

Flaunting in Florida

The PGA Merchandise Show, featuring more than 40,000 golf retailers, PGA pros and industry leaders, and thousands of products of all shapes and sizes, this year took place in Florida again. Attending on behalf of *The Golf Business* was Sarah Forrest – and here’s her pick of what she saw

“The same attention to detail and style synonymous with J.Lindeberg has been applied to the lady golfers’ apparel as it has to the men’s’



I

had forgotten about the buzz at the PGA Merchandise Show, which I hadn’t been to for a few years, but this year I wanted to go back and take a look amid rumours it wasn’t as good, it had got smaller, not as many people were going and all the other little things I had heard over the previous few years. So off I toddle in January representing *The Golf Business* for the first time – my remit: to check out the weird and wonderful products on offer this year.

And I did find them, the weird, the wonderful and the downright great ideas which may or may not succeed in this tough marketplace of evolving products and the ‘next big thing’.

Here is a brief synopsis of a few of these, maybe not so quirky products but all noteworthy.

Popticals – golf sunglasses – not new, I’ve reviewed golf sunglasses before, so what makes Popticals different? Using optic industry



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leader, Carl Zeiss NYDEF nylon lenses, which help reduce weight by up to 18 per cent as well as colour saturation, which in turn increases the ability to read undulations on the course, as well as the light to dark shadows cast across the fairway on a summer’s day. They are in themselves good all round sports sunglasses, however what makes them double unique is their ability to pack and travel anywhere in a small fold-up self contained unit, which makes them great for the travelling golfer. A hardy, probably near indestructible hard shell carry case is half the size of normal sunglasses’ cases due to the unique nature of the FL2 micro-rail system, which quickly and easily enables the sunglasses to fold in half. And to top it all – they look pretty trendy too with a variety of frames to choose from. No more losing your sunglasses at the bottom of the golf bag, only to finally find them having slipped out their case, covered in last year’s banana and scratched to pieces; they have a tag to attach to the golf bag when not in use.

J.Lindeberg – now it has to be said that Mr J.Lindeberg himself was behind the counter at the PGA Show. This

means something – his passion for this well-known clothing brand has not waned. The range of products not only get a big thumbs up from me, but I’ve got a certain admiration for the chap

himself. The J.Lindeberg clothing range is not new, it has in some respects been the market leader for the men's clothing but its inclusion of a varied range of ladies' golf clothing has also caught my eye. Why? Because the same attention to detail and style has been applied to the lady golfers' apparel as it has to the men's.

Sharp clean lines of quality material with no unnecessary fussy non-functional bits added, doesn't make the clothing look frilly or less trim as it is all about the cut of the cloth. J.Lindeberg also produce everyday ladies' clothing and the thought processes behind the design of the golf clothing is the flexibility of multi-use clothing, you don't need to get changed after golf to go and do the shopping; J.Lindeberg clothes are simply chic and comfortable enough to be worn anywhere – style and comfort are paramount.

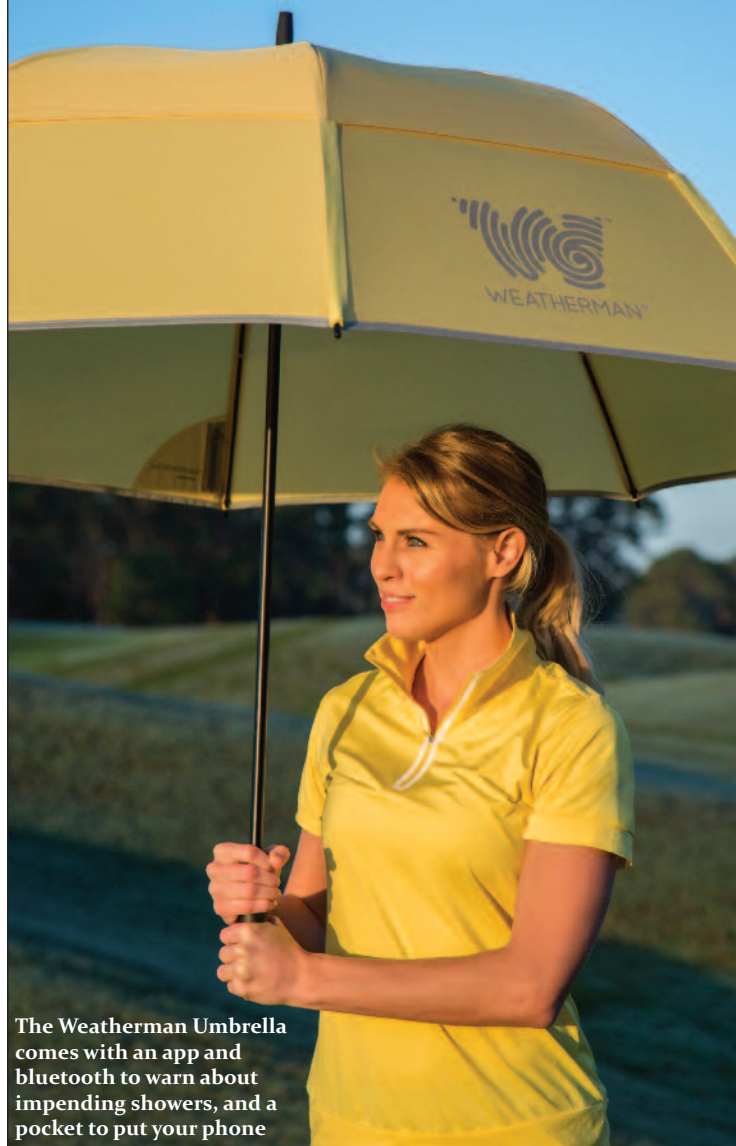
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The sunglasses case is half the size of a normal case and attaches to a golf bag via a tag

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Weatherman Umbrella – the humble golf umbrella – how can that be improved upon? We have storm umbrellas, ones for the sun and ones for high winds, we have different shapes and sizes and don't even think about the colour



The Weatherman Umbrella comes with an app and bluetooth to warn about impending showers, and a pocket to put your phone

options. The Weatherman umbrella took me a little while to get my head around – I couldn't figure out why I would need bluetooth connectivity on a golf course and why on the umbrella itself? It has an integrated app to give you the weather forecast and syncs with your existing bluetooth technology – there is even a little pocket to put your phone in whilst playing golf. Now I am not advocating to get your phone out, talk as loudly as possible and dial into conference calls whilst playing golf, but for emergency use, it might be useful?

Tested in wind tunnels, water and sun proof, this umbrella is an all-singing, all-dancing golf umbrella, and most likely just what's needed in the Great British weather – but I did giggle when I was told the app forewarned me of impending showers – not even our weathermen on the television can get that right!

A variety of the good, the bad and the downright ugly caught my eye at the PGA Merchandise Show this year, and I am forever curious to see which products make it or not. TGB

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