Oct. 26, 1965 P. M. GROSZ 3,213,565

BATHTUB TOY

Filed March 7, 1963

FIG. 1a

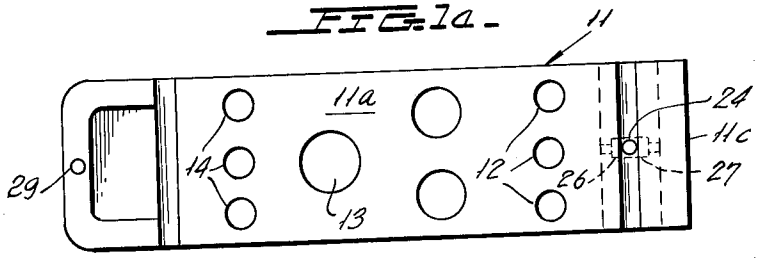


FIG. 1b

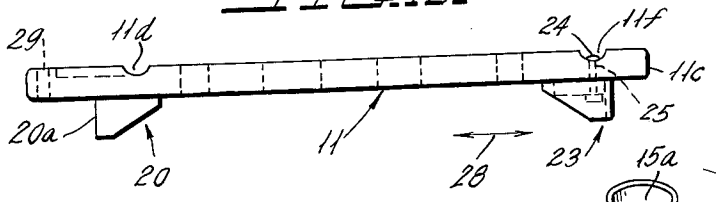


FIG. 1c

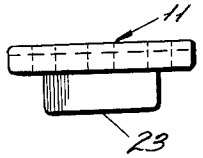
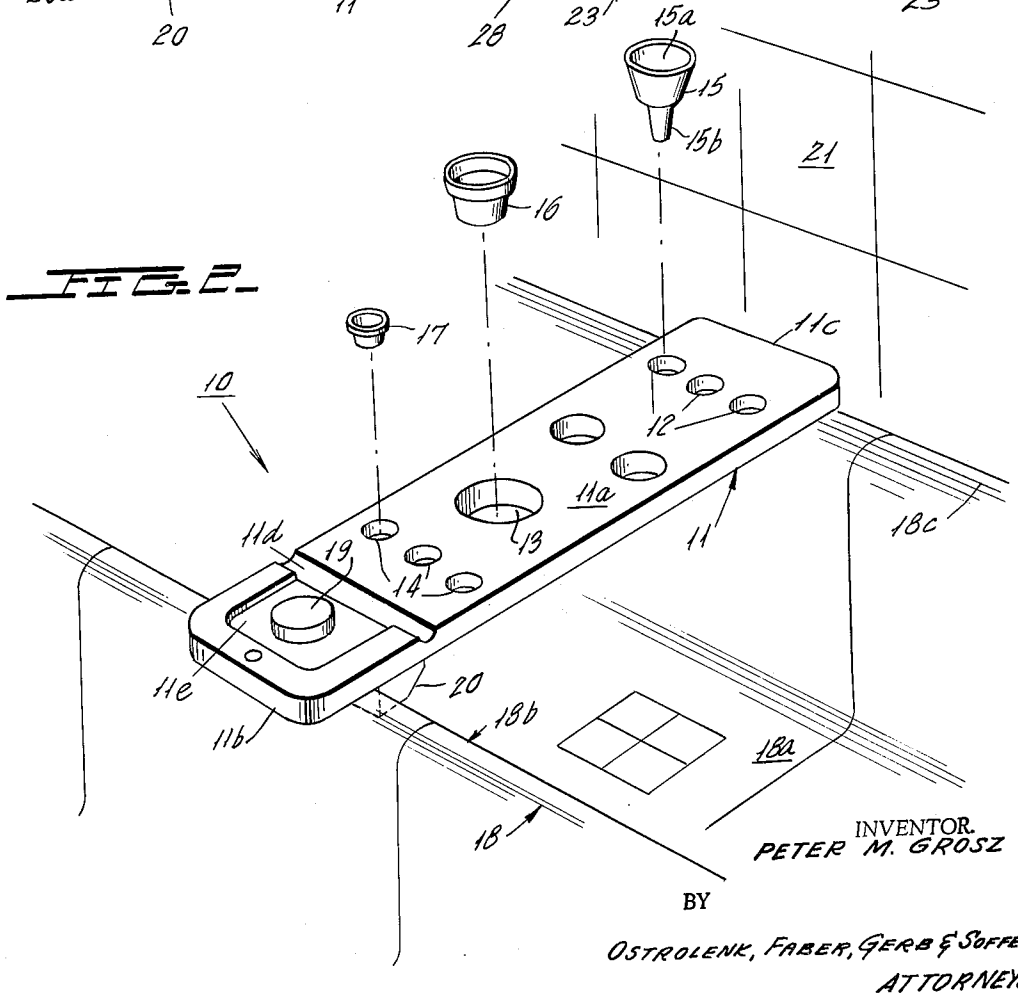


FIG. 2



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United States Patent Office 3,213,565 Patented Oct. 26, 1965

3,213,565

BATHTUB TOY

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Filed Mar. 7, 1963, Ser. No. 263,534
4 Claims. (Cl. 46—91)

This invention relates to toys and more particularly to toys adaptable for aquatic use and preferably in any standard bathtub wherein the toy has the novel arrangement which utilizes the dynamic characteristics of the water so as to provide a more interesting toy for children.

Toys employed specifically for aquatic use are substantially well known and fall into two broad categories:

(1) Outdoor water toys which encompass items such as boats, floats, wind-up self-propelled devices such as fish, whales, frogmen and the like. Toys falling into this category are employed mainly for swimming pool or beach usage.

(2) Indoor water toys comprise first and second subdivisions, the first of which consists of inert toys such as floating items some of which are hollow plastic fishes, wooden or plastic boats and other unbreakable floating toys intended primarily for infants and very young children. The second subdivision is comprised of impulse, battery or spring driven mechanical toys which are of the self-propelled type and their usage requires a certain degree of developed skill on the part of the child in order to achieve the objectives and capabilities of such self-propelled toys. Toys of the second subdivision have the shortcoming which can be attributed to almost all water toys, namely, that they either corrode or become brittle with age and therefore have a tendency to wear out quickly so as to either destroy their use to a child or to become actually dangerous to the child due to their broken or corrosive conditions.

The most desirable objective for indoor water toys suitable for bathtub use is to simultaneously provide an appeal for the young child, be capable of maintaining the child's interest for the period in which the child remains in the bath and also to be able to withstand the vigorous continued use thereof. It has been found that the toy designed in accordance with the principles of the instant invention is capable of fulfilling all of the above conditions.

In addition to the above advantages, the toy of the instant invention is further capable of providing the answer to the question of how to make taking a bath fun for a child. While children seemingly dislike taking baths, such an attitude can be modified by means of providing a stimulating and imaginative bathtub toy with which a child would enjoy playing.

The instant invention is comprised of a playboard element having means for being suitably supported by the sides of any standard bathtub. It is further designed to overcome allowances for slightly different size bath tubs so as to make its adaptation for use therein very simple and reliable. The playboard is provided with a suitable number of apertures of predetermined sizes and shapes for removably receiving a variety of cooperating elements. Such cooperating elements may take on a variety of configurations and functions, such as, for example, plastic cups, funnels and the like. In addition to such simple cooperating elements, the board is further capable of receiving more sophisticated elements, such as, water slides, squirt guns, pumps, turbines, water wheels, tubes, bubble blowers, buckets, and so forth, all of which elements are capable of taking further advantage of the dynamic characteristics of water.

The bathtub toy in usage is capable of positioning and

and supporting elements such as plastic cups which are capable of containing water within the cup, which water may be lifted from the bathtub water. Such cups containing water may then be employed for the purpose of distributing water from one cup to other cups positioned and supported by the playboard or may be used to pour water into funnels to enable the passage of water therethrough to return to the water level of the bathtub. The active motion of the water in both the lifting and pouring operations takes advantage of the dynamic characteristics of the water as opposed to toys of the floating type in which the water is basically an inert factor in the play period, acting only to support the floating toy.

Suitable grooves are provided near the ends of the playboard for the purpose of diverting the flow of water spilled upon the playboard into the bathtub instead of permitting its flow beyond the confines of the bathtub upon the bathtub floor or other undesired areas. In addition thereto, a depression is provided at one end, sufficient for the placement of a bar of soap which is used to wash the child during the play period in the bathtub and it therefore acts as a suitable means for placing the soap when it is not in use, while at the same time not placing the soap out of reach of the user requiring extra effort to reach the soap from such out of the way soap storage dishes such as are found in bathtub installations of the built in type.

The toy of the instant invention has psychological advantages in that it utilizes the dynamic characteristics of water, which properties make water the universally favorite plaything of children. Water, however, acts only as an inert medium for mechanical or floating toys, whereas the toy of the instant invention enables the child to employ the dynamic characteristics of the water so that the child becomes actively engaged in playing with the water rather than just in it or on it. The stimulating and imaginative characteristics of the bathtub toy provides enjoyment for the child thereby establishing the bathing chore rather as a play period due to the use of such a toy and has been proven to be sufficiently successful is captivating the attention of the child so as to free the mother from full time supervision of the bathing chore thereby enabling her to devote time to other pre-dinner or pre-bedtime chores.

The instant invention is simple in design and is comprised of effectively no moving parts during usage thereof so as to make it extremely rugged, serviceable, safe and long lasting. All the elements are preferably formed from a suitably rugged plastic material or a plastic covered piece of wood thereby making it able to withstand repeated soakings in water, soap and detergents. The straight, simple lines enable it to be easily stored when not in use, easily cleaned after usage and very unlikely to harm the children using it due to the rounded edges and overall smoothness of the playboard as well as the cooperating elements provided therewith.

The play cups, funnels and their cooperating elements are so designed as to telescope into one another for stacking of these elements when not in use thereby enabling these elements to be stored without occupying a large amount of storage space. Both the playboard and the cooperating elements are formed of plastics of bright solid colors or other suitable patterns as desired to provide a more aesthetic appearance for the bathtub type.

It is therefore one object of the instant invention to provide a novel aquatic toy adaptable for use in a bathtub.

Still another object of the instant invention is to provide a novel aquatic toy for use in bathtubs which is so designed as to utilize the dynamic characteristics of water in the usage of the toy.

Another object of the instant invention is to provide a novel aquatic toy which is so designed as to be adaptable for use in bathtubs of varying sizes.

Still another object of the instant invention is to provide a novel aquatic toy especially adapted for use in bathtubs which may be readily stored when not in use without the necessity for large storage requirements.

These and other objects of the instant invention will become apparent when reading the accompanying description and drawings in which:

FIGURES 1*a*, 1*b* and 1*c* are top, side and end views respectively, of a playboard designed in accordance with the principles of the instant invention.

FIGURE 2 shows a perspective view of a modified form of the playboard of FIGURE 1 positioned for use in a bathtub and further, showing the relationship of the cooperating elements therewith.

Referring now to the drawings; there is shown therein a bathtub toy **10** comprised of a playboard **11**. The playboard **11** may be formed of wood, wood coated and plastic, or plastic and is provided with a plurality of apertures **12**, **13** and **14** of varying sizes for cooperation with elements of varying sizes, such as, for example, a funnel **15**, a first sized cup **16** and a substantially smaller second sized cup **17**. The cups and funnel are readily positionable in the apertures and are likewise easily removable therefrom for the purposes of filling and/or emptying any of these cooperating elements **15–17**. The funnel **15** is provided with openings **15***a* and **15***b* at its upper and lower extremities for the purpose of permitting the substantially free passage of water therethrough so that in usage thereof the child may take advantage of the dynamic characteristics of the water so as to fill and empty containers or to pour water through such a funnel so as to return the water to the tub **18** upon which the playboard **11** is positioned.

In using the playboard **11** water may be spilled upon the upper surface **11***a* thereof and may be diverted towards the opposing ends **11***b* and **11***c*. As for water upon the surface **11***a* of playboard **11** which may be floating in the direction of its left-handmost end **11***b* the playboard **11** is provided with a substantially deep groove **11***d* which captures and diverts water falling therein so as to spill out from the ends of the groove **11***d* and return to the inside wall **18***a* of the bathtub **18**.

The playboard **11** is further provided with a depression **11***e* which is shown as being a substantially rectangularly shaped depression, but may be of any other suitable shape. The depression **11***e* is provided for the placement of soap, such as, for example, the bar of soap **19** shown in FIGURE 2. This position makes the soap readily available for use by the parent or other person washing the child and is further within easy reach of the parent to permit it to be replaced within the soap dish **11***e* without any bending or stretching being required.

The playboard is further provided with a projection **20** at its lower left-hand end, which projection has a face **20***a* which abuts against the inner surface of the left-hand wall **11***b* of bathtub **18**. The opposite end **11***c* of playboard **11** presses upon the upper edge of right-hand wall **18***c* of bathtub **18**. The left and right-hand walls **18***d* and **18***c* respectively, of bathtub **18** serve to adequately support playboard **11** while the projection of stop means **20** prevents the playboard from being moved in a direction transverse to the side walls **18***b* and **18***c* of bathtub **18**. This thereby prevents the playboard **11** from falling into the bathtub **18** and also provides an adequate support upon which the child may depend for lifting, leaning or supporting purposes.

In applications wherein the bathtub **18** is not installed so that it is immediately adjacent to a side wall, such as, for example, the side wall **21**, it thereby becomes possible for water lying upon the upper surface **11***a* of playboard **11** to flow over the right-hand edge of the bathtub and on to the floor thereby unnecessarily wetting either the floor or a rug which may be positioned thereon. This is substantially prevented by the provision of a second substantially deep groove **11***f* positioned adjacent the right-hand edge **11***c* of playboard **11**, the purpose of which is again to both collect water flowing on to the surface **11***a* and also divert such water back into the confines of the bathtub **18**. A further consideration in such bathtubs not having side walls, such as the side wall **21**, is that of suitably preventing the playboard from experiencing any action transverse to the side walls of the bathtub. This function is provided by the projection or stop means **23** positioned on the underside of playboard **20** which stop cooperates with the stop means **20** to completely prevent any movement of the playboard transverse to the side walls of the bathtub.

In order to accommodate the playboard for use in bathtubs of varying widths, the stops **20** and **23** are made adjustable by providing fastening means **24** comprised of a nut and bolt arrangement which is threaded through a first aperture **25** in playboard **11** and a second elongated slot **26** in stop means **23** wherein said elongated slot **26** is provided with a shoulder **27** upon which the nut member of the fastening means **24** may rest. Thus by loosening the fastening means the adjustable stop **23** may be moved in either direction as shown by the arrow **28** in order to accommodate the playboard for use in bathtubs of varying widths. After suitably positioning stop **23** the fastening means **24** is then tightened to secure stop means **23** in the desired position. Stop means **20** may be made either adjustable or non-adjustable, depending upon the range of widths which it is desired to adapt the playboard **11** to meet. Further, in order to simplify the structure of playboard **11** stop means **20** and **23** may be permanently fastened to playboard **11** by any suitable adhesive or bonding means or by fastening means of the type of fastening means **24**.

Playboard **11** is further provided with a suitable aperture **29** which may be employed for the purpose of hanging the playboard upon a suitable nail, hook, or other projecting object in order to permit easy storage thereof. The flatness of the playboard enables it to be easily stored stored since it has no severely projecting portions permanently attached thereto. The cups and funnels are of such a design as to be readily telescoped into one another so as to be easily stacked for storage thereof.

The practical embodiments of the bathtub toy described herein were constructed for and used by children in the age range from three to eight years. The toys were tested for a substantial period and it was found that the children enjoyed playing with the board, the cups and funnels, and were able to utilize their imagination to the fullest. It was further found possible to bathe two children at the same time as the playboard was utilized to divide the bathtub into two distinct areas. This arrangement made for harmonious play and prevented squabbles which were found to have taken place prior to the use of the playboard. In addition to the use for holding of soap, it was also found to have been readily adaptable for holding wash cloths and brushes as well.

Over a substantial period of continual use there was found to be no accidents occurring in the bathtub due to the playboard. Its smooth clean lines keep the occurrence of such accidents down to an absolute minimum. The substantial flatness of the playboard has the further advantages of being easily stored and also easy to clean.

The playboard is also self-storing in that when no longer in use it may be pushed to one or the other of the extreme ends of the bathtub and the cups, funnels and so forth, may be stored right upon the playboard itself [i.e. within the apertures provided therein].

As one preferred embodiment, it has been found to be preferable to form the playboard of a substantially pliable material so as to discourage children from sitting upon the playboard during its use. Even though the playboard was given such pliability, it was still found,

nevertheless, to be rigid enough to support the weight of the water filled cups, funnels and so forth.

From the foregoing it can be seen that the instant invention provides a novel and yet extremely engaging aquatic toy for children which features simplicity in design and yet takes full advantage of the dynamic properties of water to capture the attention and cultivate the imagination of the children using such toys.

Although there has been described a preferred embodiment of this novel invention, many variations and modifications will now be apparent to those skilled in the art. Therefore, this invention is to be limited, not by the disclosure herein, but only by the appending claims.

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive privilege or property is claimed are defined as follows:

1. An aquatic toy especially adapted for use in bathtubs or other bathing appliances comprising playboard means having at least a minimum length so as to be supported by the walls of a bathtub; said playboard means being provided with apertures for positioning and supporting objects therein; stop means secured to the underside of said playboard means at an end thereof for abutting the inside wall of a bathtub to prevent movement of said playboard means in a direction transverse to the wall of the bathtub, said playboard means having first and second grooves on the upper surface at opposite ends of said apertured region for diverting water which collects on said upper surface back into the confines of the bathtub, said playboard means further having a depression for receiving soap; one side of said depression communicating with one of said grooves to enable water collected in said depression to flow into said groove, a plurality of open-ended containers for holding water having a configuration adapted to be received and supported by at least one of said apertures; said containers being adapted to telescope into one another for stacking thereof when said toy is not in use.

2. An aquatic toy especially adapted for use in bathtubs or other bathing appliances comprising playboard means having at least a minimum length so as to be supported by the walls of a bathtub; said playboard means being provided with apertures for positioning and supporting objects therein; stop means secured to the underside of said playboard means at an end thereof for abutting the inside wall of a bathtub to prevent movement of said playboard means in a direction transverse to the wall of the bathtub, said playboard means having a groove on the upper surface at one end thereof for diverting water which collects on said upper surface back into the confines of the bathtub, said playboard means further having a depression for receiving soap; one side of said depression communicating with said groove to enable water collected in said depression to flow into said groove, at least one open-ended container for holding water having a configuration adapted to be received and supported by at least one of said apertures, said open-ended container also having an opening at its lower end to permit water to flow therethrough in the manner of a funnel.

3. An aquatic toy especially adapted for use in bathtubs or other bathing appliances comprising playboard means having at least a minimum length so as to be supported by the walls of a bathtub; said playboard means being provided with apertures for positioning and supporting objects therein; stop means secured to the underside of said playboard means at an end thereof for abutting the inside wall of a bathtub to prevent movement of said playboard means in a direction transverse to the wall of the bathtub, said playboard means being formed of a pliable plastic material of suitable strength to withstand repeated use and the weight of the implements to be used therewith and yet sufficiently pliable to yield under the weight of a person thereby preventing the use of the playboard means as a seat, at least one open-ended container for holding water having a configuration adapted to be received and supported by at least one of said apertures.

4. An aquatic toy especially adapted for use in bathtubs or other bathing appliances comprising playboard means having at least a minimum length so as to be supported by the walls of a bathtub; said playboard means being provided with apertures for positioning and supporting objects therein; stop means secured to the underside of said playboard means at an end thereof for abutting the inside wall of a bathtub to prevent movement of said playboard means in a direction transverse to the wall of the bathtub, said playboard means being formed of a plastic material of suitable strength to withstand repeated use, said plastic material being sufficiently pliable to bend under the burden of substantially heavy weights to discourage children from sitting upon said playboard means, at least one open-ended container for holding water having a configuration adapted to be received and supported by at least one of said apertures.

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