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BALL GAME DEVICE

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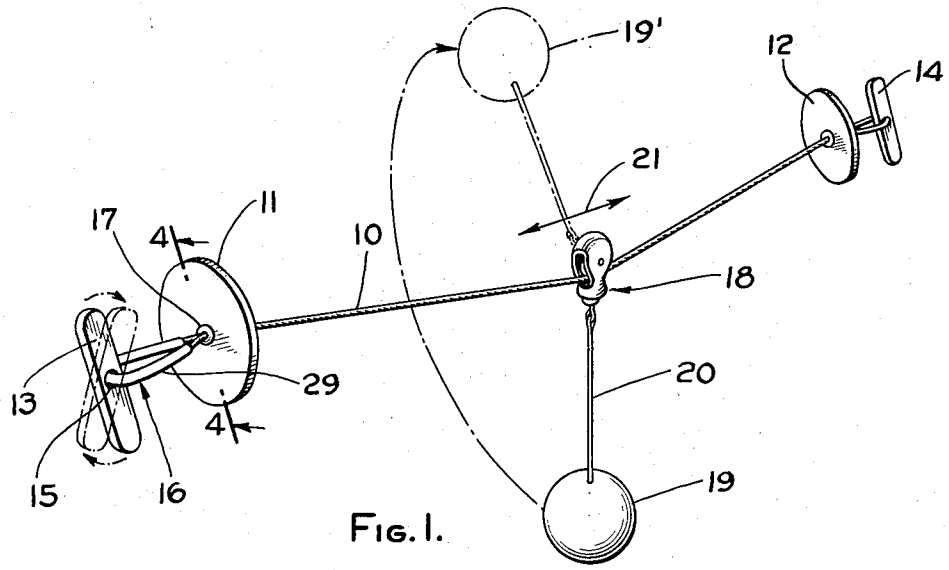



FIG. 1.

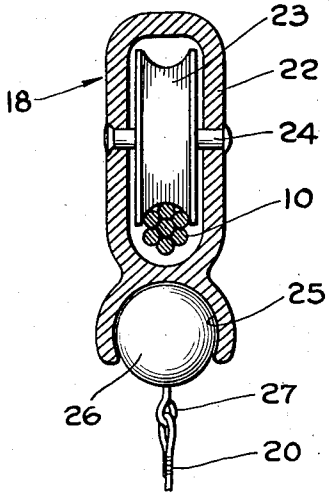



FIG. 2.

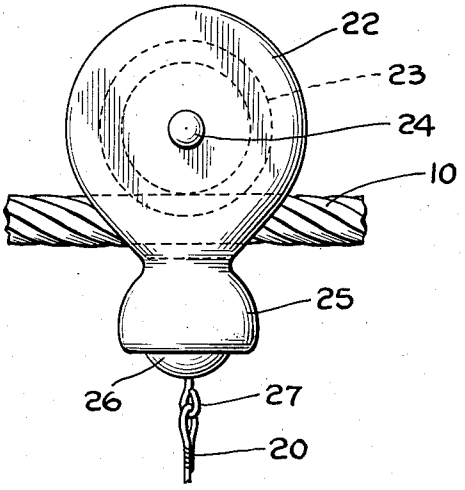



FIG. 3.

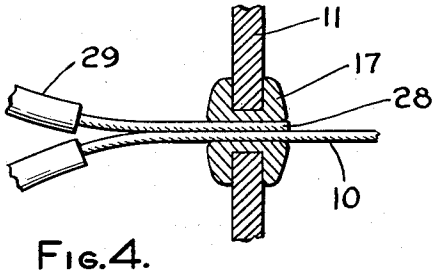



FIG. 4.

INVENTOR.
SEYMOUR A. LIBOW

BY *Elliott & Pastoriza*

ATTORNEYS

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# BALL GAME DEVICE

Seymour A. Libow, 215 4th Ave., Venice, Calif.

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1 Claim. (Cl. 273—95)

This invention relates generally to gaming devices and more particularly to a novel ball game for two players.

It is a primary object of this invention to provide a ball game which may be played by two players within a limited area and yet provide considerable exercise and excitement for each player.

Briefly, the invention contemplates the provision of a first flexible line or cable which may be of the order of eight to ten feet in length. One end of the flexible line is held by one player and the other end by an opponent player so that the line may be pulled taut between the players. A coupling means encircles the line intermediate its ends and is arranged to move longitudinally back and forth along the line. A second flexible line in turn is secured at one end to the coupling means and terminates at its other end in a ball of six to ten inches in diameter. This second flexible line is shorter than the first line; for example, from one to three feet in length.

With the above described arrangement, and two players holding the opposite ends of the first flexible line with one hand respectively, each may alternately slacken or tension the line to cause the ball at the end of the second flexible line and the coupling means to move towards the opponent player. Moreover, by imparting wave motion to the first flexible line the ball and second line may be made to twirl around the first line and execute desired maneuvers in an attempt to strike the opponent player. Since the ball is captive on the first flexible line, the game may be played within a relatively small area as compared to most ball games and yet provide considerable excitement and exercise for the players. For example, the game is ideally suited to paraplegics since only one arm motion is required. The game itself may be scored by simply totaling the number of times one player is able to cause the ball to strike the other player.

A better understanding of the ball game device will be had by referring to the accompanying drawings illustrating a preferred embodiment thereof, in which:

Figure 1 is an overall perspective view of the game;

Figure 2 is an enlarged view partly in cross section of one type of flexible coupling;

Figure 3 is a side elevational view of the coupling means illustrated in Figure 2; and,

Figure 4 is a cross section taken in the direction of the arrows 4—4 of Figure 1.

Referring first to Figure 1, the device comprises a first flexible line 10 which may be in the form of a wound cable. As shown, the end portions of the cable 10 may be secured to and passed through the centers of suitable shield plates 11 and 12. The extreme ends of the cables in turn are looped through handles 13 and 14.

Since the handles and securement thereof to the ends of the cable 10 are identical, a detailed description of one will suffice for both. Referring particularly to the handle 13, for example, the preferred embodiment is in the form of an elongated member provided with a central bore 15 through which the end portion of the cable 10 passes as shown at the loop 16. The cable is then folded back and retained by a retaining rivet 17. The rivet 17 serves the dual function of locking the folded end to the line to retain the loop 16 in closed position and also securing the shield 11 to the cable. By simply looping the cable through the handle 13, the handle can be moved or swiveled in various directions as indicated by the dotted lines and provides an adequate securement to the cable 10 for imparting desired motions thereto.



Intermediate the ends of the first flexible cable 10 between the shields 11 and 12, there is provided a coupling means 18 connected to a ball 19 through a second flexible line or rope 20. The rope 20 is shorter than the cable 10 as indicated in Figure 1. The coupling means 18, on the other hand, is such that it can readily move longitudinally along the first flexible line 10 in either direction as indicated by the double headed arrow 21. Moreover, the flexible coupling is such that the ball can execute lateral spiral movements as indicated by the dashed arrow and dotted line position of the ball at 19'.

Figure 2 shows an enlarged partial cross sectional view of a preferred form of the coupling means 18 and Figure 3 shows a side view thereof. As shown in Figures 2 and 3 the coupling comprises a pulley housing 22 enclosing a pulley wheel 23 arranged to ride along the cable 10. The pulley wheel 23 may be mounted on a shaft 24 secured to opposite inside walls of the pulley housing 22 as shown.

The lower end of the pulley housing 22 terminates in a ball socket 25 receiving a ball 26 to provide a universal joint. The lowermost end of the ball 26 is provided with a metallic eye 27 for receiving one end of the rope 20. By this arrangement, the length of the rope 20 may be adjusted by simply untying the end of the rope 20 from the eye 27 and shortening it to a desired length and then retying it to the eye 27.

It will be evident from the foregoing description of the coupling means that the same may readily move with little friction longitudinally along the cable 10. Moreover, the entire structure may swing about the cable in a plane generally normal thereto as described in connection with Figure 1.

Figure 4 illustrates the rivet structure in detail for securing the looped end of the cable and the cable itself to the shield. As shown the end portion of the loop 16 extends through the rivet 17 and terminates at 28. The rivet itself is squeezed to secure the cable permanently. A plastic sleeve 29 may be provided about a major portion of the exposed loop to protect the player's fingers from direct contact with the cable.

In the operation of the ball game device, each of two players will grip a corresponding handle 13 or 14 with his right hand. The shields 11 and 12 will protect the player's hand and arm from the coupling 18 when it moves all the way along the flexible line 10 to collide against the shields. On the other hand, the ball 19 can readily swing past the shields by its momentum in an arc of radius determined by the length of the rope 20. The ball will thus strike the arm and shoulders or other parts of the player unless he is able to duck. Very intricate maneuvers may be executed by either player to cause the ball to follow paths that are unpredictable by the opponent and thus considerable exercise and fun is realizable from the present invention.

The provision of the universal joint 25, 26 enables free swinging of the ball 19 with respect to the coupling and also minimizes wear on the rope 20. Finally, the means for looping the cable to the handles permits free turning of each of the handles with minimum wear on the cable. The entire device is accordingly relatively rugged and inexpensive to manufacture.

While a preferred embodiment of the invention has

been described and shown, it will be evident that various modifications within the scope and spirit thereof may be effected by those skilled in the art. The ball game device is, therefore, not to be thought of as limited to the specific embodiment set forth for illustrative purposes.

What is claimed is:

A ball game device, comprising, in combination: a first inextensible flexible line adapted to be held at one end by one player and at its other end by an opponent player so that it may be pulled taut between the players; a pulley housing defining an opening of greater dimensions than the diameter of said line and completely encircling said line, said pulley housing including a wheel mounted to roll along said line so that said pulley housing is laterally held to said line and can move longitudinally back and forth therealong; a universal joint secured to said pulley housing; a ball; a second inextensible flexible line shorter than said first flexible line connecting said ball to said universal joint; handles for the ends of said first flexible line, each of said handles being connected



to a corresponding end of said first flexible line; and shield plates disposed at the end portions of said first flexible line between said pulley housing and said handles, said first flexible line having its said end portions secured to and passing through the centers of said shield plates to connect to said handles, whereby said ball and second flexible line may be made to traverse back and forth the length of said first flexible line between said shield plates by maneuvering of said first flexible line by said player and opponent.

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