

Description

The present invention relates to an apparatus for displaying an advertisement or message inside a golf cup. In particular, the present invention relates to an apparatus for displaying an advertisement or message inside a golf cup where the advertisement or message is replaceable and is contained in a sealed enclosure to protect it from the environment.

Various different devices are known in the prior art for displaying an advertisement at the bottom of a golf cup. Typical devices of this type are disclosed in the U.S. patents of Boudreau et al. No. 4,878,665 and Boudreau No. 4,928,417. The devices of the prior art typically comprise an annular disc having an advertisement or message imprinted on the top surface of the disc. The disc is inserted into the golf cup and is secured at the bottom of the golf cup.

Prior art golf cup display devices are unsatisfactory in that the advertisements or messages displayed by the devices are imprinted in some manner on the top surface of the discs inserted into the golf cup. The advertisements or messages are exposed to the environment. Over a period of time, the advertisement or message may become faded or completely removed from the surface of the disc by rain, repeated contact with the golf cup flag stick on removal and reinsertion of the stick into the cup, and the repeated contact with golf balls falling into the cup. What is needed to overcome this disadvantage is some type of a protective layer covering over the advertisement or message on the top surface of the annular disc, that protects the advertisement or message from rain, contact with the golf hole flag stick, and contact with golf balls hit into the cup.

Prior art golf cup advertisement or message display devices are also unsatisfactory in that, should it be desired to replace the advertisement or message with a different advertisement or message, the entire disc must be removed from the cup and replaced with a new disc having the new advertisement or message thereon. If advertisements or messages are changed frequently, the frequent replacement of the discs in each of the golf cup holes of a golf course can amount to a substantial expense. What is needed to overcome this disadvantage of prior art golf cup advertisement or message display devices is a golf cup advertisement or message display device constructed so that the advertisement or message displayed by the device can be easily and inexpensively replaced.

According to the present invention there is provided apparatus for removably displaying an advertisement or message inside a golf cup, the

apparatus comprising an annular display member for displaying a marking for an advertisement or message, and an upper annular disc, adapted to fit in a golf cup, for covering the display member and being transparent to permit the display member to be viewed therethrough, characterised in that the apparatus also includes a lower annular disc with the surface supporting the display member, and in that the upper annular disc has depending skirts respectively at both its inner and outer circumferences, the dimensions of the lower annular disc being such that it will fit within, and frictionally engage, the inner and outer skirts of the upper annular disc, to trap the display member between the annular discs.

The apparatus set out above can protect the advertisement or message displayed in the golf cup from the surrounding environment, but also enables the advertisement or message to be quickly and easily changed.

In a preferred embodiment, the lower annular disc is constructed entirely of plastics material and the upper annular disc is constructed entirely of a transparent plastics material. However, other materials may be employed in constructing the annular discs and the upper annular disc may be constructed so that it is only partially transparent. The annular display member enclosed between the annular discs is preferably a paper product, but may also be other types of thin, flexible materials that are receptive to printing.

Both the upper and lower annular discs have an annular configuration with a hole at the centre. The hole in each annular disc is dimensioned to be larger than the diameter of the typical flag stick of a golf hole. The support surface of the lower annular disc extends from the periphery of the centre hole out to the peripheral edge of the lower annular disc member, and this support surface inclines upwards slightly as it extends from the central hole out to the peripheral edge of the lower annular disc. Several attachment clips preferably depend downward from the peripheral edge of the annular disc. The attachment clips are configured and positioned around the peripheral edge of the lower annular disc to enable the clips to engage inside drainage slots of a conventional golf cup to releasably secure the lower annular disc to the bottom of the golf cup.

The peripheral skirts of the upper annular disc and the inner and outer peripheral edges of the lower annular disc are preferably related to one another so that when the apparatus is assembled, a water tight seal is formed between the two annular discs.

Preferably the upper annular disc and the lower annular disc are separable so that the display member can be replaced.

The apparatus of the invention is assembled to display an advertisement or message inside a golf hole according to the following method. An annular sheet of material, with the advertisement or message marked on its top, inclined surface is positioned on top of the support surface of the lower annular disc. The inclination of the sheet of material is predetermined to be substantially equal to the inclination of the support surface of the lower annular disc. A sheet of material is centred on the support surface so that a centre hole in the sheet is aligned with the centre hole of the lower annular disc and the peripheral edge of the sheet is aligned with the peripheral edge of the lower annular disc.

Next the upper annular disc is positioned over the sheet and the lower annular disc and is attached to the lower annular disc. The centre skirt of the upper annular disc is aligned with the centre holes of the sheet and lower annular disc and the peripheral skirt of the upper annular disc is aligned with the peripheral edges of the sheet and lower annular disc. The centre skirt is then inserted through the centre hole of the sheet and into the centre hole of the lower annular disc. Simultaneously, the peripheral skirt of the upper annular disc passes over the peripheral edge of the sheet and the peripheral edge of the lower annular disc. The upper annular disc is pressed downward on to the lower annular disc with the centre skirt engaging in friction, sealing engagement with the centre hole of the lower annular disc and the peripheral skirt engaging in friction, sealing engagement around the peripheral edge of the lower annular disc, thereby sealing the sheet between the upper and lower annular discs. With the upper annular disc attached to the lower annular disc, the advertisement or message marked on the top surface of the sheet is visible through the cover surface of the upper annular disc.

The assembled upper annular disc, sheet and lower annular disc are next inserted into the golf cup. The assembled upper annular disc, sheet and lower annular disc are pushed downward toward the bottom of the golf cup until the depending clips of the lower annular disc engage in the drainage slots of the golf cup, thereby securing the apparatus to the bottom of the golf cup with the message or advertisement marked on the sheet displayed through the transparent upper annular disc.

The invention will now be further described, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a cutaway perspective view showing one embodiment of apparatus of the invention being assembled into a conventional golf cup;

Figure 2 is an elevation view, in section, showing the apparatus of Figure 1 assembled into a conventional golf cup;

Figure 3 is an exploded perspective view showing the component parts of the apparatus of Figure 1; and

Figure 4 is a partial elevation view, in section, showing the detail of the connection of the apparatus to the inside of a conventional golf cup.

The apparatus 10, for displaying an advertisement or message inside a cup, is shown in Figure 1 in its assembled condition above a conventional golf cup 12 into which it is to be inserted and secured. The component parts of the apparatus of the invention are shown in Figure 3. The apparatus 10 is basically comprised of a lower annular disc 14, an upper annular disc 16, and an annular sheet of material 18 onto which an advertisement or message is marked. The lower and upper annular discs 14, 16 are preferably constructed of a plastics material and the sheet of material 18 is preferably constructed of paper or paperboard. However, the component parts of the apparatus of the invention 10 may be constructed of other similar types of materials without departing from the intended scope of the invention.

The golf cup 12 shown in the operative environment of the invention is of conventional construction. The particular construction of the golf cup 12 is only one example of possible constructions of conventional golf cups. The apparatus 10 may be employed with a variety of different golf cup constructions other than that shown with only minor modifications to the apparatus.

As seen in the drawing figures, the golf cup 12 is comprised of a tubular body 22 that is inserted into a hole 24 provided for the cup in a green of a golf course. A tapered bottom surface 26 of the cup is provided toward the bottom of the tubular body 22. The bottom surface 26 has a peripheral edge 28 that is secured to the interior surface of the tubular body 22. The bottom surface 26 tapers downward inside the tubular body 22 toward a centre hole 32 in the bottom surface. A cylindrical centre sleeve 34 is secured to the underside of the cup bottom surface 26 and depends downward surrounding the centre hole 32. The inner diameter of the centre sleeve 34 is determined to enable the insertion of a conventional golf flag stick into the sleeve 34. Extending across the underside of the bottom surface 26 and between the sleeve 34 and the inner surface of the tubular body 22 is a plurality of reinforcing webs 36. Spatially arranged between the plurality of webs 36 are drainage slots 38 formed through the bottom surface 26. The slots 38 enable rain water to drain completely through the interior of the golf cup 12.

Each of the component parts of the golf cup 12 may be moulded integrally with each other, or may be secured together in any other known method. The construction of the golf cup 12 is conventional

and does not form a part of the present invention. Moreover, the described construction of the golf cup 12 is for illustrative purposes and is not intended to be limiting. The apparatus 10 may be employed with a variety of different types of golf cups with only minor modifications to the apparatus.

As seen in Figure 3, the lower annular disc 14 of the apparatus has a circular configuration with a peripheral edge 42 and a centre hole 44. The centre hole 44 is bounded by a circular, centre edge 46 of the annular disc. The diameter of the centre edge 46 is slightly larger than the diameter of the golf cup centre sleeve 34 as seen in Figure 2. The peripheral edge 42 of the lower annular disc has a diameter slightly smaller than the internal diameter of the golf cup 12. As seen in the drawing figures, the diameter of the peripheral edge 42 of the lower annular disc is predetermined to position the lower annular disc peripheral edge 42 adjacent to the top edges 48 of each of the drainage slots 38 formed in the golf cup bottom surface 26.

A plurality of engagement tabs 52 is formed integrally with and depend downward from the peripheral edge 42 of the lower annular disc. The tabs 52 are spatially arranged around the periphery of the lower annular disc in a predetermined arrangement to correspond with the spacing of the drain slots 38 formed in the bottom surface of the golf cup 12. Each of the plurality of tabs 52 is formed with a cam surface 54 on the exterior surface of the tab. The cam surface 54 terminates at a shoulder projection 56 from the exterior surface of each tab. The cam surface 54 and shoulder 56 formed in each tab 52 facilitate the engagement of each tab in a drainage slot 38 of the golf cup as will be explained. Where the apparatus is employed in golf cups having constructions other than that described above, the tabs may have to be modified or replaced with other structures for securing the lower annular disc to the bottom surface of the golf hole.

The lower annular disc 14 is provided with a support surface 58 extending from the centre edge 46 of the centre hole 44 outward to the peripheral edge 42 of the annular disc. As seen in the drawing figures, the support surface 58 of the lower annular disc tapers downwardly from the peripheral edge 42 of the disc toward the centre hole 44 of the annular disc. The inclination of the support surface 58 is predetermined to be equal to or slightly less than the inclination of the golf cup bottom surface 26.

As seen in Figure 3, the sheet of material 18 has an annular configuration with a centre hole 62. The centre hole 62 in the sheet of material 18 is bounded by a circular inner edge 64 of the material. The outer circumference of the sheet of

material 18 is bounded by a circular peripheral edge 66. A top surface 68 of the sheet of material 18 extends from the centre edge 64 of the material out to its peripheral edge 66. The top surface 68 is capable of having an advertisement or message 72 marked thereon in any known method. The sheet of material 18 is preferably paper, facilitating the marking of an advertisement or message 72 on the top surface 68 of the sheet. As seen in the drawing figures, the top surface 68 of the sheet has a tapered inclination that extends downward from the peripheral edge 66 of the sheet to the centre edge 64 of the sheet. The inclination of the sheet 18 is predetermined to correspond to the inclination of the top surface 58 of the lower annular disc. The diameter of the centre hole 62 of the sheet is predetermined to correspond to the diameter of the centre hole 44 of the lower annular disc, and the diameter of the peripheral edge 66 of the sheet is predetermined to correspond to the diameter of the peripheral edge 42 of the lower annular disc. The configuration of the sheet 18 enables it to lay flat on the support surface 58 of the lower annular disc 14.

The upper annular disc 16 also has an annular configuration with a hole 74 at its centre. The centre hole 74 is bounded by a downward depending, circular centre skirt 76 of the upper annular disc. As shown in the drawing figures, the centre skirt 76 has an inner diameter slightly larger than the diameter of the golf cup centre sleeve 34 to enable insertion and removal of a golf hole flag stick through the centre hole 74 of the upper annular disc. The centre skirt 76 is also provided with an exterior diameter that is substantially equal to the diameter of the lower annular disc centre edge 46 to enable insertion of the upper annular disc centre skirt 76 into the centre hole 44 of the lower annular disc. The diameter dimensions of the upper annular disc centre skirt 76 and the lower annular disc centre edge 46 provide a friction, sealing engagement between the exterior of the upper annular disc centre skirt 76 and the interior of the lower annular disc centre edge 46.

The upper annular disc 16 is completely bounded by a circular, peripheral skirt 78 that depends downward from the peripheral edge of the upper annular disc. As seen in Figures 2 and 4, the upper annular disc peripheral skirt 78 has an inner surface with a diameter substantially equal to the diameter of the outer surface of the lower annular disc peripheral edge 42. This enables the peripheral skirt 78 of the upper annular disc to be inserted over and around the peripheral edge 42 of the lower annular disc and to engage in a friction, sealing engagement around the peripheral edge 42 of the lower annular disc.

The upper annular disc 16 is provided with a cover surface 82 that extends outwardly from the centre skirt 76 of the disc to the peripheral skirt 78 of the disc. The upper annular disc 16 is constructed so that at least the cover surface 82 of the disc is transparent. However, in the preferred embodiment of the invention the entire upper annular disc 16 is moulded from a transparent plastic material. As seen in the drawing figures, the top and bottom surfaces of the cover surface 82 of the upper annular disc have an inclination that is substantially equal to the inclination of the top surface 68 of the sheet of material 18 and the support surface 58 of the lower annular disc 14. As is best seen in Figures 2 and 4, the cover surface 82 of the upper annular disc spaces the centre skirt 76 from the peripheral skirt 78 a predetermined distance that enables the centre skirt 76 to be inserted inside the centre edge 46 of the lower annular disc and the peripheral skirt 78 to be inserted over and around the peripheral edge 42 of the lower annular disc.

In assembling the apparatus 10 and inserting and securing the apparatus in the interior of the golf cup 12, the sheet of material 18, with an advertisement or message 72 marked in its top surface 68, is placed with its bottom surface on the support surface 58 of the lower annular disc 14. The sheet of material 18 is centred on the support surface 58 so that the circular centre edge 64 of the sheet is aligned with the centre edge 46 of the lower annular disc and the circular peripheral edge 66 of the sheet is aligned with the peripheral edge 42 of the lower annular disc.

Next, the upper annular disc 16 is assembled to the sheet 18 and lower annular disc 14. The upper annular disc 16 is lowered onto the sheet 18 and lower annular disc 14 with the circular centre skirt 76 aligned with the centre holes 62, 44 of the sheet and lower annular disc. The circular centre skirt 76 is inserted through the sheet centre hole 62 and into the lower annular disc centre hole 44 with the exterior surface of the centre skirt 76 engaging in a friction, sealing engagement with the interior surface of the lower annular disc centre edge 46. As the upper annular disc 16 is continued to be pressed downward over the sheet 18 and lower annular disc 14, the peripheral skirt 76 of the upper annular disc passes over the peripheral edge 66 of the sheet and is engaged in a friction, sealing engagement around the exterior of the lower annular disc peripheral edge 42. The upper annular disc 16 is continued to be pressed downward over the lower annular disc 14 until the sheet of material 18 is pressed tight between the support surface 58 of the lower annular disc and the underside of the cover surface 82 of the upper annular disc. The friction, sealing engagement between the centre

skirt 76 and the peripheral skirt 78 of the upper annular disc and the centre edge 46 and the peripheral edge 42 of the lower annular disc completely encloses the sheet of material 18 between the two annular discs. Enclosing the sheet of material in this manner seals the sheet 18 from the outside environment and protects it from the flag stick, golf balls, moisture, dirt and dust. With the cover surface 82 of the upper annular disc 16 being transparent, the advertisement or message 72 marked on the top surface 68 of the sheet of material is visible through the cover surface 82.

Figure 1 shows the assembled upper annular disc 16, the sheet of material 18, and the lower annular disc 14 of the apparatus 10 ready for insertion into the interior of the golf cup 12. The assembled apparatus 10 is inserted into the interior of the golf cup 12 with each tab 52 of the apparatus aligned with one of the drain slots 38 of the golf cup. As the apparatus is inserted downward into the golf cup, the cam surfaces 54 of each tab 52 engage in sliding engagement over the top edge 48 of each drain slot 38. As the assembly is continued to be pressed downward into the golf cup, the cam surfaces 54 slide over the top edges 48 of the slots until they completely pass the slots, and the shoulder surfaces 56 of each tab engage beneath the top edges 48 of the slots. By constructing these component parts of the apparatus from a resiliently flexible plastics material each of the tabs 54 resiliently flexes inward as the tabs are passed by the top edges 48 of the slots. With the shoulders 56 of each tab engaged under the underside of the top edges 48 of the slots, the apparatus is securely held in its operative position against the bottom surface 26 of the golf cup 12. In this position of the apparatus, a golfer looking into the interior of the golf cup 12 can easily see the advertisement or message 72 marked on the sheet of material 18 and displayed through the transparent cover surface 82 of the upper annular disc 16.

Should it be desired to replace the advertisement or message in the apparatus, the apparatus is removed from the interior of the golf cup 12 and disassembled to remove the old sheet from between the upper and lower annular discs. The upper and lower annular discs are then reassembled with a new sheet of material 18 displaying a new advertisement or message between the upper and lower annular discs 14, 16 of the apparatus. The transparent upper annular disc 16 protects the new advertisement or message 17 marked on the sheet of material 18 from its surrounding environment, and protects the advertisement or message from being marred or obscured from repeated insertions of a golf flag stick into the golf cup or from repeated contact with a golf ball falling into the cup.



Claims

1. Apparatus for removably displaying an advertisement or message inside a golf cup, the apparatus comprising:

a) an annular display member (18) for displaying a marking (72) for an advertisement or message; and
 b) an upper annular disc (16), adapted to fit in a golf cup, for covering the display member to be viewed therethrough; characterised in that the apparatus also includes
 c) a lower annular disc (14) with a surface (58) supporting the display member, and in that the upper annular disc (16) has depending skirts (76,78) at both inner and outer circumferences, the dimensions of the lower annular disc (14) being such that it will fit within, and frictionally engage, the inner and outer skirts (76,78) of the upper annular disc, to trap the display member (18) between the annular discs.

2. Apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, characterised in that the entire top surface (82) of the upper annular disc (16) is transparent.

3. Apparatus as claimed in Claim 1 or Claim 2, characterised in that the display member (18) is a thin, annular disc of material having a message marked thereon.

4. Apparatus as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that a watertight seal is formed between the peripheral skirts (76,78) of the upper annular disc (16) and the inner (42) and outer (18) peripheral edges of the lower annular disc (14).

5. Apparatus as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the upper annular disc (16) and the lower annular disc (14) are separable so that the display member (18) can be replaced.

6. Apparatus as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that both the lower and upper annular discs (14,16) have a peripheral edge (42,78) and a centre hole (44,74) and the surfaces of the annular discs taper downwardly from the peripheral edges to the centre holes.

Patentansprüche

1. Vorrichtung für das entfernbare Schaustellen einer Werbung oder Mitteilung in einem Golfloch, welche umfaßt:

a) ein ringförmiges Schaustellungsteil (18) zum Schaustellen einer Markierung (72) für eine Werbung oder Mitteilung; und
 b) eine obere ringförmige Scheibe (16), die ausgebildet ist zum Passen in ein Golfloch, zum Abdecken des Schaustellungsteils, das durch diese hindurch sichtbar ist; dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die Vorrichtung ebenfalls umfaßt
 c) eine untere ringförmige Scheibe (14) mit einer Oberfläche (58), welche das Schaustellungsteil trägt, und daß die obere ringförmige Scheibe (16) davon herabhängende Ränder (76, 78) sowohl am inneren als auch am äußeren Umfang aufweist, wobei die Abmessungen der unteren ringförmigen Scheibe derart sind, daß sie in die inneren und äußeren Ränder der oberen ringförmigen Scheibe paßt und damit kraftschlüssig im Eingriff steht, um das Schaustellungsteil (18) zwischen den ringförmigen Scheiben festzuhalten.

2. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die gesamte obere Oberfläche (82) der oberen ringförmigen Scheibe (16) transparent ist.

3. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 1 oder 2, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß das Schaustellungsteil (18) eine dünne ringförmige Scheibe aus Material mit einer darauf markierten Mitteilung ist.

4. Vorrichtung nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß eine wasserdichte Dichtung zwischen den an den Umfängen vorgesehenen Rändern (76, 78) der oberen ringförmigen Scheibe (16) und den inneren (42) und äußeren (18) Umfangskanten der unteren ringförmigen Scheibe (14) gebildet ist.

5. Vorrichtung nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die obere ringförmige Scheibe (16) und die untere ringförmige Scheibe (14) trennbar sind, so daß das Schaustellungsteil (18) ersetzt werden kann.

6. Vorrichtung nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß sowohl die untere als auch die obere ringförmige Scheibe (14, 16) eine Umfangskante



(42, 78) und ein zentrales Loch (44, 74) aufweisen und daß die Oberflächen der ringförmigen Scheiben von den Umfangskanten zu den zentralen Löchern nach unten geneigt verlaufen.

Revendications

1. Appareil pour afficher de manière amovible une publicité ou un message à l'intérieur d'un trou de golf, l'appareil comprenant :
 - a) un élément d'affichage annulaire (18) pour afficher un marquage (72) destiné à une publicité ou un message ; et
 - b) un disque annulaire supérieur (16), agencé pour s'adapter dans un trou de golf, destiné à couvrir l'élément d'affichage qui sera vu à travers ;
 caractérisé en ce que l'appareil comporte également :
 - c) un disque annulaire inférieur (14) muni d'une surface (58) supportant l'élément d'affichage, et en ce que le disque annulaire supérieur (16) comporte des jupes (76, 78) issues des deux circonférences intérieure et extérieure, les dimensions du disque annulaire inférieur (14) étant telles qu'il s'adaptera à l'intérieur, avec un contact de friction, des jupes intérieure et extérieure (76, 78) du disque annulaire supérieur, de façon à enfermer l'élément d'affichage (18) entre les disques annulaires.
2. Appareil selon la revendication 1, caractérisé en ce que toute la surface supérieure (82) du disque annulaire supérieur (16) est transparente.
3. Appareil selon l'une des revendications 1 ou 2, caractérisé en ce que l'élément d'affichage (18) est un disque annulaire mince d'une matière comportant un message marqué sur elle.
4. Appareil selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, caractérisé en ce qu'une étanchéité à l'eau est formée entre les jupes périphériques (76, 78) du disque annulaire supérieur (16) et les bords périphériques intérieur (46) et extérieur (42) du disque annulaire inférieur (14).
5. Appareil selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, caractérisé en ce que le disque annulaire supérieur (16) et le disque annulaire inférieur (14) sont séparables de façon qu'on puisse remplacer l'élément d'affichage (18).
6. Appareil selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, caractérisé en ce que les disques annulaires inférieur et supérieur (14, 16) présentent tous les deux un bord périphérique (42, 78) et un trou central (44, 74) et les surfaces des disques annulaires convergent vers le bas à partir des bords périphériques vers les trous centraux.