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CARD GAME APPARATUS

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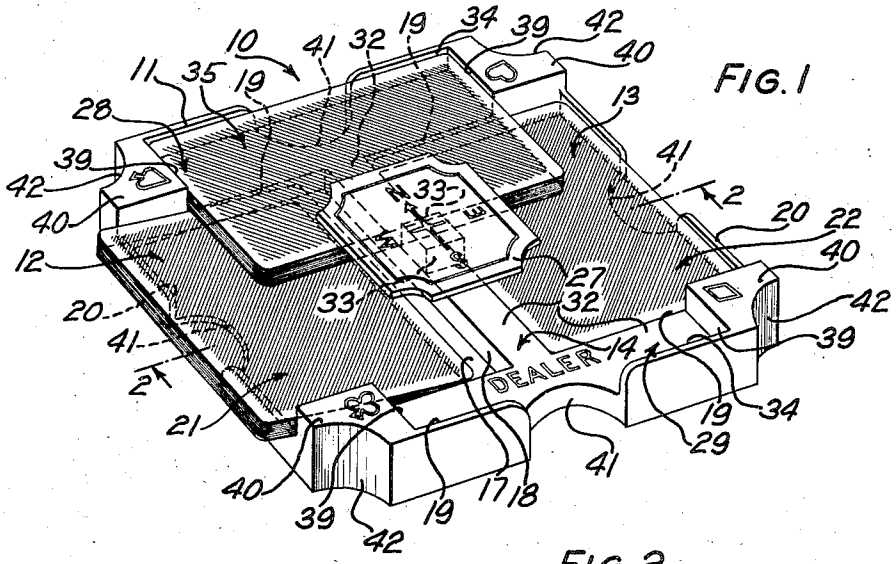


FIG. 1

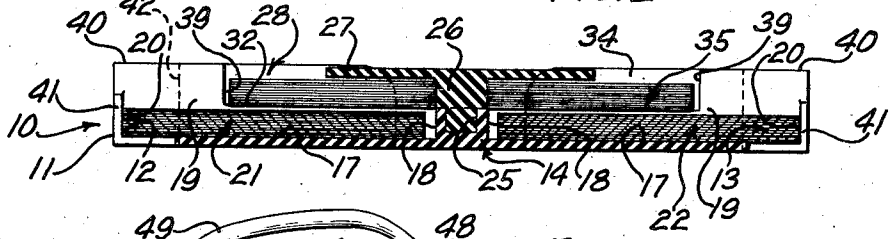


FIG. 2

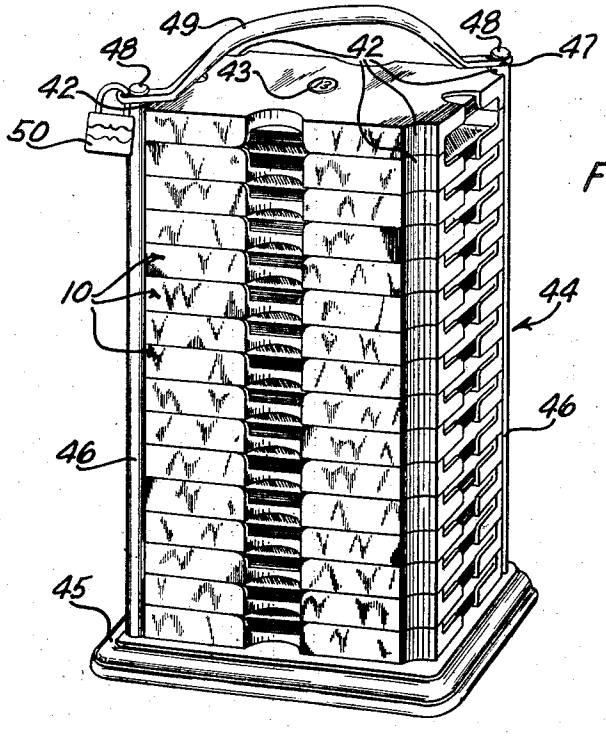


FIG. 3

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CARD GAME APPARATUS

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19 Claims. (Cl. 273—151)

This invention relates to card game apparatus, and more particularly to card holding apparatus.

This invention has been found particularly useful in card games, such as, for instance, duplicate bridge, wherein a plurality of decks of cards are divided into a plurality of different playing hands, either previous to the play, as they are played, or thereafter, the individual hands being separately segregated, identified and kept intact so that they may be played over again, either by the same partners or their opponents, or in any desired order.

The primary object of this invention is to provide an improved, practical and compact apparatus for holding individual groups of cards segregated, identified and intact for subsequent play.

In accordance with one embodiment of this invention, a card holding apparatus is provided which comprises a molded tray-like body which defines an interior space therein having four partially independent intercommunicating compartments for four groups of cards arranged so that two groups are retained at one level and two groups at a different level overlappingly in contact with and at angles to the first two groups. A plate bearing identifying indicia is assembled on the body above the groups of cards and firmly retains each group in its respective compartment, while still permitting each group to be easily inserted in or taken out of its compartment without interfering with the other groups. A rack is provided for holding a set of holders in stacked relation comprising a molded base having two vertical standards fixed thereto which fit in diagonally opposite corner recesses in the card holders and a removable and lockable cross bar, also serving as a handle, interconnects the upper ends of the standards to lock the holders together as a set and prevent unauthorized inspection of the cards, the top holder being placed upside down.

A more complete understanding of the invention may be secured from the following specification considered in connection with the accompanying drawing, in which

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a card holding apparatus embodying the invention, in which a group of cards is shown in one of each of the different level compartments, one compartment of one level being empty of cards and one compartment of the other level having its group of cards partially removed;

Fig. 2 is an enlarged vertical section taken on the line 2—2 of Fig. 1 with a group of cards in each compartment of the holder; and

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of the rack for holding a set of card holders.

Referring now to the drawing, and particularly to Figs. 1 and 2, a card holder or tray is indicated in general by the numeral 10 comprising a one-piece molded body member 11 made of bakelite or other suitable molding material. The body member 11 is square and provided with two parallel lower rectangular card holding compartments 12 and 13 separated by a reinforcing rib 14 rising from a bottom surface 17 and forming inner side walls 18 of the compartments. End walls 19 of the compartments disposed at right angles to the inner side walls 18 also rise from the bottom surface 17 to a common height with the inner walls, except at their outer ends where they rise to the greatest depth of the body member 11, while outer side walls 20 parallel to the inner side walls are slightly higher than the latter walls to provide stop surfaces for each group of cards indicated at 21 and 22 to prevent them from sliding accidentally out of the compartments.

Suitably secured by cement or otherwise in a round hole 25 formed in the rib 14 intermediate its length is a reduced round end of a square shank 26 integrally formed on a square molded bakelite plate 27, the square shank having opposite walls thereof flush with the inner walls 18 of the compartments 12 and 13. The lower surface of the plate 27 is spaced from the upper surface of the rib 14 by the shank 26, a distance substantially the same as the height of the inner side walls 18 and the end walls 19 of the compartments. Preferably this space should be only slightly greater than the thickness of a group of cards.

Above the two lower compartments 12 and 13 are two parallel upper rectangular card holding compartments 28 and 29 separated by the shank 26 of the plate 27, and arranged at right angles to the lower compartments, each having a bottom T-shaped surface 32 formed from the upper surface of the rib 14 at each side of the shank 26 of the plate 27 and a right angle extension of the upper surfaces of the end walls 19 of the lower compartments, the extensions and the upper surface of the rib being in a common plane. Inner side walls 33 of the upper compartments are provided by opposite sides of the shank 26 of the plate 27 between the upper surface of the rib 14 and the lower surface of the plate 27, while outer side walls 34, parallel to the inner side walls 33 of the upper compartments rise from the bottom surface 32 to a height which is subtantially in the plane of the upper surface of the plate 27.

The plate 27, which extends from the center of the body member 11, partially covers the four

compartments and is effective in cooperation with the end and outer side walls of the compartments to prevent the cards from falling out of the several compartments, in any position of the holder, when each compartment contains its group of cards. Like the outer side walls **20** of the lower compartments, the outer side walls **34** of the upper compartments are sufficiently high to provide stop surfaces for the upper cards of each group, only one of which is illustrated, indicated at **35**, to prevent them from sliding accidentally out of the compartments. End walls **39** of the upper compartments rise from the bottom surface **32** and terminate in the plane of the outer side walls **34**, the end walls **19** of the lower compartments at this point being of a common height with the end walls of the upper compartments. The junction of the end walls **19** and **39** of the lower and upper compartments, respectively, which rise to a common height and which is the greatest depth of the body member **11**, provides a reinforced portion **40** at each corner of the body member.

To facilitate the removal of each of the groups of cards from their respective compartments, the outer side walls **20** and **34** and the bottom walls **17** and **32** of the compartments are formed with semi-circular finger notches **41**. Each corner portion **40** of the body member **11** is formed with an arc-shaped recess or notch **42** for a purpose to be described hereinafter.

For simplicity and accuracy of description the four compartments have been referred to so far as if they were independent entities. Reference to the drawing shows at once that the interior space defined by the inner surface of the tray and the cooperating surfaces of the central shank and plate, actually presents the four compartments as intercommunicating without any complete partitions between except as to an outer longitudinal half or less of each compartment defined between the several pairs of consecutive corner members **40**. Compartments for groups **21** and **22** do not communicate directly but do so by way of both the other compartments. When in use, each compartment is further partially defined and walled by the cards in the two compartments above or below. Thus the groups of cards coact with the holder to retain each other in place.

The upper surface of the center plate **27** has inscribed thereon adjacent each of its four outer edges one of the letters N, E, S and W, designating north, east, south and west players, an arrow pointing to the letter N, and such other indicia may be inscribed thereon as may be found desirable to facilitate the use of the apparatus in playing different types of card games. For example, in duplicate contract bridge certain plates will indicate that one or both pairs of players are "Vulnerable". To indicate the position of the dealer, the word "Dealer" is inscribed upon one or the other of the bottom surfaces **17** or **32** of the lower and upper compartments, respectively, of the body member **11**, and in such position that it will be hid when the group of cards is in the compartment. In making up a set of four card holders **10**, the center plates **27** and the body members **11** will be assembled so that one of the letters N, E, S and W on the plates will appear opposite the word "Dealer" of the associated body member **11** in each completed holder **10**. In playing, for instance, duplicate contract bridge the various combinations of "Dealer" and "Vulnerable" require generally a total of sixteen card holders **10**, each of which is provided with a serial number inscribed preferably on its bottom surface as indicated at **43** (Fig. 3).

For conveniently holding and carrying a set of sixteen holders **10** in stacked relation and locking them together as a unit to prevent unauthorized inspection of the four groups of cards contained in any holder, a rack is provided which is indicated in general by the numeral **44** (Fig. 3). The rack **44** comprises a molded bakelite base **45** having fixed thereto in opposite diagonal corners two vertical standards **46** which, when the card holders **10** are stacked upon the base **45** as shown in Fig. 3, fit into one, or the other, pair of the diagonally opposite arc-shaped notches **42** formed in the corners of the card holders. To protect the cards in the top holder **10** of the stack it is turned upside down. The upper end of each of the standards **46** is formed with a peripheral annular channel **47** disposed a short distance below the upper end thereof, which is in the form of a rounded head, indicated at **48**. A cross bar **49**, which also serves as a handle for the rack **44**, connects the standards **46** at their upper ends, the bar being formed with suitably shaped slots at each end (not shown) for receiving the upper ends of the standards **46** and thereafter upon a slight longitudinal movement of the bar the latter may be latched under the lower annular surface of the heads **48**. The bar **49** is locked in its latched position to the standards by a lock **50** which is operatively associated with one of the slots in the bar.

Due to the particular arrangement of the card holding compartments, as described above, a very compact and efficient card holder or tray is provided and one which is pleasing in appearance. Also it will be obvious that any group or hand of cards may be readily inserted in or removed from any compartment at either level regardless of whether the other compartments contain cards or are empty, and with a minimum of injury to the cards due to the ready accessibility and openness of the compartments. Furthermore, the center plate **27** above the compartments, which partially covers the compartments, is effective in cooperation with the end and outer side walls of the compartments to prevent the cards from falling out of the several compartments, in any position of the holder, when each compartment contains its group of cards. The center plate also provides a convenient surface for inscribing identifying indicia useful in playing card games to which the holders **10** are applicable. Due to the fact that the center plate can assume any one of four positions, the word "Dealer" can be molded into the base, all of the bases being thus identical. Also the notching of the corners of the holder in cooperation with the standards **46** of the rack **44** provides means whereby the holders may be stacked in a set on the rack and locked thereto to prevent unauthorized inspection of the hands of cards carried in the holder compartments.

It will be understood that the embodiment herein described is merely illustrative of the invention and one application thereof, the invention being limited only by the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A holder for a plurality of groups of cards having a set of card compartments at one common level, and a set of card compartments at another common level, the compartments at one level being arranged to overlap and communicate with

the compartments at the other level whereby groups of cards arranged in the holder coact with the holder to retain each other in place.

2. A holder for a plurality of groups of cards having a set of card compartments at one common level, and a set of card compartments at another common level, the compartments at one level being arranged to overlap and communicate with the compartments at the other level, the compartments of each set being substantially parallel to each other and not parallel to the compartments of the other set, all whereby groups of cards arranged in the holder coact with the holder to retain each other in place.

3. A holder for a plurality of groups of cards having a set of card compartments at one common level, and a set of card compartments at another common level, the compartments at one level being arranged to overlap transversely and communicate with the compartments at the other level whereby groups of cards arranged in the holder coact with the holder to retain each other in place.

4. A holder for four groups of cards having two opposite card compartments at one common level, and two opposite card compartments at another common level, the compartments at one level being arranged to overlap and communicate with the compartments at the other level whereby groups of cards arranged in the holder coact with the holder to retain each other in place.

5. A holder for four groups of cards having two mutually parallel card compartments at a common lower level, and two other mutually parallel card compartments overlapping and communicating with the first two compartments, the two sets of compartments having their lengths extending in directions substantially at right angles to each other.

6. A holder for a plurality of groups of cards having a set of card compartments open at the top at a common lower level, a set of card compartments at a common upper level open at the top and arranged to overlap and communicate with the compartments at the lower level, and a plate fixed to the holder for partially covering the compartments, whereby groups of cards arranged in the compartments coact with the holder and with the plate to retain each other in place.

7. A holder for four groups of cards having two mutually parallel card compartments open at the top at a common lower level, two mutually parallel card compartments open at the top at a common upper level arranged to overlap and communicate with the compartments at the lower level, and a plate fixed to the holder and extending from the center thereof for partially covering the compartments, the two sets of compartments having their lengths extending in directions substantially at right angles to each other, all whereby groups of cards arranged in the holder coact with the holder and with the plate to retain each other in place.

8. A holder for a plurality of groups of cards comprising a unitary body member having a set of mutually parallel card compartments at a common lower level and a set of mutually parallel card compartments arranged to overlap and communicate with the first set of compartments, and a plate carried by said body member for partially covering the compartments, the two sets of compartments having their lengths extending in directions substantially at right angles to each other, all whereby groups of cards arranged in the holder coact with the holder and with the plate to retain each other in place.

9. A holder for four groups of cards comprising a unitary body member having two mutually parallel card compartments open at the top at one common level and two mutually parallel card compartments open at the top at a different common level arranged to overlap and communicate with the first two compartments, and a plate bearing identifying indicia cemented to said body member and extending from the center thereof for partially covering the compartments, the two sets of compartments having their lengths extending in directions substantially at right angles to each other, all whereby groups of cards arranged in the holder coact with the holder and with the plate to retain each other in place.

10. A holder for four groups of cards comprising a body member having two card compartments at one level, and two card compartments at another level, the compartments at one level arranged to overlap the compartments at the other level, said body member formed with a separating wall for the compartments of one level, and with end and outer side walls for each of said compartments at the different levels effective to prevent the cards in the several compartments from sliding either endwise or transversely out of said compartments, and a plate having a portion fixed to the upper surface of said separating wall for spacing the plate therefrom, said plate portion forming a separating wall for the compartments at the higher level, said plate partially covering each of said lower and upper level compartments and effective with said end and outer side compartment walls to prevent the cards from falling out of the several compartments in any position of the holder when each compartment contains a group of cards.

11. A holder for four groups of cards comprising a body member having a pair of card compartments at a lower level, a wall separating said compartments, end and outer side walls for said compartments, a pair of card compartments at an upper level overlapping transversely said lower compartments, the bottoms of said upper compartments being formed by the upper surfaces of said separating and end walls for said lower compartments, end and outer side walls for said upper compartments, said latter end walls extending inwardly at each corner of the body member from said latter side walls to the inner surfaces of said end walls for said lower compartments, the upper surfaces of the end walls of said lower and upper compartments at the corners of the body member being in a common plane, a plate spaced from the upper surface of said separating wall for said lower compartments for partially covering each of said lower and upper compartments, and means between said plate and separating wall for separating said upper compartments and securing said plate to said body member.

12. A holder for cards comprising a member having card holding compartments, said member having notches at diagonally opposite corners thereof for cooperation with a carrier for the holder.

13. A holder for cards comprising a member having card holding compartments, said member being formed with arc-shaped notches extending across the depth of the holder at diagonally opposite corners thereof for cooperation with a mounting device for the holder.

14. A holder for cards comprising a member

having card holding compartments, said member having notches at diagonally opposite corners thereof, the holder being designed to be assembled in stacked relation with other holders, the notches of the stacked holders being alined for cooperation with a mounting and securing device for the stacked holders.

15. A holder for cards comprising a square shaped member having card holding compartments, said member having a notch in each of the four corners thereof whereby either pair of diagonally opposite notches may be used in cooperation with a mounting device for the holder.

16. A holder for a plurality of groups of cards having a plurality of card compartments open at the top in a common plane, a plurality of card compartments open at the top in another common plane, the compartments in one plane being arranged to overlap and communicate with the compartments in the other plane, and means carried by the holder for partially covering the compartments whereby groups of cards arranged in the holder coact with the holder and the means to retain each other in place.

17. A holder for a plurality of groups of cards comprising a body member having a plurality of card compartments open at the top in a common plane, a plurality of card compartments open at the top in another common plane, the compartments in one plane being arranged to overlap and communicate with the compartments in the other plane, said body member being formed with separating walls for the compartments in the different planes, and with end and outer side walls for each of said compartments in the different planes effective to prevent the cards in the several compartments from sliding either endwise or transversely out of said compartments.

18. A holder for four hands of cards having a pair of compartments open at the top at one level accessible respectively from opposite sides of the holder, and a second pair of compartments open at the top at a higher level and overlapping and communicating with said first compartments, said second pair of compartments being accessible respectively from the opposite sides at right angles to said first sides.

19. A holder for four hands of cards having a pair of compartments open at the top at one level accessible respectively from opposite sides of the holder, and a second pair of compartments open at the top at a higher level and overlapping and communicating with said first compartments, said second pair of compartments being accessible respectively from the opposite sides at right angles to said first sides, said holder comprising as its main element an integral body forming the floors of said compartments, a partition between the lowermost compartments and outside retaining walls for the four compartments.

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