TABLETOP GAME WITH LIGHTED PLAYING FIELD

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The present invention provides a game having a translucent playing surface and a light source beneath the playing surface.
TABLETOP GAME WITH LIGHTED PLAYING FIELD

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to tabletop games and, more particularly, to tabletop sports games, such as foosball, baseball, hockey, or the like, having a lighted playing field.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Many arcade style tabletop games exist. Some of the more popular arcade style tabletop games simulate soccer (or football as it is known outside of the United States) and hockey. These games typically comprise a tabletop playing field that simulates the field and players of the actual game. While the below application refers to soccer simulations, e.g., foosball games, one of ordinary skill in the art will recognize other tabletop games can be substituted for foosball.

[0003] A foosball table includes rows of representative athletes, suspended like pendulums from control rods that are mounted transversely above a playing field. Players slide and rotate the control rods to make the athletes kick a small ball, attempting to score a goal. The representative athletes are suspended over a playing field that represents a traditional soccer field. Often times, the traditional field is modified in the corners to provide a slope so the foosball does not get caught in the corner.

[0004] While generally enjoyable in its own right, these tabletop games frequently do not sustain the interest of players for any length of time. Thus, it would be desirable to produce a tabletop game having additional features to increase interest in the tabletop game.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] To attain the advantages and in accordance with the purpose of the invention, as embodied and broadly described herein, a tabletop game is provided having a clear, translucent or semi-translucent playing surface. A light source is placed under the playing surface.

[0006] The foregoing and other features, utilities and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following more particular description of a preferred embodiment of the invention as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

[0007] The accompanying drawings, which are incorporated in and constitute a part of this specification, illustrate embodiments of the present invention, and together with the description, serve to explain the principles thereof. Like items in the drawings are referred to using the same numerical reference.

[0008] FIG. 1 shows a front perspective view of a foosball game illustrative of the present invention; and

[0009] FIG. 2 shows a side plan view of the foosball game illustrative of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0010] The present invention will be further explained with reference to FIGS. 1 and 2. With reference to FIG. 1, a representation of a soccer field is generally illustrated by playing field 10. Playing field 10 may include indicia of a regulation soccer field including, for example, goal box 12, center kickoff circle 14, center line 16, and the like. Playing field 10 is surrounded by sidewall 18. In stead of regulation markings, playing field 10 may have indicia of players, whimsical designs, or the like.

[0011] Playing field 10 is made of a material transparent, translucent, or semi-transparent to light. For example, playing field 10 could be a clear plastic, glass, colored plastic, colored glass, a frosted glass like surface. Further, playing field 10 could have portions of the playing surface transparent, translucent, or opaque to form patterns and designs in the playing surface. A light source, which will be explained further below, can be placed below the playing field 10, providing a lighted surface on which foosball could be played.

[0012] Referring now to FIG. 2, a side plan view of the foosball table is provided. Residing beneath playing field 10, is at least one light source 20. As shown, light source 20 could be a single florescent light tube extending down the center of the playing surface. However, multiple rows of florescent light tubes may be used. Other types of lights, however, could also be possible, such as, incandescent lights, halogen lights, light strings (such as Christmas lights), or the like. In general, almost any arrangement of light can be provided depending on the lighting effect desired. Further, light source 20 could be a strobe light or other light that has an on and off feature, similar to a timer, or a string of blinking Christmas lights. Still further, it would be possible to have a dimmer to manually or automatically control the brightness of light source 20. Finally, a timer could be used to control an on and off pattern of the lights and the dimmer.

[0013] While the invention has been particularly shown and described with reference to particular embodiment(s) thereof, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various other changes in the form and details may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

We claim:

1. A game, comprising:
a game arena;
a playing surface in the game arena;
the playing surface having at least one portion that can pass light; and
at least one light source beneath the playing surface, such that light from the at least one light source can be viewed from above the playing surface.
2. The game according to claim 1, wherein the game arena represents a foosball game.
3. The game according to claim 1, wherein the game arena comprises at least one of a hockey game, a baseball game, a golf game, a football game, or a soccer game.
4. The game according to claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the playing surface comprises glass.
5. The game according to claim 4, wherein the glass comprises at least one color.
6. The game according to claim 4, wherein the glass is frosted.

7. The game according to claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the playing surface comprises plastic.

8. The game according to claim 7, wherein the plastic comprises at least one color.

9. The game according to claim 1, wherein the playing surface includes at least one of a transparent portion, a translucent portion, and an opaque portion.

10. The game according to claim 1, wherein the at least one light source comprises:

   at least one of a fluorescent light, an incandescent light, a light string, or a strobe light.

11. The game according to claim 1, further comprising:

   at least one light switch to turn the at least one light on and off.

12. The game according to claim 1, further comprising:

   at least one dimmer switch to regulate the brightness of the at least one light source.

13. The game according to claim 11, further comprising:

   at least one dimmer switch to regulate the brightness of the at least one light source.

14. The game according to claim 1, further comprising at least one timer to control power to the at least one light source.

15. The game according to claim 11, further comprising:

   at least one timer to control power to the at least one light source.

16. The game according to claim 12, further comprising:

   at least one timer to control power to the at least one light source.

17. The game according to claim 13, further comprising:

   at least one timer to control power to the at least one light source.

18. The game according to claim 1, wherein the at least one portion of the playing surface is designed to form a playing surface that simulates at least one of a hockey game, a baseball game, a golf game, a football game, or a soccer game.

19. The game according to claim 1, wherein the at least one portion of the playing surface is designed to form a decorative pattern.

20. The game according to claim 18, wherein the at least one portion of the playing surface is further designed to form a decorative pattern.

21. A game, comprising:

   a game arena;

   a playing surface in the game arena;

   the playing surface having at least one portion that can pass light; and

   means for providing light beneath the playing surface, such that light from means for providing light can be viewed from above the playing surface.

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