Oct. 8, 1957 C. TROVATO 2,809,040

POCKETED BALL GAME APPARATUS

Filed Dec. 13, 1955 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

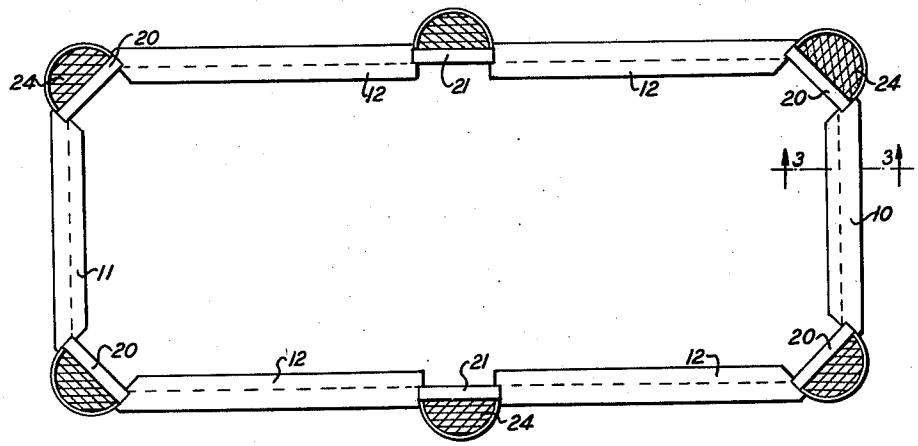


FIG. 1

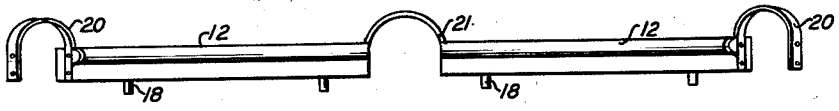


FIG. 2

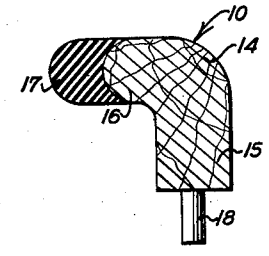


FIG. 3

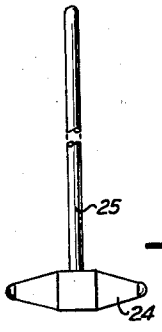


FIG. 5

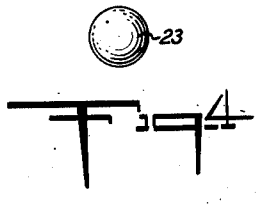


FIG. 4

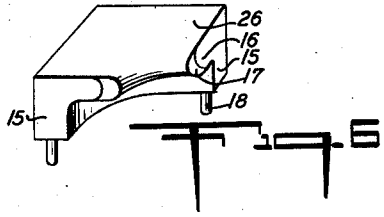


FIG. 6

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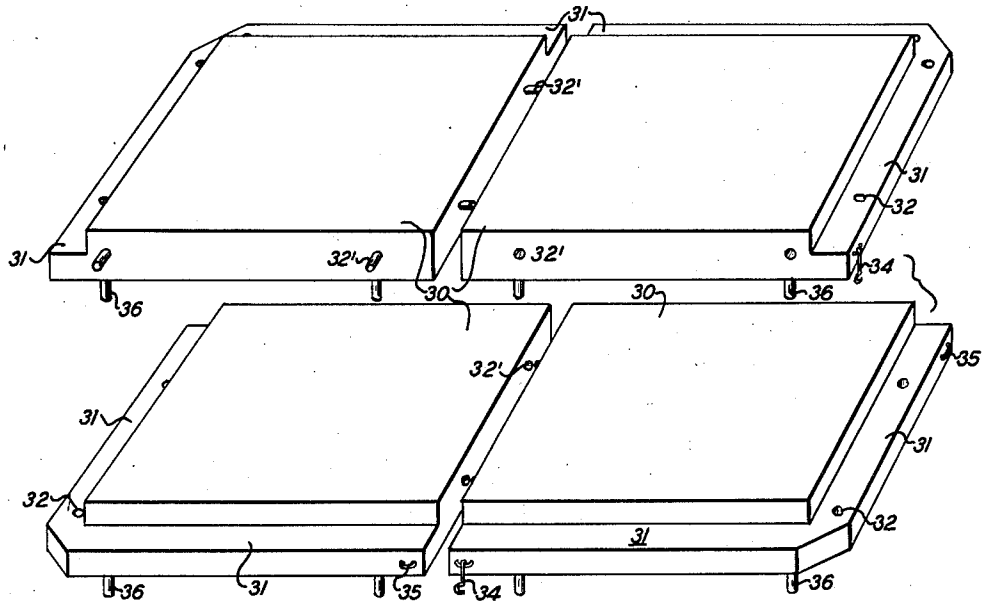
BY Herbert J. Jacobi

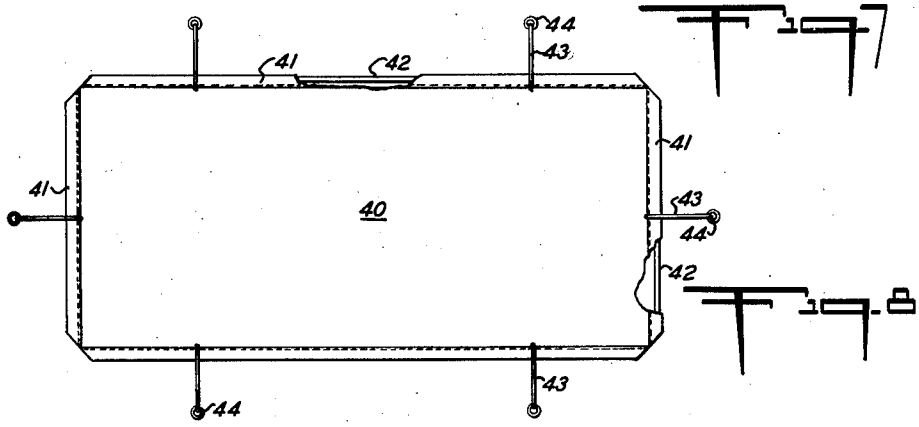
ATTORNEY

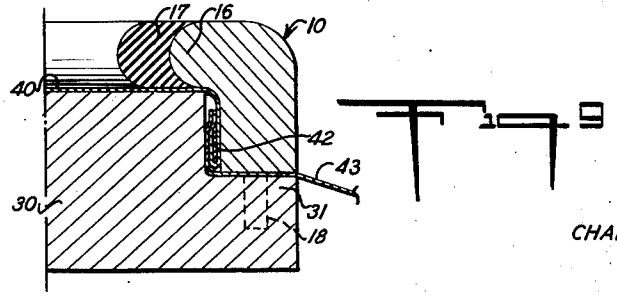
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POCKETED BALL GAME APPARATUS

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2,809,040

POCKETED BALL GAME APPARATUS

Charles Trovato, Whittier, Calif.

Application December 13, 1955, Serial No. 552,756
1 Claim. (Cl. 273—123)

This invention relates to games and game apparatus and is particularly concerned with surface projectile games of the ball and mallet type adapted for outdoor, as well as indoor play. While the apparatus of the present invention may be variously employed it is ideally adapted for play in a manner simulating the games of pool and billiards.

Numerous outdoor ball and mallet games and game apparatus have heretofore been proposed and many have found favor, notably croquet and variations thereof. For the most part, such games involve only the skill of accurate direction of the projection of the ball without recourse to either rebounding angularity of the ball from a cushion or the inter-play of rebounding balls from impingement, one against another. Thus, while such games are ideal for children as well as adults, they do not intrigue the more highly developed mathematically trained mind as is the case of indoor games, such as pool or billiards, wherein not only skill, but precise judgment of angular rebound and interplay of multiple balls is involved. Furthermore, such surface projectile games, such as croquet and its more modern counterpart golf have not been limited nor confined to small and specific areas. Hence, a substantial ground area is required for such play. Also, since the required area is large, rolling terrain is frequently encountered and in many instances, such non-uniform surface is depended upon to increase the intricacies of the game. Obviously, such irregular ground surface would preclude the display or development of skill dependent wholly upon the accuracy of trajection or calculated angularity of rebounds.

It is therefore among the primary objects of the present invention to provide a novel and improved outdoor game and game apparatus of the surface projectile type, wherein the skill of the player is to be demonstrated by accuracy of play piece trajectory and rebound calculation, independently of surface unevenness and without recourse to wickets or like intermediate surface impediments or goals.

Another object is to provide an outdoor game and game apparatus for play simulating pool or billiards wherein skill and efficiency of play may largely depend on the rebound and inter-action of a multiplicity of balls and/or the rebound thereof from cushioned circumferential edge members.

A further object is to provide a novel game and game apparatus for a limited area and one which may be enjoyed, either in or out of doors without damage to or mutilation of the surface over which it is played.

It is also an object of the invention to provide a game apparatus which may be readily set up and arranged for play and as readily removed and stored in a compact manner, this objective being accomplished by the use of a simple rugged and durable arrangement of parts and one well suited to meet the demands of economic manufacture.

With these and other objects, features and advantages of the present invention in mind, reference may be had to the following specification taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 is a top plan view of the assembled frame structure of the present game apparatus;

Fig. 2 is a side view of the side rails looking outwardly from the center through the assembled frame structure of Fig. 1 showing the frame as directly applied to a floor or ground surface minus the net bags;

Fig. 3 is a detailed section through one rail of the frame, as indicated by the line 3—3 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 4 illustrates a ball or game piece for use within the frame of Figs. 1 and 2;

Fig. 5 illustrates the type of mallet for use with the ball of Fig. 4;

Fig. 6 is a perspective view of a corner piece for use with the frame of Figs. 1 and 2 when a billiard simulating game is to be played;

Fig. 7 is an exploded perspective view of a base structure for use with the frame of Figs. 1 and 2;

Fig. 8 is a top plan of a removable play surface sheet which may be used directly on the ground or floor or as a cover over the base structure of Fig. 7, and

Fig. 9 is a partial sectional view showing the frame applied to the base of Fig. 7 and utilizing the sheet of Fig. 8.

While the structural details of the various elements of the present game apparatus may be widely varied and while the play anticipated may alter to suit the wishes of the players, the invention is here presented in the form of apparatus designed for a ball and mallet, pool or billiard simulating game. This present illustrative form of apparatus may be generally defined as including a circumferential frame of readily joined and separable rails, preferably formed with an inner edge or cushion of resilient material corresponding to the peripheral cushions of a pool or billiard table. Assembly of at least some of the rails is by way of an arched spacing element and bags are provided between the spaced rail ends to simulate ball receiving pockets of a pool table. When the game of billiards is to be simulated, cushion blocks are provided for such spaces to provide a continuous cushioned surface. The game is to be played with a ball and mallet as depicted and the frame may be directly mounted on a floor or ground surface, or, if desired, there is provided a multi-part base which may be assembled and united with the frame to insure a smooth playing surface. The apparatus also includes a play surface sheet which may be spread on the floor, ground or base to further insure a uniform playing surface.

Referring now to the structural details of that preferred form of the present invention illustrated in the drawings, the frame as indicated in Figs. 1, 2 and 3 comprises end rails **10** and **11** and a plurality of side rails **12**. The end rails **10** and **11** are of uniform length, preferably somewhat less than that of the side rails **12**. As here shown, the side rails are four in number, two on each side, and are also of uniform length. As shown, when joined together, the side and end rails define a rectangular play area, preferably of the size and contour of a standard pool or billiard table. While the rails may be of such material as desired, they are here shown as comprising a body **14** of wood (Fig. 3) having a depending generally vertical supporting web **15** and an inwardly projecting head **16**. The inwardly protruding face or edge of the head **16** is provided with a cushion **17**, preferably formed of rubber or equivalent elastic material, in the manner of the wall cushions of a pool or billiard table. The rails may further be provided with downwardly projecting dowels or pins **18** adapted to fit within the bores of the base member of Fig. 7 or they may be so formed to pierce a ground surface to assist in retaining the frame in playing position.

While for some purposes, as for instance, where only a billiard simulating game is to be played, the rails may be directly inter-connected by butt end engagement, they are preferably joined by the upwardly looped wicket-like end and intermediate side straps **20** and **21** respectively. The intermediate straps **21** are similarly secured between the facing butt ends of the side rails **12**. It will thus be seen, that the inter-connection of the rails by the arched

straps 20 and 21 so spaces the rails as to provide openings therebetween at each corner of the assembled structure and centrally at each side thereof. These openings of course, constitute pockets simulating the pockets of a pool table and receive the ball 23 of Fig. 4 therethrough. Net bags 24 or the like, are mounted at the openings to receive such balls as may pass through the openings.

As in the game of pool or billiards, one ball, preferably white or of some like distinguishing color or designation is selected as the cue or in this case, mallet ball and the player is confined to direct drive of this ball alone. In the play of the present game the selected ball is struck by the head 24 of the mallet shown in Fig. 5, the handle or shank 25 of which is grasped by the player. When a pool simulating game is to be played, the balls used will be equal in number to those used in the conventional pool game and these balls will be racked in triangular formation for the commencement of the game. When a billiard simulating game is to be played, the corner and side openings between the rails are blocked by cushioned blocks, one such corner block being shown at 26 in Fig. 6. In this case, only three balls are used and the cushioned blocks provide a continuity of surface throughout the entire periphery of the play area.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that the rails with their linking straps provide a readily assembled and disassembled peripheral frame cushioned so as to permit the balls to rebound therefrom in a calculated manner, so that by accurate strikes of the mallet, shots, as in pool or billiards, may be carried out. The rails of the frame when not in use may be compactly arranged in a parallel relation for storage. When the frame is to be erected for play, the straps may be easily secured between the rails to provide the required pocket forming spacing. Where an adequately smooth and uniform surface is available, either in or out of doors, the frame may be directly placed upon such surface. Where the ground itself is found satisfactory, the dowels 18 may engage the ground to assist in securing the frame against inadvertent movement and where the frame is to be arranged on a floor or hard surface, the dowels may be removed to permit the frame to rest directly and evenly on such surface.

Since, the accuracy of ball trajectory, either after being struck by the mallet or upon rebound from other balls, or from the cushions 17 is largely influenced by the character of the surface within the bounds of the frame, it is usually desirable to insure such uniform surface by the provision of a base structure having a uniform smooth upper surface. Such base structure is presented in Fig. 7 and comprises interengageable rectangular elements 30 having two adjacent sides formed with outwardly extending edge flanges 31 provided with spaced apertures 32 adapted to receive the dowel pins 18 of the frame rails. For uniting the elements 30 into a single base structure, the edges opposed from the flanges 31 are formed with inter-fitting pins and holes as indicated at 32'. Securement of the elements in inter-fitted relation may be achieved by a hook 34 and staple 35 and the united base structure may be supported in upwardly spaced relation with respect to a floor or the ground by feet 36. Since, the height of the feet may readily be adjusted, a uniform parallel surface may be insured and where outdoor use is intended, the feet will elevate the base structure to preclude damage and warping from ground moisture.

It will be apparent that in some instances, the abutting edges of the base elements 30 may present a ridge or depression militating against an accurate trajectory for the balls and in some cases, a floor or a ground level while sufficiently uniform, may have surface characteristics undesirable with respect to the free rolling of the ball. Therefore, the invention includes the provision of a play surface sheet as depicted in Fig. 8. The sheet comprises a rectangular body 40 commensurate in dimensions with that of the outer edges of the frame and base. The body 40 is of flexible material with at least one surface designed to provide the desired playing characteristics and may be waterproofed to withstand exposure when the apparatus is used outdoors. As shown in Fig. 9, the edges of the sheet are adapted to be interlocked between the rails of the frame and the flanges of the base structure when in use, with frame and base. The edges of the sheet are provided with hems 41 within which may be inserted stiffener elements 42 to assist in assuring a smooth wrinkle-proof playing surface. The edges of the sheet are also provided with extending cords 43 terminating in securing rings 44. When the sheet 40 is applied between the frame and base, the rings may be engaged by a securing cord to retain the sheet over the base structure and when the frame is used on a floor or ground surface independently of the base structure the sheet may be retained by securement of the rings 44 to such surface.

From the foregoing, it is believed that the type of game for which the apparatus of the present invention is particularly designed may well be understood. With the frame in place on floor, ground or the base structure, balls may be disposed as desired in pool or billiard fashion and the selected cue ball may be struck by the mallet to directly hit the ball desired, or to carom or ricochet from the cushioned wall, in the manner of conventional billiard or pool balls from the cushioned edges of pool or billiard tables. As to structure, it will be understood, that the frame may be assembled in convenient manner to form an enclosure, either representative of a pool or billiard play surface. The cue ball may be struck by the mallet in the manner of a ball struck by a cue and the resultant trajectory will substantially follow that of the ball of a billiard or pool game. It will, of course, be understood, that in the practice of the invention, numerous changes and modifications and the full use of equivalents may be resorted to without departure from the spirit or scope of the invention as herein set forth in the appended claim.

What is claimed is:

A game apparatus for the play of a ball and mallet game simulating pool or billiards, including end and side rails, each rail including a vertical supporting web and an inwardly projecting head, together with a resilient co-extensive cushion mounted on the inner face of the head, spaced dowel pins projecting downwardly from said web, detachable means uniting said rails in generally rectangular arrangement to define the periphery of a play area, said means being constructed and arranged to so space the facing butt ends of the rails as to provide for the passage of a ball therebetween, a base providing a supporting surface co-extensive with said play area and comprising a plurality of substantially rectangular separable sections, inter-engaging dowel pins and apertures in the abutting edges of said sections and releasable means for securing said sections in assembled relationship, outwardly extending peripheral flanges on said sections for receiving and supporting the webs of said rails, apertures in said flanges for receiving the dowel pins on said webs and constituting the sole means for detachably retaining said rails in place on said base, a removable sheet disposed over said base and providing a play surface, said sheet having a hem disposed between said web and said base, a stiffener element disposed in said hem and spaced cords extending from the edges of said sheet to facilitate stretching and securing said sheet over said base to provide a wrinkle-free play surface.

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