

June 27, 1967

E. W. ANDERSON ETAL

3,328,031

BASEBALL GAME WITH DISENGAGEABLE BASE RUNNER PEGS

Filed Feb. 27, 1964

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1

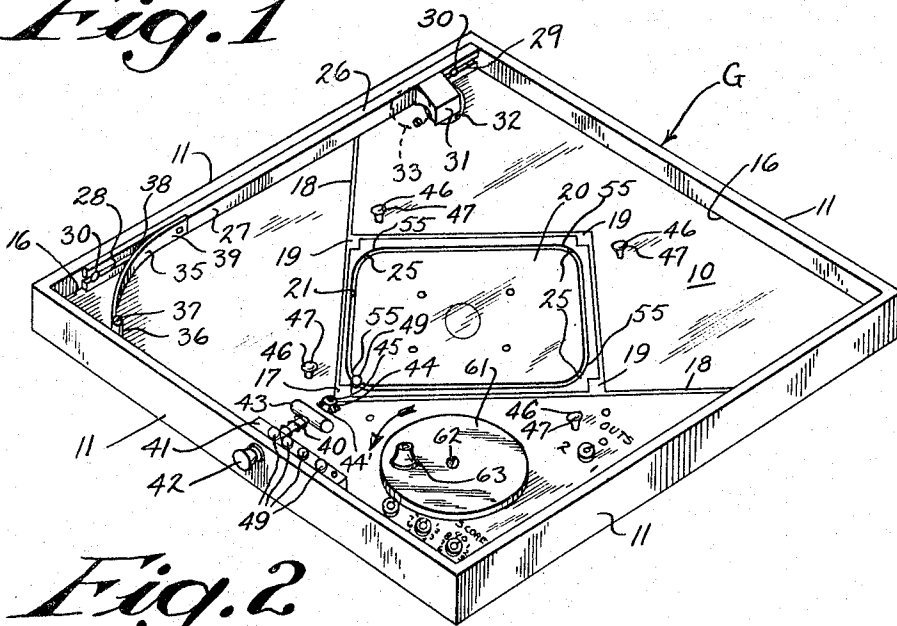


Fig. 2

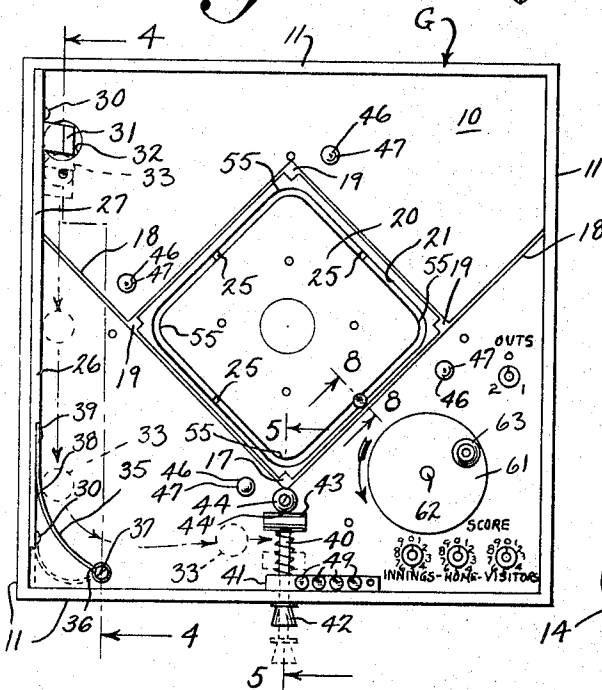


Fig. 5

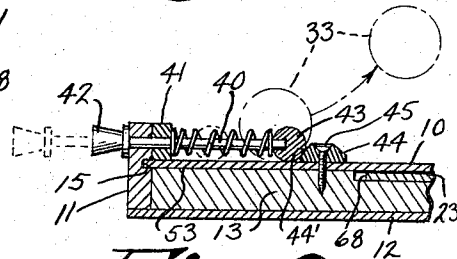
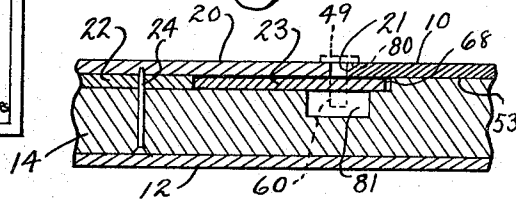


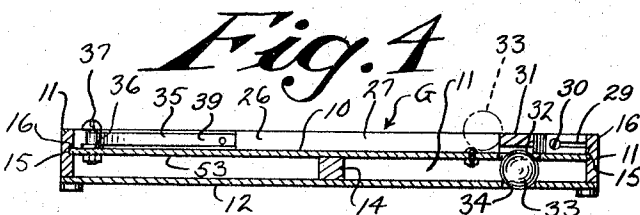
Fig. 6



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2 Sheets-Sheet 2

Fig. 3

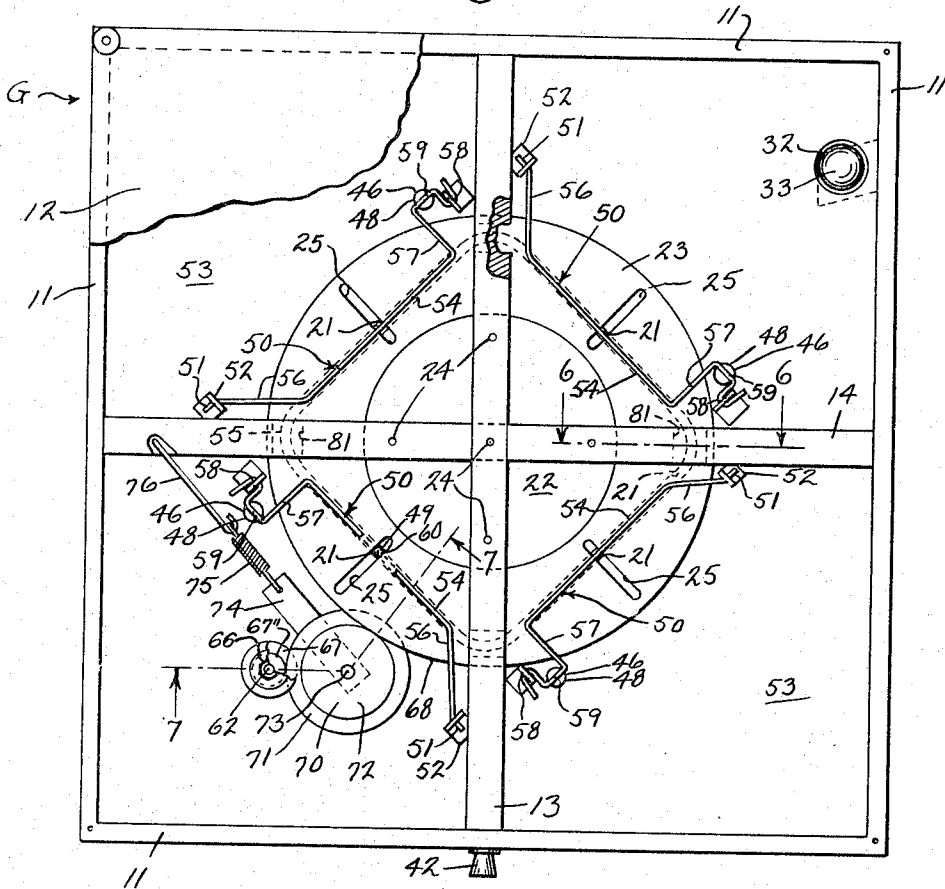


Fig. 1

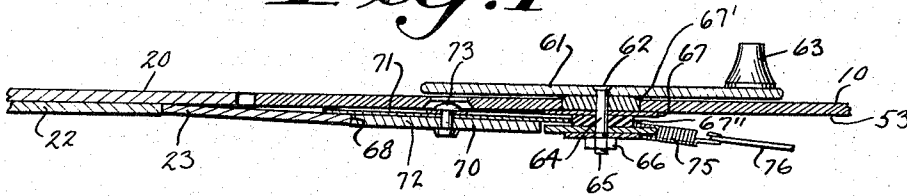
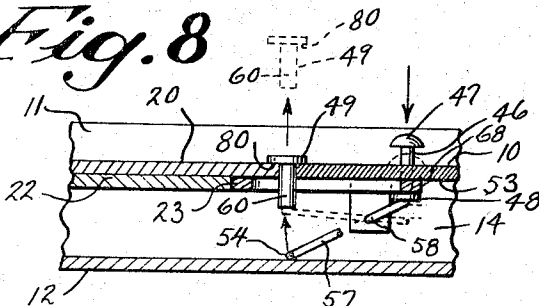


Fig. 8



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3,328,031

BASEBALL GAME WITH DISENGAGEABLE BASE RUNNER PEGS

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7 Claims. (Cl. 273—89)

This invention appertains to toys and games and more particularly to improvements in parlor baseball games.

Our present invention represents an improvement over the type of game shown and described in United States Patent No. 2,075,960 issued April 6, 1937 to George F. Reichel and entitled "Parlor Baseball Game." The invention as set forth in the above mentioned patent described a baseball game wherein a ball was pitched through an enclosed chute and directed toward a plunger representing a bat. When the ball was struck by the plunger it was again directed through a chute and upwardly into a spiral bowl-shaped receptacle located centrally of the game board. Means was also provided to propel a pin representing a base runner about the board and to eject or remove the pin from its holder to represent a "put-out" and the like. The game as set forth in the Reichel patent required a certain amount of skill and a competitive spirit between the players developed as a result of playing the game. However, the means for propelling the base runner and for making the "put-outs" was complicated and the manner of pitching the ball was fairly limited.

It is, therefore, a primary object of our invention to provide an improved parlor baseball game which is of a considerably simpler construction than the game shown and described in the above mentioned patent but which nevertheless, requires a higher degree of skill and technique to play successfully.

Another important object of our present invention is to provide novel improved means for propelling or pitching the ball toward the bat and in being able to vary the speed and direction of the ball toward the bat or plate.

A further object of our present invention is to provide a novel parlor baseball game having an improved and simplified means for propelling the runner about the bases.

Another object of our present invention is to provide an improved parlor baseball game wherein "put-outs" may be made by ejecting the runner from the base line and wherein the structure and means for so ejecting the pin or runner is simplified and positive in its operation.

Still another object of our present invention resides in providing a simple and improved parlor baseball game wherein the ball is pitched and batted on the exposed upper surface of the playing field in plain view, and wherein means is provided to deflect the ball after it is batted either into the air or to one side or the other of the playing field depending upon the skill of the batter and skill and technique used by the pitcher.

A salient feature of our present invention resides in providing an improved parlor baseball game which more nearly simulates the well-known outdoor game and wherein a high degree of skill and technique is required to play the game successfully and wherein the necessity of the "element of luck" is greatly reduced.

A further object of our invention is to provide a simple, practical and reliable construction that is economical to manufacture, easy to assembly and positive in its operation.

With the above and other objects in view, which will more readily appear as the nature of the invention is better understood, the same consists in the novel con-

struction, combination and arrangement of parts and method of playing the game as hereinafter will be more fully described, illustrated and claimed.

A preferred and practical embodiment of our invention is shown in the accompanying drawings, in which,

FIGURE 1 is a top view in perspective of our novel parlor baseball game showing in dotted lines the proper position of the ball prior to pitching or directing the same toward the bat with a pin representing a base runner in the initial position at home plate prior to propelling the pin toward first base after the ball has been batted;

FIGURE 2 is a top plan view of the game illustrating in dotted lines the direction of the ball toward the batting area or plate, and also illustrating in dotted and full lines the different positions of the pitching guide member for varying the direction of the ball toward the plate, a pin representing the runner being shown in midway position between home and first base in response to movement of the crank in the direction of the arrows;

FIGURE 3 is a bottom plan view of my novel game with the bottom panel partly removed to illustrate further details in its construction;

FIGURE 4 is a vertical section taken through the game, the section being represented by the line 4—4 of FIGURE 2 of the drawings and looking in the direction of the arrows and showing in full lines the means for storing the ball when the game is not in use and illustrating in dotted lines the proper position of the ball prior to pitching in playing the game;

FIGURE 5 is an enlarged fragmentary section taken on the line 5—5 of FIGURE 2 of the drawings, looking in the direction of the arrows and illustrating in dotted lines how the ball is batted toward the playing field;

FIGURE 6 is a fragmentary section taken on the line 6—6 of FIGURE 3 of the drawings, and looking in the direction of the arrows;

FIGURE 7 is an enlarged fragmentary section taken on the line 7—7 of FIGURE 3 looking in the direction of the arrows and illustrating details in the construction of the crank and means for propelling the pin or player about the bases, and

FIGURE 8 is an enlarged fragmentary section taken on the line 8—8 of FIGURE 2 of the drawings, looking in the direction of the arrows and illustrating in full and dotted lines the novel means for ejecting the pin or runner from the base line for making "put-outs."

Referring now to the drawings in detail wherein similar reference characters designate corresponding parts throughout the several views the letter G generally indicates one type of our improved parlor baseball game and the same includes broadly an upper playing surface or board 10, side wall panels 11, a bottom 12 and supporting cross-bars 13 and 14, respectively. The various component parts of my game can be made of any desired material but in the preferred form the side walls or panels 11 are formed of wood in such a manner as to define a substantially rectangular shape and the playing board 10 has its peripheral edges 15 received in suitable slots 16 formed in the walls or panels 11. Thus, the playing surface is recessed below the top edges of the walls or panels and held firmly in position. Imprinted on the top surface of the board 10 are the indications of the baseball playing field, which include the regulation home plate representation 17, foul lines 18 and various bases 19.

Within the representation of the diamond the board 10 is cut out to provide a large opening with rounded curved corners. A suitable piece 20 is then provided the dimensions of which are such that when the piece 20 is centered within the opening a space will be provided between its peripheral edge and the edge of the open-

ing and thus a continuous groove 21 is had. This piece 20 is of a size and configuration so that its upper surface lies on the same level with the playing surface 10 of the board and secured to its under surface is a smaller rounded hub piece and loosely fitted on this hub piece 22 is a ring member 23. This ring member 23 is mounted so that it is free to turn or rotate about the hub member 22 and the hub member as well as the piece 20 is secured in place by nails 24 or the like which are fastened through the respective supporting cross-bars 13 and 14. The ring member 23 is also provided with transversely extending equidistantly spaced slots 25 and these slots are of such a size that regardless of the position of the ring 23 in reference to the groove 21 a portion of the slot will always be in alignment with the groove. The purpose of this will become readily apparent as the operation and playing of the game is described. On one side of the playing field we provide a pitching guide member 26 and this member merely includes a sliding slat 27 of a length which is of shorter dimension than the inside length of the corresponding wall or panel 11. Each end of the slat is provided with a longitudinally extending central groove 28 and 29, respectively, and within the groove to guide the slat 27 in its movement in relation to the wall 11 we provide a pair of headed pins or screws as desired 30. Thus, it can be seen that the slat 27 can be moved longitudinally from its full line position to its dotted line position FIGURE 2 and held in proper relation to the wall 11 by means of the aforementioned guide pins or screws 30. At one end of the slat 27 we provide a block or handle piece 31. When this piece 31 is in its retracted full line position it overlies an aperture 32 provided in the playing board 10 and this aperture is of a size and configuration to receive the ball 33. This ball will be of any desired type, but for purposes of the game it is in the nature of a Ping-pong ball. Directly under the aperture 32 we provide a smaller aperture 34 in the bottom 12 upon which the ball 33 is set when not in play. Thus as shown primarily in FIGURE 4 of the drawings, the ball can be held within the game proper and not be lost when the same is not in use. At the end of the slat opposite the block 31, we secure a flexible spring band 35 one end of which 36 is anchored to a pin 37 secured to the surface of the board 10. To provide a smooth, continuous, uninterrupted surface from the inner side of the slat 27 to the flexible band member 35, we notch or cut out the end 38 of the slat and recess the band end 39 therein. In order to propel or bat the ball onto the playing board 10 or entirely off the board in what is termed a "fly ball" we provide a spring actuated plunger 40 which is slidably supported by the wall 11 and the block 41 and has one end provided with the handle 42 acting as a stop and the retracting means for the plunger. The end opposite the handle 42 has a transversely extending barrel shaped batting piece 43 secured thereto and, located directly in front of the batting piece 43 when the batting piece is in its extended full line position, is a ball deflector 44, which is secured in place by means of the recessed screw or nail 45. This ball deflector 44 is in the nature of a button and its peripheral wall 44' has a sloping or conical shape. Adjacent each of the representations of home plate and various bases, we provide a small opening in the playing board 10 and within the opening is loosely and slidably mounted a button 46. The buttons 46 are each provided with a rounded upper head portion 47 and a flat disc shaped member 48 on the opposite end of the shank. The purpose of each of the buttons 46 will also become readily apparent as the description proceeds.

If desired we may also provide various scoring indicia and indicators, such as a means for keeping track of the inning and score for the home team, and visitors, and further may provide additional indications which will

show the number of outs, etc., so that the play and score can be kept track of as the game proceeds.

It should be noted that the pitching guide member 26, the batting piece 43 and the means for propelling the pin or peg 49 (the runner) are all operative in relation to the flat playing surface 10 and thus the game more nearly simulates a real baseball game in appearance and in the competitive spirit developed.

Attention is now directed more particularly to FIG. 3 of the drawings, and it can be seen that supporting cross-members 13 and 14 not only brace the walls or side panels 11, but form the supporting structure for the ring 23 and for bracing the means for rotating the ring 23.

The pins 49 are utilized during the game to represent players and in the description of the Rules and Instructions and operation it will be apparent that these headed pins are placed in the groove 21 in such a manner that they are received in one of the transversely extending slots 25 in ring 23 and as the ring 23 is rotated, the respective pin 49 will obviously be moved along the groove 21 from one base to another. In playing the game a "put-out" must be represented, and this is accomplished by ejecting the pin or player from the groove 21 prior to the pin's travel toward a respective base. To accomplish this, we provide a series of equidistantly identically formed wire ejecting levers 50, one provided for each representation of a base line.

Therefore each wire ejecting lever has one end 51 pivotally secured to a bracket 52 depending from the bottom surface 53 of the playing board 10 and each lever includes an elongated stretch 54 in line with and extending parallel with the respective portion of the groove 21 representing the base line. At the point where each base line is joined the groove is rounded as indicated by the reference numeral 55 and the stretch 54 terminates at either end prior to the round portion 55 of the groove and is joined to its pivot points 51 by an inwardly positioned stretch 56 and at its other end is provided with the arrangement 57 where it is similarly pivoted at 58 to the under surface 53 of the board. The lever arrangement has a short stretch 59 extending directly under the flat disc 48 of the button 46. Thus, it can be seen that by pressing down on the head 47 of the button 46 the ejection member will be pivoted so that the stretch 54 is directed upwardly in the direction of the arrows FIGURE 8, and engages the shank 60 of the respective pin 49 and ejects the same out of the groove 21 as shown by the dotted line FIGURE 8. This, then, is termed a "put-out" and obviously after pin 49 has traveled a sufficient distance along the representation of the base line and has reached a certain curved portion 55 of the groove it will not be engaged by the stretch 54 and a "put-out" will not be had.

One of the novel arrangements of our present invention resides in the relatively simple but positive means for rotating the ring 23, and thus causing a pin 49 to move rapidly within the groove 21 to represent a player running the bases. This means includes a flat disc 61 pivoted at its axial center 62 to the surface of the playing board 10 adjacent the batting plunger and this disc is provided with a handle 63 to facilitate the rotation of the same. The disc 61 is for this purpose provided with the inwardly extending axle 64 one end of which is threaded to receive a lock nut 66, and this axle is received through a suitable aperture formed for this purpose in a hub 67'. Beneath the hub 67' is a spacing washer 67 engaging the under side of the playing board and also provided to give the proper frictional contact upon turning the handle 63 is a rubber hub member 67''. From the drawings, it can be seen that the axle 64 is spaced somewhat from the peripheral edge 68 of the ring 23 and the thickness of ring 23 is slightly less than the thickness of the hub piece 22. To provide for a drive connection from the friction member 67'' and ring 23 an intermediate resiliently mounted free floating wheel is positioned as indicated by the reference numeral

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70. This drive wheel 70 includes an inner circular piece of metal 71 and a smaller circular wood piece 72 both of which are mounted for free rotation by the pin 73 to one end of a strip 74. The other end of the strip 74 has secured thereto a spring 75 and the spring is in turn anchored to the supporting cross member 14 by a length of wire 76. The metal disc 71 is in frictional engagement with the rubber member 67'' and the wood portion 70 thereof frictionally engages the outer periphery 68 of the ring 23. It should be obvious that the disc 61 and rubber friction member 67'' are splined to the axle 64 and will rotate therewith. Thus, by rotating the handle 63 in the direction of the arrows FIGURES 1 and 2, the ring 23 will be turned and a player or peg 49 received in any one of the transverse slots 25 will be moved along the groove 21. This means for rotating the ring 23 has been found to be quite positive and economical to produce and there is enough tension in the spring 75 to provide the correct amount of frictional engagement between the periphery of the ring 23, member 70, metal disc 71 and rubber friction member 67''. Thus the disc 61 can be rotated at a relatively fast pace and due to the resilient mounting of the member 74 the desired frictional engagement will always be present and this simple mechanism will in turn absorb abuses, wear and punishment.

From the foregoing it can be seen that the headed pin or peg 49 is of a size and configuration to be placed in the groove 21 with its shoulder 80 (FIG. 8) resting on the surface of the playing field or board 10. To start the game therefore, a player represented by the peg 49 is selected and one of the transverse slots 25 of the flat ring 23 is aligned with home plate 17 and the peg is placed in groove 21 and extends through aligned slot 25.

The game is played in such a manner as to simulate the real, outdoor game and involves two or more persons. Similar or like rules are applied, for example, three strikes, four balls, fair and foul balls, flies, grounders, put-outs etc. If only two people are playing, then one person obviously represents the team at bat and the other represents the team pitching and in the field. The person representing the team pitching and in the field utilizes our novel pitching guide member 26 and places the ball against the inner surface of the block 30. To propel the ball, the player uses his forefinger and pushes the ball with a gentle snapping motion. A fast or slow ball can be thrown depending on how the ball is snapped and variations in the direction of the ball toward the batting mechanism or bat represented by the member 43 can be had by moving the block with the thumb at the same time or before or after the ball is snapped. The ball moves in the direction of the arrows and, obviously, the bat or member 43 is retracted by means of the handle 42 against the action of the spring 40 to its dotted line position by the player representing the team at bat. Changing from fast or slow snapping movements will increase the deception of the pitch and changing the distortion of the flexible band 35 will also increase the deception by changing the direction of the ball toward the plate and bat. Any ball that can be reached by releasing the plunger is considered a strike, all other types of pitches are considered balls, unless the batter strikes them or strikes at them, and as previously brought out, three strikes comprise an out and four balls puts a man on base. As the ball approaches the proximity of the bat 43 the player representing the team at bat releases the plunger and if the ball is engaged by the member 43 it is then propelled toward the playing field in a manner similar to the dotted line representation in FIGURE 5 of the drawings, and the ball will be deflected into the air or to the side by the deflecting button 45. A ball must be hit between the foul lines in order to be considered a fair ball; otherwise, as in a real game, it is considered a foul ball and represented as a strike if there is one strike or less on the batter. After a fair ball has been hit by the batter, he must then propel the runner represented by peg 49 to the base, i.e., first base as fast as possible. This is

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accomplished by turning the disc 61 by means of the handle 63. Therefore, a desired and preferred way to bat would be to withdraw the plunger with the left hand and simultaneously with the right hand resting on the handle 63 of disc 61 start rotating the disc in the direction of the arrows FIGURE 1 and FIGURE 2, as soon as the ball is struck. It should be brought out at this point that by turning the disc 61 in the direction opposite the arrows the rotation and direction of the ring 23 will be reversed. This would occur where a runner is situated between first and second bases, and a ball is hit, and the runner is advanced by turning the crank in the direction of the arrows but it appears obvious that he cannot reach second base. Therefore, the crank could be quickly reversed and the runner returned to the curved portion representing first base and if button 46 adjacent second base is depressed the stretch 54 of the lever mechanism would not reach the peg to disengage the same. In any event, when a fair ball has been hit it must be recovered by the player representing the pitching and fielding team and with the hand in which the ball is held he must tap the appropriate button 46, and, if a peg runner 49 is in position intermediate the bases, this will bring about an ejection of the peg from the groove and is called a "put-out." Obviously, if the runner has reached any portion of the curved stretch of the groove 21 the peg will not be ejected since it will be in a position beyond the underlying stretch 54. It should be noted that in order to provide means for the peg 49 to be carried past the supporting members 13 and 14, we provide a through slot 81 immediately under and in alignment with the curved portions of the grooves 21, note particularly FIG. 6 of the drawings.

Any fly ball caught is considered to be an "out," and if runners are on base when a fly is caught they must hold the base; otherwise, double or triple plays may be made.

From the foregoing, it can be seen that we have provided a parlor baseball game which is of very simple and rugged construction and which very closely simulates the real outdoor game and it is believed that the features and advantages of our invention will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art and it will, of course, be understood that changes in the form, proportion and minor details of construction may be resorted to without departing from the spirit of the invention or scope of the appended claims.

We claim:

1. In a baseball game, a playing field having bases, a movable batting mechanism, a pitching guide member including means for directing and guiding a pitched ball toward said batting mechanism, a base runner, means for propelling said base runner around said bases including a continuous substantially rectangular shaped groove adjacent said bases, said base runner comprising a headed peg adapted to be received in said groove with its headed portion engaging the surface of the playing field, means carried beneath said playing field in alignment with said groove for disengaging said peg from said groove and propelling means to effect a "put-out" when the peg runner is in position intermediate said bases, wherein said pitching guide member and means for directing and guiding a pitched ball includes, a movable slat slidably secured at one side of the playing field, and a flexible spring band having one end secured to one end of the slat and its other end affixed to the playing field at a point adjacent the said batting mechanism, whereby, movement of the slat will distort and flex said band to change the direction of the ball.

2. In a baseball game, a playing field having bases, a movable batting mechanism, a pitching guide member including means for directing and guiding a pitched ball toward said batting mechanism, a base runner, means for propelling said base runner around said bases including a continuous substantially rectangular shaped groove adjacent said bases, said base runner comprising a peg having an enlarged head, the undersurface of which is positioned in sliding face abutting engagement with said playing field

adjacent said groove, and a shank extending downwardly from said head and received in said groove, means carried beneath said playing field in alignment with said groove for engaging said shank and disengaging said peg from said groove and propelling means to effect a "put-out" when the peg runner is in position intermediate said bases, said means carried beneath said playing field including, a series of pivoted lever mechanisms, each lever mechanism being formed from a single length of wire, said length of wire having a relatively short stretch portion and a major stretch portion in alignment with a respective portion of the groove between adjacent bases, and means operable from said playing field for actuating said lever mechanisms to disengage a peg from said groove when said peg is in an intermediate position between adjacent bases in alignment with a major stretch portion, said means including a headed button having a shank extending through said playing field in alignment with said relatively short stretch portion.

3. In a baseball game, a playing field having bases, a movable batting mechanism, a pitching guide member including means for directing and guiding a pitched ball toward said batting mechanism, a base runner, means for propelling said base runner around said bases including a continuous substantially rectangular shaped groove adjacent said bases, said base runner comprising a headed peg adapted to be received in said groove with its headed portion engaging the surface of the playing field, means carried beneath said playing field in alignment with said groove for disengaging said peg from said groove and propelling means to effect a "put-out" when the peg runner is in position intermediate said bases, a flat guide member secured beneath the playing surface to the playing field, a flat ring piece having an enlarged central aperture receiving said guide member therein, said flat ring at all times underlying said groove, and being provided with a series of equidistantly spaced transversely extending slots each slot being aligned with said groove regardless of its position relative to said groove, and means associated with the playing field for imparting rotation to said flat ring piece.

4. In a baseball game: a playing field having bases; a groove in said playing field adjacent said bases defining a substantially rectangularly shaped area; a base runner positioned in said groove and having a lower portion extending below said playing field; means for propelling said base runner around said bases including, a thin and flat disk mounted for rotation beneath said playing field about an axis generally centrally of said area, four radially outwardly extending equiangularly spaced slots in said disk in alignment with said groove and adapted to receive the lower portion of a base runner, a drive member frictionally engaging an edge of said disk, resilient means urging said drive member and disk toward one another, means for rotating said drive member; and means carried beneath said playing field and disk for disengaging said base runner from said groove and disk to effect a "put-out" when the base runner is in a position intermediate said bases.

5. In a baseball game: a playing field having bases; a substantially rectangularly shaped groove in said playing field adjacent said bases; a base runner positioned in said groove, said base runner having an enlarged head, the undersurface of which is positioned in sliding face abutting engagement with said playing field adjacent said groove, and a shank extending downwardly from said head and extending below said playing field; means for propelling a base runner around said bases; and means for disengaging a base runner from said groove and propelling means to effect a "put-out" when the base runner is in a position intermediate said bases including four ejector members each pivotally mounted below said playing field for movement upwardly into engagement with the lower end of a base runner shank, said members being normally spaced from said lower end of said base runner shank whereby

said base runner can be propelled around said base path without interfering with said members, and four vertically movable actuators, one for each ejector member, each actuator extending from above to below said playing field to provide a manually engageable portion above said playing field and an ejector member pivoting portion below said field.

6. In a baseball game, a playing field having bases, a base runner, means for propelling said base runner around said bases including a continuous substantially rectangular shaped groove adjacent said bases, said base runner comprising a peg having an enlarged head, the under-surface of which is positioned in sliding face abutting engagement with said playing field adjacent said groove, and a shank extending downwardly from said head received in said groove, means carried beneath said playing field in alignment with said groove for engaging the bottom of said shank to disengage said peg from said groove and propelling means to effect a "put-out" when the peg runner is in position intermediate said bases, and means having a manually engageable portion above the playing field and a further portion beneath the playing field for actuating said means for disengaging said peg from said groove and said propelling means.

7. In a baseball game, a playing field having bases, a movable batting mechanism, a pitching guide member including means for directing and guiding a pitched ball toward said batting mechanism, a ball deflector secured to said playing field adjacent to and in front of said batting mechanism, said ball deflector being in the form of a circular button having a conical outer periphery, a base runner, means for propelling said base runner around said bases including a continuous substantially rectangular shaped groove adjacent said bases, a flat guide member secured beneath the playing surface to the playing field, a flat ring piece having an enlarged central aperture receiving said guide member therein, said flat ring at all times underlying said groove and being provided with a series of equidistantly spaced transversely extending slots in alignment with said groove regardless of their position relative to said groove, means associated with the playing field for imparting rotation to said flat ring piece, said base runner comprising a headed peg received in said groove with its headed portion engaging the surface of the playing field, means carried beneath said playing field in alignment with said groove for disengaging said peg from said groove and propelling means to effect a "put-out" when the peg runner is in position intermediate said bases, said means carried beneath said playing field including, a series of pivoted lever mechanisms, each lever mechanism being formed from a single length of wire, said length of wire having a relatively short stretch portion and a major stretch portion in alignment with a respective portion of the groove between adjacent bases, and means operable from said playing field for actuating said lever mechanisms to disengage a peg from said groove when said peg is in an intermediate position between adjacent bases in alignment with a major stretch portion, said means including a headed button having a shank extending through said playing field and engaging said relatively short stretch portion.

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