Nov. 3, 1970 C. P. HEAVENER, JR 3,537,706

CONSTRUCTION GAME

Filed March 5, 1968

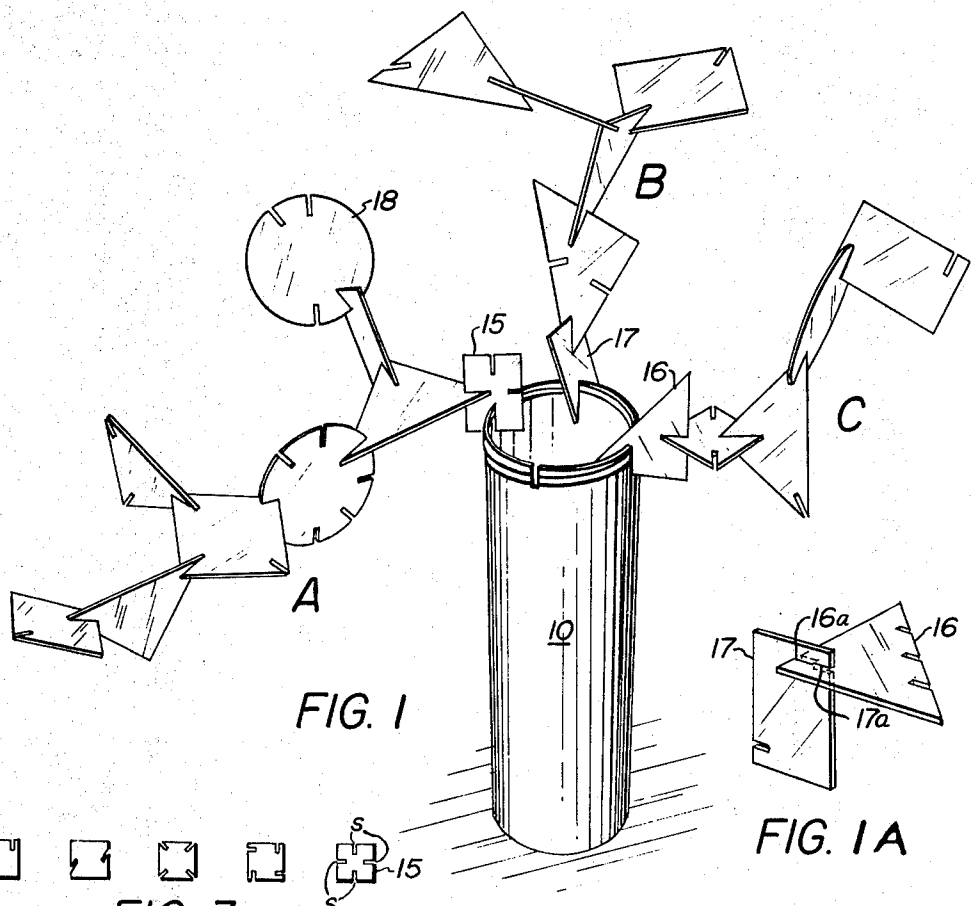


FIG. 1

FIG. 1A

FIG. 3

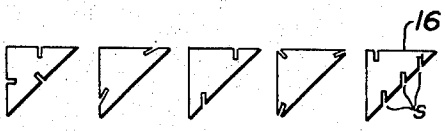


FIG. 4

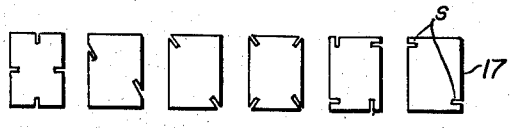


FIG. 5

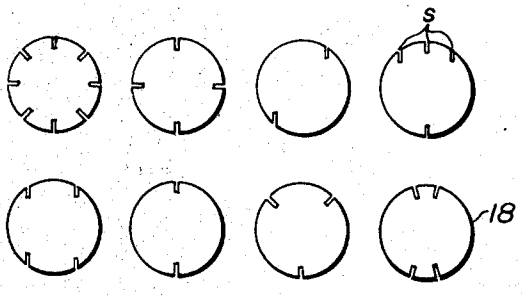


FIG. 6

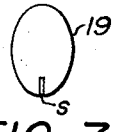


FIG. 7

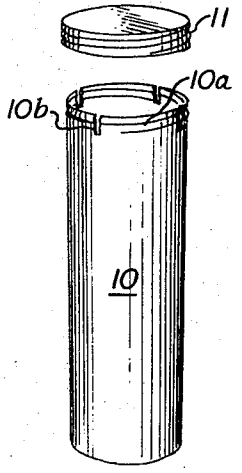


FIG. 2

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CONSTRUCTION GAME

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U.S. Cl. 273—1 6 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A game construction is disclosed that employs an upright hollow container of cylindrical shape representing a tree trunk and a group of differently shaped sets of playing elements that are adapted to be interlatched through slotted portions with respect to each other and the container to represent branches of the tree. The elements of each set are of the same shape with respect to each other and of different shape with respect to the other sets of the group and have a different number and arrangement of mounting slot portions that are adapated to interlatch with slotted portions in an upper lip edge of the container and with slotted portions of elements of the same set and of the other sets to extend outwardly from the container, and when of sufficient build-up extension, to topple the container. The playing elements are shown of flat construction and of relatively the same thickness as the container which also serves to store the elements when they are dismounted with respect to each other and the container.

This invention relates to an improved toppling game which is adaptable to different methods of playing and particularly, to a game which utilizes an improved construction of insertable and removable playing elements for building up a simulated tree or the like.

There has been a need for a toppling type of game which simulates a natural object such as a tree and which involves a certain amount of skill in playing it and, at the same time, has speculative features in its practice, such that player interest is stimulated. Such a game should be capable of employment in a number of ways to broaden its utilization and make it adaptable to the desires of a group of players.

It has thus been an object of the invention to devise a new and improved form of toppling type of game.

Another object has been to device a game construction which utilizes its storage container as a part thereof.

Another object has been to develop a game which will maintain players' interest and which can be varied to suit the whims of the players and broaden its field of application or use.

These and other objects of the invention will appear to those skilled in the art from the illustrated embodiment and the claims.

In the drawings, FIG. 1 is a perspective view in elevation illustrating an assembly of elements or parts utilizing a game constructed in accordance with the invention to simulate a tree.

FIG. 1A is a fragmental side view on the scale of FIG. 1, illustrating how game elements are assembled in an interlatched relation with each other.

FIG. 2 is a slightly reduced vertical view in elevation illustrating a container part and its lid; the container part is itself constructed to simulate the trunk of a tree and to carry interlatching playing elements as branches or limbs in playing the game.

FIGS. 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 are top plan views on the scale of FIG. 2 illustrating various playing elements that may be employed in building up limbs or branches of a tree, as illustrated in FIG. 1. More specifically, FIG. 3 is

illustrative of square elements with various arrangements and numbers of slotted portions, FIG. 4 is illustrative of triangular elements, FIG. 5 is illustrative of rectangular elements, FIG. 6 is illustrative of circular elements and FIG. 7 is illustrative of oval elements.

In carrying out the invention, a suitable hollow container, such as a cylindrical container **10**, with a closed bottom end portion and an open top end portion is provided. The container is used in an upright position on a table or other substantially planar support as a tree trunk or support for game or playing elements, pieces or twigs, such as **15** to **19**, inclusive. The body of the container **10**, as shown particularly in FIG. 2, has an externally threaded lip **10***a* about its open mouth portion to receive a threaded closure cap **11**. In this manner, the playing elements may be packed or enclosed within the container for shipping and storing purposes. The lip **10***a* is provided with latching portions for receiving and mounting a primary group of the playing elements, each of which has at least two mounting slot portions *s*, one for interlatching with the latching portions of the lip **10***a* and the other for interlatching with a mounting slot portion of an assembled group of playing elements which includes a secondary, tree limb simulating group and a final or end group for the simulated limbs. The latching portions of the lip **10***a* are in the form of four, equally-peripherally-spaced, vertical, slotted or slit portions **10***b* which extends from its edge downwardly towards the body of the container **10**. Each playing element has at least one open-mouth mounting slot latching portion *s* extending from a thickness edge thereof into its body for interlatching assembly with each other and the lip **10***a* of the container **10**.

In playing the game, one of the playing elements or twigs, for example **15**, may be mounted as shown in FIG. 1 by sliding it edgewise or endwise with one of its slot portions *s* in alignment into one of the slots **10***b*, in such a manner that the slotted portion *s* will engage or abut with opposite sides of the thickness of the lip **10***a* of the container **10**, and the slotted portion **10***b* will engage or abut opposite faces of the element **15**. As will be appreciated, this gives a rather firm mounting relation of the playing elements. In a similar manner, another element such as a triangular element **16**, may be positioned in a mounted relation within a second slotted portion **10***b* of the container **10** and this repeated until all of the slotted portions **10***b* are engaged by one of the elements **15**, **16**, **17** or **18**. It will be noted that the playing elements are moved into an interlatching position with the lip **10***a* and with each other in a right-angular or perpendicular relation, such that they tend to support each other. In this connection, the width of each slotted portion **10***b* and of each mounting slot portion *s* may be the same and slightly greater than the relatively thin-wall, substantially the same thicknesses of the lip **10***a* and of the playing elements. The depth of the portions **10***b* and *s* is preferably the same to provide a substantially equal length of support for each of a pair of interlatching parts.

In FIG. 1, only three of the slotted portions **10***b* have been illustrated as cooperating with a playing element for clarity of illustration, but in playing the game all of the slotted portions **10***b* may be utilized. The purposes is to progressively or successively build-up tree branches or extending limb portions from the container **10** which represents the trunk, to a maximum extent, without causing the container **10** to topple on its table support by reason of an off-balancing of the upper portion of the tree such that it becomes top heavy and overturns. The use of groups of various shapes of planar or flat playing elements (see FIGS. 3 to 7) and of different spaced

mountings or arrangements of slot portions *s* in elements of the same shape gives an infinitesimal variety of arrangements or assemblies that can be built up into so-called tree limbs. Although the parts of the game may be made of any suitable materials, it has been found that a container **10** of cardboard material colored to simulate a tree trunk, a lid **11** of metal and playing elements represented in FIGS. 3 to 7 of resin material are fully satisfactory.

In playing the game, the container **10** is placed in an upright position on a table, each player then places one twig element in a slot on the trunk at a time in rotation, then each player may take turns placing an element in the slot of any other previously positioned element. As more elements are added, limbs or branches sprout in all directions, building up a tree-like construction or assembly. As previously intimated, the idea is to add elements to the trunk without causing the tree to topple or fall and to present the players with individual challenges, due to the fact that each playing situation tends to develop differently as the building up operation is accomplished, using various shapes of elements and elements having various numbers and locations of mounting slot or latching portions *s*. Variations in the play of the game are limited only by the imagination of the players.

A suggested combination of playing pieces includes the container **10** to represent a tree trunk, a plurality of playing elements to, as built-up or assembled with respect to the trunk and each other, represent twigs or branches. The playing elements of the game may be in the form of groups of the same general shape, e.g., twenty squares (see FIG. 3), with five each of a red, yellow, green and orange color series; twenty triangles (see FIG. 4), with five each of the same color series; twenty-four rectangles (see FIG. 5), with six each of the same color series; thirty-two circles (see FIG. 6), with eight each of the same color series; and four ovals (see FIG. 7), all in black and as used in representative games Nos. 3 and 4, as hereinafter outlined. As shown, each same shape group of playing elements may have individual elements of a different number and arrangement of mounting slot portions *s*. It will be apparent that other and additional combinations of shapes as well as colors may be used.

One type of game which will be labeled as No. 1 may be played by two to four players, with each player selecting one color of elements. Play is rotated in a clockwise direction, and each player adds an element to the trunk of the tree or to another previously placed element of his own color. Neither the tree trunk nor the playing elements may be touched while another element is being mounted in position. The play progresses until the tree assembly falls by reason of off-balancing effected by the build-up of one or more branches or limbs; if only a limb or part thereof falls, the player placing the last element is "out" and the game continues. If the players have placed all of the playing elements and the tree remains standing, then play continues in the same rotation with each player moving one of his previously mounted elements to a different position until he is either disbarred or the tree topples and he loses. The game can be played with partners, with the understanding that partners may not follow each other and that each uses the same color of playing elements as the other partner.

A second method of playing which is labeled No. 2 is started with one playing element of a different shape being placed on the trunk. Each player then draws any playing element in rotation from a common stock pile and applies or mounts it on any previously mounted element of the same general shape. In this method of play, each player may use any color element and the play otherwise progresses as outlined under game No. 1, above.

In a third method of playing the game labeled No. 3, each player may draw any color or shape of elements from a common stock pile and play it on any other color

or shape of previously mounted element on the tree. Also, each player may pass as many times as he wishes, with the understanding that he will lose two points for each pass. Black (oval) playing elements are employed as final end elements to a particular branch or limb at any time to stop a further play build-up of that particular branch or limb.

The method of scoring as to No. 3 is as follows: For each triangle-shaped playing element added to the tree by a player, one point credit is given him, two points credit for each rectangular piece, three points credit for each square; four points credit for each circle; and three points credit for each black oval. If a limb falls while the player is adding an element, ten points are subtracted from his score and if the tree falls, twenty points are subtracted, at which time the play ends. However, the play does not end and the player is not "out" if a limb falls. The play also ends when all players pass. The game is restarted or reinitiated and played until one player attains a score of 500 points or any other predetermined point count. If all the elements have been played and the tree remains standing, play will continue by moving previously placed elements until it does fall; no points are scored for playing previously played elements and a player may not pass if all the elements have been played.

Another or No. 4 variation of the game follows the procedure of No. 3, above, but the mounting of a triangle gives a player four points, of a rectangle gives him three points, of a square gives him two points, and of a circle or black piece, one point in each instance.

Referring particularly to FIGS. 1 and 1A of the drawings, it will be noted that a mounting of each element, such as **15**, **16** or **17** of FIG. 1, on the container or simulated tree trunk **10** is accomplished by sliding a slotted portion *s* of the element along an opposed or associated slotted portion **10***b* of the container until bases of both slotted portions engage each other. At this time, opposed edges of the slotted portion *s* of the playing element, such as **16**, extends in an opposed relation along opposite sides of the thickness of the wall of the container **10**, and the opposed edges of the slotted portion **10***b* of the container extend in an opposed relation along opposite sides of the associated element **16** to define an interlocking relation between the container and the element. The same type of latching or assembled relation is accomplished between playing elements, such as **16** and **17**, which are used to build up a branch or limb of the simulated tree. In FIG. 1, tree limbs or branches are represented by A, B and C. As shown in FIG. 1A, opposite edges **17***a* of the rectangular shape **17** lie along opposite sides of the flat triangular shape element **16**, and opposite edges **16***a* of the triangular shape **16** lie along opposite sides of the rectangular shape **17**. When the two elements **16** and **17** are in an interlatched relation such as shown in FIG. 1A, then the bases of their respective cooperating latching slot portions engage and limit further insertion or inward sliding movement with respect to each other at point *a*.

Although the invention has been illustrated as particularly applied to a cylindrical container and from the standpoint of five different flat or planar sets or groups and four different series of colors and as applied to representative methods of playing or utilizing its parts or elements, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that the game may be employed with additional and other color series, with additional and a lesser number of shapes having a varied positioning and number of slotted portions, and also that various modifications, additions and subtractions may be made without departing from its spirit and scope as indicated by the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A game which comprises, a plurality of playing elements of different shapes of relatively flat construction, each of said elements having at least one open mouth mounting slot portion extending from a thickness edge

thereof into its body, a hollow upright container for receiving and storing said elements, said container being constructed to stand in an upright position for representing a tree trunk and having an upper open-mouth lip provided with latching portions to receive and interlatch with a mounting slot portion of each of a group of said elements in a spaced relation about its periphery to define a starting group of elements for building up simulated branches with an assembling group of said elements; each element of said starting group having at least a pair of spaced-apart mounting slot portions, one for interlatching engagement with said latching portions of said lip and the other for interlatching engagement with an element of said assembling group; the elements of said assembling group being adapted to be progressively built-up into longitudinally extending branches from an associated one of the elements of said starting group by cooperating engagement between their mounting slot portions, said playing elements being provided in sets of similar shape and of a different number and arrangement of mounting slot portions, the wall thicknesses of said container and said playing elements being substantially the same, said latching portions of said lip being defined by a group of peripherally spaced-apart slotted portions open from its edge to extend inwardly therefrom, and the width of each of said slot portions of said container and each of said mounting slot portions of said playing elements being slightly greater than the wall thickness of said container and said playing elements.

2. A game as defined in claim **1** wherein, said container is of cylindrical shape.

3. A game as defined in claim **1** wherein the depth of said mounting slot portions and of said slotted portions is substantially the same.

4. A game as defined in claim **3** wherein, said playing elements are adapted to interlatch with each other by inserting the mounting slot portion of one of said elements within the mounting slot portion of another of said elements and moving said pair of elements at right angles with respect towards each other until opposed side edges of the mounting slot portions of said pair of elements extend inwardly along a portion of the wall of the body of the other element of said pair, and said elements are provided in groups of the same shape and number of mounting slot portions and of different colors.

5. A game construction which comprises, a substantially cylindrical container for positioning in an upright

relation and having an upper open mouth portion defined by a lip thereabout, slotted portions in a peripherally spaced relation and open downwardly from the edge of said lip, a plurality of sets of playing elements of different shapes, said elements being of different colors and having a relatively thin-wall flat construction, elements of the set of a first shape of elements having at least one mounting slot portion therein open from an edge thereof and extending inwardly therealong, each element of at least a second of said sets having therein a number of mounting slot portions different from at least some of the other elements of said second set, a primary group of said elements selected from all of the sets provided with more than one mounting slot portion having one of their mounting slot portions interlatched with an associated slotted portion of said container, a secondary group of playing elements of different colors and different shapes selected from all of the sets mounted to project from each of said playing elements that are mounted on said container and with their associated mounting slot portions in an interlatching relation with each other to simulate tree branches extending generally outwardly from said lip and supported thereon, and a final group of playing elements of one general shape mounted in an interlatching relation with an end playing element of the simulated tree branches.

6. A game construction as defined in claim **5** which has a sufficient number of said playing elements on at least one of its simulated branches to topple said container.

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U.S. Cl. X.R.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

Patent No. 3,537,706 Dated November 3, 1970

Inventor(s) Chester P. Heavener

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent are hereby corrected as shown below:

Column 1, line 47, change "device" to --devise--.

Column 2, line 11, after "elements," insert --leaves,--; line 64, change "purposes" to --purpose--.

Column 6 (claim 5), last line, after "of" insert --each of--.

SIGNED AND
SEALED
JAN 5 1971

(SEAL)
Attest:

Edward M. Fletcher, Jr.
Attesting Officer

WILLIAM E. SCHUYLER, JR.
Commissioner of Patents