Aug. 28, 1962 R. H. MESINGER 3,051,210

GOLF CLUB HEAD COVER

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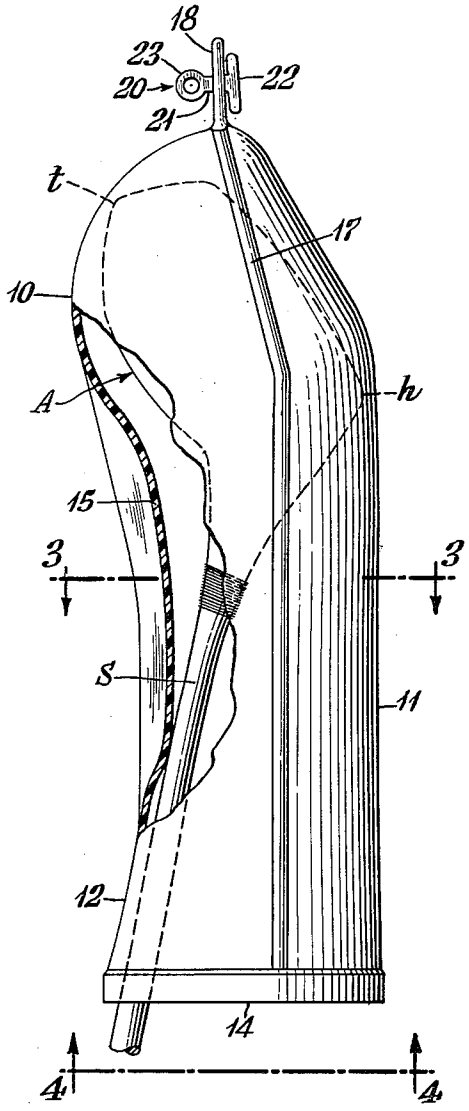


Fig. 1.

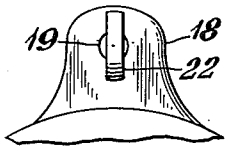


Fig. 2.

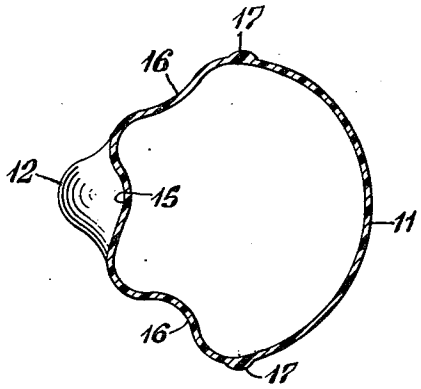


Fig. 3.

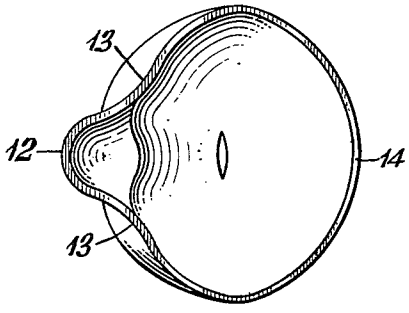


Fig. 4.

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GOLF CLUB HEAD COVER

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This invention relates to improvements in golf club head covers, particularly a seamless plastic cover shaped to fit over golf club heads.

Customary golf club head covers have been made of limp flexible sheet material pieces sewed together. To retain such covers on the clubs, elastic girth bands or the like were added. Such covers are difficult to put on and take off if made tight enough to remain securely on the club and they lack durability. It has been proposed to make the cover of multiple sewed together pieces to form a shape conforming to the angular relation between the club head and its shaft and large enough to be easily removed and put on but because the cover must bend when put on and taken off it must be made of very flexible material and also an elastic girth band is usually needed to keep the cover from being too easily displaced.

According to the present invention there is provided a unitary seamless homogeneous molded cover of a heat cured vinyl resin base plastisol and comprising an open bottomed tubular or sleeve portion at the upper end of which is a head cover portion disposed at only a slight degree laterally of the sleeve portion. The head cover portion has the general but enlarged shape of a golf club head for fully enclosing the club head while the club shaft extends through the sleeve portion. The sleeve portion may be cylindrical throughout but should be of a minimum internal diameter sufficient to be extended around the club head so that the club head may be easily passed through it.

By making the angularity of the head portion of the cover to the sleeve much less than the angularity of the club head to its shaft and by using a not too highly plasticized resin material, advantage is taken of the resilient resistance of the material in cooperation with the angularity relationship to cause the cover to hold itself firmly on the club and yet permits the cover to be large enough to be very easily removed by hand, and replaced by hand.

If desired, the sleeve portion may be formed to have portions distorted from circular to increase the resilient stiffness and holding action. For example, a region near the upper portion of the sleeve may be provided with one or more longitudinal areas which are distorted inwardly or outwardly or both from the cylindrical thus providing a slight constriction when the material is relaxed. Such distorted areas provide material which allows the constriction to be stretched if necessary for clearing the club head.

For use as a convenient pull tab and for securing the cover to a cord if desired to prevent its loss, an integral extension or ear extending outward from the highest part of the head portion is provided. Such ear is provided with a hole for attachment of a retaining cord. Customary constructions permit such cords to become twisted up, tangled, and add to the difficulty of using the cover. Such problems are solved by the present invention by providing a novel cord swivel in the form of a shank passed through the tab hole having a T-shaped head at one end and a cord eye at the other end.

The interior surface of the cover when made of vinyl material is preferably coated with a varnish of a type constituting an effective sealant or barrier against vapors of the ingredients of the plastic or plasticizer in the cover material which otherwise might tend to adversely affect the varnish finish usually applied on wooden golf club heads. Such inside varnish coating also preferably has antifriction properties.

Thus principal objects of the invention are to provide a flexible, impervious, tough, durable, and seamless golf club cover; which can be applied and removed from a club head easily and quickly; which will be retained in place tightly enough at least not to be readily displaced or fall off by gravity; which is not made of multiple pieces and needs no stitches which can deteriorate; which is unaffected by the weather, which can be retrieved from the ground by use of the golf club; which can be manufactured at relatively low cost; and which can be made large enough so that one size can be used on various sizes of wooden golf clubs.

Other objects and advantages will be apparent from the description and the drawing in which:

FIG. 1 is a side elevational view of a cover according to the invention with a portion broken away;

FIG. 2 is a fragmentary front view of the upper end of the cover;

FIG. 3 is a view of a section taken on the line 3—3 of FIG. 1; and

FIG. 4 is a bottom view of the cover from the line 4—4 in FIG. 1.

The cover comprises a head portion **10** preferably of a shape similar to a wood club head and with an interior slightly larger than the club head. A sleeve portion **11** extends downwardly from the lower part of the head portion. This may be substantially cylindrical although of irregular sectional outline and has a minimum internal circumference which will readily go around a club head. A representative golf club is indicated at A within the cover. To insure against the cover falling off the club when held head down, advantage is taken of the resilient properties of the plastic material which acts to return to its relaxed as-molded shape if distorted therefrom. Therefore the angular relation between the head portion **10** and the sleeve portion **11** is not made the same as the angle between club head and shaft of a golf club but is made substantially greater. It has been found that this included angle should be greater than 160° and not greater than about 175° and is preferably about 165°. This allows the cover to be large enough to be slid over any wooden club head and when in position as shown in FIG. 1, the cover is distorted by the angularity of the club head so that the heel *h* of the club head binds against the front wall of the cover and the toe portion *t* binds against the rear wall of the head portion **10** thus forcing the shaft *s* rearwardly (or the sleeve **11** forwardly) to press the shaft against the rear wall of the lower part of the sleeve portion.

The sleeve portion is preferably not circular in cross-section and particularly the lower portion at the rear is shaped to provide a shaft retaining longitudinal groove **12**, there being longitudinally inwardly deformed portions **13** on each side of the groove **12**. The circumference at the bottom rim **14** is somewhat larger than just sufficiently go around the largest golf club head.

The sleeve portion **11** may also be provided, between the head portion **10** and the groove portion **12**, with one or more longitudinally depressed areas **15** and **16** providing a longitudinally corrugated effect. Any other form of inward and outward displaced areas can be employed, it being required that the normal relaxed state of the material provide resilient stiffening corrugations and if the resulting constricted cross section is slightly too small to pass the club head, the displaced area will stretch out so that the effective circumference can increase to freely pass the club head.

At the lower peripheral edge of the sleeve **11** there preferably is provided an extra thickness of material for

example a rounded bead or a band **14**. The material of the cover is of a generally uniform thickness throughout except an extra reinforcing thickness may be provided along the lateral side edges **17** of the cover. Also any external decorative contours and raised numerals are provided on the top front area of the head portion. The reinforcement or bead along edges **17** particularly at the head portion contributes to better protection of the club head.

An integrally molded pull tab or ear **18** is provided, extending from the highest part of the head portion. The ear **18** has a hole **19** through it. A cord swivel **20** is provided having a shank portion **21** passing through the hole **19** with a T-shaped head portion **22** too large to pass through the hole at one end and an eye portion at the other end. The swivel may be made of any material strong enough and plastic has been found preferable. The ear may be used to pull the cover off a golf club and a retaining cord may be fastened to or passed through the eye.

This cover thus can conveniently be tied to a cord on the golf bag or to adjacent club head covers and the swivel will prevent the cords from getting tangled and the adjacent covers entangled.

Preferably the interior surface is coated with a sealing varnish which provides an effective barrier to vapors that might otherwise affect the surface of a club head. A clear vinyl resin varnish may be used. Also preferably incorporated in or coated on such varnish layer is a material that reduces friction between a club head and the inside of the cover.

A suitable antifriction coating may be a silicone suspension in a vinyl resin varnish or a varnish compounded especially for coating plasticized vinyl resin articles.

The unitary cover is made in a hollow mold preferably of one piece except for a closeable access hole having an interior surface contour which is complementary to the exterior contour and surface pattern of the cover. Such mold is charged with a measured amount of a plastisol mixture of vinyl resin suspended in a liquid plasticizing agent. Such formulations are made by compounders to provide the properties desired in the finished article. The charged and closed mold is rotated in multiple planes to evenly distribute the plastisol on the entire interior of the

mold which is being heated in an oven. The film of plastisol first gels, and then fuses to combine resin and plasticizer into a very tough durable skin. Since no core need be used the interior walls of the cover have smooth patternless surfaces.

What is claimed is:

1. A golf club head cover comprising a unitary, jointless, homogeneous and flexible bag-like cover formed of a molded flexible plastic, said cover having a rounded head enclosing portion larger than the golf club head and an elongated sleeve portion depending therefrom and having an open bottom end, the head enclosing and sleeve portions being angularly related at greater than 160° and not greater than about 175° the angle being substantially larger than the angular relation between a wood golf club head and shaft, the lower portion at the rear center of the sleeve portion being outwardly displaced from round contour to provide a longitudinal groove to receive a golf club shaft, the head portion of sleeve angle of the cover being sufficiently greater than the golf club head to shaft angle to cause the cover to bind the heel and toe portions of the club head and hold the club shaft in said groove so that the groove material resiliently presses against the shaft whereby the cover is retained on club head but can be readily pulled off the head.

2. A golf club head cover according to claim 1 in which the wall of the upper portion of said sleeve adjacent said head enclosing portion is provided with at least one longitudinally extending and inwardly displaced area.

3. A golf club head cover according to claim 1 in which the upper end of the cover is provided with an integral ear having a hole through it in combination with a cord securing means comprising a shank passing through said hole with a ring portion at one end of the shank and an enlarged head at the other end.

4. A golf club head cover according to claim 3 in which said cord securing means is made of a plastic material.

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