July 28, 1970 E. A. ROBINSON 3,521,885

TETHERED PLAY BALL DEVICE

Filed Oct. 4, 1968

Fig. 1

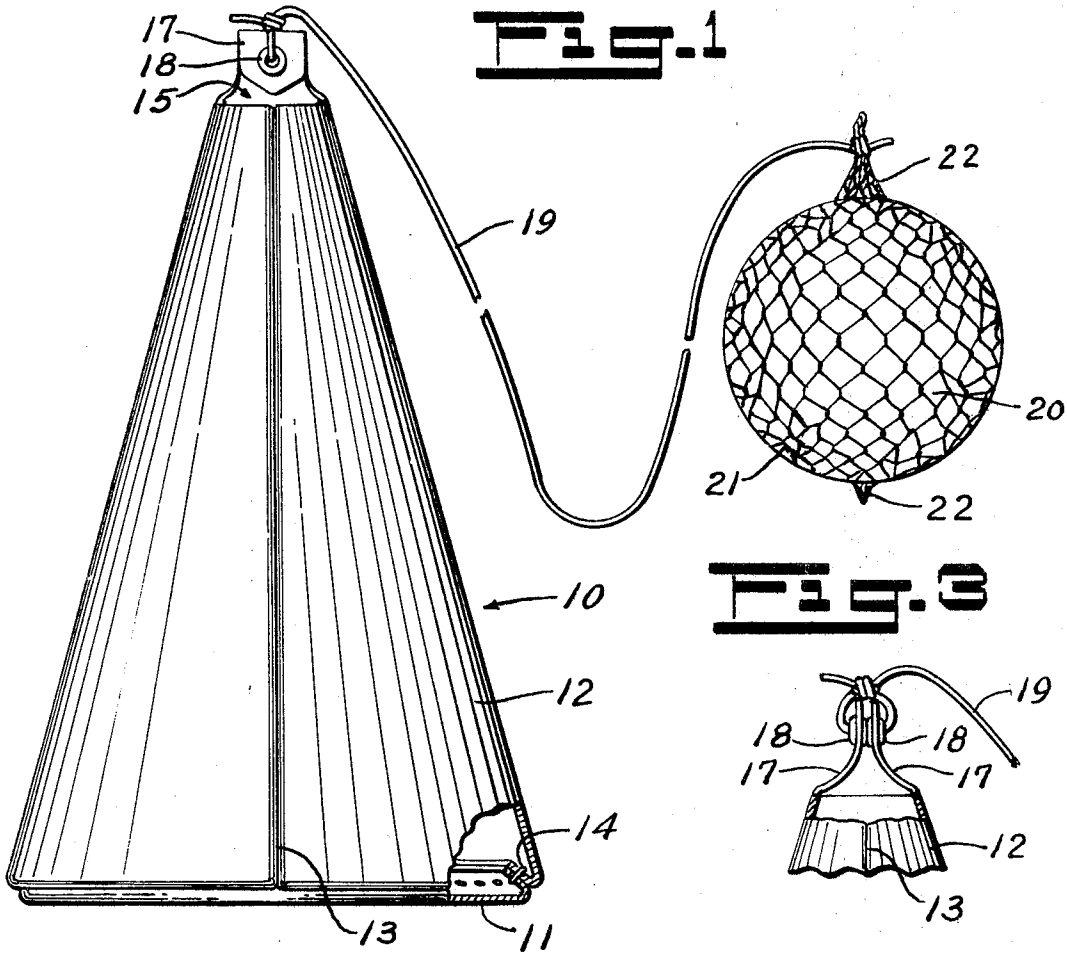
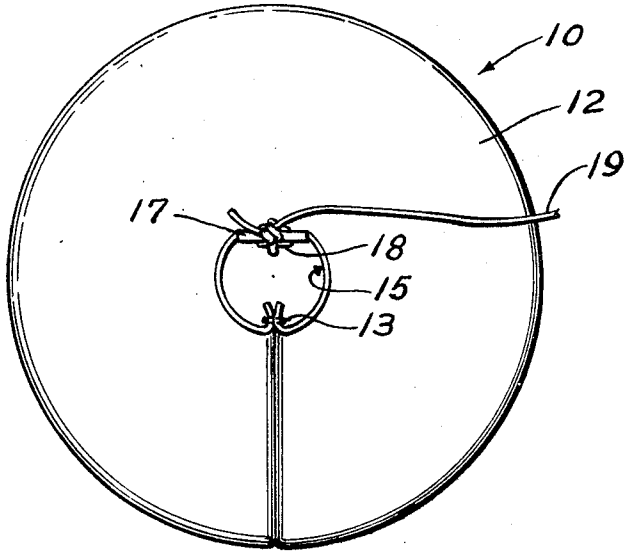


Fig. 3

Fig. 2



INVENTOR.
ELI A. ROBINSON
BY
John M. Montstream
ATTORNEY

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TETHERED PLAY BALL DEVICE

Eli A. Robinson, Amsterdam, N.Y., assignor to Collette Manufacturing Company, Amsterdam, N.Y., a corporation of New York

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A tethered play ball device is disclosed using a casing as a base or anchor made of a crushable material with an opening through which weighting material may be inserted into the casing. The material of the casing is impervious to the weighting material. The casing is also conical in shape with sufficient angularity to the cone so that the ball tether which is secured to the top will not wrap or remain wrapped around the base but works upwardly when the ball is batted.

The casing for the base or anchor for the tethered play ball is made from suitable material which is crushable so that it can be rolled, folded, pressed and/or compacted into a small compass for packing in a relatively small package. Also the material is such that it is impervious to weighting material contained therein. The casing may be made of suitable material such as cloth, leather, plastic of many kinds and the like. The ball is suitably attached to the casing.

It is an object of the invention to construct a tethered play ball device which has a casing for a base or anchor which can be crushed into a relatively small package and which will retain therein weighting material, such as sand or dirt, received through an opening into the casing. The casing and base is also conical so that in batting the tethered ball, the tether will usually not wrap around or will release itself from being wrapped around the base or anchor by being impelled upwardly over the apex of the cone by the conical shape.

Another object is as above and in addition provide an anchor or base which can use sand or dirt provided by the purchaser as the weighting material and hence shipping charges therefore are not included which would be substantial.

Other objects of the invention will be more apparent from the following description when taken in connection with accompanying drawings illustrating preferred embodiments thereof in which:

FIG. 1 is a side view of the tethered play ball device with the base or casing partially in section;

FIG. 2 is a top view of the tethered play ball device; and

FIG. 3 is a view of the top of a base having two tongues.

The casing forming the anchor or base for the tethered play ball device is made of suitable material which can be compressed into a relatively small package and which material also is impervious to a weighting material such as sand or dirt. The casing and base is conical in form and for children a base which is five inches in diameter at the bottom and seven inches high has been found suitable.

The casing is shown as fashioned by cutting or shaping a circular bottom **11** preferably of the crushable material and cutting a side member **12** which will shape into a cone. The side member is stitched at **13** to sew its two edges together in conical form and the bottom edge of the side member is suitably fastened to the bottom which is shown as of crushable material in which the side members stitched **14** to the edge of the bottom. The casing is

then turned inside out if it is desired to have the edges of the seams within the casing. The casing has an opening for insertion of weighting material particularly. Desirably the hole is large enough so that the casing can be inverted to bring the seam edges within the casing. Preferably the cone blank is shaped and sewn so that there is an opening **15** at the top thereof for inverting the casing and for insertion of the weighting material. So located it is not essential that it be closed to retain weighting material therein. The cone shape need not be circular as shown but may be other geometrical conical forms.

A tethered ball is suitably attached to the apex of the casing and a convenient way of accomplishing this is to provide tongue means having at least one tongue **17** at the top thereof. Preferably, too, each tongue is doubled over to give greater strength thereto and a suitable eyelet **18** may be used which extends through the two layers of a doubled over tongue through which a tether **19** is attached. If the tongue means includes two tongues as shown in FIG. 3 the attachment of the tether to both tongues would close the top opening to a substantial extent after insertion of the weighting material.

The tether is a string or cord and preferably of elastic having one end attached to the tongue means and the other end being attached to a resilent ball **20** in any suitable manner. A tennis ball is suitable. The attachment shown includes netting **21** which fits over the ball or is wrapped around the ball and having the netting bunched together at its ends **22** and suitably fastened. A netting made of plastic filament can be heat welded together. The other end of the tether is fastened to the bunched netting in any manner.

The conical shape of the anchor or base will prevent the tether from remaining wrapped around the base. Should the tether circle the conical base usually it rides up and over the apex promptly or the next batting of the ball will cause the tether to ride up over the top. An angle of the cone of about 15 degrees from its vertical axis or 30 degrees over all has been found suitable. There is considerable latitude in the size of the angle particularly an increase in the angle. A greater angle for the cone increases the ability of the tether to ride up the cone as the ball is batted around. By a like token the greater the angle for a particular diameter or dimension of the bottom of the base reduces the amount of weighting material which can be inserted into the base hence reducing the weight anchorage provided by the base. For the same height, the angle can be increased by increasing the dimension of the bottom which also increases the amount of weighting material which can be loaded into the casing.

This invention is presented to fill a need for improvements in a tethered play ball device. It is understood that various modifications in structure, as well as changes in mode of operation, assembly, and manner of use, may and often do occur to those skilled in the art, especially after benefiting from the teachings of an invention. This disclosure illustrates the preferred means of embodying the invention in useful form.

What is claimed is:

1. A play ball device comprising a casing of crushable material and impervious to small particles of weighting material, the casing having a flat bottom and being of conical form to the top of the casing, the angle of the cone being such that the tether rides up on the cone when wrapped around the same in batting the ball, the casing having an opening into the casing for the insertion and retention of weighting material, a resilent batting ball, and a tether of substantial length attached to the ball and to the top of the casing.

2. A play ball as in claim **1** including tongue means having at least one tongue projecting above the top of

the casing and the tether being attached to the tongue means.

3. A play ball device as in claim 2 in which the opening into the casing is at the top.

4. A play ball device as in claim 3 in which the tongue means includes a tongue on each side of the opening, the tether being attached to the two tongues to hold them together and thereby partially close the opening.

5. A play ball device as in claim 1 in which the opening into the casing is at the top of the cone.

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ANTON O. OECHSLE, Primary Examiner

T. BROWN, Assistant Examiner