



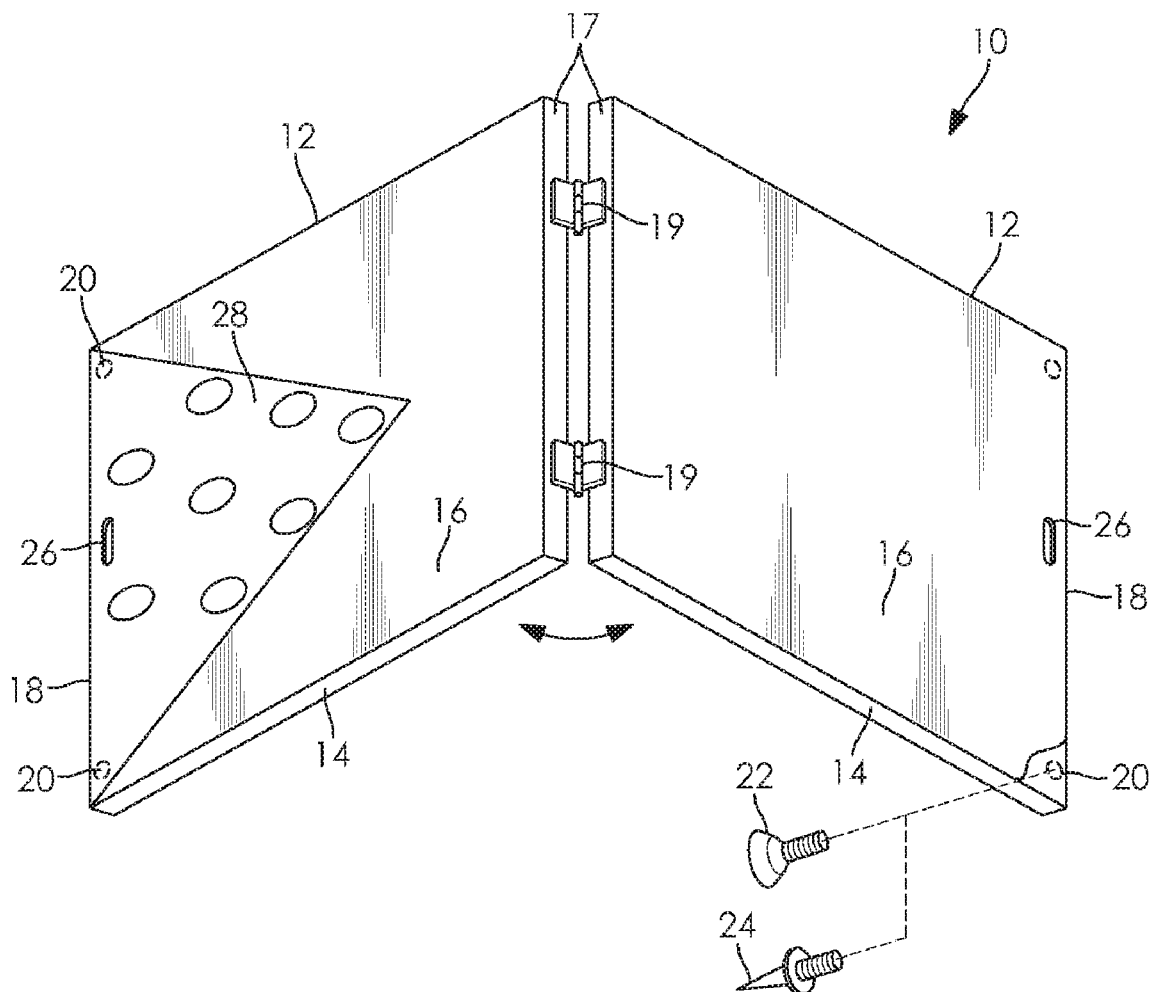
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Chapman(10) **Pub. No.: US 2022/0054931 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Feb. 24, 2022**(54) **PORTABLE PIN GAME PLATFORM****Publication Classification**(71) Applicant: **Fowling Enterprises, LLC,**
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(US)(73) Assignee: **Fowling Enterprises, LLC,**
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(2) Date: **Jun. 3, 2021****Related U.S. Application Data**(60) Provisional application No. 62/774,368, filed on Dec.
3, 2018.(57) **ABSTRACT**

A portable game platform including a first platform section and a second platform section pivotally joined together by a hinge. Each platform section formed of a base defining at least two holes and a surface board attached to the top of each base. A plurality of feet are configured to be removably received by the holes in the bases. The platform has a game play configuration in which the two surface boards form a continuous game play surface, and a collapsed configuration in which the game platform folds at the hinge and the bottom of the first base abuts the bottom of the second base. A process for setting up the portable game platform includes unfolding the platform sections along the hinge. Joining one of the plurality of feet into each of the holes defined in the bases, and leveling the game platform by adjusting the feet within the holes.



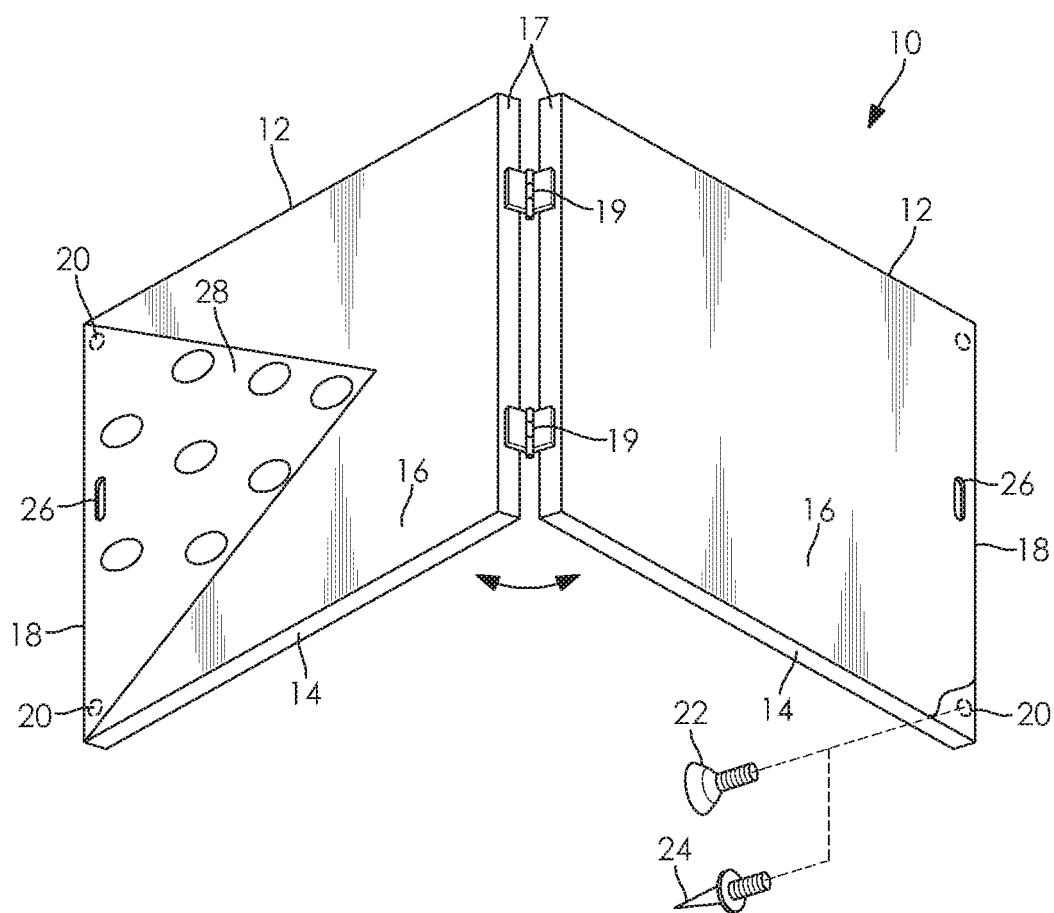


FIG. 1

PORTABLE PIN GAME PLATFORM

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims priority of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Ser. No. 62/774,368 filed Dec. 3, 2018, which is incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention in general relates to a pin game platform and process of setting up the same, and in particular, to a game platform that is portable, compact, and easy to set up for game play on various surfaces.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Pin games involving the setting up, striking, and knocking down of individual game pins with an object such as a ball often require a game board to delineate the game area relative to the surrounding space and to provide a suitable surface upon which game pins may be set up. Individual game pins are set up on the playing surface in a predetermined orientation prior to beginning the game. Depending on the rules of the specific game, the individual game pins can be struck or knocked down with an object thrown or otherwise set in motion by a player. A player's progress can be scored in a variety of ways. For example, a player is rewarded for the number of pins knocked down per toss or in a competitive timed fashion. Some games involving the setting up, striking, and knocking down of individual game pins are played recreationally. Such games could also be played more seriously, for example, in a league-play format.

[0004] Fowling Enterprises, LLC has pioneered FOWLING™, as a brand for a game that involves throwing an oblong ball, like a football at an array of pins positioned on a game board in order to knock down pins according to the rules of the game. The pins used in a FOWLING™ game are similar to, or can include standard pins used in bowling. A FOWLING™ game board is a forty-two inch by ninety-six inch (42"×96") rectangle on a platform constructed of half inch plywood fastened to a two inch by four inch (2"×4") wood frame edge. Typically, a FOWLING™ game set up has two game boards forty-eight feet (48') apart. Generally, a player or a team of players stands at one of the game boards and throws the football at the pins arranged on the opposing game board. Once the first player or team's throwing turn has ended, another player or team standing at the other game board throws the football at the pins arranged on the first game board.

[0005] Given the size of the game boards, moving or transporting a game board is cumbersome and heavy, thereby limiting playing of a FOWLING™ game to a designated game play space where the game boards are built and/or stored. Additionally, given the configuration of the game board and the setup of the pins on the game board, a suitable game play area must be a flat, level, large, open space, further limiting where a FOWLING™ game may be played.

[0006] Thus, there exists a need for a game board and process of setting up the same that provides for efficient and simplified moving and transport and for greater adaptability to play space locations and terrain features.

SUMMARY

[0007] A portable game platform for supporting game pins is provided. The portable game platform includes a first platform section and a second platform section. The first platform section is formed of a first base and a first surface board, the first base having a top and a bottom, the first surface board being attached to the top of the first base, the bottom of the first base defining at least two holes at a first end of the first base. The second platform section is formed of a second base and a second surface board, the second base having a top and a bottom, the second surface board being attached to the top of the second base, the bottom of the second base defining at least two holes at a first end of the second base. The first platform section and second platform section are pivotally joined together by a hinge along a second end of the first base and a second end of the second base. A plurality of feet are configured to be removably received by the holes in the first base and the second base. The game platform has a game play configuration in which the first surface board and the second surface board form a continuous game play surface, and a collapsed configuration in which the game platform folds at the hinge and the bottom of the first base abuts the bottom of the second base.

[0008] A process for setting up the portable game platform is also provided. The process for setting up the portable game platform includes unfolding the first platform section from the second platform section along the hinge, joining one of the plurality of feet into each of the holes defined in the first base and the second base, and leveling the game platform by adjusting each of the plurality of feet within the holes.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] The subject matter that is regarded as the invention is particularly pointed out and distinctly claimed in the claims at the conclusion of the specification. The foregoing and other objects, features, and advantages of the invention are apparent from the following detailed description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

[0010] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a portable game platform in accordance with an embodiment of the invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0011] An inventive portable game platform and process of setting up the same are provided. The present invention has utility as portable and compact game platform that is easy to set up for game play on various surfaces. In some inventive embodiments, the present invention affords storage of game equipment, thereby further enhancing the overall portability of the entire game. The present invention further affords the stacking of multiple game platforms for improved storage and transportability given the compact and flat nature of the game platform.

[0012] It is to be understood that in instances where a range of values are provided that the range is intended to encompass not only the end point values of the range but also intermediate values of the range as explicitly being included within the range and varying by the last significant figure in the range. By way of example, a recited range from 1 to 4 is intended to include 1-2, 1-3, 2-4, 3-4, and 1-4.

[0013] The present invention provides a portable game platform 10. According to embodiments, the game platform

is a forty-two inch by ninety-six inch (42"×96") rectangle. It is appreciated that the present invention is not limited to these dimensions, but instead represent those for an official FOWLING™ platform. As shown in FIG. 1, an embodiment of the inventive portable game platform 10 includes two platform sections 12, each formed of a base 14 and a surface board 16. According to embodiments, the bases 14 are constructed from wood two-by-fours and the surface boards 16 are formed of half inch plywood. Alternatively, the game platform 10 is constructed from lightweight materials of similar dimensions. Lightweight materials operative herein illustratively include fiberglass reinforced polyurethane foam, oriented strand board (OSB), honeycomb core containing plastics, polyvinyl chloride (PVC), hard skinned foam cores of for example polystyrene with skins of hardboard, fiberboard, poplar plywood, aluminum, or combinations thereof. Each board 16 is attached to the top of one of the bases 14 by fasteners such as nails, screws, or adhesives. It is preferred that the attachment of the boards 16 to the bases 14 do not interfere with game play, that is that the fasteners are flush with the board 16 or extending into a board 16 from underneath and not penetrating onto the gaming surface.

[0014] The bottom of each base 14 defines at least two threaded holes 20 at a first end 18 of each base 14. The threaded holes 20, shown in phantom lines in FIG. 1, are positioned in some inventive embodiments on the outer corners of the bases 14 so that there is a threaded hole 20 in each of the outer corners of the game platform 10. In some embodiments, the threaded holes 20 are metal or plastic threaded inserts that are retained in holes that are drilled into the material that forms the bases 14. In some inventive embodiments, the threaded holes 20 are not perceptible from the top side of the boards 16. In FIG. 1, the board 16 has been cut away in the bottom right corner of the game platform 10 to show the threaded hole 20 more clearly. According to various embodiments, the bases 14 also include additional threaded holes 20 positioned around the bottom of the bases.

[0015] The two platform sections 12 are pivotally joined together by a hinge 19 that is attached to a second end 17 of one base 14 and to a second end 17 of the other base 14. The hinge 19 allows the bases 14 to move relative to one another as shown by the arrow in FIG. 1. According to various embodiments, the hinge 19 is a piano hinge. In some embodiments, the hinge 19 is at least two hinges. In embodiments that utilize at least two hinges 19, the hinges are positioned near the outer edges of the game platform 10 so that the platform section 12 pivot relative to one another smoothly and controllably.

[0016] The hinge 19 allows the game platform 10 to be moved between a game play configuration to a collapsed configuration. In the game play configuration, the hinge 19 is closed so the game platform sections 12 are coplanar and the boards 16 form a continuous game play surface. In the collapsed configuration, the hinge 19 is open so the game platform sections 12 are positioned in parallel planes and the bottom of the first base 14 abuts the bottom of the second base 14. In the collapsed configuration, the two platform sections 12 define a cavity between the boards 16 and bound by the bases 14. Accordingly, in the collapsed configuration, items may be placed within the cavity and retained within the cavity for storage, organization, and transport. Items that may be stored and retained within the cavity include game

equipment such as a game ball, game pins, game platform set up tools, score keeping instruments, threaded feet 22, 24 (described below), or a combination thereof.

[0017] The inventive portable game platform further includes feet 22, 24 that may threadably engage the holes 20 of the game platform 10 by a user so the game platform 10 can be set up for use in the game play configuration. It is appreciated that other conventional joiner systems are operative herein to attached feet, these illustratively include bayonet fittings, spring loaded pins that can engage complementary openings in the holes, and friction fits. Each of the feet 22, 24 are individually adjustable by thread rotation or catch selection for a bayonet or pin in each individual foot 22, 24 into a hole 20 to a desired depth within the hole 20. The deeper a foot 22, 24 is inserted into a hole 20, the shorter that particular foot will be. Accordingly, the feet 22, 24 are used to adjust the position and level of the game platform 10. The feet 22, 24 are also removable from the holes 20 when a user wishes to pack up the game platform 10 into the collapsed configuration. According to embodiments, the feet are each independently flat rubber feet 22, spiked feet 24, or a combination thereof. Flat rubber feet 22 being particularly well suited for game play on an impenetrable surface such as wood, concrete, pavement, rocky terrain, or the like. The flat rubber feet 22 also help to prevent the game platform 10 from sliding or bouncing around as it is struck with a game ball during game play as the rubber feet provide grip and help to absorb shock. Spiked feet 24 are well-suited for game play on a penetrable surface such as grass, dirt, mud, gravel, or the like. The spiked feet 24 also help to prevent the game platform from undesirably sinking into the ground and from moving around during game play.

[0018] According to embodiments, the feet 22, 24 are formed of a plastic, rubber, or metal material or a combination thereof. For example, the spiked portion of a spiked foot 24 may be formed of a plastic material while the threaded portion may be formed of a metal material, while the flat portion of a flat foot 22 may be formed of a rubber material or a rubber coated plastic material while the threaded portion is formed of a metal material. Alternatively, the feet 22, 24 may be entirely formed out of metal or entirely formed out of a sufficiently strong and resilient plastic. According to embodiments, the inventive portable game platform 10 includes a set of threaded flat feet 22 and a set of spiked feet 24 so that the game platform can be set up for game play on various terrains. The different types of feet 22, 24 may also be used in combination, for example if half of the game platform is on an impenetrable surface while the other half of the game platform is on a penetrable surface.

[0019] Embodiments of the inventive portable game platform 10 include a bubble level mounted on at least one platform section 12. In some inventive embodiments, the bubble level is attached to at least one of the bases 14 so that the bubble level is visible to a user setting up the game platform 10 but so that it does not interfere with game play by being positioned on top of the boards 16 that make up the game surface. In some embodiments, the bubble level is attached to one of the bases 14 at the first end 18 so the right to left level of the game platform 10 may be checked and adjusted using the feet 22, 24. In other inventive embodiments, the bubble level is attached to a section of a base 14 between the first end 18 and the second end 17 of the base

14 so the back to front level of the game platform 10 may be checked and adjusted using the threaded feet 22, 24. In other inventive embodiments, a first bubble level is attached to one of the bases 14 at the first end 18 and a second bubble level is attached to a section of a base 14 between the first end 18 and the second end 17 of the base 14 so the level of the game platform 10 may be checked and adjusted in all directions using the feet 22, 24.

[0020] Some inventive embodiments of the portable game platform 10 further include a handle disposed on at least one of the platform sections 14. As shown in FIG. 1, the handle 26 is a through hole defined in the boards 16. As shown, the through hole handle 26 is an elongated oval shape. Other shapes capable to receiving a user's hand are also contemplated. As shown, the through holes that make up the handle 26 are positioned at the first ends 18 of the platform sections 12. Accordingly, when the platform is in the collapsed configuration and carried at the handle 26 in this position, the hinge 19 is oriented at the bottom of the platform 10 to help ensure items placed in the cavity between the two sections 12 do not fall out. Alternative handle 26 configurations are also contemplated. For example, in various embodiments, the handle 26 is a rope handle. That is the handle 26 is a piece of rope that passes through a hole in the base 14 and is knotted on the inside of the base 14. According to other inventive embodiments, the ends of the rope are both within the base 14 and knotted together or knotted independently with the center portion of the rope being positioned on the outside of the base 14 to be gripped by a user. According to embodiments there is a rope handle positioned at the first end 19 of both platform sections 12. According to embodiments, the handle 26 is a shoulder strap. In preferred embodiments, the handle 26 is designed such that it does not interfere with game play. Accordingly, the handle 26 may be positioned along an edge of base 14 or may include a plug that is inserted into a handle 26 cut out from a board 16 so that during game play the handle 26 is not perceptible.

[0021] Embodiments of the inventive portable game platform 10 further include a locking mechanism configured to secure one platform section 12 to the other platform section 12 when the game platform 10 is in the collapsed configuration. According to embodiments, the locking mechanism is any of a chest latch, a sliding bolt latch, a hook latch, a sliding door latch, a drawer latch, a gate latch, a rocker latch, a matchbox lock, a sliding latch, a hook and eye latch, a hinge latch, a hasp latch, a door latch, a window latch, a cabinet latch, a toggle latch, a door chain latch, and any other similar suitable locking mechanism.

[0022] Embodiments of the inventive portable game platform 10 further include game pin positioning indicia 28 disposed on a top surface of a board 16 on at least one of the game platform sections 12. As shown in FIG. 1 the game pin positioning indicia 28 includes a plurality of circles arranged in a triangle shape. In FIG. 1 some of the circles have been omitted for visual clarity. In a typical FOWLING™ game, ten game pins are used. The game pin positioning indicia 28 indicate the position of each game pin.

[0023] The present disclosure further provides a process for setting up the portable game platform 10. The process includes unfolding the platform sections 12 along the hinge 19 so that the game platform 10 is in the game play configuration, inserting and threading the threaded feet 22, 24 into the threaded holes 20, and leveling the game

platform by adjusting each of the threaded feet 22, 24. According to embodiments, leveling the game platform includes referring to the at least one bubble level that is attached to the game platform 10. According to embodiments, the process includes first carrying the game platform 10 to a desired game playing location using the handle 26. Various embodiments include unlocking the locking mechanism before unfolding the platform sections 12. The process may also include removing any items or game equipment stored within the cavity between the two platform sections 12.

[0024] As a person skilled in the art will recognize from the previous detailed description and from the figures and claims, modifications and changes can be made to the preferred embodiments of the invention without departing from the scope of this invention defined in the following claims.

1. A portable game platform for supporting game pins, said game platform comprising:
 - a first platform section formed of a first base and a first surface board, the first base having a top and a bottom, the first surface board being attached to the top of the first base, the bottom of the first base defining at least two holes at a first end of the first base;
 - a second platform section formed of a second base and a second surface board, the second base having a top and a bottom, the second surface board being attached to the top of the second base, the bottom of the second base defining at least two holes at a first end of the second base;
 - a hinge pivotally joining said first platform section and said second platform section along a second end of the first base and a second end of the second base; and
 - a plurality of feet configured to be removably received by the holes in the first base and the second base;
 said game platform having a game play configuration in which the first surface board and the second surface board form a continuous game play surface, and a collapsed configuration in which the game platform folds at said hinge and the bottom of the first base abuts the bottom of the second base.
2. The game platform of claim 1 further comprising a handle disposed on at least one of said first platform section and said second platform section.
3. The game platform of claim 2 wherein said handle is a rope handle.
4. The game platform of claim 2 wherein said handle is a through hole defined in at least one of the first surface board and the second surface board.
5. The game platform of claim 1 further comprising a locking mechanism configured to secure said first platform section to said second platform section when the game platform is in the collapsed configuration.
6. The game platform of claim 5 wherein a first portion of said locking mechanism is disposed at the first end of the first base and a second portion of said locking mechanism is disposed at the first end of the second base.
7. The game platform of claim 1 further comprising game pin positioning indicia disposed on a top surface of the first board.
8. The game platform of claim 1 wherein said plurality of feet are configured to be individually adjusted to level said game platform.

9. The game platform of claim 1 wherein at least one of said plurality of feet is a flat rubber foot, or a spiked foot.

10. (canceled)

11. The game platform of claim 1 wherein said plurality of feet include a set of flat rubber feet and a set of spiked feet.

12. The game platform of claim 1 further comprising a bubble level attached to at least one of said first platform section and said second platform section.

13. The game platform of claim 1 wherein said hinge is a piano hinge.

14. (canceled)

15. The game platform of claim 1 wherein in the collapsed configuration, said first platform section and said second platform section define a cavity between the first board and the second board, the cavity being configured to retain game equipment.

16. A process for setting up the portable game platform of claim 1 comprising:

unfolding said first platform section from said second platform section along said hinge;

joining one of said plurality of feet into each of the holes defined in the first base and the second base; and

leveling the game platform by adjusting each of said plurality of feet within the holes.

17. The process of claim 16 further comprising carrying the game platform to a location using a handle disposed on at least one of said first platform section and said second platform section.

18. The process of claim 16 further comprising unlocking a locking mechanism that secures said first platform section to said second platform section when the game platform is in the collapsed configuration.

19. The process of claim 16 further comprising removing game equipment from a cavity formed between the first board and the second board.

20. The process of claim 16 wherein said plurality of feet are flat rubber feet when the game platform is set up on an impenetrable surface.

21. The process of claim 16 wherein said plurality of feet are spiked feet when the game platform is set up on a penetrable surface.

22. The process of claim 16 wherein leveling the game platform includes referring to at least one bubble level attached to the game platform.

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