Feb. 18, 1969 E. B. VICK 3,428,318

GAME COMPRISING BALL FLIPPING MEANS AND TARGET INCORPORATING SIGNALING MEANS

Filed May 10, 1966 Sheet 1 of 2

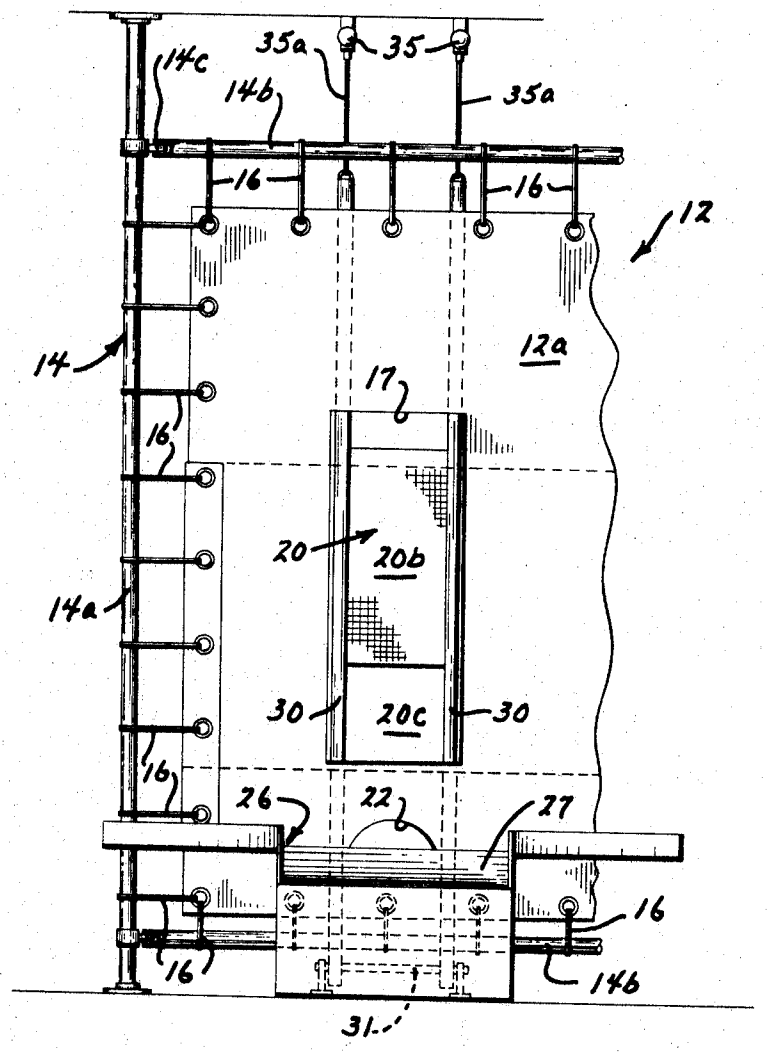


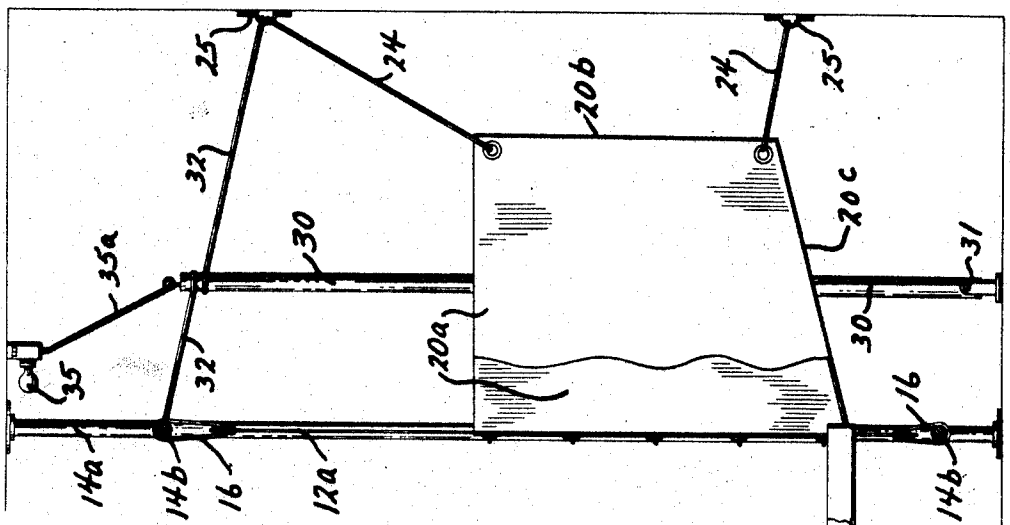
FIG. 1

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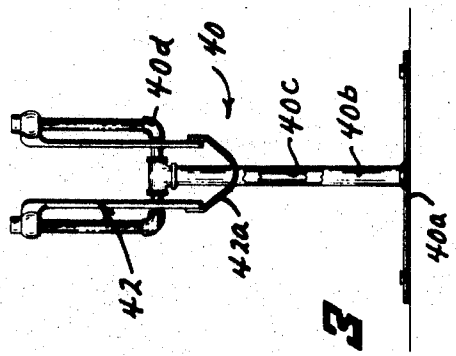


FIG. 3

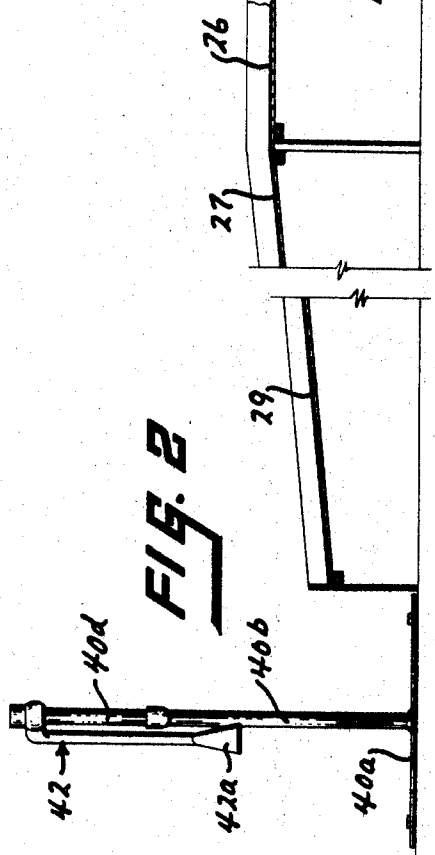


FIG. 2

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3,428,318

GAME COMPRISING BALL FLIPPING MEANS AND TARGET INCORPORATING SIGNALING MEANS

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U.S. Cl. 273—101 2 Claims
Int. Cl. A63b 65/12, 63/00

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A game defined by the combination of a ball flipper, a target and a ball return, where the target face has an opening behind which and along the side edges thereof are pivotal signal controlling members, where the opening has a height equivalent to the letter-to-knees dimension in baseball, and where the pivotal signal controlling members are spaced apart to simulate the edges of baseball home plate.

The present invention relates to a game, and more particularly to a new and novel game which simulates the pitching of regulation baseball through flipping action.

As is known, with the increase in population, there is a continual need for added recreational pastimes for all age groups. In this connection, the applicant herein has invented a new and novel amusement game which requires skill on the part of the player and which provides, as well, a great amount of entertainment value.

Broadly, the instant novel game is defined by a ball flipper, a structure which employs an elastic member for receiving a playing ball in a slingshot relationship, and spaced therefrom, perhaps at a distance of fifty to sixty feet, a target area. The latter comprises a target face having an opening therein, and a ball-receiving space disposed behind such opening, with a ball return being provided in the target face for introducing the ball along an inclined channelway to its point of origin at the ball flipper structure.

In order to create the simulation of regulation baseball, the opening in the target face extends between the known letter and knee positions, while disposed within the target structure, and along the side edges of the opening in the face thereof, are pivotal members, which, when hit, cause the energization of lamps or other signaling means to notify the player. The aforesaid pivotal members are positioned to represent the outside edges of home plate dimension-wise.

In other words, the player flips the ball as in a slingshot towards the target, where, for example, if the target opening is missed, a "ball" results, and where if either of the pivotal members are hit, a "strike" results. Any variation in scoring is, of course, achievable, depending upon the desires of the players. The instant invention is readily installed for use, comprising a simplicity in the number of components, and representing economies in such installation without sacrificing any amusement benefits.

Accordingly, the principal object of the present invention is to provide a new and novel game which broadly simulates the pitching of regulation baseball through flipping action.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a new and novel game having a target opening arranged to simulate a batter at home plate in baseball.

A further and more general object of the present invention is to provide a new and novel game which may be proportioned for various installations; which basically comprises a ball flipper, a target, and a ball return; which is readily installed for use; and, which provides a high degree of amusement coupled with skill.

Other objects and a better understanding of the present invention will become more apparent from the following description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein

FIG. 1 is a view in front elevation, looking toward the target area from the ball flipper structure in FIG. 2, showing such game target and the ball return in accordance with the teachings of the instant invention;

FIG. 2 is a view in side elevation of the over-all game; and,

FIG. 3 is an independent view in front elevation showing the ball flipper structure used in playing the applicant's new and novel game.

For the purposes of promoting an understanding of the principles of the invention, reference will now be made to the embodiment illustrated in the drawings and specific language will be used to describe the same. It will nevertheless be understood that no limitation of the scope of the invention is thereby intended, such alterations and further modifications in the illustrated device, and such further applications of the principles of the invention as illustrated therein being contemplated as would normally occur to one skilled in the art to which the invention relates.

Referring now to the figures, and particularly to FIGS. 1 and 2, the applicant's new and novel game comprises, in a typical embodiment of the invention, a target **12** elevated with respect to the floor level. The target **12** is defined by a front upstanding framework **14** comprising vertical members **14***a* and horizontal members **14***b*. In order to provide for ready erection, the vertical members **14***a* have laterally extending portions **14***c* which are adapted to be received in the ends of the horizontal members **14***b*.

The target **12** is typically made from tarpaulin or like material, where the front face **12***a* thereof is positioned by the framework **14** through a series of mounting cords **16**. An opening **17** is provided in the target face **12***a* and, as should be evident from FIG. 2, a series of walls surround such opening **17** behind the target face **12***a* to define a ball-receiving space **20**. More particularly, the latter comprises side walls **20***a*, a rear wall **20***b*, typically padded or quilted, and a forwardly sloped lower rear wall **20***c*, the latter permitting ready movement of the ball towards another opening **22** in the face **12***a* of the target **12**.

Various arrangements may be provided for retaining the over-all target in position for use, such as, as shown, guide lines **24** which secure either to support member **25** disposed on a wall behind the target or to points along the ceiling around the target (not shown). The aforementioned opening **22** in the target face **12***a* empties onto a platform **26** disposed in front of the target, where, as further evident from FIG. 2, a sloped portion **27** is provided fanning into an elongated ball return channelway **29** which feeds back to the area where the players are located. In a typical installation of the invention, some fifty to sixty feet are provided between the players and the above-described target area.

With further reference now to FIGS. 1 and 2, pivotal members **30** are provided within the ball-receiving space **20** in the target and along each side edge of the opening **17**. Members **30** are spaced apart at a dimension equivalent to the side edges of the home plate in the game of baseball and, additionally, the opening **17**, from top to bottom, approximates a letter to knee dimension of baseball.

The members **30** typically pivot on a horizontally disposed rod **31**, where guide ropes **32** extend from the top horizontal member **14***b* of the framework **14** and from the mounting member **25**, so that the pivotal members **30** normally are in the position presented in FIG. 2. An

incandescant lamp **35**, or other signal device, interconnects each member **30** through a drawstring **35***a*, so that when hit with a ball, the member **30** moves rearwardly, causing the lamp **35** to become energized. Thereafter, because of the guide ropes **32**, the members **30** return to the position of FIG. 2.

Referring now to FIG. 3, the novel ball flipper structure **40** provided to propel the playing ball towards the target comprises a stand **40***a* supporting an upstanding hollow member **40***b* which receives a freely rotatable member **40***c* therewithin having an arm-like portion **40***d*. An elastic member **42** is secured to the arm-like portion **40***d*, such elastic member **42** having an enlarged central portion **42***a* which receives the playing ball in slingshot fashion. Obviously, the design of the member **42** may be varied, including its length, the material of which it is made, and the configuration of the ball-receiving portion.

In use, the player places the ball in the elastic member **42** of the ball flipper structure **40** and moves such member **42** rearwardly as in the use of a slingshot. If desired, member **40***c* can be rotated to effect the proper directioning of the ball towards the target. Upon release, the ball is propelled towards the target area and, if successful, passes through the opening **17**. If either edge of the home plate is struck, i.e. the pivotal members **30**, the lamp **35** becomes energized, indicating a "strike" to the player. Thereafter the ball passes through opening **22** and along the platform **26**, the sloped portion **27** of the platform, and the channelway **29** to the player's position. Obviously, the aforedescribed ball return path permits passage of a ball whether or not it passes through the opening **17** in the target face **12***a*, i.e. in the instance of a "ball."

From the preceding, it should be apparent that the applicant herein has provided a new and novel game structure whereby through flipping action a baseball pitch to a batter at home plate is simulated. Although only one target face is shown in the drawing, it should be understood that a series of targets may be employed one adjacent the other. As to the ball, in one form of invention, it is sized between a regulation hard ball and a regulation soft ball. Moreover, and obviously, the configuration of the platform and ball return may be varied and, as well, the over-all dimensioning and proportioning of the game, from small to large size. Thus, the preceding description should be considered illustrative and not as limiting the scope of the following claims.

I claim:

1. A game structure comprising, in combination, a ball flipping device, a target having a face with an opening disposed therein, a ball return communicating with said target, two members pivotally mounted for movement in a vertical plane within said target adjacent the side edges of said opening and movably responsive to contact by a flipped ball, and signal means responsive to movement of said members, said ball flipping device including a fixed framework mounting a rotatable portion on which an elastic member is disposed for receiving said ball in slingshot relationship.

2. The game structure of claim **1** where said opening has a height equivalent to the letter-to-knees dimension in baseball, and where said pivotal members are spaced apart to simulate the edges of baseball home plate.

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U.S. Cl. X.R.

273—26, 102.2; 124—20