A Golf Tee Holder

A system for practicing golf is disclosed. The system includes a golf tee holder (34), a lie modifying wedge (106), a lie modifying sheet (132), and a lie modifying bag (152). The golf tee holder (34) is a small, rubber component placed under a driving range mat (58), which holds a real golf tee (84) at an adjustable height. The lie-modifying wedge (106) is a foam wedge that is placed under or on top of the driving range mat (58) to manipulate the lie of the golf ball (100) on the driving range mat (58) amongst uphill, downhill, and side-hill lies. The lie-modifying sheet (132) and lie-modifying bag (152) are relatively flat components placed on top of and anchored to the driving range mat (58) and used as surfaces from which to hit golf balls from different materials simulating hazards on a golf course, such as long grass, a hard pan lie, and a sand trap.
A GOLF TEE HOLDER

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the invention

[0001] This invention relates to a golf tee holder and a system for practicing golf.

2. Discussion of related art

[0002] Golf players spend a great deal of their practice time at driving ranges where they can hit real golf balls using full swings. Most golf players prefer to practice hitting golf balls from natural turf. However, many driving ranges today do not have natural turf and only offer their patrons artificial driving range mats from which to hit.

[0003] The typical system for hitting a golf ball from an artificial driving range mat includes the mat itself with a hitting surface and an artificial tee made of a molded material. Players can either hit golf balls from the hitting surface itself or tee the ball up on the artificial tee. The artificial tee is a cylindrical in shape and extends upwards through a hole in the driving range mat to a set height above the hitting surface. The driving range mat is flat, and there is only one surface from which the golf players can hit.

[0004] One disadvantage of this system is the artificial tee does not allow players to use real, wooden tees when practicing on driving range mats. Another disadvantage is the artificial tee does not allow players to adjust the height at which their golf ball is teed when practicing on the driving range mats. A further
disadvantage is the golf players can only practice from flat lies from a surface that simulates hitting from very short grass.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] The invention provides for a golf tee holder including a base portion having a first horizontal width and a lower surface to position on a horizontal surface, and a holding piece secured to and extending upwardly from the base portion, the holding piece having a second horizontal width less than the first horizontal width and an opening in an upper end thereof, the opening having a diameter and the holding piece being a material such that a stem of a golf tee having a diameter between 3 mm and 6 mm inserted into the opening is frictionally held by opposing surfaces of the opening.

[0006] The base portion may be circular in shape.

[0007] The base portion may have a diameter between 40 mm and 70 mm and a thickness between 2 mm and 7 mm.

[0008] The holding piece may be cylindrical in shape.

[0009] The holding piece may have a height between 20 mm and 50 mm and a diameter between 10 mm and 30 mm.

[0010] The opening in the holding piece may extend completely through the holding piece to allow a lodged piece of a first golf tee to be ejected by inserting a second golf tee therein.

[0011] The base portion and the holding piece may be made from a single piece of the material.

[0012] The material may be rubber.
[0013] The base portion may be circular in shape with a diameter of approximately 55 mm and a thickness of approximately 5 mm, the holding piece may be cylindrical in shape with a height of approximately 25 mm and a diameter of approximately 15 mm, and the opening may have a diameter of approximately 3 mm.

[0014] The holding piece may be sized to extend upwardly through a hole in a driving range mat with a thickness of approximately 25 mm, the hole having a diameter of approximately 15 mm and extending completely through the driving range mat.

[0015] The invention also provides for a system for practicing golf including a base portion having a first horizontal width and a lower base surface to position on a horizontal surface, a holding piece secured to and extending upwardly from the base portion, the holding piece having a second horizontal width less than the first horizontal width and an opening in an upper end thereof, the opening having a diameter and the holding piece being of a material such that an end of a golf tee having a diameter between 3 mm and 6 mm inserted into the opening is frictionally held by opposing surfaces of the opening, and a driving range mat having a mat hole extending completely through the driving range mat, the mat hole positioned over the holding piece, the driving range mat having a lower mat surface positioned on the horizontal surface.

[0016] The base portion may be positioned between the driving range mat and the horizontal surface.

[0017] The driving range mat may have a hitting surface, the hitting surface being within 10 mm of the upper end of the holding piece.
[0018] The driving range mat may have a third horizontal width, the third horizontal width being at least 1 m.

[0019] The driving range mat may have a base portion groove on the lower mat surface.

[0020] The base portion may be positioned between the driving range mat and the horizontal surface, the lower base surface being approximately coplanar with the lower mat surface, the driving range mat may have a hitting surface approximately coplanar with the upper end of the holding piece, and the driving range mat may have a third horizontal width being approximately 1.5 m.

[0021] The invention further provides a system for practicing golf including a base portion having a first horizontal width and a lower surface to position on a horizontal surface, a holding piece secured to and extending upwardly from the base portion, the holding piece having a second horizontal width less than the first horizontal width and an opening in an upper end thereof, the opening having a diameter, a driving range mat placed on the horizontal surface, the driving range mat having a mat hole positioned over the holding piece, the base portion positioned between the driving range mat and the horizontal surface, and a golf tee having a stem removably inserted into the opening, the diameter of the opening and the holding piece material being such that the stem is frictionally held by opposing surfaces of the opening.

[0022] The golf tee may be held at an adjustable tee height, the adjustable tee height being adjustable by sliding the stem of the golf tee relative to the opening.

[0023] The system for practicing golf may also include a golf ball supported on a supporting component of the golf tee.
[0024] The invention further provides a system for practicing golf including a driving range mat having first and second portions, the first portion on a base support, the base support having an upper surface in a first plane that is substantially horizontal, and a lie-modifying component between the base support and the second portion of the driving range mat, the lie-modifying component having an upper surface, the upper surface of the lie-modifying mat in a second plane at an angle to the first plane so that an upper surface of the second portion of the driving range mat is in a third plane at an angle to the first plane.

[0025] The base support may be the ground.

[0026] The lie-modifying component may have a lower surface on the base support, the lower surface being substantially co-planar with the base support.

[0027] The lie-modifying component may have a length of approximately 1.5 meters and a width of approximately 0.75 meters.

[0028] The lie-modifying component may have a height of approximately 100 mm.

[0029] The second portion of the driving range mat may completely cover the upper surface of the lie-modifying component.

[0030] The driving range mat may have sides in a first direction, and the first portion and the second portion of the driving range mat may be divided by a line, the line being in a second direction, the second direction being parallel to the first direction.

[0031] The invention further provides a system for practicing golf including a driving range mat on a base support, the driving range mat having a hitting surface in a first plane that is substantially horizontal, the hitting surface having first and
second portions, and a lie-modifying component on the second portion of the hitting surface, the lie-modifying component having an upper surface, the upper surface of the lie-modifying component in a second plane at an angle to the first plane.

[0032] The base support may be the ground.

[0033] The lie-modifying component may have a length of approximately 1.5 m and a width of approximately 0.75 m.

[0034] The lie-modifying component may have a maximum thickness of 100 mm.

[0035] The driving range mat may have sides in a first direction, in the first portion in the second portion of the hitting surface maybe divided by a line, the line being in a second direction, the second direction being parallel to the first direction.

[0036] The invention further provides a system for practicing golf including a driving range mat, on a base support, having a first anchoring formation and a hitting surface, a hitting surface material attached to the hitting surface of the driving range mat, the hitting surface material having a first texture, a lie-modifying sheet on the driving range mat, the lie-modifying sheet having an upper surface and a second anchoring formation, the second anchoring formation engaging with the first anchoring formation to secure the lie-modifying sheet to the driving range mat, and a lie-modifying material attached to the upper surface of the lie-modifying sheet, the lie-modifying material having a second texture different from the first texture.

[0037] The first formation may be a circular hole in the driving range mat and the second formation may be a cylinder extending from a lower surface of the lie-modifying sheet, the cylinder size to extend through the hole.
[0038] The lie-modifying sheet may have a length of approximately 60 cm in a width of approximately 30 cm.

[0039] The lie-modifying material may further comprise strands of an artificial material suitable for simulating a rough portion of a golf course.

[0040] The strands of artificial material may have lengths of approximately 7 mm.

[0041] The lie-modifying material may be a sand bag.

[0042] The lie-modifying material may further comprise an upper surface suitable for simulating a hard pan portion of a golf course.

[0043] The invention further provides a system for practicing golf including a driving range mat, on a base support, having a first anchoring formation and an upper surface, an upper surface material attached to the upper surface of the driving range mat, the upper surface material having a first texture, and a lie-modifying bag, on the driving range mat, having a second anchoring formation, a lie-modifying material, and an upper surface on the lie-modifying material such that the upper surface has a second texture different from the first texture, the second anchoring formation engaging with the first anchoring formation to secure the lie-modifying bag to the driving range mat.

[0044] The first formation may be a circular hole in the driving range mat, and the second formation may extend from a lower surface of the lie-modifying mat and the sides to extend through the hole.

[0045] The lie-modifying bag may have a length of approximately 60 cm, a width of approximately 30 cm, and a height of approximately 8 cm.

[0046] The lie-modifying material may be sand.
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0047] The invention is further described by way of example with reference to accompanying drawings wherein:

[0048] Figure 1 is a perspective view of a golf tee holder according to an embodiment of the invention;

[0049] Figure 2 is a cross-sectional side view of the golf tee holder;

[0050] Figure 3 is a top plan view of a typical driving range mat;

[0051] Figure 4 is a cross-sectional side view on 4-4 in Figure 3;

[0052] Figure 5 is view similar to Figure 4 further illustrating the golf tee holder on a horizontal surface;

[0053] Figure 6 is a perspective view of a typical golf tee;

[0054] Figure 7 is a view similar to Figure 5 further illustrating the golf tee and a golf ball;

[0055] Figure 8 is a cross-sectional side view of the golf tee holder with a broken tee stem inserted therein;

[0056] Figure 9 similar to Figure 8 further illustrating a second golf tee inserted into the golf tee holder to eject the broken tee end; and

[0057] Figure 10 is similar to Figure 9 further illustrating the second golf tee fully inserted into the golf tee holder and the ejected broken tee end.

[0058] Figure 11 is a perspective view of a lie-modifying component;

[0059] Figure 12A is a top plan view of the lie-modifying component and the driving range mat;
[0060] Figure 12B is a top plan view of the lie-modifying component and the driving range mat;

[0061] Figure 12C is a top plan view of the lie-modifying component and the driving range mat;

[0062] Figure 12D is a top plan view of the lie-modifying component and the driving range mat

[0063] Figure 13 is a cross-sectional side view on 13-13 in Figure 12A further illustrating the lie-modifying component under the driving range mat on the horizontal surface;

[0064] Figure 14 is a cross-sectional side view on 14-14 in Figure 12B further illustrating the lie-modifying component on the driving range mat on the horizontal surface;

[0065] Figure 15 is a perspective view of a lie-modifying sheet;

[0066] Figure 16 is a top plan view of the lie-modifying sheet placed on a driving range mat;

[0067] Figure 17 is a cross-sectional side view on 16-16 in Figure 16 further illustrating the driving range mat and the lie-modifying sheet on the horizontal surface;

[0068] Figure 18 is a perspective view of a lie-modifying bag;

[0069] Figure 19 is a top plane view of the lie-modifying bag placed on the driving range mat; and

[0070] Figure 20 is a cross-sectional side view on 19-19 in Figure 19 further illustrating the driving range mat and the lie-modifying bag on the horizontal surface.
DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0071] Figures 1 and 2 of the accompanying drawings illustrate a golf tee holder 30 according to an embodiment of the invention. The golf tee holder 30 includes a base portion 32 and a holding piece 34.

[0072] The base portion 32 is in the form of a circular disk made from a flexible, rubber-like material. The base portion 32 has upper and lower horizontal surfaces 36 and 38 and a circular outer edge 40. The outer edge 40 has a diameter 42 of 55 mm. The base portion 32 has a thickness 44 as measured over the upper 36 and lower 38 horizontal surfaces of 5 mm.

[0073] The holding piece 34 is in the form of a cylinder co-molded with, and made from the same material as, the base portion 32. The holding piece 34 extends upwardly from a central region of the base portion 32. The holding piece 34 has a horizontal upper surface 46 and a circular outer edge 48. The outer edge 48 has a diameter 50 of 15 mm. The holding piece 34 has a height 52 as measured over the upper horizontal surface 36 of the base portion 32 and the upper horizontal surface 46 of the holding piece 34 of 25 mm.

[0074] A circular opening 54 is a formed through the golf tee holder 30. The opening 54 extends into the upper horizontal surface 46, through the holding piece 34 and the base portion 32, and out of the lower horizontal surface 38 of the base portion 32. The opening 54 has a diameter 56 of 3 mm.

[0075] Figures 3 and 4 illustrate a typical driving range mat 58. The driving range mat includes a lower layer 60, an upper layer 62, and a circular mat hole 64.
[0076] The lower layer 60, made from a foam-like material, includes a lower mat surface 66 and a circular base portion groove 68. The upper layer 62, made of artificial turf, includes a hitting surface 70. The driving range mat 58 is square with side lengths 72 of 1.5 m and has a mat thickness 74 as measured over the hitting surface 70 and the lower mat surface 66 of 30 mm.

[0077] The circular mat hole 64 is formed through the driving range mat 58. The mat hole 64 extends into the hitting surface 70 through the upper layer 62 and lower layer 60 and out the lower mat surface 66. The mat hole 64 has a diameter 76 of 17 mm.

[0078] The circular base portion groove 68 is formed on the lower mat surface 66. The base portion groove 68 is concentric with the mat hole 64 and has a diameter 78 of 57 mm. The base portion groove 68 extends upwardly into the driving range mat 58 to a depth 80 of 6 mm.

[0079] Figure 5 illustrates the golf tee holder 30 and the driving range mat 58 resting on a horizontal surface 82. The mat hole 64 is positioned around the holding piece 34. The base portion 32 is positioned in the base portion groove 68. The lower mat surface 66 and the lower horizontal surface 38 of the base portion 32 are coplanar and rest on the horizontal surface 82. The upper horizontal surface 46 of the holding piece 34 is coplanar with the hitting surface 70 of the driving range mat 58.

[0080] Figure 6 illustrates a typical golf tee 84. The golf tee 84 includes a stem 86 and a supporting component 88. The stem 86 is cylindrical with a diameter 90 of 5 mm and ends in a point. The supporting component 88 is a circular, concave
platform with a diameter 92 of 12 mm and an upper surface 94. The golf tee 84 has
a height 96 of 55 mm.

[0081] In use, as illustrated in Figure 7, the golf tee holder 30 is placed on
the horizontal surface 82. The driving range mat 58 is placed on the horizontal
surface 82 such that the mat hole 64 is positioned over the holding piece 34. The
base portion 32, now positioned in the base portion groove 68, is secured between
the horizontal surface 82 and the lower layer 60 of the driving range mat 58. The
holding piece 34 extends upwardly through the mat hole 64 such that the upper
horizontal surface 46 of the holding piece 34 is coplanar with the hitting surface 70
of the upper layer 62 of the driving range mat 58.

[0082] The stem 86 of the golf tee 84 is inserted into the opening 54. The
opening 54 expands slightly when the stem 86 is inserted because of the flexible
material from which the holding piece 34 is made. The golf tee 84 is held in place
by frictional forces exerted on the stem 86 from all directions by the opening 54.
The supporting component 88 is held at an adjustable tee height 98 as measured over
the upper surface 94 of the supporting member 88 and the hitting surface 70 of the
driving range mat 58.

[0083] A player can lower the adjustable tee height 98 by manually pushing
the golf tee 84 farther into the opening 54. Conversely, the player can raise the
adjustable tee height 98 by pulling the golf tee 84 farther out of the opening 54. A
golf ball 100 is then placed on the supporting component 88 where it rests at the
adjustable tee height 98. After setting the adjustable tee height 98, the player can
use a desired first golf club to strike the golf ball 100 off the golf tee 84.
[0084] When the golf ball 100 is struck, the golf tee 84 usually undergoes some lateral forces. Such lateral forces cause the golf tee 84 along with the holding piece 34 to bend out of place temporarily immediately after the golf ball 100 is struck. The flexibility of the material from which the golf tee holder 30 is made allows the holding piece 34 to return to its original position, whether or not the golf tee 84 has become dislodged from the opening 54. However, the golf tee holder 30 remains in place because the base portion 32 is secured within the base portion groove 68 and the holding piece 34 is positioned in the mat hole 64.

[0085] If the golf tee 84 is not dislodged from the opening 54, the player may or may not want to change the adjustable tee height 98 before hitting another golf ball from the golf tee 84, using either the first golf club or a desired second golf club.

[0086] If the golf tee 84 has become dislodged from the opening 54, the player can reinsert the stem 86 into the opening 54. The player can then set the adjustable tee height 98 to either the same height or a different height before hitting another golf ball from the golf tee 84, using either the first golf club or a desired second golf club.

[0087] Often, the lateral forces applied to the golf tee 84 are great enough, despite the holding piece 34 being flexible, to break the golf tee 84. In which case it is possible for the stem 86 of the golf tee 84 to become lodged in the opening 54. In use, and as illustrated in Figures 8, 9, and 10, the golf tee holder 30 is removed from beneath driving range mat 58 and the stem 86 is lodged in the opening 54. To remove the lodged stem 86, a second stem 102 of a second golf tee 104 is inserted into the opening 54. When the second stem 102 has been inserted far enough into
the opening 54 to contact the lodged stem 86, the second stem 102 pushes the lodged stem 86 towards the lower horizontal surface 38 of the base portion 32. Once the second golf tee 104 is nearly completely inserted into the opening 54 and the second stem 102 extends to the lower horizontal surface 38 of the base portion 32, the lodged stem 86 is dislodged from the opening 54. The player can then continue normal use of the golf tee holder 30.

[0088] Figures 11, 12A, 12B, 12C, 12D and 13 illustrate a lie-modifying component 106 and the driving range mat 58 on top of the horizontal surface 82.

[0089] The lie-modifying component 106 is wedged shaped and made from a soft foam-like material. The lie-modifying component 106 has an upper surface 108 and a lower surface 110. The lie-modifying component 106 has a length 112 of 1.5 m, a width 114 of .75 m, and a height 116 of 100 mm. A cross section of the lie-modifying component is a right triangle with the height 116 of 100 mm and a hypotenuse 118 of 756 mm. The upper surface 108 and the lower surface 110 are rectangular in shape.

[0090] The lower surface 110 of the lie-modifying component 106 is on the horizontal surface 82 and beneath the driving range mat 58. The lower mat surface 66 of the driving range mat 58 completely covers the upper surface 108 of the lie-modifying component 106. An outer region of the lower mat surface 66 of the driving range mat 58 is raised to the height 116 of the lie-modifying component 106.

[0091] A first portion 120 of the hitting surface 70 is located directly above a first portion 122 of the driving range mat 58. The first portion 122 of the driving range mat 58 is directly on the horizontal surface 82. The first portion 120 of the hitting surface 70 remains parallel to the horizontal surface 82. The driving range
mat 58 bends upward at mat bending point 124. A second portion 126 of the hitting surface 70 is located directly above a second portion 128 of driving range mat 58. The second portion 128 of the driving range mat 58 is on the lie-modifying component 106. The second potion 126 of the hitting surface 70 is now at an angle to the horizontal surface 82.

[0092] In use, to simulate a side hill lie with the golf ball 100 below the golf player’s feet 130, a golf player places the golf ball 100 on the first portion 120 of the hitting surface 70. The golf player then stands on the driving range mat 58 with his feet 130 on the second portion 126 of the hitting surface 70. The golf player’s feet 130 will be higher than the golf ball 100 because the second portion 126 of the hitting surface 70 is higher than the first portion 120 of the hitting surface 70. The golf player then hits the golf ball 100 from the first portion 120 of the hitting surface 70 with a golf club. As illustrated in Figure 12B, to simulate a side hill lie with the golf ball 100 above the feet 130, the golf player places his feet 130 on the first portion 120 of the hitting surface 70 and the golf ball 100 on the second portion 126 of the hitting surface 70.

[0093] As illustrated in Figures 12C and 12D, uphill and downhill lies can also be simulated by reconfiguring the driving range mat 58, the lie-modifying component 106, and the golf player’s feet 130. To simulate either an uphill or downhill lie, one foot 130 is placed on the first portion 120 of the hitting surface 70 and the other foot 130 on the second portion 126.

[0094] Alternatively, the lie-modifying component 106 can be placed on top of the driving range mat 58. Figure 14 illustrates the lie-modifying component 106 on the driving range mat 58. The second portion 126 of the hitting surface 70 is
covered by the lie-modifying component 106. The upper surface 108 of the lie-
modifying component 106 is now exposed. The golf ball 100 or the golf player’s
feet 130 are placed on either the upper surface 108 of the lie-modifying component
106 or on the first portion 120 of the hitting surface 70 of the driving range mat 58
to simulate uphill, downhill, and side hill lies.

[0095] Figures 14, 15, and 16 illustrate a lie-modifying sheet 132 placed on
the driving range mat 58 on the horizontal surface 82. The lie-modifying sheet 132
includes an anchoring formation 134, an upper surface 136, a lower surface 138, and
long artificial grass 140. The lie-modifying sheet 132 is rectangular in shape with a
length 142 of 60 cm and a width 144 of 30 cm.

[0096] The anchoring formation 134 extends downward from the lower
surface 138 of the lie-modifying sheet 132. The anchoring formation 134 is
cylindrical in shape.

[0097] The long artificial grass 140 is attached to the upper surface 136 of
the lie-modifying sheet 132. The long artificial grass 140 has a height 168 of 70
mm.

[0098] The hitting surface 70 of the driving range mat 58 is covered with
artificial turf 146 which does not extend above the hitting surface 70. The lie-
modifying sheet 132 is on the driving range mat 58 placed on the horizontal surface
82. The anchoring formation 134 is inserted into the mat holes 64 to secure the lie-
modifying sheet 132 to the driving range mat 58. The lower surface 138 of the lie-
modifying sheet lies directly on and covers a covered portion 148 of the hitting
surface 70. An exposed portion 150 of the hitting surface 70 remains uncovered.
[0099] In use, to simulate hitting from the rough, a golf player places the
golf ball 100 on the lie-modifying sheet 132 resting the golf ball 100 in the long
artificial grass 140. The golf player places his feet 130 on the exposed portion 150
of the hitting surface 70 of the driving range mat 58. The golf player may then
strike the golf ball 100 out of the long artificial grass 140 located on top of the lie-
modifying sheet 132. Lateral forces are exerted on the lie-modifying sheet 132
when the golf player hits the golf ball. The anchoring formation 134 prevents the
lie-modifying sheet 132 from sliding off the driving range mat.

[00100] Figures 17, 18, and 19 illustrate a lie-modifying bag 152 on top of
the driving range mat 58 on the horizontal surface 82. The lie-modifying bag 152
has an anchoring formation 154, an upper surface 156, a lower surface 158, and sand
filler 160. The lie-modifying bag 152 is pillow-shaped with a length 162 of 60 cm, a
width 164 of 30 cm, and a height 166 of 8 cm.

[00101] The anchoring formation 154 extends downward from the lower
surface 158 of the lie-modifying bag 152. The anchoring formation 154 is
cylindrical in shape.

[00102] The lie-modifying bag 152 is on the driving range mat 58 placed on
the horizontal surface 82. The anchoring formation 154 is inserted into the mat
holes 64 to secure the lie-modifying bag 152 to the driving range mat 58. The lower
surface 158 of the lie-modifying bag 152 lies directly on and covers the covered
portion 148 of the hitting surface 70. An exposed portion 150 of the hitting surface
70 remains uncovered.

[00103] In use, to simulate hitting from a sand trap, the golf player places
the golf ball 100 on the upper surface 156 of the lie-modifying bag 152. The golf
player places his feet 130 on the exposed portion 150 of the hitting surface 70 of the
driving range mat 58. The golf player then strikes the golf ball 100 from the upper
surface 156 of the lie-modifying bag 152. When the golf ball 100 is struck, the
upper surface 156 of the lie-modifying bag 152, will depress into the sand filler 160
of the lie-modifying bag 152. The result is that the golfer will get a sensation similar
to that of hitting a golf ball 100 out of a sand trap. Lateral forces are exerted on the
lie-modifying bag 152 when the golf player hits the golf ball 100. The anchoring
formation 154 prevents the lie-modifying bag 152 from sliding off the driving range
mat 58.

[00104] One advantage of this system is the golf tee holder 30 allows the
player to use real golf tees when practicing on artificial driving range mats, more
closely simulating the feel of hitting a golf ball off natural grass. Another advantage
is the golf tee holder 30 allows the player to adjust the tee height when practicing on
artificial mats. Another advantage is the holding piece 34 is not exposed, therefore
wear on the golf tee holder 30 is at a minimum thus golf tee holder 30 should have a
very long useful life. Furthermore, this system allows a golf player to practice from
a variety of different lies and different surfaces while hitting from artificial surfaces.

[00105] The embodiment described above is only one embodiment of this
invention. Embodiments of this invention can vary in many ways. For example, the
diameter of the base portion can be between 40 mm and 70 mm, and the thickness of
the base portion can be between 2 mm and 7 mm, depending on the size of the base
portion groove on the particular driving range mat.
[00106] Also, the height of the holding piece can be between 20 mm and 50 mm with a diameter of between 10 mm and 30 mm, depending on the size and shape of the mat hole.
CLAIMS

What is claimed:

1. A golf tee holder, comprising:
   a base portion having a first horizontal width and a lower surface to position on a horizontal surface; and
   a holding piece secured to and extending upwardly from the base portion, the holding piece having a second horizontal width less than the first horizontal width and an opening in an upper end thereof, the opening having a diameter and the holding piece being of a material such that a stem of a golf tee having a diameter between 3 mm and 6 mm inserted into the opening is frictionally held by opposing surfaces of the opening.

2. The golf tee holder of claim 1, wherein the base portion is circular in shape.

3. The golf tee holder of claim 2, wherein the base portion has a diameter between 40 mm and 70 mm and a thickness between 2 mm and 7 mm.

4. The golf tee holder of claim 1, wherein the holding piece is cylindrical in shape.

5. The golf tee holder of claim 4, wherein the holding piece has a height between 20 mm and 50 mm and a diameter between 10 mm and 30 mm.
6. The golf tee holder of claim 1, wherein the opening in the holding piece extends completely through the holding piece to allow a lodged piece of a first golf tee to be ejected by inserting a second golf tee therein.

7. The golf tee holder of claim 6, wherein the base portion and the holding piece are made from a single piece of the material.

8. The golf tee holder of claim 7, wherein the material is rubber.

9. The golf tee holder of claim 8, wherein the base portion is circular in shape with a diameter of approximately 55mm and a thickness of approximately 5 mm, the holding piece is cylindrical in shape with a height of approximately 25 mm and a diameter of approximately 15 mm, and the opening has a diameter of approximately 3 mm.

10. The golf tee holder of claim 9, wherein the holding piece is sized to extend upwardly through a hole in a driving range mat, the driving range mat having a thickness of approximately 25 mm, the hole having a diameter of approximately 15 mm, the hole extending completely through the driving range mat.

11. A system for practicing golf, comprising:

   a base portion having a first horizontal width and a lower surface to position on a horizontal surface;
a holding piece secured to and extending upwardly from the base portion, the holding piece having a second horizontal width less than the first horizontal width and an opening in an upper end thereof, the opening having a diameter and the holding piece being of a material such that a stem of a golf tee having a diameter between 3 mm and 6 mm inserted into the opening is frictionally held by opposing surfaces of the opening; and

a driving range mat having a mat hole extending completely through the driving range mat, the mat hole positioned over the holding piece, the driving range mat having a lower mat surface to position on the horizontal surface.

12. The system for practicing golf of claim 11, wherein the base portion is positioned between the driving range mat and the horizontal surface.

13. The system for practicing golf of claim 12, wherein the driving range mat has a hitting surface, the hitting surface being within 10 mm of the upper end of the holding piece.

14. The system for practicing golf of claim 13, wherein the driving range mat has a third horizontal width, the third horizontal width being at least 1 m.

15. The system for practicing golf of claim 14, wherein the driving range mat has a base portion groove on the lower mat surface.
16. The system for practicing golf of claim 11, wherein the base portion is positioned between the driving range mat and the horizontal surface, the lower base surface being approximately co-planar with the lower mat surface, the driving range mat has a hitting surface approximately co-planar with the upper end of the holding piece, and the driving range mat has a third horizontal width being approximately 1.5 m.

17. A system for practicing golf, comprising:
   a base portion having a first horizontal width and a lower surface to position on a horizontal surface;
   a holding piece secured to and extending upwardly from the base portion, the holding piece having a second horizontal width less than the first horizontal width and an opening in an upper end thereof, the opening having a diameter;
   a driving range mat placed on the horizontal surface, the driving range mat having a mat hole positioned over the holding piece, the base portion positioned between the driving range mat and the horizontal surface; and
   a golf tee having a stem removably inserted into the opening, the diameter of the opening and the holding piece material being such that the stem is frictionally held by opposing surfaces of the opening.

18. The system for practicing golf of claim 17, wherein the golf tee is held at an adjustable tee height, the adjustable tee height being adjustable by sliding the end of the golf tee relative to the opening.
19. The system for practicing golf of claim 18, further comprising a golf ball supported on a supporting component of the golf tee.

20. A system for practicing golf, comprising:

   a driving range mat having first and second portions, the first portion on a base support, the base support having an upper surface in a first plane that is substantially horizontal; and

   a lie-modifying component between the base support and the second portion of the driving range mat, the lie-modifying component having an upper surface, the upper surface of the lie-modifying mat in a second plane at an angle to the first plane so that an upper surface of the second portion of the driving range mat is in a third plane at an angle to the first plane.

21. The system for practicing golf of claim 20, wherein the base support is the ground.

22. The system for practicing golf of claim 21, wherein a lower surface of the lie-modifying component is on the base support, the lower surface being substantially coplanar with the base support.

23. The system for practicing golf of claim 20, wherein the lie-modifying component has a length of approximately 1.5 m and a width of approximately 0.75 m.
24. The system for practicing golf of claim 23, wherein the lie-modifying component has a maximum thickness of 100 mm.

25. The system for practicing golf of claim 24, wherein the second portion of the driving range mat completely covers the upper surface of the lie-modifying component.

26. The system for practicing golf of claim 25, wherein the driving range mats has sides in a first direction, and the first portion and the second portion of the driving range mat are divided by a line, the line being in a second direction, the second direction being parallel to the first direction.

27. A system for practicing golf, comprising:
   a driving range mat on a base support, the driving range mat having a hitting surface in a first plane that is substantially horizontal, the hitting surface having first and second portions; and
   a lie-modifying component on the second portion of the hitting surface, the lie-modifying component having an upper surface, the upper surface of the lie-modifying component in a second plane at an angle to the first plane.

28. The system for practicing golf of claim 27, wherein the base support is the ground.
29. The system for practicing golf of claim 28, wherein the lie-modifying component has a length of approximately 1.5 m and a width of approximately 0.75 m.

30. The system for practicing golf of claim 29, wherein the lie-modifying component has a maximum thickness of 100 mm.

31. The system for practicing golf of claim 30, wherein the driving range mats has sides in a first direction, and the first portion and the second portion of the hitting surface are divided by a line, the line being in a second direction, the second direction being parallel to the first direction.

32. A system for practicing golf, comprising:

   a driving range mat, on a base support, having a first anchoring formation and a hitting surface;

   a hitting surface material attached to the hitting surface of the driving range mat, the hitting surface material having a first texture;

   a lie-modifying sheet on the driving range mat, the lie-modifying sheet having an upper surface and a second anchoring formation, the second anchoring formation engaging with the first anchoring formation to secure the lie-modifying sheet to the driving range mat; and

   a lie-modifying material attached to the upper surface of the lie-modifying sheet, the lie-modifying material having a second texture different from the first texture.
33. The system for practicing golf of claim 32, wherein the first formation is a circular hole in the driving range mat and the second formation is a cylinder extending from a lower surface of the lie-modifying sheet, the cylinder sized to extend through the hole.

34. The system for practicing golf of claim 33, wherein the lie-modifying sheet has a length of approximately 60 cm and a width of approximately 30 cm.

35. The system for practicing golf of claim 34, wherein the lie-modifying material further comprises strands of an artificial material suitable for simulating a rough portion of a golf course.

36. The system for practicing golf of claim 35, wherein the strands of artificial material have lengths of approximately 70 mm.

37. The system for practicing golf of claim 34, wherein the lie-modifying material is a sand bag.

38. The system for practicing golf of claim 34, wherein the lie-modifying material further comprises an upper surface suitable for simulating a hard pan portion of a golf course.

39. A system for practicing golf, comprising:
a driving range mat, on a base support, having a first anchoring formation and a hitting surface;

a hitting surface material attached to the hitting surface of the driving range mat, the hitting surface material having a first texture;

a lie-modifying bag, on the driving range mat, having a second anchoring formation, a lie-modifying material, and an upper surface on the lie-modifying material such that a the upper surface has a second texture different from the first texture, the second anchoring formation engaging with the first anchoring formation to secure the lie-modifying bag to the driving range mat.

40. The system for practicing golf of claim 39, wherein the first formation is a circular hole in the driving range mat, and the second formation extends from a lower surface of the lie-modifying mat and is sized to extend through the hole.

41. The system for practicing golf of claim 40, wherein the lie-modifying bag has a length of approximately 60 cm, a width of approximately 30 cm, and a height of approximately 8 cm.

42. The system for practicing golf of claim 41, wherein the lie-modifying material is sand.
FIG. 3
FIG. 12C
INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US03/41663

A.  CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPCI(7) : A63B 69/36
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B.  FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C.  DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages</th>
<th>Relevant to claim No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>US 6,106,409 A (JACKSON, Jr) 22 August 2000, see entire document.</td>
<td>1-19</td>
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<tr>
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<td>X</td>
<td>US 3,936,055 A (SCOTT) 03 February 1976, entire document.</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>US 4,387,896 A (O'BRIEN) 14 June 1983, see entire document.</td>
<td>32,33,34,35,38</td>
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</table>

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

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"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

Date of the actual completion of the international search: 27 April 2004 (27.04.2004)
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