STACKED ELEMENT REMOVAL GAME

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ABSTRACT

A plurality of can-shaped elements having opposed flat end surfaces having the shape of a semicircle extended by a rectangle, the end walls being connected by a curved side wall along the semi-circle and the two adjacent sides of the rectangle, are provided in groups of differing indicia, the cans being stacked in a vertical pyramid shaped array. Means are provided for randomly indicating cans of a given indicia such that a player is required to selectively remove from the stacked pyramid a can of such indicia.

2 Claims, 4 Drawing Figures
STACKED ELEMENT REMOVAL GAME

There is an old and well known game played at carnivals and the like. It is comprised of a stacking of a plurality of dummy bottles, often in the shape of milk bottles, in a vertical pyramidal arrangement. In this game, the object is to knock all the bottles down or from their pyramidal arrangement by throwing a ball or a similar object at the stacked array. Thus, the object of the game is basically to strike the pre-arranged bottles in a position where the structure is inherently unstable, to cause the collapse thereof by one or more throws of the ball.

Briefly, the herein invention utilizes a stacked arrangement of cans or other relatively stable elements. The cans are vertically placed one upon another in an alternating fashion from row to row proceeding upwardly from the base of the stack in preferably a pyramidal shape, though this is not required when for example square or rectangular cans are utilized. The cans are provided with groups of differing indicia such as color or the like. Means, such as a deck of cards or the like, is additionally provided to indicate a can having a particular indicia is to be removed from the stacked arrangement. Players take turns drawing cards or using other indicia to indicate which of the groups of cans is to be removed from the stacked array. The player then is required to remove a can from that group without toppling any additional cans. The player who acquires the most cans or points assigned to given cans would win the game. It is believed that the invention would be further understood from the following detailed description and drawings.

FIG. 1 is a pictorial representation of a preferred embodiment of this invention.

FIG. 2 is a partial front view of the stacked arrangement of FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is a perspective view particularly showing the construction of a can-shaped element used in FIGS. 1 and 2.

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of another embodiment of an element of this invention.

The herein invention is a game of skill which can be enjoyed by individuals of all age groups. As compared to the prior art game described above, the purpose of the invention is to individually remove cans or the like from a stacked array, one at a time, without causing the stack to topple. The individual elements utilized in the game will be referred to as cans. They may, however, be of various configurations, as long as they can be adequately stacked and maintained in a balanced vertical relationship.

Turning to FIGS. 1 and 2, there is seen a stacked array 11 of individual cans 13. The cans are arranged in successive horizontal rows 15. In order for the game to be successfully played, the cans of one row must be alternately disposed to the cans of the adjacent row. Thus, as seen in FIG. 2, for example, individual can 17 is seated upon the top surfaces 19 and 21, of cans 23 and 25 respectively. Can 17 is so disposed as to straddle both of the cans 23 and 25 preferably so that the weight distribution of can 17 is equally distributed between the two lower cans, or in other words, half of the base area of can 17 is located on top surface 19 of can 23 while the other half of the base of can 17 is located on surface 21 of can 25. The presence of cans 24 and 26 resting on top of can 17 also contributes to hold can 17 in position when a can below it is removed. Thus, if can 23 were removed, the weight of cans 24 and 26 hold can 17 in position. If cans 24 and 28 were also removed, can 26 would cooperate with can 25 to keep can 17 in position. The alternating effect is seen in both FIGS. 1 and 2 wherein the cans in alternating rows are in co-alignment with each other while being offset by half a can width from the cans of the immediately adjacent rows. This arrangement of the cans thus provides the balancing relationship preferably desired in order to play the herein game as will be further explained. In the embodiment shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, the cans elements 13 appear from the front of the stack to be in the shape of normal cylindrical cans for food goods or the like. The game can be played utilizing completely cylindrical cans, however, it is preferred, particularly from the standpoints of effective play of the game as well as economics and ease of manufacture, that the cans have a configuration such as shown in FIG. 3. The can of FIG. 3 may be formed of plastic or similar material such that the cross section through the can as indicated by surface 27 is comprised of a semicircular area 29 extended by a rectangular portion 31 to provide an enlarged base area so the cans can readily rest one upon another. It has been found that a semicircular portion, 29 alone, does not provide a large enough base for the cans to be sufficiently stable for satisfactory play of the game. However, by extending the semicircular portion by providing a rectangular extension 31, the desired large surface area is achieved. It is to be noted that the cans are hollow, having a pair of end wall portions 33 and a curved side wall portion 34, which provide an open rear end 35. This construction can be readily and economically injection molded by means of a straight draw two part mold. It is further advantageous in that the player can insert a finger into the opening 35 in the rear of the can to grip the can or to tap the can from the rear in removing it from the stack. In other words, a hollow can having an opening allows better gripping and control over its movement from the stack by a player. Injection molding such cans of plastic is economical and the resultant cans are lightweight, durable, and safe for handling by children.

In playing the game, the cans are in groups having differing indicia which can include color, words, or other labels or other similar means. In the particular embodiment shown, the cans are made to simulate canned vegetables. To achieve this effect, labels 37 are placed on the front of the cans in the same manner as normal can goods. The labels will serve to identify the groups of cans. Thus, as shown in FIG. 4, a single can in the game which would be utilized at the top of pyramid could have a spinach label, while the cans comprising the bottom row of the pyramid could have a label indicating beans. While it is not mandatory, as will be further explained, it is desirable that all the cans of a given group be disposed in the same row. When the game is played in accordance with this arrangement, it is then obvious that the groups of cans of the same indicia will have a diminishing number of cans for each group. Thus, for example, there would be one more can in the bottom row of beans than in the adjacent row of corn, as shown in this particular embodiment. If the game is played wherein all the cans in the same group are not disposed in the same row, then it should be ap-
parent that the number of cans in a given group is of no particular moment.

To play the game, the cans are assembled, preferably as shown in FIG. 1, according to a pre-arranged array wherein the number of cans in each group of indicia will indicate the row in which the can must be placed. A deck of cards, or other similar indicia, such as a spinner or the like, accompanies the game. The purpose of this is to indicate the group from which a can is to be removed from the stack by the player. Utilizing a deck of cards, for example, each card contains an indication of a can from a given group. For example, as shown in FIG. 1, a card 38 would indicate that a can of peas is to be removed from the stack. In this particular embodiment of the invention, a given point value is assigned to cans of a given group. For example, peas is given a 3-point value. First, in playing the game, the players take turns in drawing a card and attempting to remove a can from the group indicated by that card. They will receive the point value attributed to that can if the can is successfully removed without toppling the stack or any other cans. Of course, no point value need be given the cans and the player would merely accumulate cans with each can being attributed the same value. If a player draws a card indicating a can in a group and he feels he cannot remove a can from that group without causing a toppling, he can pass to the next player who then will draw. The players keep drawing cards, either passing or removing a can until all the cans are either removed from the stack or removal of a given can by a player attempting to remove it causes the stack to topple. When the game is completed, the winner is the player that has accumulated the most points based on the cans he has withdrawn or the player that has accumulated the most cans if no points are attributed.

Where the cans have labels or are imprinted with the indicia indicating contents such as that described with relation to FIG. 1, it is particularly desirable from a visual and aesthetic standpoint to arrange all of the cans in the same group on one line of the stack. This becomes further important when points are attributed to a particular group of cans since the points will be related to the position of those cans within the stack. However, as has been previously pointed out, the game can be readily played by completely intermixing the cans of differing groups and varying even the numbers of cans per group. For example, there can be three color groups of cans, all of equal numbers which still could be arranged in the same pyramidal fashion as shown in FIG. 1. The cards of other indicia would indicate, for example, that a yellow can is to be removed and the player could select a yellow can from any of several positions that it might be in the stacked array.

In the preferred embodiments shown in FIGS. 1 to 3, the cans have a front cylindrical surface on which a label or the like may be attached. It should be appreciated that, while the configuration of element of FIG. 3 is preferred, the elements can be rectangular or square shaped in nature as seen in FIG. 4 where a rectangular box-type element 41 is shown, which again is preferably of a hollow construction having a rear opening 43. In the particular game shown, the box element 41 could have labels of food items such as cereal, soap, or the like. When utilizing the rectangular or square boxes 41, they can be intermixed with the cylindrical can element 13 in the same game, or a game can be formulated entirely out of these box-type elements. The basic requirement in order for the game to be successfully played is that the top and bottom surfaces of the elements be flat so that they can be stacked one on top of another. The shape of the top and bottom surfaces, and the configuration of the side wall may vary, with some resultant differences in ease of removal of the element and stability of the stack during its removal. This relates to the amount of frictional or surface contact between end surfaces (and between side surfaces) and accessibility of individual elements to being reached and manipulated for their removal without disturbing adjacent elements.

We claim:

1. A game comprising:
   a plurality of elements having opposed flat end surfaces such that said elements can be stacked vertically one upon another, the end surfaces of said elements having the shape of a semi-circle extended by a rectangle,
   said elements being in groups of differing indicia, means for randomly indicating one of said groups,
   and partially enclosed curved side wall between said end surfaces extending around said semi-circle and the adjacent extending edge of the rectangle, but not around the edge of the rectangle opposite the semi-circle.

2. The game of claim 1 wherein the number of elements in each group decreases by one element from group to group such that a pyramidal vertically stacked structure can be formed with all elements of a group in the same line of said pyramid.

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