Sept. 12, 1967 J. SHUSDA 3,341,207

PRACTICE GOLF PUTTING CUP

Filed Aug. 28, 1964

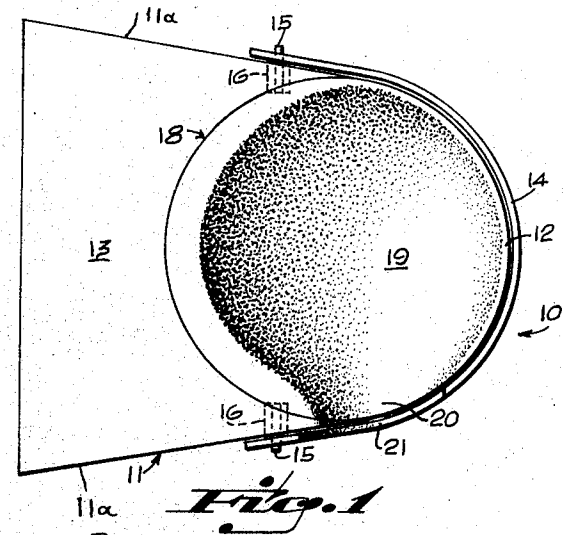


Fig. 1

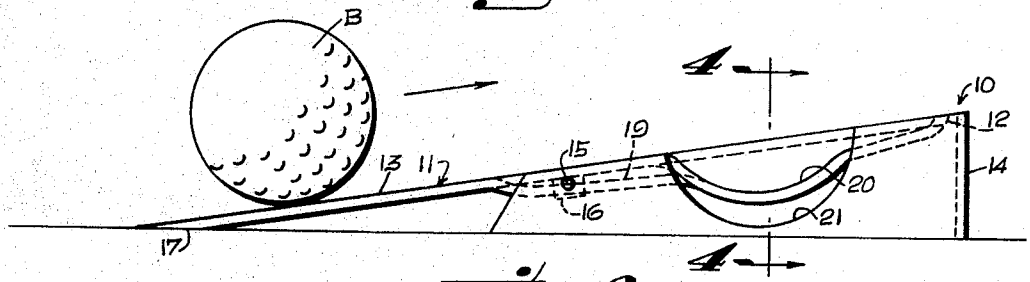


Fig. 2

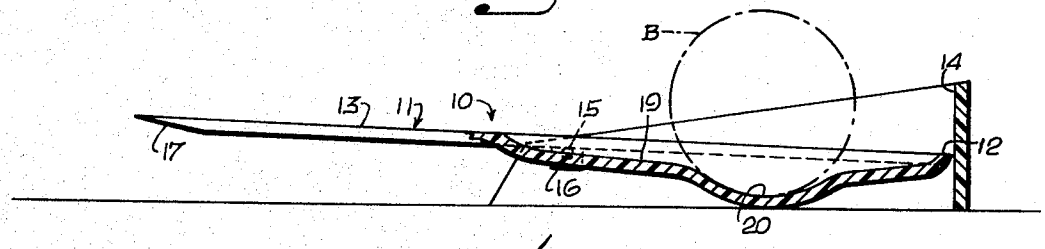


Fig. 3

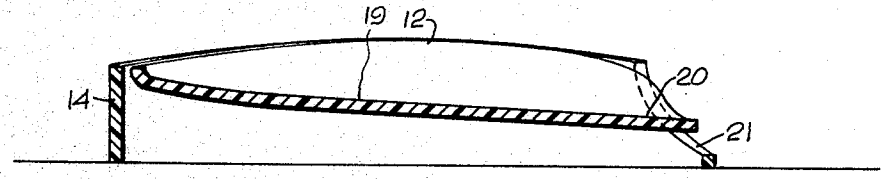


Fig. 4

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PRACTICE GOLF PUTTING CUP

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My invention relates to the sport of golf and is directed particularly to an improved simulated golf cup for indoor putting practice.

This invention is a continuation-in-part of my application Serial No. 382,822, filed July 15, 1964, and it is the principal object of this invention to provide improvements in golf putting cups of the character therein described.

In my above-mentioned prior application, I describe a practice golf putting cup comprising a rockably supported platform one side of which is shaped and painted or otherwise impressed to simulate a cup hole, and the other side of which constitutes a shallow ramp leading to the cup hole, and including a retainer wall at the back of the simulated cup, whereby a ball approaching the device with the proper speed and direction will, upon passing the pivotal axis of the platform, fall gently with the rocking movement of the simulated cup portion to "sink" the ball. In this construction, each time a ball is "sunk" in the cup, it must be removed before the next practice putt can be made. It is accordingly the principal object of the present invention to provide means, in a practicing cup of the character described, for automatically and immediately discharging a ball "sunk" in the cup so that a number of balls can be played in succession without the necessity of resetting or unloading the cup.

It is a more particular object of the present invention to provide, in the cup hole end of the platform, a funnel-shaped concavity leading to one side of the device and providing a downwardly inclined chute through which a ball will pass in its discharge from the cup, whereupon the rockably supported platform will automatically fall back into ready position again with the platform ramp portion against the floor.

It is another object of my invention to provide a golf practice cup that closely simulates, in action and appearance, a real golf cup, yet which is simple in structure, durable in use, and inexpensive enough to be distributed as an advertising give-away item.

Other objects, features and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following description when read with reference to the accompanying drawings. In the drawings, wherein like reference numerals denote corresponding parts throughout the several views:

FIG. 1 is a top view of an improved form of practicing putting cup embodying my invention;

FIG. 2 is a side elevational view of the putting cup illustrated in FIG. 1, illustrating the device in a first position of use;

FIG. 3 is a side elevational view, partly in section, showing the device in a second position of use; and

FIG. 4 is a transverse cross-sectional view taken along the line 4—4 of FIG. 2 looking in the direction of the arrows.

Referring now in detail to the drawings, **10** designates an improved form of practice cup embodying my invention, which can be fabricated or molded of a synthetic plastic or made of metal. The practice cup **10** comprises a platform member **11**, the back end portion of which is of semi-circular shape, as indicated at **12**, and the front end of which extends forwardly to provide a ramp portion **13** the front edge of which is substantially parallel with the diametrical axis of said back portion. The ramp portion **13** is formed with equally divergent side portions

11*a*, the inner ends of which merge tangentially with the semi-circular back end **12**.

Means is provided for rocking the platform member **11** about a transverse axis substantially parallel with the front edge of the ramp portion **13**. To this end, there is provided, in closely spaced relation about the back end portion **12** of the platform member **11**, an arcuate retainer wall **14** with respect to which said platform member is journalled by means of pivot pins **15** fixed in opposed support blocks **16** secured against the underside of the platform member. The pivot pins **15** lie along a pivotal axis parallel with and somewhat forward of the transverse diametrical axis of the semi-circular back end portion of the platform member **12**, and weight distribution of the platform member is such that the front edge of the ramp portion is normally down and resting against the support surface, as illustrated in FIG. 2. The front edge of the ramp portion is beveled along its underside, as indicated at **17**, so that the upper surface of the ramp presents a smooth juncture with the supporting surface.

The semi-circular back portion **12** of the platform member **11** and a complementary semi-circular portion of said platform member indicated at **18**, together form a circular portion at the rear of said platform. This circular portion is preferably painted or otherwise marked to simulate the dark interior of a real golf cup. The diametrical size of the circular portion **18** is preferably 4¼ inches, approximately the same size as a real golf cup.

A salient feature of my invention resides in the provision of means for automatically discharging a "sunk" ball so that the practicing cup can be used successively without any need for unloading. To this end the circular cup simulating portion **18** of the platform member **11** is molded or otherwise formed with a concavity **19** which, as best illustrated in FIG. 4, is of gradual downward inclination to one side of said cup simulating portion to merge, in funnel-like configuration, into a discharge chute portion **20**. The adjacent side of the retainer wall **14** is provided with an arcuate opening **21** to allow outward passage of a ball.

The practice cup **10** is well adapted to indoor use placed directly on the floor or on a rug. If the ramp portion **13** is of a transparent material, such as one of the clear synthetic plastics, the color of the floor or rug will show through, to better define the simulated cup opening for more realistic practice. In practice, when the putted golf ball B travels up the ramp incline and just begins to move past the transverse rocking axis above the pivot pins **15**, its weight will cause the platform member **11** to rock so that the back portion **13** thereof swings down against the supporting surface, as illustrated in FIG. 3, to catch the ball in the concavity **19**. The retainer wall **14** is low enough at the back so that if the putted ball is travelling at too great a speed to sink into a real cup, it will be projected over the top of said retainer wall to count as a miss. Experience has established that the rocking axis should be about ⅜ inch from the floor or other supporting surface to best simulate real putting. The ramp portion **13** extends about 1½ inches in front of the forward edge of the circular simulated cup area **18**. After the ball has been "sunk" it will roll sidewardly down the inclination of the concavity **19** into the chute portion **20** thereof to pass outwardly to the side of the cup through the opening **21** in the retainer wall **14**, whereupon the platform member **11** will swing forwardly again in ready position for the next putt.

While I have illustrated and described herein only one form in which my invention can conveniently be embodied in practice, it is to be understood that this form is given by way of example only, and not in a limiting sense. My invention, in brief, comprises all the embodi-

ments and modifications coming within the scope and spirit of the following claims.

What I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. A practicing golf cup, comprising, in combination, an inclined platform having a flat upper surface thereon except for the elevated end portion which contains a circular target portion including a concave chute portion therein inclined downwardly to one side of said target portion, said target portion being darkened to simulate the dark interior of a real golf cup; a semi-circular and upstanding ball retainer wall surrounding the semi-circular end of said target portion, the depressed end of said platform having a straight edge portion adapted to form a smooth juncture with a supporting surface and have a golf ball putted thereover, said retainer wall including an opening therein in alignment with said chute portion, the dimensions of said chute portion and wall opening being sufficient to accommodate the outward passage of a golf ball from said cup; and fulcrum means enabling the weight of a golf ball putted up said inclined platform and into said chute portion to rock the elevated end of the platform downwardly.

2. A practicing golf cup as defined in claim 1 wherein said semi-circular wall is in spaced relation with respect to said target portion of said platform, and said fulcrum means comprises pivot pins on said platform journalled in opposite end portions of said retainer wall.

3. A practicing golf cup as defined in claim 2 wherein the weight of said platform between the straight edge portion thereof and said fulcrum means is greater than the weight of the platform between the target portion thereof and the fulcrum means, so that when the cup is placed on a level surface with said target portion at a lower height than said straight edge portion, said straight edge portion will gravitate downward.

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