

PRO SHOP

THE MAGAZINE FOR GOLF PROFESSIONALS, OWNERS, MANAGERS, RETAILERS AND THE CANADIAN GOLF INDUSTRY



NEW TECHNOLOGY

By Ken Trowbridge, CPGA

High Tech Reaches New Level at Bond Head

The new Golf Institute at Bond Head isn't your average fitting centre or golf school.

Based at The Club of Bond Head, a 36-hole facility north of Toronto, the institute features a 1200-square-foot performance centre that houses three labs, each with state of the art technology for 3-D imaging, video, clubfitting, golf kinetics and biomechanics and the only green grass Motion Reality Golf System in Canada.

In addition to the indoor facilities, those visiting The Golf Institute at Bond Head will have access to over two acres of bent grass practice tees, a short game area, a par four practice hole and two golf courses, all within a few yards of a stunning and traditionally designed clubhouse.

The Golf Institute at Bond Head is the culmination of shared visions. Leading the initiative to build a world class instruction and coaching facility is Bruce McCarroll, a Canadian PGA Master Professional and a past Ontario PGA and Canadian PGA Teacher of the Year.

"During the week of the 2006 Masters, I attended a two-day shindig hosted by TaylorMade to launch their new golf ball and, as luck or fate would have it, I was seated next to Nigel Hollidge (The Club at Bond Head's director of golf properties) for the first night of festivities.

"As our conversation moved to the topic of golf instruction, I began to share with Nigel my vision of what it would take to build the definitive teaching and coaching facility for golf and human performance.

"In the following weeks, that vision became a shared one and



now, the dream has become a reality."

Joining McCarroll and Hollidge in their vision to create the institute is director of golf kinetics Kevin Honsberger, who will blend his experiences as an athlete, coach, educator and physiotherapist.

Honsberger has worked under the direction of Dr. Ron Taylor at Mount Sinai's Sports Medicine Clinic and as a director of the Olympic High Performance Centre at The Fitness Institute. Honsberger has also been certified as a golf fitness professional by the Titleist Performance Institute.

The objective is to provide each student, regardless of handicap, an environment that is conducive to learning with world class instruction and coaching, cutting edge techniques for assessing the body and mind, the latest clubfitting technology and, most importantly, the plan that every player needs to reach goals.

Included at the Golf Institute is The 3-D Motion Reality Golf System Lab. This technology uses

six high-speed video cameras to track the positions of multiple reflective markers that are attached to the golf club and the golfer.

The position of these reflective markers create a detailed 3-D computer animation of the movements of the player and the golf club that can be reviewed from virtually any conceivable reference point or angle.

In addition to visual examination of a player's swing, numerous tools are used to automatically extract and present precise measurements of the golf swing, including club impact data, swing planes, body and posture angles, centre of gravity and dynamic balance.

It is also possible to overlay on another image to compare to other golfers. This system also includes a launch monitor, which measures ball speed, launch angle and spin. Each student will receive a take-home DVD of the Motion Reality Golf System session that can be reviewed at home.

The Golf Video Lab captures the golfer's swing with the use

of four high-speed video cameras fixed in four different positions--face on, down-the-line, overhead and behind.

The golf swing can then be analyzed in detail from different perspectives and compared to a model swing that will provide the student the visual feedback required to clearly see the swing fault and begin the process of correcting the error.

Once again, every student will receive a take-home DVD with voiceover of their session.

Trackman Technology is also offered.

Trackman uses Doppler radar technology to measure flight characteristics (maximum height, carry, landing angle and time etc.), three-dimensional movement of the golf club (speed, attack angle, path, face angle, vertical/horizontal swing planes, etc.) and launch conditions at impact (ball speed, rate of spin and spin axis, etc.).

This precise data can then be used to either provide the

best fit in golf equipment or enable the teacher and student to accurately measure how ball flight and launch conditions are affected by a change or adjustment in swing mechanics.

Another attraction at the Golf Institute is K-Vest Technology, a motion-training device that employs sophisticated software and wireless technology to precisely measure in degrees, the rotation of the golfer's hips, shoulders and motion of the arms to improve the "kinetic link" of the golf swing.

K-Vest measures the sequence, timing and speed of the hips, shoulders and arms to identify the swing faults that reduce clubhead speed and power. This system can also be used in real time so the student can identify the correct feeling of any swing change or adjustment.

If this isn't enough for any golfer to improve, the golf kinetics lab for performance and injury management will provide clients with a complete evaluation of their biomechanical infrastructure. Assessments include skeletal structure, flexibility and strength, computer foot scans, video analysis and 3-D sequencing evaluations.

The lab will then be able to design exercise and treatment programs to enhance performance and reduce the risk of injury.

The golf instruction curriculum at the Golf Institute at Bond Head is a smorgasbord of golf technology and instruction. •

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