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Mattel, Inc.  
333 Continental Blvd.  
El Segundo, CA 90245-5012  
Re: Rock em Sock em Robots

Dear Mattel:

I needed to write to you about your product. Last fall I was at a garage sale while vacationing in South Carolina. The family hosting the sale had a number of items set out on tables along the street and I told them that it was not properly called a "garage sale" unless you had the stuff inside your garage. The woman said that the local Lion Food store was all out of "Yard Sale" signs so she bought a "Garage Sale" sign instead. I did not press the issue. Apparently Lion Food is the name of a grocery store down south -- she assured me that it was not a place to get food for lions, which would be dumb anyway, because lions will pretty much eat anything that is meat and they do not need a special store just for their feeding needs.

On one of her tables, I saw a fun looking colorful box with the words "Rock em Sock em Robots" printed on the side. I asked her about it and she told me that it was a game of robot boxing. She told me that it was very popular years ago and acted like I should have known what it was. I told her, and am telling you now, that I grew up in the central African plains while my mom and dad worked in the Peace Corps and that I did not have conventional toys. We played with elephant tusks and zebra chips along with simple beads and wood carvings. I guess that when we came back to the States in 1994, your Rock em Sock em Robots had run its course and was no longer a toy in the forefront of American pop culture.

So after discussing it with my family, I paid \$36.78 for the robot game and packed it up in our car before returning home from vacation. I should have known better than to buy a used game at a garage (yard) sale. #1 there were no instructions; #2 it had obviously been used (possibly abused) and was no longer in good working condition; #3 I did not get a receipt so that I could return it if it was defective. But I figured that I would probably never run across another one so I bought it anyway.

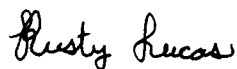
I am just checking on the outside chance that you offer services to repair the game. I am assuming that I cannot return the game to you for a refund since I was not the first buyer. I probably could not find the woman I bought it from again because I only found her the first time from the signs that said "Garage Sale". All things being equal I'd like to just sell it back to her.

You see I basically figured out how to work the game and make the robots punch each other, but after taking about 5 or 10 punches, the red robot's head flies off! I mean it literally flies off! The woman's kids must have had the same problem and had the robot head come off numerous times. I know this because she obviously rigged the game so that the head would not get lost. Pretty ingenious actually, she connected the head to the body with a spring. It's amazing what ingenuity people have! When something breaks and you don't want to lose the broken piece, you usually resort to glue or tape or rubber bands. This woman obviously had none of these available, but she made use of an old spare spring. It's like the time in Africa when we made a working time piece out of three beans, a handful of small ivory slivers, some old fish scales, dried lion intestines, and some spikey thorns. You make due with what you have and you become very resourceful when you don't have much. Anyway, I surely would have lost the robot head if she hadn't done this. But that's why I wonder if you could replace it or fix it. It obviously has had this problem for a long time.

I wish I could find that woman again. She told me that her kids never misused the game and that it was still in its original condition, but she seemed to be so very sorry that the instructions were missing. WHY would she lie about the condition of the game, but still be so honest and contrite about the missing instructions?

Can you please tell me whether I can have this game repaired or exchanged? My guess is that this particular and individual game somehow just slipped through the quality assurance testing. I mean, the game is about robot boxing... That means that they are GOING to get hit! That's the whole point of boxing. With that premise, it's only logical to make the game durable enough to stand up to all the hitting and punching. Please let me know what options might be available to me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rusty Lucas".

Rusty Lucas

p.s. I am currently collecting baseball caps to send back to my old friends in Africa to keep the hot sun out of their faces. Do you happen to have any free or promotional caps with your company logo on them? If so and you could spare a few, I would really appreciate it. I bet they might like to pretend that they are "Rock 'em Sock 'em Robots" themselves!