INTERCHANGEABLE ALIGNMENT SYSTEM FOR GOLF PUTTERS

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ABSTRACT

An alignment system for a golf putter, having a plurality of interchangeable top plates for a putter head, wherein each of the interchangeable top plates has differing alignment indicia.
INTERCHANGEABLE ALIGNMENT SYSTEM FOR GOLF PUTTERS

RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] The present application claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application Ser. No. 60/530,281, entitled An Interchangeable Alignment System For Golf Putters, filed Dec. 16, 2003, the entire disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety for all purposes.

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0002] The present invention relates to golf putters.

BACKGROUND

[0003] Alignment golf putters which help a golfer improve their swing have been around for some time. Typically, such systems include a putter with markings or lights placed thereon, or with spike(s) extending from a rear face of the putter. The golfer watches the putter during the swing and the alignment marks, lights or extensions on the putter assist the golfer in determining the direction of their swing (so that they can improve their swing over time).


[0005] There are numerous problems with these various existing systems. For example, some systems tend to cause the golfer to focus so much on the visual aspects of the putter head itself that they tend to become distracted and lose focus on the overall swing. In addition, some putter alignment systems tend to be better at static alignment, but poor at dynamic alignment, (i.e., they provide poor alignment during the swing itself). Further problems common to putter alignment systems are that they fail to account for the fact that different golfers have different dominant eyes (i.e.: left vs. right); and that different golfers have different perspectives for static vs. dynamic alignment. In addition, different golfers tend to have different planes of swing.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] The present invention provides an alignment system for a golf putter, including: a shaft; a putter head; and a plurality of interchangeable top plates for the putter head, wherein each of the interchangeable top plates have differing alignment indicia thereon.

[0007] In optional preferred aspects, the indicia include a series of arrows or curved lines in alignment with one another. In various embodiments, these arrows or curved lines may either be spaced a uniform distance apart, or be spaced progressively closer together to one another across the top plate. It is to be understood, however, that the present invention is not limited to any particular indicia design.

[0008] In optional preferred embodiments, the indicia comprises a series of markings of which one portion is a mirror image of another portion. Such portions may preferably be of equal size. In optional aspects, the alignment indicia on different top plates include indicia having opposite color contrasts. An advantage of the various embodiments of the indicia is that they preferably convey a visual impression of a line of swing as the putter is swung by the golfer.

[0009] In one optional embodiment, the putter head may be made from a clear material and the alignment system may also be printed onto a clear material. An advantage of this see-through embodiment of the putter head is that will appear to take on the background of the green, further highlighting the alignment indicia.

[0010] The plurality of interchangeable top plates for the putter head may optionally be slide mounted plates dimensioned to be received into the putter head; or be magnetically attached to the putter head; or simply be adhesive stickers.

[0011] The present invention provides the advantageous method of improving a golfer’s putting swing by first providing a golfer with a golf putter having a plurality of interchangeable top plates for its putter head; having the golfer put with different interchangeable top plates on the putter head; having the golfer then select a preferred top plate for their own individual use; and having the golfer continue to put with the preferred top plate on the putter head. In optional embodiments, the golfer designs the indicia on one or more of the interchangeable top plates.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] FIG. 1 is an exploded perspective view of the present golf putter, showing one of the interchangeable top plates.

[0013] FIG. 2A is a top plan view of the top plate of FIG. 1.

[0014] FIG. 2B is a top plan view of an alternate top plate.

[0015] FIG. 2C is a top plan view of yet another alternate top plate.

[0016] FIG. 2D is a top plan view of yet another alternate top plate.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0017] FIG. 1 shows an embodiment of the present invention including an alignment system 10 for improving the swing of a golf putter. System 10 includes a golf putter 12 (including a shaft 14 and a putter head 16). System 10 further includes a plurality of interchangeable top plates 20 for use with putter head 16. In accordance with the present invention, any number of different top plates 20 may be provided. Each of the various interchangeable top plates 20 have differing alignment indicia (i.e.: they have different markings or patterns printed or otherwise displayed thereon).

[0018] Different people have different dominant eyes, different contrast sensitivities, etc. Thus, different people may require their own individualized alignment systems. In accordance with the present invention, one or more interchangeable top plates 20 may be designed by the golfer him(her)self. For example, the various indicia 21 on interchangeable top plates 20 may be designed and then printed on magnetic sheet paper, or on adhesive label makers (similar to personal CD label makers).
Thus, an advantage of the present system is that each golfer who uses the present alignment system is able to try out each of the various plurality of interchangeable top plates 20. Thus, after practicing swinging with each of the various interchangeable top plates 20, the golfer will get a feel for whichever plate design is best suited for them. Since different golfers are expected to have different preferred top plate designs, the present system provides an alignment system that can be individually tailored to different golfers. In contrast, existing systems for improving putting swing alignment all have a “one size fits all” design.

FIGS. 2A to 2D show various individual top plate designs. It is to be understood that the present invention is not limited to the various embodiments of top plates 20 as shown in FIGS. 2A to 2D. Rather, such embodiments of top plates 20 are merely exemplary.

Referring first to FIG. 2A, top plate 20A has a series of arrows 21 printed, etched or otherwise marked thereon. Indicia 21A may also comprise holograms, giving an advantageous three dimensional appearance to the alignment system. Arrows 21 are in alignment with one another. In various embodiments, arrows 21 may be spaced a uniform distance apart from one another (as shown) or spaced progressively closer together to one another across the length of top plate 20A.

In optional preferred aspects, top plate 20A may be designed as two portions 22A and 23A that are mirror images of another portion. Such a design may be preferred in conveying a visual impression of the line of swing as the putter is swung by the golfer. For example, when the putter is swung, the golfer will tend to see an imaginary line separating portions 22A and 23A. This imaginary line will correspond identically to the direction of swing of the golf club. Portions 22A and 23A are preferably of equal size.

In one optional embodiment, putter head 16 is made of a clear, see-through material. In another optional embodiment, interchangeable top plate 20 is also made of a clear, see-through material.

As shown by comparing FIGS. 2A and 2B, the alignment indicia of different top plates 20 may include indicia having opposite color contrasts (e.g.: see indicia 21A and 21B).

As shown in FIG. 2C, top plate 20C may comprise a series of curved lines 21C in alignment with one another. Sequential curved lines 21C may be spaced progressively closer together to one another (as shown), or they may alternatively be spaced a uniform distance apart from one another.

As shown in FIG. 2D, top plate 20D may comprise a series of straight lines 21D.

As can be seen in each of FIG. 1, the various alignment indicia 21A, 21B, 21C and 21D found on top plates 20 may be disposed across a substantial portion of the top of putter head 16. Moreover, it is to be understood that putter head 16 is not limited to any particular shape. As such, the embodiment of FIG. 1 is merely exemplary.

Although interchangeable top plates 20 may be flat thin plates that are dimensioned to be received into a recess in the top of putter head 16 (as shown), the present invention is not so limited. For example, top plates 20 may instead be designed to be slidably received into a groove in the putter head. Also, top plates 20 may instead be magnetically attached to the putter head. Alternatively, top plates 20 may instead be adhesive stickers.

The present system also includes a method of improving a golfer’s putting by providing a golfer with the presently described alignment system 10, having the golfer put with the different interchangeable top plates 20 on putter head 16; having the golfer select a preferred top plate (e.g.: 20A, 20B, 20C or 20D); and then having the golfer continue to put with the preferred top plate (e.g.: 20A, 20B, 20C or 20D) on putter head 16.

The present invention also includes a kit including alignment system 10 and instructions for use setting forth the above described preferred method. Such instructions for use may simply be printed on the packaging in which the present invention is sold, or may be included in printed form within the packaging box. Alternatively, such instructions for use may be stored in electronic machine readable format, or provided over the internet.

What is claimed is:

1. An alignment system for a golf putter, comprising:
   a plurality of interchangeable top plates for a golf putter head, wherein each of the interchangeable top plates has differing alignment indicia.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein at least one of the indicia comprises:
   a series of arrows in alignment with one another.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein at least one of the indicia comprises sequential arrows spaced a uniform distance apart from one another.

4. The system of claim 2, wherein the arrows are spaced progressively closer together.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein at least one of the indicia comprises:
   a series of curved lines in alignment with one another.

6. The system of claim 5, wherein sequential curved lines are spaced progressively closer together.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein at least one of the indicia comprises:
   a series of markings of which one portion is a mirror image of another portion.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein each portion is of equal size.

9. The system of claim 1, wherein the differing alignment indicia include indicia having opposite color contrasts.

10. The system of claim 1, wherein the alignment indicia convey a visual impression of a line of swing as the putter is swung.

11. The system of claim 1, wherein the alignment indicia are dimensioned to be disposed across a substantial portion of the top of the putter head.

12. The system of claim 1, wherein the interchangeable top plates are adhesive stickers.

13. The system of claim 1, wherein the interchangeable top plates are dimensioned to be mounted in a recess in a top of a putter head.

14. The system of claim 1, wherein the interchangeable top plates are magnetically attached to the putter head.
15. The system of claim 1, further comprising:
the golf putter head configured to receive the interchangeable top plates thereon.
16. The system of claim 15, wherein the golf putter head is made of a see-through material.
17. The system of claim 16, wherein at least one of the interchangeable top plates is made of a see-through material, and the indicia disposed thereon are not made of a see-through material.
18. A method of improving a golfer's putting, comprising:
providing a user with the system of claim 1;
having the user putt with the different interchangeable top plates on the putter head;
having the user select a preferred top plate; and
having the user continue to putt with the preferred top plate on the putter head.
19. The system of claim 18, further comprising:
having the user design the alignment indicia; and
having the user apply the alignment indicia to one of the interchangeable top plates.
20. A kit comprising:
the alignment system of claim 1; and
instructions for using the system according to method claim 18.