Nov. 18, 1941. L. A. WINTER 2,263,115

GAME

Filed June 15, 1940

Fig. 1

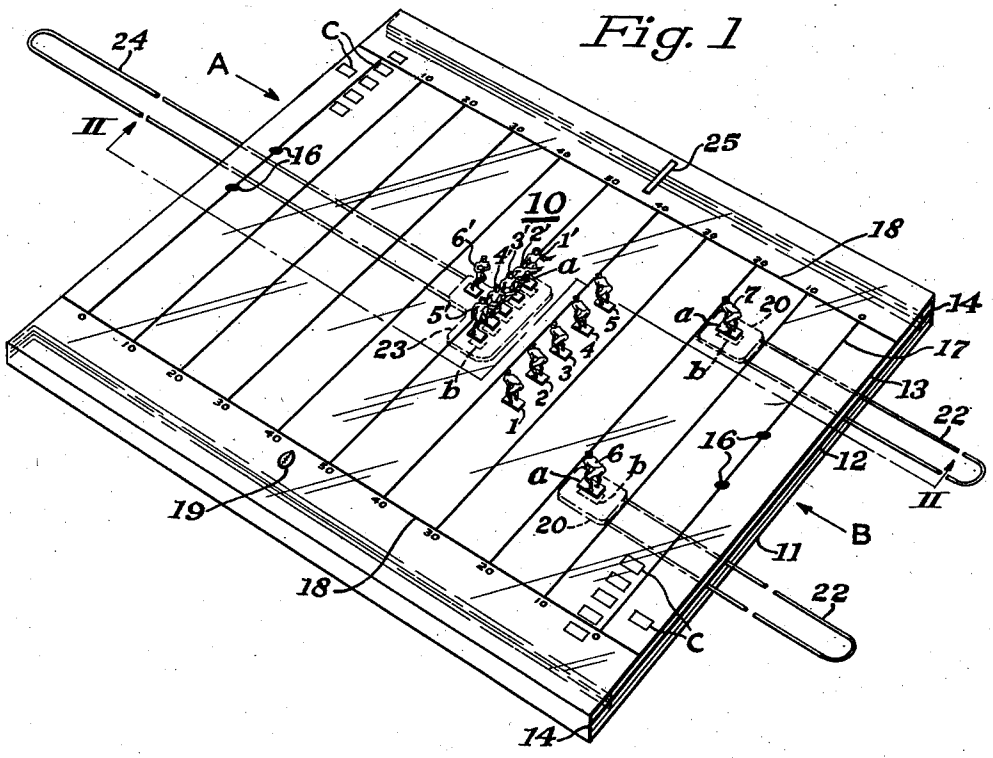


Fig. 2

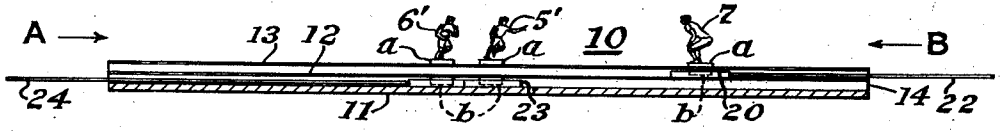


Fig. 3

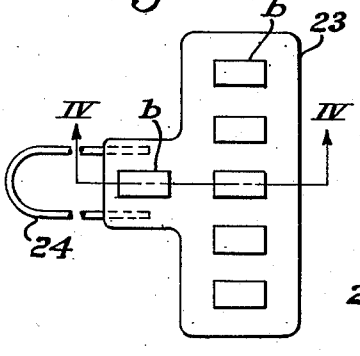


Fig. 4

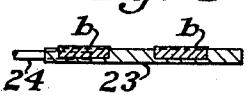


Fig. 5

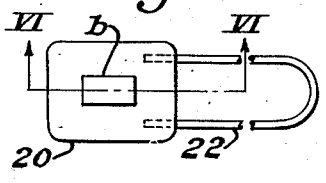
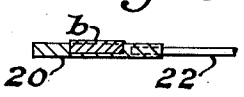


Fig. 6



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,263,115

GAME

Lawrence A. Winter, McDonald, Pa.

Application June 15, 1940, Serial No. 340,714

9 Claims. (Cl. 273—94)

This invention pertains to a new and improved game, and more particularly, to an apparatus for simulating in miniature a game that employs actuated players or elements.

In one aspect, my invention deals with the provision of new and improved means for actuating or moving elements such as players employed in a game such as football.

And, it has been an object of my invention to provide new and improved game apparatus.

Another object has been to devise a game apparatus providing a play simulated to that of an actual sport or game such as football, wherein elements are moved over a playing field.

Another object has been to provide a simplified and interesting game apparatus capable of being played by one or more persons.

These and many other objects of my invention will appear to those skilled in the art from the description, the drawing, and the claims.

In the drawing: Figure 1 is a top view in perspective of an embodiment of my invention illustrating a football game;

Figure 2 is a longitudinal sectional view in vertical elevation taken along the line II—II of Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a top plan view showing an actuating element for the side representing the offensive in the football game;

Figure 4 is a vertical view in longitudinal section taken along the line IV—IV of Figure 3;

Figure 5 is a view similar to Figure 3 showing another type of actuating element normally employed by the defensive side during the playing of the game; and

Figure 6 is a cross-sectional view similar to Figure 4 but taken along the line VI—VI of Figure 5.

As set forth particularly in an illustrative embodiment of my invention shown in Figures 1 and 2, I have provided a playing board or housing represented in its entirety by the numeral 10. The board 10 comprises a planar-like bottom portion 11 of suitable thickness and strength to support the arrangement, longitudinal side wall portions 14, a top cover portion 13 (representing the playing field), and an intermediate or spacer portion 12.

In accordance with my invention, the top portion 13 is preferably marked off to indicate in miniature a football playing field including the yard lines 17, the side line portions 18, and goal posts 16. The portions 12 and 13 may be of any suitable material such as paper, fabric, plywood, plastic, or glass, and are preferably translucent or transparent for reasons which will be later explained. As shown in Figures 1 and 2, one player may sit at the end of the board represented by the letter A, and the other player may sit at the opposite end of the board represented by the letter B. The players A and B are thus in a position to actuate their representative men or elements through open end portions of the box-like housing or playing board 10. For this purpose, suitable actuating means are provided.

In the arrangement shown in Figure 1, the person or player represented by B controls the defensive side or the defensive football men, while the player A employs the offensive football men. Actually each person's side has seven defensive men and six offensive men, in order that his defensive men may be employed when B (or A) is playing the defensive side of the game and his offensive men may be employed when B (or A) has the ball and is playing the offensive side.

The defensive side is provided with a suitable number of linemen which will preferably have numbers on their uniforms represented by the numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc. In fact, all of the football men are preferably numbered. Defensive men 1–5, inclusive, are provided with lower centers of gravity or with a slightly greater weight than the offensive men 1'—6', inclusive. The men 1–5, inclusive, are, in effect, stationary men placed in a suitable position by player B and when the play actually begins, the defensive men 6 and 7 are moved towards the opposing side to stop the ball carrier represented by the numeral 6', or to back up the inanimate football men 1–5.

The animate men 6 and 7 of the defensive side and 1'–6', inclusive, of the offensive side are preferably provided with bases having permanent magnets represented as *a*. Each defensive backfield man 6 and 7, who may be termed a halfback, is actuated, moved, or slid by individual slidable actuating means 20. The means 20 has a substantially planar face portion provided with a permanent electromagnet *b*, and having an extending handle portion of wire or other suitable material represented as 22. In like manner, as shown particularly in Figures 3 and 4, the offensive side A is provided with a suitable means 23 for actuating all of the players as a group. The actuating element 23 also has a substantially planar outline and is provided with a number of magnets *b* corresponding to the number of offensive football men.

To further balance the defensive side, the elements 20 are provided with stronger magnets

than the actuating element 23 or are preferably actuated through a single thickness 13, while the offensive football men are actuated through two layers 12 and 13, see Figure 2. That is, the magnets *b* of the actuating slide elements 20 and 23 are of opposite polarity to the magnets *a* of the football men, and thus, the two have a normal tendency to attract each other. It will be apparent that the bar-like magnets *a* and *b* each have north and south poles. To obtain the maximum attraction, therefore, the south pole of the magnet *b* will be opposite to the north pole of the magnet *a*, and likewise the north pole of the magnet *b* will be opposite to the south pole of the magnet *a*; this is what the applicant has reference to when speaking of the so-called opposite polarity of the two sets of magnets. It is thus apparent that a movement of the handles 22 and 24 will cause a corresponding sliding movement of the representative men. However, when the men run into each other, they will upset and be knocked off magnetic contact, simulating the interference take-outs and other plays of an ordinary football game. The position of the ball carrier when stopped is indicated by a side line marker 25 and the stationary men are again lined up and the animated men are placed over their corresponding actuating magnets *b*. To initially line up the elements if the upper layer 13 is non-transparent, I preferably mark off at each end of the playing field the position of the players with respect to the actuating element, see C.

The portions 12 and 13 may have some flexibility, although the portion 11, serving only a support function, may be entirely rigid in construction. It will be noted that the operation of the offensive players 1'–6', inclusive, and of the defensive animated players 6 and 7 is in two different paths or in two distinct and separate spaces of the playing board 10. The handle portions 22 and 24 are preferably long enough so that the elements 20 and 23 can be moved the full length of the playing field, for example, from B's goal or zero yard line to A's goal or zero yard line. It is thus apparent that there is no interference between the actuating elements 20 and actuating elements 23.

The game may be played as follows: First, in the kickoff, a lightweight ball 19 is placed on the kicker's forty-yard line midway between the side line stripes. The kicking team, for example, B's, then employs two men 6 and 7, representing its color which may be red. The handles 22 are then operated by the player so that one of the football men 6 or 7 strikes the ball, kicking it towards the other side of the field. The other offensive man 7 or 6 is moved to any suitable position to prevent a runback by the other side A. The other side A is provided with six men (1'–6') having another suitable color such as white; they are actuated by the operating arm 24 and may "pick the ball up" by striking against it, moving it back towards the original end of the field. It is then up to the animated players 6 and 7 as controlled by the operator B to block such a carryback or return of the kick.

Lineplay will next be considered. When the kickoff has been completed, assuming that the ball is stopped in the position marked by the element 25, the offensive and defensive players A and B line up their respective men on the playing field facing each other with the center 3' of the offensive side in a position where the ball 19 was placed down. However, the ball 19 is now removed and it is assumed that when a play is made, the center 3' passes directly to the backfield fullback 6'. The ball is only used during a kick-off, a punt, or a try for an extra point.

Referring to Figure 1, we will assume that the ball was stopped at B's forty-yard line. Then the respective sides will have their players in the position shown. A, having the initiative, will figure out his play, call off suitable signals, and then slide his element 23 to move the players 1' to 6' towards B's goal line. He may try a lineplay between one of the players 1–5, inclusive, or he may try an end-run. The lineplay may be partially blocked by the stationary, but tiltable defensive men 1–5, inclusive, but these men if hit correctly may be knocked out of the way, opening the way for further travel of the ball carrier 6'. However, the defensive player B then actuates his animated men 6 and 7 to stop an end-around play or to back up the defensive line.

The plays will be run off similar to a football game in that each side will have four downs in which to make yardage and the playing time will be one hour, with no time out for setting up the men after a particular play. Any suitable number of persons, preferably at least two, may take part in the game; if additional players are available, one may operate the line marker 25, one may be referee, two may serve as coaches, and another may keep time with a stopwatch. If B is able to stop A's men before they have obtained the necessary first down within four tries, then B will employ his offensive men, removing his defensive players from the board. His offensive men will be similar to the offensive men of the player A except that they will have a different color or marking.

When the offensive side wishes to pass, for example A, he will call off suitable signals and say, "Hep, ball to 5' (or 1')." In other words, the two end men 5' and 1' are eligible pass receivers. Then the defensive side B must operate or slide his animated elements 6 and 7 in such a manner as to stop the end men rather than the backfield man 6'.

When the offensive side has been stopped on the downs and wishes to punt, the ball 19 is brought out again on the field and placed just outside the offensive end. An additional offensive magnetic man is brought out corresponding to one of the men 6 and 7 of the defensive side and he is actuated by the offensive slide element 20 to hit the ball or kick it.

When a try for an extra point is to be made, the offensive side brings out two defensive halfbacks 5' and 7' and strikes the ball with one of them, attempting to put it between the goal posts 16, while, of course, the defensive side will endeavor to prevent this by employment of the animated men 6 and 7; the stationary men 1 to 5 are removed from the field during the "try". Of course, the "try" can be made by an ordinary running play with the men lined up as in Figure 1, but on a suitable yard line of the defending team.

Although I have illustrated my invention as particularly applied to a football game, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that it has a broad application and may be employed whereever animated figures are needed, for example, in football, baseball, golf or racing games. One of the important features of the invention is believed to rest in the provision of means for actuating the players that does not obstruct the

playing field or detract from the interest in the game, and which permits each operator to actuate his elements without undesired obstruction caused by the actuating of the elements of the other side. By providing suitable spacers or layers, each player has his own field of operation, and if desired, the football men of one side, for example, the defensive side, may be stronger than those of the offensive side to provide a balanced game that corresponds to the actual game of football.

In using the term "slidably" in the specification and claims, I have reference to the broader meaning therein involved. That is, I have reference to movement on or along a part or surface, particularly in the sense that such surface or part acts as a support or guide for the movement, regardless of whether or not anti-friction devices such as rollers, etc., are used.

Although, as pointed out, I have shown a particular type of game, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that the invention is not limited to such an arrangement and that various modifications, substitutions, and additions may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as indicated by the appended claims. It will also be noted that I preferably employ permanent magnets *a* and *b*, but if desired, electromagnets may be used and current carried by the handle portions 22 and 24.

I claim:

1. In a game apparatus having an extending playing surface portion and a playing element positioned on said surface portion for movement therealong, the combination of a guide portion positioned in a spaced-apart relationship with respect to an under side of said playing surface portion and extending therealong, an actuating means operably slidably positioned on said guide portion and in the spacing between said guide portion and the under side of said surface portion for movement along said guide portion, said actuating means having a magnetic attraction with a base portion of said playing element through said playing surface portion such that a sliding movement of said actuating means will produce a corresponding movement of said playing element without mechanical connection therebetween, and means for slidably moving said actuating means along said guide portion.

2. In a game apparatus having a substantially planar playing surface portion and playing elements operably positioned on an upper side of said playing surface portion for sliding movement therealong, the combination of a substantially planar spacer portion extending along said playing surface portion in a spaced-apart relationship with respect to an under side thereof, portions connecting said spacer portion to said playing surface portion, a substantially planar actuating means operably positioned in the spacing provided by said spacer portion for sliding movement therealong, a handle portion extending from an end of said playing surface portion and connected to said actuating means for moving it with respect to said playing surface portion, said actuating means having magnetic attraction with a base portion of at least one of said playing elements through said playing surface portion such that a sliding movement of said actuating means will produce a corresponding sliding movement of said playing element.

3. In a game apparatus having an extending playing surface portion and player elements operably positioned on an upper side of said playing surface portion for sliding movement therealong, the combination of a pair of actuating means, each of said actuating means having magnetic attraction with a base portion of at least one of said playing elements through said playing surface portion such that a sliding movement thereof will produce a sliding movement of a corresponding playing element, means slidably and operably positioning each of said actuating means beneath an under side of said playing surface portion and having portions for segregating one of said actuating means with respect to the other of said actuating means during its movement along said playing surface portion.

4. In a game apparatus having an extending playing surface portion and at least a pair of playing elements operably positioned for sliding movement along an upper side thereof, the combination of a pair of spacer portions positioned beneath said playing surface portion and extending therealong, said spacer portions having guide surface portions, an actuating means operably-slidably positioned within a spacing provided by said spacer portions for movement therealong beneath said playing surface portion, said actuating means having magnetic attraction with a base portion of at least one of said playing elements through said playing surface portion such that a sliding movement of said actuating means will produce a sliding movement of the corresponding playing element, another actuating means operably and slidably positioned within another spacing provided by said spacer portions for movement beneath said playing surface portion, said last-mentioned actuating means having magnetic attraction with a base portion of another playing element through said playing surface portion such that a sliding movement of said actuating means will produce a sliding movement of the corresponding playing element, and means for moving each of said actuating means along the guide surface portions provided by said spacer portions.

5. In a game apparatus having an extending playing surface portion and a pair of opposed playing elements operably positioned on said playing surface portion for movement therealong, the combination of a pair of superimposed guide portions positioned in a spaced-apart relationship along an under side of said playing surface portion and in a spaced-apart relationship with respect to each other, an actuating means operably slidably positioned within spacing provided by one of said guide portions and the under side of said playing surface portion, another actuating means operably slidably positioned within spacing provided between said guide portions, each of said actuating means having a magnetic attraction with a base portion of one of said playing elements through said playing surface portion such that a sliding movement of said actuating means will produce a movement of corresponding playing elements, and means extending along each of the spacings and cooperating with each of said actuating means for moving each of said actuating means along said guide portions.

6. In a game apparatus having a substantially planar playing surface portion and player elements operably positioned on an upper side of said playing surface portion for sliding movement therealong, the combination of a pair of actuating means, each of said actuating means having magnetic attraction with a base portion of at least one of said playing elements through

said playing surface portion such that a sliding movement thereof will produce a sliding movement of the corresponding playing element, means slidably and operably positioning each of said actuating means beneath an under side of said playing surface portion and having portions segregating one of said actuating means with respect to the other of said actuating means during its movement along said playing surface portion, and handle means operably associated with one of said actuating means and extending beyond an end portion of said playing surface portion and having a length sufficient to insure movement of said actuating means along the full length of said playing surface portion, and handle means operably associated with the other of said actuating means and extending beyond an opposite end of said playing surface portion and having a length sufficient to insure movement of said last-mentioned actuating means along the full length of said playing surface portion.

7. In a game apparatus having an extending playing surface portion and a playing element having a base portion slidably positioned for movement therealong, the combination of a magnet in the base portion of said playing element adjacent said playing surface portion, an actuating means slidably positioned along an under side surface of said playing surface portion for sliding movement therealong, said actuating means having a magnet therein arranged to present an opposite polarity to the magnet in said playing element, so that there will be a maximum attraction between the magnet of said player element and the magnet of said actuating means, and also so that said playing element will align itself in a suitable playing position on the field when brought into proximity through said playing surface portion with the magnetic attraction of said actuating means, and means for slidably moving said actuating means along the under surface of said playing surface portion.

8. In a game apparatus for simulating a conventional game such as football and having an extending surface portion and a plurality of playing elements operably positioned on an upper side of said extending surface portion for sliding movement therealong, the combination of an actuating means for said playing elements operably and slidably positioned beneath an under side of said playing surface portion for movement therealong, said actuating means having a plurality of magnet portions, each of said magnet portions having magnetic attraction with a corresponding playing element through said playing surface portion, and means for slidably moving said actuating means along the under side of said playing surface portion for slidably moving said playing elements along the upper side thereof.

9. In a game apparatus adapted to closely simulate an outdoor game such as football and having a substantially planar surface portion whose upper side represents a typical playing field, playing elements representing offensive and defensive players operably positioned on the upper side of said planar surface portion for sliding movement therealong, the combination of a paddle-like actuating means for the offensive playing elements, a paddle-like actuating means for the defensive playing elements, bar-like magnets positioned in base portions of said offensive and defensive players and in both of said paddle-like actuating means and arranged to provide magnetic attraction between each of said actuating means and its corresponding playing elements through said planar surface portion, a shelf-like substantially planar portion operably positioned beneath an under side of said playing surface portion in a spaced-apart relationship therewith, one of said paddle-like actuating means being operably-slidably positioned between said playing surface portion and such shelf-like portion for longitudinal movement therealong, said last-mentioned actuating means being adapted to cooperate with defensive playing elements for moving them by magnetic attraction along said playing surface portion, a second shelf-like portion having a spaced-apart relationship with said first-mentioned shelf-like portion and extending therealong, the other of said actuating elements being operably-slidably positioned in the spacing between said shelf-like portions for longitudinal movement therealong, said last-mentioned actuating means being adapted to cooperate with offensive playing elements for moving them along said playing surface portion, and means extending out of the spacings and associated with both of said actuating means for moving them from opposite ends of said playing surface portion.

LAWRENCE A. WINTER.