

TITLE**GOLF SWING TRAINING APPARATUS****FIELD OF THE INVENTION**

The present invention relates to an apparatus to assist in training the swing of a golfer.

BACKGROUND TO THE INVENTION

In the game of golf, the success or otherwise of a golfer is largely dependent on the golfer's swing. Much research has been conducted into golfers' swings, in order to identify technical features of good swings which may be taught by golf instructors.

Two technical features are well known as being of great importance to a good golf swing. These are the ability to maintain the club swing substantially within a constant plane, and the ability to complete the swing without lateral swaying of the hips.

Although such concepts can be taught by instructors, it is often difficult for a golfer to be aware whether or not a particular swing embodies these features.

There are a number of devices which assist a golfer in practicing particular technical elements of a golf swing. These include clubs having a head which separates from the shaft where the swing is incorrect, gloves to control hand and wrist positions during swing, and items to be attached to the golf club to constrain its movement.

Of these devices, those which are designed to assist in the swing path are either specialised training clubs or attachments to clubs. As such, it is not possible for a

golfer to use his or her usual clubs for practice without adding devices which alter the feel of the club.

Further, these devices do not assist in controlling the body positioning during the swing, and in particular do not assist in controlling hip sway.

The present invention attempts to overcome at least in part some of the aforementioned disadvantages of previous golf swing training apparatus.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In accordance with one aspect of the present invention there is provided a golf swing training apparatus comprising a swing plane maintenance means and a hip sway control means, wherein the swing plane maintenance means comprises at least one guide member having a substantially planar upper surface along which a golf club may be swung and the hip sway control means comprises at least one laterally extending member which locates, in use, beside a golfer's hips and prevents the swaying thereof.

Preferably, the swing plane maintenance means includes a club retaining portion arranged, in use to travel along the guide member.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The present invention will now be described, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is an isometric view of a golf swing training apparatus in accordance with the present invention; and

Figure 2 is a side view of the golf swing training apparatus of Figure 1.

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Referring to the Figure, there is shown a golf swing training apparatus 10 comprising a swing plane maintenance means 12, a hip sway control means 14 and a foot placement control means 16.

The swing plane maintenance means 12 comprises an annular guide member 18. The guide member 18 comprises a closed curve, and is disposed at an angle relative to the vertical. The guide member 18 is supported by adjustable support means 19. The adjustable support means 19 is located entirely outside and beneath the guide member 18, so as not to interfere with a golfer's swing. The guide member 18 may be adjusted in height, size of the ring, shape and in its angle relative to the vertical.

The guide member 18 is preferably rectangular in cross section. A club retaining portion in the form of a hook 20 is mounted to the guide member 18, and is arranged to travel along the guide member 18. In effect, the guide member 18 acts as a rail along which the hook 20 can travel.

The hip sway control means 14 comprises at least one laterally extending member 22. The laterally extending member 22 locates, in use, alongside the hips of a golfer. The or each laterally extending member 22 is sufficiently rigid to prevent the swaying of the hips through the laterally extending member. It will be appreciated that the or each laterally extending member is moveable so that its position can be adjusted as required by individual golfers.

The foot placement control means 16 will provide a stable, consistent location for the golfer's feet. In a preferred embodiment, the foot control means is adjustable to provide guidance on correct foot position for different types of golf shot.

In use, the golfer stands on the foot placement control means 16 and adjusts the swing plane maintenance means 12 and the hip sway control means 14 in accordance with the height of the golfer, the type of club being used and the desired angle of swing. The golfer then rehearses his or her swing. The preferred mode of use of the invention is for the shaft of the club to engage with the hook 20 on the golfer's backswing, thus restraining the club head and shaft to remain adjacent the guide member 18. The downswing and follow through take place along the planar upper surface of the guide member 18 leaving the hook 20 behind. It is anticipated that constant repetition will encourage "muscle memory", and that the golfer's swing will remain planar when on the golf course.

Various embodiments and extra features are envisioned in relation to the present invention. They include the provision of electronic detection and measurement devices, the provision of video capture means, and the use of smart card technology to remember and replicate correct positioning of the swing plane maintenance means 12, the hip sway control means 14 and the foot placement control means 16 for a particular golfer. In a preferred embodiment, the golf swing training apparatus includes software to allow a real-time analysis of a golfer's swing.

The embodiment shown in the drawings includes a control module 24 which can be used for these purposes.

Modifications and variations as would be apparent to a skilled addressee are deemed to be within the scope of the present invention.

CLAIMS

1. A golf swing training apparatus comprising a swing plane maintenance means and a hip sway control means, characterised in that the swing plane maintenance means comprises at least one guide member having a substantially planar upper surface along which a golf club may be swung and the hip sway control means comprises at least one laterally extending member which locates, in use, beside a golfer's hips and prevents the swaying thereof.
2. A golf swing training apparatus as claimed in claim 1, characterised in that the or each guide member is a closed curve.
3. A golf swing training apparatus as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, characterised in that the swing plane maintenance means includes a club retaining portion arranged, in use, to travel along the guide member.
4. A golf swing training apparatus as claimed in claim 3, characterised in that the club retaining portion is a hook.
5. A golf swing training apparatus as claimed in claim 3 or claim 4, characterised in that the guide member is more or less rectangular in cross section and acts as a rail along which the club retaining portion can travel.
6. A golf swing training apparatus as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the angle and size of the or each guide member relative to a vertical plane is variable.
7. A golf swing training apparatus as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the golf swing training apparatus further comprises a foot placement control means.

8. A golf swing training apparatus as claimed in claim 7, characterised in that the position of the foot placement control means is variable.
9. A golf swing training apparatus as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the position of the hip sway control means is variable.
10. A golf swing training apparatus as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the golf swing training apparatus includes electronic detection and measurement devices.
11. A golf swing training apparatus as claimed in claim 10, characterised in that the golf swing training apparatus includes software which provides real-time analysis of a golfer's swing.