

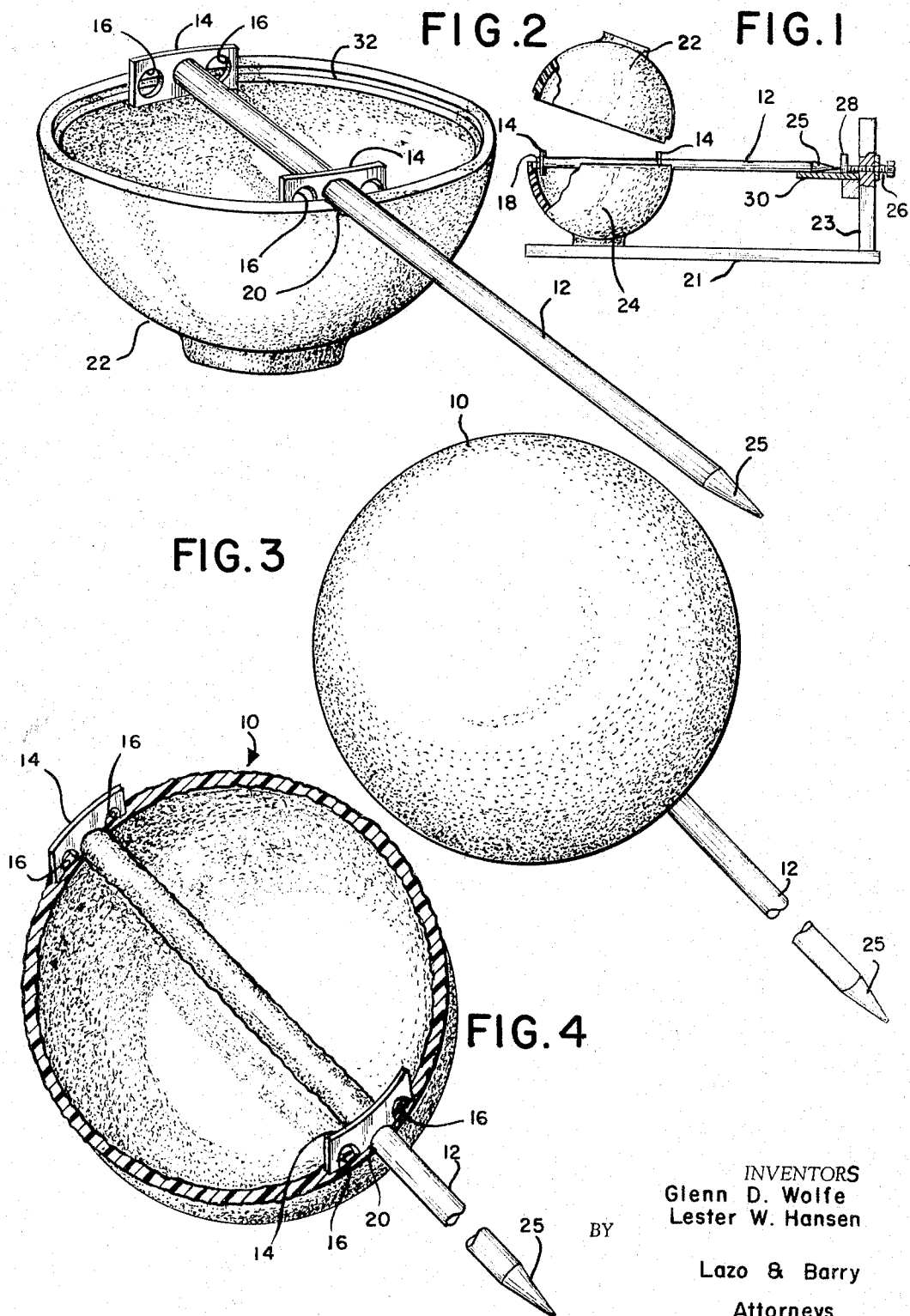
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TEE BALL MARKER

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TEE BALL MARKER

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This invention relates to markers which are used on driving tees on golf courses, more specifically known as tee ball markers.

As is well known, the driving tee on a golf course is the small area on the fairway where play is commenced on each hole. Each day a pair of markers are placed on the driving tee indicating the point at which the players should tee off and these markers are moved daily or more often depending on the number of players using the course. The markers are moved so that the grass on the tee does not become trampled as a result of the players teeing off at the indicated area. These markers were originally made of wood and due to variations in weather had a limited life. Efforts to increase the life of such markers have been directed toward the use of solid plastic markers that are unaffected by weather but are comparatively expensive. One of the problems encountered in making this type of marker has been that of mounting the ball on the stake. The marker has had a tendency to become loose in the ball as a result of the frequent applications of force to the ball in placing it in the ground and removing it from the ground.

The primary object of this invention is to provide a tee ball marker that is low in cost and simple to manufacture.

Another object of this invention is to provide a tee ball marker for a driving tee that can withstand considerable pounding without any material change in its physical dimensions.

A further object of this invention is to provide a tee ball marker that is unaffected by weather conditions.

A still further object of the present invention is to provide a tee ball marker which has an integral ball and stake arrangement making it virtually impossible to separate them.

These objects are accomplished by molding a hollow plastic ball on a mild steel stake so that it is rigidly secured to the stake. A rectangular plate is secured close to one end of the stake and a second plate is secured to the stake a predetermined distance from the first plate. The distance between the plates is greater than the inside diameter of the ball and less than the outside diameter of the ball so that the plates will be imbedded or fused within the walls of the ball when the ball is molded thereon. To insure that the plates are completely imbedded within the walls of the ball they are curved to the curvature of the outside surface of the ball prior to being secured to the stake. A pair of holes are also provided in the plates which allow the plastic material of the ball to flow through the plate so that the plates are securely imbedded in the wall of the ball. The ball can be made of any of the known plastisol materials which are available for hollow molding procedures.

Other objects and advantages will become more readily apparent from the following detailed description when read in connection with the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 shows the stake positioned within the bottom half of the mold.

FIG. 2 is a side view of the mold with the cover shown open.

FIG. 3 shows the completed tee ball.

FIG. 4 shows a cut-away view of the interior of the ball.

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Referring more particularly to the drawings, the tee ball marker consists of a hollow plastic ball 10 having a mild steel stake 12 securely mounted therein. The stake is retained in the ball by a pair of rectangular plates 14 which are rigidly secured to the stake. One of the plates is located close to end 18 of the stake and the other plate is located a predetermined distance a from the first plate. The distance a is made less than the outside diameter of the ball and greater than the inside diameter of the ball so that the plates will be imbedded or fused into the wall of the ball. Both of the plates are curved to the curvature of the wall of the intended ball prior to being mounted on the stake. This is to insure that the plates are completely imbedded therein.

The tee ball is made in a mold (FIG. 4) having an upper section 22 and a lower section 24. The lower section is rigidly mounted on a base 21 and has a groove 20 in its rim for positioning the stake 12 in the mold. A vertical support member 23 is secured to the other end of the base and has an adjusting screw 26 threadably mounted in its upper end, with plate 28 mounted on its inner end. A support bracket 30 is mounted on the vertical member to hold the pointed end 25 of the stake when it is placed in the mold. The pointed end of the stake is placed against plate 28 and by turning the adjusting screw will determine the position of the other end of the stake with respect to the inner wall of the mold. Once the stake has been properly located in the mold it is locked in position by clamping the upper section of the mold onto the bottom sections. An aligning groove 32 is provided around the inner surface of the lower section of the mold to properly align the upper section in position and a groove is cut in the rim of the upper section to engage the shaft.

The process for making a tee ball is as follows. The plates are secured to the stake at the proper positions. The stake is then placed in the groove in the lower section of the mold with the pointed end abutting and resting on bracket 30. For a four-inch diameter ball, three and one-half ounces of plastisol material, for example Lakeside Plastic No. 711, is placed in the lower section of the mold. The upper section of the mold is then placed on the lower section and clamped in position. The mold is placed in an oven on a two directional rotating stand so that it is rotated at the same speed in two different directions. The oven temperature is maintained in the range of 450° to 500° F. and the mold is rotated in the oven for approximately three minutes. The rotation of the mold simultaneously on two axes will distribute the plastisol evenly over the entire inner surface of the mold. The molds are removed from the oven and quenched in water to set the plastisol material. When the molds are opened, the hollow ball formed therein will still be soft but will air harden in about five minutes.

The tee ball thus made will have the plates 14 fused into the wall of the ball so that the stake is rigidly secured to the ball. It should be noted that the stake is anchored to two parts of the ball and thus will have greater stability when it is driven into the ground. The close proximity of the end 18 of the stake to the surface of the ball provides a substantially solid driving surface which can be used to pound the tee ball into the ground.

What is claimed is:

1. A tee ball marker comprising a pointed shaft, a pair of contoured, rectangular plates staked to said shaft, one of said plates being located close to the end of the shaft, the other plate being located a predetermined distance from said one plate, each of said plates having a hole located on opposite sides of said stake,

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and a thin hollow plastic ball molded on said stake, the inside diameter of said ball being slightly smaller than the distance between said plates and the outside diameter being slightly larger than the predetermined distance between said plates, whereby said plates are imbedded within the walls of said ball.

2. A tee ball marker comprising a thin hollow plastic ball,

a pointed stake having one end projecting outward from one side of said ball and the other end imbedded within the other side of said ball,

a rectangular plate rigidly secured to said other end of said ball, said plate being curved so that it is completely imbedded in said other side of said ball,

a second rectangular plate rigidly secured to said stake at the intersection of said stake with said one side of said ball, said second rectangular plate being curved so that it is completely imbedded in said one side of said ball, whereby said stake is rigidly secured to said ball.

3. A marker for a golf course driving tee comprising a hollow plastic ball,

a stake projecting radially outward from said ball, and means for securing said stake rigidly to two sides of said ball, said means comprising at least one plate

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staked to said stake and completely imbedded within one wall of said ball.

4. A marker according to claim 3 wherein said plate is rectangular and curved to the same curvature as the wall in which it is imbedded.

5. A marker for a golf course driving tee comprising a hollow plastic ball,

a stake projecting radially outward from said ball, and means for securing said stake rigidly to two sides of said ball, said means comprising a pair of plates rigidly mounted on said stake and imbedded in the side of said ball.

6. A marker according to claim 5 wherein each of said plates is curved to substantially the same configuration as the side of the ball in which it is imbedded.

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