United States Patent [19]

Welch

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[54] BOARD GAME APPARATUS

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[21] Appl. No.: **125,062**

[52] **U.S. Cl.....273/131 AB,** 273/131 F, 273/131 KN

[51] **Int. Cl.**.....**A63f 3/02**

[58] **Field of Search**.....273/131

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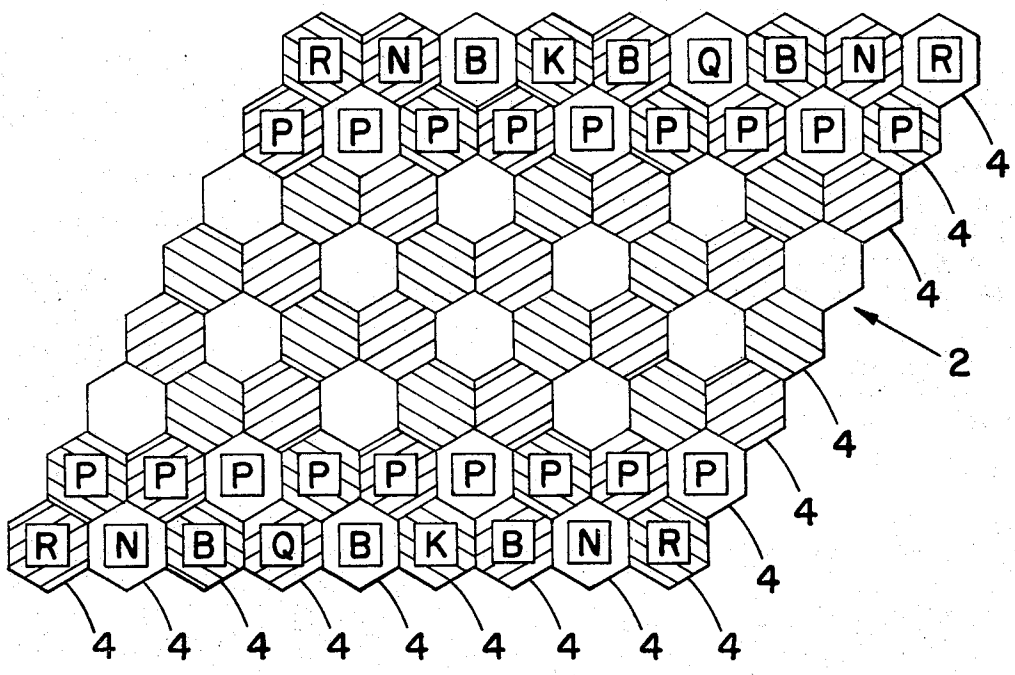
Primary Examiner—Delbert B. Lowe

Attorney—Robert M. Sperry

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A chess-type game comprising a game board of generally parallellogram configuration having the three-color pattern shown in FIG. 1 and formed of an even number of rows each containing nine hexagonal playing spaces disposed in continuous relation, and two sets of playing pieces each including three bishops and nine pawns. A checker-type game is also disclosed comprising the same game board and two sets of playing pieces each having nine men.

6 Claims, 12 Drawing Figures



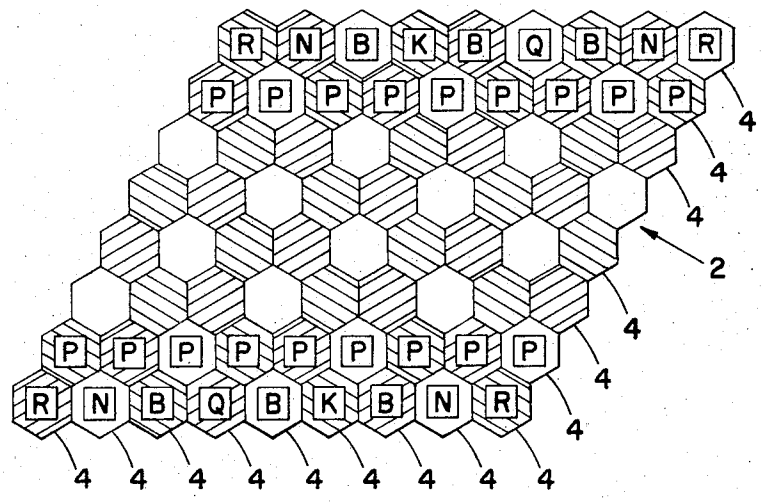


FIG. 1

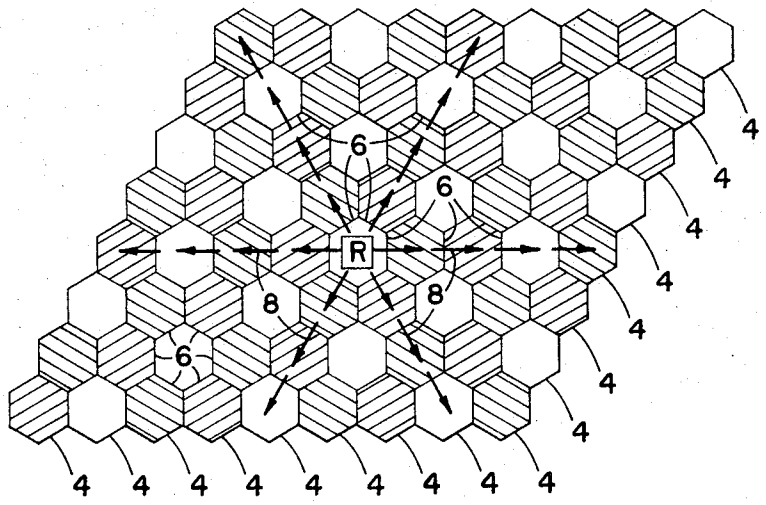


FIG. 2

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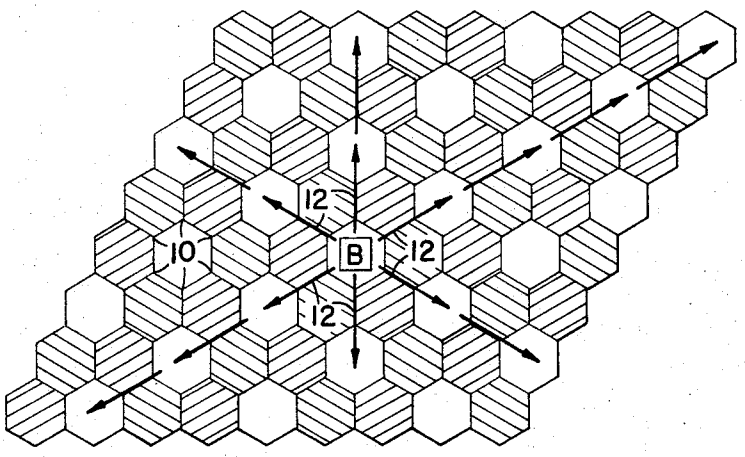


FIG. 3

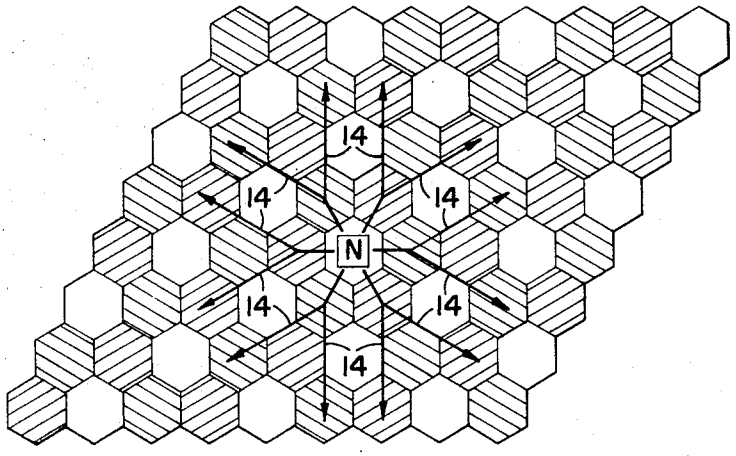


FIG. 4

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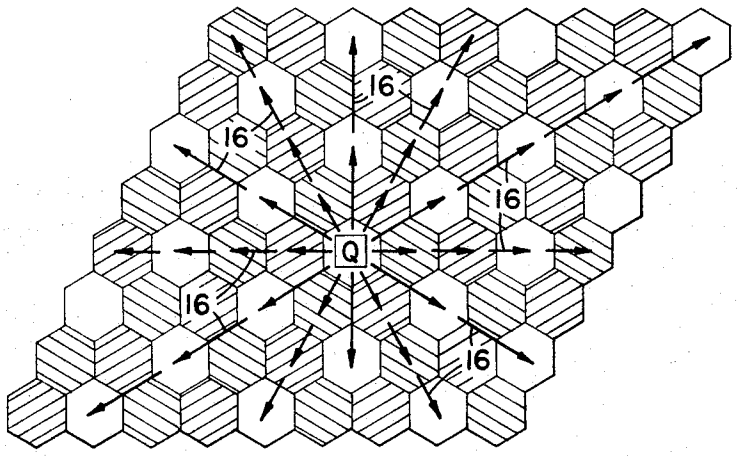


FIG. 5

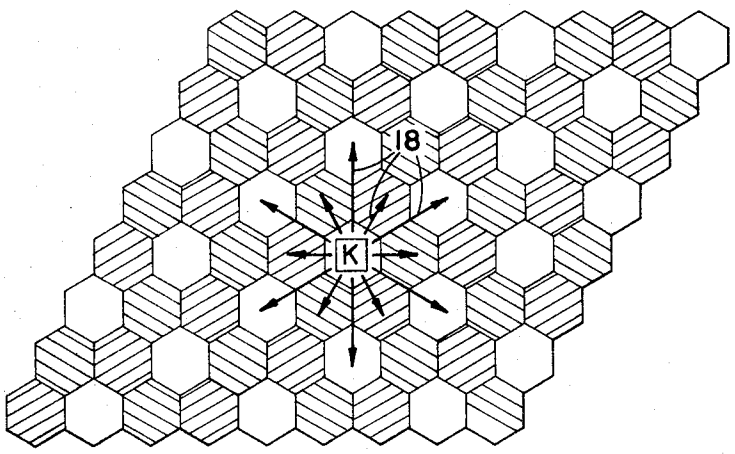


FIG. 6

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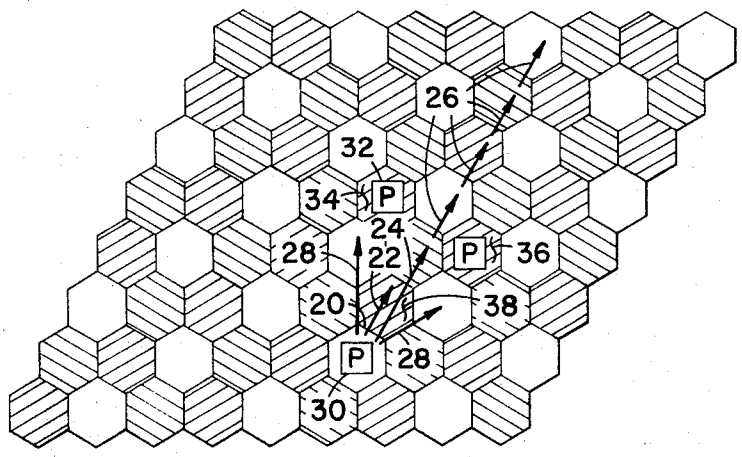


FIG. 7

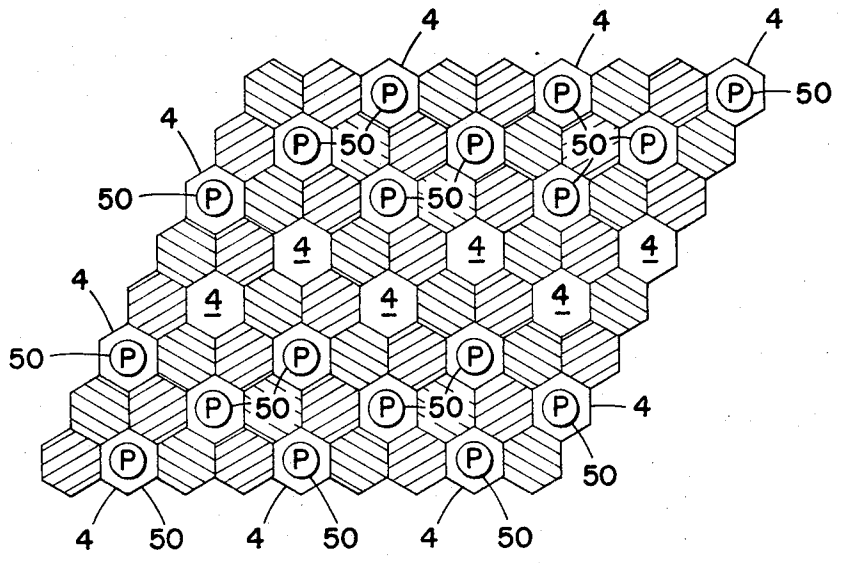


FIG. 10

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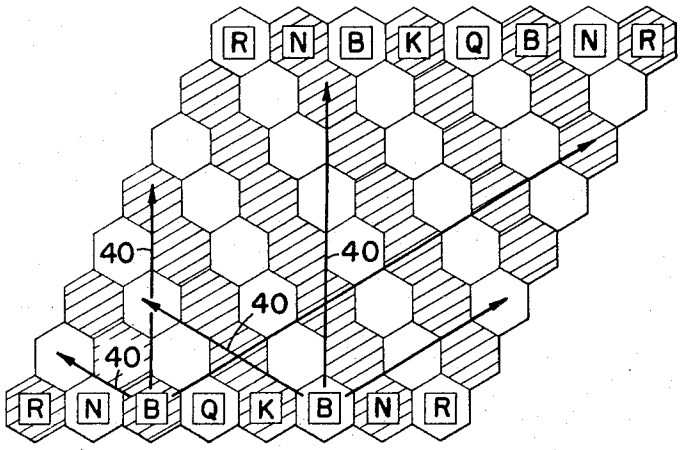


FIG. 8

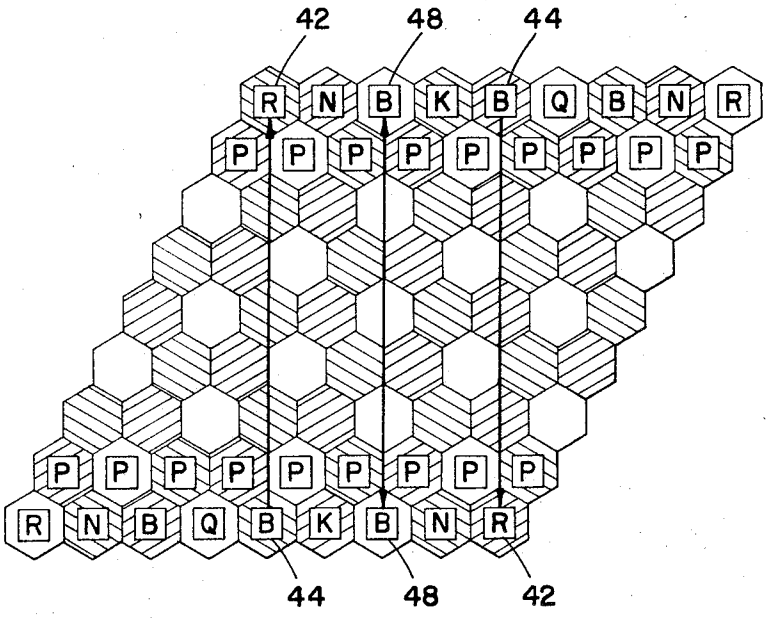


FIG. 9

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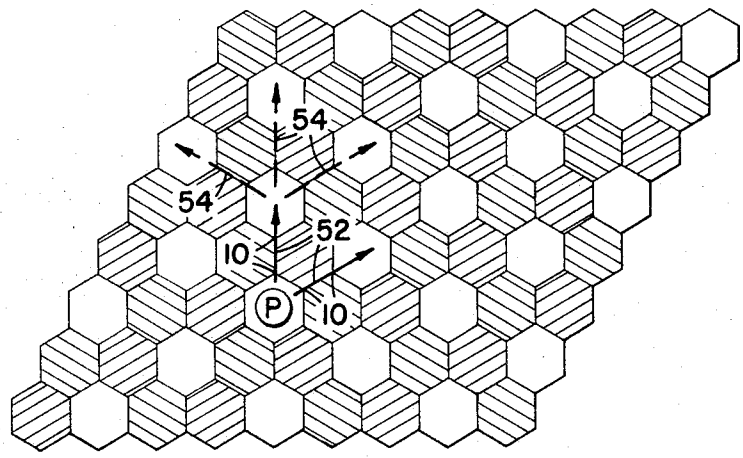


FIG. 11

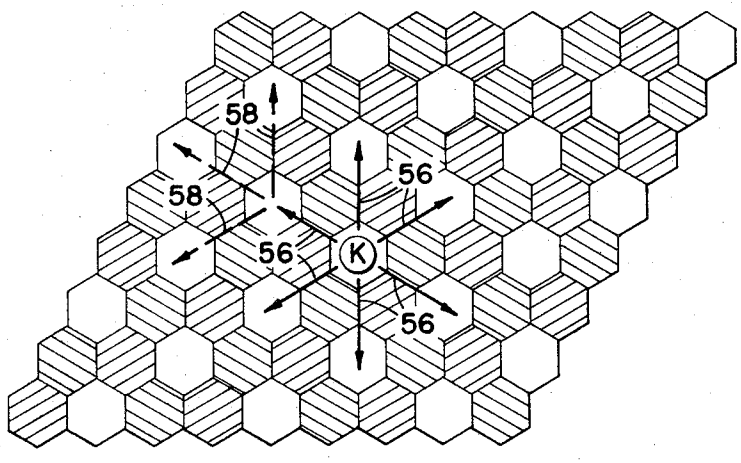


FIG. 12

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BOARD GAME APPARATUS

This invention relates to games and is particularly directed to board-type games, such as chess and checkers.

The intellectual challenge and appeal of such games as chess and checkers is clearly demonstrated by the fact that these games have continued to be popular for several hundred years. On the other hand, once the initial concepts of these games have been mastered, players frequency become bored or disenchanted by the somewhat regimented movement of playing pieces dictated by the limitations of the square shape of the playing board and the game spaces thereon. Unfortunately, no satisfactory alternative games or varietal forms have been proposed heretofore. Those which have been suggested have, generally, either lost the intellectual challenge or have been overly complex.

These disadvantages of the prior art are overcome with the present invention and novel playing apparatus and rules are provided, yielding games which retain the intellectual challenge and appeal of conventional chess and checker games, while adding greater flexibility of movement and permitting the creation of entirely new concepts of attack and defense.

The advantages of the present invention are preferably attained by providing a game board configured in the shape of a parallelogram formed by a plurality of rows of contiguous, hexagonal playing spaces; together with appropriate playing pieces and rules modifying such games as chess and checkers for play on such a board.

Accordingly, it is an object of the present invention to provide intellectually challenging board-type games.

Another object of the present invention is to provide intellectually challenging board-type games which are not overly complex.

An additional object of the present invention is to provide improved chess-and-checker-type games.

A further object of the present invention is to provide greater flexibility of movement for chess-and-checker-type games.

A specific object of the present invention is to provide improved games comprising a game board configured in the shape of a parallelogram formed by a plurality of contiguous, hexagonal playing spaces, together with appropriate playing pieces, and rules modifying such games as chess and checkers for play on said board.

These and other objects and features of the present invention will be apparent from the following detailed description, taken with reference to the figures of the accompanying drawing.

In the drawing:

FIG. 1 is a plan view of a game board embodying the present invention, having playing pieces for playing a chess-type game positioned on said board;

FIG. 2 is a plan view of the playing board of FIG. 1, illustrating the movement of a chess rook or castle thereon;

FIG. 3 is a view similar to that of FIG. 2, illustrating the movement of a bishop on said board;

FIG. 4 is a view similar to that of FIG. 2, illustrating the movement of a knight on said board;

FIG. 5 is a view similar to that of FIG. 2, illustrating the movement of a queen on said board;

FIG. 6 is a view similar to that of FIG. 2, illustrating the movement of a chess king on said board;

FIG. 7 is a view similar to that of FIG. 2, illustrating the movement of a chess pawn on said board;

FIG. 8 is a plan view of a first forbidden form of the game board of FIG. 1;

FIG. 9 is a plan view of a second forbidden form of the game board of FIG. 1;

FIG. 10 is a view similar to that of FIG. 1, having playing pieces for a checker type game positioned thereon;

FIG. 11 is a view similar to that of FIG. 2, illustrating the movement of a checker pawn on said board; and

FIG. 12 is a view similar to that of FIG. 2, illustrating the movement of a checker king on said board.

In that form of the present invention chosen for purposes of illustration, FIG. 1 shows a game board 2 configured in the shape of a parallelogram formed by a plurality of contiguous, hexagonal playing spaces 4. Preferably, adjacent playing spaces are marked in contrasting colors and a three color pattern is required, as shown. The board 2 is composed of a plurality of rows, each containing nine playing spaces 4. If desired, the number of rows may be varied. However, it is essential that there be an even number of rows and the number of playing spaces in each row cannot be varied. Thus the board 2 could, conceivably, be constructed with six, eight, 10, or 12 rows, each containing nine playing spaces 4. However, it appears that either eight or 10 rows is preferable. The board 2 cannot be constructed with seven or nine rows of playing spaces 4 and there must be nine, and only nine, of the playing spaces 4 in each row. The reasons for these restrictions will be explained subsequently.

For the chess-type game, the playing pieces are substantially identical to those of the conventional chess set, with the exceptions that the set of the present invention requires one additional bishop and one additional pawn for each team. On the other hand, the movement of the pieces must be modified to conform with the game board 2 of the present invention. As seen in FIG. 1, the starting positions of the pieces are substantially conventional, except that on each team, the queen stands to the left of the king and the additional bishops are interposed between the kings and queens. For purposes of illustration, the playing pieces are identified in the drawings as follows:

Pawn—P
Rook (Castle)—R
Knight—N
Bishop—B
Queen—Q
King—K

As seen in FIG. 2, the castles or "rooks" may move any number of spaces in any straight-line direction through the faces 6 of adjacent playing spaces 4, as indicated by arrows 8. The arrowheads indicate the spaces on which the piece may stop. A rook can continue such movement only until it reaches a space occupied by another piece. A rook may capture an opponent's piece by removing the opponent's piece from the board 2 and occupying the space 4 formerly held by the captured piece.

As seen in FIG. 3, the bishops may move any number of spaces in any straight-line direction through the corners 10 of the playing spaces 4, as indicated by arrows 12. A bishop can continue such movement only until it reaches a space occupied by another piece and may

move only on spaces of the same color as that occupied by the bishop at the start of the game. A bishop may capture an opponent's piece by removing the opponent's piece from the board **2** and occupying the space **4** formerly held by the captured piece. Referring to FIG. **1**, it will be seen that this movement permits the bishops to be played without previous movement of a pawn.

As seen in FIG. **4**, the knights may move one space through the faces **6** of adjacent playing spaces **4** plus one space through the corners **10** of the playing spaces **4**, as indicated by arrows **14**. A knight may capture an opponent's piece by removing the opponent's piece from the board **2** and occupying the space formerly held by the captured piece. In making a move, the knights may jump any piece occupying an intermediate playing space and are the only pieces which are permitted to do so.

As seen in FIG. **5**, the queens may move as either a rook or a bishop. That is, the queens may move any number of spaces in any straightline direction through either the faces **6** or corners **10** of the playing spaces **4**, as indicated by arrows **16**. A queen may move only in straight lines and may move only until it reaches a space occupied by another piece. A queen may capture an opponent's piece by removing the opponent's piece from the board **2** and occupying the space formerly held by the captured piece. It will be seen that, as with the bishops, the queens may be moved from their initial positions, shown in FIG. **1**, without prior movement of a pawn.

As seen in FIG. **6**, the chess kings may move one space in any direction through either the faces **6** or corners **10** of a playing space, as indicated by arrows **18**. A king may capture an opponent's piece by removing the opponent's piece from the board **2** and occupying the space formerly held by the captured piece. As in conventional chess, capture of the opponent's king constitutes winning the game.

FIG. **7** illustrates the moves of the chess pawns. Pawns may move only through the forward face **20** of a playing space **4**. On the initial move, a pawn may move either one space, as indicated by arrow **22**, or two spaces, as indicated by arrow **24**. Thereafter, the pawn may move only one space at a time, as indicated by arrows **26**. A pawn may not move onto a space occupied by another piece except to capture such piece and capture is made by a single space move through the corners of the playing space, as indicated by arrows **28**. A pawn generally captures an opponent's piece by removing the opponent's piece from the board **2** and occupying the space formerly held by the captured piece. The sole exception to this capture rule is that if, on an initial move of two spaces, the pawn crosses a space controlled by an opposing pawn, the pawn may be captured "en passant" by the opposing pawn. Thus, if the pawn **30** of FIG. **7** made an opening move of two spaces, as indicated by arrow **24**, while an opposing pawn **32** was located on space **34** or **36**, the opposing pawn **32** could capture the pawn **30** by moving to space **38** and removing the pawn **30** from the board **2**.

In play, the rules of conventional chess apply. However, it is found that, with the game board of the present invention and the movements of the pieces as described, an excitingly different and intellectually stimulating game results.

As described above, the game board **2** consists of a parallelogram formed of an even number of rows of contiguous, hexagonal playing spaces **4**; with each row consisting of nine such playing spaces **4**. It has been stated that each row must contain nine, and only nine, of the hexagonal playing spaces **4** and that an odd number of rows is forbidden. The reasons for this will now be explained.

FIG. **8** illustrates a forbidden form of the game board having eight rows of hexagonal playing spaces, but containing only eight hexagonal playing spaces in each row and employing a two-color pattern. The pawns have been omitted from FIG. **8** to facilitate showing the movement of the bishops. This corresponds to the number of playing spaces on a conventional chess board and would permit the use of a conventional set of chessmen. However, the entire character of the game is jeopardized if the bishops are not restricted to movement on playing spaces of a given color. On the other hand, with the two-color game board of FIG. **8**, conventional movement of bishops to contiguous playing spaces of a given color would render the bishops virtually useless; whereas movement through the corners of the playing spaces, as described in FIG. **3**, would cause the bishops to change colors, as indicated by arrows **40**, and would lead to hopeless confusion. At the same time, a three-color pattern on a game board having eight playing spaces to a row would result in a bishop coverage for playing spaces of only two colors. Hence, one-third of the board would have no bishop coverage. Conversely, if the game board were formed with 10 playing spaces per row, additional chessmen would be needed to provide teams covering two full rows in the starting position, a new starting line-up of pieces would be required, new rules would be needed, and an extremely complex game would result. Accordingly, such variations are forbidden and the game board of the present invention is restricted to a three-color pattern having nine hexagonal playing spaces per row.

FIG. **9** illustrates a second forbidden form of game board, wherein limitations of nine playing spaces per row and a three-color pattern are adhered to; but an array of nine rows is provided. However, this exposes the kings' rooks, indicated at **42**, to immediate capture by the opposing bishops, indicated at **44**, moving as indicated by arrows **46**. Moreover, the opposing bishops, indicated at **48**, are similarly exposed. Other odd-numbered arrays present similar problems and, hence, are forbidden. Thus, the game board of the present invention is limited to an even number of rows, each containing nine contiguous hexagonal spaces, and employing a three-colored pattern. Obviously, arrays of four or six rows provide insufficient room for movement of the pieces. On the other hand, arrays of 12 or more rows result in unwieldy dimensions without significantly affecting the game. Hence, arrays of either eight or 10 rows are preferred.

FIG. **10** shows the game board **2** of the present invention having a plurality of men **50** for a checker-type game disposed thereon in their starting positions. As shown, each team is composed of nine pawns **50** positioned on respective playing spaces **4** of a given color.

As seen in FIG. **11**, a checker pawn may move one space in any forward direction through the corners **10** of the playing space **4**, as indicated by arrows **52**, and

may capture an opponent's piece by jumping over the opponent's piece in any forward direction, as indicated by dashed arrows **54**, and removing the captured piece from the board **2**. Upon reaching the opposite edge of the board, a checker pawn becomes a checker king. Thereafter, as seen in FIG. **12**, the king may move one space in any direction through the corners of the playing space **4**, as indicated by arrows **56** in FIG. **12**, and may capture an opponent's piece by jumping over the opponent's piece in any direction, as indicated by dashed arrows **58**, and removing the captured piece from the board **2**. Jumps involving bends exceeding 90° are prohibited. Aside from this, the rules of conventional checker games apply.

It will be apparent that numerous other games, designed for play on conventional checker boards, may be adapted for play on the game board of the present invention. Accordingly, it should be clearly understood that the forms of the present invention described above and shown in the accompanying drawing, are illustrative only and are not intended to limit the scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A chess-type game comprising:

a game board having the peripheral configuration shown in FIG. **1** and having on its surface a checkered, three-color game pattern as shown in said FIG. **1** with the number of horizontal rows of playing spaces being an even number greater than six and less than twelve; and two sets of playing pieces; each of said sets consisting of a king, a queen, three bishops, two knights, two castles, and nine pawns, with the playing pieces of each of said sets bearing indicia indicative of membership in a respective one of said sets.

2. A checker type game comprising:

a game board having the peripheral configuration shown in FIG. **1** and having on its surface a checkered, three-color game pattern as shown in said FIG. **1** with the number of horizontal rows of playing spaces being an even number greater than six and less than twelve; and two sets of playing pieces; each of said sets consisting of nine pieces each bearing indicia indicative of membership in a respective one of said sets.

3. The game of claim **1** wherein said even number is eight.

4. The game of claim **1** wherein said even number is 10.

5. The game of claim **2** wherein said even number is eight.

6. The game of claim **2** wherein said even number is 10.

* * * * *