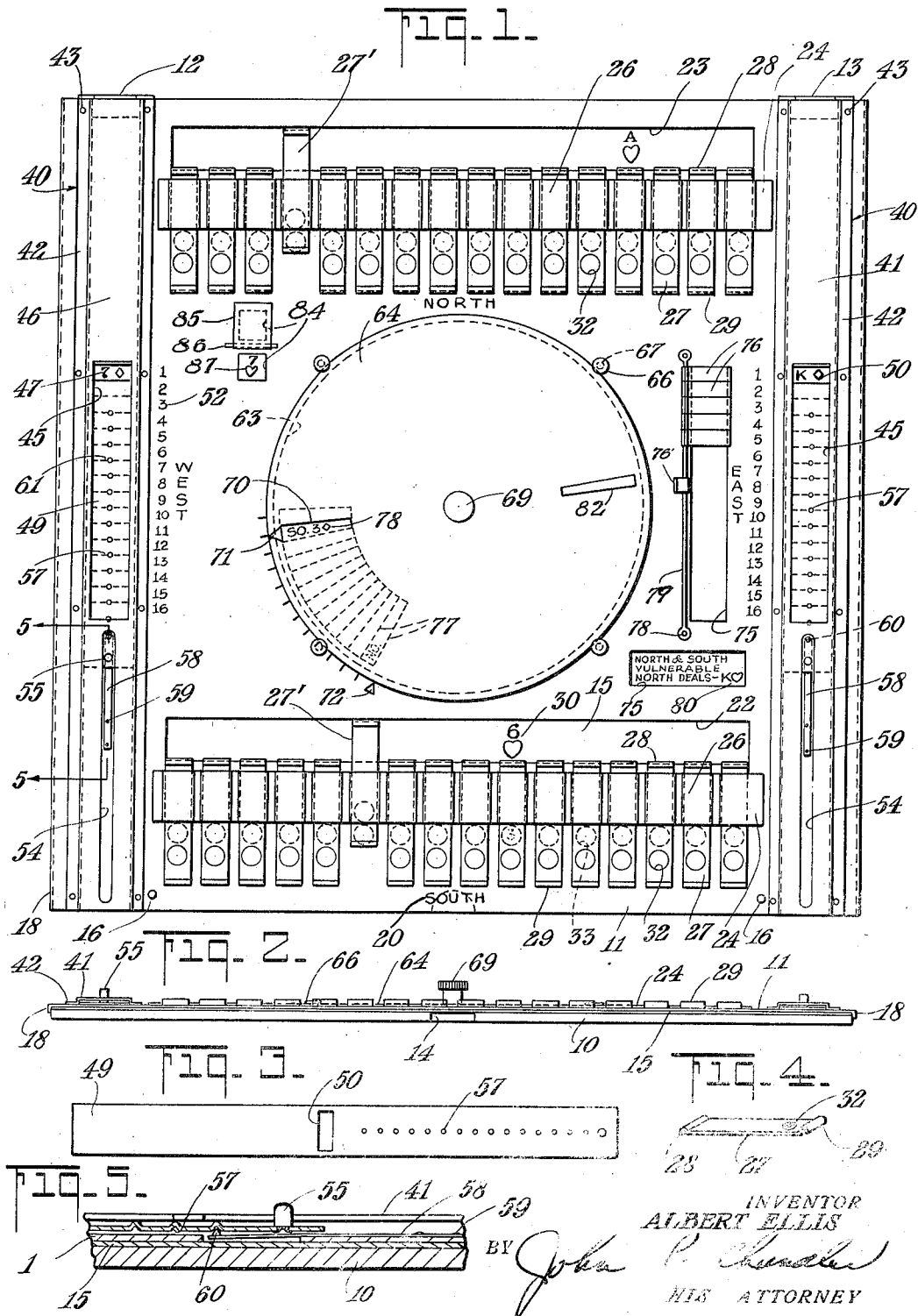


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GAME APPARATUS

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GAME APPARATUS

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This invention relates to a game apparatus, and relates more particularly to a novel device which may be employed by a sole person in working out problems, either for pleasure or for instruction, in card games normally played by four persons.

The game of bridge owes its popularity to a large extent to the fact that many of its intricacies appeal to persons desiring a relatively high order of mental stimulation, and the present game apparatus is designed to further encourage such interest on the part of players of this and other similar games. The present apparatus is especially appealing to a person interested in bridge, either an expert or an amateur, since it is not always convenient to find three suitable partners for games of this general character.

The game constituting the present invention consists essentially of a game board having means for receiving thereunder a card or sheet having prearranged hands of cards printed thereon, the board having suitable openings through which such cards may be viewed, the board further being provided with novel closure members for the several openings to permit the player to play the game in exactly the same manner as it would be played with four persons.

A more particular object of the invention is the provision of a solo game apparatus of this general character which may be used in playing a variety of games, the device in this connection not being limited to the conventional four suit game of bridge employing fifty-two cards. In other words, games having five, six, or even eight suits may be simulated with the present device, thereby permitting greater flexibility of operation and providing a highly interesting apparatus.

Still another object of the invention is the provision of a game apparatus having improved means for permitting the bidding of the respective hands in the game wherein the single player indicates his bid in accordance with his own discretion, and in the event that such bid is incorrect, means are provided for calling his attention to such error.

In the drawing:

Fig. 1 is a plan view of the playing surface of the apparatus constituting the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a front elevation thereof;

Fig. 3 is a plan view of one of the slide plates for permitting the player to observe indicia printed on the sheet;

Fig. 4 is a perspective view of another slide member; and

Fig. 5 is a broken section taken on line 5—5 of Fig. 1.

The particular embodiment of the invention chosen for illustration in the drawing is adapted to be used for playing a game of bridge wherein sixty-four cards are used, sixteen to the single player, sixteen to his imaginary partner, and sixteen each to his imaginary opponents. Means are also provided for one extra card which is taken by the declarer (in this instance always the single player) in exchange for a card of his choosing, after the formal bidding has ceased.

It must be pointed out, however, that the herein described apparatus may be employed in playing the conventional contract bridge game employing fifty-two cards, or other games of this general character.

Referring now more particularly to the drawing, the device consists of a substantially square base member 10 made from wood, metal, or other suitable material, the base having a cover member 11 of the same size as the base, said cover member constituting the playing board and being secured to the base along one edge thereof by means of hinges 12 and 13. This cover member is preferably made from thin gauge sheet metal, and in order to facilitate the raising of the cover from the base, the base is provided with a small, centrally disposed cut-out portion 14 along the front edge thereof.

A sheet of paper 15, having certain indicia printed thereon, is positioned upon the base member, said sheet desirably covering the entire base, and in order to facilitate the correct positioning of the sheet, the cover 11 is provided, adjacent to the front edge thereof, with a plurality of pins 16, the heads of which are substantially flush with the upper surface of the cover. These pins extend beneath the cover and into aligned recesses (not shown) in the base, said pins passing through suitable pre-formed apertures in the sheet. If desired, the cover may also be formed with downwardly extending flanges 18 along opposite sides thereof to enclose the side edges of the base.

The sheet 15 has printed thereon certain indicia indicating four hands of cards as dealt in various games having from four to eight suits in the playing deck, and the player observes these indicia from the upper side of the playing board through suitable apertures described hereinafter. It will be appreciated that a plurality of such sheets having a variety of hands will be furnished with the game since one player will have no fur-

ther use for a sheet once he has played the game with the cards contained thereon.

Along the lower edge of the playing board, the word "South" is printed or otherwise inscribed, as shown at 20, and the words "North", "East" and "West" are also suitably positioned thereon. In playing the present game in its simplest form, "South" always eventually becomes the declarer, and so the single player of the game always plays the "dummy", which is the North hand. It is evident that the player uses his discretion in the sequence of play of the cards of his hand and those of the dummy, whereas he can, of course, have no discretion over the playing of the cards in the hands of his opponents, otherwise the game would not even remotely resemble the well-known game of bridge. Accordingly, it is evident that different means must be employed for allowing the player to observe the contents of the North and South hands from those employed for the East and West hands.

For the North and South hands, elongated transverse slots 22 and 23 are formed adjacent to the front and rear edges, respectively, of the board. Immediately forward of and spaced from each transverse slot an elongated guide plate 24 is suitably secured to the upper surface of the board. This guide plate is formed with a plurality of spaced upwardly disposed offset or inverted U shaped portions 26 each of which, together with the adjacent upper surface of the playing board, constitute a closed channel or slideway for each one of a plurality of slide members 27, one of such slide members being shown in detail in Fig. 4.

Each slide is made from an elongated blank of sheet metal and is formed with beading 28 along the rear edge thereof, the terminal of which beading extends slightly below the lower surface of the slide and acts as a stop to limit the forward and rearward movement of the slide when such beading engages the front and rear edges of the slot 22 or 23. Another and somewhat similar beading 29 is formed along the front edge of each slide, which beading functions as a finger-engaging portion for moving the slide, and this beading terminates at or about at the plane of the lower surface of the slide, so that the beading will not interfere with the free movement of the slide.

The sheet 15 has inscribed thereon within the limits of the area thereof made visible by the transverse opening 22, a series of spaced playing card indicia giving the numerical designation of the card and the suit mark directly thereunder, as shown at 30. Only one such is indicated in the slot 22 in Fig. 1, to wit, the 6 of hearts, although it will be appreciated that in the instant case wherein 16 of the cover slides 27 are provided, there will be 16 of such indicia. When a cover slide 27 is pushed rearwardly, as shown at 27' in Fig. 1, this indicium will be covered, and when the slides are in their forward position, as are the balance of the slides, this indicium will be visible.

Since the cards of the opponents in the East and West hands are to be played in a numerical sequence without the discretion of the South player, it is apparent that the single player of the game must also play his own cards and those of the dummy in a certain predetermined sequence. In order, however, not to advise him of this sequence until after the card is played, the following means are provided. Each slide is provided with an aperture 32 adjacent to the

beading 29 and the player board is likewise provided with an aperture 33 which is aligned with the aperture 32 only when the slide is in intermediate position. On the sheet 15 immediately beneath each aperture 33 there is placed the play sequence number of the particular card, which number is not visible when the slide 27 is in either extreme position. Thus, as the player wishes to play a particular card from his hand, he moves the slide rearwardly to completely cover the card indicium. In case, however, he wishes to check the correctness of his play, as in most instances he must, he moves the slide to intermediate position where he observes the sequence number.

The East and West hands have the following similar means for disclosing one card indicium at a time. A slideway 40 is stamped from a single blank of elongated sheet metal, said slideway having a central raised portion 41 and lowered marginal edge portions 42 which are secured longitudinally of the playing board adjacent to the edges thereof by means of rivets 43.

The raised portion 41 is formed with an elongated slot 45 beneath which the individual card indicia are printed upon the sheet 15 as indicated at 47. Within the slideway area an elongated slide member 49 is positioned and adapted to be moved longitudinally. This slide is formed with a small rectangular slot 50 through which the indicium on only one card in the East and West hands may be viewed at one time.

On the playing board adjacent to the inner marginal edges 42 of the slideways, and within the limits of the longitudinal slot 45, there are inscribed in evenly spaced positions the sequence numbers of the cards as played from the East and West hands. These numbers, indicated at 52, are in numerical succession, and in accordance with the arrangement for the North and South hands have 16 of such numerical designations.

In order to provide means for moving the slide 49 towards the player a distance equal to the width of the slot 50 at each play, a narrow slot 54 is formed at the inner end of each slideway 40, and the inner end of the slide 49 is provided with an upstanding, finger engaging member 55, such member engaging the outward end of the slot 54 when the slot 50 in the slide is positioned just beyond the outer end of the slot 45, or in other words, when the slot 45 is completely closed by the slide 49.

The slide 49 is provided with a plurality of spaced, longitudinally disposed circular recesses 57 on the lower side thereof. An elongated flat spring 58 is mounted on the upper surface of the player board by means of rivets 59, the spring having a small tit 60 at one end thereof which engages the sides of said recesses, all as shown in Fig. 5. Thus, as the slide 49 is moved toward the player by manipulating the member 55, the tit 60 successively engages the circular recesses 57, thereby interrupting the movement of the slide.

The recesses are spaced apart a distance equal to the distance between the numbers 52, and accordingly as the slide is moved, it successively positions the slot 50 opposite said numbers, thereby disclosing the indicium of each card in the East or West hands. The spaced broken lines 61 define the areas which are successively opened as the slide 49 is drawn towards the player.

The bidding arrangement comprises a circular

aperture 63 in the center of the playing board 11 and a circular plate 64 of slightly larger diameter than that of the aperture mounted concentrically thereof for rotative movement by means of a plurality of spaced lugs 66 secured to the playing board by means of rivets 67.

The plate 64 is adapted to be rotated by means of a thumb turn 69, and the plate is further provided with a narrow radial slot 70 adjacent to the periphery. At the center of this slot at the edge of the plate, an arrowhead 71 is stamped, and the bidding begins when this indicator is adjacent to a similar marking 72 on the playing board.

The bidding structure is completed with a small rectangular aperture 80 in the playing board. In the area of the sheet 15 defined by said aperture there are printed indicia concerning the status of the players when the instant hand is "dealt". In the example shown, North and South are "vulnerable" and North has performed the bidding.

The first bid is accordingly made by "North", and when the indicators 71 and 72 are aligned, there will appear on the sheet through the opening a suitable bid for the North hand. The plate 64 is then revolved clockwise a distance equal to the distance between two of the radial broken lines 77, and a suitable bid for the East hand will appear on the sheet. South, the player, now mentally makes a bid in accordance with the value of his hand and again moves the disc to determine the correctness of his bid. The bidding thus continues until three passes occur, the player, of course, always securing the bid, one of such bids appearing at 78.

In order to play a somewhat more complicated card game, the following means are provided for defensive playing, that is, where the unseen opponent plays his hand and that of the exposed dummy. Adjacent to the east side of the board there is provided an elongated slot 75, and a shaft 79 is mounted on the board adjacent to the edge of the slot and is spaced from the board, the rod having circular end portions 78. Upon this rod are pivotally mounted a plurality of independently movable closure plates 76 having finger-engaging portions 76' which are vertically disposed when the closure plates are horizontal. When, however, it is desired to open a portion of the slot 75, the finger-engaging portion 76' of a closure plate 76 is moved downwardly and the closure plate proper assumes a vertical position.

In defensive playing, after the bidding has ceased and West is the declarer, all of the closure plates 76 are opened, and as each card is played from this dummy the appropriate closure plate is closed.

As in the conventional bridge game, all of the card representations positioned on the sheet within the area defined by the edges of the aperture 75, which constitute the dummy for the "East" hand, are desirably arranged or grouped in their appropriate suits in order that the player may observe at a glance the relative strength and value of such dummy hand. In the playing of the individual cards from this dummy hand, however, they quite naturally do not follow the order in which they have been arranged in suits, but rather these cards are played in accordance with the sound discretion of the player in the hand opposite such dummy, which in the present instance is predetermined, since the player is "West" and accordingly not the actual solo

player whose position is always "South", as previously stated.

In this instance, then, the numerical designations 52, running from 1 to 16, inclusive, are again employed to indicate sequence of play of the cards in this "East" hand. In this case, when the solo player at "South" who actually performs the mechanical manipulation of the "East" hand, seeks to find which of the "East" dummy cards is to be played first, he moves the slide 49 to a point wherein the aperture 50 is adjacent to the numeral "1" and a card representation is thus disclosed on the sheet corresponding to some one card in the dummy, which card is to be played first from such dummy. The player then closes the particular plate 75 positioned adjacent to the card in the dummy which corresponds to the card disclosed through the opening 50. In other words, the card representations which are successively disclosed through the aperture 50 as the slide is moved are arranged in the same fashion in defensive as in offensive playing.

In playing the game with 65 or more cards, it may be desirable to provide means for having a fairly large number of bids, and in order to facilitate this, the disk 64 may be provided with a second radial slot 82 substantially opposite the slot 70. Also, when playing with the 65 cards, the last card is usually termed a "widow" and may be exchanged for another card in the deck. In order to facilitate the playing of this "widow" card, the playing board is provided with a plurality of spaced, substantially square apertures 84 and a cover plate 85 mounted on a shaft 86 adapted to close one or the other of these apertures. In the illustration given, the sheet contains indicium of the "widow" card, as shown at 87, and after the player has selected the proper card to be discarded from his hand, he manipulates the cover plate 85, and on the sheet beneath the cover plate 85 he determines whether or not the selected card for discard is the correct one.

Whereas the North and South hands are shown as being provided with sixteen separate cover plates, it will be appreciated, however, that any suitable number may be so provided depending upon the nature of the game. Also, any suitable means may be provided for securing the sheet on the lower side of the playing board. For instance, the base 10 may be eliminated entirely and the marginal edges of the playing board turned under in order to form flanges which secure the sheet.

What I claim is:

1. A card game adapted to be played by a single player and simulating a four-handed game normally played by four players, the game comprising a playing board having an opening adjacent to each marginal edge thereof, a sheet removably positioned on the lower surface of said playing board, the sheet being inscribed with representations of a plurality of playing cards in the areas defined by each of such openings, a cover plate for the cards in the hand adjacent to the player and in the hand opposite the player, and a movable cover plate for closing each of the two other openings, each of said latter plates having an aperture therein of such size as to uncover only one card representation at one time, the playing surface being marked with spaced numerical designations indicating sequence of play of said latter hands and the sheet being marked with numerical designations indicating

sequence of play of the cards in the two first-mentioned hands.

2. A card game adapted to be played by a single player and simulating a four-handed game normally played by four players, the game comprising a substantially rectangular playing board having an elongated aperture adjacent to and spaced from each marginal edge thereof, a thin sheet removably positioned beneath said playing board, the sheet being inscribed with representations of a plurality of cards of a plurality of suits, such cards being divided into four hands, the representations of the cards of each hand being positioned on the sheet in the area defined by the edges of one of such apertures, a plurality of longitudinally movable cover plates for covering the individual card representations in the hand adjacent to the player and in the hand opposite the player, and a longitudinally movable plate for closing each of the two other apertures, each of said latter plates having an aperture therein adapted to uncover only one card representation at one time.

3. A card game adapted to be played by a single player and simulating a four-handed game normally played by four players, the game comprising a substantially rectangular playing board having an elongated aperture adjacent to and spaced from each marginal edge thereof, a thin sheet removably positioned beneath said playing board, the sheet being inscribed with representations of a plurality of cards of a plurality of suits, the representations of the cards of each hand being positioned on the sheet in the area defined by the edges of one of such slots, a plurality of cover plates for covering the respective cards in the hand adjacent to the player and in the hand opposite the player, and a longitudinally movable plate for closing each of the two other apertures, each of said latter plates having an aperture therein adapted to uncover only one card representation at one time, the playing surface being marked with spaced numerical designations indicating sequence of play of said latter hands.

4. A card game adapted to be played by a single player and simulating a four-handed game normally played by four players, the game comprising a playing board having an elongated opening adjacent to and substantially parallel with each marginal edge thereof, a sheet removably positioned on the lower surface of said playing board, the sheet being inscribed with representations of a plurality of cards of four suits or more, such cards being divided into four hands, the representations of the cards of each hand being positioned on the sheet in the area defined by a respective one of such slots, a longitudinally movable cover plate for selectively covering each card in the hand adjacent to the player and in the hand opposite the player, and a single longitudinally movable plate for closing each of the two other openings, each of said latter plates having an aperture therein of such size as to uncover only one card representation at one time, the playing surface being marked with spaced numerical designations indicating sequence of play of said latter hands and the sheet being marked with numerical designations indicating sequence of play of the cards in the two first-mentioned hands.

5. A game apparatus of the class described comprising a substantially rectangular playing board having a slot spaced from and substantially parallel with each marginal edge of the

board, a removable sheet positioned beneath the lower surface of the board, representations of a plurality of cards inscribed in spaced relation in said sheet within areas defined by the edges of said slots, cover means for selectively exposing any or all of the card representations in two of the areas and means for exposing only one such card representation at one time in each of the other areas, said latter means comprising a longitudinally moveable closure plate covering each of said slots, each plate having an aperture therein of approximately the same size as one card representation.

6. A game apparatus of the class described comprising a substantially rectangular playing board having a slot spaced from and substantially parallel with each marginal edge of the board, a removable sheet positioned beneath the lower surface of the board, representations of a plurality of cards inscribed in spaced relation in said sheet within areas defined by the edges of said slots, cover means for selectively exposing any or all of the card representations in two of the areas, means for exposing only one such card representation at one time in each of the other areas, such means comprising an elongated, longitudinally moveable cover plate slideably mounted on the board relative to each of the two latter slots and adapted to substantially cover the same, each plate having an opening therein of such size as to disclose only one card representation therethrough, the sheet being inscribed with numbers indicating sequence of play relative to the cards in the first two mentioned areas and the playing board being inscribed with numbers indicating sequence of play of the cards in the last mentioned areas.

7. In a game apparatus of the class described, the combination of a substantially rectangular board having an elongated opening adjacent to and spaced from each marginal edge thereof, a sheet removably positioned beneath said board, the sheet being provided with a plurality of playing card indicia within the areas defined by said elongated openings, slidable cover plates associated with two of such openings on opposite sides of the board, each of such plates having an aperture therein of such size as to disclose only one card indicium at one time, a plurality of longitudinally movable closure members associated with said other two opposed openings, each of such members being adapted to conceal a card indicium when moved in one direction and to expose the same when moved in the other direction, the sheet being provided with numerical designations adjacent such latter card indicium to indicate sequence of play, the board and the closure members having apertures which are aligned when said members are in intermediate position, thereby disclosing said numerical designations.

8. A game apparatus by which a single player may play a game simulating a four handed bridge game and comprising a playing board having an opening adjacent to each marginal edge thereof and a sheet positioned beneath the board and having representations of a plurality of cards inscribed thereon within areas defined by said openings and indicating four hands of playing cards, two of such opposed hands representing "North" and "South" hands and the other two representing "East" and "West" hands, the board having a supplemental opening adjacent to one of the openings surrounding said latter hands, a plurality of closure plates for selectively cover-

ing and exposing individual card representations in the "North" and "South" hands and a longitudinally movable cover plate for each of the "East" and "West" hands, each plate having an opening therein of such size as to expose only one card representation at one time, the sheet further being provided with card representations arranged in suits disposed in the area defined by the supplemental opening, a plurality of closure plates for selectively covering any of said card representations, the card representations in the area defined by the opening adjacent the supplemental opening being the same as those in the area defined by the supplemental opening but being arranged in the order of their numerical sequence of play.

9. A game apparatus by which a single player may play a game simulating a four handed bridge game and comprising a playing board having an opening adjacent to each marginal edge thereof and a sheet positioned beneath the board and having representations of a plurality of cards inscribed thereon within areas defined by said openings and indicating four hands of playing cards, two of such opposed hands representing "North" and "South" hands and the other two representing "East" and "West" hands, the upper surface of the board being provided with numerical designations adjacent to the openings for the "East" and "West" hands to indicate sequence of play for the cards in such hands, the board having a supplemental opening adjacent to one of the openings surrounding said latter hands, a plurality of closure plates for selectively covering and exposing individual card representations in the "North" and "South" hands and a longitudinally movable cover plate for each of the "East" and "West" hands, each plate having an opening therein of such size as to expose only one card representation at one time, the sheet further being provided with card representations arranged in suits disposed in the area defined by the supplemental opening, a plurality of closure plates for selectively covering any of said card representations, the card representations in the area defined by the opening adjacent the supplemental opening being the same as those in the area defined by the supplemental opening but being arranged in the order of their numerical sequence of play as indicated by the sequence numbers on the board.

10. A game apparatus by which a single player

may play a game simulating a four handed bridge game and comprising a playing board having an opening adjacent to each marginal edge thereof and a sheet positioned beneath the board and having representations of a plurality of cards inscribed thereon within areas defined by said openings and indicating four hands of playing cards, two of such opposed hands representing "North" and "South" hands and the other two representing "East" and "West" hands, the board having a supplemental opening adjacent to one of the openings surrounding said latter hands, a cover plate for each of the openings for selectively exposing and covering the various card representations, the sheet further being provided with card representations arranged in suits disposed in the area defined by the supplemental opening, the card representations in the area defined by the opening adjacent the supplemental opening being the same as those in the area defined by the supplemental opening but being arranged in the order of their sequence of play.

11. A game apparatus comprising a substantially rectangular board having an elongated opening adjacent to and spaced from each marginal edge thereof and a supplemental opening adjacent to and spaced from one of such openings, a sheet positioned beneath such playing board and having representations of a plurality of playing cards inscribed thereon within areas defined by said openings, manually operated closure plates associated with each of said openings adapted to selectively conceal and expose individual card representations on the sheet, the closure plate associated with the opening adjacent to the supplemental opening and the opening opposite thereto comprising a longitudinally movable member having an opening therein of such size as to disclose only one card representation at one time, the playing board adjacent to said two opposed openings having spaced sequential numerical designations adapted to indicate sequence of play, the card representations within the area defined by the supplemental opening being grouped into card suits and the card representations in the opening adjacent thereto being identical with the representations in the area defined by the supplemental opening but being arranged in the order of the predetermined sequence of play as indicated by the numerical designations on the playing board.

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