United States Patent [19]

Davis

[11] **3,862,760**

[45] **Jan. 28, 1975**

[54] **MINIATURE GOLF GAME**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.**..... **273/176 E,** 273/180, 273/176 H, 273/176 FA

[51] **Int. Cl.**..... **A63b 69/36**

[58] **Field of Search** 273/176, 105, 87, 177, 273/178, 179, 180

[56] **References Cited**

UNITED STATES PATENTS

2,618,483	11/1952	Chiodo	273/87 C X
2,794,646	6/1957	Knott	273/176 F
2,886,321	5/1959	Tarte	273/105 R
3,366,388	1/1968	Del Raso	273/176 H

FOREIGN PATENTS OR APPLICATIONS

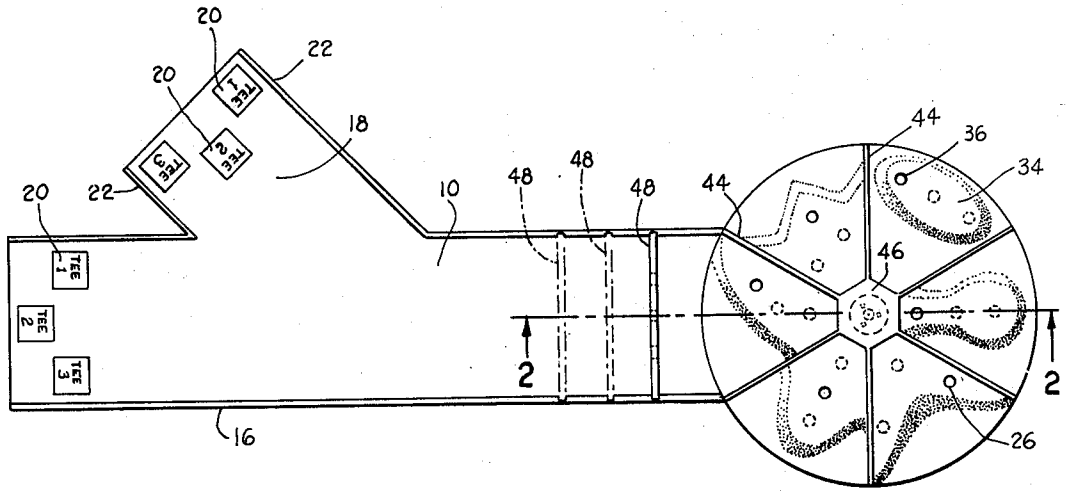
254,008	5/1967	Austria	273/176 F

Primary Examiner—George J. Marlo
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Bailey & Dority

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A miniature golf game including an elongated driveway surface over which golf balls are putted. Positioned adjacent one end of the driveway surface is a circular rotatable supporting member. Positioned on this supporting member are a plurality of substantially pie-shaped removable inserts. These pie-shaped inserts have cups located therein into which golf balls are to be putted.

4 Claims, 7 Drawing Figures



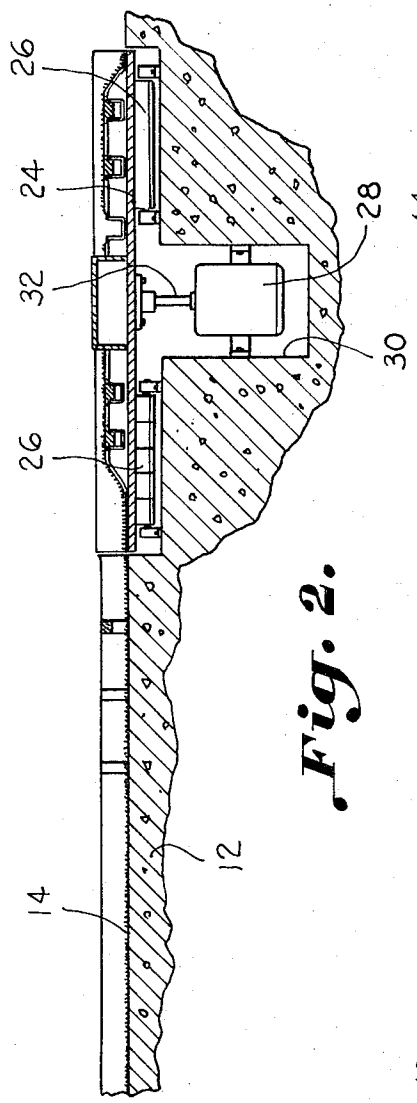

26
24
32
28
30
26
12
14

Fig. 2.

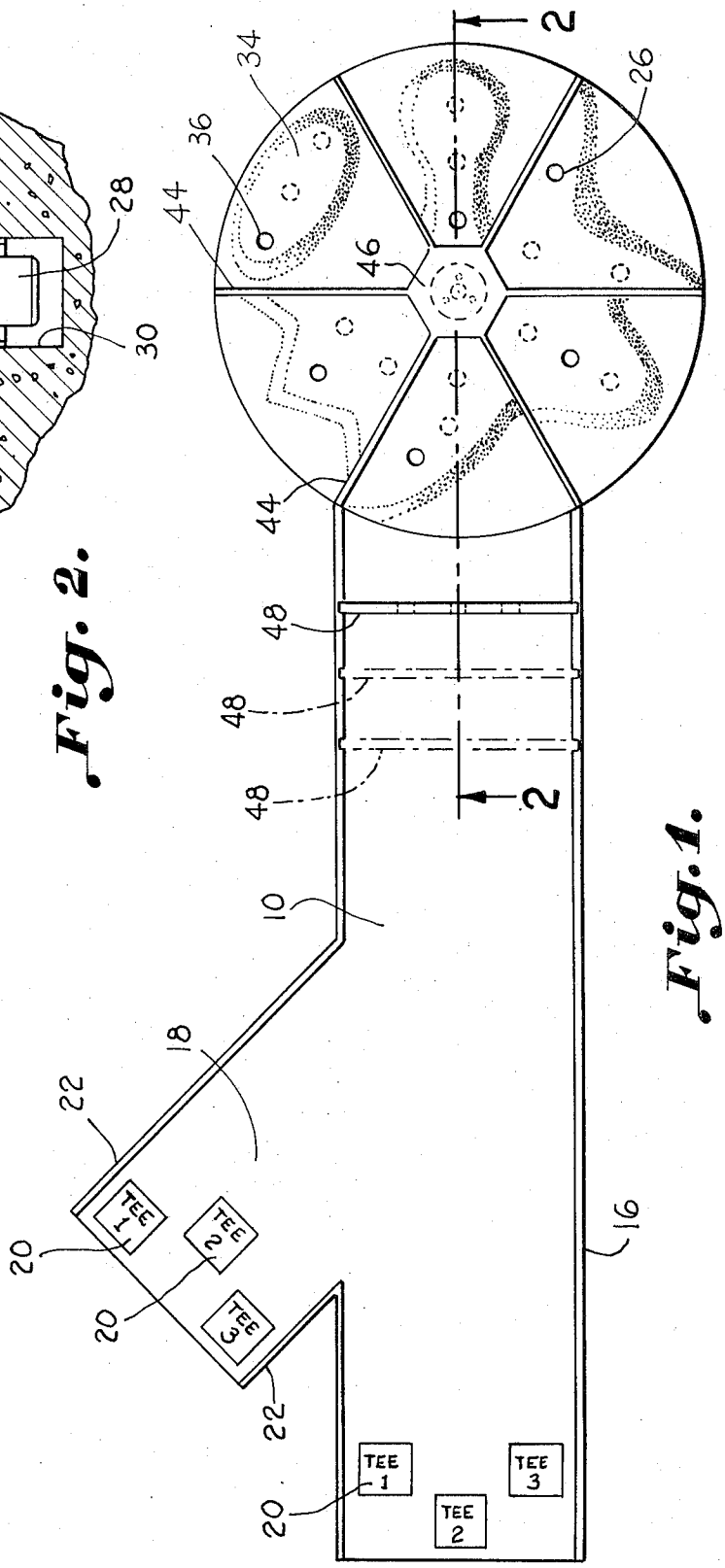

2
34
36
26
44
46
44
48
48
48
2
10
18
22
TEE 1
TEE 2
TEE 3
20
20
22
20
16
TEE 1
TEE 3
TEE 2

Fig. 1.

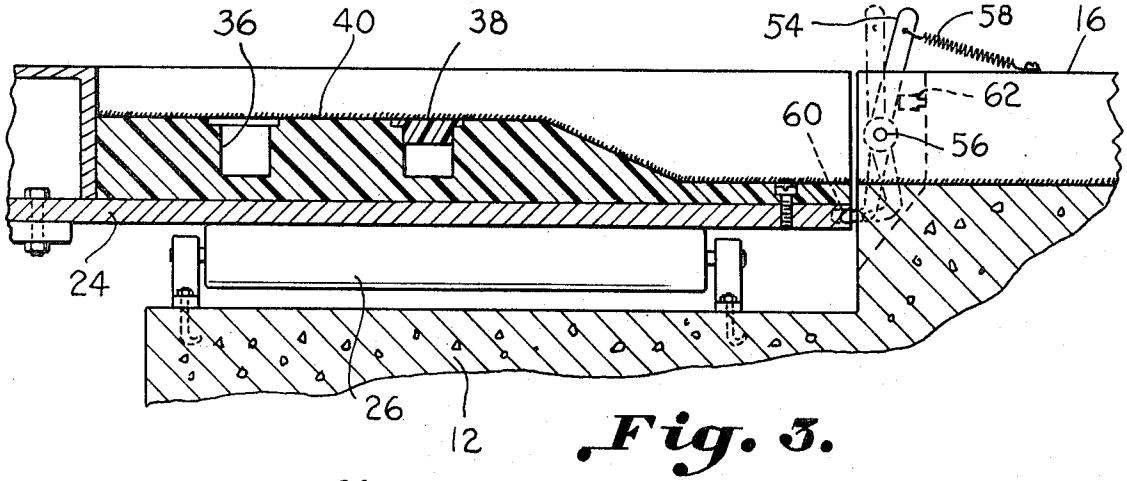


Fig. 3.

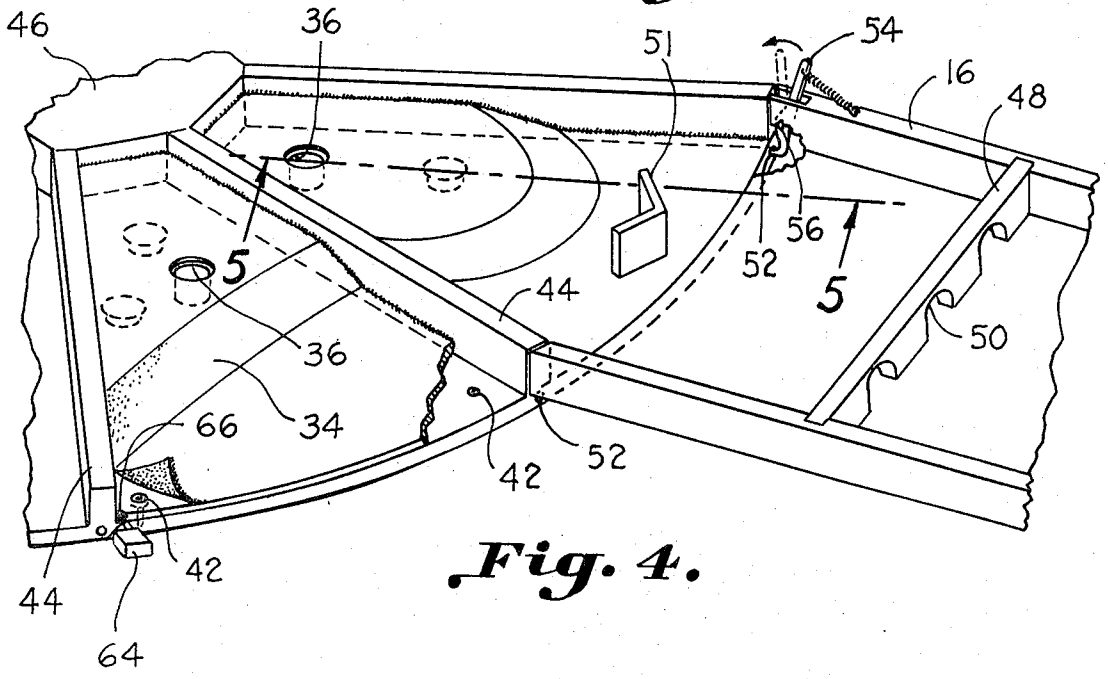


Fig. 4.

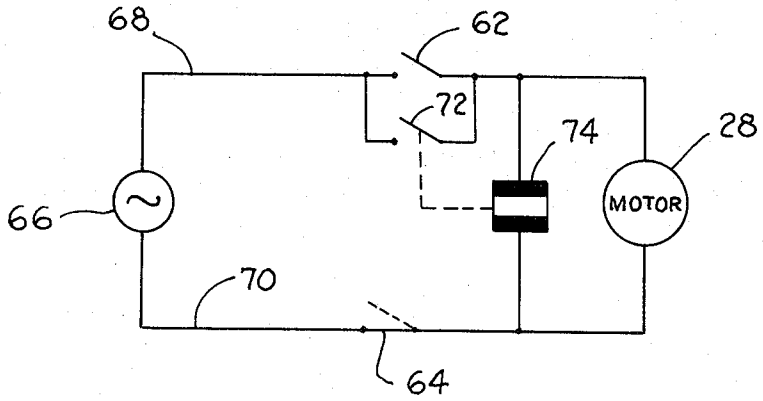


Fig. 5.

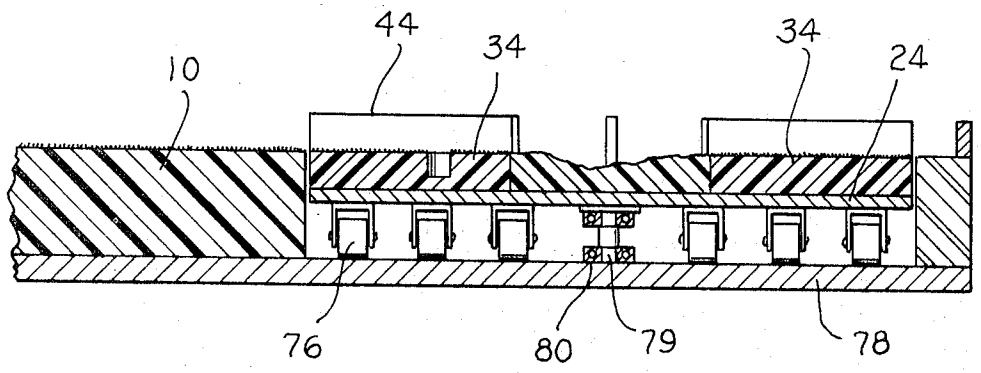


Fig. 6.

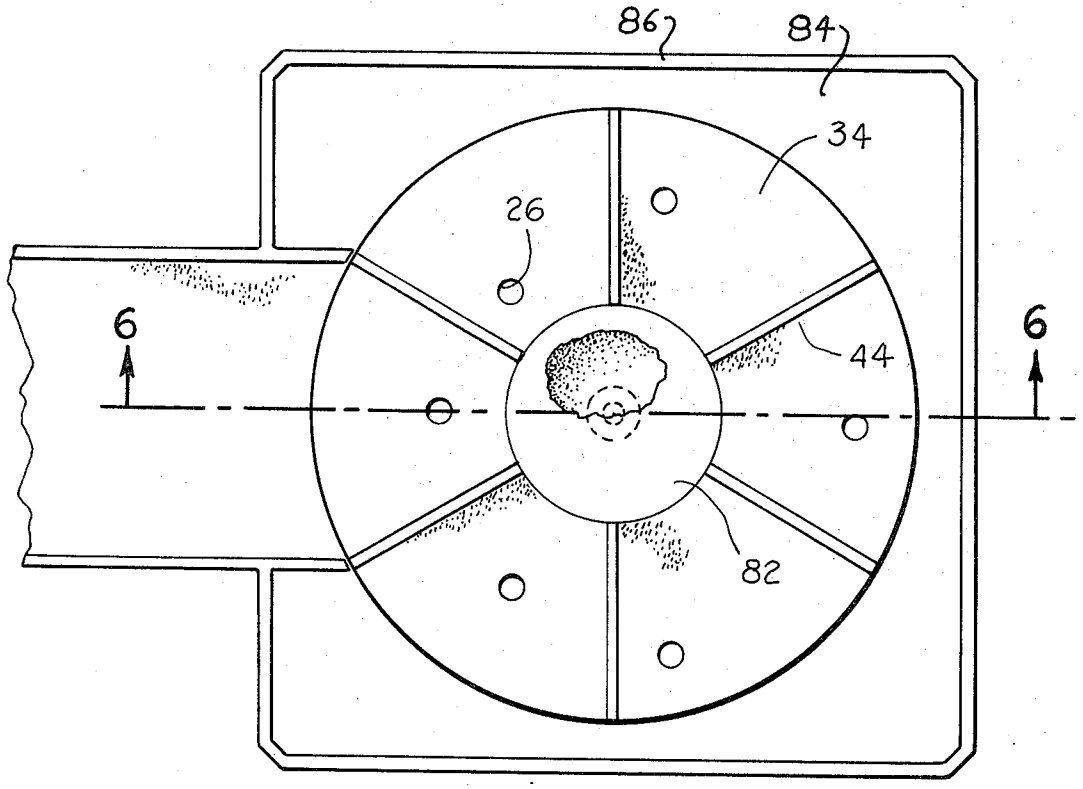


Fig. 7.

MINIATURE GOLF GAME

The present invention relates to a miniature golf course and more particularly to a golf game that can be played in small areas, such as motel lobbies and the like.

While full-size miniature golf courses are very common, they require a substantial investment to construct an eighteen-hole golf course as well as a considerable amount of space. Interest has grown considerably in the past few years in playing the game of miniature golf; however, due to the scarcity of land in heavily populated areas, such are not readily available.

It has become apparent from the interest created in golf that additional usage or playing of the game can be developed if suitable golf putting games could be utilized as promotional or advertising devices for motels. It is desirable that these games be of such size to be utilized in the lobby of the motel without taking up a substantial amount of space. These games could also be utilized in open spaces directly in front of motels and the like.

Two miniature golf game apparatus such as disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 2,794,646 and 3,366,388 can be utilized in relatively small areas; however, the miniature golf game apparatus disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 2,794,646 does not disclose a game having a plurality of various hole locations for different shots.

U.S. Pat. No. 3,366,388 discloses a rotating putting surface having a plurality of holes thereon with a shiftable driving surface adjacent thereto. Normally, the miniature golf game consists of a plurality of different holes. While U.S. Pat. No. 3,366,388 may present different hole configurations to a user, such requires the plugging and unplugging of the various holes.

Accordingly, it is an important object of the present invention to provide a miniature golf game apparatus that can be installed in a relatively small area.

Another important object of the present invention is to provide a miniature golf game apparatus wherein the playing areas thereof can be readily changed.

Still another important object of the present invention is to provide a miniature golf game apparatus wherein the putting surface can be rotated to present different putting areas.

Still another important object of the present invention is to provide a miniature golf game apparatus which includes a putting surface comprised of a plurality of inserts that can be readily placed on and removed from the rotatable disc.

These and other objects of the invention will become apparent from the reading of the following specification and claims, together with the accompanying drawings wherein like parts are referred to and indicated by the like reference numerals and wherein:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a plan view of a miniature golf game apparatus constructed in accordance with the present invention,

FIG. 2 is a sectional view taken along line 2—2 of FIG. 1,

FIG. 3 is an enlarged sectional view showing the manner of supporting and locking the rotatable supporting member,

FIG. 4 is an enlarged fragmentary perspective view illustrating inserts mounted on the rotatable supporting member,

FIG. 5 is a schematic diagram of an electrical circuit used for rotating the apparatus,

FIG. 6 is a sectional view illustrating a modified form of the invention, and

FIG. 7 is a plan view illustrating the manner in which inserts of the modified putting apparatus of FIG. 6 are installed thereon.

Referring in more detail to FIG. 1 of the drawings there is illustrated a miniature golf game having an elongated driveway surface **10**. The driveway surface may be supported on poured concrete such as shown at **12** with a carpeted surface **14** adhered thereto. The carpeted surface **14** may be any suitable artificial or fabric-type material customarily used on miniature golf courses. The right border of the driveway is defined by an elongated board **16**. The left border of the driveway has a secondary driveway **18** projecting outwardly therefrom at an angle. Such is to accommodate additional T-boxes **20** from which the golf balls can be putted. The sides of the secondary driveway **18** are also defined by elongated boards **22**. Adjacent the other end of the driveway is a circular, rotatable supporting member **24** that is supported on rollers **26** spaced thereunder which are, in turn, supported on the concrete bed **12**. The supporting member can be constructed of any suitable material such as sheet plywood. Adjacent the center of the rotatable supporting member **24** and directly therebelow is an electric motor **28** which is carried within a well **30** provided in the concrete bed. A shaft **32** couples the electric motor to the base of the rotatable supporting member **24**. Thus, when the electric motor **28** is energized such, in turn, rotates the rotatable member **24**.

A plurality of substantially pie-shaped inserts **34** are positioned side-by-side on the rotatable supporting member **24** defining a circular putting surface. The pie-shaped inserts **34** may be constructed of any suitable material such as plywood and/or plastic. Holes **36** are provided in the inserts at various locations. These holes **36** may be plugged as shown in FIG. **3** with a plug **38** having a lip that nests on top of the cup. The plug has a carpeted surface compatible with the playing surface **40** provided on the upper portion of the insert **34**. The inserts may be contoured to simulate various putting surfaces. The inserts are secured to the rotatable supporting member **24** with bolts **42**.

Dividers **44** extend radially outwardly from a hub **46** carried above the central portion of the rotatable supporting member **24**. The dividers **44** may be constructed of any suitable material such as 2 × 4 boards. As shown in FIG. **1**, six dividers **44** are utilized to divide the putting surface into six putting areas.

Various obstacles such as boards **48**, having openings **50** cut therein may be inserted between the side rails **16** and **22** at various locations as indicated in dotted lines in FIG. **1**. Other obstacles can be placed on the driveway surface or directly on top of the removable inserts such as shown by the angle member **51** in FIG. **4**.

In order to align the putting areas between the dividers **44** with the end of the elongated driveway surface **10**, holes **52** are provided in the edge of the rotatable supporting member directly under each of the divider partitions **44**. A pivotable lever **54** is carried within a recess provided in the end of the border **16** of the drive-

way 10. The lever 54 is pivoted on a pin 56 extending between the sides of the recess. A spring 58 extends from adjacent the top of the lever 54 to the border 16 for urging an outwardly projecting portion 60 carried on the lower end of the lever into a hole 52 carried in the rotatable supporting member 24.

When it is desired to rotate the supporting member 24, the lever is pulled forward to disengage the end 60 from the hole.

The rotatable supporting member may be either manually rotated or electrically rotated by use of the electric motor 28, shown in FIG. 2.

When it is desired to operate the game electrically a pushbutton 62 is positioned within the recess in which the lever 54 is located so that when the lever is pulled forward, the pushbutton 62 closes an electric circuit to energize the motor 28. A microswitch 64, having an outwardly extending arm 66, is located closely adjacent the path traveled by the rotatable member 24 so that the partitions 44 engage the arm to de-energize the motor 28 at a predetermined time.

FIG. 5 illustrates schematically one suitable electrical circuit for activating the motor 28. The motor 28 is coupled to any suitable AC source 66 by leads 68 and 70. Interposed in lead 68 is the pushbutton switch 62 which is normally opened. Carried in shunt with the pushbutton switch 62 is a relay contact 72 which is also normally opened. A relay 74, which operates the relay contact switch 72 is carried in shunt with the DC motor 28. Interposed in lead 70 is the microswitch 64 which is normally closed.

In describing the operation of the schematic circuit of FIG. 5, when the lever 54 is pulled forward, such permits the switch 62 to close the circuit between the AC source 66 and the relay 74 energizing the relay. When the relay 74 is energized, such causes contact 72 to close shunting around the pushbutton 62. Thus, when the lever 54 is released, an electrical path is provided between the AC source 66 and the motor 28 through the relay contact 72. Motor 28 is energized rotating the supporting member 24 until one of the partitions 44 engages the microswitch arm 64 to open the circuit to the motor 28. The microswitch 64 is positioned so that when the motor 28 is de-energized the lower end 60 of the lever 54 will be in alignment with a hole 52 to lock the rotatable member 24 in position.

It is noted that the driveway 10 is built up level with the top of the inserts. Such can be built up by placing boards onto the base board 78.

In FIGS. 6 and 7, there is illustrated a modified form of the invention wherein the circular rotatable supporting member 24 is supported on a plurality of rollers 76 which are in turn mounted on an elongated baseboard 78. The baseboard 78 extends the entire length of the driveway 10 and under the rotatable green portion 24. Such makes the entire game apparatus portable so that it can be placed in the lobbies of motels and the like.

The center of the rotatable supporting member 24 is supported on a shaft 79 which is, in turn, journaled in a bearing 80 carried on the elongated supporting board 78. When it is desired to rotate the supporting member in order to align a different putting area with the driveway, the entire supporting member 24 is rotated on the shaft 79 and the rollers 76.

The dividers 44 extend from the outer perimeter of the rotatable member 24 and terminate short of the center thereof so as to provide a common area 82 at the inner end of each of the pie-shaped members 34. Therefore, if the ball is putted too hard, it enters the central portion 82 between the rotatable putting surfaces. The central portion 82 can be constructed of any suitable material such as plastic for simulating water traps, sand traps, etc.

A square area 84 having a raised border 86 extends around the putting area.

While a preferred embodiment of the invention has been described, using specific terms, such description is for illustrative purposes only and it is to be understood that changes and variations may be made without departing from the spirit or scope of the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A miniature golf game apparatus comprising:
an elongated driveway surface;
ball positioning means carried adjacent one end of said elongated driveway for holding a ball to be putted;
a rotatable supporting member carried adjacent the other end of said driveway surface;
a plurality of substantially pie-shaped removable inserts positioned side-by-side on said rotatable supporting member defining a circular playing surface;
contoured surfaces carried on each of said insert simulating various putting surfaces;
a ball receiving cup carried in each of said pie-shaped inserts; and
dividers carried between said pie-shaped inserts for defining putting areas;
whereby by rotating said rotatable supporting member selective putting areas can be brought in alignment with said elongated driveway and said pie-shaped inserts can be changed for varying the layout of said game.

2. The miniature golf game apparatus as set forth in claim 1 wherein said dividers are elongated members extending from an outer perimeter of said rotatable supporting member to a point short of the center of said rotatable member.

3. The miniature golf game apparatus as set forth in claim 1 further comprising;
a secondary driveway surface merging at an angle with said elongated driveway surface; and
ball positioning means carried adjacent an outer end of said secondary driveway surface for holding a ball to be putted so that a choice of driveway surfaces may be had by a player of the game.

4. The miniature golf game apparatus as set forth in claim 1 further comprising:
a vertical shaft having one end engaging a center portion of said rotatable supporting member;
an electric motor coupled to the other end of said vertical shaft; and
means for selectively energizing said electric motor for rotating said rotatable supporting member so that different putting areas can be brought in alignment with said elongated driveway surface.

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