United States Patent [19]

Rabinovich

[11] **3,909,003**

[45] **Sept. 30, 1975**

[54] **AREA-MATCHING PUZZLE-GAME**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.**..... **273/157 R**; 35/31 D; 273/130 R; 273/137 R

[51] **Int. Cl.** **A63f 9/10**

[58] **Field of Search**..... 273/156, 157 R, 130 R, 273/135 B, 135 F, 137 R; 35/31 D, 31 F

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Primary Examiner—Anton O. Oechsle

[57] **ABSTRACT**

An area-matching puzzle-game including one or more (usually at least two) tablet-receiving trays and a plurality of tablets of a co-planar set of tablets of several different sizes of at least six or more different sizes, with the width and length dimensions of each such tablet-receiving tray and the different width and length dimensions of each different kind of such tablets being substantial multiples of a corresponding selected arbitrary dimension element unit (or units) such that it is possible to place a plurality of such tablets, comprising only a portion of the total co-planar set of such tablets, in any of a plurality of different arrangements including at least four-per-tray, or more, different rectangular-area-defining arrangements including different combinations of various different ones of said tablets, including the same and/or different types of said tablets, in a co-planar manner on or in the tablet-receiving tray in a substantially area-coextensive manner such as to substantially exactly fill and cover the playing surface (in a preferred form, a recess) of such a tablet-receiving tray. In a preferred form, there may be two (or more) different sizes and-/or shapes of such tablet-receiving trays, each adapted to be substantially filled and covered by multiple (usually at least four or more) different combinations of portions of the total co-planar set of tablets.

10 Claims, 16 Drawing Figures

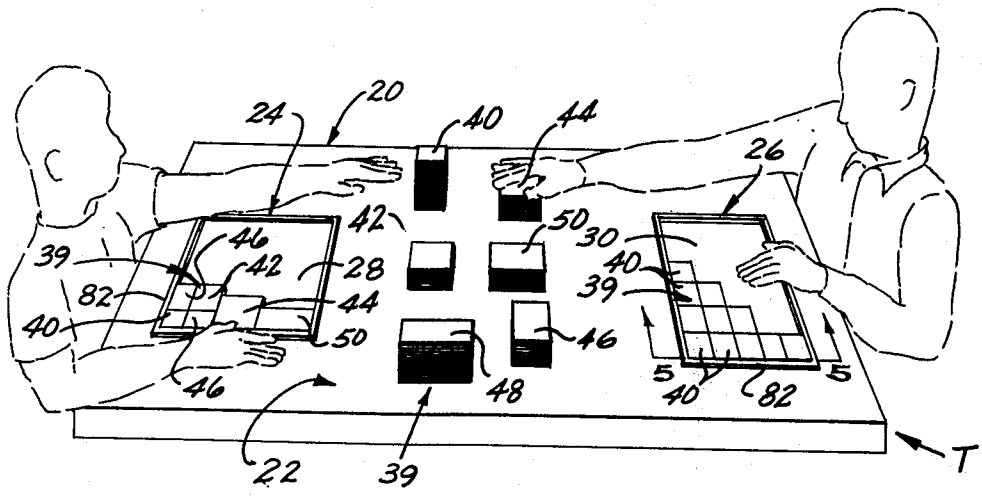


FIG. 1

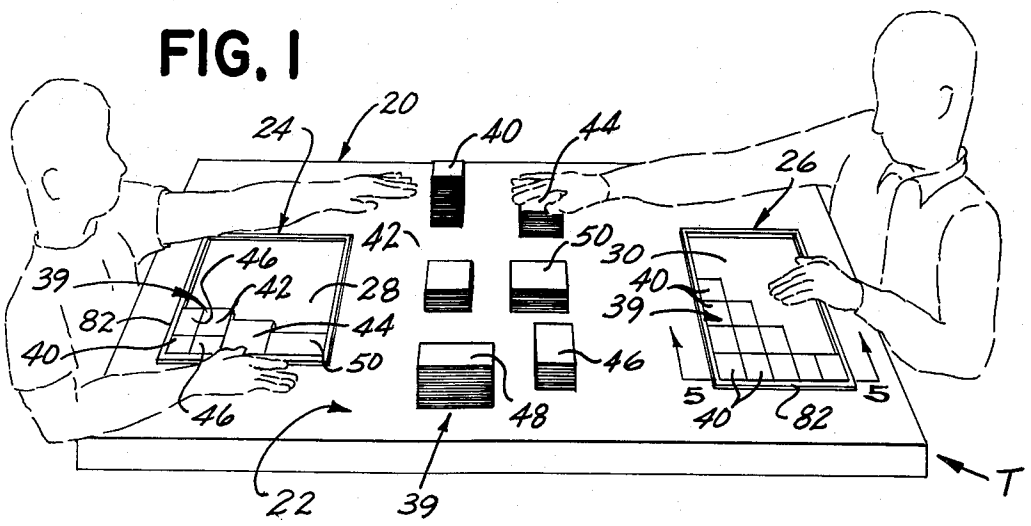


FIG. 2

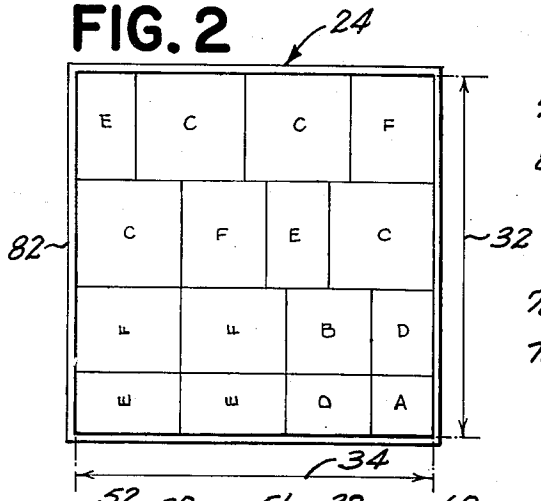
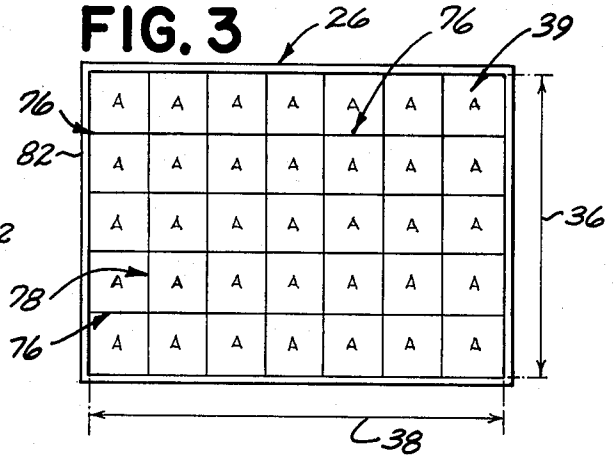


FIG. 3



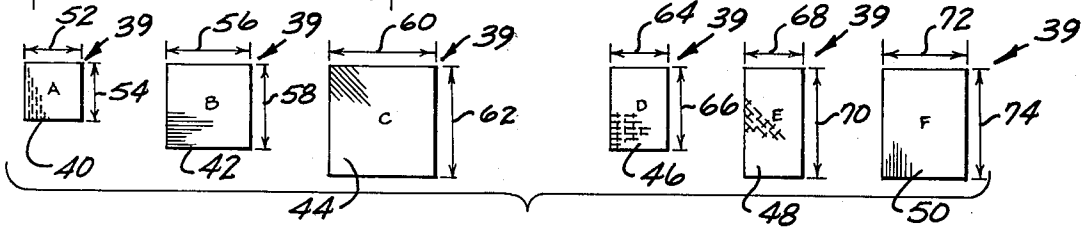


FIG. 4

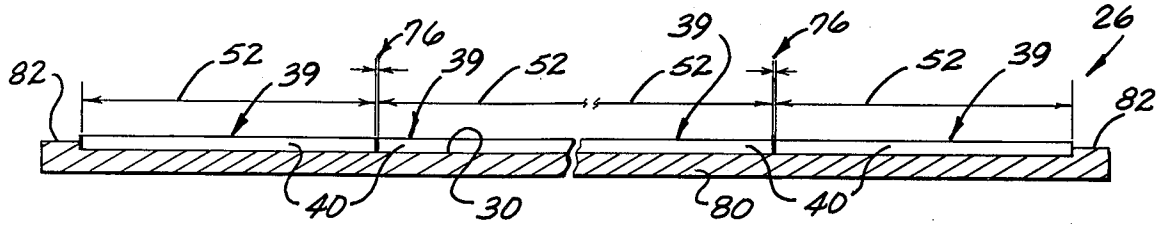


FIG. 5

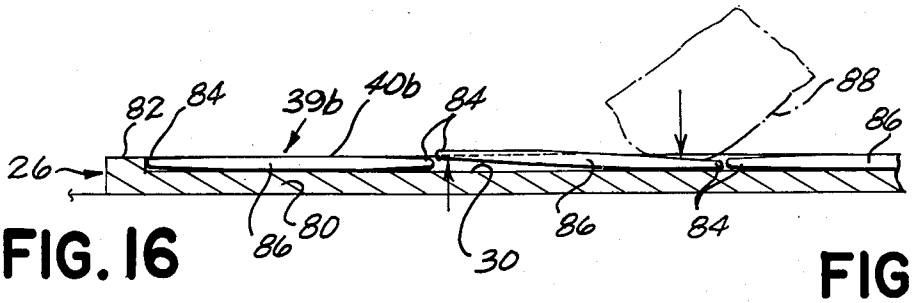


FIG. 16

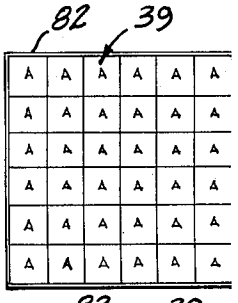


FIG. 6

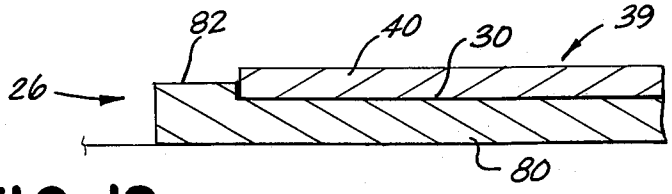


FIG. 12

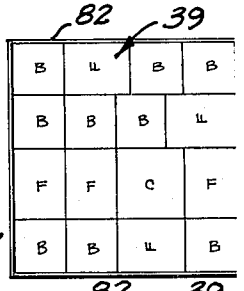


FIG. 7

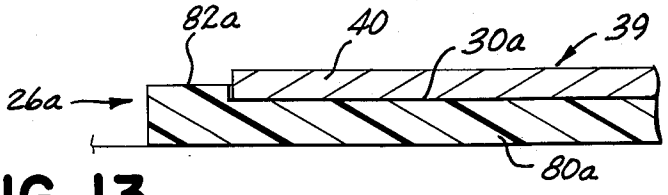


FIG. 13

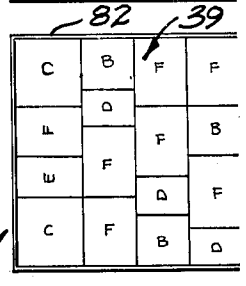


FIG. 8

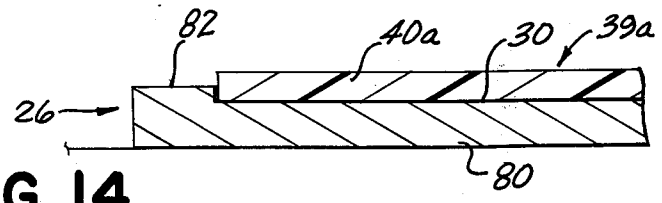


FIG. 14

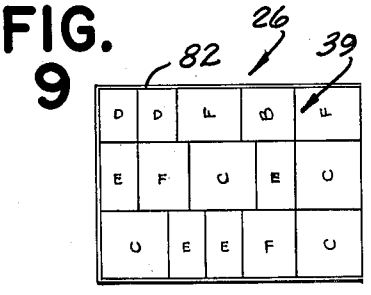


FIG. 9

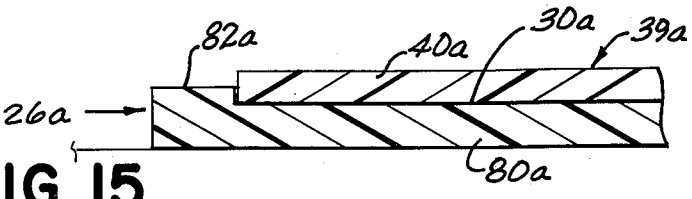


FIG. 15

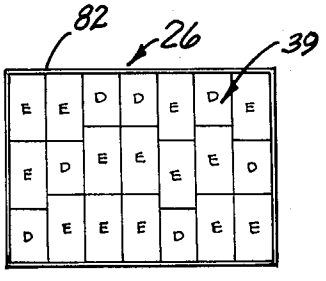


FIG. 10

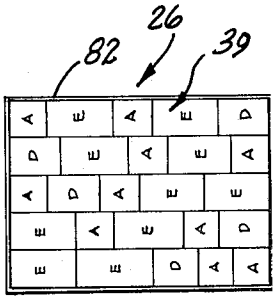


FIG. 11

AREA-MATCHING PUZZLE-GAME

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Generally speaking, the present invention may be said to comprise a puzzle, usually intended for individual play, or a game which may be played by a plurality of players, and which involves a substantial measure of skill. It includes one or more tablet-receiving tray means, which may be of several different sizes and/or shapes (in a preferred form, rectangular with different length and width dimensions), with each such tablet-receiving tray means having a playing area comprising a top surface portion thereof (and which, in a preferred form, comprises an upwardly open recess). The puzzle-game also includes a plurality of tablet means which effectively comprise playing piece means and which include a number of different types (different sizes and/or shapes) of said tablet means and individually selectible by a player for placing on the playing area or within the receiving recess of a selected one of the tablet-receiving tray means. Each of the several different types of tablet means, in a preferred form thereof, is of substantially rectangular configuration (in certain cases, having different width and length dimensions and, in other cases, having substantially equal width and length dimensions and, therefore, comprising the special square case of a rectangular configuration). The width and length dimensions of the playing area of the upper surface or receiving recess of each tray means comprise multiples (in certain cases, different multiples and in other cases, the same multiple) of a selected dimension element unit (which is of an arbitrary short length). Each of the several different kinds of tablet means, when of said preferred rectangular or square configuration, has a width dimension and a length dimension comprising multiples (in certain cases, different multiples and, in other cases, the same multiple) of the previously mentioned selected dimension element unit whereby to comprise a corresponding fractional part of the corresponding width and length dimensions of each receiving of each receiving recess of each tray means. The width and length dimensions of each different type of tablet means are so related to the corresponding width and length dimensions of the receiving recess of each tray means as to cause each such tray means to be capable of substantially exactly receiving a number of said tablet means in substantially area-coextensive manner whereby various combinations of said tablet means can be placed on the playing surface (within the receiving recess) of any of said tray means for substantially exactly filling and covering same, which is the purpose of the apparatus, whether played individually as a puzzle or with multiple players as a game.

In a preferred form of the invention, each recess defined by each tray means includes an extra clearance space to provide for small width direction edge separations of adjacent tablet means, and/or each such recess means may also include an extra clearance space to provide for small length direction edge separations of adjacent tablet means, to facilitate the positioning and removal of said tablet means with respect to the recess defined by a corresponding tray means.

In a preferred form, each tray means is made of flat, substantially planar, thin-sheet material and, in one exemplary form, is provided with upwardly directed edge flange means therearound whereby to define therewithin a corresponding one of said recesses. Also, in a preferred form, each of the plurality of tablet means is made of flat, substantially planar, thin-sheet material and, in one form, may be so constructed as to facilitate the positioning and/or removal thereof relative to one or more other closely adjacent tablet means on the playing area (within the recess) of one of said tray means.

Said tray means and/or said tablet means may be made of inexpensive thin-sheet material capable of relatively inexpensive fabrication, such as cellulosic, carboardlike, paper-like or wood material, or thin-sheet "Masonite," ceramic, aluminum or plastic material, or any other material suitable for the purposes and objectives of the present invention.

OBJECTS OF THE INVENTION

With the above points in mind, it is an object of the present invention to provide a novel, area-matching puzzlegame of the character referred to herein, generically and/or specifically, and which may include any or all of the features referred to herein, either individually or in combination, and which is of extremely simple, inexpensive, easy-to-manufacture construction such as to be suitable for ready mass manufacture and distribution at an extremely low cost, both as to the initial cost (including tooling and production set-up costs, etc.) and as to the subsequent per-unit manufacturing costs, whereby to be conducive to widespread production, distribution, sale, and use of the invention, for the purposes outlined herein or for any substantially equivalent or similar purposes.

Further objects are implicit in the detailed description which follows hereinafter (which is to be considered as exemplary of, but not specifically limiting, the present invention), and said objects will be apparent to persons skilled in the art after a careful study of the detailed description which follows.

For the purpose of clarifying the nature of the present invention, several exemplary embodiments of the invention are illustrated in the hereinbelow-described figures of the accompanying two sheets of drawings and are described in detail hereinafter.

FIG. 1 is a greatly reduced-size three-dimensional, pictorial, perspective view of one exemplary form of the invention as seen from a viewing point above and at one side of a playing table, and wherein the invention is being employed as a game played by two persons, although not specifically so limited.

FIG. 2 is a larger scale, top plan view illustrating in a somewhat diagrammatic manner one of the two different types of exemplary receiving tray means having one exemplary arrangement of a plurality of the tablet means positioned thereon in a manner substantially exactly filling and covering the playing area within the top recess of the tray means, which is the same type of tray means as that shown at the left side of FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is a view generally similar to FIG. 2, but illustrates a different exemplary type of tray means and a different exemplary arrangement of a plurality of tablet means positioned on the playing area within the recess of the tray means and substantially exactly filling and covering same, with the tray means being of the same type as that shown at the right side of FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 is an exemplary top plan view illustrating a representative group of a plurality of different types of the tablet means.

FIG. 5 is a greatly enlarged, fragmentary, partly broken-away view taken substantially along the plane and in the direction indicated by the arrows 5-5 of FIG. 1 and clearly shows two representative, extra-clearance space portions to provide for small edge separations of adjacent tablet means to facilitate the positioning and removal of same with respect to the recess defined by the corresponding tray means and is intended to illustrate both width direction clearance space portions and length direction clearance space portions.

FIGS. 6, 7, and 8 illustrate the same type of tray means as shown in FIG. 2, but with different representative arrangements of the plurality of tablet means for covering the complete playing areas within the recess.

FIGS. 9, 10, and 11 illustrate the same type of tray means as shown in FIG. 3, but with different representative arrangements of the plurality of tablet means for covering the complete playing area within the recess.

FIG. 12 is an enlarged, fragmentary view illustrating a form of the invention where both the tray means and the tablet means are made of thin-sheet, cellulosic material.

FIG. 13 is a view similar to FIG. 12. but illustrates a slight variation thereof wherein the tablet means are made of cellulosic material and the tray means are made of thin-sheet, formed, plastic material.

FIG. 14 is a view similar to FIG. 12, but illustrates a very slight variation thereof wherein the tray means are made of thin-sheet, cellulosic material, and the tablet means are made of thin-sheet, plastic material.

FIG. 15 is a further view similar to FIG. 12, but illustrates a very slight variation thereof wherein both the tablet means and the tray means are made of thinsheet, plastic material.

FIG. 16 is a fragmentary view similar in many respects to a left portion of FIG. 4, but illustrates a very slight modification of the tablet means which facilitates the positioning and/or removal thereof within the recess and with respect to other closely adjacent tablet means.

The puzzle game, depending upon whether one person uses it as a puzzle or multiple persons play it as a game, is based upon the concept of finding a mathematical relationship among the various elements which compose it, such that various possible combinations of the tablet means can be employed to substantially fully cover the playing area of either of the two exemplary tray means, or of any other substantial functional equivalents thereof.

The various elements of the system have been designed in a manner based primarily upon the metric system for convenience since it is a system based on powers of ten and, therefore, lends itself more readily to developing the proper mathematical relationships by the various elements of the puzzle-game. However, it should be clearly understood that the system of units is not to be construed as limiting the game, and English system equivalents of the metric system dimensions of the various elements of the puzzle-game may be employed. Indeed, this is true of any other measurement system.

The purpose of the puzzle or game is to mentally determine and to physically implement the covering of the complete playing area of any particular tray means by placing thereon a number of any combination of any of the various tablet means.

Four representative and non-specifically-limiting different arrangements of the tablet means on one particular type of square tray means are shown in FIGS. 2, 6, 7, and 8, and four representative and non-specifically limiting, different arrangements of the tablet means on one particular type of rectangular (non-square) tray means are shown in FIGS. 3, 9, 10, and 11. However, the eight examples just referred to are representative only of the many possible different types of tablet means, different types of tray means, and different types of area-covering arrangements of different ones of said tablet means on said tray means.

The arrangement illustrated in FIG. 1 shows the puzzle-game being used as a game, with two players playing same while seated at opposite sides of a table, such as is generally designated at T, which has a playing surface or region, such as is generally designated at 22, where a plurality of different types of tablet means, indicated generally at 39, are positioned and two different types of tray means, indicated generally at 24, and 26, are also positioned. It should be noted that in the arrangement illustrated in FIG. 1, the left tray means 24 is shown as being of a square type such as is shown in a somewhat-larger-scale plan-view configuration in FIG. 2 while the right tray means, indicated generally at 26, is of a rectangular configuration such as is shown in plan view, drawn to a somewhat larger scale in FIG. 3.

In the example illustrated in FIG. 1, there are six different types of the tablet means indicated generally at 39, such as are shown in top plan view in laterally spaced relationship in FIG. 4, wherein a first type of tablet means is designated by the reference numeral 40, and also each of same bears the letter "A" for identification purposes. A second type of tablet means is designated by the reference numeral 42 and bears the letter "B" for identification purposes. A third type of tablet means is designated by the reference numeral 44 and bears the letter "C" for identification purposes. Each of the three types of tablet means 40, 42, and 44 just referred to is of thin-sheet, planar, square configuration.

In the exemplary form illustrated, three additional types of tablet means are designated at 46, 48, and 50, respectively, and bear corresponding letters "D", "E", and "F", respectively, with each of said last three types of tablet means being of rectangular (non-square) configuration in addition to being of thin-sheet, planar form similar to the first three square tablet means 40, 42, and 44.

In one exemplary way of playing the game, there are a total of 200 tablet means 39 in all, including 70 of the Type "A" indicated at 40 in FIG. 1, 20 of the Type "B" indicated at 42 in FIG. 1, 20 of the Type "C" indicated at 44 in FIG. 1, 20 of the Type "D" indicated at 46 in FIG. 1, 50 of the type "E" indicated at 48 in FIG. 1. However, these numbers of the tablet means 39 are merely representative of one convenient arrangement for playing the game and are not to be construed as limiting the invention. This is also true of the two different types of tray means indicated at 24 and 26 in FIG. 1, which, incidentally, may be assigned to either of the players by choice or by any random selection means, such as riffling or cutting the cards of a deck and giving

either high man or low man his choice or by any other desired selection process.

The various different types of tablet means may be appropriately colored (usually differently colored), if desired, as may the tray means.

Each tray means is of flat planar configuration having a main body portion such as that shown at **80** in FIG. **4**, which is made of thin-sheet material which, in the exemplary form illustrated, is of an exemplary cellulosic type such as cardboard, chipboard, or other paper-like material, although not specifically so limited. The main body portion **80** is provided therearound with an upwardly directed edge flange means **82**, thus defining within the edge flange means **82** the playing surface or playing area which, in said exemplary form comprises a recess lying within the edge flange **82** and indicated, in the case of the non-square tray **26** by the reference numeral **30** and, in the case of the square tray **24**, by the reference numeral **28**. It should be noted that the receiving recess of playing area **28** in the case of the square tray **24** and **30** in the case of the non-square tray **26** has a width dimension **32** in the case of the recess **28** and a width dimension **36** in the case of the recess **30**, in each case comprising a different multiple of a selected dimension element unit. For example, in the case of the recess **28**, the width dimension **32** comprises **150** millimeters (which is a multiple of **5** millimeters, which, in this case, comprises the hereinbefore-mentioned selected dimension element unit) plus **2** additional millimeters comprising an extra clearance space in a width direction such as will be described in greater detail hereinafter. In other words, the **150** millimeters width dimension **32** (exclusive of the **2** millimeters of the extra clearance space) is an exact multiple of the hereinbefore-mentioned selected dimension element unit of millimeters. The purpose of this will be clarified hereinafter.

It should also be noted that the length dimension of the recess **28** is indicated by the reference numeral **34** and is identical to the just-described width dimension **32** and, thus, also comprises a multiple of the **5** millimeter selected dimension element unit plus **2** millimeters of extra clearance space in the length direction, which will be explained in greater detail hereinafter.

The recess **30** of the non-square tray means **26** also has a width dimension, which in this case is indicated by the release numeral **36**, which is a multiple (a different multiple) of the previously-referred-to selected dimension element unit which is **5** millimeters. In the example illustrated, said width dimension **36** comprises **125** millimeters (which is a multiple of the basic **5** millimeter selected dimension element unit plus an additional **2** millimeters of clearance space in a width direction, parts of which are indicated at **76** in FIGS. **3** and **4**. Incidentally, it should be noted that the total of all of the individual clearance space portions in the width direction such as the exemplary ones shown at **76** in FIGS. **3** and **4** across the entire recess **30** in the width direction total the above-mentioned **2** extra millimeters of clearance space in the width direction; and as illustrated in FIGS. **3** and **4**, said width direction extra clearance space portions are defined between adjacent edges of the plurality of tablet means **39** shown in FIGS. **3** and **4** and corresponding edges of the recess **30** in a width direction similar to the width dimension doubled-headed arrow indicated by the reference numeral **36**.

The square recess **28** of the tray means **24** has the same extra **2** millimeters of clearance space in the width direction indicated by the double-headed arrow **32** of FIG. **2** as that just described with respect to the width direction extra clearance space portions **76** of FIG. **3**. Each of the two recesses **28** and **30** has similar extra clearance spaces of **2** millimeters in each case in the length direction, such as that indicated by the double-headed arrow **38** in the case of FIG. **3** and such as that indicated by the double-headed arrow **34** in the case of FIG. **2**; and in each case said **2** millimeters of extra clearance space in the length direction is substantially similar to and is intended for the same hereinafter-described purposes as the width direction clearance space portions **76** illustrated in detail in FIGS. **3** and **4** and described hereinbefore.

In the exemplary first form of the invention illustrated, each of the six different types of exemplary tablet means, indicated generally at **39**, has width and length dimensions, each of which is also a multiple (usually a different multiple) of the previously-mentioned selected dimension element unit which, in the example illustrated, is **5** millimeters. Thus, the width dimensions of each of the six different tablets shown in FIG. **4** are designated respectively by the reference numerals **52, 56, 60, 64, 68,** and **72,** while the length dimensions of said tablets are designated, respectively, by the reference numerals **54, 58, 62, 66,** 70, and **74.** The width dimension **52,** in the example illustrated, is **25** millimeters, the width dimension **56** is **35** millimeters, the width dimension **60** is **45** millimeters, the width dimension **64** is **25** millimeters, the width dimension **68** is **25** millimeters, and the width dimension **72** is **35** millimeters. The length dimension **54** is **25** millimeters, the length dimension **58** is **35** millimeters, the length dimension **62** is **45** millimeters, the length dimension **66** is **35** millimeters, the length dimension **70** is **45** millimeters, and the length dimension **74** is **45** millimeters. It will be noted that all of said width and length dimensions are multiples of the previously-mentioned **5** millimeter selected dimension element unit. Thus, it is clear that various possible layout arrangements of different ones of said tablet means **39** can be placed on the playing area **28** or **30** of either of the two tray means **24** or **26** in a manner which will substantially exactly cover said playing area without leaving any intervening substantial open spaces (other than the very small previously-mentioned clearance portions **76** and **78** which are for the purpose of positioning and removing the tablet means **39** relative to the playing area or recess **28** or **30.** In other words, theoretically the **2** millimeter extra clearance spaces in both the width and length direction of each of the two tray means **24** and **26** could be eliminated, making each of the recesses exact multiples in both width and length directions of the **5** millimeter selected dimension element unit. However, practically speaking, this is not an effective arrangement because of the difficulty of placing and removing the tablet means within the recesses of the tray because of no small extra clearance spaces, which is the reason why, for practical purposes, the previously mentioned width and length **2** millimeter clearance spaces are provided.

In the exemplary first form of the invention, each of the tablet means **39** is of flat, planar, thin-sheet, cellulosic material, as is perhaps best shown in FIG. **12,** where the tablet means **40** is shown in cross-section.

However, none of the tablet means is limited to being constructed of cellulosic material, as will be referred to hereinafter. Preferably, each of the tablet means **39** carries a different identification letter on its upper surface and may also be differently colored, although not specifically so limited. It may also be desirable for each of the tray means **24** and **26** to be differently colored, although not specifically so limited.

FIG. **6** illustrates the tray means **24** with a different arrangement of the tablet means **39** from the same tray means as shown in FIG. **2.**

FIG. **7** illustrates a further variation of the selection and arrangement of tablet means covering the square tray means **24.**

FIG. **8** illustrates an even different arrangement of the tablet means on the square tray means **24.**

FIG. **9** illustrates a different arrangement of the tablet means **39** on the non-square tray means **26,** such as that shown in FIG. **1** and in FIG. **3.**

FIG. **10** shows the non-square tray means **26** with a further variation in th arrangement of the tablet means **39** thereon. l

FIG. **11** is an additional variation of the layout of the tablet means **39** on the non-square, rectangular tray means **26.**

In other words, FIGS. **2** and **6–8** illustrate a number of representative different solutions to the problem of covering the entire playing area of the square-type tray **24,** while FIGS. **3** and **9-11** illustrate a number of representative different solutions to the problem of fully covering the playing area of the non-square, rectangular tray **26,** and each of these four showings is intended to be merely representative and not to be construed in a limiting sense.

While both the tray means and the tablet means in the first form of the invention have been described as being made of cellulosic cardboard or paper-like material, either of same may be made of other suitable materials, such as wood, plastic, or any combination thereof, and representative such variations are shown in FIGS. **13–15.** In the case of FIG. **13,** the tablet means is not changed as to material and, therefore, parts thereof are designated by the same reference numerals as the first form of the invention, while the tray means is changed from cellulosic material to plastic material and, therefore, corresponding parts are designated by similar reference numerals, followed by the letter "*a*", however.

In FIG. **14,** the tray means is not changed from the first form of the invention and, therefore, the same reference numerals designate corresponding parts thereof. However, the tablet means is modified from cellulosic material to plastic material and, therefore, parts thereof similar to the first form of the invention are designated by similar reference numerals, followed by the letter "*a*", however.

FIG. **15** amounts to a combination of FIGS. **13** and **14** wherein both the tablet means and the tray means are changed from cellulosic material to plastic material and, therefore, all portions thereof similar to the first form of the invention are designated by similar reference numerals, again followed by the letter "*a*", however.

It should be understood that in the showings of FIGS. **12** through **15** the fragmentary, enlarged, sectional view is taken on a plane similar to that indicated by the arrows **5—5** of FIG. **1** on the non-square, rectangular type of tray means. However, this is intended to also illustrate the corresponding constructions of the square-type tray means, as well and to thus eliminate the necessity of providing additional duplicate illustrations similar to FIGS. **12** through **15,** but of the square-type tray means.

FIG. **16** is a view generally similar to the left portion of FIG. **5,** but illustrates a very slight modification of the tablet means only, which, therefore, are designated by similar reference numerals, followed by the letter "*b*", however. The tray means is the same as in the first form of the invention and, therefore, identical reference numerals are used to designate such parts. Each of the tablet means generally designated at **39***d* and, in the example illustrated, comprising the particular smallest square type of tablet means which bear the letter A, as shown in FIG. **4,** is designated in FIG. **16** by the reference numeral **40**b and has a thicker center **86** than its edge portions **84,** thus making it possible to apply a finger to one of the edge portions **64** and to rock the entire tablet means **40***b* in the manner shown at the center of FIG. **16** so that the opposite edge **84** will be raised to a degree such that it can be digitally engaged and removed from its position on the playing surface **30** with great ease. This comprises means for facilitating the positioning and removal of each of the tablet means **39**b and is merely representative of a number of different, substantially functionally equivalent arrangements which are intended to be included and comprehended within the broad scope of the present invention.

It should be noted that the particular **5** millimeter length of the selected dimension element unit referred to hereinbefore, and any of the multiples thereof comprising the various width dimensions and length dimensions of the recesses of the tray means and of the various tablet means, can be converted to corresponding English measuring system equivalents, and for this purpose a brief table of the various width and length dimensions briefly identified by number is set forth hereinbelow.

Dimension **32** is **6.6855** inches. Dimension **34** is **6.6855** inches. Dimension **36** is **4.8992** inches. Dimension **38** is **7.6697** inches. Dimensions **52** and **54** are **0.9842** inches. Dimension **56** and **58** are **1.3779** inches. Dimensions **60** and **62** are **1.7716** inches. Dimensions **64** and **68** are **0.9842** inches. Dimension **66** is **1.3779** inches. Dimensions **70** and **74** are **1.7716** inches. The wall thickness of the flange **82** is **3** millimeters or **0.117** inch.

It should also be noted that the actual length (irrespective of measuring system) of the above-mentioned selected dimension element unit can also be appropriately modified provided that the relationships of the multiples thereof function in a manner substantially equivalent to that of the exemplary system disclosed hereinbefore.

The rules for playing the game or puzzle may be briefly stated as follows. Each player selects a particular type of tray from a number of same — for example, four (two square and two rectangular) — preferably by the use of random-choice means or other agreed-upon selection process. The **200** tablets of the **6** different types may be placed in individually stacked arrangements or in a completely mixed arrangement on the playing table. A random-choice means, such as flipping a coin or the like, may be employed to select the player who starts the game, who then takes one of the exposed

tablets and places it on the playing area of his tray to begin the effort to exactly cover same. The next player does exactly the same, and each player successively thereafter selects a tablet and places it on the playing area of his tray in the effort to cover same with a minimum number of tablet means. If, during the course of the game, any particular player picks up a tablet means and finds that he cannot place it exactly on the playing area of his tray means because there is no open spot of the same size and shape, he may put the tablet means back on the pile of tablet means and, if necessary, he can even remove another tablet means and put two tablet means back on the source of same, but he cannot pick up another tablet and attempt to place it on the playing area of his tray during the same turn, but must await the next time it is his turn to play. A tablet means can be placed at any location on the playing area of the tray whether or not it is contiguous to other adjacent tablet means or to the flange surrounding the recess comprising the playing area. However, a tablet means cannot be held or retained by a player — it must be either placed on the playing area of the tray means or returned to the pile of tablet means. It is forbidden to leave open areas or interior space between non-contiguous tablet means when all of same are placed on the playing area of a tray and the player can no longer find a tablet means that will fit any such open area between non-contiguous tablet means. In such case, it is necessary to remove one or more of the already placed tablet means so that a sufficiently large open area is provided to allow the exact covering of same with other carefully selected tablet means during succeeding turns of that particular player. The position of any of the tablet means cannot be switched around after once being placed on the playing area of the tray means, with one optional exception. The optional exception is the situation which exists when a tablet means is selected by a player, and when the player attempts to then place on an uncovered portion of the playing area of the tray means, is found to be too large for said uncovered portion of the playing area of the tray means so that it cannot be placed thereon without overlapping the edge flange of the tray means. Under such conditions, it is permitted for the player to then move that particular tablet means to a different position on some other uncovered portion of the playing area of the tray means where it can be fully received. It should be noted that this is an optional mode of play and this particular rule may be modified so that when it is found that a selected tablet means cannot be placed on a particular playing area portion upon which the player attempts to place it, it must then be returned to the pile of tablet means from which it was selected and it cannot be moved to a different open portion of the playing area of the tray means during that particular move of that particular player. Either mode of play may be selected in advance, either as an arbitrary initial condition of play or by mutual selection of the players.

The player who finishes first — that is, completely covers the playing area of his particular tray means with carefully selected tablet means is the winner of the game. The rest of the players may continue playing if they wish to determine who is the second player to complete the covering of his playing area, the third player to do so, etc. The game can be a partnership game rather than a game of individual opponents. For example, using one tray for every two or more players, the rules are the same, but in each team of players, each individual plays successively or alternatively with his partner (or partners) in the corresponding turn of play of that particular team. It should be clearly understood that any particular player may use any system which he selects in attempting to cover the playing area of his particular tray means with the sequentially selected tablet means. In other words, he may start at one corner and place sequentially selected tablet means, each contiguous to a previous one along a lateral row or along a column in a direction perpendicular to such a lateral row or, if he chooses, he may place the tablet means at spaced, non-contiguous locations. This is entirely at the option of each player.

It should be noted that the table means and the tray means may be manufactured of various different suitable materials, such as cardboard, plastic, wood, etc., either by utilizing one particular type of said materials for both said tray means and said tablet means or by using different ones of said materials for said tray means and said tablet means in any desired combination thereof. Said tablet means and/or said tray means may be suitably colored and/or identified by letters or other identification markings for the purpose of more readily distinguishing different types of said tablet means and/or said tray means from each other and a manufacturer may choose any of the following options:

1. A uniform color for everything and identification letters and markings corresponding to individual type;
2. Different colors and identification letters; or
3. Different colors only.

It should be understood that the figures and the specific description thereof set forth in this application are for the purpose of illustrating the present invention and are not to be construed as limiting the present invention to the precise and detailed specific structure shown in the figures and specifically described hereinbefore. Rather, the real invention is intended to include substantially equivalent constructions embodying the basic teachings and inventive concept of the present invention.

What is claimed is:

1. An area-matching puzzle-game comprising: a plurality of tablets comprising a single co-planar set, each tablet being of substantially rectangular configuration; at least one tablet-receiving tray, each tray being of rectangular configuration and defining a corresponding upwardly open single-tablet-layer, multiple-tablet-combination table-receiving recess for receiving in a substantially-exact area-coextensive manner single-layer arrangements of at least four-per-tray different rectangular-area-defining combinations of certain selected ones of said tablets, the receiving recess defined by each rectangular tray having a width dimension and a length dimension comprising multiples of a selected dimension element unit, and each tablet of said coplanar set having a width dimension and a length dimension comprising multiples of said same selected dimension element unit and comprising a corresponding fractional part of the corresponding width and length dimensions of the receiving recess of each tray, with said width and length dimensions of each tablet being, therefore, so related to the corresponding width and length dimensions of each tray as to cause said tray to substantially exactly receive a number of said different tablets of said co-planar set in a substantially area-coextensive manner whereby various combinations of dif-

ferent ones of said tablets of said co-planar set can be placed within any of said trays for substantially exactly filling and covering the recess defined thereby, each tablet of said co-planar set being of one of at least six different types having corresponding different surface areas, with the tablet of each different type each having a width dimension comprising either the same multiple of said selected dimension element unit or a different multiple of said selected dimension element unit from the width dimension of each tablet of a different one of said multiple different types, no tablet having a width dimension which is an integral multiple of the width dimension of any other tablet, thus being related to each other, with the one of greater width dimension being effectively multiplied by an improper fraction relative to the one of lesser width dimension, with the tablet of each different type each having a length dimension comprising either the same multiple of said selected dimension element unit or a different multiple of said selected dimension element unit from the length dimension of each tablet of another one of said multiple different types, no tablet having a length which is an integral multiple of the length of any other tablet, thus being related to each other, with the one of greater length dimension being effectively multiplied by an improper fraction relative to the one of lesser length dimension.

2. An area-matching puzzle-game as defined in claim **1**, wherein the width dimension of each such recess defined by each such tray includes an extra clearancespace to provide for small width direction edge separations of adjacent tablets to facilitate the positioning and removal of same with respect to the recess defined by a corresponding tray.

3. An area-matching puzzle-game as defined in claim **1**, wherein the length dimension of each such recess defined by each such tray includes an extra clearance space space to provide for small length direction edge separations of adjacent tablets to facilitate the positioning and removal of same with respect to the recess defined by a corresponding tray.

4. An area-matching puzzle-game as defined in claim **1**, wherein the width dimension and the length dimension of each such recess defined by each such tray includes an extra clearance-space to provide for small width and length directions edge separations of adjacent tablets to facilitate the positioning and removal of same with respect to the recess defined by a corresponding tray.

5. An area-matching puzzle-game as defined in claim **1**, wherein each tray is made of flat, substantially planar, thin-sheet material and is provided with an upwardly directed edge flange therearound defining therewithin a corresponding one of said recesses.

6. An area-matching puzzle-game as defined in claim **1**, wherein each of said tablets is made of flat, substantially planar, thin-sheet material.

7. An area-matching puzzle-game as defined in claim **1**, wherein each tray is made of flat, substantially planar, thin-sheet cellulosic material and is provided with an upwardly directed edge flange therearound defining therewithin a corresponding one of said recesses.

8. An area-matching puzzle-game as defined in claim **1**, wherein each tray is made of flat, substantially planar, thin-sheet plastic material and is provided with an upwardly directed edge flange therearound defining therewithin a corresponding one of said recesses.

9. An area-matching puzzle-game as defined in claim **1**, wherein each of said tablets is made of thin-sheet material provided with means at each end thereof for facilitating the positioning and removal of said tablet and comprising accessible oppositely positioned tablet edge portions adapted to be digitally engaged for convenient and easy removal of any corresponding tablet.

10. An area-matching puzzle-game as defined in claim **1**, wherein each of said tablets is made of thin-sheet material provided with controllably rockable means for facilitating the positioning and removal of said tablets and comprising thin accessible oppositely positioned tablet edge portions at opposite ends of each tablet and intervening thicker tablet fulcrum portions, with said thin accessible tablet edge portions being adapted to be digitally engaged for convenient rocking movement and subsequent easy removal of corresponding tablets.

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