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Dien

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[54] **COMBINATION GREEN FIXING TOOL AND BALL MARKER**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **273/162 D**, 273/32 A, 273/32 B, 273/162 F

[51] **Int. Cl.** **A63b 57/00**

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 273/32 R, 32 A, 32 B, 273/162 R, 162 D, 162 F, 202–208; 7/14.1; 172/381

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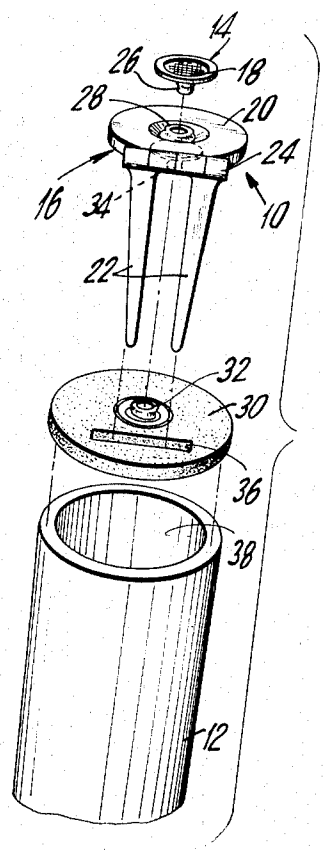
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Assistant Examiner—Richard J. Apley
Attorney—Nichol M. Sandoe et al.

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A combination green fixing tool and ball marker in which the tool and marker are detachably secured to one another and releasably received within the grip end of a golf club. The tool is formed with a generally planar handle having a green repairing prong depending normally therefrom. A fastener is provided for mounting a ball marker on one face of the handle and a second fastener is provided for releasably mounting the handle on a radially extending surface defining the axial end of a golf club. Preferably, the fasteners consist of snaps which are co-axially aligned generally centrally of the planar handle.

5 Claims, 5 Drawing Figures



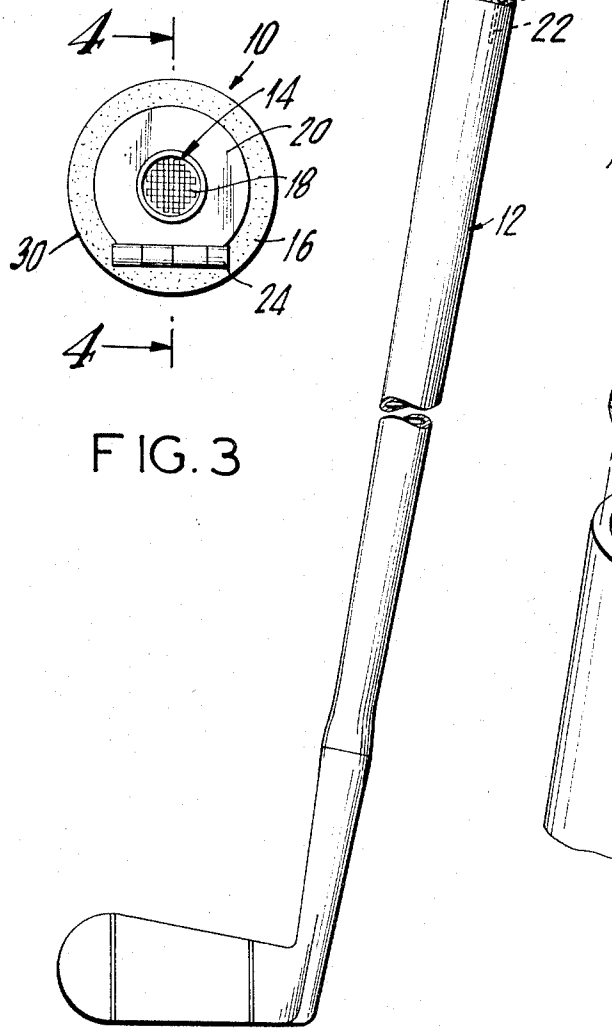


FIG. 1

FIG. 3

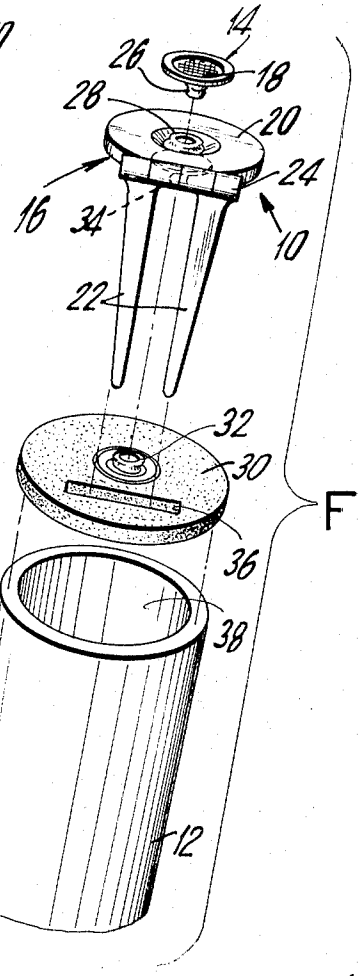


FIG. 2

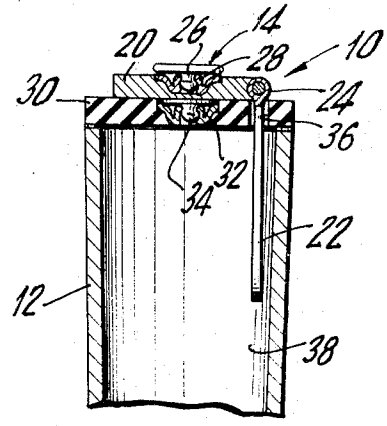


FIG. 4

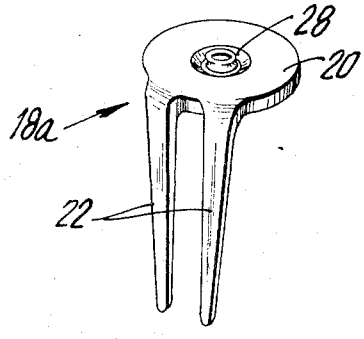


FIG. 5

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COMBINATION GREEN FIXING TOOL AND BALL MARKER

The present invention relates generally to golf accessories, and more particularly to a combination green fixing tool and ball marker.

Several times in each round of golf the ball is driven onto the green with a force sufficient to cause a slight indentation in the surface. When the ball is hit properly, a high arc and slight backspin are imparted to the ball and the impact and resulting indentation in the green is maximized. The courteous golfer, who is concerned for his fellow players, usually attempts to remove this indentation such as by stamping the affected green surface with his spiked shoe or golf tee. Tools for fixing the green have long been available, but few golfers, whether duffers or highly skilled, carry such tools primarily as a result of the inconvenience of carrying the tool around in their pockets. As a result of this failure to carry a tool, most golfers neglect the courtesy of repairing the green surface with the result that the condition of the greens and the quality of play are both adversely affected.

In playing a round of golf, the player often has to mark the position of his ball on the green after the ball is temporarily removed therefrom to permit another golfer to putt his ball into the cup in an unimpeded path. The common method of the average golfer seeking to mark the position of his ball is to fumble in his pocket until he locates a coin, most often a dime, which he places at the position of the ball. However, the search for a dime may be lengthy, or even futile, so that the golfer may use a tee as a ball marker. This expedient, however, is injurious to the quality of the green surface.

As in the case of green fixing tools, ball markers have long been available to the golfer. However, as with the green fixing tools, the average golfer has also failed to utilize any of the commercially available markers, and most golfers continue to use dimes for this purpose.

The prime reason for the failure of the millions of golfers to employ the available green fixing tools and ball markers is that most of them must be carried loose in the golfer's pockets and are thus often forgotten or lost. Moreover, in the course of a round, the player carrying one of these devices may even forget that he is carrying it and thus fail to use it when called for. To make the use of such tools more convenient, it has been proposed, such as disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 2,979,335, to carry either a green-fixing tool or a ball marker in the handle of a golf club. These proposed arrangements have, however, gone largely unaccepted by the majority of golfers due to their excessive cost and undue complexity of construction and use.

It is an object of the invention to provide a device to encourage the average golfer to fix greens, while simultaneously providing a convenient ball marker.

A further object is to provide a green fixing tool and ball marker at a minimum cost to the golfer.

It is a further object to oprovide a combination green fixing tool and ball marker that is simple to manufacture, convenient to use, and inexpensive to purchase.

To these ends, I have developed a combination green fixing tool and ball marker which fits into the the top of the putter (or other club). The ball marker and green fixing tool are detachably secured to one another and when thus assembled can be received and reliably retained as a unitary assembly in the golf club.

To the accomplishment of the above and to all other objects as may hereinafter appear, the present invention relates to a combination green fixing tool and ball marker as defined in the appended claims, and as described in greater detail in the following specification taken together with the accompanying drawing in which:

FIG. **1** is a fragmentary elevation of a golf club including the combination green fixing tool and ball marker of my invention:

FIG. **2** is an exploded view, on an enlarged scale as compared to FIG. **1**, of the upper end of a golf club and the individual elements of the combination tool and marker;

FIG. **3** is a plan view of the assembled combination tool and ball marker;

FIG. **4** is a cross-sectional view taken across line **4**—**4** of FIG. **3**; and

FIG. **5** is a perspective view of a modified version of the combination green fixing tool and ball marker of the invention.

Referring now to the drawings, there is shown in FIG. **1** the combination green fixing tool and golf ball marker generally designated **10** as it is intended for use, that is, releasably received and carried in the upper or grip end of a golf club **12.**

As shown in FIG. **2,** the combination tool **10** includes a ball marker **14** detachably fastened to a green fixing tool **16,** each of which is made of a rigid plastic or lightweight metal such as aluminum. Ball marker **14** includes a disc-like colored member **18** of an area, texture, and color to make it readily visible when placed on a green in lieu of the removed golf ball. Green fixing tool **16** also includes a handle element **20** having a diameter greater than that of colored disc **18.** Handle element **20** is secured to a bifurcated prong **22** by means of a hinge **24.** As shown prong **22** extends substantially perpendicularly to the handle end **20.** As herein specifically disclosed, the ball marker is releasably fastened to the green fixing tool by means of a snap which comprises a male snap element **26** projecting centrally and downwardly from colored disc element **14,** which is received in a snap engagement in a mating female snap element **28,** which is centrally positioned and projects upwardly from the green fixing handle element.

The assembled combination tool **10** is attached to the golf club as shown by FIGS. **2** – **4** by means of a disc-shaped cover **30** secured to the other end of the golf club. Cover **30** includes a female snap element **32** projecting upwardly therefrom for releasable snap engagement with a male snap element **34** projecting downwardly and axially aligned with snap element **26.** A slot **36** is formed in cover **30** through which prong **22** passes into the hollow interior **38** of the golf club (FIG. **4**).

The combination tool-marker device of the invention is used by releasing the tool from its snap retention to the golf club. The tool may be detached from the golf club as a unit when it is desired to use the fixing tool **16.** Alternatively, if only the ball marker is to be used, the green fixing tool may be left attached to the club, and the ball marker is released from its snap engagement with the green fixing tool.

The green fixing tool is employed by inserting the prong element into the green turf. The green fixing tool is thereafter pulled upward to relieve the indentation in

the green caused by the landing of the ball thereon. When it is desired to employ the ball marker, the golf ball is carefully removed from its position on the green and that position is precisely marked with the marker which is placed at the location previously occupied by the ball. It will be appreciated that the combination tool-marker is especially useful where both parts are to be used within a brief time sequence.

FIG. **5** illustrates a possible modification of the combination tool and marker of the invention in which the green fixing tool **18***a* is formed of a single integral piece of metal or rigid plastic, and does not require the hinge **24** of the first described embodiment.

The combination green tool and ball marker herein described can be conveniently used by the typical golfer to either repair the green surface when necessary or to mark the position of his ball on the green. The tool is convenient to use, and since it is carried directly on the golf club, to wit, the putter it is unlikely to be lost or forgotten. In addition to these factors, the tool-marker combination is inexpensive and thus within the economic reach of all golfers.

It is to be recognized that means other than snaps are available for releasably fastening the green fixing tool and ball marker. It should also be appreciated that there are other possible variations that may be made to the combination green tool-marker herein specifically disclosed.

What is claimed is:

1. In a green repairing tool and ball marker combination adapted for mounting on a golf club, the improvement comprising: a substantially planar ball marker; a green repairing tool having a generally planar handle; first fastening means being provided for releasably mounting said ball marker on a first face of said handle; second fastening means being provided for releasably mounting the tool on a radially extending surface defining the axial end of a golf club with a second face of said handle in opposed face relationship with the radially extending surface; and green repairing prong means depending generally normally from said planar handle.

2. The improvement according to claim **1** wherein said green repairing prong means depends from the periphery of said planar handle.

3. The improvement according to claim **1** wherein said green repairing prong means is hingedly connected to said planar handle.

4. The improvement according to claim **1** wherein said first and second fastening means comprise first and second pairs of snaps.

5. The improvement according to claim **4** wherein said snaps are co-axially aligned generally centrally of said planar handle.

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