

April 29, 1924.

1,492,368

J. FUNAI

BASEBALL GAME

Filed July 1 1922

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1

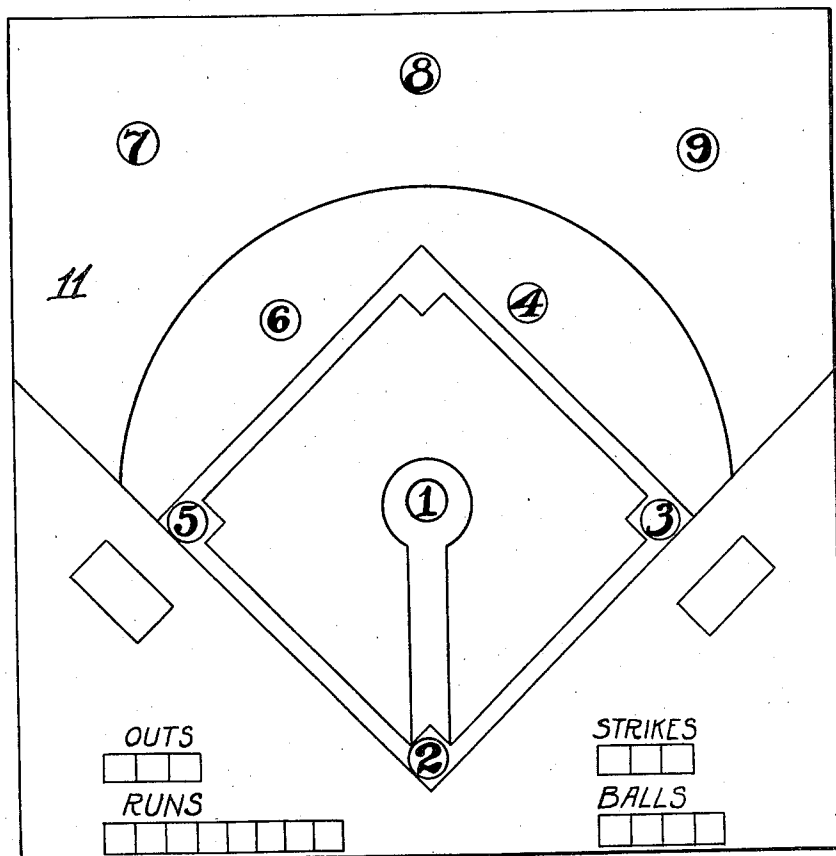


Fig. 2

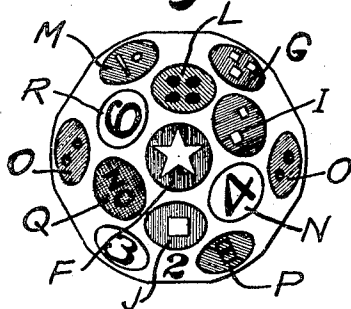


Fig. 9



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Fig. 3

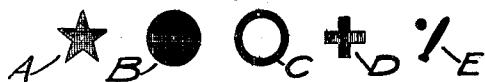


Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 4

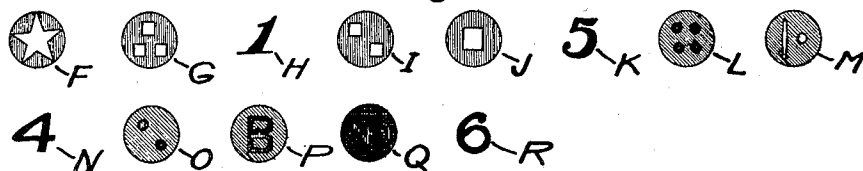


Fig. 8



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JUKICHI FUNAI, OF SEATTLE, WASHINGTON.

BASEBALL GAME.

Application filed July 1, 1922. Serial No. 572,128.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JUKICHI FUNAI, a subject of the Emperor of Japan, and resident of the city of Seattle, in the county of King and State of Washington, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Baseball Games, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to a game in the form of a baseball game which is chance controlled and wherein opportunity is presented for disposing of plays in the manner such as they would be disposed of by actual players upon a baseball diamond.

It is an object of my invention to provide play-controlling devices for such a game which will permit a wide variation in the possibilities of any one play and yet without reducing the proper proportion between the various types of plays. For instance, in a baseball game, strikes and balls considerably predominate in proportion to batted balls. Likewise, one-base hits occur considerably more frequently than home runs, and ground balls upon which a runner is thrown out are more frequent than hits. It is my object to maintain these relative proportions without involving the use of a large single indicator.

A further object is to provide play-controlling devices for such a game, certain thereof having indeterminate indications and others, whose use is indicated thereby, having either determinate or indeterminate indications, the final determinations of the play being left in suspension until the final determinate indication is indicated, and the chances for different final dispositions of such plays on different occasions being thereby enhanced.

A further object is to provide an element of surprise in the use of casual devices which may be employed under certain conditions at any time, by means of which the fortunes of one of the opponents may be advanced or retarded.

Summed up, it is my object to provide a baseball game which may be played by two opponents and which in its elements of chance, variety of plays, and suspense, will resemble closely the actual game of baseball.

My invention comprises the novel game

members and the novel indications thereon and in the relations specified and hereinafter claimed, which shall be hereinafter described in the specification, defined by the claim, and which is illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

In the accompanying drawings I have shown a typical lay-out of the elements used in playing the game, although it is to be understood that the particular arrangement illustrated may be widely varied without departing from the scope of my invention.

Figure 1 is a plan of the baseball diamond which may be employed to keep track of the plays as they occur.

Figure 2 is an elevation illustrating one of the devices which is typical of those which may be employed to control the play in my game.

Figure 3 is a chart of the indications appearing on the primary play-controlling device, or "pitcher" ball.

Figure 4 is a chart of the indications which appear upon the secondary play-controlling device, or "batter" ball, which is brought into use through the use of the primary device.

Figure 5 is a chart of the indications upon a third, or one of the determinate, play-controlling devices.

Figures 6 and 7 are charts, respectively, of the indications appearing upon two others of the determinate devices.

Figure 8 is a chart of the indications which appear upon one of the casual devices, or "base-stealing" balls.

Figure 9 is a perspective view of a counter which may be employed to indicate a base runner upon the playing field of Figure 1.

It is obviously inconvenient and practically impossible to indicate upon any single play controlling device the wide variety of plays which may occur in a baseball game, without seriously disturbing the proportionate relation of such plays. I have, therefore, provided a series of play-controlling devices, those which I prefer to employ being in the shape of balls with flattened faces, with as many of these faces to each ball as may be practicable or desirable, these devices to be rolled as dice. Such a ball is shown in Figure 2, and this particular

ball is intended to have thirty-two faces. Upon the primary of these balls, which I shall designate as the "pitcher" ball, or "key device", I provide a series of indications which indicate the primary plays in baseball. Such indications are shown in Figure 3, and as an instance of the plays, the star A may indicate a strike, the circle B a "ball", the ring C a wild pitch, the cross D a batter hit by pitched ball, and the bat and ball E a batted ball. These indications are divided in about the proportion in which such primary plays would occur in an actual baseball game, so that "balls" would outnumber "strikes", both would outnumber "batted balls", and the "wild pitch" and other unusual plays would be comparatively infrequent.

It will be noted that all of the plays thus indicated on the pitcher ball are determinate except the batted ball. For instance, when a strike is thrown, this is an advantage for the pitcher or the side in the field, but requires no positive action unless it is the third strike, and then the play is determinate only in indicating an out. When a "ball" is thrown, it is either an advantage for the batsman requiring no action, or, if the fourth "ball," he is placed upon first base. However, if a ball is batted, this is indeterminate and one does not know if the ball was fair or foul, if hit at a fielder or a safe hit, whether a bunt, a grounder, or a fly. In order to indicate such a variety of plays the faces allotted to "batted balls" would have to be greatly increased, and to avoid disturbing their proportion to "balls," "strikes" and the like, the number of faces would again have to be increased beyond reasonable limits.

In order to determine more specifically the character of the batted ball, another play-controlling device or ball, which I shall designate as the "batter" ball, must be employed. The indications upon the "batter" ball are shown in Figure 4. Here, for instance, the star F indicates a home run; the three squares G represent a three-base hit; the numeral "1," designated by H, represents a ball batted towards No. 1 fielder; the two squares I represent a two-base hit; and the single square J represents a one-base hit. The numeral "5," designated by K, represents a ball batted toward No. 5 fielder; the four dots L represent an out on a liner to pitcher. Obviously, if a runner occupied one of the bases this would ordinarily result in a double play, and this indication serves for such a play. The bat and ball M represent a foul grounder; the numeral "4," designated by N, represents a ball batted toward No. 4 fielder; the two dots O represent a foul fly; the letter "B" designated by P represents a bunt; the word "No," designated by Q, represents a fly or

liner, generally to a fielder; the numeral "6," designated by R, represents a ball batted toward No. 6 fielder.

On the playing field 11, it will be noted that the various fielders are represented by numerals, the catcher being No. 2, the pitcher No. 1, first baseman No. 3, second baseman No. 4, short stop No. 6, third baseman No. 5, and the fielders 7, 8 and 9. Thus, if the indication H is brought upward on No. 2 ball, this indicates a grounder or fly (except a liner) batted to the pitcher. If the indication N comes uppermost, this indicates a ball batted toward the second baseman. Obviously this indication is not, in itself, determinate, for the fielder may catch the ball and throw the batter out, he may make an error, when the runner would be safe, or if runners are on the bases the fielder may make a double play. In order that this disposition of the play may finally be determined, if the ball is batted toward one of the fielders the "fielder" ball is employed, the indications thereon being shown in Figure 5. Here the star S indicates an out, the two stars T represent a double play, and the square U represents an error. The relative proportions of these plays is arranged as nearly as possible in accordance with the frequency of their occurrence in a game, with "outs" predominating.

In addition to the indeterminate indications on the "batter" ball which indicate only that the ball has been batted toward a fielder, there are other indeterminate indications, as, for instance, the bunt indication P. When this indication is shown it is necessary to select one of the two "bunt," the indications upon which are shown respectively in Figures 6 and 7. The first "bunt" ball, shown in Figure 6, is employed when there are no runners on the bases and a bunt is indicated on the "batter" ball. In Figure 6 the star V indicates that the batter is out, the square W indicates that the batter is safe, and the two squares X indicate that the batter made two bases on the bunt. These indications also are employed in the proportion they would occur in a baseball game, as nearly as possible. In Figure 7, illustrating the second "bunt" ball, to be used when runners are on base and the "batter" ball indicates a bunt, the first star above a square, Y, indicates that the batter was out but that the runner advanced, that is, a sacrifice bunt. The second star and square, Z, indicates that the runner was out but that the batter is safe, in other words, a fielder's choice. The two squares *a* indicate that both runner and batter were safe, while the two stars *b* indicate that a double play resulted and both the runner and the batter were put out. These balls are therefore determinate in the same manner as the "fielder" ball, being used inter-

changeably therewith as their use is indicated by the "batter" ball. In these bunt balls it will be noted that the star indicates an advantage to the side in the field, while the squares indicate an advantage to the side at bat. Similarly this same system might be employed in the other balls, although it is best carried out in these bunt balls.

I may employ one or more casual ball or balls which are designated as the "base-stealing" balls, the indications upon the first of these "base-stealing" balls being shown in Figure 8 and being typical of those upon two other "base-stealing" balls which I prefer to employ. These balls are to be employed by the side at bat whenever runners are on the bases and it is desired to attempt to steal a base. In Figure 8 the ring *c* indicates that the runner was out stealing, the two squares *d* that the runner stole two bases, the square *e* represents that one base was stolen, and the crossed square *f* represents an attempt to steal but a return to the base previously occupied. The other "base-stealing" balls are employed when runners occupy other bases than first base and a steal is to be attempted. The indications are similar to those on the ball described, with appropriate indications of the fate of all runners.

The game is begun by one side, as the side in the field, rolling the "pitcher" ball, which, as is quite evident, is the primary of "key" play-controlling device. If a ball, strike, wild pitch, or a hit by pitched ball sign comes uppermost, when the "pitcher" ball finally comes to rest, the play is obvious. However, if the batted ball sign *E* comes uppermost it is then necessary to determine what kind of batted ball resulted and what disposition was made of the play. The side at bat thereupon rolls the subsidiary or "batter" ball. If the sign for a hit, respectively *F*, *G*, *I*, or *J* is uppermost when the "batter" ball comes to rest, the play is obvious, the batter taking the base indicated and any runner on base moving up the amount indicated by the hit. If the indication *L* shows that the batter lined out to the pitcher, clearly the batter is out and if a runner is on base this would have resulted in a double play and the runner likewise would have been put out. The foul grounder and foul fly indications, *M* and *O* respectively, merely count for strikes, as do fouls in the game of baseball, or it may be made a part of the playing rules that upon a foul fly another ball may be rolled to indicate whether or not an out resulted.

In case the bunt indication *P* is uppermost, it is necessary to determine whether or not the batter was safe, and if a runner was on base, whether the runner was advanced. If no runner was on base the side in the

field rolls the first "bunt" ball, which is in turn subsidiary to the "batter" ball. This indicates whether or not the batter was safe, out, or made two bases on his bunt. This finally determines the play. If a runner is on base, the second "bunt" ball is rolled by the side in the field and this finally determines the play, both as to the batter and as to the runner.

If when the "batter" ball comes to rest it indicates the ball was batted to a fielder, as fielder No. 6, indication *R*, this indicates that a ball was batted to the short stop. It is not known yet if the short stop caught the ball and made an out, or if an error resulted whereby the batsman gained his base. It is then necessary to roll a different subsidiary ball, the "fielder" ball, to determine the disposition of the play. This will indicate that the batsman was safe on an error, or out, or that a double play resulted if the bases were occupied by runners. This finally determines the play. A similar determination may be made in case of the fly or liner indication *Q*, or this may be taken as an out, as would usually occur.

At any time when runners are on bases, the side at bat has the option of rolling one of the casual or "base-stealing" balls, the proper ball being determined by the most advanced base occupied by runners. Supposing first base to be occupied, the first "base-stealing" ball would be rolled. This would indicate either that the runner was out stealing, was safe, that he stole two bases, or that he attempted to steal but changed his mind and returned to the base previously occupied. The second and third "base-stealing" balls may have indications for a double or triple steal, or for one runner to have been put out and another runner to be safe, and similar indications to those on the first of these balls. By the use of these balls an element of surprise is introduced into the game and a further element of chance whereby the side at bat may advance or retard its fortune by means independent of the succession of throws of the "pitcher," "batter" and "fielder" balls.

It will be obvious that variations upon the game may be worked out, and by the use of more balls more complicated plays may be brought into the game. Those described here are merely suggestive, and their character, the proportion of one play to another on the same ball, and various other details of the game may be varied to suit the desires of the players of the game.

What I claim as my invention is:

A baseball game comprising a playing field, counters for representing runners and devices for controlling the play of said game comprising a pitcher device having indications thereon of different primary plays, including an indication of a batted ball, a

batter device having an indication thereon of the character or direction of the batted ball, including a bunt indication, and usable only when the pitcher device indicates a
5 batted ball, and a plurality of determinate bunt devices selectively usable when a bunt is indicated by the batter device, according to the presence or lack of counters representing runners on the bases.

Signed at Seattle, King County, Wash- 10
ington, this 21st day of June, 1922.

JUKICHI FUNAI.

Witness:

A. S. IKEDA.