



by Brian Wilkes
Brian's Custom Clubs

FROM THE Club FITTING BENCH

Custom Fitted Clubs

Which one of you wouldn't like to improve how you play golf? Just about everyone we talk to would like to shoot lower scores and have more fun. And it's not just about hitting the ball further. Being inconsistent seems to be the biggest issue with most of my customers, so becoming more consistent is the number one goal. As well, while it's important to hit the ball well off the tee, most of the game is played within 100 yards of the green. A good short game will ensure a lower score more often than the occasional jaw dropping hit off the tee.

So, how do we get to an improved golf game? To accomplish this we advocate a three-part strategy: lessons, professionally fitted clubs and practice, practice and more practice. Lessons will ensure that when you are practicing, you practice the right way, not the wrong way. We see lots of golfers at the range with significant swing faults that could be cured by having their swing corrected by a teaching professional, and then "lock in" the changes with lots of practice. Instead, they reinforce their swing faults while they practice. Examples of serious swing faults include not shifting your weight and keeping it on the back foot during the swing (sometimes called a reverse pivot) and standing up during the backswing. If you don't correct these faults, any hope of significant game improvement

diminishes.

How many tour players do you think play with clubs that have not been professionally fitted to them? We can confidently say not one of them. Yet only about 10 percent of amateurs and weekend golfers get their clubs professionally fitted. The players that use equipment that fits them properly know that this is the key to playing to the best of their ability, no matter what level of play they are at. An important reason to play with clubs that fit is so that you don't have to change your swing to enable you to hit clubs that don't fit. We see people doing this all the time. When we finally put clubs that fit into their hands, they feel funny at first.

So why do 90% of golfers not get their clubs professionally fitted? Frankly, we don't know the answer, and it puzzles us because the benefits are pretty big. It's easy and cost effective. For example, a typical fitting takes just over an hour and costs less than \$100. When you consider all the other costs in golf, this is a minor outlay.

A lot of golfers think that only very good players will benefit from fitted clubs. This is wrong. Fitted clubs will help all players play to the best of their ability, at any level of golf. What if the clubs you have now are too short or too long? You'll be developing swing habits using clubs that are not the right length for you. What if the shafts are too flexible or strong for your swing? That may be a source of inconsistency, because too much or too little flex means a less controllable ball flight. What if the lie angle is too flat? It could be the cause of your ball flight going to the right of the target; and so on. Many golfers will make adjustments to their swing in order to make their clubs work for them. We would rather fit the clubs to your swing instead.

What if you already have clubs? You can have your swing and clubs assessed to determine how well they fit. Many variables can be tweaked in a set of clubs to enable them to fit better. This is not always true, but in many cases, minor adjustments can be made to improve how the clubs perform relative to your swing and physical abilities.

Do clubs that are custom built to fit you cost a lot? We get customers dropping in who think that custom clubs cost a king's ransom. They don't! A good set can be had for about the same as you'd pay retail in a pro shop for a set of irons, or fairway woods, hybrids or a new driver. When custom fit, these have the added bonus of being made especially for you. Customers with a set of custom clubs generally experience better, more solid ball striking, less fatigue during a round, and improved scoring. A lower score and more fun: who doesn't want these?

For custom repairs or custom fitting, Brian Wilkes can be reached at brian@briansclubs.com, by telephone at 250-516-3392, or you can visit his website at www.briansclubs.com.



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