

Feb. 11, 1969

J. M. SCOTT

3,427,031

WEDGE-SHAPED GOLF SWING TRAINER

Filed May 4, 1967

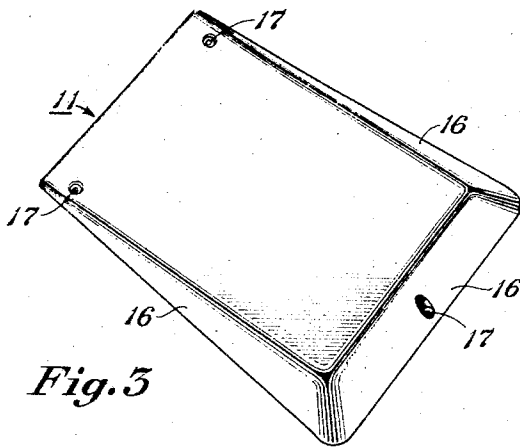


Fig. 3

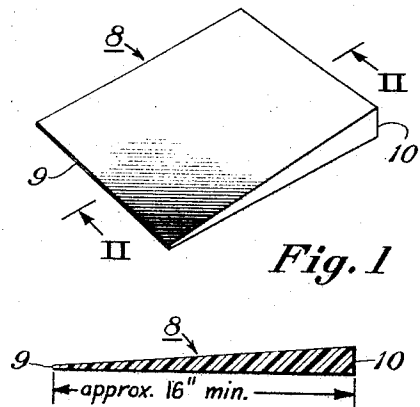


Fig. 1

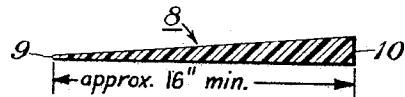


Fig. 2

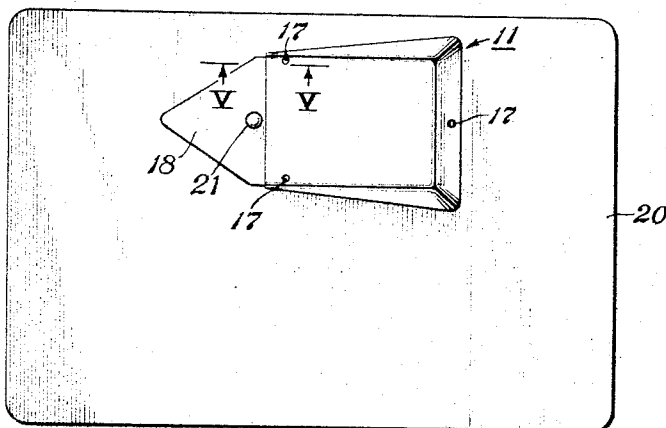


Fig. 4

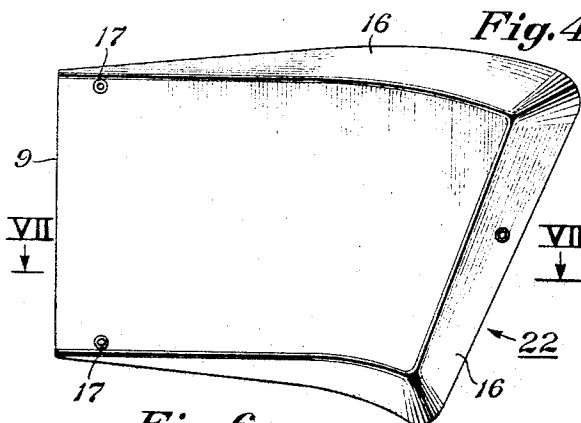


Fig. 6

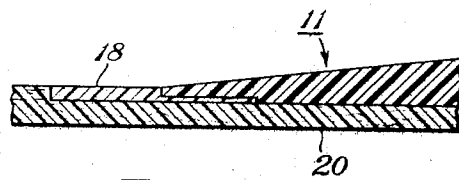


Fig. 5



Fig. 7

INVENTOR.
John M. Scott
BY
Wm. T. Wofford
Attorney

1

3,427,031

WEDGE-SHAPED GOLF SWING TRAINER

John M. Scott, 208 Virginia Place,
Fort Worth, Tex. 76107

Continuation-in-part of application Ser. No. 362,658,
Apr. 27, 1964. This application May 4, 1967, Ser.
No. 649,758

U.S. Cl. 273-186

Int. Cl. A63b 69/36

3 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A wedge-shaped slightly yieldable pad having a planar upper surface connecting its thin and thick ends. The planar surface is inclined both longitudinally and transversely to form the path along which an iron club head should move in starting a correct backswing in preparation for striking a golf ball positioned adjacent the thin edge of the pad. The respective sides of the upper surface are curved to different extents at the thick end of the pad to suggest different inside-out swing paths to accommodate long and short armed golfers.

This application is a continuation-in-part of application Ser. No. 362,658, filed Apr. 27, 1964, now abandoned.

Background of the invention

The training devices of this invention are designed to aid the user to develop the capability of correct execution of certain techniques in the use of the iron clubs, such techniques being quite desirable in accordance with a certain generally accepted theory regarding optimum use of the iron clubs. A brief discussion of such theory is deemed necessary as background for understanding the present invention.

Two basic elements are required, among other elements, to strike a golf ball properly with an iron club. These two elements are: First, the club should be taken away from the ball, as the back swing begins, in a low and sweeping manner without breaking the wrists while the club head is within an area of eighteen to twenty inches of the ball proper. Second, from the top of the back swing, the club head should move downward into the ball in such manner that the lowest point of the arc of the club head is located just forward of the ball, so that the ball is struck a descending blow by the club head.

In order to achieve the first element above-mentioned, it is necessary for the player to refrain from breaking his wrists as he begins the back swing or if golf parlance he will be guilty of the fault of "picking up the club." The player knows this objective with his mind because it is commonly talked by golf professionals and explained in golf textbooks, but his muscles subconsciously resist the desired action as it seems "natural" to break the wrists sharply, pick the club up quickly, and hurry it to its maximum back swing position.

In order to achieve the second element above-mentioned, it is necessary for the player's hands to "lead the club" so that they are slightly forward of the ball at the moment of impact. This results in the club head striking the ball a downward blow, squeezing it against the turf and causing the application of backspin. This proper type of descending blow causes the ball to rise in the air, while the contrary ascending blow is known as a "scoop." The ascending blow diminishes club head speed, causes the ball to be topped, or scuffed, and causes the overspin on the ball which unless exactly true, makes the ball fly off the line as the overspin may direct.

Another desirable element of a properly executed golf swing is that in returning the club head to the ball, the

2

head should follow an "inside out" path, that is, the head should diverge outwardly from the golfer's body. The proper "inside out" path is achieved by keeping the right elbow (assuming a right-handed golfer) in close to the body.

It is the object of the present invention to provide devices which will assist in training a golf player to strike a golf ball with an iron club properly in accordance with the above theory.

Brief description of the drawing

FIG. 1 is a view in perspective of a pad device constructed in accordance with the principles of the invention; FIG. 2 is a cross-sectional view of the pad of FIG. 1, the view being taken on the line II—II thereof; FIG. 3 is a perspective view of a modified form of pad device of FIG. 1; FIG. 4 is a plan view of the pad of FIG. 3 and showing how it may be used in combination with a striking target and a mat; FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional view of a part of the combination shown in FIG. 4, the view being taken on the line V—V of FIG. 4; FIG. 6 is a plan view of a pad device constructed in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the invention; and FIG. 7 is a cross-sectional view taken at lines VII—VII of FIG. 6.

Description of preferred embodiment

Referring to the drawing, and first to FIGS. 1 and 2, it will be seen that a training device embodying principles of the invention may consist merely of a wedge shaped pad such as is shown at 8.

The pad may be made of molded rubber, plastic or the like and is generally rectangular in plan with a thin forward edge 9 and a thick rear edge 10. The upper surface of the pad 8 is planar, or substantially so, and while the invention is not to be regarded as limited to exact dimensions, it is preferably some sixteen inches in length with its upper surface rising one and one-half inches from the forward edge to the rear edge. An upper surface rise within the range of 1 1/8 to 1 1/2 inches per sixteen inches of pad length would be considered satisfactory.

The sloping upper surface of the pad 8 shown in FIG. 1 should offer only minor frictional resistance to the movement of a club over it.

The pad 8 can be used with a ball, or without one, but in either case it will be understood that the target for the down swing of the club will be just beyond the forward or thin edge 9 of the pad (preferably within an inch of same).

FIG. 3 shows a pad 11, similar to that of FIGS. 1 and 2, and which will be used in the same way. The pad 11 differs from the pad 8 of FIGS. 1 and 2 in that it is provided with beveled edges as shown at 16, and holes 17 at its forward sides and end to accommodate wooden golf tees to secure the pad to the ground.

In FIGS. 4 and 5, the pad 11 of FIG. 3 is shown associated with a striking target 18 and a mat 20.

The target 18 should be of harder material than the pad 11, such as a hard tough plastic, and it may be provided with a spot 21 to simulate the presence of a golf ball.

The mat 20 may be advantageously employed when the pad 11 and target 18 are used at commercial practice establishments. The mat 20, among other things, insures that the proper level is provided for the player when he is addressing a ball on the pad or addressing the target. FIG. 5 illustrates the fact that the front edge of the pad 11 is at the same level as the target 18 and the mat 20.

The pad 22 of FIG. 6 is similar to that of FIG. 3, and is used in the same way. It differs from the pad of FIG. 3 in that its rear portion is curved inwardly toward the golfer's position. This curved portion suggests to the golfer a desired lateral path that requires him to keep his elbow in close to his body, thus producing the desired

3

"inside out" path hereinbefore mentioned. In addition, it will be seen that the length and radius of curvature of the curved end portion of the pad on the side remote from the golfer's position is greater than the length and radius of curvature of the curved end portion on the pad near side. A golfer with short arms should select an imaginary swing path adjacent the near side of the pad, while a long armed golfer may select a path near the far side of the pad. Thus, the pad is universal.

In using the devices of the present invention, the golfer takes the club head back along the surface of the pad slope, feeling the surface as the surface slopes upward. In order to feel the surface throughout the initial part of the back swing, the player must refrain from cocking his wrists and thus from "picking the ball up." Repeated use of a practice device, for example that of FIG. 6, results in the acquisition by the player of a proper muscle habit. Thus the take-away of the club tends to become a reflex muscle action which can be performed by the player without conscious direction. This reflex muscle action is highly desirable as it enables the player to repeat the proper motion in play regardless of the pressure of competition. It creates what is known as a "grooved swing," and such a swing is a highly desirable attribute of the golf player's ability.

The devices of the present invention secure a somewhat similar result insofar as the downswing in the hitting area is concerned. The hitting area is that part of the downswing extending from the ball back to a point some eighteen to twenty inches. The player avoids contact with the surface of the device and yet strikes the ball. The slope compels a descending blow. If the surface is touched the player knows his downstroke is improper and corrects to strike the ball cleanly without contacting the slope surface. This trial and error method results in creating a muscle habit so that the correct downstroke is an action controlled by muscle and nerve habit and not requiring conscious direction.

In the critical hitting area, as the club head descends, it is desirable that the hands continue to lead the club head and that the wrists not be uncocked until the hands have passed the ball. They are then uncocked and the accumulated power of the centrifugal force and the smashing effect of the hands is unleashed at a time when they are most effective. This type of swing likewise causes the ball to be squeezed between the club head and the turf, allows the scientifically developed loft which is built into the club head to perform its function. It applies backspin to the ball and results in the most desired type of impact and shot.

It will be understood from the foregoing, that since the present invention concerns proper club path in the "hitting area," which has been defined as that part of the downswing (also backswing) extending from the ball back to a point some eighteen to twenty inches from the ball, the minimum length for a practicable practice pad would be about sixteen inches. It will also be understood from the foregoing that the length of the "hitting area" and thus the length of the pad for a short-armed golfer is less than for a long-armed golfer. The pad of FIG. 6

4

is designed to be "universal" in that it can be used effectively by both short-armed and long-armed golfers. This is because the pad is inclined both in the longitudinal and transverse directions. The pad upper surface may be thought of as that surface generated by an infinite number of lines each representing the proper path of the club in the "hitting area" for golfers having different arm lengths.

Thus the devices of the present invention enable the golfer to acquire the basic stroke elements of the back swing as well as the downstroke.

The foregoing disclosure and the showings made in the drawing are merely illustrative of the principles of this invention and are not to be interpreted in a limiting sense.

I claim:

1. A guiding device for training golf players in the use of iron clubs comprising a pad of slightly yieldable material in the shape of a wedge having a first forward end adjacent which a golf ball may be positioned, a second rearward end, a planar bottom surface extending from said first end to said second end, and a substantially planar upper surface extending from a first elevation at said first end to a higher elevation at said second end to form an upper surface inclined relative to said bottom surface, the minimum length of said pad between said ends being approximately sixteen inches and the inclination of said upper surface relative to said bottom surface being within the range of $1\frac{1}{8}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches per 16 inches of pad length so that said upper surface forms the correct inclined path along which an iron club head should be moved in starting a correct backswing in preparation for striking a golf ball positioned adjacent the first end of said pad.

2. A device as defined in claim 1, wherein each of the sides of the inclined surface at said second end are curved so as to form an inside-out swing path, with the length and radius of curvature of one of said sides being greater than the length and radius of curvature of the other of said sides so that said one side forms the inside-out swing path of a long armed golfer and said other side forms the inside-out swing path of a short armed golfer.

3. A device as defined in claim 1, wherein the pad upper surface is inclined in both the longitudinal and transverse directions.

References Cited

UNITED STATES PATENTS

1,637,339	8/1927	Glennon et al. _____	273—183 X
2,432,209	12/1947	Osgood _____	273—195 X
2,712,939	7/1955	Harp _____	273—186
2,908,504	10/1959	Pratt _____	273—186

FOREIGN PATENTS

26,125 1905 Great Britain.

GEORGE J. MARLO, *Primary Examiner.*

U.S. Cl. X.R.

273—191; 195