The present invention relates to a toy and, more particularly, to a toy requiring skill in its handling and of the type including a racket and a ball attached to the racket by means of an elastic cord.

The general object of the present invention resides in the provision of a toy of the type described, which is combined with a ball catching device affording a greater variety of play and handling as compared to the conventional toy.

Yet another object of the present invention resides in the provision of a toy of the character described, which requires a certain amount of skill in order to be able to catch the ball and retain the same in the catching device.

Another object of the present invention resides in the provision of a toy having a catching device of the character described, which serves also as means for storing the ball when the toy is not in use.

Yet another object of the present invention resides in the provision of a toy of the character described, which is of simple and relatively inexpensive construction.

The foregoing and other important objects of the present invention will become more apparent during the following disclosure and by referring to the drawings, in which:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of the toy in accordance with the present invention;

FIGURE 2 is a side view of the racket or flattened bat and a longitudinal section of the catching device.

FIGURE 3 is a fragmentary view of the catching device, the ball, and the racket, of the type described.

Referring now more particularly to the drawings in which like reference characters indicate like elements throughout, the toy in accordance with the invention consists essentially in a racket 1, constituted by a plate-like member having an integral handle 2 at one end and a ball catching device, or basket 3, at the other end, a ball 4 being attached to the racket 1 by means of an elastic cord or band 5.

Racket 1 is of elongated shape and its main portion is defined by a straight front edge 6 and straight lateral edges 7. Racket 1 is flat and is preferably made of plywood and handle 2, which has a smaller width in order to be grasped with one hand, is an integral part of the racket 1 and forms an extension of the latter in the same plane as its main portion.

Ball 4 is preferably made of sponge rubber or other elastic or resilient material, and its elastic band or cord 5 is attached to one of the main faces of racket 1 slightly forwardly of the rear end of the catching device 3.

The catching device 3 is preferably made of rigid plastic material molded into shape. It has the general form of a half truncated cone defining a main part 8 having a curved transverse section, but slightly flattened in its zone directly opposite racket 1. The catching device 3 flares from back to front and forms at the front an opening 9 which is larger in size than back opening 10.

The lateral marginal portions of the catching device 3 are bent to form portion 11, having an X-shaped cross-section overlapping the lateral edges 7 of racket 1 and secured thereto by means of staples 12 or other securing means.

Front opening 9 is defined by inwardly directed front flange 13, which is extended to overlap and cover the ends of finished edge 6 of racket 1 and to join with the L-shaped portion 11.

Preferably, a strip 14, integral with the catching device, entirely covers the front edge 6 of racket 1. When seen in longitudinal section, the main portion 8 of catching device 3 forms a somewhat S-shaped curve.

Back opening 10 is provided with an inwardly directed flange 15 at its periphery. Said flange 15 is located in a plane which is slightly forwardly inclined with respect to racket 1, whereas front flange 13 of the catching device is located in a plane which is slightly rearwardly inclined with respect to racket 1. This enables to stand the toy on a table or other surface, on the front flange 13 and strip 14, in stable position.

The main part 8 of catching device 3 is provided at its external face with a series of longitudinal grooves 16 forming ribs 16' at the inside face of the catching device. These ribs 16' are substantially equally spaced, parallel to each other, and terminate at the front and at the back of the catching device short of front and back edges 13 and 15, respectively.

The toy in accordance with the present invention is used in the following manner:

Handle 2 is grasped with one hand and ball 4 is caused to bounce off the main face of racket 1 opposite to catching device 3. The ball is thrown away from the racket, but is returned by elastic cord 5. The process is repeated. This is a conventional manner of using the toy. However, at any time, racket 1 can be turned in a manner to present front opening 9 to the returning ball being pulled by elastic cord 5.

It is essential to properly align the catching device 3 with respect to the trajectory of the returning ball in order that the latter may enter the catching device without striking front flange 13 or edge 6 of the racket 1.

Upon entering the catching device 3, the ball 4 becomes wedged between the main face of racket 1 and ribs 16', and the latter positively retain the ball 4 inside the catching device 3, because ribs 16' gradually approach the main face of racket 1 towards the back of the catching device.

When the toy is not in use, ball 4 can be forced further rearwardly within the catching device to finally take a position rearwardly of the rear ends of ribs 16', in order to be retained between said ribs and the back flange 15 of the catching device.

In order to retrieve the ball, the latter is pushed forwardly with the fingers, or other object inserted through back opening 10.

The toy in accordance with the present invention requires a certain amount of skill in the handling of racket 1 in order to catch the ball and retain the same within device 3. Moreover, the act of aligning the catching device with the ball upon the return movement of the latter, must be made very quickly because the time allowed for this movement starts when the ball is struck with the external main face of the racket 1 and finishes when the ball enters the catching device under the action of elastic cord 3.

While a preferred embodiment has been illustrated and described, it is understood that various modifications may be resorted to without departing from the scope of the appended claims.

What I claim is:

1. A toy comprising a flat perforate racket having a front edge and a handle at the opposite end, a ball, an elastic cord attached to said ball and to one of the main faces of said racket whereby said ball can be made to be bounced off said main face in a repeating manner, and a rigid, unitary, molded catching device carried on a second of said main faces, said catching device having generally the shape of a half truncated cone, the longitudinal edges of which are secured to the longitudinal edges of said racket, the wider end of said catching device being disposed closely adjacent, and generally parallel to the front edge of said racket, said catching device having a
front opening for receiving said ball and longitudinal spaced ribs integrally formed in said catching device and protruding inwardly therein for wedging said ball and retaining the same in said catching device.

2. A toy as claimed in claim 1, wherein said catching device is provided with an opening at the back thereof and said ribs terminate short of said back opening whereby said ball can be retained rearwardly of said ribs and can be dislodged by an object inserted through said back opening to push said ball forwardly of said catching device.

3. A toy as claimed in claim 2, wherein said front and back openings are provided with an inwardly directed flange along their periphery.

4. A toy as claimed in claim 2, wherein the longitudinal marginal portions of said catching device have an L-shaped cross-section overlapping the longitudinal edges of said racket.

5. A toy as claimed in claim 4, wherein said catching device has a strip integral therewith covering said front edge of said racket.

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