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Weekly 18

Tracking the hottest products for 2006



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Archive

ORLANDO, Fla. -- Caveat emptor, golf fans.

For those of you whose Latin is worse than Tiger Woods' driving accuracy, it means "Let the buyer beware."

After a stint at this week's PGA Merchandise Show, the Weekly 18 departs from its usual take on Tiger and the gang to deliver news on some of the hottest, coolest and craziest golf equipment on the market for the 2006 season.

Of course, there's no way to write a complete list on which products are generating more buzz than others; after all, how do you compare, say, a 3-wood to a woman's golf shoe? Or headwear to swing training devices? Quite simply, it isn't feasible. The event includes 1,200 exhibitors from 26 countries, covering 1.1 million gross square feet, leaving even the most dutiful reporter's head spinning at the enormity of it all.

Instead, this list is comprised of those products that sparked our interest -- and, seemingly, that of consumers at the Show this week -- and may do the same for you. (As always, consult Golf Digest's annual Hot List for a complete ranking of new equipment.)

So don't necessarily rush out to buy everything you see here; it's simply a wide sampling of merchandise that grabbed our attention. Like we said: Caveat emptor.

Fashion

J.Lindeberg men's golf line: Simply put, you're just not cool until you're outfitted in this high-end line of tight, bright clothes that got it's big break in golf when Jesper Parnevik took to wearing the company's duds on the course. Its other players now include Baddeley and Hank Kuehne, as it continues to set the standard in the nouveau chic line of threads. Of course, while you'll look like a million bucks in the lime greens and fluorescent yellows, this pricey apparel almost costs that much, too.

Lija women's golf line: This one's for the ladies, but you won't be confined to the course in these clothes. As it was explained to us, oftentimes men can go to the office, play a round of golf and grab dinner all in the same outfit, while women would need three different wardrobes. Not anymore. This line is perfectly acceptable in all walks of life, though ladies will certainly catch other players' eyes when wearing it on the course.

Pukka headwear: From the company that introduced us to the Vucket last year -- a bucket-style hat with the top cut out -- comes a new line of stylish, dressy hats. For those who long for the days of Sam Snead-type headwear, if it ever makes a comeback, Pukka could be right at the forefront of the revolution. With Greg Norman semi-retired and Brian Baird sporting a baseball-style cap, we can't think of any players on tour wearing alternative dome coverings. That trend has to stop sometime, right?


Williams Golfwear: Sometimes you just root for a company to make it. When founder and CEO Paul Williams found out about the PGA Show less than two weeks ago, he had large color photos of his products made (he's also the company's model), printed some brochures and booked a flight from his residence in Bristol, England (no ESPN offices in that Bristol; we asked). The product line features brightly-colored pants with alternately-hued pockets, many including stripes. Ranging from \$100-\$135, these are cool and affordable.



Scott Halleran/Getty Images

With 1,200 exhibitors at the PGA Show, there are plenty of hot products this year.

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