

[54] GAMES WITH CHANGEABLE PLAYING PIECES

2,745,667 5/1956 Graham .....273/137 R

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[22] Filed: Dec. 22, 1969

[21] Appl. No.: 887,184

[57] ABSTRACT

[52] U.S. Cl. ....273/134 AD, 273/134 D, 273/137 R, 273/134 F, 273/131 K

[51] Int. Cl. ....A63f 3/02

[58] Field of Search .....273/134 AD, 137 R, 137 AB, 273/137 AC, 137 AD

A game for use by a plurality of players wherein each player has at least one playing piece for movement between positions designated on a playing surface. Identifying characteristics are provided for each piece for display on faces of the pieces with each piece having a plurality of such characteristics. Means are provided for selecting a particular characteristic for each piece during operation of the game. Depending upon the characteristic selected, the piece will have a variety of different powers from the standpoint of the number of spaces which can be moved during one turn of a player, the direction of movement possible, and the ability of a piece to capture or be captured by another piece.

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21 Claims, 23 Drawing Figures

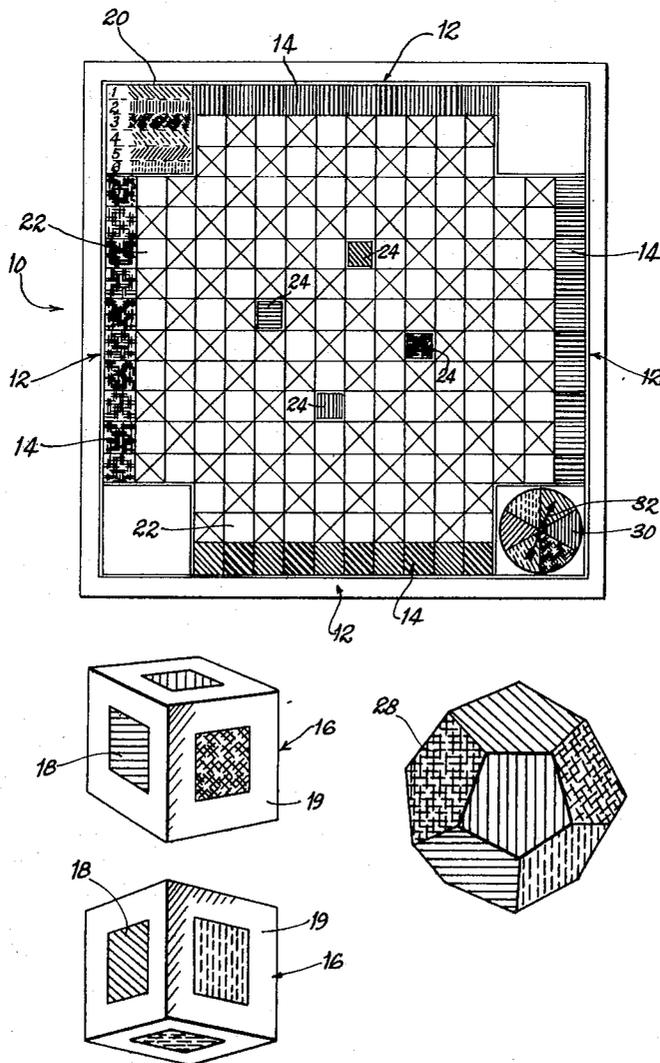




FIG. 5

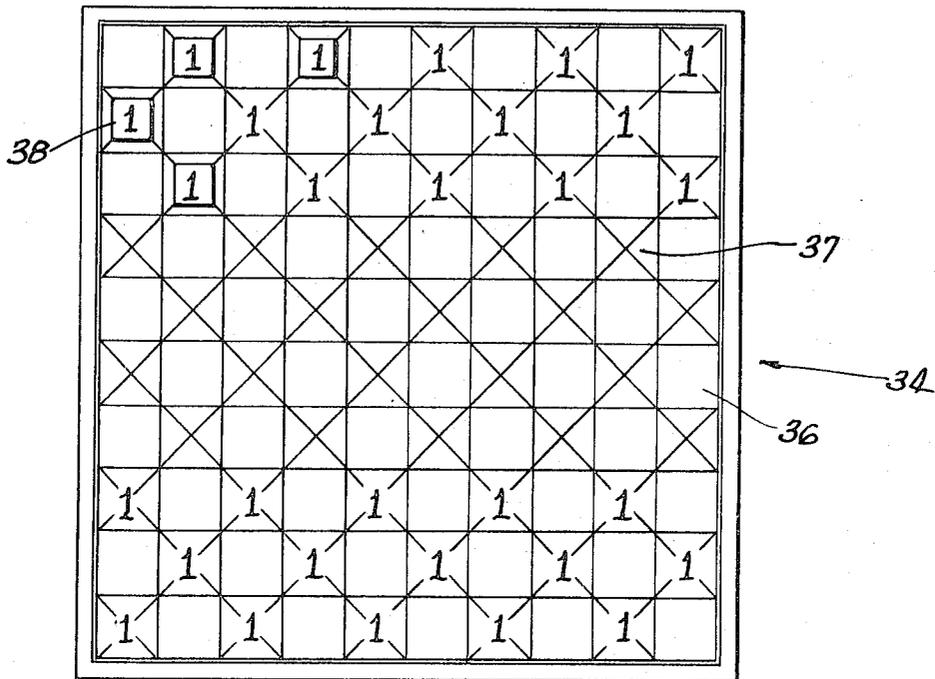


FIG. 6

FIG. 7

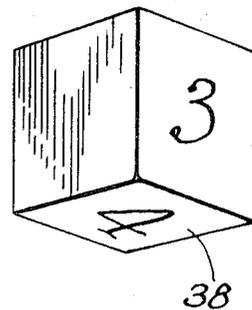
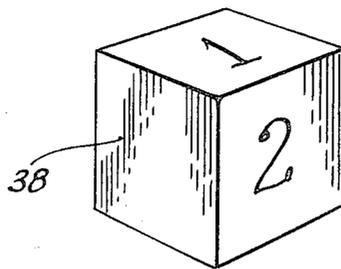


FIG. 8

FIG. 9

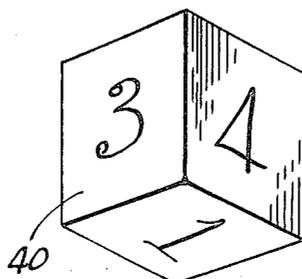
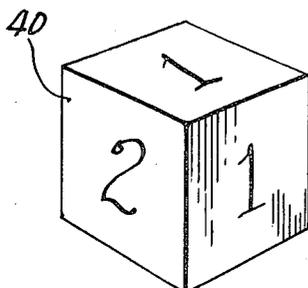


FIG. 10

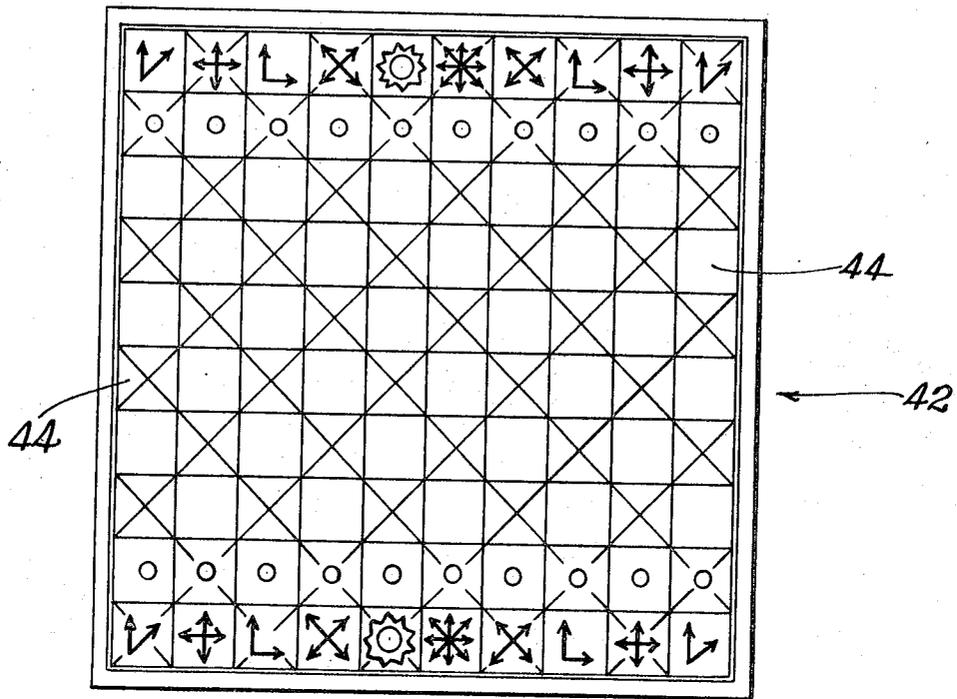


FIG. 11

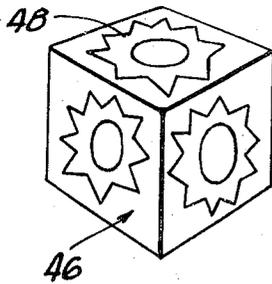


FIG. 12

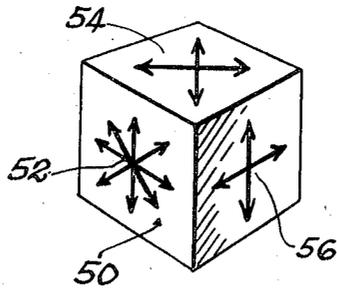


FIG. 13

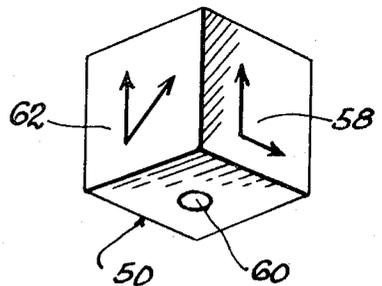


FIG. 15

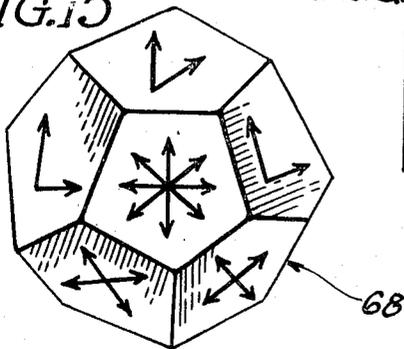


FIG. 14

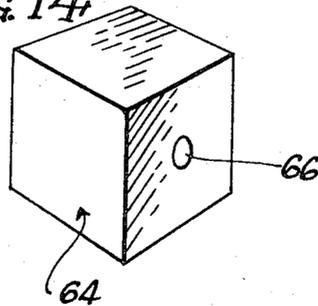


FIG. 16

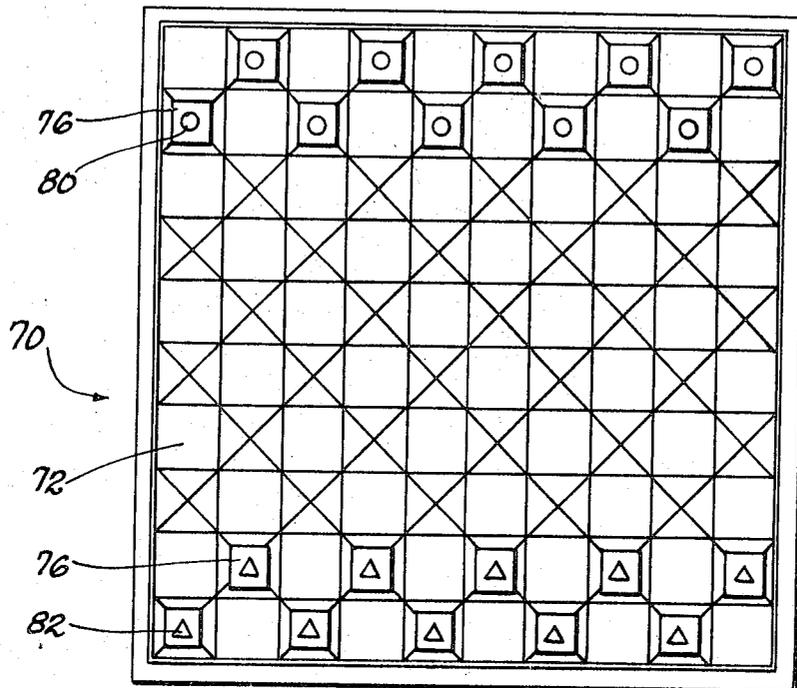


FIG. 17

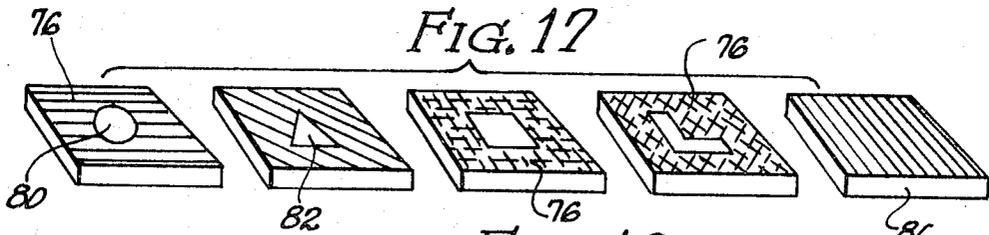


FIG. 18

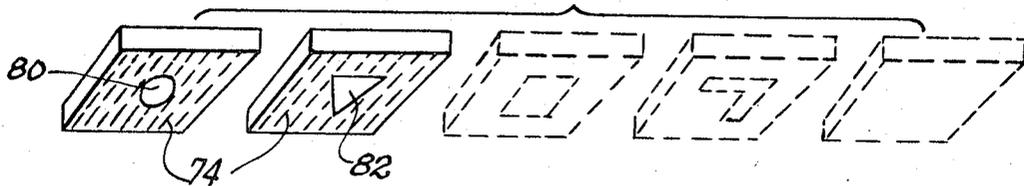


FIG. 19

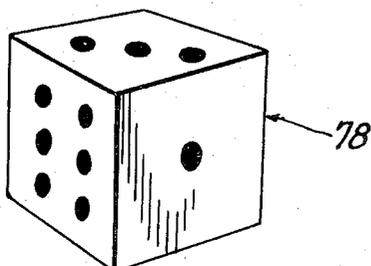


FIG. 20

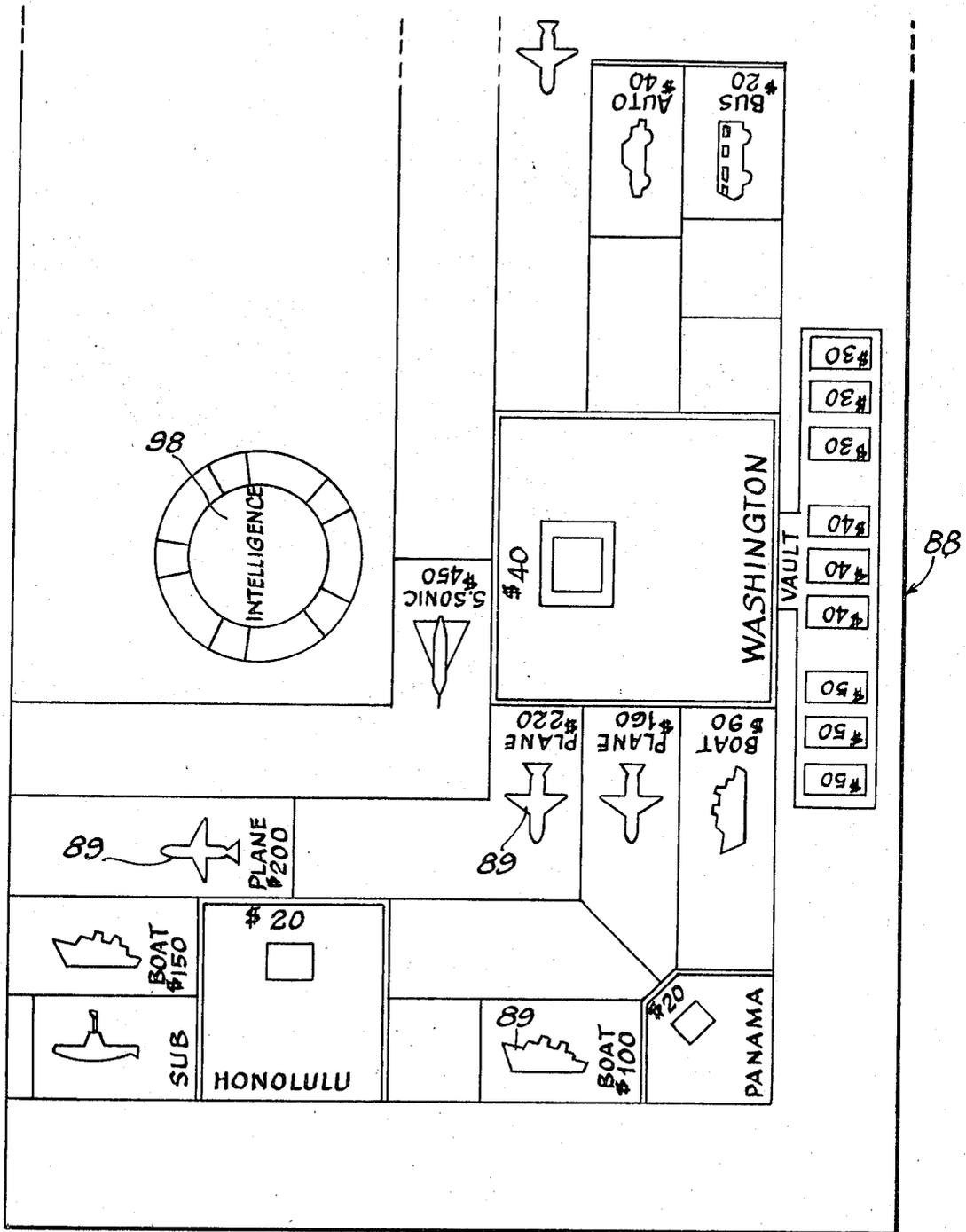
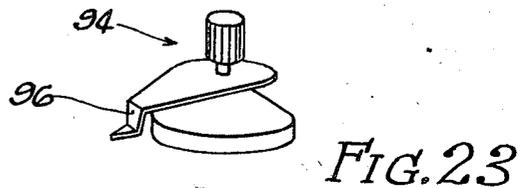
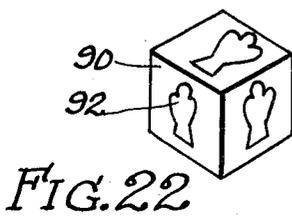


FIG. 21



**GAMES WITH CHANGEABLE PLAYING PIECES**

This invention relates to games, and it is more particularly directed to games which include unique features for introducing variety in the course of play.

In the typical game, individual playing pieces have designated capabilities. For example, in games such as Chinese checkers, all of the pieces of each player have the same power from the standpoint of distance which a piece can move and the direction of movement. In games such as chess or checkers, the pieces also have specific moving capabilities, and capturing ability. In checkers, a piece may become a king, and in chess, a pawn may be exchanged for a piece of greater value under certain conditions; however, these changes are made without any element of chance or variety being introduced.

In other types of games, for example games such as Monopoly, involving movement of pieces along designated lines of travel, the pieces do not change in power or moving capability during play. Other factors, such as the throw of dice, introduce an element of chance; however, the playing piece characteristics are not affected.

It is a general object of this invention to provide a game apparatus which introduces a unique element of variety and chance during play of the game.

It is a more specific object of this invention to provide a game apparatus which includes playing pieces having a plurality of different capabilities all of which may be used in the course of playing a game.

These and other objects of this invention will appear hereinafter, and for purposes of illustration, but not of limitation, specific embodiments of the invention are shown in the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a plan view of a playing surface suitable for one game designed in accordance with the concepts of this invention;

FIGS. 2 and 3 are perspective views of playing pieces utilized in the game;

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of a selecting means utilized for the game;

FIG. 5 is a plan view of an alternative playing surface;

FIGS. 6 and 7 are perspective views of a playing piece used in the game;

FIGS. 8 and 9 are perspective views of a piece used for selecting particular characteristics of a playing piece;

FIG. 10 is a plan view of a further alternative playing surface;

FIGS. 11 through 14 are perspective views of playing pieces used in association with the playing surface shown in FIG. 10;

FIG. 15 is a perspective view of a selecting means used for the playing pieces of FIGS. 11 through 14;

FIG. 16 is a plan view of an additional alternative playing surface;

FIGS. 17 and 18 are perspective views of playing pieces used in conjunction with the playing surface of FIG. 17;

FIG. 19 is a perspective view of a die which may be used as a selecting means for the pieces of FIGS. 17 and 18;

FIG. 20 is a perspective view of an alternative means employed for designating the characteristics of the playing pieces of FIGS. 17 and 18;

FIG. 21 is a fragmentary plan view of an additional playing surface;

FIG. 22 is a perspective view of a playing piece utilized in conjunction with the playing surface of FIG. 21; and,

FIG. 23 is a perspective view of a selecting means utilized for the playing piece of FIG. 22.

This invention generally relates to various types of games which are conventional in certain ways. Specifically, playing pieces are assigned to persons playing the games, and various types of playing boards or other playing surfaces may be provided. During the play, the playing pieces are moved from one position to another over the playing surfaces.

The specific improvements of the invention relate to the use of playing pieces which have a plurality of different capabilities during play. For example, the playing pieces may define

several faces with identifying characteristics displayed on the respective faces to indicate different capabilities. In some cases, marker means may be employed for visually indicating the capabilities of the playing pieces. The capabilities referred to comprise such factors as the number of playing piece positions which can be occupied during a single turn, the direction or directions which a playing piece can move in a single turn, or the power of the playing piece from the standpoint of capturing other playing pieces.

In addition to employing playing pieces of the types described, the invention utilizes a selecting means which operates through chance to determine which of the playing piece capabilities may be used by a player. Thus, a die or spinning selector may be employed by players in the course of the game whereby the capabilities of the various playing pieces will be constantly changed during the game.

FIGS. 1 through 4 illustrate a game construction embodying the characteristics of this invention. The construction includes a game board 10 defining four starting positions generally designated at 12. Each starting position includes 10 square 14 adapted to be occupied by the playing pieces 16 of each player.

The playing pieces 16 shown in FIGS. 2 and 3 comprise cubes having different colored areas 18 on each of their six faces. The bodies 19 of the pieces should also be of different colors to differentiate each player's pieces. Starting squares 14 should be colored to correspond with the colors of the bodies 19 so that the starting position of each player will always be identifiable.

At least one corner 20 of the board 10 displays a color code. The six colors displayed in this corner correspond with the six colors shown on the faces of the playing pieces, and these colors are numbered one through six. The color assigned number one is the superior color with the rank of the colors decreasing as the assigned number increases.

In the specific game illustrated, from two to four players may participate. Each player is assigned 10 pieces which are located on the squares 14. In the course of the game, the pieces may be moved either straightforward or sideways onto any of the squares 22.

When a player has a turn, he first must designate which piece 16 he intends to move for that turn. The player then throws two dice for determining the type of movement permitted for that piece, and for determining the capturing power of the piece. One die may be of the conventional type having from one to six spots with the number rolled determining the number of spaces the piece 16 can be moved. The other die may correspond with a playing piece 16, and the color which is uppermost upon throwing this die will determine the capturing power of the piece 16.

After throwing the two dice, the player positions the piece 16 which he previously selected so that the color on the uppermost face of this piece will correspond with the color on the second die. The player moves the piece the number of spaces shown on the first die, his objective being to capture pieces of an opponent by moving his piece into a square occupied by an opponent's piece, or to advance his piece to a position where capture can be accomplished on a later turn. Defensive consideration are also required since a player naturally wishes to protect his pieces from capture as much as possible. Capture is permitted when the color of the opponent's piece is the same as, or of a lesser power than, the piece being moved. The winner of the game is determined when only one player has a remaining piece or pieces.

Certain variations of this game are obviously available. For example, the pieces may be moved along diagonal lines only, or diagonal movement may also be allowed in the version described. Safety islands 24 may be provided as shown with each island having a color assigned to one player. When a player occupies his own island, he will be free from capture. A similar immunity to capture may be provided whenever a player occupies one of his own starting squares 14.

As an additional variation, a player may be awarded a "king" if he places one of his pieces on a starting square of an opponent. A king can be designated by placing an inactive piece underneath the piece reaching the opponent's square 14, and this piece may also be assigned a permanent value, for example by placing a number two color uppermost and maintaining this condition throughout the remainder of the game. A king may also be permitted to move diagonally to increase its capturing ability.

FIG. 4 illustrates a multisided die 26 having colored faces 28. The die can be used as a selecting means in place of a die which corresponds with a playing piece 16. The die 26 may have one of the colors repeated on several faces, for example the color six of lowest power, so that there will be a tendency to have pieces on the board which are more readily captured by other pieces.

As an alternative to a selecting means in the form of a die, a spinning dial may be employed. This dial may include a face 30 drawn on a corner of the board with a spinning needle 32 being employed for determining the power of the playing piece selected by a player.

FIG. 5 illustrates a game board 34 which is similar to a conventional checkerboard except that 100 squares are provided instead of 64. The squares comprise squares 36 which are unoccupied during play, and squares 37 which are available for occupation by playing pieces 38.

The playing pieces 38 comprise cubes having four faces numbered one through four and two blank faces. Cubes 40 have three faces displaying the number one with the other three faces displaying the numbers two, three and four, respectively.

In playing the game, each player is given 15 of the cubes 38, and the cubes are located on squares 37 as shown. Each player in turn moves one of his pieces diagonally to commence the game. Each player in turn then throws a cube 40 and the number displayed on the cube then replaces the number one for the piece just moved. When the next turn of the player comes, he may move the piece for the number of times shown. A cube 40 is thrown after each move so that the playing piece 38 just moved will have its moving capability determined before the next player takes a turn.

The game otherwise progresses in the same manner as conventional checkers. Thus, if a player has a piece displaying the number three, this player can move this piece two spaces, and if an opponent's piece is then encountered in an adjacent space, the player can jump the opponent's piece, and remove this piece from the board. Similarly, a player may jump an opponent's piece on his first move, and then take two additional moves after this jump.

FIG. 10 illustrates a game board 42 defining squares 44 to be occupied by playing pieces. The game board includes 100 squares, and the game concept is closely related to that of chess.

The playing pieces are illustrated in FIGS. 11 through 14. The cube 46 of FIG. 11 comprises a cube having a single designation 48, and this piece corresponds with the king in a chess game.

Nine other pieces for each player comprise cubes 50 which display different characters on each face as shown in FIGS. 12 and 13. The character 52 indicates a queen, the character 54 a bishop, the character 56 a rook, and the character 58 a knight. The dot 60 indicates a pawn, and the character 62 indicates a piece not found in a conventional chess game. In the game illustrated, this piece is referred to as a duke, and it is capable of moving one block in any direction in the manner of a king, and it is also capable of moving three blocks in any direction by jumping directly to such blocks in the manner of a knight. Where the concepts of this invention are applied to a game including only pieces formed in conventional chess, then the face of the playing piece 50 occupied by the duke may illustrate the symbol for one of the other conventional pieces, for example a pawn.

In addition to the pieces 46 and 50, 10 other pieces 64 are provided as shown in FIG. 14. These pieces may be the same as the pieces 50 except that they will not have queen and duke indications. Alternatively, a dot 66 may be provided on one face with the other faces being blank so that the pieces will correspond with pawns in conventional chess. In that case, the pieces remain as pawns throughout the game.

FIG. 15 illustrates a multisided die 68 displaying the various characters which are also displayed on the playing pieces 50 and 64. The die 68 preferably has 12 faces illustrating one queen, one duke, two knights, two rooks, two bishops and four pawns.

The chess version is played in all respects similar to conventional chess except that the die 68 is rolled by a player after the player moves a piece 50 or 64. Depending upon which face of the die turns up, the player adjusts the position of the piece to determine the value of that piece for its next move. If a queen or duke is rolled after moving a piece 64, then that piece 64 may be changed to any face desired.

With respect to either of the chess or checkers versions described, these games can be played on the playing surface illustrated in FIG. 1. This can be accomplished by using only that portion of the board between two opposing sides, or these games may be played with three or four participants. This feature is advantageous from a market standpoint since a variety of games can be packaged together to increase the sales appeal.

FIGS. 16 through 20 illustrate still another game which may be played on the playing surface 70 or on a board such as shown in FIG. 1. This board includes squares 72 which may be occupied by any of the playing pieces shown in FIGS. 17 and 18. The playing pieces may be moved straightforward or to the side, or diagonal movement may be substituted or added as a possibility.

The playing pieces comprise flat members having colored upper and lower faces. The colored faces 74 illustrated in FIG. 18 are all the same color. The upper faces 76 are of different colors, and these colors are given a rank in the same manner as described with reference to the game shown in FIG. 1.

At the start of the game, the lower face 74 of each piece is exposed in the starting positions as shown in FIG. 16. A player selects a piece he intends to move and then throws a die 78 such as shown in FIG. 19. The number which turns up on the die indicates how many spaces the selected piece can move. If the number is even, the selected piece must remain with its present face up. Where an odd number is thrown, the selected piece is turned over.

Each player has for his objective the removal of as many pieces from the board before all of his pieces are removed. The player is free to remove both his own pieces and those of an opponent whenever he moves one of his pieces into a space occupied by an opponent's piece of lower value. In a preferred version, the player doing the capturing has the alternative of also removing his piece or keeping this piece in play.

Where a player moves his piece into a space occupied by an opponent's piece of the same value, then neither piece can be removed; however, the player's piece is stacked on top of the opponent's piece. This stack is then played as any other piece by the player with the piece on top except that the stack can be moved backwards as well as forward or sideways. The stack can be used to build on other component's pieces or the opponent may build on the stack. A stack or a single piece may be removed when a player is successful in moving them to an opponent's starting position. The die 78 is used for the stacks as well as single pieces, and the top piece of the stack will change depending upon whether an odd or even number is thrown.

In order to distinguish the pieces of one player from another, characters such as the dot 80 shown on the left-hand pieces in FIGS. 17 and 18 or the diamonds 82 shown on the next pieces may be shown on each piece of a given player. On the other hand, symbols such as these may be employed in place of color to indicate the rank of the pieces, and then

colors may be used solely to distinguish the upper and lower surfaces and to distinguish one player's pieces from another. Preferably, a player's pieces are mixed at the start of a game with the common color up so that when the pieces are placed on the board, the players will not know their value when turned over.

FIG. 20 illustrates a symbol 84 which is detached from a playing piece. Such detachable symbols may be employed in conjunction with blank pieces such as shown at 86 at the right-hand side of FIGS. 17 and 18 so that the rank of the pieces can be changed without turning the pieces over. This use of detachable elements for changing the rank of a playing piece is particularly adaptable to games of the type shown in FIGS. 1 through 14 where cubes must otherwise be provided to secure an adequate number of variations for the rank of the playing pieces. For example, detachable symbols corresponding to the symbols utilized in the chess game could be used in conjunction with blank squares 86 to accomplish the same result as described with reference to the chess game.

FIG. 21 illustrates a segment 88 of a playing board which has lines of travel for playing pieces extending around the edges of the board. In this game, vehicles 89 are displayed on the board to indicate modes of travel available between the designated cities. Alternatively, the game may be similar to that described in applicant's copending application Ser. No. 687,879, filed on Dec. 4, 1967, and now U.S. Pat. No. 3,572,718, wherein players are assigned playing pieces for travel between cities with alternate vehicles being made available for movement of the pieces.

In a game of this type embodying the concepts of the instant invention, playing pieces 90 such as shown in FIG. 22 are employed. This playing piece is initially assigned to each player, and the player is called upon to move his piece around the board to specific destinations. Various rules can be applied which will control these movements.

The playing pieces 90 have character designations 92 on each face depicting a spy figure. These designations are in different colors, and only one of the colors represents the player's color.

A selector 94 of the type shown in FIG. 23 includes a spinning arm 96 movable over the dial face 98 shown in FIG. 21. This dial face is divided into different color segments, and if the arm points to a color other than the player's color, then he must position his spy piece so that this color is uppermost. This piece then becomes the spy piece of the player having this color. The player who loses his spy piece then adopts the spy piece of the other player.

Each of the games described is characterized by elements of variety and chance. These features are realized due to the changes made in the capabilities of the playing pieces throughout the play of the games. Thus, the strategy employed by the individual players must constantly take into consideration the fact that the capabilities of his playing pieces will change.

It will be understood that various changes and modifications may be made in the games described herein which provide the characteristics of the invention without departing from the spirit thereof.

That which is claimed is:

1. In a game played by a plurality of persons wherein each person is assigned at least one playing piece, and including a playing surface having designations indicating positions that can be occupied by the playing pieces, and wherein the game requires movement of the playing pieces over said surface from one position to another, the improvement comprising,

- a. at least one playing piece for each player,
- b. said playing piece having a plurality of identifying faces,
- c. each identifying face of every playing piece having an identifying characteristic different from the characteristics of any other identifying face on the same playing piece,
- d. said identifying characteristics used to determine varying capabilities of movement of the pieces over the board's surface, and

e. selection means bearing at least one of each of the identical identifying characteristics of the faces of the playing pieces for operation by each person to select by chance on each operation a particular one of said identifying characteristics for positioning the piece on the playing surface with the selected identifying characteristic face in preferential position relative to the other faces to provide a visual indication of the capabilities of movement of the piece on the surface of the board.

2. A game in accordance with claim 1 wherein the playing pieces comprise substantially flat elements having upper and lower faces for displaying said characteristics.

3. A game in accordance with claim 1 wherein said pieces comprise three-dimensional elements with at least three different identifying characteristics being located on different faces of said pieces.

4. A game in accordance with claim 1 wherein said identifying characteristics comprise colors on said faces.

5. A game in accordance with claim 1 wherein said identifying characteristics comprise numerical designations on said faces.

6. A game in accordance with claim 1 wherein said identifying characteristics comprise symbols on said faces.

7. A game in accordance with claim 1 wherein said playing surface displays a plurality of adjacent playing piece positions, and wherein said identifying characteristics determine the number of positions that can be moved in one turn by the person holding the piece.

8. A game in accordance with claim 1 wherein said playing surface defines alternative lines of travel for said playing pieces, and wherein said identifying characteristics determine the particular lines of travel for the playing pieces during a move of the playing piece by the person holding the playing piece.

9. A game in accordance with claim 1 wherein each person playing the game is assigned a plurality of playing pieces, and wherein said game permits the capture of the playing piece of one player by a playing piece of another player, said identifying characteristics determining the ability of a particular playing piece to capture another playing piece, and determining the vulnerability to capture of one playing piece by another playing piece.

10. A game in accordance with claim 9 wherein some playing pieces of each person have identifying characteristics different than other playing pieces of that person, and wherein the playing piece to be changed during a given move is selected by the person holding the piece.

11. A game in accordance with claim 1 including at least some additional playing pieces having a single identifying characteristic displayed on one face thereof.

12. A game in accordance with claim 1 wherein said selecting means comprises a die having identifying characteristics on its faces corresponding to the characteristics of said playing pieces whereby the die can be thrown by a player with the characteristic displayed by the uppermost face on the die determining the position of a playing piece on said surface.

13. A game in accordance with claim 1 wherein said selecting means comprise a spinner and dial, said dial displaying characteristics corresponding to the characteristics on the faces of said pieces.

14. In a checker game wherein each player is assigned a plurality of playing pieces, and including a playing surface displaying a plurality of squares indicating positions that can be occupied by the playing pieces, and wherein the game requires diagonal movement of the playing pieces over said surface from one position to another, the playing pieces of one player having the ability to jump playing pieces of an opposing player whereby the opposing player's pieces are removed from the board, the improvement wherein said playing pieces define a plurality of faces, at least some of said faces having an identifying characteristic indicating the number of moves a piece can take in one turn, and selecting means operable by each player resulting in the selection of one of said characteristics whereby the position of the piece on the playing surface can

be changed to locate the face having the selected characteristic in a preferential position relative to other faces of the piece to thereby provide a visual indication of the number of moves allowed for the piece, said identifying characteristics being numerical values displayed on said faces, and said selecting means comprising a die having numerical values on its faces corresponding to those on said playing pieces.

15. In a game played by a plurality of persons wherein each person is assigned at least one playing piece, and including a playing surface having designations indicating positions that can be occupied by the playing pieces, and wherein the game requires movement of the playing pieces over said surface from one position to another, the improvement comprising,

- a. At least one playing piece for each player,
- b. said playing piece having a plurality of identifying faces,
- c. each identifying face of every playing piece having an identifying characteristic different from the characteristics of any other identifying face on the same playing piece,
- d. said identifying characteristics used to determine varying capabilities of movement of the pieces over the board's surface, and
- e. selection means bearing a plurality of independently positioned and different identifying characters, each of the identifying characters being related to a particular identifying characteristic on an identifying face of a playing piece, the selection means being provided for operation by each person to select by chance on each operation of the selection means a particular one of the identifying characters for positioning the piece on the playing surface with the identifying character on the playing piece which corresponds with the selected identifying character on the selection means being in preferential position relative to the other playing piece faces to provide a visual indication of the capabilities of movement of the piece on the surface of the board.

16. A game in accordance with claim 15 wherein the playing pieces comprise substantially flat elements having upper and lower faces for displaying said characteristics.

17. A game in accordance with claim 15 wherein said pieces comprise three-dimensional elements with at least three different identifying characteristics being located on different faces of said pieces.

18. A game in accordance with claim 15 wherein said playing pieces comprise relatively flat members adapted to be stacked one upon the other, and including separate identifying characteristics displayed on the opposite faces of said pieces, said separate identifying characteristics determining the ownership of said pieces by a particular player, and wherein said selection means includes means for determining which face of the playing pieces on the playing surface is turned upwardly.

19. In a game played by a plurality of persons wherein each person is assigned at least one playing piece, and including a playing surface having designations indicating positions that can be occupied by the playing pieces, and wherein the game requires movement of the playing pieces over said surface from one position to another, the improvement comprising,

- a. at least one playing piece for each player,
- b. said playing piece having an identifying face,
- c. a plurality of identifying elements each removably attachable to an identifying face of a playing piece, said identifying elements having different identifying characteristics when compared with the characteristics of any other identifying elements,
- d. said identifying characteristics used to determine varying capabilities of movement of the pieces over the board's

surface, and

e. selection means bearing a plurality of independently positioned and different identifying characters, each of the identifying characters being related to a particular identifying characteristic on an identifying element, the selection means being provided for operation by each person to select by chance on each operation a particular one of the identifying characters for positioning the identifying element which corresponds with the selected identifying character on the identifying face of a playing piece, the identifying element being located on the identifying face in a preferential position to provide a visual indication of the capabilities of movement of the piece on the surface of the board.

20. In a game played by a plurality of persons wherein each person is assigned at least one playing piece, and including a playing surface having designations indicating positions that can be occupied by the playing pieces, and wherein the game requires movement of the playing pieces over said surface from one position to another, the improvement comprising,

- a. at least one playing piece for each player,
- b. said playing piece having a plurality of identifying faces,
- c. each identifying face of every playing piece having an identifying characteristic different from the characteristics of any other identifying face on the same playing piece,
- d. said identifying characteristics used to determine the ownership of the pieces by players of the game,
- e. selection means bearing at least one of each of the identical identifying characteristics of the faces of the playing pieces for operation by each person to select by chance on each operation a particular one of said identifying characteristics for positioning the piece on the playing surface with the selected identifying characteristic face in preferential position relative to the other faces to provide a visual indication of the ownership of the piece on the surface of the board.

21. In a game played by a plurality of persons wherein each person is assigned at least one playing piece, and including a playing surface having designations indicating positions that can be occupied by the playing pieces, and wherein the game requires movement of the playing pieces over said surface from one position to another, the improvement comprising,

- a. at least one playing piece for each player,
- b. said playing piece having a plurality of identifying faces,
- c. each identifying face of every playing piece having an identifying characteristic different from the characteristics of any other identifying face on the same playing piece,
- d. said identifying characteristics used to determine varying capabilities of movement as well as the ownership of the pieces over the board's surface, and
- e. selection means bearing a plurality of independently positioned and different identifying characters, each of the identifying characters being related to particular identifying characteristics on an identifying face of a playing piece, the selection means being provided for operation by each person to select by chance on each operation of the selection means particular ones of the identifying characters for positioning the piece on the playing surface with the identifying characters on the playing piece which corresponds with the selected identifying characters on the selection means being in preferential position relative to the other playing piece faces to provide a visual indication of the capabilities of movement and of the ownership of the piece on the surface of the board.

\* \* \* \* \*