



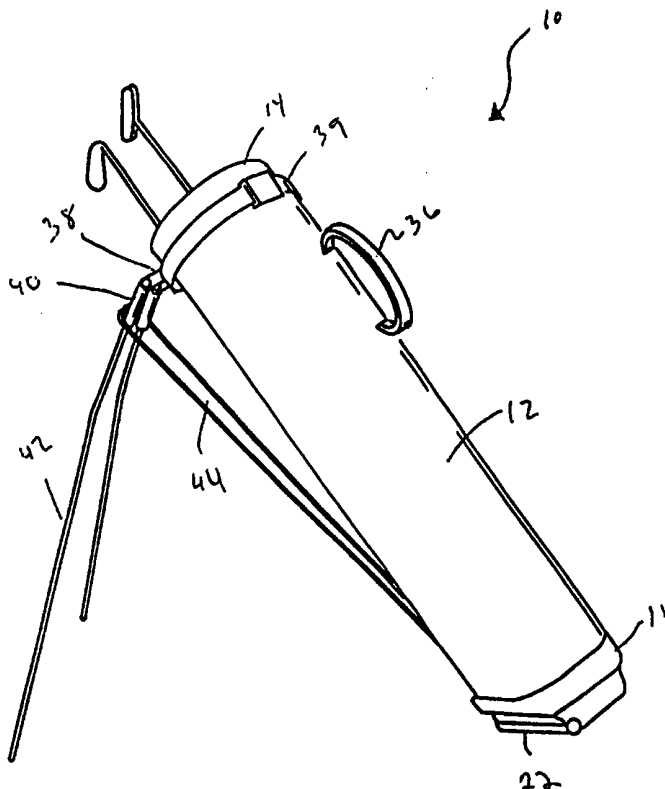
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(54) Title: AUTOMATIC GOLF BAG SUPPORT STAND

(57) Abstract

An automatic golf bag support stand assembly (10) including a golf bag (12) with a pivotal foot (22) pivotally coupled to the bottom (16) of the golf bag (12). A pair of legs (42) is pivotally coupled with respect to the golf bag (12). A pair of actuation rods (44) has upper ends pivotally coupled to the legs (42) and lower ends coupled to the pivotal foot (22). As such, resting the golf bag (12) on a recipient surface and pivoting it forwardly pushes the actuation rods (44) upwardly to extend the legs (42) outwardly in a tripod orientation and the lifting of the golf bag (12) will allow the pivotal foot (22) to move downwardly in co-planar relationship with a planar extent (18) of the bottom (16) of the golf bag (12) to retract the legs (42) for carrying the golf bag (12).



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1 AUTOMATIC GOLF BAG SUPPORT STAND

2

3 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

4

5 Field of the Invention

6

7 The present invention relates to a new and improved
8 automatic golf bag support stand and, more particularly,
9 pertains to automatically supporting a golf bag with an
10 integrally formed stand.

11 Description of the Prior Art

12 The use of golf bag stands is known in the prior
13 art. More specifically, golf bag stands heretofore
14 devised and utilized for the purpose of supporting a golf
15 bag when not in use are known to consist basically of
16 familiar, expected, and obvious structural
17 configurations, notwithstanding the myriad of designs
18 encompassed by the crowded prior art which has been
19 developed for the fulfillment of countless objectives and
20 requirements.

21 The prior art discloses a large number of golf bag
22 support stands. By way of example, U.S. Patent Number
23 4,834,235 to Solheim discloses golf bag with extensible
24 support stand. U.S. Patent Number Re. 33,203 to Reimers
25 discloses a golf bag device. U.S. Patent Number 4,921,192
26 to Jones discloses a golf bag having integrally support

1 stand. U.S. Patent Number 5,152,483 to Maeng discloses a
2 golf bag with support stand. U.S. Patent Number 5,
3 356,003 to Gretz et al. discloses a golf bag with stand.
4 U.S. Patent Number 5,415,285 to Reimers discloses a soft
5 sided golf bag with quick action integral stand. U.S.
6 Patent Des. 377,748 to Keller et al. discloses the
7 ornamental design for a golf bag leg hinge bracket.
8 Lastly, U.S. Patent Number 846,552 to Collins discloses
9 an automatic folding stand.

10 In this respect, the automatic golf bag support
11 stand according to the present invention substantially
12 departs from the conventional concepts and designs of the
13 prior art, and in doing so provides an apparatus
14 primarily developed for the purpose of automatically
15 supporting a golf bag with an integrally formed stand.

16 Therefore, it can be appreciated that there exists a
17 continuing need for a new and improved automatic golf bag
18 support stand which can be used for automatically
19 supporting a golf bag with an integrally formed stand. In
20 this regard, the present invention substantially fulfills
21 this need.

1 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

2 In view of the foregoing disadvantages inherent in
3 the known types of golf bag stands now present in the
4 prior art, the present invention provides a new and
5 improved automatic golf bag support stand. As such, the
6 general purpose of the present invention, which will be
7 described subsequently in greater detail, is to provide a
8 new and improved automatic golf bag support stand and
9 methods which have all the advantages of the prior art
10 and none of the disadvantages.

11 To attain this, the present invention essentially
12 comprises a golf bag having a rigid open top and a rigid
13 closed bottom with a tubular intermediate portion
14 therebetween. The top is open for the positioning of
15 golf clubs therethrough for support on the bottom and
16 within an interior space of the intermediate portion. As
17 shown in Figure 2, the bottom has a planar extent for
18 about half of its extent and an angled extent for the
19 remainder of its extent to define a triangular shaped
20 recess. A pivotal foot is pivotally coupled to the
21 bottom of the bag and resides below the angled extent
22 thereof. The intermediate portion has an interior
23 surface and an exterior surface with a slot therethrough
24 in proximity to the bottom. Also included is a handle
25 formed on a front of the intermediate portion adjacent to
26 the top. A pair of projections extend radially outward

1 from the intermediate portion adjacent to the top. The
2 projections have aligned circular apertures extended
3 therethrough. A pair of short rods have interior ends
4 with apertures. Pins extend through the apertures of the
5 projections and short rods for the pivotal coupling of
6 the short rods with respect to the bag. The short rods
7 have exterior ends with axial apertures and a circular
8 bearing hole extending therethrough radially outwardly of
9 the axis of the short rods. Next provided is a pair of
10 cylindrical legs having upper ends bent inwardly and
11 extending through the bearing holes. As such, the legs
12 are adapted for pivoting therewithin with respect to the
13 apertures of the projections. The legs have an inward
14 bend between their midpoints and their upper ends. The
15 long legs have lower ends adapted to support the bag in a
16 tripod orientation in association with the bottom of the
17 bag. Lastly, a pair of actuation rods have upper ends
18 bent through the bearing holes of the short rods. The
19 rods further has a U-shaped lower end with an aperture
20 therethrough. Such aperture is coupled to the pivotal
21 foot at the bottom of the bag via a bolt. As shown in
22 Figure 4, an intermediate extent of the actuator rods
23 extends through the slot in the bag. By this structure,
24 the bag may be rested on a recipient surface and pivoted
25 forwardly to push the actuation rod upwardly to extend
26 the legs outwardly in a tripod orientation. Further, by

1 lifting of the bag, the foot is move downwardly in co-
2 planar relationship with the planar extent of the bottom
3 and the legs are retracted for carrying the bag.

4 There has thus been outlined, rather broadly, the
5 more important features of the invention in order that
6 the detailed description thereof that follows may be
7 better understood and in order that the present
8 contribution to the art may be better appreciated. There
9 are, of course, additional features of the invention that
10 will be described hereinafter and which will form the
11 subject matter of the claims appended hereto.

12 In this respect, before explaining at least one
13 embodiment of the invention in detail, it is to be
14 understood that the invention is not limited in its
15 application to the details of construction and to the
16 arrangements of the components set forth in the following
17 description or illustrated in the drawings. The
18 invention is capable of other embodiments and of being
19 practiced and carried out in various ways. Also, it is
20 to be understood that the phraseology and terminology
21 employed herein are for the purpose of descriptions and
22 should not be regarded as limiting.

23 As such, those skilled in the art will appreciate
24 that the conception, upon which this disclosure is based,
25 may readily be utilized as a basis for the designing of
26 other structures, methods and systems for carrying out

1 the several purposes of the present invention. It is
2 important, therefore, that the claims be regarded as
3 including such equivalent constructions insofar as they
4 do not depart from the spirit and scope of the present
5 invention.

6 It is therefore an object of the present invention
7 to provide a new and improved automatic golf bag support
8 stand which has all the advantages of the prior art golf
9 bag stands and none of the disadvantages.

10 It is another object of the present invention to
11 provide a new and improved automatic golf bag support
12 stand which may be easily and efficiently manufactured
13 and marketed.

14 It is a further object of the present invention to
15 provide a new and improved automatic golf bag support
16 stand which is of a durable and reliable construction.

17 An even further object of the present invention is
18 to provide a new and improved automatic golf bag support
19 stand which is susceptible of a low cost of manufacture
20 with regard to both materials and labor, and which
21 accordingly is then susceptible of low prices of sale to
22 the consuming public, thereby making such a automatic
23 golf bag support stand economically available to the
24 buying public.

1 Even still another object of the present invention
2 is to automatically support a golf bag with an integrally
3 formed stand.

4 Lastly, it is an object of the present invention to
5 provide golf bag with integrally formed, automatically
6 retractable golf bag stand including a golf bag having a
7 rigid open top and a rigid closed bottom with a tubular
8 intermediate portion therebetween. The top is open for
9 the positioning of golf clubs therethrough for support on
10 the bottom and within an interior space of the
11 intermediate. The bag further includes a pivotal foot
12 pivotally coupled to the bottom of the bag. A pair of
13 legs are pivotally coupled with respect to the bag. The
14 legs have lower ends adapted to support the bag in a
15 tripod orientation in association with the bottom of the
16 bag. A pair of actuation rods have upper ends pivotally
17 coupled to the legs and lower ends coupled to the pivotal
18 foot at the bottom of the bag. As such, resting the bag
19 on a recipient surface and pivoting it forwardly pushes
20 the actuation rod upwardly to extend the legs outwardly
21 in a tripod orientation and the lifting of the bag will
22 allow the foot to move downwardly in co-planar
23 relationship with the planar extent of the bottom to
24 retract the legs for carrying the bag.

25 These together with other objects of the invention,
26 along with the various features of novelty which

1 characterize the invention, are pointed out with
2 particularity in the claims annexed to and forming a part
3 of this disclosure. For a better understanding of the
4 invention, its operating advantages and the specific
5 objects attained by its uses, reference should be had to
6 the accompanying drawings and descriptive matter in which
7 there is illustrated preferred embodiments of the
8 invention.

9 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

10 The invention will be better understood and objects
11 other than those set forth above will become apparent
12 when consideration is given to the following detailed
13 description thereof. Such description makes reference to
14 the annexed drawings wherein:

15 Figure 1 is a perspective illustration of the
16 preferred embodiment of the automatic golf bag support
17 stand constructed in accordance with the principles of
18 the present invention.

19 Figure 2 is a side view of the present invention.

20 Figure 3 is an upper rear view of the legs, rods
21 projections and legs of the present invention.

22 Figure 4 is a lower rear view of the rods and
23 pivotal foot of the present invention.

24 Figure 5 is a top view of the present invention.

25 Figure 6 is a bottom cross-sectional view of the
26 present invention.

1 The same reference numerals refer to the same parts
2 throughout the various Figures.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

4 With reference now to the drawings, and in
5 particular to Figures 1 through 6 thereof, the preferred
6 embodiment of the new and improved automatic golf bag
7 support stand embodying the principles and concepts of
8 the present invention and generally designated by the
9 reference numeral 10 will be described.

10 The present invention, the new and improved
11 automatic golf bag support stand is a system 10 comprised
12 of a plurality of components. Such components, in their
13 broadest context, include a bag, legs, pivotal foot, and
14 actuator rods. Each of the individual components is
15 specifically configured and correlated one with respect
16 to the other so as to attain the desired objectives.

17 The present invention, designated as numeral 10,
18 includes a golf bag 12 having a rigid open top 14 and a
19 rigid closed bottom 16 with a tubular intermediate
20 portion therebetween for fixing the open top and closed
21 bottom with respect to each other. The top is open for
22 the positioning of golf clubs therethrough for support on
23 the bottom and within an interior space of the
24 intermediate portion. As shown in Figure 2, the bottom
25 has a planar extent 18 for about half of its extent and
26 an angled extent 20 for the remainder of its extent to

1 define a triangular shaped recess. The intermediate
2 portion has an interior surface and an exterior surface
3 with a slot therethrough in proximity to the bottom. As
4 shown in Figure 2, the slot has a length that is less
5 than 1/2 the length of the bag.

6 A pivotal foot 22 is pivotally coupled to the bottom
7 of the bag along an intersection of the planar and angled
8 extent. Such intersection is preferably formed along a
9 diameter of the bottom of the bag. Further, the pivotal
10 foot resides below the angled extent of the bottom of the
11 bag during use. As shown in Figure 6, the bottom
12 includes a pair of arms 24 extending rearwardly therefrom
13 for pivotally coupling about a post 26 mounted to the
14 bottom of the bag. Ends of the post and the arms both
15 reside in recesses 28 of the bottom of the bag during
16 use. It should be further noted that the pivotal bottom
17 includes a U-shaped member 30 with a rear member 32
18 connected between ends thereof. Finally, a central
19 member 34 is integrally formed between a central extent
20 of the U-shaped member and rear member such that all of
21 the members remain in co-planar relationship.

22 Also included is a handle 36 formed on a front of
23 the intermediate portion adjacent to the top. As shown
24 in Figure 1, the handle comprises a flexible rectangular
25 strip having ends connected to the bag along a line which
26 remains in parallel with an axis of the bag.

1 A pair of projections 38 extend radially outward
2 from the intermediate portion of the bag adjacent to the
3 top thereof. The projections have aligned circular
4 apertures extended therethrough. As shown in Figure 5,
5 the projections are angularly spaced by about 60 degrees
6 and extend radially less than 1/4 the radius of the open
7 top of the bag. In the preferred embodiment, the
8 projections are mounted to the bag via an annular rigid
9 cuff 39 secured adjacent to the top of the bag.

10 A pair of short rods 40 have interior ends with
11 apertures. Pins extend through the apertures of the
12 projections and short rods for the pivotal coupling of
13 the short rods with respect to the projections and bag.
14 The short rods have exterior ends with axial apertures
15 and a circular bearing hole extending therethrough
16 radially outwardly of the axis of the short rods. Such
17 bearing hole of each short rod ideally resides adjacent
18 to and above the exterior end thereof.

19 Next provided is a pair of cylindrical legs 42
20 having an inward bend between their midpoints and their
21 upper ends. As such, each leg is defined by an elongated
22 linear portion which forms an obtuse angle of greater
23 than 120 degrees with a short linear portion. The upper
24 ends of the leg are bent to extend through the bearing
25 holes of the short rods. During use, the legs are
26 adapted for pivoting with respect to the apertures of the

1 projections. The long legs have lower ends adapted to
2 support the bag in a tripod orientation in association
3 with the bottom of the bag.

4 Lastly, a pair of actuation rods 44 have upper ends
5 bent through the bearing holes of the short rods. The
6 rods further has a U-shaped lower end 46 with an aperture
7 therethrough. Such aperture is coupled to the pivotal
8 foot at the bottom of the bag via at least one bolt. As
9 shown in Figure 6, such coupling is effected at an
10 intersection of the central member and U-shaped member of
11 the pivotal foot. As shown in Figure 4, an intermediate
12 extent of each of the actuator rods extends through the
13 slot in the bag.

14 With reference still to Figure 4, it is shown that
15 the portions of the actuator rods within the slot are
16 maintained in parallel while portions thereabove extend
17 away from each other to couple with the respective short
18 rod. For reasons that will become apparent later, the
19 actuator rods are resilient in nature.

20 By this structure, the bag may be rested on a
21 recipient surface and pivoted forwardly to push the
22 actuation rod upwardly to extend the legs outwardly in a
23 tripod orientation. Further, by lifting of the bag, the
24 foot is move downwardly in co-planar relationship with
25 the planar extent of the bottom and the legs are
26 retracted for carrying the bag. Such retraction is

1 further urged by the tendency of the actuator rods to
2 remain linear and in parallel with respect to each other.

3 As to the manner of usage and operation of the
4 present invention, the same should be apparent from the
5 above description. Accordingly, no further discussion
6 relating to the manner of usage and operation will be
7 provided.

8 With respect to the above description then, it is to
9 be realized that the optimum dimensional relationships
10 for the parts of the invention, to include variations in
11 size, materials, shape, form, function and manner of
12 operation, assembly and use, are deemed readily apparent
13 and obvious to one skilled in the art, and all equivalent
14 relationships to those illustrated in the drawings and
15 described in the specification are intended to be
16 encompassed by the present invention.

17 Therefore, the foregoing is considered as
18 illustrative only of the principles of the invention.
19 Further, since numerous modifications and changes will
20 readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not
21 desired to limit the invention to the exact
22 construction and operation shown and described, and
23 accordingly, all suitable modifications and equivalents
24 may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the
25 invention.

CLAIMS

What is claimed as being new and desired to be protected by LETTERS PATENT of the United States is as follows:

- 1 1. A new and improved golf bag with integrally
2 formed, automatically retractable golf bag stand
3 comprising, in combination:
4 a golf bag having a rigid open top and a rigid
5 closed bottom with a tubular intermediate portion
6 therebetween, the top being open for the positioning of
7 golf clubs therethrough for support on the bottom and
8 within an interior space of the intermediate portion, the
9 bottom having a planar extent for about half of its
10 extent, an angled extent for the remainder of its extent
11 to define a triangular shaped recess and a pivotal foot
12 pivotally coupled to the bottom of the bag below the
13 angled extent thereof, the intermediate portion having an
14 interior surface and an exterior surface with a slot
15 therethrough in proximity to the bottom;
16 a handle formed on a front of the intermediate
17 portion adjacent to the top;
18 a pair of projections extending outwardly from
19 the intermediate portion adjacent to the top with aligned
20 circular apertures extending therethrough;

21 a pair of short rods having interior ends with
22 apertures and pins extending through the apertures of the
23 projections and short rods for the pivotal coupling of
24 the short rods with respect to the bag, the short rods
25 having exterior ends with axial apertures and a circular
26 bearing hole extending therethrough radially outwardly of
27 the axis of the short rods;

28 a pair of cylindrical legs having upper ends
29 bent inwardly and extending through the bearing holes for
30 pivoting therewithin with respect to the apertures of the
31 projections, the legs having an inward bend between their
32 midpoints and their upper ends, the long legs having
33 lower ends adapted to support the bag in a tripod
34 orientation in association with the bottom of the bag;

35 a pair of actuation rods having upper ends bent
36 through the bearing holes of the short rods and having a
37 U-shaped lower end with an aperture therethrough coupled
38 to the pivotal foot at the bottom of the bag with an
39 intermediate extent extending through the slot in the bag
40 whereby resting the bag on a recipient surface and
41 pivoting it forwardly pushes the actuation rod upwardly
42 to extend the legs outwardly in a tripod orientation and
43 the lifting of the bag will allow the foot to move
44 downwardly in co-planar relationship with the planar
45 extent of the bottom to retract the legs for carrying the
46 bag.

1 2. A golf bag with integrally formed,
2 automatically retractable golf bag stand comprising:
3 a golf bag having a rigid open top and a rigid
4 closed bottom with a tubular intermediate portion
5 therebetween, the top being open for the positioning of
6 golf clubs therethrough for support on the bottom and
7 within an interior space of the intermediate, the bag
8 further including a pivotal foot pivotally coupled to the
9 bottom of the bag;

10 a pair of legs pivotally coupled with respect
11 to the bag, the legs having lower ends adapted to support
12 the bag in a tripod orientation in association with the
13 bottom of the bag;

14 a pair of actuation rods having upper ends
15 pivotally coupled to the legs and having lower ends
16 coupled to the pivotal foot at the bottom of the bag,
17 whereby resting the bag on a recipient surface and
18 pivoting it forwardly pushes the actuation rod upwardly
19 to extend the legs outwardly in a tripod orientation and
20 the lifting of the bag will allow the foot to move
21 downwardly to retract the legs for carrying the bag.

1 3. A golf bag as set forth in claim 2 wherein an
2 intermediate extent of each actuator rod extends through
3 a slot in the bag.

1 4. A golf bag as set forth in claim 3 wherein the
2 slot is formed adjacent to the bottom of the bag.

1 5. A golf bag as set forth in claim 3 wherein the
2 slot has a length of less than 1/2 that of the bag.

1 6. A golf bag as set forth in claim 2 wherein the
2 legs are bent.

1 7. A golf bag as set forth in claim 2 wherein the
2 legs are pivotally coupled to a pair of projections
3 extending outwardly from the intermediate portion of the
4 bag adjacent to the top.

1 8. A golf bag as set forth in claim 7 wherein the
2 protrusions extend radially from the top of the bag.

1 9. A golf bag as set forth in claim 2 and further
2 including a handle formed on a front of the intermediate
3 portion adjacent to the top.

1 10. A golf bag as set forth in claim 2 wherein the
2 bottom has a planar extent for about half of its extent
3 and an angled extent for the remainder of its extent to
4 define a triangular shaped recess.

AMENDED CLAIMS

[received by the International Bureau on 23 April 1999 (23.04.99);
original claim 3 cancelled; original claims 1,2,4,5 and 10 amended;
remaining claims unchanged (4 pages)]

What is claimed as being new and desired to be
protected by LETTERS PATENT is as follows:

- 1 1. A golf bag with integrally formed,
2 automatically retractable golf bag stand comprising, in
3 combination:
4 a golf bag having a rigid open top and a rigid
5 closed bottom with a tubular intermediate portion
6 therebetween, the top being open for the positioning of
7 golf clubs therethrough for support on the bottom and
8 within an interior space of the intermediate portion,
9 the bottom having a planar extent for about half of the
10 extent of the bottom, an angled extent for the remainder
11 of the extent of the bottom to define a triangular
12 shaped recess and a pivotal foot pivotally coupled to
13 the bottom of the bag below the angled extent thereof,
14 the intermediate portion with a slot therethrough in
15 proximity to the bottom;
16 a handle formed on a front of the intermediate
17 portion adjacent to the top;
18 a pair of projections extending outwardly from the
19 intermediate portion adjacent to the top with aligned
20 circular apertures extending therethrough;
21 a pair of short rods having interior ends with
22 apertures and pins extending through the apertures of

23 the projections and short rods for the pivotal coupling of
24 the short rods with respect to the bag, each short rod
25 having an interior end with an axial aperture and a
26 circular bearing hole extending therethrough radially
27 outwardly of the projections;

28 a pair of cylindrical legs having upper ends extending
29 into the axial apertures of the short rods, the legs having
30 an inward bend between their midpoints and their upper
31 ends, the long legs having lower ends adapted to support
32 the bag in a tripod orientation in association with the
33 bottom of the bag;

34 a pair of actuation rods having upper ends bent
35 through the bearing holes of the short rods and having a U-
36 shaped lower end with an aperture therethrough coupled to
37 the pivotal foot at the bottom of the bag with an
38 intermediate extent extending through the slot in the bag
39 whereby resting the bag on a recipient surface and pivoting
40 it forwardly pushes the actuation rod upwardly to extend
41 the legs outwardly in a tripod orientation and the lifting
42 of the bag will allow the foot to move downwardly in co-
43 planar relationship with the planar extent of the bottom to
44 retract the legs for carrying the bag.

1 2. A golf bag with integrally formed, automatically
2 retractable golf bag stand comprising:

3 a golf bag having a rigid open top and a rigid closed
4 bottom with a tubular intermediate portion therebetween,
5 the top being open for the positioning of golf clubs
6 therethrough for support on the bottom and within an
7 interior space of the intermediate, the bag further
8 including a pivotal foot pivotally coupled to the bottom of
9 the bag with a slot formed in the bag;

10 a pair of legs pivotally coupled with respect to the
11 bag, the legs having lower ends adapted to support the bag
12 in a tripod orientation in association with the bottom of
13 the bag;

14 a pair of actuation rods having upper ends pivotally
15 coupled to the legs and having lower ends coupled to the
16 pivotal foot at the bottom of the bag and having
17 intermediate extents extending through the slot, whereby
18 resting the bag on a recipient surface and pivoting it
19 forwardly pushes the actuation rod upwardly to extend the
20 legs outwardly in a tripod orientation and the lifting of
21 the bag will allow the foot to move downwardly to retract
21 the legs for carrying the bag.

1 4. A golf bag as set forth in Claim 2 wherein the
2 slot is formed adjacent to the bottom of the bag.

1 5. A golf bag as set forth in claim 2 wherein the
2 slot has a length of less than 1/2 that of the bag.

1 6. A golf bag as set forth in claim 2 wherein the
2 legs are bent.

1 7. A golf bag as set forth in claim 2 wherein the
2 legs are pivotally coupled to a pair of projections
3 extending outwardly from the intermediate portion of the
4 bag adjacent to the top.

1 8. A golf bag as set forth in claim 7 wherein the
2 protrusions extend radially from the top of the bag.

1 9. A golf bag as set forth in claim 2 and further
2 including a handle formed on a front of the intermediate
3 portion adjacent to the top.

1 10. A golf bag as set forth in claim 2 wherein the
2 bottom has a planar extent for about half of the extent of
3 the bottom and an angled extent for the remainder of the
4 extent of the bottom to define a triangular shaped recess.

STATEMENT UNDER ARTICLE 19

1

2 The amendment of the claims has no effect on the
3 description or drawings. Such amendment merely cancels
4 Claim 3 and amends Claims 1, 2, 4, 5 and 10, to define
5 over the prior art, U.S. Patent Number 5,799,786 to Beck
6 et al and U.S. Patent No. 5,339,951, to Chen in a manner
7 similar to amendments filed in the U.S. equivalent
8 application.

1/3

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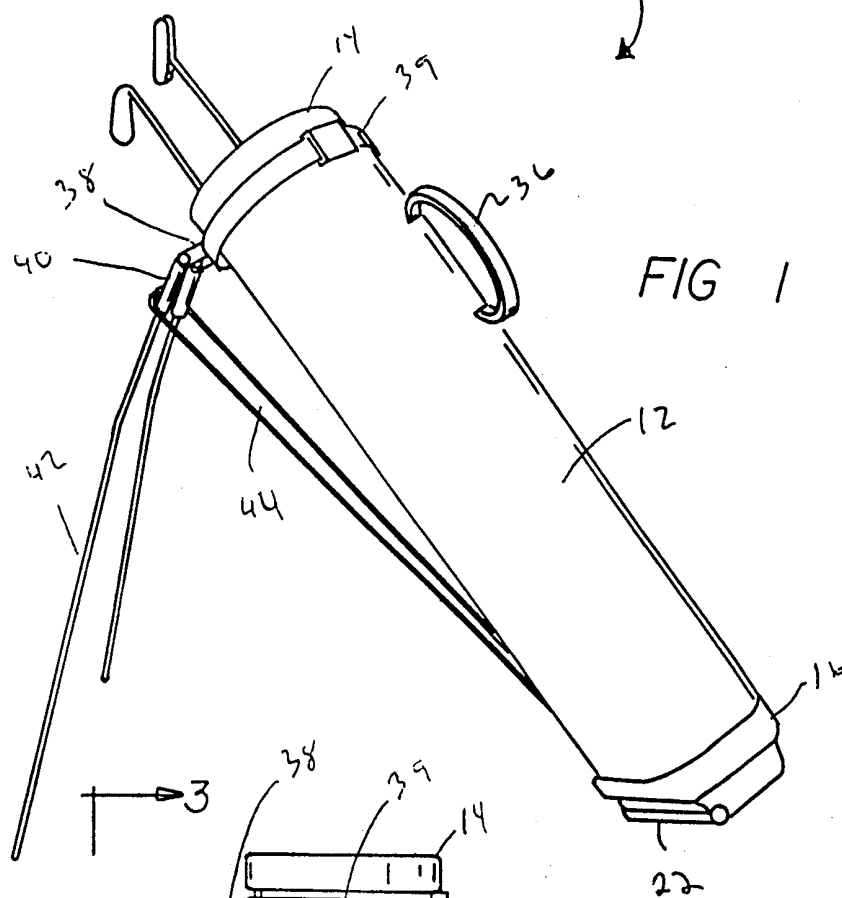


FIG 1

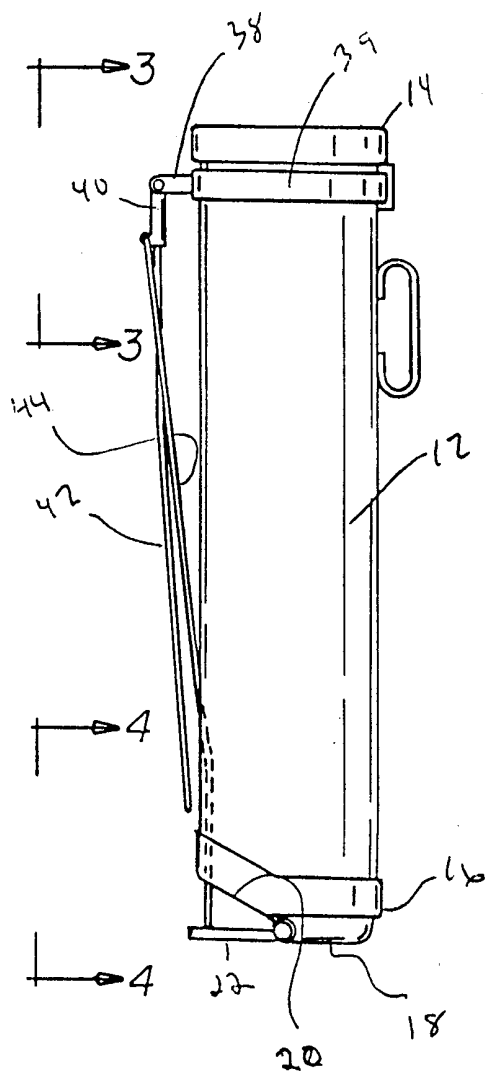


FIG 2

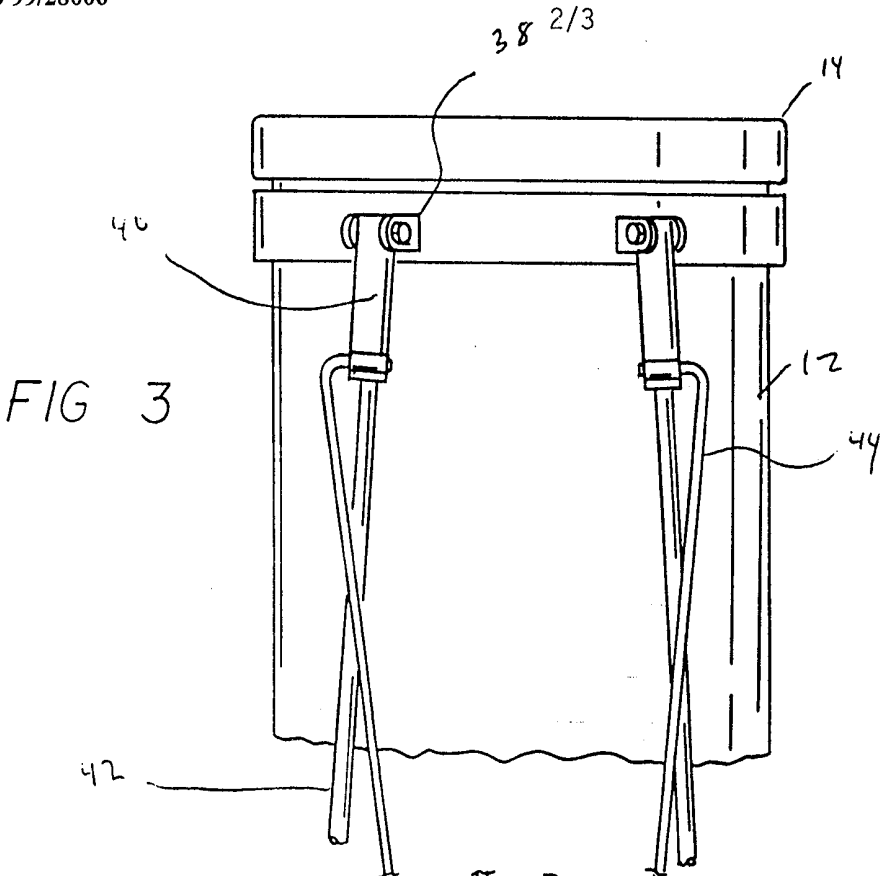
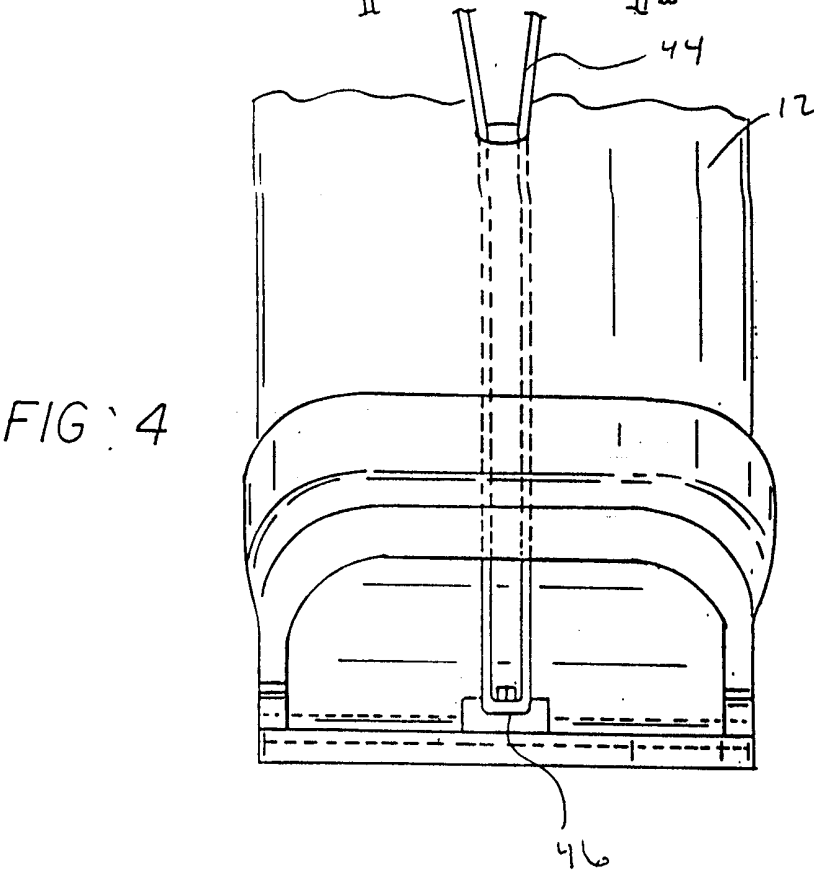


FIG 5

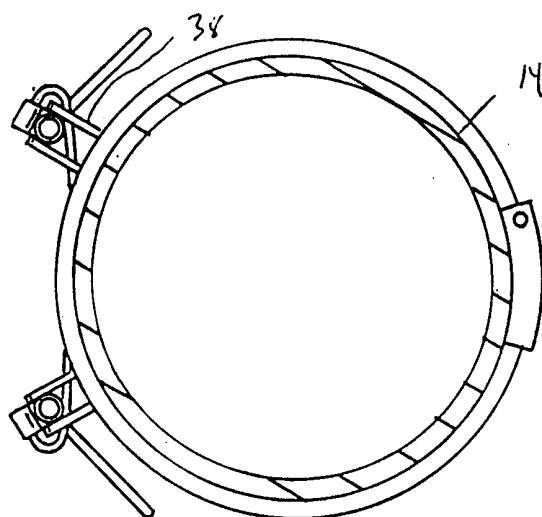
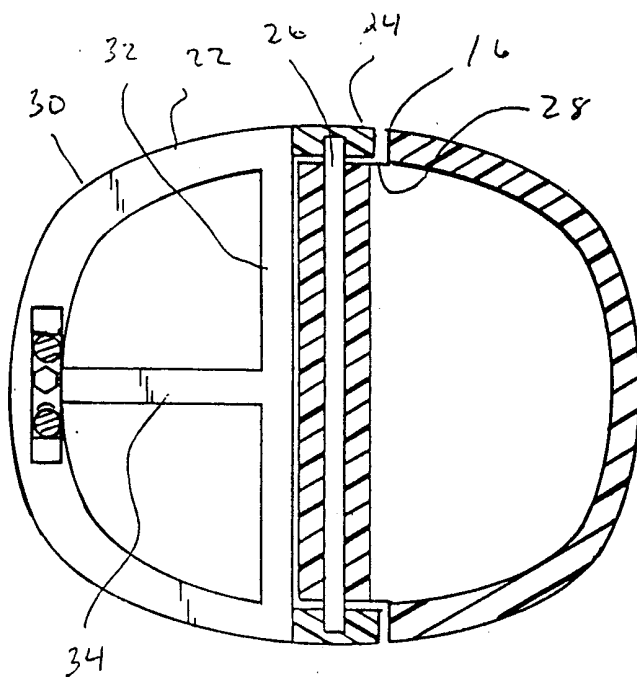


FIG 6

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

 International application No.
PCT/US98/25472

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(6) :A63B 55/06

US CL :248/96; 206/315.7

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 248/96; 206/315.7, 315.3

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X,P ----- Y,P	US 5,799,786 A (BECK et al) 01 September 1998 (01/09/98), see entire document, especially figures 1-5.	2-5,9, and 10 ----- 1 and 6-8
X --- Y	US 5,339,951 A (CHEN) 23 August 1994 (23/08/94), see entire document, especially figure 2.	2-5 and 7-9 ----- 1, 6-8 and 10
Y	US 4,921,192 A (JONES) 01 May 1990 (01/05/90), see entire document, especially figures 1-3.	1, 6 and 10
Y,P	US 5,762,189 A (REIMERS) 09 June 1998 (09/06/98), see entire document, especially figures 1, 5, and 6, and the description, column 11, lines 4-8.	1



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

*	Special categories of cited documents:	"T"	later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"A"	document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance		
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"O"	document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means		
"P"	document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	"&"	document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

29 JANUARY 1999

Date of mailing of the international search report

23 FEB 1999

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