Jan. 25, 1966 J. M. BOULANGER 3,231,278

COLOR CODED SURFACE BALL GAME APPARATUS

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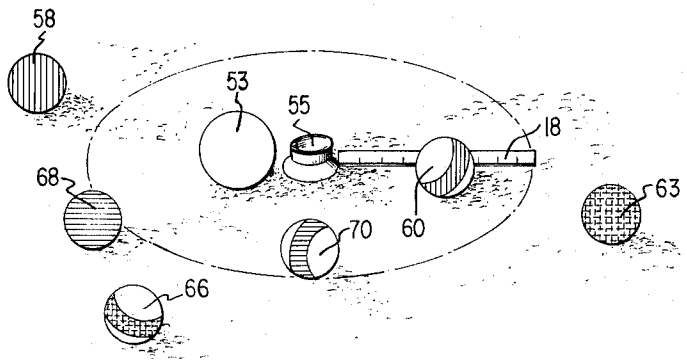
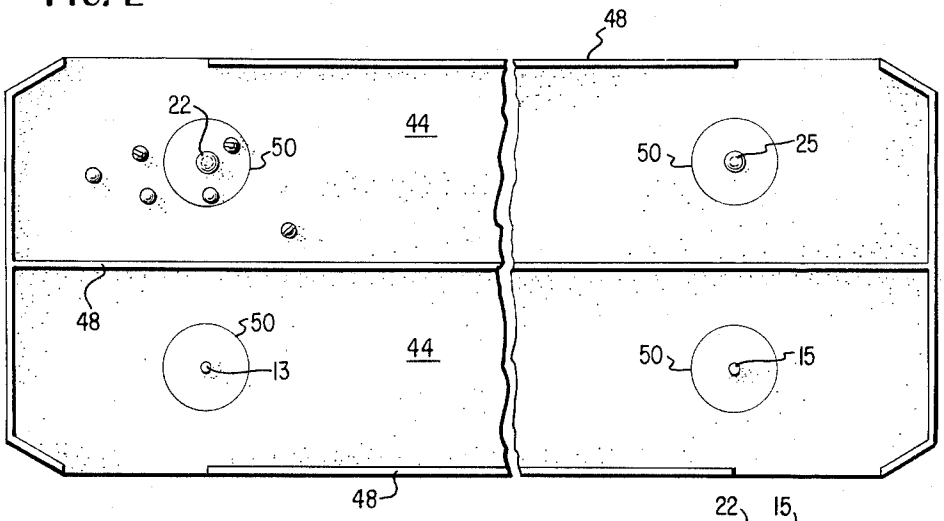


FIG. 3

FIG. 2



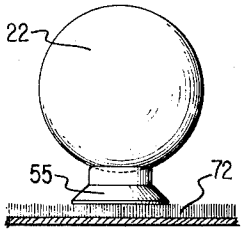


FIG. 4

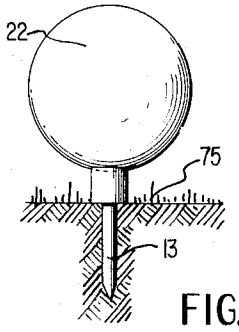


FIG. 5

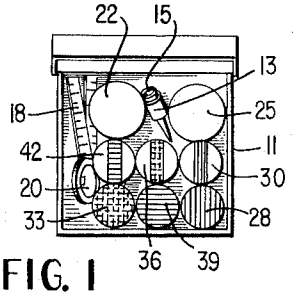


FIG. 1

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COLOR CODED SURFACE BALL GAME APPARATUS

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This invention relates to a novel apparatus used for playing a rolling-ball game. The game apparatus includes a court having a fairly high friction surface with goals placed thereon, a distance marker and a set of six color-coded playing balls.

The game apparatus of this invention provides a game having a number of clear advantages over most known games. It can be played indoors or out-of-doors, a lawn or carpet being easily convertible into a court. Also, special courts may be established having carpeting or other relatively high friction surfacing material such as felt placed over the flooring. The game combines skill and competition with mild exercise and is playable by most persons whether young or old.

Goals are placed near each end of the court, each goal consisting of a ball and a support, the support being of such type that the goal ball can be knocked from the support by a relatively gentle impact of the playing ball against the goal support or ball. When a lawn or other puncturable material comprises the court, the goal support may be, for example, similar to a golf tee but generally enlarged beyond the usual. On more stable surfaces, such as a carpet, a furniture or beverage-glass type coaster may be employed.

The distance marker may be a ruler made of wood, paper tape or other convenient material which may be fastened to the goal or unattached thereto. Alternatively, the distance marker may comprise a circular sheet of paper, flocked paper, felt or other suitable material having the goal placed at its center. The length of the ruler or radius of the circular distance marker will be determined by the rules of the game to be played. In a preferred apparatus, this dimension is 21 inches.

The set of six playing balls, because of its novel color coding feature, provides distinct balls for from 2 to 6 players and because of this feature the balls can be easily distinguished even at night under artificial illumination. The set of six balls uses three distinct colors preferably the primary colors, red, yellow and blue. Of the six balls three are solid color, one of each selected color, and three are of a neutral color, for example, white, with a band of each selected color. Thus, one ball is solid color A, one is solid color B, one is solid color C, one is neutral with a color A band, one is neutral with a color B band and one is neutral with a color C band. Where two persons play the game, one player can employ the three solid color balls while the other uses the banded balls. With three players the balls may be assigned on the basis of color, the first player using the solid color A and banded color A balls, etc. Where four or more play, each player can use just one ball, or in the case of 4 or 6 players, two teams may be chosen to compete against each other.

The playing balls are usually about 3¼ inches in diameter and may be made of a dense or light material depending upon the size and circumstances of the court. Thus, where a court 30 to 60 feet in length is available, balls made of wood or a dense plastic may be used. Indoors, where less space is generally available, and furniture may be damaged, balls made of cork, light plastic, hollow rubber, etc. may more conveniently be used. The goal or target balls usually are distinct in size from the playing and scoring balls. A 5-inch diameter is advantageous for these balls which usually are made of wood and provided with a neutral color, such as white.

The invention will be better understood by reference to the accompanying drawing which is to be considered illustrative only and not limiting.

In the drawing,

FIGURE 1 shows the apparatus of this invention in a carrying case;

FIGURE 2 is a view of specially set-up courts on which the apparatus is designed to be used;

FIGURE 3 is a close-up view of the apparatus on a court after the set of balls has been thrown thereon;

FIGURE 4 is a detail showing placement of the goal ball on one type of goal support; and,

FIGURE 5 shows the goal ball on another type of support.

In FIGURE 1 an "outdoor" set is shown in its carrying case 11. The apparatus consists of eight balls, two goal ball supports 13 and 15, which may be nested together, and one or two distance markers or rulers 18. A score recorder 20 may also be included in the set.

The balls are made of a relatively dense material and comprise the goal balls 22 and 25 and six scoring balls. These latter are a red ball 28, a red-banded white ball 30, a yellow ball 33, a yellow-banded white ball 36, a blue ball 39 and a blue-banded white ball 42.

In FIGURE 2, the set of balls is shown deployed upon a playing court 44 which has a relatively high friction surface, such as carpeting, flocked paper or cloth, etc. The court may be provided with fixed or moveable court boundary elements 48 and, as shown in FIGURE 2, may be provided in a side-by-side permanent installation of about 30 to 60 feet distance betweeen the goals, preferably about 50 to 55 feet. In this embodiment the distance markers are the sheet-form circles 50 which may be permanently or temporarily attached to the playing court.

FIGURE 3 shows an "indoor" set wherein the balls are made of lighter material. The set includes the goal ball 53 which is shown as having been knocked from its support 55 which in this embodiment is a flat-bottomed coaster. The "indoor" scoring balls comprise the red ball 58, the red-banded white ball 60, the yellow ball 63, the yellow-banded white ball 66, the blue ball 68 and the blue-banded white ball 70. FIGURE 4 shows the goal support 55 disposed on a carpet 72 while FIGURE 5 shows the goal support 13, which is about 4 inches long, penetrating a lawn of grass 75.

The apparatus may be used as follows: Tee or pedestal goal supports are set up a suitable distance apart and the goal-balls are placed thereon. Each player, or a representative of each team, stands behind one goal and throws or rolls his ball or balls toward the other goal trying to knock the goal ball off its support and also trying to have the thrown ball end up within a specified distance of the goal, as determined by the length or radius of the distance marker. A certain number of points are awarded each player or team for each time the goal ball is knocked off, e.g. 4 points and certain points, e.g. 3 points are awarded to the player or team for each ball of theirs which remains within the prescribed distance, e.g., 21 inches, of the goal support. Additional points may also be awarded the player whose ball or balls end up closest to the goal support. Whenever the goal ball is knocked from its pedestal, it is replaced before the next throw. After all six balls are thrown and the scoring is completed, the next episode involves throwing the balls toward the opposite goal.

Thus, the game apparatus of this invention provides a novel combination of elements which may be used to provide healthful and relaxing recreation for people of all ages.

It is claimed:

1. Apparatus for playing a game consisting essentially

of an unobstructed court having a surface of relatively high friction characteristics and having a single goal placed near each end thereof, a distance marker for determining the distance of an object from each of the said goals, and a color-coded group of six scoring balls of about equal size and adapted to be thrown upon said court and being rollable thereon, one of said balls being of a first color, one of said balls being of a second color, one of said balls being of a third color, and one of said balls having a band of said first color on a neutral background, one of said balls having a band of said second color on a neutral background and one of said balls having a band of said third color on a neutral background, each of said goals comprising a member affixed to the court supporting a neutral-colored goal ball in such fashion that said goal ball may be knocked from said support by the impact of any one of said group of scoring balls.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 in which the said support penetrates the said court.

3. The apparatus of claim 1 in which a distance marker is a circular sheet having the goal at its center.

4. Apparatus consisting essentially of two goals adapted to be placed on an unobstructed surface of relatively high friction characteristics, distance markers adapted to be placed adjacent said goals, and a color coded group of six scoring balls of about equal size and adapted to be thrown upon said court and being rollable thereon, one

of said balls being of a first color, one of said balls being of a second color, one of said balls being of a third color, one of said balls having a band of said first color on a neutral background, one of said balls having a band of said second color on a neutral background and one of said balls having a band of said third color on a neutral background, each of said goals comprising a member affixable to the court supporting a neutral-colored goal ball in such fashion that it may be knocked from said support by the impact of any one of said group of scoring balls.

5. In a game apparatus comprising a court, goals, each comprising a member affixed to the court supporting a neutral-colored goal ball in such fashion that said goal ball may be knocked from said support by an impact and a plurality of scoring balls to provide said impact, the improvement which consists essentially of the placement of only a single goal near each end of the otherwise unobstructed court and, in combination with said member, a distance marker to measure the distance travelled by said goal ball as a result of said impact.

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