



Tyler Stuart, John Krosky and Matt Mockus (left to right) co-invented Golfkicks.

Golfers Get Help for Their Soles

MAN'S INVENTION TURNS SNEAKERS INTO CLEATED GOLF SHOES **BY EDITH G. TOLCHIN**

I LOVE watching “Shark Tank.” After all, since 1997 I’ve been working with inventors who are trying to become successful entrepreneurs, so what’s not to like?

Here’s a versatile sports apparel accessories invention recently featured on the show that was designed for golfers who would rather not buy those hokey cleated golf shoes. Golfers can modify a favorite pair of rubber-soled shoes or sneakers at home with Golfkicks.

I spoke with Tyler Stuart, who co-invented Golfkicks with Matt Mockus and John Krosky.

Edith G. Tolchin (EGT): Tell us how this idea came about.

Tyler Stuart (TS): We noticed that most golf shoe options were boring, except for some very expensive and limited releases that Nike-Jordan were doing.

We started talking to people at golf courses, and the consensus was everyone had a golf shoe complaint on some level—whether it was fashion, comfort, orthopedic needs, size, and so on. So why not let them add golf traction to their street shoes?

EGT: Tell us about the three people at the helm.

TS: Founders are: Matt Mockus, expert garage tinkerer and customer service guru (and Ty’s buddy from growing up in Iowa); sales, finance and 50-handicapper John Krosky, who we’ve known forever through the digital media business; and the creator of the Sushi Roll® rollable tackle box by Fishpond USA, Tyler Stuart. We all live within a mile of each other in Denver

and have been hitting the muni golf courses together for years.

EGT: From what materials are Golfkicks made?

TS: Our latest version (fourth generation) is a metal shoe anchor that’s shaped like an auger you’d use to drill your hole for ice fishing. This anchors the golf cleat into your rubber sole. Then, we over-mold it with a hard rubber cleat that feels great on the course or even in the grocery store after your round.

EGT: Where are you manufacturing? Any obstacles you may have encountered in bringing the product to market?

TS: We have an exceptional design partner in Newport Beach, California, called *ANDesign*. They help orchestrate design and manufacturing and we have a local fulfillment partner in Denver, so it’s a combo of California, overseas, and Colorado.

EGT: Were you satisfied with your experience on “Shark Tank”?

TS: We had an absolute blast with the “Shark Tank” folks. They saw us on Instagram, reached out (we thought it was a prank call), and we kept the whole thing lighthearted and fun—which is reflective of the idea—so we could just be ourselves.

They have a potent combination of business savvy and entertainment in their DNA, so we learned a ton while being put on the map as a brand and product. You can see us on Season 11, Episode 5.

EGT: Are Golfkicks safety tested? Also, if a consumer applies them incorrectly, what disclaimers do you include in the packaging?

TS: My 10-year-old nephew, Johnny, can properly mount up a pair of shoes in five minutes with a power drill, but he's pretty handy.

Golfkicks add phenomenal traction for navigating a golf course and hitting a golf ball. Millions of people play golf in street shoes or "spikeless" golf shoes, and properly mounted Golfkicks grip much better than both. We've sold tens of thousands of Traction Kits, so we hope we make the golf course a safer place.

Mounting Golfkicks is a do-it-yourself project, and the combinations of chosen sneakers and customer skill levels are infinite. So, we do our best to provide guidance on our website through text, photos and videos. We encourage creativity, have a disclaimer to keep the lawyers happy, and

have personally guided hundreds of customers through installation when they need help.

EGT: How are Golfkicks sold?

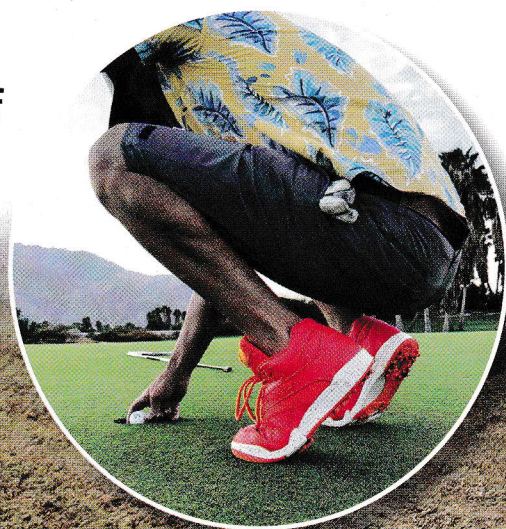
TS: We sell Golfkicks Traction Kits on Golfkicks.com, recently launched on Amazon Prime, and are experimenting with like-minded retailers. So far, we've partnered up with Malbon Golf in Los Angeles and South Korea because we like their style; Manor Phoenix, which is more of a skate and sneakerhead shop than golf shop; and Clubhouse Golf Supply in Japan. All these people and places have a street-skate-surf vibe and are big on making golf more accessible.

EGT: Please share your patent process.

TS: Ty had done this once for his consumer product for fly fishing, the Sushi Roll. This helped, and we did the same thing for Golfkicks—a napkin

Golfers can modify a favorite pair of rubber-soled shoes or sneakers at home with Golfkicks.

"Everyone had a golf shoe complaint on some level ... so why not let them add golf traction to their street shoes?" —TYLER STUART





sketch provisional patent— and then we got real IP attorneys to help do it right on the non-provisional patent. Most existing patents around footwear traction involve an attachment system on the shoe-side, and ours must work on almost any sole.

EGT: How many different styles and colors do you feature, and what is the pricing?

TS: Seven colors, one style, and we're working on a multi-sport version to expand beyond golf. There are 20 spikes in a Traction Kit, a few ballmarkers, a Sharpie to map out your traction, an install-driver tool and a hex insert bit in case you want to use a drill. All of this for the low price of \$32!

Each Traction Kit comes with 20 spikes, a few ballmarkers, a Sharpie, an install-driver tool and a hex insert bit.

EGT: Are you adding new products to your line?

TS: Yes. We're working on some new traction shapes for field sports, hiking, trail running, military, gardening, and anywhere you might want extra grip.

EGT: Do you have any insights about product development to share?

TS: Go with your gut and heart in the beginning, and the second you start hearing feedback from potential and real customers, LISTEN! 🗣️

Details: Golfkicks.com

Books by **Eddie Tolchin** (egt@edietolchin.com) include "Fanny on Fire" (fannyonfire.com) and "Secrets of Successful Inventing." She has written for *Inventors Digest* since 2000. Eddie has owned EGT Global Trading since 1997, assisting inventors with product safety issues and China manufacturing.



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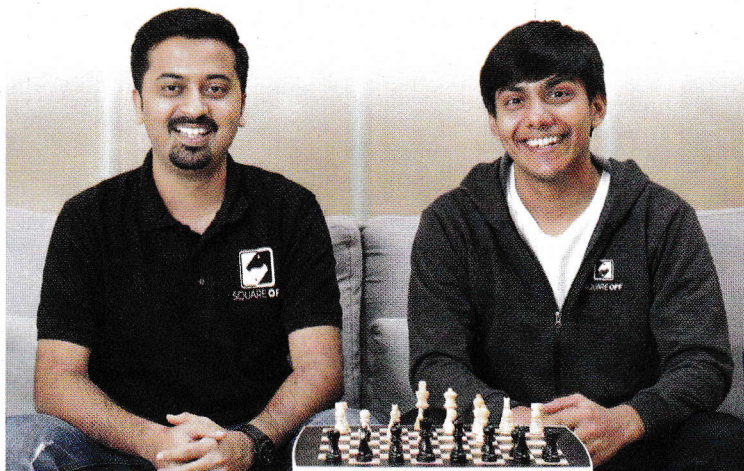
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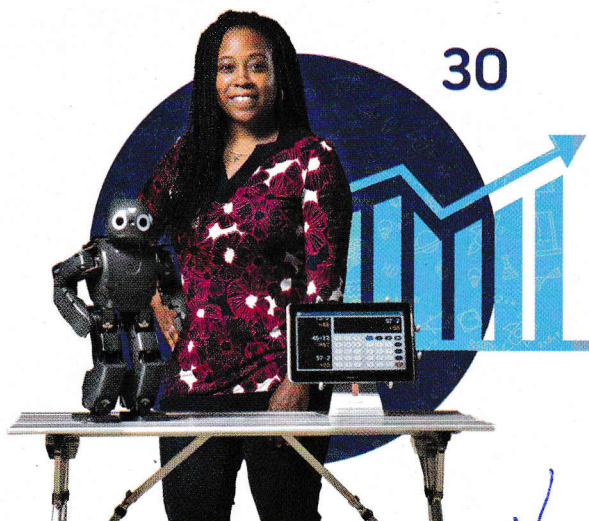
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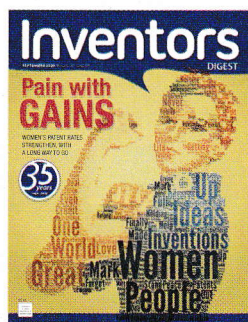
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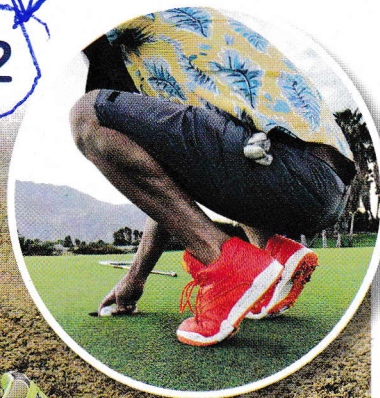


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