June 6, 1967 R. S. BABCOCK 3,323,801

CARD HOLDER

Filed Feb. 24, 1965

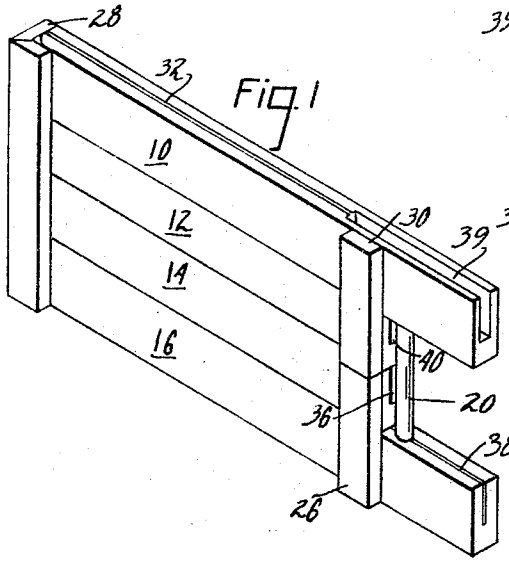


Fig. 1

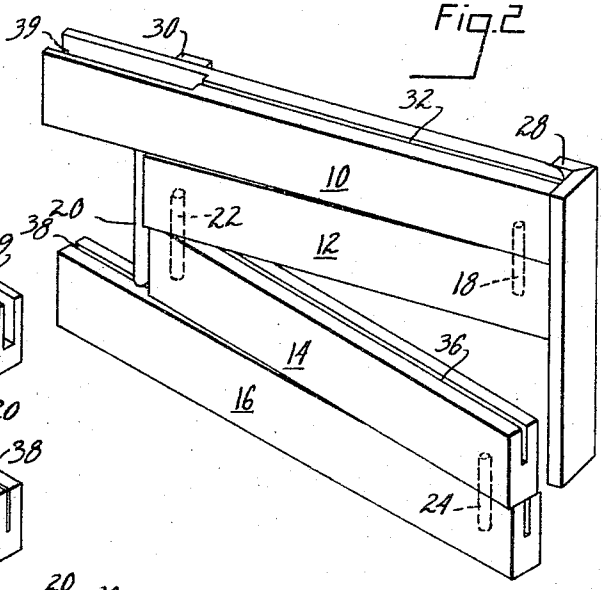


Fig. 2

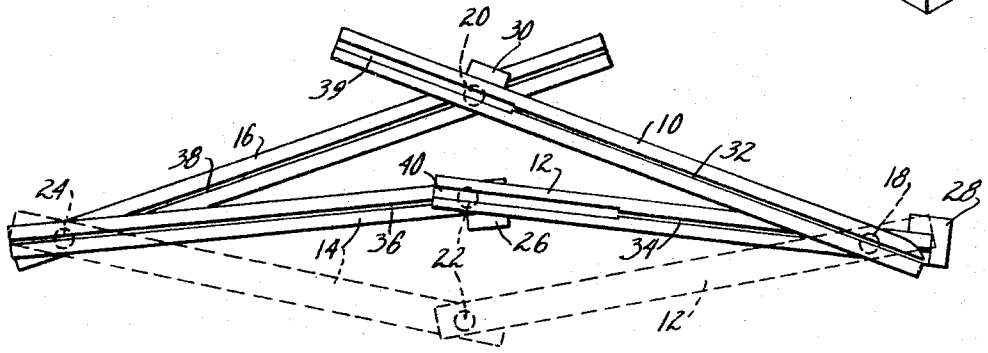


Fig. 3

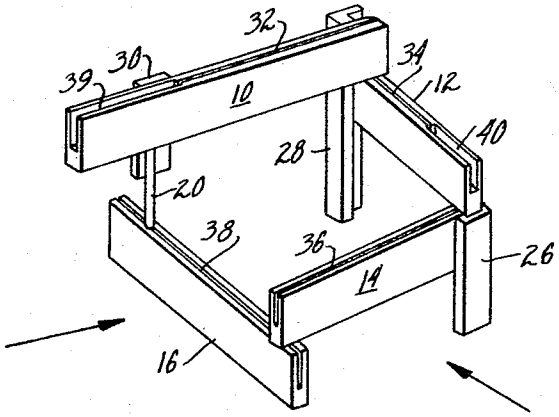


Fig. 4

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CARD HOLDER

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The present invention relates to an improved card holder enabling two players to play a four-handed card game, and is particularly adapted for use in such games in which each player is permitted to see only his own hand and the opposite dummy hand but not his opponent's dummy hand during play.

It is a principal object of the invention to provide a card holder of this general description embodying in compact and convenient form four card racks, which are supported and arranged to hold the cards of the adjacent hands dealt to the two players and rearwardly thereof the cards of the two opposite or dummy hands, in such manner that each player has an unobstructed view of the card faces of his own and his dummy hand while at the same time said card faces are effectively concealed from the other said player.

It is a further object of the invention to provide a card holder of this general description comprising four racks which are pivotally connected to be opened out so that they form roughly a diamond-shaped closure and alternatively to be folded together into a compact portable unit.

With these and other objects in view as may hereinafter appear, the several features of the invention will be readily appreciated by one skilled in the art from the following description taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of my improved card holder in its folded carrying position;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the card holder shown in FIG. 1 turned end for end and in partly opened position;

FIG. 3 is a plan view of the card holder shown in full lines in slightly less than half open position and in dotted lines in slightly more than half open position; and

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the card holder in its fully opened playing position, the arrows indicating the assumed location of the players with relation thereto.

Referring to the drawings, the card holder illustrated as embodying in a preferred form the several features of the invention comprises a group of four racks **10**, **12**, **14**, **16** pivoted to one another, end to end, and adapted to be opened out from the package position of FIG. 1 in which they are stacked one above the other to a fully opened position forming the roughly diamond-shaped closure of FIG. 4. The top rack **10** is connected to the upper intermediate rack **12** by means of a pivot pin **18** and is connected at its other end to the bottom rack **16** by a pivot pin **20**. Intermediate racks **12** and **14** are pivotally connected by a pivot pin **22**, and rack **14** is connected to rack **16** by pivot pin **24**.

It will be noted that the pivot pin **20** connecting the racks **10** and **16** is located beyond the pivoted together ends of the racks **12** and **14** so that these two racks are permitted to swing freely into the folded position in line with the top and bottom racks. It will be noted further that

each of the top and bottom racks **10** and **16** is extended beyond the pivot pin **20** connecting said racks a sufficient distance to provide with the pivot pin **20** a three-sided pocket for the storage of a pack of cards therebetween when the card holder is folded to its put-away or carrying position.

When the card holder is opened out as shown in FIG. 4, the racks **16** and **14** will support the hands of the two players located and facing as indicated by the arrows. The rack **12** rearwardly of and at a higher level than the rack **16** will support the cards of the corresponding dummy hand. The rack **14** adjacent to the rack **16** forms the front card holder for the second player, the rack **10** which is disposed rearwardly of and at a higher level than the rack **14** forming the corresponding dummy hand holding rack.

In order to support the opened out card holder in an upright position, the right hand end of rack **14** as viewed in FIGS. 3 and 4 is provided with a downwardly extending foot **26**. The rear corner of the card holder as viewed in FIG. 4 is supported by a second foot **28** which is L-shaped in cross section, is secured to and faces against the rear side and end of the rack **12**. The foot **28** also extends upwardly across the side and end portions of the top rack **10** so that a swinging movement of the rack **12** away from the rack **10** causes the edge of the foot **28** to act as a stop to prevent the opening of the pivoted racks **10** and **12** beyond a position of somewhat less than a right angle as shown in FIG. 4. The foot **28** also acts as a stop to limit the rearward movement of the racks **14** and **16** relative to the rack **12** when the card holder is folded. The end face of the foot **28** also serves as an end closure for the four racks when in their closed package position. During the folding operation the foot **26** secured to the rack **14** is moved into engagement with the bottom rack **16** thus preventing rack **14** from moving beyond a vertically aligned position, with relation to the rack **16**. The stop **30** secured to the rack **10** limits the rearward folding movement of rack **12** about the pivot **18** with relation to the rack **10** so that the rack **12** together with the left hand end of rack **14** pivotally connected to the rack **12** are positively supported in the desired vertically stacked position of FIG. 1 with relation to the rack **10**.

The racks **10**, **12**, **14** and **16** have cut into the top faces thereof card-receiving grooves **32**, **34**, **36** and **38**. The groove **32** in the rack **10**, in which the dummy hand associated with the front rack **14** is supported, is formed at one end thereof with an enlarged portion **39** adapted to receive the cards of the dummy hand in stacked relation in the event that the dummy hand is not initially disclosed, as, for example, in accordance with my method of dealing and arriving at a contract. Similarly the groove **34** associated with the rack **12** for supporting the dummy hand associated with the front rack **16** is formed with an enlarged portion **40** to receive a group of cards which are dealt to but are not initially disclosed in the dummy hand to be supported in the rack **12**.

As best shown in FIGS. 2, 3 and 4 the card holder is opened out by first moving the lower two racks **14** and **16** about the pivot **20** forwardly away from the foot **28**. As this movement is continued to approximately the solid line position of FIG. 3, racks **12** and **14** connected by the pivot pin **22** are moved to a relatively straightened posi-

tion as shown in solid lines in FIG. 3, thereafter being moved to the dotted line position of FIG. 3, and finally to the fully opened position of FIG. 4 in which the foot **28** secured to the rack **12** is engaged against the back side of the rack **10** and in which the racks **10** and **12** turning on the pivot pin **18** and the racks **14** and **16** turning on pivot pin **24** are opened out to slightly less than a right angle. This diamond-shaped arrangement of the racks has been found to provide an optimum relationship of the racks in which each player is permitted to see only his own hand and the dummy hand associated therewith. It will be noted that the racks **16** and **14** supporting cards dealt to the two players are at a substantially lower level than the two racks **12** and **10** supporting the dummy hands thus insuring an unobstructed view of the rearwardly placed dummy hand to each player. The diamond-shaped arrangement of the racks as shown in FIG. 4 is of especial advantage to insure the concealment of each player's cards from the other player under conditions likely to be encountered while traveling when the two players might be seated side by side with the card holder positioned between and in front of them.

The illustrated card holder is especially well adapted for the playing of a novel card game which is an adaptation of contract bridge in which only two players participate in the dealing and arrangement of the cards and in the bidding to arrive at a playing contract. The rules for this game are as follows:

Four hands are dealt, one being assigned to each of the four racks. The hands in the racks **16** and **14** adjacent the respective players are set up. The other two hands are picked up without inspection and are placed, while still folded, in the recessed portions **39** and **40** of the slots in the respective dummy racks **10** and **12**. The dealer bids on the basis of his own hand. Upon bidding anything except "pass," "double," or "redouble," the dealer picks up and arranges three of his dummy's cards in the opposite rack, so that they are visible to him. It is then the second player's turn to do likewise. Consecutive passes by both players terminate the bidding. Also, a double terminates the bidding, except that the opponent may redouble, which terminates the bidding. The person who has last the contract leads from his own hand regardless of where he sits. After the initial lead all remaining cards of each dummy hand, if any, are placed in the appropriate racks so that each player sees his own hand and his dummy hand, but not the other two. The play and scoring then continues as in regular contract bridge.

A preferred embodiment of the invention having been described, what is claimed is:

1. A card holder enabling two players to play four-handed card games which comprises four racks each constructed and arranged to support cards therein in an upright position, and means connecting said racks to one another as a four-sided closure, said racks comprising two adjacent player hand supporting racks disposed at slightly less than a right angle to one another and two dummy hand supporting racks, one disposed opposite each of said player hand receiving racks and at a higher level.

2. A card holder enabling two players to play four-handed card games according to claim **1** in which pivotal connections are provided between said racks connecting said racks end to end for arrangement in a four-sided closure and for folding into parallel relation to a compact package.

3. A card holder according to claim **2** in which the four racks comprising said adjacent player hand supporting racks and said oppositely disposed dummy hand supporting racks for the folded position are stacked one above the other in parallel relation, and in which said pivotal connections comprise a pivot pin connecting two adjacent ends of the top and bottom racks, a second pivot pin connecting the other end of the bottom rack with one end of the intermediate rack adjacent thereto, a third pivot pin connecting the other end of the top rack with one end of the upper intermediate rack adjacent thereto, and a fourth pivot pin connecting the remaining ends of said intermediate racks.

4. A card holder according to claim **3** in which a downwardly extending foot is attached to the upper intermediate rack adjacent its pivotal connection with the top rack, and a second downwardly extending foot is connected to the lower intermediate rack adjacent its pivotal connection with the upper intermediate rack.

5. A card holder enabling two players to play four-handed card games which comprises four card receiving racks adapted to be arranged in a diamond-shaped closure comprising two adjacent player hand receiving racks, each having formed therein a card receiving slot, and two opposed dummy hand receiving racks, each having formed therein a card receiving slot extending along the length of the rack and having adjacent one end thereof a widened portion to receive an undistributed group of said cards, and pivotal connections connecting said racks, one above the other, with each opposed dummy hand receiving rack located at a higher level than the associated player hand receiving rack, said racks being foldable into parallel relation in a compact vertically stacked package.

6. A card holder enabling two players to play four-handed card games which comprises four racks each constructed and arranged to support cards therein in an upright position, pivotal connections connecting said racks to form a closure, said racks being mounted one above the other providing a top rack, a bottom rack, and upper and lower intermediate racks foldable into parallel relation in a compact vertically stacked package.

7. A card holder enabling two players to play four-handed card games, which comprises four racks pivoted to one another end to end forming a four-sided closure and adapted to be folded into a closely adjacent parallel package relationship in which the four racks are stacked, one above another, and pivotal connections comprising a first pivot pin connecting adjacent ends of the top and bottom rack for said stacked position, second and third pivot pins connecting the other ends of the top and bottom rack with the adjacent end of the next adjacent intermediate rack, and a fourth pivot pin connecting the adjacent remaining ends of the two intermediate racks, and a stop device interposed between two adjacent pivoted-together racks limiting the angular opening of said racks to form said diamond-shaped enclosure.

8. A card holder enabling two players to play four-handed card games which comprises four racks each constructed and arranged to support cards therein in an upright position, pivotal connections connecting said racks to form a closure, said racks being mounted one above the other providing a bottom player hand receiving rack, a second player hand receiving rack pivoted to the upper side of said first rack, a third dummy hand receiving rack pivoted to the upper side of said second rack, and a fourth dummy hand receiving rack pivoted to the upper side of said third rack and to the free end of said first rack, a card holder supporting foot attached to said second rack arranged for the closed position of said first and second racks for engagement with said first rack, a foot attached to said third rack arranged for the closed position of said card holder to engage with and limit the movement of said first and second racks about their respective pivots, and a stop element secured to said fourth rack arranged to engage with and limit the swinging movement of said third rack.

9. A card holder enabling two players to play four-handed card games which comprises four card supporting racks pivoted end to end, one above the other form-

ing a roughly diamond-shaped closure and foldable into parallel relation in a compact vertically stacked package, and pivotal connections for said racks comprising a pivot pin connecting adjacent ends of the top and bottom racks, pivot pins connecting the opposite ends of said top and bottom racks with the respective adjacent intermediate racks, and a pivot pin connecting adjacent free ends of the two intermediate racks, said pivot pin connecting the top and bottom racks being located beyond the adjacent ends of said intermediate racks, and said top and bottom racks being formed with extensions providing with said pivot pin a card pack receiving pocket for the stacked package position of said racks.

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