April 21, 1964 J. B. McKEE 3,129,943

GOLF COURSES

Filed Sept. 21, 1961 3 Sheets-Sheet 1

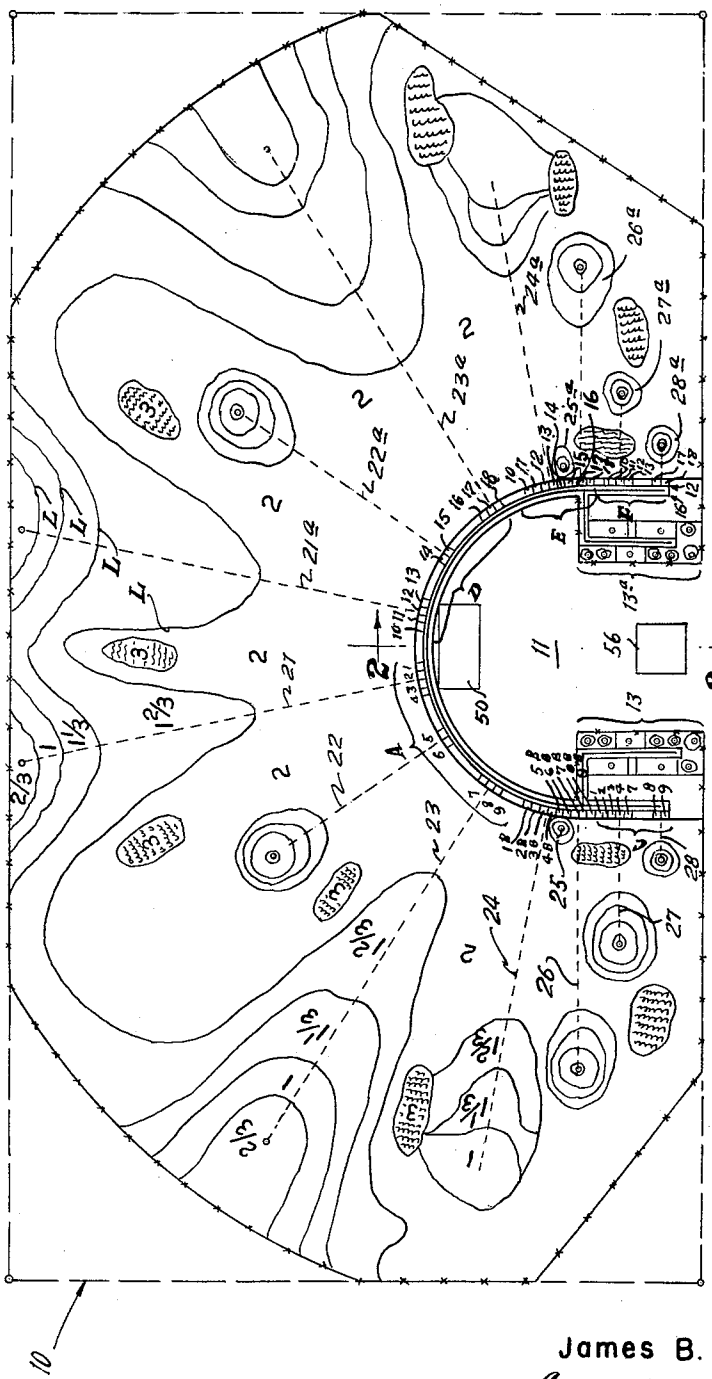


Fig. 1

INVENTOR
James B. McKee

BY Hastings Ackley and Walter J. Jagmin
ATTORNEYS

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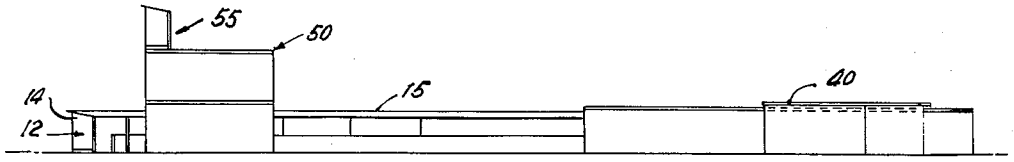


Fig. 2

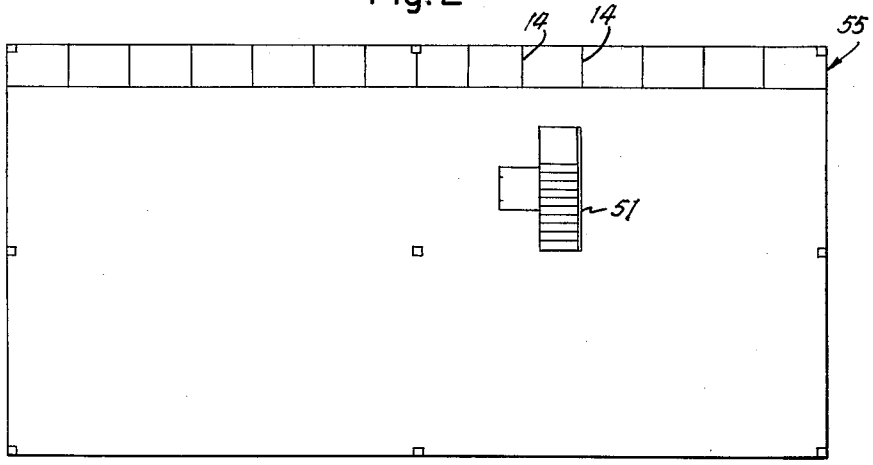


Fig. 3

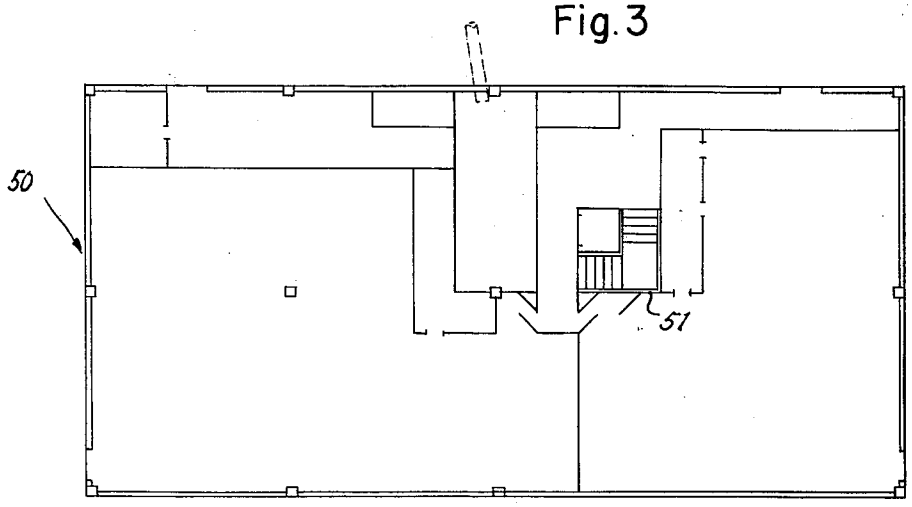


Fig. 4

INVENTOR

James B. McKee

BY E. Hastings Ackley and Walter J. Gagm

ATTORNEYS

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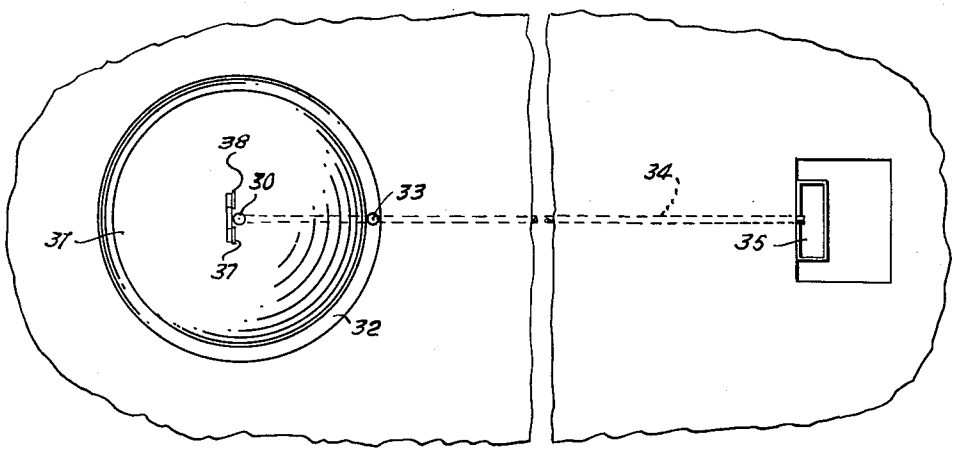


Fig. 5

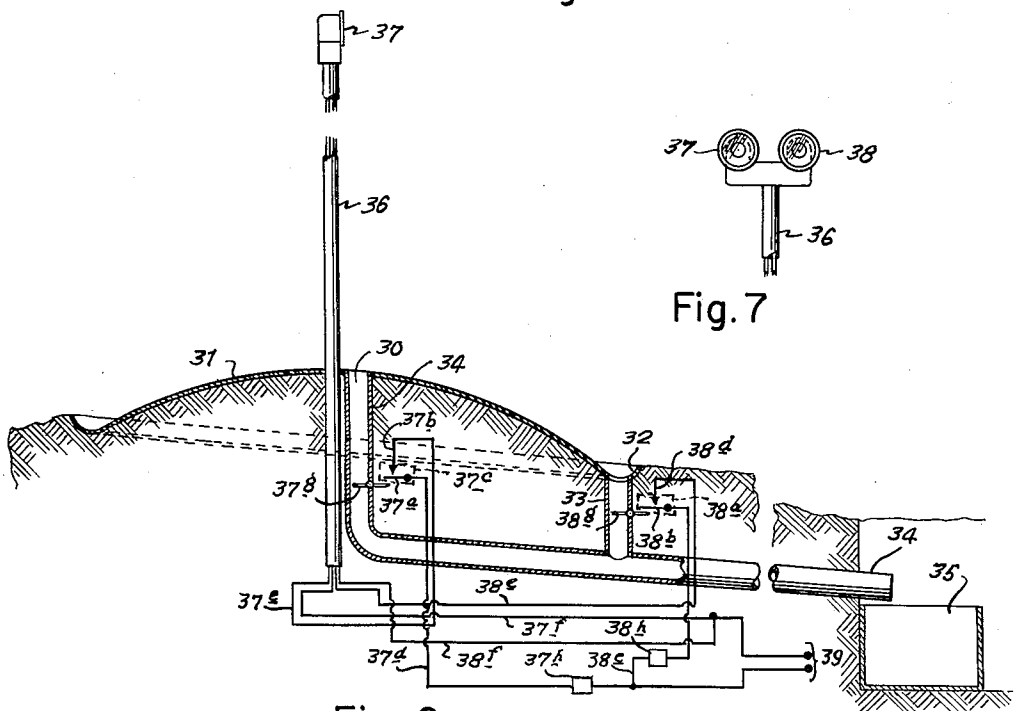


Fig. 6

Fig. 7

INVENTOR

James B. McKee

BY Hastings Ackley and Walter J. Jagm

ATTORNEYS

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GOLF COURSES

James B. McKee, 3615 Townsend Drive, Dallas 29, Tex.

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2 Claims. (Cl. 273—176)

This invention relates to golf courses, and more particularly, to a golf course upon which a golf game closely simulating the conventional game of golf may be played.

One object of this invention is to provide a novel type of golf course for playing a game of golf which requires very little walking on the part of the participants as compared to the conventional game of golf when played on a regular course.

Another object is to provide a golf course adaptable to a golf game wherein the players make all of their golf shots from a centrally located area on the course so as to reduce the amount of walking required in playing the game and to permit the game to be played more speedily than a game played on a regular course.

Still another object is to provide a golf course for a golf game wherein the ball driving positions and walkways connecting the same are covered by sheltering roofs so that a player can play the game in inclement weather conditions without having to walk out on the fairways and being exposed to the elements.

A further object is to provide a golf course with a centrally located club house wherein the golf course includes a driving range and the club house roof is provided with teeing positions from which golfers may drive balls onto the driving range.

Still another object is to provide a golf game which closely simulates a regular golf game but which may be played on a relatively small acreage of land (60 to 80 acres) as compared to a conventional golf course.

A still further object is to provide a golf game comprising a novel type of golf course on which a game of golf may be played under conditions which closely approximate the conventional game of golf but which may be played several times as speedily as conventional golf and which will permit a simultaneous play by a far greater number of players.

A still further object is to provide a golf game comprising a novel type of golf course on which a game of golf may be played under conditions which closely approximate the conventional game of golf but which may be played at night at no additional expense to the player for the privilege of playing on a lighted golf course.

A still further object is to provide a golf course and golf game wherein the player remains within a limited playing area and is required to make almost all of the types of shots as he would be required to make in playing eighteen holes of a conventional game of golf without the necessity, however, of having to follow the ball to make his next shot.

Still another object is to provide a golf course and game wherein the player is enabled to play a golf game closely simulating the conventional game and under playing conditions which closely approximate those on the conventional golf course without, however, being required to leave a sheltered playing area from which he makes tee shots, fairway shots, sand trap shots, and approach shots as on a conventional course.

Additional objects and advantages of the invention will be readily apparent from the reading of the following description of the method of playing the golf game of this invention, and of a golf course for playing the same, and reference to the accompanying drawings thereof, wherein:

FIGURE 1 is a schematic plan view of a golf course which embodies the invention with the covering roofs removed from the teeing positions, walkways, and putting greens in the playing area;

FIGURE 2 is a sectional view of the playing area of the course taken along the line 2—2 in FIGURE 1;

FIGURE 3 is a plan view of the roof of the club house showing the arrangement of the driving tees thereon;

FIGURE 4 is a plan view of the first floor of the club house;

FIGURE 5 is a fragmentary top view of a modified form of a fairway of the course;

FIGURE 6 is a vertical sectional schematic view of the fairway of FIGURE 5; and,

FIGURE 7 is a fragmentary plan view of indicator lamps which are mounted adjacent the cup provided in the fairway of FIGURE 5 for indicating a "hole-in-one" or a close shot to the pin.

Referring particularly to the drawings, the golf course 10, illustrated in FIGURE 1, is provided with a playing area 11 in the shape of a horse shoe or inverted U which is centrally located along one of the boundaries of the course and from which the player makes all the strokes required in playing the game. Although the course is illustrated as rectangular in form it may be of other configurations, such as fan shape, semi-circular, or the like. In the main, however, the course should extend or radiate from the central playing area and provide a sufficient expanse which is adapted to accommodate "drives" approximating 300 yards or more which may be made from the playing area 11.

As in the conventional game, the player is required to make tee shots, fairway shots, sand trap shots, approach shots, and putting strokes, all under conditions which closely approximate those on a regular course. A number of hitting stalls or hitting positions 12 are arranged in an inverted U configuration about the perimeter of the playing area 11 from which hitting positions the players make all of the shots as required in playing the game, excepting for the putting strokes, however, which are played on putting greens 13 and 13A also located within the playing area 11. From each of the hitting positions, the player is required to make a particular type of shot, whereby each shot represents a stroke made while playing a particular "hole." Only one shot is made from each hitting position and a sufficient number of hitting positions are provided so as to be assigned and divided among eighteen holes whereby the player is required to make the usual variety of shots as well as the number of times he might ordinarily be required to make when playing the conventional game of eighteen holes.

As shown in FIGURE 2, the hitting positions are provided with stalls having partitions 14 so that a poorly hit ball will not strike players in the playing area. The hitting positions are also covered by a protective transparent roofed archway 15 which, in addition, extends over a walkway 16 located directly behind the hitting stall, thus permitting the players to move from one stall to the next while under the shelter of a covering roof.

The hitting stalls and putting greens from which a player makes the strokes required to play the first nine "holes" are located in the left side of the playing area 11 as seen in FIGURE 1 and the hitting stalls and putting greens for playing the last nine holes are located in the right side of the playing area. The driving tees are located in the upper or central portion of the U-shaped configuration of hitting positions located about the perimeter of the playing area and, as in the conventional game, are eighteen in number, one for each "hole." As illustrated in FIGURE 1, the tee and other hitting positions are designated by the same number as the hole to which they are assigned, excepting that letter subscripts are added thereto. As viewed in FIGURE 1, the nine tees

for the first nine holes are located to the left of the center or axial line through the playing area and arranged in consecutive order in counter-clockwise direction from the center line and the tees for the last nine holes are located to the right of the center line in consecutive order in a clockwise direction.

In the course illustrated in FIGURE 1, the first nine tee shots or drives are made to three fairways, 21, 22 and 23, the centers of which are indicated by broken lines in FIGURE 1. The fairways 21, 22 and 23 each extend radially from the approximate geometric center of the playing area 11 and lie adjacent to one another in consecutive order in the counter-clockwise direction as viewed in FIGURE 1 with the fairway 21 lying slightly to the left of the axis or center line through the playing area. The first four drives, representing drives made on the first four holes, are made to the long fairway 21, which is approximately 250 yards in length, from adjacent tee positions 1A 2A, 3A and 4A which provide for different driving conditions for each tee shot as determined by the slight variations in the direction of wind and driving angle from these tee positions. From the fifth and sixth hole driving tees 5A and 6A, the drives are made to the relatively short fairway 22 which may be approximately 125 yards in length. The drives for the seventh, eighth and ninth holes are made from the driving tee positions 7A, 8A and 9A to the third fairway 23 which is approximately 225 yards in length. In playing the game, all of these drives are made in succession without any other type of shot having been made, the player always moving to the next tee stall on his left after making each drive.

There are no "greens" at the ends of fairways 21 and 23 to which a player may guide or plan the control of his drive. There is, however, a green with pin and cup at the end of fairway 22. Each of the fairways is delineated by contour lines L which may be painted on the fairway to mark the boundaries of scoring areas each of which is assigned a scoring value representing a given number of strokes or fraction thereof as is illustrated in FIGURE 1 for the zones in fairway 21, with the scoring values assigned to the zones being ⅔, 1, 1⅓, 1⅔, 2 and 3, respectively. The zones assigned values of 3 represent hazards as on a conventional course. In playing the game, each player must endeavor to drive his ball to the zone in the fairway which is assigned the least scoring number of strokes, since the object of the game, as in the conventional game, is to complete the play of eighteen "holes" with a minimum number of strokes. Since all players are required to make the same number of drives, the score for each player is not determined by the number of strokes actually made by each drive, but by a score representing a given number of strokes as determined by the zone to which he has succeeded in driving his ball, which score must be one of the assigned scoring values within the range between ⅔ of a stroke and three strokes. These scores, the player records on a specially prepared score card as scores made for the drives on holes 1 through 9. It is to be understood, of course, that scoring values other than those indicated for the zones in FIGURE 1 may be used, so long as there is a gradation between the values with the lowest value being assigned to the zone requiring a premium of skill to be reached with consistency.

The topography and terrain for each fairway may be flat or rolling but preferably not unlike the terrain on which an average fairway would be laid out and not so undulating as to conceal any large part of the fairway out of view of the driving tees. The scoring zone in each fairway which is assigned the least number of strokes, and to which each player must attempt to drive if he is to record a minimum number of strokes, should present a degree of difficulty such as would require the skill of a professional to be driven with regularity and consistency.

Having completed his first nine tee shots, the player then proceeds to play four fairway shots from the consecutively adjacent hitting positions, 1B, 2B, 3B and 4B to the fairway 24 which lies adjacent the fairway 23 and similarly extends radially from the playing area 11. These shots represent fairway shots made on holes 1 to 4. He then makes two sand trap shots from the adjacent hitting positions 5B and 6B to the target area 25 which represent sand trap shots to the green for holes 5 and 6. The target area 25 is disposed adjacent the fairway 24 on the side thereof which is opposite the fairway 23.

Two additional fairway shots are required to be made from the adjacent hitting positions 8B and 9B to the fairway 26 which represent fairway shots to be made on holes 8 and 9, there being no fairway shot provided for hole 7. The fairway 26 lies to the left of the target area 25 as viewed from the playing area 11. All of these "fairway" shots are made by the player from adjacent hitting positions on the U-shaped perimeter of the playing area, as shown in FIGURE 1, the player moving successively from one hitting position to the next in a counter-clockwise direction. Contour lines L and scoring zones similar to those provided for the driving fairways are also provided for the fairways 24 and 26 and the target area 25. After completing each "fairway" shot and "sand trap" shot, the player records the score he has made for each stroke on his score card.

On completion of the fairway shots, the player then proceeds to make seven approach shots representing approach shots made on holes 1 through 4 and 7 through 9, there being no approach shots provided for holes 5 and 6. The approach shots for "holes" 1 and 2 are made from the consecutively adjacent hitting positions 1C and 2C to fairway 26. The approach shots for "holes" 3, 4, and 7 are made from the consecutively adjacent hitting positions 3C, 4C and 7C to the fairway 27 which lies to the left of the fairway 26 as viewed from the playing area. The approach shots for "holes" 8 and 9 are made from the adjacent hitting positions 8C and 9C to the fairway 28 which lies to the left of the fairway 27 as viewed from the playing area. The fairways 27 and 28, like the other fairways, are also marked with contour lines and scoring zones so that the player may record a score on his score card for each approach shot as determined by the scoring value of the zone to which he has succeeded in placing his ball.

Upon completing the "approach" shots, the player then moves to the putting greens 13 for the first nine holes which are covered by a transparent roof, such as the transparent roof 40, illustrated in FIGURE 2, which also covers the putting greens 13A for holes 10 through 18, thus providing sunlight for the grass and cover for the players. To play a particular green, the player places his ball on the green behind a given line which is a fixed distance from the cup for each green and then endeavors to hole his ball in a minimum number of strokes, recording on his score card the actual number of strokes he is actually required to make. The greens for the course are preferably of substantially the same contour and texture as are the usual greens to be found on a conventional golf course and are located adjacent the hitting positions 1C through 9C whereby the player is never obliged to leave the shelter of a covering roof when moving from the teeing positions to the greens.

After completing play of the "front" nine holes, the player or players may then retire to the club house preparatory to playing the back nine holes 10–18 of the course. For these holes, the layout and arrangement of fairways, teeing positions, scoring zones and putting greens are substantially the same as for the first nine holes and are played in the same manner.

The first four drives of the back nine are made to the long fairway 21*a* from adjacent tee positions 10D, 11D, 12D and 13D. The fifth and sixth drives of the back nine are made from the hitting positions 14D and 15D to the short fairway 22*a*. The drives from the 16D, 17D and 18D hitting positions are made to the fairway 23*a*.

The next four fairway shots are then made from hitting positions 10E, 11E, 12E and 13E to the fairway 24*a*, and then two sand trap shots are made from the adjacent hitting positions 14E and 15E to the target area 25*a*. Two additional fairway shots are then made from the hitting positions 17E and 18E to the fairway 26*a*. Upon completion of these fairway shots, the seven approach shots for the "holes" 10 through 13 and 16, there being no approach shots for holes 14 and 15, are made from the hitting positions 10F, 11F, 12F, 13F and 16F for the fairway 27*a*. The approach shots for holes 17 and 18 are made from the adjacent hitting positions 17F and 18F to the fairway 28*a*. The player then moves to the putting greens 13*a* and successively putts for the cup of each of the playing greens 13*a*. The scoring is the same for the first nine holes.

If desired, each of the fairways may be provided with a cup 30 and a dome shaped cover 31 which slopes downwardly in all directions from the cup. The cover 31 has a gutter 32 which slopes downwardly to a collector pipe 33 so that balls which hit on the dome cover 31 roll by gravity into gutter 32 and thence to the collector pipe 33 which opens upwardly into the gutter. The cup itself opens downwardly into a collector pipe 34.

The collector pipe 34 may slope downwardly towards the hopper 35 so that if a driven ball enters into the cup it will move downwardly by gravity through the collector pipe 34 to the hopper 35.

A pin 36 may be connected to the dome cover at the cup and is provided at its upper end with a pair of lamps 37 and 38. One of the lights, for example 37, may be green and the other light 38 may be red. The green light may be connected in series with the contacts 37*a* and 37*b* of the switch 37*c* across a source of electrical energy 39 by means of the conductor 37*d* connected to the movable contact 37*a* and to one side of the source of electrical energy, the conductor 37*e* which is connected to one side of the lamp and the conductor 37*f* which connects the other side of the lamp to the other side of the source of electrical power. The movable contact 37*a* of the switch is moved to closed position, whenever a ball falls into the cup 30, by a control gate 37*g* of the cup which is pivotally secured to the collector pipe 34 and has one end extending into the collector pipe to be engaged by the ball which pivots the control gate downwardly and in so doing causes the opposite end of the control gate to engage and actuate the movable contact 37*a*. If desired, a suitable flasher or intermittently actuated switch 37*h* may be connected in series with the switch 37*c* to cause the light to be flashed intermittently as the ball rolls through the conduit and holds the movable contact 37*c* of the switch in closed position. The ball rolls through the collector pipe slowly so that the light 37 will remain lit for an appreciable period of time.

The lamp 38 is similarly controlled by a switch 38*a*. Switch 38*a* has a movable contact 38*b* connected to one side of the input circuit or source of electric power 39 by the conductor 38*c*. The stationary contact 38*d* is connected to one side of the lamp 38 by the conductor 38*e* while the other side of the lamp 38 is connected to the other side of the input circuit 39 by the conductor 38*f*. It will be apparent that when a ball hits the domed cover 31 and rolls to the trough 32, and thence into the collector pipe 33 which communicates with the pipe 34, it causes the control gate 38*g* to pivot and move the movable contact 38*b* into engagement with the stationary contact 38*d*, thus connecting the lamp 38 across the input circuit and causing the lamp to give a visual signal that the ball hit within a certain distance of the pin. If desired, of course, a flasher unit 38*h* may be connected in series with the switch 38*a* to cause the lamp 38 to flash on and off for a short period of time as the ball rolls past the gate 38 and holds the switch 38*a* to be closed.

In the event that the fairways are provided with the cups and domed covers and the signal lamps 37 and 38, the scoring may be modified by giving one score for a "hole in one" or a "hole-out." Zero strokes will thereafter be scored for that particular "hole." The player, however, may elect to play such zero subsequent strokes for practice.

Although a particular arrangement and order of hitting positions is illustrated in the golf course in FIGURE 1, it is to be understood of course that these need not be in consecutive order or necessarily in a U-shaped configuration. In addition, a greater or lesser number of fairways may be provided and the type and number of shots which a player must make for each hole may be varied as desired. The scoring values assigned to the contoured zones may also be varied from those indicated in FIGURE 1 but should preferably provide for a par score of around 72 which is the standard par for a conventional course.

When the course is heavily played, considerable divoting wear on the grass in the hitting stalls may be expected. To provide for such eventuality, large steel frames containing permanent soil and turf will be mounted on dolleys and rolled into position or out of position as necessary for replacing the heavily worn sod. For the hitting stalls, some of these frames could be tilted to provide for a sidehill effect.

The contour lines which demark the scoring zones on the fairways will be indicated by colored neoprene tubing, if desired, instead of painted on the fairways.

The particular form of the score card is also arbitrary, but the arrangement of the hole numbers on the card will preferably correspond to the sequence of strokes made from the hitting positions so as to facilitate the recording of scores.

The club house 50 should preferably be located directly behind the teeing positions for the first and tenth "holes." The ground floor, indicated in FIGURE 4, may be provided with a large number of lockers for storing golf clubs and accessories, and may include other facilities not unlike those of a conventional club house. It might also be provided with a barber shop, beauty salon, curio shops, stores, and the like, as would provide a considerable shopping center. In any event, a stair well 51 or escalator should be provided whereby stairs lead from the ground floor to the roof.

The roof of the club house is provided with a number of teeing positions or "stalls" 55 along its front edge whereby the fairways 21 and 28 of the course may be used as a driving range. Alternatively, these teeing positions might be used as substitute tees for the fairways 21 and 28 when a game of golf is played. A viewing gallery might also be provided on the roof and main floor of the club house, if desired, to permit spectators to view the "play" over the entire course.

The interior portion of the area 11 is also provided with a large parking lot area and a centrally located service station 56.

It will therefore be apparent that the golf course disclosed herein may be located on approximately 60 to 80 acres of land and provide for a 6000 or 7000 yard course which is considerably less than the vast acreage required for the conventional type of golf courses. The economic advantage of a course requiring such a small acreage are obvious. In addition, since a player is not obliged to follow his ball in order to make a follow-up shot, the amount of walking and playing time is considerably reduced from that required for the conventional game. Consequently, a far greater number of players may play the course in a given time interval than may play a conventional course. Only a limited number of public or private courses are open at night. This course will provide a means for the player, who works during the day, to play, individually or in a league, at night and enjoy perfection of his game. Also the novice player will not suffer any additional financial expense because of balls hit into the water or "rough." For courses where playing fees are charged, the income advantages will be cor-

respondingly greater. It will also be seen that the provision of sheltering roofs for the walkways, teeing positions, and putting greens of the course will encourage play during inclement weather conditions. If desired, the entire playing area may be covered so that a player once arriving at the course, need never move out from under a sheltering roof.

The foregoing description of the invention is explanatory only, and changes in the details of the construction illustrated may be made by those skilled in the art, within the scope of the appended claims, without departing from the spirit of the invention.

What is claimed and desired to be secured by Letters Patent is:

1. A golf course having a hitting area; a plurality of fairways extending in radial directions from said hitting area, said fairways being divided into zones, each of said zones being assigned a particular scoring value; and means on said fairways marking the boundaries of said zones whereby a golf drive made to one of said fairways by a player in the hitting area may be assigned a score as determined by the scoring value of the zone to which he has succeeded in driving his ball, one of said zones having assigned an extreme scoring value and being provided with a target area having a downwardly extending hole therein into which a ball may pass and having a surface sloping downwardly outwardly from said hole and to a gutter provided at the periphery of the target area, said hole and said gutter being provided with conduits into which balls falling into the hole rolling into the gutter may pass by gravity to a collecting station; and means operatively associated with said conduits and energized by the passage of balls through the conduits for giving visual indication of the passage of a ball through each of the conduits.

2. The golf course of claim 1, wherein said means for giving visual indication gives one indication upon the passage of a ball through one of said conduits and gives another visual indication upon the passage of a ball through the other of said conduits.

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