

equipment interview

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Exclusive: Cobra-Puma's new leaders speak out

Once Puma's purchase of Cobra Golf was completed in April, *PGA Magazine* got together with the organization's new leaders to discuss the transition, the future, and what it all means to PGA Professionals. Cobra is a leading brand in market share in both woods and irons, according to independent research firm Golf Datatech, owning 8.6 percent of the drivers/fairway woods/hybrids market and 6.4 percent of the irons market, through the end of March this year. Here's what Bob Phillion, president of Cobra-Puma Golf, and Brian Zender, senior vice president and general manager of Cobra Golf, had to say.

PGA Magazine: Why does this purchase make sense to Puma?

Bob Phillion: It starts with the fact that it fits into our long-term strategy. Since we entered the category in 2006, we have been reviewing how to get deeper into the sport. (It involves) our commitment to golf as a category and wanting to expand on our early success with Puma Golf, and wanting to set a global platform over the long term. The key to this is how great of a fit Cobra is with Puma. A lot of the language we talk about is very similar between the two brands. It starts with performance with an edge, using function and innovation, but doing it a little bit differently and having our own positioning within it. Both companies are inclusive, in terms of their positioning and getting people excited about the game. Our product lines are complimentary. We feel we have a compelling package for both men and women that we can offer to retailers and the consumer.

PGA Magazine: Are you looking to become a golf mega-brand?

Phillion: No, we're driving for desirability and not for size. We certainly have our hands full with the Puma side of footwear, apparel and accessories, and the Cobra side with clubs and a mix of accessories.

PGA Magazine: How will these brands become integrated?

Phillion: To be clear, we will continue to develop each brand separately. There are a number of touch points we will be collaborating on, areas such as design and research, aspects of the sales side will be combined, as well as various parts of our marketing, starting with public relations and various components of our marketing plan that we'll weave together.

PGA Magazine: What will PGA Professionals see to this extent in their respective golf shops?

Phillion: The brands will stand alone, for the most part, to the consumer. There are general aspects of look and feel that will be common across the brands, so con-



Bob Phillion (With Ricky Fowler)



Brian Zender

this Just In

Callaway has announced a promotion with Major League Baseball. During the 2010 MLB season, any player hitting a home run that travels 470 feet or more receives a set of Diablo Edge clubs. To date, only Atlanta Braves rookie Jason Heyward has earned a new set of Callaway irons...

Golfsmith has revived MacGregor Golf with a fresh product lineup, including the M85T premium titanium driver with Cup Face 360 (\$299.99); titanium game improvement M75T driver (\$199.99); muscle cavity VIP forged irons (\$799.99); game-improvement wing back M85i irons (\$699.99); ROTA series milled putters (\$129.99); plus

fairways, hybrids, wedges, balls and accessories... **Ecco USA** introduced the hybrid sport-casual Golf Street Premier shoe (\$140) that Fred Couples created buzz about at the Masters. Designed to be worn on- and off-course, the shoe features full-grain leather uppers, a sleek PU midsole and roughly 100 pre-molded traction

bars for stability... **KZG** unveiled the X95 wedge (\$109) with a single notched sole, in eight loft/bounce combinations... **Tour Edge** has released the Bazooka HT Max driver (\$149) with heel-toe weighting and high MOI and Bazooka HT Max iron set (\$259) in which each iron has a

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