

May 2013

## INDIAN HILLS NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 3

### NEWS

April showers bring May flowers. We certainly had plenty of rain, so now the grass, trees and flowers are growing like crazy. Warm weather really is here to stay now. Of course, I've said this before, but it's more realistic in May.

Leagues have started now (M-F mornings, M-W evenings), so the best times to play during the week are between 10:00-12:00 A.M, 2:00-4:00 P.M. or any time after 2:00 P.M. on Thursday and Friday. On weekends you can call for a reservation any time, there are usually lots of times open before noon and after 3:00. Season passes and golf discount cards are available for avid players. Remember, discount cards are not valid for league play.

Many golfers have gotten new grips on their clubs this season, and the Winn Dri-Tac remains the most popular. The new Winn Duratech has also found some fans, as well as the Golf Pride Niion (very brightly colored!). New grips will feel much better than old worn out grips, and they can definitely improve performance.

In our custom club-fitting sessions, we find that we are spending more time discussing major brands such as Ping because they offer such terrific deals on clubs that are only one or two generations old. While Ping's newest line, the G25, has gotten wonderful reviews, the G20 and G15 are also excellent clubs. Because they have the new G25, the G20 and G15 are now marked way down— often as much as 50% off the original price. Some of the prices are very competitive with the cost of our custom made clubs, and certainly Pings are very high quality also. There are many, many options for golf clubs, more than ever before. If you think your current clubs can be improved upon, give us a call and set up a club-fitting appointment. We are happy to help. Often new clubs will be better than older models, but sometimes simple adjustments can be made to existing clubs that can be a big improvement.



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## HELPFUL TIPS

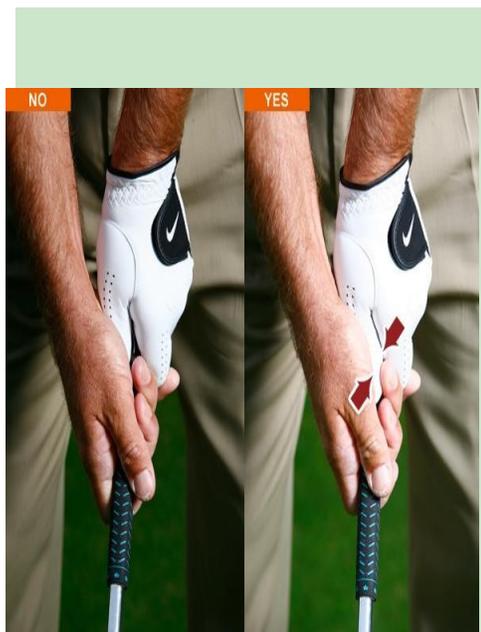
It is often said that we learn more from failure than we do from success. Of course, learning from failure will include a lot of failure. In this issue we will try to help you learn from other people's failures so that you can improve while minimizing the frustration.

In my 15+ years of fitting people for golf clubs, I have seen a lot of different swings and quite a range of golf equipment. I will let you in on the mistakes and problems that I see the most often, in the hope that you can avoid the same mistakes (and frustration).

The biggest problem that we see in golf equipment is set make-up. Once upon a time it was common for a set of clubs to include a driver, three wood, five wood, three through nine irons, pitching wedge and sand wedge. These days there are many more options, especially for mid to long distance shots. It really bothers me when I see a golfer struggling with a three iron. Very few players today should use a three iron; a three hybrid or seven wood will be *much* more forgiving and consistent. Hybrids are available in many different lofts; if you have irons that you don't hit well, they can be replaced with something better. This especially applies to slower swingers who tend to have a lower ball flight. Hybrids are much easier to launch, and keeping the ball in the air is the way to create distance. The three wood is another major culprit, also because of its low ball flight. While most people assume that the three wood will hit the ball farther than the five wood, this is not always the case. If a well struck shot with a three wood flies too low, it will not achieve optimal distance (especially if the ground is wet and soft); some people can hit a five wood farther than a three wood. Long shots are important, and most players should have at least two options for long shots. Short shots are even more important and the more options you have the better. Most golfers carry a pitching wedge (about 44°-50° loft). Many— but not all— have a sand wedge (usually 54°-56° loft). Top players usually carry three or four wedges, usually 4°-5° different than one another in loft, so they can control distance and trajectory more precisely on scoring shots. Another important feature of a wedge is the sole angle, or bounce angle. A high degree of bounce is good for soft conditions like sand, thick grass or wet ground. Low bounce can be better from firm ground or tight lies, but low bounce wedges (less than 6°) do require more skill. Everybody should have at least one wedge with 12° or more, and at least one with 10° or less. I usually recommend at least three wedges because there are a lot of different variables in short shots.

The most common adjustment that we make to golf clubs is shortening putters. This does not benefit all players, but for most people it is a huge ad-





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vantage. A putter that is too long can force you to stand too far away from the ball and your intended line, thereby creating difficulty perceiving the line accurately. A putter that is too long can also create excess tension in the chest and shoulders. Ideally the hands should hang directly beneath the shoulders with a minimum amount of tension.

There are more variables in the golf swing than there are in a golf club. We do not give lessons at Indian Hills, but we do recommend instruction from a qualified professional. Generally speaking, everything in the golf swing starts with the grip. Very few golfers truly have a good grip to begin with, making it impossible to create proper hand action. The hands are the last part of the body to unload in the swing. If they don't operate correctly through impact, a golfer can do everything else right and still hit poor shots. Look at this site: [golf.about.com/od/golftips/ss/golfgrip\\_lead.htm](http://golf.about.com/od/golftips/ss/golfgrip_lead.htm), for a video of a good grip.

The other swing fundamental that seems to elude a large number of golfers is the correct weight shift. Often this correlates with a lack of flexibility. Certainly allowances must be made for diminished range of motion, but the golf swing should include loading up on the back leg and shifting to the front leg. Not only does this move produce more power, but it allows the clubface to close properly through impact. A poor weight shift will usually lead to weak slices. A good weight shift also leads to good balance, which leads to repeatability and consistency.

A qualified instructor can assess a golfer's entire swing and find the particular aspect that is most in need of improvement. When a golfer can narrow their focus to one specific area it is much easier to see measureable improvement and better results. Even if a golfer has a great deal of knowledge about the golf swing, another perspective can be invaluable. Nearly all professional players have instructors. So consult a swing instructor for help with your own individual swing, and don't be surprised if the topics of grip and weight shift become a big part of the process.

## J.C.'s COURSE NOTES

May in Michigan is mosquito season and this year they've been particularly fierce. We sprayed last week with good results. It is a bit earlier than we usually treat but public opinion was rather strong. Because control products available today don't have a long effectiveness, conventional thought is to wait until the first generation completely hatches so your treatment eliminates the greatest number possible. Mosquitos hatching a few days after treatment are unlikely to be controlled. We try to use only as much chemical controls as necessary to handle course pests. This is especially true with insects because control materials are usually left on the grass and plant surfaces to be effective. By comparison, when we treat for weeds and disease control, products are incorporated into the soil or plant very quickly. Mosquito control is also more of a challenge because wind and rainfall can limit opportunities to apply. We wait for a still day with no rain forecast for 72 hours—not always easy in May. A reminder: aerosol bug spray will kill our short turf ( greens and tees), please apply when standing in the rough or on pavement.

There isn't anything more frustrating to a golf course operator than slow play. You don't want to be out there pushing people along or harassing them to speed up. These are your customers, after all, and you want them to enjoy themselves. But of course those people waiting and stewing behind are your customers as well. Golf etiquette requires that you allow faster moving groups to play through if the course is open in front of you. If this is necessary, tee off while the faster group is putting out behind you, then allow them to tee off. You can then locate your ball and plan your next shot while they continue on. There are also several simple steps to playing faster without rushing. First, play ready golf; if you're ready to hit and it's safe to hit, hit. Don't worry about whose honor it is. Secondly putt out. Putt until your ball is in the hole, don't mark. With spikeless golf shoes, stepping in someone's line is not the sin it once was. And finally, whoever does putt out first, head to the next tee and prepare to tee off without delay. Again, the heck with honors. We appreciate your help and will try to do our part as well. We are currently mowing the rough every three days and will avoid overly nasty pin placements. Together, hopefully we can get the average round at Indian Hills under two hours.

The seedhead inhibitor we applied to greens and fairways in April has done its job. They've greened back up and should be much healthier in July and August. You can see the difference on the ninth fairway, where we did not treat the left side for comparisons sake. Incidentally, on the fancy country club blogs, instead of referring to the temporary discoloration as "sickly yellow" as I do, they refer to the process as "bronzing" the turf. It's all in how you sell it.



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ANY CUSTOM CLUB PURCHASE.**

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CUSTOM CLUB PURCHASE OF  
\$500.00 OR MORE.**

**ONE COUPON PER CUSTOMER  
VALID THROUGH JUNE 30, 2013**



Indian Hills is a 9 hole golf course that is one of Lansing area's hidden treasures. Wonderfully maintained, the golf course features lush fairways and consistently rolling greens. Mature trees frame the fairways and strategically placed bunkers and water hazards challenge your game. Indian Hills caters to golfers of all levels. The course is short enough for beginners to feel comfortable... while still providing a challenge for the expert player. The golf course is highlighted by abundant wildlife and numerous eye catching gardens.

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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