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PARACHUTE GOLF BALL

Filed March 20, 1961

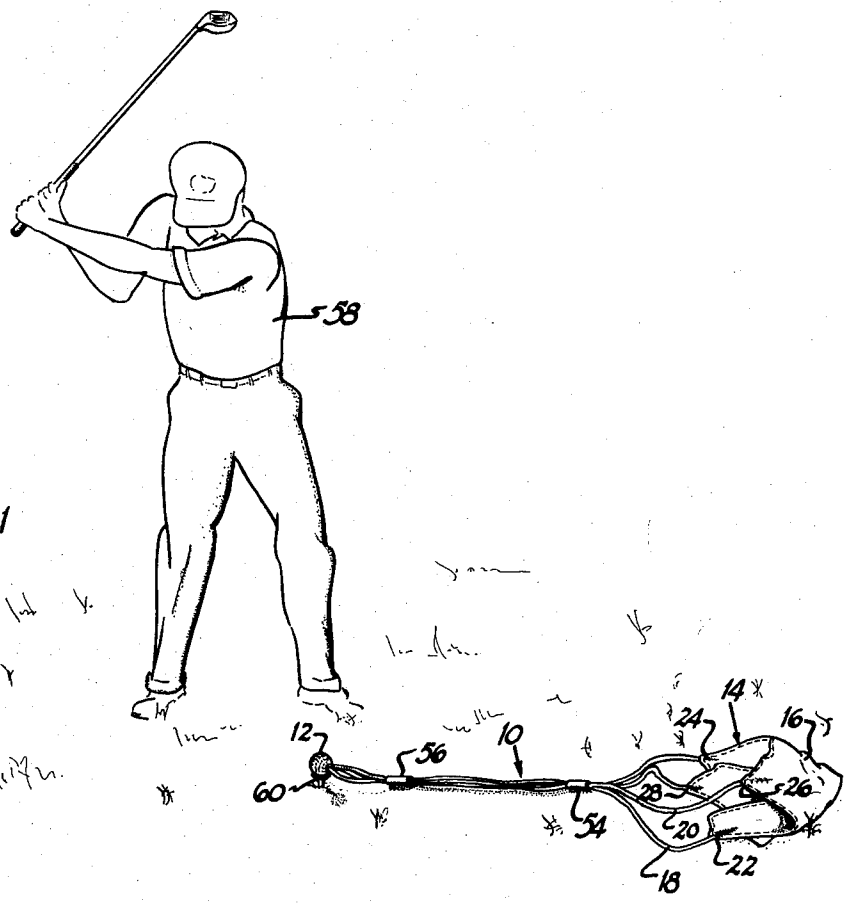

FIG. 1

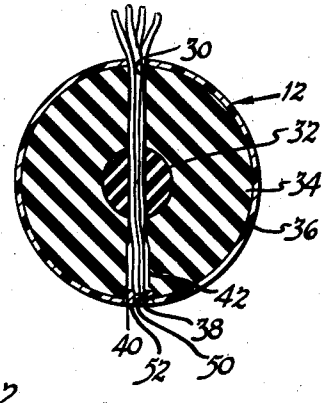

FIG. 2

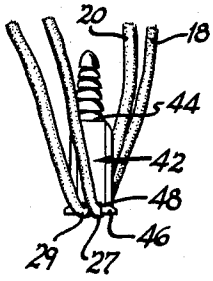

FIG. 3

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PARACHUTE GOLF BALL

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The present invention relates to a practice golf ball assembly, and more particularly to a practice golf ball having an attached parachute to impede the ball during flight.

Golfers frequently desire to practice their golf swings away from the golf links or driving range. It is, of course, impractical to use a regular golf ball in the limited space available in a backyard or vacant lot. Various golf ball devices have been proposed which will travel only a short distance after being hit. In one proposed device, the ball is made of cotton material. Another device comprises a hollow plastic ball which has a plurality of openings therein to prevent the ball from traveling very far after it is hit.

However, the best practice is considered to be to hit an actual golf ball because this most closely simulates actual golfing and permits the golfer to move from practice to actual play with a minimum of change in the conditions. The present invention offers a solution to this problem by providing a practice golf ball which comprises a real golf ball having a parachute attached thereto to impede the flight of the ball after it is hit.

An object of the invention is to provide a practice golf ball having a parachute secured thereto.

Another object of the invention is to provide adjusting means on the parachute to permit selective variation in the amount of canopy opening to vary the distance the ball will travel after being hit.

A further object of the invention is to provide means on the parachute canopy cords to prevent entanglement of the cord.

Another object of the invention is to provide means for attaching the parachute to the golf ball which will not unbalance the golf ball.

Other objects of this invention will appear in the following description and appended claims, reference being had to the accompanying drawings forming a part of this specification wherein like reference characters designate corresponding parts in the several views.

In the drawings:

FIGURE 1 is a view in perspective of one embodiment of the practice golf ball assembly of the present invention showing the ball in actual use;

FIGURE 2 is a cross-sectional view of the golf ball showing the means for attachment of the parachute cords; and

FIGURE 3 is an enlarged perspective view of the fastening member utilized to retain the parachute cords in place.

Before explaining the present invention in detail, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited in its application to the details of construction and arrangement of parts illustrated in the accompanying drawings, since the invention is capable of other embodiments and of being practiced or carried out in various ways. Also, is to be understood that the phraseology or terminology employed herein is for the purpose of description and not of limitation.

Referring to the drawings, it will be seen that the practice golf ball assembly **10** comprises a conventional golf ball **12** having a parachute **14** attached thereto.

The parachute **14** includes a flexible canopy **16** fabricated from a material such as cotton or silk. Two cords **18, 20** extend from the canopy. The cords are preferably fabricated from a strong and durable material such as nylon. Each cord has both of its ends **22, 24, 26, 28** secured at spaced points to the perimeter of the canopy to thus form cord loops **27, 29.**

The cord loops extend into an opening **30** in the golf ball which extends axially through the ball. The opening **30** has an enlarged portion **38** at one end which forms a shoulder **40.** As will be noted, the golf ball is of conventional structure having a hard resilient core **32** covered with a second resilient core **34,** which is in turn covered with a tough resilient material **36.**

A fastening member **42** is secured in the enlarged portion and abuts against the shoulder **40.** As will be seen in FIGURE 3, the member **42** is in the shape of a screw having a threaded end **44** and an enlarged head **46.** A slot **48** is provided in the head **46.** The member **42** is preferably fabricated from a lightweight material such as plastic to the end that it will not unbalance the golf ball.

In assembling the golf ball and parachute, the cord loops **27, 29** are inserted entirely through the opening **30.** The member **42** is then placed within the loops as shown in FIGURE 3 with the loops lying in the slot **48.** The cords are then pulled back, drawing the member **42** into the opening **30.** The threaded end **44** extends into the opening **30** and the enlarged head **46** abuts against the shoulder **40.** There is sufficient room between the end **44** and the walls of opening **30** to accommodate the cords. A plug **50** is then inserted into the enlarged portion **38** to hold the assembly in place. The plug **50** may be formed by a liquid or paste plastic which is hardened after being forced into the enlargement **38.** The exterior surface **52** of the plug may subsequently be painted an attractive color, such as green, to assist in locating the ball properly on a golf tee.

Referring to FIGURE 1, it will be seen that an adjusting member, in the form of a sleeve **54** having an opening therethrough, is slidably mounted on the cords **18, 20.** The sleeve **54** is positionable along the cords to selectively vary the amount of canopy opening. As will be appreciated, the closer the sleeve is to the canopy, the smaller the permissible canopy opening. When the sleeve is moved close to the canopy, the canopy opening is quite small to thereby reduce the impedance offered by the parachute to ball flight. The impedance of the parachute is measurably increased as the sleeve **54** is moved away from the canopy.

Variation in parachute impedance permits the user to adjust the assembly in accordance with the permissible distance which he may hit the ball. For example, in a small backyard, the golfer may wish the ball to travel only a few yards. Contrariwise, if the golfer has a vacant lot available, he may reduce the parachute impedance and permit the ball to travel further so that he may have a more accurate indication of the direction of ball flight.

A second sleeve **56** is slidably mounted on the cords **18, 20** intermediate the sleeve **54** and the ball **12.** The function of the second sleeve is to prevent entanglement of the cords with each other and with the golf ball. As will be appreciated, such entanglement would cause a deviation in the flight of the golf ball and thereby give a false indication to the golfer.

In use of the practice golf ball assembly, the golfer **58** places the ball on a tee **60** with the painted surface **52** facing away from the line of flight. The canopy **16** is positioned in front of the ball to the end that the ball will have a relatively free flight until it passes over the canopy and travels a distance therebeyond approximately equal to the length of the cords **18, 20.** Thus, the golfer gets the same feel that he would get if hitting a ball on the golf links or at a golf driving range.

Because of the unique means of fastening the parachute cords to the golf ball, there is negligible unbalancing of the golf ball. This results in a true flight of the ball to tell the golfer whether he is hooking or slicing the ball. Additionally, the device is very safe in operation. The member **42** is securely locked in the ball. The only way for the parachute to become separated from the ball is for the cords **18, 20** to break. If one of the cords does break, the other will hold the parachute in place, thus preventing free flight of the ball.

Having thus described my invention, I claim:

1. A practice golf ball assembly comprising a golf ball; a parachute secured to the golf ball to impede the ball during flight; said parachute including a flexible canopy; a plurality of cords extending from the canopy; each cord having both of its ends secured at spaced points to the perimeter of the canopy to form cord loops; said ball having an opening extending axially therethrough; said opening having an enlarged portion at one end forming a shoulder; a fastening member secured in the enlarged portion and abutting against the shoulder; said cords extending into the ball opening and being looped around said fastening member to thereby secure the parachute to the ball.

2. A practice golf ball assembly comprising a golf ball; a parachute secured to the golf ball to impede the ball during flight; said parachute including a flexible canopy; a plurality of cords extending from the canopy; each cord having both of its ends secured at spaced points to the perimeter of the canopy to form cord loops; said ball having an opening extending axially therethrough; said opening having an enlarged portion at one end forming a shoulder; a fastening member secured in the enlarged portion and abutting against the shoulder; said cords extending into the ball opening and being looped around said fastening member to thereby secure the parachute to the ball; and an adjusting member having an opening therethrough slidably mounted on the cords; said adjusting member being positionable along the cords to selectively vary the amount of canopy opening to thereby vary the amount of impedance offered by the parachute to ball flight.

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