

# New Golf Balls 2005

O I R T Y



O O Z E N S

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Which ball will you pick out of the lineup? Which ball will be called "criminal" by players in your foursome because of the seemingly illegal distance o the tee and unfair touch around the greens?  
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By Laurie Lee Dovey



Alias: **Nike One Platinum**

Info: **Three covers — inner, middle and outer. Platinum One core allows aggressive players to apply variable loads to the ball.**

Contact: [www.nikegolf.com](http://www.nikegolf.com) - 1-888-799-6453



Alias: **Srixon Z-URS**

Info: **Urethane performance technology: 330-dimple pattern generating a high trajectory with a penetrating ball flight.**

Contact: [www.srixon.com](http://www.srixon.com) - 1-888-4-SRIXON

The future of golf ball technology took center stage this year as a result of a letter from the United States Golf Association (USGA) to manufacturers last spring. The USGA requested that manufacturers voluntarily develop prototype balls, for study by the USGA, that perform at reduced distance standards. The USGA requested prototype designs that would conform to overall distance standards of 15 and 25 yards less than the current 317-yard standard.

In the March 2005 letter, Dick Ruge, senior technical director for the USGA, said, "The USGA and the R&A continue to believe that no rule changes are needed under current conditions. However, we believe that it is our responsibility to be prepared to make rule changes, if future conditions demonstrate the need to do so."

Ruge further stated that, "Since late 2002, the USGA and R&A have been conducting research into how golf ball design and construction affects golf ball performance. The purpose of this research is to gain a better understanding of golf ball technology so that if the need to change rules arises, we will be guided by scientific knowledge and be able to act in a timely manner."

For now, the Rules, as they relate to golf ball design, have not changed. New ball offerings for 2005 are designed to meet the current legal standard. Now if only most of us could hit them that far.

Titleist, the undisputed leader in golf ball sales, unveiled improvements to balls within its three established microbrands — Pro V1, NXT and DT SoLo. By developing improvements to the core formulation and redesigning the casing layer of the Pro V1, Titleist has advanced the incredibly popular golf ball with improved launch conditions, while maintaining its drop-and-stop performance into the green. The new Pro V1 leaves the clubface faster and with slightly lower spin for longer, straighter shots and a penetrating ball flight. The New Pro V1 remains the ball with the most game-optimizing technology within the Pro V1 family for the majority of professionals and amateurs.



Alias: **New Titleist Pro V1**

Info: **Improved launch conditions: drop-and-stop performance into the green.**

Contact: [www.titleist.com](http://www.titleist.com) - 1-800-225-8500

Titleist improved the new NXT Tour through new advanced dual-core technology. The technology consists of a very soft inner core and firmer outer core for soft feel and optimum short-game spin with measurably longer distance on driver and iron shots.

A new high-lift construction and soft, faster core formulation that delivers longer distance on all shots while retaining its feel-good performance drive the new DT SoLo. Golfers with moderate swing speeds who require additional lift for optimum carry and overall distance will benefit the most from the improvements to this Titleist offering.

Nike continued to garner attention for its golf ball lineup by unveiling the Nike One Platinum, the first ball designed to maximize the potential of larger-headed drivers.

While studying Tiger Woods, Nike's golf ball guru, Rock Ishii, saw that Tiger hit the ball farther and controlled it better with his new driver, the 460cc Nike Ignite. However, Ishii could see that Tiger wasn't reaching his potential. Consequently, Nike was challenged to develop a ball that was longer, yet with the ability to be controlled with larger-headed drivers and still maintain spin performance around the green.

The Platinum's progressive density core with a soft center and a progressively harder outer shell provides lower spin off the tee, even with the soft outer cover. Three layers, beyond the core, have specific purposes. The inner cover, which is closest to the core, is designed to reduce spin off the driver. The middle cover provides superior mid-iron control. The outer cover, which is softer than the Nike One Gold, promotes incredible feel around the green. The outer cover also features a proprietary 408-dimple pattern for a higher trajectory and more penetrating ball flight through the apex of the ball's trajectory. It descends at a less steep angle, promoting more distance and roll.

Srixon added a new model to its urethane performance technology family — the Srixon Z-URS. The main difference between the Z-URS and the Z-UR is in the core compression. Z-URS features a 10-percent lower compression than the



Alias: **Dimplit 1070**

Info: **Relatively unknown ball with big-time performance. Two-piece design performs much like a three-piece ball.**

Contact: [www.dimplit.com](http://www.dimplit.com) - 1-877-DIMPLIT



Alias: Dunlop LoCo Pro

Info: Multi-layer solid construction that creates high initial velocity with low spin on the driver.

Excellent feel and spin around the green.

Contact: [www.dunlopsportsonline.com](http://www.dunlopsportsonline.com) - 1-800-235-5516



Alias: Callaway HX Tour 56

Info: Ultra-thin, durable cover delivers consistency and professional velocity.

Highly resilient rubber core is faster and softer, providing stable ball flight.

Contact: [www.callawaygolf.com](http://www.callawaygolf.com) - 1-800-588-9836

Z-UR. This provides a softer feel and sound with irons and on the greens without sacrificing distance or playability.

The Z-URS shares several proprietary Srixon technology features with the Z-UR, including a membrane-thin, shear-resistant urethane-elastomer cover, resilience-enhancing proprietary PBDS added to the core for greater velocity, and a 330-dimple pattern that generates a high trajectory with a penetrating ball flight for stability in all wind conditions.

**Bridgestone Golf's B330-S** is another second-generation offering. It's differentiated from its predecessor, the B330, by a new cover and core formulation designed for smooth feel. The Soft Speed Elasticity core is softer and incorporates Gradational Compression Technology, which consists of varying degrees of softness from the inside to outside of the core. The core generates extreme compression for reduced driver spin and faster rebound for explosive distance.

The three-piece urethane ball features a 330-dimple pattern for reduced drag during elevation, and a prolonged lift after peak trajectory. This causes a shallower angle of descent.

Seamless Cover Technology (SCT) also offers complete dimple coverage, compared to balls with a seam that might cause unexpected variances in ball flight. This technology results in a more consistent flight for pinpoint accuracy.

A half century after introducing its first golf ball, **Wilson** unveiled a new line of Staff balls to meet specific player needs. Each model was tailored to provide the appropriate playability off the tee, in the fairway and around the green for a specific player type.

Long and soft are givens in the line, so Wilson approached spin as the determining factor of each ball's playability. Starting with a two-piece construction and the new PhD (Pan Head Design) dimple design, Wilson utilized additional layers to deliver the playability demanded by each group.

The Wilson Staff Dx2 is a two-piece ball (soft core/ionomer cover) targeted at golfers seeking distance and accuracy in shots from tee to green. The Dx2 is designed to be straighter by reduc-



**Alias:** Wilson Staff Tx4  
**Info:** Urethane-covered four-layer ball for the tour player and low-handicap golfer seeking workability.  
**Contact:** www.wilsonstaff.com - (773) 714-6400



**Alias:** Top-Flite Strata TL-Tour  
**Info:** Enriched energy core provides soft feel and optimum distance.  
**Contact:** www.top-flite.com - 1-866-TFGOLF.CO

ing spin off the driver. It combines PhD Aerodynamics and Nano Tech Core technologies that are shared by each ball in the new trio.

PhD Advanced Golf Ball Aerodynamics helps players gain additional distance with their shots. With just 312 dimples, each larger and shallower than most standard dimples, the unique dimple pattern produces higher lift and tighter trajectories.

Nano Tech Core technology means the ball incorporates a rubber core chemistry that's reinforced with nano-sized particles to enhance the overall composite structure for greater strength and consistency. The highly resilient Nano Tech Core maintains a soft feel without sacrificing maximum velocity at impact.

The Wilson Staff Px3 is a three-piece ball (core/inner mantle/soft ionomer cover) targeted to the golfer seeking distance and accuracy off the tee, but more control on iron shots. An advanced DuPont HPF Polymer inner layer is used as an additional progressive layer to promote higher spin on iron shots.

The Wilson Staff Tx4 (Tour) is a urethane-covered four-layer ball (core/Fusion mantle/urethane elastomer cover/PhD aerodynamics) for the tour player and accomplished golfer looking for the ultimate in workability for pin-attacking precision. The soft Nano Tech Core is surrounded by a unique HPF Fusion mantle that promotes maximum acceleration off the clubface while generating even higher iron spin rates for the golfer who can shape shots.

**Top-Flite's** Strata TL-Tour is another offering centered around core technology. The ball features an enriched energy core, the fastest ever made by Top-Flite. The one-piece core outperforms the company's previous two-piece core for soft feel and optimum distance. An ionomer mantle provides spin control off the tee and on long-iron shots, while the thin thermoplastic urethane cover enhances soft feel, distance and performance around the greens.

There's no doubt that John Daly has garnered **Dunlop's** LoCo brand tons of



Alias: Pinnacle Exception  
 Info: Large, soft-compression, high-velocity core formulation with a 392-dimple design.  
 Contact: www.pinnaclegolf.com - 1-800-225-8500

attention, and the new LoCo Pro golf ball is no exception. Daly won the Buick Invitational playing the ball during its debut week on tour. The LoCo Pro is a multi-layer solid construction that generates high initial velocity with low spin off the driver and excellent feel with hit-and-sit spin properties for shots into the green. Dunlop likens the ball performance to the Pro V1x, but not the price tag.

Long known as a high-performance ball brand, **Maxfli** continues the tradition with the new BlackMax. The multilayer ball combines a large neodymium rubber core with a firm, thin ionomer mantle and an ultra-thin cast thermoset urethane cover. Neodymium is uncommon in golf ball covers because it's difficult to process. However, it offers a superior combination of high COR (coefficient of restitution) and low compression, which results in high velocity off the clubface, yet soft feel at impact.

The BlackMax also helps players control spin via the composition and thickness of the mantle and urethane cover, and how they work together. Off the driver, the combination minimizes backspin. Off irons, specifically the short irons, they let players generate enough spin to stop the ball quickly but not so much that spin-back behavior is hard to predict.

**Callaway's** HX Tour 56 is an extension of the company's highest performance ball, the HX Tour. The Tour 56 has a softer feel with more spin and greenside control. An ultra-thin, durable cover delivers consistency and professional velocity. The Sub-HEX design with Concentric Core Technology, made up of a new chemical composition for a large, highly resilient rubber core that is faster and softer, provides stable ball flight and more consistent overall performance.

As usual, **U.S. Kids Golf** came to the rescue of young golfers, and any other player with a clubhead speed less than 90 mph, with the introduction of the SS\*90 MPH ball. The ball is a low-compression, two-piece design that produces a high, piercing trajectory to help players increase distance with all clubs. The durable Surlyn cover, with specially formulated dynamic energy core, is extremely sensitive to driver speed.



Alias: Bridgestone Tour B330-S  
 Info: Soft Speed Elasticity core incorporates Gradational Compression Technology.  
 Contact: www.bridgestonegolf.com - 1-800-358-6319



Alias: Max i BlackMax

Info: Neodymium cover gives high velocity on the clubface and soft feel at impact.

Contact: www.max-1.com - (760) 918-6000

**Ben Hogan Golf's** latest ball offering, the Tour Deep, brings another new dimple-pattern technology to the forefront. Six strategically placed deep dimples hold the ball's high-velocity core perfectly centered for consistent cover thickness and extraordinary performance. The deep dimple also creates turbulence in airflow, improving aerodynamics for superior distance. Spin and feel are additional attributes of the Tour Deep. The thin urethane cover provides spin and feel around the greens, while the mantle layer interacts with the thin cover and soft core to improve performance off woods and long irons.

Hogan also introduced the Hawk ball that uses perimeter weighting for spin control off woods and long irons, creating greater distance. The lively SOAR Energy Core provides high energy retention for distance and feel, while the high-velocity inner core reduces spin on driver and long-iron shots. The thin urethane Talon cover enhances the ball's green-grabbing power on scoring shots.

The **Pinnacle Exception** features a large, soft-compression, high-velocity core formulation that contributes to a soft finished compression and a higher initial velocity. Its low 70s finished ball compression is nearly 30 compression points lower than most competitive two-piece distance golf balls. It also incorporates a soft, durable and responsive sodium/zinc cover blend with a 392 icosahedral dimple design. While this combination provides a low spin rate to minimize hook and slice sidespin for long, straight shots, the Pinnacle Exception still offers higher short-game spin and control than many other two-piece distance balls.

Finally, **Dimplit Golf** lays claim to the first-ever 1070-dimple ball design. The Dimplit 1070's cover combines large and small dimples for optimum ball flight. Large dimples give a ball lift, enabling it to ride on air currents, while small and relatively deep dimples interspersed in the cover design help keep shots straight to maximize distance. The ball's core construction is also compact and solid, creating an even energy release for smoother flight and more distance. Dimplit reports that the two-piece ball performs very close to a three-piece design. **GI**



Alias: U.S. Kids SS\*90 MPH

Info: Low-compression, two-piece design that produces a high, piercing trajectory to help players increase distance with all clubs.

Contact: www.uskidsgolf.com - 1-888-387-5437