

REPLACED SHEETS		SG
☐ Description	: paged	to paged
☐ Claim(s)	: paged	to paged
☒ Drawing(s)	: paged 114	to paged 114
☒ Abstract	: paged 13	to paged

Title: GOLF CLUB HOLDER

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to an apparatus for holding golf clubs.

BACKGROUND ART

As is well known in the art, a set of golf clubs incorporates a series of clubs of varying head angle. The clubs are correspondingly numbered in order of increasing head angle for easy identification. The steeper the head angle, generally speaking the more lift is imparted to the ball. Broadly speaking, however, the distance covered is correspondingly reduced. As such, selection of the appropriate club to play each shot is a key element of the game.

Golf clubs are generally carried in a tubular golf bag, usually attached to a golf buggy or

carried manually by means of a shoulder strap attached to the bag.

However, golf clubs carried in this way tend to become jumbled within the bag, making club selection both difficult and time consuming. Damage can also occur to both the shafts and the heads of the clubs, as they bump and rub together as the bag is carried and as clubs are removed and replaced progressively during the game. This can damage or adversely affect the performance of the clubs.

In an attempt to overcome these problems some golf bags are provided with several partitions, generally near the top of the bag. These partitions divide the clubs in groups, thereby reducing the extent to which they are jostled together.

However, the order of the clubs still tends to become jumbled both within and between compartments, as selected clubs are withdrawn or replaced, making selection difficult. Also, in any particular partitioned compartment the clubs are still able to impact against one another as the bag is moved.

Furthermore, the clubs are generally supported by the shaft. This results in wear on the shafts and again leaves the shafts and heads free to rattle against one another with consequential damage or wear.

In a further attempt to ameliorate these

problems, some golf bags have been provided with an individual compartment for each club. However, the clubs still tend to become disordered as a result of being replaced out of sequence in the compartments. Also, the clubs are still gripped by the shafts, which promotes wear, whilst the club heads continue to bang together, again causing damage and adversely affecting performance.

DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to overcome or ameliorate at least some of these deficiencies of the prior art.

Accordingly, the invention provides an apparatus for holding golf clubs, each club comprising a shaft terminating in an uniquely angled head having a front and a rear surface, said apparatus including a support bracket comprising an array of generally planar partitioning fins defining a corresponding array of compartments therebetween, each said fin having a substantially parallel first and second face, wherein each said first fin face locates the front surface of an adjacent club head, and each said second fin face locates the rear surface of an adjacent club head, such that in combination the fins simultaneously locate the front and rear surfaces of each said club head.

Preferably, said fins are disposed such that

said compartments are progressively graduated to accommodate club heads of progressively increasing angle.

Preferably also, each said compartment is uniquely configured to nestingly accommodate a specific club having a correspondingly angled head.

The compartments are preferably configured to accommodate a set of clubs of progressively increasing head angle in sequential order.

Each compartment is desirably configured to accept a particular club head and the club heads of the previous and next clubs in a standard golf club set.

The apparatus is also preferably adapted to hold the clubs in an inverted orientation, and further includes locating means to locate or contain the shafts of the clubs.

In one embodiment, the locating means takes the form of a golf bag. In this embodiment, the support bracket is preferably adapted to be mounted adjacent the open end of the golf bag with the shafts extending downwardly and contained within the bag.

In an alternative embodiment, however, the locating means may comprise a separate bracket, hoop, cup or other suitable formation connected with the support bracket by an intermediate frame member. In this case, it will be appreciated that a

golf bag as such would not necessarily be required.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

A preferred embodiment of the invention will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a plan view of an apparatus for holding golf clubs according to the invention;

Figure 2 is a front elevation of the apparatus shown in Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a side elevation of the apparatus of Figure 1;

Figure 4 is a front perspective view of the apparatus of Figure 1;

Figure 5 is a rear perspective view of the apparatus of Figure 1 including golf clubs;

Figure 6 is a rear elevation of the apparatus shown in Figure 1 including golf clubs; and

Figure 7 is a plan view of the apparatus shown in Figure 1 including golf clubs.

MODES FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

Referring to the drawings, the invention provides an apparatus 1 for holding golf clubs 2. The apparatus includes a support bracket 3 adapted for attachment adjacent the open end of a conventional golf bag 4. The support bracket includes an array of generally planar partitioning fins 5. These fins 5 define a corresponding array of

intermediate compartments 6 which are each uniquely adapted to contain and locate the head of a respective club, with the shaft extending downwardly into the bag.

Each club 2 has a head 7 with front and rear surfaces 8 and 9 respectively. The front surface 8 strikes the golf ball during play.

Each partitioning fin 5 has first and second substantially parallel faces 10 and 11 respectively.

Each first fin face 10 is uniquely angled so as to locate the front surface 8 of an adjacent club. Each second fin face 11 is uniquely angled to locate the rear surface 9 of an adjacent club.

In this way, two adjacent fins define compartments 6 which locate both the front and rear surfaces of the club therebetween. Due to the fin being of thin generally planar construction and being uniquely angled to closely approximate simultaneously the front surface of a first club and the rear surface of a second adjacent club, a maximum number of clubs can be located within a given golf bag width by the apparatus according to the invention.

In one particularly preferred form of the invention, as shown in the drawings, the apparatus is adapted to be retro-fitted to a conventional golf bag. This is achieved by virtue of a pair of side

legs 15 and a pivotable forward leg 16 each extending downwardly from the support bracket housing the club heads. The side legs 15 incorporate respective feet 17 adapted to engage snugly the inner periphery of the bag adjacent its upper marginal edge. The forward leg 16 incorporates an adjustable pivot shaft 18 mating with slot 19. This arrangement allows the apparatus to fit a number of golf bags and be repositioned quickly and easily to cater for variations in the angle the bag is transported, as is encountered from an upright position in a golf buggy to an inclined position over a shoulder. Also, leg 16 includes a recess 20 adapted to engage the upper edge of the bag, and thereby positively locate the apparatus over the mouth of the bag. Normally, ratchet loop fastenings are used to fix the apparatus to the bag. If desired, press studs, hook and loop fasteners, screws, rivets, or the like may also be used to secure the apparatus.

With the apparatus fitted to the golf bag in this way, a set of golf clubs can be neatly and snugly held in sequential order of progressively increasing head angle with the designated number of each club prominently displayed for easy reference. This makes club selection particularly easy, because each club has a dedicated location within the array

of partitioning elements. Moreover, because each compartment is uniquely configured to accommodate a specific club, the user cannot replace a club in the wrong compartment. This preserves the sequential order of the clubs during play.

It should be appreciated, however, that in other preferred embodiments there need not be a unique correlation between the compartments and the clubs. Thus, whilst the compartments may be progressively graduated to accommodate club heads of increasing angle, a degree of tolerance may nevertheless be provided so that each compartment may accommodate several clubs within a defined range. For example, a compartment nominally dedicated to a "3" iron may also accept a "2" or a "4" iron. Such forms of the invention may be adapted for use with an incomplete set of clubs.

It should also be noted that other forms of the invention need not be adapted specifically for retro-fitting to conventional golf bags. For example, one embodiment contemplates the use of a separate bracket, hoop, cup or other suitable formation to locate the shafts of the clubs. In such cases, the top bracket carrying the partitioning elements and the bottom bracket locating the shafts may be connected by an intermediate frame member, thereby obviating the

need for a bag. The top and bottom brackets may also be integrally formed with a wheeled buggy, for example.

As the invention preserves the order of the clubs during a game, it facilitates quick and easy selection of the desired club to play each shot. Moreover, by positively locating and separating each club, the heads are prevented from being damaged by jostling against one another. Also, because the clubs are being supported directly by the heads, shaft wear, to which clubs have been prone in previously known devices, is avoided. Furthermore, the two-faced partitioning fins allow a large club selection by providing only minimal interruptions between the club heads. The fins also allow the apparatus to be cheaply injection moulded, as no cavities are present in the apparatus. If the apparatus is produced for a known bag configuration a single non-adjustable variant can be produced from a single and correspondingly cheaper mould.

A further advantage of the apparatus arises because a set of golf clubs of increasing head angle also have increasingly longer shafts. Traditionally, golf clubs have been positioned in golf bags with their grips at the same location (i.e. the grips abutting the bottom surface of a golf bag). This arrangement is undesirable

because it means the golf bag has to accommodate the thickest part of the club shafts (i.e. the grip) at the same location. This also allows the grips to rub, causing wear or damage to each other. Since the apparatus disclosed herein locates the club heads at the same height the grips are at staggered heights in relation to one another and the above problems are avoided.

Thus, in light of the previously discussed advantages, the invention represents significant functional and commercial improvements over the prior art.

Although the invention has been described with reference to specific examples, it will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that the invention may be embodied in many other forms.

CLAIMS:-

1. An apparatus for holding golf clubs, each club comprising a shaft terminating in an uniquely angled head having a front and a rear surface, said apparatus including a support bracket comprising an array of generally planar partitioning fins defining a corresponding array of compartments therebetween, each said fin having a substantially parallel first and second face, wherein each said first fin face locates the front surface of an adjacent club head and each said second fin face locates the rear surface of an adjacent club head, such that in combination the fins simultaneously locate the front and rear surfaces of each said club head.
2. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said fins are disposed such that said compartments are progressively graduated to accommodate club heads of progressively increasing angle.
3. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 wherein each said compartment is uniquely configured to accommodate nestingly a specific club having a correspondingly angled head.
4. An apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein each said compartment is configured to accommodate nestingly a particular club head and the club heads of the previous and next clubs in a standard golf club set.



5. An apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4 wherein the compartments are configured to accommodate a set of clubs of progressively increasing head angle in sequential order.
6. An apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the apparatus is adapted to hold the clubs in an inverted orientation.
7. An apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, further including locating means to locate or contain the shafts of the clubs.
8. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 7 wherein the locating means takes the form of a golf bag and the support bracket is adapted to be mounted adjacent the open end of the golf bag with the shafts extending downwardly and contained within the bag.
9. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 7 wherein the locating means comprises a separate bracket, hoop, cup or other suitable formation connected with the support bracket by an intermediate frame member.

