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Golf Europe 2008 Trend Overview

General:

Manufacturers are attempting to fulfil the most varied demands with versatile solutions throughout the golf hardware and accessories sector - from driver to ball, from glove to shoe. The result of this development is a considerably expanded and more diversified selection. In addition, true custom fitting has become an important issue for golf clubs.

There are a number of trends not dependent on product groups, but which overlap other sectors, or even are independent of golf; including terms such as “Smart“, “IQ“ or “Nano“ – currently very popular prefixes in combination with product names or the relevant technologies.

Drivers / Woods / Hybrids / Irons / Wedges / Putters:

The most important term is and remains MOI – Moment Of Inertia. Drivers and fairway woods are endowed with sleeker shapes, inspired by aeronautics. The selection of standard options for individual models has been expanded. This is permitted because of a wider material selection; more shafts, more club face and loft options are available for various swing profiles and there are also “do-it-yourself” systems which let players decide on the shaft they would like to use depending on the conditions.

Strike zones, reinforced from the back of the club, considerably expand the sweet spot in all club categories. Hybrids with so-called progressive designs ensure constant flight curve characteristics. Thanks to rounded soles, irons as well as hybrids slide easier through the turf. Sets with several different club types (utility woods, hybrid and “ordinary” irons), offer even beginners an edge on the course. Wedges feature sharp-edged ridges providing plenty of backspin. Putters are dominated by MOI, interchangeable weights, and multi-layer club face construction. Players can look forward to plenty of futuristic-looking designs.

Balls:

The 2009 market will offer an increased selection and variety. Similar to clubs, balls are adapted to accommodate various swing profiles and speeds. For example, performance balls with tour features for medium swing speeds, or balls which benefit from high altitude as well as greater distance, and those which do the opposite and reduce unwanted altitude. The latter are meant specifically for golfers with rapid swing speed. In addition, colour plays a more important role, including glitter tints and sparkling surfaces. Technical improvements take advantage of aerodynamics and composite materials..

Shoes/ Gloves

A powerful drive depends on the stability of the golf shoe. This product group also promises innovations which support high swing speeds in particular. Soles with support inserts, surrounded by soft flex channels in a stable TPU bed, as well as metatarsal fiberglass or light alloy wedge inserts, provide a solid platform. There is a new hybrid spike combining the characteristics of metal and plastic. A new process for uppers will render shoes completely waterproof without increasing weight, reducing flexibility or breathability. For more leisure-oriented players the trend includes golf shoes with lower sole height, so-called "low profile shoes". They are available with or without spikes and can be worn off the course, on the streets or for leisure activities. Individuality is the watchword and there are models which allow golfers to customize their colors, add emblems or monograms, and which can be created from the convenience of a computer.

Swarovski crystals, a hit for ball markers during the 2008 season, add glamour to golf shoes. These glittering models will be presented for the first time at GOLF EUROPE 2008.

Energy transfer and absorption are new issues which glove manufacturers have tackled in addition to grip and fit. Integrated reinforcements absorb club vibrations, and other construction details assist with long drives thanks to special feel and fit.

Trolleys / Bags

Wheels with extremely low rolling friction, adjustable towing bar lengths to accommodate various heights, or with the smallest – convertible-friendly – dimensions, thanks to newly developed folding mechanisms, are the most important new features for trolleys. Add to this simple-to-use one-hand folding techniques. The new e-trolleys also feature decreased packing dimensions and weight. Space-saving designs are all the rage. In addition, there is an expanded selection of additional features such as hill-holders, remote controls, and

more. Colours also make more of a splash than ever before. Technical features include organizer systems, accommodating even hybrids in specially designed bays. Thanks to waterproof materials rain-covers are no longer needed. Travel bags include a new system featuring an extendable undercarriage, similar to an airplane's landing gear, which has little impact on the overall weight when released.

285 exhibitors from 26 countries present their latest trends at GOLF EUROPE 2008, held in Munich from October 5th to the 7th, 2008.

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