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APPROACH GOLF COURSE

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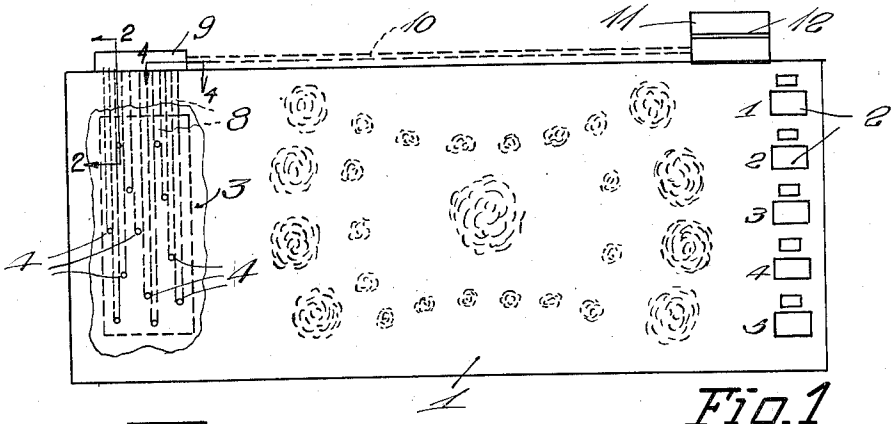


Fig. 1

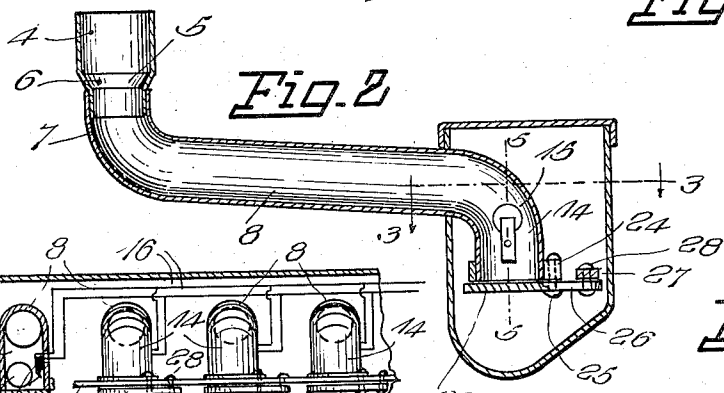


Fig. 2

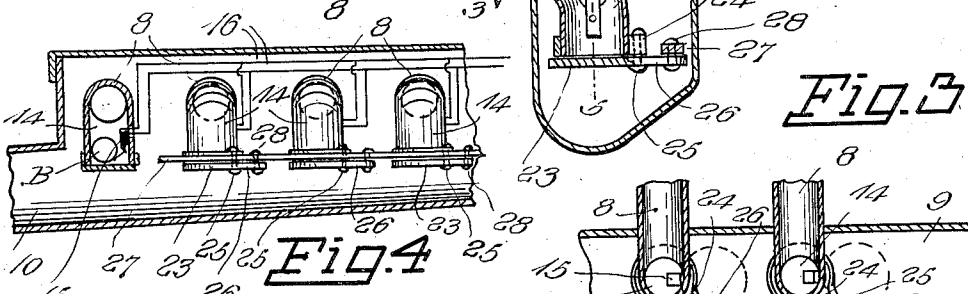


Fig. 3

Fig. 4

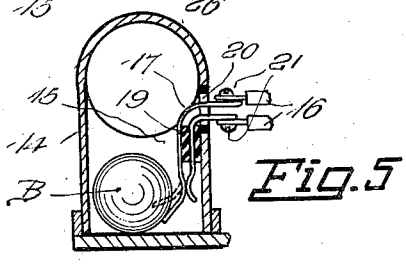


Fig. 5

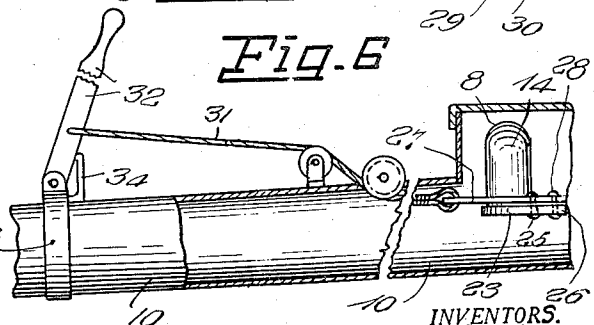


Fig. 6

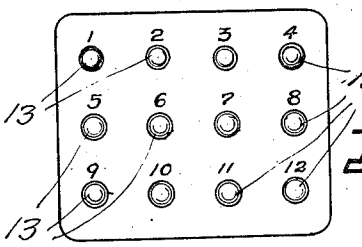


Fig. 7

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APPROACH GOLF COURSE

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7 Claims. (Cl. 273—32)

This invention relates to a game apparatus and more particularly to an apparatus by means of which skill in making approach shots in a game of golf may be improved and a record of successful shots made kept by means of electric lights which are illuminated when golf balls driven toward a green drop into cups.

Another object of the invention is to provide a practice course wherein all of the cups are carried by tubes or pipes leading into a box from which a pipe leads to a control house so that when closures for inner ends of the pipes are moved to open position, balls in the pipes will drop into the box and roll through the return pipe to the control house.

Another object of the invention is to so mount the closures for inner ends of the tubes that they may be connected with actuating means of such construction that all of the closures may be moved to open position at the same time.

Another object of the invention is to provide an apparatus of this character wherein the score board carrying the signal lights may be mounted on top of the control house where it can be easily seen by players standing at the driving off end of the playing field.

The invention is illustrated in the accompanying drawing, wherein:

Fig. 1 is a plan view of the playing field.

Fig. 2 is a sectional view on an enlarged scale, on the line 2—2 of Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is a sectional view taken horizontally through Fig. 2, on the line 3—3.

Fig. 4 is a sectional view taken vertically on the line 4—4 of Fig. 1.

Figure 5 is a sectional view taken vertically through the inner end of one of the tubes, on the line 5—5 of Fig. 2.

Fig. 6 is a sectional view taken longitudinally through the return pipe and showing the operating means for the closures at the inner ends of the tubes through which balls pass into the box.

Fig. 7 is a view of the score board which is mounted on the control house.

The practice course constituting the subject matter of this invention is intended for practicing approach shots and consists of a field or lot 1 which may be of any dimensions desired and is preferably 150 feet long by 40 feet wide. Such a lot will accommodate five players who will stand upon tee-off sites or mats 2 and attempt to make "approach" or "chip" shots with an iron to the green 3 and into one of the cups 4 which are embedded in the ground of the green in spaced relation to each other, as shown in Fig. 1. The balls B used are golf balls of conventional formation and are divided into sets for use by players driving from the various tees or mats 2. The balls to be driven from the first tee may be marked with the identifying number "1" or colored red or some other distinctive color and the balls to be driven from each of the other tees may be identified by distinctive colors or by numbers corresponding to the numbers by which the tees are identified. By so marking the balls, those which are driven into the cups by the various players may be identified.

The cups are formed of metal and each has its lower portion reduced in diameter, as shown at 5, and terminating in a neck 6 which fits snugly into the upturned end 7 of a companion tube 8 extending transversely of the playing field to one side thereof and into a box 9 from which a pipe 10 extends longitudinally of the field to a control house 11 located adjacent the teeing off end of the field. A tally board 12 is mounted in upright position longitudinally of the roof of the control house so that one side of the board faces the playing field and this board carries a number of sockets in which light bulbs 13 are mounted where they may be clearly seen by the players who stand at the driving stations 2 and attempt to make approach shots which will drive the golf balls into the cups 4.

Outer end portions of the tubes 8 which extend into the box 9 are curved downwardly to provide depending terminal portions 14 into which the golf balls pass after rolling through the tubes 8, as shown in Figs. 4 and 5. When a golf ball lands on the green and drops into a cup 4, so that it rolls through a tube and into the depending terminal end portion 14 thereof, this is to be indicated on the score board by illumination of a companion one of the signal lights 3. In order to accomplish this, the terminal portion of each tube carries a switch connected with a companion lamp socket by circuit wires 16. Each switch is constructed as shown in Fig. 5, and referring to this figure, it will be seen that each switch consists of a pair of contact strips 17 and 18 which are formed of resilient metal and are held in insulated relation to the tube 8 and each other by a block of insulation 9. This block is secured against a side portion of the tube and upper portions of the contact strips pass through an opening 20 and carry screws 21 by which the conductor wires are held in engagement with the contact strips. The contact strips extend downwardly below the block of insulating material and the strip 17 has its lower portion extended be-

yond the lower end of the strip 18 and bent to form a tongue 22 which projects laterally from the strip 18 at an incline so that when a golf ball drops into the outer terminal portion of the tube it will have one side bearing against the tongue 22 and flex the same toward the lower end portion of the strip 17 until it engages the same and closes a circuit through the signal.

After a person has driven a predetermined number of golf balls toward the green, which may be six, or any other desired number, the score is to be noted by observing the signal lamps which have been illuminated, and another player will then take his turn. The competition between the players may constitute a game of skill and the winner receive a prize or the apparatus may be merely used as a practice course for improving a person's ability to make approach shots.

Until the player has driven all of the predetermined number of balls toward the green, those which have entered the cups are to be retained in the depending outer terminal portions 14 thereof by gates 23 which are pivoted to ears 24 carried by the tubes through the medium of pivot pins 25. These pins pass through handles 26 of the gates which extend radially therefrom and are connected with a bar or rod 27 by pins 28. The bar 27 extends longitudinally in the box and, at one end, is engaged by a spring 29 carried by an eye 30 at one end of the box. This spring exerts pull on the bar to yieldably hold the gates closed and retain the balls in the tubes. A cable 31 is secured at one end to the other end of the bar and extends longitudinally of the pipe 10 to the control house where it is secured to a lever 32 carried by a collar 33 which is tightly mounted about the pipe and carries a stop 34 for limiting tilting movement of the lever in one direction. By grasping the lever and swinging it away from the stop, pull will be exerted on the cable and the bar shifted longitudinally in the box to move the gates to open position and allow the balls to drop to the bottom of the box. The balls will then roll along the bottom of the box and through the return pipe 10 to the control house. It will thus be seen that an attendant at the control house may effect return of the balls after a player has made all of his shots and a record of the score obtained made. Any suitable means may be provided for clearing the green of balls which fail to roll into the cups.

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed is:

1. In a practice course for golf, a field having driving stations adjacent one end and a green adjacent its other end, cups embedded in the green and open at their upper ends, a control station, a box, a return pipe leading from said box to said station, tubes extending from said cups into said box, gates for ends of the tubes within the box, means for moving the gates to open position and allowing balls to drop from the tubes into the box and roll through the return pipe to the control station, and means for yieldably holding the gates normally closed.

2. In a practice course for golf, a field having driving stations adjacent one end and a green adjacent its other end, cups embedded in the green and open at their upper ends, a control station at one side of the field adjacent the driving station end thereof, a box embedded in the ground at said side of the field opposite the green, a return pipe extending from said box to said control station, a score board including electrically energized signals thereon, tubes leading from said cups into said box, gates for inner ends of said tubes normally closed, means for closing circuits through the signals including switches in the tubes disposed in position to be engaged and closed by balls resting on the gates within the tubes, and means for moving the gates to open position and allowing balls to drop from the tubes into the box and roll through the return pipe to the control station.

3. In a practice course for golf, a field having driving stations adjacent one end and a green adjacent its other end, cups embedded in the green and open at their upper ends, a control station at one side of the field adjacent the driving station end thereof, a box embedded in the ground at said side of the field opposite the green, a return pipe extending from said box to said control station, a score board including electrically energized signals thereon, tubes leading from said cups and into said box, gates for inner ends of said tubes normally closed, means for closing circuits through the signals including switches mounted in the tubes and each comprising contact strips extending into a tube through a side thereof in insulated relation to the tube and each other, one strip being of greater length than the other strip and having its lower free end portion projecting laterally from the same in position for engagement by a golf ball to close the switch and energize a companion signal, and means for opening the gates to allow balls in the tubes to drop into the box and roll through the pipe to the control station.

4. In a practice course for golf, a field having driving stations adjacent one end and a green adjacent its other end, cups embedded in the green and open at their upper ends, a box embedded in the ground at a side of the field opposite the green, tubes embedded in the ground under the green and having their inner end portions extending upwardly and communicating with open lower ends of the cups, said tubes extending transversely of the field with their outer ends extending into the box and downwardly therein, ears extending from the down turned outer ends of said tubes, gates pivoted to said ears for movement into and out of closing relation to the tubes, handles extending from the pivoted portions of said gates, a rod extending longitudinally in said box and pivoted to said handles, a spring anchored to a wall of the box and connected with an adjacent end of the rod to exert pull on the rod and normally hold the gates closed, and means for drawing the rod longitudinally in opposition to the spring and moving the gates to open position and allow golf balls in the tubes to drop into the box.

5. In a practice course for golf, a field having driving stations adjacent one end and a green adjacent its other end, cups embedded in the green and open at their upper ends, a box embedded in the ground at a side of the field and opposite the green, tubes embedded in the ground under the green and having their inner end portions extending upwardly and communicating with open lower ends of the cups, said tubes extending transversely of the field with their outer ends extending into the box and downwardly therein, gates pivoted to the down turned outer ends of said tubes and yieldably held closed, handles for said gates, a bar extending longitudinally in said box and pivoted to the handles of said gates, and means for exerting pull on said bar and moving the gates to open position.

6. In a practice course for golf, a field having

driving stations adjacent one end and a green adjacent its other end, cups embedded in the green and open at their upper ends, a box embedded in the ground at a side of the field and opposite the green, tubes embedded in the ground under the green and having their inner end portions extending upwardly and communicating with open lower ends of the cups, said tubes extending transversely of the field with their outer ends extending into the box and downwardly therein, gates pivoted to the down turned outer ends of said tubes and yieldably held closed, handles for said gates, a bar extending longitudinally in said box and pivoted to the handles of said gates, a control station at the side of the field adjacent the driving station end thereof, a return pipe leading from said box to the control station, a lever carried by said pipe at the control station, and a cable extending longitudinally of the pipe with one end connected to said bar and its other end connected with the lever and adapted to exert pull on the bar to move the gates to open position when the lever is moved in one direction.

7. In a practice course for golf, a field having driving stations adjacent one end and a green adjacent its other end, cups embedded in the green and open at their upper ends, a box embedded in the ground at a side of the field opposite the green, tubes embedded in the ground under the green and having their inner end portions communicating with the cups and their outer end portions entering the box, gates for outer ends of the tubes, a control station, a return pipe leading from the box to the control station, and means actuated from the control station for moving the gates to open position.

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