United States Golf Association
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Notice to Manufacturers
Driver Check Testing Program

The USGA limit for spring effect (CT) is 239 microseconds and the USGA has established an 18 microsecond test tolerance. The test tolerance is used to ensure that there is an extremely low probability that any club measured by the USGA above 257 microseconds could actually have a CT less than 239 microseconds. Club manufacturers that produce products intended to appear on the USGA's List of Conforming Driver Heads have the responsibility to anticipate manufacturing variations when designing these products. In addition, manufacturers of clubs appearing on the List of Conforming Driver Heads have the responsibility to maintain adequate quality control procedures to ensure ongoing compliance with the Rules.

During 2007, the USGA measured the spring effect (CT) of drivers that were obtained from retail locations. These clubs were produced by a number of different manufacturers. Some of these drivers were found by the USGA to have CT readings in excess of the 239 limit plus the 18 microsecond measurement tolerance. The manufacturers involved took appropriate actions regarding these clubs promptly after the USGA notified them. This experience has demonstrated that clubs with above limit CT measurements have been manufactured and sold, and potentially could be manufactured and sold in the future. Because of this potential, the USGA is implementing a check testing procedure for driver spring effect to maintain the accuracy of the USGA's List of Conforming Driver Heads. The USGA has conducted similar check testing of golf balls for more than two decades.

The check testing procedure is being implemented in two phases with two different levels of inspection:

- The Phase I sampling plan will be used from now on for all drivers currently appearing on the USGA List of Conforming Driver Heads, which is published on the USGA website at www.usga.org, as well as those drivers submitted to the USGA through December 31, 2009. The Phase I level of inspection was used by the USGA to check test clubs obtained from retail shops in 2007.

- The Phase II sampling plan will be used for drivers submitted to the USGA on or after January 1, 2010. Because Phase II is a more stringent sampling plan, additional time is being allowed. This will give manufacturers the opportunity to consider the tighter inspection while designing clubs to be submitted when Phase II is in effect.

Driver Check Testing Procedure

1. The USGA will obtain samples of drivers from retail sources of its choosing. These sample drivers will be measured for spring effect (CT) on the USGA pendulum tester located at the USGA Test Center.

2. All drivers appearing on the USGA's List of Conforming Driver Heads will be subject to the check testing program.

3. The frequency of sampling will be determined by the USGA and may change from time to time, depending on the results obtained.

4. For the check testing program, a change in a driver head's status from conforming to non-conforming will be determined by the sampling plans referenced below. Two different sampling plans will be used, both of which have been published by the International Standards Organization (ISO). Details of both sampling plans are attached.

5. If a club model is determined by the USGA to exceed the terms of the sampling plan, the USGA will take the following actions:

    a. The manufacturer of the club will be informed by the USGA that samples of the product have been determined by the USGA to exceed the limit for spring effect. The manufacturer will have a reasonable amount of time to review the findings and discuss the matter with the USGA.

    b. After the manufacturer has had the opportunity to review the findings and discuss them with the USGA, the club will be removed from the List of Conforming Driver Heads and added to the List of Non-Conforming Drivers within a reasonable amount of time, unless the manufacturer provides information to the USGA which warrants additional consideration by the USGA.

    c. The USGA will provide the manufacturer with an opportunity to submit a conforming version of the club to the USGA. This will require some permanent identifying markings distinguishing this version from the non-conforming version.

    d. The USGA will allow the manufacturer of the club the opportunity to inform its customers of the change in conformance status of the particular club.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Dick Rugge, P.O. Box 708, Far Hills, NJ 07931, Phone 908-781-5490, Fax 908-234-0138, e-mail: drugge@usga.org

SAMPLING PLAN DETAILS

Phase I: ISO 2859-1, Table 10-E-2, Double sampling plan, AQL 10.0

A. Measure 8 samples. Accept on 1 defect, reject on 3 defects.

B. If 2 defects are found in the first 8 samples, measure an additional 8 samples.

C. Accept on 4 total defects (out of 16), reject on 5 total defects.

Phase II: ISO 2859-1, Table 10-E-2, Double sampling plan, AQL 4.0

A. Measure 8 samples. Accept on 0 defects, reject on 2 defects

B. If 1 defect is found in the first 8 samples, measure an additional 8 samples.

C. Accept on 1 total defects (out of 16), reject on 2 total defects

Those familiar with quality control methods may recognize these as MIL-STD inspection sampling plans. These are now known as ISO sampling plans. Further information about these sampling plans can be obtained from the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). www.iso.org , or the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). http://webstore.ansi.org