

Making golf balls can be a real blast

By Nancy Cardillo

How can a boron carbide nozzle help improve your golf game? Well, that's certainly a fair question.

In golf, of course, it's all about the shot. How far did the ball travel? Was it a straight shot? Did it make the green? Even the most recreational golfer will tell you that a good round of golf is a very satisfying way to spend a morning or an afternoon...and a bad round, well, it can certainly make a sunny day very cloudy in a hurry.

The proper equipment is essential for a good round of golf, and that includes golf balls that are made to perform well.

First, a bit of history.

The rubber golf ball was invented in the late 1890s in Cleveland, Ohio. The aerodynamically-superior dimple pattern first appeared in 1908. Golf ball standards, however, didn't arrive until the 1930s, when the United States Golf Association – following standards set by the British Golf Association – standardized the weight and size for American-made golf balls. The golf balls used today reflect a durability and precision of the tremendous technological advancement of their manufacture as well as the development of space age plastics, silicone and improved rubber.

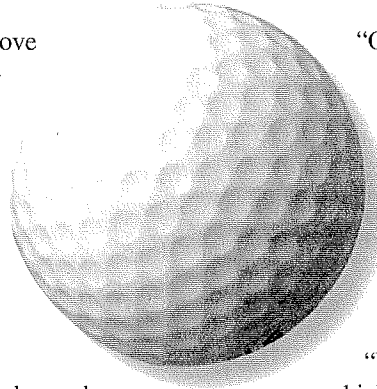
The next time you buy a dozen golf balls and shake your head at the cost, think about all that goes into the making of a golf ball. Rubber threads are wound around a rubber core and coated with dimpled enamel. The dimples (336 on American golf balls) are arranged in rows to achieve an average drive of from 180 to 250 yards. Why dimples? Simply put – VERY simply put – the dimples help reduce drag, even as the speed of the ball increases.

A reduction in drag, of course, allows for more control and straighter flight.

All of which leads to better rounds of golf and happier golfers.

To give you an idea of just how big this game of golf is, just one of the top golf ball manufacturers in the U.S. produces an average of 26 million dozen golf balls annually. That's a lot of golf balls! If just two to three percent are defective, it represents a huge dollar loss to the manufacturer. So defective golf balls are recycled rather than destroyed, and that's where the nozzles come in.

Malyn Industrial Ceramics, Inc., of Akron, New York, has manufactured boron carbide nozzles for nearly 20 years. Its nozzles are used in a variety of industries, including the golf ball industry. According to Michael Malyn, founder and president, Malyn makes two sizes of nozzles for the golf ball industry.



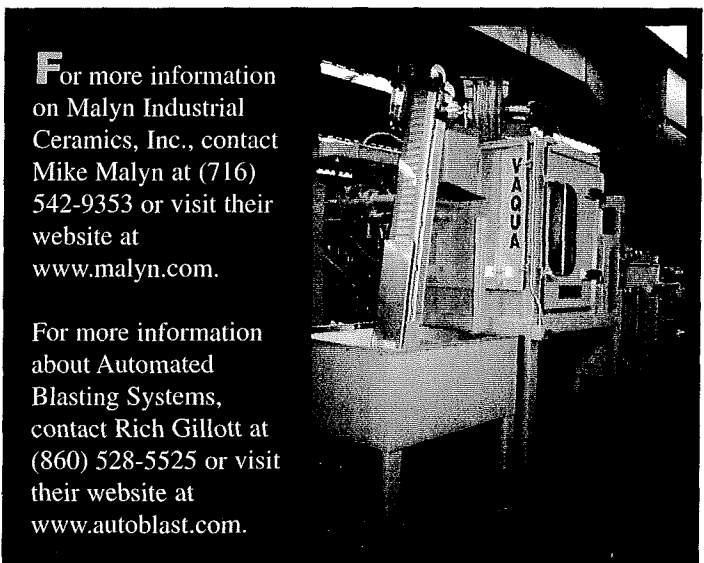
"Our nozzles are used both to etch the golf ball surface for coating or painting and to strip the coating after a defective paint job or logo stamping," Malyn says. Each year, Malyn sells thousands of its nozzles to companies that, in turn, produce the equipment manufacturers use to blast golf balls. Companies such as Automated Blasting Systems (ABS) of South Windsor, Connecticut, which has been dealing with Malyn for nearly 20 years.

"Malyn's products are of the highest quality, which is important to us," says Richard Gillott, vice president and general manager of ABS. "I deal directly with Mike Malyn, which is also very important. Mike delivers when he says he will deliver, and he's always available when I need him. Quality and timeliness are very important to me in dealing with my customers, and that's why I trust Malyn."

According to Gillott, the flight of the golf ball can be greatly affected by a defective paint job or dimpling when too much of a radius is developed from the dimples to the center of the ball. Manufacturers can save a lot of money if they are able to redo defective golf balls rather than toss them out or sell them as imperfect.

ABS has developed the patented Vaqua Wet Blast System for paint stripping of golf balls, and uses Malyn nozzles in its machinery. "This system will strip, wash and dry 30 dozen golf balls every 12 minutes," says Gillott. "It's very cost-effective and efficient."

So the next time your shot sails straight off the tee and directly toward the green, say a silent "thank you" to boron carbide nozzles and wet blast systems!



For more information on Malyn Industrial Ceramics, Inc., contact Mike Malyn at (716) 542-9353 or visit their website at www.malyn.com.

For more information about Automated Blasting Systems, contact Rich Gillott at (860) 528-5525 or visit their website at www.autoblast.com.