METHOD OF ADMINISTERING A GAME OF CHANCE

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ABSTRACT

A method of administering a game of chance which includes multiple drawings of winning indicia that are displayed to players at selected intervals during play of the game ensures compliance with State statutes or other regulations regarding monitoring of the drawings by accountants, security personnel or others without requiring their presence throughout the course of a day or other time period when the game is played.
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FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] This invention relates to games of chance, and, more particularly, to a method of administering a game of chance having multiple drawings of winning indicia that are conducted prior to the beginning of a predetermined time period during which the game is played wherein the winning indicia are securely stored until displayed at selected intervals during the course of the predetermined time period.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] A number of games of chance are operated by casinos, State lotteries and other entities which involve multiple drawings of winning numbers in a given time period. One example of such a game is known as "Keno" which typically employs a ball machine or random number generator to select twenty integers from a group of integers numbered one to eighty. Players wager by marking numbers of integers that they select on a Keno ticket form having eighty integer selection boxes (1-80). A player is paid according to how many integers drawn match the integers he or she selected on the ticket form, and according to the wager amount.

[0003] In most instances, Keno games of the type described above have multiple drawings of winning integers throughout a predetermined time period during which the game is played. For example, one State lottery currently conducts drawings at intervals of every four minutes beginning at 6:04 a.m. and ending at 2:28 a.m. each day of the week.

[0004] At least some States have statutes in place requiring that all lottery drawings must be witnessed by an accountant from an independent CPA firm, and/or that all lottery drawings must be monitored by the lottery’s security division. These mandates make it burdensome, expensive and essentially impractical when applied to games of the type described above in which drawings are conducted at intervals throughout a day. It is not feasible for an accountant and/or security personnel to be present to monitor each and every drawing during an entire day, especially when the drawings are conducted at short intervals of time such as every four minutes in the game described above.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] This invention is directed to a method of administering a game of chance, such as Keno, in which the game can be conducted in compliance with State statutes regarding the participation of accounting and/or security personnel without requiring their presence throughout the course of a day or other time period during which the game is played.

[0006] In the presently preferred embodiment, the method comprises conducting multiple drawings of winning indicia prior to the beginning of a predetermined time period during which the game is to be played, securing the results of each drawing and then displaying one drawing of winning indicia at each of a number of selected intervals throughout the course of the predetermined time period. A sufficient number of drawings is conducted to permit the display of a different drawing of winning indicia for each of the selected intervals. In order to ensure the integrity of the game, the drawings of winning indicia are secured until displayed, using one or more security means described below.

[0007] The method of this invention is a cost effective, efficient and secure means of conducting a game of chance involving multiple drawings that are displayed at intervals throughout a day or other period of time. Accountants, security personnel or others that may be required to monitor drawings can be assembled prior to the beginning of the time the game is to be played, and all drawings may take place, one after another, within a relatively short period of time. The results of these drawings may then be secured until such time as they are released, one drawing at a time, during the time the game is played. The accountant and/or security personnel need not be present when the results of a drawing are displayed, but only when the drawings are conducted, thus solving the problem of requiring the attendance of such personnel at every drawing throughout the predetermined time period for playing the game.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0008] This invention is directed to a method of administering a game of chance. For purposes of the present discussion, a game of chance resembling a traditional Keno game is described herein, although it should be understood that the method of this invention is applicable to essentially any other game of chance involving multiple drawings of winning indicia that are displayed at intervals during the time period in which the game is played. The term “winning indicia” as used herein refers to a group of integers, a combination of alpha-numeric indicia, symbols or other indicia. It is contemplated that a number of different entities may act as the administrator of the game of chance, such as State lotteries, casinos and the like.

[0009] As noted above, a typical Keno game involves players making a wager by marking integers that they select on a Keno ticket form from a pool of eighty (1-80) integers. Up to twenty integers may be selected by a player, known as “spots,” on any given ticket form. A ball machine, random number generator or other means is employed to randomly select twenty winning integers from the eighty-two integer pool, and the results of each drawing are displayed to the players. A player is paid according to how many integers drawn match the integers he or she selected on the ticket form, and according to the wager amount. A number of drawings may be held at selected intervals during the time period in which the game is played to provide multiple opportunities for players to place wagers and potentially win a prize.

[0010] In applying the method of this invention to the game described above, or a similar game of chance, an initial consideration is to predetermine a time period during which the game is to be played. Secondly, a decision must be made regarding how many drawings of winning indicia will be conducted and displayed during the predetermined time period. For purposes of the present discussion, it may be determined, in one example, that the game will be played during a predetermined time period of eighteen hours each day and drawings of winning indicia will be displayed at hourly intervals. Under those circumstances, players would have an opportunity to place wagers and win prizes in up to eighteen drawings during each day the game is played.

[0011] An important aspect of the method of this invention is the provision of means for dealing with the drawing and display of multiple winning indicia at intervals throughout the entire duration of play of the game in a cost effective, efficient and secure manner. This is of particular importance in State lotteries governed by statutes or having internal poli-
cies that require monitoring of each drawing of winning indicia. In Florida, for example, current statutes require the presence of an accountant employed by an independent certified public accounting firm at each lottery drawing and that each drawing be monitored by the Division of Security. In the example given above, such monitoring requirements would demand the presence of at least two personnel, each hour, for an eighteen hour period during each day the game is played. It was recognized that such an obligation would be burdensome, expensive and essentially impractical.

[0012] The method of this invention overcomes the monitoring issue described above. In one embodiment, an accountant, security representative or other monitoring personnel are present at the location where the drawings are to take place prior to the time the initial drawing of winning integers is scheduled. A total of eighteen drawings are conducted in the presence of such personnel, one after the other, in the example discussed herein. The results of these eighteen drawings are secured, as described below, and then displayed, one each hour, throughout the day. In an alternative embodiment, more than eighteen drawings are conducted in the presence of monitoring personnel prior to the scheduled start of the game for a given day. In either embodiment, once the drawings are conducted the monitoring personnel may be excused and need not be present for the display of winning integers throughout the day.

[0013] Security measures are an important aspect of the method of this invention in order to ensure the integrity of the game. As noted above, all of the drawings required for play of the game on a given day are conducted in advance of the scheduled beginning of the game, and therefore the results must be "secured," i.e. maintained in secret, until such time as they are displayed. Preferably, all of the winning integers for each drawing are immediately encrypted once selected, e.g. eighteen drawings of twenty integers each in the example discussed herein. The encrypted drawings of integers may be stored in a "black box" server, maintained in the random number generator if that device is used to generate the winning integers instead of a ball machine, or, placed in one or more other secure storage devices. No access is permitted to any of the drawings of winning integers except when it is time for display of the drawing results, e.g. once each hour for eighteen hours in the example discussed herein.

[0014] Although the drawings of winning indicia are conducted one after the other prior to commencement of the game on a given day, the sequence in which such results are displayed may be random to add an additional measure of security to the game. In the example discussed, the eighteen drawings of twenty winning integers may be displayed in any sequence, preferably randomly, which dramatically reduces the chance of correctly matching winning integers with a particular drawing throughout the day in the event the security system was somehow compromised.

[0015] Even further security protection is provided by employing the alternative embodiment discussed above in which more drawings are conducted than needed for the game on a particular day or other predetermined time period, i.e. more than eighteen drawings of winning integers for play of the game in one day in the example described herein. It is contemplated that the display of winning integers from such larger group of drawings would also be done in random order for added security.

[0016] While the invention has been described with reference to a preferred embodiment, it should be understood by those skilled in the art that various changes may be made and equivalents 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.

[0017] The example discussed above is not intended to in any way limit the scope of this invention. While a time period of eighteen hours per day with drawings displayed each hour is described above, it is contemplated that any other predetermined time period could be employed and the intervals at which the drawing results are displayed can be varied as desired. The term "predetermined time period" is therefore not limited to all or part of a calendar day but could extend for several days or longer in which case multiple drawings could be conducted at the beginning of such period and the game could be played intermittently or continuously during such period. For example, sufficient drawings could be conducted on a Monday to play the game through Friday of the same week, and the game could be played each calendar day from Monday through Friday with drawings displayed at selected intervals over several hours of each day. Further, other security measures than those specifically mentioned herein could be employed to maintain the results of each of the drawings secret until such time as they are displayed, and the term "securing" the results of the multiple drawings as use herein is intended to encompass all such measures.

[0018] 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.

1 claim:

1. A method of administering a game of chance, comprising:

(a) conducting multiple drawings of winning indicia prior to the beginning of a predetermined time period during which the game of chance is played;

(b) securing the results of each of the multiple drawings;

(c) displaying the results of one of the multiple drawings of winning indicia at each of a number of selected intervals throughout the course of the predetermined time period.

2. The method of claim 1 in which step (a) comprises conducting multiple drawings of winning indicia in the presence of monitoring officials prior to the scheduled start of the predetermined time period in which the game is played.

3. The method of claim 1 in which step (a) employs a random number generator to select winning indicia for each of the multiple drawings.

4. The method of claim 3 in which step (b) comprises storing each of the multiple draws of winning indicia in the random number generator.

5. The method of claim 1 in which step (b) comprises encrypting the results of each of the multiple drawings and maintaining the encrypted results in a secure storage device except when step (c) is performed for each of the multiple drawings.

6. The method of claim 1 in which step (a) comprises conducting multiple drawings of winning indicia in sequence, one after the other.

7. The method of claim 6 in which step (c) comprises displaying the results of the multiple drawings of winning indicia in a different sequence than the sequence in which the multiple drawings of winning indicia were selected.
8. A method of administering a game of chance, comprising:
(a) predetermining a time period during which the game of chance will be played;
(b) selecting a number of intervals within the predetermined time period;
(c) conducting multiple drawings of winning indicia prior to the beginning of the predetermined time period;
(d) securing the results of each of the multiple drawings;
(e) displaying the results of one of the multiple drawings of winning indicia at each of the intervals throughout the course of the predetermined time period.

9. The method of claim 8 in which step (c) comprises conducting the same number of multiple drawings of winning indicia as the number of intervals selected in step (b).

10. The method of claim 9 in which step (d) comprises securing the results of the multiple drawings of winning indicia by randomly selecting each multiple drawing of winning indicia for display in step (e) from the same number of multiple drawings of winning indicia obtained in step (c).

11. The method of claim 8 in which step (c) comprises conducting a larger number of multiple drawings of winning indicia than the number of intervals selected in step (b).

12. The method of claim 11 in which step (d) comprises securing the results of the multiple drawings of winning indicia by randomly selecting each multiple drawing of winning indicia from the larger number of multiple drawings of winning indicia obtained in step (c).

13. The method of claim 8 in which step (c) comprises conducting multiple drawings of winning indicia in the presence of monitoring officials prior to the scheduled start of the predetermined time period in which the game is played.

14. The method of claim 8 in which step (c) comprises employing a random number generator to select winning indicia for each of the multiple drawings.

15. The method of claim 14 in which step (d) comprises storing each of the multiple drawings of winning indicia in the random number generator.

16. The method of claim 8 in which step (d) comprises encrypting the results of each of the multiple drawings of winning indicia and maintaining the encrypted results in a secure storage device except when step (e) is performed for each of the multiple drawings of winning indicia.

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