Dec. 1, 1959 O. J. PHILLIPS 2,915,314

FOLDABLE BACKSTOP GAME DEVICE

Filed July 26, 1957

FIG. 1

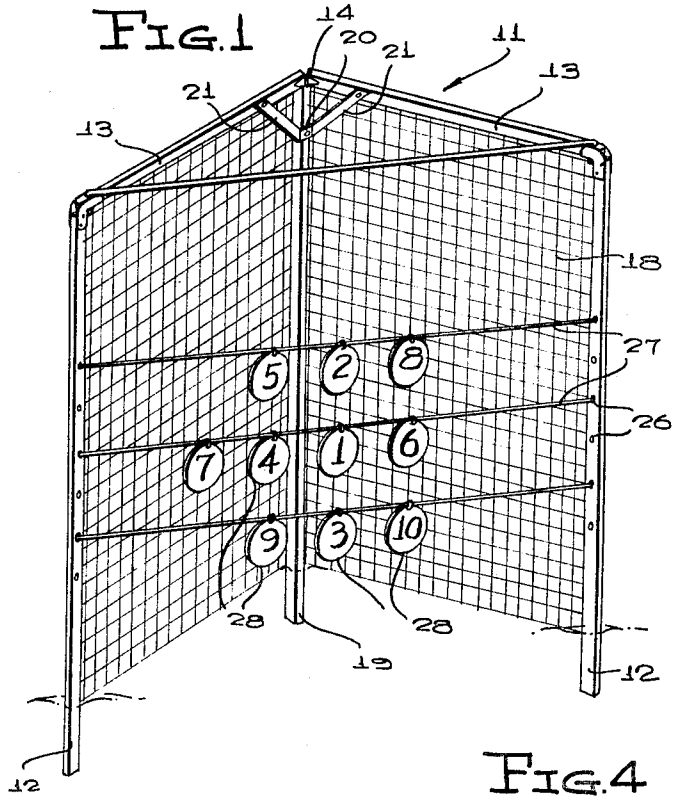


FIG. 5

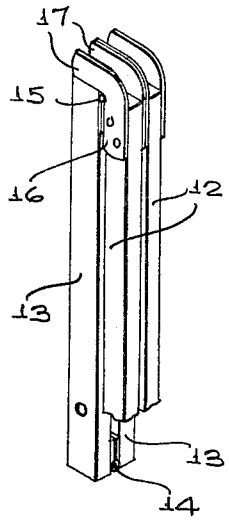


FIG. 4

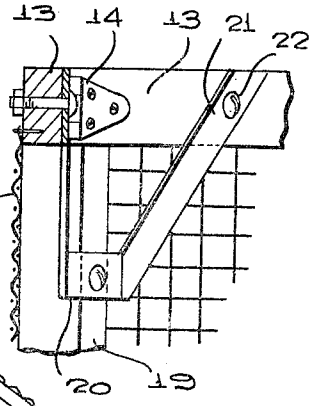


FIG. 2

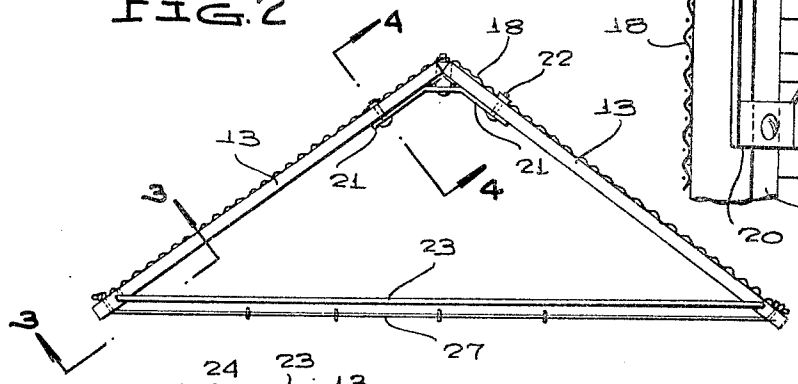
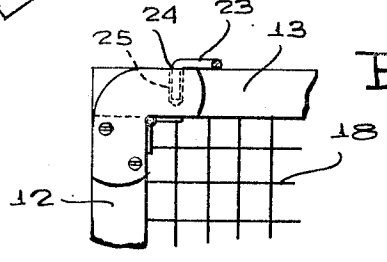


FIG. 3



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FOLDABLE BACKSTOP GAME DEVICE

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3 Claims. (Cl. 273—102.4)

This invention relates to game devices, and more particularly to a foldable backstop device adapted to provide a means of improving the skill of a person throwing a baseball, football, or similar ball, as well as a game apparatus to enable a person to obtain a score in accordance with his accuracy in throwing a ball into the backstop device.

A main object of the invention is to provide a novel and improved foldable backstop device adapted to be employed as a game apparatus for enabling a person to improve his accuracy in throwing a baseball, football, or similar ball, the device being simple in construction, being easy to set up for use, and providing a means whereby a person may obtain practice in throwing a ball in a pleasant and interesting way.

A further object of the invention is to provide an improved foldable backstop device provided with target means enabling a person to improve his accuracy in throwing a baseball, football, or similar ball, the apparatus involving inexpensive components, being durable in construction, and being foldable to a compact size for convenience in transportation and storage.

Further objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the following description and claims, and from the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Figure 1 is a front perspective view of an improved backstop device constructed in accordance with the present invention, shown set up for use.

Figure 2 is a top plan view of the backstop device of Figure 1.

Figure 3 is an enlarged cross sectional detail view taken on the line 3—3 of Figure 2.

Figure 4 is an enlarged cross sectional detail view taken on the line 4—4 of Figure 2.

Figure 5 is a fragmentary perspective view of the backstop device of Figure 1 in folded position.

Referring to the drawings, the improved backstop device is designated generally at **11** and when set up for use, comprises a pair of front post members **12, 12** to the top ends of which are hinged respective top arms **13, 13.** The top arms **13** are connected to the top ends of the vertical post members **12** by suitable hinge means allowing the vertical post members **12** to swing in the same vertical plane containing the top arms to positions closely adjacent to and parallel to said top arms, as shown in Figure 5, whereby the apparatus may be folded to a very compact volume, as will be presently described.

The rear ends of the top arms **13, 13** are hingedly connected together by a suitable hinge **14,** so that said top arms **13, 13** may be swung closely adjacent and parallel to each other when the apparatus is folded.

As shown in Figure 5, the hinges connecting the members **12** to the members **13** are designated at **15** and comprise sleeve portions **16** secured to the top ends of the members **12,** said sleeve portions having the pairs of guide flanges **17, 17** which engage adjacent the front and

rear sides of the top arms **13** when said top arms are unfolded to the positions thereof shown in Figure 1.

Designated at **18** is a flexible netting member of suitable flexible mesh material which is secured at its forward marginal portions to the post members **12, 12** and at its top marginal portions to the arms **13, 13.**

Designated at **19** is a rear vertical post member, substantially equal in length to the vertical post members **12, 12,** and having secured thereto a rigid bracket **20** having the upwardly and outwardly inclined arm portions **21, 21** which are located in planes at an obtuse angle to each other. The top ends of the arms **21, 21** are detachably connected to the respective top arms **13, 13,** as by bolts **22,** whereby the arms **21, 21** hold the horizontal top arm members **13, 13** in forwardly diverging relationship when the apparatus is set up for use.

As shown in Figure 4, the rear post member **19** is positioned subjacent the hinged rear ends of the top arms **13, 13,** and the bracket member **20** is arranged so that the upwardly and outwardly extending bracket arms **21** will then engage against the inside surfaces of the top arms **13, 13,** so that the bracket arms **21** may be readily secured to the top arms **13** by inserting the bolts **22.** The rear post member **19** engages against the netting member **18** and stretches said netting member in the manner illustrated in Figure 1, holding the netting member taut.

Designated at **23** is a rigid rod member having the right angled end portions **24,** said end portions being engageable in vertical recesses **25** provided in the forward end portions of the top arms **13, 13** to detachably secure said top arms in forwardly diverging relationship, as shown in Figure 1, when the apparatus is set up for use.

The vertical post members **12, 12** are each formed with vertically spaced apertures **26,** and connected to said post members at said apertures are respective vertically spaced flexible cable members **27** which extend horizontally across the front plane of the enclosure defined by the backstop assembly, said cable members **27** being held in a susbtantially taut condition when the rod member **23** is engaged with the recesses **25** in the manner above described.

As shown in Figure 1, the cable members **27** may be fastened to the post members **12** at selected apertures **26** so as to provide a desired vertical spacing between the cable members.

Secured to the cable members **27** are target members **28** which may be suitably numbered so as to define scoring values, the target members being adjustable on the cable members **27** so as to define any desired configuration or pattern thereon, and so as to be arranged in a predetermined area in front of the backstop enclosure. Thus, the target members **28** may be arranged in the "strike" zone so that a person using the device may simulate the conditions facing a baseball pitcher. The target members **28** may be of any suitable shape, and if so desired, may be replaced by rings or hoops, so that a person may use the device with a football or other ball and attempt to throw the ball through the rings or hoops.

To fold up the device for transportation or storage, it is merely necessary to remove the horizontal strut bar **23** and to unfasten the bracket arms **21** from the top arms **13.** This allows the rear post member **19** to be detached from the top arms, after which the top arms **13, 13** may be swung together and to adjacent parallel relationship and the front post members **12, 12** may be swung into positions closely adjacent and parallel to the top arms **13, 13,** providing the folded configuration of the device illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5 does not illustrate the netting member **18** nor the flexible cable members **27**, but since these members are flexible, they readily fold in accordance with the folded positions of the rigid frame elements **12** and **13** and do not interfere with the conversion of the apparatus to its folded condition for transportation or storage.

While a specific embodiment of an improved foldable backstop device has been disclosed in the foregoing description, it will be understood that various modifications within the spirit of the invention may occur to those skilled in the art. Therefore, it is intended that no limitations be placed on the invention except as defined by the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A foldable backstop device comprising a pair of vertical front post members of similar lengths, respective top arms hinged at their forward ends to the top ends of said front post members for rotation on horizontal axes transverse to the planes defined by said top arms and their associated front post members, means hingedly connecting the rear ends of said top arms for rotation relative to each other on a vertical axis, a flexible netting member secured at its side margins to said front post members and at its top margins to said top arms, a rear vertical post member substantially equal in length to said front post members, and rigid bracket means secured to the upper portion of said rear post member and detachably connected to the rear portions of said top arms, said rigid bracket means constituting the sole connection of said rear post member to said top arms and being formed and arranged to support said rear post member adjacent the hinged rear ends of said top arms with the top arms in forwardly diverging relationship.

2. A foldable backstop device comprising a pair of vertical front post members of similar lengths, respective top arms hinged at their forward ends to the top ends of said front post members for rotation on horizontal axes transverse to the planes defined by said top arms and their associated front post members, means hingedly connecting the rear ends of said top arms for rotation relative to each other on a vertical axis, a flexible netting member secured at its side margins to said front post members and at its top margin to said top arms, a rear vertical post member substantially equal in length to said front post members, rigid bracket means secured to the upper portion of said rear post member and detachably connected to the rear portions of said top arms, said rigid bracket means constituting the sole connection of said rear post member to said top arms and being formed and arranged to support said rear post member adjacent the hinged rear ends of said top arms with the top arms in forwardly diverging relationship, and a rigid rod member detachably connected to the forward portions of said top arms.

3. A foldable backstop device comprising a pair of vertical front post members of similar lengths, respective top arms hinged at their forward ends to the top ends of said front post members for rotation on horizontal axes transverse to the planes defined by said top arms and their associated front post members, means hingedly connecting the rear ends of said top arms for rotation relative to each other on a vertical axis, a flexible netting member secured at its side margins to said front post members and at its top margin to said top arms, a rear vertical post member substantially equal in length to said front post members, rigid bracket means secured to the upper portion of said rear post member and including respective upwardly and outwardly extending arms detachably connected at their top ends to the rear portions of said top arms, said rigid bracket means constituting the sole connection of said rear post member to said top arms and being formed and arranged to support said rear post member subjacent the hinged rear ends of said top arms with the top arms in forwardly diverging relationship, and a rigid rod member detachably connected to the forward portions of said top arms.

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