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TO: ALL MANUFACTURERS

GROOVE GEOMETRY

Introduction

Recent submissions, patent literature and communications from manufacturers have led The R&A to believe that permissible groove geometries should be more clearly defined to prevent the introduction of cross-sections or features that might circumvent the intent of the new groove specifications effective 1 January 2010. The purpose of this document is to provide clarification of The R&A's interpretation of acceptable groove geometries and to propose some additional requirements.

Current Interpretations of 2010 Groove Specifications

The groove starts where there is a significant departure from the plane of the face and this is joined to the wall of the groove via the edge. The wall continues to the base of the groove.

The edge must be substantially in the form of a round (having an effective radius of not less than 0.010", as determined by the two circles method, and not greater than 0.020"), which comprises an arc to which the groove wall and the land are tangential. As such, the ends of the "round" coincide with the ends of the edge - one end marking the joint to the land and one end marking the start of the groove wall. For the avoidance of doubt, this means that groove edges must be a convex curve and must not include serrations, gear teeth or other similar features.

The R&A reserves the right to define the extent of the groove edge. Edge configurations, including (but not limited to) chamfers, fillets, notches, etc. do not conform to the Rules since they are not in the form of a round. An allowance may be made for edge regions not strictly fulfilling this requirement as a result of production variations, but any such variations must be minimal and not part of the club's intended design.

Proposed Additional Requirements

The R&A proposes that the following two additional requirements are introduced to define with greater precision permissible groove geometries:

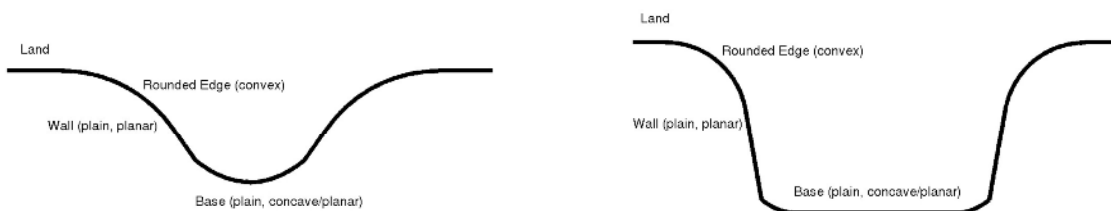


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- (i) The wall of the groove must be substantially “plain” and “planar”. This would disallow features such as bends, indentations in or protrusions from the wall.
- (ii) The base of the groove must also be substantially “plain” and join the two opposing walls of the groove using a concave shape or a plane.



Illustrative Examples of Permissible Grooves

Comments

Manufacturers are invited to submit their comments on this proposal as soon as possible and no later than 31 August 2009. As the intent of the new Rule is well known and since the great majority of clubs being submitted for evaluation already meet these additional requirements, The R&A does not consider this to be a substantive addition to the new specifications scheduled to be introduced from 1 January 2010. Therefore, if adopted, these additional requirements would be effective from the same date.

If you have any questions that require immediate assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

DAVID RICKMAN

Director of Rules and Equipment Standards