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Nike Introduces Stylish Golf Shoe for British Open



Article by: [Kyle Stack](#) | July 8, 2011

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London's famous Savile Row might not seem like a natural inspiration for a golf shoe, but for a senior footwear designer at Nike, it was a sensible connection. Tom Rushbrook, a native of England, was tasked with giving Nike's Lunar Control golf shoe an upgrade prior to next week's British Open, scheduled for July 14-17 at Royal St. Georges Golf Club in Sandwich, England. The craftsmanship of men's suits for which Savile Row is famous drove Rushbrook's two-day re-design project.

Available on a limited edition basis in Europe beginning July 11, and in the U.S. starting July 13, the British Open edition shoe [\$190] features herringbone tweed at the collar [the upper part of the shoe, surrounding the middle of the foot and the heel]; a red polka dot pattern on the lining; and a double stitch at the bottom of the eye-stay [the part of the lacing system closest to the toe].

Rushbrook's design was inspired by a photo he found on Google Images after doing an online search for "Savile Row." The photo displayed a grey herringbone suit with a polka-dot handkerchief in the left breast pocket, a brown walking cane and a pair of black dress shoes. "That was the main foundation to the entire project," he says, explaining that rather than focus strictly on a new colorway, he wanted to use British fashion elements to incorporate new materials into the shoe. The challenge was to keep everything understated.



The British Open, often referred to as the Open Championship, is steeped in tradition. Given the black and grey clothing typically worn by the English, Rushbrook considered simplicity to be paramount. He says, “The way I see it is you shouldn’t have too many colors in one shoe.”

He also had to be mindful of coordinating the shoes with Nike’s pre-selected outfits for many of its sponsored players, including Paul Casey, Stewart Cink and reigning Masters Champion Charl Schwartzel. Splashes of red—in the polka dots on the liner and the Power Channel pattern on the sole—match the red of the players’ shirts, golf club grips and golf bags.

One-half of the sole features more of the herringbone pattern. Rushbrook notes that cameras capture the bottom of a player’s shoe on a swing follow-through, which is what inspired the design element.

Rushbrook didn’t get everything he wanted, though. His idea to place patent leather on the toes—a tribute to the legendary Nike Jordan XI—was shot down by Nike executives, who were concerned that sunlight reflecting off the material would bother golfers during their swing. But although some elements did not make it into the Lunar Control, the shoe’s design sends an unmistakable message: Savile Row design has made it to the links.

Photo: Nike

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