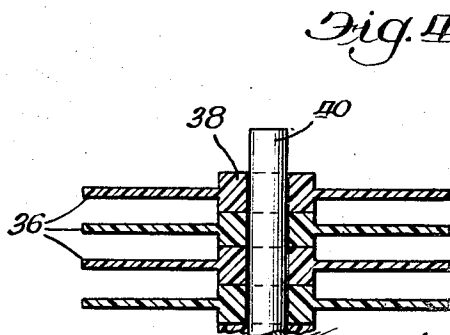
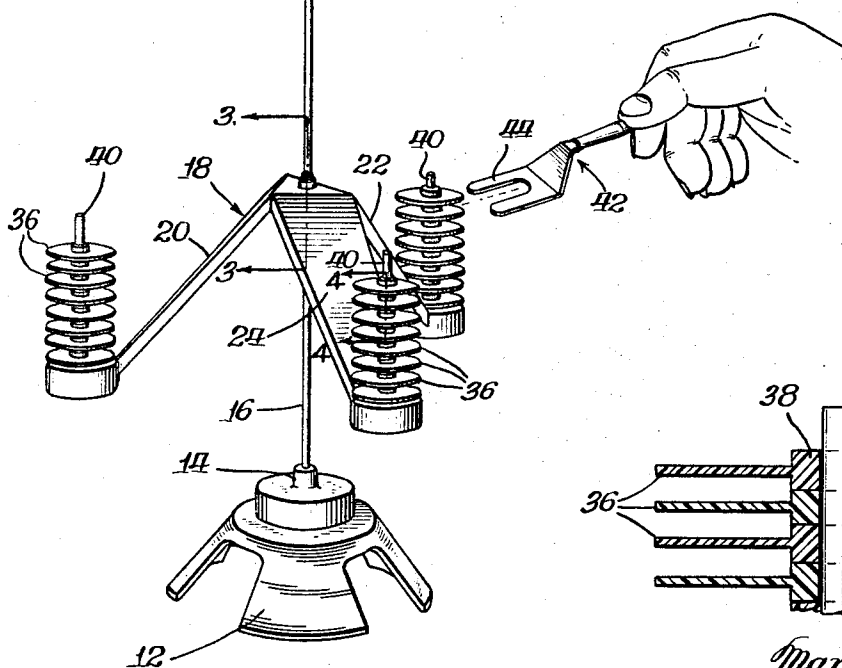
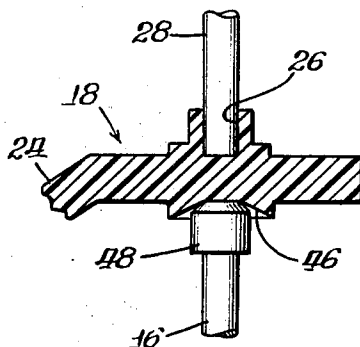
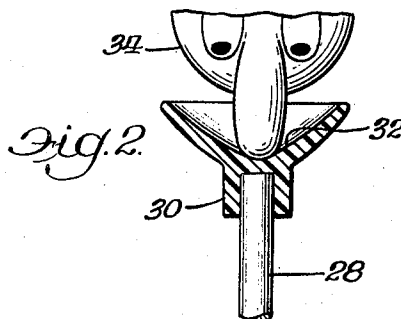
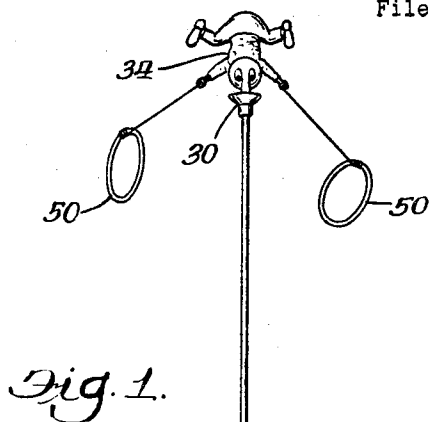


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BALANCING GAME APPARATUS

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3,402,929

## BALANCING GAME APPARATUS

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### ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A game of skill wherein a base member provides a pivotal support for a flexible pole having three radially extending arms at its lower end and including means for balancing a figure on the upper end of the pole. Each of the arms includes a vertically extending rod at its outer end adapted to receive circular playing pieces during the play of the game, in accordance with instructions from a chance device.

The present invention relates generally to games and is particularly directed to game apparatus requiring the balancing of playing pieces on a movable support member.

Games of skill which require careful manipulation by the players have long been a favorite with children as well as adults. The present invention relates particularly to a game which involves the balancing of parts comprising the apparatus for the game and the maintaining of such balanced condition while adding or removing separable playing pieces.

The primary object of the invention is to provide game apparatus including a pivotally supported elongated flexible pole member having means adjacent its lower end for the support of removable playing pieces and including means at its upper end for freely supporting an object in balanced relation, with the apparatus being mounted so that it must be maintained in essentially a vertical condition in order to continue to support the object at its upper end. A further object is to provide such apparatus wherein the piece supporting means fixed adjacent the lower end of the pole includes portions disposed in laterally projecting relation to the axis of support for the pole, so that the disposition of the pieces on their support determine whether the balance of the object on the pole member is maintained. Other objects and advantages will be apparent from the following description of the selected embodiment illustrated in the drawings, wherein:

FIGURE 1 is an elevational view of the game apparatus;

FIGURE 2 is an enlarged fragmentary view of the upper portion of the apparatus, partly in section;

FIGURE 3 is a sectional view taken along the line 3—3 in FIGURE 1 and;

FIGURE 4 is an enlarged sectional view taken along the line 4—4 in FIGURE 1, with parts broken away.

With reference particularly to FIGURE 1, it will be that the game apparatus 10 comprises generally a base member 12 adapted to be supported on a flat surface and including a central boss 14 providing a cylindrical opening at the upper portion thereof for removably receiving a first pole section 16. Pivotally mounted on the upper end of the first pole section 16 is a playing piece supporting member 18 comprising three extending arms 20, 22 and 24 disposed laterally about the axis of the pole. The member 18 includes means defining a cylindrical opening 26 (FIGURE 3) at its center for removably receiving a second pole section 28, which is preferably somewhat flexible and considerably longer than the first pole section 16. The upper end of the flexible pole

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28 includes a tip portion 30 (FIGURE 2), which may be of rubber or the like, having a concave upper surface 32 for freely supporting a figure 34. A plurality of disc-shaped playing pieces 36 are provided with the game, each disc having an axial opening defined by a collar portion 38, which projects on opposite sides of the disc, and each of the pieces is adapted to be slidably received on a vertically extending peg 40 at the outer end of each of the arms 20, 22, 24.

Generally, it is intended that the game apparatus be used by a number of players who, in turn, place the disc pieces 36 on one of the supporting pegs 40 or remove one or more pieces from such pegs, as directed by suitable chance means. For handling the playing pieces there is provided a tool 42 having a forked, flat end portion 44 which is adapted to be inserted below one of the playing pieces 36 in engagement with the collar 38 at any position along the length of the piece supporting peg 40. If the playing pieces are handled carefully, the apparatus will be retained in its balanced condition with the figure 34 remaining on the upper end of the pole. However, if the placement or removal of the pieces 36 disturbs the weight distribution of the pieces sufficiently, it causes the supporting arms 20, 22, 24 to rock about their pivot axis and the figure 34 will fall from the upper end of the pole 28. A suitable penalty is then imposed upon the player who has caused the figure to fall.

With reference to FIGURE 3, it will be noted that the playing piece supporting member 18, which may be formed of plastic or other suitable material, includes a downwardly facing concave surface portion 46 at its central axis which is adapted to be freely and rockably supported on the upper end of the first pole section 16. In order that the balancing of the supporting member 18 may not be too critical, the upper end of the first pole section 16 preferably includes a collar 48 or the like so as to increase its area of support. Generally, the relationship of the parts at this point of support (46, 48) is such that the playing piece supporting member 18 can rock fairly easily but through a relatively great arc, so that the placement and removal of pieces 36 from the pegs 40 will cause a noticeable rocking or tilting of the supporting member 18 and the pole 28 attached thereto without necessarily destroying the balanced relation of the figure 34 on the top of the pole. It is to be understood, of course, that the structure can be modified to produce any degree of criticality desired with respect to the balanced relation of the several movable parts. In this respect, it will be noted that the figure 34 at the upper end is provided with oppositely extending ring portions 50, which are preferably of metal and fairly heavy, and the area of contact between the figure 34 and the mounting piece 30 (FIGURE 2) is sufficiently great so that an appreciable amount of relative movement can be had between the figure and the pole before the figure loses its balance and falls. With the described arrangement the flexible pole 28 can be tilted as much as 20 to 30 degrees or more away from its vertical axis of support without causing the figure to fall. Consequently, the playing of the game can produce considerable suspense as the pole 28 is caused to sway substantially with the placement and removal of pieces 36 relative to their supporting pegs 40.

One form of the game might include a deck of playing cards (not shown) each having instructions with regard to the play of the game, such as "insert one disc" or "remove three discs." Each player is assigned a supporting peg nearest him, and the player who first fills his peg with playing pieces 36, while maintaining the balance of the figure 34, is the winner of the game. The rules of the game and the cards or means for directing the play of

the game might also include instructions for a player to either add or remove pieces from an opponent's supporting peg 40. Obviously, various modifications might be made in the play of the game, as well as in the structure described above, without departing from the principles of this invention.

What is claimed is:

1. Game apparatus comprising a base, a first pole section fixed to said base in vertically extending relation thereto, a member rockably supported on the upper end portion of said first pole and having arm portions projecting laterally of the pole in uniformly spaced relation about the pole, a second flexible pole section supported on said member in vertically extending relation to said first pole, an element freely supported on the upper end of said second pole in a balanced position, a plurality of playing pieces, and each of said laterally projecting arm portions of said member including means at their outer ends adapted to supportingly receive a plurality of said playing pieces while said member is supported on said first pole whereby an unbalanced positioning of said pieces about the axis of said second pole section can cause said second pole to swing away from its normally vertical position and disturb the balanced position of said element.

2. Game apparatus comprising a base member adapted to be supported on a flat surface and including a vertically extending central part, a playing piece supporting member pivotally supported on said vertically extending part and including laterally projecting arm portions disposed in equally spaced-apart relation around the pivot axis of said member, each of the outer ends of said arm portions including a vertically extending rod, a plurality of playing pieces having axial openings therethrough so that one or more of such pieces can be inserted on each of said vertically extending rods, an elongated flexible pole supported centrally of said member in vertically extending relation thereto, an upwardly facing concave element secured to the upper end of said pole, and a figure freely supported on said concave element in a balanced position, whereby an unbalanced positioning of said pieces

on said supporting member can cause said pole to sway sufficiently relative to its normally vertical position to disturb the balance of said figure and the latter will fall off said concave element.

3. Game apparatus comprising a base member adapted to be supported on a flat surface, a playing piece supporting member having a central portion freely supported on said base for rocking movement vertically and horizontally and including three laterally projecting arm portions disposed in equally spaced-apart relation around its center axis, each of the outer ends of said arm portions including a vertically extending rod, a plurality of circular playing pieces having axial openings therethrough so that one or more of such pieces can be inserted on each of said vertically extending rods, a hand tool having a generally flat bifurcated end portion adapted to pick up one of the playing pieces from a flat surface and also to remove one or more of said pieces from one of said vertically extending rods, an elongated flexible pole fixed at one end to the center of said playing piece supporting member in upwardly extending relation thereto, an upwardly facing concave element secured to the upper end of said pole, and a figure freely supported on said concave element in a balanced position, whereby an uneven distribution of said playing pieces about the pole on said supporting member can cause said figure to fall.

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