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(54) **DOUBLE-GRIP GOLF PUTTER**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

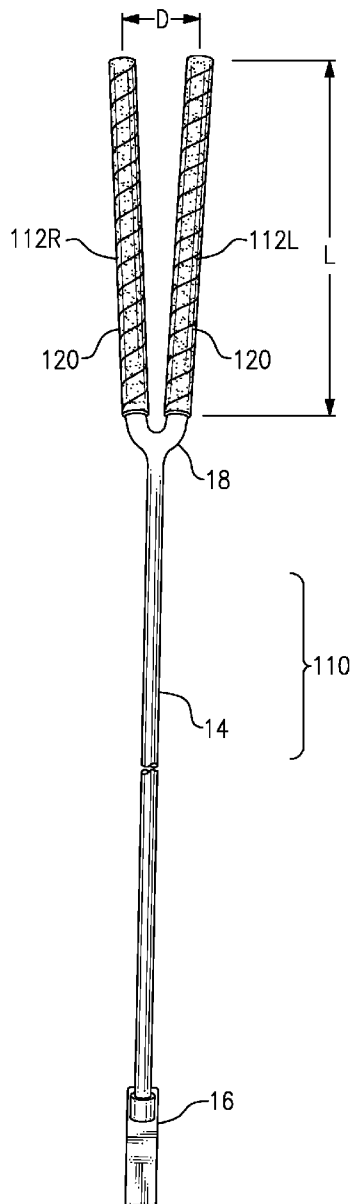
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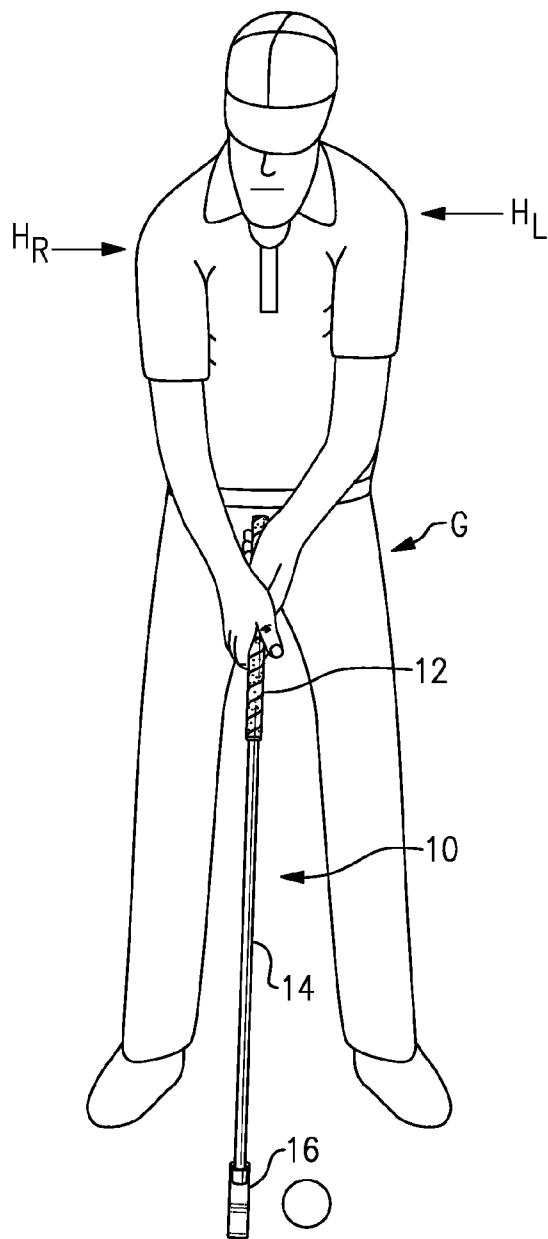
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A dual grip putter has a pair of grip members rising from the upper end of the putter shaft, forming a Vee at an angle of about fifteen to eighteen degrees, with an open space between the two grip members. Upper ends of the grip members are spaced about 2½ inches apart. This arrangement positions the golfer's hands so that his or her forearms are aligned with the upper arms, with elbows generally straight, and so that the shoulders are both at an even height.

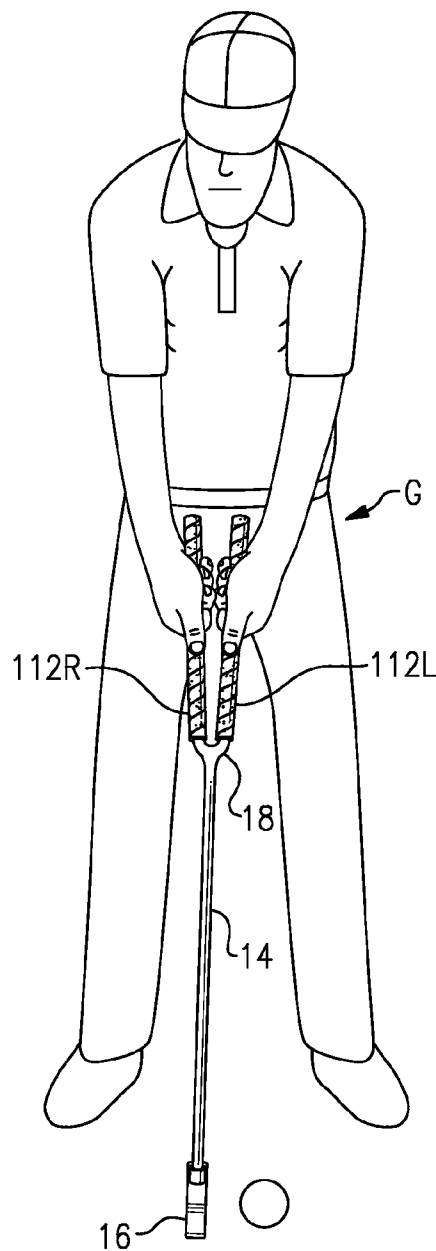
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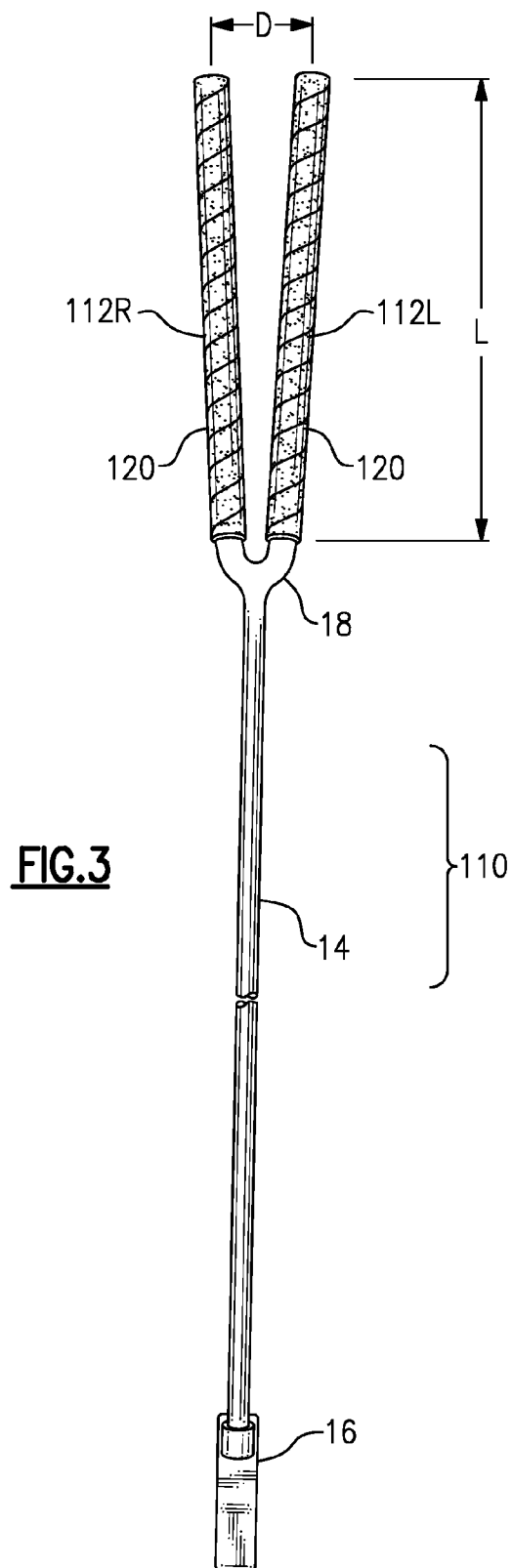




**FIG. 1**  
Prior Art



**FIG. 2**



## DOUBLE-GRIP GOLF PUTTER

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] This invention relates to golfing equipment, and is more specifically directed to golf putter, i.e., golf clubs that are intended for use on a putting green to strike a golf ball precisely and propel it towards the golf hole on the green. The invention is more particularly concerned with a golf putter with an improved handle or grip portion at the upper end of the putter shaft, designed to position the golfer in a natural, even, and symmetrical stance, and to afford greater control and accuracy in putting the ball towards the hole.

[0002] The traditional single-grip putter has the grip extending straight at the upper end of the shaft and along the axis of the shaft. The lower end of the shaft may have a gooseneck just above the hosel of the putter head, or the shaft may be straight as it enters the hosel, but the upper part of the shaft is straight and defines the axis of the putter. The grip has a wrap of natural or synthetic leather, or a cover of a synthetic material.

[0003] For the traditional grip position for a putter, the golfer places one hand above the other on the grip. For a right handed golfer, the left hand is above the right hand on the grip. This grip creates an asymmetrical positioning of the golfer's arms and shoulders, and thus affects the player's posture, resulting in the left shoulder being higher than the right shoulder (for a right handed golfer). Also this positions the player with his or her forearms extended outwards, and with the elbows bent. Many golfers experience difficulty in making accurate putts.

[0004] Some golfers use a reverse grip or cross-hand grip, i.e., with the left hand below the right hand for a right-handed golfer. This improves the putting accuracy for a small minority of golfers, and is not a perfect solution. There are also special putter grips, such as "claw grips" and long-shaft putters, all involving a single grip at the end of the single shaft.

[0005] An alternative two-hand grip technique is sometimes used, with one hand placed directly on the grip of the putter (usually the left hand for a right handed player), with the other hand (e.g., the right hand) wrapped over the first hand so the two hands are at the same height on the club. This has resulted in improved putting performance for some players, as the arms and shoulders are positioned more-or-less symmetrically. However, because one hand is wrapped around the other hand, the player's hands are not identically positioned. Also, many golfers have found this grip technique to be a difficult one to learn.

[0006] Some two-grip putters and double-grip clubs have been proposed in the past. A wishbone-handled putter is described in U.S. Pat. No. 6,616,545, with left and right grips that are spaced apart by about the width of the golfer's shoulders. Another putter with a loop handle with left and right grips and with a cross bar at its top portion is discussed in U.S. Pat. No. 5,868,631.

[0007] A putter that has a fan-shaped or wedge-shaped unitary grip is discussed in U.S. Pat. No. 6,875,125. That grip has a center member that fits over the top end of the putter shaft, and left and right members that extend laterally from the center member. The center member prevents the golfer's fingers from entering between the left and right members, so most golfers cannot obtain a comfortable, natural grip position with this arrangement.

[0008] Thus, to date there has been no truly effective technique or grip arrangement that places the average golfer in a comfortable, symmetrical stance on the green and helps the golfer increase putting accuracy.

### OBJECTS AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] Accordingly, it is an object of this invention to provide a putting technique, and an improved putter, which avoid the drawbacks of the prior art.

[0010] It is a more specific object to provide a double-grip putter that places the golfer's hands, arms and shoulders at an optimum posture for putting, and facilitates accurate, consistent putting.

[0011] In accordance with an aspect of this invention, the putter has an elongated shaft with a shaft axis; a putter head at the lower end of the shaft, with a putting face to left or right side and a double grip arrangement formed at an upper end of the shaft. In the double grip arrangement a left grip member and a right grip member are disposed on left and right sides of the shaft axis, respectively, and an open space is defined between the two grip members. A crotch joins the lower ends of the grip members to the upper end of the shaft. The left and right grip members angle out from said crotch to form a V shape, and the upper ends of the left and right grip members are spaced apart a distance of substantially two to three inches. Favorably, the grip member ends have a center to center spacing of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

[0012] The golfer grasps the left and right grip members with his or her left and right hands. The golfer holds the putter in a symmetrical fashion, with fingers of the golfer's two hands in contact or near contact with each other, and with the golfer's shoulders positioned at even height over the putting green. The golfer's forearms are aligned with the upper arms, with the elbows comparatively straight.

[0013] In one embodiment, the crotch takes the form a U-shaped member of tubing similar to that of the shaft, and being joined to the upper end of the shaft. The left and right grip members form a Vee with an angle of about  $15^\circ$  to  $18^\circ$ .

[0014] In some putters, the shaft may be bent, i.e., the shaft may have an offset or gooseneck at the lower end just above the hosel of the putter head. In that case, the axis is defined by the upper part of the shaft.

[0015] Also, while the invention is shown and described here in connection with a putter for right-handed players, the same principles would also apply to a putter for a left-handed player.

[0016] The above and many other objects, features, and advantages of this invention will become apparent to persons skilled in the art from the ensuing description of a preferred embodiment, which is to be read in conjunction with the accompanying Drawing.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

[0017] FIG. 1 is a perspective front view of a golfer holding a conventional putter, with a grip according to the prior art.

[0018] FIG. 2 is front view of a golfer holding a club according to one embodiment of the invention.

[0019] FIG. 3 is a front elevation of the putter of this embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0020] With reference to the Drawing, and initially to FIG. 1, a golfer G is shown holding a conventional putter 10 having a conventional single grip 12 at the upper end of a putter shaft 14, and with a putter head 16 at the lower end of the shaft. Here, the golfer G is shown in a right-hand putting position, standing with the club head 16 to the golfer's right of the ball. The golfer G has his hands on the club's grip 12, with the left hand above and the right hand further down on the grip. With this gripping technique, the golfer's forearms are angled out from the shaft of the putter, and the golfer's elbows are bent. More significantly, with the right hand further down the grip of the club, the golfer's posture has his right shoulder at a level H<sub>R</sub> that is somewhat below the level H<sub>L</sub> of his left shoulder, as indicated by arrows in FIG. 1. This unevenness of stance makes it difficult for many golfers to control the putter so that the ball consistently travels as intended towards the hole.

[0021] The improvement of the present invention is evident from an inspection of FIG. 2. Here, the golfer G is using a putter 110 that has a double grip, with a left grip member 112L and a right grip 112R that are joined at their lower ends to a somewhat U-shaped crotch 18 that is affixed to the top of the putter shaft 14. The shaft 14 and head 16 can be of any suitable design, depending on the golfer's preference.

[0022] The golfer G is here shown achieving an even and symmetrical stance, with the golfer's hands at the same elevational position on the left and right grip members 112L and 112R, respectively. The grip members are of a generally standard length, i.e., about twelve inches, and these angle out (about fifteen to eighteen degrees) from the crotch in a V shape. As seen, the golfer G grasps the two grip members so that his thumbs are generally on the forward side, the palms to the outside and the fingers curving into the open space between the two grip members. The space is such that the golfer can have the fingers of his two hands touching or nearly in contact with one another. The golfer can place his hands slightly higher or lower on the grip members 112L, 112R than what is shown here. In FIG. 2, the golfer G has his forearms positioned more or less in line with his upper arms, and with the elbows straight or nearly straight. Also, this posture places the golfer's shoulders both at the same level above the putting green. The evenness of stance that can be accomplished with the improved putter lets the golfer achieve a smoother and more consistent putting motion, and will improve the golfer's putting accuracy, in most cases.

[0023] Details of the putter 110 of this embodiment are shown in FIG. 3. In this embodiment, the shaft 14 is straight, but in some alternative embodiments, there may be a curve or gooseneck just above where the shaft enters the hosel of the putter head 16.

[0024] The two grip members 112L and 112R extend generally upwards from the crotch 18, and angle outward to left

and right from the club axis at a small angle, forming a Vee. Here the Vee has an interior angle of about fifteen to eighteen degrees. The grip members are shown as each having a wrapping or covering 120, which increases the thickness and provides some cushioning to facilitate grasping with the hands.

[0025] The grip members 112L and 112R have a length L that is typically about twelve inches. The upper ends of the grip members are space apart, with a center to center spacing distance D, which can be about two and a half to three inches, favorably about two and three-quarters inches. The space inside the Vee between the two grip members is open and unobstructed.

[0026] The shaft as well as the crotch and grip members may be a tubular steel material, which can be hollow or may be filled, e.g., with a short length of steel rod, depending upon the fabrication technique.

[0027] Many other modifications and variations of this putter are possible which would not depart from the scope and spirit of this invention, as defined in the appended claims.

What I claim is:

1. A putter for use by a golfer on a golf putting green in putting a golf ball towards a hole on the green, comprising an elongated shaft having a shaft axis; a putter head at a lower end of said shaft with a putting face to one or the other of left and right sides of the shaft axis; and a double grip arrangement formed at an upper end of the shaft, the double grip arrangement including:

- a left grip member and a right grip member that are disposed on left and right sides of the shaft axis, respectively, with an open space defined therebetween;
- a crotch joining lower ends of said left and right grip members to the upper end of said shaft;
- the left and right grip members angling out from said crotch to form a V shape, and wherein upper ends of said left and right grip members are spaced apart a distance of substantially two to three inches;
- such that the golfer may grasp the left and right grip members with his or her left and right hands in a symmetrical fashion with fingers of the golfer's two hands in contact or near contact with each other, and with the golfer's shoulders positioned at even height over the putting green.

2. The putter of claim 1, wherein the left and right grip members are substantially twelve inches long, and the upper ends thereof have centers spaced apart by substantially 2½ inches.

3. The putter of claim 1, wherein said crotch includes a U-shaped member joined to the upper end of said shaft.

4. The putter of claim 1, wherein said left and right grip members form an angle of about 15° to 18°.

5. The putter of claim 1, wherein said left and right grip members each have a grip wrap extending from said crotch to the upper end of the respective grip member.

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