March 28, 1939. H. HARPSTER 2,152,381

STROKE PERFECTING DEVICE FOR GOLFERS

Filed July 29, 1938

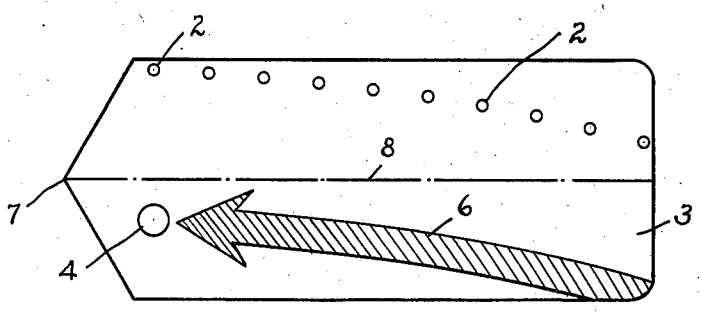


Fig. I.

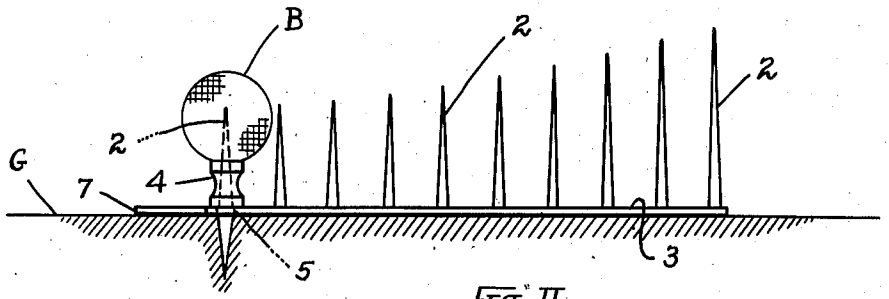


Fig. II.

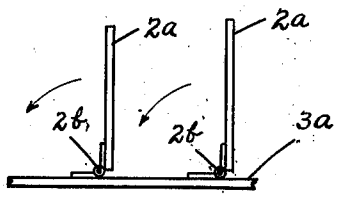


Fig. III.

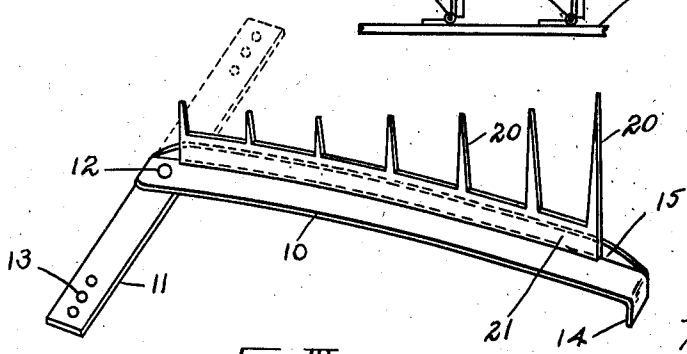


Fig. III.

INVENTOR

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2,152,381

STROKE PERFECTING DEVICE FOR GOLFERS

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3 Claims. (Cl. 273—35)

My invention relates to the game of golf, and more particularly to devices for assisting golfers properly to address and strike the ball.

The invention consists in refinements and elaborations in the structure of such devices, by virtue of which greater utility is realized. The structure of the invention affords greater accuracy in teaching the proper stroking of the ball; it is inexpensive to construct, of relatively small size and light weight, and may be readily carried about in the play of the game.

A device embodying the invention is illustrated in the accompanying drawing, in which:

Fig. I is a view of the device in plan from above;

Fig. II is a view of the same in side elevation;

And Fig. III is a view in perspective, illustrating a modified embodiment of the invention.

A known device of the sort to which my invention is directed includes a means for supporting a golf-ball in position to be hit with a driver (or other club), and a wall or shoulder that is spaced laterally from the point of support of the ball and extends rearwardly therefrom, to provide a lateral guide or "barrier" adjacent to the path through which the head of the club must swing in order to hit the ball properly.

In accordance with the invention, I provide the guiding wall or shoulder of the device in the form of a vane that is adapted to yield or give way in longitudinal direction, in case the head of a club is improperly swung and strikes the vane endwise. And advantageously the vane is also adapted to yield laterally. In case the club be swung improperly and strikes the vane, the vane does not to any serious degree impede the progress of the club in course of its movement into contact with the ball. The player will "feel" the sweeping contact of the club with the vane, but the club will continue in its swing and drive the ball, with a hook, or a slice—depending on the nature of the error which was committed in the swing.

Advantageously, the vane is of skeleton construction, in this case formed of a line of thin, upright members that are severally and delicately yieldable in the direction of movement of the head of the club, and preferably the vane is formed of a line of vertical rubber stems, whose inherent elasticity permits them individually to bend in whatever direction they are pressed.

Referring to the drawing, the line of rubber stems **2** that form the guiding vane are secured at their lower ends upon a base **3**. In this case the base consists in a mat of rubber of relatively great rigidity, to which the rubber stems **2** are secured by vulcanizing. In service the mat is laid upon the ground G. The support for the ball B to be driven may consist in a conventional tee **4** projected through an orifice **5** in the mat into the ground, or it may be a tee of rubber secured to, or freely resting on, the mat. Again, the surface of the mat itself, at the point where the tee **4** is shown, may comprise the supporting tee for the ball.

On the face of the mat **3**, I provide an index **6**, in this case in the form of a curved arrow pointing to the tee **4**. This arrow indicates the path through which the head of the club must be swung to hit the ball perfectly. The longitudinally yielding vane (the line of flexible stems **2**) extends substantially in parallelism with the index **6**, as viewed in plan. In swinging the club so that its head follows the arc indicated in plan by the index **6**, and in keeping the outer tip or toe of the club immediately within the line of stems **2**, the ball on the tee will be struck from the inside-out, as said in the parlance of the game, and thereby slicing will be avoided, and just enough hook will be given to the driven ball to insure top-spin and long roll. If the head of the club strikes the stems at the right-hand end of the line as viewed in Fig. I, the ball will be hit from the outside-in, and a "slice" will be the result. If the club strikes the stems at the left-hand end of the line, the ball will be hit too far from the inside, and an objectionable "hook" will be the consequence. But by swinging the head of the club immediately within the line of stems and in direction of the arrow the ball will be driven perfectly.

It will be noted that the forward end of the mat is pointed, as at **7**, whereby the body of the mat itself serves as an index of the direction of flight of the properly driven ball. In service the mat is directed, in its position on the ground, towards the object—the "green" or the middle of the "fairway"—and if the ball is hit correctly its flight will be in the direction in which the mat is pointed. And in this connection it is important to note that the tee **4** lies an interval from the longitudinal center line **8** of the mat and on opposite side from the line of flexible stems **2**.

In refinement of the structure described, the stems **2** may advantageously be of increasingly greater height towards the end of the line, thereby affording an approximation, if not an accurate index, of the proper arc (as viewed in vertical plane) through which the head of the club should be swung.

In modification of the structure described the base of the device may consist in two arms or straps of metal 10 and 11, secured together for angular adjustment on a pivot-pin 12. In service the straps are adjusted in the L relation shown, and a wooden tee, such as the tee 4 shown in Fig. II, is stuck through a hole 13 in strap 11 into the ground. The end of the strap 10 may be bent downward, as at 14, providing a cleat that may be pressed into the ground, to cooperate with the tee in securing the device in desired position. It is further noteworthy that the arm or strap 10 may be provided on its outer edge with a flange 15, and the yielding vane or line of yielding pins may be secured to this flange. More specifically, the line of pins 20 may be cut from a single web of rubber, leaving an integral strap portion 21 at the bases of the pins, by means of which integration with the base may be effected. That is, the strap portion 21 may be vulcanized or otherwise secured to the inner face of the flange 15. The structure manifestly employs the most essential features of the structure first described, and obviously it is used in the same manner as the structure described.

It will be noted that the arm 11 may include more than one tee-receiving perforations 13, to the end that the lateral distance between the tee and the line of pins 20 may be varied to make accommodations for variation in size of the heads of clubs that are used. For the same reason, of course, more than one orifice 5 may be provided in the base of the device shown in Figs. I and II.

When the device of Fig. III is not in use, the arm 11 may be swung on pivot 12 into position of alignment with the arm 10. As so collapsed or folded the device is compact and may be readily carried in the pocket. It is still further noteworthy that the arm 11 may be swung into the dotted line position shown, whereby the device may be so placed adjacent to a ball resting on the ground, say on the fairway, that the desired guide is provided while making an "iron" shot.

Other modifications and variations than those described are, manifestly, permissive within the terms of the appended claims.

I claim as my invention:

1. A device for use with a golf-ball supported in position to be driven, said device including a flat base adapted to rest on the ground, an elongate index on the face of the base directed to the point of support of the ball for indicating in plan the proper path through which to swing the head of a club, and a guiding vane that is carried by the base, that rises above the surface of the base, that is spaced laterally from said point of support of the ball and extends rearward therefrom in substantial parallelism with said index, and that is delicately yieldable laterally of and in direction of extent of the vane in response to impact of the head of such club.

2. A device of the class described including a base adapted to rest on the ground, a tee for supporting a golf-ball in position to be driven, a vane carried by said base and being spaced laterally from said tee and extending rearward therefrom in parallelism with the correct path to be followed by the head of a club swung to drive the ball, said vane comprising a line of vertical members adapted to yield in the direction of movement of such head of the club, said vertical members being of increasingly greater height towards the end of the line remote from the tee.

3. In a stroke-perfecting device for use with a golf-ball supported in position to be driven, said device including a basal portion adapted to be positioned upon the ground and a guide carried by such basal portion and spaced laterally from and extending rearward from said golf-ball; the improvement herein described in which said guide comprises a line of slender, relatively delicate fingers or stems that are closely spaced in the line and that extend upward from said base, the individual fingers or stems being delicately yieldable to stress effective either laterally or longitudinally of said line, whereby, no matter from what direction the head of a golf-club may strike such guide, the guide as a whole offers no disturbing resistance to the swing of the club.

HOWARD HARPSTER.