United States Patent [19]

Selness

[11] **3,871,656**

[45] **Mar. 18, 1975**

[54] **SAILING GAME APPARATUS**

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[22] Filed: **Dec. 2, 1971**

[21] Appl. No.: **203,970**

[52] **U.S. Cl.**..... **273/131 B,** 35/10.2, 273/131 BB, 273/131 C, 273/131 K, 273/134 C, 273/134 D, 273/134 G

[51] **Int. Cl.** **A63f 3/00**

[58] **Field of Search**..... 273/134, 131

[56] **References Cited**

UNITED STATES PATENTS

1,500,782	7/1924	Vegiard	273/134 ES
2,455,519	12/1948	Powers	273/134 AD

FOREIGN PATENTS OR APPLICATIONS

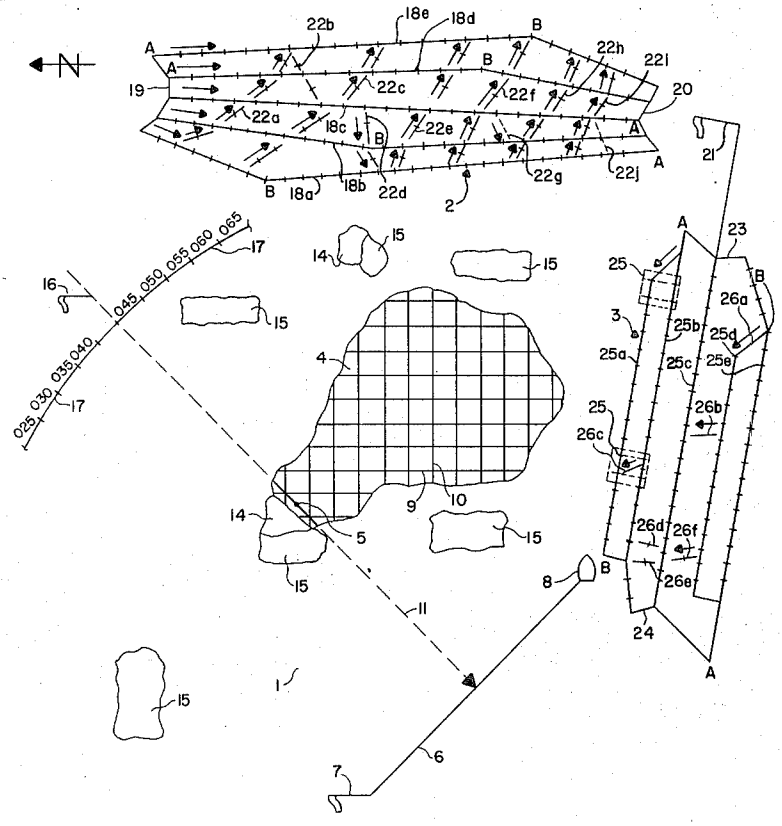
495,506	8/1953	Canada	273/134 AE
19,634	1899	United Kingdom	273/134 ES

Primary Examiner—Delbert B. Lowe
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—John M. Harrison

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A game closely simulating yacht and sailboat racing, with particular emphasis placed on the skill of the sailor, rather than chance, in advancing the boat around the course. The game is played on a board which simulates a body of water, upon which is inscribed a triangular race course having windward, downwind, and reaching leg areas in a triangular layout. The game board consists of a grid having an arrow indicating wind direction and port and starboard tack lines inscribed thereon, with a transparent overlay pivotally positioned over the grid. Playing pieces are caused to sequentially traverse the grid according to a predetermined number of grid moves and the wind direction can be selectively varied as the game progresses.

3 Claims, 7 Drawing Figures



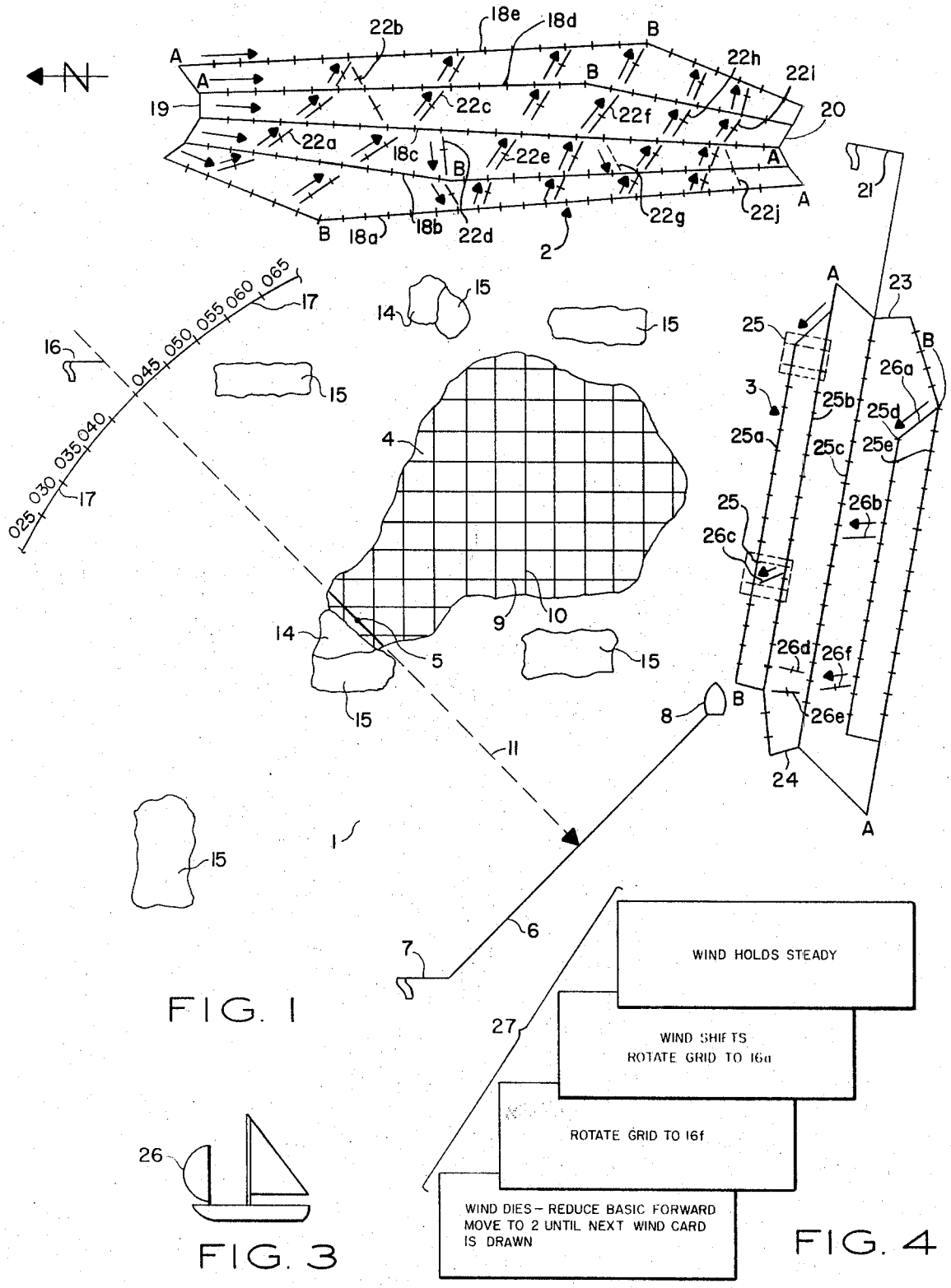


FIG. 1

FIG. 3

FIG. 4

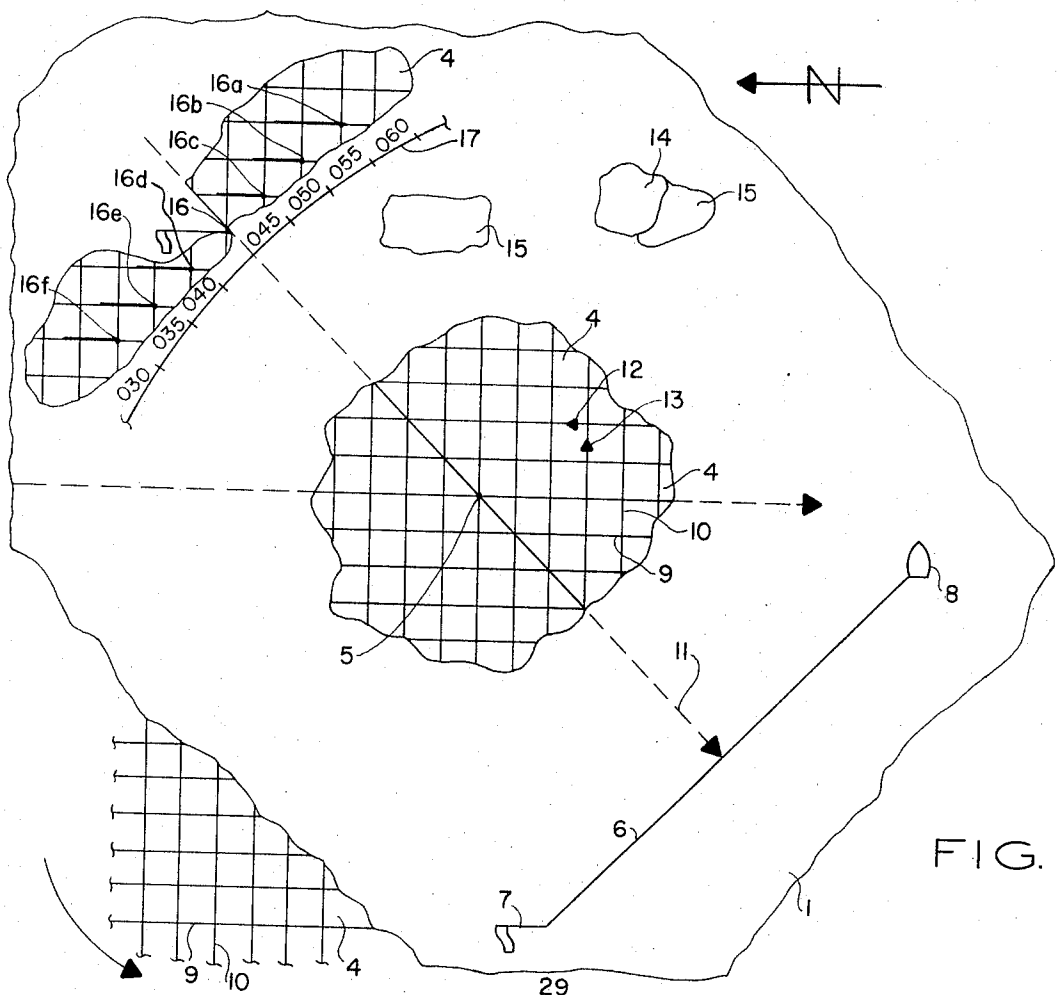


FIG. 2

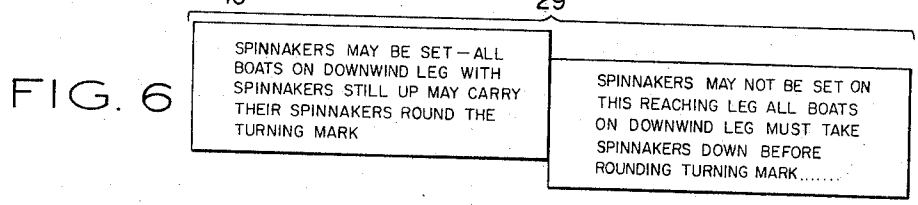


FIG. 6

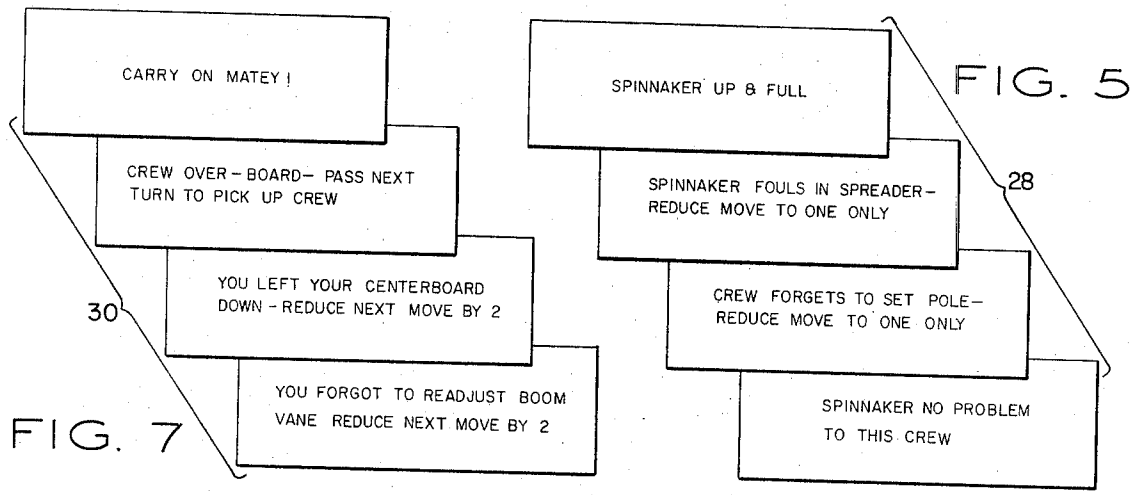


FIG. 7

FIG. 5

SAILING GAME APPARATUS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates to a new sailing game, and more particularly, to a yacht or sailboat racing game which depends more upon the skill of the players than chance in order to win. The game is simple and easily understood, and may be played by novice sailors, and experienced yachtsmen, as well as those who in general enjoy a game more adapted to the skill of the player than to chance. The game is specifically designed to make use of yacht racing tactics, and provides an excellent bar and parlor pastime for winter yacht club or home relaxation. It presents the excitement and thrills of an actual boat race, and may be enjoyed by people of all ages.

2. Description of the Prior Art

Heretofore, games relating to sailing have been based primarily on chance rather than on skill in traversing the racing or sailing course. Thus, U.S. Pat. No. 1,500,782 to Harry E. Vegiard describes a sailing game, the advancement of the sailing characters of which is dependent upon the spinning of a dial which is marked with varying degrees of advancement. Furthermore, in U.S. Pat. No. 2,455,519 to James C. Powers, Jr., movement of the sailing pieces on the board is dependent upon the rolling of dice. Accordingly, while these patents disclose sailing games which in some measure provide a sense of the sailing technique, they are not as dependent upon player skill as the game disclosed in the instant invention. Furthermore, these patents do not disclose or teach the effect of variable wind factors, which is a prime feature of one aspect of the instant invention.

Accordingly, an object of this invention is to provide a sailing game specifically designed to teach yacht and sailboat racing tactics.

Another object of the invention is to provide an exciting and stimulating home, bar and parlor game which is useful to those having a knowledge of and an interest in yacht and sailboat racing and who are interested in improving their racing and sailing tactics.

Yet another object of the invention is to provide a sailing game which features a variety of realistic intangibles found in the actual sailing process which makes the game exciting and stimulating to the very end.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a game which is useful for teaching nonsailors the terminology of sailboat and yacht racing and the basic points of sailing.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a challenging sailing game which simulates actual racing conditions and which provides many variables actually found on the race and sailing course.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a boat racing and sailing game which may be played by substantially any selected number of players under a variety of simulated sailing conditions, and the playing time of which may be varied according to the desires of those participating.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a sailing game which is versatile, which provides an indoor technique for brushing up on sailing tactics, including the use of compass headings, on the windward leg of the course, and which provides a method for racing on either a port or starboard race course.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

These and other objects of the invention are provided in a sailing game incorporating a playing surface having a grid depicting wind direction and having port and starboard tack lines marked thereon to form the windward leg of the racing circuit. A downwind leg and reaching leg are also provided to complete the triangular shaped course, and in each of the latter two legs, a choice of courses may be made in order to ultimately reach the finish line. Advancement of the boats on all three legs of the course is made according to predetermined moves, and depends upon various hazards and contingencies built into the game, as hereinafter noted. A variation in the wind direction may be achieved preferably by manipulation of the grid itself or, in the alternative, by adjusting a clear plastic overlay positioned over the grid area in the windward leg of the race course, also as hereinafter noted.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention will be better understood in view of the following description presented with reference to the accompanying drawings.

FIG. 1 of the drawings is a plan view of the entire race course, including the windward, downwind and reaching legs of the course, the windward leg area being inscribed on a windward course grid, over which is positioned a transparent overlay having downwind and reaching legs inscribed thereon;

FIG. 2 discloses the windward leg of the course in more detail and illustrates the rotatable cooperation between the transparent overlay and the windward course grid to achieve a simulation of varying wind direction;

FIG. 3 illustrates a typical shape for the playing pieces in this invention;

FIG. 4 represents a set of windward wind cards which indicate wind condition on the windward leg of the course;

FIG. 5 illustrates a set of spinnaker set cards which determine chance hazards in setting the spinnaker on the downwind and reaching legs of the course;

FIG. 6 represents a set of reaching leg spinnaker set cards for use in the reaching leg of the course to determine whether or not spinnakers may be set; and

FIG. 7 illustrates a set of reaching leg chance cards which determine chance hazards on the reaching course leg.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Referring now to FIG. 1 of the drawings, a triangular shaped racing course composed of transparent overlay **1**, upon which are inscribed downwind leg **2** and reaching leg **3**, is illlustrated, and beneath which is positioned windward leg grid **4**. Windward leg grid **4** may be fixed with respect to transparent overlay **1**, but is preferably rotatably connected at its approximate center to the overlay in order to permit rotatable movement of the grid with respect to overlay **1** about pivot point **5**. The starting point in the race is leeward mark **6**. The starting line traverses the distance between leeward flag **7** and committee boat **8**, all of which are inscribed on transparent overlay **1**.

Referring now to FIG. 2 of the drawings, the windward leg is set forth in detail, illustrating windward leg

grid **4** composed of starboard tack lines **9** and port tack lines **10,** and having an arrow **11** superimposed thereon to indicate wind direction. As illustrated, starboard and port tack lines **9** and **10,** respectively, are positioned at a 45° angle to the wind direction. Direction of advancement along the starboard and port tack lines is indicated by starboard arrow **12,** and port arrow **13.** The transparent overlay **1** is positioned over the grid and indicates sailing hazards, such as islands **14** and lull areas **15,** and also indicates the position of windward mark **16.**

Windward leg grid **4** is provided with alternate windward positions **16***a*, **16***b*, **16***c*, **16***d*, **16***e*, and **16***f*, as illustrated, and the grid can be rotated about pivot point **5** to effect selective coincidence of windward mark **16** with each one of these alternate windward positions or any selected windward position with respect to the compass, to simulate a change in wind direction. Since windward leg grid **4** and arrow **11** inscribed thereon also rotate, a selected degree of wind shift can be incorporated into the game to increase the difficulty thereof. For example, if windward mark **16** is adjusted to coincide with alternate windward position **16***a* by rotating windward leg grid **4** in the counterclockwise direction, the wind direction can be made to change from northeast to essentially due north. Corresponding changes in sailing tactics must be made to compensate for the wind shift, and the game is thereby rendered more difficult. It will be appreciated that the wind may be assumed to blow from any selected direction, the northeast selection illustrated in the drawing being illustrative only.

It will be further appreciated that while starboard tack lines **9** and port tack lines **10** are positioned at an angle of about 45° with respect to the wind, alternate angular positioning may be effected to allow adjustment for boats of varying windward efficiency. Thus, tack line angular variation with respect to the wind may be from about 40° to about 50°, but is preferably 45°, as illustrated.

Referring again to FIG. **1** of the drawings, compass headings **17** are shown inscribed on transparent overlay **1** for teaching and using the fundamentals of compass bearings in the game.

While it is preferred in the invention to utilize a rotatable windward leg grid **4** and a fixed transparent overlay **1** in the game of this invention, it will be recognized that the grid may be fixed and the overlay rotated, as desired. Other variations may be effected according to the desires of the players, as hereinafter set forth.

Referring again to FIG. **1** of the drawings, downwind leg **2** is shown with alternate downwind leg courses **18***a*–**18***e* shown, courses **18***a*, **18***b*, **18***d* and **18***e* having designated sections A and B thereon, the function of which will be hereinafter set forth. Boats begin traversing the downwind leg at downwind leg start **19,** and continue until they have traversed the turning mark **21** down wind of downwind leg finish **20.**

Inter-course routes **22***a*–**22***j* are provided in downwind leg **2** to enable switching from one downwind leg course to another. Regarding both downwind leg courses **18***a*–**18***e* and inter-course routes **22***a*–**22***j*, where direction indicating arrows are provided, advancement may be made only in the indicated direction. However, boats may move in either direction, at the will of the player, on inter-course lines not having such arrows.

FIG. **1** of the drawing further illustrates the last leg of the race course, designated the reaching leg and illustrated by reference numeral **3,** which is traversed after the boat has traversed turning mark **21.** Reaching leg start **23** marks the beginning of the reaching leg course, and the race is completed after the boat has traversed reaching leg finish **24** and leeward mark **6.** As in downwind leg **2,** reaching leg **3** is characterized by alternate reaching leg courses **25***a*–**25***e* and designated points A and B, noted on courses **25***b* and **25***e*. This course leg is also characterized by chance elements **25** provided at various points in the course, the function of which is hereinafter noted, and inter-course routes **26***a*–**26***f*. Directional arrows indicate the mandatory direction of travel.

FIG. **3** of the drawings illustrates a preferred configuration for the playing pieces of the invention with removable spinnaker **26** being attached and detached according to game rules hereinafter set forth.

Referring now to FIGS. **4**–**7,** various card sets are illustrated which introduce an element of chance into the game. Thus, windward wind cards **27** determine various aspects of wind conditions on the windward leg of the course, as set forth in FIG. **4.** Likewise, FIG. **5** illustrates typical spinnaker set instructions for the downwind and reaching legs. FIG. **6** cards determine whether or not spinnakers may be set on the reaching course leg, and FIG. **7** cards effect a chance determination of progress rate on the reaching leg of the course.

In order to play the game, each player participating draws a start order card which designates the sequence of starting the race. The number one player then draws a starting position card, the second player does likewise, and so on, until all boats are designated a starting position at leeward mark **6,** on the windward leg of the course. Starting positions may be inscribed on transparent overlay **1,** or in the alternative, on windward leg grid **4.** Start order cards may be inscribed numerically and shuffled for random drawing by the players, or may, in the alternative, designate color coded start positions, as desired. Furthermore, start positions may be inscribed in color coded areas on tranparent overlay **1** or windward leg grid **4,** and may, if desired, designate port or starboard tack line starting positions. In the alternative, start position cards may be provided which designate starting positions keyed to locations on the board and, if desired, a port or starboard tack line position. Windward wind cards **27,** illustrated in FIG. **4** of the drawing, may, in a preferred embodiment of the invention, be drawn on every fifth round of moves on the windward leg of the course. At this point the boats may advance to the windward mark **16** only along the port tack lines **10** and starboard tack lines **9** moving from intersection to intersection, movement from one intersection to the next constituting one space. A player may change his boat's tack line position by placing the boat in the tacking position and forfeiting one turn. It should be noted that each player must tack at least once on the windward leg in order to reach windward mark **16.** The normal basic forward move for the windward leg is three spaces along either a starboard or port tack line; however, penalties are assessed under certain conditions for certain positions of the boats with respect to each other and on the board. For example, if one boat is in another boat's "cover space", which is defined as three spaces downwind and three spaces aft of the boat, a one mark penalty is assessed as long as

the boat remains in its sister boat's cover space. In addition to the normal three space forward move assessed each player per turn, the player may elect as an alternative to declare a "pinch" and move his boat one space sideways to the next upwind tack line. Alternatively, he may elect instead to declare a "slide" and move his boat sideways to the next downwind tack line or upward or downward one space on the next downwind tack line. Furthermore, in a collision situation, the boat on the starboard tack line always has the right of way, whereas the boat on the port tack line must elect any one of the following alternatives: (*a*) advance as far as possible for that turn and still avoid the collision; (*b*) tack on the spot; (*c*) declare a pinch; (*d*) declare a slide; or (*e*) pass his turn. Under no circumstances may a player move his boat on a port tack line to such a position that it blocks the next move of another boat on the starboard tack line. Furthermore, in no case may a boat tack, pinch or slide into position so as to block the next move of another boat. A boat may take the normal forward move on starboard to block the next move of a boat proceeding on a port tack line. If a boat moves on a port tack to block the next move of a boat proceeding on a starboard tack line, the latter may call "starboard" and the former must move back 1 space to permit the latter to pass. A one mark penalty is also assessed whenever a boat starts from a "dead spot" [lull]; for the purposes of the rule, if any portion of the boat is in a dead spot or lull, the boat is considered to be entirely in the lull.

A boat may elect to take any number of forward moves less than the maximum allowed for that turn under the following circumstances: (a) to avoid collision; (b) to avoid obstacles; or (c) to avoid proceeding past a "lay " line, which is defined as a port or starboard tack line which intersects windward mark **16.** When any part of a boat has reached windward mark **16,** the mark is considered to be "rounded" or traversed. It should be noted that windward mark **16** can be rounded on a starboard tack line **9** only on the starboard lay line, which has previously been defined as the line which intersects windward mark **16.** However, the mark can be rounded on a variety of port tack lines **10** because the course is traversed to starboard. If a port course were set, the reverse would be true.

As heretofore noted, in order to provide for varying wind conditions, a situation which frequently arises under actual racing conditions, windward leg grid **4** is adapted to pivot with respect to transparent overlay **1,** as illustrated in FIG. **1.** Accordingly, if, during the course of a race it is desired to simulate a changed wind condition, the grid is simply pivoted to a selected windward mark position inscribed on the overlay, and the boats advanced to the adjusted windward mark **16.** At the start of the game, windward mark **16** should be set on the "zero point" designated on the grid by rotating the grid to provide for a northeast wind, and alternate windward positions may be set thereafter as often as desired. Alternatively, the overlay could be pivoted over the grid, obtaining the same result, as heretofore noted.

After reaching windward mark **16,** on the next turn, the boats advance to downwind course **2** to begin the downwind leg. It will be appreciated that on the downwind and reaching legs of the course, the wind is considered to blow from a constant direction, normally the initial direction at the beginning of the game, which is the northeast, as heretofore noted. On the downwind leg of the race course, the boats may advance in the direction indicated by the arrows along a selected downwind leg course **18***a*–**18***e*. If it is desired for tactical reasons to switch from one course line to another, the boats may be maneuvered along the inter-course lines from "tick" mark to tick mark, as heretofore described. The basic downwind course move is three spaces, except in areas designated as A-B, where the basic move is four spaces. A boat must take as many forward moves as allocated on course lines, except as impeded by a leading boat. However, a boat may stop as desired while on inter-course routes. Cover space for theh downwind leg extends the width of the boat, to four tick marks ahead of the boat, and follows the contour of the course. Progress may be speeded on downwind leg **2** by an election to set the boat spinnaker under the following terms: (a) a player electing to set his spinnaker must first draw a spinnaker set card **28,** illustrated in FIG. **5,** and on the turn when the spinnaker is set, the basic forward move for that turn is decreased by 1. (b) After the initial move when the spinnaker is set, the basic forward move for each subsequent move with the spinnaker is increased by 1. (c) The spinnaker may be taken down before reaching turning mark **21,** and if such an election is made, on that particular turn, the basic forward move for that turn is reduced by 1. (d) The first boat rounding turning mark **21** will draw a reaching leg spinnaker set card **29.** If a "no" spinnaker card is drawn, then all following boats must take spinnakers down before reaching turning mark **21.** If the first boat had its spinnaker up at turning mark **21** and draws such a card, that boat must forfeit all forward moves on the next turn to take down the spinnaker. However, if a "yes" spinnaker card is drawn by the first boat rounding turning mark **21,** all boats may carry their spinnakers to the mark and round turning mark **21** with spinnakers flying. As in the windward leg of the course, boats positioned in the cover space of a competing boat must forfeit one space per turn for the length of time that they remain in that cover space.

Upon reaching downwind leg finish **20** and rounding turning mark **21,** on the next respective turn, the boats proceed to reaching leg start **23.** As heretofore noted, the first boat reaching turning mark **21** will, upon arrival, draw a reaching leg spinnaker set card **29.** If a no spinnaker card is drawn, spinnakers may not be flown. If the lead boat spinnaker was up at turning mark **21** under these circumstances, this boat must forfeit all forward moves on the next turn in order to take down her spinnaker. However, if a yes spinnaker card is drawn, spinnakers may be used on reaching leg **3** and spinnakers will be set and taken down in accordance with the spinnaker set rules for the downwind leg. Boats with spinnakers up at turning mark **21** may continue to carry spinnakers around the mark on reaching leg **3,** if a yes card has been drawn. Boats may be moved forward in the direction indicated along course lines and inter-course lines, as in the downwind leg of the course, from tick mark to tick mark, under the same conditions as on downwind leg **2.** Any boat which stops at a chance space must immediately draw a reaching leg chance card **30,** illustrated in FIG. **7,** the inscription of which will affect the next successive move of that boat.

Cover space for boats on reaching leg **3** includes that area extending from the bow of the boat to four tick marks aft and two boat lengths down wind of the boat.

The first boat reaching leeward mark **6** is the winner of the race. Alternatively, another windward leg may be sailed, or the course may be traversed as many additional times as desired. Additionally, if spinnakers are flown on reaching leg **3** of the course, the spinnaker must be taken down before arriving at leeward mark **6**, and the move which brings each respective boat to leeward mark **6** must be made with spinnaker already down. If a spinnaker is not taken down upon traversal of reaching leg finish **24**, the next succeeding turn must be forfeited.

From the preceeding discussion, it is obvious that the subject matter of this disclosure presents a versatile and exciting game which closely simulates actual sailboat racing. The game is extremely versatile in that a variety of conditions, such as varying wind direction, may be selected in order to increase the difficulty of the course. Furthermore, the course may be competitively played as a starboard course where the boats traverse the course in a clockwise fashion, as previously described, or in the alternative, it may be set up and raced as a port course where the boats traverse the course in a counterclockwise fashion. Furthermore, each respective leg may be utilized as a single race, or the legs may be used in combination to provide races of varying lengths and difficulty. Also, designated course lines may be utilized in the various legs of the game course, or the player may be at liberty to select the course line of his choice.

Whereas chance devices are incorporated in this game in order to reflect the variables inherent in actual sailboat racing, successful negotiation of the course depends primarily upon the individual expertise and skill of players. Chief among these is the ability to avoid another player's cover space and to assess varying wind conditions, proper tacking time, and course locations to traverse the course as rapidly as possible. It will be recognized that additional elements of chance, such as the use of dice to determine rate of progression, and the like, can be incorporated into the game as desired. Substantially any number can play the game, but from a practical viewpoint, the number is preferably limited to no more than six. Furthermore, while the game does not demonstrate or teach such fine points as sail arrangements, components of the game can be utilized by persons knowledgable in sail arrangement problems to demonstrate proper sail positioning on the respective legs of the course. The game board and components of the invention may also be utilized by instructors to teach yacht racing tactics, or by individuals to develop sailing fundamentals and work out their own tactics. Most boat racing situations and problems may be simulated by the invention so that it may be utilized as a teaching aid, as well as a game. During actual racing conditions, yacht club protest committees may make use of the invention to establish necessary factual data during a racing protest to resolve the controversy and reach a fair decision.

It will be recognized that while the application is developed regarding sailboat racing, the game of this invention may be readily adapted to iceboat or desert boat racing. Furthermore, the race course may be to starboard or port, and the relative positions of the windward, downwind and reaching leg courses may be interchanged and traversed as many times as desired.

I claim:

1. A sailing game for use with playing pieces simulating sailing vessels comprising:

a. A grid having alternate windward position marks, intersecting starboard and port tack lines, compass bearings, and an arrow indicating wind direction inscribed thereon;

b. A transparent overplay positioned over said grid and having a leeward mark starting point and a windward mark finishing point inscribed thereon, said leeward mark starting point and said windward mark finishing point being positioned essentially across said grid from each other;

c. Said grid being mounted for pivoting with respect to said overlay to vary coincidence of said alternate windward position marks and said windward mark to effect a simulated change in wind direction; and

d. Playing pieces adapted to sequentially traverse said grid along said starboard and port tack lines at a predetermined rate from said leeward mark starting point to said windward mark finishing point.

2. The sailing game of claim **1** further comprising a downwind leg course and a reaching leg course inscribed on said overlay, said downwind leg course and said reaching leg course each having alternate courses available for traversal by said playing pieces.

3. The sailing game of claim **2** wherein certain ones of said alternate courses are connected by intercourse lines whereby said playing pieces may change from one of said courses to another.

* * * * *

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

Patent No. 3,871,656 Dated March 18, 1975

Inventor(s) Jerry N. Selness

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent are hereby corrected as shown below:

Column 5 lines 52-54 cancel beginning with "to a selected" to and including "mark 16," and substitute the following --so that a selected windward position mark on the grid is aligned with the windward mark 16 inscribed on the overlay. The boats advance to the windward mark 16 according to the adjusted wind grid--.

Column 6, line 14, "theh" should read --the--.

Column 8, line 26 "overplay" should read --overlay-- in claim 1.

Signed and Sealed this

Fourth Day of *October 1977*

[SEAL]

Attest:

RUTH C. MASON
Attesting Officer

LUTRELLE F. PARKER
Acting Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks