Oct. 13, 1970 C. E. SMITH 3,533,626

BOARD GAME HAVING INDICATING PLAYING PIECES

Original Filed Sept. 13, 1966 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

FIG. 1

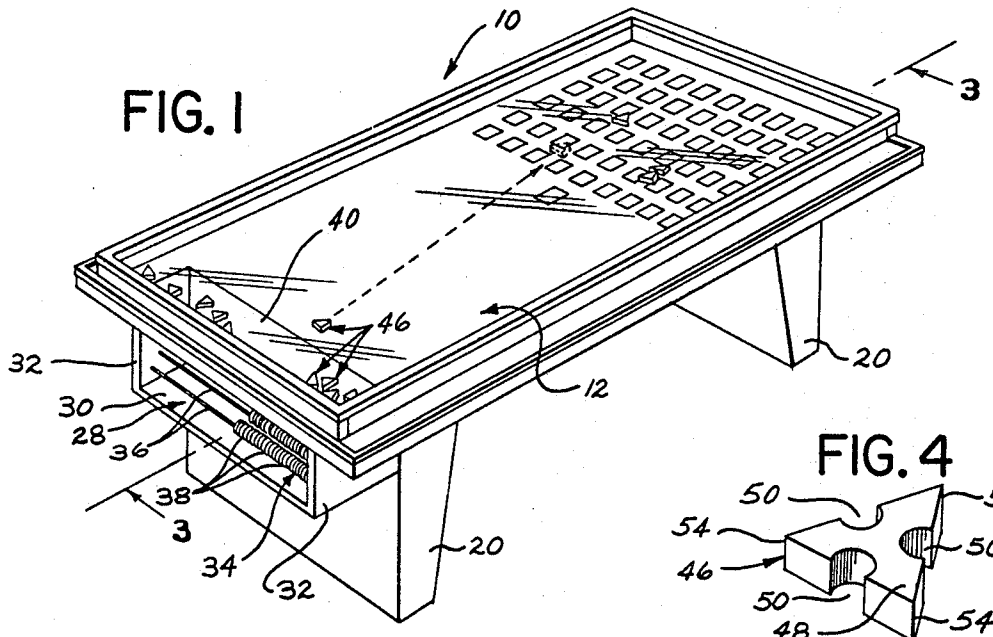



FIG. 2

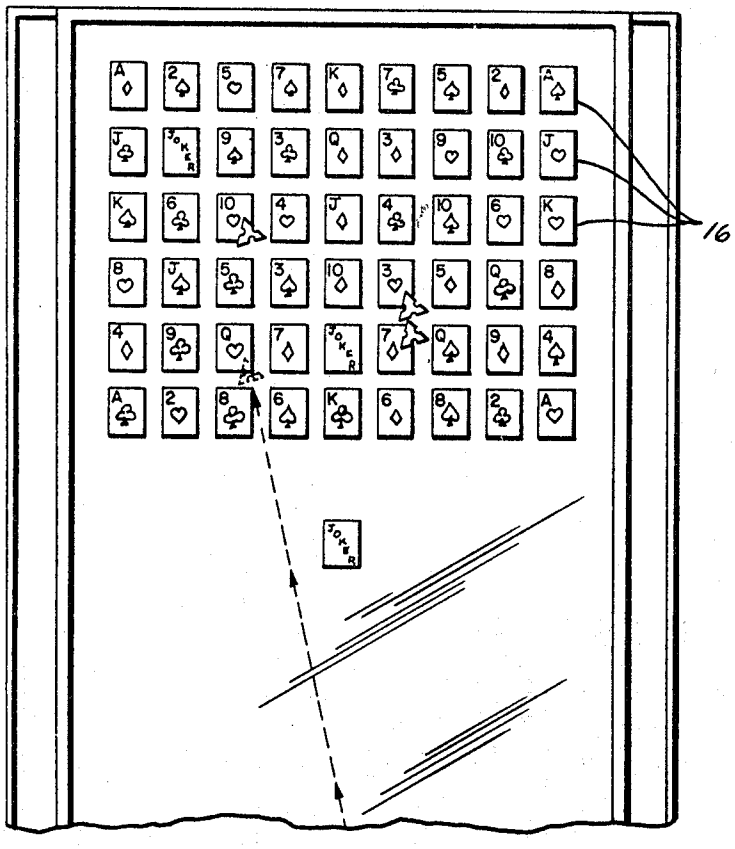
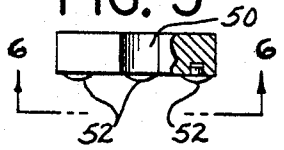



FIG. 4




FIG. 5



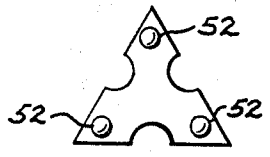




FIG. 6

INVENTOR.
CARROLL E. SMITH

BY

Bernard A. Brown

ATTORNEY

Oct. 13, 1970 C. E. SMITH 3,533,626

# BOARD GAME HAVING INDICATING PLAYING PIECES

Original Filed Sept. 13, 1966 2 Sheets-Sheet 2

FIG. 3

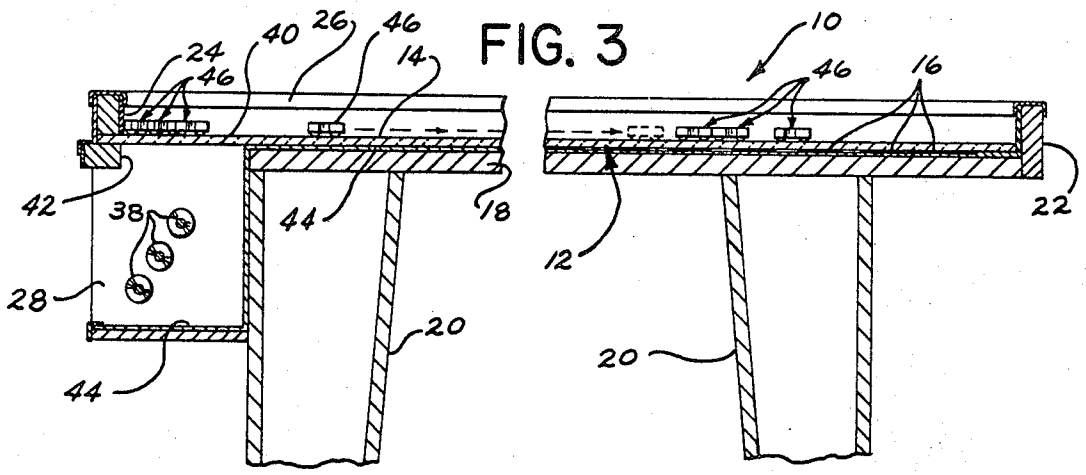
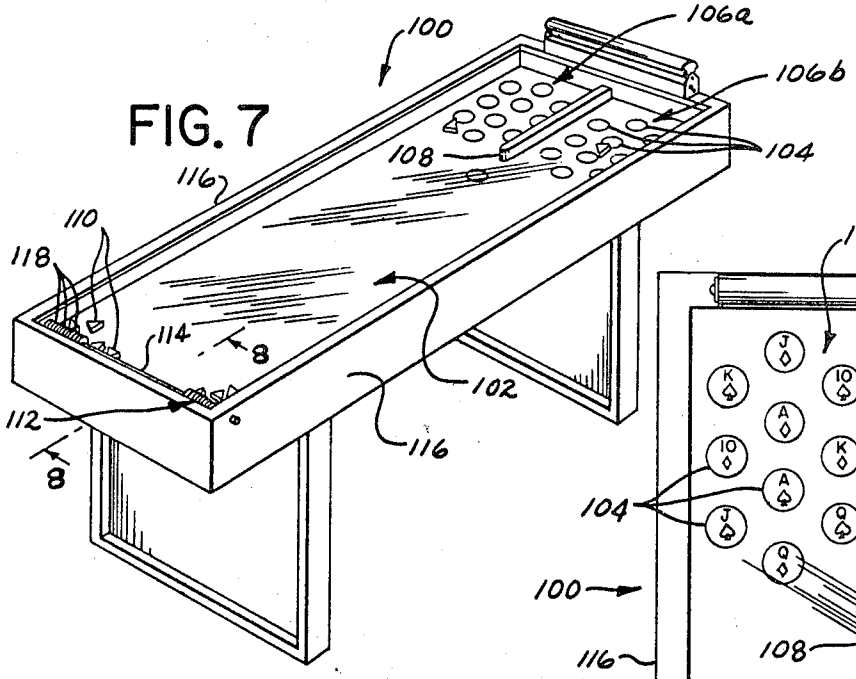



FIG. 7



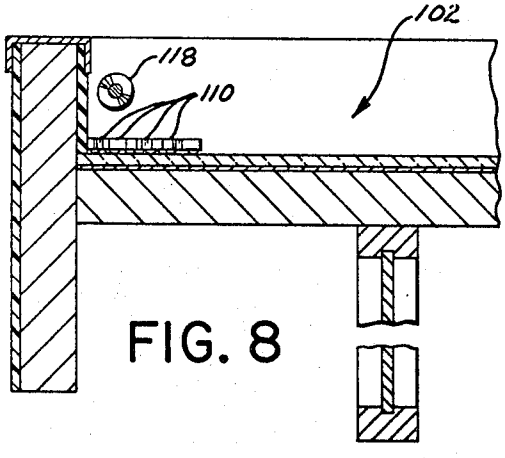




FIG. 8

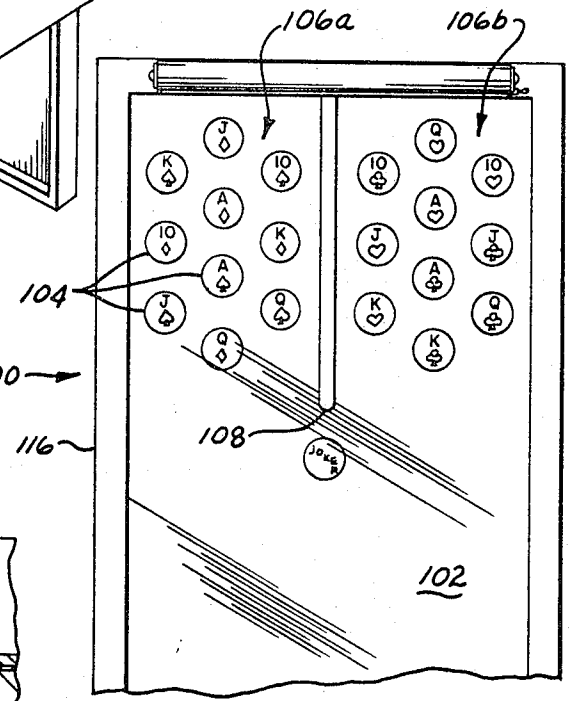



FIG. 9

INVENTOR.
CARROLL E. SMITH
BY
Bernard S. Brown
ATTORNEY

United States Patent Office 3,533,626
Patented Oct. 13, 1970



3,533,626

# BOARD GAME HAVING INDICATING PLAYING PIECES

Carroll E. Smith, 2336 Graydon, Monrovia, Calif. 91016

Application Sept. 13, 1966, Ser. No. 586,906, now Patent No. 3,467,386, dated Sept. 16, 1969, which is a continuation-in-part of Ser. No. 408,170, Nov. 2, 1964. Divided and this application Nov. 12, 1968, Ser. No. 774,856

Int. Cl. A63f *1/04, 3/00*

U.S. Cl. 273—126 1 Claim

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Game apparatus is provided having playing pieces or markers propelled by players along a playing surface or base in attempts to locate markers in scoring relation to scoring zones separated from each other to leave spaces; each playing piece is so configured in relation to said spaces and has such an indicator part that the playing piece can occupy a space either to indicate a score or not indicate a score; score keeping means are positioned between a transparent end area of the base and are visible from above. The markers take the shape of triangular pieces with the apices acting as score indicators when placed on one or more scoring zones. The particular size and configuration of these markers with respect to the spacing between scoring zones allow the indicators or apices of one marker to contact two or more scoring zones at the same time. The marker may also be located between scoring zones such that its indicators contact one or none of the scoring zones.

This application is a division of application Ser. No. 586,906, filed Sept. 13, 1966, now Pat. 3,467,386 which is a continuation-in-part of Ser. No. 408,170 filed Nov. 2, 1964, now abandoned.

## BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to games; more particularly, the invention relates to improvements in game apparatus for games of the type wherein playing pieces or markers are propelled along a playing surafce in an attempt to locate the markers in scoring relation to a plurality of scoring zones spaced about the surface.

Game apparatus of the class to which this invention relates are well known in the art and are used for playing a variety of games. Poker, for example, is played with game apparatus of this type. In this case, the scoring zones are defined by playing cards bonded to the playing base or card facsimiles imprinted on the base. The game is played by assigning each player a given number of playing pieces, or markers, which the player propels along the base in an attempt to locate each marker in scoring relation to one or more of the playing cards. The player whose markers register the best poker hand wins. As indicated above, poker is only one of the many different games which may be played with game apparatus of this general type.

Briefly described, the invention provides game apparatus wherein each marker is shaped to define, or otherwise includes, one or more indicators, the effective size of each of which is substantially smaller than the overall size of the marker. The scoring zones on the playing base of the apparatus are spaced in such a way that each indicator of each marker may be disposed in scoring relation to only one scoring zone at one time. Accordingly, the maximum number of scoring zones relative to which a marker may be disposed in scoring relation at one time may be controlled. For example, if a marker has but a single indicator, each marker may be disposed in scoring relation to



only a single scoring zone. If the marker is equipped with two spaced indicators, the marker may be disposed in scoring relation to either one or two, but no more, scoring zones at one time. In the illustrative embodiment of the invention, each marker has three indicators, whereby each marker may be disposed in scoring relation to a maximum of three scoring zones at one time. This unique shape of the marker also permits a playing base of given size to contain a maximum number of scoring zones and, in addition, permits the markers themselves to be of convenient size and to have sufficient mass for effectively sliding them along the playing base.

A further feature of the invention resides in an improved table construction which embodies the playing base of the present apparatus. This table is equipped with scoring keeping means disposed below the base and accessible from one end of the table. The base has a transparent area overlying the score keeping means to permit the latter means to be viewed from above the base, thereby facilitating keeping of a player's score, without diminishing the overall playing area of the base.

It is therefore the general object of the present invention to provide improved game apparatus of the character described.

An object of the invention is the provision of game apparatus of the character described wherein the playing pieces, or markers, are uniquely constructed to control the maximum number of scoring zones relative to which each marker may be disposed in scoring relation at one time.

An object of the invention is to provide improved game apparatus of the character described wherein the unique construction of the markers permits a playing base with a maxmium number of scoring zones with markers of convenient size.

Other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent to those versed in the art from a consideration of the following description, the appended claim and the accompanying drawings.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the present improved game apparatus;

FIG. 2 is an enlarged, fragmentary top plan view of the apparatus;

FIG. 3 is an enlarged vertical sectional view, taken at line 3—3 in FIG. 1;

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of a unique playing piece or marker according to the invention;

FIG. 5 is a side elevational view, partially broken away, of the marker of FIG. 4;

FIG. 6 is a bottom view of the marker of FIGS. 4 and 5, taken at line 6—6 in FIG. 5;

FIG. 7 is a perspective view of a modified game apparatus according to the invention;

FIG. 8 is an enlarged, fragmentary vertical sectional view taken at line 8—8 in FIG. 7; and

FIG. 9 is an enlarged fragmentary plan view of the game apparatus in FIG. 7.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Referring first to FIGS. 1 through 6, there is illustrated game apparatus **10** in the form of a game table. This table includes a playing base **12** of generally rectangular outline. As shown best in FIG. 3, the base **12** comprises a rectangular transparent sheet **14**, which may be plastic or glass. Cemented or otherwise bonded to the undersurface of this sheeet are a multiplicity of playing cards **16**. Cards **16** are located at one end of the base **12** and are spaced about the base in the rectangular pattern shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. As will be explained later, each playing card **16** defines a scoring zone on the base.

Base **12** is supported by a horizontal platform **18** of the table **10**. Fixed to the under surface of this platform are legs **20** for positioning the base **12** at a convenient height above the floor. Upstanding side rails **22** are fixed to the side edges of the table platform **18** and rise above the base **12** to define a border thereabout. According to preferred practice of the invention, a resilient cushion **24** is bonded or otherwise secured to the inner surfaces of the rails **22**. The purpose of this cushion will appear presently. A channel shaped cap **26** may be fitted over the upper edges of the rails **22** and cushions **24**, as shown in FIG. 3, to provide the table **10** with a finished appearance.

At one end of the table **10** is a score keeping enclosure **28**. This enclosure has a bottom wall **30** secured to the adjacent table legs **20** and vertical side walls **32** secured to the ends of the bottom wall **30**, the outer surfaces of the adjacent legs **20**, and the table platform **18**. The score keeping enclosure **28** opens endwise of the table **10**. Within the enclosure are score keeping means **34**. Various score keeping means may be employed on the table. The illustrated score keeping means comprises a plurality of horizontal supporting rods **36** which are fixed at their ends to the enclosure side walls **32** and mount thereon a plurality of counters **38**. The location of the score keeping means **34** below the playing base **12** is convenient from the standpoint of compactness. In other words, the score keeping means are located out of the way and yet in a position which they are readily accessible for keeping the players scores. However, the score keeping means **34**, being disposed beneath the table **12**, as it is, is not readily visible from above the table or from the end of the table.

For this reason, the base **12** is provided with a transparent area or window **40** overlying the score keeping enclosure **28** through which the score keeping means **34** are readily visible from above the base. The transparent area **40** is simply provided by cutting an opening **42** in the table platform **18** in registry with and preferably of the same size as the enclosure **28**. The transparent sheet **14** extends over the platform opening **42** to provide the transparent viewing area **40**. The sheet **14**, extending over the platform opening **42**, as it does, provides a continuous playing surface which extends from one end of the table **10** to its other end and over the platform opening **42**. As a result, the entire upper surface area of the table is available for play.

To enhance the appearance of the table **10**, the inner side wall and bottom wall surfaces of the score keeping enclosure **28** are preferably lined with a felt material **44** or other suitable lining material. According to the preferred practice of the invention, this lining material is also interposed between the transparent sheet **14** of the base **12** and the platform **18** of the table **10**, to cushion the sheet.

Used in conjunction with the table **10** are playing pieces, or markers **46**. One of these markers is illustrated in enlarged detail in FIGS. 4 through 6. As shown in these latter figures, each marker **46** comprises a generally flat, triangular body **48**. The markers may comprise any suitable material, and may preferably be fabricated of steel. For appearance's sake, the sides of the markers may be recessed as indicated at **50**. As explained hereinafter, the markers **46** must slide freely along the playing surface of the base **12**, which is the upper surface of the transparent sheet **14**. To this end, each marker **46** may be equipped with plastic feet or bearings **52** for engaging the playing surface. These bearings may comprise pins of Teflon, nylon, or other appropriate material, which are simply press-fitted into the underside of each marker, as shown in FIG. 5. According to the preferred practice of the invention, each marker is equipped with three bearings arranged in a triangular pattern of FIG. 6 so that each marker will rest flat on the playing surface.

According to the present invention, at least one and preferably all three, of the apex points of each marker **46** define an indicator or pointer **54** which cooperate with the scoring areas **16** in the manner described below. In the event that less than all of the apex points of each marker are to be used as indicators or pointers, the marker points which are to be so used may be designated by colors, or in some other fashion. Conceivably, in some games which may be played with the present apparatus, the points of each marker may be differently colored and assigned different point values to be used in calculating the total score which is registered by each marker during the progress of a game. It is apparent of course that the marker indicators **54** may comprise other than physical points on the marker. For example, each indicator **54** might comprise a simple line or other mark impressed into or otherwise formed in each marker.



According to the present invention, the scoring zones **16** are spaced in such a way that each of the marker indicators **54** can be disposed in scoring relation to only one scoring zone at one time. Thus, if each marker is equipped with only one indicator **54**, the marker can be disposed in scoring engagement with but a single scoring zone. If each marker is equipped with two indicators, each marker can be disposed in scoring relation to one or two, but no more, scoring zones at one time. In the event each marker is equipped with three indicators, as in the case of the marker shown in FIG. 4, each marker may be disposed in scoring relation to a maximum of three scoring zones at one time. It is apparent, therefore, that the maximum number of scoring zones relative to which each marker may be disposed in scoring relation at one time may be controlled or varied by changing the number of indicators on the marker. In some games, such as the illustrated poker game, it is desirable to provide each marker with three indicators, as shown, so that each marker may be disposed in scoring relation to up to three scoring zones, or playing cards **16**, at one time.

When playing a game with the illustrated game apparatus **10**, each player is assigned a given number of makers **46**. During each turn of a player, he propels one or more of his markers along the playing surface of the base **12** toward the scoring zones or playing cards **16**. The player's score is then computed by noting which if any of the indicators or pointers **54** of the corresponding markers are disposed in scoring relation to the scoring zone **16**. In the case of the illustrated poker game, the player whose markers registered the best poker hand during each round would be designated the winner of that particular round and would be assigned a number of points commensurate with his particular winning hand.

It will be observed that each marker indicator or pointer **54** is substantially smaller in size than the overall size of the marker. This is advantageous since it permits a playing base **12** of given size to contain a maximum number of scoring zones **16** and, as well, the use of markers of convenient size and appropriate weight. In other words, if each marker were simply made round, in the usual way, the only way in which it would be possible to limit or control the maximum number of scoring positions relative to which the marker could be disposed in scoring relation at one time would be to make the spaces between adjacent scoring zones larger than the markers. This, in turn, would require the spaces to be made excessively large or the markers to be made excessively small. Large spaces between adjacent scoring zones, of course, would increase the overall size of the game apparatus, while excessively small markers would render the latter difficult to handle. According to the present invention, these difficulties are simply solved by providing each marker with the indicators **54** which are substantially smaller than the markers themselves and by using the game apparatus in such a way that the scoring relation of each marker to a scoring zone **16** is determined by the relative position of the zone and one of the indicators on the marker rather than by the relative position of the zone and the marker as a whole. This obviously permits the spaces between adjacent scoring zones to be minimized, thereby permitting a reduction in the overall size of the game apparatus for a given number

of scoring zones, and, at the same time, permits the use of markers of any convenient overall size and weight. It is apparent that the number of indicators with which each marker is equipped may vary from game to game depending upon the maximum number of scoring zones relative to which each marker is to be disposed in scoring relation at one time for the particular game.

The modified game apparatus illustrated in FIGS. 7 through 9 includes a table **100** which is similar to that described earlier and includes a base **102** having means, such as playing cards, defining a plurality of scoring zones **104** spaced about the base. In contrast to the earlier game apparatus, however, the base **102** of the table **100** is divided into two playing areas or fields **106***a* and **106***b* by an upstanding, longitudinally extending divider **108** rising above the upper playing surface of the base **102** and extending lengthwise of the latter along its longitudinal center line. Each of these playing fields has a number of the scoring zones **104** spaced thereabout, in the manner best illustrated in FIG. 9. The modified apparatus also includes playing pieces or markers **100** which are identical to the markers illustrated in FIGS. 4 through 6.

The table **100** is somewhat differently constructed than the table **10** described earlier. The differences between the two tables, however, are unimportant except that in the case of the table **100**, the score keeping means **112** are located above the playing base **102**, at one end of the table. In this case, the score keeping means comprise a rod **114** which extends between and is secured at its ends to the upstanding side rails **116** of the table and mounts counters **118**.

The modified game apparatus of FIGS. 7 through 9 is used in much the same way as the game apparatus of FIGS. 1 through 6. In the case of the apparatus of FIGS. 7 through 9, however, each player is assigned one of the two playing fields **106***a* or **106***b* and each player's score is determined by the positions of his markers relative to the scoring zones **104** in his respective playing field.

Those versed in the art will appreciate that the present invention achieves the objects and realizes the advantages hereinbefore mentioned.



Although specific embodiments of the present invention have been illustrated and described herein, it will be understood that the same are merely exemplary of presently preferred embodiments capable of attaining the objects and advantages hereinbefore mentioned, and that the invention is not limited thereto; variations will be readily apparent to those versed in the art, and the invention is entitled to the broadest interpretation within the terms of the appended claim.

The inventor claims:

What I claim is:

**1.** A game apparatus comprising a base having a playing surface, means on said base defining a plurality of scoring zones spaced about the base, said scoring zones being totally separated from one another so that each scoring zone is completely encircled by a blank non-scoring region, a generally triangular game piece slidable on said playing surface, the three apieces of said game piece being adapted to be disposed in scoring relation to said scoring zones to indicate a score, said game piece being configured and sized in relation to said non-scoring region about each scoring zone such that the game piece can be disposed between adjacent scoring zones with two or more of said apices touching two or more adjacent scoring zones and can also be disposed in position wherein none or one of said apices touch a scoring zone.

**References Cited**

UNITED STATES PATENTS

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 753,561 | 3/1904 | Edmunds | 273—126 |
| 2,230,874 | 2/1941 | Wenneis | 273—126 |
| 2,722,423 | 11/1955 | Sire | 273—126 X |
| 2,727,744 | 12/1955 | Watson | 273—128 |
| 3,181,866 | 5/1965 | Clochesy | 273—126 |


RICHARD C. PINKHAM, Primary Examiner

T. ZACK, Assistant Examiner

U.S. Cl. X.R.

273—128