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J. S. ROGERS

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BASEBALL GAME

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Fig. 3.

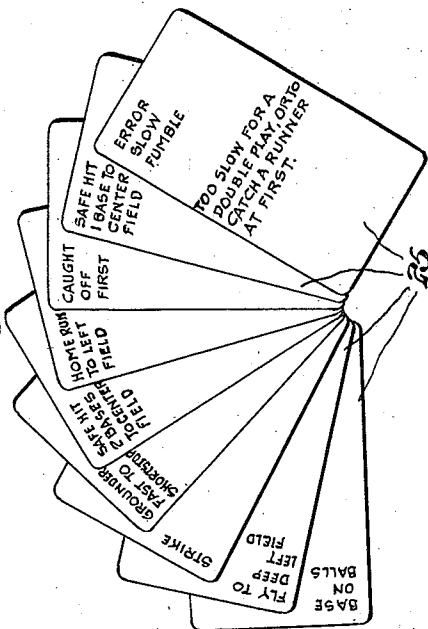


Fig. 2.

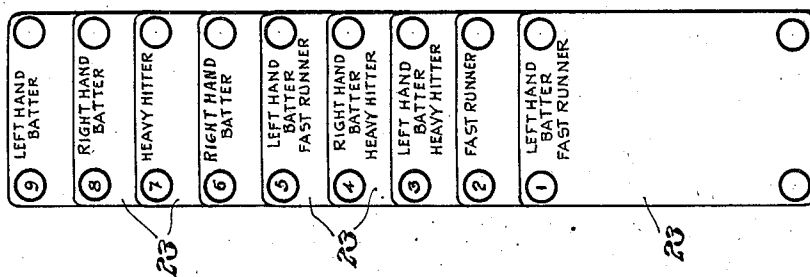


Fig. 1.

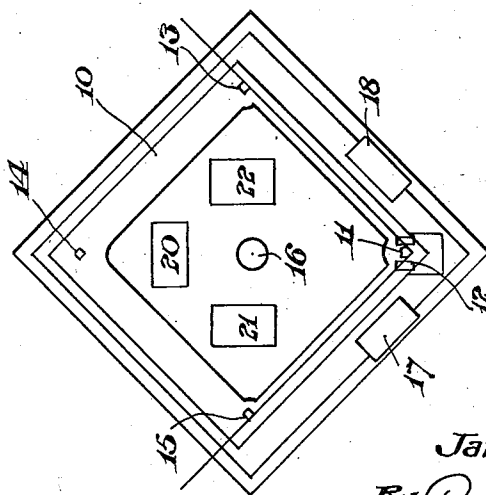
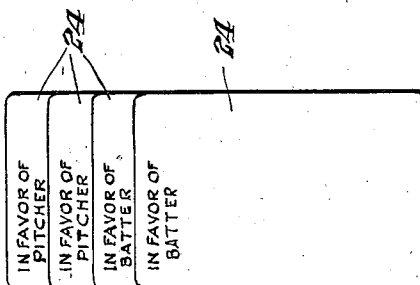


Fig. 4.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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BASEBALL GAME

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4 Claims. (Cl. 273-93)

The present invention relates to games and more particularly to means including cards for simulating the playing of a baseball game.

Some of the objects of the present invention are to provide instrumentalities by means of which the game of baseball can be simulated in the home or elsewhere; to provide means to artificially reproduce the action of a game of baseball so that the play may be interesting and exciting; to provide a card game wherein plays such as occur in regular outdoor baseball games can be selected by the players according to their own judgment to meet situations arising in play and simulate the regularly played outdoor game; to provide a card baseball game wherein skill rather than chance plays a major part; to provide a card baseball game wherein objects simulating players are used with a replica of a baseball diamond to run bases according as plays develop, and wherein means serve as umpires to decide disputed plays; and to provide other improvements in a table baseball game as will hereinafter appear.

Generally considered the invention provides instrumentalities mutually adapted and coordinated with each other and with a basic plan for playing a game between two contesting teams in realistic similitude to baseball as played on the baseball field, for either two or four players; which is played with cards or cards and other symbols, in accordance with customary rules of baseball appropriately adapted to card play in certain respects, on a conveniently sized miniature diamond or table top or other surface serving as a diamond with the four bases properly located thereon, around which cards or other symbols representing batters may be moved according to what bases they make; and in which the players make according to their own judgment baseball plays such as occur in regular baseball games, by means of certain of said coordinated instrumentalities in the form of play-cards for specifically designated plays held in their playing hands, without being controlled in their judgment therein by any device or method of determining plays by mere chance or fortuitous circumstances; and in which the results of plays are determined by the players according to the customary rules of baseball and their experienced judgment; with an appeal to umpire cards or other symbols to settle disputes between them; the said instrumentalities being also mutually adapted and coordinated with each other and with said basic plan to further provide for circulating the cards by which plays are made to

and through the playing hands, so as to replenish the playing hands always up to full playing strength, keep the players always supplied with a wide variety of plays from which to choose, include all the plays commonly occurring or likely to occur in regular baseball games without increasing the playing hands beyond convenient size, keep the playing hands in good balance by continued circulation of the playing cards and reduce the element of luck in the cards to about the equivalent of the so-called "lucky breaks" of regular games.

By the present invention older children and adults who understand baseball can play a game with cards in similitude to baseball, which requires an understanding of baseball in order to play it, and which permits the players to use their baseball knowledge, judgment and skill in a contest of realistic baseball strategy, with free opportunity for the best player to win.

In the accompanying drawings Fig. 1 represents a plan of a baseball diamond as arranged for play with the present invention; Fig. 2 represents a team of typical batter-cards arranged in spread position; Fig. 3 represents a group of typical play-cards arranged in spread position to show some of the many card indicia of various plays; and Fig. 4 represents typical umpire cards arranged in spread position.

Referring to the drawing one form of the present invention includes a board 10 laid out with a conventional baseball diamond showing home plate 11, batter's box 12, first base 13, second base 14, third base 15, pitcher's box 16. Also shown are representations of the player's benches 17 and 18 for the respective teams; an area 20 for umpire; an area 21 for the cards to replenish cards as played by the players; and an area 22 for the discard of player's cards.

For representing the batters in the game, each team consists of nine objects representing nine batters, these objects being preferably in the form of cards 23, numbered consecutively from one to nine, preferably in their batting order. Certain of these batter-cards 23 carry indicia giving characteristics of the batter represented, for example "Heavy hitter," "Fast runner," and the like. If desired each batter-card may have some such indicia thereon. In addition there may be one or more cards indicating a "pinch" hitter. The nine batter-cards representing each team, respectively, are placed face up in the bench areas 17 and 18, respectively, the team first at bat, which may be considered the home team, being preferably placed in area 18 and the other

team in area 17. In playing the game the batters are put up to bat by placing their batter-cards in the batter's box 12 one at a time in their batting order. While cards are here shown as representing batters, this is only by way of example, since broadly the invention comprehends the use of statuettes or other representations of players, which may be provided with indicia as heretofore explained.

For plays in the game, play-cards (illustrated in Fig. 3), are provided for playing hands from which the players may make plays in the game according to their own judgment; each in his proper turn to play as may be prescribed in playing rules for the game. Each play-card bears indicia directly designating a particular play which can be made by playing that card, said indicia being varied on the different cards to provide a sufficiently of all plays commonly occurring or likely to occur in regular outdoor games for realistic similitude thereto.

The play-cards also provide means for keeping the playing hands up to full playing strength by new play-cards drawn from a pool to replace those played from the hands, and also a means by use of the played cards for new pools whenever a pool in use is exhausted of keeping the play-cards circulating between the hands, thereby largely eliminating mere luck in the cards and making it possible to include a sufficiency of plays without increasing the playing hands beyond convenient size.

The preferable number of play-cards for hands of convenient size for the Two player game is forty-two, making fourteen for each playing hand and fourteen for a first pool; with twenty-three additional such cards for the Four player game, making sixty-five in all and thirteen for each of four playing hands and thirteen for a first pool.

The forty-two play-cards preferable for well balanced hands in the Two player game, taking into account their circulation between the hands through the pool, may conveniently be described in groups as follows; a group totaling eleven cards, consisting of nine "Strike" cards and two "Base on ball" cards, with permission in the Rules to make the latter play by merely saying "Base on balls," in order to avoid unduly enlarging the playing hands; a group totaling twelve "Safe hit" cards, consisting of one "Safe hit, 1 base to left field," two "Safe hit, 1 base to center field," one "Safe hit, 1 base to right field," four similar "Safe hits, 2 bases," one to left field, two to center field and one to right field, three similar "Safe hits, 3 bases," one each to Left, Center and Right field respectively, and one "Home run, to left field"; a group totaling five "Grounder" cards, consisting of two "Grounder, fast to shortstop," one "Grounder, fast to second baseman," one "Grounder, slow to third baseman," designated as too slow for a double play but not too slow to catch any batter at first, and one "Bunt, slow to third baseman," designated as too slow for a double play or to catch a fast runner at first; a group totaling seven "Flies," consisting of one "Fly to shortstop," one "Fly to second baseman," one "Fly to third baseman," one "Fly, liner to left field," one "Fly to deep left field," one "Fly to deep center field," and one "Fly, short to right field"; a group totaling four "Foul" and "Error" cards, consisting of one "Foul," one "Foul beyond catching reach," one "Error, slow fumble," designated as just too slow for a double play or to

catch any batter at first, and one "Error, ball keeps on going" which may be abbreviated "Error B. K. O.," these cards being provided as a means for counter-plays by the opposing player to convert a play by his opponent into a foul or an error, since all hits of the above mentioned groups are presumed to be fair hits and to be properly fielded, flies caught and throws made to proper bases unless counter-played into a foul or an error in proper cases as allowed by the rules of the game; and finally a group totaling three base running cards, consisting of one "Caught off first" and two "Caught stealing second," no other cards for base running being necessary, as all other base running is left to regular baseball rules and the judgment of the players, with an appeal to umpire cards to settle disputes.

While the foregoing number of play-cards and play designations have been specifically stated, it is to be understood that this is only by way of example as at present preferred for well balanced playing hands, but the number of play-cards and the designations of the plays may be varied without departing from the invention; as for instance if it should be desired to change the playing balance by including a greater proportion of plays favorable to the Batter, or vice versa, so that larger or smaller scores will usually result.

A number of umpire cards 24 are provided as a means for settling disputes between the players as to results of plays or base running. In play they are placed face down in the umpire area 20. Each umpire card bears indicia which on certain of them appears as "In Favor of Batter" and on others as "In Favor of Pitcher"; as the player whose team is at bat is called the Batter, spelled with a capital "B," and the player whose team is in the field is called the Pitcher. Either of them may appeal to the umpire cards, each stating what he claims, when one of them, preferably the one who first appealed, shuffles the umpire cards, holds them face down and lets the other player draw one which settles it in favor of the claim of one or of the other. Four umpire cards have been found to work very satisfactorily, but without departing from the invention more umpire cards may be used if desired.

From the foregoing it will be seen that the batters of a team at bat, represented by batter-cards, are put up to bat at home plate in their batting order, plays are made by the Batter and the Pitcher in their turns to play by play-cards from their playing hands according to their own judgment, counter-plays may be made in proper cases to convert a play into a foul or an error, new play-cards are drawn from a pool, the played cards being used for new pools, and the batter-cards are moved around the bases on the play diamond or card table according to the results of plays, with disputes settled by appeal to umpire cards, until the side is out; when the other team comes to bat and the positions of Batter and Pitcher are reversed until that side is out.

It is thus a game of judgment which requires an understanding of regular baseball rules and outdoor baseball, and skilful play in order to win.

The game has been tentatively named "Card-ball."

Without departing from the invention or changing the essential character or coordination of the instrumentalities provided thereby for the

game, a set of playing rules consistent therewith may be prescribed for the conduct of the game; including but not exclusively rules appropriately adapting in certain respects the regular rules of baseball to card play; rules respecting the special playing abilities and functioning of specially designated batters such as "Heavy hitter," "Fast runner," "Pinch hitter" (if used) etc.; rules governing particular plays and the use of particular cards such as Foul and Error cards, "Caught stealing second" cards etc.; rules governing turns to play and counter-plays by Batter and Pitcher, respectively, or by partners in the Four player game; and other rules found desirable for proper and skilful playing of a well balanced and interesting game.

The following rules have been found to work out well and are preferable rules of the game, but may be changed, if desired, without departing from the invention.

For convenience they are divided into I General rules, and II Particular cards and plays, both of which are stated for the Two player game but apply also to the Four player game subject to the thereafter stated III Special rules for the Four player game.

I GENERAL RULES

1. Cardball is played according to the regular rules of baseball, with some adaptations to card play.

2. The cardball diamond is the playing field; but any four cornered table may be used as a diamond, its four corners representing the bases.

3. The cardball pack of cards contains:

Two teams, the "Reds" and the "Blues," between which the game is played; each team having 10 batters (spelled with a small "b"), represented by 10 batter-cards colored red and blue, respectively.

42 play-cards, for plays occurring in regular baseball games, strikes, hits, errors, fouls, etc., by which the players make plays according to their own judgement.

23 Additional play-cards, for use in the Four-player game only; and so marked.

4 Umpire cards, to settle disputes as to results of plays.

4. Both teams are the same, each having 2 "Heavy hitters," 2 "Fast runners," and 1 "Pinch hitter" (explained in II Particular cards and plays), and both teams are numbered in the same batting order.

5. Each player captains one team, acting as managing Batter (spelled with a capital "B") when his team is at bat, and as Pitcher when it is in the field.

6. The Play-cards must be given special attention, as they provide a distinctive feature of Cardball by which the players make plays on their own judgment, and games may be won or lost by the skill and strategy with which plays are made.

7. The play-cards, described in groups, are as follows: 9 "Strike" cards; 2 "Base on balls" cards; 12 "Safe hit" cards for one, two and three bases, respectively, and one home run, to various parts of the field; 7 "Fly" cards to various parts of the field; 5 "Grounder" cards to various parts of the infield; 2 "Foul" cards; 2 "Error" cards; 2 "Caught stealing second" cards; and 1 "Caught off first" card.

8. The Umpire cards are, 2 "In favor of batter" and 2 "In favor of pitcher." They settle any dispute between the players as to the result of

a play or base running; as results of plays, including base running are left to the regular rules of baseball and the judgment of the players. Either player may appeal to the umpire cards, shuffle them and let the other player draw one, which settles it in favor of the claim made by the one or the other.

9. All hits of every kind are presumed to be fair hits, and to be properly fielded, flies caught and throws made to proper bases unless the play is counter-played into a foul or an error.

10. Either Player, when it is his turn to play, may make any play for which he has a play-card in his hand, by playing it face up in front of him.

11. The Batter has the first turn to make a play whenever his team comes to bat, after which the Pitcher has two turns in succession; and so on, one play by the Batter followed by two by the Pitcher until that side is out, when the other team comes to bat and the positions of Batter and Pitcher are reversed, with the incoming Batter having the first play to start his innings at bat. That keeps the playing in good balance.

12. Either a Batter or a Pitcher, if he holds a "Foul" card in his hand, may counter-play it on a play of a hit of any kind made by his opponent if it is a hit to any left or right portion of the field, they being relatively near the side-lines, but not if it is a hit to any center portion of the field. Even a play starting as a "Safe hit" may be so counter-played into a foul, because the last card played on any play determines the final character of the play.

13. A Batter, if he holds an "Error" card, may counter-play it on any play in which an error could occur in a regular game.

14. Counter-plays do not count as turns to play; since they are made on an opponent's play.

15. The Pitcher may play two "Strike" cards together, counting as two strikes but as only one turn to play, in order to be able to put a batter out on strikes, since he has only two turns to play in succession.

16. The Batter, if it is his turn to play, may claim a base on balls by merely saying, "Base on balls"; and the Pitcher in his turn may give a base on balls in the same way; since there are only two such cards in the pack, in order to keep the playing hands within convenient size.

17. After each play fresh cards are drawn from a pool of play-cards to replace all cards played from a hand or hands; and the played cards are put aside in a pile to be shuffled and used as a new pool whenever a pool in use is exhausted. That keeps the playing hands well supplied with a wide variety of plays, keeps the play-cards circulating between the hands and reduces mere luck in the cards to about the "lucky breaks" in outdoor games.

18. The method of play is as follows:

19. Pencil and paper are provided to keep the score, three chips, coins or other tokens are put in the center of the diamond to keep track of outs by pushing them over to the side at bat as outs are scored, and the players toss up for choice of teams and of going first or second to bat, one toss giving both choices and also the dealing of the play-cards.

20. The Cardball diamond is preferably turned to put home plate on the first Batter's left. If a table is used as a diamond, the corner to the first Batter's left is home base, and the other bases are the corners around to his right.

21. The batter-cards of the two teams are put face up in their batting order in the "Players'

benches" or on the table in front of the players; and the umpire cards are put face down in the space marked for them or any convenient place on the table.

22. The play-cards are then dealt equally to each player and a pool; making 14 to each player for playing hands and 14 to the pool, face down.

23. The Batter of the team first at bat puts his first batter up to bat by putting his batter-card up in the batters' box at home plate, and begins the game by making the first play by putting down a play-card from his hand.

24. If his batter makes a base, the Batter moves his batter-card to that base, puts his played card to one side to start a pile of played cards, draws a new play-card from the pool and puts up his next batter at home plate.

25. The Pitcher then makes two plays in succession by play-cards from his hand, and the playing proceeds in that way, one turn and two, with such occasional counter-plays as may be made, all played cards being added to the played card pile after each play, fresh cards being drawn from the pool to replace them and the next batter put up to bat, until the side is out.

26. The batter-cards of batters who make bases are moved to and around the bases according to what bases they make as results of plays; being scored if they reach home. The batter-cards of batters who are out are put at the bottom of the team of batter-cards, and are rearranged in batting order whenever they have been at bat all the way around.

27. Playing is speeded and made more interesting if the following are observed:

(a) Each player as he puts down a play-card or a counter play-card should state for the information of the other player what play he makes, and also what result of it he claims unless the result is so obvious as to need no statement.

(b) The other player, if he admits the claim, should promptly say, "Admitted," or "OK," or "Take it" (if it is a base) or words to such effect.

(c) If he questions the claim, they should settle it by brief discussion, if possible, or one or the other should promptly appeal to the umpire cards, shuffle them and let the other draw one to settle it without unduly delaying the game.

28. Five innings constitutes a game unless otherwise agreed.

II PARTICULAR CARDS AND PLAYS

Particular batter-cards

A "Heavy hitter" at bat gets one more base on a "Safe hit" play than the play-card calls for; that is 2 bases on a card for 1 base; 3 bases on a card for 2 bases; and a home run on a card for 3 bases; provided the Batter claims the extra base when he makes the play.

A "Fast runner" can steal second base safely, when he has a chance to steal it, and he cannot be put out in the attempt. Also he can make first safely on a "Bunt, slow to third baseman."

A "Pinch hitter" is an extra batter and can be substituted at bat for any of the nine regular batters of his team at any time except in the last inning of the game according to the number of innings agreed to be played.

When he is first substituted at bat, no hit of any kind made by him to any part of the field can be counter-played by the Pitcher into a foul; but thereafter he remains on the team in place of the batter whom he replaced and whenever

he may again come to bat he is merely an ordinary batter.

The Batting order may be changed by either player for his team if so agreed before the playing is begun.

Particular play-cards

The 2 "Foul" cards are for different kinds of fouls. One is designated simply as a "Foul." It is useless to counter-play on a fly, as it merely converts it into a foul fly which is presumed to be caught. The other is a "Foul beyond catching reach," and converts a hit into a foul, which if it is a fly cannot be caught.

The 2 "Error" cards are for different kinds of errors. One is an "Error, slow fumble"; designated as just too slow for a double play or to catch any batter at first. That gives a measure of the delay caused by the fumble in whatever part of the field it occurs. The other is an "Error, ball keeps on going," abbreviated as an "Error B. K. O.," meaning that the ball tips a fielder's fingers but keeps on going with speed and direction not materially changed.

Particular plays

A "Foul" card can be counter-played only on a hit to some left or some right portion of the field; not on any hit to any center portion.

A "Caught off first" play may be made by a Pitcher if it is his turn to play and there is a runner on first. He must be given the out unless the Batter counter-plays it into an error.

A "Steal of second" or an attempt to steal may be claimed orally, there being no card for it; or a "Caught stealing second" card may be played, as the case may be, under the following circumstances:

(a) A Batter, with any runner on first and a runner on third when a Strike is played, may claim and must be given a safe steal of second; because a catcher very rarely throws to second under those circumstances for fear of letting the runner in from third.

(b) A Batter, with a Fast runner on first and the other bases clear when a Strike is played, may claim and must be given a safe steal of second; as a Fast runner is designated as one who can steal second safely.

(c) A Batter, with an ordinary runner on first and the other bases clear when a Strike is played, may claim a steal of second and must be given a safe steal unless the Pitcher counter-plays a Caught stealing second card, which puts the runner out in the attempted steal if the Batter does not counter-play an Error card and make his runner safe at second.

(d) A Pitcher, when there is an ordinary runner on first and the other bases are clear, may play a Strike card and a Caught stealing second card together as one turn to play and claim that the runner attempted to steal second and was put out in the attempt. He must be given the out unless the Batter counter-plays an Error card.

III SPECIAL RULES FOR THE FOUR-PLAYER GAME

1. The players play as partners, two and two, seated on opposite sides of the table.

2. Each pair of partners decides which of them shall act as Captain of their team.

3. The additional 23 Play-cards are included in the pack, making 65 in all, which are dealt 13 to each player and 13 to the pool.

4. The Captain of the team first at bat plays

as managing Batter for it during its first inning at bat and as Pitcher during its first inning in the field, and the opposing Captain acts as first Pitcher and then as Batter for his team during that innings.

5. During the second innings their partners act as Batter and Pitcher, then Pitcher and Batter, respectively, in the same way during that innings; and so on, the partners taking similar turns in successive innings.

6. Original plays may be made only by the players who are then acting as Batter and Pitcher, respectively.

7. Counter-plays may be made only by their respective partners not then acting as Batter or Pitcher.

That makes the partners keep on the alert, and requires good team play on their part.

8. The player who makes a play or a counter-play states what play he makes and what result of it he claims, but the Captain of the opposing team must agree to it or either Captain may appeal to the umpire cards to settle it.

9. In all other respects the Rules of the two play game apply to the Four Player game.

Example of play

Batter puts up his first batter, opens with a "Safe hit, 2 bases to center field," moves his batter-card to second base, puts his played card to one side to start a pile of played cards, draws a new card from the pool and puts up his second batter.

Pitcher plays a "Fly, to shortstop," claims batter out and runner held on second. Batter promptly says "OK" (not having an "Error" card or preferring to hold it back), removes his batter-card from home plate, and puts up his third batter. Pitcher adds his played card to the played card pile and draws a new card from the pool.

Pitcher, for his second turn, plays a "Ground-er, fast to shortstop," claims batter out and runner held on second. Batter admits it, removes his batter-card from home plate and puts up his fourth batter. Pitcher puts his played card in the played card pile and draws a new card from the pool.

Batter having the next turn, with two out, a runner on second and his fourth batter, a "Heavy hitter" up (who gets one more base on a "Safe hit" than the play-card calls for) makes a rash play. Without holding either of the two "Foul" cards in his own hand, neither one having been discarded into the played card pile, and the Pitcher very likely holding one, he plays a "Safe hit, 3 bases to left field" and claims a home run for his "Heavy hitter"; with his runner brought in from second. But Pitcher has a "Foul" card and counter-plays it, counting one strike against the batter. Batter and Pitcher add their played cards to the played card pile and draw new cards from the pool.

Pitcher then plays two "Strike" cards and puts the batter out on strikes. Side out for no runs.

Batter has learned that if he expects to win, he had better keep his wits about him.

It will now be apparent that a new and novel

game simulating a game of baseball has been devised, wherein the plays are realistically similar to the plays in regular outdoor baseball games, and wherein the plays are not determined by chance but by the judgment of the players. Thus skill is a major factor in the game, and the most skillful player stands the best chance of winning. The introduction of umpire cards is a novel feature of the invention, since it permits the results of plays and base running to be left to the regular rules of baseball and the experienced judgment of the players, eliminates the unwieldy number of cards which would otherwise be necessary to determine results and base running under the many varying circumstances of plays and runners, and furnishes a means of prompt settlement of possible disputes.

Having thus described my invention, I claim:

1. In a game simulating the game of baseball, a plurality of objects representing two teams of batters for association in succession with a diamond, certain of said objects having indicia thereon designating certain playing characteristics of the batters thereby represented, respectively, and a plurality of playing cards for playing hands, each card having indicia thereon directly designating a specific play or action of the game governing the action of said batters when at bat or in the field, respectively.

2. In a game simulating the game of baseball, a plurality of cards representing two teams of batters for association in succession with a diamond, certain of said cards having indicia thereon designating certain playing characteristics of the batters thereby represented, respectively, and a plurality of playing cards for playing hands, each card having indicia thereon directly designating a specific play or action of the game governing the action of said batters when at bat or in the field, respectively.

3. In a game simulating the game of baseball, the combination of a plurality of objects representing two teams of batters, certain of said objects having indicia thereon, designating certain playing characteristics of the batters thereby represented, respectively, a plurality of playing cards for playing hands, each card having indicia thereon directly designating a specific play or action of the game governing the action of said batters when at bat or in the field, respectively, and a plurality of umpire cards, each card having indicia thereon designating the umpire's decision on a disputed play.

4. In a game simulating the game of baseball, the combination of a plurality of cards representing two teams of batters, certain of said cards having indicia thereon designating certain playing characteristics of the batters thereby represented, respectively, a plurality of playing cards for playing hands, each card having indicia thereon directly designating a specific play or action of the game governing the action of said batters when at bat or in the field, respectively, and a plurality of umpire cards, each card having indicia thereon designating the umpire's decision on a disputed play.

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