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54 Improvements in or relating to a board game.

57 A board game comprises a board defining a track (1) of adjacent spaces to be occupied by playing pieces (13) and a spinner (7) to identify, in a random manner, at least one of the playing spaces. The game further comprises a plurality of playing pieces (13) to be moved from space to space by players, and a random number generator (15) to indicate the number of spaces the playing pieces can be moved.

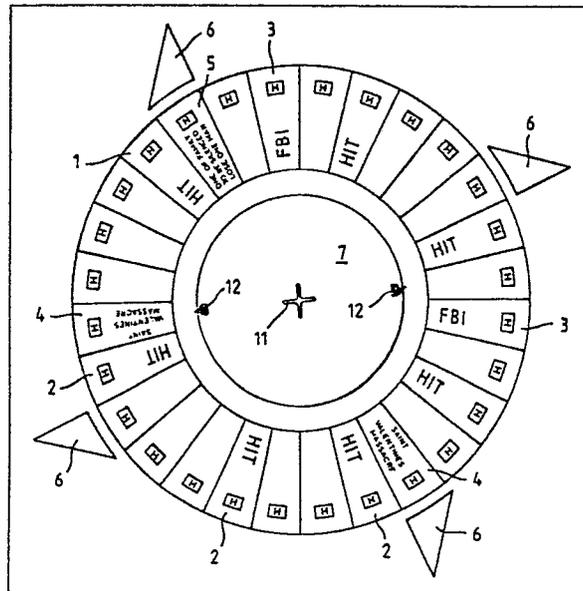


Fig.1.

EP 0 288 997 A2

Improvements in or relating to a board game

The present invention relates to a board game.

It has been proposed previously to provide a board game comprising a board, the board defining a track of adjacent spaces to be occupied by playing pieces, the game further comprising a plurality of playing pieces to be moved from space to space by players, and a random number generator to indicate the number of spaces the playing pieces can be moved.

This invention relates to such a board game further incorporating means in the form of a spinner to identify, in a random manner, at least one of the playing spaces.

Preferably said track is in the form of a substantially circular track, and the spinner is located in the centre of the track.

Conveniently the spinner is adapted to identify two playing spaces substantially diametrically opposed.

Advantageously the spinner is in the form of a base plate carrying a vertically upstanding element on which is rotatably supported a rotatable element carrying means identifying the space or spaces.

Preferably the space identifying means comprise representations of two gunmen.

Preferably the spinner, when operated, emits a sound resembling that of gunfire.

In an alternative embodiment of the game the space identifying means may comprise representations of two wizards.

Conveniently the playing pieces are divided into a set of playing pieces for each player, each set comprising a plurality of components representing first members and one component representing a second member.

In order that the invention may be more readily understood, and so that further features thereof may be appreciated, the invention will now be described, by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

FIGURE 1 is a plan view of a board for playing a game in accordance with the invention;

FIGURE 2 is a side view of the board, and

FIGURE 3 is a view showing the remaining components of the game.

Referring to the drawings the board defines a substantially circular track 1 consisting of a plurality of adjacent spaces. Various of the spaces carry markings providing those spaces with particular significance. For example, various spaces 2 are marked with the word "Hit", various spaces 3 are marked with the letters "F.B.I.", and various spaces 4 are marked "St. Valentine's Massacre". At least one space 5 is marked "One of family to be silenced, lose one man".

Located adjacent the circular track 1 are four equally-angularly spaced spaces, which are four base or "home" regions 6.

Located in the centre of the circular track is a spinner arrangement 7. As can be seen most clearly in Figure 2 the spinner arrangement 7 consists of a base 8 having an upstanding pin 9. Mounted on the pin 9 is a spinner plate 10 which has a central inverted thimble 11 which actually rests on top of the pin 9. The plate 10 carries two elements 12 each representing a gunman, carrying guns pointing radially outwardly. The elements 12 are at diametrically opposed positions and it is to be understood that these representations provide an indication of two spaces present on the track 1 which are diametrically opposed.

The plate 10 may be spun, in which case the plate will rotate and will stop indicating a random pair of playing spaces on the track 1.

Turning now to Figure 3 the equipment to play the game comprises a plurality of playing elements 13, each representing Mafia soldiers. These playing pieces may conveniently be formed of four different colours if the game is to be played, as intended, by four players. Also the game comprises four playing pieces 14, representing four "Godfathers" and again these playing pieces will be made of the four different colours. Additionally the game comprises two dice 15, and a rule book 16.

The game is based on the theme of the "Mafia" and at the beginning of the game each player is provided with a "Godfather" 14 and a number of Mafia soldiers 13, for example, eight Mafia soldiers which form a family. Each player will have playing pieces of one respective colour. Also each player is allocated one "Home" space 6 where he initially locates his playing pieces.

The general idea of the game is for each player to make his Godfather complete one circuit of the track 1 and return to the home base without the Godfather being killed.

The game commences with the players each throwing the dice, the player with the highest score commencing.

On each throw of the dice a player may move either one playing piece by number of spaces equal to the total number of spots showing on the dice or may move one playing piece by a number of spaces as indicated by the spots on one die and another playing piece a number of spaces as shown by the spots on the other die. As will become apparent from the following description it is desirable for the Godfather, whenever he is on the circular track 1 to be protected, if at all possible, by

at least one Mafia soldier 13 being on the same space. Thus, as the game commences, it is envisaged that players will initially locate some Mafia soldiers on the track 1 before bringing the Godfather onto the track 1.

If a player causes any one of his playing pieces to land on one of the squares 2 marked with the word "Hit" that player is allowed to spin the spinner arrangement 7. The gunman on the spinner arrangement will, when the spinning has finished, indicate two diametrically opposed spaces. If there is a Mafia soldier on either of the spaces indicated then that Mafia soldier is deemed to be killed and is eliminated from the game. If there are two Mafia soldiers 13 of the same player occupying one space, only one Mafia soldier 13 is eliminated from the game. If there is a Mafia soldier 13 and a Godfather 14 on one player on the square, the soldier is eliminated, but the Godfather survives. If the Godfather is alone on the square, unprotected, then the Godfather is eliminated.

If the spinning arrangement 7 identifies a square 4 marked with the words "St. Valentine's Massacre" all soldiers present on the square will be eliminated. If the Godfather is also present on the square, that is to say if the Godfather is present on the square together with soldiers, then the Godfather will not be eliminated.

It will be understood, therefore, that players will endeavour to have at least one Mafia soldier 13 present on any square occupied by the Godfather 14 so that if a "Hit" should occur there will be no chance of the Godfather being eliminated. However, from time-to-time it will be inevitable that the Godfather 14 of one or more players will be in a playing space on his own. If there is then a "Hit" and the gunman 12 on the spinning arrangement 7 identifies a square occupied by the Godfather, then the Godfather is eliminated and that particular player is out of the game.

If one of the Mafia soldiers 13 of one player is alone on a space, and an opponent is able to move one of his Mafia soldiers 13 onto that same space, the Mafia soldier 13 of the first player will be deemed to be taken hostage. The Mafia soldier of the first player cannot then move. If another of the Mafia soldiers of the opponent lands on the space, so there are two soldiers of the opponent, the Mafia soldier of the first player is deemed to be "Hit" and is therefore eliminated from the game.

The Godfather can be held hostage in this manner, but cannot be eliminated in this manner. If, when a "Hit" occurs, a gunman 12 identifies space containing a Mafia soldier or the Godfather of one player, being held hostage by the Mafia soldier of another player, the hostage is deemed to be eliminated, but his captor survives, unless the "Hit" stem from a move of the first player, in which case,

the captor is eliminated and the hostage survives.

Only three playing pieces from the same player are allowed on one playing space at a time. In the event of two players of one family being on one space, no other player can land a playing piece on that space.

The Godfather playing pieces 14 are not allowed to land on the spaces 3 marked "F.B.I.". If any playing piece lands on the spaces marked "One of the family to be silenced, lose one man" that player loses a Mafia soldier 13.

Each player must move at least one playing piece if they can. Thus if there is a possible move, or combination of moves, that can be made subsequent to the throwing of the dice, that move or combination of moves must be made. If, at the end of the move of moves a player has been found to move a playing piece onto a "Hit" space 2, then the spinning arrangement 7 is spun.

Any Mafia soldier 13 who completes a full circle of the track, can reclaim a Mafia soldier 13 previously eliminated from the game (if there are any).

It is to be understood that the Godfather, when approaching his "Home" base 6 can only be moved to that Home base if the number of spots shown on the dice permit him to move precisely to the Home base 6. If the dice are unkind, and if a large number of Mafia soldiers 13 have been eliminated from the game, it may be that the number shown on the dice is such that the Godfather must be moved past the home base 6, in which case the Godfather must complete a further circuit of the track 1 before he can enter his home base 6. However, if the Godfather does start a second circuit of the track 1 he collects three of this previously eliminated Mafia soldiers 13.

In a modified version of the game the spinner is adapted to emit a sound similar to that of machine gun fire when the spinner is spun. This may be achieved by providing the spinner with a noise generating device such as that used in a rattle thus the fixed base may be provided with an element with a discontinuous surface, such as an element resembling a cog wheel, and the rotary part of the spinner may carry one or more elements biased resiliently into contact with the discontinuous surface, so that, as the spinner spins, the resiliently biased element moves rapidly into contact with sequential parts of the discontinuous surface. However, many other techniques may be used to obtain the desired effect.

Whilst the game has been described as having a "Mafia" theme it is envisaged that the game may have a mythological theme.

Thus in an alternative embodiment of the game the four families may be replaced by four armies, one army of Samurai warriors, one of Troglodytes,

one of Rats and one of Vikings, each army having a King which must be moved around the track 1 and returned to the home base in the same way as the Godfather in the "Mafia" based game.

The two elements 12 received upon the plate 10 of the spinner arrangement 7 would represent wizards.

The basic layout of the board remains the same as described above although the markings carried by the spaces defining the track 1 are altered so as to fit in with the new theme. Thus the "Hit" squares 2 become "Spell" squares such that when a playing piece lands upon one of these squares the spinner arrangement may be operated which may result in one or more playing pieces being eliminated from the game by the wizard casting a spell. The "F.B.I." squares 3 will represent sacred ground upon which the Kings may not land. The "St Valentines Massacre" squares 4 become known as the "source" whilst the square 5 marked "One of the family to be silenced, lose one man" represents darkness and a playing piece landing on this square is considered to be cast into the unknown and eliminated from the game.

The manner in which the game is played is the same as for the "Mafia" based game. Thus the King of each army must complete one circuit of the track 1 without being eliminated. The Kings and the playing pieces of each army may be eliminated in the same manner as previously described and thus the armies will be used to protect the Kings. Playing pieces may also be taken hostage as described above and, in the mythological theme, are considered to be suspended in time and are placed upon a pentagonal marking at the outer edge of each square which replaces the "H" marking carried by each square in the "Mafia" based game.

The features disclosed in the forgoing description, the following claims and/or in the accompanying drawings may, both separately and in any combination thereof, be material for realising the invention in diverse forms thereof.

Claims

1. A board game, said board game comprising a board, the board defining a track (1) of adjacent spaces to be occupied by playing pieces (13), the game further comprising a plurality of playing pieces (13) to be moved from space to space by players, and a random number generator (15) to indicate the number of spaces the playing pieces can be moved, characterised in that the game further comprises means in the form of a spinner (7) to identify, in a random manner, at least one of the playing spaces.

2. A board game according to claim 1 wherein said track (1) is in the form of a substantially circular track, and the spinner (7) is located in the centre of the track.

3. A board game according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the spinner (7) is adapted to identify two playing spaces substantially diametrically opposed.

4. A board game according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the spinner (7) is in the form of a base plate (8) carrying a vertically up-standing element (9) on which is rotatably supported a rotatable element (10) carrying means (12) identifying the space or spaces.

5. A board game according to claim 4 wherein the space identifying means (12) comprise representations of two gunmen.

6. A board game according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the spinner (7), when operated, emits a sound resembling that of gunfire.

7. A board game according to Claim 4 wherein the space identifying means (12) comprise representations of two wizards.

8. A board game according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the playing pieces (13) are divided into a set of playing pieces for each player, each set comprising a plurality of components representing first members and one component representing a second member.

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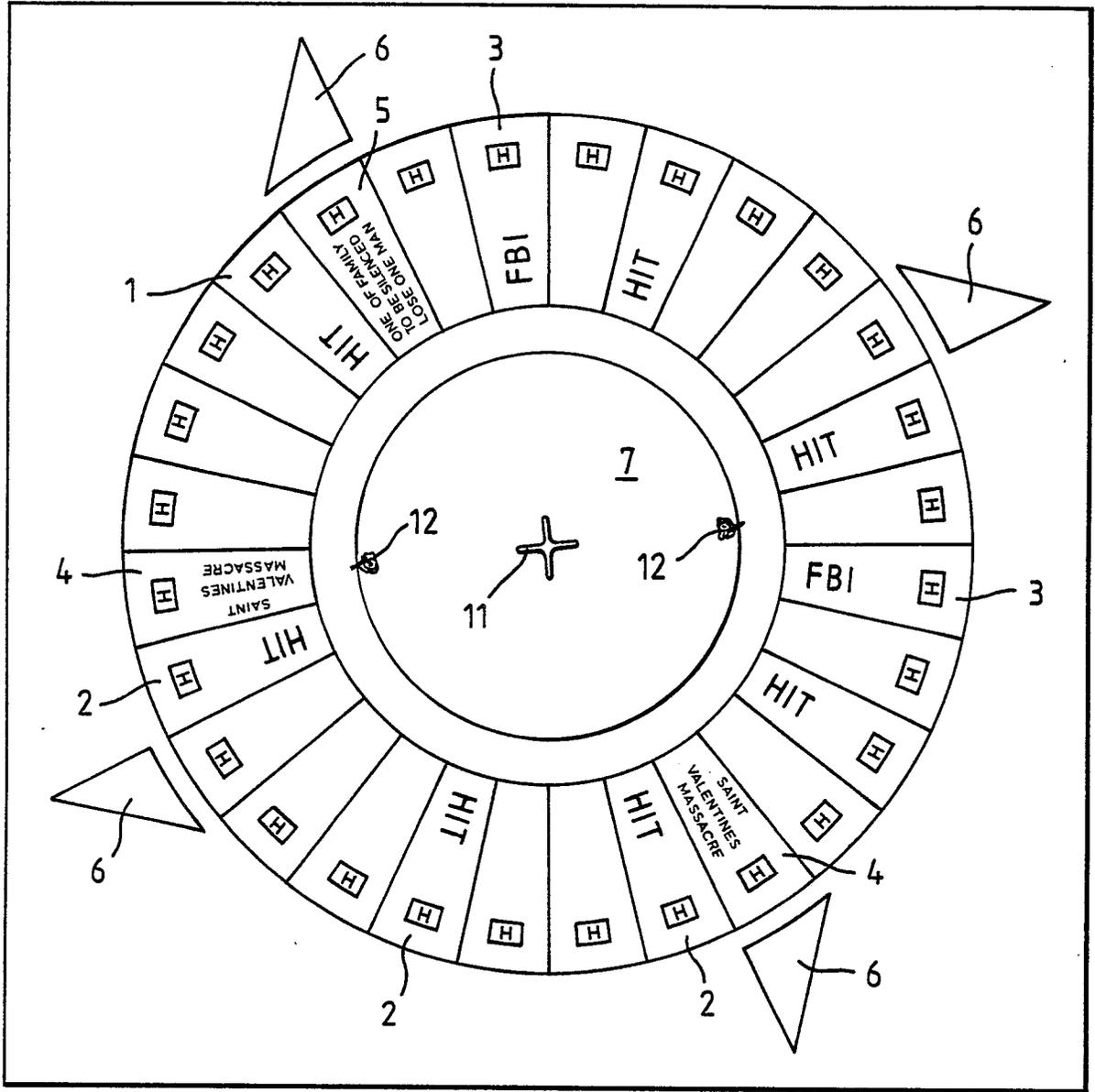


Fig. 1.

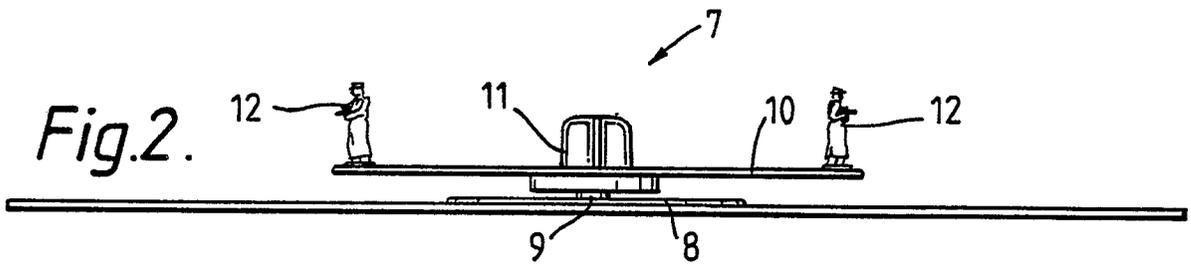


Fig. 2.

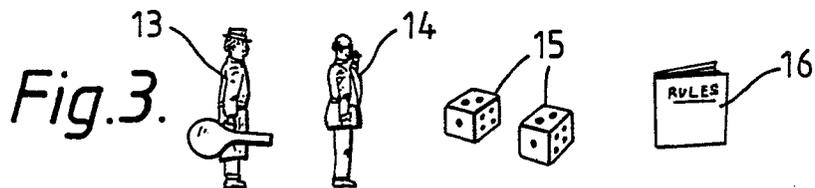


Fig. 3.