BALANCE BOARD GAME

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Field of Search .......... 273/131 R, 131 A, 273/131 AB, 131 E, 1 R, 134 AD, 134 GR, 131 KP; 272/1 R, 57 A, 70; 35/29

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ABSTRACT

A skill developing and recreational balance board game including a freely rotating and tiltable standing platform of appropriate size to allow two persons to stand uprightly thereon, a plurality of numbered occupant stepping blocks rotatably secured to the upper surface of the platform, and cards for selecting two of the rotating blocks to be occupied by the feet of each player, the two players standing on the platform being apprised from the cards, each card bearing a sequence of numbers, as to the sequence in which they are to place their feet on certain ones of said occupant stepping blocks, the blocks rotating freely as feet are placed thereon and the platform rotating and tilting as the players change position.

13 Claims, 9 Drawing Figures
BALANCE BOARD GAME

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention
   This invention relates to a skill developing and recreational type balance board game capable of advantageous use by children and adults and adapted for practical use either indoors or outdoors.

2. Description of the Prior Art
   Broadly speaking, balance board game apparatus are, of course, well known in the prior art. However, the prior art has been primarily concerned with developing a satisfactory portable body exercising and strengthening device for the use of one person, such as disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 3,488,049, in the name of M.V. Sasser, Jr., and U.S. Pat. No. 3,100,639, in the name of E.D. Bonevitz. The prior art has also been concerned with developing ambulatory rocking devices, which are commonly known as "Bongo Boards", and which travel forwardly or rearwardly by controlled shifting of the users body weight, such as disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 3,419,267, in the name of K.H. Stolle, U.S. Pat. No. 2,941,801, in the name of N.F. Pedersen, and in U.S. Pat. No. 2,764,411, in the name of S. Washburn, Jr.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION
   The present invention provides a skill developing and recreational balance board game. Broadly speaking, the game includes a large standing platform of appropriate size to allow two players to stand uprightly thereon. Floor engaging base means pivotally support the platform above the floor surface for free rotation of the platform about a centrally located vertical axis and for tilting in any direction. A plurality of occupant stepping blocks having identifying indicia thereon are rotatably secured to the upper surface of the platform. Finally, means are provided for selecting two of the rotating blocks to be occupied by the feet of each player. Accordingly, two players standing on the platform will be apprised from the selecting means as to the sequence in which they are to place their feet on certain ones of the occupant stepping blocks, the occupant stepping blocks rotating freely as feet are placed thereon and the platform rotating and tilting as the players change position.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING
   FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the balancing board game of the present invention illustrating the feet of the players thereof on certain ones of the occupant stepping blocks.
   FIG. 2 is an enlarged partial cross sectional view taken along the line 2-2 of FIG. 1.
   FIG. 3 is an enlarged cross sectional view through a typical occupant stepping block wherein the bearing means comprise balls.
   FIG. 4 shows a card having sequential indicia thereon corresponding to the indicia on certain ones of the occupant stepping blocks.
   FIGS. 5 through 9 are side elevational views of exemplary balancing board games of the present invention which are made of plastic material.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS
   Turning first to FIG. 1, it will be seen that the balancing board game 10 of the present invention includes a large standing platform 12 of appropriate size to allow two players 14 and 16 to stand uprightly thereon. As shown, the platform 12 is preferably circular in shape, but it will, of course, be understood that the platform 12 may be of any desired configuration so long as it is of a size to accommodate two players.
   The platform 12 may be formed of any suitable strong material, such as plywood, plastic, or a sandwich construction including a metal skin filled with aforesaid core element.
   A floor engaging base means 18 pivotally supports the platform 12 above the floor surface 20 for free rotation of the platform 12 about a centrally located vertical axis 22 and for tilting in any direction. The floor engaging base means 18 may be one piece and integral with the platform 12, as shown in FIGS. 5 through 8, or it may comprise a separate pedestal and/or base member having a circular floor engaging base of smaller diameter than the platform 12, as shown in FIG. 9, or a separate base member 24 of substantially the same construction as the platform 12 as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2.
   Turning to FIGS. 1 and 2, it will be seen that the platform 12 and the separate base member 24 may be joined together by way of a ball and socket joint 26, the upper surface of the base member 24 being provided centrally thereof with a concave socket element 28 which receives a ball member 30 extending from the underside of the platform 12.
   The tilt of the platform 12 may be restrained to a relatively small degree by building up the perimeter 25 of the base member 24 so that it will contact the underside of the platform 12. Likewise, it will, of course, be understood that the tilt of the platform 12 may be increased by providing an extension for the ball member 30.
   A plurality of occupant stepping blocks 32 are rotatably secured to the upper surface of the platform 12. As can be seen, the blocks 32 have identifying indicia 34 thereon.
   Broadly speaking, the occupant stepping blocks 32 may comprise opposed disc members 36 separated by bearing means, such as a Teflon sheet 38, as shown in FIG. 2, or roller bearings 40, as shown in FIG. 3.
   While a disc member 36 of each occupant stepping block 32 may be permanently secured in a desired position on the upper surface of the platform 12, as by molding (see FIG. 8) or by use of suitable fastening means, it has been found that best results are obtained when one of the disc members 36 is provided with at least two opposing pegs or dowels 42 which may be received by mating apertures 44 in the upper surface of the platform 12. In this manner, the degree of the complexity of the balancing game 10, and thus the skill of the players 14 and 16, may be regulated by simply positioning the pegs or dowels 42 of the occupant stepping blocks 32 within the apertures 44 on the upper surface of the platform 12, as desired.
   Means are provided for selecting two of the occupant stepping blocks 32 to be occupied by the feet of each player 14 and 16. In practice, the selecting means preferably comprises at least one card 46, as shown in FIG. 4, having sequential indicia 48 thereon corresponding to the indicia 34 on certain ones of the occupant stepping blocks 32. Accordingly, two players 14 and 16 standing on the platform 12 will be apprised from the indicia 48 on the card 46 as to the sequence in which
they are to place their feet on certain ones of the occupant stepping blocks 32. As feet are placed on the blocks 32, they are caused to rotate freely, and the platform 12 is caused to rotate and tilt as the players 14 and 16 change position.

The following sequential indicia 48 are exemplary of indicia which may be placed on a plurality of cards 46:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sequential indicia</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Card number:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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NOTE.—A "P" above a numeral indicates a step by one player onto a block 32 on the platform side of the other player.

In practice, the players alternate placing their feet on the occupant stepping blocks 32 having indicia thereon corresponding to the indicia on a card 46 on their respective sides of the platform 12. For example, if a card A, as shown above, were drawn, the first player would place his left foot on the block 32 on his side of the platform 12 having the numeral 1 thereon. The second player would then place his left foot on the block 32 on his side of the platform 12 having the numeral 2 thereon. These movements would be followed by the first and second players placing their right feet on the blocks having the numerals 3 thereon, and so forth, alternating back and forth between the left and right feet.

It has also been found that in practice eight occupant stepping blocks 32, four on each side, are preferably attached to the upper surface of the platform 12. The blocks 32 may also be positioned such that they will provide substantially equal leverage about the centrally located vertical axis of the game 10, increasing the likelihood of the action by the players 14 and 16. However, it will, of course, be understood that the number of stepping blocks 32 as well as the positioning thereof on the platform 12 will vary as desired.

Figs. 5 through 9 are side elevational views showing exemplary balancing board game. As can be seen in FIG. 5, the underside of the platform 12 has been reinforced by the radial ribs 13 and the floor engaging means 18 comprises a pedestal 50 which is one piece and integral with the underside of the platform 12. The free end 52 of the pedestal 50 is rounded to provide a ball which is received by a mating recess 54 in the base plate 56. The length of the pedestal 50 will, of course, be determined by the desired tilt of the platform 12. Additionally, it will be understood that the depth of the radial ribs 13 as well as the number thereof may vary as desired, primarily depending upon the characteristics of the thermoplastic material from which the game 10 is manufactured.

In Figs. 6 and 7, the floor engaging means 18 is also shown to be one piece and integral with the underside of the platform 12 and configured so as to furnish free rotation of the platform 12 about a centrally located vertical axis and for tilting in any direction.

As can be seen from FIG. 8, the floor engaging means 18 comprises a pedestal 58 which is one piece integral with the underside of the platform 12. The free end 60 of the pedestal 58 is rounded to provide free rotation of the platform about a centrally located vertical axis and for tilting in any direction. Further, as can be seen, the lower disc 36 of each occupant stepping block 32 is molded and one piece with the upper surface of the platform 12. The opposed disc members 36 are shown separated by a Teflon sheet 38, with the upper disc 36 being provided with a peg or dowal 62 which may be received into a mating aperture 64 in the lower disc 36.

In FIG. 9, the floor engaging means 18 comprises a pedestal 66 provided with a ball member 68 extending upwardly therefrom which is received by a mating concave socket 70 in the underside of the platform 12. The length of the pedestal 66 will, of course, be determined by the desired tilt of the platform 12.

While certain preferred embodiments of the invention have been specifically illustrated and described, it is understood that the invention is not limited thereto, as many variations will be apparent to those skilled in the art, and the invention is to be given its broadest interpretation within the terms of the following claims.

What we claim is:

1. A skill developing and recreational balance board game, which comprises:
   a. a large standing platform of appropriate size to allow two players to stand uprightly thereon;
   b. floor engaging base means for pivotally supporting said platform above the floor surface for free rotation of said platform about a centrally located vertical axis and for tilting in any direction;
   c. a plurality of occupant stepping blocks rotatably secured to the upper surface of said platform, said blocks having identifying indicia thereon; and
   d. means for selecting the sequence in which the feet of each player are placed on certain ones of said stepping blocks; whereby two players standing on said platform will be apprised by said selecting means as to the sequence in which they are to place their feet on certain ones of said stepping blocks, said blocks rotating freely as feet are placed thereon and said platform rotating and tilting as said players change position.

2. The balance board game according to claim 1, wherein said platform is circular.

3. The balance board game according to claim 1, wherein said selecting means comprise at least one card having sequential indicia thereon corresponding to the indicia on certain ones of said stepping blocks.

4. The balance board game according to claim 1, wherein said floor engaging base means is one piece and integral with the underside of said platform.

5. The balance board game according to claim 1, wherein said floor engaging base means comprises a pedestal having a concave socket which receives a ball member extending from the underside of said platform.
6. The balance board game according to claim 5, including an extension for said ball member whereby the degree of tilt of said platform is increased.

7. The balance board game according to claim 1, wherein said floor engaging base means comprises a pedestal provided with a ball member extending upwardly therefrom which is received by a mating concave socket in the underside of said platform.

8. The balance board game according to claim 7, including an extension for said pedestal whereby the degree of tilt of said platform is increased.

9. The balance board game according to claim 1, wherein said floor engaging base means is substantially the same configuration as the platform, and wherein the perimeter of said base means is extended upwardly so that it will contact the underside of said platform and restrict the tilt thereof to a relatively small degree.

10. The balance board game according to claim 1, wherein said game includes eight occupant stepping blocks, four positioned on each side of said platform.

11. The balance board game according to claim 1, wherein each of said occupant stepping blocks comprise opposed discs separated by bearing means, one of said discs being positioned on the upper surface of said platform.

12. The balance board game according to claim 11, wherein said bearing means comprise rollers.

13. The balance board game according to claim 11, wherein said bearing means comprise a Teflon sheet. * * * *