April 22, 1941. J. W. MATHEWSON 2,239,446

BASEBALL PLAYING DEVICE

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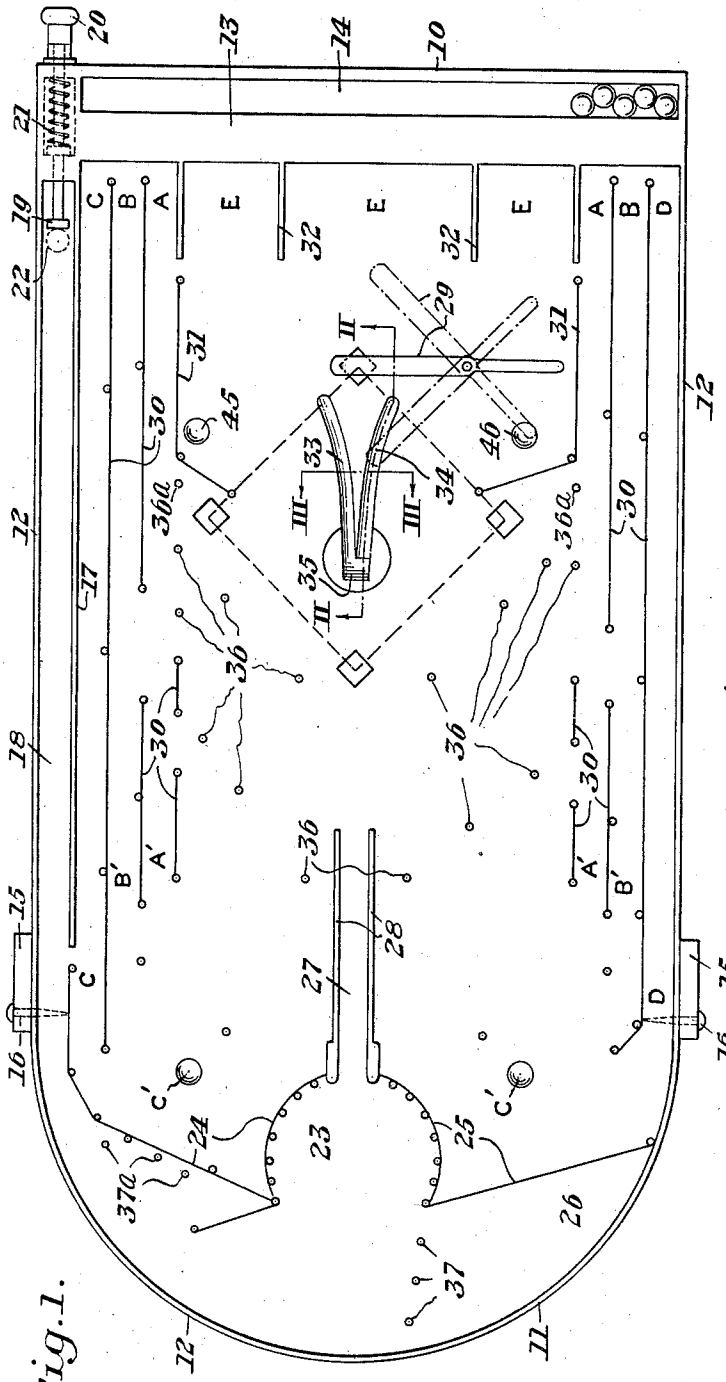


Fig. 1.

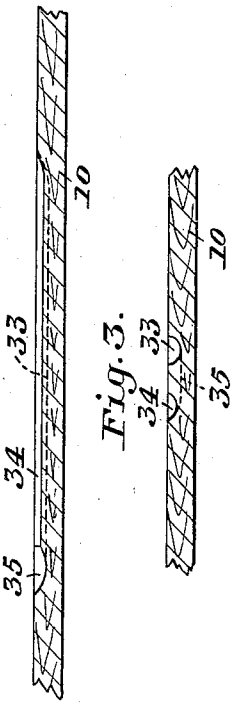


Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

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Fig. 4.

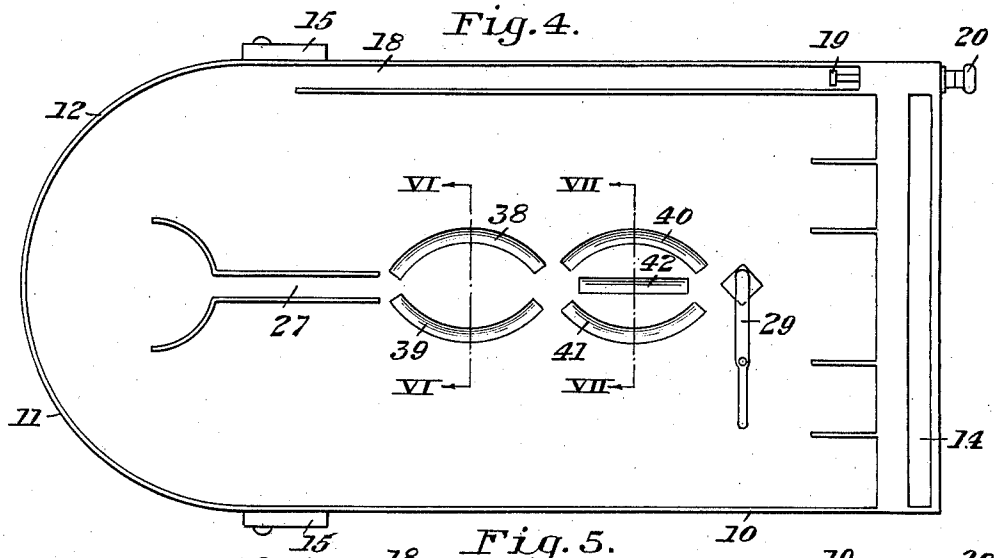


Fig. 5.

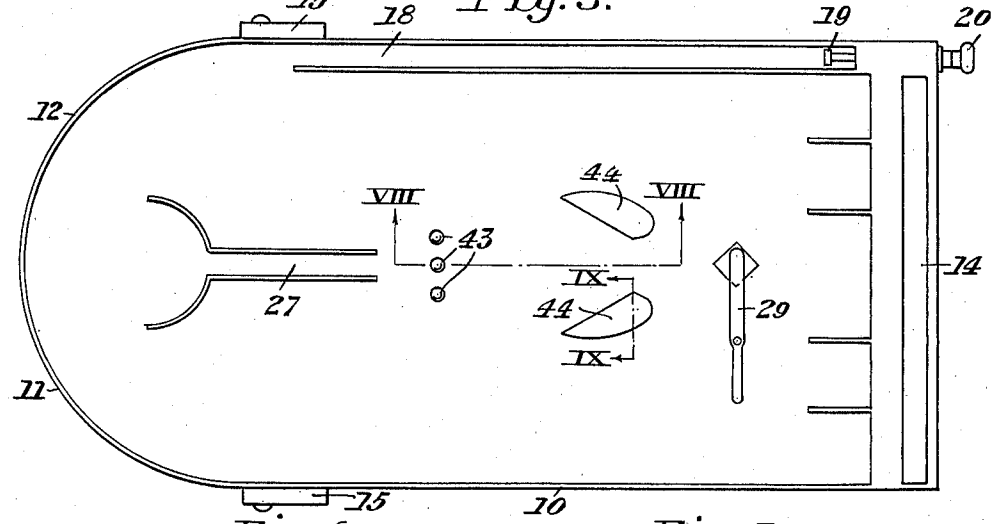


Fig. 6.

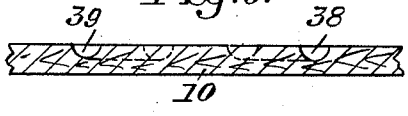


Fig. 7.

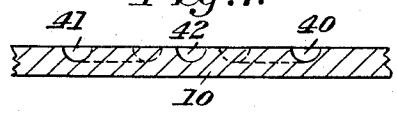


Fig. 8.

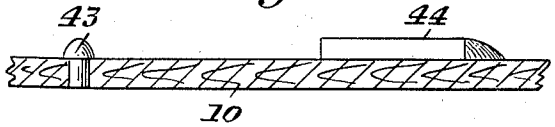
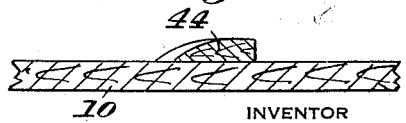


Fig. 9.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,239,446

BASEBALL PLAYING DEVICE

John W. Mathewson, Oakdale, Pa.

Application November 26, 1938, Serial No. 242,522

12 Claims. (Cl. 273—89)

This invention relates generally to a baseball playing device and more particularly to a game device by which two persons may simulate the plays of an actual baseball game. My game is so constructed that results of the plays are dependent in a large measure upon the skill of the players and do not depend upon the operation of purely mechanical devices.

I provide a game board of generally rectangular shape and having a baseball "diamond" marked out on it near one end of the board. A bat pivotally mounted on the board is operated by one person. Near the edge of one of the sides of the board a spring actuated plunger is provided by which a second person "pitches" the balls. During the playing of a game of baseball the board is tilted by raising the end of the board opposite the end where the bat is mounted. The "pitcher" shoots balls up the board along the edge and they roll down the center of the board toward the bat. Vertical barriers are placed over the surface of the board to form guideways or compartments into which the balls may roll after being hit by the batter to indicate the various plays of the game.

In the accompanying drawings I have shown present preferred embodiments of my invention in which

Figure 1 is a plan view of my game device;

Figure 2 is a broken cross-section on an enlarged scale along the lines II—II of Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a broken cross-section on an enlarged scale along the lines III—III of Figure 1;

Figures 4 and 5 are incomplete plan views showing modifications of my device;

Figure 6 is a broken cross-section on an enlarged scale along the lines VI—VI of Figure 4;

Figure 7 is a broken cross-section along the lines VII—VII of Figure 4;

Figure 8 is a broken cross-section on an enlarged scale along the lines VIII—VIII of Figure 5; and

Figure 9 is a broken cross-section on an enlarged scale along the lines IX—IX of Figure 5.

In Figure 1 there is shown a game board 10 of generally rectangular shape but having one end 11 in the form of a semi-circle. The edges of the board 10 are bordered by a rim 12 which has sufficient height to prevent balls from rolling off the board. A baseball "diamond" is marked out on the board to properly locate the bat and various barriers which indicate fair or "foul" hits as hereinafter described. A cross plate 13 is fastened on the board near the square end of the board to form a channel 14 in which extra balls may be kept.

When the game device is being used to play a game of baseball as will be hereinafter described, the board 10 is tilted so that the round end 11 is higher than the square end which has the channel 14. In order to keep the board at the proper slope, I provide legs 15 which pivot about pins 16 fastened to the edges of the board at the point where the semi-circular end joins with the straight sides of the board.

A barrier 17 is mounted on the board 10 adjacent to one edge so that the barrier forms with the rim 12 a guideway 18 along which balls may be shot by a person actuating a plunger 19. The plunger is actuated by pulling back the handle 20, thus compressing a spring 21. When the player releases the handle 20, the spring 21 expands and forces the plunger 19 against a ball shown in proper position at 22. By varying the amount which the handle 20 is withdrawn, the player can control the speed with which the balls go up the guideway 18. When a ball leaves the guideway 18, it is forced around the curved end 11 of the board 10 by the rim 12. Depending upon the speed with which the ball is shot up the guideway, it will then roll into a semi-circular pocket 23 formed by barriers 24 and 25 or it will roll completely around the circular end 11 and into a compartment or guideway 26 which is formed by the barrier 5 and the rim 12 along the curved end 11 of the board 10. If the ball which is shot up the guideway 18 falls into the pocket 23, it will roll down a guideway 27 formed by the barriers 28 towards a bat 29 which is pivotally mounted on the board 10 near the square end of the board.

The person operating the bat 29 attempts to hit the ball as it rolls down the board from the guideway 27 so that the ball will fall into various compartments or guideways A, B, C, D, A' and B' formed by barriers 30. The value of the hit is determined by the compartment into which the ball rolls according to the "rules" of the game which will hereinafter be explained. All of the barriers above mentioned may be made of strips of metal or wood fastened vertically in the board 10 in the arrangement shown in Figure 1. However, I have found it advisable to make the barriers 24, 25 and 30 by stringing flexible steel wire between pins so that when the balls strike these barriers they will spring back therefrom with considerable velocity and thereby increase the uncertainty of the game inasmuch as the balls may bounce several times between two barriers.

The end of the board near the bat 29 is divided into additional guideways or compartments by barriers 31 and 32. The barriers 31 are designed to indicate when a batter hits a "foul ball" and barriers 32 provide with barriers 31 compartments or guideways E into which the ball may roll and thus indicate another type of baseball play as will be hereinafter described.

To add an additional element of uncertainty into the game, I have placed pins 36 around the "outfield" of the board to strike the balls after they have been hit. I have also found it advantageous to put pins 37 between the barrier 25 and the rim 12 of the circular end 11 of the board so as to increase the possibility that balls shot up the guideway 18 will fall into the compartment 23. Likewise I place pins 37*a* near the barrier 24 to catch and hold balls which do not reach the pocket 23. This arrangement aids in keeping track of the number of "balls" which a player has pitched.

To vary the paths which the balls follow in rolling from the guideway 27 towards the bat 29 and thus simulate the "curves" and straight balls which are thrown by a pitcher in an actual game of baseball, I provide two grooves 33 and 34 which come to a point 35 in line with the guideway 27. Since the guideway 27 is wider than the diameter of the balls used in playing the game, the balls frequently bounce back and forth between the barriers 28 and come out of the guideway 27 at an angle. If a ball hits one edge or the other of the point 35 it will be deflected and roll down one of the grooves 33 or 34. The balls may strike the point 35 squarely and roll straight down the board 10 between the two grooves 33 and 34. The groove 33 is cut so that as a ball rolls down this groove, it just misses the end of the bat 29. As shown in Figures 2 and 3, the groove 33 is also cut deeper than the groove 34 thus increasing the possibility that a ball will follow this groove.

Figures 4, 6 and 7 show modifications of my playing device in which different means are employed to cause the balls coming down the guideway 27 to follow irregular and uncertain paths toward the bat 29. In this modification circular grooves 38, 39, 40 and 41 are cut in the board to form a figure 8. In addition, a straight groove 42 is cut in the board between the grooves 40 and 41. Thus a ball rolling down the guideway 27 may go straight down the board between the grooves 38 and 39 and down into the groove 42 directly toward the bat 29. A ball may bounce off one of the barriers forming the guideway 27 and roll into the groove 38 or the groove 39. If the ball should go into the groove 38, it would, after leaving that groove, jump into the groove 41 or the groove 42, depending upon the speed with which the ball rolled down the board on the guideway 27.

Figure 5 shows a further modification of my playing device in which a different means is employed for varying the direction in which the balls roll toward the bat 29. In this modification small rounded buttons 43 are placed just below the guideway 27. Balls rolling down the guideway 27 may deflect from the buttons 43 and strike side projections 44 which are placed between the buttons 43 and the bat 29. The balls will bounce off the projections 44 and continue toward the bat 29, but the direction of the balls will vary according to the angle with which they hit the projections 44. As shown in Figures 8 and 9, the upper surfaces of the projections 44 are sloped toward the edges which are nearest the bat 29 so that balls which are hit by the bat 29 may roll over the projections 44 and will not be materially impeded in their roll toward the top of the board 10.

The method by which a game of baseball is played on my device may be varied according to the desires of the players. However, I have found the following "rules" to be highly satisfactory in that the interest of the players is maintained throughout the duration of the game. As I have previously indicated, this game is played by two persons; one person acts as a "pitcher" and shoots the balls up the guideway 18. Depending upon the force with which the ball is shot, it will roll into the pocket 23 or continue along the rim 12 of the rounded end 11 of the board and down into the compartment or guideway 26. If the ball goes into the pocket 23, it will roll down the guideway 27 toward the bat 29. According to the rules which I have established, if the ball goes into the guideway 26, it constitutes a "ball." If it rolls down the guideway 27, it is a "strike" whether the other person who manipulates the bat 29 attempts to hit the ball or not. If the "pitcher" shoots a ball with such little force that it rolls back into the guideway 18 or is caught by the pins 37*a*, the play is also a "ball."

When the batter hits a ball, it will roll up toward the top of the board 10 and since the board is tilted, will then roll down into one of the compartments A, B, C, D, A' and B', depending upon the angle and force with which the ball is hit and whether or not it hits any of the pins 36 or the barriers 30. If a ball which has been hit rolls down into the guideway A, it constitutes a one base hit. If it rolls down the guideway A', it constitutes a "long" one base hit, that is, a hit which will advance a runner on base two bases although the batter will get but one base. If the ball rolls into the guideway B, it constitutes a two base hit, and if into the guideway B', a "long" two base hit. If a ball rolls into the guideway C, it constitutes a three base hit, and into the guideway D or one of the pockets C', a home run.

Further in accordance with the rules, if the ball hits the inside of the barriers 31, the hit is counted as a foul. If the ball should fall into the small pockets which have been cut in the board at 45 and 46, the play is a "foul out." The ball may roll down into the compartments or guideways E formed by the barriers 31 and 32, in which case the play is an out. The ball may fall back on the outside of the barrier 31 and rest between the barrier 31 and the pins 36*a* which are positioned near the barrier 31. This play is a "sacrifice out" which advances a runner on base but puts the batter out.

By keeping the balls at the bottom of the guideways A, B, C and D, the position of the runner on bases can be recorded. Thus if a ball is hit and rolls into the barrier C, it indicates that a man is on third base. If then a ball rolls into the guideway A, it indicates a single and the ball which is in the guideway C is moved to the guideway D, which will indicate a run since the guideway D also indicates a home run. If a ball which has been hit rolls into one of the guideways A, it shows a single and if subsequently a ball rolls down the guideway B', which indicates a long double, the ball which is at the bottom of the guideway A is moved to the bottom of the guideway D.

The players' interest in the game of baseball played on my game device is maintained through-

out the duration of the game because the result of the plays depends in a large measure on the skill of the players. Thus whether a "ball" or strike is thrown by the "pitcher" depends on the speed with which the balls are shot up the guideway 18. Whether a hit counts for one base, two bases or a home run depends on the angle and force with which a ball is hit by the "batter." The obstacles or grooves placed before the bat cause the balls to follow uncertain paths and thus require additional skill on the part of the batter.

The only moving mechanical parts are the plunger and the bat. These are very simple in construction and, therefore, my playing device may be manufactured at low cost and kept in playing condition indefinitely.

While I have shown only three present preferred embodiments of my invention, it is to be distinctly understood that it may be otherwise variously embodied and practiced within the scope of the following claims.

I claim:

1. A baseball playing device comprising a game board, a bat pivotally mounted on said board, means positioned on the board for rolling balls over the board towards said bat, grooves in said board for causing chance variations in the paths which the balls follow in rolling towards the bat, and compartments on the surface of the board into which the balls may roll after being hit by the bat to indicate hits and "outs."

2. A baseball playing device comprising a game board, a bat pivotally mounted on said board, means positioned on the board for rolling balls over the board towards said bat, a forked groove in said board for causing chance variations in the paths which the balls follow in rolling toward the bat, and compartments formed by barriers on the board into which the balls may roll after being hit by the bat to indicate hits and "outs."

3. A baseball playing device comprising a game board, a bat pivotally mounted on said board, means positioned on the board for rolling balls over the board towards said bat, curved grooves in said board for causing chance variations in the paths which the balls follow in rolling towards the bat, and compartments formed by barriers on the board into which the balls may roll after being hit by the bat to indicate hits and "outs."

4. A baseball playing device comprising a game board, a bat mounted on said board, means positioned on the board for rolling balls over the board towards said bat, means for causing chance variations in the paths which the balls follow in rolling towards the bat so that the balls may roll within or beyond the reach of the bat, and compartments formed by barriers on the board into which the balls may roll after being hit by the bat to indicate hits and "outs," and pins positioned about the surface of said board for changing the directions in which the balls travel after being hit by said bat.

5. A pin ball game comprising a game board having means for tilting the board at one end, a shooter adjacent the lower end thereof for projecting balls to the upper end of the board, a pivotally mounted bat near the lower end of the board to one side of the shooter, a barrier extending across the board near its upper end and providing a sluiceway spaced downwardly towards the bat and effective to receive balls that roll down in a limited zone only across the width of the board, balls rolling down from either side of said zone escaping the sluiceway, said sluiceway terminating in line with but remote from the bat, the arrangement enabling the speed of delivery from the sluiceway to the bat to be varied according to the speed and angle at which the ball enters the upper end thereof.

6. A baseball playing device comprising a game board having a generally plane surface, a pivoted bat mounted on the board, means positioned on the board for rolling balls towards the bat, ball deflecting means in the zone of the board over which the balls roll towards the bat which permit the balls to roll towards the bat and cause chance variations in the paths which the balls follow, said ball deflecting means being of a character to permit balls hit by the bat to roll out over the board in all directions, and compartments on the surface of the board into which the balls may roll after being hit by the bat to indicate hits and "outs."

7. A baseball playing device comprising a game board having a generally plane surface, a pivoted bat mounted on the board, means positioned on the board for rolling balls towards the bat, variations in the surface of the board in the zone over which the balls pass in rolling towards the bat of a character that the balls are deflected but not stopped in their movement, said variations permitting balls which have been hit by the bat to roll out over the board in all directions, and compartments on the surface of the board into which the balls may roll after being hit by the bat to indicate hits and "outs."

8. A baseball playing device comprising a game board having a generally plane surface, a bat pivotally mounted at one end of said board, means for shooting balls towards the end of the board away from the bat so that they roll back on the board towards the bat, ball deflecting means in the zone of the board over which the balls roll towards the bat which permit the balls to roll towards the bat and cause chance variations in the paths which the balls follow, said ball deflecting means being so constructed as to permit balls hit by the bat to roll out over the board in all directions, and barriers positioned on the board to form guideways into which the balls may roll to indicate strikes, "balls," hits and "outs."

9. A baseball playing device comprising a game board which may be tilted, a bat, means for shooting balls up the board when it is tilted, barriers so arranged on the board that the balls after being shot may roll down a guideway in the center of the board towards the bat or down a guideway along the edge of the board depending upon the force with which the balls are shot up the board, ball deflecting grooves in the zone of the board over which the balls roll towards the bat which permit the balls to roll towards the bat and cause chance variations in the paths which the balls follow, so that the balls may roll either within or beyond the reach of the bat, and guideways positioned about the board and having spaced openings therein into which the balls may roll to indicate strikes, "balls," hits and "outs."

10. A pinball game comprising a game board which may be tilted having a shooter adjacent the lower end thereof when tilted for projecting balls to the upper end of the board, a pivotally mounted bat near the lower end of the board to one side of the shooter, a guideway along the upper edge of the board having an opening therein through which balls may roll depending on the force with which they are rolled up the board by the shooter, said opening connecting with a guideway which directs the balls towards the bat, and means positioned in the zone of the board over which the

balls roll towards the bat for causing chance variations in the paths which the balls follow in rolling towards the area of the board swept by the bat.

11. A baseball playing device comprising a game board having a generally plane surface, a bat pivotally mounted at one end of the said board, means positioned on the board for shooting balls towards the end of the board away from the bat so that they roll back over the board towards the bat, the surface of the zone of the board over which the balls roll towards the bat having ball deflecting means which permit the balls to roll towards the bat and cause chance variations in the paths which the balls follow, said ball deflecting means being so constructed as to permit balls hit by the bat to roll out over the board in all directions, and barriers positioned on the board to form guideways into which the balls may roll after being hit by the bat to indicate strikes, "balls," hits and "outs."

12. A baseball playing device comprising a game board, a bat mounted on said board, means positioned on the board for rolling balls over the board toward said bat, barriers positioned on the surface of said board for causing chance variations in the paths which the balls follow in rolling towards the bat so that the balls may roll within or beyond the reach of the bat, said barriers being of a character to permit balls hit by the bat to roll out over the board, and compartments on the surface of the board into which the balls may roll after being hit by the bat to indicate "hits" and "outs."

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