Aug. 28, 1956 J. M. TULLIO 2,760,776

FOOTBALL GAME DEVICE

Filed March 20, 1953

FIG. 1

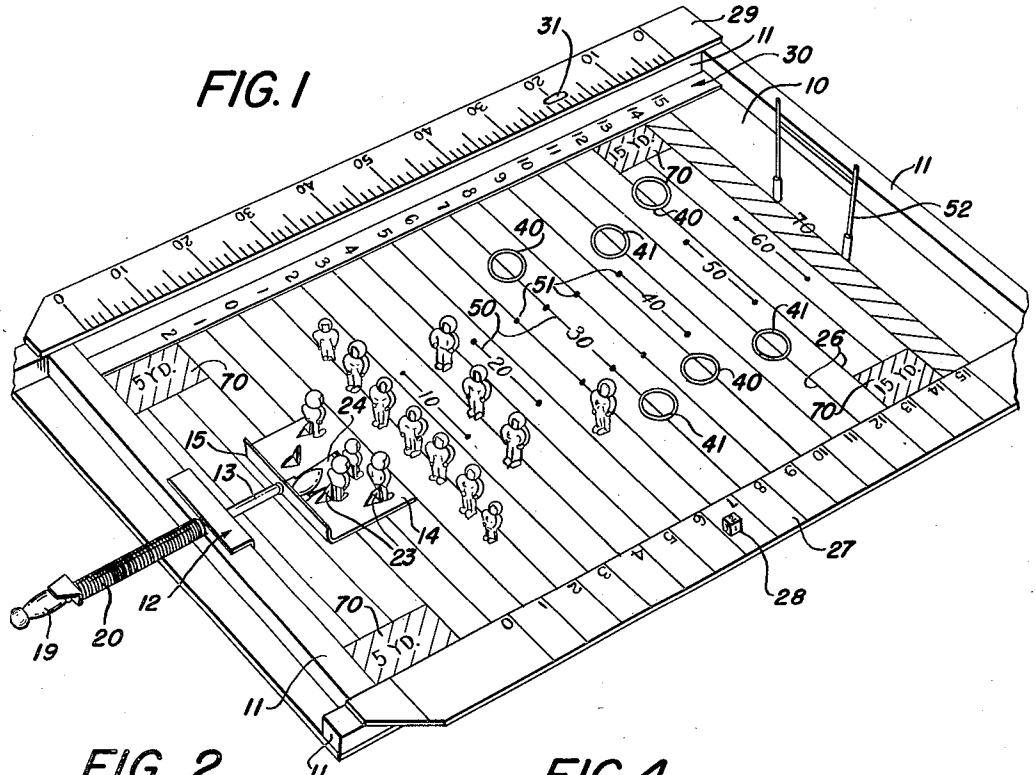


FIG. 2

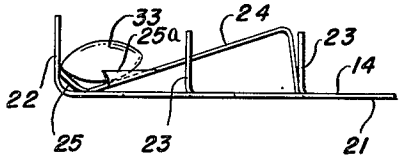


FIG. 4

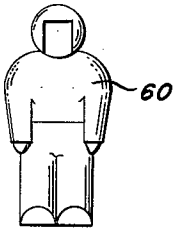


FIG. 5

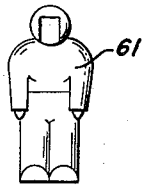


FIG. 6

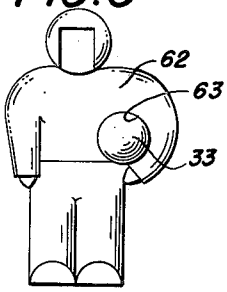


FIG. 3

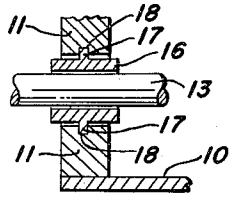
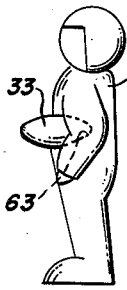


FIG. 7



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FOOTBALL GAME DEVICE

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5 Claims. (Cl. 273—94)

This invention relates to football game devices and in particular relates to an improvement over the form of football game device shown and described in United States Patent 2,600,940, issued on June 17, 1952.

While the above prior art device provided a new and novel form of football game simulating, to a certain extent, the actual playing conditions of an actual football game, many playing conditions normally encountered in a football game were incapable of being simulated in the playing of a game with the said device. For example, it was impossible to employ any forward passing maneuvers, and also it was impossible to attempt a field goal under the conditions present on the prior art gameboard. Further disadvantage was found in the limited amount of skill that was permitted with respect to the placement of the offensive and defensive playing figures, and also in the fact that the angular direction of catapulted motion was not capable of variation and accordingly the outcome of a scrimmage play was more dependent on chance rather than the exercise of skill to exploit an apparent defense weakness.

Further disadvantage may be found in the fact that the prior art failed to introduce the proper element of actuality into the game, inasmuch as no provision was made for "fumbles."

Accordingly, it is one object of this invention to provide a football game device capable of simulation of all actual playing conditions.

It is a further object of this invention to provide a football game device capable of simulating such offensive maneuvers as forward passing and place kicking for field goals.

It is a still further object of this invention to provide a football game device wherein the outcome will be predicated upon skill rather than chance.

These and other objects of the invention will become more apparent upon a reading of the following specification, considered in the light of the accompanying drawings.

Of the drawings:

Figure 1 is a perspective drawing of the improved game, indicating among other things the scrimmage area.

Figure 2 is a side elevation showing the improved ramp provided on the catapult platform.

Figure 3 is an enlarged cross-section showing the mounting of the catapult with respect to the game board.

Figure 4 is a front elevation of a miniature, defensive lineman playing figure.

Figure 5 is a front elevation of a miniature defense back playing figure.

Figures 6 and 7 are front and side elevations, respectively, of a miniature offensive playing figure.

Referring now to the drawings and in particular to Figure 1, thereof, the game board is shown including a bottom or floor member **10**, which serves as the actual playing field. An upright frame or border **11** erected along all four sides of the bottom serves as a fence to

confine the movable objects in play and to support auxiliary or scoring elements to be later described.

A catapult shown generally at **12** is slidable through an opening in one end section of the fence **11** and comprises a rod **13** on the inner end of which is mounted a platform **14** fastened as by a nut **15**. At the opening provided in the fence for passage of the rod **13** therethrough, there is provided an apertured block **16**, surrounding the rod **13** to permit reciprocal movement with respect thereto. Lugs **17**, **17**, provided on opposed faces of the block **16**, are receivable within appropriate apertures **18**, **18**, provided in the frame **11**, to permit movement of said rod **13** and block **16** with respect thereto. Suitable anchoring means may be provided on the block **16** and handle **19** for anchoring a helical spring **20** therebetween, the arrangement being such that when the handle **19** is drawn outwardly from the frame **11**, the spring **20** will urge return of the same to the position shown in Figure 1.

To the end of releasably accommodating selected playing figures thereon, the platform **14** is shown including a base **21**, formed integrally at right angles with a mounting plate **22**. A plurality of struck tabs **23**, **23**, serve as locators for the positioning of the playing figures in a manner to be described. Adjacent the central area of the base **21**, there is shown an inclined ramp **24**, pointed in the direction of stroke of the rod and having rear and side tabs **25**, **25***a*, respectively, provided thereon for reception of a miniature football **33**, or other article to be catapulted therefrom in accordance with the playing rules of the game.

On the floor **10** is scribed a rectangle stepped off in equally spaced parallel grid lines **26** in general simulation of a playing field. The field, however, and the grid lines do not have the same significance as in the full-scale game, but represent the locale of action for each individual scrimmage. Each grid line represents one yard and they will be provided in such number that the farthest line from the line of scrimmage will represent by its number the maximum yardage to be expected from a scrimmage play. Such number is of course arbitrary and its variation has to do only with the matter of the ease or difficulty of scoring, the absolute advance of the ball in the scrimmage area being determined by the physical characteristics of the various components of the game device. The figures indicating the value of the yardage attained from scrimmage are shown in Figure 1 immediately adjacent the grid lines and are designated by the arrow and the numeral **30**. These lines are numbered from 0 to 15 and from 0 to −2, the zero line being the starting line of scrimmage for each play.

The remaining required yardage from scrimmage in the four or less downs available may be indicated by placing a suitable marker adjacent the proper one of a series of consecutive numbers imprinted on a strip **27** fastened to one long side of the border **11**. A very convenient marker is shown as a cube **28** bearing on various of its faces, the numerals 1 to 4. An ordinary die of proper size will suffice for this purpose. Thus, not only is the marker a means for indicating the required yardage, but also for advising as to the number of the "down."

The progress of the game as a whole is indicated by a marking strip **29** carried by the frame **11** on the opposite side of the playing field from the strip **27**. Strip **29** has evenly spaced graduations to represent yard intervals and are numbered at the 10-yard intervals as in a regular playing field, with the 0-yard line at each end, and the numbers increasing inwardly from each end up to a single 50-yard line at the middle. A marker **31** preferably in the general semblance of a football is moved by the players or referee to record its exact position at any given time as determined by the results of the various plays.

Also provided on the face of the game board may be a plurality of circular depressions 40, 40 provided at selected positions on the board 10 for reception therein of the football 33 when the same is properly catapulted from the inclined ramp 24. A second set of circular depressions 41, 41, of distinct characteristics is provided adjacent the depressions 40, 40, for similar reception therein of the football from the inclined ramp 24, the arrangement being such that reception within one set of depressions (40, 40) indicates a completed forward pass while reception within the other set of depressions (41, 41) indicates that the pass has been intercepted. It is manifest that the degree of skill involved could be somewhat increased in this regard by substituting movable passing rings (not shown) which could be selectively positioned by both the offensive and defensive players of the game.

For the purpose of permitting field goal attempts, the board 10 is also provided with a second set of indicia having grid lines 50, spaced in parallel relationship to the lines 26 and being defined by a series of holes 51, 51, whereby the upright cross-bar member 52 may be selectively positioned at any grid line 50 depending upon the yardage to the opponent's goal line as determined by previous scrimmages. Because the grid lines 50 are used only with regard to offensive plays which involve passing and kicking maneuvers, the yardage designations represented by the grid lines 50 are different and independent of the yardage designations represented by the grid lines 26, although as before the same are arbitrary and may be varied to ease or increase the difficulty of scoring.

To introduce a certain element of realism into the game, the board 10 is also shown as including one or more shaded areas 70, 70, positioned in relatively obscure portions of the game board 10, and designating penalty areas to penalize a team whose player comes to rest within said areas.

The playing figures employed in the performance of the game are shown, for the purposes of illustration, as comprising three distinct sizes, and shapes, to indicate a defensive lineman 60, a defensive back or end 61, and an offensive ball carrier 62. With regard to the defensive players 60 and 61, the same are indicated as being of different weight and height, whereby the person placing the defensive playing figures can position the heavier and taller defensive linemen in the defensive position where he feels an offensive thrust is most likely to occur, much in the same manner a coach positions his defensive players against an anticipated offensive thrust. To the end of simulating the actual game conditions involving a ball carrier, at least one offensive player 62 is shown being provided with a cut-out pocket 63, for frictional reception therein of the football 33, the frictional fit of the football therein introducing a certain element of skill into the game inasmuch as a fumble will result if the football is improperly secured within the pocket 63.

Procedure

The opposing players will vie for kick-off as by flipping a coin. The defense then aligns his eleven men behind the scrimmage line in any desired grouping designed to block the kicked ball which is catapulted from the inclined ramp 24 upon release of the catapult mechanism 12 as previously described. Because the kick-off involves a kicking maneuver, the distance of travel of the football is measured along the indicia 50, and the marker 31 will be positioned on the strip 29 according to the distance the kick travelled. For example, if the kick-off stopped on the 40 yard indicia, the marker 31 would be placed on the 20 yard marker of strip 29. (See Figure 1.)

At this point the respective offensive and defense players may be aligned in position for scrimmage. In one manner of playing the game, the player maneuvering the offensive team, positions three of the four offensive playing figures 62 normally employed on the platform

14. The defensive player then aligns his defensive players to attempt to stop an offensive thrust at an expected point. At this point, the defensive player does not know whether or not the offensive maneuver will be a ground thrust, or an attempted pass and accordingly, the defensive players must be aligned to provide some measure of protection against both contingencies.

With the defensive players thus aligned the offensive player then selects whether he will "pass" or "run" the ball, the choice to be indicated by virtue of placement of the ball for the ensuing scrimmage.

In the event of a "pass" play, the ball is placed in the inclined ramp 24, directed towards one of the circular depressions 40, and released. If, after the general intermingling that follows, the ball 33 has come to rest fully within the depression 40, it indicates a completed forward pass, the length of which is determined by the indicia 50. If, however, the ball comes to rest within a depression 41, it indicates that the "pass" has been intercepted and downed by the defensive team at a point determined by the indicia 50. Possession then changes and the marker 31 is moved accordingly.

In the event the offensive player desires to attempt a "running" play, this choice is indicated by placement of the ball 33 within the pocket 63 of the offensive player 62, together with subsequent placement of playing figure 62 (with ball 33) against tab 23 on base 21. With the ball carrier thus positioned, the catapult may be pointed and released, and after the resultant intermingling, the gain or loss may be determined from the resting place of the ball carrier with respect to the indicia 26. During a scrimmage involving a running play, it is manifest that the ball 33 may become dislodged from within the pocket 63 by virtue of contact with defensive players, especially if the ball 33 was carelessly placed within the pocket 63 by the offensive player. Possession of this "fumble" may then be determined by a flip of a coin.

To punt the ball, the same is placed on the ramp 24 and catapulted down the field to obtain the maximum yardage as determined by the indicia 50. Field goals are attempted in much the same manner with the ball 33 being placed in ramp 24, for subsequent catapulting down field. However, in the case of a field goal attempt, the upright cross-bar member 52 is positioned in the holes 51, 51 at a distance indicated by the indicia 50 to represent the distance from the scrimmage line to the opponent's goal line. Successful completion of a field goal is of course indicated by passage of the catapulted ball through the upright crossbars.

During the foregoing maneuvers described above, further realism is introduced into the game by virtue of the penalty areas, 70, 70 provided on the board. A player coming to rest in a penalty area as a result of the scrimmage incurs a penalty for his team, and, as under actual game conditions, the same may be refused or accepted according to the advantage gained.

It will be seen from the foregoing that a new and novel form of football game has been provided wherein there is supplied a heretofore unattainable degree of realism to actual game conditions. By virtue of the improved ramp and game board all offensive maneuvers simulating actual game conditions are capable of skillful execution. Defensively, the improved playing figures make possible the exercise of certain defensive maneuvers whereby heavier men may be selectively aligned to present the best possible defensive pattern. While the game employs chance, the element of chance can be minimized by the exercise of skill and knowledge of the game of football.

Modifications of the invention may be resorted to without departing from the spirit thereof or the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A football game device of the character described, comprising: a game board having a flat playing surface of rectangular configuration; a catapult mechanism car-

ried by said game board adjacent on transverse end portion thereof and including a platform that is disposed in substantially parallel relationship to said playing surface and being movable over said surface upon movement of said catapult; an inclined ramp secured to an exposed surface of said platform so as to be inclined longitudinally of said playing surface; and target means provided on the playing surface of said game board at a longitudinally spaced distance from said platform, whereby an object received on said ramp may be arcuately projected longitudinally of said playing surface towards said target means; said target means including a series of transverse markings occupying a central portion of said playing surface of said game board and defining at their end portions apertures in said playing surface; and an upright crossbar having its opposed leg portions selectively positionable in said apertures defined by said transverse markers.

2. A football game device of the character described, comprising: a game board having a flat playing surface of rectangular configuration; a catapult mechanism carried by said game board adjacent one transverse end portion thereof and including a platform that is disposed in substantially parallel relationship to said playing surface and being movable over said surface upon movement of said catapult; an inclined ramp secured to an exposed surface of said platform so as to be inclined longitudinally of said playing surface; and target means provided on the playing surface of said game board at a longitudinally spaced distance from said platform, whereby an object received on said ramp may be arcuately projected longitudinally of said playing surface towards said target means; said target means including a series of transverse markings, occupying a central portion of said playing surface of said game board and defining at their ends apertures in said playing surfaces; an upright crossbar having its opposed leg portions selectively positionable in said apertures of said transverse markings; said transverse markings including numerical indicia with the smallest numerical designation being located adjacent said platform and the largest of said numerical designations being spaced farthest from said platform.

3. The device of claim 1 further characterized by the fact that said catapult and said platform secured thereto

are arcuately movable across the plane of the playing surface of said game board whereby the direction of longitudinal projection may be altered.

4. A football game device of the character described, comprising: a game board having a flat, rectangular surface provided with transversely extending indicia thereon that are representative of the markings on a football field, with one said transversely extending indicium being representative of a scrimmage line; a catapult mechanism carried by said game board adjacent one transverse end portion thereof and including a platform disposed in substantially parallel relationship to said playing surface and having the projecting transverse edge thereof normally located adjacent said scrimmage line; at least one vertical support projecting from the exposed surface of said platform; a first series of playing figures, capable of placement upon said surface on one side of said scrimmage line that is located opposite said platform; a second series of playing figures, receivable against said vertical supports, whereby the same can be ejected from said platform for contact with said first-named series of playing figures upon movement of said catapult; an inclined ramp having side edges defining a seat and being secured to said exposed surface of said platform so as to be inclined longitudinally of said playing surface; a game ball receivable on said seat of said ramp; and target means provided on the playing surface of said game board at a longitudinally spaced distance from said platform, whereby a game ball received on said ramp may be arcuately projected over said first-named series of playing figures toward said target means upon actuation of said catapult mechanism.

5. The device of claim 4 further characterized by the fact that said first-named series of playing figures vary in size and weight.

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