ABSTRACT: An aid in practicing putting comprising an elongated flat base and upon said base a channel of U-shaped cross-sectional contour with its side flanges disposed longitudinally of said base. Along their inner surfaces these side flanges are provided with rows of transversely aligned, longitudinally equipped flaps of flexible material and of preferably semicircular contour. Transversely of the channel, these flaps are spaced from each other by a distance slightly larger than the length of the putter blade. Target means for a golf ball is arranged on the base in an area thereof spaced from one of the open ends of the channel in the vertical plane of symmetry thereof. When a golfer wishes to putt a golf ball from a point on the floor of the channel onto the target means, the blade of his putter must stay free of the opposed flaps on the side flanges of the channel for the stroke to be perfect. If his putter blade touches any one of these flaps, the golfer senses this immediately and knows that his putting stroke is faulty.
A GOLFPUTTING PRACTICE DEVICE

One of the main causes for high scores in the game of golf is faulty putting on the green in the final phase of the golfer's effort to sink his ball into the target hole. The chief reason for faulty putting is the inability on the part of the golfer to put the ball precisely in a predetermined direction. To make the ball roll in precisely the intended direction it is necessary that the golfer swing the putter within and in parallelism with a vertical plane containing the intended line of direction. Frequently, however, golf players depart from this plane, either at the beginning and/or the end of the putting stroke, and in this matter impart to the ball a slightly misdirected momentum as the head of the putter makes contact with ball. In practicing putting to overcome the described putting defect, it is often difficult, if not impossible, for the player to judge whether his club departed laterally from parallelism with the vertical plane containing the desired line of advance of the ball, and it is therefore necessary for him to ask friends or an instructor to watch his practice strokes.

It is an object of the invention to provide an aid for practicing putting strokes that enables a golfer to practice putting strokes, in the former depending upon the help of an instructor or friends to advise him of deficiencies in his putting strokes.

Another object of the invention is to provide an aid for practicing putting strokes that makes the golfer realize immediately that his putting stroke is faulty and departs excessively from parallelism with the vertical plane containing the intended line of advance of the ball.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a device of the type referred to, that is of simple and inexpensive construction and may readily be produced by mass production method.

These and other objects of the present invention will be apparent from the following description of the accompanying drawings which illustrates a preferred embodiment thereof and wherein FIG. 1 is a fragmentary perspective of the complete arrangement of the invention;

FIG. 2 is a plan view of a component of the arrangement shown in FIG. 1; and

FIG. 3 is a section through the component shown in FIG. 2 taken along line 3-3 of FIG. 2 and viewed in the direction of the arrows associated with said line.

In accordance with the invention I provide the inner surfaces of the side flanges of a U-shaped channel with rows of inwardly projecting flaps of flexible material, whose free inner edges are spaced from each other in a direction transversely of the channel by a distance slightly larger than the length of a putter blade; and a distance in front of one of the open ends of the channel in the longitudinal plane of symmetry of the channel, I place suitable target means for the golf ball, such as a shallow cup having in its sidewall a depression which faces the end of the channel. When practicing putting, the golfer places a golf ball on the floor of the channel about midway between the channel ends on a point of the longitudinal centerline of the floor; and when he swings the putter against the ball to impel it toward the target cup, he must take care to avoid contact of the putter blade with the flaps on either side of the channel. If the putter blade makes contact with any of the flaps, the golfer senses this immediately and knows that his stroke is faulty.

Having reference to FIG. 1, the reference numeral 10 identifies a suitable base of preferably elongated rectangular contour, which may be a strip of green carpeting or felt simulating the putting surface of a golf course. Placed upon said base is a channel 12 of U-shaped cross-sectional contour whose side flanges 14a and 14b are disposed to extend longitudinally of the base. The inner surfaces of said flanges are provided with rows of flaps 16a and 16b, respectively, which are equispaced from each other in a direction longitudinal of the channel, with the flaps on the opposite flanges transparently aligned with each other. These flaps are of a flexible material, such as leather, rubber or plastic and are preferably of semicircular contour; and they are of such size relative to the transverse width of channel 12 that the free inner edges of the semicircular arcs formed by their edges are spaced from each other by a distance somewhat larger than the length of a putting blade (FIGS. 2 and 3). The channel itself may be made from metal, plastic material, or rubber, and if both the channel and the flaps are made of plastic material or rubber, the whole device may be molded as one piece in a single operation.

Located upon the base in front of one of the open ends of the channel 10 and in the vertical plane of symmetry thereof is a suitable target means for the golf ball, such as a shallow cup 18 of plastic material, wood or metal, which has a depression 20 in its sidewall and is so oriented that said depression faces the space between the side flanges of the channel 12. The cup 18 may be provided with a ramp 22 that leads to the depression 20 in its sidewall. Both the channel 12 and the cup 18 may be suitably secured to the base 10, but it is preferable that at least one rests loosely on the base and is held in position by its weight so that the distance between the open end of the channel 12 and the cup 18 may be varied at will, enabling the golfer to practice putting over different distances.

In using the arrangement of the invention, the golfer places the cup 18 at a point of his choice in front of one of the ends of the channel 12 in the vertical plane of symmetry of said channel, i.e., a point on the extension of the longitudinal centerline c-c of the channel floor 24. He then places a golf ball 25 on the floor 24 of the channel 12 upon the defined centerline and midway between the ends of the channel. Thereupon he places the blade of his putter behind the ball in such a position that said blade touches neither of the flaps 16a, 16b on the opposite side flanges of the channel, and he begins to practice putting strokes aiming at the depression 20 in the cup 18. In swinging the putter, the golfer must take care to avoid contact of the putter with the flaps on either of the side flanges 14a, 14b of channel 12, and as long as he succeeds in doing this, his putting stroke will be proper and drive the ball into the cup 18. However, if his putting stroke departs from parallelism with the vertical plane of symmetry of the channel either in swinging backwards before striking the ball, or in swinging forward after the putting blade has made contact with the ball, the blade brushes against flaps 16a and/or 16b, as the case may be, and the golfer senses this immediately and knows that his putting stroke was faulty and where and in which direction the plane of rotation of the putting stroke departed from strict parallelism with the longitudinal plane of symmetry of the channel, and hence from the intended direction of advance of the ball.

For accuracy in training oneself to perform proper putting strokes, the transverse distance between the free inner edges of the opposed flaps 16a and 16b on the two side flanges 14a and 14b of the channel 12 should be only slightly larger than the length of the blade which the golfer uses, as has previously been pointed out and as is shown in FIGS. 2 and 3. Since the lengths of putters now commonly in use, vary to some extent, this necessitates the availability of a choice of putting channels of the type described wherein the distances between the free inner edges of the opposite flaps 16a, 16b are greater or smaller. Alternatively, it may be of advantage to construct putting channels of the type described, wherein one or both of the side flanges 14a, 14b are adjustable relative to the floor 24 of the channel in a direction transversely thereof.

While I have explained my invention with the aid of an exemplary embodiment thereof, it will be understood that the invention is not limited to the specific constructional details shown and described by way of example, which may be departed from without departing from the scope and spirit of the invention.

I claim:
1. An aid in practicing putting comprising a channel of U-shaped cross-sectional contour having a pair of transversely spaced longitudinally extending side flanges and projecting from the inner surfaces of said flanges rows of longitudinally spaced flaps of flexible material.
2. A device according to claim 1 wherein said flaps are equispaced from each other and the flaps on opposite flanges are transversely aligned with each other.

3. A device according to claim 1 wherein said flaps are vertically disposed.

4. A device according to claim 1 wherein said flaps are of semicircular contour with the summit points of their edges spaced apart a distance somewhat larger than the length of the putter blade.

5. An aid in practicing putting comprising an elongated flat base, upon said base a channel of U-shaped cross-sectional contour with its side flanges extending longitudinally of said base, rows of longitudinally spaced flaps of flexible material projecting from the inner surfaces of said side flanges with their inner edges spaced apart by a distance slightly larger than the length of a putter blade, and in an area of said base removed from one end of said channel and within the longitudinal vertical plane of symmetry of said channel target means for a golf ball.

6. An arrangement according to claim 5 wherein said flaps are of semicircular contour with the summit points of their edges spaced apart by a distance slightly larger than the length of a putter blade.

7. An arrangement according to claim 5 wherein said target means is a shallow cup having a depression in its sidewall and is arranged to present said depression to the end of said channel.