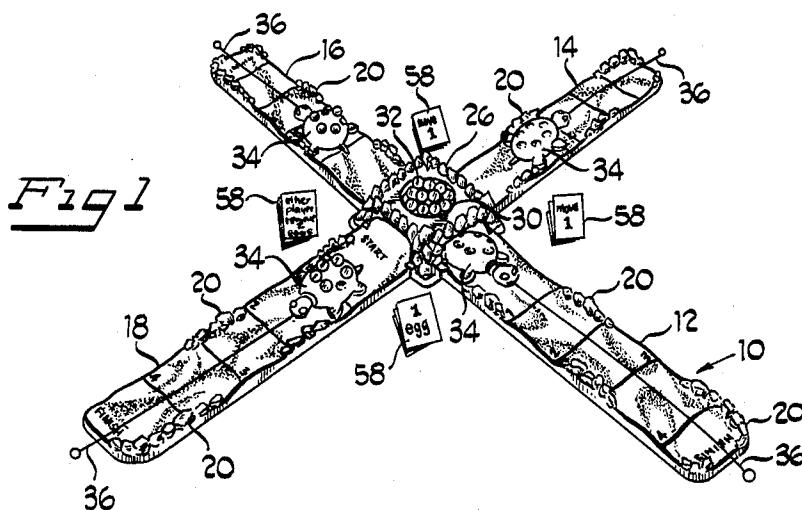
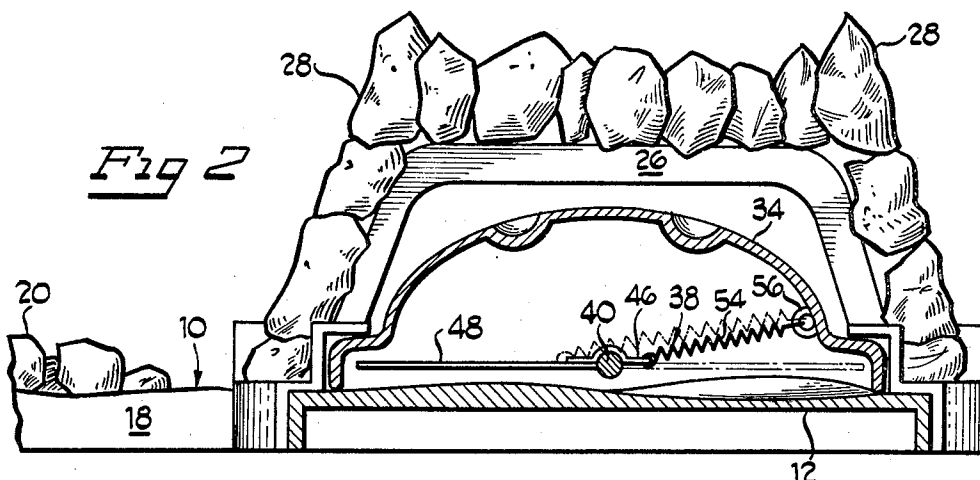
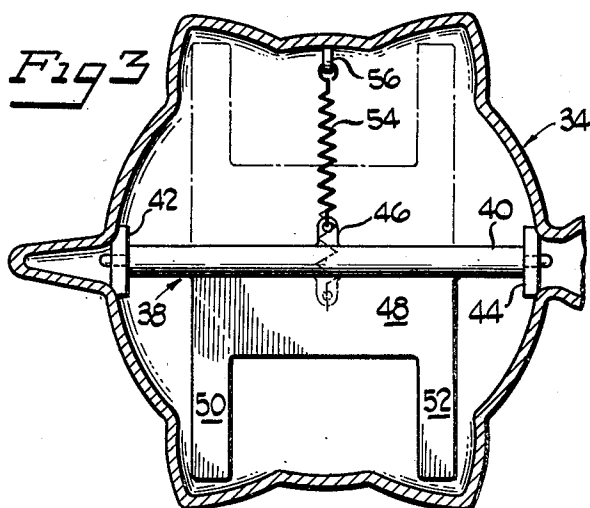
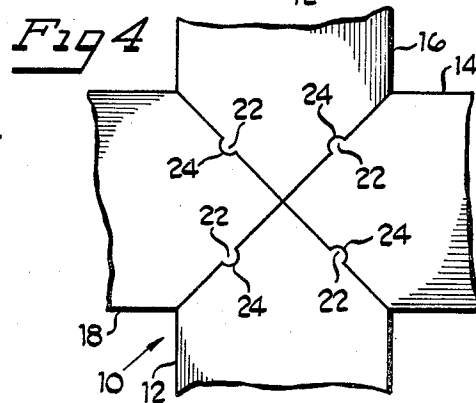


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J. D. BRESLOW ET AL
RACING GAME APPARATUS COMPRISING WEIGHT
CONTROLLED CONTESTANTS
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INVENTORS
JEFFREY D. BRESLOW
MARVIN I. GLASS

BY *Lucas & Coffey*
ATTORNEYS

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RACING GAME APPARATUS COMPRISING WEIGHT CONTROLLED CONTESTANTS

Jeffrey D. Breslow, Evanston, and Marvin I. Glass, Chicago, Ill., assignors to Marvin Glass & Associates, Chicago, Ill., a partnership

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A game apparatus including a three-dimensional playing board having a plurality of uneven, bumpy tracks along which playing pieces, in the form of simulated turtles, are moved by means of strings pulled by the players, the extent of such movement being determined by chance means, such as cards. Each simulated turtle includes a spring element biasing one side of the turtle upwardly. The shell or back of each turtle has a number of dimples or hollowed areas for holding marbles. The tension of the spring is such that it will cause the turtle to flip over unless the turtle is weighted down by a predetermined number of marbles placed on its shell. The drawing of cards determines whether a player is entitled to put one or more marbles on his turtle's shell or remove marbles from an opponent's turtle. If a turtle flips over, it must be returned to the starting position on its track. The unevenness of the track and the striking of obstacles thereon may cause the turtle to rock to a degree such that marbles roll off its back and the turtle may flip over. The first player to move his turtle the entire length of the track wins the game.

Background of the invention

The invention relates to games of chance and skill wherein the players move playing pieces along a path on a playing board as determined by chance means. Games involving a game board and playing pieces are well-known, wherein the players move their pieces definite numbers of spaces in accordance with the indications of a chance mechanism, but the present invention concerns such a game wherein the board has uneven, bumpy tracks over which the playing pieces are pulled by the players. The playing piece support weighted elements, such as marbles, and are spring loaded so as to cause the playing pieces to flip over if their balance is sufficiently disturbed by the loss of marbles.

Summary of the invention

Game apparatus comprising a three-dimensional playing board including a plurality of track sections with uneven, bumpy surfaces; a plurality of playing pieces adapted to be drawn over the tracks, with each such playing piece having a spring element biasing one side of the playing piece upwardly to cause the piece to flip over if its balance is sufficiently disturbed; removable weights to maintain the playing pieces normally in upright position, so that the balance of the playing piece is disturbed by the loss of such removable weights; and chance means to determine the progress of the playing pieces on the tracks.

Brief description of the drawings

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of the game board set up and ready for play, with four playing pieces positioned thereon;

FIGURE 2 is an enlarged cross section showing the bridge covering the junction of the four tracks, portions of two tracks, and a playing piece;

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FIGURE 3 is a plan view of the underside of a playing piece, and

FIGURE 4 is a top plan view of the junction of four tracks.

Description of the preferred embodiment

The preferred embodiment, shown in the drawings, includes a three-dimensional game board, indicated generally at 10, with four track sections joined in the shape of a cross, the track sections being designated 12, 14, 16 and 18. The tracks may be made in separate pieces and joined by mating tabs 22 and grooves 24 as shown in FIGURE 4. Each of the tracks is marked with a starting line and a finish line, and intermediate these lines each track is divided into a number of spaces (see FIGURE 1). The tracks may be painted any suitable color to simulate an outdoor path. Simulated piles of rocks 20 are placed at intervals along the tracks as obstacles and to give a suggestion of the outdoors. The upper surface of each of the tracks is bumpy and uneven, and preferably this uneven surface is in the form of transverse undulations. These undulations give a rocking motion to the playing pieces as they are pulled along the tracks.

A bridge or housing 26 with four depending legs is placed over the junction of the four tracks. In this position, the legs and the roof of the housing define a vertical opening in the housing wall above each of the tracks. The roof section of this opening is only slightly higher than a turtle, and prevents a turtle under it from flipping over. The starting line on the track is placed so that a turtle just behind that line will be partly under the roof of the housing 26. The housing 26 may be decorated with simulated rocks 28 to suggest the outdoors and may be shaped and painted to simulate a cave for turtles. Also, the roof of the housing 26 may have a hollowed area or cup 30 for receiving a number of marbles 32, the purpose and use of which will be stated subsequently.

Four toy figures of turtles 34 are provided. To the head of each simulated turtle is attached a string 36 for the purpose of enabling a player to pull the turtle along the track. On the shell of each turtle are a number of dimples or hollowed areas for receiving marbles 32 removed from the container 30.

As shown in FIGURES 2 and 3, underneath the body portion of each turtle is a spring element indicated generally at 38. This spring element is mounted on a rotatable axle 40, supported in plates 42 and 44 fixed on the tail portion and neck portion of the body of the turtle (see FIGURE 3). Fixed transversely on the axle 40 is a strap 46, which extends a short distance on either side of the axle. On one end of strap 46 and fixed to axle 40 is a plate 48 with legs 50 and 52. At the other end of strap 46 there is attached an end of coil spring 54. The other end of coil spring 54 is attached to eye 56 mounted on a side wall of the body of the turtle (see FIGURES 2 and 3).

By manually rotating plate 48 and axle 40 a player may move plate 48 to the position shown in broken lines in FIGURE 2 and in FIGURE 3. This will extend the coil spring 54 to the position shown in broken lines in FIGURES 2 and 3, and place the spring under tension. With plate 48 in the position shown in dotted lines, the turtle is placed on a track.

The tension of the spring 54 is such that when the spring element is "cocked" by placing the plate 48 in the position shown in broken lines in FIGURE 2, the spring will exert sufficient pull on plate 48 to rotate it and axle 40 to cause the turtle to flip over. However, the spring will not cause this result if a marble or marbles are placed on the turtle's back in the dimples. The strength of the spring

in different turtles may be varied so that a player will not know whether his turtle may be maintained in an upright position by one marble only or whether two or more marbles will be required.

It is apparent that as a turtle is pulled over the track and encounters the transverse undulations in its surface, marbles may roll out of the dimples with the resulting flip of the turtle. Therefore, the player must use skill in seeking to keep his turtle in balance as he pulls it on the track.

Chance means such as cards 58 are provided. A portion of these cards have legends indicating the number of spaces on the tracks which a turtle may be moved. Other cards have designations as to the number of marbles a player may place on his turtle. A third type of card indicates the number of marbles which a player may remove from an opponent's turtle. The cards are shuffled and drawn in turn by each player to determine his move. Other chance means such as dice could be used.

In the play of the game, each player is assigned a track. He places his turtle behind the starting line on his track, with the spring element "cocked," i.e., with the plate 48 and spring 54 in the position of the broken lines shown in FIGURE 2. In this position the turtle is partially under the bridge 26 so that the legs and roof of the bridge prevent the turtle from flipping over. A portion of the shell of the turtle extends beyond the bridge 26 and expose some of the dimples on the shell. Each player in turn draws a card. As soon as a player draws a card designating one marble or "egg," he may draw a marble 32 from cup 30 and place it on a dimple in the turtle's shell. This may or may not stabilize the turtle and prevent him from flipping over. If the player happens to have a turtle requiring two marbles to stabilize it, he should await his drawing of a second marble before moving his turtle from under the bridge. The player takes his chance on whether or not he has a "one marble" or a "two marble" turtle. When the player is satisfied that he has his turtle stabilized and draws a card permitting movement of the turtle, he moves his turtle to the designated space by pulling it forward by means of the string 36. At any time an opponent may draw a card entitling him to remove marbles from the first player's turtle. When marbles are removed, the turtle may become unbalanced and flip over. Whenever a turtle flips over, it must be returned to the starting line. All marbles lost from a turtle's shell must be returned to cup 30.

The rocking of the turtle on the undulations in the track may cause marbles to roll out of the dimples. In addition, imbalance of a turtle may be caused by its striking or riding up on the rocks 20 along the path so that marbles will spill out of the dimples on its shell.

The first player to move his turtle the entire length of the track to the finish line indicated on the outer end of the track wins the game.

Although shown and described with respect to particular structure, it will be apparent that various modifications might be made without departing from the principles of this invention. Further, it should be understood that the described play of a game with the use of the disclosed apparatus is only by way of example and may take any of numerous other forms.

What is claimed is:

1. A game apparatus comprising a three-dimensional playing board including a plurality of track sections each formed with uneven portions along its length, and a plurality of playing pieces each having a plurality of dimples on its upper surface, a plurality of weighted elements adapted to be positioned in said dimples on said playing piece, each piece being adapted to be drawn along one of said tracks and having a movable spring element operable to bias one side of said playing piece upwardly, a number of said weighted elements not greater than the number of dimples on a particular playing piece providing a total weight capable of holding said playing piece in a generally horizontal position against the action of said spring when placed on said upper surface of said playing piece, and the uneven surface portions of said track being of such form as to be capable of tilting said playing piece so as to displace one or more of said weighted elements.

2. Game apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein each playing piece is a generally hollow, hemispherical member, and said movable spring element comprises a lever rotatably mounted within said hollow member, and a spring connecting said lever to said hollow member so as to yieldably hold said lever in a first position and so as to permit rotation of said lever to a second position wherein said spring is tensioned to create a downward force of said lever on the supporting surface for said playing piece.

3. Game apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein said playing board is formed by the joinder of one end of each of four of said track sections so as to provide a cross-shaped playing board, and including a center structure which straddles the intersection of said track sections, said center structure being formed to provide a container on top thereof, and a plurality of said weighted elements removably positionable in said container.

4. Game apparatus as set forth in claim 3, wherein said center structure provides a space above each of said track sections which is of sufficient size to at least partially receive one of said playing pieces and hold it against tilting movement when said spring element is in its biased condition.

5. Game apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein the uneven track portion is provided by an undulating upper surface and includes obstacles formed along the side edges thereof.

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DELBERT B. LOWE, Primary Examiner

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