No. 749,872. PATENTED JAN. 19, 1904.

J. S. MATHER.

GAME APPARATUS.

APPLICATION FILED JUNE 24, 1902.

NO MODEL. 2 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

Fig. 1.

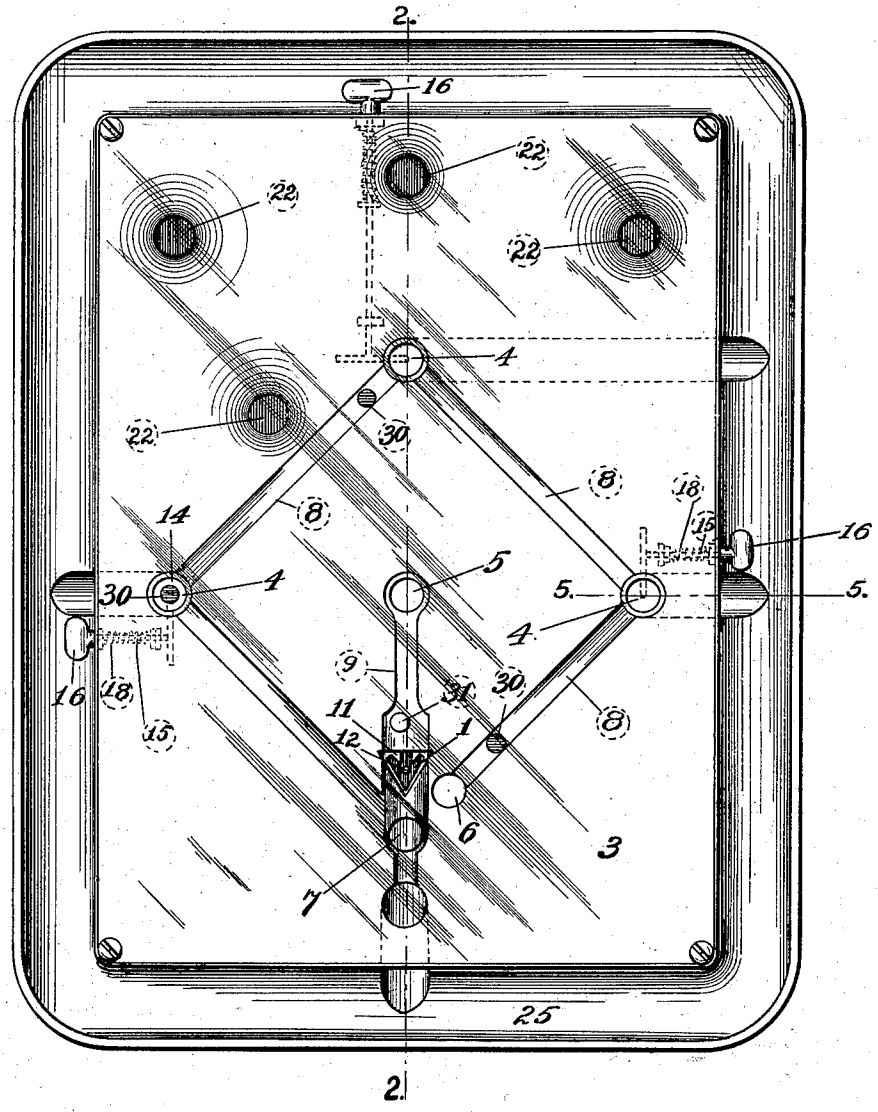
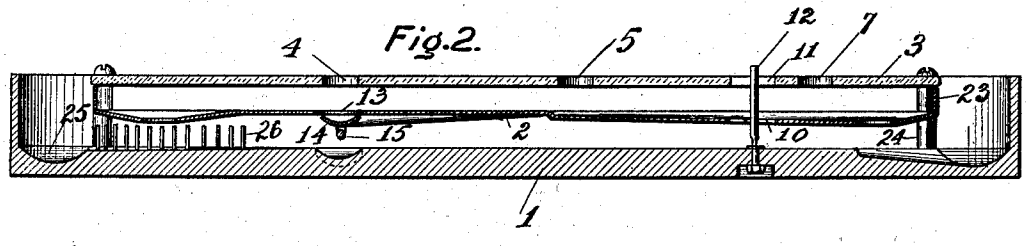


Fig. 2.



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NO MODEL. 2 SHEETS—SHEET 2.

Fig. 3.

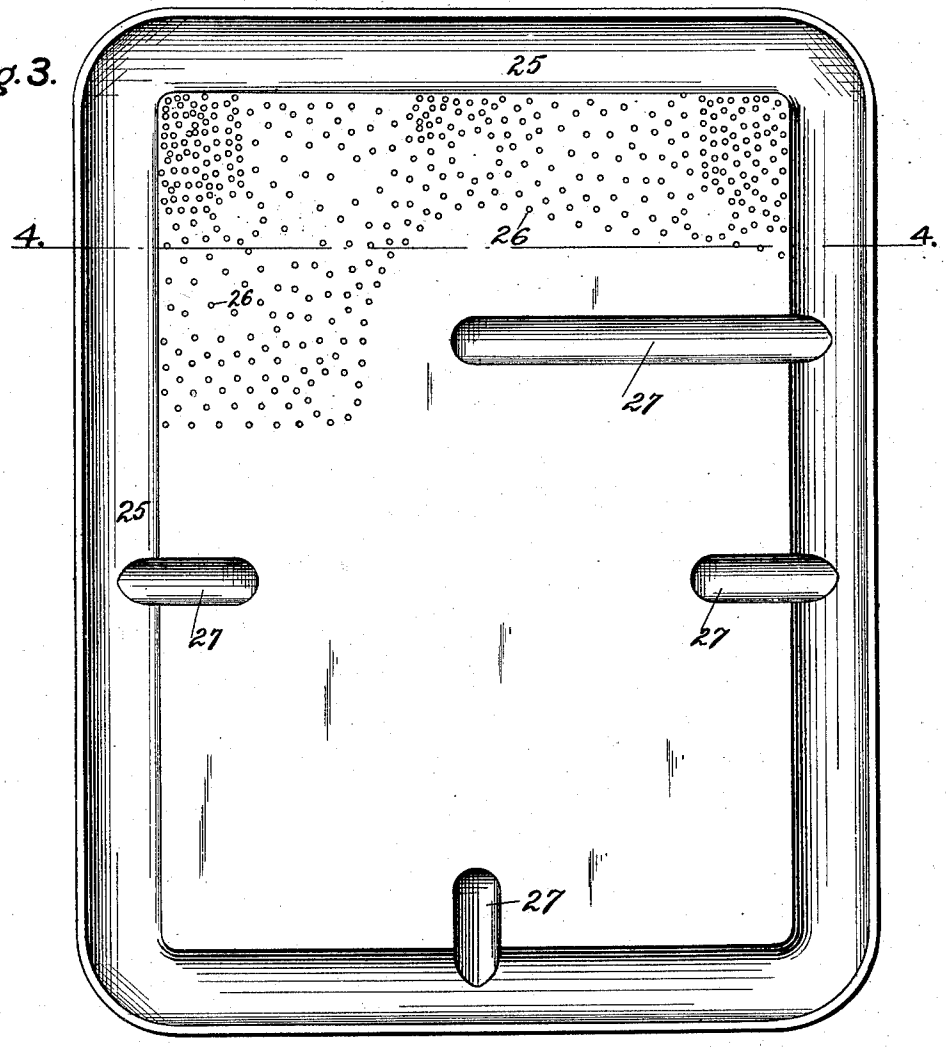


Fig. 4.

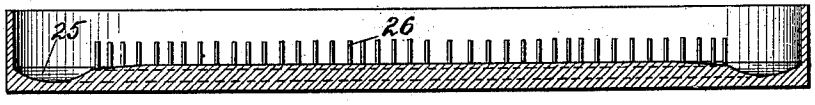


Fig. 5.

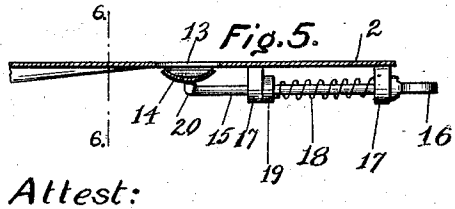
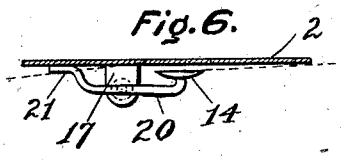


Fig. 6.



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No. 749,872. Patented January 19, 1904.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOSEPH S. MATHER, OF ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI.

GAME APPARATUS.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 749,872, dated January 19, 1904.

Application filed June 24, 1902. Serial No. 112,955. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOSEPH S. MATHER, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of the city of St. Louis, State of Missouri, have invented a new and useful Game Apparatus, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to game apparatus, and has for its principal object to provide an apparatus for simulating the game of base-ball.

It consists in the parts and in the arrangement and combination of parts hereinafter described and claimed.

In the accompanying drawings, which form part of this specification, and wherein like symbols refer to like parts wherever they occur, Figure 1 is a plan view of my apparatus. Fig. 2 is a vertical cross-section on the line 2 2 of Fig. 1. Fig. 3 is a plan view of the bottom board. Fig. 4 is a vertical cross-section of the bottom board on the line 4 4 of Fig. 3. Fig. 5 is a detail view of a base-cup and the means for manipulating the same, and Fig. 6 is a similar detail view of the base-cup at right angles to the view of Fig. 5.

The body of my device comprises a bottom board 1, a false bottom 2, supported a slight distance above said bottom board, and a cover 3, which is preferably of glass. In the cover 3 are holes 4, arranged to conform to the position of the bases and to the pitcher 5 of the ordinary base-ball game. There is an additional hole 6 in the cover arranged close to the home-base opening 7 in the direction of first base. The false bottom is provided with a series of grooves 8, which incline downwardly from base to base around the diamond. There is also a groove 9, extending in a downward direction from the pitcher's position to past the home base, said groove being made wide and shallow near the home base. Mounted on the bottom board 1 and projecting upwardly through holes 10 and 11, provided therefor in the false bottom and in the cover, respectively, is a resilient piece 12, hereinafter termed a "bat." This bat preferably consists of a piece of round resilient wire of reduced diameter near its attachment to the bottom board. The false bottom is provided with four holes 13, directly below the holes in the cover conforming to the position of the bases. Below these holes 13 in the false bottom are cup-shaped pieces 14, supported upon shanks or spindles 15, provided therefor. These shanks or spindles extend through the side of the frames and are provided on their ends with handles or finger-pieces 16 in position to be easily manipulated by the players. Each spindle is rotatably mounted in its bearings 17, which are preferably suspended from the false bottom, and is also capable of endwise movement therein. In order to return the spindle to its normal position automatically, it is provided with a helical spring 18, fastened to it and to its support or bearings 17 and bearing at its respective ends against its support and a shoulder 19 on said spindle. By this arrangement the spring acts as a compression-spring to retract the spindle to normal position when turned on its axis. The shoulder 19 is arranged to abut against the support 17, and thus constitute a limiting-stop for determining the longitudinal movement of the spindle and the normal position of the base-cup. The base-cup is preferably secured to its spindle by means of an arm 20, arranged radially of said spindle, the cup being secured in horizontal position at one end of said arm and the other end of said arm projecting laterally from said spindle and turned up to abut against the under side of the false bottom. The tailpiece 21 of the arm thus constitutes a limiting-stop for determining the normal angular position of the base-cup. The stops for the spindle are thus so arranged that the cups thereon normally rest in a horizontal position directly below the respective base-openings in the cover. The cups being thus eccentrically mounted on their spindles, as hereinbefore described, will be tilted upwardly when the spindles are turned against the force of their springs, so that a ball in any cup will roll therefrom into the groove leading to the next base.

The false bottom 2 has a number of holes 22 therein located to conform to the position of the fielders and short-stop, and the upper surface of said false bottom is arranged to incline toward these holes 22, and there is an inclosing wall 23 or side extending upwardly from the false bottom to the cover. The bot-

tom board has a groove 25 extending around the border thereof within convenient reach of the players, and all portions of the bottom board are inclined more or less toward this border groove. The bottom board has a wall extending upwardly at its margin a sufficient distance to prevent the rolling off of balls in such groove. The inclination of the upper surface of the bottom board varies at different locations, and preferably some locations are roughened or provided with pins or other obstacles 26, suitable for retarding without stopping the progress of a rolling ball. This bottom plate is also provided with grooves 27, extending at a comparatively steep inclination from beneath the bases to the border groove 25. One of said grooves 27 also extends to said border groove from beneath a hole arranged in the false bottom in the position of the catcher and into which any balls that pass the bat will drop to be quickly recovered.

The operation of my device is as follows: Assume that there are two players each provided with a set of balls colored red and blue, respectively, and that the red balls 30 represent the inside. Then the player who holds the blue balls 31 drops one of them in the hole at the pitcher's stand and the other player manipulates the bat, so as to strike therewith the blue ball 31 as it rolls down the groove. The ball 31 is thus batted out into the field and rolls into one or the other of the holes 22 in the false bottom and thence drops through said hole onto the base-board, over which it rolls into the border groove 25, where it may be reached by its player and placed by him in any of the base-holes which the rules of the game suggest. As soon as the batter strikes the blue ball 31 he drops a red ball 30 into the hole 6 near the home position and the ball rolls down the groove 8 to the first base, where it comes to rest in the base-cup. In order to start the ball from one base to another, all that is necessary is to turn the spindle on its axis by manipulating the finger-piece 16. In this way several of the bases may be occupied at the same time each by its own ball. The base-holes in the cover are so arranged that when the base is occupied by a ball another ball will not pass through the corresponding hole. When a ball of the outside occupies a base, it is recovered by pulling the spindle endwise, whereby the ball is scraped off of said cup and drops through the hole in the false bottom into a steep groove 27 in the base-board leading to the border groove.

It is apparent from the foregoing description that the apparatus is capable of closely simulating the ordinary game of base-ball, the several inclinations of the surface being arranged so that the time occupied by the ball in reaching the border groove corresponds to the force of the batting blow and the direction in which it sends the ball, both of which are under the control of the player.

Obviously the apparatus hereinbefore described admits of considerable modification without departing from my invention, and I do not wish to restrict myself to the said construction. For instance, the cover need not be transparent, provided an opening be made of sufficient size to permit the batter to see the ball. So, too, the cover may be entirely omitted, in which case the balls may be removed without providing any special devices for the purpose.

What I claim is—

1. A game apparatus comprising a raised bottom having holes arranged in inclined depressions in its upper surface and having bases, a cover having holes located above the bases, and a bat arranged for manipulation and means whereby a ball may be moved to the bat, substantially as described.

2. A game apparatus comprising a raised bottom having holes arranged in inclined depressions in its upper surface and having downwardly-inclined grooves arranged in the form of a diamond, bases at the corners of said diamond, a cover having holes above said bases and near the home base, and a bat arranged for manipulation and means whereby a ball may be moved to the bat, substantially as described.

3. A game apparatus comprising a raised bottom having holes arranged in inclined depressions in its upper surface and having downwardly-inclined grooves arranged in the form of a diamond, bases at the corners of said diamond, a cover having holes above said bases and near the home base, and a bat arranged for manipulation and means whereby a ball may be moved to the bat, said bases being eccentrically mounted on rotatable spindles, substantially as and for the purpose set forth.

4. A game apparatus comprising a raised bottom having holes arranged in inclined depressions in its upper surface and having downwardly-inclined grooves arranged in the form of a diamond, bases at the corners of said diamond, a cover having holes above said bases and near the home base, and a bat arranged for manipulation and means whereby a ball may be moved to the bat, said bases being eccentrically mounted on rotatable spindles and a spring for retracting each spindle substantially as and for the purpose set forth.

5. A game apparatus comprising a raised bottom having holes arranged in inclined depressions in its upper surface and having downwardly-inclined grooves arranged in the form of a diamond, bases at the corners of said diamond, a cover having holes above said bases and near the home base, and a bat arranged for manipulation and means whereby a ball may be moved to the bat, said bases being mounted on longitudinally-movable spindles, substantially as described.

6. A game apparatus comprising a raised

bottom having holes arranged in depressions in its upper surface and having downwardly-inclined grooves arranged in the form of a diamond, bases at the corners of said diamond, a cover having holes above said bases and near the home base and a bat arranged for manipulation and means whereby a ball may be moved to the bat, said bases being mounted on longitudinally-movable spindles and a spring for retracting each spindle, substantially as described.

7. A game apparatus comprising a raised bottom having holes arranged in depressions in its upper surface and having downwardly-inclined grooves arranged in the form of a diamond, bases at the corners of said diamond, a cover having holes above said bases and near the home base, and a bat arranged for manipulation and means whereby a ball may be moved to the bat, said bases being mounted on spindles and each spindle being movable longitudinally and rotatably, substantially as described.

8. A game apparatus comprising a raised bottom having holes arranged in depressions in its upper surface and having downwardly-inclined grooves arranged in the form of a diamond and also extending from the pitcher's box to the home base, bases at the corners of said diamond, a cover having holes above said bases and near the home base and above the pitcher's box, and a bat arranged for manipulation, said bases being mounted on spindles and each spindle being movable rotatably and longitudinally and a coiled spring fastened to said spindle and to the spindle-support respectively, substantially as described.

9. A game apparatus comprising a raised bottom having holes arranged in inclined depressions in its upper surface and having downwardly-inclined grooves arranged in the form of a diamond, bases at the corners of said diamond, a cover having holes above said bases and near the home base, and a bat arranged for manipulation and means whereby a ball may be moved to the bat, and a bottom board having an inclined upper surface, substantially as described.

10. A game apparatus comprising a raised bottom having holes arranged in inclined depressions in its upper surface and having downwardly-inclined grooves arranged in the form of a diamond, bases at the corners of said diamond, a cover having holes above said bases and near the home base, and a bat arranged for manipulation and means whereby the ball may be moved to the bat, and a bottom board having different portions of its surface inclined toward its edges at different angles, substantially as described.

11. A game apparatus comprising a raised bottom having holes arranged in inclined depressions in its upper surface and having downwardly-inclined grooves arranged in the form of a diamond, bases at the corners of said diamond, a cover having holes above said bases and near the home base, and a bat arranged for manipulation and means whereby a ball may be moved to the bat, and a bottom board having different portions of its surface inclined toward its edges at different angles and some of such inclined portions having obstacles thereon, substantially as described.

12. A game apparatus comprising a raised bottom having holes arranged in inclined depressions in its upper surface and having downwardly-inclined grooves arranged in the form of a diamond, bases at the corners of said diamond, a cover having holes above said bases and near the home base, and a bat arranged for manipulation and means whereby a ball may be moved to the bat, and a bottom board having grooves inclining downwardly from beneath said base-holes toward its edge, substantially as described.

13. A game apparatus comprising a raised bottom having holes arranged in depressions in its upper surface and having downwardly-inclined grooves arranged in the form of a diamond, bases at the corners of said diamond, a cover having holes above said bases and near the home base, and a bat arranged for manipulation and means whereby a ball may be moved to the bat, and a bottom board having a groove around its border and having grooves inclining downwardly from beneath said base-holes, toward its edge, substantially as described.

14. A game apparatus comprising a raised bottom having holes arranged in depressions in its upper surface and having a downwardly-inclined groove extending from the pitcher's box to the bat and downwardly-inclined grooves arranged in the form of a diamond, bases at the corners of said diamond, a cover having holes above said bases and above the pitcher's box and near the home base, and a bat arranged for manipulation, and a bottom board having a groove around its border and having grooves inclining downwardly from beneath said base-holes toward its border groove, substantially as described.

15. A game apparatus comprising a bottom board having its surface inclined, a false bottom arranged above said bottom board and having holes therein and having its surface inclined toward said holes respectively and having also inclined grooves in its upper surface arranged in the form of a diamond, a cover having holes arranged above the upper ends of said grooves, and a bat arranged for manipulation and means for moving the ball to the bat, substantially as described.

St. Louis, Missouri, June 21, 1902.

J. S. MATHER.

Witnesses:
JAMES A. CARR,
ZOLA TUCKER.