March 1, 1960 A. J. HALLORAN 2,926,919

GOLF PRACTICE DEVICE

Filed Nov. 27, 1957 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

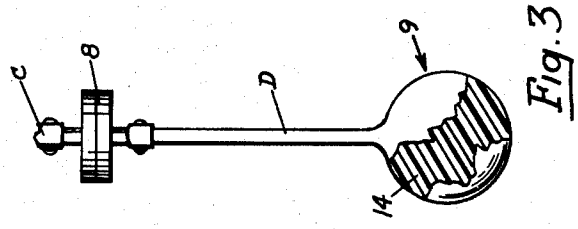


Fig. 3

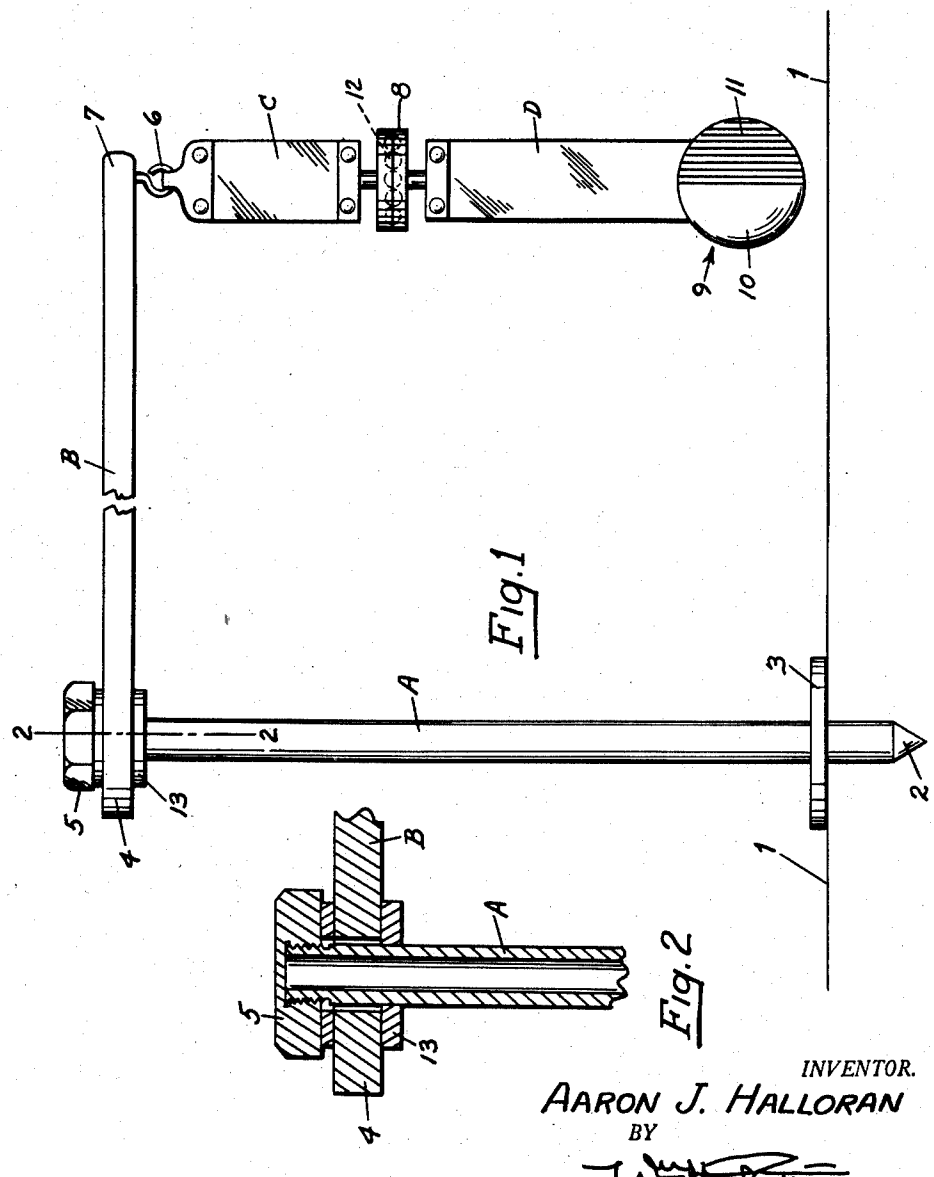


Fig. 1

Fig. 2

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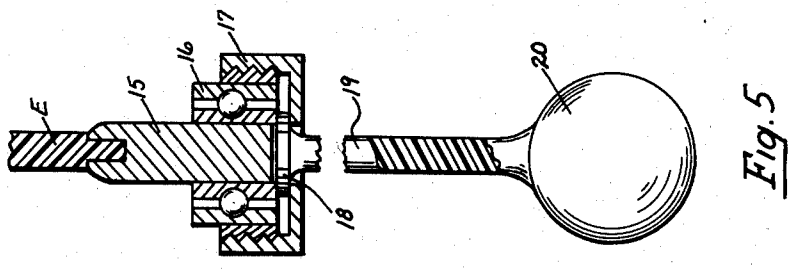


Fig. 5

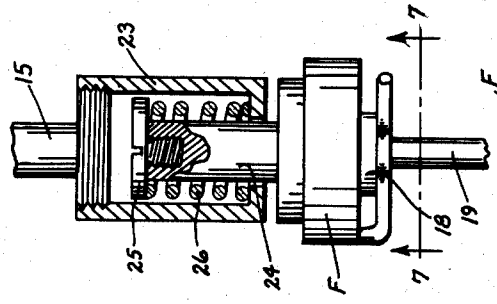


Fig. 6

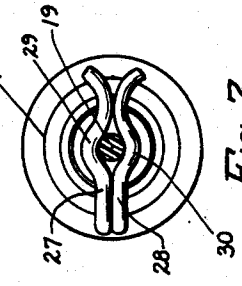


Fig. 7

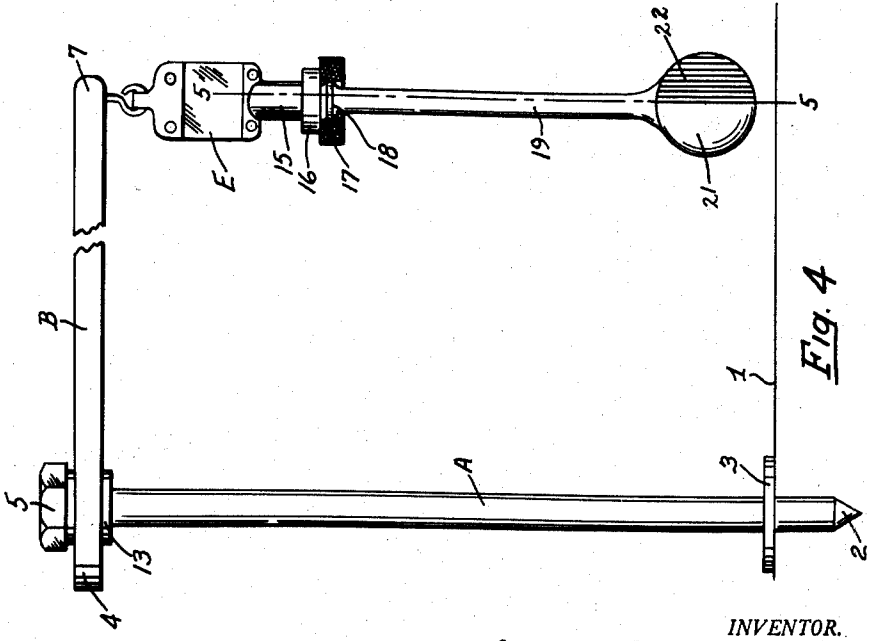


Fig. 4

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GOLF PRACTICE DEVICE

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Application November 27, 1957, Serial No. 699,327

4 Claims. (273—185)

This invention relates to a golf practicing device and therefore is in a sense a game which serves not only to enable the user to perfect his golf stroke but to also obtain exercise and pleasure from the use of the device.

In its broadest sense the device provides a captive ball, which is a simulated golf ball, which is stuck by a golf club in the hands of a user and as to whether or not the golf stroke has resulted in a "sliced" or "hooked" drive can be determined visually from the direction of rotation of the ball.

A captive type ball practicing device is not broadly new but such devices as are known and in use suspend a golf ball by a cord or cable and in either instance the suspending means for the ball is fully flexible. Such devices have been found to be unsafe because it has been found if the ball has not been struck fairly by the head of the golf club, as for instance if the ball is "topped," the cord or cable suspending the ball will wrap around the club head and can result in either breaking the club shaft or pulling the club head from the shaft. The ball suspending means of some known devices of the present sort are in the form of a metal rod or cable and with them if the ball is "topped" the club head will strike the rod or cable which will result in the club head being nicked or marred.

An object of the invention is the provision of a device of the character described which is safe in that the disadvantages above referred to in prior devices are eliminated.

Another object of the invention is the provision of means to permit the simulated ball to rotate freely in either direction, that is clockwise or anti-clockwise, in accordance with the spin imparted to the ball by the manner in which it is struck by the club head to thus permit easy visual determination of whether the ball has been struck in a manner which would result in a "slice" or "hook."

A further object of the invention is the provision of a device of the character described which is comparatively simple of construction, rugged to provide durability, efficient in providing practice and determination of the error in a golf swing, and comparatively low in cost of production.

Another and further object of the invention is the provision of a device of the character described which can be utilized in a comparatively small space or area and which, by slight modification, can be used either indoors or outdoors.

Another and still further object of the invention is the provision of a device of the character described which is portable and which can be quickly and easily assembled and disassembled to permit ready packaging or for storage in a minimum of space.

Other objects and novel features of construction, as well as advantages of the invention, will appear from the following description when read in the light of the accompanying drawings.

In the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a view in side elevation of the improved device.

Fig. 2 is a vertical sectional view on the line 2—2 of Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is a perspective view, partially in vertical section, of the ball and the support therefor, the view being at right angles to Fig. 1.

Fig. 4 is a side elevational view of a modified form of the invention.

Fig. 5 is a vertical sectional view on the line 5—5 of Fig. 4.

Fig. 6 is a side elevational view, partly in vertical section of a further modified form of the invention.

Fig. 7 is a horizontal sectional view on the line 7—7 of Fig. 6, looking in the direction indicated by arrows.

Having reference now to the drawings which illustrate an embodiment of the inventive concept, and utilizing like reference numerals and characters to designate similar parts, A is a standard or support which is intended to extend vertically above the ground 1 by having its pointed end 2 forced into the ground. To facilitate the securement of the standard in the ground it is, adjacent its lower end, provided with a foot tread 3 by means of which the pointed end of the standard can be quickly and conveniently forced the required depth into the ground.

A horizontally disposed arm B has one end 4 rotatably mounted on the upper end of the standard. It is secured against longitudinal displacement by a nut 5 or the like which also permits rapid and easy positioning of the arm on and the removal of the arm from the standard.

A plastic upper strap C has its upper end suitably secured as at 6 to the opposite and free end 7 of the arm B. The lower end of this strap carries a spinner 8 to which is suitably secured a second and lower plastic strap D. Formed as a part of this strap and at the lower end thereof is a simulated golf ball 9. The lengths of the straps C and D are such as to suspend the ball 9 the proper distance above the ground 1 so that it can be struck by the head of a golf club.

The spinner 8 permits the lower strap D and the simulated ball to rotate freely in respect to the upper strap C.

When the device is in use the parts will be positioned as illustrated in Fig. 1. Upon being struck by a club head the simulated ball 9 and its carrying strap D will rotate clockwise should the golf stroke be such that a "slice" would result, and will rotate anti-clockwise should the ball be so struck that a "hook" would result. The direction of rotation of the simulated ball and its strap can be readily visually determined but visual determination of the direction of spin could be made more pronounced by coloring the ball by making half of it one color and half another color as is illustrated in Fig. 2 of the drawings wherein the half of the ball designated 10 could be white and the other half 11 could be red in color.

In accordance with and response to the degree of force with which the ball is struck the horizontal arm B will rotate about the supporting standard A.

The spinner 8 need be of no particular or specific construction in that it merely embodies a roller raceway. In Fig. 1 the roller balls or rollers are designated by dotted lines at 12. It is only necessary that this raceway permit the lower strap D and the simulated ball 9 to rotate freely.

The horizontally disposed and rotating supporting arm B is supported on the upper end of the standard or upright A by a flange 13 or the like.

The straps C and D are made of some suitable soft pliable plastic and the ball 9, which is a part of the lower strap D, is of the same size as a regulation golf ball but would be lighter in weight than a normal ball. It has been pointed out that the means of suspension of the golf ball in devices heretofore known and used is unsatisfactory and dangerous because a fully flexible cord tends to wrap around the club head or shaft if the ball is improperly struck. With the present straps although they yield

they are not sufficiently flexible to wrap around a club head or club shaft and this is of tremendous importance as a safety feature. In Fig. 3 of the drawings the ball is shown partly in cross section as at **14** to indicate that it is plastic in nature. In this figure of the drawing the edges of the straps C and D are shown, whereas in Fig. 1 of the drawings the faces of the strap are shown from which it can be clearly seen that the ball suspension is of a strap form and is not cord-like as might be erroneously assumed from Fig. 3.

A slightly modified form of the invention is illustrated in Fig. 4 where similar parts are given the same reference numerals which they carry in the Fig. 1 construction. The main difference in this form of the invention resides in the supporting means for the simulated ball.

In this figure of the drawings the upper strap E is somewhat shorter than the upper strap C and carries at its lower end an element **15** having on its lower end a raceway **16** to which is threadedly attached a cap **17** in which is secured the head **18** of a soft pliable plastic rod **19** the lower end of which is formed into a ball **20** which is a simulation, as to size, of a regulation golf ball. This rod is not to be confused with a flexible rope or string as it, like the straps C and D, is such that it does not have sufficient flexibility to wrap around the shaft or head of a golf ball. With this construction a new rod and ball can be substituted for the old one should the occasion arise to make this necessary.

In operation this form of the invention is similar to the first described form in that the ball and rod are freely rotatable so that it can be visually determined from the direction of spin of the ball whether the practice stroke has imparted a "slice" or "hook" to the ball. To make this more easily ascertainable half of the ball may be colored differently from the other half as for instance one half white as at **21** and the other half red as at **22**.

A slight further modification of the invention is illustrated in Figs. 6 and 7. Some persons using the device can accelerate the club head with sufficient speed to make it desirable to take up the impact of the force exerted upon the ball.

Accordingly in this form of the invention the lower end of the upper strap E is provided with a housing **23** into which extends a short shaft **24** having a head **25** above a coil spring **26** in the housing **23**. This shaft extends upwardly from a roller raceway designated as an entirety by F. A pair of spring arms **27** and **28** depend from the raceway and intermediate their lengths are outwardly crimped as at **29** and **30** to receive between them the pliable plastic rod **19** with the head **18** of the rod above the spring arms, as clearly appears in Fig. 6 of the drawings.

By this construction the rod and ball **20** are safely detachably secured to the raceway which will permit replacement of a used rod and ball should replacement be necessary.

Departures from the specific constructions illustrated and described can be made without departing from the

inventive concept, and the invention is accordingly to be limited only by the scope of the hereinafter following claims.

What I claim is:

1. In a golf practicing device, a vertical standard, a horizontally disposed arm having an end freely rotatably supported on the standard, a flat strap composed of a soft pliable material having the characteristic that it will not collapse upon itself, said strap depending from the free end of the horizontal arm, an elongated element composed of soft pliable material having the characteristic that it will not collapse upon itself and having a lower end formed to simulate a golf ball, and the lower free end of the strap and the upper end of the elongated element being interconnected by a roller raceway which permits the elongated element to rotate freely about its longitudinal axis in respect to the strap from which it is suspended.

2. A construction as defined in claim 1 wherein, the elongated element which is attached to the strap through the medium of the raceway is in the form of a flat strap the lower end of which is formed into a sphere to simulate a golf ball.

3. A construction as defined in claim 1 wherein, the elongated element the lower end of which is formed to simulate a golf ball is rod-like in form and at its end opposite to the golf ball is provided with an enlargement constituting a head, a connector depending from the lower side of the raceway and embodying a pair of resilient arms disposed in horizontal parallel relationship, said arms intermediate their lengths being provided with opposed crimps to form a passageway, the rod portion of the elongated element being disposed in the passageway formed by the arm crimps, the head of said elongated element being disposed above the arms, and said arms having their ends oppositely disposed and resiliently movable away from one another to permit the insertion of the rod-like element between the arms, whereby the rod-like element is quickly and easily detachably connectable and disconnectable.

4. A construction as defined in claim 3 wherein, a housing is detachably connected to the lower end of the strap, a coil spring in said housing, the raceway being provided with a shaft extending into the housing and through the coil spring therein, said shaft end which is within the housing being provided with a head, and said coil spring being disposed between the bottom of the housing and the under side of said shaft head.

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