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OLYMPIC MAKEOVER

Trailblazers changing
the way we all play golf

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A C C E S S T H E L U X E L I F E

SPRING 2012



Kenya

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and all those wildebeests

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The Front

Ever since medieval Europeans started whacking leather balls with wooden sticks, golf has been a game of innovation. Today, more than ever, the industry is filled with **forward-thinkers** who balance their respect for rules and tradition with an open-armed embrace of the bleeding edge. Here, we spotlight nine golf lovers making a difference as they embody that trailblazing spirit. Their pioneering work in varied golf-related fields is **setting the stage for how golf will be played in the future** and ensures that the royal and ancient game remains interesting and new.

BY JOSH SENS

And the innovators are ...





STANDOUT DESIGN: The Castle Stuart course in Inverness, Scotland, is one of architect Gil Hanse's crowning glories.



Course Design

Gil Hanse

Architect

Breakthrough: Classic modern designs

What he's doing: Sometimes the best way to move forward is by looking back. A good case in point: Hanse, whose acclaimed course-design work has altered the golf landscape by weaving classic motifs into modern design. In contrast to many newfangled courses that call for little more than brutish aerial assaults, Hanse's layouts require imagination, placing a premium on creative shot-making in the manner of golf's finest ancient links. Play the Boston Golf Club in Massachusetts or Castle Stuart in Inverness, Scotland (two of his most heralded courses, built with his design partner Jim Wagner), and you experience the game in all its subtle glory: a return to a time

when precision played an equal role to power, when the ability to pull off a clever bump-and-run was more important than bombing a 300-yard drive. What kind of impact has Hanse had? He has caught the attention of Mike Keiser, the developer of Bandon Dunes Golf Resort in Oregon, which is home to four courses on *Golf Magazine's* Top 100 list. Keiser, who has his pick of architects, selected Hanse to design a new course just down the coast from Bandon Dunes. It's sure to make bold headlines when it opens, though a ribbon-cutting date has not yet been set.

Why it matters to you: The challenge. The artistry. The back-to-nature beauty. Hanse's courses are the embodiment of everything you love about the game.



Agronomy

Mike Kenna

Agronomist, United States Golf Association

Breakthrough: Low-maintenance grasses

What he's doing: Golfers take for granted the grass they play on, expecting nothing less than pristine, verdant turf. But behind those plush conditions lies exhaustive research, and behind much of that research stands Kenna, the USGA's director of Green Section Research. A former professor of turfgrass management, Kenna has devoted his career to an unsung field central to the game's future. His work has helped give rise to a range of economical and eco-friendly grass strains, from drought-resistant bent grasses to hearty Bermudas that require less pesticide and stand up to the abuses of salt and cold. At the USGA, where he has served since 1990, Kenna has continued that commitment, distributing approximately \$1.5 million a year in grants to support turfgrass research. Over the last 22 years, that money has helped fund the development of nearly 40 low-maintenance strains.

Why it matters to you: You want to play golf courses in immaculate condition – and you want to leave the world a better place for your kids. Turns out your interests aren't in opposition. Thanks to Kenna, golf has become greener in every way.



USGA/JOHN MUMMERT (KENNA), BOBISGREAT/DREAMSTIME (GRASS)



Instruction

Jamie Mulligan

Swing Doctor

Breakthrough: A different way to teach

What he's doing: Any basic-issue guru can analyze a golf swing. Mulligan analyzes the entire student to get a better grip on what makes him tick. Think of it as holistic golf instruction, a pedagogical approach that places more importance on the person than the player, with the understanding that what happens in real life shapes what takes place on the links. To that end, Mulligan looks at teaching as a wheel, and technique as one of only many spokes. "Take a player like John Cook," Mulligan says of his longtime student and PGA Tour veteran. "Some of his other spokes might be 'father,' 'husband,' 'friend,' 'fitness.' If all of those spokes aren't in line, things have a way of getting out of sync." It's hard to argue with the premise. Or the results. In addition to Cook, Mulligan has groomed prominent Tour talents such as Patrick Cantlay, Paul Goydos, John Mallinger, and John Merrick.

Why it matters to you:

What's true for the pros is also true for you. You can't play your best if your life is out of balance. Mulligan's advice helps keep the game in proper perspective (hint: in the grand scheme, it doesn't really matter what you shoot).

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Women's Fashion

Keri Murschell

President, Keri Golf

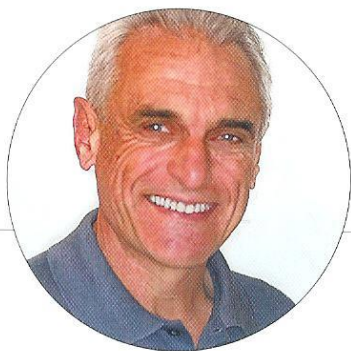
Breakthrough: Bringing sporty looks to the fairways

What she's doing:

Women's golf bags once were a sports world afterthought: Functional but far from fashionable, they were little more than men's bags with a few feminine frills. With the launch of Keri Golf in 2004, Murschell brought a sense of style to an uninspired field, forging bags with high-end fabrics and vibrant pastel colors, and infusing the fairways with a lively sense of style. "Keri Golf designs bags that appeal to women because of the feminine details and the organization that is built into the compartments," she says. The bags were such a hit that Murschell formed a partnership with Adams Golf in 2009 and now serves as the company's creative product manager for ladies' products.

Why it matters to you: Are you a woman? Do you love a woman? Do you believe that women golfers deserve equal treatment? Answer "yes" to any of the above, and you owe a debt of gratitude to Murschell, who has pushed equipment-makers to take women as seriously as so many women take the game.





Performance

Bob Prichard

Founder, Somax Performance Institute

Breakthrough: A fix for the yips

What he's doing: The yips, those bedeviling flinches that drive so many golfers to the brink of madness, have long been thought of as a psychological affliction, a twitch of the hands that begins as a weakness between the ears. Prichard's research stands that notion on its head. A Bay Area-based sports-performance specialist who has worked with the likes of LPGA legend Se Ri Pak, Prichard has spent decades dissecting golf swings. His evidence suggests that the yips are actually a physical ailment, caused by a buildup of scar tissue in the forearms that comes from years of swinging a tensely gripped club.

Why it matters to you: The yips are a disease, and its effects are killing your enjoyment of the game. One solution is to take up bowling. Another is to follow Prichard's prescription: Microfiber reduction, a connective tissue massage therapy that loosens scarring. It's a promising way forward in a fight against a problem that has proved resistant to all known cures.

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Mental Game

Bob Rotella

Sports Psychologist

Breakthrough: Strengthening the mind

What he's doing: Back in the Dark Ages, say, 30 years ago, the world's best golfers weren't big on introspection. As PGA legend Lanny Wadkins once put it: "My idea of a sports psychologist was a friendly bartender at the end of the night." Then came Rotella. With books like *Golf Is a Game of Confidence* and *Golf Is Not a Game of Perfect*, Dr. Bob, as he is known, introduced golfers to a whole new world. Today, most Tour players have a mental-game guru on speed-dial. And often that guru is Rotella, who has worked with dozens of the game's leading lights, including major-winners Paul Azinger, Padraig Harrington, Rory McIlroy, and Nick Price. Never one to sit still with his thoughts, Rotella is primed to release his latest book, *The Unstoppable Golfer*, which hits stores in April and is built around this premise: The key to great golf is a great short game, and the key to a great short game is having a great mind.

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Why it matters to you: You could spend a lifetime trying to master the mechanics – or you could spend a few hours reading Rotella. You'll come away having learned this vital lesson: Changing your swing isn't as important as changing your mind.



Equipment

Benoit Vincent

Chief technical officer, TaylorMade Golf

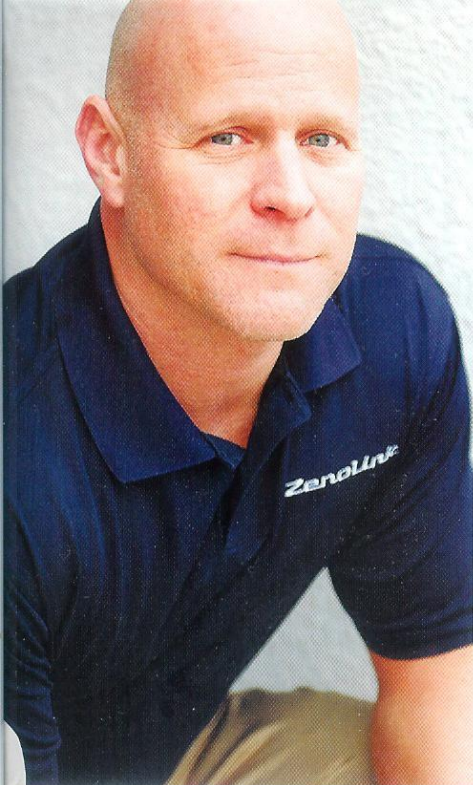
Breakthrough: The adjustable driver

What he's doing: Golf equipment is in constant evolution. But now and then, there's a revolution, like the one Vincent led in 2004. That year, TaylorMade introduced the R7, the game's first user-adjustable driver. Thanks to movable weights in the R7 head, average golfers could tweak the club's performance on the spot – a luxury once reserved for top pros with lackeys at their beck and call. The R7 was a trendsetter (today, adjustable drivers account for roughly one-third of all driver sales). But even as other manufacturers caught on, Vincent and his colleagues kept pushing forward, adding adjustable features, like loft, face angle, and flight path, to



subsequent designs, first with the R9 in 2009, followed by the R11 last year. With their latest, the RBZ, Vincent and Co. combine adjustability with accessibility: the club retails for \$300, about 25 percent less than its adjustable ancestors.

Why it matters to you: If hunting for the right driver is like searching for a mate (time-consuming, draining, and frequently expensive), the adjustable market is like speed-dating: the fast, efficient way to find the one you love.



Biomechanics

Chris Welch

Founder, Zenolink

Breakthrough: Rethinking the swing

What he's doing: Golfers visit swing doctors to fix their fundamentals, but all too often those doctors treat the symptoms and not the cause. Think about it that way and you understand the importance of Welch's work. Welch is golf's godfather of biomechanics, the scientific study of how the body moves. Some 20 years ago, when "biomechanics" was a foreign word to golfers, Welch got busy spreading the gospel. As he saw it, obsessing over swing flaws was a superficial focus. Better to search deeper for the real roots of the problem — tightness in the hips, say, or weakness in the shoulders — that prevent so many players from swinging properly. Thanks to Welch's efforts, "biomechanics" is now a common language among top-level instructors, from David Leadbetter to Jim McLean. It has become a vital idiom that helps golfers everywhere elevate their games.

Why it matters to you: Head still. Knees flexed. Hands high at the finish. You could fill encyclopedias with all the swing tips you've picked up throughout the years. But none has the power of biomechanics to get to the root causes of your slice. Welch has taken this once-rarefied field and built a practical tool for golfers. His service offers biomechanic analyses and treatments.

Consulting

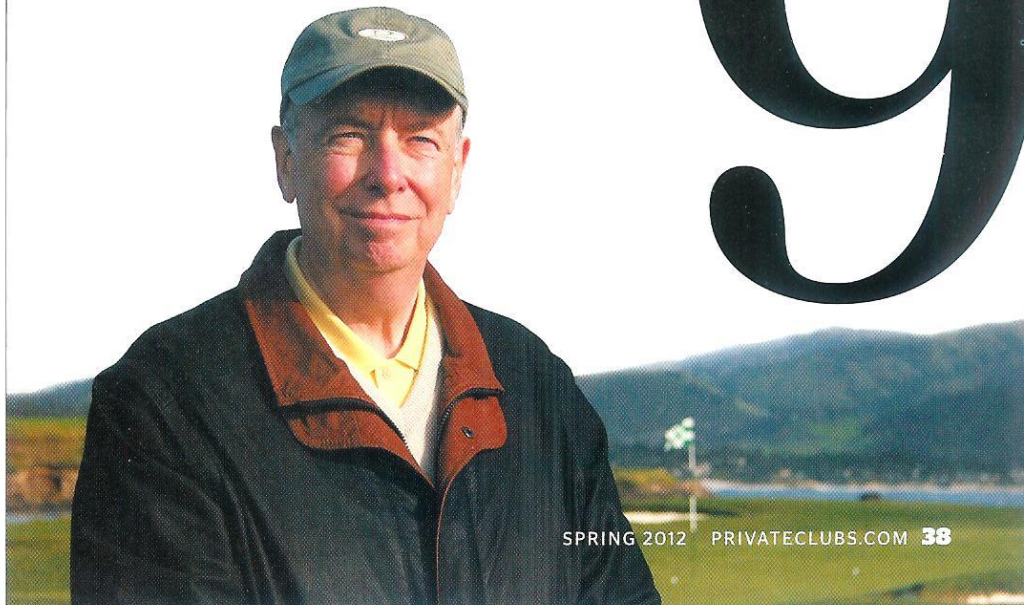
Bill Yates

Founder, Pace Manager Systems

Breakthrough: Improving the pace of play

What he's doing: Slow play is like the weather. Talk about it all you want, but it's still hard to change. One man working to redirect the winds is Bill Yates, a pace-of-play expert whose pioneering work has eased golf-course congestion everywhere. As the author of the *Pace of Play Manual* for the National Golf Course Owners Association and a past pace-of-play consultant to the USGA, Yates has not only helped devise methods for measuring how long a round "should" take, he has helped course managers achieve those goals. Along the way, Yates has exposed pace-of-play myths (did you know waving groups up on par 3s actually slows things down?) and introduced technology, such as his new Pace Manager GPS, that course managers can use to monitor the flow of play more carefully.

Why it matters to you: If you despise slow play, you've gotta love Yates, a man who has done more than anyone to eliminate an agonizing problem in the game. ▀



KIM PROCHAZKA (WELCH), MIKIETUDREAVIMTIME (STOPWATCH)

