

Oct. 13, 1970

B. T. FISHER

3,533,628

SPACE TRAVEL BOARD GAME APPARATUS

Filed June 12, 1967

3 Sheets-Sheet 1

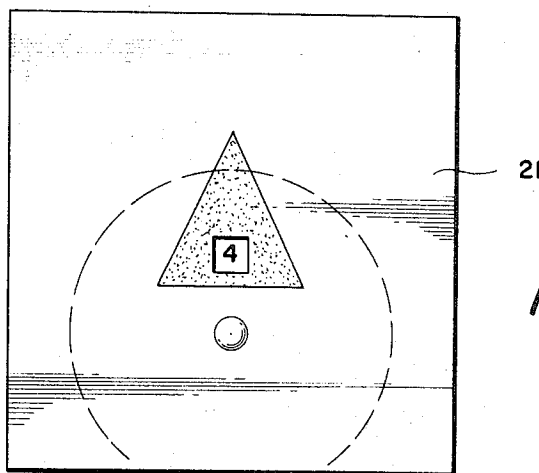
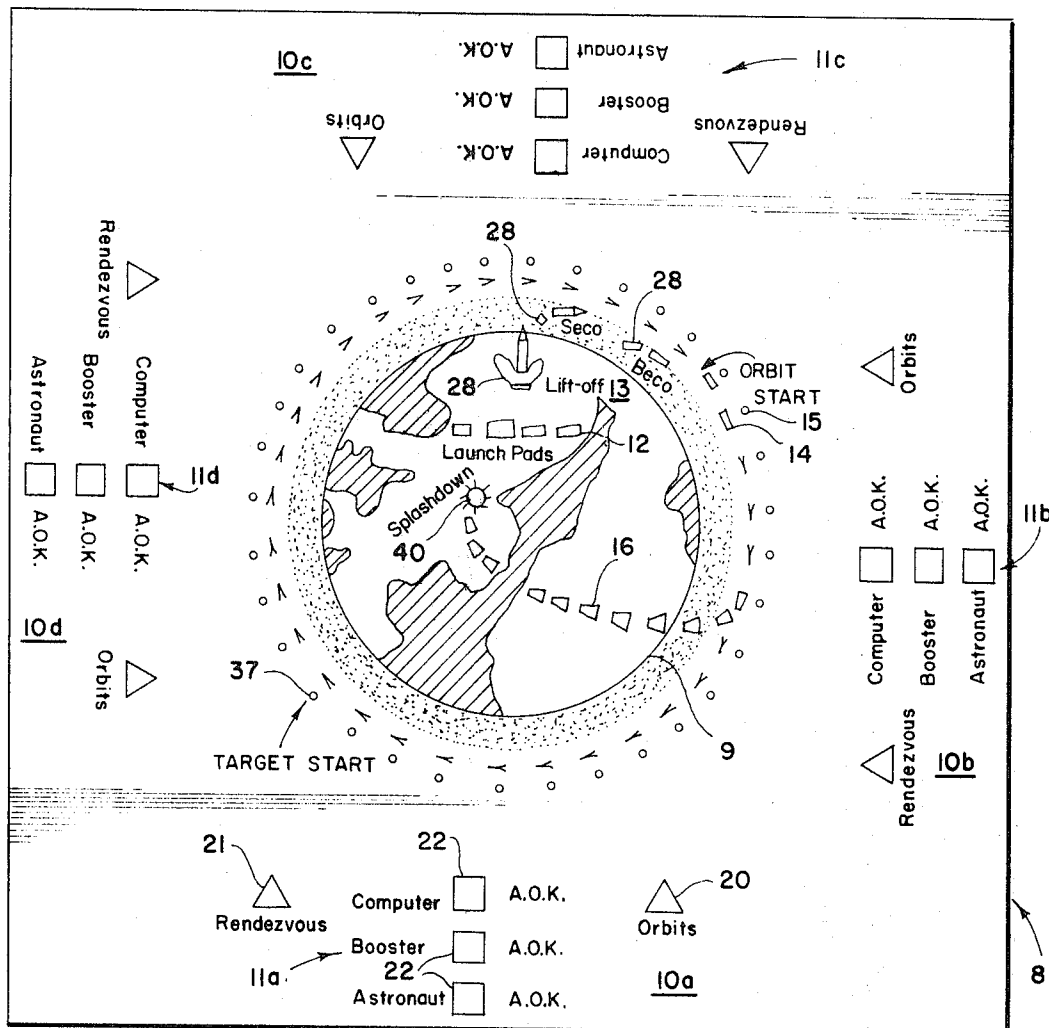


FIG. 1

FIG. 2

INVENTOR
BRUCE T. FISHER

BY *Larson and Taylor*
ATTORNEYS

Oct. 13, 1970

B. T. FISHER

3,533,628

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3 Sheets-Sheet 2

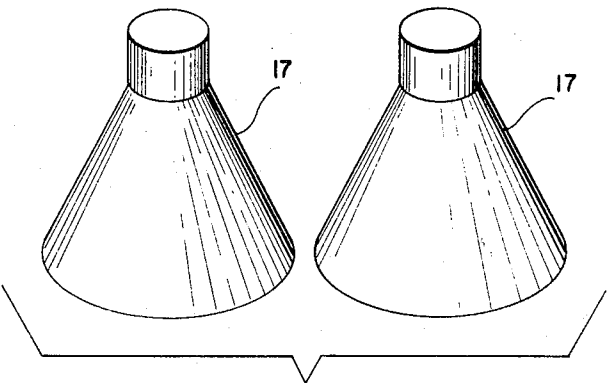


FIG. 3

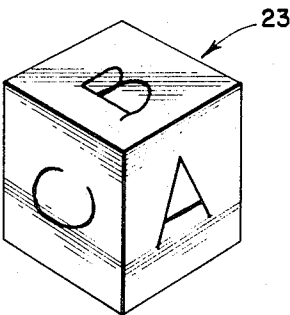


FIG. 4A

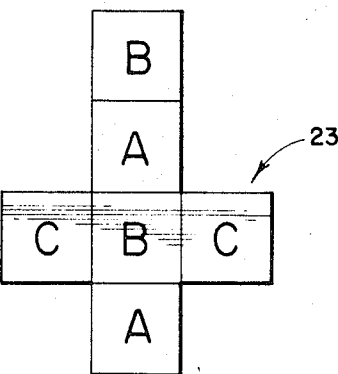


FIG. 4B

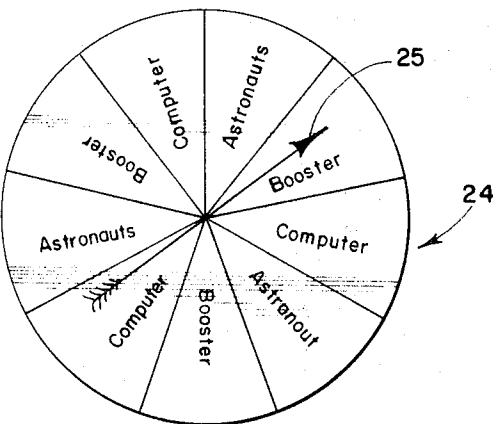


FIG. 5

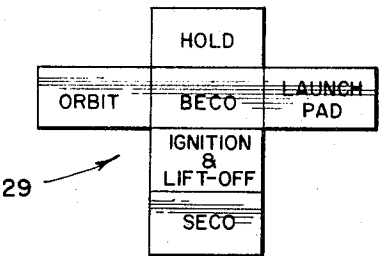


FIG. 6B

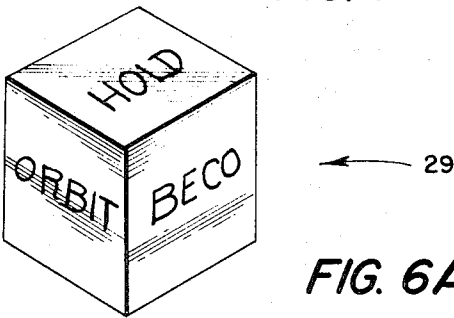


FIG. 6A

INVENTOR
BRUCE T. FISHER

BY *Larson and Taylor*
ATTORNEYS

Oct. 13, 1970

B. T. FISHER

3,533,628

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3 Sheets-Sheet 3

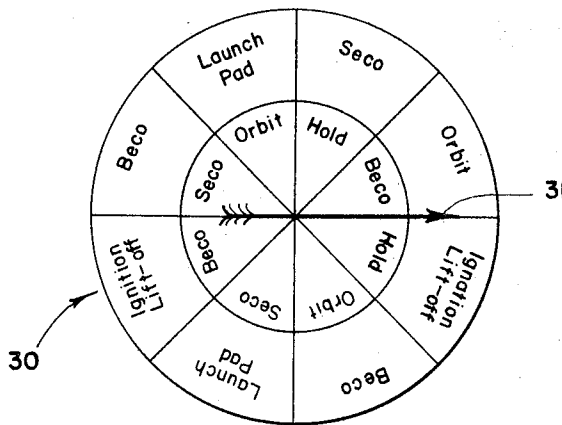


FIG. 7

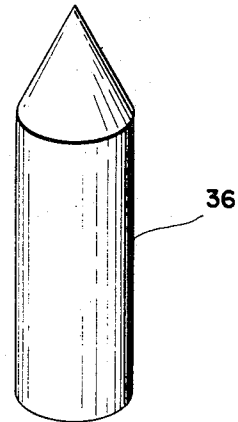


FIG. 8

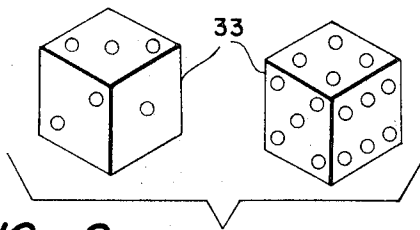


FIG. 9

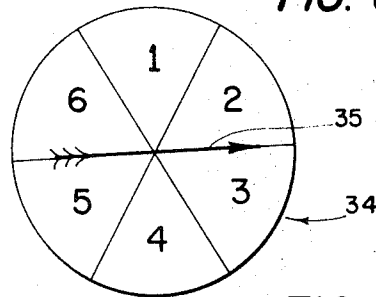


FIG. 10

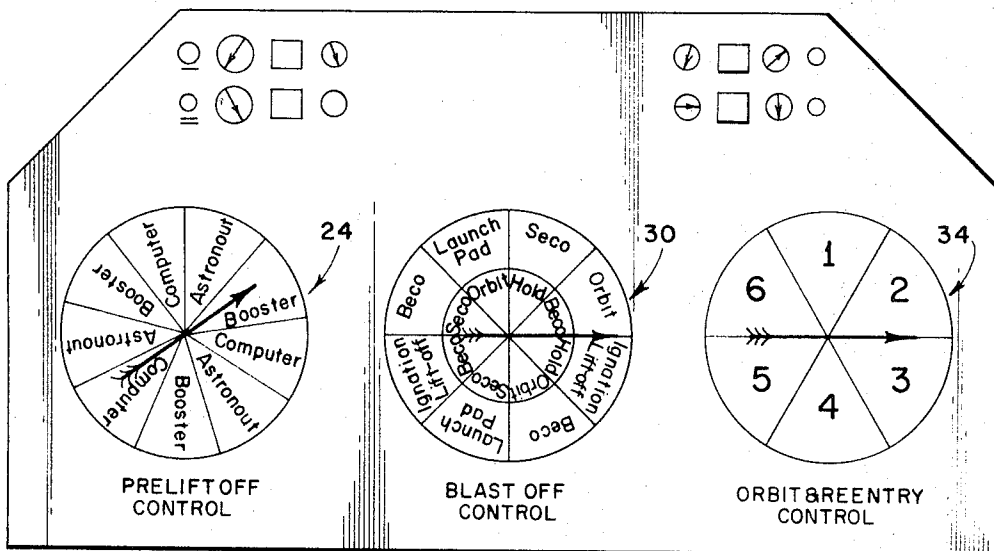


FIG. 11

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INVENTOR
BRUCE T. FISHER

BY *Larson and Taylor*
ATTORNEYS

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3,533,628

SPACE TRAVEL BOARD GAME APPARATUS

Bruce T. Fisher, 1122 Henry Ruff Road,
Westland, Mich. 48184

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U.S. Cl. 273—134

6 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A space travel game having as its object the successful completion of an orbiting and rendezvous mission. Position markers, one for each player, are moved through successive stages on a game board, the stages including a preliftoff stage, a launch stage, an orbit stage and a reentry stage; rendezvous with a target satellite or an opponent's position marker taking place during the orbit stage. Each stage includes a plurality of steps through which the player must advance before moving onto the next stage. A chance means is provided for each stage having positions thereon corresponding to the steps of its corresponding stage and including means to select, at random, at least one of the positions. A numerical chance means is provided for determining how many steps in orbit a player may move. Counting devices are provided, two for each player, to count orbits attained and rendezvous completed by each player.

BACKGROUND—FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The concept of employing a game board on which physical objects may be moved to complete the object of the game is well known.

This concept has been employed heretofore for games associated with space travel. Examples of such games are shown in the Pirkko Pat. No. 3,170,695 and in the Turner Pat. No. 3,223,420.

However, to my knowledge, no games have been developed heretofore similar to the present game wherein the board concept is employed in combination with corresponding mechanical pieces to provide a game which has as its goal the completion of an entire space launch, orbiting and rendezvous mission.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is a purpose of the present invention to provide a new, interesting board game which is entertaining and amusing and which relates to a space orbiting and rendezvous mission.

According to the invention there is provided a game board having a representation of the earth in the center thereof and having a plurality of player areas scattered about the periphery thereof. In a preferred embodiment the board will be square and four player areas will be provided.

The board includes representations of a plurality of stages including a "Preliftoff" stage, a "Launch" stage, an "Orbiting" stage and a "Reentry" stage. Each of these stages includes a plurality of steps which correspond to steps that an astronaut would actually have to take before proceeding to the next stage in an actual space mission. In the game, these steps must be taken by a player before he can move on to the next stage.

To mark positions on the board, each player is given a position marker which may be in the form of a space capsule.

Each player takes a turn in sequence, and chance means are provided for determining the number of steps to be advanced by a player during his turn. A different chance means is provided for each stage of the game, each chance means including positions representing the steps of its

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corresponding stage. The chance means includes a means for selecting, at random, one or more positions.

For example, the first stage is the preliftoff stage and this includes three steps, an "Astronaut A.O.K.," a "Booster A.O.K." and a "Computer A.O.K." Chance means such as dice or a spinner having marked thereon indicia representative of the three steps "Astronaut O.K.," "Booster O.K." and "Computer O.K." are manipulated to choose at random a particular step. When the player has completed the preliftoff stage he moves to the launch pad which represents the beginning of the "Launch" stage. A new set of chance means are then employed either in the form of dice or a spinner and include positions to represent, in addition to the launch pad itself, "Ignition and Liftoff," "BECO" (booster engine cut-off), "SECO" (second engine cut-off), "Orbit" and "Hold." Numerical chance means are then employed to indicate the number of steps the player takes through the orbiting path. A target satellite is moved along a path in close proximity to the orbit path and when a player's space capsule lands on the same point as the target satellite a rendezvous has been completed. After a predetermined number of orbits and/or rendezvous a player will pass into the last stage, the reentry stage, which ends in splashdown. Generally the first person to splashdown would win the game.

Mechanical means may be provided on the game board in each player area for counting the number of rendezvous and/or orbits completed by each player.

According to another feature of the game all of the chance means or some of the chance means may be positioned on a common backboard and arranged to represent a control panel. The game may include a single control panel or a plurality of control panels, one for each player.

Thus, it is an object of this invention to provide a new and interesting board game relating to orbiting and rendezvous of a space capsule.

It is another object of this invention to provide a board game relating to orbiting and rendezvous of a space capsule which employs a board having a plurality of stages, and a plurality of chance means and other mechanical elements designed and arranged in correlation with the various stages on the board whereby operation of the chance means and the mechanical elements will allow completion of the game by moving position markers through the stages on the board.

It is another object of this invention to provide a competitive game of chance in which the player who first completes a space orbiting and rendezvous mission will win the game.

Other objects and the attendant advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the detailed description to follow together with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

There follows a detailed description of a preferred embodiment of the present invention to be read together with the accompanying drawings. It is to be understood, however, that the detailed description and the drawings are intended merely to illustrate the preferred embodiment and that the invention is capable of numerous modifications and variations within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined in the claims.

In the drawings:

FIG. 1 illustrates a game board on which the game of the present invention is played.

FIG. 2 is an enlarged view of one of the counting devices on the board of FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 illustrates typical position markers employed by each player to represent his position on the board.

FIGS. 4A and 4B illustrate in perspective and in a development view, respectively, a die for use as a chance means for the preliftoff stage.

FIG. 5 illustrates a spinning device which may serve as a chance means for the preliftoff stage.

FIGS. 6A and 6B illustrate in perspective and in a development view, respectively, a die which may serve as the chance means for the launch stage.

FIG. 7 illustrates a spinner which may serve as the chance means for the launch stage.

FIG. 8 illustrates a typical target satellite.

FIG. 9 illustrates a numerical chance means in the form of standard dice for determining the number of moves to be taken through the orbit and reentry stages.

FIG. 10 illustrates a numerical chance means in the form of a spinner.

FIG. 11 illustrates a control panel having formed thereon a preliftoff spinner, a launch spinner and a numerical spinner.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring now to the drawings there is shown in FIGURE 1 a game board 8 having formed thereon a representation of the earth 9 and four player control areas, 10a-10d, one control area for each player. If necessary, more or less than four control areas can be provided. However, it is convenient to provide a square board with one player control area on each of the four sides of the board.

The game board includes indicia thereon representative of a number of stages through which an astronaut would have to pass in completing an orbiting and rendezvous mission. A separate preliftoff 11a-11d is provided in each player control area. This stage represents the steps which must be followed before a space capsule may be launched to enter orbit.

Following the preliftoff stage is a launch pad 12 for each player followed immediately by a launch stage 13 from which a space capsule enters an orbit stage 14 which has associated therewith a target orbit 15. The orbit stage is followed by a reentry stage 16 through which the space capsule travels to a splashdown at 40. Since the object of the game is to complete a predetermined number of orbits and rendezvous, each player has located in his player control area an orbit counter 20 and a rendezvous counter 21. A counting device is shown in greater detail in FIG. 2.

To play the game each player would have a separate position marker 17 of any convenient size or shape; for example, in the shape of a space capsule. Two typical position markers are shown in FIG. 3.

The first stage, the preliftoff stage 11, includes three separate steps 22, an "Astronaut checkout" step, a "Booster checkout" step and a "Computer checkout" step. The player must pass through these three steps in order to complete the preliftoff stage. Random chance means are used to determine whether or not a player can pass from one step to the next step of the preliftoff stage. Such a chance means is shown in FIGS. 4A and 4B in the form of a die 23 having formed thereon the letters A, B and C representing the three steps 22 in the preliftoff stage. One, two or three dice may be used but in any event the object is to roll the letter corresponding to the next step to which the player must advance. For example, if the player is on the "Astronaut checkout" step, he must roll a "B" for "Booster checkout."

FIG. 5 illustrates another chance means for use in the preliftoff stage of the game in the form of a spinner 24 having a pointer 25 which is spun to select, at random, one of the positions on the dial of the spinner which correspond to step 22 in the preliftoff stage.

Once a player has completed the preliftoff stage he is ready to move his marker 17 to a launch pad 12 to commence the launch stage 13.

The launch stage 13 includes a number of steps 28 in-

cluding "Launch pad," "Ignition and liftoff," "SECO," (second engine cut-off), "BECO," (booster engine cut-off), and then "Orbit." The player must pass through all of these steps in order to complete the lift off stage 13. A separate chance means is provided for the launch stage 13. A typical chance means may be in the form of one or more dice 29 as shown in FIGS. 6A and 6B. The die 29 includes six positions, four of which represent the four steps within the launch stage, one of which represents a move from the last launch step to "Orbit" and the last of which is a "Hold" and indicates that the countdown is being delayed.

One, two or more of these dice may be used. However, as in the case of the preliftoff stage, the player must select the position on the dice corresponding to the next position to which he must move. It is also possible to employ a spinner device 30 having a pointer 31 with the various steps of launch stage 13 indicated on the dial of the spinner. In addition, the dial may be formed with a second set of positions concentric with the first set. The pointer would then arrive at two positions on each turn. The player would then advance if either position arrived at by the pointer was in fact the next position to which the player must move.

Once the player has reached orbit, the object is to complete a predetermined number of orbits and/or rendezvous. For the purpose of rendezvous, a target satellite 36 is moved about the earth on a target orbit path 15 having positions corresponding to each space capsule orbit position and having a starting point 37. Thus, every time a player lands on a position corresponding to that on which the satellite is located, he has completed a rendezvous. For example, a player may complete the orbit and rendezvous stage when he has completed five orbits and five rendezvous. The number of moves to be made during each turn through the orbit stage may be determined by typical numerical chance means such as dice 33 shown in FIG. 9 or spinner 34 having a pointer 35 as shown in FIG. 10.

Once the predetermined number of orbits and rendezvous has been completed the player enters the reentry stage 16 to splashdown at 40. To make the game more interesting the rules may provide that a player cannot land on splashdown 40 until he rolls the exact number required to land on point 40 without going over.

As another interesting feature of the game, when spinners are used in the preliftoff stage, and in one or both of the launch stage and the orbiting stage, these spinners may be mounted on a common card and one card may be provided for each player and arranged to represent a separate "control panel." Such a control panel card is shown in FIG. 11.

From the detailed description of the structure as described above, it can be seen that many different actual procedures may be followed in carrying out the game whereby the winner would be the player to pass through all of the successive stages, complete the necessary number of rendezvous and orbits, and properly splashdown at splashdown point 40.

By way of illustration a typical set of game rules will be set forth below.

First, the object of the game would be to attain a predetermined number of rendezvous with the target satellite and/or with an opponent's position marker and to complete a specified number of orbits. Each player shakes the numbered dice and the one with the highest number plays first. Play continues clockwise and the satellite is placed on the satellite start point 37.

The player starts by shaking his preliftoff dice or spinning his preliftoff spinner. In order for a player to move his space capsule to the launch pad he must first have his astronaut, booster and computer checked out in that order. To do this there may be three similar dice or three spinners and he may be required to shake on at least two of the dice the same letter or word representing

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the next step to which he must advance. Having completed one step the player may attempt the second step before he gives up his turn. Once all of the requirements have been fulfilled in the preliftoff stage the player uses the launch stage dice in an attempt to get his space capsule onto a launch pad and from there through the launch stage into orbit.

The player proceeds with two launch dice 29 or the spinner 30, obtaining in order "Launch pad," "Ignition and lift off," "BECO," "SECO" and then finally "Orbit." As in the case of the preliftoff stage the player may be required to roll two of the positions on the dice representing the next step before he can move on. The launch stage chance means also includes a countdown "Hold" position which means that the player must lose one turn while the countdown is being delayed. Of course, the rules would provide that once "Ignition and liftoff" had taken place, the "Hold" would no longer have effect.

Once a player has attained orbit he employs the numerical chance means, that is, either the conventional dice 33 or the spinner 34. Each player, once in orbit, must move the target satellite one space before he shakes the dice or turns the spinner. Rendezvous may be attained when a player's position marker lands on an orbit marker corresponding to a position on which the target satellite is resting or when the player's marker lands on the same orbit marker on which an opponent is resting. Each complete revolution about the earth 9 represents an orbit.

Finally, the last stage is reentry. A player qualifies for reentry if he has completed the necessary number of rendezvous and orbits. To complete the reentry stage to splashdown, the player may be required to select the exact number of moves required to the point 40. This supplies additional interest by slowing down a player who may have advanced well beyond the other players. The first player to "Splashdown" is declared the winner.

Although the invention has been described in considerable detail with respect to a preferred embodiment thereof, it should be apparent that the invention is capable of numerous modifications and variation apparent to those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A space travel game apparatus comprising:
 - (a) a game board having indicia thereon representing the earth and defining a plurality of successive playing stages through which the player passes to complete the game, each of said stages including a plurality of steps through which the player passes before moving to the next stage, the said stages including at least one orbiting stage, the steps of which define an orbiting path about the earth and at least one preorbiting stage, the steps of which must be passed to reach the orbiting stage,

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(b) position markers to be moved manually by the players through the successive stages,

(c) a preorbiting chance means having a plurality of indicia representing the steps of the preorbiting stage, and a selecting means for randomly selecting one of the said indicia to determine whether the player can move to the next step, and

(d) a numerical chance means for determining, at random, the number of steps to be traversed by a player through the said orbiting stage, said preorbiting stage being a preliftoff stage, and said board having thereon at each playing position indicia representative of the steps of said preliftoff stage, said successive playing stages including a re-entry stage, the steps of which re-entry stage define a path from the orbiting stage to the earth, and a plurality of counting devices mounted on said board at each playing position.

2. A space travel game apparatus as claimed in claim 1 including a target satellite movable manually in said orbiting stage whereby the said position markers can be positioned on the same orbiting stage step with a satellite to accomplish a rendezvous.

3. A game apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the said preorbital chance means comprise dice having said indicia formed on their faces.

4. A game apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the said preorbital chance means comprise a spinning device having a circular face and a rotatable pointer, said indicia being disposed around said face.

5. A game apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein both of said chance means are spinning devices each having a circular face and a rotatable pointer, and including a control panel for each player, said control panel having both of said spinning devices formed thereon.

6. A game apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein there are included a second preorbiting stage consisting of launching steps defining a path from the earth to the orbiting stage, and a second preorbiting chance means having indicia representing said launching steps and including means for selecting one of said indicia at random.

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DELBERT B. LOWE, Primary Examiner