

1

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GAME APPARATUS

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This invention relates to apparatus for playing board games and more particularly to apparatus designed to facilitate scoring procedures in connection with the playing of such games.

In many board games playing pieces are placed on certain contiguous or successive areas marked out on the board and the placing of the playing piece on certain predetermined areas results in an adjustment of the score of a player, either by adding a bonus to the score or subtracting a penalty therefrom.

Usually the predetermined areas which result in adjustment of the score are marked in a characteristic way in order to show how the score is to be adjusted. However, when a playing piece is placed on one of the predetermined areas, it covers this marking and it has been found that frequently the playing piece has subsequently to be lifted in order to discover how the score should be adjusted. The object of the present invention is to provide board game apparatus in which the occasions for such subsequent lifting of a playing piece are eliminated or substantially reduced.

The invention in its preferred embodiment contemplates the provision in a board game of this character of additional indicia supplementing the primary indicia or marking applied to the special areas on the board, and these supplemental indicia take the form of projections extending outwardly from the special areas or spots which require an adjustment of the score when said areas are occupied by a playing piece, the number of such projections being indicative of the same adjustment of the score required by the primary indicia which is concealed by the playing piece.

For the purpose of accommodating such projections on the surface of the board, it is well to have the areas adapted to be occupied by the playing pieces each surrounded by a margin which is not covered completely by a playing piece placed on the area which the mark surrounds. In the case of games in which the areas are arranged in multiple rows the narrow marginal spaces may take the form of a grid substantially coterminous with the playing surface of the board.

Some boards comprised in board game apparatus as above described, have the predetermined areas marked in selected colors so as to indicate the way in which the score is to be adjusted, and within the contemplated scope of the invention, in such board game apparatus, the projections in the margins surrounding the predetermined area or areas may be given the same color as the predetermined area bounded by the margins in which the projections are located and extending across the margins from the predetermined area.

According to another feature of the invention, when the predetermined areas are square, there may be projections in each of the four margins bounding a predetermined area so that the projections or secondary indicia in each of the four margins indicates the way in which the score is to be adjusted. In such an arrangement, it is desirable that the projections should be shaped so as to show which

2

area they project from, for instance, they may be triangular and point away from the predetermined area.

When the predetermined areas are square, and the projections are provided in each of the four margins, the playing pieces may also be square and, if desired, with their sides of a length equal to the length of one side of the predetermined area plus the width of one margin. Thus, if a playing piece is located with its center over the center of a predetermined area, half the width of the margins will be visible all around. If then two further playing pieces are placed on adjacent areas in line with the first playing piece, two of the margins will be covered completely but the remaining two margins, running parallel to the line, will be half exposed so that the projections in them will be visible.

Within the scope of the invention, the physical structure of the apparatus may take a variety of forms. The playing pieces may be of any suitable configuration although the utility of the apparatus is probably more obvious in the case of square playing pieces adapted to be applied to square areas on the board, of approximately the same size as the playing pieces. The primary indicia which is readily readable on unoccupied areas or spots may be applied in any suitable way to the surface of the board, either by embossing, printing, or inlaying in the board. The projections which constitute the secondary indicia, visible when the spots are occupied by playing pieces, may also take any suitable structural form, although the directional factor may be borne in mind and the shape of the projections made to indicate the area or spot to which they belong, by making them of triangular form or in the form of arrowheads or the like.

Other objects and features of novelty will be apparent from the following specification when read in connection with the accompanying drawings in which one embodiment of the invention is illustrated by way of example.

In the drawings:

Figure 1 is a somewhat diagrammatic or schematic plan view of a playing board embodying the features of the present invention;

Figure 2 is a fragmentary plan view showing an enlarged area of the board; and

Figure 3 is a view in perspective of a typical playing piece which may be used in connection with the invention.

In the drawings the numeral 10 indicates generally the playing board to which our invention has been applied. The board is divided into a grid or network of narrow strips 12 and 13 which divide the board into a multiplicity of squares 15 upon which playing pieces are adapted to be placed during the progress of the game.

A playing piece adapted for use in the present invention is indicated at 20 in Figure 3 of the drawings and comprises a block or tile made of suitable material such as wood, metal, or plastic and bearing an identifying legend 22 which in this case comprises a numeral.

The tile 20 is of approximately the same area as one of the squares 15, and in any case its area should not be more than the area of a square 15 plus half the width of the margins 12 and 13 on each side of the piece.

Within the scope of the invention, the placement of the tiles or playing pieces 20 upon the squares on the playing surface may be determined in any manner appropriate to the rules for playing the particular game to which the principles of the invention are applied. For example, the pieces could be placed on the board as a result of the manipulation of dice, spinners, or any other suitable chance device, or they could be placed on the board in sequence either in a numerical series or, if the insignia 22 comprises letters of the alphabet, the playing pieces can be arranged in alphabetical order. However, the apparatus described herein is particularly applicable to the playing of word games in which the

tiles bear letter insignia at 22 and are placed on the board to spell out words in either or both of the cardinal directions on the board. The tiles may also bear numerical indications of the basic score for its particular letter.

It will be noted that certain of the squares or areas are formed differently from the others, these special areas being designated 15A and 15B. Those indicated at 15A bear a primary signal or indicia as at 25 which in this case is a word indicating the adjustment of the value of the score to be gained or lost by the player whose playing piece happens to fall upon this particular spot. In the case of the square 15A the indication is that the tile or playing piece value is to be tripled when the piece falls upon this area. Similarly when a playing piece falls upon any of the spots 15B, the primary indicia 26 indicates that the scoring value of the playing piece is doubled. It is apparent that any suitable indication of the score adjustment may be utilized, whether by words, numerals, or other indicia, applied by embossing, indenting, embedding, coloring or otherwise. Also, if desired, the entire areas 15A and 15B may be represented in colors or shadings associated with the particular primary indicia applied thereto. For example, a spot where the score value is tripled could be shown in blue and the spots or areas where the score value is to be doubled may be shown in red.

Now it is obvious that the primary indicia 25 or 26 may be readily observed when the spaces are not occupied, as at the beginning of the game, or where the areas are left unoccupied at the termination thereof. However, the really significant score adjustment comes into consideration only when the areas are occupied by a tile or playing piece 20, and in such cases the primary indicia 25, 26 are completely obscured by the playing piece. Therefore, the present invention provides secondary indicia corresponding to the primary indications 25 and 26 which project from the main areas of the squares 15A and 15B into the margin strips 12 and 13 adjacent the value adjustment squares.

For example, in the case of the area 15A, the primary indicia 25 of which indicates a triple scoring value, a series of projections or pips 30 are formed on one or more sides of the area 15A and the number of these pips corresponds to the numerical value indication of the primary indicia 25.

Similarly on the margins of the areas 15B where the primary indicia 26 shows the privilege of doubling the scoring value, a pair of pips or projections 32 extend from one or more of the margins of the area. The utility of this particular apparatus is aptly shown in the square 15A shown at the center of the lower portion of Figure 2 of the drawings where a tile 20 completely obscures the primary indicia 25 (as indicated by dotted lines) and the only indication of the modification of the score is afforded by the pips 30 extending from the margins of the square beyond the periphery of the playing piece 20.

It will be appreciated that owing to the relative sizes of the tiles and the small squares marked on the boards, each square is completely covered when a tile is placed on it and that the tile may extend to cover at least half of the margins bounding the square. Thus after a tile has been placed on a premium square, it is not possible to see the color of that square and thus one may encounter difficulty in determining the score of the player covering the square. However, the present invention reduces this difficulty and obviates it on all but very few occasions.

Referring to the drawing, it will be seen that in the margins of each premium square, the pips 30 and 32 are triangular and point away from the square to which they belong.

The tiles are not so large that each of them covers all the margins of a square on which it is placed, and even

when the tiles are of maximum area, at least half of one margin and the pips in it will remain visible when a tile is placed on a premium square unless the premium square is completely surrounded by tiles. In practice this very seldom occurs and thus except on very few occasions it is not necessary to lift the tiles once they have been placed in order to discover the way in which the score is to be adjusted.

It is understood that various changes and modifications may be made in the illustrative form of the apparatus described herein without departing from the scope of the invention as defined by the following claims.

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed as new and desired to be secured by Letters Patent is:

1. Board game apparatus comprising a playing board having a flat playing surface, means on said board dividing the playing surface into a plurality of definitely delineated small areas constituting spots for occupancy by playing pieces, means formed on certain selected ones of said spots constituting primary value indicia, a plurality of playing pieces, each of said playing pieces being of a size and configuration such as to approximately cover one of said spots and completely conceal said primary indicia means, means formed on each of said playing pieces for identifying the piece, means projecting from each of said selected spot areas and constituting supplemental value indicia, said last named means extending laterally marginally from said spot areas, said last named means also projecting beyond the confines of the playing piece occupying said selected area, and being of a number corresponding to the value indicated by the primary indicia means.

2. Board game apparatus comprising a playing board having a flat playing surface, means on said board dividing the playing surface into a plurality of definitely delineated small substantially rectangular areas constituting spots for occupancy by playing pieces, means formed on certain selected ones of said spots constituting primary value indicia, a plurality of playing pieces, each of said playing pieces being of a size and of a rectangular configuration such as to approximately cover one of said spots and completely conceal said primary indicia means, means formed on each of said playing pieces for identifying the piece, means projecting from each of said selected spot areas and constituting supplemental value indicia, said last named means extending laterally marginally from each side of said spot areas, said last named means also projecting beyond the confines of the playing piece occupying said selected area, and the last named supplemental value indicia means on any one side of said area being of a number corresponding to the value indicated by the primary indicia means.

3. Board game apparatus comprising a playing board having a flat playing surface, means constituting a grid of narrow strips on said board surface dividing the playing surface into a plurality of definitely delineated small substantially rectangular areas constituting spots for occupancy by playing pieces, means formed on certain selected ones of said spots constituting primary value indicia, said grid forming strips comprising marginal zones surrounding said spot areas, a plurality of playing pieces, each of said playing pieces being of a size and of a rectangular configuration such as to approximately cover one of said spots and completely conceal said primary indicia means, means formed on each of said playing pieces for identifying the piece, means projecting from each of said selected spot areas and constituting supplemental value indicia, said last named means extending laterally marginally from each side of said spot areas and into said marginal zones, said last named means also projecting beyond the confines of the playing piece occupying said selected area, and the last named supplemental value indicia means on any one side of said area being of a number corresponding to the value indicated by the primary indicia means.

5

4. Board game apparatus comprising a playing board having a flat playing surface, means constituting a grid of narrow strips on said board surface dividing the playing surface into a plurality of definitely delineated small substantially rectangular areas constituting spots for occupancy by playing pieces, means formed on certain selected ones of said spots constituting primary value indicia, said grid forming strips comprising marginal zones surrounding said spot areas, a plurality of playing pieces, each of said playing pieces being of a size and of a rectangular configuration such as to approximately cover one of said spots and completely conceal said primary indicia means, means formed on each of said playing pieces for identifying the piece, means projecting from each of said selected spot areas and constituting supplemental value indicia, said last named means extending laterally marginally from each side of said spot areas and into said marginal zones, said last named means also projecting beyond the confines of the playing piece occupying said selected area, and the last named supplemental value indicia means on any one side of said area being of a number corresponding to the value indicated

6

by the primary indicia means, said last named supplemental value indicia means having a directional configuration characteristic which conjoins and clearly associates the indicia means with the spot area to which it applies.

5. The game apparatus as set forth in claim 4 in which the supplemental value indicia means comprise triangles, each having one side joined to the spot area to which it belongs.

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