May 21, 1968 R. L. STIPP 3,384,377

GOLF STANCE GUIDE

Filed Jan. 14, 1966

FIG. 1

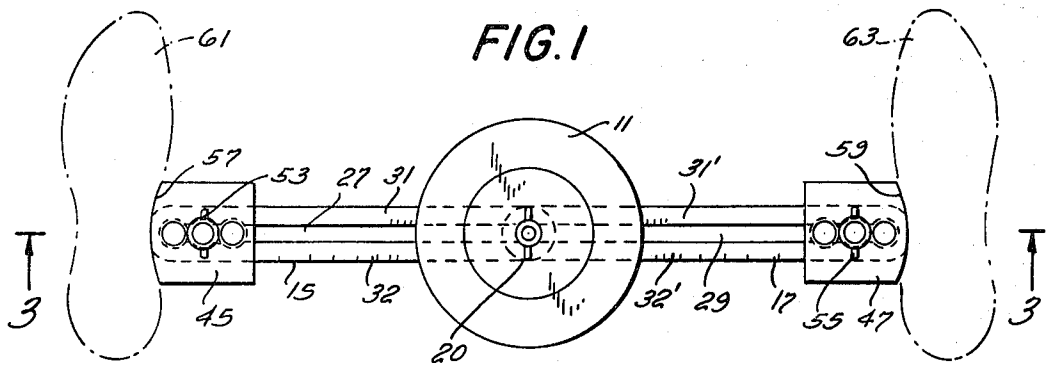
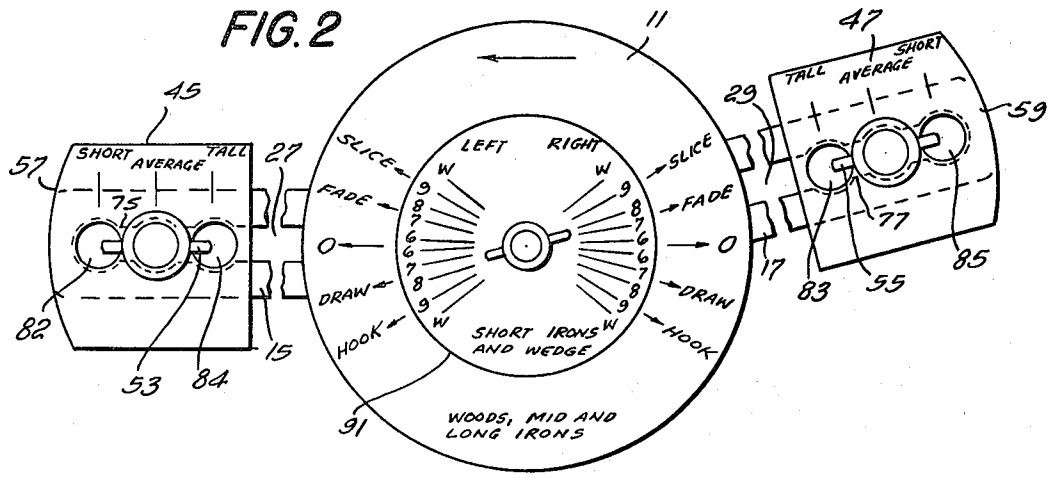


FIG. 2



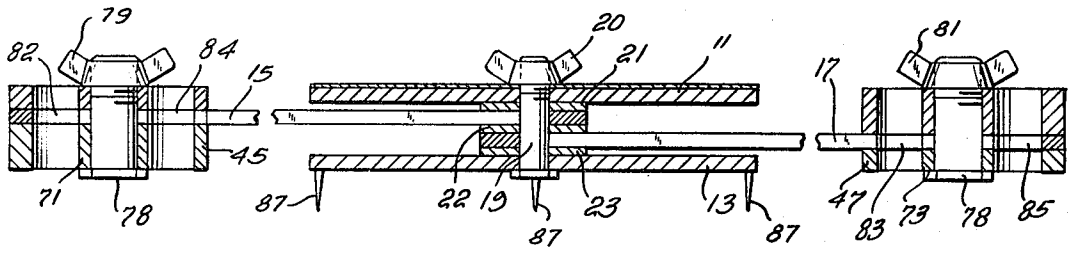


FIG. 3

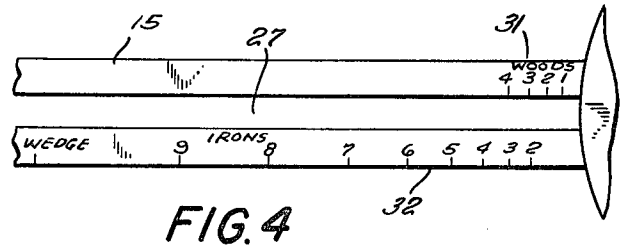


FIG. 4

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United States Patent Office 3,384,377 Patented May 21, 1968

3,384,377

GOLF STANCE GUIDE

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Filed Jan. 14, 1966, Ser. No. 520,700
7 Claims. (Cl. 273—187)

This invention relates to a golf stance guide. It is to be used primarily for practice purposes as an aid to correct stroking of the ball, thereby to improve the golf club swing.

It has been found that one of the important factors in striking the ball is a proper stance. This is considered as involving the arrangement or positioning and spacing of the golfer's feet. In golf, stance is usually regarded as the key to balance. Balance is the key to accuracy and efficiency.

With proper spacing and positioning, addressing the ball becomes such a pattern that the swing is said to be "grooved." It is important in determining the actual flight taken by the golf ball path. The finesse of the golfer should be such that his feet may be set relative to the desired flight path. Generally speaking, foot spacing and positioning for the longer shots substantially corresponds to the width of the shoulders of the average player.

For the majority of shots, it is desirable that the swing-path which the club assumes shall correspond to the desired line of flight. For other conditions, it may be that the golfer desires to slice the ball or hook it off and away from the normal straight line of flight for some particular purpose. In cases where objects inevitably are between the position taken by the golfer as he assumes his stance prior to striking the ball, it frequently happens that the ultimate objective cannot be reached by a straight flight path. It is, thus, frequently desirable to change the flight path followed to one at an angle to the objective and the point where it is desirable that the ball should finally come to rest. This often occurs on dog-leg holes, as well as in instances where one is stymied from the objective. Consequently, for such conditions, frequently it is desirable to slice or hook the ball. In still other cases where the deviation of the flight path is not quite as great, a slight fade or draw on the shot is often adequate to achieve the objective. Certain side-hill lies often call for somewhat similar considerations.

Further, for many of the iron shots the stance and foot-positioning is different from what would be the case for the wood shots. Compensation often is made for various other reasons, such as wind, to achieve the desired results. The stance assumed by the golfer is the real key to proper balance in hitting the shot and striking the ball. This insures proper weight shift which is an essential part of the swing if accuracy and excellence are to be achieved.

The instrument and device to which this invention is directed is equally adapted to use by the low handicap golfer and by the novice. It is particularly useful in practice. When the stance guide of the invention is in use, the golfer may be striking the ball many times with precisely correct positioning of the feet to achieve a path of swing. This stance can be remembered long following the practice since it has been achieved with affirmative guidance. The device set forth as the invention is also particularly useful for golf professionals in their instruction program. The precision with which the foot location for striking the ball is achieved affords the instructor a better chance to observe the actual swing, knowing that the important feature of balance has been stabilized and that the correct positioning of the feet has already been achieved.

The device with which this invention is concerned comprises, in the main, a body member which is adapted to

be rested upon the ground and placed approximately between the golfer's spread feet. Two arm members extend outwardly from the body member on either side. A foot-positioning element is adjustably supported at the end of each arm. The golfer positions the inside of each foot against each foot-positioning element. Each of the arm members isalso capable of being moved in an angular path about the body member as a center. The arm members may be moved in unison or individually. They may be maintained in substantially precise alignment or one of the arms may be maintained substantially along the desired flight path of the ball while the other arm member is turned in a selective manner relative to such contemplated flight path.

The device is immediately adapted to use by left- or right-handed players with much the same success. Provisions are made for adjusting the length of the arms, both with respect to the average overall separation of foot-positioning element at the outer ends, as well as providing for minor length changes to accommodate different uses. Also, further length adjustment adapts the device for use with clubs calculated to carry the ball to different distances after striking. Illustratively, the golfer's feet should be positioned closer together when swinging a short iron than when using a driver.

An instance of greatest extended length of the arms and the foot-positioning elements would be for the case where the golfer plans to hit the ball with a long distance wood club. As a general proposition, the golfer's feet are much closer together and spaced at a slightly different position relative to the line of flight when hitting a wedge or sand-trap shot, as compared to positions for using a long distance iron. Further, the foot positioning distance, even for a shot intended to be carried out on a straight flight path is different when the ball is above or below the level at which the golfer's feet are positioned. The stance guide may be used to practice shots of each type with equal facility.

The device herein to be described is completely and uniquely adapted for aiding the golfer's practice of the many types of shots which are regularly experienced in the average round. This enables the golfers to be prepared for playing readily and with preparation for different conditions which can readily be anticipated without hesitating in the approach to the shot, provided, of course, that there had been an opportunity to practice previously and to correct for such conditions.

The invention has for one of its main objects an instructional device which is easy for either the experienced low handicap or even the golf professional to use, as well as for an instructional device for the player who is generally in the novice class. It has a further object to provide an instructional and practice type of device which is easily transportable from one location to another and which can be made sufficiently compact to be free from objections from transportation and storage, as well as to provide a device which can readily be disassembled for ease of shipment.

Other objects and advantages will be apparent from the further and more detailed description to follow when this description is considered in conjunction with the accompanying drawings from a part of the disclosure.

FIG. 1 is a general plan view showing the positioning of the device relative to the golfer's feet for a completely straight shot;

FIG. 2 is an enlarged representation of the device of FIG. 1 showing the unit with its extending arms in a location such that a ball hit by a right-handled player will follow a flight path generally calculated to fade the ball slightly toward the right from the flight path initially assumed;

FIG. 3 is a sectional view of the device of FIG. 1 taken

substantially through the center of the device of FIG. 1 to show the arm mounting and positioning; and

FIG. 4 is a slightly enlarged view of one of the arms to show illustrative settings for different type shots.

If reference is now made to the drawings for a further and more complete showing, the device pictured in FIG. 1 comprises the upper and lower substantially circular base members **11** and **13**. The lower base **13** is adapted to be rested upon the ground (conventionally indicated by FIG. 3). This provides the main support for the device. A pair of extendible arm members **15** and **17** is held from the base to be movable inwardly and outwardly therefrom. The arms are held tightly to the base by an adjustable support pin **19** extending between the base top and bottom sections **11** and **13**. The pin may be tightened by the hand nut **20** for holding the top and bottom sections **11** and **13** tightly positioned with shims **21**, **22** and **23**, separating the inner ends of arm members **15** and **17** and the top and bottom. Tightening or loosening is achieved by turning the thumb nut **20** in the appropriate direction. The arms **15** and **17** may be adjusted to desired lengths extending outwardly from support pin and their angular position relative to each other on the central part **11** of the base member. Each outwardly extending arm **15** or **17** is provided with a slotted section **27** or **29** through which the fastening pin **19** is extended loosely. The slotted arrangement also permits inward or outward adjustment of the arm length relative to the center pin.

It is frequently desirable to place scale identifications **31** and **32** (or **31'** and **32'**) along the sides of the slots **27** and **29**. One scale is for wood club reference. The other scale is for iron club reference. With the aid of the scales, the length of the extended arms may be set relative to the body center. Each arm normally extends outwardly from the central support pin by about half the width of the shoulders of the player when long wood shots are to be played. This arm length is known and can be considered as a basic length for the adjustment for the purpose of adjusting the arm length to accommodate the golfer's swing to different types of clubs.

To this point, no detailed mention has been made as to the location guide for the golfer's feet relative to the device. The extendible arms **15** and **17** are movable in and out relative to the central base **11** by the in or out movement permitted with the loosening of adjusting thumb nut **20**. When the desired correct spacing and positioning has been achieved, this thumb nut is tightened. At this time, the golfer's feet may be positioned, as above inferred, with the instep adjusting to the curved edges **57** and **59** of the foot positioning elements **45** and **47**. Illustratively, the feet may be positioned as sketched in phantom at **61** and **63** in FIG. 1.

In the normal play, it is recognized that while the foot separation is usually gauged generally in accordance with the shoulder width, it is also determined to some extent by the general overall build of the player. The average player thus would adopt what would be the normal stance with the feet approximately shoulder width apart for making the long shots with the wooden clubs. The tall slender player generally should use a slightly narrower stance in order to obtain the full hip and shoulder turn. The short stout player should ordinarily use a slightly wider stance than average in order to brace himself better against an over-shifting of the weight. To this end, the foot-positioning elements **45** and **47** are fastened by the tightening thumb nuts **53** and **55** to the outer ends of the arms **15** and **17**. These members may be located in any one of three (or more) positions to accommodate different players. For this purpose, the foot-positioning elements **45** and **47** are usually each provided with three separate indicator points and formed with a slot separating them.

Support blocks **71** and **73** are secured to the outer end of the extendible arms **15** and **17**. While the blocks are usually permanently attached, the need not be so. A bolt **78** extends through the support blocks and through the outer end of the arms **15** and **17** and protrudes through the foot-positioning elements **45** and **47**. This bolt may hold the assembly together and if so used, provides an easy way to disassemble. The foot-positioning elements **45** and **47** are normally slotted at **75** and **77** and marked opposite the slots with positioning lines bearing adjusting legends, such as, tall, average and short. The foot-positioning blocks then are moved in and out while the thumb nuts **79** and **81** on the ends of the bolts **78** through the support blocks are loose. Then, with propor positioning of the foot-positioning element at the end of the associated arm for the particular golfer to use the device, the thumb nuts are tightened and the foot-locating components and blocks positioned. Normally, because it is desirable to be able to turn the foot-positioning blocks through small angles relative to the end of the adjustable arms, transverse inner and outer slots **82**, **84** in the case of the support **45**, and **83** and **85** in the case of the support **47**, are provided in the outward slotted sections **75** and **77**. These are rounded out to an extent sufficient to permit the supports **45** and **47** to turn about the center to an extent sufficient to provide any desired angular relationship between the sides of the foot-positioning elements **45** and **47** and the arms **15** and **17**.

The support blocks **71** and **73** in the particular arrangement shown (see, particularly, FIG. 3) are of different heights in order that the complete unit may be rested evenly upon the ground. The lower support **13** is adapted to rest upon the ground and the arms **15** and **17**, which extend outwardly therefrom, serve to locate the blocks to insure careful positioning. Simplicity of construction and ease of moving in and out is assured with the block **71** made sufficiently higher than block **73** to accommodate the separation of the upper arm **15** relative to the base as compared to the arm **17**, when the complete unit is rested on the ground.

Various shots and use of different clubs normally require somewhat different foot separation of the user. To this end, designations are usually made on either side of the center slots **27** and **29** to indicate the ideal location for the extendible arms as compared to the central base. For this reason, a scale **31** or **31'** may mark positioning for different wood shots and a scale **32** or **32'** may mark the positioning for different iron shots. Normally, the marking is such that the adjustable arms may be moved in and out relative to the central support so that the mark for the particular club desired is adjacent to the periphery of the central body member. The central member normally has designations to show the approximate angle that the extendible arms **15** and **17** should make relative to each other for playing different types of shots. The markings appear on the central body member and the arms may then be positioned in accordance with this condition. Very frequently, the central member may also be provided with an inner circle designation **91** for indicating the conditions of foot-positioning of the right and left foot positions for right- and left-handed golfers. In this instance, the showing indicates the left and right foot positions for a choice of several iron clubs, for instance, illustrated between the No. 6 iron and the wedge. This is merely illustrative and it will be understood that other clubs can be used and the relative position shown by the drawings are in no sense limiting but are merely illustrative.

The foregoing considerations have been mainly on the basis that a right-handed golfer would be using the device. The ball flight-path for such use would be initiated substantially in the direction shown by the arrow of FIG. 2 when the golfer's feet are positioned relative to the foot positioning elements **45** and **47** substantially as shown by FIG. 1. In the case of a left-handed golfer, it will be apparent that the direction of ball flight would be opposite that indicated by the arrow in FIG. 2. In such case the feet of the player would be reversed so that the ball might be imagined to be placed below the base depicted

by FIG. 2 and the golf club to swing in a direction from the left side of the sheet of drawing toward the right.

It is often desirable, in order to hold the device in a completely stable position, to provide an effective anchor for the unit in the turf. This is conveniently achieved by means of the short spikes or pins **87** which may protrude from the lower base member **13** at generally opposite points and which may form an extension of the support pin **19** which holds the two base members together. If desired such pin or spike extensions may also be provided at the ends of the bolts **78**, or any desired combination of locations may be selected. The important feature is that of holding the stance guide element firmly to the ground, thereby to derive maximum benefit from its guiding features.

Various other modifications and changes may readily be made within the spirit and scope of what is here indicated.

Having now described the invention, what is claimed is:

1. A golf stance guide adapted for use to assist a golfer in determining a club swing-path for addressing and striking a ball comprising a central base adapted for resting upon the ground, a pair of slidably mounted aligned arm members extending outwardly from the base in generally opposite directions, means for moving each arm member inward and outward relative to the base to change its effective length and means for changing the angular position of each arm relative to the base and to the other arm, a foot-positioning unit supported approximately at the outer end of each arm, and means for adjusting the angular position of each foot-positioning unit relative to its associated arm so that with a user's foot positioned adjacent to said unit and the unit between the feet the club swing-path will be governed by the foot-positioning generally to determine the ball flight-path.

2. The golf stance guide claimed in claim **1** wherein indicia of a contemplated ball flight-path are provided substantially adjacent to the base periphery whereby the slidably mounted arms extending from the base may be aligned with the selected indicia thereby to predict the ball flight-path when struck by a golf club following its normal swing path determined by the foot position.

3. The golf stance guide claimed in claim **1** wherein the foot-positioning units have the outer edge of arcuate formation adapted approximately to complement the instep formation of the human foot.

4. The golf stance guide claimed in claim **1** wherein the base is subtsantially circular and wherein each outwardly extended arm is slotted for a selected distance between its ends, means projecting through the slotted regions of the arms and the central portion of the base for permitting longitudinal adjustment of the arms and for tightly securing the arms to the base in selected adjusted locations and positions.

5. The golf stance guide claimed in claim **4** having, in addition, peripherally placed indicating lines on said base adapted for alignment with the slotted portion of the arms to designate probable departures in ball flight-path from one contemplated with the arms positioned in straight line relationship.

6. The golf stance guide claimed in claim **5** wherein the arms each have progressively spaced indicia thereon adapted for registry with selected base positions to determine foot spacing for different club swings.

7. The golf stance guide claimed in claim **1**, in addition, at least one pin member extending outwardly from one side of said base and adapted for penetrating location within the turf upon which the base is adapted to be rested when in use.

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