



## TERMINATOR-INSPIRED AUSSIE GOLF BALLS

**"The progressive development of man is vitally dependent on invention. It is the most important product of his creative brain."**

The great Nikola Tesla said that. And people like David Nommensen can probably relate to it more than the vast majority of us.

How many times have you wondered why something hasn't been created yet? Most people probably have inventive thoughts every day – but we stop as soon as we realise how many obstacles need to be overcome to bring our ideas to life. That isn't the case for Nommensen, who works in research and development within the oil and gas business.

The Queenslander has patented a special technology to stop corrosion on the equipment that's used in wells 14,000 feet below the earth. He calls it "synthetic metal" and it has recently been applied to create an interesting new concept for golf balls.

"The big thing with compression on golf balls is that when the ball gets hit, it deforms and its performance is then determined by how quickly it can bounce back, whether it's a chip shot or a drive," Nommensen told *Golf Australia magazine*.

"Just imagine being able to adjust that internal layer – which is reinforced with the synthetic metal endoskeleton (pictured) – so that the ball can bounce back like a clock spring. The ball would go a mile!"

Nommensen is passionate about the game of golf and is well aware of the feedback an invention like this could potentially receive. But he has done his

research and believes the balls would conform to the Rules of Golf.

"I know that someone will probably say that the balls won't conform to the Rules of Golf and they won't get the stamp of approval. But there's been an amendment a couple of years ago and a company came out with a ball that had a hollow metal core – and it got approved," Nommensen said, referencing balls created by OnCore Golf.

Moreover, Nommensen's concept could actually offer a response to one of our game's greatest issues: the distance the modern ball travels. While these balls might have the potential to fly tremendous distances, their creator says he can tweak them to make variable distance golf balls.

"We can adjust, microscopically, to create one ball that's good for driving certain distances and one ball that's good for something else. At the moment, all companies are able to change is the layer and the type of rubber used. But we can give that mantle layer a whole different characteristic that's never been available before," said Nommensen, who specialises in injection moulding.

The appearance of the balls could also offer a point of difference when it comes to shelf appeal, according to Nommensen, whose idea for the ball came to him while watching the 1984 blockbuster *The Terminator*.

"If you look at the golf ball, we use a software that mimics the bio-cellular structure of the human body and it's called a voronoi effect. We don't have to have that synthetic metal layer as deep as it is shown in the graphic, either, meaning you could create the ball using

a transparent first skin or coating so that the consumer can actually see the endoskeleton underneath ... I would love to call it The Terminator Golf Ball, but I think that might already be trademarked," Nommensen said.

Breaking into the competitive equipment market isn't an easy task – and although Nommensen has begun to approach various manufacturing companies with his concept, very few have taken his thoughts on board, despite the ability to dodge the high production costs involved with 3D metal printing.

"I'm trying to find someone within the industry who understands the research. It's a bit radical. But I think that every golf ball manufacturer is looking for a point of difference," Nommensen said.

"The cost of 3D metal printing is still high. But it's dropping quickly as the technology matures. Our patent also includes the ability to construct a metal endoskeleton using alternate, lower cost methods, such as laser cutting and metal stamping."

Like any inventor worth their salt, Nommensen has plenty of other ideas front of mind, too. One of which could help to end the arduous process of looking for lost golf balls in long grass.

"Another thing I thought about during my research came after I played at Hamilton Island. I could put a sensor in the bottom of my driver and a microscopic cable that came up the shaft to the handle, which would vibrate when the clubhead hovers over a lost ball in long grass," said Nommensen, who believes his synthetic metal could also be used to create golf clubs. ●