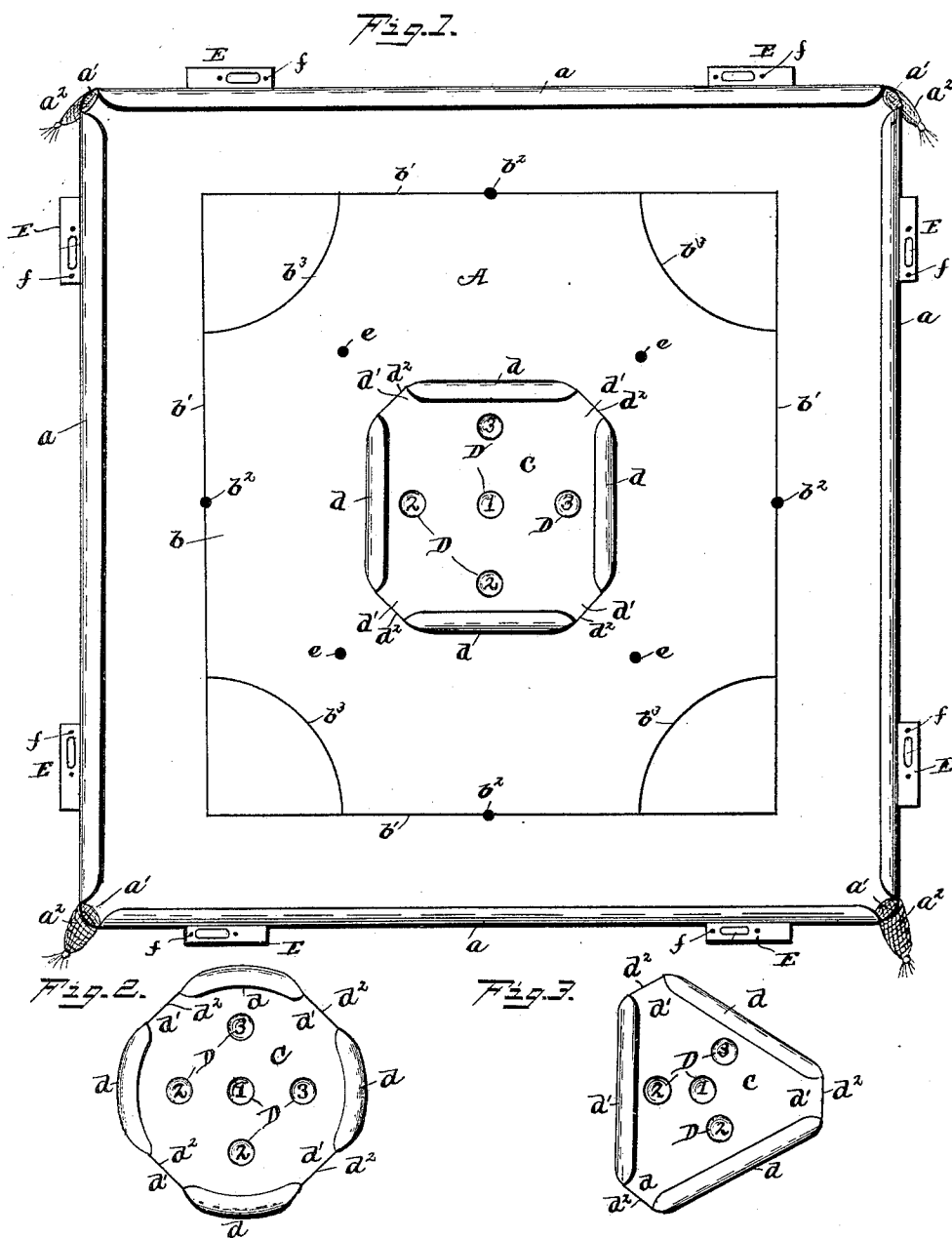


(No Model.)

E. B. S. MERCER.
GAME BOARD.

No. 462,870.

Patented Nov. 10, 1891.



Witnesses.
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

EDWARD B. S. MERCER, OF CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA.

GAME-BOARD.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 462,870, dated November 10, 1891.

Application filed August 31, 1891. Serial No. 404,364. (No model.) Patented in England May 15, 1889, No. 8,094.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, EDWARD BEAUCHAMP SINGLETON MERCER, a subject of the Queen of Great Britain, residing at Cape Town, South Africa, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Game Apparatus, (for which I have obtained Letters Patent in England, No. 8,094, dated May 15, 1889,) of which the following is a specification, reference being had therein to the accompanying drawings.

This invention relates to a new and improved game board or table, having for its object the production of a novel, interesting, and highly-entertaining game, which may be played by from two to eight persons.

The invention comprises the detail construction, combination, and arrangement of parts, substantially as hereinafter fully set forth, and particularly pointed out in the claims.

In the accompanying drawings, Figure 1 is a plan view of my improved game-board. Figs. 2 and 3 are similar views of slight modifications.

Referring to the drawings, A designates a table or board, preferably square, and provided with cushioned sides or flanges *a*, and intervening openings *a'* between adjacent ends of said sides, over the outer portions of which are net pockets *a''*. The table and cushions are covered with suitable cloth, as is a billiard-table. On this cloth a square *b* is formed by drawing lines *b'* parallel with the cushioned sides of table A. In the exact center of each line *b'* is a mark or spot *b''*, on all of which four spots are placed four black balls, one on each spot. At each corner of square *b* the right-angular lines are connected by a segment of a circle *b'''*, thus forming a kind of triangle. These four triangles are called balk spaces or lines, and denote the point from which each player is to start.

In the center of board or table A, and consequently also in the center of square *b*, is formed an inclosure C by cushions *d*, secured to or resting on table A. A space or opening *d'* is left between adjacent ends of each two cushions, so as to allow a ball to pass into the inclosure. Within this inclosure are five (more or less) cups D—such as are used on a bagatelle-board—large enough to receive a ball. Each cup is numbered to represent a

different value or point. A line *d''* is drawn between the adjacent ends of each two cushions *d*, so as to indicate whether or not a ball is within the inclosure C. A short distance from each opening *d'* is a mark or spot *e*, making four in all if inclosure C be square or circular. If the inclosure be either less or more than four openings, then the original spots between the balk spaces or lines only are used and the spots *e* are dispensed with.

The openings in the center inclosure, if four, may turn either toward each corner pocket or toward each mark or spot whereon the black balls are placed, and the inclosure may consist either of a square, a triangle, a circle, or a figure having more than four sides. The center of this inclosure in all cases should be the exact center of the table or board, and, if so desired, instead of being permanently fastened to the bed the cushions *d* might be loaded inside with lead sufficiently heavy not to be moved on one side by ordinary means during any game, or may have pegs put in the base to fit into holes in the bed of the table or board.

The bed of the table or board may be made either of slate, wood, or any other suitable material. The cushions may be made from any suitable substance, with india-rubber or other suitable material giving elasticity.

The balls are made either from ivory, wood, or any other suitable substance. For this sized table I would suggest using two-inch balls and three-inch apertures.

Adjacent to each corner of table A are two scoring and chalk boxes E, affixed to said table. Each box has a color or mark *f* of a separate ball painted on the top, so that each player may score for himself, and it will be seen by each player as he moves around the table or board.

There are two sets of rules according to which games may be played on my improved game board or table. According to one set of rules the game may be played by from two to eight players each having different colored or marked balls to play with, though a greater number may play, if desired, by playing sides and two using one ball for both. Points or numbers are made either by caroms, by putting any black ball or opponent's balls into the inclosure by means of striking the player's ball

with a cue against either any of the four black balls or any opponent's ball, or by means of striking the player's ball with a cue against any of the four black balls, and so entering the inclosure from off one of the said black balls, or by the player's ball simply being played against one of the four outside cushions without hitting any black ball and so entering the inclosure. The four pockets at the extreme corner of the table or board are to be carefully avoided.

1. A carom consists of striking two black balls in succession by the player's ball. It may be made either direct or off any cushion; but should any opponent's ball be touched "*en passant*"—i. e., between the first black ball struck and the second—it shall not be counted a carom. Caroms shall only be counted should they be made outside the center inclosure and count only two for each carom made.

2. Holing or putting any black or opponent's ball into the inclosure means sending it in by means of first striking the player's ball with the cue against any black or opponent's ball, and so sending it in.

3. Entering inclosure from off any black ball means the player striking his or her ball with a cue against one of the black balls, and so sending his or her ball into inclosure from off such black ball; but this may not be done off any opponent's ball.

4. A player may enter the inclosure with his or her ball either off any of the four black balls or off any of the four outside cushions.

5. Any ball being driven into or entering the inclosure by means of another ball or off any cushion and coming out again shall not count to the player, and any ball entering the inclosure must have entered and remain at least over half the ball's diameter in order to score.

6. As soon as any ball shall enter the inclosure and a score is made therefrom it shall at once be taken out.

7. In the event of it being a black ball it shall be placed by the next player on the nearest spot which is vacant; if equidistant from two vacant spots, then on one of them at his option.

8. Should the ball entering the inclosure be any player's ball, it shall also at once be taken out; if belonging to a non-striker at the time, it shall be kept off the table till his turn comes round, when he may restart from any of the four balk lines or spaces at his pleasure; but if the striker's ball enters and his turn is not yet finished he takes it out and places it within any of the four balk lines or spaces at his option and continues to play until he ceases to score.

9. If a black ball is driven into the inclosure, it counts 4 plus the double of any number of cup it may happen to fall into; but if it only enters without being cupped it only counts four.

10. If the striker's ball enters the inclosure

off a black ball, it counts three plus the single number of any cup it may happen to fall into; but if it only enters without being cupped it only counts three. The same rule applies in the event of any opponent's ball being put in.

11. If the player enters the inclosure off any opponent's ball, he forfeits his turn but does not deduct any score.

12. If a player enters the inclosure simply off an outside cushion and not off any ball, it counts two plus the single number of any cup it may chance to fall into; but if none it only counts two, and his ball is taken out and he plays from any of the four balk lines or spaces he may wish.

13. If a player holes any opponent's ball by any means either off any cushion or direct, he counts two plus any single number of cup it may fall into; if none, only two, and the ball is taken off the table till the owner's turn comes around again.

14. If a player follows his opponent's ball into the inclosure, he only counts two for putting his opponent's ball in, and although he does not deduct anything for going in himself, yet he ceases to play, both balls being taken from the table till their respective turns come round again.

15. If a player follows a black ball into inclosure, he counts three for his own ball plus single numbers of any cup if he goes in, and four for the black ball plus any double number of cup it may fall into. If no cups are entered, simply three and four, respectively, are counted.

16. Should any black ball be driven by any means into any corner-pocket, the then player shall loose three for any or every such ball so pocketed, whether it be any black ball or opponent's ball or himself, either direct or off any cushion, and he ceases to play, except in the event of scoring at the same time by contact with any opponent's ball, when he may continue to play, but he must deduct three. This last part of rule does not apply with regard to the black balls.

17. In case of any black ball being pocketed it shall be placed by the next player at his option on the nearest vacant spot, or if it be a player's ball it may remain there till the owner's turn comes around again.

18. No ball of any kind should remain in the inclosure during play.

19. The first player must break the balls.

20. This game shall be for fifty or one hundred up, but may be varied by mutual agreement before any game.

21. In the event of more than two players and where one shall have obtained the number of points agreed on, each player shall have the same number of turns, and the highest scorer at the end shall be deemed to have won the game.

22. A carom may be made or any other score even if the striker's ball is touching another or two black balls be touching.

23. There are no such things as misses counting against any player, except that in so doing he stops his play in that he does not score, and any player is not under any penalty by not hitting other balls or even any cushion, except as above stated.

24. No player's ball may enter the inclosure directly off the cushions of the inclosure, but must (if only played off a cushion) first be off one of the outside cushions of table or board.

25. Where there are only two players, forfeited points are added to the opponent's score. Where three or more play, they are deducted from the player's score.

26. There shall be no actual play with the cue within the inclosure.

27. On no account shall any ball be removed during the game in order to give any striker clearer play.

28. Order of play. For two players: White plays first and breaks the balls; spot-white follows. For more than two players in the following order: white, spot-white, red, green, brown, blue, yellow, lake.

Should there be four spots on table or board close to openings of inclosure, they are not used under this set of rules.

According to the other set of rules the game is played by two or more having a distinguishing ball each to play with, and is performed by means of striking each player's ball with a cue and so endeavoring either to hole or pocket any of the four black balls, which are placed on certain marks or spots on the table or board provided for such. Play is commenced by the holder of the white ball (each black ball being placed on a spot near each opening of the inclosure, if there are four of such) who may place his ball at the extreme corner of any of the four balk lines or spaces and endeavor by striking his ball against a black one, to make the ball pass into the inclosure, which when done is placed on the nearest of the spots vacant to the black ball after it has stopped within the inclosure.

1. Players follow in the same order as the above described set of rules.

2. A player goes on playing until he ceases to score.

3. Should any player's ball enter either the inclosure or any pocket, the owner thereof ceases to play till his or her turn comes round.

4. When a black ball is driven into the inclosure, it counts four plus the number of any cup, if cupped; if not cupped, simply four is counted.

5. If a black ball by any means is pocketed, it counts three and is taken out and spotted on the nearest mark or spot for that purpose to the pocket it went down in, and the player goes on playing from where his ball remained after his last stroke.

6. Any black ball entering the inclosure is dealt with in the same manner as if it were pocketed, and a ball must remain still within the inclosure in order to score. Any ball

merely traveling in and out again without stopping does not score.

7. Should a player's ball enter either a pocket or inclosure, the player ceases to play till his turn comes round and his ball is kept off the table, being out of play.

8. Players' balls, unless entering any pocket or inclosure, should always remain where they left off rolling.

9. When any player holes or pockets his own ball and also by the same stroke puts a black ball either in the inclosure or a pocket, he ceases his stroke and no score is counted.

10. Caroms are made either by hitting two black balls following without interruption by another ball or by hitting any two opponents' balls in the same manner without a black ball intervening, and in both cases counts two, though caroms may either be played or not in this set of rules, as agreed beforehand.

11. A player may either go off any cushion or off any other ball, opponent's or black, in order to try and put down another black ball.

12. If no black ball at all is hit during a stroke, it counts a "miss," and one is added to the opponent's or opponents' scores. A miss cue is treated in like manner.

13. No ball shall be removed during any game to make a clearer stroke.

14. Anything over half diameter of ball in inclosure counts as in.

15. For two players the game is thirty-nine up without caroms or fifty up with caroms, or more, as agreed upon beforehand.

16. Any foul stroke made by moving any other ball than the striker's with the cue, the striker loses his turn if claimed by an opponent.

17. If a striker has put one of the four balls into the inclosure and all spots are occupied, he himself having managed to put his own ball in the place occupying that which the black ball has vacated, such black ball shall be placed on either side as near as can be, without touching the striker's ball, to the original spot it was on before the last stroke was made.

The four spots used between the balk lines or spaces for the first set of rules has no reference to this set, except in cases where an inclosure of either less or more than four openings is used.

I claim as my invention—

1. The herein-described improved game board or table, comprising the table having cushioned sides, the pockets in each corner of said table and the central inclosure having openings therein, and recesses or sockets within said inclosures, as set forth.

2. The herein-described improved game board or table having cushioned sides, openings in each corner, pockets near such openings, the central inclosure also having within and without cushioned sides, the openings therein, and the recesses or sockets within said inclosure, substantially as set forth.

3. As an improvement in game-boards, the herein-described board having cushioned sides, the openings in each corner, the pockets in said openings, the inner square, the
5 triangular figures in the corners of said square, and the central inclosure having openings therein, substantially as set forth.

4. As an improvement in game-boards, the herein-described board having pockets at
10 each corner, the inner square marked on said board, and triangular figures in each corner of said square, the spots between such fig-

ures, the central inclosure having openings therein, the recesses or sockets in said inclosure, and the spots near said openings, 15 substantially as set forth.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

E. B. S. MERCER.

Witnesses:

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J. HAYES,

Clerk to Messrs. Deare & Co.