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(54) **HOOP TOSS GAME**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

The invention generally relates to a game (G, G', G'') requiring the use of manual dexterity and skill in projecting hoops, or rings (12), by one player in manner to slip each hoop (12) onto a distanced and immobilized target. The target (10, 10a, 10b) comprises a main post (14, 14a, 14b) adapted to be secured into or on the ground and a number of secondary hooks (16, 16b) extending from the main post (14, 14a, 14b). The main post (14, 14a, 14b) and the secondary hooks (16, 16b) are each adapted to be engaged by a properly thrown hoop (12). The main post (14, 14a, 14b) and the secondary hooks, e.g. there are four secondary hooks (16, 16b) include vibration dampers (20) in order to reduce a hoop (12) accurately thrown thereon to bounce off the target member (10, 10a, 10b). Four secondary hooks can be embodied in a pair of hook units (30, 31), each having two opposed secondary hooks (16b). The two hook units (30, 31) are capable of being relatively displaced from a cross-like configuration, i.e. game position of target member, to a collapsed configuration, i.e. storage position of target member (10b).

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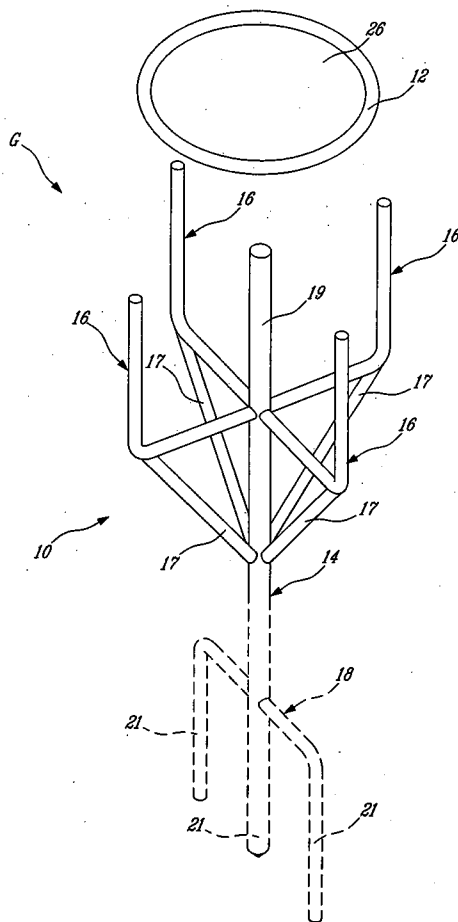
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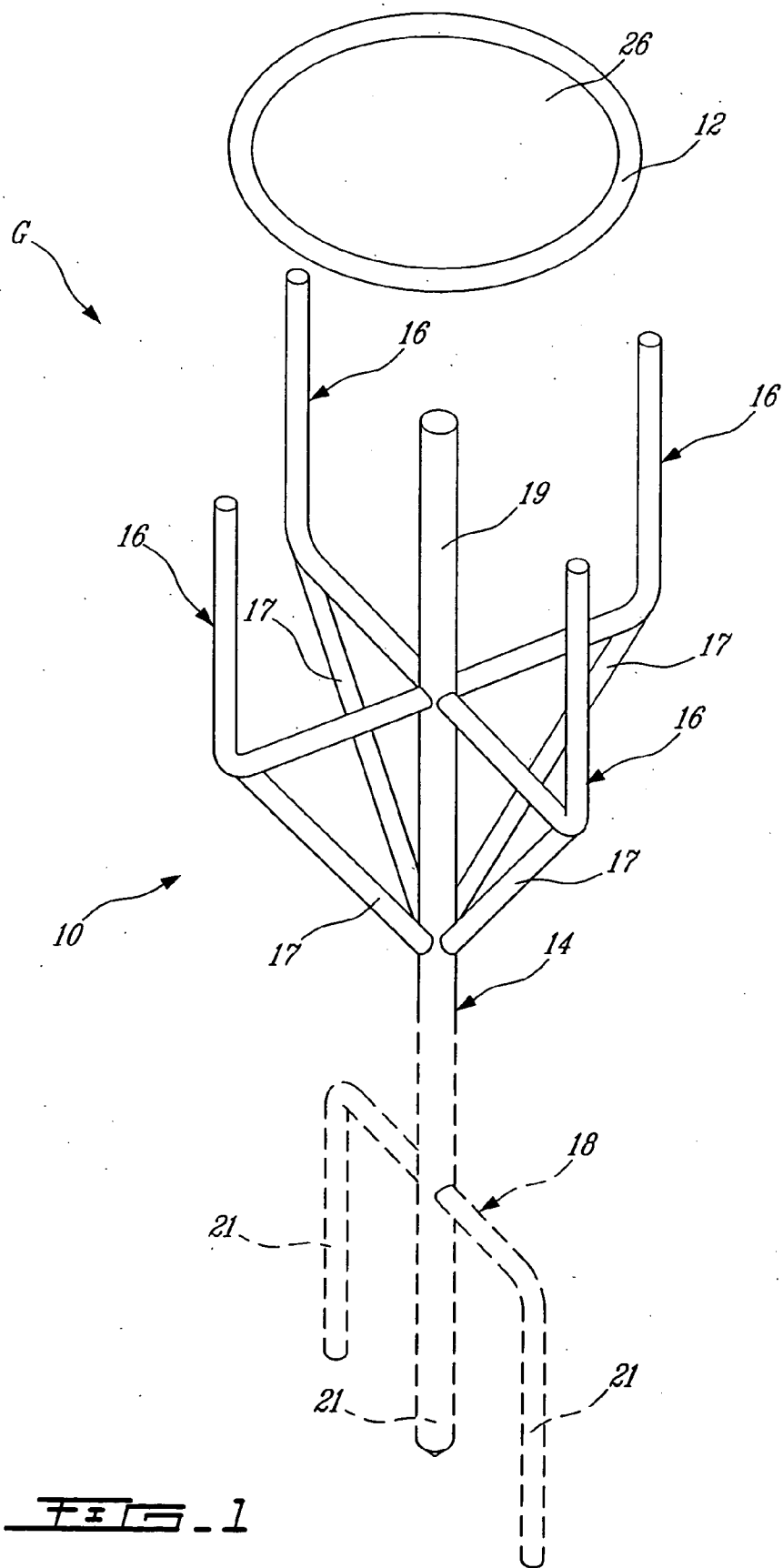
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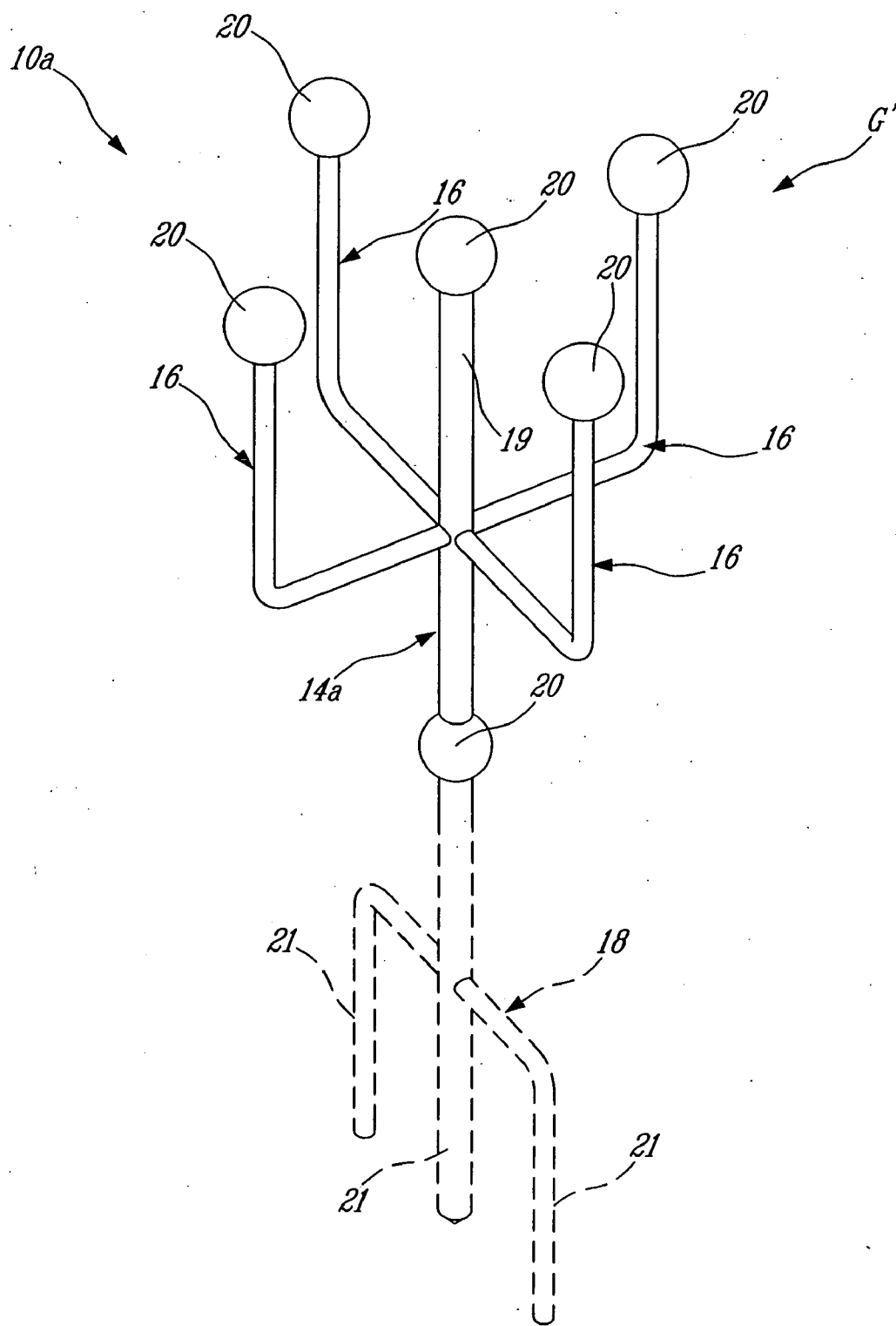


FIG. 1A

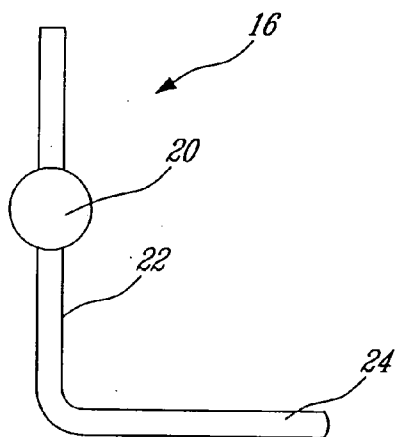


FIG. 2A

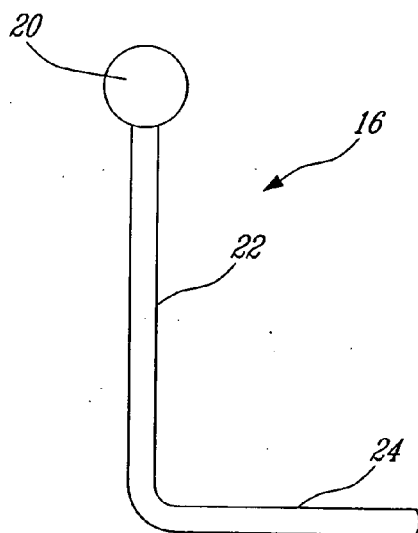


FIG. 2B

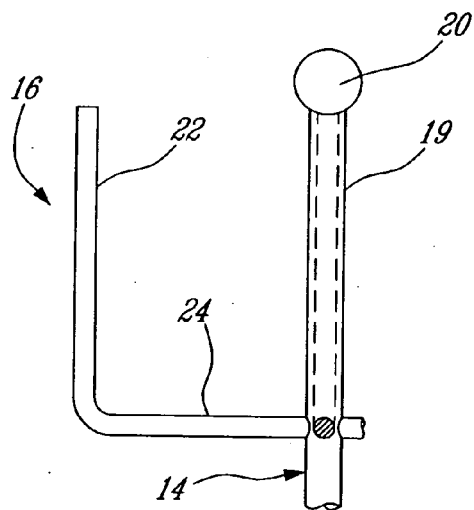


FIG. 2C

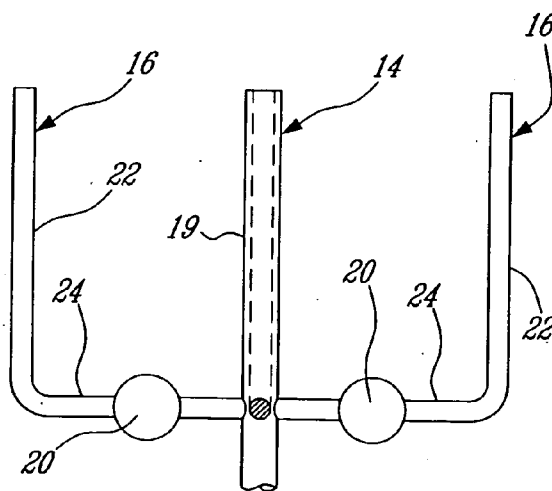
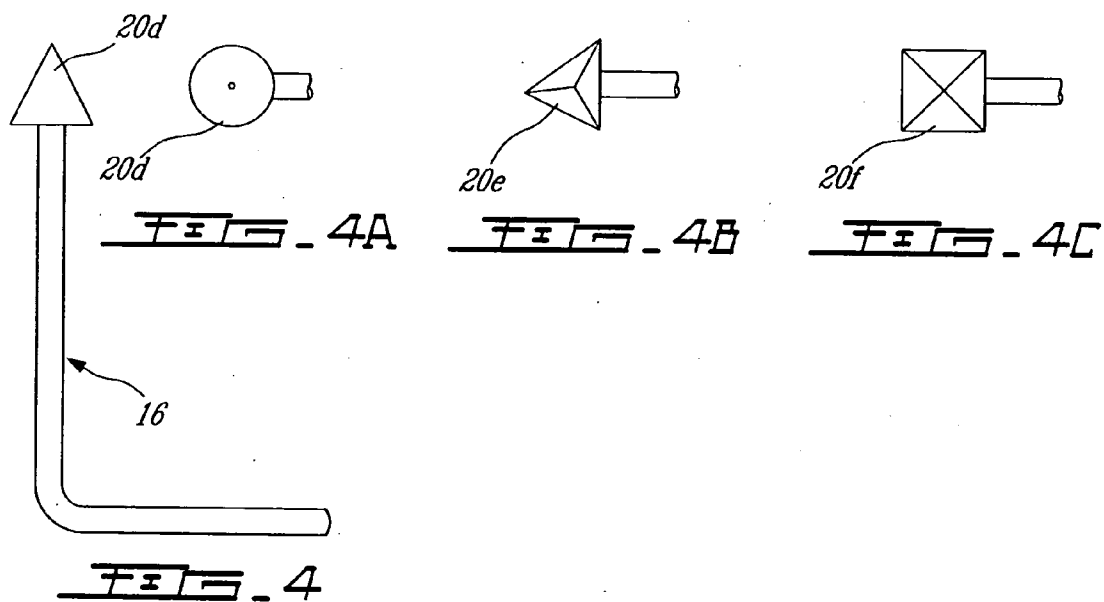
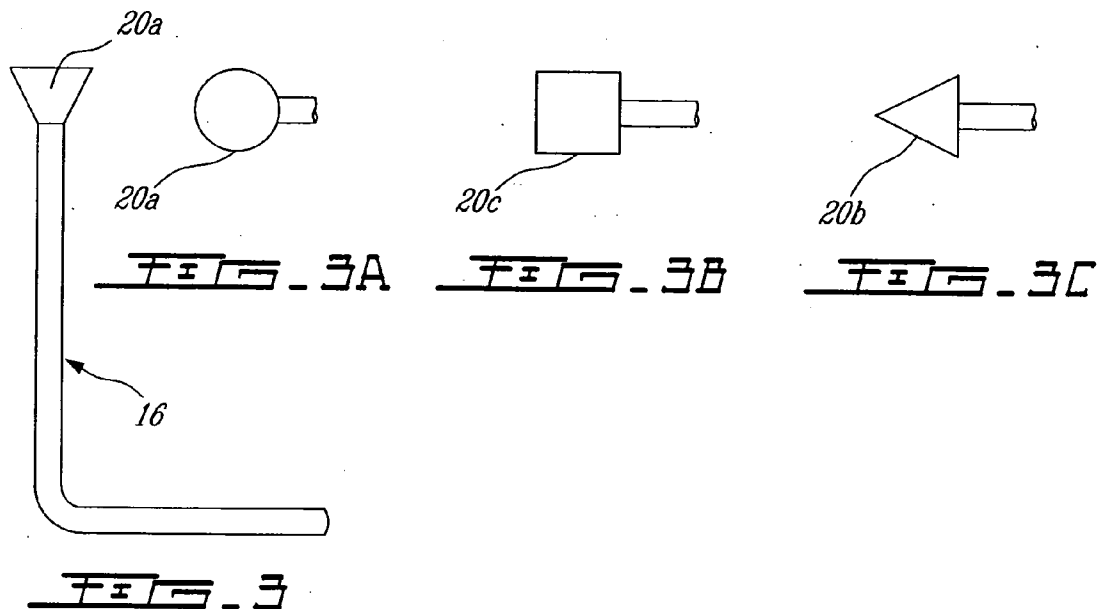


FIG. 2D



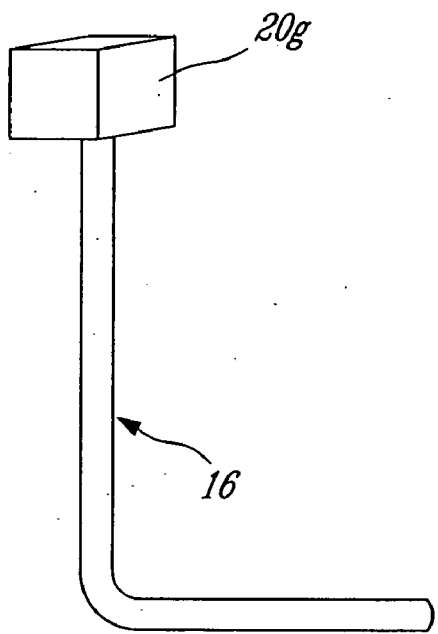


FIG. 5

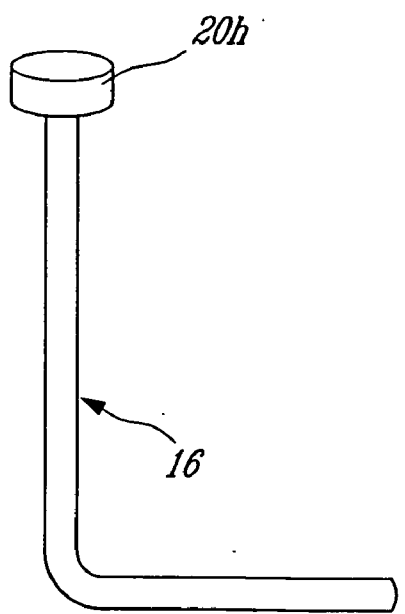


FIG. 6

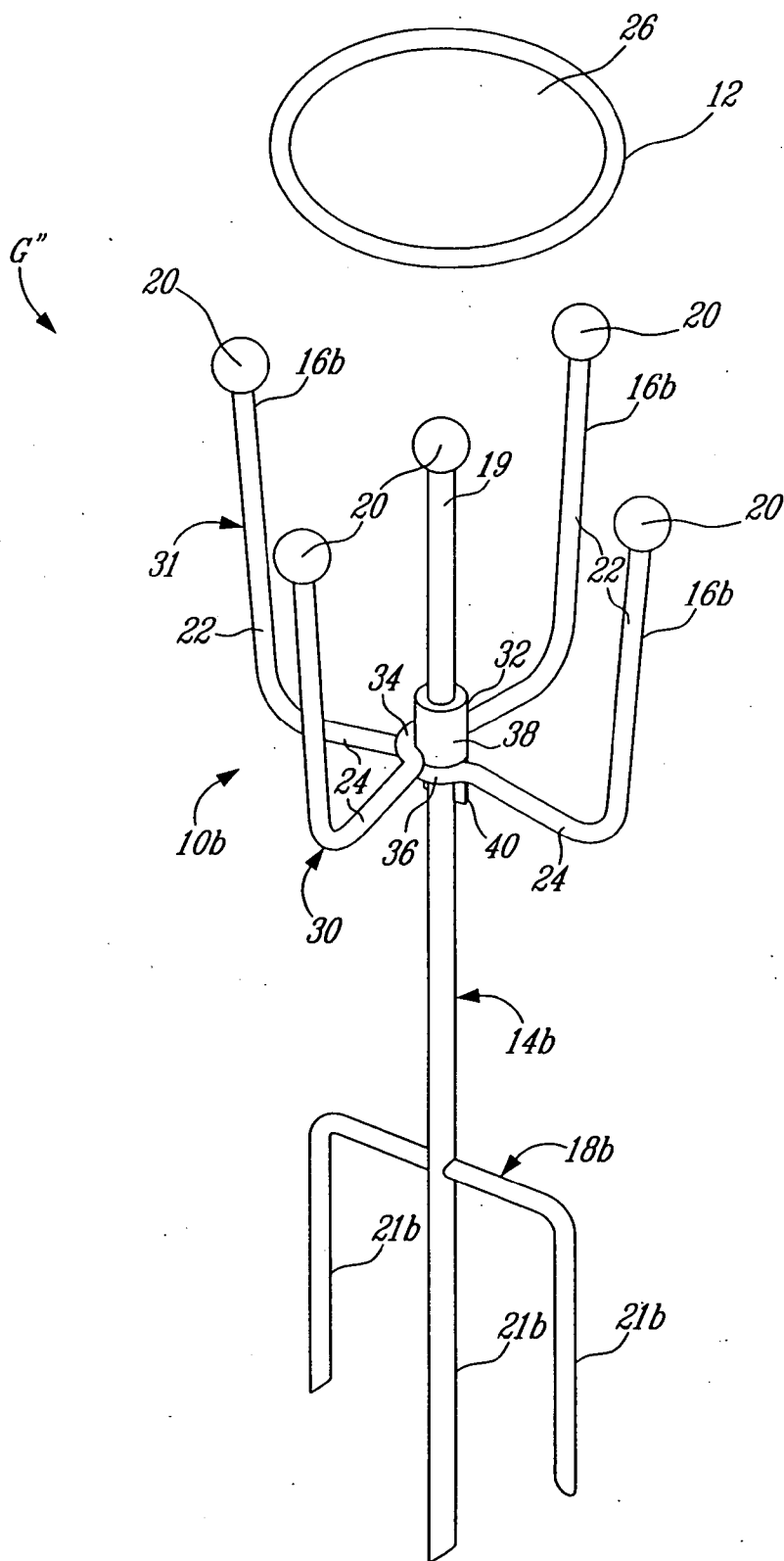


FIG. 7

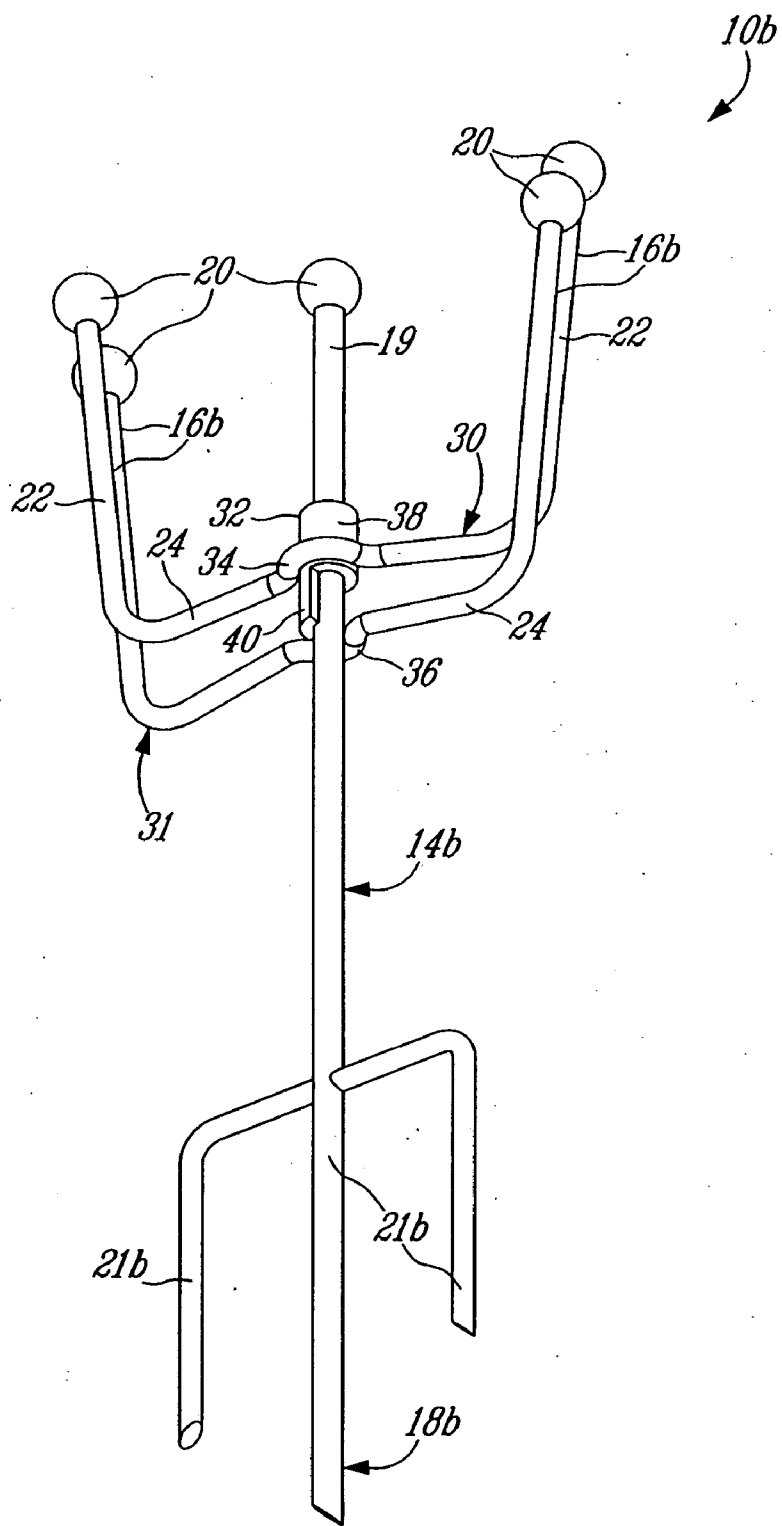
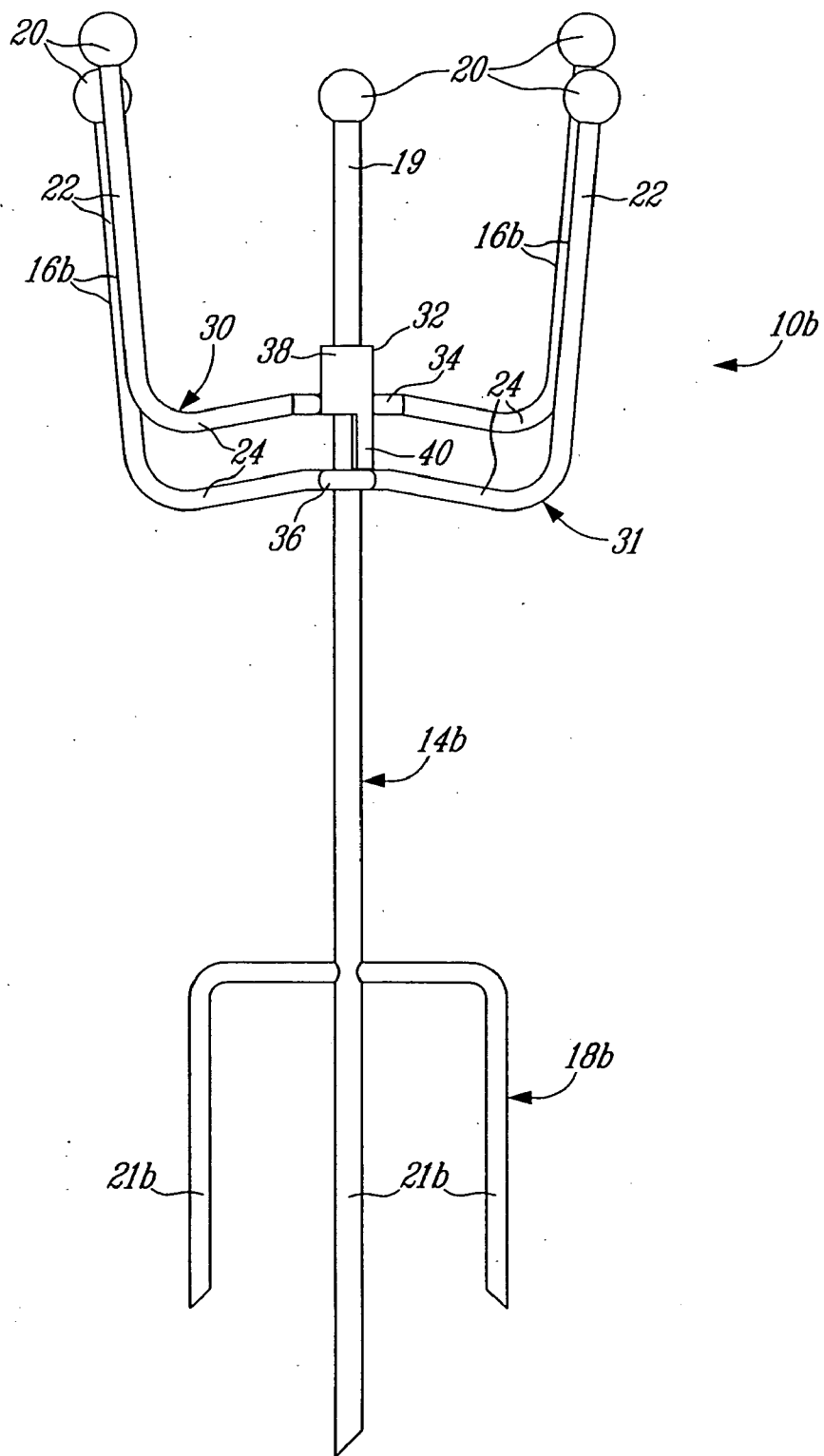


FIG. 8



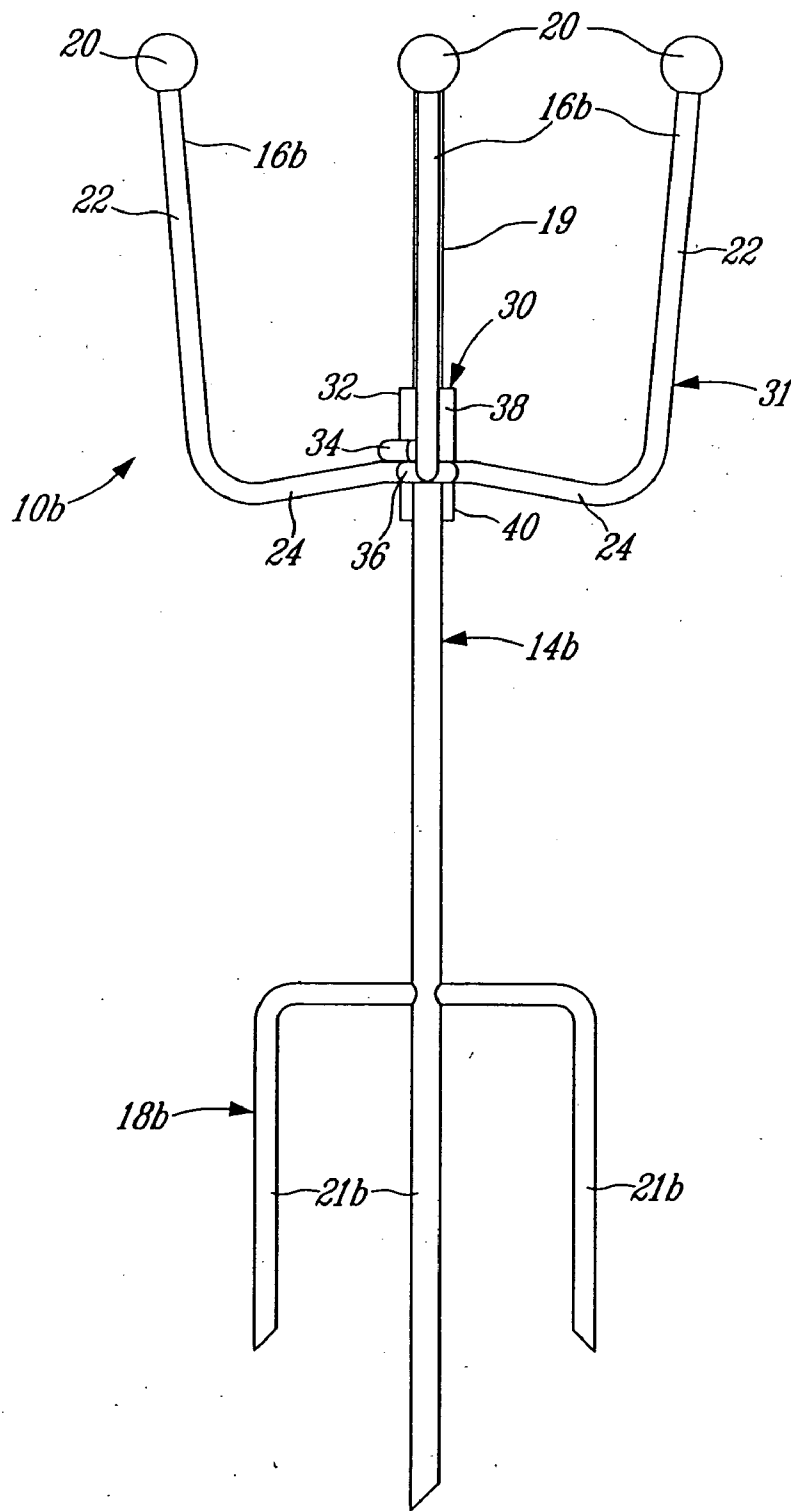


FIG. 10

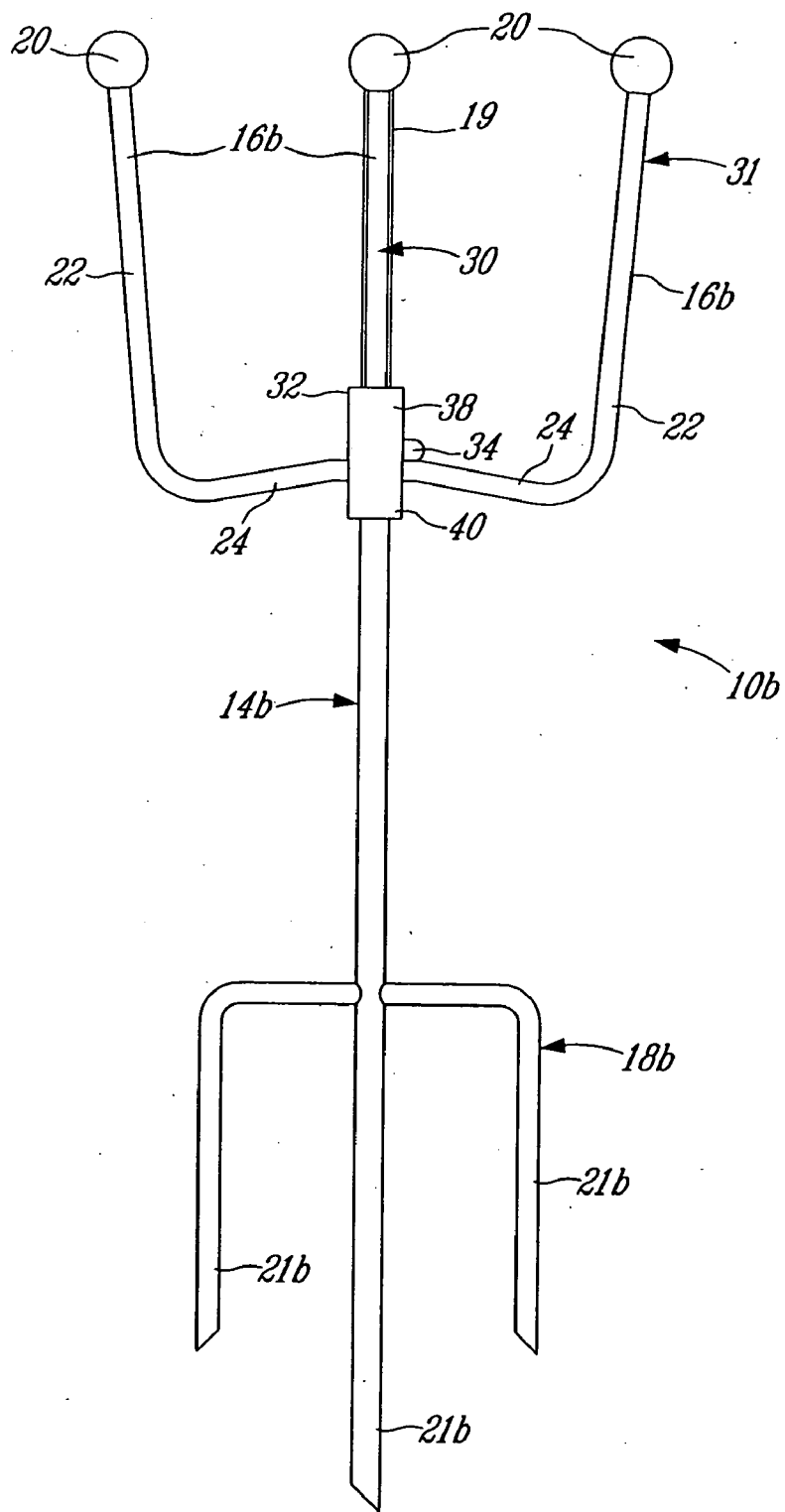


FIG. 11

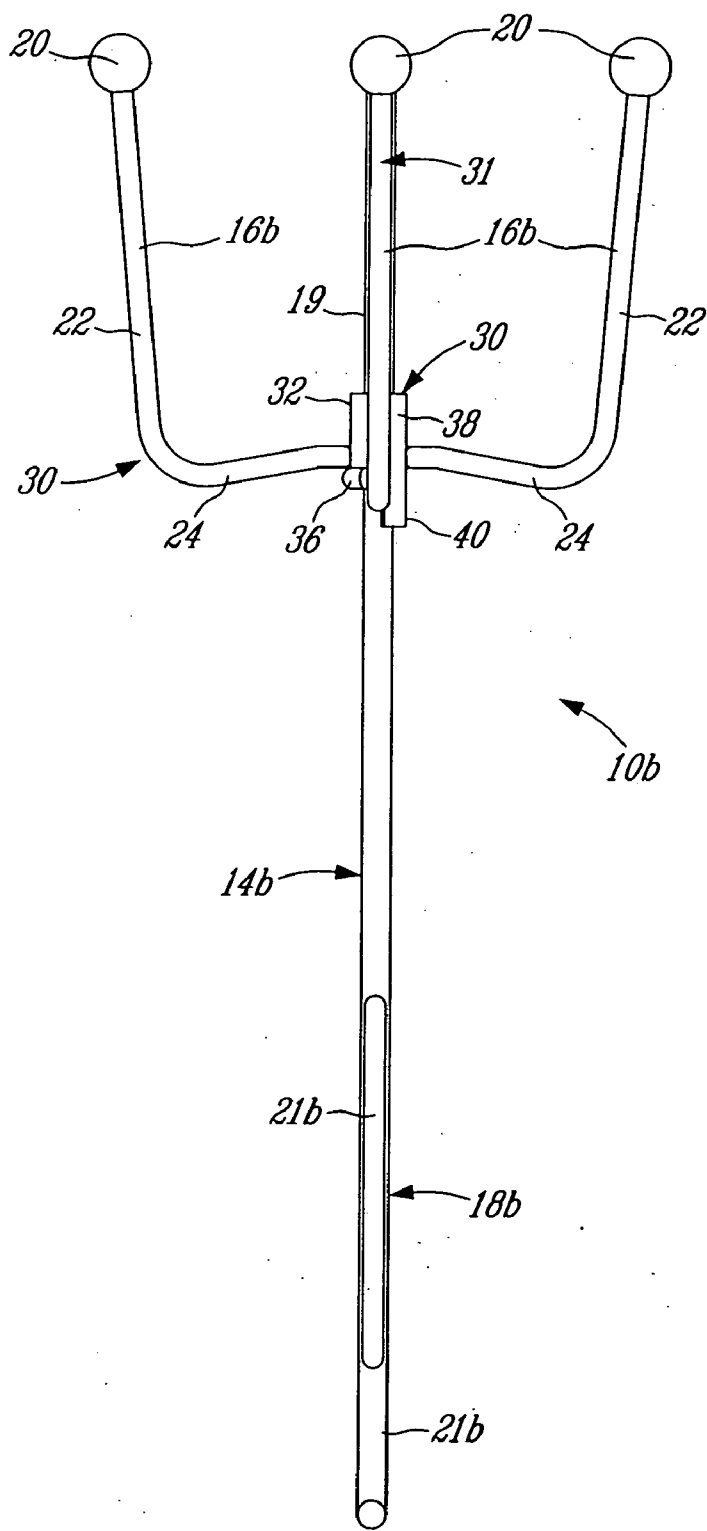


FIG. 12

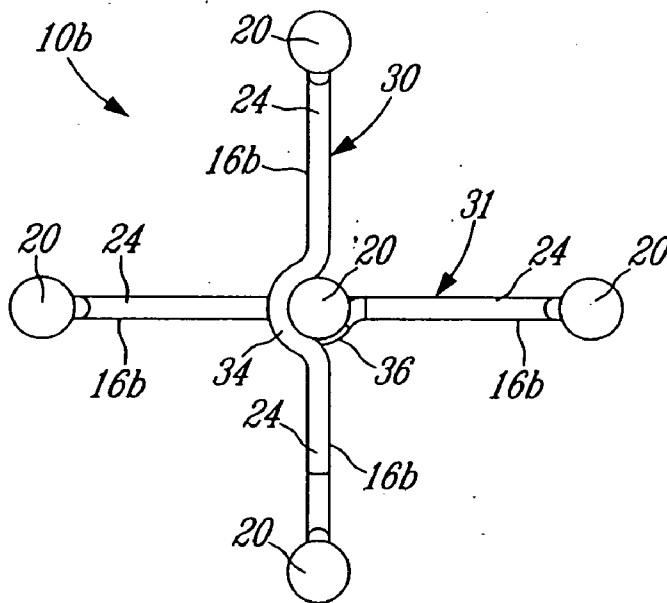


FIG. 13

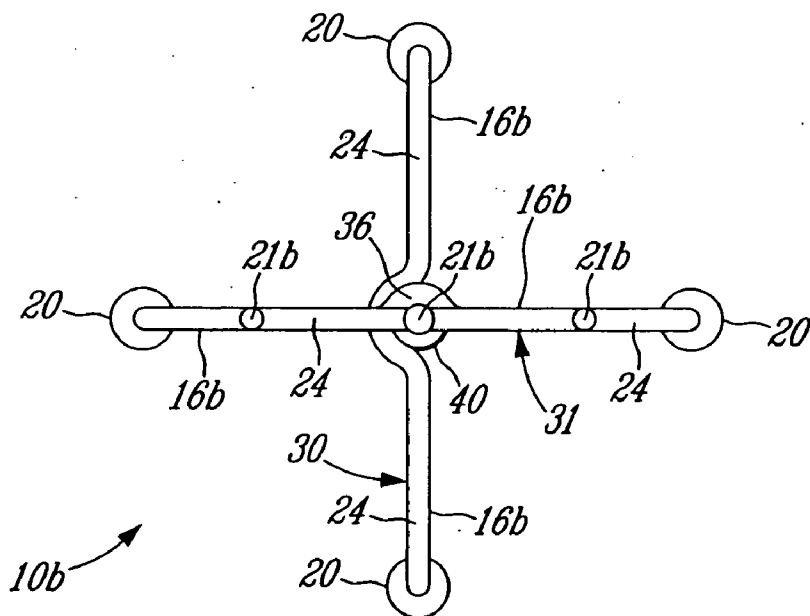


FIG. 14

HOOP TOSS GAME

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The invention generally relates to a game and, more particularly, to a ring toss game.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Hoop toss and ring toss games have been provided under several forms in the art. They are generally based on throwing circular hoops or aerial projectiles over a specially designed post. Ring toss games are well known in the art and usually consist of one or more rings that are tossed onto a post. Such a post may have one or more projecting arms to catch the rings as each ring's central opening passes over and falls in an encircling relationship onto such post and/or onto any one of the projecting arms. Many of these games have been patented, such as in U.S. Pat. No. 1,705,501, which issued to Sas on Mar. 19, 1929, there is disclosed a device having several conical projections on a turntable that rotates while a player throws a ring with a view of dropping his ring over one of the rotating projections. In U.S. Pat. No. 1,480,563, which issued to Morgan on Jan. 15, 1924, the post onto which the rings are thrown oscillates back and forth on a hinge to make it more difficult to throw the rings onto the post. U.S. Pat. No. 1,230,503, which issued to Miller on Jun. 19, 1917, there are disclosed different mechanisms for supporting a ring toss post on a base member for indoor use and for outdoor use. U.S. Pat. No. 2,365,513, which issued to Bartle et al. on Dec. 19, 1994, discloses a post having pegs projecting horizontally therefrom at a variety of elevations and directions thereon, and a handle is provided at the top of the post. By way of the handle, the post is jerked around by the player, so that the rings move upwardly along the post and become engage to successive pegs, as a result of the post's movements.

[0003] Numerous other games have been provided in the prior art. For example, U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,130,281 (issued to Leber et al. on Dec. 19, 1978), No. 4,132,410 (issued to Montagna on Jan. 2, 1979), No. 4,726,591 (issued to Johnson on Feb. 3, 1988), and No. 4,819,947 (issued to Mackey on Apr. 11, 1989) all are illustrative of such other known games.

[0004] All of these units may be suitable for the particular purpose that they address, but there is also a need for a new ring toss game.

[0005] For instance, there is a need for a ring toss game that is less subject to vibrations when a ring makes contact with the post thereof, such as to reduce the possibility that the thrown ring bounces off the post.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] It is therefore an aim of the present invention to provide a hoop toss game comprising main and secondary rods, at least one of which being provided with a vibration damper, and at least one aerial projectile, which is preferably a ring.

[0007] Therefore, in accordance with the present invention, there is provided a hoop toss game comprising a target member and at least one aerial projectile, said target member including at least one projecting catching element and a vibration damper provided on said catching element.

[0008] More particularly, said aerial projectile is a ring.

[0009] Typically, said target member comprises a base member, a main post extending upwardly from said base member, and at least one secondary hook, said main post and said secondary hook each constituting a catching element, whereby said aerial projectile is adapted to engage at least one of said main post and said secondary hook.

[0010] Specifically, said vibration damper defines an enlargement with respect to said catching element.

[0011] Also in accordance with the present invention, there is provided a hoop toss game comprising a target member and at least one aerial projectile, said target member comprising a base member, a main post extending upwardly from said base member, and four secondary hooks extending outwardly from said main post, said main post and said secondary hooks each constituting a catching element such that there are five catching elements, whereby said aerial projectile is adapted to engage at least one of said main post and said secondary hooks.

[0012] Further in accordance with the present invention, there is provided a hoop toss game comprising a target member and at least one aerial projectile, said target member comprising a base member, a main post extending upwardly from said base member, and two hook units adapted to extend in cross-like fashion about said main post, each said hook unit having a pair of opposed secondary hooks, said hook units being relatively displaceable one relative to the other such that, for storage, said hook units can be positioned in a generally side-by-side and substantially parallel relationship, said main post and said secondary hooks each constituting a catching element such that there are five catching elements, whereby said aerial projectile is adapted to engage at least one of said main post and said secondary hooks.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0013] Further features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following detailed description, taken in combination with the appended drawings, in which:

[0014] **FIG. 1** is a perspective view of a hoop toss game according to a first embodiment of the present invention;

[0015] **FIG. 1A** is a perspective view of a hoop toss game according to a second embodiment of the present invention, which is provided with a vibration damper;

[0016] **FIGS. 2A to 2D** are elevational views of part of the hoop toss game which illustrate some of the different possible positions of vibration damper(s) on the hoop toss game also in accordance with the present invention;

[0017] **FIGS. 3, 4, 5 and 6** are elevational views of part of the hoop toss game which illustrate different shapes of vibration dampers;

[0018] **FIG. 3A** is a top plan view showing the damper of **FIG. 3**;

[0019] **FIGS. 3B and 3C** are top plan views showing variants of the damper of **FIG. 3**;

[0020] **FIG. 4A** is a top plan view showing the damper of **FIG. 4**;

[0021] FIGS. 4B and 4C are top plan views showing variants of the damper of FIG. 4;

[0022] FIG. 7 is a perspective view of a hoop toss game according to a third embodiment of the present invention;

[0023] FIG. 8 is a perspective view of the hoop toss game of FIG. 7, but shown in a storage position thereof;

[0024] FIG. 9 is an elevation of the hoop toss game of FIG. 8, that is in the storage position;

[0025] FIG. 10 is a front elevation of the hoop toss game of FIG. 7, that is in a game position thereof;

[0026] FIG. 11 is a rear elevation of the hoop toss game of FIG. 7, that is in a game position thereof; and

[0027] FIGS. 12, 13 and 14 are respectively side elevation, top plan and bottom plan views of the hoop toss game of FIG. 7, that is in a game position thereof.

[0028] It will be noted that throughout the appended drawings, like features are identified by like reference numerals, whereas for variants of such features, suffixes such as "a", "b", "c", etc. have been added to the reference numerals.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0029] Referring now specifically to the drawings, a hoop toss game G in accordance with the present invention includes a target member 10 and at least one aerial projectile 12, which is preferably a ring or hoop. The target member 10 comprises a main post 14 and a plurality of secondary hooks 16, and an anchoring base member 18. Reinforcement braces 17 are provided between the main post 14 and each of the secondary hooks 16, at the elbows thereof. As seen for instance in the variant game G' of FIG. 1A (which also includes an aerial projectile 12, albeit not shown thereon), any one of the post 14 or the hooks 16 of the target member 10a may have a damping member 20 thereon; in FIG. 1A, damping members 20 are mounted on the post 14a (i.e. between the hooks 16 and the anchoring base member 18) and at upper free ends of the post 14 and of each of the hooks 16, noting that the damping member 20 mounted on the post 14a (i.e. between the hooks 16 and the anchoring base member 18) could be omitted.

[0030] The anchoring base member 18 includes for instance three prongs 21, a central one of which being a downward extension of the main post 14, which are adapted to be forcibly introduced in the ground for securing the target member 10/10a in the ground. Other base members may be contemplated, such as a large and heavy base adapted to rest upon the ground, or any other suitable support surface, thereby allowing the game G/G' to be also used on hard surfaces, i.e. on surfaces which cannot be penetrated by the illustrated anchoring base member 18.

[0031] Still referring to FIGS. 1 or 1A, it is the object of the game to throw the hoop 12 in manner to slip it onto at least one of the hooks 16 and of an upper end 19 of the post 14 of a hoop toss game 10/10a positioned at a distance from the player throwing the hoop 12.

[0032] The hoop toss game G/G' comprises, for instance, four (4) secondary hooks 16. The number of points awarded for each ring that has engaged the target member 10/10a

may be higher if the ring has engaged both the upper end 19 of the main post 14 and one of the secondary hooks 16, rather than just one of the rod and hooks 19 and 16. In such a case, the ring 12 has an inner diameter that is larger than exterior distance between the upper end 19 of the main post 14 and any one of the secondary hooks 16. It is also possible to attribute different number of points for a ring 12 that has engaged only the upper end 19 of the main post 14 versus one that has engaged only one secondary hook 16.

[0033] Referring to FIGS. 2A to 2D, the damping member 20 may be positioned at various locations on the target member 10a and may be removable therefrom. Also, there may be more than one such damping member 20 on the target member 10a. For instance, the damping member 20 may be tightly fixed or screwed on the secondary hooks 16 and the upper end 19 of the main post 14. Indeed, the secondary hooks 16 or the upper end 19 of the main rod 14 may be provided with damping members 20 that can be secured or integrated at different elevations thereon. For instance, FIG. 2A shows one damping member 20 mounted at a middle portion of a vertical section 22 of the secondary hook 16. FIG. 2B shows one damping member 20 mounted at an upper end of the vertical section 22 of the secondary hook 16. FIG. 2C shows one damping member 20 mounted at a free end of the upper end 19 of the main post 14. Finally FIG. 2D shows two damping members 20 mounted at a middle portion of a horizontal section 24 of the secondary hook 16.

[0034] FIGS. 3 to 6 illustrate various shapes that can be adopted by the vibration damper 20, although other shapes can also be contemplated. The damping member 20 may be, for example, spherical, cubical, triangular, or disc-shaped. It may also be under form of a bulge, a thickening, a swelling part or a protuberant part of the secondary hooks 16 or of the upper end 19 of the main post 14. The vibration dampers have the advantage of significantly reducing vibrations in the secondary hooks 16 or in the upper end 19 of the main post 14 when the ring 12 hits these components and thus reduce the possibility that the ring 12 disengages from one of the secondary hooks 16 or from the upper end 19 of the main post 14 because of vibrations. In other words, a well-thrown ring 12, that is a ring 12 that has engaged at its central opening 26 at least one of the secondary hooks 16 and the upper end 19, has less chances of bouncing off the target member 10/10a as a result of vibrations imparted to the target member 10/10a by the impact between it and the ring 12. The damper, when defining an enlargement of the secondary hooks 16 or of the upper end 19 of the main post 14, also acts as an obstruction stop that prevents a ring 12 thrown therebelow from easily bouncing off the target member 10/10a.

[0035] FIGS. 7 to 14 show a further variant game G", wherein the target member 10b is provided with two U-shaped hook units 30 and 31, each including two opposite hooks 16b that are integrally joined at the inner ends of the horizontal sections 24 thereof by a curved connecting portion 34 (for the hook unit 30) and 36 (for the hook unit 31). The curved connecting portion 34 of the hook unit 30 is located above the curved connecting portion 36 of the hook unit 31. The curved connecting portion 36 is welded to the post 14b, whereas the curved connecting portion 34 is welded to a sleeve 32 of the hook unit 30. The sleeve 32 is slidably engaged around the post 14b. As the lower hook

unit **31** is fixed to the post **14b**, the sleeve **32**, and thus the upper hook unit **30**, sits by gravity onto the lower hook unit **31**, and, more particularly, the sleeve **32** and the curved connecting portion **34** of the upper hook unit **30** are supported by the curved connecting portion **36** of the lower hook unit **31**.

[0036] The sleeve **32** includes an upper cylindrical member **38** and a downwardly projecting locking member **40** that is in the form of an arcuate extension of part of the side wall of the upper cylindrical member **38**, as best seen in **FIGS. 8 and 12**. In **FIGS. 7 and 10 to 14**, the target member **10b** is shown in an operational, or game, position thereof, that is with its two U-shaped hook units **30** and **31** extending at right angles to each other thereby forming a cross-shaped outer target (as in the embodiments of **FIGS. 1 and 1A**).

[0037] Furthermore, the target member **10b** of game G" can be displaced to a storage position (see **FIGS. 8 and 9**), wherein the two U-shaped hook units **30** and **31** extend generally in a parallel and side-by-side relationship. More particularly, in the game position, the upper (displaceable) hook unit **30** is positioned so that the locking member **40** extends opposite the curved connecting portion **36** of the lower hook unit **31**, with the post **14B** extending centrally thereof. In this configuration, the upper hook unit **30** extends at right angles to the lower hook unit **31** and cannot be rotated with respect thereto as opposite vertical edges of the locking member **40** are limited by the ends of the curved connecting portion **36** of the lower hook unit **31**.

[0038] To displace the target member **10b** to the storage position, the upper hook unit **30** is raised, via the sliding engagement of the sleeve **32** along the main post **14b**, until the lower end of the locking member **40** is above the curved connecting portion **36** of the lower hook unit **31**. Then, the upper hook unit **30** can be rotated, almost 90°, about the main post **14b** and relative to the lower hook unit **31**, until the upper and lower hook units are side-by-side as seen in **FIGS. 8 and 9**. In this position, the upper hook unit **30** rests, via gravity, on the lower hook unit **31** and, more particularly, the lower end of the locking member **40** of the upper hook unit **30** sits atop the curved connecting portion **36** of the fixed lower hook unit **31**. In this storage position, the target member **10b** is much more compact, e.g. to carry in a bag, as it is much more two-dimensional.

[0039] Also, the target member **10b** of **FIGS. 7 to 14** has a slightly different anchoring base member **18b** in that the central prong **21b** is longer than the two side prongs **21b**, with the lower ends of all three prongs **21b** being beveled for easier insertion of the target member **10b** in the ground.

[0040] Scoring in the game G/G'/G" can be achieved in a variety of ways. For example, points can be obtained by throwing the ring member **12** so that it engages one of the secondary hooks **16/16b**. Other points can be scored by catching the ring **12** on one of the secondary hooks **16/16b** and the upper end **19** of the main post **14/14a/14b**.

[0041] Therefore, by reducing significantly the vibrations in the secondary hooks **16/16b** and in the upper end **19** of the main post **14/14a/14b**, there is eliminated, or at least reduced, failures resulting from an engaged ring bouncing off the target member **10/10a/10b**, whereby the hoop toss game G/G'/G" of the present invention allows for challenging the true talent of players.

I claim:

1. A hoop toss game comprising a target member and at least one aerial projectile, said target member including at least one projecting catching element and a vibration damper provided on said catching element.

2. The hoop toss game of claim 1, wherein said aerial projectile is a ring.

3. The hoop toss game of claim 1, wherein said target member comprises a base member, a main post extending upwardly from said base member, and at least one secondary hook, said main post and said secondary hook each constituting a catching element, whereby said aerial projectile is adapted to engage at least one of said main post and said secondary hook.

4. The hoop toss game of claim 1, wherein said vibration damper defines an enlargement with respect to said catching element.

5. The hoop toss game of claim 3, wherein one said vibration damper is provided on said main post and said secondary hook.

6. The hoop toss game of claim 5, wherein said vibration dampers are provided at upper free ends of said main post and of said secondary hook.

7. The hoop toss game of claim 3, wherein there are provided four said secondary hooks extending outwardly from said main post, whereby there are five catching elements.

8. The hoop toss game of claim 7, wherein said secondary hooks extend in diametrically opposed pairs from said main post.

9. The hoop toss game of claim 3, wherein there are provided four said secondary hooks extending outwardly from said main post.

10. The hoop toss game of claim 9, wherein one said vibration damper is provided on each said secondary hook.

11. The hoop toss game of claim 10, wherein one said vibration damper is provided on said main post.

12. The hoop toss game of claim 7, wherein said secondary hooks extend in diametrically opposed pairs from said main post.

13. The hoop toss game of claim 1, wherein said target member comprises a base member, a main post extending upwardly from said base member, and four secondary hooks extending outwardly from said main post, at least each said secondary hook constituting a catching element, whereby said aerial projectile is adapted to engage at least one of said main post and said secondary hooks.

14. The hoop toss game of claim 13, wherein said main post also constitutes a catching element such that there are five catching elements, whereby said aerial projectile is adapted to engage at least one of said main post and said secondary hooks.

15. The hoop toss game of claim 1, wherein said target member comprises a base member and a main post extending upwardly from said base member, said at least one catching element comprising two hook units adapted to extend in cross-like fashion about said main post, each said hook unit having a pair of opposed secondary hooks, said hook units being relatively displaceable one relative to the other such that, for storage, said hook units can be positioned in a generally side-by-side and substantially parallel relationship, said main post and said secondary hooks each constituting a catching element such that there are five

catching elements, whereby said aerial projectile is adapted to engage at least one of said main post and said secondary hooks.

16. The hoop toss game of claim 15, wherein said aerial projectile is a ring.

17. The hoop toss game of claim 15, wherein a first one of said hook units is fixedly mounted to said main post, whereas a second one of said hook units is displaceable along said main post for moving said target member between a game position and a storage position.

18. The hoop toss game of claim 17, wherein said second hook unit is displaceable between lower and upper positions, wherein in said lower position a locking member of said second hook unit engages said first second hook unit with said first and second hook units being in said cross-like fashion and said target member being in said game position, and wherein in said upper position said locking member is released thereby allowing said first hook unit to be rotated relative to said main post and to said second hook unit and allowing said target member to assume said storage position.

19. A hoop toss game comprising a target member and at least one aerial projectile, said target member comprising a base member, a main post extending upwardly from said base member, and four secondary hooks extending outwardly from said main post, said main post and said secondary hooks each constituting a catching element such that there are five catching elements, whereby said aerial projectile is adapted to engage at least one of said main post and said secondary hooks.

20. The hoop toss game of claim 19, wherein said aerial projectile is a ring.

21. The hoop toss game of claim 19, wherein a vibration damper is provided on each of said secondary hooks.

22. The hoop toss game of claim 21, wherein said vibration damper defines an enlargement with respect to said secondary hook.

23. The hoop toss game of claim 19, wherein a vibration damper is provided on said main post.

24. The hoop toss game of claim 23, wherein said vibration damper defines an enlargement with respect to said secondary hook.

25. The hoop toss game of claim 19, wherein a vibration damper is provided at upper free ends of each of said main post and said secondary hooks.

26. The hoop toss game of claim 19, wherein said secondary hooks extend in diametrically opposed pairs from said main post.

27. A hoop toss game comprising a target member and at least one aerial projectile, said target member comprising a base member, a main post extending upwardly from said base member, and two hook units adapted to extend in cross-like fashion about said main post, each said hook unit having a pair of opposed secondary hooks, said hook units being relatively displaceable one relative to the other such that, for storage, said hook units can be positioned in a generally side-by-side and substantially parallel relationship, said main post and said secondary hooks each constituting a catching element such that there are five catching elements, whereby said aerial projectile is adapted to engage at least one of said main post and said secondary hooks.

28. The hoop toss game of claim 27, wherein said aerial projectile is a ring.

29. The hoop toss game of claim 27, wherein a first one of said hook units is fixedly mounted to said main post, whereas a second one of said hook units is displaceable along said main post for moving said target member between a game position and a storage position.

30. The hoop toss game of claim 29, wherein said second hook unit is displaceable between lower and upper positions, wherein in said lower position a locking member of said second hook unit engages said first second hook unit with said first and second hook units being in said cross-like fashion and said target member being in said game position, and wherein in said upper position said locking member is released thereby allowing said first hook unit to be rotated relative to said main post and to said second hook unit and allowing said target member to assume said storage position.

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