Aug. 12, 1958 R. B. WEEKS 2,847,222

GAMEBOARD AND GAMEPIECE THEREFOR

Filed March 4, 1955

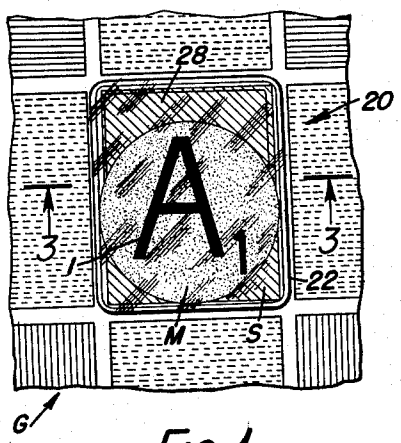


FIG. 1.

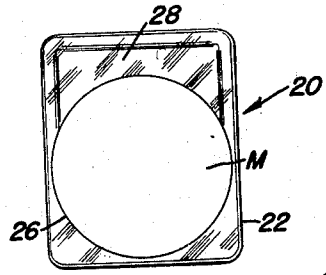


FIG. 2.

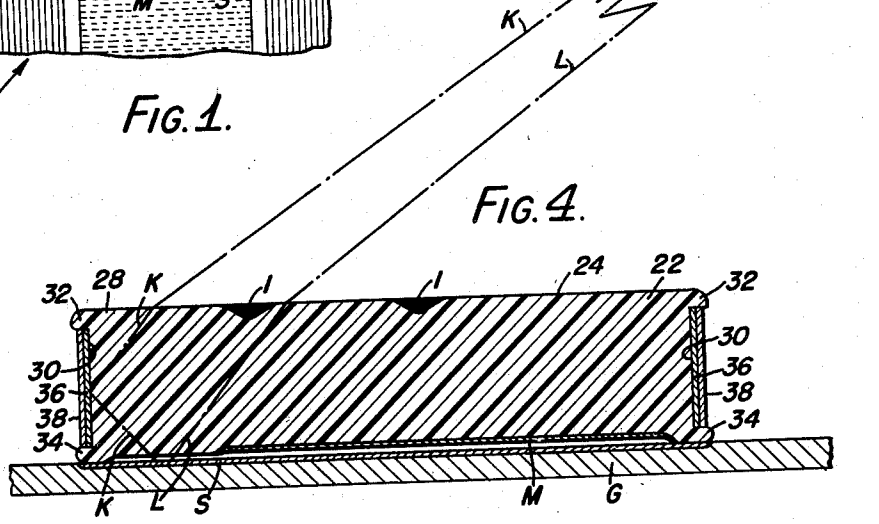


FIG. 4.

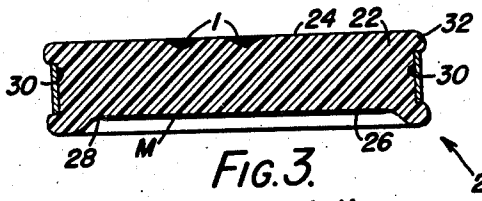


FIG. 3.

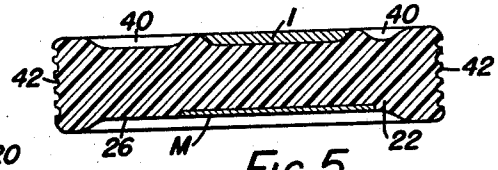


FIG. 5.

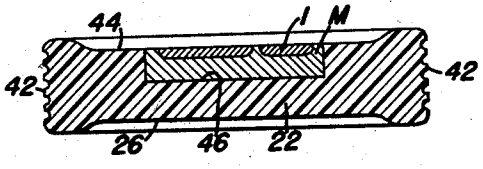


FIG. 6.

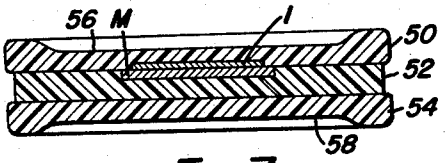


FIG. 7.

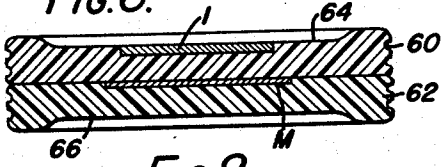


FIG. 8.

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GAMEBOARD AND GAMEPIECE THEREFOR

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4 Claims. (Cl. 273—131)

The present invention relates generally to games and more particularly to games played by placing or moving gamepieces to chosen, marked spaces on a gameboard. More specifically, the invention relates to the gamepieces used in playing such games.

In many games involving the use of gamepieces, gameboards are used having a plurality of marked spaces such as rectangles, circles and the like. In some cases, the spaces are colored to indicate that when a player has covered a particular space in the course of his play, certain credit or debit is to be applied to his score in that play or move. If the playing pieces, sometimes called "men," are of non-transparent material, it is frequently necessary to move a previously played piece so as to be advised of the color on the board beneath it and so be able to assess a possible next play. Frequent moving of the pieces already placed on a gameboard tends to disrupt the orderly arrangement on the board and realignment of gamepieces is often necessary.

If, to eliminate undesirable handling of the pieces, they are made of a transparent material, then the transparency may work to disadvantage in the drawing of pieces from a reserve or stock. This is the case in games where the pieces carry letters, numbers or other indicia and it is important that the players do not identify them until after they draw. When transparent gamepieces are used, disclosure of the indicia on the pieces before drawing can be avoided by keeping the reserve or stock in a high-sided container which will hide the pieces from view of all players. This practice, while effective, is most inefficient.

One object of this invention is to provide a gamepiece bearing indicia so constructed that when it is positioned on a gameboard right-side-up, its indicia and the color of the playing space beneath it can be seen readily, but, when turned bottom-side-up, the indicia cannot be seen.

Another object of this invention is to provide a gamepiece which is transparent but which need not be kept out of sight to hide the indicia on it.

Another object of this invention is to provide a transparent gamepiece constructed so that its transparency will not be materially lessened with considerable use.

Another object of this invention is to provide a transparent gamepiece having reflecting means so that when the piece is placed on a playing space on a game board, the reflecting means will reflect light rays and make the color of the playing space beneath it more distinct.

Another object of this invention is to provide a transparent gamepiece having reflecting means which is protected from wear.

A further object of this invention is to provide a transparent gamepiece which bears indicia that will not decrease in clarity with use.

Still further objects of this invention are to provide gamepieces of the character described which can be easily constructed and which are easily handled when used.

Other objects of this invention will be apparent hereinafter from the specification and from the recital of the appended claims.

In the drawing:

Fig. 1 is a top view of a transparent gamepiece constructed according to one embodiment of this invention, the gamepiece being shown resting on a playing space of a game-board, a fragmentary part of the game-board being shown;

Fig. 2 is a bottom view of the gamepiece;

Fig. 3 is an enlarged section taken on line 3—3 of Fig. 1 and looking in the direction of the arrows;

Fig. 4 is a longitudinal section, on a greatly enlarged scale, of a gamepiece constructed according to another embodiment of this invention, the gamepiece having reflecting means around its periphery and being shown resting on a colored playing space of a game-board. Also, there is shown, diagrammatically, the lines of vision from a player's eye to the playing space beneath the gamepiece; and

Figs. 5–8 are sectional views of transparent gamepieces constructed according to other embodiments of this invention.

Referring now to the drawing by numerals of reference, and particularly to Figs. 1–3 inclusive, 20 denotes generally a gamepiece constructed according to this invention. It comprises a rectangular body 22 made of a clear, colorless, or substantially colorless, transparent material, such as "Lucite," Celluloid, "Pyrex" glass, or other optically similar material not having extreme brittleness. The upper face 24 of body 22 has indicia 1 pressed into it and suitably blackened or colored to make it stand out. Indicia 1 may take the form of a letter, number or any other suitable symbol.

Body 22 has a depressed bottom face 26 (Fig. 3) which bears a masking element or patch M in register with the indicia 1 above it. Masking element M may be circular, as shown, or any other shape, so long as its size is slightly larger than the indicia 1. Element M is clearly visible through transparent body 22 when viewed from upper face 24 (Fig. 1). It is provided to hide from view the letter, number, symbol or other indicia on the face of the gamepiece when it is positioned in a stock or reserve bottom-side-up (Fig. 2). To meet this requirement, the element or patch M must, therefore, be opaque and it may take one of many forms. It may be a sheet material such as paper, cloth, plastic, metal foil or the like, attached to bottom face 26 by a suitable adhesive; or, it may be a paint, enamel or lacquer applied to the gamepiece bottom. Further, it may be an area of the bottom which has been roughened, crazed, etched or treated chemically to make the area opaque so as to render impossible the identification of the indicia 1 when the gamepiece is bottom-side-up, or otherwise viewed through bottom face 26.

Indicia 1 and masking element M are positioned toward one end of the gamepiece, thereby providing a considerable area 28 at the opposite end of the piece free from indicia or masking. Thus, when the gamepiece is placed upon a playing space S on a gameboard G, as shown in Fig. 1, the color of the playing space beneath the piece may be readily seen by looking through the transparent body 22, there being no need to move the gamepiece to see the space. Thus, the necessity for moving gamepieces on a gameboard to view playing spaces beneath gamepieces is eliminated, and, any disruption of the orderly arrangement on a board is made unnecessary.

As previously stated, the bottom face 26 of the gamepiece is depressed. This keeps opaque element M, whatever it may be, from wearing off when the gamepiece is

used in playing a game. In some games, gamepieces are moved from one space to another during the course of play. This results in sliding contact between the bottoms of the gamepieces and the surface of the gameboard, and without some provision, such as a depressed bottom surface, masking element M would, in time, wear off. Further, prolonged sliding contact between the bottom of the gamepiece and the gameboard would roughen the mask-free area **28** of the bottom and reduce its transparency, thus making it more difficult to see the color of the playing space beneath the piece.

Preferably, the sides of the gamepiece are also depressed, as indicated at **30**. The side depressions produce flanges **32** and **34** at the top and bottom, respectively, of the gamepiece. These depressions and resulting flanges enable a player to pick up a gamepiece with ease, since his or her fingers can easily grip the sides of the piece. Depressions **30** may be used for a further purpose, as shown in detail in Fig. 4, in which reference numerals and letters similar to those used in Figs. 1–3 indicate like parts.

In some instances, a player's line of vision to a particular gamepiece is not such as to readily permit looking down through the piece to the space S on the gameboard G beneath it. Movement of his or her head, back or forward, right or left might be necessary to secure a good line of vision through the gamepiece. However, the possible need for head movement is eliminated if light-reflecting means are provided on the gamepiece. Such reflecting means may be in the form of tin-foil **36** positioned in depressions **30** and bonded to the sides of the gamepiece with its reflecting side facing inwardly. A clear, transparent adhesive, or other suitable means can be used in bonding the foil in place. Preferably, means is provided to protect the reflecting material from handling wear. Such means may be in the form of an outer protective coating **38**, of paper, plastic, fabric, paint, enamel, lacquer or other material. Coating **38** will also protect the reflecting means from being damaged when the gamepiece is in a storage container.

Assuming that playing space S is colored to indicate scoring influence and a player is looking at a gamepiece positioned on it, his or her line of vision will be somewhat as shown, with E designating the player's eye. For convenience, eye E is shown closer to the gamepiece and gameboard than would be the actual case. Lines K and L indicate some paths of light travel from the colored surface of space S on the gameboard to the eye of the player. It will be obvious, that considerable area of color on the gameboard space S will be visible directly, that is, along lines L, all of which are bent somewhat by refraction in passing through the body **22** of the gamepiece. Also, it will be seen that the color on space S will be reflected, by the tin-foil **36** or other material on the side of the piece farthest from eye E, to the eye E of the player along lines such as indicated by K, which also are bent by refraction. The portions of reflecting material which are on the sides of the gamepiece, right and left of the player's line of vision, and facing toward him, serve to reflect light from illumination sources not directly above the gameboard upon the color of the space S on the board and accentuate the player's view of the space.

If desired, the colored spaces or zones on the gameboard can be made of luminous material, or material of a similar optical character, in which case some portions, or all, of the reflecting material **36** can be eliminated.

In Fig. 5, there is shown a modified, transparent gamepiece construction. The top of the gamepiece is provided with depressions **40** disposed about indicia **1** and inward of the edges of the piece to protect from wear the portions of the surface through which the playing space beneath the gamepiece is to be visible. Further, the sides of the gamepiece have grooves **42** to facilitate handling of the piece. The bottom face **26** of the gamepiece is constructed as the previous pieces described, with a masking element M applied to it.

In the embodiment shown in Fig. 6, the transparent gamepiece is provided with a depressed upper surface **44** formed with a recess area **46** in which is mounted an opaque masking element in the form of a wafer or disc M. Masking element M serves as a background for gamepiece indicia **1** imbedded in it and visible from the top of the gamepiece but hidden from view when the gamepiece is turned bottom-side-up. The sides of the gamepieces also have handling grooves **42** and a recessed bottom **26**.

In Fig. 7, there is shown a gamepiece made by laminating three layers of transparent material together, namely, an upper layer **50**, a middle layer **52**, and a bottom layer **54**. The top of layer **50** is depressed at **56** and the bottom of layer **50** has indicia **1** imbedded in it. Imbedded in the upper face of middle layer **52** is a mask M positioned so that it registers with indicia **1** when it and layer **50** are laminated together.

The dimensions of layers **50** and **54** are equal; but, layers **50** and **54** are larger than the dimensions of middle layer **52**. Thus, irregular sides are formed when the gamepiece is made, as shown, thereby permitting easy handling of the piece after construction. Further, the bottom of layer **54** is depressed at **58**. This depression and the depression **56** on the top of the gamepiece protects against roughening the surfaces of the gamepiece during use and decreasing the transparency of the material from which the piece is made.

The gamepiece shown in Fig. 8 is somewhat similar to the one shown in Fig. 7, comprising, however, only two layers of transparent material laminated together, namely, layers **60** and **62**. Layer **60** has a depressed upper surface **64** in which indicia **1** is embedded. The upper surface of layer **62** is provided with a masking element M suitably applied such as by roughening an area of the surface. The bottom **66** of layer **62** is depressed in a manner similar to upper surface **64** for reasons heretofore recited. The sides of the gamepiece are knurled, grooved, dimpled or otherwise marked to make handling of the gamepiece easier.

While the invention has been described in connection with several different embodiments thereof, it will be understood that it is capable of further modification, and this application is intended to cover any variations, uses, or adaptations of the invention following, in general, the principles of the invention and including such departures from the present disclosure as come within known or customary practice in the art to which the invention pertains and as may fall within the scope of the invention or the limits of the appended claims.

Having thus described my invention what I claim is:

1. A gamepiece comprising a body made of a material through which light rays may pass, said body having an upper side and a bottom side, said body bearing indicia visible from said upper side, an opaque element beneath said indicia and registering therewith, said element being larger than said indicia and having an area less than the area of either said upper or bottom sides, and reflecting means affixed to the periphery of said body and adapted to reflect light into said body.

2. A gamepiece comprising a body made of a material through which light rays may pass, said body having an upper side and a bottom side, said body bearing indicia visible from said upper side, an opaque element beneath said indicia and registering therewith, said element being larger than said indicia and having an area less than the area of either said upper or bottom sides, and reflecting means affixed to the periphery of said body and adapted to reflect light into said body, and means for protecting said reflecting means from wear.

3. In combination a gameboard and at least one gamepiece for said gameboard, said gameboard comprising a playing surface divided into playing spaces some of

which are coated with a luminous material, said gamepiece comprising a body made of a material through which light rays may pass, said body having a bottom side, adapted to seat on said gameboard, and an upper side, said body bearing indicia which is visible from said upper side, an opaque element beneath said indicia and registering therewith, said opaque element having a size greater than that of the indicia and an area less than the area of either said upper or bottom sides of said body so that when the gamepiece lies bottom-side-up said indicia is concealed.

4. In combination a gameboard and at least one gamepiece for said gameboard, said gameboard comprising a playing surface divided into playing spaces, each of which has a size equal to the size of said gamepiece so that when the gamepiece is positioned on a particular space it will completely cover it, said gamepiece comprising a body made of a material through which light rays may pass, said body having a bottom side, adapted to seat on said gameboard, and an upper side, said body bearing indicia which is visible from said upper side, an opaque element beneath said indicia and registering

therewith, said opaque element having a size greater than that of the indicia and an area less than the area of either said upper or bottom sides of said body.

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