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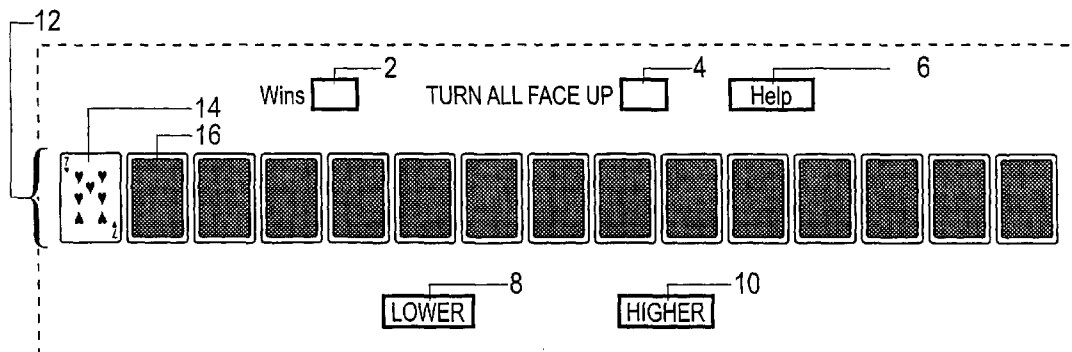
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(54) Title: CASINO-STYLE GAME APPARATUS INVOLVING PLAYER GUESSING



(57) Abstract: A method of playing a card game wherein gamers must guess numerous consecutive cards whether the following card will be lower or higher than the last card. A particular embodiment of this game is to play it on an electronic gaming device as a secondary game where the winnings of the primary game are used to fund bets for the secondary game. The preferred game display consists of presenting on a single row the thirteen (13) cards of a same suit of a standard card deck, all the thirteen (13) cards turned face down, and to turn the first to the left card face up when the gamer has decided to play. The gamer has to guess whether the following card to be turned will be lower or higher than that of the card displayed. If the gamer succeeds to pass through guessing right the whole thirteen (13) cards, a prize is awarded.

WO 01/83056 A1

CASINO-STYLE GAME APPARATUS INVOLVING PLAYER GUESSING

FIELD OF INVENTION

5 The present invention relates to a casino-style game, such as a card game, which provides player involvement by inputting guesses and a satisfactory level of fast play. Furthermore, the preferred environment is to apply the card game to electronic gaming devices.

10 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

 Gambling games are not new. Gambling games have existed for centuries. However, even if some games are very old, they continue to be popular. The perfect example of this is Poker games. Poker games were played long ago and will still be played far into the future. The reason why poker games are still so
15 popular is that these games depend on strategy developed by gamers. The outcome of the game depends on the know-how and the experience of the gamers. Therefore, some gamers search for games presenting strategic choices such as Poker games.

 Particularly with games applied to electronic gaming devices, designers
20 have added features, such as bonus features, double up features, fever features, etc. to increase the interest of the games. These features have the advantage of changing the rhythm of the game, therefore avoiding monotony.

 Different kinds of games and features have been used since the beginning of electronic gaming devices: instant bonus wins, awards multiplier of different
25 kinds, progressive jackpots, fever round in the primary game with slightly different rules, etc.

 One award multiplier especially related to the present invention is the double up feature that demands gamer to guess whether the next card will be higher or lower than the current card displayed on the screen. Other double up
30 aspects have also been used, such as a red or black choice. However, the basics of this feature is essentially to offer gamers a choice between two events with even probabilities of occurrence. Further, by allowing to double the bet of the winning gamers, and enabling a loss of all bets to the losing gamers, the payoff of

- 2 -

the additional feature is essentially 100%.

The principle of giving gamers a possibility to place a bet regarding whether the next card will be a higher or a low card and rewarding gamers for their good guess is not limited to features available in secondary screens but is also used in many primary games. Typical examples are Hofberg et al.'s game (U.S. Patent no. 5,431,407) wherein gamers can place numerous bets on future cards including "low-ace thru six" and "hi-8 thru king" bets, and DiMuro's game (U.S. Patent no. 5,918,884) wherein gamers have high/low bets possibilities also.

During the last decade, electronic gaming devices have become more and more important in the industry. They have the advantage of being easy to install where no other gambling devices could be installed. It is easy to install electronic gaming devices in a Bingo hall, but almost impossible to have a Blackjack table. The law tolerates electronic gaming devices in multiple environments other than casinos. This is the primary reason of their popularity.

However, limitations are encountered with electronic gaming devices. Operators do not want to pay large amounts for the purchase of these devices. Therefore, to limit their cost, electronic gaming devices have limited processor possibilities and memory available. Consequently, a reason for the strong popularity for the double up feature as a secondary screen feature on electronic gaming devices is its need for little available memory. Bonus round features with high quality graphics and numerous animations demand much more memory and power from the processor of the electronic gaming device, leaving less memory available for other games and features. But double up features do not need new graphics; if the primary game is a card game, it uses the same cards, if not, the double up feature demands only two symbols to be used. Moreover, in both cases the double up feature does not require important computing possibilities.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is the object of the invention to offer a new card game offering challenge to the gamers.

Another object is to offer a game easy to understand, easy to master, and easy to play. Therefore, the object is to allow game designers to place the card game of the invention as a secondary screen feature. Furthermore, the object is

meant to allow gamers to understand quickly the rules of the game and the best choice to make at each step of the game.

Another object is to offer a game demanding few resources to be used. Therefore, the game can be installed as an additional feature in association with an existing game played on an electronic gaming device. Furthermore, the game
5 of the invention increases the suspense on the whole game, changes the rhythm of the game, therefore increase the interest of the gamers and helps to avoid monotony to the gamers playing the primary game.

Accordingly, the card game of the present invention is a game wherein
10 gamers must guess whether the next card will be a higher or lower card than the actual card showing. Furthermore, the process of the game demands gamers to pass through a whole suit of predetermined cards to win a play, thus be awarded a prize.

The cards used to play the game consists of the same cards as the one
15 used in the primary game, in the case of the primary game being a card game. Furthermore, only part of the cards are used. The cards used are predetermined for the play and known by the gamer.

The probability of success in passing through the whole series of cards therefore depends on both the capacity of analysing the situation by the gamers
20 to determine the choice having the greater probability of occurring, and the sequence of the cards randomly determined. Even if the choices the gamers have to make are simple, the game remains interesting because of random given situations occurring during the fall of the cards. A situation can appear simple, however knowing the cards already uncovered, thus the cards still available, the
25 choice becomes harder.

Furthermore, contrary to the standard game, a guess whether the next card is higher or lower, this game offers increased probabilities to the gamers at each step of the process for success. However, because there are multiple steps to pass through to win the play, the gamers see themselves offered higher odds
30 than the regular odds associated with standard double up games; the odds increase in relation to the number of steps gamers must pass through. Consequently, the game offers more interest to gamers.

The preferred embodiment for this game consists of offering to gamers to pass through a single set of cards of the same suite, i.e. the thirteen (13) cards from the ace to the king of diamond per example. The cards are displayed on the screen of the electronic gaming device in random order, all cards face down
5 except the furthest to the left. Afterwards, the gamer guesses whether the next card will be higher or lower than the card face up. If the gamer makes the wrong decision, they lose. Otherwise, the gamer passes to the next card and must compare the card to the last card turned face up. If the gamer guesses right for the twelve (12) cards initially faced down, the gamer is awarded the prize.
10 Otherwise, the gamer loses their bet.

However, in other applications, the use of a card deck can be replaced by other gaming symbols according to the environment of play, or what pleases players. With the use of other gaming symbols than card game, the ranking of the cards should be clear and easy to remember for players.

15 These and other aspects and advantages of the present invention will become better understood as seen in the following description and accompanying drawings, herein:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

20 Figure 1 is a schematic representing the card game of the present invention according to the first embodiment;

Figure 2 is another schematic representing the card game of the present invention in figure 1 in the process of play;

Figure 3 is a flow chart of the game according to the first embodiment;

25 Figure 4 is a block diagram according to the first embodiment; and

Figure 5 is another schematic representing the card game according to another embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

30 The preferred embodiment consists of playing the game on an electronic gaming device, also known as a gaming apparatus. Moreover, the embodiment consists of offering the game as a secondary feature associated with the primary game. To have access to the secondary game, the gamer must win in the primary

game. Therefore, the gamer is offered to gamble their winnings from the primary game in the secondary game. The process looks similar to the double up feature present in association with many games found on many electronic gaming devices.

5 Furthermore, the elements of the game are thirteen (13) cards of the same suite, the furthest to the left displayed face up and the others displayed face down. The gamer guesses whether the next card will be higher or lower than the card displayed face up. Depending if the guess of the gamer is the wrong or the right one, the gamer sees the play end with the loss of the winnings they have
10 won in the primary game or the play continues until all the cards are turned face up, or the gamer guesses incorrectly.

 When all the cards have been turned successfully, the gamer is awarded a prize corresponding to the odds awarded for the secondary feature game multiplied by the winnings the gamer won in the primary game. However, even if
15 the gamer sees strong interest in the secondary game, the gamer cannot play multiple plays in sequence of the secondary game. To play the secondary game, gamers need to win a prize in the primary game, and afterwards can bet these winnings in the secondary game. Consequently, gamers sees playing the secondary game as an opportunity and boredom is avoided.

20 To more clearly illustrate the play of the secondary game of the present invention, figure 1 shows a secondary screen of an electronic gaming device showing the secondary game after the gamer has chosen to play the secondary game. The secondary screen displayed on the electronic gaming device shows the winnings **2** won in the primary game and used as a bet in the secondary
25 game. Also, the value **4** of succeeding to turn all cards face up, therefore succeeding to pass through the whole game, is displayed. This value **4** automatically changes in regards to the winnings **2**. Additionally, a help control **6** is displayed giving access to another screen displaying all the information the gamers need to understand the game, therefore to play it efficiently. On the lower
30 part of the screen are displayed two (2) controls; a lower control **8** and a higher control **10** used by the gamer to guess for the next card. Furthermore, in the centre of the screen are displayed the thirteen (13) cards **12** in a random order.

The furthest card to the left **14** is displayed face up. This card is the evaluation value used to compare the next **16** card after being turn face up.

To illustrate the process of playing the game, table 1 shows a particular sequence of play. In this sequence of play, the gamer sees the first card turned up be a seven (7). It is the most difficult card a gamer can begin with. The reason is that the probabilities of the next card being lower are the same as is for it being higher. However, in this example, the gamer guesses correctly. Subsequently, they can guess again until they win or lose. In the example, the gamer guesses right all the time. Then, they receive a prize according to the bet. However, table 1 shows that some steps are easier than other. For example, the step number 2 is to guess whether the next card will be higher or lower than the jack that was face up. If the gamer thinks a little, they will count that only two cards are available to be next card in the higher cards: the queen and the king. Beside, the lower cards being in greater number, the ace to the 10 except the 7 that is already face up, therefore not available. Consequently, even if the number of steps to pass through to win the game is numerous, most of them offer very good odds of success.

Example 1:

Table 1 shows the different steps regarding this example when the gamer decides the category of the next card.

Step	Last card	Choice	Card turned up	Result
0	-	-	7	-
1	7	Higher	Jack	Continue
2	Jack	Lower	2	Continue
3	2	Higher	8	Continue
4	8	Higher	King	Continue
5	King	Lower	6	Continue
6	6	Lower	3	Continue
7	3	Higher	10	Continue
8	10	Lower	Ace	Continue
9	Ace	Higher	4	Continue
10	4	Higher	5	Continue
11	5	Higher	Queen	Continue
12	Queen	Lower	9	Win

Table 1: Sequence of cards and associated guesses for example 1

To clearly illustrate, in more detail the process of playing the game, figure 2 illustrates the same screen than that of figure 1 some steps further into play. In this illustration, the gamer has already passed through five (5) steps of the play. Consequently, the gamer sees in front of them six (6) cards **14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24** turned face up; the initial card **14** and one card for each of the five (5) steps **16, 18, 20, 22, 24** that were guessed successfully. At this time, the last card turned face up **24** is the six (6). With the six (6) cards turned face up **14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24**, the played can decide with more chance of success whether the next card **26** is higher or lower. In a regular double up game, if a gamer compares an unknown card to a six (6), the gamer knows that five (5) cards are lower: the ace to the five (5). Consequently, they know also that seven (7) cards are higher. However, with the present game, the gamer can count the cards already displayed and therefore deduct the probabilities for the lower or higher cards. In this case, only the two (2) **18** has been displayed in the lower cards, therefore one (1) out of five (5) cards. Furthermore, five (5) cards have been displayed before the six (6). Therefore, there are only six (6) cards available to be displayed. With four (4) cards lower still available, the best choice is to guess that the next card would be lower.

To succeed in guessing right all the time, the gamers are awarded ten (10) times the original bet won in the primary game.

To clarify more so, the flow chart in figure 3 presents the steps of playing the present game. In the beginning, the gamer winnings a prize in the primary game. To play the secondary game, the gamer activates a control informing the electronic gaming device 28 of their choice. Then, the screen of the electronic gaming device changes to display the secondary game. In the secondary game display screen, the first thing the gamer sees is thirteen cards face down. To allow the gamer to know what they their choices are, the gamer can go to the help control to understand better how to play the secondary game, and can also decide to exit the secondary game without losing any winnings from the primary game. However, when the gamer decides to play the game, they press the play button on the electronic gaming device, therefore turning the first card face up 30. Then the gamer guesses 32 whether the next card will be higher or lower than the last one. To guess, the gamer press one of two controls; the higher card control or the lower card control. When a control has been pressed, the next card is turned face up 34 and compared 36 to the last card turned face up. If the guess is bad, the gamer loses their winnings 42 won in the primary game. The screen change to the primary game allowing the gamer to go back to play the primary game 44 again. However, if it is a successful guess and cards turned down are still available 38, the gamer must guess again for the next card 32. Afterwards, the process continues until all the cards have been turned face up. When all the cards have been guessed correctly, the gamer is awarded a prize 40 according to the primary winnings. Then, the play returns to the primary game 44.

The block diagram in figure 4 illustrates the system. First a credit controller 46 receives the credit value from a gamer. These credit are used to place bets in the primary game. Afterwards, the game controller 48 plays and evaluates the game to its final outcome. Depending whether the outcome is a win or a loss, the gamer is awarded a prize 50 that they can gamble again in the secondary game as their choice. When choosing to gambling their winnings, the gamer goes in the secondary game screen offering them to play the game. The play of the secondary game is controlled by the second game controller 52 to the secondary

game final outcome. Subsequently and depending whether the gamer succeeds passing through the whole process of the game or not, the gamer is awarded a secondary prize by the secondary prize awarding controller **54** corresponding to a multiple of the winnings of the primary game, or nothing. The prize is then added
 5 by the credit controller **46** to the credits of the gamer and available for future plays of the primary game.

Another embodiment consists of having this secondary game with slight changes in the rules and with a multiple step payoff. For this embodiment, the fall of the first card is not random; but it is always a seven (7). Gamers are awarded if
 10 they succeed to turn up a minimum of four cards without guessing wrong, and they receive a bigger prize if they succeed to turn up all the cards, but loose their bet if they do not succeed to guess successfully the four cards. An example of this embodiment, table 2 shows the pay table associated with this game.

Successful guesses	Odds
0 to 3	0 x
4 to 10	1 x
All	8 x

15 Table 2: Pay table of the example2

For this second embodiment of the game of the invention, the process of playing the game is the same. Furthermore, the display allowing gamers to play the secondary game is almost the same. The only difference is the display of the
 20 available prizes the gamer can be awarded. In the first embodiment, the gamer is offered only one prize. additionally, in the second embodiment, there are two different prizes: one for succeeding to guess four (4) to ten (10) cards, and one when succeeding with all the cards.

A third embodiment consists to a similar game with an undetermined set of
 25 cards. In detail, when the gamers goes in the secondary game and begin a play, they do not know in advance all the cards taking part in the game. One play can be comprised of some cards and the following play can be comprised of a totally different set of cards, or even a set of cards with some cards common to the first

set. However, with this method, it is impossible for gamers to know in advance the cards they will have to guess before beginning the play. Nevertheless, when the play begins, all the cards taking part in play are displayed on the screen, therefore allowing gamers to determine the best guesses as in the first two embodiments.

5 Figure 5 illustrates this embodiment. The cards being part of the secondary game are in two separate areas; the reference area **56** and the play area **58**. The cards in the reference area **56** are turned face up and the cards in the play area **58** are face down. Furthermore the card information, the help control **6**, the high card control **10** and the low card control **8** are on the screen of play. Furthermore, 10 the amount of the winnings from the primary game are still displayed addition to the value of the prize for successfully uncovering one (1) line **60** or two (2) lines **62**. Previous to the beginning of the play, the gamer chooses with the one (1) line control **64** or the two (2) lines control **66** the number of lines expected to guess correctly. Besides the choice of the number of lines, the first card of the first line 15 **68** is turned face up to allow the gamer use of a card to compare and guess whether the next card is higher or lower than the face up card.

A possible added option to the game to increase the confidence of the gamers is to randomly display some cards in the set, therefore allowing the gamer to decrease the number of guesses necessary. Depending on the cards 20 displayed, the gamer can avoid some situations where the guess would have been more difficult. An example is if a card originally turned face up is a king, and during the process of the play the card preceding is a seven (7). Normally, it would be difficult to guess with good probabilities of a right next card. However, because the following card is known, the choice is easy.

25 Moreover, the method of play can still be applied with a multiple steps pay table. Furthermore, the game can be divided into multiple steps clearly defined on the play screen of the electronic gaming device.

The description of the above embodiments of the present invention has been presented for the purpose of illustration and is not intended to limit the 30 invention. The scope of the present invention is defined by appended claims. Various modifications and changes may be made without departing from the scope of the invention as set forth in appending claims.

CLAIMS

1. An apparatus for playing a casino-type game, the apparatus comprising:
 - a selection device for selecting an arrangement of a plurality of gaming symbols having a predetermined ranking value;
 - a player input device for selecting one of at least an increase and a decrease in ranking value of a gaming symbol between a selected one of said gaming symbols and a neighbouring one of said gaming symbols;
 - a display generator generating a display of at least ones of said gaming symbols whose increase or decrease in ranking value has been selected; and
 - a prize calculator determining whether said selected increase or decrease in ranking value is correct with respect to said selected one of said gaming symbols and said neighbouring one of said gaming symbols for each of said gaming symbols, and outputting a prize value.

2. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said gaming symbols are playing cards.

3. The apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein said arrangement of a plurality of gaming symbols comprises a row of said playing cards.

4. The apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein said playing cards are selected from a single deck.

5. The apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein said playing cards are selected from a single suit of a single deck.

6. The apparatus as claimed in claim 3, 4 or 5, wherein said display generator displays simultaneously a plurality of parallel ones of said rows, each said row representing a single game segment, and said prize calculator determining a prize after each game segment is played.

- 12 -

7. The apparatus as claimed in claim 6, wherein a first card in said row of playing cards is displayed as overturned on said display, said player input device, said display generator and said prize calculator being operative to allow a player to select whether a next card is of higher or lower value than a previous card, following which said next card is displayed as overturned, until all cards in said row are overturned.

8. The apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein said prize value is zero unless said selected increase or decrease in ranking value is correct for all cards in said row.

9. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said selection device selects said arrangement at random.

10. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said display generator generates a display of at least one of said gaming symbols independently from increase or decrease in ranking value of said gaming symbols being selected.

11. A method of calculating a prize in a casino-type game, the method comprising:

selecting an arrangement of a plurality of gaming symbols having a predetermined ranking value;

selecting one of at least an increase and a decrease in ranking value of a gaming symbol between a selected one of said gaming symbols and a neighbouring one of said gaming symbols;

generating a display of at least ones of said gaming symbols whose increase or decrease in ranking value has been selected;

determining whether said selected increase or decrease in ranking value is correct with respect to said selected one of said gaming symbols and said neighbouring one of said gaming symbols for each of said gaming symbols; and

calculating a prize value based on said determining.

12. The method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said gaming symbols are playing cards.
13. The method as claimed in any one of claims 11 or 12, wherein said arrangement of a plurality of playing symbols comprises a row of said playing symbols.
14. The method as claimed in claim 12, wherein said playing cards are selected from a single deck.
15. The method as claimed in claim 12, wherein said playing cards are selected from a single suite of a single deck.
16. The method as claimed in claim 13, wherein said arrangement comprises a plurality of parallel ones of said rows, each said row representing a single game segment, with calculating a said prize value after each said game segment is played.
17. The method as claimed in any one of claims 11 to 16, wherein said arrangement of gaming symbols are selected at random.
18. The method as claimed in any one of claims 13 or 16, wherein said prize value is zero unless said selected increase or decrease is correct for all said gaming symbols in said row.
19. The method as claimed in any one of claims 11 to 18 wherein the said method is executed automatically in an electronic gaming device.
20. A computer program comprising code means adapted to perform all steps of any one of claims 11 to 18, embodied on a computer readable medium.

21. A computer program comprising code means adapted to perform all steps of any one of claims 11 to 18, embodied on an electrical or electro-magnetic signal.

22. A gaming device comprised of

- a betting controller receiving information from a gamer, further said information being interpreted as bets;
- a game controller generating signals representing outcomes in the game;
- a display controller displaying a representation of said signals on a gaming display;
- a prize awarding means to award prizes according to said outcomes and said bets; and

wherein said game device executes the steps defined in any one of claims 11 to 18.

Fig. 1

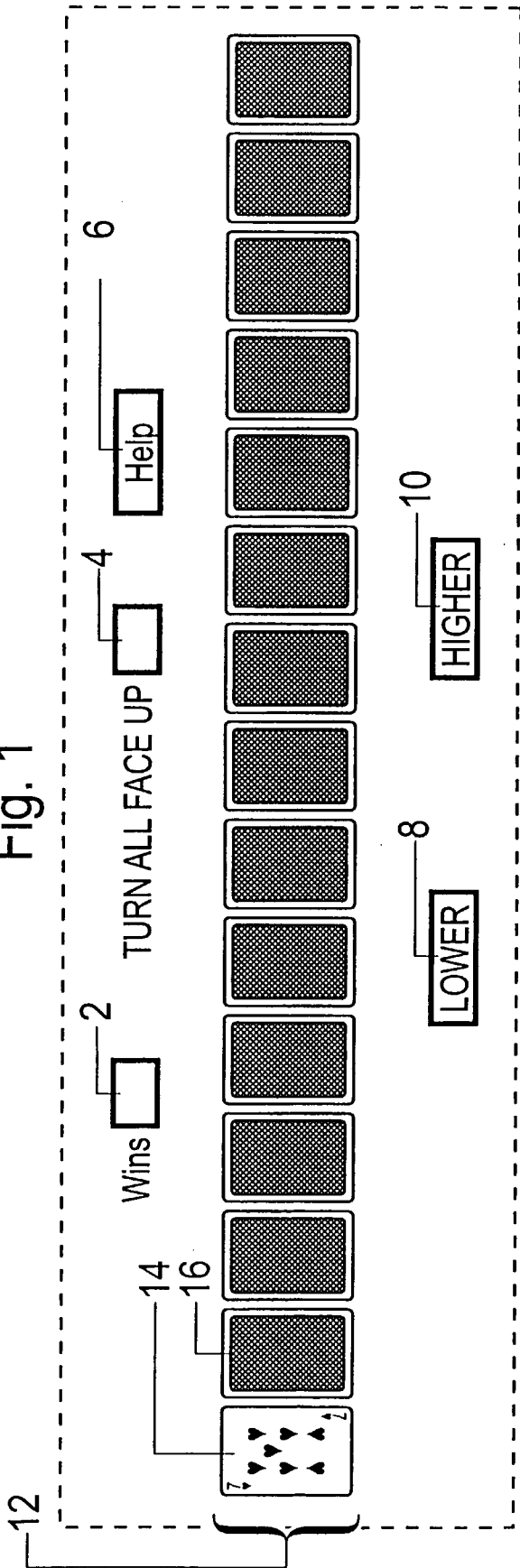


Fig. 2

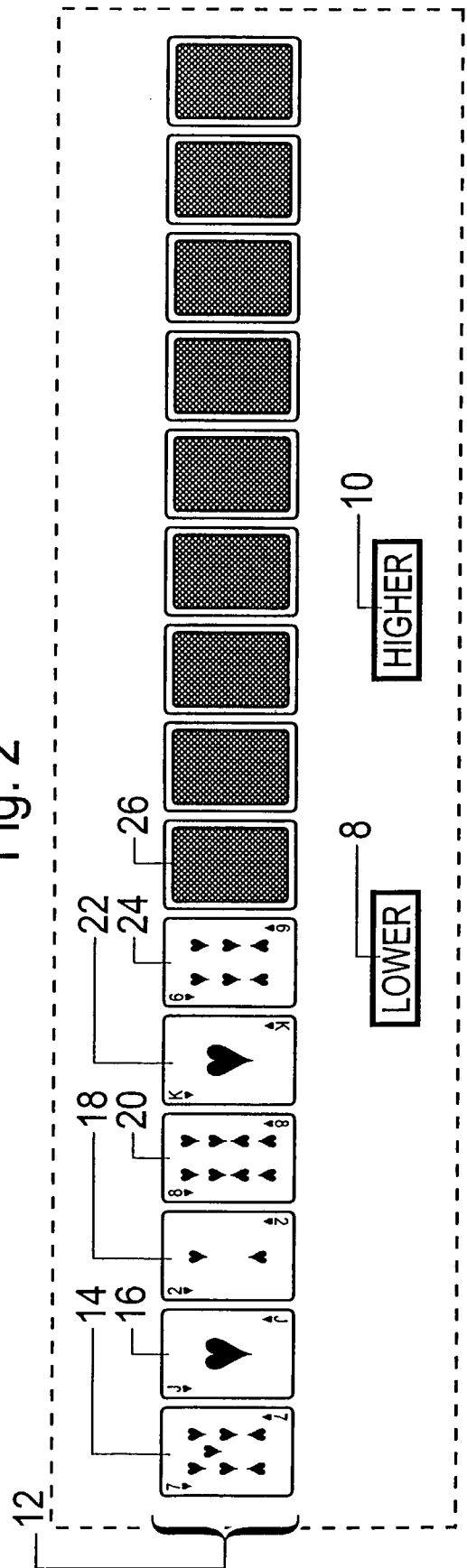


Fig. 3

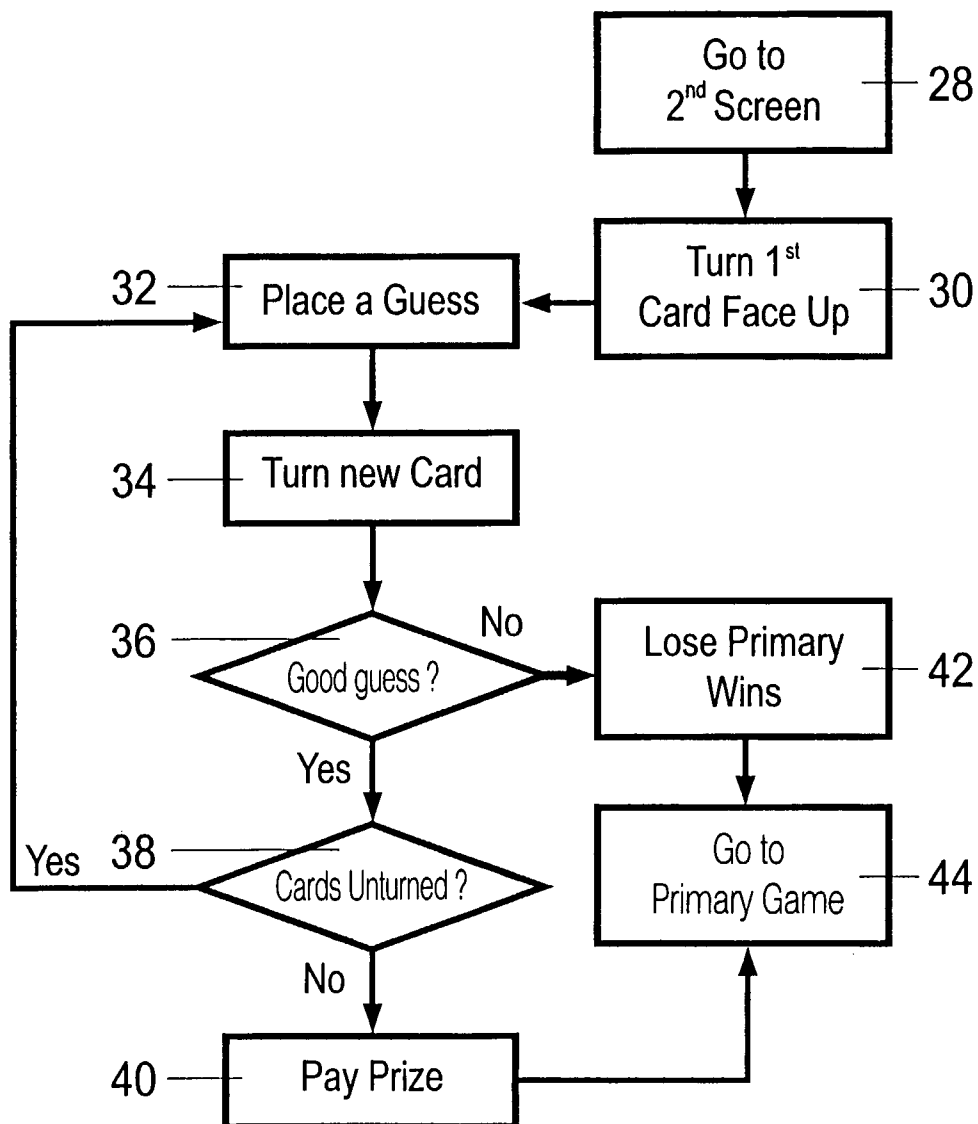


Fig. 4

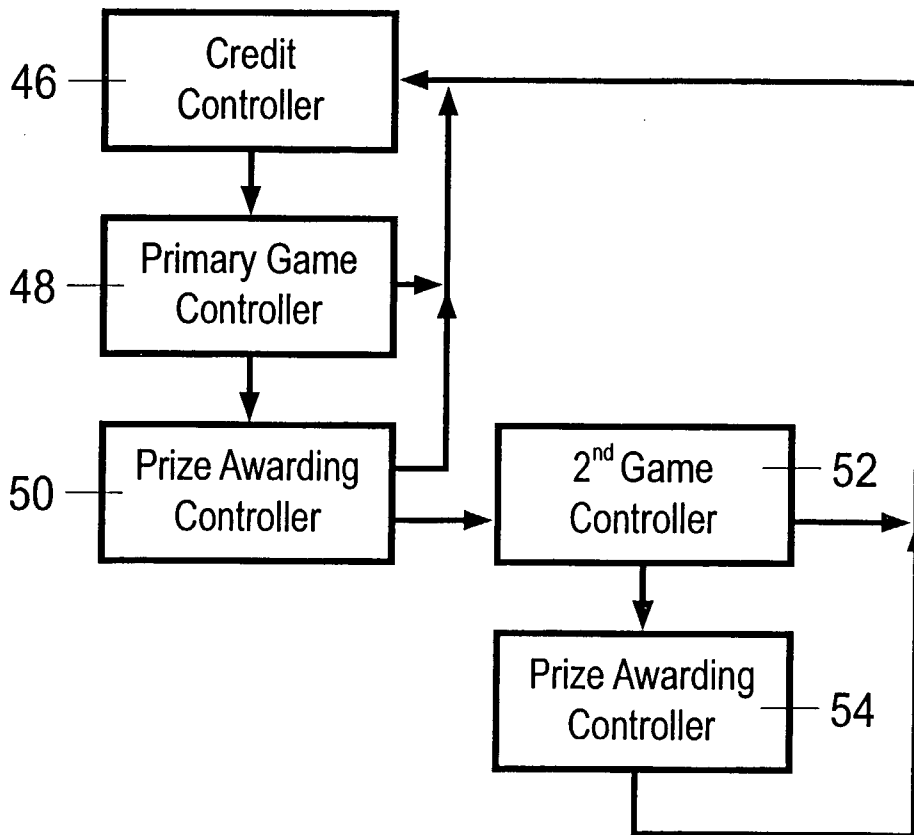
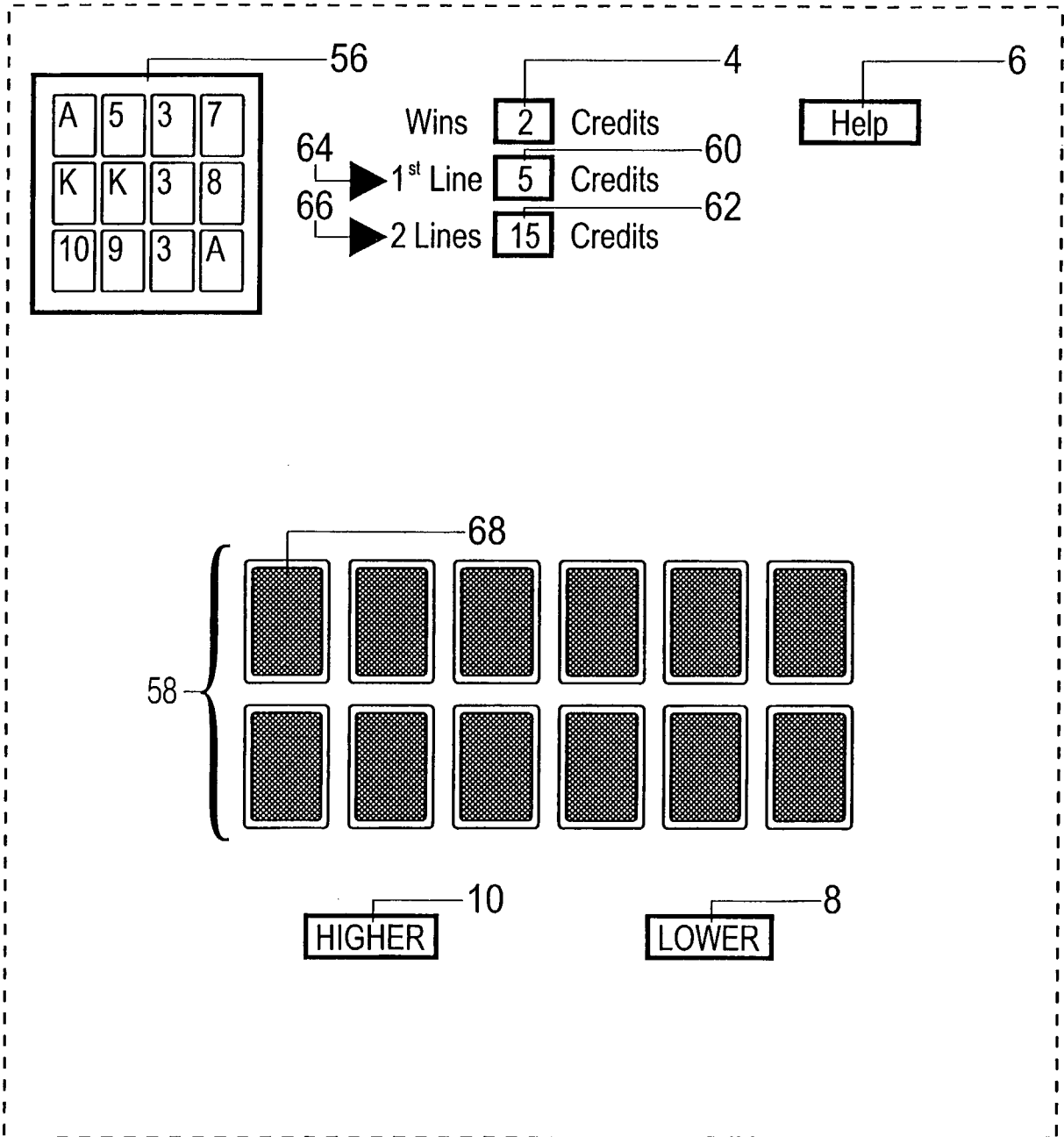


Fig. 5



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/CA 01/00600

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER IPC 7 A63F3/00		
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
B. FIELDS SEARCHED		
Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) IPC 7 A63F G07F		
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 practical, search terms used) EPO-Internal, WPI Data, PAJ		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US 5 431 407 A (HOFBERG ET AL.) 11 July 1995 (1995-07-11) cited in the application column 2, line 67 - column 3, line 2 column 3, line 32 - line 47 column 5, line 22 - line 30 column 6, line 4 - line 8 column 7, line 56 - line 58 claim 12	1-10,22
Y	WO 00 16866 A (SHUFFLE MASTER) 30 March 2000 (2000-03-30) page 3, line 20 - line 27 claim 39	1-10,22

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patent family members are listed in annex.
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Date of the actual completion of the international search 28 September 2001		Date of mailing of the international search report 08/10/2001
Name and mailing address of the ISA European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016		Authorized officer Raybould, B

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C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 5 918 884 A (DI MURO) 6 July 1999 (1999-07-06) cited in the application column 3, line 14 - line 38; figures -----	1

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT
Information on patent family members

national Application No PCT/CA 01/00600
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