July 15, 1969 R. B. MOSSMAN 3,455,556

BOARD GAME APPARATUS WITH PLAYING PIECE USED BY ALL PLAYERS

Filed June 30, 1966 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1.

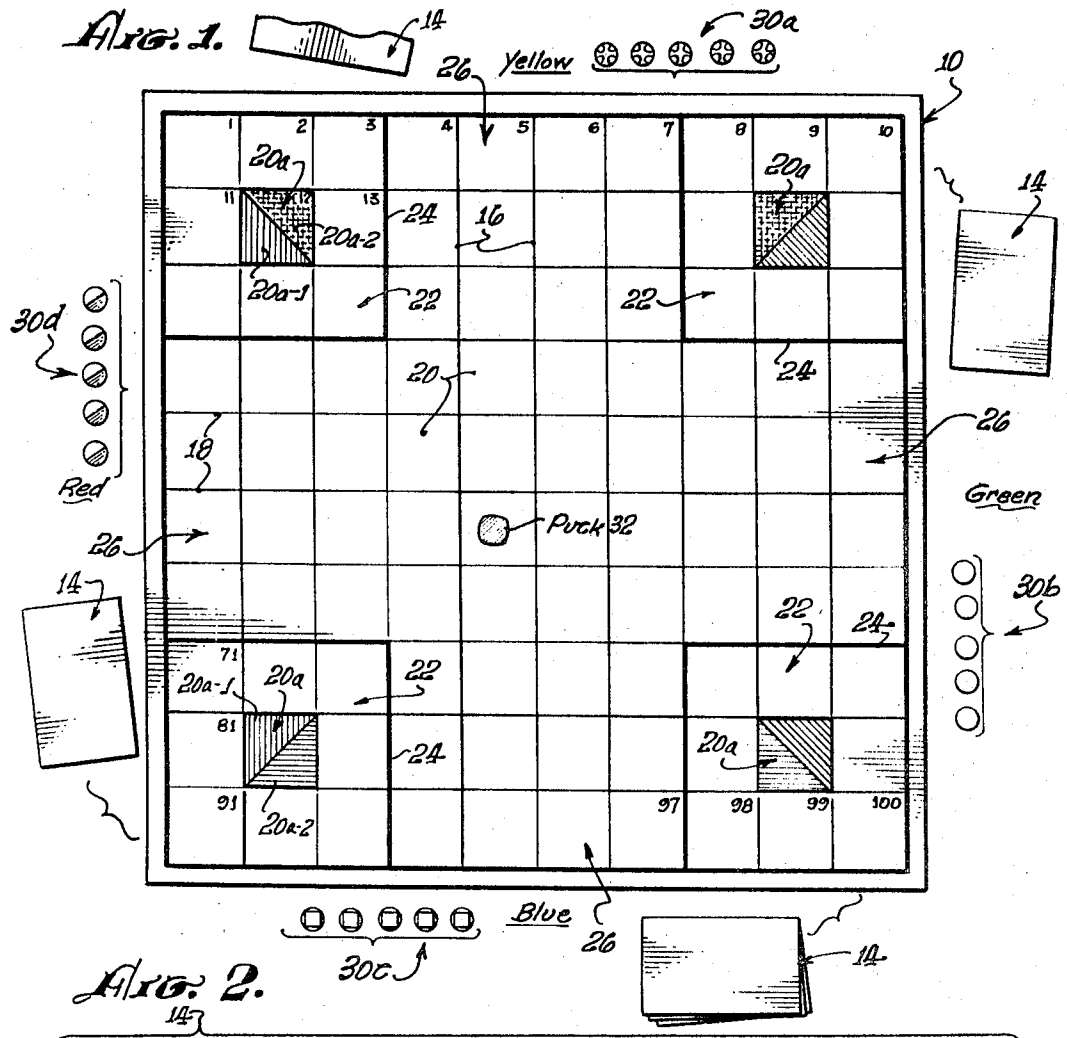
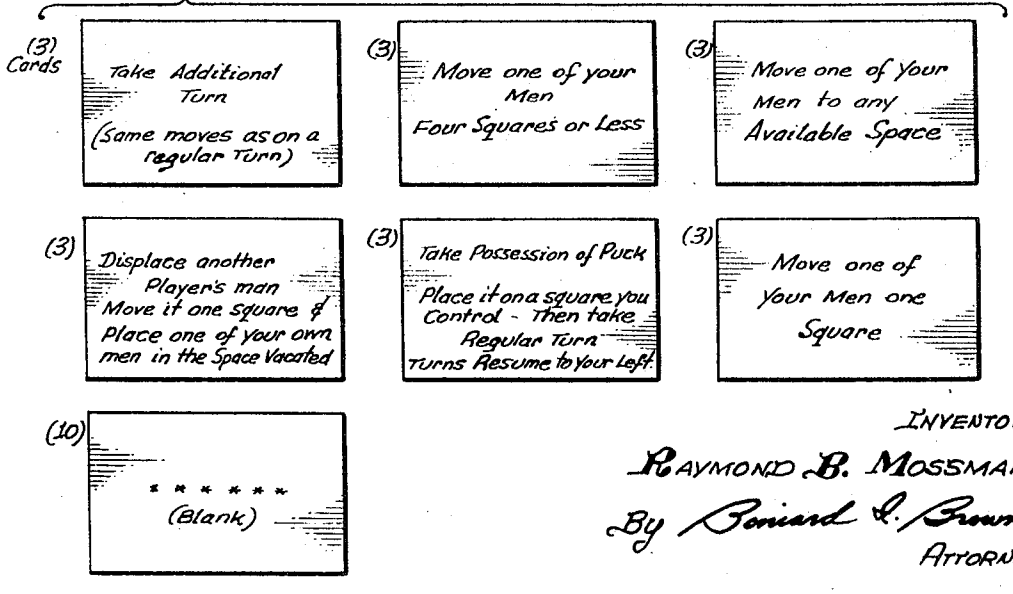


Fig. 2.



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FIG. 3.

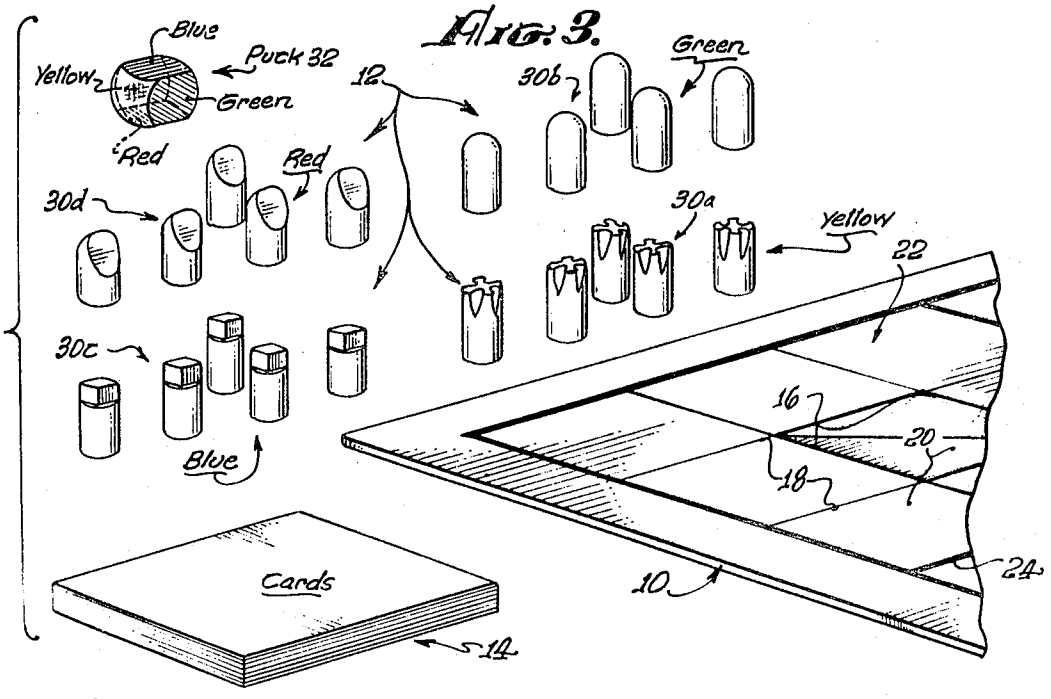


FIG. 4.

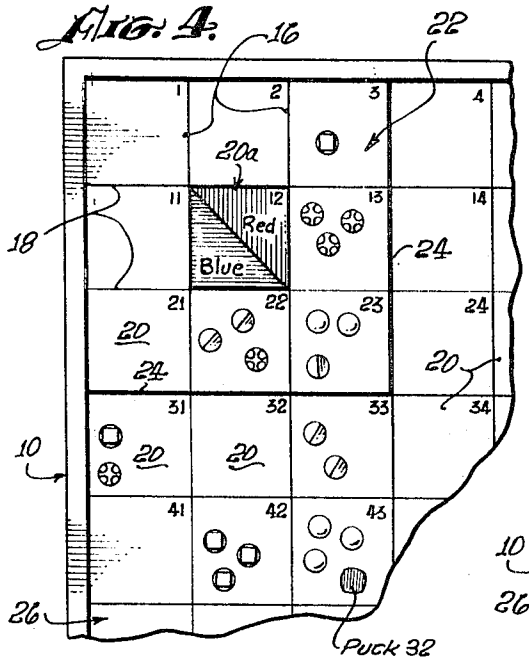
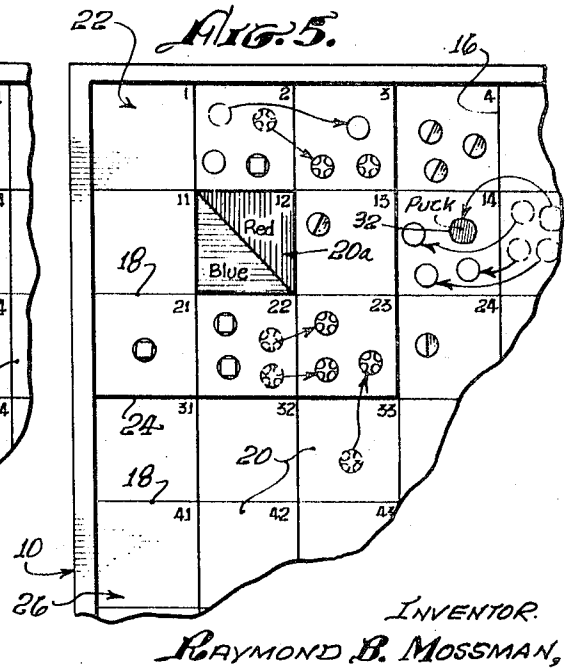


FIG. 5.



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3,455,556

Patented July 15, 1969

3,455,556

BOARD GAME APPARATUS WITH PLAYING PIECE USED BY ALL PLAYERS

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Filed June 30, 1966, Ser. No. 561,887
Int. Cl. A63f 3/00, 1/00, 9/04
U.S. Cl. 273—134 9 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Game apparatus having distinctive sets of game pieces to be assigned to the respective players, a cube-like common game piece or puck to be used by all the players, said puck having planar faces each colored to correspond to one of said sets of games pieces, a game board divided into common playing spaces, a player starting zones, and player scoring zones, and change selected instruction means directing various game actions and moves, the playing spaces and pieces being of such relative dimensions that a set of game pieces and said puck may be simultaneously positioned on a single space. During the course of the game, each player attempts to gain possession of the puck and maneuver the latter and his game pieces from his assigned starting zone, across the common playing spaces, to his assigned scoring zones.

This invention relates generally to games; more particularly, the invention relates to novel board game apparatus for playing a new and intriguing tactical game which simulates various competitive sports as well as a military battle.

Generally speaking, the invention provides a game including a playing or game board, a set of game pieces for each player, a common game piece, herein referred to as a puck, to be used by all of the players, and a pack of chance cards which are dealt to the players, at the start of each game. The game board is marked to define a central playing field, a number of scoring zones generally uniformly spaced about the field, and starting zones in the regions between adjacent scoring zones. Each starting zone is located opposite a pair of adjacent scoring zones. The face of the board is divided into a multiplicity of discrete playing spaces which are arranged in a generally uniform pattern over the entire playing area of the board including the central playing field, the starting zones, and the scoring zones. In the illustrative embodiment of the invention, for example, the playing face of the game board has a number of mutually perpendicular, intersecting grid lines extending parallel to the edges of the board. These grid lines define rectangular playing squares arranged in a first set of rows extending parallel to two opposite edges of the board and a second set of rows extending parallel to the remaining edges of the board and normal to the first rows. Rectangular groups of these playing squares, at the four corners of the board, are outlined to define the scoring zones. The rectangular group of playing squares between each pair of adjacent corner scoring zones defines a starting zone. Accordingly, the game board has two scoring zones and an intervening starting zone along each of its sides. The rectangular space bounded by these starting zones and scoring zones defines the central playing field.

The sets of game pieces each comprise a number, typically five, of separate, essentially identical game pieces. The several game pieces of each set are distinguished from the game pieces of the remaining sets by common identification means, such as a common distinctive color and/or a common distinctive shape. Each game piece set is identified with a particular pair of adjacent scoring zones, and the corresponding opposite starting zone, by

providing the scoring zones with appropriate identification means. In the illustraeive embodiment of the invention, for example, the game pieces of each set have a common distinctive color, and the scoring zones associated with the respective sets have identification areas, or flags as they are referred to herein, of the same color. As will appear presently, each pair of adjacent players about the board have a common scoring zone. Accordingly, each scoring zone contains a pair of colored flags corresponding to the game pieces of two different game piece sets.

The common game piece, or puck, of the present game apparatus is multisided and has a number of planar faces at least equal to the number of players. The puck of the illustrated game apparatus, for example, has the general shape of a cube. Four faces of this cube are colored to match the colors of the game pieces in the four sets of game pieces.

The chance playing cards which are dealt to the players at the start of each game bear various printed instructions which direct certain moves for the players. If desired, a few of the cards may be left blank to enhance the chance aspect of the game.

Briefly, the basic object of the game which is played with the present game apparatus is for each player to attain possession of the common game puck and maneuver his game pieces and the puck from his starting zone, across the central playing field, onto a single playing square within one of his respective scoring zones. The game involves certain tactics, or tactical maneuvers, which each player may resort to for the purpose of impeding his opponent's scoring efforts and/or aiding his own scoring efforts. Certain of these tactics are concerned with neutralizing and acquiring control of playing squares for the purpose of impeding or obstructing movement of an opponent's game pieces. Other tactics are concerned with capturing the puck from an opponent currently in possession of the same, or evading capture of the puck by an opponent. A player acquires control of a playing square by maneuvering onto the square a greater number of game pieces than any of his opponents. Any player who thus controls a playing square may permit or deny movement of his opponent's game pieces across the square. If such movement is denied any player, the latter must move his game pieces around the controlled square. In this way, a player may obstruct the progress of his opponent's game pieces across the board. Typical rules of the game limit the maximum number of game pieces which each playing square may contain.

A playing square becomes neutralized when two players have the same number of game pieces on the square, and no other player has more than that number of pieces on that square. Thus, while each player is prohibited from moving his game pieces across a square currently controlled by an opponent, without the opponent's permisssion, the player may, nevertheless, move any number of his game pieces onto the square without permission as long as the total number of pieces on the square does not exceed the permitted maximum. Accordingly, any player may neutralize a playing square currently controlled by an opponent with a number of game pieces equal to or less than one-half the permitted maximum number of game pieces which each square may contain, by maneuvering the same number of his own game pieces onto the square. Any player who thus neutralizes a playing square previously controlled by an opponent may move his remaining game pieces across the square without the opponent's permission. Typical game rules prescribe certain limitations on the movement of a player's game pieces from a playing square which he has just neutralized. It is evident at this point, therefore, that each player may impede the progress of this opponent's game pieces across

the game board and/or aid the movement of this own game pieces or the pieces of an ally across the board by judicious neutralizing and controlling of the playing squares.

As noted earlier, a player, to score, must maneuver his game pieces and the common playing puck onto a single playing square in one of his respective scoring zones. Moreover, the rules of the game may direct that a player, to score, must retain control of the square and puck during a single following turn of each remaining player. Accordingly, loss of the puck to any opponent temporarily eliminates a player's chance of scoring. The game rules prescribe certain ways in which each player may capture the puck from an opponent and lose the puck to an opponent. For example, according to typical game rules, a player may capture the puck from an opponent currently in possession of the same by gaining control of the playing square which contains the puck. It is evident at this point, therefore, that a player currently in possession of the puck may eliminate possibility of its capture by controlling the square containing the puck with a number of his game pieces equal to or greater than one-half the maximum number of game pieces which each square may contain (except in a situation wherein another player invokes the use of an appropriate chance playing card or cards which he holds to take possession of the puck).

As noted earlier, the chance playing cards which are included in the present game apparatus are dealt to the players at the start of each game. According to typical game rules, each player may use his respective cards one or more at a time at any point in the course of the game by signifying his intention to do so. These cards direct different prescribed moves, both adverse and beneficial, including changes in possession of the puck from one player to another. Thus, a player may lose or gain possession of the puck both as a result of his own and his opponent's playing tactics and as a result of directions on the playing cards.

Typical game rules may permit players to form open or secret alliances in an effort to aid their own games and/or impede their opponents' games. Such alliances may be legitimate or deceptive in intent. In other words, one player may form an alliance with another player to impede the scoring efforts of the remaining players and/or to impede the scoring efforts of this partner in the alliance. Thus, each player must be aware of both the advantages and the risks of forming alliances with other players. As noted earlier, each player has a scoring zone in common with each of his adjacent opponents. It follows, therefore, that two players may score, either individually or cooperatively, in their common scoring zone and that each scoring zone is defended by the two players who cannot score in the respective scoring zone.

It is evident at this point that the game which is played with the present game apparatus simulates various competitive sports as well as a military battle. As a consequence the players may decide, at the outset of each game, which particular activity the game is to simulate and then play the game accordingly. It is obvious, of course, that the particular rules governing the game which is played with the game apparatus of the invention may be varied. It should be understood at the outset, therefore, that the typical game rules which are set forth herein are intended to be purely illustrative in nature and are not intended in any way to limit the scope of the invention.

It is the general object of the invention to provide novel board game apparatus of the character described.

A more specific object of the invention is to provide board game apparatus which may be used to play a game simulating any one of several activities, such as various competitive sports or a military battle.

A further object of the invention is to provide a board game apparatus of the character described for playing a game involving novel and highly intriguing tactical maneuvers or movements of game pieces across the game board.

Yet a further object of the invention is to provide board game apparatus of the character described which permits selective individual and cooperative efforts on the part of the players.

A still further object of the invention is to provide board game apparatus of the character described which is relatively simple in construction, economical to manufacture, and otherwise ideally suited to its intended purposes.

Other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent to those versed in the art from a consideration of the following description, the appended claims and the accompanying drawings, wherein:

FIGURE 1 illustrates a typical board game apparatus according to the invention;

FIGURE 2 illustrates typical chance playing cards embodied in the game apparatus;

FIGURE 3 illustrates the basic components of the game apparatus; and

FIGURES 4 and 5 illustrate typical tactical maneuvers or moves involved in playing a game with the present game apparatus, the squares on the game board being numbered for ease of description.

Referring now to the drawings, the game apparatus of the invention which has been selected for illustration comprises a game board **10**, game pieces **12**, and a deck of chance playing cards **14**. The illustrated game board **10** is square in shape and is designed for use by four players situated at the sides, respectively, of the board. The playing face of the board is printed or otherwise marked to form a number of intersecting, uniformly spaced, mutually perpendicular grid lines **16** and **18** which extend parallel to the side edges, respectively, of the board. These grid lines define therebetween a multiplicity of playing spaces or squares **20**. These playing squares will be observed to be arranged in a first set of rows extending parallel to the upper and lower edges of the playing board **10** in FIGURE 1 and a second set of rows extending parallel to the remaining edges of the board and normal to the first rows. A group of the playing squares **20** at each corner of the game board **10** is outlined to define a square scoring zone **22**. The illustrated game board, then, has four scoring zones. Each illustrated scoring zone contains nine playing squares **20**. Each scoring zone may be outlined in any convenient way. In the drawings, for example, each scoring zone is defined by heavy lines **24** which extend along portions of certain of the grid lines **16** and **18**. The rectangular group of playing squares **20** located between each pair of adjacent scoring zones **22** defines a starting zone **26**. The illustrated game board, then, has four starting zones located along the sides, respectively, of the board. Each starting zone contains twelve playing squares. The remaining central region of the game board, which is bounded by the starting zones **26**, defines a playing field. The illustrated playing field is square in shape and contains sixteen playing squares **20**.

The central playing square **20***a* in each scoring zone **22** is divided diagonally into triangular portions **20***a*–**1** and **20***a*–**2**. These portions of the central scoring zone square are referred to herein as flags and are provided with identification means, such as distinctive coloring, to identify them with certain of the game pieces **12**, as explained below.

The game pieces **12** of the present game apparatus are grouped into four distinctive sets **30***a*, **30***b*, **30***c* and **30***d* which are assigned to the different players, respectively, and a common playing piece or puck **32** which is used by all of the players. Each illustrated game piece set **30***a*, **30***b*, **30***c* and **30***d* contains five essentially identical game pieces. For convenience, the separate game pieces of each set will be hereinafter referred to by the reference numeral applied to the respective set. The game pieces of the several sets

are distinguished one from the other by providing the game pieces of each set with similar distinctive identification means, such as a common color and/or shape, as indicated in the drawings. The common playing puck **32** is generally cube shaped and four of its faces are provided with identification means which identify each face with a particular game piece set. Four faces of the illustrated puck, for example, are colored to match the game pieces of the four game piece sets **30***a*, **30***b*, **30***c* and **30***d*, respectively.

As noted earlier, each flag **20***a*–**1** and **20***a*–**2** on the game board **10** is identified with a corresponding set of the game pieces **12**. In the drawings, for example, each flag has the same color as the game pieces of its respective game piece set. It is significant to note at this point that one flag in each scoring zone **22** and one flag in an adjacent scoring zone are identified with the same set of game pieces. Thus, in the illustrated game board, one flag in the upper left-hand scoring zone in FIGURE 1 and one flag in the upper right-hand scoring zone are colored yellow to match the yellow color of the game piece set **30***a*. Similarly, one flag in the lower left-hand scoring zone and one flag in the lower right-hand scoring zone are colored blue to match the blue color of the game piece set **30***c*. The two remaining flags in the two right hand scoring zones are colored green to match the green color of the game piece set **30***b* and the two remaining flags in the two left-hand scoring zones are colored red to match the red color of the game piece set **30***d*.

The card pack **14** contains a number of chance playing cards, typically twenty-eight in the case of the illustrated game apparatus which is designed for use by four players. Printed on each card are directions or instructions relating to the game pieces **30***a*, **30***b*, **30***c* and **30***d*, and the puck **32**. FIGURE 2 illustrates exemplary instructions which might be printed on the cards. As noted earlier, certain cards may be left blank, as desired, as shown in FIGURE 2, to enhance the chance or intrigue aspects of the game. It should be understood, of course, that the directions indicated in FIGURE 2 are intended to be purely illustrative and that the directions which are printed on the cards may vary, according to the particular rules under which the game is played.

It is recognized that the rules governing the game which is played with the present game apparatus are immaterial to the inventive aspects of the invention. However, it is believed to be desirable to explain, in some detail, the game as it is played under a typical set of rules. It should be understood, of course, that the following explanation is intended to be purely illustrative in nature and is not to be construed as limiting the invention in any way.

According to such typical game rules, each player is assigned one of the sets **30***a*, **30***b*, **30***c* or **30***d* of game pieces, the two corresponding scoring zones **22** which contain the flags **20***a*–**1** or **20***a*–**2** having the same color as his respective game pieces, and the starting zone **26** at the opposite side of the game board **10**. A selected number of the playing cards **14** are dealt face down to the players at the start of the game. As explained earlier, the object of the game is for each player to maneuver his game pieces from his respective starting zone **26**, across the central playing field, to a single playing square **20** within one of his scoring zones, along with the puck **32**. A player who thus maneuvers his game pieces and the puck onto a single square of one of his scoring zones obtains a predetermined score, such as ten points. The rules of the game may require a scoring player to maintain control of the square during one further turn of each remaining player. During the course of the game, each player attempts to block or impede movement of his opponent's game pieces across the board. Moreover, since possession of the puck **32** is essential to scoring, each player attempts to capture the puck from an opponent currently in possession thereof, or prevent its capture by his opponents. The players thus impede the movement of their opponents' game pieces, capture the puck, and prevent capture of the puck, by utilizing the various tactics referred to earlier, to wit, controlling and neutralizing the playing squares **20** and employing their respective playing cards **14**. As noted earlier, according to typical game rules, a player may use his cards, any number at a time, at any point in the course of the game by signifying his intention to do so.

At the start of a typical game, each player places his five game pieces within his respective starting zone **26**, along the outermost row of playing squares **20**. Each player may place up to a maximum of four game pieces on the same square. Thereafter, one of the players rolls the puck **32** until the puck lands with one of its colored faces uppermost. The puck is then assigned to the player having the correspondingly colored set of game pieces. At this point, the puck holder shuffles the playing cards **14** and deals an equal number of the playing cards **14** to each of the players, face down. According to typical game rules, for example, each player is dealt five cards and the remaining cards are placed face down. The puck holder then advances his game pieces to the third row from his side of the board and places the puck **32** with his own color uppermost on one of the squares that he currently occupies. At this point, the puck holder takes his first regular turn.

The regular turns of the present game proceed around the board in a clockwise direction, subject to interruption by a player signifying his intention to take a card turn. During each regular turn of a player, the latter may move his game pieces a given total number (typically four) of squares or less. That is to say, if the total given number of moves is four, during each turn a player may move one of his game pieces four squares, two of his game pieces two squares each, and so on. However, any player may move less than four total squares, if he so desires. Preferably, each player counts each move out loud. Each player may move his game pieces in any direction, either lengthwise of the rows of playing squares or diagonally across a playing square.

As noted earlier, a player may impede movement of his opponent's game pieces by acquiring control of a playing square **20**. A player controls a square when he has on that square a greater number of game pieces than any of his opponents. A player who thus controls a playing square may grant or deny permission to his opponents to move their game pieces across the controlled square. In the event that such permission is denied a player, the latter must move his game pieces around the controlled square. On the other hand, if the player in control of a playing square grants an opponent permission to cross the square, the opponent may move his game pieces across the square.

A player who controls a playing square **20** with a number of his respective game pieces not greater than one-half the maximum number of game pieces which may be placed in any square has only temporary control of the square. This temporary control may be neutralized by another player. Thus, a player neutralizes a playing square currently in the control of an opponent by placing on the square an equal number of game pieces. A player who thus neutralizes a playing square may move his game pieces across the square without the permission of the opponent who previously controlled the square. According to typical game rules, a player who moves his game pieces onto a square currently controlled by an opponent, without the opponent's permission, and who fails to neutralize or merely neutralizes the square, without acquiring control thereof, may not move his game pieces from that square until his next turn, either a regular turn or a card turn.

The puck **32** is considered to be one of the puck holder's game pieces. The puck holder may move the puck only during his turns, and only into a square he controls.

However, the game rules may dictate that movement of the puck does not constitute one of the prescribed maximum number of moves which a player may take during each turn.

As noted earlier, the player may take a card turn at any point during the game. A player signifies his intention to take a card turn in any suitable way, as by announcing "card." After signifying his intention to take a card turn, a player turns over a card of his selection from among those he holds and follows the instructions printed on this card. As may be observed in FIGURE 2, a player may acquire possession of the puck **32** by virtue of the instructions on his respective playing cards.

At this point, then, it is obvious that during the course of the game, the players take successive turns in moving their game pieces across the board toward their respective scoring zones **22**, or into various tactical positioning to impede or assist other players. The players may utilize the tactics described earlier to impede the progress of their opponents' game pieces and/or aid the progress of their own game pieces, as well as to acquire possession of or prevent capture of the puck **32**.

The score is made when a puck holder gains control of a square in one of his respective scoring zones **22** and places the puck **32** on this square. As noted earlier, the rules of the game may require that the puck holder retain possession of the square until the remaining three players have completed one more regular turn. Accordingly, scoring requires, first, control of one square within a player's scoring zone, and secondly, placement of the puck **32** on the controlled square. Accordingly, a player, to score, must acquire and maintain control of the puck.

The rules of the game may dictate various ways in which possession of the puck may be gained or lost. As mentioned earlier, for example, certain of the playing cards **14** may contain instructions dictating transfer of the puck from one player to another. Moreover, according to typical game rules, a player may acquire control of the puck when he gains control of a playing square currently controlled by the puck holder and containing the puck. In the event that a player merely neutralizes, rather than acquires control of, the square containing the puck, his opponent, the current puck holder, must on his next turn move the puck to another playing square which he controls before moving any of his regular game pieces. If all of the puck holder's squares are neutralized when his next turn arrives, he loses the puck to that player who has neutralized the square containing the puck. Thus, during the course of the game, the players attempt to block one another, or capture the puck from one another, and, at the same time, move their game pieces toward one of their respective scoring zones.

FIGURES 4 and 5 illustrate typical placement and moves of game pieces which may occur in the course of the game. The illustrated game piece placements and moves are obvious so that no detailed discussion thereof is necessary. Suffice it to say that a neutralized square is illustrated at **31** in FIGURE 4. Controlled squares are illustrated at **33** and **42** in FIGURE 4. A square controlled by a puck holder and containing the puck **32** is illustrated at **43** in FIGURE 4. Game piece movements resulting in absolute control of a playing square **20** by a player, that is, control that cannot be neutralized by another player owing to the placement of more than half the maximum permitted number of game pieces on a single square, is illustrated at **22**, **23** and **33** in FIGURE 5 (except in a situation wherein another player invokes the use of an appropriate chance playing card or cards which he holds to take possession of the puck). Movement of three game pieces and the puck **32** onto a single square, resulting in absolute control of the square by the puck holder and hence immunity to capture of the puck, is illustrated at square **14** in FIGURE 5.

As noted earlier, two players may cooperate with one another by forming alliances in an attempt to impede the movement of their opponents' game pieces and/or to achieve cooperative scoring. Moreover, one player may enter into a deceptive alliance with an opponent for the purpose of tricking or trapping the latter. For example, a puck holder, who currently has an alliance with one opponent, might suddenly shift his attack from one of his scoring zones to the other scoring zone, thus forcing his partner in the alliance to make undesirable defensive moves. Such alliances may be made openly or secretly by written notes or by conversations held away from the game board.

The rules of the game may permit passing of the puck **32** from one player to another. For example, typical rules governing passing of the puck may read as follows:

(1) A puck holder must possess the puck on a controlled square when he passes it to an opponent.

(2) A puck holder may pass the puck only on his regular turn and in lieu of moving any of his game pieces.

(3) A puck holder may not, when he passes the puck to an opponent, have any game pieces in that scoring zone where he might share a score with the puck receiver, as described below.

(4) The receiver of the puck must be in control of a square in which he can place the puck.

As noted above, the rules of the game may permit two players to share a score which is made as a result of passing of the puck **32** from one player to the other. Thus, if the puck is passed from one player to another, and the puck receiver thereafter scores in their mutual scoring zone, the resulting score, which would normally be assigned to the player making the score, is shared equally by both players. As an example of this puck passing maneuver, if two players, in attempting to obstruct the movements of the current puck holder, move their game pieces too far from one of the scoring zones which they are defending, the third player may be able to maneuver his game pieces into position to receive the puck from the current puck holder and thereafter score in the undefended scoring zone.

It is now obvious that under typical game rules, each player may follow many lines of action and may resort to a variety of tactical maneuvers in his attempt to score. For example, the puck holder may keep the puck **32** with a group of his respective game pieces, moving the game pieces and the puck in unison, up the middle of the game board **10**, square by square, without disclosing which scoring zone **22** he intends to attack. Alternatively, a puck holder may move his game pieces and the puck toward the right or left in an attempt to enlist the aid of the adjacent player. According to yet a further plan of attack, the puck holder may retain the puck **32** on a playing square **20** which he currently controls on his near side of the board, while advancing one or two of his remaining game pieces toward one of his scoring zones, and rely on his playing cards for advancement of the puck toward or to scoring position. Sudden shifts in the direction of attack followed by the puck holder may also be advantageous. It is evident, of course, that if the puck holder losses control of the puck, he may later regain possession of the puck by the various maneuvers discussed above. Certain of these maneuvers are illustrated in FIGURES 4 and 5.

As noted earlier, the game rules and maneuvers discussed above are intended to be purely illustrative and not limitative in nature.

Those versed in the art will appreciate that the present invention achieves the objects and realizes the advantages hereinbefore mentioned.

Although a specific embodiment of the present invention has been illustrated and described herein, it will be understood that the same is merely exemplary of presently preferred embodiments capable of attaining the objects and advantages hereinbefore mentioned, and that the invention is not limited thereto; variations will be readily apparent to those versed in the art, and the inven-

tion is entitled to the broadest interpretation within the terms of the appended claims.

The inventor claims:

1. Game apparatus comprising:

a game board having a central playing field, a number of scoring zones generally uniformly spaced about said playing field, and an equal number of starting zones, said starting zones being respectively positioned in spaced relation to and opposite respective pairs of adjacent scoring zones,

said game board being divided into distinct playing spaces arranged in a generally uniform pattern over the entire board including said playing field, said starting zones, and said scoring zones,

each player being assigned one starting zone and the two opposite scoring zones, whereby each player has a scoring zone in common with an adjacent player,

game piece sets to be assigned to said players, respectively,

each game piece set containing a number of separate game pieces,

said game pieces in each said set having common identification means which distinguish the pieces of each set from the game pieces of the remaining sets,

each pair of adjacent scoring zones being associated with a particular game piece set and having identification means corresponding to the respective game piece set,

a common game piece to be used by all players and having distinguishing means which render the latter game piece visually distinguishable from the remaining game pieces of the game apparatus,

chance means manually operable to designate one of said identification means, and

said playing spaces and game pieces being relatively sized to permit simultaneous placement of said common game piece and the several game pieces of any given game piece set in side-by-side relation on the same playing space.

2. Game apparatus according to claim 1 wherein:

said scoring zones have indicia defining said scoring zone identification means,

said game pieces bear respective indicia to define said first mentioned game piece identification means,

said common game piece has faces which bear respective indicia to define said common game piece identification means, said indicia bearing faces constituting said chance means, and

the game pieces of each game piece set and the corresponding scoring zones having the same indicia.

3. Game apparatus according to claim 1 wherein:

said game board is generally square in shape and has a number of intersecting, generally uniformly spaced, mutually perpendicular grid lines extending parallel to the edges, respectively, of the board,

said grid lines define therebetween said playing spaces,

said scoring zones are located at the corners, respectively, of said board and each comprises a rectangular group of said playing spaces, and

said starting zones respectively comprise rectangular groups of said playing spaces.

4. Game apparatus comprising:

a game board having a central playing field, a number of scoring zones generally uniformly spaced about said playing field, and an equal number of starting zones located between adjacent scoring zones, respectively, whereby each pair of adjacent scoring zones are located opposite a starting zone,

said game board being divided into distinct playing spaces arranged in a generally uniform pattern over the entire board including said playing field, said starting zones, and said scoring zones,

each player being assigned one starting zone and the two opposite scoring zones, whereby each player has a scoring zone in common with an adjacent player,

game piece sets to be assigned to said players, respectively,

each game piece set containing a number of separate game pieces,

said game pieces in each said set having common identification means which distinguish the pieces of each set from the game pieces of the remaining sets,

each pair of adjacent scoring zones being associated with a particular game piece set and having identification means corresponding to that of the respective game piece set,

a common game piece to be used by all players and having distinguishing means which render the latter game piece visually distinguishable from the remaining game pieces of the game apparatus,

said common game piece having a multi-sided configuration defining a number of generally planar faces and being adapted to be thrown in such a way that said common game piece lands with one of said faces uppermost, said faces being at least equal in number to said game piece sets and each having an identification means corresponding to that of a particular game piece set, and

said playing spaces and game pieces being relatively sized to permit simultaneous placement of said common game piece and the several game pieces of any given game piece set in side-by-side relation on the same playing space.

5. Game apparatus according to claim 4 wherein:

said scoring zones have colored areas defining said scoring zones identification means,

said game pieces are colored to define said first mentioned game piece identification means,

said faces of said common game piece are colored to define said common game piece identification means, and

the game pieces of each game piece set, colored areas of the corresponding scoring zones, and the corresponding face of said common game piece having the same distinctive color.

6. Game apparatus according to claim 4 wherein:

said common game piece has the general shape of a cube.

7. Game apparatus according to claim 4 wherein:

said game board is generally square in shape and has a number of intersecting, generally uniformly spaced, mutually perpendicular grid lines extending parallel to the edges, respectively, of the board,

said grid lines define therebetween said playing spaces,

said scoring zones are located at the corners, respectively, of said board and each comprises a rectangular group of said playing spaces, and

said starting zones are located along the sides, respectively, of said board between adjacent corner scoring zones and comprise rectangular group of said playing spaces.

8. Game apparatus according to claim 4 wherein:

the game pieces of each said game piece set have a common distinctive color defining said first mentioned game piece identification means,

the face of said common game piece corresponding to each game piece set having the same color as the corresponding set, the colored faces of said common game piece comprising said common game piece identification means, and

said scoring zone identification means comprise a pair of colored areas in each scoring zone, one said area in each scoring zone and one said area in an adjacent scoring zone having the same color as the game pieces of the corresponding game piece set.

9. Game apparatus according to claim 4 wherein:

said colored areas in each scoring zone occupy por-

tions of a common playing space in the respective scoring zone.

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U.S. Cl. X.R.

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