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(54) **Improved tee for golf balls**

(57) In order to be driven into the ground in a fixed way to allow the player to make several shots during training or teaching, the invention consists of a rigid lower portion (1) to be driven into the ground and an elastic upper portion (2) movable with respect to the former portion and projecting from the surface of ground to provide an effective support (3) for the golf ball (4).

The elastic upper movable portion (2) consists of a tubular member coaxially connected to rigid lower portion (1), and the outside surface of rigid lower portion (1) to be buried is provided with a screw thread (8) allowing the tee to bore the ground by rotating it by a suitable fastening tool or key (5) capable of being inserted through the tubular portion (2) to rotate the tee.

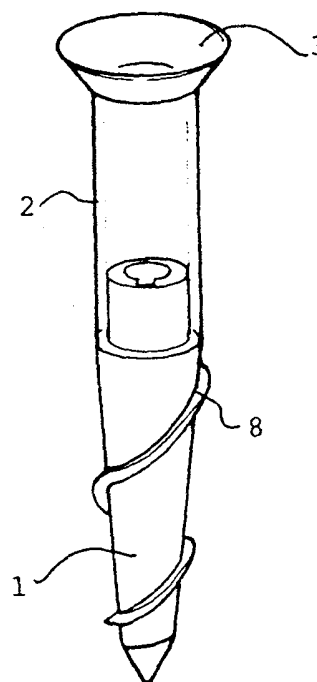


FIG. 5

Description

[0001] The present invention relates to the play of golf and more particularly a tee for golf balls to be driven in the ground and used during training.

[0002] It is known that during training and/or teaching in golf courses both ball and ground holder, so-called tee, fly away upon teeing off. It is self-evident that this entails for the player to go in search of the tee flown away after each shot and to bend in order to drive the tee in the ground and to lay down the ball thereon. The tee gets often lost and has to be replaced with a new one.

[0003] A first object of the present invention is to provide a tee of new design, especially for training, which is capable of being driven in the ground easily and fixedly so that more shots are allowed and also capable of being taken out of the ground easily and quickly.

[0004] A second object of the invention is to provide a tee which is fixedly driven in the ground so that the ball can be easily laid thereon by the player without the need for the latter to bend but just use the club and do his best by a foot.

[0005] A better understanding of the invention will result from the following detailed description with reference to the accompanying drawings that show some preferred embodiments thereof only by way of a not limiting example.

In the drawings:

Figure 1 shows a first embodiment of the invention during use;

Figure 2 shows the invention of Fig. 1 being driven in/taken out of ground;

Figures 3 and 4 show how the hole for the tee is made into the ground and the relative equipment;

Figure 5 is a second embodiment of the invention;

Figure 6 is a detail of the second embodiment of Fig. 5;

Figure 7 is an axial section of a detail of the embodiment of Fig. 5;

Figure 8 is a detail of a third embodiment of the invention;

Figure 9 is a detail of a fourth embodiment of the invention; and

Figure 10 is a partially sectioned view showing an example of the fastening between the elastic upper portion of the invention and the rigid lower portion.

[0006] The device according to the present invention

shown in Figure 1 consists essentially of an elongated body comprising a lower rigid portion 1 to be driven in the ground, and an elastic upper portion 2 which can be deformed and is able to project from the surface of the ground to provide an effective support 3 for golf ball 4.

[0007] In a first embodiment shown in Figures 1 and 2 the elastic upper portion 2 consists of a preferably transparent tubular member coaxially connected to the rigid lower portion which has a slightly pointed shape to facilitate the penetration into the ground.

[0008] In order to facilitate the penetration of tee into the ground, such first embodiment has a fastening tool or key 5 to be coaxially screwed onto the rigid lower portion 1 by inserting the same through the elastic tubular portion 2.

[0009] Such fastening tool 5 which is provided with a hand-grip 6 and serves to drive in/take out the tee from the ground can be easily assembled to/disassembled from the tee according to the invention because of its lower end screw thread 5A capable of engaging to a corresponding screw thread 5B in the upper portion of rigid member 1 inside the elastic portion 2.

[0010] Referring in particular to Figures 3 and 4, the penetration of the tee is facilitated by making a suitable hole into the ground in the desired position. To this end fastening key 5 is used as a punch after having temporarily screwed a removable point 7 that bores the ground to its lower end.

[0011] A second embodiment of the invention shown in Figures 5, 6 and 7 can be more easily used because it does not require any preliminary hole in the ground. In this case, the outside surface of rigid lower portion 1 to be buried is provided with a screw thread 8 that allows the tee to be screwed into the ground by turning it by means of fastening tool 5.

[0012] In such second embodiment the cylindrical lower end of fastening tool 5 provided with a radial projection 9 is inserted into a corresponding upper axial hole formed in rigid portion 1, such radial projection being able to engage into an inverted T-shaped groove formed in such upper axial hole to transmit the rotation movement of screwing or unscrewing.

[0013] Therefore, the tee can be fastened in a particular easy fashion: fastening tool 5 is inserted into its housing so that the tee is screwed into or unscrewed from the ground after an initial partial idling rotation.

[0014] Figures 8 and 9 show, by way of example, two possible alternatives of the coupling between fastening tool or key 5 and tee which are particularly suitable for the second "screwing" embodiment.

[0015] As can be seen from Figure 8, the coupling provides a flat or cross screwdriver, while Figure 9 shows a coupling providing a socket head screw which can be square, as shown, or hexagonal, triangular, etc.

[0016] Finally, Figure 10 shows as Figure 9 an example of the fastening of elastic upper portion 2 to rigid lower portion 1 forming the tee according to the present invention. In this case, the fastening is carried out by a

small radial screw V blocking the lower end of tubular member 2 to the upper end of rigid member 1 to be driven into the ground.

[0017] Of course, many other type of fastening may be used according to the invention and can be of the fixed or removable type so that elastic tubular portion 2 subject to deterioration because of the hits struck out by the club at each shot can be replaced.

[0018] At last, as shown in the Figures, it is preferred that rigid lower portion 1 of the tee is conical to facilitate the penetration of ground.

[0019] The present invention has been described and illustrated according to preferred embodiments thereof, however, it should be understood that further variations may be made without departing from the scope of the invention described so far.

[0020] For example, a possible variation could relate to the elastic upper portion 2 that could be made of a rigid material instead of an elastic material and bound resiliently to lower portion 1 by elastic means of the known type such as an helical spring or other similar elastic member.

[0021] A further variation could consists of providing an elastic division or partition which can be deformed within elastic upper portion 2 in order to prevent foreign bodies from entering accidentally such as soil, sand, pebbles, etc. which could prevent tool or key 5 from being inserted into its housing. Only by way of example, such division or partition could be shaped like a thin disc arranged crosswise to elastic tubular upper portion 2 and provided with two central notches arranged like a cross which open upon inserting tool or key 5 and close immediately after such key is drawn from the tee.

Claims

1. An improved tee or ground holder for golf balls to be used during training or teaching, characterized in that in order to be driven into the ground in a fixed way to allow the player to make several shots, it consists of a rigid lower portion (1) to be driven into the ground and an elastic upper portion (2) movable with respect to the former portion and projecting from the surface of ground to provide an effective support (3) for the golf ball (4).
2. The improved tee according to claim 1, characterized in that the elastic upper movable portion (2) consists of a tubular member coaxially connected to rigid lower portion (1), and the outside surface of rigid lower portion (1) to be buried is provided with a screw thread (8) allowing the tee to bore the ground by rotating it by a suitable fastening tool or key (5) capable of being inserted through the tubular portion (2) to rotate the tee.
3. The improved tee according to the preceding claim,

characterized in that the cylindrical lower end of fastening tool (5) is inserted into a corresponding upper axial hole formed in rigid portion (1) and is provided with a radial projection (9) able to engage into a corresponding, inverted T-shaped groove formed in such upper axial hole to transmit the rotation movement of screwing or unscrewing.

4. The improved tee according to the preceding claim, characterized in that as an alternative to the coupling between fastening tool or key (5) and tee by radial projection (9) there is provided a coupling of the screw-screwdriver type or socket head screw type with square, hexagonal, triangular, etc. section.
5. The improved tee according to claim 1, characterized in that the elastic upper movable portion (2) consists of a tubular member coaxially connected to rigid lower portion (1), and a fastening tool or key (5) capable of being screwed coaxially to the rigid lower portion (1) by passing it through the tubular portion (2) is provided to facilitate the penetration of the tee into the ground.
6. The improved tee according to the preceding claim, characterized in that such fastening tool (5) which is provided with a hand-grip (6) and serves to drive in/take out the tee from the ground can be easily assembled to/disassembled from the tee because of its lower end screw thread (5A) capable of engaging to a corresponding screw thread (5B) in the upper portion of rigid member (1) inside the elastic portion (2).
7. The improved tee according to the preceding claim, characterized in that the penetration of the tee is facilitated by making a suitable hole into the ground in the desired position so that fastening key (5) can be used as a punch after having temporarily screwed a removable point (7) that bores the ground to its lower end.
8. The improved tee according to the preceding claims, characterized in that elastic movable upper portion (2) is fastened to rigid lower portion (1) by a small radial screw (V) blocking the lower end of tubular member (2) to the upper end of rigid member (1) to be driven into the ground.
9. The improved tee according to the preceding claims, characterized in that rigid lower portion (1) of the tee is conical to facilitate the penetration of ground.
10. The improved tee according to the preceding claims, characterized in that an elastic division or partition which can be deformed is provided within

elastic upper portion (2) in order to prevent foreign bodies from entering accidentally such as soil, sand, pebbles, etc. which could prevent fastening tool or key (5) from being inserted into its housing.

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11. The improved tee according to the preceding claim, characterized in that said division or partition is shaped like a thin disc arranged crosswise to elastic tubular upper portion (2) and provided with two central notches arranged like a cross which open upon inserting tool or key (5) and close immediately after such key is drawn from the tee.

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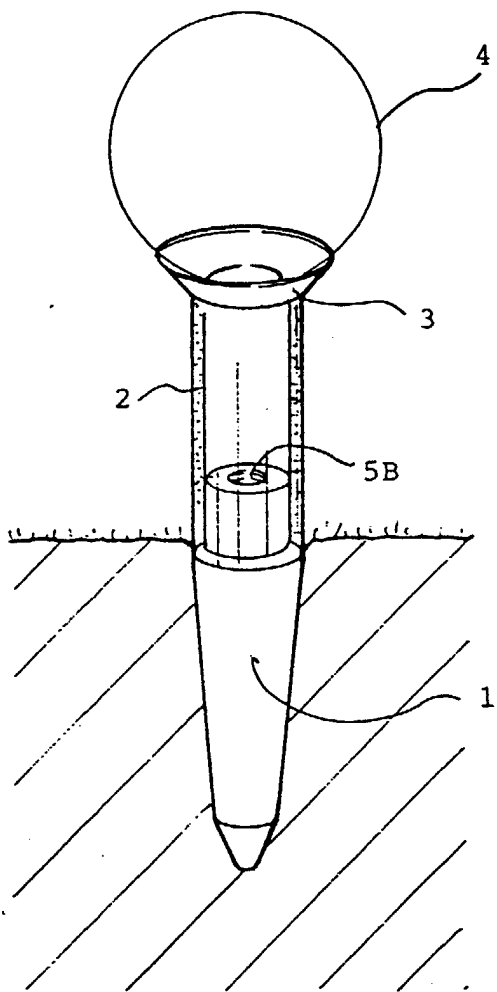


FIG. 1

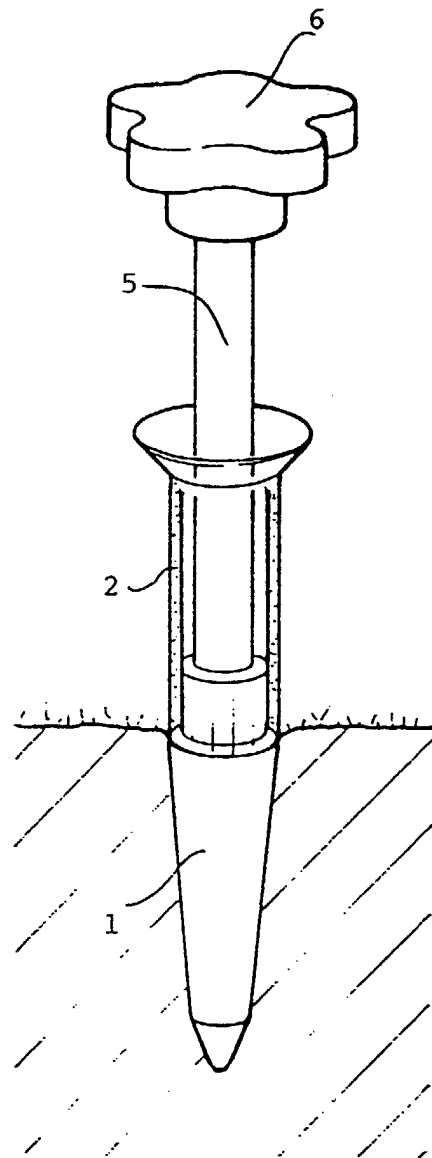


FIG. 2

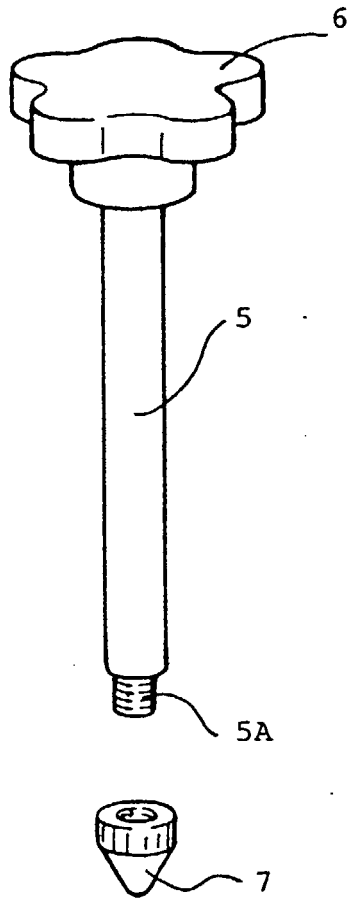


FIG. 3

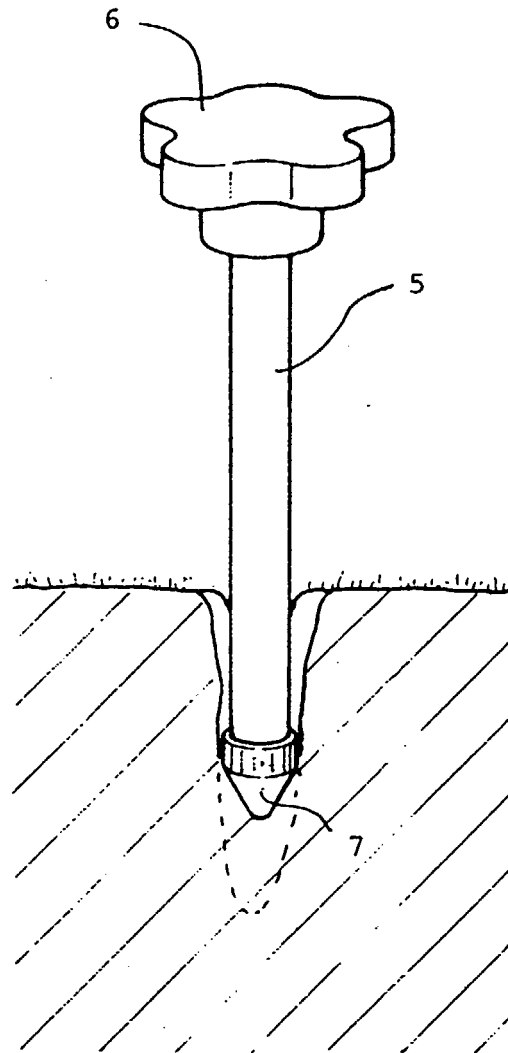


FIG. 4

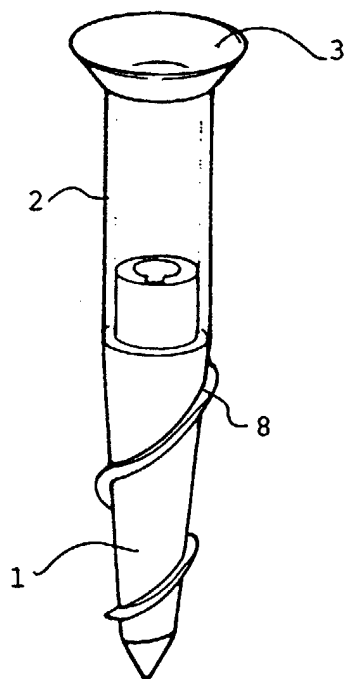


FIG. 5

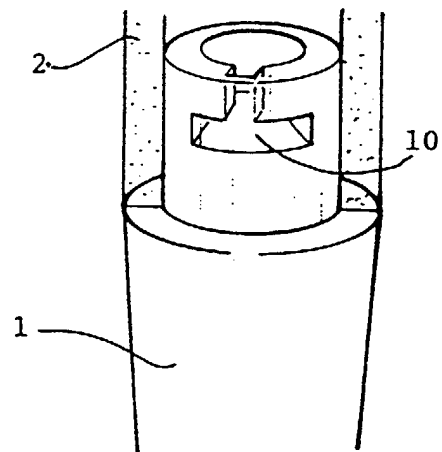
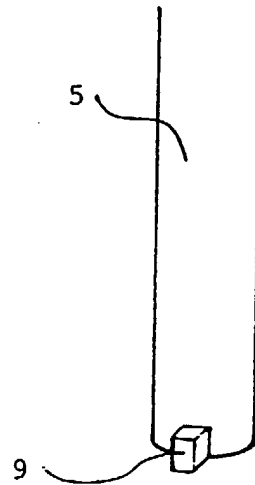


FIG. 6

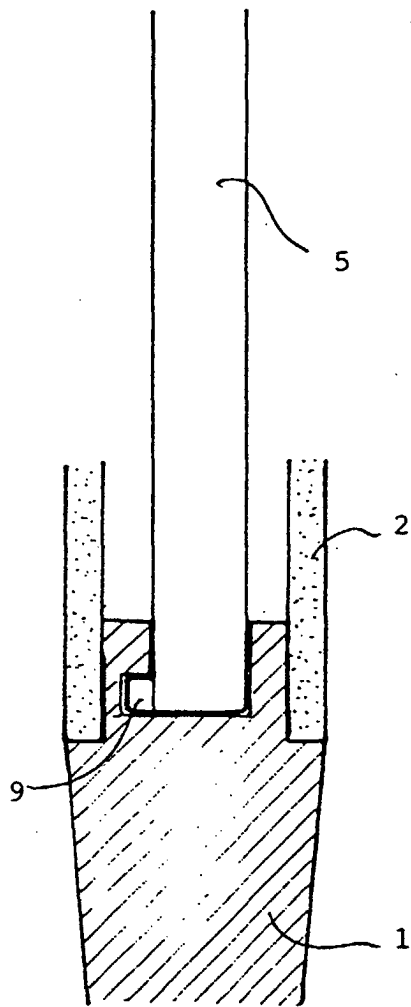


FIG. 7

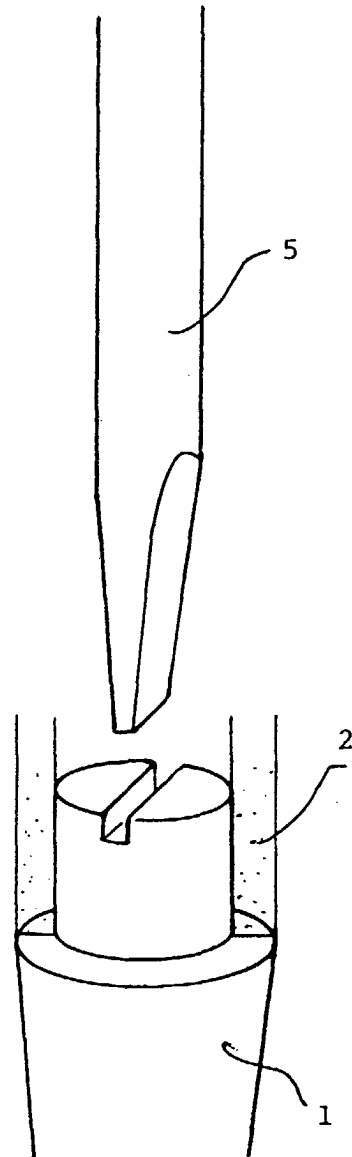


FIG. 8

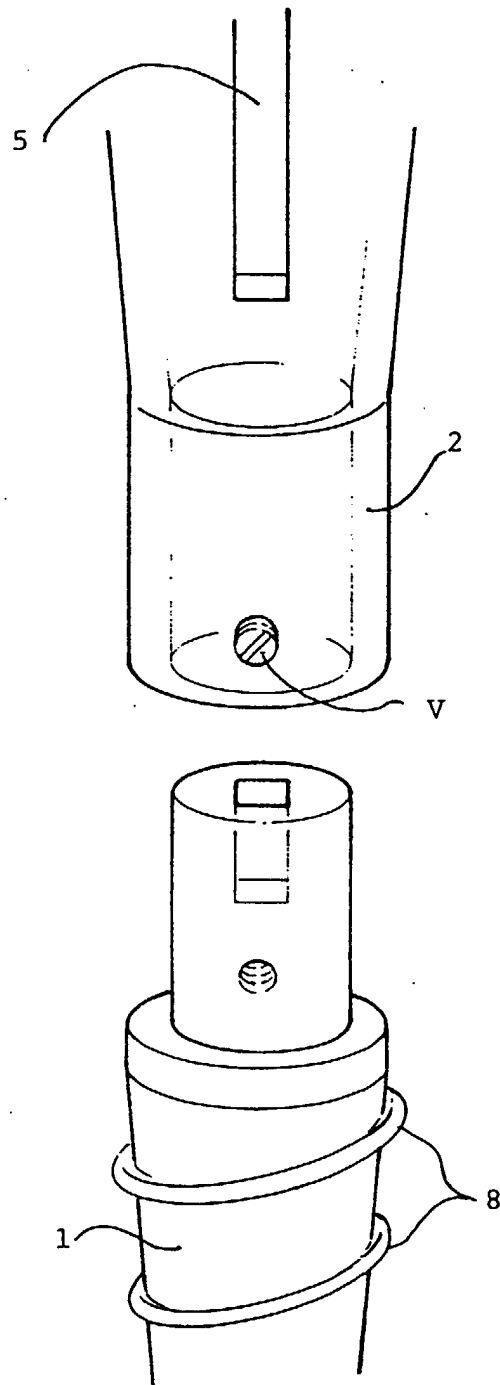


FIG. 9

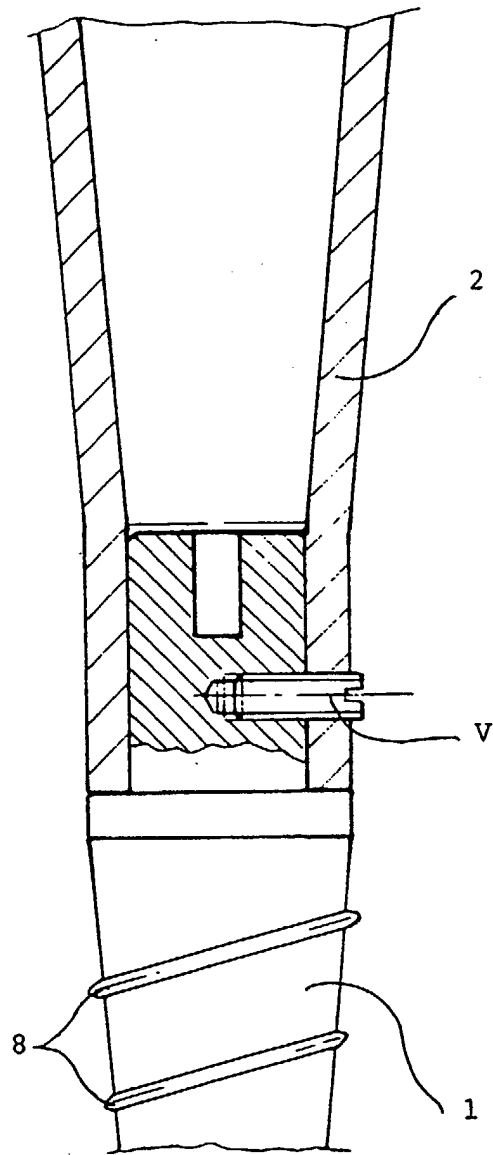


FIG. 10