

Recap of Athletic & Sporting Goods Sales

	1959	1958	1950
Golf Equipment	\$ 79,131,183	68,357,116	41,789,127
Baseball & Softball Equipment	34,218,054	33,981,772	29,220,703
Inflated goods	17,606,161	15,774,699	11,299,996
Boxing Gloves	495,773	527,764	555,691
Tennis, Badminton, etc. Equipment	9,524,758	8,944,499	5,702,461
Helmets & Pads	6,817,019	5,929,208	3,409,863
Athletic Shoes	28,623,356	23,375,828	12,478,224
Athletic Clothing	7,639,576	8,004,740	6,183,170
Miscellaneous Items	8,547,703	9,609,269	6,412,650
	<u>192,603,583</u>	<u>174,504,895</u>	<u>117,051,885</u>

The above figures are reported on the basis of manufacturers' selling prices, including federal excise tax. It is estimated that about 95 per cent of all suppliers sent information to Ernst & Ernst, who compiled the census.

Golf Census Shows Big Preference for Top Quality Lines

THE annual census report recently compiled for the Athletic Goods Manufacturers' Assn. By Ernst & Ernst, public accountants, shows the increase in the sales of golf equipment in the last decade in an extremely favorable light in comparison with other types of athletic goods (see table above). Sales of clubs, balls, bags and miscellaneous equipment have increased dollarwise by 93 per cent during this period and are outstripped only by football helmets and pads, which are up about 100 per cent, and athletic shoes, which show a 133 per cent increase since the 1950 census was compiled. Golf shoe sales are not

included in the latter category.

Approximately 95 per cent of the companies that manufacture the various kinds of equipment listed above cooperated in the audit.

Actually more impressive than the 10-year increase in the sales of golf equipment is the gain recorded between 1958 and 1959. For the longer period, the increase has been at the annual rate of between 9 and 10 per cent, but this was improved considerably last year when sales jumped 16 per cent. The latter figure undoubtedly reflects the wide expansion of golf facilities in the last few years. The 1958-59 increase in the sales of golf equipment once again is matched only by those of helmets and pads and athletic shoes.

Expensive Equipment Attractive

A breakdown of golf sales by Ernst and Ernst shows that with the exception of bags, the more expensive playing equipment generally has a greater attraction for



Persons who attend the PGA Championship at Firestone CC, Akron, O., in July will see what is said to be one of the finest clubhouses in the Midwest. It was completed late in 1959 and replaces the building destroyed by fire a year before. Of contemporary architecture, the L-shape building is constructed of Texas brick, Ohio Briar Hill stone and is trimmed in redwood. The first floor is framed by a huge expanse of glass that gives a panoramic view in all directions and the dining room, 40 x 120 ft., extends the entire length of the east side of the building.

the golfer than that in the lower price category.

Figures for sales of iron clubs, for example, show that those in the highest price bracket command nearly 33 per cent of the market from a unit standpoint and well over 50 per cent of the dollar volume. The balance in both units and dollars is divided among clubs in four other price brackets. Runnerup to the highest price clubs are those at the bottom of the ladder. Sales of these low price, so-called "beginners' clubs" make up nearly 25 per cent of the market, undoubtedly indicating that there is a huge influx of new players. Dollarwise, however, these sales only account for about 12 per cent of the manufacturers' volume.

Approximately the same situation prevails where wood clubs are involved. Higher price woods account for 35 per cent of the unit sales and about 55 per cent of the dollar income. The cheapest woods make up less than 20 per cent of unit sales while those in the next highest category account for about 30 per cent. This indicates that the beginning golfer is content to go along with the cheapest possible irons he can buy but is more selective in choosing woods.

Want Balls With Distance

Golf ball sales in the Athletic Goods Manufacturers' report are listed in three price categories. Golfers are quite overwhelmingly in favor of the most expensive line as nearly 60 per cent of them purchase

the highest price balls. As a result, the dollar volume here is close to 75 per cent. Balls in the medium price range account for only 16 per cent of unit sales and the cheapest ones, about 25 per cent.

There is a very decided about-face made by golfers in the purchase of the top quality line golf bags. Only about 6 per cent of them buy the highest price bags in comparison with the 54 per cent who purchase the cheapest ones. Slightly more than 30 per cent of the players select bags in the second lowest price range.

New Record in Course Building Says Golf Foundation Head

Pres. Joe Graffis of National Golf Foundation reported at the Foundation's annual meeting at the Yale Club, New York City, April 22nd, that the past six months had established a new half-year record in course building. In the period construction had started on 97 standard courses and 20 enlargements of existing courses. There now are 301 courses and 84 additions in some stage of construction.

Interest continues to grow in Par 3 courses, with construction starting on 22 more since last fall.

The Foundation president's report pointed out that in the past 10 years there had been an increase of 19.2 per cent in U. S. population, 21.6 per cent increase in number of courses and 32.5 per cent increase in the number of golfers.