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K. H. STOLLE

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ROCKING LOCOMOTION APPARATUS

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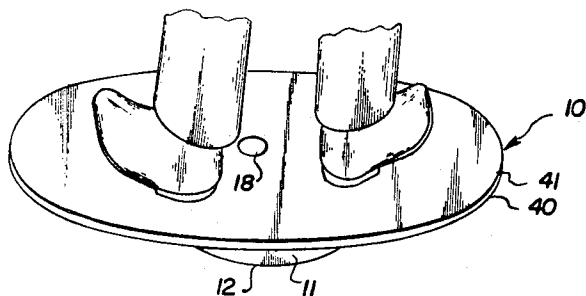


FIG. 1.

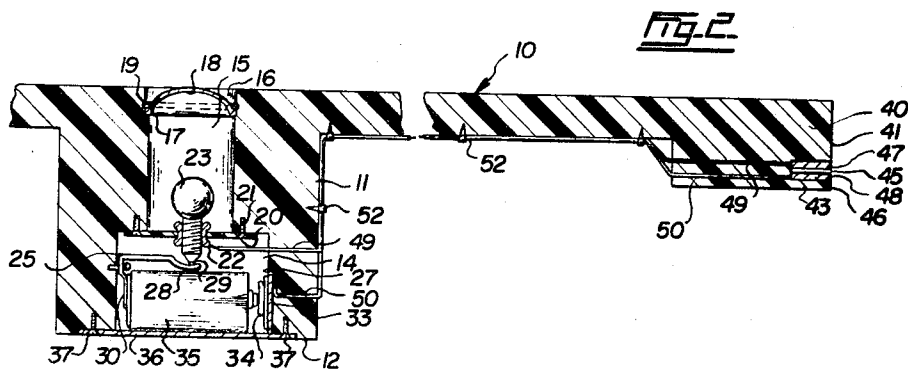


FIG. 2.

INVENTOR
KARL H. STOLLE
BY

Hetherston Haugh
ATTORNEYS

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3,419,267

ROCKING LOCOMOTION APPARATUS

Karl H. Stolle, Crofton, British Columbia, Canada

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A rocking locomotion apparatus having a tiltable platform upon which the user stands, said platform being provided with means for signalling when the user is overbalancing the platform during locomotion and therefore is not operating the apparatus very skillfully.

Background of the invention

This invention relates to rocking locomotion devices upon which a person stands, the locomotion being accomplished by a series of combined rocking and pivoting movements.

In the field of locomotion devices, there are a group commonly called "wobble boards" which are so constructed that they may be moved over the surface of a floor by pivoting and rocking movements of a person standing thereon.

These wobble boards all have the same operating principle which embodies the lateral altering of the point of support that the wobble board has with the floor by rocking the board from side to side and at the same time pivotally moving the board at the ends of the rocking movements so as to move over the floor.

The operation of these wobble boards is quite simple and requires only a modicum of a sense of balance, and their operation therefore poses no challenge to individuals who like competition.

Summary of the invention

The present invention comprises a large diameter circular standing platform, a pedestal having a circular floor engaging base of smaller diameter than the platform, said pedestal supporting the platform above the floor surface for tilting in any direction, a normally open electrical rim switch encircling the platform adapted to be closed when the rim of the platform touches the floor, and electrically operated indicating or signalling means connected in an electrical circuit controlled by said rim switch for evidencing closure thereof. A person standing on the platform has to try to move about the floor by manipulating the apparatus without allowing the platform rim to touch the floor. This offers a challenge to proper and skillful operation, as lack of skill or improper operation is indicated when the indicating or signalling means is operated.

Brief description of the drawings

In the drawings which illustrate the invention:

FIGURE 1 is an isometric view of the invention illustrating the position of the feet of the user thereon, and

FIGURE 2 is an enlarged central sectional view of the invention.

Description of the preferred embodiment

Referring to the drawings the rocking locomotion apparatus, hereinafter called a wobble board, comprises, in general, a flat large diameter circular platform 10 which is mounted on top of a cylindrical pedestal 11 of smaller diameter than the platform and having a circular flat base 12. The platform and pedestal are preferably formed of a strong dielectric material, such as wood or a strong thermoplastic, the latter material being preferred as the platform and pedestal may be integrally cast as illustrated in FIGURE 2 of the drawings.

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The pedestal 11 is of hollow thick wall construction having a lower chamber 14 opening outwardly and downwardly of the base 12 thereof and an upper enlarged passage 15 which opens into a larger preferably circular aperture 16 formed in the platform 10. There is, therefore, formed between the aperture and passage 16, an annular shoulder 17. A hemispherical lens 18 is fitted into the aperture 16 so as to rest upon the shoulder 17, and an expanding ring 19 is fitted over said lens to hold it in place against the shoulder 17.

Across the lower end of the passage 15 a circular electroconductive metallic plate 20 is secured by screws 21, said plate having a centrally located internally threaded open-ended socket 22 into which a light bulb 23, preferably of the conventional flashlight type, is screwed. An L-shaped spring contact element 25 is secured by a screw 26 to wall 27 of the chamber 14, said spring contact element having one of its arms 28 extending beneath and bearing against the center electrode 29 of the light bulb 23 and having its other arm 30 extending freely downwardly towards the base 12 of the pedestal. Arranged on wall 27 opposite arm 30 is a contact plate 33 to which a helical contact spring 34 is secured. The arm 30 and spring 34 serve as contact elements engaging opposite poles of a dry cell battery 35 which fits within the chamber 14 being held therein by a covering plate 36 which is secured as by screws 37 to the base 12 of the pedestal.

The platform 10 is formed with a thickened rim portion 40, said rim portion having an outer vertical side wall 41 and a flat undersurface 43. A thin deep peripheral slot 45 is formed in the vertical side wall 41 adjacent the undersurface 43 to leave a thin peripheral flange 46 which, by reason of the material of construction of the wobble board, is somewhat springy or resilient and capable of being bent upwardly so as to close the slot 45.

Secured by suitable adhesive to opposite side surfaces of the slot 45 are a pair of annular contact elements 47 and 48. Each of these elements may be formed of a thin strip of aluminum foil or the like and extend completely around the platform, the thickness of said annular contact elements 47 and 48 being such that when the flange 46 is in its normal state of repose, the contact elements are spaced slightly apart. Leads 49 and 50 which are extended through suitable passages formed through rim portion 40 and the pedestal 11 connect contact elements 47 and 48 to the socket 22 and the plate 33, respectively, thereby forming an electrical circuit between the battery 35 and light 23, the closure of which is effected by engagement of said contact elements 47 and 48. The leads 49 and 50 are secured in position beneath the platform 10 by screw-type lead holders 52.

In operating the wobble board, the user stands upon the platform 10 with his feet slightly spaced apart and by shifting his weight from side to side rocks the wobble board on the base of the pedestal 11. As the user rocks the wobble board from side to side, he twists his body from side to side, imparting an alternating pivotal movement to the board which causes the latter to move forwardly or backwardly as described.

It will be appreciated that as the base 12 of the pedestal 11 is circular, it will have only a point contact with the floor surface. The wobble board, in its tilted attitude, is therefore very unstable and requires exceptional skill to operate it properly without having the rim portion 40 of the platform 10 contact the floor surface. When contact is made between the rim portion 40 of the platform, the flange 46 will be depressed upwardly bringing the contact elements 47 and 48 into engagement with each other, thereby closing the circuit and energizing the light bulb, the flashes emanating from the latter being visible through the lens 18.

In view of the skill required in its proper operation,

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the wobble board may be used competitively. For instance a course, to be traversed, may be laid out on the floor and scores awarded to competitors who are unable to follow the course without having the rim portion of the platform contact the floor surface.

It is to be understood that the invention as described herein is not limited to the employment of a light bulb to give evidence of the engagement of the rim portion of the platform with the floor as it will be appreciated that any well known electrically actuated indicator such as a buzzer or the like may be employed to provide audible evidence of contact between the platform and the floor.

I claim:

1. Rocking locomotion apparatus comprising a large diameter circular standing platform, a pedestal having a circular floor engaging base of smaller diameter than the platform, said pedestal supporting said platform above a floor surface for tilting in any direction, a normally open electrical rim switch secured to the platform at the periphery of the latter adapted to be closed when the rim of the platform touches the floor, and electrically operated indicating means connected in an electrical circuit controlled by said rim switch for indicating when the rim touches the floor.

2. Rocking locomotion apparatus comprising a large diameter circular standing platform, a hollow pedestal having a circular floor engaging base of smaller diameter than the platform, said pedestal supporting the platform above a floor surface for tilting in any direction, a normally open electrical rim switch secured to the platform at the periphery of the latter adapted to be closed when the rim of the platform touches the floor surface, and electrically operated indicating means mounted on the pedestal and connected in an electrical circuit controlled by said switch for indicating when the rim touches the floor.

3. Rocking locomotion apparatus as claimed in claim 2 in which the rim switch comprises a first annular contact element secured to the platform at and below the rim thereof, a springy annular flange extending from the platform below and spaced apart from the first annular contact element, and a second annular contact element secured to the flange and being engageable with the first contact element when the flange is pressed upwardly as the rim touches the floor.

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4. Rocking locomotion apparatus comprising a large diameter circular standing platform having a centrally located opening formed therein, an electric light bulb mounted in the opening, a hollow pedestal having a circular floor engaging base of smaller diameter than the platform, said pedestal supporting the platform above a floor surface for tilting in any direction, a normally open electrical rim switch secured to the platform at the periphery of the latter adapted to be closed when the rim of the platform touches the floor, an electrical battery mounted in the pedestal, and an electrical circuit connecting the battery and light bulb through the rim switch.

5. Rocking locomotion apparatus comprising a large diameter circular standing platform, a hollow pedestal having a circular floor engaging base of smaller diameter than the platform, said pedestal supporting the platform above a floor surface for tilting in any direction, an electric light bulb operatively mounted in the hollow base, an opening in the platform over the base and through which said light bulb can be seen, a normally open electrical rim switch secured to the platform at the periphery of the latter adapted to be closed when the rim of the platform touches the floor surface, an electrical battery mounted in the hollow pedestal, and an electrical circuit incorporating said bulb and battery to illuminate the bulb when said switch is closed when the platform rim touches the floor.

6. Rocking locomotion apparatus as claimed in claim 5 in which the rim switch comprises normally spaced apart annular contact elements mounted on the platform so as to be moved into engagement when the rim touches the floor.

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KENNETH H. BETTS, *Primary Examiner.*

U.S. Cl. X.R.

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