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GOLFER'S GRIP-AID

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Fig. 1

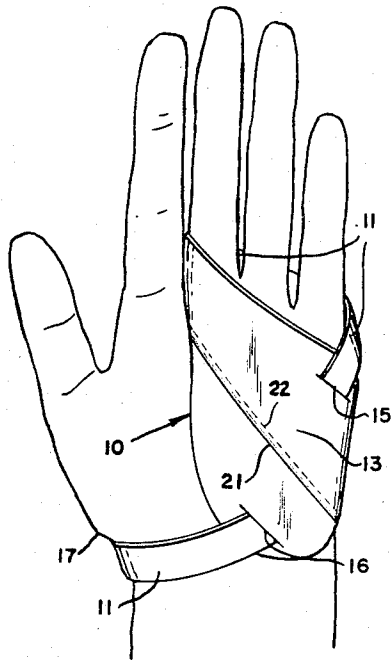


Fig. 2

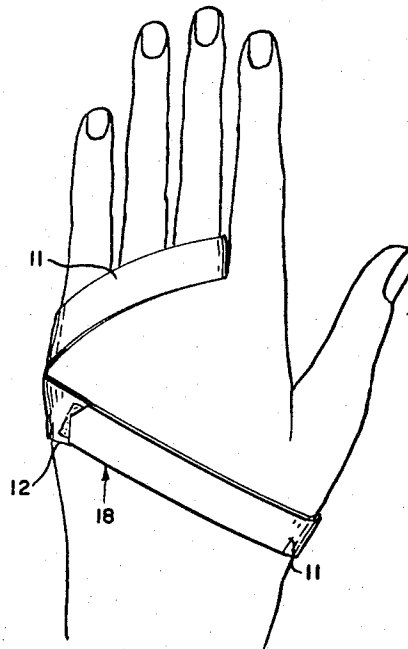
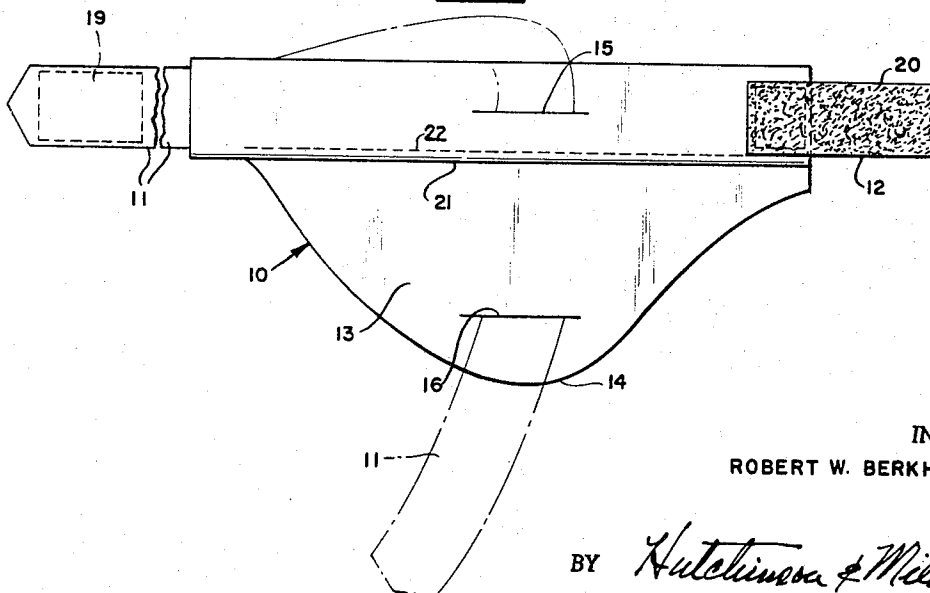


Fig. 3



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GOLFER'S GRIP-AID

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A golfer's hand gripping aid and protective device formed of a pliable part-palm covering piece provided with extension straps which adjustably affix the covering in place on the palm of a golfer's hand, without binding the wrist action of the golfer and without destroying the "feel" of the club. The construction and design affords easy adjustment of the covering to the desired position and there maintains the same in firm position. The covering is provided with a visual club alignment guide which is likewise adjusted along with the palm covering to the correct palm position.

This invention relates to a grip-aid and primarily to grip-aids for golfers to provide a firmer grip of the golf club while at the same time affording protection of that portion of the palm of the hand where it is most needed.

In playing the game of golf many golfers find it highly desirable to wear some form of hand grip-aid on the left hand, if the golfer is right handed, to provide a firmer and surer grasp of the club, as well as to provide protection for the hand, thus avoiding the formation of blisters and callouses on the hand. While various golfing hand grips and golfing gloves have been proposed heretofore, these have not proved entirely satisfactory, either because they so fully cover the hand as to dull the golfer's sense of touch or "feel," or because they are inconvenient to wear, adjust in position or too difficult to put on and take off.

The present invention is directed to a novel improvement in hand grips for golfers which avoids the disadvantages associated with the golf gloves and grips of the prior art.

Accordingly, it is an object of this invention to provide a novel and improved golfer's hand-grip that will afford adequate protection to the hand of the wearer where needed, will provide improved gripping action of the club, will not destroy the sense of "feel" of the club, and can be easily applied to the hand, adjusted and fixed in desired position thereon and will be quickly removable therefrom when desired.

It is a further object of this invention to provide a novel and improved golfer's hand-grip which covers only a part of the palm of the hand, i.e., the area of the palm where the maximum gripping power is applied in the execution of a golf shot, and where the greatest amount of protection is needed, while at the same time leaving the thumb, index finger and the radial side of the palm of the hand free and uninhibited so as not to destroy the sense of "feel" of the club, so important in attaining control of the club in the execution of a well hit golf shot.

Another object of the invention is to provide a hand-grip which is simple in construction, relatively inexpensive to manufacture and one which can be easily placed in position, adjusted to proper location and will accommodate various hand sizes.

Another object of the invention is to provide a hand-grip for golfers which embodies a palm covering provided with a visual club alignment guide, which can be varied and positioned along with the covering, to the proper position in the palm of the hand, to assist the golfer in securing a correct grip on the club by the hand in question.

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It is a further object to provide a novel construction which will attain the foregoing objects and at the same time will provide a grip-aid which is reversible and can be worn on either the left or the right hand of the golfer and hence universally adaptable for use by not only right handed golfers but also left handed golfers.

Another object is to provide a novel hand-grip for golfers which will attain the above-mentioned objects and will not bind or inhibit the wrist action of the hand during the execution of the golf swing.

Other and further objects and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following description and the appended claims, reference being had to the accompanying drawings forming a part of this specification. The invention may be embodied in the form illustrated in the drawings, attention being called to the fact, however, that the drawings are illustrative only, and that changes may be made in the specific constructions illustrated and described, so long as the scope of the appended claims is not violated.

In the accompanying drawings which form a part of this application,

FIGURE 1 discloses the novel golfing grip-aid of this invention in position on the palm side of the left hand of the golfer;

FIGURE 2 shows the back of the left hand of the golfer with the grip-aid in place; and

FIGURE 3 is a top plan view of the golf-aid in extended position, with a dotted line showing depicting the manner in which the longer extension strap is looped and threaded through the palm piece prior to application of the device to the hand.

Like characters of reference are used throughout the following specification and the accompanying drawings to designate corresponding parts.

Referring to the drawings for a description of the invention in its preferred form, the grip-aid 10 depicted therein is fabricated out of a pliable, relatively thin, sheet-like material, such as plastic sheeting or a vinyl fabric of the type sold under the trade name "Naukahyde" by Uniroyal, Inc., or of leather, canvas, suede, or any similar relatively flexible and pliable material. As shown, the device is preferably formed of a one-piece construction as viewed in FIG. 3, but it will be understood that the fastening means 11 and 12 can be formed separately and stitched, or otherwise secured, to the grip body 13, said separate means being formed out of either the same material as the part-palm covering 13 or of a different or cheaper material, as desired.

In FIG. 3 is shown the grip-aid 10 in extended position before being applied to the hand of the golfer. The aid is formed with a palm covering piece 13 having a somewhat generally inverted triangular configuration as viewed in FIG. 3 with extension straps 11 and 12 extending from opposite sides of the base of the inverted triangularly shaped piece 13 and with the apex of the piece rounded off as at 14.

Straps 11 and 12 are the fastening and positioning means for securely fixing the aid to the hand of the golfer. As shown, in the drawings, the device is primarily designed for application to the left hand of a right handed golfer, and is shown in FIGS. 1 and 2 as so applied. Strap 11 is designed considerably longer than strap 12, since when the part-palm covering 13 is positioned on the palm of the left hand as shown in FIG. 1, the strap 11 will preferably be passed between the index finger and the middle finger, looped or wrapped around the middle, ring and little fingers, brought around the ulnar side of the hand and threaded through parallel slots 15 and 16 in the palm covering passing generally diagonally across the palm of the hand where it goes around the left or radial side of the hand adjacent to or below the thenar eminence

17 of the thumb to the back of the hand to reach a fastening position 18 with the shorter extension strip or strap 12 which has been brought around the ulnar side of the hand to the fastening position 18.

Any desired adjustable fastening means can be utilized at 18 to fasten the ends of the two straps securely and detachably together, the components of the securing means being carried by the respective strap ends. While fastening may be consummated by a fixed, receiving snap device on one strap end and a variable position, insertion, snap device on the other strap end, it is preferred to use a nylon tape fastener device such as those sold under the trade name of "Velcro" and manufactured by the Velcro Corporation of New York, N.Y.

Such nylon tape fasteners are well known in the art and consist essentially of two pieces of all nylon tape. One piece is covered with a myriad of finely woven filaments formed into permanent hooks. The other piece is covered with soft nylon loops and a soft wool-like surface. When pressed together the two tapes engage and fasten tightly to form a firm shear resistant bond. However the tapes separate readily by simply peeling them apart. Such tape fasteners, for example, are disclosed and described in U.S. Patents Nos. 2,717,437, 3,083,737, 3,009,235 and 3,154,837 among others.

The two component parts 19-20 of the nylon tape fastener, which may be termed the "fleecy" strip and the "burr" strip, are of substantial length and are stitched to the ends of the straps 11 and 12 in such fashion that the overlapping of the strap ends will bring their respective fastening surfaces in operative fastening position where the fastening is assured by application of finger pressure thereto. In view of the length of each part of the tape, ample variance in adjustment of the straps will be afforded within the limits of the strips, by varying the position of overlap of the straps and the tape components. This will generally provide ample adjustment for accommodating most golfers' hands to afford a snug fit. However, if added initial and major strap adjustment is necessary or desired, the strap 11 could be provided with some form of additional length varying adjustment, not shown, as will be readily understood.

The palm covering 13 while shown generally as somewhat triangular in shape, it does not necessarily have to be so shaped. It is only desirable that the covering when in adjusted position cover that portion of the palm side of the hand extending from the ulnar side at least to the mid-point of the palm, and preferably slightly beyond the precise mid-point, as shown, and from the base of the middle, ring and little fingers down to the heel of the hand. This particular area of the palm is the area of the left hand subjected to the greatest stress and wear during the execution of a golf shot. The middle, ring and little fingers are the fingers of the left hand of a right handed golfer that primarily provide the gripping force together with the muscles of the heel of the hand, to properly power the golf swing. The base of these fingers and the heel of the palm on the ulnar side are thus fully protected against skin abrasion, blisters and callouses. The thumb and first or index finger which do not power the swing, but instead function to control the club swing, are left completely free and uncovered, along with the entire radial side of the palm.

With the thumb, index finger and the radial side of the palm completely free of the covering, the sensibility of the hand to control the club is not lost, as is the case with all conventional golf gloves and golfing grip-aids of the prior art. In other words, by virtue of the part-palm coverage construction the "feel" of the club and the ability to control the club is retained while at the same time the grip-aid affords the desired gripping action and skin protection where needed the most.

Additionally the grip-aid 10 is provided with an aid in visual alignment of the club in the palm of the left hand. This aid or guide may take various forms, but in

the preferred embodiment shown in the drawings the visual aid or guide means 21 is provided by an upstanding fold formed in the material of the covering which is retained by a suitable line of stitching 22. This crease or fold is formed to extend diagonally across the palm piece 13 and runs from approximately the point where the extension strap 11 passes between the index and middle fingers downwardly and across the palm piece to the heel on the ulnar side of the piece, as will be apparent from an inspection of FIG. 1.

The fold or crease 21 not only will function as a visual club alignment guide but it also acts to improve the gripping effect or purchase of the club in the hand of the golfer.

As heretofore noted, the aid is easily and quickly applied to the hand of the golfer and securely maintained in the desired position. The palm covering and the visual alignment guide 21 can be readily adjusted to the desired and correct position on the palm of the hand with adequate adjustment of the straps and fastening means permitting the device to be properly applied to different hand sizes. It will be noted that only a single fastening means 19-20 is all that is necessary to accomplish the desired objectives.

By virtue of the novel construction, and the manner in which the extension strap 11 is employed and threaded or laced through the slots 15 and 16 of the part palm piece 13, it will be particularly noted that the palm piece may be slidingly adjusted along the strap 11 to the desired position on the golfer's hand. This sliding adjustment of the palm piece might be termed a pivotal movement with the pivot point in effect being the point where the extension strap 11 enters the space between the index and middle fingers. This construction allows the golfer to move the palm covering in a limited arc about the aforesaid imaginary pivot point with the ulnar side of the covering sliding and/or swinging along the strap 11. In this manner the palm piece can be placed where it is most desired with respect to the precise area to be protected, where it is most comfortable to the wearer and where the fold or crease 21 can be brought into the proper position to correctly function as a visual guide means in aligning the club in the left hand. Once the proper position is attained, the two ends of the straps are securely fastened at the back of the hand to firmly hold and maintain the desired selected position.

While the device has been described as preferably positioned on the hand of a golfer as shown in the drawings, with the strap extension passing between the index and middle fingers and looping all three fingers, i.e., the middle, ring and little fingers, it will be appreciated that in some instances, depending on the preference of a particular player, it might be desired to pass the extension strap 11 between the middle finger and the ring finger and loop or encircle merely the ring and little fingers. Likewise, other finger looping variations might also be employed but in each instance the strap 11 will pass around the ulnar side of the hand at approximately the base of the little finger and extend through the slots 15 and 16 diagonally across the palm as in the case of the three finger encirclement shown in the drawings. The functions and desired objects will be the same.

The invention has been shown and described as applied to the left hand of a right handed golfer. However, by virtue of the simple and relatively uncomplicated structure of the device, the same may be easily and readily reversed and in reversed position applied in similar manner to the right hand of a left handed golfer. In reversed position the only difference would be in the general appearance of the visual alignment guide means 21 where only a seam would be visible, which nevertheless will function as intended.

It will be particularly noted that by virtue of the particular construction, the fastening strap means do not bind the wrist in any manner to hinder the proper wrist

action, as is the case with so many of the prior art aids. The two fastening means 11 and 12 do not encircle the wrist but are fastened at the back of the hand, as shown in FIG. 2, at a point outwardly and above the golfer's wrist.

If desired more than two slots or slits, such as 15-16, could be formed in the palm covering 13 to receive the strap 11 and, if desired, a further slot or slit could be employed adjacent to slot 15 but positioned more towards the upper center portion of the palm piece, if additional major adjustment of the piece and strap should be needed.

While the present invention has been explained and described with reference to specific embodiments of structure, it will be understood, nevertheless, that numerous modifications and variations are susceptible of being incorporated without departure from the essential spirit or scope thereof. Accordingly, it is not intended for an understanding of this invention to be limited by the foregoing description nor by the illustrations in the annexed drawings, except as indicated in the hereinafter appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A golfer's gripping aid and protective device comprising a thin pliable part-palm covering shaped to cover at least that portion of the palm of the hand extending from the ulnar side to approximately the mid-point of the palm, and from the base of the middle, ring and little fingers to the heel of the hand, said covering being provided with strap engaging means, a first fastening and positioning strap means extending from the mid-point palm portion of said palm covering, and a second fastening and positioning strap means extending from the ulnar side of said palm covering, said first fastening and positioning strap means adapted to be passed between any two fingers of the hand, but preferably between the index and middle fingers, to the back of the hand to encircle the middle, ring and little fingers, and to then pass around the ulnar side of the hand to the palm side and through said strap engaging means in said palm covering to extend diagonally across the palm, and to then pass around the base of the thumb on the radial side of the hand to the back of the hand to there meet said second fastening and positioning strap means extending from the heel portion of the ulnar side of the palm covering around to the back of the hand, and means for fastening said first and second fastening and positioning strap means together at the back of the hand outwardly of and below the wrist.

2. A golfer's gripping aid as claimed in claim 1, where-

in said first and second fastening and positioning strap means are extensions of and are formed integrally with said part-palm covering.

3. A golfer's gripping aid as claimed in claim 1, wherein said part-palm covering is generally triangular in configuration with said first and second fastening and positioning strap means extending from opposite sides of the base portion of said triangular configuration.

4. A golfer's gripping aid and protective device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said strap engaging means comprises spaced slots extending through the palm covering and slidably engaging said first fastening and positioning strap means.

5. A golfer's gripping aid and protective device as claimed in claim 4, wherein said part-palm covering is adjustable in position on the palm of the hand by being slidably moved along the first fastening and positioning strap means.

6. A golfer's gripping aid as claimed in claim 1, wherein said means for fastening together said first and second fastening and positioning strap means is an adjustable fastener.

7. A golfer's gripping aid as claimed in claim 1, wherein the part-palm covering is provided with a visual club alignment guide means.

8. A golfer's gripping aid as claimed in claim 7, wherein the club alignment guide means comprises a diagonally extending fold or crease line formed in the material out of which the part-palm covering is made.

9. A golfer's gripping aid as claimed in claim 1, wherein the gripping aid can be completely reversed and hence capable of application to either the left or right hand of a golfer.

10. A golfer's gripping aid as claimed in claim 6, wherein the gripping aid can be completely adjusted in position on the hand, the tension on the encircled fingers varied as desired, all through a single control point embodied in the adjustable strap fastener.

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