

WHERE GOLFERS BUY

by Vincent J. Pastena

Although in 1970 pro shops have made greater gains in the equipment categories, GOLFDOM's survey shows that department stores still receive the major portion of the soft goods business

GOLFDOM once again has asked golfers, "Where do you usually purchase golf equipment and apparel?" and the answers, unfortunately in some cases, echoed those of the 1969 study. In a survey of GOLF Magazine subscribers, it was found that golf professionals still are getting an inadequate share of the soft goods business—about 17.4 per cent versus 15 per cent in 1969. Department stores continue to get the lion's share of the remaining business.

Pro shops remain the leaders in the equipment categories and in golf shoes and golf gloves—two categories that lie between equipment and apparel. In fact, the 1970 figures indicated that pro shops had made even greater gains in the equipment market. Some 75.5 per cent of the golfer-respondents in 1970 indicated that they purchased woods at pro shops; 74.5 per cent purchased irons at pro shops and 73.8 per cent purchased putters at pro shops. In each case, the figure was more than 5 per cent greater than the respective figures in 1969.

For the 1970 study, GOLFDOM also did a breakdown of each merchandise category by type of golfer—private club, semi-private club and public course. Predictably in every merchandise category, the percentage of private club members who make purchases at pro shops was significantly greater than the percentage for the other two golfer types.

Expanding the survey, GOLFDOM also asked the golfer how often he purchased a complete set of clubs, a set of woods, a set of irons, a putter and utility clubs. On the first three categories, "every three years" and "every five

years" received the largest percentage of response. On putters "every year" and "every two years" received high response, whereas responses on utility clubs were distributed well in the time periods from "every year" through "every five years."

Golfers also were asked how many dozens of golf balls they purchased in an average year. Highest percentage of the over-all response came in the "two to four dozens" range. "One to two dozens" was next, followed by "four to six dozens." The buying patterns of private club, semi-private club and public course golfers were relatively similar.

Looking into the potential for pro shops in the gift market, some 69.2 per cent of the golfer-respondents said that they purchased golf merchandise as gifts. The runaway leader among gift items was golf balls, voted by 94.6 per cent of the respondents. Golf shirts, golf sweaters and golf gloves, respectively, were the next three gift items most frequently indicated.

GOLFDOM still feels that the professional has a long way to go to build up his soft goods business. Last year, in our report of the 1969 survey, "Pros Losing Out on Soft Goods" (February, 1970, p. 54a), we offered some advice on improving the apparel side of the pro shop business. At the core of these suggestions was the need for evaluation and improvement by many professionals in these basic merchandising practices: buying, bookkeeping, reordering, displaying and promoting. Only when this need is met, are we likely to see a reversal in the golfer's buying pattern of soft goods.

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Where Golfers Buy Golf Equipment and Golfwear

1969

Item	Pro shop %	Sporting goods store %	Department store %	Other retail store %
Woods	70.1	17.7	8.5	3.7
Irons	69.4	18.2	8.5	3.9
Putters	68.0	18.5	9.5	4.0
Golf bags	53.3	24.8	16.1	5.8
Golf shoes	41.9	15.0	25.3	17.8
Golf slacks	11.9	6.5	62.7	18.9
Golf shirts	15.9	7.0	60.5	16.6
Golf sweaters	17.6	7.0	57.8	17.6
Golf gloves	77.4	10.9	8.7	3.0

Frequency of Golf Club Purchases*

Frequency of Purchases	Complete Set of Clubs	Set of Woods	Set of Irons	Putter	Utility Clubs
Every year	2.8	3.5	2.3	17.9	16.5
Every 2 years	6.6	9.6	8.1	22.2	15.1
Every 3 years	25.9	26.1	21.5	14.1	21.6
Every 4 years	13.1	11.8	13.4	8.4	9.6
Every 5 years	25.4	25.6	27.2	15.2	19.3
Every 6 years	6.9	6.1	8.1	3.0	3.7
Every 7 years	2.9	3.5	3.7	1.6	2.3
Every 8 years	2.2	3.2	4.3	1.1	1.8
Every 9 years	.2	0	0	0	0
Every 10 years or more	14.0	10.6	11.4	16.5	10.1

*Figures indicate percentage of respondents

Where Golfers Buy Golf Equipment and Golfwear

1970

Item	Pro shop %	Sporting goods store %	Department store %	Other retail store %
Woods				
Private	85.7	9.8	2.8	1.7
Semi-private	65.6	22.1	9.3	3.0
Public	67.1	16.9	9.1	6.9
Over-all Response	75.5	14.7	6.2	3.6

Item	Pro shop %	Sporting goods store %	Department store %	Other retail store %
Irons				
Private	84.8	10.8	2.7	1.7
Semi-private	64.9	23.0	8.6	3.5
Public	65.7	17.7	9.2	7.4
Over-all Response	74.5	15.6	6.1	3.8

Item	Pro shop %	Sporting goods store %	Department store %	Other retail store %
Putters				
Private	83.6	11.0	3.1	2.3
Semi-private	63.6	21.0	8.6	6.8
Public	65.3	19.5	8.5	6.7
Over-all Response	73.8	15.7	5.9	4.6

Item	Pro shop %	Sporting goods store %	Department store %	Other retail store %
Golf balls				
Private	84.3	7.1	3.6	5.0
Semi-private	58.1	16.1	15.5	10.3
Public	59.4	13.4	17.0	10.2
Over-all Response	70.8	11.1	10.3	7.8

Item	Pro shop %	Sporting goods store %	Department store %	Other retail store %
Golf bags				
Private	73.6	13.9	6.8	5.7
Semi-private	38.9	27.5	20.4	13.2
Public	48.3	20.6	20.1	11.0
Over-all Response	57.9	19.1	14.0	9.0

Item	Pro shop %	Sporting goods store %	Department store %	Other retail store %
Golf shoes				
Private	55.1	8.2	16.1	20.6
Semi-private	32.9	15.0	35.9	16.2
Public	36.1	17.6	27.9	18.4
Over-all Response	44.0	12.8	24.4	18.8

Item	Pro shop %	Sporting goods store %	Department store %	Other retail store %
Golf slacks				
Private	15.3	5.9	56.1	22.7
Semi-private	3.3	5.3	76.3	15.1
Public	6.5	5.1	77.2	11.2
Over-all Response	9.8	5.6	67.2	17.4

Item	Pro shop %	Sporting goods store %	Department store %	Other retail store %
Golf skirts				
Private	25.6	4.5	49.4	20.5
Semi-private	6.9	5.2	69.0	18.9
Public	10.2	4.5	69.3	16.0
Over-all Response	17.5	4.6	59.1	18.8

Item	Pro shop %	Sporting goods store %	Department store %	Other retail store %
Golf shirts				
Private	24.5	3.1	51.7	20.7
Semi-private	7.9	6.4	73.6	12.1
Public	8.6	5.7	76.6	9.1
Over-all Response	15.6	4.7	64.8	14.9

Item	Pro shop %	Sporting goods store %	Department store %	Other retail store %
Golf blouses				
Private	26.4	2.9	52.8	17.9
Semi-private	11.5	3.8	71.1	13.6
Public	9.6	4.1	74.0	12.3
Over-all Response	18.9	3.4	62.2	15.5

Item	Pro shop %	Sporting goods store %	Department store %	Other retail store %
Golf sweaters				
Private	25.7	2.8	50.6	20.9
Semi-private	6.2	6.2	72.1	15.5
Public	10.6	5.0	72.9	11.5
Over-all Response	16.6	4.4	62.2	16.8

Item	Pro shop %	Sporting goods store %	Department store %	Other retail store %
Golf jackets				
Private	39.2	4.2	40.8	15.8
Semi-private	14.7	5.1	66.2	14.0
Public	13.7	6.4	68.1	11.8
Over-all Response	26.1	5.2	54.7	14.0

Item	Pro shop %	Sporting goods store %	Department store %	Other retail store %
Golf gloves				
Private	88.8	6.3	2.3	2.6
Semi-private	76.3	11.5	7.7	4.5
Public	66.0	11.7	14.3	8.0
Over-all Response	79.3	9.0	7.1	4.6

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**Dozens of Golf Balls Purchased by Golfers
in Average Year***

No. of Dozens	Private	Semi-private	Public	Over-all Response
Up to 1	7.4	10.0	13.5	9.9
1-2	14.8	26.7	32.0	23.2
2-4	28.2	33.3	30.0	29.5
4-6	23.9	15.6	12.0	18.3
6-8	8.6	7.2	6.7	7.7
8-10	6.4	3.3	3.1	4.7
10-12	3.3	1.1	1.2	2.0
Over 12	7.4	2.8	1.5	4.7

*Figures indicate percentage of respondents for each category

Do you purchase golf merchandise as gifts?

Yes—69.2% No—30.8%

What items do you purchase as gifts?*

Golf clubs	13.9%
Golf bags	15.2%
Golf slacks	13.9%
Golf shirts	42.5%
Golf sweaters	33.6%
Golf balls	94.6%
Golf shoes	10.2%
Golf skirts	7.5%
Golf blouses	7.9%
Golf jackets	19.8%
Golf gloves	29.3%

*Figures indicate percentage of respondents for each category

When Golfers Buy*

Item	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
Golf clubs	45.9%	19.4%	19.8%	14.9%
Golf balls	34.1%	30.6%	21.2%	14.1%
Golf bags	45.2%	21.5%	17.1%	16.2%
Golf shoes	49.9%	22.3%	16.1%	11.7%
Golf slacks	44.8%	28.9%	17.1%	9.2%
Golf skirts	43.5%	33.3%	14.0%	9.2%
Golf shirts	41.8%	31.7%	16.6%	9.9%
Golf blouses	45.1%	33.0%	14.1%	7.8%
Golf sweaters	29.2%	12.0%	40.5%	18.3%
Golf jackets	34.5%	10.1%	40.2%	15.2%
Golf gloves	37.8%	30.9%	19.1%	12.2%

* In some cases golfer respondents have answered more than one season