

(12) **UK Patent Application** (19) **GB** (11) **2 318 299** (13) **A**

(43) Date of A Publication 22.04.1998

(21) Application No 9621491.1

(22) Date of Filing 15.10.1996

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(51) INT CL⁶
A63B 63/00

(52) UK CL (Edition P)
A6D D13B

(56) Documents Cited
GB 2305365 A **GB 2255021 A** **GB 1592757 A**
US 5556104 A **US 5042820 A**

(58) Field of Search
UK CL (Edition P) **A6D DPB D11F D11X D13B**
INT CL⁶ **A63B 63/00 69/00**

(54) **Football target device with rebound boards**

(57) A football practice/target device comprises a vertical board 4 with targets 6 and an inclined board 5. The arrangement is such that a ball projected towards the device will rebound from the vertical board 4 substantially horizontally, from the targets 6 limply, and from the inclined board 10 upwards, thus enabling different skills to be practised from the same device. The targets 6 may be holes in the vertical board 4 covered with netting to provide the limp rebound characteristic. The device can be folded for storage and may have support props (8 fig 2) for stability.

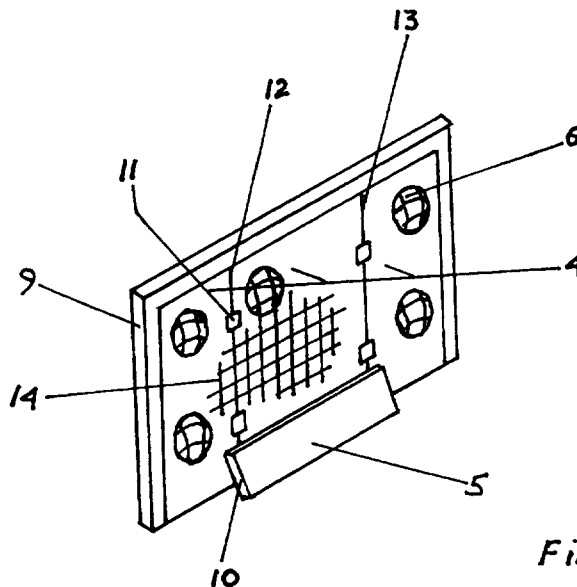


Fig. 1

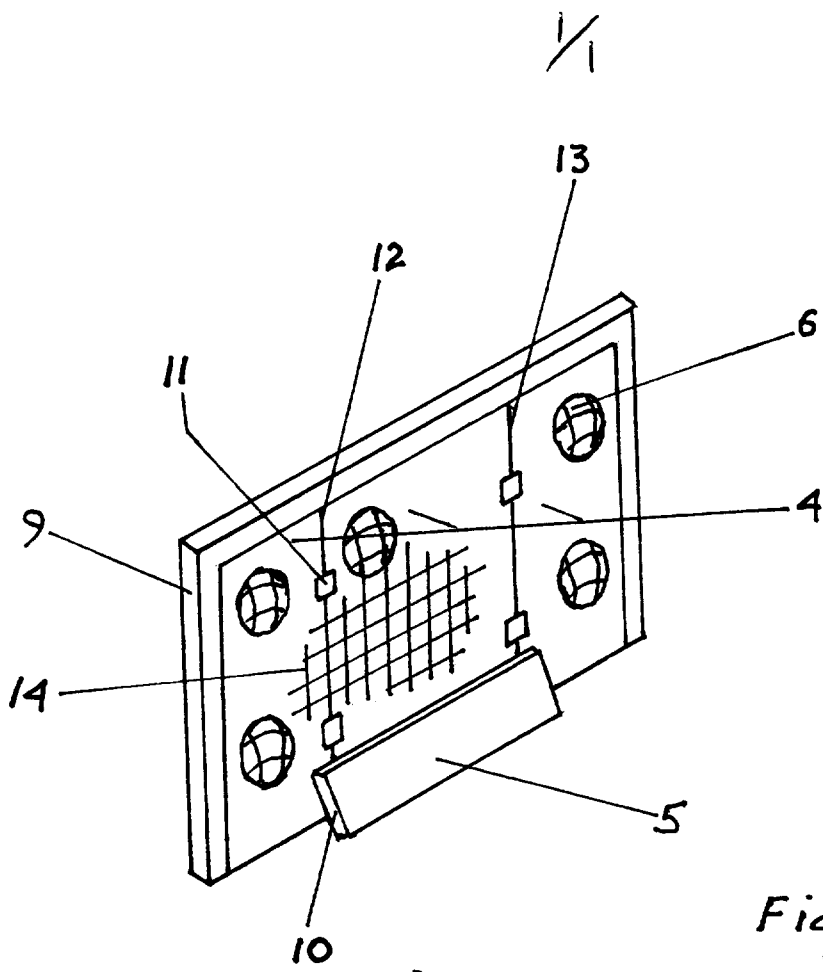


Fig. 1

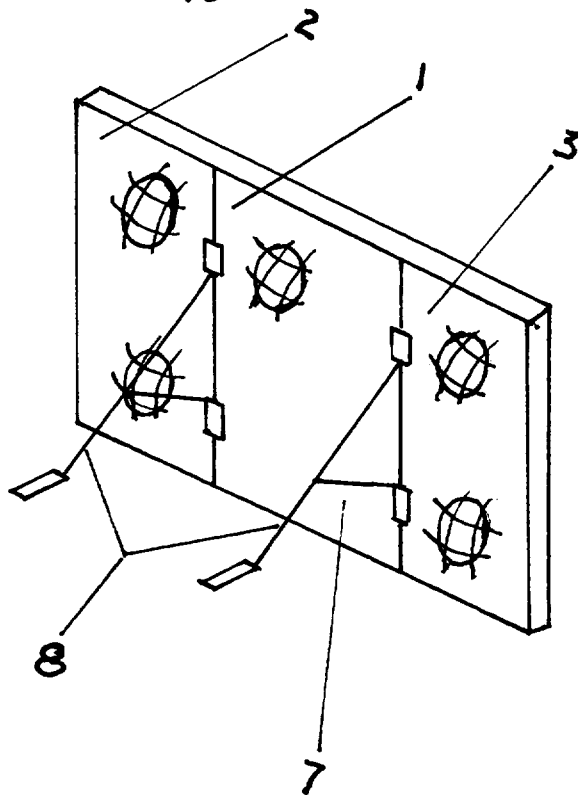


Fig. 2

FOOTBALL PRACTICE DEVICE

THE PRESENT INVENTION RELATES TO A FOOTBALL PRACTICE DEVICE WHICH CAN BE USED BY SOMEONE WISHING TO PRACTISE ALONE IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE SKILLS AND ACCURACY NORMALLY PRACTISED (AND ACHIEVED) ONLY IN TEAM GAMES. FOR EXAMPLE A CHILD BETWEEN THE AGE OF 4-12 COULD USE SUCH A DEVICE TO PRACTISE AND IMPROVE HIS/HER KICKING AND HEADING ROUTINES.

A VERTICAL WALL HAS LONG BEEN KNOWN FOR PRACTISING BALL GAMES FOOTBALL. THE USER RECEIVES REBOUNDS OF A BALL BY THE WALL FROM HIS SHOTS, IN ORDER TO PRACTISE FURTHER STRIKES. ALL STRIKES ARE LIKELY TO PROJECT THE BALL STRAIGHT BACK, THEREFORE REBOUNDS ESPECIALLY FROM VERY LOW OR GROUND LEVEL STRIKES WILL NOT TO RETURN THE BALL TO THE USER'S HEAD OR AWKWARDLY HIGH FOR THE NEXT PRACTICE STRIKE. THEREFORE SKILL AT TRAPPING HIGH BALLS OR AT HEADING WILL TEND NOT TO BE ACQUIRED.

A VERTICAL SOFT SHEET HAVING TARGET AREAS IN THE FORM OF APERTURES IS KNOWN FROM A BROCHURE BY "T.P. ACTIVE TOYS", FOR FOOTBALL TRAINING. THE CONTRASTING TARGET AREAS IN THIS FORM OF ARRANGEMENT REPRESENT TARGETS REQUIRING SPECIAL SKILL AND ACCURACY FOR THE USER TO BE ABLE TO SELECT AND HIT REGULARLY. THE PRESENT INVENTOR AIMS TO PRODUCE A MORE ROBUST STRUCTURE, WHICH WOULD BE EASY TO TRANSPORT AND ASSEMBLE. THE PRESENT INVENTION ALSO ENABLES SUCH TARGET AREAS TO BE USED, BUT IN A MORE ROBUST STRUCTURE; ACCORDINGLY ONE MAIN OBJECT OF THE PRESENT INVENTION IS TO CAUSE REBOUNDS FROM LOW SHOTS TO BE RETURNED UPWARDS TO THE USER; ANOTHER OBJECT IS PREFERABLY TO ENABLE THE DEVICE TO BE READILY FOLDED AWAY FOR TRANSPORTATION AND STORAGE. A THIRD OBJECT IS TO PROVIDE SMALL TARGET AREAS OF WHICH CAN BE AIMED AT AND HITS READILY IDENTIFIED. A FORTH OBJECT IS TO PROVIDE FOR REBOUNDS FROM ALL PARTS OF THE DEVICE, SO THAT CONTINUOUS INTERACTION CAN BE MAINTAINED.

ACCORDING TO THE INVENTION, THERE IS PROVIDED A GAME PRACTICE DEVICE COMPRISING A RELATIVELY LARGE AREA OF MATERIAL HAVING OR ENCLOSING ONE OR MORE CONTRASTING RESILIENT AREAS FOR DEFINING SELECTABLE TARGET AREAS; AND CHARACTERIZED IN THAT THE LARGE AREA OF MATERIAL IS A NON-RESILIENT BOARD ON WHICH THE RESILIENT AREAS ARE MOUNTED, AND IN THAT A FURTHER AREA, ALSO OF BOARD, IS INCLINED SO AS TO RETURN A FOOTBALL STRIKING THIS AREA IN AN

UPWARDLY DIRECTION, e.g. FOR PRACTICE AT HEADING, TRAPPING OR KICKING HIGH BALLS.

PREFERABLY THE BOARD IS IN SECTIONS THAT FOLD FORWARDS ALONG TWO VERTICAL LINES INTO THREE PARTS AND IS SUPPORTED REARWARDLY ON PROPS, THE INSTALLATION OF WHICH ALSO PREVENTS THE BOARD FROM FOLDING ALONG THE FOLDING AWAY LINES. THE PROPS MUST BE SUPPORTED ON THE GROUND FIRMLY ENOUGH, e.g. BY METAL TENT PEGS, TO RESIST THE REPEATED IMPACTS OF THE FOOTBALL. THE INCLINED FURTHER AREA IS PROVIDED BY A PIECE OF INCLINED BOARD ATTACHED TO THE MAIN BOARD NEAR GROUND LEVEL, FOR INTERCEPTING FOOTBALLS RECEIVED LOW DOWN AND RETURNING THEM UPWARDLY; THE ATTACHED PIECE MAY BE STIFF ENOUGH AND BE ALSO ARRANGED TO BE COOPERABLE WITH THE GROUND, SO AS TO PROVIDE STRUCTURAL STRENGTH AND FURTHER STABILITY THAN THAT ALREADY PROVIDED BY THE PROPS.

FURTHER ADVANTAGES AND FEATURES WILL APPEAR FROM THE FOLLOWING DESCRIPTION OF AN EMBODIMENT, GIVEN BY WAY OF EXAMPLE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DRAWINGS IN WHICH:-

FIG. 1 SHOWS A FRONT VIEW, FIG. 2 A SIDE VIEW OF A GAMES PRACTICE DEVICE EMBODYING THE INVENTION.

REFERRING TO BOTH FIGURES, A GAME PRACTICE DEVICE HAS A MAIN BOARD DIVIDED INTO BOARDS SECTIONS 1, 2 & 3 WHICH AT THEIR FRONT EXHIBIT NORMAL REBOUND SURFACES 4, AN UPWARD REBOUND SURFACE 5, AND A NUMBER OF YIELDING SURFACES 6, WHICH LATTER MAY COMPRISE FIVE ROUND HOLES IN THE BOARD ACROSS EACH OF WHICH YIELDING STRANDS ARE STRETCHED TO FORM NETTING. (THE NORMAL REBOUND SURFACE 4 MAY BE PAINTED WITH WHITE LINES IN A SQUARE GRID TO REPRESENT A GOAL NET 14). AN IMPACTING FOOTBALL WILL RICOCHET IN TOTALLY DIFFERENT AND THEREFORE IMMEDIATELY DISTINGUISHABLE WAYS FROM THE SURFACES 4, 5 AND 6. FOR INSTANCE THE BALL WOULD DROP DOWN LIMPLY TO THE GROUND FROM YIELDING SURFACE 6, OR WOULD REBOUND UPWARDS FROM SURFACE 5, AND REBOUND MORE OR LESS HORIZONTALLY FROM SURFACE 4.

THE REAR SURFACE 7 OF THE BOARD IS ATTACHED TO TWO ANGLED BACK PROPS WITH FEET 8, THAT ARE ATTACHED TO THE GROUND BY HEAVY METAL TENT PEGS ABLE TO WITHSTAND THE REPEATED IMPACTS OF THE FOOTBALL ON THE FRONT SURFACES 4, 5 &

6. A SMALLER BOARD 10 IS ATTACHED AT AN OBLIQUE ANGLE TO THE FRONT SURFACE 4 OF THE BOARD 1, IN ORDER TO PROVIDE THE UPWARDS REBOUND SURFACE 5 OF BOARD 10. BOARD 10 ALSO PROVIDES EXTRA STABILITY AND RIGIDITY TO THE COMPLETE DEVICE.

THREE SIDES OF AREA 4 MAY BE SURROUNDED BY WHITE PVC ANGLE 9, NOT ONLY REPRESENTING THE GOAL POST AND THE TWO UPRIGHTS BUT ALSO GIVING A ROBUST EDGE AND GOOD APPEARANCE TO THE DEVICE.

PERSONS, TYPICALLY CHILDREN AGED BETWEEN 4 AND 12, WILL POSITION THEMSELVES IN FRONT OF SURFACE 4 AND KICK OR HEAD A FOOTBALL AT IT. TARGET OR "GOAL" MAY BE DESIGNATED AS THOSE WHICH HIT THE YIELDING SURFACE 6 PROVIDED BY THE ELASTIC NETTING. THOSE SHOTS WHICH HIT THE UPWARDLY INCLINED SURFACE 5, WILL REBOUND FOR HEADING THE FOOTBALL.

THE TARGET,"GOAL", AREAS 6, THE PRACTICE BOARD FRONT SURFACE 4 AND THE UPWARD REBOUND SURFACE 5 SHOULD REWARD SKILFUL AND ACCURATE SHOOTING. A LOW SHOT, OFTEN VERY DESIRABLE IN FOOTBALL, IS REWARDED BY THE BALL REBOUNTING UPWARDLY, SUITABLE FOR PRACTISING HEADING OR ACCURATE TRAPPING BY THE CHEST, THIGHS OR FOOT OF THE PRACTISING USER.

A DESIRABLE OPTION IS THAT THE THE BOARD CAN BE FOLDED AWAY FOR TRANSPORT AND STORAGE, AND HENCE IT IS HINGED AT THE VERTICAL LINES 12 AND 13, BY MEANS OF HINGES 11 TO ALLOW SIDES 2 & 3 TO FOLD FORWARD. ASSEMBLY INVOLVES OPENING OUT THE TWO HINGED BOARDS 2 AND 3 FROM BOARD 1, THEN SCREWING ON THE TWO METAL BACK PROPS, 8 ONTO THE BACK, THE UPWARD DEFLECTOR BOARD 10, ON THE FRONT, AND THE TOP WHITE PVC ANGLE 9. THE WHOLE DEVICE IS FIRMLY FIXED TO THE GROUND BY TWO HEAVY METAL TENT PEGS THROUGH THE HOLES IN THE BACK BRACKETS 8, AND TWO SMALLER PEGS (NOT SHOWN) IN THE BACK AT THE EXTREMITIES OF BOARDS 2 AND 3. THE PROPS 8 MAY PREFERABLY CARRY THE STIFFENING BRACKETS SERVING TO ATTACH THE BOARD SECTIONS TOGETHER IN ONE PLANE. ALTERNATIVELY THE BRACKETS MAY BE SEPARATE PIECES.

THUS IT CAN BE SEEN IN SUMMARY THAT THERE IS PROVIDED:-

1) A GAME PRACTICE DEVICE COMPRISING OF AN AREA OF MATERIAL WHICH CAN BE SUPPORTED ON THE GROUND IN A GENERALLY VERTICAL PLANE AGAINST IMPACTS, AND WHICH HAS VARIOUS SUB-AREAS WHICH ARE YIELDABLE AND DEFINED TARGET AREAS

(6), CHARACTERIZED IN THAT AN AREA OF THE MATERIAL COMPRISES NON-RESILIENT BOARD AREA 4, IN WHICH THE YIELDABLE TARGET AREAS (6) ARE DEFINED, AND A FURTHER AREA (5) IS PROVIDED BY AN ATTACHED BOARD (10) WHICH IS UPWARDLY INCLINED SO THAT AN IMPACTING OBJECT TENDS TO REBOUND IN AN UPWARD DIRECTION.

2) THE NON-RESILIENT BOARD IS IN THREE PIECES HINGED TOGETHER SO AS TO BE FOLDABLE ALONG VERTICAL LINES (12 & 13) BUT ALSO ABLE TO BE RIGIDLY HELD TOGETHER WHEN FULLY ASSEMBLED IN ONE PLANE TO PROVIDE THE SURFACE AREA, 4 OF MATERIAL FOR GAME PRACTICE.

3) THE BOARD COMPRISES ANGLED BACK PROPS (8) WITH FEET FOR HOLDING TO THE GROUND TO WITHSTAND IMPACTS RECEIVED FROM USERS ON THE FRONT SURFACES (4, 5, 6).

4) THE SURFACE AREA 4, IS OUTLINED BY WHITE PLASTIC ANGLE 9, REPRESENTING THE GOAL POST AND THE TWO UPRIGHTS, PREFERABLY PROVIDING A DEGREE OF WEATHERPROOFING AT THE EDGES OR PROTECTION AGAINST INJURY OR SPLINTERS ARISING FROM HUMAN IMPACTS WITH THE EDGES.

C L A I M S

- 1 A FOOTBALL PRACTICE DEVICE COMPRISING A VERTICAL MEMBER WITH AN ATTACHED UPWARDLY INCLINED MEMBER AND TARGET HOLES WHEREIN THE DEVICE IS ADAPTED TO REFLECT A PROJECTED FOOTBALL SELECTIVELY EITHER HORIZONTALLY, SOMEWHAT UPWARDLY, OR ONLY LIMPLY, RESPECTIVELY.
- 2 A FOOTBALL DEVICE AS CLAIMED IN 1 WHICH IS RIGIDLY SUPPORTED BY TWO PROPS (ITEM 8 OF FIG.2) THAT ARE FIXED TO THE BACK OF THE VERTICAL MEMBER WHICH PROPS IN TURN ARE ANCHORED TO THE GROUND BY STEEL TENT PEGS.
- 3 A FOOTBALL DEVICE AS CLAIMED IN 1 AND 2 ABOVE HAS THREE REFLECTING SURFACES, NAMELY :-
 - a) THE VERTICAL SURFACE 4 (OF FIG.1) REFLECTING THE BALL GENERALLY HORIZONTALLY.
 - b) THE ANGLED SURFACE 5 (OF FIG.1) REFLECTING THE BALL SOMEWHAT UPWARDS.
 - c) THE YIELDING (ELASTIC) SURFACE 6 (OF FIG.1) REFLECTING THE BALL "LIMPLY" BACK.
- 4 A FOOTBALL DEVICE AS CLAIMED IN ANY PRECEDING CLAIM WHICH IS MADE FROM METAL, PLASTIC MATERIAL OR WOOD, OR FROM A COMBINATION OF THESE MATERIALS.
- 5 A FOOTBALL DEVICE AS CLAIMED IN ANY PRECEDING CLAIM ARRANGED AS IN THE FORM OF A FOLDING, SEMI-ASSEMBLED EASILY TRANSPORTABLE "FLAT PACK" ARTICLE OR AS A HEAVILY BUILT, SOLID PERMANENT OUTDOOR FIXTURE.
- 6 A FOOTBALL DEVICE AS CLAIMED IN ANY PRECEDING CLAIM IS A FOOTBALL PRACTICE DEVICE FOR ONE OR MORE PERSONS TO IMPROVE, PERFECT AND PRACTICE FOOTBALL SKILLS WITH EITHER FOOT, HEAD AND BODY IN A CONTINUOUS, INTERACTIVE MANNER.
- 7 A FOOTBALL DEVICE AS CLAIMED IN ANY PRECEDING CLAIM ARRANGED AS A GAME FOR A SMALL NUMBER OF ATTACKING PLAYERS AGAINST A SIMILAR NUMBER OF DEFENDING PLAYERS, SCORING DEPENDING ON WHICH TARGET THE ATTACKING TEAM HIT THE BALL.
- 8 A FOOTBALL DEVICE SUBSTANTIALLY AS HEREIN DESCRIBED AND ILLUSTRATED IN THE ACCOMPANYING DIAGRAMS FIGS.1 AND 2.



Application No: GB 9621491.1
Claims searched: 1-8

Examiner: John Hewet
Date of search: 22 January 1998

Patents Act 1977 Search Report under Section 17

Databases searched:

UK Patent Office collections, including GB, EP, WO & US patent specifications, in:

UK Cl (Ed.P): A6D (D11F, D11X, D13B, DPB)

Int Cl (Ed.6): A63B 63/00, 69/00

Other:

Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Identity of document and relevant passage	Relevant to claims
X	GB 2305365 A (DOS SANTOS) see especially figure 3	1-7
X	GB 2255021 A (ROSS) see especially the figures	1-7
X	GB 1592757 (FREEMAN) see especially page 2 line 50 to page 3 line 15	1, 4-7
X	US 5556104 (GUILLEN) see especially figures 7 to 9	1-4, 6-8
X	US 5042820 (FORD) see especially panel 34	1-8

X Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step
Y Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.

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A Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
P Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
E Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.