April 3, 1951 A. M. RANKIN 2,547,776

BALL THROWING DEVICE

Filed Dec. 1, 1944

Fig. 1.

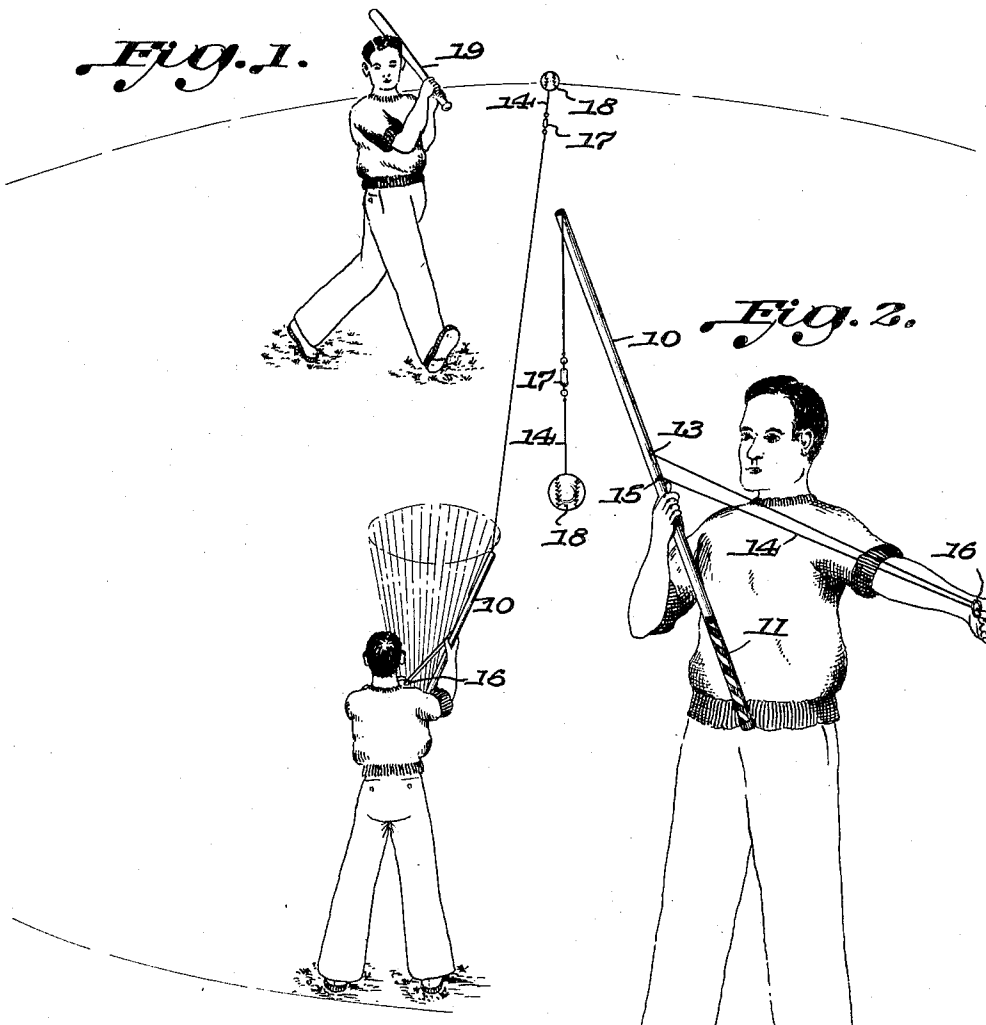


Fig. 2.

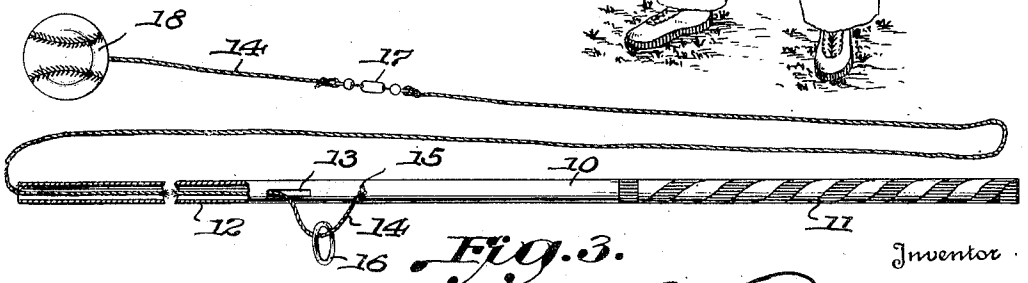


Fig. 3.

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BALL THROWING DEVICE

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3 Claims. (Cl. 273—26)

1

This invention relates to a game and apparatus used in connection therewith, and is particularly concerned with equipment by means of which the game of baseball may be simulated in part.

The invention includes a device for propelling a ball through the air and controlling its flight, both the game and the apparatus being designed not only for the amusement of the players but for the development of skill in timing and batting as in playing of the normal baseball game. However, it will be understood that the device provides amusement of itself irrespective of the training qualities which might result from its use. The invention also provides a device which may be used with a group of players or from which a single player by himself may receive enjoyment and exercise without requiring the necessity of companion players.

It is therefore among the objects of the invention to provide a new game in which the player will develop skill in such matters as timing, batting, and kindred baseball techniques while enjoying the pleasure and exercise of the game.

Another object of the invention is to provide a game device which is adapted to propel a ball through the air and to control its path of travel so that its trajectory may be confined to a predetermined path.

Another object of the invention is to provide a game device which provides for the tethering of a ball while permitting free limited movement thereof so that the ball may be propelled through the air and may be struck by a batter while being readily retrievable by the operator of the device.

Another object of the invention is to provide a ball game device which may be used by either one or a group of persons so as to provide amusement and exercise to all parties present.

Another object of the invention is to provide a device for propelling a ball through an orbital path, the radius of which may be conveniently adjusted by the operator of the device.

A further object of the invention is to provide a ball propelling device in which the ball may be put into motion in a limited circular path of travel which may be increased at the will of the operator so as to initiate the movement of the ball without excess of strain while permitting a final orbital path for the ball of substantial radius.

Further objects and advantages of my invention will be apparent from the following specification taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

2

Figure 1 is an illustration of the game and game device used therewith by a pair of players;

Fig. 2, a view of the apparatus in the hands of the ball propelling player and showing the means by which the radius of the path of travel of the ball is adjusted; and

Fig. 3, a view partly in section of the device of the present invention.

Referring now to the drawings, the device of the present invention comprises a long stick or handle 10 which is provided at one end with a grip portion 11 which may be suitably covered with a decorative and/or frictional surface 11 which is adapted to receive the hand of the operator in the practice of the game for which the device is designed.

The outer end of the handle 10 is tubular as shown at 12 in Fig. 3, the side of the handle being cut away as at 13 to form an aperture communicating with the tubular passage. Inwardly of the tubular passage a cord, string or tether 14, is secured to the outer surface of the handle 10 as by an eyelet screw 15.

Encircling the string 14 adjacent the eyelet 15 is a ring 16 through which the cord passes. Thereafter the cord enters the aperture 13 and extends outwardly through the tubular portion of the handle 12 and is provided intermediate its length with a swivel 17, the extremity of the cord being secured to ball 18 which is here shown as in the form of a normal baseball used in playing the regulation American game of baseball.

In use of the device of the present invention the operator holds the handle 10 in one hand, preferably the right, and draws outwardly on the ring 16 as shown in Fig. 2, thus causing the cord to be withdrawn through the tubular portion 12 and providing for a minimum extension of the cord beyond the end of the handle. Thus the ball is drawn toward the end of the handle and rotary movement of the handle will thus impart a rotary flight to the ball, the radius of which is limited by the length of cord extending from the handle. Since the distance from the ball to the handle is small, the operator will have little difficulty in maintaining the ball in a circular flight, the centrifugal force on the ball acting to maintain the cord under tension. After the orbital flight of the ball is well established, the radius of its orbit may be gradually increased by a relaxing of the tension on the ring 16 so that the cord may be gradually fed through the tubular portion 12 of the handle to provide a

maximum radius for the orbital path of the ball. And if desired the ring 16 may be fully released and the operator may use both hands for imparting rotary movement to the handle and thus increase the speed at which the ball is traveling.

It will be seen that as in one form of the use of the device if the ball is struck while traveling in its orbital path, it may move in a path limited by the length of the cord and may be readily retrieved by the operator by simply pulling on ring 16 thus retracting the cord and drawing the ball towards the end of the handle. Provision of the swivel 17 provides means for preventing excess twist which results in deterioration and wear of the cord. Such swivel permits the ball 18 to spin with the outer portion of the cord which is attached to the swivel 17 without imparting such spinning and winding effect to the main body of the cord.

The game of the present invention is played by a ball propelling member or pitcher who holds the device of the invention and therewith causes the ball to travel in an orbital path, the radius of which may be instantly changed by manipulation of the ring 16 as before mentioned. The other player or players of the game are batsmen who take a position adjacent the expected orbital path of the ball and attempt to strike the ball, knocking it from its path. The pitcher manipulating the ball through the ring 16 serves to cause it to change the radius of its orbital path by which means it will be seen that the number of strikes on the ball by the batter is determined by the batter's skill in judging speed, distance and position of the ball and by the pitcher's skill in causing radical changes in the radius of the orbital path thus attempting to confuse the batter.

It will be understood, of course, that more than one batter may take part in the game, either successively taking a predetermined batter's position or in simultaneously arranging themselves adjacent the orbital path of the ball so that each may endeavor to strike the ball each time the ball makes one revolution to its path. The apparatus of the present invention may also be used by a single player alone in which case a bat may be secured in fixed position and the pitcher may develop skill in manipulation of the device by attempting to secure a movement of the ball in an orbital path which is intersected by the bat thus causing the ball to strike the bat.

It will be understood, of course, that numerous means of amusement by the present apparatus may be developed by the operator, and it is understood, of course, that the invention is not confined to the specific game herein referred to. It will be understood also that various changes may be made in the invention without departing from the spirit and scope thereof and therefore the invention is not limited by that which is shown in the drawing and described in the specification but only as indicated in the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A game device comprising a tubular handle, a grip portion on the inner end of said handle, an aperture in said handle substantially midway of its length and communicating with the interior thereof, a cord having one end fixed to said handle and extending through said aperture into and out through the outer end of said handle said cord being freely slidable in said aperture and said handle, a swivel having one end attached to the free end of said cord, a ball attached to the other end of said swivel by a relatively short flexible line, and a ring slidably received on said cord between the fixed end thereof and said aperture whereby a player may grasp the handle in one hand and the ring in the other hand and propel the ball in an orbital path while varying the radius thereof at will by movement of said ring from said aperture.

2. A game device comprising a tubular handle, an aperture in said handle communicating with the interior thereof, a cord having one end fixed to said handle and extending through said aperture into said handle and out through one end of said handle said cord being freely slidable in said aperture and said handle, a ball attached to the free end of said cord, and a ring slidably received on said cord between the fixed end thereof and said aperture whereby a player may grasp the handle in one hand and the ring in the other hand and propel the ball in an orbital path while varying the radius thereof at will by movement of said ring from said aperture.

3. A game device comprising a tubular handle, an aperture in said handle communicating with the interior thereof, a cord having one end fixed to said handle and extending through said aperture into said handle and out through one end of said handle said cord being freely slidable in said aperture and said handle, a ball attached to the free end of said cord, and means slidably received on said cord between the fixed end thereof and said aperture whereby a player may grasp the handle in one hand and said means in the other hand and propel the ball in an orbital path while varying the radius thereof at will by movement of said means from said aperture.

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