Gifts galore for naughty/nice golfer

by Tod Leonard

In the spirit of "any golf gift is better than the best pair of socks," we offer this shopping guide, with the hope that this year in golf brings you better scores, better friendships and only a pinch of insanity.

COOL STUFF

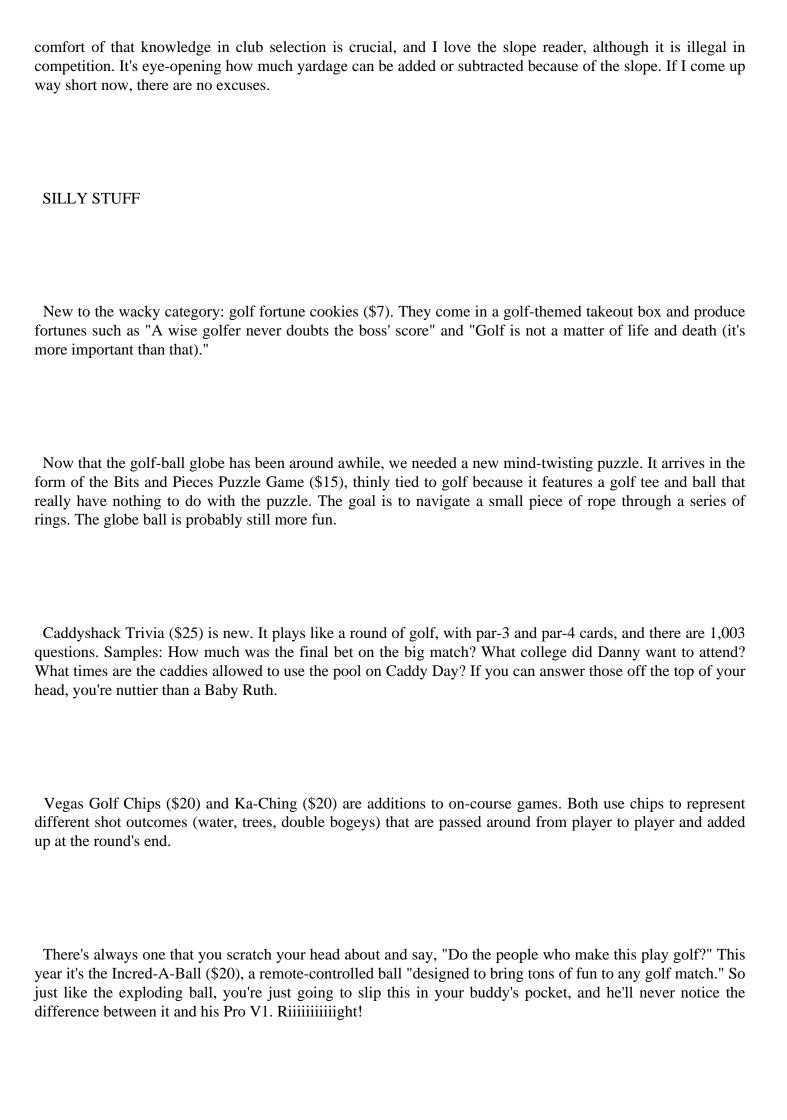
GIFTS FOR THE GOLFER - Whether it's a 'Life is Good' shirt, a football head cover or a box of birdie balls - a practice ball that mimics the flight of a golf ball - this holiday shopping season brings a number of options for the golfer on your list. CNS Photo by Howard Lipin. "Life is Good" - A great motto, and a fun, casual clothing line that features the now-familiar stick figures with big smiles on their faces. Golf is big in the LIG world, and they've got a nice selection of items. Honestly, I'm as happy getting one of the pigment-dyed T-shirts (\$23) as I would be with an \$80 polo. The items include pajama bottoms (\$30), boxers (\$20), women's tech T-shirts (\$30), hats (\$20) and coffee mugs (\$10).

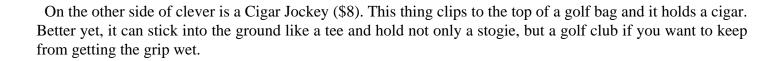
It seems like, overnight, everybody in the airport had a suitcase or briefcase with a pull handle. Now there's a golf bag, the Datrek Roller (\$150), for those who just can't shoulder the load from the parking lot to the golf cart. For the serious walker, there is the Bag Boy C550 (\$160) that is very heavy duty, has fat tires, and still folds to an amazing 27 inches.

Most women golfers would probably agree: Few players on the LPGA have more fashion sense than Paula Creamer, including her sunglasses. And now she has her own Paula Creamer Collection of shades (\$70). And no, not all of them are pink! Paula has her own line of pink Precept golf balls, and if you catch any flak from your friends, ladies, tell them the Pink Panther won on the tour this year with them.

The Birdie Ball is a practice ball that first appeared a few years ago. It really isn't a ball, but a plastic thing that looks like a napkin ring. It can mimic the flight of a golf ball, but doesn't fly far. A nice practice tool in a small yard, Birdie Balls are \$25 per dozen, and separate accessories include a plastic strike pad with balls (\$35) and a short-game target with balls (\$40).

	se who never get the time to wash their clubs at the course, there's the Club Tub (\$50). It's a compact, tub with internal brushes to quickly clean your clubs.
opening t	llseye Cup (\$20) is a yellow plastic ring that fits into any cup on the putting green and reduces the to the cup by one-third. A good way to sharpen your putting aim, and it can also be turned to take a e on breaking putts.
HIGH-T	TECH STUFF
www.bre	my favorite conceptual gadget of the year is the Exelys Breakmaster Digital Green Reader (\$80, akmaster.com), seen in commercials on The Golf Channel. This contraption is as illegal as a juiced it comes to competition, but it figures to be a real eye-opener for most golfers.
green, the should be severity of it's not a	atting guru Dave Pelz will tell you that the average hack has no idea how to truly read breaks in the at most of what we do is complete guesswork, so anything that might put some science to the task e valuable. You place the Breakmaster near your ball on the line of the putt, and it will read the of the slope and display an arrow that shows how much to play the ball outside the hole. Of course, cure-all, since speed and the quality of your stroke are huge factors, but at least it gives us a repeated age of the line. It seems like a great practice tool.
helped m	st practical high-tech gadget? That's any easy one, too. In the past few years, nothing I have tried has by game more than the Bushnell Pinseeker (\$400). I gush about it to anybody I play with. Friends get in only one round.
	re so many yardage gadgets out there, but the binocular-sized Pinseeker accomplishes everything. It is in on most targets - trees, rocks, bunkers, water, flagstick - and give you the exact yardage. The





READ THIS

Mark Frost, author of one of the sport's all-time great books, "The Greatest Game Ever Played," produced another wonderful telling of a true tale this year in "The Match" (\$25). It's the story of a high-stakes, 1956 showdown arranged by Eddie Lowery, the former kid caddie of Francis Ouimet who became a wealthy auto dealer in San Francisco. At Cypress Point, Ben Hogan and Byron Nelson take on amateurs Ken Venturi and Harvie Ward in a match that produces 27 birdies and an eagle. Guess who wins?

Two other standouts come to mind: "Tommy's Honor" (\$27.50), Kevin Cook's account of the lives of Old and Young Tom Morris, and "Where Golf is Great" (\$60), a 5-pound coffee table book on Scotland and Ireland that was named Book of the Year by the U.S. Golf Association.

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