

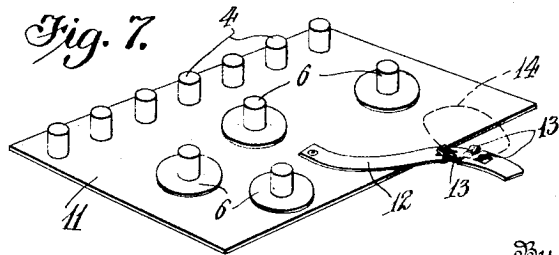
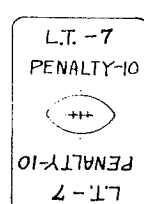
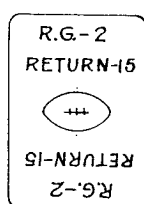
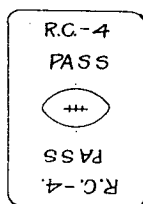
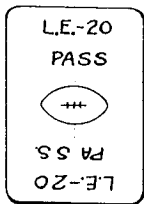
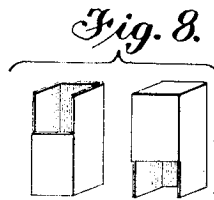
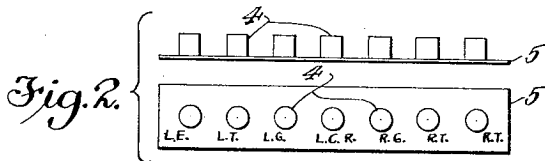
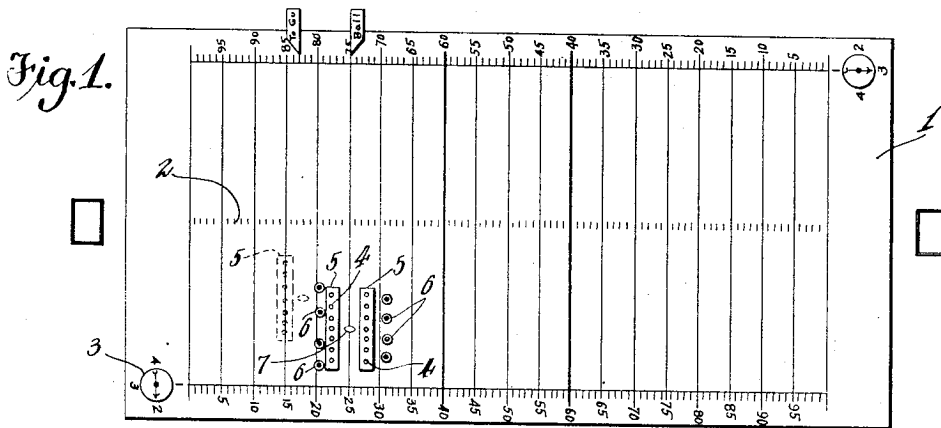
Nov. 27, 1928.

1,693,277

A. HUSTWICK

FOOTBALL GAME

Filed March 5, 1928



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ALFRED HUSTWICK, OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

FOOTBALL GAME.

Application filed March 5, 1928. Serial No. 259,044.

This invention relates to an indoor or table football game in which provision has been made to duplicate the moves and plays of the actual game. This invention discloses novel means and combinations thereof so as to allow the game to be played practically in accordance with the standard rules and regulations of the real game.

An object of this invention is to provide an indoor football game in which the element of chance is blended with and modified by the skill of the players as in the actual game.

Another object is to provide means for playing a football game in accordance with methods of play as utilized by various colleges or coaches. Another object is to provide a football game in which the players can exercise at all times an option as to what play can be performed. Another object is to provide a football game which is extremely simple, does not require needless and dogmatic rules or methods of play and in which arbitrary rules and regulations have been practically eliminated. A still further object is to provide a football game in which intellectual exertion is required in addition to mechanical skill.

Another object is to provide an indoor football game embracing a combination of means of specific construction.

These and other objects and results of my invention will become apparent from the following detailed description of the elements embraced herein and the method of playing the game.

It is acknowledged that other forms of indoor games simulating the outdoor game of football have been invented heretofore, but none of these prior games have utilized men or game pieces of the particular arrangement, construction and mode of operation which I have invented. Neither have these prior men or game pieces been activated, put into play and caused to carry out the plays in the manner to be hereinafter disclosed by me. Furthermore, most of the prior games were so designed that the succession of the plays was entirely dependent upon chance, while my invention is primarily designed to furnish a game in which the player may exercise his skill. Some of the prior games were also so designed that physically stronger players had a great advantage over weak players, while the game herein disclosed modifies or nulli-

fies such physical strength and introduces an element of mental and physical skill which enhances the scope of and pleasure derived from the game.

In describing this invention, reference will be made to the appended drawings which show, merely for the purpose of illustrative disclosure, a preferable embodiment of my invention, it being expressly understood that various changes and modifications may be made in practice within the scope of the claims without departing from my invention.

In the drawings:

Figure 1 represents one form of miniature football field on which the game may be played.

Figure 2 shows both a side elevation and a plan view of a movable piece representing a plurality of linesmen.

Figure 3 shows both a side elevation and a plan view of one form of backfield men.

Figure 4 gives an elevation and plan view of one form of piece designed to represent and be used as a football.

Figure 5 is a side elevation illustrating the method of propelling or activating the football in making a pass or kicking the ball.

Figure 6 is a side elevation of another form of piece designed to represent a football.

Figure 7 is an isometric view of a game piece upon which linesmen are mounted, the piece being provided with means for propelling a representation of a football.

Figure 8 is a perspective view of a combined container adapted to receive the pieces used in playing the game and to function as goal posts.

Figures 9 to 12 inclusive represent a type of card which is also used in playing the game.

The game may be played upon any suitable field having approximately the relative proportions of a football field, for example, the game may be played upon a fabric, cloth or other suitable board 1 marked off in the form of a gridiron with transverse lines thereon representing five yard increments. The borders of the field may be suitably marked as shown in Fig. 1 so as to indicate the total number of yards from the players' goal. Additional indices may be shown longitudinally of the playing field and centrally thereof as indicated at 2. Behind each goal line it is preferred to provide a portion of the board so as to allow the erection of goal posts

thereon when they are needed. Furthermore, it may be desirable to indicate the forty yard lines in a suitable manner so as to readily ascertain the position to be assumed at the beginning of the game or for kick-off. A suitable marker may be placed in the space beyond the goal line as indicated at 3 so as to enable the players to keep track of downs, quarters, or the total score.

10 Instead of using a large number of separate men, I prefer to use one piece such as is shown in Fig. 2 which represents a plurality of linesmen. The linesmen 4 may be of any desired size, shape or of any desired material and are preferably mounted or secured to a unitary base 5. In Fig. 2 the linesmen are shown as being merely cylindrical portions attached to the base 5 and spaced from each other, but it will be understood that linesmen of any desired configuration may be used, for example, they may be carved or otherwise formed so as to represent uniform figures in a crouching position, such as is assumed by linesmen in a football game. 25 The base portion 5 is preferably suitably marked as shown in Fig. 2 so as to indicate the character and position of the men. For example, the linesmen may be called from left to right, left end, left tackle, left guard, center, right guard, right tackle and right end.

It will be noticed that eight plays may be made through or around such a line. For example, a play may be made around left end by the opposing team or a play may be made between left end and left tackle, or a play may be made between left tackle and left guard, etc. For this reason, I prefer to place the identifying marks such as "Left end" or "L. E." in the open spaces which are presumed to be protected by the men. The center, for example, protects the space between himself and the guards and, therefore, he protects two openings, left center and right center. The guards are assumed to protect the opening between the guard and the tackle, the tackle protects the opening between himself and the ends, and the ends protect the open space on each side of the line. Each team or each player playing the game is supplied with one unitary piece representing his line.

The backfield men 6 comprising the quarterbacks, halfbacks and fullbacks are independent game pieces which may be constructed as shown in Fig. 3 and each player is supplied with four movable backfield pieces so that the total number of men represented by the unitary line piece of seven men together with the backfield men represents a football team of eleven players. It will be understood that if standard football rules and practice changes, the number of men allowed on the line of scrimmage or the total number of men comprising a team, the pieces

herein described may also be changed in accordance with the rules of the game so as to conform therewith. The backfield men 6 may be made in accordance with Fig. 3 or if desired they may be suitably carved, colored or otherwise ornamented in accordance with the desire of the manufacturer.

The other appurtenances of the game comprise a small football of any desired shape or construction. For purposes of illustration, I have shown a small, flat, elliptical piece 7 in Fig. 4 which may be used in lieu of a football. The piece 7 may be formed of bone, pressed paper, composition, or any other suitable material and may be either flat, as shown, or it may be semi-spherical or be thicker at one end or in the center. This form of piece may be propelled by the use of a plectrum or boot 8 made of bone, pyroxylin composition, pressed paper or any other suitable composition. The plectrum should preferably have a beveled or pointed lower end and the elliptical piece 7 representing the football may be propelled during passing or kicking the ball by slipping the plectrum 8 off one end of the piece 7 while exerting a slight pressure upon the plectrum. In Fig. 6 a different form of piece is shown and comprises a flat, elliptical piece 9 having a spring 10 attached thereto at one end so that by exerting a pressure at the upper end of the piece 9 and then quickly releasing the same, the piece is caused to travel upward and describe an arc such as would occur if a ball were kicked.

The linesmen 4 may be mounted upon a common base 11 such as is shown in Fig. 7, the base 11 having means permanently or detachably attached thereon adapted to propel a football. These means may comprise a spring 12 attached to the base 11 and having suitable fingers 13 or other means thereon to support a representation of a football, for example, a miniature football 14 which may have a weighted end to minimize rolling. When this enlarged base 11 is used the backfield men 6 may be positioned upon the base so that when the line is shifted, the entire base is moved to go through with the backfield, simplifying the operation.

Each player is also provided with a pack of cards such as are illustrated in Figs. 9 to 12. A pack may comprise from about thirty to fifty cards. Each card has thereon one scrimmage play or line buck and one other defensive or offensive play, such as a return, penalty or forward pass. It will be remembered that in the scrimmage line such as is represented by the piece shown in Fig. 2 bearing seven men offers the possibility of eight different plays through the lines inasmuch as there are eight openings through and around such line. For ease in playing, each of the cards is marked with the position or hole through which the scrimmage play

may be made. For example, Fig. 9 illustrates a card giving the player the possibility of either trying for a left end run which, if not blocked, is good for twenty yards or gives the player the option of executing a forward pass if he so desires. If the player desires to make a left end run and his opponent places a backfield man, such as is shown in Fig. 3, back of the opening called "Left end", then the play is blocked and the offensive loses a down without any gain. In like manner Fig. 10 indicates a card which gives the player the option of either making a line buck through right center for a gain of four yards, or allows him to make a forward pass. Fig. 11 gives the player an option of either endeavoring to make a scrimmage play through right guard for two yards, or if the occasion warrants, the return of opponent's punt for fifteen yards. Fig. 12 indicates a card giving the player the option of either gaining seven yards through left tackle or imposing a penalty of ten yards upon the opponent. A deck of forty cards of this character may be well made up in view of the fact that there are eight holes in the scrimmage line, thereby allowing five plays for each hole.

The relation of the various pieces and the purpose of the various plays indicated on the cards will be more clearly brought out by the following detailed description of certain plays in a game. After each player has been given a deck of cards and the winner of the toss of a coin decided whether he intends to kick off or receive the ball, each player then shuffles his cards and after his opponent has cut them, deals himself a definite number, say four cards, face down, and places the remainder of the deck of cards face down at one side of the playing board or field.

Then two forward lines or pieces, as shown in Fig. 2, or Fig. 7, are then set facing each other at a suitable distance from each other with the forty yard line midway between them. The ball 7 is placed in the center of the field on the forty yard line. The backfield pieces 6 (each player having four of these), are disposed in any suitable position behind each team. The player who kicks off then picks up his plectrum or boot 8 and snaps the edge of the ball 7, making it go as far into his opponent's territory as possible. The ball may be placed behind the player's forward line if desired when making a kick, or in the holder of spring 12 when the piece shown in Fig. 7 is used.

If the ball upon being kicked goes over a side line, it is moved in to a point approximately twenty yards from the side line in line with the spot at which it went outside. A marker 15 indicating the position of the ball is then placed on the right hand side of the board which is generally inscribed so as to indicate the total number of yards from the

player's goal to the opponent's goal. Another marker 16 is placed in position ten yards ahead of the marker 15 which indicates the present position of the ball so that the number of yards to be made for a first down is always indicated by these markers. The exact construction of the markers 15 and 16 may be varied very materially without departing from this invention, the particular form shown in the drawings being merely illustrative of a device of this nature and its use. After a kick the opponent then has the privilege of playing a return card, that is, a card calling for a return. For example, if the opponent were to have the four cards in his hand shown in Figs. 9 to 12, then the opponent could place the card, shown in Fig. 11 face up at one side of the playing field and call for a return of fifteen yards. The ball would then be moved fifteen yards back toward the kicker's own goal line and the player who has kicked off would lose possession of the ball. As soon as the opponent has played a card, such as, for example, the card shown in Fig. 11, he would immediately pick up another card from the remainder of the deck and place it in his hand. In this way, every player has four cards (or any predetermined number) in his possession at all times, thereby allowing him to make a selection from the plays indicated on his cards.

The player who now has possession of the ball, lines up his team or scrimmage line immediately in back of the point at which the ball is put into play and his opponent similarly lines up his forward line to oppose him. The player who now has possession of the ball consults his hand of preferably four cards. Although he may kick or punt the ball at will without using a card, all other plays must be made by playing a card calling either for a scrimmage play, a pass or a field goal. After the player who has possession of the ball selects the card which he desires to play, for example, the card shown in Fig. 9, he places that card face down on the table and indicates to his opponent that he is ready to play. His opponent then moves his four movable backfield men in any desired position so as to plug up or block any four of the eight openings through which a scrimmage play may be made. For example, the opponent may have placed his movable backfield men in the holes or openings marked left tackle, left guard, right guard and right tackle. After the opponent has thus placed his men and signified that he is ready, the player then turns the previously selected card face up and inasmuch as this indicates a gain of twenty yards through left end and the left end hole has not been blocked by his opponent, then the play is successful and the ball is advanced twenty yards. In view of the fact that the gain has been made through left end, the ball is not advanced longi-

5 tudinally down the field parallel to its original position in front of the center, but is moved toward the left sufficiently so as to advance it twenty yards down the field and assume a position transverse to the board which it would have if the ball had actually been run around left end. When play is resumed, the scrimmage lines 5 bearing the men 4 are also slightly moved towards the left so that the center is opposite the ball. In this way, not only are the teams advanced longitudinally down the board with each play if a gain is made, but they are also moved transversely across the board, their transverse movement depending upon the actual location of the play through which the gain has been made.

10 A further illustration of the method of playing is shown in Fig. 1. Assuming that the team on the right hand side of the field has possession of the ball, it will be noticed that marker 15 indicates that the ball is on the seventy-five yard line and that eight yards are to be made for a first down. The indicator 3 beyond the goal line on the playing field 1 indicates that it is now second down. The right hand side player chooses a card from the four present in his hand and lays it face down on one side of the playing field. His opponent, the player on the left hand end of the board, then moves his four movable backfield pieces 6 in any desired position so as to block four holes or four scrimmage plays. For example, he blocks, as shown in Fig. 1, left end, left guard, right guard, and right end. The right hand player then turns his card face up and let us assume that this is the card shown in Fig. 12 indicating a gain of seven yards through left tackle. In view of the fact that the left end player has not blocked the opening "left tackle" the play is successful and the right hand player gains seven yards, the ball being put into play on the eighty-two yard line. In view of the fact that the play has been made through left tackle, the scrimmage lines 5 are moved toward the center of the field so as to assume a position indicated by dotted lines in Fig. 1 and the game is resumed with third down and one yard to go.

50 It will be seen that the defense consists in moving movable backfield men into position so as to prevent the offense from completing a scrimmage play. It is true that there are eight openings through which scrimmage plays may be made while the defense only has four backfield men with which to block eight plays, but the defense is allowed to move the blocking backfield after the offense has selected its play and before it is announced. Numerous games have been played with the above described equipment and remarkably close scores made after an hour or more of playing and very often the offense will move down to, say the two or three yard line and be successfully held there for four downs, there-

by losing the ball. This indicates the similitude between the game as played with this arrangement and combination of means and the actual outdoor football game.

70 If a player has reached third down and has still several yards to go or if at any time it is advisable to punt, he does not necessarily have to play a card, but announces a punt or kick. The opponent has the privilege of arranging his four backfield men in any desired position so as to receive the punt and the player then proceeds to propel the ball forward with the plectrum, boot or other means. If the ball strikes one of his opponent's forwards or linesmen and bounces off it is a blocked punt and goes to the opponent where it comes to rest on the board. If it goes outside over the sidelines, it is the opponent's ball in the same manner as that described during kick off. If it goes over the goal line without striking one of the opponent's men on its way, it goes into play in the opponent's possession on his twenty yard line. If it drops clear anywhere on the field it can be returned by the opponent who simply plays a card from his hand reading "Return — yards" (if he has such a card) and moves the ball back the required distance and takes possession of it.

80 If a player holds in his hand a card marked "Pass" he may play it face upward on his discarded pack or formerly played cards indicating that he is going to play a forward pass. His opponent then draws back his movable backfield men and arranges them as he sees fit. The player making the pass may then move one of his own backs beyond the opposing team to any desired point so as to act as a receiver of the forward pass. The player then tries with the boot, spring or other means to jump the ball so that it will hit the backfield man that he has placed to receive it. If he succeeds, it is a completed pass and the ball remains in his possession where it comes to rest. If the ball misses his receiving back it is an incomplete pass and the player loses a down. In accordance with the present day rules two incomplete passes in one series of four downs incurs a five yard penalty. If the ball being passed strikes an opponent's man it is an intercepted pass and goes into play in opponent's possession where it comes to rest. If the ball strikes a man of the opponent's team after striking the receiver which it is aimed at, the play is called a fumble and the ball goes to the player whose man it last struck.

110 It will be seen that all of the plays of the actual game can be executed with great similarity and in perfect accord with the rules of the standard outdoor game. It will be understood that if the standard rules are changed, the rules underlying the playing of the herein described game may also be changed.

125 Penalties, which are also indicated on a 130

few of the cards comprising a player's pack, may only be inflicted upon the opponent's scrimmage plays. For example, if a player is in a tight spot and has been unable to stop gains through his line, he may, in order to nullify a successful and rather disastrous gain, play a penalty card. The opponent does not lose his down but the ball goes back whatever yardage is shown on the card from the point it occupied prior to the play.

If a player has a card marked "Field goal" in his hand and the ball is actually on or within his opponent's thirty yard line, the player may, by laying the card face up, shoot at the goal. Any proportional goal post or net may be used or one of the portions of the box such as is shown in Fig. 8 may be stood on end behind the goal line as required by the rules to act as a goal post. If the ball crosses the goal between the posts a field goal is scored and counts three points.

Other methods of scoring, such as touch-down, conversion and safeties may be made in the same manner that they are made in the actual game. Very few if any, rules not embraced by the standard football game practice come up or need be remembered in playing the game in accordance with my invention. It has been found desirable, however, to formulate a rule which penalizes a player five yards whenever it is found that he holds more than four cards in his hand at any one time. The opponent of the player thus penalized has the option of selecting one card from his hand and discarding it. Four players may participate in the game, two of the players playing the cards in the first quarter with their partners acting as time keepers and linesmen and in consulting capacity as coaches. At the end of each quarter the partners change places so that each gets a chance to play half of the game. The duration of the game may vary in accordance with the players' desires and the game may be played for only a certain period or the termination of the game may be reached when a player uses up all of his cards.

The packs of cards with which each player is provided may be so designed as to be representative of a type of game as played by nationally known football coaches or teams. An average football game played by certain teams will be found to have a certain proportion of scrimmage plays, a certain proportion of passes attempted, and very often a certain outstanding type of line play. For example, one team may be particularly successful in executing gains through the ends and tackle, while another team may depend upon most of their scrimmage line gains for plays through the center or guards. By proportioning the cards or the plays enumerated thereon in accordance with the type of play represented by a certain football team,

it is possible to play the game in accordance with my invention with great similarity to an actual football game as played by any particular football team. In this way I may prepare decks representing teams as coached by well known coaches such as Alonzo Stagg, Knute Rockne, Howard Jones, etc. The game, therefore, not only enables the players to derive pleasure therefrom but may be used for educational purposes.

I claim:

1. A football game comprising a miniature football playing field, a game piece representing a plurality of linesmen immovable to each other, a plurality of separate movable pieces representing back-field men, a piece representing a football, and means for actuating the football when making a kick or pass.

2. A football game comprising a miniature football playing field, a game piece representing a plurality of linesmen, a plurality of separate pieces representing backfield men adapted to be positioned in openings between linesmen and a deck of cards each bearing a line play and another type of play.

3. A football game comprising a miniature football playing field, indices along the length of said field to indicate the distance between goal lines, movable means for indicating the position of the ball while in play, a plurality of game pieces representing football linesmen mounted upon a common base, means for propelling a representation of a football mounted upon said base and a plurality of separate movable pieces representing backfield men, and adapted to be placed in opening between said linesmen.

4. A football game comprising a miniature football playing field, a plurality of game pieces representing football linesmen mounted upon a common base, means for propelling a miniature football mounted upon said base, a plurality of separable movable pieces representing backfield men and a deck of cards each bearing a line play and another type of play, the deck being played one at a time from a plurality of said cards in a hand.

5. An indoor football game comprising a miniature football field, a plurality of game pieces representing linesmen mounted in a line upon a common base, spring means attached to said base adapted to propel a representation of a football and a plurality of separate movable pieces representing backfield men adapted to be positioned on said base and guard openings between said linesmen.

6. In a football game, the combination of a plurality of game pieces representing football linesmen mounted upon a common base, a plurality of separate movable pieces representing backfield men and adapted to be positioned in openings between linesmen, and a deck of cards each bearing a line play and

another type of play, said cards being marked with the position of the linesmen through which said line plays are to be made.

5 7. A football game comprising a miniature football field, a game piece representing a plurality of linesmen, a plurality of separate movable pieces representing backfield men and adapted to be positioned in openings between linesmen, a representation of a foot-

ball, means for actuating and moving said 10 football, and a deck of cards each bearing a line play and another type of play, each card being marked with the position of the linesman through which said plays are to be made. Signed at Los Angeles, California, this 15 21 day of February, 1928.

ALFRED HUSTWICK.