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<https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2019/11/12/finances-of-intercollegiate-athletics-database.aspx>

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<https://perfectputt.substack.com/p/the-finances-of-collegiate-golf>

Hey Golfers —

In October, I wrote a piece on the [Finances of Collegiate Golf](#). It received more ‘bad’ survey comments than normal. So I am here to redeem myself — I am excited to write part two of this newsletter.

The median annual budget of a Power Five Men’s Division I Golf Program is **\$946,700** — not even 1% of a universities athletic department budget.

And that number nearly doubled from 2011 to 2019 — going from \$551,400 to \$946,700.

So what is that money spent on?

According to the [NCAA](#), 22% of an overall athletic department budget is spent on coach compensation. While another 19% is spent on facilities, and 8% is spent on travel. Student aid is responsible for 15% of an athletic department budget.

Let’s take out coach compensation and student aid to focus on **facilities and travel**.

Power Five Golf Programs spend millions of dollars on facilities.

Here are just five examples:

- Arizona State University — \$10 million
- University of Illinois — \$7.2 million
- Michigan State University — \$6 million
- Wake Forest University — \$4.5 million
- Iowa State University \$2 million

The University of Illinois opened its indoor practice facility in 2007 — the price tag was \$5.2 million. Since then, they have made significant additions to their practice facility — including a 24 acre outdoor practice facility.

The facility boasts 55,000 square feet of practice greens as well as multiple grass types to practice on.

It is no coincidence that Illinois Men's Golf Team has won twelve Big Ten Conference titles since 2009.

The University of Oklahoma recently received a \$5 million alumni donation to build a state of the art indoor facility.

Jerry Ransom donated the \$5 million gift — he also donated \$2.75 million to the Oklahoma Golf Programs a few years ago to build a short course, and 11 acre outdoor practice facility.

A donation of nearly \$8 million to an athletic program is enormous, let alone golf programs.

To provide some context on how large of an expense a \$5 million facility is. The median expense in a **Power Five college for facilities was \$18.6 million**, or about 27% of the annual facility expense.

To put it in even greater perspective. There are 350 Division I colleges — the median generated revenue in 2021 was \$4.8 million. A \$5 million facility is greater than the median revenue of a Division I athletic department.

My alma mater — University of Northern Iowa's entire athletic department budget is around \$15 million. Northern Iowa is a Division I college, but not a Power Five school, rather an FCS school. Oklahoma's new facility would be 33% of the entire athletic budget at Northern Iowa.

From a facility standpoint — there are dozens of programs that have spent millions of dollars to recruit and compete at the highest level. The two highlighted above are just scratching the surface.

Collegiate golf is unique to most other sports from a travel standpoint. Golf tournaments are two to three days plus a practice round.

Let's stick with the University of Oklahoma theme.

OU Men's Golf has twelve tournaments on its schedule this year. A majority of them require a flight and are in different time zones.

OU flew private to the Big 12 conference tournament last year. A chartered flight from **Norman, Oklahoma to Trinity, Texas costs around \$25,000.**

And it isn't unusual for Power Five programs to fly private. One Big 12 program has a University owned jet they use at least once during the season.

What is becoming common is custom vans. And it isn't just Power Five colleges that are sporting a nice ride.

These custom vans have wifi, television, and luxury seating to make road trips more comfortable and efficient.

The University of Northern Iowa recently purchased a custom van at a significant cost, especially for a mid-major Division I program. **A custom van can cost well over \$100,000.**

Facilities and travel for Collegiate Golf programs are incredibly solid. Golfers have access to top local golf courses, private practice facilities, and travel better than most professional golfers outside of PGA Tour players.

There are 296 Division I Men's Golf programs — only four programs turned a profit in 2019. And only 25 out of 350 Division I athletic departments made a profit in 2019.

Have yourself a great Monday. Talk to you next week!