Aug. 25, 1970 R. G. RIDEOUT 3,525,525

TOY BASEBALL GAME

Filed June 28, 1968 4 Sheets-Sheet 1

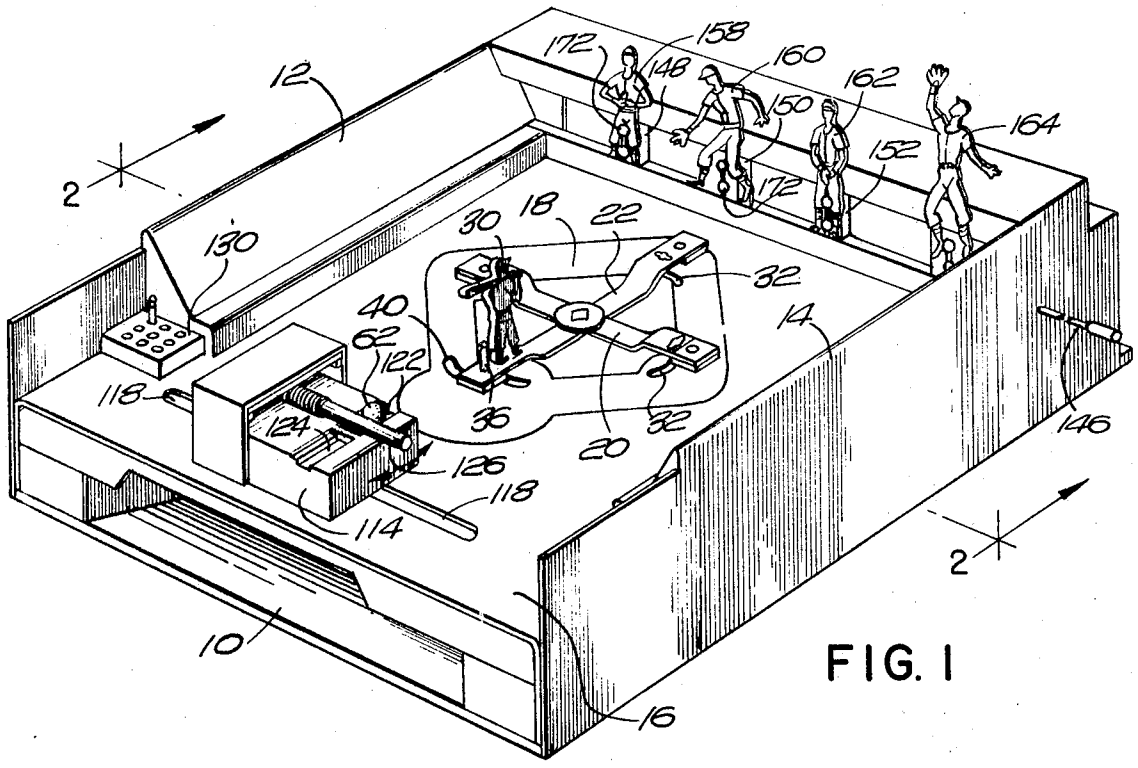


FIG. 1

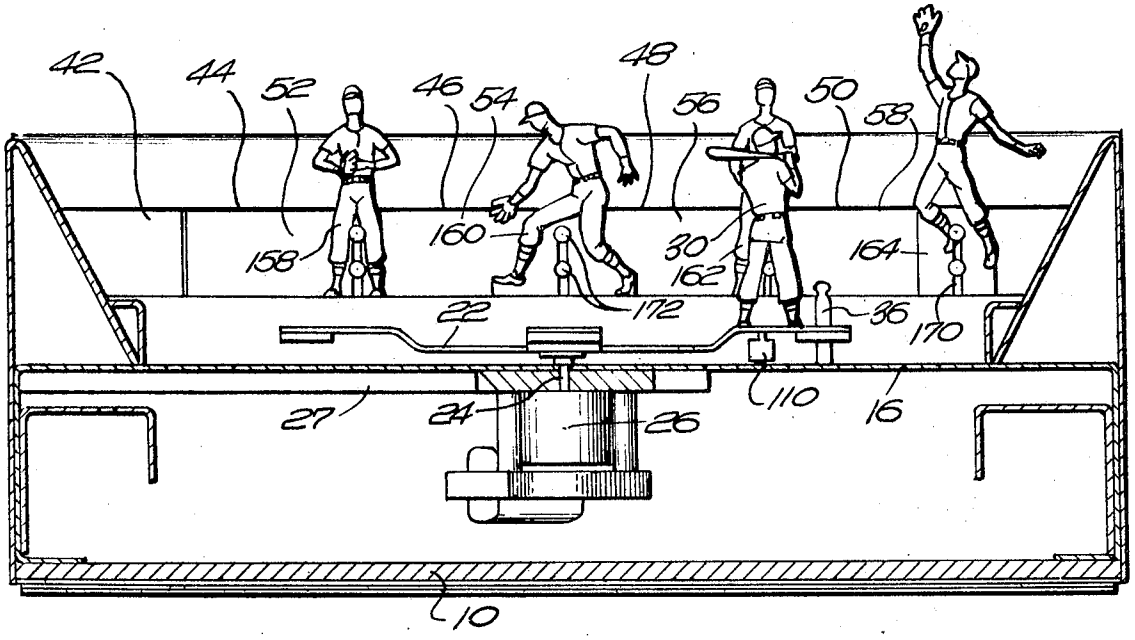


FIG. 2

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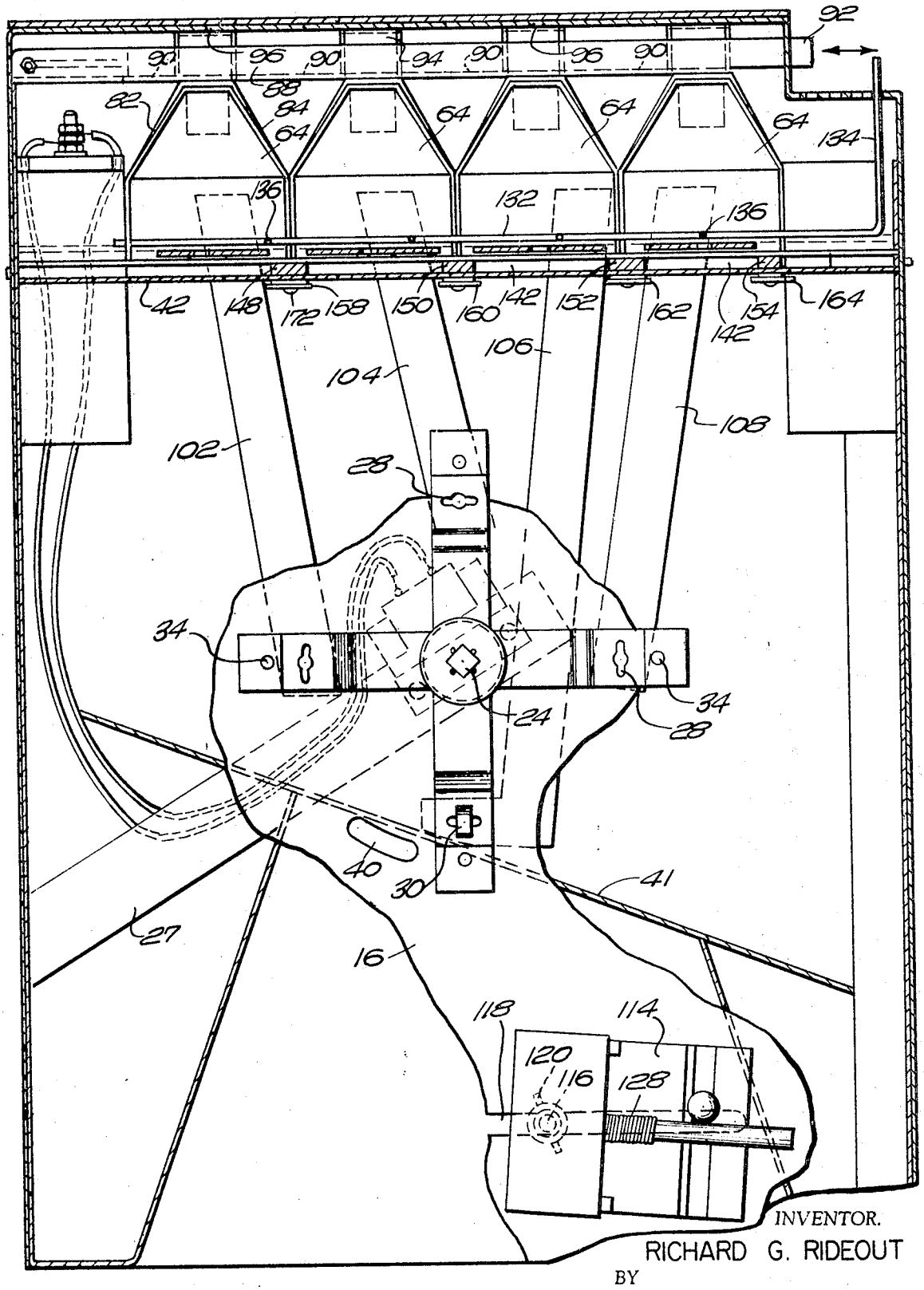


FIG. 3

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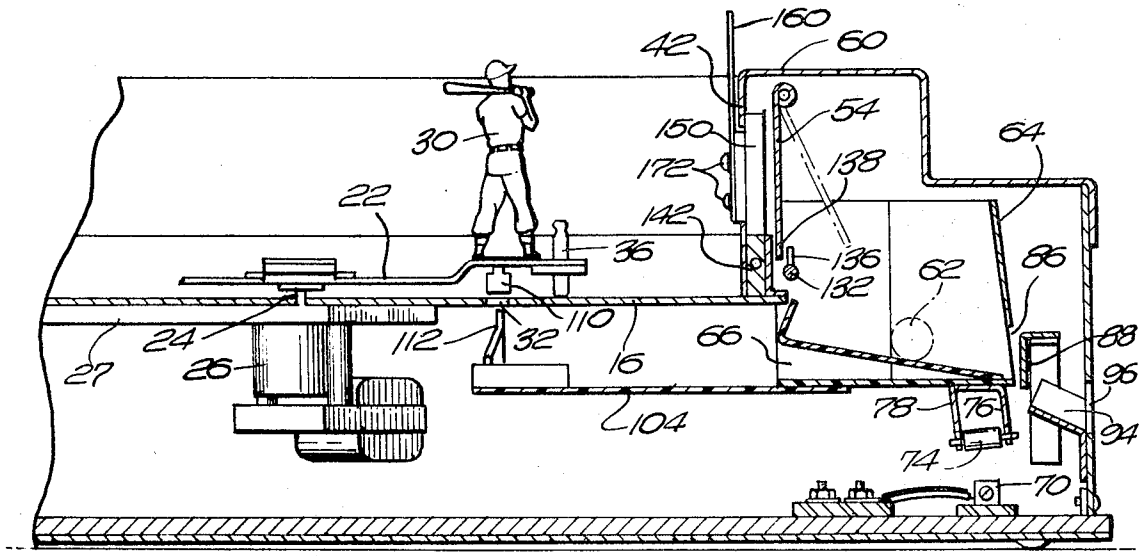


FIG. 4

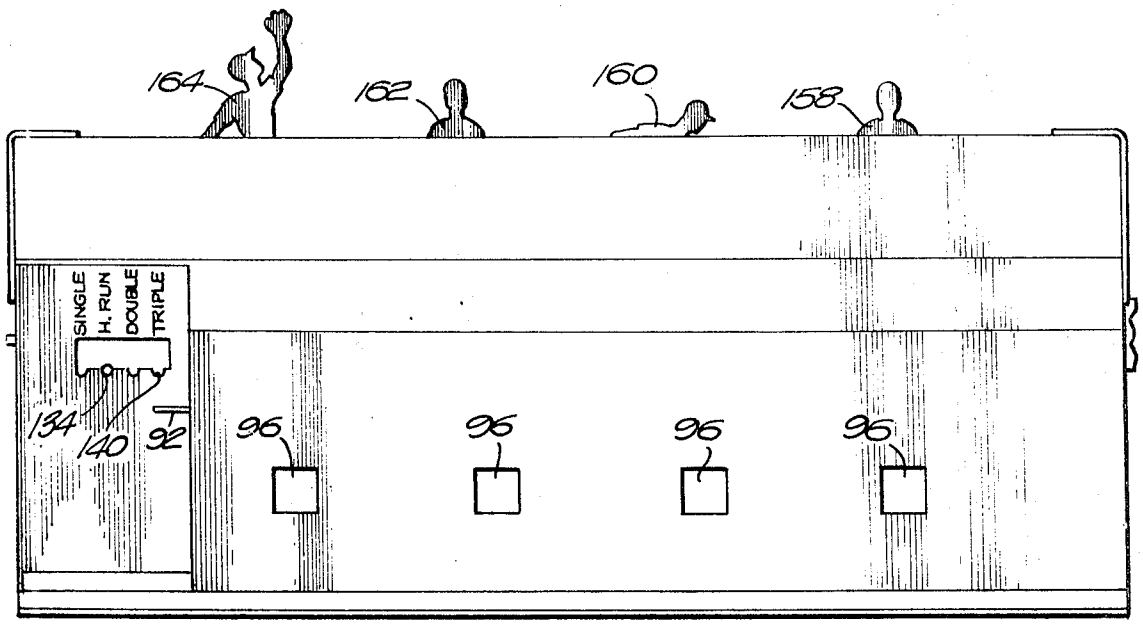


FIG. 5

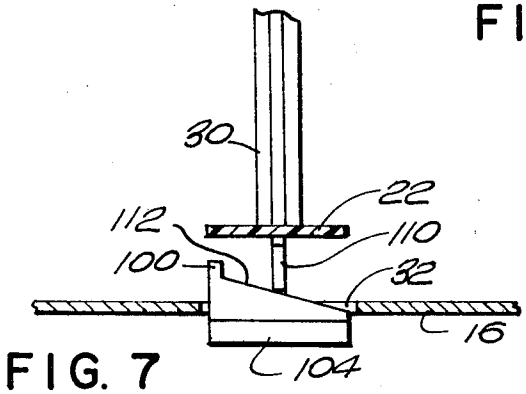


FIG. 7

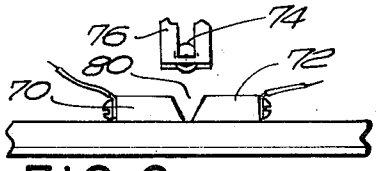


FIG. 6

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FIG. 8

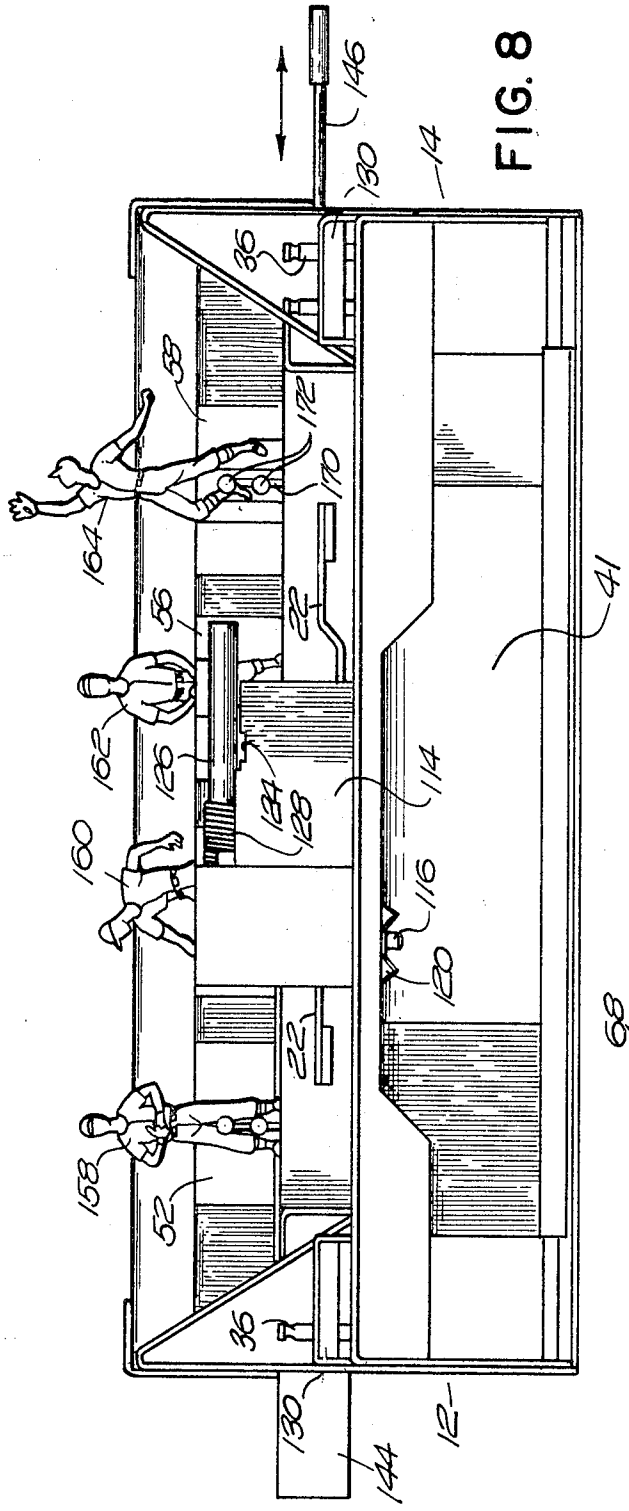
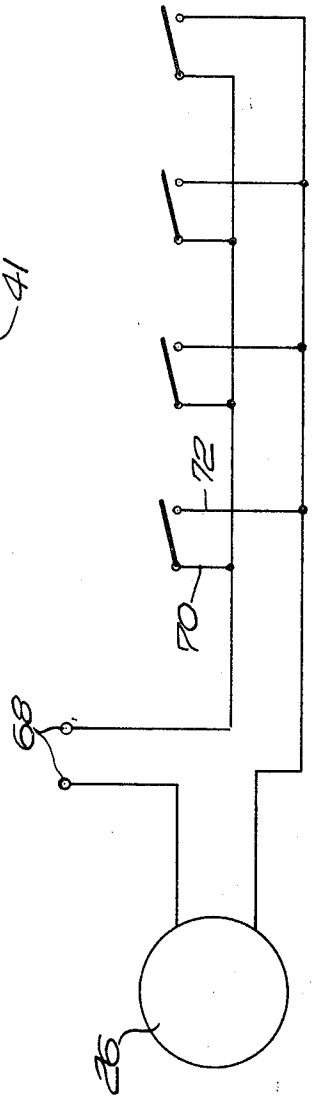


FIG. 9



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3,525,525

TOY BASEBALL GAME

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Int. Cl. A63f 7/06, 7/10
U.S. Cl. 273—89 10 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A toy baseball game apparatus including a field on which a baseball diamond is shown, a motor-driven rotor on which a member representing a batter is removably mounted, stop elements under the four bases selectively movable up through the field into the path of the batter to stop the rotation of the rotor, a ball, means operable by one player to project the ball to any one of four swinging targets a selected one of which can be locked by the opposing player, and means operable by the ball when it passes one of the targets to start the motor and simultaneously to raise a corresponding stop element to stop the rotation when the batter reaches it. The rotor advances base-runner elements placed thereon.

This invention is an improvement over the apparatus shown in U.S. Pat. No. 3,050,308.

The game is designed for operation by two opposing players one of whom projects the ball toward any of the targets for the purpose of causing rotation of the rotor. The other player manipulates devices to prevent passage of the ball past any of the targets. For a more complete understanding of the invention reference may be had to the following description and to the drawings, of which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the apparatus embodying the invention;

FIG. 2 is a section, on a larger scale, on the line 2—2 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a plan view of the apparatus shown in FIG. 1, but on a larger scale, portions being broken away;

FIG. 4 is a section on a vertical plane of part of the apparatus;

FIG. 5 is a rear elevation of the apparatus;

FIG. 6 is a detail elevation of one of the switches controlling the motor;

FIG. 7 is a fragmentary sectional view showing a stop element elevated to intercept the batter member;

FIG. 8 is a front elevational view of the apparatus shown in FIG. 1; and

FIG. 9 is a wiring diagram of the circuits in the apparatus.

As indicated in FIG. 1, the apparatus comprises a rectangular box having a bottom **10** and side walls **12** and **14**. Spaced above the bottom **10** is a horizontal field **16** on which is depicted a baseball diamond **18** with the home plate nearest to the front of the apparatus. Over the diamond is a rotor **20** which, as shown, consists of four arms **22** of equal length extending radially from a vertical shaft **24** driven by a small electric motor **26** mounted under the field **16** and supported by a bar **27**. The four arms **22** are preferably identical, each having near its free end a short transverse slot **28** to receive a removable member or playing piece **30** which represents the batter in playing the game. The slots **28** are equidistant from the axis of rotation of the rotor **20** and when the rotor is at rest, the slots **28** are respectively directly over slots **32** at the locations of the four bases of the diamond, the latter slots being for stop members, hereinafter described, which are selectively elevated to intercept the batter member **30**. Each arm **22** has a thickened end portion through which is a hole **34** adapted to receive a cylindrical peg **36**

representing a base-runner. A peg **36** fits loosely in any of the holes **34** and its lower end rests on the field **16** so that when the rotor **20** turns, it carries the peg or pegs **36** around from one base to the next. If a base-runner is advanced all the way around the diamond, it drops through an aperture **40** near the home plate, scoring a run. A partition wall **41** just behind the aperture **40** keeps the peg within easy reach after it had dropped below the field.

Near the rear end of the apparatus is a vertical barrier **42** which has a series of four rectangular openings **44**, **46**, **48**, **50**. These openings are normally closed respectively by target plates **52**, **54**, **56**, **58** which are hinged at the top and hang behind their respective openings ready to swing back about an axis **60** when struck by a ball **62** which is projected from the front end of the apparatus across the field **16**. A cup **64** made of a plastic material is mounted behind each target plate to receive the ball **62** when it passes through the corresponding opening in the barrier **42**. The cups are individually rockable about a horizontal axis **66**. Beneath each cup **64** is an electric switch in series with the motor **26** and a suitable source of power such as a battery (not shown) or a connection **68** for the usual domestic power supply. As shown in FIG. 6, each switch consists of two metal blocks **70**, **72** which serve as terminals to be connected by a floating conductor **74** in the form of a metal cylinder **74** loosely supported by two tongues **76**, **78** (FIG. 4) which extend down from each cup **64**. The mutually confronting surfaces of the terminals **70**, **72** diverge upwardly so that when the conductor **74** descends into the space **80** to close the switch, it will operate properly even when the cup carrying it is somewhat out of line. The side walls **82**, **84** of each cup **64** converge toward the rear to direct the ball to an exit opening **86** which is normally blocked by a slide bar **88** which is an angle bar having openings **90** which can be moved to register with the exit openings **86** by manipulation of an end **92** of the bar **88** projecting from the casing. This permits the ball when in one of the cups **64** to escape to a chute **94** and through an opening **96** in the rear of the casing. Each switch **70**, **72** is in series with the motor **26** and a power source so that when the ball **62** enters any one of the cups **64** and rocks it downward to close one of the switches, the motor **26** starts to rotate the rotor **20** carrying with it the batter **30** and any base-runners **36** which may be in the holes **34**. To stop the rotor **20** a series of four stop elements **100** is provided, each stop element being located directly below one of the slots **32** in the field **16**. One such stop element is shown in FIGS. 4 and 7. The stop elements are mechanically connected respectively to the four rockable cups **64** by arms **102**, **104**, **106**, **108** which extend forward from the respective cups **64**. These stop elements determine how far the batter **30** will progress when the motor **26** is started. For example, if the ball passes through the opening **44** and enters the cup behind the target **52**, the ball will rock that cup downward thus elevating the stop element **100** which is supported by the arm **102** at third base. In other words, the ball entering the cup behind the target **52** results in a three-base hit. If the ball enters the cup behind the targets **54**, **56**, **58**, the results are, respectively, a two-base hit, a home run and a single as is evident from FIG. 3. When a stop element **100** is elevated to project above the level of the field **16**, as indicated in FIG. 7, it is in the path of travel of a lug **110** projecting down from the batter **30** below the arm **22**. Each stop element **100** is preceded by a sloping edge **112** which is engaged by the lug **110** just before it reaches the stop element **100**. As the lug rides on the sloping edge **112**, it depresses the arm that carries the stop element and rocks the cup to which the arm is attached, thus raising the conductor **74** and opening the switch to deenergize the motor **26**.

The means provided to project the ball **62** across the field toward the barrier **42** comprises a block **114** which is movable on the forward portion of the field **16**, the extent of its movement being limited by a stem **116** projecting down from its bottom through an elongated transverse slot **118** in the field **116**. The block can be secured in position by tightening a thumb-nut **120** threaded on the stem **116**. On the top face of the block are two aligned shallow grooves **122, 124** for the ball **62**. Above the dividing line between the inner ends of these grooves is a bat **126** horizontally supported by a helical spring **128** one end of which is secured in an elevated portion of the block **114**. The bat **126** extends a short distance into the outer end of the spring **128** and is resiliently held thereby in the horizontal position shown in FIG. 1, being spaced above the block so that its axis is on a level with the center of the ball **62** when the latter is in one of the grooves. When the bat **126** is manually pulled forward toward the operator and then released, the spring **128** causes it to hit the ball smartly, sending the ball toward the barrier **42**. If the ball passes through one of the openings in the barrier, the rotor is operated and then stopped as hereinafter described, the batter **30** and a base-runner **36** having first been mounted on and in the arm **22** at the home plate. Suitable racks **130** are provided to hold a supply of pegs **36** representing base-runners. As shown on the drawings, the block is in a position to represent a right-handed batter. It can be readily turned around to represent a left-handed batter or to be operated by a left-handed operator.

To assist the defense operator who is located behind the rear end of the apparatus, means for selectively locking any one of the four targets is provided, the locking means being hidden from the offense operator. For this purpose a transverse rod **132** is slidably mounted behind the barrier **42**, a portion **134** being at right angles to the rest of the rod to project out through the rear wall of the casing to provide a handle for moving the rod. Projecting up from the rod **132** are four lugs **136** which are on a level with tongues **138** which project down from the bottom edges of the targets **52, 54, 56, 58**. The spacing of the tongues **138** and the spacing of the lugs **136** are such that only one lug can be directly behind a tongue at any one time so that only one target can be locked at a time. As shown in FIGS. 3 and 5, notches **140** are provided in the casing wall to receive the handle **134** and hold the rod **132** in adjusted position. The particular target which is locked at any time is thus known to the defense operator but not to the offense operator. If the ball strikes a locked target, it cannot pass through the opening, but falls on the field, so the offense operator must guess which target is locked at any moment and should aim at any of the others.

As a further aid to the defense, a partial obstruction is provided in front of each of the openings. This is in the form of a slide **142** one end portion **144** of which projects out beyond the side wall of the casing (FIG. 8). A rod **146** is secured to the other end of the slide **142** and projects out from the other side wall of the casing. By manipulating these projecting elements, the slide can be quickly and easily shifted back and forth a limited distance. Extending up from the slide **142** are four vertical strips **148, 150, 152, 154**, partially blocking respective openings **44, 46, 48, 50**. The width of these strips may be different, but each covers only a fraction of the width of an opening. The slide **142** with its strips is readily movable by the defense operator back and forth for the purpose of getting one of the strips into the path of the ball **62** when the ball is projected by the offense operator. The strips are provided respectively with detachable elements **158, 160, 162, 164** which project above the top of the casing enclosing the cups **64** so as to assist the defense operator in attempting to align one of the strips with the ball-channel on the block **114**. These elements may be in the form of baseball players. They are detachably mounted on their respective strips by slots **170** extending up from their lower edge to receive headed elements **172** on the front face of the respective strips.

The game is played by two operators sitting at opposite ends of the apparatus. The offense operator shifts and/or turns the block **114** to aim the ball for one of the target plates which he thinks is not locked, and more particularly at an exposed portion of that target plate which is not shielded by a slide strip. He then operates the bat **126** to project the ball. If the ball does not succeed in passing through one of the openings in the barrier, it falls on the field and is retrieved by the offense operator, an out being scored. If the ball gets past the barrier and into one of the cups **64**, the rotor is turned and stopped in accordance with which cup is entered, the batter **30** and a base-runner **36** being advanced accordingly. The defense operator then shifts the slide **90** to permit the ball to escape through a discharge aperture **96**, whereupon it is returned to the offense operator and the slide **90** is shifted back to block the apertures **86**. The batter is returned to the home plate position and the ball is again projected until three outs have been scored, whereupon the operators change places and resume play.

I claim:

1. A toy baseball game apparatus comprising a substantially horizontal field having a representation of a baseball diamond thereon with first, second, third and home base locations, a vertical shaft extending up through said field at the center of said diamond, a rotor mounted on said shaft in a plane above said field, means below said field for rotating said shaft and rotor, a member representing a batter detachably mounted on said rotor with a portion extending down from said rotor and normally located over the said home base location, a stop element at each said location, means operable to elevate any one of said stop elements selectively into the path of the downward extension of said member, a ball, means for propelling said ball across said field, means engageable by said propelled ball for actuating said rotating means and a selected one of said stop-elevating means.

2. A game apparatus as claimed in claim **1**, each said stop-elevating means comprising a rockably mounted cup adapted to receive said ball, and an arm attached at one end to the cup and carrying a stop element at the other end thereof.

3. A game apparatus as claimed in claim **2**, said means for rotating the shaft comprising an electric motor and a control switch connected in series therewith, said switch being operable by movement of said cup to close the switch when the ball enters the cup and rocks it.

4. A game apparatus as claimed in claim **3**, said downward extension of the batter member having means to depress the elevated stop element when engaged thereby to move said cup in reverse so as to open the closed switch.

5. A game apparatus as claimed in claim **4**, each said switch comprising two spaced terminals having mutually confronting surfaces diverging upward, and a floating conductor supported by one of said cups above the space between said terminals, said conductor being lowered into contact with both terminals by said cup when the cup is rocked by said ball.

6. A game apparatus as claimed in claim **1**, said rotor comprising four radial arms each having an aperture uniformly spaced from said shaft to receive said member representing a batter.

7. A game apparatus as claimed in claim **6** and, a plurality of pegs representing base-runners, each said arm having a hole therethrough to receive a peg loosely, said field having near the home plate location a hole therethrough under the path described by the holes in said arms whereby any peg moved by rotation of said rotor to register with said hole through the field drops therethrough.

8. A game apparatus as claimed in claim **2**, said apparatus including an upright barrier between the ball propelling means and the cups, said barrier having four open-

ings therethrough and target plates normally closing said openings, each said target plate being hinged to the barrier and adapted to swing back if unlocked when struck by said ball whereby the ball can pass through the corresponding opening into one of said cups, and means operable by the player at the rear of the apparatus to lock selectively any one of said targets.

9. A game apparatus as claimed in claim 8, wherein said means to lock said targets comprises a slide having obstruction elements in front of said openings but of substantially less width than the corresponding openings, and means operable by the player at the rear of the apparatus to move said slide transversely of the apparatus.

10. A game apparatus as claimed in claim 1, said ball-propelling means comprising a block movable on said field near the front end of the apparatus, said block having shallow aligned grooves in its upper face to receive said ball, a short rod supported horizontally above said

upper face, and a spring secured at one end to said block and at the other end to said rod, said spring being arranged to swing said rod when the rod is retracted and then released.

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U.S. Cl. X.R.

124—16; 273—127