United States Patent

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[54] **TRAINING DEVICE FOR GOLFERS**
3 Claims, 5 Drawing Figs.

[52] **U.S. Cl.** **273/183**
[51] **Int. Cl.** **A63b 69/36**
[50] **Field of Search** 273/183, 194, 164, 202, 203, 190

[56] **References Cited**

UNITED STATES PATENTS

3,114,557	12/1963	Cabot	273/202

FOREIGN PATENTS

935,312	8/1963	Great Britain	273/203

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ABSTRACT: A device is provided for training a player to maintain a fixed head position during the golf swing. The device employs a first element having a head portion formed on an elongated shank that is adapted to be inserted in the ground, and a second element that is apertured for adjustable disposition on the first element shank. In use, the first element shank is inserted in the ground so that the head portion thereon is viewed by a player in alignment with the shank axis when he assumes his stance for a swing, and the second element is adjusted along the shank axis to a disposition at which it is just obscured by the head portion when the latter is viewed from the assumed stance of the player. The first element head portion and the second element are relatively shaped in outline so that parallax and apparent size phenomena allow the second element to remain obscured during the golf swing only as long as a fixed head position is maintained. In particular, one of the outlines, preferably that of the first element head portion, is made oval and the other is made circular to provide the desired relation, and the second element is preferably invested with sharply contrasting surface coloring to provide a readily apparent signal of deviation in head position.



Fig. 1

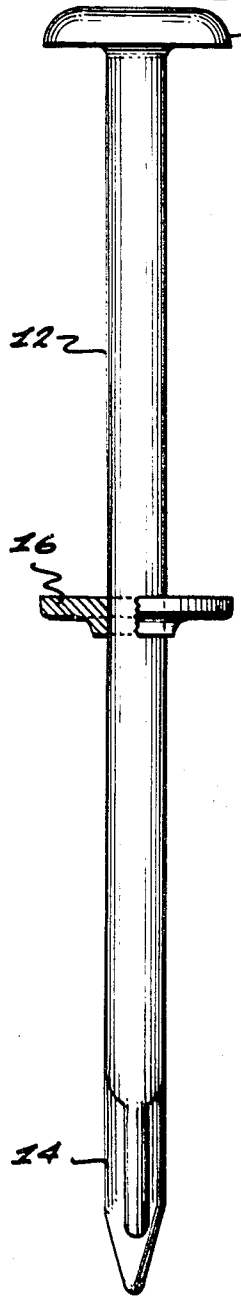
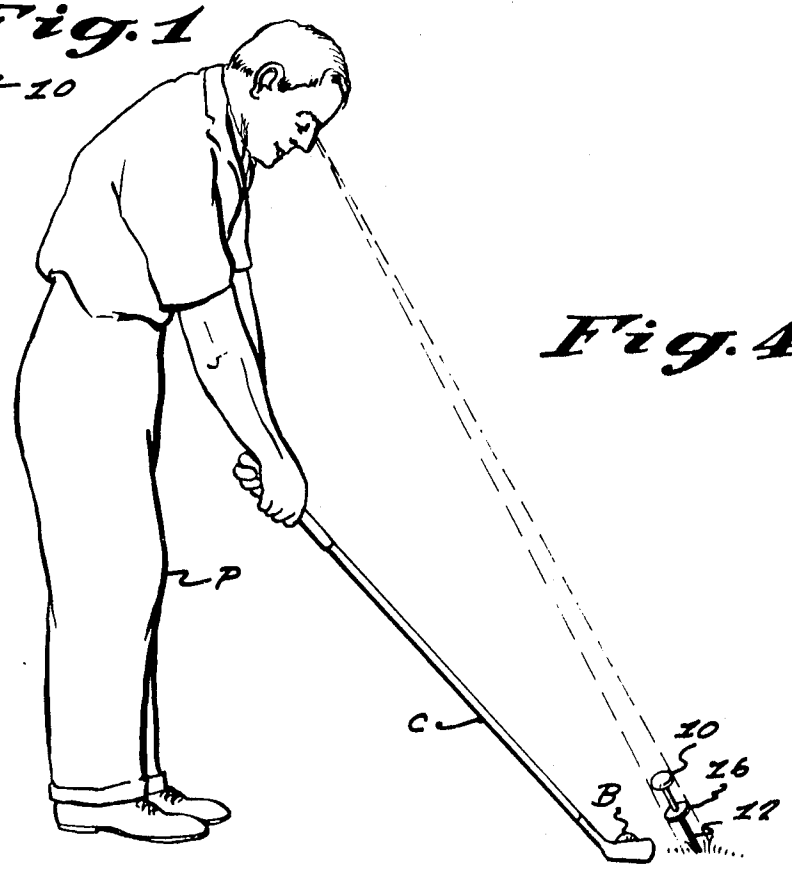


Fig. 4



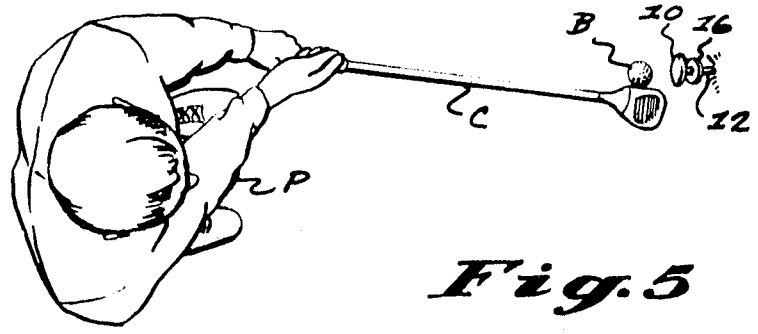


Fig. 5

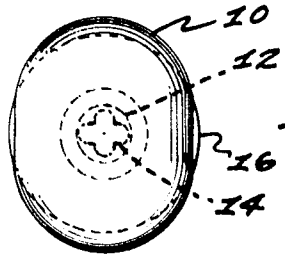


Fig. 3

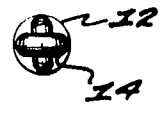


Fig. 2

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TRAINING DEVICE FOR GOLFERS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The importance of maintaining the head still during the golf swing has generated considerable prior art activity directed toward training players to develop a swing about a fixed head position. Exemplary prior art proposals are found in U.S. Pats. No. 1,091,186; No. 1,677,261; No. 2,669,782; No. 3,228,696; and No. 3,268,228. Insofar as I am aware, all such prior proposals have depended on some scheme for inducing the player to maintain a fixed line of sight in the ball. In point of fact, however, to keep one's "eye on the ball" is only of secondary consideration as an indication of, and a good habit that tends to promote, keeping the head still. It is perfectly possible in fact to hit a golf ball with authority when blindfolded as along as the head is kept still. Accordingly, it is the matter of keeping the head still to which primary attention should be directed, and the present invention was conceived with that primary end in view.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The device of the present invention is arranged to present a visual indication of head position to a player as he executes a golf swing. For this purpose, a first element is provided that includes a head portion disposed on an elongated shank that is adapted for insertion in the ground, and a second element that is apertured for adjustable disposition in the shank of the first element. Both the first element head portion and the second element when disposed on the first element shank are shaped to present outlines arranged parallel to each other and perpendicular to the shank axis, and the first element head portion is shaped to obscure the second element only as long as the device is viewed in alignment with the shank axis when the shank has been inserted in the ground and the second element has been adjusted thereon to a just obscured disposition in relation to the aligned viewing position. Thus, any appearance of the second element in view as the player swings is a signal of head movement and the need for further practice to eliminate. Parallax and apparent size phenomena are relied on in arranging the device to provide an effective head position signal, as will be noted in further detail presently.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a side view, partly in quarter section, of a device embodying the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a top plan view corresponding to FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a bottom end view showing the lower end form of FIG. 1 device;

FIG. 4 is a side elevation illustrating use of the FIG. 1 device by a player; and

FIG. 5 is a top plan view corresponding to FIG. 4.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

In FIG. 1 the head portion of the previously mentioned first element of the device is seen at **10** on the upper end of an elongated shank **12** that has its lower end **14** pointed and fluted (compare FIGS. 1, 2 and 3) so as to be adapted for insertion in the ground and to resist turning about its axis upon such insertion. The previously mentioned second element completing the device is seen at **16** as comprising a circular member that is centrally apertured for disposition on the shank **12**.

The circular outline of the adjustable member **16** is shown in FIG. 2 in relation to an oval configuration of the head portion **10** in outline; the outlines referred to being those of the respective elements **10** and **16** that are parallel to each other and perpendicular to the shank axis. Actually the respective outline configurations might be reversed between the elements **10** and **16** and still function in accordance with the present invention if related properly, but the illustrated arrangement is the preferred one.

The relation needed between the respective outlines, as noted earlier, is a respective shaping such that the first (i.e., of **10**) obscures the latter (i.e., of **16**) only as long as the device viewed in alignment with the axis of the shank **12** with the head portion **10** nearest and the second element **16** adjusted to just obscured position. When this relation is provided, a player P may use the device for training in development of a fixed head position as is illustrated in FIGS. **4** and **5**.

In both the side elevation of FIG. **4** and the top view of FIG. **5**, it should be understood that the player P has inserted the device in the ground with the head portion **10** aligned across his eyes as viewed from his stance; that is, the device is positioned in both FIGS. **4** and **5** in correspondence with its FIG. **2** position.

Because FIG. **2** is an isometric illustration, the circular outline of the second element **16** is seen partially exposed to the right and left of the oval outline of head portion **10**, but when the device is viewed by the player P in FIGS. **4** and **5** the portions of element **16** that appear exposed in FIG. **2** will be situated respectively toward the top and bottom of head portion **10** and will be obscured by the apparent size of head portion **10** when element **16** is adjusted properly in relation to an aligned viewing position. That is to say, the head portion **10**, being nearer to the viewing player P, will appear larger from the top to bottom in relation to the second element **16** than it really is, and will obscure the latter as long as the viewing player P does not shift his head upwardly or downwardly from alignment with the axis of shank **12**.

In the side-to-side direction, however, the parallax resulting from the eye spread of the viewing player P makes the oval configuration of the head portion **10** necessary to obscure the second element **16** from aligned viewing, and the oval shape is accordingly proportioned to maintain the adjusted second element obscured as long as there is no head shifting to either side.

A practical embodiment of the device of the present invention is formed in an overall length of 8¾inches, with a head portion 10 of ¼inch thickness at one end of a ⅜-inch shank **12** extending 8½inches and having a 1¼-inch portion at its other end arranged with the fluting and pointing illustrated at **14**. The second element **16** only needs to be about ⅛inch thick, although it is preferable to provide a boss of about the same thickness in relation to its central aperture, as illustrated, in order to guard fully against any cocking tendency during sliding adjustment or otherwise.

With the foregoing proportions a suitable diameter for a second element **16** is 1⅜inches when the head portion **10** is shaped on a major axis of 1½ inches with rounded ends thereat formed on 21/32 inch radii to merge with intervening flats across a minor axis of 1 5/16 inches. Molded plastic is advantageously used in forming the elements of the device, with a molding nylon in black color being used for the first element on which the head portion **10** is formed, and polyethylene in a white color being used for the second element **16**, to provide a sharp contrast in surface coloring that will make appearance of the second element **16** readily apparent to the viewing player P as a signal of head movement.

In using the device, the player P initially inserts it in the ground at the angle that will result in aligned viewing from the stance at which he is to swing, as illustrated in FIGS. **4** and **5**. More than one attempt may be necessary to find the right inserted angle, particularly until one becomes familiar with using the device, but once the device is properly placed it serves the incidentally helpful function of additionally providing a fixed indication of stance position so that it may be repeatedly assumed as a matter of course.

Both the proper angle of ground insertion and the needed adjustment of the second element **16** will vary some in relation to the particular club C that is to be used, as the spacing of the stance from the ball B will vary with different clubs, so that after the right inserted angle has been found it may also be necessary to adjust the second element **16** along the shank **12** until it is just obscured by the head portion **10** from the

aligned viewing position at the assumed stance for the club C being used with the ball B placed for hitting adjacent the inserted position of the device, as indicated in FIGS. 4 and 5. When a driver is being used, it has been found that the second element should be disposed about 4 inches below the head portion 10 in a device of the proportions previously noted. In any event, once the device has been properly positioned for a particular stance, it provides a particularly effective check on head position that may be used to good advantage by a golfer during practice.

The present invention has been described in detail above for purposes of illustration only and is not intended to be limited by this description or otherwise to exclude any variation or equivalent arrangement that would be apparent from, or reasonably suggested by, the foregoing disclosure to the skill of the art.

I claim:

1. Training apparatus for golfers comprising the combination of a supporting surface on which a golfer may stand and address a gold ball, a golf ball positioned at a predetermined point on said surface, and a golfer's head movement indicator fixed to said surface adjacent said golf ball, said indicator comprising a first element having a head portion formed on the upper end of an elongated shank, and a second apertured disclike element adjustably disposed on the shank of said first element below said head portion, said first element being positioned at an inclination relative to said surface such as to permit a golfer's line of sight, while the golfer is addressing said golf ball on said surface, to be substantially in alignment with the longitudinal axis of said shank, and the relative sizes and dispositions of said first element head portion and said second element being such that said second element is just obscured from the golfer's line of sight while addressing said golf ball as aforesaid whereby, when executing a golf club swing, at said golf ball, improper movement of a golfer's head will become evident to the golfer by the golfer's line of sight being shifted to an extent as to bring the second element into the golfer's view.

2. A training device for golfers as defined in claim 1 and further characterized in that one of said first element head portion and said second element is oval in outline and the other is circular.

3. A training device for golfers as defined in claim 1 and further characterized in that said first element head portion is oval in outline, in that said second element is centrally apertured and is circular in outline, and in that the major axis of said head portion outline is sufficiently greater than, and the minor axis sufficiently less than, the diameter of said second element outline to provide said obscuring relation to the former to the latter.

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