A. W. WEEDEN.

BASE BALL GAME APPARATUS.

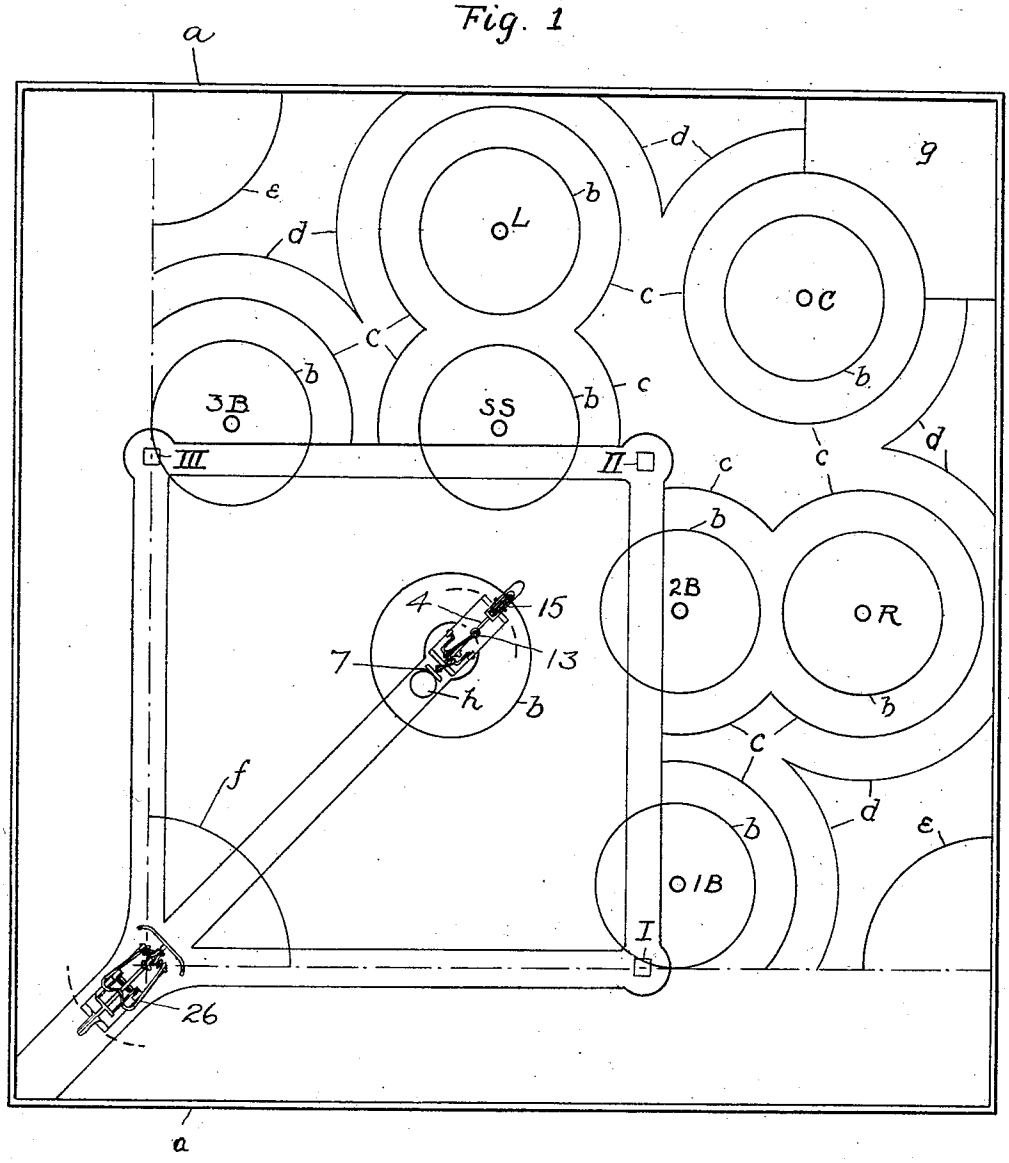
APPLICATION FILED MAR. 28, 1910.

977,149.

Patented Nov. 29, 1910.

2 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

Fig. 1



Inventor:
Arthur W Weeden
by Nathan B Day
Attorney.

Attest:
Oscar F. Hill
Ellen O. Spring.

A. W. WEEDEN.

BASE BALL GAME APPARATUS.

APPLICATION FILED MAR. 28, 1910.

977,149.

Patented Nov. 29, 1910.

2 SHEETS—SHEET 2.

Fig. 2

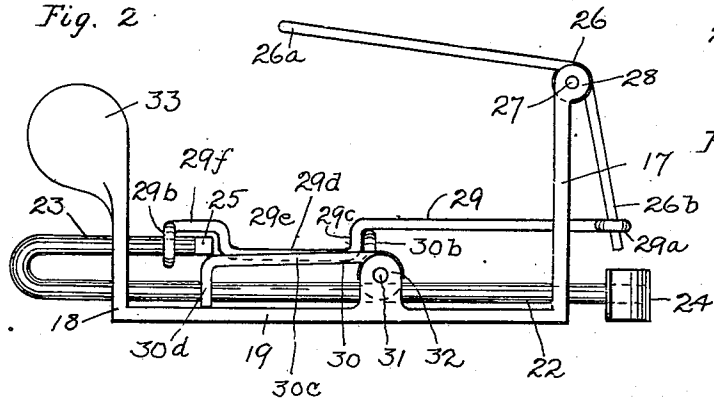


Fig. 3.

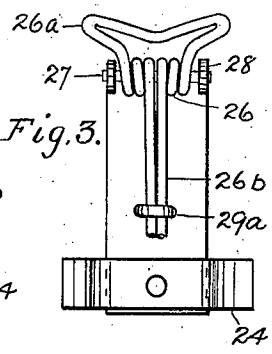


Fig. 4.

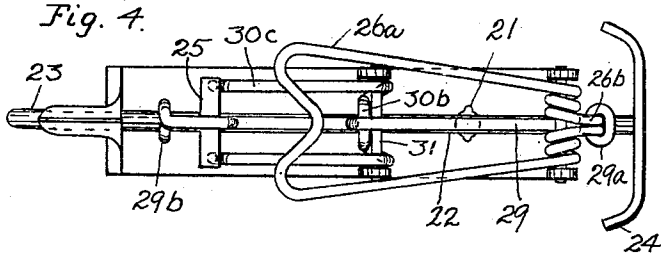


Fig. 5.

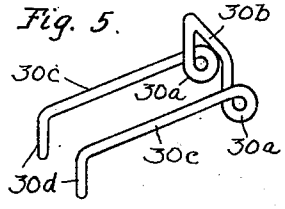


Fig. 6

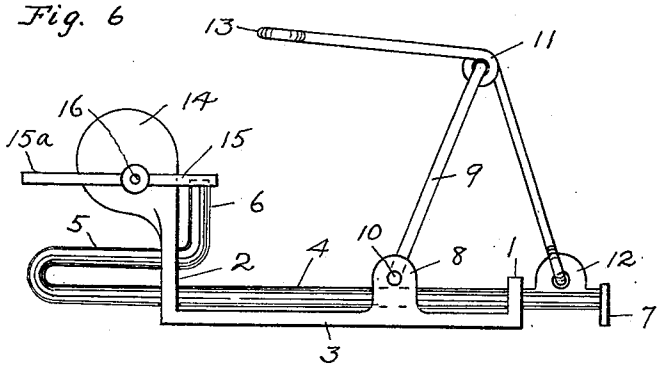


Fig. 7

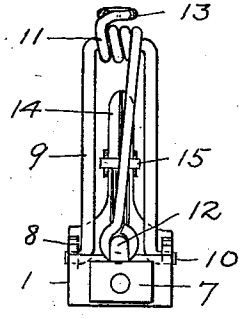


Fig. 8

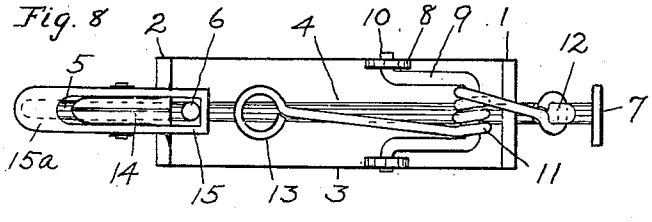
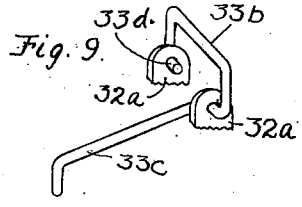


Fig. 9.



Attest:

Oscar F. Hill

Ellen O. Spring

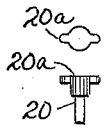


Fig. 10.

Fig. 11.

Inventor:

Arthur W. Weeden

by Nathan B Day

Attorney.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ARTHUR W. WEEDEN, OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS, ASSIGNOR OF ONE-HALF TO ARVID W. ERICKSON, OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS.

BASE-BALL-GAME APPARATUS.

977,149. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Nov. 29, 1910.

Application filed March 28, 1910. Serial No. 552,057.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, ARTHUR W. WEEDEN, a citizen of the United States, residing at Somerville, in the county of Middlesex and State of Massachusetts, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Base-Ball-Game Apparatus, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to game apparatus designed for use in playing indoor baseball and more particularly consists in a board having a surface laid out to represent a baseball field said board having mounted thereon suitable devices for projecting and pitching the ball and for batting a ball so pitched to some portion of said field.

More especially my invention consists in apparatus for playing an indoor baseball game or a game of a similar character, said apparatus comprising more especially a batting device embodying the essential features of my batting device, and a game board representing a baseball field having its playing territory subdivided or apportioned substantially as hereinafter set forth.

Referring to the drawings,—Figure 1 represents a plan view of my game board showing the manner of marking out the baseball field and showing the projecting and batting devices mounted thereon. Figs. 2, 3, and 4 are respectively, a side elevation, a front view, and a plan view of my batting device, showing in detail the construction of one of the preferred embodiments of the same. Fig. 5 is a perspective view showing the locking piece, which forms a part of the batting device, detached from the same. Figs. 6, 7 and 8 are, respectively, a side elevation, a front elevation, and a plan view, showing in detail the construction of the preferred form of projecting device which I have devised for use in connection with my baseball game. Fig. 9 is a perspective view showing a modified form of locking piece which may be employed in my batting device. Figs. 10 and 11 are respectively a top view and a side elevation of the pivot pin.

Referring to the drawings: Referring to said Fig. 1 the baseball field is preferably on a board of substantially square area, preferably hinged at its center and adapted to fold into a compact form. Around the said board is provided an upwardly projecting edge strip, *a*, of any convenient height, for the purpose of preventing the ball from going beyond the limits of the field. On said board is marked out a baseball diamond in usual form, the home plate being preferably located in the vicinity of one corner of said board. The positions of first, second, and third bases may be indicated in any usual manner as by I. II. and III. Preferably in substantially the positions normally occupied by the players in a regular baseball game, are positioned pegs or statuettes, representing players which may be designated by the characters 1B, 2B, 3B, Ss., L., C. and R. The catcher and pitcher are preferably not so represented. The territory in the vicinity of each player is subdivided substantially in the manner shown. Preferably circles *b* are circumscribed about the positions of the pitcher and of the infield and outfield players. Outside of said circles are circumscribed second circles *c*, or partial arcs of the same, and outside of arcs *c* of the second circles are circumscribed partial arcs *d* of third circles. By virtue of the circles or arcs of the same hereinabove mentioned the field will be subdivided off in substantially the manner indicated.

Preferably the arcs, *e*, are marked out in the corners of the field, and arc *f* near the home plate. A space *g* is marked out in the center field corner of the board as shown.

The game is played with a ball, *h*, preferably a flat counter similar to a checker. For projecting the ball, as the said counter is hereinafter termed, a projecting device is employed, said projecting device being commonly stationed in the location ordinarily occupied by the pitcher. If desired however said projecting device may be stationed a greater distance from the home plate, or in any other convenient location, than as shown.

The preferred embodiment of my projecting device or pitcher is shown in Figs. 6, 7 and 8 and consists of instrumentalities as hereinafter described, which are mounted on a suitable frame. The front and rear ends of said frame, respectively numbered 1 and 2, extend upward from the base 3, of the same as shown, and in said end portions is slidingly mounted the projector bar 4. The rear end of said projector bar is preferably turned back or reversed, parallel to its length, as at 5, so as to again pass through said rear end 2. Said reversed portion 5 of

said projector bar terminates in a preferably vertical portion 6, thereby preventing the axial twisting or turning of said projector bar. On the front end of said bar is located the projector 7. In the side of said frame of the projecting device are carried lugs 8 forming bearings for a spring supporting link 9 which is swingingly mounted therein; said link preferably being formed of a metal strip bent in U form, with its open ends turned outwardly as at 10 to engage in holes formed in said lugs 8. On said spring supporting link is carried a spring 11, said spring being coiled about the upper part of said U shaped portion as shown. One end of said spring is bent downwardly to engage an eye 12 formed on said projector bar 4, near its forward end, while the other end of said spring is preferably extended rearwardly as shown and provided with terminal loop 13, by which the tension of the spring may be manually controlled. The rear upwardly projecting end 2 of said frame preferably carries a flattened wing piece 14 lying, substantially parallel with the projector bar. On said wing-piece is carried a trigger 15 which is pivoted at 16. Said trigger 15 is provided with a forward opening arranged to fit over the upwardly extending portion 6, of said projecting bar, when said bar is in its retracted position, and to restrain the said bar from moving forwardly, in response to pressure exerted by said spring 11, until the said trigger is disengaged therefrom, such disengagement being effected by manually depressing the rear portion 15^a of said trigger.

The pitcher operates in the following manner. The projector bar 4 is moved to its rearward position and the upwardly extending terminal portion 6 of the said bar is engaged within the forward opening of trigger 15, thereby locking the projector bar in its rearward position. The player then swings the frame into the required direction and places a ball or checker on the board in front of the projector. He then depresses with one hand or finger the terminal loop 13 until he has given the desired tension to the spring 11. At the same time he depresses the rearward end 15^a of the trigger 15 with the other hand or a finger. In consequence the projector bar will be released and will be carried forward by the action of the spring 11, and the ball will be projected thereby in the desired direction with a speed dependent upon the amount of the tension originally given to the spring 11.

The preferred embodiment of my batting device or "batter" is shown in Figs. 2, 3 and 4, and consists of instrumentalities as hereinafter described which are mounted on a suitable frame. The front and rear ends of said frame, respectively numbered 17 and 18 extend upwardly from the frame base 19. Said base is pivotally secured to the game board in the position of the home plate, preferably by quickly detachable means. For example a pivot pin 20 having a laterally elongated head 20^a as shown in Figs. 10 and 11 is secured to the board at the proper position. In the base of the batter frame is formed an opening 21 through which the head of said pin is adapted to fit when said batter is turned substantially at right angles to its normal position. In other positions said elongated pin head will operate to prevent the disengagement of said frame from said pivot pin, although permitting the base to freely swing angularly about the same. Slidingly carried in said end portions 17 and 18 is the carrier bar 22; the rear end of said bar being bent back or reversed substantially parallel to its length as at 23, and again passed through said rear end 18 so as to prevent axial twisting or turning of the said carrier bar. On the forward end of said carrier bar is mounted the striker 24, so carried on said carrier bar 22 that its lower edge lies adjacent to and substantially parallel with the game board. On the end of said reversed extension of the carrier bar is provided a cross piece 25 preferably extending laterally partially across the frame base, and in a plane substantially parallel with the same. Thus said striker is freely longitudinally movable within the limits of sliding of said carrier bar, and in such motion is carried preferably with its lower edge closely adjacent to, although not in contact with the surface of the game board. For giving a motion to said striker a spring 26 is employed; said spring being preferably coiled about and pivoted on a rod 27 mounted in journals 28 located near the top of said front end. From the coiled portion the spring is extended rearwardly substantially as shown at 26^a, the forward portion, 26^b of the same, being bent downwardly and passed through a terminal loop 29^a formed at the end of the actuating link 29.

A short distance above the carrier is located the actuating link 29, the same being preferably in the form of a piece of wire having its forward end slidably carried in the forward frame end 17, and terminating in a loop 29^a encircling said forward portion of 26^b the spring 26, and having at its rear end a terminal loop 29^b adapted to slide on the reversed extension 23 of the carrier bar. At an intermediate portion said actuating link 29 is bent downwardly as at 29^c, thereafter being bent again parallel to its original direction as at 29^d. At 29^e said link is bent upwardly and is thereafter bent again substantially at right angles and extended rearwardly as at 29^f, preferably substantially parallel with its initial direction, to the terminal loop 29^b.

The locking piece of the projecting device

is shown at 30. In its preferred form more clearly shown in Fig. 5 said piece is embodied in the form of a piece of wire having two looped portions 30^a, forming annular bearings about which said locking-piece is adapted to swing and interconnected by a U shaped portion 30^b. Rearwardly from said looped portions 30^a are preferably two parallel horizontal extension 30^c, the terminals of the said extensions being preferably bent downwardly as indicated at 30^d, and thereby serving to retain the parallel horizontal extensions 30^c in an approximately horizontal position. Said locking piece is adapted to swing upon said looped portions 30^a about a pin 31, carried in lugs 32 carried in the sides of the base of the batter frame. Said batting device is of such proportions that a player can readily grasp a wing shaped guide 33 preferably formed on the upper portion of said rearward extension and also depress the free portion 26^a of said spring 26 so as to give the required force to the spring.

The relative dimensions of the parts hereinbefore described are so proportioned that, in the position shown in Figs. 2, 3 and 4, wherein the carrier bar is shown near its extreme rearward position, the cross bar 25 is positioned just over the points at which the parallel extensions 30^c of said locking piece are bent downward into the terminals 30^d, said cross bar thereby operating to prevent the rotation in a clockwise direction of said locking piece at its journals. In consequence said connecting portion 30^b is interposed just in front of the downwardly bent portion 29^c of the actuating link, and hence the forward movement of said actuating link will be prevented so long as the cross bar 25 is in engagement with the ends of the locking member.

The batting device is operated in the following manner. Assuming the parts to be in the position in which they are shown in Figs. 2, 3 and 4, and the batter frame to be rotated about its securing pivot into the desired direction, the end 26^a of spring 26 is depressed preferably by the player's finger until the required tension has been put upon the spring. As has been before pointed out, owing to the action of the locking piece 30, the actuating bar 29 is prevented from forward motion in response to the pull exerted upon the loop 29^a at the forward end of the same when tension is put upon spring 26. When however, a slight rearward movement is given to the carrier bar, as a result, for example, of the impact upon the striker 24 of a ball projected against the same by the pitching device, the cross bar 25 will be displaced rearwardly with respect to the locking piece, until it will no longer serve to prevent the horizontal extensions 30^c of said locking member from swinging upwardly in consequence of the pull exerted upon the connecting bar 30^b of the locking piece through its contact with portion 29^c of the actuating bar. In consequence connecting bar 30^b, at the same time will be carried down into an approximately level position, wherein it will no longer interpose to prevent the forward movement of actuator bar 29. In consequence the actuator bar will be free to move forward, or to the right as shown in Fig. 2, in response to the pull exerted on the same by the tension of the spring 26. As a result of such forward movement of the actuating bar 29 the rear loop 29^b of the same, will engage against the cross bar 25 and will drag said carrier bar forwardly with said actuator bar, thereby imparting a movement to the striker which will project forwardly any object which may be in front of the same, said object commonly being the ball by the impact of which the initial movement is given to the carrier bar. Thus said carrier bar acts as a trigger, by the movement of which the spring is permitted to become operative to give a projecting movement to the carrier bar.

In Fig. 9 is shown a modified form of locking piece of somewhat simpler construction than that already described. Said locking piece preferably is bent from a single piece of wire having substantially rectangular open loop formed at one end, the upper part of said loop, 33^b, corresponding in position and function with the connecting piece 30^b of the locking piece hereinabove described. On the bottom side, said rectangular loop is in part open; one end of the same being bent to pass through a journal hole formed on lug 32^a and then being bent backwardly and substantially at right angles with said rectangular loop portion to form a horizontal extension 33^c, corresponding to the extension 30^c of Fig. 5. The other end of the said rectangular portion terminates in a journal portion 33^d which engages in a journal hole formed in a second lug 32^a. Said modified locking piece may thus be mounted in the same position as that occupied by the locking piece 30 shown in Figs. 2, 3 and 4; said portion 33^c being adapted to engage in its locking position the carrier bar 25, and the portion 33^b engaging in such position with the portion 29^c of the actuator bar; the whole piece being furthermore adapted to rotate about its journals when portion 33^c is released, all substantially as hereinbefore described in connection with locking piece 30.

The baseball game apparatus hereinabove described is employed in the following manner. The pitching device is under the control of one or more players, who constitute one team, and the batting device is manipulated by another player or players, constituting a second team. Both said pitcher and

batter are pivotally attached to the game board as hereinbefore described.

Preliminary to the use of the pitcher the projector bar of the same is locked in its rearward position by means of trigger 15. In like manner the carrier bar of the batter is locked in its rearward position by locking piece 30. The setting of said carrier bar in its rearward locked position is effected by raising upwardly the end 26^a of the spring 26; such motion communicating through its forward end 26^b, a rearward movement to the actuator bar 29, which causes the portion 29^e of the same to push against the cross bar 25, carrying the same rearwardly until a position of said actuator bar has been reached which permits the locking piece 30 to occupy its locking position as shown in Fig. 2. The carrier bar is then moved slightly forward by hand until the cross bar 25 rests upon the ends of the parallel extensions 30^c as indicated.

The pitcher having been given the direction desired by the player in control of the same, preferably being of course aimed at the batter, a ball, *h*, is placed on the board in front of the projector 7 as shown in Fig. 1. The end 13 of the pitcher spring is then depressed to give the desired tension to the said spring. At the same time the trigger 15 is released, and projector bar 4, being left free to move forwardly under the action of the pitcher spring, will operate to project the ball toward the batter with a force dependent upon the amount of tension given to the said spring. Meanwhile the player in the control of the batter will have aimed the same in the desired direction, and also will have depressed the end of spring 26 to the desired extent, the amount of such tension put on said spring depending on whether the player desires to make a long or short hit. If the ball fails to hit the striker or to release the locking device it is a "ball". If the ball hits on the ends of the striker or otherwise is given an initial direction toward the area back of the foul lines, it is a "strike". However, if the ball strikes fairly on the striker, the impact of the same will release the locking piece and the carrier bar will spring forward sending the ball out into the field. If the ball so batted comes to rest inside the area of one of the inner circles circumscribed about any player, the batter is out. If, however, it rests between the inner and second circles, or between the arcs of the same, it is a base hit; if beyond the arcs of the second circle and not farther than the arcs of the third circle, it is a two base hit. If beyond the arcs of the third circle and not in the home run territory, it is a three base hit. A ball lodging in one of the areas marked out at the corners of the field is counted a home run. The above method of marking out the field is preferred by me, but the precise manner of apportioning the same is not absolutely prescribed. In addition further modifications may be added if desired; for example a ball lodging in the rear half of the inner circles circumscribed about any out-fielder's position, may be deemed a "sacrifice" hit, and entitle the base runner to one base, or more as desired.

If desired the player can so aim the pitcher that it shall deliver a slow ball adapted to barely graze the striker, in an endeavor to cause the ball to come to rest in the territory within the foul lines and thus to count as a strike against the batter. On the other hand a skilled player by a timely change in the direction of the batting device and by manipulating the spring of the batter may, to a large extent, place the ball in the field substantially where he desires.

Thus by the use of my board and apparatus the game may be made to embody practically all of the features and incidents which characterize the game as played out doors. At the same time since the speed and direction of the pitched ball is largely under the control of one player, and the length and directions of the hit can be controlled by the other player, a large element of skill is introduced which is not present in games of a like character of which I am aware.

Having described my invention, I claim,

1. In combination with a game board having a playing territory apportioned off into areas of assigned values, a projectable element or ball, and a ball projecting device; an angularly adjustable batting device loosely pivoted upon said game board and rendered operative by the impact of said ball to strike the same in the desired direction.

2. In combination with a game board having a playing territory apportioned off into areas of assigned values, a projectable element or ball, and an angularly adjustable ball projecting device; a batting device embodying a longitudinally movable striker rendered operative by the impact of said ball to repel the same, said striker being slidably mounted on a frame secured to said game board and having a capacity for substantially instantaneous angular adjustment upon said board whereby the striker may be caused to repel said ball in the desired direction.

3. In combination with a game board having a playing territory apportioned off into areas of assigned values, a projectable element or ball, and a ball projecting device; an angularly adjustable spring operated batting device rendered operative by the impact of said ball to strike the same in the desired direction, said spring having a free

portion under the control of the operator whereby the tension upon the said spring may be varied.

4. In combination with a game board having a playing territory apportioned off into areas of assigned values, a projectable element or ball, and a ball projecting device; a batting device comprising a frame loosely pivoted on said game board so as to be angularly adjustable thereupon, a carrier bar longitudinally movable in said frame, a striker carried upon said carrier bar, a spring carried on said frame, an actuator bar operatively connecting said spring and said carrier bar, and a locking piece swingingly mounted in said frame, said locking piece being adapted, in its locking position, to lock the actuator bar against longitudinal movement, and being retained in said locking position by said carrier bar.

5. In combination with a game board having a playing territory apportioned off into areas of assigned values, a projectable element or ball, a ball projecting device; and a batting device comprising a frame loosely pivoted on said game board so as to be angularly adjustable thereupon, a carrier bar longitudinally movable in said frame, the forward end of said carrier bar having a striker mounted thereon, the rear end of said carrier bar being reversed substantially parallel to itself, and having a cross-piece laterally extending from said reversed end, a spring mounted upon said frame for actuating said carrier bar, an actuator bar for operatively interconnecting said spring and said carrier bar, and a locking-piece swingingly mounted in said frame, said piece embodying a horizontal extension 30^c secured in its locking position under said cross-piece, and a connecting piece 30^b by which, in the locking position of said locking piece said actuator bar is locked against an actuating movement in response to the tension of said spring.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

ARTHUR W. WEEDEN.

Witnesses:
NATHAN B. DAY,
CHAS. F. RANDALL.