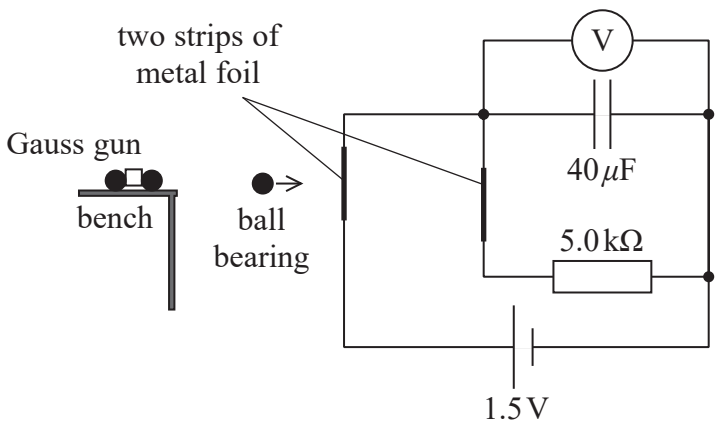
18 A 'Gauss gun' can be made from five ball bearings of equal mass and two magnets, as shown.

Pairs of ball bearings are placed to the right of two strong magnets. A single ball bearing is released from the left, as shown. The ball bearing is attracted to, and collides with, the first magnet. This and all subsequent collisions can be assumed to be elastic.

(a) Explain what happens to make the last ball bearing on the right subsequently move off with a large velocity.

(3)

(b) A student set up the apparatus shown to measure the speed of the last ball bearing. The 'Gauss gun' was placed at the end of a bench, so that the ball bearing left the gun and broke two strips of metal foil which formed part of an electric circuit.



As the ball bearing left the gun, it broke the first foil strip at its centre so that the capacitor started to discharge. When the ball bearing broke the second foil strip the capacitor discharge stopped.

(i) Calculate the energy stored in the capacitor when it was fully charged.

(2)

Energy stored = ...

(ii) The voltmeter reading halved in the time taken for the ball bearing to travel between the two foil strips.

Show that the time taken for the ball bearing to travel between the two foil strips was about 0.1 s.

(2)

(iii) The two foil strips were 0.50 m apart.

Calculate the horizontal velocity of the ball bearing.

(2)

Horizontal velocity = ...

(iv) The student positioned the second foil strip with its centre 8.0 cm lower than the centre of the first foil strip.

Deduce whether the ball bearing broke the second foil strip at its centre.

Assume the ball bearing was travelling horizontally as it broke the first foil strip.

(2)

(Total for Question 18 = 11 marks)