

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT: GOLF BALLS

~ Sibling Rivalries for 2011 ~



BRIDGESTONE
The two-piece **FIX** (\$19.99/dozen) for recreational golfers replaces the former TreoSoft, generating more spin and control around the greens because of its newly formulated soft Ionomer cover. A low-compression core helps yield a higher launch with less spin.

BRIDGESTONE
Past versions of the **Tour B330-S** have been very popular with better golfers. Now the 2011 model (\$56/dozen) features a new material that'll fuel 105 mph-plus swing speeds with more tee shot distance and better wind piercing.

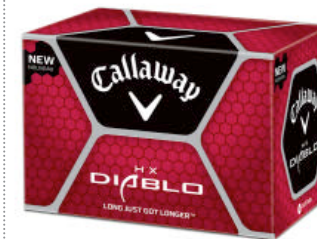


TAYLORMADE
The soft-feeling **Burner Tour** (\$22/dozen) sports a new softer cover and large, low-compression core for high spin around the green where you need it, and less on 8-iron-and-longer strokes where you don't.

TAYLORMADE
The next-generation **Burner** (\$19.99/dozen) aims to maximize distance and feel through a high launch and long carry. Its high-energy, low-compression core yields distance and soft feel. The cover is soft, resilient, durable and shear-resistant.



CALLAWAY
The soft core of the three-piece **HX Diablo Tour** (\$25.99/dozen) gets firmer toward the outside, for low driver spin and more distance. A soft cover enhances feel and yields more spin on short shots, while an inner cover reduces driver spin.



CALLAWAY
Meanwhile, the two-piece, distance-oriented **HX Diablo** (\$19.99/dozen) wraps a soft, resilient core with an Ionomer cover that promotes low spin and distance off the driver. Like its sibling, this model has HEX Aerodynamics instead of conventional dimples, for a more penetrating flight.

Aside from breaking in a new set of clubs, is there any greater on-course equipment rush than teeing up a fresh, brand-new golf ball? You get that unspoken confidence that you'll nail your drives and pinpoint your approaches. Well, that sentiment will be magnified in 2011 because ball manufacturers are packing their products with even more performance features. Think low-compression cores that ultimately help soften impact feel yet gain yardage when you need the long ball. And when you strive for some check-action spin as you approach the pin from 150 yards or try to stick it close from the side of the green, these new softer covers conveniently help out. There are other changes you'll notice in the ball market. Last year, Srixon made a retro-splash with its fluorescent Tour Yellow Z-Star golf balls. They were so well received by golfers and Tour

PLAY BALL

By SCOTT KRAMER

pros that the company is expanding that color to other ball models this year. Competitor Bridgestone has taken notice, debuting its popular e6 ball in both yellow and orange. You'll also be happy to see that the bulk of performance balls seem to be dropping slightly in price: Even top brands will cost you roughly \$20-\$25/dozen.

With so many choices, you may not be sure which ball is best for you. Which is why nearly every ball company now offers some form of fitting. Titleist and Bridgestone have traveling fitting centers—check their respective websites for dates and locations—and others offer interactive, online systems that'll help you zero in on the right model. Of course, nothing beats good old trial-and-error—which gives you the chance to sample all these fun new offerings.