

# Drag Coefficients of Different Dimple Patterns

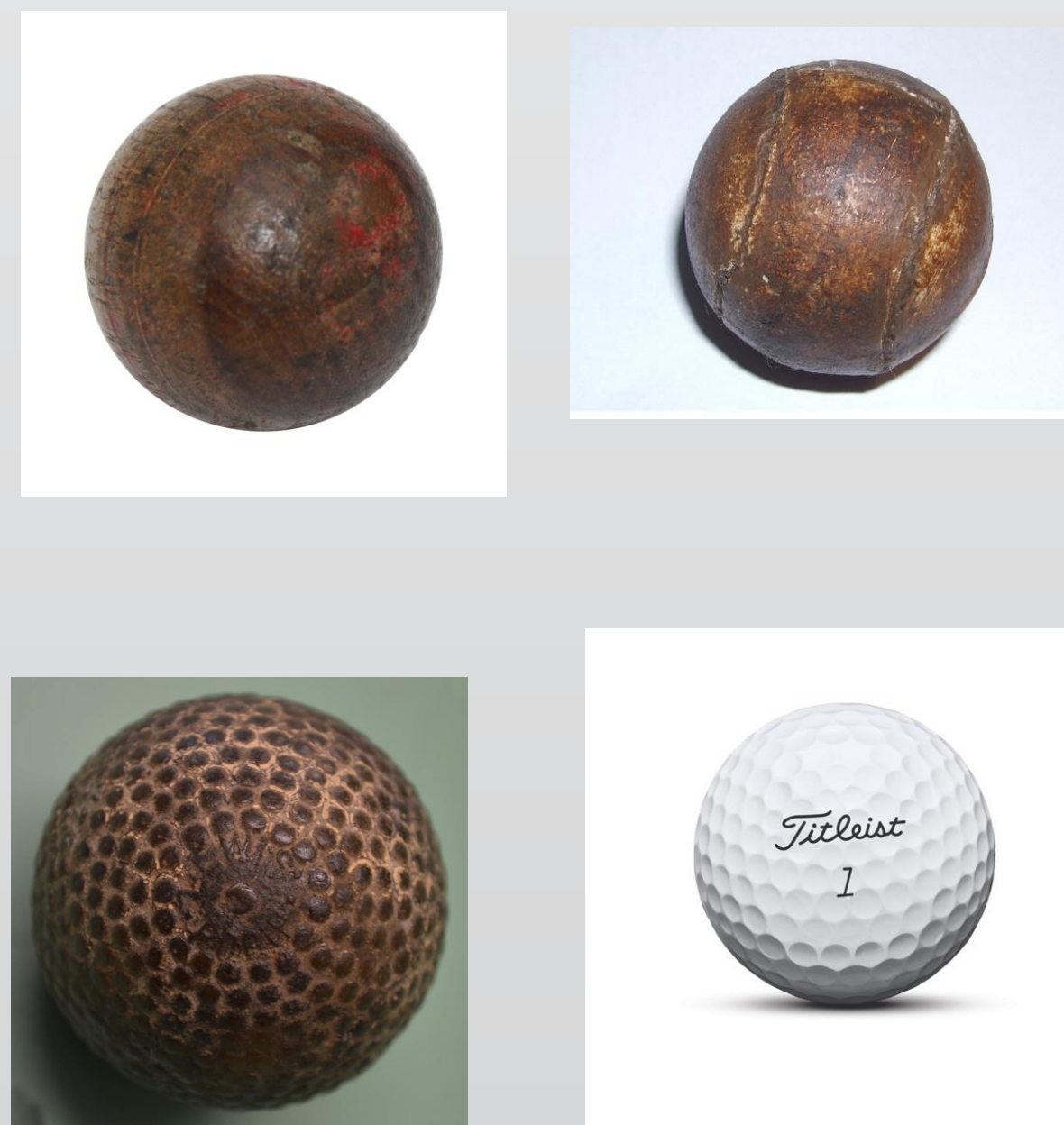
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## Introduction

During ball flight, drag opposes the motion of the ball. To reduce drag, golf ball manufacturers have added dimples. Many designs exist with varying dimple shapes, sizes, and distribution patterns. The drag coefficient of several brands were found and compared to one another.

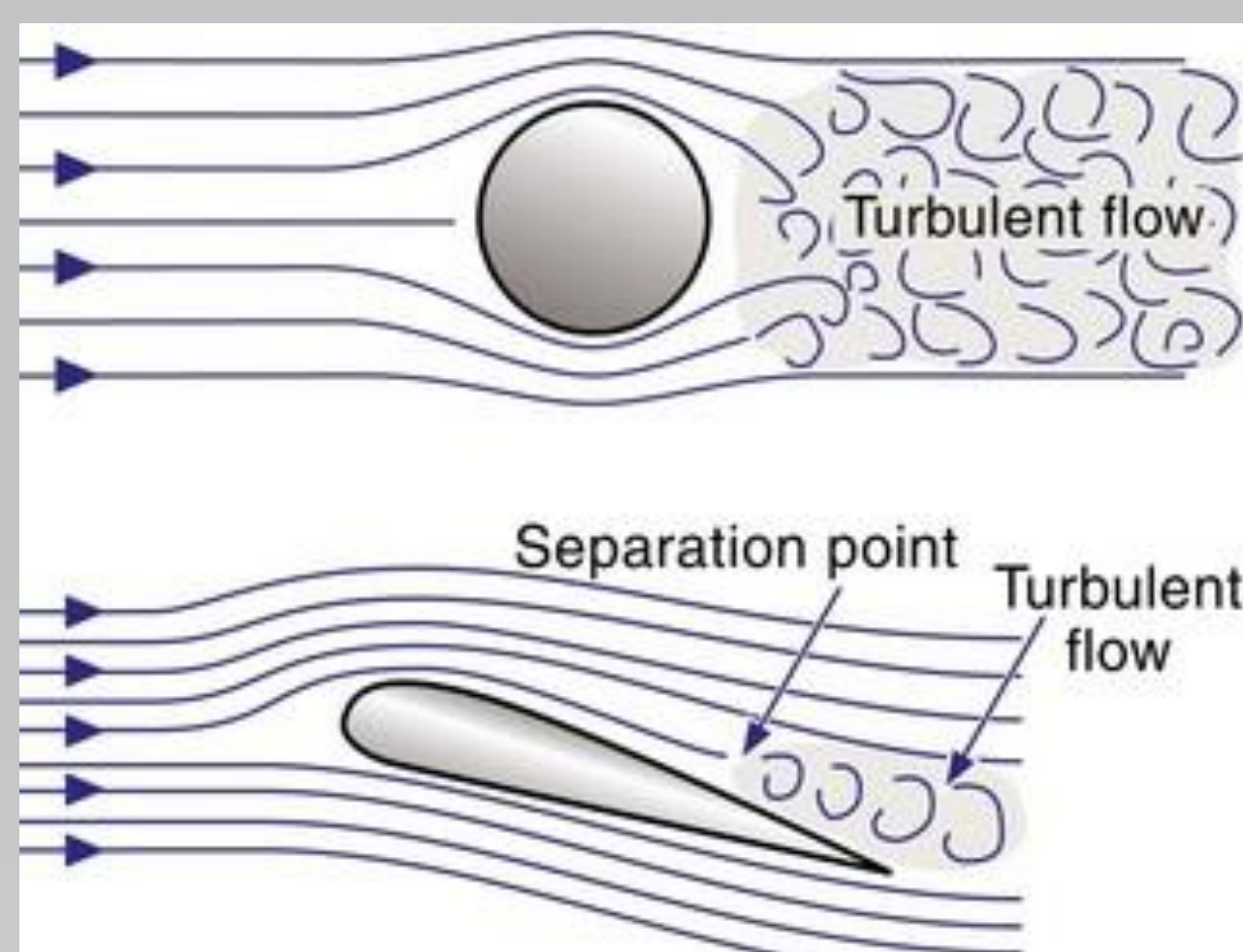
- Early golf balls were wooden spheres
- Golfers noticed that nicked up balls flew further and straighter
- Dimples then introduced to Guttie ball
- All modern golf balls contain dimples



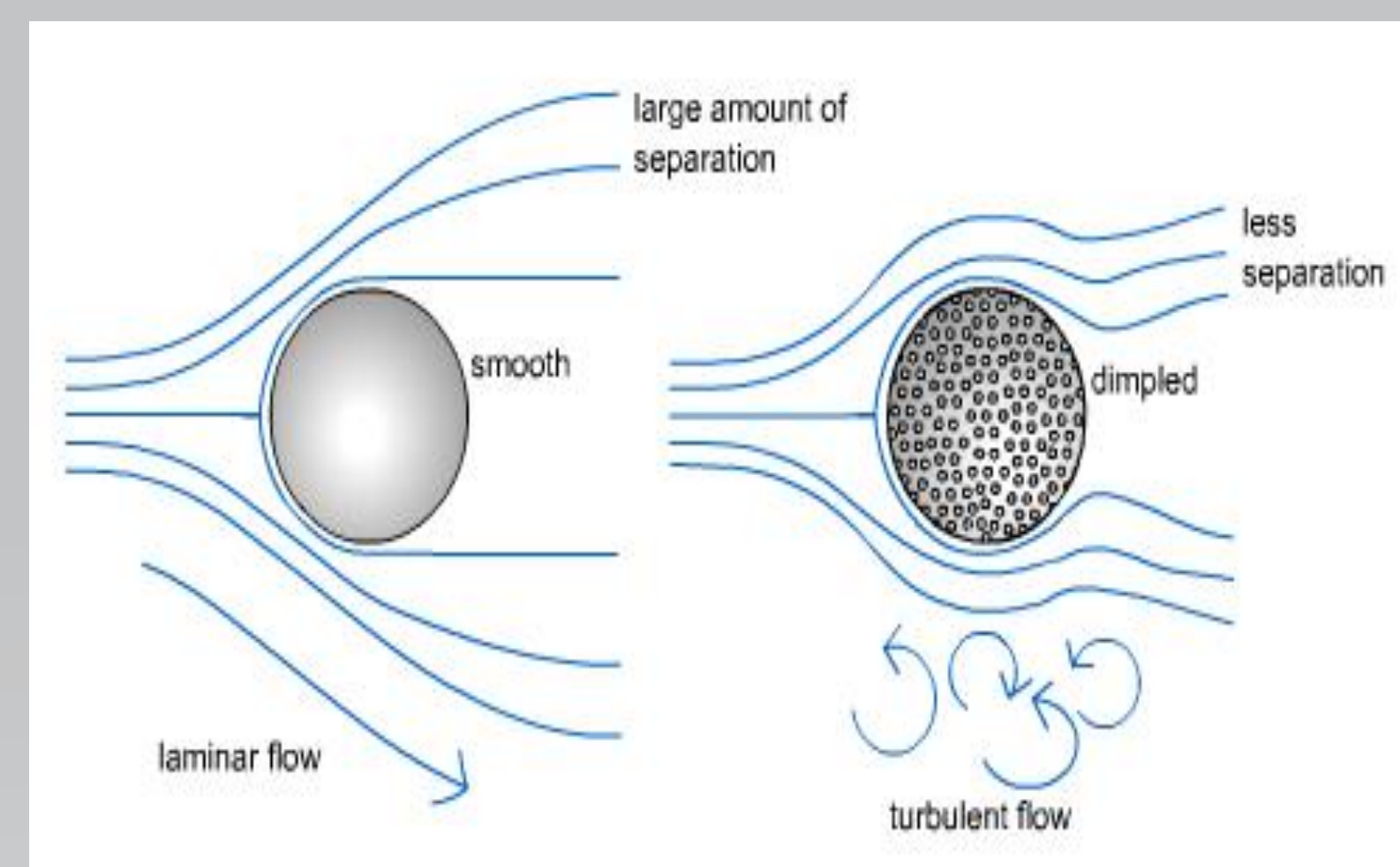
**Figure 1.** Evolution of golf balls  
Top Left: Wooden Ball  
Top Right: Featherie  
Bottom Left: Guttie  
Bottom Right: Titleist ProV1

## Drag Reduction By Dimples

- Two types of flow in fluid dynamics
  - Laminar
  - Turbulent
- Drag
  - Dimples decrease the separation point of fluid from the ball
  - Smaller separation point results in a smaller drag wake.
- Lift
  - Spin introduces an imbalance in pressure
  - Forces higher pressure to the bottom of the golf ball causing lift

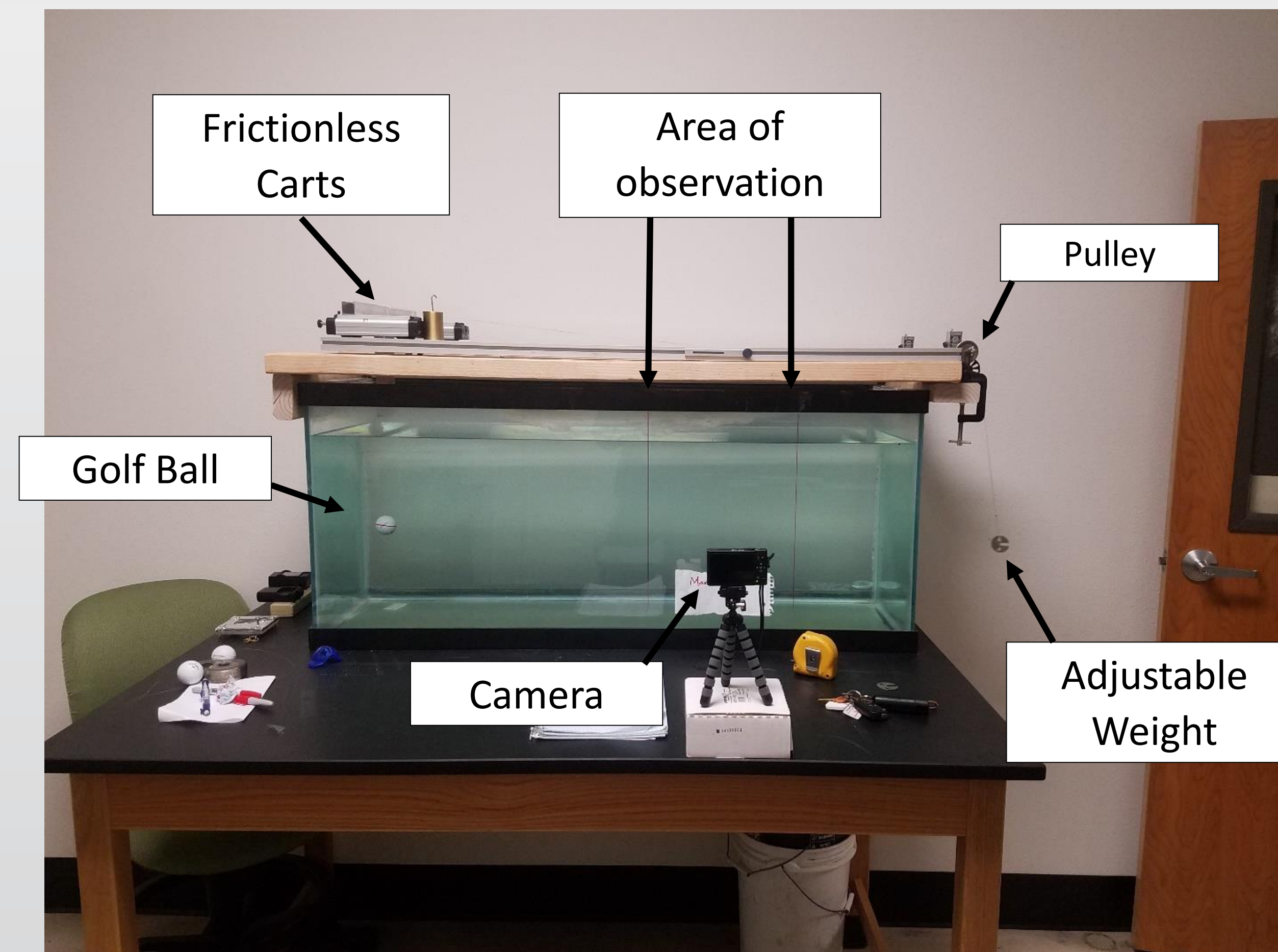


**Figure 2.** Schematic of laminar flow versus turbulent flow.



**Figure 3.** Flow of fluid around a smooth sphere compared to dimpled sphere.

## Experiment



**Figure 3.** Photo of Experimental set up

- Water tank allowed low velocity measurements
- Simple Pendulum allowed forces to be calculated
- Motion of golf ball analyzed using Tracker
- Varying masses were used to adjust terminal velocity

## Conclusions

The samples shown in the analysis portion clearly illustrate a strong agreement between data and trendline. It was expected that the Taylormade golf ball would have the highest drag coefficient as it has a traditional pattern; while other designs are presumably improvements on that one. However, the data show it has the lowest drag coefficient. Future work should be to study the role lift plays in total distance the ball travels. Numerical models would be useful in future endeavors towards determining the effect lift has, as well as including spin in experimental procedure.

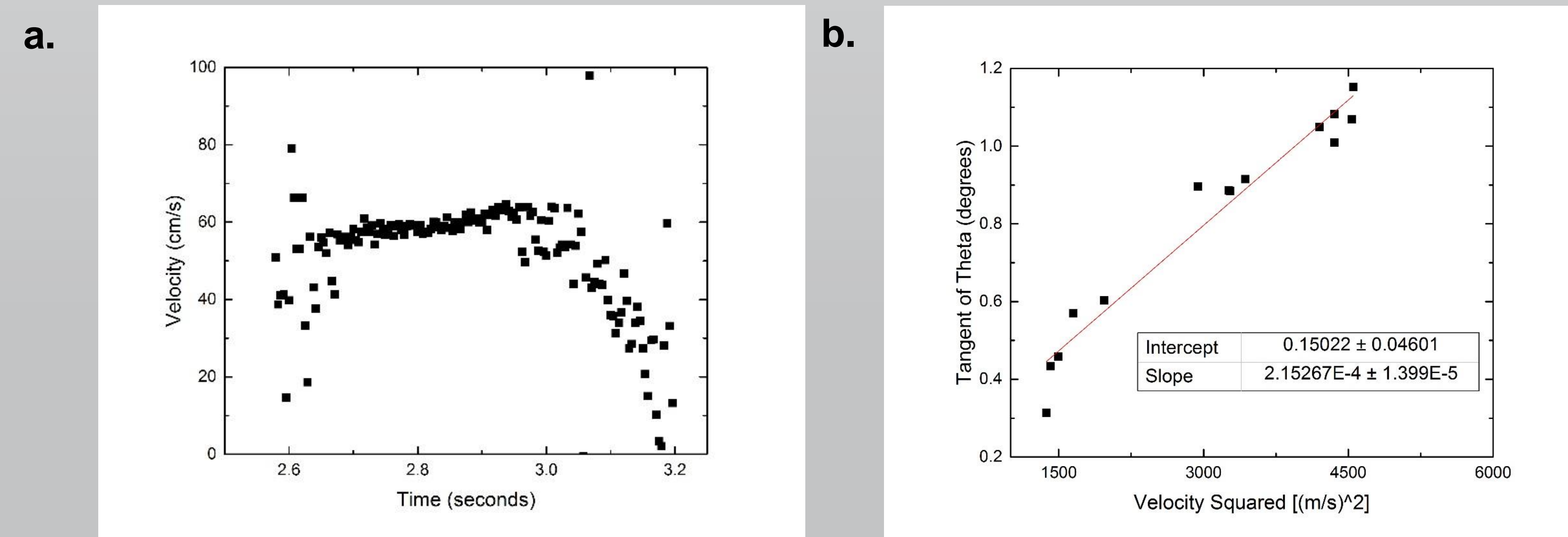
## Acknowledgements

This project was supported by the Linfield College Physics Department.

## References

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## Analysis



Calculation of Drag Coefficients

$$F_d = \frac{C_d \rho A v^2}{2} \quad F_d = \tan\theta (mg - F_B)$$

$$C_d = \frac{2(mg - F_B)}{\rho A} \cdot \frac{\tan\theta}{v^2}$$

- $\rho$  = density of the water
- $A$  = cross sectional area of ball

**Table 1.** Results of experiment

Golf Ball	Drag Coefficient
Bridgestone B330-RX	0.152
Callaway TourHex	0.143
Maxfli Tour Distance	0.149
Nike PD Long	0.173
Taylormade Penta	0.125

**Figure 5.** Example of results  
a. Plot of  $v$  vs. time. Data for analysis was taken between 2.7 seconds and 2.9 seconds  
b. Plot of  $v^2$  vs.  $\tan\theta$  for Bridgestone golf ball  
c. Free-Body diagram of simple pendulum