

[54] **PORTABLE AND ADJUSTABLE
MINIATURE BASKETBALL GOAL**

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[51] Int. Cl. **A63b 63/04**
[58] Field of Search..... **273/1.5**

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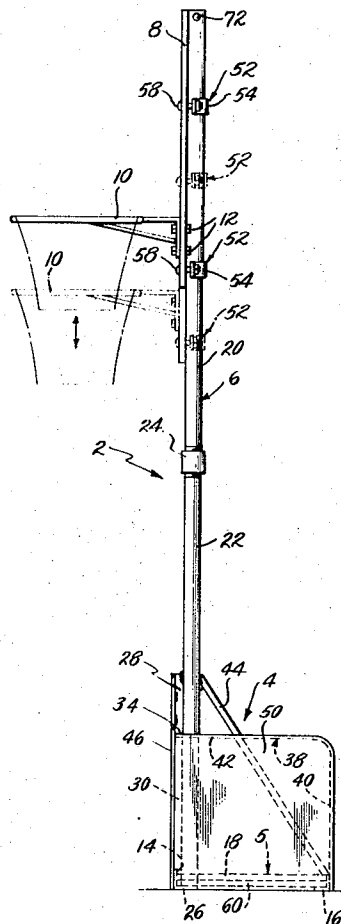
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[57]

ABSTRACT

A portable miniature basketball goal for use by small children has a base adapted to rest on a flat supporting surface and carries a vertical standard to which is secured a backboard carrying a hoop. The base includes a platform for receiving anchor means and has flat, vertically extending front and side walls surrounding the front and side edges of the base. The walls are devoid of sharp corners throughout. Brace means extend between the base and vertical standard to secure the latter in vertical position, and the brace means are confined within the boundaries of and are completely shielded by the walls, so that the danger of physical injury to a child from collision with the goal or brace means is minimized, and recovery of a ball fumbled in the playing area is made easy.

7 Claims, 8 Drawing Figures



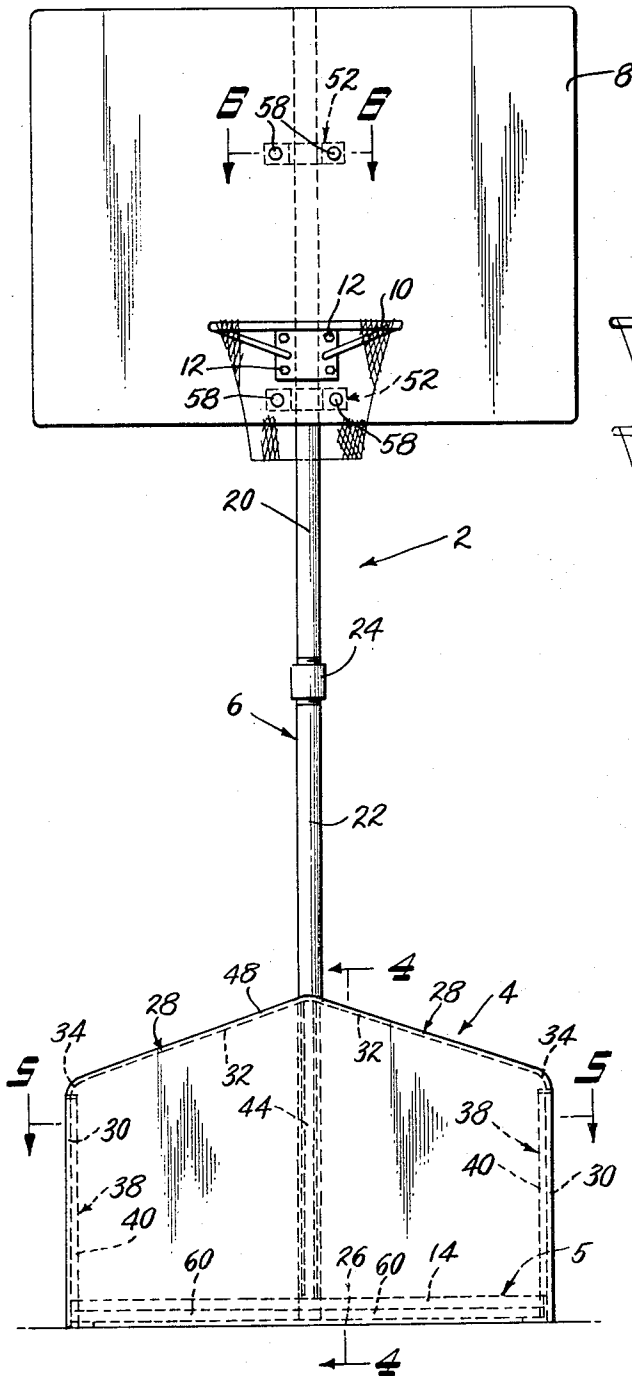


Fig. 1.

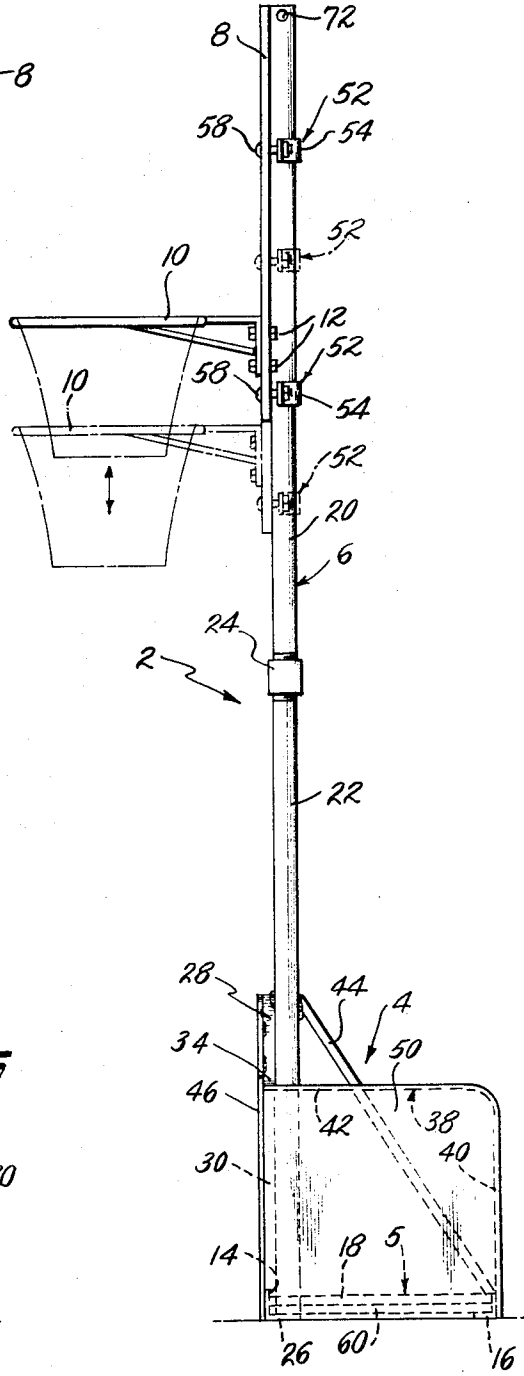


Fig. 2.

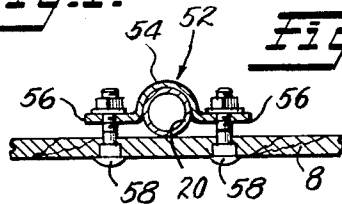


Fig. 6.

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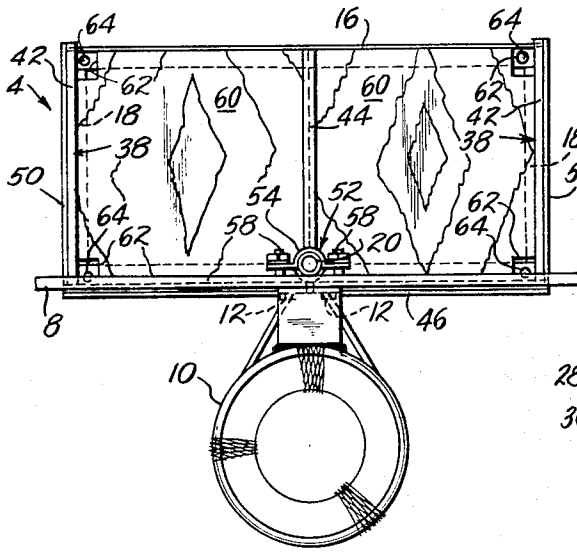


Fig. 3.

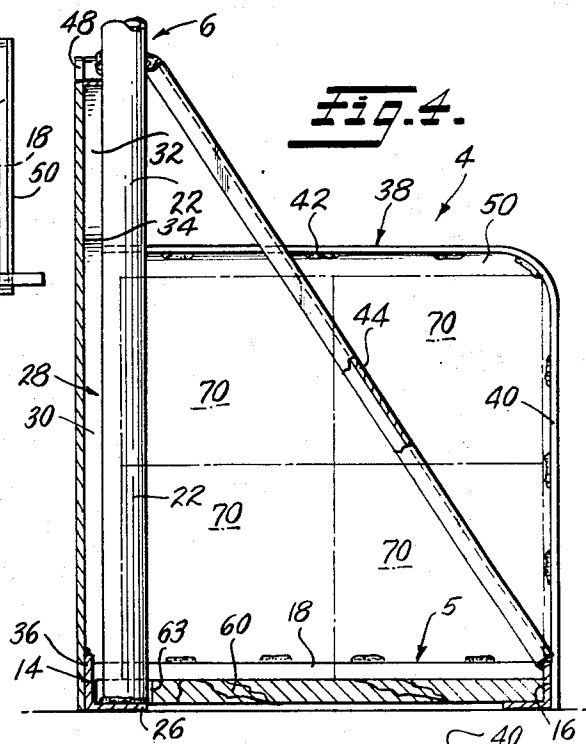


Fig. 4.

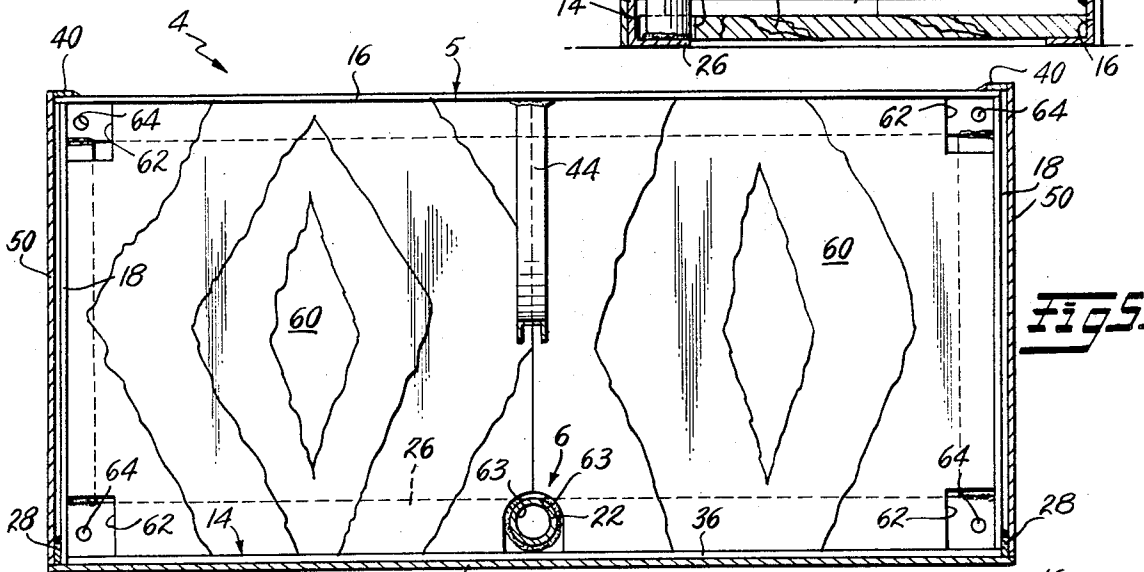


Fig. 5.

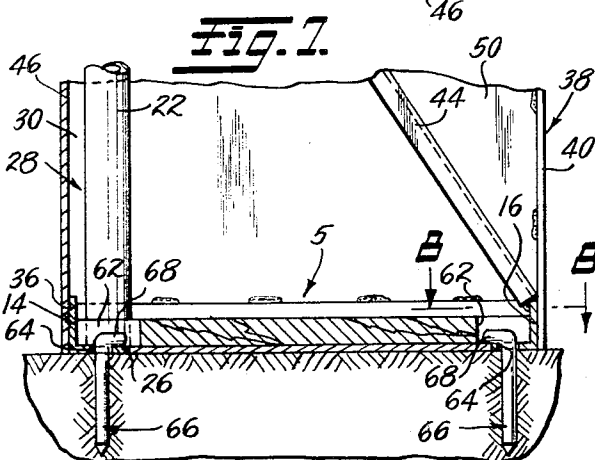


Fig. 7.

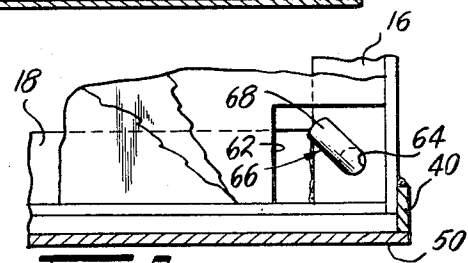


Fig. 8.

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PORTABLE AND ADJUSTABLE MINIATURE BASKETBALL GOAL

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates generally to portable basketball goals, and more specifically to a miniature portable and adjustable basketball goal designed for safe and easy use by small children, and which is economical to construct and can be firmly anchored in place.

2. Description of the Prior Art

Since the invention of the game of basketball there have been many goal constructions proposed, and several of these have been designed to be portable so that they can be placed on and removed from any suitable playing surface. However, none of the portable goals that have been proposed and which are available commercially give adequate consideration to the special demands of at home use by small children from age 3 to about age 10.

To be practical for home use, the average family must be able to easily afford the purchase of the portable goal. Presently available portable goals are generally too expensive for the average wage earner to purchase, mainly because of complex design. Accordingly, there is need for a portable goal that is of economical design, a need which the present invention meets.

A portable goal of necessity requires a base and standard arrangement for supporting the hoop.

When dealing with goals for use by larger children and adults, the design of the supporting structure is not too important. However, where a portable goal is to be used by small children, special problems are involved, because of the inexperience with which such children normally handle the ball and their frequent inability to avoid colliding with stationary objects while playing.

Presently available portable goals usually have supporting structures that include exposed structural members of small diameter or width. These members can cause severe injury to a child colliding therewith, and a loose ball can easily become entangled therewith. Further, a misdirected thrown ball striking such a small member frequently bounces back in a most erratic and unpredictable fashion, an event which causes difficulty in recovery for a small child. The present invention is especially designed with the small child in mind, and minimizes these problems.

A portable goal for home use must also be easy to move and simple to anchor in place. The present invention satisfies both of these demands.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present goal includes a base made of angle irons, to which is attached a flat front wall facing the playing area, and two flat side walls that extend rearwardly from the front wall. These three flat surfaces effectively shield the angle iron members both from a small child in the playing area, and from a misdirected playing ball.

Specifically, because only flat surfaces are presented to the playing area physical injury to a child colliding with the base will be minimized. Should a ball strike the flat surfaces it will merely bounce forwardly thereoff, in a predictable manner. Thus, the base is uniquely suited for use by children age 3 and up.

The angle iron base supports a vertical standard, made simply from two sections of pipe joined by a collar, the lower pipe section being welded to the angle irons of the base. This is a most economical arrangement, and disassembly of the upper pipe section for storage purposes is a simple matter. Because only the vertical standard itself projects above the front base wall, and all of the supporting angle irons are shielded by the three walls, a clean and attractive structure especially suited for use by small children results.

A hoop is mounted conventionally on a plywood blackboard, and the latter is adjustably secured to the upper

pipe section by a pair of clamps. Thus, the height of the hoop is easily adjusted to correspond to the ages of the children using the goal.

The goal can be easily and quickly placed on any suitable playing surface. When installed on a hard surface, such as a driveway or a basement floor, concrete blocks or the like are placed on a platform carried by the base for securing the goal in place. Four stakes are utilized to secure the base in place on a lawn, the three flat walls serving to shield both the concrete blocks and the stakes from the playing area. With the anchor blocks and stakes removed, the goal is light in weight and can be easily carried.

The present goal, since it is for use by small children, is, of course, smaller than the standard goal. The design features of the invention are especially adaptable to such a miniature goal.

It is the principle object of the present invention to provide a portable and adjustable basketball goal that is economical to construct, easily adjustable to various heights, and substantially nontipable when in place for play.

Another object is to provide a miniature basketball goal for use by small children, designed to present only flat wall-like surfaces to the playing area.

Other objects and many of the attendant advantages of the invention will become readily apparent from the following Description of the Preferred Embodiment, when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a front elevational view of the portable goal of the invention;

FIG. 2 is a side elevational view of the goal of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a top plan view of the goal of FIGS. 1 and 2;

FIG. 4 is an enlarged vertical sectional view taken on the line 4—4 of FIG. 1; showing details of the base structure;

FIG. 5 is an enlarged horizontal sectional view taken on the line 5—5 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 6 is an enlarged fragmentary horizontal sectional view taken on the line 6—6 of FIG. 1, showing one of the backboard clamps;

FIG. 7 is a fragmentary vertical sectional view, similar to FIG. 4, showing two of the stakes for anchoring the goal; and FIG. 8 is an enlarged fragmentary horizontal sectional view taken on the line 8—8 of FIG. 7.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring now to the drawings, the goal of the invention is indicated at 2 and includes a base 4, a vertical standard 6 mounted on the base, a backboard 8, and a hoop 10 secured to the backboard 8 by bolts 12.

The base 4 includes a rectangular frame 5 formed of a front angle iron 14, a rear angle iron 16, and side angle irons 18, the ends of said angle irons being welded together to form a rectangle, with the vertical flange of each member being to the outside. The vertical standard 6 is comprised of upper and lower pipe sections 20 and 22, respectively, detachably joined together by a threaded collar 24. The bottom end of the lower pipe section 22 rests centrally on and is welded to the horizontal flange 26 of the front frame angle iron 14.

The vertical standard 6 is braced to the frame 5 against lateral movement by a pair of front braces 28, each of which is made of strap steel and comprises a vertical portion 30 and an upwardly inclined portion 32, joined by a rounded corner portion 34. The bottom end of each front brace 28 is welded to the end face of the vertical flange 36 and the horizontal flange 26 of the front angle iron 14, so that the front edge of said brace is flush with the outer surface of the vertical flange 36. The lower pipe section 22 is set back from the front face of the vertical flange 36 a distance corresponding to the width of the front braces 28, and the upper ends of said braces extend to the center of and are welded to said lower pipe section.

The front braces 28 are braced by side braces 38 made of strap steel, each side brace 38 including a vertical portion 40 welded at its lower end to the rear frame angle iron 16, and a horizontal portion 42 that extends forwardly to the associated front brace 28 and is welded thereto just below the corner portion 34. Finally, stability for the vertical standard 6 is assured by a diagonal, inverted channel-shaped brace member 44 that is welded at its lower end centrally to the vertical flange of the angle iron 16, and at its upper end to the pipe section 22 behind the upper ends of the front braces 28. The standard 6 is thus firmly anchored to the base frame 5 against movement in any direction.

Welded to the edges of the front brace members 28 and to the vertical flange 36 of the angle iron 14 is a steel sheet front wall 46, the wall 46 having inclined upper edges 48 that mate with the inclined brace portions 32. Similarly, steel sheet side walls 50 are welded to the side braces 38 and the vertical legs 30 of the front braces 28, the vertical legs 40 of the side braces 38 projecting beyond the ends of the rear angle iron 16 a distance corresponding to the thickness of the brace members 38 whereby the side walls 50 are in contact with the entire length of the side braces 38 and the height of the brace portions 30. The front wall 46 and the side walls 50 thus completely shield the brace members 28, 38 and 44, as well as the base frame 5, from the playing area in front of the goal. Only flat surfaces are presented to a child using the goal, which as discussed hereinabove will minimize the danger of physical injury and make easy the recovery of a ball fumbled in front of the goal.

The walls 46 and 50 also, of course, add stability to the base 4 by reinforcing the braces 28 and 38.

The backboard 8 can be of plywood or some other suitable material, and is secured to the vertical standard 6 by a pair of vertically aligned clamp members 52. Each clamp member 52 includes a semi-cylindrical portion 54 for embracing the upper pipe section 20, and a pair of flat securing wings 56 that are secured to the backboard 8 by bolts 58. Obviously, by merely loosening the bolts 58 the backboard 8, and hence the hoop 10, can be adjusted to any height.

A pair of plates 60 of plywood or the like is received within the base frame 5, the outer corners of the plates having rectangular cutouts 62 therein. The plates 60 are also cut-out at 63 to fit about the pipe section 22.

The bottom horizontal flanges of the angle irons comprising the frame 5 have holes 64 in the four corners of said frame beneath the cutouts 62, which serve to receive anchor stakes 66. The anchor stakes 66, as shown in FIGS. 7 and 8, are utilized to secure the goal 2 in place on a lawn or directly on the earth. Each stake 66 is L-shaped and includes a head portion 68, the plate cutouts 62 being sufficiently large to easily accommodate said head portions 68.

The goal 2 is light in weight and is easily moved about. The four stakes 66 will normally anchor it firmly to the earth, but if further anchoring is desired, concrete blocks 70 (FIG. 4) or like weights can be stacked on the plates 60. Any such weights 70 are shielded by the front and side base walls 46 and 50, and thus they cause no safety hazard and the neat appearance of the goal 2 is preserved.

When utilizing the goal 2 on a driveway, a basement floor, or other hard surface, the stakes 66 are not employed. Instead, the weights 70 alone are utilized to anchor the goal. The upper end of the standard 6 has holes 72 therein, to which brace wires can be attached if necessary.

As has been mentioned, the dimensions of the goal 2 are smaller than for a standard goal. Typically, the standard 6 will have an overall height of about 8 feet, and the goal hoop 10 can thus be positioned at nearly any desired height from about 6 feet downwardly. For small children, the hoop 10 should be about 14 inches in diameter, and a ball of about 7 inches in diameter should be used for playing.

Obviously, many modifications and variations of the invention as shown and described are possible.

I claim:

1. A portable goal for use by small children comprising: a base, said base including rectangular frame means; said rectangular frame means having removable weights acting thereon to anchor said base against movement relative to a substantially flat supporting surface; a single vertical standard, the lower end of said standard being secured to and supported by said rectangular frame means at the central portion of the front edge thereof; a backboard having hoop means thereon; means securing said backboard to said vertical standard; substantially flat, generally vertical front and side wall means secured around said base bordering the front and side edges of the latter; said wall means shielding the lower end of said standard, said rectangular frame means and the removable weights from the playing area; said base including brace means extending between said rectangular frame means and said standard for securing said standard in a vertical position, said brace means being confined within the boundaries of and shielded from the playing area by said wall means; said brace means including a pair of front braces extending in opposite directions from said standard, each of said front braces having its lower end secured to said rectangular frame means and its upper end secured to said standard to prevent movement of said standard in a direction substantially parallel to said backboard; and a third brace extending between said standard and the rear edge of said rectangular frame means to prevent movement of said standard in a direction substantially normal to said backboard, said third brace having its upper end secured to said standard and its lower end secured to said rectangular frame means; said front braces and said rear brace being positioned to allow the removable weights to be disposed between said side wall means and said standard to act on said rectangular frame means; and said wall means being devoid of exposed sharp corners throughout.

2. The portable goal as recited in claim 1, wherein each of said front braces includes a vertical portion and an upwardly inclined portion extending from the upper end of said vertical portion, the lower ends of said vertical portions being secured to the front edge of said rectangular frame means, and the upper ends of said inclined portions being secured to said standard; and said brace means also includes a pair of side braces, each of said side braces includes a vertical portion secured at the lower end thereof to the rear edge of said rectangular frame means and a horizontal portion extending from the upper end of said vertical portion and secured at its free end to the associated one of said front braces.

3. The portable goal as recited in claim 2, wherein said front wall means is secured to the front faces of said pair of front braces; and said side wall means comprises a pair of side walls, each of said pair of side walls is secured to the vertical and horizontal portions of one of said side braces and extends to said front wall.

4. The portable goal according to claim 1 in which the upper end of each of said front braces is secured to said standard between said standard and said front wall means.

5. The portable goal according to claim 4 in which the upper ends of said front braces and the upper end of said third brace are secured to said standard in substantially the same horizontal plane.

6. The portable goal according to claim 1 in which said front braces are disposed forwardly of a vertical plane passing through the rear of said standard and said rear brace is disposed in a vertical plane passing through said standard to allow the removable weights to be disposed between said side wall means and said standard to act on said rectangular frame means.

7. The portable goal according to claim 1 in which said rectangular frame means comprises four angle iron members secured to each other and each of said angle irons has its bottom flange disposed within the rectangle formed by said angle irons with the removable weights acting thereon.

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