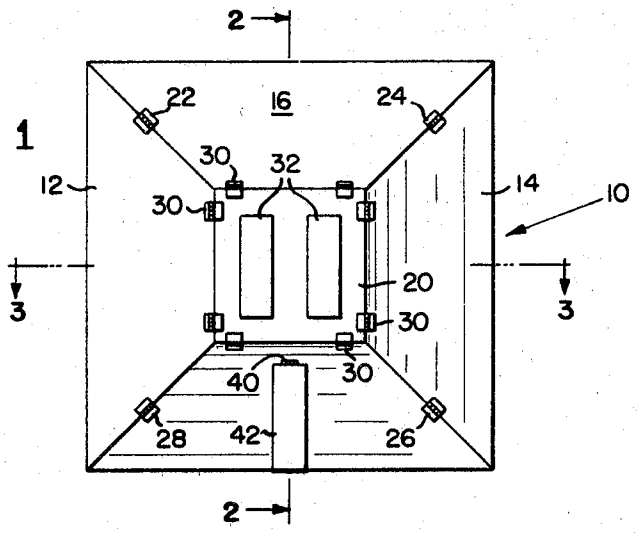
July 2, 1968 H. L. MEGERLE 3,390,882

PORTABLE GOLF DRIVING RANGE INCLUDING HINGE MEANS CONNECTING SELF-SUPPORTING PANELS

Filed Feb. 9, 1966

FIG. 1



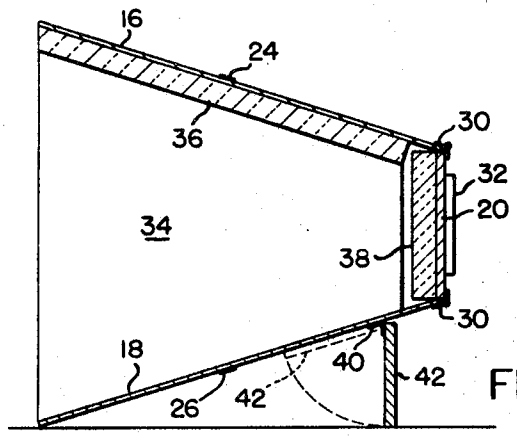


FIG. 2

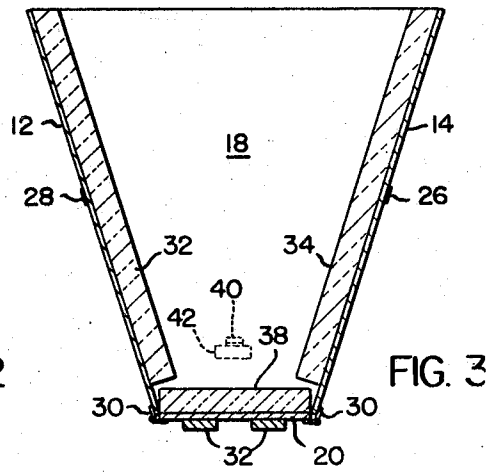


FIG. 3

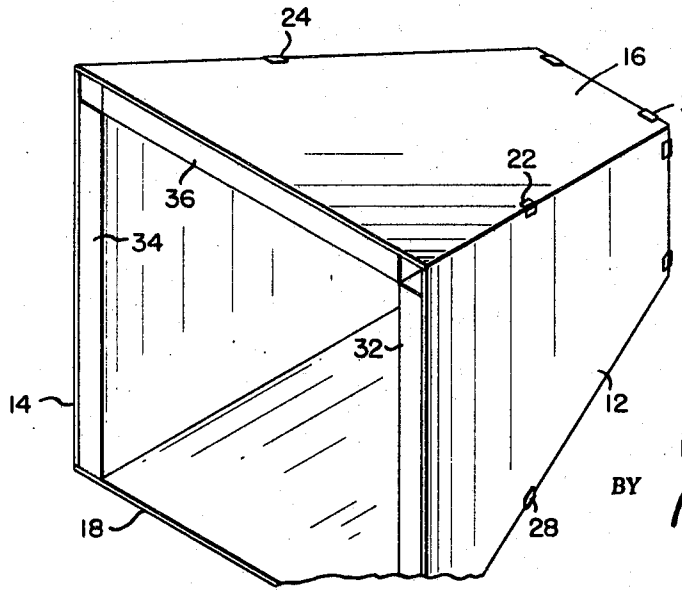


FIG. 4

INVENTOR.
HERBERT L. MEGERLE
BY
ATTORNEY

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PORTABLE GOLF DRIVING RANGE INCLUDING HINGE MEANS CONNECTING SELF-SUPPORTING PANELS

Herbert L. Megerle, 669 Seward St., Rochester, N.Y. 14611

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This invention relates to practice apparatus for golfers, and more particularly to a portable golf driving range.

Most golfers will agree, that to excel in the sport of golfing, they must heed the old adage "practice makes perfect." For the golfers who reside in climates where the sport is necessarily rather seasonal, devices have been provided which permit such golfers to practice their strokes out of season. Such prior devices include portable driving ranges which can be erected in a garage, yard, basement, etc., to function as a backstop or catcher against which a golfer may drive golf balls; but these, as a general rule, are made of canvas or netting.

A major disadvantage of such prior ranges is that they are easily ripped, or torn, and are difficult to store. Moreover, the golf balls driven into the canvas or netting of such range, must thereafter be retrieved and returned to the simulated tee or area from which they were originally driven.

An object of this invention is to provide a portable golf driving range, which is substantially sturdier than prior such ranges, and which is collapsible so as to occupy a minimum amount of storage space.

A further object of this invention is to provide an improved driving range of the type described, which tends to return a driven golf ball approximately to the point from where it was driven.

Other objects of the invention will be apparent hereinafter from the specification and from the recital of the appended claims, particularly when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawing.

In the drawing:

FIG. 1 is a rear view of a portable driving range made in accordance with one embodiment of this invention;

FIG. 2 is a sectional view taken along the line 2—2 in FIG. 1 looking in the direction of the arrows;

FIG. 3 is a sectional view taken along the line 3—3 in FIG. 1 looking in the direction of the arrows; and

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of this range.

Referring now to the drawing by numerals of reference, a collapsible driving range or golf ball catcher made in accordance with one embodiment of this invention is designated at **10**. This range, which decreases in area from front to rear, is truncated pyramidal in shape, and rectangular in cross section. It has side panels **12** and **14**, a top panel **16**, a bottom panel **18**, and a rear panel **20**. The panels **12**, **14**, **16** and **18** are trapezoidal in shape, and have the confronting side edges thereof pivotally connected by hinges **22**, **24**, **26** and **28**. The end panel **20** is rectangular and is pivotally connected at its marginal edge to the rear marginal edges of each of the panels **12**, **14**, **16** and **18** by a pair of hinges **30**. Two spaced, parallel cleats or reinforcing members **32** are secured to the outer face of the rear panel **20**.

Secured to and covering the inside face of each of the panels **12**, **14**, **16** and **20** is a thick, resilient layer of insulation or padding **32**, **34**, **36** and **38**, respectively.

Pivotally connected at one end thereof by a hinge **40** to the outer face of the bottom panel **18** adjacent the rear edge thereof is a collapsible supporting leg **42**.

To use the device, the forward edge of the lower panel **18** is placed upon the ground, or, if the range is used indoors, upon the floor, and the leg **42** is pivoted downwardly to support the rear end of the range **10** slightly

above ground or floor level. This, as shown more clearly in FIGS. 1 and 2, causes the lower panel **18** to be inclined to the horizontal downwardly from its rear edge toward its forward edge.

In use, a golfer tees up his golf ball at any convenient point in front of the range, and drives into the front, open end of the range. If the ball strikes the inclined, lower panel **18**, it will bounce against one of these side pads **32** or **34**, or against the upper pad **36**, and back down onto the lower panel **18**. The pads **32**, **34**, **36** absorb much of the striking force of the ball. Since the panel **18** is not covered with resilient material, the ball will roll out of the range **10**, and back in the direction from which it was driven. Similarly, if the driven ball strikes directly against the pad **38** on the rear panel **20**, or first against one of the panels **32**, **34** or **36** and then against the rear panel, the cushioning effect of the pads will cause the ball to drop harmlessly onto the lower panel **18** to be returned thereby in the direction of the golfer.

The panels **12**, **14**, **16**, **18** and **20** may be made from plywood, or a like self-supporting material. Each of the hinges **22**, **24**, **26** and **28** and **30** has a pintle, which may be removed manually, thereby readily to collapse or disassemble the range.

From the foregoing it will be apparent that applicant has devised a relatively simple, sturdy, and inexpensive driving range which may be set up in a garage, yard, living room, or other suitable area, to permit practice golf strokes without endangering persons or nearby property. Moreover, with this novel range the driven golf ball is automatically returned toward the golfer after its striking force has been absorbed by the range.

While the invention has been described in connection with a specific embodiment thereof, it will be understood that it is capable of further modification, and this application is intended to cover any variations, uses, or adaptations of the invention following, in general, the principles of the invention and including such departures from the present disclosure as come within known or customary practice in the art to which the inventon pertains and as may be applied to the essential features hereinbefore set forth, and as fall within the scope of the invention or the limits of the appended claims.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim is:

1. A portable driving range for golfers, comprising

(a) a first plurality of rigid, trapezoidally shaped panels constructed of self-supporting material,

(b) a further rigid panel constructed of self-supporting material and having a number of sides equal to the number of said first panels,

(c) hinge means connecting said panels together so that they form a self-supporting readily disassembled container having a diminishing cross sectional area, and which is open at its larger end and closed at its smaller end by said further panel,

(d) resilient means secured to certain of said panels to cushion and halt the flight of a golf ball driven into the open end of said container, and

(e) pivotally mounted leg means for holding said container in a position such that one of said first plurality of panels forms a bottom inclined to the horizontal so that a ball driven into the container will be returned by gravity out of the open end of the container after its flight is halted.

2. A portable driving range as defined in claim **1**, wherein said hinge connecting means comprises

(a) a first plurality of hinges pivotally connecting the sides of said further panel to the sides of said first panels which are the shorter of the parallel sides of said first panels, and

(b) a further plurality of hinges pivotally connecting the inclined sides of each of said first panels to the

inclined sides of adjacent ones of said first panels.

3. A portable driving range as defined in claim 1, wherein said pivotally mounted leg means comprises a rigid leg member pivotally connected at one end thereof to one of said first panels adjacent said further panel, and engageable at its opposite end with a horizontal surface to support the closed end of said container above said surface with said one of said first panels inclined to said surface.

4. A portable driving range as defined in claim 3, wherein

(a) said resilient means comprises a resilient pad secured to and substantially covering one face of each of said panels except said one panel, and

(b) said panels are connected together so that said pads face the interior of said container.

5. A portable driving range as defined in claim 1, wherein

(a) there are four of said first panels, and

(b) said further panel is rectangular.

6. A portable driving range as defined in claim 5, including a pair of spaced, parallel reinforcing cleats secured to the face of said further panel at the exterior of said container.

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RICHARD C. PINKHAM, *Primary Examiner.*

G. J. MARLO, *Assistant Examiner.*