

[54] SNOWBALL FORMING DEVICE
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 [51] Int. Cl. F25c 1/10
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 249/161, 162

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[57] ABSTRACT

A snowball forming device comprising a first and a second semi-spherical cup-like means, each of said cup-like means having a closed end and an open end, said open ends being adapted to be brought together to form a completed sphere and handle means associated with the closed end of each of said semi-spherical cup-like means.

8 Claims, 6 Drawing Figures

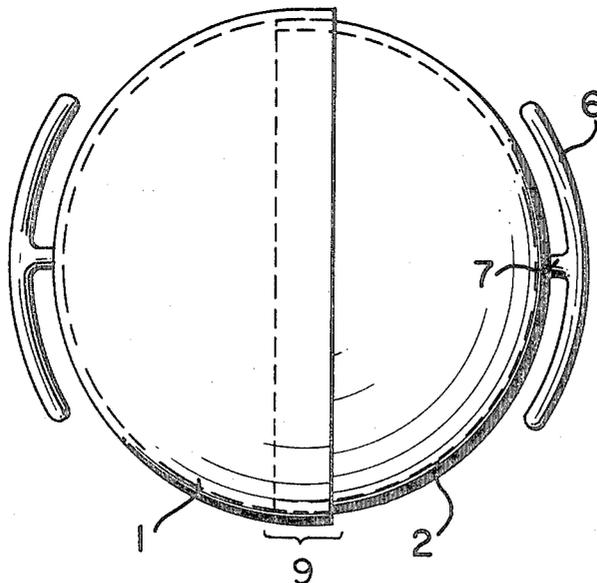


FIG. 1

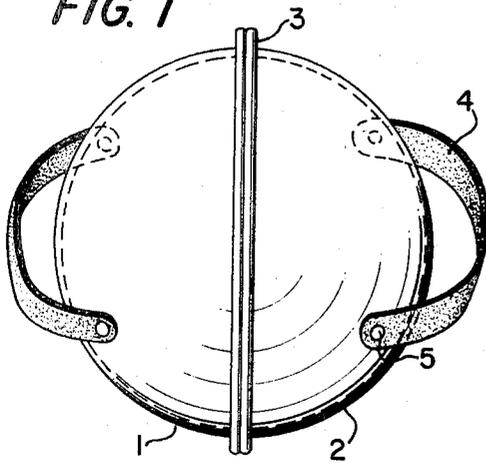


FIG. 2

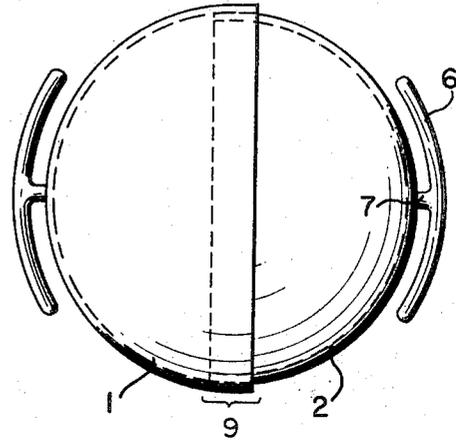


FIG. 3

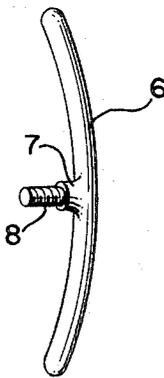


FIG. 4

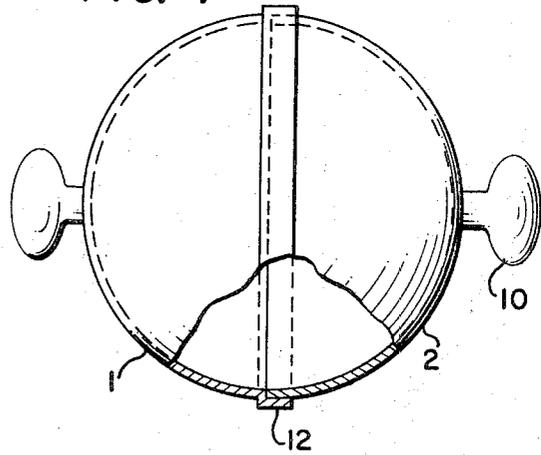


FIG. 5

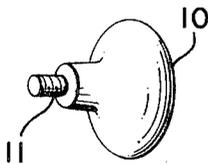
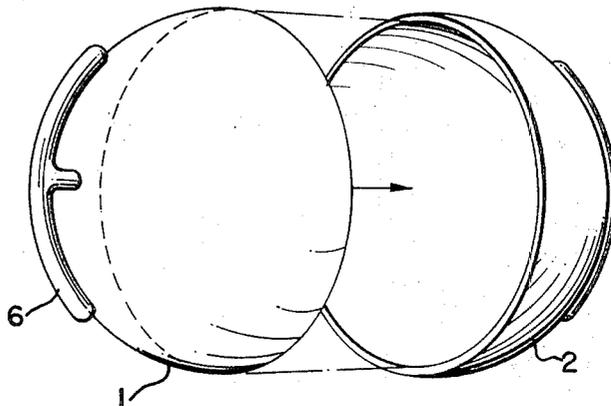


FIG. 6



SNOWBALL FORMING DEVICE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a toy-type device which is designed and adapted for the entertainment and enjoyment of children engaged in snow-ball throwing activities. More particularly, the present invention is directed to a manually operable mechanical device which can be used by children to form snowballs.

The throwing of snowballs is a normal and healthy activity engaged in by children and young adults of all ages. Individuals engaged in snowball throwing activity generally utilize their hands in forming the snowballs. In using bare hands to form snowballs, the coldness transferred from the snow to the bare hands generally substantially limits the ability to engage in snowball throwing for an extended period of time. In situations where the hands are protected by gloves or mittens, the gloves or mittens soon become wet due to the transfer of heat from the hands through the gloves or mittens to the snow. Accordingly, the gloves or mittens soon become wet and the hands become very cold. This is particularly true when the snow fall is of a wet type. The same problem is encountered even in snow falls of the dry-type with the further complication that it is very difficult to apply sufficient pressure between the hands to make a snowball which will stick together.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An object of the present invention is to provide an easy to use toy-like device which can be used by children and young adults of all ages to make snowballs.

Another object of the present invention is to provide an easy to use snowball forming device which can be conveniently grasped in the hands of the user and which can be adapted to scoop up the snow and form it into a substantially spherical snowball.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a snowball forming device which eliminates the necessity of the hands coming into direct contact with the snow.

Still another object of the present invention is to provide an easy to use toy-like device which is artistic to look at and designed and adapted for the enjoyment and entertainment of children given to fun provoking and snow-ball throwing activities.

Other objects and further scope of applicability of the present invention will become apparent from the detailed description given hereinafter; it should be understood, however, that the detailed description and the specific examples, while indicating preferred embodiments of the invention, are given by way of illustration only, since various changes and modifications within the spirit and scope of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from this detailed description.

Pursuant to the present invention, it has been found that the above-mentioned disadvantages may be eliminated and an effective snowball forming procedure may be achieved by utilizing the snowball forming device of the present invention. The snowball forming device of the present invention comprises two semi-spherical cups which, through the use of handle means, are adapted to be grasped by the left and right hand, respectively, of the child or young adult engaged in the snowball throwing activity. According to the present

invention, the semi-spherical cups are grasped in the hands of the user, raked across the surface of a pile or batch of snow in opposing directions, and the snow scooped up and trapped in the two semi-spherical cups is formed into a snowball by bringing the two semi-spherical cups together to form a sphere. Thus, by scooping the hands containing the device of the present invention together, a snowball can readily be formed. By separating the semi-spherical cups, a compressed snowball can be readily removed therefrom. In making snowballs it is frequently desirable to trap a substantial quantity of snow between the semi-spherical cups. Thus, by compressing a large volume of snow between said cups a compact snowball can be formed which can be readily removed from said cups. In addition, the frictional force created by the snow against the inner surface of the cups during the snow making process produces an amount of heat and surface melting which further facilitates the removal of the snow from the semi-spherical cups.

The snowball forming device of the present invention can comprise identical semi-spherical cups provided with peripheral lip portions which assist the snowball making individual in guiding the two semi-spherical cups together to affect the formation of the snowball. In another embodiment of the present invention, one of the semi-spherical cups can be slightly smaller than the other so that as the two cups are pushed together, one of the cups overlaps the other forming a friction seal. Such an arrangement facilitates the compression of the snow between the two semi-spherical halves or cups. This is particularly true in the case where the snowball forming device is made of a yielding-type of material, such as for example, a conventional plastic material.

In a still further embodiment of the present invention, one of the semi-spherical cups can be provided with a groove which is adapted to receive the other semi-spherical cup. In this embodiment both of the semi-spherical cups are substantially the same size but one of the cups is provided with a raised portion which defines a groove and is adapted to receive the opposing cup. All of the snowball forming devices of the present invention can readily be provided with handle means on the outside surface of each of the semi-spherical cups. Any type of handle means which provides the snowball forming individual with sufficient control to readily form snowballs, can be utilized with the device of the present invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The present invention will become more fully understood from the detailed description given hereinbelow and the accompanying drawings which are given by way of illustration only, and thus are not limitative of the present invention and wherein,

FIG. 1 shows the snowball forming device of the present invention wherein the semi-spherical cups are substantially identical and lip means are provided for guiding the semi-spherical cups together;

FIG. 2 shows another embodiment of the present invention wherein one of the semi-spherical cups is smaller than the other so that a friction seal is produced by pressing the two semi-spherical cups together;

FIG. 3 shows a type of handle means which can be readily attached to the semi-spherical cups;

FIG. 4 shows still a further embodiment of the present invention wherein guide means are provided on one

of the semi-spherical cups to guide the two halves of said cups together;

FIG. 5 shows another type of handle means which can be readily adapted to the snowball forming device of the present invention; and

FIG. 6 shows a perspective view of the snowball forming device of the present invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The snowball forming device of the present invention comprises two semi-spherical cups 1 and 2 for scooping up, trapping and accumulating the potential snowball. The semi-spherical cups are of a cross section that make it readily adaptable to be held in the hand of the user. As can readily be seen in FIG. 1, each of the semi-spherical cups is provided with handle means, such as straps 4 which can be readily attached to the respective semi-spherical cups by buttons or bolts 5. Each of the cups is provided with lips 3 which provide a surface for guiding the two semi-spherical cups together during the snowball forming operation.

FIG. 2 shows the embodiment wherein semi-spherical cup 2 is smaller than semi-spherical cup 1 and accordingly slides inside cup 1 a distance 9. In this embodiment of the present invention the cups are advantageously made of a yieldable thermoplastic or thermosetting material which permits the snowball forming individual to further compress the cups together. FIG. 2 also shows another type of handle means having a T-shape. This handle means contains a gripping portion 6 which is attached to the cups by an attaching member 7. The handle means can either be integral with the semi-spherical cups, such as for example, when the cups are molded of plastic or the handles can be separate units, as shown in FIG. 3 wherein they are merely screwed into the cups by screw element 8.

FIG. 4 shows the embodiment of the present invention wherein both of the semi-spherical cups are substantially identical in size but cup 1 is provided with an overlapping portion 12 which is adapted to guide the cup 2 into alignment with cup 1. This arrangement merely facilitates the snowball forming procedure utilized in the device of the present invention. FIG. 4 shows a further type of handle means which can be readily adapted to the device of the present invention. Thus, handle means 10 having a doorknob-like shape can be made integral with the semi-spherical cups or, can be a separate unit as shown in FIG. 5 wherein the handles can be screwed into the cups through the use of screw element 11. Although three types of handles are described and shown in the drawings, it is readily apparent that any type of handle means which is adaptable to the semi-spherical cups can readily be utilized in the snowball forming device of the present invention.

FIG. 7 merely shows, in perspective, one of the embodiments of the snowball forming device of the present invention.

It will be apparent that the device of the present invention can be made of a variety of materials, such as for example, aluminum, plastic, including both thermo-

plastic and thermosetting materials, aluminum coated with a plastic material, and the like. It is also readily apparent that the device of the present invention can be manufactured in a variety of colors and can also be provided with a cloth-like strap which can be associated with any portion of the semi-spherical cups to facilitate carrying said cups in one hand.

The invention being thus described, it will be obvious that the same may be varied in many ways. Such variations are not to be regarded as a departure from the spirit and scope of the invention, and all such modifications are intended to be included within the scope of the following claims.

It is claimed:

1. A snowball forming device for compressing light snow into compressed snow comprising a first and second semi-spherical cup-like means having substantially identical shapes, each of said cup-like means having a closed end and an open end, said first semi-spherical cup-like means being larger than the second semi-spherical cup-like means and thus having a larger diameter at its open end than the second semi-spherical cup-like means, said second semi-spherical cup-like means being adapted to nest in said first semi-spherical cup-like means a distance sufficient to compress the snow contents in said first and second cup-like means before the inner periphery of the first cup-like means engages the outer periphery of the second cup-like means, said semi-spherical cup-like means being yieldable so that during compression, the first cup-like means is deflectable outwardly and the second cup-like means is deflectable inwardly to further compress the snow, and separate and individual handle means attached to the closed end of each of said semi-spherical cup-like means and disposed opposite said open ends, said handle means being adapted to fit the hands of the snowball maker to enable said snowball maker to independently bring said semi-spherical cup-like means together.

2. The device of claim 1 wherein the handle means has a doorknob shape.

3. The device of claim 1 wherein the handle means is a strap means attached to the closed end of the semi-spherical cup-like means.

4. The device of claim 1, wherein the handle means is screwably attached to the closed end of the semi-spherical cup-like.

5. The snowball forming device of claim 1, wherein the handle means substantially conforms to the curvature of the closed end of the cup-like means.

6. The device of claim 5 wherein the handle means is integral with the semi-spherical cup-like means.

7. The device of claim 5 wherein the handle means is detachable from the semi-spherical cup-like means.

8. The device of claim 5 wherein the handle means has a T-shape which conforms to the curvature of the semi-spherical shape, said handle extending a distance from said cup-like means to enable human hands to slide in between said handle and the surface of said cup-like means.

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