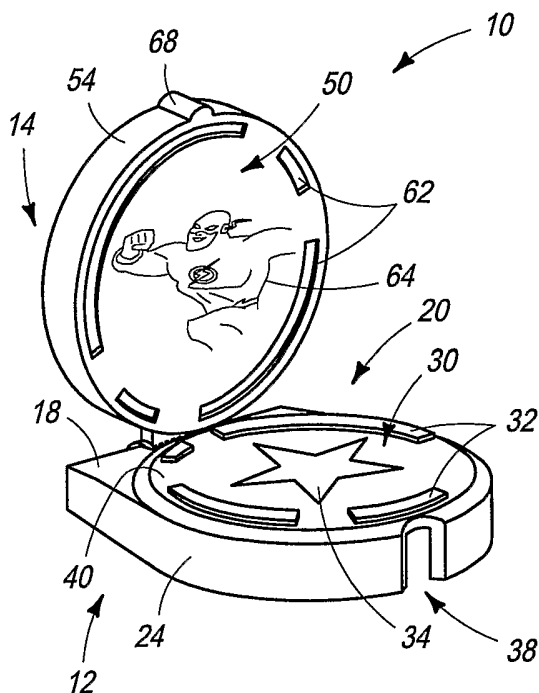




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(54) Title: CHECKERS TYPE BOARD GAMES AND APPARATUS FOR PLAYING THE SAME



(57) Abstract: Game pieces, other apparatus, and methods for playing checkers type board games, are disclosed. Game pieces may include game action indicia indicating a game action to be performed, such as moving a game piece in a manner other than that as provided by the rules according to which a traditional game of checkers is played. Game action indicia may be selectively displayable, such as with a game piece that includes a pivotable portion bearing game action indicia, which may be folded into a generally perpendicular orientation relative to a base portion. Games may include a game board, a set of rules, and a set of game pieces for each player, with some game pieces including different game action indicia than other game pieces. Some methods of game play may provide that a player may choose to perform the game action indicated by a game piece displaying game action indicia.

CHECKERS TYPE BOARD GAMES AND APPARATUS FOR PLAYING THE SAME

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Related Applications

This application is based upon and claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) to the U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/622,746, entitled “Checkers Type Board Games and Apparatus for Playing the Same” and filed on October 27, 2004, the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety for all purposes.

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Technical Field

The present disclosure is directed to board games, and more particularly to checkers type board games in which players move game pieces, each of which includes game action indicia, on a checkers type board. In some embodiments, the game action indicia indicate a game action to be performed, such as moving a game piece in a manner other than that as provided by the rules according to which a traditional game of checkers is played. In some embodiments, the game pieces include a base portion and a pivotable portion that may be folded into a generally perpendicular orientation relative to the base portion, to selectively display the game action indicia to one or both players. Some methods of game play may provide that a player may choose to perform the game action indicated by a game piece displaying game action indicia.

Background

The traditional game of checkers is played on a game board consisting of 64 squares arranged in eight vertical and horizontal rows by two players each controlling a set of twelve game pieces (or “checkers”), each set colored differently from the other and placed initially
5 on alternating squares in the first three rows on opposite sides of the board. Alternating diagonal rows across the board are open for play whereas the intervening rows are not. The game pieces may be moved only diagonally from square to square, although each player’s game pieces may “jump” one of the other player’s game pieces located on an adjacent diagonal square beyond which there is an open square. Although game pieces may only be
10 moved one square per turn towards the far side of the game board, a game piece may make multiple jumps in such direction, if possible. Game pieces that have been jumped are removed from the game.

If a game piece reaches the farthest row on the side of the game board opposite from where it was placed initially, *i.e.* the first row of the opponent’s side of the board (also called
15 the “king row”), the game piece becomes a “king.” This change in status is signified by placing a second game piece of the same color on the king game piece, thus “crowning” the king game piece. A king game piece may move and/or jump in any direction on the diagonal rows.

Examples of games based on a variation of checkers can be found in the disclosures
20 of U.S. Patent Nos. 1,700,016, 3,048,404, 4,032,152, and 4,226,419. Examples of games including game pieces including selectively displayable indicia and/or vertically foldable portions can be found in the disclosures of U.S. Patent Nos. 567,218, 4,125,262, 4,343,476, and 5,312,110.

The disclosures of the aforementioned references are incorporated herein by reference in their entirety for all purposes.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Fig. 1 is a three-dimensional view of a foldable game piece, shown to include a
5 pivotal portion attached to a base portion, with the game piece folded into an open
configuration to display game action indicia on a first face of the pivotal portion.

Fig. 2 is another three-dimensional view of the game piece of Fig. 1, showing game
theme indicia on a second face of the pivotal portion.

Fig. 3 is another three-dimensional view of the game piece of Fig. 1, showing a
10 bottom side of the base portion, which includes a recess.

Fig. 4 is an elevation view of the game piece of Fig. 1, with the base portion oriented
horizontally and the pivotal portion oriented vertically, showing how the game piece may
be folded between the open configuration and a closed configuration.

Fig. 5 is a three-dimensional view of the game piece of Fig. 1 folded into a closed
15 configuration, showing a top side of the base portion.

Fig. 6 is another three-dimensional of the game piece of Fig. 1 folded into a closed
configuration, showing the bottom side of the base portion, with the pivotal portion folded
into the recess.

Fig. 7 is a three-dimensional view of two game pieces in a closed configuration,
20 showing how one may be stacked upon the other.

Fig. 8 is a three-dimensional view of two stacked game pieces, both of which are in a closed configuration.

Fig. 9 shows a plurality of exemplary game action indicia.

Fig. 10 shows a three-dimensional view of a game board, upon which two sets of
5 game pieces are arranged in a starting configuration, each game piece in closed configuration and placed with the bottom side down to conceal game action indicia, and each set of game pieces colored differently to indicate player affiliation.

Fig. 11 shows a detail view of the game board of Fig. 10, with one game piece being moved to the king row.

10 Fig. 12 shows a detail view of the game board of Fig. 10, with a game piece on the king row being folded into an open configuration to display the game action indicia on the pivotable portion.

Fig. 13 shows a detail view of the game board of Fig. 10, with a game piece displaying game action indicia being moved in a manner indicated by the game action indicia
15 on the game piece.

Fig. 14 shows a three-dimensional view of a game board and two sets of game pieces in a starting configuration similar to that shown in Fig. 10, but with each game piece placed with the bottom side up to display the game action indicia.

Fig. 15 shows a three-dimensional view of a game board and two sets of game pieces
20 in a starting configuration similar to that shown in Fig. 10, but with each game piece folded

into an open configuration and placed so that the game action indicia is visible only to a player facing the first faces of the pivotable portions of the game pieces.

Detailed Description

The present disclosure provides game pieces and methods for playing checkers type
5 board games in which the game pieces include game action indicia adapted to indicate a game action to be performed. The game actions indicated may include manners of movement of game pieces, which may differ from those provided by the rules according to which a traditional game of checkers is played. Throughout this disclosure, the terms “traditional” and “conventional” are used to refer to the rules and game pieces of a standard game of
10 checkers, as briefly summarized above; for example, a “traditional” move is one in which a game piece is moved one square in a diagonal direction, generally toward the “king row.”

Thus, one exemplary game action according to the present disclosure may be to move the game piece including the game action indicia three traditional moves in a row, in a single turn. Another exemplary game action may be to move the game piece including the game
15 action indicia an unlimited number of squares in a straight diagonal line. Yet another game action may be to move an opponent’s game piece, such as to a square where it may be jumped by the game piece that includes the game action indicia indicating such a game action. Optionally, a game action may be simply to move a game piece as per the traditional rules of checkers.

20 In some embodiments of games including a plurality of the aforementioned game pieces, the game action indicia of several different game pieces may indicate different game actions. Such games may include a set of game pieces for each player, the game pieces of each set also including player affiliation indicia, such as a color. Each set may include

several game pieces each including different game action indicia, and may also include several game pieces each with the same game action indicia. Further, some embodiments may include sets of game pieces such that each set collectively includes the same, or different, game action indicia relative to the other set. Methods of game play suitable for
5 such embodiments may provide that game play generally follows the traditional rules of checkers, but that a player may choose to perform the game action that is indicated on a game piece the player controls.

In some embodiments, the game pieces may be configured to selectively display the game action indicia. For example, a game piece may include a base portion and a pivotable
10 portion bearing or otherwise including the game action indicia, such that the pivotable portion is foldably coupled to the base portion. The game piece thus may be adapted to be folded between a "closed" configuration, in which the pivotable portion is folded against the base portion, and an "open" configuration, in which the pivotable portion is folded away from the base portion.

15 In both configurations, the base portion may remain generally horizontal, so that the game piece may be placed on a flat surface such as game board, with the pivotable portion foldable between a first, horizontal position and a second, vertical position. In the horizontal position, the pivotable portion is folded against the base portion and the game piece is "closed." In this configuration, the game action indicia may be concealed by being hidden
20 underneath the game piece as it rests on a game board with the game action indicia facing down, or it may be displayed by turning the closed game piece so that the game action indicia is facing up. In the vertical position, the pivotable portion is folded away from the base portion and the game piece is "open." In this configuration, the game action indicia may thus be viewable from a direction facing the vertically displayed game action indicia.

Thus, in the exemplary configuration briefly described above and discussed in more detail below, a game piece may be placed in one of three ways on a game board that is positioned generally between two players: so that the game action indicia is not visible to either player (*i.e.*, closed, with the game action indicia facing down), visible to both players
5 (*i.e.*, closed, with the game action indicia facing up), or visible to only one player (*i.e.*, open, with the game action indicia displayed on a vertical surface so that only a player facing the vertical portion may see it).

Exemplary sets of rules suitable for use with such game pieces may provide that a player may perform the game action indicated on a game piece only when the game action
10 indicia is displayed to one or both players. For example, in one method of game play, the game pieces may be initially placed so that the game action indicia is not visible by either player until a game piece is successfully moved to the “king row,” at which point the game action indicia may be displayed to both players (such as by turning over the game piece or by folding the pivotable portion to the second, vertical position), and the player controlling the
15 game piece may subsequently choose to perform the game action indicated.

An exemplary game piece configured to selectively display game action indicia as discussed above is presented in Figs. 1–6, indicated generally at 10. As will be discussed, the game piece in Figs. 1–4 is shown in an open configuration and in Figs. 5–6 in a closed configuration, with Fig. 4 demonstrating how the game piece may be folded between the two
20 configurations.

The exemplary game piece is shown in Figs. 1–3 to include a base portion 12 foldably coupled to a pivotable portion 14. Game piece 10 further includes a hinge mechanism 16 on pivotable portion 14, and surrounding structure such as support arms 18 on base portion 12,

to enable the pivotable portion to be folded relative to the base portion. Although not shown, the hinge mechanism and/or the support arms may further include springs or other biasing devices to urge the pivotable portion into either a first, horizontal position (as shown in Figs. 5–6) or a second, vertical position (as shown in Figs. 1–4) relative to the base portion. Also, although the foldable linkage is illustrated in the exemplary embodiment as a hinge mechanism, any suitable structure may be used that allows the pivotable portion to be folded or pivoted with respect to the base portion.

Base portion 12 includes a top side 20 (which can be seen in Figs. 1 and 2), a bottom side 22 (which can be seen in Fig. 3), and a peripheral edge 24. Top side 20 is shown to further include a central surface 30 and a series of raised ridges 32, arranged to partially define a circle that surrounds the central surface. Central surface 30 is shown to include game theme indicia 34, illustrated as an embossed design. Bottom side 22 further includes a recess 36, and peripheral edge 24 features a small notch 38 positioned generally opposite the base portion from support arms 18. Base portion 12 further includes player affiliation indicia 40, shown as a color.

Some embodiments of games, such as those presented herein, may incorporate a theme or backstory based to some extent on characters, events, and/or locations portrayed in a particular popular culture phenomenon, *i.e.* in a book, comic book, movie, TV show, or the like. Game components and features may be configured to reflect such a theme, for example by means of decorative indicia on the various game pieces. The exemplary embodiment incorporates the theme of the popular DC Comics superhero team known as the “Justice League.” Thus, game theme indicia 34 is shown to be an embossed design that resembles a star, one of the symbols of the Justice League. However, the illustrated embossed design is merely exemplary, and the central surface may include game theme indicia as desired to

reflect a different theme, or no theme. Optionally, the central surface may be configured to include instructional indicia or other nondecorative indicia relevant to game play, such as player affiliation indicia.

Also, although the depicted game piece is shown to include color as player affiliation indicia, other suitable indicia adapted to differentiate between game pieces that are controlled by, or otherwise affiliated with, each player, may be used. Examples include one or more symbols, icons, or other markings, colors, or any combinations thereof. Moreover, such player affiliation indicia may appear on any suitable part of game piece 10, in addition to, or instead of, base portion 12.

Foldably attached to base portion 12 is pivotable portion 14, which is shown in Figs. 1–3 to include a first face 50, a second face 52, and a peripheral edge 54. First face 50 further includes a flat surface 60 surrounded by a series of recessed channels 62 arranged to partially define a circle. As discussed in greater detail below, channels 62 correspond in size, shape, and position to the series of ridges 32 on the top side of base portion 12, so that the channels on one game piece may interlock or otherwise interface with the ridges on another game piece.

Flat surface 60 of pivotable portion 14 is shown to include game action indicia 64, which is adapted to indicate a game action. As illustrated, game action indicia 64 is shown to be in the form of a graphic illustration of a superhero, as consistent with the “Justice League” theme of the exemplary embodiment. Specifically, game action indicia 64 is a graphic illustration of the superhero “The Flash.” However, such game action indicia may be any symbol, icon, image, text, other marking, or any suitable combination thereof that is adapted to indicate a game action to be performed. Moreover, the game action indicia of several

game pieces may differ, and accordingly may represent different game actions to be performed. As described in more detail below, a set of rules suitable for use with the exemplary embodiment may provide that game action indicia that represents a specific superhero indicates a specific game action to be performed.

5 As best seen in Figs. 2–3, second face 52 of pivotable portion 14 includes game theme indicia 66, presented as an embossed design in the form of the Justice League “JL” logo. As with game theme indicia 34, the illustrated embossed design is merely exemplary, and the second face may include game theme indicia as desired to reflect a different theme. Optionally, the second face may be configured to include instructional indicia or other
10 nondecorative indicia relevant to game play, such as player affiliation indicia. Finally, peripheral edge 54 of pivotable portion 14 includes a small tab 68 positioned generally opposite the pivotable portion from hinge mechanism 16.

Thus, with reference to Fig. 4, the pivotable portion of exemplary game piece 10 is shown to be foldable relative to the base portion by being rotated approximately 270 degrees,
15 as indicated by arrow 70, about an axis described by the hinge mechanism. Thus, the pivotable portion is foldable between a first position, in which the pivotable portion is generally parallel to the base portion and in which the game piece is in a closed configuration, and a second position, in which the pivotable portion is generally perpendicular to the base portion and in which the game piece is in an open configuration. In
20 the exemplary embodiment, in the first position, game action indicia is concealed when the game piece is placed on a game board with the bottom side down and displayed when the game piece is placed on a game board with the bottom side up; in the second position, the pivotable portion is generally perpendicular to the base portion and the game action indicia is displayed, for example to a player facing the vertical portion. As explained in greater detail

below, this feature may enable one player to selectively conceal the game action indicia from the other player.

Figs. 5–6 illustrate game piece 10 in a closed configuration, in which it can be seen that pivotable portion 14 of exemplary game piece is sized and shaped so that it fits substantially within recess 36 when in a first position. In such a configuration, the game piece has a generally flat and substantially disc-like shape roughly similar to that of a conventional checker. Also, it can be seen that tab 68 is disposed on peripheral edge 54 of the pivotable portion to partially protrude through notch 38 on peripheral edge 24 of the base portion, when the game piece is in a closed configuration. The tab may thus assist a player, such as a child, in folding the game piece back into an open configuration. Some embodiments may further include other features to enable folding the game piece between the open and closed configurations and/or selectively retain the game piece in a chosen configuration. For example, the game piece may include retention features, such as detents, pins, tabs, and the like, to selectively retain or lock the game piece in either configuration. Further, as mentioned above, the hinge mechanism may include one or more springs or other biasing members configured to urge the game piece into either configuration.

Figs. 7–8 illustrate how two game pieces 10 in closed configuration may be stacked on top of each other securely, such as during play of a checker-type game when a first game piece is converted into a “king” by being “crowned” with a second game piece. The interlock or interface between ridges 32 and channels 62 of stacked game pieces may be configured to enable players to pick up and/or otherwise move the stacked game pieces of a “king” game piece, as a unit, without the game piece sliding apart. Optionally, the structure forming the interface may be configured in such a manner as to orient stacked game pieces in a given

direction relative to each other, for example by aligning the hinge mechanisms of each of a stack of game pieces, as shown in Fig. 8.

Exemplary methods of game play utilizing the concepts and components discussed above are outlined in the paragraphs below. The games are based on the game of checkers, and thus may be played by two players on a checker board, each player controlling a set of twelve game pieces, which are initially arranged on alternating spaces in the first three rows of opposite sides of the board (the “starting configuration”). Unlike a traditional set of checkers, the game pieces include game action indicia. Moreover, in the embodiments presented herein, some of the game pieces include distinguishable game action indicia.

For example, Fig. 9 presents several different types of game action indicia, seven of which can be seen to represent a different superhero, and an eighth can be seen to include game theme indicia. More specifically, game action indicia 641 represents The Flash, game action indicia 642 indicates Wonder Woman, game action indicia 643 indicates Batman, game action indicia 644 indicates the Martian Manhunter, game action indicia 645 indicates the Green Lantern, game action indicia 646 indicates Superman, and game action indicia 647 indicates Hawk Girl. Game action indicia 648 indicates a star symbol of the Justice League.

In the exemplary embodiments, seven game pieces of each set are “superhero game pieces,” each of which include game action indicia indicating a different superhero member of the Justice League, such as The Flash and the other superheroes illustrated in game action indicia 641–647); the remaining five game pieces of each set are “regular game pieces” that include indistinguishable, or generic, game action indicia (such as game action indicia 648).

To further the superhero theme of the exemplary embodiment, the game action indicated by the game action indicia may be related in some manner to the powers possessed

by the superhero depicted. For example, in Fig. 1, game action indicia 64 is a graphic illustration of the superhero The Flash, who, according to the Justice League theme, possesses the power of great speed. As such, the exemplary rules provide that the game action indicated is that the game piece including The Flash game action indicia can be moved
 5 three traditional moves in a row, in a single turn. The table below lists an exemplary set of superhero game action indicia and details an exemplary game action corresponding to each superhero.

Table 1: exemplary game actions for superhero game action indicia:

Superhero	Special power/move
The Flash	Player may move this game piece three traditional moves in one turn.
Wonder Woman	Player may move an opponent's game piece in a straight line toward this game piece; the opponent may not move the game piece for one turn.
Batman	Player may capture an opponent's game piece two spaces away from this game piece.
Martian Manhunter	Player may move this game piece orthogonally (rather than diagonally) one space.
Green Lantern	Player may prevent this game piece from being captured by an opponent's game piece.
Superman	Player may use this game piece to jump two spaces diagonally, capturing any game pieces jumped.
Hawk Girl	Player may move (not jump) this game piece an unlimited number of spaces in a straight diagonal line.

In the exemplary games disclosed herein, seven game pieces of each set are superhero
 10 game pieces bearing distinguishable superhero game action indicia on the flat face of the pivotable portion, each superhero game action indicia corresponding to a "special power" or game action to be performed such as those presented in the table above or otherwise as

provided by a set of rules. The remaining five game pieces are regular game pieces, and may be moved in the manner of a conventional checker.

As described in greater detail below, one way in which described methods differ from each other is in the initial placement of the game pieces in the starting configuration on the game board, since only seven of each set of twelve game pieces are superhero game pieces. Thus, a first method involves initially placing the game pieces randomly in the starting configuration and concealing the game action indicia from both players; a second method involves initially placing the game pieces strategically in the starting configuration and concealing the identities and positions of the superhero game pieces and regular game pieces of each player from the other player; and a third method involves initially placing the game pieces strategically in the starting configuration but revealing the game action indicia of the game pieces to both players. Play then proceeds according to the conventional game of checkers, with modifications to accommodate displaying the game action indicia and performing the game actions indicated.

EXAMPLE 1

In a first method, the twelve game pieces of each set are each folded into a closed configuration, arranged top side up, mixed randomly, and placed randomly in the starting configuration. Fig. 10 shows components of a game 80, including game board 82 that has an array of squares 84, and two sets of game pieces 10, which have been placed in such a starting configuration. The game pieces of each set include differentiable player affiliation indicia such as a color; however, all of the game pieces are illustrated to be of the same color, for clarity. In setting the game pieces in the starting configuration and while moving the

game pieces during play, neither player is permitted to look underneath the game pieces to determine which game pieces are superhero game pieces and which are regular game pieces.

Play proceeds according to the conventional game of checkers. However, if a game piece is moved to the "king row," as shown in Fig. 11, the game action indicia 64 is revealed, such as by folding the game piece into an open configuration, as shown in Fig. 12. Alternatively, the "king" game piece may be "crowned" by placing a second game piece on top of the king game piece, and the two game pieces may collectively be turned upside-down to display the game action indicia of the lower game piece. In either case, if the king game piece is a regular game piece, it may be moved as a conventional king. However, if the king game piece is a superhero game piece, the player controlling the game piece may choose to perform the game action corresponding to the superhero game action indicia on the king game piece, as illustrated, for example, in Fig. 13. Once the game action has been performed, the game action indicia is concealed, either by folding the game piece into a closed configuration and crowning it with a second game piece, or by turning the stacked game pieces over a second time to display the top side of the base portion. Thereafter, the king game piece is moved as a conventional king.

EXAMPLE 2

In a second method, the twelve game pieces of each set are each folded into a closed configuration and placed according to each player's preference in the starting configuration, top side down. In other words, the flat surface of the pivotable portion of each player's game piece is visible to each player, so the relative positions and identities of each player's superhero game pieces and regular game pieces is apparent to both players. Fig. 14 shows components of game 80, including game board 82 and two sets of game pieces 10, arranged

in such a starting configuration. The game pieces of each set include differentiable player affiliation indicia such as a color; however, all of the game pieces are illustrated to be of the same color, for clarity. Game action indicia 64 of each game piece is displayed and is visible to both players.

5 When a player decides to use the “special power” of one of the superheroes indicated on one of the superhero game pieces, the game action corresponding to the superhero on a game piece is performed. Once the corresponding game action has been performed, the game piece is turned over to display the top side of the base portion, and is moved thereafter as a conventional checker.

10 EXAMPLE 3

 In a third method, the twelve game pieces of each set are each folded into an open configuration and placed according to each player’s preference in the starting configuration, such that the “JL” logo on each player’s game piece is facing the other player. In other words, the flat surface of the pivotable portion of each player’s game piece is visible to the
15 player but concealed from the other player, so neither player can determine which of the other player’s game pieces are superhero game pieces and which are regular game pieces. Fig. 15 shows components of game 80, including game board 82 and two sets of game pieces 10, arranged in such a starting configuration. The game pieces of each set include differentiable player affiliation indicia such as a color; however, all of the game pieces are illustrated to be
20 of the same color, for clarity. Game action indicia 64 of each piece is displayed, but is visible only to the player controlling the game piece.

 When a player decides to perform the game action indicated by the game action indicia indicated on one of the superhero game pieces, the game action indicia is shown to the

other player and the game action is performed according to the superhero indicated on the game piece. Once the game action indicated on a game piece has been performed, it is folded into a closed configuration and moved thereafter as a conventional checker.

The disclosed methods are indicated to be exemplary methods of game play utilizing
5 the game components and concepts as described above, as other methods are certainly possible and within the scope of this disclosure. For example, the exemplary game pieces as described and illustrated herein may be used to play a game according to the conventional rules of checkers, with no modifications. Also, in each of the exemplary methods of game play, the “special power” of each superhero game piece may only be used once; in other
10 embodiments, the “special powers” may be used multiple times, or in combination, and so forth. Further, the table above presents seven exemplary game actions, but the variety and number of game actions indicated by game action indicia may be configured as desired.

Aspects of one or more of these exemplary methods of game play may be reflected in a set of rules to accompany a game. Such rules may thus be adapted to provide a game with a
15 desired degree of complexity or difficulty, for example to adapt the game to players of a predetermined age range. The rules may include additional methods of game play consistent with the components and concepts of the game as described above, and may vary from those as indicated herein.

It is believed that the disclosure set forth herein encompasses multiple distinct
20 inventions with independent utility. While each of these inventions has been disclosed in a preferred form, the specific embodiments thereof as disclosed and illustrated herein are not to be considered in a limiting sense as numerous variations are possible. The subject matter of the inventions includes all novel and non-obvious combinations and subcombinations of the

various elements, features, functions and/or properties disclosed herein. Similarly, where the claims recite “a” or “a first” element of the equivalent thereof, such claims should be understood to include incorporation of one or more such elements, neither requiring nor excluding two or more such elements.

5 It is believed that the following claims particularly point out certain combinations and subcombinations of features, functions, elements and/or properties that may be claimed through amendment of the present claims or presentation of new claims in this or a related application. Such amended or new claims, whether they are directed to a different invention or directed to the same invention, whether different, broader, narrower or equal in scope to
10 the original claims, are also regarded as included within the subject matter of the inventions of the present disclosure.

What is claimed is:

1. A game piece for use with a game board, the game piece comprising:

a base portion including a top side and a bottom side; and

5 a pivotable portion foldably coupled to the base portion, the pivotable portion further including game action indicia adapted to indicate a game action to be performed;

wherein the pivotable portion is foldable between a first position, in which the pivotable portion is generally parallel to the base portion and in which game action indicia is concealed when the game piece is placed on a game board with the bottom side down and
10 displayed when the game piece is placed on a game board with the bottom side up, and a second position, in which the pivotable portion is generally perpendicular to the base portion and in which the game action indicia is displayed.

2. The game piece of claim 1 wherein the bottom side includes a recess and
15 wherein the pivotable portion is configured to fit substantially within the recess when the pivotable portion is in the first position.

3. The game piece of claim 1 wherein the top side and the bottom side collectively include correspondingly configured interlocking structure such that two game
20 pieces may be stacked by engaging the interlocking structure of a top side of a first game piece with the interlocking structure of a bottom side of a second game piece.

4. The game piece of claim 3 wherein the top side and the bottom side are adapted to align two stacked game pieces in a predetermined relative orientation.

25

5. The game piece of claim 3 wherein one of the top side and the bottom side includes a plurality of ridges arranged to describe a substantially circular shape, and the other of the top side and the bottom side includes a correspondingly positioned plurality of channels shaped to accommodate the plurality of ridges.

5

6. The game piece of claim 1 further including player alignment indicia adapted to indicate player alignment.

7. The game piece of claim 6 wherein the player alignment indicia includes a
10 color.

8. A game for use with the game piece of claim 6, the game comprising:
a plurality of game pieces according to claim 6, the plurality including a first game
piece and a second game piece;
15 a game board; and
a set of instructions for game play;
wherein the player alignment indicated by the player alignment indicia of the first
piece is different from the player alignment indicated by the player alignment indicia of the
second piece.

20

9. The game piece of claim 1 wherein the game action indicia includes a
distinguishable icon.

10. A set of game pieces of claim 1, the set comprising at least a first game piece and a second game piece, wherein the game action indicated by the game action indicia of the first game piece is different from the game action indicated by the game action indicia of the second game piece.

5

11. A method of playing a board game with one or more game pieces of claim 1, the method comprising:

placing the one or more game pieces in a first position, with the bottom side down, on a game board;

10 playing a game with the one or more game pieces according to the rules of checkers;
folding a game piece that has been moved to the king row to the second position;
performing the game action indicated by the game action indicia on the pivotable portion.

15 12. A method of playing a board game for two players, each with one or more game pieces of claim 1, the method comprising:

each player placing one or more game pieces in a second position on a game board so that the game action indicia on the pivotable portion is concealed from view from the other player;

20 playing a game with the one or more game pieces according to the rules of checkers;
one player performing the game action indicated by the game action indicia on the pivotable portion of a game piece in a second position after showing the game action indicia to the other player.

13. A method of playing a board game with one or more game pieces of claim 1 the method comprising:

placing the one or more game pieces in a first position, with the bottom side up, on a game board;

5 playing a game with the one or more game pieces according to the rules of checkers;

turning a game piece bottom side down after performing the game action indicated by the game action indicia on the pivotable portion.

14. A game, comprising:

a game board;

a plurality of game pieces for use with the game board, the plurality of game pieces including a first game piece and a second game piece, each of the first and second game piece

5 further including:

a base portion including a top side and a bottom side;

a pivotable portion foldably coupled to the base portion; and

player alignment indicia adapted to indicate player alignment;

wherein:

10 the pivotable portion of each of the first and second game piece is foldable between a first position, in which the pivotable portion is generally parallel to the base portion and in which game action indicia is concealed when the game piece is placed on a game board with the bottom side down and displayed when the game piece is placed on a game board with the bottom side up, and a second position, in which the pivotable portion is
15 generally perpendicular to the base portion and in which the game action indicia is displayed;

the player alignment indicated by the player alignment indicia of the first piece is different from the player alignment indicated by the player alignment indicia of the second piece; and

the pivotable portion of at least one of the plurality of game pieces further
20 includes game action indicia adapted to indicate a game action to be performed.

15. A method of playing a board game that includes a set of rules and plurality of game pieces, each game piece including a base portion, the base portion having a top side and a bottom side, each game piece also including a pivotable portion foldably coupled to the base portion, wherein the pivotable portion of each game piece is foldable between a first position, in which the pivotable portion is generally parallel to the base portion and in which game action indicia is concealed when the game piece is placed on a game board with the bottom side down and displayed when the game piece is placed on a game board with the bottom side up, and a second position, in which the pivotable portion is generally perpendicular to the base portion and in which the game action indicia is displayed; the method comprising:

placing one or more game pieces in a first position on a game board;

playing a game with the one or more game pieces according to the rules of checkers;

and

performing the action indicated by the game action indicia on the pivotable portion

upon the occurrence of a predetermined game event as provided in the set of rules.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein a predetermined game event is folding the game piece to the second position after the game piece has been moved to the king row.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein placing one or more game pieces in a first position on a game board further includes placing the game pieces bottom side down, and wherein the method further includes one player showing the game action indicia on a game piece to another player prior to performing the game action indicated by the game action indicia on the pivotable portion.

18. The method of claim 15, wherein placing one or more game pieces in a first position on a game board further includes placing the game pieces bottom side up, and wherein the method further includes turning a game piece bottom side down after performing the game action indicated by the game action indicia on the pivotable portion.

5

19. The method of claim 16, further including concealing the game action indicia on a game piece after performing the game action indicated by the game action indicia on the pivotable portion.

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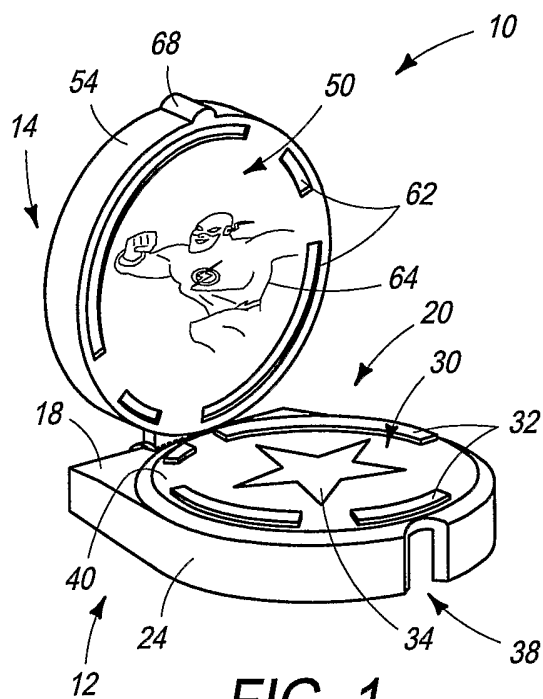


FIG. 1

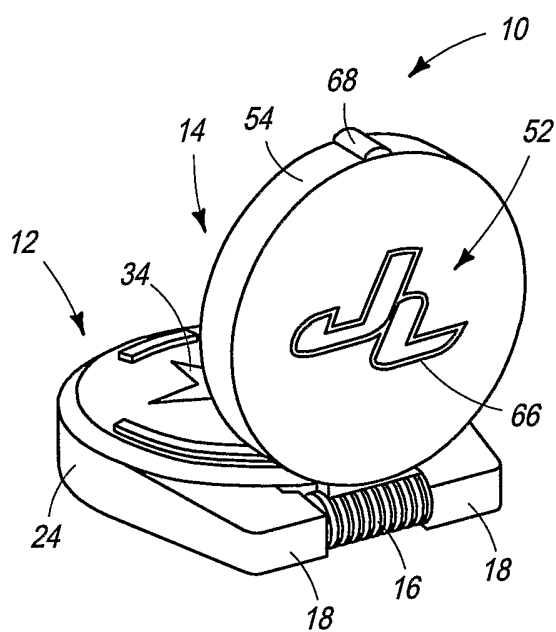


FIG. 2

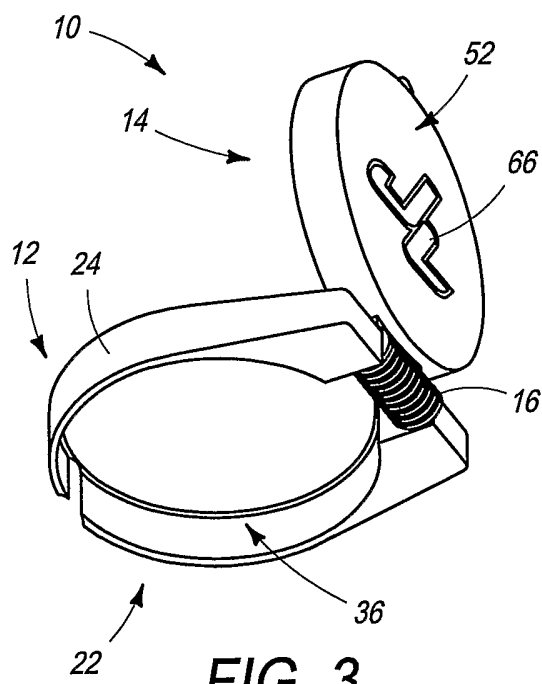


FIG. 3

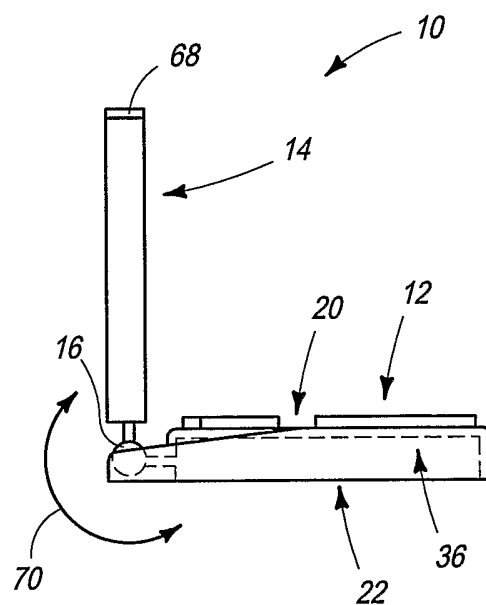


FIG. 4

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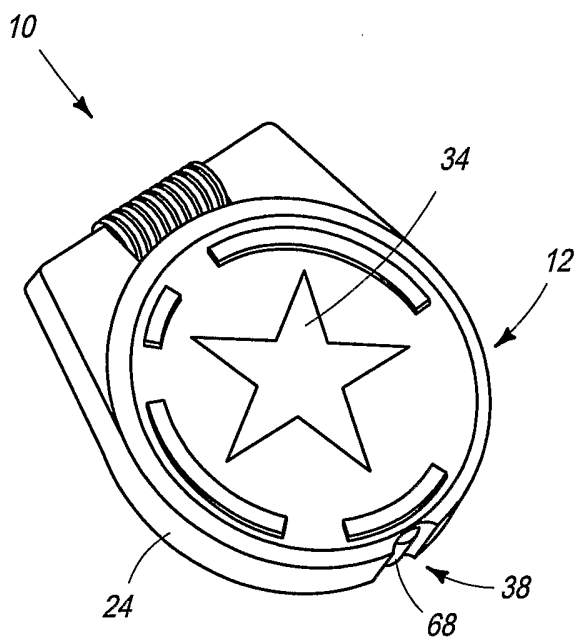


FIG. 5

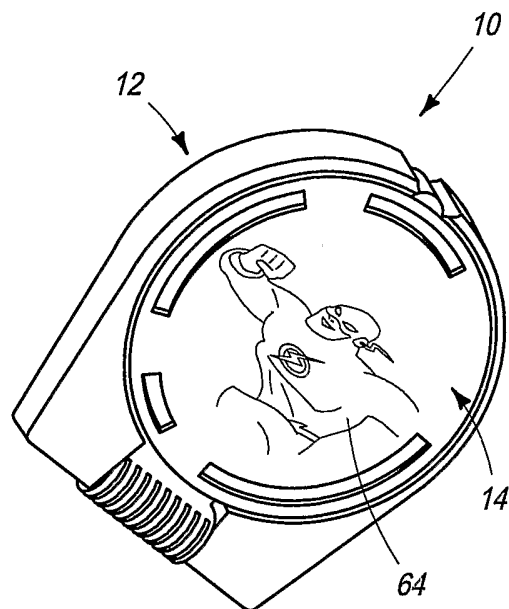


FIG. 6

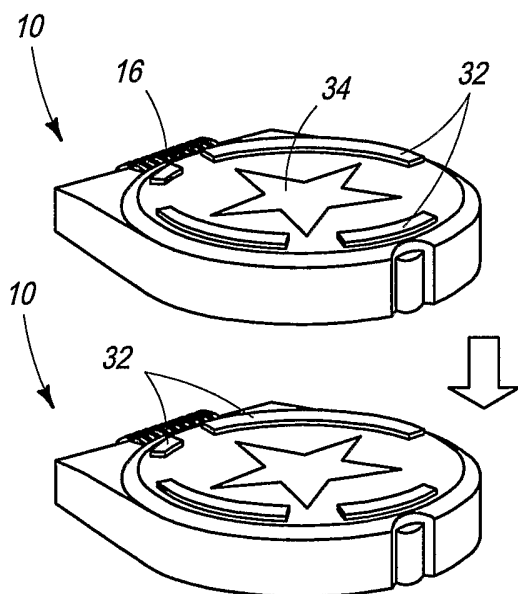


FIG. 7

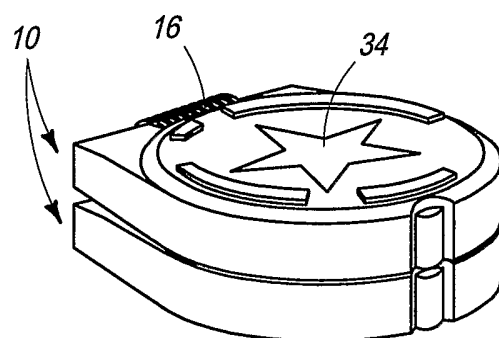
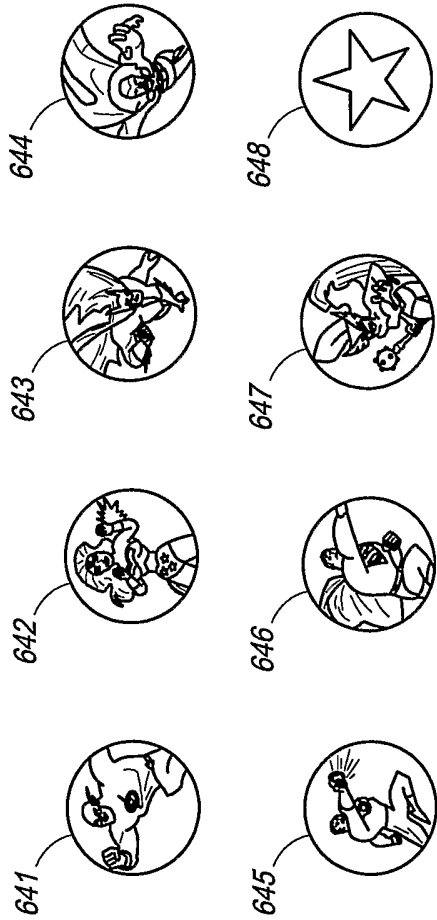
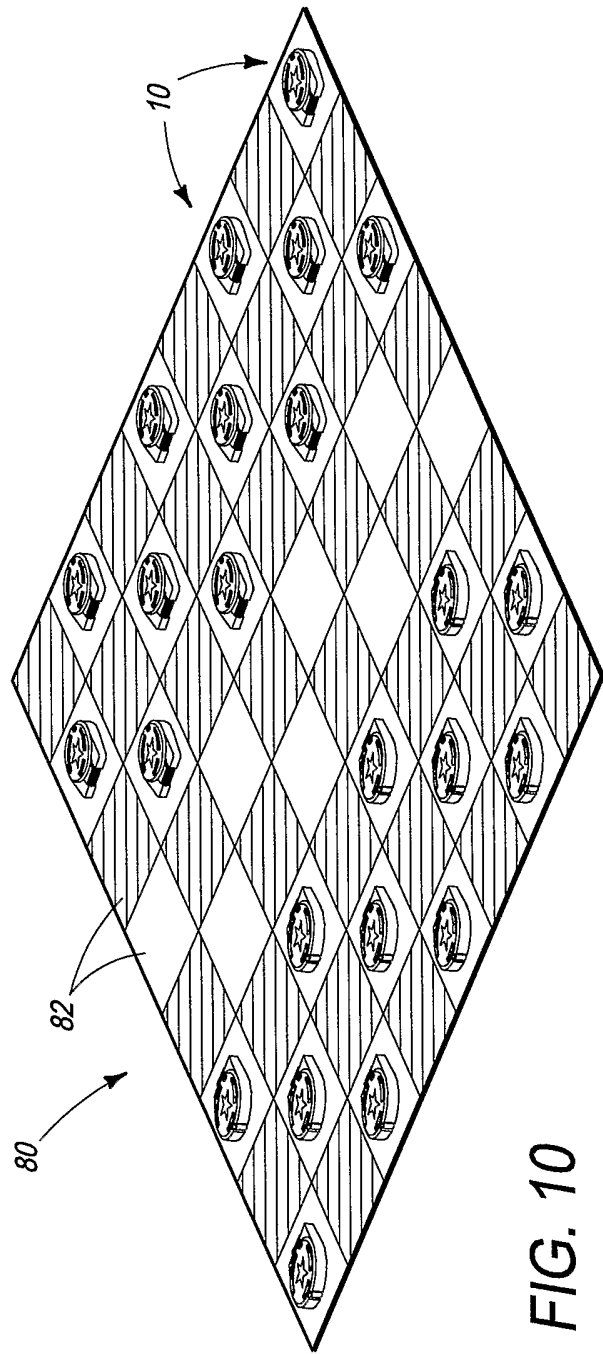


FIG. 8



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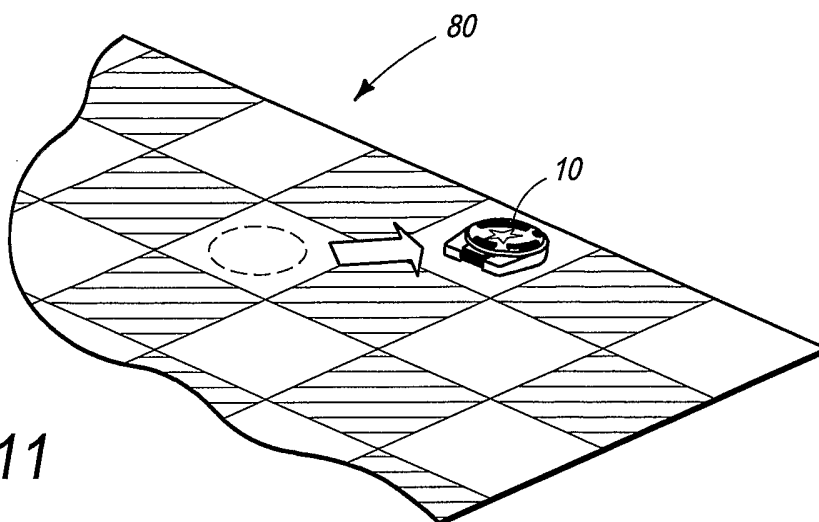


FIG. 11

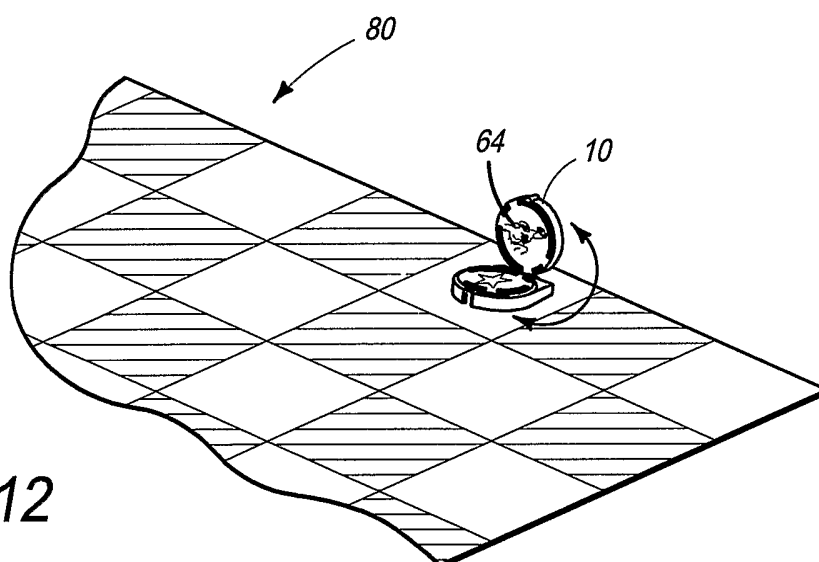


FIG. 12

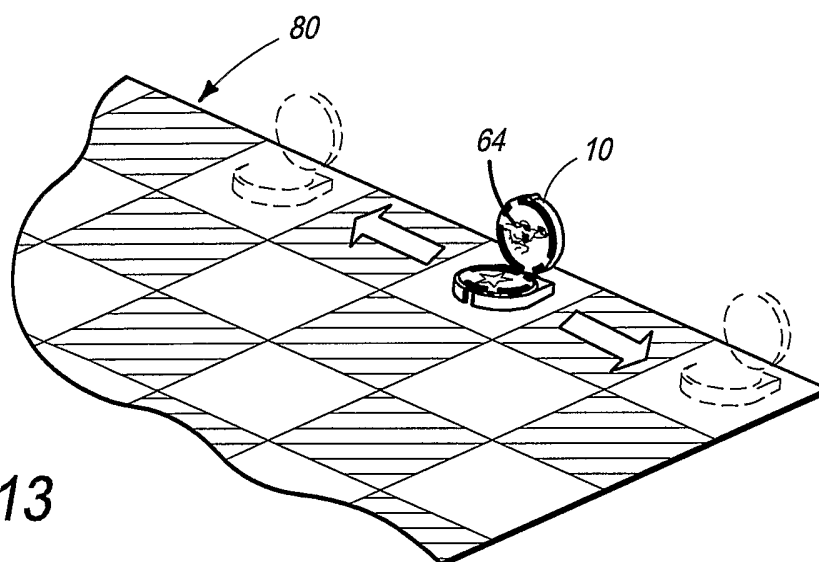


FIG. 13

