

Wilson  Staff

Smooth... but Deadly!

In the latest instalment in our exclusive Taking the Test segment, *Asian Golf Monthly's* Mike Sebastian gets up close and personal with Wilson Staff's new Smooth driver.

TRY AND VISUALISE this scenario in your mind's eye. The setting is a quiet section of the Sicilian quarter of the west side of Chicago in the 1920s. It's not quiet because it's a peaceful neighbourhood – it's tranquil because this is where the big, power-wielding mob chieftains of the rotten Mafia hoods hang out.

However, this peace is not destined to last for long. One of the feuding mob leaders decides to put out a wipeout contract to take down the supreme godfather and to shunt power into his hands. And the wise guy who lands the job to gun down the ageing Mafioso is a cold-blooded killer brought in from the east – the Bronx.

For a wise guy with such a scary testimonial for slaughter, you would reckon that he would go by the name of Machine-Gun Mickey or even Baseball-bat Scarface. Instead, this kid answers to the name 'Smoothie'.

Why 'Smoothie?' Well, he is reputed to be highly efficient, precise and surgical in his contract executions and has no tolerance for mistakes.

Now, what in the name of **Al Capone** is a golf magazine doing talking about the Mafia and a wise guy called 'Smoothie?' Well, we wanted to have

some fun with the name and there are some very good analogies that we would like to draw from this little tale.

You see, the Chicago-headquartered Wilson Staff has just rolled out a spanking new driver called the Smooth. This is the same company that arms triple-Major championship winner **Padraig Harrington** with weapons to destroy his competition in the most spectacular shootouts in the world of professional golf.

Wilson Staff's Smooth shares a lot of similarities with the Mafia wise guy 'Smoothie'. It looks very conventional against a stable of competitive drivers that are anything but conventional. The almost nondescript looking head carries a mass of 460 cc but it certainly does not look threatening.

The colourings on the driver's head are also very understated – it is a metallic black with an underside that is highlighted by some strips of glossy chrome metallic insets. Against the yellows, greens, reds and blues that dominate driver heads these days, the Smooth looks quiet and laid back.

Asian Golf Monthly took delivery of a special sample of the Smooth to take out for trials and seeding amongst a select group of golfers. The first trial was con-

ducted by me and this was the first time that I have ever laid hands on a Wilson driver. When I whipped it out of my bag, it did not cause a stir amongst my flight mates because it just looked ordinary.

My sample had a 10.5-degree loft and was fitted with an ominous looking Fujikura regular-flex shaft. After my three flight mates bombed away with their thundersticks, I took my Smooth onto the deck and decided to take my time and give the new driver a chance to show me what it could do in my hands. The Smooth felt good; the shaft was suitably whippy for me and the whole driver felt really light in weight.

I took my stance and let it rip. Lo and behold, the Smooth took the ball smack on the sweet spot and sent the distance ball screaming down the middle of the fairway. This got the attention of my flight mates who all wanted a go at this new driver (this happens to me always when I test new equipment).

My immediate observation after the first hit was that the Smooth gave me higher ball speed off the clubface and this translated into even more distance. Anything that gives me more distance is welcome in my bag!

I continued using the Smooth

throughout the 18-hole test and every time I hit it off the tee-box, this new baby delivered consistency, accuracy and distance. It suddenly dawned on me why the Smooth had created quite a stir late last year when Wilson Staff's star player tried out a prototype.

Reports tell us that Harrington was so impressed with the Smooth that he decided to replace his faithful Wilson Staff Dd6+ driver with the Smooth. Now, when you have a triple Major winner changing drivers after a test, you better believe what we have to tell you.

The Smooth is a deadly weapon. This is what one of my flight mates said about the Smooth: "It's a beautiful-looking driver and it really knows how to conceal its deadly performance credentials." He added: "I'm amazed by the awesome club head speed that it generates and I reckon this is what propels the ball such great distances."

Jean-Pierre Degembe, global business

director for Wilson Staff, said: "I am not in the least surprised by these player observations. Our research and development engineers modelled the Smooth along the streamlined shape of the world's finest sports cars and this driver features an aerodynamic design and variable face geometry to deliver distance, even from miss-hits."

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The Smooth is set to cause quite a stir on the global golf scene. After the not-so-successful reign of Wilson Staff's Spine driver, the Smooth is definitely going to claim its rightful place amongst the best of the best in drivers.

Perhaps the best acid test for the Smooth will be the successes notched up by Harrington in 2009. Knowing the sort of player he is and his attention to quality, the Irishman's teaming up with the Smooth is going to prove an indomitable combination.

Like the hot, cold-blooded young Mafia wise guy 'Smoothie', get ready to soak in the mayhem that is set to play out on the world's golf courses. Go on, make your day Smooth!

