

Consumer spending on golf climbs to \$22 billion

JUPITER, Fla. — Golf-related consumer spending reached \$22.2 billion in 1999, according to a recent study by the National Golf Foundation (NGF), headquartered here.

The report, *Golf Consumer Spending in the U.S./2000 Edition*, shows that green fees and dues at both public and private courses, accounted for 73 percent of spending (\$16.3 billion), followed by golf club purchases with 11 percent (\$2.5 billion). Soft goods — bags, gloves, shoes and so on — ranked third with \$979 million. Golf ball purchases and range ball rentals rounded out the total.

While dues and fees were up about three percent over 1998 figures, equipment sales declined by two percent.

Breaking it down by player segments, avid golfers (playing more than 25 rounds a year) make up the smallest group (25 percent) but account for 53 percent of all golf-related spending. The average avid golfer spent \$222 on clubs, while moderate players (eight to 24 rounds a year) plunked down an average of \$118. Occasional players (less than eight rounds a year) forked over a mere \$16 for clubs.

Overall, golf club spending was down 6.6 percent from 1998 levels, but club sales are expected to rebound this year and next, the NGF said, as the replacement cycle for clubs, particularly titanium woods, sends golfers shopping.

BREAKDOWN BY SCORE, INCOME

Broken down by average score, golfers who shoot between 80 and 89 spent an average of \$1,182, the highest for any group. Private club members make up only 15 percent of the U.S. golfing population, but account for 47 percent of the spending on the game. Male players spent an average of \$462 in 1999 on golf clubs, balls, soft goods and public fees, and female players came in at \$411.

The NGF report said off-course specialty stores continue to dominate golf product sales, followed by on-course shops, sporting goods retailers and mass merchandisers.

Not surprisingly, income plays a big role in golf-related spending, the NGF found. Golfers with a household income of \$75,000 or more spent about 120 percent more overall, compared to other groups. Among the 26.3 million golfers in the country, some 10 million pull down \$75,000 or more.

Avid golfers accounted for 60 percent of private fees and dues

and 44 percent of public fees, which equates to 53 percent of total fees in 1999. "From this statistic," the report said, "it's clear why so many golf manufacturers target this group for their products."

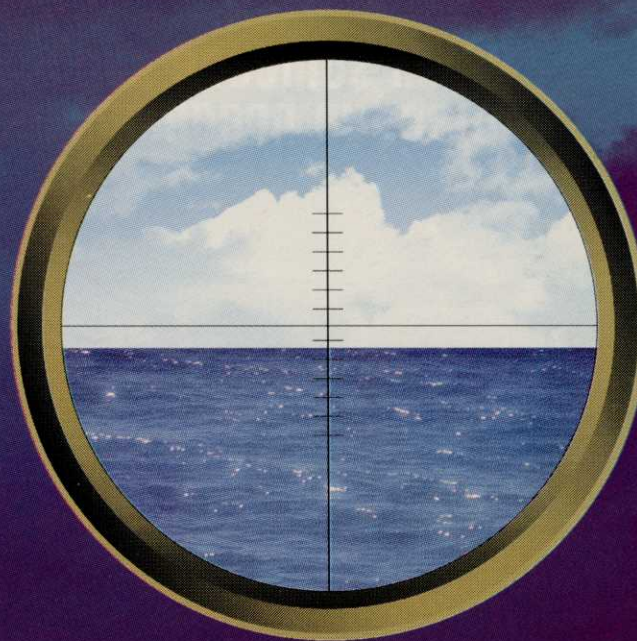
CONSUMER SPENDING IN THE U.S.

(IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS)

	1998	1999	% CHANGE
PUBLIC FEES	\$7,483	\$7,656	2.3%
PRIVATE FEES AND DUES	8,298	8,605	3.7%
RANGE BALLS ON-COURSE	940	958	1.9%
RANGE BALLS STAND-ALONE	672	722	7.4%
CLUBS	2,666	2,491	-6.6%
BALLS	793	820	3.4%
SOFT GOODS	1,017	979	-3.7%
TOTAL	\$21,869	\$22,231	1.7%

Source: National Golf Foundation's Golf Consumer Spending in the U.S./2000 Edition

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