METHOD AND DEVICE FOR PROVIDING A GAME OF CHANCE

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ABSTRACT

The game may be played with game pieces, such as cards, e.g., in poker, balls or numbers, e.g., in Bingo or Keno, The game randomly draws a first set of game pieces for a programmed number of game pieces. In one aspect of the game, the player may be given an opportunity to purchase, for an additional wager, i.e., the cost of the opportunity, additional game pieces. The cost of the opportunity is based on the potential payout and the odds of winning. The cost to the player of an additional game piece or card is a function of the potential amount of the payout if the player achieves a winning combination, and the odds of the player achieving the winning results, which is a function of the game piece needed and the game pieces remaining in the programmed number of game pieces.
USER INTERFACE

BUTTON LAYOUT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Cash Out</th>
<th>Help</th>
<th>Change Bet Per Card</th>
<th>Change Numbers On Cards</th>
<th>Cancel Extra Ball</th>
<th>Buy Extra Ball</th>
<th>Max Bet</th>
<th>Play</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Change**
- This button will alert the casino staff by illuminating the candle for customer assistance.

**Cash Out**
- Depressing this button will activate the printing of your ticket for the value of the credits you currently have displayed.

**Help**
- Depressing this button will activate the help screens to explain how game plays and pays.

**Change Bet Per Card**
- Depressing this button will change the bet per card on all cards open-to change number of cards played you must use touch screen.

**Change Numbers On Card**
- Depressing this button will change the numbers displayed on each card.

**Cancel Extra Ball**
- Depressing this button will cancel out the purchase of any extra balls.

**Buy Extra Ball**
- Depressing this button will purchase extra ball offered, you will need to press this button for every extra ball you wish to purchase.

**Max Bet**
- Depressing this button will increase all four cards bet to maximum level and begin ball drop.

**Play**
- Depressing this button will initiate ball drop, it will rebet the amount of previous game.

FIG. 3
PROVIDING A SET NUMBER OF GAME PIECES FOR EACH PLAY OF THE GAME

ALLOWING THE PLAYER TO SELECT A GAME LAYOUT AND A WAGER DENOMINATION

ALLOWING THE PLAYER TO PLACE A WAGER ON THE GAME VIA THE USER INTERFACE

ASSIGNING INDICIA TO EACH POSITION ON THE GAME CARDS

DRAWING A FIRST SET OF GAME PIECES

MARKING ANY MATCH BETWEEN THE FIRST SET OF GAME PIECES AND THE INDICIA ON THE GAME CARDS

PROVIDING A FIRST PAYOUT IF THE FIRST SET OF 30 DRAWN GAME PIECES RESULT IN ANY WINNING PATTERN SATISFYING THE PREDETERMINED WIN CRITERIA

ESTABLISHING A COST FOR THE PLAYER TO PURCHASE ONE OR MORE ADDITIONAL GAME PIECES

IDENTIFYING THE NEAR WINS CRITERIA SATISFIED ON THE GAME CARD

ESTABLISHING A FIRST COST FOR A FIRST ADDITIONAL GAME PIECE

ALLOWING THE PLAYER TO PURCHASE THE FIRST ADDITIONAL GAME PIECE

FIG. 4
Extra Balls Cost $20.00

Extra Balls Cost $22.00

FIG. 9

FIG. 10
FIG. 17
METHOD AND DEVICE FOR PROVIDING A GAME OF CHANCE

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims the benefit of provisional application Ser. No. 60/916,059 filed on Apr. 4, 2007 and is herein incorporated in its entirety.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention is generally related to a game, such as a bingo game, and more particularly, to a system and method for providing a game of chance that allows a player to purchase one or more additional items, used in the game for an additional wager.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] The growth and competition in the casino electronic gaming machine in relation to the games of chance, such as bingo and keno, has resulted in increasingly sophisticated and complex technology being integrated into the gaming environment, at the individual game. The additional sophistication is designed to provide the player with additional wagering features, play options and add allure of a larger payout or additional payouts.

[0004] A random drawing game, such as a bingo game or a keno game, typically includes a player having the option to choose or purchase a game card and the payout or winner is determined by a single draw of numbers. The game has a limited number of wagering options and the game is completed with a single draw of numbers. The prior art added additional payout opportunities with features such as a powder ball or other drawing ball bonus to increase the excitement of a larger potential payout.

[0005] However, the prior art games still conclude after the single draw of numbers and do not entice the player to continue play, offering additional wagering and multiple draws to extend the play of the game. The present invention is aimed at extending the length of the game by providing additional wagering options and several additional draws to a game thereby eliminating the winning or losing aspect of the single draw of numbers.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION AND ADVANTAGES

[0006] In a first aspect, the present invention, includes a method of playing a game of chance and providing a gaming device with a graphical display. Each gaming device provides a graphical display. The graphical display displays a game card having a plurality of rows and columns creating a grid of positions. The gaming device further provides a user interface for allowing communication between the gaming device and a player. The method includes providing a set number of game pieces each having a unique marking and randomly assigning an indicia to each position on the game card. The indicia matches one of the markings on the set number of game pieces. The method further includes the step of drawing a first set of a programmed number of the game pieces. The method marks matches between the markings on the first set of game pieces and the indicia in each position on the game card. The method also provides a first payout to the player if the matches satisfy one of a plurality of predetermined win criteria. The method also establishes a first cost of a first additional game piece based on a function of the number of remaining game pieces and a sum of a potential payout of the first additional ball satisfying another of the plurality of predetermined win criteria on the game card.

[0007] In a second aspect, the present invention includes a method of playing a game of chance and providing a gaming device with a graphical display. Each gaming device provides a graphical display for displaying a game card having a plurality of rows and columns creating a grid of positions. The gaming device further provide a user interface for allowing communication between the gaming device and a player. The method provides a set number of game pieces each having a unique marking. The game through the user interface allows the player to select a game layout and a wager denomination. The method further includes the step of allowing the player to place a wager on the game via the user interface. The method includes creating the game card on the gaming device according to the selected game layout and wager denomination by the player. The method also randomly assigns an indicia to each position on the game card. The indicia for each position matches one of the markings on the set number of game pieces. The method randomly draws a first set of a programmed number of game pieces and marks the matches between the markings on the first set of game pieces and the indicia in each position on the game card. The method provides a payout to the player if the matches satisfy one of a plurality of predetermined win criteria. The method identifies on the game card the indicia and positions that satisfy a near win criteria on the game card. Next the game establishes a first cost to purchase a first additional game piece based on a function of the number of remaining game pieces and the first additional ball satisfying another of the plurality of predetermined win criteria and a sum of the identified positions on the game card.

[0008] In a third aspect, the present invention includes a game system for playing a game of chance. The game system comprises of a game device for providing a user interface to communicate between a player and the game system. The game system provides a graphical display to display a game card having a plurality of rows and columns creating a grid of positions. The game system further includes a game controller for providing a set number of game pieces each having a unique marking. The game controller randomly assigns an indicia to each position on the game card. The game controller draws a first set of a programmed number of game pieces. The game controller marks the matches between the first set and the indicia on the game card and provides a first payout to the player for matches one of a plurality of predetermined win criteria. The game controller establishes a first cost of a first additional game piece based on a function of the number of remaining game pieces and a sum of a potential payout of the additional ball satisfying another of the plurality of predetermined win criteria on the game card.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] Other advantages of the present invention will be readily appreciated, as the same becomes better understood by reference to the following detailed description when considered in connection with the accompanying drawings wherein:

[0010] FIG. 1 is a of a representative diagram of a gaming system;

[0011] FIG. 2 is an exemplary screenshot of a graphical display;
FIG. 3 is a diagrammatic illustration of a layout of the buttons on a user interface; FIG. 4 is a block diagram depicting an illustrated embodiment of the method of playing a game of the present invention; FIGS. 5 through 16 are exemplary screenshots, or portions thereof, from the illustrated embodiment of the present invention; and FIG. 17 is a diagrammatic illustration of the illustrated embodiment a pay table of a plurality of predetermined win criteria.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring to the Figures, wherein like numerals indicate like parts throughout the several views a gaming system 10 and a method 100 for playing a game of chance. The game 12 may be played with game pieces, such as cards, e.g., in poker, balls or numbers, e.g., in Bingo or Keno. In one aspect, the game under predefined circumstances gives the player an opportunity to purchase, for an additional wager, i.e., the cost of the opportunity, an additional game piece. The cost of the opportunity is based on the potential payout and the odds of winning. For example, in poker, if a player has a hand of five cards and needs one additional card to complete a winning combination, e.g., a full house. The cost to the player of an additional card is a function of the potential amount of the payout if the player achieves the winning combination, and the odds of the player achieving the winning results (which is a function of the cards needed and the cards remaining in the deck).

In a bingo game, the odds of an extra game piece, ball or number (as explained below) would be a function of the resulting payout if the extra game piece completes a winning pattern and the odds of receiving that game piece from a set number of game pieces for each game. Although the present invention is not limited to any specific type of game, the below discussion will be with respect to a bingo implementation.

With particular reference to FIG. 1, the gaming system 10 will be discussed as an electronic bingo game 12. The electronic bingo game 12 may be, for example, a Class III game which may be operated in a casino. The electronic bingo game 12 may be self-contained in a cabinet and may operate independently. However, the electronic bingo game 12 may operate in conjunction with a player tracking server (not shown) in a conventional manner. Additionally, as explained more fully below, the electronic bingo game 12 may be linked to a progressive system (not shown) for providing the player an opportunity to participate in, and win, a progressive jackpot (see below).

Interaction between a player 13 and the gaming system 10 may be accomplished through a series of buttons or inputs (not shown), which may be implemented as mechanical buttons or switches or touch screen buttons or inputs, or a combination thereof, generally referred to as an user interface 14. A sample button layout of the user interface 14 is shown in FIG. 3.

Referring to FIG. 1, the gaming system 10 includes a graphical display 16. The graphical display 16 displays a game card and further may provide visual information to the player 13 regarding the play of the game, e.g., credits, amount bet, pay tables, etc. The graphical display 16 may be separated into various areas which provide visual and textual information to the player 13. In the illustrated embodiment, as shown in FIG. 2, the graphical display 16 is divided into the following areas: a progressive and extra game piece information area 18, a pay table area 20, a wager information area 22, and a game piece information area 24 and the game cards 26, 28, 30, 32. The game cards 26, 28, 30, 32 each have a plurality of rows and columns creating a grid of positions 34 on each game card 26, 28, 30, 32. The gaming system 10 further includes the user interface 14 for the player 13 to communicate with the game system 10 for placing wagers, selecting game layouts, and game denominations. Information related to the progressive jackpot (see below) and the cost of the next additional game piece (see below) will be indicated in the progressive and extra game piece area 18.

In the pay table area 20, the patterns are shown defining predetermined win criteria. In the one embodiment, the inverse or reverse of the shown patterns on the pay table 36 may also be included as a winning pattern 38 as defined by the predetermined win criteria. The winning patterns of a plurality of predetermined win criteria for the illustrated embodiment are also illustrated in FIG. 17. The pay table area 20 may also indicate the payout amount for each winning pattern for the given or selected denomination. It is understood that additional patterns, positions or game variables may be programmed into the predetermined win criteria by the casino, or gaming facility, to provide variation of the game.

In the illustrated embodiment, the player 13 may be allowed to select through the user interface 14 a wager denominator of the game, e.g., $0.01, $0.05, $0.10, $0.50, $1.00, etc., and decide how many multiples of the wager denominator to wager on each game card.

Information related to the number of player credits stored on the machine, i.e., the credit meter, the total amount bet on the current game, the credits won, and the credits lost by the player are displayed in the wager information area 22.

In one aspect of the present invention, the player is given the opportunity to play or purchase one or more game cards. However, the number of game cards may be higher, e.g., up to 30 or 200 cards or higher. In the illustrated embodiment, the player may play up to four game cards 26, 28, 30, 32, each has three rows and five columns for a total of 15 positions 34. However, each game card may have any number of position and columns with the resulting total number of positions, e.g., 10 rows and 20 columns for 200 positions. Each position 34 is randomly assigned indicia identifying each position 34. In the illustrated embodiment, each position is assigned a number, however, it is understood that the present invention may be incorporated into any game chance and the positions 34 may utilize a variety of indicia such as icons, symbols, cards, colors or other indicia to uniquely distinguish each position 34.

The gaming system 10 further includes a game controller 40 that manages the play of the game 12 for the player 13 at the gaming system 10. The game controller 40 provides a set number of game pieces 42 for each play of the game 12. The game controller 40 further provides a first set 44 of a programmed number of the game pieces. The game controller 40 randomly draws the first set 44 out of the set number of game pieces 42 to begin the play of the game 12. For example, in the illustrated embodiment, the first set is thirty game pieces 42 drawn or randomly chosen from a set number of sixty game pieces 42 total for each play of the game 12. Of course, any programmed number of game pieces 42 may be drawn as the first set 44 from any set number of game pieces 42 for each play of the game to create many variations along...
with the number of game cards. For example, in another embodiment, the first set 44 may be 150 game pieces 42 drawn from the set number of 300 game pieces 42 for each play of the game. In the bingo embodiment described, it is understood that the game pieces 42 are defined as balls and each ball has a unique marking, typically a number. However, it is understood that the present invention may be incorporated into any game and the game pieces 42 may utilize a variety of markings such as icons, symbols, cards, colors or other markings to uniquely distinguish each game piece 42. The markings of the game piece 42 correspond or match the indicia used to identify the positions 34 on the game cards, as will be understood during the description of the game 12.

[0027] The game controller 40 further provides a first payout to the player for matches between the positions 34 and the game pieces 42 that satisfy the one of the plurality of predetermined win criteria, as will be further discussed below. The game controller further establishes a cost of additional game pieces based on a function of the number of remaining game pieces to be drawn and a sum of potential payouts of the additional game pieces satisfying the predetermined win criteria on the game card, as will be fully discussed below.

[0028] The play of the single game will further set forth the steps of the method 100 involved in the illustrated embodiment, an electronic bingo game 12. The illustrated embodiment utilizes four game cards 26, 28, 30, 32. Referring to FIG. 4, the method 100 begins with a first step 102, where the game controller provides a set number of game pieces. In the illustrated embodiment, the play of a single game 12 is based on sixty game pieces 42. However, as already discussed various embodiments may use any set number of game pieces 42.

[0029] In a second step 104, the game controller allows the player to select a game layout and a wager denomination. The game layout may vary the game card 26, 28, 30, 32 design to various numbers of rows and columns. The illustrated embodiment each game card 26, 28, 30, 32 has 5 columns and 3 rows, creating 15 positions 34.

[0030] In a third step 106, the game controller allows the player to place a wager on the game via the user interface. The player may bet a multiple of the selected wager denomination and play up to four game cards at that multiple of the wager in the illustrated embodiment. Additional variations allow for the player to wager different amounts for each game card 26, 28, 30, 32.

[0031] In a fourth step 108, the game controller assigns indicia to each position on the game cards 26, 28, 30, 32. In the illustrated embodiment, the sixty positions 34 are assigned indicia matching one of the markings on the game pieces 42. The assigning of the indicia is random and may be duplicative in one embodiment with more than one position 34 assigned the same indicia. However, one skilled in the art would understand several variations of the game 12 with various criteria for the assigning of the indicia to each position 34. One such variation, includes each marking of the game piece 42 assigned to match the indicia of a single position 34 between all the game cards. In this variation the player 13 playing the maximum game cards would see each game piece drawn resulting in a match with one position between the game cards. Therefore, it would be understood that if the player does not play the maximum game cards each game piece 42 drawn may not be result in a match on the game card 26, 28, 30, 32 by the player 13.

[0032] In a fifth step 110, the game controller draws a first set of game pieces 42. For example, in the illustrated embodiment, the first set 44 is thirty game piece 42 randomly drawn out of the set number of sixty game pieces 42 for the play of the game 12. Of course, any programmed number of game pieces may be drawn from any set number of balls or game pieces as already discussed.

[0033] Once the game has begun and the first set of thirty game pieces 42 are drawn, the first set may be shown in the ball information area 20. With particular reference to FIG. 6, in the illustrated embodiment, the first set of thirty game pieces 42 are displayed in 5 rows of 10 balls/numbers in the game piece area 24 of the graphical display 12. The last ball ("16") drawn is prominently displayed in the game piece area 24 as indicated by 24A. In addition, the total number of game pieces drawn so far in the game is also displayed by the ("30") and indicated by 24B.

[0034] In a sixth step 112, the game controller marks any match between the first set of game pieces 42 and the indicia in each position 34 on the game cards 26, 28, 30, 32. The matches are marked in the illustrated embodiment with an oval behind the indicia or number. However, it is understood that any various indications, animation or game themes could be used to mark and identify the positions matching the drawn game pieces 42.

[0035] In a seventh step 114, the game controller provides a first payout if the first set of thirty game pieces drawn results in any winning pattern on the game cards satisfying the one of the plurality of predetermined win criteria. In the illustrated embodiment, a winning pattern is outlined with a solid line and a payout amount is indicated on the respective game card 26, 28, 30, 32. The total amount wagered is indicated in the information area 18 under the amount bet and until this point of the game is $40. Any amount won would be shown in the information area 18, as well as on the respective game card 26, 28, 30, 32.

[0036] At any point, the player has the opportunity to start a new game and take any payout from a winning pattern, if any.

[0037] In an eighth step 116, the game controller establishes a cost for the player to purchase one or more additional game pieces. In one embodiment, the player may be given this opportunity only if certain near win criteria are met, e.g., only if at least one of the game cards has a “near” win. A near win may be defined as any game card needing only a predetermined number of game pieces or numbers, e.g., 1, for a winning pattern to satisfy one of the plurality of the predetermined win criteria. However, it should be noted that other near win criteria or other definitions or criteria may be used and programmed into the game controller to further provide additional variation of the game 12.

[0038] With particular reference to FIG. 5, in the illustrated embodiment, a near win is defined as any pattern which only requires one additional game piece or number to satisfy the predetermined win criteria.

[0039] In a ninth step 118, the game controller identifies the near win criteria satisfied on the game card 26, 28, 30, 32 by a dotted line outlining or across a near win pattern satisfying the near win criteria. Additionally, the required missing number or indicia may be highlighted on the game card. In the illustrated embodiment, a dotted line outlines the position 34 needed to satisfy the predetermined win criteria. The amount of a potential payout, may also be printed under the number in the position 34 on the game card 26, 28, 30, 32. To further entice and identify larger payouts to the player, in the illustrated embodiment, if the amount of the potential win is
greater than the amount wagered, then the missing number may be further highlighted, e.g., by an animated dotted line or other variation to draw the player's attention.

[0040] For example, in FIG. 5, in the first game card 26, a near win criteria is indicated by a dotted line 26A. The missing position has indicia “4S” to achieve the 1L or one line winning pattern, which is located in the middle position of the bottom row. A dotted line 26B outlines this position. The amount of a potential payout ($30) may also be indicated on the first game card 26. Since the amount of the payout ($30) is less than the total amount wagered ($40), in the illustrated embodiment, the dotted line 26B around the “45” is not animated to further attract the player’s attention.

[0041] Furthermore, additional indications of the position satisfying the near win criteria may be indicated in the pay table area of the graphical display by changing the color of the missing position and/or animating the missing position on the respective pay table pattern. For example, the position of the “4S”, i.e., the middle position of the bottom row may be highlighted by a different color in the pay table area 1.

[0042] Continuing with the second game card 28, a “V” pattern satisfying the near win criteria is illustrated by a dotted line 28A. The missing position is identified by indicia “5S” and a dotted line 28B highlights that position. The amount of the potential payout (“$30”) may be printed under the “5S”. Since the amount of the potential payout ($30) is less than the total amount wagered ($40), in the illustrated embodiment, the dotted line 28B around the “5S” is not animated to further attract the player’s attention.

[0043] Continuing with the third game card 30, the first set of game pieces 42 resulted in no positions 34 satisfying the near win criteria.

[0044] Continuing with the fourth game card 32, a “little box” pattern satisfying the near win criteria is illustrated by a dotted line 32A. The missing position is identified by indicia “31” and a dotted line 32B highlights that position. The amount of the potential payout (“$40”) may be printed under the “31”. Since the amount of the potential payout ($40) is greater than the total amount wagered ($40), in the illustrated embodiment, the dotted line 32B around the “31” is further highlighted, i.e., the dotted line 32B is animated to further attract the player’s attention.

[0045] As discussed above, the player is offered the opportunity to purchase an additional game piece 46 if a set of predetermined conditions are met, e.g., a near win exist on one of the game cards 26, 28, 30, 32. In the illustrated embodiment, the option is offered to the player if the first set has achieved a “near” win on any of the game cards (see above). In the example discussed above, the player has achieved three near wins so the player is given the opportunity to purchase the additional game piece 46.

[0046] In a tenth step 120, the game controller 40 establishes a first cost, i.e., the additional wager, the player must pay in to obtain the additional game piece 46. The cost is established as a function of a predetermined number of factors, which may include, but are not limited to, the potential wins or payout and the odds of obtaining one of the game pieces 42 for the missing position 34 that would satisfy the one of the predetermined win criteria. For example, in the given example, for each “near” win there is a 1 in 30 odds of the next game piece 42 completing the near win pattern identified on the game cards 26, 28, 30, 32 by the dotted lines 26A, 28A and 32A.

[0047] The cost of the additional game piece 46 is shown in the progressive and extra game piece information area 18. In the given example of FIG. 5, the cost is $15.33. As will be shown below, as more game pieces are drawn, the remaining game pieces to be drawn from decreases, the odds of obtaining a game piece 42 that completes a winning pattern thereby increases. Therefore, the cost will generally go up (unless a near win has been completed and the potential payout is removed from the function).

[0048] In an eleventh step 122, the game allows the player to purchase the first additional game piece 46. Referring to FIG. 6, the game piece information area 24 includes a plurality of slots 24C for any additional game pieces 46. As shown, in the current example, the player purchased the first additional game piece 46 and the randomly drawn game piece has a marking of “18”. The additional wager or cost of the additional game piece 46 is reflected in the information area 22 (under “Bet”) adding the $15.33 to the initial wager amount of $40 for a new bet amount of $55.33. The first additional game piece 46 is displayed in the slots 24C and in the last ball drawn 24A. The total number of balls drawn, i.e., 31, is also updated in the ball information area 24, 24B.

[0049] In the illustrated embodiment, the additional game piece 46 having a marking of “18” has resulted in no patterns satisfying the predetermined win criteria. However, an additional pattern satisfying the near win criteria has occurred on the third game card 30. The near win winning pattern is identified on the third card 30 is a 1L, a one line winning pattern is indicated by a dotted line 30A on the bottom line of the third game card. The missing position is identified by indicia “59” and a dotted line 30B highlights that position. The amount of the potential payout ($30) may be printed under the “59”. The position may also be highlighted on the pay table 36, as already discussed above.

[0050] The game controller 40 continues the play of the game by establishing the cost of a second additional game piece 46. The second cost is based on the same function as already discussed above. Since there is at least one game card satisfying the near win criteria the game continues to allow the player to purchase additional game pieces. The second cost of the second additional game piece 46 includes the same near win positions plus the additional one identified by indicia “59”.

[0051] The second cost of the second additional game piece 46 includes the same near win positions plus the additional one identified by indicia “59”.

[0052] With reference to FIG. 8, the player purchased another additional game piece 46 having marking “79” (which is shown in the ball information area 24, 24A), for the additional cost of $16.89. The additional wager amount is reflected in the information area 22. The “79” has not resulted in a win or any additional near wins. However, the cost of the next additional game piece has increased to $17.50. This is due to the fact that the odds of the next additional game piece satisfying the predetermined win criteria has increased to 1 in 28 odds since there are fewer game pieces to draw the next additional game piece 46.
amount is reflected in the information area 18. The “37” has not resulted in a win or any additional near wins. However, the cost of the next additional game piece has increased to $18. 15. The increase is due to the odds of the next additional game piece 46 satisfying the predetermined win criteria has increase to 1 in 27 odds since there are fewer game piece to draw the next additional game piece 46.

[0053] With reference to FIG. 9, the player has continued to purchased another additional game piece 46 having a marking “90” (which is shown in the ball information area 24, 24A), for the additional cost of $18.15. The additional wager is reflected in the information area 18. The “90” has not resulted in a win, however, an additional pattern satisfying the near win criteria has occurred on the fourth game card 32 (indicated by dotted line 32C). The near win is a 1L, or one-line pattern of the top row of the fourth game card 32, indicated by dotted-line 32C. The missing position is identified by indicia “17” and a dotted line 32D highlights that position 34. The potential payout ($30) may be printed under the “17”. The position may also be highlighted on the pay table area 20, as already discussed above. The game controller 40 next establishes the cost of the next additional game piece 46, as described in the function above, and the cost has increased to $20.00.

[0054] With reference to FIG. 10, the player has opted to purchased another additional game piece 46 having marking “78” (which is shown in the ball information area 24, 24A), for the additional cost of $20. The additional wager is reflected in the information area 18. The “78” has not resulted in a win, however, an additional pattern satisfying the near win criteria has occurred on the second card game 28 (indicated by dotted line 28C). The near win is a 1L, or one-line pattern of the middle row of the second game card 28. The missing position is identified by indicia “58” which is already identified by the dotted line 24B highlighting that position. The potential payout $60 may be printed under the “58” since this position will complete two winning patterns as indicated by dotted lines 24A and 246. The game controller 40 establishes the cost of the next additional game piece 46, as described above, as $22.00.

[0055] With reference to FIG. 11, the player has opted to purchased another additional game piece 46 having marking “17” (which is shown in the ball information area 24, 24A), for the additional cost of $22. The additional wager is reflected in the information area 22. The “17” has resulted in satisfying the predetermined win criteria and another pattern satisfying the near win criteria on the fourth card 32. Dotted line 32C has turned into a solid line to reflect a win and the payout. The player has won $50 and that is reflected both on the fourth game card 32 and in the information area 22. The dotted line 32E identifies the pattern satisfying the near win criteria, which is in the shape of a triangle. The missing position is identified by indicia “31” which is already identificed by the dotted line 283 highlighting that position. The potential payout $450 may be printed under “31” which is reflected in the potential payout amount of dotted lines 28A and 28E. The game controller 40 establishes the cost of the next additional game piece 46, as described above, as $23.75.

[0056] With reference to FIG. 12, the player has opted to purchased another additional game piece 46 having marking “33” (which is shown in the ball information area 24, 24A), for the additional cost of $23.75. The additional wager is reflected in the information area 22. The “33” has not resulted in a win, however, an additional pattern satisfying the near win criteria has occurred on the first game card 26 (indicated by dotted line 26C). The near win is a 1L, or one-line pattern of the top row of the first game card 26. The missing position is identified by indicia “39” which is identified by the dotted line 26D highlighting that position. The potential payout is $30 and may be printed under “39”. The game controller 40 establishes the cost of the next additional game piece 46, as described above as $26.08.

[0057] With reference to FIG. 13, the player has opted to purchased another additional game piece 46 having marking “39” (which is shown in the ball information area 24, 24A), for the additional cost of $26.08. The additional wager is reflected in the information area 22. The “39” has resulted in satisfying the predetermined win criteria and two additional patterns satisfying the near win criteria on the first game card 26. Dotted line 22C has turned into a solid line to reflect a win. The player payout amount won an additional $30 which is reflected both on the first game card 26 and in the information area 22. The two additional near win patterns on the first card 26, indicated by dotted lines 26E and 26F. Dotted line 26E illustrates a near win having a “large box” pattern, missing the position having indicia “45” already highlighted by dotted line 263 and a potential payout of $1,030 may be printed under the position reflecting the sum of the two potential payout of that position. Dotted line 22C illustrates a near win having a “mountain pattern”, missing the position having indicia “24” highlighted by dotted line 26G with a potential payout of $7,470. The potential payout may be printed under “24”. The game controller 40 establishes the cost of the next additional game piece 46 as $409.55, as described above as a function of the sum of the potential payouts, including the new $1,000 and $7,470 and the increased odds of the next additional game piece satisfying the predetermined win criteria.

[0058] With reference to FIG. 14, the player has opted to purchased another additional game piece 46 having marking “49” (which is shown in the ball information area 24, 24A), for the additional cost of $409.55. The additional wager is reflected in the information area 22. The “49” has not resulted in a win, however, an additional pattern satisfying the near win criteria with an increase payout of has occurred on the second game card 28. The previous near win further include the “plus” sign pattern indicated by dotted lines 28E and 28C, missing the position having indicia “58” as already indicated by dotted line 283. The game controller 40 establishes the cost of the next additional game piece as $432.86.

[0059] With reference to FIG. 15, the player has opted to purchased another additional game piece 46 having marking “84” (which is shown in the ball information area 24, 24A), for the additional cost of $432.86. The additional wager is reflected in the information area 22. The “84” has not resulted in a win, however, additional patterns satisfying the near win criteria on the second card 28. The “20” will complete a triangle and 1L or one-line winning pattern. A “58” will compete: the pillars, the W, the M, the Checkers, the plus, and the valley patterns, for a potential win of $2,080. The potential payout may be printed below each of the positions. The game controller 40 establishes the cost of the next additional game piece 46 as $553.

[0060] At this point, 40 game pieces have been drawn as indicated in 24B, leaving 20 game pieces available to be drawn. In the illustrated embodiment, the game 12 allows the player to purchase up to 11 extra game pieces. However, the number of additional game pieces can vary by the theme,
game variation and programmed by the casino, or gaming facility into the game controller 40.

[0061] With reference to FIG. 16, the player has opted to purchase another additional game piece 46 having marking “42” (which is shown in the ball information area 24A), for the additional cost of $553. The additional wager is reflected in the information area 22. The “42” has not resulted in a win or any additional near wins. The game controller 40 ends the game since the player 13 has purchased the maximum number of additional game pieces 46. The game controller 40 pays out any remaining matches satisfying the predetermined win criteria.

[0062] In another aspect of the present invention, a progressive jackpot may be provided. In one embodiment, a portion of each wager, initial wagers and/or additional wagers (for the purchase of additional game pieces 46). In one embodiment, the progressive jackpot is accrued and awarded via a progressive jackpot system (not shown) which may include one or more computer servers coupled to a plurality of games 12. Alternatively, the progressive jackpot may be administered by a system which performs other related services, such as accounting services and/or player tracking services.

[0063] Play of each game 12 by players contributes to the progressive jackpot which may be awarded to a player whose play triggers the progressive jackpot. For example, in one embodiment, the progressive jackpot may be awarded to the player who covers off positions on one of their game cards 26, 28, 30, 32 after the first set of game pieces 42 are called, e.g., in the illustrated embodiment, after the first set of thirty game pieces 42 are randomly drawn by the game controller 40. It should be noted that the progressive system may be programmed to trigger the jackpot after any predetermined or defined pattern is achieved.

[0064] In another embodiment, each game piece 42 has a color which is determined based on the column of the game card in which they are positioned. In another embodiment, each game piece 42 or indicia is assigned a randomly determined color, e.g., one of five colors, when the game piece 42 is drawn.

[0065] In one embodiment, the progressive system may be programmed to trigger the jackpot when a predetermined pattern on one of the game cards 26, 28, 30, 32 is filled with a indicia, such as a ball having a predetermined (or all the same) color. Typically, this must be accomplished during the drawing of the first set of game pieces 42.

[0066] In another embodiment, the progressive system is programmed or may be programmed to define participation requirements. For example, in one embodiment, only players who are currently playing the maximum number of game cards, available, e.g., 4, wagering at the highest denomination, e.g., $1, and betting a predetermined minimum per game card.

[0067] While the invention has been described with reference to an exemplary embodiment, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various changes may be made and equivalents may be substituted for elements thereof without departing from the scope of the invention. In addition, many modifications may be made to adapt a particular situation or material to the teachings of the invention without departing from the essential scope thereof. Therefore, it is intended that the invention not be limited to the particular embodiment disclosed as the best mode contemplated for carrying out this invention, but that the invention will include all embodiments falling within the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for playing a game of chance, said method comprising the steps of:
   providing a gaming device with a graphical display for displaying a game card having a plurality of rows and columns creating a grid of positions;
   providing a user interface on the gaming device for allowing communication between the gaming device and a player;
   providing a set number of game pieces each having a unique marking;
   randomly assigning an indicia to each position on the game card, the indicia for each position matching one of the markings on the set number of game pieces;
   marking the matches between the markings on the first set of game pieces and the indicia in each position on the game card;
   providing a first payout to the player if the matches satisfy one of a plurality of predetermined win criteria; and
   establishing a first cost of a first additional game piece based on a function of the number of remaining game pieces and a sum of a potential payout of the additional ball satisfying another of the plurality of predetermined win criteria on the game card.

2. A method as set forth in claim 1 further comprising the step of allowing the player to purchase an additional game piece at the first cost.

3. A method as set forth in claim 2 further comprising the step of marking the matches between the markings on the additional game piece and the indicia in each position on the game card.

4. A method as set forth in claim 3 further comprising the step of providing a second payout to the player for matches satisfying one of a plurality of predetermined win criteria.

5. A method as set forth in claim 4 further comprising the step of establishing a second cost of a second additional game piece based on a function of the number of remaining game pieces and a second sum of a potential payout of the second additional ball satisfying another of the plurality of predetermined win criteria on the game card.

6. A method as set forth in claim 1 further comprising the step of selecting a game layout by the player through the user interface.

7. A method as set forth in claim 6 further comprising the step of allowing the player to select a wager denomination on the game layout through the user interface.

8. A method as set forth in claim 7 further includes the step of allowing the player to select a number of game cards and placing a wager on each of the game cards through the user interface.

9. A method for playing a game of chance, said method comprising the steps of:
   providing a gaming device with a graphical display for displaying a game card having a plurality of rows and columns creating a grid of positions;
   providing a user interface on the gaming device for allowing communication between the gaming device and a player;
   providing a set number of game pieces each having a unique marking;
   allowing the player to select a game layout and a wager denomination through the user interface;
allowing the player to place a wager on the game via the user interface;
creating the game card on the gaming device according to the selected game layout and wager denomination by the player;
randomly assigning an indicia to each position on the game card, the indicia for each position matching one of the markings on the set number of game pieces;
randomly drawing a first set of a programmed number of game pieces;
marking the matches between the marking on the first set of game pieces and the indicia in each position on the game card;
providing a payout to the player if the matches satisfy one of a plurality of predetermined win criteria; identifying on the game card the indicia and positions that satisfy a near win criteria on the game card; and establishing a first cost to purchase a first additional game piece based on a function of the number of remaining game pieces and the first additional ball satisfying another of the plurality of predetermined win criteria and a sum of the identified positions on the card.

10. A method as set forth in claim 9 further comprising the step of allowing the player to purchase purchasing an additional game piece at the first cost.

11. A method as set forth in claim 10 further comprising the step of marking the matches between the marking on the additional game piece and the indicia in each position on the game card.

12. A method as set forth in claim 11 further comprising the step of providing a second payout to the player for matches satisfying one of the plurality of predetermined win criteria.

13. A method as set forth in claim 12 further comprising the step of identifying on the game card the indicia and positions that satisfy the near win criteria on the game card.

14. A method as set forth in claim 13 further comprising the step of establishing a second cost of a second additional game piece based on a function of the number of remaining game pieces and the second additional ball satisfying another of the plurality of predetermined win criteria and a second sum of the identified positions on the game card.

15. A game system for playing a game of chance, said game system comprising:

a game device for providing a user interface to communicate between a player and the game system, and providing a graphical display to display a game card having a plurality of rows and columns creating a grid of positions; and

a game controller for providing a set number of game pieces each having a unique marking, randomly assigning an indicia to each position on the game card, randomly drawing a first set of a programmed number of game pieces, marking the matches between the first set and the indicia on the game card, providing a first payout to the player for matches satisfying one of a plurality of predetermined win criteria, and establishing a first cost of a first additional game piece based on a function of the number of remaining game pieces and a sum of a potential payout of the first additional ball satisfying another of one of the plurality of predetermined win criteria on the game card.

16. A game system, as set forth in claim 15, including a user interface for allowing the player to purchase the first additional ball at the first cost.

17. A game system, as set forth in claim 16, including a game controller for marking the matches between the first additional game piece and the indicia in each position on the game card.

18. A game system, as set forth in claim 17, including a game controller for providing a second payout to the player for matches satisfying one of the plurality of predetermined win criteria.

19. A game system, as set forth in claim 18, including a game controller establishing a second cost of a second additional game piece based on a function of the number of remaining game pieces and a second sum of a potential payout of the second additional ball satisfying another one of the plurality of predetermined win criteria on the game card.

20. A game system, as set forth in claim 15, including a user interface for allowing the player to select a game layout.

21. A game system, as set forth in claim 20, including a user interface for allowing the player to select a wager denomination on the game layout.

22. A game system, as set forth in claim 21, including a user interface for allowing the player to select a number of game cards and placing a wager on each of the game cards.