



# GRAAA

Welcome to the November 2016 issue of digital *Golf Range Magazine!*

Inside this issue, you will find the following features:

- Cover Story: Make Your Demo Day a Success – As you plan for 2017, look to these top-notch demo days for ideas on how to turn your range into a golf equipment showroom
- Tour Talk: The Magic Number is 125 – Fighting for a PGA Tour card and a chance to compete
- Facility Profile: The Ridge at Back Brook – New putting course set to enhance membership experience at ultra-exclusive club
- Top 25 Teaching & Training Aid: Eyeline Golf Ball of Steel – Our series on golf's finest training aids continues with a tool that can help your students develop a more consistent putting stroke
- Video File: On the range at the historic Biltmore Golf Course

Keep it fun and thanks for supporting the GRAA.

Best Regards,

Rick Summers  
CEO & Publisher, GRAA  
610-745-0862  
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*Golf Ranges: Where the Fun Starts*

SPIETH'S COACH OPENS NEW FACILITY • CLUBFITTING TECHNOLOGY • RANGE NEWS

# Golf Range

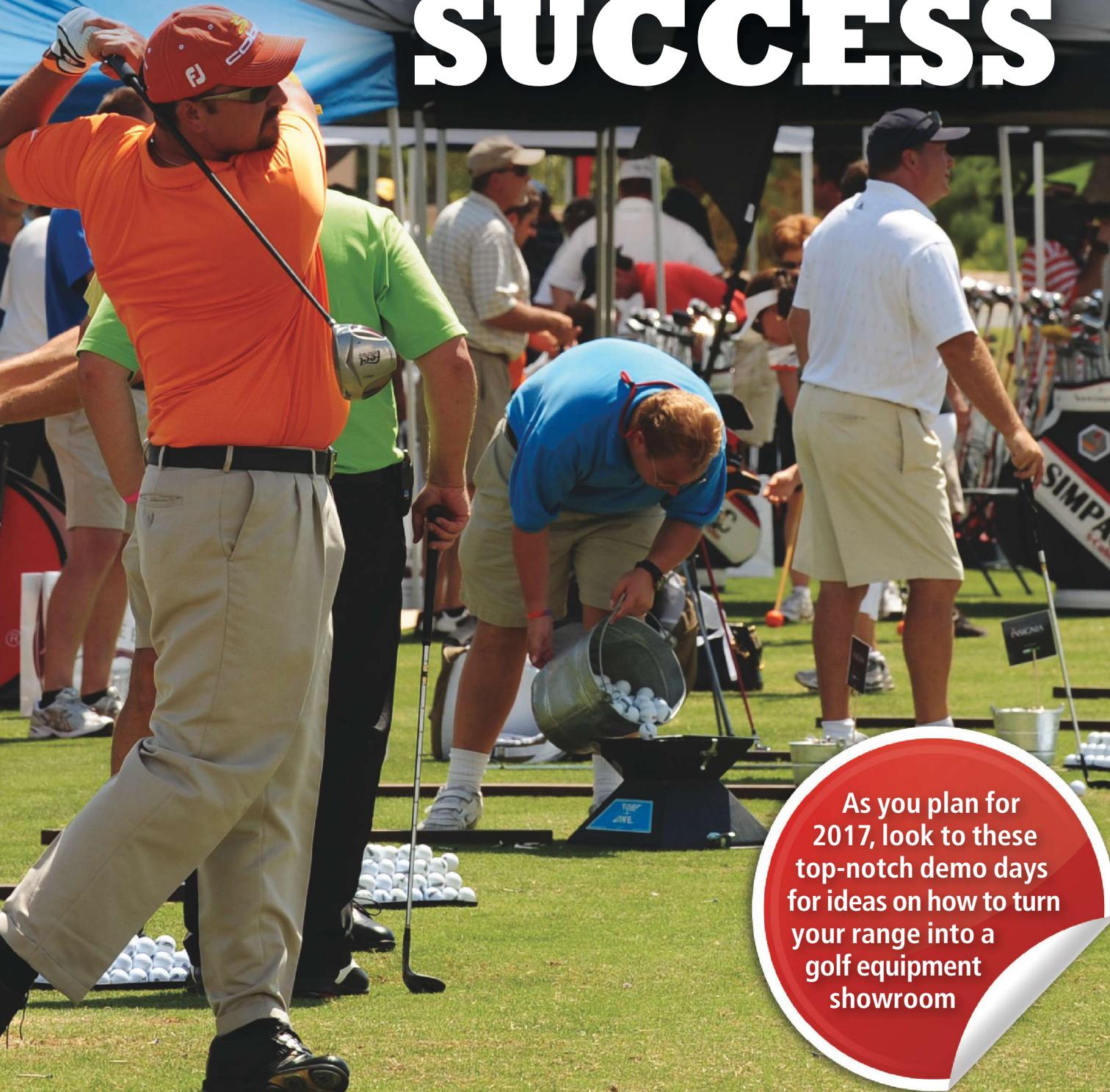


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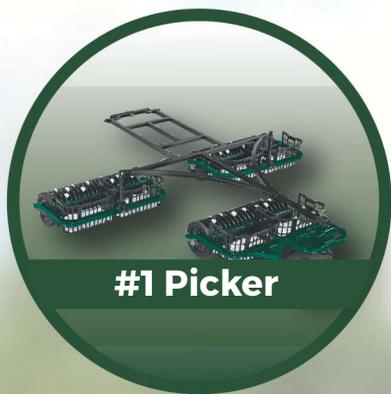
Volume 24 No. 11  
November 2016

TEACHING • PRACTICE • PLAYER DEVELOPMENT • FITTING/DEMO • OPERATIONS • ENGAGEMENT

## Make Your Demo Day a **SUCCESS**



As you plan for 2017, look to these top-notch demo days for ideas on how to turn your range into a golf equipment showroom



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### DOES LONGEVITY MATTER?

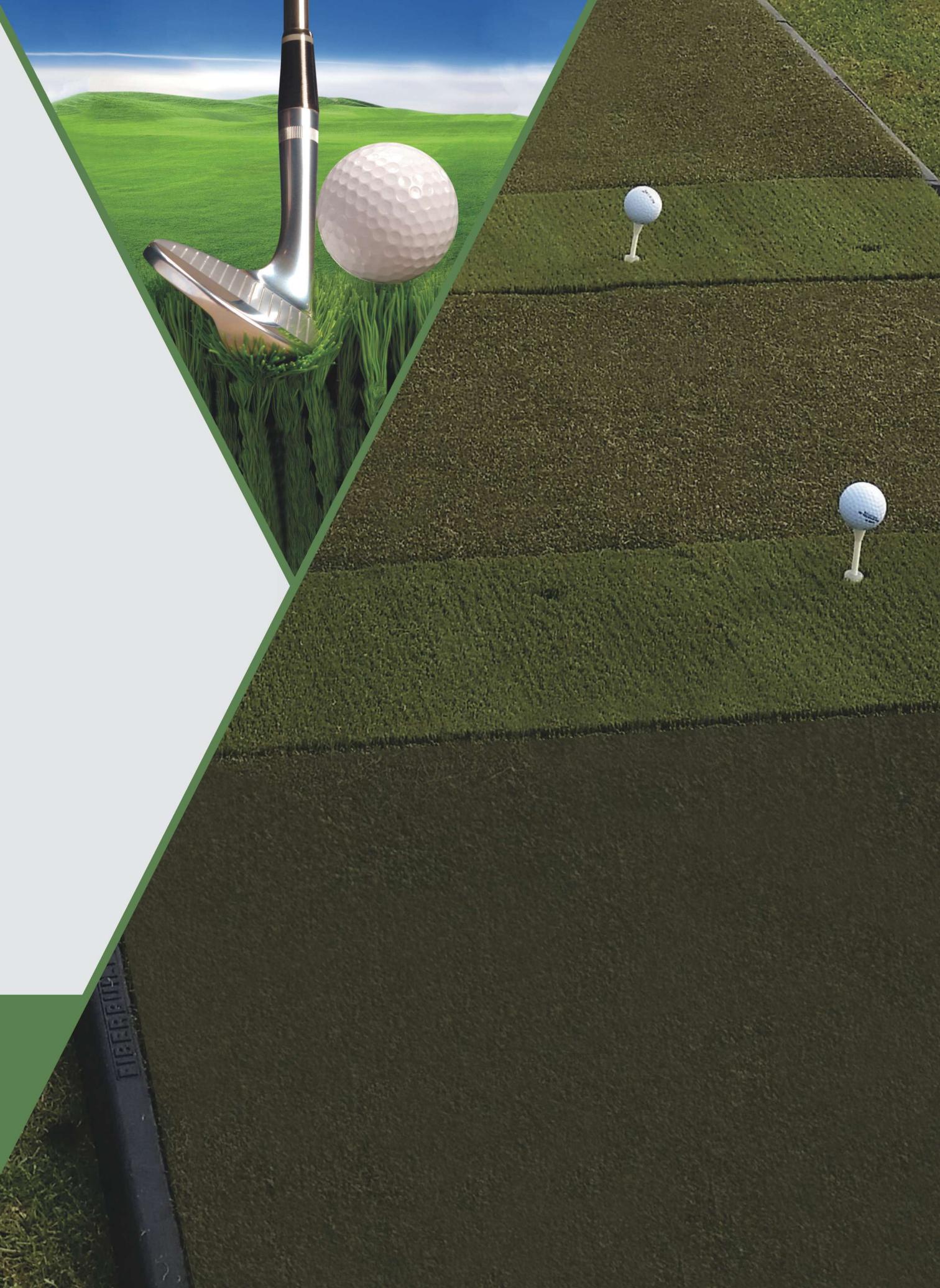
Fiberbuilt mats have been tested for longevity vs traditional turf mats. This robotic testing has shown that Fiberbuilt grass can withstand up to 300,000 shots from the exact same location before showing any visible wear; while traditional turf mats last only between 10,000 & 30,000 shots.

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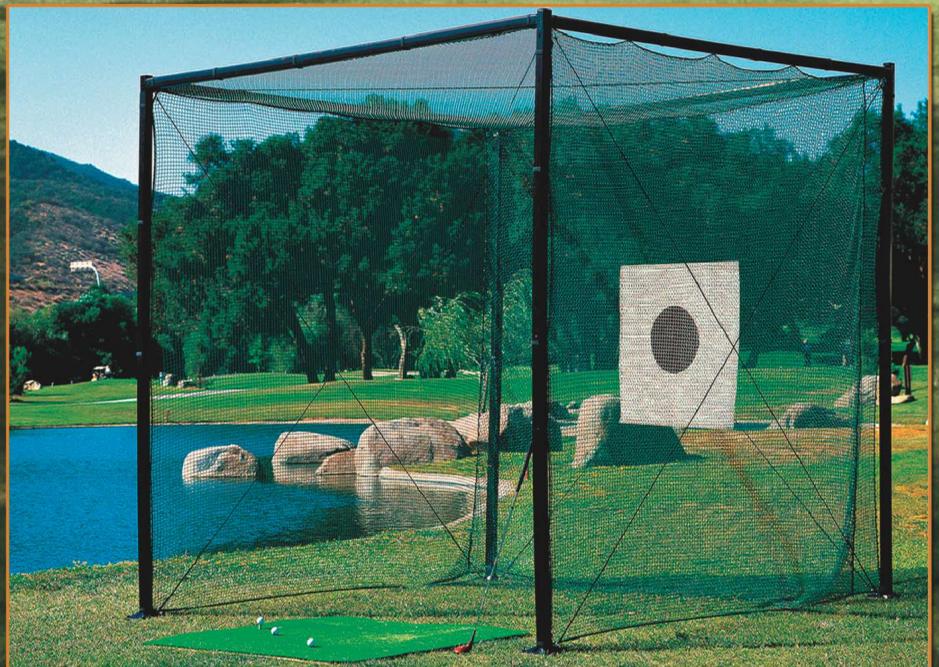
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Cover Story



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# Golf Range



## MAGAZINE

Volume 24, Number 11

November 2016

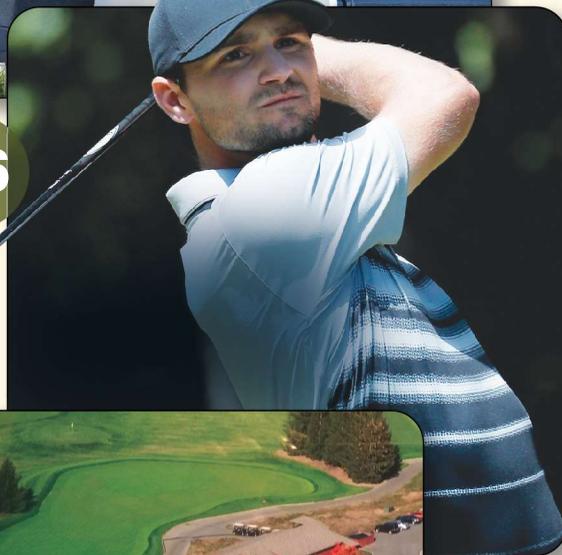
36



50



56



60



### Features

- 36 **Make Your Demo Day a Success**  
As you plan for 2017, look to these top-notch demo days for ideas on how to turn your range into a golf equipment showroom
- 50 **A Tool to Enhance Clubfitting, Teaching and More**  
The GC2 launch monitor from Foresight Sports is providing to have various usages across the industry
- 56 **The Magic Number is 125**  
Fighting for a PGA Tour card and a chance to compete
- 60 **Upscale Putting Course**  
New putting course set to enhance membership experience at ultra-exclusive club
- 64 **Coaching for the Future**  
Cameron McCormick, Jordan Spieth's coach, teams with fellow PGA Professionals Corey Lundberg and Andrew Lewis to open golf performance center
- 68 **Top 25 Teaching & Training Aid: Eyeline Golf Ball of Steel**  
Our series on golf's finest training aids continues with a tool that can help your students develop a more consistent putting stroke

### Departments

- 10 **Teeing Off**
- 20 **From the CEO**
- 24 **Golf Range News**
- 30 **Video File:** On the range at the historic Biltmore Golf Course
- 74 **GRAA Featured Partners**
- 76 **GRAA Preferred Vendors**

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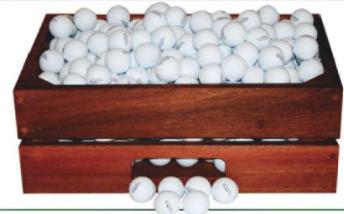
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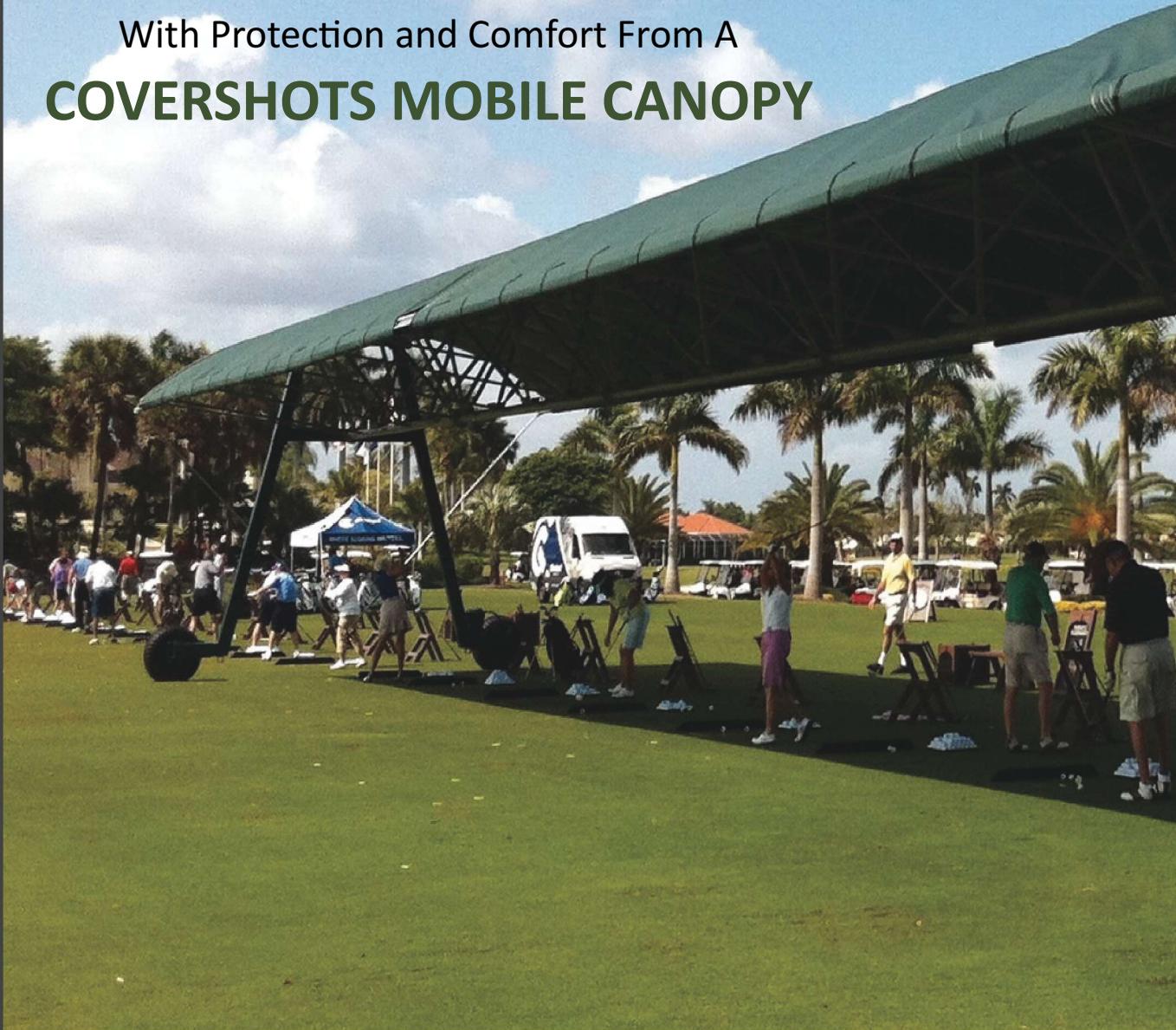
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# Transforming Your Range into a Golf Equipment Showroom

**D**emo days are one of the most traditional uses of a practice range. However, there is nothing tradition about the demo day experiences we highlight in this month's cover story: Make Your Demo Day a Success. We turned to seven of the most successful demo days in the country to glean strategies and ideas that could help increase attendance and revenue at your next demo day.

In the November edition of Tour Talk, we take a closer look at the PGA Tour's wraparound season and what it means for players who are fighting to keep their tour cards for 2017. You'll be surprised by the approach to practice and preparation that many of the players take.

Furthermore, this month's installment of *Golf Range Magazine* shines the spotlight on 2015 PGA Teacher of the Year Cameron McCormick – who has been Jordan Spieth's coach for more than a decade. McCormick recently opened a new teaching and coaching facility outside of Dallas with a goal of developing the next generation of great golfers, and we have the inside scoop.

As always, we want to hear from you! Your feedback helps make the GRAA and *Golf Range Magazine* better. So please let us know if you decide to implement an idea or strategy you've read in either our best practice emails or in *Golf Range Magazine*.

All the best,



Rick Summers  
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*Golf Ranges: Where the Fun Starts*

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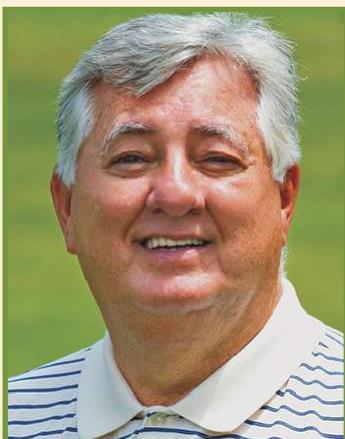


Callaway Golf and the San Diego Padres teamed up for the second year in a row for an unforgettable 9-hole golf experience winding through Petco Park. The event, called the Links at Petco, kicked off to the public on Wednesday, November 2 and ran through Tuesday, November.

On October 28, Acushnet Holdings Corp. (NYSE:GOLF) (“Acushnet”) announced the pricing of the initial public offering of shares of its common stock pursuant to a registration statement on Form S-1 filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “Commission”). All 19,333,333 shares of common stock to be sold in the offering will be sold by existing stockholders of Acushnet. The underwriters in the offering have a 30-day over-allotment option to purchase up to an additional 2,899,999 shares of common stock from the selling stockholders. The initial public offering price is \$17.00 per share. Acushnet’s common stock began trading on the New York Stock Exchange on October 28, 2016 under the ticker symbol “GOLF,” and the offering was expected to close on November 2, 2016, subject to certain closing conditions.

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Six Golf Course Superintendent Association of America members have recently been inducted into various local and national golf halls of fame. They are: Robert Frase, Stark County (Ohio) Amateur Golf Hall of Fame; Joseph A. Kennedy Jr., Tennessee Golf Hall of Fame; Stan Kogut, Western Massachusetts Golf Hall of Fame; Lawrence Powell, National Black Golf Hall of Fame; William Rohret, Las Vegas Golf Hall of Fame; and Mark Wilson, Kentucky Golf Hall of Fame.



PGA Professional Bill Madonna, the longtime director of instruction at Bill Madonna Golf Academy in ChampionsGate, Florida, passed away on September 13, 2016 at the age of 71. Madonna, a three-time GRAA Top 50 Growth of the Game Teacher (2012-14), is survived by his wife Bonnie; children Nancee and Billy; grandchildren Elizabeth and Sophia; sisters Pat and Gerri; and his Aunt Mary Kline. In addition to his GRAA accolades, Madonna was annually selected by *Golf Magazine* and *Golf Digest* as one of the “Top 100 Teachers in America.”



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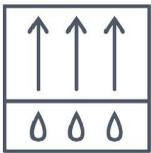
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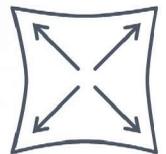
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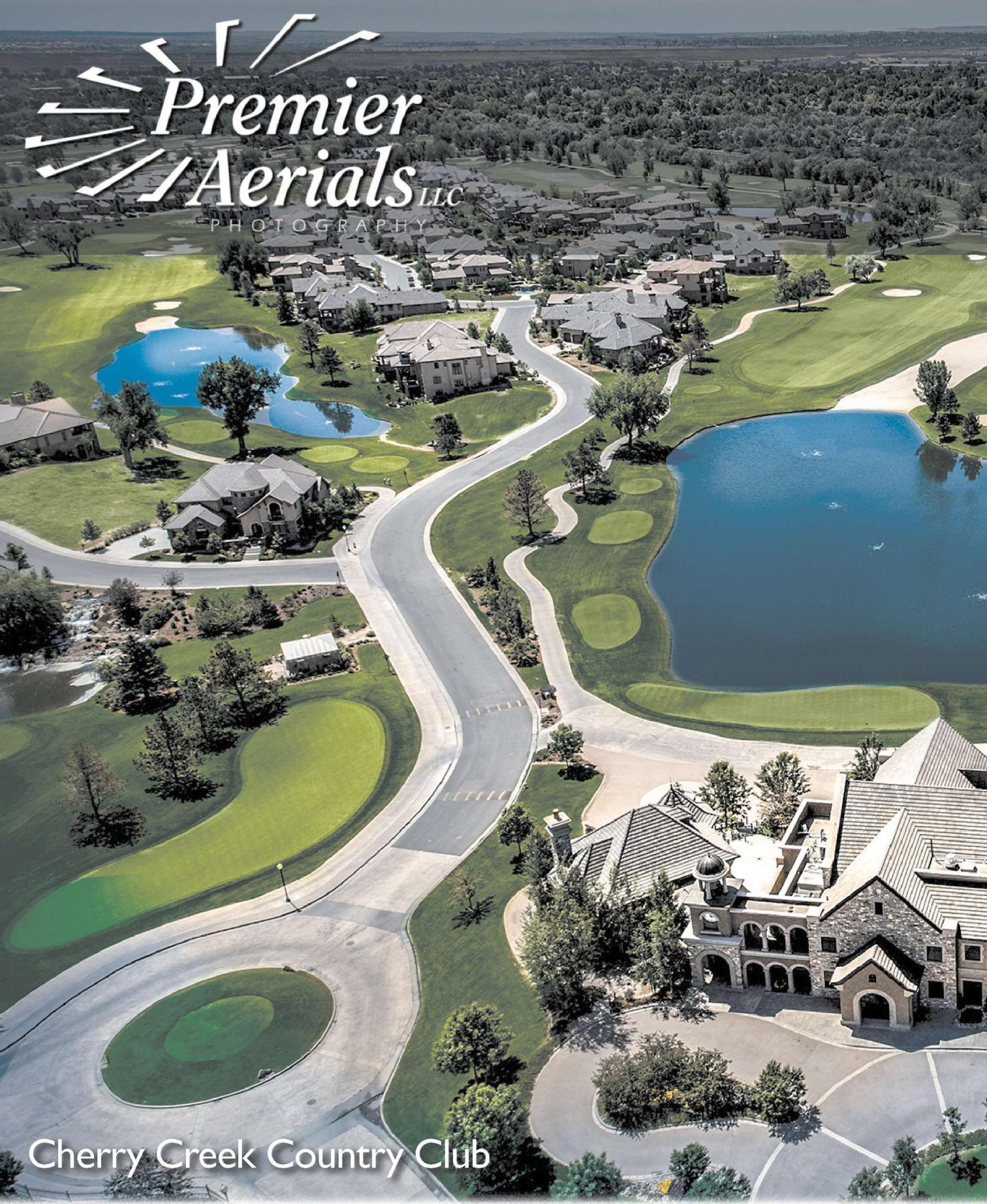
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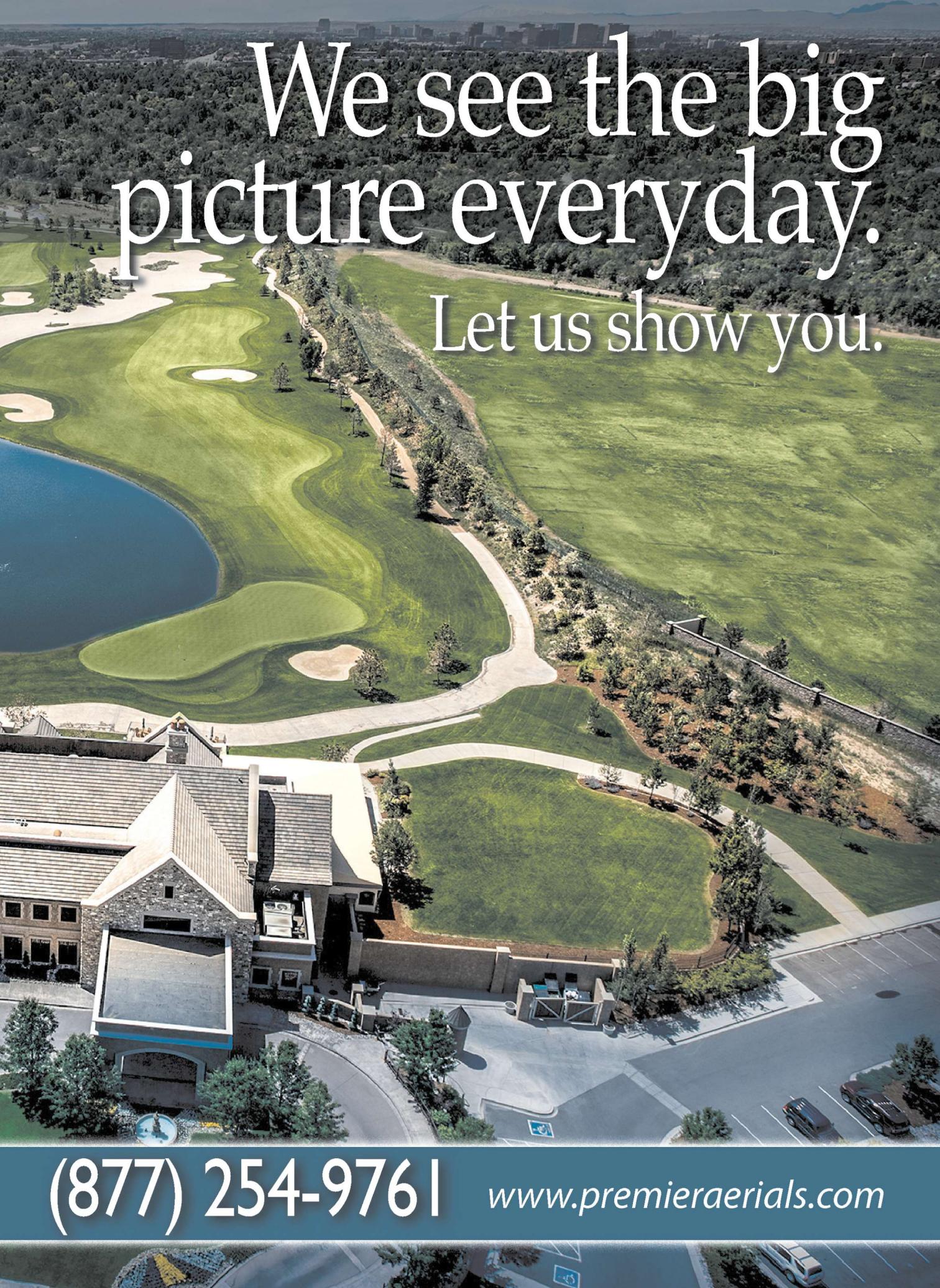
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An aerial photograph of a golf course. In the foreground, there is a large clubhouse building with a stone and wood facade, a parking lot with several cars, and a paved area with a blue handicapped sign. The middle ground shows a large green fairway with a winding path, a sand trap, and a blue lake. The background is a dense forest of trees, with a city skyline visible in the distance under a clear sky.

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# On the Range at The Biltmore



**T**he historic Biltmore Golf Course was built in 1925 by renowned architect Donald Ross, and since then has remained one of most respected facilities in South Florida. Home to the University of Miami women's golf team, the Biltmore's game improvement facilities include several key components: a 10,000 square foot practice putting green; a dedicated clubfitting, repair and sales facility on the range; large natural turf hitting areas; a two-acre short game area; and the Biltmore Golf Academy. Check out the video for more details. ■

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# Make Your Demo Day SUCCEED

As you plan for 2017, look to these top-notch demo days for ideas on how to turn your golf equipment showroom into a successful demo day. BY [Name]



# Day a SS

urn your range into a  
Y TONY L. STARKS

## FEATURED DEMO DAYS:

- PGA Show Demo Day; Orlando, Florida
- PGA Outdoor Demo Experience; Las Vegas, Nevada
- Desert Mountain Golf Festival; Desert Mountain Club, Scottsdale, Arizona
- Haggin Oaks Golf Expo; Haggin Oaks Golf Complex, Sacramento, California
- Annual Spring Demo Day & Clubfitting Experience; Carlsbad (California) Golf Center
- 24-Hour Demo Day at Anchorage (Alaska) Golf Course
- *Golf Digest* Hotlist Demo Tour at Topgolf



**F**or many facilities, demo days are the biggest retail day of the year. They provide an opportunity to partner with key vendors to promote new offerings in multiple categories including hard goods, soft goods and accessories. If you strategize and market properly, you can attract hundreds of golfers to your facility over the span of a few days and provide a huge revenue boost in a short amount of time.

In this month's cover story, we look at seven highly effective demo day experiences and the key elements that make them a success. If you're planning a demo day for the upcoming year, look to these ideas for ways to enhance the experience for attendees while also maximizing revenue for your facility.

# PGA Show Demo Day & PGA Outdoor & Demo Experience

Celebrities, such as LPGA Tour star Lexi Thompson (pictured), often make appearances during PGA Show Demo Day.



A large crowd of people is gathered on a golf course for a demo day. In the foreground, several men are seen from behind, wearing various golf attire like polo shirts and caps. Some are looking towards a target in the distance. The background shows a vast green field with scattered golf balls and a few structures under a clear sky.

## Top 3 Takeaways from PGA Show Demo Day & PGA Outdoor Demo Experience

- Examine your staff and build a team that engages all stakeholders – facility leaders, marketing arms, sales, operations, grounds staff and vendor partners. Communicate early and often, make sure the status of the project is transparent for everyone involved. Prior preparation prevents poor performance – plan, plan, plan and then execute flawlessly.
- Complete your due diligence to understand the needs of attendees and the goals of each participating vendor. Communicate clearly to all audiences with relevant messaging.
- Conduct separate post-event surveys for attendees, vendors and your staff/stakeholders. Use the surveys to compile a list of key learnings and benchmarks so you can build on your event year after year.

**T**he PGA Show Demo Day, held annually during PGA Merchandise Show Week in Orlando, Florida, is the largest outdoor golf demo experience in the world. The PGA of America couldn't ask for a better location. Orange County National Golf Center features a 360-degree range and practice facility that stretches more than 42-acres. The event, operated by PGA Worldwide Golf Exhibitions in conjunction with *PGA Magazine*, annually attracts more than 100 of the leading golf companies. Thousands of PGA Professionals from around the world gather to test the latest and greatest in golf equipment, accessories, training aids and more. Education is also an important part of the day, as PGA Teachers of the Year are featured presenters at Instructional Workshops where they showcase their latest learnings to an engaged audience of their peers. PGA Worldwide also executes the PGA Outdoor Demo Experience coinciding with the annual PGA Fashion & Demo Experience in Las Vegas. For the last three years, Cascata Golf Club has hosted the Demo Experience.

Whether hosting a large-scale demo experience like these or an exclusive private club demo day, PGA Worldwide's Elizabeth Reed says the foundational strategies are the same. "Preparation prevents poor performance, you can never plan too much. But you still have to execute flawlessly," says Reed, PGA Worldwide Golf Exhibitions senior director of industry development. "From the outset, you have to build an event pedigree. Spend time developing an event platform that delivers on your desired brand experience while also staying on budget and on time. Throughout the entire process, you have to maintain a laser sharp focus on the customer."

# Desert Mountain Golf Festival



Russell Kirby/GOLF LINKS

Mark Thush, 2016 PGA Merchandiser of the Year for private facilities.



## Top 3 Takeaways from the Desert Mountain Golf Festivals

**M**ark Thush, the 2016 PGA Merchandiser of the Year for private facilities, serves as the PGA director of retail at Desert Mountain Club in Scottsdale, Arizona – one of the most renowned private clubs in the area with over 4,000 members and five golf shops. Under Thush's guidance, Desert Mountain has created new course-specific logos for each shop and expanded the club's demo experiences. Known as the Desert Mountain Golf Festival, the demo events are held twice annually in conjunction with the club's two largest member tournaments, adding apparel, gift and accessory vendors for a total of 80 brands represented. Thush believes that the success of Desert Mountain's demo events may have played a role in his winning the Merchandiser of the Year Award. "We've created a really meaningful day that captures the attention of our membership and becomes a 'save-the-date' must-attend event," says Thush. "I wouldn't be surprised if the awards committee was impressed by the amount of planning and hard work that goes into putting on a successful event of this magnitude. After each event, I know I'm always impressed that our team makes it happen so seamlessly!"

- Don't be afraid to expand your vendor list. We added apparel, gift and accessory suppliers to the mix and the number of featured brands has grown from a dozen just a few years ago to more than 80 currently. It ensures that we have something for everyone.
- Keep it fun. We have energetic music, BBQ for lunch, a putting contest and no-obligation prizes that we give out throughout the day.
- Schedule your events appropriately to maximize exposure. We typically host two large demo experiences in conjunction with our Member-Member tournament in the fall and our Member-Guest tournament in the spring. Having said that, we have also been successful hosting events on other days that we strategically selected so they don't conflict with other events going on around the mountain.

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# Haggin Oaks Golf Expo



**F**or the last 41 years, Haggin Oaks Golf Complex has hosted the annual Haggin Oaks Golf Expo, the first of which was a simple sidewalk sale done to generate extra cash flow to help offset the cost of taxes after the facility had a lucrative year. From those humble beginnings it has now grown into a massive demo experience with upwards of 190 vendors and nearly 25,000 attendees over a three-day span. Over the years, the event has taken on many different forms. In its current format, it's more akin to the PGA Merchandise Show than a standard demo day. In 2000 the facility expanded the Expo to include outside vendors in the golf-lifestyle category, including other golf courses, and began charging them for booth space. The life-style companies currently comprise two-thirds of the vendors that attend the annual event. While that opened up a vast new revenue stream, it caused Haggin Oaks to pivot how they operate, market and view the Golf Expo. "We're very much in the tradeshow business, we're generating well over \$100,000 in booth space sales annually now," says Haggin Oaks' Vice President of Retail & Marketing, Ken Morton Jr., who is also an advisory board member for PGA Worldwide Golf Exhibitions – operator of the PGA Merchandise Show. "We have an alliance to our facility to generate sales, but just as much responsibility to maximize traffic for all those booths out there."

The sale of booth space allowed Haggin Oaks to expand the advertising budget for the Expo, as well – creating ad programs with the *Sacramento Bee*, running TV and radio ads, and working with the local ESPN radio affiliate to host live radio shows from the Expo grounds all three days of the event. Furthermore, they developed a website dedicated solely to the Haggin Oaks Golf Expo where attendees can find a list of vendors, a map of the property and more.

## Top 3 Takeaways from the Haggin Oaks Golf Expo

- **Involve other golf courses in your event.** We get asked a lot, why in the world would you invite other golf facilities to your biggest event of the year and give them access to your client base? Looking at it selfishly, it could be viewed as a bad idea. But we wanted to take a more global approach and view the business of golf as larger than just Haggin Oaks. We had 30-40 golf courses represented at the 2016 Expo, and we view it as celebrating the game and Northern California golf. The event is bigger than just us. If we're able to increase rounds overall, then that's a benefit to everyone in the industry.
- **Work with vendors to improve marketing for your event.** Our vendors are becoming more and more savvy using social media and engaging their own databases. We've been able to work with vendors, who've allowed us to access their databases in order to market the event, which greatly expands our reach. We try to work with individual vendors to cater results specifically to them.
- **Plan your success in advance of the event.** For example, we have 50 stalls on the back of the range dedicated to clubfittings during the Expo. We make advanced appointments for one-hour fittings for \$25 – but that gets refunded with any purchase. We'll have 200 fittings scheduled before the event even starts. So if we never sold a club on the front end of the range where the main Expo goes on, we'd still have a really successful event from the advanced fitting appointments. We go to great lengths to schedule those fittings, because we know how instrumental they are to the overall success of the event.

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# Annual Spring Demo Day & Fitting Experience at Carlsbad Golf Center

**T**he Annual Spring Demo Day & Fitting Experience at Carlsbad Golf Center is one of the most well-attended and respected demo events in the Carlsbad area. That's saying a lot, considering the oceanfront town is also home to many of the major golf equipment manufacturers. That also places them in a very unique position, as facility owner and PGA Professional Susan Roll has been able to forge strong relationships with all of the manufacturers over the 14 years she's operated the facility. "We're very proud of the strong relationship we have with the manufacturers, and they truly view us as a partner because we've done a lot business with them," says Roll, the 2011 PGA Merchandiser of the Year for public facilities. "This event has been a way for us help them showcase their new products, while also showcasing our facility and everything we offer."

In the early days, fitting was less of a focus but that quickly changed. Now Roll places a high emphasis on clubfitting by scheduling fittings in advance for all the manufacturers. "The attendees know that they can get special attention from the reps from their favorite golf equipment brand and a great fitting," says Roll. "We get people coming from hundreds of miles away because they can try everything, but once they realize our fitting expertise and see what we offer they become long-term customers."

In addition to hard goods, various golf products and clubfitting, they also bring in a food trucks so golfers can fuel up while they test out some of the latest golf gear. For the last three years the most popular has been a pizza truck, serving pies made with organic ingredients. Roll credits the staff at Carlsbad Golf Center, which is a GRAA Top 50 Stand Alone Facility, for dedicating hours upon hours to the success of their event.

The event is "by far" their most important retail stretch of the year, with more than 1,300 people attending over two days and 30 vendors.

## Top 3 Takeaways from the Annual Spring Demo Day at Carlsbad Golf Center

- Be prepared and well organized. We set the dates for our event a year in advance. We deliver detailed information to each participating vendor at least two months in advance, if not more. Things like do they need a tent, table and linens, electricity. It's important that the vendors know what to expect and what's expected of them.
- Have adequate staffing. Everyone who works for the company is there on the day of our event. We want attendees and vendors to receive the highest level of service. With so much going on, it's critical that our staff engages attendees to make sure they find what they're looking for and get what they need. That's why we all wear bright blue shirts on that day, so we're easy to spot.
- Create a high-energy atmosphere. That starts with you, your staff and everyone involved. Be sure to be 100-percent dedicated to the event and making it a success. It makes for a long day, not to mention all the prep work, but you have keep up the enthusiasm and make sure the entire day feels like a non-stop party.

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# 24-Hour Demo & Fitting Day at Anchorage Golf Course



The midnight sun is perhaps one of the coolest phenomena offered by Mother Nature. The sun remains visible well into the night, for 22-plus hours in fact. It occurs around the summer solstice in locations north of the Arctic Circle, like Anchorage, Alaska. To take advantage of the longest day of the year, Anchorage Golf Course hosted a 24-hour demo and clubfitting event in 2011 in partnership with Callaway Golf. While Jeri Cunningham, the facility's director of golf operations, says it was a one-time event there are certainly elements that made the event a success which can be implemented within more traditional demo days.

"Callaway has always been a great partner of ours, so we challenged them to come to Alaska to take part in this event. They jumped on board immediately and loved the idea," says Cunningham.

Callaway brought multiple fitting techs, and Cunningham worked in advance to schedule fittings – at one station they scheduled fittings every half hour, and every hour on the other one. By the time the event rolled around, every slot for a 24-hour period was filled – with midnight being the most popular timeslot.

"It's not too often that you can be on the driving range under the midnight sun," says Cunningham. "People loved that unique opportunity?"

There were also two fitting bays dedicated to walk-ins who just wanted to try to the latest Callaway equipment or have an impromptu fitting. Cunningham's staff and the team from Callaway made it through the entire 24 hours, with only a couple people opting to get a few hours of sleep along the way. They had over 150 scheduled golfers attend and countless other walk-ins, accounting for more than \$60,000 in equipment sales in just the one day.

They didn't serve coffee, but they did keep the beer flowing and the music pumping. "It was a 24-hour party as much as it was a fitting day," adds Cunningham.

## Top 3 Takeaways from the 24-Hour Demo & Fitting Day at Anchorage Golf Course

- **Nighttime clubfittings and demos can draw a big crowd.** People love the opportunity to do something different. While you may not have the midnight sun like we do in Anchorage, you could certainly replicate what we did if you have a lighted range or by renting lighting equipment for the day.
- **Be flexible with timeslots.** When committing to a golf experience, people want to choose when they can come – so that it fits their schedule. Having the ability for people to come at 8 a.m. or 10 p.m. was huge for us.
- **Make it a big party.** You attract so many different demographics when you create a fun and engaging atmosphere.

## Golf Digest Hot List Equipment Demo Tour at Topgolf



Topgolf and *Golf Digest* teamed up to create an equipment demo tour that stopped at six different Topgolf locations and stretched from March through August. We spoke with Rodney Ferrell, Topgolf's vice president of global partnerships, who identified several strategies they used that could also help your demo day be a success:

- **Entertainment and gamification.** When participating vendors or manufacturers create a game atmosphere at their hitting bays, attendees are more engaged because they're provided a challenge. It speaks to the competitive nature of golfers. We're lucky enough to have our existing infrastructure for the game, but there are many ways to gamify a traditional practice range.
- **Music and food.** These two things dramatically change the atmosphere and help bring in the social and non-golfers. That "party" atmosphere encourages people to invite their friends who may not be golfers, but still desire new experiences and want to have fun.
- **Track participation.** During our six demo events, we gave all the attendees a special card that they swiped when they visited each vendor. If they saw every vendor, they were entered into a special drawing to win a grand prize. This incentive to visit each vendor was very well received by our partners. In addition, it encourages the vendors to be more engaged and involved with the demo day because they know they're going to see every person that comes to the event.

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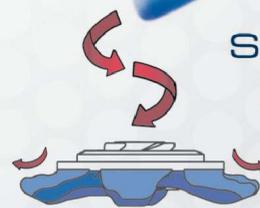
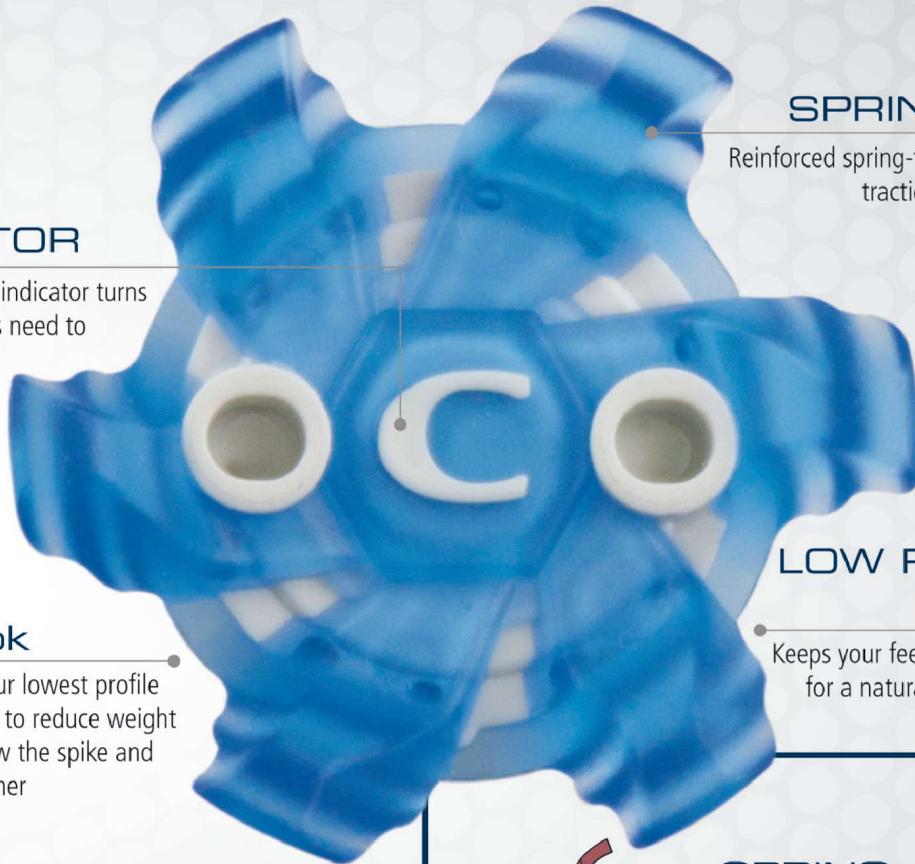
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# A Tool to Enhance Clubfitting, Teaching and More

The GC2 launch monitor from TrackMan is proving to have various uses

By Tony L. Starks



# Performance Teaching

from Foresight Sports is  
messages across the industry

**T**echnology drives most new industries. With golf's birthday dating back several hundred years, the industry is far from new. However, over its lifetime, advances in technology have spurred growth in virtually every category of the golf business: equipment, apparel, golf course design, instruction and everything in between.





Within the last decade, launch monitors have become a cornerstone of golf industry tech – helping instructors provide more detailed lessons, helping manufacturers create better performing equipment and helping fitters deliver more precise fittings.

The GC2 from Foresight Sports, which features the attachable Head Measurement Technology (HMT), takes precision to a new level. The system uses an advanced stereoscopic camera that locks onto the dimples of the golf ball to analyze critical ball characteristics at impact. Using the two lenses, the device captures anywhere from 12 to 24 images per swing and then uses those photos to create a 3D projection of the ball flight that can be output onto a laptop or another device. And because it is a camera-based system, the GC2 has a 99 percent capture rate – meaning it very rarely misses a shot for any reason.

With the use of HMT technology, clubfitters and instructors are able to see the exact point where the ball impacted the clubface. This allows fitters to easily see a golfer’s tendencies, and make equipment changes (either shaft, loft or lie, or clubhead design) that help the golfer produce more center strikes.

Some manufacturers have even utilized HMT technology in the development of new equipment. When engineers set out to design more forgiving golf equipment, many times the goal in mind is minimizing performance gaps between good shots and mis-hits – i.e. helping a toe or a heel strike perform more like a center hit. HMT technology gives them an exact and quantifiable way to measure those gaps.

Furthermore, the GC2’s price point weighs in at less than many of its competitors – between \$7,000 and \$15,000, depending on options. Along with its premium performance, the affordable pricing may have helped it become the leading launch monitor at golf retailers nationwide – including the PGA Tour Superstore, Dick’s Sporting Goods and Golfsmith.

“Our company has revolutionized clubfitting, as we have unified the primary clubfitters in this industry around one technology,” says Rick Cuellar, Foresight Sports’ director of sales. “If golfers were fit for clubs at any major outlet in the last few years, they were most likely fit on our GC2.”

As with clubfitting, the aim of golf instruction is to help golfers find the center of the clubface more often. For Martin Hall, the 2008 PGA Teacher of the Year, GC2 with HMT has been an invaluable tool when it comes to accomplishing that goal.

“Knowing the contact points on the face of the club is very informative,” says Hall, a PGA teaching professional at Ibis Golf and Country Club in West Palm Beach, Florida. “There’s nothing else on the market that gives you the actual location and strike on the face. That’s a massive help.”

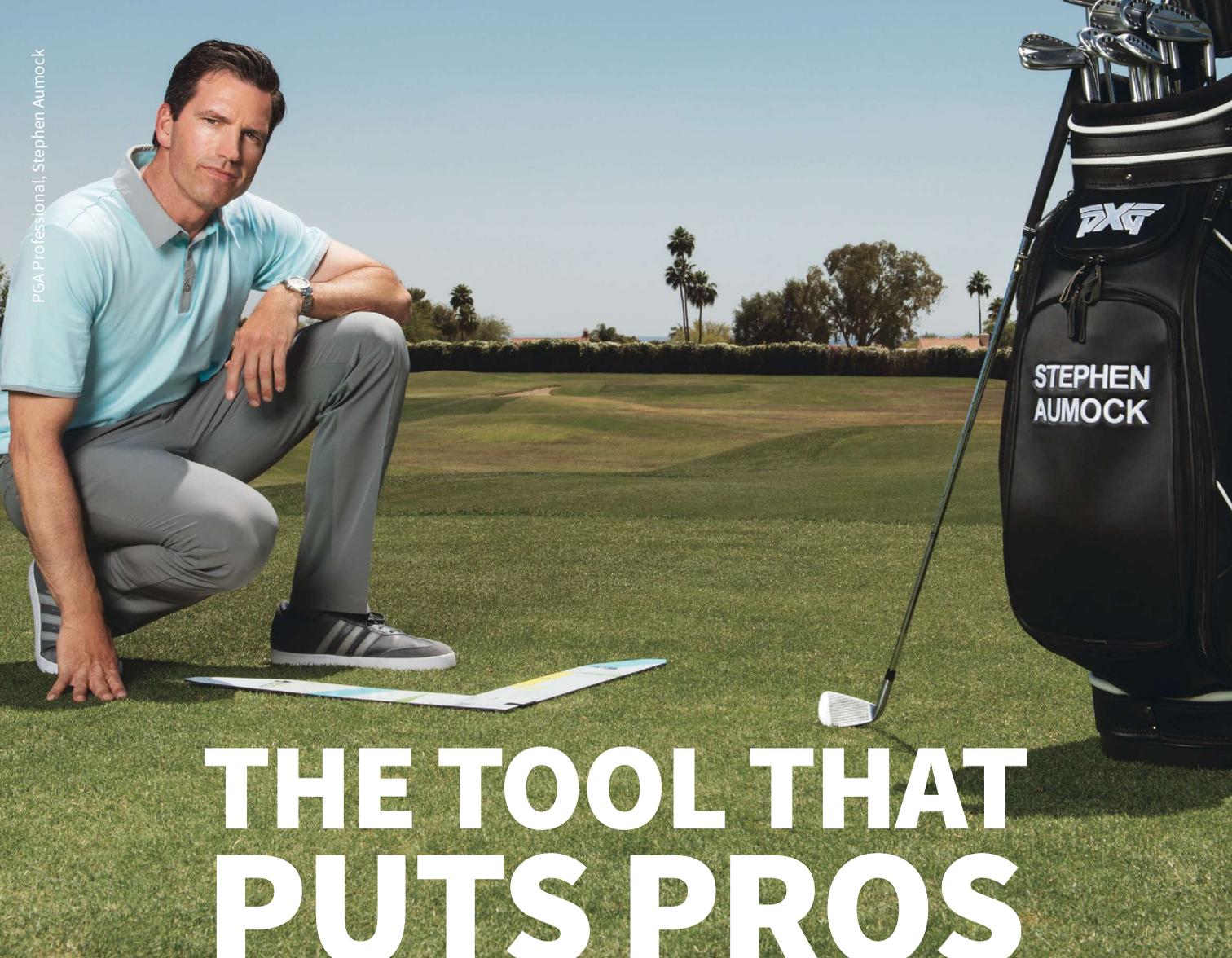
Hall pays the most attention to a combination of path, face angle, attack angle and strike point – he calls it the “collision model.” It helps his students to better see and understand why their desired results don’t match their actual ball flight.

“I have people look at the start direction of the ball and the spin axis on the ball, and see if it is working it’s way towards the target or away from the target,” says Hall, who hosts “School of Golf,” on the Golf Channel. “Obviously, towards the target is good and away from the target is bad. The GC2 makes it easy to show them why they’re not getting the results they want.

“When a student is making changes, I push people to exaggerate their feel in order to actually get to where they should be. Although it may feel weird to them at first, they quickly come around when they see that they’re hitting the center of the clubface more.”

Hall’s “collision model” can be a helpful guideline for clubfitters. Matching a golf swing with equipment that helps produce consistent face angles at address and impact, attack angle and strike point is a formula for success. ■

Martin Hall (left), the 2008 PGA Teacher of the Year and host of Golf Channel’s “School of Golf,” using the GC2 and a formula he calls the “collision mode” for precise clubfittings.



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“ You try to make your preparation more quality instead of quantity. It’s human nature to think ‘Oh I’ve got to play really well this week’ and over-prepare. But it’s the big picture isn’t it? Life is going to go on after (Sunday).”

— Kyle Stanley, PGA Tour golfer



# THE MAGIC NUMBER is 125

Fighting for a PGA Tour card and a chance to compete

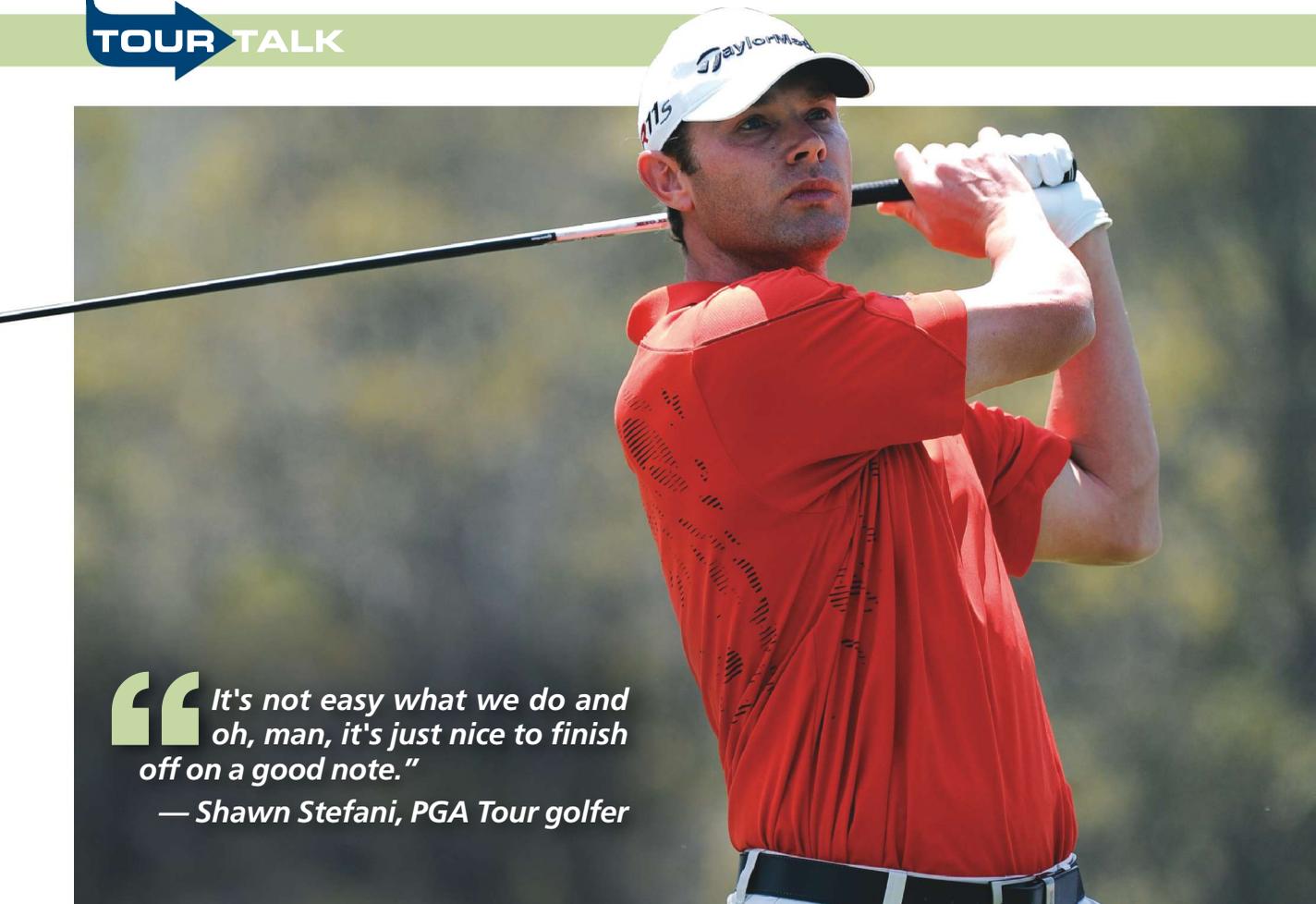
BY GARRETT JOHNSTON

One of the more stressful weeks of the 47 on the PGA Tour wrap-around season is the final one of the regular season at the Wyndham Championship in August at Sedgefield Country Club in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Jobs are at stake that week and the door-slammng frustration and uneasiness is palpable. The top 125 in the FedEx Cup Standings qualify for the Playoffs after this decisive week. Also, those who haven't already done so, retain their tour cards and full-time playing privileges for the following season.

Those who finish between the 125 and 150 get partial status for the next season, but are subject to reshuffles throughout the season in playing priority. They can join those who finish outside the 150 at the Web.com Tour Finals the following four weeks to fight for 25 PGA Tour cards.

After finishing in the dreaded 126 spot, Matt Jones (right) retained conditional status on the PGA Tour for 2016-17 and is working to regain his card.



**“It's not easy what we do and oh, man, it's just nice to finish off on a good note.”**

**— Shawn Stefani, PGA Tour golfer**

This year the Wyndham produced an odd week, as nine of the 12 players sitting in the 120-131 spots entering the week either missed the cut or withdrew, leaving only a couple players in position to make a move. By week's end the two biggest opportunists were Shawn Stefani and Kyle Stanley. Both entered the week outside the top 125 and finished within it. Stefani began at 133 while Stanley started at 127.

So with all the pressure and the gravity of what they're playing for, did Stanley find himself pounding more balls on the range that week?

“No not really, if anything it's kind of the opposite,” Stanley said. “You try to make your preparation more quality instead of quantity. It's human nature to think ‘Oh I've got to play really well this week’ and over-prepare. But it's the big picture isn't it? Life is going to go on after (Sunday).”

It did for Stanley as he finished tied for 14th in the event, moving him to 116th and into the Playoffs.

Sam Saunders, the grandson of Arnold Palmer, finished the week at 148 but made a move toward the top 125 in the first three rounds. The 29-year-old also limited his time on the range at Sedgefield.

“I think at this point in the season we're all tired, we're all ready to be done,” Saunders said. “It's such a long season and I think conserving energy is as important as anything.”

Matt Jones entered the week at 124, but a missed cut left

him on the outside looking in at 126. The 36-year-old veteran was understandably frustrated as he left the property.

“I wasn't expecting to play well because I've been playing terribly and it's just a tough golf course,” Jones said.

Shawn Stefani entered the week at 133 and dealt with severe allergies all week, blowing his nose between swings in the final round. The Texan said his hands were shaking on the 72nd green as he stood over a long birdie putt. He would convert the necessary par to make the Playoffs and secure his 2016-17 card. He teared up as he answered questions afterward.

“It's not easy what we do and oh, man, it's just nice to finish off on a good note,” Stefani said.

Stefani conserved his energy and did not hit the range during the early part of the week.

A veteran who did not keep his card at the Wyndham was Australian Cameron Percy. The 42-year-old said both he and his wife were applying for their green cards, so she could work if need be, just in case he didn't keep his card.

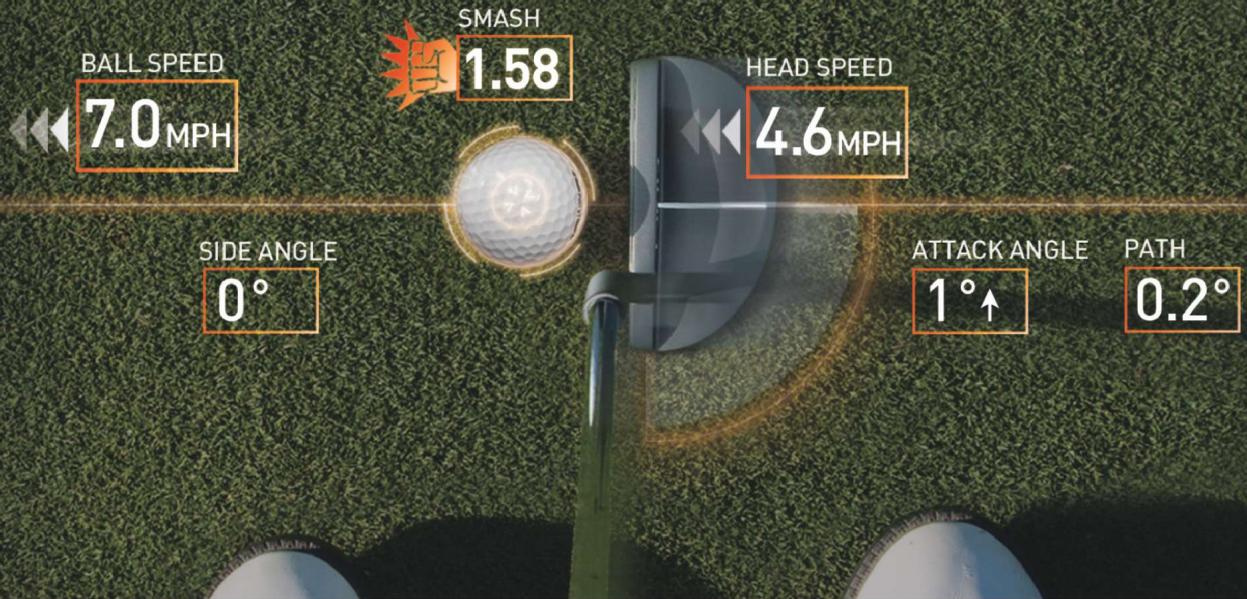
“It can drive you insane basically,” Percy said. “That's part of our lives, that's just the way it goes.”

Thankfully a few weeks later Percy earned his card back via the Web.com Tour Finals.

“This game is very volatile,” Percy concluded.

You can say that again. ■

# Roll model.



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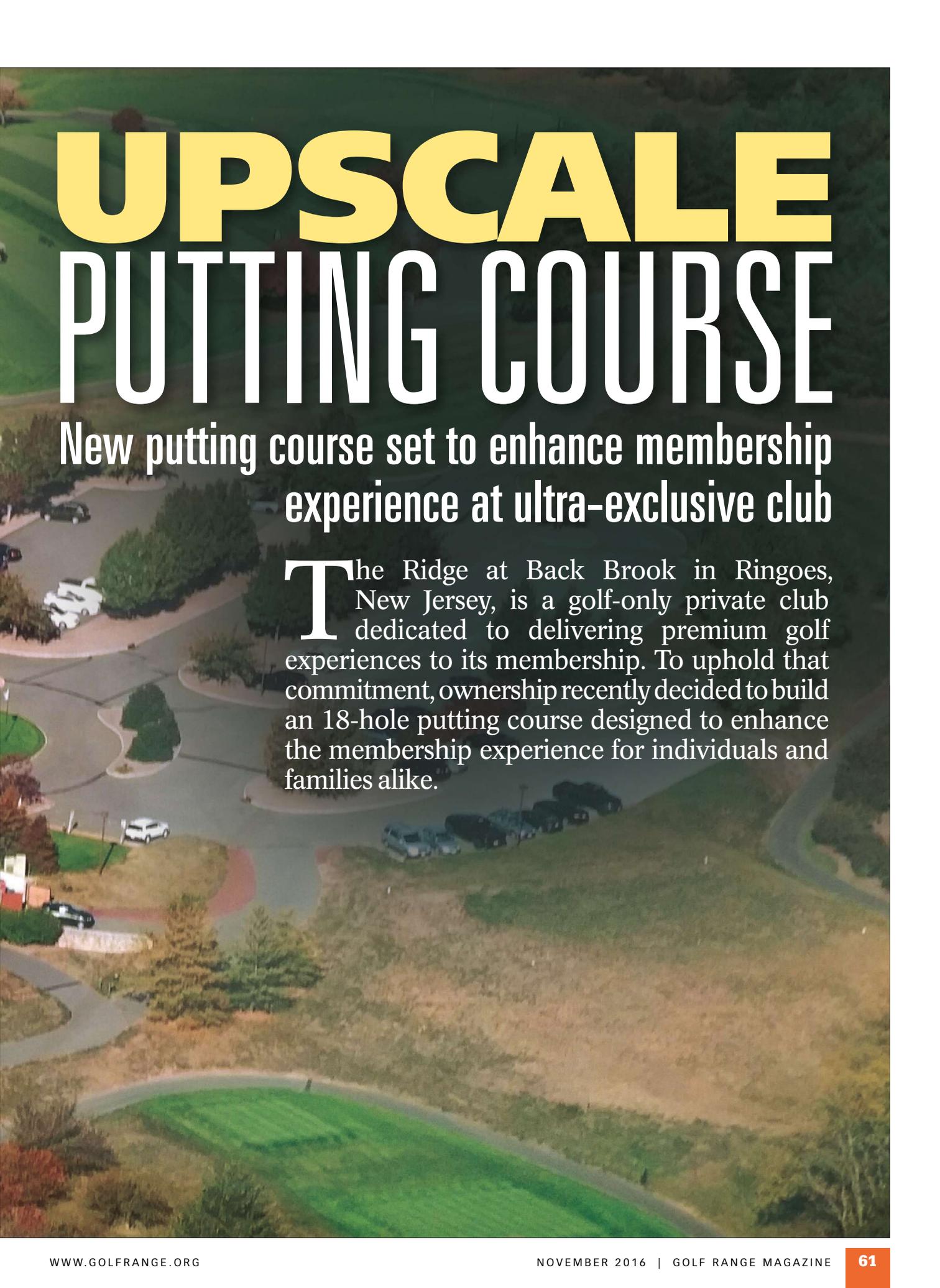
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An aerial photograph of a golf course. In the foreground, there is a large, well-maintained green putting green. To the left, a paved road curves through the landscape, with several cars parked along its edge. The background shows more of the golf course, including various trees and grassy areas. The overall scene is captured from a high angle, providing a clear view of the course's layout and the new construction project.

# UPSCALE PUTTING COURSE

New putting course set to enhance membership experience at ultra-exclusive club

**T**he Ridge at Back Brook in Ringoes, New Jersey, is a golf-only private club dedicated to delivering premium golf experiences to its membership. To uphold that commitment, ownership recently decided to build an 18-hole putting course designed to enhance the membership experience for individuals and families alike.



“Besides the obvious – active members and guests of the club – we think it will be a great venue for junior golfers to be introduced to the game of golf, as well as spouses who do not play golf,” says Joel D. Moore, owner of the acclaimed Tom Fazio-designed regulation course that opened for play in 2002. “Playing an 18-hole putting course is a great activity for the entire family.”

Moore said the project, which is due to formally open May 1, 2017, was undertaken for several reasons. “The Ridge at Back Brook is a very private and exclusive golf-only club, meaning we do not offer a pool, tennis, or other amenities you might see at a country club. Our practice facilities are a very important part of our total golf experience.”

The course owner said the club’s original putting green did not have a large flat area where members and guests could practice their putting stroke “without being influenced by significant undulations.”

He added, “Secondly, since we are always looking at improving our practice/golf facilities, having an 18-hole putting course, along with a separate large flat area for practicing putting, provides our members with a significant improvement and a facility that most private clubs do not offer.”

There has been a lot of buzz amongst the club’s members, who are “very excited and cannot wait” for the new putting course to open for use. Construction took about five weeks to complete, with the turf presently maturing and growing in.

Pavelec Brothers, the golf course-design firm that built the regulation course at the club, also constructed the new putting green.

“The putting course was built to United States Golf Association standards,” observes Moore. “Meaning it has a gravel layer with installed drainage pipes, 12 inches of greens mix, and is seeded with A-4 bentgrass, with an upgraded irrigation system. The entire green was surrounded by turf-type fescue sod.”

The new putting green is approximately 30,000 square feet and has a separate section that is flat for traditional practice putting.

“We envision the putting course to be used on a regular basis by our members and their guests, maybe to settle the competition after a round of golf or when time is not sufficient to go out and play a full round of golf on the course. The putting course can be utilized for fun and practice in a relatively short amount of time,” Moore describes.

It is also believed that the putting course will be used when the club hosts outside outings and events, an additional activity that “will be part of ‘The Ridge Experience’ for those non-members that day.”

“That gives us greater potential for generating more revenue from non-member events. And, of course, when we have our member/guest events the putting course will be an integral part of the planned competition,” Moore says. “The new putting course is another example of how The Ridge separates itself from other private clubs.” ■

Because The Ridge at Back Brook is golf exclusive and does not offer a swimming pool, tennis courts or other amenities, their practice facilities are vital to the overall club experience.

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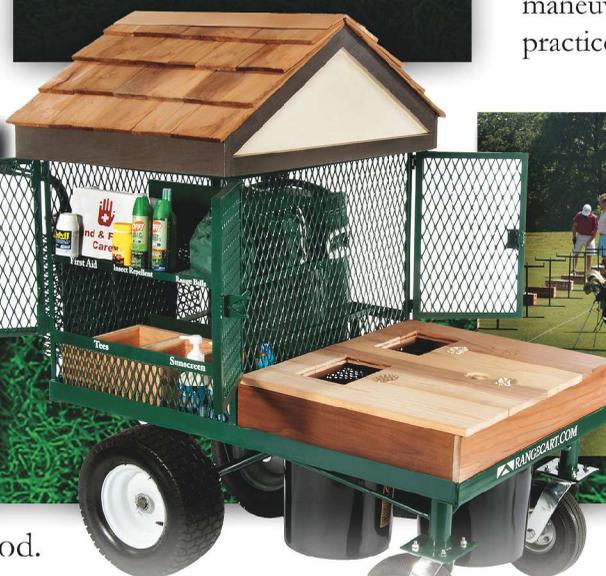
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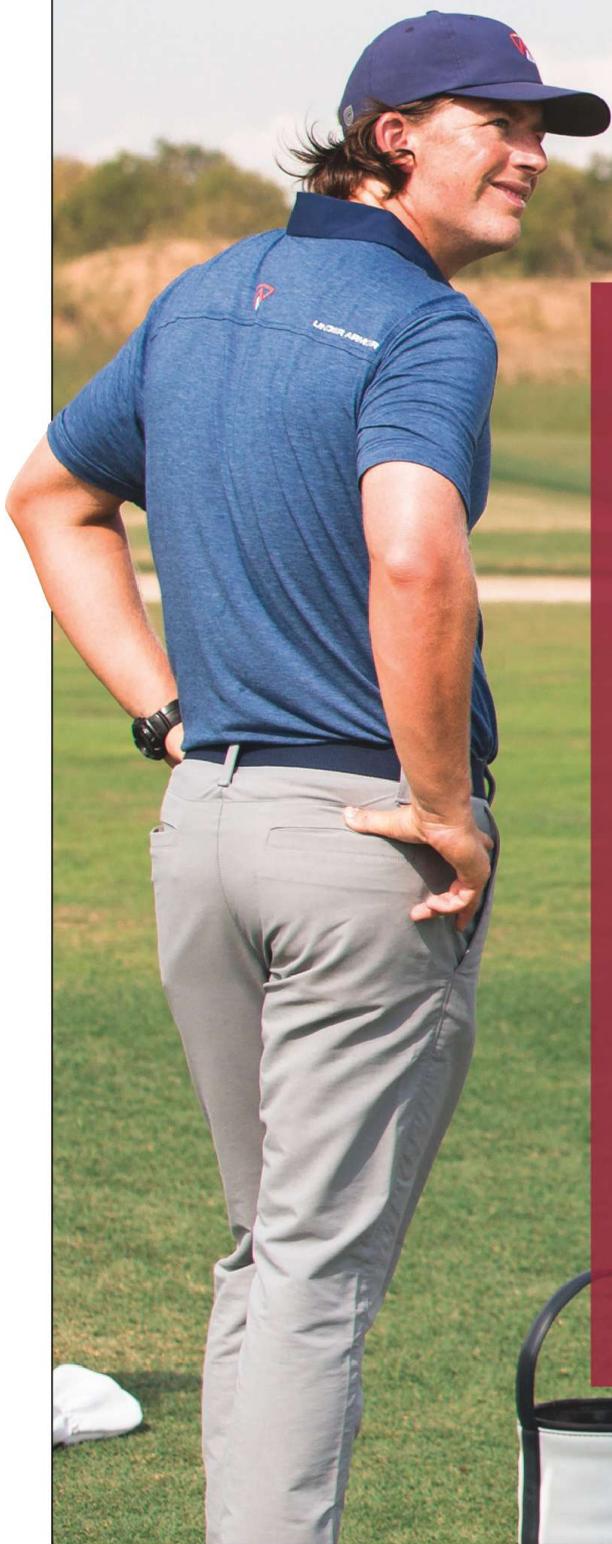
*“We have the full line of RangeCart products. RangeCarts-AppleCrates-RangeStands and now the SpikeWash at Baltusrol Golf Club. All of these products have drastically improved our range while our members can conveniently access needed amenities for a quality practice session or warmup. Our staff loves the convenience and mobility that allows for easy setup and recalibration of the range each day. I highly recommend all RangeCart products.”*



— Doug Steffen, PGA Professional, Director of Golf Baltusrol Golf Club

# Coaching for

Cameron McCormick, Jordan Spieth's coach, teams with fellow PGA Profess



**I**t takes a strong commitment to enhance the game for all levels of golfers – including PGA and LPGA Tour professionals, collegiate athletes, talented amateurs and youth players. But the new Altus Performance facility, which recently opened in Dallas at both the spectacular Trinity Forest Golf Club and Old American Golf Club, has a unique method.

Take America's fastest rising young golf superstar, Jordan Spieth, add his lifelong teacher, Cameron McCormick, plus fast-rising golf teachers, Corey Lundberg and Andrew Lewis, add in a brand new modern facility, plus hard work and inspiration, and you see the seeds of growth for a new era of talented golfers practicing and training in North Texas.

"We can create a set of standards and do things that, frankly, have not necessarily been done in the United States," says McCormick, the 2015 PGA Teacher of the Year. "We will be able to provide a holistic development opportunity for athletes with coaches who have walked the walk."

This practice and training facility is the first of its kind in Texas. Spieth's frequent onsite presence serves as inspiration for an already strong client roster consisting of a who's who of youth, collegiate and professional golf.

"We had a young boy whose parents brought him up from Houston the other day," Lundberg says. "He's won many junior tournaments and he is a young stud. He was working on the range and Jordan came out there to hit balls and he came over to say hello. The boy couldn't even talk, he couldn't even move. That's the impact it had."

# r the Future

ionals Corey Lundberg and Andrew Lewis to open golf performance center



Andrew Lewis (left) is part of a trio of instructors that founded the Altus Performance Institute.



Corey Lundberg (top) and Cameron McCormick, Jordan Spieth's longtime instructor, designed the Altus Performance Institute for the advancement of golfers at every level.

The facility is not only for elite players, but those who just want to learn the game – the “developmental group” as Lundberg calls them – and those who want to move up in the junior and amateur golf ranks.

All players can apply for participation in one of the Altus programs by going to

[www.altusperformance.com](http://www.altusperformance.com) or calling either the headquarters at Trinity Forest or the North Dallas location at Old American Golf Course, headed by Lewis. The young players in the development program start at ages 5-9, with the Aspire group – the more competition-ready players who aspire to play college golf – ranging up to 18 years old.

The Altus headquarters at Trinity Forest is a comprehensive 60-acre facility with a 360-yard double-ended range and an 8,000 square foot practice facility. The location is jointly shared with the club members and the Southern Methodist University golf program.

There will be chipping areas and multiple putting greens, as well as state-of-the-art coaching technology including multiple TrackMan units, Gears 3D Analysis, Swing Catalyst Pressure Plates and an indoor putting studio.

“Who wouldn’t want to design their own facilities to help players learn and grow the game?” asks McCormick, who is already spending dedicated time there with his most famous professional student and other members of the Altus institute.

“We’re going to be able to hit every kind of shot you could think of and every kind of putt. It will be great for growing the game and developing strong players,” Lundberg adds.

There is also a separate First Tee facility at Trinity Forest and a 9-hole practice course designed by Ben Crenshaw and Bill Coore, who also did the par-72 championship course.

“We have a lot of different players all with the same goal: Progressing and getting better in golf. Both Cameron and I enjoy working with the developmental players who are starting to catch fire for the game,” Lundberg describes.

McCormick, who has been with Spieth more than a decade, continues to play an integral role in the development of the two-time major champion and former World No. 1 player. Spieth is a big believer in what Altus can mean for the next generation of great players.

“I have complete trust in anything he (McCormick) says, he’s my swing coach, putting coach, short game coach, mental coach, everything,” says Spieth. “He’s a very special teacher, somebody who I think is just going to get bigger and bigger, and you’re going to see him with a lot of tour players in the future.”

That future begins now, as McCormick, Lundberg and Lewis grow the game in the fertile North Texas soil, one talented player at a time. ■

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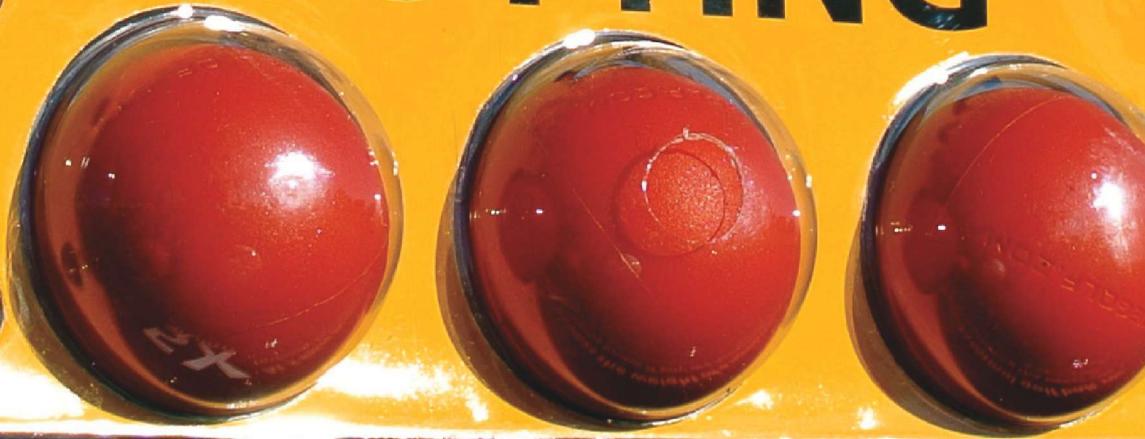


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# A STEELY APPROACH to Putting

Sometimes the simplest ideas are best, that may well be the case with Eyeline Golf's Ball of Steel

BY SCOTT KRAMER

**W**hat is it? It's a weighted steel ball bearing coated in silicone – the size of a golf ball but five times heavier. Rolled with a putter, it gives instant feedback on bad strikes. Its heaviness means if the ball is hit on the toe or heel, or low on the face, it will roll off the putter face very slowly – to the extent golfers may even double-hit it.

**Speed & Energy:** And then there's stroke speed through impact. "The Ball of Steel was developed to encourage and teach a stroke that has energy at impact, not prior to that point," says Jerry Walters, Eyeline Golf's manager of instruction programs. "The maximum transfer of energy is midway through the stroke, and if the putter travels farther in the backswing than it advances in the through stroke, deceleration can occur." The weight of this product helps students instantly realize and feel deceleration. Putts struck anywhere other than the blade's sweetspot using the Ball of Steel will torque the face open or closed, creating a mis-hit with little energy transfer to the ball.

**Shaft Angle:** The ball's weight also demands that there's no pre-release of the putter head. Thus, the body automatically learns to adjust the shaft angle for a consistent loft. So if golfers lean the shaft one way or the other, or if the hands flip, instant feedback is provided.

**Bottom Line:** It penalizes any mis-hit, while rewarding a center strike with the right amount of force at impact. Because of that, it helps golfers stop worrying about distance, target or putting style so that they can just focus on proper contact. And since the ball is so heavy, it rolls true off the face and cannot be bumped offline.

Rolling putts with it develops the foundation for a solid stroke – according to officials who claim that by using the heavy ball, all of a golfer's muscles have to remain in motion and the arms, shoulders and hands will stay connected throughout the stroke. Officials suggest to first try this product on putts of just a few feet and claim that users start getting used to its weight by around the 10th putt. It's intended solely for putts of six feet or shorter. Let's look at a few detailed examples of how golf instructors are using the aid with their students.





**RICK KREBS**  
PGA director of instruction, Waverly Woods Golf Club in Marriottsville, Maryland

“Six feet is an important distance to practice putting—regardless of talent level. Tour professionals are good at lag putting, leaving the ball inside that range. But most amateurs have a tough time controlling their distance on long putts, so they end up with a lot of six-foot second putts. That’s why making putts from that distance is important, and it inspires confidence. The other thing is that amateurs don’t practice a lot. If students practice with the Ball of Steel, after just five minutes they’ll find better contact and putter acceleration. That’s why I use it. They’re making more putts, making better contact, lowering their scores and therefore having more fun. Everyone likes to work on the long game, but this is important. You don’t have to be athletic or have strength to have a good short game. If you don’t hit the center of the clubface, it’s a great tool for instant feedback. You will feel the putter twist in your hands if you hit it on the toe or heel. This is trying to eliminate face rotation. If you’re not getting feedback, you’re not learning anything. That’s why I like it.”

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**RENEE TRUDEAU**  
PGA teaching professional, Biltmore Hotel and Golf Course in Miami, Florida

“I mostly use the Ball of Steel for putting clinics, particularly to help newer golfers develop a feel for putts no longer than four feet. It encourages acceleration to the finish of the stroke and centered contact, and, because of its weight, it helps stabilize the hands through impact. I originally bought this to help my students feel the wrists stay stable while making an accelerating stroke. I had too many students with long, flowing backstrokes to decelerating forward strokes. I needed something to help them feel the difference. If you don’t use it correctly, you will practically whiff. My favorite drill with it is using it from three feet, then hitting one regular ball from six feet away. The goal is to use the same three-foot stroke on the six-foot putt, feeling a shorter stroke with constant acceleration.”



**HELEN KURTIN**  
PGA-LPGA director of instruction, St. Louis Golf Academy in Maryland Heights, Missouri and the 2015 Gateway PGA Teacher of the Year

“In my teaching, I find that it works best with three types of students: Those who always leave their short putts short; players who break down their wrists when putting; and beginners who stop the putter as soon as they hit the ball. I don’t even have to explain things, the Ball of Steel does all the talking. After a few putts, my students just get it. My junior golfers love it.”



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## GRAA Top 25 Teaching & Training Aids Expanded Coverage on GolfRange.org

In addition to the monthly GRAA Top 25 Teaching & Training Aids coverage in *Golf Range Magazine*, the Golf Range Association of America has created a Teaching & Training Aids Resource Center on GolfRange.org.



Visit [GolfRange.org](http://GolfRange.org) for expanded listings of the Top 25 Teaching & Training Aids for 2016.



The Golf Range Association of America

## Top 25 Teaching & Training Aids

The 2016 list was selected by the country's top teachers



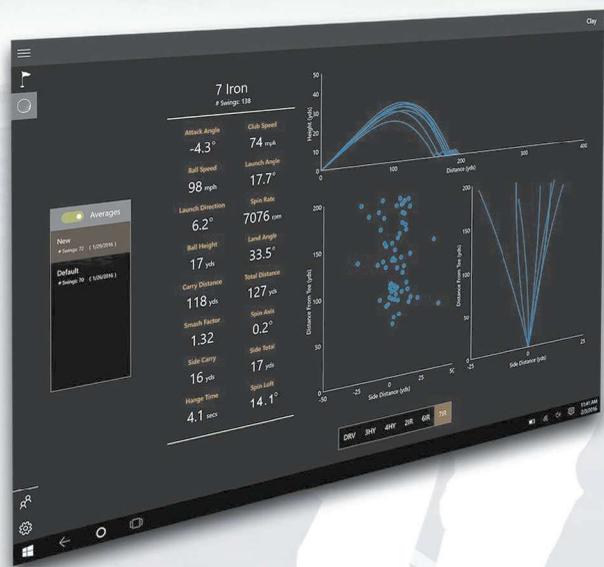
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