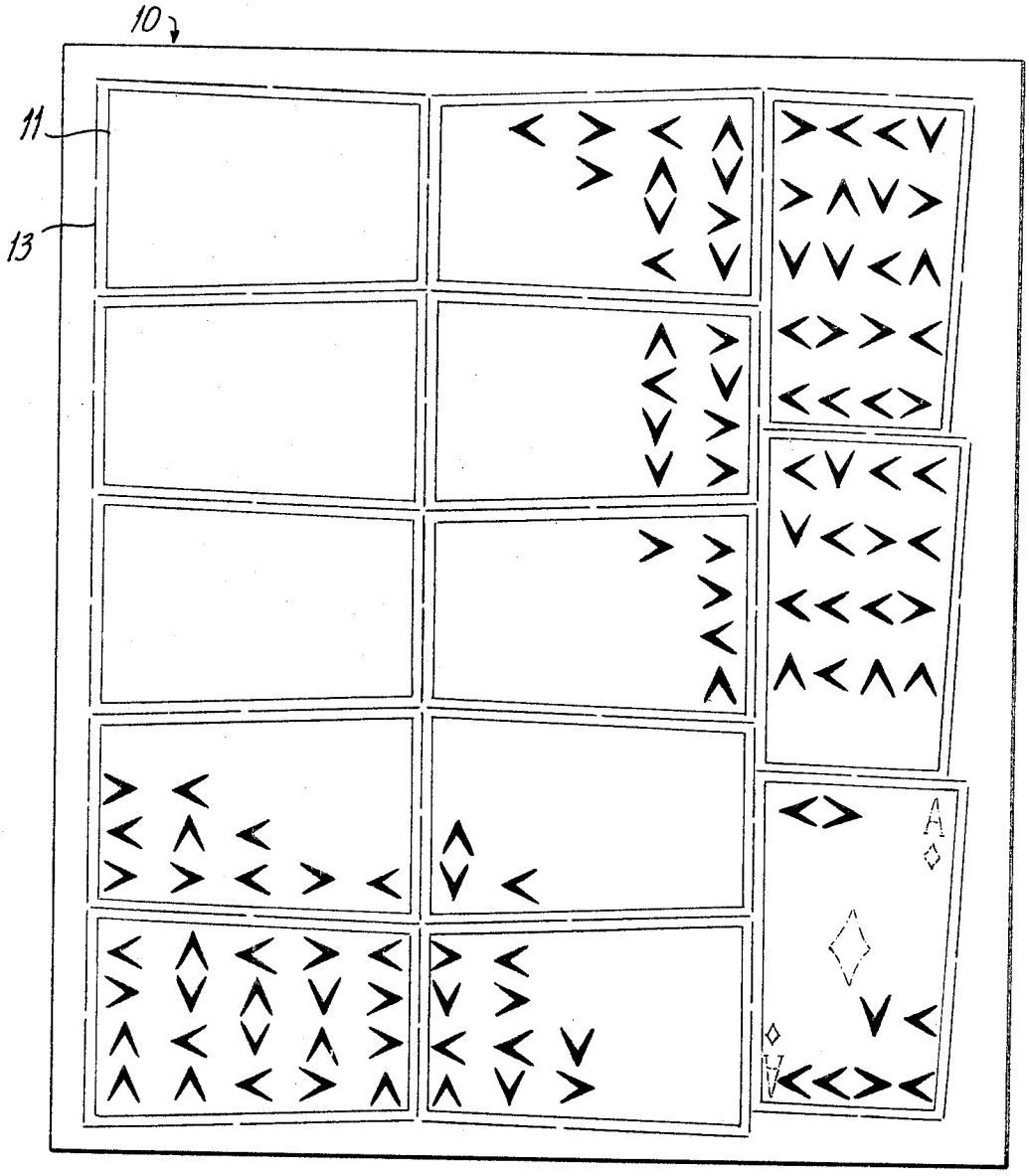
July 7, 1970 T. G. TERBELL 3,519,274

COMPOSITE PLAYING CARD SHEETS

Filed April 15, 1968 4 Sheets-Sheet 1

FIG. 1



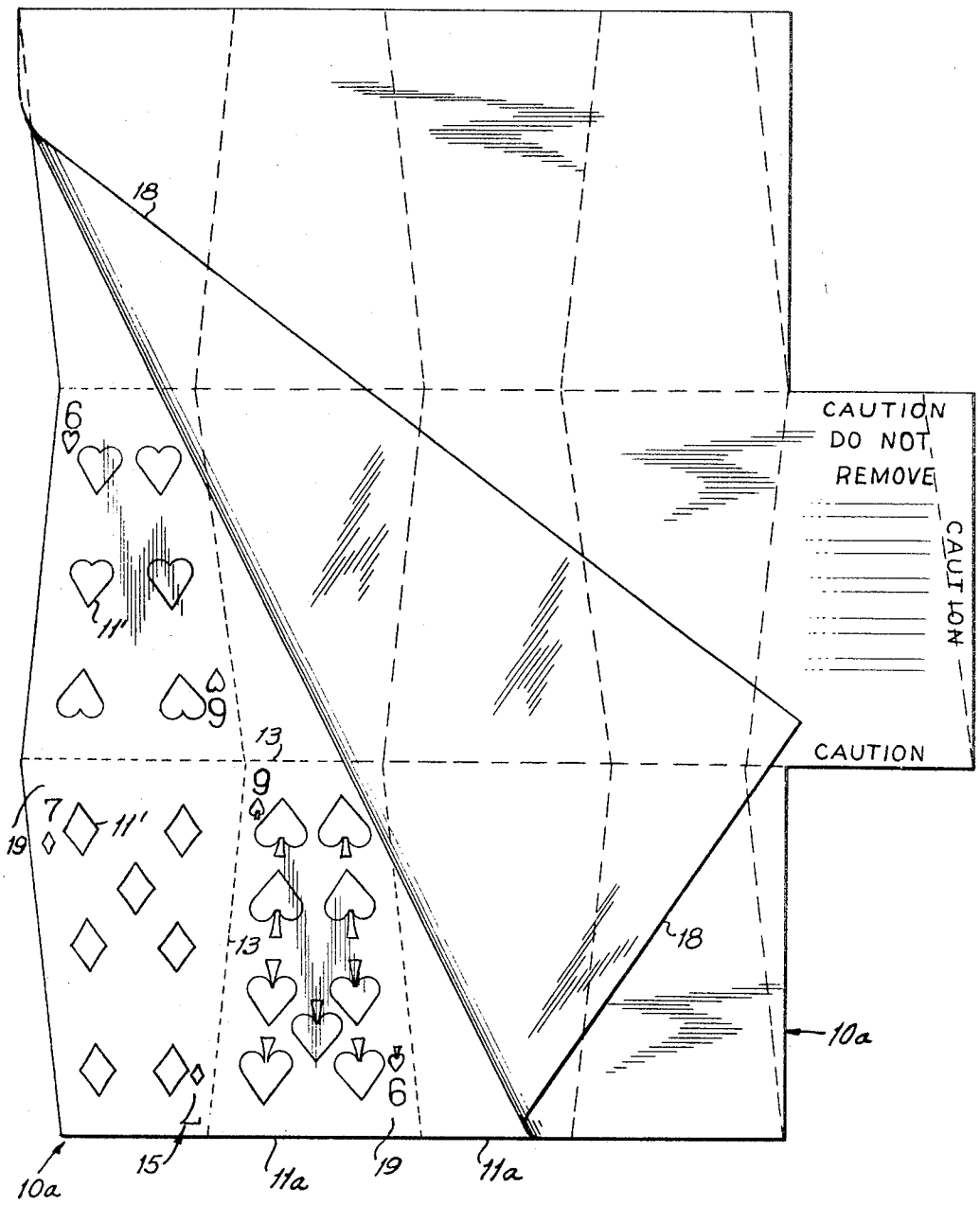
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COMPOSITE PLAYING CARD SHEETS

Filed April 15, 1968 4 Sheets-Sheet 2

FIG. 2



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COMPOSITE PLAYING CARD SHEETS

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FIG. 3

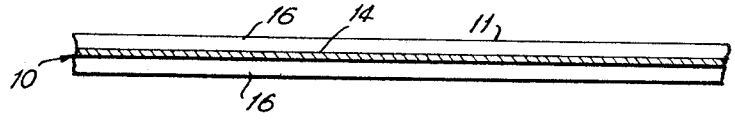


FIG. 4

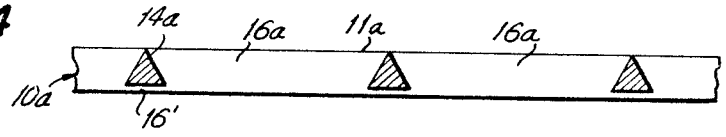


FIG. 5

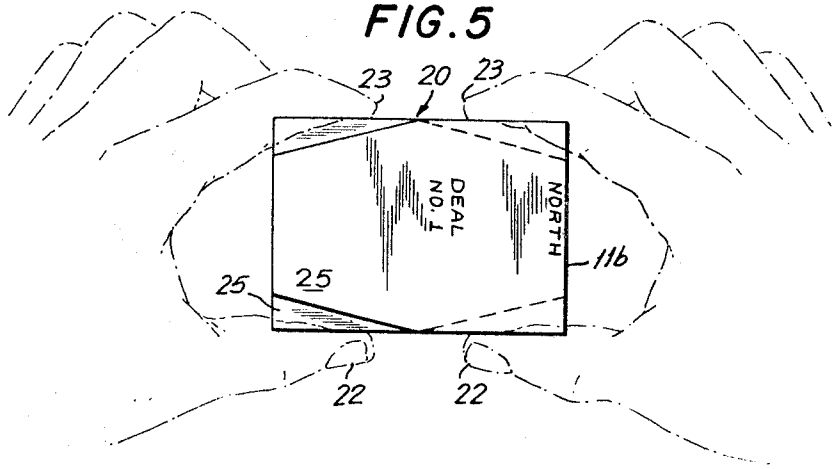
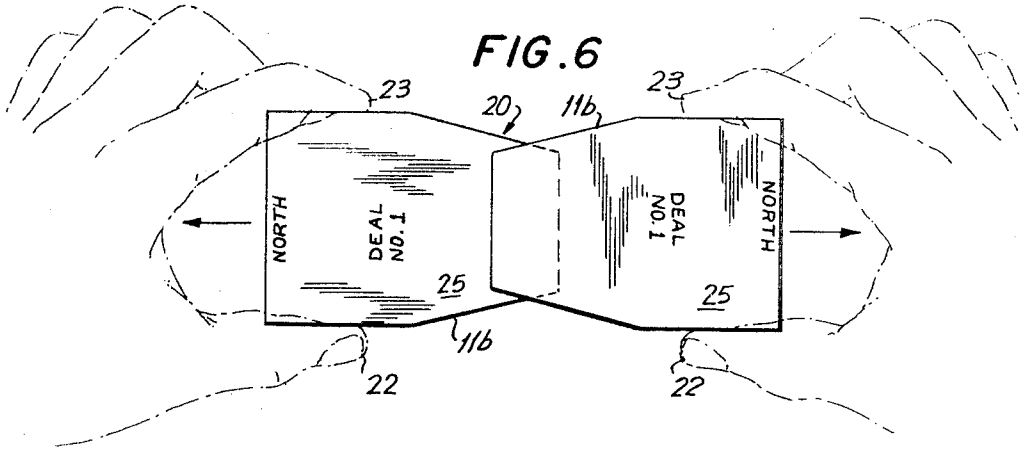


FIG. 6



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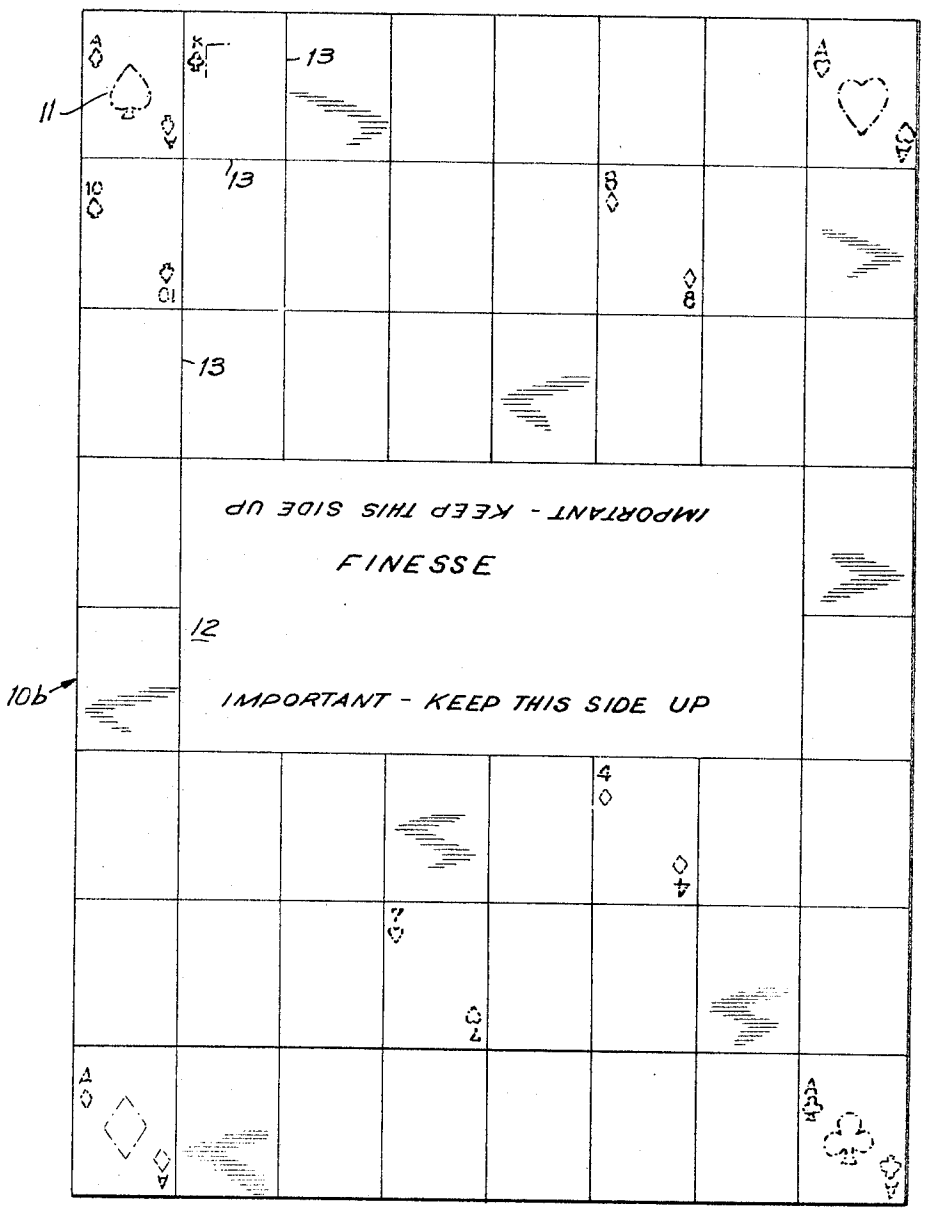
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COMPOSITE PLAYING CARD SHEETS

Filed April 15, 1968 4 Sheets-Sheet 4

FIG. 7



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United States Patent Office 3,519,274
Patented July 7, 1970

3,519,274

COMPOSITE PLAYING CARD SHEETS

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Continuation-in-part of application Ser. No. 610,972, Jan. 23, 1967. This application Apr. 15, 1968, Ser. No. 721,258

Int. Cl. A63f 1/02, 1/10

U.S. Cl. 273—151 10 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Playing cards are made trapezoidal so that when the side edges of the cards are brought into substantial alignment any misoriented cards are then pulled out by grasping the opposite edges of the wider ends respectively and pulling in opposite directions after which one of the packs thus separated is turned and they are superposed in register. The cards may bear markings to identify the game and hand in which each is to be played or the player to whom the card is to be dealt in a particular hand. Such markings may be directional pointers arranged in a complex design.

These cards may be made separate and assembled in decks as has been customary or a plurality of cards may be printed on a single sheet with their edges defined by weakened lines to facilitate separation of individual cards by tensile pull. Such composite cards may have a full hand to be dealt as a unit to the player.

This application is a continuation-in-part of my copending application Ser. No. 610,972, filed Jan. 23, 1967, and now abandoned. This invention relates to a card game and more particularly relates to a specific type and arrangement of cards adapted to be used with the game.

A plurality of playing cards are printed on a single flat, stiff sheet with partially cut, or otherwise weakened break lines at their edges to facilitate the separation of individual cards. Groups of cards may be printed on unitary sheets and dealt as units; but the cards may be separated and played individually. Every easily recognized identification of the individual cards is advantageously omitted from the backs, so that the deck is essentially unmarked so far as play is concerned. Trapezoidal cards are advantageously used with a gentle taper along the length so that when separated and randomly assembled, the cards can be gathered face-to-back into a pile, grasped edgewise at the middle until the side edges of the cards oriented in each direction are aligned, and may then be pulled apart by grasping the wider ends of the cards in the deck by light pressure against opposite edges and pulling in opposite directions. Thereupon the narrower ends pull apart, after which the packs thus separated are rotated and superposed in register. The advantages are secured whether the invention is used with a deck manufactured in the ordinary way as a separate deck of cards or with the composite sheet as more particularly described below.

Standard playing card indicia can be used on the faces of the cards, and miniature indicia are displayed in an upper corner so as to be visible to the player of the hand when the cards are assembled and fanned out in the usual way for playing. Instructions and/or other comment may accompany the cards for such hands, so that they can be compared with actual play; and the cards may bear markings to identify each with the hand from which it was played. Such markings may be removable.

An object of my invention is to provide a group of cards printed on a unitary sheet, hereinafter referred

to as a "composite card sheet," which is advantageously in generally rectangular form, thus allowing for advantageous packging; and advantageously is of a size adapted for mailing without folding.

Another object of my invention is to provide a sturdy composite card sheet which can be separated into playing cards of uniform size and shape and will have substantially identical edges on all cards, especially when a protective border is provided.

Another object of this invention is to provide cards with distribution indicia thereon whch can be dealt easily and quickly into preselected "hands."

In keeping with the above-stated objects, I provide a composite card sheet on which are a plurality of preselected, separable cards, preferably prearranged in "hands" suitable for play. These playing cards, as illustrated in the drawings, advantageously have smaller bottoms than tops, with the sides gently tapering to the bottoms. Four such trapezoidal, almost rectangular, playing cards are connected in a nearly rectangular composite card.

These composite cards, as shown on the drawings, each comprises a number of individual cards arranged upright and abreast in two rows, and an odd number of cards arranged horizontally along the ends of the individual cards in one row. Each row is shown with five cards upright and three cards are shown arranged across the ends of the cards in one of the two rows of five. The same principles, however, can be used with different numbers of cards. With the five card rows and three across the ends, the individual cards will be three-fifths as wide as their length. For cards two-thirds as wide as they are long one may use a composite card according to the invention with three rows of three upright cards abreast, and across both the top and the bottom a row of two cards end to end, all cards are printed on an integral sheet and scored between card portions for easy separation by tensile pull.

If a fourteenth card is to be supplied, e.g., a joker or an instruction card, etc., the arrangement may be two cards end to end over two rows of five cards side to side over two cards end to end across the bottoms of the cards in the previous row.

The dimensions of the cards as well as the nature of the indicia used for dealing or for play can be varied provided that the cards are of more or less the shape and proportions indicated above.

Preferably a protective border is left at the edges of the composite sheet, which also is pulled off when the cards are separated, but assures that the edges of the cards will all be apparently the same.

Other objects and advantages will appear upon consideration of this specification and the accompanying drawing.

Although certain specific examples of the invention and its application in practical use and also certain modifications and alternatives are given herein, it should be understood that these are not intended to be exhaustive or limiting of the invention. On the contrary, these illustrations and explanations herein are given in order to acquaint others skilled in the art, with the invention and the principles thereof and a suitable manner of its application in practical use so that others skilled in the art may be enabled to modify the invention and to adapt it and apply it in numerous forms, each as may be best suited to the requirements of use.

In the drawings:

FIG. 1 is a plan view of one embodiment of the invention, showing the backs of cards on a unit sheet and also, on one card, showing, in broken (phantom) lines, the figure which would be on the face of the card.

FIG. 2 is a plan view of another unit sheet slightly modified and showing another embodiment of the present invention for a single hand in a bridge game.

FIG. 3 is a cross-section taken on any of lines **13** of FIG. 2.

FIG. 4 is a view like that of FIG. 3, but showing another embodiment.

FIGS. 5 and 6 are plan views of a pack of cards during orienting, respectively, and showing how the pack is grasped for pulling out disoriented cards. The cards in this figure are shown of a somewhat different outline, still embodying my invention.

FIG. 7 is a diagrammatic plan view of a full deck of cards on a single sheet embodying the present invention.

This invention relates to a card game and more particularly to the cards used in such a game.

Referring first to FIGS. 1 and 2, there is shown there a card sheet **10** or **10***a* of a stiff sheet material such as that which is commonly used for ordinary playing cards; and, on the face of this, are printed the characteristic indicia **11'** of the various cards of a deck of cards suitable for playing a game. Representative ones of these indicia are indicated by phantom lines on FIG. 1, although, of course, on the actual cards **11** they would not be visible from the back side shown in FIG. 1. This arrangement is desirable so that the cards in the hands will not be exposed prematurely but instructions will be read before the particular cards in the hands are disclosed. Although the invention is not necessarily limited to the usual deck of playing cards, it will ordinarily be used with such a deck and, therefore, for purposes of illustration, we shall use the familiar playing card indicia.

As shown in FIG. 1, the thirteen trapezoidal cards of a single hand are integral edge to edge on a single composite sheet **10**.

As shown in FIG. 7, a central area **12** presents advantageously on its back, the trademark of the game, the identification of the particular hand, e.g., in FIGS. 5 and 6 by a deal number and dealer and vulnerability, instructions for use of the sheet, which may relate simply to the handling and breaking up of the sheet into cards and playing of the individual cards, or it may also relate to the nature of the game, calling attention to the risks and possible advantages of certain sequences of playing the cards and how advantage can be taken of the rules of the game or the ordinary psychology of the players. As indicated, the cards indicia mentioned are to remain hidden until they are played, therefore, a warning, "KEEP THIS SIDE UP," may be prominently displayed on the back as in FIG. 7.

When the game is to be played, the several hands are given one to each of the players, each of whom will then separate the individual cards in his hand and proceed to play them as though they had been dealt to him from an ordinary pack. For this purpose, the sheet material is effectively weakened along the lines **13** which constitute the outlines of the cards. This may be done in any of a variety of ways which are well known for other purposes, such as tickets, tablets of paper or cards and return cards for mailing correspondence or business reply.

Although no particular manner of weakening the sheet material along the edges of the cards is essential to the invention, it is important that the weakening should be such that the edges will be substantially uniform, i.e., that there will not be distinctive spots where the sheet material is torn away or distinctively frayed at the edges, as these might identify the particular cards to a meticulously observant player, if the same cards are used in a subsequent game.

In FIGS. 3 and 4, I have shown two examples of weakened lines which will tear away without substantially visually distinctive edges.

In FIG. 3, the sheet material is weakened, e.g., by being passed between rotating knives which cut into the sheet just enough to leave a web **14** as a tying portion between the cuts **16** to hold the cards **11** together in the sheet **10** while it is being delivered. Because the cuts **16** on each side guide the tearing of the web **14**, there will be no evident discontinuity or other distinctive appearance which could identify the particular card to any of the players.

In FIG. 4, successive cuts **16***a* extend entirely through the sheet **10***a* and also, at **16'**, across the back of the remaining triangular tying portions **14***a*.

In either case, the appearance of the edges is such that there is little likelihood that differences in the edges would serve as markings to tell even a keen observer the identity of the several cards; however, to reduce the chance of such identification, the sheet may have a border strip **17** beyond the outer edges of the cards. This border strip will be joined to the cards by the same kind of weakened tying portions as those which hold the cards together.

After these sheets have been dealt out, they are readily torn through these weakened tying portions and the cards can be used essentially as would standard die-cut cards of a bridge pack.

Because, according to this invention, each sheet carries prearranged cards as in an interesting deal, with each of the "hands" containing cards which might have been dealt from an ordinary pack after thorough shuffling, it is not necessary to shuffle these cards; and, therefore, the character of the sheet material and of the edges is less important than it would be in an ordinary deck of playing card. However, it is found that if a good grade of card stock is used, the cards can be re-used many times, just as would any deck of playing cards.

It will be appreciated that with the cards so arranged, the generally rectangular composite card can be conveniently and advantageously placed into an envelope of reasonable size and the four cards for one deal fitted snuggly therein can be sold in retail stores or sent through the mail.

The cards according to my invention can be made cheap enough to be thrown away after a single use; but if a good playing card material is used the cards can be used many times, just as would any deck of playing cards.

Since it is an object of the invention to provide prearranged hands especially design for instruction, or play with more than ordinary skill, it is desirable that the hands can be restored to the original arrangement. Therefore, each hand preferably includes a designation of the player and deal number on each card, preferably on the backs of the respective cards, as showed in FIGS. 5 and 6. This can be written out or abbreviated, e.g., to a letter and number, a letter for the player and a number for the deal or vice versa, or it can be distinctive colors or figures of any kind, which are associated with the respective players, etc.

These are printed in substantially the same place for all the cards of one hand, although, advantageously, they are in different places for cards of other hands, so that, with the cards disarranged, they can more easily be sorted by putting together the cards marked for each hand.

On FIG. 1 is shown a special type of marking on the backs of the cards which tells the dealer at a glance which player should receive it. The markings are arrows or carets, each of which points to one of the player positions. As shown, the deck is marked for successive play with different predetermined distributions.

cards so that they can be used to separate the cards without disclosing the denominations of the cards in a particular hand. It is not objectionable that they would be visible to other players, since they do not necessarily correlate with the particular cards.

The arrangement of FIG. 7, with all four hands laid out around a central instruction panel, requires either a relatively large sheet or small playing cards.

The "hand" may be printed on separated sheets, e.g., as illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2 and the instructions and other material, which are shown as being in the central panel **12** in FIG. 7, may be on a cover sheet **18**. This instruction sheet will overlie the cards on the hand which

is uppermost and can contain prominently displayed instruction for use of the cards. A tab at the right warns that the assembly of cards is to remain hidden until the instruction sheet is read; and after that, the individual sheets can be dealt face down to the several players, who will tear them apart and play them in accordance with the particular game, either before or after reading the instructions and comments regarding the play.

To assure attention to the warning, the sheets may be supplied in an envelope with a sealing flap at one side; and the back of the envelope be cut out to expose the caution tab just referred to. The envelope has adhesive on the flap only at spots which are small enough to be readily pulled off for lifting the flap, or can be perforated to assure tearing neatly, while leaving the envelope in condition to hold the sheets between uses.

Since there are postal restrictions as to the size and weight which can be set through the mails at lower rates, is is desirable that the sheets **10** be a lightweight carboard, e.g., such as has been used for game cards. The instruction sheet should be of a light flexible sheet material and printed so as to assure that the instructions are read before the individual cards are viewed. The weight is as little as is consistent with ease of handling and play.

In FIGS. 1 to 6, I have shown the cards **11**, **11***a* and **11***b* trapezoidal instead of rectangular, and thus have saved a substantial area and weight of the cards. A corner **19** of each card will project from behind an overlying card when a hand is fanned out ready for play. On the central area of the main face of the card, much larger indicia is ordinarily displayed so that, when the card is played onto the table, it can be readily seen by other players.

It is desirable that each card be symmetrical with respect to a vertical axis and that the small indicia be always in the same corner, e.g., the upper left-hand corner, as shown. The sloping side gives an extra space for the small indicia in the upper corner, while larger indicia (as shown at **11** on FIG. 1, on a few represenative cards) can be presented on a central area of the card, is desired.

Locating the small indicia **15** in the left upper corner **19** of the respective cards, which is most convenient for fanning out a hand, and, therefore, a symmetrical form of card with the small indicia, all in the same corner, is preferred.

One great advantage of the trapezoidal cards as shown in FIGS. 2, 5 and 6, is that they are readily oriented top up, and do not have to be printed with identical top and bottom as is usual in playing cards, although this may be done if desired.

With such cards in random orientation, one picks up the entire pack **20** between thumb **22** and forefinger **23**, e.g., as shown in FIG. 5, and then, grasping the edges at the lower end of the pack **25** with the thumb and forefinger of the other hand, the respectively oriented cards are drawn apart as shown in FIG. 6. Because of the taper, the lower end of each card projects laterally beyond any cards which are inverted, i.e., bottoms-up and the inverted cards are pulled neatly from those which are correctly oriented, top up. The part of the pack thus pulled out can then be turned around and assembled top up with the others to give uniform orientation throughout the pack.

Held with the narrow end toward the palm of the hand and gripped between the thumb and forefinger, the cards have a satisfactory exposed area for all the usual designations and a comfortable "feel" when fanned out top viewing the entire hand. This has been found very satisfactory for most efficient use of card stock for playing cards with minimum weight.

In the embodiment shown in FIG. 1, each hand of **13** cards is printed on a single sheet and die-cut around the cards, as shown and described for the other figures, and one such sheet is dealt to each player; but, with the embodiment shown in FIG. 7, the dealer first reads the instructions on the central panel and then breaks off the four hands and delivers them to the respective players.

As the card sheet is shown in FIG. 7, there are two hands, above and two below the central panel, with two cards at each end. One-half of the cards above and one of the cards at the adjacent end wall constitute the "North Hand"; the other half of the cards above and one of the cards at the other end will constitute the "East Hand." In this case, the remaining cards below and at the two ends constitute, respectively, the "West" and "South" hands.

With the arrangement shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, four sheets **10***a* are arranged one on another, each with thirteen cards, as illustrated, and can be delivered in an envelope which, in the case shown on FIG. 2 with the flap folding in over the opening at the edge, has the thirteenth card at the right on FIG. 2. This envelope will have prominently displaced on its outside a warning to keep its flap side up when it is opened, and to be sure to read the instructions. When the envelope is opened on receipt of the hand, the first thing one will see is the "CAUTION" tab. This should keep the players from looking at, or distributing, the cards in the hands until they understand what is to be done. A single cover sheet can be used for the four sheets which make up the deal, but it is advantageous to have a thin cover sheet **18** over each of the hands so that their faces are not likely to become exposed during their dealing out to the players, and the instructions and comments may be given as particularly related to one hand held by the player reading them.

With a card measuring 1¾ inches at the top, tapering to 1¼ inches at the bottom and 3 inches long, the trapezoid form saves nearly 15% in weight over a rectangular card **3** by 1¾ inches, yet the cards are equally effective for play and may be even more satisfactory. These trapezoidal cards permit mailing of the game of four sheets such as are shown in FIGS. 1 and 2.

The backs of the cards, as is usual with playing cards, are advantageously printed with some over-all design which renders them opaque, so that even in a bright light opposite players cannot see through to discover the designation for the particular card. As suggested above, the several cards (of each hand) may be identified for the respective hands by permanent or removable indicia, e.g., as shown in FIGS. 5 and 6. Such indicia may be permanent printing, advantageously on the back of each card, or may be printed or written, at a convenient position, on the cards with ink or a pencil which can be wiped or washed off the cards if they are to be used for other purposes; or it may be printed on a pressure-sensitive adhesive tape which will be held on the respective cards as long as it is desired, but can be readily stripped off.

As shown in FIG. 1, the backs of the cards give directions for dealing prearranged hands by the very simple expedient of a series of arrows or carets, each of which points to a player position to which the card is to be dealt in a particular hand when the cards are re-used in connection with an expert's comment sheet. These point from the dealer's position and are simple enough for each dealer to follow while he is dealing, but confusing enough so that the players will not be apprised of the location of the high cards. When the deal is in progress, the direction indicator will always appear at the same position on successive cards, so that there is a minimum chance of confusion, but if one were to try to memorize the back of the card so as to recognize it when held by another player, the similarity of the backs and the complexity of the designs make that very difficult; and the fact that the directions change each time the deal shifts makes a simple memorization worthless. One has to figure back from a known deal, counting the carets and

bearing in mind the rotation of the deal, a very difficult mental feat, which few will want to undertake.

On a particular deal when distributing the cards only the carets located at one particular relative position are to be considered. For example, upon the first re-deal only the carets in the upper left corner of each card are to be considered. When distributing the cards the dealer looks only at the caret in the upper left-hand corner of each card and distributes the cards in the directions indicated. When the cards are all distributed in this manner a particular prearranged deal is achieved. On the second re-deal only the carets second from the left in the top row need be considered. Likewise on the third re-deal only the carets third from the left in the uppermost row are to be considered. If the carets are followed in order from left to right and then down to the second row and across again, etc., a whole prearranged series of prearranged deals can be achieved.

Moreover, the first deal is not indicated on the back, but is established by the physical position of the cards on the multicard sheets; the carets will ordinarily be used only for re-play to compare one's bidding and play with the experts; so that if one should want to cheat, it would be much easier to look on the instruction sheet; the point here is that the backs of the cards do not force the information onto the players so that they cannot bid and play as they would in an ordinary deal.

I claim:

1. A multiple card integral sheet for games, which comprises a sheet of card stock comprised of a plurality of separable card portions integral in said sheet, the card portions being formed by partial cuts spaced from the edges of the cards, whereby the card is made readily separable from the remainder of the sheet by simply pulling apart, and leaves edges of said card portion substantially smooth and true, although narrow portions of the sheet remain uncut and integral with adjacent portions, thereby holding the cards in said sheets but said uncut portions are readily broken by a tensile pull; leaving only a small break in the continuity of the precut edges of the card; and peripheral border strips separably secured in like manner along the outermost edges of said card portions, the several card portions being disposed in a plurality of rows, the several card portions in each row being, respectively, in the form of isosceles trapezoids, side by side in the row; alternate card portions in each row being inverted so that the narrow end of one is aligned with the wider end of the next.

2. A multiple card sheet as defined in claim **1** in which several rows of integrally joined separable trapezoidal card portions, their ends aligned in a common straight edge, are integral each with an adjoining row of card portions, and the card stock is scored along said straight edge to minimize rough tears when said portions are severed; and an area of said sheet in which the straight end edge coincides with the end edges of the card portions of one of said rows; and an area of said sheet adjoining said last mentioned straight end edge is of width at least equal to the maximum width of said individual card portions and is scored transversely along lines which divide said area into individual transverse card portions which lie across the ends of card portions of the one row of individual card portions.

3. A multiple card sheet as defined in claim **2** in which card portions in the adjoining row are oriented with a side edge substantially aligned on the same line as the ends of the card portions in said one row, and the overall outline of said sheet is substantially rectangular.

4. An integral deck of thirteen playing card portions in edge-to-edge arrangement, each of generally trapezoidal shape having larger tops and smaller bottoms aligned to form a generally rectangular composite card sheet with five card portions side by side in each of two contiguous rows, and three card portions arranged end to end across the ends of the card portions in one of said first-named rows.

5. A composite card sheet as described in claim **4** having a marginal border of stiff sheet material contiguous with the card edges to provide a protective border for the composite sheet.

6. A composite card comprising a plurality of playing card portions separably joined at their edges, the respective card portions being of trapezoidal shape, tapered from end to end, arranged in rows with card portions of a plurality of the rows having their side edges integrally but separably joined, and their end edges in at least one edge aligned and contiguous with aligned side edges of an adjoining row, with the edge line defined by a straight line scoring, the individual card portions of said adjoining row being end to end in the row and integral with, and separably contiguous with adjoining card portions of the adjacent of said plurality of rows.

7. A composite card as defined in claim **6** in which the individual card portions are of isosceles trapezoid form.

8. A composite card as defined in claim **6** in which the card portions in said adjoining row are similarly oriented whereby the side edges opposite the aligned side edges thereof define a zigzag edge, which edge is protected by a border strip integral with the sides of said card portions but defined by a weakened line, whereby it is readily separable therefrom by tensile pull.

9. A composite card as defined in claim **6** in which said plurality of rows comprises two rows and there are five card portions side by side in each of said two rows and three card portions end to end in said adjoining row contiguous to at least one of the said two rows.

10. A composite card is defined in claim **6** in which said plurality of rows comprise three internal rows each having three card portions side by side, there being an additional adjoining row, with the two adjoining rows each being contiguous to one of said three rows.

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ANTON O. OECHSLE, Primary Examiner

U.S. Cl. X.R.

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