

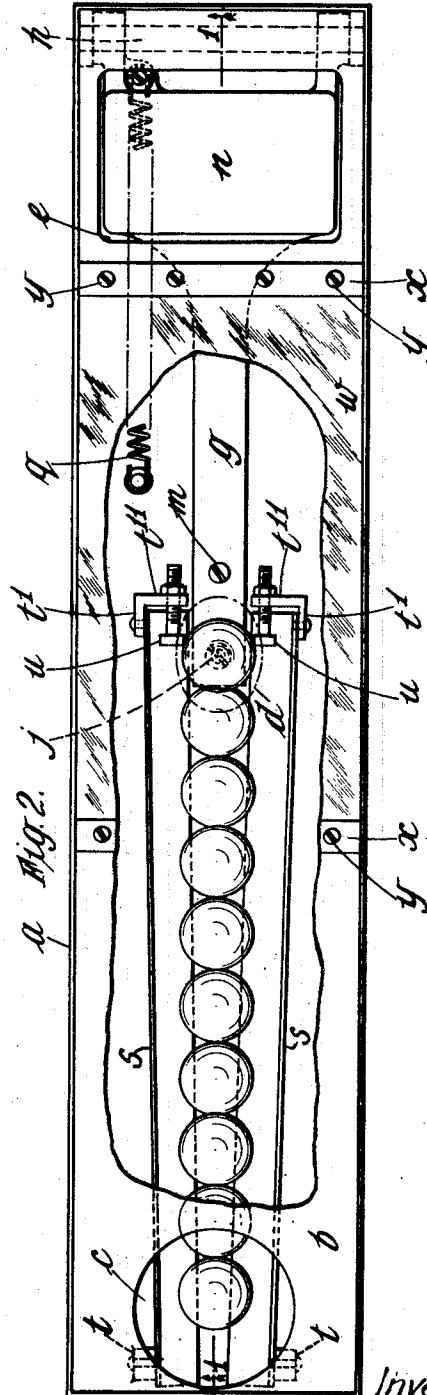
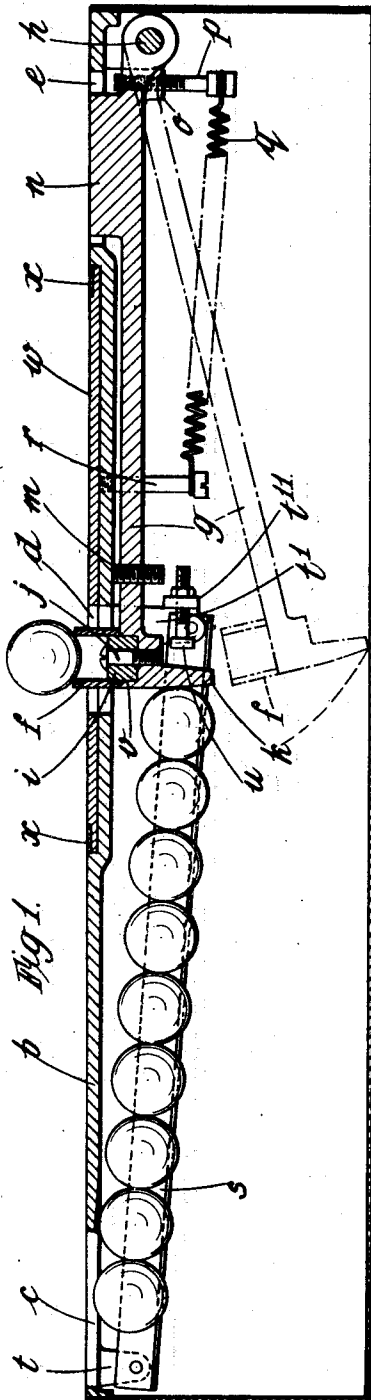
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APPARATUS FOR PRACTICING GAMES

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## APPARATUS FOR PRACTICING GAMES

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This invention relates to apparatus for practicing games and for playing games in which a ball is adapted to be struck from a tee by the player using a club or other appliance, and relates more particularly to apparatus comprising a mechanical tee.

The object of the present invention is to provide improved apparatus to enable the player to practice the game more conveniently or otherwise to amuse himself.

Apparatus made in accordance with this invention comprises a tee off which a ball is to be struck, said tee being adapted to be lowered and raised, means for supplying a ball to the tee in the lowered position and means comprising a spring or counterweight for continually urging the said tee to the normal raised position, the said tee being arranged to be lowered by force supplied by the player.

The invention further consists in constructing the said tee in the form of a resilient tube, and the lower end of the said tube may be secured by fixing with cement or rubber solution to the outside of a cylindrical spigot preferably of hard rubber adapted to be secured to a movable member of the apparatus, and the said movable member may be mounted on a pivot and provided with an arm to the extremity of which the tee is secured.

The invention further consists in providing guides for the pivoted member and means for adjusting the limits of movement of the said pivoted member.

An improved magazine is also provided which is designed to assist in clearing the magazine of any dirt which may be introduced with the balls.

In one construction the top of the apparatus is provided with a circular hole which communicates with the magazine so that the balls, after having been driven off, may be putted back into the hole, thus giving practice

at putting as well as serving to replenish the magazine.

Referring to the drawings filed herewith in which Fig. 1 is a longitudinal sectional elevation and Fig. 2 is a plan of one form of device made in accordance with this invention:—

The device comprises a rectangular casing *a* of sheet metal having a top *b* of cast aluminium which is provided with a circular hole *c* near one end, a central opening *d* and a rectangular hole *e* at the other end.

A tee *f* in the form of a short length of thin rubber tubing is carried on one end of a member or arm *g* which is pivoted at its other end on a pivot *h* supported in the casing *a*, the tee *f* being adapted to project through the central opening *d* when in the raised position. The tee *f* secured by fixing with rubber solution to a spigot *i* provided with a central hole through which the screw *j* passes and secures it in a cylindrical recess *v* in the member *g*. The member *g* is formed with a heel *k* at the extreme free end, the surface of the said heel being shaped as an arc about the pivot *h*. The member *g* is further provided with a screw stop *m* adapted to co-act with the top *b*, an operating face *n* and a lug *o* through which is mounted a bolt *p* which projects below the member *g* and to the end of which is attached one end of the tension spring *q*. The other end of the tension spring *q* is anchored to a bolt *r* fixed in the top *b*. By screwing the bolt *p* in the lug *o* the leverage about the pivot *h* can be varied and this construction provides delicate adjustment of the effect of the tension spring *q* on the arm *g*. The downward movement of the member *g* is limited by the heel *k* coming into contact with the bottom of the casing *a* but any other form of stop may be provided.

The magazine for holding the balls comprises two L section girders *s* of aluminium supported at a slight incline on supports *t* and *t'* provided on the top *b*. The girders

*s* are spaced apart a short distance, the lower ends of the girders being adjacent the heel *h* of the arm *g* which is adapted to pass between them and to pick up a ball therefrom on the tee *f* while the girders *s* are arranged to diverge slightly towards the lower end so as to provide sufficient space for the passage of the tee *f* and member *g* but not sufficient to allow a ball to drop between them. Adjustable stops *u* are provided in the supports *t'* to limit the forward movement of the balls. When the member *g* is depressed the balls will move forward until the first ball is against the stops *u* in the position for being picked up by the tee *f* in its upward movement between the lower end of the girders. The magazine is adapted to be filled through the circular hole *c* in the top *b*.

The supports *t'* are also adapted to serve as guides for the member *g*. The member *g* is preferably made a loose fit on the pivot *h*.

The top *b* is suitably stepped to receive a rubber mat *w* secured in place by plates *x* and screws *y*, the mat being provided with an opening corresponding to the central opening *d* to allow passage of the ball and tee. The mat *w* protects the top *b* from accidental damage and also prevents the club from being injured.

In operation, assuming that the empty tee is in its uppermost position and the magazine is loaded, the player depresses the member *g* by pressing on the operating face *n* with his club and holds it down momentarily in its lowest position. As soon as the tee *f* is below the girders *s* the lowest ball in the magazine which has been restrained by the heel *h*, moves forward against the stops *u*. On the player removing his club from the face *n* the spring *q* raises the member *g* in its upward movement, the tee *f* collects the said ball from the magazine and raises it through the hole in the top *b* in position ready for the player to strike. After playing a ball, the tee can be recharged by repeating this operation until the magazine is exhausted. If the device has been used in combination with a net, the player may then obtain practice in putting by putting the balls back into the circular hole *c* in the top *b*, thus recharging the magazine. If it is desired to alter the height of the tee, the adjustable screw stop *m* can be easily reached with a screw driver through the hole *d* in the top *b*. If the spring *q* is too strong, the balls may be bounced off the tee when the stop *m* comes in contact with the top *b* and if it is too weak, it may not be sufficiently strong to lift the ball and hold it in the uppermost position. The effect of the spring *q* can easily be adjusted through the hole *c* in the top *b* provided for the platform *n* when the member *g* is depressed. Similarly, if a counterweight instead of a spring is used, means may be provided for

adjusting the torque due to the counterweight.

The end of the arm *g* adjacent the heel *h* as well as the tee *f* itself together serve as a stop to restrain the forward movement of the balls until the tee *f* is lowered sufficiently to receive a ball. The surface of the heel *h*, which makes contact with the end ball in the magazine, is formed as an arc about the pivot *h* so that its movement is not obstructed by the balls in the magazine. This ensures that the movement of the member *g* is not hampered unduly by the balls in the magazine.

By forming the floor of the magazine of two girders *s* spaced apart, any mud collected on the balls is able to fall through the gap into the bottom of the casing instead of clogging the magazine, and the casing may be emptied periodically or when necessary. Furthermore, the girders *s* act as rails on which balls can roll freely but at the same time are kept strictly in line.

What I claim and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. An apparatus of the character described including a pivotally mounted member carrying a tee, means for yieldingly urging the end of said member carrying the tee upward, and a magazine including inclined guide members whose lower ends straddle the free end of said pivotally mounted member.

2. Apparatus for playing a game, comprising a tee secured directly to a pivoted member adapted to be lowered and raised, means for supplying a ball to said tee when in lowered position comprising lateral guides disposed on each side of said pivoted member adjacent to said tee and means for continually urging said member to a normal raised position, the said tee being adapted to be lowered by force supplied directly to said member by the player.

3. Apparatus according to claim 2 characterized by the fact that the guides are disposed just clear of the normal path of said pivoted member.

4. Apparatus according to claim 2 in combination with means for limiting the movement of the tee in the upward direction, said means comprising means for limiting the movement of the pivoted member, said means being adjustable.

5. Apparatus according to claim 2, the said tee being secured to an arm of a pivoted member and the said means for urging the tee to the normal raised position comprising a spring operably connected to the said pivoted member.

6. Apparatus according to claim 2, the said tee being secured to an arm of a pivoted member and the said means for urging the tee to a normal raised position comprising a spring operably connected to the said pivoted mem-

ber, through a member of adjustable length for varying the strength of the spring.

7. Apparatus for playing a game comprising a tee secured directly to a pivoted member  
5 adapted to be lowered and raised, means for supplying a ball to said tee when in lowered position and means for continually urging said member to a normal raised position, the said tee being adapted to be lowered by force  
10 supplied directly to said member by the player, ball supply means comprising a magazine from which the balls are fed by gravity, the tee end of the said pivoted member being shaped as an arc described about the pivot  
15 about which the said arm moves, the end of the said arm acting as a stop to restrain the feed of the balls whilst the tee is in its raised position.

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