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## INDIAN HILLS NEWSLETTER

### NEWS

Indian Hills would like to wish everyone a happy New Year. We trust everyone had a wonderful Holiday season. Hopefully Santa brought you all lots of golf-related gifts! If you receive an Indian Hills gift certificate, it can be applied towards any goods or services that we offer. Gift certificates have no expiration date; they are good forever. In addition to our usual vast selection of golf clubs, grips, and golf-related accessories, we recently stocked up on some animal head-covers. If you would like your bag to project a more ferocious or snuggly image, come look at our selection (we have 13 different models in stock). Other items that can help you prepare for next season include golf balls, training aids (especially for putting), soft spikes (like grips, they wear out faster than you think), and of course, grips. New products begin to become available in January and February, I'm sure we will have some exciting new grips pretty soon (including the new Winn Duratech, which is slightly firmer than their best-selling Dri-tac).

Referring back to our last newsletter, I hope I didn't come across as too pushy or hectoring. The winter definitely is a good time to be preparing for next season, but we realize not everybody wants to admit that their fitness level is restricting their game. Flexibility and range of motion are very important in the golf swing, especially as we get older. The benefits extend well beyond golf, potentially increasing your overall quality of life. Again, it can be a difficult topic to address, but the reality is that if you are more than 40 years old, your flexibility will decrease every year unless you actively maintain it. Older players with a lot of experience generally have ingrained their golf swing, making it more difficult to make swing changes. Fitness, however, can always be improved. On the opposite end of the spectrum, a golfer without much experience may find it more worthwhile to focus on specific details of the swing. If you don't have firmly ingrained habits, the opportunity exists to ingrain the proper habits. After all, when it's time to play, you are going to swing the club the way that you are accustomed to (for better or worse).



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***Gary Player once said that his only regret in golf was that he didn't switch to left hand low earlier in his career.***



## HELPFUL TIPS

The United States Golf Association has proposed a rule that would prohibit anchoring the golf club (specifically the putter) during a stroke. The proposed rule would take effect for USGA sanctioned play in 2016. While the proposed rule would put an end to the growing popularity of the belly putter, there is still lots of room for creativity in putting. First, keep in mind that the belly putter (anchored to the belly) and the long putter (anchored to the chest) are still within the current rules. If you use one of these putting methods, the USGA says you may continue to do so until at least 2016. If the proposed new rule is implemented in 2016, the belly putter and long putter themselves will still conform with the rules, as long as they are not anchored to the body while making a stroke. If you are considering adopting a new putting style (for whatever reason), it's certainly worthwhile to know the rules.

The USGA has proposed banning anchoring the golf club to the body. This would include anchoring the hand or the forearm to the body as well. This rule would *not* prohibit a number of other stabilizing techniques that can serve the same purpose. For players with a distinct arc to their stroke, anchoring the elbows to the body is an option. Another style worth exploring might be anchoring the putter shaft to the forearm (like Matt Kuchar) to minimize hand action. If you've never tried it, and your putting hasn't been up to your standards, the simplest adjustment might be to go left hand (or lead hand) low. Nine time major champion Gary Player once said that his only regret in golf was that he didn't switch to left hand low earlier in his career.

Whichever method you choose, putting is a very personal exercise. Because it does not require an athletic motion, it is mostly a psychological event. More than anything else, good putting requires confidence. However, there are some universal fundamentals that remain critical regardless of one's style of putting. It is *always* of paramount importance to make contact with the face of the putter square to your intended starting line. It is *always* crucial to deliver the correct amount of force to the ball to ensure that it travels the correct distance. It is *always* important to make solid contact with the ball, thereby creating the proper launch and pure roll. Of course, there are also many variables that are dependent on a specific putter or style of putting. In fact, the number of potential variables is infinite (especially the distracting thoughts that flash through your brain during the putting stroke). The objective is to minimize the variables. In an ideal state, the only variable you would face would be the amount of force to be applied to the ball. Everything else would remain constant.

## J.C.'s COURSE NOTES

### WHAT GOES UP

There have been many changes at the golf course since I first saw it in 1978. Many of the greens have been rebuilt or enlarged, as have all the tees. The current pro shop was built in 2000 and several ponds have been added. However, none of these changes are what you would notice most if you were to compare a view of the course today to 35 years ago. The biggest difference is the number of trees.

Before we began planting trees in the late 1980's the course was mostly open space. The willows and birches that surround the 3rd tee were there as were the maples and oaks between the 2nd tee and the 1st fairway. The only other tees were the single sycamores that overhang many of the tees and various clumps of the conical evergreens. We've planted almost 200 trees since then. These plantings include ashes on the 8th and 9th hole, various fruit trees for color , and a group of catulpas on the 7th hole that are seedlings from the state tree on the Capitol lawn. The majority of new trees that we've added are a hybrid called austree. These are a cross of willows and poplars developed for their rapid growth. These trees grow 10-15 feet per year and are planted all over the course for protection and framing. These trees grow so well that now it is time to remove some of them.

We began by removing two austrees by men's five tee. This allows sunlight to reach the tee and improves the turf quality. Next we removed a tree behind the 1st green for the same reason. It helped, but more thinning is still needed there. This winter we have removed two trees nearest the golf cart parking lot because of damage to the asphalt by the tree roots. The plan this season is to begin removing trees along the 6th fairway to open up the tee shot.

### GROWING SHORTER

This season we are going to experiment with an extra set of tee markers on the holes that have the longest carry distance to the fairway. On these holes we will place additional tee markers at the start of the fairway. We hope this will make the game more enjoyable for some of our players. Of course no one is required to use them; they are another option. I hope some of you will give them a try and give us some feedback. Golf is meant to be fun (honest!) and hitting a good drive that doesn't reach the fairway is not fun. There is also some time saving potential for new players.



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At Indian Hills Custom Golf, we've been building custom golf clubs since 1979. Our professionally certified club makers Sam Anderson and J.C. Petersen can customize clubs for golfers of all abilities, from beginners to top players. Our full service pro shop offers a full range of club repairs, including re-gripping, extending or shortening clubs, re-shafting, loft and lie adjustments and much more. Most repairs can be done promptly and expertly within 48 hours. Custom club fitting by appointment Monday-Saturday.



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