

| UNDER ARMOUR |

# PASSION FOR PERFORMANCE

THREE NEW SHIRT CATEGORIES LEAD UNDER ARMOUR'S ASSAULT ON APPAREL THIS SEASON



## WE BROUGHT YOU A FIRST

look at three new shirt technologies from Under Armour a few issues ago and thought, with summer here, now would be the time for a more extensive overview.

In its market research, Under Armour identified three categories of golfer, each of which it decided to target with a distinct range of products. The results, as you'll soon find out, are pretty special...

ColdBlack, top left, is UA's next generation of performance apparel and has solved an age-old problem - how to stay cool in warm temperatures while wearing dark colours.

Made from performance polyester, which allows perspiration to escape the shirt, ColdBlack offers a UPF (ultraviolet protection factor) of 30, proven to lower body temperature, making it possible for the cooling range to include dark options.

Charged Cotton, left middle, caters for the demand for great cotton comfort and fit. These features, however, don't cut it for the \$1bn apparel giant - every garment

simply has to also aid performance.

This has been achieved through the inclusion of a uniquely 'charged' strand of cotton for every classic cotton strand. This creates a push/pull effect that transports moisture away from the body five times faster than normal cotton.

Catalyst, bottom left, is the third new shirt and is perfect for the eco-conscious golfer. Amazingly, each shirt is made completely from four recycled plastic bottles.

Taking a scientific approach, Under Armour recycled used water bottles - cleaning and crushing them into tiny strands, before heating them together - to create this revolutionary shirt.

Its construction gives golfers a four-way stretch movement that limits abrasion in key impact zones so they can swing more freely. It, again, has excellent moisture transport properties and UV protection.

RRP: ColdBlack from £45, Charged Cotton from £45, Catalyst from £35  
underarmour.co.uk

As well as five-time PGA Tour event winner Hunter Mahan, Under Armour's tour staff includes Scotland's Richie Ramsay and big-hitting American Gary Woodland.



Scan this!

For more information on the three new shirt technologies from Under Armour, scan the QR Code above with your Smartphone or tablet.

## Stewart Golf is getting pushy

Stewart Golf, famous for its luxury electric carts, has just released the Z3 Push Trolley, an evolution of the Z1 that launched some 18 months ago to great acclaim.

From listening to customer feedback, a number of improvements have been made to the original, including the addition of a foot brake, the incorporation of accessory points on the handle, re-designed bag jaws to accommodate smaller stand bags, and a rear wheel quick release mechanism for easy storage.

It has the same two-step folding system as its predecessor but is now better provisioned to suit those who don't want to carry but aren't yet ready to put an electric model into action.

RRP: £179  
stewartgolf.co.uk



## You can always count on Abacus...

You never know when things could take a chilly turn on the golf course, so it's always a good idea to be prepared.

For that reason, the Oakdale Longsleeve Rugger from Abacus could be the perfect garment for you.

It's hardy enough to keep you protected in cold conditions but remains loose to allow a free-flowing golf swing with no infringements.

Made from 100% cotton, it also feels great against the skin.

RRP: £80  
abacussportswear.com



Rivet heads up Under Armour's 'Innovation Centre' at Terre Blanche



**S**TATISTICS DON'T USUALLY make for the most interesting reading. However, the figures for golf apparel sales over winter 2011 would have raised more than a few eyebrows.

That's because through the off-season just gone, a new contender emerged in golf's highly competitive clothing market.

Under Armour, a brand that forged its reputation on American football fields rather than fairways, was the UK's No.1 winter apparel brand in 2011/12.

In light of those figures, *bunkered* was invited to take a look behind the scenes at 'UA' to see what has made them one of the hottest brands in golf, and to learn how they intend to cement their standing.

So we travelled to their hub in the South of France to hear from UA's Richard Palmer, and the man Under Armour consult on the performance of their golf apparel, world-leading biomechanist, Jean Jacques Rivet.

"There's something we're doing that golfers like," says Palmer, as we drive through the French Riviera. "We think that's 'innovation'."

And from one look at our final destination, UA's 'Innovation Centre' at Terre Blanche, it's clear to see that Under Armour are intent on giving their customers even more of just that.

The centre, which is also a European Tour Performance Institute, is a cutting-edge golf academy kitted out with an array of mind-boggling equipment.

The walls are plastered with flatscreen TVs, cameras survey each bay from every angle and even the practice mats are touch sensitive, so to monitor how a player's weight is distributed throughout his or her swing. It's not your average £4-a-bucket driving range.

Invited to take a seat, we were treated to a purposeful presentation by Rivet, the man at the helm of this trailblazing facility.

Convinced, confident and assured, he soon revealed what all of this gear was for: "We believe what you wear can make you a better golfer," he says with conviction.

Though they're relative newcomers to golf, most people know that UA work on the principle that their apparel is more than mere fashion, can deliver more than just cover from the elements.

Founded in 1996, Under Armour revolutionised first American football and then the wider world of sports with a base layer that didn't absorb moisture like a regular cotton tee. Instead, it removed moisture from inside to out.

"Performance apparel' didn't exist before Under Armour," says the brand's founder, Kevin Plank. "Under Armour defines a category. We are the athletics brand of this generation."

And Plank says the stats back up that proclamation. UA annual turnover has gone from just \$17k to over \$1.5bn in less than 15 years. Now they are intent on carrying that 'performance' into golf.

Since Plank's first base layer, UA has been a brand synonymous with the pursuit of progress. And from within the heart of their hi-tech hub, it's crystal clear 'innovation' is still their abiding ethos.

Under Armour's Richard Palmer was there to explain that desire is what prompted their partnership with Rivet.

"If a product doesn't perform, it can't have our logo on it," says Palmer. "We wanted someone who could validate what we are working towards. So JJ tells us what works and what doesn't work, too."

"Our work with JJ began a little over two years ago. Ultimately, what we wanted to know was: can what you wear make you a better golfer? That is why we're here."

Rivet's work on biomechanics has provided the principles that underpin the teachings of some of the world's top golf coaches, David Leadbetter among them.

A former windsurfer turned scratch golfer, he has been absorbing and analysing data from top level tour events since 1998. He has charted the evolution of the golf swing and body composition of the leading players on the European and US circuits for over a decade.

JJ has combined that analysis and insight with UA's desire to push golf apparel to its limits.

The first fruits of the partnership are evidenced by UA's 'Armour Stability' top; a shirt that, remarkably, helps those who wear it to make a better golf swing.

Rivet's findings determined that the best technique relies upon engaging the abdominal and latissimus dorsi - your stomach and your shoulders. So, UA's Armour Stability top activates those muscle groups.

Strategic 'stabiliser' patches in the lower back engage the abs and shoulders through compression, making it easier to deliver a more efficient swing.

Now, the Armour Stability top won't transform you into a superstar instantly, but UA have found that with the right technique, wearing their compression shirt can increase club head speed by up to 11 per cent - so it will optimise your body to make the best swing possible as often as possible.

Wearing Armour Stability reduces fatigue, and maintaining performance is also the central concern of UA's latest product line.

'Cold Black', 'Catalyst', and 'Charged Cotton' make up their summer offering. Geared towards countering the elements, they ensure players can perform at their peak for longer, be it by providing comfort, wicking sweat, or reflecting heat.

"We want to bring something new, something that's better than what's already there," says Richard Palmer.

It would seem that what Under Armour is bringing to golf is the pioneering notion that apparel can be more than just fashion. It can be equipment. ■

**"If it doesn't perform, it can't have the Under Armour logo on it"**

RICHARD PALMER

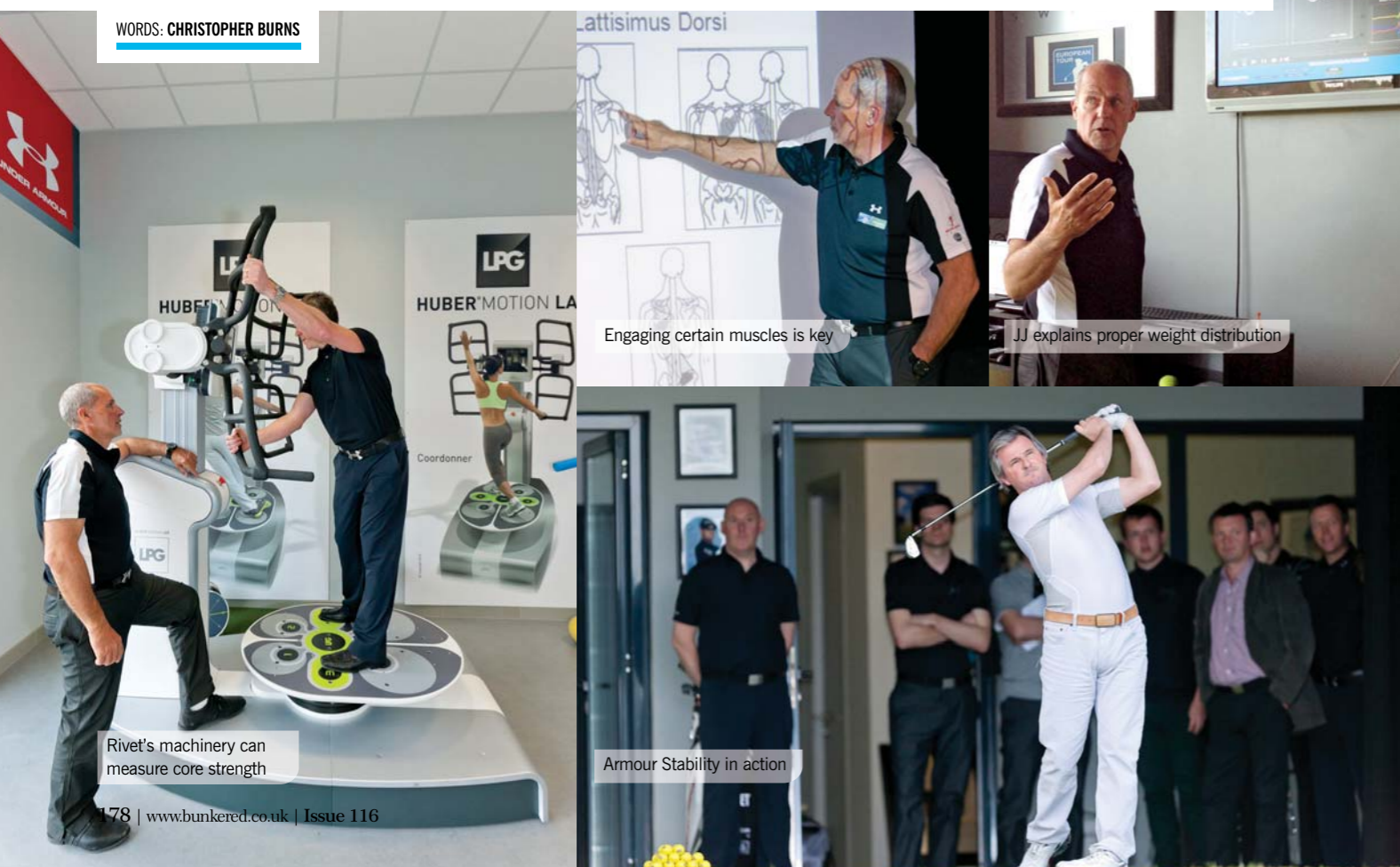


The Armour Stability top promotes a better swing

# Innovation station

BUNKERED GOES INSIDE UNDER ARMOUR'S 'INNOVATION CENTRE' AT TERRE BLANCHE

WORDS: CHRISTOPHER BURNS



Engaging certain muscles is key



JJ explains proper weight distribution



Rivet's machinery can measure core strength



Armour Stability in action

## UNDER ARMOUR BY THE NUMBERS

STATS ON THE HOTTEST BRAND IN GOLF APPAREL

**1996** + **1.5bn** + **1** + **11**

The year Under Armour was founded by Kevin Plank

Under Armour's turnover, in dollars, in 2011

In 2011, UA were the UK's No.1 men's winter apparel brand \*

In per cent, the potential increase in club speed with Armour Stability

\* In total men's apparel value and units for Oct, Nov, and Dec 2011 according to Golf Datatech