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GAME WITH BALL-RECEIVING SPACED DIVIDER MEMBERS

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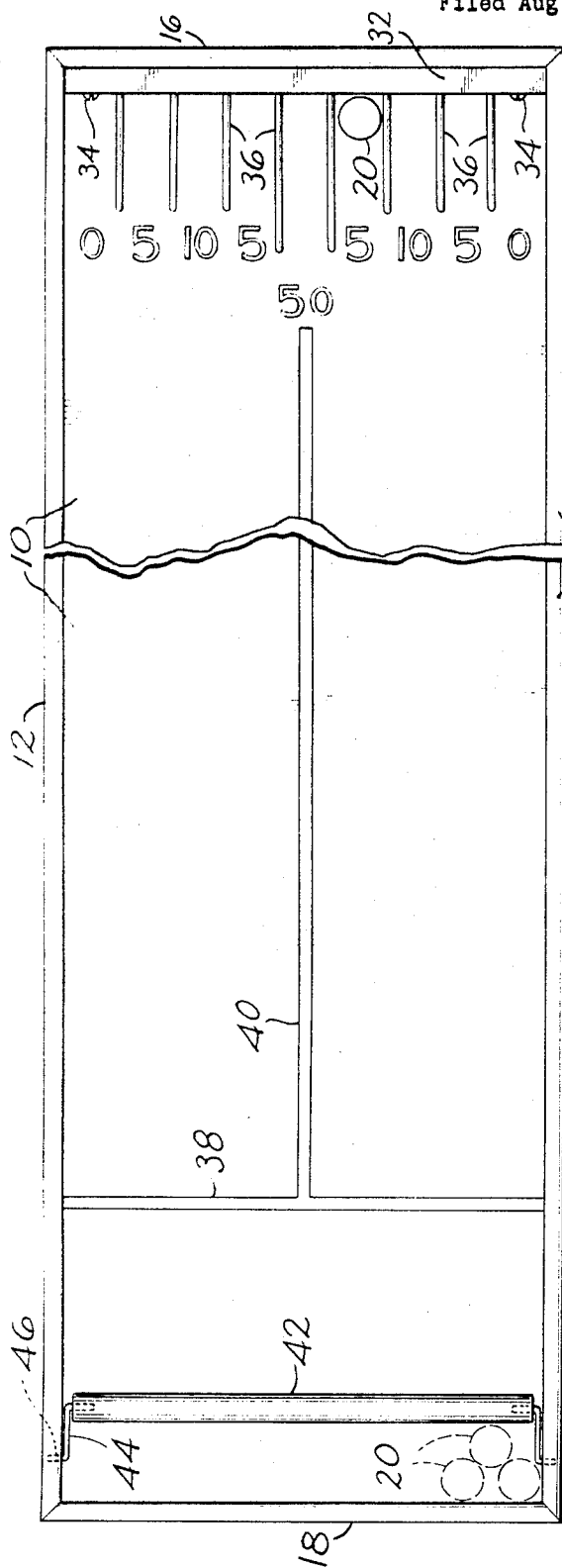


Fig. 1.

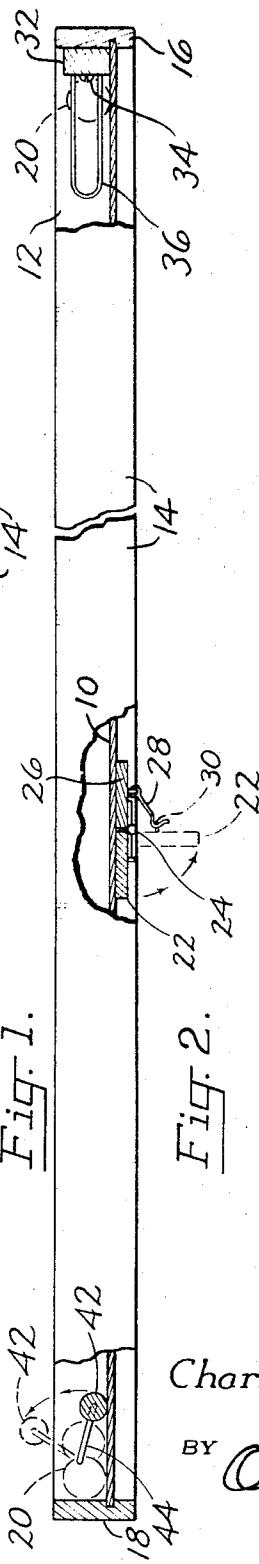


Fig. 2.

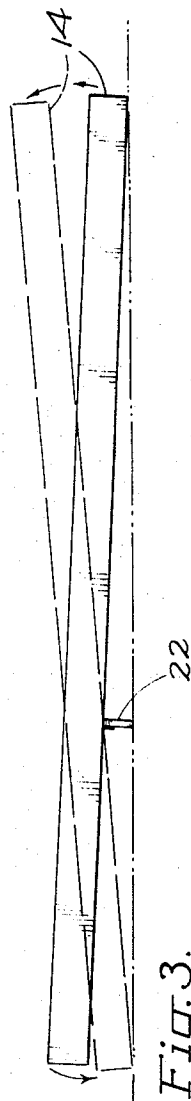


Fig. 3.

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**GAME WITH BALL-RECEIVING SPACED
DIVIDER MEMBERS**

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4 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A plurality of laterally spaced and laterally resilient, elongated U-shaped wire dividers are mounted above the base member of a game board, at the front end thereof, with the closed ends of the wires extending toward the rear end of the board freely above the base member, the dividers defining ball-receiving compartments between them. A retractable fulcrum on the underside of the base member is positioned rearward of the longitudinal center of the latter for pivoting the board between forward and rearward inclined positions, and a pivoted ball retainer is mounted adjacent the rear end of the board for retractably retaining playing balls.

This invention relates to games, and more particularly to games of the class in which balls are rolled along the surface of a game board to enter compartments designated by various magnitudes of scoring points, with the object of attaining the highest score.

The principal object of the present invention is the provision of an amusement game of the class described in which resilient means are utilized to define a plurality of ball-receiving compartments, thereby minimizing the effect of skill and maximizing the element of chance in attaining highest score.

Another object of the present invention is the provision of a game of the class described wherein the game board includes means providing a support by which the board may be inclined downward toward the ball-receiving compartments, or inclined downwardly toward the opposite end, for returning the played balls to the starting end.

Still another object of this invention is the provision of a game of the class described in which the game board includes an adjustable barrier at the starting end, movable between an elevated position above the board to allow returning balls to pass under it, and a lowered position adjacent the board to retain behind it the balls returned from the scoring compartments.

The foregoing and other objects and advantages of this invention will appear from the following detailed description, taken in connection with the accompanying drawing in which:

FIG. 1 is a foreshortened plan view of an amusement game embodying the features of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a foreshortened side elevation viewed from the bottom in FIG. 1, parts being broken away to disclose details of construction; and

FIG. 3 is a side elevation showing the game board in ball-playing position in solid lines and in ball-return position in dash lines.

Referring particularly to FIGS. 1 and 2 of the drawing, the amusement game of the present invention includes an elongated game board which comprises a base member 10, confining side walls 12 and 14, front wall 16 and rear wall 18. The walls project upwardly from the base member to confine the playing balls 20 within the area of the base member. The walls also, preferably, project below the base member to provide a marginal support for the base member and also to provide a space under the base

member and within the lower plane of the walls for a retractable fulcrum member.

In the embodiment illustrated, the fulcrum member comprises a transversely elongated bar 22 pivoted on the transverse axis of the hinge 24 which is secured to a transverse block 26 secured to the underside of the base member. The bar thus is pivotable between a retracted position adjacent and parallel to the underside of the base member, as indicated in solid lines in FIG. 2, and an extended position projecting downward substantially normal to the plane of the base member, as indicated in dash lines. The fulcrum bar is retained in this extended position by such means as the cooperating hook 28 and eye 30. The fulcrum bar is located rearwardly of the longitudinal center of the game board, so that the latter normally inclines downward toward the front wall.

A transverse block 32 is mounted at the front end of the base member, extending upwardly therefrom and secured in position by such means as the screws 34 which anchor in the front wall. This block supports a plurality of laterally spaced and laterally resilient U-shaped wires 36 which are disposed in vertical planes and project toward the rear end of the board. The wires serve as dividers to define between them a plurality of ball-receiving compartments. The wires are spaced upwardly from the base member to insure maximum resilience.

The lateral spacing between adjacent wires, and between the outer wires and side walls, is chosen to be only slightly greater than the diameter of the playing balls 20. Thus, for example, playing balls of relatively soft rubber and having a diameter of $1\frac{3}{16}$ inches, dictate the spacing between adjacent wires to be about $1\frac{15}{16}$ inches.

By providing only a very slightly larger space between adjacent wires than the diameter of the balls, and also by providing resilience in the wires and in the balls, the extreme difficulty of utilizing skill in directing the balls from the rearward, starting end of the board, into a selected compartment defined by a pair of adjacent wires, will be appreciated. The difficulty of utilizing skill in directing a ball into a specified compartment is further enhanced by rounding the rearward, closed ends of the U-shaped wires, to minimize the area of contact with the ball.

The central pair of wires preferably project farther rearward than the wires spaced laterally outward therefrom, and the ball-receiving compartment defined by these central wires is accorded the highest scoring point value, for example 50 as illustrated, for the obvious reason that it is the most difficult to enter. The chambers immediately adjacent the central chamber are accorded score point values of 5; the next outward chamber 10; the next outward chambers 5; and the outermost chambers no score point value.

The balls are playing from the rearward, starting end of the board, for example from any position behind a transverse foul line 38, the balls being rolled one at a time either directly toward the downwardly inclined front end, as for example along the central longitudinal guide line 40, or by banking the balls off the side walls.

After the balls have been played and the score totaled, downward pressure is exerted at the rearward end of the board sufficient to cause the latter to rock about the fulcrum bar 22 to the position illustrated in dash lines in FIG. 3. The balls thus return by gravity to the rearward end of the board.

Means is provided for retaining the balls at the rearward end of the board, in readiness for play. In the embodiment illustrated, a transverse bar 42 is supported between the side walls by the offset arms 44 for pivotal movement about the common axis of the supporting pivot ends 46 of the arms. When the balls are to be returned to the starting end of the board, the retaining bar 42 is

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swung upward, as indicated by the arrows in FIG. 2, to allow the balls to pass under it. The bar then is swung downward to the solid line position, thus retaining the playing balls in the area behind it.

Although various methods of play may be devised, the preferred method of play is to allow one player to roll a plurality of balls, for example five balls of one color, after which a second player plays a group of five balls of a different color. The scores of each player then are totaled, and the balls returned to the starting end of the board and the play repeated as often as necessary until one player reaches a predetermined magnitude of score.

When it is desired to store the game board when not in use, the hook 28 is disengaged from the eye 30 and the fulcrum bar 22 retracted to the solid line position illustrated in FIG. 2 where it is confined within the lower margins of the peripheral wall.

It will be apparent to those skilled in the art that various changes may be made in the size and relative dimensions of the game board, the number, width and depth of the ball-receiving compartments, and the corresponding diameter of the playing balls, as well as other structural details described hereinbefore, without departing from the spirit of this invention and the scope of the appended claims.

Having now described my invention and the manner in which it may be used, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. An amusement game, comprising:
 - (a) a game board including an elongated base member having upstanding marginal walls and having a front end and a rear end,
 - (b) a plurality of laterally spaced and laterally resilient elongated divider members mounted at the front end of the board above the base member and projecting toward the rear end of the board freely above the base member, the divider members defining ball-receiving compartments between them,
 - (c) at least one playing ball having a diameter smaller than the lateral spacing between adjacent divider members, and

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(d) ball retainer means mounted pivotally adjacent the rear end of the board for movement between a retracted position upward from the base member for passage of a playing ball under the retainer means, and an operative position upon the base member for retaining a playing ball on the area of the base member rearward of the retainer means.

2. The amusement game of claim 1 wherein each divider member is supported at the front end of and above the base member and comprises a U-shaped wire disposed in a vertical plane above the base member with the closed end thereof extending toward the rear end of the board.

3. The amusement game of claim 1 wherein the central pair of adjacent divider members are of equal length and project toward the rear end of the board to equal distances greater than the divider members spaced laterally outward therefrom.

4. The amusement game of claim 1 including fulcrum means mounted pivotally on the under side of the base member for adjustment between a retracted position adjacent the base member and an extended position projecting downward from the base member for supporting the board for pivotal movement between forward and rearward inclined positions, and lock means releasably interconnecting the base member and fulcrum means for securing the latter in said extended position.

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