

Bigger Is Not Better (Not in Golf Anyway!)

By Ed Gilbert, Head Thinker

absolute**thinking**



Golf equipment marketing is big business for the manufacturers and for the PGA and LPGA professional golfers. Endorsements can be huge for the winning PGA/LPGA tour player. Hundreds of thousands of dollars just to wear a logo use a putter, driver, wedge and irons. Check out the bags on television (not the elderly women) but the big bag carried by the caddie. No offense to older women. That is my current circle of influence. Just don't want to confuse my readers who are easily swayed by youth, looks and tattoos.

After doing a great deal of research, I found there is no good resource but patchwork all over the Internet for what pros play with what equipment. Few are loyal to one company. They may use Titleist Pro-V1 balls and a Taylormade R-11 driver and someone else's irons. Money talks and the proverbial bull shit can't get a VIP pass to an event.

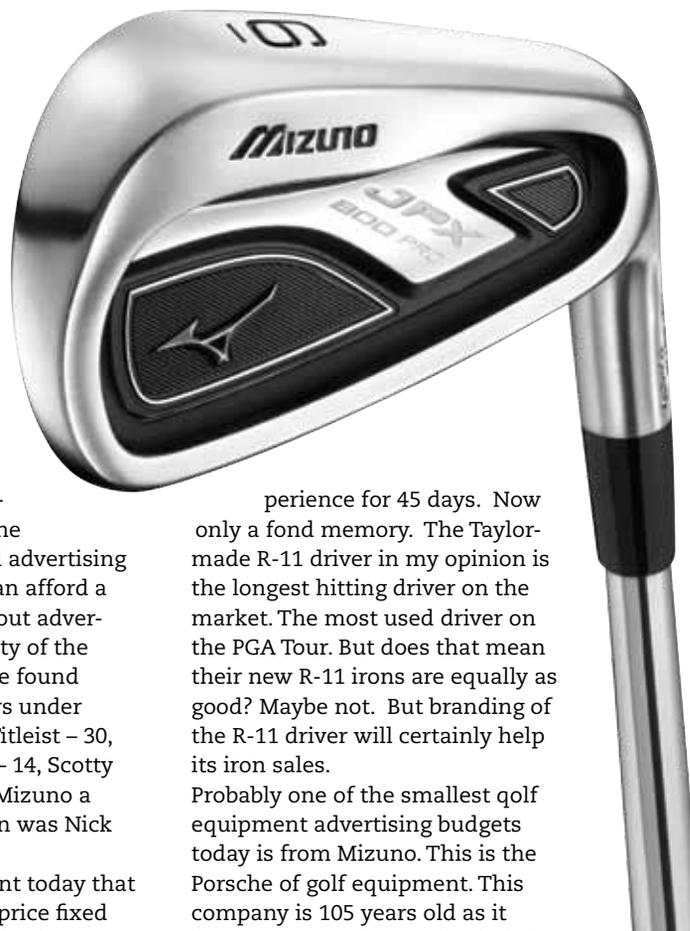
The bigger the marketing budget, the more impressions. The more impressions, the more potential sales. Unless you are astute. Porsche automobiles have a small advertising budget but people who can afford a Porsche know it is not about advertising; it's about the quality of the product. From what I have found Taylormade has 76 players under endorsement contracts, Titleist - 30, Callaway - 21, Cleveland - 14, Scotty Cameron (Ping) - 38 and Mizuno a handful. Their best known was Nick Faldo (Not too shabby).

Since it is more apparent today that golf manufacturers have price fixed for the most part (Where is Sherman

when you need him?), the difference is in how you hit them and how you were motivated by one company's marketing message over another.

Since I am an equipment junkie and have owned 90% of all drivers made, I can give an educated opinion as an 11 handicapper who at one time was a 6 when I had an outer body ex-

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perience for 45 days. Now only a fond memory. The Taylormade R-11 driver in my opinion is the longest hitting driver on the market. The most used driver on the PGA Tour. But does that mean their new R-11 irons are equally as good? Maybe not. But branding of the R-11 driver will certainly help its iron sales.

Probably one of the smallest golf equipment advertising budgets today is from Mizuno. This is the Porsche of golf equipment. This company is 105 years old as it began in 1906. They made their first

golf club in 1936 (Star-Line), Grand Monarch clubs in 1968, their first titanium club in 1990 and the highly successful JPX line began in 2005.

Today for the player looking to improve their game, look at the JPX-800. A great forgiving forged club. I play golf with the same 16 guys I have been playing with for over 15

years. I am the worst golfer at an 11 handicap. The best players all play Mizuno irons. There is an on-going debate about forged versus cast that could go on forever but here is what I know: If you want to get better and want a club you can feel, then the Mizuno JPX 800 forged iron is for you. Very forgiving. Most of the forged irons by Mizuno are made for low-handicap players. However, these are a huge exception. This is a great forged iron for a large target audience. They are very forgiving and long. This new hot metal construction is a brand new process of making this club head. The club head is stronger and the impact on ball speed is worthy. 3 MPH faster and 7 yards longer on average. Pocket cavity on the other side extends the sweet spot and brings center of gravity deeper. This club is a great choice for players who want to try forged irons and still desire forgiveness.

While the top 25 players don't endorse them, does it really matter if it helps your game? PGA Tour pros could hit a \$10 knock off club a long way. Their clubs are not made to the same specs we buy. So who cares? If you want one of the finest irons on the market today and be perceived as a Porsche kind of guy, buy this iron. 🏌️