

United States Patent

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[72] Inventor **Earl A. Simendinger, Jr.**
19500 Euclid Ave., Apt. 681, Cleveland,
Ohio
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Primary Examiner—Anton O. Oechsle
Assistant Examiner—Paul E. Shapiro
Attorney—Oberlin, Maky, Donnelly & Renner

[54] WATER SPORT PLATFORMS 1 Claim, 4 Drawing Figs.

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B63b 7/00

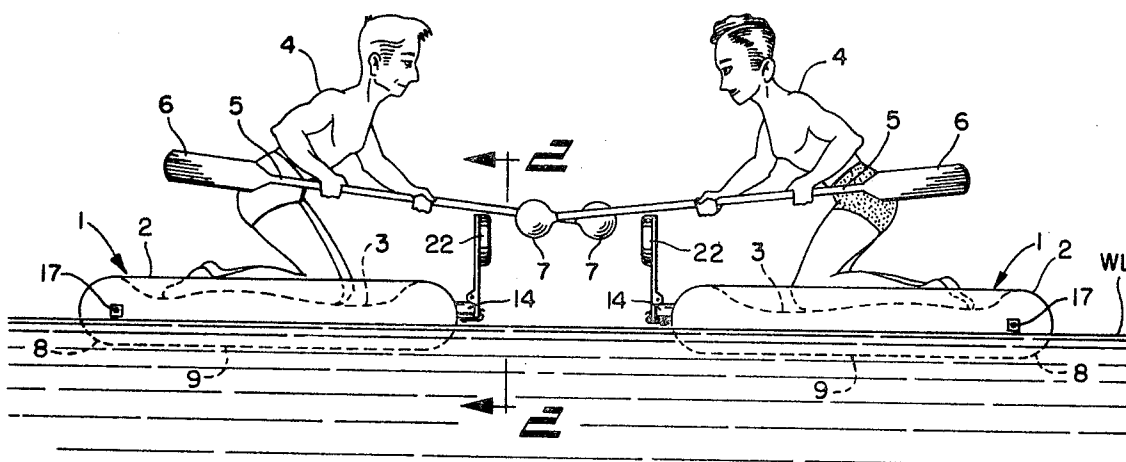
[50] Field of Search..... 273/1,
102.1; 272/1 B; 9/2 A, 11.1; 244/99

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ABSTRACT: A pair of jousting poles and a pair of inflatable rafts each raft having a flexible wall for supporting a water sport player in the inflated condition and for collapsing and letting the player down or tipping him into the water in the deflated condition. An escape valve is mounted on the wall of the raft and this valve is connected to an arm supporting a target. When the target is hit by a jousting pole carried by an opposing water sport player, the arm is moved and opens the escape valve causing the raft to deflate and collapse.



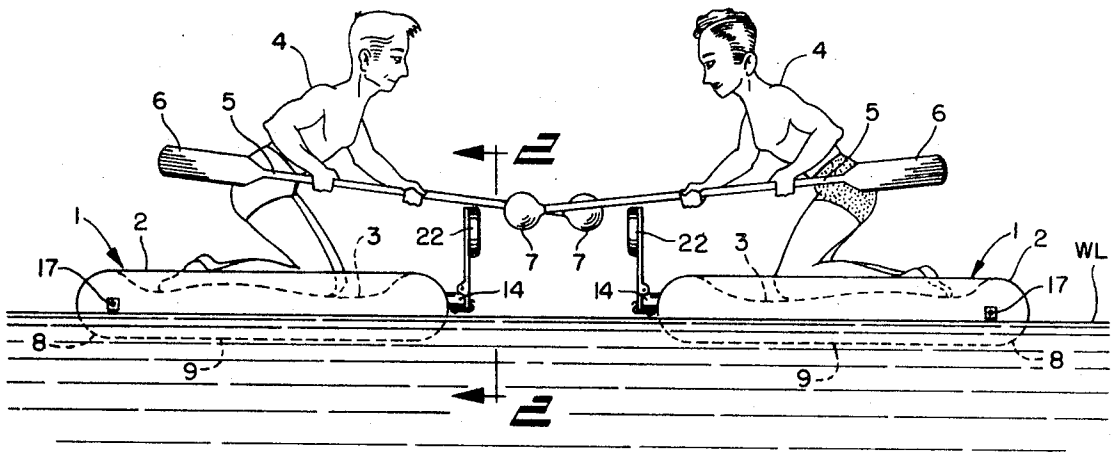


Fig. 1

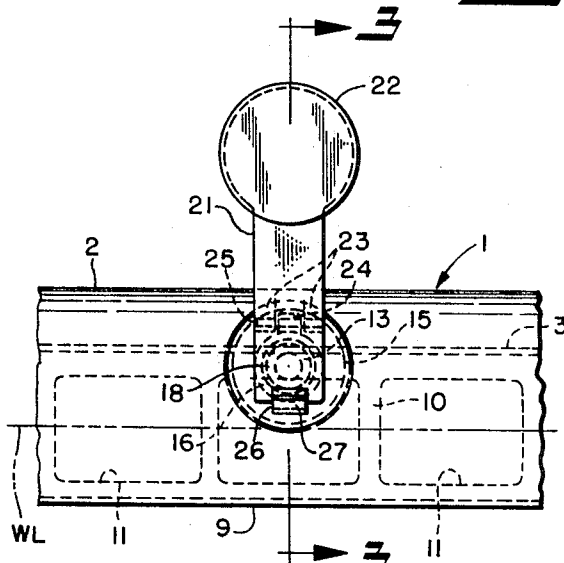


Fig. 2

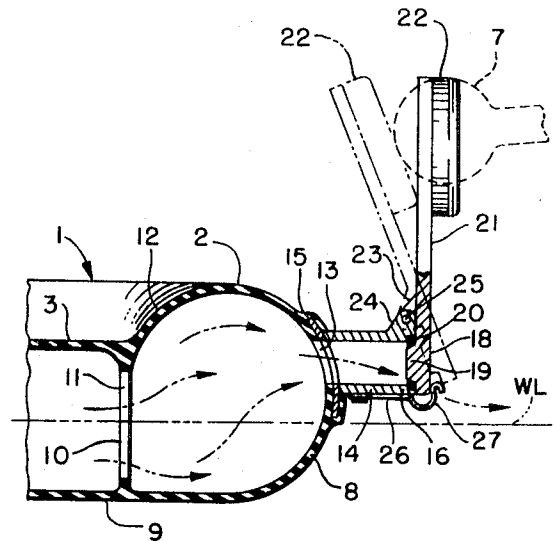


Fig. 3

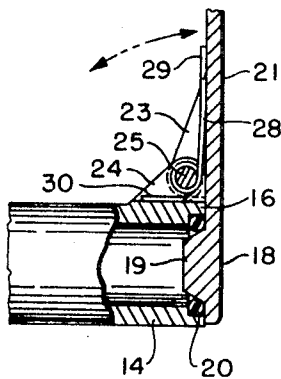


Fig. 4

INVENTOR
EARL A. SIMENDINGER, JR.

BY
Oberlin, Maky, Donnelly & Renner
ATTORNEYS

WATER SPORT PLATFORMS

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates generally as indicated to apparatus for a water sport or contest in which the players kneel on buoyant supporting platforms. Each platform has a disclike target mounted at the forward edge which is connected to a valve or other means for decreasing the buoyancy of the platform. A pole is carried by each player with which he attempts to strike the target on the opposing player's platform. He also uses this pole to defend his platform by deflecting the pole of the opposing player away from the target on his platform. Each pole may have padding on one end to prevent injury of the players and a paddle at the other end which can be used to maneuver the platform.

To the accomplishment of the foregoing and related ends the invention then comprises the features hereinafter fully described and particularly pointed out in the claims, the following description and the annexed drawing setting forth in detail a certain illustrative embodiment of the invention. This being indicative, however, of but one of the various ways in which the principles of the invention may be employed.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In the annexed drawings:

FIG. 1 is a side elevation view of a preferred form of floatable support or platform constructed in accordance with this invention showing how two of the platforms are used during the playing of this game.

FIG. 2 is an enlarged fragmentary front elevation view of the floatable support taken along the plane of the line 2-2 of FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary longitudinal section through the target valve mechanism and platform taken along the plane of the line 3-3 of FIG. 2.

FIG. 4 is an enlarged fragmentary view like FIG. 3 showing a modified form of valve arrangement.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring now in detail to the drawings and first, especially to FIG. 1, the floatable support or platform 1 illustrated herein by way of example includes a buoyant container such as inflatable casing 2 having a top wall portion and horizontal supporting surface 3 on which the players 4 may kneel. The normal floating position of the platform with a water line WL is shown in FIGS. 1, 2, and 3. Each player 4 may carry a pole 5 having a paddle 6 at one end and a soft padded cover 7 at the other end.

The inflatable casing 2 has a wall 8 of flexible rubber or other rubberlike material such as polyvinyl chloride which is impervious to air or other inflating gasses. The wall 8 may be reinforced by cords of cotton, rayon or nylon (not shown) if desired. Preferably, the casing 2 has a flat bottom wall portion 9 which is connected to the supporting surface 3 by reinforcing members or webs 10, which may be of the same or similar material used for the casing wall 8. These webs 10 retain the shape of the casing 2 when it is inflated. Openings 11 in the webs 10 are located at intervals along the webs to permit substantially unrestricted flow of air through the casing as shown by the arrows in FIG. 3.

Edge portion 12 of the wall casing 2 may have a tubular configuration in the inflated condition to provide stability and maneuverability of the platform 1. The casing 2 may also be constructed with a greater length than width or if desired, may be of a circular configuration. In any case the depth is preferably less than either the width or length of the casing 2 to provide the necessary stability and support for the players.

At the edge portion 12 of the casing 2 faced by the player being supported, an opening 13 is provided in the wall 8. A tube 14 of metal or other rigid material is disposed in the

opening 13 and may have a flanged end 15 which is mounted in sealing engagement with the casing wall 8 so that the tube projects horizontally forward from the casing 2 providing a passage and outer end 16 of the tube through which air may pass. Preferably, a separate inflation valve 17 is provided in the casing wall 8; however, the casing 2 may also be inflated through the tube 14 if desired. The separate inflation valve 17 shown in FIG. 1 is of the type used to inflate beach rafts and inner tubes and has a connection for attachment to an inflating device such as an airhose found at most filling stations or a tire pump.

To contain the air in the casing, a closure such as cap 18 is disposed over the outer end 16 of the tube 14. This cap 18 may have a projecting surface or plug 19 conforming substantially to the opening in the outer end 16 of the tube 14 for holding the cap in position. A circular gasket 20 of rubber or other rubberlike material may be disposed around the plug 19 in sealing engagement with the cap 18 and outer end 16 of the tube 14 when the cap is on the tube. Preferably, the gasket 20 is adhered to the cap 18 by a suitable adhesive so that when the cap is removed from the outer end 16 of the tube 14, the gasket will move with the cap.

A movable member or arm 21 connects the cap 18 to a target 22 which is disposed above the cap, the casing 2 and the water in which the casing floats so as to be visible to the players 4. The target 22 may have different shapes but preferably is round with a striking surface facing forward for receiving pressure from the end of the pole 5 with the padded cover 7 when a player 4 hits the target as shown in FIG. 3.

The arm 21 is hinged at the outer end 16 of the tube 14 at the upper side thereof and has bifurcated lugs 23 disposed on each side of a lug 24 mounted on the tube. A hinge pin 25 extends in a horizontal direction through aligned holes in the arm lugs 23 and the tube lug 24 to permit swinging movement of the arm 21 and the attached target 22 and cap 18 to open and close the outer end 16 of tube 14.

As shown in FIG. 3, a spring such as clip 26 is fastened to the underside of the tube 14 with a hook end 27 over the edge of the cap 18 to hold it in sealing engagement with the outer end 16 of the tube 14. When sufficient pressure is exerted against the face of the target 22 to overcome the clamping force exerted by the clip 26, the cap 18 will swing away from the tube 14 around the hinge pin 25 as shown in phantom lines in FIG. 3.

It will now be apparent that to inflate the casing 2, the cap 18 is placed over the outer end 16 of tube 14 in sealing engagement and the clip 26 snapped over the edge of the cap to hold it in place. Air is pumped into the casing 2 through inflation valve 17 and the casing assumes the shape shown in FIG. 1 to provide the necessary support for a player 4. The player 4 paddles his platform 1 to a position in close proximity to the platform of his opponent by means of the paddle 6 at the end of the pole 5. When the player is within striking distance of his opponent's target 22, he attempts to strike the target with enough force so that the pressure against the target will overcome the spring pressure of the clip 26 and thereby cause the removal of the cap 18 from the tube 14 permitting the escape of the air from the casing 2. This will cause the casing 2 to completely deflate and reduce the platform buoyancy to the point where the opponent is no longer supported and is immersed in the water. Of course, in the meantime, the opponent is also attempting to strike the target 22 of the platform 1 on which the first player is kneeling and both players will be using their poles 5 to ward off the attacks on their respective targets 22.

Alternatively, the spring force applied by spring clip 26 may be applied by a wire of flat steel spring 28 wrapped around hinge pin 25 in the clearance space provided between lug 24 on the tube 14 and arm lug 23. The spring 28 has a movable end 29 bearing against the arm 21 and a fixed end 30 bearing against the tube 14. Here again, the arm 21 will be urged in a counterclockwise direction as seen in FIG. 4 when the target 22 is hit by the pole 5 and if the pressure on the target is suffi-

cient to overcome the spring force, the cap 18 will be swung away from the tube 14 permitting passage of the air out of the casing 2. This escape of air will only continue while the arm 21 is held in the open position by pressure on the target 22. Upon release of pressure on the target 22 the spring 28 of FIG. 4 will force the cap 18 back into sealing engagement with the end of the tube 14.

It will, therefore, be apparent that with the spring 28 exerting a continuous closing force on cap 18 the game will be prolonged since it may take a number of strikes or prolonged pressure on the target to cause sufficient deflation of the casing 2 to reduce the platform buoyancy to the point where the player is fully immersed in the water and loses the game.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that the supporting platform 1 of the present invention is especially adapted for the water sport described herein and can be easily transported in the deflated condition to a pool, lake, river or other body of water where there is sufficient water to float the platforms. Then by use of hand or foot pumps or compressed gas bottles the casing may be inflated to provide the platform with the buoyancy needed to support the player. With the targets in place the players can joust with the poles providing stimulating exercise requiring the skill of fencing as well as skill in balancing and maneuvering a watercraft. Although the game as described here is for only two players, it may be played with teams of players in which several players on several platforms

form a team to combat a similar group of players. Likewise, a larger platform may be constructed in accordance with the invention to support two players, one of whom may paddle and maneuver the platform while the other jousts with the pole to ward off attacks against the target on his platform and attempts to strike the target of the opposing players. It is also contemplated within the scope of this invention that two or more targets may be provided on one platform either connected to one closure or a number of closures for an equal number of openings for deflating the casing and reducing the buoyancy of the platform.

I claim:

1. In combination, a pair of inflatable collapsible rafts for supporting opposing water sport players, a pair of jousting poles to be carried by said players, each of said rafts having a flexible wall collapsible in the deflated condition and an escape valve for releasing air from the raft, said escape valve having a deflation passage for the escape of air thus to sink the raft together with the player thereon and a closure member movable from a position closing said passage to a position opening said passage, target means movable connected to the raft and to said closure member for opening said deflation passage when said target means is moved by one of said pair of jousting poles carried by an opposing water sport player.

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