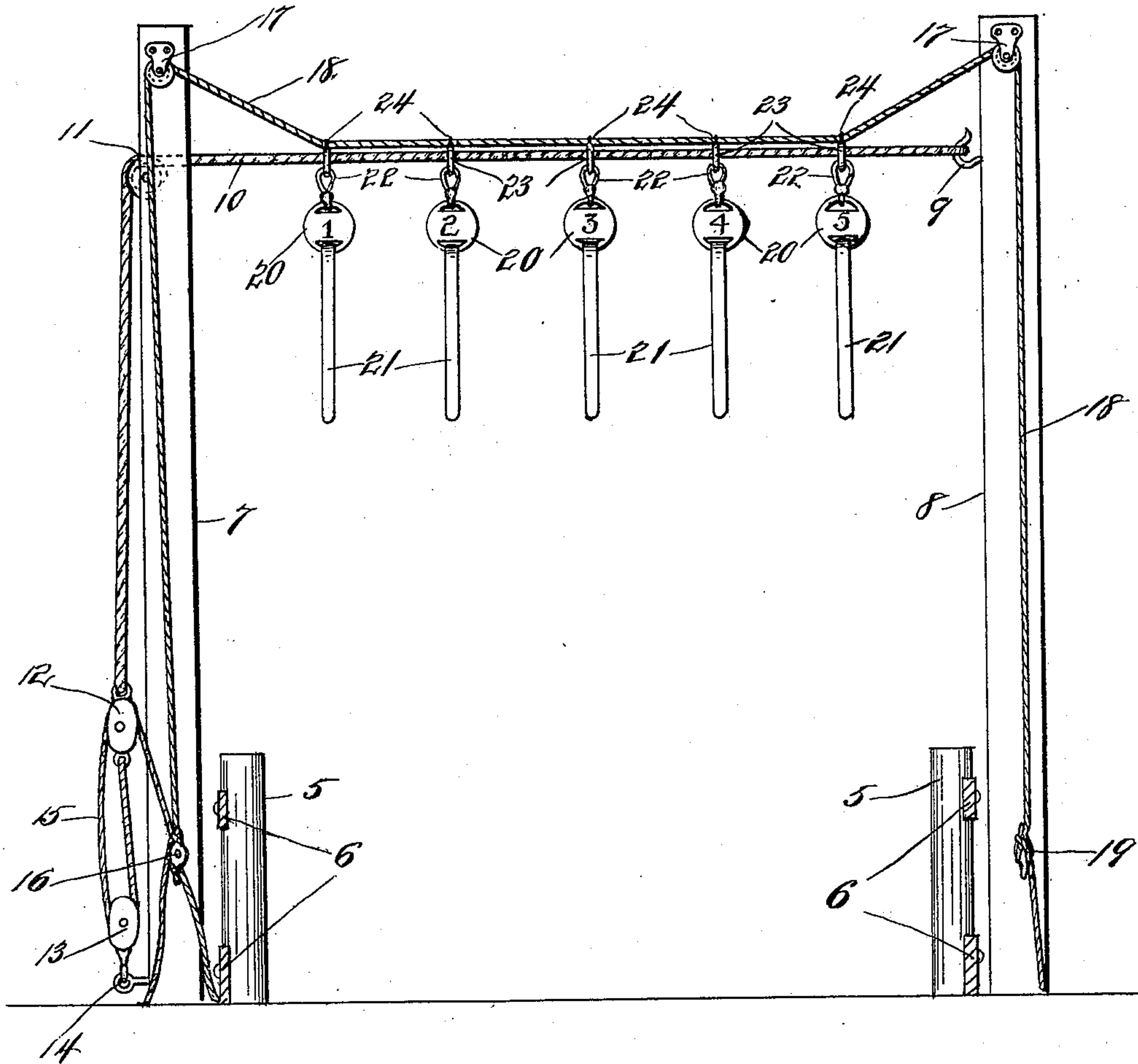


(No Model.)

W. H. WHITTLE.
STARTING APPARATUS FOR RACE TRACKS.

No. 594,717.

Patented Nov. 30, 1897.



WITNESS

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STARTING APPARATUS FOR RACE-TRACKS.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 594,717, dated November 30, 1897.

Application filed March 16, 1897. Serial No. 627,826. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, WILLIAM HENRY WHITTLE, a citizen of the United States, residing at New York, in the county of New York and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Starting Apparatus for Race-Tracks, of which the following is a full and complete specification, such as will enable those skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

This invention relates to starting apparatus for race-horses; and the object thereof is to provide an improved apparatus for this purpose by means of which the horses may be started evenly and fairly at all times.

The invention is fully disclosed in the following specification, of which the accompanying drawing forms a part, said drawing being a transverse view of a race-track, showing my improved starting apparatus connected therewith.

In the drawing forming part of this specification the separate parts of my improvement are designated by numerals of reference, and in said drawing I have shown at the posts at the opposite side of the track, which form a part of the fence by which the track is inclosed, and these posts are provided with boards 6, which constitute the fence, and in the practice of my invention I provide two uprights or posts 7 and 8, which are placed at the opposite sides of the track and near the grand stand or the starter's stand or at any suitable location.

The post 8 is provided near its top with a hook or other fastening device 9, and connected therewith is a rope or cable 10, which extends through a pulley at 11, which is connected with the opposite post near the top thereof, and said rope or cable is extended downwardly to within a predetermined distance from the ground and is provided with a sheave or pulley 12, and a similar sheave or pulley 13 is connected with the bottom of said post 7, as shown at 14, and I also provide a rope or cord 15, one end of which is secured to one of these sheaves or pulleys, and said cord is then passed around said sheaves or pulleys in the usual manner and is adapted to be connected with a cleat or

other fastening device at 16, secured to the bottom of the post 7.

By means of the rope or cord 15 the rope or cable 10 may be drawn taut, as will be readily understood, and connected with each of the posts 7 and 8, at or near the top thereof, is a pulley 17, and passed over these pulleys 17 is a cord 18, the ends of which are carried downwardly and secured one to the cleat or fastening device 16, which is secured to the post 7, with which the sheave or pulley 13 is connected, and the other to a corresponding cleat or fastening device 19, which is secured to the opposite post 8.

That end of the cord 18 which is secured to the post 8, at the bottom thereof, is preferably left quite long, and I also provide a plurality of disks or plates 20, each of which is provided with a depending strap 21 and at the upper side thereof with a spring-hook 22, with which is connected a link 23, through which the rope or cable 10 is passed, and each of these links is in practice adapted to be connected with the cord 18, as shown at 24, in any desired manner.

In making connection between the links 23 and the cord 18 I prefer to employ short strings, which may be tied thereto quickly and easily at any desired point, and by loosening the cord 18 from the bottom of the post 8 at 19 the disks or plates 20 may all be moved in the direction of the post 7, and by loosening the end of the rope or cable 10 at 9 and the end of the cord 18 at 19, and also by loosening the cord 18 at 16 and the rope 15 at the same point, the entire apparatus may be quickly and easily lowered to the ground.

Any desired number of the disks or plates 20 may be employed, and the operation will be readily understood from the foregoing description when taken in connection with the accompanying drawing and the following statement thereof.

In practice one of the disks or plates 20 is provided for each horse in the race, and in starting the horses each jockey is supposed to take hold of one of the straps 11, and at the starting-signal the straps are loosened and the race begins.

If it be impossible for a jockey to so manage his horse as to enable him to take hold of

one of the straps and hold it until the starting-signal, he may work his horse up to the line over which the straps are suspended, and if said strap touch his person at any point
 5 the starter may give the signal, the only object in this connection being that one of the straps will be grasped by or shall touch each of the jockeys in the race at the time that the signal to start is given.

10 My improved apparatus affords an excellent opportunity for the starter to discipline the jockeys, and at the starting each jockey has an object to accomplish which is known to himself, the starter, and the public, that ob-
 15 ject being to line up under his respective strap, and the necessity of doing this places the jockey under absolute control of the starter, and this necessity does away with all false starting or breaks.

20 With my improved apparatus it is impossible for a jockey to get left at the post for the want of a fair start, as there is no probability that he will not be able to grasp the strap or place himself in such position that
 25 the strap will touch his person.

The signal for the start may be given in any desired manner, but is preferably given by an electric gong or similar device, so as to enable each jockey to watch his strap and those of
 30 his opponents instead of being under the necessity of watching the starter or his assistants, and as soon as the horse is started the straps are removed from over the track in the manner hereinbefore described, thus giving
 35 a clear track.

My improvement is perfectly adapted to accomplish the result for which it is intended, while being also comparatively inexpensive, and may be employed wherever such appa-
 40 ratus is necessary.

Having fully described my invention, I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent—

1. A starting apparatus for race-tracks,
 45 comprising uprights or posts at each side of

the track, a cable or similar device which connects the upper ends thereof, a plurality of straps suspended therefrom, and means for moving said straps transversely of the track, substantially as shown and described. 50

2. A starting apparatus for race-tracks, comprising uprights or posts at each side of the track, a cable or similar device which connects the upper ends thereof, a plurality of straps suspended therefrom, and means for
 55 moving said straps transversely of the track, each of said straps being also numbered, substantially as shown and described.

3. A starting apparatus for race-tracks, consisting of posts or uprights at each side of the
 60 track, a cable or other device by which the tops of said posts are connected, disks suspended from, and longitudinally movable on said cable, straps connected with said disks, a pulley mounted near the top of each of
 65 said posts or uprights, a cord which is passed over said pulleys and connected with each of said disks, substantially as shown and described.

4. A starting apparatus for race-tracks, con-
 70 sisting of posts or uprights placed at each side of the track, a cable or other device by which the tops of said posts are connected, disks suspended from, and longitudinally movable on said cable, straps connected with said
 75 disks, a pulley mounted near the top of each of said posts or uprights, a cord which is passed over said pulleys and connected with each of said disks, and means for drawing said cable taut, substantially as shown and
 80 described.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my invention I have signed my name, in presence of the subscribing witnesses, this 10th day of March, 1897.

WILLIAM HENRY WHITTLE.

Witnesses:

C. GERST,

L. M. MULLER.