

SLICE OF LIFE



By Terry Moore

Reader warning: This is my annual review about my own golf equipment. Do not operate heavy machinery or be driving a motor vehicle while digesting it.

The best thing I did in terms of golf equipment this year involved my entire set of clubs. No, not buying a new set or tossing the old ones in a pond. Instead, I went through clubfitting and launch monitor sessions. These sessions convinced me to re-evaluate my clubs and to make some changes. One recommendation was to re-shaft my irons with new lightweight steel ones, thereby increasing swing speed and enhancing my ball trajectory and carry. As such, I reshafted my irons with a new set of sub-100 gram weighted steel shafts from Nippon Shaft. I'm still a believer in using steel shafts in irons where stability and consistency are desired. I always remember a cautionary line from a Senior...er...Champions Tour player at the Ford Seniors Players one year, "Graphite shafted-irons often have a mind of their own." (Tour players want assurance that when they pick out a club it only goes a set distance with little or no variance save turf

and wind conditions.) Anyway, these lightweight steel Nippon shafts have been a plus for me. I only wish I had made the switch sooner.

Another equipment switch I made this year was to jump on the hybrid bandwagon. I opted for the AdamsGolf's Idea Hybrid A2 3-iron. These hybrids are easier to hit than the traditional long irons and they lend a higher trajectory. I replaced my five metalwood with this hybrid and it's been a good move. But like all equipment changes, a good solid swing, tempo, and mechanics still must be applied to them. Those elements will always be a work in progress.

Cashing in some pro shop gift certificates, the "Moore equipment makeover" continued with the purchase of some new wedges this past spring. I tried various models and brands but ended up with the Titleist Vokey Design Spin Milled wedges. The faces on my old wedges had been so worn down (from abuse not overuse!) that I hardly ever spun or even checked up a ball with them. But with these new wedges, if you hit it properly the ball will "check" on command. Case in point: I was playing with our club pro (a master at the short game) one day and had a short chip shot to a pin with little green to work with. Using my 56 degree Vokey Spin Milled wedge, I nipped this shot so that it hit once, bounced twice and then stopped on a dime ensuring me a short birdie putt. (With my old wedges there would've been no way for me to have stopped my ball near the flag.) When the pro came over to examine my new wedge it was a MasterCard moment: priceless.

Rarely do I make putter changes.

Maybe once during a comet cycle. As a veteran of the game's trials, I know it's seldom—in the phrase used by Dave Hill--- the arrow that's at fault but usually the Indian. But at PGA Merchandise Show in Orlando last January, I tried the Heavy Putter, the aptly named, hernia-risking, two pound putter that came on the market in 2005. Immediately, I loved its feel and how its heavy mass and weight forced me to swing the clubhead in a pendulum fashion. Anyway, I knew I had to give it a go and decided this summer to put one in my bag. In theory, it's hard to argue with the Heavy Putter's science. I recall the advice of former National PGA of the Year Charlie Sorrell when talking about putters and putting. Sorrell recommended heavier putters for those struggling with their stroke or with their confidence. The heavy clubhead forces one to use the bigger arm and shoulder muscles when swinging the blade, letting the clubface naturally accelerate through the ball. It will take another season to see if I fully adapt to and become comfortable with the Heavy Putter. I also know I have to be careful when removing and returning it to my bag. One false move and the Heavy Putter can put a heavy hurt on one's fingers.

Speaking of fingers, I will now snap mine and you shall awake. You won't remember what you've just read.

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