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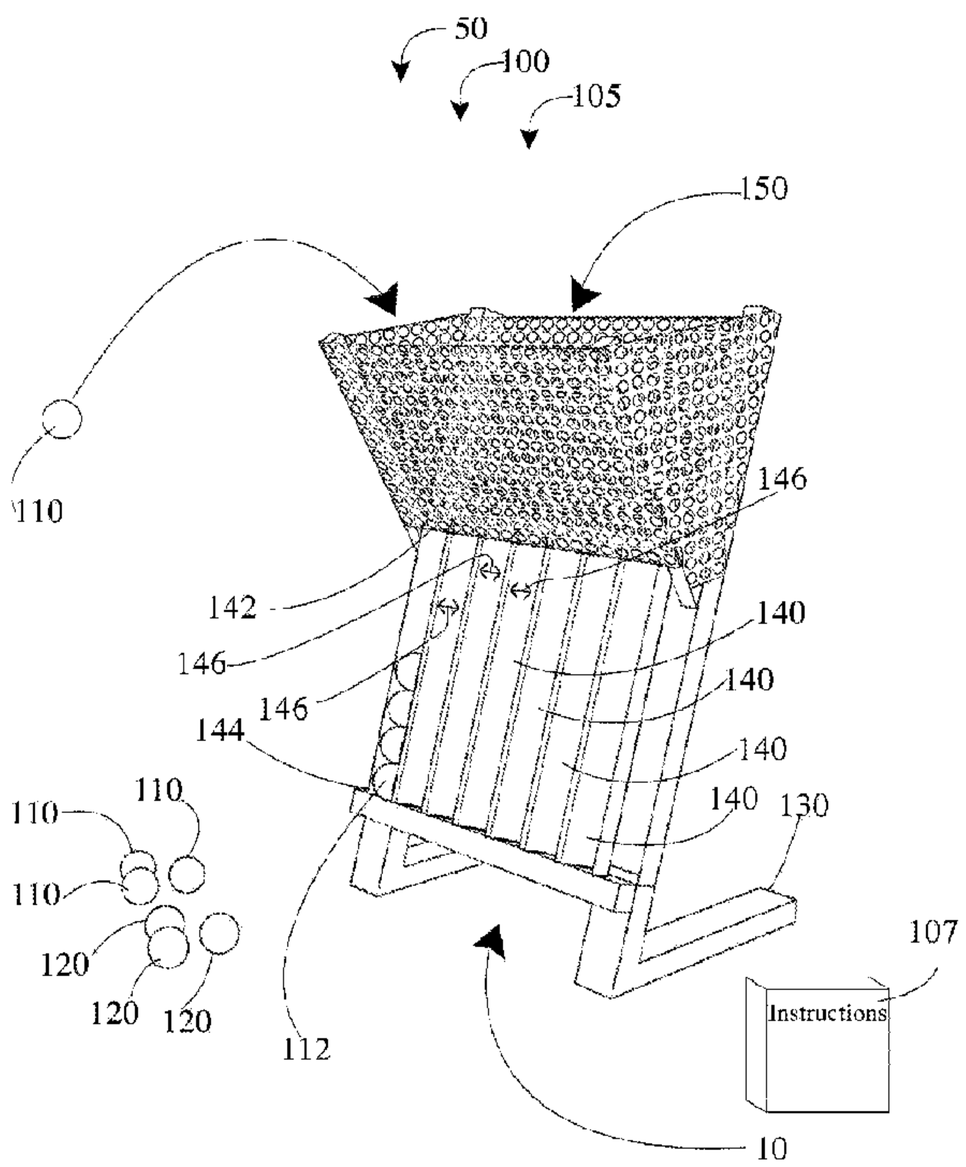


FIG.1

(57) Abrégé/Abstract:
An apparatus for playing a game includes a first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color and a second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color, each sized and dimensioned to be thrown by hand. A base stand that supports a plurality of vertically oriented channels each configured to hold and display a column of the spherical game -pieces. A funnel is affixed to the base stand that is configured to receive a thrown game -piece, and to direct the thrown game-piece into the upper end of one of plurality of vertically oriented channels. Astorage container may be located under the plurality of vertical channels configured to receive and store the game -pieces. The apparatus for playing a game is useful for playing a game with at least one participant.

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(54) **Title:** APPARATUS FOR PLAYING A GAME AND METHOD

(57) **Abstract:** An apparatus for playing a game includes a first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color and a second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color, each sized and dimensioned to be thrown by hand. A base stand that supports a plurality of vertically oriented channels each configured to hold and display a column of the spherical game -pieces. A funnel is affixed to the base stand that is configured to receive a thrown game -piece, and to direct the thrown game-piece into the upper end of one of plurality of vertically oriented channels. Astorage container may be located under the plurality of vertical channels configured to receive and store the game -pieces. The apparatus for playing a game is useful for playing a game with at least one participant.

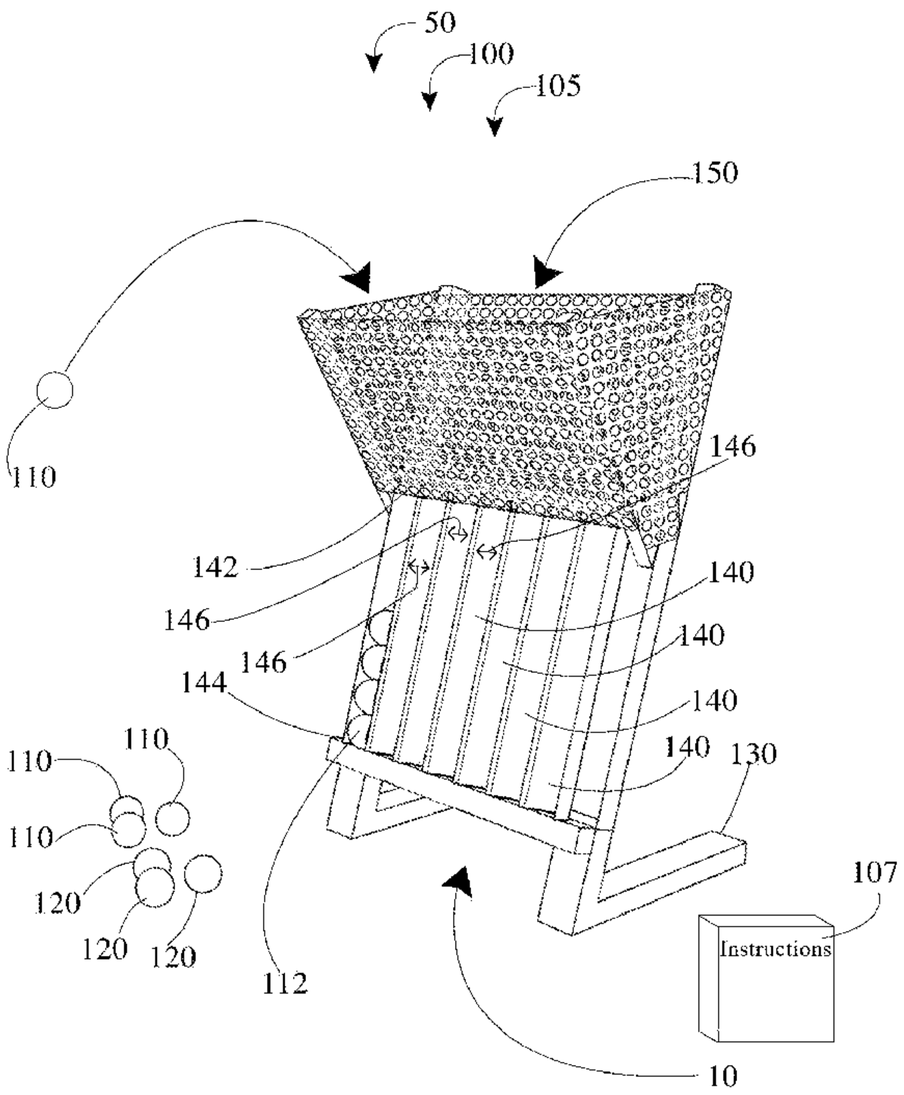


FIG.1

[Continued on next page]

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APPARATUS FOR PLAYING A GAME AND METHOD

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The following includes information that may be useful in understanding the present disclosure. It is not an admission that any of the information provided herein is prior art nor material to the presently described or claimed inventions, nor that any publication or document that is specifically or implicitly referenced is prior art.

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0002] The present invention relates generally to the field of games of existing art and more specifically relates to backyard ball-toss games.

RELATED ART

[0003] Backyard games encompass a wide variety of gameplay. Games can be played by an entire family or just one person. Many social events include a game of some type. Presently there is a clear distinction between conventional backyard games and indoor games. Backyard games are set up outside, typically in the yard of a person's estate. Backyard games often involve throwing an object to a target; such games include horseshoes, ladder toss, lawn darts and bocce ball. Generally, backyard games cannot be played indoors due to space restrictions and potential property damage. Indoor games involve smaller pieces, such as puzzles, chess, and games that include figurines. Generally, indoor games cannot be played outdoors due to the sensitive nature of the pieces.

[0004] U.S. Pat. No. 4,905,996 to David P. Tallent relates to a ball and target net apparatus. The described ball and target net apparatus includes a target net that has a perimeter framework securing a generally planar net wherein the frame work includes a plurality of forwardly extending horizontal legs and associated bracing to maintain the netting in a secure arrangement in use. The framework and the legs of the apparatus are telescoping to affect a compact structure easily stored when not in use. An inner net is selectively securable to spaced elongate straps longitudinally secured relative to the main net portion of the apparatus to provide a target in variable orientation relative to the main net.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] In view of the foregoing disadvantages inherent in the known backyard game art, the present disclosure provides a novel apparatus for playing a game. The general purpose of the present disclosure, which will be described subsequently in greater detail, is to provide an entertaining and efficient apparatus for playing a game.

[0006] An apparatus for playing a game is disclosed herein. The apparatus for playing a game includes a first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color, each sized and dimensioned to be thrown by hand. A second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color, each sized and dimensioned to be thrown by hand. A base stand is configured to rest upon a substantially horizontal surface. The base stand supports a plurality of vertically oriented channels each configured to hold and display a column of the spherical game-pieces. Each of the of vertically oriented channels has an upper end and a lower end, relative to the base stand. Each upper end of a vertically oriented channel is configured to individually receive at least one of the spherical game-pieces while each lower end is configured to prevent the passage of game-pieces through the lower end of the respective channel. A funnel

is affixed to the base stand that is configured to receive a thrown game-piece, and to direct the thrown game-piece into the upper end of one of plurality of vertically oriented channels.

[0007] According to another embodiment, a method for playing a game is also disclosed herein. The method includes the step of providing an apparatus for playing a game; the apparatus for playing a game comprising a first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color, each sized and dimensioned to be thrown by hand, a second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color, each sized and dimensioned to be thrown by hand, and a base stand configured to rest upon a substantially horizontal surface. The base stand has a top and a bottom, relative to the substantially horizontal surface, a plurality of vertically oriented channels affixed to the base stand, each configured to hold and display a column of a portion of the first plurality of the spherical game-pieces, a portion of the second plurality of spherical game-pieces, or any combination thereof. Each of the plurality of vertically oriented channels has an upper end and a lower end, relative to the base stand, each upper end configured to individually receive at least one of the first plurality of the spherical game-pieces and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces, each lower end configured to support a respective column by preventing passage of a bottom game-piece from a respective channel, and a funnel affixed to the base stand. The funnel is configured to receive a thrown game-piece, and to direct the thrown game-piece into the upper end of one of plurality of vertically oriented channels.

[0008] The method also includes the step of throwing one of the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color, and alternatively the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color, into the funnel such that the one of the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color, and alternatively the second plurality of spherical

game-pieces of a second color, is directed into one of the plurality of vertically oriented channels, the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color corresponding to a first player and alternatively a first team, and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color corresponding to a second player and alternatively a second tea. The method further includes the steps of repeating the process of throwing one of the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color, and alternatively the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color, into the funnel, alternating turns between the first player and alternatively the first team, and the second player and alternatively the second team, until a victor is determined, and determining the first player and alternatively the first team as the victor if the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color comprise a row of four as arrayed in the plurality of vertically oriented channels, and alternatively determining the second player and alternatively the second team as the victor if the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color comprise a row of four as arrayed in the plurality of vertically oriented channels; wherein the row of four comprises four adjacent spherical game-pieces of the same color in a vertical, horizontal, or diagonal orientation.

[0009] For purposes of summarizing the invention, certain aspects, advantages, and novel features of the invention have been described herein. It is to be understood that not necessarily all such advantages may be achieved in accordance with any one particular embodiment of the invention. Thus, the invention may be embodied or carried out in a manner that achieves or optimizes one advantage or group of advantages as taught herein without necessarily achieving other advantages as may be taught or suggested herein. The features of the invention which are believed to be novel are particularly pointed out and distinctly claimed in the concluding portion of the specification. These and other features,

aspects, and advantages of the present invention will become better understood with reference to the following drawings and detailed description.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] The figures which accompany the written portion of this specification illustrate embodiments and methods of use for the present disclosure, an apparatus for playing a game, constructed and operative according to the teachings of the present disclosure.

[0011] **FIG. 1** is a front perspective view of the apparatus for playing a game during an 'in-use' condition, according to an embodiment of the disclosure.

[0012] **FIG. 2** is a partial front perspective view of the apparatus for playing a game of **FIG. 1** during a 'non-use', according to an embodiment of the present disclosure.

[0013] **FIG. 3** is a top perspective view of the apparatus for playing a game of **FIG. 1**, according to an embodiment of the present disclosure.

[0014] **FIG. 4** is a front perspective view of the apparatus for playing a game of **FIG. 1**, according to an embodiment of the present disclosure.

[0015] **FIG. 5** is a flow diagram illustrating a method of playing a game, according to an embodiment of the present disclosure.

[0016] The various embodiments of the present invention will hereinafter be described in conjunction with the appended drawings, wherein like designations denote like elements.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0017] As discussed above, embodiments of the present disclosure relate to a backyard ball-toss game and more particularly to an apparatus for playing a game as used to provide an apparatus for playing an entertaining game.

[0018] Generally, an apparatus for playing a game includes a first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color, and a second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color, each sized and dimensioned to be thrown by hand. The first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color each may have a diameter of about three inches and alternatively the diameter of about one-and-a-quarter inches. The first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color may be ping-pong balls, and alternatively tennis balls. A base stand, that may be constructed of wood, configured to rest upon a substantially horizontal surface, the base stand having a top and a bottom, relative to the substantially horizontal surface. The base stand may comprise a self-supporting stand having a display side and a supporting side. The self-supporting stand is configured such that the display side and the supporting side are disposed at an acute angle relative to each other. A plurality of vertically oriented channels may be aligned substantially in a plane; the plane at an incline relative to the substantially horizontal surface; the plurality of vertically oriented channels being located on an upward facing side of the base stand with respect to the substantially horizontal surface and the plane. The plurality of vertically oriented channels may be affixed to the base stand, each configured to hold and display a column of a portion of the first plurality of the spherical game-pieces, a portion of the second plurality of spherical game-pieces, or any combination thereof. Each of the plurality of vertically oriented

channels having an upper end and a lower end, relative to the base stand, each upper end may be configured to individually receive at least one of the first plurality of the spherical game-pieces and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces. Each lower end may be configured to support a respective column by preventing passage of a bottom game-piece from a respective channel.

[0019] Each lower end of the plurality of vertically oriented channels may have a closed position and an open position, and may be further configured to release its respective column by opening from the closed position to the open position, permitting passage through its respective column. The plurality of vertically oriented channels may further each include a viewing slot vertically disposed along the vertically oriented channel, and configured such that the contents of the vertically oriented channel are visible. The plurality of vertically oriented channels may comprise seven vertically oriented channels. A funnel is affixed to the base stand; the funnel is configured to receive a thrown game-piece, and to direct the thrown game-piece into the upper end of one of plurality of vertically oriented channels. The funnel may include a frame configured to define edges of the funnel, and a netting material extending between the edges of the frame configured to receive and direct the thrown game-piece into the upper end of one of plurality of vertically oriented channels.

[0020] The funnel may include a forward ramp, a rear ramp, and two sidewalls. The forward ramp and the rear ramp extend upward from the upper ends of plurality of vertically oriented channels and away from each other relative to the plane of the plurality of vertically oriented channels. The forward ramp, the rear ramp, and the two sidewalls together may be configured to circumscribe the upper ends of plurality of vertically oriented channels. The two sidewalls may extend between the forward ramp and the rear ramp, with one of the two

sidewalls extending upward from the upper end of a first of the plurality of vertically oriented channels aligned in the plane, and the other of the two sidewalls extending upward from the upper end of a last of the plurality of vertically oriented channels aligned in the plane.

[0021] The apparatus for playing a game may further comprise a storage container configured to contain both the first plurality of spherical game-pieces and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces together. The storage container may be sized and dimensioned to contain at least twenty-four 3-inch diameter balls. The storage container may fit beneath the plurality of vertically orientated channels and may be configured to receive the first plurality of spherical game-pieces and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces when each lower end of the plurality of vertically oriented channels is opened from the closed position to the open position.

[0022] Referring now more specifically to the drawings by numerals of reference, there is shown in **FIGS. 1-4**, various views of an apparatus for playing a game **100**.

[0023] **FIG. 1** shows an apparatus for playing a game **100** during an 'in-use' condition **50**, according to an embodiment of the present disclosure. Here, the apparatus for playing a game **100** may be beneficial for use by a user **40** to play a game involving at least one player. As illustrated, the apparatus for playing a game **100** may include a base stand **130** configured to be secured on a horizontal surface **10**. The base stand **130** may be configured to retain and elevate a plurality of tubes **140** from the horizontal surface **10**. Each of the plurality of tubes **140** may be configured to hold any combination of a first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color **110** and a second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color **120**. The plurality of tubes **140** may each include viewing slots **146** traversing the length of each of the plurality of tubes **140**. The viewing slots **146** may display any combination of a first plurality

of spherical game-pieces of a first color **110** and a second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color that may have been retained in the plurality of tubes **140** as a column of balls **112**.

[0024] Apparatus for playing a game **100** may further include a funnel **150** configured to direct any combination of a first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color **110** and a second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color **120** into the plurality of tubes **140**. Each of the plurality of tubes **140** may include a tube-upper end **142** and a tube-lower end **144**. The tube-upper end **142** may be configured to allow the passage of any combination of a first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color **110** and a second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color **120**. The tube-lower end **144** may be configured to restrict the passage of any combination of a first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color **110** and a second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color **120** through the plurality of tubes **140**. Those with ordinary skill in the art will now appreciate that upon reading this specification and by their understanding the art of games as described herein, methods of gameplay (and alternate gameplay) will be understood by those knowledgeable in such art.

[0025] According to one embodiment, the apparatus for playing a game **100** may be arranged as a kit **105**. In particular, the apparatus for playing a game **100** may further include a set of instructions **107**. The instructions **107** may detail functional relationships in relation to the structure of the apparatus for playing a game **100** such that the apparatus for playing a game **100** can be used, maintained, or the like, in a preferred manner.

[0026] Referring now to **FIG. 2** showing the apparatus for playing a game **100** during a 'non-use' condition **60** of **FIG. 1**, according to an embodiment of the present disclosure. As

above, the apparatus for playing a game **100** may include a storage container **160** configured to retain any combination of a first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color **110** and a second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color **120**. The storage container **160** may be stowed beneath the plurality of tubes **140** (**FIG. 1**) that has been retained by the base stand **130**.

[0027] **FIG. 3** is a top perspective view of the apparatus for playing a game **100** of **FIG. 1**, according to an embodiment of the present disclosure. As described above the apparatus for playing a game **100** may include a funnel **150**. The funnel **150** may comprise a frame **156** and a netting material **158**. The frame **156** may tautly retain the netting material **158**. The netting material **158** may create a tapered barrier in the form of a first ramp **152** and a second ramp **154**.

[0028] As illustrated in **FIG. 3**, the first ramp **152** and the second ramp **154** may be used to guide any combination of a first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color **110** (**FIG. 1**) and a second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color **120** (**FIG. 1**) towards the tube-upper end **142** (**FIG. 1**) of each of the plurality of tubes **140** (**FIG. 1**).

[0029] Referring now to **FIG. 4**, a front perspective view of the apparatus for playing a game **100** of **FIG. 1**, according to an embodiment of the present disclosure. As illustrated, the base stand **130** that may be supported by a horizontal surface **10** may comprise an easel **134** type structure having a display side of stand **136** pivotably connected to a supporting side of stand **138**. The base stand **130** may retain the plurality of tubes **140** in a vertically oriented plane **160**. The vertical orientation of the plurality of tubes **140** is conceptually such that the column of balls **112** may be resting on a trapdoor **132**. As shown, the trapdoor **132** may be

configured to release the column of balls **112** from each of the plurality of tubes **140** when the trapdoor **132** is in an open state **80**.

[0030] **FIG. 5** is a flow diagram illustrating a method for playing a game **500**, according to an embodiment of the present disclosure. In particular, the method for playing a game **500** may include one or more components or features of the apparatus for playing a game **100** as described above. As illustrated, the method for playing a game **500** may include the steps of: step one **501**, providing an apparatus as described herein; step two **502**, throwing one of the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color, and alternatively the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color, into the funnel such that the one of the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color, and alternatively the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color, is directed into one of the plurality of vertically oriented channels, the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color corresponding to a first player and alternatively a first team, and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color corresponding to a second player and alternatively a second team; step three **503**, repeating the process of throwing one of the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color, and alternatively the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color, into the funnel, alternating turns between the first player and alternatively the first team, and the second player and alternatively the second team, until a victor is determined; step four **504**, determining the first player and alternatively the first team as the victor if the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color comprise a row of four as arrayed in the plurality of vertically oriented channels, and alternatively determining the second player and alternatively the second team as the victor if the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color comprise a row of four as arrayed in the plurality of vertically oriented

channels, wherein the row of four comprises four adjacent spherical game-pieces of the same color in a vertical, horizontal, or diagonal orientation.

[0031] It should be noted that the steps described in the method of use can be carried out in many different orders according to user preference. The use of "step of" should not be interpreted as "step for", in the claims herein and is not intended to invoke the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112(f). It should also be noted that, under appropriate circumstances, considering such issues as design preference, user preferences, marketing preferences, cost, structural requirements, available materials, technological advances, etc., other methods for playing a game **500**, are taught herein.

[0032] The embodiments of the invention described herein are exemplary and numerous modifications, variations and rearrangements can be readily envisioned to achieve substantially equivalent results, all of which are intended to be embraced within the spirit and scope of the invention. Further, the purpose of the foregoing abstract is to enable the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and the public generally, and especially the scientist, engineers and practitioners in the art who are not familiar with patent or legal terms or phraseology, to determine quickly from a cursory inspection the nature and essence of the technical disclosure of the application.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is new and desired to be protected by Letters Patent is set forth in the appended claims:

1. An apparatus for playing a game, the apparatus comprising:

a first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color (110), each sized and dimensioned to be thrown by hand;

a second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color (120), each sized and dimensioned to be thrown by hand; and

a base stand (130) configured to rest upon a substantially horizontal surface, the base stand having a top and a bottom, relative to the substantially horizontal surface;

a plurality of vertically oriented channels (140) affixed to the base stand, each configured to hold and display a column of a portion of the first plurality of the spherical game-pieces, a portion of the second plurality of spherical game-pieces, or any combination thereof, each of the plurality of vertically oriented channels having an upper end and a lower end, relative to the base stand, each upper end configured to individually receive at least one of the first plurality of the spherical game-pieces and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces, each lower end configured to support a respective column by preventing passage of a bottom game-piece from a respective channel; and

a funnel (150) affixed to the base stand, said funnel configured to receive a thrown game-piece, and to direct the thrown game-piece into the upper end of one of plurality of vertically oriented channels.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a storage container configured to contain both the first plurality of spherical game-pieces and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces together.

3. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the storage container is sized and dimensioned to contain at least twenty-four 3 inch diameter balls.

4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the plurality of vertically oriented channels are aligned substantially in a plane; and

wherein the funnel includes a forward ramp, a rear ramp, and two sidewalls, the forward ramp and the rear ramp extending upward from the upper ends of plurality of vertically oriented channels and away from each other relative to the plane of the plurality of vertically oriented channels, the two sidewalls extending between the forward ramp and the rear ramp, with one of the two sidewalls extending upward from the upper end of a first of the plurality of vertically oriented channels aligned in the plane, and the other of the two sidewalls extending upward from the upper end of a last of the plurality of vertically oriented channels aligned in the plane, the forward ramp, the rear ramp, and the two sidewalls together configured to circumscribe the upper ends of plurality of vertically oriented channels.

5. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the funnel includes a frame configured to define edges of the funnel, and a netting material extending between the edges of the frame configured to receive and direct the thrown game-piece into the upper end of one of plurality of vertically oriented channels

6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of the first color and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of the second color are tennis balls.

7. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of the first color and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of the second color each have diameter of three inches.

8. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of the first color and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of the second color are ping-pong balls.

9. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of the first color and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of the second color each have a diameter of one-and-a-quarter inches.

10. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the plurality of vertically oriented channels includes seven vertically oriented channels.

11. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of vertically oriented channels includes a viewing slot vertically disposed along the vertically oriented channel, and configured such that the contents of the vertically oriented channel are visible.

12. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the base stand comprises a self-supporting stand having a display side and a supporting side, the self-supporting stand configured such that the display side and the supporting side are disposed at an acute angle relative to each other.

13. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the plurality of vertically oriented channels are aligned substantially in a plane, said plane at an incline relative to the substantially horizontal surface, the plurality of vertically oriented channels being located on an upward facing side of the base stand with respect to the substantially horizontal surface and said plane.

14. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the base stand is made of wood.

15. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein each lower end of the plurality of vertically oriented channels has a closed position and an open position and is further configured to release its respective column by opening from the closed position to the open position, permitting passage of its respective column.

16. The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising a storage container configured to contain both the first plurality of spherical game-pieces and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces together, the storage container sized and dimensioned to contain at least twenty-four 3 inch diameter balls, and to fit beneath the plurality of vertically oriented channels and receive the first plurality of spherical game-pieces and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces when the each lower end of the plurality of vertically oriented channels is opened from the closed position to the open position.

17. An apparatus for playing a game, the apparatus comprising:

a first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color, each sized and dimensioned to be thrown by hand;

a second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color, each sized and dimensioned to be thrown by hand; and

a base stand configured to rest upon a substantially horizontal surface, the base stand having a top and a bottom, relative to the substantially horizontal surface;

a plurality of vertically oriented channels affixed to the base stand, each configured to hold and display a column of a portion of the first plurality of the spherical game-pieces, a portion of the second plurality of spherical game-pieces, or any combination thereof, each of the plurality of vertically oriented channels having an upper end and a lower end, relative to the base stand, each upper end configured to individually receive at least one of the first plurality of the spherical game-pieces and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces, each lower end configured to support a respective column by preventing passage of a bottom game-piece from a respective channel; and

a funnel affixed to the base stand, said funnel configured to receive a thrown game-piece, and to direct the thrown game-piece into the upper end of one of plurality of vertically oriented channels;

further comprising a storage container configured to contain both the first plurality of spherical game-pieces and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces together;

wherein the storage container is sized and dimensioned to contain at least twenty-four 3 inch diameter balls;

wherein the plurality of vertically oriented channels are aligned substantially in a plane; and

wherein the funnel includes a forward ramp, a rear ramp, and two sidewalls, the forward ramp and the rear ramp extending upward from the upper ends of plurality of vertically oriented channels and away from each other relative to the plane of the plurality of vertically oriented channels, the two sidewalls extending between the forward ramp and the rear ramp, with one of the two sidewalls extending upward from the upper end of a first of the plurality of vertically oriented channels aligned in the plane, and the other of the two sidewalls extending upward from the upper end of a last of the plurality of vertically oriented channels aligned in the plane, the forward ramp, the rear ramp, and the two sidewalls together configured to circumscribe the upper ends of plurality of vertically oriented channels;

wherein the funnel includes a frame configured to define edges of the funnel, and a netting material extending between the edges of the frame configured to receive and direct the thrown game-piece into the upper end of one of plurality of vertically oriented channels;

wherein the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of the first color and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of the second color are tennis balls;

wherein the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of the first color and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of the second color each have diameter of three inches;

wherein the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of the first color and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of the second color are ping-pong balls;

wherein the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of the first color and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of the second color each have a diameter of one-and-a-quarter inches;

wherein the plurality of vertically oriented channels includes seven vertically oriented channels;

wherein each of the plurality of vertically oriented channels includes a viewing slot vertically disposed along the vertically oriented channel, and configured such that the contents of the vertically oriented channel are visible;

wherein the base stand comprises a self-supporting stand having a display side and a supporting side, the self-supporting stand configured such that the display side and the supporting side are disposed at an acute angle relative to each other;

wherein the plurality of vertically oriented channels are aligned substantially in a plane, said plane at an incline relative to the substantially horizontal surface, the plurality of vertically oriented channels being located on an upward facing side of the base stand with respect to the substantially horizontal surface and said plane;

wherein the base stand is made of wood;

wherein each lower end of the plurality of vertically oriented channels has a closed position and an open position, and is further configured to release its respective column by opening from the closed position to the open position, permitting passage of its respective column;

further comprising a storage container configured to contain both the first plurality of spherical game-pieces and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces together, the storage container sized and dimensioned to contain at least twenty-four 3 inch diameter balls, and to fit beneath the plurality of vertically oriented channels and receive the first plurality of spherical game-pieces and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces when the each lower end of the plurality of vertically oriented channels is opened from the closed position to the open position;

18. The apparatus of claim 17, further comprising set of instructions; and

wherein the apparatus is arranged as a kit.

19. A method of playing a game with a first player and a second player, the method comprising the steps of:

providing an apparatus for playing a game comprising a first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color, each sized and dimensioned to be thrown by hand, a second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color, each sized and dimensioned to be thrown by hand, and a base stand configured to rest upon a substantially horizontal surface, the base stand having a top and a bottom, relative to the substantially horizontal surface, a plurality of vertically oriented channels affixed to the base stand, each configured to hold and display a column of a portion of the first plurality of the spherical game-pieces, a portion of the second plurality of spherical game-pieces, or any combination thereof, each of the plurality of vertically oriented channels having an upper end and a lower end, relative to the base stand, each upper end configured to individually receive at least one of the first plurality of the spherical game-pieces and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces, each lower end configured to support a respective column by preventing passage of a bottom game-piece from a respective channel, and a funnel affixed to the base stand, said funnel configured to receive a thrown game-piece, and to direct the thrown game-piece into the upper end of one of plurality of vertically oriented channels;

throwing one of the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color, and alternatively the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color, into the funnel such that the one of the first plurality of spherical

game-pieces of a first color, and alternatively the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color, is directed into one of the plurality of vertically oriented channels, the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color corresponding to a first player and alternatively a first team, and the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color corresponding to a second player and alternatively a second team;

repeating the process of throwing one of the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color, and alternatively the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color, into the funnel, alternating turns between the first player and alternatively the first team, and the second player and alternatively the second team, until a victor is determined; and

determining the first player and alternatively the first team as the victor if the first plurality of spherical game-pieces of a first color comprise a row of four as arrayed in the plurality of vertically oriented channels, and alternatively determining the second player and alternatively the second team as the victor if the second plurality of spherical game-pieces of a second color comprise a row of four as arrayed in the plurality of vertically oriented channels, wherein the row of four comprises four adjacent spherical game-pieces of the same color in a vertical, horizontal, or diagonal orientation.

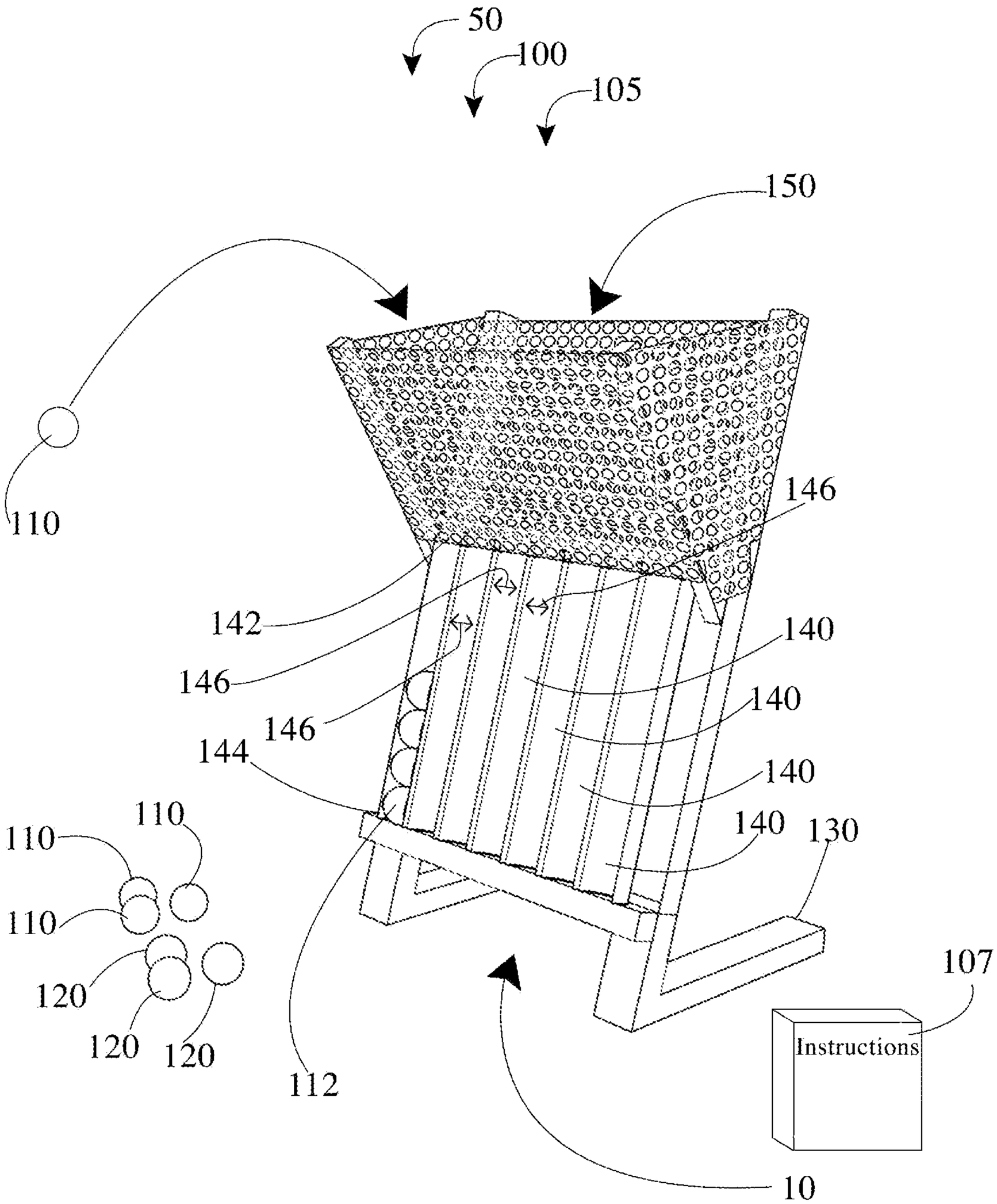

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Instructions
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FIG.1

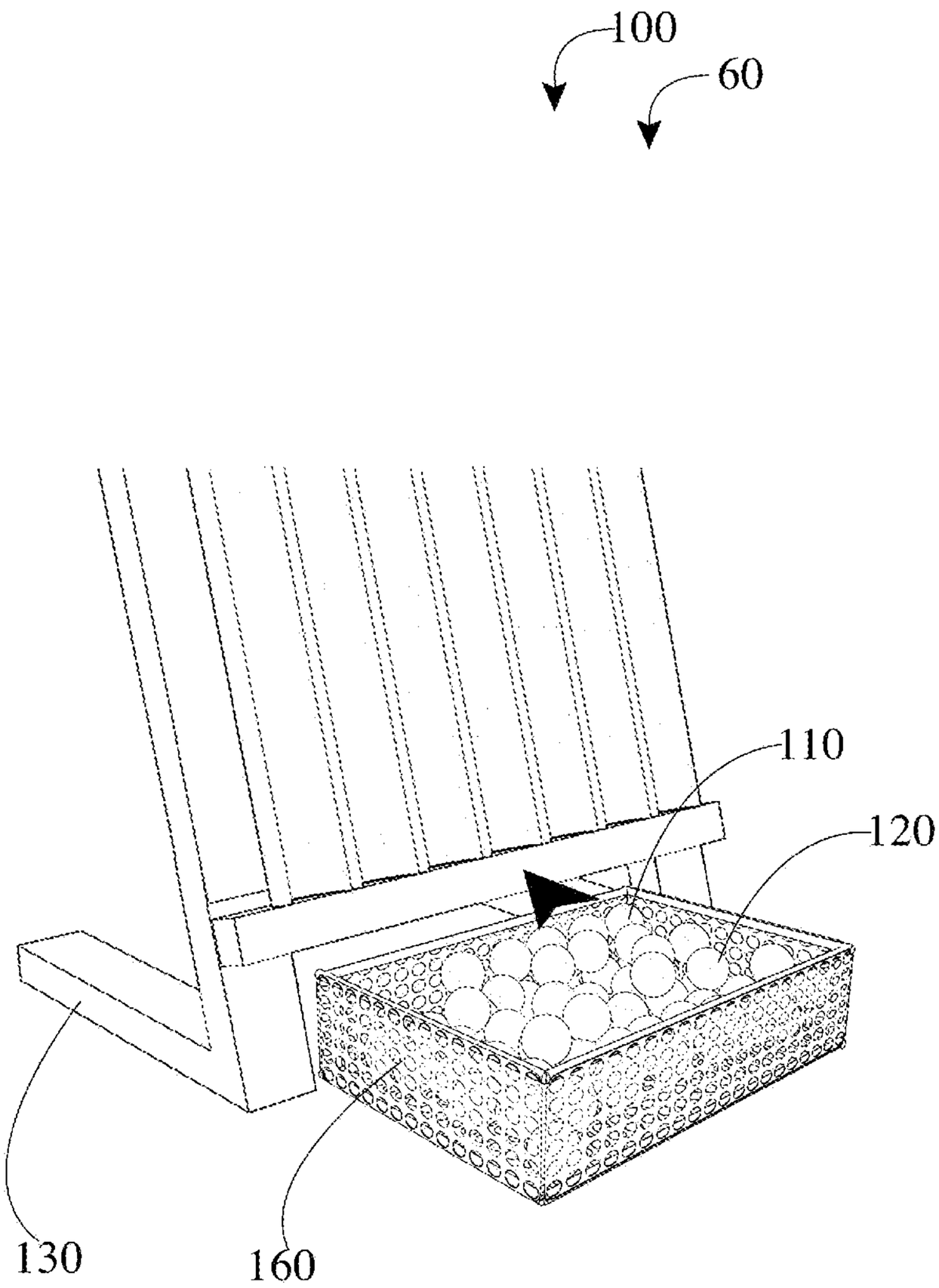


FIG.2

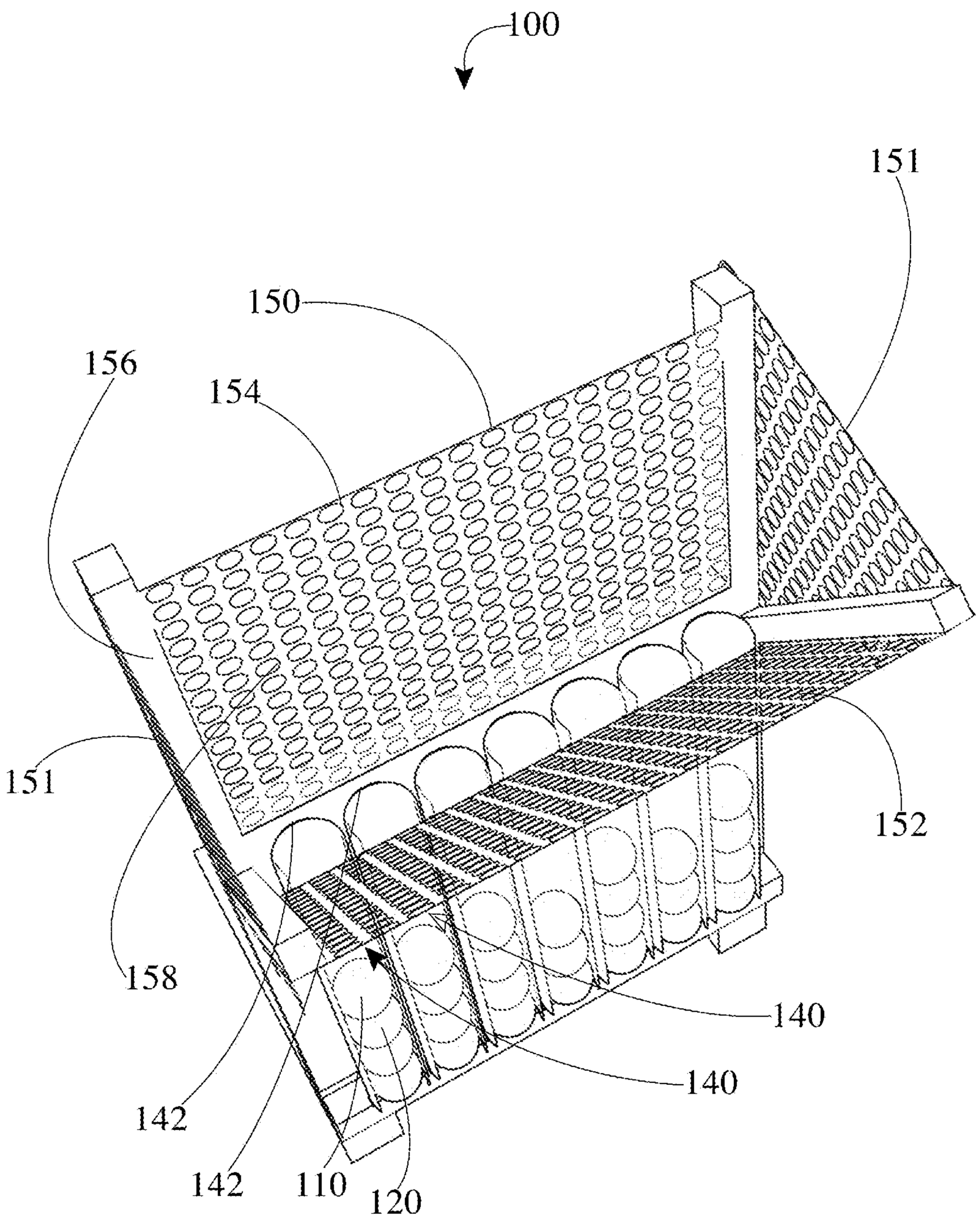


FIG.3

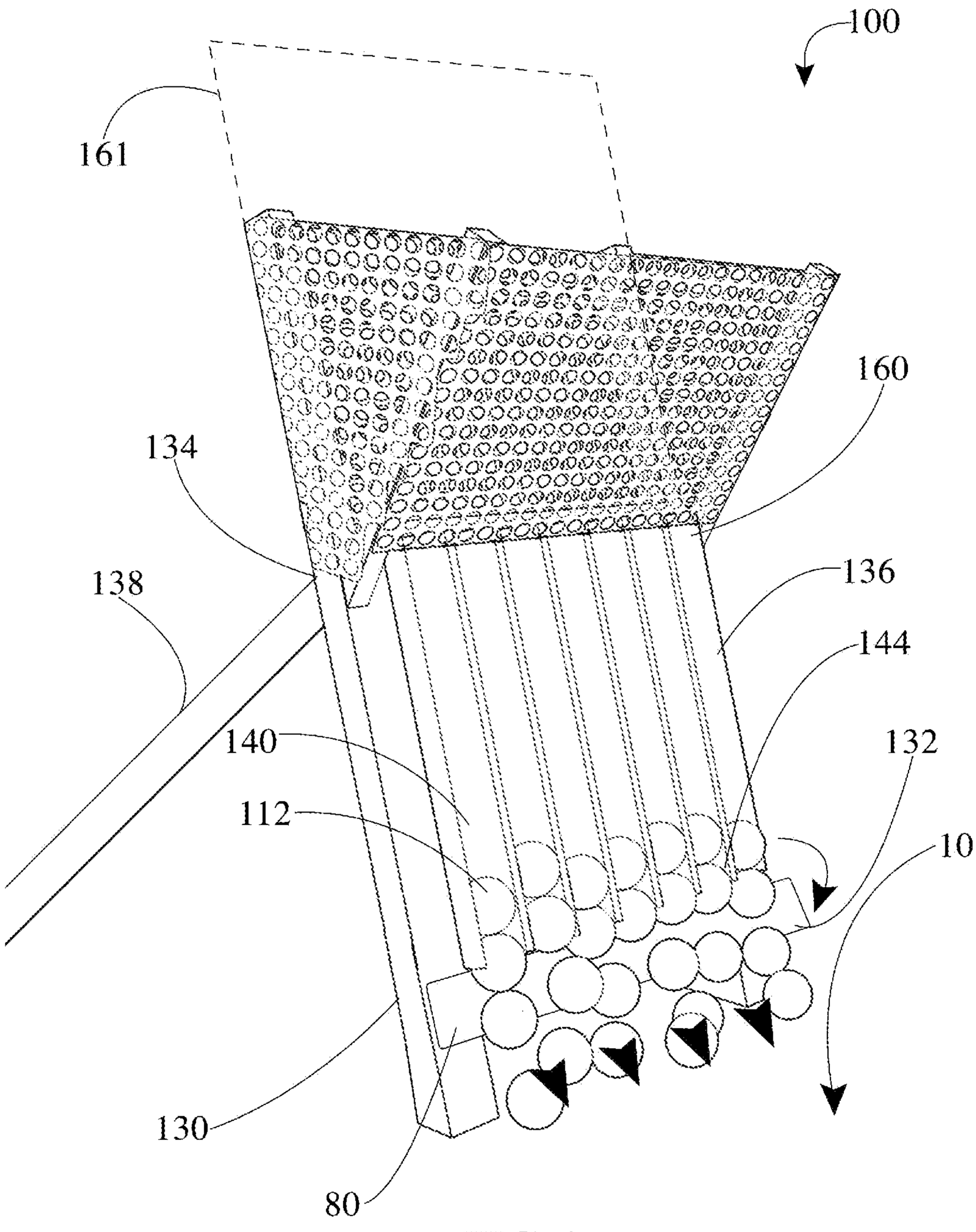


FIG.4

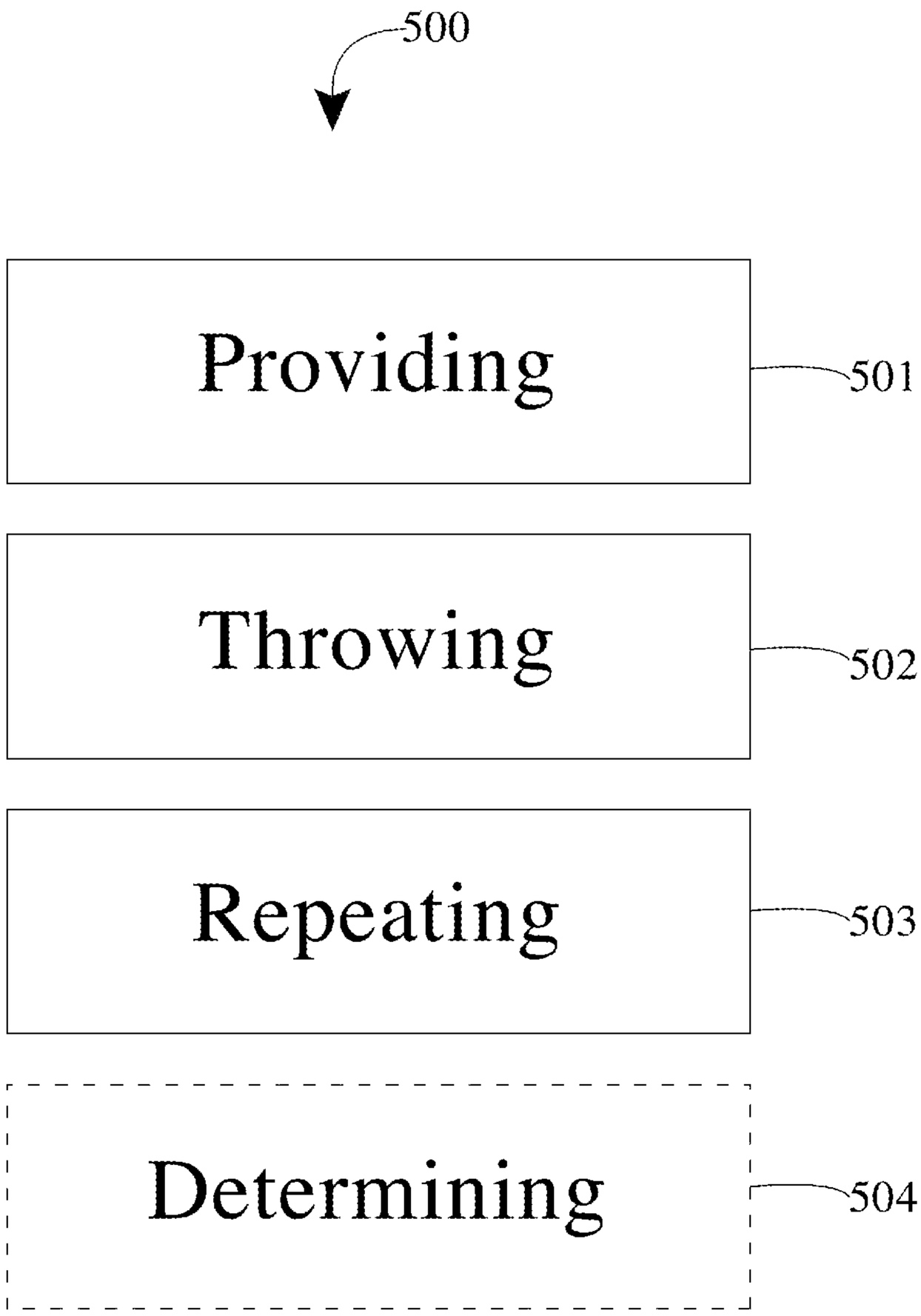

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FIG.5

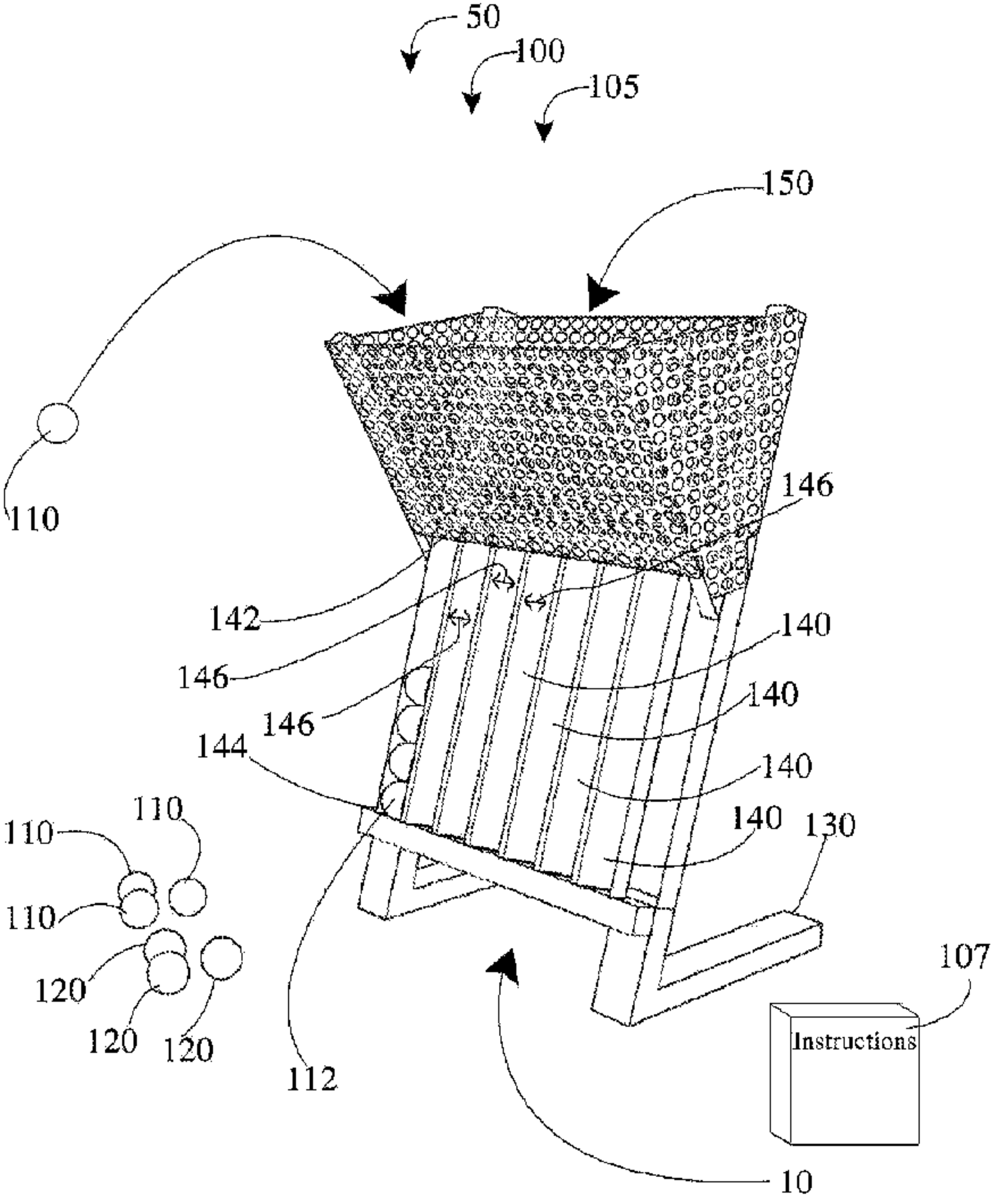

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FIG.1