United States Patent [19]

Goldfarb

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[54] **REACTION GAME SIMULATING RELEASE OF TREASURE**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **273/1 R,** 46/43, 273/102.1 G, 273/120 R, 273/138 R

[51] **Int. Cl.** **A63f 9/00**

[58] **Field of Search** ... 273/1 R, 1 E, 1 M, 120, 138, 273/86 B, 86 F, 102.1 G; 46/43

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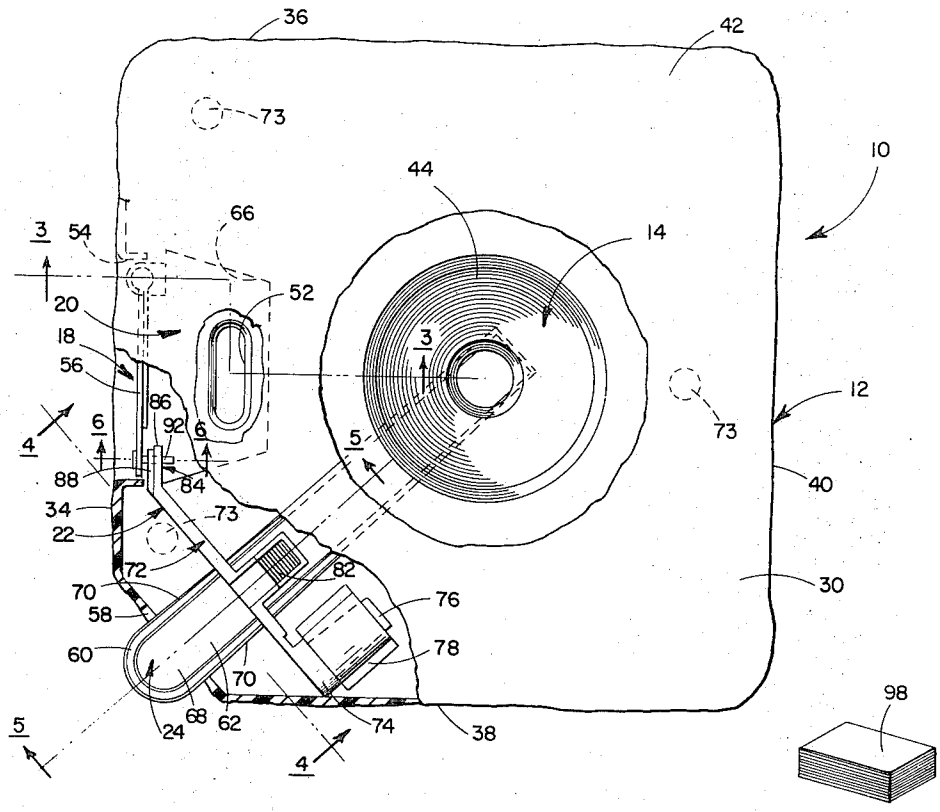
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Primary Examiner—Anton O. Oechsle
Assistant Examiner—Paul E. Shapiro
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Robert M. Ashen

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A housing is provided with a receptacle for the treasure. An opening in the housing allows deposit of treasure items into the housing and a door in the housing allows removal of the treasure. The door is normally latched shut but is unlatched by a ball operated pivoted arm. The housing includes a funnel shaped receptacle for the receipt of individually marked player balls. The funnel allows deposit of all the balls simultaneously but because of its shape permits exit of only one ball at a time. As the balls exit the funnel they travel down an inclined chute. The pivoted arm overlies the chute and is caused to pivot by a ball wedging it upwardly and thus unlatching the door. The end of the chute extends out of the housing whereby the players may see which ball was the first one down the chute and thus unlatch the door. A stack of cards are provided bearing various instructions for the players of the game to either deposit treasure tokens in the receptacle or deposit their balls in the funnel. The cards are drawn one at a time by the players.

4 Claims, 6 Drawing Figures



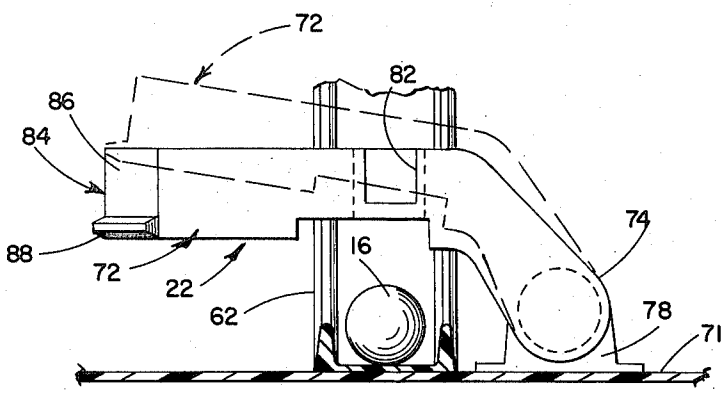


FIG. 4

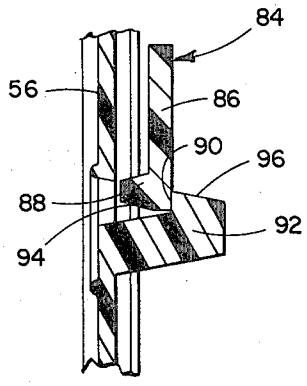


FIG. 6

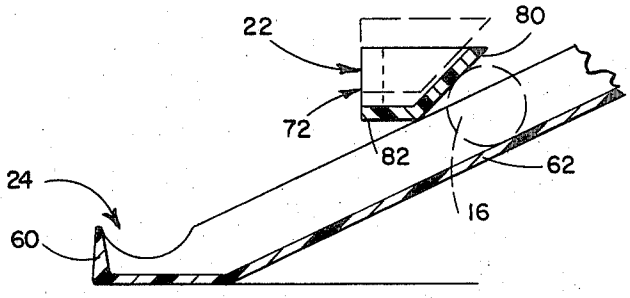


FIG. 5

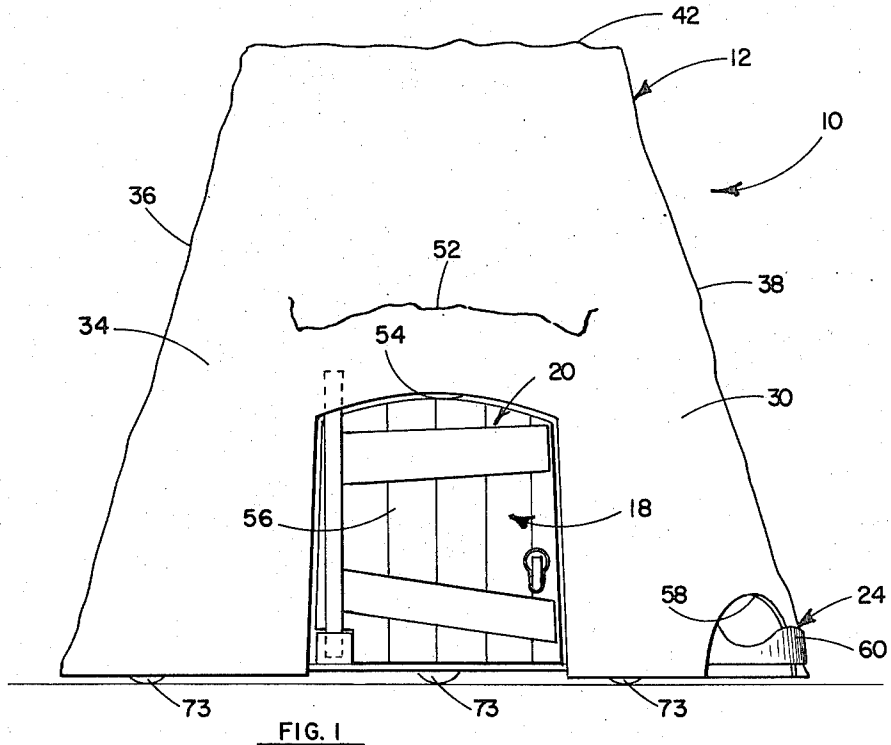


FIG. 1

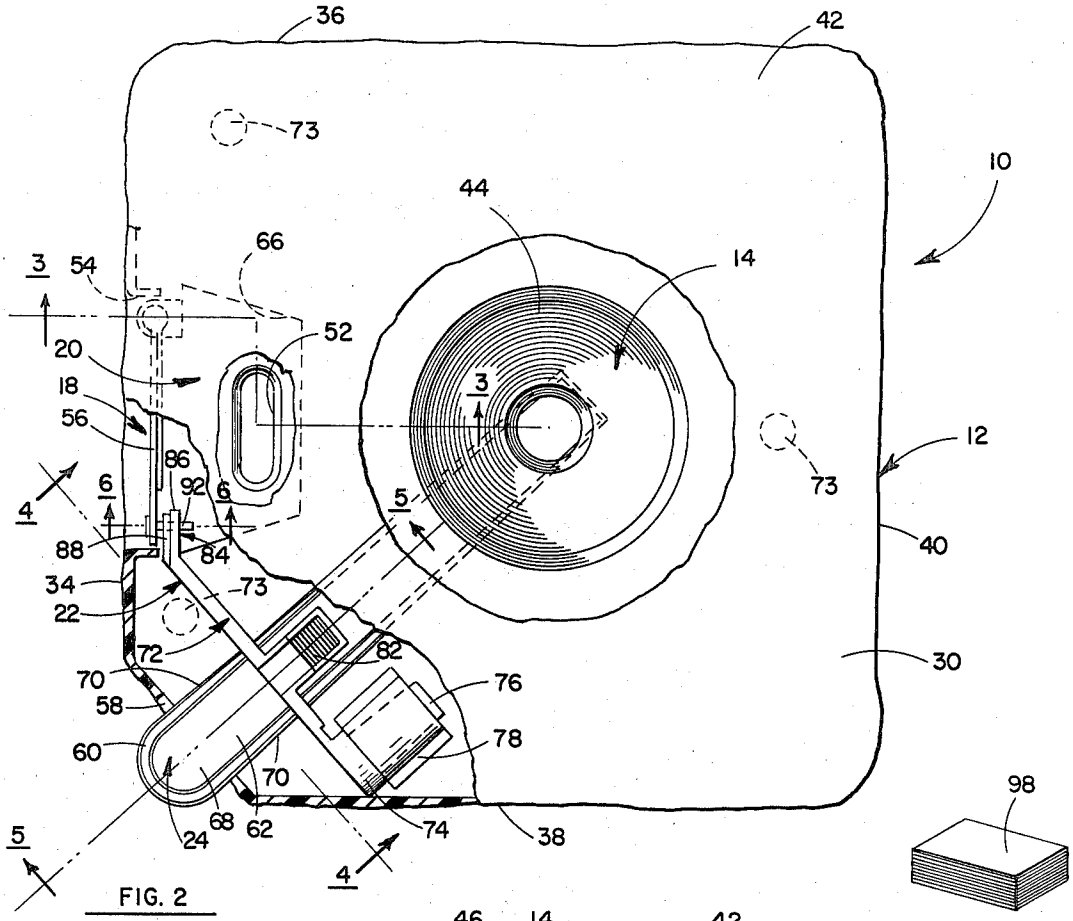

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FIG. 2

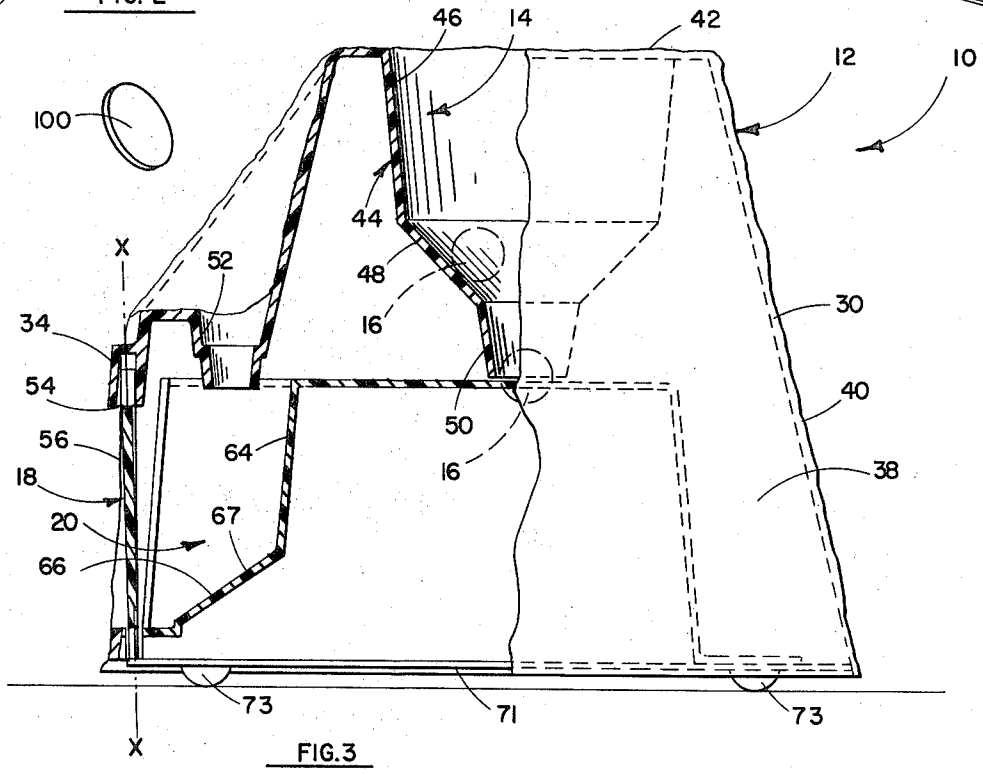

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12
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X
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64
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66
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71
73
X

FIG. 3

REACTION GAME SIMULATING RELEASE OF TREASURE

There have been various types of competitive action games in the prior art which involve a number of players competing with each other at the occurrence of a given signal or event, and with the result of the competition being indicated as by the lighting of a light or ringing of a bell to show which player was the winner. However, the prior devices did not combine the indication of the winner with the providing of a tangible prize or reward to the winner, neither did they combine an element of chance in determining the winner.

The illustrated game of the present invention provides means which respond to the competitive action of the players which, for example, may be the turning up of a particular card from a deck, at which point the players all strive to place a playpiece, such as a marble, into a receptacle means of the game. To add excitement and suspense to the play of the game, the marbles must travel a distance before they are arranged in sequence, and thus the first marble into the entrance of the receptacle means is not necessarily the one that passes through the receptacle means. When the game responds, it will indicate which of the playpieces was in fact first past through the receptacle, and it may also provide a prize or reward which may, for example, be the opening of a treasure chest with the winner getting the treasure in the chest.

One way for determining a winner of the race to place objects in the receptacle, is for the receptacle to permit only one object at a time to pass through. In such an arrangement, a convenient and effective manner of indicating the winner of the contest is to make the first playpiece that passes through the receptacle visible to the players. In one particular arrangement of the game, for economy of construction and maintenance, the first piece passing through the receptacle may physically engage a means which reacts to cause a game action in response thereto. Such first or winning playpiece may also be exposed to the view of the players. Color or other indicia on the playpieces serve to distinguish the playpieces of one player from the playpieces of the other players and thus the winning player will be known when the winning playpiece is made visible.

IN THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a front elevational view of a game which is a presently preferred embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a top view, partially broken away, of the game of FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is a side view taken partially in section along line 3—3 of FIG. 2.

FIG. 4 is a sectional view taken generally along line 4—4 of FIG. 2.

FIG. 5 is an enlarged sectional view taken generally along line 5—5 of FIG. 2.

FIG. 6 is an further enlarged section taken generally along line 6—6 of FIG. 2.

In general, the illustrated game **10** comprises a housing **12** with a receiving means **14** at its upper end for receiving simultaneously playpieces **16** such as marbles. The playpieces **16** bear different indicia to distinguish them from one another. At a given time or signal, the players race to place their playpiece first in the receiving means **14**. The first playpiece passing through the receiving means operates play means **18** of the game. In the illustrated game **10**, the play means **18** comprises a treasure chest **20** in the housing and means **22** operable by the first playpiece to open the treasure chest. The game **10** also has indicating means **24** in the form of an opening in the housing which exposes the first playpiece to view and thus indicates who won the race and the treasure in the chest.

More particularly, the housing **12** of the illustrated game is made up of an outer shell or casing **30** which may represent or depict any desired subject such as the mountain depicted by the illustrated game. Alternately, a castle or a pirate sailing ship, or other suitable settings could be depicted. The outer casing **30** can be made of any suitable material such as plastic, metal, wood, carboard or the like, suitable for such a toy. The casing **30** is essentially in the form of a box or cube being open at the bottom and having a front wall **34**, a left side wall **36** (as viewed in FIG. 1), a right side wall **38**, a rear wall **40**, and a top or upper wall **42**.

In the center of the upper wall **42** a funnel section or receptacle **44** is provided which comprises the receiving means **14** of the illustrated game. The funnel section **44** has a large upper end portion **46** which is slightly tapered toward its lower end, an intermediate frusto conical shaped portion **48** which narrows down to a lower end slightly larger than the marble diameter, and a lower end portion **50** which also has a slight inward taper toward its lower end. The funnel section **44** thus provides a wide entrance at its upper end capable of receiving a number of marbles, but by the time it has narrowed to the lower end of the intermediate portion **48** it can only allow one marble one at a time to pass therethrough. Thus, while the marbles placed into the funnel **44** at the entrance can roll around and they can pass one another, by the time they pass through the lower end portion **50** they are effectively arranged in a sequence or series. This funnel construction adds an element of chance to the game since the first to place his marble in the funnel entrance is not necessarily the one whose marble first passes through portion **50**. The casing is formed around the edge of the upper end of the receiving funnel section **44**, to at least partially conceal from view the funnel and simulate to the players the illusion of a rocky or craggy secret tunnel leading into the depicted mountain.

Another opening **52**, which is similarly partially concealed by craggy formed portions of the outer casing **30**, is provided adjacent the front edge of the top wall **42** of the housing. The illustrated opening **52** is proportioned to receive playpieces which may take the form of simulated coins, jewels, or other treasures.

In the center of the front wall **34** is provided a doorway **54** at which is mounted an openable door **56** as will be described in detail below.

At the right front corner of the housing is provided another opening **58** through which the lower end **60** of a chute **62** extends, and at which the winning and first through playpiece appears.

Within the outer shell **30** of the housing is provided an inner housing structure **64** which combines and cooperates with the outer shell to provide a treasure receptacle **66**, the chute **62**, and the support for the means operable by the winning playpiece to open the door to the treasure chamber or receptacle.

The inner shell 64 may be secured to the outer shell 30 by suitable means such as adhesive, rivets or other fasteners known in the art. As shown in FIG. 2, the inner shell 64 defines the inclined elongated chute 62 which leads from the lower end of the funnel 44, through the opening 58 to the lower right hand corner of the housing as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. The chute 62 has a bottom wall 68 which may be concave, as desired, to receive the marble, and a pair of side rails 70. The illustrated toy also has a bottom plate 71 secured across its lower end and provided with individual button feet 73.

In the illustrated device, the means 22 operable by the playpiece for creating the action effect (in this case, the opening of the door to the treasure chamber) is provided by a pivoted arm 72 which normally engages means on the door 56 to maintain it closed, but which is raised by the first playpiece 16 traveling down the chute 62 to release the door and permit it to open. This arrangement is illustrated in FIGS. 2, 4, 5 and 6. More particularly, the generally horizontally extending arm 72 extends above and across an intermediate portion of the chute 62 within the housing. The arm 72 is pivoted at one end 74 by means of a frusto conical shaped hub 76 on the end of the arm. The hub 76 is received in a bearing housing 78 secured upon the bottom plate 71. The mid section of the arm 72 which extends over and across the chute 62, carries a cam surface 80 provided on a projection 82 secured to the rear side of the arm 72. Thus, when the arm 72 is in its lowered rest position as shown in solid line in FIGS. 4 and 5, the cam surface 80 is disposed in the path of the marble 16 moving down the chute.

As shown in FIG. 5, the cam surface 80 extends upwardly and rearwardly so as to facilitate the desired engagement with the marble. When the marble coming down the chute engages the cam surface 80, the weight of the marble tends to move the cam surface and thus the arm 72 to a position such as shown in broken lines in FIGS. 4 and 5, which will be referred to as its raised position.

At the outer end of the arm 72 opposite its pivot point, is a latching section 84. The latching section 84 comprises the outer end 86 of the arm itself which is set in an angle to the remainder of the arm so that such outer end 86 extends generally parallel to the front wall 34 of the housing and to the treasure chest door 56. This is to compensate for the orientation of the remainder or main portion of the arm 72 which extends diagonally across the right front corner of the housing as shown in FIG. 2. The main portion of the arm in turn is generally normal to the direction of the inclined chute 62. The chute 62 extends approximately from the center of the housing with its upper end positioned directly below the lower end 50 of the funnel 44 to the opening 58 at the lower right hand corner of the housing.

The arrangement of the parts just described permits the lower end 60 of the chute 62 to be positioned within a rectangular area defined by vertical walls of the housing, and the extension of front wall 34 and side wall 38 on the right hand corner when facing the front of the housing. As noted above, the lower most end 60 of the chute is exposed to view by that lower right corner of the housing being shortened or cut off. This arrangement is desirable in that it permits the entire structure to be packaged within a rectangular box having the general shape of the housing without having to provide additional space or an extension of the box to accommodate the end of the chute.

The latch section 84 on the end of the arm 72 further comprises a forwardly extending projection 88 which thus extends generally normal to the back surface of the door 56. The latch section 84 on the arm is adapted and proportioned to be received in an upwardly open slot 90 defined by a rearwardly projecting finger 92 on the rear of the door (seen best in FIG. 6). When the arm 72 is in its lowered position, the latch section 84 is received in the slot 90 and thereby retains the door 56 in its closed position. When the arm 72 is raised to its elevated position, the latch section 84 is removed from the slot 90 permitting the door 56 to swing open. The door 56 may be provided with biasing means such as a spring (not shown), but in the illustrated structure, the door 56 is pivotally mounted on a axis X—X which is essentially vertical, but which inclines forwardly a small amount from its lower to its upper end. By virtue of the inclined axis, when the door 56 is not held closed, its own weight will cause it to swing open.

The forward end of the projection 88 of the latch section 84 is inclined to provide a cam surface 94 (FIG. 6). The upper edge of the latching finger 92 mounted on the rear of the door also provides an inclined cam surface 96. Thus, when the door 56 is re-closed, the inclined cam surface 96 of the finger 92 will engage the inclined cam surface 94 of the projection 88. As the door 56 is further closed, this engagement will cause the arm 72 to be lifted a small amount to permit the finger 72 to pass rearwardly of the latch section 84. The latch section 84 can then again seat in the recess 90 defined by the finger 92. Thus the door is reset for later re-opening.

As noted above, the opening 52 in the upper wall 42 of the housing leads to the treasure chest on receptacle 66. When the door 56 is opened, whatever treasure has been accumulated in the chest can spill out. As shown in FIG. 3, the bottom floor 67 of the treasure chest may be inclined so that the weight of the treasure accumulated in the chest tends to bear against the rear of the door and fling it open when the door is released. Thus, when the door opens, the treasure in the chest will all spill out in a flood or avalanche to create a further moment of excitement for the children playing the game.

Now to consider the play of the game, the playpieces which are assigned to each player to place in the receiving means may take various forms and they are illustrated as marbles which have different colors for each of the players. The treasures assigned to the players may also take various forms such as simulated coins or jewels. Various means such as, for example, a deck of cards or a spinner may be provided which indicate when the players should place some of their treasures into the treasure chest. Certain of these cards may provide that the players rush to each place their marble into the receiving means. The marble which is first to pass through the lower end 50 of the funnel 44 continues down the chute 62 to engage the cam surface 80 and thereby lift the arm 72. This in turn permits the door 56 to open and whatever treasures have been placed in the chest 66 to spill out. Further, the arm 72 is thereby lifted out of the way of the marbles coming down the chute and it permits the first and winning marble to reach the exposed lower end 60 of the chute 62. The marbles are removed one at a time from end

60 of the chute so that the game can be replayed. While marbles are simple and relatively low cost, other rollable or slidable playpieces could be used.

A deck of cards **98** is shown in FIG. **2.** The cards may be shuffled, placed face down, and turned over one at a time. The cards may direct different players to place specified amounts of treasure, such as the coin **100** shown in FIG. **3,** into the chest **66.** One or more action cards may trigger the race of all players to place their marble **16** into the funnel **44.**

I claim:

1. A game comprising:

a housing,

a plurality of play pieces, each carrying a different indicia,

receiving means mounted in said housing for simultaneously receiving said play pieces, said receiving means having an inlet at the top end thereof and an outlet at the bottom end thereof, said receiving means having a plurality of tapered sections tapering towards the outlet so as to permit only a single play piece to pass through the outlet at a time,

treasure simulating members,

a receptacle formed in the housing for storing the treasure simulating members, said receptacle having a doorway therein,

an opening in the housing providing an entrance to said receptacle for use in depositing the treasure simulating members in the receptacle,

an arm member pivotally mounted in said housing, said arm member having latch means thereon for latching the receptacle doorway and cam means thereon for receiving an actuation signal,

an inclined chute positioned below the outlet of said receiving means for receiving play pieces therefrom, said pieces being conveyed by said chute to the bottom end thereof,

the cam members of said arm being positioned along said chute in the path of pieces conveyed therealong, and

chance selection means for randomly alternatively calling for the deposit by the players of a predetermined number of treasure simulating members in the receptacle or of pieces in the receiving means,

whereby the pieces placed in the receiving means ride down the chute to actuate the arm member to enable the arm member to unlatch the doorway so as to release treasure simulating members from the receptacle.

2. The game of claim **1** wherein the housing has an opening therein adjacent to the bottom end of said chute such that said pieces are visible when they reach the end of their travel in the chute.

3. The game of claim **1** wherein the chance selection means comprises a set of cards each having a direction thereon.

4. The game of claim **1** wherein said arm member is pivotally mounted at one end thereof, the latch means being on the other end of said arm means with said cam means intermediate the ends of said arm member.

* * * * *