

# What Pro Shop Men Should Know About Club Repairing

By **JOE WOLFE**

*Asst. Supt., Golf Club Dept., Wilson Sporting Goods Co.*

**J**UDGING from the increasing amount of golf clubs being received by the club manufacturers for minor repair work, changes, and alterations, it appears that club making and club repairing by the professionals is fast becoming a lost art.

There exists probably more than one reason for this: First, we have no definite program or facilities for training the present crop of shop-boys, assistant professionals, and professionals. Second, most shop-boys and assistants desire tournament glamour, and falsely think that in becoming a good player, they automatically line themselves up for a top grade club job.

Naturally, the senior experienced professional knows that this thinking is far from straight and correct. The senior professional knows that playing ability alone, will seldom, if ever, land a first grade club job for the aspiring professional.

Most club manufacturers are overburdened with production problems and are undermanned in skilled help. Consequently, any club or clubs sent in for reconditioning, or for any minor, ordinary repair job must, of a necessity, take anywhere from two to six weeks to be completed.

It is not that each club takes anywhere near that length of time to complete—it simply involves a tremendous amount of packaging, scheduling, typing, and pricing. Certainly, neither the club professional or the manufacturer is going to make or build up friendship with this type of service.

All manufacturers are doing their utmost to remedy the situation, but it appears to be an ideal opportunity for the alert professional to gain the confidence and approval of his members by the simple process of emphasizing and quietly advertising the fact that his shop is capable of making first grade repairs when necessary.

## **Knowledge and Tools Needed**

On the other hand, in defense of the shop-boy and assistant professional, nothing can be more discouraging than trying

to do a competent repair job on golf clubs without the proper tools. Next to this, nothing is more frustrating than endeavoring to do a repair job without the proper knowledge concerning the component parts of a golf club.

We certainly would not expect any mechanic, whether he be automobile, radio, or building mechanic, to make changes or repairs without an adequate and thorough knowledge of their trade. By the same token, we cannot expect the present day shop-boy or assistant professional to be able to do a first-rate repair job when he does not have complete, thorough knowledge of the items and operations that go into modern club making.

The real club-maker is vanishing. Present-day manufacturers, both large and small, are simply assemblers. All of the items that go into the make-up of a club are made at various convenient locations (up to exact specifications, of course), brought together under one roof and assembled. That is modern club making in its simplest phase.

Therefore, any person who gains an intimate familiarity with each part that goes into a golf club, and is reasonably handy or skillful with his hands, can soon become an expert club repairman.

Having this intimate knowledge of the parts and construction of a club, also helps the repairman to more quickly locate or diagnose the reason for the trouble.

As an example: Endeavoring to locate a rattle in a club, the wise shop-boy or assistant professional knows that certain manufacturers use wood plugs at the butt end of the shafts. He also knows that climatic conditions, wet or dry, could cause shrinkage and swelling, helping the plug to work loose and cause the rattle.

He would know that certain other manufacturers do not use wood plugs and therefore would not need to check under the grip on that particular make club. Rather, he would check the head for swelling. Most persimmon heads, no matter how they are treated, will absorb moisture and

swell and shrink, thereby loosening the face and sole plate screws and causing the rattle to be in either one of those spots. The same swelling and shrinking can cause the lead underneath the sole plate to work loose, also causing a rattle.

If, perchance, this particular rattle is caused by the wood plug working loose, then the only recourse is to remove the cap, the grip, and replug the shaft with a snugger, tighter fitting plug, clinch it and put an inch or two of gummed paper around the listing where the cork meets the plug (to give it a smooth taper), and then regrip. In an emergency, of course, it is possible to take a sharp pointed punch, insert it through a grip perforation, and reclinch the plug in two or three places. At best, however, this is both a temporary and dangerous method, often resulting in the cracking of the shaft and complicating the existing trouble.

#### Plug Repair Procedure

The wise shop-boy should know that the first step in removing a grip in order to replace the wood plug, is to remove the small round insert which is a separate piece of plastic and is merely pressed into the cap, and then unscrew the screw which is fastened to the wood plug. He

should know that if the same screw is replaced, it will soon break loose and cause another rattle. For that reason, he should have on hand the same type of screw, but slightly longer, which will get down deeper and fasten onto fresh wood. In our particular manufacturing method, our standard cap screw is  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. x 7, and the oversize, or the screw which should be used on cap repairs or cap replacements, is sized at 1 in. x 8.

The shop-boy should know that in removing or unwinding the grip, he must be extremely careful so as not to tear the listing to shreds. Being careless in this means costly replacement and a waste of precious time. Building up to size, which when done in a pro shop, with tape, either paper or friction, adds a tremendous amount of weight to the club and certainly destroys the balance of it.

Some grades of clubs have cork underlisting, which will not tear to pieces when the grip is removed, but other grades have a paper listing which sticks to the grip and rips out in various places when the grip is unwound. This condition can be prevented by carefully loosening the grip from the top end of the club and unwinding it by pulling straight down alongside the shaft, and NOT pulling it



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straight out like a roll of paper.

The ugliest part of a repair job is often the crude method most shop-boys use in fastening the bottom end of the grip with black plastic tape. No matter how careful he is, the job simply does not compare to the manufacturers' grip band. Therefore, when removing the grip, pull straight down slowly until reaching the grip band; hold onto the grip band with the left hand and reverse the pull on the grip, pull up toward the butt end and ease the end of the grip out of the inside of the grip band, leaving the band intact. It will then be a simple matter to regrip, place a dab of glue on the inside of the grip band, and slip it over the end of the grip, giving it a tapered, finished, factory-looking appearance.

If the shop-boy discovers that, due to swelling and shrinking, the sole plate screws or the face insert screws have worked loose and cause a rattle, naturally he will remove the plate and check the lead under the sole plate. In most instances, it will suffice to take a large countersink or large Phillips type screwdriver and strike the lead a sharp blow, spreading it out against the wall of the hole fastening it. Then, when replacing the sole plate screws, he should peg the screw holes with dowel rods before replacing the old screws. If dowel rods are not available, an oversize sole plate screw should be used so that the plate is firmly anchored. In our manufacturing, we use a  $\frac{5}{8}$  in. x 7 sole plate screw and when repairing, we are able to use the next larger size— $\frac{3}{4}$  in. x 8, thus insuring a tightly fitting, permanent sole plate.

The same method and thinking can be used when a face screw breaks loose. If a dowel rod of the proper size is not available, then simply turn to a larger size screw. In our case, we use a  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. x 4 face screw, and on a repair we are able to switch to a 1 in. x 5.

#### Removing Face Inserts

Quite often, the fibre face insert is pulled away from the head and is raised above the face proper. The experienced shop-boy knows that he must remove the face insert, clean out the face and remove bits of grass and dried dirt, and then check the face for warping.

Chances are that it is warped and should be sanded or filed flat and level before gluing and returning it to the wood head. If the insert still protrudes above the face, it can be carefully filed down flush with the face proper, being cautious not to remove the bulge and roll

which was originally placed in the club by the manufacturer.

This filing naturally removes some of the face scoring, and the good club man knows that face scoring, both on woods and irons, should be kept prominent and clean because it plays an important part in the ultimate result of a good golf shot. Therefore, to replace the face scoring, all good shops should be equipped with at least one blade of a jeweler's saw, such as used by the manufacturers. With this tool, it is a comparatively simple matter to replace the face scoring on the wood.

Next, he would sand it lightly to remove any rough edges, paint it with clear shellac (NOT orange shellac), and have the club ready for action in a very short time.

Many a fine wood club has been ruined due to the application of a file to the face by an inexperienced man. First of all, it is imperative for the shop-boy to realize that the face of every good wood club has a certain amount of bulge and roll. Each manufacturer endeavors to maintain a predetermined amount of bulge and roll to the face of their wood clubs. In our particular operation, we recommend a  $9\frac{1}{2}$  in. bulge, and the same amount of roll.

The horizontal measurement of a face, in factory terminology, is considered the bulge, and the vertical measurement is considered the roll. This simply means that if we were to draw a circle with a



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Fred Slyder, Pres., Chicago Dist. Golf Association, (second from left) presents check in the amount of \$2500 to provide free tea and coffee to service men and women at the USO and \$1000 to send 20 sons of veterans to the American Boys Camp, Coloma, Wis. Money was contributed by Chicago area golfers. Receiving checks are (L to R) Charles Aaron, Pres. of the Chicago USO Club, Stanley Van Dyk, American Boys Camp, and looking on (R) S. T. Jessop, V-P, CDGA.

9½ in. radius, the outer arc described by this circle would be the actual shape and amount of bulge in the faces of our wood clubs. Naturally, the factory has gauges to measure and check this measurement. It would be a simple matter for a pro or shop-man to obtain, or even make one. Then he would be able to check the results of his refacing efforts.

#### Refacing Wood Clubs

Refacing a wood club in a pro shop usually falls into four categories: The professional either recommends more or less loft, or more or less hook to the face. In either case, it would be wise to remove the face screws before applying the file. If the face screws are not removed, the heads and slots of them are apt to be filed down and destroyed. This would ruin the appearance of the club and make any future work on the club face an extremely difficult task.

After doing the desired work, the screw holes can be re-countersunk and the screws replaced. Any filing on a face, no matter how trivial, will remove some of the face scoring. It is therefore necessary to recut the face scoring with a jeweler's saw blade, sand the face lightly, and shellac it with clear shellac.

#### Refinishing Woods

Most pro shops are not equipped to do any refinishing of a wood club. It would be wise to send all refinishing jobs out to an approved finishing expert. Nevertheless, every shop-boy and assistant pro should have a smattering of knowledge concerning finishing processes and procedures. Many manufacturers still use a lacquer finish on all of their woods. Wilson still uses and recommends the more expensive, elastic and durable, varnish finish.

In doing any patching or refinishing, the shop-boy should know that he cannot and should not spray or brush lacquer over varnish, because the quick drying solvents used in lacquers will penetrate and destroy the varnish base, causing a mottled or "orange peel" effect. By the same reasoning, shellac, with a strong alcohol content, should not be used over varnish. On the other hand, varnish may be and can be brushed or sprayed over lacquer without any ill effects.

Synthetic plastics and sprays may and can be used as a "once over lightly" treatment, but in the long run, the field of wood finishing is so intricate and compli-

(Continued on page 62)

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period until tests show that phosphorus is needed again.

**Q—**We hear a lot of discussion about "thatch" and "mat" but there seems to be a lot of disagreement on definitions. What is your explanation? (N.H.)

**A—**Let's start with grain because that is where most of our trouble begins.

Grain is the surface development of grass stems and blades which interfere with and affect the true roll of the ball.

Thatch is the next deeper layer of living material (stems, leaves, runners, stolons) which, together with the surface grain, acts like a "thatched roof" to shed water.

Mat is the dead felt-like material between the thatch and the soil.

In my definition it all begins with the grain. If we keep this under control we will automatically control thatch (living tissues) and mat (dead tissues).

Grain and thatch can be removed mechanically a little at a time and there will always be live grass to furnish a putting surface. To drastically remove grain, thatch and mat all at one time would

utterly destroy the putting green, leaving no living material to grow and produce a new putting surface.

Mat must be brought down chemically and biologically with living organisms, aided by aerifying to remove columns of mat leaving holes through which air, moisture, nutrients and roots can move freely into the soil below.

A limited quantity of mat may be tolerated because it may provide a certain amount of cushion to help hold a shot. This would be true only if repeated frequent aerifying is practiced to overcome the bad effects of the mat and if vertical mowing is done to prevent grain and thatch from forming.

### WHAT PRO SHOULD KNOW

*(Continued from page 52)*

cated that in most cases the shop-boy would be wise to ship his refinishing problems to a suitable and experienced source.

Irons, as a rule, are able to withstand much more abuse than wood clubs. On iron clubs, the shop-boy does not encoun-

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ter any problems with refacing, loose sole plates, loose laces, screws, etc. An iron club seldom, if ever, breaks loose at the shaft, and if the shaft should break, then it is certainly advisable to send it to the factory for reshafting.

#### Iron Adjustments Dangerous

The well informed shop-boy should know and realize the danger of attempting to adjust the loft and lie of an iron club. Without the proper equipment, it simply cannot be accomplished properly. It is not sufficient to merely place an iron into a vise and hammer it to an upright lie, or to a flat lie. Without the necessary "know how", it becomes impossible to adjust the lie of an iron without destroying the loft.

With iron clubs, it is merely necessary to clean the heads with a detergent and warm water, and then wipe the heads dry. Although most heads are chrome or stainless steel, this does not guarantee or mean that they will remain rustless; it simply means that an iron head should not be buffed, as buffing cuts through most any finish. It also means that all irons should be wiped dry after each use or cleaning. Chrome will never rust if it is continu-

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### Changing Shafts

Occasionally, the shop-boy may find it absolutely necessary to change or reverse shafts from one club to another, or he may desire to replace a broken shaft with one from another club. Once more, knowledge of manufacturing and factory specifications serves the repair man in good stead.

The majority of shafts are banded and marked with a symbol: Symbols such as Rocket "R", "S", and "X", One Star and Two Star, "A" and "T" denote various degrees of stiffness.

Practically all mens irons, whether they be marked with "A", "T", "R", "S", "X", One Star, or Two Star, have the same tip diameter. It would therefore create no problem if the shop-boy desired to change shafts in an iron club. An "S" shaft, for instance, would fit nicely into a head that once held an "R" or "A" shaft.

Unfortunately, this condition does not exist in the wood clubs.

In order to change flexes on a wood shaft, the manufacturer resorts to changing the tip end and butt end diameters

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of the shaft. Most ladies' shafts have a tip diameter of .270. The standard medium men's shaft, with symbols of "T", plain Rocket, Rocket "R", plus a number of other secondary shafts with the plain True Temper label, all have a tip diameter of .278. This increase of .008 of an inch contributes to the stiffening effect.

The Rocket One Star, Rocket "S", and Dynamic .286 shafts all have a .286 tip diameter. Again, this increase in tip diameter also increases the stiffness. The Dynamic "S" and Rocket "X" have a .294 tip diameter.

#### Tools for the Pro Shop

Knowing these specifications, the shop-boy would not endeavor to remove a Dynamic "T" shaft from one wood club and try to replace it with a shaft marked "S". If he tried to insert the larger shaft without reaming out the wood head, he would split the neck of the smaller sized wood head. By the same token, it would not be wise to endeavor to replace an "X" shaft with a Rocket "R" shaft. Being much smaller, the Rocket "R" would have to be shimmed to bring the shaft up to a large diameter—large enough to insure a snug fit.

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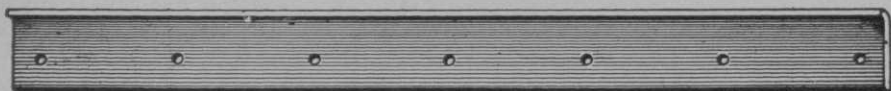
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modern club making "know how" when used in conjunction with repair work. But we must remember that all of the "know how" in the world is useless without the proper tools.

As mentioned before, most pro shops are woefully lacking in proper tools and equipment. This is regrettable, especially when with a little thought most any pro shop can be placed in a fine position, tool-wise, for under \$25.

To properly handle some of the minor reconditioning jobs that a pro shop is called upon to perform it should have at least the following tools and equipment:

- 2 files—1 flat—1 half round
- 2 single edge screw drivers—2 sizes
- 2 Phillips screw drivers—2 sizes
- 2 ½ in. camels hair brushes for touch-up work
- 1 pint white shellac for touch-up work
- 1 pint black shellac for touch-up work
- 1 pint alcohol for thinning shellacs
- 1 pint 3-1 fnoil for preserving and finishing
- ½ pint white lead for filling in stamping and wood face scoring
- 25 1x5 oversize face screws
- 25 ¾x8 oversize sole plate screws
- 1 jeweler's saw for rescoring faces
- 1 package No. 1 sandpaper
- 1 package No. 00 steel wool
- 1 sharp pointed tool—awl type—for cleaning lettering, etc.
- 1 pint varnish
- 1 pint lacquer
- 1 pint thinner for removing finish and thinning lacquer

- 1 can liquid plastic finish
- 1 sharp knife
- 1 pair pliers
- 1 pair long nose pliers
- 1 hammer
- 1 hand drill
- 1 package drills—assorted sizes
- 1 package lead weights
- 1 can glue
- 1 roll string whipping
- quantity of grips, caps, and screws
- quantity of cheese cloth

This may appear to be an imposing array of materials, but the over-all cost would be negligible compared to the benefits which would be derived.

From the foregoing, it is apparent that a good shop-boy or professional is unable to do a presentable job of repairing or selling without the proper tools and without knowing the fundamentals of club making as it is practiced in the modern method.

It is especially deplorable when you realize that most golf club manufacturing plants are anxious and willing to disclose almost any part of their knowledge to the professionals. In spite of this fact, when Monday rolls around (the professional's day off), it is rarely that a shop-boy or assistant professional drops into our factory seeking golf club making knowledge. Naturally, Wilson Sporting Goods is in no position to conduct clinics for aspiring shop-boys; we have neither the personnel or the facilities for such an undertaking. Nevertheless, we are always happy to impart whatever information we can—know-

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ing that in the long analysis, not only the pro, but also the manufacturer profits from increased "know how" of the professional golf men.



### CURTIS TAKES THE CAKE

Chuck Curtis is presented with a symbolic cake by Wilbur Clark on the occasion of his being elevated to the presidency of the National Golf Writers Association. Curtis, golf expert for the Los Angeles Times, was surprised with the confection while covering the Tournament of Champions at Clark's Desert Inn.

### Women Golfers Present Pro Shop Fashion Show

A unique event took place at the Dearborn CC (Detroit dist.) on the occasion of the Women's Golf Group's Luncheon. A "Fashion Show" of the latest and smartest golf attire was well presented by the women golfing members themselves.

Over a hundred women golfers were seated at small tables in the dining room and ballroom and were delighted to watch the home talent models circulate among them, ready and willing to stop for close inspection and questions. Shorts received particular attention, this being the first year the club has sanctioned their wear by women.

Mrs. Gladys Johnson provided piano music as background, and Mrs. Ralph Johnson as narrator described the following costumes: Haymaker golf dresses, Serbin Bermuda shorts, culottes, Bermuda skirts and blouses.

Golf Mart Apparel included rain togs, matched separates, Chesterfield sweaters, Foot-Joy shoes, Coberknit Pullover and Jacket Windbreaker.

Mrs. Faust Bianco, wife of the Club

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