# United States Patent

**Taylor**

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[45] **Sept. 12, 1972**


## [54] PUTTING PRACTICE DEVICE


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[21] Appl. No.: **184,360**

[52] **U.S. Cl.**.....**273/176 G,** 273/180, 273/179

[51] **Int. Cl.**.....**A63b 67/02,** A63b 57/00

[58] **Field of Search**.....273/176, 179, 180, 181, 182



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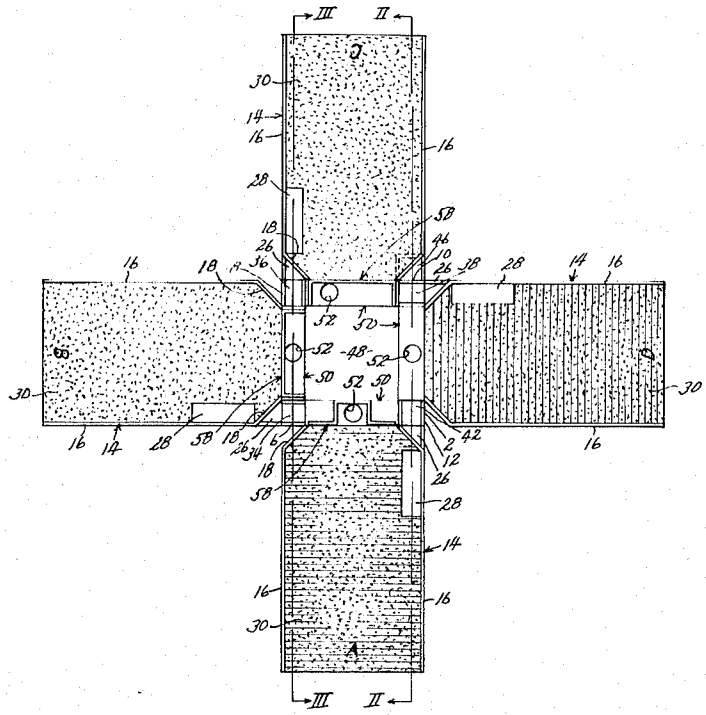
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A putting practice device consisting of a square box adapted to rest on a floor, four ramps inclined upwardly from the floor respectively to the four upper edges of the box, and up which a golf ball is to be putted in sequence, a target plate overlying the box at the upper end of each ramp, and having an aperture therein providing a target hole through which the ball must fall, hazards guarding the holes, passageways in the box beneath each of the target plates and each operable to convey a ball to the successive ramp, except beneath the fourth plate which delivers the ball to a special container indicating completion of the course, and a central trap in the box adapted to receive a ball passing over any of said target plates without passing through the hole thereof, and operable to return any such ball to the first ramp of the series. The ramps, target plates and hazards are detachable and interchangeable to vary the putting conditions.


**10 Claims, 20 Drawing Figures**



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SHEET 1 OF 3

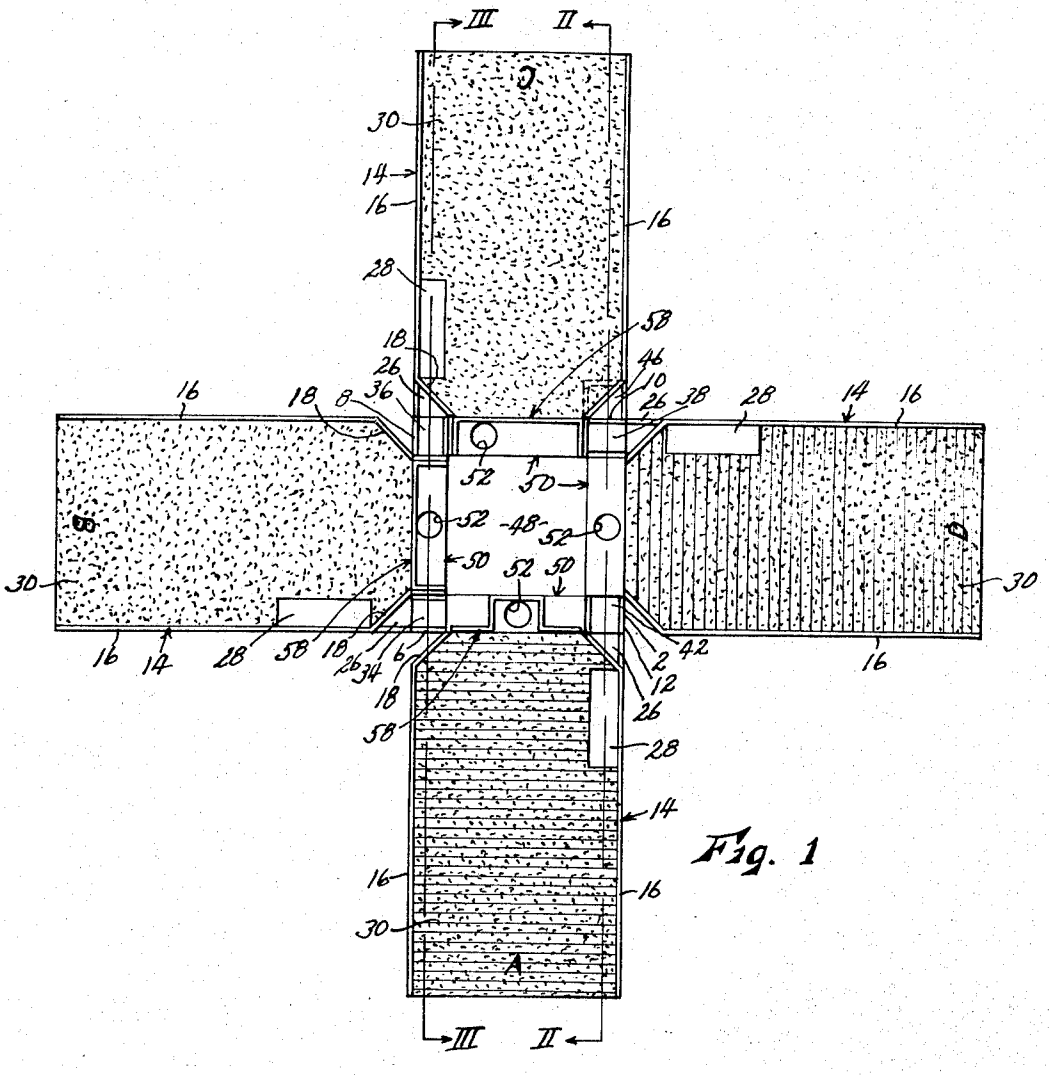



Fig. 1

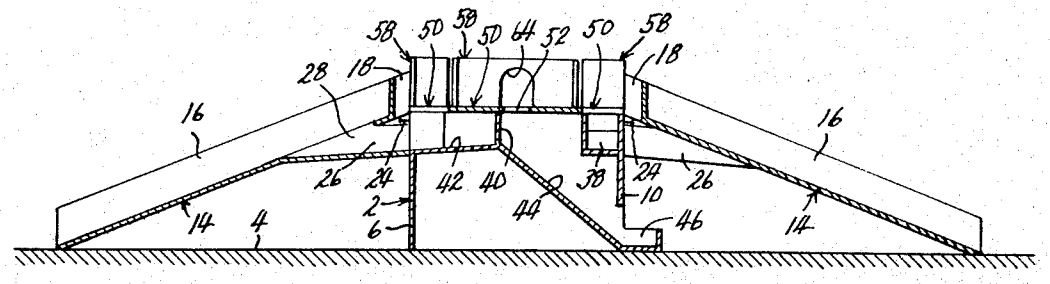



Fig. 2

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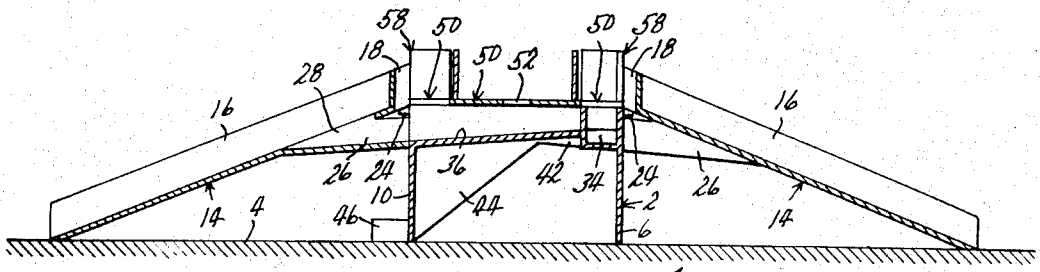



Fig. 3

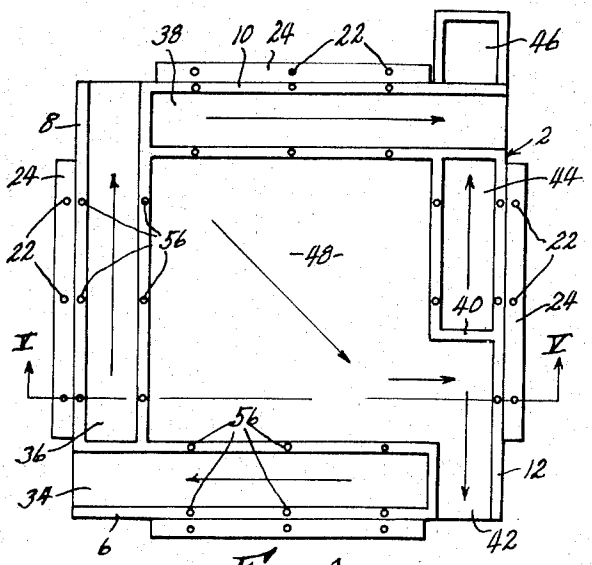



Fig. 4

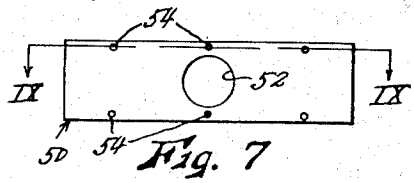



Fig. 7

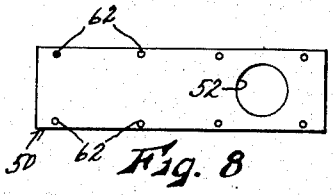



Fig. 8

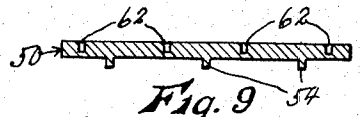



Fig. 9

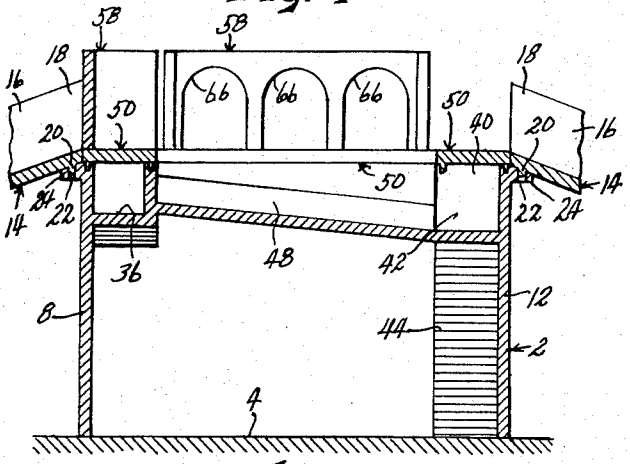



Fig. 5

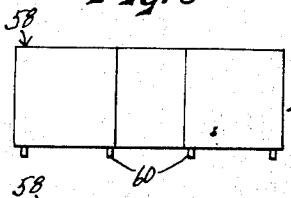



Fig. 10

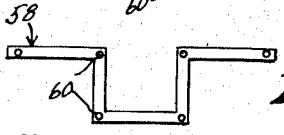



Fig. 11

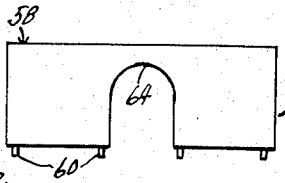



Fig. 12

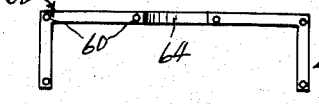



Fig. 13

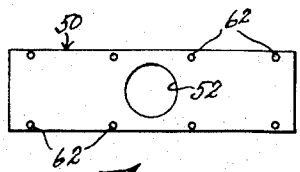



Fig. 6

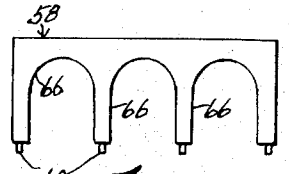



Fig. 14

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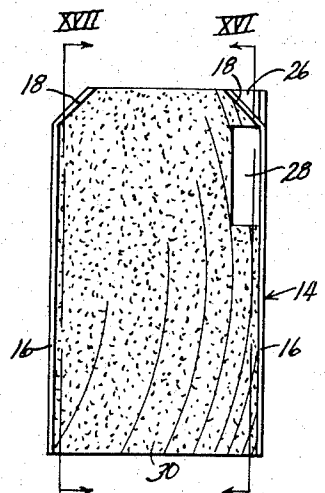



Fig. 15

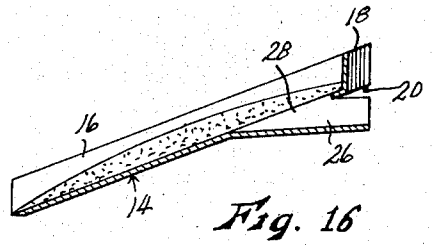



Fig. 16

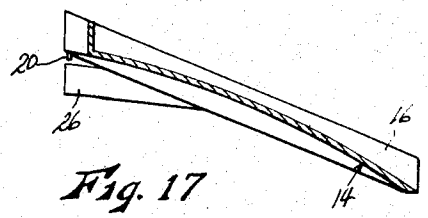



Fig. 17

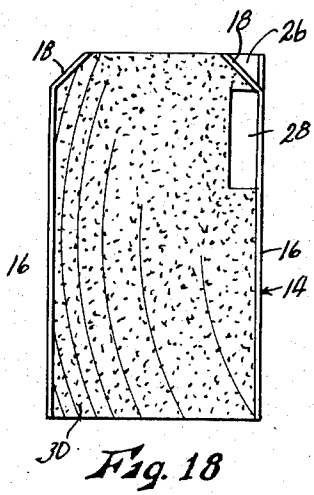



Fig. 18

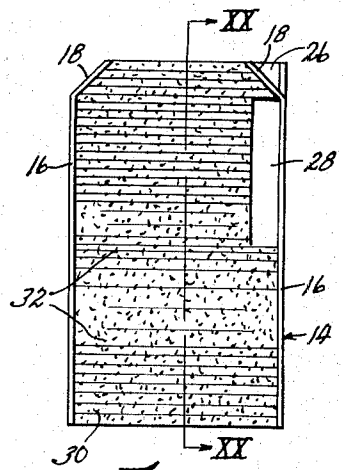



Fig. 19

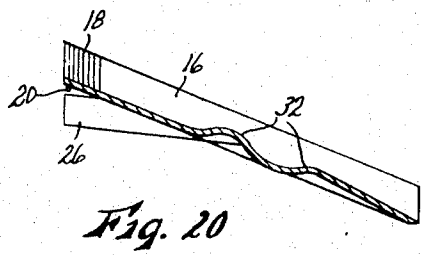



Fig. 20

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# PUTTING PRACTICE DEVICE

This invention relates to new and useful improvements in devices for practicing and improving the user's skill in the game of golf, specifically the putting phase of golf.

The principal object of the present invention is the provision of a putting practice device which is quite effective in developing the skill of the user to a high degree, and which in itself constitutes an absorbing game offering interesting competitive possibilities when a number of players are involved.

To this end, the device consists of an open-topped square box adapted to rest on a floor surface, four ramps sloping upwardly from the floor to the respective four upper edges of the box, and up which a golf ball must be putted in sequence, a horizontal target plate overlying said box at the edge portion thereof adjoining the upper edge of each of said ramps, and having a hole formed therein through which the ball putted up that ramp must fall, hazard obstructions protecting the holes, the box forming passageways beneath each of the four holes, the passageways beneath each of the first three holes conveying the ball to the next successive ramp, and the passageway beneath the fourth hole conveying the ball to a special receptacle to indicate successful completion of the course. The central portion of the box, surrounded by the target plates, constitutes a trap into which the ball will fall if it passes over any one of the target plates without falling through the hole thereof, and conveys the ball back to the first ramp, indicating that the player must recommence the game at the first hole.

Another object is the provision of a putting practice device of the character described which offers a wide variety in possible variations as to the "lie" of each hole, and in degrees of difficulty. To this end, the ramps are interchangeable, and may be contoured to represent lateral slope or other irregularities of ground surface, the target plates are interchangeable, and may be varied to change the relationship of the holes thereof to the associated ramps, and the hazard obstructions may be of different configurations to change the difficulty of approach to each hole.

Other objects are simplicity and economy of construction, and ease and convenience of setting up the apparatus.

With these objects in view, as well as other objects which will appear in the course of the specification, reference will be had to the accompanying drawing, wherein:

FIG. **1** is a top plan view of a putting practice device embodying the present invention,

FIG. **2** is a sectional view taken on line II—II of FIG. **1**,

FIG. **3** is a sectional view taken on line III—III of FIG. **1**,

FIG. **4** is an enlarged top plan view of the central box element of the device, with the ramps, target plates, and hazard obstructions omitted,

FIG. **5** is a fragmentary sectional view taken on line V—V of FIG. **4**, with ramps, target plates, and hazard obstructions included,

FIG. **6** is a top plan view of one form of target plate,

FIG. **7** is a bottom plan view of the target plate shown in FIG. **6**,

FIG. **8** is a top plan view of another form of target plate,



FIG. **9** is a sectional view taken on line IX—IX of FIG. **7**,

FIG. **10** is a front elevational view of one form of hazard obstruction,

FIG. **11** is a bottom view of the hazard obstruction shown in FIG. **10**,

FIG. **12** is a front elevational view of another form of hazard obstruction,

FIG. **13** is a bottom view of the hazard obstruction shown in FIG. **12**,

FIG. **14** is a front elevational view of still another form of hazard obstruction,

FIG. **15** is top plan view of one of the ramps, showing a modification of structure,

FIG. **16** is a sectional view taken on line XVI—XVI of FIG. **15**,

FIG. **17** is a sectional view taken on line XVII—XVII of FIG. **15**,

FIG. **18** is a view similar to FIG. **15**, showing another modification of structure,

FIG. **19** is a view similar to FIG. **15**, showing still another modification of structure, and

FIG. **20** is a sectional view taken on line XX—XX of FIG. **19**.

Life reference characters refer to similar parts throughout the several views, and the numeral **2** applies generally to the central body member of the device having the form of a horizontally square, rectilinear box adapted to rest on a floor **4** or other horizontal surface, and formed of wood, plastic, or other suitable material. Said box has vertical side walls **6**, **8**, **10**, and **12**, moving in a clockwise direction as viewed in FIGS. **1** and **4**, and is hollow except for interior partition walls forming certain passageways therein, as will appear.

Also included are four inclined ramps each indicated generally by the numeral **14**, and sloping upwardly from floor **4** respectively to the upper edges of side walls **6**, **8**, **10**, and **12**. In FIG. **1**, these ramps are also indicated respectively by the letters A, B, C, and D, as golf balls must be putted successively up these ramps in that order in the intended conduct of the game. Each ramp is provided with elevated side walls **16**. While the ramps may be of any desired width, and are illustrated as of the same width as box **2**, their upper ends must be somewhat narrower than the box width, and the upper end portions of side walls **16** of each ramp are disposed in upwardly converging relation, as indicated at **18**, for this purpose. Each ramp is releasably secured to box **2** by depending pegs **20** secured to the lower surface of the upper edge thereof, said pegs being releasably inserted in holes **22** provided therefor in an outwardly extending lip **24** integral with the upper edge of the associated box side wall (see FIGS. **4** and **5**). Each ramp is also provided with a trough **26** affixed thereto, said trough sloping downwardly in the same direction as the ramp, but at a lesser degree. Said trough opens at its outer end through an opening **28** formed in the floor of the ramp, at the side and adjacent the top of said ramp, and its inner end extends flush with, but is not attached to, the associated box side wall, just beneath the ramp and at one side of the box. If desired, the floor of each ramp may be covered with felt as indicated at **30**, or otherwise coated or roughened, to prevent sliding or skidding of golf balls thereon.

The floor of each ramp **14** may be planar, as indicated in FIGS. **1–3**, but a requirement for greater skill

may be introduced by the use of specially configurated ramps such as shown in FIGS. **15–20**. FIGS. **15–17** show a ramp which is the same in all respects as above described, except that the floor thereof is upwardly bowed so as to slope downwardly to the right, so that a golf ball moving upwardly therealong will break to the right. FIG. **18** shows a ramp similar to that of FIGS. **15–17** except that the floor thereof slopes downwardly to the left, to produce a left-breaking ball. FIGS. **19–20** show a ramp the floor of which is planar except for transverse undulations **32** formed therein. This may be termed a "double-roll" ramp, producing successively opposite left and right breaking of the golf ball, depending on the lateral angle at which the ball engages the undulations.

The top portion of the interior of box **2** is partitioned by interior walls to form a series of upwardly opening side passageways or chutes disposed just inside and parallel to the side walls of the box, each wide and deep enough to receive a golf ball, and a central, upwardly opening trap. Referring principally to FIG. **4**, it will be seen that there is a side chute **34** just inside and parallel to box side wall **6**, said chute sloping downwardly toward side wall **8** and opening through side wall **8** to communicate with trough **26** of ramp B. Similarly, a chute **36** adjacent side wall **8** slopes downwardly toward and opens through side wall **10** to communicate with trough **26** of ramp C, and a chute **38** adjacent side wall **10** slopes downwardly toward and opens through side wall **12** to communicate with trough **26** of ramp D. The chute adjacent side wall **12** is divided transversely intermediate its ends by a partition wall **40** to form two chutes **42** and **44**, chute **42** sloping downwardly toward and opening through side wall **6** to communicate with trough **26** of ramp A, and chute **44** sloping downwardly toward side wall **10**, passing beneath chute **38**, and opening through side wall **10** to communicate with an upwardly opening receptacle **46** affixed to the exterior surface of said side wall. The central area of the top of box **2**, defined on three sides by chutes **34**, **36**, and **38**, and on its fourth side by chutes **40** and **42**, constitutes a depressed well or trap **48**, which is inclined downwardly toward and communicates with the inner end of chute **42**. The directions of downward slope of the floors of the various chutes, and of trap **48**, are indicted by arrows in FIG. **4**.

The tops of chutes **34**, **36**, **38**, **42**, and **44**, at least those portions thereof aligned with the narrowed upper exits of the various ramps, are each covered by a horizontal, planar target plate **50** having a hole **52** formed therethrough large enough to pass a golf ball therethrough into the associated chute. Each target plate is provided on its lower surface with pegs **54** which are releasably insertable into sockets **56** formed therefor in the upper edges of the box side walls, and in the upper edges of the partition walls defining the various chutes. The outer edge of each target plate is smoothly flush with the floor of the associated ramp. The hole **52** of the target plate may be disposed centrally of the length thereof, as shown in FIGS. **6** and **7**, or adjacent one end thereof, as shown in FIG. **8**. The species of FIG. **8** may be reversed end-for-end, to dispose hole **52** adjacent the opposite end, and the plates are all freely interchangeable. Thus, with the proper combination of target plates as shown respectively in FIGS. **7** and **8**, the target hole **52** associated with each of the ramps may be disposed either centrally, or to the left or right, relative to the width of the ramp. However, as will appear, the target hole **52** associated with ramp D must be disposed over chute **44**, not chute **42**.

Finally, each target plate **50** may have a hazard obstruction **58** mounted thereon. Said hazards may be of various configurations, but each constitutes a vertical wall having affixed in its lower edge a series of pegs **60** releasably engageable in sockets **62** formed therefor in the top surface of the target plate. The hazard which is illustrated in connection with ramp A is shown in FIGS. **10** and **11**, and constitutes a continuous wall, disposed at the outer edge of the associated target plate except that the central portion thereof aligned with hole **52** of that target plate is offset inwardly, whereby to provide access for a golf ball to that hole. While as illustrated the target hole of ramp A is centrally located, this type of hazard could also be provided for left or right holes. The hazard illustrated in connection with ramp B is shown in FIGS. **12** and **13**, and constitutes a continuous wall disposed at the outer edge of the associated target plate, said wall having a gate aperture **64** formed therein and aligned with hole **52** of the associated target plate. This type of hazard may also be provided for left and right holes. The hazard shown in FIG. **14** and illustrated in connection with ramp C, is the same as that shown in FIGS. **12** and **13**, except that instead of a single gate aperture, it is provided with three gate apertures **66**, these apertures being aligned respectively with the left, center, and right positions of hole **52**. The target plate associated with ramp D is illustrated as having no hazard obstruction **58** at all applied thereto, although as will appear this may be the most difficult situation of all. The hazard obstructions are of course freely interchangeable.

In the use of the device, the player first putts a golf ball from floor **4** upwardly along ramp A, aiming for hole **52** of the target plate associated with that ramp. If the ball enters the hole, it falls into chute **34** and is delivered thereby to trough **26** of ramp B and rolls down said ramp to floor **4** to a position from which it may be putted upwardly along ramp B, indicating that the player is entitled to play ramp B. When he is successful in putting the ball up ramp B into hole **52** associated therewith, the ball falls into chute **36** and is thereby delivered to ramp C, and so on through ramps C and D. When the ball enters hole **52** associated with ramp D, it falls into chute **44** and is delivered thereby to receptacle **46**, indicating successful completion of the course. However, if the ball does not enter any one of the holes **52** as desired, but passes inwardly over the associated target plate, assuming that the hazard **58** associated with that target plate permits it to do so, it falls into central trap **48** and is delivered thereby back to ramp A, indicating that the player must recommence the entire course at ramp A, of course totalling all of his strokes regardless of the number of times he must recommence, to determine his score. In competitive play, where a plurality of players complete the course, the lowest score of course determines the winner.

Although it is of course a matter of choice, the hazards **58**, or lack of them, are believed to be arranged in order of ascending difficulty from ramp A to ramp D.

That is, the hazard used in connection with ramp A, and shown in FIGS. **10** and **11**, is recessed only above the associated hole **52**, so that any ball entering the recess should fall into the hole, unless it is stroked with such excessive force that it rebounds from the recessed hazard wall and rolls back down the ramp. Also, the ball will rebound from any other portion of the hazard wall. However, no ball from ramp A can enter trap **48**, although this would be rather pointless anyway since the penalty for entering the trap is to return to ramp A, and the player is already playing that ramp. The hazard used in connection with ramp B, and shown in FIGS. **12** and **13**, presents all of the difficulties at ramp A, plus the additional difficulty that said hazard is apertured at **64** so that there is always the possibility that the ball, if stroked with only slightly too great a force, will pass over the target plate without entering hole **52** thereof, and into trap **48**. The ball still may, however, rebound from any unapertured portion of the hazard wall, and the trap penalty thereby avoided. The angle between the inclined ramp and horizontal target plate, at all of the holes, presents an additional difficulty, in that the ball, if overstroked, may arch or "fly" over the target plate. The result of "understroking" the ball, at any of the holes, is of course that the ball does not attain the top of the ramp. The hazard **58** of ramp C presents all of the difficulties of the ramp B hazard, plus which, having three apertures **66**, it offers additional avenues that the ball can follow to trap **48** without entering hole **52**. However, the ball may still rebound from the portions of the hazard wall between the apertures, and the trap penalty avoided. Ramp D is shown as having no hazard obstruction **58** at all, and this is probably the most difficult situation of all, since the ball must be stroked with just the correct force, and in a precisely correct direction, to prevent any ball moving up this ramp from either entering trap **48**, or rolling back down the ramp due to understroking.

Thus it will be apparent that a putting practice device, or game has been produced which has substantial advantages. It faithfully reproduces many of the varying conditions and hazards encountered in the actual game of golf, in a manner which is both entertaining, and also offers fine possibilities as a competitive game. Also, since ramps **14**, target plates **50**, and hazard obstructions **58**, in the various types shown, are all freely removable and interchangeable, the device offers almost endless variation as to the conditions and degrees of difficulty related to the successive "holes" so that any sense of overfamiliarity, routine or boredom may easily be avoided. Moreover, the variations of these elements actually shown are only samples or examples of possible variations, and could be greatly expanded if desired.

While I have shown and described a specific embodiment of my invention, it will be readily apparent that many minor changes of structure and operation could be made without departing from the spirit of the invention.

What I claim as new and desire to protect by Letters Patent is:

**1**. A putting practice device comprising:

a. a box-like body member adapted to be rested on a horizontal surface with it horizontal upper edge spaced above said surface,

b. a series of inclined ramps sloping upwardly from said surface to the upper edge of said body member, and attached at their upper ends to said body member, and up which a golf ball may be putted successively,

c. a generally horizontal target plate overlying and attached to said body member at the top of each of said ramps, and having a hole formed therein through which a golf ball putted up the associated ramp may fall, and

d. internal partition walls in said body member forming inclined chutes beneath each of said target plates except that associated with the last of said series, each of said chutes being operable to deliver a golf ball falling through the hole of the associated target plate by gravity to the next successive ramp of said series.

**2**. A device as recited in claim **1** wherein each of chutes is operable to delivery a golf ball to the inclined upper surface of said next successive ramp, whereby said ball rolls downwardly on said ramp to a position for play with respect thereto.

**3**. A device as recited in claim **1** with the addition of partition walls in said body member forming an inclined chute beneath the target plate associated with the last ramp of said series, said last named chute being operable by gravity to convey a golf ball falling therein to a receptacle carried by said body member exteriorly thereof.

**4**. A device as recited in claim **1** in which said target plates do not cover the entire top area of said body member, the uncovered top area thereof forming a depressed trap well bounded by said target plates, and into which a golf ball passing over any of said target plates without entering the hole thereof will fall, and with the addition of partition walls in said body member forming an inclined floor for said well, and an inclined chute communicating at its upper end with the lowermost portion of said well and operable to deliver a golf ball by gravity from said well to the first of said series of ramps.

**5**. A device as recited in claim **4** wherein said last named chute is operable to deliver a golf ball to the upper surface of the first ramp of said series, whereby said ball rolls downwardly on said first ramp to a position for play with respect thereto.

**6**. A device as recited in claim **1** with the addition of hazard obstructions mounted on certain of said target plates, each of said obstructions constituting a vertical wall permitting access of a golf ball travelling upwardly over the associated ramp to the hole of said target plate, but at least partially obstructing the passage of said ball over all other portions of said target plate.

**7**. A device as recited in claim **6** wherein said hazard obstructions associated with said target plates are each detachably connected to the associated target plate and are interchangeable, and wherein the walls constituting the respective obstructions are of different configurations.

**8**. A device as recited in claim **7** wherein said ramps and target plates are detachably connected to said body member and are interchangeable, said ramps having different surface configurations affecting the rolling course of a golf ball thereon, and the holes of said target plates being disposed at different positions relative to the transverse widths of the associated ramps.

9. A device as recited in claim 1 wherein said ramps are detachably connected to said body member, and wherein said ramps are formed with respectively different surface irregularities affecting the course of a golf ball rolling thereover.

10. A device as recited in claim 1 wherein said target plates are detachably connected to said body member and are interchangeable, and wherein the holes of said target plates are disposed at different positions with respect to the transverse widths of the associated ramps.

* * * * *