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E. E. WINKLEY

GOLF APPARATUS

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2 Sheets-Sheet 1

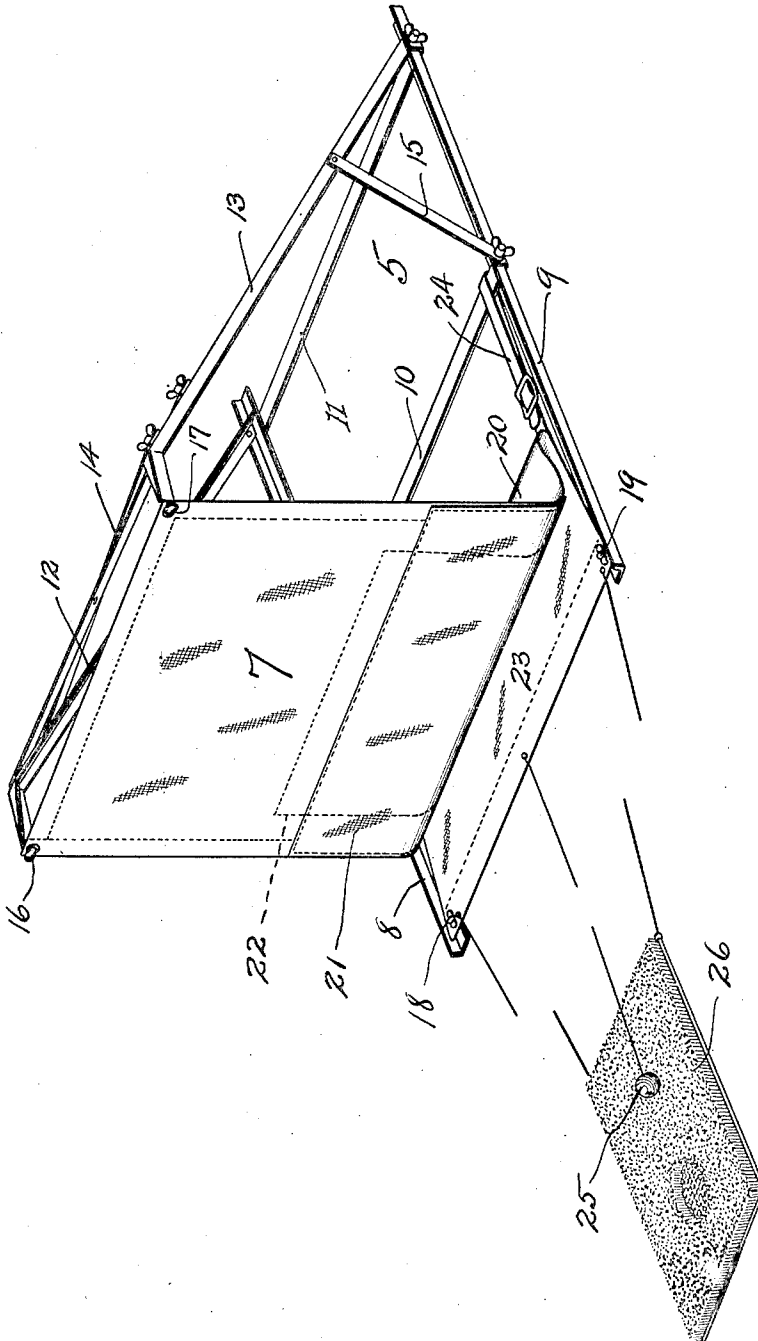


Fig. 1.

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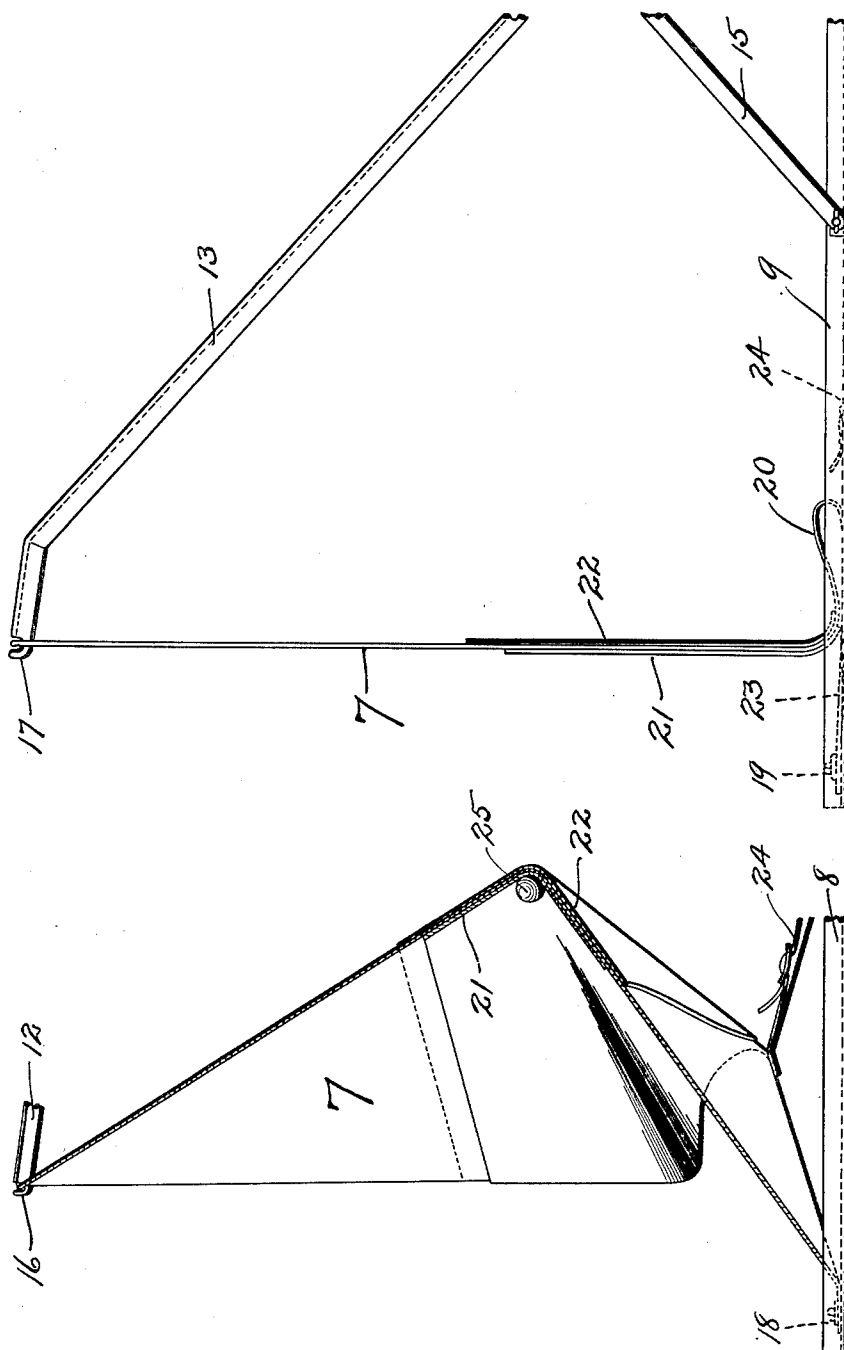


Fig. 3.

Fig. 2.

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## UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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## GOLF APPARATUS.

Application filed November 8, 1923. Serial No. 673,490.

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, ERASTUS E. WINKLEY, a citizen of the United States, residing at Lynn, in the county of Essex and State of Massachusetts, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Golf Apparatus, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to a golf practice device for use either indoors or outdoors and more particularly to a simple and easily assembled form of stop for receiving driven balls.

It is important in devices of this character that the stop be so constructed as to eliminate danger of the ball rebounding toward the player on any stroke; to provide means for effectually arresting the ball's flight; and to prevent a topped ball from rolling under and beyond the stop.

The object of the invention is to provide a golf practice stop having the advantages just named, and having such other advantages as may be set forth in the following description.

Accordingly the invention comprises the features and combinations of parts hereinafter described and then particularly pointed out in the appended claims.

The preferred form of the invention is illustrated in the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the stop and its supporting frame; Fig. 2 is a sectional view through the center of the stop illustrating its action in receiving and stopping a driven ball; and Fig. 3 is a view, in side elevation of the stop in the position it assumes prior to receiving a driven ball.

In the embodiment of the invention illustrated in the drawings there are but two main parts of the ball stop, i. e. a skeleton frame, indicated generally by 5, and a drive receiving curtain, or stop proper, of flexible material, indicated generally by 7. The frame 5 is so constructed as to present the minimum amount of metal, or other material of which it may be constructed, in the field of the stop, and to provide sufficient resistance to the impact of the driven ball to prevent displacement, as by being slid backward along the floor.

Accordingly the frame 5 comprises a pair of floor members or rails 8 and 9 held in spaced parallel relation by transverse braces

10 and 11, and a pair of diagonal stop holding members or arms 12 and 13 which extend forwardly and upwardly from the rear of the floor rails. These arms are held in position by rearwardly placed vertical braces 14 at each side and an upper cross brace 15. The forward end portions of the arms 12 and 13 are preferably bent downward, so as to be parallel to the rails, and the extreme ends are provided with hooks 16 and 17. It will be observed that the skeleton frame is so constructed that the only rigid parts presented toward the player are the extreme ends of the four frame members 8, 9, 12 and 13. There is no other rigid part in the plane of the stop curtain from which a driven ball can rebound to the injury of a player, and the chances of a ball squarely hitting any of the four frame member ends is negligible.

The four frame member ends are at the four corners of a rectangular area which is covered by the drive receiving curtain 7. As illustrated the floor rail ends are in advance of the diagonal arm ends, but this is not essential and all four ends may be in the same vertical plane as will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

The ball stop 7 is in the form of a curtain of flexible material, preferably heavy canvas or duck, and is rectangular in form being of the same width as the transverse distance between the frame members at each side but considerably longer than the distance between the upper and lower pairs of frame member ends. Each corner is provided with an eyelet and when the two upper eyelets are ringed on the hooks 16 and 17 the upper edge of the curtain is held taut permitting the body of the stop to hang vertically from these two points of suspension, the side edges being wholly free and unsecured. The eyelets at the two lower corners may be oval in form so as to slip over swivelled buttons 18 and 19, at the forward ends of the floor rails, which may be turned to hold the lower edge of the curtain taut across the floor or ground. This construction prevents the ball, if topped or otherwise struck so as to roll, from passing under the curtain.

The extra length of the curtain 7 causes it naturally to hang with a transverse fold 20 at the lower edge of the vertical area. The formation of this fold and consequent vertical presentation of the main portion of the

curtain is insured by weighting the central portion of the stop, as by applying additional thicknesses of the canvas. As illustrated a piece 21 is secured across the front and a piece 22 at the back. In addition to weighting the curtain so that it naturally will hang in a vertical plane between the upper and lower frame members, these additional layers reinforce and strengthen the stop at its central portion where it receives the hardest service from driven balls.

If desired, the apron 23 of the curtain may be held taut, in a longitudinal direction, and close to the floor by a pair of straps 24 one attached at each rear side margin of the curtain at the base of the fold 20 and secured to the frame as by encircling the cross brace 10. The use of the straps 24 will ensure the stop unvaryingly resuming its vertical position with the fold 20 held to the rear, as shown in Figs. 1 and 3. If the straps are not employed the device can be used with equal facility for practice, but when the ends of the fold or fullness 20 are not held by the straps, i. e. if the side margins of the apron 23 are not held taut, then the ends of the fold frequently fall forward and inward when the curtain straightens after an impact by the ball, and the stop presents a rumpled appearance to the player which is not so pleasing and gives the impression of a poorer target to drive against. This would however, only affect the novice.

In using the golf stop the ball 25 may be a free ball or a tethered ball, as illustrated. A door mat 26 may conveniently be used, as a simulation of turf, to drive from and the length of the attaching cords may be such as to determine the distance a free ball should be placed from the stop for it properly to receive the practice shots.

It will be understood that the important feature of the practice device is the stop 7. When a portable apparatus is required then the stop may conveniently be mounted on a comparatively light movable frame of the character hereinbefore described, but it is within the scope of the invention to provide any other supporting means which will cause the novel stop to present a smooth, vertical target portion to the player and yet successfully arrest the flight of a driven ball without rebound. Indoors the stop may be hung from corner supports, projecting a suitable distance from a wall, as is suggested by Fig. 2, and in its simplest form the lower corners of the stop might be secured directly to the floor, the only supporting members required being at the upper edge of the flexible sheet material.

Attention is called particularly to the mounting of the drive receiving curtain which reduces to a minimum the exposure of the rigid material of the supporting frame and practically eliminates danger of re-

bound. Also to the mode of mounting the loose or full curtain, with its unsecured side edges. When the curtain is struck by the ball its fullness permits it to belly, creating a suction at its forward face which with the resistance to forward movement offered by the air at its rear face, quickly stops the driven ball. The curtain is heavier than the ball and the resistance and suction act together to overcome the force and velocity of the ball which, when its flight is arrested, rolls down onto the apron 23 and the curtain then resumes its vertical position illustrated by Fig. 2. Since the apron is drawn taut across the floor or ground improperly-stroked balls cannot roll under the stop and can readily be recovered for another stroke. The flexible stop is rigidly secured, yet retains sufficient flexibility to stop a driven ball without rebound.

The scope of the invention having been indicated, and its preferred form having been specifically described, what is claimed as new, is:—

1. A stop for golf practice comprising a suitably braced frame presenting two pair of spaced forwardly extending members the four forward ends only of which are presented to the player, one pair on the floor or ground and the other pair a suitable distance thereabove; and a flexible drive receiving curtain equal in width to the horizontal spacing of the frame members and having a length greater than the vertical distance between said upper and lower pairs, secured to said four frame ends by its four corners.

2. A stop for golf practice comprising a suitably braced frame presenting two pair of spaced forwardly extending members the four forward ends only of which are presented to the player, one pair on the floor or ground and the other pair a suitable distance thereabove; and a flexible drive receiving curtain connected at its upper and lower edges to said upper and lower pairs respectively having a transverse fold intermediate its points of connection.

3. A stop for golf practice comprising a suitably braced frame presenting two pair of spaced forwardly extending members the four forward ends only of which are presented to the player, one pair on the floor or ground and the other pair a suitable distance thereabove; and a flexible drive receiving curtain secured to said upper and lower pairs but of greater length than the distance therebetween presenting a vertical ball stop extending between said frame members with a horizontal portion at its lower end formed by a transverse fold.

4. A stop for golf practice comprising a suitably braced frame presenting two pair of spaced forwardly extending members the four forward ends only of which are presented to the player, one pair on the floor or

ground and the other pair a suitable distance thereabove and in a vertical plane to the rear of the lower pair; a flexible drive receiving curtain secured by its upper corners to said upper pair and by its lower corners to said lower pair, having a length to provide a fullness between its upper and lower secured edges, the lower portion of which is turned forward, to provide a horizontal apron, and means for holding said apron taut and close to the floor.

5. A golf practice device comprising a frame constructed and arranged to present to the player only the four ends of four forwardly projecting stop holding members, said ends defining the four corners of an upright rectangle; and a rectangular, flexible ball stop having its four corners secured to said four frame ends, said stop being equal in width to the transverse spacing of said frame member ends whereby it hangs vertically with its upper and lower edges held taut, but the length of said stop being greater than the vertical spacing of said frame member ends whereby the fullness of its unsecured sides permit it to belly on impact by the ball and then resume its vertical position.

6. A hanging, flexible stop for golf practice presenting to the player a smooth, vertical target with a transverse fold at its lower edge and having unsecured side edges.

7. A hanging stop for golf practice of flexible sheet material having a smooth, vertical target portion, a transverse fold at the lower edge of said portion, and its extreme lower edge secured in substantially the plane of the floor.

8. A stop for golf practice of flexible sheet material, hung from its upper edge only to present a smooth vertical target portion, secured by its lower edge in substantially the plane of the floor and having a transverse fold intermediate said edges, and means for insuring that said fold will be

maintained at the rear of said vertical portion.

9. A stop for golf practice of flexible sheet material secured at its upper and lower edges, but having free side edges and being of such length as to belly when struck by a ball, and provided with a weighted central portion for causing said stop invariably to return to a position presenting a smooth, vertical target portion after the force of each impact has been spent.

10. A stop for golf practice comprising two horizontal spaced frame members adapted to rest on the floor or ground and two superposed frame members so braced as to present only the four ends of said members to the player; and a flexible drive receiving curtain of greater length than the distance between the forward ends of said upper and lower pairs of frame members and secured by its upper and lower corners to said four forward ends, said curtain being weighted at its central area to cause it to hang vertically from said upper members and maintain a transverse fold at the lower end of said vertical portion.

11. A golf practice device comprising two horizontal spaced frame members adapted to rest on the floor or ground and two diagonal spaced frame members extending upwardly and forwardly from points at the rear ends of said horizontal members; a ball stop of flexible sheet material having free side edges, hanging vertically by its upper edge from the forward ends of said diagonal members, having a transverse fold adjacent said horizontal members and connected by its lower edge to the forward ends of said horizontal members; and a pair of straps secured to the side margins at the rear face of said stop below said fold and connected to said frame for holding the lower portion of the stop taut with the fold at the rear of the vertical portion.

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