PATENTS EXAMINATION BOARD

Subject: The Drafting of Patent Specifications - Paper 2

Date: Supplementary - November 2021

Time: 09h00 - 13h00 (although candidates requiring extra time are entitled to an additional two hours)

Examiners: L Cilliers
V Williams
Moderator: J D Whittaker

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Attached is an instruction from your client detailing an invention. You are required to draft a full patent specification for your client's invention. The full patent specification must include: (1) a background to the invention, (2) a brief description of the drawings, (3) a detailed description of the invention, (4) a set of patent claims, and (5) an abstract. **No summary of the invention (consistories) is required.**

Marks will be allocated as follows:

- 60% of the marks will be allocated to the claims.
- 40% of the marks will be allocated to the rest of the specification.

In order to obtain a pass for this paper, candidates must obtain not less than 40% for each of these two sections.

**The paper includes a set of drawings with no numbering. Please hand in a numbered set of drawings.**

Your client writes:

I have for a long time been fascinated by the evolution of kicking tees that are used by goal kickers in rugby. Back in the day, kickers used to balance the ball on the grass, sometimes preceded by making a bit of an indentation in the grass with the heel of the foot. However, it became clear that elevating the ball a little bit enhanced the quality of the strike on the ball while also rendering the setup more stable, and kickers accordingly started to place the ball on a small pile of sand. The pile of sand also provided more stability and made it more difficult for the ball to be blown over, for example in windy conditions. An example of such an arrangement is shown below:

At some point the sport equipment suppliers saw a good opportunity to provide a 'kicking tee' which could replace the use of sand. Much to the unhappiness of former 'sand carriers' (usually young boys who were very keen to have the opportunity to run onto the pitch with a pile of sand) the new plastic kicking tees quickly replaced the traditional sand based method.

Some examples of the kicking tees that are currently available in the marketplace are shown below:



Below is an example of a kicking tee in action:

You will note that the kicking tees come in all sorts of shapes and configurations, but that a basic common denominator is that they all include some sort of stable base, with some or other ball support formation extending from the base. In the examples shown, the base and support formation are integrally formed, but that does not necessarily have to be the case.

Although the kicking tees available on the market work well, a number of disadvantages, or at least areas for potential improvement, exist. Some of these include:

- In some kicking tees the base is reasonably small relative to the support formation, thus rendering the tee unstable when a ball is placed on the tee;
- In many cases the design of the tee is such that the kicker has to impact both the tee and the ball in order to launch the ball from the tee, and this action, combined with the weight of the tee, result in reduced energy being imparted to the ball, whilst also at times resulting in discomfort to the foot of a kicker. This is in particular the case for the more stable, but lower tees;
- Kickers often want to have the freedom to orientate the ball in different positions on top of the kicking tee. This is possible with existing tees, but it is often difficult to achieve because the structure and configuration of the support formation is fixed.

I have now come up with a new kicking tee design which I hope will solve the above problems. My kicking tee is shown in Figures 1 to 6. I am showing you two different embodiments, with some minor changes without departing from the spirit of the invention. Also, in Figure 3 the device is shown used with a soccer ball, and in Figure 6 with a rugby ball just to emphasize the flexibility of my design. In both cases the device simply includes a base from which a number of prongs extend.

As you will note, the prongs are rotatable or pivotable relative to the base, in order for the prongs to be adjustable to accommodate the desired placement of the ball, but also in order for the prongs to at least partially give way and ‘pivot over’ when engaged by the boot of the ball striker. In the embodiment shown, bottom ends of the prongs engage rotatable ball formations that are located in complementary sockets provided

in the base. The rotatable ball formations are secured in the sockets by way of releasable plugs.

Ideally the prongs should also be flexible, but it should be noted that flexible prongs as such are already used in some of the prior art kicking tees. What is, however, also advantageous in my new design, is the provision of the coiled spring formations as shown in Figure 6a, which assists in amplifying the flexibility of a prong, even in cases where the prong as such is not that flexible.

Please prepare a patent specification to protect the invention.

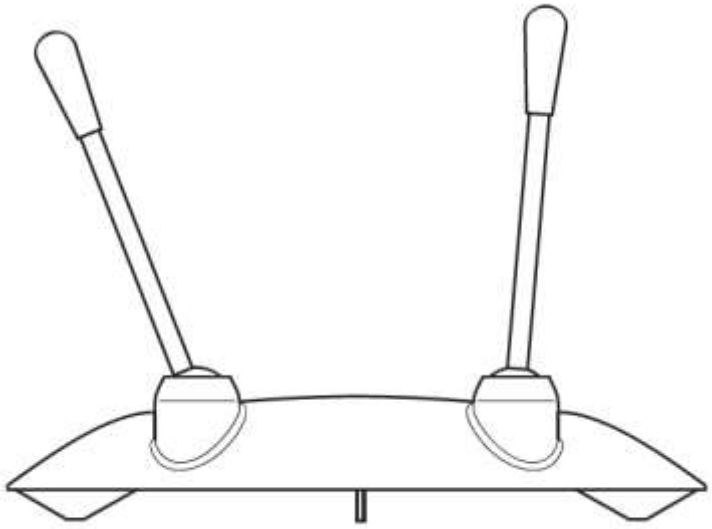

Fig. 1

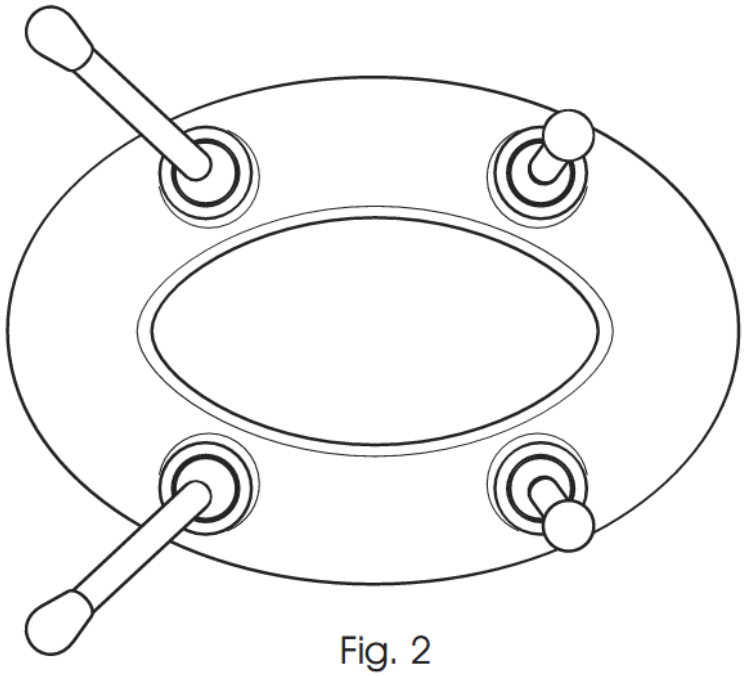

Fig. 2

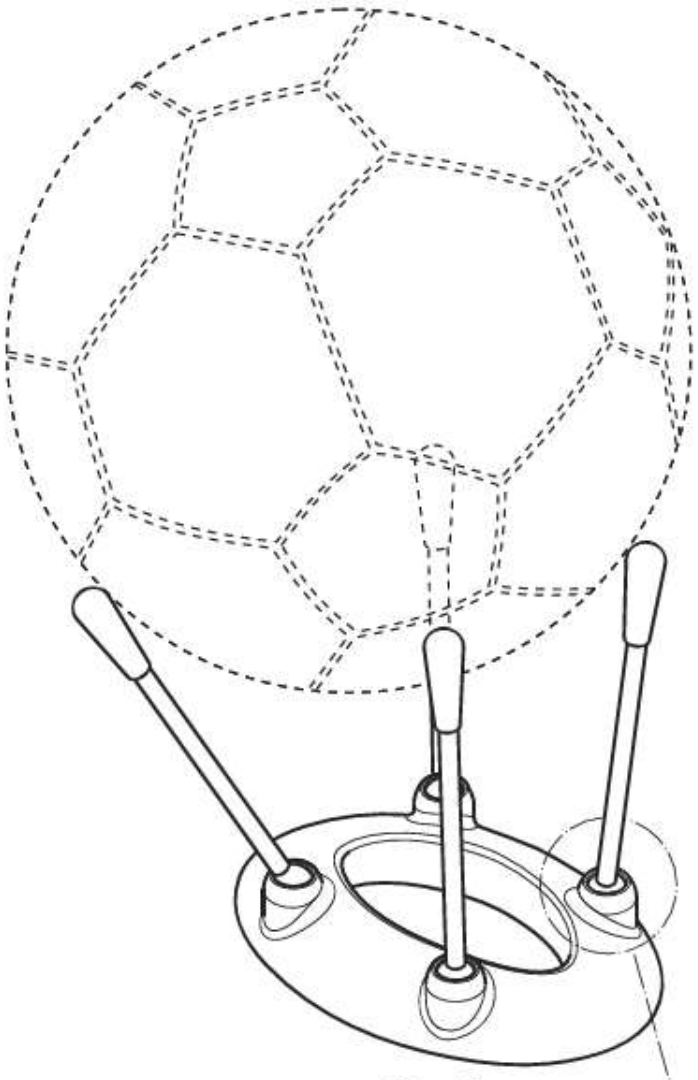

Fig. 3

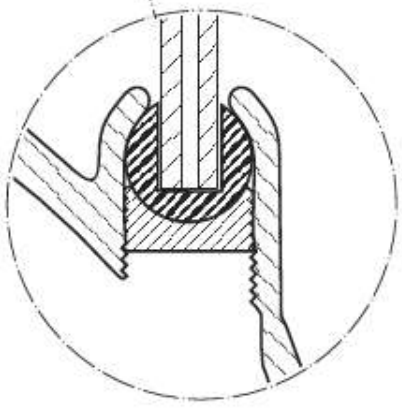

Fig. 3a

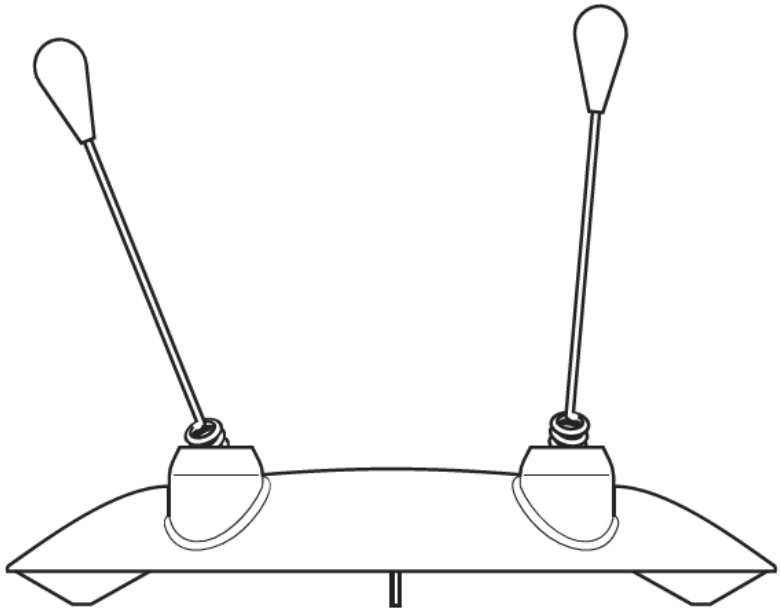

Fig. 4

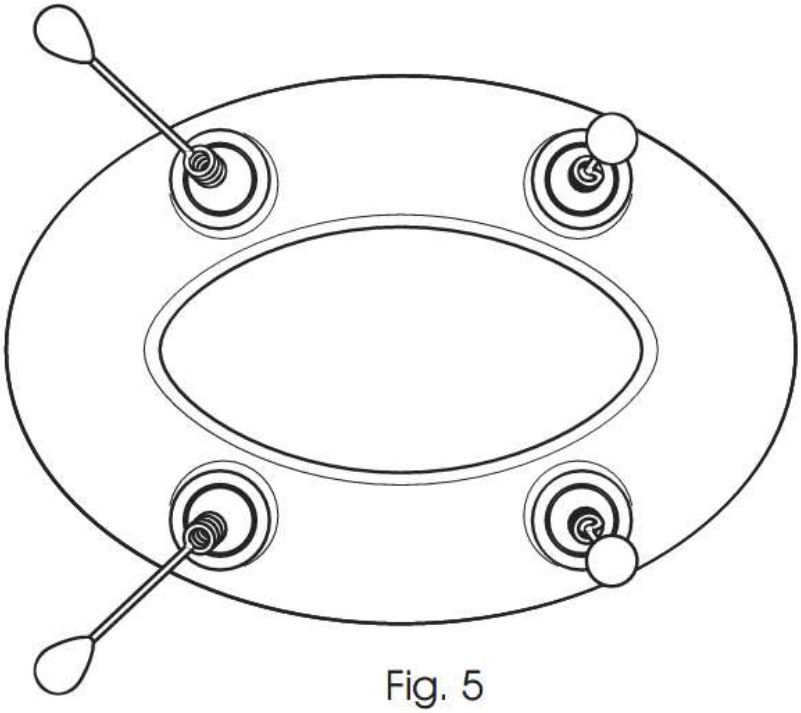

Fig. 5

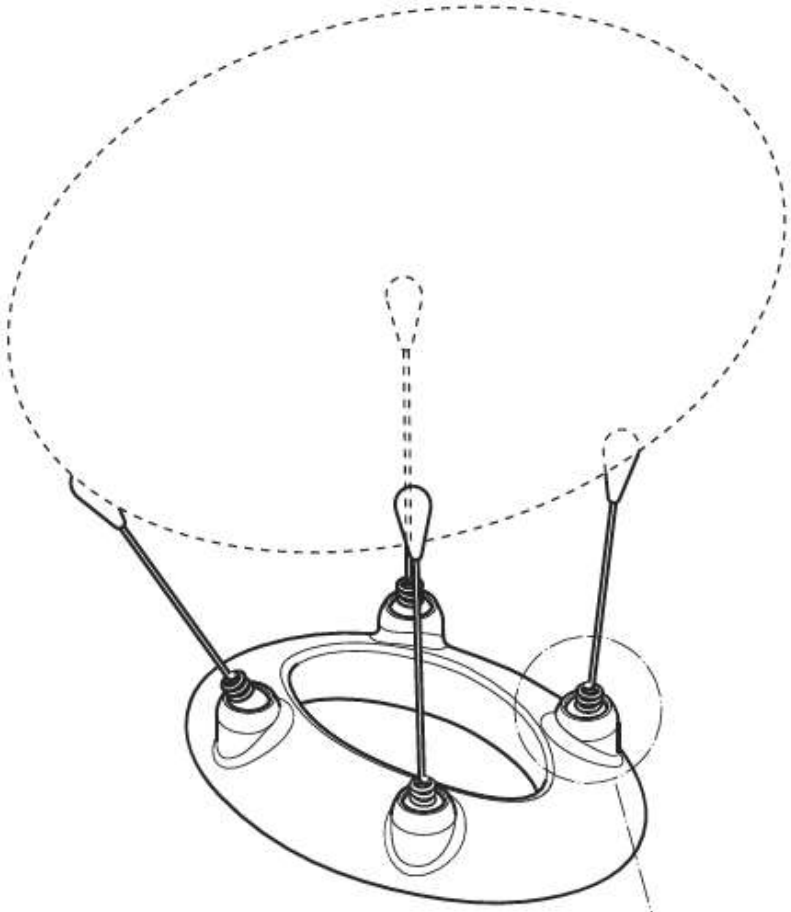

Fig. 6

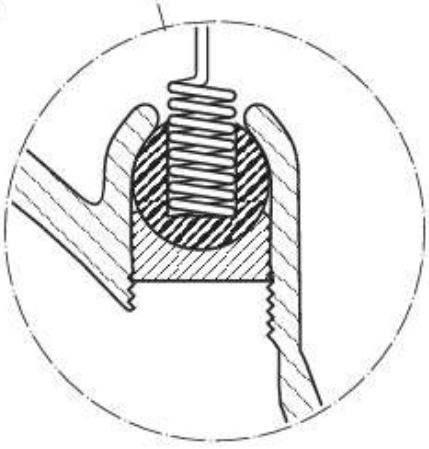

Fig. 6a