A split-soled golf shoe is disclosed, including an upper housing having a front sole and a rear sole attached to its bottom portion, wherein the front sole and rear sole are spaced apart from one another at a mid-sole area. The mid sole may be reinforced using a reinforcing strap or reinforcing material.
SPLIT-SOLED GOLF SHOE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] 1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates in general to the field of athletic sporting wear, and specifically to the field of athletic shoes for use in golf.

[0002] 2. Background Art

Athletic shoe apparel comes in all shapes and sizes, and is used in a wide range of activities, from walking to vigorous running and jumping activities. In some of these activities, it is beneficial for the participant to have a high degree of flexibility and comfort from their shoes, due to the need for particularized physical movements, or due to extended wear and tear on the feet over a period of time.

[0005] One particular activity where this flexibility and comfort would be advantageous is in golf. The movements in the golf swing are intricate and require specific precision from the player, such that foot movement and flexibility during the swing, in addition to sure footing, are paramount. Further, most golfers spend a great deal of time and distance walking during a round, making comfort important as well.

[0006] Significant time and effort has been spent in the industry in an attempt to develop a comfortable, reliable and stable shoe for golfing activities. Various shoe styles have been adapted for use in golf, from golf boots to golf saddle shoes to golf sandals, and numerous features have been added to those shoes to achieve these goals.

[0007] As of yet, however, there is still room for improvement. It is therefore an object of this invention to provide a novel, flexible, and comfortable golf shoe design.

[0008] This and other objects will become apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art in reviewing the enclosed specification, drawings and claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] FIG. 1 comprises a side view of the split-soled golf shoe, including a reinforcing strap;

[0010] FIG. 2 comprises a side view of the split-soled golf shoe, including a reinforcing material;

[0011] FIG. 3 comprises a bottom view of the split-soled golf shoe; and

[0012] FIG. 4 comprises a partial perspective view of the bottom of the split-soled golf shoe, having removable threaded spikes.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0013] The present invention comprises an improved golf shoe having a split sole. The golf shoe includes an upper housing, and two soles attached to the bottom portion of the housing. The two soles include a front sole near the toe box of the upper housing, and a rear sole near the heel area of the housing. The front sole and rear sole preferably include gripping members, such as golf spikes, or molded plastic nubs. The front sole and rear sole are spaced apart from one another so that the upper housing can flex during the movement of the player’s foot. In one preferred embodiment, the golf spikes are removable, such as threaded golf spikes.

[0014] Preferably, the area between the front sole and rear sole, called the mid-sole, is reinforced using a reinforcing material or reinforcing strap. If a reinforcing strap is used, it is preferably attached on one end to an inner vamp, and on the other end to an outer vamp on the upper housing. The inner and outer vamps preferably are connected with eyelets on the upper housing adjacent to a tongue area of the golf shoe, so that laces can be used to secure the shoe to a foot, and reinforce the mid-sole at the same time.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0015] While this invention is susceptible of embodiment in many different forms, there is shown in the drawings and will be described in detail, several specific embodiments with the understanding that the present disclosure is to be considered as an exemplification of the principles of the invention and is not intended to limit the invention to the embodiments illustrated.

[0016] The present invention is shown herein in FIG. 1 as comprising a split-soled golf shoe 10, having an upper housing 20 configured for retaining a human foot therein, and an outer sole 60 attached to a bottom portion 24 of the upper housing 20. The outer sole 60 comprises a front sole 62, and a rear sole 64, which are spaced apart from one another along the longitudinal axis of the bottom portion 24. The upper housing 20, front sole 62 and rear sole 64 work together to increase the flexibility of the golf shoe 10 during use.

[0017] Upper housing 20, as noted, is configured for retaining a human foot therein. Generally, upper housing 20 could comprise any number of conventional shapes for a golf shoe, including traditional style, boots, or sandals. The following discussion will utilize the preferred traditional style of golf shoe, but the teachings may be applied to any conventional type.

[0018] To accommodate insertion of a human foot, upper housing 20, including opening 22 on top, configured for insertion of a foot therein. Opening 22 is connected to tongue area 26, consisting of the shoe tongue 28, inner vamp 30, outer vamp 32, and eyelets 34. Tongue area 26 connects opening 22 to toe box 36, shaped appropriately for the toe portion of the human foot. Opposite from the tongue area 26 on the opening is back portion 38 of upper housing 20. Together, toe box 36, inner vamp 30, outer vamp 32, and back portion 38 create a cavity 40 therein, for retaining the foot. At the bottom of cavity 40 is the insole 42, upon which the foot rests. Upper housing 20 may comprise a single piece of material, or several different pieces of material sewn together. For example, the inner vamp 30, outer vamp 32, toe box 36 and back portion 38 can all be sewn to the insole 42 to form the cavity 40. Alternatively, they could all comprise the same piece of material, or have portions constructed from the same material, as needed.

[0019] Upper housing 20 is preferably manufactured from flexible, durable materials such as leather or fabric. Such materials are well known in the shoe industry, and any conventional material can be used with the present inven-
tion. Using such materials enables laces 50 to be threaded through eyelets 34, over the tongue area 26 so that the upper housing 20 can be securely fastened to a foot.

[0020] Bottom portion 24 of upper housing 20 has a front area 44 near the toe box 36, a heel area 46 near the back portion 38, and a mid-sole 48 there between. Preferably, the mid-sole 48 corresponds to the space between the front sole 62 and the rear sole 64. Bottom portion 24 is flexible, to allow the wearer of the shoe flexibility to move the front area 44 and heel area 46 as needed during use.

[0021] Front sole 62 and rear sole 64 comprise a thickness of hearty material such as leather, plastic or other conventional material. Preferably, front sole 62 and rear sole 64 are at least one-half inch in thickness. Traditionally, rear sole 64 has an additional thickness relative to the front sole 62, to accommodate a more comfortable walking position.

[0022] Preferably, and as shown in FIG. 3, at least one of the front sole 62 and the rear sole 64 includes one or more gripping members 66. These gripping members 66 provide stability and traction to a golfer during swinging, walking and other athletic movements. Typical gripping members include golf spikes 68 (shown in FIG. 3), such as metal and plastic spikes, and formed plastic nubs of all shapes, which are actually formed into the bottom of the sole portions. Preferably, front sole 62 includes at least seven golf spikes 68, and rear sole 64 includes at least four. Other conventional gripping members, and other amounts of gripping members can be used as well.

[0023] In a preferred embodiment (shown in FIG. 4), golf spikes 68 are removable from the sole of the shoe. Such removable spikes are well known, and generally require that the golf spike be threaded, such as threaded spike 68, which is configured to cooperate with spike socket 70 on the sole of the shoe.

[0024] As noted above, front sole 62 and rear sole 64 are spaced apart from one another at the mid-sole portion of the upper housing 20. The distance between the front sole 62 and the rear sole 64 enables the bottom portion 24 of the upper housing 20 to be flexed during movement. That distance can be varied as needed. Front sole 62, however, should be wide enough and long enough to provide support for the ball of a foot, while rear sole 64 should provide similar support for a heel of a foot.

[0025] Because upper housing 20 is formed from flexible materials, it is preferable to include a reinforcing structure underneath the mid-sole 48. For example, and as shown in FIG. 1, mid-sole 48 can additionally include a reinforcing strap 52. Reinforcing strap 52 comprises a thicker piece of material (i.e. leather or fabric), which is connected to the inner vamp 30 on one end, passes under and covers the mid-sole 48, and then connects to the outer vamp 32 on the other end. Reinforcing strap 52 provides strength and arch support to the mid-sole. Additionally, and preferably, reinforcing strap 52 is connected to eyelets 34, either directly or through the inner 30 and outer 32 vamps, so that when the eyelets 34 are tightened together using laces, it provides an additional structural support for the mid-sole 48.

[0026] Alternatively, the reinforcing structure could comprise a simple piece of thickened material, such as reinforcing material 54. The reinforcing material 54 is thinner than the front 62 and rear 64 soles, but provides some additional support to the mid-sole. To do so, the reinforcing material 54 should be thicker, but still flexible like the upper housing 20. The reinforcing material 54 may be connected to the outside of the mid-sole, or may be included inside of the cavity as well.

[0027] The foregoing description merely explains and illustrates the invention and the invention is not limited thereto except insofar as the appended claims are so limited, as those skilled in the art that have the disclosure before them will be able to make modifications without departing from the scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A split-sole golf shoe, comprising:
   - an upper housing, configured for retaining a human foot therein, the upper housing comprising an opening for insertion of the human foot;
   - an outer sole affixed to a bottom portion of the upper housing, the sole comprising:
     - a front outer sole affixed proximate a toe box of the upper housing;
     - a rear outer sole affixed proximate a heel area of the upper housing,
   - at least one of the front sole and rear sole comprising one or more gripping members;
   - wherein the front sole and rear sole are spaced apart from one another along the bottom portion at a mid-sole portion of the bottom portion so as to give the bottom portion additional flexibility.

2. The golf shoe according to claim 1, wherein the gripping members comprise golf spikes.

3. The golf shoe according to claim 2, wherein the golf spikes comprise a spike socket and a threaded spike, such that the threaded spike is removable from the spike socket.

4. The golf shoe according to claim 2, wherein the golf spikes comprise a rigid material.

5. The golf shoe according to claim 1, wherein the mid-sole portion comprises a reinforcing material.

6. The golf shoe according to claim 1, wherein the mid-sole portion comprises a reinforcing strap, wherein the strap extends from an outer vamp of the upper housing, across the mid-sole portion, and to an inner vamp of the upper housing.

7. The golf shoe according to claim 6, wherein the outer vamp and inner vamp are associated with eyelets in the upper housing, which eyelets are configured to accept laces.

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