SPECIAL REPORT

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This is a report presented in Golf Magazine Golf.Com. Very Interesting, but after you read it, I would like to insert some possible pitfalls to consider as well.

You’re Playing the Wrong Size Grips!
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The Conventional Wisdom - Unless your hands are unusually big or small, you can get away with playing standard-size grips. You can also use a static fitting chart like the one below to match grip size to your hand size.

Our New Theory - Finding the correct grip size has little to do with the size of your hands, or even personal preference. It has everything to do with the dynamics of your swing.

How We Tested It - Twenty-four golfers (ranging in handicap from +1 to 7) hit their own 5-iron and five identical 5-irons (Titleist AP2s with Dynamic Gold S shafts), each with a different-sized Golf Pride grip (undersized, standard, slightly larger standard, midsized and jumbo). All markings were covered to prevent any previous size bias. While blindfolded, each golfer was asked to choose the grip they preferred simply by holding each club in their hands. They were then measured for grip size using a fitting chart.

After sufficiently warming up with their own 5-iron, each golfer hit two practice shots out to a target on the range, then hit 10 additional shots that were measured on a Trackman launch monitor. This was repeated for each club (assigned in random order), concluding with their own 5-iron, which served as a control club.

THE SHOCKING RESULTS! - After tallying the results of the pre-hit tests and the data collected by the launch monitor, we know three things for certain:

1. Hand Measurements Don't Work
   • 16 of the 24 blindfolded golfers (67%) preferred a grip size that was different than their measured grip size in the pre-test.
   • After hitting shots, 22 of the 24 players (92%) preferred a grip size that was different than their measured grip size.
   • CONCLUSION: Determining grip size through standard static fitting procedures isn't a very good predictor of the grip size that golfers prefer.
2. Neither Does Relying on Your Feel Sense
• 21 of the 24 golfers (88%) had standard-sized grips on their own 5-irons, yet less than half of these players (10 of 21) were measured for standard-sized grips.
• Only slightly more than half (11 of 21) preferred the standard-size grips on their 5-iron after hitting test shots with the other 5 test clubs.
• CONCLUSION: If you're playing off-the-rack clubs with standard-sized grips, there's only a 50% chance that these grips match what you'd be measured for in a static fitting, or what you'd actually prefer.

3. You're Playing the Wrong Grips!
• Only 5 of 24 golfers (21%) hit their best shots with the grip size that matched their measured grip size in terms of left/right accuracy. These weren't always the grip size the golfers preferred, either.
• Only 3 of these golfers (13% total) hit the best shots with the grip size that matched their measured grip size in terms of distance control.
• Only 1 golfer (4%) hit the ball straighter and with greater distance control with the grip size that matched their measured grip size.
• CONCLUSION: Your grips are costing you at least 5 strokes per round.

How to Use These Findings
The only way to know what size grips to use is to experiment with as many different sizes as possible. When you decide to make the change, ask the professional who's fitting you the following questions. The answers will go a long way toward making sure the job gets done right.

1. What size grips are currently on my set?
Part of a good trial is comparing your performance with new grips against what you brought to the fitting.
2. Can I hit the same club outfitted with different-size grips?
That's how we performed the test, and it's the only way to accurately test your performance with each size. Make sure swing weights are consistent — larger grips will tend to make the club head feel too light.
3. Can I measure my swings with each grip on a launch monitor?
It's hard to gauge your results if you're hitting into a net, so make sure the shop has a launch monitor or other shot-tracking device. It's important to base your decision solely on shot data.

Money Well Spent
A set of 14 new grips will run you anywhere from $50 to $100, plus $25 in labor. That's a small price to pay for increased performance without making a single swing change.

Here's my take:
This is a very good report and a very good test. However, as in all golf club fitting, you have to consider what the student is doing in their swing which attracts them to a specific grip configuration. Whether it be grip size, shaft flex or other. Sure a golfer that has a strong left
hand grip may “feel” like a large grip enables his/her extending of the front arm outward instead of rotating the forearms properly. In my estimation, allowing that golfer to continue with the larger grip they like dooms them to continue the current swing fault in order to hit a successful shot, sometimes.

Another thing I would question is the grip of the golfer? How do they grip the golf club? The fact is, one can test golfers for what they like and perform better with, (better than what they’re doing now) but with knowledge of the golf swing motion possible corrections should be made before sizing the grip.

Now, a careful trained eye may prescribe a grip size the golfer does not initially like in order to force the golf to swing his/her best motion for positive results. It’s almost as if the golf club forces you to swing properly or you get a bad shot. Orthopedic golf club fitting?

Fitting is not an exact science, it’s a talent. It’s an art that is developed over years of training from the right fitter, in depth knowledge of the golf swing and tons and tons of experience. The best fitters I’ve ever witnessed and had the honor of being taught by was; Jim Hofmeister and Freddy Bond. Both were with Henry-Griffitts at the time.

Some establishments will tell you they can fit you for golf clubs in 15 minutes, well Jim and Freddy took about two hours.

If you live in Richmond and wish to be fitted please go to www.quickfixgolf.com or send me an email at bobbylopez@quickfixgolf.com or call 804-378-7456.