F. W. INGOLS.

HOME PLATE FOR BASEBALL.

APPLICATION FILED APR. 30, 1921.

1,432,293. Patented Oct. 17, 1922.

2 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

Fig. 1

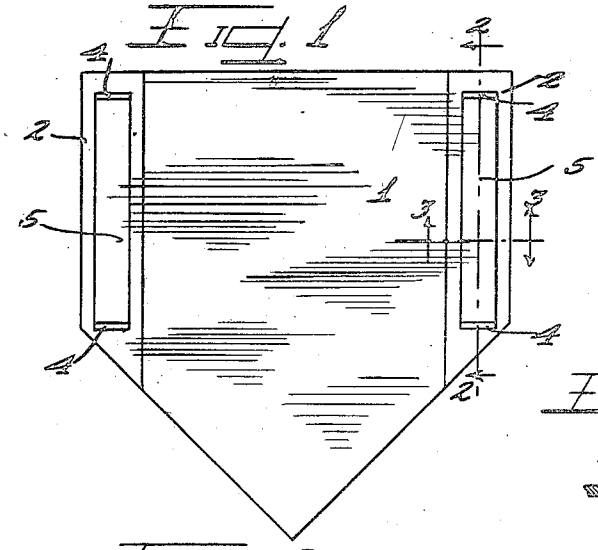


Fig. 3

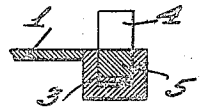


Fig. 2

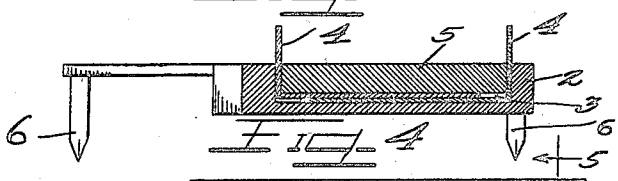
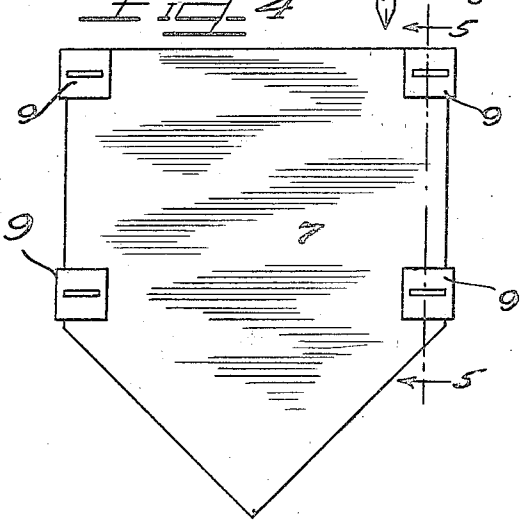


Fig. 4



Witnesses

H. B. Tinkes

Charles O. Fiero

Inventor

Frank W. Ingols

by Charles O. Fiero Atty.

F. W. INGOLS.

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2 SHEETS—SHEET 2.

Fig 6

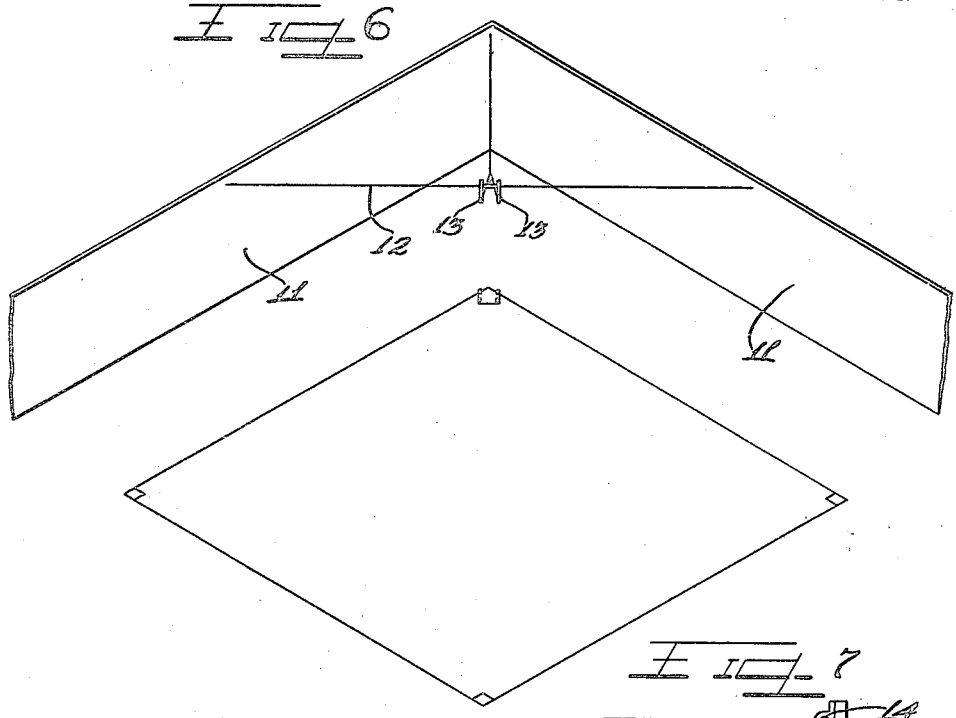


Fig 7

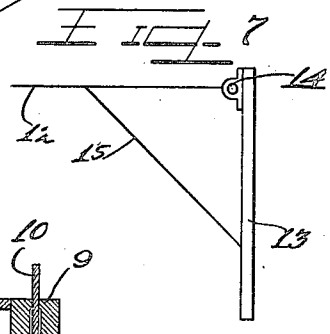
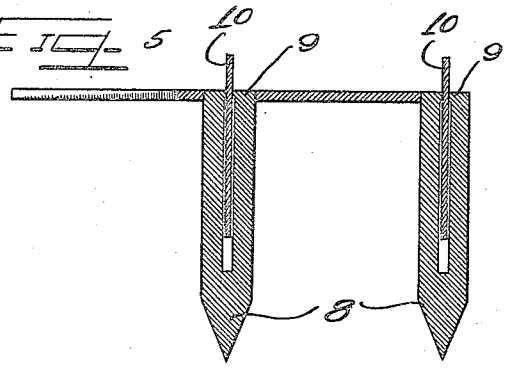


Fig 5



Witnesses

A. G. Parks

Charles W. Fills Jr.

Inventor

Frank W Ingols

by Charles W. Fills Atty.

Patented Oct. 17, 1922. 1,432,293

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

FRANK W. INGOLS, OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

HOME PLATE FOR BASEBALL.

Application filed April 30, 1921. Serial No. 465,788.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, FRANK W. INGOLS, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of the city of Chicago, in the county of Cook and State of Illinois, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in a Home Plate for Baseball; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description of the same, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, and to the numerals of reference marked thereon, which form a part of this specification.

My invention relates to pitching and umpiring sights for ball games and comprises conspicuously marked guiding means in combination with the home plate to define the lateral limits within which the ball must be delivered to the batter, and raised sights which may be optionally used to assist in juding the flight of the ball and also its elevation. In the past, it has been customary to whitewash the home plate and provide the umpire with a brush to intermittently sweep it off. This procedure delays the game and entails loss of time. Further, the outer lateral edges of the home plate are substantially flush with the ground and cannot easily be watched by the umpire or seen by the pitcher who delivers the ball to the batter. To overcome these objections, I have provided guiding sights that can readily be observed, and it is an object of this invention to provide guiding sights that will assist the pitcher in delivering the ball to the batter within the limits defined by the rules, and also assist the umpire in judging the flight of the ball to determine whether it has been delivered within said limits.

My invention comprises the novel features of construction hereinafter described and pointed out in the appended claims.

In the accompanying drawing, which illustrates several embodiments of my invention, and in which similar reference numerals refer to similar features in the different views:

Figure 1 is a plan view of a home plate equipped with one form of my guiding sights.

Figure 2 is a section on the line 2—2 of Figure 1.

Figure 3 is a section on the line 3—3 of Figure 1.

Figure 4 is a plan view of a home plate equipped with a modification of my guiding sights.

Figure 5 is a section on the line 5—5 of Figure 4.

Figure 6 is a perspective view of a baseball diamond showing the use of raised sights above the home base.

Figure 7 is a detail view of the raised sights illustrated in Figure 6.

As shown in the drawings:

By reference to Figures 1 to 3, which illustrate one form of my invention may assume, it will be observed that the lateral sides of the home plate 1 are provided with borders 2 which may be separate therefrom or integral therewith. The borders 2 are provided with grooves 3 extending parallel with a line between the pitcher's box and the home plate. White or conspicuously marked sights 4 are adjustably held in these grooves and project above the plate 1, and for the purposes of illustration, I have shown these sights projecting from the ends of the grooves and held in place by a filler block 5. As shown in Figure 2, the sights 4 preferably comprise strips sufficiently flexible to be bent to conform to the shape of the grooves 3, and sufficiently long so that they overlap, whereby if the projecting or sight ends should wear or be torn off, the filler blocks can be removed and a new portion of the strips projected above the plate. Further, this structure permits the projecting ends or sights to be adjusted to any desirable degree above the plate 1. The guiding sights 4 may be made of flexible rubber or canvas covered with rubber, or any other composition that produces the proper rigidity and flexibility that will allow a base runner to slide thereover and that will allow the guiding sights to return to normal position thereafter. In the present instance I have proportioned the parts so that the outer edges of the sights 4 constitute the lateral limits of the home plate 1, which is usually provided with proper spikes 6 to anchor the same in the ground. The present structure can be easily adapted for home base plates now in use by merely properly shearing the sides thereof and anchoring border blocks adjacent thereto that contain the guiding sights.

In Figures 4 and 5 I have illustrated another form that my invention may assume and, as shown, the home base plate 7 is notched at four corners as shown in Figure 4. Slotted posts 8 that fit the notches are driven into the ground until their tops are

flush with the bottom of the plate 7, as shown in Figure 5. Slotted rubber blocks 9 or the like are inserted in the notches to fill the space thereof with the slots in the blocks in registry with the slots in the posts 8. The slots in the blocks 9 and posts 8 are arranged so that their outer edges lie in the line of the outer edge of the plate 7, so that the guiding sights 10 that are supported therein shall extend to the outer limits of the plate 7 which defines the zone through which the legally delivered or strike balls must pass. By reference to Figure 5 it will be observed that the guide sights 10 do not rest upon the bottom of the slots in the posts 8 but are supported some distance thereabove by means of the wedging or clamping action of the walls of the slots in the rubber blocks 9. It is obvious that these slots may be so proportioned that they tightly bind the guide sights 10; however, allowing vertical adjustment thereof so that the said sights 10 may be adjusted to project any desirable extent beyond the plate 10, and in case the projecting end should be broken off or should become worn or damaged so that it would not be efficient, it could be cut off, and the guide sight projected upwardly until a new portion came into view, or the strip 10 could be removed and the damaged end cut off and the strip replaced and properly adjusted.

It should be understood that the aforedescribed embodiments of my invention illustrate merely certain ways of practicing my invention which, in its broadest scope, contemplates the use of guide sights for defining the proper and legitimate strike ball zone.

In some cases, it may be desirable to use elevated guide sights to assist in properly throwing and judging balls that are high or near the shoulder. For this purpose I have illustrated in position above the home plate supports 11 from which a wire 12 may be strung at a suitable height from the ground for supporting the guide sights 13 arranged in alinement with the guide sights on the home base plate. These guide sights 13 may be provided with eyes 14 for receiving the wire 12 and may be braced by a bracing means 15 attached to the sights 13 and wire 12, as shown in Figure 7. The supports 11 may be the wall of the ball park and need not be angular as shown, since the wire 12 may be readily supported by a straight wall so not to interfere with the catcher in chasing foul balls.

It will accordingly be apparent that I have invented guiding sights that will materially assist the umpire and pitcher in their duties during the game of ball, that are simple in construction, adjustable, readily installed and efficient for the purpose desired.

I am aware that numerous details of construction may be varied through a wide range without departing from the principles of this invention, and I therefore do not purpose limiting the patent granted otherwise than necessitated by the prior art.

I claim as my invention:

1. A home plate for base ball having conspicuous guiding sights defining the lateral limits of the strike ball zone, and adjustable relative thereto.

2. A home plate for base ball having grooves in the border thereof, and white guiding sights adjustably held in said grooves and projecting above said plate.

3. A home plate for base ball having bordering elements, and conspicuously colored guiding sights secured in said elements and projecting thereabove.

4. A home plate for base ball having raised sights at its lateral edges defining the strike ball zone.

5. A home plate for base ball having projecting flexible elements at opposed lateral edges defining the strike ball zone.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto subscribed my name in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

FRANK W. INGOLS.

Witnesses:
CARLTON HILL,
JAMES M. O'BRIEN.