

Show Your Craftsmanship in Club Repairs and Altering

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Professionals know how slow and costly it is to get club repairs made at factories. We know too that the repair business is something on which the manufacturer does not make money and which requires the services of good men who are needed in manufacturing operations. The repair business is a headache all around.

There is one way to cure the trouble and to make an asset of what now is a liability, or at least, a nuisance.

We can be top workmen in our own shops. That's the answer.

I know what the conditions are governing assistants and that when a pro can get ambitious and otherwise desirable assistants the lads usually have to be trained from the beginning on club repairs. That's one of the important phases of their training. By knowing club design and construction they become better salesmen and users of clubs.

However there has been a tendency to completely disregard this phase of work and education in the pro shop.

Who will quarrel with George Sayers' methods or products, or those of Chuck Tanis, or Charley Smith or any one of a dozen more? These fellows know golf clubs and club-making. We hear some hot arguments about what defines club-making. Well, that should be easy. If we are properly trained to do top drawer repairs, we could assemble a set of clubs that would be more than passable. That sure holds true for my two assistants. Maybe not so fancy, but the clubs would be playable. Since I trained them; I know I can also make clubs. There's more profit in factory-made clubs, so I wouldn't be interested in making clubs in my shop. Repairing or altering is different.

Good repair is an outstanding service to members and to all customers. A player walked from my shop today as happy as a lark. He is 5 ft. 2 in. in height and needed a flat lie in his set of clubs. The clubs did not necessarily have to be short; but flatness was his need. He waited in my shop while I adjusted a new set of high priced irons to his individual need with my Ellingham bending fixture. He was overjoyed and his results on the

course proved better than he ever dreamed of. Philip Zeilic is now a happy and satisfied golfer and a good customer and booster for me.

Distinguished By Experience

Experience in our shop qualifies us to stand head and shoulders above any store you can name. We can back up what we say and adjust clubs and make minor repairs in a way that will win us friends and save us customers too.

Our club champion came in the shop a few nights ago and wanted his clubs adjusted for loft. He was not quite satisfied with the distance of some of his irons. Again the bending fixture gave his irons that new "goose" look and at the same time saved him time. He did not have to wait for his set to go to the factory. Many times I have bent putters for this same Phil Di Orto, who holds our workers' and club championship.

Some small gripping jobs save a world of our players' time. We keep plenty of gripping supplies on hand and can do most of the average jobs. We have benefited greatly from Kenneth Smith's new stuff and use it extensively.

At our golf course where 40,000 rounds of golf are played a season, the repair work leads to many prospects for new club sets. The player comes in and talks over his problem with us and sometimes it develops that he is interested in new equipment but has been hesitant in asking about it. So, our repair service acts as a prospect gatherer.

Why quibble about nickles and dimes on windings? Doing these simple jobs can be the greatest of all interest builders and good will gestures. The player is waved on his way when he offers to pay for a small grip winding in our shop. We think this is good business and a very useful service. It is one way we use to advertise our shop.

Craftsmanship As Advertising

Most Americans admire skill in work or play. This holds true in the golf shop. Most golfers are like fishermen and hunters; they love their gear and trappings. They like to fiddle around with golf and they love to watch the other fellow do a

job on a club. We gather a good gallery any time we have a delicate piece of shop work to do. Many of our players think Bill Dennis, my expert shop assistant on repair, is a wizard when he finishes a particularly exacting repair job and the work turns out good. These fellows are skilled workmen themselves and admire skilled work on their golf equipment.

I train one of my men as a specialist on repair and clubmaking. The other one, Joe Zeilic, must also keep right up to the mark on his repairing. After all, some of these days he may step out on a job of his own. Then he will bear my stamp of training and I want that stamp to be complete. He must be a capable repair man and he is.

Through the years, many professionals have added to my knowledge of club making and repair. Fred Haskin, amiable and successful mentor at Country Club of Columbus, Ga., took me into his shop for several days of instruction. Fred was a master at this part of his trade. His work was admired throughout our country and overseas as well. Fred was probably the last man to drop hickory shaft work on iron clubs. He trained Carey Ritch as his specialist on clubmaking and happy little Carey could do a real job. I still look back to the days with Fred and know that much of which I know today came from that tutoring.

George Norrie, Idle Hour Club, Macon, Ga., showed me a great deal about finishing wood heads. He was a stickler for fine preparation of the surface before lacquering. This idea was confirmed during my many long talks with that great Jersey pro, Jack Beckett, formerly of Yountakah CC, Nutley. Jack was precise in his methods and always admired the deep lasting finish on the woods.

Along the way I learned that a bit of pitch under the winding on wood head necks would insure a close holding whipping. An easy way to reinforce a softening wood face is to drive many, many grip tacks right into the face. We have some rent woods with this treatment that have seen years of service after the surface started to give away.

Repair Tips

Cork listing has proven best for under gripping. For a good holding grip, firm black pitch is good or the Kenneth Smith grip adhesive is also used; beware of using too much of the adhesive under your grips. Spalding rubbing compound does a neat job on cleaning sheath shafts. We use a heavy needle to clean the cross slots in Phillip's screws so that we can remove them from old woods. We immediately replace a screw if the shaft is slightly loose. We discourage our play-

ers from using hand force to test the head and shaft connection; usually they can work this into a good loud click in a few tries.

Wood heads are dipped in a pail of lacquer and we learned from a furniture manufacturer that a good brush to sweep off the excess gave a dandy job. Good old shellac seems to hold longest on whippings, but lacquer does a good job and looks slicker. We keep the Ellingham repair kit handy and find many uses for these tools. If a player has trouble with the sole plate of his woods we find that good steel screws, slightly oversized, will hold well and do the job. We have wondered why there aren't more and better screws in the faces of some woods. Many give way because there are three instead of four.

The trick weighting under some wood club plates give us a headache. This work is tedious but pays off when completed. Usually such a club is a favorite that has been given plenty of use, and when it goes bad on a July afternoon the player is frantic to get it in order before his next game.

We use the Lorythmic scale and find it very handy. In matching clubs, we use flattened buck shot to match the clubs on the scale, making sure that screws and plates are attached so that complete weight is taken. Then if four buckshot are needed, we bore a hole in the bottom of the clubhead and drive in four buck shot. We bore a hole just large enough to take the shot and drive them in with a very blunt punch. It is necessary to pad the head so that no damage is done to the finish. If more weight is needed we bore a larger hole, set a small screw in the bottom to anchor the lead in place and melt the lead into the head. For melting we use a regular lead ladle that is rather small and a GI type of gasoline stove as made by Coleman. If you have regular gas in your clubhouse you can go to the kitchen and melt lead, or have a simple burner placed in your shop.

We use Form-A-Coat to cap the grips and use the regular kit of cellulose tape to replace the fancy factory-like covering on lower grip whippings. These things dress up your work and surprise your customers and members.

Most of our club cleaning has gravitated to club washing with a bucket of water and some good detergent cleaner. Be sure the cleaner is not harmful to the hands. A quick trip into the water is ample for the woods and they will then wipe clean and bright. The irons can stay in the bath longer and then be wiped dry and into the bag.