

Golf's New Measuring Stick

By James Achenbach

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Dick Helmstetter, vice chairman and senior executive vice president of Callaway Golf, was asked about the future of golf club fitting.

"In the future, there will be more measuring devices built into golf clubs," Helmstetter said.

Don't look now, but the future has arrived.

SmartSwing is a \$799 titanium driver (with a choice of lofts and shaft flexes) that includes sensors and a significant amount of processing power in the shaft of the club.

The primary benefit of SmartSwing is real-time feedback (three seconds after the swing is made). Choices include swing plane, release point, angle of attack, angle of incidence (club path from the inside or outside) and clubhead direction at impact.

The SmartSwing driver also can be programmed to include the beeping tones that are part of the Tour Tempo system advocated by instructor John Novosel.

"In the future, with greater processing power, we can make this club do just about whatever we want," said SmartSwing founder and CEO Dick Eyestone. "This is a computer, a processor."

The computer parts are held in the shaft with air-bag components.

For \$699, the Austin, Texas, company will install SmartSwing technology into the shaft of any driver.

"We encourage golfers to play a round of golf with it," Eyestone said, "to see how their swing varies from the range to the course."