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GOLF PUTTING TARGET WITH BALL RETURN MEANS

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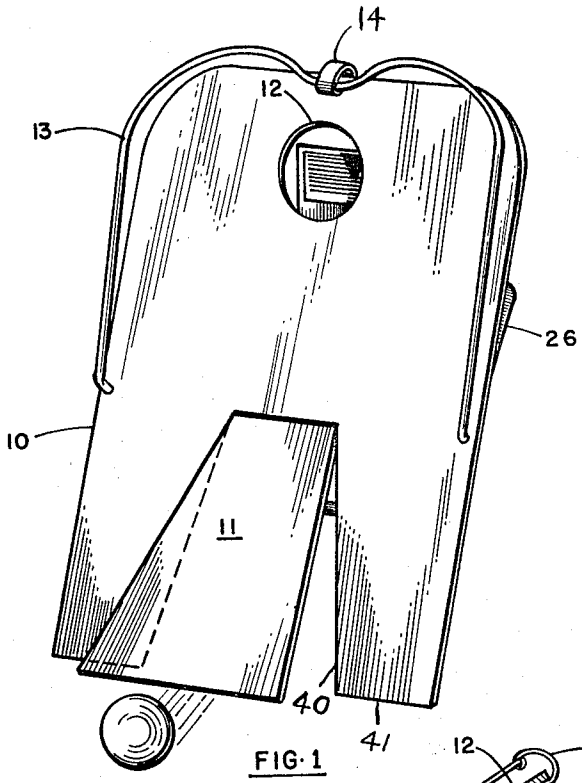


FIG. 1

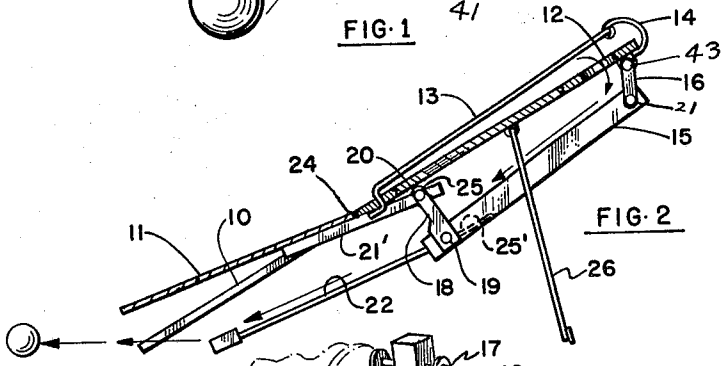


FIG. 2

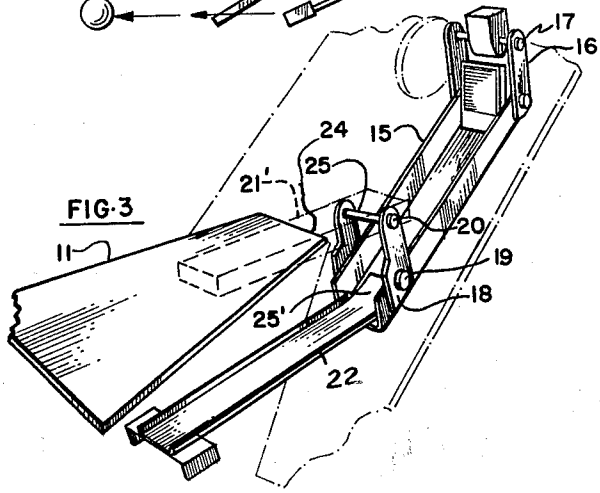


FIG. 3

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GOLF PUTTING TARGET WITH BALL RETURN MEANS

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This invention relates to games and, more particularly, to golf practice devices which can be used on a carpet of a room or the like.

Various golf practice devices have been provided but none of these will automatically return a ball to the user without having an area permanently open in the playing surface or without having some electrically actuated device for returning the ball.

The device disclosed herein has a continuous playing surface including a gate. The mechanism and gate are so proportioned and articulated that the weight of the ball running over a channel and associated mechanism actually supplies the force necessary to open the gate so that the ball always returns to the player, either by rolling back down the incline or by returning through the gate opened by the ball itself.

It is accordingly, an object of the present invention to provide an improved golf training device.

Another object of the invention is to provide a golf training device which is simple in construction, economical to manufacture, and simple and efficient in operation.

With the above and other objects in view, the present invention consists of the combination and arrangement of parts hereinafter more fully described, illustrated in the accompanying drawing and more particularly pointed out in the appended claims, it being understood that changes may be made in the form, size, proportions, and minor details of construction without departing from the spirit or sacrificing any of the advantages of the invention.

In the drawing:

FIG. 1 is an isometric view of a golf training device according to the invention;

FIG. 2 is a lateral central cross sectional view of the device; and

FIG. 3 is a view of the device showing the playing surface in phantom.

Now with more particular reference to the drawing, a golf training device is shown having a rigid plate-like member with a playing surface **10** which may be made of plywood, fiberboard, plastic, or any other suitable material. The plate-like member may be supported by element **26** on a floor and rest at an acute angle thereto.

A gate **11** is hinged to the rigid member at **24** and the gate closes an opening **40**. The opening **40** extends upwardly from a lower end **41** and gate **11** engages the floor when in normal position. The sides of the opening **40** and gate **11** may converge slightly upwardly as shown. The rigid member has an elongated central opening at its front lower edge.

A channel **15** is suspended by short links **16** and **18**. The short link **16** is supported at its upper end on the underside of the plate-like member by a pivot **43** and, at the lower end, it is attached to the channel **15** by a pivot **21**. A pivot **20** is attached to an extension **21'** on the gate **11**. The extension **21'** is attached to the lower surface of the gate. The lower end of the link **18** is pivoted to the lower end of the channel **15** at **19**.

A railing **13** in the form of a heavy wire has its lower front ends turned down and fastened to the playing surface **10** while the intermediate part of its upper part is supported by a strap **14**. A track **22** is adapted to rest on the floor or other suitable supporting surface at its front end and it has its upper end fastened to the channel **15** by a flexible member **25** such as a piece of fabric.

Thus, in normal position, the front lower end of the

gate **11** rests on the floor and a person may putt or otherwise propel a golf ball or other suitable ball up over the inclined surface into a hole **12**. If the putt is accurate, the ball will drop down through the hole **12** onto the channel **15**. The weight of the ball will thus exert a force on the flexible member **25** and thereby, through the link **18** to the extension **21'**, swing the gate **11** up around a pivot **24**. This will cause the lower end of the gate **11** to swing up about the pivot **24** and allow the ball to roll down the track **22** under the gate **11** which will be elevated to the position shown in FIG. 2. As soon as the ball has escaped, gravity will cause the gate **11** to swing down to bring its top surface flush with the surface of the playing surface **10**.

The foregoing specification sets forth the invention in its preferred practical forms but the structure shown is capable of modification within a range of equivalents without departing from the invention which is to be understood is broadly novel as is commensurate with the appended claims.

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. A practice device comprising
a plate-like member having a playing surface,
means to support said member with said playing surface in an inclined position with one end resting on a floor,
a hole in said playing surface adjacent to the upper end thereof,
an elongated opening in the lower end of said playing surface extending from its lower edge to an intermediate part thereof,
a gate swingably attached to the upper end of said opening,
said gate having a portion thereof extending from an end thereof to a position above said swingable connection and under said plate-like member,
a pair of short links,
one said short link being connected to said portion of said gate,
the other said short link being connected to the lower side of said playing surface,
an upwardly opening channel,
said channel being supported on the distal ends of said short links,
and a track member,
said track member being below said gate and adapted to rest on a floor at its lower end and connected to said channel at its upper end whereby a ball which falls through said hole drops onto said channel and rolls down said channel and the weight of said ball on said channel swings said gate about said swingable connection thereof upwardly and allows said ball to escape below said gate.

2. A game device comprising
a rigid plate-like member adapted to be supported on a floor and disposed at an acute angle thereto,
a hole in said plate-like member at an intermediate part thereof,
an opening in said plate-like member adjacent the lower edge thereof,
a gate closing said opening,
said gate, when closed, having a top surface flush with the top surface of said plate-like member,
said gate being hinged at its upper edge and having an extension extending under said plate-like member and above said hinge point,
and a mechanical linkage connected to said gate adapted to be moved by the weight of a ball falling through said hole to open said gate.

3. The device recited in claim **2** wherein

said linkage comprises a channel member swingably connected to said plate-like member at one end and swingably connected to a lever fixed to said gate at the other end,

said channel member being adapted to receive said ball falling through said hole.

4. The device recited in claim 3 wherein

a track is attached to said channel member at one end and adapted to rest on a floor at its other end.

5. The device recited in claim 4 wherein

said plate-like member has an upwardly extending rim around its upper edge.

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