United States Patent

[11] 3,575,415

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[54] **POCKETED BALL-RECEIVING TARGET**
3 Claims, 3 Drawing Figs.

[52] **U.S. Cl.** **273/105**
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[50] **Field of Search** ..... 273/105, 26 (A), 181 (A), 102.4, 103, 181 (F)

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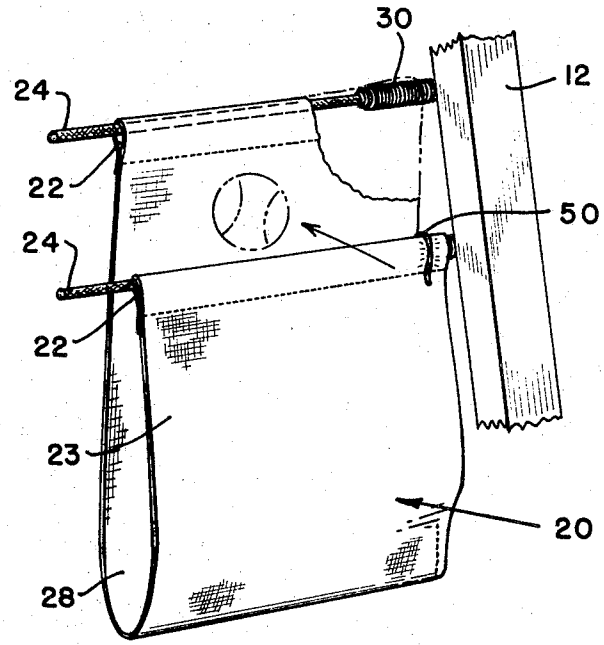
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ABSTRACT: A ball-throwing game having a ball-receiving target with a front frame member supporting resiliently a plurality of horizontally extending ball-retaining pockets. A ball-collecting pouch extends from the top to the bottom of the rear side of the frame behind the pockets to receive and retain tossed balls which are not tossed within and held by the ball-retaining pockets.



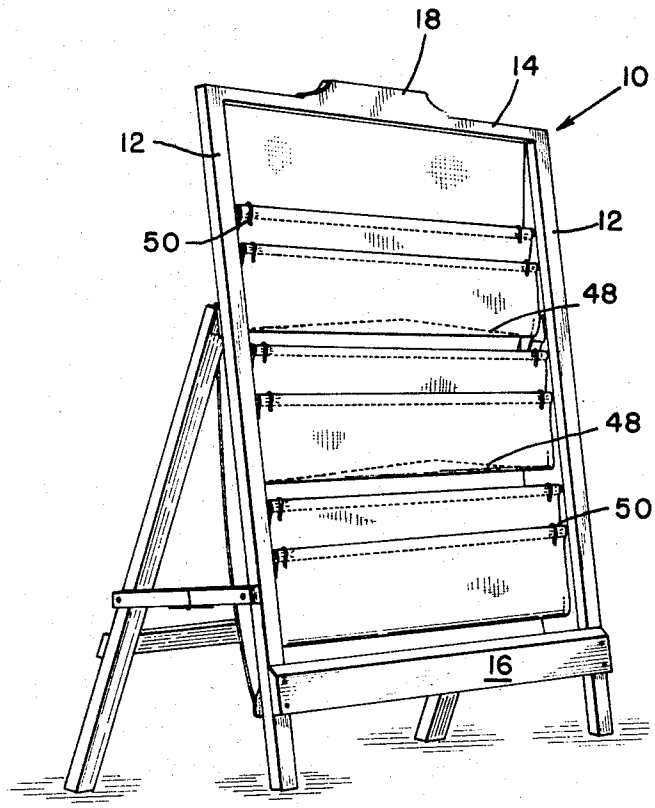


FIG. 1

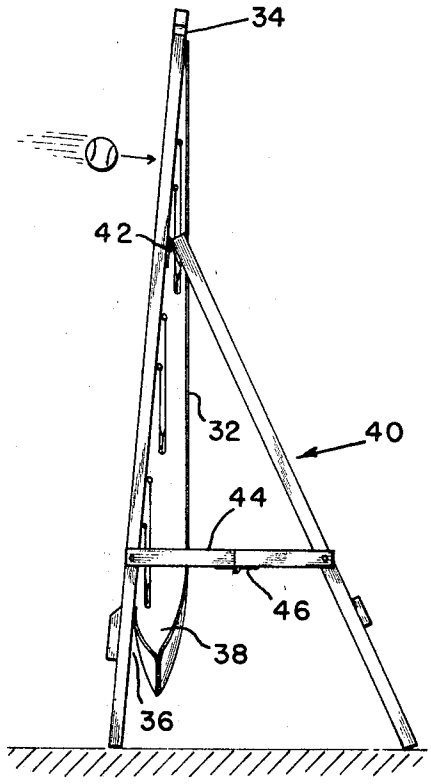


FIG. 2

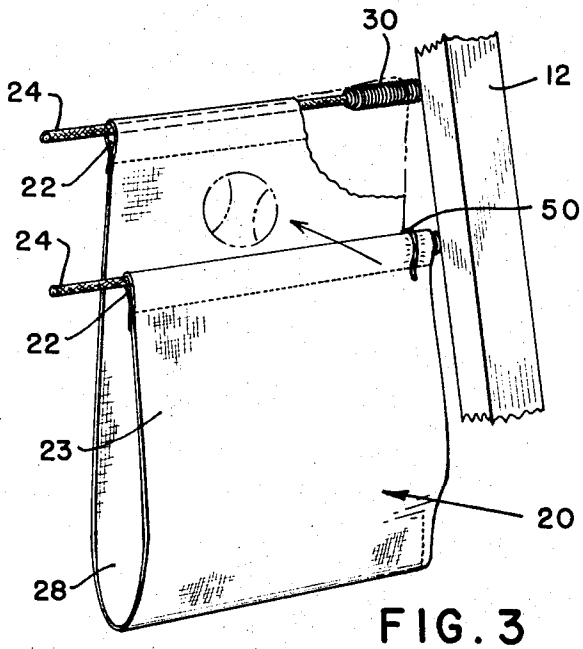


FIG. 3

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POCKETED BALL-RECEIVING TARGET

BACKGROUND, BRIEF SUMMARY, AND OBJECTIVES OF THE INVENTION

Many ball-tossing games have been available for a number of years embodying components that will receive and retain one or more tossed balls in the event the balls are thrown with the desired degree of accuracy. Usually, such games are neither provided with means to collect the tossed balls in the event they are not accurately directed by the thrower into the scoring pockets nor resilient structure in the ball-receiving pockets to retain them firmly in place. Additionally, no satisfactory ball-tossing game adapted to collect conveniently errant balls as well as those thrown with a high degree of accuracy which is capable of being folded compactly for storage or transportation has been available.

The present invention embodies a ball-receiving game target having a front frame which supports a plurality of horizontally extending and substantially parallel troughlike pockets which are resiliently held to absorb the shock of a thrown ball and cooperate to receive that ball either in one of the retaining pockets or the collecting pouch. The target has a hinged support which is foldable against the front frame member so that the entire assembly may be packaged or stored conveniently.

Accordingly, it is an objective of the present invention to provide a ball-throwing game which is capable of conveniently collecting all tossed balls rather than only those that are received within a desired scoring area.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a ball-receiving game target of the type described which is of a knock down construction to allow convenient storage of the device when not in use.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a ball-receiving target of the type described wherein the plural scoring pockets are resiliently held to avoid sagging after repeated use of the game.

Yet still another further object of the present invention is to provide a ball-receiving target of the type described which is extremely durable and economical in construction.

These and other objects of the present invention will become more apparent after a consideration of the following detailed specification taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings wherein like characters of reference designate like parts throughout the several views.

FIGURE DESCRIPTION

FIG. 1 is a front perspective view of the ball-receiving target comprising the present invention shown in the erected position.

FIG. 2 is a side elevational view of the ball-receiving target shown in FIG. 1 illustrating the configuration of the ball-retaining pockets and the ball-collecting pouch.

FIG. 3 is an enlarged, perspective, sectional and fragmentary view of one of the ball-retaining pockets of the ball-receiving target shown in FIGS. 1 and 2.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DISCLOSURE

Referring now to the drawings and particularly to FIG. 1, a front frame member shown generally as 10 is formed from a pair of upstanding side rails 12 joined by a top cross member 14 and a bottom plate 16 as shown. A small name plate 18 can be mounted atop the top rail 14 to carry the game name or advertising if desired.

A plurality of ball-retaining pockets, each of which is designated generally as 20, extend across the side rails 12 in a substantially horizontal position. A hemmed loop 22 is provided in each of a flexible sheet of material 23 to receive a resilient support member such as the rope 24 shown in FIG. 3, and the flexibility of the material sheet 23 will cause the formation of a troughlike pocket 28 for receiving one or more balls therein when the sheet is supported by the ropes 24 in the manner illustrated. Each of the pockets is carried by the side

support members 12 as shown in FIG. 3 wherein each end of each rope 24 is secured to a stretchable coil spring 30 which is in turn secured to and behind the side rail 12. Thus, the repeated shock of thrown balls against the pocket 20 will not distort or loosen the supporting rope 24 because the rope segment is carried between two stretchable coil springs 30 which will give with the impact of the balls.

Any convenient number of ball-receiving pockets 20 can be supported on the front frame member 10, through it has been found to be a game requiring a great deal more skill if the number of pockets is limited and emphasis is placed on the accuracy of the thrower to place the ball in one of, for example, three pockets 20. In the event the tossed ball is not accurately thrown to one of the pockets 20, a ball-collecting pouch 32 is provided which extends from the top 34 to the lower portion 36 of the front frame member 10 rearwardly and continuously behind the ball-receiving pockets 20. Thus, a thrown ball which will not be received by one of the pockets 20 will pass beyond the pocket and be collected by the pouch 32 in the manner illustrated in FIG. 2. The natural drape or fold 38 of the pouch 32 permits the collection and retention of a number of balls until each thrower has completed his opportunity to score and can then advance and collect all thrown balls for the next player.

To make the target 10 a component of a game of skill, the pockets 20 are preferably given values which provide a collective score for each player tossing a number of balls. The particular construction of the pockets permits the rapid collection of the thrown balls once the participant has finished his turn to score.

To provide for compact and convenient storage of the game when not in use, a rearwardly extending support frame generally shown as 40 is pivotally secured to the frame member 10 by hinges 42 or other equally efficient devices. A pair of foldable locking braces 44 pivotally connected by a hinge 46 allows the supporting frame to be folded inwardly against the front frame when the target is to be stored and also provides a rigid substantial target structure when in the erected position as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2.

An additional feature includes the provision of a peaked, transversely extending seam 48 in a number of the pockets 20 such as shown in FIG. 1 so that received balls in those particular seamed pockets will roll generally toward the ends of the pockets 20 and will not collect in the middle of the front frame. Such collection will occasionally cause a tossed ball which hits the pocket where a number of balls are collected inside that pocket to rebound away from the frame and not be collected by either the pockets or in the pouch. When the peaked seams 48 are used, it will be necessary to block the ends of the pockets to prevent the balls from falling from the pockets when received.

In the first suggested construction of the game so that the troughlike pockets 28 and the pouch 32 are formed without the provision of a peaked, transversely extending seam 48, it is also advantageous to seam the edges of the pockets and pouch from the bottom upwardly for a distance of approximately 2 inches as shown particularly in FIG. 3 to prevent the balls from falling from the containers through the open sides. A further aid in sustaining the game target even after repeated impacts resulting when a great number of balls are thrown at the target resides in the provision of a U-shaped, resilient clip 50 affixed over the pockets where the pockets are suspended by the ropes 24 in the manner shown in FIGS. 1 and 3. These clips prevent the pocket structure from gathering in the middle as tossed balls are continuously received by the targets as the clips act somewhat as clothespins to retain the fabric securely against the ropes 24 at a location just away from the connection of the ropes to the resilient springs 30.

Thus there has been shown a preferred embodiment of a ball-receiving target substantially forming a ball-tossing game, and it will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art of ball-tossing game construction that any number of modifications and variations may be made in the front frame member, the

ball-receiving pockets and the ball-collecting pouch as well as the supporting components for the game without departing from the spirit and purpose of this invention. Such modifications and alterations as well as the use of mechanical equivalents are contemplated.

We claim:

1. A ball-receiving target comprising: a frame means having vertically spaced upper and lower frame portions; means releasably supporting said frame means in a substantially upright position; a plurality of discrete, horizontally extending ball-retaining pockets, each of said ball-retaining pockets having an upper ball-receiving portion adapted to receive a ball tossed therethrough; horizontally extending means for supporting individually each of said plurality of discrete ball-retaining pockets, said support means including a segment of rope for each pocket, and a coil spring securing each end of said rope segment to said frame means so that the rope segments are maintained under tension; and a ball-collecting pouch positioned rearwardly of said plurality of spaced pockets for receiving balls not collected by said pockets, said pouch substantially corresponding in width to the width of one of said plurality of ball-retaining pockets and secured to the upper and lower frame portions.

2. A target as claimed in claim 1, said ball-collecting pouch including a flexible material sheet extending continuously from the top to the bottom of said frame means.

3. A target as claimed in claim 1, each of said ball-retaining pockets having a loose fold with a peaked transversely extending seam therein to induce a ball received therein to roll to an end of said pocket.