C. M. STEELE.

BASE BALL GAME.

APPLICATION FILED OCT. 17, 1913.

1,113,504. Patented Oct. 13, 1914.

Fig. 1.

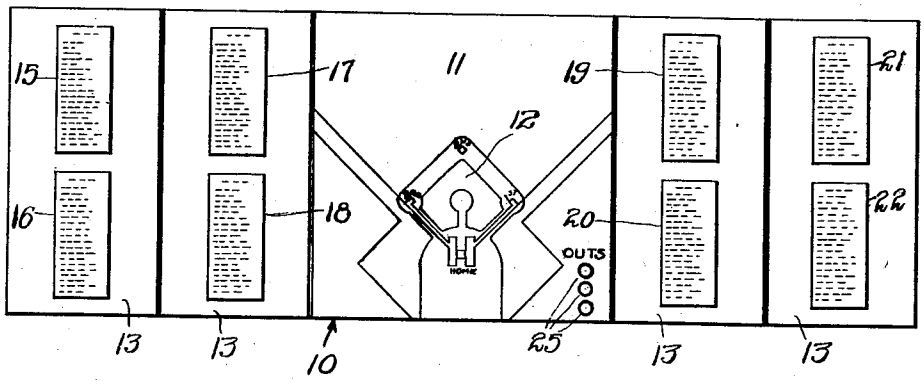


Fig. 3.

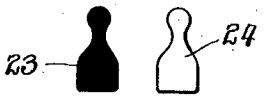


Fig. 5.

Fig. 2.

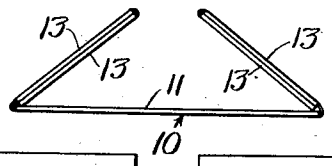


Fig. 4.

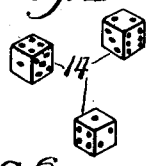


Fig. 6.

NONE ON BASES.
111 TRIPLE.
112 SINGLE.
113 OUT AT 1st.
114 FLY OUT.
115 FOUL OUT.
116 OUT AT 1st.
122 BASE ON BALLS.
123 SINGLE.
555 DOUBLE.
556 OUT AT 1st.
566 SINGLE.
666 HOME RUN.

15

RUNNER ON FIRST.
111 TRIPLE.
112 FORCES RUNNER AT 2nd.
113 STRIKE.
114 STRIKE.
115 FLY OUT.
116 OUT AT 1st. RUNNER TO 2nd.
122 BALL (STEALS 2nd)
123 SINGLE (RUNNER TO 3rd)
555 DOUBLE-RUNNER TO 3rd.
556 FLY OUT-RUNNER TO 2nd.
566 SINGLE-RUNNER TO 2nd.
666 HOME RUN.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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BASE-BALL GAME.

1,113,504. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Oct. 13, 1914.

Application filed October 17, 1913. Serial No. 795,649.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CHARLES M. STEELE, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of Chicago, in the county of Cook and State of Illinois, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Base-Ball Games; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description thereof, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, and to the letters of reference marked thereon, which form a part of this specification.

This invention relates to an improved game apparatus and more particularly to a game apparatus for playing the game of base-ball adapted for indoor use.

By the use of a game apparatus as hereinafter fully described I propose to produce a game in imitation of an actual game of base-ball as it would be played out of doors between two contesting teams, to provide for practically every play or contingency that might occur in actual play, and to inject the element of chance into the game to such a degree as to make the outcome uncertain and hence keep the contestants in a constant state of excitement during the progress of the game.

Briefly set forth my invention provides for a miniature playing field or "diamond" upon a board or table. Each contestant—there being preferably two in number—is provided with a set of nine counters or men, representing a team and each counter thereof representing a player of the team. A plurality of schedules are provided, there being preferably eight in number. Each schedule corresponds to a condition that might arise when one of the teams is "at bat." Each schedule contains a plurality of numerals or combination of numerals, each consisting by preference of three digits, each numeral having a corresponding legend, indicating a possible contingency that might occur during the time one of the players is "at bat," and while a runner or runners of the same team are on the "bases." A set of dice, preferably three in number, is used. The dice when thrown exhibit a combination of numerals upon their upper faces which according to a predetermined sequence will correspond to a similar combination upon any one of the schedules. By referring to the proper schedule, determined by the circumstances of play at the time, the counters are moved according to the particular condition called for by the schedules, and thus the batsman may be called "out on strikes" or may make a "hit," and thus become a "runner," and upon the next play to be advanced "put out" or even "score" at the home plate. The game proceeds according to the rules of the game of base-ball as played out-of-doors, and the success or failure of the contestants being entirely dependent upon the element of chance accompanying the throwing of the dice.

My invention, therefore, consists in the novel features herein described and more particularly pointed out in the appended claim.

In the accompanying drawings—Figure 1 is a plan view of the game board showing the playing field thereon and the arrangement of the schedules; Fig. 2 is a view in end elevation of the game board showing the manner in which the same may be folded; Fig. 3 is a view in elevation of the game pieces used in playing the game; Fig. 4 is a perspective view of the dice used in the game; Figs. 5 and 6 are views of portions of two of the schedules embodied in my invention showing the arrangement of the same.

Referring to the accompanying drawings, a clear understanding and manner of playing the game may be had from the following:—The game board 10 upon which the game is played, preferably comprises a plurality of heavy cardboard sections joined at their adjacent margins by a flexible material as cloth or canvas, in order that the said sections may be folded upon each other when the game apparatus is not in use, and likewise to be spread out upon the table or some other flat surface when in use. The central section 11 of the game board is preferably rectangular in shape and has upon its upper face the reproduction of a playing field and "diamond" 12, similar in shape and proportion to the outdoor "diamond." Upon either side of the central section 11 are a plurality of smaller sections 13, these being preferably four in number, arranged in pairs flexibly connected to the opposite side margins of the central section and with each other. Each of the said sections 13 is, by preference, of a width one-half that of the central section 11, so that the said smaller sections may be folded upon each other and thence upon the central section 11, as shown in Fig. 2, thus permitting the game board to assume a convenient size when not in use.

Upon the smaller sections 13 are printed or attached in any suitable manner the before mentioned schedules, hereinafter fully described, and arranged upon the sections 13 in any convenient manner, although they are herein illustrated as arranged so that two schedules shall appear upon each of the sections 13, the schedules on each section being in vertical relation.

Referring now more in detail to the nature and arrangement of the schedules, the same are, as hereinbefore mentioned, preferably eight in number, each being suited to provide for one of the several playing conditions that may occur. Thus one of the schedules 15, (Fig. 5) is marked "None on bases", which means that no "runner" has succeeded in reaching any of the bases. Such a condition obviously would exist at the beginning of an inning or when the succeeding batsmen have been put out, prior to the turn of the present batsman at bat. On this schedule, therefore, appears a list of contingencies that might occur during a batsman's turn at bat and with no runner or runners on the bases. Opposite the designation of each of these different contingencies is a numeral or combination of numbers, preferably corresponding digits, having values ranging from one to six. The number of the digits comprised in each numeral or combination corresponds to the number of dice used in the game, and the value of the digit corresponds to the number of spots or indicia appearing on the upper faces of the dice when thrown.

The dice 14 used in the game are preferably of the usual form comprising cubes of equal size, having a number of spots or indicia ranging from one to six upon each of the six faces or sides thereof. In view of the fact that the dice are similar in size and appearance, it is obvious that at each throw of the dice several different numbers or combinations of digits might be obtained. It would be impossible to provide a contingency or play for every possible combination of digits that might appear by the throw of the dice, and even assuming that such a thing were possible, it would permit the contestant selecting any one of a number of possible "plays". To avoid this difficulty and permit but one possible combination of digits and consequently but one "play" to be obtained at a single throw of the dice, the spots or indicia appearing upon the dice are grouped in a different sequence after each throw. By preference this sequence is such that the lowest indicia obtained by the throw of the dice is the first digit of the combination, the second lowest indicia the second digit, and the highest indicia appearing upon the faces of the dice the last digit of the combination. Thus, if the 5, 6 and 3 appear on the upturned faces of the dice, when the same are thrown, by following the above arrangement the combination of digits or the number obtained would be "356", and none other. In like manner, if two similar indicia appear upon the dice, together with an indicia of higher or lower value, the two similar digits thus obtained would be combined and appear before or after the remaining or odd indicia thrown, depending on whether the similar digits were of a higher or lower value than the said remaining digits. Thus if the digits 3, 5, 3 appear when the dice are thrown, the combination would obviously be 335 and none other. On the other hand, if the remaining or odd digit proved to be 1, the combination obtained would be "133". The series of numbers or combination of digits appearing upon the schedules are arranged to correspond to the definite sequence hereinbefore pointed out with reference to the throwing of the dice. Thus the said series of numbers on the schedule comprises only such digits as would accord with the definite sequence selected. To illustrate, if the digits "5", "6", "3" were thrown by the dice the proper number or combination of digits would as before be 356, which would correspond to the number 356 upon the schedules, the same being the only number thereon to which such a combination would refer.

Having described the method of obtaining the combinations of digits by means of the dice and their relation to the series of numerals upon the schedules, the latter will now be described in detail.

The top of each of the eight schedules 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, (Fig. 1) bears one of the captions or headings as follows: "None on bases", "Runner on first", "Runner on second", "Runner on third", "Runners on first and second", "Runners on second and third" and "Bases full". These captions indicate the eight possible conditions of play that might occur in the period during which either side or contestant is "at bat". Below each of the captions or on each schedule is a series of the numbers representing all of the possible combinations of digits obtainable upon the dice according to the sequence hereinbefore described. The said numbers are preferably arranged in vertical columns and each number is followed by the designation of a possible contingency or play that may occur while the batsman is at bat. For instance, referring to Fig. 5, which represents a portion of the schedule "None on bases" the number or combination of digits 112 indicates a "single" which would mean that the batsman has hit the ball and has reached first base without being put out. Likewise the number 556 on this same schedule indicates "Out at 1st"; that is, that the batsman having hit the ball has been put out at first base.

Similarly the words "Fly out" following the number 114 on the same schedule means that the batsman has hit a fly ball which has been caught, thus putting him out. In addition to indicating the performance of the batsman a number may also indicate what takes place on the bases in the instance that a preceding batsman or batsmen are on the bases. This may be illustrated by referring to Fig. 6, showing the schedule marked "Runner on first", on which appears the number 123 followed by the words "Single", "Runner out at third", indicates that the batsman made a hit enabling him to reach first base safely and that the runner on first base has been put out attempting to reach third base upon the hit of the batsman. It is to be understood, however, that the schedules differ in arrangement in that each embraces only such plays as would occur in an actual game under the circumstances indicated by the caption or heading of the particular schedule. The schedules are composed as near as possible in accordance with actual playing conditions as regards the performance of the average player in real life and also as regards the element of chance in the throwing of the dice. To illustrate this feature, it is a well known fact to those familiar with the game of base ball, that the batsman will receive a "strike" or a "ball" more frequently than he will make a "hit" or otherwise succeed in reaching first. Hence a "strike" or "ball" will be repeated frequently throughout the schedule. Similarly, if a batsman is able to make a safe hit, the value of this hit, which depends on the number of bases he is able to make upon the hit, is repeated on the schedules in proportion to the value of the hit. Thus the word "Single", meaning a "hit" good for one base, may occur several times. The word "Double", meaning a two base hit, would be repeated preferably but a few times and the word "Triple" and "Home run", meaning a "three base hit" and a "complete circuit of the bases", respectively would, for instance, appear still less frequently.

In addition to recording a particular play with reference to the possibility of its occurrence relative to the total number of plays that occur during a game, the numbers corresponding to the several plays are arranged according to the laws of chance in the throwing of dice; that is, the play or contingency that in all likelihood would occur the least number of times during an actual game would correspond to a number indicating a combination of indicia of the dice which occur the least number of times. To illustrate this point further, to throw the dice so that three similar digits appear is considered unusual, as for instance, to secure three 1's or three 6's. Hence a "home run" would be indicated by three 6's, a "triple" by three 1's, a "double" by three 4's, and so on. In like manner, the plays that more frequently occur would be indicated by combinations or numbers more usually obtained in the throwing of the dice.

In addition to the game-board and the schedules hereinbefore described, I provide a plurality of counters or men 23 and 24. These counters are preferably eighteen in number and may be of any desirable shape, although illustrated in Fig. 3 as of a convenient shape resembling the pawn, commonly used in the game of chess. These counters or men may be divided into two sets of nine, each set representing a contesting team and each counter a player thereof. Each set of counters is preferably distinguishable from the other set in some suitable manner, such as being of different colors as represented by the counters 23 and 24 in Fig. 3. Furthermore, the counters indicating the "players" of each team may be numbered or provided with other suitable means of identification, in order that the individual players of actual teams may be represented and a game between the two teams reproduced and the interest in the game materially increased. I propose also to provide a plurality of score blanks or cards for use in keeping the score of the game. score cards are preferably used, said score cards being identical to the cards used for keeping score in the game of base ball as played out-of-doors. These score cards may be arranged with suitable blank spaces to record the runs made by the teams in each running herein illustrated, or arranged to record the runs of the individual players thus enabling the contestants to keep what is known as a "box score". In this manner a record of the games played may be preserved.

The game is usually played by two persons, each representing a contesting team although it may be played by more than two persons. Two persons are each provided with nine of the counters or men, properly indicating a team. The persons or contestants then decide which one should start the game, that is to bat first. This may be decided in any suitable manner such as by the tossing of a coin or throwing of the dice. The player obtaining the privilege of starting the game places one of the counters or "men" upon the square indicating the home plate of the diamond represented upon the game board, and then proceeds to throw the three dice in the customary manner. By combining the digits represented by the indicia appearing upon the uppermost faces of the dice, in the manner hereinbefore described, a number is obtained corresponding to a like number upon the schedules. The player now refers to schedule having the heading "None on bases" for such is ob-

viously the condition at the commencement of the game. He then moves his counter as indicated by the play corresponding to the number or combination of digits. For example, should the number referred to indicate a "fly out", the player would remove the counter from the home plate to a convenient place, as the spots 25 upon the game board 10, (Fig. 1), to indicate the "outs", for the words "Fly out" would mean that the counter or batsman has hit a fly which has been caught by a player of the opposing team, thus putting the player out. Under such circumstances the same player puts another counter on the home plate and proceeds to throw the dice again referring to the schedule "None on bases". Let it be assumed that upon referring to the schedule the combination of digits, for instance 123, (Fig. 5), indicates a "single", that is, a hit entitling the batsman to proceed to first base. The player will then move the counter to first base and repeat the operation of throwing the dice to obtain the combination of digits necessary to determine the next play. Upon so doing, the schedule marked "Runner on first" will be referred to, in view of the preceding play which resulted in the placing a runner on that base. Should the number upon the said schedule call for "Fly out", the batsman would obviously retire from "bat" and the runner on first base would remain on that base, the counters being positioned accordingly. Again if the number should indicate a "double", that is a two-base hit, the runner on first base would "score" at the "home plate" and the batsman proceed to second base, or, if the number indicated only a "single", the runner on the first base would proceed to second base or third base according to the play specified and the batsman would be entitled to reach first base, and the counters would be moved to corresponding positions. Now, with runners on first base and second base, or on first and third base, as the case may be, the player again throws the dice, referring to the schedules "Runners on first and second" or "Runners on first and third" according as the circumstances of the game dictate. The player or team continues to "stay in bat" until three outs are registered against him and then the opposing player representing the other team takes his turn "at bat". He also plays according to the rules above pointed out until three outs are recorded and the first player or team comes to bat. The game proceeds in this manner until nine innings have been played, the player or team having the greater number of runs at the end of the game being the winner. The runs, hits and errors may be, if desired, recorded in the same manner as in an actual game of base-ball.

The play is usually exciting during the entire game owing to the manner in which the schedules are arranged, hence the game reproduces as closely as possible what would actually occur in a contest between two evenly matched teams in real life.

A game apparatus embodying the features of my invention not only provides a source of amusement to those having an intimate knowledge of and interest in the game, but forms a means whereby the novice may obtain a knowledge of the game.

Obviously the game apparatus embodying the features of my invention may be variously modified, as for instance in the arrangement of the schedules or the number of dice employed without departing from the spirit of the invention. For that reason I do not wish to be limited except in so far as specified in the appended claim.

I claim as my invention:

A game apparatus for playing the game of base-ball comprising a game board having a representation of a playing field thereon, a plurality of schedules, each of said schedules embracing a plurality of designations of plays under a definite situation of the base runners, said play designations having distinguishing indicia, and chance controlled indicating means having indicia corresponding to the indicia associated with the play designations.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my invention I affix my signature in the presence of two witnesses, this 13th day of October, A. D. 1913.

CHARLES M. STEELE.

Witnesses:

EUGENE C. WANN,

MAURICE D. HERMAN.