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SCORE DISPLAYING MEANS

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Fig. 1.

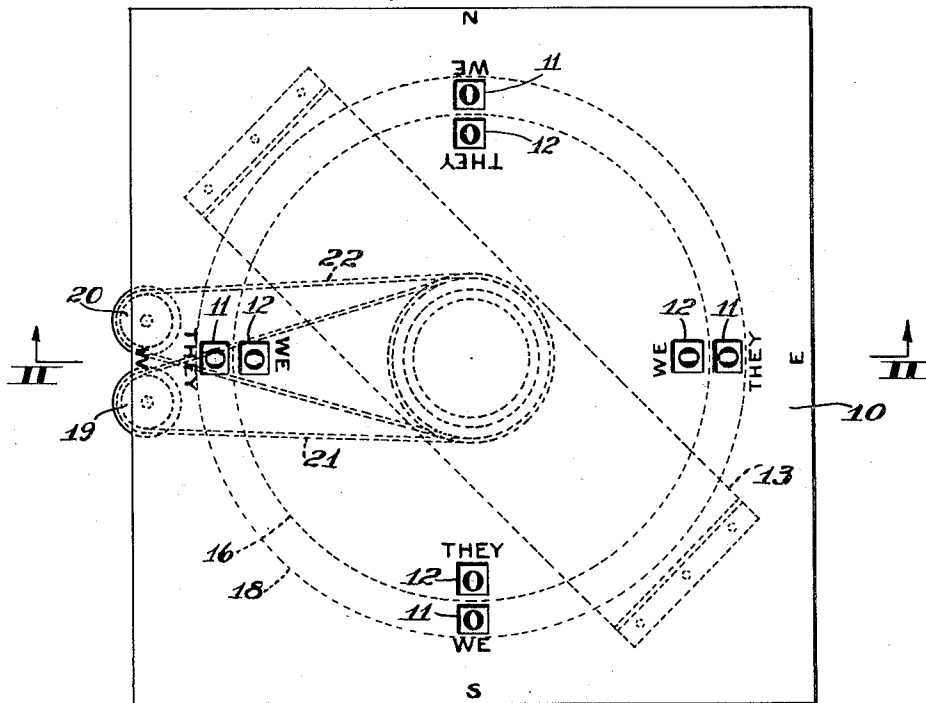


Fig. 2.

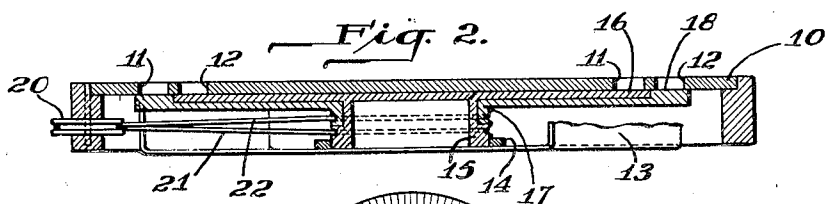
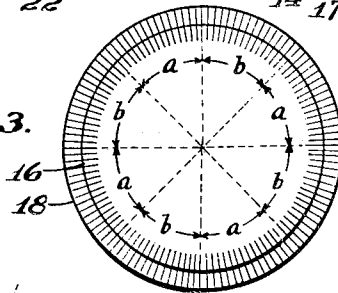


Fig. 3.



WITNESSES
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Fig. 4.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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SCORE DISPLAYING MEANS

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2 Claims. (Cl. 273—148)

My invention pertains to means for displaying the temporary scores of the players engaged in the game of contract bridge.

Contract bridge, like other games of the whist family, is played in rubbers, a rubber being completed when one side has won two out of three games. Each pair of partners declares, or contracts for, the number of tricks which the pair hopes to win. A game is made when a certain specified number of points are scored, the number being 100 under the system at present in vogue. The points scored towards a game are in accordance with the number of tricks contracted for and actually won in fulfillment of the contract, but the value of the tricks in any hand played is dependent upon whether a suit has been declared as trump or not, and, if a trump suit has been declared, what that suit is. Thus it may happen that several hands, at each of which a score is made, may be required to be played by a pair of partners before a game is completed. Furthermore, the premiums which are awarded and the penalties which are inflicted vary in amount in accordance with whether a side has, or has not, already won a game in the course of a rubber which is in progress. A side which has won a game is said to be "vulnerable", and may be subjected to severe penalties in case of its failure to take the number of tricks contracted for.

As, in the game of contract bridge, the number of tricks scored towards the winning of a game are only those which the partners, constituting a side, have contracted to take, and because of the penalties which may accrue by reason of failure to take the number of tricks contracted for, it becomes important that the players should at all times have in mind the exact state of the score towards the game in progress, and also the condition as to whether or not their side is vulnerable. To meet this condition the four players frequently keep individual score sheets so that they can at all times inspect the state of the score. This, of course, is a nuisance, but where it is not done it frequently becomes necessary for one player before deciding on a declaration to inquire of another how the score stands, or to lean over the table and inspect the score sheet. Either is annoying, and is objectionable because such an inquiry or inspection may give rise to inferences by the player's partner concerning whether or not the player would have made or not made the declaration had the score been otherwise. It is the principal object of my invention to

provide a means whereby, without the labor incident to all the players keeping individual score sheets, the temporary state of the score towards both game and rubber may at all times be visible to all the players. Other objects of my invention, and advantages secured thereby, will appear from the following specification and claims.

A card table embodying my invention, constructed so as to display the temporary scores, is described in the following specification and shown in the accompanying drawing. The invention may, however, be embodied in a loose top to be placed on a card table instead of in the table itself, and other changes may be made in the construction described and shown, without exceeding the scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims.

In the drawing:

Fig. 1 is a plan of the table;

Fig. 2 is a cross section of the table top, taken on the line II—II of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a plan of the superposed discs; and

Fig. 4 is a fragmentary enlarged plan of portions of the discs, showing the manner of applying the score numbers thereto.

In the drawing, 10 designates the top of a card table of any convenient character in which, according to my invention, are formed four apertures or "windows" 11 disposed equidistantly around a circle in such manner that a window is opposite each player. Two diametrically opposed windows are marked "We" and the other two are marked "They". Four other windows, 12, are provided adjacent to, and conveniently in line with, the windows 11. The windows 12 are equidistantly spaced around a circle which is of a less radius than the circle of the windows 11, and are marked "We" and "They" similarly to the windows 11. Beneath the table top, and spaced therefrom, is secured a shelf 13 upon which is supported, centrally of the table, a ring 14 in which is rotatably mounted the hub 15 of a disc 16 of such diameter that numbers inscribed near its periphery will be visible through the windows 12. Upon the hub 15 of the disc 16 is rotatably mounted the hub 17 of a second disc 18 of larger diameter than the disc 16 and preferably having its peripheral portion of increased thickness so that the face of such portion lies flush with the face of the disc 16. This peripheral portion of the disc 18 is visible through the windows 11.

The discs are similar, as to the numbering thereon, and it will be sufficient therefore to

refer to the disc 16. This is divided into eight sectors of which every other sector is designated *a* in the drawing (Fig. 3), the remaining sectors being designated *b*. In each of the sectors *a*, at the periphery of the disc, is inscribed a series of numbers which among them comprise all the points which a side can have gained while still not having secured a game. The numbers shown in the drawing are those which apply in the game of contract bridge as it is conducted at this date, though they would be changed, of course, should different scoring rules be adopted. The same set of numbers are inscribed in the sectors *b* but in a different color. For instance the numbers in the sectors *a* may be in black and the numbers in the sectors *b* in red.

Means are provided for permitting the discs 16 and 18 to be manually rotated from one position to another. In the particular embodiment of my invention herein shown, such means consists of thumb-wheels 19 and 20 rotatably mounted in the rim of the table top, at one side of the latter. Cords 21 and 22 pass around these wheels and around the hubs 15 and 17 of the two discs. Thus a person sitting at one side of the table (who may be the person keeping the total cumulative score of game points, bonuses and penalties) can manipulate the discs by operating the wheels 19 and 20.

The device may be used as follows: At the beginning of a rubber the discs are turned so that a black zero is visible both under the windows 11 and the windows 12. Assuming, for example, that the players sitting in the N-S position make a first score, amounting to 70 points, towards a game, the score keeper then operates the thumb wheel 19 so as to turn the disc 18 to bring the number 70, in black, beneath each of the windows 11. Such number will appear under the windows marked "We" in the N-S position and under the windows marked "They" in the E-W position, and it will be plainly shown before all the players that the N-S partners are not vulnerable, and that they need 30 points to score the first game. If before the N-S partners complete a game the E-W partners make a score, the thumb wheel 20 will be operated to turn the disc 16 so as to show the E-W score beneath the windows 12. When one of the sides has won a game during the progress of a rubber, the disc will be manipulated so as to show any subsequent score, towards a game, of such side in red characters. A zero in red shows that the side in question has won a game but has not won any points towards a second game. For example, a red zero in the windows 11 and the number 30 in red in the windows 12 would show that both sides had won a game and were vulnerable, that the N-S partners had no score on the third or "rubber" game, and that the E-W partners had a score of 30 on such third game.

The windows are preferably placed approximately five inches from the edges of the table. In this position the numbers are in the natural line of vision of the players and can be seen at a glance, without craning or other indication that special note is being taken of the score.

Where the term "contract bridge" is employed in the appended claims, other games having similar scoring characteristics are intended to be included.

I claim:

1. A score displaying device for use in the game of contract bridge, comprising a table top having formed therein two sets of circularly disposed openings of four each, each opening of each set being disposed opposite a player; indicia means, designating a pair of players, disposed adjacent one pair of openings of one set and the opposed pair of openings of the other set; indicia means, designating the other pair of players, disposed adjacent the other pair of openings of said sets; a disc rotatably mounted beneath said table top having thereon four sets of numbers arranged to be visible through the four openings of one of said sets of openings, each number of said sets representing a possible score at the game; and a second disc rotatably mounted beneath said table top concentric with the first disc and having repeated thereon four sets of numbers arranged to be visible through the other of said sets of openings, the sets of numbers being the same as those of the first-named disc.

2. A score displaying device for use in the game of contract bridge, comprising a table top having formed therein two sets of circularly disposed openings of four each, each opening of each set being disposed opposite a player; indicia means, designating a pair of players, disposed adjacent one pair of openings of one set and the opposed pair of openings of the other set; indicia means, designating the other pair of players, disposed adjacent the other pair of openings of said sets; a disc rotatably mounted beneath said table top and having repeated thereon eight sets of numbers arranged to be visible through the four openings of one of said sets of said openings upon rotation of the disc, each number of said sets representing a possible score at the game, and four of said sets of numbers being displayed distinctively from the other four disposed between them; and a second disc disposed beneath said table top and having repeated thereon eight sets of numbers arranged to be visible through the openings of the other of said sets of openings when the disc is rotated, the sets of numbers being the same as those of the first-named disc and four of said sets of numbers being displayed distinctively from the other four disposed between them.

HARRY L. WHITE.