United States Patent

[11] 3,618,953

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[33] **Italy**
[31] **7239-A/69**

[54] **CHECKERBOARD GAME DEVICE**
9 Claims, 11 Drawing Figs.

[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **273/130 D,** 273/139
[51] **Int. Cl.** **A63f 3/00**
[50] **Field of Search** 273/130, 131, 134, 139

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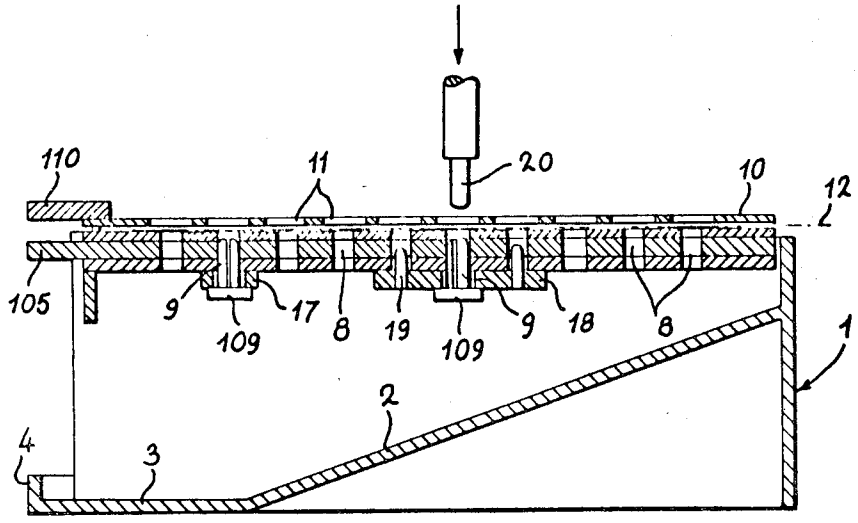
ABSTRACT: A box provided with a removable cover panel, which is formed with through bores arranged in rows as in a checkerboard. Removable pieces can be secured to the underside of the panel by means of suitable securing pins so that the piece is held between the panel and the head of the pin. The piece is provided with at least one through bore for the securing pin and is provided in correspondence with the remaining bores of the panel covered by the piece itself with pins integral to the piece and adapted to penetrate partially into the panel bores. The pins are expelled by the action of a stylus operate by the player, an the piece will fall off whenever all securing pins, or just one integral pin, has been expelled. The player will direct his hits without knowing the position of the pieces. To this respect the checkerboard may be covered by a suitable opaque and perforable sheet.



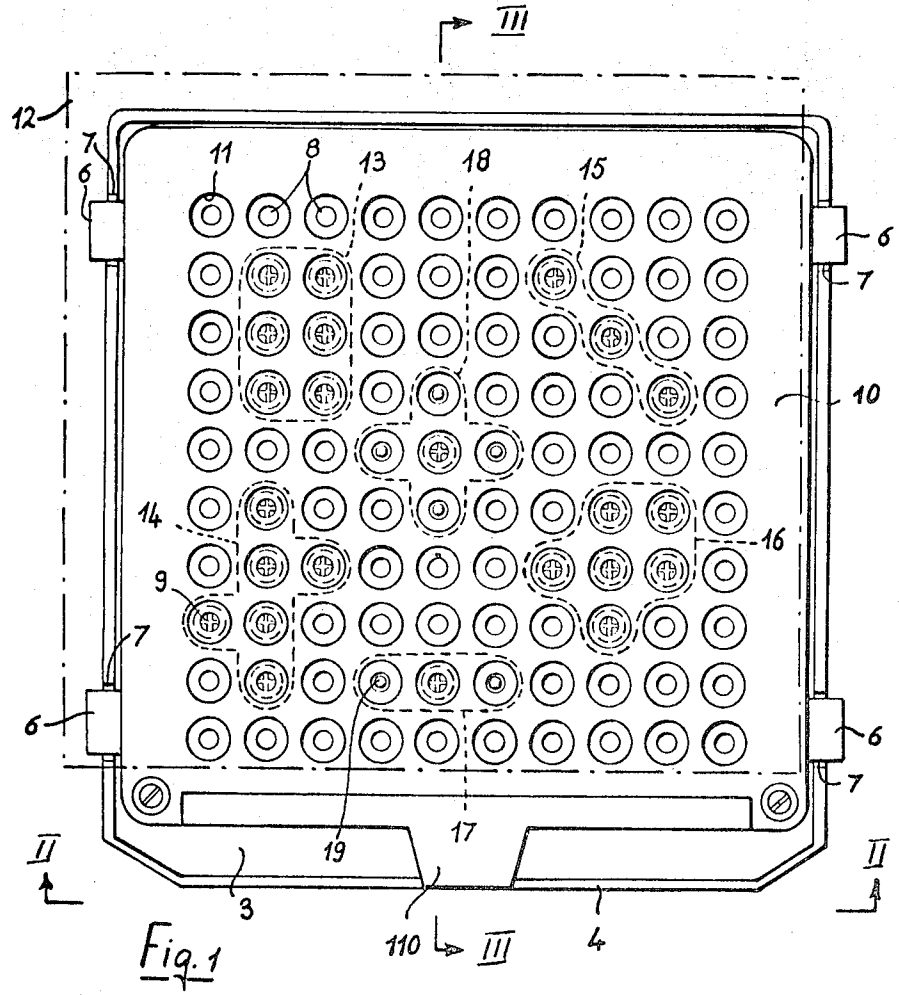


Fig. 1

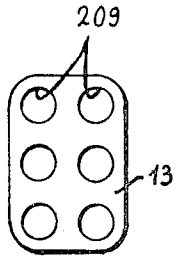


Fig. 4

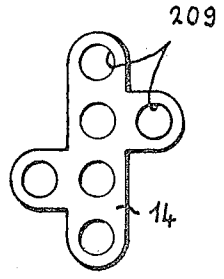


Fig. 5

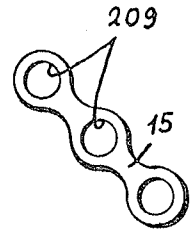


Fig. 6

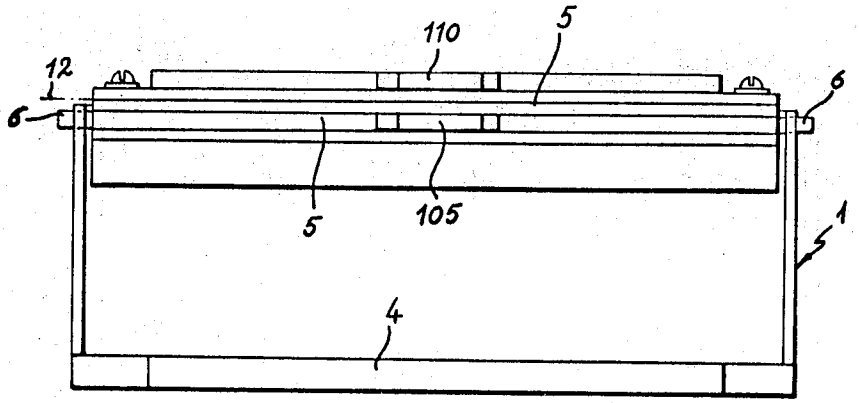


Fig. 2

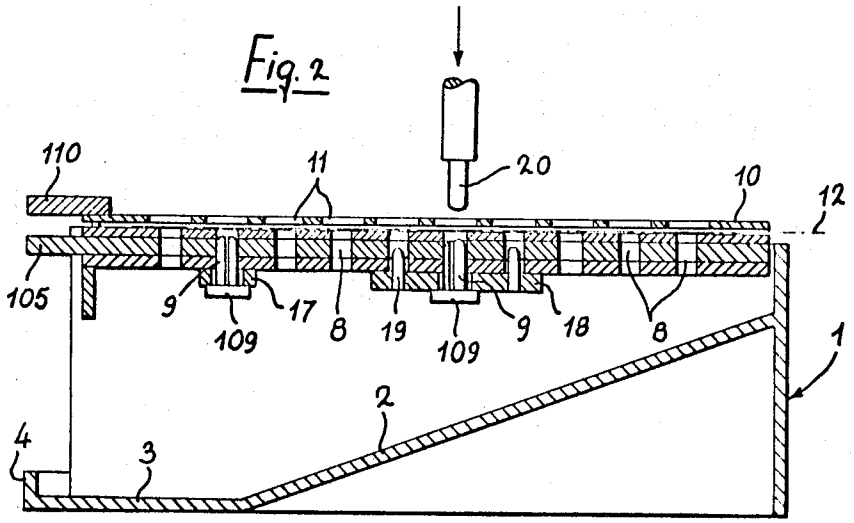


Fig. 3

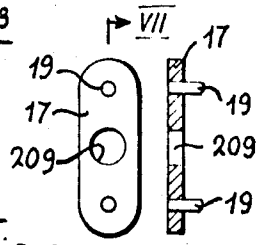


Fig. 7

Fig. 7A

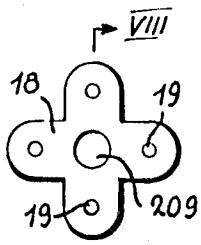


Fig. 8

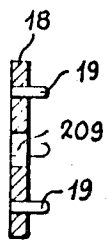


Fig. 8A

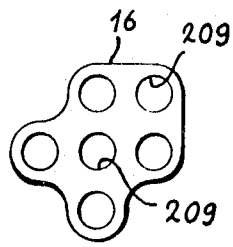


Fig. 9

CHECKERBOARD GAME DEVICE

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a checkerboard game device, suitable for playing, usually by two or more players, a checkerboard game in which each player tries to locate and eliminate, by usually random plays, some pieces which have been set freely by the other player on his checkerboard, and which the first-named player cannot see. The pieces on the checkerboard may occupy one single square or more adjacent squares (complex piece) and the elimination of a piece from the game may take place by locating all squares of a piece (i.e. by completely spotting out the piece which usually occupies more than one square) or, by agreement of the players (and particular construction of the pieces), by locating a vulnerable square of a complex piece. The player who first eliminates all the opponent's pieces, or who eliminates the greatest number of pieces in a determined number of moves (or "hits"), wins.

It will be appreciated that, as above said, most of the time the plays, or moves (or "hits") are executed at random, since the players do not know, of course, the position of the opponent's pieces. When a player effects a successful move, by hitting a target consisting of a complex piece, evidently he will direct his hits to the adjacent squares, until he has completely eliminated the piece. Each player may develop his particular technique for exploring the opponent's checkerboard by effecting sample moves or hits, thus adopting a personal strategy, but this is completely left to the individual player's initiative, since no rules as to the moves are established.

According to the invention, the checkerboard game device comprises a box which is open at the top and at one of its sides and is provided with a bottom which is inclined downwardly towards the open side. On the open top of the box there is removably mounted a cover plate which is provided with through bores arranged in regular rows, as in a checkerboard. The pieces are substantially flat elements, which may differ in shape and in size, so as to cover one or more adjacent bores of the cover panel. The pieces are provided with at least one through bore, which serves, through the aid of a securing pin, to secure in a removable manner the piece to the underside of the cover panel. In correspondence with the other portions of the piece, which are not provided with through bores, there are provided, in alignment with the bores on the panel, pins which are integral to the piece itself. A screen plate, suitably centered on the cover panel, and provided with as many bores, serves to hold between the panel and the screen itself a sheet of opaque material, such as paper, so that the player cannot see from the overside the tips of the pins which support or are integral to the pieces secured on the underside of the panel. By acting with a stylus, and perforating the paper in correspondence with the bores (squares) of the panel, and penetrating into said bores, the player tries to locate the opponent's pieces. Thus, when he "hits" a securing pin, same will fall on the bottom of the box, and if the piece is only held by said pin, also the piece will fall and will be considered eliminated or out of play. When the player hits a pin which is integral to the piece, the piece will fall, independently of the number of securing pins which hold same and which are not contacted by the stylus. When a piece is provided with a plurality of securing pins, the piece will fall only after disengagement of all securing pins. Of course, when the player hits a bore which does not correspond to any piece, nothing will happen, and the hit will be missed.

The invention will be better understood from the following description of an example of same, when considered in connection with the accompanying drawings, and the novel features will be particularly pointed out in the appended claims.

IN THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a top plan view of the checkerboard game device according to the invention.

FIG. 2 is a front view of the device taken from lines II—II of FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 shows a section of the device along lines III—III of FIG. 1.

FIGS. 4, 5, and 6 show in plan view as many corresponding pieces to be used in connection with the device. FIGS. 7, 8 and 7A, 8A show, respectively in plan view and in section along lines VII—VII and VIII—VIII, other pieces to be used in connection with the device.

FIG. 9 shows, in plan view, another piece to be used in connection with the device according to the invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

with reference to the drawings, the checkerboard game device according to the invention consists of a box 1 which is open at the top and on one side, having the bottom 2 inclined downwardly towards the open side, where it terminates with a horizontal portion 3 slightly projecting out beyond the side and provided with an upwardly directed edge 4. Onto the open top of the box 1 there is removably fitted the checkerboard panel 5, which is suitably centered by means of side lugs 6, which engage corresponding recesses 7 provided on the upper edges of the sides of the box 1.

On the panel 5 there are provided through bores 8 of equal diameter, which are orderly arranged in rows according to a square or quadrilateral disposition, such as in a checkerboard.

Panel 5 has associated therewith a thin screen plate 10 provided with as many through bores 11 as there are bores in panel 5, and arranged in the same manner, so that when the screen plate is superposed to the panel, the bores 11 and 8 are in alignment. The bores 11 of the screen plate 10 have a slightly greater diameter than the corresponding bores 8, for the reason which will be explained hereinafter.

The screen plate 10 is, for example, constructed of any suitable material sufficiently rigid but having a certain degree of elasticity, so as to be hinged, as in the embodiment shown, by one of its sides to a corresponding side of the panel 5. In the present case the screen plate 10 is hinged to the side of the panel 5 in correspondence of the open side of the box 1. Suitable projecting parts 110 and 105 are provided respectively on the side of the screen plate 10 and of the panel 5, so that the player, by pressing together the said parts 110 and 105 will cause the upwards lifting of the said screen plate 10, thus permitting the introduction and accommodation between the screen plate 10 and the cover panel 5 of a sheet of suitably opaque material 12 (indicated by dash-and-dot lines in FIGS. 1, 2, 3) such as, for example, paper, which can be easily perforated. By releasing the pressure from the parts 110 and 105, the plate 10 will be again lowered onto the panel 5 and the interposed sheet 12 will be held firmly therebetween.

Referring now to FIGS. 4 to 9 the pieces (13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18), which are substantially flat, may be constructed different in size and also different in shape. The pieces shown in FIGS. 4, 5, 6 and 9 are provided only with through bores 209 having a slightly larger diameter than bores 8 of panel 5, while the pieces shown in FIGS. 7 and 8 (respectively 7A and 8A) are provided with at least one through bore 209, while the remaining parts which correspond, when the piece is secured to the panel 5, to a through bore in the mentioned panel, are provided with integral pins 19. The pins 19 are of a smaller diameter than the bores 8 of panel 5, and have such a length as to penetrate partially into said bores. Both pins 19 and bores 209 of the pieces are arranged in such a manner as to perfectly match, whenever the piece is secured onto the cover panel 5, with corresponding bores in the panel itself.

In order to secure the pieces to the underside of the cover panel 5, securing pins 9 are provided, having an enlarged head 109, larger than bores 209 of the pieces. The stem portion of the pin 9 is constructed so as to frictionally engage the sidewalls of the bores 8 of panel 5, and in the example as shown is of the split-pin type.

In order to play the game, the player prepares his checkerboard by taking off the cover panel 5 and by applying the pieces on the underside of it. The pieces are secured (see FIG.

3 and 1) by means of the pins 9 so as to be locked by the head portion 109 of the pin itself. The integral pins 19 penetrate partially and freely into the corresponding bores 8 of panel 5. Having thus completed the setting of the pieces (which the player has arranged at his will), the player again puts the cover panel 5 on the box 1, and lifts the screen plate 10 so as to insert the sheet of paper 12 between the plate 10 and the panel 5. The so prepared panel will not show any trace of the arrangement of the pieces on its underside.

The player who receives the so-prepared box will try, with the aid of a suitable stylus 20 (see FIG. 3) to locate and eliminate the pieces on the underside of the panel. To this respect the stylus 20 is provided with a tip portion capable of freely and fully penetrating into any of the bores 8 of panel 5. Each time the player makes a move, he will perforate the paper 12 in correspondence of the square which he "hits." Thus, the perforated paper will keep a trace of the already-effected moves or "hits." Whenever the player succeeds in hitting a bore engaged by a securing pin 9, the securing pin will be expelled. If the piece is held in place by only one securing pin (pieces 17 and 18) the piece will fall down and slide on the inclined bottom 2 to the open side of the box, thus being eliminated. If the piece is secured to the panel 5 by more than one securing pin 9 (pieces 13, 14, 15, 16) it will be necessary for the player to spot out and expel all pins. In this case, in order to facilitate the future moves or hits, the player can take from the bottom 3 of the box the pins which have fallen from the cover and accommodate same into the corresponding square which he has hit. To this purpose, as above said, the bores 11 in plate 10 have a larger diameter than bores 8 in panel 5, and precisely to accommodate the head 109 of a pin 9.

When the player hits a bore corresponding to an integral pin 19, the whole piece will fall down, inasmuch as the stylus expels the said pin 19 and the piece integral thereto.

When a piece, or a pin, expelled by the stylus, falls down on the inclined bottom 2, it will slide or roll, as above said, to the portion 3 in correspondence of the open side of the box. If it is desired, in order to acoustically point out the successful hits, the bottom 2 may be made of resonant material, such as metal. In the contrary case, the bottom can be lined with sound-absorbing material, such as rubber foam or the like.

The described checkerboard device can be used also as a psychological test device. Infact, the subject, by choosing at will the moves or "hits" which he desires to effect, according to any predetermined strategy of his own, or even just at random, will give to experts an indication as to his ability.

Alternately, when the game is played by two or more players, each player can keep his own checkerboard, without the need of having it covered by the opaque sheet of paper, and he can call out the hits on the opponent's checkerboard. To this respect, any square of the checkerboard can be easily identified by using two combined indicia, as a letter of the alphabet and a number, in a known manner.

It is believed that the invention will have been clearly understood from the foregoing detailed description of my now-preferred embodiment. Changes in the details of construction may be resorted to without departing from the spirit of the invention, and it is accordingly my intention that no limitations be implied and that the hereto-annexed claims be given the broadest interpretation to which the employed language fairly admits.

I claim:

1. A checkerboard game device, comprising:
   - a box;
   - a cover panel adapted to cover the top of the box, said cover panel being provided with through bores, arranged orderly in rows as in a checkerboard;
   - a series of substantially flat pieces, having shapes and sizes so as to cover one or more adjacent bores of the cover panel, said pieces being each provided with at least one through bore;
   - a securing pin provided with a head larger than the said through bores and with a stem which is adapted to frictionally engage any of the bores provided on the cover panel and to freely pass through the bores in said pieces, whereby the piece can be held on the underside of the cover panel by plugging the said pin so that the piece is held between the underside of the panel and the head of the pin;
   - a stylus element operable by the player and adapted to penetrate from the overside into any of the bores of the cover panel, so as to expel from same the above-mentioned pins which it may encounter.

2. A checkerboard game device according to claim 1, in which the pieces have a size such as to cover two or more adjacent bores of the cover panel, each piece being provided with at least one through bore for a securing pin, while in correspondence with the remaining bores of the panel, the piece is provided with integral pins which are adapted to freely penetrate partially into the said bores of the panel, so as to coact with the stylus caused to penetrate into said bores.

3. A checkerboard game device according to claim 1, in which the box is open at one side and is provided with a bottom wall immediately underneath the cover panel, said bottom wall being inclined towards the open side of the box, whereby the pins or pieces, which fall from the underside of the panel, roll or slide towards the open side of said box.

4. A checkerboard game device according to claim 1, in which the cover panel is provided, on its upper side, with a screen plate presenting a series of through bores in correspondence with the through bores in the cover panel, said screen plate being mounted so as to be at least partially liftable with respect to the cover panel, in order to accommodate between the screen plate and the cover panel a sheet of opaque material, which is firmly held between the panel and the lowered screen plate.

5. A checkerboard game device according to claim 4, in which the said screen plate is hinged on one side at the corresponding side of the cover plate.

6. A checkerboard game device according to claim 4, in which the through bores in the screen plate are of such a diameter as to house the head of the securing pins.

7. A checkerboard game device according to claim 1, in which centering means are provided on the periphery of the cover panel and on the sides of the box in correspondence with the open top, in order to perfectly center the cover panel on the box.

8. A checkerboard game device according to claim 3, in which the bottom wall is made of resonant material.

9. A checkerboard game device according to claim 3, in which the bottom wall is lined with sound-absorbing material.

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