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(54) ADD 'EM UP VIDEO POKER

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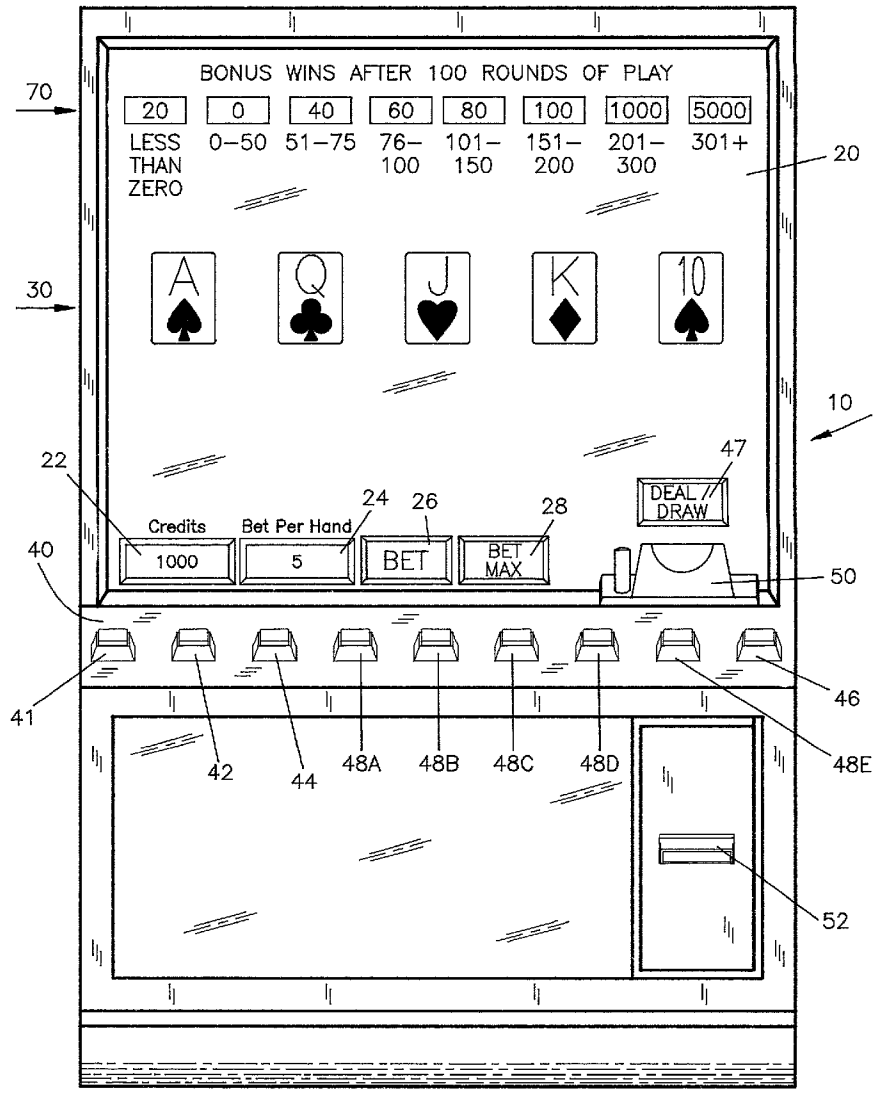
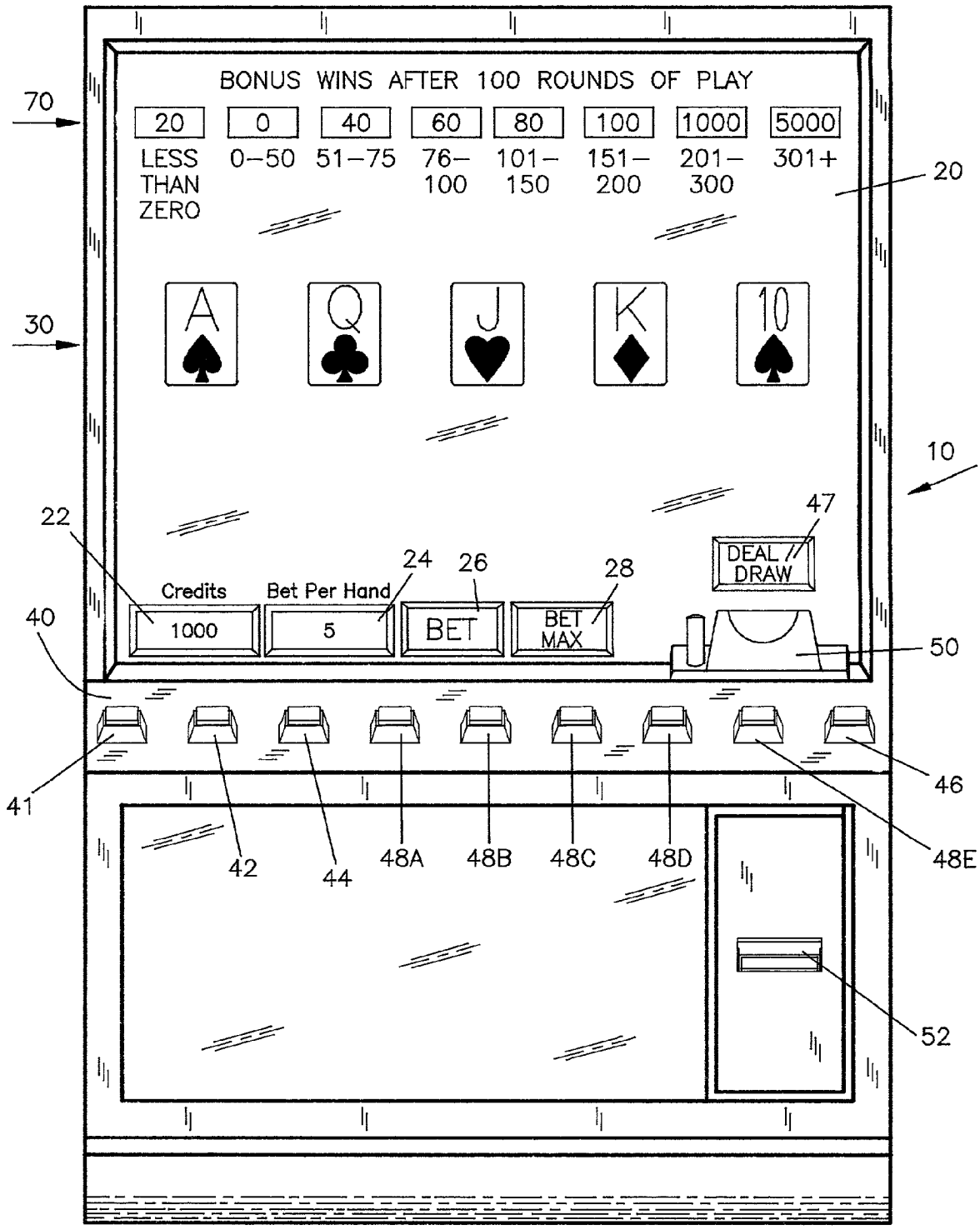
(57) **ABSTRACT**

During the play of a session of a video poker game that uses only a player's hand to determine winning or losing outcomes, the player accrues points for each hand played. The points can be allocated based on the ending hand achieved by the player. Alternatively, the points can be allocated based on the starting hand dealt to the player. After a predetermined number of hands of video poker, say one hundred hands, the player=s accrued point total is compared to a pay table and the player receives an award based on the point total.




BONUS WINS AFTER 100 ROUNDS OF PLAY
20
0
40
60
80
100
1000
5000
LESS THAN ZERO
0–50
51–75
76–100
101–150
151–200
201–300
301+
70
20
30
A
Q
J
K
10
10
22
47
DEAL / DRAW
24
26
28
Credits
Bet Per Hand
1000
5
BET
BET MAX
40
50
41
46
42
44
48A
48B
48C
48D
48E
52

FIG–1

ADD 'EM UP VIDEO POKER

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application is based on and claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 60/233350, filed Sep. 18, 2000.

[0002] This application relates to a method of playing video poker and more particularly to a method of playing video poker in which the player accrues points for each hand of video poker. After a predetermined number of hands, the player=s accrued points are compared to a pay table and the player receives an award based on the number of points the player has accrued.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] A well known game of chance offered to players in most gaming casinos is video draw poker. After making a wager, the player is dealt five cards face up. The player selects which cards, if any, the player wishes to hold, the unheld cards are discarded and replacement cards are dealt for the discarded cards. The final five card hand is analyzed to determine its poker hand ranking and the player is paid for winning poker hand rankings based on the amount of the player=s wager. A pay table is displayed to the player showing the amounts that the player can win based on the poker hand ranking achieved by the player and the amount wagered by the player.

[0004] There is a need in the gaming industry to provide new and exciting games for the players to maintain interest in casino gaming. It is an object of the present invention to provide players with a separate game within a game so that the player has the chance to win additional payouts during the course of play of video poker.

[0005] It is a feature of the present invention to accrue points for each hand played by the player during the course of a session of video poker. The points can be accrued based on the ending hand achieved by the player. After a predetermined number of hands of video poker, the player=s point total is compared to a pay table and the player receives an award based on the total points accrued by the player.

[0006] It is an advantage of the present invention that the player will receive additional payouts based on the length of time that the player plays the gaming machine. This will encourage the player to play the gaming machine for a longer time and add an additional entertainment feature to the gaming machine. This also adds a form of entertainment to the game of video poker since the player will have a rooting interest in watching his total points accrue over a series of hands of video poker.

[0007] Other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from a consideration of the following detailed description.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] During the play of a session of a video poker game that uses only a player's hand to determine winning or losing outcomes, the player accrues points for each hand played. The points can be allocated based on the ending hand achieved by the player. Alternatively, the points can be allocated based on the starting hand dealt to the player. After a predetermined number of hands of video poker, say one hundred hands, the player=s accrued point total is compared to a pay table and the player receives an award based on the point total.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] **FIG. 1** shows a gaming machine configured to operate the method of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0010] The present invention adds a feature to the method of play of conventional video poker. In conventional video poker, a player makes a wager to be able to play a hand of cards. After making the wager (which can be any number of coins, tokens or credits, but is usually a maximum wager of five credits), the player is dealt five cards face up. These first five cards are the player=s initial hand or starting hand.

[0011] The player selects which cards, if any, the player wishes to hold from his initial hand. The unheld cards are discarded and replacement cards are dealt for the discarded cards. The final five card hand is analyzed to determine its poker hand ranking and the player is paid for winning poker hand rankings based on the amount of the player=s wager. A pay table is displayed to the player showing the amounts that the player can win based on the poker hand ranking achieved by the player and the amount wagered by the player.

[0012] In conventional video draw poker, a typical pay table would be:

TABLE 1

DRAW POKER	NUMBER OF COINS BET				
POKER HAND	1	2	3	4	5
ROYAL FLUSH	250	500	750	1000	4000
STRAIGHT FLUSH	50	100	150	200	250
FOUR-OF-A-KIND	25	50	75	100	125
FULL HOUSE	9	18	27	36	45
FLUSH	6	12	18	24	30
STRAIGHT	4	8	12	16	20
THREE-OF-A-KIND	3	6	9	12	15
TWO PAIR	2	4	6	8	10
JACKS OR BETTER	1	2	3	4	5

[0013] While this pay table is known as a regular Draw Poker format pay table, other pay tables have been developed for the other variations of draw poker, such as Deuces Wild Poker, Bonus Poker, Double Bonus Poker, Double Double Bonus Poker, Triple Bonus Poker, Joker=s Wild Poker or any of the myriad of video poker formats that have been developed. Each of these video poker formats uses various arrangements of poker hand rankings as winning combinations and they use various payout amounts for the poker hand rankings. The amounts paid for the various winning hand combinations in each of the video poker formats are calculated to provide a certain theoretical game return which is generally in excess of ninety per cent.

[0014] The method of the present invention can be applied to any of the various video poker formats discussed above.

[0015] **FIG. 1** shows a gaming machine upon which the method of the present invention can be carried out. The gaming machine **10** includes a video screen display **20** on which is shown the playing cards that will be used during the play of the method of the present invention. The video screen display **20** also includes other information and data presented to the player to allow the player to understand the play of the game and to effect the operation of the method.

[0016] In the preferred embodiment of the present invention, the video screen display shows a credit meter **22** and a display of the total number of credits **24** wagered for a particular round of play of the game. The video screen display also has a first touch screen location **47** to allow the player to DEAL the initial five card hand, then to DRAW replacement cards when the player has decided which cards to hold and which cards to discard during the play of the video draw poker game. Other touch screen locations allow the player to make his initial wager, which can be made one credit at a time using the BET ONE location **26** or which can be made by wagering the maximum number of credits allowed by the gaming machine using the BET MAX location **28**.

[0017] The playing cards **30** used in the play of the game are displayed at any suitable location on the video screen display **22**. Each of the card locations on the video screen display **22** can also be touch screen locations so that the player may designate which cards he wishes to hold by merely touching the appropriate card location on the video screen display **20**.

[0018] The gaming machine **10** also has a button panel **40** which includes typical buttons that the player may press to activate various actions during the play of the method of the present invention. A CASH OUT button **41** is provided to allow the player to collect any credits which the player has accrued on the credit meter **22**. A BET MAX button **42** and a BET ONE button **44** are provided to allows the player to wager either the maximum amount of credits or to wager one credit at a time on the play of the game as desired by the player. A DEAL/DRAW button **46** is provided to allow the player to effect the deal step and the draw step of the method of play as desired should the player prefer to use the button panel instead of the DEAL/DRAW touch screen location **47** on the video screen display **20**. A plurality of HOLD buttons **48** are also provided to allow the player to select which cards the player wishes to hold should the player prefer to use the button panel instead of the card touch screen locations on the video screen display **20**.

[0019] In the preferred embodiment of the present invention, when the initial five card hand is displayed on the video screen display **20**, the player must choose which cards to hold by either pressing the card location on the touch screen or by pressing the HOLD button associated with the card position.

[0020] The gaming machine **10** also includes a coin head **50** to allow the player to insert coins or gaming tokens as wagers to allow play of the gaming machine **10**. A bill acceptor slot **52** is also provided on the gaming machine **10**. In order to accrue credits that may be used to play the gaming machine **10**, the player inserts paper currency or other suitable script or gaming coupons into the bill acceptor slot **52** behind which, on the interior of the gaming machine, is mounted a bill acceptor which takes in and validates the currency. The monetary value of the inserted currency is then applied to the credit meter **22**, the credits on which the player may use to play the gaming machine.

[0021] In the method of the present invention, during the play of a session of video poker, the player accrues points for each hand played. The points can be allocated based on the ending hand achieved by the player. Any suitable amount of points can be allocated to each ending hand achieved by the player. In a very simple example, the player could achieve a single positive point for each hand that is a winning hand and the player could achieve a single negative point for each losing hand. The points achieved by the player are then accumulated over a series of hands of video poker play. Any suitable number of hands of play can be used, say one hundred hands. The player can then be paid an award depending on the point total achieved by the player. The player could be paid an award for achieving a number of positive points, or a number of negative points or for ending with exactly zero points.

[0022] In a preferred embodiment of the present invention, the player can achieve points based on the number of credits allocated to each winning hand combination and the player would also achieve one negative point for each losing hand combination. In this example, a Double Double Bonus poker format is the poker game being played by the player with the following pay table being used:

TABLE 2

DOUBLE DOUBLE BONUS POKER FORMAT	NUMBER OF COINS BET				
POKER HAND	1	2	3	4	5
ROYAL FLUSH	250	500	750	1000	4000
STPAIGHT FLUSH	50	100	150	200	250
FOUR ACES WITH 2, 3 OR 4	400	800	1200	1600	2000
FOUR ACES	160	320	480	640	800
FOUR 2'S, 3'S OR 4'S WITH ACE, 2, 3 OR 4	160	320	480	640	800
FOUR 2'S, 3' OR 4'S	80	160	240	320	400
FOUR 5'S THRU K'S	50	100	150	200	250
FULL HOUSE	8	16	24	32	40
FLUSH	5	10	15	20	25
STRAIGHT	4	8	12	16	20
THREE-OF-A-KIND	3	6	9	12	15
TWO PAIR	1	2	3	4	5
JACKS OR BETTER	1	2	3	4	5

[0023] The player would engage in the play of this Double Double Bonus format video poker game in the conventional manner. The player would wager one or more credits (with a maximum of five credits) and an initial five card hand would be displayed to the player. The player would determine which cards he wished to hold, if any, and replacement cards would be dealt to the player. The ending five card hand would be the player=s final hand and the poker hand ranking of this five card hand would be determined. The player would win or lose on this final hand based on the pay table shown in Table 2. Winning hands would be paid to the player based on this pay table and, if the player had a losing hand, his wager would be lost.

[0024] The player would also achieve points equal to the credits won by the player for winning hands and the player would achieve a single negative point for a losing hand. The points achieved by the player would be shown on a separate point meter on the screen display.

[0025] After a predetermined number of hands of video poker, say one hundred hands, the player=s accrued point total is compared to a pay table and the player receives an award based on the point total achieved by the player over the course of this predetermined number of hands.

[0026] In the preferred embodiment of the present invention, the player is not required to make a separate or an additional wager to be eligible for this accrued point total award. A portion of the moneys wagered by the player in the regular video poker game is used to fund this accrued point total award.

[0027] Any suitable scheme can be used to determine the accrued point total award. In one example, an award can be paid to the player for simply achieving a positive point total, or an award can be paid to the player for simply achieving a negative point total, or an award can be paid to the player for achieving exactly zero points at the end of the predetermined number of hands of video poker play.

[0028] In the preferred embodiment of the present invention, a range of total points is used to determine the amount of the point total award to be paid to the player. Any suitable ranges and any suitable awards can be used. For example, the following total points ranges and their corresponding awards can be used:

TABLE 3

TOTAL POINTS	AWARD
LESS THAN 0	20
0–50	0
51–75	40
76–100	60
101–150	80
151–200	100
201–300	1000
301+	5000

[0029] The video screen display **22** can also include a location **70** which displays to the player the pay table for the various total points amounts that the player may achieve during each one hundred rounds of play of the game. Since the probability of an particular range of total points can be calculated for any predetermined number of hands of video poker, the amount of each award can be determined based on the percentage amount that is willing to be added to the regular game return.

[0030] In another embodiment of the present invention, the player can be required to make a separate wager of any suitable amount, say one credit, and the moneys generated by this separate wager can be used to fund the accrued total point award.

[0031] Alternatively, the points can be allocated based on the starting hand dealt to the player. After each initial five cards are dealt to the player, the poker hand ranking of these five cards is determined. A point value can be assigned to each poker hand for this starting hand. The points are accrued over a predetermined number of starting hands and an award is made to the player based on the total number of accrued points, as explained above.

[0032] While the invention has been illustrated with respect to several specific embodiments thereof, these embodiments should be considered as illustrative rather than limiting. Various modifications and additions may be made and will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of playing a poker game that uses only a player's hand to determine winning or losing outcomes and in which points are accumulated by the player over a predetermined number of hands comprising:

a) dealing an initial player's hand of five cards all face up;

b) selecting none, one or more of the face up cards from the initial player's hand as cards to be held;

c) discarding from the initial player's hand the face up cards that were not selected to be held and replacing each of those cards with a face up card resulting in a final five card player's hand;

d) determining the poker hand ranking of the final player's hand; and

e) awarding the player at least one point for each winning outcome based on the poker hand ranking of the final player's hand.

2. The method of claim 1 further including accumulating a total points of the awarded points over all of the predetermined number of hands and awarding the player a payout based on the total points.

3. The method of claim 1 further including awarding the player at least one negative point for each losing outcome based on the poker hand ranking of the final player's hand.

4. The method of claim 3 further including accumulating a total points of the awarded points over all of the predetermined number of hands and awarding the player a payout based on the total points.

5. The method of claim 1 in which the amount of points awarded for each winning outcome is based on the poker hand ranking of the final player's hand.

6. The method of claim 1 in which the player makes a wager to participate in the poker game and the player also receives a monetary payout when the player achieves a winning outcome based on the poker hand ranking of the final player's hand.

7. A method of playing a poker game that uses only a player's hand to determine winning or losing outcomes and in which points are accumulated by the player over a predetermined number of hands comprising:

a) dealing an initial player's hand of five cards all face up;

b) determining the poker hand ranking of the initial player's hand;

c) selecting none, one or more of the face up cards from the initial player's hand as cards to be held;

d) discarding from the initial player's hand the face up cards that were not selected to be held and replacing each of those cards with a face up card resulting in a final five card player's hand;

e) determining the poker hand ranking of the final player's hand; and

f) awarding the player at least one point for each winning outcome based on the poker hand ranking of the initial player's hand.

8. The method of claim 7 further including accumulating a total points of the awarded points over all of the predetermined number of hands and awarding the player a payout based on the total points.

9. The method of claim 7 further including awarding the player at least one negative point for each losing outcome based on the poker hand ranking of the initial player's hand.

10. The method of claim 9 further including accumulating a total points of the awarded points over all of the predetermined number of hands and awarding the player a payout based on the total points.

11. The method of claim 7 in which the amount of points awarded for each winning outcome is based on the poker hand ranking of the initial player's hand.

12. The method of claim 7 in which the player makes a wager to participate in the poker game and the player also receives a monetary payout when the player achieves a winning outcome based on the poker hand ranking of the final player's hand.

13. A method of playing a poker game that uses only a player's hand to determine winning or losing outcomes and in which points are accumulated by the player over a predetermined number of hands comprising:

a) dealing an initial player's hand of at least five cards all face up;

d) determining the poker hand ranking of the initial player's hand; and

c) awarding the player at least one point for each winning outcome based on the poker hand ranking of the initial player's hand.

14. The method of claim 13 further including accumulating a total points of the awarded points over all of the predetermined number of hands and awarding the player a payout based on the total points.

15. The method of claim 13 further including awarding the player at least one negative point for each losing outcome based on the poker hand ranking of the initial player's hand.

16. The method of claim 15 further including accumulating a total points of the awarded points over all of the predetermined number of hands and awarding the player a payout based on the total points.

17. The method of claim 13 in which the amount of points awarded for each winning outcome is based on the poker hand ranking of the final player's hand.

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