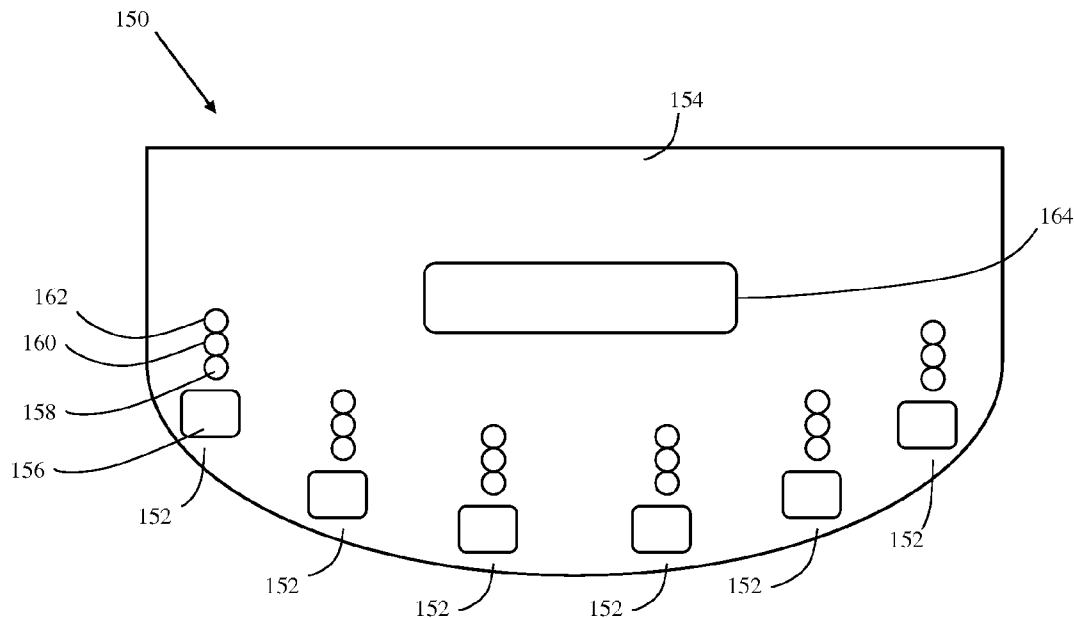




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(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication**  
**Mumphrey**(10) **Pub. No.: US 2012/0032400 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Feb. 9, 2012**(54) **BLACKJACK GAME WITH SIDE WAGER**(76) Inventor: **Timothy Mumphrey**, Ocean  
Springs, MS (US)(21) Appl. No.: **13/034,641**(22) Filed: **Feb. 24, 2011****Related U.S. Application Data**(60) Provisional application No. 61/370,419, filed on Aug.  
3, 2010.**Publication Classification**(51) **Int. Cl.**  
**A63F 1/00** (2006.01)  
**A63F 9/24** (2006.01)(52) **U.S. Cl. .... 273/292; 463/12**(57) **ABSTRACT**

A Blackjack variant with a side wagering game includes in some embodiments the steps of: receiving a wager from a player to participate in the Blackjack game; receiving one or more side wagers from a player participating in the Blackjack game, wherein each of the one or more side wagers is associated with a preset criteria relating to cards in a side wager hand to be formed from cards dealt in the Blackjack game; dealing the playing cards according to the Blackjack game rules; identifying a portion of the playing cards dealt as forming the side wager hand; comparing the side wager hand with the preset criteria for each of the one or more side wagers; awarding a payout amount to the player if the player placed a side wager and the corresponding preset criteria for the side wager is satisfied, wherein the payout amount depends at least in part of the preset criteria satisfied; and continuing with the Blackjack game until the game is resolved.



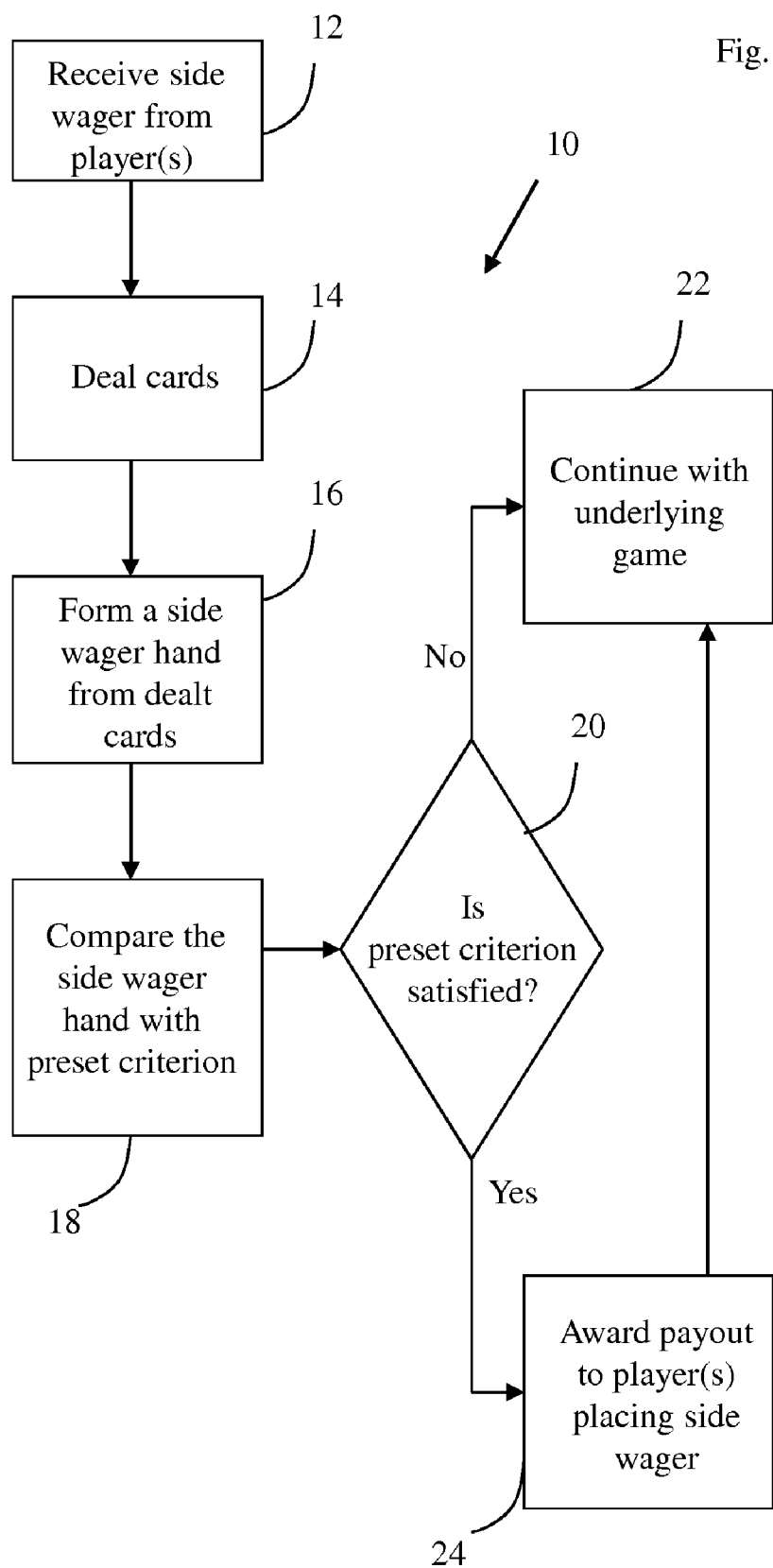
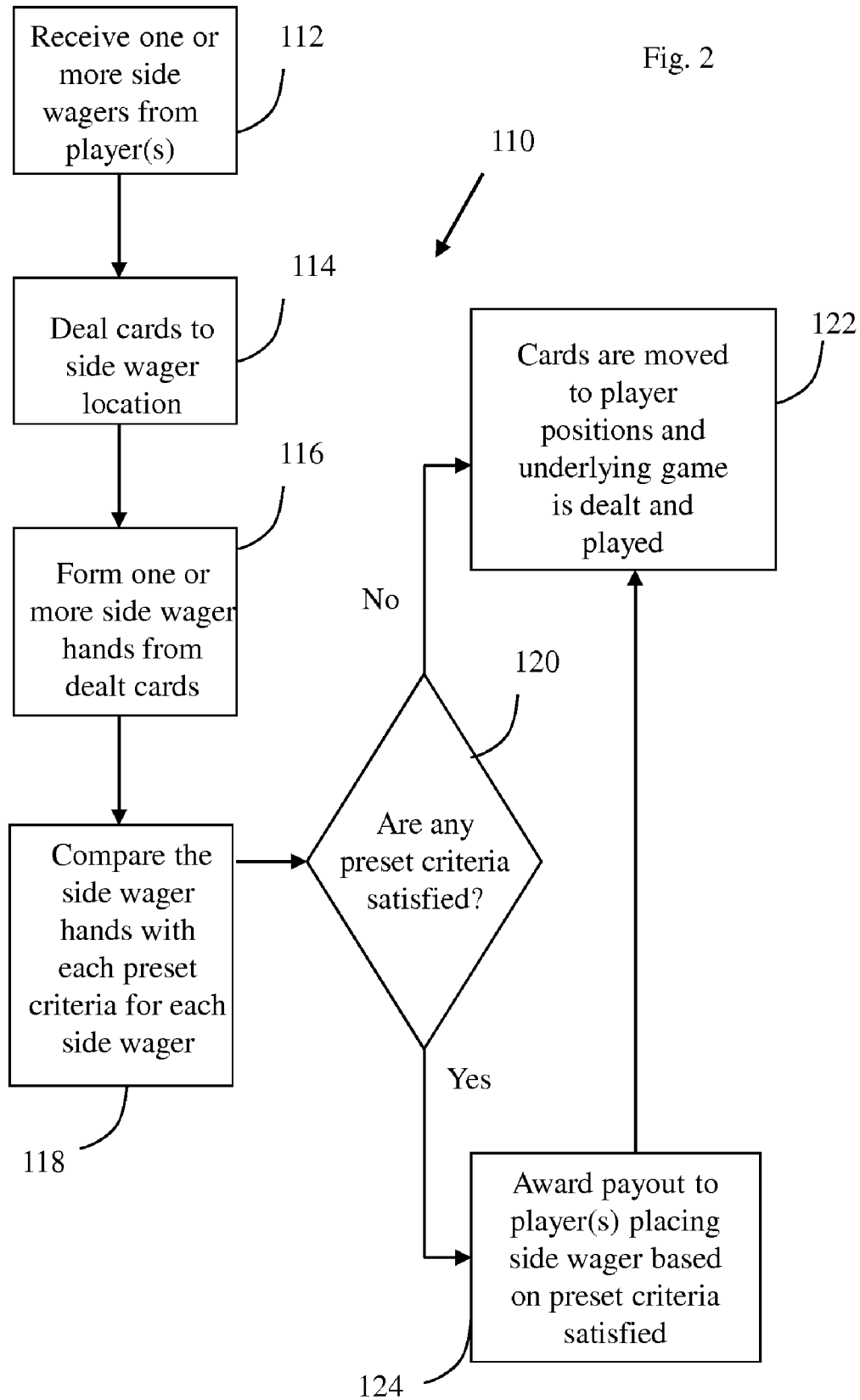
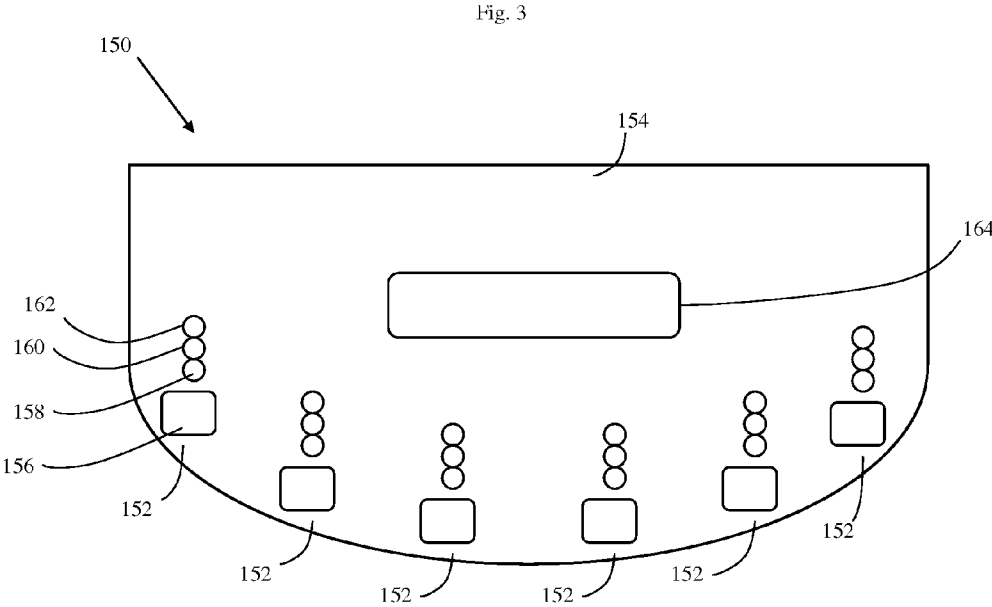


Fig. 2





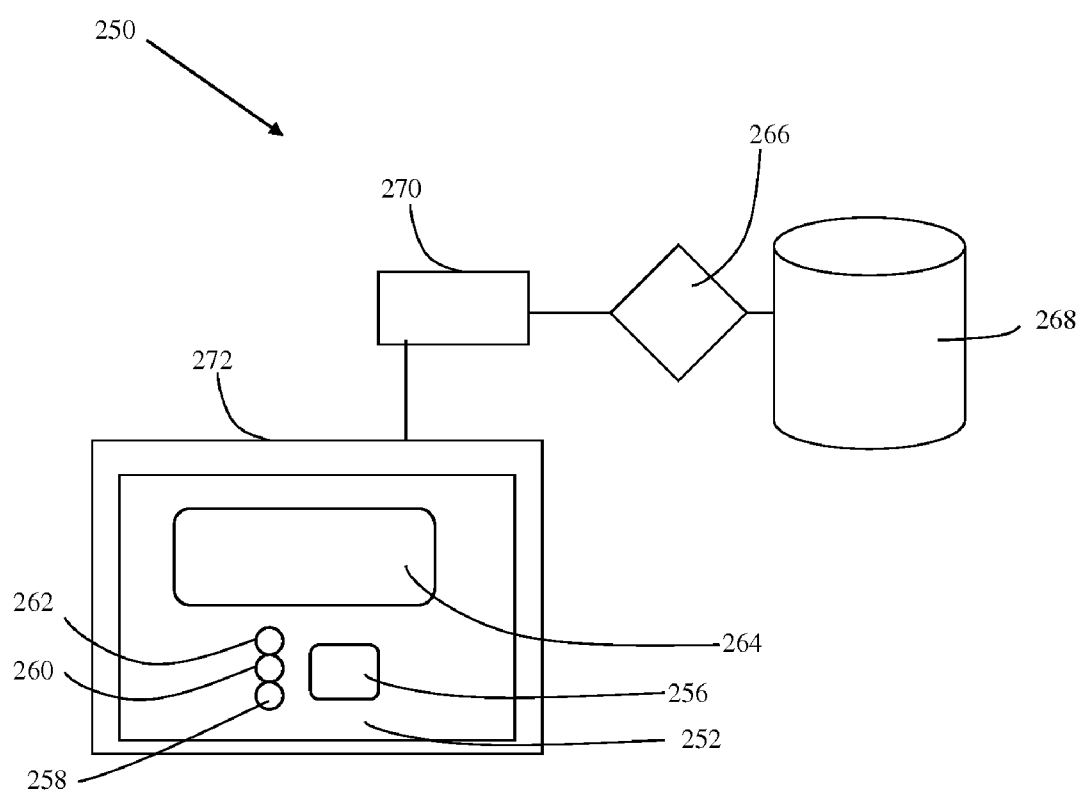


Fig. 4

**BLACKJACK GAME WITH SIDE WAGER****CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED  
APPLICATIONS FROM WHICH PRIORITY IS  
CLAIMED**

**[0001]** This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/370,419 which was filed Aug. 3, 2010, the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.

**BACKGROUND**

**[0002]** 1. Field of the Invention

**[0003]** The present invention relates to a method of playing a card game. In particular, the invention relates to a method of playing a wagering card game.

**[0004]** 2. Description of the Related Art

**[0005]** Many card games have been developed over the years and some are particularly adapted for gambling. Typically, such games include a dealer who deals cards and one or more players who place wagers on whether an outcome will be achieved based on the cards that the dealer deals. One example in this regard is Blackjack which is also known as Twenty-One.

**[0006]** The objective of Blackjack is for a wagering player to finish a round of play with a hand of playing cards with a sum of the total value of cards coming as close as possible to the value of twenty-one, without the player hand total exceeding twenty-one. The game is played by one or more players against a dealer with the player making an initial wager on a final outcome under the rules of blackjack, which remain fairly consistent throughout the world, and with only minor variations in different casinos or jurisdictions. Players' hands that are less than or equal to twenty-one, and exceed the value of the dealer's hand wins. All players' hands that have a lower sum than the dealer's hand and all hands that exceed the sum of twenty-one lose. Dealer and Player hands with the same total value (without the player first busting, result in ties (called a "push"). An initial two-card hand totaling twenty-one points is called blackjack, and in the absence of the dealer having a similar hand, automatically wins, without respect to the dealer's hand final; count and is often paid at odds greater than 1:1.

**[0007]** One conventional method of playing Blackjack uses one or more standard decks of playing cards (a fifty-two card deck without jokers). Each numbered card is counted according to its face value. The Jacks, Queens and Kings are worth ten (10), and Aces are worth either one (1) or eleven (11), depending on which is most beneficial to the count of the hand. A "ten" card therefore hereinafter includes any card which has a value of ten in the game of Blackjack, that is, a numbered 10 card, Jacks, Queens and Kings.

**[0008]** Once all the bets are made, the dealer will deal the cards to the players. The dealer will make two passes around the table starting with the player farthest to the left so that the players and the dealer have one card after the first pass and then receive a second card each after the second pass. The two cards dealt to the dealer or house includes one card face up or otherwise exposed to view, usually the second (and last) card dealt.

**[0009]** A player views an initial value of cards in the player's hand, views the dealer's up-card (the exposed card) and then makes decisions on drawing or not drawing further playing cards. This further drawing is done in an attempt to try and

win the hand by having a higher count than the dealer's hand without busting, or allowing the dealer to bust the house hand. The player can "stand" on any count of twenty-one or less. Once the player exceeds a count of twenty-one or "busts," the player wager is lost, whatever the ultimate point count of the dealer's hand. Usually, the dealer must hit when with a point count of less than seventeen. Normally a dealer must stand on a soft count of at least seventeen, a soft count being a hand value where an Ace is counted as a value of eleven. House rules may vary, however.

**[0010]** Although the game of Blackjack is a consistent winning game for the house, players tend to place the minimum wager on a blackjack game unless the player is using some system or feels that the cards are running in a favorable streak. While Blackjack is a very popular game, many new games which are quickly rising in popularity provide numerous wagering opportunities, thus increasing player participation and excitement. Consequently, further variations of existing wagering games are always of interest to players and casinos, and therefore, there is a desire for methods which would increase wagering in the game of Blackjack.

**SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

**[0011]** The invention is generally directed to side wagering games which can be added into or configured with an underlying or base game.

**[0012]** In some embodiments, the invention is directed to a method of conducting a side wagering game with an underlying wagering game in which playing cards or representations thereof are dealt according to predefined rules to determine the outcome of the underlying wagering game.

**[0013]** In some embodiments, this method includes the steps of: receiving a side wager from a player participating in the underlying game that at least one preset criterion will occur in a side wager hand to be formed from cards dealt in the underlying game; dealing the playing cards according to the predefined rules of the underlying game; identifying a portion of the playing cards dealt as forming the side wager hand; comparing the side wager hand with the preset criterion; awarding a payout amount to the player if the preset criterion is satisfied; and continuing with the underlying game until the underlying game is resolved.

**[0014]** In some embodiments, the aforementioned method further includes the step of receiving a mandatory wager or wagers for the underlying wagering game.

**[0015]** In some embodiments, the aforementioned method further includes the steps of dealing the portion of playing cards identified as forming the side wager hand to a side wager hand location and moving the playing cards to a player position in the underlying game prior to continuing with the underlying game, wherein the playing cards are moved to the player position in the same order as if the cards had been initially dealt to the player position according to the rules of the underlying game.

**[0016]** In some embodiments, the underlying wagering game in the aforementioned method may be Blackjack or a poker-based variant game.

**[0017]** In some embodiments, the step of identifying a portion of the playing cards dealt as forming the side wager hand as described in the aforementioned method further includes identifying consecutively dealt cards of a predefined amount as forming the side wager hand. In some embodiments, identifying consecutively dealt cards of a predefined amount as

forming the side wager hand may begin with the first cards dealt in the underlying game according to the predefined rules of the underlying game.

**[0018]** In some embodiments, the preset criterion in the aforementioned method may relate to or include a relationship between playing cards or symbols. The preset criterion may be unrelated to the manner of resolving the underlying game. For example, the underlying game may follow Blackjack or Baccarat rules whereas the preset criterion used to determine and resolve the side wagering game may relate to poker rules, or vice versa.

**[0019]** In some embodiments, the step of continuing with the underlying game until the underlying game is resolved as described in the aforementioned method further includes dealing additional playing cards to the player.

**[0020]** The invention is also directed to a method of conducting a Blackjack variant game with a side wagering game which includes the steps of: receiving a wager from a player to participate in the Blackjack game; receiving one or more side wagers from a player participating in the Blackjack game, wherein each of the one or more side wagers is associated with a preset criteria relating to cards in a side wager hand to be formed from cards dealt in the Blackjack game; dealing the playing cards according to the Blackjack game rules; identifying a portion of the playing cards dealt as forming the side wager hand; comparing the side wager hand with the preset criteria for each of the one or more side wagers; awarding a payout amount to the player if the player placed a side wager and the corresponding preset criteria for the side wager is satisfied, wherein the payout amount depends at least in part of the preset criteria satisfied; and continuing with the Blackjack game until the game is resolved.

**[0021]** In some embodiments, each of the preset criteria for one or more of the side wagers are satisfied based on different amounts of cards identified as forming the side wager hand.

**[0022]** In some embodiments, the preset criteria for one or more of the side wagers includes preset criteria that may be satisfied based on at least three of the cards and at least four of the cards identified as forming the side wager hand, respectively.

**[0023]** In some embodiments, the step of identifying a portion of the player cards dealt as forming the side wager hand further includes dealing a predefined amount of consecutively dealt cards according to the rules of Blackjack beginning with the first card dealt to form the side wager hand. The consecutively dealt cards may exclude the dealer hand card which is dealt face down according to the rules of Blackjack.

**[0024]** In some embodiments, the aforementioned method further includes the steps of dealing the portion of playing cards identified as forming the side wager hand to a side wager hand location and moving the playing cards to a separate player position prior to continuing with the Blackjack game, wherein the playing cards are moved to the player position in the same order as if the cards had been initially dealt to the player position according to the rules of the Blackjack game.

**[0025]** In some embodiments, the preset criteria relates to or includes poker-like hand rankings.

**[0026]** The invention is also directed to a system for providing a wagering game, which includes the following components: a data input device for receiving a wager to participate in an underlying game and one or more side wagers to participate in a side wagering game associated with the underlying game; a display device for displaying playing cards

forming a side wager hand at a first side wager hand position and displaying at least some of the playing cards forming a side wager hand in at least one player position on the display; a data processing device for: comparing the side wager hand with a preset criteria associated with each of the one or more side wagers; determining a side wager payout amount to be awarded to the player if the player placed a side wager and the corresponding preset criteria for the side wager is satisfied, wherein the payout amount depends at least in part of the preset criteria satisfied; causing the playing cards forming the side wager hand to be displayed in the at least one player position on the display after the side wager payout amount is determined; and continuing play of the underlying game until the underlying game is resolved.

**[0027]** The aforementioned system may be an electronic gaming machine or electronic platform including multiple data input devices providing player positions. The system may also include a transceiving device for providing the wagering game to players via an online system or the Internet. The data input device may also be included in a touch-enabled display device or consist of a remote terminal in communication with the processing device.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

**[0028]** FIG. 1 is a process flow chart depicting an exemplary game play method configured and constructed according to some embodiments of the invention.

**[0029]** FIG. 2 is a process flow chart depicting another exemplary game play method configured and constructed according to some embodiments of the invention.

**[0030]** FIG. 3 is a schematic diagram depicting an exemplary table layout for facilitating the process shown in FIG. 2.

**[0031]** FIG. 4 is a schematic diagram depicting the components of an exemplary system configured and constructed according to some embodiments of the invention.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

**[0032]** The exemplary embodiments herein relate to wagering games such as Blackjack variations in which additional side wagers other than the standard underlying game wagers are placed by players and received by the house or casino to be subsequently resolved in a secondary side wager game which is determined at least in part by some of the playing cards dealt for the underlying game.

**[0033]** It should be understood that the methods and steps recited herein may be partially or wholly carried out in a variety of ways, such as by a dealer physically using game elements in a casino, via an electronic gaming machine (EGM) in a gaming establishment, through a computer or portable device, such as a mobile phone, capable of communicating via the Internet, global telecommunication network or world wide web. It should further be understood that the methods and systems of the invention are described herein in connection with standard playing cards for illustrative purposes only, as the methods and systems of the invention may be used with non-standard playing cards or any other items with varying distinguishable symbols.

**[0034]** In some embodiments, the invention is directed to a method of playing an underlying game, such as Blackjack, generally referred to by the reference numeral **10** which includes various steps as shown in FIG. 1.

**[0035]** In step **12**, a side wager is received by a player interested in participating in a secondary game. The player

may also be required to place a wager in the underlying game, which in this embodiment is comparable to conventional Blackjack, in order to participate in the secondary game. Furthermore, the side wager may also be mandatory. It should be understood that receiving the side wager may comprise the player placing an amount at risk, such as placing a gaming chip on a designated betting area on a table game felt layout.

**[0036]** In step **14**, playing cards or virtual representations thereof are dealt for the underlying game, which for illustrative purposes in this embodiment is conventional Blackjack. In some embodiments, the playing cards are dealt according to the rules of conventional Blackjack, that is, with each player receiving a first card, beginning with the player to the left-most of the dealer and then proceeding to the right to deal one card to each player until all players have a first card. Once the players each have a first card, then the dealer will receive a first card. The dealer will then deal a second card to each player following the same pattern until the dealer deals the last card to form the dealer hand. In such embodiments, a portion of the dealt cards will be identified as forming the side wager hand in step **16**.

**[0037]** For purposes of illustration, in this embodiment the portion of cards dealt which are identified as forming the side wager hand in step **16** are the first, consecutively dealt cards, not including any “burn” or discarded cards. However, in other embodiments, the portion of cards dealt which are identified as forming the side wager hand may not include any of the dealer hand cards, skip the first card, consist of every other card, or be dealt as new cards from the deck after all the cards are dealt in the underlying game and used only with respect to the side wager.

**[0038]** In some embodiments, the cards identified as forming the side wager hand are dealt to the player positions as in conventional Blackjack. In other embodiments, the cards used to form the side wager hand in step **16** are first dealt to a special location on the table layout or on a display screen adjacent to one another prior to then being moved to the player positions according to the rules of the underlying game of Blackjack.

**[0039]** For example, if there are four players, and the side wager hand will be formed from the first three cards, then the first dealt cards to players 1, 2 and 3 will comprise the side wager hand and may be dealt first to a side wager hand location or to each player as in the conventional deal in order to resolve the wager. In another example, if the side wager hand will be formed from the first four cards and there are three players in the round, then the side wager hand will comprise the first dealt cards to players 1, 2 and 3 along with the first card dealt to form the dealer hand. In yet another example, if the side wager hand will be formed from the first four cards and there are two players in the round then the side wager hand will comprise the first and second cards dealt to the player 1, the first card dealt to player 2 and the first card dealt to the dealer. In yet another example, if the side wager hand will be formed from the first four cards and there is only one player then the side wager hand will comprise the first and second cards dealt to player 1 and the first and second cards dealt to the dealer.

**[0040]** In step **18**, the side wager hand is compared with a preset criterion. It should be understood that the preset criterion may correspond to any particular feature associated with the playing cards or certain combinations of cards, such as a poker or poker-like hand rank (that is, similar to conventional poker rankings but not necessarily the same card configura-

tion) achieved by the side wager hand or the presence of a particular card in the side wager hand. In other embodiments, the side wager hand may be compared with preset criteria, such as a plurality of poker or poker-like rankings, such as pair, two-pair, three-of-a-kind, straight, flush, full house, straight flush and royal flush. The poker or poker-like rankings may be based on any number of cards in the side wager hand, such as two through five, excluding any rankings which are eliminated based on the number of cards, and may differ depending on the odds of achieving certain hands for more or less than five cards.

**[0041]** As shown in step **20**, if the side wager hand does not satisfy the preset criterion, then in step **22** the underlying game continues until resolution. Thus, in the embodiments in which the cards are placed in a special side wager hand location, they may be moved by the dealer to each player position to form the respective player's hand in the underlying game. If the side wager hand satisfies the preset criterion, then in step **24** a preset amount may be paid out to the players that placed the side wager in step **12** as an award. In embodiments in which there is a preset criteria of poker rankings, the award payout may be an odds payout expressed as a multiple of the unit wagered as a side wager in step **12**. For example, the payout may be 6 to 1 for a three card flush in the side wager hand. After the payout, the underlying game is then continued in step **22**. Alternatively, payouts may be paid after the underlying game is resolved.

**[0042]** In another embodiment illustrated by game method **110** in FIG. 2, players may place multiple side wagers, one or some of which may be mandatory. FIG. 3 illustrates an exemplary table game layout **150** which may be used to facilitate game play of this embodiment in a gaming establishment. It should be understood that layout **150** may be partially of fully electronic, that is, incorporating touch-enabled screens and electronic wagering. However, for purposes of illustrating the features of this embodiment, the game method **110** will be discussed in connection with table game layout **150** as if physical playing cards, physical wagering chips and a live dealer are all involved.

**[0043]** In this embodiment, one of the available side wagers may be based on at least three of the cards in the side wager hand achieving at least a certain poker rank based on three cards, while another one of the available side wagers may be based on at least four of the cards in the side wager hand achieving at least a certain poker rank based on four cards. It should be understood that other side wagers based on other amounts of cards in the side wager hand achieving a poker rank, such as two or five cards, may be incorporated within a method according to this embodiment.

**[0044]** Table game layout **150** includes multiple player positions **152** and a dealer position **154**. In this embodiment, there are six player positions **152**, each generally including an area **156** for placing cards in the underlying game, a wagering circle **158** for placing wagers in the underlying game, a wagering circle **160** for placing wagers for the three card side wager, and a wagering circle **162** for placing wagers for the four card side wager. Area **164** is provided as a location for placing cards when forming the side wager hand.

**[0045]** In step **112**, participating players may place wagers for the underlying game in circle **158**, the three card side wager in circle **160** and the four card side wager in circle **162**. In step **114**, cards are dealt in the underlying game, which in this embodiment is a version of Blackjack. As described above, cards may be dealt to player and dealer positions **152**



and **154** or first dealt to a designated side wager hand location **164** so that all the cards can be viewed adjacent to one another. In this embodiment, the side wager hand is comprised of four cards. Thus, four cards may be dealt to a designated side wager hand location **164** in step **116**. In this embodiment, the side wager hand cards are dealt but no further cards are dealt in the underlying game until the side wagers are resolved.

**[0046]** In step **118**, the side wager hand is compared with the preset criteria, which in this embodiment includes determining the best three card and four card poker-like hand ranks achievable from the side wager hand, and comparing each of those rankings with paytables listing three card poker-like hand ranks and four card poker-like hand ranks with corresponding payouts. It should be understood that the payouts may be expressed in such terms as set amounts, odds payouts, multiples of the unit side wager, portions of a standard progressive meter, or combinations thereof.

**[0047]** An exemplary payable is shown below.

Three Card Side Wager Preset Criteria	
ini-Royal (Queen, King, Ace suited) suited	100 to 1
Straight Flush (Ace, 2, 3-Jack, Queen, King suited)	30 to 1
Three of a kind	25 to 1
Straight (Ace, 2, 3-Queen, King, Ace)	10 to 1
Flush	60 to 1
Four Card Side Wager Preset Criteria	
Four of a kind	40 to 1
Two Pair	8 to 1
Three of a kind	5 to 1
Pair	1 to 1

**[0048]** It should be readily apparent that the above payable is provided for illustrative purposes and may be altered accordingly. It should also be noted that in some embodiments, more than one of the preset criteria for a payout may be satisfied. For example, in the above payable, a three of a kind hand satisfies both the three card side wager preset criteria and four card side wager preset criteria. However, it is envisioned that players will only be entitled to payouts on side wagers for which wagers are placed. Thus, players that place both the side wagers for the three card side wager and four card side wager will be entitled to payouts on both.

**[0049]** If in step **120**, preset criteria are not satisfied for any of the side wagers, then the cards are moved from the side wager hand location **164** to the respective player positions **152** and the underlying game continues in step **122**. Thus, if additional cards are necessary for the underlying game, these cards are dealt in step **122** according to the rules of the underlying game directly to the player positions **152** for placement in areas **156**, regardless of whether all the players placed a side wager. For example, in conventional Blackjack, if there are three players in the game then the side wager hand comprises the first card to players 1, 2 and 3 along with the dealer's first card. Upon the side wagers being resolved, the cards forming the side wager hand are moved from area **164** to areas **156** in the player positions **152** as if they would have been dealt in the underlying game and the deal continues with a second card to each player beginning with player 1.

**[0050]** If in step **120**, the preset criteria for one or more of the side wagers are satisfied then the appropriate amounts are awarded in step **124**. Upon payment of side wagers, game

method **110** returns to step **122** and the cards are moved from the side wager hand location to the player positions and the underlying game is played.

**[0051]** In some embodiments, players receive two hands for the underlying game and place a wager in connection with each hand with at least one side wager. The game is carried out as described above, that is, with the first three or four cards dealt being dealt to a side wager hand location for resolution of the three card and/or four card side wagers before continuing the underlying game in which two player hands will be separately resolved against one or more dealer hands.

**[0052]** In some embodiments, if there is one player playing one hand only, the side wager hand may consist of three cards only and only a side wager based on three or less cards, if available, may be placed and received, thus keeping the identity of the second dealer hand card hidden during resolution of the side wager and maintaining the same gameplay in the underlying Blackjack game. It should be readily apparent that one player may also choose to play more than one hand in the game, thus allowing for a side wager hand of four cards in the aforementioned embodiments. In some embodiments, the underlying game may be other than Blackjack but include some cards which are dealt face up while others are dealt face down or otherwise remain initially unexposed as part of the game. It should be readily apparent that in such games, the cards used for the side wager hand may be only the face up cards, thus skipping over the cards dealt face down, regardless of the order in which the face down cards are dealt.

**[0053]** In other embodiments, one or more additional cards may be dealt to form the side wager hand prior to dealing the second card to the dealer hand, thus permitting the side wager hand to consist of four or more cards and allowing a second card to be dealt to the dealer face down after resolution of the side wagers.

**[0054]** In some embodiments, players may each be dealt a first card, and then one card or a group of cards, such as for example the next one, two or three cards in the deck, are dealt to the side hand location. Side wagers in these embodiments are resolved by comparing the side wager hands, formed by each player's first card and the one card or group of community cards dealt to the side hand location, against a payable, which may be configured for resolving two, three or four card wagers. Alternatively, the dealer may also receive a first card which can be used in the side game, such as a qualification hand or a hand which the players must outrank to win. In some alternatives, a player may place one or more additional side wagers which can be resolved by comparing with paytables listing payouts for two card, three card or four card ranks of an additional side wager hand which is formed from the player card, dealer card and one card or a group of cards that may be dealt to a side hand location.

**[0055]** Those skilled in the art will readily appreciate that the methods described herein may be incorporated in a system in accordance with the invention using virtual representations of cards and table layouts. The system of the invention may include various computer and network related software and hardware, such as programs, operating systems, memory storage devices, data input/output devices, data processors, servers with links to data communication systems, wireless or otherwise, and data transceiving terminals, and may be a standalone device or incorporated in another platform, such as a mobile device. The system of the invention may be provided on electronic platforms with multiple player positions. In addition, the system of the invention may be pro-

vided at least in part on a personal computing device, such as home computer, laptop or mobile computing device through an online communication connection or connection with the Internet. Those skilled in the art will further appreciate that the precise types of software and hardware used are not vital to the full implementation of the methods of the invention so long as players and operators thereof are provided with useful access thereto or the opportunity to play the game as described herein.

[0056] FIG. 4 illustrates an exemplary system 250 constructed in accordance with some embodiments of the invention. System 250 includes processing device 266 in communication with a memory device 268, data input/output device 270 and a display device 272. In some embodiments, display device 272 is a touch-enabled device and includes a data input device component therein. Memory device 268 may include data relating to the underlying game and side wagering game, as well as the preset criteria. The player position 252 is displayed on display device 272 along with wagering areas 258, 260 and 262. Dealt cards are displayed in side wager hand area 264 and processing device 266 compares the side wager hand in area 264 with the preset criteria stored in memory device 268. Should the preset criteria be satisfied, that is, a certain hand be achieved with a player placing a side wager, then a payout is determined by processing device 266 and the same is indicated on display device 272. The dealt cards displayed in side wager and area 264 are moved or otherwise displayed in the appropriate areas 256 of each player position 252.

[0057] While exemplary methods and applications of the methods of the invention have been described herein, it should also be understood that the foregoing is only illustrative of a few particular embodiments with exemplary and/or preferred features, as well as principles of the invention, and that various modifications can be made by those skilled in the art without departing from the scope and spirit of the invention. Therefore, the described embodiments should not be considered as limiting of the present invention in any way. Accordingly, the invention embraces alternatives, modifications and variations which fall within the spirit and scope of the invention as set forth in the claims and equivalents thereto.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of conducting a side wagering game with an underlying wagering game in which playing cards or representations thereof are dealt according to predefined rules to determine the outcome of the underlying wagering game, the method comprising the steps of:

- a) receiving a side wager from a player participating in the underlying game that at least one preset criterion will occur in a side wager hand to be formed from cards dealt in the underlying game;
- b) dealing the playing cards according to the predefined rules of the underlying game;
- c) identifying a portion of the playing cards dealt as forming the side wager hand;
- d) comparing the side wager hand with the preset criterion;
- e) awarding a payout amount to the player if the preset criterion is satisfied; and
- f) continuing with the underlying game until the underlying game is resolved.

2. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of receiving a mandatory wager for the underlying wagering game.

3. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of dealing the portion of playing cards identified as forming the side wager hand to a side wager hand location and moving the playing cards to a player position in the underlying game prior to continuing with the underlying game, wherein the playing cards are moved to the player position in the same order as if the cards had been initially dealt to the player position according to the rules of the underlying game.

4. A method according to claim 1, wherein the underlying wagering game is Blackjack.

5. A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of identifying a portion of the playing cards dealt as forming the side wager hand further comprises identifying consecutively dealt cards of a predefined amount as forming the side wager hand.

6. A method according to claim 5, wherein the step of identifying consecutively dealt cards of a predefined amount as forming the side wager hand further comprises beginning with the first cards dealt in the underlying game according to the predefined rules of the underlying game.

7. A method according to claim 1, wherein the preset criterion comprises a relationship between playing cards.

8. A method according to claim 1, wherein the preset criterion is unrelated to the resolution of the underlying game.

9. A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of continuing with the underlying game until the underlying game is resolved further comprises dealing additional playing cards to the player.

10. A method of conducting a Blackjack variant game with a side wagering game comprising the steps of:

- a) receiving a wager from a player to participate in the Blackjack game;
- b) receiving one or more side wagers from a player participating in the Blackjack game, wherein each of the one or more side wagers is associated with a preset criteria relating to cards in a side wager hand to be formed from cards dealt in the Blackjack game;
- b) dealing the playing cards according to the Blackjack game rules;
- c) identifying a portion of the playing cards dealt as forming the side wager hand;
- d) comparing the side wager hand with the preset criteria for each of the one or more side wagers;
- e) awarding a payout amount to the player if the player placed a side wager and the corresponding preset criteria for the side wager is satisfied, wherein the payout amount depends at least in part of the preset criteria satisfied; and
- f) continuing with the Blackjack game until the game is resolved.

11. A method according to claim 10, wherein each of the preset criteria for one or more of the side wagers are satisfied based on different amounts of cards identified as forming the side wager hand.

12. A method according to claim 10, wherein the preset criteria for one or more of the side wagers includes preset criteria that may be satisfied based on at least three of the cards and at least four of the cards identified as forming the side wager hand, respectively.

13. A method according to claim 10, wherein the step of identifying a portion of the player cards dealt as forming the side wager hand further comprises dealing a predefined

amount of consecutively dealt cards according to the rules of Blackjack beginning with the first card dealt to form the side wager hand.

**14.** A method according to claim **13**, wherein the consecutively dealt cards excludes the dealer hand card dealt face down according to the rules of Blackjack.

**15.** A method according to claim **10**, further comprising the steps of dealing the portion of playing cards identified as forming the side wager hand to a side wager hand location and moving the playing cards to a separate player position prior to continuing with the Blackjack game, wherein the playing cards are moved to the player position in the same order as if the cards had been initially dealt to the player position according to the rules of the Blackjack game.

**16.** A method according to claim **10**, wherein the preset criteria comprises poker-like hand rankings.

**17.** A system for providing a wagering game, comprising:

- a) a data input device for receiving a wager to participate in an underlying game and one or more side wagers to participate in a side wagering game associated with the underlying game;
- b) a display device for displaying playing cards forming a side wager hand at a first side wager hand position and displaying at least some of the playing cards forming a side wager hand in at least one player position on the display;

c) a data processing device for:

- i) comparing the side wager hand with a preset criteria associated with each of the one or more side wagers;
- ii) determining a side wager payout amount to be awarded to the player if the player placed a side wager and the corresponding preset criteria for the side wager is satisfied, wherein the payout amount depends at least in part of the preset criteria satisfied;
- iii) causing the playing cards forming the side wager hand to be displayed in the at least one player position on the display after the side wager payout amount is determined; and
- iv) continuing play of the underlying game until the underlying game is resolved.

**18.** A system for providing a wagering game as recited in claim **17**, wherein the system comprises an electronic gaming machine.

**19.** A system for providing a wagering game as recited in claim **17**, wherein the data input device comprises a remote terminal in communication with the processing device.

**20.** A system for providing a wagering game as recited in claim **17**, wherein the system comprises an electronic platform including multiple data input devices.

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