Jan. 2, 1962 H. R. HARRIS 3,015,351

RETRACTIBLE DEVICE FOR GOLF CLUB HEAD COVERS

Filed May 12, 1961

Fig. 1.

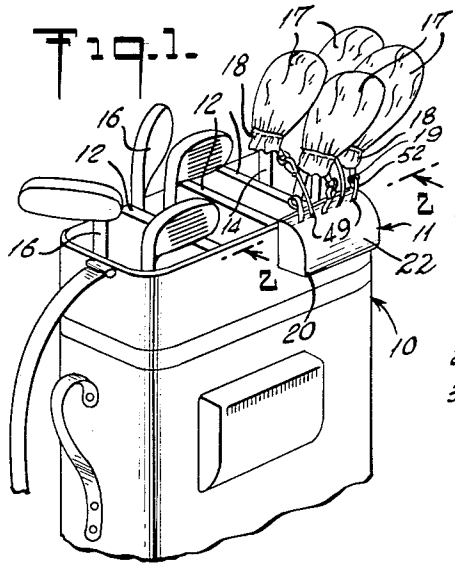


Fig. 4.

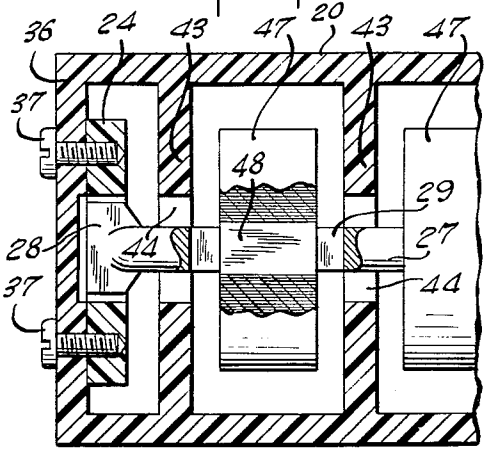


Fig. 2.

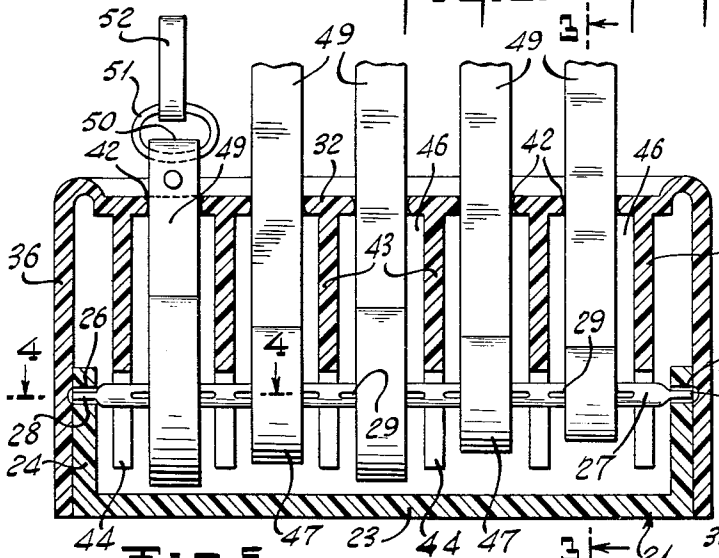


Fig. 3.

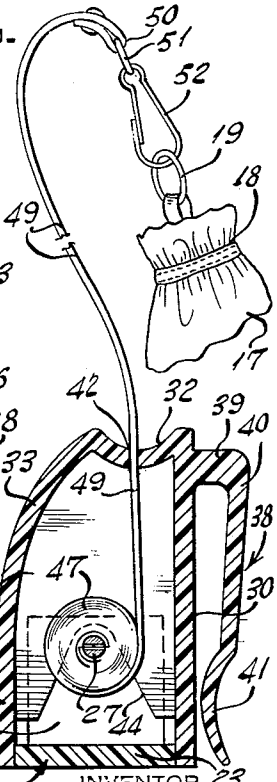


Fig. 5.

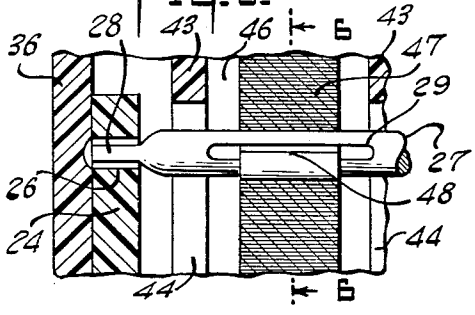
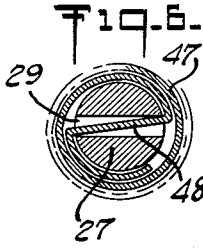


Fig. 6.



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RETRACTIBLE DEVICE FOR GOLF CLUB HEAD COVERS

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The present invention relates generally to improvements in golf equipment and accessories, and in particular it relates to an improved golf head protecting device.

In playing the game of golf, the clubs are generally borne or carried about in an open-topped elongated bag, the golf club shafts nesting in the bag and the club heads extending above the upper rim of the bag. Many of the clubs, the so-called woods, are provided with highly polished wooden heads. These wooden heads being easily scarred, nicked, abraded or otherwise damaged while being carried in the bag, by contact and impact with each other and with the metal-headed clubs or exposure to damp or wet weather, are usually protected by covering the wooden heads with a removable cap or hood formed of a leather, flexible organic plastic material or knitted or woven fabric, the throat or opening of the hood being provided with a draw string or an elastic collar. While these hoods, as heretofore employed, protect the club heads satisfactorily, they possess numerous drawbacks and disadvantages. These drawbacks find their source primarily in that the protective heads are in a detached state and when not applied about the club heads are awkward to handle and are often dropped and soiled or otherwise damaged, and easily lost. When the hoods are attached to the bag, as in some cases, their manipulation for placement on the club heads and removal therefrom is accompanied with difficulty, the strings usually employed snarling and knotting. The arrangements heretofore employed and proposed for the protection of bag-carried golf club heads leave much to be desired.

It is, therefore, a principal object of the present invention to provide improvements in golfing equipment.

Another object of the present invention is to provide an improved device for enveloping and protecting the heads of golf clubs which are carried or stored in a golf bag.

Still another object of the present invention is to provide an improved golf club head protective device which may be readily applied to and employed with the conventional golf bag.

A further object of the present invention is to provide an improved golf club head protective device of the above nature which is characterized by its simplicity, dependability, convenience, ruggedness and low cost.

The above and other objects of the present invention will become apparent from a reading of the following description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing, wherein:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view, partially broken away for convenience of illustration, of a golf club carrying bag employing a protective device in accordance with the present invention;

FIGURE 2 is a cross-sectional view on an enlarged scale, taken along line 2—2 in FIGURE 1;

FIGURE 3 is a cross-sectional view, on the same enlarged scale, taken along line 3—3 in FIGURE 2;

FIGURE 4 is a cross-sectional view, on an even larger scale, taken along line 4—4 in FIGURE 2;

FIGURE 5 is a cross-sectional view, on the same scale as FIGURE 4, taken along line 5—5 in FIGURE 3; and

FIGURE 6 is a cross-sectional view, on a still larger scale, taken along line 6—6 in FIGURE 5.

In a sense, the present invention contemplates the provision of a golf club head protecting device comprising a housing having an opening formed therein, means adapted to secure said housing to a golf bag, a golf club head protecting open-ended hood, a flexible member having one end thereof attached to said hood and the other end thereof extending through said opening into said housing, the means disposed in said housing normally resiliently drawing said flexible member into said housing.

According to a preferred form of the present invention, the housing has a plurality of longitudinally spaced, longitudinally extending slots formed therein. A plurality of flexible members are provided in the form of bands passing through each of the slots. A longitudinally extending shaft is non-rotatably mounted in the housing and has longitudinal slots formed therein. A spiral band spring is associated with each of the slots in the housing, the inner end of each spring registering with a slot in the shaft and the outer end thereof having the inner end of a corresponding flexible band attached thereto. The outer end of each flexible band carries a spring clip which separably engages a ring or eye carried by a corresponding hood. The spiral spring, in each case, is biased as normally to resiliently draw the flexible band associated with it into the housing where it is wound about the shaft with the associated spring.

Referring now to the drawing which illustrates a preferred embodiment of the present invention, reference numeral 10 generally designates a golf bag on which is mounted the improved club head protective device 11. Golf bag 10 may be of any conventional construction, and is usually provided with partitioning straps 12 extending transversely across the open top thereof, as well as with handles, pouches and the like, as illustrated in FIGURE 1. The golf clubs are usually carried in the golf bag 10 with their heads projecting above the upper rim of the golf bag. The woods, or wooden-headed clubs 14, are generally located at one end of the golf bag with the irons 16 being disposed in the remainder of the bag.

Since the golf club heads, particularly the woods, when exposed under normal conditions, are easily subjected to damage, each of the wooden heads is capped or covered by a removable hood 17 formed of a soft pliable material such as leather, a thermoplastic material or a knitted or woven fabric. The bottom open end of each hood 17 is provided with a hemmed border 18 which encloses an elastic band so that the hood opening may be enlarged to permit its passage over the club head, and automatically contracts when released. In accordance with the present improved construction, a coupling ring 19 is suitably mounted on the lower border of each hood 17.

The hood support device 11 comprises a housing 20 including a bracket-defining base member 21 and a cap member 22. Base member 21 consists of a rectangular bottom wall 23 having upstanding walls 24 at opposite ends thereof, said end walls 24 being of slightly less width than that of bottom wall 23. Horizontally aligned slots 26 are medially formed in the end walls 24 a short distance below the tops thereof. Supported by and extending between end walls 24 is a longitudinally extending horizontal shaft 27 having flattened end wings 28 disposed within and closely registering with slots 26 in the end wall to prevent rotation of said shaft 27. Formed in the shaft 27 along the length thereof are regularly longitudinally spaced longitudinal through slots 29.

Cap member 22 includes a vertical, substantially rectangular front wall 30, a longitudinally extending concaved top wall 32 directed rearwardly from the upper edge of the front wall 30, a curved rear wall 33 provided with a depending flat section 34, and appropriately shaped vertical end walls 36. The lower edges of walls, 30, 34 and 36 delineate a horizontal rectangular opening of the

shape of base bottom wall 23, base member 21 nesting in cap member 22 with the under face of the bottom wall 23 being coplanar with the bottom edges of walls 30, 34 and 36. Cap member 22 and base member 21 are locked in assembled position by means of suitable screws or threaded bolts 37 passing through openings in cap end walls 36 and engaging aligned tapped bores in base end walls 24.

In order to facilitate the separable mounting of housing 20 on the upper border of golf bag 10 there are provided on the outer face of the cap member front wall and extending therefrom a pair of longitudinally spaced clip-defining resilient arms 38. Each arm 38 is formed integral with wall 30 and includes an upper horizontal leg 39 projecting forwardly from adjacent the upper border of front wall 30, and a downwardly, rearwardly inclined leg 40 depending from the front of leg 39 and terminating at its free end in a rearwardly convex section 41, the lower portion of which diverges from the wall 30 and reaches substantially to the plane of the bottom thereof.

Formed in housing top wall 32 are longitudinally spaced, longitudinally extending slots 42 which are aligned with corresponding shaft slots 29 but spaced forwardly thereof. Disposed between successive slots 42 are vertical panels or partition member 43 which depend from top wall 32 and extend between the front and rear walls 30 and 34 to points above the base bottom wall 23. Triangular recesses 44 are formed in the undersides of partition panels 43 and straddle shaft 27. Panels 43 divide the housing into successive compartments 46 associated with each of which is a housing slot 42 and a shaft slot 29. Housing 20 may be made of any suitable material but is advantageously formed of a suitable synthetic thermoplastic material by injection molding or the like method.

Located in each compartment 46 is a resilient retracting mechanism including a spiral metal band spring 47 of conventional construction. The inner end 48 of each spiral spring 47 registers with a corresponding shaft slot 29 and is bent to effect the locking thereof in the slot 29, the spring band being spirally wound about the shaft 27 in a counter-clockwise direction, as seen in FIGURE 7, or it may otherwise be secured thereto. The band may be plastic covered as an aid in preventing metal corrosion.

The outer free end 49 of each flexible band 47 is looped, as at 50, and engages a ring 51 and is suitably fastened in position. Ring 51 passes through the trailing coupling end of a spring clip 52 of conventional construction. Ring 51 and clip 52, or either thereof, are longer than slots 42. Each spring clip 52 releasably engaged the coupling ring 19 of a respective club head hood 17. Spring bands 47, 49 are so fitted and biased that when released from engagement with a hood 17, it will be fully retracted by rewind action thereof into compartment 46. Sufficient wind is provided in each of springs 47 to permit the withdrawal thereof for substantially the full length thereof.

In employing the arrangement described above, the device 11 is mounted on the upper border of the golf bag 11 adjacent the wood club carrying end merely by hooking clip arms 38 over the rim of the golf bag 11 so that the upper border is rightly embraced between the housing wall 30 and arms 40. Clip elements 52 are then snapped over corresponding coupling rings 19. To apply a hood 17 over a club head, the corresponding band 49 is drawn from housing 20 against its normal spring tension, and the hood is slipped over the selected golf club head, whereupon the band 49 is released. The band is thus drawn taut and does not interfere with the manipulation of the other clubs. If it is desired to remove a club, the respective hood 17 is slipped from the club head and is retracted by the attached band 49 which is drawn into the housing by the spring 47.

While there has been described and illustrated a preferred embodiment of the present invention, it is apparent that numerous alterations, omissions, and additions may be made without departing from the spirit thereof.

I claim:

1. A golf club head protective device comprising a housing having an opening formed therein, means adapted to secure said housing to a golf bag, a golf club head open ended hood, a flexible member having one end thereof attached to said hood and the other end thereof extending through said opening into said housing, and means disposed in said housing normally resiliently drawing said flexible member into said housing.

2. A golf club head protective device comprising a housing having an opening formed therein, means adapted releasably to secure said housing to the upper border of a golf bag, a golf club head open ended hood, a flexible member having one end separably attached to said hood and the other end thereof extending through said opening into said housing, and means disposed on said housing resiliently drawing said flexible member into said housing.

3. A golf club head protective device comprising an elongated housing having a plurality of longitudinally spaced openings formed therein, means adapted to secure said housing to the upper border of a golf bag, a plurality of open ended hoods, a plurality of flexible members each having one end thereof connected to one of said hoods and the other end thereof extending into said housing through a corresponding one of said openings, and means disposed in said housing and independently resiliently drawing each of said flexible members into said housing.

4. A protective device according to claim 3, wherein said housing securing means includes a clip element defined by an arm having an upper end secured to a wall of said housing and a lower free end resiliently urged toward said wall, the upper rim of said golf bag being adapted to be engaged between said arm and said wall.

5. A protective device according to claim 3, wherein the ends of said flexible members connected to said hoods carry clip elements separably engaging said hoods.

6. A protective device according to claim 3, wherein said drawing means comprises a spiral spring having an inner end affixed to said housing and an outer end affixed to said flexible member.

7. A protective device according to claim 6, wherein said flexible member is in the form of a band adapted to wind about said spiral spring.

8. A golf club head protective device comprising an elongated housing having a plurality of longitudinally spaced, longitudinally extending slots formed therein, means adapted to secure said housing to a golf bag, a longitudinally extending shaft non-rotatably mounted in said housing and having longitudinal slots formed along the length thereof, a plurality of spiral band springs wound about said shaft and transversely aligned with respect to said housing slots and having their inner ends aligned with said shaft slots, a plurality of flexible bands extending through said housing slots and having their inner ends secured to the other ends of respective of said spiral springs, and club head hood members secured to the outer ends of said flexible bands.

9. A protective device according to claim 8, including panels disposed in said housing between successive of said spiral springs to subdivide said housing into corresponding compartments.

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