United States Patent

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[54] **PRACTICE PUTTING DEVICE**
1 Claim, 3 Drawing Figs.

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[50] **Field of Search** ..... 273/177, 178, 179(All), 180, 127

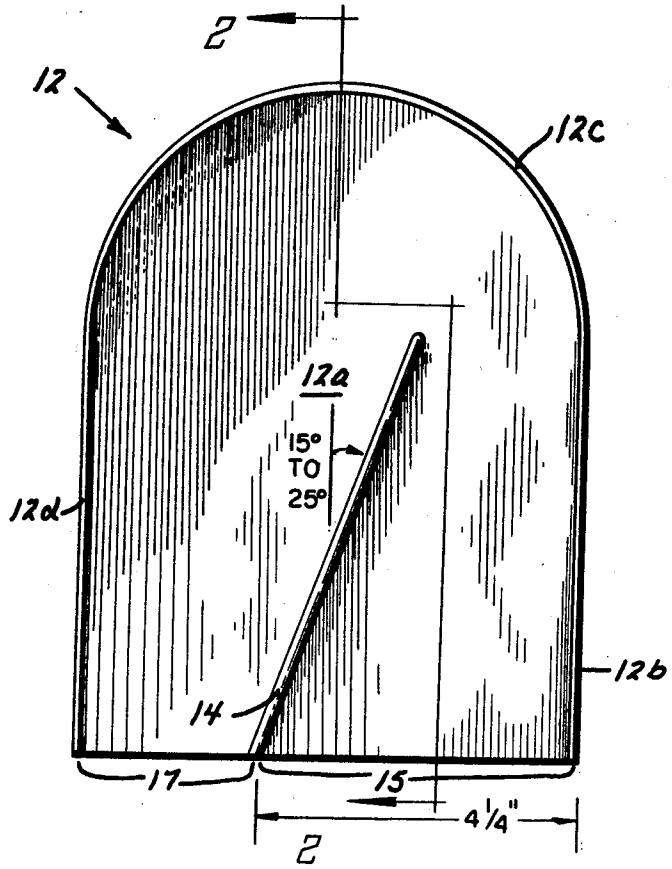
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ABSTRACT: A simulated putting arrangement characterized by a guide arm angularly disposed on a partially enclosed inclined plate member, where the opening to such plate member for the golf ball is the same as an actual cup, and where the position of the guide arm permits the ready return of the golf ball to the practice putter. The guide arm angles towards one side of the device in a range of between 15° and 25° with reference to a vertical plane along the length of the device.



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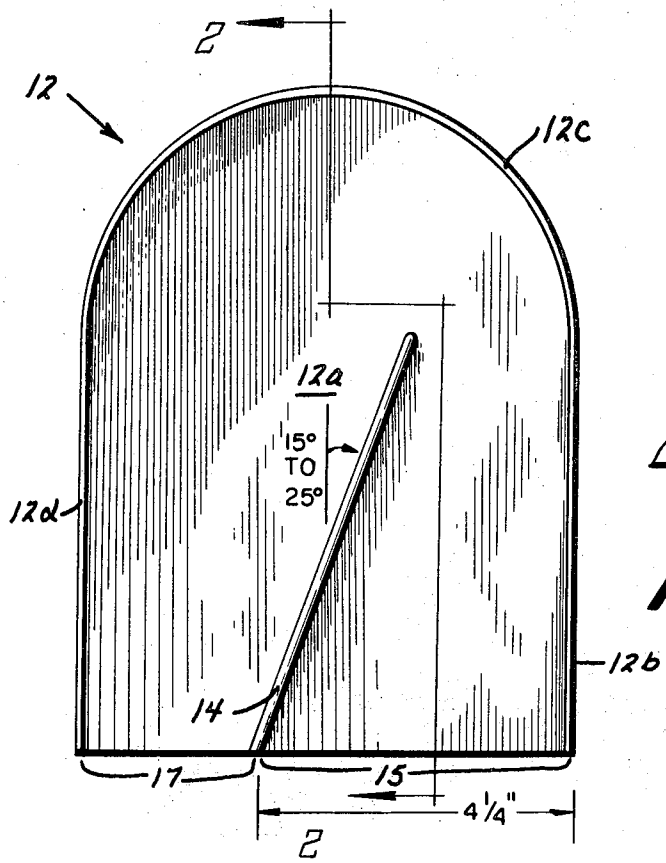


FIG. 1

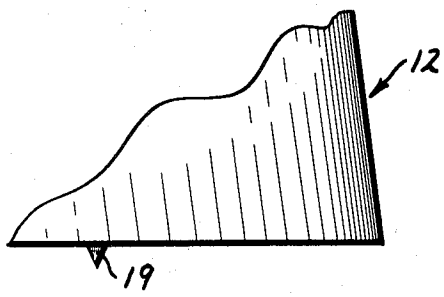


FIG. 3

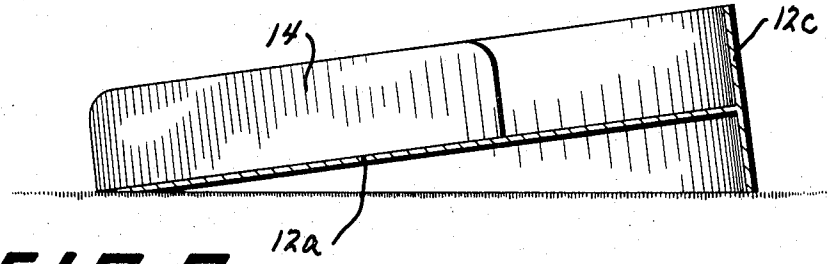


FIG. 2

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PRACTICE PUTTING DEVICE

As is known, in the game of golf, putting requires considerable skill for effective results. Many approaches have been developed for simulating putting away from the golf green, and such have been mostly objectionable, due to complicated and awkward mechanical structures. Accordingly, a need has arisen for a simple approach for practice putting, typically for use indoors, or, in any event, away from the golf green. An important consideration is the ready return of the golf ball to the practice putter without the necessity or use of mechanically movable arrangements.

The invention provides a simple and effective approach for simulating putting. In this connection, an inclined plate member is provided having an upturned wall around its outer edge except for the portions thereof which serve to receive the golf ball and to return the golf ball to the putter. A guide arm is provided to divide the surface of the plate member into a golf ball receiving portion and into a golf ball return portion. The entry to the golf ball receiving portion defined by the guide arm is the exact diameter of the cup in a regulation golf green. The positioning of the guide arm further serves to permit the ready return of the golf ball to the practice putter after putting has been effected.

The invention will become more apparent from the following description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing, wherein:

FIG. **1** is a plan view of the simulated putting arrangement defining the invention;

FIG. **2** is a view of the invention in side elevation, partly in vertical section, taken at line **2–2** in FIG. **1** and looking in the direction of the arrows; and,

FIG. **3** is a fragmentary view showing an invention embodiment employing gripping members.

For the purposes of promoting an understanding of the principles of the invention, reference will now be made to the embodiment illustrated in the drawing and specific language will be used to describe the same. It will nevertheless be understood that no limitation of the scope of the invention is thereby intended, such alterations and further modifications in the illustrated device, and such further applications of the principles of the invention as illustrated therein being contemplated as would normally occur to one skilled in the art to which the invention relates.

Referring now to the FIGS. the simulated putting arrangement defining the invention comprises a base member **12** having an inclined surface **12*a*** for receiving and returning a golf ball. The base member **12** has an upturned wall around a portion thereof, particularly a sidewall **12*b***, all blending together. In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the entire structure is made from a molded plastic material.

The surface **12*a*** of the base member **12** receives a baffle or guide member **14**, typically positioned at an angle of 21° with reference to a vertical plane extending normally to the front of the base member or with reference to a vertical plane along the longitudinal axis of the base member. In other embodiments of the invention, the baffle or guide arm **14** may be disposed within a range of 15° to 25° to the aforesaid vertical plane to achieve equally effective results.

In any event, and most importantly, the guide arm **14** is so arranged on the surface **12*a*** of the base member **12** to provide a golf ball entry **15** having the size of the regulation cup in a golf green. In other words, in practice putting, the putter knows that the mouth or entry **15** for the golf ball receiving area is the same as the diameter of the cup in a conventional green, and, therefore, serves as an accurate training and practice approach.

A combination of the entry or mouth **15** and the angle of the guide arm **14** further serves to readily permit the return of the golf ball, with the assistance of gravity occasioned by the incline of surface **12*a***. In other words, the golf ball passes through the mouth **15** and may either hit the sidewall **12*b***, guide arm **14**, or even a portion of the curved back wall **12*c***. In any event, the arrangement is such that positive golf ball return is always achieved, through a variety of ricochetting actions. The golf ball then rolls from the structure through an opening **17** defining an exit mouth and ball towards the practice putter.

While the invention should normally not slide during use, there may be a situation where gripping points or feet **19** are desirable. An example of such is shown in the invention embodiment of FIG. **3** (only one of which is shown). In this connection, the feet or gripping points **19** could be a fixed part of the structure, or, in the alternative, could be removably received in openings disposed along the bottom edge of the base member **12**. As stated, the purpose of these gripping feet is to prevent any unwanted movement of the overall structure and, accordingly, could typically be made from a resilient material.

The simulated putting arrangement described above is susceptible to various changes within the spirit of the invention. For example, the guide arm **14** may be a separate part, and the angle of incline of surface **12*a*** raised or lowered as desired. Thus, the above description should be considered illustrative, and not as limiting the scope of the following claims:

We claim:

1. A simulated putting arrangement comprising an inclined golf ball receiving surface, a wall surrounding a portion of said golf ball receiving surface defined as sidewalls and a rear wall, a straight guide arm fixedly disposed on said golf ball receiving surface and angling towards one of said sidewalls in a range between 15° and 25° with respect to a vertical plane along the length of the device, said guide arm having a leading edge and a lagging edge, said lagging edge of said guide arm spaced from said rear wall, the distance between said leading edge of said guide arm and said one of said sidewalls being approximately the diameter of a regulation cup in a conventional golf green and defining an opening for the passage of a golf ball onto said receiving surface, and the distance between said leading edge of said guide arm and the other of said sidewalls defining a golf ball return passageway.