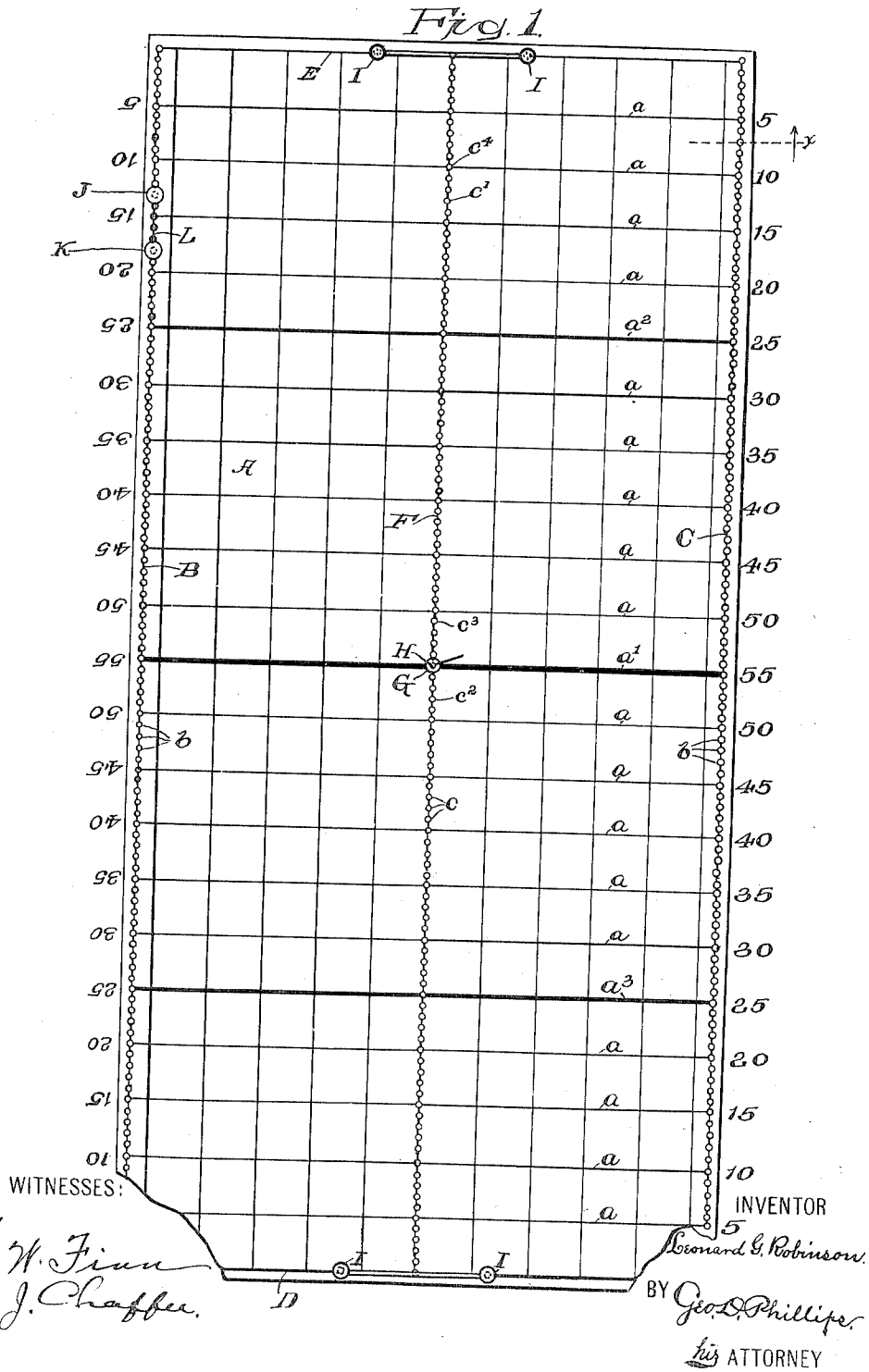


No. 817,191.

L. G. ROBINSON.  
FOOT BALL CARD GAME.  
APPLICATION FILED APR. 20, 1905.

3 SHEETS-SHEET 1.

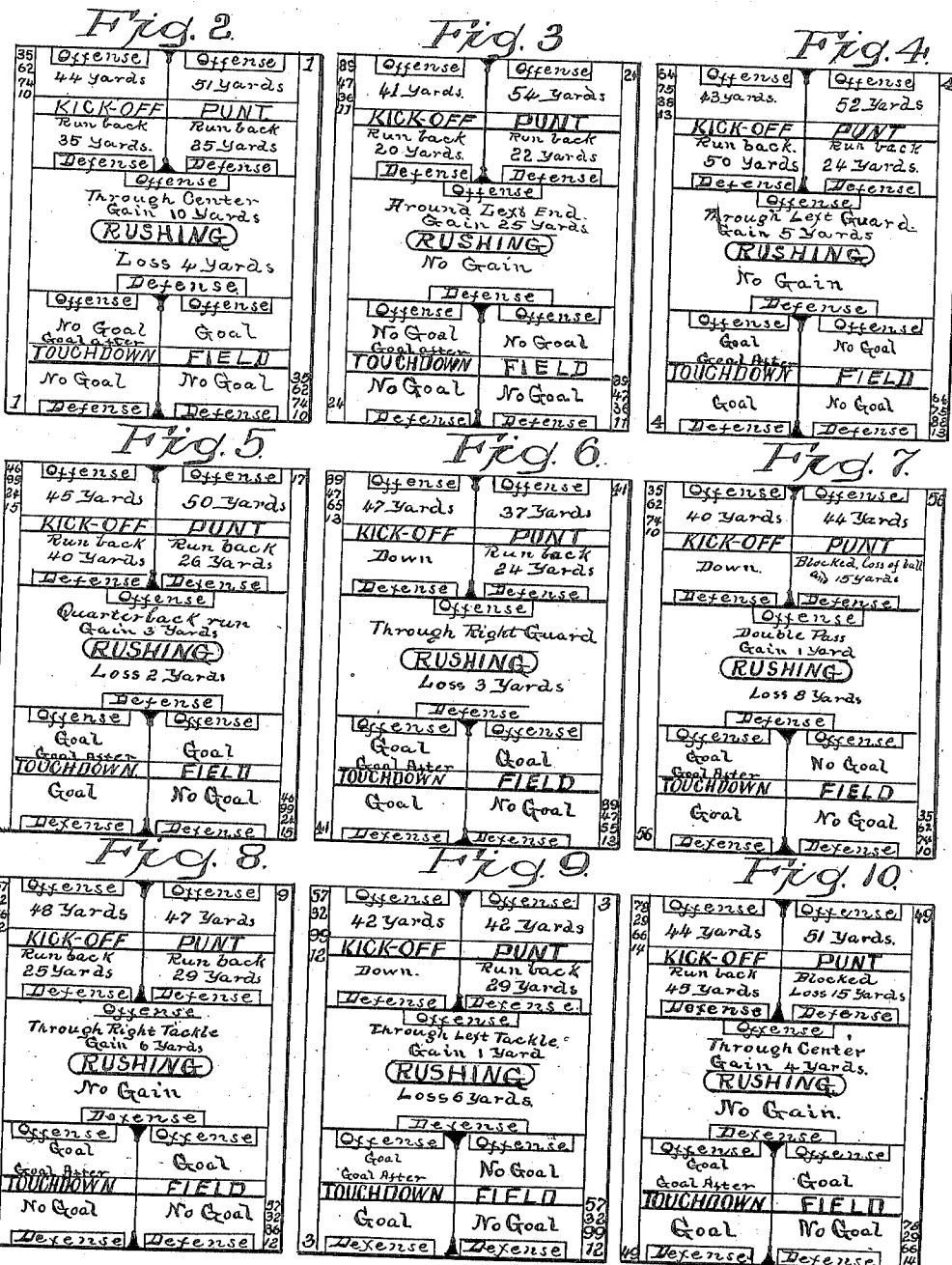


No. 817,191.

L. G. ROBINSON.  
FOOT BALL CARD GAME.  
APPLICATION FILED APR. 20, 1906.

PATENTED APR. 10, 1906.

3 SHEETS—SHEET 2.



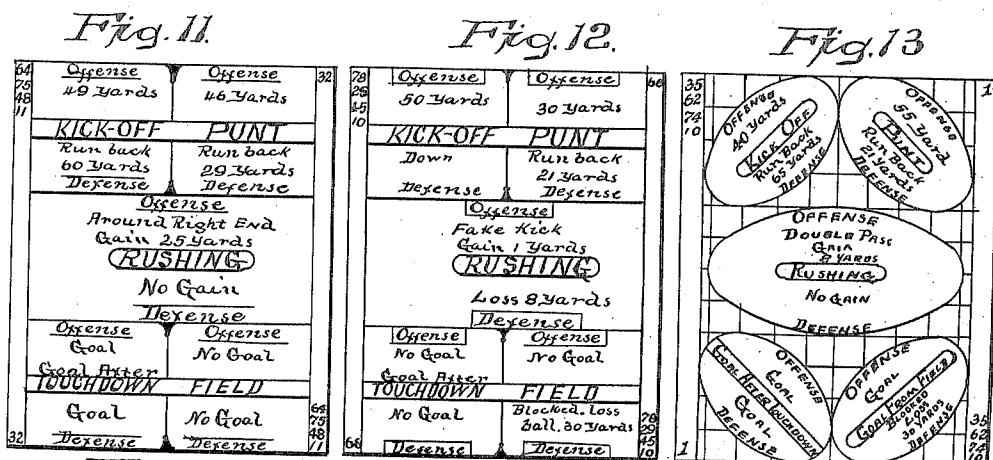
WITNESSES:  
G. W. Finnan,  
B. J. Chapple,

INVENTOR,  
Leonard G. Robinson,  
BY Geo. D. Phillips,  
his ATTORNEY.

No. 817,191.

L. G. ROBINSON. PATENTED APR. 10, 1906.  
FOOT BALL CARD GAME.  
APPLICATION FILED APR. 20, 1905.

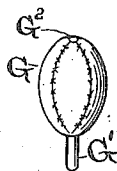
3 SHEETS—SHEET 3.



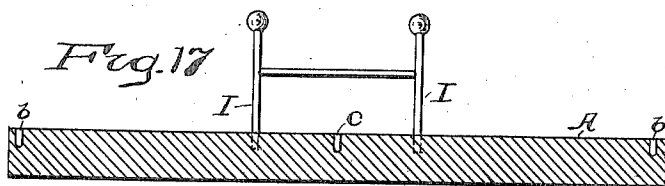
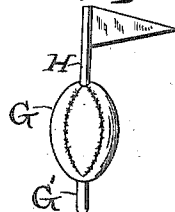
**Fig. 14.**

Double Pass.	35-62-74-10
Around Left End.	89-47-36-11
Through Left Tackle.	57-32-99-12
Through Left Guard.	64-75-88-13
Through Center.	78-29-66-14
Quarterback Run.	46-99-24-15
Through Center.	35-62-89-14
Through Right Guard.	89-47-65-13
Through Right Tackle.	57-32-86-12
Around Right End.	64-75-48-11
Fake Kick.	78-29-45-10

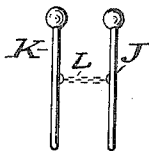
**Fig. 15**



**Fig. 16**



**Fig. 18**



WITNESSES:  
G. W. Finn  
B. J. Chappin

INVENTOR  
Leonard G. Robinson.  
BY Geo. O. Phillips.  
Attorney

# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

LEONARD G. ROBINSON, OF NEW YORK, N. Y.

## FOOT-BALL CARD GAME.

No. 817,191.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented April 10, 1906.

Application filed April 20, 1905. Serial No. 256,639.

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, LEONARD G. ROBINSON, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of New York, in the county of New York and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Foot-Ball Card Games, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to an improved card game wherein a series of cards of particular relative significance are used.

The object of my invention is to reproduce minutely the game of "Rugby" foot-ball, embodying in every detail the essential features of that fascinating outdoor game as played in the United States.

The equipment of my game consists of—

First, a miniature regulation foot-ball, in the movements of which the whole game of foot-ball is centered.

Second, a diagram of a regulation gridiron or foot-ball field, including two sets of goal-posts, within the boundaries of which the ball moves when in play.

Third, the "linesman," consisting of two rods connected by a chain to be used in measuring the movements of the ball over the gridiron.

Fourth, in connection with the ball and gridiron, &c., the most indispensable feature is a pack of cards, called the "team-cards," to be divided between persons representing the opposing teams. These cards regulate the movements of the ball over the gridiron.

Fifth, in connection with the team-cards and also an essential feature of the game I employ a signal-card which may be termed the "key" to the team-cards. The signal-card determines which card or suit may be played at a particular time.

To enable others to understand my invention, reference is had to the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 represents a board or card on which is laid out a correct representation of the gridiron used in regulation foot-ball, except that perforations are used for locating the ball and linesman. Figs. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 each represent a card of a suit of the pack. Fig. 13 is a sample of one of the many different styles in which the playing-cards may be printed. Fig. 14 represents the signal-card. Fig. 15 is a detail view of the foot-ball to be used in playing the game. Fig. 16 is a detail view of the foot-ball bearing the colors of the team having

possession of the ball. Fig. 17 is a transverse section of the foot-ball field on line  $x$  of Fig. 1, showing one of the goal-posts in position. Fig. 18 is a detail view of two uprights linked together to represent linesmen.

The gridiron A, Fig. 1, may be made of cardboard, wood, or other suitable material and represents in miniature the regular foot-ball field. As the regular field is one hundred and ten yards long, the board is divided by the lines  $a$ , which represent a distance apart equal to five yards. These lines terminate at the side lines B C and are numbered from each goal-line D and E "5," "10," "15," &c., to the center or fifty-five-yard line. These numbers are reversed on one side, so that they may be easily read by the players located at opposite ends of the gridiron, or, in other words, facing the goal-lines D and E. The eleventh, center, or fifty-five-yard line  $a'$  and also the twenty-five-yard lines  $a^2$  and  $a^3$  are made heavier, as shown, so that such lines may be more prominent or conspicuous. The distance between these five-yard lines  $a$  is subdivided into yards, which yards are represented by the holes  $b$  on the side lines, and also by the holes  $c$  on the center line F, making one hundred and eleven holes, each hole representing one yard, thus dividing the field from goal-line to goal-line into one hundred and ten yards. The center line F is the line on which the ball G, Figs. 15 and 16, is to travel. While any object may be used to represent the ball, I prefer to employ a miniature representation of a regulation foot-ball to more closely resemble the regular game. The ball is provided with the pin  $G'$ , adapted to be inserted in any one of the holes, when holes are used, located on the center line F, and it has the hole  $G^2$  in its upper surface to receive the flagstaff H, carrying the colors of the team having possession of the ball. It will be understood, however, that I do not wish to be confined to any particular means whereby the ball may be located on the gridiron so long as the ball is detachably located thereon. In the regular outdoor game the ball will travel in every conceivable direction between the side lines of the gridiron, and it would be impossible to represent these various and ever-changing positions of the ball on a miniature field. Therefore to simplify matters I have arranged the ball to travel in a straight line from goal-line to goal-line without lessening interest in the game.

The goal-posts I are similar to the regula-

tion goal-posts—that is, formed like the letter **H**—and they are set in holes on each of the goal-lines **D** and **E**. These goal-posts have no particular use in the game except as  
 5 completing the appearance of the actual gridiron.

The linesmen are represented by the rods **J**, **K**, Fig. 18, and are connected by the chain **L**, representing a length equal to five yards. A  
 10 cord or bar would answer equally as well as a chain. The linesmen are inserted in the holes **b** of the side lines **B** or **C** and are used for measuring the movements of the ball. It being a rule in foot-ball that on a scrimmage  
 15 (a play which may be opposed by the team not in possession of the ball) the ball shall be advanced five yards in three consecutive plays or be surrendered to the other team. On every scrimmage, therefore, one linesman—  
 20 **J**, for instance—is placed on either side line and on a line with the ball, and the other linesman **K** is placed five yards, or five holes, farther in the direction the ball is to travel. The linesmen then remain stationary until  
 25 the ball has reached or passed the linesman **K** for a first down or is lost to the other team.

To carry out the resemblance of this game to the regular outdoor game, the flags used on the ball may represent the colors of some  
 30 college, school, or club.

The office or object of the cards in my game of foot-ball is the elimination of that personal and physical collision or impact so characteristic of the outdoor game without  
 35 at the same time eliminating the element of personal equation or in any way detracting from the science or from the interest of the game. The cards direct and regulate the movement of the ball over the gridiron and  
 40 consist, as before mentioned, of the team-cards, the number of which may be varied, and the "signal-card."

In regulation foot-ball we have two classes of plays or modes of putting the ball in play—the free plays and the scrimmage plays. The  
 45 free plays are the "kick-off" and the "goal after touchdown," where the execution of the play must not be interfered with by the opposing team. The scrimmage plays are the  
 50 "goal from field," the "punt," and "rushing," where the team not in possession of the ball may after the ball has been put in play do everything to obstruct and to break up the play before it is fully executed. After  
 55 the ball is put in play from scrimmage the team in possession of the ball may try by various means simple or intricate to advance the ball toward the opponent's goal-line. To insure in every play the coöperation of every  
 60 member of the team, a member of the team in possession of the ball, generally the quarterback, after deciding the method and the direction of the attack and before the ball is put in play calls a signal from a set of signals  
 65 previously agreed upon. For this purpose I

employ the signal-card. The signal-card (shown at Fig. 14) has printed thereon a number of plays or modes of attack in rushing the ball from scrimmage. The number of these  
 70 modes of attack or plays may be increased or decreased to a considerable extent without changing the general plan of my game. Opposite each of these plays on the signal-card is a series of numbers which is the "signal"  
 75 for that play. Every one of these signals will be found on a certain number of the team-cards, and the number of signals on the signal-card determines and corresponds to the number of suits in the team-cards. Consequently whenever a signal has been called  
 80 any team-card having that signal may be played in response to that signal. The captain of the team retains possession of the signal-card so long as his side has possession of the ball and surrenders it to the captain of  
 85 the other team whenever the ball is lost. While I show signals comprising numbers opposite the plays or modes of attack on the signal-card and corresponding numbers on the suits of the team-cards, I do not wish to  
 90 be confined to the use of numbers, but hold myself at liberty to use letters, signs, or other known means for signaling.

Assuming that there are sixty-six playing-cards divided into eleven suits of six, each  
 95 card of a suit having the same signal numbers located in some conspicuous place thereon, preferably in the upper left and lower right hand corners, then Figs. 2 to 12, inclusive, will each represent one card from each  
 100 of the eleven suits. The numbers in the upper right and lower left hand corners are the numbers of the respective cards from "1" to "66." As before stated, regulation foot-ball has five plays or modes of putting the ball in  
 105 play. Two of these are free plays—that is, their execution cannot be interfered with by the opposing team—and are used only when their use is required by the rules. They are the kick-off, when the ball is kicked from the  
 110 middle of the field, and the goal after touchdown, when the team scoring a touch-down may add one point to the score by kicking the ball from placement over the cross-bar of the opponents' goal. The scrimmage plays are  
 115 used when the rules do not provide for the free plays. They are rushing, the carrying of the ball, the punt, the kicking of the ball, and the goal from field. The captain decides which one of the three he will use at a  
 120 given time. Each of the cards, therefore, contains five plays—viz. kick-off, punt, goal after touch-down, goal from field, and rushing. These five plays are the regular and only  
 125 means of putting the ball in play in regulation foot-ball. Around each of these plays or means of putting the ball in play are grouped the possible results of these plays, both offensive and defensive. In other  
 13 words, each of these five plays is divided

into two parts—viz., the offense and the defense. All the results of plays that are indicated under "offense" are to the advantage of the team in possession of the ball. Those indicated under "defense" are to the advantage of the team not in possession of the ball. Every one of the cards, therefore, may have ten possible values. The value of a card at a given time is determined in two ways—first, by the plays used, whether kick-off, punt, goal from field, goal after touch-down, or rushing; second, by the part of that play, whether offense or defense. As to which of the five plays or modes of putting the ball in play shall be used at any time is determined, first, by the rules, as in the kick-off and goal after touch-down; second, by the captain in possession of the ball, as in his choice between the punt, the goal from field, and rushing. As regards to whether the offense or defense shall govern a particular play depends whether the one team or the other plays that card. When a card is "downed" by the side in possession of the ball, the offense regulates that play, and when the team not in possession of the ball plays or "downs" a card the defense regulates it.

The rules governing this game are the same as those in regulation foot-ball. Any one, therefore, who is at all familiar with the game of foot-ball as played by our schools and colleges need little or no further explanation to be enabled to play my game. Any one, however, can readily familiarize himself with and master the game through the perusal of the following rules and the illustration of their principles: Regulation foot - ball requires twenty-two players, eleven on a side, including the captains. In playing my game any number from two to twenty -two can play. The captains sit at each end of the field or grid-iron A, Fig. 1, facing each other, while the other players are arranged on either side and back of their respective captains. As in regulation foot- ball, the game will last seventy minutes, two halves of thirty-five minutes; but the captains may agree to make the two periods of play of whatever length they choose. When the players are in their respective positions, the referee shuffles the pack of cards and deals them one at a time to the respective captains, who in turn deal them to their teams, themselves as well. When the cards are dealt, the referee will toss up for kick-off, and the captain winning the toss places his colors on the ball, (see Fig. 16,) which ball is already placed in the hole on the fifty-five-yard line or center of the gridiron, as shown at Fig. 1. Let it be supposed that the captain winning the toss is stationed at the goal-line D. He puts the ball in play or kicks off by placing one of his cards on the table face up, and the number indicated on said card for the offense on kick-off will be the number of yards that the ball is advanced

toward the opponents' goal-line E. Suppose, for instance, he turned over card No. 3, Fig. 9, which shows a kick-off of forty-two yards. Then the ball is advanced forty-two yards or holes, which will place the ball in hole *c'*, within thirteen yards or holes of the opponents' goal-line E. Then the defense or captain stationed at E tries to run the ball back by playing a card, which, for example, is card "49," Fig. 10, where it will be noted that the defense on kick-off can run the ball back toward the opponents' goal-line D, forty-five yards, which will carry the ball back to the hole *c''*, three yards beyond the center or fifty-five-yard line toward said goal-line D. If, on the other hand, the defense should happen to play card No. 41, Fig. 6, he would find "down," which means that the kick-off could not be run back, but is downed where the kick-off has left it. Whether the ball has been run back or not it is first down five yards to gain for the team at E receiving the kick-off. When the movement of the ball is stopped, it is called a "down," and whenever the ball changes hands it is "first down five yards to gain." On any first down the rods J K, representing the linesmen, are placed in holes *b* of either of the side line B or C, for instance. Rod J is placed directly opposite the hole *c'*, where the ball has been stopped or downed. The other rod K is then carried or placed five yards or holes farther in the direction that the ball is supposed to travel—viz., toward the goal-line D. The ball must now be put in play by one of the scrimmage plays—viz., rushing, punt, or goal from field. It is a rule in regulation foot-ball that on the scrimmage the team having possession of the ball must advance it five yards or more, and if it has not been advanced five yards it must be surrendered to the other team. As before stated, when the rules do not require the kick-off or goal after touch-down the ball shall be put in play from scrimmage in one of the three ways—viz., rushing, punt, or goal from field. The captain of the team in possession of the ball determines which one of these scrimmage plays he shall use at a particular time. If the captain decides on the punt or goal from field, he shall first say "punt," if that be decided on, or "goal from field," if he decides to make that play, before calling a signal from the signal-card. Should he decide on rushing, he may select any mode of attack and call the signal which is opposite. If, for example, he decides to make his attack on the "left guard," (see Fig. 14,) he calls for the signal for that play, which is "64 75, 88, 13," which card is No. 4, Fig. 4. The instant these signal-numbers are called all the players of both teams, including the captains, look over their cards, and the first to find the card containing these numbers immediately lays it down on the table, face up, and calls "down." The card which has thus

been first downed is the card that regulates that particular play. Now, if any member of the team in possession of the ball has downed that card the offense of that play regulates the resulting movement of the ball, which shows a again of five yards or holes. If, on the other hand, that card has been downed by a member of the team not in possession of the ball, the defense of that particular play regulates the resulting movement of the ball, which shows "no gain," and means that the ball could not be advanced. It is in these scrimmage plays that all of the players have the opportunity of displaying all the qualities of body and mind so essential to success on the foot-ball field. The successful captain will be the one possessing a knowledge of the game of foot-ball, displaying good judgment and ready to do the right thing at the right time. The skilled captain will before the game is far advanced learn the strong points of his own team, as well as the weak points of his opponents, and run his end of the game accordingly. In short, although in this game, as in regulation foot-ball, the element of chance is a very important factor, the team possessing the greater degree of alertness, aggressiveness, good judgment, and good team work will be the winning team. Should the captain in possession of the ball find that it has been downed dangerously near his goal, he may find it advantageous to try the punt, the object of which is to get the ball as far away from his own goal-line as possible. He then selects a signal from the signal-card, which, for example, may be "35, 62, 74, 10." He calls that signal after having previously called "punt." Let us suppose that in response to that signal-card No. 1, Fig. 2, is played. If that card is first downed by the offense or team in possession of the ball, it shows a kick of fifty-one yards or holes. The ball G will be advanced toward the opponents' goal-line that distance. Should the same card be downed by the other side or defense, both the offense and defense of that play will count, except where the defense says "blocked," when the defense alone counts. For example, let it be supposed that the ball is on the twenty-five-yard line or line  $a^2$ , Fig. 1. The ball will then be carried fifty-one holes or yards toward the goal-line D and run back by the defense twenty-five yards, which would place the ball in hole  $c^3$ , making it first down for the team receiving the punt. If, on the other hand, signal-numbers "78, 29, 66, 14," had been called, (see card No. 49, Fig. 10,) and this card was played or downed first by the defense, the punt would be blocked, as noted in defense under "punt." The result of this block may be a loss of ball, distance, or both. In this particular case the loss is fifteen yards or holes, which would carry the ball back to the hole  $c^4$  or ten-yard line; but the ball is retained by

the team punting. If, in place of the words "fifteen yards," it is stated "loss ball," then the ball would be lost to the side punting, and of course changes hands.

As before mentioned, any number of players from two to twenty-two can play the game. Aside from the signal-card I use but one pack of cards, which may consist of any number of cards divided into suits regulated by the number of signals on the signal-cards. The number of signals on the signal-card, and consequently the number of suits in the team-cards, as well as the number of cards in each suit, may be increased or decreased at pleasure without in any way changing the game. The only thing to be considered in making up the number of cards in the pack is to have the right number to make the game interesting. Too few cards would not give sufficient variety of plays, and too many would make the pack too bulky to handle. I have therefore chosen the number best suited to give the more common and more representative results of the various plays.

It is not necessary here to state all of the great variety of plays in regulation foot-ball or to go into minute details or explanations of the terms used in regulation play, as they will readily be understood by those familiar with the game. My object, as before mentioned, is to provide means whereby the game can be played indoors with all the zest, interest, and enthusiasm that one can experience on the actual "gridiron," the only difference being the absence of personal contact of the players with each other.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. A foot-ball-game apparatus, comprising a diagram laid out to represent a foot-ball field, a miniature foot-ball, means for detachably locating the ball in any part of said field, a single pack of cards having printed thereon the different modes or means for putting the ball in play, a signal-card containing scrimmage plays, and signals for said plays with corresponding signals on the cards of the pack, for the purpose set forth.

2. In a foot-ball-game apparatus, a diagram representing a gridiron or foot-ball field, a movable miniature foot-ball detachably located thereon, a signal-card, a pack of cards adapted to be divided between opposing forces or persons representing opposing teams, each card containing five modes of putting the ball in play, each mode being divided into its offensive and defensive results, said cards adapted to be promiscuously distributed among the players and to be played at any stage of the game when called for by the signal-card, for the purpose set forth.

3. In a foot-ball game, a diagram representing a gridiron or foot-ball field, a miniature foot-ball adapted to be moved over said

field and be detachably located thereon, a pack of team-cards adapted to be divided between two opposing forces or persons representing opposing teams, said cards divided  
5 into suits, a signal-card having printed thereon a number of plays or modes of attack, signals connected with each of said plays or modes of attack, the suits of the team-cards having corresponding signals thereon, for the  
10 purpose set forth.

4. In an apparatus for a game of foot-ball, a pack of team-cards adapted to be divided between two opposing forces or persons representing opposing teams, each card contain-  
15 ing five plays or modes of putting the ball in play, viz: "kick-off," "punt," "goal after touchdown," "goal from field" and "rush-

ing," around each of these plays being grouped the possible results of said plays, both offensive and defensive, for the purpose set forth. 20

5. A foot-ball-game apparatus comprising a signal-card having a plurality of signals thereon and a single pack of playing-cards having corresponding signals divided into as many suits as there are signals on the signal-  
25 card, for the purpose set forth.

Signed at Bridgeport, in the county of Fairfield and State of Connecticut, this 15th day of April, A. D. 1905.

LEONARD G. ROBINSON.

Witnesses:

GEORGE W. FINN,  
S. J. CHAFFEE.