Wherefore, what is claimed is:

1. A universal swing training apparatus, comprising:

a sports-related implement comprising two separate and distinct sections spaced apart to form a gap there-between, said sections comprising a proximal section and a distal section; and

a slide mechanism inserted within said gap and connected to the upper end of the proximal section and the lower end of the distal section,

the slide mechanism comprising a rail guide, a plurality of front ball bearings, a plurality of rear ball bearings, and a sliding rail assembly that are cooperatively configured to,

insure said upper end and said lower end are coaxial when the sliding rail assembly is situated in a coaxial position on the rail guide, and

permit a lateral shift of said lower end relative to said upper end during a swinging of the implement.

2. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein,

the sliding rail assembly comprises a sliding rail member,

the upper portion of the sliding rail member is adapted to permit said lower end to be connected to said upper portion in a manner that insures said lower end is coaxial with the sliding rail assembly regardless of how the implement is swung, and

the lower portion of the rail guide is adapted to permit said upper end to be connected to said lower portion in a manner that insures said upper end is coaxial with the rail guide regardless of how the implement is swung.

3. The apparatus of Claim 1 or 2, wherein,

the sliding rail assembly comprises a sliding rail member the lower portion of which comprises a sliding rail block,

the upper portion of the rail guide comprises a guide block the upper portion of which comprises a linear guide channel that passes from the left side of the guide block to the right side thereof, and

said channel is adapted to receive the combination of the sliding rail block and the front and rear ball bearings in sliding engagement when said

combination is slidably inserted into said channel,

said sliding engagement permitting the sliding rail assembly to travel in a direction that is orthogonal to both the longitudinal axis of the sliding rail assembly and the longitudinal axis of the rail guide.

4. The apparatus of Claim 3, wherein,

the sliding rail block comprises a prescribed width W1 and a pair of opposing elongated rail slots comprising a front rail slot and a rear rail slot,

said rail slots are positioned such that their longitudinal axes lie along a plane that is orthogonal to the longitudinal axis of the sliding rail member,

the vertical axis of said channel is aligned with the longitudinal axis of the rail guide,

said channel comprises parallel vertical sidewalls, a pair of opposing elongated guide slots, and a prescribed width W2 that is slightly greater than width W1 , thus allowing the sliding rail block to be movably positioned within said channel,

said guide slots comprise a front guide slot that resides on one of the sidewalls of said channel, and a rear guide slot that resides on the other of the sidewalls of said channel,

said guide slots are positioned on their respective sidewalls such that the longitudinal axes of said guide slots lie along a plane that is orthogonal to the longitudinal axis of the rail guide,

the front rail slot and the front guide slot comprise a common shape that is slightly less than semi-circular and is sized to allow said front rail and guide slots to receive the front ball bearings in low-friction rolling engagement when the sliding rail block is positioned within said channel, and

the rear rail slot and the rear guide slot comprise a common shape that is slightly less than semi-circular and is sized to allow said rear rail and guide slots to receive the rear ball bearings in low-friction rolling engagement when the sliding rail block is positioned within said channel.

5. The apparatus of Claim 4, wherein the difference between widths W1 and W2 is greater than or equal to 1 .0 millimeters and less than or equal to 2.0 millimeters.

6. The apparatus of any preceding Claim, wherein,

the sliding rail assembly comprises a slide-limiting member comprising a post,

the rail guide comprises a rail travel distance limiting feature,

the bottom of the post protrudes a prescribed protrusion distance into said distance limiting feature after the slide mechanism has been assembled, and

the post and said distance limiting feature are cooperatively configured to limit said lateral shift to a prescribed maximum rail travel distance D1 .

7. The apparatus of any preceding Claim, wherein upon said lateral shift the slide mechanism generates a tactile sensation and a discernible sound.

8. The apparatus of any preceding Claim, wherein,

the sliding rail assembly comprises a sliding rail member the lower portion of which comprises a sliding rail block comprising a front rail slot and a rear rail slot,

the upper portion of the rail guide comprises a guide block the upper portion of which comprises a linear guide channel comprising a front guide slot and a rear guide slot, and

the sliding rail member further comprises a ball bearing retainer feature that is adapted to retain the front ball bearings in-between the front rail slot and the front guide slot when the sliding rail block is positioned within said channel, and also retain the rear ball bearings in-between the rear rail slot and the rear guide slot when the sliding rail block is positioned within said channel, regardless of how the implement is swung.

9. The apparatus of Claim 8, wherein,

the front and rear rail slots are positioned such that their longitudinal axes lie along a plane that is orthogonal to the longitudinal axis of the sliding rail member,

the ball bearing retainer feature comprises a pair of front ball bearing retainer members and a pair of rear ball bearing retainer members,

each of said retainer members comprises a post and a head that is rigidly disposed onto one end of the post,

the sliding rail block further comprises a pair of front retainer member cavities and a pair of rear retainer member cavities,

the longitudinal axis of each of the front and rear retainer member cavities lies along said plane,

each of the front and rear retainer member cavities comprises a size and shape that are adapted to allow the post of a given one of said retainer members to be fully and securely inserted into said cavity such that the head of said retainer member contacts either the left side or the right side of the sliding rail block, and

the head of each of said retainer members comprises a radial size that is selected to allow said head to cover a prescribed portion of a given one of the ends of a given one of said rail slots, said portion being large enough to prevent the front and rear ball bearings from falling out of the slide mechanism after it has been assembled, said portion being small enough to allow said lateral shift.

10. The apparatus of any preceding Claim, wherein the coaxial position comprises a rightmost position and said lateral shift occurs in a leftward direction from the rightmost position.

11. The apparatus of any one of Claims 1 to 9, wherein the coaxial position comprises a central position, said lateral shift occurs in a leftward direction when the implement is swung leftward, and said lateral shift occurs in a rightward direction when the implement is swung rightward.

12. The apparatus of any preceding Claim, wherein the sports-related implement is a golf club, and the lateral shift is 0.65 millimeters.

13. The apparatus of any one of Claims 1 to 11, wherein the sports-related implement is a baseball bat, and the lateral shift is 3.5 millimeters.

14. The apparatus of any one of Claims 1 to 11, wherein the sports-related implement is a tennis racket, and the lateral shift is 3.0 millimeters.