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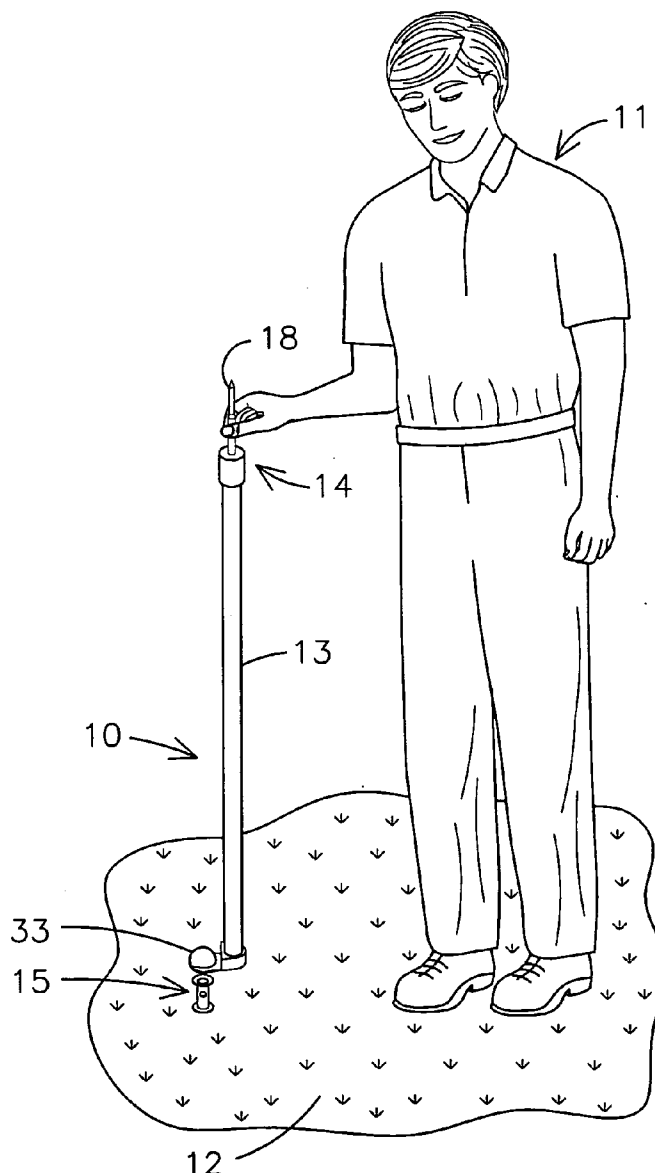
(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Irwin(10) **Pub. No.: US 2007/0293353 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Dec. 20, 2007**(54) **GOLFBALL & TEE SETTER APPARATUS**(52) **U.S. Cl. 473/386**(76) **Inventor: Larry J. Irwin, Fenton, MI (US)**(57) **ABSTRACT**

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(2006.01)

A golf ball and tee setting apparatus has an elongated shaft in which one end has an elongated prong protruding therefrom and the other end has a golf ball supporting member. A golf tee has a ball support surface on one end and has a countersunk bore extending thereinto through the ball support surface and sized for the elongated prong to fit thereinto so that the tee can be placed on the elongated prong and set by a standing golfer. The golf tee has means for holding the prong in the bore with a plurality of prong gripping teeth around the bore or with a plurality of tapered gripping fingers around the end of the bore. The tee is removed from the ground with a tee lifting yoke on the elongated shaft.



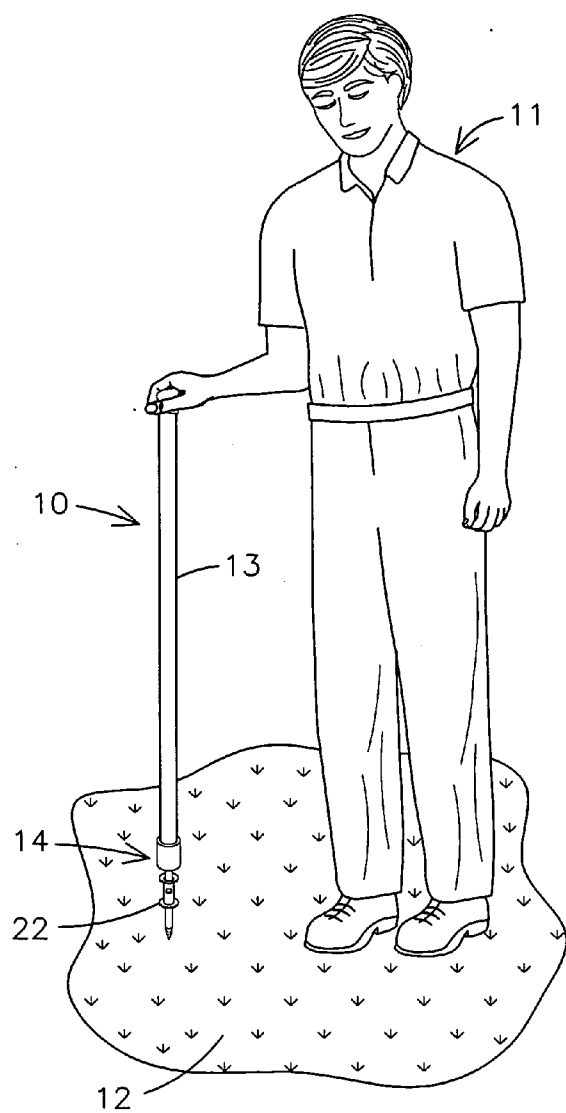


FIG. 1

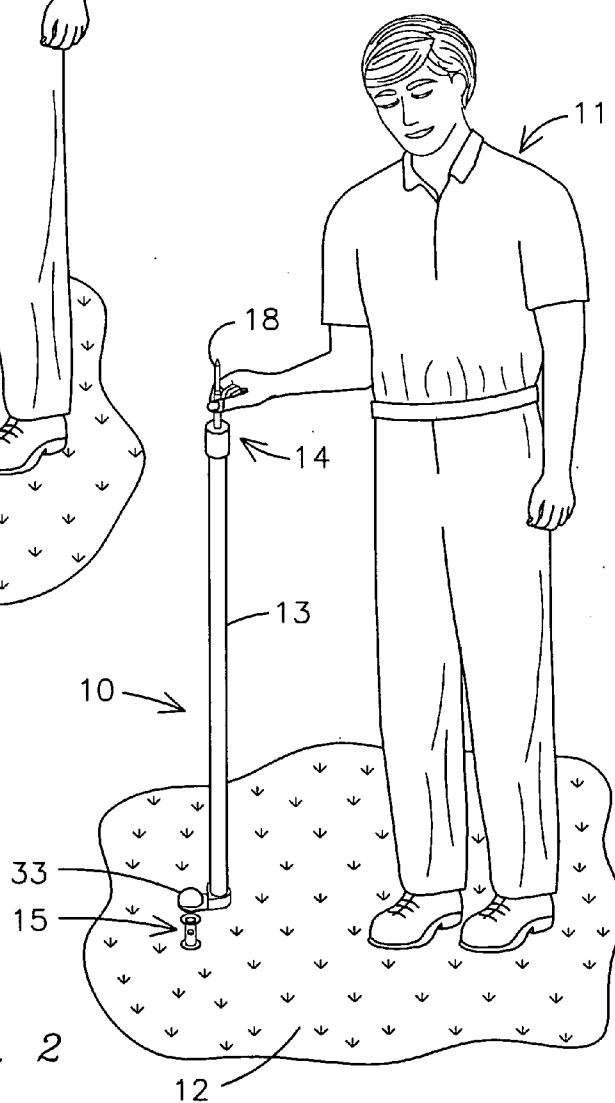


FIG. 2

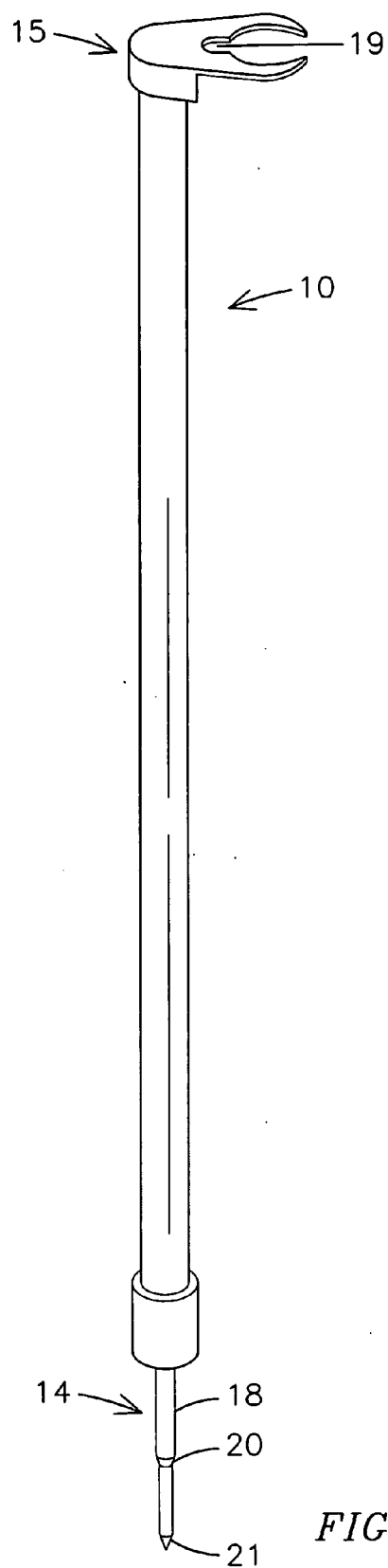


FIG. 3

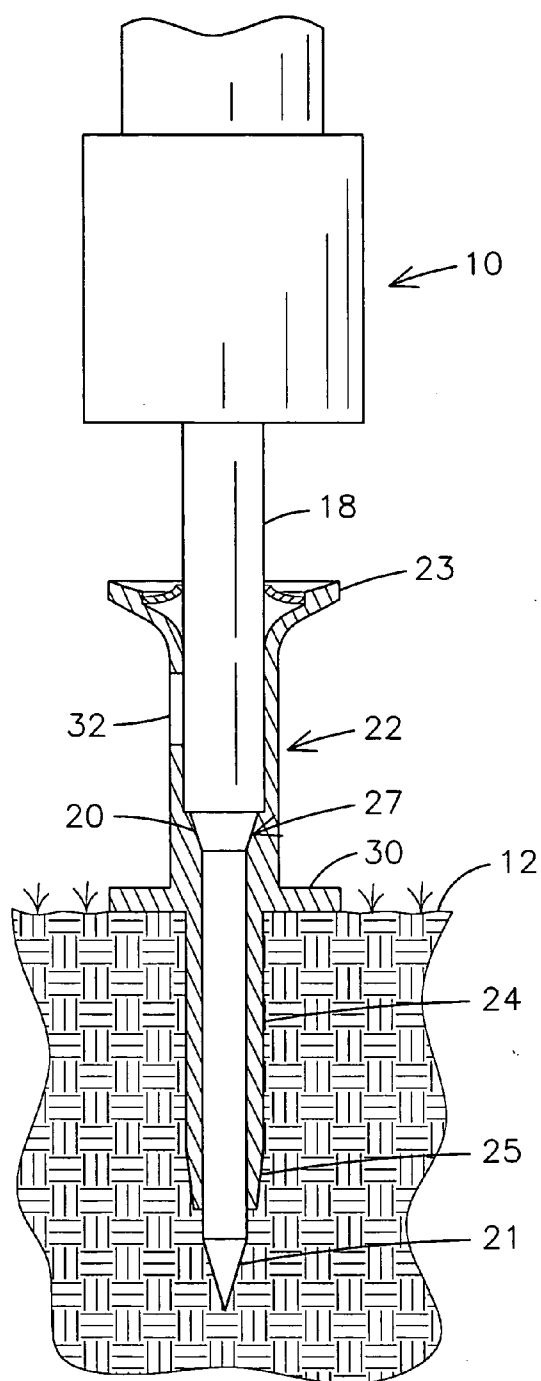
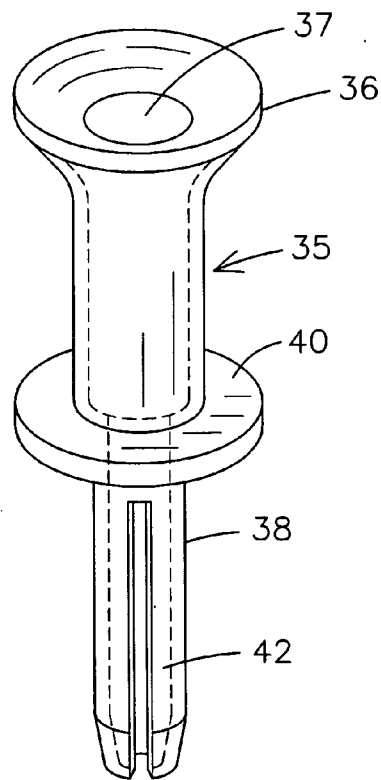
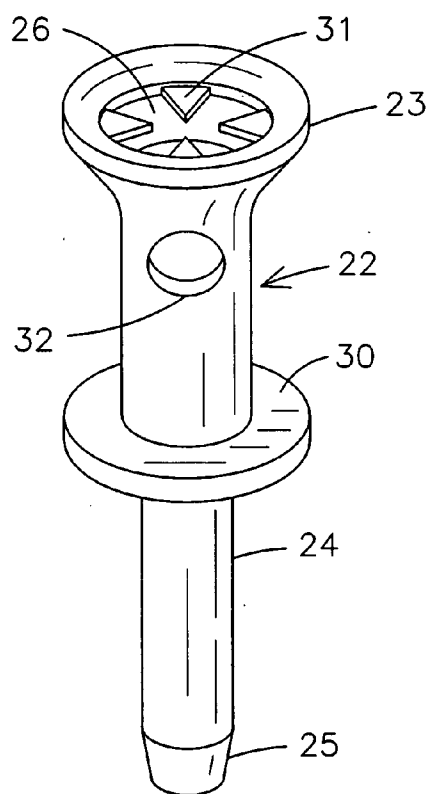
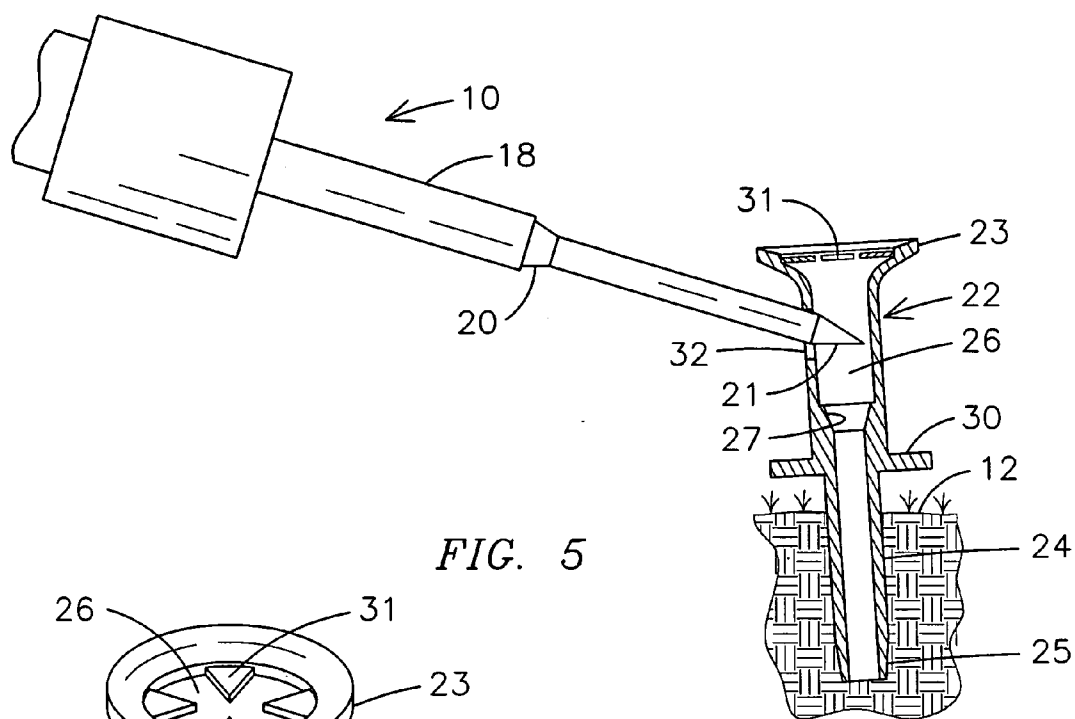


FIG. 4



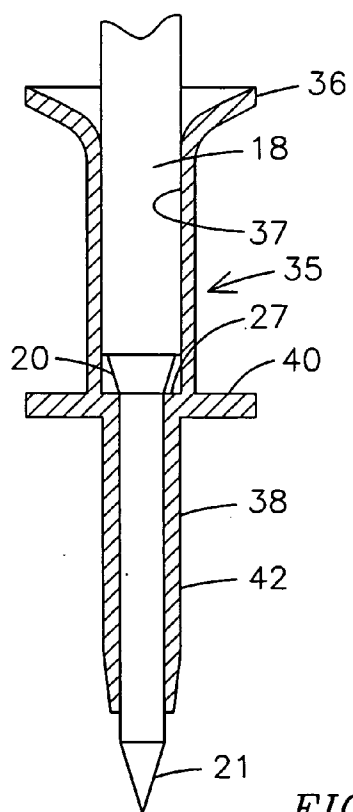
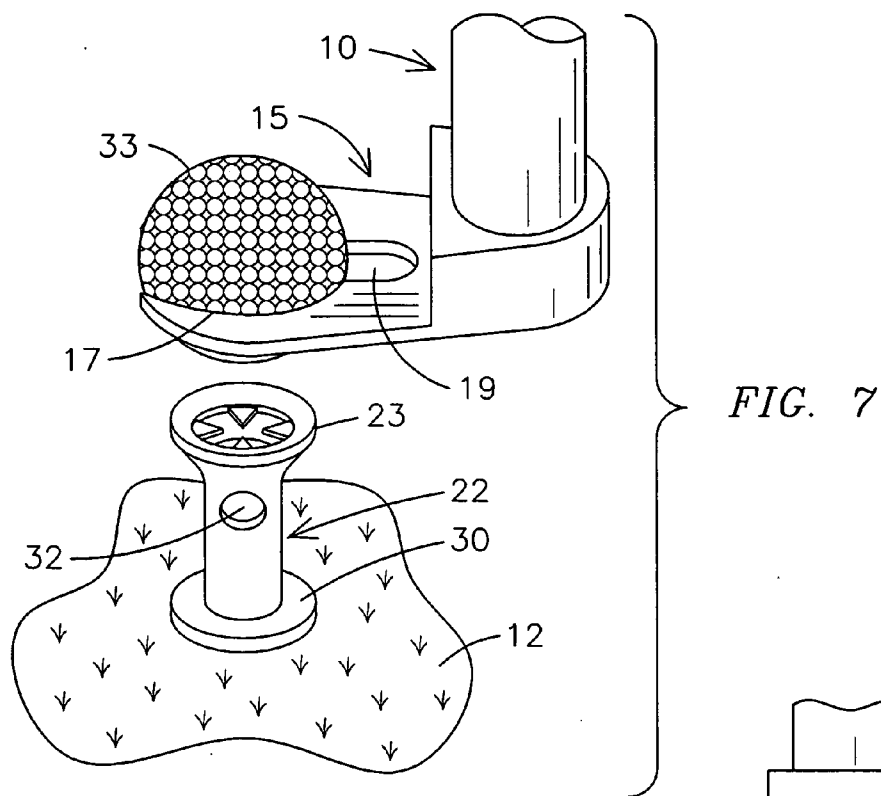


FIG. 9

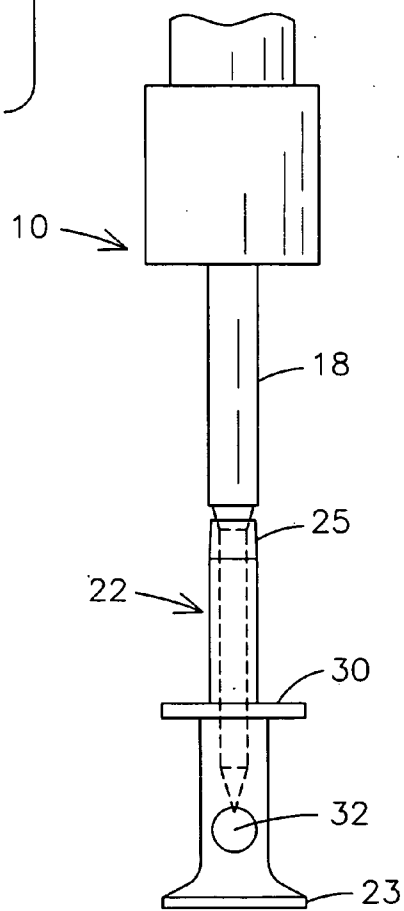


FIG. 10

GOLFBALL & TEE SETTER APPARATUS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates generally to a golf ball and tee setting apparatus and particularly to such an apparatus which allows the setting of a golf tee into the ground and setting the golf ball on top thereof without the user having to bend over at the waist.

[0002] Presently, it is necessary for a golfer to bend at the waist or knees in order to insert a golf tee into the ground and place a golf ball on the tee. Many people enjoy the sport of golf despite having various physical limitations so that the process of teeing up the ball can cause severe physical pain to some golfers, such as elderly golfers or golfers with back or knee problems. For some handicapped golfers, the task of teeing a golf ball is not only difficult but may be impossible.

[0003] The present invention provides an apparatus in which an elderly or handicapped golfer with back problems can place a tee into the ground and set a golf ball on top of the tee from a standing position. A number of different types of golf ball and tee placing devices have been provided in the past. The prior art Smith et al. U.S. Pat. No. 6,843,737 shows a golf ball and tee setting device and method which facilitates the setting of a tee into the ground with a ball on top of it without causing the user to bend over at the waist. The Armstrong U.S. Pat. No. 2,609,198 and the Kopfle U.S. Pat. No. 4,951,947 disclose golf ball and tee combinations in which the ball holding mechanism is biased in an upward and open position. They require the user to forceably hold a trigger or knob to retain the ball and tee combination during a golf ball and tee setting. The U.S. patent to Setecka, U.S. Pat. No. 3,889,946, shows a portable adjustable tee and ball positioning device for pressing golf ball tees into the ground at desired positions and to the desired depth and height without the user bending over to manually mount the tee into the ground. The Erickson, Jr. U.S. Pat. No. 5,759,117 teaches another golf ball and tee placing device in which the golfer may handle a golf ball without having to bend over. The Keller U.S. Pat. No. 5,540,432 is a golf tee and ball setter for non-stooping placement of golf balls and golf tees on site. The Ahner U.S. Pat. No. 5,494,279 is another golf ball tee setting device for setting a golf tee into the ground. The Tobias U.S. Pat. No. 4,969,646 is yet another golf ball tee and placement device as is the Geishert, Sr. U.S. Pat. No. 5,330,178.

[0004] In contrast to these prior art ball and tee placing devices, the present golf ball and tee setting apparatus works with an integrated and coordinated golf tee having an elongated bore therethrough which is held onto a prong and allows the golf tee to be set into the ground at a predetermined depth and then allows the other end of the apparatus to place a golf ball on the tee without the golfer to have to bend over. This simplifies the golf ball and tee setting apparatus and reducing the cost of manufacturing the device.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] A golf ball and tee setting apparatus has an elongated shaft in which one end has an elongated prong protruding therefrom and the other end has a golf ball supporting member having a tee engaging yoke. A golf tee has a ball support surface on one end and has a bore extending thereinto through the ball support surface and sized for the elongated prong to fit thereinto so that the tee

can be placed on the elongated prong and set into the ground by the standing golfer. The prong is removed from the tee by lifting the elongated shaft. The golf tee has means for holding the prong in the bore with a plurality of prong gripping fingers around the bore on the end of the tee or with a plurality of prong gripping teeth on the ball support surface around the bore. The golf tee also has a flange located between the ends thereof for engaging the ground surface to limit the insertion into the surface. The golf tee may also have a bore extending into the side thereof for accepting the tip of the elongated prong. The golf tee bore is a countersunk bore shaped for the elongated prong to fit into for driving the tee into the ground.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0006] Other objects, features, and advantages of the present invention will be apparent from the written description and the drawings in which:

[0007] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a golfer holding a golf ball and tee setter in accordance with the present invention placing the tee into the ground;

[0008] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the golfer of FIG. 1 using the golf ball and tee setter to place the ball on the tee;

[0009] FIG. 3 is a perspective view of a golf ball and tee setter of FIGS. 1 and 2;

[0010] FIG. 4 is a partial perspective view of a golf tee being inserted into the ground with the golf ball and tee setter;

[0011] FIG. 5 is a partial sectional view of the golf tee being removed from the ground with the golf ball and tee setter;

[0012] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the golf tee of FIG. 5;

[0013] FIG. 7 is an exploded perspective view of a golf ball being placed on a golf tee in accordance with the present invention;

[0014] FIG. 8 is a perspective view of an alternate embodiment of the golf tee of the, present invention;

[0015] FIG. 9 is a sectional view showing the golf tee setter holding the golf tee of FIG. 8; and

[0016] FIG. 10 is an elevation of the golf tee setter prong supporting an upside down golf tee for safety cover.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0017] Referring to the drawings FIGS. 1-4, a golf ball and golf tee setter 10 is shown being held by a golfer 11 standing on a golf course 12. The golf tee and golf ball setter 10 has an elongated shaft 13 having a tee setting end 14 and a ball setting end 15. The golf ball setting end 15 has a golf ball support 16 extending perpendicular from the shaft 13 and having a generally circular opening 17 open on one side and sized for a golf ball to fit thereinto. The golf ball setting end 15 has a tee engaging yoke 19 which fits around a tee for picking up the tee by a standing golfer. The golf ball tee-setting end 14 has an elongated prong 18 which has an annular ledge portion 20 and a pointed end 21.

[0018] The golf ball and tee setter 10 works in conjunction with a golf tee 22, as more clearly seen in FIGS. 4, 5 and 6, having a golf ball supporting end 23 and a ground inserting prong portion 24 having an angled end 25. A countersunk bore 26 extends into and through the golf tee 22 and extends through the golf supporting portion 23 of the tee in which the

angled ledge 27 of the countersunk bore can engage the ledge 20 of the prong 18. The pointed end of the prong 18 can extend through the golf tee 22, as seen in FIG. 4. The golf tee 22 has an annular flange 30 extending therearound and positioned to fit flat on the golf course surface 12, as seen in FIG. 4. A golf tee 22, as seen in FIGS. 4, 5 and 6, has a plurality of gripping teeth 31 extending around the opening to the bore 26 for gripping the prong 18 when it is inserted into the golf tee. This golf tee also shows an opening 32 in the side of the golf tee extending into the bore 26.

[0019] In operation, the golf tee setting prong 18 is inserted into the golf tee 22 bore 26, as seen in FIG. 4, and is held by the gripping teeth 31. The prong is inserted into the tee until the ledge 20 engages the bore ledge 27. By gripping the other end of the shaft 13, the golfer 11 can drive the golf tee 22 into the ground until the annular flange 30 engages the golf course surface 12. The prong 18 is held in the bore 26 of the golf tee 22 by the gripping teeth 31, as seen in FIG. 4 or by slightly tapered legs 42 that lightly hold onto the prong. To remove the tee from the ground after hitting the ball, insert prong 18 into hole 32 or use yoke 19 of FIG. 7 to pick it up.

[0020] Turning to FIG. 7, the golf ball 33 is illustrated being held by the golf ball support 15 within the opening 17 and supported on the shaft 10. The tee removing yoke 19 is located behind the opening 17. The golf ball is being placed onto the golf ball supporting surface 23 of the golf tee 22. Once the golf ball is placed on the tee, the shaft is lowered further allowing the golf ball support 15 to be removed by circle 17. This allows the golf ball setter to be removed from the golf tee leaving the golf ball 33 sitting thereon. The golf tee can then be removed by placing the yoke 19 around the golf tee under the ball supporting position 23 and lifting the tee.

[0021] Turning to FIGS. 8 and 9, an alternate embodiment of a golf tee 35 is illustrated having a golf support surface 36 and having a countersunk bore 37 extending through the golf support 36 and through the golf tee 35. This golf tee 35 also has the prong end 38 for inserting into the ground and an annular flange 40 extending therearound for positioning the golf tee in the ground. The golf tee 35 has eliminated the gripping teeth 31 of FIG. 6 and has added a plurality of prong gripping fingers 42 on the tee prong end 38 which engages the prong 18 on the side of the prong when the prong is inserted into the bore 18 prong end 38 for holding the golf tee 35 to the golf ball and tee setter 10 while placing the golf tee 35 into the ground.

[0022] FIG. 10 illustrates the golf ball and tee setter 10 having the golf tee 22 placed over the prong 18, backwards, which allows for the storage of the tee 22 as well as providing a safe cover for the pointed prong 18 to prevent the golfer from being hurt by the pointed end of the prong 18.

[0023] It should be clear at this time that a golf ball and tee setter has been provided which works in conjunction with a matching golf tee allowing the golf ball and tee setter to be able to reduce the complexity and reducing the cost of the golf ball and tee setter while simplifying its use and allowing a handicapped or older golfer to play the sport of golf without having to bend over. However, the present invention is not to be considered limited to the forms shown which are to be considered illustrative rather than restrictive.

I claim:

1. A golf ball and tee setting apparatus comprising:
 - an elongated shaft having two end portions;
 - a ball supporting member on one end portion of said shaft;
 - an elongated prong on the other end of said elongated shaft;
 - a golf tee having a ball support surface on one end and having a bore extending therein through said ball support surface and sized for said elongated prong to fit therein;
 - whereby said tee can be placed on said elongated prong and set by a standing golfer and the prong remove from said tee by lifting said elongated shaft.
2. The golf ball and tee setting apparatus in accordance with claim 1 in which said golf tee ball support surface has a plurality of prong gripping teeth around the bore extending therein.
3. The golf ball and tee setting apparatus in accordance with claim 1 in which said golf tee has a flange located between the ends thereof for engaging the ground surface to thereby limit the insertion into the surface-and control the golf ball position.
4. The golf ball and tee setting apparatus in accordance with claim 3 in which said golf tee has a bore extending into the side thereof sized for said elongated prong.
5. The golf ball and tee setting apparatus in accordance with claim 3 in which said golf tee bore extends through said tee.
6. The golf ball and tee setting apparatus in accordance with claim 5 in which said ball supporting portion extends perpendicular to said elongated shaft and has an opening therein for supporting a golf ball for placement onto said tee.
7. The golf ball and tee setting apparatus in accordance with claim 5 in which said golf tee bore is a countersunk bore shaped for said elongated prong to fit into for driving said tee into the earth.
8. The golf ball and tee setting apparatus in accordance with claim 7 in which said golf tee has an angled end forming a plurality of fingers for gripping said prong when said prong is inserted into said golf tee bore.
9. The golf ball and tee setting apparatus in accordance with claim 6 in which said golf ball supporting portion has a second opening herein sized for placement on said golf tee for removing said tee.
10. A golf ball tee setting apparatus comprising:
 - an elongated shaft having two end portions;
 - an elongated prong on the other end of said elongated shaft;
 - a golf tee having a ball support surface on one end and having a bore extending therein through said ball support surface and sized for said elongated prong to fit therein;
 - whereby said tee can be placed on said elongated prong and set by a standing golfer and the prong remove from said tee by lifting said elongated shaft
11. The golf ball tee setting apparatus in accordance with claim 10 in which said golf tee ball support surface has a plurality of prong gripping teeth around the bore extending therein.
12. The golf ball tee setting apparatus in accordance with claim 10 in which said golf tee has a flange located between the ends thereof for engaging the ground surface to limit the insertion into the ground surface.

13. The golf ball tee setting apparatus in accordance with claim **12** in which said golf tee has a plurality of gripping fingers on the other end thereof for gripping said elongated prong.

14. The golf ball tee setting apparatus in accordance with claim **13** in which said golf tee bore extends through said tee.

15. The golf ball tee setting apparatus in accordance with claim **14** in which said golf tee bore is a countersunk bore shaped for said elongated prong to fit into for driving said tee into the earth.

16. The golf ball and tee setting apparatus in accordance with claim **15** in which said golf tee gripping fingers form an angled end on said golf tee.

17. A golf ball tee apparatus comprising:

a golf tee having two ends portions and having a ball support surface on one end portion and a generally elongated earth inserting prong on the other end, and having a countersunk bore extending therein through said ball support surface and sized for said elongated prong to fit therein and said golf tee having means for holding said prong in said bore while said tee is being placed for receiving a golf ball;

whereby said tee can be placed inserted in the ground with an elongated prong inserted into said bore.

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