United States Patent

[11] 3,578,333

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[21] Appl. No. **809,540**
[22] Filed **Mar. 24, 1969**
[45] Patented **May 11, 1971**
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[54] **PRACTICE GOLF GREEN INCLUDING UNDULATED AREA AND THICKENED TAPERED CUP RECEIVING END PORTION**
1 Claim, 4 Drawing Figs.

[52] **U.S. Cl.** **273/176R,** 273/195A, 273/181R, 273/183A
[51] **Int. Cl.** **A63b 67/02**
[50] **Field of Search** 273/176, 195, 183, 184, 185, 181, 812, 196

[56] **References Cited**
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ABSTRACT: The disclosure describes a golf game for both indoor and outdoor use comprising a mat with a clipping tee and a driving tee thereon and an artificial golf green having a cup and flag, with indicia on the surface of the green marking off areas progressively further away from the cup, with values assigned to the green areas for evaluating golf shots to the green. The green includes an undulated area and a thickened tapered end portion including an integral molded cup of regulation size. The mat and green are separable so that the distance between them can be varied at will depending on the space available. The device can be used with either a practice ball or a regular golf ball.

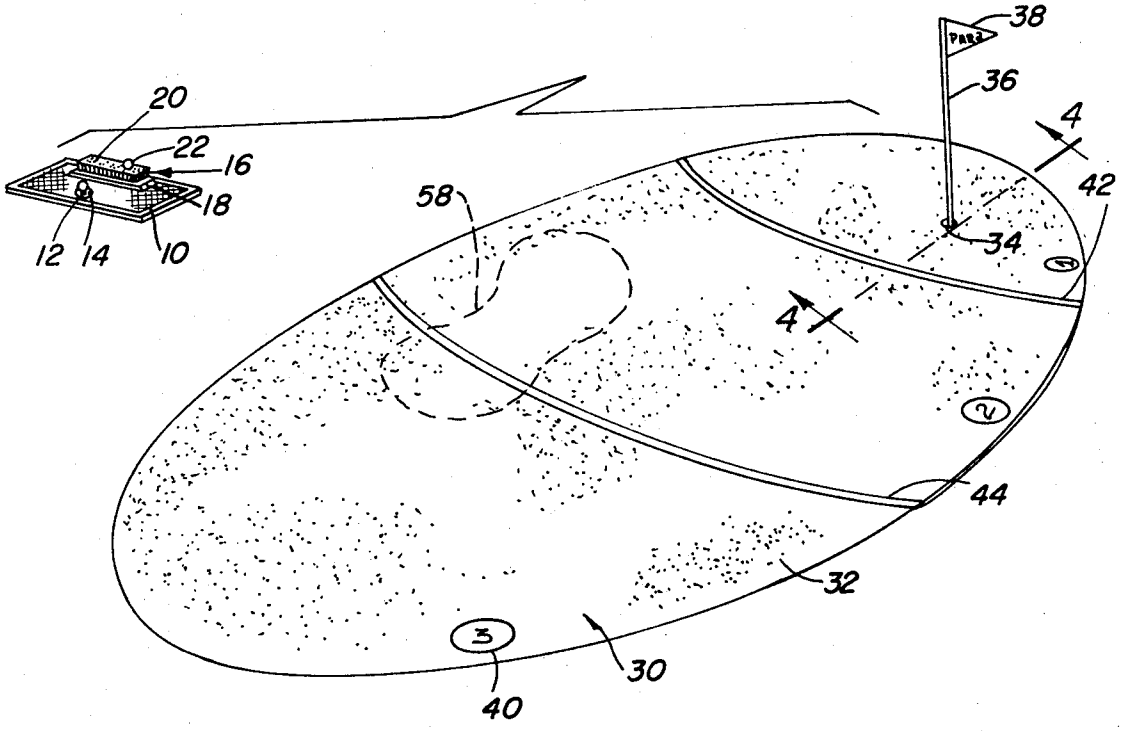


FIG. 1

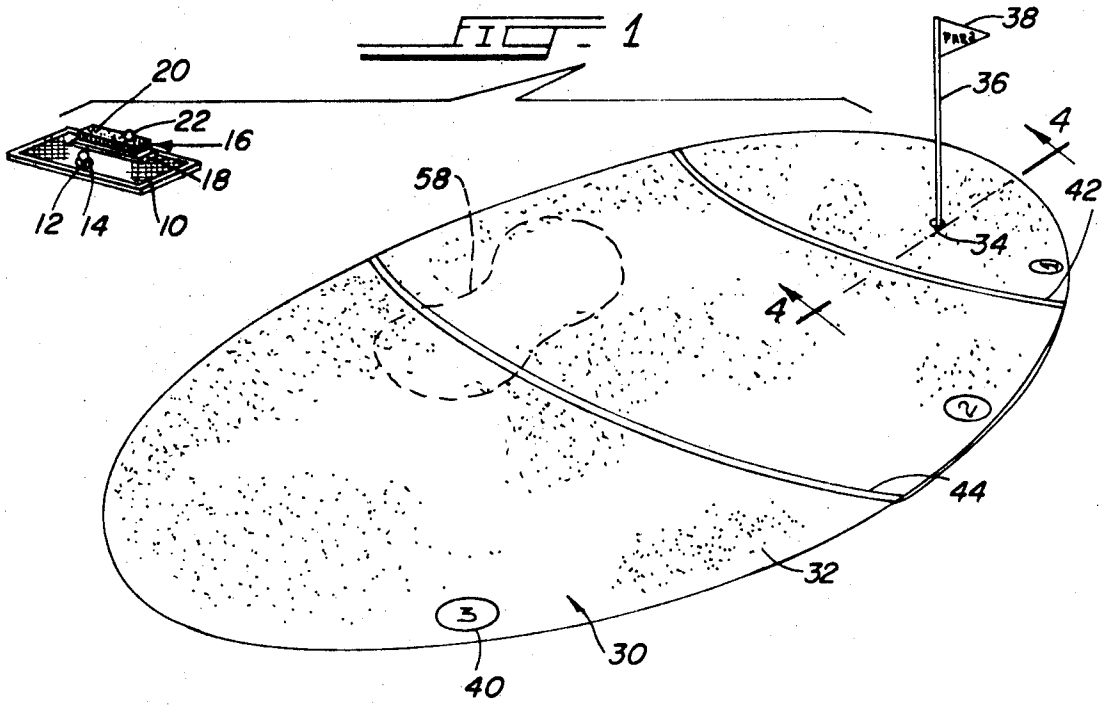


FIG. 2

FIG. 3

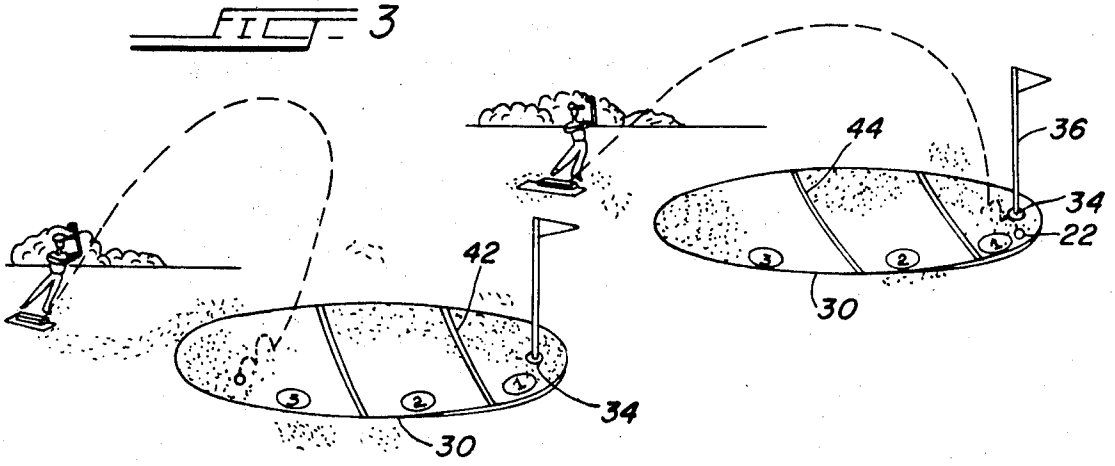
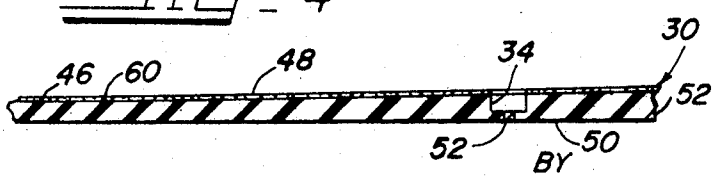


FIG. 4



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PRACTICE GOLF GREEN INCLUDING UNDULATED AREA AND THICKENED TAPERED CUP RECEIVING END PORTION

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The art provides a wide variety of golf games adapted for play indoors with synthetic grass or plastic mats and various forms of ramps, signals and ball-return mechanisms associated with the cup. A difficulty with this kind of game is that the conditions of play do not approach actual conditions on the golf course and use of the game, though amusing and entertaining, does not contribute to the golfing proficiency of the player. Furthermore, the scoring of the games are related to chance rather than the accuracy of the shot and no means are provided to determine or measure the true difference between the poor, average and good golf shot. Also, the player has no means to measure or evaluate the consistency of his swing or the improvements in his golf game with continued practice. Aside from direction, practice on the parlor rug gives the serious golfer little practice or opportunity to increase his proficiency for actual play.

The instant invention is concerned with a golf game which can be used or played indoors or outdoors, can be used as a practice device to develop proficiency in the swing as applied to all types of golf shots such as putting, approach and drive shots and is characterized by being adaptable to measuring the accuracy of all types of golf shots, especially chipping and driving shots, and can be used as a serious golf practice aid or as a game. The man who takes his golfing seriously or the beginner who is concerned about improving his golf at a rate commensurate with his ability, requires a type of golf game which closely assimilates actual conditions on the course and allows complete freedom of motion so that the golf swing is totally utilized, yet may be used in a confined area such as the yard or recreation room.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention concerns an indoor-outdoor golf practice game including a tee adapted to provide both iron and wood shots and a simulated green having all the appearances of a regulation green, with cup and flag, etc., and having indicia thereon at different distances from the cup to evaluate the proficiency of the golfer.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

An embodiment of the invention is shown in the accompanying drawings wherein:

FIG. 1 shows a perspective view of the tee and green of this invention;

FIG. 2 is an illustration of the use of the device by a golfer showing a good golf shot;

FIG. 3 is an illustration of the use of the device by a golfer showing an average or poor golf shot; and

FIG. 4 is a fragmentary cross-sectional view taken along the lines 4–4 of FIG. 1.

THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring to the drawings, a specific embodiment of the invention is shown wherein FIG. 1 shows the tee mat **10** having a driving tee **12** comprising a short piece of a flexible tube mounted in a rubber base **14** affixed to the mat **10** by integral molding or by an adhesive. The driving tee **12** may be on one side of the mat **10** and about midway between the ends of the mat or be part of the brush mat. On the other side, the chipping tee **16** is similarly affixed to the mat as by means of the base **18** which may be made of rubber or similar material like the base **14**. The chipping tee or brush mat **16** comprises a plurality of closely spaced bristles **20** arranged like a brush so that the golf ball **22** rests thereon much like a cushion of grass so that an iron can be used to strike the ball.

Associated with the tee mat **10** as a separate unit, for placement any desired distance therefrom, is the mat green **30** comprising a flat piece of pliant material such as plastic, canvas or rubber, having sufficient body to lie flat on the ground or floor without wrinkling or blowing in the wind. The mat green **30** has simulated grass **32** thereon and may be in the form of a carpet of synthetic material such as an outdoor-indoor Ozite carpet. The cup **34** is an official size golf cup. Means are provided in the cup to hold the flag **36** bearing the pennant **38** with "PAR 2" indicia thereon, as hereinafter described.

The green **30** is divided into scoring sections **01**, **02** and **03**, shown by means of the indicia **40**, by means of the marker or border lines **42** and **44**. The lines **42** and **44** may be slightly arcuate or straight lines and of a contrasting color, i.e., white or black, from the color of the simulated grass **32**, which will be a shade of green. The cup **34** and the flag **36** are located at one end of the green with the first line **42** marking off a space or target area surrounding the cup **34**. The section **02**, adjacent to the first section, is slightly larger in area and further from the cup. The **03** section lies adjacent to the **02** section at the end of the green furtherest from the cup **34**. The areas of the section **03** and **02** may be about the same or the section **03** may have an area larger than the section **02**. The green **30** can be circular, oval, elliptical or rectangular and measure about 4 to 10-feet wide and 10 to 16-feet long. Other dimensions of these parts can be used to accommodate different play areas.

Referring to FIG. **4**, the green **30** is shown to comprise a uniformly flat portion **46**, which extends over most of the section **02** and all of the section **01** of the green and the area **48** slightly inclined or gradually thickened from about the beginning of the section **02** to the end of the green **52**. The bottom surface **50** of the mat **30** is shown as being made of rubber and is normally flat and the resilience of the mat aLl allows it to conform to any irregularities on the surface upon which it is placed. The tapered rubber under surface **50** is cemented to the lower side of the surface **30**. This tapered or wedge shape of the end of the green gives sufficient body thereto to form or mold the cup **34** integral with the mat as shown in FIG. **4**. The cup **34** is molded or cut out to conform exactly with a regulation golf cup, namely 2-inches deep and 4 inches in diameter. The slope **48** is made very gradual so as to be hardly perceptible to the eye and has the advantage of simulating the surface conditions of an actual green, which is not in all instances level.

Contoured areas, either concave or convex, as indicated by the dotted circle **58**, can be molded into the green **30** to simulate the uneven contours of an actual green. The line of demarcation **60** between the flat surface area **46** and the sloping area **48** need not be straight and can be irregular to further provide a natural unevenness of the green **30**. Alternatively, the green **30** can be laid over solid objects to provide further contours. The contours **58** can be molded or formed into either the topside of the green **30** or into the bottom **50**.

The cup **34** can be molded or formed so as to receive a regulation metal cup as presently used on golf courses. These cups may have an inner cup to hold the flagstaff. In this instance, its dimensions would be slightly larger to receive the metal cup and retain it by frictional engagement with the sides. The hole **52** being centered in the cup **34** serves to receive the bottom inner cup holding the end of the shaft.

The shots from the tee **10** are normally made using a plastic or sponge rubber practice ball. When such practice balls are used, the distance obtained is multiplied by a factor of about 10 to give the approximate distance that would have been obtained with a regulation golf ball. After a player makes his tee shot to the green, the practice ball is replaced with a regular golf ball for the putting shots to complete the hole. The tee **10** can be placed any desired distance from the green **30** depending on the available space. This distance should be from about 6 feet (indoors) to a minimum of 12 feet (outdoors), but may vary with any given area.

The section **01** is representative of a close-in or one-putt shot and a ball landing in section **01** counts as one point and the ball lies one or the same as one shot on the regular golf green. The section **02** is representative of an intermediate shot

and a ball landing in section 02 counts as two points and the ball lies two. The section 03, being furtherest from the cup, represents a below average or poor shot and a ball landing in section 03 counts as three points and the ball lies three. In the event the player's first shot rolls off or misses the green, the player is penalized one point and must chip again from the brush mat 16. A hole-in-one counts one point.

The manner of play and scoring can be the choice of the player or players. The golf game can be played by an individual or two, three, four or more players. In one embodiment, as an illustration, four different colored plastic golf balls are used, to identify the players, as in a foursome. For indoor play, the tee 10 and the green 30 are placed so that the distance from the tee to the nearest edge of the green is at least a minimum of 6 feet. The first player puts his practice ball on the mat brush 16 and takes his approach shot with either of the three short irons, i.e., 07, 08 or 09, or a pitching wedge. After all of the players are on the green, the flag 36 is removed and the putting begins, as on a regular green. The players now replace the plastic ball with a regular golf ball for putting and follow the usual rules for putting. As in golf, the player with the lowest number of points (or strokes) wins the hole. The distance between the tee 10 and the green 30 can be varied with each play or round. Par for nine holes or rounds is 18 points and par for 18 rounds is 36 points. Tournament games can also be played. When using the device of this invention outdoors, the rubber driving tee 14 is used and the players use their wood clubs.

If woods are used and the shot fails to reach the green, it must be played again with a one stroke penalty. If the outdoor use of the game is played on grass, the player may chip the ball to the green, counting each stroke.

The mat 10 and the green 30 can be constructed of any strong, flexible synthetic or natural material which is fire resistant and resistant to cutting, tearing, cracking and abrasion. These parts can be made of rubber, rubber coated fabric or a wide variety of synthetic plastics such as polyvinyl, particularly polyvinyl, sisal and cork compositions, polyethylene, polybutylene, polystyrene, nylon, polyurethane and polymeric isocyanaes, that is those plastics which are readily formed into pliable sheets or laminates of the desired thickness. A number of organic or inorganic fillers can be used, as well as fabrics coated or laminated with plastics. Materials having a high strength-to-weight ratio, light weight and low water or no water absorption are preferred. Limited amounts of foaming or cellular structure can be incorporated during fabrication to give lightness of weight, good flexibility and sufficient softness to simulate on actual golf green.

The indicia 40 and the lines 44 can be incorporated into the fabric or plastic sheet as dyed or painted areas during or after molding. Any color combinations can be used and preferably the grass 32 is green and the indicia white.

It should now be apparent that the mat 10 may be placed anywhere distant from the green 30, directly ahead, or to any side, whereby the object of this invention is achieved.

I claim:

1. A portable outdoor-indoor golf green adapted for placement at desired distances from a tee from which golf shots are performed comprising:

a sheet of flexible material approximately the area of a golf green having a simulated grass textured surface,

pad means affixed edge to edge on the underside of said sheet having a tapering thickness greater than the remaining areas of said green,

said pad means having the front and thinner section beginning substantially medially of the ends of said green and with the larger and thicker section thereof terminating at one end of said green,

a cylindrical recess simulating a cup in the area of greater thickness of said green,

lineal indicia on said textured surface and spaced from said recess for evaluation of golf shots from said tee landing within the areas defined by said indicia,

a regulation golf cup retained by said recess, and

said pad means including an area of concave and convex undulations.