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[54] **DEXTERITY GAME WITH INDICIA BOARDS AND PLAY PIECES MATCHING THE INDICIA**

[76] Inventors: **Adolph E. Goldfarb,** 4614 Monarca Dr., Tarzana, Calif. 91356; **Erwin Benkoe,** 17965 Medley Dr., Encino, Calif. 91316

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[52] **U.S. Cl.**..... **273/135 A,** 273/1 E, 273/135 B

[51] **Int. Cl.** **A63f 3/06**

[58] **Field of Search**..... 273/135 B, 135 A, 144, 273/1 E, 130 AB

[56] **References Cited**

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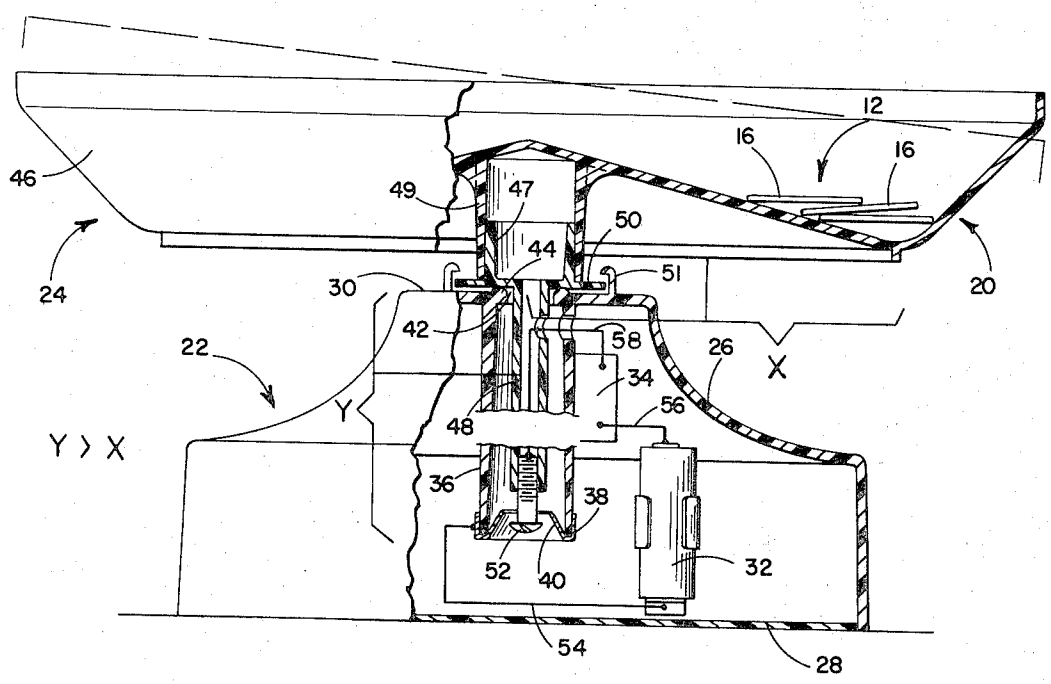
Primary Examiner—Paul E. Shapiro

Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Robert M. Ashen

[57] **ABSTRACT**

Apparatus for playing a competitive game calling on the steadiness and dexterity of the players, wherein the players attempt to selectively withdraw play pieces from a sensitively balanced receptacle. If the players unbalance the receptacle in this process, they loose their turn as indicated by an appropriate signal or alarm. The game apparatus also includes bingo-type cards or boards having a plurality of different indicia thereon, with the play pieces having indicia matching those on these cards. The players try to select and withdraw from the receptacle, play pieces which will match indicia on their boards or cards, the object of the game being to match indicia in a particular pattern or arrangement on the cards such as a horizontal, vertical or diagonal row.

10 Claims, 2 Drawing Figures



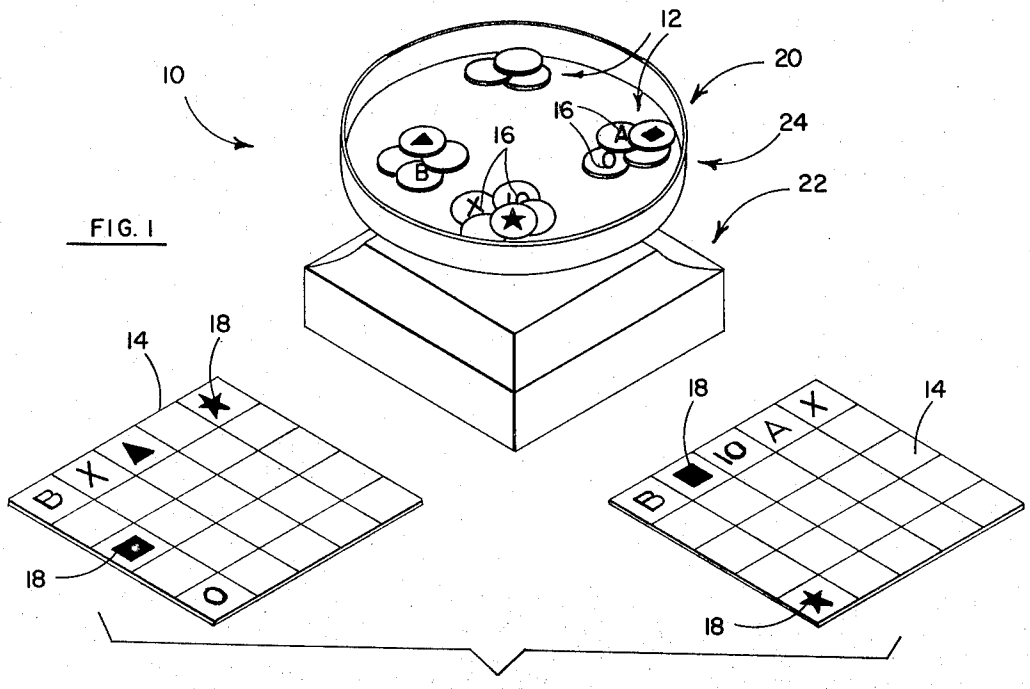

10
12
20
16
24
22
16
B
A
X
O
14
18
18
14
18
B
X
O
18
B
10
A
X
18

FIG. 1

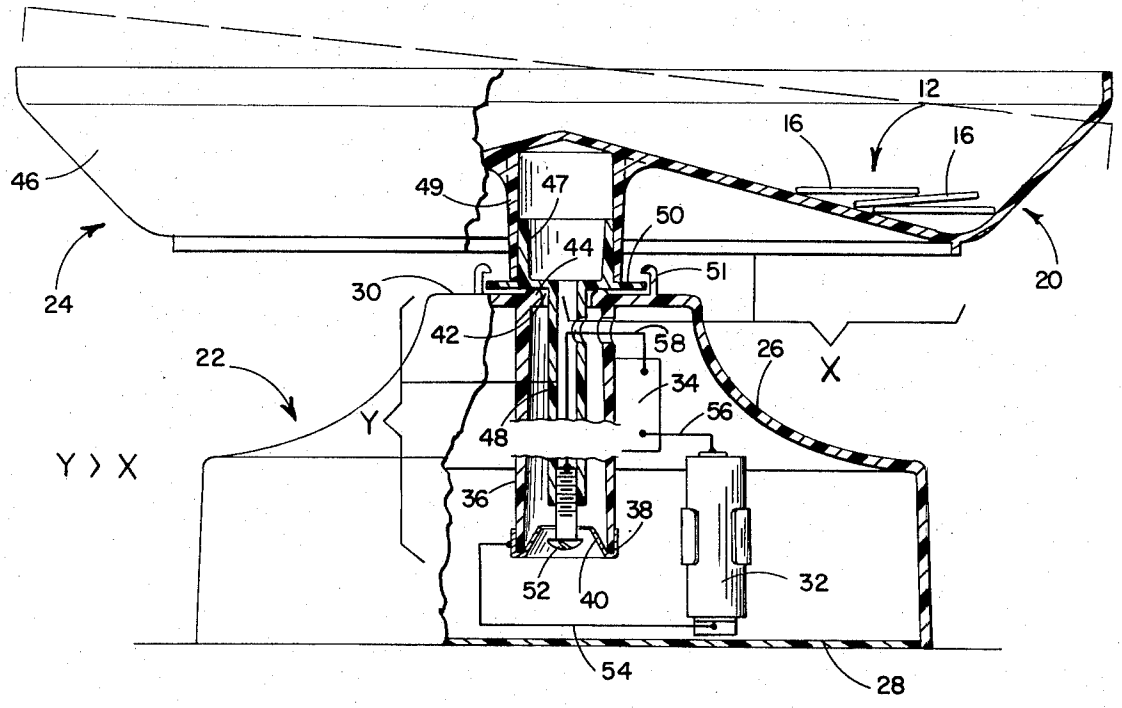

12
16
16
46
49
47
50
44
51
30
20
24
42
58
26
22
34
X
Y
56
48
Y > X
36
38
52
40
32
54
28

FIG. 2

DEXTERITY GAME WITH INDICIA BOARDS AND PLAY PIECES MATCHING THE INDICIA

Bingo is, of course, a well known and widely played game where each player has a card with rows of numbers thereon (or other indicia thereon). The card of each player has a different selection and arrangement of the numbers. Then, by random chance, numbers are selected one at a time and each player is allowed to cover the corresponding numbers on his card as the selected numbers are announced. The players compete to be the first one to have a complete row or other configuration covered on his particular card. This form of the game is basically intellectual in that there is no physical activity or manipulation by the players requiring concentration, skill or the like. Further, there is not a great deal of thought involved since the numbers are selected at random and the players merely match the called numbers. Thus, the play of the game is rather cut and dried with the actual physical and mental participation of the players being minimal.

On the other hand, there are many devices which require skill and dexterity. These however tend to become dull and uninteresting after they have been used for a short time, particularly to younger children. Further, often only one person can use such a device at a time so that they are not suited for competitive or joint activities.

The present invention contemplates game apparatus which permits the players to compete with one another while using their dexterity. The game is also very good for teaching children to match letters, numbers and designs and to improve their hand-to-eye coordination. There is also the aspect of planning which pieces to choose, taking into consideration visibility and availability of certain game pieces within the receptacle, as well as the chances of the other player or players taking certain pieces which they may desire before they have the chance to take those pieces themselves. There is a further aspect of the excitement engendered when the other player tilts the receptacle and energizes the signal.

In the drawings:

FIG. 1 shows game apparatus, including player cards, play pieces, and a sensitively balanced receptacle, all of which comprises a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is an enlarged side sectional view of the receptacle of the game apparatus of FIG. 1.

The illustrated game apparatus **10** comprises a presently preferred embodiment of the present invention. Game apparatus **10** includes a plurality of play pieces **12** having different indicia **16** thereon, and a plurality of individual cards or boards **14** each having a plurality of spaces with indicia **18** thereon matching some of the indicia **16** on the pieces (Different cards may have different indicia and/or differences in location thereon of the indicia). The apparatus **10** also includes a sensitively balanced receptacle **20** for holding a plurality of the play pieces. In the play of the game, the players take turns in grasping a play piece **12** within the receptacle **20** and removing it so that they can place it on their card **14** on a space having an indicia **18** matching the indicia **16** of the piece. If the player unbalances or tilts the receptacle while removing the play piece, a signal sounds or shows and the player looses his turn and/or points.

As shown in FIG. **1**, each illustrated card **14** is generally square, having a plurality of square areas or spaces formed on its upper surface. The areas form vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines in the manner of a check board or a bingo-type card. The card may be of any suitable material such as wood, metal, plastic or cardboard. While a square configuration is shown, it might be desirable to use a different shape card, and also to vary the shape of the individual spaces. Thus, for example, a single large board or plastic sheet could be used, with each player having his own portion thereof. In another version, each player may have play pieces which are identifiably his own, such as by their color, so that track can be kept of placement of pieces by the various players with reference to the particular game objective. For example, for younger children who often tilt the receptacle, the game could comprise a board with a different colored set of spaces for each player and a plurality of play pieces of each of these colors.

As noted above, the illustrated cards **14** have indicia **18** on each of the areas or spaces. These indicia might, for example, be numbers, letters, colors, designs, or the like. There are a plurality of different indicia on each of the illustrated cards. Further, on the illustrated cards, some indicia may appear on some cards but not other cards, while other indicia appear on a different group of the cards. In other words, it is preferred that out of the total number of different indicia, each of the cards have some but not all of such indicia. In this way, each card is different and distinctive in the indicia which it bears and/or in the arrangement of the indicia thereon. On the other hand, a version of the game could be played using identical cards because different players can match up different rows or portions of their cards, or there could be more than one play piece with the same indicia on it.

The illustrated play pieces **12** are flat circular disc or chips bearing the indicia **16** on one surface thereof. Various other shapes and configurations of play pieces may utilized. The play pieces may be formed of any suitable material such as wood, metal, plastic, or even cardboard. As noted above, the indicia **16** on the play pieces matches indicia **18** on the various player cards **14.**

The sensitively balanced receptacle **20** may now be described in detail. As shown best in FIG. **2**, the receptacle comprises a base section **22**, and a receptacle section **24** mounted in a sensitively balanced, tiltable manner on the base section, with a visual or audible signal being energized when the receptacle section is tilted relative to the base section.

More particularly, the base section **22** comprises side walls **26**, a bottom wall **28**, and a top wall **30** which combine to form a hollow box-like structure. A buzzer **32** and a battery **34** are mounted in the base section (shown schematically in FIG. **2**). A tubular portion **36** is secured to at its upper end to the underside of the top wall **30** of the base section. The tubular portion **36** extends downwardly therefrom into the interior of the base section. An annular contact ring **38** of electrically conductive material such as brass is mounted around the lower end of the tubular portion **36**, with an annular inner edge portion **40** of the ring **38** inclined radially inwardly and upwardly from the lower end of the tubular portion. The upper end of the tubular portion. The upper end of the tubular portion **36** communicates with a circular opening **42** through the top wall **30.** Formed

on the upper side of the top wall **30** and centered around the opening **42,** is a upstanding annular rib or lip **44** upon which the receptacle section **24** rests.

The receptacle section **24** includes generally a bowl-like portion **46** in which the play pieces **12** are disposed, and an extension or contact portion **48** which depends downwardly from the center underside of the bowl-like portion **46.** The bowl-like portion **46** may be transparent to aid the players in seeing the indicia on various play pieces within that portion. The extension portion **48** extends downwardly into the tubular portion **36** of the base section, and an annular flange **50** is provided around the upper end of the extension portion **48.** The flange **50** rests upon the annular rib **44** of the base section, and thereby supports the receptacle section in a sensitively balanced tiltable condition. A pair of opposed, L-shaped retaining finger portions **51** are secured to the top wall **30** to retain the flange **50** in place. The retaining finger portions **51** may be flexible and resilient so that they may be defected outwardly by flange **50** and will then return to the illustrated positions overlying the flange when the receptacle section is placed in position on the base section.

For ease of fabrication, packaging, and storage, the bowl-like portion **46** may be made of a separate piece from the extension portion **48,** with the two pieces being assembled by the players when they wish to use the game. For example, the bowl-like portion **46** may have an cylindrical portion **49** secured to its center underside and depending downwardly therefrom. The extension portion **48** may have an upstanding hub portion **47** which fits into the cylindrical portion **49.**

An electrical contact may be provided at the lower end of the extension portion **48** as by means of a screw **52** of electrically conductive material such as brass threaded into the lower end of that extension portion. The contact screw **52** is thus disposed within the portion **40** of the contact ring **38** at the lower end of the tubular portion **36.** When the receptacle section **24** is tilted, the contact screw **52** will make contact with the contact ring portion **40.** This will complete an electrical circuit through the battery **34** and the buzzer **32.** One electrical lead wire **54** connects the contact ring **38** to the buzzer **32.** Another electrical lead **56** connects the buzzer **32** to the battery **34.** The battery **34** is connected through a lead wire **58** to the contact screw **52.** This circuit is normally open by virtue of the gap between the contact screw **52** and the contact ring **38.** The circuit is closed to energize the buzzer **32** when the contact screw **52** makes contact with the contact ring **38.** The contact screw **52** is shown in an intermediately sensitive location relative to the contact ring **38.**

The position of contact screw **52** may be adjusted by screwing it further into or out of the end of the extension portion **48** from the position shown in FIG. **2.** This increases the distance which the screw must travel to engage the inclined portion **40** of the ring contact **38.** As the contact screw is adjusted downwardly, the gap increases because of the incline of portion **40** of the contact ring, to reduce the sensitivity. Conversely, when the screw is adjusted upwardly, the sensitivity is increased. In other words, the closer the contacts are set to one another, the less movement is required at the bowl portion **46** to cause a signal and the higher the sensitivity of the device. As shown in FIG. **2,** the length of the receptacle means **20,** and particularly the base of the bowl-like portion **46,** is designated as being in an "X" direction and the length of the elongated extension arm **48** is shown as being in a "Y" direction. In a particular form of the invention, the extent of the arm in the Y direction is greater than that of the receptacle means **20** in the X direction, i.e., Y>X. It should be noted also that the contact screw is located at the end of an elongated arm away from the bowl portion so that when the end of the arm extends considerably further from the support means than does the rim of the bowl portion a large multiple of linear movement is created, whereby a small linear movement of the bowl portion will produce a relatively large linear movement at the contact screw.

In the play of the game, each player gets one of the cards **14** and the players take turns attempting to extract from the receptacle certain selected play pieces which have indicia that correspond to indicia on desired spaces on their cards. The players may try to complete a horizontal, vertical or diagonal row on their card, or they may even try to fill the entire card. Other type objectives may be fulfilled such as completing the spelling of words or the creation of a design or picture. The scoring may take various alternate forms as well, with given numbers of points assigned for completing certain tasks, such as being the first to complete a row. The inadvertent actuation of the buzzer by tilting the receptacle section may result in loss of one or more turns, or may result in loss of a certain number of points.

It will be appreciated that a visual signal such as a light may be substituted for the audible buzzer signal.

We claim:

1. Competitive play apparatus for play of a game by two or more players, comprising in combination:

a plurality of play pieces having different indicia thereon,

a plurality of board surfaces each board surface assigned to one player, said board surfaces having indicia thereon matching the indicia on said play pieces,

a sensitively supported receptacle means for receiving said play pieces therein and for retaining said play pieces so that a player may selectively remove a play piece having an indicium thereon matching an indicium on said player's board surface, and

a base having signal means for providing a signal when actuated and means supporting said receptacle means in a said sensitively supported manner so that if said receptacle means is inadvertently engaged by a player when he attempts to remove a play piece from the receptacle means, said receptacle means will be moved relative to said base to actuate said signal means.

2. The play apparatus of claim **1** wherein said board surfaces comprise a plurality of individual cards having rows of indicia thereon, and the selection and arrangement of indicia thereon, on each card is different from that on the other cards.

3. The play apparatus of claim **2** wherein said play pieces are in the form of flat discs having opposed faces and said indicium is provided on one face thereof.

4. The play apparatus of claim **1** wherein said receptacle means is tiltably balanced on said base.

5. The play apparatus of claim **4** wherein said receptacle means includes a bowl-like portion having a peripheral rim and an elongated extension arm with a

contact member mounted thereon at a distance from said support means greater than the distance therefrom of said peripheral rim of said bowl-like portion, whereby the distance traversed by tilting movement of the rim of the bowl-like portion is substantially magnified at said contact member.

6. The play apparatus of claim **5** wherein said arm depends downwardly from the center of said bowl-like portion and said base includes a contact member disposed adjacent to but spaced from the contact member of said arm.

7. The play apparatus of claim **6** wherein said contact member of said base comprises an annular member surrounding the contact member on said arm whereby tilting of the receptacle means in any direction will bring the contact member on the arm into engagement with the annular contact member.

8. The play apparatus of claim **7** wherein said annular contact member has a center axis and an annular portion inclined inwardly toward said axis, said contact member on said arm being disposed along said center axis, said arm contact member being adjustable longitudinally of said axis to vary the distance which said arm contact member must travel to engage said annular inclined portion.

9. The play apparatus of claim **4** wherein said receptacle means includes a bowl-like portion having a peripheral rim and an elongated extension arm with a contact member mounted thereon, said elongated extension arm being mounted substantially centrally of the bowl-like portion and wherein said means supporting said receptacle means comprises an annular lip, the bowl-like portion being positioned upon said annular lip in a balanced position of the receptacle means.

10. The play apparatus of claim **1** wherein said receptacle means is transparent.

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