April 30, 1963 E. WAITE 3,087,731

GAME APPARATUS

Filed Sept. 18, 1959

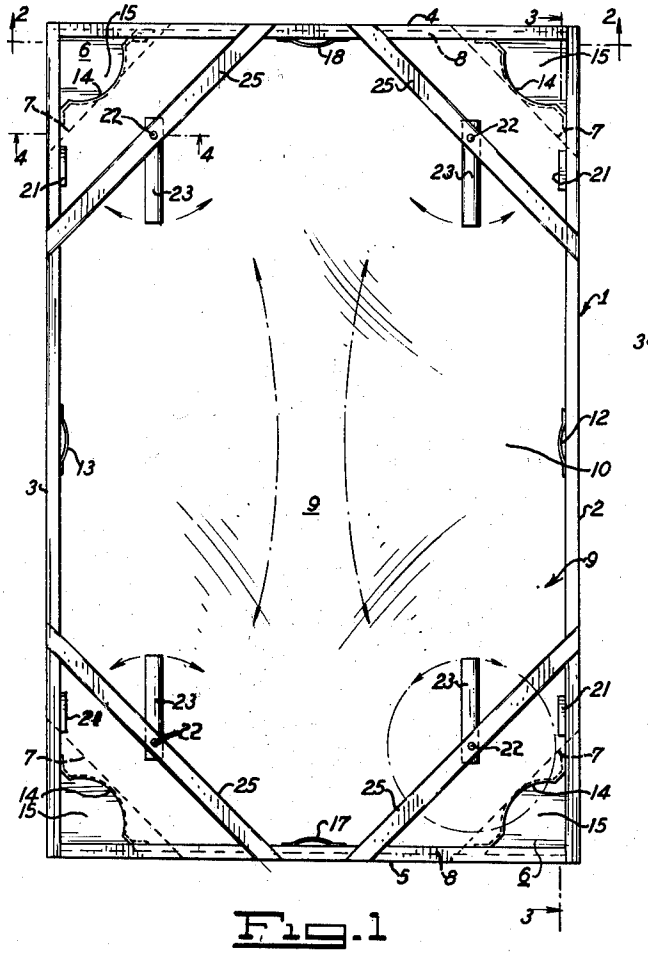


Fig. 1

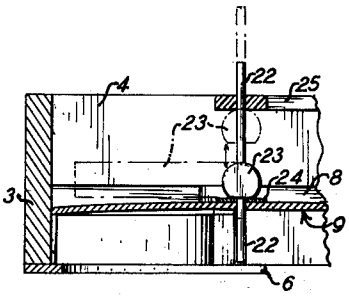


Fig. 4

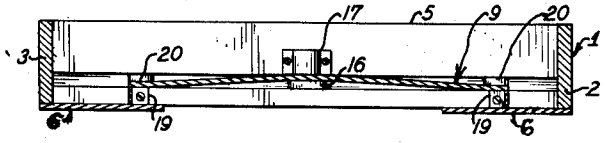


Fig. 2

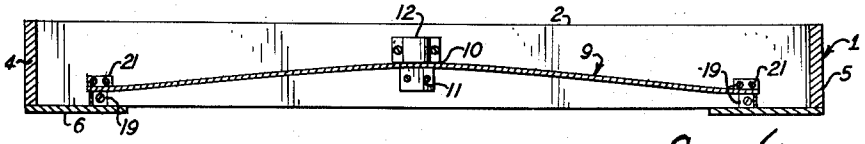


Fig. 3

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GAME APPARATUS

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My present invention relates to game apparatus, and has particular reference to game apparatus of the surface projectile type wherein a ball, marble or suitable game piece is manually projected or propelled along a playing surface of a game board by a player adjacent one end of the game board toward a goal or goals located at the opposite end thereof.

Numerous game devices of the general type to which the present invention relates have been provided, and numerous patents have been granted on such devices. In game apparatus of this general type, it is common to provide a rectangular game board having an upstanding marginal flange surrounding a relatively flat or slightly convexed playing surface over which a small ball, marble or suitable game piece is projected or propelled by a player located at one end of the game board toward a goal or pocket located at the opposite end thereof, and to provide a manually operated bat-like projector or paddle positioned in front of each goal or pocket which serves as a projector for projecting or propelling the game piece toward the goal or pocket at the opposite end of the game board and also serves as a means for defending the goal or pocket with which it is associated to prevent entry of an opponent's game piece into said goal or pocket. Representative of this general type of game apparatus, may be mentioned simulated hockey games wherein a game board of oblong, generally rectangular form, is provided with goals or pockets at two opposite ends thereof, and is provided with manually operable bat-like members or paddles horizontally disposed with respect to the playing board, one in front of each goal or pocket and each mounted on a vertically extending, manually operable member by means of which the bat-like member or paddle may be given a complete circular sweep to either prevent entry of an opponent's game piece into the goal or pocket, or to project or propel the game piece toward a goal or pocket at the opposite end of the game board. It has also been previously proposed to provide game apparatus of this general type in which the game board is provided with a goal or pocket at each of the four corners thereof, with a manually operable bat-like member or paddle in front of each goal or pocket, thus enabling several persons, say four, with two players located at opposite ends of the game board, to participate in the game.

My present invention relates primarily to the manually-operable, bat-like member or paddle positioned in front of each goal or pocket of game boards of the general type referred to above, and has as its object the provision of means for mounting said bat-like member on the game board in front of each of the goals or pockets thereof.

It is an object of my present invention to provide a manually-operable, bat-like member for use with game apparatus of the general type referred to above, which member comprises a vertical rod or spindle with a horizontally disposed bat or paddle secured thereto intermediate the ends thereof, and to provide means for mounting said rod or spindle on the game board for rotation about its vertical axis, whereby a player may grasp the upper end of said rod or spindle between his thumb and forefinger and rotate or twirl said rod or spindle to swing the horizontally-disposed bat or paddle directly over, or slightly above, the uper surface of the game board and into contact with a game piece to project or propel said game piece toward a goal or pocket at the opposite end of the game board or to prevent the game piece of an opposing

player from entering the goal or pocket with which said bat-like member or paddle is associated.

It is a further object of my present invention to provide a manually-operable, bat-like member of the type above specified, in which the vertically positioned, rotatable rod or spindle to which the bat-like member or paddle is secured, is also free to move vertically to a limited extent, between spaced surfaces, to permit the bat-like member or paddle secured thereto to assume various vertical positions above the playing surface, as distinguished from the bat-like members or paddles of the prior art which are not capable of such limited vertical movement.

It is a further object of my present invention to provide novel and efficient means for mounting the aforesaid vertical rod or spindle, in which the uppermost member of said mounting means also serves effectively as a brace or strengthening means for a corner portion of the frame of the rectangular game board.

It is a still further object of my present invention to provide a bat-like member for a game board of the general type above referred to which is cheap and easy to manufacture, install and operate; is strong and durable; and is highly efficient in the purposes for which designed.

In the accompanying drawings forming a part of this specification, and wherein, for the purpose of illustration, I have shown a preferred embodiment of my present invention:

FIG. 1 is a top plan view of a game apparatus having a plurality of my new and novel bat-like members applied thereto and constituting a part thereof,

FIG. 2 is a transverse sectional view of the game apparatus shown in FIG. 1, taken on the line 2—2 of FIG. 1,

FIG. 3 is a longitudinal sectional view of the game apparatus shown in FIG. 1, taken on the line 3—3 of FIG. 1, and

FIG. 4 is an enlarged fragmentary sectional view of one of the corner portions of the game apparatus shown in FIG. 1, taken on the line 4—4 of FIG. 1, and showing the detailed construction of, and the mounting means for, the bat-like members or paddles of my present invention.

Referring more in detail to the game apparatus illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which drawings like reference numerals have been employed to designate like parts throughout the several views, the numeral **1** designates, broadly, a rectangular frame consisting of spaced, parallel, longitudinally-extending, upstanding side members **2** and **3**, and spaced parallel, transversely-extending, upstanding end members **4** and **5** rigidly secured to the opposite ends of side members **2** and **3**. The upper or top portion of the rectangular frame is open, i.e., uncovered. The same is true of the lower or bottom portion of said rectangular frame except that at each of the four corners of the frame, I provide a thin, underlying, triangular piece of Masonite, plywood or the like **6**, the base **7** of each of which pieces extends across the corner portion with which the triangular piece is associated. The inner surface of each end member **4** and **5** is provided with a longitudinally-extending groove **8** for a purpose to be hereinafter described.

The playing surface over which the balls, marbles or like game pieces roll or are projected, comprises a sheet of thin Masonite, plywood or the like designated, broadly, by the reference numeral **9**, which sheet **9** is bent or pressed to slightly convex form with its highest central portion **10** disposed centrally and transversely of the side members **2** and **3** of the rectangular frame **1**. The centrally and transversely disposed highest portion **10** is supported on blocks **11** nailed or otherwise secured to the inner surfaces of side members **2** and **3** and is held in firm engagement with said blocks by inwardly bowed de-

flector plates 12 and 13 nailed or otherwise secured to the inner surfaces of side members 2 and 3, respectively, which deflector plates 12 and 13 overlie the upper surface of sheet 9 immediately above blocks 11. The opposite ends of sheet 9 are disposed within grooves 8 on the inner surfaces of end members 4 and 5, the four corner portions of sheet 9 being cut off at an approximate angle of 45° and having arcuate portions 14 centrally located along the lines of cut, which centrally located arcuate portions 14 define the leading edges of goals or pockets 15. These goals or pockets 15 are slightly larger than the ball, marble or other game piece employed when playing the game, the object of which game is to get the game piece or pieces of a player or players located at one end of the game board 1 into the goal or pocket or goals or pockets of an opposing player or players located at the opposite end thereof.

In addition to the convex form of the sheet 9 with its highest portion 10 centrally and transversely located to cause a game piece thereon to slide or roll toward one or the other end of the game board, the end portions of the sheet 9 at each corner portion thereof are curved downwardly at a relatively slight angle as best shown in FIG. 2, to cause a game piece to slide or roll toward the goal or pocket 15 at the adjacent corner of the game board. This bending or downward, transverse sloping of the corner portions of sheet 9 toward the goals or pockets at the two corners at each end of the playing surface is accomplished by supporting the central portion of each end of sheet 9 on a block or cleat 16 secured by nails or other fastening means along the lower wall defining the groove 8 in the adjacent end members 4 or 5, and is held in firm supporting engagement with said block or cleat by an inwardly-bowed, centrally positioned deflector plate 17 or 18 nailed or otherwise secured to the inner surface of each end member 5 and 4, respectively, which deflector plates 17 and 18 overlie the upper surfaces of the end portions of sheet 9 immediately above the blocks or cleats 16. The two side portions at each end of sheet 9 on opposite sides of the longitudinal center line of said sheet, are then bent downwardly to impart to each end portion of sheet 9 a slightly convex curvature, as best shown in FIG. 2 of the accompanying drawings. This transverse convex curvature of the opposite end portions of sheet 9 is maintained by supporting said end portions at opposite sides thereof on strips of metal or the like 19, the upper edge of each of said strips being flush with the edge of the lower wall defining groove 8, and the lower edge of each strip resting on the upper surface of one of the triangular corner pieces 6. Each strip 19 has its ends bent at an angle to engage the inner surfaces of the adjacent side and end members of the rectangular frame, which ends are secured to said side and end members by nails, screws, or other fastening means. The intermediate portion of each strip 19 is bent or bowed to correspond to the centrally-positioned arcuate portion 14 at each corner of sheet 9. Four blocks or cleats 20 are provided, adapted for positioning within grooves 8, with their upper surfaces underlying the walls defining the upper walls of said grooves and with their lower surfaces engaging the upper surfaces of the end portions of sheet 9 immediately above the ends of strip 19 which are secured to the end members 4 and 5 of the rectangular frame 1. I also provide blocks or cleats 21 nailed or otherwise secured to the inner surface of side members 2 and 3 and overlying the sheet 9 near opposite ends thereof, which blocks or cleats 21 assist in maintaining the convex, transverse curvature at the end portions of sheet 9.

The bat-like members or paddles which I provide and with which my present invention is primarily concerned, each comprises a vertical rod or spindle 22 having a radially-extending bat or paddle 23 rigidly secured thereto intermediate the ends thereof. The lower end portion of rod or spindle 22 passes through an aperture in sheet 9 slightly in advance of, or in front of, one of the goals or

pockets 15 and terminates slightly above the upper surface of sheet 6 with the bat or paddle 23 overlying the upper surface of sheet 9 and preferably spaced slightly above said surface by means of a relatively thin spacing washer 24. The upper end portion of rod or spindle 22 is journalled in, and extends through and above, a strip 25 which extends diagonally across a corner of the game board and has its opposite ends secured to the upper surfaces of side members 2 or 3 and end members 4 or 5 by nails, screws or other suitable fastening means.

The vertical distance between the upper surface of sheet 9 and the undersurface of strip 25 is greater than the diameter of the bat or paddle member 23, and is also greater than the diameter of the balls or marbles used when playing the game, and the length of the rod or spindle 22 below said sheet 9 is greater than the vertical distance between the upper surface of the bat or paddle 23 and the undersurface of strip 25. By virtue of this construction, a player may engage the upper end of the rod or spindle 22 which projects above the upper surface of strip 25, between his or her thumb and forefinger and may rotate said rod or spindle to swing the bat or paddle 23 about the axis of the rod or spindle 22. The player may also lift the rod or spindle 22 vertically from the full line position shown in FIG. 4 to the overlying dotted line position shown in said figure, which results in the striking of the ball, marble or other game piece at varying heights on the surface thereof, and also enables the balls, marbles or other game pieces used in playing the game, to be of various sizes, from a relative small size to a size slightly less than the vertical distance between the upper surface of sheet 9 and the undersurface of strip 25. In the preferred embodiment of my invention, the strip is made of clear, rigid and transparent material, to avoid obscuring the player's view of the goal or pocket behind and beneath said strip. The strip 25 has an aperture therein to provide an upper bearing for the vertical rod or spindle 22, and as it extends diagonally across the corner between the upstanding side and end walls which define said corner, it will be readily apparent that the strip 25 serves as a brace or corner reinforcement for the game board which adds materially to the strength and rigidity of the game board.

Having thus described the construction of one form of game board and of the bat-like members or paddles positioned in front of each goal or pocket thereof, it is believed that it will be readily apparent how the game is played and how my novel bat-like member or paddle functions as a game accessory or projector. Suffice it to say, for the purpose of the present specification, that the game board 1 is placed on a smooth and level surface such as a table top or counter. One or two players take up positions at opposite ends of the game board and grasp the upper ends of the rods or spindles 22 of the bat-like members or paddles at corner portions of the adjacent end of the game board. A small ball, marble or suitable game piece is then placed at the highest central portion 10 of the playing surface from which it will roll or slide toward one or the other ends of the game board due to the convex curvature of sheet 9 and toward one or the other corners at that end of the game board due to the transverse, convex curvature of the end portions of said sheet. As the game piece approaches one of the goals or pockets 15, the player having control of the bat-like member or paddle in advance of the goal or pocket toward which the game piece is approaching, will wait until the said game piece comes within the surface area swept by the bat or paddle 23, at which time he will impart vigorous rotation of the rod or spindle 22, thus contacting the bat or paddle 23 with the game piece to prevent the same from entering the goal or pocket with which said bat-like member or paddle is associated and to project or propel the game piece toward the opposite end of the game board and toward one or the other goals or pockets located at said opposite end. This

"batting" or projecting of the game piece from one end of the game board toward the goals or pockets at the opposite end thereof is continued until one of the players is successful in getting the game piece into one of the goals or pockets **15** at the opposite end of the game board. The player or players who get the greatest number of "goals" in a given period of play, wins the game. Considerable skill is required of the players, and the winning of the game depends, to a large extent upon the manner in which a player actuates the vertical rod or spindle **22** and the bat or paddle **23** secured thereto. It will be obvious that the side and end deflector plates **12** and **13**, and **17** and **18**, respectively, when contacted by a game piece during the playing of the game, serve effectively to divert the game piece inwardly toward the central area of the game board. The force required to propel the game piece need be only a relatively moderate force, because once the game piece passes the highest central portion **10** disposed centrally and transversely of the game board, the game piece will roll or slide toward one of the goals or pockets at the end of the game board beyond said highest central portion **10**.

It is to be understood that the form of my invention shown and described herein is to be taken as a preferred embodiment thereof, and that various changes may be made in the shape, size, and arrangement of parts without departing from the spirit of my present invention or from the scope of the subjoined claims.

Having thus described my present invention, I claim:

1. Game apparatus of the surface projectile type comprising a generally rectangular sheet forming a playing surface defined by upstanding marginal side and end members; a goal on said playing surface at a corner thereof to receive a game piece projected therein; said sheet having an aperture therein adjacent said corner and in front of said goal; a strip extending diagonally across and above said corner and having its ends secured to the upper portion of the upstanding side and end members defining said corner, said strip having an aperture therein in vertical alignment with the aperture in said sheet; and a manually-operable game piece projector in front of said goal and comprising a vertical spindle having a radially-extending bat member secured thereto intermediate the ends thereof and overlying a portion of said playing surface; the upper end portion of said spindle passing through and terminating above the aperture in said strip and the lower end portion of said spindle passing through and terminating below the aperture in said sheet, whereby said spindle is mounted for rotation about its axis to swing the bat into contact with a game piece on said portion of said playing surface to propel the same away from said goal.

2. Game apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein said spindle is vertically movable within the aligned apertures to vary the vertical distance of the bat above the playing surface.

3. Game apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein the vertical distance between the playing surface and the under surface of said strip is greater than the vertical dimension of the game piece employed in playing the game to permit said game piece to pass beneath said strip and into the goal at the corner of the playing surface.

4. Game apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein the length of the lower portion of the spindle which extends through and below the aperture in said sheet is greater than the distance between the upper surface of the bat secured to the intermediate portion of said spindle and the under surface of said strip whereby said spindle may be raised vertically until the bat thereon contacts the under surface of said strip without withdrawing said lower portion of said spindle out of the aperture in said sheet.

5. Game apparatus of the surface projectile type comprising a generally rectangular sheet forming a playing surface defined by marginal side and end members, a goal on said playing surface at a corner thereof adapted to receive a game piece projected therein, a diagonally disposed bracing strip extending across and spaced above a portion of said corner a distance sufficient to permit passage thereunder of a game piece, said bracing strip being positioned outwardly of said goal and having its opposite ends secured to the side and end members, a manually-operable game piece projector comprising a vertical spindle and a radially extending bat member intermediate the upper and lower portions of said spindle, a first aperture in the bracing strip intermediate the ends thereof, a second aperture in the playing surface at said corner thereof, said second aperture being in substantially vertical alignment with said first aperture in said bracing strip, the upper portion of said projector spindle extending through and journalled in said first aperture and the lower portion of said spindle extending through and journalled in said second aperture whereby the bat member is mounted in front of the goal for pivotal movement in the space between the bracing strip and the playing surface therebelow.

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