

OUTDOORS

What's in your golfer's stocking?

andyHALL
Special to Florida Weekly



With Christmas only weeks away many golf widows, friends and family are seeking that special gift they know will satisfy their golf addict. The annual search is on for the perfect item every golfer wants in their stocking, so I thought I'd provide a few suggestions.

If your budget is big and you're looking to provide your golfer with something practical, you might want to consider a golf rangefinder. They come in a variety of styles; most work with optics and lasers, and the useful ones range between \$150-\$400.

The rangefinder is typically a binocular containing a cross-hair sight. When the cross hairs are placed on a target, it gives a distance readout after you press the button to activate the laser. A golf rangefinder is most useful for distances inside 250 yards, so spending money

on a device with a 1000 plus yard range is unnecessary.

User reviews indicate a steady hand, usually supported by the golf cart help rangefinders provide accurate distances, and many courses provide laser reflectors on the flagpole, but the flag also provides a good target. One consideration, many rangefinders read the furthest target available instead of the closest. Perfect if you have tree limbs or brush in your line of sight, but on the golf course you'll want to read the closest target.

I know there are many more expensive rangefinders available, but until your golfer has a professional-price-tag golf swing, you probably don't need a professional-price-tag rangefinder.

Another item particularly useful in southwest Florida is golf outerwear, because of our long rainy season and occasional cold mornings in winter. Golf outerwear for southwest Florida should be waterproof, but made of breathable material for hot humid days. Complete sets including the jacket and pants range between \$200 - \$400, but you can opt to purchase a single item if you're constrained by budget.

I suggest you consider outerwear made specifically for our changing conditions. Light breathable jackets with zip-out sleeves allow gradual removal as winter mornings heat up, and are perfect during summer with passing rain showers. I like jackets with easy



access chest pockets for golf balls, tees and scorecard, and adjustable cinches for fit and comfort.

Rain pants with removable leg panels are a nice feature as they keep the wind-chill at bay, while minimizing the time and effort for removal, along with storage requirements. A number of golfwear manufacturers offer these options in their products, including FootJoy, SunMountain and Sunderland.

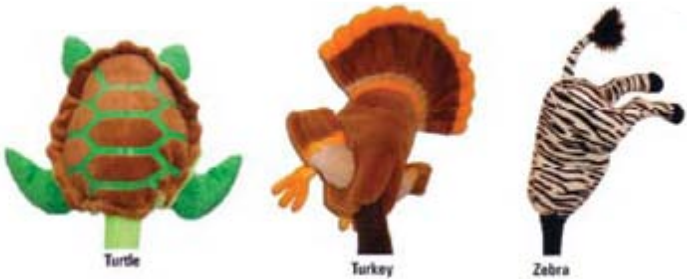
If you're working off a small budget, several items come to mind that I think your golfer will appreciate. You might want to consider something that they won't typically buy for themselves.

Custom golf club head covers are something most golfers enjoy, but are slow to buy when visiting their favorite proshop or golf store. They routinely convey the golfers personality, affiliation to school

or organization, or are just whimsical in nature, almost like the game they play. Novelty head covers range from \$20 - \$25 and are available locally or online. I enjoy the animal head cover I received last year, and just purchased a "horse's ass" head cover for a close associate.

Personalized or logo golf balls are an affordable option that gift givers can purchase online, but you'll need to order them now for Christmas. Golfers of all skill levels appreciate personalized golf balls. They're perfect when playing in large groups or games like captain's choice, or when discerning that the ball that strangely landed in the rough is yours. They usually range between \$20-\$30 per dozen depending on the brand and number of balls ordered.

Regardless, golf gifts are greatly appreciated whether practical or fun, and they always add to this game we play. ■



Bonneville Time Machines



The Bonneville was incredibly hip in the Sixties and still holds up as the standard of classic design today. They look every inch the part but go faster, stop quicker and handle better than the original. Powered by 865cc parallel twin engine with loads of accessories to make your Bonnie even groovier.

The Bonneville. A pedigree that few models can match.

Triumph Motorcycles of Fort Myers

16090 S. Tamiami Trail
Fort Myers, FL 33980
239-481-8100
www.gcmotorcycles.com

Go your own way

www.TriumphMotorcycles.com



Give a Tasteful Gift This Holiday Season!



17650 San Carlos Blvd.
239-482-6765
www.sandybutler.com