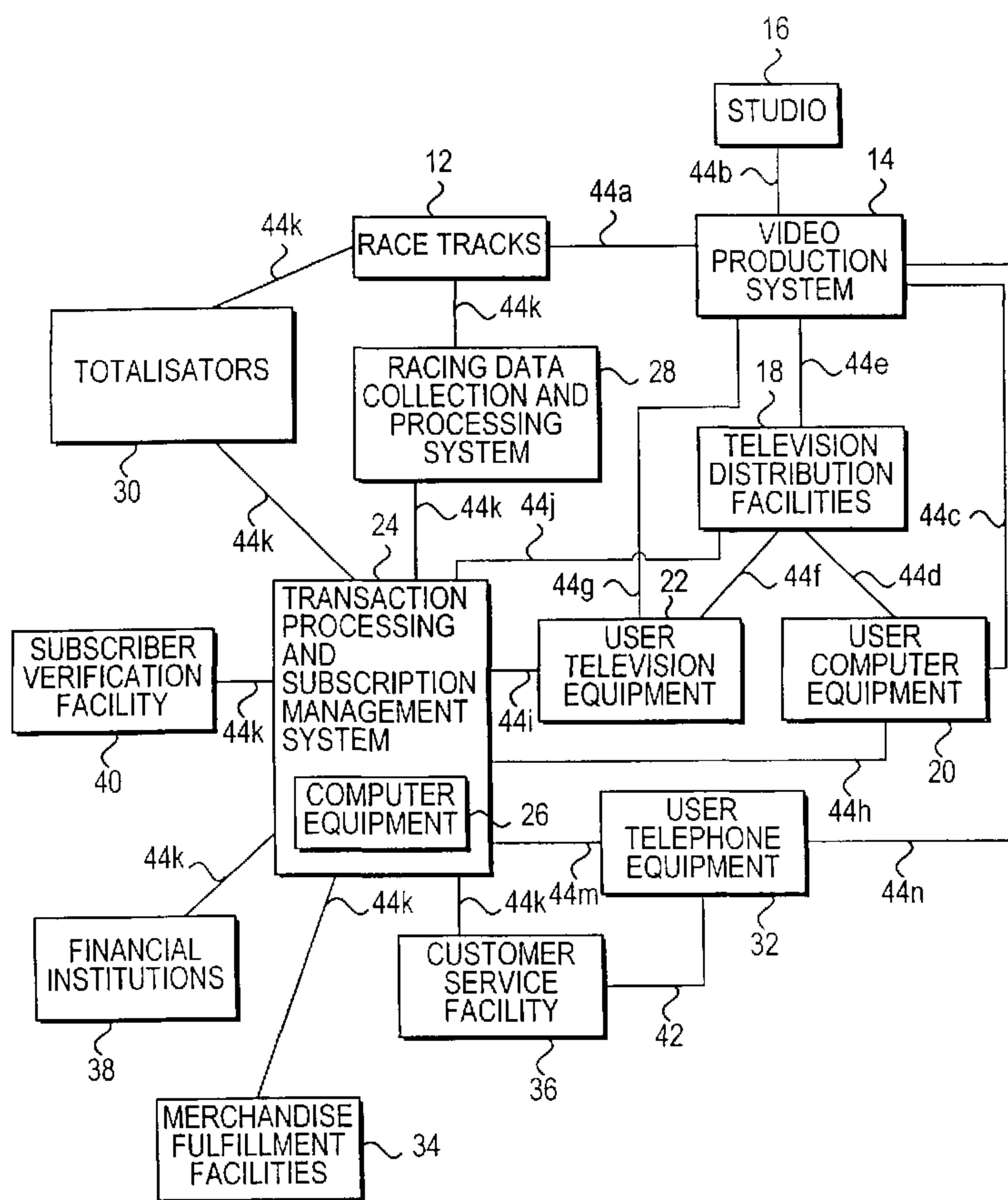




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 (54) Title: INTERACTIVE WAGERING SYSTEM



(57) **Abrégé/Abstract:**

An interactive wagering application is provided that displays information areas on various wager creation screens. The information areas may be configurable. Information such as promotions, weather information, jockey information, trainer information, odds, or any other suitable information may be displayed in the information areas. The interactive wagering

(57) **Abrégé(suite)/Abstract(continued):**

application may create a wagering ticket that reflects the amount of a user's wager and the total amount of the user's wager when multiple runners are taken into account. The interactive wagering application may record the user's position within the application and the user's recent wagering selections, so that this information may be used to assist the user in restarting the application after exiting or when creating additional wagers.

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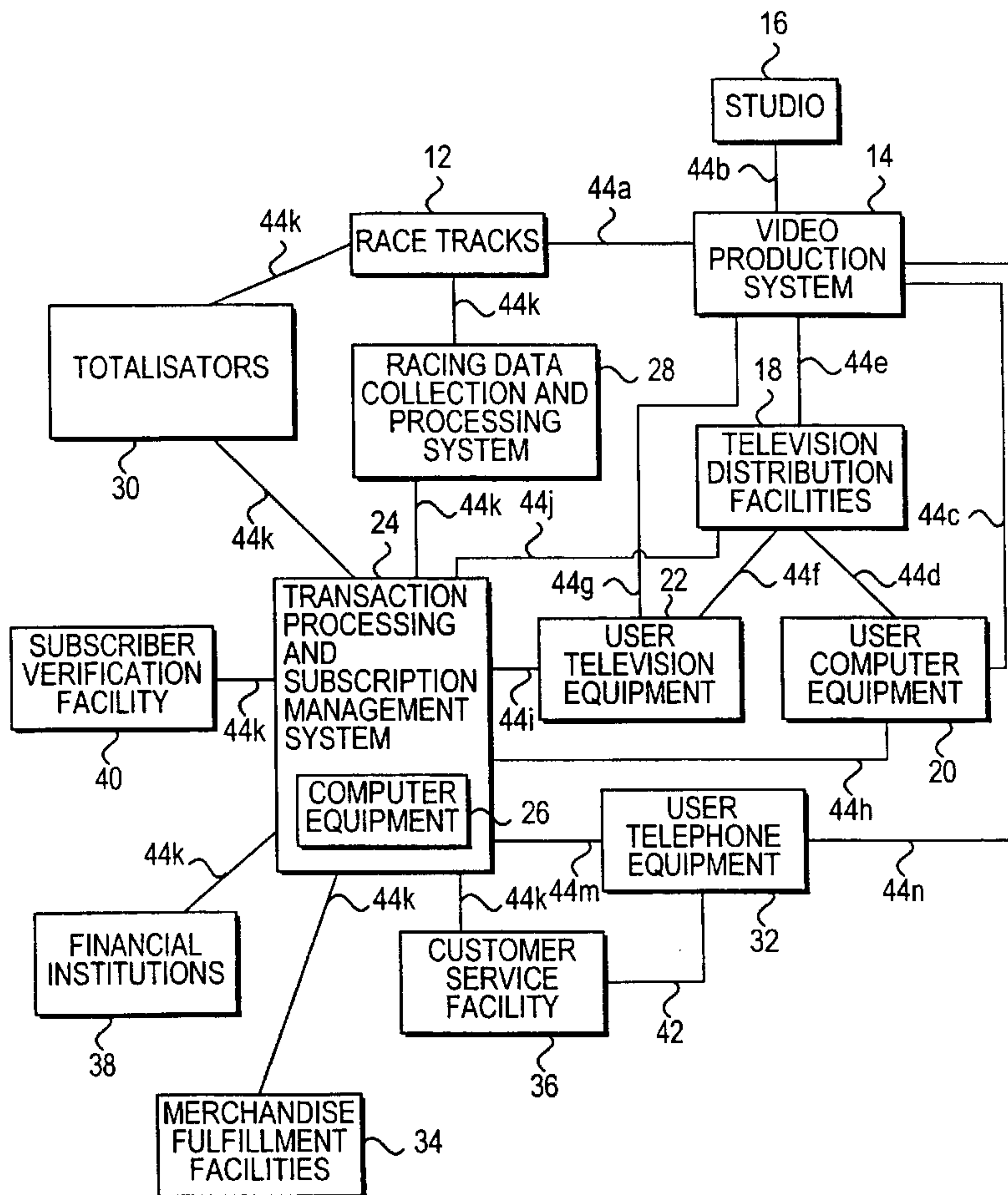
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(54) Title: INTERACTIVE WAGERING SYSTEM



(57) Abstract: An interactive wagering application is provided that displays information areas on various wager creation screens. The information areas may be configurable. Information such as promotions, weather information, jockey information, trainer information, odds, or any other suitable information may be displayed in the information areas. The interactive wagering application may create a wagering ticket that reflects the amount of a user's wager and the total amount of the user's wager when multiple runners are taken into account. The interactive wagering application may record the user's position within the application and the user's recent wagering selections, so that this information may be used to assist the user in restarting the application after exiting or when creating additional wagers.

WO 01/75825 A3

INTERACTIVE WAGERING SYSTEM

This application claims the benefit of United States provisional application No. 60/193,893, filed
5 March 31, 2000.

Background of the Invention

This invention relates to interactive wagering, and more particularly, to interactive wagering applications with configurable on-screen
10 information areas and enhanced wager creation features.

Wagering is a popular leisure activity. For example, many racing fans wager on events such as horse, dog, and harness racing. However, it may be inconvenient to attend racing events in person. Not
15 all racing fans have sufficient time to visit racetracks as often as they would like and some fans have difficulties in obtaining suitable transportation to the track. Off-track betting establishments are available for fans who cannot attend racing events in
20 person, but fans must still travel to the off-track betting establishments.

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As a result, systems have been developed in which fans may place off-track wagers using personal computers connected to the Internet, standard telephones, or set-top boxes.

5 It is an object of the present invention to improve such systems by providing an interactive wagering system with configurable on-screen information areas and enhanced wager creation features.

Summary of the Invention

10 An interactive wagering system is provided. An interactive wagering application is implemented using the system.

The interactive wagering application may provide wager creation screens for the user to use in
15 creating wagers. The wager creation screens may have information areas. The information areas may be associated with menu items or options on the wager creation screens. For example, on a racetrack selection menu screen an information area may be
20 associated with each available racetrack. On a race selection screen, there may be an information area associated with each available race option. Other screens such as wager type selection screens, wager amount selection screens, and horse selection screens,
25 may also be provided with information areas.

Personnel associated with racetracks or other content creators may create and modify the content for the information areas. For example, the content creators may change the content in an information area

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using a web page interface or any other suitable system. The web page interface may allow the content creators to type text into a data entry field that corresponds to the information area on the wager
5 creation screen. Material may also be dragged and dropped into the data entry field. A preview function may be provided that allows the content creator to preview the content of the screens including the content of the information areas.

10 If desired, personnel associated with the interactive wagering application may ensure that the content supplied by the content creator is satisfactory, before the content is provided to users. Content may also be created by personnel associated
15 with the interactive wagering application.

Changes to the content of the information areas may be made without any need to recompile the code for the interactive wagering application.

Various different types of content may be
20 displayed in the information areas. For example, information on the current weather at a particular racetrack may be displayed in an information area adjacent to the listing for that racetrack on a track selection screen. Promotional information may also be
25 included in an information area. For example, a special offer that is available at a particular track may be displayed in an information area associated with that track on a track selection menu. Information areas may also be used to display information on
30 upcoming events, track hours, directions, etc. If a

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track is closed due to rain, information announcing the track closure may be displayed in an information region adjacent to the track name. On a horse selection menu, the information region adjacent to each selectable horse option may be used for odds, jockey information, trainer information, etc. An information region may be used when listing a betting interest that includes two horses. Information for the first horse (e.g., 1a) may be placed in the horse name area. Information for the second horse (e.g., horse 1b) may be placed into the information area adjacent to the information region containing the first horse name.

If desired, the content of the information areas may be periodically rotated. For example, new content may be displayed in the information regions every second or every few seconds.

If desired, the information areas may be made interactive. For example, when a user has highlighted a desired information area, the user may press a remote control "info" key to obtain additional information related to the content of the highlighted information area.

If multiple horses are associated with a single horse number (e.g., three horses 2a, 2b, and 2c are associated with slot No. 2), the notation "multiple runners" may be placed in the horse name field. The associated information area may be used to display a message such as "press info for details." If the user highlights the multiple runners field and presses info,

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the additional information on each of the multiple runners may be provided.

Sometimes a user may desire to exit the interactive wagering application in the midst of
5 creating a wager. The interactive wagering application may automatically record the user's position within the interactive wagering application. When the user subsequently restarts the interactive wagering application, the interactive wagering application may
10 allow the user to automatically resume the wager creation process where the user left off. Moreover, the user's most frequently chosen wager criteria or the user's last wager may be used to assist the user when creating a wager. When the user is creating a wager,
15 the interactive wagering application may assume that the wagering criteria (e.g., the selected track, race, wager type, horses, and wager amount) that were last used or were most frequently used reflect the user's preferences. Accordingly, these wagering criteria may
20 be used as defaults when the interactive wagering application is populating fields in the wager creation screens. As an example, if the user's last wager was made at the track Churchill Downs, the next time that the interactive wagering application presents the track
25 selection menu to the user, the track Churchill Downs may be preselected in the track selection menu. The user therefore need not search for the Churchill Downs entry when selecting the track for the wager.

A wagering ticket may be provided on the
30 wager creation screens. As the wager is built, the

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entries in the wagering ticket may be updated. For example, after the user has selected a racetrack, the racetrack may be added to the wagering ticket. If a wager is created with multiple runners (e.g., an exacta
5 wager), information is provided for each runner.

If the user creates a second wager by adding an additional runner to one portion of the wager (e.g., by selecting a second horse for a win wager or the like), the wagering ticket may be used to display
10 information on both the selected wager amount (e.g., \$2) and the total amount of the wager (e.g., \$4).

In the horse selection menu when creating a wager, horse numbers may be provided in color. Moreover, the color of each horse's number in the horse
15 selection menu may be matched to the official saddle blanket colors used in racing. For example, the graphic image of the number one for horse number one may be red, because that is the standard blanket color for runner number 1. The graphic image of the number
20 two for horse number two may be white, because white is the standard blanket color for runner number 2, etc.

Further features of the invention, its nature and various advantages will be more apparent from the accompanying drawings and the following detailed
25 description of the preferred embodiments.

Brief Description of the Drawings

FIG. 1 is a schematic diagram of an illustrative interactive wagering system on which an

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interactive wagering application may be implemented in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 2 shows an illustrative menu screen that may be provided as an overlay on top of a wagering-
5 related television channel in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 3 shows an illustrative racetrack selection screen that may be provided by the interactive wagering application in accordance with the
10 present invention.

FIG. 4 shows an illustrative race selection screen that may be provided by the interactive wagering application in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 5 shows an illustrative wager type
15 selection screen that may be provided by the interactive wagering application in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 6 shows an illustrative horse selection screen that may be provided by the interactive wagering
20 application in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 7 shows an illustrative multiple runners information region that may be provided by the interactive wagering application in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 8 shows an illustrative wagering ticket
25 that may be provided by the interactive wagering application after the first horse in an exacta wager has been selected in accordance with the present invention.

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FIG. 9 shows an illustrative wagering ticket that may be provided by the interactive wagering application after the first and second horses in the exacta wager have been selected in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 10 shows an illustrative wagering ticket that may be provided by the interactive wagering application after an additional second horse (No. 4) has been selected in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 11 shows an illustrative wager amount selection screen that may be provided by the interactive wagering application in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 12 shows an illustrative wager list screen that may be provided by the interactive wagering application in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 13 is a flow chart of illustrative steps involved in using an interactive wagering application that retains information about the user's last position in the application when the user exits the application in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 14 is a flow chart of illustrative steps involved in creating a wager with an interactive wagering application that retains information about a user's recent selections in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 15 is a flow chart of illustrative steps involved in using an interactive wagering application

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that provides information areas with customizable content in accordance with the present invention.

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

An illustrative interactive wagering system
5 10 in accordance with the present invention is shown in
FIG. 1. Aspects of the invention apply to various
different types of wagering, but are described herein
primarily in the context of interactive wagering on
races (e.g., horse races) for specificity and clarity.

10 Races may be run at racetracks 12, which may
be located at various geographic locations. Races run
at the racetracks may be simulcast to television
viewers. For example, simulcast videos may be provided
to users with satellite receivers or to off-track
15 betting establishments via satellite.

System 10 may be used to provide an
interactive wagering service to users of various user
equipment. An interactive wagering application may be
used to provide the wagering service. The interactive
20 wagering application may run locally on the user
equipment (e.g., on a set-top box, personal computer,
cellular telephone, handheld computing device, etc.) or
may run using a client-server or distributed
architecture where some of the application is
25 implemented locally on the user equipment in the form
of a client process and some of the application is
implemented at a remote location (e.g., on a server
computer or other such equipment in the system) as a
server process. These arrangements are merely

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illustrative. Other suitable techniques for implementing the interactive wagering application may be used if desired.

Real-time videos from racetracks 12 may also
5 be provided to video production system 14 for distribution to users as part of a television wagering service (i.e., a wagering-related television channel or Internet-delivered service or the like). If desired, multiple simulcast videos may be provided to video
10 production system 14 in real time. Talent (e.g., commentators) for the television wagering service provided by the interactive wagering application may be located at studio 16. Studio 16 may provide a video feed containing commentary and the like to video
15 production system 14. Graphic overlays for the television wagering service may be added to the service at video production system 14.

The television wagering service may use video production system 14 to combine selected video segments
20 from desired racing simulcasts with the video feed from studio 16 and suitable graphic overlays. If desired, video production system 14 or a separate facility may be used to reformat simulcasts from racetracks 12. For example, if racetracks 12 provide simulcasts as
25 traditional analog television channels, video production system 14 (or a separate facility) may convert these simulcasts or portions of these simulcasts into digital signals (e.g., digital video signals) or into a different number of analog signals.
30 Digital video signals may require less bandwidth than

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analog video signals and may be appropriate for situations in which videos are to be transmitted over either high or low bandwidth pathways. Low bandwidth pathways may include telephone lines, the Internet,
5 etc.

Video production system 14 may be used to provide a television wagering service that includes selected simulcast videos, video from studio 16, and graphic overlays to television distribution facilities
10 18 (for redistribution to user television equipment 22 and user computer equipment 20), to user computer equipment 20, and to user telephone equipment 32 (if user telephone equipment 32 has a display capable of displaying moving images). Television distribution
15 facilities 18 may be any suitable facilities for supplying television to users, such as cable system headends, satellite systems, broadcast television systems, or other suitable systems or combinations of such systems. User computer equipment 20 may be any
20 suitable computer equipment that supports an interactive wagering application. For example, user computer equipment 20 may be a personal computer. User computer equipment 20 may also be based on a mainframe computer, a workstation, a networked computer or
25 computers, a laptop computer, a notebook computer, a handheld computing device such as a personal digital assistant or other small portable computer, etc.

Each of television distribution facilities 18 is typically located at a different geographic
30 location. Users with user television equipment 22 may

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receive the television wagering service from an associated television distribution facility. User television equipment 22 may include, for example, a television or other suitable monitor. A television may
5 be used to watch the television wagering service on a traditional analog television channel. User television equipment 22 may also include a digital or analog set-top box connected to a television distribution facility 18 by a cable path. A digital set-top box may be used
10 to receive the television wagering service on a digital channel. If desired, user television equipment 22 may contain a satellite receiver, a WebTV box, a personal computer television (PC/TV), or hardware similar to such devices into which set-top box capabilities have
15 been integrated. A recording device such as a videocassette recorder or digital recording device (e.g., a personal video recorder or digital video recorder based on hard disk drives or the like) may be used in user television equipment 22 to store videos.
20 The recording device may be separate from or part of the other components of user television equipment 22.

User computer equipment 20 may receive the television wagering service using a video card or other video-capable equipment to receive analog or digital
25 (e.g., moving picture experts group or MPEG) videos from a television distribution facility. User computer equipment 20 may also receive the television wagering service directly from video production system 14 using, for example, a modem link. If desired, the video for
30 the television wagering service may be compressed

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(e.g., using MPEG techniques). This may be useful, for example, if the path to user computer equipment 20 is a modem connection using telephone links. If video production system 14 is only used to serve user
5 computer equipment 20 without traditional analog television capabilities, video production system 14 may only need to supply such digitally-compressed video signals and not analog television signals.

Video clips of races and other simulcast
10 information may be provided to users in the form of a television wagering service or by an interactive wagering service provided by the interactive wagering application. If desired, race-related videos may be provided to the user by using video production system
15 14 or other suitable equipment to route appropriate video clips from the simulcasts to the user in real time. Video clips may also be stored for later viewing. For example, one or more video servers located at racetracks 12, video production system 14,
20 television distribution facilities 18, or other suitable locations may be used to store video clips. The stored videos may then be played back in real time or downloaded for viewing at user television equipment 22, user computer equipment 20, or user telephone
25 equipment 32. The video clips may contain videos of races, commentary, interviews with jockeys, or any other suitable race-related information. If desired, real-time or stored videos may be provided from racetracks 12 directly to user television equipment 22,
30 user computer equipment 20, or user telephone equipment

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32 over the Internet or other suitable communications
paths without involving video production system 14.
Videos may also be provided by routing video signals
through equipment located elsewhere in system 10. For
5 example, videos may be routed through transaction
processing and subscription management system 24.

Transaction processing and subscription
management system 24 may contain computer equipment 26
and other equipment for supporting system functions
10 such as transaction processing (e.g., handling tasks
related to wagers, product purchasing, adjusting the
amount of funds in user accounts based on the outcomes
of wagers, video clip ordering, etc.), data
distribution (e.g., for distributing racing data to the
15 users), and subscriber management (e.g., features
related to opening an account for a user, closing an
account, allowing a user to add or withdraw funds from
an account, changing the user's address or personal
identification number, etc.). Databases within
20 transaction processing and subscription management
system 24 or associated with system 24 may be used to
store racing data, wagering data and other transaction
data, and subscriber data such as information on the
user's current account balance, past wagering history,
25 individual wager limits, personal identification
number, billing addresses, credit card numbers, bank
account numbers, social security numbers, etc. Using
such databases may allow the user to access information
more quickly and allows for central administration of
30 the wagering service.

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If desired, racing videos and other services may be provided using servers and other equipment located at transaction processing and subscription management system 24. For example, video clips may be provided to the user on-demand. Interactive advertisements may be provided to the user. When the user selects a desired advertisement, transaction processing and subscription management system 24 may provide additional information or other services related to the advertisement to the user.

Product ordering services may be implemented using computer equipment at transaction processing and subscriber management system 24 to handle orders and to assist in adjusting the appropriate account of the user accordingly. Orders may be fulfilled using merchandise fulfillment facilities 34. Merchandise fulfillment facilities 34 may be operated solely to provide merchandise fulfillment or may be associated with independently-operated mail-order or on-line businesses. Similar facilities may be used to allow users to order services.

Statistical racing data such as the post times for each race, jockey names, runner names and the number of races associated with each track, handicapping information (e.g., information on past performances such as the number of wins and losses for the past year, etc.), and weather conditions at various tracks may be provided by racing data collection and processing system 28. Some of the data may be collected from racetracks 12 and some may be provided

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by third party information sources such as Axcis Pocket Information Network, Inc. of Santa Clara, California or other suitable data sources.

Racing data may also be provided from
5 totalisators 30. Totalisators 30 are the computer systems that may be used to handle wagers made at the racetracks, made at off-track betting establishments, and made using interactive wagering system 10. Totalisators 30 generate wagering odds in real time.
10 Totalisators 30 generate these odds based on information on which wagers are being placed (e.g., based on information on which wagers are being placed on races at racetracks 12). Totalisators 30 are available from companies such as Amtote International,
15 Inc. of Hunt Valley, Maryland. Totalisators 30 may be associated with individual racetracks 12 or groups of racetracks 12. Totalisators 30 may communicate with one another using a communication protocol known as the Intertote Track System Protocol (ITSP). This allows
20 totalisators 30 to share wagering pools. Totalisators 30 may provide racing data including information on the current races at racetracks 12, the number of races associated with each racetrack, win, place, and show odds and pool totals for each horse or other runner,
25 and exacta, trifecta, and quinella payoff predictions and pool totals for every possible combination of runners. Totalisators 30 may also provide current odds and other real-time racing data for other types of wagers. Totalisators 30 may provide the time until
30 post time for each race.

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Totalisators 30 may provide race results, such as the order-of-finish list for at least the first three positions and payoff values versus a standard wager amount for win, place, and show, for each runner in the finish list. Payoff values may be provided for winning complex wager types such as exacta, trifecta, quinella, pick-n (where n is the number of races involved in the pick-n wager), and daily double. The payoff values may be accompanied by a synopsis of the associated finish list.

Totalisators 30 may also provide program information of the type typically provided in printed racing programs. Such program information may include early odds, early scratches, race descriptions (including the distance of each race and the race surface - grass, dirt, artificial turf, etc.), allowed class ratings (based on a fixed ratio of external criteria), purse value (payoff to winning runner), allowed age range of runners, and the allowed number of wins and starts for each runner.

If desired, some of the information provided to transaction processing and subscription management system 24 by totalisators 30 (such as the program information or other suitable racing data) may be provided by racing data collection and processing system 28. Similarly, some of the information provided to transaction processing and subscription management system 24 by racing data collection and processing system 28 may be provided by totalisators 30. Moreover, the foregoing examples of different suitable

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types of racing data are merely illustrative. Any suitable data related to racing may be provided to transaction processing and subscription management system 24 if desired.

5 Transaction processing and subscription management system 24 provides the racing data to users at user television equipment 22, user computer equipment 20, and user telephone equipment 32 for use in following race results and developing wagers. If
10 desired, racing data may be provided to users using paths that do not directly involve transaction processing and subscription management system 24. For example, racing data may be provided from racing data collection and processing system 28 to user television
15 equipment 22, user computer equipment 20, or user telephone equipment 32 using the Internet or other suitable communications paths.

 User telephone equipment 32 may be a conventional telephone, a cordless telephone, a
20 cellular telephone or other portable wireless telephone, or any other suitable telephone equipment. Users at user television equipment 22 and user computer equipment 20 may view information on the racing data on a television or other suitable monitor. Users at user
25 telephone equipment 32 may listen to racing data using an interactive voice system. User telephone equipment 32 may be based on cellular telephones with displays. Users may view racing data displayed on such displays.

 Users who wish to place wagers may establish
30 an account at transaction processing and subscription

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management system 24. An account may also be established at one of totalisators 30. The user and the interactive wagering services may have their own bank accounts at financial institutions 38. A user may
5 set up an account electronically by using user television equipment 22, user computer equipment 20, or user telephone equipment 32 to interact with the subscriber management functions of transaction processing and subscription management system 24. If
10 desired, accounts may be established with the interactive wagering service with the assistance of customer service representatives at customer service facility 36. Customer service facility 36 may be at the same location as transaction processing and
15 subscription management system 24, may be part of system 24, or may be located remote from system 24. Customer service representatives at customer service facility 36 may be reached by telephone. If user telephone equipment 32 is used to access the
20 interactive wagering service, for example, user telephone equipment 32 may be used to reach the customer service representative using communications path 42. If user television equipment 22 or user computer equipment 20 is being used with the service, a
25 telephone at the same location as that equipment may be used to reach the customer service representative.

The user's identity may be checked using social security number information or other identification information with the assistance of
30 subscriber verification facility 40. The services of

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subscriber verification facility 40 are used to ensure that the user lives in a geographic area in which wagering is legal, that the user is of a legal age, and that the identification information (e.g., the user's social security number) matches the name provided by the user. If the user is using a cellular telephone or handheld computing device, the user's present physical location may be determined by determining which general part of the cellular telephone network is being accessed by the user or by using the cellular network or a handset-based location device such as a global positioning system (GPS) receiver in the body of the cellular telephone to pinpoint the user's location. This location information may be used to verify that the user is located in a geographic area where wagering is legal.

In a typical enrollment process, the user provides personal information to the interactive wagering service and provides funds with a credit card or funds from the user's bank account. The interactive wagering service sets up an account for the user at transaction processing and subscription management system 24 and directs one of totalisators 30 to set up a new account for the user at the totalisator. The totalisator is also directed to credit the user's account to reflect the amount of funds provided by the user. After the user places a wager and wins or loses, the totalisator adjusts the user's totalisator account to reflect the outcome of the wager. The totalisator may periodically inform the interactive wagering

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service of the adjusted balance in the user's account. This may be accomplished using any suitable technique (e.g., periodically, continuously, on-request, etc.). For example, reports may be collected periodically
5 (e.g., once a day in an end-of-day report) and provided to the interactive wagering service to reconcile the account balances at transaction processing and subscription management system 24 with the account balances at totalisators 30.

10 If the user makes a balance inquiry, the inquiry may be passed to the appropriate totalisator by transaction processing and subscription management system 24. If the user is charged a fee for
15 subscribing to the service, the service may debit the fee from the user's account at the transaction processing and subscription management system 24.

 The accounts at totalisators 30 and transaction processing and subscription management system 24 are typically maintained separately, because
20 the business entities that operate totalisators 30 and transaction processing and subscription management system 24 are independent. If desired, financial functions related to opening and maintaining user accounts and the like may be handled using computer
25 equipment at another location such as one of financial institutions 38 or other location remote from totalisators 30 and system 24. Such financial functions may also be implemented primarily at a totalisator 30 or primarily at the transaction

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processing and subscription management system 24 if desired.

Users at user television equipment 22, user computer equipment 20, and user telephone equipment 32 may place wagers by providing wagering data and otherwise interacting with transaction processing and subscription management system 24. The interactive wagering service may provide a user at user television equipment 22, user computer equipment 20, or user telephone equipment 32 that has display capabilities with screens containing various racing data. For example, the user may be presented with screens that allow the user to view the current odds for horses in an upcoming race at a given track.

The service may provide the user with interactive screens containing menus and selectable options that allow the user to specify the type of wager in which the user is interested and the desired wager amount. With a set-top box arrangement, for example, the user may use a remote control or wireless keyboard to navigate the various menus and selectable options. With a personal computer, the user may use a keyboard, mouse, trackball, touch pad, or other suitable input or pointing device. With a cellular telephone with a display, the user may use buttons on the telephone. When the user has made appropriate selections to define a desired wager, the user television equipment, user computer equipment, or user telephone equipment may transmit wagering data for the

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wager to transaction processing and subscription management system 24.

Users with telephones may also interact with the service using an interactive voice response system located at transaction processing and subscription management system 24. The interactive voice response system may present menu options to the user in the form of audio prompts (e.g., "press 1 to select a \$2 wager amount," etc.). The user may interact with the service by pressing the corresponding buttons on a touch tone telephone. User telephone equipment 32 that is based on cellular telephones allows the user to interact with the wagering service in this way. User telephone equipment 32 that is based on cellular telephones with messaging and display capabilities also allows the user to interact visually with the interactive wagering service.

The components of system 10 may be interconnected using various communications paths 44. Communications paths 44 may include satellite paths, coaxial cable paths, fiber-optic paths, twisted pair paths, other wire or cable-based links, wireless paths through free space, or any other suitable paths or combination of such paths. Communications over paths 44 may involve analog transmissions, digital transmissions, wireless transmissions, microwave transmissions, radio-frequency transmissions, optical transmissions, audio transmissions, or any other suitable type of transmissions or combination of such transmissions. Communications may involve Internet

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transmissions, private network transmissions, packet-based transmissions, television channel transmissions, transmissions in the vertical blanking interval of a television channel or on a television sideband, MPEG
5 transmissions, etc. Communications may involve wireless pager or other messaging transmissions. Communications paths 44 may include cable connected to cable modems, digital subscriber lines, integrated services digital network (ISDN) lines, or any other
10 suitable paths. Examples of suitable communications paths are described below. Those examples are, however, merely illustrative. Any of the communications path arrangements described above or other suitable arrangements may be used if desired.

15 Communications paths that carry video and particularly uncompressed analog video or lightly-compressed or full-screen digital video generally use more bandwidth than communications paths that carry only data or that carry partial-screen digital video.
20 For example, if it is desired to transmit high-quality simulcasts of races from racetracks 12 to video production system 14, analog or digital videos may be transmitted from racetracks 12 to video production system 14 over path 44a using satellite links. Video
25 may be transmitted from studio 16 to video production system 14 over path 44b using a satellite link or a high-speed terrestrial path such as a fiber-optic path. Studio 16 may also be located at the same site as video production system 14, thereby avoiding the need for a
30 long-haul transmission path. Videos may be transmitted

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from video production system 14 to user computer equipment 20 over path 44c using a modem link (using, for example, a digital subscriber line, a telephone network link, a wireless link, etc.). The modem link
5 may be made over a private network.

A user with a cable modem may connect a personal computer or other such user computer equipment 20 to an associated cable system headend using path 44d. (The headend in such an arrangement would be one
10 of the television distribution facilities 18 shown in FIG. 1.) The user may then receive videos from the headend via cable modem. Videos may be provided to the headend over path 44e using a network link, fiber optic links, cable links, microwave links, satellite links,
15 etc. A user with a set-top box or similar device (shown in FIG. 1 as user television equipment 22) may also receive videos from a cable system headend using a cable modem or other such communications device over path 44f. In addition, a user with user television
20 equipment may receive videos over the Internet or a private network using a telephone-based modem or other such communications device using path 44g. In a system with distributed processing, interactive wagering services may be provided using a television
25 distribution facility 18 that includes equipment that supplements or replaces at least some of the equipment at transaction processing and subscription management system 24.

If desired, user television equipment 22 or
30 user computer equipment 20 may receive analog or

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digital videos from an associated television distribution facility over the communications paths normally used to distribute television programming (e.g., paths 44f and 44d). For example, videos may be received as part of a dedicated interactive wagering service television channel. If videos are provided as digital signals (e.g., MPEG signals), 10 or more digital videos may be carried on a single analog channel (or one digital video may be carried on one-tenth of the bandwidth of an analog channel). If the videos are not full-screen videos, even more videos may be simultaneously provided without a loss of image quality.

Racing videos may be provided to user telephone equipment 32 over a partially-wireless telephone Internet link or other telephone link using path 44n.

If desired, racing data may accompany the racing videos along any of these paths. Moreover, racing videos may be provided by routing them directly from racetracks 12 to user television equipment 22, user computer equipment 20 (e.g., over the Internet or a private network, etc.), or user telephone equipment 32. Racing videos may also be provided by routing them through transaction processing and subscription management system 24. If a cellular telephone or portable computing device has sufficient display capabilities to support moving images, racing videos may be displayed. Such videos may be provided using any suitable path, such as a direct path from

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racetracks 12, a path through video production system
14 or other suitable video processing equipment,
through a hub such as transaction processing and
subscription management system 24, etc. Racing videos
5 may be provided in real time or may be recorded for
later distribution. Videos that are not provided in
real time may be downloaded by user television
equipment 22, user computer equipment 20, a cellular
telephone, or other suitable user equipment at a lower
10 data rate than would otherwise be required and may be
downloaded in the background if desired. Such videos
may also be provided to the user at real-time video
rates for direct viewing by the user.

Racing data and other information related to
15 the interactive wagering service may be provided to
users over paths connected to transaction processing
and subscription management system 24. For example,
racing data and other data for the service may be
provided to user computer equipment 20 over path 44h
20 using a modem link. Path 44h may be a private network
path or an Internet path. Path 44h may use telephone
lines, digital subscriber lines, ISDN lines, wireless
data paths, or any other suitable type of
communications links. User television equipment 22 may
25 receive data for the wagering service over
communications path 44i, which may be a telephone line,
digital subscriber line, ISDN line, or other suitable
type of communications path and which may use a private
network path or an Internet path, etc.

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Data for the wagering service may be provided to users of the interactive wagering application via communications path 44j and paths 44f and 44d. Communications path 44j may be provided over a private network, using the public telephone network, using 5 satellite links, or any other suitable type of links. Data from paths such as path 44j may be routed to paths such as paths 44f and 44d directly by associated television distribution facilities 18, or may be 10 buffered at television distribution facilities 18 if desired. Paths 44f and 44d may include coaxial cable and use of paths 44f and 44d may involve the use of cable modems or the like. If data is provided over path 44j and path 44f or path 44d using an Internet 15 protocol, a web browser or similar software running on user television equipment 22 or user computer equipment 20 may be used to access the data. Such software may be integrated into the interactive wagering application or may be used separately. Software may also be used 20 to view videos and may be used on other platforms (e.g., advanced cellular telephones) if desired.

The communications paths 44k that are used to connect various other components of the system typically do not carry high-bandwidth video signals. 25 Accordingly, paths 44k may be telephone-like paths that are part of the Internet or a private network. Such paths and various other paths 44 may be dedicated connections for security, reliability, and economy.

User telephone equipment 32 may receive 30 information for the wagering service via path 44m. If

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user telephone equipment 32 is a standard (non-cellular) telephone, such information may be in the form of audio prompts ("press 1 to place a wager") and audio racing data ("the current win odds for horse 2
5 are 5-1"). Transaction data processing and subscription management system 24 may contain interactive voice response equipment that provides such information to the user and that responds to touch-tone signals from the user when the user responds to prompts
10 by pressing buttons on the user's telephone.

If user telephone equipment 32 is a cellular telephone, racing data and other information for the interactive wagering service may be provided to the user by using a cellular wireless connection as part of
15 path 44m. Users with cellular telephones may be provided with audio prompts using an interactive voice response system located at transaction processing and subscription management system 24 to which the users may respond by pressing cellular telephone buttons to
20 generate touch-tone signals.

Racing data and other information for the interactive wagering service may be provided to cellular telephones in the form of alphanumeric messages. Such messages may be transmitted to the user
25 by using paging or other alphanumeric messaging formats or any other suitable data communications scheme. If desired, data may be provided to the cellular telephones over the voice channel and decoded by the cellular telephone using modem circuitry or other
30 suitable circuitry. Data may also be provided using

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any other suitable cellular or wireless path.

Regardless of the way in which racing data and other information for the interactive wagering service are provided to the cellular telephone, such information
5 may be provided to the user by displaying it on the cellular telephone display screen or by presenting it in audible form through the speaker of the cellular telephone.

Racing data and other interactive wagering
10 service information for the users may be provided in one or more continuous data streams, may be provided periodically (e.g., once per hour or once per day), or may be provided using a client-server arrangement in which data is requested by a client processor (e.g.,
15 user television equipment 22, user computer equipment 20, user telephone equipment 32, or any other such equipment) from a server (e.g., a server implemented using computer equipment 26 at transaction processing and subscription management system 24 or computer
20 equipment at another suitable location). Videos may also be provided using any of these techniques.

A return communications path between the user and the interactive wagering service may be used to allow the user to place wagers and otherwise interact
25 with the interactive wagering service. For example, a user with a standard telephone or a cellular telephone may interact with the service by pressing touch-tone keys on the telephone in response to audio prompts provided by an interactive voice response system at
30 transaction processing and subscription management

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system 24. If desired, users may call customer service representatives at customer service facility 36 and place wagers with manual assistance. The user of a cellular telephone may interact with the wagering service by selecting menu options and otherwise interacting with information displayed on the cellular telephone. When a selection is made, software implemented on the telephone may be used to assist the user in transmitting appropriate data (e.g., wagering data) to the wagering service. Such data may be transmitted using any suitable technique. For example, data may be transmitted using a wireless data link that is separate from the cellular voice channels. Data may also be transmitted over the voice channel (e.g., using a modem built into the cellular telephone, by automatically generating touch-tone signals that may be recognized by the interactive voice response system at transaction processing and subscription management system 24, or using any other suitable arrangement). These approaches may be used even if the user receives racing data and other information for the service using a platform other than a telephone-based platform.

Users with user television equipment 22 may interact with the service by sending data (e.g., wager data) to transaction processing and subscription management system 24 using path 44i or using paths 44f and 44j. Users with user computer equipment 20 may send data (e.g., wager data) to transaction processing and subscription management system 24 via path 44h or paths 44d and 44j. Users at any user equipment may

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send data for the service to locations other than transaction processing and subscription management system 24. For example, the user may provide information directly to customer service facility 36,
5 etc.

If desired, the user may send data to the service at transaction processing and subscription management system 24 using different paths than those used to receive data from transaction processing and
10 subscription management system 24. For example, racing data may be received at user television equipment 22 via paths 44j and 44f, whereas data may be sent by the user from user television equipment 22 to transaction processing and subscription management system 24 using
15 path 44i, etc. Moreover, the paths used to receive certain video information may be different from those used to receive racing data. For example, user television equipment 22 may receive racing videos using path 44f, but may receive racing data using path 44i.
20 These examples are merely illustrative. Any suitable combination of paths may be used to distribute racing data and other information for the interactive wagering service, any suitable combination of paths may be used to receive videos, and any suitable combination of
25 paths may be used to send data to the wagering service.

If desired, the user may interact with the wagering service using more than one platform. For example, the user may place a wager using a cellular telephone while the user is driving home. When the
30 user arrives home, the user may determine the outcome

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of the wager by watching a video of the race on user television equipment. Later in the day, the user may check the user's account balance using a personal computer. This is merely an illustrative example. The
5 various wagering platforms may be used in any suitable combination.

Although system 10 has been described in the context of a system that supports multiple wagering platforms, system 10 may support fewer platforms if
10 desired. For example, aspects of the invention may be implemented using a system 10 that only supports cellular telephone wagering or wagering using handheld computer devices. If desired, system 10 may be configured so that it does not support personal
15 computer wagering, wagering with standard telephones, or wagering with user television equipment. The system may support cellular telephones and/or handheld computing devices such as personal digital assistants, palm-sized computers, etc. in combination with any
20 other suitable platform.

The features of the present invention are sometimes described herein in the context of an interactive wagering application implemented on user television equipment. This is only illustrative. An
25 interactive wagering application implemented on any suitable platform (user computer equipment, user telephone equipment, etc.) may be used to provide such features if desired. In computer arrangements, on-screen options may be selected by clicking on them
30 using a mouse pointer or other pointing arrangement.

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In set-top box arrangements, on-screen options may be made larger than they appear in computer-based arrangements to accommodate the greater viewing distance from which televisions are typically operated. Options may be selected by highlighting them using remote control arrow keys and by pressing an appropriate key such as an OK or enter or select key. In cellular telephone arrangements and handheld computer arrangements, options and information may be displayed using smaller screens than are typically available on personal computer or set-top box arrangements. To accommodate the smaller screen size, options that might otherwise be presented on a single screen may be displayed using multiple screens or layered menus. Options may be selected by highlighting them using navigation keys and pressing an appropriate select button on the cellular telephone or handheld computing device or by using a pen-based interface or the like.

20 The interactive wagering application may be implemented using application software that runs primarily on user television equipment, user computer equipment, user telephone equipment, or other local platform or using a remote server or other computer 25 that is accessed from the local platform. Arrangements in which interactive wagering services are implemented using software on remote computers that is accessed on-demand from local platforms may be referred to as client-server arrangements. Such client-server 30 arrangements may be used to allow client processes on

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set-top boxes or other platforms to access server processes running on servers located at cable system headends or other television distribution facilities 18 (FIG. 1). Regardless of the type of system architecture or platform used, the software that 5 supports the interactive wagering service features described herein may be referred to as an interactive wagering application.

In a set-top box environment, the system may 10 allow the user to launch the application by selecting a menu option in an interactive television program guide or other set-top box application or menu. If desired, the application may be launched automatically whenever the user tunes to a particular channel (e.g., the 15 wagering-related television channel). After the user has tuned to this channel, the system may display an interactive icon on the user's television screen that indicates that the interactive wagering application is available. If the user presses an "OK" remote control 20 key, the system may launch the application.

In a computer-based system, the user may access the interactive wagering application by browsing to an Internet web site or a site on a private network.

Systems based on cellular telephones or the 25 like may be launched by selecting an appropriate on-screen menu option presented on the display of the cellular telephone.

An illustrative menu screen 46 that may be provided by the interactive wagering application is 30 shown in FIG. 2. Screen 46 and the screens shown in

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FIGS. 3-12 are examples of screens that may be displayed on a satellite receiver set-top box or other user television equipment 22. The format and contents of such screens may be modified to accommodate
5 different platforms such as user computer equipment and user telephone equipment platforms if desired. Moreover, the information and options of the screens of FIGS. 2-12 may be provided using audio prompts to accommodate telephone-based wagering from touch-tone
10 telephones.

As shown in FIG. 2, menu screen 46 may include a number of different options 47. For example options may be provided to place a bet, to view a bet history, to view handicapping information such as odds,
15 to view race results, to view a list of the user's wagers, to move to the next player (when multiple players are wagering at a single session), or to obtain help. Screen 46 may be displayed as an overlay on top of a wagering-related television channel provided, for
20 example, by video production system 14 of FIG. 1.

The user may make on-screen selections by using remote control keys or other suitable user interface to place a highlight region such as highlight
region 48 of FIG. 2 on top of a desired selection and
25 pressing an OK or enter or select key on the remote control.

When the user selects the place a bet option of FIG. 2, the interactive wagering application may display a screen such as racetrack selection screen 50
30 of FIG. 3. As shown in FIG. 3, the racetrack name

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field for each selectable racetrack option has a corresponding information area. For example, racetrack name field 52 has a corresponding information area 54. In the example of FIG. 3, the content of information area 54 (sunny; track dry) corresponds to the current weather and track conditions at the track listed in racetrack name field 52 (Gulfstream). This provides the user with easily-accessible information on current track conditions before the user decides to place a wager at a particular track.

Information areas may contain other information besides weather and track conditions. For example, information area 55 contains a promotion (win a free t-shirt) that is taking place at the Calder track. Information area 57 contains information on how late the Churchill downs track is open. Information areas may also be used to provide information on track closures (e.g., due to poor weather conditions), racetrack directions (e.g., driving directions to the racetrack), information on upcoming events, etc.

Screen 50 may contain a wagering ticket 56. Indicator 58 may be used to visually indicate which portion of the wagering ticket 56 is currently being filled in. In the example of FIG. 3, the user is selecting a desired racetrack for a wager. The user may select desired racetracks using highlight region 60. When, for example, the user highlights the racetrack option for the Gulfstream track, the code 62 (GP) for the Gulfstream track may be added to ticket 56 and the name Gulfstream may be displayed in region 64.

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After the user has selected a track, the interactive wagering application may present a screen such as race selection screen 66 of FIG. 4 to the user. In screen 66, the user may move highlight region 68 on top of a desired selectable race option. In the example of FIG. 4, the user has positioned highlight region 68 on race 5. Race description field 70 contains information describing race 5 (i.e., it is a maiden claiming race for \$20,000). Information on various types of races may be included in the race description field for each race option. For example, information may be included in the race option that identifies the race as being an allowance race, a maiden claiming race, a claiming race, a maiden claiming race, etc. Each race description field in screen 66 has a corresponding information area. For example, race description field 70 has corresponding information area 72. The information areas may be used for any suitable content. For example, the information areas may contain information on the length of the race and the post time of the race. In the example of FIG. 4, race 5 is described in information area 72 as being a race of 6 furlongs in length and having a post (start) time of 2:30 PM.

When the user highlights a desired race, the race number may be added to ticket 56 in region 57 and indicator 58 may be positioned to make it clear the user is selecting a race. The race number for the currently highlighted race may be displayed in region 74. The description of the race may be displayed in

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region 76. The race length may be displayed in region 78. The time until post (e.g., 15 minutes in the example of FIG. 4) may be displayed in region 80. If desired, the user may scroll to additional races using, 5 for example, a remote control down arrow key, as indicated by arrow 82.

When the user selects a desired race, the interactive wagering application may display a wager type selection screen such as screen 84 of FIG. 5. The 10 user may place highlight region 86 on top of a desired selectable wager type option (e.g., win, place, show, exacta, trifecta, etc.). The wager types are listed in wager type fields such as wager type field 88. The wager described in wager type field 88 is an exacta. A 15 corresponding information area may be provided for each wager type field. In the example of FIG. 5, wager type field 88 (exacta) has a corresponding information area 90. The information in information area 90 is a wager type description for the corresponding wager type 20 listed in wager type field 88. If desired, other suitable information may be included in information areas such as information area 90.

Wager ticket 56 may be updated to reflect the highlighted wager type (exacta). This information is 25 displayed in region 92. Indicator 58 may be moved to indicate that the user is selecting the wager type. Moreover, runner indicators 94 may be provided. The number of runner indicators 94 that are provided depends on the wager type. For a win wager, one runner 30 indicator 94 is displayed, because a win wager only

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involves a single runner. For an exacta wager (the subject of the example of FIG. 5), two runner indicators 94 are displayed, one for the first place finisher and one for the second place finisher.

5 When the user selects the desired wager type, the interactive wagering application displays a horse selection screen such as screen 96 of FIG. 6. As shown in FIG. 6, the names of the horses are listed in selectable horse option name fields such as horse name
10 field 98 and corresponding information areas such as information area 100 are used to display information on the current win odds for each horse. If desired, other information, such as information on the horse's jockey or trainer, etc. may also be provided in the
15 information areas.

Horse numbers such as horse number 102 are provided adjacent to each horse name. As shown in FIG. 6, each horse number may be a different color. In particular, each horse number may be displayed using
20 the same colors that are used for that horse's saddle blankets in the actual race. The saddle blanket coloring convention is used to assist wagerers in visually identifying their horse during a race, without being required to discern the individual runner numbers
25 in the race video. Providing this information on the horse selection screen 96 assists the user in remembering the proper colors for their horses.

If a betting interest involves more than one horse, there may be a horse number (e.g., horse number
30 2 in the example of FIG. 6) that has more than one

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associated runner. An indication 104 (e.g., "multiple runners") may be displayed in the horse name field of the selectable horse option for such entries.

Information instructing the user to press an info
5 button or the like may be provided in the corresponding information area 106.

When the user highlights the multiple runners entry of FIG. 6 and presses info, the interactive wagering application may display a screen such as
10 screen 108 of FIG. 7 in which additional information 110 on each of the runners associated with horse number 2 is provided.

After the user selects each horse, the wagering ticket is updated. If, for example, the user
15 selects horse number 2, the interactive wagering application may display a screen such as screen 112 of FIG. 8 in which wagering ticket 56 has been updated to include information 114 on the selected horse (i.e., horse No. 2). Indicator 58 points to the current
20 runner position that is being selected (e.g., the first place finisher in the example of FIG. 8). In addition, an indicator such as check indicator 116 may be provided to make it clear which horse has been selected.

25 After the user selects a first place finisher, the user may select a second place finisher, as shown in FIG. 9. In the example of FIG. 9, the user has highlighted horse number 1 and this information 118 is reflected in wager ticket 56. The position of
30 indicator 58 may also be updated.

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Although selecting a first and second place finisher completes an exacta wager, the user may wish to add additional runners to either the first or second place finisher slots. This in effect allows the user to place a second wager similar to the first wager. As shown in FIG. 10, for example, the user has added an additional runner (horse No. 4) to the second place finisher's slot for the exacta wager. When the user has finished adding runners, the user may press a remote control right arrow key to move to the next screen, as indicated by message 120. The interactive wagering application may then present the user with a wager amount selection screen such as wager amount selection screen 122 of FIG 11.

As shown in FIG. 11, screen 122 may provide the user with an opportunity to select from various wager amounts. A highlight region 123 may be used to highlight a desired wager amount option. There are a number of wager amount fields 124, each containing a different wager amount. There is a corresponding information area 126 for each wager amount field 124. The interactive wagering application may display any suitable information in information areas 126. In the example of FIG. 11, each information area 126 contains the results of a calculation indicating how much the user's total wager would amount to after taking into account any multiple runner selection that the user has made. In particular, because the user has chosen an extra runner for the second place finisher in the exacta wager of FIG. 11, this amounts to two exacta

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wagers (one for horse 2 to win and horse 1 to place and one for horse 2 to win and horse 4 to place). Because two wagers are being made, each information area 126 shows that the wager amount chosen will be half of the user's total wager amount. As an example, if the user selects a \$4 wager amount by highlighting the wager amount field for \$4 wagers as shown in FIG. 11, the total amount deducted from the user's account for the wager (not accounting for any possible winnings) will be \$8. This is also reflected in wagering ticket 56, in which the wager amount 128 (\$4) and the total amount being wagered 130 (\$8) are shown separately. The position of indicator 58 may be updated to reflect that the user is selecting a wager amount.

When the user has finished selecting a wager amount, the interactive wagering application may display a screen such as screen 132 of FIG. 12. Screen 132 may list all of the wagers that the user has created but not placed. Options 134 may be provided to allow the user to create a new wager, view wager details, duplicate a wager, and delete a wager. Options 134 also include an option to send all created wagers. In the example of FIG. 12, the user has used highlight region 136 to highlight the send all option. When the user selects the send all option, the wagers listed in screen 132 are submitted to transaction processing and subscription management system 24 for processing.

A flow chart of illustrative steps involved in using an interactive wagering application that

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retains information about the user's last position in the application when the user exits the application is shown in FIG. 13. At step 138, the user may be provided with an opportunity to invoke the interactive
5 wagering application.

At step 140, after the user has invoked the application, the interactive wagering application may allow the user to create a wager. While the user is creating the wager (e.g., by selecting a track, race,
10 etc.); the interactive wagering application maintains a record of the user's position in the application (e.g., which screen the user is on). The record of the user's position may be stored locally (e.g., in user television equipment 22, user computer equipment 20, or
15 user telephone equipment 32) or may be stored remotely (e.g., on a server at television distribution facility 18, on computer equipment 26 at transaction processing and subscription management system 24, or any other suitable storage location).

20 The user may exit the interactive wagering application before completing the wager.

At step 142, after the user has exited the application, the user may be provided with another opportunity to invoke the interactive wagering
25 application.

At step 144, after the user has invoked the interactive wagering application, the user may be returned to the same location within the interactive wagering application at which the user was located
30 prior to exiting the application. The interactive

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wagering application may return the user to the same location by consulting the information in the stored record of the user's last position.

If desired, the interactive wagering
5 application may store information on the user's last
wager and use this information as assumed preferences
when the user creates a subsequent wager. Illustrative
steps involved in creating a wager with an interactive
wagering application that retains information about a
10 user's recent selections are shown in FIG. 14. At step
146, after the user has invoked the application, the
interactive wagering application may allow the user to
create a wager. While the user is creating the wager
(e.g., by selecting a track, race, etc.), the
15 interactive wagering application maintains a record of
which selections were made by the user. The selections
made by the user are indicative of the user's wagering
preferences. The record of the user's selections may
be stored locally (e.g., in user television equipment
20 22, user computer equipment 20, or user telephone
equipment 32) or may be stored remotely (e.g., on a
server at television distribution facility 18, on
computer equipment 26 at transaction processing and
subscription management system 24, or any other
25 suitable storage location).

After the user has placed a wager, the user
may exit the application and restart the application or
may continue to create wagers with the application
without exiting. In either event, the user may be
30 provided with an opportunity to create a wager using

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the stored record of the user's wager selections at step 148. For example, the user's most frequently chosen wager criteria or selections or the user's last wager may be used to assist the user when creating the new wager. When the user is creating the new wager, the interactive wagering application may assume that the wagering criteria (e.g., the selected track, race, wager type, horses, and wager amount) that were last used or were most frequently used reflect the user's preferences. Accordingly, these wagering criteria may be used as defaults when the interactive wagering application is populating fields in the wager creation screens. As an example, if the user's last wager was made at the track Churchill Downs, the next time that the interactive wagering application presents the track selection menu to the user, the track Churchill Downs may be preselected in the track selection menu. The user therefore need not search for the Churchill Downs entry when selecting the track for the wager.

If desired, personnel at a track or any other suitable party (e.g., the provider of the interactive wagering service) may configure the information areas shown in FIGS. 3-11. For example, personnel associated with a racetrack may change the information area associated with their track to inform wagerers that the track is closed due to inclement weather or that there is a special at the track. These changes may be made without recompiling the code for the interactive wagering application.

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Illustrative steps involved in using an interactive wagering application that provides information areas with customizable content are shown in FIG. 15. At step 150, personnel at a racetrack or
5 any other suitable party (e.g., the operator of the interactive wagering application located at, for example, transaction processing and subscription management system 24), may be provided with an opportunity to create content for the information
10 areas. For example, a web site or other user interface may be provided that allows the appropriate party to enter in the desired content for the information area.

Once the content has been created, the content may be provided to the interactive wagering
15 application at step 152. For example, the information may be transmitted from the web site to computing equipment 26 over the communications paths of FIG. 1.

At step 154, the content that has been created may be displayed in information areas of the
20 type generally illustrated in FIGS. 2-11.

If desired, the features of the present invention may be used with other types of racing, such as dog or harness racing (a type of horse racing).

The foregoing is merely illustrative of the
25 principles of this invention and various modifications can be made by those skilled in the art without departing from the scope and spirit of the invention.

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What Is Claimed is:

1. A method for allowing users to place electronic wagers on races that are to be run using an interactive wagering application that is implemented using user equipment having a display, comprising:

displaying a plurality of wager creation screens for a user on the display, wherein the wager creation screens each include a plurality of interactive menu items, wherein each menu item has an associated information area, and wherein the user creates a wager by selecting desired menu items on the wager creation screens; and

providing the user with an opportunity to use the interactive wagering application to place the wager.

2. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options.

3. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options.

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4. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options and contain promotional information.

5. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options and contain promotional information, wherein the promotional information in each information area promotes a racetrack associated with the racetrack option with which that information area is associated.

6. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a race selection screen in which the menu items are selectable race options.

7. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the

- 50 -

racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options and contain weather information.

8. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options and contain information on upcoming events.

9. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options and contain racetrack hours.

10. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options and contain racetrack directions.

11. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are

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selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options and contain racetrack closure information.

12. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a race selection screen in which the menu items are selectable race options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the race options are located adjacent to the race options.

13. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a race selection screen in which the menu items are selectable race options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the race options are located adjacent to the race options and contain race information.

14. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a race selection screen in which the menu items are selectable race options, wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the race options and contain race information, and wherein the race information in each information area includes distance information.

15. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a race

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selection screen in which the menu items are selectable race options that include race information.

16. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a race selection screen in which the menu items are selectable race options for races, wherein the race options include race information, and wherein the race information included in each race option includes a race type selected from the group consisting of: allowance, maiden claiming, claiming, and maiden claiming.

17. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a race selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options and contain post time information.

18. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a horse selection screen in which the menu items are selectable horse options.

19. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a horse selection screen in which the menu items are selectable horse options and wherein the information areas that

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are associated with the selectable horse options contain information on odds.

20. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a horse selection screen in which the menu items are selectable horse options and wherein at least one of the selectable horse options contains an indication that that selectable horse option is associated with multiple runners.

21. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a horse selection screen in which the menu items are selectable horse options, wherein at least one of the selectable horse options contains an indication that that selectable horse option is associated with multiple runners, and wherein the information region associated with that selectable horse option informs the user how to obtain information on the additional runners.

22. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a horse selection screen in which the menu items are selectable horse options, wherein at least a given one of the selectable horse options contains an indication that the given selectable horse option is associated with multiple runners, and wherein the method further comprises displaying a screen containing information on

- 54 -

each of the multiple runners when the user selects the given selectable horse option.

23. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a horse selection screen in which the menu items are selectable horse options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the horse options are located adjacent to the horse options and contain jockey information.

24. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a horse selection screen in which the menu items are selectable horse options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the horse options are located adjacent to the horse options and contain trainer information.

25. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a wager type selection screen in which the menu items are selectable wager type options.

26. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a wager type selection screen in which the menu items are selectable wager type options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the wager

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type options are located adjacent to the wager type options.

27. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a wager type selection screen in which the menu items are selectable wager type options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the wager type options are located adjacent to the wager type options and contain wager type descriptions.

28. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a wager amount selection screen in which the menu items are selectable wager amount options.

29. The method defined in claim 1, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a wager amount selection screen in which the menu items are selectable wager amount options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the wager amount options are located adjacent to the wager amount options.

30. The method defined in claim 1, wherein the user selects multiple runners for a given wager with the wager creation screens, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a wager amount selection screen in which the menu items are selectable wager amount options and wherein the information areas

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that are associated with the wager amount options are located adjacent to the wager amount options and contain information indicating how much the given wager costs for each wager amount option taking into account the multiple runners that have been selected.

31. The method defined in claim 1, further comprising allowing a content creator to modify the content in the information areas.

32. The method defined in claim 1, further comprising allowing a content creator to modify the content in the information areas using a web interface.

33. The method defined in claim 1, further comprising automatically rotating the content displayed in the information areas.

34. An interactive wagering system that provides a user with an opportunity to submit electronic wagers on races that are to be run to computer equipment over a communications path using an interactive wagering application, comprising:

user equipment with which the interactive wagering application is implemented, wherein the user equipment is configured to:

display a plurality of wager creation screens for the user, wherein the wager creation screens each include a plurality of interactive menu

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items, wherein each menu item has an associated information area, and wherein the user creates a wager by selecting desired menu items on the wager creation screens; and

provide the user with an opportunity to use the interactive wagering application to place the wager.

35. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options.

36. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options.

37. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options and contain promotional information.

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38. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options and contain promotional information, wherein the promotional information in each information area promotes a racetrack associated with the racetrack option with which that information area is associated.

39. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a race selection screen in which the menu items are selectable race options.

40. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options and contain weather information.

41. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the

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racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options and contain information on upcoming events.

42. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options and contain racetrack hours.

43. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options and contain racetrack directions.

44. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a racetrack selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options and contain racetrack closure information.

45. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a race selection screen in which the menu items are selectable

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race options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the race options are located adjacent to the race options.

46. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a race selection screen in which the menu items are selectable race options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the race options are located adjacent to the race options and contain race information.

47. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a race selection screen in which the menu items are selectable race options, wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the race options and contain race information, and wherein the race information in each information area includes distance information.

48. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a race selection screen in which the menu items are selectable race options that include race information.

49. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a race selection screen in which the menu items are selectable race options for races, wherein the race options include race information, and wherein the race

- 61 -

information included in each race option includes a race type selected from the group consisting of: allowance, maiden claiming, claiming, and maiden claiming.

50. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a race selection screen in which the menu items are selectable racetrack options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the racetrack options are located adjacent to the racetrack options and contain post time information.

51. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a horse selection screen in which the menu items are selectable horse options.

52. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a horse selection screen in which the menu items are selectable horse options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the selectable horse options contain information on odds.

53. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a horse selection screen in which the menu items are selectable horse options and wherein at least one of the selectable horse options contains an indication that

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that selectable horse option is associated with multiple runners.

54. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a horse selection screen in which the menu items are selectable horse options, wherein at least one of the selectable horse options contains an indication that that selectable horse option is associated with multiple runners, and wherein the information region associated with that selectable horse option informs the user how to obtain information on the additional runners.

55. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a horse selection screen in which the menu items are selectable horse options, wherein at least a given one of the selectable horse options contains an indication that the given selectable horse option is associated with multiple runners, and wherein the user equipment is further configured to display a screen containing information on each of the multiple runners when the user selects the given selectable horse option.

56. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a horse selection screen in which the menu items are selectable horse options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the horse options are located

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adjacent to the horse options and contain jockey information.

57. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a horse selection screen in which the menu items are selectable horse options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the horse options are located adjacent to the horse options and contain trainer information.

58. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a wager type selection screen in which the menu items are selectable wager type options.

59. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a wager type selection screen in which the menu items are selectable wager type options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the wager type options are located adjacent to the wager type options.

60. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a wager type selection screen in which the menu items are selectable wager type options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the wager

- 64 -

type options are located adjacent to the wager type options and contain wager type descriptions.

61. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a wager amount selection screen in which the menu items are selectable wager amount options.

62. The system defined in claim 34, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a wager amount selection screen in which the menu items are selectable wager amount options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the wager amount options are located adjacent to the wager amount options.

63. The system defined in claim 34, wherein the user selects multiple runners for a given wager with the wager creation screens, wherein at least one of the wager creation screens is a wager amount selection screen in which the menu items are selectable wager amount options and wherein the information areas that are associated with the wager amount options are located adjacent to the wager amount options and contain information indicating how much the given wager costs for each wager amount option taking into account the multiple runners that have been selected.

64. The system defined in claim 34 wherein the user equipment is further configured to allow a

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content creator to modify the content in the information areas.

65. The system defined in claim 34 wherein the user equipment is further configured to allow a content creator to modify the content in the information areas using a web interface.

66. The system defined in claim 34 wherein the user equipment is further configured to automatically rotate the content displayed in the information areas.

67. A method for allowing users to place electronic wagers on races that are to be run using an interactive wagering application that is implemented using user equipment, comprising:

providing a user with an opportunity to invoke the interactive wagering application;

allowing the user to begin creating a given wager while maintaining information on the user's location within the interactive wagering application;

allowing the user to exit the interactive wagering application before completing the given wager;

providing the user with a further opportunity to invoke the interactive wagering application; and

automatically returning the user to the same location within the interactive wagering

- 66 -

application that the user was at prior to exiting the application when the user invokes the application in response to the further opportunity to invoke the interactive wagering application.

68. An interactive wagering system that provides a user with an opportunity to submit electronic wagers on races that are to be run to computer equipment over a communications path using an interactive wagering application, comprising:

user equipment with which the interactive wagering application is implemented, wherein the user equipment is configured to:

provide a user with an opportunity to invoke the interactive wagering application;

allow the user to begin creating a given wager while maintaining information on the user's location within the interactive wagering application;

allow the user to exit the interactive wagering application before completing the given wager;

provide the user with a further opportunity to invoke the interactive wagering application; and

automatically return the user to the same location within the interactive wagering application that the user was at prior to exiting the application when the user invokes the application in response to the further opportunity to invoke the interactive wagering application.

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69. A method for allowing users to place electronic wagers on races that are to be run using an interactive wagering application that is implemented using user equipment having a display, comprising:

allowing a user to begin creating a wager with the interactive wagering application, wherein the user selects a wager amount and a wager type having multiple runners; and

displaying a wager ticket on the display after the user has selected the wager amount and the wager type, wherein the wager ticket contains a total wager amount that reflects the selected wager amount and reflects selection of the wager type having multiple runners.

70. An interactive wagering system that provides a user with an opportunity to submit electronic wagers on races that are to be run to computer equipment over a communications path using an interactive wagering application, comprising:

user equipment having a display with which the interactive wagering application is implemented, wherein the user equipment is configured to:

allow a user to begin creating a wager with the interactive wagering application, wherein the user selects a wager amount and a wager type having multiple runners; and

display a wager ticket on the display after the user has selected the wager amount and the

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wager type, wherein the wager ticket contains a total wager amount that reflects the selected wager amount and reflects selection of the wager type having multiple runners.

71. A method for allowing users to place electronic wagers on races that are to be run using an interactive wagering application that is implemented using user equipment, comprising:

allowing a user to create a wager with the interactive wagering application while storing information on the user's selections made while in the interactive wagering application;

allowing the user to place the wager;

and

providing an opportunity for the user to use the interactive wagering application to create another wager using information on the stored selections as assumed preferences.

72. An interactive wagering system that provides a user with an opportunity to submit electronic wagers on races that are to be run to computer equipment over a communications path using an interactive wagering application, comprising:

user equipment with which the interactive wagering application is implemented, wherein the user equipment is configured to:

allow a user to create a wager with the interactive wagering application while storing

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information on the user's selections made while in the interactive wagering application;

allow the user to place the wager; and
provide an opportunity for the user to use the interactive wagering application to create another wager using information on the stored selections as assumed preferences.

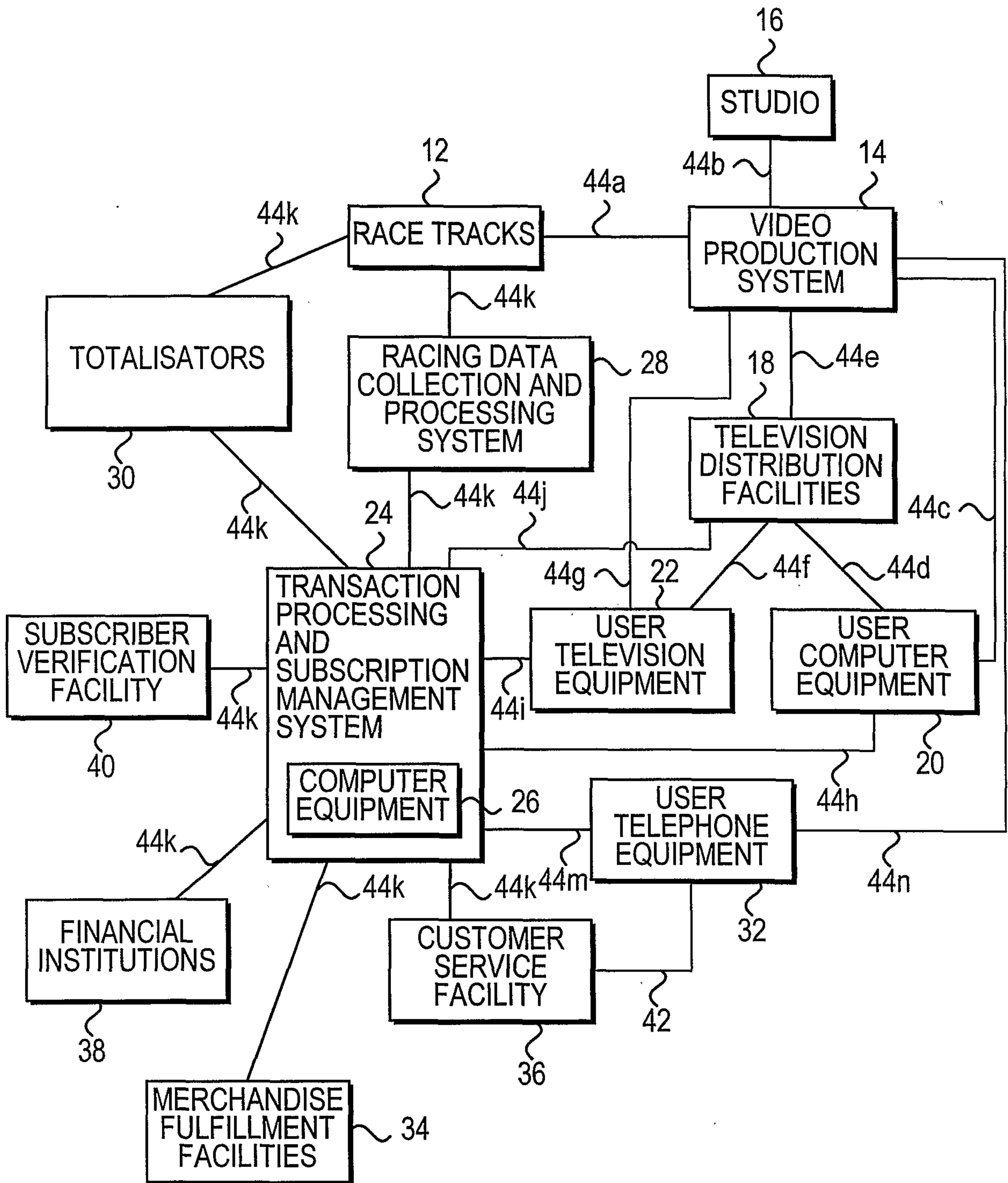


FIG. 1

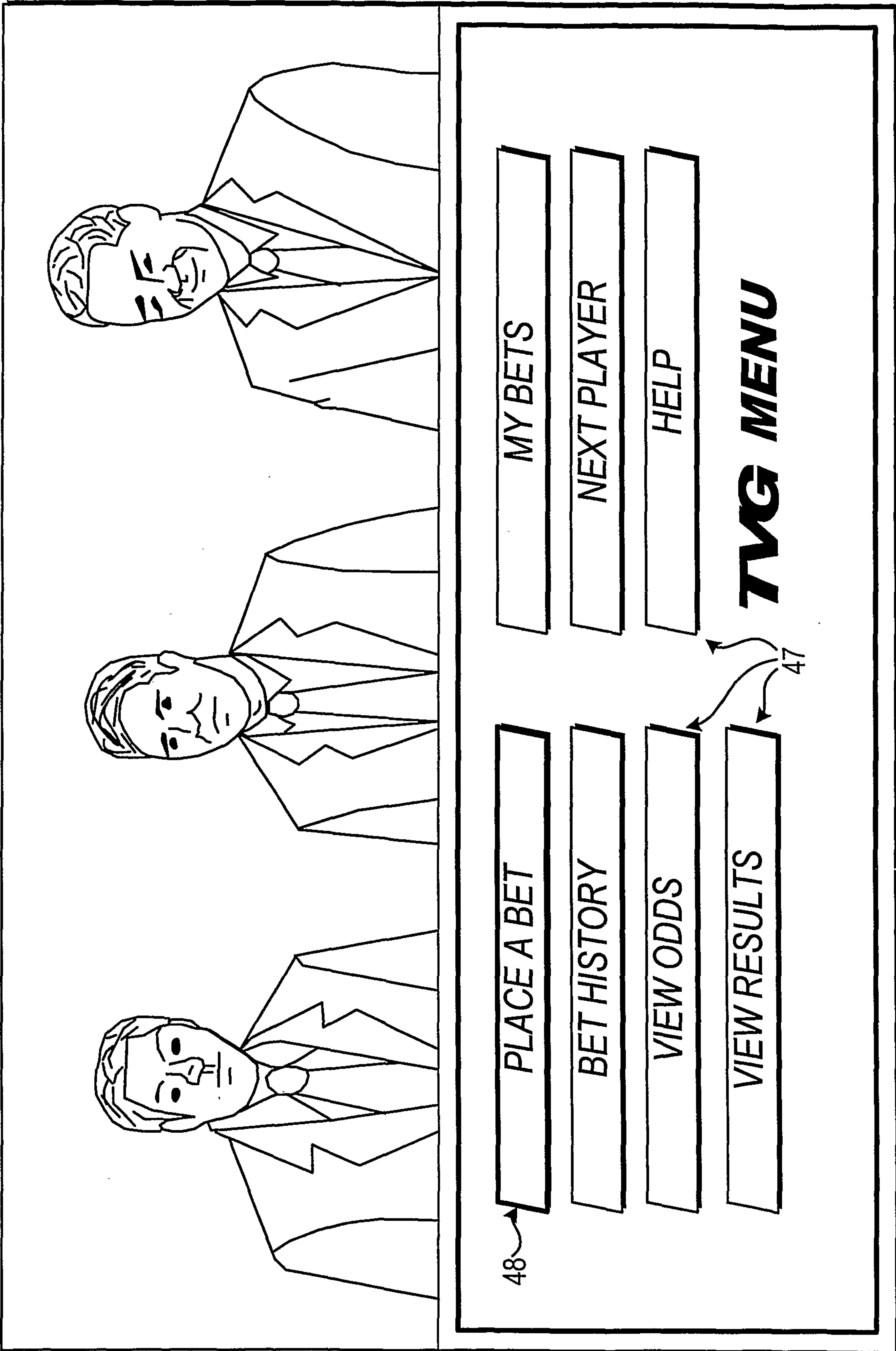


FIG. 2

3/15

50

60

52

54

55

57

64

Gulfstream

TMG

58

56

62

TRACK	GP
RACE	
TYPE	
PICKS	
AMT	
TOTAL	+ FEES

AQUEDUCT / LIGHT RAIN; TRACK MUDDY

GULFSTREAM / SUNNY; TRACK DRY

TURFWAY PARK / CLOUDY; TRACK DRY

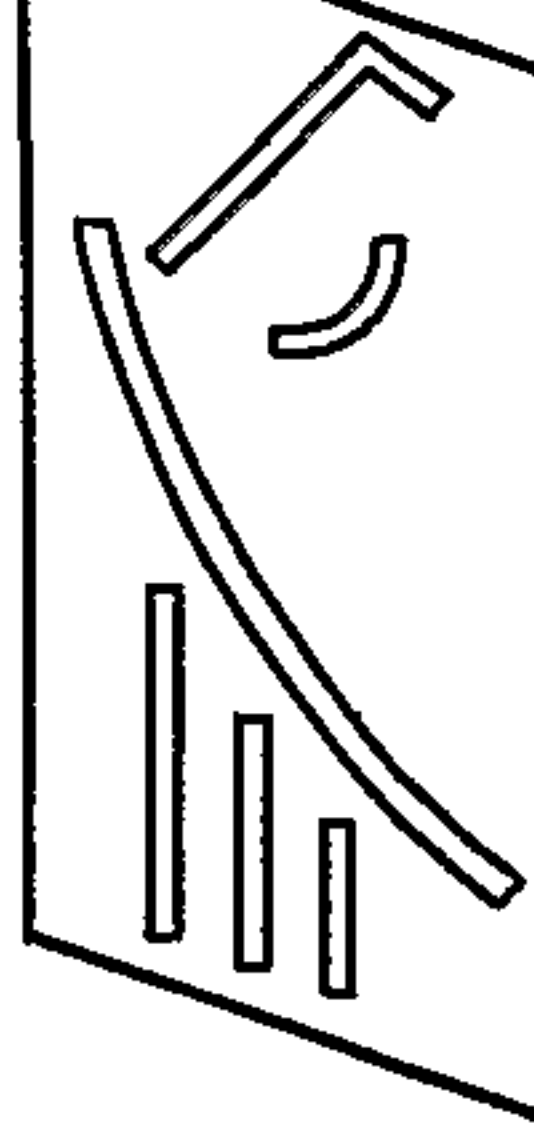
CALDER / WIN A FREE T-SHIRT

CHURCHILL DOWNS / OPEN UNTIL 10:00 PM TONIGHT!

TODAY'S TRACKS: 10

FIG. 3

4/15



TVG

Gulfstream

MAIDEN CLAIMING \$20,000

6 FURLONGS ← 78

15 MINUTES

TRACK GP

RACE 5

TYPE

PICKS

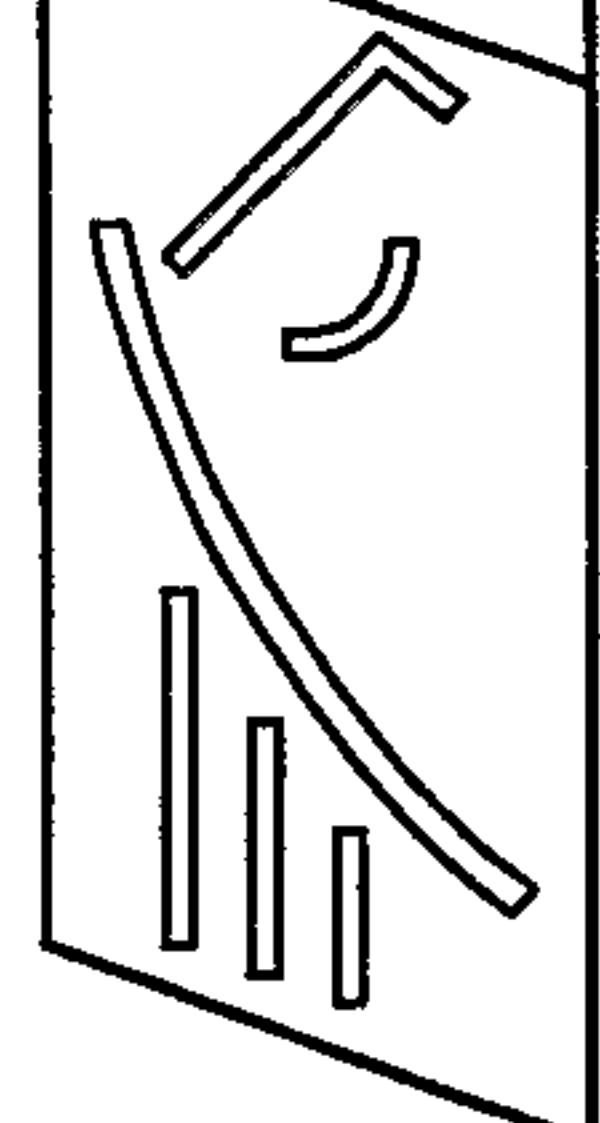
AMT

TOTAL + FEES

RACE

1 ALLOWANCE	12:30P
2 MAIDEN CLAIMING \$20,000	1:00P
3 DERBY	
4 CLAIMING \$20,000	1:30P
5 MAIDEN CLAIMING \$20,000	2:00P
TOTAL RACES: 12	

FIG. 4



TVG

Gulfstream

5

RACE

MAIDEN CLAIMING \$20,000

6 FURLONGS

15 MINUTES

WIN / FINISH 1ST WINS

PLACE / FINISH 1ST OR 2ND WINS

SHOW / FINISH 1ST, 2ND, OR 3RD WINS

EXACTA / PICK 1ST AND 2ND FINISHES


TRIFECTA / PICK 1ST, 2ND, 3RD, FINISHES

TOTAL ENTRIES: 12

TRACK	GP				
RACE	5				
TYPE	EXA				
1ST					
2ND					
AMT					
TOTAL					+ FEES

FIG. 5

6/15



TVG

Gulfstream

5

RACE

MAIDEN CLAIMING \$20,000

6 FURLONGS

15 MINUTES

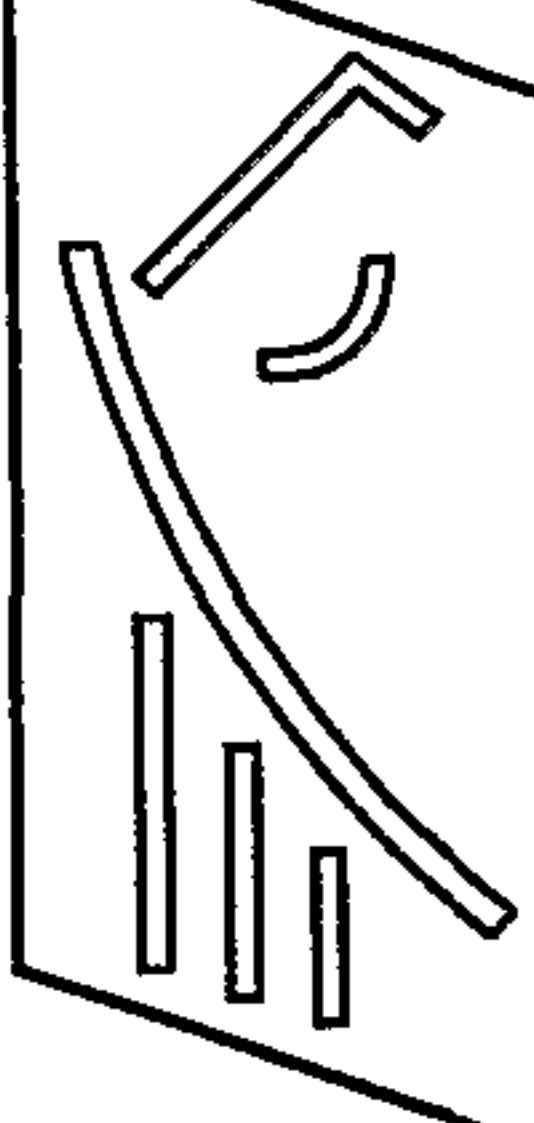
HORSE	1	2	3	4	5	
	102	102	102	102	102	102
	RED	WHITE	BLUE	YELLOW	GREEN	
	BUCKLES OF BRASS	MULTIPLE RUNNERS	CLYDES A GOING	PROVEN POWER	MY COOL CLEAT	
	/ 5-1	/ 3-5 PRESS INFO FOR DETAILS	/ 60-1	/ 12-1	/ 5-4	
						TOTAL ENTRIES: 12

TRACK	GP				
RACE	5				
TYPE	EXA				
PRESS RIGHT ARROW TO ADVANCE					
AMT					
TOTAL					+ FEES

FIG. 6

7/15

108



TVG

Gulfstream

5

RACE

MAIDEN CLAIMING \$20,000

6 FURLONGS

15 MINUTES

HORSE

4

CLICK TO OPEN

TRACK

RACE

TYPE

1ST

2ND

AMT

TOTAL

MULTIPLE RUNNERS

HORSE	NAME
2A	ONE SLICK FOX
2B	INVINCIBLE
2C	METAMORPHOSIS

PRESS SELECT TO CONTINUE

RS

OR DETAILS

110

AMOUNT

TOTAL

+ FEES

TOTAL ENTRIES: 12

FIG. 7

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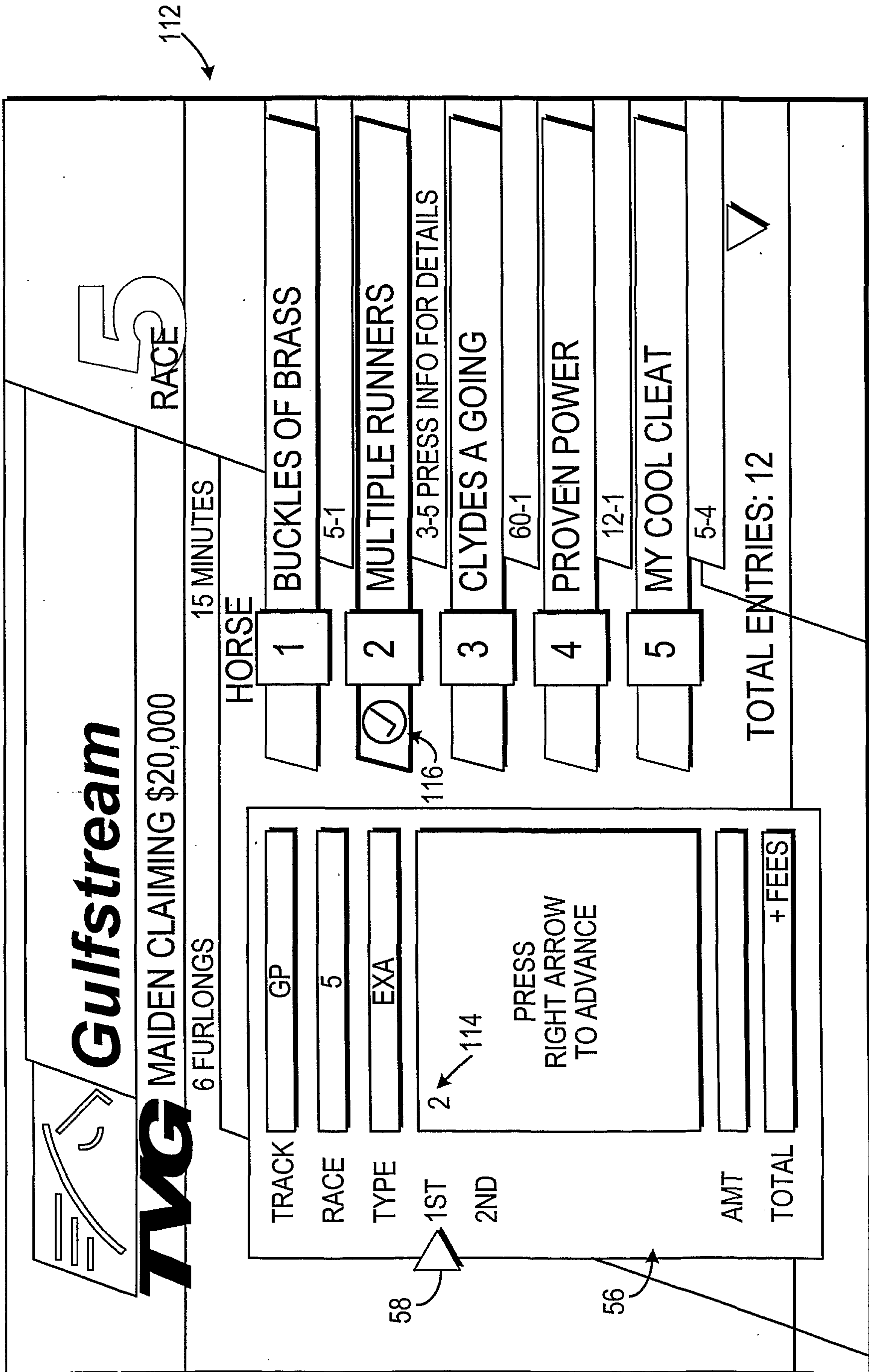


FIG. 8

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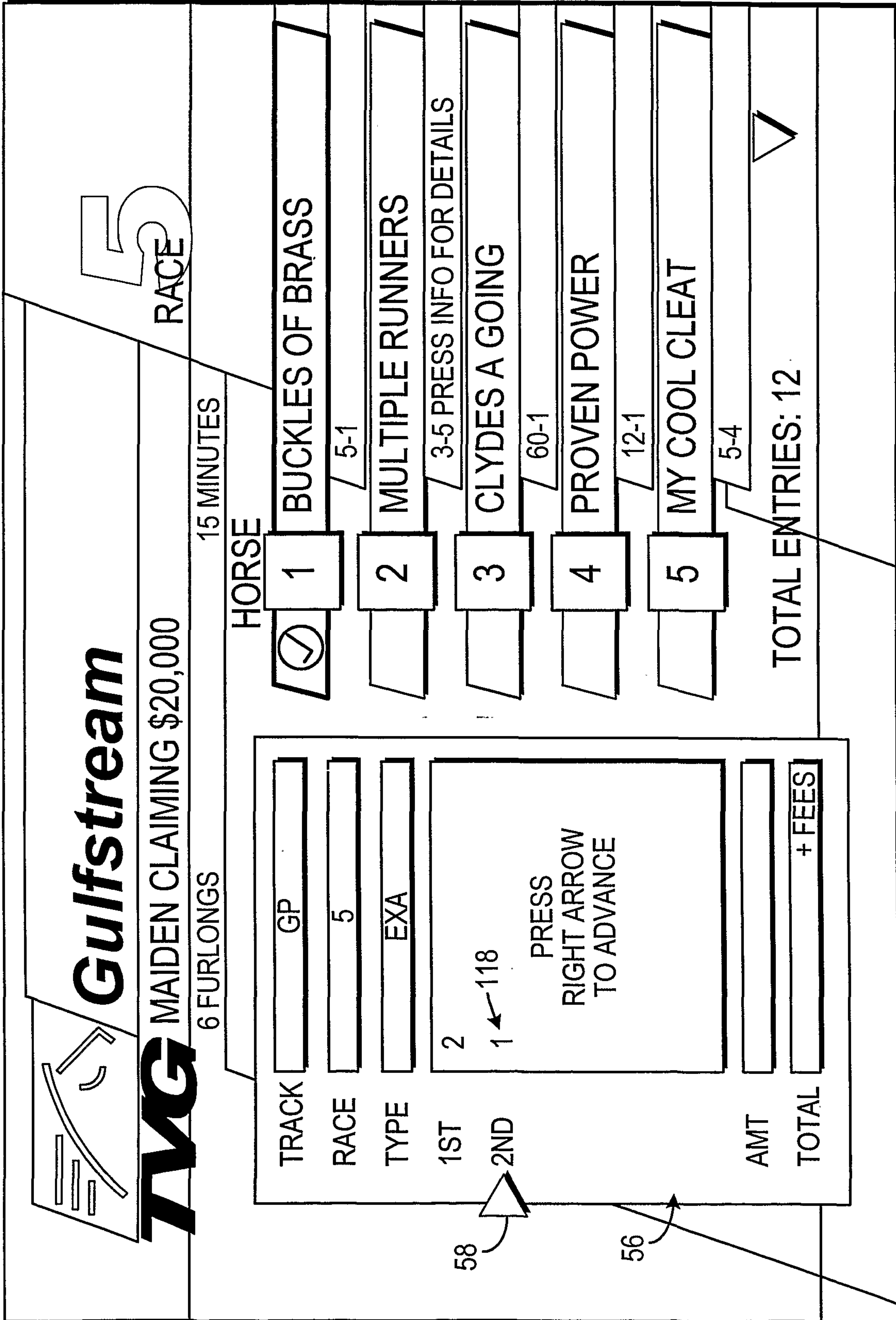
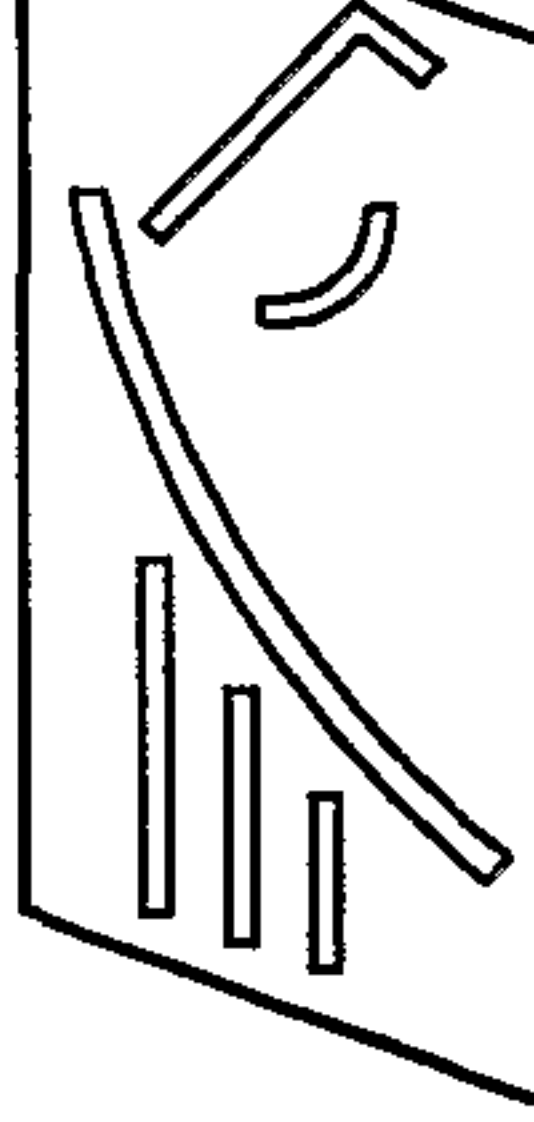


FIG. 9

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TVG

Gulfstream

5

RACE

MAIDEN CLAIMING \$20,000

6 FURLONGS

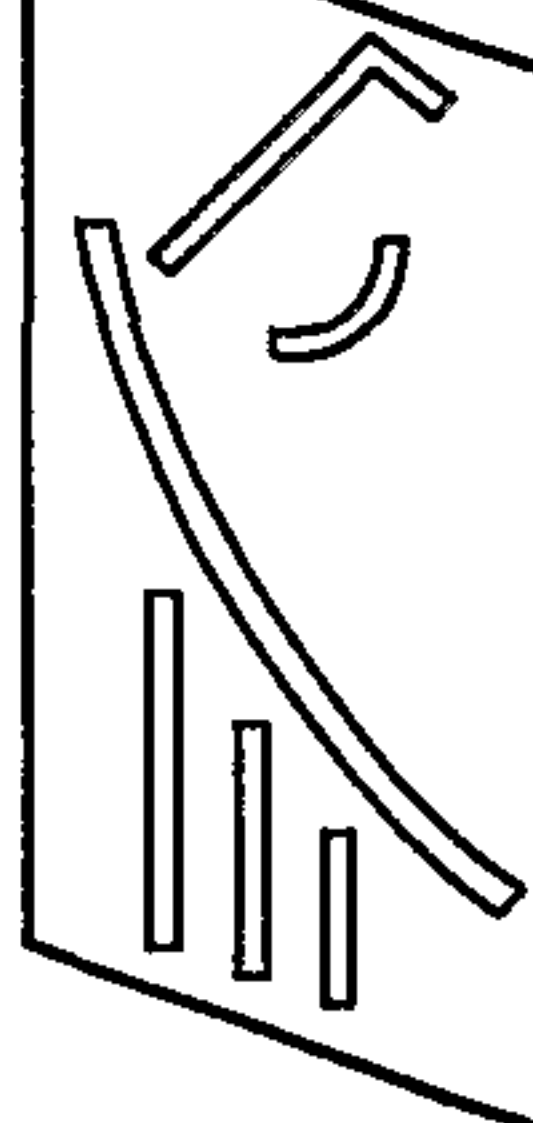
15 MINUTES

HORSE	
1	BUCKLES OF BRASS / 5-1
2	MULTIPLE RUNNERS / 3-5 PRESS INFO FOR DETAILS
3	CLYDES A GOING / 60-1
4	PROVEN POWER / 12-1
5	MY COOL CLEAT / 5-4
TOTAL ENTRIES: 12	

TRACK	GP				
RACE	5				
TYPE	EXA				
1ST	2				
2ND	1 + 4				
					PRESS RIGHT ARROW TO ADVANCE
AMT					
TOTAL					+ FEES

FIG. 10

11/15



Gulfstream

5 RACE

TVG

MAIDEN CLAIMING \$20,000

6 FURLONGS

15 MINUTES

HORSE

TRACK	GP				
RACE	5				
TYPE	EXA				
1ST	2				
2ND	1 + 4				

	\$4
AMT	\$4
TOTAL	\$8 + FEES

\$1	/	TOTAL BET = \$2 + FEES	/	122
\$2	/	TOTAL BET = \$4 + FEES	/	
\$3	/	TOTAL BET = \$6 + FEES	/	
\$4	/	TOTAL BET = \$8 + FEES	/	
\$5	/	TOTAL BET = \$10 + FEES	/	
TOTAL ENTRIES: 12				

	\$8 + FEES
TOTAL	\$8 + FEES

FIG. 11

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MY BETS

TMG

TOTAL BETS \$15

TRACK	RACE	TRACK	AMOUNT	TOTAL
AQU	2	WIN	\$5	\$5
GP	1-2	DD	\$2	\$2
AQU	5	EXA	\$4	\$8

Menu options: SEND ALL, NEW BET, VIEW, DUPLICATE, DELETE

Additional text: R1-5, R2-3, 1ST-2, 2ND-1+4

132

136

134

FIG. 12

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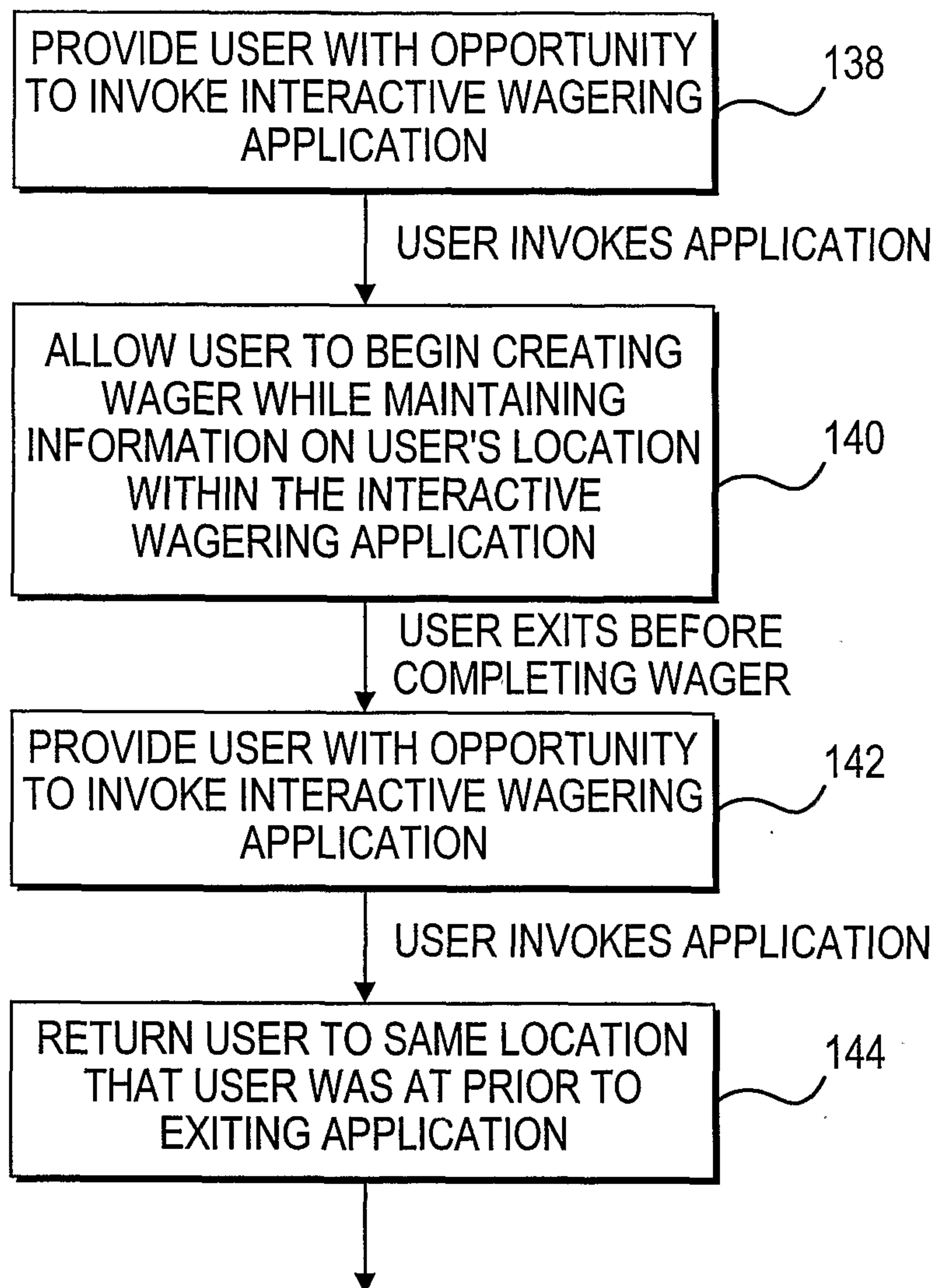


FIG. 13

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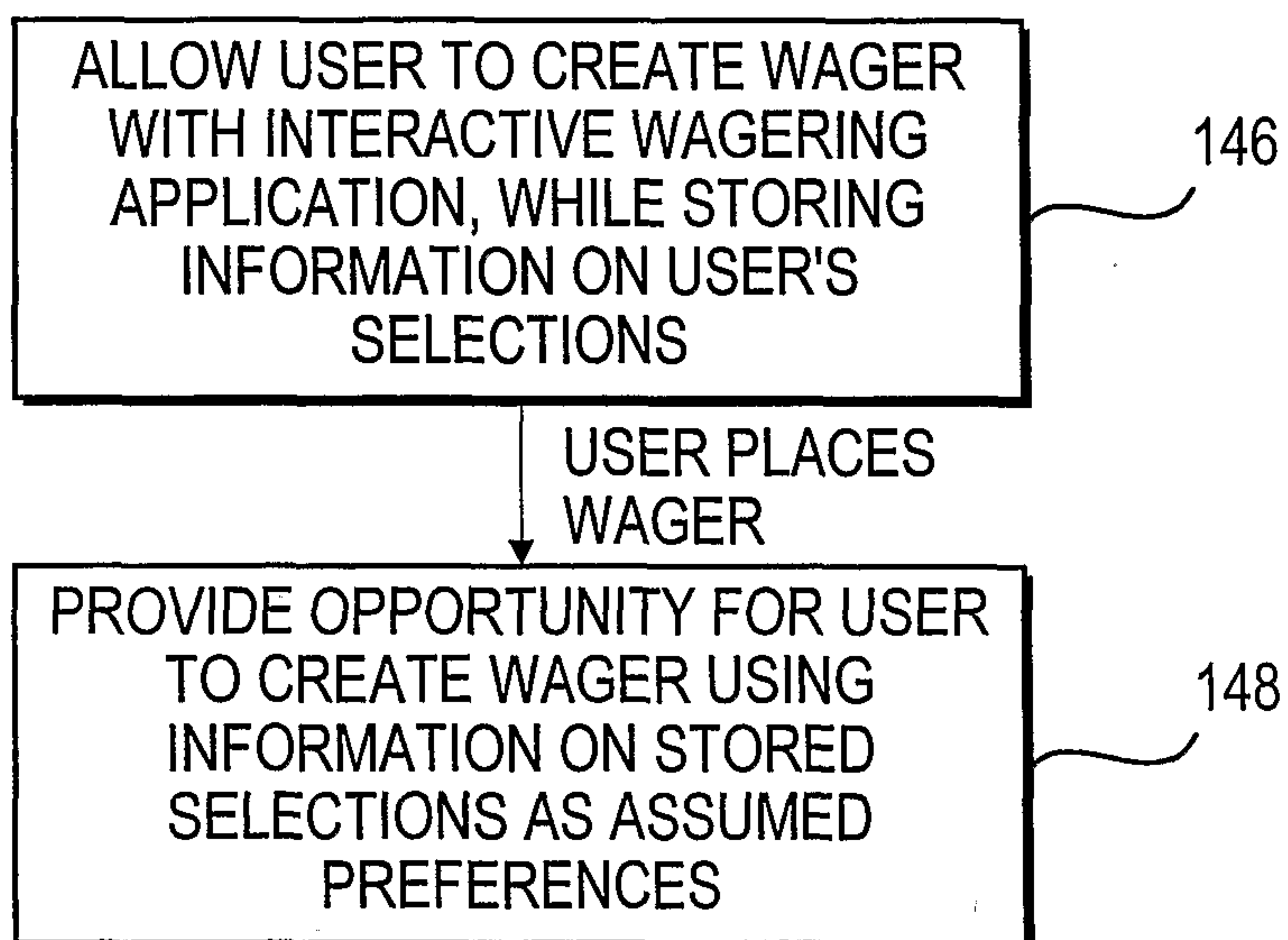


FIG. 14

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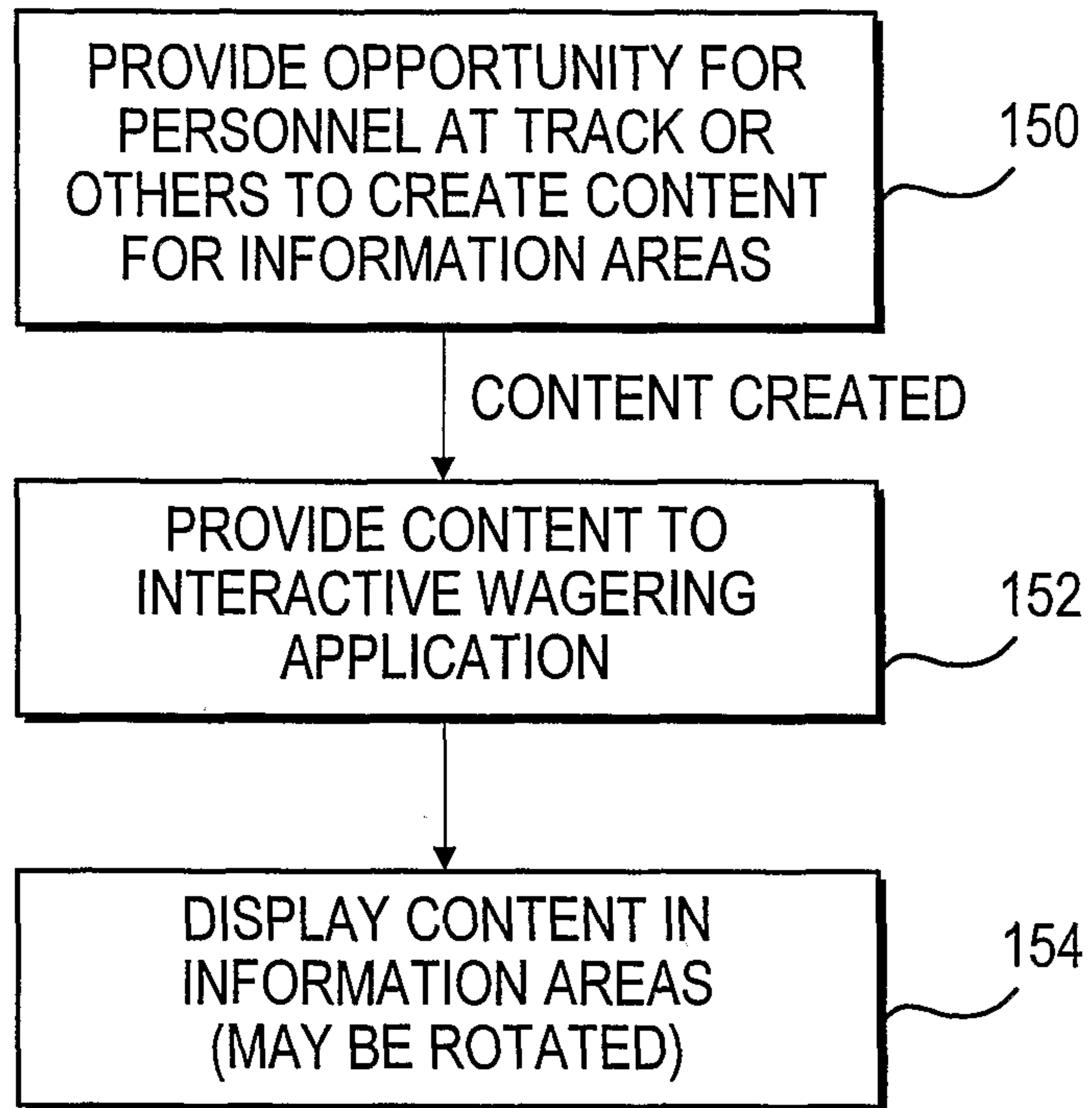


FIG. 15

