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Goldfarb et al.

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[45] **Jan. 23, 1973**

[54] SLALOM GAME

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** .....**273/120 R,** 273/123 R

[51] **Int. Cl.** **A63b 3/02**

[58] **Field of Search**.....273/108, 109, 110, 118, 120, 273/113, 115, 116, 123, 119

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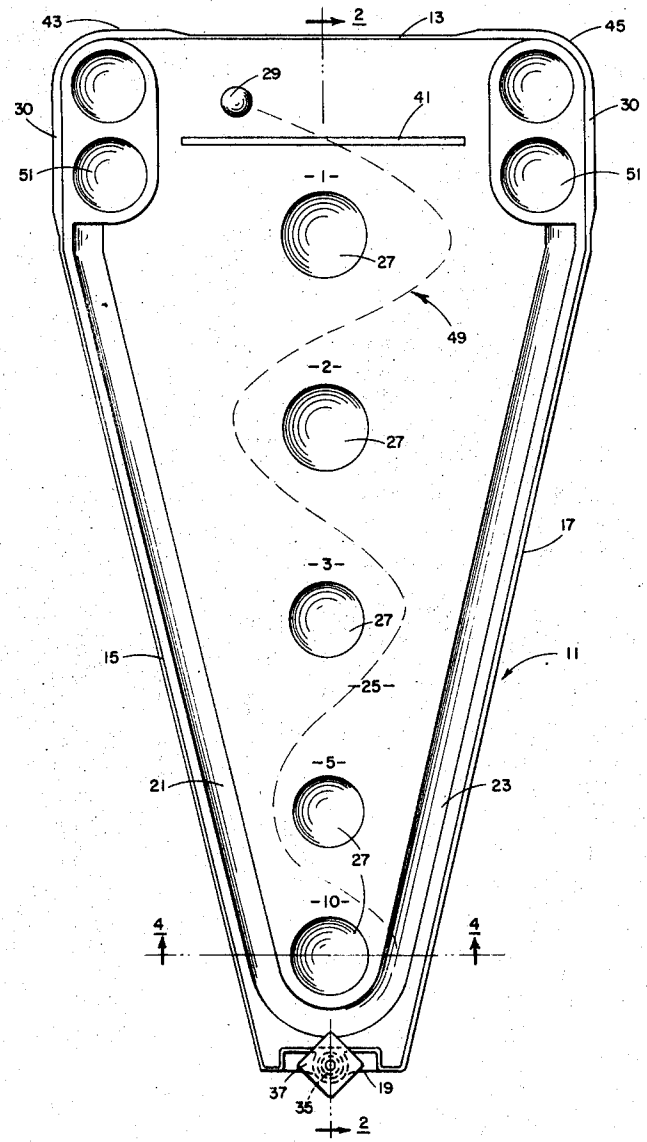
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A game comprising an elongated playing board having a first wide end with sidewalls tapering toward a narrow opposite end and a concave upper surface, the curvature of which extends between the sidewalls, the upper surface being inclined downwardly from the first end to the narrow end, and a plurality of longitudinally spaced receiving means located in the upper surface, whereby it is the object of the game to roll a spherical playing piece on the surface from the first end toward the opposite narrow end so that the piece will move from side to side as it rolls down the surface along a path which avoids the receiving means. If the path is imperfect, the playing piece will be caught in one of the receiving means.

2 Claims, 4 Drawing Figures



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SHEET 1 OF 2

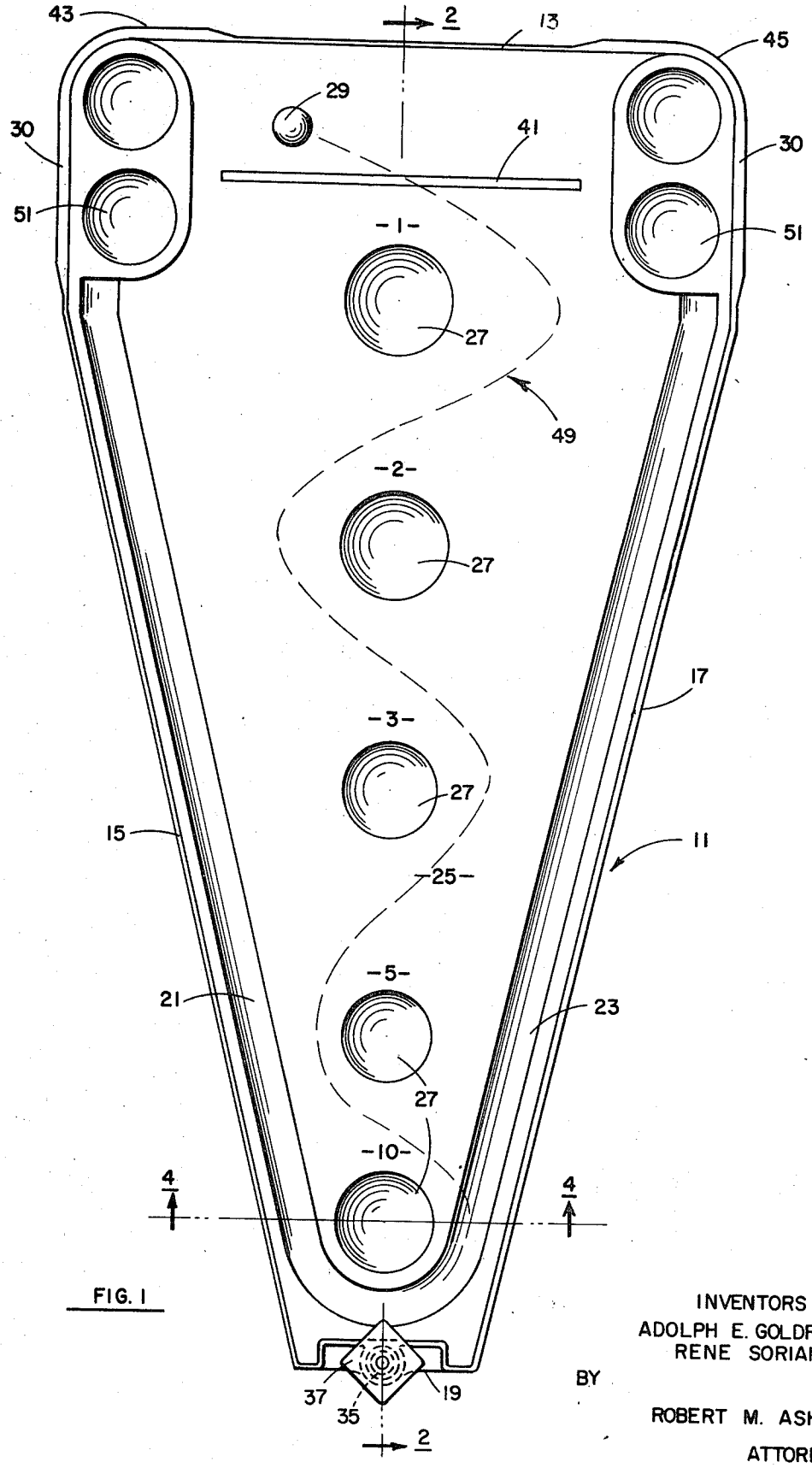


FIG. 1

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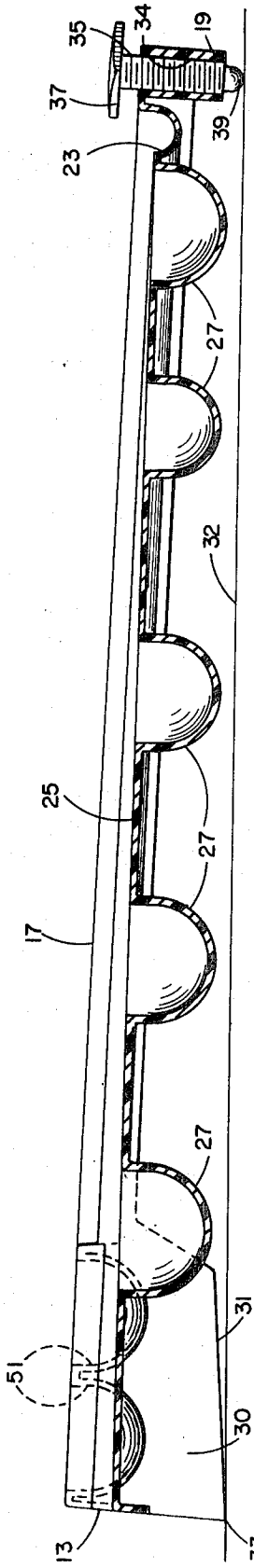


FIG. 2

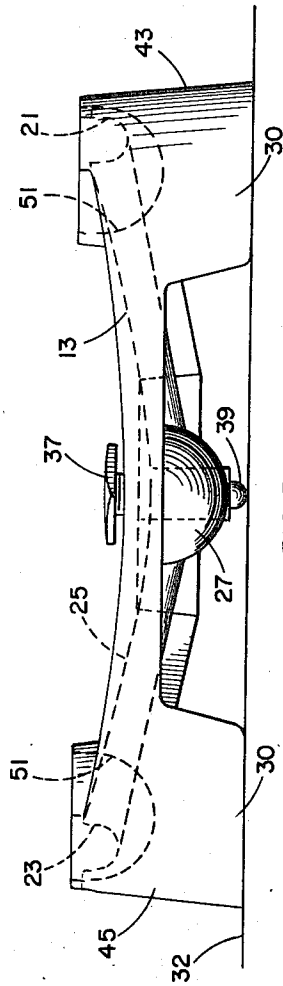


FIG. 3

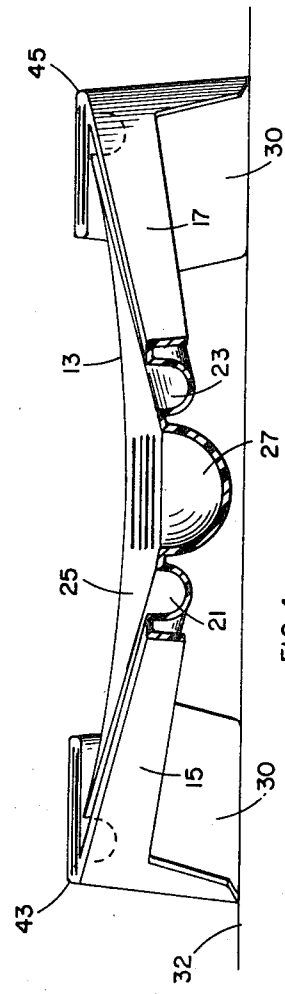


FIG. 4

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SLALOM GAME

There have been various games in the past where a ball or marble is manipulated upon a playing surface in order to either avoid obstacles or place the playing piece in a desired receptacle or hole in the board. The simplest of all such games is a flat board which is then tilted by the player attempting to get a small sphere-shaped piece into one or more of a plurality of receptacles on the board's surface to form a pattern or achieve a certain object of the game. In other games, the playing board is an inclined surface and the piece moves down the incline due to gravity. Various means are then provided for controlling the movement of the playing piece down the board in an attempt either to avoid striking certain obstacles or trying to place the piece in receptacles. A typical pinball machine is an example of a game where there is control exercised by the player over placement of the playing piece by mild shaking or movement of the playing board to cause the piece to strike certain obstacles and avoid receptacles in the playing board in its downward path. Thus, most of the prior games in this area involve a continuous manipulation of the board or external controls during the movement of the sphere-shaped piece on the playing surface.

Briefly, the herein invention comprises the movement or a ball or sphere-shaped playing piece down an inclined surface of a playing board. The board is comprised of a first wide end and an opposite narrow small end with the sides tapering from the wide end to the small end. The surface of the board is concave, curving between the two sides thereof. Additionally, the concave playing surface is inclined from the wide end to the narrow end, such that the ball due to gravity will roll from the wide end to the narrow end. Located on the concave playing surface are a plurality of spatially aligned receptacles on the center line of the playing surface between the two sides. A player attempts to achieve a slalom effect to avoid the holes on the board when rolling the ball down the surface thereof. The player starts the ball down the incline such that it will roll from one side to the other and pass between each adjacent receptacle on the board in a zig zag slalom fashion as it progresses from the wide end to the narrow end. Means can be additionally provided for selectively adjusting the degree of incline of the playing surface or to compensate for uneven surfaces upon which the board rests. Further, a gutter may be provided on the side walls to receive a ball that passes off the playing surface in its downward movement, thus preventing the ball from rolling off the table onto the floor or the like. In playing the game, various points can be assigned to the receptacles in the playing surface, with the highest number of points being assigned the receptacle adjacent the narrow end, such that the player who accumulates the highest number of points will win the game.

It is believed that the invention will be better understood from the following detailed description and drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a top view of the device of this invention,

FIG. 2 is a cross-sectional side view taken along lines 2—2 of FIG. 1,

FIG. 3 is an end view of the device of FIG. 1, and

FIG. 4 is a cross-sectional end view taken along lines 4—4 of FIG. 1.

Turning now to the drawings, there is seen a playing board 11 of the game. The board, which can be formed out of plastic or other similar suitable material, has a first wide rear end 13. Sides 15 and 17 taper toward a narrow front end 19 of the board. Along each of the sides 15 and 17 there is provided a gutter 21 and 23 respectively. Between the gutters 21 and 23, the top playing surface 25 is curved in a concave manner, as particularly seen in FIGS. 3 and 4. Preferably, the concave playing surface is a section of a cone.

The playing board 11 has a plurality of receptacles 27 spatially disposed from each other along the center line of the board extending from one end to the other. The receptacles 27 are sized so as to receive a marble, steel ball, or other spherical playing piece 29 which may land in the receptacle when moving on the playing board surface. As seen in FIG. 4, the receptacles 27 are generally hemispherically shaped pockets in the curved playing surface 25. However, the board can be provided with receptacles in the form of open apertures, whereby the playing piece 29 can drop through the board if entering one of the receptacles.

The playing board 11 is constructed with a base portion 30 at its rear end 13. The bottom surface 31 of the base portion is angularly disposed relative to the surface 32 on which it rests (FIG. 2) so that the board can pivot up and down on the back edge 33 of the base portion. In order to provide a means for adjusting the incline of the surface 25 of the board slightly downward toward the front end 19, there is provided a threaded hole 34 at the front end. A screw member 35 engages the hole 34, passing therethrough, having a turning knob upper end 37 and a rounded base 39. As can be seen, by moving the screw member 35 up or down, the board will accordingly pivot on edge 33 and change the degree of incline of surface 25. It is important for play of the game that the angle of decline of the curved playing surface 25 be adjustable to account for variations in the evenness of the table or floor upon which the device will rest, as well as to permit control of the speed with which the playing piece 29 moves down the board from the rear end 13 to the front end 19.

In playing the game, a player grasps the spherical playing piece 29 behind a marked starting line 41 and adjacent one of the rear corners 43 or 45 and rolls the playing piece 29 toward the opposite side from the corner in which the piece is started. He attempts to thereby cause the piece to roll back and forth along the concave surface as it moves down the surface along a path which by-passes all of the receptacles 27, with the piece finally landing in the lowermost or bottom receptacle adjacent the front end 19. Each receptacle can be attributed a number of points, so that the maximum points in playing the game are achieved if the playing piece lands in the bottom receptacle. The angle of decline of the playing surface should preferably be about 1°. In other words, the surface preferably does not decline very much. The decline is adjusted by the screw member 35 as indicated above. Preferably, the game is constructed so that if the board is on a flat table or floor, the front end 19 is disposed intermediate of the screw 35 to achieve the 1° angle. The end 19 can then be moved up and down the screw to maintain the angle of decline regardless of the surface upon which it rests.

In playing the game, the initial velocity imparted to the playing piece **29** as well as the angle is important and requires a degree of skill. If the velocity is too high, the piece **29** will roll off the curved surface into a gutter **21** or **23**. This, of course, is not a mandatory requirement and, in fact, gutters need not be provided in the game with the playing piece being allowed to roll off the surface.

The number of receptacles **27** on the curved top surface **25** of the board and the spacing between receptacles is dependent upon the size or length of the board. The spacing between adjacent receptacles should be sufficient to allow a ball or sphere **29** to progress in a zig zag path **49** as shown by dotted outline. If the receptacles are too close to each other, then it would be apparent that the slalom type effect would not be readily achieved without the piece **29** intercepting one of the receptacles. Though it is preferred that the receptacles **27** be disposed along the center line of the board as indicated above, it is possible to slightly stagger alternate receptacles, which makes the game more difficult since the piece **29** would then be forced to roll out close to the gutters as it zig zags down the boards.

In order to obtain a desired incline to the curved top surface **25** the previous description of the device has been with regard to utilizing a board **11** that has an adjustment screw **35** at its front end **19**. Alternatively, the board can have an adjustment screw at the rear end in addition or in place of the one at the front. By placing the adjustment screw adjacent the lower front end **19** of the board, it is completely out of the playing area since it is between the last receptacle and the end of the board. Of course, it is possible to play the game having no adjustment means at all with the board. This would be achieved when the board is constructed with the proper angle of incline such that when it is placed on a flat surface the desired incline is maintained. The absence of the adjustment screw thus would limit the playing of the game to the utilization of generally flat surfaces.

The board of the game may additionally have receptacles **51** for storing the playing pieces. As shown in one embodiment, four receptacles **51** are located adjacent the wide end **13**, with two of the receptacles **51** being at each side of the board.

We claim:

1. A game board comprising:

a wide first end,

two sides tapering from said first end to a narrow second end,

a playing surface extending concavely between the two sides of the board,

a plurality of apertures in the playing surface, said apertures being spatially disposed from each other from one end to the other end of the board, and

means for adjusting the elevation of one end of the board relative to the opposite end thereof,

said means for adjusting said board elevation comprising a screw member engaging a threaded aperture adjacent one end of the board.

2. The board of claim **1** wherein said screw member is disposed adjacent the narrow end of the board.

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