June 22, 1937. T. J. HAMILTON ET AL 2,084,802

FOOTBALL GAME

Filed April 2, 1935 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

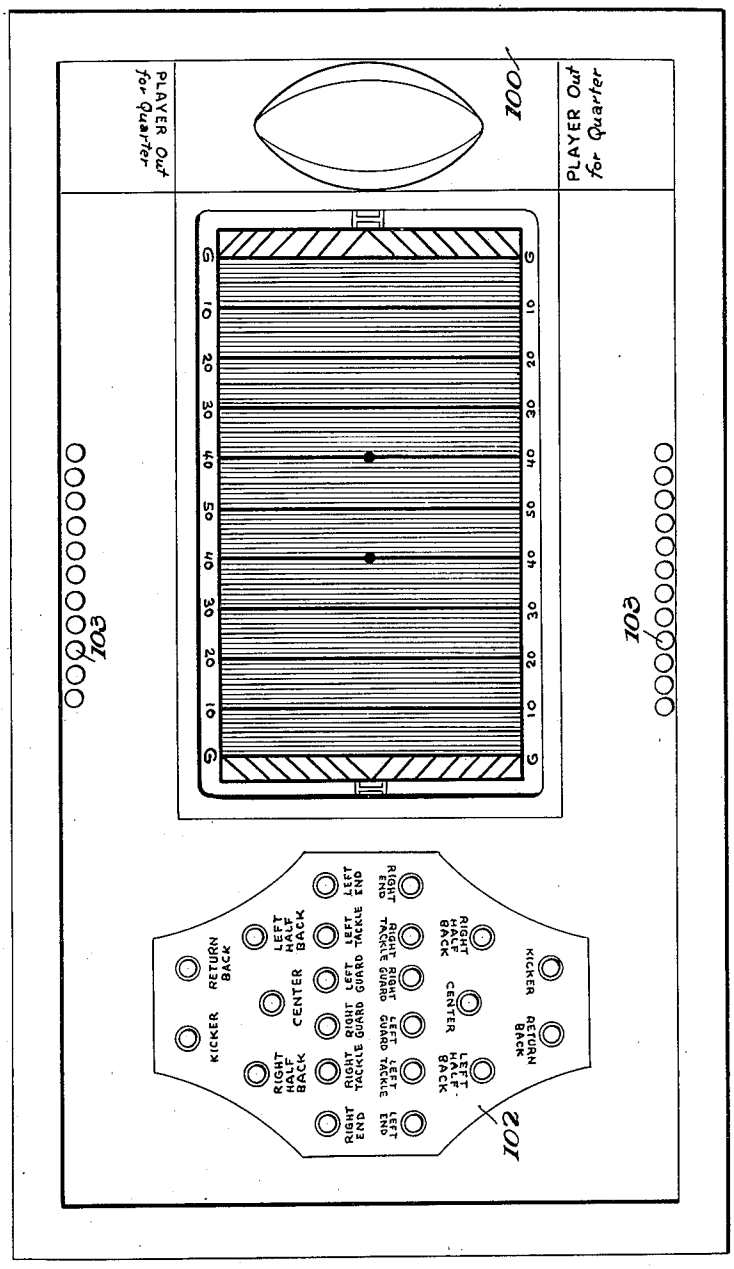

Fig. 1.

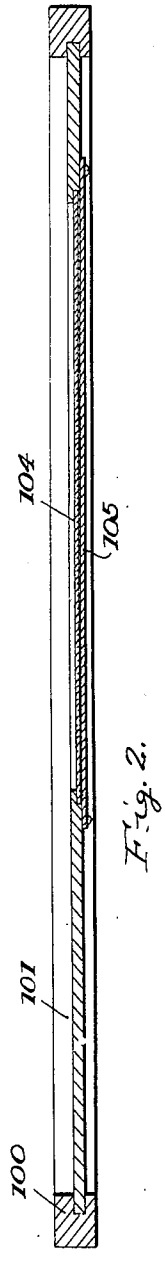

Fig. 2.

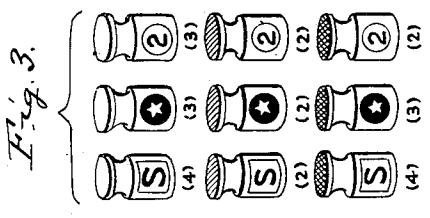

Fig. 3.

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23	Class	★	2	Scrub	23
LONG GAIN 20 YARDS	Line	NO GAIN		FUMBLE	PUNT OUT OF BOUNDS
	End	NO GAIN		FUMBLE	FUMBLE
FUMBLE LOSE BALL —6	Pass	FUMBLE			POINT AFTER Touchdown
	Punt	30	FUMBLE		Point N. G.
WILD PASS FUMBLE	Return	7	FUMBLE		FIELD GOAL
	Kickoff	35	25	20	N. G.

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Fig. 4.

REPLACE PLAYER

Side in possession of the ball replace player at position chosen by opponent. Player removed may not be returned to the game.

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Fig. 5.

7	Class	★	2	Scrub	7
LONG GAIN 24 YARDS	Line	No Gain	2	4	PUNT OUT OF BOUNDS 11 YARD LINE
	End	No Gain	3	5	
FUMBLE RETAIN BALL —3	Pass	INCOMPLETE 6 YD. PASS		7	POINT AFTER Touchdown
	Punt	45	30	20	Point Good
WILD PASS Incomplete 42 Yd. Pass	Return	18	6	No Gain	FIELD GOAL
	Kickoff	50	35	30	Good-- 5

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Fig. 6

11	Class	★	2	Scrub	11
LONG GAIN Touchdown	Line	5	7	LONG	PUNT OUT OF BOUNDS 4 YARD LINE
	End	6	9	LONG	
FUMBLE RETAIN BALL Gain 1	Pass	8	LONG	LONG	POINT AFTER Touchdown
	Punt	*	40	30	Point Good
WILD PASS LONG	Return	LONG	13	9	FIELD GOAL
	Kickoff	59	45	40	Good--30

11 *Out of bounds, opponents 10 yd. line. ©1933 BY TOM HAMILTON PITTSBURGH, PA.

Fig. 7.

PENALTY	Class	★	2	Scrub	PENALTY
LONG GAIN 19 YARDS	Line	—5*	—5*	—5*	PUNT OUT OF BOUNDS —15*
	End	—5*	—5*	—15*	
FUMBLE LOSE BALL —4	Pass	—5*	—5*	—15*	POINT AFTER Touchdown
	Punt	40	—5*	—5*	Point N. G.
WILD PASS —15*	Return	12	8	5	FIELD GOAL
	Kickoff	—5*	—5*	—5*	N. G.

15 *Offense penalty. No loss of down. ©1933 BY TOM HAMILTON PITTSBURGH, PA.

Fig. 8.

13	Class	★	2	Scrub	13
LONG GAIN 22 YARDS	Line	—4	—1	1	PUNT OUT OF BOUNDS SEE PUNT
	End	—7	—2	2	
FUMBLE LOSE BALL —6	Pass	INTERCEPTED 15 YD. PASS			POINT AFTER Touchdown
	Punt	BLOCKED* LOSE 7 YDS.			N. G.
WILD PASS —13	Return	6	NO GAIN		FIELD GOAL
	Kickoff	35	25	20	N. G.

24 *Retain ball unless 4th down. ©1933 BY TOM HAMILTON PITTSBURGH, PA.

Fig. 9.

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2,084,802

FOOTBALL GAME

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Application April 2, 1935, Serial No. 14,344

5 Claims (Cl. 273—94)

This invention relates to an indoor or table football game particularly adapted to simulate the action and to develop the strategy and tactics required of the player and coach in the actual game.

Various types of football games have been developed heretofore in which the play and the result are primarily matters of chance with little or no exercise of strategy and skill required of the contestants. These games generally involve dealing cards or throwing dice, etc., and are either games of chance depending entirely on the run of the cards or dice or are devoted to the development of guessing contests, the outcome of which depends ultimately on luck. In other words the game of football has been merely a background used as a basis for a conventional guessing contest or game of chance. While some element of chance or luck is necessarily involved in any game of this type, it is desirable to provide a game which exacts of the contestants the exercise of skill in diagnosing the strength and weakness of an opposing team and of strategy and tactics required for success in the actual game.

One of the objects of the present invention is to provide a novel football game wherein the results of the game depend on the skill and football knowledge of the contestants in diagnosing the strength and weakness of the opposing teams and in the employment of good football strategy and tactics under various conditions.

Another object is to provide a novel football game which is so similar to the actual game in strategy, thought and details that it will develop in players a finer appreciation of the elements of football.

A further object is to provide a novel football game which actually duplicates the problems presented to coaches and players so that instruction and experience are gained by the use of the game.

Another object is to provide a game in which success is attained through the utilization of the same "football sense", thought and reasoning that is demanded of successful players and coaches of the actual game.

A further object is to provide a football game which involves the manipulation and utilization of squads of "men" divided into classifications according to playing ability and on the disposition and distribution of strength and weakness in opposing line-ups by different means.

One embodiment of the invention has been illustrated in the accompanying drawings and described hereinafter but it is to be expressly understood that the invention is not restricted to this particular embodiment and that the drawings are for purposes of illustration only and are not to be construed as defining the limits of the invention, reference being had to the appended claims for this purpose.

In the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a plan view of a game board which may be employed in playing a game embodying the invention;

Fig. 2 is a side view in section of the board shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 illustrates various types of "men"; and

Figs. 4 to 9, inclusive, illustrate typical cards selected from a complete set or deck of cards used in playing the game.

An important characteristic of a game embodying the invention is that it permits each contestant to control the disposition of strength and weakness in the line-up of his own team, as is the case in the actual game. To this end, a set of men is provided for each contestant which is divided into different classifications according to playing ability. For example, a set may be composed of "stars", reserves or "seconds", and "scrubs". In many cases, it will be desirable to carry the classification still further, providing men of each of the above three classifications, each of which may be used only as a lineman, end, back, etc. The numbers of men in the various classifications should preferably be so proportioned as to approach in strength and number the average football squad. Thus there should be one or two star backs, several reserve backs, and several scrubs, and the same should be true as to other types of men. While the proportions of "stars", etc., may be varied as desired, it is ordinarily not desirable to enable contestants to play an entire team of stars, or an entire back field or line of stars.

Any suitable type of "men" may be employed. As shown in Fig. 3, the men are of conventional shape and may be formed of any suitable material such as wood, mica, pressed paper, metal, etc., and it will be understood that they may have any other suitable shape or design than that indicated in the drawings. Where division is made into types of players, such as linemen, ends and backs, the men belonging to the several types should be distinctive in color or otherwise and as shown in Fig. 3, the top three men with plain heads represent backs, the intermediate three men with hatched heads represent ends, and the lower three men with heads hatched with lines

at right angles represent linemen. In each of these three groups, the center man is a star as indicated by the star on its side, the right hand man is a reserve or "second" as indicated by the numeral 2 and the left hand man is a scrub as indicated by the letter S. It will be understood that the number of men, the number of men in various groups and classifications, and the distinguishing characteristics and indicia employed may be selected as desired.

A game embodying the present invention also requires a set or deck of cards, which in general are characterized by the fact that each card bears a table of the results of various types of plays which results correspond to the playing ability of the men involved in the plays. Referring to Figs. 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9, selected at random from a typical deck, it will be observed that plays of six different types are represented on each card in the vertical column headed "class", including line plays, end plays, passes, punts, returns and kick-offs. The division of plays into these classes has been found suitable for most instances, but can be varied as desired. In the horizontal rows opposite the headings which indicate these six types of plays are found indications of the results of the plays under the vertical column headings of star, second and scrub players.

In the particular form of the game herein described by way of example, the results obtained in running and passing plays as distinguished from kicking plays depend primarily on the defensive strength of the positions at which the plays are directed, whereas the results of kicking plays depend on the ability of the kicker. Referring for example to Fig. 6, if a line play be directed at a defensive position occupied by a star player, the result is "no gain"; if the position is occupied by a second, the gain is two yards; and in the case of a scrub, the gain is four yards. It will be understood, however, that if desired cards can be employed in which the results are weighted according to offensive ability as well as defensive ability.

The yards gained or lost in the various plays are preferably so proportioned throughout the complete deck as to provide results throughout a succession of plays which correspond to the results of a game between two reasonably well matched teams. The number of cards may be varied as desired, but it is convenient to use enough cards to provide the average number of plays in one quarter, the cards being reshuffled for succeeding quarters. Further, the complete deck preferably contains cards on which the tables include indications of acts or events which may adversely affect the execution and result of a play, such as Fig. 4 providing fumbles, Fig. 8 providing penalties, Figs. 6 and 9 providing respectively incomplete and intercepted passes, Fig. 9 providing blocked punts, and Fig. 7 providing "long" gains. These special indications are occasional and in about the same proportion as such instances may be expected to occur in an actual game. As in the actual game, they are unexpected and they have the same effect to break up a planned series of plays and to require the "quarterback" to revise his strategy and tactics. In addition to the vertical columns referred to, the cards bear special indications with respect to certain plays such as punts, field goals, and points after touchdown, as well as special indications with respect to fumbles, long gains and wild passes, the use of which will be made clear hereinafter.

Another feature of the cards which is of value in simulating actual playing conditions is represented by "substitution" cards which enforce a substitution in one of the opposing line-ups. These substitution cards may be of two types, the one shown in Fig. 5 causing the removal of a player for the remainder of the game as in the case of an injury, and others requiring removal only for the remainder of a quarter of the game. In addition, any desired arbitrary rules permitting substitutions or changes of the line-ups can be provided.

Although for some purposes the game can be played merely with the set of men and the set or deck of cards it is preferable to include in most cases a means for recording and indicating the progress of the game and also lining up the men of the opposing teams to simulate the actual game. Figs. 1 and 2 illustrate a suitable apparatus for these purposes, which embodies a frame **100** having a board **101**. At one end of the board is a diagram **102** with suitable indications for positioning the men comprising the opposing teams. The men are positioned in such a way that the indications of playing ability are concealed from the contestant directing the opposing team. Additional men who are not in the game may be lined up at opposite sides of the playing field as indicated at **103**.

The apparatus also embodies a diagrammatic representation of a playing field on which the progress of the game may be charted and recorded. This may be done in any suitable way as by the provision of a pad of removable sheets, each having thereon a diagram of a football field, or by the provision of any suitable type of surface which can be marked in pencil or otherwise and subsequently erased. In the form shown, a surface of ground glass **104** is provided which is supported in the frame by a backing plate **105**. The glass **104** is suitably marked with yard lines, etc., to represent a football field.

The method of playing a game embodying the invention will be better understood by the following illustrative description. The rules of the game are essentially the rules of actual football and the game is played throughout in the same manner as an actual game except for the use of the cards to determine the results of the plays. The selection of offensive plays is left in all cases in the hands of the contestant having the offensive and for consistent success he must study and analyze the conditions of the game, diagnose the strength and weakness of the opposing team and direct his own team accordingly, and in general exercise the same football sense that is necessary in the actual game. Only two variations from regulation play are preferably imposed by the rules, one of which is a rule preventing repeated successive attacks on a weak position in the same series of downs, thereby forcing the contestants to diversify the play, and the other of which prohibits transfer of players from one position to another, which is rarely encountered in actual play.

The manner of play is illustrated below, it being understood that since only six cards are shown in the drawings, repeated references to the same card are necessary herein for adequate description. Teams A and B are lined up on the playing board by the contestants who select and dispose their men to what they consider their best advantage, concealing the indication of playing ability of their men from the opponent. Any suitable means may be provided for effecting such

concealment, which means in the form shown comprises the arrangement of the indications of playing ability on one side only of each man as shown in Fig. 3, the men being placed so that these indications are turned away from the opposing player. It may further be stated here that in order not to disclose the character of players to an opponent, the contestant having the defensive always draws the card and reads the result of a play announced by the opponent, except in the case of kicking plays as to which the opposite is true. While preferably the cards are not shown to the opposing contestant, the play may be varied in this respect as by turning the cards face up as they are drawn.

Team A wins the toss and elects to kick off. The cards having been shuffled and placed face down on the board, A draws the first card, say Fig. 4. A has a star kicker, and without showing the card to B, he reads in the kick off column and finds that the kick off was 35 yards. B then draws the second card (Fig. 6) and without showing the card to A, reads opposite "return" under the classification of his quarterback who is a reserve or second, finding that the kick off is returned six yards. The kick off is then recorded on the chart from A's 40-yard line to B's 25-yard line and the return is recorded from B's 25-yard to his 31-yard line.

B may now try any one of the plays listed on the cards, and any line play, end play or pass may be directed against any of A's playing positions. B announces that he will try A's left tackle. A picks up the next card (Fig. 7) and reads opposite "line" under the classification of his left tackle, a reserve or second. B's gain on the play is seven yards which is recorded on the chart to B's 38-yard line, whereupon B announces that he will run A's right end. A has a star at right end and finds on the next card (Fig. 9) that the play resulted in a loss of seven yards, the play being charted to B's 31-yard line. B now elects to punt and himself draws the next card. Assuming it to be like Fig. 6, and B's kicker to be a star, the punt is forty-five yards and is charted from B's 31-yard line to A's 24-yard line.

During this series of plays B should have been forming an estimate of the ability of his opponent's men and should have been diagnosing the strength and weakness of the opposing line-up. It will be observed that B has no information as to the individual ability of his opponent's men except such as he may be able to gain in an actual game from observing the results of his own play. In all cases except kicks (including kick-offs, punts and field goals), the defense draws the card and announces the gain or loss according to the defensive strength of the position over which the play is directed, in order to prevent the offensive player from learning the individual ability of the defensive players. Since in the case of kicks the results depend primarily on the ability of the offensive rather than the defensive player, the cards in these instances are drawn by the offensive player in order to prevent the defensive player from learning the individual ability of the opposing backs. This system forces both contestants in the game to study the strength and weaknesses of the opposing team on the basis of observed results and to direct the offensive accordingly.

When A receives B's punt on his 24-yard line, he draws the next card (Fig. 7) and reads opposite "return" and under the classification of his quarterback, a star, and finds that a "long" return was made. In this case (as also in case of a fumble), the play continues through two cards, A now drawing the next card (Fig. 9) and looking in the upper left corner to find that the return was twenty-two yards, returning the ball to A's 46-yard line. A then elects to run B's right tackle, but B on turning the next card finds a substitution card like Fig. 5. Remembering the loss he had previously suffered at A's right end, B tells A to remove his right end for the rest of the game, this man being replaced by A from his squad. A now calls a new play and selects a forward pass over B's star center. B draws the next card (Fig. 7) and opposite "pass" and under "star" finds that A gained eight yards. The pass is then charted from A's 46-yard line to B's 46-yard line. A now tries B's left guard in which position a scrub is playing. B looks at the next card (Fig. 8) opposite "line" and under scrub and reads —5*. The footnote at the bottom of the card explains this entry which means a 5-yard penalty against A, bringing the ball back to A's 49-yard line, second down and seven yards to go. A decides to run B's left end (a second) and B finds from the next card (Fig. 9) that A loses two yards, bringing the ball to A's 47-yard line, third down and nine yards to go. A now tries B's star right end and B finds from the next card (Fig. 7) that A gained six yards.

It is now fourth down with three yards to go with the ball on B's 47-yard line, and A elects to punt. Provided that A has a star kicker, he has two choices, either to "punt" or "punt out of bounds", the latter requiring a star kicker and also that the ball be within the 50-yard line. A chooses to "punt out of bounds", picks up the next card (Fig. 6) and finds that the kick goes out of bounds on B's 11-yard line. B immediately decides to punt but on the next card (Fig. 9) B finds that the punt was blocked with a loss of seven yards, the ball being retained by B because it was first down. It is now second down with the ball on B's 4-yard line, and with seventeen yards to gain. B again punts and this time (Fig. 6) his star kicker punts forty-five yards to B's 49-yard line. On the next card (Fig. 7) A finds that his star quarterback made a "long" return and from the following card (Fig. 9) that he returned the ball twenty-two yards to B's 27-yard line. A fails to gain in three attempts and announces that he will try for a field goal, being able to meet the requirements of star kicker and the ball being inside the 30-yard line. A turns the next card (Fig. 7) and in the lower right hand corner under field goal reads "Good—30" which indicates that the attempt is good for the number of yards stated. A thus scores three points.

The foregoing description illustrates one manner of playing a game embodying the invention. The regular rules of football preferably apply to this game except for the desirable arbitrary exception stated above that a play may only be directed at a particular defensive player once in a series of downs. The scoring of the game is the same as in the actual game and is determined entirely according to the progress of the ball on the playing field except in the case of field goals, which are explained above, and points after touchdown, which are determined from the special indications on the cards. Otherwise the rules and scoring of the actual game are followed.

The contestants may substitute men at any

position they desire in accordance with the rules of the actual game. The usual penalty applies in the case of more than three "time outs" in each half. The substitution cards such as Fig. 5 preferably do not count as a "time out" against either side and other substitutions may be permitted at these times without charge against either team. Teams may be entirely rearranged between halves without any notice to the opponent.

It will be observed from the foregoing description that a game embodying the invention provides a novel and improved method of playing an indoor football game in which each player or contestant is given the problem of selecting and directing his team chosen from a squad of men of varying ability. Further, he must analyze and maneuver against the team as chosen and directed by his opponent and in this respect cannot play the game intelligently without the football sense and knowledge required of a good quarterback. The data on the cards is worked out to provide results closely comparable to the results that an actual football game might give and provision is made is made for the unexpected "breaks" of the game which call upon both the offensive and the defensive quarterbacks for sudden changes of tactics in taking advantage of or defending against sudden scoring opportunities. Thus the game is effective to test and to develop the football knowledge of a player and also to develop an appreciation of the fine points of the game, the elements of chance and guess work being subordinated. Further, the method of charting the game adds much interest in giving a record of the plays already consummated.

While one embodiment of the invention has been illustrated and described above with considerable particularity, it will be expressly understood that the invention is not limited to this particular embodiment, but is capable of variations which will occur to those skilled in football without departing from the spirit of the invention. Thus, considerable variation of the data on the cards is permissible depending upon the standard of play desired. For example, the cards can be calculated to reproduce a game between two teams which are both strong offensively or between two teams which are both strong defensively. The number and classification of the men may be regulated as desired, provided that the characteristic of varying ability is retained. Further, the number of cards and the arrangement of data on the cards may desirably be changed to suit different conditions and to meet popular demands. These and other changes which will be obvious from the foregoing description are within the scope of the invention and reference should, therefore, be had to the appended claims to define the limits of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A football game comprising a plurality of men bearing indicia whereby they are divided into groups of linemen, ends and backs, the men of each group being divided into different classifications of playing ability as stars, seconds and scrubs, whereby each contestant controls the disposition of playing ability in his line-up, means for concealing said indicia from an opposing player, a plurality of cards each bearing a table indicating results of different plays according to the playing ability of the men involved therein, and means for indicating the progress of the game.

2. A football game comprising a plurality of men bearing indicia whereby they are divided into different classifications to provide a plurality of players of different playing ability for each playing position of a team and each representing an individual player, whereby each contestant in the game controls the disposition of strength and weakness in his line-up, means for concealing said indicia from an opposing player, a plurality of cards each bearing indications of results of plays, said results corresponding to the playing ability of the men involved in the plays, and means comprising a writable surface simulating a football field whereby the progress of the game may be charted.

3. A football game comprising a plurality of men bearing indicia whereby they are divided into groups of linemen, ends and backs, the men of each group being divided into different classifications of playing ability as stars, seconds and scrubs, whereby each contestant controls the disposition of playing ability in his line-up, means for concealing said indicia from an opposing player, a plurality of cards each bearing a table indicating results of different plays according to the playing ability of the men involved therein, and means comprising a writable surface simulating a football field whereby the progress of the game may be charted.

4. A football game comprising a plurality of men bearing indicia whereby they are classified to provide a plurality of players of different playing ability for each playing position of a team, whereby each contestant in the game controls the disposition of strength and weakness in his line-up, means for concealing said indicia from an opposing player, a plurality of cards each bearing indications of results of plays, said results corresponding to the playing ability of the men involved in the plays, and means for indicating the progress of the game.

5. A football game comprising a plurality of men bearing indicia whereby they are divided into groups of men for different playing positions of a team and the men of each group are further classified to provide a plurality of players of different playing ability for each of said playing positions, whereby each contestant in the game controls the disposition of strength and weakness in his line-up, means for concealing said indicia from an opposing player, a plurality of cards each bearing indications of results of plays, said results corresponding to the playing ability of the men involved in the plays, and means for indicating the progress of the game.

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