

**[54] GAME WITH FREE FALL PLAYING
PIECES AND SELECTIVELY PLACED
SUPPORT PEGS**

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[57] ABSTRACT

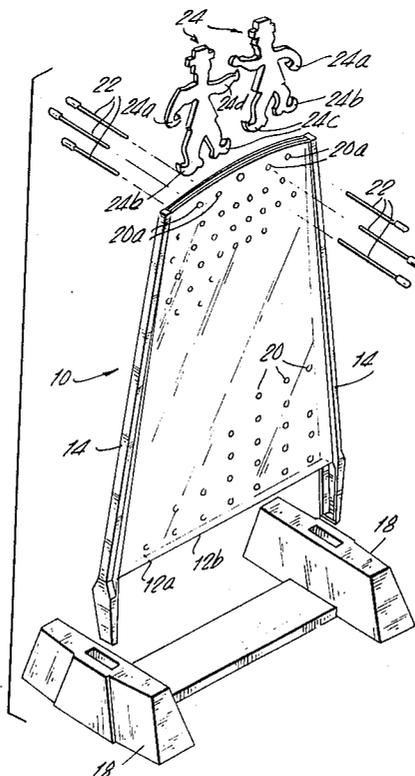
A child's game includes an upright playing board comprising two sheets of transparent plastic having peg holes therein and a pair of playing pieces adapted to be supported between said sheets by pegs removably inserted in said peg holes. The object of the game is to advance a playing piece from an initial support position at the upper edge of the playing board to a winning support position at the lower edge of the board by alternately inserting and removing support pegs, permitting the playing piece to fall from one support position to another down the board. The game is preferably played by two players or two teams of players each having a playing piece and three support pegs, with the players alternating turns until one reaches a winning position.

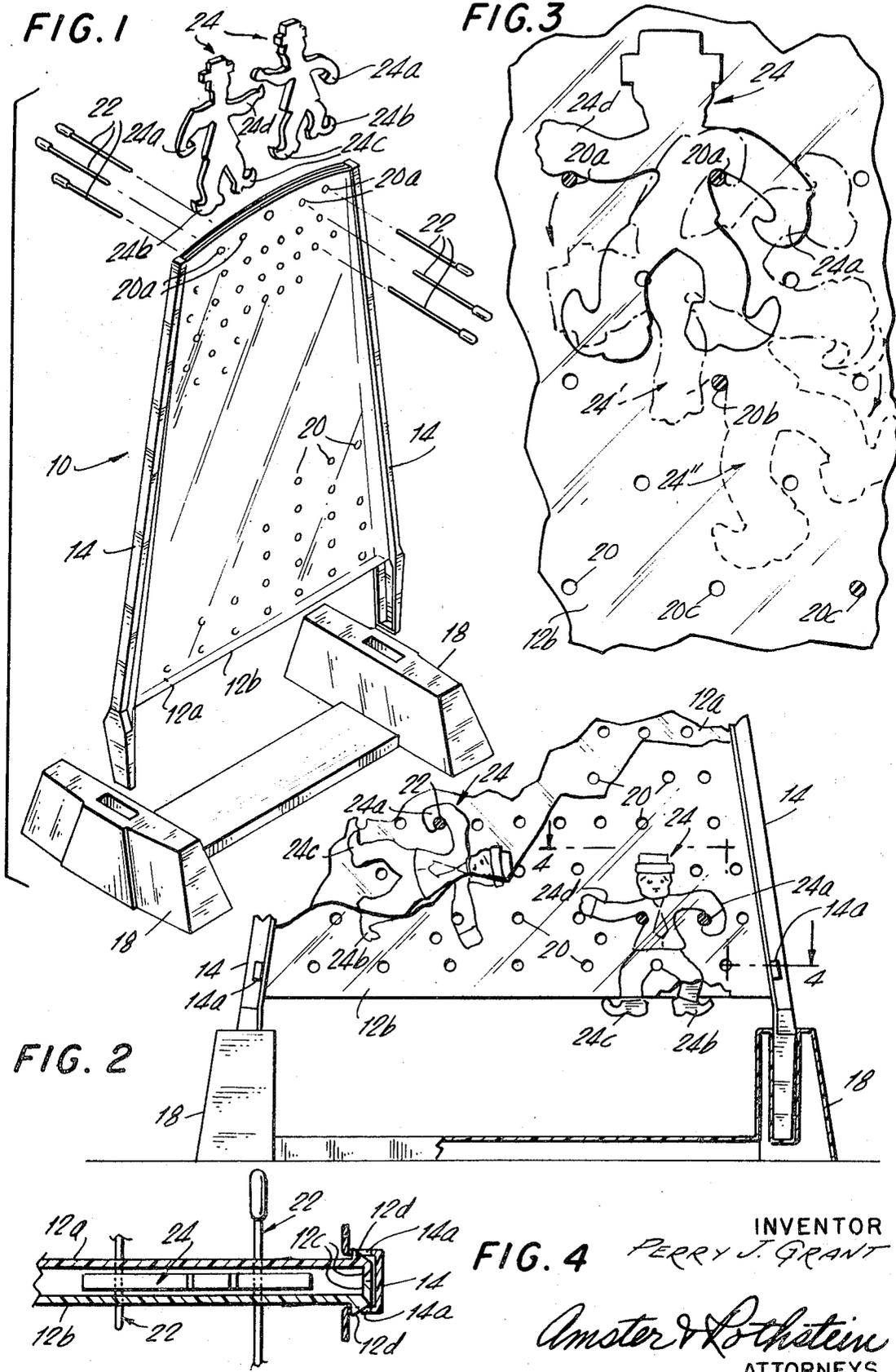
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3 Claims, 4 Drawing Figures





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GAME WITH FREE FALL PLAYING PIECES AND SELECTIVELY PLACED SUPPORT PEGS

This invention relates generally to toys and more specifically to a table top game intended primarily for children.

The present invention combines elements of skill and chance in a table top game for children suitable for both competitive play by two players or two teams of players and for individual practice and play by a single child. The game incorporates the action of moving pieces with the excitement of competition in the form of a race and permits a wide variety of move combinations thus maintaining a child's interest and attention. The game apparatus is safe for use by children of any age, includes few loose pieces and is relatively indestructible.

In accordance with the present invention, the game apparatus comprises a pair of playing pieces, an upright playing board forming a guideway for said playing pieces and a plurality of removable supports receivable in said playing board to obstruct said guideway. The playing pieces are adapted to slide downwardly in the guideway from one support position to another as supports are alternatively inserted and removed. At the start of the game, the playing pieces are positioned adjacent the upper end of the board on a first pair of supports. As play progresses, each player in turn places one or more additional supports below his playing piece and removes one or more supports, permitting the playing piece to fall from one support position to another toward the bottom of the playing board. The player whose playing piece first reaches a support position at the lower edge of the board is the winner.

Further objects features and advantages of the present invention will be more fully appreciated by reference to the following detailed description of a presently preferred, but nonetheless illustrative, embodiment in accordance with the present invention, when taken in conjunction with the appended drawings, wherein:

FIG. 1 is an exploded perspective view of the game apparatus;

FIG. 2 is a fractional front elevation, partially in section, of the lower portion of the game apparatus with one playing piece in winning position;

FIG. 3 is a fractional view of the game board showing a single playing piece in three progressive positions; and

FIG. 4 is a top view of the game apparatus.

Referring specifically to the drawings, the game board 10 comprises two substantially trapezoidal sheets 12a, 12b of transparent plastic supported in face-to-face parallel vertical position by a pair of upright side pieces 14 lodged in base 18. Sheets 12a, 12b include correspondingly spaced grids of apertures 20 over substantially their entire surface area. Only a portion of the apertures are shown in FIG. 1 for simplicity. In addition to board 10, the game apparatus includes six support pegs 22 three for each of two players and a pair of playing pieces 24. Pegs 22 are dimensioned to be received within apertures 20 and pieces 24 are adapted to fit between plastic sheets 12a and 12b and to slide freely between the sheets unless supported by pegs 22. Playing pieces 24 include hooked hand portions 24a and hooked leg portions 24b and 24c which permit the playing pieces to be supported by a single peg as exemplified by the left hand playing piece in FIG. 2. It is to be understood that numerous configurations of playing pieces may be employed in accordance with the present invention and that they need not be in human form.

The specific structure of the game board is adapted for easy manufacture and assembly. Sheets 12a, 12b preferably include inwardly turned right angle edge sections 12c (best seen in FIG. 4) which abut one another along the lateral edges of sheets 12a, 12b, maintaining a constant separation between the sheets. The lateral edges of sheets 12a, 12b also include a series of triangular projections 12d which mate with corresponding slots 14a in the side pieces 14 to permit snap fit assembly of the board. Projections 12d include a gradual sloped exterior face for easy insertion into side pieces 14 and the side

pieces and base are preferably of molded plastic for durability and convenient manufacture.

To start the game, each playing piece 24 is supported by two pegs 22 positioned in the start holes 20a at the top of the playing board. The first player to move inserts his third peg somewhere on the playing field beneath his playing piece and removes one of the initial support pegs, permitting his playing piece 24 to fall from its initial support position to a second support position on one or more of the newly inserted pegs further down the board. The opposing player then follows the same procedure, inserting and removing pegs and permitting his playing piece to drop to a new support position. Play continues with each player alternately advancing his playing piece toward the bottom of the board until one player reaches a support position with at least a portion of his playing piece extending beneath the underside of the board as exemplified by the right hand playing piece in FIG. 2.

If a player's piece falls from a board, that player must start again from the top while his opponent may continue to move.

FIG. 3 shows three progressive stages in a typical sequence of movement of a playing piece through successive support positions toward the bottom of board. The piece starts in a first support position (shown in solid line in FIG. 3) where the piece is supported in upright orientation by pegs 22 positioned under the arms in holes 20a. This corresponds to the initial support position at the start of the game. The player moves by inserting his third peg in hole 20b and extracting the left pin from beneath arm 24d. The piece then falls to a hanging position shown in broken line as 24' supported by a single peg under the hooked hand portion of arm 24a. On the next turn, support pegs are inserted in holes 20c or elsewhere down the board and the single peg supporting the playing piece is removed, permitting the piece to drop (24'') to a new position. In the normal progress of the game, play would continue in this manner with players alternating turns until one player reached the bottom of the playing board.

It is to be understood that the above described arrangements are merely examples of the application of the principles of the present invention. Further embodiments will be apparent to those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A skill and competition game for opposing players comprising a playing board including two substantially flat sheets of transparent material secured together in parallel face-to-face relation and defining a free fall guideway therebetween, said playing board being supported on a base in upright position with opposing sides thereof forming opposing playing surfaces for two competing players, said transparent sheets including a plurality of holes therethrough over a substantial portion of their surface with the holes of one sheet being in corresponding horizontal alignment with the holes of the other, a pair of playing pieces, said playing pieces arranged to slide freely in said guideway between said transparent sheets so as to be visible to players at opposite sides of said playing board, a plurality of support pegs substantially fewer in number than said holes, said pegs having a length greater than the distance between said opposing playing surfaces and being removably insertable in corresponding holes in said sheets to form supports for said playing pieces in said guideway wherein alternate removal and reinsertion of one or more of said pegs by alternating players at opposite sides of said board permits said playing pieces to fall between said sheets from support position to support position.

2. A game in accordance with claim 1 wherein said playing pieces include hooked portions extending outwardly therefrom permitting said pieces to be supported by a single peg.

3. A game in accordance with claim 2 wherein said playing pieces are of different colors and wherein each player is provided with a plurality of support pegs of a color corresponding to the color of his playing piece.

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