Oct. 21, 1969 W. McGAWN LEES 3,473,811

GOLF PRACTICE DEVICE

Filed March 10, 1967

FIG.1

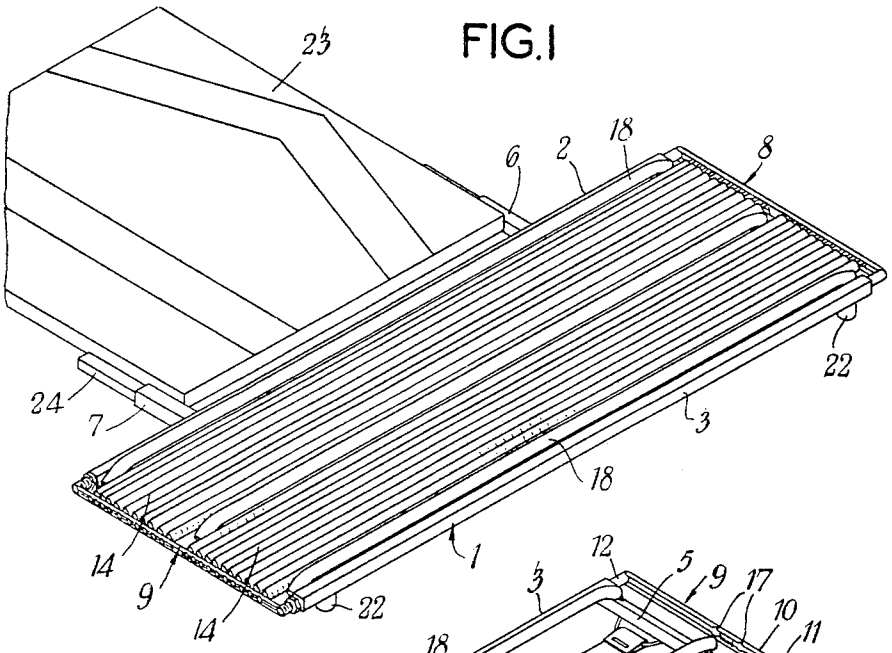


FIG.2

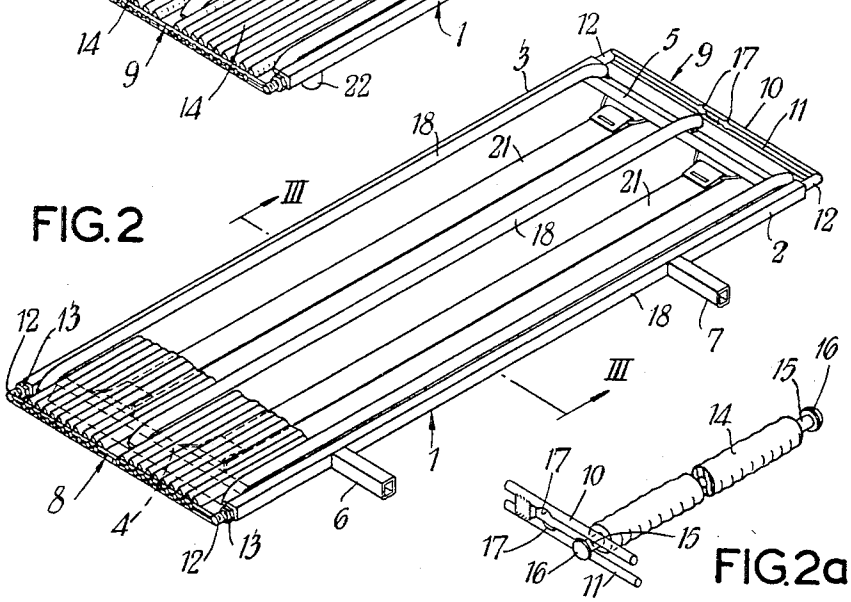
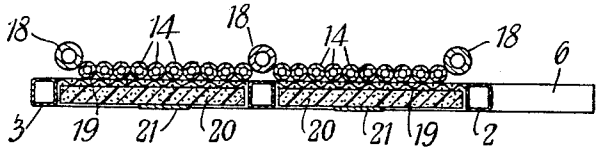


FIG.2a

FIG.3



United States Patent Office 3,473,811
Patented Oct. 21, 1969

3,473,811

GOLF PRACTICE DEVICE

William McGawn Lees, 604 Walton Road,
West Molesey, Surrey, England

Filed Mar. 10, 1967, Ser. No. 622,148
Claims priority, application Great Britain, Mar. 11, 1966, 10,802/66
Int. Cl. A63b *69/36, 69/00*
U.S. Cl. 273—195 1 Claim

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Longitudinally stretchable tubular members have their ends connected to a framework and form a surface from which golf balls may be driven. Adjustment members are provided to vary the extent of stretch of the tubular members so that the feel of the surface formed thereby is varied. Plastic supporting layers and a strap of webbing are provided beneath the surface of tubular members.

This invention relates to golf practice devices.

Facilities for golfers to practice their game without being on a golf course are becoming increasingly popular and the advent of the golf driving range is an indication of this. However, these ranges, while providing an extremely useful facility for practice, are restrictive in that the surface on which the practice takes place is normally matting. These mats present an unyielding surface which does not affect the stroke with the driver from a tee-peg but form impossible surfaces for fairway woods and iron shots unless a tee-peg is used.

To execute an iron shot correctly, it is generally recognized that the ball must be struck a downward blow to impart the desired back spin and this is evidenced by the divot taken by the playing of such a shot from a fairway. Practice mats at present known do not allow the club head to travel in a downward path through the ball.

It is the main object of this invention to provide a golf practice device which, inter alia, enables the playing of iron shots in the accepted correct manner.

According to the present invention there is provided a golf practice device, including a framework, location means attached to the framework at opposite sides thereof, surface defining means attached to and extending between the location means and resilient support means located beneath the surface defining means, said surface defining means being retained under tension by the location means and supported by the resilient support means in such a manner as to provide a striking surface capable of yielding to and resisting the downward movement of a club head when a ball is struck from the striking surface during play, whereby the "feel" of play from a fairway is simulated.

The invention will now be more particularly described with reference to the embodiments thereof illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of a golf practice device constructed in accordance with the invention;

FIGURE 2 is a perspective view similar to FIGURE 1 with part of the construction cut away to show more detail;

FIGURE 2*a* is a fragmentary view of part of FIGURE 2;

FIGURE 3 is a cross-sectional view on the line III—III of FIGURE 2.

Referring to FIGS. 1 to 3, a golf practice device includes a framework **1** which includes longitudinally extending members **2** and **3** and integral, laterally extending, members **4** and **5** fixed to the members **2** and **3** at a short distance from the ends thereof. The longitudinally

extending member **2** has short socket members **6** and **7** fixed thereto. The members of the framework **1** are of square section metal tube, although it will be appreciated that a tube of other cross-section may be employed. Location means **8** and **9** are provided one at each end of the framework **1** and, as shown particularly in FIGS. 2 and 2*a*, the location means **8** and **9** include spaced parallel rods **10** and **11** carried by short spigots **12** which enter the longitudinally extending members **2** and **3** of the framework. At least one of the location means **8** and **9** is adjustable in position and, in this particular embodiment, the location means **8** is provided with nuts **13** in screw-threaded engagement with screw-threads on short spigots **12**. These nuts **13** are, therefore, adjustable on spigots **12** and abut against the ends of the longitudinally extending members **2** and **3** of the framework **1**. Thus the distance between the location means **8** and **9** may be varied.

The golf practice device also includes surface defining means which consists of a plurality of tubes **14** of a synthetic plastics material. These tubes **14** are horizontally disposed and positioned side by side as indicated in FIG. 3, so that they present an upwardly facing surface from which a ball may be struck. Each of the tubes **14** has, projecting from each end, a shank **15** with an integral head **16** so that each tube may be attached to a location means. This is achieved by providing the rods **10** and **11** of each location means with small cut away portions **17** whereby the heads **16** may be passed between the rods **10** and **11** and then moved horizontally so that the head **16** abuts against the rods **10** and **11** on the side thereof remote from the tube **14**. Both ends of each tube will be attached in this manner and, by suitably adjusting the position of nuts **13** on spigots **12**, the tension in the tubes **14** may be adjusted to simulate play from soft or hard ground. The tubes **14** are preferably of reinforced polyvinylchloride with the outer surface of the tubes **14** slightly undulating as indicated in FIG. 2*a* so that a ball may be retained on the playing surface.

Also extending longitudinally of the framework **1** are three guide tubes **18** which serve to delineate the striking surfaces and may also be used to guide a club head into the correct path of movement during play.

Supporting the surface defining means is resilient support means which comprises a mesh **19** of plastics material immediately underneath the tubes **14** and a layer of foamed plastics material **20** underneath the mesh **19**. The foamed plastics material may be polyester foam. Immediately underneath the foamed plastics material is a strap **21** of webbing attached to the framework **1**. The framework **1** may be provided with feet **22**.

The golf practice device described above may be attached to a mat on which a player may take his stance and such a mat is indicated at **23** in FIG. 1. This mat **23** is provided with spigots **24** which engage in the sockets **6** and **7** of the framework.

It will be appreciated that the golf practice device includes two striking areas, namely those areas defined by the tubes **14** which are separated by the central guide tube **18**. The purpose of this division is that the striking surface furthest from the mat **23** may be used for the playing of wood shots whereas the striking surface nearest to the mat **23** may be used for the playing of iron shots. For this purpose, if the player desires, a tee-peg may be inserted between any two of the tubes **14**.

The lateral members **4** and **5** of the framework **1** are slightly raised above the level of the longitudinal sides **2** and **3** so as to raise the striking surface so that when the framework **1** lies on a hard surface, for example, the wood or concrete floor of a driving range, there is sufficient distance between the floor and the striking sur-

face to allow for yielding of the surface during the playing of an iron shot. The provision of feet 22 assist in this connection.

As will be appreciated, by adjustment of the tension in the tubes 14, comparatively spongy or firm conditions of play may be simulated.

In the embodiment above described, the striking surface permits the correct playing of an iron shot. The striking surface will yield to the downward movement of the club head through the ball and will, at the same time, resist this movement by the frictional contact of the club head with the surface. Thus, the "feel" of play from a fairway is simulated.

I claim:

1. A golf practice device, which comprises:

a framework;

a surface-defining means, in the form of a plurality of horizontally disposed, longitudinally extensible tubular members of circular cross-section formed of a plastics material, carried by the framework;

a pair of location means attached to the framework at opposite sides thereof, each said location means including two spaced parallel rods and each said horizontally disposed member having extending from each end thereof a shank with an integral head at its outer end, each tubular member end being retained by a said location means by means of the shank passing between the said rods and the head engaging the said rods on the side thereof remote from the said member; a resilient support means located beneath said surface-defining means; and support means including a mesh of plastics material immediately underneath the said surface-defining means, a layer of foamed plastics material underlying the said mesh and a strap of webbing attached to the framework and lying underneath the foamed plastics material;

said surface-defining means being attached to and extending between said location means and said resilient support means;

at least one of the said location means being adjustable in position toward and away from the opposite location means whereby the tension of the surface-defining means may be adjusted,

said surface-defining means being retained under tension by said location means and being supported by the said resilient support means in such a manner as to provide a striking surface capable of yielding to and resisting the downward movement of a club head when a ball is struck from the striking surface during play, whereby the "feel" of play from a fairway is simulated.

References Cited

UNITED STATES PATENTS

1,669,204	5/1928	MacCallum	273—196 X
1,983,671	12/1934	Kohler	273—195
2,169,407	8/1939	Crowley	273—187
3,345,073	10/1967	Hoffman	273—197

GEORGE J. MARLO, Primary Examiner

U.S. Cl. X.R.

273—186, 187, 191