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Lorenz et al.

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[54] **MULTILEVEL CHESS OR CHECKER BOARD**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **273/131 AD,** 273/131 AC, 273/131 BA, 273/131 KC, 273/136 B, 273/136 C

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

[58] **Field of Search** 273/131, 136, 133, 134, 273/137

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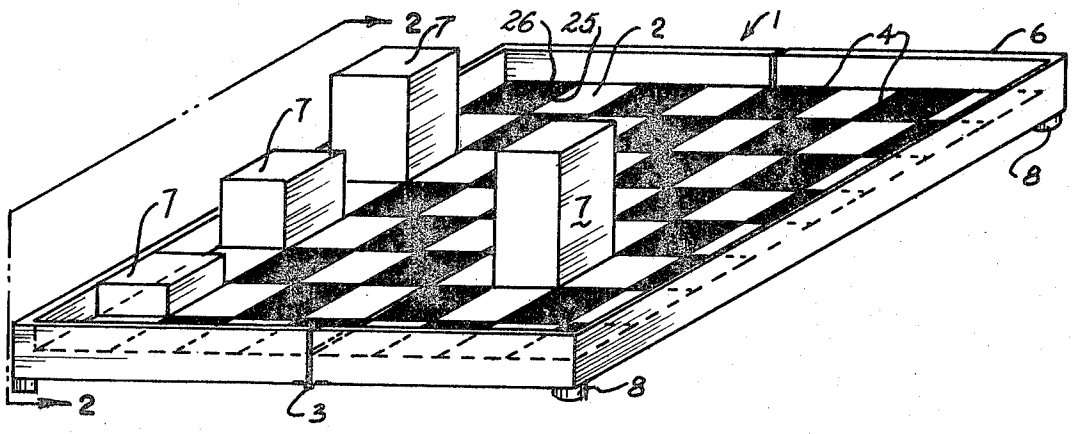
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A multilevel chess or checker board is provided which enables participants of the conventional games of chess or checkers to vary the topography of the board prior to commencement of the game. The preferred embodiment includes a playing surface divided into a checkerboard design of 64 alternately colored squares, conventionally of two colors. A lip extends about the periphery. A plurality of topography pieces of different heights are provided which enable the game participants to vary the topography of the actual playing surface. The topography pieces are intended as supports for the playing pieces. Means for attaching the topography or supporting pieces to the board are provided, which, in conjunction with the peripheral lip about the board, result in a compact, close fitting playing surface.

5 Claims, 6 Drawing Figures



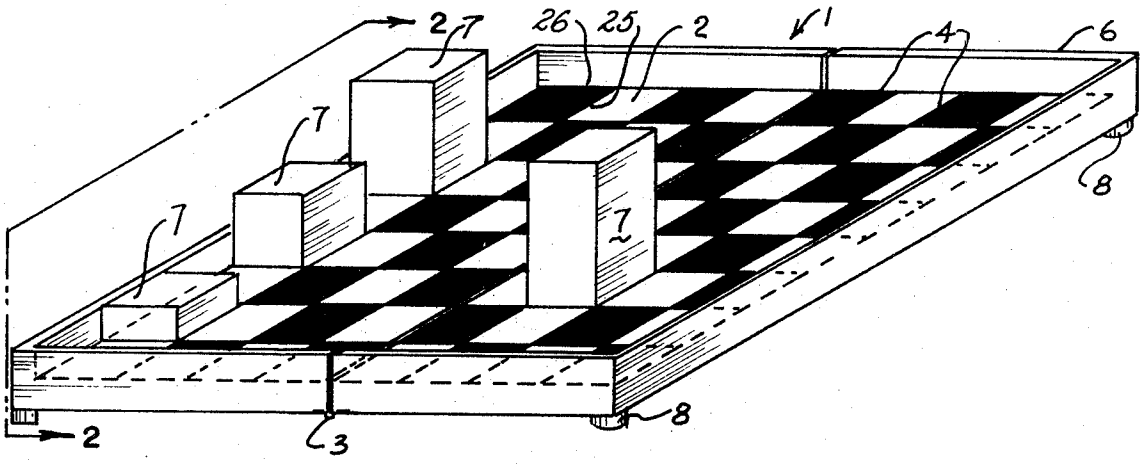


FIG. 1.

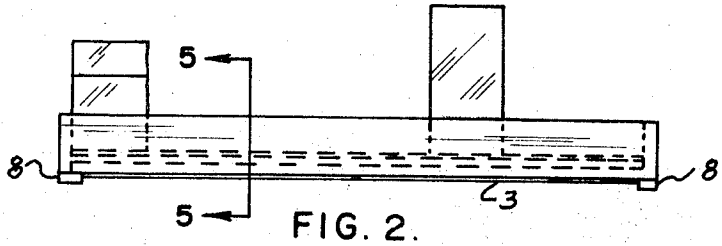


FIG. 2.

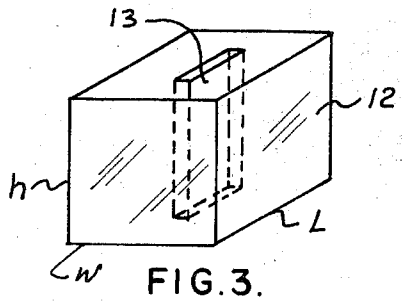


FIG. 3.

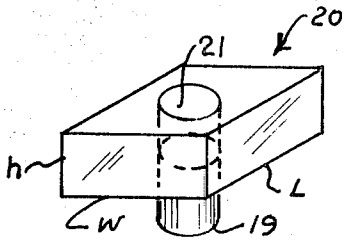


FIG. 4.

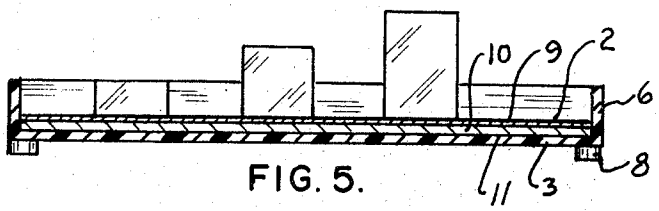


FIG. 5.

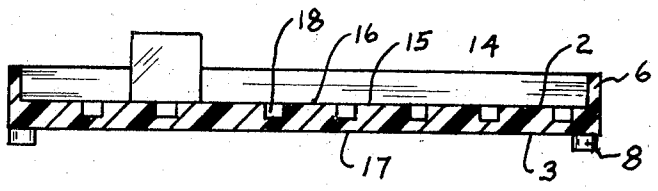


FIG. 6.

MULTILEVEL CHESS OR CHECKER BOARD

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to game boards and more particularly to a chess or checker board having a variable topography.

Conventional chess or checker boards typically are two dimensional devices. The invention disclosed hereinafter enables the participants in a conventional chess or checker game to design the height of the chess or checker board by varying the height of the squares comprising the board, prior to commencing the game, while adhering to the conventional alternating color design of the board. The particular game is played thereafter on a board having varying topography which adds difficulty and interest to the game.

A number of game boards having blocks or other pieces which are placed upon a playing surface are known in the art. In general, the blocks themselves are the playing pieces, the intention of the game being to attain a desired pattern or disposition of the blocks. Our invention is distinguished from these prior art devices in the particular construction disclosed and in the fact that the topography pieces serve as supporting seats for the regular individual checkers or chessmen used in the conventional game or chess or checkers.

One of the objects of this invention is to provide a game board in which the height of the squares may be varied.

Another object of this invention is to provide a game board having a plurality of topography varying parts associated with it.

Yet another object of this invention is to provide a chess or checker board having topography varying pieces which serve as supporting seats for individual chessmen or checkers.

Other objects of this invention will be apparent to those skilled in the art in light of the following description and accompanying drawings.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In accordance with this invention, generally stated, a game board having a plurality of squares displayed thereon is provided with a peripheral lip and a plurality of supporting pieces. The supporting pieces have a length and width dimension corresponding to the squares displayed on the board, and have varying height dimensions. Means are provided for attaching the supporting pieces to the board or to other supporting pieces. The topography of the board is varied by preselected distribution of the supporting pieces prior to the start of play. Play is conducted according to conventional chess or checker rules, the supporting pieces serving as seats for the playing pieces of the game.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In the drawings, FIG. **1** is a view in perspective of one illustrative embodiment of game board of this invention;

FIG. **2** is a view in side elevation of the game board shown in FIG. **1**;

FIG. **3** is a view in perspective of one illustrative supporting piece used in conjunction with the board of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **4** is a view in perspective of a second illustrative embodiment of the supporting piece useful with the game board of this invention;

FIG. **5** is a sectional view taken along the lines **5—5** of FIG. **2**; and

FIG. **6** is a sectional view of a second illustrative embodiment of game board of this invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring now to FIG. **1**, reference numeral **1** indicates the game board of this invention. The board **1** generally is rectangular in plan having an upper surface **2** and a lower surface **3.**

The upper surface **2** has a plurality of squares **4** disposed on it in a conventional checker board pattern. That is, the squares **4** are of alternating colors disposed in eight rows of eight squares each. The squares have a length dimension **25** and a width dimenstion **26.** The board preferably is divided into two sections which are foldable for storage along a pair of hinges.

A peripheral lip **6** extends about the perimeter of the board **1** and is important in holding a plurality of supporting pieces **7**, later described in detail.

The preferred construction for the board **1** is shown in cross section in FIG. **5.** A layer **9**, the outer boundary of which forms the upper surface **2,** has the squares **4** disposed on it. Layer **9** may comprise any of a variety of material layers. For example, the layer **9** may be a vinyl overlay having the squares printed on it. A layer **10** is interposed between the layer **9** and a supporting layer **11.** The layer **10** preferably is constructed from a material capable of being magnetized. Thin foil works well, for example. The layer **11** may be constructed from a variety of materials. Both plastic and wood work well. Plastic is particularly convenient as the lip **6** may be integrally formed with the layer **11.** The layers **9, 10** and **11** may be attached to one another by any convenient method. Epoxy or other adhesives work well. It is convenient to attach a number of feet **8** to the lower surface **3** of layer **11** preferably at each of the four corners of the board **1.** The feet **8** may be constructed from a non-skid material. Rubber works well, for example. Other materials or locations for the feet **8** are acceptable. Thus, the feet **8** may be integrally formed with the layer **11,** or rubber feet, when used, may be manufactured separately and later attached to surface **3.**

The game board **1** is intended for use with the plurality of supporting pieces **7,** an example of which is shown in FIG. **3** at **12.** The supporting element **12** generally is rectangular in plan having a length dimension L, a width dimension W, and a height dimension H. The length and width dimensions of the supporting element **12** correspond to the length **25** and width **26** of the squares **4.** Each supporting element **12,** however, has a varying height dimension H. Individual elements **12** of the supporting piece plurality **7** may be constructed from any suitable material. Again, wood or plastic work well. In the preferred embodiment, each of the supporting elements **12** has a member **13** mounted in it. The member **13** is constructed from magnetic material and may have any convenient shape, although a rectangular shape is illustratively shown. The member **13** may be molded in the supporting element **12** or provisions may be made for its insertion after manufacture of the supporting element **12.** The element **12** may be removably

mounted to the board **1** by magnetizing either the member **13** or the layer **10.**

A second embodiment of game board of this invention is shown in FIG. **6,** and like reference numerals are used where appropriate. As there illustrated, a board **14** has a playing area **15** having an upper surface **16** and a lower surface **17.** The lip **6** extends about the periphery of the playing area **15.** The surface **16** has the checker board indicia displayed on it. Each of the squares **4,** in the embodiment of FIG. **6,** has a receptacle **18** formed in it. The receptacles **18** are closed at the bottom in the embodiment illustrated, however, they may extend through the playing area **15,** between the surfaces **16** and **17,** if desired. The receptacles **18** are sized to receive a male member **19** of a supporting element **20,** a plurality of which comprises the supporting pieces **7.**

Supporting element **20,** like supporting element **12,** has a length L dimension and width W dimension corresponding to the length and width dimensions **25** and **26** respectively of the squares **4.** Again, the height dimension H varies in embodiments of this invention. The male member **19** is attached to the supporting element **20** by any convenient method. A tight press fit is suitable, for example. The supporting element **20** may have an opening **21** in it which serves as a receptacle for a male member **19** of another supporting element **20.** Use of the supporting elements **20** in this manner is described hereinafter. As described in conjunction with the embodiment of FIG. **2,** the board **14** may have feet **8** positioned at convenient locations on the surface **3** of the playing area **15.**

The game board of this invention is used in the conventional games of chess or checkers. Its function is to vary the topography of the conventional chess or checker board to increase the conceptional difficulties of those games. The supporting elements **12** and **20** themselves have no point value nor are they intended as playing pieces in the game. They serve, as their name implies, as supports for the chessmen or checkers. The supporting elements **12** and **20** are capable of use in a variety of ways. Thus, in one embodiment, the supporting elements **12** or **20** are provided with definite but distinct height measurements. For example, the supporting elements **12** or **20** may be utilized with a checkerboard having one inch squares displayed on it. Supporting elements for this last mentioned board would have height measurements of one-half, 1, 1½ and 2 inches, for example. Half of each of the various height sized supporting elements are colored the same as one of the colors of the squares **4.** The supporting elements **12** and **20** are intended to be placed on the board **1** prior to commencement of the conventional chess or checker game. A player has five height choices in setting up the checkerboard. That is, he may elect not to use any of the supporting elements, or he may select one of the four sizes provided. The supporting elements are placed on the board **1** and either of the games of checkers and chess is played according to its normal rules.

If desired, a single size of the supporting elements **12** or **20** may be provided. Again, half of the supporting elements match one of the colors used in conjunction with the squares **4.** For example, with 1 inch squares on the board **1,** the height of each supporting element **12** or **20** may be one-half inch. Thereafter, each player may use the supporting elements as building blocks to vary the height of the squares **4** in one half inch increments. However, the height of any one square is not limited to any predetermined height, as in the first embodiment described above where each of the supporting elements are manufactured to a preselected height. Regardless of which supporting element embodiment is utilized, a sufficient number of the elements comprising the plurality of supporting pieces **7** are provided to permit the players to vary the height of each square on the board if desired.

The supporting elements **12** and **20** may be manufactured for use in either of the two situations described. Thus, when the magnetized member **13** of the supporting element **12** is utilized, a plurality of the elements **12** may be aligned so that a stack of the supporting elements **12** is obtained. In the alternative, the male members **19** of the supporting elements **20** may be inserted in the receptacles **18** to provide a first height to a particular square, and additional height may be obtained by stacking the supporting elements **20** atop one another, inserting members of succeeding supporting elements **20** in opening **21** of the preceding one. In either situation, the peripheral lip **6** is an aid in maintaining the supporting piece plurality **7** on the board **1** and keeps the elements in alignment, the result of which is a close fitting square structure in plan.

Numerous variations, within the scope of the appended claims, will occur to those skilled in the art in light of the foregoing description and accompanying drawings. Thus, various materials may be utilized in the construction of both the supporting elements and the board of this invention, in addition to those described above. Other height dimensions may be used for the supporting elements. Certain embodiments of the board **1** may be nonfoldable, eliminating use of the hinges. These variations are merely illustrative.

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed and desired to be secured by Letters Patent is:

1. A checkerboard for playing a game, comprising:

a playing surface, said playing surface including a laminated structure having a first layer including a top side having a plurality of alternately colored squares arranged in a checkerboard design displayed thereon, each of said squares having a length dimension and a width dimension, a second layer of magnetic material and a third structural layer;

a peripheral lip extending around said playing surface; and

a plurality of supporting pieces for varying the topography of said playing surface, said supporting pieces having length and width dimensions corresponding to the length and width dimensions of individual ones of said squares, said supporting pieces having magnetic means mounted in them, one of said magnetic means and said layer of magnetic material being magnetized, an equal number of individual elements of said supporting piece plurality having predetermined heights of one-half inch, 1 inch, 1½ inches and 2 inches.

2. A checkerboard for playing a game, comprising:

a playing surface, said playing surface including a top side having a plurality of alternately colored squares arranged in a checkerboard design displayed thereon, each of said squares having a length dimension and a width dimension, said playing surface having a plurality of receptacles in it,

individual ones of said receptacles being approximately centrally located along individual ones of said squares comprising said checkerboard design;

a peripheral lip surrounding said surface; and

a plurality of supporting pieces for varying the topography of said playing surface, said supporting pieces having length and width dimensions corresponding to the length and width dimensions of individual ones of said squares, each of said supporting pieces having an upper surface and a lower surface, one of said upper and lower surfaces having a male member extending outwardly from it, said male member being removably intermountable with the receptacles of said game board.

3. The checkerboard of claim **2** wherein the other of said upper and lower surfaces of individual ones of said plurality of supporting pieces has a receptacle in it, said receptacle being sized to receive the male member of any of the other of the individual ones of said supporting pieces.

4. The checkerboard of claim **3** wherein each of said supporting pieces has a height dimension equal to one half of the value of one of said length and width dimensions of an individual one of said squares.

5. A checkerboard for playing a game, comprising:

a playing surface, said playing surface including a layered construction including a first layer having an outer surface, said outer surface having a plurality of alternately colored squares displayed thereon, said squares being arranged in a checkerboard design, each of said squares having a length dimension and a width dimension, a second layer permitting attachment of a plurality of supporting pieces, and a third structural layer;

a peripheral lip extending around said playing surface; and

a plurality of supporting pieces for varying the topography of said playing surface, said supporting pieces having length and width dimensions corresponding to the length and width dimensions of individual ones of said squares, said supporting pieces including means for removably mounting individual ones of said supporting pieces on said playing surface, equal numbers of individual elements of said supporting piece plurality having heights of one-half inch, 1 inch, 1½ inches and 2 inches.

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