

[54] FIELD GOAL GAME TOY

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[58] Field of Search 46/128; 273/85 E, 85 F, 273/94 R, 94 E, 94 F, 101

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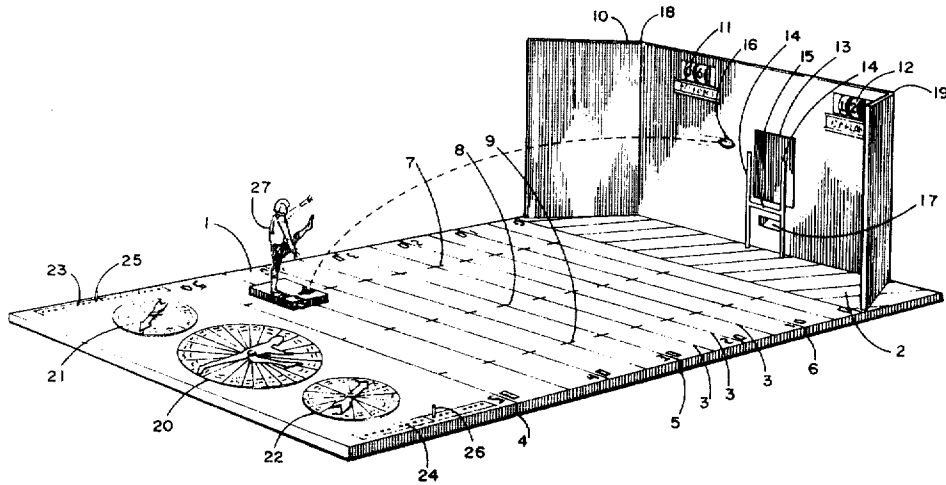
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[57] ABSTRACT

A game toy comprises a game board representing at least a portion of a football field, and having goalposts located near the end thereof, a kicker having a spring-operated leg, a football-shaped ball, a tee for holding the ball in an elevated position in front of the spring-operated leg, and random selected devices for determining the play of the game.

4 Claims, 2 Drawing Figures



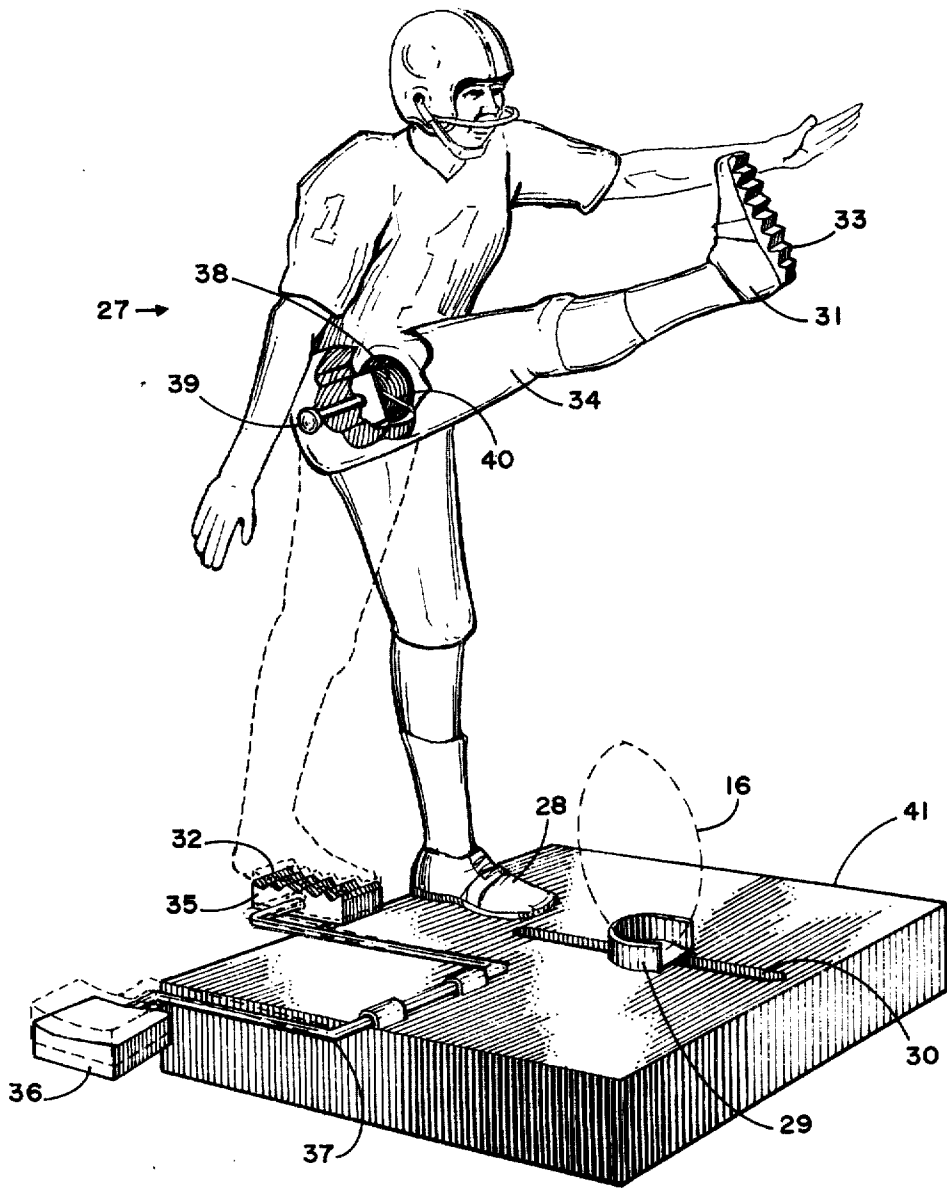


FIGURE 2.

FIELD GOAL GAME TOY

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Football as played in the United States has been a highly popular spectator sport for many years, and as such has fathered the development of a large number and variety of toy games based on football. Some of these games involve miniature players who actually move, such as the game where players having magnetic bases move around on a vibrating metal surface representing the field. Several of the games allow each opposing player to select an offensive play with the success of each play depending on the luck and skill of the opponent in selecting an appropriate defensive play or alignment; an example of this type of game is Photoelectric Football, where offensive and defensive charts are placed on top of each other and illuminated to see if a defensive player blocks the path of travel of the ball (as shown on the offensive chart). Another example is Talking Football, wherein an offensive play and defensive formation are selected, and the result is determined and announced by prerecorded audio playback devices.

An important part of football is the field goal. A field goal, which counts three points, is scored when the offensive team kicks the ball from the ground between two upwardly extending bars known as the goalposts. With the increasing strength and accuracy of kickers in recent years, the field goal has become a potent offensive weapon, and has been responsible for some of the most exciting and important moments in collegiate and professional football.

It is an object of the present invention to provide a game for appeal to people of all ages wherein each player scores points by operating a mechanical kicker to kick a ball through goalposts located at a distance from the kicker.

It is a further object of the invention to enable game players to utilize their skills in properly placing a ball with respect to the kicker's leg, and to properly adjust the tension in the kicking leg, and to aim the kicker, in an attempt to score points.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A football game toy comprises a toy kicker having a spring-actuated leg which can kick a football-shaped ball from various locations on a game board through goalposts located at one end of the board. The skill of the player in placing the ball in the ball holder, locating the ball holder properly with respect to the leg, adjusting the kicking force, and aiming the kicker toward the goalposts will determine if the flight of the ball passes into the goal-scoring area. The play of the game is determined by one or more random selection devices.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 illustrates the game board layout and shows the kicker in the act of kicking a field goal.

FIG. 2 is a detailed drawing of the mechanical kicker and ball-holding device.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring to FIG. 1, game board 1 is laid out as a replica of a football field, having end-zone section 2 and laterally displaced lines 3 illustrating yard line markers. The lines labelled G, 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50 correspond to these yard lines on a football field. The drawing

shows only the equivalent of one-half of a football field, since 50 yards is normally a maximum field goal range; however, more or less of the field can be represented if desired. The game board is collapsible, and can be folded into sections along the 10, 30, and 50 yard lines; the separations of these sections are shown at locations 4, 5, and 6. Cross-marks on the yard lines, illustrated at 7, 8, and 9, represent hash-marks on a football field, and are used to locate the kicker on the left, center, or right of the field respectively.

Backboard 10 is located at the end-zone end of the field. Scoring devices 11 and 12 for each team and receptacle area 13 for goal scoring are located in the backboard. The scoring devices may simply consist of rotatable discs having numbers 0-9 which may be turned after each score to record the total team points. In order for a field goal to be scored, the ball must pass through goalposts 14 above cross bar 15 and into the receptacle area. The receptacle area has a net backing (not shown) to catch the ball 16; after landing in the net, the ball falls to the bottom of the net and is retrieved through portal 17. Although in the actual game of football the height at which the ball passes over the crossbar is immaterial, the game of the invention is more fun and requires more skill if the ball is required to enter an actual defined goal scoring area. In addition, the requirement that the ball actually enter receptacle 13 eliminates any doubt as to whether or not a ball actually went between the goalposts.

Backboard 10 is removably mounted on gameboard 1, and can be folded at sections 18 and 19 for ease of storage and packaging. The backboard may be mounted by any means, such as pegs or slots, and may be made from any suitable material, such as cardboard, plastic, or metal. The goalposts and cross-bar may be mounted in the end zone, such as by pegs in receiving holes in the game board, or may be integral with the backboard, either being painted on or otherwise affixed to the backboard around the outer edges of receptacle 13.

Spinners 20, 21, and 22 are located at the back of the game board. Spinner 21 is the selection device which determines the play of the game, and the area is divided into sections representing locations from which the ball can be kicked. The areas may be labeled 10R, 10C, and 10L, for example, denoting "10 yard line, right hash mark," "10 yard line, center hash mark," and "10 yard line, left hash mark" respectively. Similarly labeled areas are provided on the game play spinner 20 for each yard line shown on the game board. In addition to areas indicating the yard line locations, the spinner has areas labeled "touchdown," "fumble," and "interception."

Spinners 21 and 22 are respectively the offense and defense spinners. The offense spinner is used after a fieldgoal has been unsuccessfully attempted and is used to determine if a penalty should be assessed against the defense, thereby giving the offense another opportunity to score. The area of the spinner is divided into sections labeled "no penalty," "offside - 5 yards," "roughing the kicker - 15 yards," and "personal foul - 15 yards." In the event that the point of the offense spinner indicates a penalty, the kicker is moved forward the appropriate yardage from the last penalty and the kick is tried again. The defense spinner 22 is used after a field goal has been successfully made by the offense. The area of the spinner is divided into sections labeled

"kick good," "Offside - 5 yards," "Holding - 15 yards," "Illegal Motion - 15 yards," and "Personal foul - 15 yards." In the event that the point of the defense spinner indicates a penalty against the offense, the kicker is moved away from the goalposts the appropriate number of yards, and the kick is retried.

While FIG. 1 shows the spinners to be integral with the game board, the spinner can be separate from the board and thereby movable, such that the players can pass the spinners back and forth. While spinners are a simple, inexpensive selection device, any random selection device may be used. For example, appropriately marked dice, spring or battery operated spinning wheels analagous to slot machines, or even recorded talking devices may be used. Cards, such as the "Chance" cards in Monopoly, have been used to replace the offense and defense spinners. In this case, the cards are shuffled and placed face downward on the board, and the top card is picked up from the appropriate pile after each kick. It is desirable to arrange the probabilities of penalties on the offense and defense selection devices to occur about 25 percent of the time.

Pegboards 23 and 24 at each side of the back of the game board are used to keep track of the progress of the game. Each time one team complete one play, which consists of at least one spin of the game play spinner, the offensive team moves its peg 25 or 26 forward one notch. After each player's peg reaches the last or sixteenth notch, the game is over.

FIG. 2 is a detailed drawing of the mechanical kicker. Kicker 27 has left foot 28 fixably mounted on base 41, which can be moved to any position on the game board. The base may be held in place at the appropriate location on the board either by a magnet (if the base is made from or covered with a ferrous metal), with a suction cup, by a peg which can fit into a receiving hole in the board, or any other means. The base contains ball holding device 29, commonly known as a "tee," which is slidably mounted in front of the kicker's kicking foot 31. The ball 16 shown in phantom, is placed in the tee after the kicker's leg is cocked, and the tee is adjusted by sliding along track 30 to generate the proper elevation on the ball during its flight toward the goal. By adjusting the tee, and the angle at which the ball is set in the tee, different flight patterns can be produced.

The kicker's leg 34 is spring-operated and is shown in its inactive position after the kick has been made. The leg is cocked by manually pulling it back toward the base to its lower or active position, shown in phantom in FIG. 2. The leg is locked in the cocked position by engaging the ridges 33 on the bottom of the kicking foot 31 with the ridges 32 on the locking mechanism 35 of the trigger 36. When it is desired to have the kicker kick the ball, the trigger button 36 is depressed, thereby operating through linkage 37 to disengage the two sets of ridges 32 and 33. Spring 38, shown in the cutaway portion of the kicker's hip, urges the leg toward its upright position. The spring, which is coiled around pin 39, has one end 40 which is fixed to the thigh portion of the leg, as shown in the cutaway portion of the drawing, provides the force to swing the leg to its upright, inactive position.

The tension in spring 38 increases as the kicking leg is drawn back to the cocked position. The tension in the spring in the cocked position can be adjusted by how far the leg is brought back before it is locked into position. For example, if the rear ridges 33 toward the

heel of the kicking foot are engaged with the forward ridges 32 on the locking mechanism, the spring will be under relatively slight tension and a short kick will result. If however the ridges on the toe end of the kicking foot are engaged with the rear ridges of the locking mechanism, a relatively high spring tension results, and a long kick will be produced. With practice, a player will be able to adjust the spring tension, tee placement, and tilt of the ball in the tee to produce the kick required to score from each location on the field.

While the drawing illustrates one method of adjusting the tension in the kicker's leg, it is not necessary that the tension be adjustable. A fixed tension will require more accurate positioning of the ball on the tee, however. Many other methods of adjusting the tension are possible, such as levers or screw type devices which can increase the tension on the spring. These modifications will be obvious to one skilled in the art.

Although the description and drawing of the kicker indicate a spring-operated kicking leg, in its broad aspect the game contemplates the use of any type of mechanism, whether mechanical or electrical, which can move the leg to the ball with sufficient momentum to propel the ball toward the goal.

The play of the game is as follows. A coin is tossed to start the game, and the winning player becomes the offensive team. The loser becomes the defensive team. The offensive team then operates the Game Play spinner to determine where to place the kicker. If the spinner reads "Fumble" or "Interception," the offensive team loses possession of the ball to the defensive team, and the peg marker of the offensive team is moved ahead one play. If the spinner reads "Touchdown," the offensive team scores six points and is entitled to attempt an "extra point" from the center mark on the 10 yard line. If the Game Play spinner reads a field location, such as 30R indicating the right hash mark on the 30 yard line, the offensive player moves the kicker to the proper location and attempts a field goal.

If the field goal attempt is successful, the defensive player operates the Defense spinner. If the spinner reads "kick good," the offensive team adds three points to its score, moves its peg ahead one notch, and the defensive team takes over the ball. If the spinner indicates a penalty, the offensive team must move the ball back from the point of the previous kick by the amount of the penalty and try again. After the second attempt, the defense takes over as the offensive team. If the first field goal attempt is unsuccessful, the offensive team operates the offense spinner and follows the resulting instruction. If a second attempt is allowed, the defense team takes over after the second attempt. The scores are recorded on the scoreboard, and at the end of the game the highest scoring team is the winner.

It is understood that while one specific embodiment of the game has been described here in detail, many variations are possible on the play of the game and construction and operation of the kicker within the overall concept of the invention, which in essence comprises a game consisting essentially of field goal kicking with a mechanical kicker.

I claim:

1. A game comprising a game board, a single goal scoring area located at one end of and elevated from said game board, said goal-scoring area consisting of a single pair of goalposts having a defined rectangular receptacle thereabove and therebetween for scoring, a

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ball, a toy kicker having a movable leg, said kicker being movable to a plurality of locations on said game board, means for holding the ball in front of the spring-operated leg, means associated with said movable leg for urging said leg toward the ball such that the leg can propel the ball toward the goal-scoring area, first selection means for determining the placement of the kicker on the game board, and second selection means for use after an attempted kick to determine if the kick must be retried.

2. The game of claim 1 wherein the force with which the kicker's leg strikes the ball is adjustable, thereby controlling the distance which the ball travels after impact.

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3. The game of claim 1 wherein the means for holding the ball is adjustably attached to the base such that the distance from the kicker's spring-operated leg and the holding means is variable.

5 4. The game of claim 1 wherein the second selection means is used by the player representing the kicking team after an unsuccessful kicking attempt to determine if a penalty should be assessed against the defensive team and the kick retried, the game also comprising a third selection means for use by the player representing the defensive team after a successful kicking attempt to determine if a penalty should be assessed against the offensive team and the kick retried.

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