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### (54) **Game apparatus**

(57) Game apparatus comprises a board formed with an array of cavities (1,2), each cavity being formed by a number of planar walls (3-5). A number of playing pieces (8,9) can sit in the cavities. At least one actuating

member (10,11) can be inserted into a cavity containing a playing piece and when actuated flicks the playing piece out of the cavity.

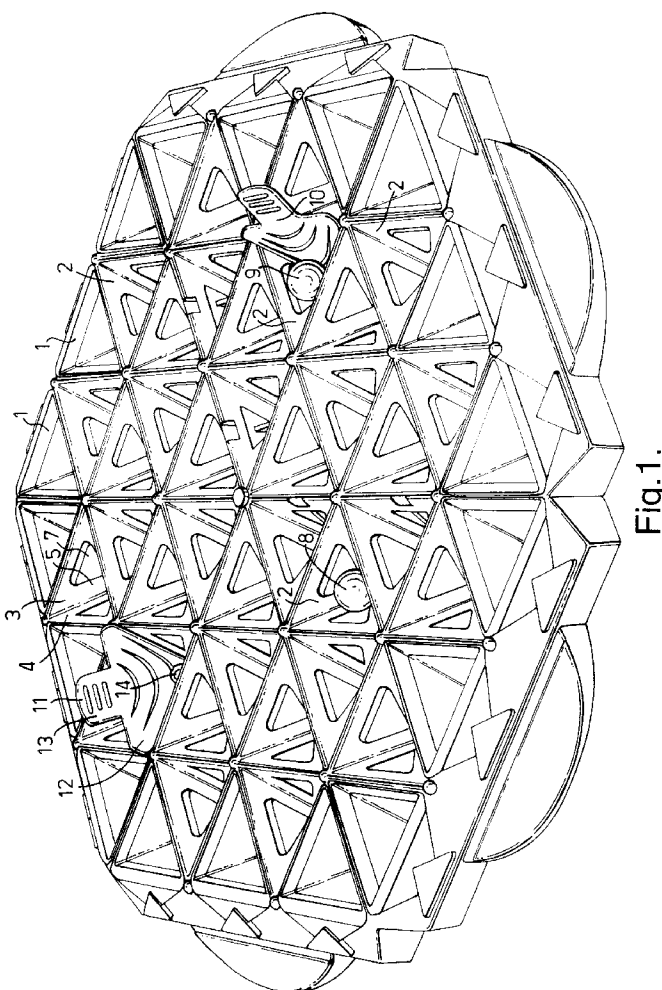


Fig. 1.

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## Description

The invention relates to game apparatus.

GB-A-2067902 illustrates a game having an array of concave recesses into which balls can be located. Each player has a flicking device which fits on his finger to enable him to flick a ball from one recess to another.

GB-A-1146460 illustrates game apparatus having a number of oval shaped recesses in each of which respective actuators are located which can be activated to cause a ball to be ejected from a recess.

In accordance with a first aspect of the present invention, game apparatus comprises a board formed with an array of cavities, each cavity being formed by a set of planar walls; a number of playing pieces which can sit in the cavities; and at least one actuating member which can be inserted into a cavity containing a playing piece and when actuated flicks the playing piece out of the cavity.

We have devised a new game apparatus which can be played by people with a wide range of ages, which is simple in construction but which is interesting to play. The use of planar walls for each cavity means that a playing piece can only be flicked out of the cavity in a limited number of directions. This increases the skill required by players over games such as those described in GB-A-2067902. In a preferred example, each cavity is formed by three triangularly shaped walls.

Preferably, each cavity tapers inwardly in a downward direction so that the playing piece can easily sit in the cavity.

In accordance with a second aspect of the present invention, game apparatus comprises a board formed with an array of cavities; a number of playing pieces which can sit in the cavities; and at least one actuating member which can be inserted into a cavity containing a playing piece and when actuated flicks the playing piece out of the cavity, each cavity having at least two pairs of opposed axle receiving recesses, and the actuating member having an axle which can be located in each pair of recesses.

Typically, the playing pieces comprise balls such as marbles although other playing pieces such as blocks and the like could be used. The playing pieces are preferably grouped into distinguishable sets, for example by being differently coloured.

Typically, the cavity and the playing pieces are so shaped that the top of a playing piece seated in a cavity is substantially level with the top of the cavity.

The actuating member preferably comprises a manually actuated member, such as a flat paddle. Most preferably, the paddle is shaped to cooperate with the shape of the cavities. In the case of a cavity formed by triangularly shaped, planar sides, the flat paddle preferably has a correspondingly, triangularly shaped section.

To assist in the flicking action, the paddle preferably has a dimple on its surface which engages a playing piece in use.

Preferably, the board is dismantlable into a number of sections, for example three sections. The sections may be held together in a variety of ways but in the preferred construction the sides of the sections are formed with respective ones of cooperating pairs of lips and apertures which can be engaged together.

Some examples of game apparatus according to the invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Figure 1 is an enlarged perspective view of the board of a first example from above showing two paddles and two balls;

Figure 2 is a plan of the apparatus shown in Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a side view of the apparatus shown in Figure 1 taken in the direction of the arrow X;

Figure 4 is a side view of the apparatus shown in Figure 1 taken in the direction of the arrow Y;

Figure 5 is an enlarged fragmentary section on a line A-A in Figure 1;

Figure 6 is a plan of the apparatus showing the paddles and balls in an alternative position;

Figure 7 is a perspective view from underneath showing the board broken into three sections;

Figure 8 is a perspective view from underneath showing a first stage in assembling the sections;

Figure 9 is a perspective view from underneath showing a second stage in assembling the sections;

Figure 10 is a perspective view from underneath showing the board fully assembled;

Figure 11 is a view similar to Figure 2 but of a second example;

Figure 12 is a plan of the board of a third example; and,

Figure 13 illustrates a paddle for use in the third example.

As can be seen in Figures 1 to 10, the first example of the board has a hexagonal form and defines an array of cavities including 18 starting cavities 1 arranged around the edge of the board, two of which are labelled, and 36 playing cavities 2, four of which are labelled in Figure 1. The starting cavities 1 are colour coded into two sets, for example yellow and red, there being nine yellow starting cavities 1 and nine red starting cavities 1. The red and yellow starting cavities alternate in sets of three around the board.

Each cavity 1,2 is triangular in plan and is defined by three triangularly shaped walls 3-5 which taper downwardly to an apex 6 (Figure 2). Each wall 3-5 of the playing cavities 2 is formed with an aperture 7. This is not essential from a playing point of view but helps to lessen the weight of the board for carrying purposes. The partial cross-section in Figure 5 shows the construction of a cavity in more detail.

The apparatus also includes 18 balls, nine coloured red and nine coloured yellow. Two balls 8,9 are shown

in the drawings seated in respective playing cavities 2.

It will be understood that the shapes of the cavities need not be triangular and the board need not be hexagonal. Furthermore, the board could have more cavities than illustrated in Figure 1. For example, the board shown in Figure 11 has 96 cavities (24 of the cavities 1, 72 of the cavities 2). In this case, there will be 12 playing pieces or balls per player.

Finally, the game includes two paddles 10,11, one for each player. The paddles are coloured yellow and red respectively. As can be seen in Figure 1, each paddle has a generally triangularly shaped, planar portion 12 with dimensions corresponding to those of a wall 3-5 and an actuating portion 13. The lower end of the triangular portion 12 is formed with a small dimple 14.

As can be seen in Figures 3 and 4, when a paddle 10,11 is inserted into a cavity 1,2 it lies alongside one of the walls 3-5 with the upper end of the triangular section 12 protruding above the rim of the cavity.

To play the game, the players first arrange the balls of their colour in the corresponding starting cavities 1. The first player then takes his paddle, for example the paddle 10, and inserts this into one of the starting cavities 1 holding a ball of his colour. He then places his finger on the actuating portion 13 of the paddle and flicks this portion downwardly which causes the paddle to flick the ball 9 out of the starting cavity 1 and over part of the board into another cavity. Movement of the ball is assisted by ensuring that the dimple 14 on the paddle 12 is inserted underneath the ball. Play then passes to the other player who inserts his paddle into a cavity holding a ball of his colour so that he can flick the ball into another cavity.

One object of the game is to arrange four balls of the same colour in a triangular array of the cavities.

Figure 6 shows the apparatus after the two balls shown in Figure 2 have been moved by several flicking movements. Figure 11 illustrates the three directions 53,54,55 in which a ball 56 can be flicked, the cavity in which the ball is received in a particular direction being dependent upon the speed of the flicking movement. A winning position is achieved when four balls of the same colour are arranged in a triangular configuration, for example in the cavities 21-24. In other games (Figure 11), a winning position could be six balls in a line 50, five balls in a line 51, or a hexagonal arrangement of balls 52.

Occasionally, a foul move will occur which would require the player to return his ball to the previous cavity. Examples of foul moves are where the ball is flicked completely off the board, a ball is flicked into a cavity which is already filled by another ball (of either colour), the player flicks a ball of his opponent by mistake, or a player touches a paddle without the ball jumping out of its cavity.

Although the board could be manufactured as a one-piece unit, it is convenient to manufacture it in sections which the players assemble before playing the

game. Thus, Figure 7 shows the board broken into three sections 30-32, each of which has a similar form, with a set of lugs 33 on one side and a set of cavities 34 on the other. Figure 7 shows the underside of the board from where it can be seen that the board is mounted on six rollers 35 to enable it to be rotated in use. In a first stage, the three sections 30-32 are pushed against each other so that each lug 33 engages in a corresponding aperture 34 with a suitable snap engagement. This results in an arrangement as shown in Figure 8 with an empty space 36 in the centre. It will be noted that the outside edges of each section do not yet line up.

A special key 37 is then positioned over the space 36, the key having three legs which engage into respective slots 38 in the sections 30-32. One of the sections 30-32 is then held steady and the key 37 is then turned in a clockwise direction. This will bring the three sections together and line them up, the board then being firmly locked into a single unit as shown in Figure 10. The board is then turned over so as to be ready to play.

The third example of the apparatus is shown in Figures 12 and 13. In this case, the board, which is similar to the board shown in Figures 1 and 2 has an array of hemispherical apertures 40, each aperture having three pairs of axle receiving slots 41,42,43. It will be seen that the apertures are positioned sufficiently close together that certain recesses can be used by more than one aperture and are thus common to both.

Figure 13 illustrates a paddle 44 which can be used with the board shown in Figure 12. The paddle 44 has a semicircular, planar section 45 which is coupled to an axle 46 via a support 47. In use, the paddle is inserted into one of the recesses 40 containing a ball to be flicked and the axle 46 is located into one of the pairs of recesses 41-43. The player then flicks the paddle by causing it to rotate about the axle 46 thus causing the ball to flick into another of the recesses 40.

## Claims

1. Game apparatus comprising a board formed with an array of cavities (1,2), each cavity being formed by a number of planar walls (3-5); a number of playing pieces (8,9) which can sit in the cavities; and at least one actuating member (10,11) which can be inserted into a cavity containing a playing piece and when actuated flicks the playing piece out of the cavity.
2. Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the playing pieces comprise balls (8,9).
3. Apparatus according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein each cavity (1,2) is formed by three, triangularly shaped walls (3-5).
4. Apparatus according to any of the preceding claims,

wherein the walls (3-5) of the cavity taper inwardly in a downward direction.

5. Game apparatus comprising a board formed with an array of cavities; a number of playing pieces which can sit in the cavities; and at least one actuating member (10,11) which can be inserted into a cavity containing a playing piece and when actuated flicks the playing piece out of the cavity, each cavity having at least two pairs of opposed axle receiving recesses, and the actuating member having an axle which can be located in each pair of recesses. 5 10
6. Apparatus according to claim 5, wherein each recess has three pairs of axle receiving recesses. 15
7. Apparatus according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the cavities (1,2) and playing pieces (8,9) are shaped such that the top of a playing piece seated in a cavity is substantially level with the top of the cavity. 20
8. Apparatus according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the actuating member (10,11) comprises a substantially flat paddle. 25
9. Apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the paddle (10,11) is shaped to cooperate with the cavity. 30
10. A paddle according to claim 9, wherein the paddle (10,11) has a substantially triangular shape. 35

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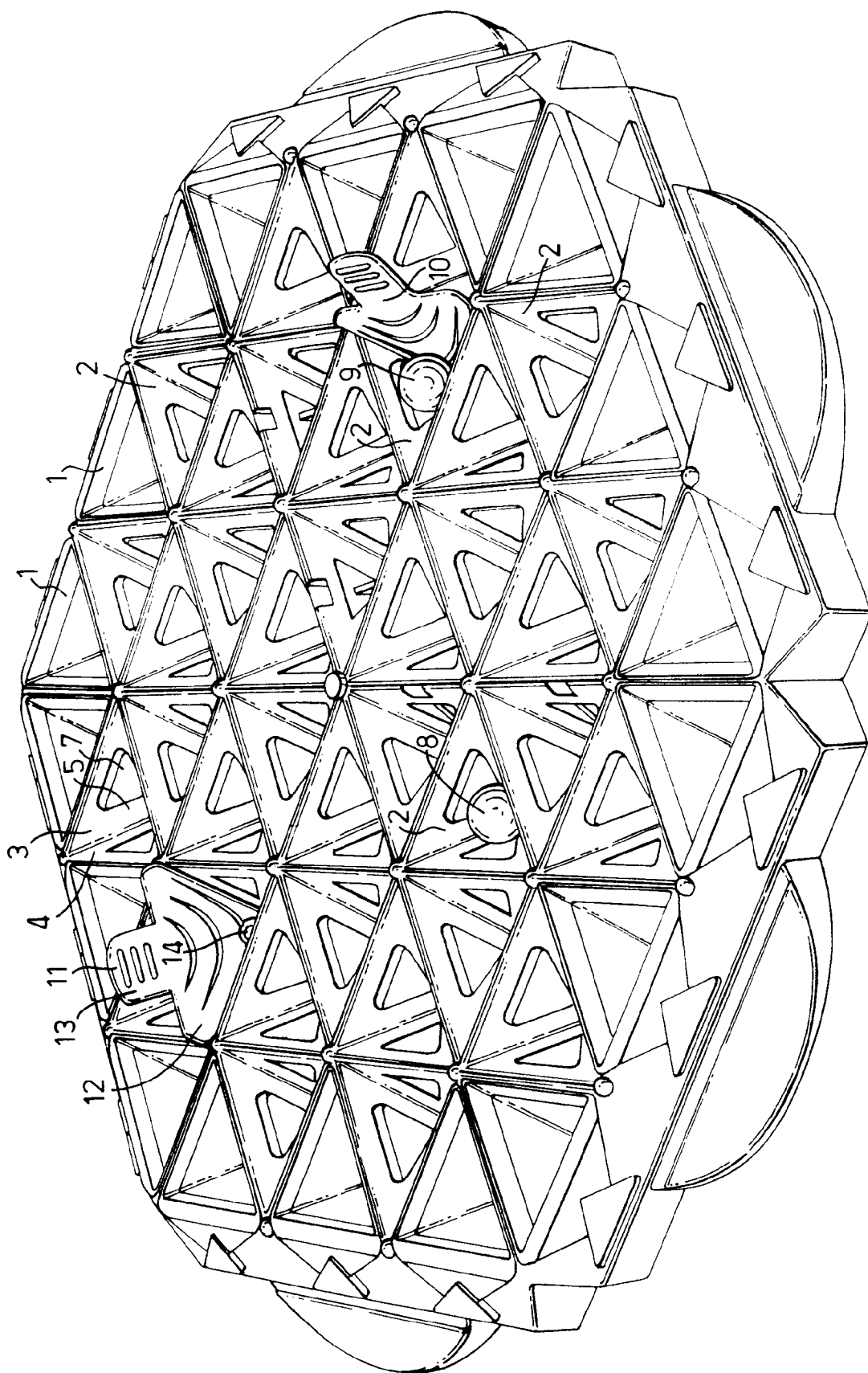


Fig.1.

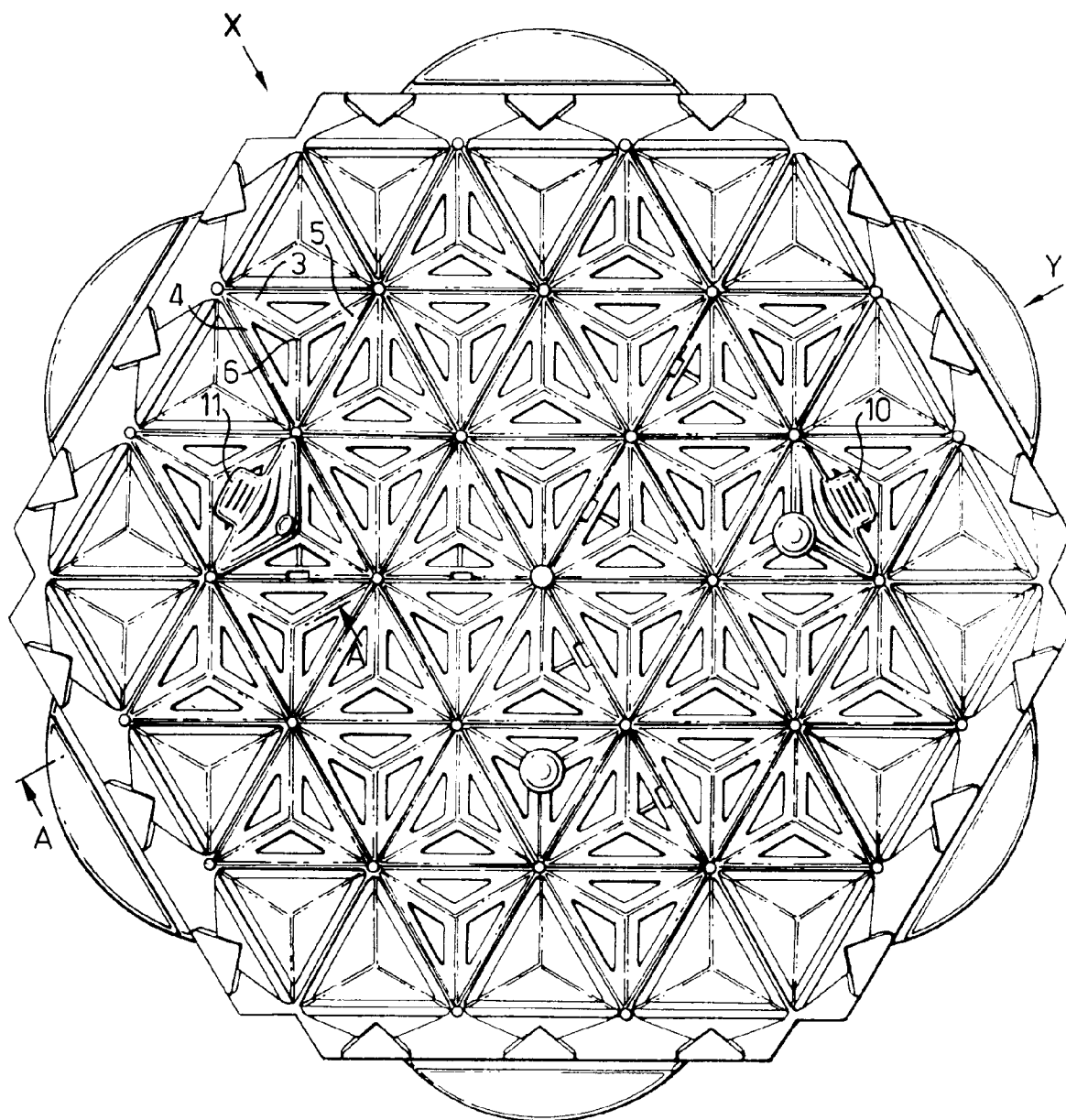
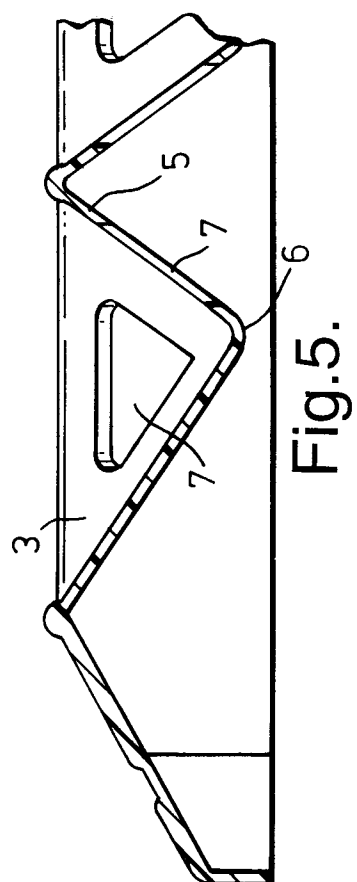
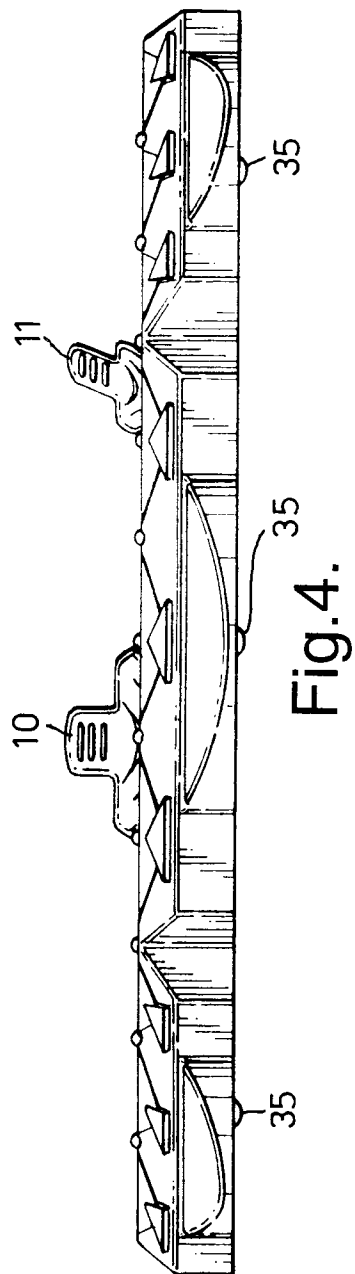
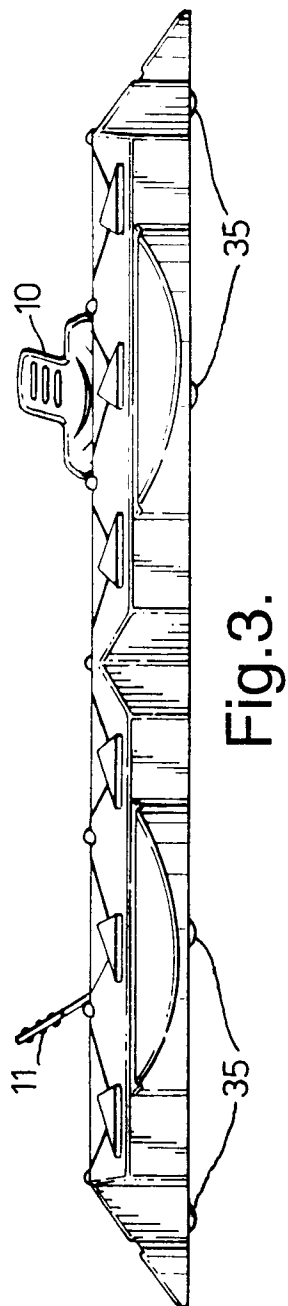


Fig.2.



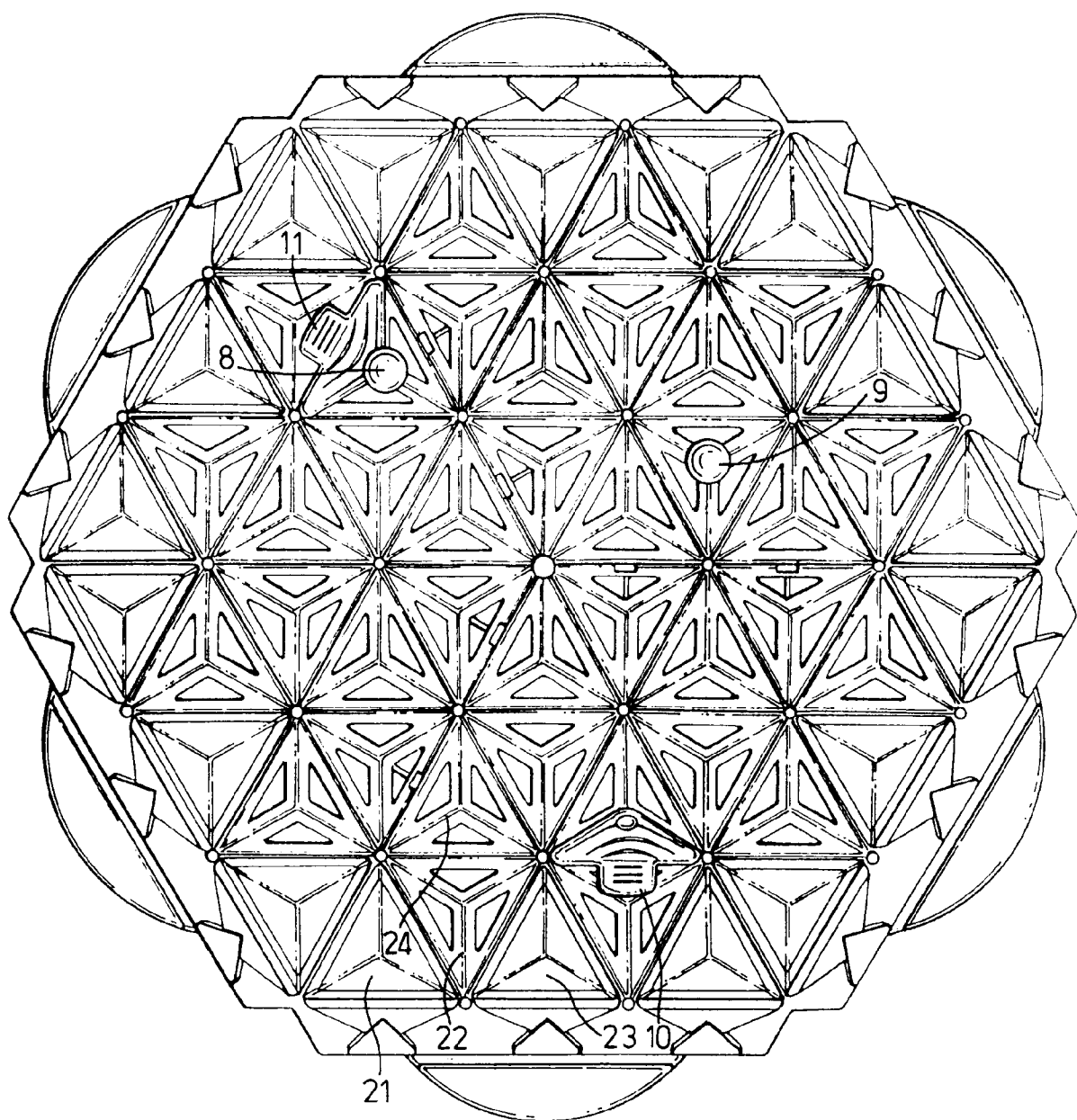


Fig.6.



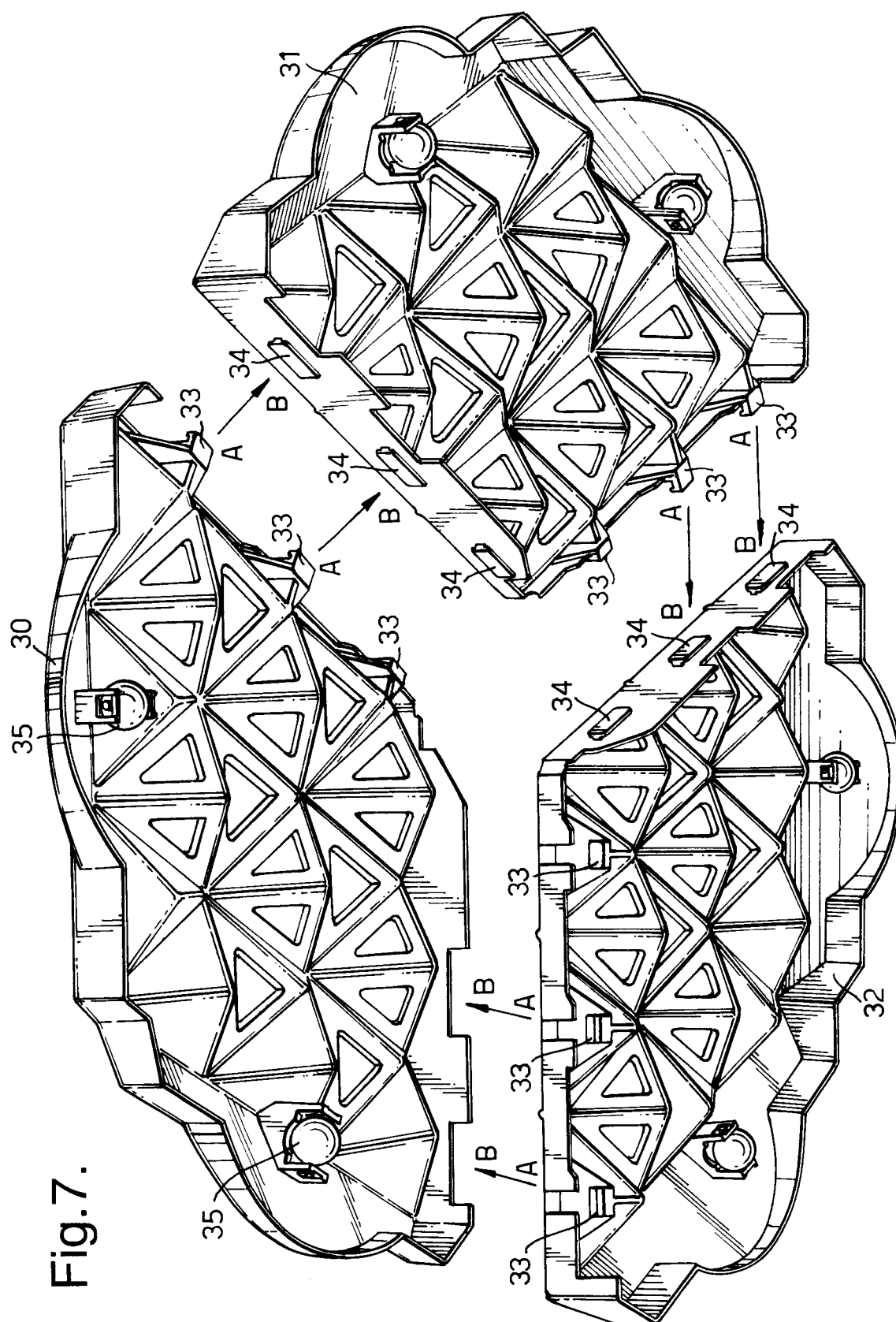


Fig.8.

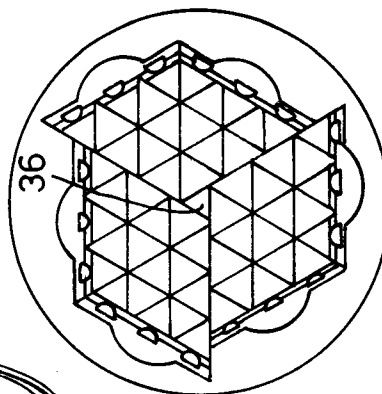
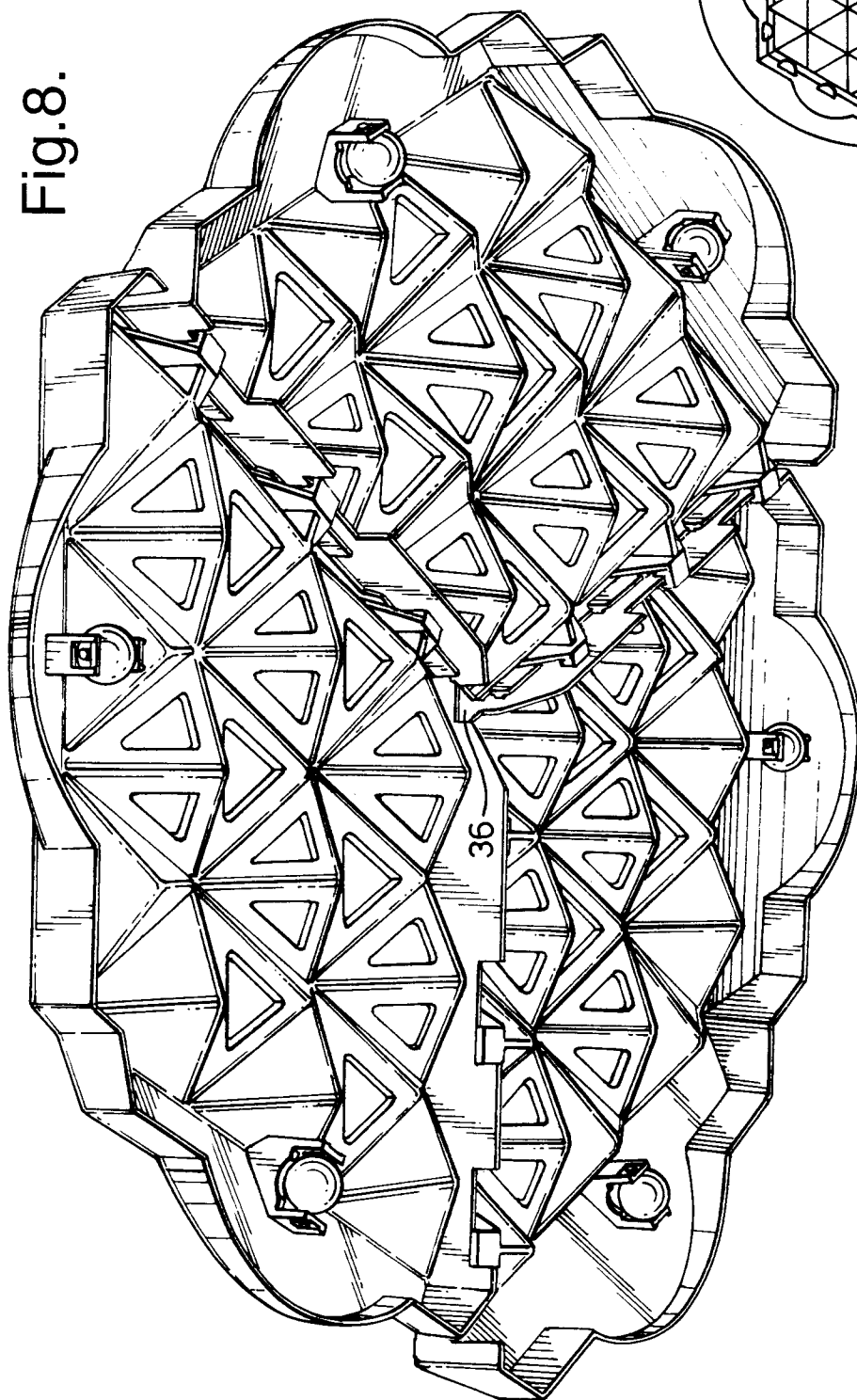
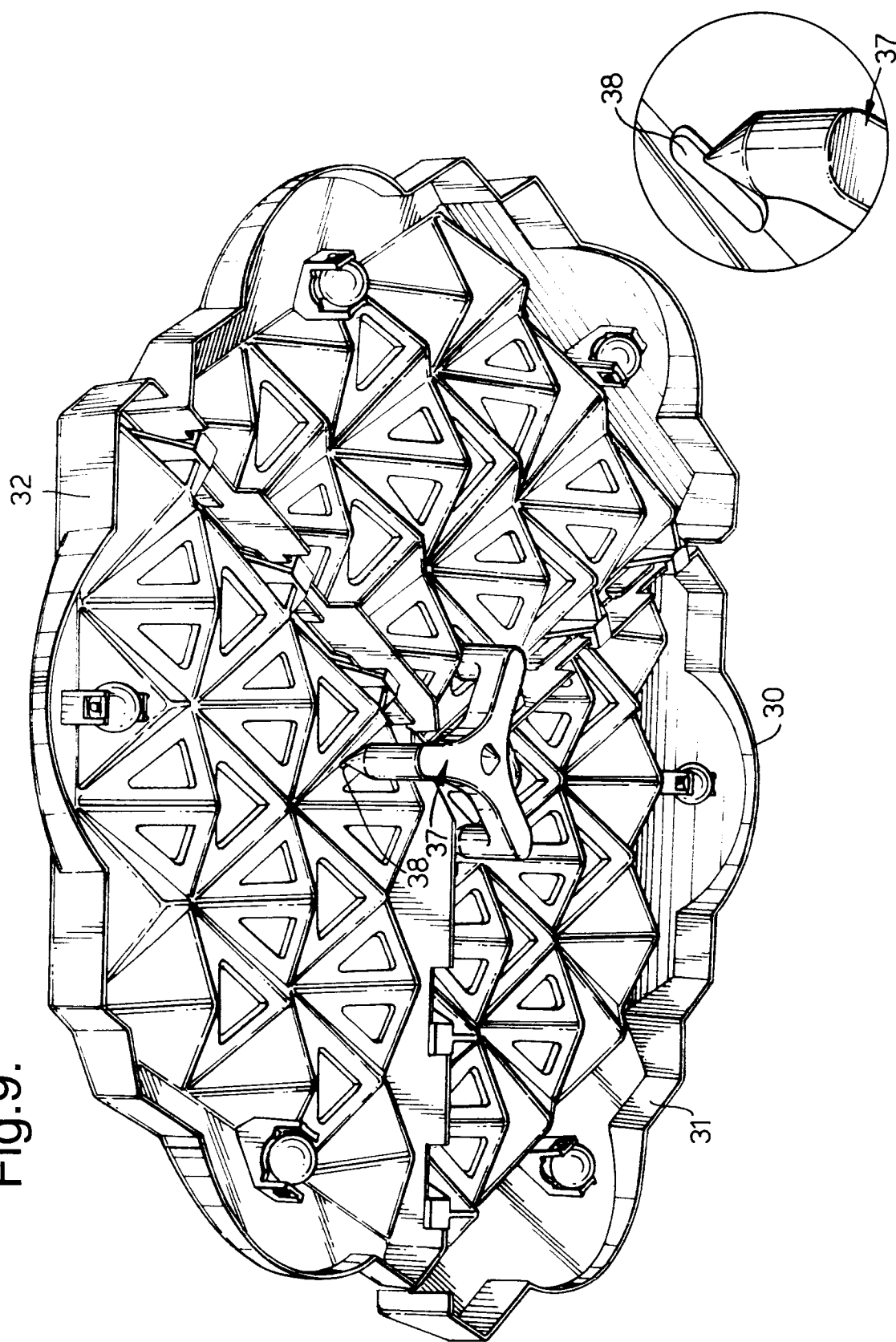


Fig.9.



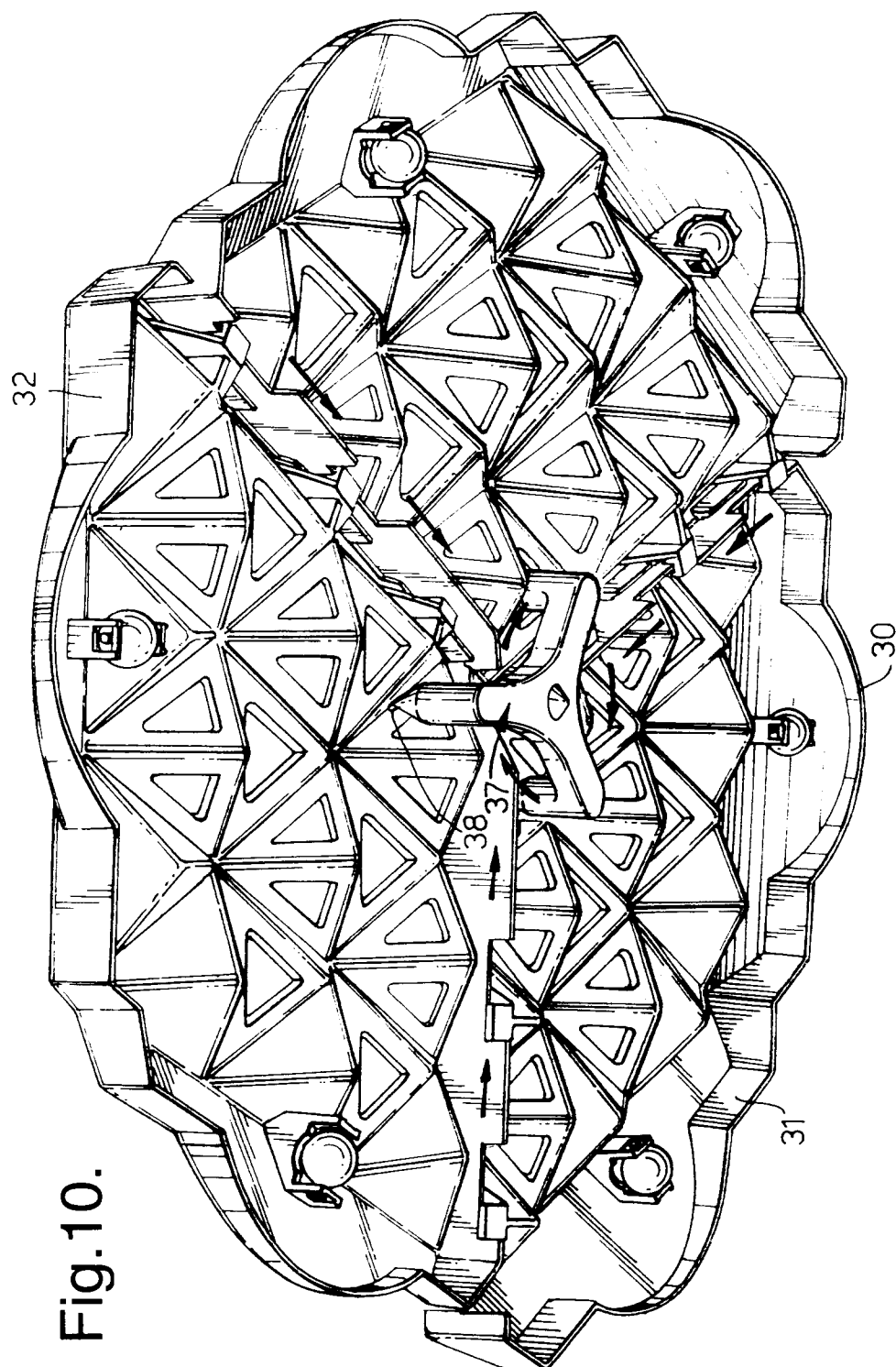


Fig.11.

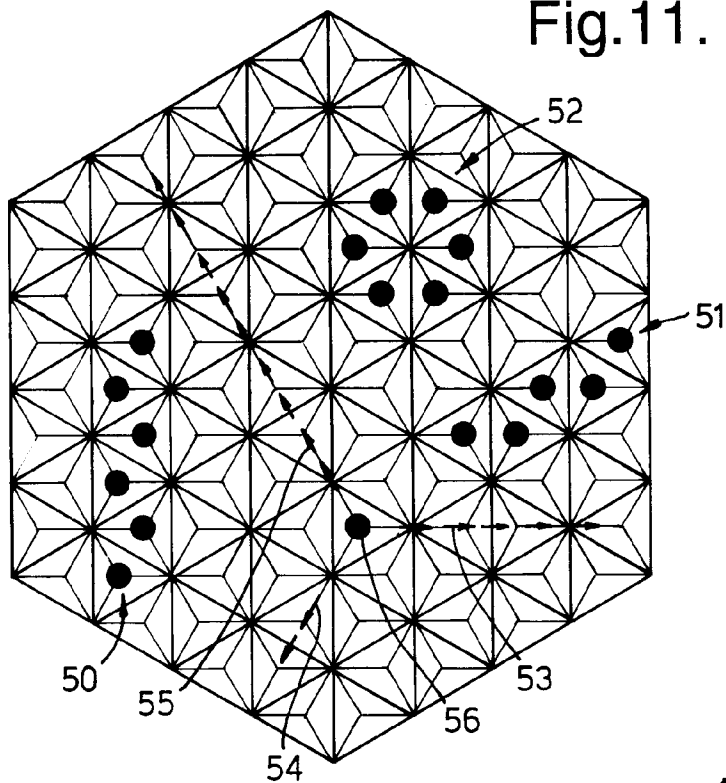


Fig.13.

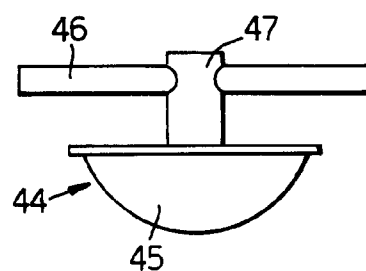


Fig.12.

