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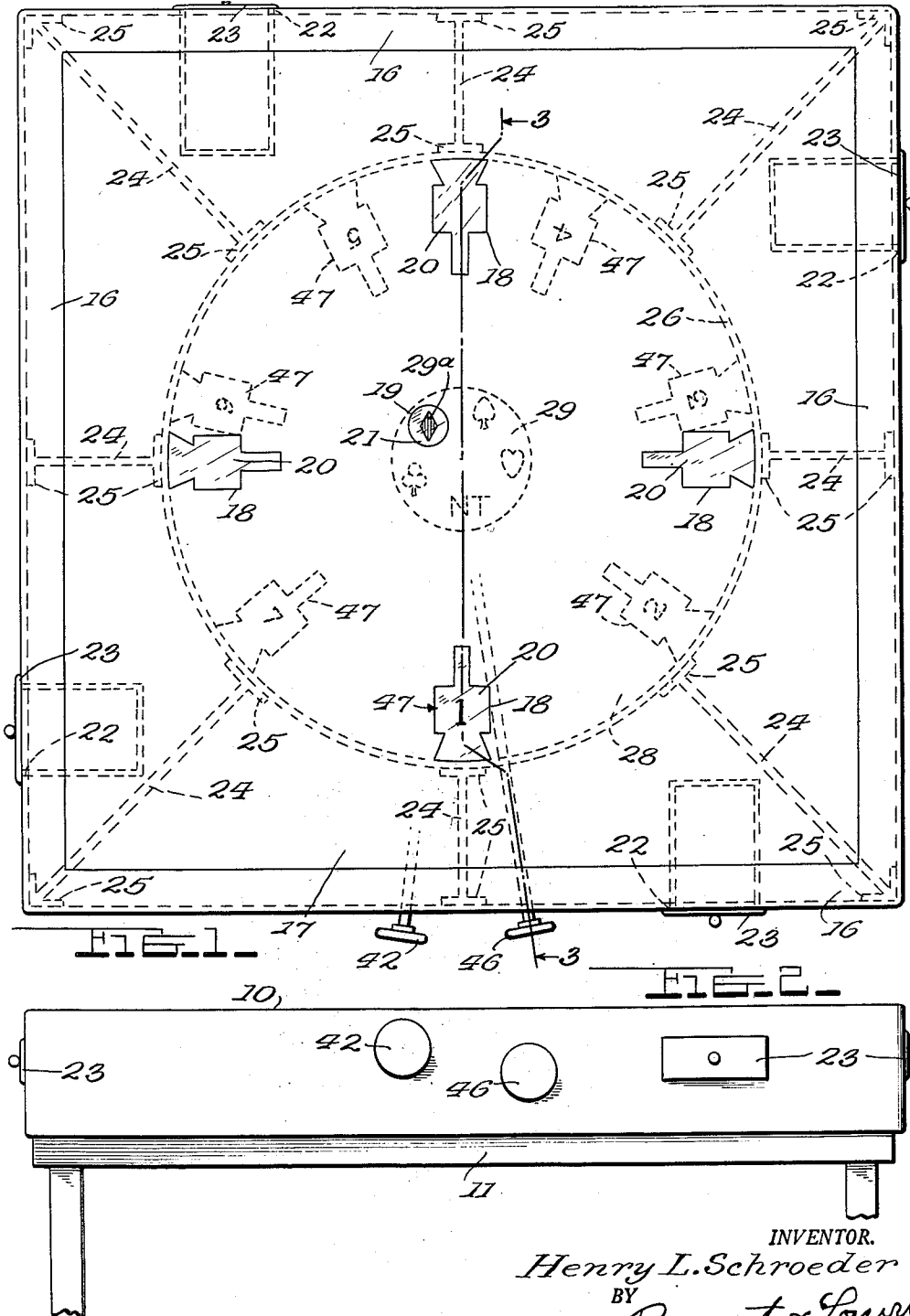
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2,624,583

GAME INDICATING CARD TABLE TOP

Filed Oct. 24, 1949

2 SHEETS—SHEET 1



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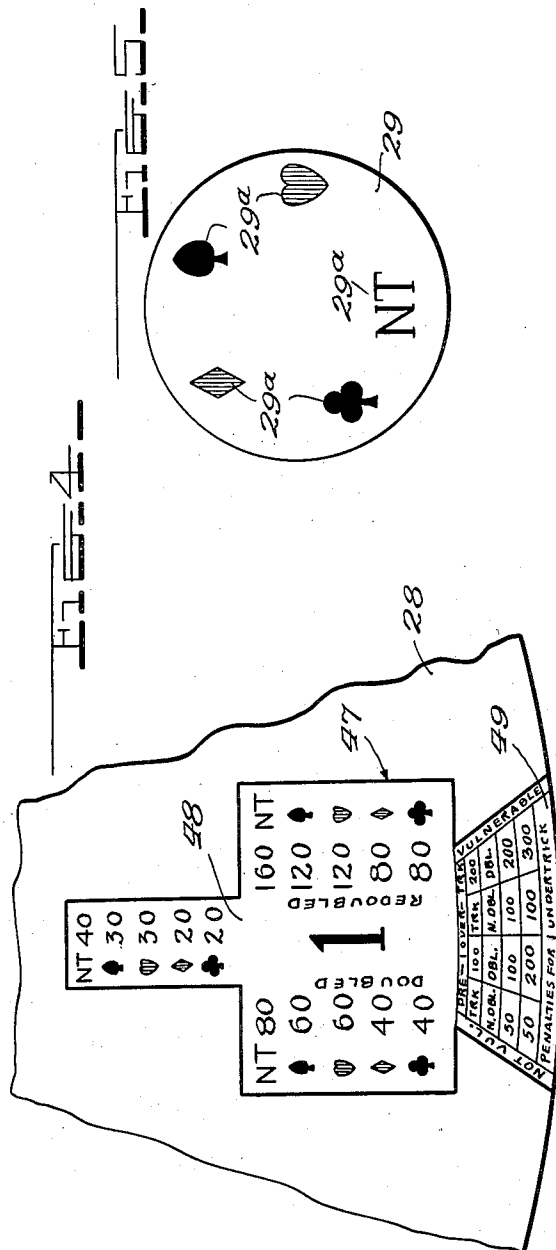
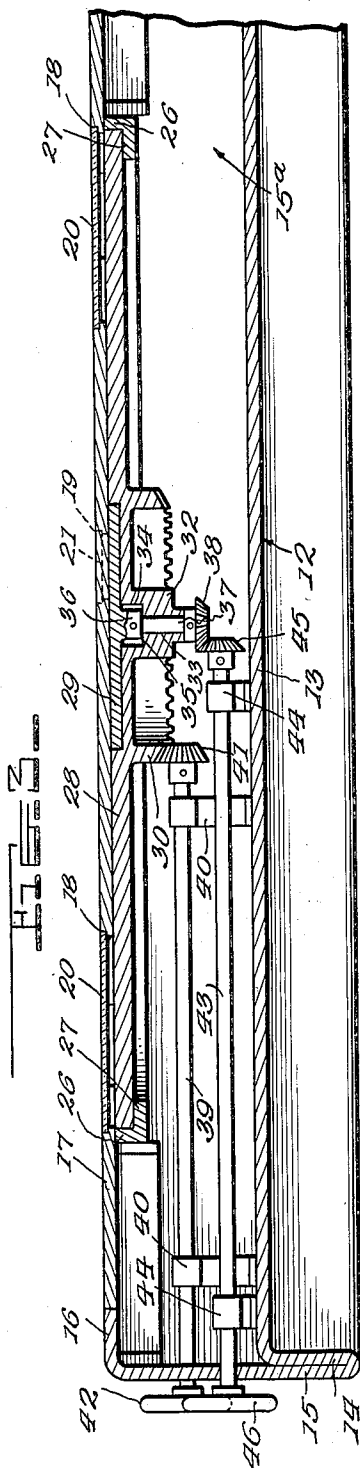
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2 SHEETS—SHEET 2



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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GAME INDICATING CARD TABLE TOP

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1 Claim. (Cl. 273-148)

1

This invention relates to improvements in card table tops and particularly to card table tops of the type bearing indicating means for information used by the players during the progress of a card game.

In the form of the invention disclosed herein, the card table top is adapted for use in the game of contract bridge, but it is to be understood that the invention with slight modifications could be adapted for use in other card games.

It may be noted of the game of contract bridge that after the bidding has been completed and during the time that the hand is being played, certain basic points of information must be remembered by each of the players. These include: the suit which has been declared as trump, the number of tricks contracted for by the highest bidder, the player who has the opening lead, and the consequences involved in the winning or losing of the hand being played. It may be further noted that these points of information change with each hand, and that once they are established for each hand are not essentially a competitive part of the game.

It is well known to those who play bridge that these basic points of information, though important to the game, have a certain nuisance value, in that the effort put into the remembering of them is a distraction that may prevent the player from remembering other important competitive information during the playing of the hand, such as the number of trump outstanding or the value and suit of cards played by the various players. It is also true that the above described basic points of information are often forgotten, resulting in considerable confusion and discussion.

Thus it is seen that some means of recording and displaying the above noted basic information would be of considerable value to bridge players, experts and novices alike. To experts the advantage of such means would be the freedom to concentrate on the finer and more competitive points involved in the playing of a hand. To the average player or novice its importance would be to render the game somewhat less complicated and confusing and eliminate unnecessary uncertainty, discussion and delay in the playing of a hand.

The recording and displaying of such basic information would in no way change or distort the standard bridge game or affect or lessen its competitive aspects.

A principal object of this invention is to provide a card table top bearing novel changeable indicating means, easily visible to the players, exhibiting certain basic points of information concerning the card game being played.

2

A further object of this invention is to provide a card table top bearing changeable indicating means operable by one of the players for easily and quickly changing the information recorded and exhibited thereon.

Another object of the invention is to provide a card table top adapted to the game of contract bridge, said top bearing movable means manually operated by one of the players for selectively indicating, at the completion of bidding, the trump suit, the number of tricks contracted by the highest bidder, the identity of the highest bidder, and the various game scores, penalties and premiums corresponding to the number of tricks in the contract for any particular hand.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a card table top on which the total game scores for each contract from one to seven may be read directly from the indicating means, each contract number having associated therewith its corresponding table showing the total game score for each particular suit and for each variation of the bidding, whether a straight bid, doubled bid or redoubled bid, thus eliminating the use of a separate score card and any mathematical computations.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a card table top in which each indicating number one to seven has associated therewith a printed table showing the premiums for each overtrick and penalties for each undertrick, from which the total penalties or total premiums may be computed by a single mathematical operation.

Another object of the invention is to provide a card table top in which a rotatable indicating means is concealed beneath the surface and read through transparent window openings thereon, said means being clearly visible to all players while at the same time permitting a smooth, unbroken table surface.

A further object of the invention is to provide a card table top of the character described so compactly constructed that it may be slipped as a unit over the top of any standard card table top or may be incorporated into the table structure during the manufacturing process with only minor structural modification of the unit.

A further object of the invention is to provide a card table top in which a plurality of drawers are formed therein for holding extra decks of playing cards, such as are employed in duplicate bridge.

With the above and other objects in view, as will be presently apparent, the invention consists in general of certain novel details of construction and combinations of parts hereinafter

3

fully described, illustrated in the accompanying drawings and particularly claimed.

In the accompanying drawings like characters of reference indicate like parts in the several views, and

Figure 1 is a top plan view of the card table top, constructed in accordance with the present invention, the dotted lines showing the relative positions of the various parts and with the indicating means set to record a bid of one diamond with South as the declarer, the indicia of the bid being omitted for purposes of clarity;

Figure 2 is a side elevational view of the card table top in position on a standard card table that is fragmentarily illustrated and showing the operating hooks for the indicating means;

Figure 3 is a cross-sectional view taken on the line 3—3 of Figure 1;

Figure 4 is an enlarged fragmentary detail top plan view of a portion of the rotatable indicating disc and showing in detail the scoring information visible through the window opening for a bid of one; and

Figure 5 is an enlarged detail top plan view of the central rotatable disc which indicates the suit declared by the highest bidder.

In the form of the invention disclosed herein the card table top is shown as a unit designed to be placed on the top of the standard card table. It is obvious, however, that the invention may be incorporated, if desired, into the structure of the card table itself without appreciable modification.

Referring to Figure 2, the top comprising the present invention and designated in general by the numeral 10 is placed on the top of a standard card table 11.

For housing the operating mechanism of the card table top there is formed in metal, plastic or other suitable material an outer lower casing section 12 generally rectangular in form and slightly larger than the outside dimensions of the average card table top.

The lower casing section 12 is formed of a flat, rectangular sheet 13 which rests on the top of the standard card table 11 and is as large as said top. The outer peripheral edge of the sheet 13 is turned downwardly on all sides to form a depending flange 14, and is then turned outwardly and upwardly upon itself to form the vertical side walls 15 that extend a material distance above the sheet 13, and is then bent inwardly a short distance to form a top marginal flange 16 and defining thereby a chamber 15a.

Butting against the inner edge of the flange 16 and of the same thickness so as to form a flush surface is the top section 17 forming the playing surface of the table. This top section may be formed of any suitable material such as rubberized sheet metal or plastic, and has provided therein four window openings 18 of the contour shown in Figure 1, the longitudinal axis of each of the window openings being one of the radial lines drawn from the center of the top perpendicular to each of the four side walls 15. Near the center of the top section 17 is a small circular window opening 19. Each of the window openings 18 and 19 is rabbeted on its peripheral edge to receive thin transparent coverings 20 and 21, respectively, these window coverings being flush with the top section 17.

In each of the side walls 15 and near the end thereof is provided an opening 22 to receive a drawer 23 which is large enough to hold a deck of cards or other accessories. These drawers are particularly useful for storing extra decks of cards

4

used in the game, and eliminate the inconvenience of keeping the extra decks on the table top during the playing of a hand, and also for the reception of stacked decks for duplicate bridge.

In order to support and strengthen the flanges 16 and top section 17 of the top 10 there are provided a plurality of radially disposed ribs 24. The opposite ends of each of the ribs 24 are provided with suitably angled flange sections 25 to aid in fastening said ribs to the various structural parts of the card table top.

Concentric with the center of the card table top 10 and fastened to the inner end flanges 25 of the ribs 24 is an annular ring 26, the lower portion thereof having an inwardly directed flange 27.

The rotatable indicating means comprises a pair of concentric discs 28 and 29.

The outer concentric disc 28 is journaled for rotation within the annular ring 26, its upper face bearing lightly against the top section 17 and a portion of its lower face resting lightly on the flange 27. On the inner portion of the lower face of the large disc 28 is a depending annular skirt 30 and on the lower edge of said skirt are formed outwardly bevelled gear teeth.

Also depending from the lower face of the large disc 28 and at the axis thereof is a circular hub 32, the lower portion of said hub being stepped down to a slightly reduced diameter and extending a slight distance below the lower edge of the annular skirt 30. Through the axial center of the hub there is formed a straight bore 33, the upper part of the bore being enlarged as at 34 to form a shoulder 35.

The upper face of the large disc 28 has a circular recess and journaled for rotation therein is the small concentric circular disc 29, the upper face of the disc 29 being flush with the upper face of the disc 28. Depending from the lower face of the disc 29 is a hub 36, the lower face of which bears on the shoulder 35. Keyed to the hub 36 is a stub shaft 37 and keyed to the lower end of the stub shaft 37 is a bevelled gear 38.

For rotating the large concentric disc 28 there is provided a shaft 39 which is journaled in a pair of bearings 40 secured in spaced relation in any suitable fashion to the upper face of the casing sheet 13. To the inner end of said shaft is keyed a bevelled gear 41 which meshes with the bevelled gear teeth on the annular skirt 30 and on the outer end of said shaft 39, which extends through the side wall 15, is an operating knob 42. For rotating the small concentric disc 29 there is provided a similar shaft 43 journaled in the spaced bearings 44 and having on its inner end a bevelled gear 45 which meshes with the gear 38 and on its outer end the operating knob 46 in proximity of the operating knob 42 so that a single player or master of ceremonies may operate the game indicia mechanism.

The upper face of the small concentric disc 29 has printed thereon in circular series the trump bids for a game of bridge as indicated by the reference character 29a and these characters 29a are adjacent the peripheral edge of the disc so that only a single symbol is visible through the window opening 21, as shown in Figure 5. For greater contrast the background of the disc may be white and the symbols shown may be printed in the customary black and red.

On the upper face of the large concentric disc 28, and near the peripheral edge thereof, as shown in Figure 1, are printed seven indicating tables 47, corresponding to the seven possible bids

5

in the game of contract bridge. These tables are so spaced that when any one of the tables 1 to 7 are selectively rotated to correspond with any one of the four window openings 18, the remaining tables are hidden beneath the top section 17, as indicated by dotted lines in Figure 1. Each of the tables 47 has an upper section 48 and a lower section 49.

As will be seen from an inspection of Figure 4, which is representative of the indicating tables 1 to 7, on the upper section 48 each bid number has surrounding it the game points corresponding to the trick contract, so that the total score resulting from the hand may be read at a glance, for any suit and whether straight bid, doubled or redoubled and without mathematical calculation. This latter point is to be emphasized, since most score cards require both interpretation and some calculations, and the present invention is helpful to the players during the playing of the hand and at the time of scoring when the hand is completed.

The lower section 49 of the printed table 47 is the same for all seven tables. From this table may be read the premium in points for each overtrick and the penalties in points for the first undertrick and each succeeding undertrick, and whether doubled, vulnerable or not vulnerable. Thus, if the number of overtricks or undertricks are known, the scorer or player may by a simple calculation determine the total points.

The operation of the invention is as follows:

If the top is constructed as a separate unit, the bottom sheet 13 is placed upon the standard table surface, the depending flange 14 encompassing the sides of said table and securing the top unit firmly thereon.

Upon completion of the bidding and prior to the playing of the hand, there have been established the position of the declarer, the declarer's bid, and the trump suit. By means of the knob 46 the operator then selectively rotates the small concentric disc 29 until the desired trump symbol 29a is in position beneath the circular window opening 19. In order to record the contract or bid, the operator, by means of knob 42, selectively rotates the large concentric disc 28 until the correct numeral is in position beneath the window opening 20 which is closest to the declarer. Thus, not only is the bid recorded but the numeral indicating the bid appears in front of the highest bidder. This also establishes the opening lead since it is a rule of bridge that the opening lead rests with the player to the left of the declarer. It will be seen from the tables accompanying the bid number that the score points corresponding to the hand will be available to each of the players and all scoring may be taken therefrom at the completion of the hand. When another hand has been dealt and bid, the indicating card table top will then be reset accordingly.

6

While there is herein shown and described the preferred embodiment of the invention, it is nevertheless to be understood that minor changes may be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as claimed.

What is claimed is:

In a card table top of the character described, a substantially rectangular casing, four large and one small window opening in the upper surface of said casing, an annular ring centered in and secured to the casing and having an inwardly directed annular flange projecting therefrom, an indicating disc journaled for rotation in said annular ring and resting on said flange, a second and smaller indicating disc journaled for rotation in a circular recess in the upper face of said first indicating disc, a separate drive shaft for rotating each of the concentric indicating discs, gear means for placing the inner ends of said shafts in driving relation with said discs, the outer ends of said drive shafts extending through the side walls of the casing, and operating knobs on the outer ends of said shafts exterior of the casing for registry of selective portions of each of said indicating discs with said window openings, said smaller indicating disc having printed in spaced relation thereon symbols for the five possible trump suits of a contract bridge hand and said larger indicating disc having tables printed in spaced relation thereon indicating the seven possible bids in a contract bridge hand, each bid having associated therewith the total point scores for each suit corresponding to such bid and its basic point score figures from which total point scores resulting from overtricks or undertricks may be computed, said tables being so spaced on the larger indicating disc that when one of the tables is selectively positioned under one of the four window openings all other tables are hidden from view through any of the other three window openings.

HENRY L. SCHROEDER.

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