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(54) Title: GAMING APPARATUS AND METHOD

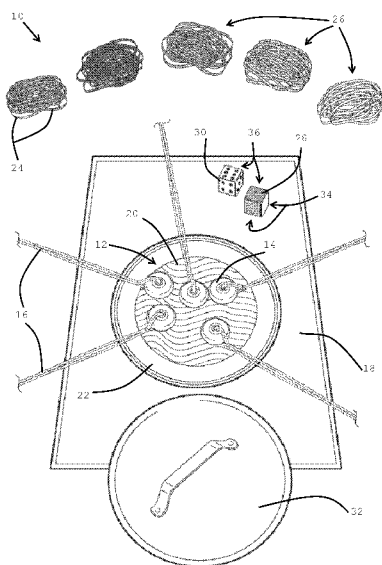


Figure 1.

(57) Abstract: Gaming apparatus comprising: player pieces each comprising a body coupled with a handling member; a playing surface denoting an inner zone and a peripheral zone about said inner zone, said inner zone for receiving the bodies of the player pieces so that respective handling members extend beyond the peripheral zone; tokens categorisable into distinct categories; a token die having a plurality of surfaces each with a token indicium indicative of a particular category of token; an action die having surfaces each with a distinct indicium indicative of a particular player action; and a cover for covering at least the inner zone to capture player pieces when a particular player action is rolled via the action die, wherein a competitive game of reaction speed is playable through interaction between the playing surface, player pieces, tokens, token and action dice and the cover.



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KM, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

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**GAMING APPARATUS AND METHOD****TECHNICAL FIELD**

[0001] This invention relates to the field of board games, in general, and in particular to apparatus for playing a game and an associated method of playing a game.

**BACKGROUND ART**

[0002] The following discussion of the background art is intended to facilitate an understanding of the present invention only. The discussion is not an acknowledgement or admission that any of the material referred to is or was part of the common general knowledge as at the priority date of the application.

[0003] A board game is typically a tabletop game that may involve pieces moved or placed on a pre-marked surface or "board", according to a set of rules. Some games are based on pure strategy, but many contain an element of chance; and some are purely chance, with no element of skill.

[0004] There are many varieties of board games. Games usually have a goal that a player aims to achieve. Early board games represented a battle between two armies, and most modern board games are still based on defeating opponents in terms of counters, winning position, or accrual of points or playing tokens.

[0005] The present invention seeks to propose possible improvements to the art of board games.

**SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

[0006] According to a first aspect of the invention there is provided gaming apparatus for playing a game, said gaming apparatus comprising:

a plurality of player pieces each comprising a body coupled with a handling member;

a playing surface denoting an inner zone and a peripheral zone about said inner zone, said inner zone for operatively receiving the bodies of the player pieces so that respective handling members extend beyond the peripheral zone;

a plurality of tokens categorisable into distinct categories;

a token die having a plurality of surfaces each with a distinct token indicium indicative of a particular category of token;

an action die having a plurality of surfaces each with a distinct indicium indicative of a particular player action; and

a cover configured for operatively covering at least the inner zone to capture player pieces when a particular player action is rolled via the action die, wherein, in use, a competitive game of reaction speed is playable by players through interaction between the playing surface, player pieces, tokens, token and action dice and the cover.

[0007] It is to be appreciated by the skilled addressee that the gaming apparatus facilitates playing a game of competition based on reaction speed or reaction time of players, where a roll of the action die to a specific player action initiates a reaction period wherein a particular

player attempts to capture the bodies of player pieces in the inner and/or peripheral zones with the cover whilst other players attempt to remove said bodies from the inner zone via the respective handling members, successful removal being rewarded by a token indicated by a roll of the token die.

[0008] Typically, the body of a player piece comprises a toroidal volume.

[0009] Typically, the handling member of a player piece comprises a piece of string coupled to a player piece via a central aperture of the toroidal volume.

[0010] Typically, the playing surface comprises a rectangular surface with the inner and peripheral zones located at a central position thereof.

[0011] In one example, the inner zone comprises a circular area sized and dimensioned for operatively receiving the bodies of the player pieces.

[0012] In one example, the peripheral zone is configured about said inner zone to delimit or demarcate a boundary of such inner zone.

[0013] Typically, the inner and/or peripheral zone comprises a particular colour and/or texture.

[0014] In one example, the token die comprises a die with the token indicium comprising colours indicative of similarly-coloured token categories.

[0015] Typically, the action die comprises a conventional die having dot indicia on respective die surfaces indicative of a particular player action.

[0016] Typically, the particular player action is selected from a group comprising catching player pieces in the inner and/or peripheral zones, changing players responsible for catching, and collecting a particular token.

[0017] In one example, the plurality of tokens is selected from a group consisting of rubber bands, coins, marbles, cards, matchsticks, toothpicks, bottle caps, foods, snacks, and beverages. It is however to be appreciated that other types of tokens are possible and within the scope of the invention.

[0018] In one example, the distinct categories of token are selected from a group consisting of colours, shapes, sizes, dimensions, types and flavours.

[0019] Typically, the cover comprises any suitable cover whereby player pieces are coverable and may include a pot or pan lid, a plate, a container lid, or the like.

[0020] According to a second aspect of the invention there is provided a method of playing a game using apparatus in accordance with the first aspect of the invention, said method comprising the steps of:

a plurality of players each place a player piece body within the inner zone of the playing surface so the handling member extends beyond the peripheral zone;

a catching player holds the cover on the playing surface distal from the peripheral zone;

the catching player rolls the action die; and

if the action die lands on a 'catch' player action, the catching player attempts to catch the bodies in the inner and/or peripheral zones with the cover whilst each other player simultaneously attempts to remove their playing piece body from the inner zone via the handling member.

[0021] Typically, the method includes the step of, where a player successfully removes their playing piece, said player rolls the token die and is rewarded with a particular category of token.

[0022] Typically, the method includes the step of, where the catching player successfully captures all of the playing pieces, said catching player rolls the token die and is rewarded with a particular category of token.

[0023] Typically, the method includes the step of, where the catching player successfully captures a playing piece, a player associated with said piece loses a reward token.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The description will be made with reference to the accompanying drawing in which:

**Figure 1** is a diagrammatic perspective-view representation of gaming apparatus, in accordance with an aspect of the invention.

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EMBODIMENTS**

[0024] Further features of the present invention are more fully described in the following description of several non-limiting embodiments thereof. This description is included solely for the purposes of exemplifying the present invention to the skilled addressee. It should not be understood as a restriction on the broad summary, disclosure or description of the invention as set out above. In the figures, incorporated to illustrate features of the example embodiment or embodiments, like reference numerals are used to identify like parts throughout.

[0025] With reference now to Figure 1 of the accompanying drawing, there is shown one example of gaming apparatus 10 for playing a game, in accordance with an aspect of the present invention.

[0026] In this example, the gaming apparatus 10 generally comprises a plurality of player pieces 12 each comprising a body 14 coupled with a handling member 16, as shown. The apparatus 10 also includes a playing surface 18 which denotes an inner zone 20 and a peripheral zone 22 about the inner zone 20. This inner zone 20 is for operatively receiving the bodies 14 of the player pieces 12 so that the respective handling members 16 extend beyond the peripheral zone 22, as shown.

[0027] The apparatus 10 also generally includes a plurality of tokens 24 categorisable into distinct categories 26, as well as a token die 28 having a plurality of surfaces 34 each with a distinct token indicium 36 indicative of a particular category of token 26. Also included is an action



die 30 having a plurality of surfaces 34 each with a distinct indicium 36 indicative of a particular player action.

[0028] Apparatus 10 further generally includes a cover 32 configured for operatively covering at least the inner zone 20 to capture player pieces 12 when a particular player action is rolled via the action die 30. In one example, the cover 32 is sized and dimensioned to cover both the inner and peripheral zones 20 and 22. In this manner, in use, a competitive game of reaction speed is playable by players through interaction between the playing surface 18, player pieces 12, token and action dice 28 and 30, tokens 24 and the cover 32.

[0029] In one example, the body 14 of a player piece 12 comprises a toroidal volume, with the handling member 16 of a player piece comprising a piece of string coupled to the player piece 12 via a central aperture of the toroidal volume, as shown. Other player piece configurations are entirely possible and within the scope of the invention.

[0030] In the current example, the playing surface 18 comprises a rectangular surface, as shown, with the inner and peripheral zones 20 and 22 located at a central position thereof. In one example, the inner zone 20 comprises a circular area sized and dimensioned for operatively receiving the bodies 14 of the player pieces 12. In this example, the peripheral zone 22 is configured about the inner zone 20 to delimit or demarcate a boundary of the inner zone 20, typically to facilitate correct placement of the bodies 14. Typically, the inner and/or peripheral zones 20 and 22 comprise a particular colour and/or texture, or the like.

[0031] In one example, the token die 28 comprises a die with the token indicium comprising colours indicative of similarly-coloured token categories 26. Similarly, the action die 30 generally comprises a conventional die having dot indicia on respective die surfaces 34 indicative of a particular player action. Accordingly, it is to be appreciated that the particular player action may be selected from a group comprising catching player pieces 12 in the inner and/or peripheral zones 20 and 22, changing players responsible for catching, and collecting a particular token, or the like.

[0032] In the current example, the plurality of tokens 24 is selected from a group consisting of rubber bands, but other examples may make use of coins, marbles, matchsticks, toothpicks, bottle caps, foods, snacks, and beverages. It is to be appreciated that other types of tokens are possible and within the scope of the invention. As such, the distinct categories of tokens 26 may be selected from a group consisting of colours, shapes, sizes, dimensions, types and flavours, or the like.

[0033] The cover 32 typically comprises any suitable cover whereby player pieces 12 are coverable and may include a pot or pan lid, a plate, a container lid, or the like.

[0034] It is further to be appreciated that the invention includes an associated method of playing a game using the apparatus 10, described above. The method generally comprises the steps of a plurality of players each place a player piece body 14 within the inner zone 20 of the playing surface 18 so

the handling member 16 thereof extends beyond the peripheral zone 22, with a catching player holding the cover 32 on the playing surface 18 distal from the peripheral zone 22.

**[0035]** The method then includes the step of the catching player rolling the action die 30, and if the action die 30 lands on a 'catch' player action, the catching player attempts to catch the bodies 14 in the inner and/or peripheral zones 20 and 22 with the cover 32 whilst each other player simultaneously attempts to remove their playing piece body 14 from the inner zone 20 via the handling member 16.

**[0036]** Typically, the method includes the step of, where a player successfully removes their playing piece 12 without being caught, that player rolls the token die 28 and is rewarded with a particular category of token 26, as indicated by the token die 28. The method also generally includes the step of, where the catching player successfully captures all of the playing pieces, the catching player rolls the token die 28 and is rewarded with a particular category of token. In general, the first player to collect a particular number of tokens in any one token category 26 wins the game, or the like. The method also typically includes the step of, where the catching player successfully captures a playing piece, the player associated with said captured piece loses a reward token.

**[0037]** A further example of playing a game involves everyone, i.e. all players, getting to roll the action die and the first player to roll a '6' becomes the catching player or catcher. Everyone else selects a player piece 12

and places it in the middle circle or inner zone of the playing surface 18. The catcher then holds the cover or lid 32 on the playing surface, not hovering over the surface 18 and not touching any part of the inner or peripheral zones 20 and 22.

[0038] The catcher then rolls the action die 30, and if said die 30 lands on a '6' or a '1', the catcher must try and catch as many player pieces 12 as they can before the other players pull out of the inner and/or peripheral zones 20 and 22. Everyone that escapes without being caught gets to roll the token die 28 - whatever colour (in this example) the die lands on indicates the colour, i.e. category of token or rubber band they win.

[0039] In one example, a surface of the action or token die 28 or 30 indicates a 'steal' category, which allows a player to 'steal' one token or rubber band off any other player. Similarly, a surface of a die may indicate a 'lose' action, which means that player loses a token or rubber band. The skilled addressee will appreciate that other variations are possible and within the scope of the invention.

[0040] In one example, if the catcher manages to capture all the player pieces 12 in one attempt, the catcher gets to roll the token die 28 for a token reward. If any other player pulls out of the inner zone 20 without the action die landing on a '6' or a '1', they receive a black band. If a player collects five black bands, they lose all their coloured bands or tokens collected to that point including the black bands.

[0041] In one example, the catcher is allowed to fake or pretend to catch if the die does not land on a 'catch' number; however, if the cover or lid 32 touches any part of the inner or peripheral zones 20 or 22 during the fake attempt, then the catcher receives a black band. If the catcher rolls a '3', the person to their left becomes the new catcher, for example.

[0042] Optional embodiments of the present invention may also be said to broadly consist in the parts, elements and features referred to or indicated herein, individually or collectively, in any or all combinations of two or more of the parts, elements or features, and wherein specific integers are mentioned herein which have known equivalents in the art to which the invention relates, such known equivalents are deemed to be incorporated herein as if individually set forth. In the example embodiments, well-known processes, well-known device structures, and well known technologies are not described in detail, as such will be readily understood by the skilled addressee.

[0043] The use of the terms "a", "an", "said", "the", and/or similar referents in the context of describing various embodiments (especially in the context of the claimed subject matter) are to be construed to cover both the singular and the plural, unless otherwise indicated herein or clearly contradicted by context. The terms "comprising," "having," "including," and "containing" are to be construed as open-ended terms (i.e., meaning "including, but not limited to,") unless otherwise noted. As used herein, the term "and/or" includes any and all combinations of one or more of the associated listed items. No language in the specification

should be construed as indicating any non-claimed subject matter as essential to the practice of the claimed subject matter.

[0044] It is to be appreciated that reference to "one example" or "an example" of the invention, or similar exemplary language (e.g., "such as") herein, is not made in an exclusive sense. Various substantially and specifically practical and useful exemplary embodiments of the claimed subject matter are described herein, textually and/or graphically, for carrying out the claimed subject matter.

[0045] Accordingly, one example may exemplify certain aspects of the invention, whilst other aspects are exemplified in a different example. These examples are intended to assist the skilled person in performing the invention and are not intended to limit the overall scope of the invention in any way unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. Variations (e.g. modifications and/or enhancements) of one or more embodiments described herein might become apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art upon reading this application. The inventor(s) expects skilled artisans to employ such variations as appropriate, and the inventor(s) intends for the claimed subject matter to be practiced other than as specifically described herein.

[0046] Any method steps, processes, and operations described herein are not to be construed as necessarily requiring their performance in the particular order discussed or illustrated, unless specifically identified as an order of performance. It is also to be understood that additional or alternative steps may be employed.

**REPRESENTATIVE CLAIMS**

1. Gaming apparatus for playing a game, said gaming apparatus comprising:

a plurality of player pieces each comprising a body coupled with a handling member;

a playing surface denoting an inner zone and a peripheral zone about said inner zone, said inner zone for operatively receiving the bodies of the player pieces so that respective handling members extend beyond the peripheral zone;

a plurality of tokens categorisable into distinct categories;

a token die having a plurality of surfaces each with a distinct token indicium indicative of a particular category of token;

an action die having a plurality of surfaces each with a distinct indicium indicative of a particular player action; and

a cover configured for operatively covering at least the inner zone to capture player pieces when a particular player action is rolled via the action die, wherein, in use, a competitive game of reaction speed is playable by players through interaction between the playing surface, player pieces, tokens, token and action dice and the cover.

2. The gaming apparatus of claim 1, wherein the body of a player piece comprises a toroidal volume.

3. The gaming apparatus of claim 2, wherein the handling member of a player piece comprises a piece of string coupled to a player piece via a central aperture of the toroidal volume.

4. The gaming apparatus of claim 1, wherein the playing surface comprises a rectangular surface with the inner and peripheral zones located at a central position thereof.

5. The gaming apparatus of claim 1, wherein the inner zone comprises a circular area sized and dimensioned for operatively receiving the bodies of the player pieces.

6. The gaming apparatus of claim 1, wherein the peripheral zone is configured about said inner zone to delimit or demarcate a boundary of such inner zone.

7. The gaming apparatus of claim 1, wherein the inner and/or peripheral zone comprises a particular colour and/or texture.

8. The gaming apparatus of claim 1, wherein the token die comprises a die with the token indicium comprising colours indicative of similarly-coloured token categories.

9. The gaming apparatus of claim 1, wherein the action die comprises a conventional die having dot indicia on respective die surfaces indicative of a particular player action.

10. The gaming apparatus of claim 1, wherein the particular player action is selected from a group comprising catching player pieces in the inner and/or peripheral zones, changing players responsible for catching, and collecting a particular token.



11. The gaming apparatus of claim 1, wherein the plurality of tokens is selected from a group consisting of rubber bands, coins, cards, marbles, matchsticks, toothpicks, bottle caps, foods, snacks, and beverages.

12. The gaming apparatus of claim 1, wherein the distinct categories of token are selected from a group consisting of colours, shapes, sizes, dimensions, types and flavours.

13. The gaming apparatus of claim 1, wherein the cover comprises any suitable cover whereby player pieces are coverable.

14. A method of playing a game using apparatus in accordance with any of claims 1 to 13, said method comprising the steps of:

a plurality of players each place a player piece body within the inner zone of the playing surface so the handling member extends beyond the peripheral zone;

a catching player holds the cover on the playing surface distal from the peripheral zone;

the catching player rolls the action die; and

if the action die lands on a 'catch' player action, the catching player attempts to catch the bodies in the inner and/or peripheral zones with the cover whilst each other player simultaneously attempts to remove their playing piece body from the inner zone via the handling member.

15. The method of claim 14, which includes the step of, where a player successfully removes their playing piece, said player rolls the token die and is rewarded with a particular category of token.

16. The method of claim 14, which includes the step of, where the catching player successfully captures all of the playing pieces, said catching player rolls the token die and is rewarded with a particular category of token.

17. The method of claim 14, which includes the step of, where the catching player successfully captures a playing piece, a player associated with said piece loses a reward token.

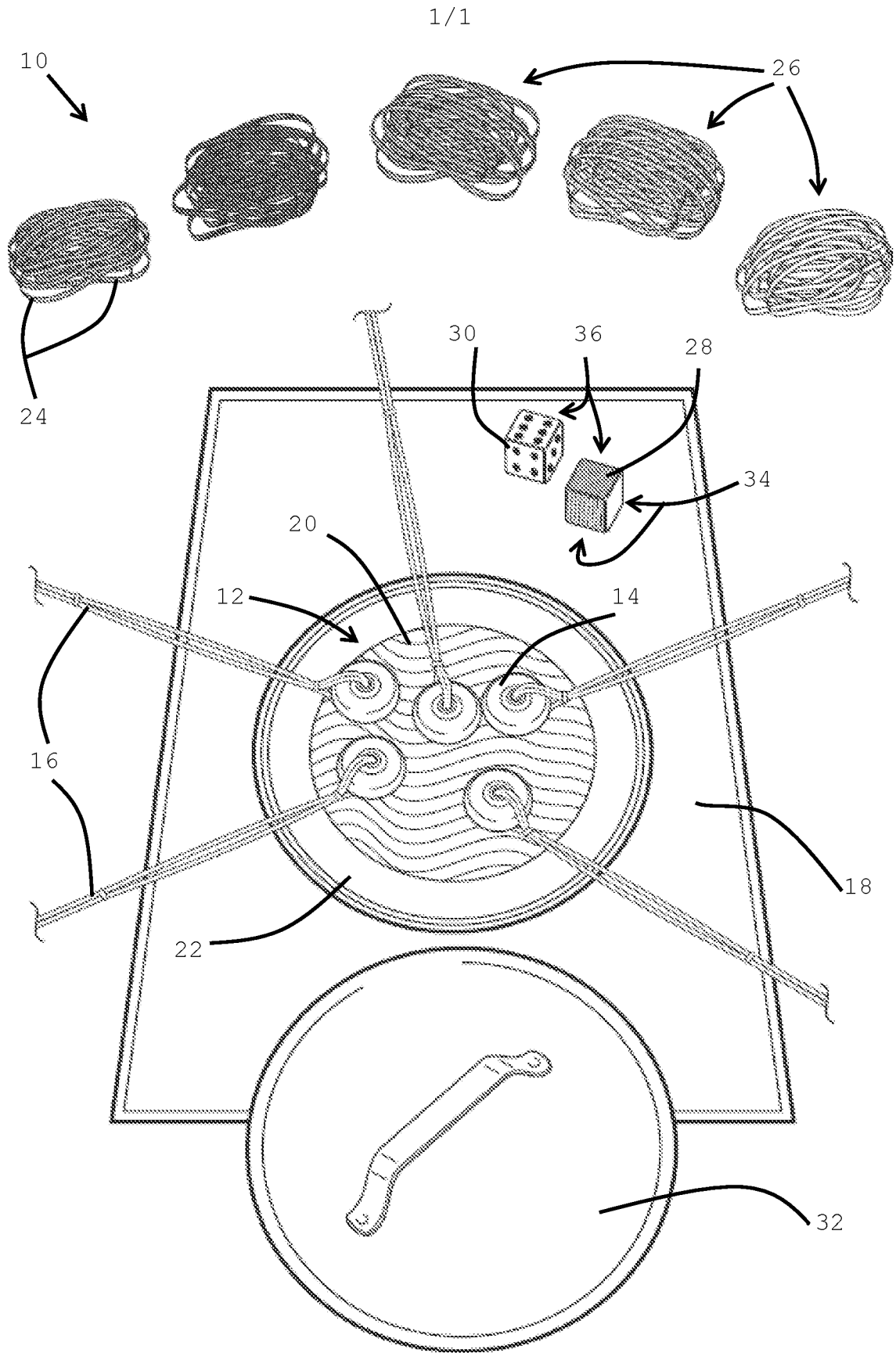


Figure 1.

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.  
**PCT/AU2018/050809**

<b>A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER</b> <b>A63F 3/00 (2006.01)</b>		
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
<b>B. FIELDS SEARCHED</b>		
Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)		
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched		
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used) PATENW: IPC A63F9, keywords include: CAPTURE, COVER, STRING, DICE (and similar terms) Google, Google images, Google Patents, The Lens (www.lens.org) Combination of keywords: board, game, speed, remove, pull, withdraw, piece , middle, before string, cord, rope, catch, capture, reflex , reaction, dice, token, trap, inner area , snap, fly swat, (and similar terms) Applicant(s)/Inventor(s) name searched in internal databases provided by IP Australia		
<b>C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT</b>		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
	Documents are listed in the continuation of Box C	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex		
* "A"	Special categories of cited documents: document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"E"	earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date	"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
"L"	document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
"O"	document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	"&" document member of the same patent family
"P"	document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	
Date of the actual completion of the international search 22 November 2018	Date of mailing of the international search report 22 November 2018	
<b>Name and mailing address of the ISA/AU</b>  AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE PO BOX 200, WODEN ACT 2606, AUSTRALIA Email address: pct@ipaustalia.gov.au	<b>Authorised officer</b>  Cade McTaggart AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE (ISO 9001 Quality Certified Service) Telephone No. +61262837926	

**INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT**

International application No.

C (Continuation).

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

**PCT/AU2018/050809**

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 4944512 A (MAUCK et al.) 31 July 1990 see whole document, in particular: column 2 lines 41-49, figs 1-2	1-17
X	US 3437337 A (LARSON) 08 April 1969 see whole document, in particular: column 1 line 53 – column 2 line 29, figs 1-2	1-17
A	GB 408151 A (SYLVESTER) 05 April 1934 see whole document, in particular column 1 lines 9-42	

**INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT**

Information on patent family members

International application No.

**PCT/AU2018/050809**

This Annex lists known patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned international search report. The Australian Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

<b>Patent Document/s Cited in Search Report</b>		<b>Patent Family Member/s</b>	
<b>Publication Number</b>	<b>Publication Date</b>	<b>Publication Number</b>	<b>Publication Date</b>
US 4944512 A	31 July 1990	US 4944512 A	31 Jul 1990
US 3437337 A	08 April 1969	US 3437337 A	08 Apr 1969
		GB 1176058 A	01 Jan 1970
GB 408151 A	05 April 1934	GB 408151 A	05 Apr 1934

**End of Annex**