

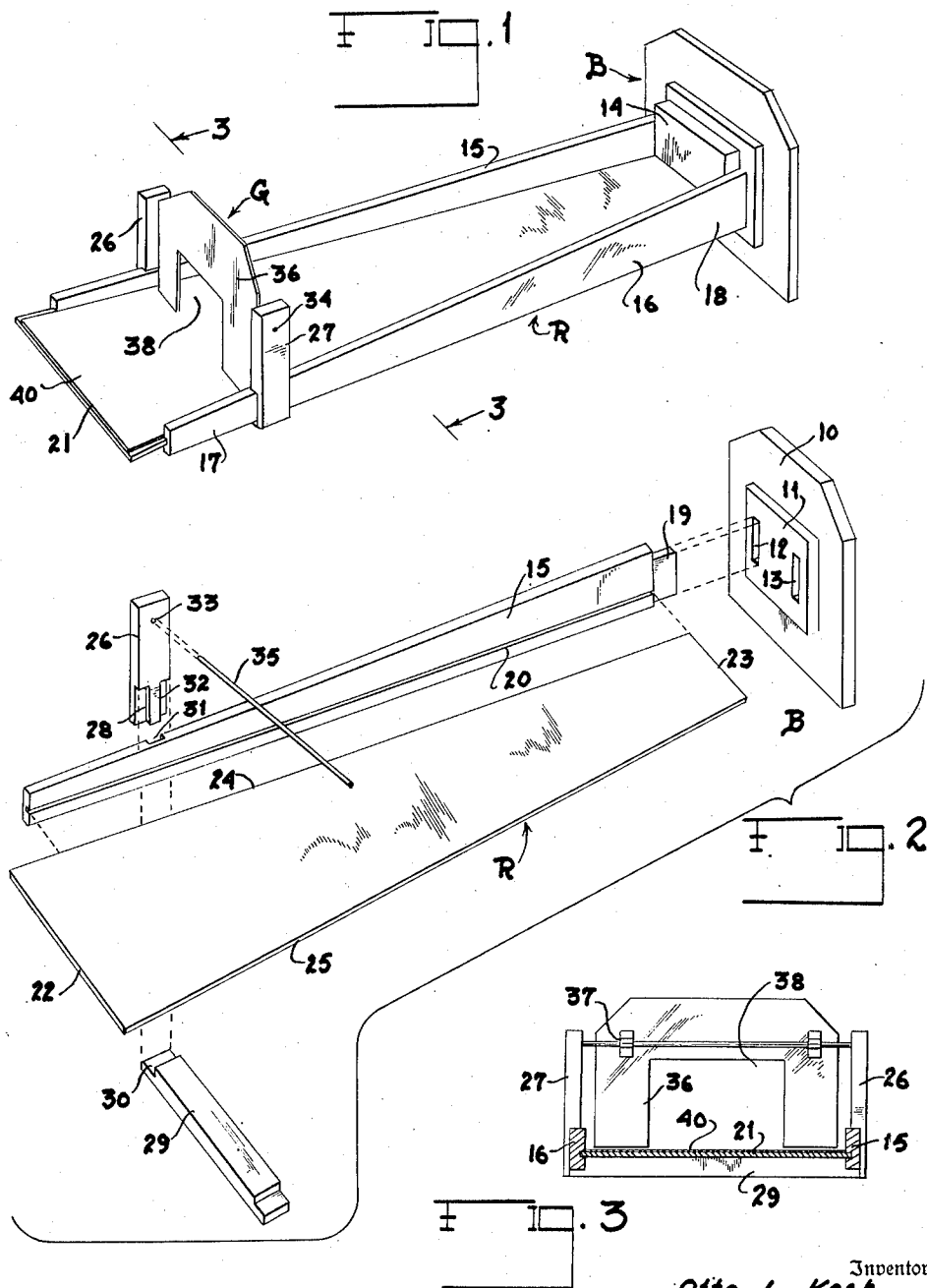
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PRACTICE TARGET FOR PUTTING

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PRACTICE TARGET FOR PUTTING

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The present invention deals with devices employed by golfers for the purpose of practicing their putting and is concerned primarily with certain improvements which particularly adapt such a device for use in the home.

At the present time, golf is a sport which is widely played by the public. During inclement seasons and on other occasions golfers are desirous of practicing their putting at home or in other similar places. Such practicing operations give rise to certain conditions which must be met by the device employed if it is to meet with the approval of the user.

In the first place, the device must be of such a character as to indicate whether a putt which has been made is accurate or inaccurate. Secondly, the device should be effective to return a putted ball to the immediate proximity of the putter and finally there should not be any loud noises created as an incident to use of the device, such as by a golf ball striking a hard surface.

The present invention has as its foremost objective the provision of a putting device which will satisfy all of these conditions.

More in detail, the invention has as an object the provision of a device of the character indicated which includes as an essential element an inclined ramp. The upper end of this ramp terminates in a back stop which is covered by a pad of soft rubber or other comparable material. This pad performs two functions. In the first instance it deadens the sound of a golf ball striking thereagainst, thus eliminating the possibility of the use of the device being objectionable or annoying to other occupants in the home in which it is used. In the second instance, the resilient nature of the pad causes the ball to rebound and imparts thereto a return impetus which cooperates with the inclination of the ramp to return the ball to the area from which it was originally struck.

Another highly important object of the invention is to provide, in a putting device of the type noted, means located at an appropriate point along the ramp for indicating whether or not a golf ball has been accurately putted. This means preferably takes the form of a gate which is swingably mounted on a horizontal axis and which includes a central opening or aperture through which a golf ball is adapted to pass. If a putt is accurate, the ball will pass through the opening in the gate without imparting any movement thereto. On the other hand, if the putt is not accurate it will strike the gate on either side of the opening and cause the gate to swing on its axis thereby indicating the inaccurate character of the putt.

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A further somewhat more detailed object of the invention is to provide, in a putting device of the character noted, a gate for indicating the accuracy of the putts which is of a very light construction and will not materially interfere with or impede the travel of the ball as it is deflected thereby, so as to insure that the ball will return to the proximity of the putter carrying out the practicing operations.

Various other more detailed objects and advantages of the invention such as arise in connection with carrying out the above noted ideas in a practical embodiment will, in part become apparent, and in part be hereinafter stated as the description of the invention proceeds.

The invention, therefore, comprises a putting practice device which consists essentially of an inclined ramp having a backstop at its upper end provided with a rubber pad and with a gate swingably mounted on a horizontal axis adjacent its lower end and formed with an aperture through which a putted ball is adapted to pass.

For a full and more complete understanding of the invention, reference may be had to the following description and accompanying drawing wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a practice putting device designed in accordance with the precepts of this invention.

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the device shown in Figure 1 with the parts developed in exploded relation; and

Figure 3 is a vertical section through the device taken about on the plane represented by the line 3—3 of Figure 1.

Referring now to the drawing wherein like reference characters denote corresponding parts and first more particularly to Figure 1, the device for practicing putting which is provided by this invention is shown as comprising three main elements. These are: a ramp which is referred to in its entirety by the reference character R, a backstop B, and a gate G.

Upon referring to Figure 2, it will be noted that the backstop B comprises a vertical panel 10 which may be made from any appropriate material of which wood is one example. This panel may have any ornamental configuration desired and while it is described as being vertical, it will in actual use assume a position which is slightly inclined with respect to the true vertical.

Secured to one face of the panel 10 is a block 11 with the joinder being effected in any preferred manner such as by using an adhesive or other fastening elements. The block 11 is formed with a pair of openings 12 and 13 which are located at the opposite sides thereof and which preferably

take the rectangular formation illustrated. These openings are continued back through the panel 10. As shown in Figure 1 a pad 14 is mounted on the exposed face of the block 11 between these openings 12 and 13. This pad 14 is preferably of a soft rubber although it may be made from any material which has the ability to deaden sound coupled with the property of resiliency so that it will impart a return impetus to a golf ball striking thereagainst.

The ramp R comprises two side members 15 and 16 which are substantial duplicates. Each of these members has a tapered construction as illustrated providing a more shallow depth at the lower end as represented at 17, and a greater depth at the other end as indicated at 18. Each of the members 15 and 16 at its wider end 18 is formed with a reduced extension 19 and these extensions 19 correspond in size and shape to the openings 12 and 13 in which they are snugly received. This connection between the side members 15 and 16 and the backstop B may be rendered permanent by using an adhesive in the joints between the extensions 19 and the holes 12 and 13.

The inner face of each of the sidepieces 15 and 16 is formed with a longitudinally extending groove 20, and it will be noted that these grooves are substantially parallel to the lower edges of the sidepieces but have a nonparallel relation with respect to the upper edges. The sidepieces 15 and 16 may be made from any material desired although the invention has particularly in mind the use of the same material employed in making the backstop parts 10 and 11, such as wood.

A ramp bottom or floor is designated 21. This bottom is preferably made from a thin sheet material such as cardboard and it will be noted is defined by a long bottom edge 22, a narrow top edge 23, and side edges 24 and 25 which converge from the wide bottom to the narrow top. The side edges 24 and 25 are received in the grooves 20 in the sidepieces 15 and 16.

It will be noted that the rubber pad 14 is snugly positioned on the bottom 21 above the narrow edge 23 so as to completely fill the space between the wider ends of the sidepieces 15 and 16. This rubber pad may extend a slight distance above the top edges of the sidepieces as indicated in Figure 1.

The gate G consists of the vertical standards 26 and 27, the lower end of each of which is cut away to provide a notch as indicated at 28 for receiving the respective sidepiece 15 or 16. A crossbar 29 has its ends notched as indicated at 30 for receiving the lower ends of the standards 26 and 27. This crossbar 29 extends across the underface of the bottom 21 and the notched ends are joined to the lower ends of the standards 26 and 27 in any preferred manner such as by using an adhesive, fastening elements or both.

It will be noted that where the notches 28 receive the sidepieces 15 and 16, the latter are formed with recesses on their outer faces as indicated at 31 and these recesses receive ribs 32 formed on the faces of the notches 28. This insures of a firm interlock between the standards 26 and 27 and the sidepieces 15 and 16.

The upper ends of the standards 26 and 27 are formed with small apertures 33 and 34 which are in alignment. These apertures receive the ends of a shaft 35 which extends across the ramp R in spaced relation thereabove.

The gate proper is designated 36 and is carried by the shaft 35. The connection between the two may be established in any preferred manner such

as by using the fastening elements shown at 37 in Figure 3.

The gate member 36 may be made from any appropriate material, although the invention has particularly in mind the use of a light sheet material having properties of rigidity, such as cardboard. It will be noted that this gate member 36 is formed with an aperture 38 extending inwardly from the lower end thereof and terminating intermediate the ends thereof through which a golf ball is adapted to pass when a putt is accurately made. If the putt is not accurate it will strike the member 36 on either side of the opening 38 and it is important that the gate 36 be sufficiently light so as not to materially impede the travel of the golf ball.

It will be noted that the bottom 21 is made from a fairly rigid sheet. This bottom is preferably covered by a sheet 40 of a material which more closely resembles a putting surface such as blotting paper on which the golf ball will take a more natural roll. This sheet 40 is shaped to accurately conform to the bottom 21 and is fitted in between the sidepieces 15 and 16.

While the manner of using the practice putting device above described is believed to be obvious from the description given, it is noted that the putter stands in a position an appropriate distance in front of the lower wider end 22 of the ramp and substantially in alignment with the rubber pad 14 and opening 38. When he strikes the golf ball the wide expanse of the lower end of the ramp just about insures that the ball will at least go on to the ramp. If it passes through the opening 38 there will be no deflection of the gate which will indicate that the putt has been accurately made. On the other hand, if the putt is not accurate the ball will strike the member 36 on either side of the opening 38 to cause a swinging deflection of the gate which indicates to the putter the character of his putt. As the ball travels up the ramp, it is confined by the converging sidepieces 15 and 16 and its travel in that direction is finally stopped by the pad 14 against which it strikes. The sound of the impact is deadened by the pad and the ball is given a return impetus which coupled with gravity action caused by the inclination of the ramp will return the ball to the proximity of the putter.

While a preferred specific embodiment of the invention is hereinbefore set forth, it is to be clearly understood that the invention is not to be limited to the exact constructions and elements illustrated and described because various modifications of these details may be provided in putting the invention into practice within the purview of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A practice putting device of the character described, comprising in combination, an inclined ramp, a backstop supporting the upper end of said ramp, and a gate swingably mounted on a horizontal axis spaced an appreciable distance above said ramp, said gate having a lower end below said axis and spaced from said ramp a slight distance when said gate assumes a vertical position over said ramp, the space between the lower end of said gate and said ramp being less than the diameter of a conventional golf ball, said gate being formed with a central aperture.

2. A practice putting device of the character described, comprising in combination, an inclined ramp having a lower end and an upper end, a backstop supporting said upper end, a pad of resilient material carried by said backstop and po-

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sitioned over said upper end, and a gate formed with a central aperture and swingably mounted on a horizontal axis in a vertical position over said ramp adjacent to the lower end thereof, said gate having a lower end that is spaced from said ramp a distance that is less than the diameter of a conventional golf ball.

3. A practice putting device comprising an inclined ramp having a floor and an upper end, a backstop supporting said upper end and secured to said ramp, a pad of resilient material carried by said backstop and positioned over said upper end of said ramp, a sheet of material fabricated to provide a putting surface superimposed upon said floor and secured thereto, and a gate mounted for swinging movement about a horizontal axis adjacent one end thereof and above said ramp and carried by said ramp and the other end of said gate being spaced from the floor of said ramp a distance that is less than the diameter of a conventional golf ball, said gate being provided with a central aperture.

4. A practice putting device comprising an inclined ramp having a floor and an upper end, a backstop supporting said upper end and secured to said ramp, a pad of resilient material carried by said backstop and positioned over said upper end of said ramp, a sheet of material fabricated to provide a putting surface superimposed upon said floor and secured thereto, and a gate mounted for swinging movement about a horizontal axis adjacent one end thereof and above said ramp and carried by said ramp and the other end of said gate being spaced from the floor of said ramp a distance that is less than the diameter of a conventional golf ball, said gate being provided with an aperture extending inwardly from said other end thereof and terminating intermediate the ends thereof.

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5. A practice putting device comprising an inclined ramp having a floor and said ramp converging from the lower end thereof toward the upper end thereof, a backstop supporting said upper end and secured to said ramp, a pad of resilient material carried by said backstop and positioned over said upper end of said ramp, a sheet of material fabricated to provide a putting surface superimposed upon said floor and secured thereto, and a gate mounted for swinging movement about a horizontal axis adjacent one end thereof and above said ramp and carried by said ramp and the other end of said gate being spaced from the floor of said ramp a distance that is less than the diameter of a conventional golf ball, said gate being provided with an aperture extending inwardly from said other end thereof and terminating intermediate the ends thereof.

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