



US 20140091525A1

(19) **United States**  
(12) **Patent Application Publication**  
**Ramirez**

(10) **Pub. No.: US 2014/0091525 A1**  
(43) **Pub. Date: Apr. 3, 2014**

(54) **BEAN BAG TOSS DEVICE WITH RAISED EXTERIOR LIP AND ELEVATED CENTRAL SECTION**

(52) **U.S. Cl.**  
CPC ..... *A63B 67/06* (2013.01)  
USPC ..... *273/402*

(71) Applicant: **Robert Ramirez**, Joliet, IL (US)

(57) **ABSTRACT**

(72) Inventor: **Robert Ramirez**, Joliet, IL (US)

(21) Appl. No.: **13/887,360**

(22) Filed: **May 5, 2013**

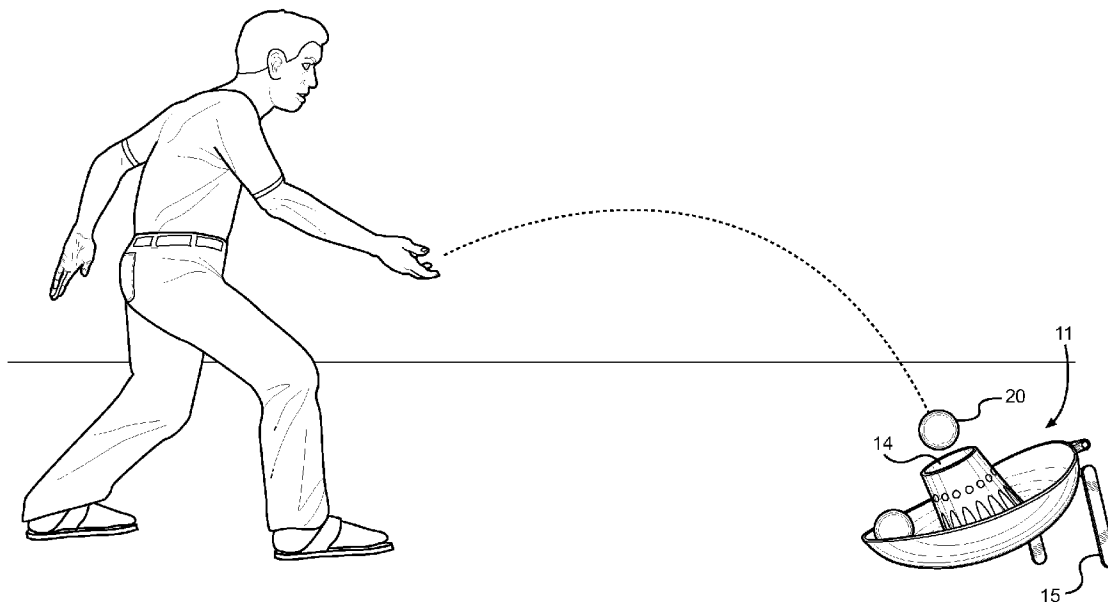
A bean bag toss device is provided that includes a rounded platform forming a bowl-like configuration and an elevated central section having an open upper. The rounded platform retains a bean bag that is thrown at the device to prevent the bean bag from sliding therefrom and onto the ground. The elevated central section requires a user to toss a bean bag directly into its open upper to score a “bull’s-eye”. In one embodiment, a bulls-eye is noted by music from a speaker attached to the platform, whereby the central section includes a motion sensor to register a bulls-eye, which initiates the sound. The device further includes a pair of folding legs that elevate the platform along one end thereof to slope the device towards a user during use. When not in use, multiple platforms can be stacked on top of another in a nesting configuration to conserve storage space.

**Related U.S. Application Data**

(60) Provisional application No. 61/708,684, filed on Oct. 2, 2012.

**Publication Classification**

(51) **Int. Cl.**  
*A63B 67/06* (2006.01)



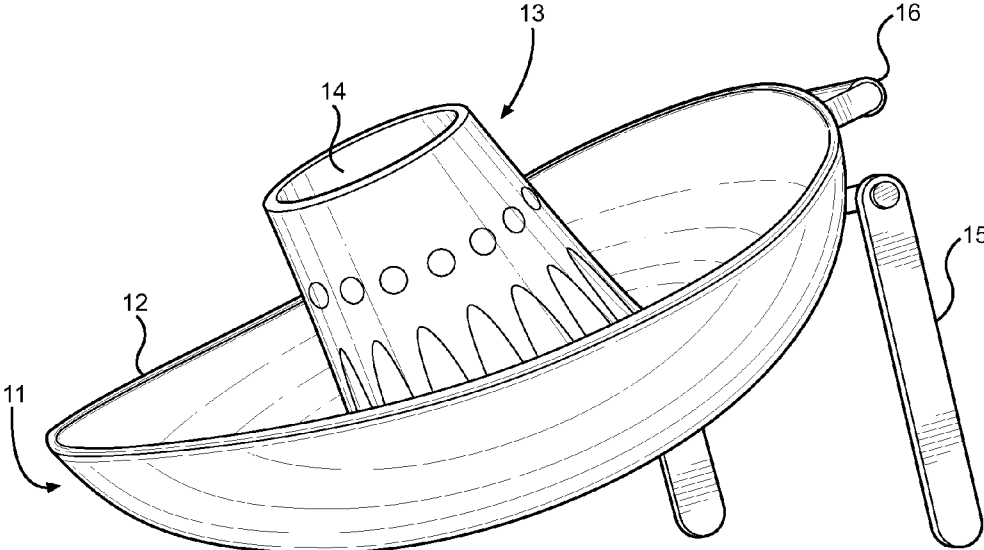


FIG. 1

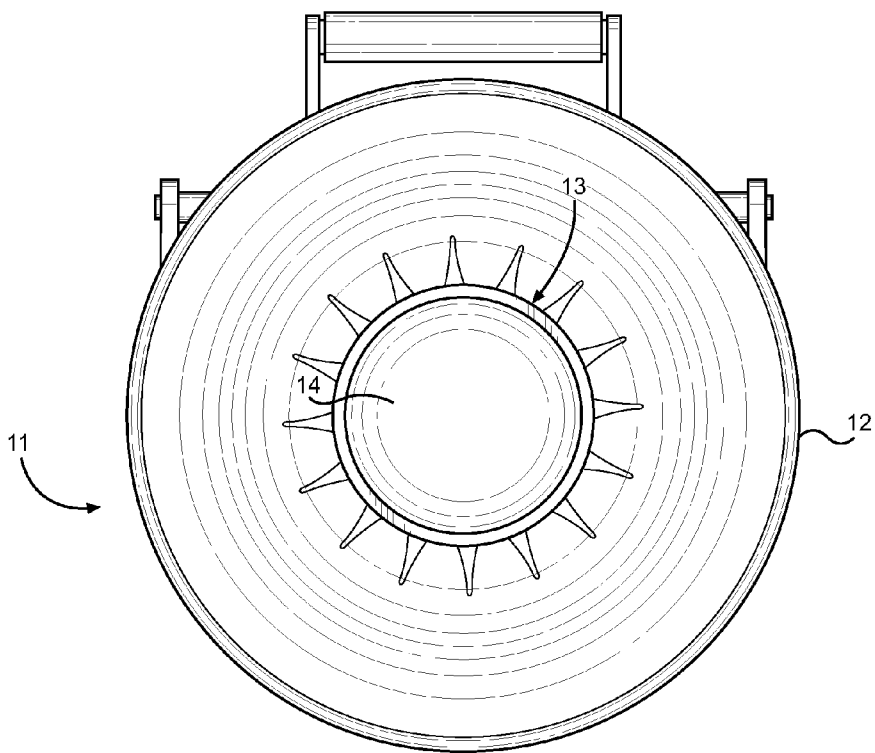


FIG. 2

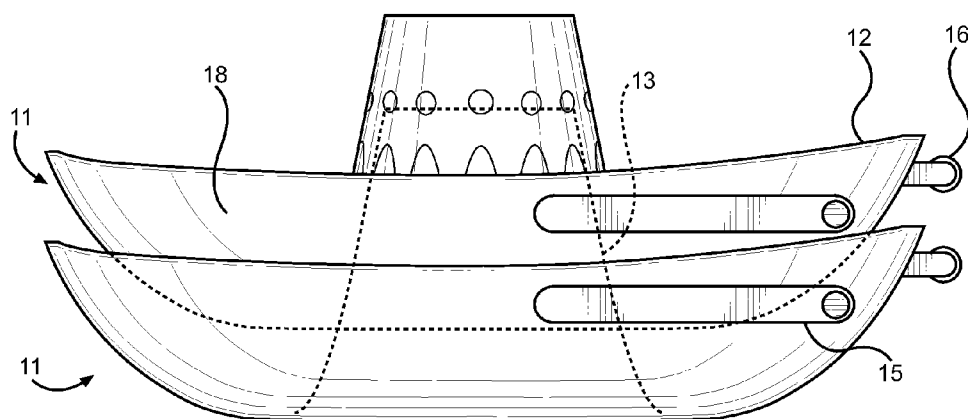


FIG. 3

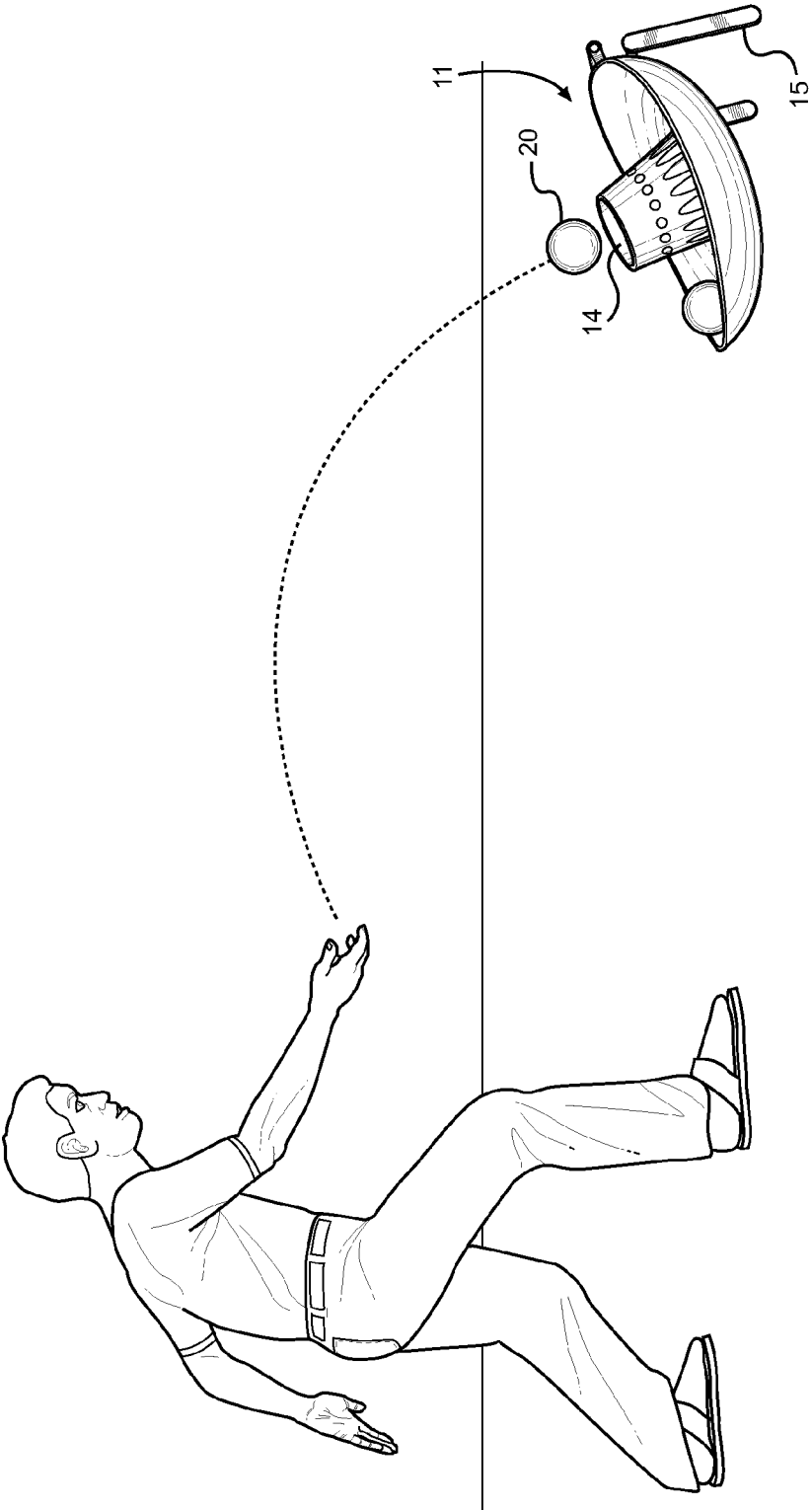


FIG. 4

**BEAN BAG TOSS DEVICE WITH RAISED EXTERIOR LIP AND ELEVATED CENTRAL SECTION**

**CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION**

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/708,684 filed on Oct. 2, 2012, entitled "Four Amigos." The above identified patent application is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety to provide continuity of disclosure.

**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

**Field of the Invention**

[0002] The present invention relates to the field of toss games and entertainment devices. More particularly, the present invention pertains to a new and improved bean bag toss device or receptacle.

[0003] Friends and families often gather at parties, picnics, or other events to spend time together and enjoy one another's company. Many gatherings occur at an outdoor location and individuals oftentimes enjoy participating in various lawn games that can be played by a wide range of participants. Lawn games often involve throwing or tossing an object at a target to accumulate points. One of the most popular games involves throwing bean-filled bags at a target to score points based on the end location of the bag. This game is commonly referred to as "Baggo" or "Cornhole." In this game, players take turns throwing bean bags at a platform that includes a hole. The main objective of the game is to land the bag inside the hole or onto the platform. The end location of the bag determines the amount of points scored and a player or team wins once a predetermined score has been attained.

[0004] Conventional bean bag toss devices utilize a pair of raised platforms. Each platform includes a hole or holes along its uppermost surface. Prior to the game, the platforms are spaced apart with players standing next to a platform facing towards the platform where they will throw the bags. Players take turns tossing their bean bags at the platform, with the goal being to toss the bag into the hole or to have it land on the platform. Conventional rules award higher points for landing the bag in the hole, and fewer points for landing on the platform. The game is continued until one team reaches a predetermined score.

[0005] Tossing the bean bag onto the platform is a common problem due to the construction of the game platform surface. As can be appreciated, the speed and trajectory of the bag when thrown often cause it to hit the platform surface but the bag will slide off. This occurs primarily because there is no wall on the edge of the platform to stop the bag's motion. For an experience player this problem is easily overcome, however, the lack of a wall or edge makes conventional bean bag games difficult for novice players or children.

[0006] Another problem associated with conventional bean bag toss games is the lack of challenge for an experienced player. A proficient bag toss player learns how to use the speed and trajectory of the bag to throw the bag into the hole, slide the bag into the hole, or slide the bag along the platform and keep it on the surface. This is advantageous for a player because a bag that slides into the hole is awarded the same number of points as a bag that is thrown directly into the hole. This creates a decreased amount of skill necessary as even a

very experienced player acknowledges it takes considerable more skill to throw a bag directly into the hole than it is to slide the bag into the hole.

[0007] A final problem with current bean bag toss platforms is that they are not designed to be readily transported after use. The platforms are generally constructed of two foot by four foot platforms. The size makes it difficult to transport the game to a park or field. Further, a platform of this size does not fit in the trunk of a compact or mid-sized sedan and generally requires a truck or sport utility vehicle.

[0008] The present invention overcomes the problems inherent in conventional bean bag toss platforms with a device that can be used by both novice and advanced players. The device comprises a rounded platform and an elevated central section, a rounded channel therearound, and an aperture extending through the central section. The rounded platform further forms a raised perimeter along the outer edge of the device to retain bags that are tossed therein preventing them from exiting the device. The open central section presents a target that requires a user to toss a bean bag or ball into it. Additionally, the platform includes a pair of folding legs and can nest with similar platforms for simplified and compact transport. In this way, the device provides a challenging game for both adults and children that can be easily transported to a desired playing location.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIOR ART**

[0009] Devices have been disclosed in the prior art that relate to tossing games. These include devices that have been patented and published in patent application publications. These devices generally relate to bag and washer tossing games that utilize a platform. The following is a list of devices deemed most relevant to the present disclosure, which are herein described for the purposes of highlighting and differentiating the unique aspects of the present invention, and further highlighting the drawbacks existing in the prior art.

[0010] Specifically, U.S. Published Application Publication No. 2005/0051968 to Froesel discloses a washer toss game, comprising a pair of housings that include an exterior perimeter wall and a sleeve extending upwardly from the center portion of the internal area of the formed box. The sleeve extends upwardly from the base of the Froesel device. In addition, a can may be located within the sleeve in an upright position to furnish one method for scoring a bulls-eye, and may be removed and inverted providing an easier method to attain a bulls-eye. The Froesel device is adapted for use as a conventional washer toss game. However, it does not provide sufficiently sized targets for a standard bean bag to land in. Additionally, the Froesel device is positioned flat on a surface for game play. This contrasts with the present invention because it includes a pair of folding legs to create a sloped platform for use. Finally, the Froesel device includes a rigid structure that prevents nesting of two or more platforms for transport and storage. The present invention overcomes this storage issue by having a curved platform allowing for nesting of multiple units when not in use.

[0011] Another patent application, U.S. Pat. No. 7,500,674 to Riley, discloses a washer tossing game with a storage container comprised of receiving boxes which are placed in a juxtaposed position. Each box includes a base for receiving a removable center section adapted to accept thrown projectiles, such as a washer. The device also includes alternative center sections allowing the game to be scaled to different skill levels. The game may optionally include additional fea-

tures such as visual highlights, protective sidewall curbing, and impact resistant lining to protect the boxes from the impact of the thrown projectiles. A carrying case and a handle are also provided allowing the game to be transported. The Riley device provides a foldable, portable box for transport, and this concept is similar to the present invention, wherein the present invention provides a means for storage. The present invention improves and deviates from this storage means by reducing the amount of space needed and making the present invention more compact when not in use.

**[0012]** Another similar application is U.S. Pat. No. 8,162,318 to Peterson. This application describes a bag tossing game assembly that includes a frame with a first elongated member and a second elongated member. The Peterson device further includes a plurality of bracing members attached to and extended between the first and second elongated members. A mount is attached to one of the bracing members. A light emitting apparatus is attached to the mount. A panel is positioned on an upper side of the frame and covers the frame. The panel has a top side, a bottom side and an aperture therein extending into the top side and out of the bottom side. In use, the Peterson device can take on various embodiments of games. This includes games such as a washer throwing game, a bag tossing game, and a ball tossing game. These games are commonly referred to as "Washers," "Corn-hole," and "Golf Toss." This device, while providing a bag toss platform, does not include a curved platform or elevated central section with an aperture in the top. Further, the Peterson device comprises multiple embodiments of various lawn games but does not include the present invention in that selection.

**[0013]** Finally, U.S. Pat. No. 6,464,226 to Kephart discloses a washer toss game, comprising a game board having a first board member and a second board member being connected to the first board member. Each of the board members includes a top side and a plurality of holes disposed on the top side, and numbers displayed upon the top side adjacent to the hole. The device also includes a plurality of washer members for tossing upon the game boards and into the holes from a determined distance. The Kephart device discloses a washer toss platform having a plurality of holes for accepting washers, whereas the present invention provides a sloping platform with a curved platform and an elevated central section with an aperture in the top that is adapted for accepting bean bags.

**[0014]** The devices disclosed in the prior art provide platforms for tossing games. Generally, the platforms currently known and disclosed in the art include an exterior perimeter wall and an elevated central section. These platforms are adapted for use in a washer tossing game. The construction and design of the platforms require they be placed flat on a surface such as a lawn or concrete. The present invention, however, requires a sloped platform. The sloping bean bag toss platforms that are known and disclosed include planar surfaces with an aperture for accepting a bag. These devices do not include a curved platform with an elevated central section. Additionally, the prior art bean bag toss platforms offer varying forms of storage means but does not allow multiple units of a similar device to nest upon one another for storage and transport. In light of the prior art and the disclosed elements of the present invention, it is submitted that the present invention substantially diverges in design elements from the prior art. Consequently, it is clear that the present invention is not described by the art and that a need exists for

bean bag toss platform having a perimeter wall and an elevated central section. In this regard, the instant invention substantially fulfills these needs.

#### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

**[0015]** In view of the foregoing disadvantages inherent in the known types of bean bag toss devices now present in the prior art, the present invention provides a new bean bag toss device wherein the same can be utilized for providing convenience for the user when playing a traditional game of bean bag toss.

**[0016]** It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a new and improved bean bag toss device that has all of the advantages of the prior art and none of the disadvantages.

**[0017]** It is another object of the present invention to provide a bean bag toss device having a platform and an elevated central section with an open upper for use as a target during a toss game.

**[0018]** Another object of the present invention is to provide a bean bag toss device, wherein the platform includes an integrally formed surface that curves upwardly to provide a bowl-like structure around a raised central section to support bean bags missing the open upper.

**[0019]** Another object of the present invention is to provide a bean bag toss device wherein the platform retains a tossing article, such as a bean bag, that is thrown at the platform and prevents the article from sliding out of the present invention and onto the ground.

**[0020]** Another object of the present invention is to provide a bean bag toss device that includes a pair of folding legs that may be used to slope the platform upward when in use.

**[0021]** Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a bean bag toss device that enables a user to stack two or more platforms on top of one another in a nesting configuration to conserve storage space.

**[0022]** Another object of the present invention is to provide a bean bag toss device wherein the elevated section requires a user to toss a bean bag directly into its upper aperture to score a bulls-eye.

**[0023]** Another object of the present invention is to provide a bean bag toss device that includes a motion sensor to detect a bulls-eye, along with a speaker and associated electronics to initiate the playing of a music clip from the speaker once a ball has been tossed through the open upper of the raised central section.

**[0024]** A final object of the present invention is to provide a bean bag toss device that may be readily fabricated from materials that permit relative economy and are commensurate with durability.

**[0025]** Other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following detailed description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF THE DRAWINGS

**[0026]** Although the characteristic features of this invention will be particularly pointed out in the claims, the invention itself and the manner in which it may be made and used may be better understood after a review of the following description, taken in connection with the accompanying drawings wherein like numeral annotations are provided throughout.

[0027] FIG. 1 is a view of the present invention with the folding legs in a deployed position.

[0028] FIG. 2 is an overhead view of the present invention.

[0029] FIG. 3 is a view of the present invention with a pair of platforms nested upon one another for transport or storage.

[0030] FIG. 4 is a view of the present invention in use, with the folding legs in a deployed position and a bean bag being tossed at the elevated central section.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0031] Reference is made herein to the attached drawings. Like reference numerals are used throughout the drawings to depict like or similar elements of the bean bag toss device platform. For the purposes of presenting a brief and clear description of the present invention, the preferred embodiment will be discussed as used for playing a conventional game of bean bag toss. The figures are intended for representative purposes only and should not be considered to be limiting in any respect.

[0032] Referring now to FIG. 1, there is shown a view of the present invention with the folding legs in a deployed position. The device comprises a platform 11 having a concave, rounded surface and a raised lip 12. Along the interior of the rounded surface is an elevated central section 13 with an open upper 14. The raised lip 12 extends around the exterior perimeter of the device. While in use, the raised lip 12 retains a tossing article, such as a bean bag, that is thrown at the platform 11 and supports the article between the lip 12 and the raised central section 13. The raised lip 12 prevents thrown objects from sliding out of the device and onto the ground. The device further includes a pair of folding legs 15. In use, the folding legs 15 cause the platform 11 to slope upwards by having one portion of the present invention elevated above the surface. The sloped angle of the present invention is helpful to users by enabling them to view the aperture 14 more easily prior to throwing an object. A handle 16 is provided for transport, allowing a user to easily lift and move the device to a desired location for game play or storage. The handle 16 is located along the exterior surface of the raised lip 12, preferably positioned above the legs 15. When not in use, multiple platforms 11 can be stacked one on top of another in a nesting configuration. The nesting configuration allows for compact storage and provides users with a simplified means to transport the device.

[0033] The elevated central section 13 is integrally formed with the platform 11 and extends upwardly from the platform 11. The central section 13 is substantially higher than the raised lip 12 thereby creating a visible target to throw an object. The terminal end of the central section 13 is open and includes an aperture 14 to accommodate a bean bag or similar thrown object. The aperture 14 serves as the bulls-eye, or highest possible score, for the game.

[0034] The pair of folding legs 15 enable the platform to slope at an angle during game play. As can be appreciated, bean bag toss games are played by standing approximately 27 to 30 feet from the platform that the user will throw at, with the goal of tossing the bean bag into the bulls-eye section or landing it on the platform. To facilitate this objective the platform 11 slopes towards the player. The sloped device decreases the difficulty with hitting the platform 11 and bulls-eye section by increasing the visibility of the target. Further, the slope creates an inclined surface for the bean bag. The incline slows the velocity of the bean bag as it makes contact with the platform 11 and allows it to rest at the base of the

platform 11. The present invention achieves this by having the legs 15 hingedly attached to the exterior surface of the raised lip 12. The legs 15 move into a deployed position creating a sloped surface during game play and move to a folded position for storage and transport.

[0035] Within the interior of the raised central section 13 is an electronic motion sensor, a speaker, and associated electronics for the operation of both. The motion sensor is situated along the interior wall of the central section 13 such that when a ball is tossed therein, the sensor registers a bulls-eye as its field of view is impinged. A processing means (i.e. a processor or logic circuit), along with a power source, is utilized to receive inputs from the motion sensor (IR sensor or equivalent), whereby the circuit is further connected to a speaker and amplifier. The system is such that when a bulls-eye is scored, a short music clip is played by the speaker. Ideally this clip is of the aligned with the overall theme of the toss game, wherein one contemplated clip is the sound of a mariachi band playing for a brief moment to commemorate the bulls-eye. A computer memory (memory means) and computer storage (storage means) is provided to store the sound clip and to operate the processing means. Overall the electronics, including the motion sensor, speaker, and electrical system elements, are considered an embodiment of the device that adds to the entertainment value of the associated ball toss game. The most basic form of the device includes the structure of the platform itself, without any associated electronic features.

[0036] Referring now to FIG. 2, there is shown an overhead view of the present invention. The raised lip 12 surrounds the perimeter of the platform 11, providing the platform 11 with a bowl-like structure. The lip 12 is integrally formed with the platform 11 and curves upwardly creating a concave internal volume. The curvature of the raised lip 12 gives an effect similar to a wall around the present invention. The lip 12 retains tossing articles thrown at the platform 11 by preventing it from sliding or rolling out of the platform 11. When a round tossing article, such as a ball, is thrown at the platform, the speed and trajectory of the throw often cause the article to hit the platform and roll along the same path it was thrown in. The raised lip 12 acts as a barrier and slows the momentum of the article. This helps to keep any thrown object to stay within the present invention thereby allowing a player to score points during a game.

[0037] The elevated central section 13 is centrally located within the platform and provides a primary target or bulls-eye section for a player to aim. The central section 13 is hollow, which forms an aperture 14 for accepting a bean bag or other tossing article. If a player tosses a bean bag and misses the aperture 14, the platform 11 provides a secondary area for the bean bag to land, while the raised lip 12 acts as a barrier to retain the bag on the platform 11. The diameter of the central section 13 is considerably smaller than that of the platform 11. This makes it challenging for a player to score a bulls-eye, or highest possible score, but also decreases the difficulty required to keep the bean bag within the platform 11.

[0038] Referring now to FIG. 3, there is shown a view of the present invention with a pair of platforms 11 nested upon one another for transport or storage. When not in use, the legs 15 can be folded and two or more platforms 11 can be stacked on top of one another to reduce storage space requirements. Each platform 11 includes an opening on the base that conforms to and accepts the elevated central section 13 of a second platform 11. The opening 18 and the curve of the raised lip 12

enable multiple platforms 11 to be stacked in a nesting configuration. Stacking multiple platforms 11 on top of one another reduces the amount of space required for storage and transport. This helps a user to transport the present invention along with other items commonly brought on day trips or to outdoor events.

[0039] In operation, a user folds the legs 15 and places a first platform on top of a second platform. The opening 18 on the base of the first platform 11 is positioned over top of the elevated section 13 of the second platform 11. The user applies pressure to the platforms 11 which causes the opening 18 and the elevated section 13 to make contact with one another. Additionally, a handle 16 extends from the side of the platform 11, which facilitates carrying. This enables a user to grasp one of the handles 16 and transport the device if necessary. When a user is ready to play the game, he or she sets the platforms 11 by lifting the first platform 11 from the second 11 and grasping the handle 16 of each platform 11. Applying a pulling force in the opposite direction of each platform will separate the two platforms, and a user can then set the present invention at a desired location for game play.

[0040] Referring now to FIG. 4, there is shown a view of the present invention in use with the folding legs 15 in a deployed position and a bean bag 20 being tossed at the elevated central section 13. The game is generally played with a pair of platforms 11 set up approximately 27 to 30 feet apart on a flat surface, such as a lawn, parking lot, or beach. The platforms 11 are oriented with the folding legs 15 facing away from the opposing platform 11, causing the platforms 11 to slope upward but facing toward one another. Ideally, the game can be played with two to four players, with each player tossing bean bags 20. Each player takes a turn throwing a bag with their opponent, such that a first team throws a bag 20 followed by the second team throws a bag 20. Once all bags 20 have been tossed, the score is calculated. Conventional scoring rules provide one point for landing a bag 20 on the platform 11 and three points for landing the bag 20 within the aperture 14. Equal points are canceled out, such that only scores in excess of your opponent's total are counted towards a team's cumulative score. The team with the most points in a single round throws first in the subsequent round. The game is played until one team reaches the score of 21 points with a lead of two or more points.

[0041] The configuration of the present invention provides a platform that can be used by players of varying skill level. As previously discussed, novice players struggle to land the bag in a conventional platform hole. Instead, most novice players attempt to land the bag on the platform to score one point. The lack of a raised lip, wall, or edge often allows the bag to roll off the platform, resulting in no points awarded for that toss. Over time, this may frustrate a player causing him or her to lose interest in the game. Conversely, a skilled player may be adept at scoring a bulls-eye by landing the bag on the platform and allowing it to slide into the hole. In such a toss, the bag hits the platform in front of the hole, and slides into the hole due to the momentum caused by the throw.

[0042] The raised lip of the present invention decreases the requisite skill level necessary to land the bag on the platform, while the elevated central section increases the skill level required to score a bulls-eye. A novice player can aim for the bulls-eye section confidently knowing that if the bag is tossed within the area of the raised lip then the bag will remain within the platform, allowing the player to score a point. Additionally, skilled players face a greater challenge of scor-

ing a bulls-eye, as they cannot slide the bag into a hole after hitting the platform. In order to score a bulls-eye the bag must be tossed directly into the aperture. The decreased skill level required for landing a ball on the platform, and the increased skill level required for scoring a bulls-eye enables the present invention to be simultaneously utilized by players with a wide range of skill level. This provides a game that can be played by many groups of individuals, while providing an appropriate challenge for players of varying skill.

[0043] It is therefore submitted that the instant invention has been shown and described in what is considered to be the most practical and preferred embodiments. It is recognized, however, that departures may be made within the scope of the invention and that obvious modifications will occur to a person skilled in the art. With respect to the above description then, it is to be realized that the optimum dimensional relationships for the parts of the invention, to include variations in size, materials, shape, form, function and manner of operation, assembly and use, are deemed readily apparent and obvious to one skilled in the art, and all equivalent relationships to those illustrated in the drawings and described in the specification are intended to be encompassed by the present invention.

[0044] Therefore, the foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly, all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention.

I claim:

- 1) A bean bag toss device, comprising:
  - a platform having a top side, a base side, and raised lip that curves upwardly in a bowl-like configuration;
  - said platform having a raised central section medially located and extending upwardly, said central section having open upper adapted to accommodate a tossing article therethrough; and
  - a pair of folding legs hingedly attached to said platform, said legs being movable to a deployed position and adapted for angling said platform from a support surface and moving to a folded position.
- 2) The device of claim 1, wherein said central section extends higher than said raised lip.
- 3) The device of claim 1, wherein said wall retains a tossing article thrown at said platform, wherein said lip is adapted to prevent said article from sliding or rolling off said platform.
- 4) The device of claim 1, wherein said platform further comprises an opening on said base side that conforms to and accepts a raised central section of a second platform, allowing said platforms to stack in a nesting configuration.
- 5) The device of claim 1, wherein said platform further includes a handle extending from said wall.
- 6) The device of claim 1, wherein said raised central section interior further comprises:
  - an interiorly mounted motion sensor, a speaker, and a processing means adapted to receive input from said motion sensor and control said speaker operation;
  - a storage means;
  - a memory means;
  - said motion sensor adapted for registering when an article is tossed into said raised central section and play a sound clip from said storage means.