May 3, 1932. R. J. LYONS 1,856,259

GOLF TEE

Filed Jan. 5, 1928

Fig. 1

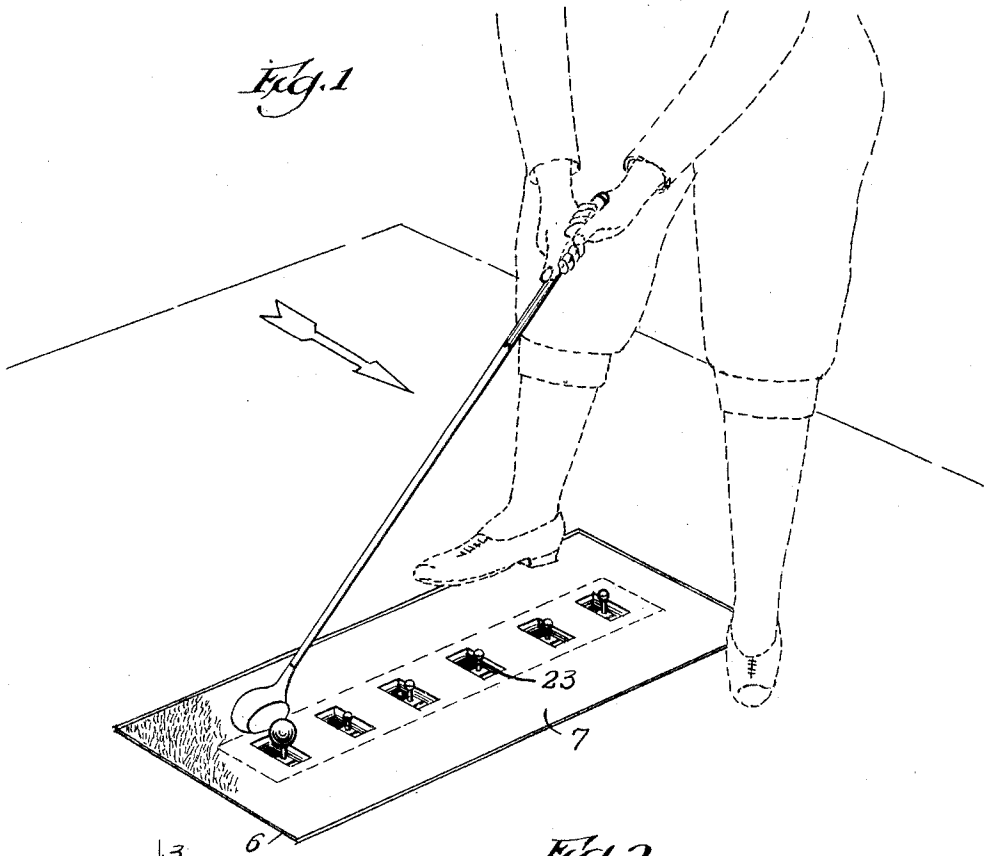


Fig. 2

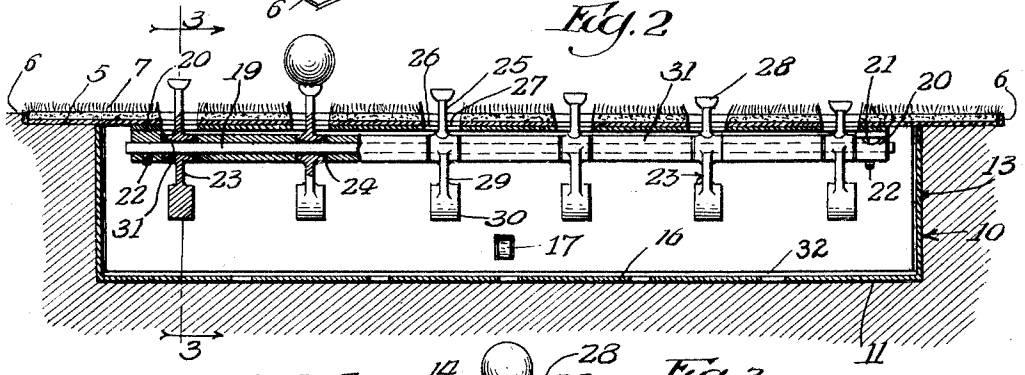


Fig. 4

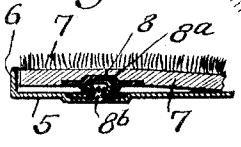
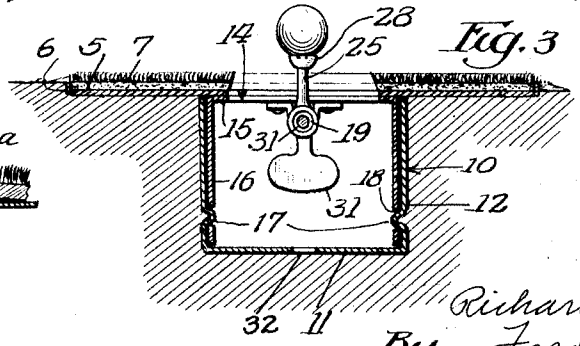


Fig. 3



Inventor:
Richard J. Lyons
By Fred Gerlach
Atty.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

RICHARD J. LYONS, OF MUNDELEIN, ILLINOIS

GOLF TEE

Application filed January 5, 1928. Serial No. 244,635.

The invention relates generally to tee devices for golf balls and more particularly to those devices which are adapted to be permanently connected or affixed to the driving greens of golf courses.

Because of the hard usage to which driving greens are subjected, the turf or grass is quickly worn down until the greens are unsuitable for play. Because of this, it is necessary to resod or rebuild the greens or to have two or more driving greens for each hole, one of which is to be used while the other is under the care of the keeper of the grounds. In either instance, great expense is incurred on the part of the club or person owning the course and the players are handicapped and put to considerable inconvenience.

One object of the present invention is to provide a tee device for golf balls which may be readily installed in a driving green or tee, as it is sometimes called, and eliminates the use of the turf or grass in connection with the play, thereby rendering the green substantially permanent and minimizing the incidental upkeep expenses. In general, this device comprises a pan which is adapted to be imbedded in a driving green or tee and is shaped to hold a fibre mat. The latter takes the place of the turf or grass which heretofore has been used in connection with the play and is removably secured to the pan so that it may be replaced when worn. Beneath the mat and secured to the pan is a box-like receptacle across the upper portion of which extends a shaft. A plurality of golf ball holding members are rotatably mounted on this shaft. The upper ends of these members project through suitable openings in the pan and mat and the lower ends are weighted so that the members will normally assume a vertical position. The members are of different heights so that a player using the device may support the ball being played at any desired elevation. The device as a unit extends transversely with respect to the driving green to which it is affixed and is adapted to be straddled during use.

Another object of the invention is to provide a device of this character in which the tee members have limited universal movement. As a result of this construction or arrangement blows delivered at angles will not break the members.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a device for the purpose hereinbefore specified which is of new and improved construction, is practically indestructible in that the tee members are pivotally supported, and consists of a comparatively small number of parts so that it may be produced at a low and reasonable cost.

Other objects of the invention and the various advantages and characteristics of the present construction will be apparent from a consideration of the following detailed description.

The invention consists in the several novel features hereinafter set forth and more particularly defined by the claims at the conclusion hereof.

In the drawings which accompany and form a part of this specification or disclosure and in which like numerals of reference denote corresponding parts throughout the several views: Fig. 1 is a section of a driving green or tee which is equipped with a device embodying the invention. Fig. 2 is a vertical longitudinal section of the device, parts being shown in elevation for purposes of illustration. Fig. 3 is a transverse section taken on the line 3—3 of Fig. 2. Fig. 4 is a detail sectional view showing one of the fasteners for securing the mat in place on the pan.

The invention is exemplified in a tee device for golf balls, comprising a rectangular pan 5, the margins 6 of which are bent upwardly to form a frame for receiving and securing in place on the pan a fibre mat 7. The pan is formed from plate of metal which is of of sufficient thickness to give the necessary rigidity to the pan. It is adapted to be imbedded or sunk in the top surface of a driving green or tee so that the marginal frame and mat are flush with the turf. In this position the mat takes the place of the turf or grass which is removed during the installing operation. The mat is preferably colored green to match or harmonize with

the grass and is made of any coarse or durable fibrous material. To prevent accidental displacement of the mat, snap fasteners 8 are provided. These fasteners are disposed at the corners of the device and comprise socket members 8^a which are sewed to the base 9 of the mat and stud members 8^b which are secured in any suitable manner to the pan. By means of these fasteners the mat is effectively held in place on the pan and provision is made whereby it may be removed readily when it is worn and replaced by a similar mat. By using the mat 7, the clubs which are used in driving from the device are protected against contact with the metal pan.

Disposed adjacent the under side of the pan 5 is an elongated box-like receptacle consisting of a sheet metal body member 10 which comprises a bottom 11, sides 12, and end walls 13; and a sheet metal cover 14 which comprises a top 15 and depending side walls 16. The top 15 is welded or soldered to the under face of the pan 5 so that the cover is removable from the body member 10 by lifting the pan. The side walls 16 fit against the inner faces of the sides 12 and serve to support the cover and pan in their operative positions. To normally maintain the cover and body member in fixed relation, inwardly projecting studs 17 are struck in the sides 12. These studs fit into holes or sockets 18 which are formed in the side walls 16. The latter are of sufficient resiliency to permit the sockets to be forced out of contact with the studs during separation of the cover from the body member. The stud and socket connections just described exemplify quickly removable or detachable means for effectively holding the cover and body member in fixed relation.

A longitudinally extending shaft 19 is arranged in close proximity to the under side of the top 15 and is held in place by a pair of brackets 20 which are secured by rivets 21 to the ends of the top 15. The shaft 19 is held in these brackets against longitudinal displacement and rotation by means of set screws 22. A plurality of tee members 23 are rotatably mounted on the shaft 19. The central portions of these members are enlarged to form hubs 24 through which the shaft extends. The members 23 are provided with upwardly extending arms 25 which project through openings 26 and 27 which are formed respectively in the pan 5 and the mat 7. The upper or distal ends of the arms 25 are shaped to form cups or rests 28 for receiving and supporting golf balls in a position whereby they may be driven from the driving green. The arms 25 vary in height as indicated in Fig. 2 so that a player using the device may support his ball at any desired elevation. The rests 28 project upwardly a sufficient distance to clear the upper surface of the mat 7. The openings 26 and 27 are elongated to permit the tee members to rotate about the shaft 19 when accidentally struck by a player. In addition to the arms 25, the tee members 23 are provided with downwardly extending arms 29, the outer portions of which are enlarged to form weights 30. These weights operate to normally maintain the tee members in a vertical or operative position. The tee members are preferably formed from castings so that all parts thereof are integral, and of any suitable light and durable metal. Sleeves 31 are interposed between the members 23 to space them apart and fasten them in alignment with the openings 26 and 27.

During play, a player will sometimes bring his club down and strike the ball or turf at an angle. To prevent such actions from injuring the tee members, the openings in the hubs 24 are flared outwardly, as at 31. As a result of this construction or arrangement, the tee members have a more or less limited universal movement which permits them to give or tilt in response to angular blows.

Openings 32 are formed in the bottom 11 to permit any water which may accumulate in the receptacle to drain.

The device may be installed, by digging an elongated hole in the green to receive the receptacle and by removing sufficient turf to accommodate the pan 5. The latter is disposed, as previously described, so that the top surface of the mat is flush with the turf or grass. In this position the mat forms in effect a part of the turf and harmonizes therewith. When the device is to be used, the player driving from the green will place the ball on the rest which is at the desired elevation. He then will address the ball in the usual manner, with his feet astride the device as indicated in Fig. 1 of the drawings. By having a transverse series of tee members it is incumbent upon the player to straddle the device, thus making the player spread his feet apart so that they assume the proper position. In the event that the club should strike beneath the ball, the tee member upon which the ball is supported will spin about shaft 19. In so doing injury to the club and tee member is avoided.

If sand or dirt should accumulate in the receptacle which houses the tee members, access to the same may be had by removing the cover 14. This is accomplished by withdrawing the pan 5. When the latter is shifted back into place, the side walls 16 will press the sockets 18 into engagement with the studs 17 to lock the cover in place. If, perchance, one of the tee members 23 should break or be rendered inoperative for any reason, it may be readily replaced by loosening the set screws 22 and withdrawing the shaft 19 from its supporting brackets 20. In the event that the mat 7 should wear out, a new

one may be installed in the pan by pressing its socket members 8^a into engagement with the studs 8^b.

The invention exemplifies a tee device for golf balls which is adapted primarily to eliminate wear and tear on the turf of driving greens, and in which provision is made for supporting the ball holding members so that they may rotate and move universally. The invention also exemplifies a tee device which is of improved construction and in which provision is made for readily replacing the mat and tee members.

Although the device has been illustrated and described in connection with an outdoor golf course, it is to be understood that it may be adapted for use indoors. It is to be understood further that the invention is not to be restricted to the details set forth, since these may be modified within the scope of the appended claims, without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

Having thus described the invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is:

1. A tee device comprising a plate having an opening formed therein, a supporting element disposed beneath the plate, a member movably mounted on said element and having means projecting upwardly through the opening for holding a golf ball, and a receptacle for holding said element and member comprising a cover secured to the plate and provided with depending side walls and a body member detachably connected to the cover and having walls engaging slidably the sidewalls of said cover.

2. A tee device comprising a plate having an opening formed therein, a supporting element disposed beneath the plate, a member rotatably mounted on said element and having an arm projecting through the opening, the upper end of the arm having a golf ball rest affixed thereto, and a housing for the member and element consisting of a cover secured to the plate and provided with depending side walls, a body member having walls engaging slidably the side walls of the cover, and quickly detachable connections between the side walls of the cover and body-member for securing said body-member in connected relation with the cover.

3. A device of the character described for holding or teeing a golf ball during drive thereof, comprising in combination a shaft having a cylindrical portion, means for supporting the shaft in a horizontal position, and a one-piece member comprising a hub rotatably mounted on said cylindrical portion of the shaft, a weight depending from the hub operative to hold the member normally in a vertical position and an arm projecting upwardly from the hub and having the distal end thereof shaped to form a cup upon which the ball is adapted to rest loosely, the shaft opening in said hub having outwardly flared ends operative to permit of limited universal movement of said member.

Signed at Chicago, Illinois, this 27th day of October, 1927.

RICHARD J. LYONS.