

[54] COMBINATION GOLF EMBLEM AND TEE DISPENSER

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[57] ABSTRACT

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224/29 B; 10/165; 206/3; 222/199

A combination golf emblem and tee dispenser in which the front plate of the dispenser defines a golf emblem and is integral with or releasably secured to a golf tee dispensing unit. The dispenser has a loading end and a dispensing end, and is provided adjacent its loading end with fixed guides to facilitate the introduction of golf tees into the dispensing unit in any orientation without jamming, and to prevent golf tees from falling out of the dispenser through the loading end under the influence of gravity when the orientation of the dispensing unit is reversed, that is with the loading end held below the level of the dispensing end. The dispensing unit is provided adjacent the dispensing end with a manually actuatable tee dispensing mechanism which is adapted, when actuated, to simultaneously dispense or release the lowermost tee and to prevent the remaining tees from falling out of the dispensing unit through the dispensing end under the influence of gravity.

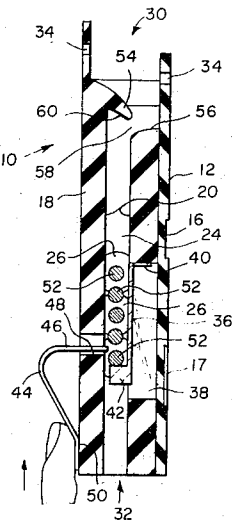
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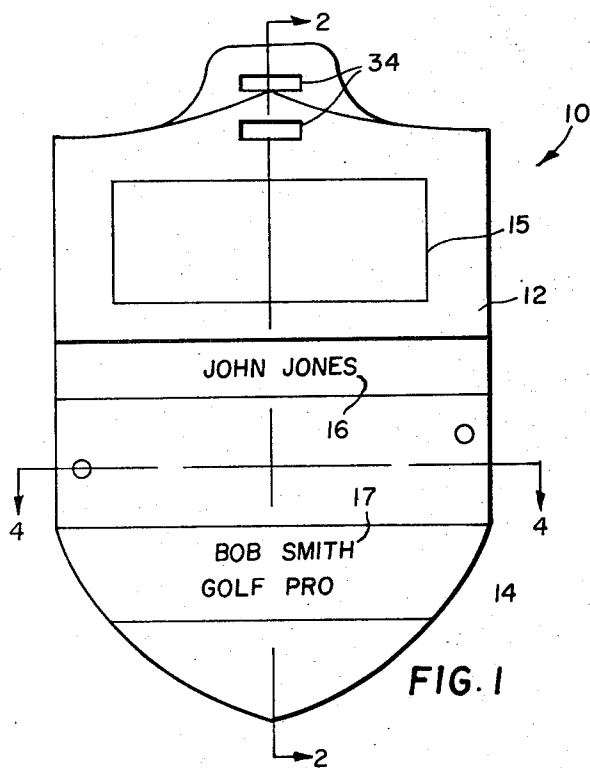
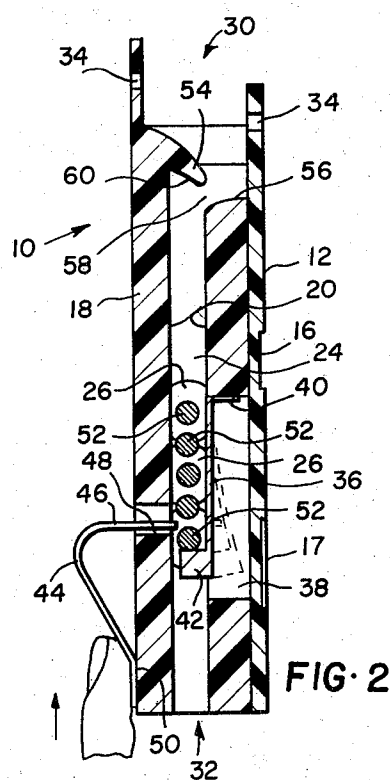
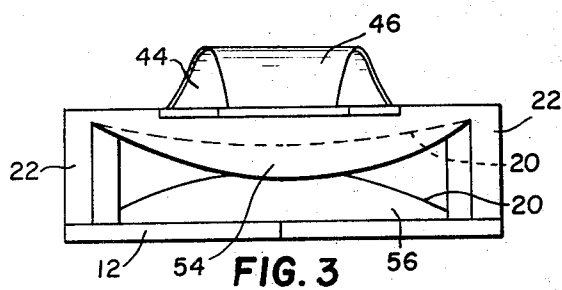
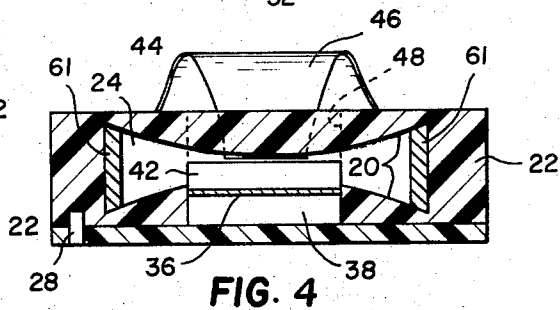
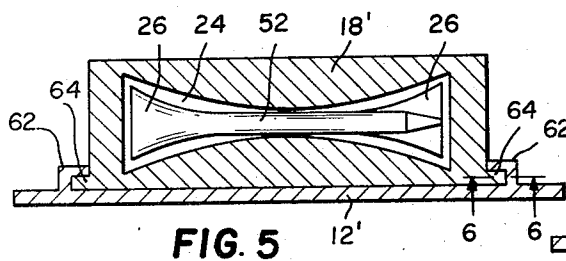
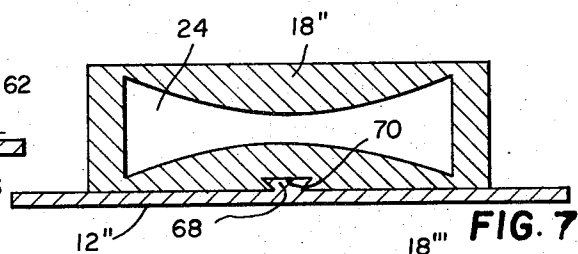
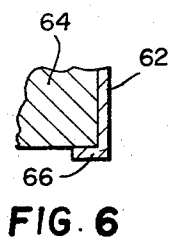
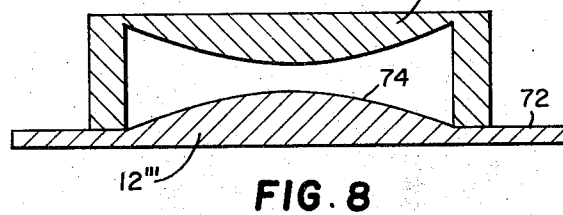
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14 Claims, 8 Drawing Figures





## COMBINATION GOLF EMBLEM AND TEE DISPENSER

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

#### 1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates generally to dispensers, and more specifically to a combination golf emblem and tee dispenser.

#### 2. Description of the Prior Art

Golf tee dispensers are known in the art in which the dispenser comprises a tubular body member within which golf tees are arranged in piggy-back fashion. The body member is provided with a resilient retaining means adjacent the open mouth of the body member for retaining the golf tees within the body member with the stem of the leading golf tee extending from the mouth. The golf tees are dispensed by manually gripping the stem of the lowermost golf tee and pulling it past the resilient retaining means. Other golf tee holders are known comprising belts having a plurality of pockets arranged along the belt in spaced-apart relation, and provided with retaining means for holding golf tees inserted therein. It is further known to provide circular golf tee holders provided with a plurality of radially extending openings for receiving the stems of golf tees. The golf tees are releasably retained within the openings by a retaining means, such as a rubber band. It is further known in the art for clubs or organizations such as country clubs to provide a plate-like golf club emblem normally in the shape of a shield or the like, and provided with suitable identifying indicia imprinted thereon. Such emblems are normally provided with securing means such as a strap for releasably securing the emblem to a golf bag or the like.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In accordance with a preferred embodiment of the invention, a combination golf emblem and tee dispenser is disclosed in which the front portion of the dispenser defines a golf emblem, and the rear portion of the dispenser comprises a dispensing unit integral with or releasably secured to the front portion. In one embodiment of the invention, the front and rear portions are molded as separate units, and rigidly joined together by heat sealing or the like to form an integral dispenser. In another embodiment, mounting means of any suitable type are interposed between the front and rear portions of the dispenser to permit the removal of one of the portions and the insertion of a new one. In still another embodiment of the invention, the dispensing unit is provided at its loading end with novel guide means to facilitate the insertion of golf tees into the dispensing unit without jamming, and to prevent the golf tees from falling out of the dispensing unit through the loading end under the influence of gravity when the unit is oriented with its loading end held below the level of the dispensing end. In still another embodiment of the invention, the dispensing unit is provided with a manually actuatable tee dispensing mechanism that is adapted, when operated, to dispense or release the lowermost tee, which falls by gravity out of the dispensing unit through the dispensing end. Substantially simultaneously, the tee dispensing mechanism prevents the remaining tees from falling out of the dispensing unit. In still another embodiment, the cavity of the dispensing

unit is provided with inserts to adapt the dispensing unit to handle small headed golf tees.

It is, accordingly, one of the objects and advantages of the present invention to provide a combination golf emblem and tee dispenser.

Another object and advantage of the invention is to provide a golf tee dispenser having means to facilitate the entry of golf tees into the dispensing unit without jamming, and to prevent the golf tees from falling out of the dispensing unit through the loading end under the influence of gravity when the dispensing unit is oriented with its loading end held below the dispensing end.

Another object and advantage of the invention is to provide a golf tee dispensing unit having an improved manually operatable tee dispensing mechanism.

Another object and advantage of this invention is to provide a golf tee dispenser that is readily adaptable to handling small and large headed golf tees.

Another object and advantage of the invention is to provide a combined golf emblem and tee dispenser that is of simple design and construction, thoroughly reliable and efficient in operation, and economical to manufacture.

The invention and its objects and advantages will become more apparent from the detailed description of the preferred embodiments presented below.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

In the detailed description of the preferred embodiments of the invention presented below, reference is made to the accompanying drawing, in which:

FIG. 1 is a front elevational view of one of the preferred embodiments of the combined golf emblem and tee dispenser of this invention;

FIG. 2 is a section view taken substantially along line 2-2 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a top plan view of the golf tee dispenser of FIG. 1;

FIG. 4 is a section view taken substantially along line 4-4 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 5 is a view similar to FIG. 4 illustrating another embodiment of the mounting means for the front and rear portions of the dispenser;

FIG. 6 is a section view taken substantially along 6-6 of FIG. 5;

FIG. 7 is a view similar to FIG. 5 illustrating another embodiment of the mounting means for the front and rear portions of the dispenser; and

FIG. 8 is a view similar to FIG. 4 illustrating still another embodiment of the combined golf emblem and tee dispenser of this invention.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

With reference to FIGS. 1-4 of the drawing, a preferred embodiment of the combined golf emblem and tee dispenser 10 of this invention is disclosed preferably for use in golfing organizations or the like. The dispenser 10 comprises a front plate-like portion 12 of any suitable plastic for defining an emblem of any suitable configuration such as a shield 14. Shield 14 preferably has a surface area 15 for receiving any suitable club identifying indicia, and a recessed slot 16 for receiving a tape on which the name of a club member may be imprinted or embossed. The shield further has a name plate 17 slidably mounted within a corresponding guide

slot and on which the name of the golf professional for the club may be permanently inscribed. A rear portion of dispenser 10 is secured to front plate 12 by any suitable mounting means and comprises a substantially hollow rectangular dispensing unit 18 in which two side walls thereof are provided with convex-shaped surfaces 20 spaced apart in facing relation and cooperating with side walls 22 to define a biconcave cavity 24 therebetween for slidably receiving golf tees 26 introduced therein at random. The plate 12 is properly positioned on dispensing unit 18 with the indicia bearing surface 15 facing out, and this is accomplished by a pair of offset pins 28 and openings, as best seen in FIGS. 1 and 4. Plate 12 is secured to dispensing unit 18 by any suitable means such as heat sealing, glue or the like. The dispensing unit 18 has a loading end 30 through which the tees 26 are randomly introduced into cavity 24 of dispensing unit 18, and an opposite dispensing end 32 through which golf tees 26 are dispensed one at a time under the influence of gravity by a dispensing mechanism now to be described. The plate 12 and dispensing unit 18 are further provided with slots 34 adjacent the loading end for receiving a strap or the like threaded therethrough by which the dispenser 10 can be hung on a loop on a golf bag or directly to a golf cart or the like.

The dispensing mechanism is mounted adjacent dispensing end 32 of dispensing unit 18, and is adapted when manually actuated to dispense a single golf tee 26 for each actuation. The dispensing mechanism comprises a flexible L-shaped spring stop member 36 (FIG. 4) positioned in a recess 38 in a wall of dispensing unit 18 and having one end 40 thereof secured to the wall by any suitable means, or constructed integrally therewith. The opposite end of stop member 36 forms a lip 42 which in its normal blocking position as seen in full lines in FIG. 2 extends across cavity 24 to prevent golf tees 26 placed in dispensing unit 18 from falling out under the influence of gravity. The opposite wall of unit 18 is provided with an inverted L-shaped, spring dispensing member 44, as best seen in FIGS. 2 and 4, having a flat shoe 46 at one end extending through a complementary slot 48 in the wall, and its opposite end 50 secured to the outer surface of the dispensing unit wall. The inherent resilience or spring action of member 44 retains it in a normal retracted position as seen in full lines in FIG. 2. The inverted position of spring dispensing member 44 facilitates actuation of the member upon movement of the operator's finger in the direction indicated by the arrow. In the normal retracted position of spring dispensing member 44, as seen in full lines in FIG. 2, the outer end of shoe 46 is substantially in the plane of the inner surface of the wall. When the member is manually moved by the operator from its normal retracted position to its dispensing position, as seen dotted in FIG. 2, shoe 46 passes between the stems 52 of two adjacent golf tees 26, and engages and moves stop member 36 to its unblocking position (seen dotted in FIG. 2) permitting the lowermost tee to drop by gravity through dispensing end 32 of the unit. The remaining tees 26 in dispensing unit 18 are prevented from falling out of the dispensing end by shoe 46. When dispensing member 44 is returned by its inherent resilience to its normal retracted position by removal of the finger, the spring-mounted stop member 36 returns with shoe 46 causing lip 42 thereof to move across cavity 24 and block the passage of the remaining golf tees

26 through dispensing end 32. Accordingly, a single golf tee 26 is dispensed for each movement of dispensing member 44 between its dispensing and retracted positions. The dispensing member 44 can best be made of any suitable material such as plastic or metal having the property of a spring.

The dispensing unit 18 is further provided with fixed guide means adjacent the loading end 30 to facilitate the feeding of golf tees 26 in generally any orientation into the dispensing unit without jamming, and to prevent golf tees 26 from falling out of dispensing unit 18 under the influence of gravity in those situations in which the dispensing unit is oriented with the loading end 30 held below the dispensing end 32. The guide means comprises a laterally extending convex-shaped projection 54 on one of the walls, as best seen in FIGS. 2 and 3, partially overlapping an end or shoulder 56 of the convex surface 20 on the other wall and spaced therefrom a distance slightly greater than the diameter of a stem 52 of a tee 26 to form a channel 58 through which the tee stem can pass. The upper or outer surfaces of projection 54 and end or shoulder 56 are preferably inclined toward dispensing end 32 to facilitate horizontal movement of tee stems 52 through channel 58 and into cavity 24 of the dispensing unit 18. The upper surface of projecting end or shoulder 56 in cooperation with the upper surface of projection 54 are designed to introduce tees 26 into cavity 24 in a horizontal position. The lower or inner surface 60 of projection 54 is horizontal or inclined downwardly toward the dispensing end 32 for the purpose of blocking stems 52 of golf tee 26, and preventing movement of the tees through channel 58 when dispensing unit 18 is oriented with dispensing end 32 above loading end 30.

Dispenser 10 is further provided with means for adapting the bi-concave cavity 24 to handle both large headed and small headed golf tees. This is accomplished by providing a pair of flat inserts 61 (FIG. 4) which may be mounted at each side of cavity 24 by a slide fit or by bending the insert and snapping it into place.

In the embodiments of the invention illustrated in FIGS. 5-8, parts similar to parts illustrated in FIGS. 1-4 will be denoted by the same numerals primed, double-primed or triple primed. In the embodiments illustrated in FIGS. 5-7, mounting means are provided for releasably mounting or securing the rear portion or dispensing unit 18' to the front portion or golf emblem 12'. In FIGS. 5 and 6, the mounting means comprises a pair of spaced, elongated guideways 62 of L-shaped cross section on front portion 12' for slidably receiving elongated ribs 64 extending laterally from the dispensing unit 18'. The front portion 12' is further provided with shoulders 66 (FIG. 6) adjacent the lower ends of guideways 62 to limit the downward movement of dispensing unit 18'. In FIG. 7, the mounting means comprises a unitary elongated rib 68 on front portion 12' that is slidably movable within a complementary unitary elongated groove 70 in dispensing unit 18'. It, of course, should be understood that the ribs 64, 68 and guideways 62, 70 may be interchanged; that is, the ribs provided on the dispensing units 18', 18'' and the grooves provided in the front portions 12', 12''. In the embodiment of the invention illustrated in FIG. 8, a rear surface 72 of front golf emblem portion 12''' is provided with a convex projection 74, and dispensing unit 18''' comprises a channel member of generally U-shaped

cross section releasably or permanently secured by any suitable means such as heat sealing to front portion 12'''.

The invention has been described in detail with particular reference to preferred embodiments thereof, but it will be understood that variations and modifications can be effected within the spirit and scope of the invention as described hereinabove.

I claim:

1. In a golf tee dispenser, the combination comprising:

a generally rectangular housing having inwardly facing first and second convex portions spaced apart to define a first cavity of bi-concave cross-section extending through said housing for receiving golf tees in side-by-side relation, and provided with a loading end through which golf tees are introduced into said first cavity and a dispensing end through which golf tees are dispensed from said first cavity; and

one of said first and second convex portions is provided adjacent said loading end with a shoulder having a surface inclined toward said dispensing end, and the other of said first and second convex portions is provided with a projection extending towards said shoulder, said projection being positioned closer to said loading end than said shoulder and cooperating therewith to define a passageway for tees into said first cavity, said projection having an inner surface substantially normal to said one portion to prevent tees from falling out of said first cavity when said dispenser is oriented with said loading end below said dispensing end, and said projection further having an outer surface inclined toward said dispensing end and coacting with said shoulder surface to facilitate introduction of tees through said passageway into said first cavity in a substantially horizontal position.

2. The invention according to claim 1 wherein said projection partially overlaps said shoulder surface, and is spaced therefrom a distance slightly greater than the diameter of the stem of a golf tee.

3. In a golf tee dispensing unit, the combination comprising:

a generally rectangular housing having four continuous side walls in which oppositely disposed first and second of said side walls have inwardly facing, spaced apart, first and second surfaces respectively, and oppositely disposed third and fourth of said side walls have inwardly facing, spaced apart, third and fourth surfaces respectively connected to said first and second surfaces to define a first cavity of bi-concave cross section extending through said housing and enclosed on four sides for receiving golf tees in side-by-side relation, said housing further being provided with a loading end through which golf tees are introduced into said first cavity and a dispensing end through which golf tees are dispensed from said first cavity;

blocking means on one of said first and second side walls and movable between a normal golf tee blocking position and an unblocking position, said blocking means in its normal blocking position being engageable by the lowermost of said golf tees for preventing said golf tees from falling out of said first cavity through said dispensing end; and

resilient means on the other of said first and second side walls having an end portion movable from a normal retracted position to a dispensing position in which said end portion extends between said lowermost golf tee and the succeeding golf tee and engages and moves said blocking means to its unblocking position for releasing and dispensing said lowermost golf tee.

4. The invention according to claim 3 wherein said blocking means comprises a movable spring stop member extending into said first cavity from said one of said first and second walls and biased into the path of said golf tees to prevent passage of said golf tees from said first cavity through said dispensing end, and said end portion of said resilient means comprises a shoe extending through an opening in said other of said first and second walls biased to said normal retracted position clear of said golf tees, and manually movable to said dispensing position in which said shoe passes between the stems of said lowermost and succeeding golf tees and urges said stop member out of the path of said golf tees whereby said lowermost tee drops by gravity from the dispenser.

5. The invention according to claim 4 wherein said resilient means comprises a substantially L-shaped spring member, one end of which forms said shoe, and the other end of which is secured to said other of said first and second walls.

6. The invention according to claim 5 wherein said other end of said spring member is arranged closer to said dispensing end of the dispenser than said shoe, and said spring member forms an inclined surface extending from said dispensing end toward said loading end to facilitate manual movement of said spring member and shoe to its dispensing position.

7. The invention according to claim 3 wherein said one of said first and second walls has a shoulder at the end of its inwardly facing surface adjacent said loading end, and said other of said first and second walls has a projection extending from its inwardly facing surface toward said shoulder.

8. The invention according to claim 7 wherein the inner surface of said projection closest to said dispensing end is substantially normal to said first and second walls to prevent tees from falling out of said dispenser when it is oriented with said loading end below said dispensing end.

9. The invention according to claim 7 wherein said shoulder has a surface inclined toward said dispensing end, and said projection is positioned closer to said loading end than said shoulder, and has an upper surface inclined toward said dispensing end.

10. The invention according to claim 9 wherein said projection partially overlaps said shoulder, and is spaced therefrom a distance slightly greater than the diameter of the stem of a golf tee.

11. In a golf tee dispenser, the combination comprising:

a generally rectangular housing having four continuous side walls defining an enclosed first cavity of bi-concave cross section having side surfaces and extending through said housing for receiving golf tees in side-by-side relation, said housing further being provided with a loading end through which golf tees are introduced into said first cavity and a dispensing end through which golf tees are dispensed from said first cavity; and

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one of said side walls is provided adjacent said loading end with a shoulder, and the opposite side wall is provided with a projection extending toward said shoulder and spaced therefrom a distance slightly greater than the diameter of a stem of a golf tee to allow tees to enter said first cavity, and to prevent tees from falling out of said loading end of said dispenser when it is oriented with said loading end below said dispensing end.

12. The invention according to claim 11 wherein the inner surface of said projection closest to said dispensing end is substantially normal to said one wall.

13. The invention according to claim 11, and further comprising plate-like inserts insertable along said side surfaces of said cavity to adapt said cavity to receive

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golf tees having heads of a size smaller than said one size.

14. In a golf emblem and tee dispenser, the combination comprising:

a front member having a front surface defining a golf emblem, and a rear surface having a first laterally extending convex portion;

a rear member of a generally U-shaped cross section secured to said front member and having a second laterally extending convex portion facing said first portion and spaced therefrom to receive a plurality of golf tees therebetween; and

means on said rear member for sequentially dispensing said golf tees from said rear member.

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