United States Patent

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[54] **TETHERED KICKING BALL AND GOAL**
7 Claims, 3 Drawing Figs.

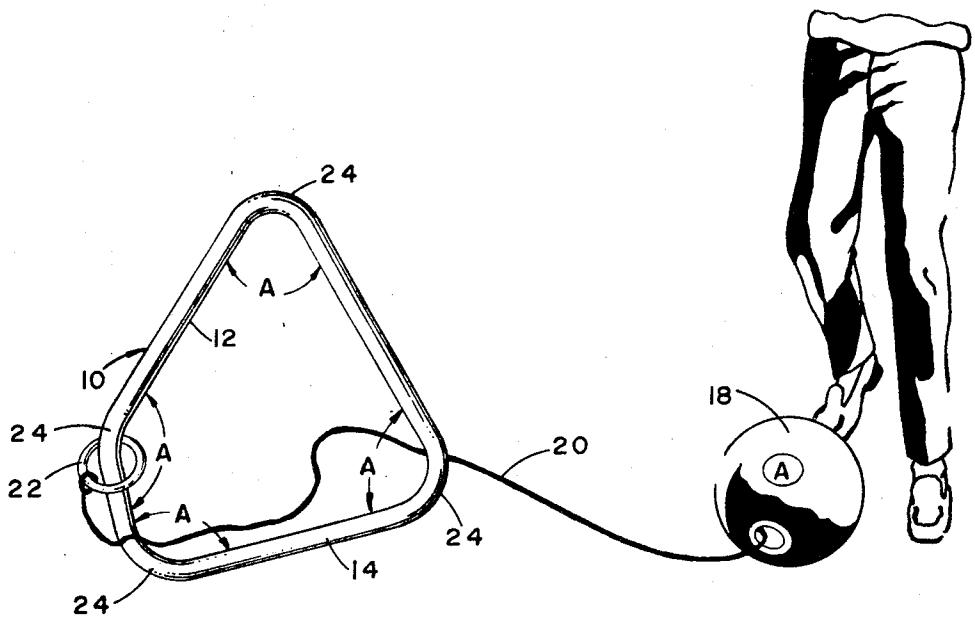
[52] **U.S. Cl.** **273/98**
[51] **Int. Cl.** **A63b 67/00**
[50] **Field of Search** ..... 273/95 A, 98, 58 C, 200, 102

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ABSTRACT: A game apparatus comprising: a wicketlike member formed from rod material and shaped into an endless member comprising a pair of V-shaped configurations each comprising a pair of legs disposed at an angle less than 90° and said configurations being connected together at the ends thereof at the same angles as those between each pair of legs to form four V-shaped configurations, any one of which may serve as base means to flatly engage a playing surface while supporting another one of said configurations in substantially upright position therefrom so that a propelled member may be projected through said upstanding configuration. A flexible member of substantial length connects the propelled member and wicketlike member so that the propelled member if propelled with sufficient force may move the wicketlike member and dispose a different upstanding configuration in position through which the propelled member may be moved.



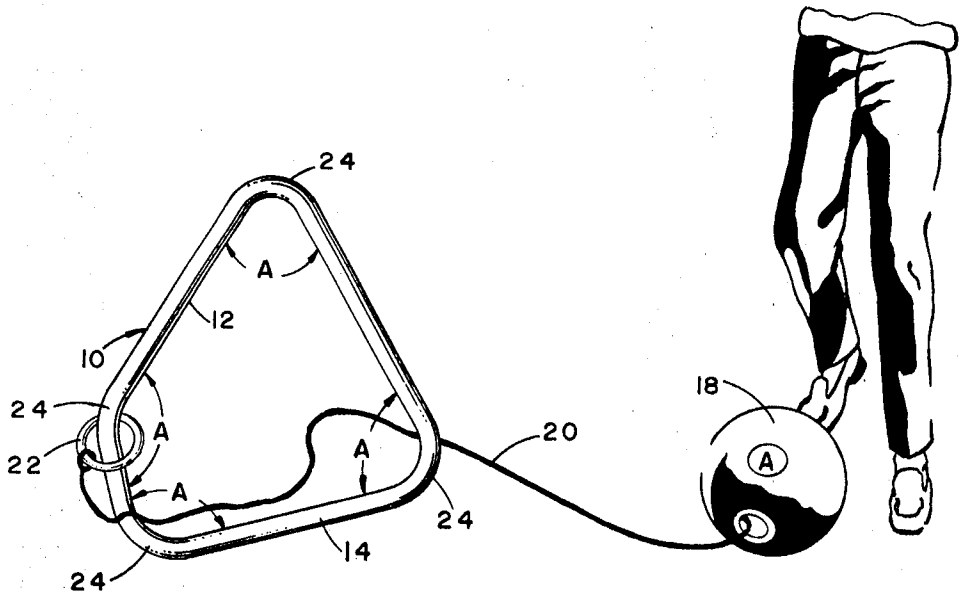


FIG. 1

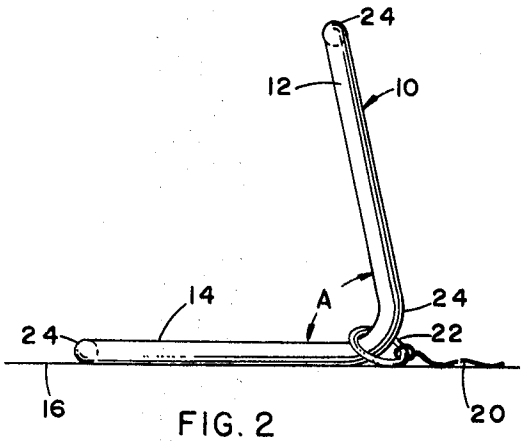


FIG. 2

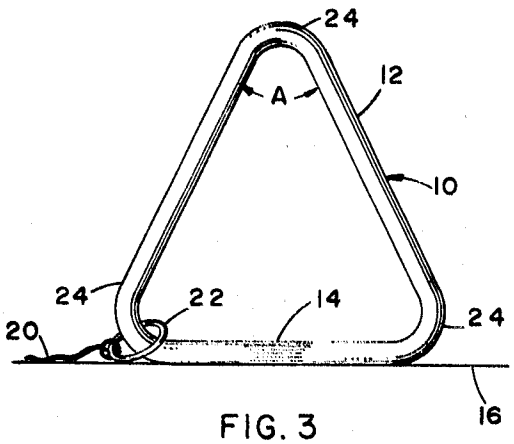


FIG. 3

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TETHERED KICKING BALL AND GOAL

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Croquet has long been a popular game played with wickets fixed on a playing field and balls are projected therethrough by hitting the same with mallets. Various forms of games have also long been played simply by kicking a ball with respect to a goal line or through a goal member. Also, a game known as paddle ball has long been known comprising a flat wooden paddle to which a small rubber ball is connected by means of a rubber strand so that the ball does not become separated from the paddle while batting it with the paddle. With respect to the game of croquet and other aforementioned games where a ball is kicked through a goal member or the like, fixed goals or wickets are used which require a certain amount of preparation of the playing field prior to a game being started.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is the principal object of the present invention to provide game apparatus comprising a wicketlike member which is not intended to be fixed to a playing field but, rather, is mobile and the position thereof is determined by a projectable member, such as a ball, which is connected to the wicketlike member by a flexible member of predetermined length, such as strong cord or the like. The object of the game to be played is to pass the projectable member through an upstanding wicketlike configuration on the first-mentioned member, with substantial force such as afforded by the use of a mallet, kicking, or throwing the same through the wicketlike configuration. As a result of using substantial force to pass the projectable member through the upstanding wicketlike configuration, the wicketlike member frequently is moved from its previous position but the shape of the same is such that there is always a base configuration contacting the playing surface to support an upstanding wicketlike configuration through which the projectable member may be moved.

Another object of the invention is to provide a wicketlike member formed from rod material of suitable composition such as metal wire, an extruded plastic strand, or otherwise, and shape the same into a continuous configuration by connecting the ends of a predetermined length of the material, said shape preferably comprising two pairs of similar pairs of V-shaped configurations which are connected at their ends in such manner as to form a base means comprising one of said configurations which is adapted to rest upon a playing field or surface, while another one of said V-shaped configurations is substantially upstanding therefrom and in position to have the projectable member move therethrough. Such wicketlike member actually comprises four V-shaped configurations, any one of which may serve as a base configuration, while supporting another one of said configurations in an upstanding position within a plane which is disposed relative to the base member at an angle slightly less than 90°, thereby preventing tilting of the wicketlike member until the projectable members pass therethrough with considerable force.

A further object of the invention is to connect one end of the flexible member or means to the wicketlike member by a ring of larger diameter than the diameter of the rod material from which the wicketlike member is formed, whereby said ring may smoothly move along any one of the sections of said member forming said V-shaped configurations, and the apexes of said V-shaped configurations are smoothly curved to facilitate such movement of the ring from one of said sections to another.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an exemplary arrangement of a game assembly embodying the principles of the present invention and showing the same adapted for the kicking of the projectable member through the wicketlike member.

FIG. 2 is a side elevation of the wicketlike member disposed in playing position.

FIG. 3 is a front elevation of the wicketlike member disposed in playing position.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The game assembly comprising the present invention consists of a wicketlike member **10** which is formed from any suitable rod material such as metal wire, extruded synthetic resin or plastics, or otherwise. Preferably, the rod material is of uniform diameter and capable of maintaining the desired shape such as illustrated in the figures of the drawing. Aluminum wire of suitable diameter, for example, is ideal material to use for such purposes, especially drawn aluminum wire which is relatively hard, so as to resist bending, and light in weight. A predetermined length of such rod material is selected and the same is bent into the configuration illustrated in the drawing and particularly FIGS. **2** and **3**. If a heavy member **10** is desired, steel rod is suitable. In said figures, it will be seen that the member **10** comprises a pair of V-shaped configurations **12** and **14**. Each V-shaped configuration has two sections or legs of substantially even length arranged at an angle of slightly less than 90°. The outer ends of the legs of said V-shaped configurations are connected together in such manner that the configurations **12** and **14** respectively lie within planes disposed at an angle A which is the same as that between the legs of each V-shaped configuration, the same being slightly less than 90°, as shown in FIG. **2**. Therefore, it will be seen that there actually are four V-shaped configurations.

By employing an angle A which is less than 90°, considering the exemplary arrangement shown in FIG. **2**, it will be seen that the configuration **14** may serve as a base for the member **10** so that it may rest flatly upon a playing surface **16**. Such playing surface may comprise a play field, lawn, gymnasium floor, or otherwise. In view of the fact that the angle A is less than 90°, it will be seen from FIG. **2** in particular that the configuration **12** is substantially upstanding with respect to the base configuration **14**. Accordingly, when the member **10** is disposed upon such playing surface **16**, said member will be retained in any local position upon the playing surface until moved therefrom. The member will not tilt by gravity from any given position and the upstanding configuration **12**, for example, will be in position to serve as a wicket through which a projectable member **18** may be moved such as by being kicked, hit with a mallet, thrown or pitched, as desired. The manner of projecting member **18** through the upstanding wicket configuration depends upon the particular type of game selected to be played with the entire game assembly which consists very simply of the wicketlike member **10**, the projectable member **18**, and a flexible connecting member **20**.

Although the projectable member **18** is illustrated in FIG. **1** as comprising a spherical ball, said member may be of any desired, suitable shape other than spherical. The essential function of such member is that it is to be projected through the upstanding configuration of the wicketlike member and, in view of this, the member **18** is of sufficiently smaller cross-sectional dimension than the area subtended by the sides forming any upstanding configuration **12**, for example, that it readily may be passed therethrough. To make the game sporting, however, the cross-sectional dimension of projectable member **18** should be such as to pass through the upstanding configuration with only limited clearance, as desired.

The connecting member **20** may be formed from any suitable type of preferably durable material such as rope of appropriate diameter made, for example, from strong synthetic resin filaments such as commercial "nylon," lightweight chain, rope made from textile materials or vegetable fibers, a rubber strand of suitable diameter, or otherwise. The length of the member **20** depends upon the relative sizes of the wicketlike member **10** and the projectable member **18**. For example, assuming that the projectable member **18** is a ball of approximately 4 inches or 5 in diameter, a connecting member **20** which is 10 feet or 12 feet long will be suitable, although this dimension is proposed by way of illustration rather than

limitation. The opposite ends of the connecting members **20** are suitably connected respectively to the projectable member **18** and wicketlike member **10**.

The end of connecting member **20** which is connected to the wicketlike member **10** preferably is directly connected to an appropriate ring **22** which is of appropriately larger diameter than the diameter of the rod material from which the member **10** is formed so as to be freely movable along the sides of the various configurations **12** and **14**. To accomplish this readily, the apexes **24** of all of the V-shaped configurations are smoothly rounded and are substantially identical. However, the intermediate portions of all legs between the rounded corners are straight. Furthermore, all angles between the opposite sides of each apex are equal and are approximately about 85°. Further, the ends of the length of rod material which form the wicketlike member **10** are preferably permanently connected together such as by soldering or welding in the event metal is used, or by suitable cement or fusion in the event synthetic resin is used.

Many types of games may be played with the game assembly comprising the wicketlike member **10**, projectable member **18** and flexible connecting member **20**. Assuming that two players are playing in opposition to each other, the first player has the opportunity to kick the projectable member, or hit it with a mallet, if desired, with the intent of projecting it though the upstanding configuration. If the player misses, the next player takes a turn from the position where the projectable member **18** happens to be. When the projectable member **18** passes through the upstanding configuration, it frequently is with considerable force, to such extent that the member **18** keeps moving past the upstanding configuration of member **10** and will pull the member **10** with it when the slack in the connecting member **20** has been taken up. This will cause the wicketlike member **10** to assume a new position and any of the four V-shaped configurations thereof may become the base which will rest upon the playing surface **16** and another V-shaped configuration connected thereto will always be upstanding relative thereto so as to serve as a wicket member through which the projectable member is to be moved by the next player. The looseness with which the ring **22** fits upon the side members of the various V-shaped configurations will prevent the connecting member **20** from becoming fouled upon the wicketlike member **10** in any way. If preferred, the end of the member **20** which is connected to the projectable member **18** may utilize an appropriate swivel to prevent unduly twisting or snarling the flexible connecting member **20**.

Team play of various kinds may be employed in playing a game with the assembly comprising the present invention or, if preferred, a single player may utilize the game assembly with pleasure, especially in endeavoring to perfect his skill in either kicking the projectable member through the upstanding configuration or projecting it through it by means of a mallet or otherwise.

While the invention has been illustrated and described in its several preferred embodiments, it is to be understood that the same is not to be restricted to the precise details herein illustrated and described since the same may be carried out in other ways falling within the scope of the invention as illustrated and described.

I claim:

1. A game assembly comprising: a wicketlike member formed from rod material of predetermined length, the ends of said wicket member being connected to form an endless member shaped to form a pair of V-shaped configurations each comprising two legs disposed at a predetermined angle to each other less than 90°, the outer ends of said legs of said pairs of configurations being connected together and disposed within planes arranged at the same angle as that between the pairs of legs of each configuration whereby four V-shaped configurations are provided, any one of which may serve as base means adapted to support said device upon a playing surface without tilting while another of said V-shaped configurations is upstanding therefrom, a member adapted to be propelled of less cross-sectional dimension than the V-shaped opening defined by said upstanding V-shaped configuration, and flexible connecting means of predetermined length connected at the ends thereof respectively to said wicketlike member and said propelled member.

2. A game assembly according to claim **1** in which said wicketlike member includes a ring loosely slidable thereon and one end of said flexible connecting means being connected to said ring.

3. The game assembly according to claim **1** which said propelled member is a substantially spherical ball adapted to be propelled by force from a mallet or generated by human force such as kicking or throwing the same through the upstanding V-shaped configuration of said wicketlike member.

4. The game assembly according to claim **3** in which the apexes of said V-shaped configurations are rounded and said wicketlike member includes a ring loosely slidable upon said endless arrangement of connected V-shaped configurations of said member, and one end of said flexible connecting means being connected to said ring for loose movement along the sides of said endless member, said ring being of larger diameter than that of the rod material from which said wicketlike member is formed to permit such ready movement of said ring along all sides thereof.

5. The game assembly according to claim **4** in which the length of said flexible means is many times that of the length of the sides of said V-shaped configurations of said wicketlike member.

6. A wicketlike member formed from rod material and comprising four sections thereof of substantially even length connected to each other to form an endless configuration, each adjacent pair of said sections being arranged at an acute angles slightly less than 90° to each other and thereby forming a pair of V-shaped configurations connected at the ends of the legs thereof, one of said configurations when disposed upon a substantially flat supporting surface serving as a supporting base for the other configuration to position it in an upright plane disposed at an angle of slightly less than 90° to the plane of one of said base configurations and any two connected sections of said member being operable to serve as such base configuration for the other two sections connected thereto.

7. The wicketlike member according to claim **6** in which the portions of said member which connect adjacent sections being similarly smoothly rounded.