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(54) **SOFT GOLF CART SHIELD**

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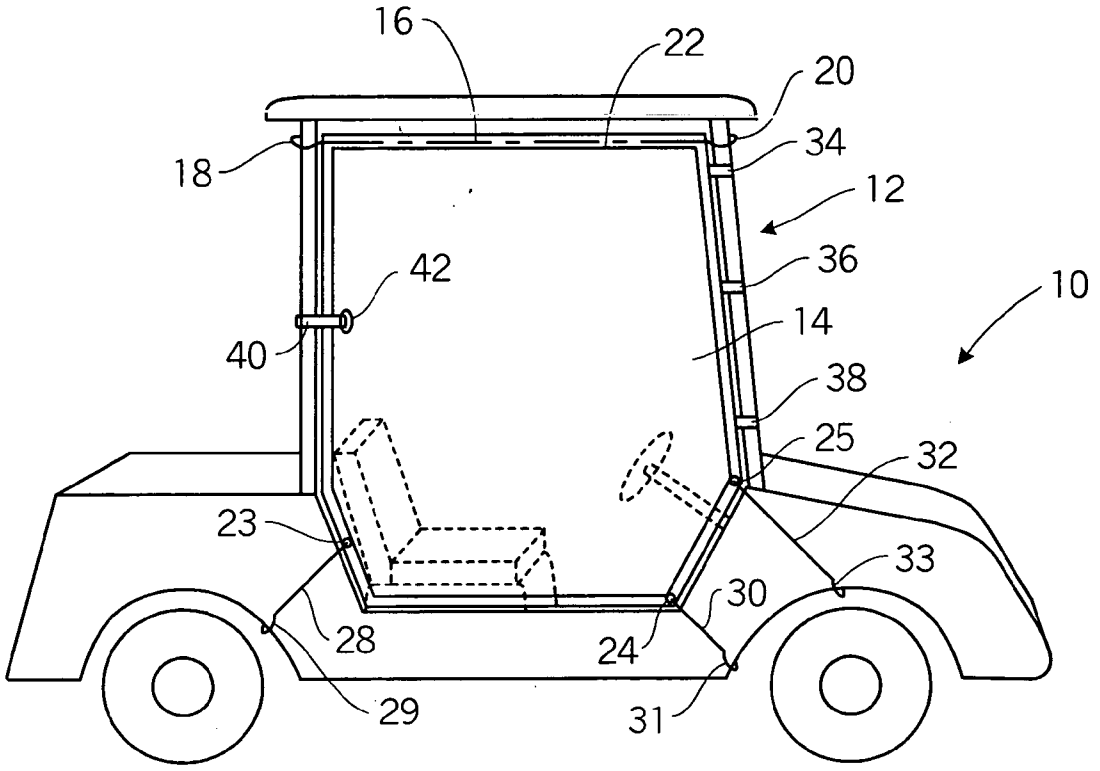
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A soft golf cart shield is provided which comprises a flexible and transparent sheet of water-repellent material for covering one side of the cart and at least one connector for attaching the sheet to the cart. The sheet is reversible and adapted to be attached to either of two open sides of the cart. In one embodiment the sheet has a top hem through which a connector is threaded along its top edge. Said connector comprises a cord desirably terminating in two hooks at opposite ends of the cord, the hooks being adapted to be attached to said cart.



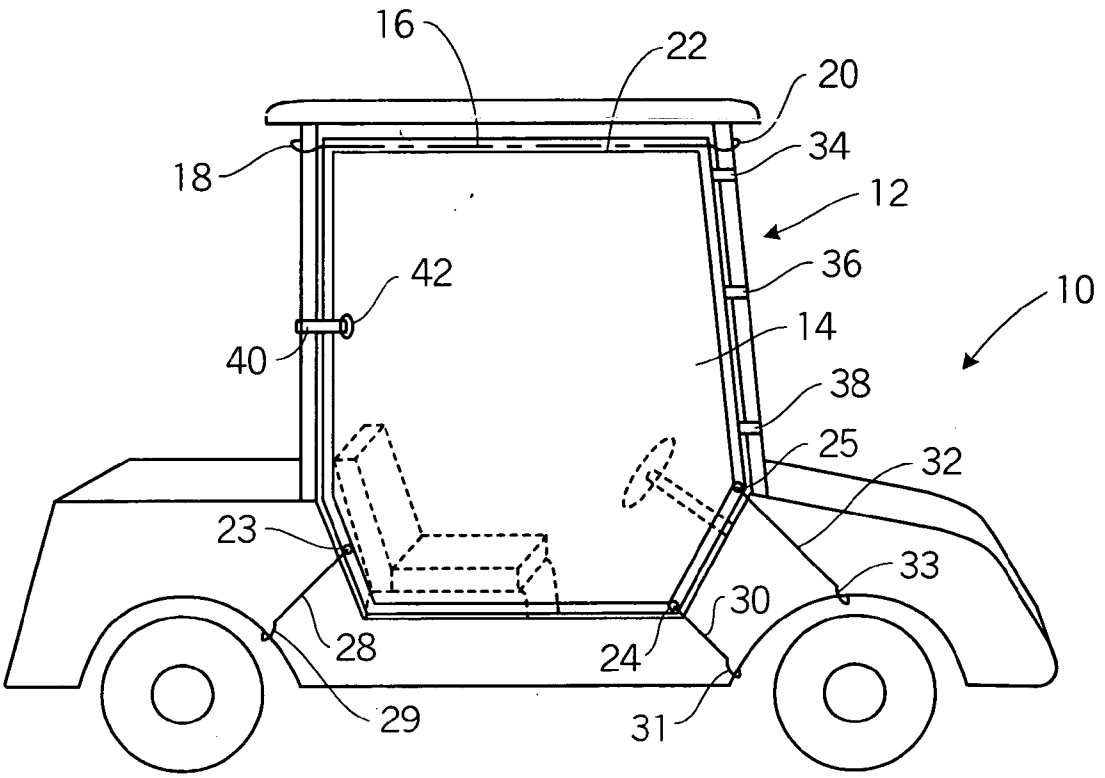


FIG. 1

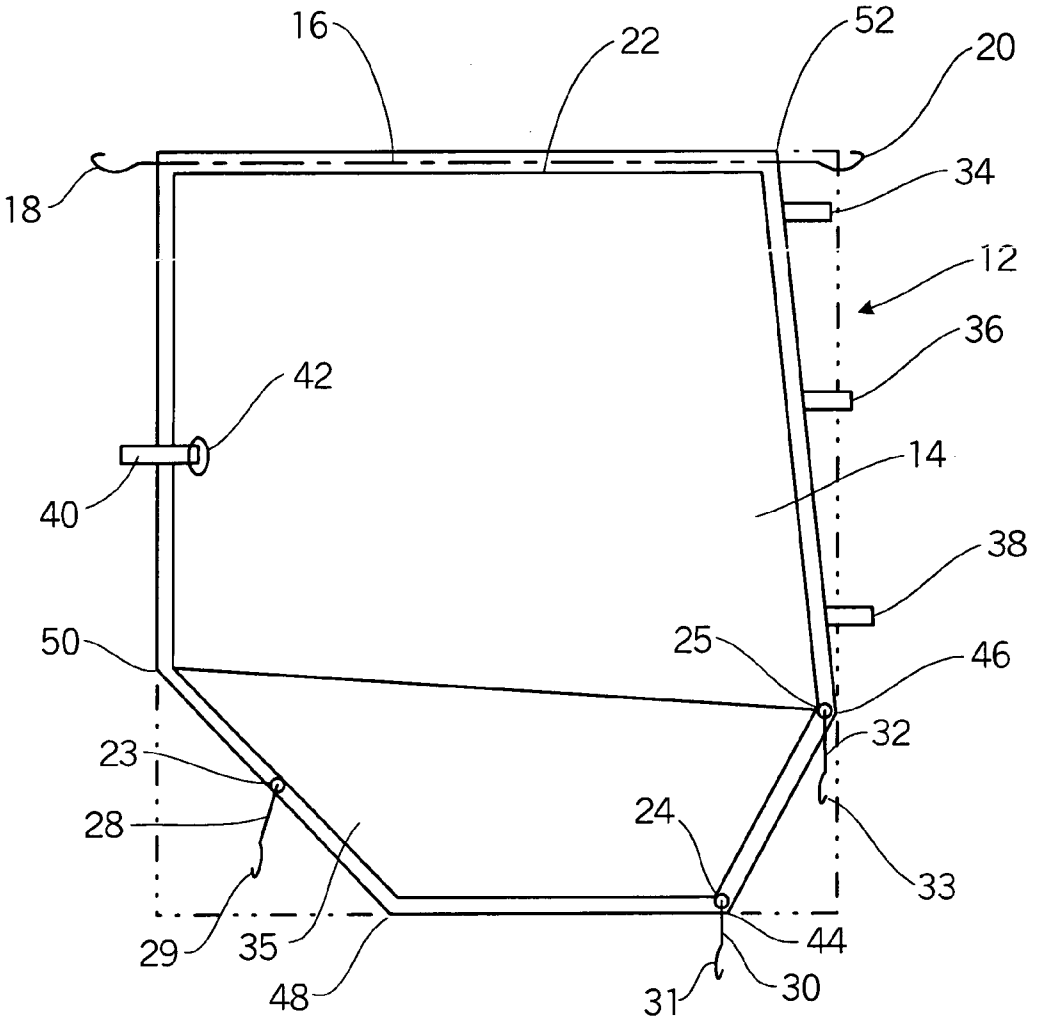

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FIG. 2

SOFT GOLF CART SHIELD

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates generally to soft golf cart shields. More particularly, the present invention relates to an improved soft golf cart shield that protects passengers and the cart interior from external weather conditions by covering an open side of the cart and a method of making the shield.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] There are a number of problems with the soft golf cart covers that are presently available. For example, the available covers are generally designed to cover the whole cart. Significant effort is required to install these covers, especially if they get wet before installation. Typically these covers have a number of zippers that must be aligned and closed when installing the cover over the cart. These covers are also difficult to remove from the cart. Moreover, the present covers are often made of heavy material and are expensive.

[0003] Accordingly, it is desirable to provide a soft golf cart shield that is inexpensive, easy to install, and which protects the passengers from rain and inclement weather while not requiring the whole cart to be covered.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0004] It is therefore a feature and advantage of the present invention to provide a soft golf cart cover shield for covering one of the open sides of the cart. It is another feature and advantage of the invention to provide a soft golf cart shield that is easy to install on the cart. It is a further feature and advantage of the invention to provide a soft golf cart shield that is made of thin material and which may be rolled to compact size and readily carried in a bag or by itself. Finally it is a feature and advantage of the invention to provide a reversible soft golf cart shield that may be attached to either of the two open sides of the cart. A method of making the shield is also disclosed.

[0005] The above and other features and advantages are achieved through the use of a novel soft, golf cart shield as herein disclosed. In accordance with one embodiment of the present invention, a golf cart shield is provided that comprises a sheet of flexible, water-repellent material for covering only one side of a golf cart and at least one connector for attaching the sheet to the cart. The sheet preferably is reversible and adapted to be attached to either side of the cart. Desirably the sheet should be of transparent material. Preferably, the sheet has a stretch cord connector threaded through a tube-shaped hem attached to the top of the sheet, said cord connector adapted to be attached to a frame of the cart. In addition, the sheet preferably has a plurality of spaced grommets along a bottom portion of the sheet through which smaller stretch cords can be threaded and attached at opposite ends to the frame of said cart. Finally, the sheet preferably has strap fasteners, preferably Velcro®-type straps, attached at various points along its perimeter to attach to strategic points on the frame of the cart.

[0006] It is to be understood that the invention is not limited in its application to the details of construction and to the arrangements of the components set forth herein or illustrated in the drawings. The invention is capable of other embodiments and of being practiced and carried out in various ways. Also, it is to be understood that the phraseology and terminology employed herein are for the purpose of description and should not be regarded as limiting. As such, those skilled in the art will appreciate that the conception upon which this disclosure is based may readily be used as a basis for designing other structures, methods and systems for carrying out the several purposes of the invention. Thus, the invention is not limited to the exact construction and operation illustrated and described, and accordingly all appropriate modifications and equivalents may fall within the scope of the invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] **FIG. 1** provides a perspective view illustrating a golf cart having a preferred embodiment of the soft golf cart shield of the present invention installed on one side of the cart.

[0008] **FIG. 2** provides an enlarged plan view of the soft golf cart shield of **FIG. 1**.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION

[0009] A preferred embodiment of the present invention provides a soft golf cart shield comprising a sheet of soft water-repellent material for covering one side of the cart and a plurality of spaced connectors for attaching the shield to the cart.

[0010] A preferred embodiment of the present inventive soft golf cart shield is illustrated in the perspective view of **FIG. 1**. Golf cart **10** is shown with shield **12** covering one side of the cart. Shield **12** includes sheet **14** comprised of flexible, transparent, water-repellent material. Sheet **14** may be of tarpaulin, vinyl, plastic or other water-repellent material. Preferably sheet **14** is at least partially transparent and is comprised of thin plastic or vinyl material. Desirably, sheet **14** is cut to a size and shape adapted to cover one open side of cart **10** similar to a door, and it is optionally reversible so that it is adapted to cover either side of the cart. Preferably, a plurality of connectors are provided for attaching the shield **12** to golf cart **10**. Preferably, at least one connector is provided for attaching the top of shield **12** to the cart and preferably comprises a bungee-type stretch cord **16** with hooks **18** and **20** attached at each end of the cord. Cord **16** is threaded through a canvas tube/vinyl top hem **22** that is part of a canvas or other material border extending around the periphery of the sheet. An advantage of this embodiment wherein a cord **16** is threaded through hem **22** is that sheet **14** may be slid back and forth on cord **16** similar to a shower curtain when at least some of said additional connectors are disengaged from the cart. However, optionally other tethering means, such as hooks, snaps or straps, may simply be affixed to hem **22** at or near each corner of hem **22**. In such a case, hem **22** need not be tubular.

[0011] As shown in **FIG. 2**, a plurality of additional connectors is provided for attaching the sides and/or bottom of the shield **12** to the cart. Although not required, a plurality of grommets **23**, **24**, and **25** are preferably provided at spaced locations along the bottom of the sheet. Said grommets may be fitted with additional connectors comprising tethering means, such as small stretch cords **28**, **30**, and **32**

terminating in hook-like devices **29**, **31**, and **33** which will attach to the wheel wells or other lower part of the golf cart frame. It is to be understood that the location and number of grommets and the number and location of the tethering means provided may vary depending on the particular shield design.

[**0012**] Preferably, additional connectors are also provided as seen more clearly in **FIG. 2** for securing the middle areas of the sides of the shield **12** to the cart. These additional connectors may be placed at several areas near the front edge of the sheet and may each be comprised of a short Velcro® type strap, straps with snaps and/or fasteners, a buckle or another tethering means **34**, **36** and **38** which wraps around the metal pole of a golf cart frame. A Velcro® type strap, strap with snaps and/or fasteners, buckle or another tethering means **40** is also provided at a middle area of the back edge of the sheet. This strap preferably is mounted in loop **42** so that the strap can be threaded back through the loop and secured after it is wrapped around a metal pole at the back of the cart.

[**0013**] A further advantage of the preferred shield of this invention is that it is completely reversible, i.e., it may be used to cover either of two open sides of the cart. Of course, two shields may be used to cover both sides of the cart if desired. However, as illustrated in **FIG. 2**, optionally the shield may be provided with a logo area **35** which may be made of plastic, nylon, canvas or another material. In such an alternate embodiment, if a logo is provided on only one side it may be not be preferable to reverse the shield between the sides of the cart.

[**0014**] The golf cart shield of the present invention is easy to manufacture. In a preferred embodiment, the typical shield adapted to fit most golf carts is manufactured from a single sheet of approximately 4 -mil thick, double polished clear vinyl. Starting with a sheet of such vinyl approximately 54 inches square, three triangular sections are cut from the corners of the sheet as illustrated in dashed lines in **FIG. 2**. A first triangular section is cut from the lower right hand corner of the sheet. The cut may be started at the bottom of the sheet approximately 8 inches from the lower right hand corner at point **44**. The cut is made in a straight line diagonally to point **46** on the adjacent side of the sheet approximately 12 inches up from the lower right hand corner of the sheet. Similarly, a second triangular section is cut from the lower left-hand corner of the sheet. This cut may be started at the bottom of the sheet approximately 16 inches from the lower left-hand corner at a point **48**. This cut is made in a straight line diagonally to a point **50** on the adjacent side of the sheet approximately 16 inches above the lower left-and corner. From point **46** a third triangular section is cut from the sheet, this cut is made diagonally in a straight line to the top of the sheet at a point **52** that is approximately 5 inches from the top right-hand corner of the sheet. Thus, the typical shield can be made from a single 54 -inch square sheet of vinyl. A tubular hem **22** may then be attached to the top of the sheet. Hem **22** may be constructed from a long rectangular piece of material such as vinyl, canvas, nylon or other material. In the preferred embodiment, a bungee-type cord **16** having hooks **18** and **20** at each end is preferably laid lengthwise along the rectangular piece of material and then the material is folded over the cord and attached to the top of the sheet. Alternatively, the bungee-type cord may be threaded through the hem after the hem installed on the sheet and hooks attached thereafter to each end of the cord. Also alternately, another tethering means may be supplied, in which case the hem may not need to be tubular. A plurality of Velcro-type straps **34**, **36**, and **38** or other tethering means are preferably attached at spaced locations along a front side edge of the sheet. A loop **42** forming an opening of metal or plastic is installed mid length along a side edge at the back of the sheet and a Velcro-type or other strap or tether **40** is installed in the loop. Finally, a plurality of grommets **23**, **24**, and **25** are installed at spaced locations along a bottom edge of the sheet and a short bungee-type cord or other tethering means **28**, **30**, and **32** is installed in each grommet. Preferably, each short cord has a hook **29**, **31**, and **33** at the opposite end from said grommet for attachment to a frame of the cart. A nylon or other material sheet **35** may be attached to a lower portion of the sheet, for example, containing a logo, advertisement or other identification information, if desired. Accordingly, the shield of the invention is easy and inexpensive to manufacture.

[**0015**] It is to be understood that the inventions are not limited to the exact construction or method illustrated but that various changes and/or modifications may be made without departing from the spirit or the scope of the inventions as more fully described in this Application for Patent.

1. A soft golf cart shield, comprising:

(a) a sheet of flexible water-repellent material adapted to cover only one open passenger side of a golf cart; and

(b) at least one connector for attaching said sheet to the golf cart so as to cover said one open passenger side of the cart.

2. The soft golf cart shield of claim 1, wherein said sheet has a hem along its top edge through which said connector is threaded, and said connector comprises a cord adapted to be attached at its opposite ends to a top portion of a frame of said cart

3. The soft golf cart shield of claim 1, wherein said sheet is of transparent material.

4. The soft golf cart shield of claim 2, wherein said connector comprises a bungee cord having a hook at each end for engaging the top portion of the frame of said cart.

5. The soft golf cart shield of claim 2, wherein said sheet has a hem along its bottom and side edges.

6. The soft golf cart shield of claim 5, wherein at least one of said hems is comprised of canvas, nylon or other cloth material.

7. The soft golf cart shield of claim 2, further comprising a plurality of additional connectors for attaching a bottom edge and opposed side edges of said sheet to said cart.

8. The soft golf cart shield of claim 7, wherein said sheet has a plurality of spaced grommets at the bottom edge of said sheet.

9. The soft golf cart shield of claim 8, wherein said additional connectors include a cord attached to each said grommet at one end and a hook at the other end for engaging the frame of said cart.

10. The soft golf cart shield of claim 7, wherein said additional connectors include a plurality of straps attached to at least one side edge of the sheet at spaced locations along said side edge.

11. The soft golf cart shield of claim 9, wherein said additional connectors include a plurality of straps attached to at least one side edge of the sheet at spaced locations along said side edge.

12. The soft golf cart shield of claim 11, wherein said sheet has a loop in the other side edge of said sheet and said additional connectors further include a strap inserted in said loop.

13. The soft golf cart shield of claim 11, wherein at least one of said plurality of straps has a hook and loop fastener surface on said strap.

14. The soft golf cart shield of claim 11, wherein at least one of said plurality of straps includes a snap fastener.

15. The soft golf cart shield of claim 1 wherein said sheet is reversible.

16. A soft golf cart shield, comprising:

(a) a sheet of flexible, water-repellent material of size and shape adapted to cover only one open passenger side of a golf cart; and

(b) at least one connector for attaching said sheet to the golf cart so as to cover said one open passenger side of the cart

(c) wherein said sheet has a hem along its top edge through which said connector is threaded, said connector comprises a tethering means adapted to be attached at its opposite ends to a top portion of a frame of said cart.

17. The soft golf cart shield of claim 16, wherein said sheet is of transparent material.

18. The soft golf cart shield of claim 16, further comprising a plurality of additional connectors for attaching a bottom edge and opposed side edges of said sheet to said cart

19. A method of making a soft golf cart shield, said method comprising:

(a) providing a square sheet of soft, flexible, transparent material;

(b) cutting said sheet to fit only one open side of a golf cart; and

(c) attaching a plurality of connectors to said sheet at spaced locations around the periphery of said sheet.

20. The method of claim 17, further comprising attaching a tubular hem along a top edge of said sheet and providing an elongated connector in said tubular hem adapted to be attached at opposite ends to a frame of said cart.

21. The method of claim 17, wherein said cutting step includes cutting a triangular section from at least one corner of said sheet.

22. The method of claim 18 further comprising attaching a hem of material along a bottom and each side edge of said sheet.

23. The method of claim 18 wherein a plurality of spaced connectors is attached to said sheet at spaced locations along the bottom and sides of said sheet.

24. A soft golf cart shied comprising:

(a) a sheet of flexible water-repellent Denial adapted to fully cover only one open side of a golf cart passenger compartments said cover being adapted to serve as a door to the passenger compartment; and

(b) at least one connector for attaching said sheet to the golf cart so as to cover said one open side of the passenger compartment.

25. The soft golf cart shield of claim 24, wherein said sheet has a hem along its top edge tough which said connector is threaded, said connector comprises a tethering means adapted to be attached at its opposite ends to a top portion of a frame of said cart.

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