

Aug. 21, 1962

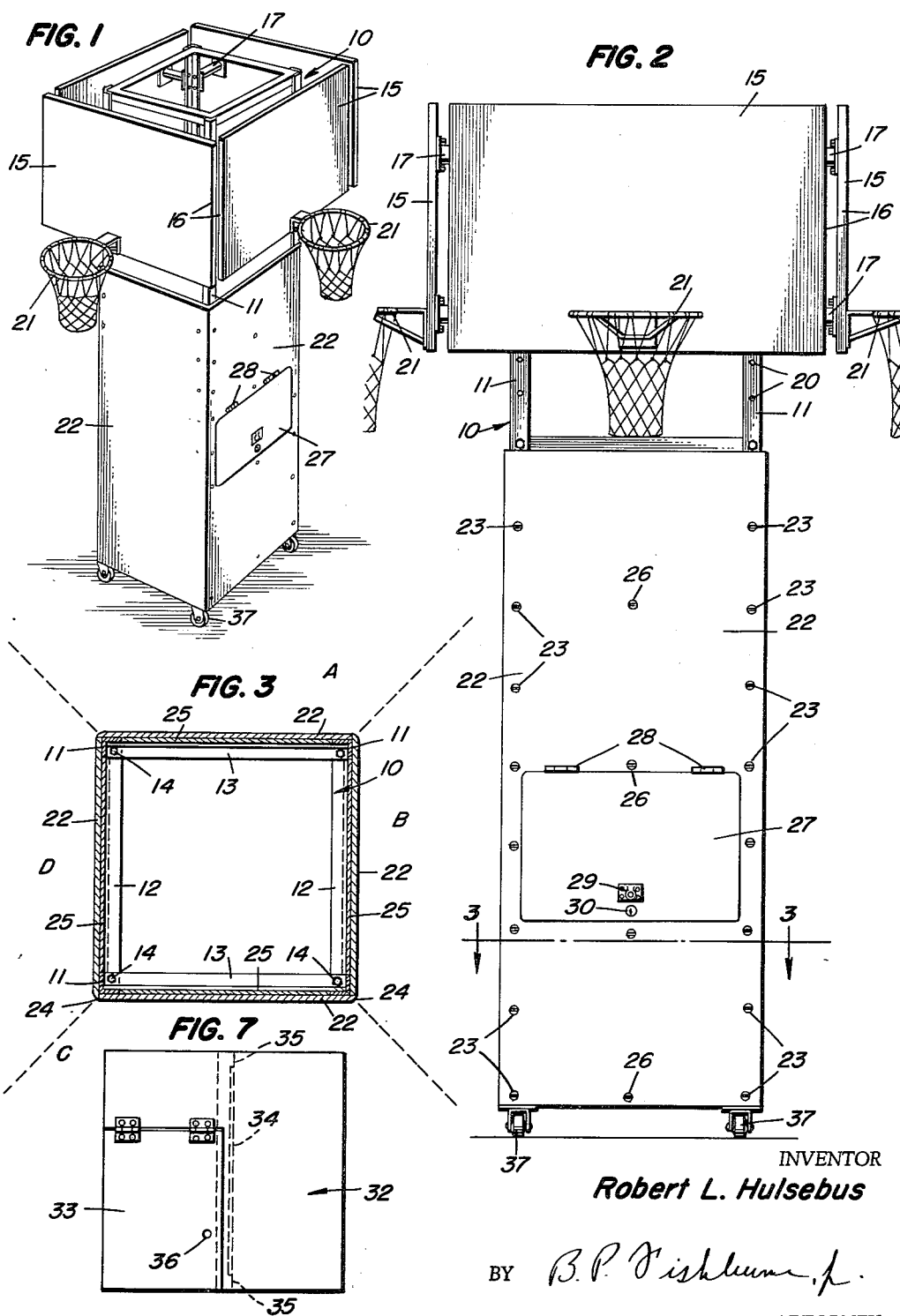
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BASKETBALL PRACTICE DEVICE

Filed Aug. 15, 1960

2 Sheets-Sheet 1



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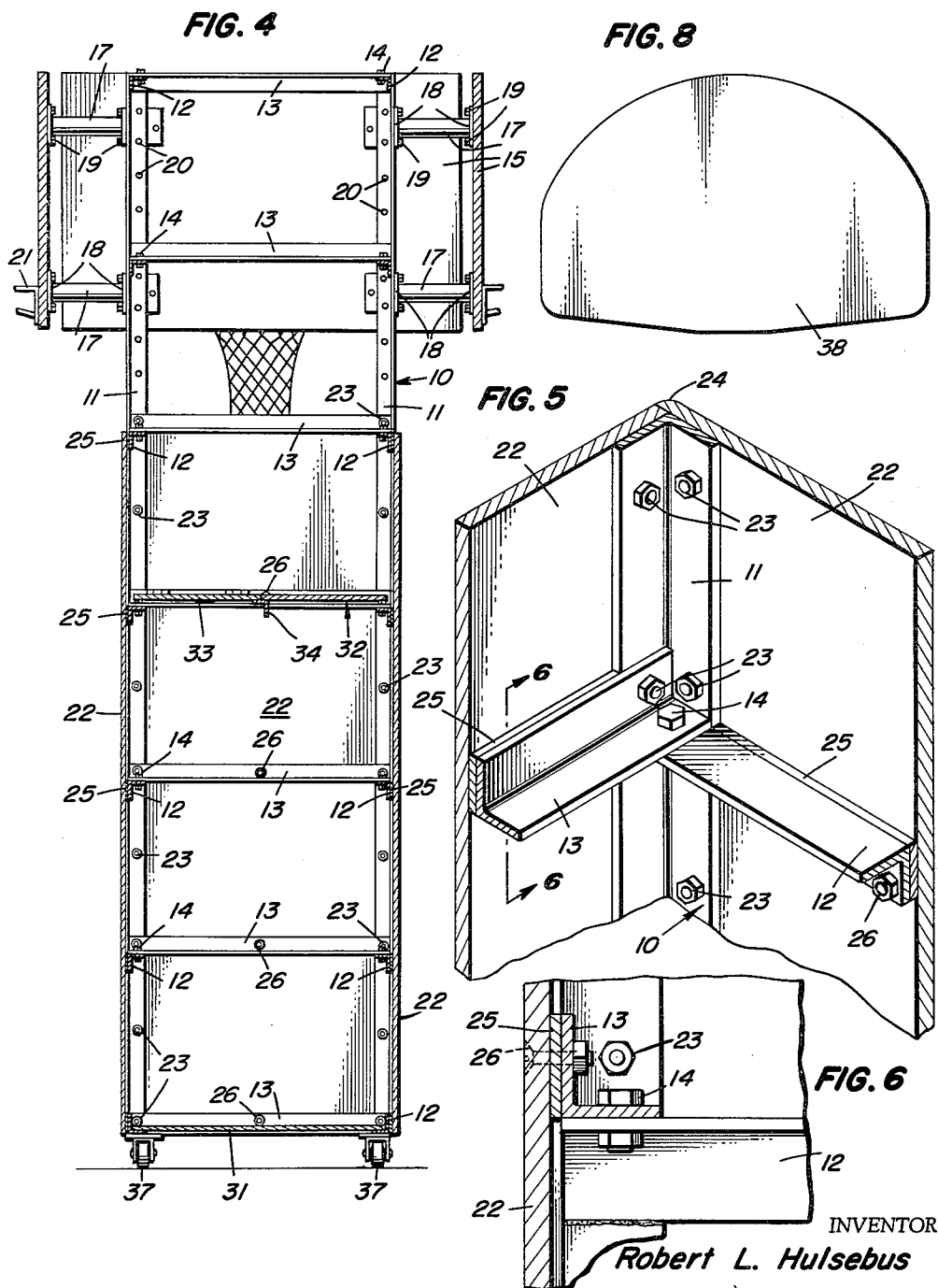
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BASKETBALL PRACTICE DEVICE**Robert L. Hulsebus, 432 N. Main St., Saluda, S.C.****Filed Aug. 15, 1960, Ser. No. 49,474****7 Claims. (Cl. 273-1.5)**

This invention relates to a basketball practice device.

An object of the invention is to provide a combined basketball practice device, storage cabinet and utility platform.

A further object of the invention is to provide a combined device of the above-mentioned character which may be portable for use in a gymnasium or the like, or in the form of a fixed or permanent installation for use indoors or outdoors.

A further and more specific object of the invention is to provide a basketball practice device having a plurality of basketball goals constructed and arranged so that a large number of players may practice basketball in a relatively small area, in safety, with a minimum likelihood of colliding or interfering with one another.

Another major object of the invention is to provide a basketball practice device having a relatively wide rebound area at each side of the device, so that basketballs as well as players in each playing area will be largely prevented from entering the playing areas adjacent the other sides of the device, whereby safety and unobstructed play for large numbers of players in a relatively small overall area is rendered possible.

Another object of the invention is to provide a basketball practice device having backboards and goals which project outwardly a substantial distance beyond the sides of the upright base portion, thus permitting a reasonable amount of player movement under each goal, in safety and without the likelihood of interference with players using adjacent goals.

Other objects are to provide a device of the above-mentioned character which simultaneously affords a large storage space for athletic equipment and the like, as well as an adjustable portable utility platform for use in a gymnasium or the like.

A further general object is to provide a device of the above-mentioned character which is rugged and durable in construction, attractive in appearance, economical to manufacture and highly useful for training a large number of players in a small available space.

Other objects and advantages of the invention will be apparent during the course of the following description.

In the accompanying drawings forming a part of this application and in which like numerals are employed to designate like parts throughout the same,

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of a basketball practice device according to the invention,

FIGURE 2 is an enlarged side elevation of the same,

FIGURE 3 is a horizontal section taken on line 3-3 of FIGURE 2, the floor panel being omitted for the purpose of clarity,

FIGURE 4 is a central vertical cross section through the device shown in FIGURE 2,

FIGURE 5 is an enlarged corner perspective view showing the framework and side walls and associated elements of the device,

FIGURE 6 is an enlarged fragmentary vertical section taken on line 6-6 of FIGURE 5,

FIGURE 7 is a plan view of an adjustable utility platform employed in the device,

FIGURE 8 is a side elevation of a backboard in accordance with a modification of the invention.

In the drawings, wherein for the purpose of illustration are shown preferred embodiments of the invention, attention is directed first to FIGURES 1 through 7,

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wherein the numeral 10 designates generally a rigid upstanding four-sided framework which is preferably square in horizontal cross section and formed of rigid angle bars or the like, to be described.

5 The framework 10 comprises vertical corner posts or uprights 11 of L-shape cross section and extending continuously for the entire height of the device at the four corners thereof, as shown in the drawings. On opposite sides of the framework 10, a plurality of vertically equidistantly spaced horizontal frame bars 12 are provided, with their end portions rigidly secured by welding, or the like, to the corner uprights 11, as best shown in FIGURES 4-6. The horizontal frame members 12 are also preferably L-shaped in cross section and arranged relative to the uprights 11 as shown particularly in FIGURES 4 through 6.

At the other two sides of the upright framework 10, companion L-shaped horizontal frame members 13 extend at right angles to the members 12 and have their opposite ends detachably rigidly secured thereto at 14. Consequently, at the top and bottom of the framework 10, as well as at a plurality of elevations along the framework, the corner uprights 11 are rigidly connected by a plurality of horizontal open rectangular frame sections, composed of the members 12 and 13. The upstanding framework 10 is open at its top and bottom and on all four sides except for the areas occupied by the members 12 and 13. The interior of the framework 10 is entirely open and unobstructed.

A plurality of rectangular backboards 15 are arranged at right angles to each other, adjacent the top portion of the framework 10, and spaced outwardly of the sides of the framework a substantial distance, as shown. The backboards 15 in effect surround the upper portion of the framework 10 in spaced relation thereto, and the adjacent vertical edges 16 of the backboards are spaced apart a slight distance only at the four corners of the device.

The backboards 15 are rigidly supported by horizontal bars 17, near their tops and bottoms and opposite sides, and adjacent the corner uprights 11 of the framework. Connector plates 18 rigid with the ends of the bars 17 are suitably rigidly secured at 19 to the corner uprights 11 and backboards 15, as shown. In their upper portions, the uprights 11 have a multiplicity of vertically spaced openings 20 formed therethrough adapted to receive the fastener means 19, whereby the several backboards 15 may be adjusted vertically upon the framework 10 as desired.

Each backboard 15 is equipped in the usual manner with a standard basketball goal 21. The goals 21 are thus arranged upon the four sides of the device in equidistantly spaced relation and at the same elevation above the playing floor. The goals 21 may be positioned at the standard height or at lower elevations if desired, as when small children or beginners are using the practice device.

With continued reference to the drawings, the framework 10 is enclosed upon all four sides from its bottom up to a point near and below the backboards 15 by side walls or panels 22, formed of plywood or any other suitable material. These side walls 22 are detachably rigidly secured as at 23 to the corner uprights 11 and/or the horizontal frame members 12 and 13 at a multiplicity of points along the height of the framework 10, as shown. Adjacent panels 22 have their corners abutting and rounded to enhance the safety of the device, as indicated at 24, FIGURE 5. To further stabilize the side walls 22 and to reduce noise and vibration, horizontal spacer slats 25 are interposed between each horizontal frame member 12 and 13 and the inner face of each side wall 22, as shown. Additional fastener elements 26 serve to interconnect the side walls 22, and spacer slats 25 with the horizontal frame

members 12 and 13, near the longitudinal centers of the latter. The side walls 22, in addition to substantially enclosing the open framework 10 and thereby providing broad vertical rebound areas on all four sides of the device, also serve to materially strengthen the central framework 10, as should be obvious.

One side wall 22, FIGURE 2, has a relatively large vertically swingable access door 27 hinged thereto at 28, a substantial distance above the bottom of the upright framework. This access door 27 is preferably provided with a flush type handle and lock means 29 and 30, as shown. All of the fastener means 23 and 26 are preferably flush with the outer faces of the side walls 22 for safety reasons, as particularly shown in FIGURE 6 of the drawings.

A horizontal rectangular bottom or floor panel 31 rests freely and removably upon the lowermost set of frame members 12 and 13, FIGURE 4. This panel 31 may be positioned in like manner at any desired elevation upon any of the other horizontal frame sections composed of the members 12 and 13. The panel 31, FIGURE 4, constitutes the bottom or floor of a large upright rectangular storage compartment, afforded by the side walls 22 and into which access may be readily gained through the door 27, as should be obvious.

A horizontal rectangular utility platform 32 having a hinged vertically swingable door section 33 is also provided, and adapted to rest removably upon any of the intermediate horizontal frame sections composed of the members 12 or 13 or upon the top horizontal frame section of the device, if preferred. The platform 32 has a horizontal reinforcing bar 34 rigidly secured to its lower side and notched at 35, FIGURE 7, so as to be capable of resting stably upon any opposed pair of the horizontal members 12 or 13. The hinged door portion 33 of the platform 32 has a finger hole 36 formed therethrough to facilitate lifting the same. Thus, when the utility platform 32 is arranged at any desired elevation upon the framework 10, access to the storage compartment below the platform 32 may be readily gained. When the platform 32 is placed upon the extreme top of the framework 10, it will serve to close such top and prevent the basketballs or other objects from being thrown into the interior of the framework. If preferred, an additional removable top wall separate from the utility platform 32 may be employed, in which case the removable top wall for the framework 10 would be identical to the floor panel 31.

Caster wheels 37 of any preferred or conventional type are suitably rigidly secured to the bottom of the framework 10 adjacent the corners of the same. If preferred, the basketball practice device may be in the nature of a fixed installation for outdoor use or the like. In such case, the caster wheels 37 are dispensed with and the bottom of the framework 10 is firmly anchored to the ground in any preferred manner.

I also contemplate providing in at least one of the side walls 22 above the elevation of the access door 27 a readily removable large panel, not shown, to provide further access to the interior of the upright framework 10 for purposes to be mentioned hereinafter.

In FIGURE 8, a slight modification of the invention is illustrated, wherein a fan-shaped backboard 38 is provided instead of the rectangular backboards 15 previously described. The fan-shaped backboards 38 are secured to the supporting arms 17 in substantially the same manner as previously described, and the backboards 38 may carry the identical goals 21 previously described. All other parts and their purposes are identical to those previously described in connection with the form of the invention shown in FIGURES 1 through 7.

In use, in a gymnasium or the like, the practice device may be positioned centrally in the available floor space so as to provide four equal playing areas A, B, C and D, FIGURE 3. The players practicing in each of these areas will of course use a single adjacent backboard 15 and

goal 21. The backboard 15 and the side wall 22 below it will provide a relatively wide rebound area for the basketballs, and very few of the basketballs thrown toward the goal for the particular playing area A, B, C or D will enter the playing areas on opposite sides thereof. Due to the outwardly spaced or offset arrangement of the backboards, the players in each playing area may circulate freely beneath the goal 21 without the likelihood of interfering with players in adjacent areas. Since the side walls 22 are free of projections and since the corners 24 are rounded as shown, the structure is quite safe and the players who accidentally fall against it are not likely to be injured.

Athletic equipment or any other desired material may be stored within the storage compartment bounded by the side walls 22 and the floor panel 31, as previously stated.

The utility platform 32 having the door portion 33 may be positioned at any desired elevation upon the framework 10, as previously mentioned, so that a maintenance worker in the gymnasium may stand on the platform 32 to replace light bulbs or to do other work. With the platform 32 arranged for example as shown in FIGURE 4, a ladder may be placed in the upper open end of the framework 10 with its lower end resting upon the platform 32, and in this manner the overall height of the device may be greatly increased for utility purposes.

If the utility platform 32 is placed at a lower elevation near the access door 27, the latter may be opened and a moving picture projector or the like placed upon the utility platform for showing movies in the gymnasium. The mentioned removable panel in one of the side walls 22 at a higher elevation, not shown, serves the same purpose in conjunction with the adjustable platform 32 when it is desired to support a moving picture projector or the like.

It is to be understood that the forms of the invention herewith shown and described are to be taken as preferred examples of the same, and that various changes in the shape, size and arrangement of parts may be resorted to, without departing from the spirit of the invention or scope of the subjoined claims.

Having thus described my invention, I claim:

1. A regulation height portable basketball practicing apparatus for use in small gymnasiums and the like where available space is limited and comprising an upright vertically elongated pedestal body portion having side walls which are substantially free of external projections likely to be dangerous to the players, each side wall of the pedestal body portion sufficiently wide to provide a substantial backstop surface for free bounding basketballs, framework secured to and extending above the pedestal body portion, vertical backboards secured to said framework above the pedestal body portion and corresponding in number to the side walls of the pedestal body portion and substantially parallel thereto and offset forwardly of said side walls a substantial distance to provide adequate clearance for players moving beneath the backboards without bodily contacting the side walls, and regulation height basketball goals secured to the backboards and projecting outwardly therefrom in regulation manner.

2. The invention as defined by claim 1, and wherein said pedestal body portion is substantially square in horizontal cross section and said backboards are disposed substantially at right angles to each other and symmetrically disposed relative to the body portion with their vertical edges in close proximity so that the backboards collectively constitute a box-like structure atop the pedestal body portion.

3. The invention as defined by claim 1, and wherein the pedestal body portion is hollow and includes a bottom wall, and an access door on one side wall of the pedestal body portion rendering the same usable as a large storage cabinet for athletic equipment and the like.

4. The invention as defined by claim 3, and vertically

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adjustable platform means within the pedestal body portion rendering the apparatus usable as a portable utility platform.

5. A regulation height portable basketball practicing apparatus for use in crowded areas and comprising an upright vertically elongated multi-sided framework, side wall panels secured to and enclosing the framework from points adjacent the bottom of the framework to points near and below the top thereof, said panels substantially free of dangerous external projections and each sufficiently wide to provide a substantial backstop surface for free bounding basketballs and effectively preventing basketballs from rolling under the apparatus or bounding through the same, substantially horizontal support arms secured to the sides of the framework above said panels and projecting outwardly of the framework and panels for substantial distances, substantially vertical backboards secured to the outer ends of said arms and spaced out-

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wardly of the panels in substantial overhanging relation thereto to provide adequate clearance for the movement of players therebeneath, and regulation height goal means secured to the backboards.

6. The invention as defined by claim 5, and wherein the backboards are rectangular and have their vertical edges in close proximity thereby forming an enlarged rectangular overhanging box-like structure on the framework near the top thereof and above said panels.

7. The invention as defined by claim 5, and an access door on one of said side wall panels enabling the framework portion enclosed by said panels to serve as a large storage cabinet.

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