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[54] **COMBINED BILLIARD BALLS RACK AND INDICATOR FOR PLACING THE BALLS**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** .....**272/22,** 273/59 R

[51] **Int. Cl.** **A63d 15/00**

[58] **Field of Search**.....273/22, 59 R, 3 A, 137 R

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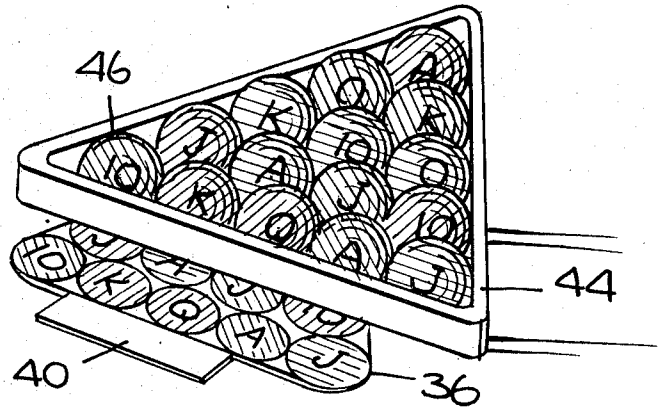
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A game combining elements of the games of billiards and of cards. A plurality of billiard balls bearing designations of playing cards are racked in a predetermined pattern on a standard billiard table through the aid of a billiard ball locator or indicator. The indicator is shaped in the general outline of a billiard ball rack and has a plurality of billiard ball markers with indicia corresponding to the billiard ball to be positioned on the marker. In addition, the indicator is flat with a pull tab at its periphery and is reversible with a different pattern of markers on each of its surfaces.

In a preferred form of game, 15 billiard balls are provided comprising three differently colored sets or suits of five balls each bearing representations respectively of the ten, jack, queen, king and ace. The billiard balls are racked in a predetermined pattern on a billiard table through the aid of a rack and of an indicator which bears indicia of each of the fifteen balls arranged in a predetermined pattern. Each player in turn then attempts to pocket five balls to obtain as high a poker hand as possible, the highest hand winning the game.

8 Claims, 8 Drawing Figures



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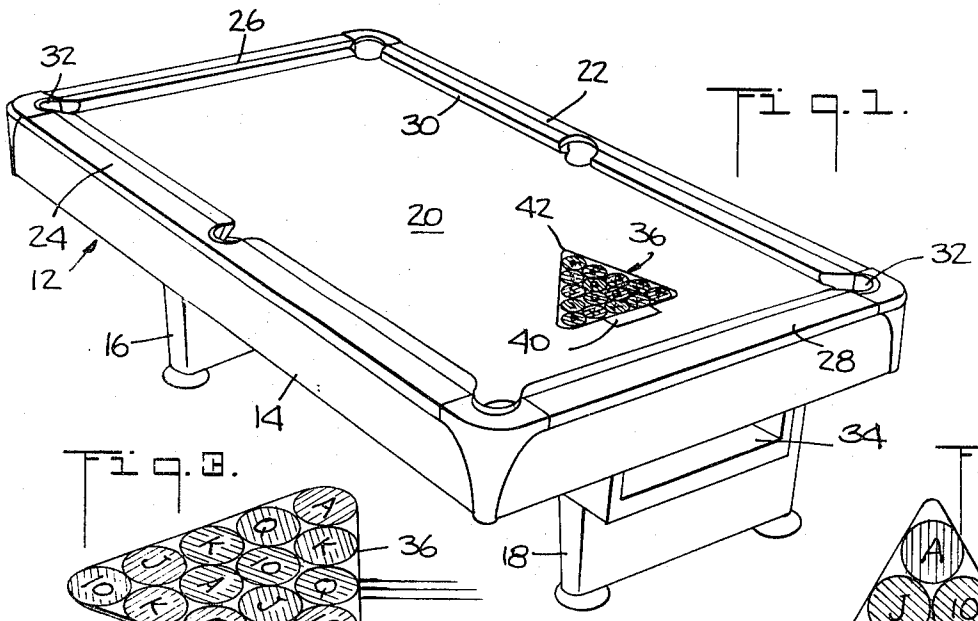


Fig. 1.

Fig. 3.

Fig. 2.

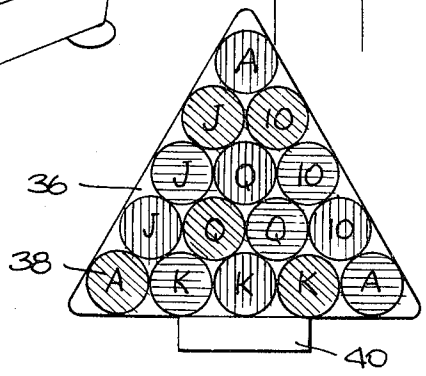


Fig. 4.

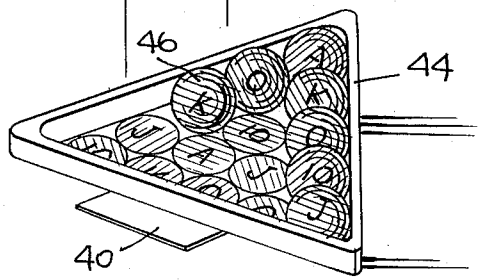


Fig. 5.

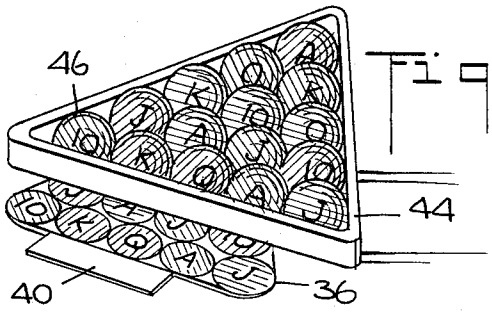


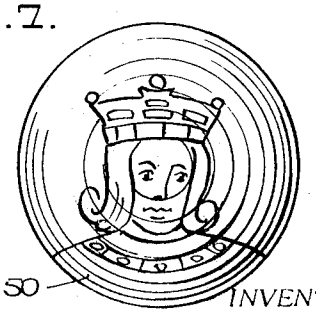
Fig. 7.



Fig. 6.

Fig. 8.





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COMBINED BILLIARD BALLS RACK AND INDICATOR FOR PLACING THE BALLS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates to a new and improved game of billiards and more particularly to a new and improved game combining the elements of the game of billiards and the game of cards.

2. Description of the Prior Art

Many forms of billiard games have been proposed involving the use of a plurality of billiard balls and a table formed with or without billiard pockets. In each of these games the player exercising the greatest amount of skill normally wins the game, although a degree of chance is involved as well. One of the most popular billiard games is pocket billiards which utilizes a table having six pockets and a set of fifteen billiard balls arranged in a pyramid on the billiard table by means of a rack.

In general, individuals who enjoy playing billiards are attracted to it for the elements of skill and chance which are associated with the game. Often a billiard player also finds enjoyment and relaxation in participating in card games associated with the elements of skill and chance such as poker, "Black Jack" and other card games. Although games have been proposed to combine elements of the game of billiards with elements of various card games such as poker, these proposals have generally proven unsatisfactory. For example, where it has been proposed to use game boards directly on a billiard table they have generally been bulky and inconvenient. In other games the rules have been gimmicky and unappealing to the average billiards player.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Generally, the present invention combine elements of the games of billiards and cards into a game which is simple enough for a novice billiard player and yet also sophisticated enough to challenge the skill of an experienced player. The game of the present invention uses inexpensive accessory equipment and may be played on a standard billiard table with standard cue sticks.

These and other advantages and objects are achieved according to the present invention wherein a game is played with a plurality of billiard balls bearing representations of playing cards and an indicator for locating the billiard balls on the billiard table according to a predetermined pattern. According to one aspect of perspective invention, of billiard balls are provided comprising three differently colored sets of five balls, each ball within a set bearing representations of the five highest ranking cards, viz., ace, king, queen, jack and ten. In such an embodiment, the indicator bears indicia of each of the fifteen balls arranged in a predetermined pattern. Preferably, the indicator is substantially triangular and is adapted to arrange the fifteen billiard balls in a predetermined pyramidal pattern on the billiard table.

According to another aspect of the game of the present invention, after the balls have been arranged on a billiard table in accordance with the predetermined pattern on the indicator, the order of play is determined by each player lagging the cue ball. Each player

in turn then takes eight shots to pocket five balls to make up a poker hand, and the player with the highest poker hand wins the game.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a billiard table having positioned thereon a preferred embodiment of an indicator according to the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a plan view of the indicator of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a perspeclive view f another embodiment of an indicator according to the present invention;

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the indicator of FIG. 3 combined with a billiard rack and having a plurality of billiard balls positioned on the indicator;

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of the indicator and rack of FIG. 4 showing removal of the indicator after all the billiard balls have been positioned in the rack;

FIGS. 6, 7 and 8 are diagrammatic views of preferred representations respectively of the king, jack and queen for use on billiard balls according to the present invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring now to the drawings, there is shown in FIG. 1 a billiard table 12 of standard design and construction. The billiard table has a horizontally disposed table portion 14 supported on legs 16 and 18, and the table portion is provided with a playing surface 20 bounded on its periphery by side rails 22 and 24 and by end rails 26 and 28. Rails 22, 24, 26 and 28 are provided with resilient cushions 30.

A plurality of pockets 32 are provided at the four corners of table portion 14 and at the midpoints of side rails 22 and 24. Pockets 32 communicate with chutes (not shown) which return balls shot into pockets 32 to a ball rack or bin 34.

As will be described in greater detail hereinafter, the game of the present invention utilizes a plurality of billiard balls bearing designations of playing cards. Preferably fifteen billiard balls are used, as in common pocket billiards or pool, the balls being broken down into three differently colored sets of five balls each, each colored set representing a different suit of playing cards. Each of the five balls within a set bears the representation of a playing card of different rank, preferably one of the five highest ranking cards viz., ten, jack, queen, king and ace.

According to the present invention, the billiard balls are positioned in a predetermined pattern on playing surface 20 of table 14 through the aid of a billiard ball locator or indicator 36. Indicator 36 is adapted to be placed beneath a standard billiard rack and therefore preferably has the same general configuration and dimensions as that of the rack. As shown, indicator 36 is generally triangular in shape with a plurality of billiard ball markers 38 on one face. Markers 38 which are preferably circular in shape are provided on the indicator and are arranged pyramidally in five rows of five, four, three, two and one markers respectively from the base of the pyramid to its apex.

Each marker bears indicia corresponding to the billiard ball to be positioned on the marker. Thus, in the example given above where each of the billiard balls is identifiable by a color and playing card rank, each

marker will bear corresponding indicia of color and rank. Conveniently, the background of the marker may be colored to correspond to a "suit" of balls, and the rank may be identified by a symbol such as a letter, e.g., J for jack; Q for queen; K for king; A for ace or a numeral, e.g. **10** for ten. The ranks of jack, queen and king may alternately be identified by pictorial representations. Other forms of indicia may also be used for identification purposes.

Indicator **36** of FIGS. **1** and **2** is adapted to be used in conjunction with a set of fifteen billiard balls having red, blue and green sets of balls bearing playing card ranks of ace, king, queen, jack and ten. The markers **38** corresponding to these balls are arranged in a predetermined pattern to enhance the skill and strategy in playing the game of the present invention described in detail hereinafter. Thus, the markers of the embodiment of FIG. **2** are arranged as follows: 1st Row — Red Ace; 2nd Row — Green Jack. Green 10; 3rd Row — Blue Jack, Red Queen, Blue 10; 4th Row — Red Jack, Green Queen, Blue Queen, Red 10; 5th Row — Green Ace, Blue King, Red King, Green King, Blue Ace. Alternatively, the markers may be arranged according to the pattern shown on indicator **36** of FIG. **3** or in any other suitable predetermined pattern to interest the players and test their skill.

Indicator **36** is preferably of plastic or other durable, flexible material, and is provided with a finger tab **40** to facilitate a player's removal of the indicator from beneath a set of racked billiard balls.

Referring now to FIGS. **1**, **3**, **4** and **5** there will now be described how the indicator of the present invention may be used in racking billiard balls on table **12**. Indicator **36** is first placed on playing surface **20** of the billiard table **12** with its apex **42** pointing toward the head of the table and resting on the foot spot. A billiard rack **44** is then placed over the indicator **36** and a plurality of billiard balls **46** bearing appropriate representations of playing cards are positioned on the corresponding markers **38** of the indicator. (FIG. **4**) After all of the balls **46** have been properly positioned on top of indicator **36**, it is removed by pulling on tab **40** (FIG. **5**). Rack **44** is then removed leaving the balls arranged in a pyramid according to the predetermined pattern on indicator **36** with the apex of the pyramid resting on the foot spot.

The player to shoot first is then determined by each player lagging the cue ball the length of the table so that it strikes the far cushion and returns to a stopping point adjacent the near cushion. The player coming closest to the near cushion without touching it shoots first, the second-closest shoots second, etc. Each player then shoots in turn, taking one shot at a time with the cue stick and cue ball until each player has pocketed five balls or taken eight shots, whichever comes first. The player to pocket balls representing the best poker hand wins the game. Thus where three colored sets of five balls are used with each set representing the ten through ace inclusive, the following hands in order of rank may be made:

Straight Flush — Five balls of one color

Full House — Three balls of one rank and two balls of another rank

Straight — Five balls of any color with ranks from ten to ace inclusive

Three of a Kind — Three balls of one rank

Two Pair — Two balls of one rank and two balls of another rank

The ranks have their normal values with ace high, so that a pair of aces beats a pair of kings, three jacks beat three tens, etc. The colors may be ranked with different colors having different ranks in order to break a tie.

In general, a player may shoot offensively or defensively as the situation may warrant. Thus, it may be more advantageous to prevent another player from making a given ball than to make a ball which may enhance the shooting player's hand. In either case, any ball that the player sinks in a pocket **32** will count toward his own hand. If a player scratches a shot, his shot is lost, although any ball made on the scratch counts toward his hand. Any movement of the cue ball by the cue stick is counted as a shot and should a ball be knocked off the playing table, it is replaced on the foot spot and the player loses that shot.

When a player has sunk five balls and the game has not yet been completed, he may use any of his remaining shots in turn to prevent an opponent from obtaining a better hand.

If only two players are competing, the above rules may be modified by permitting each player to sink seven balls and allowing him to pick the best five balls for his hand.

FIGS. **6**, **7** and **8** depict preferred representations of the three face cards for use on the billiard balls. Thus FIG. **6** depicts a preferred pictorial representation **48** of a king, FIG. **7** depicts a preferred pictorial representation **50** of a jack and FIG. **8** depicts a preferred pictorial representation **52** of a queen. It will be understood that other pictorial representations may be used on balls **46**.

Although a specific form of billiards using the rules of poker has been described hereinabove, it will be understood that other forms of such games may be played utilizing the indicator and specialized billiard balls of the present invention. One such game corresponds to the card game known as "Black Jack" or "21."In this game the balls are racked and the order of shooting is determined as hereinabove. The object of the game is to score "Black Jack" or "21" by pocketing two or three balls in a given number of turns, say three, whose value totals **21**. Each ace has a value of 11 or 1 depending on the election of the player; each jack, queen and king has a value of 10; and the ten has its face value of 10. Pocketing both the jack and the ace of the highest ranking color automatically wins the game, and a score of 21 beats a score of 20.

Although a specific form of indicator **36** has been described hereinabove it will be understood that other forms may be provided. Thus, an indicator **36** having markers **38** of a predetermined pattern may be inlaid in the surface of a billiard table in lieu of a removable indicator as described hereinabove. Additionally, indicator **36** may be provided with tabs **40** along each edge thereof, so that any of the three apexes of the pyramid may be positioned on the foot mark of the billiard table, thus providing three different patterns from one indicator. Alternately, variant patterns may be provided in the two faces of the indicator so that the single indicator may be used for different games.

Thus, it is seen that a game is provided according to the present invention which combines the skill and chance of both billiards and cards and which is of interest to both a novice and a skilled billiards player.

What is claimed is:

1. Game equipment for use with a billiard table comprising a plurality of billiard balls each of which bears a designation of a playing card; a rack of triangular configuration for racking said billiard balls into a triangular array therein; and an indicator for positioning said billiard balls on the table within said rack in a predetermined pattern, said indicator having at least a pair of faces and a plurality of markers arranged in a predetermined pattern and equal in number to said plurality of billiard balls on each of said faces, each pattern being different from the other pattern, and each of said markers bearing a designation corresponding to the ball to be positioned thereon.

2. Game equipment for use with billiard table comprising a plurality of billiard balls each of which bears a designation of a playing card; a rack of triangular configuration for racking said billiard balls into a triangular array therein; and an indicator for positioning said billiard balls on the table within said rack in a predetermined pattern, said indicator having a plurality of markers arranged in a predetermined pattern and equal in number to said plurality of billiard balls, each of said markers bearing a designation corresponding to the ball to be positioned thereon, and said indicator being of flexible material and having at least one pull tab at its periphery for slidably removing said indicator from under said rack and said billiard balls.

3. The game equipment of claim 1 wherein said plurality of billiard balls comprises fifteen balls of three differently colored sets of five balls each.

4. The game equipment of claim 3 wherein the five balls in each said set respectively bear representations of the five highest ranking playing cards of ten, jack, queen, king and ace and wherein said indicator is provided with fifteen markers, each of said markers bearing identifying indicia of the color and playing card rank of one of said billiard balls.

5. The game equipment of claim 3 wherein the representations of jack, queen and king on said billiard balls are pictorial representations.

6. The game equipment of claim 1 wherein said indicator is generally triangular in shape and wherein said markers are arranged in a pyramidal pattern of five rows comprising a first row having five markers, a second row having four markers, a third row having three markers, a fourth row having two markers and a fifth row having one marker.

7. The game equipment of claim 6 wherein said markers bear indicia as follows: first row — ace of a first suit, king of a second suit, king of a third suit, king of said first suit, ace of said second suit; second row — jack of said third suit, queen of said first suit, queen of said second suit ten of said third suit; third row — jack of said second suit, queen of said third suit, ten of said second suit; fourth row — jack of said first suit, ten of said first suit; fifth row — ace of said third suit.

8. The game equipment of claim 6 wherein the markers on said indicator bear indicia as follows: first row — ten of a first suit, king of a second suit, queen of said second suit, ace of said first suit, jack of a third suit; second row — jack of said second suit, ace of said third suit, jack of said first suit; ten of said second suit; third row — king, ten and queen of said third suit; fourth row — queen and king of said first suit; fifth row — ace of said second suit.

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