Sept. 15, 1964 J. ZIMMERMAN 3,148,882

BASEBALL GAME-BOARD DEVICE

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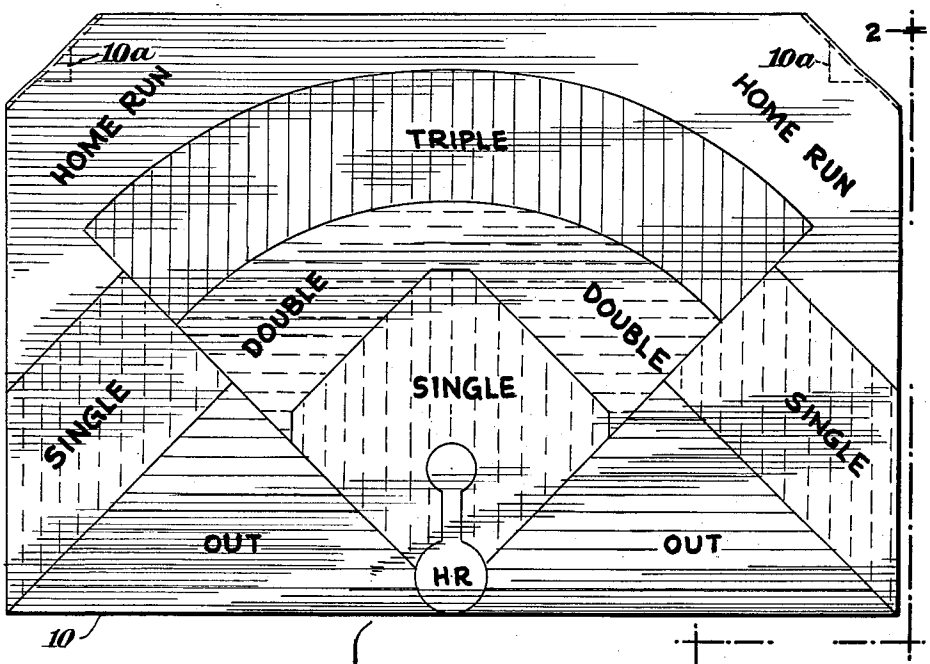


Fig. 1.

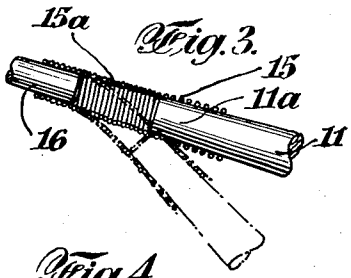


Fig. 3.

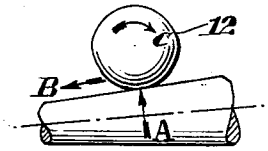
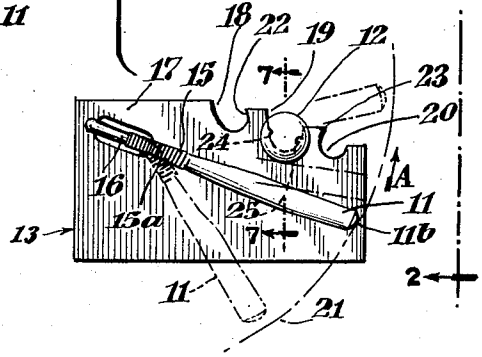


Fig. 4.



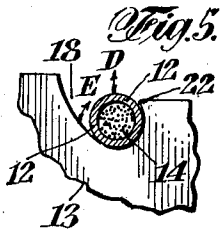


Fig. 5.

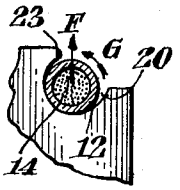


Fig. 6.



Fig. 2.

INVENTOR
Jack Zimmerman
BY
ATTORNEY

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Fig. 11.

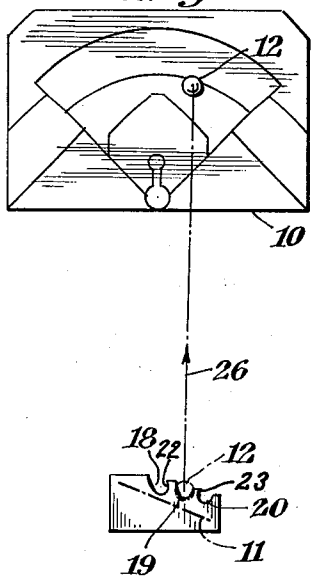


Fig. 12.

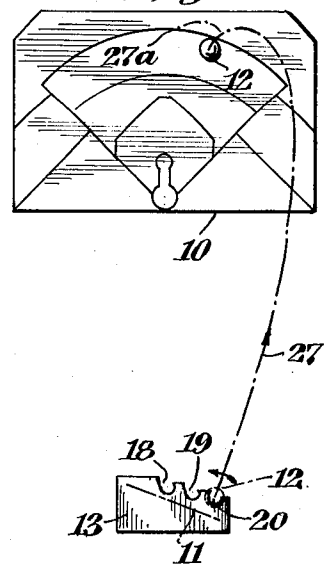


Fig. 13.

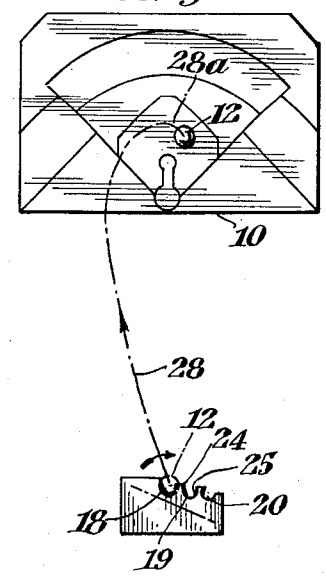


Fig. 7.

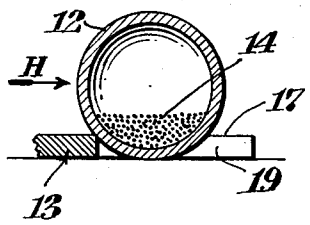


Fig. 8.

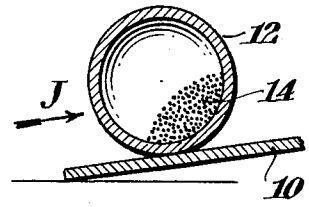


Fig. 9.

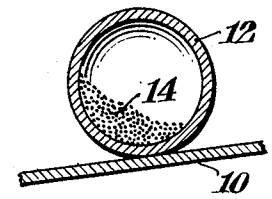


Fig. 14.

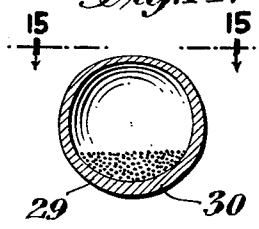
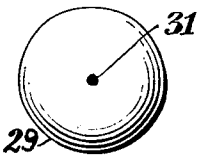


Fig. 15.



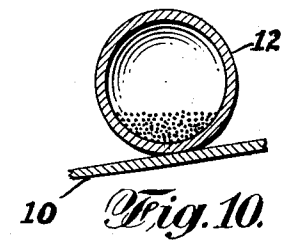


Fig. 10.

INVENTOR
Jack Zimmerman
BY E. R. Lomack
ATTORNEY

United States Patent Office 3,148,882 Patented Sept. 15, 1964

3,148,882

BASEBALL GAME-BOARD DEVICE

Jack Zimmerman, Roaring Brook Lake, Putnam Valley, N.Y.

Filed Sept. 24, 1963, Ser. No. 311,001
2 Claims. (Cl. 273—90)

This invention relates to games, and is particularly directed to devices in which there are ball-propelling means and a game-board divided into predetermined areas positioned to receive the operatively propelled ball.

It is an object of my invention to provide a game of the said category which is adapted to employ the rules of popular ball games, such as the game of baseball to which special embodiment of my invention the description hereinafter given is directed. And in this specific aspect of my invention it is my objective to employ a bat-like ball-propelling member adapted to be actuated by the player so as to direct the ball to a broad containing areas which are marked to indicate baseball plays, this embodiment of my invention having a novel ball positioner enabling the player selectively to place the ball in one of a number of different positions in relation to said bat-like member.

Another object of my invention is to provide a game of this class with ball-directing means that involve both the elements of skill and chance-controlled movements, thereby adding interest and excitement in the playing of the game. And in this aspect of my invention it is another object to provide means for producing both straight and curvilinear paths of movement of the ball, and for causing the ball to come to a stop suddenly within one of the areas having game significance in accordance with the rules.

And it is my further objective to provide a game device with the above-mentioned features which is simple in construction and easy to fabricate so that it can be a low-cost item, particularly suitable as a premium article.

Other objects, features and advantages will appear from the drawings and the description hereinafter given.

Referring to the drawings,

FIG. 1 is a plan view of the components of a form of my invention showing the game-board, ball positioner, ball and ball-propelling means in coactive operative relation, the dot-dash lines showing different positions of the bat-like propelling means during its operative movement.

FIG. 2 is a somewhat reduced side elevation of FIG. 1 looking in the direction of arrows 2—2, the ball being shown in dot-dash lines on the board.

FIG. 3 is a somewhat enlarged fragmentary plan view of the bat of FIG. 1, the spring being shown in section, the dot-dash lines indicating the flexed position of the spring upon an operative retraction of the bat.

FIG. 4 is a fragmentary plan view of the bat of FIG. 1 during its operative engagement with the ball, the arrows showing directions of movement of said members.

FIG. 5 is a fragmentary plan view of the ball positioner of my invention illustrated in FIG. 1, showing the ball operatively positioned in the left-hand pocket, the ball being sectioned substantially along line 5—5 of FIG. 2, the arrows indicating the directions of movement of the ball.

FIG. 6 is a view like FIG. 5, but showing another portion of the ball positioner and the ball operatively positioned in the right hand pocket.

FIG. 7 is an enlarged vertical fragmentary section of FIG. 1 taken along line 7—7, indicating the position of the ball just prior to being engaged by the bat (not shown) for movement in the general direction of the arrow.

FIG. 8 is a vertical section of the ball and the forward portion of the inclined board member, showing the ball at the beginning of its ascent.

FIG. 9 is a vertical section of the ball and an upper portion of the inclined board member, showing the position of the ball in retarded movement.

FIG. 10 is a section substantially like FIG. 9, showing the ball at rest.

FIGS. 11, 12 and 13 are plan views of the game-board and ball positioner showing different paths of the ball when propelled from initial positions in the three pockets, respectively, the bat being shown by dot-dash lines.

FIG. 14 is a vertical section of a modified form of ball employable in my invention.

FIG. 15 is a plan view of FIG. 14 looking in the direction of arrows 15—15.

In the baseball form of my invention illustrated, I employ a slightly inclined game-board 10 in spaced relation to the spring-mounted bat 11 so that when the bat is manually retracted and then released it will spring into a projected position to engage the ball 12 disposed within one of the three pockets of the ball positioner member 13 and thereby propel it toward said board. The said ball is hollow and contains therein a loose weight, preferably a batch of sand 14. The said pockets of the ball positioner 13 have lateral walls of various configurations, certain of said walls being proportioned and positioned so as to be adapted to engage the ball as it operatively leaves the pocket and influence the direction of its path as well as to cause it to spin, in a manner to be hereinbelow described. The spring 15 is so proportioned and connected between the mounting 16 on the flat base 17 of the ball positioner and the adjacent end of the bat that, as will more clearly hereinafter appear, when the bat is operatively moved, there will be a flexing of the spring and hence a non-arcuate path of the bat's outer end, the arrangement being such that the bat will slidably engage the ball during the time of impact thereby tending to impart a spin thereto.

Depending upon the inertial position of the batch of sand 14 after the impact, the ball will either move in a straight line or follow a curved path. In any event, when it rolls onto the board, its speed will decrease due to the board's inclination, so that at some point during the ball's movement the batch of sand 14 will gravitationally sink to the bottom of the ball and have a sudden braking effect thereupon. If the sand drops from a position on the internal wall of the ball that is not along the path of movement, the ball will tend to follow a sharply curled path just before stopping. Since the sand will naturally spread upon the inside bottom surface of the ball, the center of gravity of the weighted ball will be low, so that it will hold its position on the inclined board. The abrupt stopping of the ball, the peculiar curling movement before stopping, and the stationary position of the rollable sphere on the inclined board combine to produce a startling effect.

The particular area of the game-board at which the ball stops has scoring or other game significance, depending upon the rules. Thus, if the ball lands on the area marked "double," the player is credited with a "two-bagger" for his team, etc. It is not deemed necessary for an understanding of this invention further to elaborate on the rules or the special significance of the various markings and areas on the board.

In the particular embodiment of my invention shown in the drawings, the opposite rear corner portions 10*a* are bent downwardly and forwardly, to provide rear props for maintaining the board 10 tilted upwardly in a rear-

wardly direction. The said ball positioner **13** has the three pockets **18**, **19** and **20** facing the front edge of the board. The said spring **15** is of helical configuration, the forward portion thereof being attached to the rear or inner end **11***a* of the ball propelling bat **11**, the rear end of said spring being attached to the said mounting **16** connected to the flat base **17** of the ball positioner **13**. As illustrated, the bat **11** and the mounting **16** are in spaced relation, so that the intermediate portion **15***a* of the spring, being free of attachment to these parts, is free to flex.

The arrangement is hence such that when the bat **11** is operatively moved out of its normal inoperative position shown in full lines in FIGS. 1 and 3, the spring **15** will flex at its said intermediate portion, thereby shortening the effective radius of the bat's swing, as indicated by the dot-dash positions illustrated. Thus, during the operative retracted and projected positions of the bat, the outer end **11***b* thereof will be disposed inwardly with respect to the true arc **21** that would have been formed by end **11***b* if the effective length of the bat from its pivotal point had been constant. Hence, during the operative movement of the bat in the direction of arrow A (FIG. 1), the effective length of the bat will progressively decrease, so that when it reaches the ball it will come into slidable engagement therewith. By referring to FIG. 4 it will be seen that during the short period of the bat's contact with the ball, the rearward component of the bat's movement in the direction of arrow B, as it moves in the general direction of arrow A, will tend to cause a spinning of the ball in the direction of arrow C.

In the form of the ball positioner **13** illustrated, the pockets **18**, **19** and **20**, although all of generally arcuate shape, are of different configurations. Pocket **18** has the inwardly projecting wall portion **22** in partly overlapping relation to the opening of said pocket, so as partially to intersect the path of movement of the ball as it is operatively propelled towards the board **10**. Similarly pocket **20** has the oppositely directed inwardly projecting wall portion **23** in partly overlapping relation to its opening. The central pocket **19**, however, has no such overlapping wall portions, the lateral walls **24** and **25** thereof being in non-obstructing relation to the ball's path of movement therefrom.

The arrangement is hence such that when the ball **12** is placed in pocket **18** and struck by the bat to cause it to move in the direction of arrow D, it will be engaged by the inwardly projecting wall portion **22**, whereby a spinning motion will be imparted to the ball in the direction of the arrow E, as shown in FIG. 5. And when the ball is placed in pocket **20**, the ball will, during its operative movement in the direction of arrow F, encounter the oppositely projecting wall portion **23**, whereby an opposite spinning motion in the direction of arrow G will be imparted thereto. But when the ball is operatively placed in pocket **19**, no spinning motion will be imparted to the ball by the lateral walls **24** and **25** of said latter pocket.

In operatively employing this invention, the bat **11** is retracted and then released, whereby, due to the resiliency of the spring **15**, it will be projected for operative engagement with the ball **12** positioned in one of said pockets. When the ball is placed in the central pocket **19**, as shown in FIG. 11, and when there is no spinning movement thereof it will tend to follow the straight path **26**. When the ball is placed in pocket **20**, as shown in FIG. 12, the counterclockwise spinning of the weighted ball will tend to cause it to follow a curved path, such as path **27**. And when the ball is placed in pocket **18**, as shown in FIG. 13, the clockwise spinning motion will tend to cause the ball to follow an oppositely curved path, such as path **28**.

The effects on the ball movements of the loosely mounted sand batch **14** can be seen from FIGS. 7 to 10. Before the impact of the bat in the direction of arrow H (FIG. 7) the sand had gravitationally settled to the indicated position at the bottom of the sphere's interior. Due to the relatively sharp impact of the bat, the loose batch of sand will, through inertial action, be thrown against the rear wall of the ball, and will remain in a clump in that position if the speed of the ball is sufficiently great. At the beginning of its ascent upwardly along the board **10** in the direction of the arrow J (FIG. 8), if the ball's speed is still great enough, the said batch of sand will still tend to remain in a cluster. But as its speed decreases during its ascent, the sand will slide downwardly or otherwise settle on the lower portion of the ball's interior, as indicated in FIG. 9. Because the sand is in a loose batch, it will quickly gravitationally flow down to its lowermost position shown in FIG. 10, and will spread out in a levelling movement, thereby bringing the center of gravity of the mass, and hence of the weighted ball, to its lowest possible position. It is because of its predetermined low center of gravity that the spherical ball will quickly settle upon and remain stationary on the inclined board, as aforesaid.

In operatively emerging from either pocket **18** or **20**, the aforesaid spinning movement may cause the mass of sand **14** to cluster, after the impact, against a side of the wall, that is, it may be displaced laterally from the path of movement such as path **27** or **28**. In such event, when the ball is sufficiently slowed down during its ascent along the board **10**, the cluster of said sand may drop down from such a laterally disposed position with respect to the general path of movement as to cause a sudden curling movement at region **27***a* or **28***a* of the above-mentioned paths before stopping.

In the modified form of my invention shown in FIGS. 14 and 15, the ball **29** has a wall **30** of varying thickness, thereby adding to the variety of motions that could be imparted to the sand-weighted ball. The outer surface of the ball has the marking **31** thereon, so as to enable a player to select the position of this specially weighted ball **29** with respect to the selected pocket, to produce a desired or anticipated path of movement.

In the above description, the invention has been disclosed merely by way of example and in preferred manner; but obviously many variations and modifications may be made therein. It is to be understood, therefore, that the invention is not limited to any form or manner of practicing same, except insofar as such limitations are specified in the appended claims.

I claim:

1. In a game, a board member, a ball positioner having a plurality of recessed pockets spaced from and in facing relation to said board member, each of said pockets being proportioned operatively to accommodate therein a ball of predetermined size, and ball propelling means adjacent said pockets and adapted for engagement with a ball operatively positioned within any of said pockets for propelling it along a path in the general direction of said board, said pockets having lateral walls of different configurations, certain of said lateral walls being in different partial intersecting relations to said path, said pockets being defined by walls of substantially semi-circular configuration, the lateral wall of one of said pockets having a portion thereof extending laterally in one direction to partially overlap the opening of said pocket, and the lateral wall of another of said pockets having a portion thereof extending laterally in the opposite direction to partially overlap the opening of said latter pocket.

2. In a game, a board member inclined upwardly in a rearwardly direction, a ball positioner having a plurality of recessed pockets spaced from and in facing relation to the front of said board member, a hollow ball proportioned to fit into any of said pockets, said ball having loosely contained therein a batch of sand, and ball propelling means adjacent said pockets and adapted for operative engagement with said ball when operatively positioned within any of said pockets for propelling it

along a path in the general direction of said inclined board, said ball propelling means comprising an elongated member, a helical spring attached to the rear end thereof and extending therebeyond and leaving a rear portion free of said member, and a mounting to which the end of said rear portion is attached, whereby a portion of said spring intermediate said elongated member and said mounting is free to flex, said pockets having lateral walls of different configurations, certain of said lateral walls being in different partial intersecting relations to said path.

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