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(54) **STRATEGY GAME METHOD AND APPARATUS**

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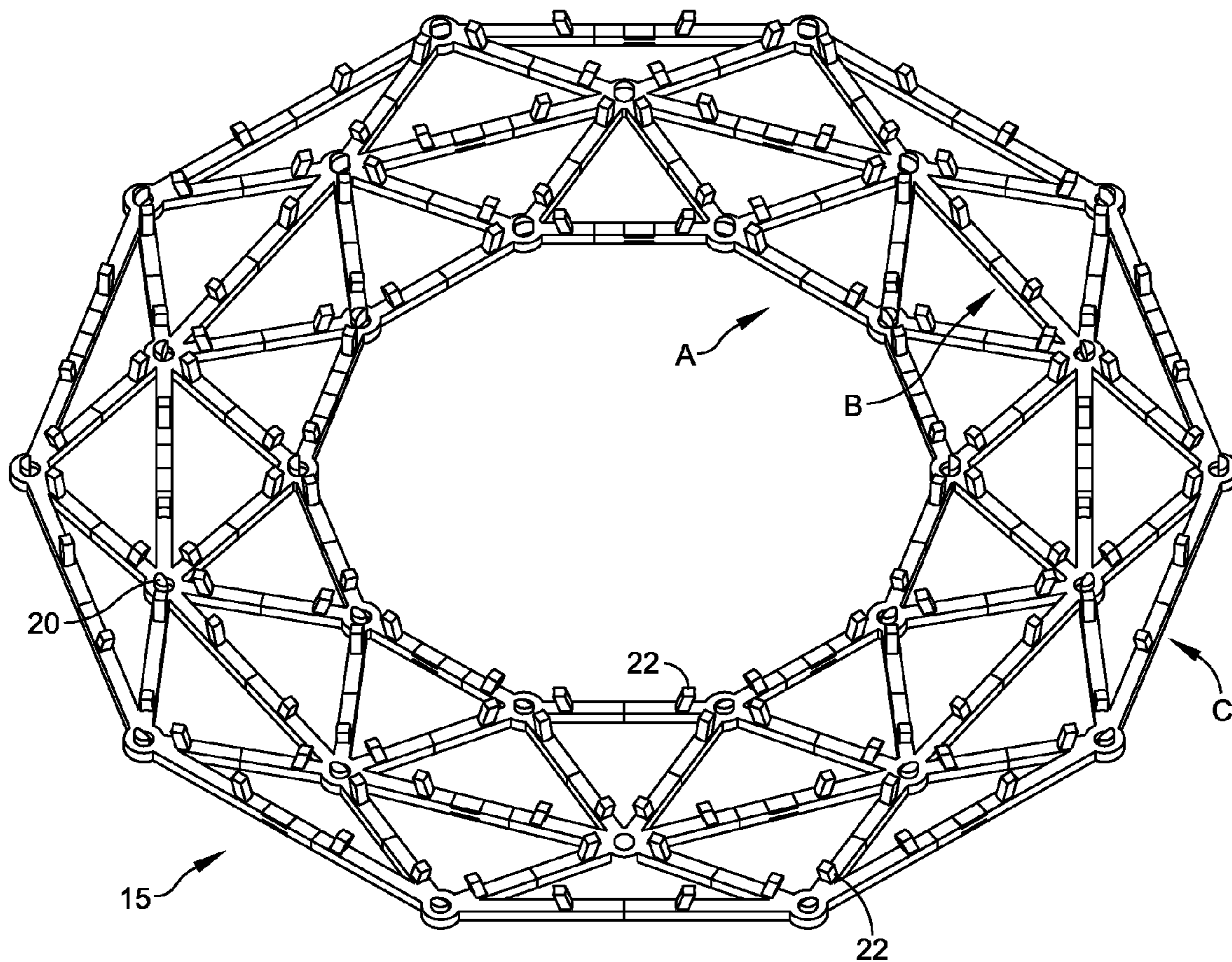
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A board game of strategy in which a plurality of player markers are strategically moved along a plurality of concentric paths along the board and where a plurality of colored interconnecting members are located between the plurality of marker positions to create a plurality of continuous paths of connecting members. Each player selects a plurality of identically colored markers, placing the plurality of identically colored markers on successive marker positions along the plurality of continuous paths. A colored dice is selected corresponding to at least one of the continuous paths of the same colored interconnecting members, the player choosing a path that includes a vacant marker position at the end of the path. The dice is rolled and one of the plurality of identically colored markers is moved the number of spaces indicated on the dice with the hope of landing on a vacant marker position. If the marker does not land on a vacant marker position the marker is removed off the game board.



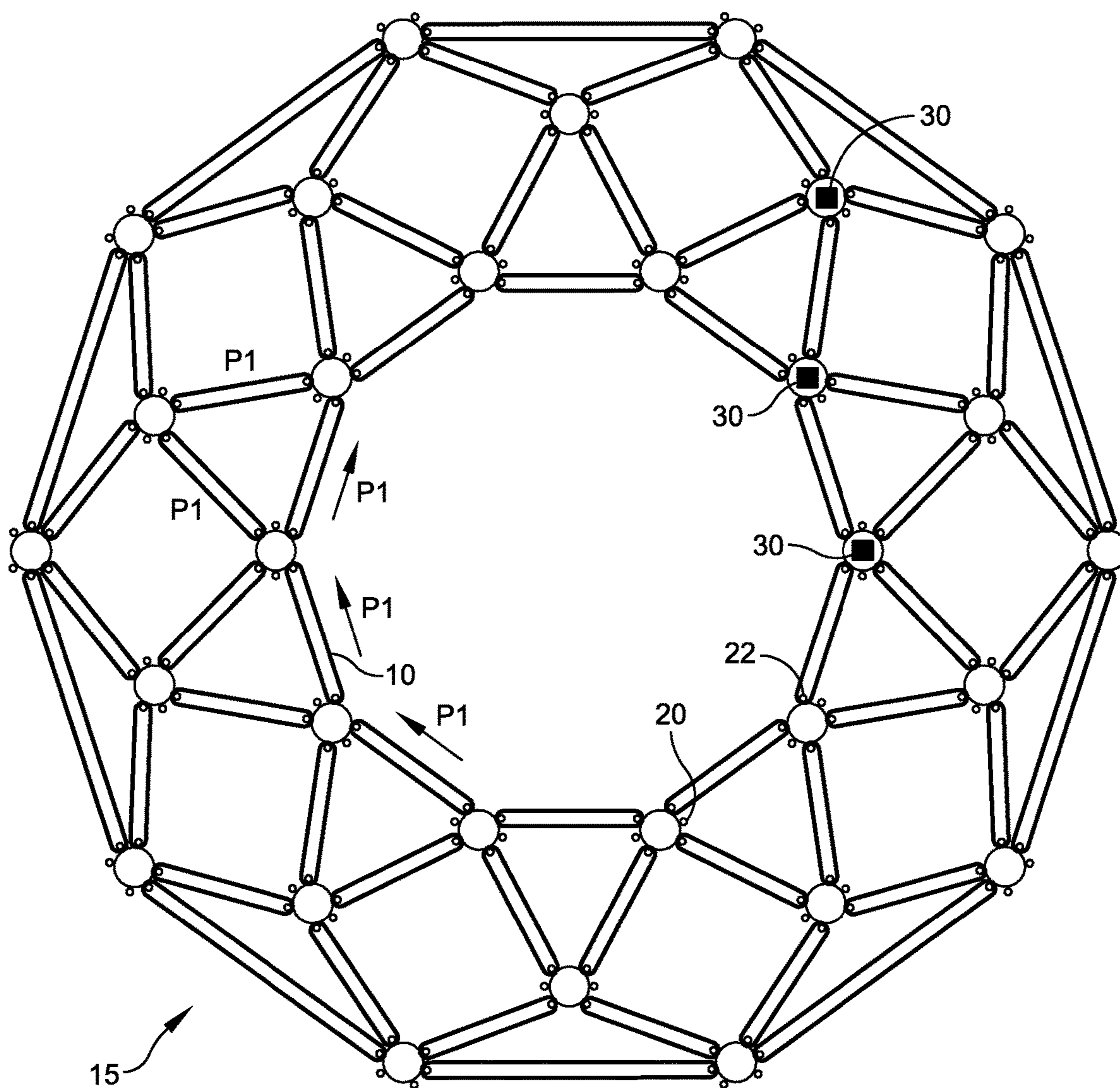


FIG. 1



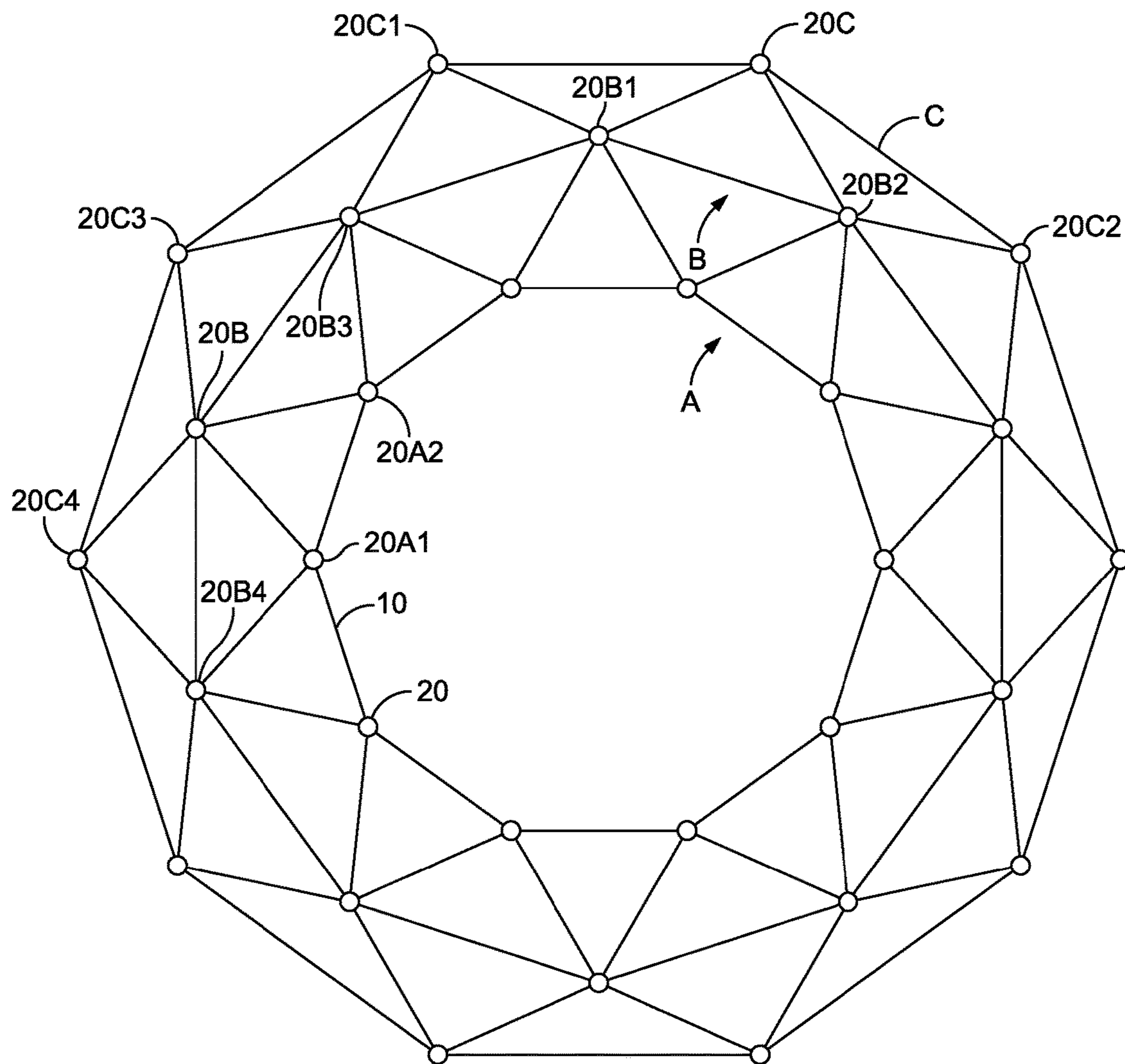


FIG. 2

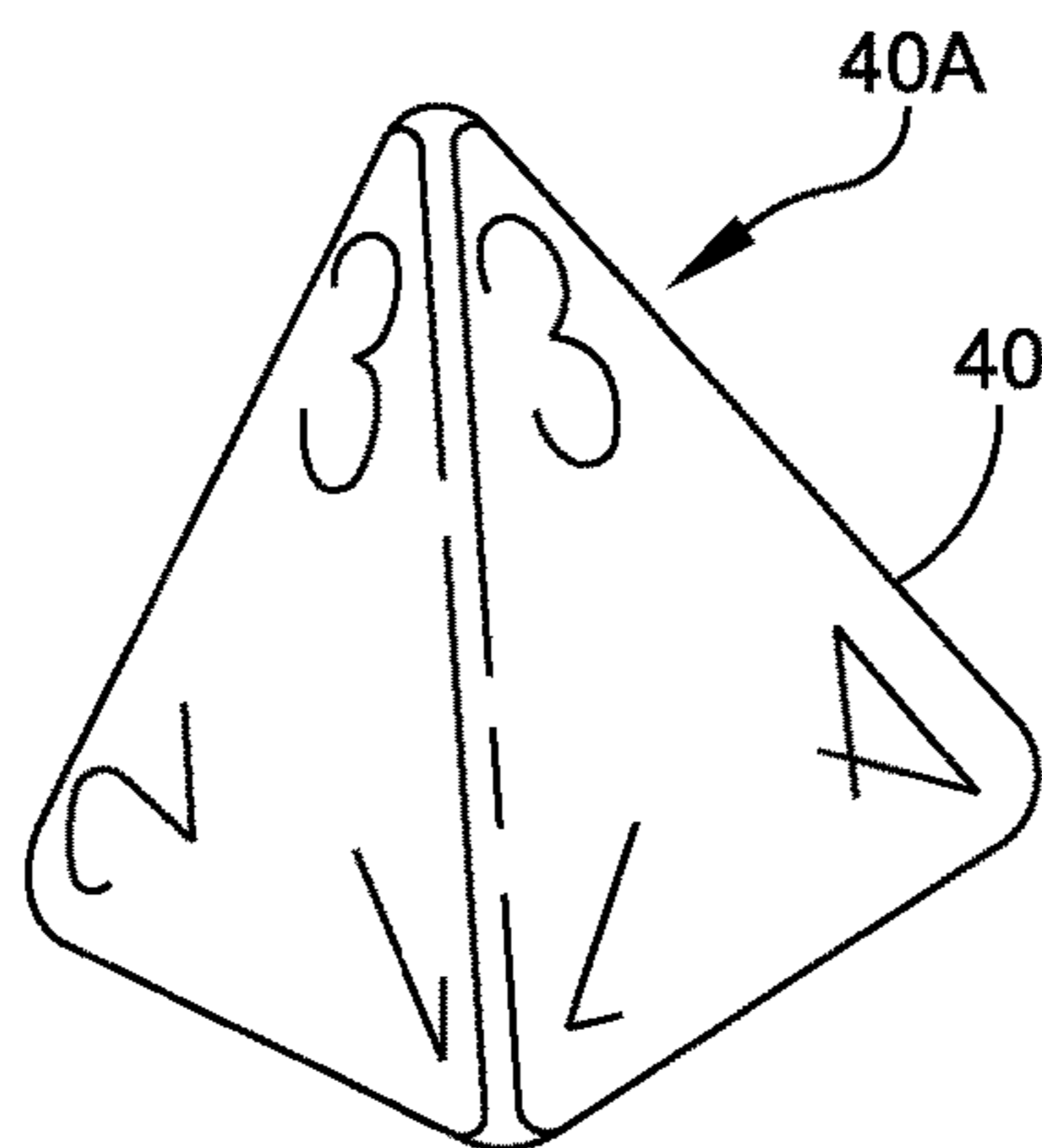


FIG. 3

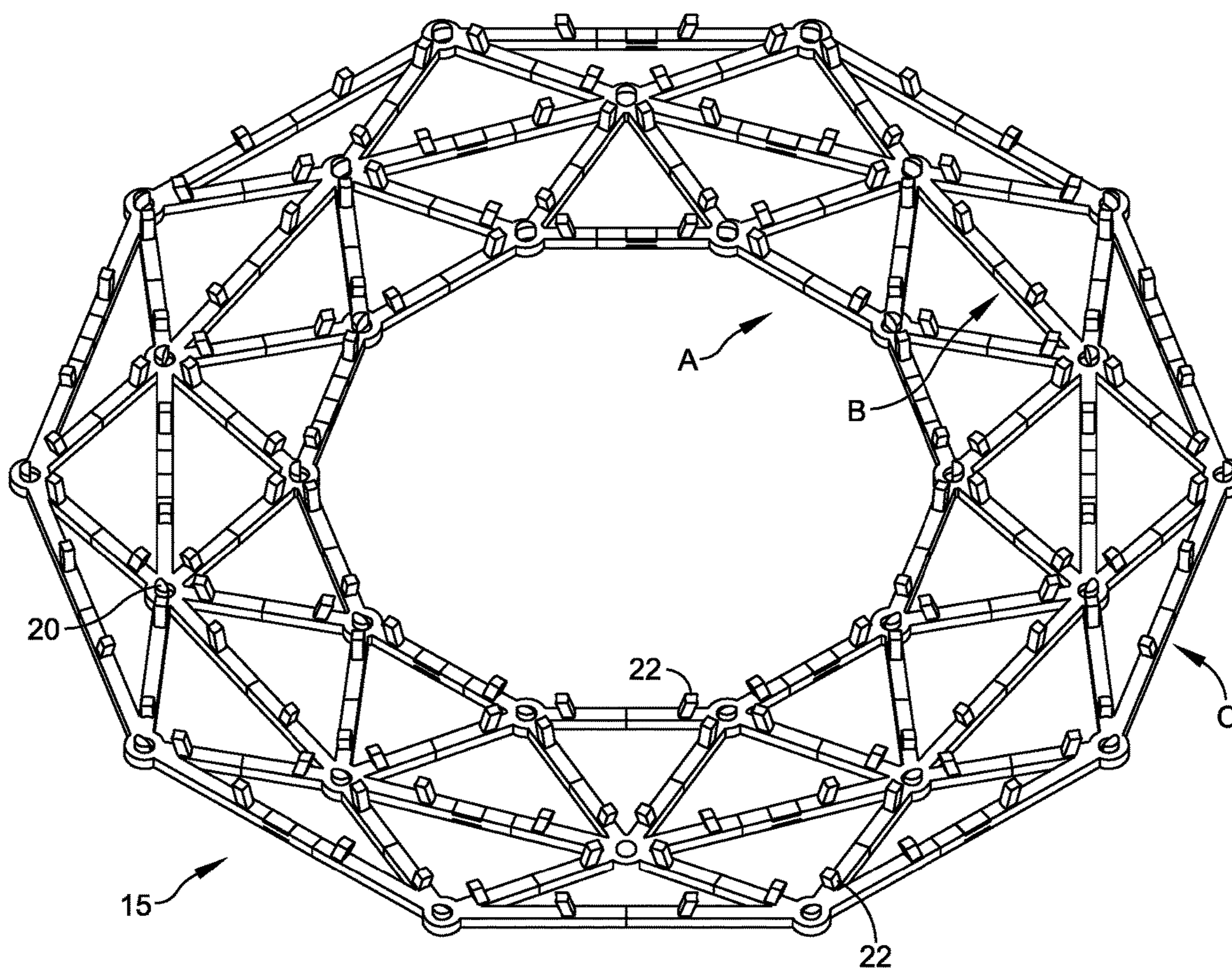


FIG. 4



## STRATEGY GAME METHOD AND APPARATUS

### FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to a game of strategy, and more particularly, pertains to a board game and a method of playing the game, in which a plurality of player markers are strategically moved along a board of interconnected colored elastics that are removed and added according to rules of play.

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Games of strategy that are played upon a game board have been popular for ages. A few examples are chess, checkers and the oriental game Go. The game boards used for such games of strategy designate an array of positions on which and between which the game pieces are moved. Such designations can either comprise a simple visual demarcation on the surface of the board such as a matrix of crossed lines, or contrasting squares such as on a typical checkerboard. Alternatively, the allowable positions can be designated by a pattern of holes or some other three-dimensional configuration. Two sets of game pieces, one for each player, are normally moved about on the game board, the two sets being somehow distinguishable from one another either by color or shape. Each set may actually be made up of a number of different pieces such as in chess, or the whole set may comprise a plurality of identical pieces such as used in checkers or Go. Typically, such game pieces are simple objects such as chips or stones but may be more embellished as in the case of the various chessmen. Invariably, in such games of strategy, two players match wits in moving two sets of game pieces about the game board in accordance with the game rules until ultimately one or the other prevails. The rules range from the extremely simple, such as a single type of move for all pieces, to the considerably more complex, wherein a hierarchy of pieces is each limited to a unique type of move under a given set of circumstances.

[0003] Since games have existed for at least the time period of recorded history, there is always a need for a new and challenging game.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0004] It is therefore an object of this invention to provide a highly challenging game of strategy utilizing a game piece with interconnected colored elastics and player markers, where the markers are moveable along the board in paths along the interconnected colored elastics based on strategy and associated game rules.

[0005] It is a further object of the present invention that a large number of positional variations and permutations are possible.

[0006] According to the present invention, the foregoing and other objects are attained by a game of strategy of the present invention in which a plurality of elastics and player markers are moved and removed about a game board or game piece in accordance with a prescribed set of rules.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] The invention is best understood from the following detailed description when read in connection with the accompanying drawings, which illustrate an embodiment of the present strategy game:

[0008] FIG. 1 is a top view of an arrangement of parts that make up the game piece of the strategy game of the present invention;

[0009] FIG. 2 is an alternative view of FIG. 1 to aid in the description of the method of play and connection paths of the strategy game;

[0010] FIG. 3 illustrates an example of dice utilized in subject strategy game;

[0011] FIG. 4 illustrates a physical embodiment of a game piece of the present strategy game.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0012] FIG. 1 illustrates an embodiment of a game piece 15 of the present invention and shows a plurality of interconnecting elastics, designated 10, positioned thereon. The game piece 15 has an array of discrete positioned marker locations 20 that includes posts 22 oriented to designate the positions of elastics 10. As indicated in FIG. 2, the post orientations are illustrated as being the connecting point of elastics 10 to marker locations 20. As illustrated in FIG. 2, a game piece 15 including full elastic placement will have three concentric circles of elastics designated A, B, and C. The elastics are stretched and secured at both ends to corresponding posts 22 (FIG. 1), and multiple elastics 10 may be stacked upon one another between the same two posts 22. The flow of elastics across the board define the paths of play of the strategy game. Although elastics 10 are disclosed as the interconnecting members other alternative structures could be utilized to accomplish the establishment of a path between corresponding posts 22.

[0013] In one embodiment, each concentric circle would include a maximum of 10 marker locations 20 along the concentric paths A, B, and C, however other numbers of marker locations 20 could be utilized. FIGS. 1 and 2 illustrate the interconnection of elastics 10 on the game piece 15 for a game utilizing the paths between all marker locations 20, however less than a full game piece 15 of interconnected elastics 10 is illustrative of typical game play. It is noted that the connection points between posts 22 are discrete as shown in FIG. 1 where each post 22 is in alignment with a corresponding post 22 in a different location on the game piece 15 for securement of elastics 22 therebetween. This alignment is necessary to form the concentric circles A, B and C of elastics 22 as described above. In FIG. 1 the game piece can be as simple as posts 22 being nails or the equivalent then secured to a backing material with elastics placed therebetween as defined above. A commercialized physical embodiment of the game piece 15 is illustrated in FIG. 4 and is illustrated without elastics 10 placed thereon. Such an embodiment may be constructed from a wood, plastic or cardboard material or equivalent and could include specialized game markers 30 (not shown) that could be snap fit into marker locations 20. Any design or configuration of posts/supporting structure to support elastic placement and provide for placement of game markers may be used. Designs are not limited to round holes or even holes at all. The prime requirement is that the supporting structure support the elastic forces of the elastics/multiple elastics placed therebetween.

[0014] In an alternate embodiment, a computerized version of the game piece can be realized where the paths between posts can be manipulated via any computerized interface or computer game implementation known in the



art. Such an implementation could be executed on a home computer system by methods known in the gaming art. Such an implementation would enable players to compete remotely via the internet. Other implementations of the game method could be envisioned as a specialized board having integrated laser means between marker locations, the manipulation of the laser defined paths being added or deleted via voice commands through a computerized system management device that could be integrated into the specialized game piece.

**[0015]** As indicated in FIG. 2, a fully set up game board can include all connected paths defined by elastics 10 according to the following rules: First, elastics placed along concentric circle C can connect to any four adjacent spaces, which include the two neighboring outside spaces and the nearest two middle concentric circle B spaces. For example, marker location 20C can have a path from 20C to 20C1, from 20C to 20C2, from 20C to 20B1, and from 20C to 20B2. These same rules apply for the placement of elastics along the innermost concentric circle A, as indicated in FIG. 2. As is evident from FIG. 2, outermost concentric circle marker location C can never connect directly to innermost concentric circle A, and vice versa. As indicated in FIG. 2, marker locations 20B, along concentric circle B can connect to any six adjacent spaces along concentric circles A, B and C. For example, marker location 20B can have a path from 20B to 20C4, 20B to 20C3, 20B to 20B3, 20B to 20B4, 20B to 20A1, and 20B to 20A2. In the preferred embodiment, the distances between adjacent spaces are constant for paths that cross over to another concentric circle (See path 20C4-20B4, 20B-20A2 Etc).

**[0016]** As illustrated in FIG. 1, marker locations 20 need to have some space for placement of a game marker 30 that gets moved along the board during play. A game marker 30 is illustrated in FIG. 1 as being placed in a marker location 20.

**[0017]** The game is begun by placing a plurality of game markers 30 and elastics 10 in a starting configuration upon the game board. For two players, each player will choose a colored set of four marker pieces. The sets of marker pieces 30 include four piece sets selected from the colors red, blue, green and yellow, although any colors may be utilized and depending on the size configuration of the game board (number of marker locations 20) more or less markers may be included in a set. In the preferred embodiment a set of markers includes four sets of markers of a specific color.

**[0018]** First, the players will set up the elastics along the game board—a typical game between two players will include 20 red, 20 blue, 20 green, and 20 yellow elastics. As illustrated in FIG. 1, and according to the aforementioned rules for placement of the elastics, the elastics are secured to the game piece 15 as illustrated in FIG. 2. When placing the elastics the players are both placing elastics to include the same color elastics along multiple paths so as to create continuous paths and/or loops. For example, and referring to FIG. 1, a typical path may include a red elastic placed along a path P1. Path P1 may include other colored elastics placed along every section of the path to define another colored path, however there can not be more than one of the same color on a path segment. For example, and referring to FIG. 2, any single path, (20C to 20C1, 20C to 20B2, Etc) can not have more than one of the same color elastics on the path segment. However, path 20C to 20C1, 20C to 20B2, Etc, may for example, contain a red, blue, green or yellow elastic.

**[0019]** There is no set way to set up the elastics, and players may each set up the paths in any random manner according to the rules of the game as described herein. All players at the beginning of the game can place the elastics on the game piece 15 at the same time prior to the game beginning. As illustrated in FIG. 1, in some cases some paths between posts 22 may be empty and such a scenario is determined by the pre-game setup chosen by the players.

**[0020]** After the elastics are set up, the players begin the game by each choosing a set of colored markers 30 (red, blue, green, yellow) and placing their markers on the marker locations 20 located between posts 22, and alternating in turn order. Players will place their markers so as to include a maximum distance between markers along valid paths. To begin the game a set of four sided Pyramid dice 40 is utilized, where each of the dice 40 colors correspond to each elastic 10 color, the elastics 10 having been placed on the game piece 15. To begin the game, a first player will evaluate the board and determine which path colors are most advantageous, that is which path colors will lead to a vacant marker space 20 that leads from a previously placed marker. From that determination, and based on a game utilizing four sets of elastic colors, a player will pick two colors, and two corresponding colored dice, that correspond to advantageous paths. The advantageous paths are those paths that lead to a vacant space 20 and contain either of the chosen two colors on every segment of the path.

**[0021]** The player next rolls the selected colored dice. After the dice lands the player will move the markers based on the dice outcome. Referring to FIG. 3, the dice 40 outcome is determined by the number 40A at the top of the pyramid. For example, if a red and blue dice is rolled, and the number on the blue is higher than the number on the red (Ex. 3 blue, 2 red), then the blue path is the path in play. The player will add the numbers from both the red and blue dice to determine the total number of spaces moved. In this example, any one of the players placed markers, will be moved a total of 5 spaces along a blue path, that is a path that has on each segment a blue elastic.

**[0022]** If the player rolls the red and blue dice and the dice outcome are both the same number, for example 3 blue and 3—red, then the player can move six spaces along a path that has either a red or blue elastic on each segment of the path. If, after a roll of the dice, and the player unsuccessfully being able to land on a vacant marker space, after evaluating all of his marker positions and paths therefrom, then one of the players markers would be removed from the game. The loser of the game is determined as the player having no more marker pieces on the board.

**[0023]** If the player successfully lands on a vacant marker space 20, then the player will next remove two elastics (to be discarded) that are attached to that space, and one of the elastics shall be one of the elastic colors travelled on to get to that space. Next, the player will pick any two elastics that are attached to that space and place them in another position on the game board—following the strategic rules for placement of elastics as previously disclosed. In this move the player may also, if desired, keep an elastic attached to the space but not in the same position. In this scenario the end of the elastic attached to the space traveled to must be moved to an alternate position on that space and the opposite end of that elastic must be moved to the corresponding post. Alternatively, both ends of that elastic may be moved to an alternate position on the board.



**[0024]** If a space traveled to has only three elastics attached to it then two would be removed from the game and only one would be moved, and if only one elastic remains attached to the space it would be removed from the game. After the first player has accomplished his move the second player will roll the dice and proceed as previously disclosed.

**[0025]** It should be understood that the foregoing description is only illustrative of the invention. Thus, various alternatives and modifications can be devised by those skilled in the art without departing from the invention. Accordingly, the present invention is intended to embrace all such alternatives, modifications and variances that fall within the scope of the appended claims.

I claim:

**1.** A game piece for use in playing a board game comprising:

- a first member having a top and bottom portion;
- a plurality of marker positions positioned in successive alignment along a plurality of concentric paths along said top portion of said first member;
- a plurality of interconnecting members, said interconnecting members being connected and removed between said plurality of concentric marker positions in accordance with board game rules.

**2.** A game piece for use in playing a board game according to claim **1**, wherein said plurality of concentric paths comprises an outermost concentric path, a middle concentric path, and an innermost concentric path, each of said concentric paths allowing for connection of said plurality of interconnecting members between said outermost concentric path and said middle concentric path, and between said innermost concentric path and said middle concentric path, but not between said outermost concentric path and said innermost concentric path.

**3.** A game piece for use in playing a board game according to claim **2**, wherein each of said plurality of successively aligned marker positions further includes a plurality of successively aligned connection points, wherein each of said plurality of successively aligned connection points are in discrete angular alignment along said plurality of concentric paths, and between said outermost concentric path and said middle concentric path, and between said innermost concentric path and said middle concentric path, but not between said outermost concentric path and said innermost concentric path.

**4.** A game piece for use in playing a board game according to claim **3**, wherein each of said plurality of interconnecting members have a first end and a second end, said first end and said second end connected between said plurality of successively aligned connection points that are in discrete angular alignment.

**5.** A game piece for use in playing a board game according to claim **4**, wherein said each of said plurality of interconnecting members may be stacked between at least one of said plurality of successively aligned connection points that are in discrete angular alignment.

**6.** A game piece for use in playing a board game according to claim **2**, wherein the distance between each of said plurality of marker positions along said plurality of concentric paths along and between said outermost concentric path and said middle concentric path, and between said innermost concentric path and said middle concentric path is constant.

**7.** A method of playing a game of strategy employing a game piece having a plurality of marker positions positioned

in successive alignment along a plurality of concentric paths, each player alternating the steps of:

- positioning a plurality of colored interconnecting members on said game board, said colored interconnecting members located between said plurality of marker positions to create a plurality of continuous paths of the same colored connecting members;
- selecting a plurality of identically colored markers, each player having a different color;
- placing said plurality of identically colored markers on successive marker positions along at least one of said plurality of continuous paths of said same colored interconnecting members, said placement continuing until all of said identically colored markers have been placed;
- selecting a colored dice corresponding to at least one of said continuous paths of the same colored interconnecting members that includes a vacant marker position at the end of said at least one of said continuous paths;
- rolling said selected colored dice;
- moving at least one of said plurality of said placed identically colored markers the number of spaces indicated on said dice after rolling, said movement continuing along at least one of said plurality of said continuous paths of said same colored interconnecting members;
- removing one of said identically colored markers off the game board if said moved colored marker fails to land on said vacant marker position.

**8.** A method of playing a game of strategy as in claim **7**, employing a game board having a plurality of marker positions positioned in successive alignment along a plurality of concentric paths:

- wherein the step of placing said plurality of identically colored markers on successive marker positions along at least one of said plurality of continuous paths of said same colored interconnecting members further includes the step of maximizing the number of markers placed on at least one of said plurality of continuous paths.

**9.** A method of playing a game of strategy as in claim **7**, employing a game board having a plurality of marker positions positioned in successive alignment along a plurality of concentric paths:

- wherein said plurality of marker positions each include a plurality of connection points, said plurality of colored interconnecting members attached between said plurality of connection points.

**10.** A method of playing a game of strategy as in claim **7**, employing a game board having a plurality of marker positions positioned in successive alignment along a plurality of concentric paths:

- wherein said continuous paths of said same colored interconnecting members includes different colored interconnecting members along the same continuous path.

**11.** A method of playing a game of strategy as in claim **7**, employing a game board having a plurality of marker positions positioned in successive alignment along a plurality of concentric paths:

- wherein said plurality of concentric paths comprises an outermost concentric path, a middle concentric path, and an innermost concentric path, each of said concentric paths allowing for connection of said plurality of colored interconnecting members between said outer-

most concentric path and said middle concentric path, and between said innermost concentric path and said middle concentric path, but not between said outermost concentric path and said innermost concentric path.

**12.** A method of playing a game of strategy as in claim **9**, employing a game board having a plurality of marker positions positioned in successive alignment along a plurality of concentric paths:

wherein said plurality of concentric paths comprises an outermost concentric path, a middle concentric path, and an innermost concentric path, each of said concentric paths allowing for connection of said plurality of colored interconnecting members between said outermost concentric path and said middle concentric path, and between said innermost concentric path and said middle concentric path, but not between said outermost concentric path and said innermost concentric path.

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