

TESTS OF GOLF BALLS VS. ADVERTISING CLAIMS

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Tests of golf balls have been sponsored by the United States Golf Association in an effort to determine whether certain brands have advantages in distance qualities claimed in published advertising.

Two types of tests were conducted: one outdoors to measure distance of flight and one indoors to measure velocity immediately after the ball is struck.

As a result of the tests, it is the Association's view that no brand is appreciably superior to its several nearest competitors.

In the distance-of-flight tests, some brands which have made the greatest claims of extra distance were compared with a mixed collection of balls consisting of many good quality brands. The average carry of all balls tested was approximately the same when Brand A and Brand B were either counted in the average or excluded from it.

In the velocity tests, the average of each brand was within USGA specifications; however, one brand was ruled as not conforming because an appreciable percentage of its balls was slightly in excess of the technical limit.

Outdoor Flight Tests

The USGA conducted a series of outdoor tests on a driving machine this spring and had access to reports of other tests by manufacturers.

To check results from those tests, the USGA then authorized the United States Testing Company, Hoboken, N. J., to conduct an independent test at the Winged Foot Golf Club, Mamaroneck, N. Y., on May 20, 1959. This test was observed by the Chairman of the USGA Implements and Ball Committee and the USGA Executive Director.

Following are extracts from the report of the United States Testing Company regarding the Winged Foot test:

"The purpose of this test program was to ascertain the distance of flight

(carry) of various golf balls after impact with a uniform, known impact velocity.

"The tests were conducted using a golf ball driving machine, manufactured by the MacNeill Engineering Co., Waltham, Mass. The site of the tests was the ninth fairway, East course. The fairway was marked off, starting at a distance of 180 yards from the driving machine. Rope markers were laid across the fairway in increments of 10 yards in such a manner that the distance from 180 yards to 260 yards was clearly defined.

"The driving machine, with its variable speed motor, was pre-set at a fixed impact velocity to produce a carry around the 220-yard range. After the range was determined by use of practice golf balls, the impact velocity was set and was not changed throughout the entire test. The direction of drive was north to south with a slight westerly wind prevailing throughout the test run.

"The driving machine drives two balls simultaneously by separate driving arms, and in order to eliminate any variation due to the degree of impact each ball was driven with both arms of the machine. Four men were stationed in the area laid out by our markers to record the point of carry and identification of the ball being driven.

"The method of test employed in this program was a fair one.

"The golf balls that were used in this test were purchased in pro shops of several golf clubs by the client. Fourteen brand name golf balls were tested giving a wide selection of similar quality balls."

Following are composite average carries with respect to blows by both arms of the driving machine as reported by the United States Testing Company:

All brands tested: 223.7 yards.

All brands tested except Brand A: 223.6 yards.

All brands tested except Brand B: 223.4 yards.

Indoor Velocity Tests

Velocity tests under controlled conditions indoors are conducted at regular intervals by the USGA, pursuant to a Rule of Golf that the velocity of the ball be not greater than 250 feet per second when measured on the USGA's apparatus, with a maximum tolerance of 2% allowed on any ball.

All except one brand of ball was considered to have conformed with this Rule in the most recent USGA velocity tests. In the one non-conforming brand the fastest balls were only slightly more than one foot per second beyond the tolerated limit, but the average of all balls of this brand was within the limit.

Small Balls

The Association also has renewed its request to USGA Member Clubs that they prohibit use of balls which do not conform with USGA specifications. This has special reference to balls which measure

less than 1.680 inches in diameter, which is the minimum under USGA Rules.

The Association is conscious of a growing practice among certain golfers to play a smaller ball. This is not only unsportsmanlike but is a threat to the integrity of the game.

The remedy rests with the Member Clubs.

Improved Test Sought

The Association is seeking to develop improved methods of limiting the distance qualities of golf balls.

Although a longer ball might offer brief, temporary advantages to a few, its use inevitably would distort the present playing values of golf courses and greatly damage the national investment in clubs and courses.

It is to the interest of every club to cooperate actively in supporting the Association's program.

USGA COMPETITIONS FOR 1960

<u>Championship or Team Match</u>	<u>Entries Close</u>	<u>Qualifying Rounds</u>	<u>Dates of Event</u>	<u>Location</u>
Curtis Cup Match (1)	—	—	May 20-21	Lindrick G. C., Worksop, Nottingham.
Open	May 4	May 23 June 6	June 16-17-18	Cherry Hills C. C., Englewood, Colo.
Amateur Public Links	*June 2	†June 19-26	July 11-16	Ala Wai G. C., Honolulu, Hawaii
Women's Open	July 6	None	July 21-22-23	Worcester C. C., Worcester, Mass.
Junior Amateur	June 29	July 19	Aug. 3-6	Milburn G. & C. C., Overland Park, Kan.
Americas Cup Match (2)	—	—	Aug. 11-12	Ottawa H. & G. Club, Ottawa, Canada
Girls' Junior	July 29	None	Aug. 15-19	The Oaks C. C., Tulsa, Okla.
Women's Amateur	Aug. 3	None	Aug. 22-27	Tulsa C. C., Tulsa, Okla.
Amateur	Aug. 10	Aug. 30	Sept. 12-17	St. Louis C. C., Clayton, Mo.
Senior Amateur	Aug. 24	Sept. 7	Sept. 19-24	Oyster Harbors C., Osterville, Mass.
World Amateur Team	—	—	Sept. 28-Oct. 1	Merion G. C., Ardmore, Pa.

Re Amateur Public Links Championship:

* Entries close with each Sectional Qualifying Chairman.

† Exact date in each Section to be fixed by Sectional Chairman.

(1) Women's amateur teams: British Isles vs. United States.

(2) Men's amateur teams: Canada vs. Mexico vs. United States.