

Jan. 19, 1965

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3,166,324

GAME PLAYED WITH A BOARD AND SYMBOL MATCHING COUNTERS

Filed May 31, 1962

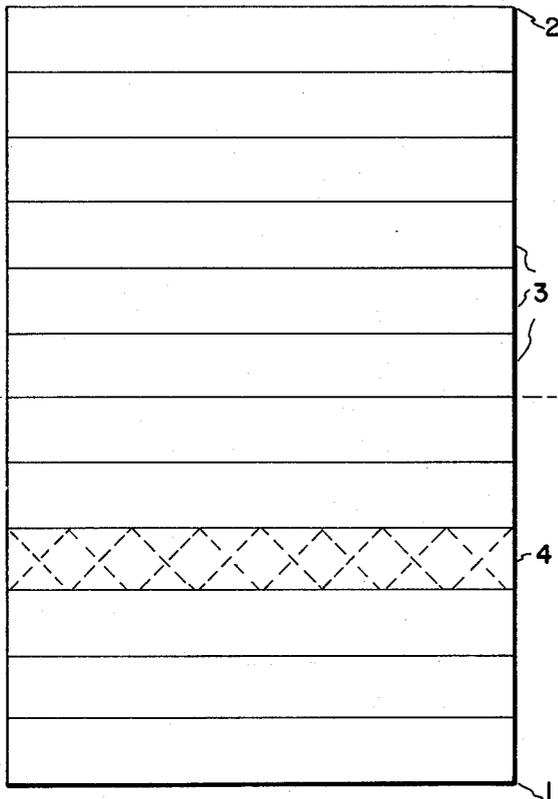


FIG. 1

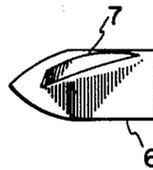


FIG. 2

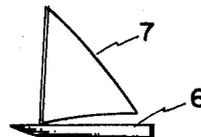


FIG. 3

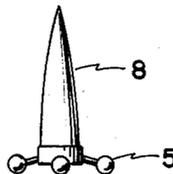


FIG. 4

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3,166,324
**GAME PLAYED WITH A BOARD AND SYMBOL
 MATCHING COUNTERS**
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 Filed May 31, 1962, Ser. No. 198,850
 5 Claims. (Cl. 273-131)

This invention relates to a game playable on a particular kind of board with special types of counters.

Various games of skill have been developed over the years. Some of them are extremely complex and appeal only to certain adults. Others are so simple that they appeal only to children and are not interesting to adults. There is a considerable need for games of skill which, while simple enough to be played by children, also present a real challenge to interest adults. This type of game has the desirable feature of being adapted to be played by parents and children together thus permitting the whole family to have common interests. The present invention relates to such a game.

The present invention requires a particular kind of board and is played with a special type of counter having various combinations of two symbols which may be colors or other distinctive forms. Each player has counters with a common base symbol which differs from the base symbol of any other player. The secondary symbols on the counters of each player differ from his base and include the base symbol of at least one other player. This essential requirement will be further amplified in the table below which follows the specific description of the game.

The game will become more apparent after a description of the drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a typical board;

FIG. 2 is a plan view of one type of counter;

FIG. 3 is an elevation of the same type of counter;

FIG. 4 is an elevation of a different type of counter.

FIG. 1 illustrates a board on which the present game is played. It is shown as a hinged board which can be opened up to present a longer playing surface. It will appear below that essentially the game is cast in the form of a race and therefore naturally the board is provided with a starting line 1 and a finish line 2. Between the starting line and the finish line are a series of strips or bands 3 which are used for symbol matching purposes and which will be referred from now on as symbol matching strips. In one modification of the game, which will be described in greater detail in connection with FIG. 4, one of the symbol matching strips differs from the others. This is shown by a different hatching at 4. In the simplest form of the game all of the symbol matching strips may be the same.

The game has the advantage that it can be played in an interesting manner by two persons and can also be played by as many as four or even more. There is no theoretical limit on the number of players but as a practical matter when the number of players substantially exceeds four the complexity of the game becomes rather formidable.

One interesting and decorative modification of the game is in the form of a sailboat race and FIGS. 2 and 3 show different views of a sailboat counter. Essentially the sail-

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boat, which can be made of plastic or any other suitable material, is provided with a hull 6 which has the same color in the case of all of the boats of one player and therefore may be considered as his basic symbol. The boats also have sails 7 which are of colors different from the hull color. At least one sail will correspond to a hull color of another player.

The rules of the game will be best understood by considering the play with two persons. In this case it is suitable for each person to receive three boats, for example, one player will have three blue hulled boats and one player three white hulled boats. The blue hulled boats will have sails which are white, red and yellow respectively, the white hulled, blue, red and yellow respectively.

At the start of the game all of the boats are behind the starting line and one player makes the first move. A move is always made towards the finish line and always from one symbol matching band to the next one. After the first person has moved, it is the turn of the second person and here is where the symbol matching comes in. For a person moving his boat onto a symbol matching strip which already contains a boat of another player will get one additional free move for each symbol match. For example, if the first move of the player having the white hulled boats involved his boat with a white hull and yellow sails, the second player, when it is his turn, could move his blue boat with either yellow sails or white sails. This would constitute a symbol match either to the white hull or to the yellow sail and the player would thus receive an additional turn and could move either the same boat or another one. For example, he might move his blue hulled boat with white sails and this would again result in a match between his white sails and the white hull of the first player's boat. He would then have a second turn and let us assume that he moves his yellow sail boat one more symbol matching strip. Then it is the turn of the white player and he might move his white hull with blue sails which would create a double match with the blue hulled boat having white sails. This would give him two additional turns. In an actual game these might not be the best moves but they illustrate a single symbol match and a double symbol match. The game then proceeds until one player has succeeded in moving all of his three boats across the finish line 2. He then wins the game.

If more than two players are playing, let us say three, the third player might have red hulled boats, one with a blue sail, one with a white sail and one with a yellow sail and if there was a fourth player he might have yellow hulled boats, one with a blue sail, one with a white sail and one with a red sail. It will be apparent when there are a larger number of players than two the possibility of symbol matching increases greatly and with four players a board which would be long enough to make an interesting game for two may well be too short for four players. This is one of the reasons that the preferred form of the present game involves a hinged board which can be opened to double the length of the course when there are more players, using the half length for example, where there are only two. With more players the possibility of multiple symbol matching increases. With larger numbers of players a variant is also possible that

the match may be only with a single boat at any one time. The following table summarizes various counter combinations for two to four players.

Sets of counters required

Counter No.		2 Players		3 Players			4 Players	
		6	6	9	8	12		
Hull	Sail	Sail	Sail	Sail	Sail	Sail		
B	W	x	x	x	x	x		
B	R	x	x	x	x	x		
B	Y	x	x	x	x	x		
W	B	x	x	x	x	x		
W	R	x	x	x	x	x		
W	Y	x	x	x	x	x		
R	B	x	x	x	x	x		
R	Y	x	x	x	x	x		
R	W	x	x	x	x	x		
Y	B	x	x	x	x	x		
Y	R	x	x	x	x	x		
Y	W	x	x	x	x	x		

It will be noted that on the counter sets for two players there are more sail colors than hull colors. With three this may hold or there may be the same number. With four players there may be fewer sail colors by one set.

FIG. 4 illustrates a different type of counter which may represent a space ship on a trip to the moon. In this case of course, the starting line represents the separation of the space ship from the rocket boosting it into its moon trip and the finish line would be the moon. The counters show a ship with antenna or a series of solar cells 5. Again as with the sailboats of FIGS. 2 and 3, one player would have ships of the same color but with different colored antennas or solar cells. The rules of the game are the same but sometimes an additional variant adds both to the realism of the game and to the skill required. One of the symbol matching strips 4 shown in FIG. 1 may be designated as a zone of danger. For example it could be referred to as a Van Allen radiation belt. A space ship would be penalized if it stayed on it for more than one move. This penalty may be in the form of an additional free move for the opponent in the case of two, or an additional move for the player whose space ship color matches the solar cells in the case of more than two players. If during the game, one player was able to make matches so that his moving turns continued and he did not stop with any ship on the radiation belt he would not be penalized but if he was forced to end his turns with a ship on this belt he would then receive the penalty of an additional free move for an opponent.

Colors as symbols make for easy symbol matching for children and also add to the colorful attractiveness of the game. It may however be played with any other symbols such as circles, squares and triangles and the like. The rules remain the same including multiple symbol matching.

FIG. 1 shows a straight course on a board. It is perfectly possible, however, to have the course curve around on itself in which case more matching strips are available in a board of given size. Care must be taken, however, that the matching strips are of sufficient length

to accommodate as many counters or moving pieces as are likely to be on one at any one time.

It is normally desirable to have the symbol matching strips sufficiently wide in the direction of the course so that there can be no confusion as to what strip a particular counter is occupying. This is not essential and the strips can be quite narrow, even theoretically lines, but it is ordinarily preferable to have sufficient space so that no confusion can result.

It will be noted that the rules of the game are few in number and extremely simple but nevertheless it is a very real test of skill which is a challenge to an adult. On the other hand the small number of rules and their simplicity makes it easy for a child to keep them in mind.

I claim:

1. A game consisting of a board and sets of counters, (a) the board having a starting line and a finish line and representing a course between the two made up of successive symbol matching strips defined by spaced, essentially parallel, line markings, each strip having a width sufficient to accommodate the corresponding dimension of the counters used and a length at least sufficient to accommodate simultaneously at least one each of said sets of counters, each symbol matching strip being devoid of vertical dividing lines defining distinctly recognizable zones of width commensurate with the corresponding dimension of a single counter,
- (b) the sets of counters being for at least two players and each counter being provided with two symbols, and
- (c) all of the counters of each set having a common basic symbol and a second symbol different from the basic symbol, at least one such second symbol being different from the others and at least one second symbol corresponding to the basic symbol of another set of counters.

2. A game according to claim 1 in which the symbols are colors.

3. A game according to claim 2 in which the counters are sail boats, each set having the hull of the boats of one symbolic color constituting the basic symbol and sails of different symbolic colors constituting the second symbol.

4. A game according to claim 2 in which the counters are in the form of space ships provided with accessory elements, the hulls of the ships of each set of counters being of a single symbolic color constituting the basic symbol of the set and the accessories being of different symbolic colors constituting the second symbol.

5. A game according to claim 4 in which the board contains at least one penalty symbol matching strip of different appearance from the other symbol matching strips.

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DELBERT B. LOWE, Primary Examiner.