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Introduction

Although the Alliss family have been involved in the world of golf for nigh on 100 years, there are still parts of the game that fascinate me. Golf hasn't really changed since it's conception, but there is an endless flow of words and deeds that forever provides an ongoing mass of information, ideas, theories and dreams, all adding up to a wondrous part of the game itself.

I am continually astounded that golfers find themselves in ever newly created situations during a simple round of golf! The Rules of the game, which started off written on one page, now consist of a volume comparable to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and yet every year situations arise calling for new rulings and explanations. Over the years, hundreds of books have been written about the game and its players and how it was spread around the world, whether by Scottish engineers bound for South America or India (who for some reason took along their golf clubs) or by members of the diplomatic corps, who were trying to spread the word of law and order throughout the four corners of the world.

That's why I was so interested in reading *Golf Club Bible*. It covers every aspect of the game and, in simple terms, allows the reader to follow its evolution, explaining the whys and wherefores of this extraordinary sport. But more than that, it also covers every aspect of the tricky business of finding the right clubs to help your game move forward, something every golfer—whether a novice or one who already loves the game—needs. I have even picked up the odd tip myself!

"Good Golfing!"



Peter Alliss

The Driver

The driver, although used on average no more than 14 times in a round, is one of the most important clubs you will purchase. It's the longest club in the bag, which makes it the hardest to control, and its extra length creates a bigger arc in the swing. Consequently, the ball travels a greater distance than with any other club. A good driver sets the tone for a round, so it makes sense to choose it wisely.

The driver, or number 1 wood, is one of the most reviewed clubs in the bag, and golf club manufacturers have been competing for years to create the perfect prototype in terms of maximum distance and accuracy. The general appearance of the driver hasn't changed much over the years, but the move toward steel, then titanium, then composite heads, has led to investments in the millions in the manufacturers' strive for perfection. This, combined with the introduction of several different types of shafts, has led to an overwhelming and sometimes confusing choice for the would-be buyer. As with all clubs, knowing how the driver is made gives you a greater understanding of how it works and helps you find the right one to suit your game.

Heads

Wooden-headed drivers were known to be difficult to hit and very high maintenance, with regular refurbishments needed to maintain its appearance—the state of the face, sole and head would take a beating after a season's play.

The change to steel improved durability, but the heads were still small and heavy, so manufacturers made the



Internal weighting Huge heads are made hollow in order to reduce weight, but this also allows manufacturers to place the weight in the optimum position without it being visible.

steel thinner, which allowed the heads to be bigger without being heavier. The larger head size made driving the ball easier. The floodgates were then opened as companies clamored to find new materials to make the biggest, most powerful drivers they could, and along came titanium.

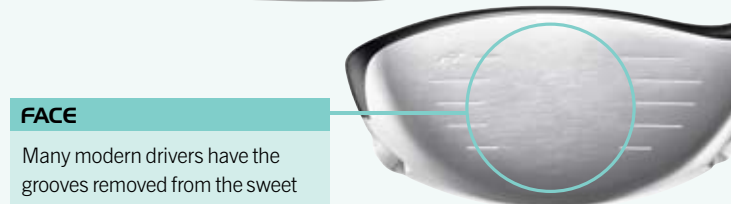
Titanium-headed drivers were lighter than steel and even stronger. So the heads could be bigger—at an increase of up to one third in size—with the extra-thin walls making the heads even easier to hit. However, having the ease of a titanium-headed driver does come at a high cost.

KEY FEATURES



TOE

Some drivers are weighted less at the toe end than at the heel. This encourages the toe to move more quickly than the heel, resulting in fewer sliced shots.



FACE

Many modern drivers have the grooves removed from the sweet spot. The smooth finish on the face helps with the reduction of spin and can improve distance.

SOLE

A driver's sole is usually rounded to help reduce wind drag during the swing. In addition, if the ground is struck, the design forces the club to almost bounce off the ground rather than dig in.



ADDRESS

Most drivers have a marking on top of the head showing the center of the face, making it easier to set up the ball. This also ensures that the clubface is aiming at the target.

VARIATIONS IN DESIGN



TaylorMade Tour Burner

This driver has a 450cc head with a deep face for a higher launch. Its light shaft leads to greater clubhead speed.

The shape of the driver has stayed much the same since the birth of golf—it has always been the biggest club in size, volume and depth, thus proving that the original design was the best one. Square-shaped heads have been introduced recently with the concept that by having corners, the weight can be distributed farther behind the heel and toe of the club, giving less twist and producing a more consistent ball flight. Though the science is correct, many believe that the shape of the head has proven to be too dramatic, and most golfers still prefer the original pear shape.



TaylorMade r7 SuperQuad

This 460cc driver has an unusual black head with four movable weights, allowing the player to change trajectory and launch angle. It's low, deep center of gravity promotes long hitting.



Ping G10 This driver has a 460cc head with a slightly thinner crown allowing the weight to be distributed elsewhere. The center of gravity is improved, which gives a higher launch and reduced spin.



Mizuno MX700

This driver has a slightly longer look at the back of the club but is still 460cc. Many modern drivers are very loud because of their hollow heads, but this model includes a vibration-dampening hull that makes it seem more solid and less noisy.



Callaway Big Bertha Diablo

This driver is 460cc and 100 percent titanium. With no hosel, the weight is repositioned in the perimeter of the clubhead to add stability.



Callaway FT 10 This driver is 460cc in size, with a face that is angled one degree closed. The carbon body, titanium face and square shape allow the weight distribution to perfect the center of gravity for maximum distance.



Takeaway The takeaway, or backswing, should remain short and firm. A takeaway that is too long can result in deceleration and too much wrist action.

A putting style where the arms hang from the shoulders and the player rocks the shoulders to create power is the most commonly used. Players have recently begun to adopt other styles, including custom fitting putters with extremely long shafts of up to 50 inches (127 cm) or more in length and hinging the putter under the chin and allowing it to rock from side to side, with the chin acting as an anchor. Another variation is to have the putter rest on the player's chest or stomach and anchor it from there.

Ball Position

One of the main goals is to achieve the best roll possible on a putt, which is created by keeping the ball on the ground. Positioning the ball in the stance is key, as this determines how the ball reacts on the first five to 10 percent of its journey. Ideally, the ball needs to start rolling as soon as possible so that it remains on the intended line.



Follow-through Like all golf shots, the clubhead should accelerate through impact, creating forward momentum. This is just as important during a putting stroke, as it promotes a smoother roll.

Positioning the ball just forward of center and just back from the left heel allows the putter to strike the ball very slightly on the up. This creates topspin and gets the ball rolling more quickly.

However, the ball does not roll immediately from the force of the putter. Even though the clubface is moving more slowly than in any other shot, the ball actually moves forward slightly in the air with no backspin or topspin; it's only when the ball is in contact with the ground that the spin and roll take affect.

Placing the ball too far back or forward in the stance creates a strike that causes the ball to bounce a few times, though it may not be that noticeable, before it eventually starts to roll. This in turn reduces its momentum and control, so that the player has to strike the ball harder just to get the required distance to the hole. Just like every other golf stroke, the more power required, the more control is lost.

SETUP

Creating a good roll on the ball is the key to successful putting. The main points to focus on at setup are:

- Ensure the head is over the ball so that a good arc is created.
- Place the ball slightly forward in the stance, which helps a player strike up on the ball and thus impart topspin earlier. This in turn makes the ball roll well.

Hips Keep the hips square to the target to allow the stroke to follow the correct line.

Knees Keep the knees square to the target at address to help align the rest of the body. They should also be slightly bent for added balance and comfort.

Clubhead Sit the clubhead flat on the ground behind the ball at 90° to the target with the correct loft showing.



Shoulders A conventional grip makes a player's right shoulder slightly lower at address, but the shoulders should be square to the target to help promote a good line of stroke.

Arms Being relaxed in the arms helps control power. Don't give in to tension, but allow the arms to hang.

Feet Maintain a slightly narrower than shoulder width stance to help with balance, at 90° to the target to aid repeating a consistent stroke.



Ladies' Clubs

Ladies' clubs are similar to men's clubs in that they share the same basic components, but they differ in other ways, such as weight, length and feel. This chapter explores the changes in ladies' clubs, and how these improve the game.

Michelle Wie The phenomenal success and high profile of Wie has attracted many girls to the game around the world and led her to be included in *Time* magazine's list of "100 People Who Shape Our World." She intends to be the first woman to play in the Masters.