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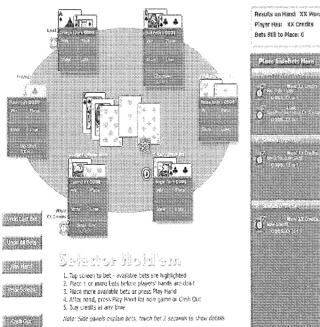
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(54) Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PLAYING A WAGERING GAME BASED ON POKER RULES SUCH AS THOSE OF TEXAS HOLD'EM, WITH SITUATIONAL WAGERS OFFERED

FIG. 8:

Play Hand Pressed (4th time), River Dealt & Hand ends, all unresolved bets are

determined (the wager on Small Blind placed at the hand's outset - see earlier image has won, etc.).





(57) Abstract: A method of providing a game, which offers situational wagers, to players who bet and who may be required to pay with either valuable points or currency, with points of no monetary value, or no points. Embodiments of the invention include games concerning player versus house hands of poker such as slot machine type video poker or a casino table game. Alternate embodiments consider poker based computer player versus house, player versus player game, internet gaming, resident gaming, and so forth. Finally, the invention can be implemented physically in connection with a player versus player hand of poker. The hand of poker is analyzed as it is playing out and cards are dealt, and people observing and those participating in the game are offered exciting situational wagers, made available dependent on how the hand is playing out. Thematically, many of the wagers increase the bettor's conceptual understanding of poker.

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System And Method For Playing A Wagering Game Based On Poker Rules Such As Those Of Texas Hold'em, With Situational Wagers Offered

Related Applications

This application claims the priority of United States provisional application Serial No. 60/907962 filed on April 25, 2007.

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to poker play and more particularly to providing to bettors, who may be required to pay using valuable points or currency or who may play with points of no monetary value or who may play without points, a game which offers situational wagers made available based on how a randomly generated poker hand or a poker hand being played live by other players they are observing is playing out.

15 Background of the Invention

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Texas Hold'em is by far the most popular form of poker, constituting the lion's share of the poker hands played online and in casino poker play. Nonetheless, the vast majority of poker hands played within the multibillion-dollar casino video poker slot machine market and online video poker market, are hands of five card draw poker, a game rarely played by poker players online or in casinos. A key reason for this, is that poker players want to influence whether they win or lose. Five card draw poker satisfies this need, as a bettor chooses which cards to discard, making such decisions as whether to draw to a pair or for a straight or flush. Texas Hold'em, presently offering no significant way for the bettor to influence whether he wins or loses, constitutes only a small percentage of the video poker market. Similarly, prior to the invention, other popular forms of non-draw poker such as Omaha, constitute either no portion or an insignificant portion of the poker market.

The invention, by providing a bettor with an opportunity to select between multiple situational wagers, gives the bettor the means to influence his own outcome – thereby determining winning and losing. Also, thematically, many of the situational wagers concern how the observed poker hand is playing out, thereby increasing the bettor's conceptual

understanding of poker. The foregoing addresses significant deficiencies in the present market, creating the opportunity for fun and popular poker play of Texas Hold'em and other non-draw forms of poker such as Omaha or Double Texas Hold'em, in a market which presently has limited and weak offerings.

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Summary of the Invention

Many remember the horse-racing game for kids: You'd wind up a mechanical track, select a horse, then watch the toy horses race around. If your horse won, you won too. The invention is like that, in that a bettor wagers on: I. one or more of the game's observed players and/or II. bonus bets made available as the hand plays. Further, just as in horse racing or Jai Alai, bettors may be offered the chance to wager on whether those they are observing win, place or show.

The term bettor, as used herein, is the person wagering on the game. The term observed player as used herein represents one of the poker players in the game which the bettor is wagering on either in the setting of a virtual computer-generated player or in the setting of an actual person playing poker physically in a locale such as a casino or playing electronically in a setting such as online with the game shown on a screen. In the circumstance where observed player is understood to mean a nonvirtual human player, and some or all of the below bets are being offered to non-participant bettors, appropriate logistical adjustment should be understood to accommodate the foregoing (i.e., bets where the outcome can be influenced by the observed player might be unavailable, hole cards will be dealt so that no observed player sees cards held by his competitors), and all unresolved bets – perhaps because of early termination of the hand – will be refunded. Finally, the invention may be implemented in a manner so as to supply poker players with additional wagers they can make on hands of poker they are participating in and also observing as they play. In this iteration, appropriate logistical adjustment should be understood to accommodate the foregoing.

The invention is not specific to a particular non-draw form of poker game. Nevertheless, the invention must be described in an illustrative context. For this purpose, Texas Hold'em, the most popular form of non-draw form of poker, is used herein. To appreciate the nuances of the invention, the basic rules of Texas Hold'Em must be understood. Those are set forth below.

The rules of Texas Hold'em determine which of the observed players has the winning hand at the conclusion of each hand. The bettor may have placed a wager on the winning game character or others, or only placed other available bets on the hand, see listing below. Furthermore, just as in roulette where during a single spin a person can place inconsistent bets such as a wager on the number 1 and also number 32, bettors playing the invented game may place conflicting bets where one bet's winning precludes the possibility of another wager winning.

In the illustrative Texas Hold'em variation of the invention shown herein, the bettor can make bets at four different hand stages: 1. before any cards are shown, 2. before the flop but with all 'hole' cards displayed (they're dealt face up to the observed players), 3. after the flop and 4. after the turn.

This game may be deployed as video poker with an interactive display, perhaps a touch-screen, or by using other methodologies. The bettor acquires credits which act as virtual chips, and places wagers throughout the hand as it plays. Similarly, the game may be deployed as a table game (similar to a craps table, but with other bets offered), through utilization of the card-reading technology which is present in certain game tables, or through utilization of virtual cards. An electronic deployment is described herein, wherein the bettor uses virtual chips and places wagers throughout the hand on bets offered on the virtual table. [For a physical deployment, appropriate logistical adjustments should be understood.]. Moreover, the game can be played with networked terminals and with significant bonus bets being paid on successful wagers placed on highly unusual events (i.e., four pf a kind losing).

The Invention's Play Setting

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The invention may be implemented as video poker in the slot machine market or as a casino table game, both concerning player versus house hands of poker. Furthermore, the invention can be implemented, as a poker based computer player versus house or player game (either internet game, resident application or otherwise). Finally, the invention can be implemented physically in connection with player versus player hands of poker.

In the illustrative embodiment of the invention, simple icons (as below defined) are used to present the bettor with the wagers offered by the invention concerning a player versus house hand of poker. The observed players in the illustrative embodiment of the invention are computer-generated fictional poker players. For demonstration purposes, the

examples given are based around Texas Hold'em, although the same infrastructure could be applied to any poker variant. The term Hold'Em as used herein, should be understood to relate to all types of non-draw poker.

Certain descriptions of the game included herein are explained using slot machine type controls. This is without limitation to its possible deployment in other settings. By way of example, alternate methods for playing the game include use of a mouse, keyboard, physical placement of chips, etc. All references herein to functions (certain suggest operation through touch-screen), should be understood to include <u>all</u> possible methodologies for play of the game (with assumed logistical adjustment to accommodate different settings).

Most of the infrastructure would be fairly similar in either a slot machine, internet game or computer game environment. However, the casino table game would likely involve an additional component - necessary interaction between a computer system and a physical (likely felt-type) table.

15 Odds and Wagers

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Payouts are based on the odds of the bets selected. Obviously, wagers on a stronger hand (more likely to win) win less than wagers on a weaker hand (less likely to win). This is similar to odds setting at a racetrack. Note, in the invented game the true odds can be precisely calculated. Odds set for each possible offered wager will be set by the house to achieve the desired house advantage (for example, a 15 percent +/- house edge). Within this description of the game, odds are expressed with a variable of 'XX.' XX is a number between 1 and 10,000,000. Odds are expressed as: A) 1 to XX for the wager types which likely pay less than 1 to 1, B) XX to 1 for the wager types which likely pay more than 1 to 1, and C) XX to XX for wager types which are uncertain (criteria such as house advantage, cards in play, etc. influence this) if they can pay more or less than 1 to 1. XX is an indeterminate number of 1 or greater. In the examples given herein, the house edge has not been specified, and therefore the odds have not been calculated. For this reason, the FIG. 3 - 8 images (demonstrating play of a hand of the game) use "X" for demonstration purposes, rather than specific numeric values, to represent bettor credits and payouts. In the unlikely event of a non-whole credit payout amount, the win may be rounded down to prevent the possibility the non-whole-credit balance.

Bets that are not relevant or applicable will not show. For example, a feature may no longer be possible based of how the hand has developed, or cannot be offered in a

manner which sufficiently maintains the house's odds advantage (i.e. if a flop gives a Royal Flush to a game character, a bettor will no longer have the option to make new bets on that game character to win).

The bettor may make as many types of wagers as he likes on one or several of the observed players, as well as other available bets. This is notwithstanding whether the bets are in conflict – where no outcome will cause all to win.

An additional optional feature could cause certain observed players to "fold" at various of the hand's stages prior to the completion of the hand. For example, hands that do not meet a predefined qualifying strength (i.e. a pair, Ace-high or high draw %) might automatically fold. The necessary qualifying strength could also vary for each round (i.e., top 20 hand required preflop, Ace-high or high draw % required post-flop, and pair or better required post-turn). Additionally or alternatively, each round could cause hand(s) with the worst remaining odds to fold. Any 'folded' hand might then have no chance of winning or causing any of the available bets to win – with the exception of the Fold feature (a wager on which hand will fold early).

Brief Description of the Drawings

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Further objects, features and advantages of the invention will become apparent upon consideration of the following detailed description in conjunction with the drawing, in which:

FIG. 1 depicts an overall system including a server machine which hosts a video poker game and is equipped to supply the service provided by our invention, and a plurality of user (client) machines, which may be slot machines or computers located elsewhere such as within a bettor's locale in the instance of use of the Internet;

FIG. 2 depicts a user (client) machine which may be used by a bettor who plays the invention on-line in the instance of use of the Internet, and can also be understood as an Intranet or other setting; and

FIG. 3 - FIG. 8 are illustrations of the type of 'screen shots' encountered during the course of a bettor observing play of a hand of Texas Hold'Em (the screen shots depict many, but not all, of the different types of information that are displayed in accordance with the invention) and making bets.

The Hardware

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The heart of the system of FIG. 1 is a game server 100, of which many examples exist in the prior art. The game server (which may be an array of processors) interfaces with two types of memory – data storage 102 which maintains data pertaining to the bettor (such as his credit balance), and game memory 104 which records data pertinent to games in progress (such as the cards which are being played). (Data collected during the course of games in progress is continually updated.) Analytics processor 106, which need not be a separate unit, performs the analyses to be discussed below and determines the wagers offered to the bettor.

Communication server 108 transmits data to bettors and receives data from them, and transfers such data to and from the game server. The 'Internet' 110 should also be understood as intranet (local setting), and is the communications medium that connects user machines 112 (possibly slot machines or computers and the bettor's locale) to the server host. Although the Internet / intranet is the preferred communications medium, any other communication medium that has sufficient technological qualities, will suffice. There is nothing about the server or hardware that is unique and the hardware and any conventional poker system and method can be used to implement the invention.

Similarly, the user machines are also standard equipment, and conventional slot machines or PCs can be used. A typical user machine, as shown in FIG. 2, includes a processor 120, memory 124 for storing data pertinent to a game in progress, and a conventional graphic user interface. Input/output devices include a mouse input device 126, a keyboard input device – said understood to also include typical slot machine controls 128 and a speaker and sound card 130. In addition to memory 124 which stores temporary data, data storage 122 has the installed operating system, browser software and game software. The user machines are the same as those presently used by millions of people who play video poker.

To communicate over the Internet / intranet in general and to a game host in particular, the user machine includes a communication interface 134 which is shown connected to the Internet 110, which term should also be understood as intranet (local setting). The invention may be used in a physical setting, such as a casino, through play being networked and hosted locally. Such an implementation might utilize linked units, much like linked electronic slot machines, with appropriate backend technology including servers, networking, etc.

There are numerous features provided for today's bettors. One such example is the provision of sounds that accompany certain events taking place in the virtual poker hand displayed on the monitor of a bettor (e.g., the sound of a slot machine paying off when a pot is won by a bettor). While the embodiment of the invention disclosed herein emphasizes only the features necessary to understand the invention, it is to be understood that standard features of video poker are also contemplated.

Rules and their Permutations

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The invention's rules, concerning betting and otherwise, include all of those set out herein, or a subset of these. As to each feature, the rules may deviate, while maintaining the spirit of the feature. Additionally, the game may be deployed with additional features and wagers. The game's rules, as set out herein and otherwise, will be augmented, modified and elaborated upon to provide implementation and for other reasons.

The rules as finalized may be set out on screens and panels of the machine presenting the invention (i.e., a slot machine), so that the bettor is fully aware of all the rules. The game may have on-screen hints and the screen bottom summarizes some of its rules, as shown in FIG. 3 - 8 images of a representative hand.

The game contemplates its being deployed as herein and / or with alternate available bets and methodologies for wagering and logistics.

The Game's Play, and Certain Rules of Texas Hold'em

How the game plays – in one possible deployed version - is set out in the below narrative description of the representative hand. Hands are dealt out as in Texas Hold'Em. Each game character receives two cards - hole cards. The invention, as described in the below narrative, concerns a player versus house hand of poker where the hole cards are dealt up. Five cards are turned up on the table – the board - and used by all observed players. Observed players that have not folded may use any combination of their two hole cards plus the board to make their best five-card poker hand. Ranking of hands is the conventional ranking, with the highest hand being 10, Jack, Queen, King and Ace on-suit (the highest straight-flush) and the lowest potential winning hand being high

cards (when there is no pair or better hand). Two or more observed players may tie, in which event bets on each wins, unless the rules promulgated on the game's release otherwise provide. In the event of a tie the payoff may be lower, with perhaps the payoff rounded down to the next whole credit amount. All suits are equal in value in determining a winner. Concerning the board, the first three cards are simultaneously turned up (the flop). Then a fourth card is then turned up (the turn). Finally, a fifth and last card is turned up (the river). After each hand a revolving dealer button moves one position clockwise. Each game character position may have an assigned identifier, number or name (intriguing names make the game more fun - see mockup of game for sample names). The game can be deployed with a variable number of observed players (with 5, 6, 8 or 10 as most common).

Throughout the game's play, the bettor is offered the opportunity to place wagers, as set out herein. As the game's play, available bets may be shown in an active color, with unavailable bets not presented or shown in duller color.

Winning amounts are credited to the bettor's balance. Upon resolution of his outstanding bets, if he has available credits or monies, a bettor can play another game or cash out.

Hand Progression, Placing Wagers, Touch-Screen

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The game commences / plays through the bettor acquiring credits and placing bets. An illustrative hand's playing out is described below and shown in FIGS. 3 - 8, which suggest one method for implementation of the invention, although there are many other means of implementing the game consistent with the spirit of the invention. In the foregoing description, the bettor's tapping a wager area on the screen once makes a bet of a single credit. Each touch to the wager area after the first increases the bet by one increment (i.e., tapping twice, bets 2 credits). As to wagers which are 1 to 1 or more (i.e., 2 to 1), a bettor may wager a single credit, or more. As to wagers which are less than 1 to 1 (i.e., 1 to 2), a bettor must wager sufficient credits to win a single credit if he wins the bet. There are functions which undo bets made at that hand stage prior to play on the bets.

All of the foregoing concerning wagering (and its logistics) are modifiable. Similarly, the invention's features may be at the display areas identified herein and/or in

other areas. They may be deployed in the below set, or as a subset of the below, or in a group of which the below is a subset, or in other permutations. Not all aspects of the invention are set out herein. The invention should be understood to encompass all of the foregoing. The invention's innovation and desirability of the game is not dependent upon a specific deployment.

Available bets

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Similar to craps, the invention has a variety of available bets, which term means the below list of wagers and extensions thereon. The invention's available wagers' rules are as below, as otherwise set out herein, and as modified as set out herein. They may be deployed at the below-indicated stage of the hand, or at other times stages (as necessary, with appropriate modification). They may be at the game display areas identified below, and/or in other areas. They may be as the below set, and/or as a subset of the below, and/or in a group of which the below is a subset, and/or in other permutations. Wagers could be made to apply to the next phase of play only, and/or for longer periods, such as for the rest of the hand. Not all of the below chart's wagers are in the representative hand.

Another alternative could allow some of certain wagers to only become available if the bettor earns them – for example through a jackpot or certain play-level. If this option is applied, the odds on these premium wagers could be offered with either little or no house odds advantage (like a backup wager in craps), or even a bettor odds advantage (but for a limited number of credits).

Method, Generally

The method for making available the invention's situational wagers shown below is through performing appropriate analysis. An illustrative analysis, specific to offering the available wager of Rainbow Flop (which flop makes a flush less likely to win the hand), is shown below. As to each available wager, a similar analysis – based on the criteria set forth in the below chart - is performed and the wager is offered, as appropriate.

Rainbow Flop, Methodology Concerning Presentation and Wager Resolution

Has the bettor acquired credits? If yes ...

Is the displayed poker hand at its pre-flop stage? If yes, present option for the bettor to place a wager on Rainbow Flop.

Has the bettor placed a wager on Rainbow Flop? If yes ...

Is the displayed poker hand at its post-flop pre-turn stage? If yes ...

Review the 3 flop cards.

If all 3 of the flop cards are of different suits, resolve the wager in the bettor's favor. If otherwise, resolve the wager against the bettor.

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Wagers A Bettor Can Make Before Any Cards Are Shown Or At Time Shown:

Feature Name	Feature Description	Prior to any Cards Wagers 1. where they display, and 2. the features' odds
1. <u>Two card</u> poker	The bettor wagers on which of the observed players will be dealt the best two hole cards, with no consideration of the board — and with the assessment made according to a predefined hierarchy as to two card winning hands (perhaps having high pair - Ace Ace - as the best hand, followed by lower pairs, followed by high card comparison i.e., 10-7 beats 10-5, with no straights or flushes playing).	Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1
	The bettor wagers on if a specific observed player, or if any of the observed players will be dealt two hole cards which in the game of blackjack would be considered a blackjack (i.e., dealt an Ace and a Queen), with no consideration of the	Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1
2. <u>Hold'em</u> <u>Blackjack</u>	for poker winning hands. The bettor wagers on if a specific observed player, or if any of the observed players will be dealt two	Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1
3. <u>Hold'em</u> <u>Craps "Алу 7"</u>	hole cards which total seven (i.e., dealt an 4 and a 3), with no consideration of the board or the	

	hierarchy established for poker winning hands.	
4. <u>Hold'em Pai</u> Gow	The bettor wagers on which of the observed players will have the best Pai Gow hand of poker by using his two hole cards together with all five board cards, and with the hand set according to a standard Pai Gow house set rules, and with the assessment as to winning made according to a standard Pai Gow hierarchy of winning hands with the bettor's hand treated as a player hand not the house hand. Alternative, a win could be declared if the selected hand is better than a pre-defined threshold, and perhaps on a specific schedule with potential high bonus payouts.	Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1
<u> </u>	A wager on whether a specific card will be dealt during the hand. This	Sidebets area
5. <u>Pick a Card</u>	wager may be specific as to if the card is within one of the observed players' hands or is on the board.	ODDS: XX to 1
6. <u>Black Flop</u>	The bettor wagers on if the flop is 3 black cards.	Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1
7. <u>Rainbow</u>	The bettor wagers on if the flop cards are all different suits. The bettor wagers on if the flop is 3	Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1 Sidebets area
8. Red Flop	red cards. The bettor wagers on if the flop	ODDS: XX to 1 Sidebets area
9. <u>SELECTOR</u> <u>Hold'Em Flop</u>	cards contain a Spade card and a Heart card.	ODDS: XX to 1
10. <u>Suited Flop</u>	The bettor wagers on if the flop cards are all a single suit.	Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1
11. <u>Big Blind</u>	The bettor wagers on the 2- clockwise position from the dealer button, prior to that game character receiving any cards.	Beside Game character area ODDS: XX to 1
12. <u>Small Blind</u>	The bettor has the chance to wager on the 1-clockwise position from the dealer button, prior to that game character receiving any cards.	Beside Game character area ODDS: XX to 1
	By the game character who won the last hand, the Champion icon shows. This lets the bettor wager on	Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1
13. <u>Champion</u>	back to back wins (like a daily double). Optional: No Champion option is available if the winner is in	

	the small or big blind seat.	
14. <u>Board Hand</u>	The bettor wagers on if the hand will resolve with the 5 open cards on the board representing the best possible hand such that there are no possible hole cards which could improve that hand.	Beside Game character area ODDS: XX to 1
15. <u>High Hand</u>	A wager on whether the winning hand will be a premium hand – predefined as a certain hand (such as a full house) or better.	Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1
16. <u>SPECIFIC</u> <u>Hands</u> Note - This Feature is not shown in the mockup images.	This will allow the bettor to wager on any of several specific types of hand developing – i.e., 3 of a kind or any of the types of hands which are better than that. For example, the bettor could wager on a flush and will win ONLY if a flush develops during the hand.	Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1
17. Game Character Finish: Win, Place or Show - Pre- observed players getting cards Note - This Feature is not shown in the mockup images.	The bettor may wager on whether any game character's hand finishes first, second or third, <u>pre-observed players getting cards</u> but after the odds for each finish-position have been set. Each odds set will express win-odds, place-odds and show-odds (this is the lowest payout).	Beside Game character area ODDS: XX to XX
18. <u>Any</u> <u>Premium Hole</u> Cards	A wager on whether the deal will include one from among a group of the best initial hole card (there are 169 distinct hole-card hands) predefined as a certain level or better.	Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1 The odds payout could be higher if the hole card hand dealt is more premium (i.e., a higher payout for a deal with an Ace Ace hand, over a deal with a King King hand).
19. <u>Select the</u> <u>Cards to be</u> <u>Included in a</u> <u>Hand</u>	The bettor chooses two cards as one of the observed players' two hole cards and wagers on that hand, with odds assigned as to how that hand will play against randomly assigned hands dealt to the other observed players (i.e., choosing one of the observed players and giving him the Queen of Diamonds and the	Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1

20. Select the Cards to be Included in ALL Hands 21. Specific Premium Hole Cards Note - This Feature is not shown in the	Jack of Diamonds). The bettor chooses the two hole cards within each of the observed players' hands and wagers on one or more of the hands, with odds assigned as to how each hand will play against the bettor selected hands held by each of the other observed players. A wager on whether a Specific hand will be dealt – i.e., Bet on Any - AA Odds, 40 to 1. The bettor win if the hand is dealt to any of the observed	Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1 Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1
mockup images.	players.	
Listed below are <u>hands</u> :	A. from which a group might be selected to be winners for the 'Any premium Hole Card hand' feature or	B. for which there might be the option to place a 'Specific premium Hole Card hand' wager
Rank	Cards	Odds
1	AA	Odds X to 1
2	KK	Odds X to 1
3	QQ	Odds X to 1
4	AKs	Odds X to 1
<u>5</u>	u u u u u u u u u u u u u u u u u u u	Odds X to 1
<u>6</u>	AQs	Odds X to 1
<u>Z</u>	KQs	Odds X to 1
<u>8</u>	AJs	Odds X to 1
<u>9</u> 10	KJs	Odds X to 1
	ŢŢ	Odds X to 1
	AKo	Odds X to 1
<u>169</u>	270	Odds X to 1
22. <u>Specific</u>		Sidebets area
Premium Hole Cards AND specific to a single game character Note - This Feature is not shown in the mockup images.	A wager on whether 1. a Specific hand will be dealt – i.e., see above list AND. 2. The hand in question is dealt to a specific game character the bettor selects.	ODDS: XX to 1
		Wagers Made at Time Shown,
Feature Name	Enatura Depariation	1. where they display, and
Programme and distribution of the control of the co	Feature Description	2. the features' odds
23. <u>Pick Next</u> <u>Card</u>	A wager on whether a specific card will be the next card dealt during the	Sidebets area

hand (i.e., the upcoming turn card is the Queen of Spades)
At any stage of the hand at which earlier hand-stage bets have been resolved, the bettor can have the last stage or stages of the hand undone (with resolved bets remaining forfeited to the extent they were lost and wins still credited in the bettor's favor) and then again make any of the wagers available at that earlier stage.

ODDS: XX to 1

Appropriate area

ODDS: XX to XX

24. Mulligan

Wagers A Bettor Can Make Before The Flop But After 'Hole' Cards Have Been Displayed:

6745554 W. 1244588444444		2
		where they display, and the features' odds
25. <u>Five card</u> poker	The bettor wagers on which of the observed players will have the best hand of poker by using his two hole cards together with the three flop cards, without consideration of the turn card or river card – and with the assessment made according to a standard poker hand hierarchy as to winning hands.	Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1
26. <u>Game</u> <u>character's</u>		Beside Game character area
Finish: Win, Place or Show – PreFlop Note - This Feature is shown in the mockup images, but without the show odds.	The bettor can wager on whether any game character's hand finishes first, second or third, preflop and after hole cards are dealt but after the odds for each finish-position has been set. Each odds set will express win-odds, place-odds and show-odds (this is the lowest payout).	ODDS: XX to 1
27. <u>Flop The</u> <u>World, Hole-</u> In-One	The bettor wagers on whether any of the observed players will have a straight or a flush by using just his two hole cards together with the three flop cards, without consideration of the turn card or river card.	Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1
and the same of th	A wager that a hand will fold pre-	Beside Game character area
28. <u>Fold</u>	completion of the board.	ODDS: 1 to XX
	This allows the bettor to wager	Sidebets area

29. <u>Favorite</u> <u>Loses</u>	against the best preflop hand winning.	ODDS: 1 to XX
30. Alternative Lose	This allows the bettor to wager against any preflop hand winning.	Beside Game character area ODDS: XX to XX (below even money)

Wagers A Bettor Can Make After The Flop:

		Flop Wagers 1. where they display, and 2. the features' odds
31. <u>Best Flop</u> <u>Made-Hand</u> <u>Loses</u>	This allows the bettor to wager that the game character with the best made hand at the flop loses. This is a don't win (wager on loss) type of bet.	1 Poss. Area Beside area of Game character in the lead Alt. area (shown in image) Sidebets area ODDS: 1 to XX
32. Alternative Lose	This allows the bettor to wager against any post-flop hand winning.	Beside Game character area ODDS: 1 to XX
33. <u>Brick</u> (turn card) 34. <u>Busted</u>	A wager that the next board card (or alternatively one of the next 2 cards) will be useless in terms of creating new better hands. (This is the opposite of the concept of Sheriff and Deputy). A wager that a possible straight draw hand held by one of the observed players will fail to complete its straight (after the	Poss. Area - Above where turn card will go (for wager made at flop) Alt. area (shown in image) Sidebets area for Flop ODDS: XX to 1 Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1
<u>Draw, straight</u>	remaining board cards open). A wager that a possible flush draw	Sidebets area
35. <u>Busted</u> <u>Draw, flush</u>	hand held by one of the observed players will fail to complete its flush (after the remaining board cards open).	ODDS: XX to 1
36. <u>Fold - Post-</u> <u>Flop</u>	If less than a qualifying strength – perhaps pair, Ace high or high draw % - then a hand will fold precompletion of the board. This 'folded' hand has no chance of winning or causing any available bets to win – with the exception of this Fold feature (a wager on which hand will fold early).	Beside Game character area ODDS: XX to XX (below even money)
37. <u>Game</u> <u>character</u> Finish: Win,	The bettor can wager on whether any game character's hand finishes first, second or third, after the flop	Beside Game character area ODDS: XX to XX
FRIGIT, TYILL,	may account or unity, after the hop	and the property of the first o

Place or cards are dealt but before the turn Show - Postcard is dealt but after the odds for Flop each finish-position has been set. Each odds set will express win-Note - This odds, place-odds and show-odds Feature is shown (this is the lowest payout). in the mockup images, but without the show odds. Sidebets area A wager that the turn card and river card will both be used to create the 38. Runner best-hand made. ODDS: XX to 1 Runner -Sidebets area A wager that the next board card (or alternatively one of the next 2 cards) Odds X to 1 39. New Sheriff will create a new premium high hand (better than 3 of kind) held by one of the observed players.

Wagers A Bettor Can Make After The Turn Card:

		Turn Wagers 1. where they display, and 2. the features' odds
 40. <u>Best Turn-</u> <u>Made Hand</u> <u>Loses</u> 41. Alternative	This allows the bettor to wager that the game character with the best made hand at the <u>turn</u> loses. This is a don't win (wager on loss) type of bet. This allows the bettor to wager against any <u>turn</u> hand winning.	1 Poss. area Beside area of Game character in the lead Alt. area (shown in image) Sidebets area ODDS: XX to XX Beside Game character area ODDS: XX to XX (below even money)
42. <u>Brick</u> (river card)	The word "brick" or an image of a brick appears on the turn and river cards when those cards appear, if either card is useless in terms of creating new better hands. This is the opposite of the concept of Sheriff and Deputy.	1 Poss. area Above where river card will go (for wager made at turn) Alt. area (shown in image) Sidebets area for Turn ODDS: XX to 1
 43. <u>Gutshot</u>	A wager that the final board card will be a necessary "middle" card to complete a straight for one of the players.	Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1
44. New Sheriff	The bettor wagers on if the card which opened creates a new high hand held by one of the observed players. After a flop of 2d, 6d, 7h, a	Sidebets area ODDS: XX to 1

turn of 7d is a new sheriff card opening a full house held by one of the observed players. Wager only available IF there has A wager that the next card will been a New Sheriff card create a hand better than 3 of a kind held by one of the observed players, Sidebets area which is lower than a hand already ODDS: XX to 1 made by one of the other observed players. By way of example, after a flop of Jc, 4c, 7c (a game character has a flush poss. - sheriff), a turn of 45. New Deputy 8d is a deputy card opening a straight (a game character has a 5,6 hand). Beside Game character area The bettor can wager on whether any game character's hand finishes first, second or third, after the turn ODDS: XX to XX 46. Game card is dealt but before the river character card is dealt but after the odds for Finish: Win, each finish-position has been set. Place or Each odds set will express win-Show - Postodds, place-odds and show-odds <u>Turn</u> (this is the lowest payout).

An Illustrative Game Scenario

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Above is a description of possible types of bets that can be provided to a bettor. The following narrative describes actions that take place together with our bettor's thinking, as an illustrative hand plays out. FIGS. 3 - 8 accompany the below and depict much of the information to be found on typical 'screen shots' as the illustrative game hand advances.

A Narrative - A Bettor Decides To Play The invention:

Walking past the casino's video poker aisle, one machine catches the bettor's eye. Colorful characters like Sassy Sally, Gator Bill, Sugar Tex and Bad Fella are sitting around a poker table waiting for a deal. The bettor buys credits and gets ready for action, lots of action. When he's ready to see the hand begin, he presses "Play Hand" at the screen's bottom left. At each stage, available bets appear on the poker table itself and alongside, under "Place Sidebets Here." The bettor simply touches the screen to bet, and places as many bets as he wants. Note, the invention might in addition to having the button "Play Hand" offering the bettor has the opportunity to place bets as the hand plays, the invention might also have a further button offering the bettor the opportunity to

immediately play out the hand. Furthermore, a subset of available wagers is shown in the accompanying images, rather than all possible available wagers.

FIG. 3 shows the game prior to bettor buying credits. Notable in the foregoing image of the game with more robust features, among other things, are:

The brief rules set description at the lower part of the image.

Prominently centered, the display states, "Buy Credits - Begin Play.

Minimum \$1 = 4 credits. Minimum Play per Hand = 4 credits."

The 'Champion' designation is below game character Bad Fella.'
This indicates he won the last hand played.

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The PreFlop available wagers are listed in the right hand column, but are not shown as available. The bets cannot yet be made, as a bettor has not yet purchased credits.

FIG. 4 shows the bettor has wagered before cards are shown. Notable in the image, among other things, are:

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The buttons on the machine presently allow the bettor to play the hand. The buttons became active immediately upon the bettor having acquired 4 credits. Had the bettor acquired fewer than 4 credits, the machine would have indicated at its top right corner "Player has: X credits, Buy X more credits [4 minus the amount he has] and begin play"

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The top right portion of the display indicating:

"Player Has 9 credits" - he spent 3, having purchased 12, and

"Bets Still To Place = 1" - this represents the bets still required on the hand, which is about to be played. More than 4 credits can be played in a hand, but no fewer.

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The machine's first rules set line states: "Place 1 or more bets before Players' hands are dealt." "Play Hand" on the bottom left portion of the display is no longer in a grey colored button. It became an active button after one wager was placed.

All bets that are available at this hand stage are shown in an active color – many are in the right sidebets box area titled Sidebets on the Preflop. This box's preflop area is expanded at this stage.

The machine's bottom area states: "Note; Side panels explain bets, touch bet 2-seconds to show details."

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The Small Blind wager area has a hint – "Place a bet 'blind' that this 'player' wins the hand." This simulates what would happen if the bettor activates the hint.

The top right portion of the display for betting – the Sidebets area shows that the bettor has wagered 1 credit on "Rainbow" and 1 credit on "Any Premium Hole Cards". A third credit has been wagered on Small Blind Gator Bill – this is shown at the table beside Gator Bill.

The wagers the bettor has made are represented by chip icons which have a '1' in their center, representing that these are wagers of 1 credit each.

As an alternative to the bottom left section contained in the FIG. 4 showing its stage play of the invention's illustrative hand, the bottom-left section may also include a button "Play Out Hand," offering the bettor the opportunity to "Tap Play Out Hand to immediately play out the hand." Additionally, the bettor would also have the opportunity to "Tap Play Hand to place bets as the hand plays."

FIG. 5 shows "play hand" has been pressed once, observed players' hole cards have been dealt, certain additional wagers have been made (wager on Omega Tom to win), and certain earlier wagers are resolved (any premium hole card hand wager lost). Notable in the image, among other things, are:

The cards that have been dealt to the observed players. These are helpful to understanding the actions taken by the bettor.

As to the bettor's prior wagers, we see,

The "Any Premium Hole Cards" wager 'Lost'- the chip is indicated as being negated.

The "Rainbow" wager continues on the Board as an active wager, but its color has changed to a paler shade. This indicates that the wager - a prior stage wager - may not be withdrawn through use of the Undo buttons. This convention applies throughout the game's play.

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The wager on the Small Blind continues on the Board as an active wager, but its color has changed to a paler shade.

As the observed players now have their 2 cards, odds are now expressed as to each, and wagers may now be placed on each for Win, Place, Show, Fold and / or Lose.

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Favorite (Preflop) Loses is an active wager at this stage.

In the newly activated table wager area, we see that the bettor has wagered 2 credits on Omega Larry to Win. Note that the wager he's made is represented by a chip icon in the middle of which is expressed '2' – as aforementioned, he touched the wager area twice, to make this bet.

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Omega Larry has 'Preflop Favorite' beside his seat – this shows that he holds the best Preflop hand, so the Favorite (Preflop) Loses wager will relate to him.

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The Sidebets area related to Preflop wagers has been reduced in size – only the wagers he made preflop in this area are shown, and as to these the disposition of the bets is noted – see, above.

The Sidebets area related to flop wagers has been expanded to allow the bettor a preview of its wagers, but most of the wagers are inactive.

The top right portion of the display summarizing the bettors' credits / bets, indicates:

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"Player Has 7 credits" - he spent 5 (see, the chips he has placed), having purchased 12, and

"Bets Still To Place = 0" - this represents the bets still required on the hand, which is being played. As he's already wagered more than 4 credits, he is not required to place more wagers.

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FIG. 6: This image represents what the display might look like after the bettor has pressed Play Hand for the hand's second time – causing the deal of the flop

cards - King of clubs, Queen of diamonds and 8 of hearts. Certain additional wagers have been made (brick on turn card) and certain earlier wagers have been decided ("Rainbow" wager won).

Notable in the image, among other things, are:

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The flop cards are helpful to understanding the actions taken by the bettor and the hand's development.

As to the bettor's outstanding prior wagers, we see,

The Rainbow Flop wager has 'WON! XX credits'

The 1 credit Small Blind wager continues on the Board as an active wager, but its color has changed to a paler shade.

The 2 credits wager on Omega Larry to Win continues on the Board as an active wager, but its color has changed to a paler shade.

The expanded Sidebets area related to flop wagers now is active, allowing the bettor to place his wagers. The Favorite (Preflop) Loses wager is now removed from the table (it's no longer available).

Sugar Tex has the best flop-made hand – he'd win the hand now if the cards to come do not help any other game character. Best Flop-Made Hand Loses is below his area, as that wager will relate to him.

Rusty Ed's cards are lighter 'ghost' shade signifying he has folded.

The bettor has placed a 1 credit wager on Brick (turn card).

The top right portion of the display provides: "Player Has XX credits" - he spent chips and has winnings of credits of an indeterminate amount, all as seen on the screen.

FIG. 7: play hand pressed (3rd time), turn dealt, and certain additional wagers have been made (New Sheriff) and certain earlier wagers have been decided (Brick on Turn Card wager won). This image represents what the display might look like after the bettor has pressed Play Hand for the hand's third time – causing the deal of the turn card - 3 of hearts.

Notable in the image, among other things, are:

The turn card is helpful to understanding the actions taken by the bettor and the hand's development. Note, the card has "BRICK" on it showing Brick (turn card) has happened.

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Sassy Sally now has a pair of threes. However, Rusty Ed - cards ghost shade signifying he folded - does not have a pair of threes, because he folded at the hand's flop stage.

As to the bettor's outstanding prior wagers, we see,

The Rainbow Flop wager still has 'WON! XX credits.' At the hand's conclusion, the bettor will see all of his wagers and their dispositions.

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The 1 credit Small Blind wager continues on the Board as an active wager. Similarly, the 2 credits wager on Omega Larry to Win continues on the Board as an active wager. As to both, the wagers' color remains in the paler shade (the bets are unresolved but cannot be withdrawn).

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The Sidebet area related to flop wagers (which was previously expanded) is contracted in size and inactive – only the Rainbow Flop wager he made preflop in this area is shown, and as to this wager the disposition is noted – see, above. Flop wagers can no longer be placed.

The Best Flop- Made Hand Loses bet, which had been in the area of Sugar Tex, is now removed from the table (it's no longer available).

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Sugar Tex has the best turn-made hand – he'd win the hand now if the cards to come do not help any game character. Best Turn-Made Hand Loses is below his area, as that wager will relate to him.

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The possible wager on 'Fold' in the bottom left part of each game character's quadrant has been removed, and replaced by a possible wager on 'Show' – a third place finish. A wager on a game character folding after the river card in a non-betting game is not meaningful. The wager on Show at this stage is a wager which can have interesting play, depending on the river card. As we'll see in a moment, when the 9 on the river opens the first-place hand goes to third place. The 9 creates a straight which wins, and adds a pair to Sassy Sally – who moves into second place.

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The bettor's 1 credit wager on Brick (turn card) is noted as 'WON! XX credits.'

The Sidebets on the Turn area has been expanded and the wagers in the area are shown as active, as these wagers may be made at this time.

The bettor has placed a 1 credit wager on New Sheriff (river card).

FIG. 8: play hand pressed (4th time), river dealt and hand ends, all unresolved bets are determined (the wager on small blind placed at the hand's outset – see image 2 has won, etc.). This image represents what the display might look like after the bettor has pressed Play Hand for the hand's fourth time – causing the deal of the river card – 9 of diamonds.

Notable in the image, among other things, are:

The river card is helpful to understanding the hand's development.

Note, the card has a icon on it, showing a New Sheriff (river card) has happened.

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Gator Bill has made a straight and holds the best hand - the words "Straight - Player Wins" are displayed above his cards to let the bettor know that this game character, the small blind, made the winning hand.

Sassy Sally has made the second best hand and the words "2 pairs - Player Places 2nd" are displayed above her cards to let the bettor know that this game character made the Place hand.

Sugar Tex has made the third best hand and the words "1 pair – Show 3rd" are displayed above his cards to let the bettor know that this 'player' made the Show hand.

The disposition of the bettor's outstanding prior resolved wagers are all displayed (i.e., the Rainbow Flop wager 'WON! XX credits,' etc.

The bettor's 1 credit wager on New Sheriff (river card) is noted as "WON! XX credits."

As to the bettor's outstanding prior stage unresolved wagers, we see they are all now resolved

The 1 credit Small Blind wager has 'WON! XX credits.'

The 2 credits wager on Omega Larry to Win 'Lost' – the 2 credit chip is indicated as being negated.

The Sidebets on the Turn area related to the previously possible wagers is decontented - only the New Sheriff (river card) wager he made preflop in this area is shown, and as to this wager the disposition is noted -- see, above.

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The Best Flop-Made Hand Loses bet, which had been in the area of Sugar Tex, is now removed from the table (it's no longer available).

No further wagers can be placed on the hand, which has been played out.

The screen's top right corner relating to how the 'player' did on the hand just played, provides: "Results on Hand XX WON!

There are only two active buttons on the screen, "Play Hand" – this would start a new hand; and "Cash Out" - this would have the bettor receive back the credits he purchased – or their cash value – and end his session playing the game.

The bets listed on the screen (i.e., the right hand Sidebets and the bets in each game character's quadrant) are not shown as active and available wagers. Bets cannot yet be made, as the bettor has not yet indicated he wishes to "Play Hand" - if he does the screen will again present as per Image 2, with the exception of the identification of Gator Bill (not Bad Fella) as the Champion.

<u>Claims</u>

1. A controlled method for execution in conjunction with play of a poker hand, comprising the steps of analyzing the hand as it is played, before each of at least two stages of the hand offering a set of bets situationally specific and appropriate to that stage of the hand, accepting bets at each stage as they are made, and resolving bets that are won and lost, with the bets not dependent on the bettor being a player in the hand or on the hand being an actual hand of poker played between live players, or virtually generated.

- 2. A controlled method in accordance with claim 1, wherein some of the bets that are offered are related to community cards that may be dealt.
- A controlled method in accordance with claim 1, wherein some of the bets that are offered are related to cards that may be dealt to the players who are playing the hand.
- 4. A controlled method in accordance with claim 1, wherein some of the bets that are offered are related to cards dealt to the players who are playing the hand.
- 5. A controlled method in accordance with claim 1, wherein some of the bets that are offered are related to how the cards dealt to the players may relate to community cards that may be dealt.
- 6. A controlled method in accordance with claim 1, wherein some of the bets that are offered are related to how the cards dealt to a player, as related to community cards that have been dealt, may result in the player's finishing hand.
- 7. A controlled method in accordance with claim 1, wherein some of the bets that are offered are related to how the cards dealt to the player, as related to community cards that have been dealt, and taking into account cards dealt to other players, may result in the player's finishing place in that hand or other hands.
- 8. A controlled method in accordance with claim 1, wherein some of the bets that are offered are related to how the cards dealt to the player, as related to community cards that have been dealt, and taking into account the rule set of another game, may result in the player's hand constituting a notable hand under the rule set of said other game.

1/8

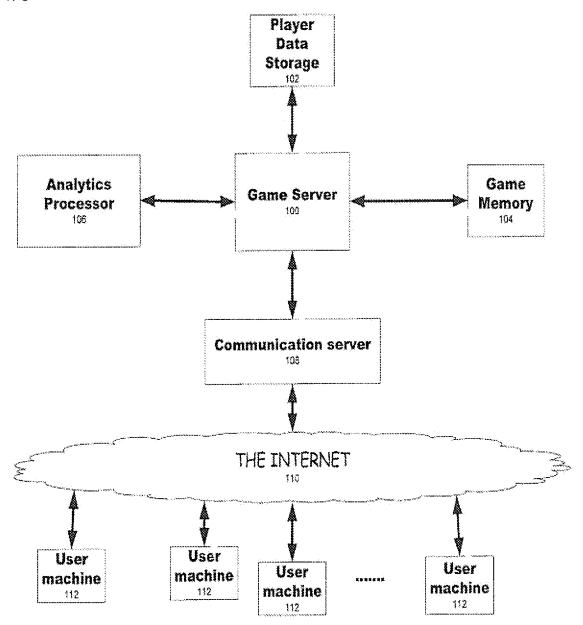
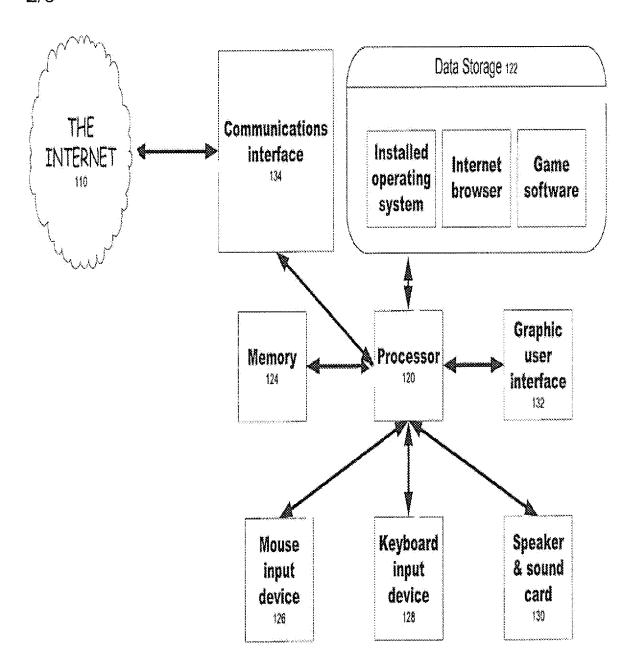


FIG. 1

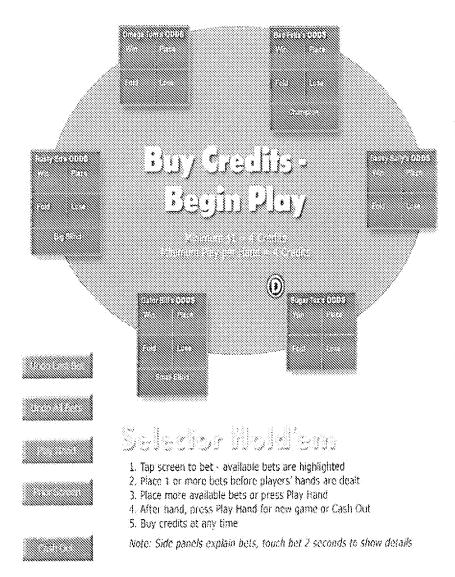
2/8



3/8

FIG. 3:

Game Prior To Bettor Buying Credits



Results on Hand: Player Has: O Credits Bets Still to Place: XX

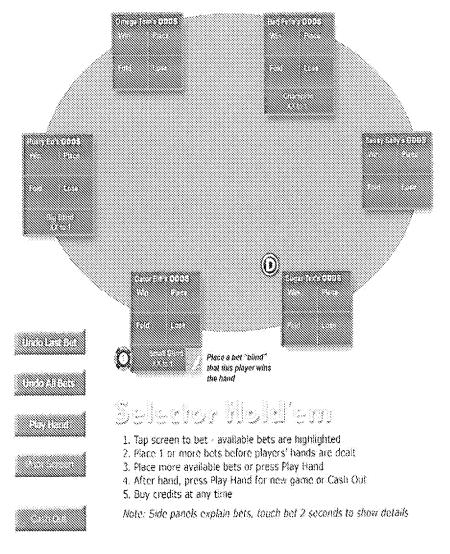


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FIG. 4:

Bettor has Wagered before cards are shown

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Results on Hand:
Player Has: 9 Credits
Bets Still to Place: 1

Control thousand

Control thousand

Control to Place: 1

Control thousand

Control to Place: 1

Control to Place:

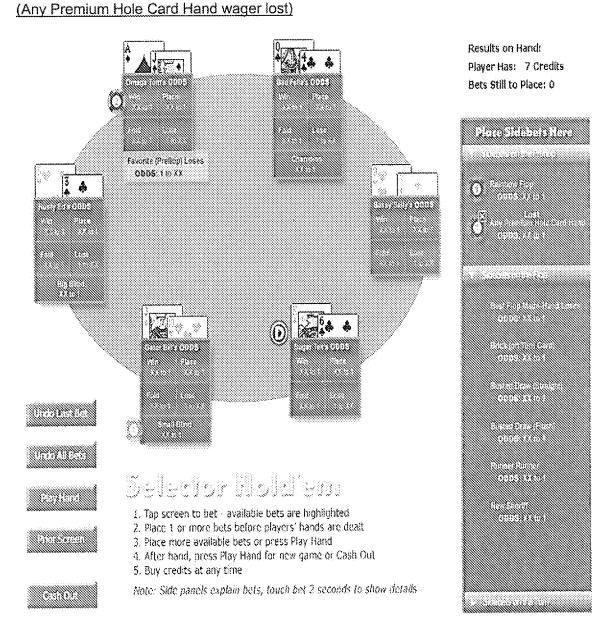
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FIG. 5:

Play Hand Pressed Once, Observed Players' Hole Cards Dealt, certain additional wagers

have been made (wager on Omega Tom to Win), and certain earlier wagers are resolved

(Ass. Resolved User Card Vand wagers leet)

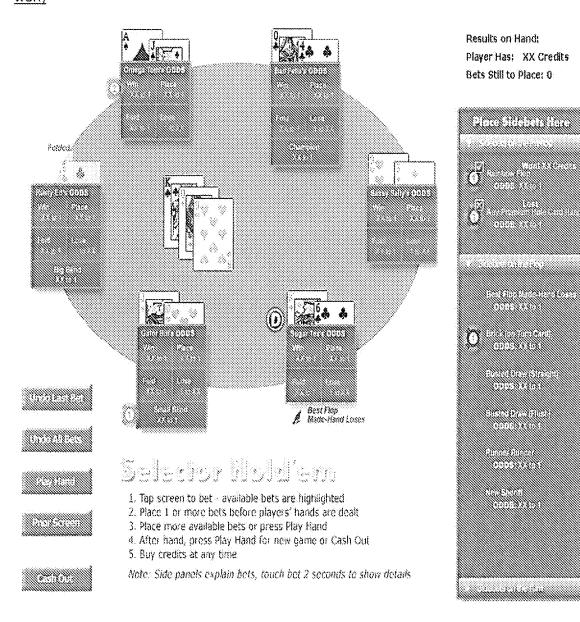


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FIG. 6:

Play Hand Pressed (2nd time), Flop Dealt, and certain additional wagers have been made

(Brick On Turn Card) and certain earlier wagers have been decided (Rainbow Flop wager won)

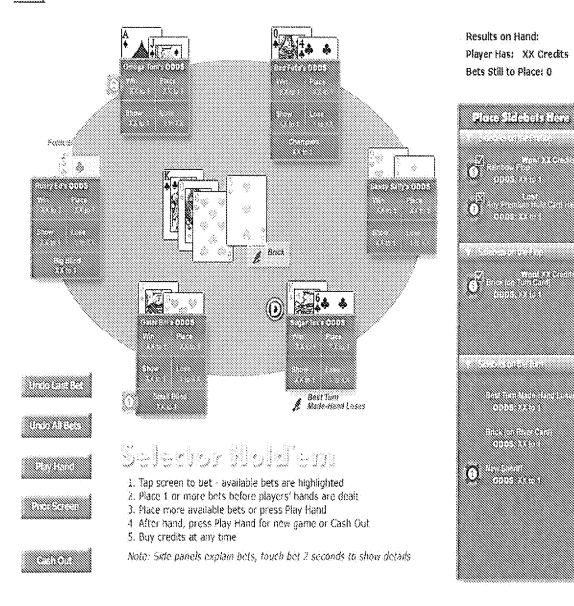


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FIG. 7:

Play Hand Pressed (3rd time), Turn Dealt, and certain additional wagers have been made

(New Sheriff) and certain earlier wagers have been decided (Brick on Turn Card wager won)

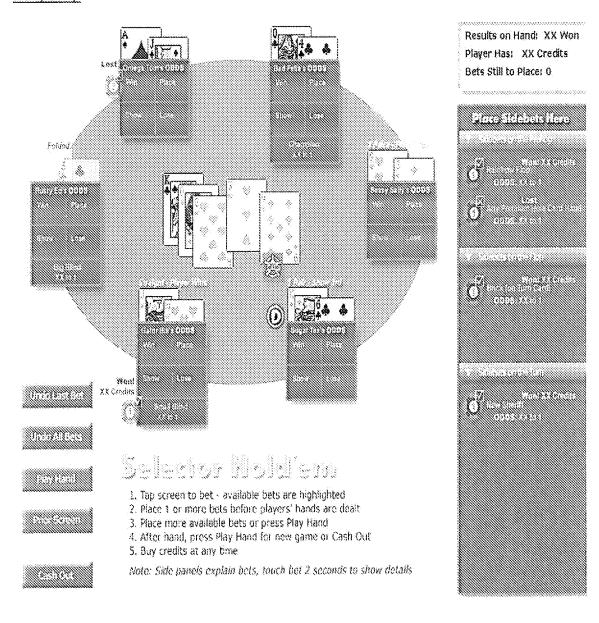


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FIG. 8:

Play Hand Pressed (4th time), River Dealt & Hand ends, all unresolved bets are

determined (the wager on Small Blind placed at the hand's outset – see earlier image has won, etc.).



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US 08/61315

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER IPC(8) - G06F 19/00 (2008.04) USPC - 463/25				
	o International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both n	ational classification and IPC		
	DS SEARCHED			
Minimum do USPC: 463/	ocumentation searched (classification system followed by /25	classification symbols)		
Documentati USPC: 463/	ion searched other than minimum documentation to the ex 9, 13; 273/292, 303, 305, 306, 308; text search see te	ttent that such documents are included in the sums below	fields searched	
PubWEST (F	ata base consulted during the international search (name of PGPB, USPT, USOC, EPAB, JPAB); Google Scholar as: bet, blackjack, casino, craps, horse, Jai Alai, live, po	•		
C. DOCUI	MENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where ap	ppropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.	
X	US 20060205484 A1 (NICASTRO) 14 September 2006 [0008], [0024]-[0031], and [0035]	6 (14.09.2006), paras. [0002], [0006]-	1-7	
Y	[0000], [0024]-[0001], and [0000]		8	
Y	US 20070069467 A1 (FORSTER) 29 March 2007 (29.	03.2007), paras. [0003] and [0010]	8	
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		<u> </u>		
Furthe	er documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.			
"A" docume	categories of cited documents: ent defining the general state of the art which is not considered particular relevance	"T" later document published after the intern date and not in conflict with the applicathe principle or theory underlying the in	tion but cited to understand	
	application or patent but published on or after the international		laimed invention cannot be	
"L" docume cited to	nt which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is establish the publication date of another citation or other	step when the document is taken alone		
"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other			tep when the document is ocuments, such combination	
means being obvious to a person skilled in the art "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed "&" document member of the same patent family				
Date of the a	Date of the actual completion of the international search Date of mailing of the international search report			
20 August 20	20 August 2008 (20.08.2008) 10 SEP 2008			
	ailing address of the ISA/US	Authorized officer:		
Mail Stop PC P.O. Box 145	Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US, Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450			
	D. 571-273-3201	PCT Helpdesk: 571-272-4300 PCT OSP: 571-272-7774		