US 20250262501A1

(19) **United States**

(12) **Patent Application Publication** (10) Pub. No.: **US 2025/0262501 A1**

Chacon (43) **Pub. Date: Aug. 21, 2025**

(54) **BATTING PRACTICE DEVICE**

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(21) Appl. No.: **19/049,495**

(22) Filed: **Feb. 10, 2025**

Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Provisional application No. 63/555,616, filed on Feb. 20, 2024.

Publication Classification

(51) **Int. Cl.**
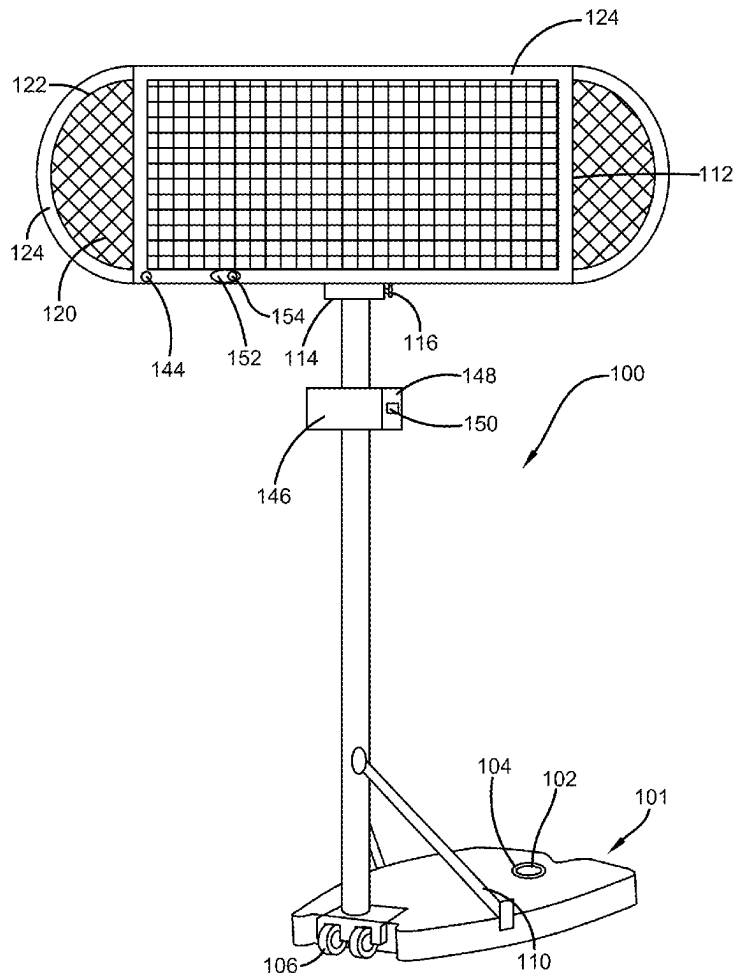|	
A63B 69/00	(2006.01)
A63B 24/00	(2006.01)
A63B 71/06	(2006.01)
A63B 102/18	(2015.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC *A63B 69/0002* (2013.01); *A63B 24/0062* (2013.01); *A63B 69/0075* (2013.01); *A63B 2024/0028* (2013.01); *A63B 2069/0008* (2013.01); *A63B 71/0619* (2013.01); *A63B*

2102/18 (2015.10); *A63B 2102/182* (2015.10); *A63B 2214/00* (2020.08); *A63B 2220/16* (2013.01); *A63B 2220/20* (2013.01); *A63B 2220/30* (2013.01); *A63B 2220/807* (2013.01); *A63B 2225/093* (2013.01)

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A batting practice device is provided. The device is designed to enhance training for baseball and softball players by enabling practice on launch angles and providing advanced feedback. The device comprises a hollow, weather-resistant base filled with dense material for stability and features built-in wheels for portability. A primary support pole with optional reinforcement supports a multi-height adjustable target member that catches balls, enabling the practice of specific trajectories like ground balls, line drives, or fly balls. The target member's height is adjustable using a locking mechanism. An adjustable tee with mechanisms for height, lateral, and angular adjustments simulates diverse pitch scenarios. Integrated sensors measure ball speed, launch angle, and distance, displaying data on an electronic interface for real-time feedback. An optional camera and AI software analyze swing mechanics, providing detailed performance insights, slow-motion replays, and recommendations to improve hitting techniques.
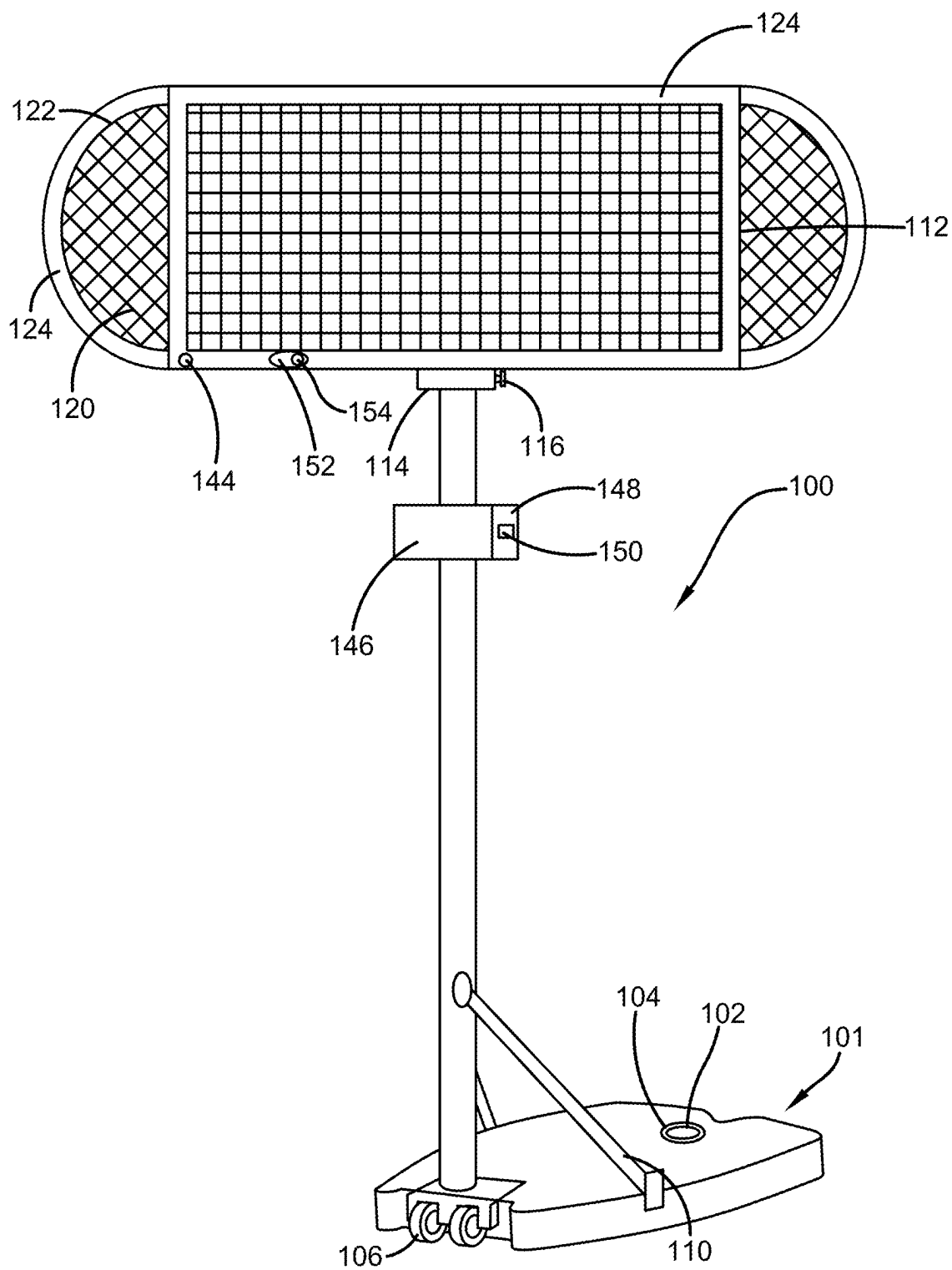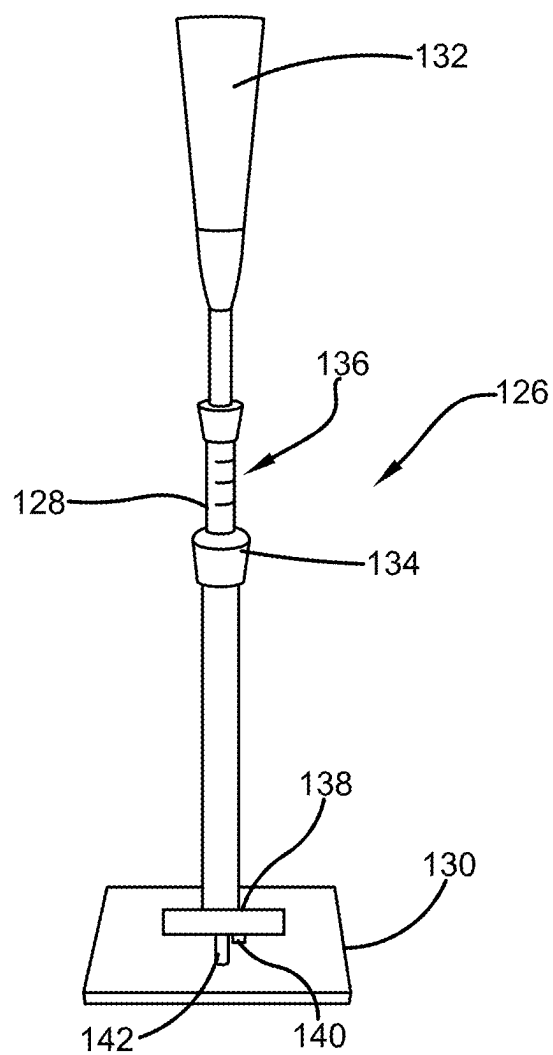
FIG. 1

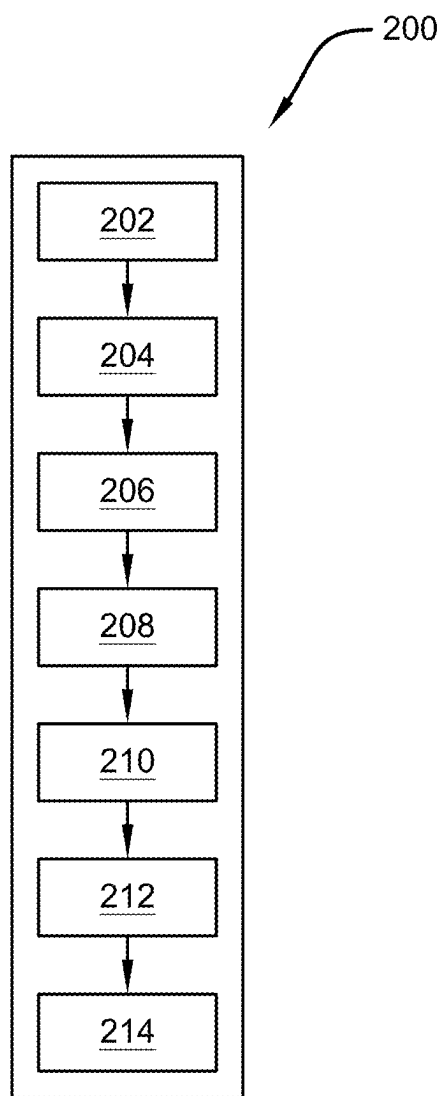## FIG. 2

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FIG. 3

BATTING PRACTICE DEVICE

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] The present application claims priority to, and the benefit of, U.S. Provisional Application No. 63/555,616, which was filed on Feb. 20, 2024, and is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates generally to the field of baseball and softball training devices. More specifically, the present invention relates to a baseball and softball training device that enables the practicing of launch angles and provides advanced feedback through features such as a height-adjustable target member, a height-adjustable tee, and integrated sensors. Accordingly, the present disclosure makes specific reference thereto. Nonetheless, it is to be appreciated that aspects of the present invention are also equally applicable to other like applications, devices, and methods of manufacture.

BACKGROUND

[0003] In sports such as baseball and softball, consistent and effective hitting is a fundamental skill that requires precise technique and continuous practice. One critical aspect of batting is the ability to control the launch angle of the ball, as this determines the trajectory and type of hit, such as ground balls, line drives, or fly balls. However, many players face challenges in practicing and perfecting launch angles during training sessions. Traditional batting practice often lacks the necessary tools to provide accurate feedback or simulate realistic ball trajectories. Without proper equipment, players are unable to focus on refining specific launch angles, which can hinder their overall development as hitters. Furthermore, existing batting training devices often lack portability, durability, and adjustability, making them impractical for varied training environments or for simulating diverse pitch scenarios. As a result, there is a pressing need for a training device that not only enables targeted practice of launch angles but also provides real-time feedback to help players evaluate and improve their performance. Such a device would allow players to fine-tune their techniques and maximize their effectiveness in real-game situations.

[0004] Therefore, there exists a long-felt need in the art for a batting practice device that allows players to practice and refine specific launch angles. There also exists a long-felt need in the art for a batting practice device that provides real-time feedback on key performance metrics, such as ball speed, trajectory, and launch angle. Moreover, there exists a long-felt need in the art for a batting practice device that is durable, portable, and adjustable to accommodate diverse training scenarios and environments.

[0005] The subject matter disclosed and claimed herein, in one embodiment thereof, comprises a batting practice device. The device is designed to enhance training for baseball and softball players by enabling practice on launch angles and providing advanced feedback. The device comprises a hollow, weather-resistant base filled with dense material for stability and features built-in wheels for portability. A primary support pole with optional reinforcement supports a multi-height adjustable target member that

catches balls, enabling the practice of specific trajectories like ground balls, line drives, or fly balls. The target member's height is adjustable using a locking mechanism. An adjustable tee with mechanisms for height, lateral, and angular adjustments simulates diverse pitch scenarios. Integrated sensors measure ball speed, launch angle, and distance, displaying data on an electronic interface for real-time feedback. An optional camera and AI software analyze swing mechanics, providing detailed performance insights, slow-motion replays, and recommendations to improve hitting techniques.

[0006] In this manner, the batting practice device of the present invention accomplishes all the forgoing objectives and provides a training device for baseball and softball players to practice specific hitting launch angles and that also provides real-time feedback on critical performance metrics, such as ball speed and trajectory, allowing players to monitor and refine their hitting techniques. Further, the inclusion of an adjustable tee with height, lateral, and angular adjustment mechanisms further enhances its versatility, allowing players to simulate a wide range of pitch scenarios. Additionally, advanced features such as a built-in camera and AI-assisted tracking software provide swing analysis and recommendations. By addressing the need for precise training, feedback, and portability, the batting practice device offers a comprehensive solution for improving batting performance in baseball and softball.

SUMMARY

[0007] The following presents a simplified summary to provide a basic understanding of some aspects of the disclosed innovation. This summary is not an extensive overview, and it is not intended to identify key/critical elements or to delineate the scope thereof. Its sole purpose is to present some general concepts in a simplified form as a prelude to the more detailed description that is presented later.

[0008] The subject matter disclosed and claimed herein, in one embodiment thereof, comprises a batting practice device. The batting practice device assists athletes in practicing launch angles during training for sports such as baseball and softball. The device comprises a weather-resistant hollow base, designed to be filled with water or sand for stability, and includes a removable threaded cap with a rubber gasket for a watertight seal.

[0009] A primary support pole attaches to the base, optionally reinforced by secondary support members for stability. A target member is attached to the pole, wherein a locking mechanism secures the pole at a desired height.

[0010] An adjustable tee with a telescoping body allows height, lateral, and angular adjustments for various hitting scenarios. The tee may be comprised of a locking mechanism, height markings, a sliding track for lateral adjustments, and a tilting mechanism for angular positioning. These adjustments simulate a range of pitch types and entry angles.

[0011] The device may also include embedded sensors to measure metrics such as ball speed, launch angle, and distance that are displayed on an electronic interface or mobile application. An optional camera, integrated with AI tracking software, records swing mechanics, offering detailed feedback, slow-motion replays, and comparisons with preloaded videos to enhance training effectiveness.

[0012] A method for using the device involves filling the base for stability, configuring the target member's height, adjusting the tee's height and position, and utilizing sensors and cameras for performance feedback.

[0013] Accordingly, the batting practice device of the present invention is particularly advantageous as it provides a training device for baseball and softball players to practice specific hitting launch angles and that also provides real-time feedback on critical performance metrics, such as ball speed and trajectory, allowing players to monitor and refine their hitting techniques. Further, the inclusion of an adjustable tee with height, lateral, and angular adjustment mechanisms further enhances its versatility, allowing players to simulate a wide range of pitch scenarios. Additionally, advanced features such as a built-in camera and AI-assisted tracking software provide swing analysis and recommendations. By addressing the need for precise training, feedback, and portability, the batting practice device offers a comprehensive solution for improving batting performance in baseball and softball.

[0014] To the accomplishment of the foregoing and related ends, certain illustrative aspects of the disclosed innovation are described herein in connection with the following description and the annexed drawings. These aspects are indicative, however, of but a few of the various ways in which the principles disclosed herein can be employed and are intended to include all such aspects and their equivalents. Other advantages and novel features will become apparent from the following detailed description when considered in conjunction with the drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0015] The description refers to provided drawings in which similar reference characters refer to similar parts throughout the different views, and in which:

[0016] FIG. 1 illustrates a perspective view of one potential embodiment of a batting practice device of the present invention in accordance with the disclosed architecture;

[0017] FIG. 2 illustrates a perspective view of a tee of one potential embodiment of a batting practice device of the present invention in accordance with the disclosed architecture; and

[0018] FIG. 3 illustrates a flowchart of a method of using one potential embodiment of a batting practice device of the present invention in accordance with the disclosed architecture.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0019] The innovation is now described with reference to the drawings, wherein like reference numerals are used to refer to like elements throughout. In the following description, for purposes of explanation, numerous specific details are set forth to provide a thorough understanding thereof. It may be evident, however, that the innovation can be practiced without these specific details. In other instances, well-known structures and devices are shown in block diagram form to facilitate a description thereof. Various embodiments are discussed hereinafter. It should be noted that the figures are described only to facilitate the description of the embodiments. They are not intended as an exhaustive description of the invention and do not limit the scope of the invention. Additionally, an illustrated embodiment need not have all the aspects or advantages shown. Thus, in other

embodiments, any of the features described herein from different embodiments may be combined.

[0020] As noted above, there exists a long-felt need in the art for a batting practice device that allows players to practice and refine specific launch angles. There also exists a long-felt need in the art for a batting practice device that provides real-time feedback on key performance metrics, such as ball speed, trajectory, and launch angle. Moreover, there exists a long-felt need in the art for a batting practice device that is durable, portable, and adjustable to accommodate diverse training scenarios and environments.

[0021] The present invention, in one exemplary embodiment, is comprised of a batting practice device designed to aid athletes in training for sports such as baseball and softball by enabling the practice of specific hitting launch angles. The device comprises a weather-resistant hollow base, which can be filled with water or sand for stability and features a removable threaded cap with a rubber gasket to ensure a watertight seal.

[0022] A primary support pole is attached to the base and may be reinforced with secondary support members for added stability. A target member is connected to the pole, wherein a locking member secures the target at specific heights.

[0023] An adjustable tee with a telescoping body allows height, lateral, and angular adjustments to accommodate various hitting scenarios. Features include a locking mechanism, height markings, a sliding track for lateral movement, and a tilting mechanism for angular positioning, simulating a variety of pitch types and entry angles.

[0024] The device may also include sensors to measure metrics such as ball speed, launch angle, and distance, with data displayed on an electronic interface or mobile application. An optional camera integrated with AI tracking software captures swing mechanics, providing detailed feedback, slow-motion replays, and comparisons with preloaded videos to improve training.

[0025] A method for using the device involves filling the base for stability, adjusting the target member's angle, setting the tee's height and position, and utilizing sensors and cameras for real-time performance feedback.

[0026] The batting practice device provides a versatile training solution for baseball and softball players, enabling the practice of specific launch angles while delivering real-time feedback on performance metrics such as ball speed and trajectory. Its adjustable tee and advanced features, including a camera and AI-assisted tracking software, enhance versatility and effectiveness, supporting players in refining their hitting techniques.

[0027] Referring initially to the drawings, FIG. 1 illustrates a perspective view of one potential embodiment of a batting practice device 100 of the present invention in accordance with the disclosed architecture. The present batting practice device 100 is designed to assist athletes in sports such as baseball, softball, soccer, volleyball, or any other ball-striking sport by enabling precise control of launch angles during training. The device 100 is comprised of a base 101 that is preferably hollow and is made from a weather-resistant plastic or polymer, which is resistant to cracking, UV degradation, and other environmental stressors. The hollow base 101 is designed to be filled with a dense material, such as water or sand, to achieve the necessary weight for free-standing stability. A removable, threaded cap 102 with a rubber gasket 104 is incorporated into the base

101 to facilitate the filling and emptying process, ensuring a watertight seal that prevents leaks during use. To enhance portability, the base 101 includes built-in wheels 106, such as but not limited to recessed wheels, which remain off the ground during operation to maintain stability and only engage when the device 100 is tilted, allowing users to easily transport the device 100 between training locations. The wheels 106 are comprised of high-durability rubber or polyurethane, enabling smooth rolling on various surfaces, including grass, gym floors, or concrete. To improve traction during transport, the wheels 106 may be textured wheels or grooved wheels to prevent slippage when moving the device 100 across uneven or slick surfaces.

[0028] At least one primary support pole 108 is attached to the base 101, as seen in FIG. 1. The support pole 108 may be supported by secondary support members 110, which attach to both the pole 108 and the base 101. These secondary support members 110 provide additional structural reinforcement, preventing unintended tilting or swaying of the support pole 108 during high-impact training sessions. At least one target member 112 attaches to the support pole 108, wherein the target member 112 is designed to catch or redirect balls hit into/at the device 100 while allowing players to train for specific launch angles.

[0029] More specifically, the target member 112 is attached to the primary support pole 108. The pole 108 is telescopic such that the target member 112 can be locked into place at the desired height using a locking member 116, such as but not limited to a rotating collar lock, a spring-pin, etc. The locking member 116 ensures that the target member 112 remains securely positioned, even under the repeated impact of high-velocity balls. During use, the height of the target member 112 relative to the tee 126 allows users to simulate the proper launch angle of ground balls, line drives, or fly balls, ensuring said angle is achieved, as indicated by a hit ball making contact with (and being captured by) the target member 112, wherein the member 112 is preferably a net 120. The net 120 is reinforced with double-stitched or quadruple-stitched seams 122 to withstand high-velocity impacts over extended use. The edges of the netting may be comprised of at least one frame member 124 with high-durability piping or flexible rods to maintain the net's 120 structural integrity and prevent sagging. The height of the pole 108 may allow angles such as but not limited to 10-40 degrees to be formed from the tee 126 to the member 112.

[0030] The device 100 may also be comprised of an adjustable tee 126, as seen in FIG. 2, that enables players to practice a variety of hitting scenarios by allowing precise adjustments to the ball placement. The tee 126 may feature a telescoping body 128 with a base 130 and a ball-holding member 132 that a baseball or softball can rest atop of or can be secured within such as but not limited to rubberized cups, spring-loaded supports, or adjustable clamps that securely hold the ball without damaging its surface. The body 128 height is adjusted by loosening a locking mechanism 134, such as but not limited to a locking collar, friction clamp, or threaded fastener. The body 128 may be comprised of height markings 136 to provide preset levels for quick and accurate adjustments. The height markings 136 may be engraved, printed, or embossed for long-term visibility. The baseball tee 126 also includes a lateral adjustment mechanism 138 that allows the ball holder 132 to simulate inside or outside pitches. The mechanism 138 is preferably a sliding track or swivel joint that connects the body 128 to the base 130. The

mechanism 138 enables the ball holder 132 to move laterally, while a locking mechanism 140 on the mechanism 138, such as a ratchet or friction-based mechanism, secures the holder 132 in the desired position. In some configurations, the tee 126 further incorporates a tilting mechanism 142, such as but not limited to a ball-and-socket joint or pivoting hinge at the base 130 to allow angular adjustments. As a result, the tee 126 enables players to practice hitting balls at different entry angles, such as high fastballs or low-breaking pitches. The combination of height, lateral, and angular adjustment mechanisms ensures that the adjustable baseball tee 126 can simulate a wide range of pitch scenarios, making it suitable for players of all skill levels.

[0031] The device 100 also incorporates advanced features to provide players with real-time feedback and performance analysis. At least one sensor 144 embedded within or attached to the target member 112 measures key metrics, such as but not limited to ball speed, launch angle, and distance. The data collected by the sensors 144 is displayed on an electronic interface 146, such as a built-in LCD screen or a connected mobile application. This feedback includes swing velocity, exit velocity, and detailed trajectory graphs, enabling players to monitor their performance in real time. The sensors 144 and interface 146 may be powered by a rechargeable battery pack 148 comprised of a charging port 150. The rechargeable battery pack 148 may feature LED indicators to display the current charge level and provide alerts when recharging is required. The device 100 may also be comprised of a camera 152 mounted at optimal angles to record swing mechanics and ball trajectories. The cameras 152 are integrated with AI-assisted tracking software 154, which analyzes swing patterns and provides detailed feedback to the user via the interface 146. The interface 146 also supports features such as slow-motion camera 152 replays and side-by-side comparisons with preloaded swing videos, enabling players to identify areas for improvement and develop proper techniques. The AI-assisted tracking software 154 may further highlight key aspects of the player's swing, such as timing, bat path, and point of contact, and provide recommendations for improvement based on the collected data.

[0032] The present invention is also comprised of a method of using 200 the device 100, as seen in FIG. 3. First, a device 100 is provided, which is comprised of a base 101, at least one primary support pole 108, at least one target member 112, and at least one adjustable tee 126 [Step 202]. Next, the base 101 is filled with a dense material, such as water or sand to provide sufficient weight for free-standing stability [Step 204]. Then, the height angle of the target member 112 is configured using the locking member 116 [Step 206]. Next, the height, lateral position, and angular orientation of the adjustable tee 126 are configured to suit the player's training needs [Step 208]. More specifically, the height of the telescoping body 128 is adjusted using the locking mechanism 134, and height markings 136 may be used to select preset levels. The lateral adjustment mechanism 138 and tilting mechanism 142 are used to simulate inside or outside pitches and varied entry angles, respectively. The ball-holding member 132 is then loaded with a ball. Next, players hit balls using the adjustable tee 126 or directly at the target member 112. The target member 112, depending on the chosen configuration, either deflects balls at realistic trajectories or catches them using the surrounding net 120 [Step 210]. During use, sensors 144 embedded in the

target member **112** measure key metrics such as ball speed, launch angle, and distance. These metrics are displayed on the electronic interface **146**, enabling real-time performance monitoring. Players can review this feedback to refine their hitting techniques [Step **212**]. Optionally, the camera **152** records the player's swing mechanics and ball trajectories. The recordings are analyzed by the AI-assisted tracking software **154**, which provides detailed feedback and tailored recommendations through the interface **146**. Users can then access slow-motion replays and side-by-side comparisons with preloaded swing videos for further improvement [Step **214**].

[0033] Certain terms are used throughout the following description and claims to refer to particular features or components. As one skilled in the art will appreciate, different persons may refer to the same feature or component by different names. This document does not intend to distinguish between components or features that differ in name but not structure or function. As used herein "batting practice device" and "device" are interchangeable and refer to the batting practice device **100** of the present invention.

[0034] Notwithstanding the forgoing, the batting practice device **100** of the present invention and its various components can be of any suitable size and configuration as is known in the art without affecting the overall concept of the invention, provided that they accomplish the above-stated objectives. One of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that the size, configuration, and material of the batting practice device **100** as shown in the FIGS. are for illustrative purposes only, and that many other sizes and shapes of the batting practice device **100** are well within the scope of the present disclosure. Although the dimensions of the batting practice device **100** are important design parameters for user convenience, the batting practice device **100** may be of any size, shape, and/or configuration that ensures optimal performance during use and/or that suits the user's needs and/or preferences.

[0035] Various modifications and additions can be made to the exemplary embodiments discussed without departing from the scope of the present invention. While the embodiments described above refer to particular features, the scope of this invention also includes embodiments having different combinations of features and embodiments that do not include all the described features. Accordingly, the scope of the present invention is intended to embrace all such alternatives, modifications, and variations as fall within the scope of the claims, together with all equivalents thereof.

[0036] What has been described above includes examples of the claimed subject matter. It is, of course, not possible to describe every conceivable combination of components or methodologies for purposes of describing the claimed subject matter, but one of ordinary skill in the art may recognize that many further combinations and permutations of the claimed subject matter are possible. Accordingly, the claimed subject matter is intended to embrace all such alterations, modifications, and variations that fall within the spirit and scope of the appended claims. Furthermore, to the extent that the term "includes" is used in either the detailed description or the claims, such term is intended to be inclusive in a manner similar to the term "comprising" as "comprising" is interpreted when employed as a transitional word in a claim.

What is claimed is:

1. A batting practice device comprising:
   a base comprised of a wheel;
   a primary support pole attached to the base;
   a target member attached to the primary support pole; and
   an adjustable tee comprising a body, a ball-holding member attached to the body, and a lateral adjustment mechanism for adjusting a lateral position of the ball-holding member.

2. The batting practice device of claim **1**, wherein the wheel is comprised of a recessed wheel.

3. The batting practice device of claim **1**, wherein the locking mechanism is comprised of a quick-release lever.

4. The batting practice device of claim **1**, wherein the base is hollow.

5. The batting practice device of claim **4**, wherein the base is comprised of cap.

6. The batting practice device of claim **5**, wherein the base is comprised of a gasket.

7. The batting practice device of claim **1**, wherein the primary support pole is telescopic.

8. The batting practice device of claim **1** further comprised of a secondary support member that attaches to the base and to the primary support pole.

9. A batting practice device comprising:
   a base comprised of a wheel;
   a primary support pole attached to the base;
   a camera;
   a sensor;
   an electronic display;
   a target member attached to the primary support pole; and
   an adjustable tee comprising a body, a ball-holding member attached to the body, and a lateral adjustment mechanism for adjusting a lateral position of the ball-holding member.

10. The batting practice device of claim **9**, wherein the primary support pole is telescopic.

11. The batting practice device of claim **10**, wherein the primary support pole is comprised of a locking member.

12. The batting practice device of claim **9**, wherein the target member is flat.

13. The batting practice device of claim **9**, wherein the target member is comprised of a net.

14. The batting practice device of claim **13**, wherein the net is comprised of a frame member.

15. The batting practice device of claim **9**, wherein the ball-holding member is comprised of a rubberized cup.

16. The batting practice device of claim **9**, wherein the body is comprised of a telescopic body.

17. The batting practice device of claim **9**, wherein the sensor measures a ball speed, a launch angle, and a distance.

18. The batting practice device of claim **9**, wherein the camera is comprised of an AI-assisted tracking software.

19. The batting practice device of claim **13**, wherein the net is comprised of a reinforced seam.

20. A method of using a batting practice device, the method comprising the following steps:
   providing a batting practice device comprised of a base, a primary support pole attached to the base, a target member attached to the primary support pole via a pivoting mechanism, and an adjustable tee comprising a telescoping body and a ball-holding member;

adjusting the primary support pole to configure the target member to a desired height and securing the target member in place using a locking member;

adjusting a lateral position of the ball-holding member using a lateral adjustment mechanism to simulate an inside or outside pitch;

adjusting an angular orientation of the adjustable tee using a tilting mechanism to simulate a desired ball entry angle; and

hitting a ball placed on the ball-holding member of the adjustable tee toward at the target member.

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