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(54) GOLF SHOE MARKING DEVICE

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(52) **U.S. Cl.** ..... **473/218**; 12/146 R

(57) **ABSTRACT**

Apparatuses for and methods of applying alignment markings to shoes are provided. One such method comprises overlaying a first alignment template over a first shoe, the first alignment template having first indicia associated with a predetermined stance, marking the first shoe adjacent to the first indicia, removing the first alignment template, utilizing the marking on the first shoe to provide a first alignment stripe on the first shoe, overlaying a second alignment template over a second shoe, the second alignment template having second indicia associated with the predetermined stance, marking the second shoe adjacent to the second indicia, and utilizing the marking on the second shoe to provide a second alignment stripe on the second athletic shoe.



FIG. 1

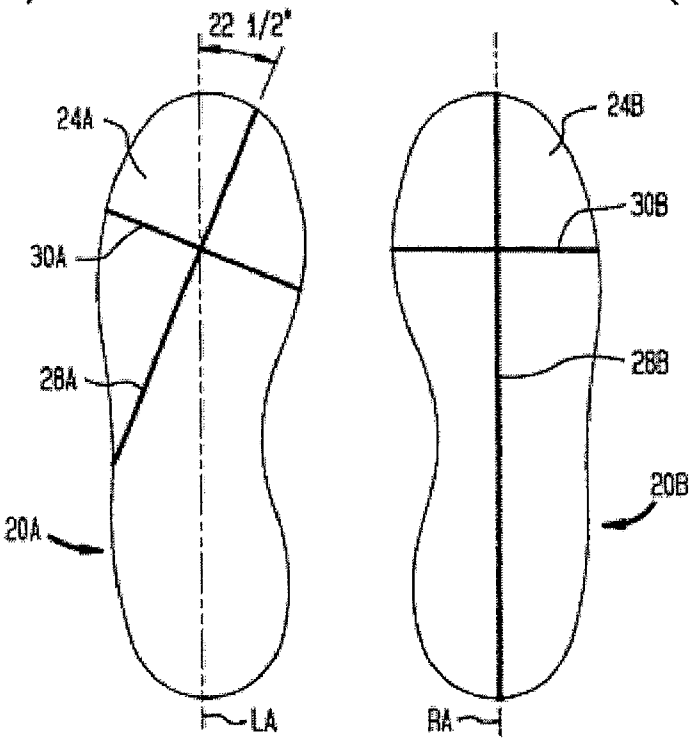

22 1/2°
24A
30A
28A
20A
LA
24B
30B
28B
20B
RA

FIG. 2

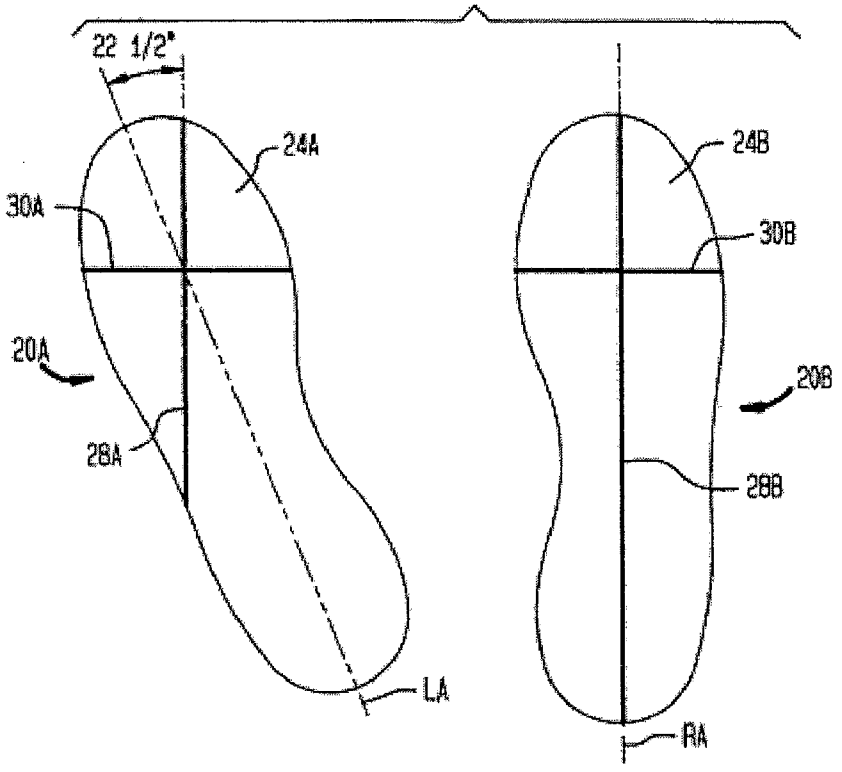

22 1/2°
24A
30A
20A
28A
LA
24B
30B
20B
28B
RA

FIG. 3



FIG. 4

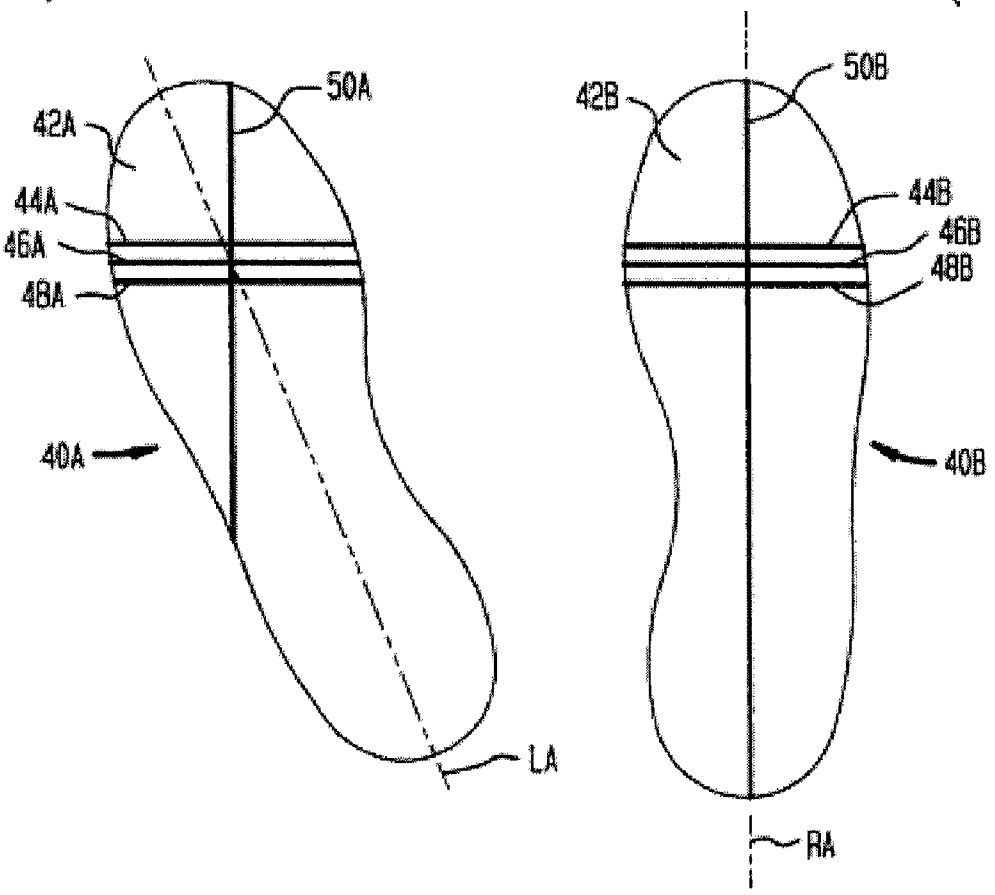


FIG. 5

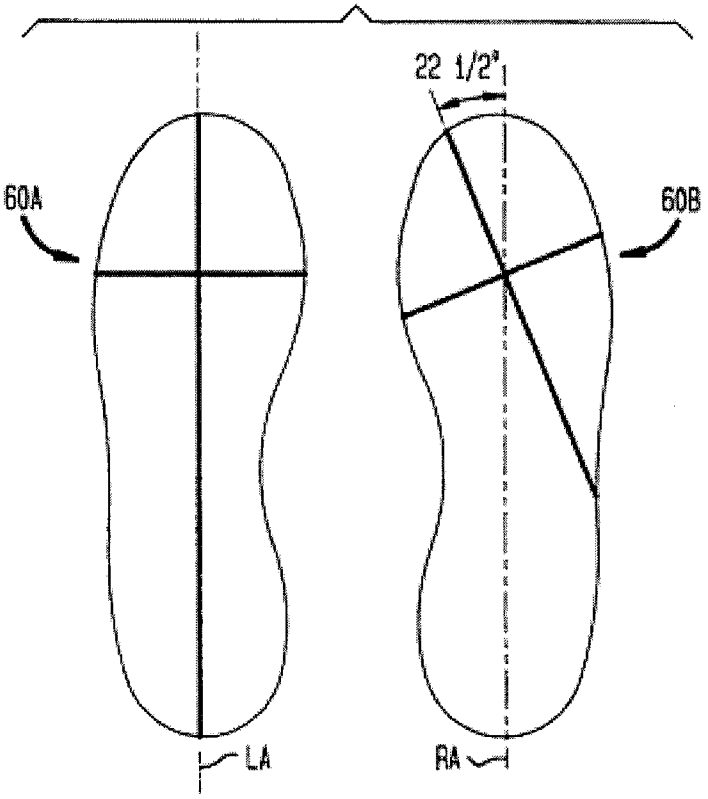


FIG. 6

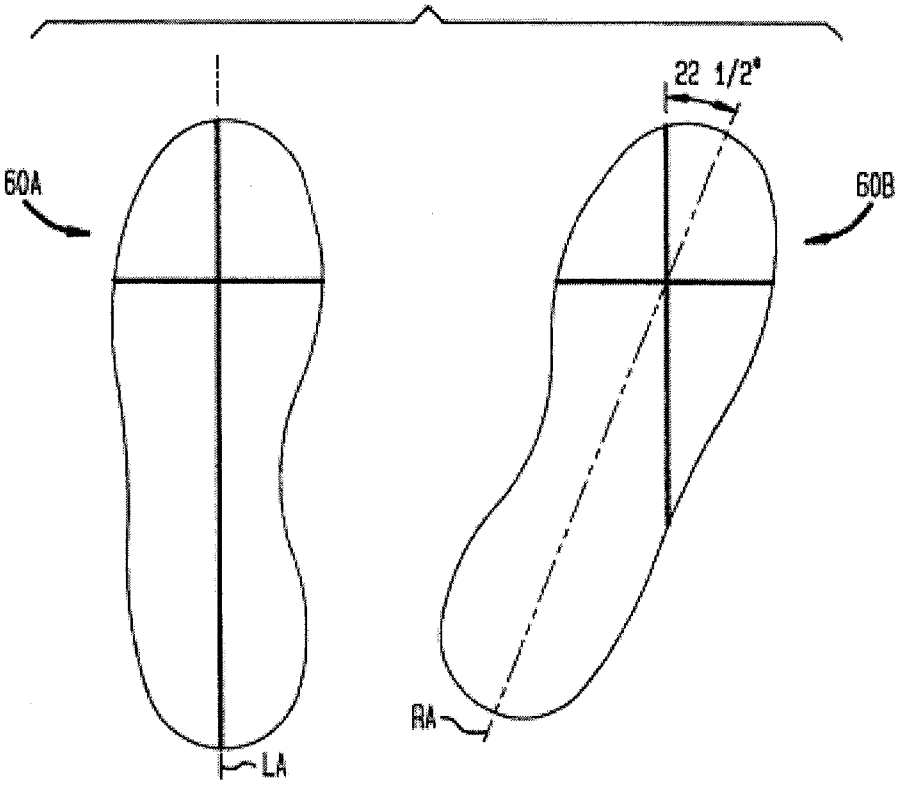


FIG. 7

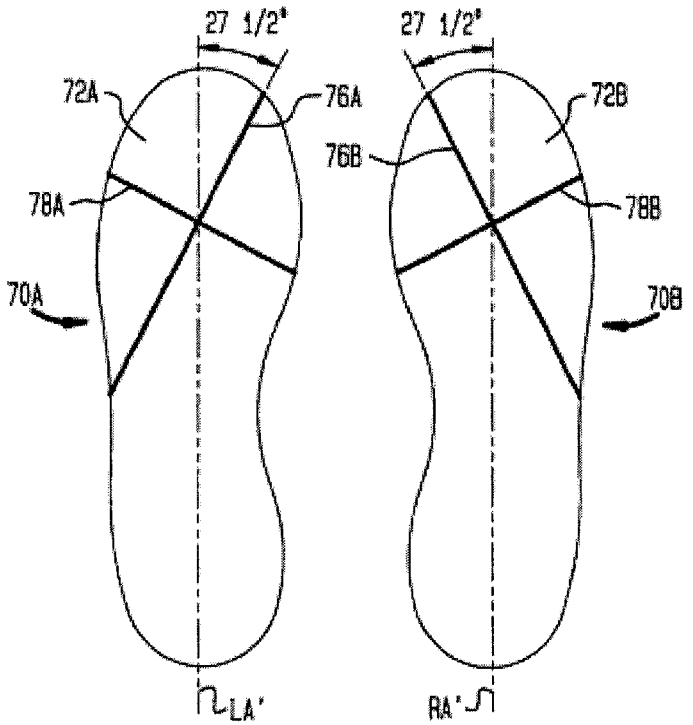

27 1/2°
27 1/2°
72A
76A
76B
72B
78A
78B
70A
70B
LA'
RA'

FIG. 8

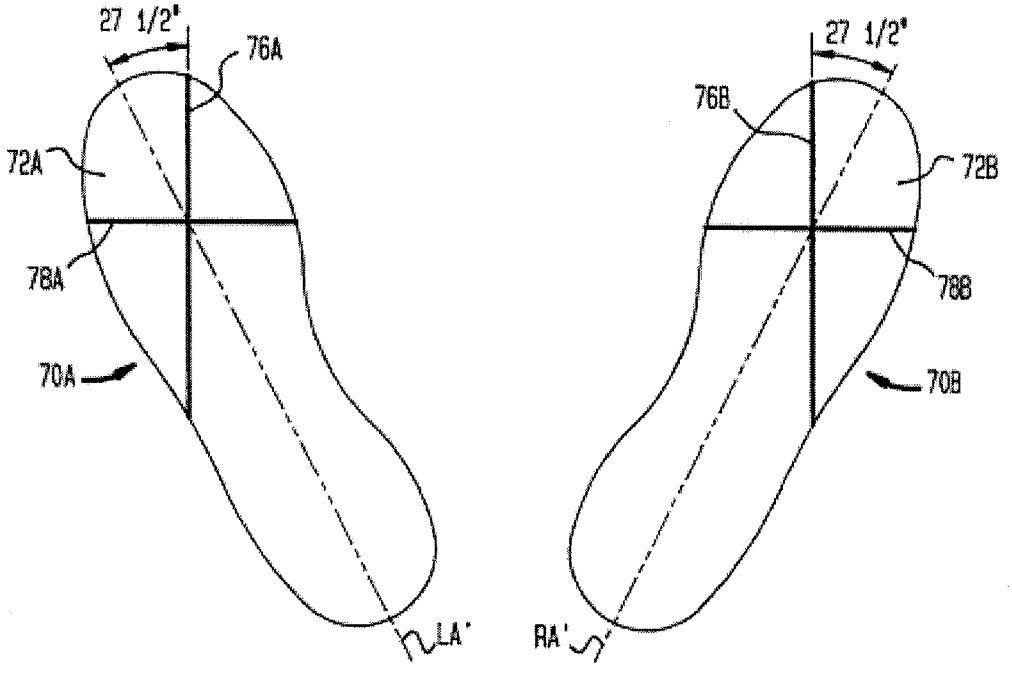

27 1/2°
76A
72A
78A
70A
27 1/2°
76B
72B
78B
70B
LA'
RA'

FIG. 9

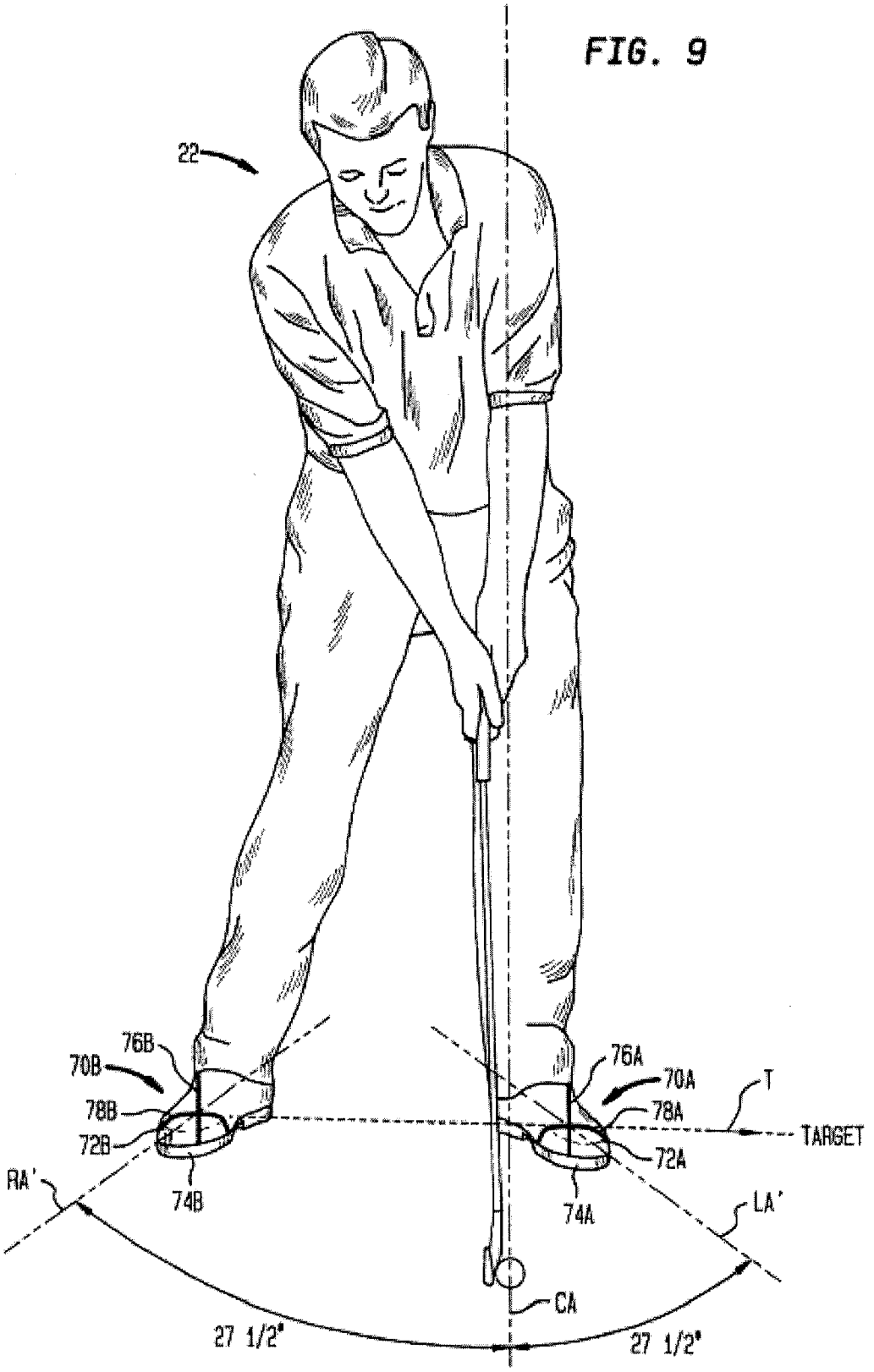

22
76B
70B
78B
72B
74B
RA'
76A
70A
78A
72A
74A
T
TARGET
LA'
CA
27 1/2°
27 1/2°

FIG. 10

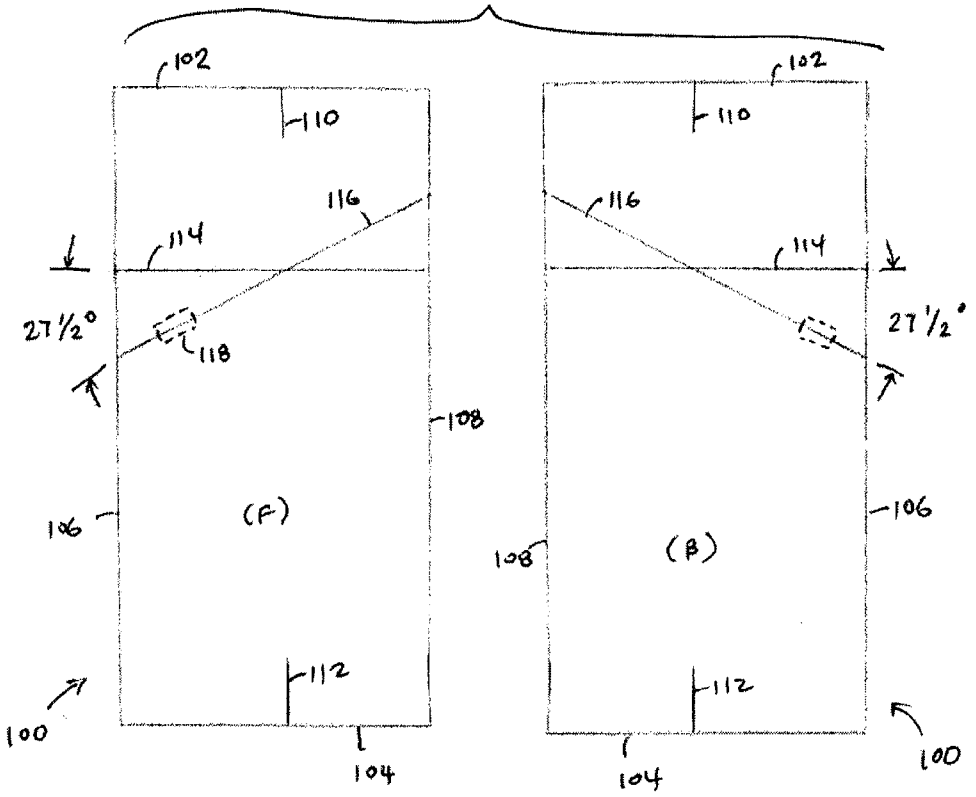

102
110
116
114
27 1/2°
118
108
106
(F)
112
100
104
102
110
116
114
27 1/2°
106
108
(B)
112
100
104

FIG. 11

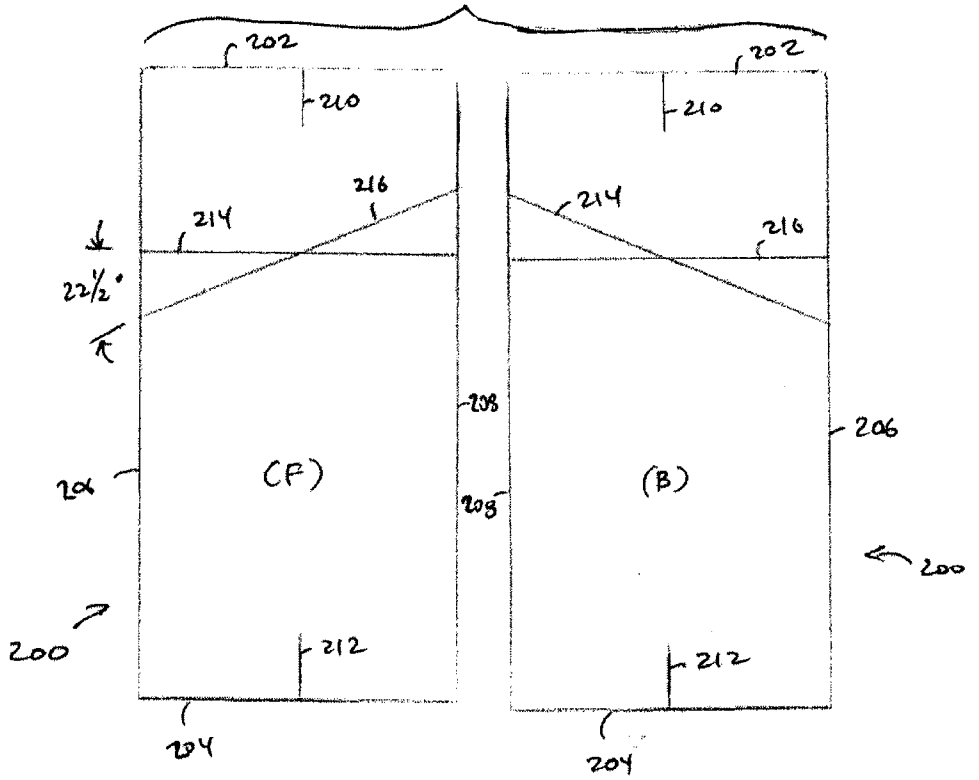

202
210
216
214
22 1/2°
208
206
204
(F)
(B)
209
200
212
202
210
214
216
200
212
204
204

FIG. 12

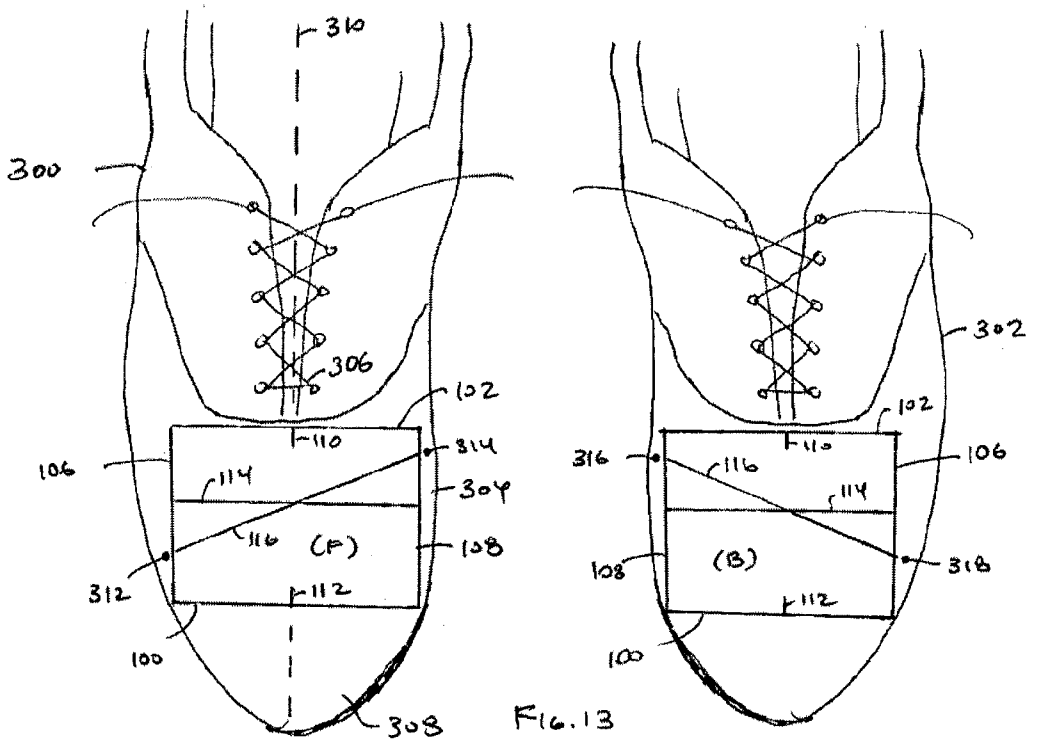
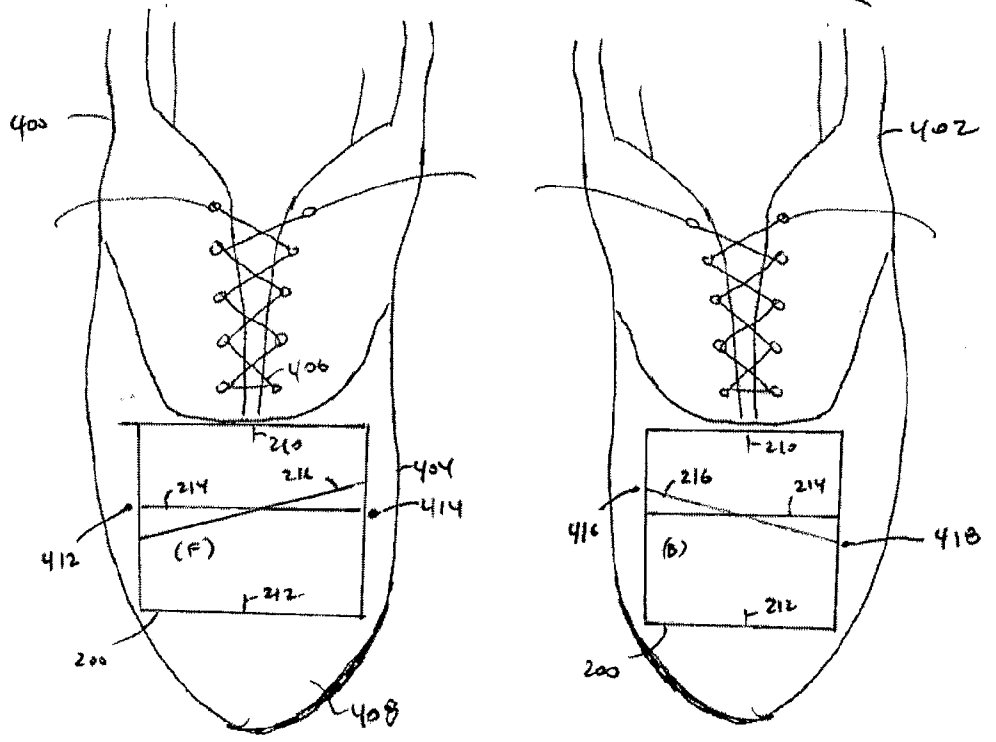

310
300
306
102
110
106
114
314
304
116
(F)
108
312
112
100
308
302
102
110
316
116
106
114
108
(B)
318
112
100

FIG. 13


400
406
210
214
216
404
414
412
(F)
212
200
408
402
210
216
214
416
(B)
418
212
200

GOLF SHOE MARKING DEVICE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] It is well known that a key to achieving a proper golf swing, and thus striking a golf ball accurately and consistently, starts with an optimal stance. The present invention relates to apparatuses and methods to assist a golfer in achieving such a stance.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0002] In order to aid in achieving a proper golf stance, and to do so consistently, golfers have been availing themselves of the aim improving self-aligning golf shoes shown and described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,381,614. Under the teachings of the '614 Patent, golf shoes may be equipped with alignment stripes, preferably aiding the golfer to align his or her feet relative to the golf ball and target in accordance with commonly accepted golf stances, such as the Leadbetter or Hogan stances. However, improvements to these teachings are desirable.

[0003] For example, it has been found that providing a mechanism by which alignment indicia, such as permanent or removable stripes, may be applied to golf shoes by a golfer would be beneficial in that conventional golf shoes may be retrofitted with aim improving indicia. Moreover, manufacturing of such shoes would be eased. Other advantages will also be recognized by the improvement shown and described herein.

[0004] Therefore, in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention, there is shown and described a method of applying alignment markings to shoes, the method comprising overlaying a first alignment template over a first shoe, the first alignment template having first indicia associated with a predetermined stance, marking the first shoe adjacent to the first indicia, removing the first alignment template, utilizing the marking on the first shoe to provide a first alignment stripe on the first shoe, overlaying a second alignment template over a second shoe, the second alignment template having second indicia associated with the predetermined stance, marking the second shoe adjacent to the second indicia, and utilizing the marking on the second shoe to provide a second alignment stripe on the second athletic shoe.

[0005] The step of marking the first shoe may mark the shoe in two locations. The step of utilizing the marking on the first shoe may utilize the two markings. The markings may be utilized by connecting the markings to form the first alignment stripe. The markings may be utilized to overlay a sticker to form the first alignment strip.

[0006] The step of utilizing the marking on the first shoe may be by extending the marking.

[0007] The step of utilizing the marking on the first shoe may be by overlaying a sticker over or adjacent to the marking.

[0008] The first alignment template may further comprise an alignment marking, the method further comprising the step of aligning the alignment marking of the first alignment template with a predetermined element of the first shoe. The predetermined element of the first shoe may be laces. The method may further comprise the step of stretching a rubber band over the length of the first athletic shoe to define a centerline of the shoe, wherein the step of aligning the alignment marking of the first alignment template with a predetermined element of the first athletic shoe aligns the alignment marking with the rubber band.

[0009] The first alignment template and the second alignment template may be the same template. The second alignment template may be the opposite side of the first alignment template.

[0010] The first indicia may be a first line. The second indicia may be a second line. The angle between the first line and the second line may be approximately 27½°, 22½°, or other various angles.

[0011] The predetermined stance may be one of the Hogan stance or the Leadbetter stance.

[0012] The first indicia may be one of a marking, a notch, or a slot.

[0013] The first alignment template may include an adhesive surface.

[0014] In accordance with a further embodiment of the present invention, a kit of components for applying alignment markings to shoes may be provided, the kit comprising an first alignment template having first indicia and second indicia associated with a first predetermined athletic stance, a second alignment template having first indicia and second indicia associated with a second predetermined athletic stance, wherein either the first alignment template or second alignment template may be utilized to aid in the application of alignment markings on shoes. The first alignment template and second alignment template may be the same template, such that indicia of more than one stance is provided on the alignment template. In this regard, the indicia may be different colors for readily apparent recognition.

[0015] The kit may further comprise an adhesive stripe.

[0016] The kit may further comprise a marking apparatus.

[0017] The kit may further comprise a rubber band.

[0018] The kit may further comprise an instruction document.

[0019] The first template may include an adhesive surface.

[0020] The kit may include an adhesive.

[0021] In another embodiment of the present invention, a kit of components for applying alignment markings to athletic shoes may be provided, the kit comprising a first alignment template, the first alignment template containing markings indicative of the Leadbetter golf stance, a second alignment template, the second alignment template containing markings indicative of the Hogan golf stance, wherein one of the alignment templates may be utilized to apply markings to athletic shoes to assist a golfer in obtaining either the Leadbetter or Hogan stance.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0022] The above description, as well as further objects, features and advantages of the present invention will be more fully understood with reference to the following detailed description of the golf shoe marking device when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

[0023] FIG. **1** is a top plan view of golf shoes for a right handed player with alignment indicia according to a first golf stance;

[0024] FIG. **2** is a top plan view of the golf shoes of FIG. **1** after the player's feet are placed in the first golf stance;

[0025] FIG. **3** is a perspective view of the golf shoes shown in FIG. **1** after the player's feet are placed in the desired stance;

[0026] FIG. **4** is a top plan view of golf shoes in a similar position as those of FIG. **2**, where the golf shoes include multiple parallel alignment indicia;

[0027] FIG. **5** is a top plan view of golf shoes for a left handed player with alignment indicia according to the first golf stance;

[0028] FIG. **6** is a top plan view of the golf shoes of FIG. **5** after the player's feet are placed in the desired stance;

[0029] FIG. **7** is a top plan view of golf shoes for both right and left handed players with alignment indicia according to a second golf stance;

[0030] FIG. **8** is a top plan view of the golf shoes of FIG. **7** after the player's feet are placed in the second golf stance;

[0031] FIG. **9** is a perspective view of the golf shoes shown in FIG. **7** after the player's feet are placed in the desired stance;

[0032] FIG. **10** is a top plan view of the front and back of a template in accordance with one aspect of the present invention;

[0033] FIG. **11** is a top plan view of the front and back of a template in accordance with another aspect of the present invention;

[0034] FIG. **12** is a top plan view of a template and golf shoes depicting certain steps in one method of applying visual indicia to golf shoes; and,

[0035] FIG. **13** is a top plan view of a template and golf shoes depicting certain steps in another method of applying visual indicia to golf shoes.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0036] In describing the preferred embodiments of the subject matter illustrated and to be described with respect to the drawings, specific terminology will be resorted to for the sake of clarity. However, the invention is not intended to be limited to the specific terms so selected, and it is to be understood that each specific term includes all technical equivalents which operate in a similar manner to accomplish a similar purpose.

[0037] Referring to the drawings, wherein like reference numerals represent like elements, FIGS. **1-3** generally depict a pair of golf shoes including a left golf shoe **20**A and a right golf shoe **20**B, which have been modified to include alignment stripes under the teachings herein. The golf shoes are intended to be worn by a golfer **22** to facilitate consistently achieving an optimal stance to improve the golfer's aim during driving and iron shots. Specific aspects of the golf shoes **20**A and **20**B are disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 5,381,614, the disclosure of which is hereby incorporated herein.

[0038] As discussed in this application, the terms "driving and iron shots" are intended to include all shots made with drivers, traditional irons including Nos. 2-9, a pitching wedge, and all clubs useful for chipping shots. Thus, driving and iron shots include golf shots made with all clubs with the exception of putters.

[0039] It should be understood that the golf shoes generally depicted in FIGS. **1-3** are intended to be used as an aid by golfers of all skill levels in acquiring an appropriate stance prior to striking a golf ball. In this regard, the golf shoes disclosed in FIGS. **1-3** include visual lines thereon to indicate when a golfer **22** has obtained one of two popular golf stances, i.e., the Hogan or Leadbetter stance, which are merely preferred stances, and thus are only intended to be examples of stances that may be obtained with the golf shoe alignment device of the present invention. Thus, the alignment lines on the golf shoes can be arranged in various positions to indicate when different preferred stances are obtained.

[0040] The present disclosure builds on the teachings of U.S. Pat. No. 5,381,614 by providing apparatuses and methods which are useful in applying the visual lines, or other indicia, indicative of the Hogan, Leadbetter, or other golf stance desired by the user.

[0041] As discussed in U.S. Pat. No. 5,381,615, the golf shoes shown in FIGS. **1-3** are useful to help players of all skill levels to obtain the popular Hogan stance during driving and iron shots. The left golf shoe **20**A includes an upper portion **24**A and a sole portion **26**A. Similarly, the right golf shoe **20**B includes an upper portion **24**B and a sole portion **26**B. These portions may be constructed in accordance with conventional golf shoes.

[0042] In the golf shoe embodiment shown in FIGS. **1-3**, the left golf shoe **20**A includes a longitudinal guide line **28**A and a transverse guide line **30**A. The transverse guideline **30**A is arranged perpendicular to the longitudinal guide line **28**A. A central longitudinal axis LA extends through the longitudinal center of the left golf shoe **20**A as shown in phantom in FIG. **1**.

[0043] The right golf shoe **20**B also includes a pair of guide lines arranged on the upper portion **24**B. In this regard, the right golf shoe **20**B includes a longitudinal guide line **28**B and a transverse guide line **30**B arranged perpendicular thereto. Additionally, a central longitudinal axis RA is co-axially aligned with the longitudinal guide line **28**B of the right golf shoe **20**B.

[0044] The guide lines, or alignment stripes, **28**A and **30**A of the left golf shoe **20**A and the guide lines, or alignment stripes, **28**B and **30**B of the right golf shoe **20**B are intended to act as alignment means to provide a visual aid for a golfer **22** in establishing relative positioning of the golfer's feet relative to each other and to the ball and target so an optimal stance may be obtained to improve the golfer's aim during driving and iron shots.

[0045] It should be appreciated that the guide lines in all embodiments of the present invention may be arranged on the upper portions **24**A and **24**B of the left and right golf shoes in any suitable manner. For example, the guide lines may be placed on the upper portion of the golf shoes by various colored dyes, markers, pens, sewn material, separable snap-on devices, or loop and hook connectors. These different ways of placing the guide lines on the upper portion of the golf shoes are intended to be examples only, and the invention includes kits of components with at least some of these various items. Thus, the particular manner in which the guide lines are arranged on golf shoes is not intended to be limited by the description in this application. What is important, is that the guide lines are arranged in a manner that will clearly provide a visual aid to a golfer who wishes to obtain a particular stance. In addition to guide lines, it will be appreciated that other guiding indicia, as discussed below, may be provided.

[0046] As discussed above, the golf shoes **20**A, **20**B disclosed in FIGS. **1-3** are intended to aid a right handed golfer in establishing the Hogan stance during driving and iron shots. This is accomplished by arranging the longitudinal guide line **28**A of the left golf shoe **20**A in a position so that it will intersect the central longitudinal axis LA to form an angle of approximately 22½° therewith on the anterior side of the left golf shoe **20**B, i.e., the side closest to the right golf shoe as shown in FIG. **1**. The relative positioning of the

longitudinal guide line **28**A and the transverse guide line **30**A is fixed. In the embodiment shown in FIGS. **1-3**, the longitudinal guide line **28**A will always remain perpendicular to the transverse guide line **30**A regardless of the positioning of the left foot golf shoe **20**A. The longitudinal guide line **28**B and the transverse guide line **30**B of the right golf shoe **20**B will also be perpendicular to each other at all times.

[0047] The longitudinal guide line **28**B of the right golf shoe **20**B extends coaxial with the central reference axis RA. As with the left golf shoe **20**A, the transverse guide line **30**B of the right golf shoe **20**B will always remain perpendicular to the corresponding longitudinal guide line **28**B.

[0048] FIG. **2** illustrates an isolated top plan view of the left and right golf shoes after a right handed golfer **22** has obtained the Hogan stance. As clearly shown in FIG. **2**, the left golf shoe **20**A should be placed at an angle with respect to the right golf shoe **20**B until the longitudinal guide line **28**A and the transverse guide line **30**A arranged on the upper portion **24**A are in axes which extend parallel with the respective longitudinal guide line **28**B and the transverse guide line **30**B on the upper portion **24**B of the right golf shoe **20**B. When the respective left and right longitudinal and transverse guide lines are in alignment with each as shown in FIG. **2**, the golfer **22** has a clear indication that he or she has obtained the desired stance.

[0049] In practice, a golfer will place his or her feet at a particular distance from a golf ball **32** prior to assuming an appropriate stance. The relative positioning of a golfer's body and feet with respect to the golf ball **32**, and with respect to each other and the target, is shown in FIG. **3** which generally illustrates a golfer **22** who has prepared golf shoes using an alignment device of the present invention to establish the popular Hogan stance.

[0050] For a right handed golfer, the golf ball **32** should be lined up with a desired location on the golfer's body along a central reference axis CA as shown in FIG. **3**. Of course, different individuals will have different preferences with regard to the alignment between the golf ball **32** and a selected position on his or her body. For example, some right-handed golfers may prefer to align the golf ball **32** with his or her left armpit while other golfers may align the golf ball with his or her left heel or other bodily reference.

[0051] For a left handed golfer, the body position is reversed so that the golf ball **32** is generally arranged in alignment with a location on the right side of the golfer's body (not shown). Once this initial alignment is obtained, the golfer must determine how to achieve the optimal stance. The alignment stripe accomplishes this by clearly providing the golfer **22** with a visual aid for arranging his or her feet in a relative position with respect to the target, each other and with respect to the golf ball **32**. Once the longitudinal and transverse guide lines are aligned, the golfer knows that the optimal stance has been obtained and may begin his or her swing.

[0052] As further shown in FIG. **3**, when the golfer **22** has been properly positioned in the Hogan stance, the longitudinal guide line **28**A of the left golf shoe **20**A will intersect the central reference axis CA at an angle of 22½° in at least one quadrant. On the other hand, the longitudinal guide line **28**B of the right golf shoe **20**B will extend parallel to the central reference axis CA. The angular relationship between the left and right longitudinal guide lines is thus the same with respect to the longitudinal reference axes LA and RA, and the central reference axis CA.

[0053] Additionally, the transverse guide lines **30**A and **30**B are particularly useful to aid a golfer **22** in improving his aim prior to swinging a golf club. In this regard, the arrangement of the transverse guide lines **30**A and **30**B are selected so that their aligned axis, obtained when the optimal stance is obtained, is also in alignment with the intended target area. This feature can be appreciated from FIG. **3** which illustrates that the axis of the aligned transverse lines **30**A and **30**B aids the golfer **22** in aiming toward the target area along arrow T. When the golfer **22** has obtained an optimal stance, the central reference axis CA will extend perpendicular to the axis of target arrow T which extends through the transverse guide lines **30**A and **30**B between the golfer's feet and the target.

[0054] FIG. **4** depicts an alternate embodiment of the alignment stripe which includes a plurality of transverse lines **44**A, **46**A and **48**A on the upper portion **42**A of the left golf shoe **40**A and a plurality of transverse lines **44**B, **46**B and **48**B on the upper portion **42**B of the right golf shoe **40**B. These additional transverse lines may provide a golfer with a clearer reference site than that provided by the single transverse line embodiment establishing the desired stance. One longitudinal line **50**A, **50**B is shown on the respective left and right golf shoes in the embodiment of FIG. **4**. However, more or less transverse or longitudinal lines may be used for aesthetic purposes to create a different appearance on the upper portions of the golf shoes.

[0055] FIGS. **5** and **6** illustrate exemplary golf shoes for use by left-handed golfers who also prefer the Hogan stance. In this regard, the longitudinal and transverse guide lines on the left and right golf shoes **60**A and **60**B are simply arranged in an orientation opposite to that shown for a right-handed golfer in FIGS. **1-3**. Thus, in the embodiments shown in FIGS. **5** and **6**, a left-handed golfer would be required to turn his or her right foot away from the left foot to form an angle of approximately 22½° with respect to a central axis between a golf ball and a selected location on a golfer's body as discussed above.

[0056] A second preferred stance which may be obtained by using the golf markings is the popular Leadbetter stance. When the Leadbetter stance is used, the positioning of a golfer's feet is the same for left and right handed players. FIGS. **7-9** clearly illustrate the orientation of the alignment guide lines required to help a golfer obtain the Leadbetter stance. In this regard, FIG. **7** illustrates an isolated top plan view of a golf shoes in which the alignment guide lines are shown in their orientation prior to positioning a golfer's feet in the Leadbetter stance. FIG. **8** depicts the orientation of the alignment guide lines after the golfer's feet have been moved into the proper position to obtain the Leadbetter stance. In this stance, both the left and the right feet should be turned outwardly from each other at an angle of approximately 27½° with respect to a central reference axis CA' (shown in phantom).

[0057] In accordance with this stance, a left golf shoe **70**A includes an upper portion **72**A and a sole portion **74**A. A longitudinal line **76**A and a transverse line **78**A are arranged on the upper portion **72**A. The longitudinal line **76**A forms an angle of about 27½° with respect to the anterior side of a central longitudinal axis LA' (shown in phantom). Similarly, the right golf shoe **70**B includes an upper portion **72**B and a sole portion **74**B. A longitudinal line **76**B and a transverse line **78**B are arranged on the upper portion **72**B. The longitudinal line **76**B of the right golf shoe **70**B also forms a angle of approximately 27½° with respect to the central longitudinal axis RA' (also shown in phantom), all of which can be

appreciated from FIGS. **7** and **8**. The orientation of the alignment lines shown in FIG. **7** is that which would be seen in the Leadbetter style golf shoes while the golfer has his or her feet placed in a normal standing position, i.e., before assuming the Leadbetter stance.

[0058] Once the Leadbetter stance is obtained, the longitudinal line **76**A and the transverse line **78**A of the right golf shoe **70** will appear to be parallel with the respective longitudinal line **76**B and the transverse line **78**B of the right golf shoe **70**B as shown in FIGS. **8** and **9**. As further shown in FIG. **9**, when the golfer **22** has successfully obtained the Leadbetter stance, the aligned transverse lines **78**A and **78**B will be arranged in an imaginary axis including the target arrow T. Thus, providing the golfer **22** with a means for improving his or her aim prior to swinging the golf club.

[0059] Although the particular positioning of a golfer's feet will vary in accordance with the desired stance in the various arrangements possible, the alignment guide lines of the present invention operate in a similar manner for each. That is, the longitudinal lines and the transverse lines, if any, should be placed in a parallel position with respect to the corresponding longitudinal or transverse lines on the other golf shoe. This is beneficial as a beginning golfer may wish to experiment with various stances before selecting one that is the most comfortable.

[0060] Heretofore, the golf shoes themselves were provided with alignment markings indicative of a particular stance, including the Leadbetter and Hogan stances, as described above. However, there are several drawbacks to this arrangement. For one, a shoe retailer must inventory shoes in each of multiple stances in all of the available sizes, potentially for both right and left handed golfers. Moreover, a consumer cannot readily change the intended stance of the shoes once purchased. Those golfers that had become proficient in a particular stance, and no longer needed to utilize the alignment stripes to obtain a proper stance, or simply no longer wanted the stripes for aesthetic or other reasons, were required to purchase a second pair of golf shoes without the stripes. Other golfers that never adapted to a particular stance were left without an option for revising their shoes to another stance orientation.

[0061] To alleviate these issues and others, the present invention includes apparatuses and methods for applying alignment indications to golf shoes, including the retrofitting of conventional golf shoes. As such, the present invention generally provides for a template that may be overlaid upon an otherwise conventional golf shoe by a user in accordance with a predetermined orientation. The user may then utilize indicia on the template to provide an alignment stripe or other alignment indication on the shoe. Such alignment stripes or indications may be drawn or painted on the shoe, adhered to the shoe, sewn to the shoe, or applied to the shoe by any suitable means.

[0062] As shown in FIG. **10**, a template apparatus **100** may be formed as a rectilinear planar surface. Preferably, the length of the template **100** approximately corresponds to that of a standard shoe upper, from the bottom of the laces to the toe box. Likewise, the width is preferably approximately the width of the standard shoe upper, such that the template **100** may be overlaid conveniently upon a shoe.

[0063] The template of FIG. **10** is designed to assist with the application of alignment indications on golf shoes for the Leadbetter stance. Preferably, the template is rectangular with upper **102** and lower **104** edges spanning first **106** and second **108** sides. The template **100** may be made from a variety of materials, including plastics and metals, or even paper so as to be environmentally responsible. Preferably, the template **100** is somewhat flexible such that it may generally conform to the shape and configuration of the golf shoe upper upon which it may be applied. In addition, the material is preferably clear, such that the template **100** may be flipped over to aid with application of alignment stripes on the shoe of the opposite foot. If not clear, additional markings may be applied to the back of the template. Alternatively, a second template (not shown) may be provided. It will be appreciated that the template **100** of FIG. **10** is represented as a clear template.

[0064] To aid in aligning the template on the shoes, the template may be provided with alignment guides **110**, **112** in the form of dashes or other indicia centered at the upper **102** and lower **104** edges, respectively. As will be shown below, the upper alignment guide **110** may be aligned adjacent to the laces of a conventional shoe while the lower alignment guide **112** may be aligned with the toe box of a conventional shoe, to properly align the template **100**.

[0065] As discussed above, the template **100** is configured for the Leadbetter stance. As such, the template **100** includes a first indicia **114** of the Leadbetter stance, in this case a line preferably extending orthogonal to the outer perimeter of the rectangular template. Note that in some embodiments the line **114** may not be included as this line is optional for the Leadbetter stance. The template also includes a second indicia **116** of the Leadbetter stance, again a line. The angle between the two lines **114**, **116** for the Leadbetter stance is approximately 27½°. Of course, that angle may vary for other stances.

[0066] Shown in FIG. **10** is the front (F) and back (B) of template **100**. In this embodiment, the template is transparent or translucent with the lines **114**, **116** and alignment guides **110**, **112** printed on the front (F). As shown, the lines **114**, **116**, and alignment guides **110**, **112** can clearly be seen through the template. In this way, a single template may be utilized for both the left and right shoes, as will be shown. In other embodiments, two separate templates may be utilized, or an opaque template with two sets of markings may be utilized.

[0067] FIG. **11** depicts a second template **200** arranged for the Hogan stance. Like template **100**, the second template is preferably rectangular with upper **202** and lower **204** edges spanning first **206** and second **208** sides. The template **200** may be made from a variety of materials as discussed with respect to template **100**.

[0068] Again like template **100**, template **200** may include alignment guides **210**, **212** in the form of dashes or other indicia centered at the upper **202** and lower **204** edges, respectively.

[0069] Being configured for the Hogan stance, the template **200** includes a first indicia **214** of the Hogan stance, in this case a line preferably extending orthogonal to the outer perimeter of the rectangular template. Note that in some embodiments the line **214** may not be included as this line is optional for the Hogan stance. The template also includes a second indicia **216** of the Hogan stance, again a line. The angle between the two lines **214**, **216** for the Hogan stance is approximately 22½°. Of course, that angle may vary for other stances.

[0070] Shown in FIG. **11** is the front (F) and back (B) of template **200**. In this embodiment, the template is transparent or translucent with the lines **214**, **216** and alignment guides

210, **212** printed on the front (F). As shown, the lines **214**, **216**, and alignment guides **210**, **212** can clearly be seen through the template. In this way, a single template may be utilized for both the left and right shoes, as will be shown. In other embodiments, two separate templates may be utilized. In practice, the template **200** for the Hogan stance may be configured all on one side, as the first indicia **214** is preferably horizontal in relation to the shoe and there is only one angular indicia transferred to the golf shoe. Flipping the template **200** does not change that relationship, as there is still only one angular indicia transferred while the other remains horizontal.

[0071] FIG. **12** represents left **300** and right **302** golf shoes to be configured with the Leadbetter stance indicia. In order to do so, the following steps may be conducted. Obviously, certain of the steps need not be completed in the order provided. For example, the application of markings will be described as being on the right shoe first (shown on the left in FIG. **12**). However, the applications can easily be applied first to the left shoe and then the right.

[0072] To apply the markings, the appropriate template, such as the template **100** shown in FIG. **10**, is applied over the right shoe upper **304**. The user may ensure proper alignment by aligning the alignment guides **110** and **112** on the front (F) of the template **100** adjacent to the laces **306** and toe box **308**, respectively. Alternatively, or in addition thereto, the user may stretch a rubber band **310** (represented by a dashed line) over the shoe upper **304** to provide visual indication of the shoe centerline. The user may also utilize line **114** to align the template between the laces **306** and toe box **308**. In some embodiments, the template may include a tacky surface, or a kit of components may include an adhesive, that can temporarily stick to the shoe **300** to aid in maintaining alignment of the template. As a temporary alignment aide, the template could simply be adhered to the shoes and left that way during use.

[0073] Once the template **100** is appropriately placed, the user may first mark one side of the shoe **300** directly adjacent second indicia **116** with a mark **312**. The user may then mark the other side of the shoe **300** directly adjacent the template with a second mark **314**. Depending on the circumstances, the marks **312**, **314** may be achieved with a pencil, sticker, or other removable means, or a pen, marker, or other permanent means. Optionally, the user may also mark opposing sides of line **114**, although that is not strictly necessary for the Leadbetter stance.

[0074] After the marks **312**, **314** are made, the user may remove the template **100** from atop the shoe **300**. The user may then extend a line, series of lines, or other indicia between the marks **312**, **314**. Preferably, a kit of materials is supplied which includes not only the templates, but linear stickers that may be applied to the shoes. Once the visual indicia is placed on the right shoe **300**, the template **100** may be flipped over to the back (B) and aligned over the left shoe **302**. Markings may be applied in a manner similar to that described previously, such that markings **316**, **318** are made adjacent to either side of line **116**. Again, the template may be removed and a line applied between the marks **316**, **318**. Alternatively, a second line corresponding to line **114** may also be applied to the second shoe **302**.

[0075] It will be appreciated that in one embodiment, upon completion of line application the shoes **300**, **302** will resemble those shown in FIG. **7**. In other embodiments, the lines **78**A, **78**B shown in FIG. **7** may be other than solid. For example, the lines may be dashed, dotted, or the like. Similarly, the lines may be colored so as to heavily contrast with the shoes, which obviously makes them readily visible. Alternatively, if such ease of visibility is not desired, the lines may be configured to colors similar to those of the underlying shoe, where only small color variations can be notice or where variations in the sheen of the two components can be detected upon relatively close inspection. In this way, the markings may only be readily visible to the user. Kits of components according to the present invention may include each of these various options.

[0076] Moving now to FIG. **13**, and additional pair of shoes **400**, **402** are shown. In this example, the shoes **400**, **402** will have indicia indicative of the Hogan stance applied. To do so, the following steps may be practiced. Like those of the Leadbetter stance, the following steps may not be conducted in the exact order presented.

[0077] First, the appropriate template, such as the template **200** shown in FIG. **11**, is applied over the right shoe upper **404**. The user may ensure proper alignment by aligning the alignment guides **210** and **212** on the front (F) of the template **200** adjacent to the laces **406** and toe box **408**, respectively. Alternatively, or in addition thereto, the user may stretch a rubber band (not shown) over the shoe upper **404** to provide visual indication of the shoe centerline. The user may also utilize line **214** to align the template between the laces **406** and toe box **408**.

[0078] Once the template **100** is appropriately placed, the user may first mark one side of the shoe **400** directly adjacent first indicia **214** with a mark **412**. The user may then mark the other side of the shoe **400** directly adjacent indicia **214** with a second mark **414**. Depending on the circumstances, the marks **412**, **414** may be achieved with a pencil, sticker, or other removable means, or a pen, marker, or other permanent means. For the Hogan stance, the user need not mark a line associated with line **216** on this shoe.

[0079] After the marks **412**, **414** are made, the user may remove the template **200** from atop the shoe **400**. The user may then extend a line, series of lines, or other indicia between the marks **412**, **414**. Preferably, a kit of materials is supplied which includes not only the templates, but linear stickers that may be applied to the shoes. Once the visual indicia is placed on the right shoe **400**, the template **200** may be flipped over to the back (B) and aligned over the left shoe **402**. It will be appreciated that due to the nature of the Hogan markings, the template need not be flipped if the back (B) is used for the first shoe **400**. Markings may then be applied in a manner similar to that described previously, such that markings **416**, **418** are made adjacent to either side of line **216**. Again, the template may be removed and a line applied between the marks **416**, **418**.

[0080] It will be appreciated that in one embodiment, upon completion of line application the shoes **400**, **402** will resemble those shown in FIG. **5**. In other embodiments, the lines shown in FIG. **5** may be other than solid, as previously discussed.

[0081] While the aforementioned procedures may be undertaken for the various shoes shown, it is to be understood that other similar procedures may be necessary for other configurations. For example, various stances a left-handed golfer and a right-handed golfer may have shoes that are opposite to each other. In that regard, the applied lines would be altered for use by the particular golfer such that the applied lines are oriented with the feet in the proper position and the

target in line. Instructions for application of alignment markings for each of the stances may be provided in a kit.

[0082] Regarding the aforementioned kit, it will be appreciated that the kit may contain a number of templates, for example a Hogan template and a Leadbetter template, in left and right handed variations as necessary, along with appropriate marking devices, such as pencils or pens, and appropriate devices for applying visual indicia on the shoes. These may include linear stickers, paint, sew on stripes, indicia with hook and loop type fasteners, or the like. In addition, the kit may contain instructions for use and an adhesive, preferably a light adhesive. All of these components may be housed in a package sufficient for this purpose.

[0083] Lastly, it will be noted that the templates may be provided with at least one aperture or slot **118**, as shown in dashed lines in FIG. **10** (where only one is shown). The apertures or slots may be arranged along the lines **114**, **116**. They may then be utilized to assist with the marking steps previously mentioned. In this regard, one need not make a mark adjacent to the template **100**, but may make the mark within the boundary of the template **100**. Indeed, this arrangement could replace the requirement to mark adjacent to the template and then connect the markings, because all of the markings may be made in a single step, for example by applying paint through the template at various locations.

[0084] While the foregoing description and figures are directed toward the preferred embodiments in accordance with the present invention, it should be appreciated that numerous modifications can be made to the structure and orientation of the alignment guide lines on the golf shoes. Thus, such modifications in the materials, structure and arrangement of the disclosed embodiments and the steps of the method of the present invention can be made without departing from the spirit and scope thereof. Accordingly, the foregoing description of the preferred embodiments should be taken by way of illustration rather than by way of limitation with respect to the present invention, which is defined by the claims set forth below.

[0085] Although the invention herein has been described with reference to particular embodiments, it is to be understood that these embodiments are merely illustrative of the principles and application of the present invention. It is therefore to be understood that numerous modifications may be made to the illustrative embodiments and that other arrangements may be devised without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention as defined by the appended claims.

1. A method of applying alignment markings to shoes, comprising:
- overlaying a first alignment template over a first shoe, the first alignment template having first indicia associated with a predetermined stance;
- marking the first shoe adjacent to the first indicia;
- removing the first alignment template;
- utilizing the marking on the first shoe to provide a first alignment stripe on the first shoe;
- overlaying a second alignment template over a second shoe, the second alignment template having second indicia associated with the predetermined stance;
- marking the second shoe adjacent to the second indicia;
- utilizing the marking on the second shoe to provide a second alignment stripe on the second athletic shoe.

2. The method of claim **1**, wherein said step of marking the first shoe marks the shoe in two locations.

3. The method of claim **2**, wherein said step of utilizing the marking on the first shoe utilizes the two markings.

4. The method of claim **3**, wherein the markings are utilized by connecting the markings to form the first alignment stripe.

5. The method of claim **3**, wherein the markings are utilized to overlay a sticker to form the first alignment strip.

6. The method of claim **1**, wherein said step of utilizing the marking on the first shoe is by extending the marking.

7. The method of claim **1**, wherein said step of utilizing the marking on the first shoe is by overlaying a sticker over or adjacent to the marking.

8. The method of claim **1**, wherein said first alignment template further comprises an alignment marking, the method further comprising the step of aligning the alignment marking of the first alignment template with a predetermined element of the first shoe.

9. The method of claim **8**, wherein the predetermined element of the first shoe are laces.

10. The method of claim **8**, further comprising the step of stretching a rubber band over the length of the first athletic shoe to define a centerline of the shoe, wherein the step of aligning the alignment marking of the first alignment template with a predetermined element of the first athletic shoe aligns the alignment marking with the rubber band.

11. The method of claim **1**, wherein the first alignment template and the second alignment template are the same template.

12. The method of claim **11**, wherein the second alignment template is the opposite side of the first alignment template.

13. The method of claim **1**, wherein said first indicia is a first line.

14. The method of claim **13**, wherein the second indicia is a second line.

15. The method of claim **14**, wherein the angle between the first line and the second line is approximately 27½°.

16. The method of claim **14**, wherein the angle between the first line and the second line is approximately 22½°.

17. The method of claim **1**, wherein the predetermined stance is one of the Hogan stance or the Leadbetter stance.

18. The method of claim **1**, wherein said first indicia is one of a marking, a notch, or a slot.

18. The method of claim **1**, wherein the first alignment template includes an adhesive surface.

20. A kit of components for applying alignment markings to shoes, the kit comprising:
- an first alignment template having first indicia and second indicia associated with a first predetermined athletic stance;
- a second alignment template having first indicia and second indicia associated with a second predetermined athletic stance;
- wherein either the first alignment template or second alignment template may be utilized to aid in the application of alignment markings on shoes.

21. The kit of claim **20**, wherein the first alignment template and the second alignment template are one template.

22. The kit of claim **20**, further comprising an adhesive stripe.

23. The kit of claim **22**, further comprising a marking apparatus.

24. The kit of claim **20**, further comprising a rubber band.

25. The kit of claim **20**, further comprising an instruction document.

26. The kit of claim **20**, wherein said first template includes an adhesive surface.

27. A kit of components for applying alignment markings to athletic shoes, the kit comprising:

a first alignment template, the first alignment template containing markings indicative of the Leadbetter golf stance;

a second alignment template, the second alignment template containing markings indicative of the Hogan golf stance;

wherein one of the alignment templates may be utilized to apply markings to athletic shoes to assist a golfer in obtaining either the Leadbetter or Hogan stances.

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