Jan. 17, 1928. 1,656,718

C. A. BICKFORD

GOLF APPARATUS AND TARGET

Filed Aug. 13. 1926 3 Sheets-Sheet 1

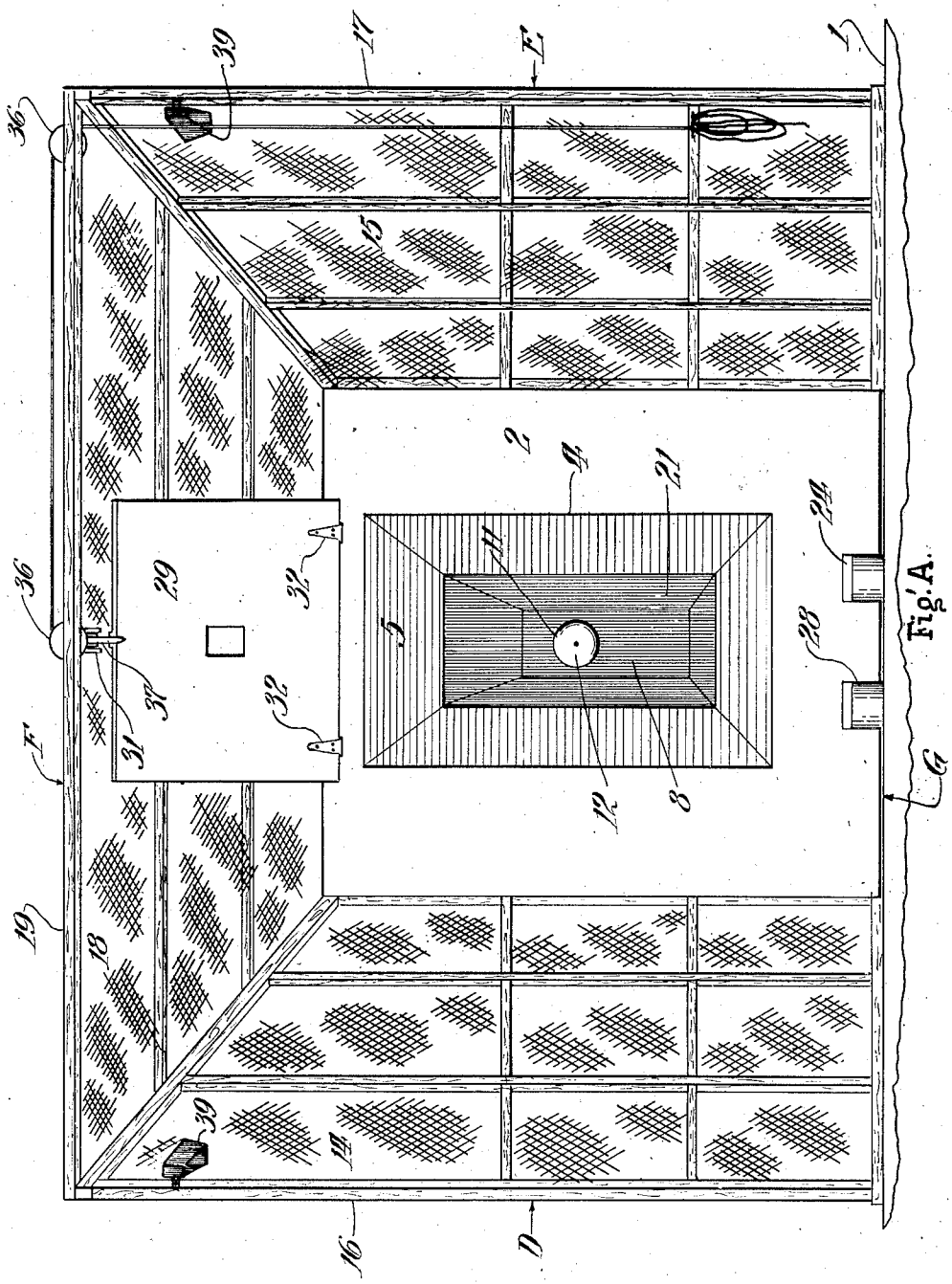


Fig. 1.A.

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Filed Aug. 13, 1926 3 Sheets-Sheet 2

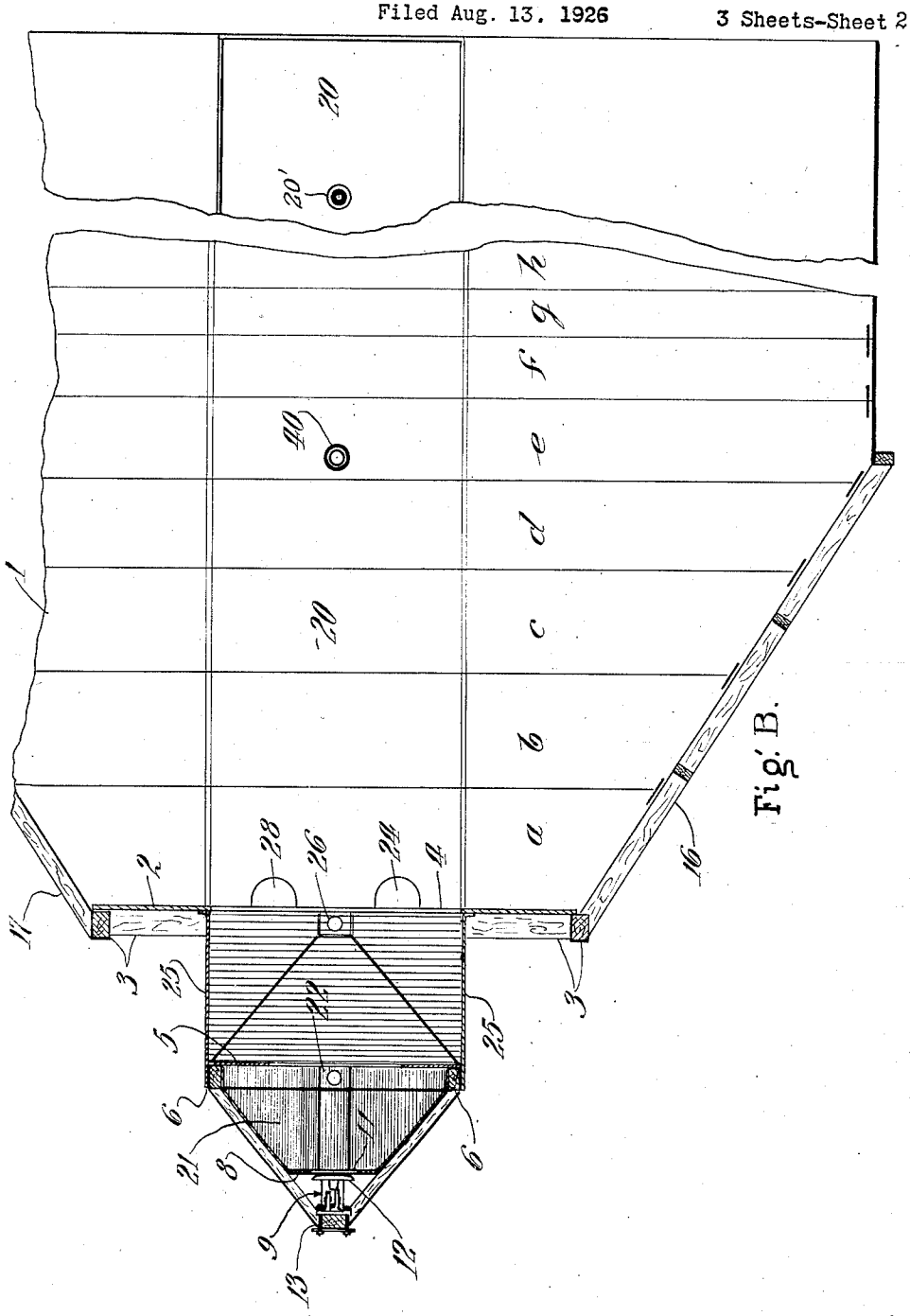


Fig. B.

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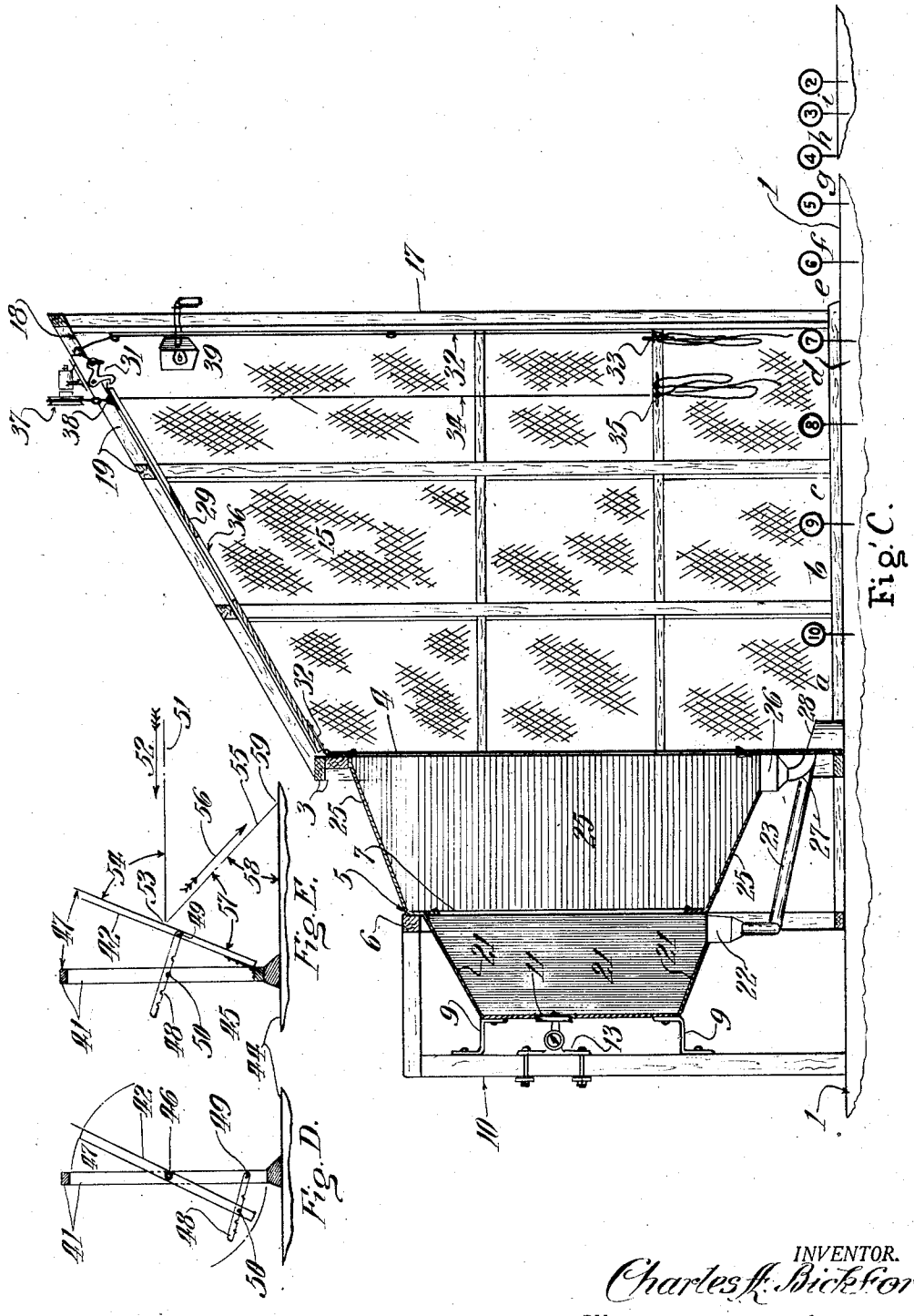


Fig. C.

Fig. E.

Fig. D.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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GOLF APPARATUS AND TARGET.

Application filed August 13, 1926. Serial No. 128,928.

The present invention relates to an apparatus for use in driving a ball thereon and therein and forms a desirable practice means for use in the game of golf and may be used as an instrument for playing an indoor game of golf, and among the objects of my invention are the following:

To provide an apparatus for use as an exercise means for athletes.

To afford a device useful for practice in the game of golf or any similar game.

To provide an apparatus for use indoors and at night so that an athlete may practice in inclement weather or at night, or indoors, and in a small space.

To supply a means useful as a target which may gauge the ability of a golf player exercising therein and which may provide means to allow a golf player to practice on any shot he may desire and correctly gauge his accuracy thereupon.

A further object is to create a device upon which long drive shots may be practiced and their length and force accurately gauged.

To provide a means useful in playing an indoor game of golf and scoring the same.

Another object of my invention is to supply a device in which all of the sticks or clubs of a golf game may be used and all the skill of a golf player may be employed, and such other objects, advantages and capabilities as will later more fully appear.

My invention further resides in the construction, arrangement and combination of parts illustrated in the accompanying drawings, and while I have shown therein a preferred embodiment of my invention, I desire it understood that the same is susceptible of modification and change without departing from the spirit of my invention. I also wish it understood that although I have suggested as a preferred embodiment of my invention that my device be used as an apparatus for the practice of golf and for use as an indoor game of golf, yet I wish it understood that my invention be not limited to this particular game of golf but may be used for any similar game to which its construction is adapted.

Referring to the drawings, Fig. A is a front elevation of my invention.

Fig. B is a horizontal sectional plan view.

Fig. C is a vertical longitudinal sectional view.

Figs. D and E are detail views of my preferred range target.

My invention more in detail comprises a court or plat 1 which when my device is used out of doors would represent the ground or green and when used indoors would represent a floor of wood or other suitable material. On the supporting frame or structure is erected a target 2 secured by suitable means to a framework 3 constructed of wood, metal or other suitable material. The target 2 may be also made of wood, metal, canvas or the like and has a rectangular hole 4 in the center thereof. Directly back of the target 2 is a second target 5 of similar material mounted on a supporting frame 6. In the center of the target 5 is a rectangular hole 7 smaller than hole 4 of the target 2. Directly back of target 5 is a third target 8 also of similar and suitable material and mounted by bracket 9 to upright 10. In the middle of target 8 is a round hole 11 back of which is mounted a gong 12, on adjustable bracket 13 secured to upright 10.

My device is fitted with side wings 14 and 15 spreading sidewise from target 2 and secured to supporting framework 16 and 17 at the proper angle with target 2. A top wing 18 is provided and secured to suitable overhead framework 19 at the proper angle with target 2 to connect with wings 14 and 15. It will readily be seen that these guard wings 14, 15 and 18 form an enclosure and prevent any damage or injury to personal property from a wild shot or ball driven from the rear of the floor 1. At the rear end 20 of the floor 1 is a tee 20′ which is the place from which a ball is driven into the targets 2, 5 and 8.

It will be readily understood that a ball driven through hole 4 of the first target 2 might, if not directed toward the center thereof, strike the enclosing zone walls 25 which forms a hopper-like enclosure, which is funneled at the bottom to empty into a suitable funnel 26 connected by tube or trough 27 to pocket 28. Thus a ball driven into target 2 would automatically come to rest in pocket 28 by gravity. The twofold object of this is to permit a player to recover his ball in front of the target for ease in making the next shot and to further eliminate controversy or argument between players as to just what target was hit or as to what score of accuracy he is entitled to.

In a like manner, a ball going through the first target 2 into target 5 is guided by the zone wall 21 to funnel 22 from where it is

conveyed by tube 23 to pocket 24 suitably marked to identify it with the target zone with which it is connected.

The multiple targets and the correlative zones thereof in my invention may be of different colors to make them stand out more plainly by contrast. The numbering or indicating characters which may be secured thereto may be changeable to suit the varying or improving skill of the players. Likewise the square or rectangular target openings of one or all of the targets may be varied for the same purpose. The apparatus described thus far is for use especially in determining the accuracy of a player in driving a ball thereinto. Hereinafter, I shall describe how my device may be used to indicate the driving power of a player.

A range target 29 is provided with hinges 30 and latched up against the upper wing 18 so as to be out of the way in using the apparatus for testing the accuracy of the player. This target 29 may also be hinged at the bottom as in Figs. D and E and which is the preferable form. A pull on the cord 32 secured at the lower end to cleat 33 releases latch 31. This range target 29 is now lowered by means of cord 34 secured at cleat 35, the cord passing over suitable sheaves 36 and secured at clip 37 to range target 29. In the lowered position the range target 29 covers hole 4 of target 2 and is then in substantially a vertical position ready for testing the driving power of the player. The ball will rebound from range target 29 so that in order to prevent the drive from rebounding further than is necessary and to prevent injury to the players, target 29 is inclined slightly from the vertical, as more clearly disclosed in Figs. D and E. In the vertical position, the range target 29 acts as a closure for the protection of the target apparatus.

The range target 29 may comprise a supporting frame 41 secured to the court or green 44 and a face board 42 preferably of plywood covered with canvas or covered with quilted fabric, rubber, cork, or any other suitable material for deadening the impact of the ball and for shortening the rebound of the same. The face board 42 is fitted with suitable means to give it a suitable forward inclination by means of some convenient hinge or swivel mechanism such as hinges 45 or swivel 46. As a preferred embodiment I have shown a notched bar 48 swiveled or hinged at 49 to engage a stud 50 on the side of frame 41. The angle of the target may then be adjusted to various angles according to the notches in the bar 48 and shown in Figs. D and E. The object of this angle may be described as follows: It is evident that on a short court the range of the rebound may exceed the driving range or distance between tee and target to the discomfort or danger of players being required to dodge balls. By inclining my target forwardly more or less to suit the range of rebound this is readily overcome and the range of rebound shortened thereby. A ball driven at my target 42 substantially along line 51 in the direction of arrow 52, as clearly shown in Fig. E, hits the face board 42 at point 53 at a definite angle of incidence 54 and rebounds therefrom at a like or equal angle 57 along line 55 in the direction of arrow 56 to hit the court or green at point 59. Should the angle of inclination 47 of my target be increased, the angle of incidence 54 with the target would be decreased as would angle 57. The angle 58 with the court would then be increased and the point 59 where the ball would hit the court 44 and would be closer to the target 42, thus shortening the rebound range.

Decreasing the angle 47 of target 42 with the face board 41 would act vice versa to cause the range of the rebound to be longer so that the point 59 where the ball hits the court will be farther from the target 42. It is to be noted that the target is covered with a material for deadening the impact of the ball against the target and for shortening the rebound of the same.

In playing the indoor game of golf a player may tee his ball at 20′ and proceed to drive for accuracy into the triple targets, 2, 5 and 8. The range target 29 at this point is raised or lowered out of position. A number of players or groups of players may follow each other in rotation in much the same manner as if playing the regular game of golf. A player driving from 20′ and hitting the gong 12 is conceded as in golf to have made an eagle or hole in one. Should his ball strike 8 and lodge in the zone thereof, he is conceded a par three, four or five scoring according to the numeral marking on or accredited to 8 at the beginning of the play. A shot striking 5 or lodging in the zone thereof may entitle the player to bogey or one over par, or to such a number or score as may be given for a mark on 5. Should a player hit the face of target 2 he would likewise be credited with the marking of two for his score. It is suggested that in this game each drive at my golf target for accuracy may be considered as one hole. In a nine hole game, five shots are usually driven at the compound target 2, 5 and 8, which is designed to rather indicate the accuracy of placing a drive. The next three holes are played to indicate the driving power of the player and secondary target 29 is lowered and placed in position. The players may tee off from 16 against the range target 29 for three shots each. The force of their respective drives are measured by the impact against the range target 29 and the rebound of each ball back into the court or green 20

so as to come to rest in one of the various zones thereof such as A, B, C, D, E, F, G and H as illustrated in Fig. B. The harder the drive, the farther into the court 1 the ball will roll. For this reason I have provided markers for use with my target to be placed or shown along either edge of the green and numbered in order, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 as shown in Fig. C. They indicate limits or boundaries of the court zones I, J, K, L, M, N, O, of green 20. A player making a hard accurate drive against 29 would place his ball in one of the zones farther from the target and be credited with a lower or better score than the player who made a weaker drive. The latter's ball would come to rest in one of the zones near the target and he would take his score from one of the higher numbers of zone markings along the edge of the court.

For the ninth hole a drive is taken against 29 with such skill and force as to cause it to stop as nearly as possible to the cup 40 on the green or at a suitable distance from the target. The player then holes out with as few strokes as his skill will permit just as in the well-known and popular game of golf. This completes a nine hole game of golf. In an eighteen hole game ten holes are usually played at the target 29 up and seven with it down in the last position, the eighteenth hole being the same as in the nine hole game as just described. This game of golf may be elaborated to bring into play all the sticks or clubs used in golf such as the mid-iron, mashie, brassie, etc. When the distance between the tee and the target is short, range target 29 is padded or muffled with a heavier coating of canvas, rubber or padding so as to shorten the rebound. On the other hand, the range of the rebound from target 29 may be increased by covering target 29 with metal, hardwood or suitable composition to increase the rebound, but only where the space permits the same.

My golf target is further provided with suitable illuminating units such as electric lamps 39 so placed as to so flood the targets and court or green thereof with sufficient illumination for night playing whether indoors or out.

While I have described in this specification various scoring means and continuations or plays, yet it is strictly understood that the same may be modified when using my device without departing from the spirit of my invention. The game herein disclosed is merely suggestive of one means to which my apparatus may be put. Further analagous and substantially similar uses I declare are fully within the scope of my invention.

Having now described my invention,

I claim:

1. In a golf apparatus, a target comprising an inclined padded member for deadening the impact of a ball driven against said member, and means for adjusting said member so as to correspondingly adjust the range of rebound of said ball, said member, when in vertical position, providing a closure for said golf apparatus.

2. A golf apparatus and target, comprising a plurality of graduated target spaces having inclined sides, said sides merging toward the face of the adjacent target, each target provided with zone walls for receiving a ball driven into said target faces, and runways leading from each of said zones and connected with separate pockets for indicating the respective score.

3. A golf apparatus and target comprising a tee, a target member adapted to receive a ball driven from said tee, said target member comprising an inclined surface, and providing a closure for said apparatus when said member is in vertical position.

4. A golf apparatus and target comprising a tee, a target member adapted to receive a ball driven from said tee, said target member comprising an inclined surface provided with means for deadening the impact of said ball so as to shorten the rebound, and said member, when in vertical position, providing a closure for said apparatus.

5. A golf apparatus and target comprising a tee, a target adapted to receive a ball driven from said tee, said target comprising a series of target faces provided with zone walls for receiving the ball driven into said zone faces, said target faces providing an unobstructed central passage leading to a central target, and means for indicating the target face against which the ball is impinged.

6. In a golf apparatus, a target member, means for adjusting the inclination of said member, said member providing a target surface and when in vertical position providing a closure for such golf apparatus.

7. A golf apparatus and target, comprising a plurality of graduated target faces having inclined sides, said sides merging toward the face of the adjacent target, each target provided with zone walls for receiving a ball driven into said target faces, a central unobstructed passage leading to a central target, and runways leading from each of said zones and connected with separate targets for indicating the respective scores.

In witness whereof, I hereunto subscribe my name to this specification.

CHARLES A. BICKFORD.