April 11, 1933. H. E. RYAN 1,903,480

GAME APPARATUS

Filed Nov. 9, 1929

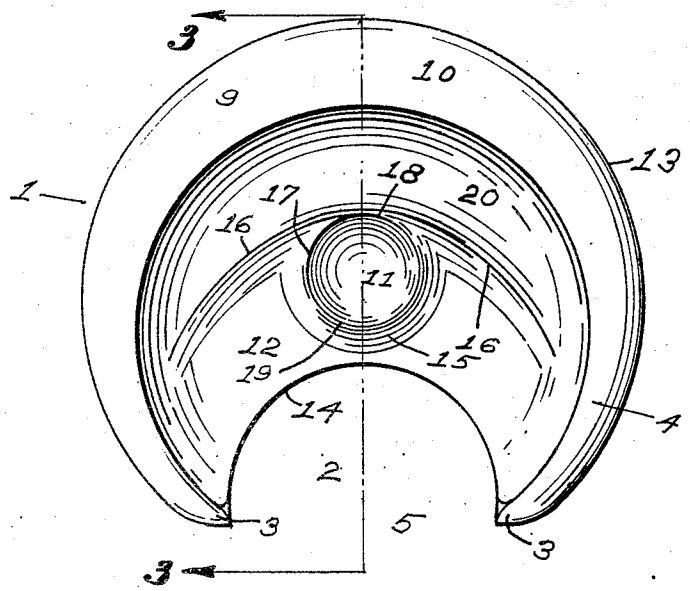


Fig. 1.

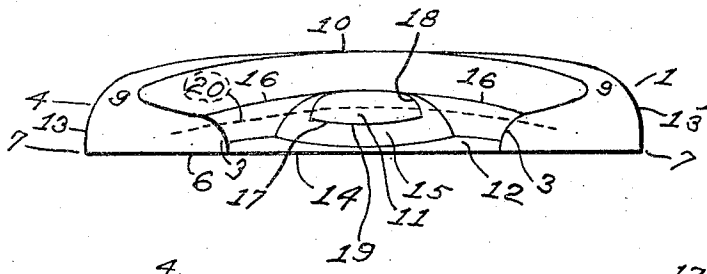


Fig. 2.

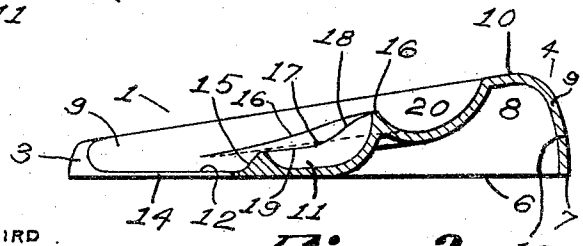


Fig. 3.

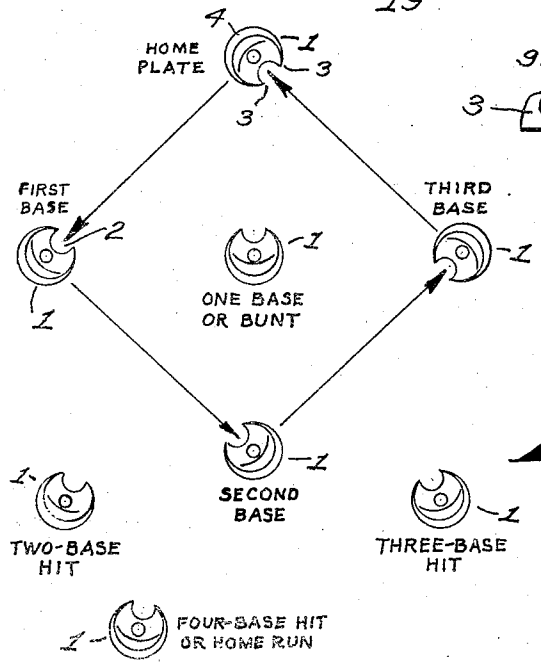


Fig. 4.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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GAME APPARATUS

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This invention relates to game apparatus, and more particularly to a golf putting cup and the arrangement of such cups in the playing of games and their adaptation thereto. It is especially adapted for practice in putting a golf ball.

As is well known, cups are at present used to line the putting holes in golf courses or links, the cups being sunk into the sand or ground below the level thereof. The present invention contemplates the provision of a golf putting cup that will serve its purpose when placed on a flat playing surface, thereby obviating the necessity for forming holes in the ground or surface to receive the same, and enabling the cup to be used indoors on the floor or carpet, as well as outdoors and on concrete or other hard playing surfaces.

A further object of the invention is the provision of a putting cup adapted for use in small spaces.

A further object is the provision of a portable putting cup embodying obstacles or traps or the like, so that the latter need not be especially prepared in the sand and which can be carried away and set up elsewhere intact wherever desired, indoors as well as outdoors, thereby enabling a player to practice wherever convenient and in all kinds of weather to acquire skill in the art of putting.

A further object is the provision of means for indicating to a player divers characteristics of the motion of the ball, thereby aiding him to become proficient by reason of the teaching of such indications.

A further object of the invention is the provision of a novel game involving the use of golf putting cups.

Other objects, advantages, and desirable features of the invention will appear in the course of the following description of an illustrative embodiment of the spirit thereof.

In the accompanying drawing forming part of this specification, in which like numbers of reference denote like parts wherever they occur,

Figure 1 is a plan view of a putting cup embodying the present invention;

Figure 2 is a front elevation of the same;

Figure 3 is a vertical sectional view taken on the line 3—3 in Figure 1; and

Figure 4 is a diagram exhibiting an arrangement of such golf putting cups on a field to simulate a base ball diamond.

The putting cup may be cast or otherwise formed of any suitable material preferably wear-resistant and weather-proof or incorrodible, such, for instance, as an aluminum casting. The cup 1 is preferably of substantially crescent shaped formation in plan view, the substantially semi-circular recess 2 opening laterally or forwardly between the horns or extremities 3 of the crescent 4, the said recess 2 being preferably of the same diameter as that of the regular golf cup, and the opening or mouth 5 of said recess being preferably substantially equal to said diameter. The bottom 6 is such that the cup rests firmly and solidly on an even floor or playing surface, the marginal edge 7 of the bottom preferably lying in one plane so as to engage a level floor at all points, and the inner portions of the bottom face 6 being preferably recessed as at 8 to reduce weight and maintain the casting substantially uniform in thickness throughout. The outer marginal portion of the crescent rises in the form of a flange 9, whose upper face 10 inclines upwardly from the extremities 3 to the middle thereof. A minor recess or golf hole 11 is formed in the upper face 12 of the cup behind the major semi-circular recess 2, and preferably centrally with relation to the outer edge 13 of the flange 9. The hole 11 is preferably substantially equal in diameter to the golf ball. The upper face 12 inclines radially in all directions from the edge 14 of the laterally opening semi-circular major recess 2 and extends to the steeper incline or bunker 15 that surrounds the hole or pit 11, to the crescent shaped bunker or prominence 16 whose middle portion merges with the circular bunker 15 behind the hole 11 and whose end portions merge into the flange 9 in juxtaposition to the extremities 3 thereof, and to the portions of the flange 9 intermediate the extremities 3 and the extremities of the prominence 16. The edge 14 is preferably as thin as it is possible to cast it.

The edge 17 of the golf hole 11 inclines from front to rear, the semi-circular rear portion 18 of said edge 17 being steeper than the semi-circular anterior portion 19 thereof and merging into the higher middle portion of the ridge 16. A crescent-shaped groove or trap 20 is formed intermediary of the flange 9 and the ridge 16. The top of the ridge 16 and the bottom of the groove 20 are highest at their middle points directly behind the golf hole 11, and slope down gradually therefrom in opposite directions toward their extremities, the extremities of the bottom of the groove 20, however, being higher than the extremities of the top of the ridge 16 to enable a ball to roll down the groove 20 to the end thereof and then over the extremity of the ridge 16 thereat and down the inclined surface 12 to the recess 2. If desired, the exposed surfaces of the cup may be painted, the golf hole 11 and the remainder of the crescent being done in contrasting colors, such, for instance, as black paint for the golf hole and red paint for the surrounding portion, thereby enabling the golf hole to be more readily distinguished in playing.

A plurality of cups made in accordance with this invention, usually nine or eighteen, as determined by the rules of the game, are distributed to suitable points on the green or lawn, or the floor or carpet in the home, as desired, in lieu of the golf holes or the regulation golf cups that are sunk into the ground or sand on golf links in the well known manner. The cup of this invention is especially useful in confined and limited courses or indoors for simulating the game of golf in miniature or on a miniature scale as far as putting or limited pitching may be considered in the game, the various inclines, holes, bunkers and traps of the cup being especially useful in connection with a golf ball and putter in practicing putting and aiding in the acquisition of skill in the art of putting a golf ball. The bunker or incline 15 and the hole 11, and the trap groove 20 function as means for indicating divers characteristics of the motion of a ball directed to the cup. The point in the cup on which the ball lands is, of course, indicative of the force with which the ball is pitched. When a ball rolls up the incline 12 and bunker 15 and lands in the golf hole 11, a straight or direction or forward roll is indicated, since the ball will ascend the bunker 15 and land in the hole 11 only when it rolls in a forward direction, that is in a direction that is clockwise as viewed in Figure 3. When the ball rotates counterclockwise, or has what is known as a back spin, it will either not ascend the incline or bunker 15, or else it will hop over the hole 11 and enter the trap groove 20 or pass over the flange 9 and alight behind the cup, depending upon the momentum of the ball. If the ball fails to ascend the bunker 15, it will roll back down the inclined surface 12 into the recess 2 and perhaps back to the player, a rolling back to the right indicating what is known as a "slice" in the pitching, and a return roll to the left revealing a "pull" in pitching, while a return through the middle indicates a straight course in pitching toward the golf hole. A straight course to the golf hole is, also, indicated when the ball settles in the groove or trap 20 directly behind the golf pit 11 and remains there, any deviation to the right or left in the pitching being made manifest by the rolling of the ball down the right or left portions, respectively, of the groove 20, and thence down the inclined surface 12 to the recess 2 and perhaps back to the player. By noting the inaccuracies in pitching and putting as revealed by the said indications, the player is enabled to make compensation and correction therefor in successive trials with greater accuracy than is possible without the use of a cup embodying the indicating conformations of the present invention.

The present invention, also, contemplates arranging the cups 1 on a field in positions to simulate a base ball diamond, as shown in Figure 4, to play a game that is believed to be novel, and original with the present inventor. The other adjuncts are a golf ball and a golf putter; and the game may be played in miniature on the carpet in the home or on the green or lawn, in two different ways: The player may place a golf ball the length of the head of the putter from one of the horns or points 3 of the crescent 4 of the home plate cup 1 and then play or putt either for an infield hit, a two base hit, a three base hit or a four base hit, which is a home run, using one putt or stroke only; or he may play or putt for first base and the other bases in succession, in which case he will have three strokes or putts to hole out, providing that the stroke or putt is up to the cup 1 or strikes and bounces off the outside of the cup. If the putt or stroke rolls over the cup or is trapped by the groove 20 and rolls down the incline and returns to the player, the player is automatically "out". The player is in if the ball lands in the golf hole 11, inclined surface 12, or the recess 2. To hole out means to play or putt the ball within the semi-circular recess 2, the anterior limit of which consists of an imaginary straight line connecting the tips or horns 3 of the crescent 4, in one stroke, if the game is played the first way, or in two extra strokes or a total of three, one for each base, if the game is played the second way. If short of the hole the player is automatically "out", following the well known golf maxim that a ball is "never up, never in". If the ball is played or putted into the small golf hole 11 in a continuous stroke or putt, this counts for an extra

or stolen base. If, however, the player overshoots and goes into the trap 20 and is trapped and rolls out or goes over, the player is "out". The small golf hole successfully played in one stroke from the preceding cup counts for a stolen base and the player advances two bases instead of one, if the game is played the second way. This does not, however, apply if the player elects to play the first way. The game can be played by one person, by two persons (a twosome), by three persons (a threesome), by four persons (a foursome), or by sides of nine players each as in baseball, following the usual rules and usages of golf and baseball as far as they are applicable to the use of the cups 1.

It will be understood and appreciated that the use of the term "cup" in the specification and claims is intended to be broad and comprehensive, and to include devices of any shape, whether of strictly true cup form or not, that serve the purpose of a golf cup.

Having thus fully described this invention, I hereby reserve the benefit of all changes in form, arrangement, order or use of parts, as it is evident that many minor changes may be made therein without departing from the spirit of this invention or the scope of the following claims.

I claim:

1. A portable golf putting cup having a substantially crescent-shaped upper face that inclines from the edge of the recess formed between the extremities of the crescent, said face having a golf hole defined by an inclosing circular ridge behind said recess, and an upwardly presented flange that is co-extensive with the outer margin of said upper face, the extremities of the crescent being equidistant from a line passing through the center of the golf hole.

2. A portable golf putting cup having a substantially crescent-shaped upper face that inclines from the edge of the recess formed between the extremities of the crescent, said face having a golf hole defined by an inclosing circular ridge behind said recess, a crescent-shaped bunker having its medial portion tangent to the rear portion of said ridge, and a flange rising from, and co-extensive with, the margin of the said face, said bunker and flange defining a groove declining in opposite directions from a medial point behind said hole for returning the ball to said recess, the axis of symmetry of the crescent passing through said medial point and the center of the hole.

3. A golf putting cup having an inclosing circular ridge forming the edge of a golf hole, a groove behind the hole declining toward the right and left, the outer face of said ridge inclining toward the hole, and arms extending anteriorly of the hole at opposite sides of the cup and equidistant from a center line of the hole.

4. A golf putting cup having a golf hole, a concentric circular ridge inclosing said hole and rising higher at the rear of the hole than at the front thereof, a groove behind the hole declining toward the right and left, and arms extending anteriorly of the hole at opposite sides of the cup and equidistant from a center line of the hole.

5. A golf putting cup having a golf hole, a concentric circular ridge surrounding said hole, a second ridge extending behind the hole from left to right and merging with the rear of said first mentioned ridge, a third ridge behind the second ridge, said second and third ridges being spaced to define a groove, the bottom of said groove declining toward the right and left, and arms extending anteriorly of the hole at opposite sides of the cup and equidistant from a center line of the hole.

6. A golf putting cup having a golf hole, a concentric circular ridge surrounding said hole, a second ridge extending behind the hole tangent to the first mentioned ridge, the second ridge being higher at its point of tangency than the fore part of the first-mentioned ridge, a third ridge behind the second ridge and higher than the latter, said second and third ridges being spaced to define a groove, the bottom of said groove declining toward the right and left, and arms extending anteriorly of the hole at opposite sides of the cup and equidistant from a center line of the hole.

7. A portable golf putting cup having a substantially crescent-shaped upper face that inclines from the edge of the recess formed between the extremities of the crescent, the said face having a golf hole defined by an inclosing circular ridge behind the said recess, the extremities of the crescent being equidistant from a line passing through the center of the golf hole.

8. A portable golf putting cup having an upper face that presents a circular ridge forming the edge of a golf hole, and arms extending anteriorly of the hole at opposite sides of the cup and equidistant from a medial line radiating from the center of the golf hole.

In testimony whereof I hereunto affix my signature.

HERBERT E. RYAN.