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(54) **BACK PAD FOR GOLF BAGS**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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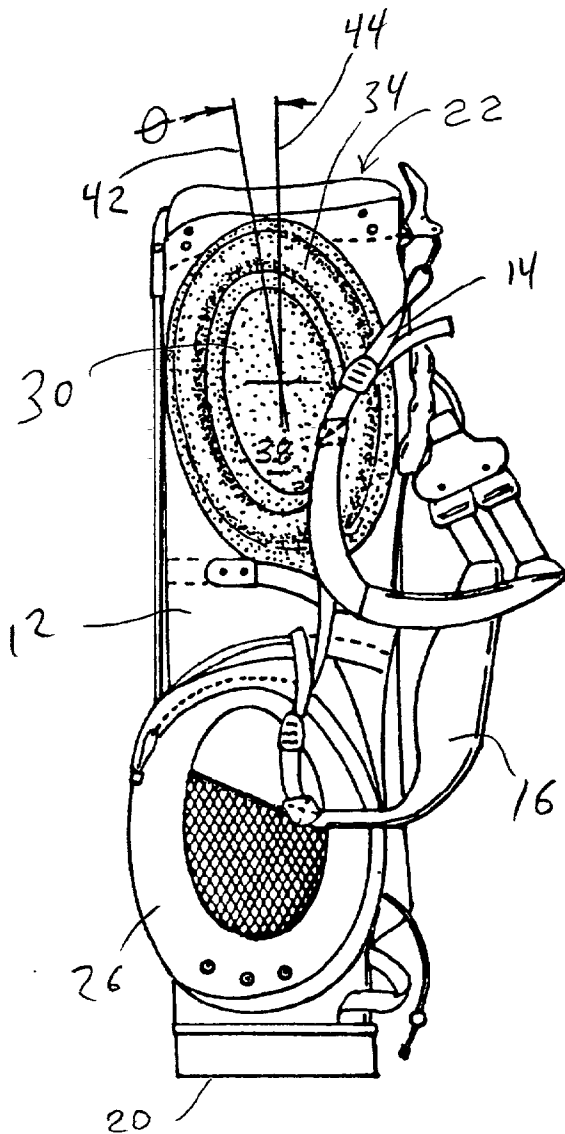
A golf bag is provided with a dual strap carrying device designed so that the golf bag may be suspended from both shoulders. The golf bag is oriented transversely across the back of the wearer and includes a back pad which is preferably constructed from foam material in the form of an oval, with a raised ring for contact with the wearer's back. The raised ring allows for an air space between the wearer's back and the golf bag, which improves the comfort in warm weather. The longitudinal axis of the pad is offset from the longitudinal axis of the golf bag by an angle of preferably ten degrees. When the straps on the golf bag are properly adjusted, the longitudinal axis of the pad will be horizontal, to provide the most comfortable position for the wearer.

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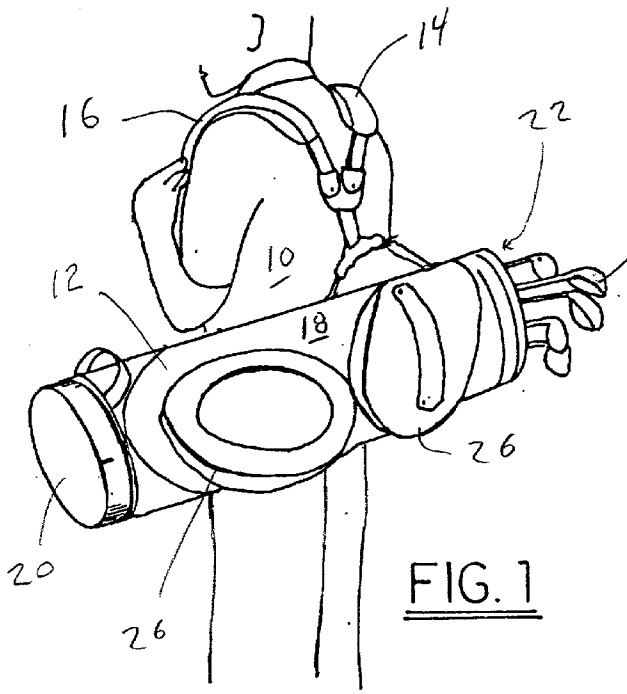


FIG. 1

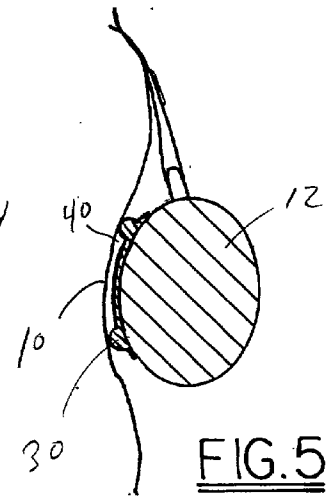


FIG. 5

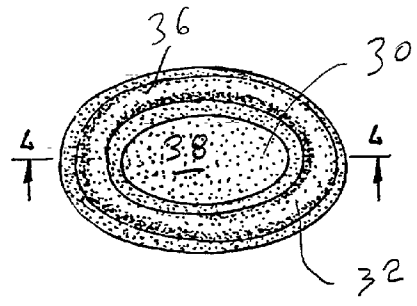


FIG. 3

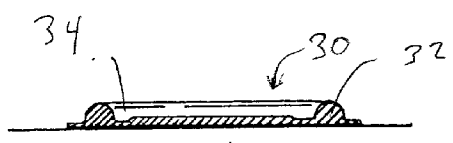


FIG. 4

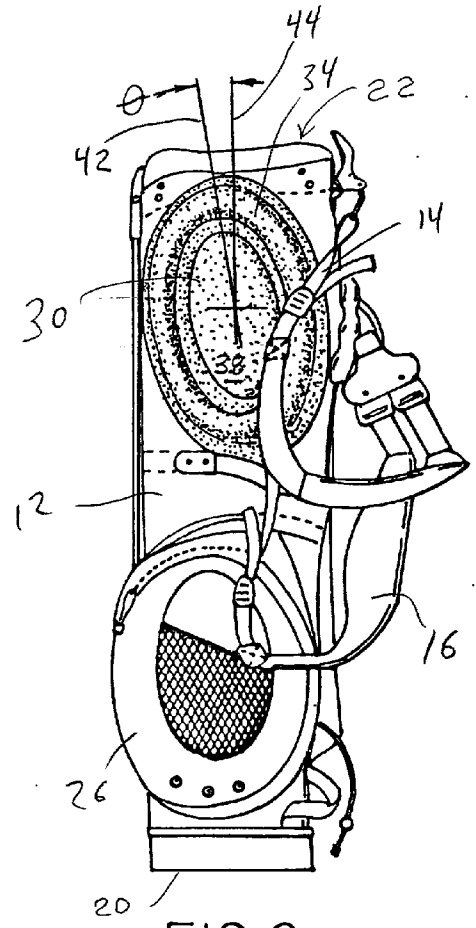


FIG. 2

## BACK PAD FOR GOLF BAGS

### 1. FIELD OF INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to golf bags and, more particularly, to apparatus used in conjunction with golf bags to promote comfort in transporting the golf bag by a person. Specifically, the present invention is directed to a pad on the golf bag whereby the pad is configured to fit comfortably against the small of the back of the person carrying the golf bag.

### 2. BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The game of golf is one of the most widely enjoyed sports activities in the world. The number of persons participating in this activity, both at the professional and recreational level, is almost unparalleled. Not only is this activity already widespread, but also the ranks of golfers continue to swell.

[0003] The sport of golf is typically played on a course consisting of nine or eighteen holes. A set of clubs is used to strike a golf ball along each hole comprising the course. Each hole consists of a tee box which defines a starting location wherein a golfer places a ball and initially strikes the ball towards a green. Each green includes a recessed cup, and it is the object of the golfer to strike the ball with a series of strokes into the cup. Different clubs are used to vary the height, distance and spin of the ball. The holes normally vary in length from short holes of approximately one hundred yards to longer holes of five hundred yards and greater. The holes are flanked by rough areas out of which it is more difficult to play, and hazards are provided to increase the intricacy and precision required in play.

[0004] Golfers may travel over a course during play in a variety of manners. For example, a golfer may walk a course and carry his/her clubs or sometimes employs another to carry clubs for him/her. Other golfers employ wheeled pull carts which receive a set of clubs so that a golfer may push or pull the cart as the golfer walks each hole. Motorized or engine driven carts are available at some courses and, in fact, are required for play at certain courses. Here, a golfer mounts his/her clubs on the motorized cart and drives across the course from ball lie to ball lie.

[0005] The present invention concerns those persons who walk a golf course and carry their own golf bag and clubs. This invention is thus useful for a substantial number of golfers who desire walking a golf course as a means of a healthy, enjoyable exercise. The typical golf bag which receives the set of clubs is in the form of a tubular carrying member closed at one end so that the shafts of the clubs may be longitudinally received in the bag. A single strap extends from an upper rim of the golf bag to a mid-point on the bag. The golfer or the caddy then carries such bag by inserting one arm through the strap so that the strap extends across one shoulder thus supporting the bag for travel. A small handle may also be mounted on the bag, normally between the end points of the strap, to enable the bag to be carried by the human hand.

[0006] A disadvantage to this system has long been present, though, and is readily realized by persons who carry golf bags over a golf course. This problem results from the fact that the entire weight of the golf clubs and bag, which

may typically be on the order of twenty to twenty-eight pounds, strains the muscles of the neck and shoulders unduly and further causes muscular strain resulting from the imbalanced nature of this method of carriage. Indeed, the imbalance can cause associated muscle soreness in the hips and lower back due to the fact that the center of gravity of the bag is offset with respect to the spine. This is of particular concern to those golfers who experience back problems.

[0007] A dual strap carrying system has been developed that can be manufactured both by original equipment on a golf bag and which can be retrofitted onto standard golf bags. This carriage system is simple to use and enhances the game of golf for those who normally carry their golf bags. U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,038,984, 5,042,703 and 5,042,704, all issued to Izzo, the disclosures of which are incorporated by reference herein, relate to this golf bag carrying system. The system allows the user to comfortably carry the golf bag such that it is centered on the back of the wearer and so that the weight of the golf bag is equally distributed between both shoulders of the wearer. The present invention increases the comfort of those who use this and other dual strap golf bag carrying systems.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] According to the present invention, a golf bag is provided with a dual strap carrying device. The carrying system is designed so that the golf bag may be suspended from and supported by both shoulders in a fully supported state. In the fully supported state, therefore, the golf bag is oriented transversely across the back of the wearer.

[0009] Generally, the golf bag is in the form of an elongated tubular body having a surrounding sidewall, a closed end and an open end so that set of golf clubs may be inserted in golf bag for storage and transport. Auxiliary compartments are provided to permit transport of auxiliary golf equipment and are oriented to permit balancing of the weight of the golf bag and clubs.

[0010] The golf bag includes a back pad which is preferably constructed from foam material, which may be compression molded foam. The pad is preferably in the form of an oval, although numerous other configurations are possible. Preferably the pad has a raised ring for contact with the back of the wearer. The raised ring allows for an air space between the back of the wearer and the golf bag, which improves the comfort in warm weather. The longitudinal axis of the pad is offset from the longitudinal axis of the golf bag by an angle preferably in the range of 5 to 15 degrees and, more preferably, about ten degrees. When the straps on the golf bag are properly adjusted, the longitudinal axis of the pad will be horizontal, while the longitudinal axis of the golf bag is offset from the horizontal to provide the most comfortable position for the wearer.

[0011] These and other objects of the present invention will become more readily appreciated and understood from a consideration of the following detailed description of the preferred embodiment when taken together with the accompanying drawings, in which:

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] FIG. 1 is a perspective rear view of a person carrying a golf bag utilizing the present invention;

[0013] FIG. 2 is a front view in elevation of the present invention attached to a golf bag;

[0014] FIG. 3 is front view of the present invention,

[0015] FIG. 4 is a cross sectional view of the present invention taken along line 4-4 in FIG. 3; and

[0016] FIG. 5 is an side cross sectional view of a person carrying a golf bag utilizing the present invention.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0017] The present invention is used in connection with a golf bag that uses a strap assembly enabling a golfer to conveniently carry a golf bag on both shoulders. These straps may be mounted over the left and right shoulders of a person who is to carry the golf bag so that the weight of the golf bag is suspended from both of the person's shoulders to hang in an orientation across the person's back.

[0018] FIGS. 1 and 5 show the present invention on a golf bag as worn by the user. In FIG. 1, for illustration purposes, it is seen that a person carries a golf bag 12 in a fully supported state by a first strap 14 and a second strap 16. Golf bag 12 is in the form of an elongated tubular body having a surrounding sidewall 18, a closed end 20 and an open end 22 so that set of golf clubs 24 may be inserted in golf bag 12 for storage and transport. Auxiliary compartments 26 are provided to permit transport of auxiliary golf equipment and are oriented to permit balancing of the weight of the golf bag and clubs.

[0019] FIG. 5 shows the pad 30 of the present invention resting on the back 10 of the wearer. The present invention allows the golf bag 12 to be positioned on the small of the wearer's back and results in a significant increase in comfort to the wearer. The pad 30, as best see in FIGS. 2-4, is attached to the side wall 18 of the golf bag by any known methods. The pad 30 includes a raised portion 32, preferably in the shape of an oval, although many other configurations would work equally as well. Preferably, the raised portion 32 is constructed from molded foam, although numerous other materials are possible. The raised portion 32 should be rigid enough such that the bag is held away from the back 10 of the wearer, but flexible enough to be comfortable for the wearer. The raised portion 32 has a cloth covering 34, made from any suitable, durable material, such as canvas, cotton, nylon, leather, polyester, or the like. The raised portion 32 includes a surface 36 adapted to contact the back 10 of the wearer. The raised portion 32 defines a recessed portion 38. The recessed portion 38 (FIG. 3) creates an air space 40 (FIG. 5) between the golf bag 12 and the back 10 of the wearer, which, in warm weather, adds to the comfort of the wearer. The raised portion 32 causes the bag 12 to be held away from the back 10 to promote air circulation between the bag and the back of the wearer.

[0020] As shown in FIG. 2, the pad 30 has a longitudinal axis 42. The golf bag 12 also has a longitudinal axis 44. The longitudinal axis 42 of the pad 30 is offset by an angle  $\theta$  from the longitudinal axis of the bag 44. The angle  $\theta$  should be sufficient such that the longitudinal axis 42 of the pad 30 is horizontal when the golf bag 12 is loaded with clubs 24 and worn by the wearer. This angle  $\theta$  should be in the range of

about 5 to 15 degrees, and, preferably about 10 degrees. This angle  $\theta$  should be sufficient to ensure that the longitudinal axis 42 of the pad 30 is horizontal when the bag 12 is worn properly.

[0021] Accordingly, the present invention has been described with some degree of particularity directed to the preferred embodiment of the present invention. It should be appreciated, though, that the present invention is defined by the following claims construed in light of the prior art so that modifications or changes may be made to the preferred embodiment of the present invention without departing from the inventive concepts contained herein.

What is claimed is:

1. In a golf bag having a longitudinal axis and two shoulder straps to be worn over the shoulders of a person such that the golf bag contacts the back of the wearer, the improvement comprising:

a pad having a raised portion adapted to contact the back of the person; and

a recessed portion defined by the raised portion adapted to create an air space between the golf bag and the back of the wearer.

2. The golf bag of claim 1 wherein the pad has a longitudinal axis which is offset from the longitudinal axis of the golf bag by an angle  $\theta$ .

3. The golf bag of claim 2 wherein the angle  $\theta$  is in the range of approximately 5 to 15 degrees.

4. The golf bag of claim 2 wherein the angle  $\theta$  is about 10 degrees.

5. The golf bag of claim 1 wherein the pad is constructed from molded foam material.

6. The golf bag of claim 5 wherein the pad is covered with nylon material.

7. In a golf bag having a longitudinal axis and two shoulder straps to be worn over the shoulders of a person such that the golf bag contacts the back of the wearer, the improvement comprising:

a pad adapted to contact the back of the person having a longitudinal axis which is offset from the longitudinal axis of the golf bag by an angle of approximately between 5 and 15 percent.

8. The golf bag of claim 7 wherein the angle between the longitudinal axis of the golf bag and the longitudinal axis of the pad is about 10 degrees.

9. In a golf bag having a longitudinal axis and two shoulder straps to be worn over the shoulders of a person such that the golf bag contacts the back of the wearer, the improvement comprising:

a pad having a raised portion generally in the shape of an oval, having a longitudinal axis offset from the longitudinal axis of the golf bag by an angle of approximately between 5 and 15 degrees, and adapted to contact the back of the wearer; and

a recessed portion defined by the raised portion adapted to create an air space between the golf bag and the back of the wearer.

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