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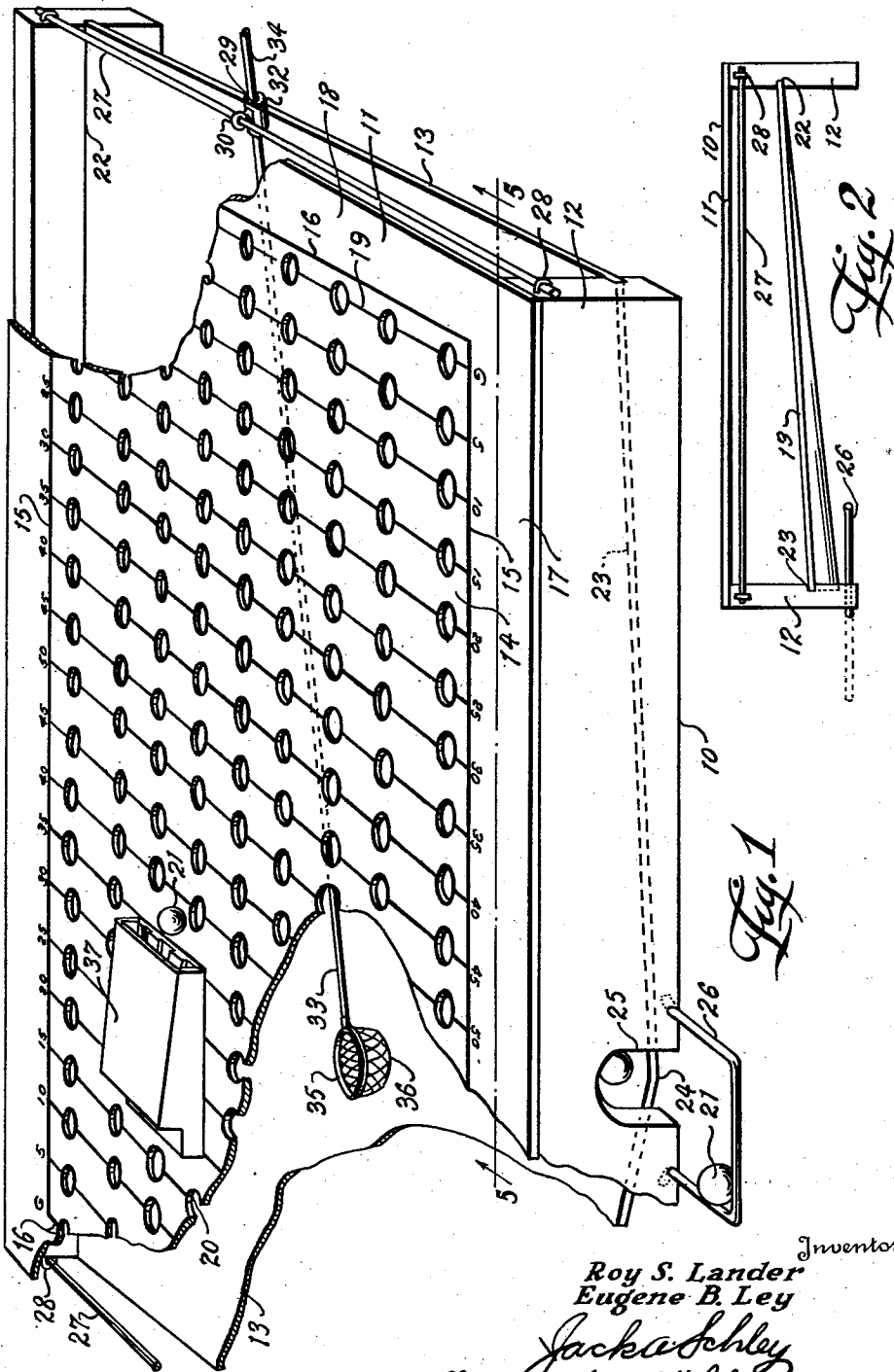
R. S. LANDER ET AL

2,433,769

GAME

Filed March 3, 1945

2 Sheets-Sheet 1



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2 Sheets-Sheet 2

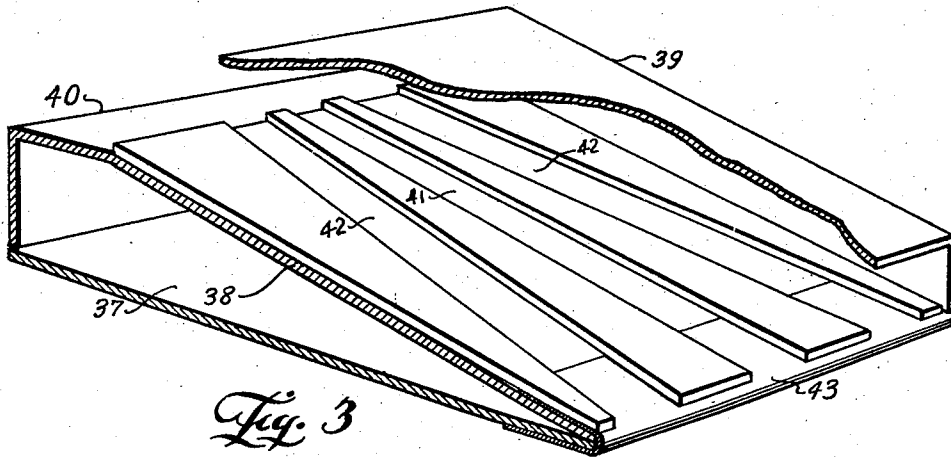


Fig. 3

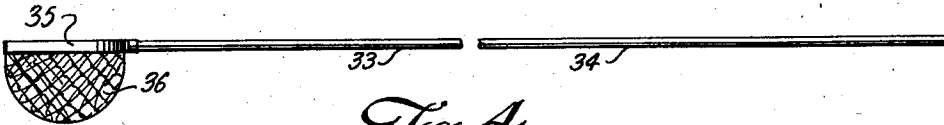


Fig. 4

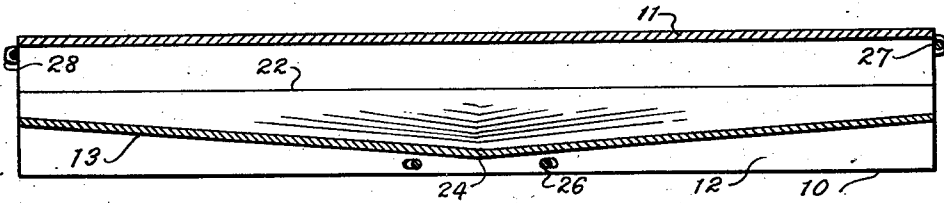


Fig. 5

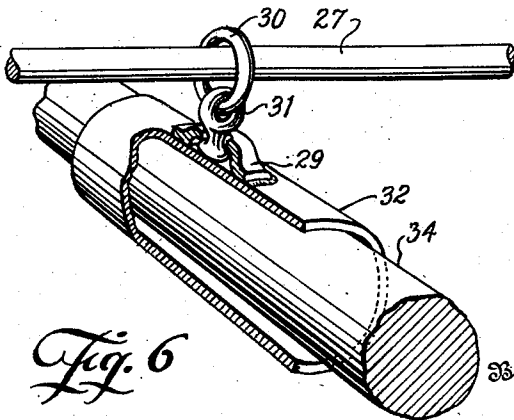


Fig. 6

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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GAME

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7 Claims. (Cl. 273-94)

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This invention relates to new and useful improvements in games.

One object of the invention is to provide an improved game which is particularly adapted to be operated in such a manner as to be realistic of the outdoor game of football.

Another object of the invention is to provide an improved table game apparatus for playing a ball game, whereby the various rules and plays of the outdoor game may be carried out with such similarity as to make the playing of the table game realistic, fascinating and enjoyable, as well as to permit the exercise of considerable skill and dexterity.

An important object of the invention is to provide an improved game apparatus including a game board depicting a playing field having spaced apertures through which balls may pass, together with a manually manipulated catcher operated under the board in anticipation of, or in an effort to catch, one or more balls falling through the apertures.

A further object of the invention is to provide in combination with the playing board a novel means of simulating kicks and passes.

A particular object of the invention is to provide at each end of the board a transversely movable hanger for supporting a catcher, whereby said catcher may be readily and expeditiously moved in various directions under the field of said board.

Still another object of the invention is to provide an improved game apparatus which is simple to operate and which may be played by opposing sides, of one player each, whereby the final results depend largely upon the ingenuity, alertness and deception employed by the players.

A construction designed to carry out the invention will be hereinafter described together with other features of the invention.

The invention will be more readily understood from a reading of the following specification and by reference to the accompanying drawings, wherein an example of the invention is shown, and wherein:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view, partly in section, of a game apparatus constructed in accordance with the invention,

Fig. 2 is a reduced end elevation of the game board,

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of the pass and kick box, partly in section,

Fig. 4 is a side elevation of the catcher,

Fig. 5 is a reduced, longitudinal, sectional view, taken on the line 5-5 of Fig. 1, and

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Fig. 6 is a detail in perspective of the catcher hanger.

In the drawings, the numeral 10 designates generally, a playing board or box-like structure which includes, a field panel or platform 11 supported upon upright, longitudinal side rails or sills 12. A false bottom 13 underlies the panel and is supported between the side rails. The latter may be rested upon an ordinary table or other support and, the said rails being of substantially uniform height throughout their lengths, the field panel is disposed in a substantially horizontal plane. It is quite desirable to have the surface of the panel 11 level and when the board is in playing position, if it is found to be otherwise, any expedient may be employed to accomplish this result.

The field panel 11 is printed or painted with a rectangular field 14, which is defined by marginal side lines 15 and end lines 16, located inwardly of the edges of said panel, whereby marginal zones 17 and 18, respectively, are provided along the sides and ends of the field. The zones 18 represent the end zones of a football field. Transversely across the field, the usual parallel stripes or lines 19 are printed or painted and numerals in multiples of 5, ranging from 5 to 50, are printed or painted in the side zones 17 at the ends of the stripes, except at the ends of the stripes adjacent the lines 16, where the letter G is used to designate the goal lines. It is pointed out that the line 16 is merely a border line and, thus, the end zones 18 extend from the goal lines to the end edges of the panel 11.

A plurality of circular holes or apertures 20 bisect the lines 19 and are arranged in regularly spaced rows longitudinally and transversely of the field; the outer rows of holes being adjacent the side lines.

The game is played with balls, indicated at 21 in Fig. 1, which are of such size as to freely drop through the holes 20. These balls may be of any suitable material, but heavier balls, such as metal or ceramic balls, are preferable.

The false bottom 13 is supported a substantial distance below the panel 11 in grooves 22 and 23 formed in the inner surfaces of the side rails 12. The groove 22 is substantially parallel with the upper longitudinal edge of its side rail, while the groove 23 is inclined from each end of its rail to the center and is generally disposed below said groove 22. The bottom, which may be made of any suitable material, is shaped to fit in these grooves and, thus, is not only inclined toward one side of the board but is provided with a cen-

tral transverse trough 24. An opening 25 is provided in the lower central portion of the side rail, having the inclined groove 23 formed therein for registering with the lower end of the trough 24. The balls 21 which fall through the openings 20 roll down the bottom 13 to the trough 24 and are discharged through the opening 25 onto the table or other support (not shown) on which the board rests. A U-shaped guard 26 collects the balls and this guard preferably formed of bent wire, has its ends slideable in the side rail on each side of the opening 25, whereby said guard may be slid inwardly when the board is not in use (Fig. 2).

Across each open end of the board, a horizontal hanger rod 27 is transversely secured by staples 28 which are driven into the ends of the side rails (Fig. 2). A hanger or carrier 29 is mounted to slide on each rod. As best shown in Fig. 6, each hanger includes a ring 30 of sufficient diameter to slide freely on the rod and also to engage in an eye 31 swiveled to the medial portion of a sleeve 32. By this arrangement, the sleeve is suspended from the rod and may be readily swung, turned and slid across the open end of the board below the panel 11.

A catcher 33 is provided with a long handle 34 which is mounted to slide in the sleeve 32. On one end of the handle, a ring 35 is suitably secured and an open mesh net 36 is suspended from the ring. The handle is made long enough to permit the net 36 to be freely moved under the transverse row of holes 20 at one end of the board with said handle projecting sufficiently from the hanger 29 at the opposite end of the board to permit it to be held in the hand of the defensive player. The rods 27 are at such elevations and the space between the panel 11 and the bottom 13 is such as to permit the net 36 to be freely moved to any part of the board in an effort to catch the balls 21 falling through the holes 20. While the defensive player may be handicapped by using the hanger, the game may be played without same.

A kick and pass box 37 is provided with an inclined chute 38 which is shielded by the box cover 39 and a horizontal shelf or platform 40 is disposed at the upper end of the chute. The cover terminates short of the shelf and is spaced high enough above the top of the chute to permit the balls to pass thereunder. The chute is formed with a central ball channel 41 and divergent channels 42 along each side of the central channel. The lower open end of the box is placed toward the defensive player and the offensive player selects a channel and places a ball therein. Due to the cover 39, it is substantially impossible for the defensive player to see which channel is selected. The ball rolls down the channel onto the field 14 and travels in accordance with the general directions of the channel, finally dropping through one of the holes 20. The lower edge of the chute 38 may be hinged to the bottom of the box as indicated at 43 in Fig. 3, while said bottom may be detachably connected to the rear wall of said box by a suitable latch (not shown). The space under the chute may be used to store the balls.

The game is designed to be played similarly to the outdoor game of football and, so far as is practicable, in accordance with the rules thereof. However, the rules may be varied and the apparatus may be used to play any game of which it is capable.

Starting the game.—In playing the game of

football, two players representing opposing teams stand or are seated behind each end zone 18. A coin is flipped to determine which player shall "kick off." The losing player then prepares to "kick" which he does by placing the open front end of the box 37 on his own 40 yard line, selecting one of the channels 41 or 42 and letting one of the balls 21 roll down the same. The opposing player does not attempt to interfere with the "kick," but allows the ball to roll along the field 14 until it falls through one of the holes 20. The line in which this hole is located determines the line of scrimmage.

As an example, if the ball rolls into a hole on the 30 yard line, then the 30 yard line becomes the line of scrimmage and the ball is "downed" at this particular hole with the first offensive play originating from said hole. In the event the ball rolls over the goal line 19, then the 20 yard line becomes the line of scrimmage. If the ball rolls over one of the side lines 15, the play will start on the yard line and hole nearest the point at which the ball left the field.

The plays.—The offensive player is now given four balls, significant of four "downs." If the play originates from a hole on his own 30 yard line, the offensive player now proceeds to drop a ball through one of the adjacent holes 20 on the 35 yard line. The defensive player manipulates the catcher 33 under the panel 11 and endeavors to catch the ball in the net 36. If the defensive player catches the ball, there is no advance and said caught ball is retained by said defensive player. The offensive player must then drop the second ball through one of the adjacent holes in the 35 yard line. Now, if the defensive player fails to catch the ball, then the play advances to the 35 yard line of the offensive player and the third ball may be dropped through any adjacent hole in the 40 yard line. Since the balls which the defensive player fails to catch roll down the bottom 13 to the trough 24 and thence out through the opening 25 into the guard 26, such balls are retrieved by the offensive player. In order to make the game realistic, an offensive player may not drop a ball into a hole not adjacent the hole through which the preceding ball was dropped, but if he wishes to take a chance he may rapidly drop from two to four balls through adjacent holes in any of the adjacent lines. The play progresses from line to line, either until the defensive player catches all four balls or the offensive player succeeds in dropping a ball through one of the holes on the goal line and the defensive player fails to catch this ball. If the offensive player fails to score, the play goes over to the other side.

Point after touchdown.—After a touchdown or score, an "extra point" may be made by running the ball. The offensive player is given only four balls or plays and starts play on his opponent's 20 yard line. The balls are dropped through adjacent holes in the same manner and with the same restrictions hereinbefore explained in an attempt to reach the goal line. Of course, it requires all four balls to reach the goal line with no gain being made on defensively-caught balls and the catching of any one of the balls preventing the scoring of the "extra point."

Passing.—An offensive player desiring to pass may do so at any time by placing the box 37 on the field 14 with its front open end on the line of scrimmage and directed toward his opponent's goal line. One of the channels 41 or

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42 is selected and a ball is permitted to roll down the selected channel onto the field. At no time is a player allowed to impel the ball from the box. Various plays may result from the pass play. If the ball drops through any hole in the field, without being caught by the defensive player, a gain is made to the yard line of the hole through which the ball dropped. If the ball is caught by the defensive player, it constitutes an "interception" and the play goes over to the defensive player at the point of interception. The offensive player at the same time delivers to the defensive player all of the remaining balls in his possession. If the ball rolls off the field, it is returned to the offensive player for another play.

Dropping the ball.—If the offensive player drops or "fumbles" a ball and it rolls into any hole back of the line of scrimmage, the line of such hole becomes the line of scrimmage if the ball is not caught by his opponent. If the opponent catches the ball, he has recovered a fumble and takes possession of all of the balls so as to change to the offense. If the ball is dropped in front of the line of scrimmage and drops into any advance hole not adjacent to the hole of the preceding player, then the play goes over to the opponent regardless of whether or not the ball is caught. If a dropped ball rolls off the field without entering a hole, the ball is returned to the offensive player without penalty.

To time the game, an ordinary alarm clock may be used. Just before the initial "kick off" play, the alarm is set to go off in a predetermined period of time, as for instance, 10 minutes. When the bell rings, the playing ceases and the player having the highest score wins.

Those playing this game have found it extremely interesting and quite realistic of the outdoor game of football. Considerable ingenuity may be displayed in playing the balls as well as in manipulating the catcher. The use of the kick and pass box makes the game much more competitive and fascinating.

The foregoing description of the invention is explanatory thereof and various changes in the size, shape and materials, as well as in the details of the illustrated construction may be made, within the scope of the appended claims, without departing from the spirit of the invention.

What we claim and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. A table ball game including, an elevated game panel having a playing field having yard lines depicted thereon and provided with spaced holes along the yard lines of the field, a ball adapted to roll on the board and to fall through the holes thereof, means below the panel for collecting balls falling through the holes thereof, and a manually manipulatable catcher insertable between the panel and the collecting means for intercepting balls falling through the holes of the panel.

2. A table ball game as set forth in claim 1, with means for movably supporting the catcher.

3. In combination in an indoor ball game, an elevated game board having a field panel provided with spaced holes, a bottom member carried by the board spaced below the panel, the ends of

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the board between the panel and the bottom member being open, and a ball catcher insertable through the open ends of the board and movable between the panel and the bottom.

4. In combination in an indoor ball game, an elevated game board having a field panel provided with spaced holes, a bottom member carried by the board spaced below the panel, the ends of the board between the panel and the bottom member being open, a ball catcher insertable through the open ends of the board and movable between the panel and the bottom, and a hanger slidably mounted at the open end of the board having swiveled means for movably supporting the catcher.

5. A game device including, an elevated game board having a field panel provided with spaced holes to permit balls to fall therethrough, a transverse support across one end of the board, a hanger slidable on said support having a swiveled member depending below the board, and a playing member carried by the swiveled member and movable therein.

6. A table football game device including, an elevated game board having a football playing field depicted thereon and provided with spaced holes along the yard lines thereof, said holes being free and unobstructed, a bottom member spaced below the game board for catching balls falling through the holes thereof, the sides of the space between the board and the bottom member, the ends of the space between the board and member open thereacross, and a ball catcher movable in the space between the board and member.

7. A table football game including, an elevated game board having a football playing field depicted thereon and provided with transverse rows of holes, the surface of the playing field being unobstructed and substantially level, whereby a ball may roll freely on said field, a bottom member spaced below the game board to permit catching of a ball falling through one of the holes before said ball reaches said bottom member, and a catcher in the space between the board and the bottom member including a ball receptacle and an elongate handle attached to the receptacle and extending from the end of the board when the receptacle is under the medial portion of the board.

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