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COIN-OPERATED SKI CHECKER

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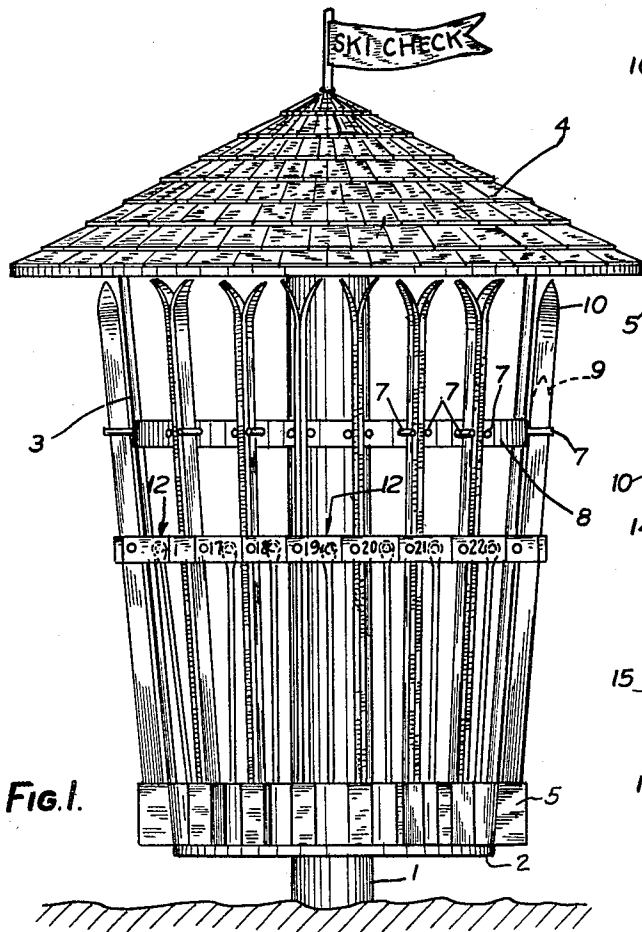


Fig. 1.

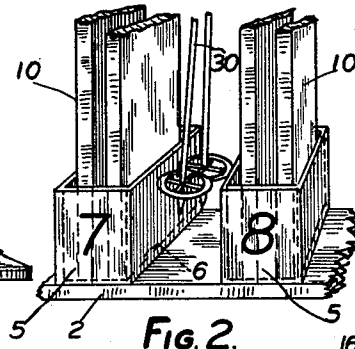


Fig. 2.

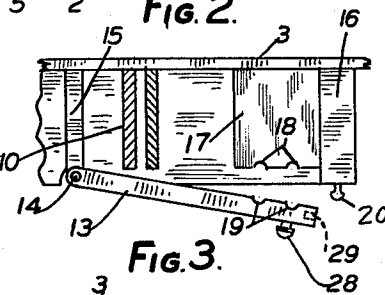


Fig. 3.

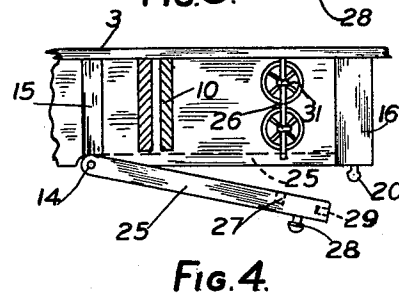


Fig. 4.

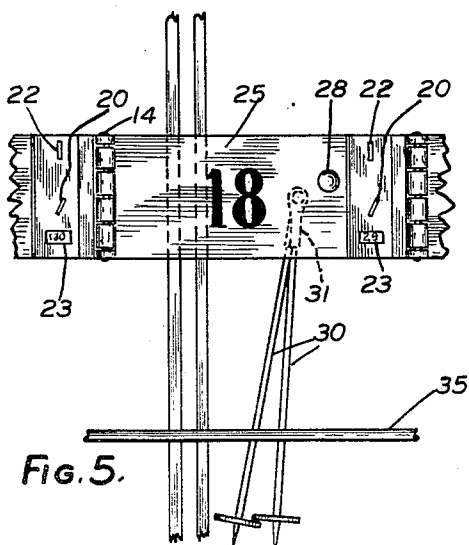


Fig. 5.

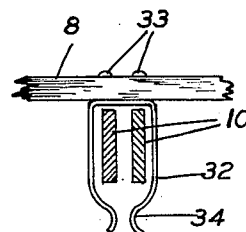


Fig. 6.

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COIN-OPERATED SKI CHECKER

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1 Claim. (Cl. 211—4)

This invention relates to temporary storage and locking facilities for skis and ski poles in public areas where normal checking facilities for safeguarding skis, ski poles and the like are not generally available. The device provides in one form a plurality of racks arranged for holding skis in a substantially-upright position, and each rack is fitted with a coin-operated locking gate so that skis and ski poles may be secured in the racks to provide safekeeping for the skis and ski poles during temporary non-use.

Included among the objects and advantages of the present invention is an economical, positive means for storing skis of the commonly-used sizes, during temporary non-use at public ski courses and other places where safe-guarding the bulky items of ski equipment, especially skis and ski poles, is difficult and heretofore not satisfactory. The device includes an upright storage rack for skis with a coin-operated locking gate which provides means for securing skis in a temporary storage space along with ski poles until their user retrieves the same. Means are provided to reduce the possibility of theft of the various sizes of skis from the racks.

These and other objects and advantages may be readily ascertained by referring to the following description and appended illustrations in which:

Fig. 1 is a side elevational view of one form of the invention showing a multiple rack unit for storage of skis and the like;

Fig. 2 is an enlarged detail of one method of supporting the bottoms of skis and the like in the device according to the invention;

Fig. 3 is a top plan view of one form of a locking mechanism according to the invention for holding the skis and ski poles;

Fig. 4 is a top plan view of a modified form of a ski locking gate and pole support;

Fig. 5 is a front elevational detail view of the locking gate illustrated in Fig. 4; and

Fig. 6 is a top plan view and partial section of a modified upper ski-positioning mount.

The ski storing mechanism illustrated in Fig. 1 includes a mount 1 secured in the ground and arranged to support a ski rack at a distance above the ground to allow for accumulation of snow and the like at the place of installation. A base member 2 is mounted on the support 1, and a series of supports 3 extend upwardly from the base a distance sufficient to extend above the longest ski in use (which is about 7½ feet). A covering 4 is mounted on the top of the mount 1 in position to form a top stop so that skis mounted in the rack cannot be lifted up out of a lower holding mechanism. The supports 3 are secured to the top 4, and the ski-holding means are mounted thereon. An upright wall, which may be used in place of the supports 3, and the supports are preferably toed in at the bottom so that a ski mounted substantially parallel and in upright position is tilted slightly out at the top. By having the skis in the rack

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tilting out at the top, the racks cannot be used without locking the gate since the skis are slightly unbalanced outwardly and would topple out of the rack. This, of course, prevents unauthorized storage without paying for the same.

The rack illustrated in Fig. 1 may have a wall which is circular, rectangular, oblong or any other shape desired. Also the rack is shown for outdoor temporary ski storage in which the base plate or ski-supporting plate 2 is mounted a distance above ground to allow for the accumulation of snow and dripping of the skis. The roof 4 provides means for keeping the snow pack from the ski storage area itself. Obviously, the device could be made for use inside a building, in which case a roof as such would not be needed, but a simple top or cover which extends over the racks to prevent moving the skis upwardly out of the locked gate would be sufficient. Where the ceiling of the room in which the storage is mounted is sufficiently low, the ceiling may act as a stop. Also, various types of means may be used in the building as a lower support for the skis, the most practical being the floor in which the rack is situated, provided drainage for the rack is supplied.

The skis in stored position require upright positioning in the correct stall, and for this purpose boxes 5 are mounted on the base plate 2, as shown in enlarged detail in Fig. 2. The box provides a simple means of supporting the skis in position directly below the locking mechanism, and provides means for accumulating or discarding drippings from melting snow and ice on the skis. The bottom 6 of the box may be a foraminous bottom such as a punched and expanded metal, screen, and the like to insure adequate drainage of liquid running off the skis. The upper ends of the skis are held in position directly above the locking mechanism by means of pegs 7 mounted on a board 8 secured to the uprights 3. The pegs 7 are placed far enough apart so that a pair of facing skis may readily fit therebetween. The pins are placed a sufficient distance above the bottom plate 2 to hold either short or long skis, as for example a six-foot-six ski indicated by dashed lines 9 or the larger skis 10. The distance between the bottom plate and the top or roof 4 should be sufficient to have a small clearance for the longest skis used between the upper and lower stop members so that the skis may be readily placed in position in the rack.

A locking mechanism, shown in general by the numeral 12 and shown in detail in Fig. 3, includes a gate 13 pivoted by means of a pin 14 to side wall 15. The gate closes against side wall 16, and is there arranged to be locked when flush with the outermost part of the wall 16. A plate 17 having two semi-circular slots 18 is secured between the two end walls. The slots are in position to register with two semi-circular slots 19 in the gate 13 and provide means for holding ski poles when the gate is closed. The distance between the edge of the wall 17 and the end wall 15 is sufficient to freely accommodate a pair of skis in facing upright position. A removable key 20, operating a lock mechanism which is not shown, provides means for releasably locking the gate after the skis 10 and the ski poles have been placed in position. The locking mechanism may be any commonly-used coin-operated locking mechanism on such devices as luggage lockers, etc. The major visible components of such locking devices are illustrated in Fig. 5, where a coin slot 22 permits means for operating the lock and for removing the key 20 after a coin has been placed in the slot. A counter 23 indicates the number of times the device has been used. The coins may be removed from the coin box by well known means.

In the modification illustrated in Figs. 4 and 5, a lock

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mechanism mounted on the supports 3 includes a gate 25 pivotally secured to end wall 15 by means of the pivot 14 the gate swings shut against end wall 16 in position for locking engagement with a lock (not shown) operated by means of the key 20. In this modification, however, an elongated pin 26 is mounted on the back of the rack and extends forwardly to a position where its outer end will engage a hole 27 in the gate 25 when in the closed position, indicated by dashed lines 25. Ski poles 30 are hung by means of the hand straps 31 over the pin 26, and when the gate 25 is swung into closed position, the poles are securely held on the pins 26 while the skis 10 are held upright in the rack. To aid the user, a handle 28 is provided on the gate to help open the gate. Each gate 25 and 13 includes a latch slot 29 in the end thereof to accommodate the lock bolt, not shown, which is actuated by the key 20. The movement of the bolt into the latch slot locks the gate securely.

In certain instances it may be desirable to more securely hold the upper portions of the skis and a spring-clip system for the holding is indicated in Fig. 6. A spring clip or clamp 32 is secured by means of rivets 33 to the lateral 8 in position to hold skis 10 in upright position. The outer portion of the clamp 32 includes a necked down portion 34 which holds the ski in upright position while the user manipulates the gates.

By numbering each of the gates and by numbering boxes 5 at the bottom of the rack with corresponding numbers, a quick identification system is provided. Also, by numbering the boxes to correspond with the gates, the user may visually align the ski in the correct box for the desired gate. This is especially valuable where there are no other skis in the rack. Also, as is the normal practice, the key is stamped with the same number as the gate so that the user can quickly identify his rack position.

To further safeguard the skis when placed in the rack, a pole 35 is horizontally mounted on the rack wall by means of brackets, not shown, which holds the bar out a distance from the wall and permits the skis to be readily placed between the wall and the bar. By having the bar placed about twenty-four inches from the bottom of the ski rest, the bottom of the skis in the rack cannot be lifted out of the boxes and moved outwardly. This prevents the skis from being pulled downwardly through

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the lock. The bar 35, in other words, acts as a theft bar which prevents removal of the skis from the rack when in locked position.

While the invention has been illustrated by reference to specific embodiments, there is no intent to limit the device to the precise details so set forth, except insofar as defined in the following claim.

I claim:

A temporary locking storage support for a plurality of pairs of skis and accessories comprising an upright support means, a base fixedly positioned with respect to said support means, a plurality of shallow recesses arranged on said base, each said recess being arranged to accommodate the rear ends of a pair of skis and prevent lateral movement of such ends, a cover member mounted on said support means spaced from the base a distance slightly greater than the length of the skis to be stored so as to prevent upward movement and removal of such stored skis, an intermediate support mounted on said support means inclusive of outwardly directed pairs of projections arranged to hold bottom to bottom positioned skis therebetween, each of said pair of projections being positioned substantially vertically above one of said recesses, a narrow stall mounted on said support member intermediate each set of cooperating projections and recesses and arranged to accommodate pairs of skis standing upwardly from said recesses and held between said projections, and a locking gate member mounted on each stall for temporarily locking said skis in upright position in said storage support.

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