Title: GAME USING TAPERED PIECES

Abstract

Games comprising one or more pieces (2) wherein the object of each game is to drop the pieces (2) onto a surface so that they stand upon either of their ends (4, 6), wherein points are scored for each piece (2) left standing upon one of its ends (4, 6) after being dropped, the winner being the first player to reach a pre-determined score. The present invention provides a simple and exciting game for two or more players.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AL</td>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>AT</td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>AU</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>AZ</td>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>BB</td>
<td>Barbados</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BE</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>BF</td>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>BG</td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>BJ</td>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>BR</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>BV</td>
<td>Belarus</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF</td>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
<td>CG</td>
<td>Congo</td>
<td>CH</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>CI</td>
<td>Côte d'Ivoire</td>
<td>CM</td>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>CN</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>CU</td>
<td>Cuba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CZ</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>DK</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>EE</td>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>FI</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>FR</td>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GE</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>GH</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>GN</td>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>GR</td>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>GB</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>GE</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>GH</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HI</td>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>HU</td>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>IE</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>IL</td>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>IT</td>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JP</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>KE</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>KG</td>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>KP</td>
<td>Democratic People’s Republic of Korea</td>
<td>KR</td>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
<td>KZ</td>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LK</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>LR</td>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>LS</td>
<td>Lesotho</td>
<td>LT</td>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>LU</td>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>LV</td>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>MC</td>
<td>Monaco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD</td>
<td>Republic of Moldova</td>
<td>MG</td>
<td>Madagascar</td>
<td>MK</td>
<td>The former Yugoslavia</td>
<td>ML</td>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>MN</td>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>MR</td>
<td>Mauritania</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MW</td>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>MX</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>MN</td>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>MR</td>
<td>Mauritania</td>
<td>MW</td>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>MX</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NB</td>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>NL</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>NZ</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>PL</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO</td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>RU</td>
<td>Russian Federation</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>SG</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>SI</td>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SK</td>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>SN</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>SZ</td>
<td>Swaziland</td>
<td>TD</td>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>TG</td>
<td>Togo</td>
<td>TJ</td>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TM</td>
<td>Turkmenistan</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>TT</td>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
<td>UA</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>UG</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VN</td>
<td>Viet Nam</td>
<td>YU</td>
<td>Yugoslavia</td>
<td>ZW</td>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GAME USING TAPERED PIECES

This invention relates to games, and more specifically to novel and inventive games using tapered playing pieces such as corks and other apparatus.

Discarded corks from wine bottles may be used in different ways, from modelling to decoration. They have even been used as means for deterring flying insects, when attached to the brim of a hat by lengths of string or cord.

Many pub games are known which are often played when a group of friends congregate. Such games sometimes require a forfeit, and one example is the marking of the face of a player with the charred end of a cork. Such a game is known as "ibble, dibble".

There is a demand for games that may be played within the confines of a public house or other such establishment. It is necessary for such games to be compact and to consist of few pieces. This requirement is to enable the apparatus of the game to be used in areas of little space, and to limit the chances of pieces being unavoidably lost as a result of the area in which they are utilised. Preferably, the playing pieces can also be carried in a pocket or handbag, for example.

The present invention provides apparatus necessary for a game of skill, utilising tapered playing pieces such as corks. The provided apparatus is of a minimal nature, thus facilitating its use in crowded and confined areas.

According to the present invention there is provided a game comprising one or more pieces wherein the object of the game is to drop the pieces onto a surface so that they stand upon either of their ends, wherein points are scored for each piece left standing upon one of its ends after being dropped, the winner being the first player to reach a pre-determined score.
According to a preferred embodiment of the present invention there is provided a game, wherein one end of a playing piece may be distinguished from the other end by some means.

According to a further preferred embodiment of the present invention there is provided a game, wherein the piece or pieces are tapered along their length. More preferably, the piece or pieces are preferably frusto-conical.

According to a further preferred embodiment of the present invention there is provided a game, wherein the smaller of the two ends of a tapered piece is coloured red and the larger end black.

According to a further preferred embodiment of the present invention there is provided a game, wherein the piece or pieces are manufactured from cork. By using cork, dropping of the playing pieces does not cause excessive noise. Other suitable materials could, of course, alternatively be used.

If cork (from a cork oak tree – Quercus suber) is used, it must have the necessary level of elasticity to react appropriately with a solid dense mass such as wood, glass, metal or marble (i.e. the surfaces most often used for the production of tables, bar tops and desks). Agglomerated cork (i.e. champagne cork) is particularly appropriate for consistent density and weight.

Each playing piece preferably has a height of about 60mm, a smaller end having a diameter of between 26mm and 32mm, more preferably about 28mm or about 30mm, and a larger end having a diameter between 31mm and 37mm, more preferably about 33mm or about 35mm. A typical weight for a playing piece is between 5 and 15 grams, more preferably about 10 grams each.

According to a particular embodiment of the present invention there is provided a game, wherein a sliding scale of points exists between one piece left
standing upon one end and a number of pieces left standing upon one end after being dropped.

According to a further embodiment of the present invention there is provided a game, wherein a sliding scale of points exist between one piece left standing upon one end and a number of pieces left standing upon one end after being dropped, said scale of points also depending upon the identifier of the end pointing upwards, said identifier being the means for distinguishing between the ends of the playing piece.

In such an embodiment, a first playing piece may have a score of one on its smaller end and a score of three on its larger end, and a second playing piece may have a score of two on its smaller end and a score of three on its larger end. As a result, any score between zero and six can be produced by dropping the two playing pieces.

According to an embodiment of the present invention there is provided a game, wherein one point is scored for one piece standing with its red end pointing upwards, two points are scored for either one piece standing with its black end pointing upwards or two pieces both standing with their red ends pointing upwards, three points are scored for one piece standing with its red end pointing upwards and one piece with its black end pointing upwards, and four points are scored for two pieces both standing with their black ends pointing upwards, after being dropped.

According to another embodiment of the present invention there is provided a game, wherein a die is also used. In such a game, the die (or dice) may be thrown to produce a score. The playing pieces are then dropped by a player and the player only scores if the score of the playing pieces matches the score predicted by the or each die. A significant degree of skill is therefore required to play this game successfully.
According to a still further preferred embodiment of the present invention there is provided a game, wherein the winner is the first player to win two sets, wherein the winner of a set is the first player to score exactly a predetermined number of points, such as twenty-one points, or to lead by exactly two clear points should a state occur in which two or more players have a score of twenty points.

According to a still further preferred embodiment of the present invention there is provided a game, wherein if the piece or pieces dropped raise the score of the player dropping them above twenty-one points, the player is said to have gone "bust" and his score remains the same until his next turn.

Specific embodiments of the present invention are now described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 shows a first embodiment of playing piece in perspective; Figure 2 shows the playing pieces used in a second game according to the present invention; and Figure 3 shows a player dropping the playing pieces whilst playing the second game.

Referring to the drawings, Figure 1 depicts one of the necessary pieces for playing a first game according to the present invention. Each playing piece 2 is a cork piece that is tapered from one end 6 to the other end 4 to form a frusto-conical shape. The cork piece is of greater length and diameter than a standard wine bottle cork, and is also of greater weight. Each end of the playing piece is coloured differently.

For this first game, each cork playing piece is 60mm in length, with a smaller end diameter of 28mm and a larger end diameter of 33mm. The pieces have a weight of about 10 grams each.
The end 4 of the playing piece which has a smaller diameter is coloured red, and the end 6 of the piece which has a larger diameter is coloured black.

When playing the game, two playing pieces are dropped simultaneously, by each player in turn, onto a surface in an attempt to stand them upon their ends 4, 6. The players forearms, hands and elbows must not contact the playing surface whilst the drop is made. This procedure is repeated until completion of the game. The number of players is two or more.

The skill of standing corks upon their ends lies in dropping them from the correct height and angle to bounce them from their sides onto one of their respective ends. The corks must not be spun or flipped, and should bounce only once each. The use of tapered playing pieces increases the difficulty of standing a piece upon its smaller end.

Points are scored according to the number of corks standing after a drop, and relative to the colour pointing upward upon each standing cork. The points allocated conform to the following schedule:

- one cork standing with red pointing up is worth one point;
- one cork standing with black pointing up is worth two points;
- two corks standing, both with red pointing up, is worth two points;
- two corks standing, one with red and one with black pointing up, is worth three points; and
- two corks standing, both with black pointing up, is worth four points.

In accordance with a preferred embodiment of the invention, each game consists of at least three sets. The first player to win two sets is the winner of the game. Each set consists of twenty-one points. The first player to reach exactly twenty-one points is the winner of the set. According to this embodiment of the invention, should a player exceed twenty-one points upon his turn, he shall be declared "bust" and shall remain on his existing score until the next round. Should a situation arise in which two players contesting the set
have a score of twenty, the score of one player must exceed the score of the other by exactly two points for the first player to win the set.

Although the invention has been described as comprising tapered pieces made from cork and characterised by coloured ends, the pieces may be made from other materials, their sides may at least in part be parallel or otherwise, and their ends may be characterised in other ways.

Turning now to Figure 2 of the drawings, this shows the playing pieces required for a second game according to the present invention. This game has been called "Skill Die – Skilled Eye" because it involves the use of a die 8 and requires serious skill!

In this second game, two cork playing pieces are used. The playing pieces typically have a height of 60mm, a smaller end having a diameter of 30mm and a larger end having a diameter of 35mm. Once, again, the playing pieces are frusto-conical in shape and made from agglomerated cork (i.e. champagne cork) for consistent density and weight. Each playing piece has a weight of approximately 10 grams.

Piece A is marked with three points on its larger end and one point on its smaller end. Playing piece B is marked with three points on its larger end and two points on its smaller end. As a result, any score between one and six can be achieved by a combination of the two playing pieces, as follows:

- small diameter of piece A standing = 1 point
- small diameter of piece B standing = 2 points
- large diameter of piece A standing = 3 points
- large diameter of piece B standing = 3 points
- small diameter of piece A and large diameter of piece B standing = 4 points
- small diameter of piece B and large diameter of piece A standing = 5 points
- large diameter of piece A and
large diameter of piece B standing = 6 points

To play the game, the die 8 is rolled to produce a predicted score. The player must then skilfully drop and bounce into a standing position either one or two of the Skill-Die playing pieces (A, B) so that the points revealed on the upper surfaces of the Skill-Die pieces equals the score on the die 8. If the scores match, the player achieves and accumulates the score. The player can then have another go.

For example, if the die is rolled to reveal "5", the player must then drop the two Skill-Die playing pieces so that piece A stands with its wide end uppermost (3 points) and playing piece B stands with its smaller end uppermost (2 points), thereby making a total of 5 points.

Similarly, if the die reveals a "2", the player must ensure that only playing piece B remains standing with its smaller diameter end uppermost. Piece A must be left lying down, so that it does not add to the score.

The aim of the game is to be the first player to reach a total score of exactly 21 points.

The players roll the die to decide who starts the game. The highest scorer starts.

If a player manages to match the score on the die 8 with the Skill-Die playing pieces, the player keeps that score and gets to throw the die again. For example, if the player rolls the die to produce a predicted score of "4" and subsequently makes playing piece A stand on its wider end to reveal a "1" and playing piece B stand on its narrower end to reveal a score of "3", making a total of "4", the player scores 4 points and rolls the die again.

The accumulation of points ceases if a player does not manage to match the score achieved by the playing pieces with the score on the die 8 or if the
player's total number of points exceeds 21. If the total number of points exceeds 21, the player is considered to have gone "bust" and loses all his/her points accumulated in that go. The player must then wait until his/her next go to try to achieve a score which takes him/her closer to 21 points without exceeding 21 points.

The player who accumulates 21 points first is the winner of the game. If the game comprises the best of three or five sets, the players will play to 21 more than once until one player has reached the goal of 21 points sufficient times to win the match.

As will be appreciated, a significant amount of skill is required to be able to bounce the playing pieces (A, B) into the desired standing configuration. However, once this skill has been achieved, an extremely exciting and competitive game can result.

Finally, as will be appreciated, the components required to play either of the above-described games are very few and small. Accordingly, they can be readily carried in a pocket or handbag, so that a game can be played anywhere, anytime.

It will of course be understood that the present invention has been described by way of example only, and that modifications of detail can be made within the scope of the invention.
CLAIMS

1. A game comprising one or more pieces wherein the object of the game is to drop the pieces onto a surface so that they stand upon either of their ends, wherein points are scored for each piece left standing upon one of its ends after being dropped, the winner being the first player to reach a pre-determined score.

2. A game as claimed in claim 1, wherein one end of a piece is distinguished from the other end by some means.

3. A game as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the piece or pieces are manufactured from cork.

4. A game as claimed in claim 3, wherein the cork is agglomerated cork and each playing piece weighs about 10 grams.

5. A game as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the piece or pieces are frusto-conical.

6. A game as claimed in claim 5, wherein each playing piece has a height of about 60mm, a smaller diameter of between 26mm and 32mm and a larger diameter of between 31mm and 37mm.

7. A game as claimed in claim 5 or claim 6, wherein the smaller of the two ends of a playing piece is coloured red and the larger end black.

8. A game as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein a sliding scale of points exists between one piece left standing upon one end and a number of pieces left standing upon one end after being dropped.

9. A game as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein a sliding scale of points exists between one piece left standing upon one end and a number of pieces left standing upon one end after being dropped.
pieces left standing upon one end after being dropped, said schedule of points also depending upon an identifier of the end pointing upwards, said identifier being means for distinguishing between the ends of the playing piece.

10. A game as claimed in any preceding Claim, wherein one point is scored for one piece standing with its first end pointing upwards, two points are scored for either one piece standing with its second end pointing upwards or two pieces both standing with their first ends pointing upwards, three points are scored for one piece standing with its first end pointing upwards and one piece with its second end pointing upwards, and four points are scored for two pieces both standing with their second ends pointing upwards, after being dropped.

11. A game as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 9, wherein the playing pieces are frusto-conical, the first playing piece has a score of one on its smaller diameter end and a score of three on its larger diameter end, and the second playing piece has a score of two on its smaller diameter end and a score of three on its larger diameter end.

12. A game as claimed in claim 11, wherein a die is included for defining a predicted score, and a score is only achieved if the cumulative scores of the two playing pieces match the score predicted by the die.

13. A game as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein if the piece or pieces dropped raise the score of the player dropping them above twenty-one points, the player is said to be bust and his score remains the same until his next turn.

14. A game as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the winner is the first player to win two sets, wherein the winner of a set is the first player to score exactly twenty-one points, or to lead by exactly two clear points should a state occur in which two or more players have a score of twenty points.

15. A game substantially as described herein with reference to Figure 1 or Figure 2 of the accompanying drawings.
INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 A63F9/04

According to international Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 A63F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages</th>
<th>Relevant to claim No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>US 5 505 462 A (LOEWEN GREGORY M) 9 April 1996 (1996-04-09)</td>
<td>1,2,5,8,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>column 3, line 53 -column 4, line 62; figures 3,4</td>
<td>10-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>US 5 833 237 A (VELICH JAMES F) 10 November 1998 (1998-11-10)</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>column 2, line 59 -column 3, line 44; figures 1.3A,3B,3C</td>
<td>3,8-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>CH 684 147 A (ENGELBERT FENZL) 29 July 1994 (1994-07-29)</td>
<td>3,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>column 1, line 31 - column 1, line 51; figure 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C. Patent family members are listed in annex.

Date of the actual completion of the international search

25 January 2000

Date of mailing of the international search report

03/02/2000

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentliaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx 31 651 apo nl.
Fax. (+31-70) 340-2016

Authorized officer

Feber, L.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patent document cited in search report</th>
<th>Publication date</th>
<th>Patent family member(s)</th>
<th>Publication date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US 5505462 A</td>
<td>09-04-1996</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>WO 9726962 A</td>
<td>31-07-1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CH 684147 A</td>
<td>29-07-1994</td>
<td>DE 9112203 U</td>
<td>30-01-1992</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>