April 4, 1967 G. E. MITCHELL 3,312,474

GOLF STROKE GUIDE

Filed Jan. 10, 1964

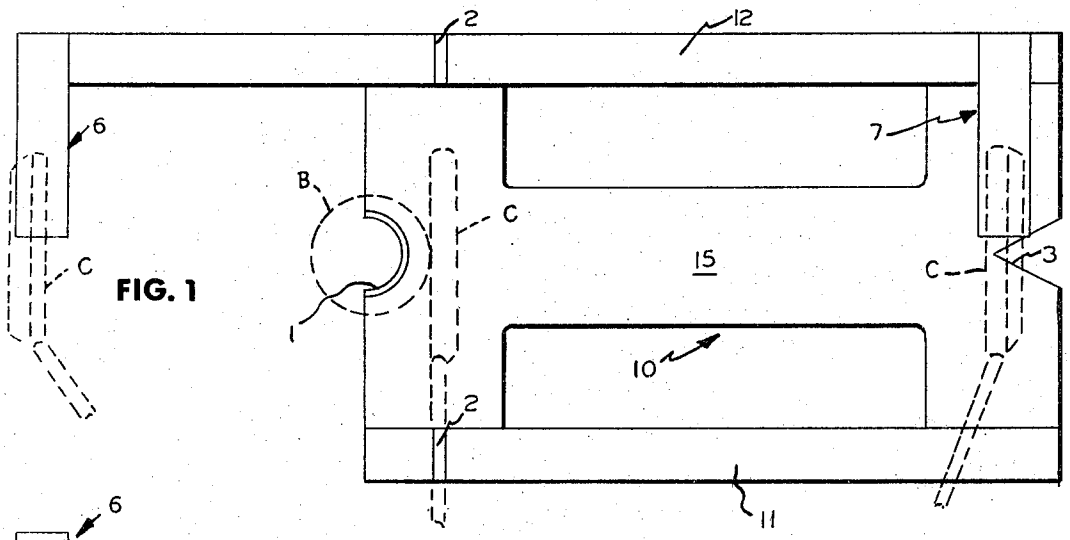


FIG. 1

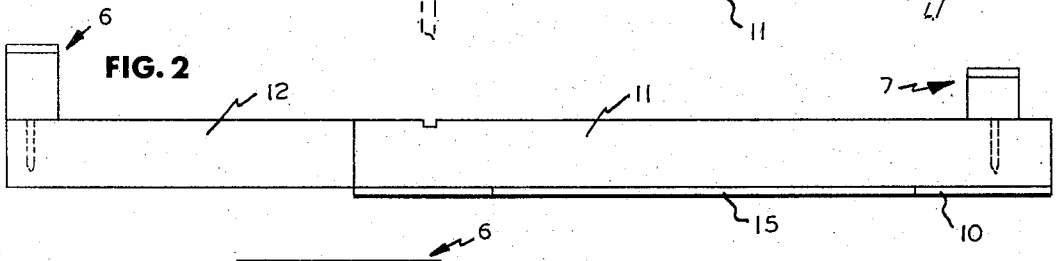


FIG. 2

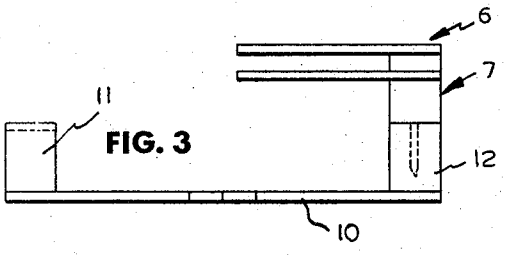


FIG. 3

FIG. 4

INVENTOR:
GEORGE E. MITCHELL
BY:
Parin, Haskell & Levine
ATTORNEY

United States Patent Office 3,312,474 Patented Apr. 4, 1967

3,312,474

GOLF STROKE GUIDE

George E. Mitchell, 272 Walnut St., Brookline, Mass. 02146

Filed Jan. 10, 1964, Ser. No. 336,977
2 Claims. (Cl. 273—186)

The present invention relates to golf instruction, and particularly to a device for facilitating the development of a proper putting stroke.

Proficiency in the game of golf requires the reasonable mastery of the art of putting, and a proper putting stroke is a very important element in consistent putting accuracy. A proper putting stroke embodies several features: the back stroke and forward stroke including the initial follow through should be in a straight line; the back stroke and forward stroke should be nearly horizontal, i.e. essentially parallel with the ground and relatively free from arc; and the initial follow through stroke should also be reasonably flat or horizontal, although a greater upward arc occurs than in the back stroke. In addition, it is important to line up the face of the club close behind the ball perpendicular to the line of stroke travel.

In accordance with the present invention, there is provided a stand which facilitates the development of a proper putting stroke, while permitting a free and unconstrained swing by the user, whereby the user will be influenced or coached into a proper swing, and deviations therefrom will be indicated. To this end, the stand of the present invention includes a base over which the back and forward strokes travel, and this base includes sighting guides for facilitating a straight line movement of the club head, and sighting guides for assisting in obtaining a proper alignment and orientation of the club head at the start of the putting stroke. A back stroke detector and a follow through detector are mounted on the base to detect deviations of the club head from acceptable limits in elevation, i.e. whether the club head has been raised too high from the ground level, or whether the swing has been held sufficiently free from arc. Since the follow through part of the stroke requires some arc while the back stroke should be nearly flat, the follow through detector is mounted at an appropriately higher elevation than the back stroke detector. Also, in order not to impose disturbing physical constraints upon the swing which would tend to interfere with a relaxed and untensed and hence natural execution of the stroke, it is preferred that the two elevation detectors be freely pivotable or otherwise yielding, should either be struck by the club. In this way, should the user exceed the limits defined by the detectors, this fact will be readily observable, yet the stroke of the club can be continued with a minimum of obstruction despite the fact that a detector has been hit. This enables the user to effect a natural swing free from preoccupation with the disturbing effect of the club hitting an unyielding obstruction.

Accordingly, it is one object of the present invention to provide a golf instruction or golf practice stand for developing a proper swing or stroke.

Another object of the present invention is to provide such a device particularly adapted for practicing or instructing on the putting stroke.

And still another object of the present invention is to provide such a device which is relatively free from jarring obstructions should the user deviate from acceptable limits of a proper stroke.

Other objects and advantages of the present invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from a consideration of the following detailed description of one embodiment of the invention, had in conjunction with the

accompanying drawings, in which like numerals refer to like or corresponding parts, and wherein:

FIG. 1 is a top plan view of one embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 2 is a side elevation view thereof;

FIG. 3 an end elevation view thereof; and

FIG. 4 is a perspective view thereof.

The instructional stand as illustrated in the accompanying drawings has a base or platform **10**, provided with two side rails **11** and **12**. The platform **10** is cut out at **13** and **14** to provide a narrow strip **15** defining a central line between the two side rails **11** and **12**. At the forward end of the strip **15** the platform is recessed at **1** to receive a golf ball, while at the back end of the strip **15**, the platform **10** is provided with a V notch **3**. The strip **15** and V notch together define a straight line path aligned with the ball receiving recess **1**, to guide or direct the back and forward strokes of a putter along a straight line.

To facilitate the initial positioning of the golf club behind the ball with the club face at a right angle to the line of the stroke path, the two notches **2** are provided in the side rails **11** and **12**.

A preferably removable, and pivotally mounted detector is located at each end of the side rail **12**. A follow through detector **6** is located at the forward end of the rail **12**, positioned a suitable distance forward of the ball receiving recess **1**, and the back stroke detector **7** is located at the rear or back end of the rail **12**, positioned a suitable distance rearwardly of the ball receiving recess **1**. For example, the follow through detector might conveniently be located about five inches forward of the ball recess **1**, and the back stroke detector might conveniently be located nine or ten inches rearwardly of the recess **1**. In the area of the ball positioning indicia **1**, and for a substantial distance forwardly and rearwardly thereof, there are no obstructions to the club stroke.

The follow through detector **6** comprises a mounting block **16** carrying projecting striker plate **17** adapted to overhang the line of travel of the putter head during the follow through stroke. A depending pin **5** carried by the mounting block **16** fits into a hole **4** in rail **12** adjacent the forward end of the rail. The pin **5** is freely pivotable and axially movable in said hole **4**.

Similarly, the back stroke detector **7** comprises a mounting block **18** carrying a projecting striker plate **19** adapted to overhang the line of travel of the putter head during the back stroke. A depending pin **5'** carried by the mounting block **18** fits into a hole **4'** in rail **12**, adjacent the rear or back end of the rail. The pin **5'** is freely pivotable and axially movable in said hole **4'**.

In view of the fact that the elevation arc during the follow through stroke is greater than such arc during the back stroke (the back stroke preferably being nearly flat), the elevation of striker plate **17** is set significantly higher than for striker plate **19**, as best shown in FIGS. 2 and 3. This is accomplished by utilizing a larger mounting block **16** for the follow through detector **6** than is used at **18** for the back stroke detector **7**.

The manner in which the present instructional device is intended to be used is best indicated by reference to FIG. 1 and the phantom line showing there of golf ball B and club head C. The instructional device is placed with platform **10** on a suitable flat surface, such as a putting green, a lawn, or a carpet. A golf ball B is nested in the receiving recess **1** and the detectors are positioned to project over the intended path of the club head, as shown in FIG. 1. The user then adresses the ball from the side of the device of rail **11**, and places the club head C immediately behind the ball B. The face of the club head is aligned with the notches **2**, which places the club at an appropriate distance behind the ball and orients the club face perpendicularly to the line of the swing. The club is

then swung rearwardly along the line of travel defined by strip **15** and V notch **3** passing under the striker plate **19** of back stroke detector **7**. Whereupon, the forward stroke is commenced, again passing under striker plate **19** and along the line of notch **3** and strip **15** to impact with the ball B. The follow through stroke is continued along the same line, with the club head C passing under the striker plate **17** of follow through detector **6**.

Should the club head be raised beyond a permissible amount during either the back stroke or follow through stroke, it will hit either detector **6** or **7**, as the case may be, indicating a faulty swing by movement of the detector out of position. However, because the detectors are freely pivotable on their pins **5** and **5'**, and because these pins may rise up in their holes if necessary, the detectors yield to the impact of the club head. If the detectors were unyielding, impact therewith would cause a jarring sensation to the user; and as a result, users would tend to be tense and lose the desired freeness in the swing or stroke.

The foregoing detailed description of one embodiment of the invention is presented merely for purposes of illustration of enable a complete understanding of the invention. Numerous variations and modifiications will become apparent to those skilled in the art. For example, the provision of yieldability for the detectors **6** and **7** can be effected in other ways. Also, for example, the stroke path delineated by strip **15** and V notch **3** could be delineated by other indicia means such as a line surface marking and/or an arrow. Other modifications and variations will become apparent, and such as are embraced by the spirit and scope of the appended claims are contemplated as being within the purview of this invention.

What is claimed is:

1. An instructional golf stroke stand comprising a base plate, two parallel side rails carried by said base plate generally defining a stroke area therebetween, said base plate having a forwardly opening recess means at its forward end midway between said side rails for locating a ball and allowing a ball positioned therein to roll unobstructedly forwardly from said stand, first indicia means on said base delineating a straight line stroke path rearwardly from said recess means and parallel with said side rails, second indicia means on said side rails delineating a ball addressing position for a club head to facilitate orienting the club head perpendicularly to said stroke path, yieldable back stroke detecting means located substantially rearwardly of said recess means and including a striker means overhanging said stroke area and spaced above said base, yieldable follow through detecting means independent of said back stroke detecting means located substantially forwardly of said recess means and including a striker means overhanging said stroke area and spaced above said base, said stroke area being free of overhanging means in the area of said recess means and for a substantial distance to either side of said recess means, and means projecting forwardly of said base plate to support the follow through detecting means, whereby to assist in guiding the stroke of the club without constraining the movement thereof or of a ball positioned in said recess, said striker means of said follow through detecting means being spaced above said base a greater distance than said striker means of said back stroke detecting means.

2. A stand as set forth in claim **1**, wherein each of said detecting means further includes a pin for mounting the striker means seated in a hole in one of said side rails and being freely pivotable and axially movable therein, whereby said detecting means can yield when struck by a club head.

References Cited by the Examiner

UNITED STATES PATENTS

1,532,984	4/1925	Borthwick	273—186
1,596,919	8/1926	Burgoyne et al.	273—186
2,941,808	6/1960	Smith et al.	273—187
3,142,487	7/1964	Portteus	273—195 X
3,194,565	7/1965	Schroer	273—195 X
3,229,981	1/1966	Taber	273—187

FOREIGN PATENTS

426,822	4/1935	Great Britain.

RICHARD C. PINKHAM, *Primary Examiner.*

L. J. BOVASSO, *Assistant Examiner.*