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(54) SYSTEM FOR, AND METHOD OF, INDICATING TO A CHILD THE ACCURACY OF SHOOTING A BASKETBALL TO MAKE A BASKET

(76) Inventors: **Karen Gottlieb-Myers**, Los Angeles, CA (US); **Dale Michael Fetterleigh**, San Bernardino, CA (US)

Correspondence Address:
ELLSWORTH R. ROSTON, ESQ.
FULWIDER PATTON LEE & UTECHT, LLP
TENTH FLOOR
6060 CENTER DRIVE
LOS ANGELES, CA 90045 (US)

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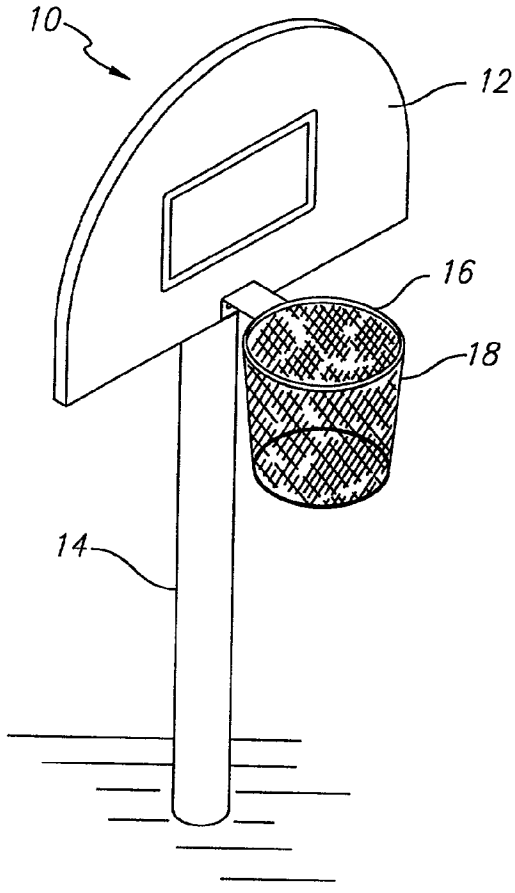
(57) **ABSTRACT**

In a preferred embodiment of the invention, a backboard, a rim on the backboard and a net extending from the rim are provided for a child shooting a basketball. A first sensor on the backboard produces a first signal when the basketball hits the backboard. A second sensor disposed relative to the rim produces a second signal when the basketball hits the rim. A third sensor disposed relative to the net produces a third signal when the basketball passes through the net. The first, second and third sensors may respectively include first, second and third switches which respectively close when the basketball hits the backboard, when the basketball hits the rim and when the basketball passes through the net and which respectively cause the first, second and third signals to be produced when they close. The first, second and third signals may be processed as by a microprocessor to provide an indication of the path of movement of the basketball relative to the backboard, the rim and the net. The processing of the first signal relative to the second and third signals may be delayed to coordinate the operation of the microprocessor in indicating the path of movement of the basketball relative to the backboard, the rim and the net. Similarly, the processing of the second signal may be delayed relative to the processing of the third signal. The path of movement of the basketball may be indicated on a sensory basis such as orally and in a manner to offer encouragement to the child.



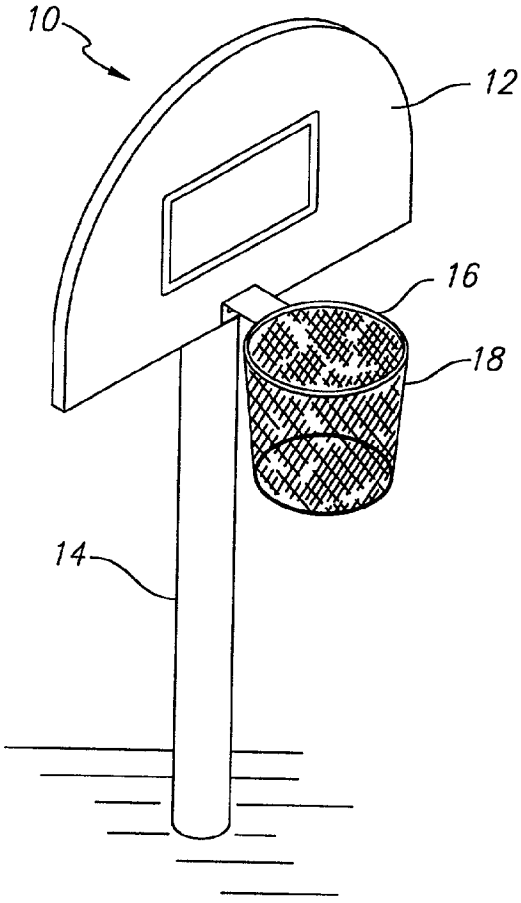


FIG. 1

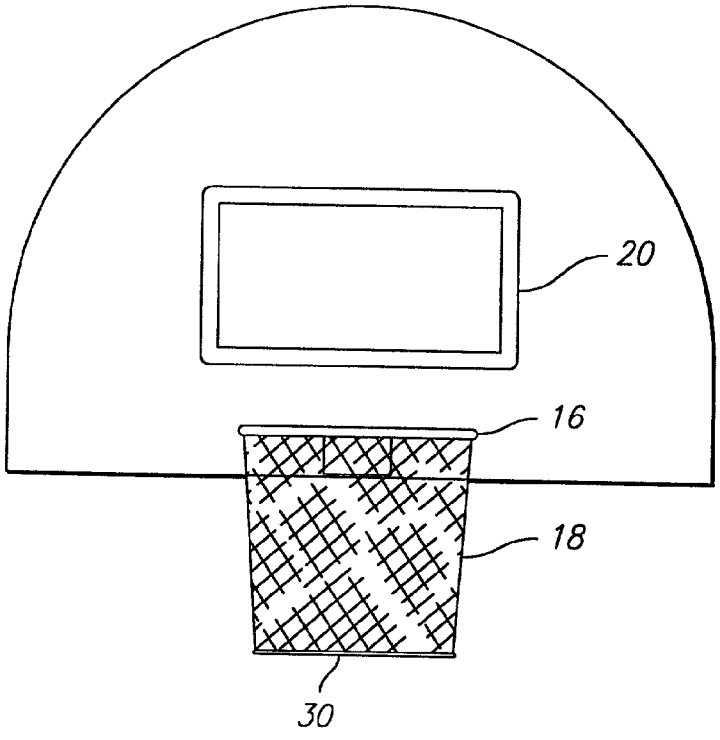


FIG. 2

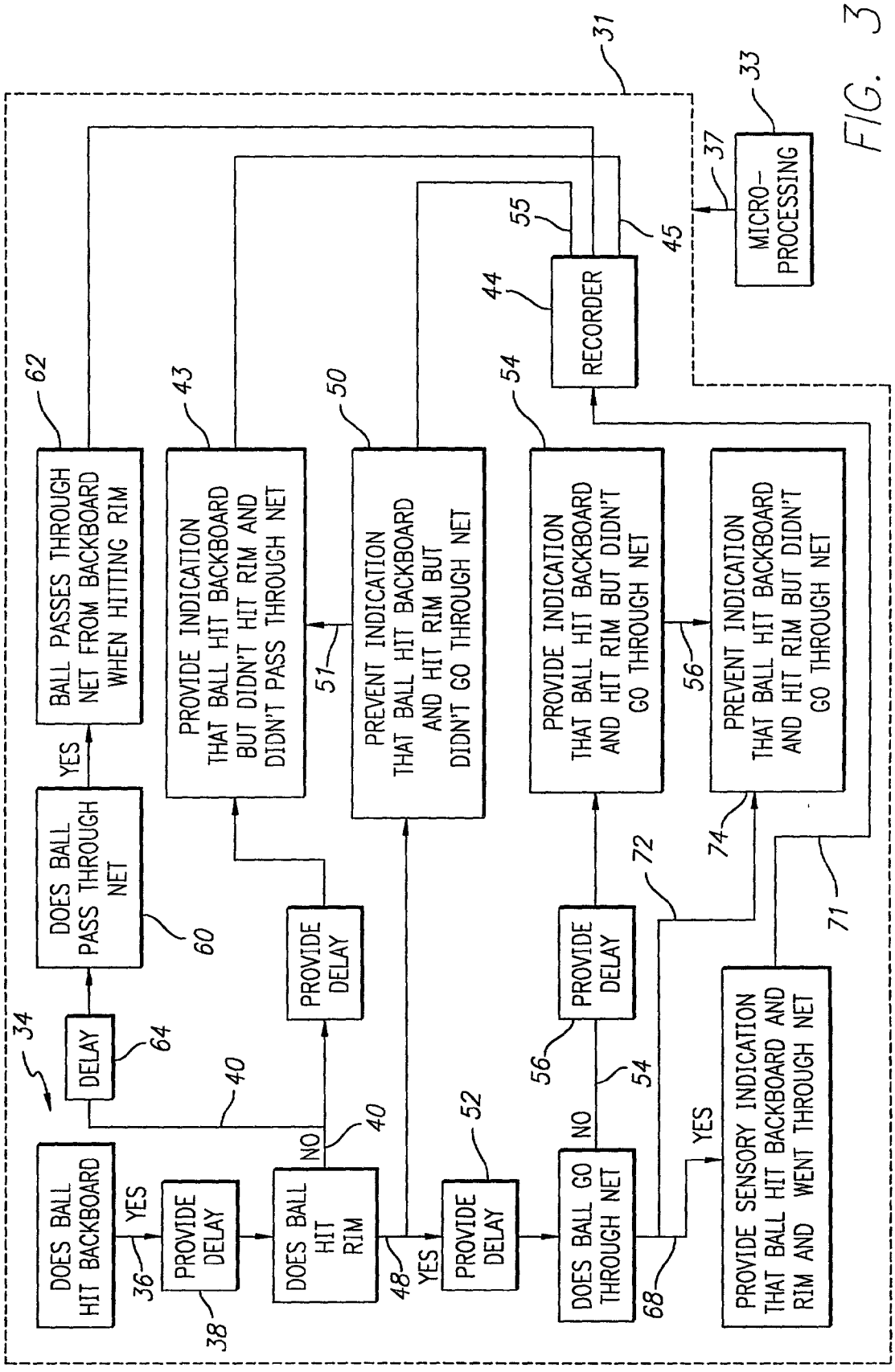

31
33
MICRO-PROCESSING
37
45
55
RECORDER
44
54
62
BALL PASSES THROUGH NET FROM BACKBOARD WHEN HITTING RIM
43
PROVIDE INDICATION THAT BALL HIT BACKBOARD BUT DIDN'T HIT RIM AND DIDN'T PASS THROUGH NET
50
PREVENT INDICATION THAT BALL HIT BACKBOARD AND HIT RIM BUT DIDN'T GO THROUGH NET
PROVIDE INDICATION THAT BALL HIT BACKBOARD AND HIT RIM BUT DIDN'T GO THROUGH NET
56
PREVENT INDICATION THAT BALL HIT BACKBOARD AND HIT RIM BUT DIDN'T GO THROUGH NET
74
72
71
YES
DOES BALL PASS THROUGH NET
60
34
DELAY
64
40
PROVIDE DELAY
PROVIDE DELAY
PROVIDE DELAY
56
54
NO
DOES BALL HIT BACKBOARD
YES
36
PROVIDE DELAY
38
DOES BALL HIT RIM
NO
40
48
YES
52
DOES BALL GO THROUGH NET
NO
68
YES
PROVIDE SENSORY INDICATION THAT BALL HIT BACKBOARD AND RIM AND WENT THROUGH NET

FIG. 3

FIG. 4

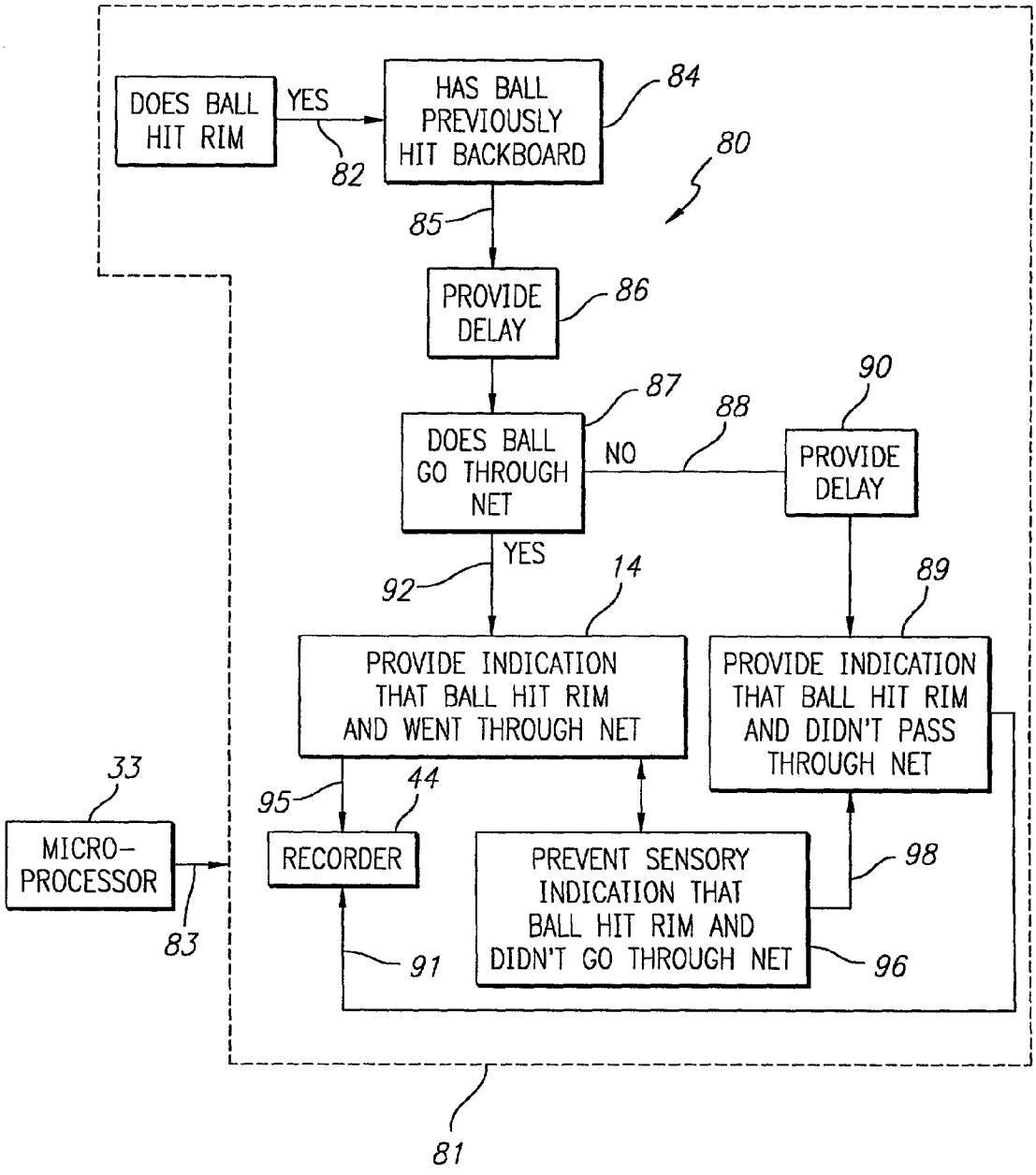
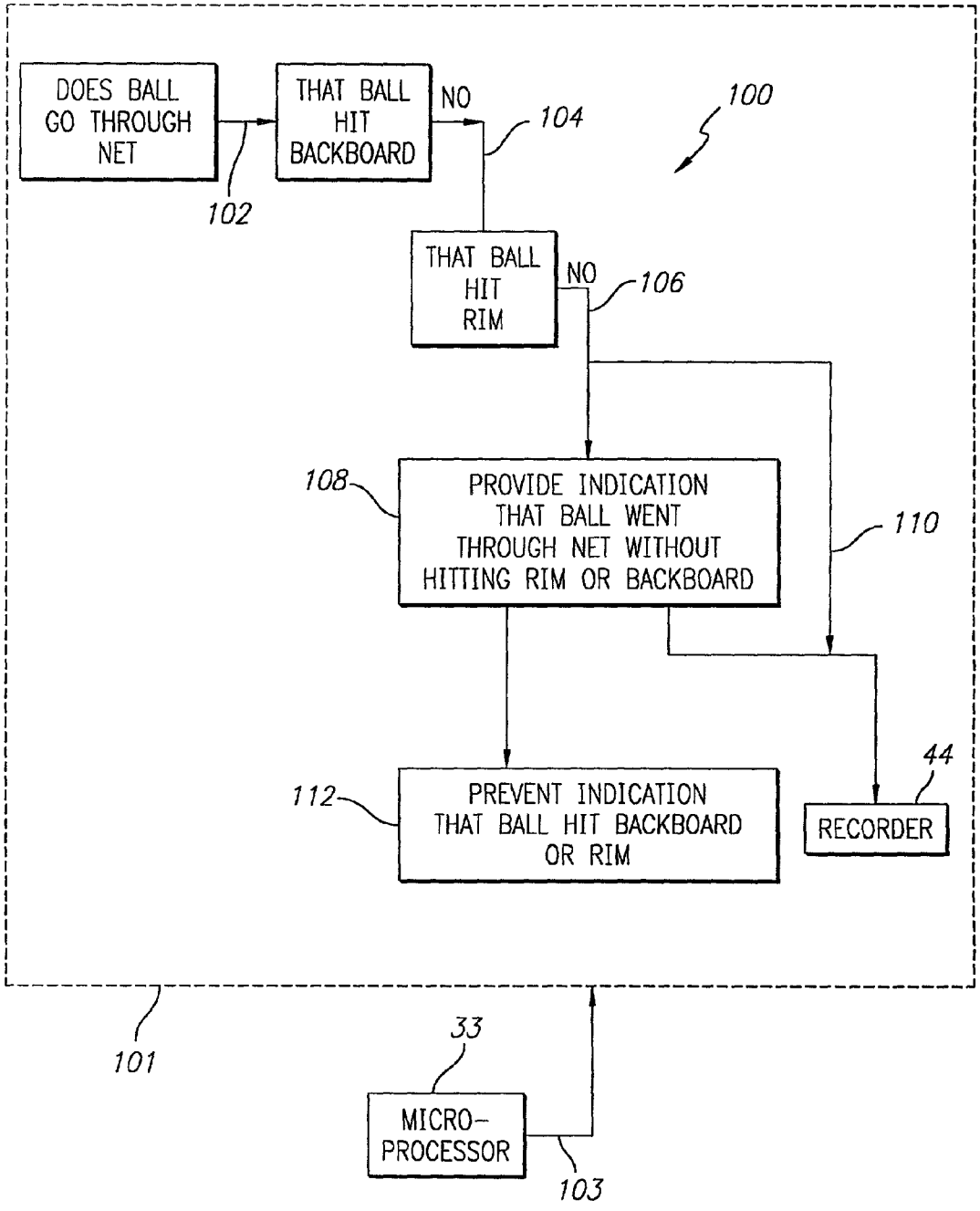

DOES BALL HIT RIM
YES
82
HAS BALL PREVIOUSLY HIT BACKBOARD
84
80
85
PROVIDE DELAY
86
DOES BALL GO THROUGH NET
87
88
NO
PROVIDE DELAY
90
YES
92
14
89
PROVIDE INDICATION THAT BALL HIT RIM AND WENT THROUGH NET
PROVIDE INDICATION THAT BALL HIT RIM AND DIDN'T PASS THROUGH NET
33
95
44
MICRO-PROCESSOR
RECORDER
PREVENT SENSORY INDICATION THAT BALL HIT RIM AND DIDN'T GO THROUGH NET
98
83
91
96
81

FIG. 5


DOES BALL GO THROUGH NET
102
THAT BALL HIT BACKBOARD
NO
104
100
THAT BALL HIT RIM
NO
106
108
PROVIDE INDICATION THAT BALL WENT THROUGH NET WITHOUT HITTING RIM OR BACKBOARD
110
112
PREVENT INDICATION THAT BALL HIT BACKBOARD OR RIM
44
RECORDER
101
33
MICRO-PROCESSOR
103

SYSTEM FOR, AND METHOD OF, INDICATING TO A CHILD THE ACCURACY OF SHOOTING A BASKETBALL TO MAKE A BASKET

[0001] This invention relates to a system for, and method of, indicating to a player (e.g. a child) the accuracy of shooting a basketball in an attempt to have the basketball pass through a net supported by a rim on a backboard.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The game of basketball has grown in popularity throughout the years in the United States and in much of the world. It may be the most popular sport now in the United States for both men and women. It is almost certainly the most popular sport during the winter months since it may be an indoor sport. Its popularity is enhanced because it requires no equipment other than a basketball which is relatively inexpensive. Furthermore, the uniforms for the players are relatively inexpensive.

[0003] Children start to play basketball at a relatively early age. For example, children as young as four (4) years old will attempt to dribble and shoot a basket. When they play basketball, they respond well to encouragement. However, they often play by themselves. No one has apparently provided previously a basketball assembly or system for children where the assembly or system provides a sensory indication (preferably oral) of the flight path of the basketball, when shot by children, relative to a backboard, a rim supported by the backboard and a net extending from the rim.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF A PREFERRED EMBODIMENT OF THE INVENTION

[0004] In a preferred embodiment of the invention, a backboard, a rim on the backboard and a net extending from the rim are provided for a child shooting a basketball. A first sensor on the backboard produces a first signal when the basketball hits the backboard. A second sensor disposed relative to the rim produces a second signal when the basketball hits the rim. A third sensor disposed relative to the net produces a third signal when the basketball passes through the net.

[0005] The first, second and third sensors may respectively include first, second and third switches which respectively close when the basketball hits the backboard, when the basketball hits the rim and when the basketball passes through the net and which respectively cause the first, second and third signals to be produced when they close. The first, second and third signals may be processed as by a microprocessor to provide an indication of the path of movement of the basketball relative to the backboard, the rim and the net.

[0006] The processing of the first signal relative to the second and third signals may be delayed to coordinate the operation of the microprocessor in indicating the path of movement of the basketball relative to the backboard, the rim and the net. Similarly, the processing of the second signal may be delayed relative to the processing of the third signal. The path of movement of the basketball may be indicated on a sensory basis such as orally and in a manner to offer encouragement to the child.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] In the drawings:

[0008] **FIG. 1** is a perspective view of a backboard, a rim supported by the backboard, a net supported by, and extending from, the rim and sensors, associated with the backboard, the rim and the net for indicating the movements of a basketball shot by a child player;

[0009] **FIG. 1A** is an enlarged fragmentary plan view which is taken substantially on the rotary line designated as 1A in **FIG. 1** and which shows in additional detail the construction and operation of the sensor associated with the backboard;

[0010] **FIG. 1B** is an enlarged fragmentary plan view which is taken substantially on the rotary line designated as 1B in **FIG. 1** and which shows in additional detail the construction and operation of the sensor associated with the rim;

[0011] **FIG. 1C** is an enlarged fragmentary plan view which is taken substantially on the rotary line designated as 1C in **FIG. 1** and which shows in additional detail the construction and operation of the sensor associated with the net;

[0012] **FIG. 2** is a flow chart indicating the sensory response of a preferred embodiment of this invention to various paths of movement of a basketball relative to the rim and the net after the basketball shot by the child impinges against the backboard;

[0013] **FIG. 3** is a flow chart indicating the sensory response of the preferred embodiment of the invention to various paths of movement of the basketball relative to the rim and the net after the basketball shot by the child fails to hit the backboard but hits the rim; and

[0014] **FIG. 4** is a flow chart indicating the sensory response of the preferred embodiment of the invention to the movement of the basketball through the net without hitting the backboard or the rim.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF A PREFERRED EMBODIMENT OF THE INVENTION

[0015] In a preferred embodiment of the invention, a basketball assembly generically indicated at **10 (FIG. 1)** is provided. The basketball assembly **10** includes a backboard **12** which may be disposed on a stanchion **14**. A rim **16** is supported by the backboard **12**. A net **18** extends from the rim **16**. The stanchion **14**, the backboard **12**, the rim **16** and the net **18** may be constructed in a conventional manner. However, the stanchion **14**, the backboard **12**, the rim **16** and the net **18***b* may be constructed in a reduced size so as to be adaptable for play by a young child preferably in the age group of approximately **4** to **9**.

[0016] A sensor generally indicated at **20** is associated with the backboard **12**. The sensor **20** may include a switch **22** which is normally open but which is closed when a basketball **24** shot by a player (e.g. a child) impinges upon or hits the backboard. The switch **22** is shown in **FIG. 1A** as sensing light when the two (2) terminals in the switch become aligned as a result of an impact of the basketball **24** against the backboard **12**. The light-sensing characteristics

of the switch **22** are only illustrative and a number of other types of switches including mechanical, electrical and semiconductor may also be used.

[**0017**] A sensor generally indicated at **26** in **FIG. 1B** is associated with the rim **16**. The sensor **26** may include a switch **28** which is normally open but which is closed when the basketball **24** shot by the child impinges upon or hits the rim **16** and causes this rim to deflect downwardly from the backboard as a fulcrum. The switch **28** is shown in **FIG. 1B** as sensing light when the two (2) terminals become aligned as a result of an impact of the basketball **24** against the rim **16**. The light-sensing characteristics of the switch **28** are only illustrative and a number of other types of switches including mechanical, electrical and semiconductor may also be used.

[**0018**] A sensor generally indicated at **30** is associated with the net **18**. The sensor **30** may include a switch **32** **(FIG. 1C)** which is normally open but which is closed when the basketball shot by the child passes through the net **18**. The switch **32** may be disposed at a position on the net to close when the basketball has passed fully into the net **18** without any prospect that the basketball will pop upwardly out of the net. For example, the switch **32** may be light sensitive and may be responsive to an interruption in the passage of light from the backboard **12** through the net **18** between terminals on the opposite sides of the net when the basketball **24** passes through the net. This is shown illustratively in **FIG. 1C**. The light-sensing characteristics of the switch **32** are only illustrative and a number of other types of switches including mechanical, electrical and semiconductor may also be used.

[**0019**] **FIG. 2** constitutes a flow chart generally indicated at **34**. The operation of the flow chart **34** may be under the direction of a microprocessor **33**. Broken lines **31** encompass the flow chart **80**, and a line **37** extends from the microprocessor to the broken lines, to show that the microprocessor controls the operation of the flow chart. As a first step in the flow chart **34**, a determination is made as at **35** whether the basketball **24** shot by the child, has impinged upon the backboard **12**. An indication is provided at **36** when the basketball **24** strikes or hits the backboard **12**. A delay is then provided as at **38** to provide time for the basketball **24** to bounce from the backboard **12** to the rim **14** on the net **18**. When the basketball **24** does not hit the rim after the delay **38**, a signal provided as at **40**. A further delay may be provided as at **42** to allow time for the basketball **24** to pass through the net **18**. An indication may be provided at **43** that the basketball **24** hit the backboard **12** but not the rim **14** and that the ball did not pass through the net. This indication may be sensory. Preferably the indication may be made orally as by a recorder **44**, which receives a signal on a line **45** from the block **43** to provide the oral indication.

[**0020**] When the basketball hits the rim **14**, a signal is provided as at **48**. Upon the production of the signal at **48**, the oral indication as at **42** is prevented from occurring. This is indicated at **50**. This prevention is provided by introducing a signal as at **51** to the block **43** to neutralize the operation of the block. The production of the signal as at **48** to indicate the striking of the rim **14** by the basketball **24** may be delayed as at **52** to provide an opportunity for the basketball **24** to pass through the net **18**.

[**0021**] At the end of the delay **52**, a determination is made as to whether the basketball **24** has passed through the net **18**. This is indicated at **53**. If the basketball **24** has not passed through the net **18**, an indication may be provided as at **54** that the basketball has hit the backboard **12** and the rim **16** but has not passed through the net **18**. This indication may be provided orally by the recorder **44** by the passage of a signal through a line **55** from the block **54** to the recorder **44**. A delay may be provided as at **56**, before the provision of the indication **54**, to make certain that the basketball has not passed through the net **18**.

[**0022**] It is possible for the basketball **24** to hit the backboard **12** and then pass through the net **18** without hitting the rim **16**. The line **40** provides an indication that the basketball **24** has not hit the rim **18**. A determination is then made as at **60** to whether the basketball **24** has passed from the backboard **12** through the net **18** without hitting the rim. If the answer is yes, an indication is provided at **62** that the ball has passed through the net **18** from the backboard **12** without hitting the rim **16**. This indication is introduced to the recorder **44**, as at **63**, to obtain an oral indication from the recorder that the basketball **24** has hit the backboard **12** and has passed through the net **18** without passing through the rim. A delay may be provided as at **64** to provide the basketball **24** with an adequate time to pass through the net **18** from the backboard **12** without hitting the rim **16**.

[**0023**] The basketball **24** may hit the backboard **12** and then the rim and subsequently pass through the net **24**. When this occurs, a signal is produced on a line **68**. This signal causes an indication to be provided as at **70** that the basketball **24** has hit the backboard **12** and the rim **16** and has then passed through the net **18**. This indication is introduced as at **71** to the recorder **44** to obtain an oral indication by the recorder that the basketball has hit the backboard **12** and the rim **14** and has passed through the net **18**. The signal on the line **68** also produces a signal which is introduced as at **72** to a block **74** to prevent a sensory indication from being provided that the basketball **24** has hit the backboard **12** and the rim **16** but has not passed through the net **18**. The sensory indication from the block **74** is introduced at **76** to the block **54** to neutralize the operation of the block **54** and prevent the block from indicating that the basketball **24** has hit the backboard **12** and the rim **14** but has not passed through the net **18**.

[**0024**] **FIG. 3** provides a flow chart, generally indicated at **80**, which is operative under the control of the microprocessor **33**. The control by the microprocessor **33** is indicated by broken lines **81** extending around the flow chart **80** and by a bus **83** extending from the microprocessor to the flow chart. The flow chart **80** is operative under the control of the microprocessor **33** when the basketball **24** impinges upon the rim **16** as indicated at **82** in **FIG. 3**. When this occurs, a determination is made as at **84** as to whether the basketball has previously hit the backboard **12**. If the answer is no, a signal is produced as at **85**. A delay may then be provided as at **86** to provide time for the basketball **24** to pass through the net **18**. A determination is then made as at **87** as to whether the basketball **24** has passed through the net **24**.

[**0025**] When the basketball **24** does not pass through the net **18**, a signal is produced as at **88**. This causes an indication to be produced as at **89** in **FIG. 3** that the basketball **24** has hit the rim but has not passed through the net **18**. A delay may be provided as at **90** to allow time for the basketball **24** to pass from the rim **18** to and through the

net **24**. When the indication is provided as at **89** that the basketball **24** has hit the rim **14** but has not passed through the net **18**, a signal is introduced on a line **91** to the recorder **44** to obtain an oral indication to this effect from the recorder.

[**0026**] When the basketball **24** passes through the net **18** after hitting the rim **16** but not the backboard **12**, a signal is produced as indicated at **92**. This signal causes an indication **94** to be produced that the basketball **24** has hit the rim **16** but not the backboard **12** and that the basketball has passed through the net **18**. This indication may be introduced through a line **95** to the recorder **44** to obtain an oral indication from the recorder that the basketball **24** has hit the rim **16** but not the backboard **12** and has passed through the net **18**. The indication **94** also prevents an indication from being produced that the basketball **24** has hit the rim **16** but not the backboard **12** and that the basketball has not passed through the net **18**. This is indicated at the block **96**. The indication in the block **96** is introduced as at **98** to the block **89** to neutralize the block **89** and prevent the block **89** from indicating that the basketball **24** has hit the rim **18** but not the backboard **12** and has not passed through the net **24**.

[**0027**] **FIG. 4** provides a flow chart, generally indicated at **100**, to indicate when the basketball **24** fails to hit the backboard **12** or the rim **16**, but has passed through the net **18**. The flow chart **100** is operative under the control of the microprocessor **33**. This is indicated by broken lines **101** around the flow chart shown in **FIG. 4** and by a bus **103** extending in **FIG. 4** from the microprocessor to the broken lines. In **FIG. 4**, an indication is provided as at **102** when the basketball passes through the net **24**. When this occurs, determinations are made as to whether the basketball **24** has previously hit the backboard **12** or the rim **18**. The failure of the basketball **24** to previously hit the backboard **12** is indicated at **104** in **FIG. 5**. The failure of the basketball **24** to previously hit the rim **16** is indicated at **106** in **FIG. 4**.

[**0028**] Under such circumstances, an indication is provided as at **108** that the basketball **24** has passed through the net **24** without striking the backboard **12** or the rim **18**. This indication may be introduced as at **110** to the recorder **44** to obtain an oral indication by the recorder that the basketball has passed through the net without hitting the backboard **12** or the rim **16**. This indication may also be provided to blocks in **FIGS. 2 and 3** to prevent any indications that the basketball **24** has hit the backboard **12** or the rim **16**. This is indicated at **112** in **FIG. 4**.

[**0029**] Since the system described above and shown in the drawings is primarily intended for use by young children in the age of approximately 4 to 9, the oral indications provided by the recorder **44** are intended to be encouraging to the child. For example, when the basketball **24** hits the backboard **12** and the rim **16** but does not pass through the net **18**, the recorder **44** may provide an oral indication that the shot was a good shot and that the child almost made a basket. As another example, when the basketball passes through the net **24** without hitting the backboard **12** or the rim **18**, the recorder **44** may provide an indication in an excited voice that the child has made a great shot.

[**0030**] Although this invention has been disclosed and illustrated with reference to particular preferred embodiments, the principles involved are susceptible for use in numerous other embodiments which will be apparent to persons of ordinary skill in the art. The invention is, therefore, to be limited only as indicated by the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. In combination for use with a basketball when shot by a player,

a basketball backboard,

a rim supported by the backboard,

a net supported by the rim,

a first member disposed on the backboard and responsive to the impingement of the basketball against the backboard for producing a first indication,

a second member disposed relative to the rim and responsive to the impingement of the basketball on the rim for producing a second indication,

a third member responsive to the passage of the basketball through the net for producing a third indication, and

a microprocessor responsive to the production of individual ones and combinations of the first, second and third indications for indicating whether the basketball has impinged upon individual ones of the backboard and the rim and has passed through the net.

2. In a combination as set forth in claim 1,

a sensory recorder responsive to the indications from the individual ones of the first, second and third sensors and responsive to the operation of the microprocessor for indicating whether the basketball has passed through the net and, if so, whether the basketball has impinged upon individual ones of the backboard and the rim before passing through the net.

3. In a combination as set forth in claim 1,

a voice recorder responsive to the production of individual ones of the first, second and third signals and responsive to the operation of the microprocessor for indicating orally whether the basketball has passed through the net and, if not, whether the basketball has impinged upon individual ones of the backboard and the rim.

4. In a combination as set forth in claim 3, wherein

the first, second and third members respectively include first, second and third switches.

5. In a combination as set forth in claim 2,

delays respectively associated with the first and second members in introducing the signals from the first and second members to the recorder.

6. In a combination as set forth in claim 1,

sensory apparatus responsive to the indications from individual ones of the first, second and third members and to the operation of the microprocessor for indicating when the basketball has impinged upon the backboard and the rim but has not passed through the net.

7. In a combination as set forth in claim 1,

sensory apparatus responsive to the indications from individual ones of the first, second and third members and to the operation of the microprocessor for indicating when the basketball has impinged upon an indi-

vidual one of the backboard and the rim but not the other one of the backboard and the rim and has not passed through the net.

8. In a combination as set forth in claim 1,

sensory apparatus responsive to the indications from individual ones of the first, second and third members and to the operation of the microprocessor for indicating when the basketball has passed through the net without impinging upon the backboard and the rim.

9. In a combination as set forth to claim 1,

sensory apparatus responsive to the indications from the first, second and third members and to the operation of the microprocessor for indicating when the basketball has impinged upon an individual one of the backboard and the rim.

10. In a combination as set forth in claim 1,

sensory apparatus responsive to the indications from the individual ones of the first, second and third members and to the operation of the microprocessor for indicating when the basketball has impinged upon the backboard and then the rim and has passed through the net.

11. In combination for use with a basketball when shot by a player,

a backboard,

a rim supported by the backboard,

a net extending downwardly from the rim,

a first sensor for providing a first signal when the basketball shot by the player hits the backboard,

a second sensor for providing a second signal when the basketball shot by the player hits the rim,

a third sensor for providing a third signal when the basketball shot by the player passes through the net, and

a processor responsive to individual ones of the first, second and third signals and to combinations of the first, second and third signals for indicating the path of movement of the basketball relative to the backboard, the rim and the net.

12. In a combination as set forth in claim 11, including,

sensory apparatus responsive to the indications from the processor for providing a sensory report of the path of movement of the basketball relative to the backboard, the rim and the net.

13. In a combination as set forth in claim 11 wherein

delays are provided in the responses of the processor to the signals from the individual ones of the first and second sensors relative to the response of the processor to the signal from the third sensor.

14. In a combination as recited in claim 12 wherein the sensory apparatus constitutes a voice recorder for providing an audible report of the path of movement of the basketball relative to the backboard, the rim and the net and wherein

delays are provided in the response of the processor to the signals from the individual ones of the first and second sensors relative to the response of the processor to the signal from the third sensor.

15. In a combination as set forth in claim 14 wherein

the first sensor includes a first switch disposed relative to the backboard to provide the first signal when the basketball impinges on the backboard and wherein

the second sensor includes a second switch disposed relative to the rim to provide the second signal when the basketball impinges on the rim and wherein

the third sensor includes a third switch disposed relative to the net to provide the third signal when the basketball passes through the net.

16. In a combination as set forth in claim 15 wherein

the processor is responsive to individual ones of the first, second and third signals for indicating the impingement of the basketball against individual ones of the backboard and the rim and the subsequent movement of the basketball relative to the net.

17. In a combination as set forth in claim 11 wherein

the processor is responsive to individual ones of the first, second and third signals to indicate whether the basketball has impinged upon individual ones of the backboard and the rim and has passed through the net.

18. In a combination as set forth in claim 11 wherein

the processor is responsive to individual ones of the first, second and third signals for indicating when the basketball has impinged upon individual ones of the backboard and the rim and has not passed through the net.

19. In a combination as set forth in claim 11 wherein

the processor is responsive to the production of the third signal without the previous production of individual ones of the first and second signals for indicating when the basketball has passed through the net without having previously impinged upon the backboard or the rim.

20. In a combination as set forth in claim 11 wherein

the processor is responsive to the production of the third signal without the previous production of individual ones of the first and second signals for indicating when the basketball has passed through the net without having previously impinged upon the backboard or the rim and wherein

the processor is responsive to individual ones of the first, second and third signals to indicate whether the basketball has impinged upon individual ones of the backboard and the rim and has passed through the net and wherein

the processor is responsive to individual ones of the first, second and third signals for indicating when the basketball has impinged upon individual ones of the backboard and the rim and has not passed through the net and wherein

the processor is responsive to the production of the third signal without the previous production of individual ones of the first and second signals for indicating when the basketball has passed through the net without impinging upon the backboard or the rim and wherein

the processor is responsive to the individual ones of the first, second and third signals for indicating when the

basketball has impinged upon the backboard and the rim and then has passed through the net.

21. In combination for use with a basketball shot by a player,

a backboard,

a first sensor disposed relative to the backboard for providing a response when the basketball shot by the player hits the backboard,

a rim disposed on the backboard,

a second sensor disposed relative to the rim for providing a response when the basketball shot by the player hits the rim,

a net extending from the rim,

a third sensor disposed relative to the net for providing a response when the basketball shot by the player passes through the net, and

a processor operative in accordance with the responses of the first, second and third sensors for indicating whether or not the basketball has impinged upon the backboard and whether or not the basketball has impinged upon the rim and whether or not the basketball has passed through the net.

22. In a combination as set forth in claim 21,

sensory apparatus responsive to the indications of the processor for providing a sensory indication of the path of movement of the basketball relative to the backboard, the rim and the net.

23. In a combination as set forth in claim 21,

the processor being operative in accordance with the responses of the first, second and third sensors for indicating the movement through the net of the basketball shot by the player and for indicating the path of movement of the basketball relative to individual ones of the backboard and the rim before the basketball passes through the net.

24. In a combination as set forth in claim 21,

the processor being operative in accordance with the responses of the first, second and third sensors for indicating the failure of the basketball to pass through the net and for indicating the path of the basketball relative to individual ones of the backboard and the rim before the basketball fails to pass through the net.

25. In a combination as set forth in claim 21,

sensory apparatus responsive to the indications of the processor for providing a sensory indication of a failure of the basketball to pass through the net and of the path of movement of the basketball relative to individual ones of the backboard and the rim before the basketball fails to pass through the net,

the sensory apparatus being responsive to the indications of the processor for providing a sensory indication of a passage of the basketball through the net and of the path of movement of the basketball relative to individual ones of the backboard and the rim before the basketball passes through the net.

26. In a method of indicating the flight path of a basketball when the basketball is shot by a player, the steps of:

providing a basketball backboard and a rim supported by the backboard and a net supported by the rim,

providing a first signal when the basketball hits the backboard,

providing a second signal when the basketball hits the rim,

providing a third signal when the basketball passes through the net, and

processing the production, or the lack of production, of respective ones of the first, second and third signals to indicate the flight path of the basketball relative to the backboard, the rim and the net after the basketball has been shot by the player.

27. In a method as set forth im claim 26, the step of:

providing a sensory indication of the path of the basketball relative to individual ones of the backboard, the rim and the net after the basketball has been shot by the player.

28. In a method as set forth in claim 26 wherein

the processing of the first and second signals is delayed to coordinate the processing of the first and second signals with the processing of the third signal to indicate the movement of the basketball relative to individual ones of the backboard, the rim and the net after the basketball has been shot by the player.

29. In a method as set forth in claim 26, the step of:

providing a sensory indication of the movement of the basketball through the net and the path of movement of the basketball relative to individual ones of the backboard and the net before the movement of the basketball through the net.

30. In a method as set forth in claim 26, including the step of:

providing a sensory indication of the movement of the basketball relative to individual ones of the backboard and the rim without passing through the net.

31. In a method as set forth in claim 29 wherein

the processing of the first and second signals is delayed to coordinate the processing of the first and second signals with the processing of the third signal to indicate the movement of the basketball relative to individual ones of the backboard, the rim and the net after the basketball has been shot by the player and wherein the sensory indication is audible.

32. In a method as set forth in claim **30** wherein

the processing of the first and second signals is delayed to coordinate the processing of the first and second signals with the processing of the third signal to indicate the movement of the basketball relative to individual ones of the backboard, the rim and the net after the basketball has been shot by the player and wherein the sensory indication is audible.

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