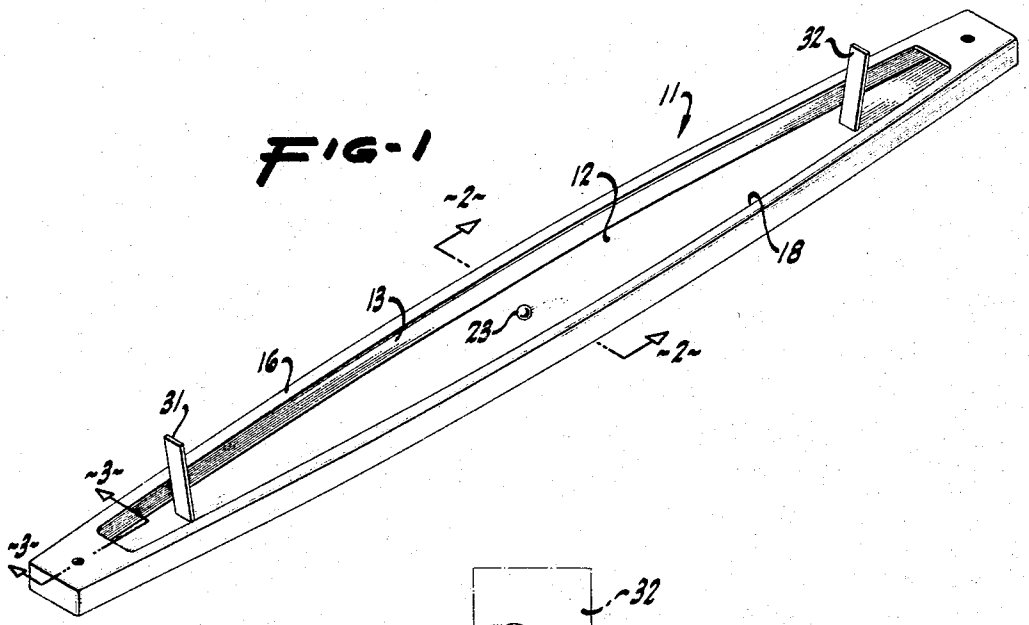
Nov. 22, 1966 L. R. BOSCH 3,287,018

PADDLE AND BALL GAME WITH BELL GOALS

Filed March 11, 1964

FIG-1



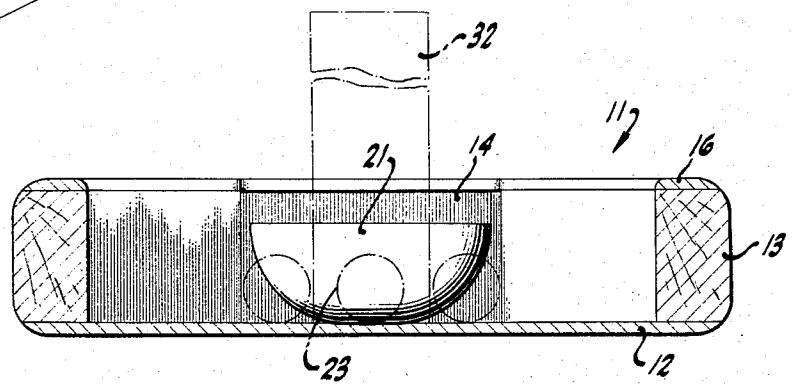


FIG-2

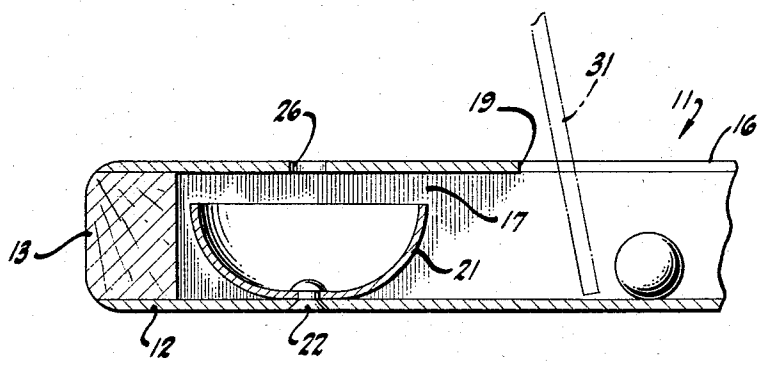


FIG-3

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PADDLE AND BALL GAME WITH BELL GOALS

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The present invention relates to a game of physical skill and dexterity employing a game board with audible scoring signals, and a pair of paddles operable to block and drive a hard ball upon the game board toward opposite goals.

The game of the present invention requires two players, and is adapted to be played upon a game board having a rim thereabout defining an elongated game area within which a hard ball is confined. At each end of the board there is disposed a bell mounted in fixed relation thereto, and producing an audible signal upon striking the same with the ball. A pair of players station themselves one at each end of the board, and each employs a paddle to drive the ball within the confines of the game area toward the bell at the opposite end. A score is made by ringing the opponent's bell with the ball. Volleying is accomplished by striking the ball with the paddle to drive it toward the bell at the opposite end of the board, and scores are prevented by blocking passage of the ball with the paddle. The opponents are restrained to operate only at their respective ends of the board, which may, for example, have a length of some four feet.

There is presented by the present invention a relatively simple game structure providing a test of the physical dexterity and skill of the players. An extremely rapid game action is achieved and a very simple scoring system, described below, facilitates rapid playing of the game. In addition, there is herein provided an extremely durable and high-strength game structure capable of withstanding very rugged use. Although the structure is exceedingly simple, it is also very strong because of the sandwich construction employed herein. It is, of course, possible to form the game board of this invention in alternative manners, such as plastic extrusion or casting; however, particular advantage attaches to the preferred embodiment of the invention illustrated in the accompanying drawings, for there is attained thereby an unexcelled durability and strength.

The present invention is illustrated as to one particular embodiment thereof in the accompanying drawing, wherein:

FIGURE 1 is a prospective view of the game board of the present invention with the paddles and ball illustrated in connection therewith;

FIGURE 2 is a transverse sectional view taken in the plane 2—2 of FIGURE 1; and

FIGURE 3 is a longitudinal sectional view taken in the central plane through one end of the game board.

Although the present invention is illustrated and described below in connection with a single, preferred embodiment thereof, it is not intended to limit the invention to the precise terms of description or details of the illustration. Instead, reference is made to the appended claims for a precise delineation of the true scope of this invention.

Considering now a single, preferred embodiment of this invention in some detail, reference is made to the drawings. There is provided, in accordance with this invenvention, a game board **11** having a narrow elongate floorboard **12**. In one embodiment of the invention, the overall length of the game board is four feet, and the width thereof is about six inches. A rim **13** is secured upon the floorboard **12** and extends about same to define an internal game area **14**, completely encircled by the rim.

A top or cover plate **16** is disposed upon this rim, and includes end portions **17** covering a small area at the ends of the game area, and a central cutout portion **18** exposing the remainder of the game area from above.

The game board structure described above tapers from a maximum lateral dimension at the center thereof to a minimum dimension at the ends, and, preferably, the rim **13** curves smoothly together from opposite sides toward the board ends, as illustrated in FIGURE 1. The overall appearance of the board is thus quite pleasing, with a generally symmetrical streamlined shape. In construction, the game board may be formed in a variety of ways, however the illustrated embodiment is comprised of a sandwich structure wherein the elements are formed of wood. The floorboard **12** may be formed of a thin plywood sheet and the top or cover plate **16** may also be formed of a thin plywood sheet of the same external configuration but having a central portion thereof cut out, as indicated at **18**. The rim **13** may be formed of two light side rails of wood stock curved to the contour of the top and floor, with a pair of end blocks closing the game area and completing the rim at the ends. These members may be cemented together to form a sandwich structure of very substantial strength.

At each end of the game board, there is provided a bell **21** and same is shown to be mounted securely upon the floorboard **12**, as by means of a rivet **22**. This bell need not have a clapper, as it is intended to be rung by a ball **23** forming a part of the game. It is, of course, possible for the bells to be mounted in a wide variety of ways, but it is necessary for same to be generally protected as by the overlying end portion **17** of the cover plate **16**. In the illustrated manner of mounting the bells **21**, there may be advantageously provided a small opening **26** through each end of the cover plate in order to provide access to the interior of the bell for securing same to the floor plate. Other types of bell mounting do not require this opening. It is further provided, in accordance with this invention, that the bells shall extend substantially entirely across the distance between the rim portions at the ends of the game board, for reasons set forth below.

There are further provided as elements of the game hereof, a pair of paddles **31** and **32**. These paddles may be formed of any relatively sturdy material, such as wood, metal, fibreboard, or the like. While it is possible to form handles, or the like upon the paddles if desired, it is not necessary, and in the illustrated embodiment the paddles are formed merely as rectangles adapted to be grasped between thumb and first finger of the players. Although it is possible for the paddles to have a certain resiliency, it is normally intended that they shall be substantially rigid. Each of the paddles is provided with a flat bottom edge, which is adapted to rest against the floorboard **12**, and the paddles operated by a flick of the wrist, so as to strike the oncoming ball **23** and to return it toward the opponent's end of the game area. Further with regard to the paddles and ball, there is herein provided a limitation upon relative dimensions. The ball should have a diameter which is less than the height of the rim **13**, inasmuch as the ball is intended to be retained within the confines of the game area **14** by the rim. Furthermore, the ball should be formed of a hard material, so that it will produce a maximum sound upon striking either of the bells **21**. It is preferable that the ball not be resilient, for otherwise it may have a tendency to bounce from the game board. One additional limitation is illustrated in FIGURE 2, wherein the paddle **32** is shown in phantom, as is the ball **23**. The width of the paddle is made sufficiently less than the width of the game area between the sides of the rim **13** at the end thereof immediately in front of

the bell **21**, for the ball to pass on either side of the paddle and strike the bell if the paddle is disposed exactly in the center and extending across the game area in this position. An internal edge **19** across the top plate **16** at the end of the game area serves to prevent inadvertent movement of the paddle against the bell, so as to ring the latter.

The rules of the game played with the structure and apparatus described above are extremely simple. Play is carried out between two opponents with each one grasping one of the paddles and standing at opposite ends of the game board. The paddles are placed in the game area, somewhat in the position as shown in FIGURE 1, and each paddle is held by one of the opponents. The ball **23** is placed in the game area and rolled toward either of the opponent's paddle. The player strikes the ball **23** with his paddle as it approaches and attempts to ring the bell of the opposite end of the board with the ball. His opponent attempts to prevent the bell at his end from being rung by blocking the bell with his paddle so as to stop movement of the ball toward the bell and, in turn, returns the ball with his paddle in an attempt to ring the bell at the opposite end of the board. Under no circumstances is the ball to be engaged by anything except the paddle, and it is not touched by the players, except to initiate the game. Scoring is simplified by utilizing a 5-ahead principle, in which a player must ring the bell at the other end of the board five times more than his opponent in order to win. Rather than adding up the number of times that the bells are rung, both addition and subtraction are used in the scorekeeping. The first person to score, i.e., to strike the bell at the opposite end of the board, obtains a point, and a successive ringing of the bell at the opposite end would then move his score to two points. However, at this time should the opponent strike the bell at the end of the board occupied by the leader, i.e., the one with the two points, the score is reduced to one to nothing, rather than moving on to two to one. Thus, at all times after the first goal or score, there is a leader whose score increases by one each time that he strikes the bell at the opposite end of the board, and is reduced by one each time his opponent strikes the bell at his end of the board. The first player to become five points ahead of his opponent wins the game. Once volleying is commenced in the game, it is normal that action is very fast and continuous until one player reaches a total of five points ahead of his opponent.

By the use of a very hard ball, such as a marble, or the like, and fixed mounting of the bell at the game board end, there will be produced a very large and readily discernible sound upon striking of the bell by the ball. In addition, the closed ends of the board serve somewhat as sounding boxes, so that the ring of ball against bell is actually amplified. Consequently, there can be no possibility of doubt or misunderstanding as to whether or not a score has been made.

In playing of the present game, the ball moves at a relatively high velocity, and it is necessary to insure that there is no possibility of the ball entering the bell area at one end of the game board and returning therefrom without striking the bell. As will be seen in FIGURE 3 of the drawing, the bell is placed sufficiently close to the end portion of the rim so that the ball cannot pass behind the bell so as to travel circumferentially about the bell and leave this area. In addition, the lateral dimension of the bell is made substantially equal to the width between rim portions at the place of bell mounting. Although it is possible for the present game to be formed with straight rim sides rather than contoured sides, as illustrated, it is important to insure that there is insufficient space alongside of the bell for the ball to pass without striking the bell. This limitation may be met in an alternative manner from that illustrated by the provision of slanted wall portions only within the closed bell area.

In playing the game, the ball may either proceed directly from one end or the other under the force of a paddle applied thereto, or may carom from wall-to-wall, depending upon the direction of force applied. Although the exact ratio of length-to-width of the game board is not fixed by the invention, it is desirable for the length to be considerably greater than the width in order that the game shall move ahead more rapidly, i.e., the ball shall not spend an exceedingly great amount of time caroming between the side walls rather than directly approaching the bells at the board ends. It has been found that a highly desirable length-to-width ratio of the entire game board is about eight to one. Thus a game board with an overall length of four feet may have a total width of six inches, and in a typical example, the board rim may have a height of one inch and the maximum internal width of the game area may be about four inches. The taper of the rim in this example is such as to form an internal separation thereof of about two inches at the end bells. Of course, the bells are to be mounted out of contact with the rim, in order that striking of the rim will not vibrate the bell enough to ring it. Likewise, the cover should not touch the bell, as the paddle is normally held in such a position as to often strike the front edge **19** of the end portion **17** of the cover. By the above-described limitation upon relative lateral extent of the paddle with respect to the ball diameter and width of the game area adjacent the bell, it is necessary for the player to move the paddle continuously in order to prevent an oncoming ball from bypassing the paddle and striking the bell thereat. A paddle of greater width would enable a player to merely block the bell by stationing his paddle immediately in front of same.

It has been found that the game described above proceeds extremely rapidly, and calls upon an exercise of eye and hand to a great extent. Physical quickness and dexterity are challenged by the game, and even though a distance of the order of four feet be provided between the opponents, the ball may be propelled sufficiently rapidly by the paddles that only extremely quick reactions will prevent the ball from passing a player's paddle to strike the bell thereat.

The present invention has been described in connection with a single, preferred embodiment thereof; however, it is of course possible to make numerous variations and modifications in the showing and description. Reference is thus made to the following claims for a definition of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A game comprising a game board having a narrow elongate configuration, said board having a rim extending upwardly about the periphery thereof defining a planar game area, a pair of bells affixed one at each end of said board and substantially filling the game area at opposite ends thereof, a hard ball adapted for disposition in said game area for rolling into contact with said bells to ring same, and a pair of paddles for use by opposing players at opposite ends of the board to strike the ball and roll the same toward the opposite end of the game area, each of said paddles having a width which is less than the lateral width of the game area immediately in front of the bells minus twice the diameter of the ball, so that the ball may pass a paddle centered between the opposite rim sides in front of a bell.

2. A game comprising a narrow elongate game board having an upstanding rim thereabout defining a game area with a planar floor and decreasing width at each end, a pair of bells disposed one at each end of the game area within the rim and substantially filling the tapered game area thereat, a pair of cover members disposed one adjacent each end of the game area across same and extending in front of the bell thereat atop the rim, a hard ball having a diameter less than the rim height from the game area floor and adapted for disposition within the

area to roll therein and ring said bells upon contact therewith, and a pair of paddles adapted for use at opposite ends of the game area for striking the ball and blocking the from striking the adjacent bell, said paddles each having a straight end to set evenly on said planar floor of the game area and a width which is less than the width of the game area in front of each bell minus twice the diameter of the ball.

3. A game of physical skill comprising a planar floor, a rim upon said floor and defining a long, narrow game area having a maximum width at the center, said rim being smoothly curved from said maximum center width to a minimum game width area adjacent the ends thereof, a pair of bells disposed one at each end of said floor within the rim and each extending substantially across the width of the floor thereat, a rigid top extending only over each of said bells upon said rim, a pair of paddles adapted for use with one adjacent each bell, and a hard ball adapted

for disposition on said floor in the game area to be struck by said paddles, said ball having a diameter that is less than one-half the difference between the paddle width and the width of the game area at the inner edge of the top over the bells so that the ball will pass on either side of a paddle disposed in central blocking relation to a bell.

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