It may not be legal, so make sure you are not wearing one when you play in the monthly medal or Stableford.

The golf glove that does it all!



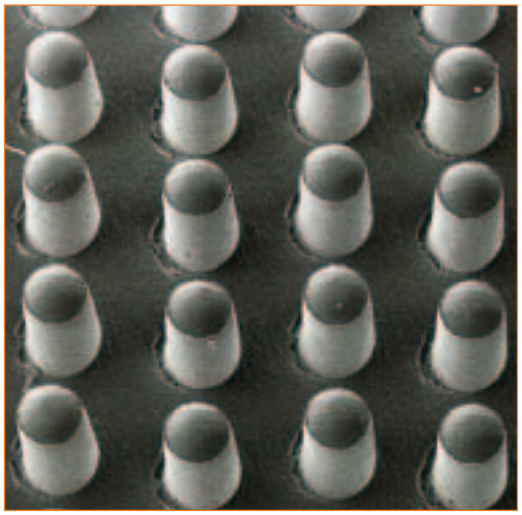
Now, let's think. Who would know more about hands and golf gloves than a leading orthopaedic hand surgeon – who is also a golfer? The new hi-tech, patented Bionic golf glove, featured at this year's PGA Merchandise Show in Orlando, is drawing raves from golfers at all levels. At a glance, the glove may appear to be just another leather glove, but closer inspection reveals the patented biomechanics and technology built into this revolutionary product. Created by Dr. Jim Kleinert, one of the world's leading orthopaedic hand surgeons, the Hillerich & Bradsby Bionic Golf Glove is designed to aid the anatomical form and function of a golfer's hand. This is achieved by inserting breathable neoprene "motion zone" pads placed between the hand's bony prominences to give wearers more control over their golf clubs, making them feel at "one with the club".

The benefits come from the patented anatomical design of the gloves including a pre-rotated finger pattern that promotes natural closure of the hand, motion zones to provide optimal flexibility for better fit, comfort and performance, and anatomical neoprene relief pads inserted into the seams to help improve grip strength, resulting in more control and straighter, more accurate shots. Additionally, the Bionic glove has strategic web zones (panels) between the bases of the fingers for enhanced breathability, helping the hands stay cool, comfortable and dry. Top-grade supple cabretta leather is used as the primary making material that is machine washable along with the neoprene inserts.

Perhaps catering to the ageing 'baby boom' market, the gloves are the first gloves to receive the Arthritis Foundation's Ease-of-Use Commendation. Independent testing for the Arthritis Foundation demonstrated that Bionic gloves can significantly improve strength in the hands of people with arthritis while helping reduce the pain. Users who tested the gloves reported that they could perform better, and with less pain, while reducing stress on the finger joints wearing the gloves compared with bare handed. "Palm padding helps unload stress on the hamate bone, where injuries frequently occur in sports that use a club, bat, or racquet," Dr. Kleinert claims. "Pads in fingers provide protection from blisters and calluses." Bionic Technology is a new division of Hillerich & Bradsby Co., makers of Louisville Slugger baseball and softball bats and gloves, PowerBilt golf equipment, and TPS Hockey gear. This glove is not USGA approved because "the pads in the palm may assist the player in gripping the club." Precisely!

Golf is one of the top participation sports in the world; approximately half the golfers in the world prefer to play with one or two gloves. Enhanced grip, inside temperature control, sensitivity and the ability to stay soft and supple (despite repeated soakings from both sweat inside and rain outside) top the desirable features list in gloves used for sports such as sailing, fencing, baseball, and racquet sports. However, when it comes to sales volume and

The Bionic golf glove.
Hillerich & Bradsby Co.



A close look at the microreplication technology that 3M utilises to create more positive traction between the gripping hand and the club.

3M

publicity – the emphasis remains on golf gloves. Of course, durability is also important to golfers. Two of the principal leather used in golf gloves are kangaroo and cabretta, a leather derived from a breed of hair-sheep found in equatorial regions of Africa, Asia and South America, and they continue to be the leathers of choice for leading golf glove manufacturers. 3M has taken cabretta leather to a new level in the 3M Premium Golf Glove with Greptile, a material that utilises 3M's microreplication technology in strategic areas of the glove and on the pressure points of the fingers. The innovative technology is composed of thousands of tiny gripping 'fingers' to create a sturdier grip, with less pressure and a snugger fit, so they can grip the club with less effort, leading to maximum club head speed for longer drives. A study, conducted at the University of Minnesota confirmed the improvement, with 3M's golf glove leading to an average increase in the club head speed of seven miles per hour, with ball flight distance improving 10.5 feet as a result.

Breathe easy

High-tech linings and panels are the latest addition to full-aniline cabretta leather, such as Pittards WR100X, which can be tanned to a thickness of between 0.4 and 0.55 millimetres with a tear strength of up to 1.5 kg. The WR100X tanning process has been specially developed to offer improved water repellency properties to keep the hands protected at all times. It enhances the insulation characteristics of the leather, guaranteeing that the hands remain warm in cold weather conditions and cool in warm weather climates, thus sustaining sensitivity and dexterity whatever the activity. Conversely, these permanent structural properties allow the leather to breathe by letting the moisture pass through the fibre structure, keeping the hands cool and comfortable during even the warmest conditions.

In golf, the properties of specially tanned cabretta leather may be used in combination with other inserted materials. Tourmax, for example, uses Coolmax in its TX Air Series for added flexibility and cooling comfort. HJ Glove uses Cool-Mesh backs in its Cool Classic line of golf gloves to pull away moisture and quick drying. This glove offers the wearer exceptional ventilation combined with the superior grip of leather in warmer climates. Etonic has introduced a patent pending "Island Thumb" design with new Aerify Lycra stretch panel design along with cabretta leather with unique silicon tanning process - claiming to be the lightest most comfortable golf glove on the market.

With Etonic's AC Tour glove cabretta is used in the palm area for durable feel and grip with air-cooling DuPont CoolMax inserts and Etonic's Air-Tech 1000 wicking microfibre back design.

USGlove Company uses Ethiopian ultra lightweight sheepskin, which they claim is 30 per cent thinner than other cabretta gloves – only one skin in 100,000 qualifies. In their Platinum Supreme, USGlove uses a patented GraFlex tanning process, which uses graphite powder as a permanent dry lubricating system (as opposed to oils). The Ti Classic glove enhances the natural cabretta leather strength by bonding the surface of each fibre with Titanium. This glove also adds Microfit Spandex Lycra flex points in the fingers and a spandex bridge joining the back of the hand to the thumb for conformity. In the Technica 3G and Ultimate II designs Hydrolyte microfibre synthetic has be used as a lining to wick moisture away from the hands.

In its SofJoy glove model, FootJoy uses a cabretta leather palm and index finger to provide a soft feel with resistance to rain and perspiration. The Dry ICE glove, also from FootJoy, is designed to draw heat away from the hand and to release it again to maintain a comfortable temperature next to the skin. This glove uses a combination of materials, including ComforTemp DCC technology, which is a cutting-edge performance process impregnated into the leather and strategically located to provide constant temperature-regulated comfort. Cabretta leather is so highly prized, however, that in its top-of-the-line StaSof glove, FootJoy uses only 100 per cent Pittards APL VII Thin Select product.



HJ Glove's Cool Classic combines a micro-fibre leather palm and cool-mesh back for exceptional ventilation and grip.

HJ Glove