ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A game apparatus comprising a board having a plurality of separate playing areas, each area being provided with a marble-receiving recesses arranged in rows of different colors, at least one marble for each row of the same color as the corresponding row, and a deck of cards for controlling the movement of said marbles along said rows, there being a group of cards in said deck for each of the rows colors on said board, the cards in each group bearing indicia of a particular color and designating different numbers of recesses.

The present invention relates to intellectual games which are played with cards which control the movement of objects on a game board.

An object of the present invention is to provide a novel game apparatus.

Another object of the present invention is to provide an intellectual game which may be played by two or more persons and has a wide range of interest for young children as well as adults.

Still another object is to provide a game of the character described having a minimum number of parts, which is inexpensive to manufacture, distribute and sell; yet is attractive in appearance.

The invention possesses other objects and features of advantage, some of which will be set forth in the following description of the preferred form of the invention which is illustrated in the drawings accompanying and forming a part of the specification, it being to be understood, however, that variations in the showing made by the said drawings and description may be adopted within the scope of the invention as set forth in the claims.

With reference to said drawings (two sheets):

FIGURE 1 is a top elevation of a game board constructed in accordance with the present invention.

FIGURE 2 is a cross section of the board taken substantially along the line 2—2 in FIGURE 1.

FIGURES 3 through 11 are top plan views of playing cards constructed in accordance with the present invention.

The game apparatus of the present invention consists briefly of a body member 6 having a top surface 7 divided into a plurality of player areas 8, 9, 10 and 11; the body member being formed with a plurality of stations 13 divided equally among the areas; the stations of each area being identically further subdivided into series of stations 14, 15, 16 and 17 in which each station within a series has matching characteristics and each series of stations has distinguishing characteristics from each other series of stations; a plurality of playing pieces 21, 22, 23 and 24 equally divided among the areas with each area having at least one piece for registration with each series of stations; and a plurality of playing cards 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34 and 35 for playing on the top surface which are generally divided into the same number of groups as there are series of stations, these groups having a common characteristic for identity with one of the series of stations and the cards bearing numbers or letters for controlling the movement of the pieces.

The body member or playing board is made of wood or plastic and has a generally planar surface. The board may be in one piece or hinged as shown by piano type hinges 38. The board may have any peripheral shape but a square shape is most suitable when constructed for five persons. The stations as at 13 may be holes, depresions or indentations in the board itself or the depressions may be formed by a multilayered board in which the top board is formed with holes and the bottom layer is solid. The stations may be circular or any other shape.

The playing board is divided into a number of player areas corresponding to the maximum number of persons for which the game is designed. Preferably the board is divided into quarters thus permitting up to four persons to play the game at one time.

Each player area is marked with a distinguishing symbol here shown as a blue diamond symbol 39, a green diamond symbol 40, a yellow diamond symbol 41, and a red diamond symbol 42.

The color symbols as seen in FIGURE 1 are to be interpreted as viewed from the bottom of the sheet.

Preferably the series of stations are distinguished by color; series 14 being blue, series 15 being green, series 16 being yellow, and series 17 being red. Each station which is set apart from the geometric pattern so as to form a starting line. The starting lines here shown consist of lines of different colored sockets. The starting line for the blue playing area is designated generally by the number 44; the green area by the number 45; the yellow playing area by the number 46; and the red playing area by the number 47.

The majority of the stations are arranged in geometric patterns consisting of straight lines. As here shown each series has ten stations in a straight line. These lines may be arranged at any angle and are here shown as pairs of parallel lines converging to form a right angle with their intersection near the center of the board for each playing area. Each of these lines is known as a "playing line."

Each series of stations further includes a station set apart from the straight line and apart from the stations designated as the "starting line." These stations may be designated as "winning spots" and are preferably set apart by a colored geometric symbol. These "winning spots" for the blue playing area are here shown as a blue station 49 adjacent to a blue diamond 59, a red station 51 adjacent to a red diamond 52, a yellow station 54 adjacent to a yellow diamond 55 and a green station 56 adjacent to a green diamond 57. Each playing area of the board has similar "winning spots" arranged in an identical pattern but they are not here further described for purposes of brevity.

Each player area may have another station or socket characterized by color or other indicia similar to the color or indicia here shown as diamonds 39-42. Thus, the blue playing area has a blue station 59, adjacent to the blue diamond; the green playing area has a green station 60 adjacent the green diamond; the yellow playing area has a yellow station 61 adjacent the yellow diamond and the red playing area has a red station 62 adjacent the red diamond. Stations 59-62 are sometimes known as the "Mataka spot."

The playing pieces are designed to register with at least one series of stations, and may be of any shape which will register with the stations. Preferably the pieces are glass or plastic marbles having different colored faces. The blue marble 63 matches the blue stations 14, the green marble 22 matches the green stations 15, the yellow marble 23 matches the yellow stations 16, and the red marble 24 matches the red stations 17. Each player is given four different colored marbles which are initially placed on the "starting line." The yellow marble, for example, moves from the "starting line" to the "playing line" at the station.
adjacent the edge of the board and moves toward the center of the board. After moving entirely along the "playing line" the marble is moved to the "winning spot" 54. Each player is given a fifth marble having a color corresponding with the diamond in his playing area. This piece is known as a "Mataka ball" and is placed at the "Mataka spot."

The playing cards may be made of heavy paper or plastic; the size of the cards should be convenient for holding in one's hand. Each card is designated by a number and a color or a letter and a color. The number of cards and the number of letters or numbers on the cards may vary but in the preferred form of the game there are 40 cards.

In FIGURE 3, card 27 is lined for the color green in a geometric pattern 64 and bears the number "1" as designated by the number 65. There are ten green cards as follows: two cards bearing the digit 1, two cards bearing the digit 2, two cards bearing the digit 3, two cards bearing the digit 4, one card bearing the digit 5, a word 66 (Mataka), and the red letters 67 and 68 the color of the letter "S," and a card bearing a letter 69 shown as the letter "B" and shown in FIGURE 9.

There are ten blue cards 30, nine of which, as generally shown in FIGURE 6, have a colored symbol 71 and a number 72. There are two cards bearing the digit 1, two cards bearing the digit 2, two cards bearing the digit 3, two cards bearing the digit 4, and one card bearing the digit 5 and the word Mataka. The blue series would also have a card as shown in FIGURE 8 bearing a letter 74 shown as the letter "A."

In like manner there are ten yellow cards, nine of which, as generally shown in FIGURE 5, consist of a yellow symbol 76 and a number 77. The yellow series consists of two cards having a 1 digit, two cards having a 2 digit, two cards having a 3 digit, two cards having a 4 digit, and one card having a 5 digit and the word Mataka. A card bearing a letter 77a shown as the letter "C" and a yellow symbol 78 as shown in FIGURE 10 completes the set.

In like manner there are ten red cards, nine of which bear a number 79 as shown in FIGURE 4 and a symbol 80. There are two cards having a 1 digit, two cards having a 2 digit, two cards having a 3 digit, two cards having a 4 digit, and one card having a 5 digit and the word Mataka. In addition there is one card as shown in FIGURE 11 having a red symbol 82 and a letter 83, shown as the letter "D."

The playing cards may be conveniently held in a stacked condition by a removable tray 86 having upstanding side members as at 87, a bottom 88 and legs 89. The tray is dimensioned so that the cards may lie in a horizontal plane on the bottom 88.

The rules of the game may of course be varied and a preferred set of rules is here set forth for purposes of illustration. To start the game, the deck of cards is shuffled and the player to the right cuts. The cards are dealt successively to the players face up until one person receives the card bearing the letter "A." This player becomes the "dealer." The board is rotated so that the "dealer" players on the area designated by the blue diamond. The dealer moves his blue marble from the "starting line" to the the fifth station on the blue "playing line." The player to the left of the dealer plays on the area designated by the green diamond and moves his green marble from the "starting line" to the fourth station on the green "playing line." This player becomes the "B" player, whereas the dealer becomes the "A" player.

If there is a third player, he assumes the position behind the area designated by the yellow diamond and moves his yellow marble to the third station on the yellow "playing line." This player becomes the "C" player. If there is a fourth player, he assumes the position behind the red diamond and moves his red marble from the "starting line" to the second station on the red "playing line."

The play is begun by the dealer shuffling the cards and the player to the right cutting them. The dealer then gives each player five cards face down.

If there are four players then they play "partners" with players "A" and "C," and "B" and "D" becoming partners. The player to the left of the dealer is the first to play and does so by laying down one card on the diamond matching the color of the card he plays. He then moves his or another's marble according to the color and number of the card played.

The cards numbered 1, 2, 3 and 4 govern the movement of the marbles as follows: a player moves his marble corresponding to the card the number of spaces indicated on the card. If an enemy has a matching colored marble "in play," the player may move the enemy backward a number of spaces according to the card played. The enemy may not be moved backward if that particular marble has reached the "winning spot" for that color. A player may split his play by moving the enemy backward and his own marble forward. If a player has his corresponding colored marble in the "winning spot," he may advance his partner's marble which corresponds with the color of the card played.

The player who plays a card designated "Mataka" S/S may move as follows: the player may move his own correspondingly colored marble forward 5 spaces. As an alternate move, he may move his partner's correspondingly colored marble forward 5 spaces. He may split his move between his partner and himself by moving both corresponding marbles a total of 5 spaces.

If a player has a card corresponding to the color of the card played forward if he is a partner or it is his own marble; backward if it is an enemy. The number of spaces moved is determined by the letter on the card as follows: the "A" card entitles the player to move a marble five stations; the "B" card moves four stations; the "C" card moves three stations, and the "D" card moves two stations.

The object of the game is for each player to attempt to get all four marbles that he is playing to the respective "winning spots" before any other player. He is then declared a "winner" and he is entitled to try for a "double win."

When a person decides to try for a "double win," his object is to move his marble from the "Mataka spot" to the line, thence along the line and back to the "Mataka spot" before any enemy can move all four of his marbles to the "winning spot." It is to be noted that when a player tries for a "double win" the cards are shuffled and redone but every player leaves his marbles in the positions they were in at the time the "win" was declared.

When each player has played all of his five cards, the dealer picks up the stack from the card tray and deals each player an additional five cards. The play continues and cards are redealt until all of the cards of the deck from the tray are dealt. At this point, the cards played are picked up, reshuffled and dealt as before. The "deal" passes to the left after all of the cards are played or one person declares himself to be a "winner."

There are some special rules for a player playing for a "double win" as follows: a person trying for a "double win" can move his partner or himself forward as determined by the cards played, but he cannot move an enemy backwards.

Other general rules are as follows: when a player reaches a "winning spot" with a marble, an enemy cannot push that marble backwards. When a player has a card in his hand which cannot move a marble by the logic set forth in the previous rules, the card is played without any movement of any marble and the next player plays.
It has been found that greater enjoyment is obtained from playing the game, particularly by younger players, if the cards are laid down on the corresponding colored diamond as the cards are played. Thus a green colored card would be played on the green diamond 40, a yellow card on the yellow diamond 41, etc. The stations are arranged so that a card receiving area is formed which has a colored symbol such as a diamond.

Where marbles are used it is desirable to form an upper standing rim surrounding the playing board as at 91, 92, 93 and 94 so that the marbles do not accidentally roll from the board.

It may be seen from a study of the above rules that a sophisticated player may gain an advantage by noting the color and number of each card played in order to aid him in plotting his moves. Thus the game is a good memory training device and a challenge to adults. The rules may be simplified for younger children, and any child who can count to five and can distinguish four colors is capable of playing and enjoying the game. The game moves very fast with a great deal of action and excitement for persons of all ages.

If desired, glass holding sockets 96, 97, 98 and 99 may be provided at the corners of the board.

I claim:

1. A game apparatus comprising:
   a body member having a top surface divided into four playing areas each having a distinguishing colored symbol;
   said body member being formed with a plurality of marble receiving sockets divided equally among said areas;
   said sockets of each area being identically further subdivided into four series of sockets in which all sockets within a series are of the same color and each series of sockets bears a different one of the colors of said symbols at said player areas;
   said sockets of each series being arranged to form a geometric pattern with two sockets from each series spaced from said pattern;
   a plurality of colored marbles dimensioned for registration with said sockets and equally divided among said areas with each player area having at least one marble for each series of sockets, the colors of said marbles matching those of the corresponding series of sockets;
   each of said player areas having a socket spaced geometrically apart from all said other series of sockets of the area in which it is located; and
   a plurality of playing cards for playing on said top surface and being divided into four groups, each group having a color matching one of said series and said cards bearing numbers or letters for controlling the movement of said marbles.

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