June 21, 1949. E. J. FARRIS 2,473,680

GAME DEVICE

Filed Aug. 13, 1947

Fig. 1.

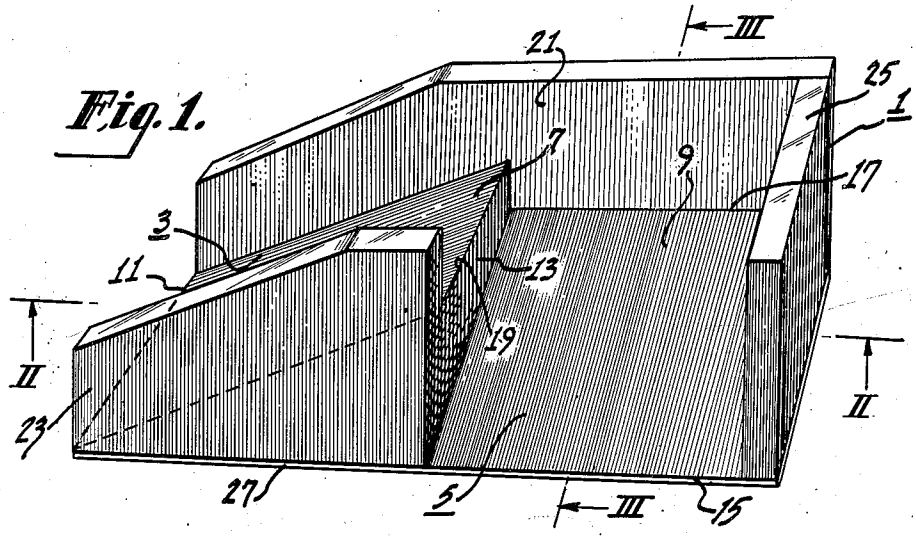
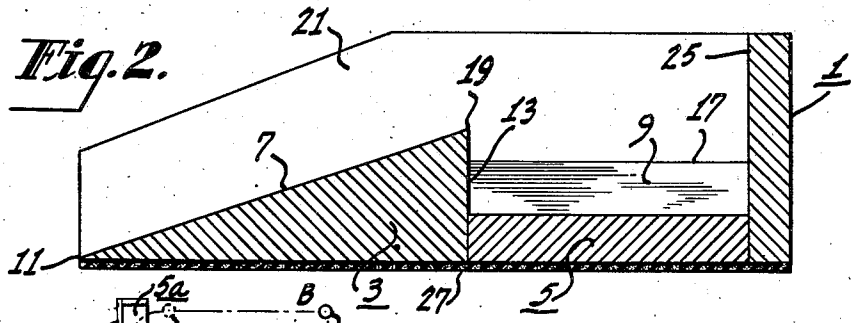
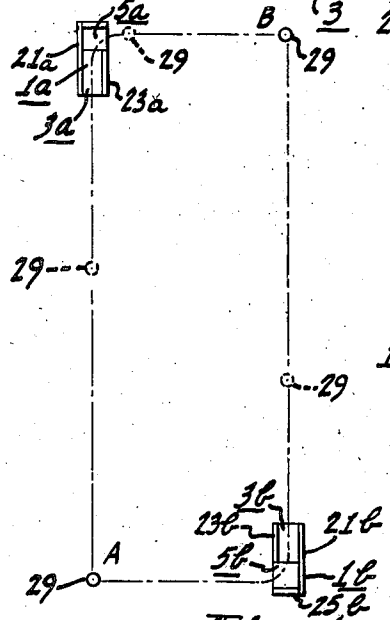


Fig. 2.





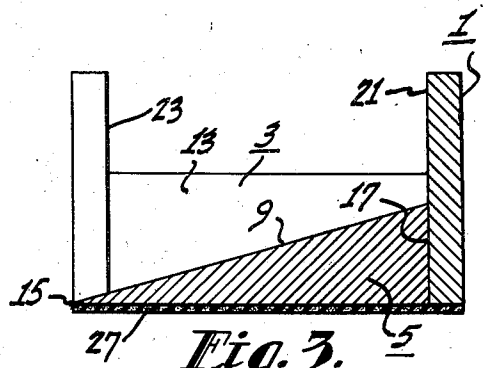


Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

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GAME DEVICE

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2 Claims. (Cl. 273—36)

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This invention relates to a game device, and more particularly to a device which is useful for practicing golf putting or the like.

Various devices have been provided heretofore which may be used indoors for the purpose of practicing annd acquiring skill in the art of putting a golf ball. Such devices usually embody a cup-like member which can be placed on the floor, rug or other similar support and which is provided with a suitable approach for the ball so that, if it is properly directed thereto, the ball will enter and be trapped in the cup. A common disadvantage of such devices is that the player must stoop down to retrive the ball from the cup manually and then deposit it at some appropriate point spaced from the cup before he can again attempt a putt. To overcome this inconvenience, there have been provided certain putter practicing devices which embody inclined planes having an opening therein which simulates a cup and from which a chute or the like extends for the purpose of returning the ball toward the player once it has entered the aforementioned opening. Devices of the last mentioned type, while being free from the previously noted disadvantage of the first mentioned type, are, however, generally quite bulky and fairly expensive. Moreover, devices of the second mentioned type have the further disadvantage that they depart radically from conditions usually encountered on a putting green at an outdoor golf course in that they generally present a rather steep incline to the ball whereas on a green the surface is usually flat.

The primary object of my present invention is to provide a novel game device which may be used for practicing golf, either indoors or outdoors, and which is entirely free from the aforementioned and other disadvantages which characterize prior art devices designed for the same purpose.

More particularly, it is an object of my present invention to provide an improved putter practicing device which will not only enable one to acquire skill in the art of putting, but which will enable him to carry on this activity continuously without the need for stooping periodically to retrieve and replace the played ball in playing position before another "shot" can be taken.

Another object of my present invention is to provide an improved device of the type set forth which will very greatly simulate putting conditions found at the green on a conventional golf course.

Still another object of my present invention is to provide an improved device as aforesaid which

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can be used either singly or in pairs by one or more players and, when used in pairs, can be arranged in a manner such that each device will automatically direct a ball played thereinto toward a position from which the ball can be played back to the other device of the pair, thereby permitting an uninterrupted or endless series of plays in continuous succession.

A further object of my present invention is to provide an improved putter practicing device which will permit the practice of putting in an easy and efficient manner.

Still a further object of my present invention is to provide a device of the type set forth which readily lends itself to the practice of other games and skills, such as croquet, bowling, etc.

It is also an object of my present invention to provide an improved game device as above set forth which is extremely simple in construction, which is very compact in form and occupies a minimum amount of space for storage, which can be fabricated easily and readily lends itself to economical quantity production, which is highly efficient in use, and which may be produced at low cost.

In accordance with one form of my invention, the device comprises a pair of contiguous ramps one of which rises to a somewhat higher elevation than the other with their inclined surfaces arranged crosswise of each other. The higher one of the two ramps, which may be designated the "inlet ramp," slopes downwardly away from the other or "outlet ramp," while the latter one slopes downwardly across the high end of the first one and in a direction generally at a right angle to the slope of the inlet ramp. A first side wall extends along one side of the inlet ramp and terminates at the high end thereof beyond which the thin end of the outlet ramp is located. A second side wall extends along the other side of the inlet ramp and along the back or high end of the outlet ramp where it meets an end wall which extends along one side of the outlet ramp. The two side walls act as guides between which a properly putted ball will roll up along the inlet ramp until it reaches the high end thereof whereupon it will roll over onto the outlet ramp and down along the latter between the high end of the inlet ramp and the aforementioned end wall. The latter two cooperate to guide the ball out of the device to a position from which it may again be played toward a similar device which is preferably disposed in opposed and laterally spaced relation to, and at a suitable distance from, the first device. The inlet ramp may be con-

sidered as corresponding to the cup on a conventional green of a golf course. The inclination of this ramp may be of the order of 10° to 15°, although this may, of course, be varied as desired. However, the inclination of the inlet ramp should not be too great in order that the playing conditions will not depart radically from those found in conventional greens. In any event, it will be apparent that my improved putter practicing device constitutes a compact unit which can be used on a parlor rug, for example, or on a lawn for the purpose of acquiring skill in putting, and this without having to stoop to retrieve the ball at any time after a shot has been made.

The novel features that I consider characteristic of my invention are set forth with particularity in the appended claims. The invention itself, however, as well as additional objects and advantages thereof, will be better understood from the following description of one embodiment thereof, when read in connection with the accompanying drawing in which

Figure 1 is a perspective view of one form of putter practicing device according to my present invention,

Figure 2 is a central, sectional view thereof taken on the line II—II of Figure 1,

Figure 3 is a transverse, sectional view thereof taken along the line III—III of Figure 1, and

Figure 4 is a plan view showing a pair of such devices arranged in opposed relation for practicing or playing by one or more players.

Referring more particularly to the drawing, wherein similar reference characters designate corresponding parts throughout, there is shown, in Figures 1–3, a putter practicing device 1 having a pair of ramps 3 and 5 which, in the illustrated embodiment, comprise a pair of wedge-like members arranged with their inclined surfaces 7 and 9, respectively, uppermost. The wedge or ramp 3 starts from substantially a feather edge 11 at one end and rises to its highest elevation at its opposite end 13. Similarly, the wedge or ramp 5 starts from substantially a feather edge 15 (although this is not as important in the ramp 5 for a reason which will appear hereinafter) and rises to its highest elevation at its opposite end 17. However, as will be clearly seen from the drawing, the high end 13 of the ramp 3 extends to a somewhat higher elevation than does the high end 17 of the ramp 5 for a reason which will become apparent presently. Preferably, the thin or feather ends 11 and 15 of the ramps 3 and 5 terminate in a common plane.

The two ramps 3 and 5 are disposed in contiguous relation with one side of the ramp 5 against the high end 13 of the ramp 3. Moreover, the two ramps 3 and 5 are so arranged that their inclined surfaces 7 and 9 extend crosswise of each other. In other words, in the particular embodiment of my invention chosen for illustration, the inclined surface 9 of the ramp 5 slopes downwardly along the rear, high end 13 of the ramp 3 and in a direction which is generally at a right angle to the direction of slope of the surface 7 of the ramp 3. Since the end 13 of the ramp 3 extends to a higher point than the end 17 of the ramp 5, it is apparent that, if a golf ball or the like is rolled up the incline 7 with sufficient force, it will eventually reach and roll over the high edge 19 of the ramp end 13 onto the inclined surface 9 along which it will then roll down back to the floor or other support on which the device 1 rests.

To guide the ball, first up along the surface 7 and then down along the surface 9, the putter practicing device is provided with a long wall 21 which extends along one side of the ramp 3 and along the high end 17 of the ramp 5, the latter being so arranged that its end 17 is disposed in extension of the adjacent side of the ramp 3. A second wall 23, parallel to the wall 21, extends only along the other side of the ramp 3 and terminates at the high end 13 of the ramp 3 where the low end 15 of the ramp 5 begins. A third wall 25 extends along the side of the ramp 5 which is most remote from the ramp 3 and meets the wall 21, as best seen in Figure 1. Each of the walls 21, 23 and 25 is considerably higher than even the high end 13 of the ramp 3. Thus, the walls 21 and 23 act as guides between which a properly addressed ball can roll up along the ramp 3, while the end 13 of that ramp cooperates with the end wall 25 to guide the ball as it rolls down along the ramp 5. The edge 11 of the ramp 3 is preferably reduced to substantially a feather so as not to offer any appreciable resistance or obstruction to a ball which is directed onto the ramp 3. However, this is not so important at the edge 15 of the ramp 5 since the ball rolls down over this edge.

The device 1 may be made of any suitable materials such as wood, metal, hard rubber, plastics, glass, ivory or any other suitable material. The ramps 3 and 5, as well as the walls 21, 23 and 25, may all be formed as separate, solid pieces and properly assembled into an integral structure, as by gluing, or with nails, screws or the like. However, in some cases, it may be preferable to cast or mold the entire device as one, integral or unitary structure, as where it is made of metal, plastics, glass or the like. In such cases, the ramps 3 and 5 may be made hollow under their inclined surfaces and filled with lead or the like to impart to the device sufficient mass so that it will not be dislodged easily by a ball directed to it. On the other hand, it may suffice to provide the under surface of the device with a surface layer of anti-friction material 27, such as a thin layer of soft rubber or felt. Such a surface layer will serve to prevent easy dislodgement of the device, particularly when it is placed on a hard surface, such as a wooden floor.

From the foregoing description, it will, no doubt, be readily apparent to those skilled in the art that I have provided an improved device of the class described which can be used not only to practice putting a golf ball, but also to improve the aim in such games as croquet, bowling and the like. Two such devices 1*a* and 1*b* may be arranged in opposed relation spaced from each other suitable distances both longitudinally and transversely or laterally, as shown in Figure 4. Assuming that a ball 29 is first placed in position A, it can be directed to the device 1*a* by a proper putt and caused to roll up the ramp 3*a* and then down the ramp 5*a* to a position B. From there, either the same player or another player can then direct the ball to the companion device 1*b* and along its ramps 3*b* and 5*b* back to substantially the position A. All this can be done without having to stoop to pick up or retrieve the ball since the "outlet" ramp 5 will, in all cases, return to the floor or other support on which the device is located a ball delivered to it by the "inlet" ramp 3.

Although I have shown but a single embodiment of my invention in the accompanying drawing and have described several variations thereof above, it will, no doubt, be apparent that many other variations and modifications are possible.

For example, instead of making the ramp 5 of a length equal to the width of the ramp 3, as shown in the illustrated embodiment, it may be made either longer or shorter, as may be found suitable. If desired, a suitably curved wall may be placed over the ramp 5 at the corner where the walls 21 and 25 meet. Also, the two ramps may be so arranged relative to each other that their inclined surfaces will extend in directions other than at a right angle to each other. Similar changes within the spirit of my invention will undoubtedly suggest themselves. I therefore desire that the foregoing shall be taken as illustrative only and not as limiting.

I claim as my invention:

1. A device of the class described comprising a pair of contiguous, inclined ramps having their inclined surfaces arranged crosswise of each other, each of said ramps having its lowest point at one of its ends and its highest point at the other of its ends, the high end of one of said ramps being at a higher elevation than the high end of the other of said ramps, said other ramp having its inclined surface extending downwardly across the high end of said one ramp, said

ramps being further so disposed relative to each other that the high end of said other ramp is disposed along one side of said one ramp in extension thereof, a first side wall extending along said one side and said extension, a second wall extending along only the opposite side of said one ramp and terminating at the low end of said other ramp, and a third wall extending along the side of said other ramp which is remote from said one ramp, said first and third walls meeting at the high end of said other ramp, and all said walls being higher than the highest point on either of said ramps.

2. A device according to claim 1 wherein said ramps are constituted by wedge-like elements.

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The following references are of record in the file of this patent:

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