A method for playing a game is provided, the method including the steps of (a) providing a game board including a matrix having a plurality of elements; (b) providing a plurality of markers; (c) marking at least one element of the plurality of elements using at least one marker of the plurality of markers upon receiving at least one input; (d) unmarking a set of elements of the plurality of elements upon meeting a first predetermined condition; (e) terminating the game upon meeting a second predetermined condition; and (f) repeating steps (b)-(d) if the second predetermined condition is not met. Furthermore, a gaming device for playing the game as an interactive computerized game is provided, where the gaming device includes a processor configured to enable game play.
You must now remove one block. Click on the block you want gone.
VIDEO BINGO-TYPE GAME SYSTEM

PRIORITY

[0001] This application claims priority to a United States Provisional Application filed on Apr. 25, 2002 and assigned U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/375,502, the contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates generally to video game systems and more specifically to a video game system for playing a bingo-type game.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] There are various video game systems for playing video games. These video game systems generally include a graphical user interface and a player console for interacting with the graphical user interface for playing a video game. Several video game systems are adapted for awarding the player with monetary winnings or other form of winnings based on the number of points accumulated during play of the video game. Monetary winnings are awarded to the player after the player so directs via the player console, e.g., by pushing a button marked “CASH OUT” or upon the occurrence of a predetermined condition.

[0004] Video games are also generally adapted for being played on a computer system, such as a personal computer or a PDA. In this case, a video game is stored as a set of programmable instructions on a computer-readable medium, such as a CD, or within a memory of the computer system. The set of programmable instructions is capable of being executed by at least one processor of the computer system for enabling a player to play the video game using the computer system.

[0005] Video games can also be played via the Internet, where a player connects to a remote server via a web browser and provides commands to the remote server for enabling the player to play a video card game stored therein. The remote server typically stores the player’s points for awarding the player prizes, money, etc.

[0006] To keep players interested and to make them feel more challenged, game makers are always designing new video game systems and new video games capable of being loaded on a computer system or being played via the Internet.

SUMMARY

[0007] It is an aspect of the present invention to provide a novel video bingo-type game.

[0008] Further, it is an aspect of the present invention to provide a set of programmable instructions capable of being stored within a memory of a computer system, a remote server accessible via the Internet, or on a computer-readable medium and configured for execution by at least one processor for enabling a player to play a video bingo-type game.

[0009] Accordingly, the present invention provides a novel video bingo-type game. A method for playing the game is provided, the method including the steps of (a) providing a game board including a matrix having a plurality of elements; (b) providing a plurality of markers; (c) marking at least one element of the plurality of elements using at least one marker of the plurality of markers upon receiving at least one input; (d) unmarking a set of elements of the plurality of elements upon meeting a first predetermined condition; (e) terminating the game upon meeting a second predetermined condition; and (f) repeating steps (b)-(d) if the second predetermined condition is not met.

[0010] Furthermore, a gaming device for playing an interactive computerized game is provided. The gaming device includes a processor configured to enable game play, the gaming device including means for receiving at least one user input; means for displaying a game board including a matrix having a plurality of elements; means for displaying a plurality of markers; means for marking at least one element of the plurality of elements in accordance with the received at least one user input using at least one marker of the plurality of markers upon receiving at least one input; means for unmarking a set of elements of the plurality of elements upon meeting a first predetermined condition; and means for terminating the game upon meeting a second predetermined condition. The gaming device is preferably implemented as a casino-type video game system where the system is configured for awarding points, and exchanging awarded points for prizes, e.g., money.

[0011] A preferred embodiment of the game involves placing colored bumper cars on a 5x5 grid during each turn of the game with the objective of placing five bumper cars having the same color along the same line either during the same turn (a turn involves placing five bumper cars on the grid) or over two or more turns of the game. The line could be vertical, i.e., a column, horizontal, i.e., a row, or diagonal. The colors of the bumper cars are green, blue, black, red, orange, yellow and purple. The quantity and order in which they appear is completely random. The black bumper car is a “spoil”, because once it is placed in the grid, the player cannot form any lines with it. The player can select and place the bumper cars during each turn in any order.

[0012] Additionally, once five bumper cars having the same color are placed along the same line, the player has to “bump” a bumper car off the grid, thereby clearing the grid of the bumped bumper car. It is recommended that if the grid contains a black bumper car, that bumper car should be bumped in an effort to “free up” the grid making it possible to form lines of the same color. The bumper cars are represented on the grid as colored owls. The player earns points for each turn played and for each line cleared.

[0013] The present invention also provides the video bingo-type game being implemented as a stand-alone computer system, i.e., video game system, or as a set of programmable instructions configured for being executed by a computer system, such as a personal computer or PDA, or a remote server accessible via a network, such as the Internet. The set of programmable instructions can be stored within a computer readable medium, such as memory of the computer system, a memory of the remote server, or on a computer-readable medium, such as a CD or a 3.5” diskette.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

[0014] FIG. 1 is an illustration of an opening screen view of the video bingo-type game according to the present invention;
FIGS. 2a-ae are illustrations showing operational screen views of an exemplary play of the video bingo-type game according to the present invention; and

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of a video bingo-type game system for playing the video bingo-type game according to the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a video bingo-type game. Furthermore, the game may be a non-computerized game played with manipulatives. A game board having a matrix (or grid) of a plurality of elements and a plurality of markers are provided. Preferably each marker is provided having an associated type, such as a color, of a predetermined set of types. A player is enabled to selectively mark respective elements of the array using respective markers. Upon meeting a predetermined condition, a set of elements of the matrix are unmarked. The game is terminated upon marking all of the elements of the matrix, or upon determining that the predetermined condition cannot be met. Preferably, the predetermined condition is met when a predetermined subset of elements of the matrix, such as an entire column, row or diagonal, is marked using markers having the same type. Preferably one of type of the predetermined set of types is a spoiler type, where an element marked using a marker having the spoiler type is incapable of contributing to meeting the predetermined condition. Preferably, upon meeting the predetermined condition, the player is enabled to selectively unmark one additional element of the matrix, where play of the game is suspended until the additional element is unmarked. Points are awarded, where the points are indicative of success in meeting the predetermined condition.

An exemplary game, embodying a preferred embodiment of the game, involves means for marking squares on a grid, such as a 5x5 grid displayed on a graphical user interface (GUI), by placing a respective bumper car on a square. The means for marking squares on the grid includes, for example, a user interface having a pointing device for selecting a bumper car, moving the selected bumper car onto the displayed grid, and selecting a square of the grid. The bumper cars are preferably provided in a series, where a set of bumper cars, such as five bumper cars, are preferably provided for each turn. During each turn, the bumper cars provided must be used to mark a respective square that is not yet marked. The objective of the game is to meet a predetermined condition as many times as possible. The predetermined condition in the exemplary game is to complete a line by placing bumper cars having the same color along the same line (five squares in this example) either during the same turn (a turn involves placing five bumper cars on the grid) or over two or more turns of the game. The line could be vertical, i.e., a column, horizontal, i.e., a row, or diagonal. In the exemplary game, the colors (i.e., type) of the bumper cars are green, blue, black, red, orange, yellow, purple and white, where a black bumper car has special properties, as described below.

It is conceivable that the game can spoil the player by not providing the colors needed to complete lines. Hence, the player must position the bumper cars by thinking far enough ahead in the game, i.e., by thinking that the bumper cars needed to complete line(s) may not appear in the subsequent turns.

The black bumper car is a “spoiler”, because once it is placed in the grid, the player cannot form any lines with it. It is contemplated that the game can be designed such that no more than one black bumper car appears during each turn. It is further contemplated that the game can be designed such that a black bumper car appears no more than once every three turns. It is further contemplated that the game can be designed such that no black bumper cars appear in the first “x” number of turns, e.g., no black bumper cars appear in the first five turns. Finally, it is also contemplated that the game can be designed such that less black bumper cars appear in the earlier turns, e.g., less than five turns, and more black bumper cars appear as the video game progresses, i.e., the latter turns, e.g., five or more turns.

In one embodiment of the game, the type of the bumper car, i.e., the color, which includes black, i.e., “spoiler”, is randomly selected, such that the quantity and order in which they appear is completely random. In alternative embodiments “spoiler” type and/or the color (other than black) of the bumper car is controllably selected, where selection is accordance with the number of bumper cars used for marking squares, the number of turns completed, the colors of bumper cars previously provided and/or the colors of the bumper cars currently marking squares on the grid. Different difficulty of levels of play may be provided, where the player may select a difficulty level. As the difficulty level increases, the type of the bumper cars provided is selected in order to decreases the chance of completing a line.

The player can select and place the bumper cars during each turn in any order. It is contemplated that the game can be designed for selecting and placing the bumper cars in a particular order, e.g., from left to right or according to a predetermined ranking, e.g., any green bumper cars should be selected and placed first, followed by any blue bumper cars, followed by any black bumper cars, followed by any red bumper cars, followed by any orange bumper cars, followed by any yellow bumper cars, and finally followed by any purple bumper cars.

Once five bumper cars having the same color are placed along the same line, that line is cleared, i.e., unmarked, making it possible to place additional bumper cars on that line. Additionally, once five bumper cars having the same color are placed along the same line, the player has to “bump” a bumper car off the grid, thereby clearing the grid of the bumped bumper car. It is recommended that if the grid contains a black bumper car, that bumper car should be bumped in an effort to “free up” the grid making it possible to form lines of the same color. The bumper cars are represented on the grid as colored ovals.

Points are awarded to the player, so that the points awarded are indicative of success in meeting the predetermined condition, i.e., completing a line in this example. Points are awarded, for example, for completing a turn and/or for completing a line. The game is terminated when all of the squares of the grid are marked, no lines are completed, and the player cannot use another bumper car to mark a square. The game may also be terminated when a determination is made that it is impossible to place five bumper cars for completing a line.

A detailed description is first provided of a preferred embodiment of the video bingo-type game followed by a detailed description of an exemplary play of the video
bingo-type game. The following detailed description describes the video bingo-type game as being implemented as a set of programmable instructions configured for being executed by a computer system, such as a personal computer or PDA, or a remote server accessible via a network, such as the Internet. The set of programmable instructions can be stored within a memory of the computer system, a memory of the remote server, or on a computer-readable medium, such as a CD or a 3.5" diskette.

[0026] When a player accesses the video bingo-type game, if the player is a registered player, the player is greeted with an introductory game banner, which may include an advertisement and/or a message to the player. Following the introductory game banner, the player is provided with an opening screen of the video bingo-type game. If the player is not a registered player, the player is provided with a registration screen. Upon successfully registering, the player is then greeted with the introductory game banner, which is then followed by the opening screen.

[0027] FIG. 1 illustrates a view of the opening screen designated generally by reference numeral 100. The opening screen 100 (and every screen thereafter) includes four soft buttons, START OVER 102 for restarting the video card game, HELP 104 for being provided with a page or pop-up window containing helpful information on how to proceed or what to do next with respect to the video bingo-type game, RULES 106 for being provided with a set of rules for the video bingo-type game, and QUIT 108 for quitting the video bingo-type game.

[0028] The opening screen 100 (and every screen thereafter) further includes a score table 110 indicating the number of points, the number of turns played, the number of lines created, and the number of sponsor coins accumulated. In a preferred embodiment of the video bingo-type game, the player earns 1,000 points for each turn completed or played, and 100 points for the first line formed of the same colored bumper cars, 200 points for the second line formed of the same colored bumper cars, 300 points for the third line formed of the same colored bumper cars, 400 points for the fourth line formed of the same colored bumper cars, etc.

[0029] Sponsor coins are accumulated when a bumper car 116 is selected to be placed which has a corresponding hidden sponsor coin. The uncovered sponsor coin is given to the player and the score table 110 is changed to reflect that the player has x number of sponsor coins.

[0030] The uncovered sponsor coin in a preferred embodiment depicts an advertisement, logo, etc. of a particular advertiser, such as a company. If the player accumulates a sufficient amount of sponsor coins from that particular advertiser, the player can exchange the sponsor coins for promotional products and/or services from the particular advertiser, e.g., ten sponsor coins corresponding or advertising a wireless telecommunications company can be exchanged for five hours of free wireless telephony provided by the wireless telecommunications company. Also, it is contemplated that any uncovered sponsor coin can be equated with a certain number of points which are then awarded to the player and reflected by the score table 110.

[0031] The opening screen 100 (and every screen thereafter) further includes a banner 112 on the upper right portion of the screen. The banner 112 provides various messages to the player during the course of the game. The banner 112 also indicates the end of the game by displaying the message "GAME OVER".

[0032] The opening screen 100 (and each screen thereafter) further includes a 5x5 grid 114. The 5x5 grid 114 of the opening screen includes blank or clear ovals. As the game progresses and the player positions bumper cars 116 into the grid 114 which are initially displayed on the bottom of the grid 114, the clear ovals change into the color of the bumper car 116 positioned thereat. The oval can be made clear again by either forming a line with four other ovals having the same color to clear the entire line of ovals, or by "bumping" the bumper car 116 positioned on the oval off the grid 114 after a line of five ovals having the same color is formed.

[0033] Game Play

[0034] With reference to FIGS. 1 and 2a-2e, an exemplary play of a preferred embodiment of the video bingo-type game will now be described. The game begins by displaying the opening screen 100 as shown by FIG. 1. The opening screen 100 includes five randomly generated colored bumper cars 116a-e on the bottom of a clear 5x5 grid 114. The score table 110 indicates zero points earned, zero turns completed, zero lines formed, and zero sponsor coins earned. The banner 112 does not display any messages. The five randomly generated colored bumper cars 116a-e are colored from left to right purple (P), orange (O), orange (O), yellow (Y) and red (R).

[0035] In playing the bingo-type game and while being shown the opening screen 100, the player first decides to first position the purple (P) bumper car 116a in the grid 114 by selecting the purple (P) bumper car 116a and then selecting a position in the grid 114 by moving the selected bumper car 116a to that position. The player selects the position having the coordinates column 1, row 5 and the purple bumper car 116a is placed into that position as indicated in FIG. 2a where the oval having the coordinates column 1, row 5 is shown as being purple (P). After the purple (P) bumper car 116a is selected and placed within the grid 114, a silhouette of the purple (P) bumper car 116a is shown below the other bumper cars 116b-e which are yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

[0036] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2a, the player then selects the first orange (O) bumper car 116b and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 1, row 1. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 1, row 1 is shown as being orange (O) in FIG. 2b and a silhouette of the first orange (O) bumper car 116b is shown below the other bumper cars 116c-e which are yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

[0037] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2b, the player then selects the second orange (O) bumper car 116c and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 2, row 2. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 2, row 2 is shown as being orange (O) in FIG. 2c and a silhouette of the second orange (O) bumper car 116c is shown below the other bumper cars 116d-e which are yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

[0038] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2c, the player then selects the yellow (Y) bumper car 116d and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 1, row 4. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 1, row
4 is shown as being yellow (Y) in FIG. 2d and a silhouette of the yellow (Y) bumper car 116d is shown below the red (R) bumper car 116e which is yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

0039 While viewing the screen of FIG. 2d, the player then selects the red (R) bumper car 116e and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 5, row 1. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 5, row 1 is shown as being red (R) in FIG. 2e.

0040 After the red (R) bumper car 116e is positioned within the grid 114, a set of five new bumper cars 116d′-e′ are presented to the player at the bottom of the grid 114 as shown by FIG. 2f. This signifies that the player has successfully completed a turn and the beginning of a new turn. Since the player has successfully completed a turn, the score table 110 in FIG. 2i indicates that the player has earned 1,000 points and that one turn has been played.

0041 While viewing the screen of FIG. 2e, the player then selects the first purple (P) bumper car 116d′ and moves it to position having the coordinates column 2, row 5. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 2, row 5 is shown as being purple (P) in FIG. 2f and a silhouette of the first purple (P) bumper car 116d′ is shown below the other bumper cars 116d′-e′ and 116e which are yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

0042 While viewing the screen of FIG. 2f, the player then selects the second purple (P) bumper car 116e′ and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 3, row 5. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 3, row 5 is shown as being purple (P) in FIG. 2g and a silhouette of the second purple (P) bumper car 116e′ is shown below the other bumper cars 116d′-e′ which are yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

0043 While viewing the screen of FIG. 2g, the player then selects the yellow (Y) bumper car 116c′ and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 2, row 4. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 2, row 4 is shown as being yellow (Y) in FIG. 2h and a silhouette of the yellow (Y) bumper car 116c′ is shown below the other bumper cars 116d′-e′ which are yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

0044 While viewing the screen of FIG. 2h, the player then selects the blue (B) bumper car 116a′ and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 1, row 3. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 1, row 3 is shown as being blue (B) in FIG. 2i and a silhouette of the blue (B) bumper car 116a′ is shown below the red (R) bumper car 116d′ which is yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

0045 While viewing the screen of FIG. 2i, the player then selects the red (R) bumper car 116b′ and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 5, row 2. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 5, row 2 is shown as being red (R) in FIG. 2j.

0046 After the red (R) bumper car 116b′ is positioned within the grid 114, a set of five new bumper cars 116d′-e′ are presented to the player at the bottom of the grid 114 as shown by FIG. 2j. This signifies that the player has successfully completed two turns and the beginning of a new turn. Since the player has successfully completed two turns, the score table 110 in FIG. 2j indicates that the player has earned 2,000 points and that two turns have been played.

0047 While viewing the screen of FIG. 2j, the player then selects the first blue (B) bumper car 116a′ and moves it to position having the coordinates column 2, row 3. The oval having the coordinates column 2, row 3 includes ten sponsor coins hidden therein. Since a bumper car 116a′ has been positioned within this oval the player earns the 10 sponsor coins as indicated by the score table 110 in FIG. 2k. Further, the oval having the coordinates column 2, row 3 is shown as being blue (B) in FIG. 2l and a silhouette of the first blue (B) bumper car 116a′ is shown below the other bumper cars 116b′-e′ which are yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

0048 While viewing the screen of FIG. 2k, the player then selects the second blue (B) bumper car 116b′ and moves it to position having the coordinates column 4, row 3. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 4, row 3 is shown as being blue (B) in FIG. 2l and a silhouette of the second blue (B) bumper car 116b′ is shown below the other bumper cars 116c′-e′ which are yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

0049 While viewing the screen of FIG. 2l, the player then selects the third blue (B) bumper car 116c′ and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 5, row 3. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 5, row 3 is shown as being blue (B) in FIG. 2m and a silhouette of the third blue (B) bumper car 116c′ is shown below the other bumper cars 116d′-d′ which are yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

0050 While viewing the screen of FIG. 2m, the player then selects the first orange (O) bumper car 116c and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 4, row 4. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 4, row 4 is shown as being orange (O) in FIG. 2n and a silhouette of the first orange (O) bumper car 116c is shown below the second orange (O) bumper car 116d′ which is yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

0051 While viewing the screen of FIG. 2n, the player then selects the second orange (O) bumper car 116d′ and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 5, row 5. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 5, row 5 is shown as being orange (O) in FIG. 2o.

0052 After the second orange (O) bumper car 116d′ is positioned within the grid 114, a set of five new bumper cars 116d′-e′ are presented to the player at the bottom of the grid 114 as shown by FIG. 2o. This signifies that the player has successfully completed three turns and the beginning of a new turn. Since the player has successfully completed three turns, the score table 110 in FIG. 2o indicates that the player has earned 3,000 points and that three turns have been played.

0053 While viewing the screen of FIG. 2o, the player then selects the orange (O) bumper car 116c′ and moves it to position having the coordinates column 3, row 3 to form a upper left to lower right diagonal line having five orange colored bumper cars. Accordingly, the five ovals which form the upper left to lower right diagonal line are cleared as shown by FIG. 2p.

0054 In FIG. 2p, the score table 110 indicates the formation of one line and the player is awarded 100 points.
making the player’s total number of points earned 3,100. Also shown by FIG. 2p is a silhouette of the orange (O) bumper car 1166" which was used to form the diagonal line. The silhouette of the orange (O) bumper car 1166" is shown below the other bumper cars 1166"-d" which are yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114. The banner 112 in FIG. 2p displays the message “You must now remove one block. Click on the block you want gone.”

[0055] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2p, the player then selects the yellow-colored oval having the coordinates column 2, row 4 for being “bumped” off the grid 114. The yellow-colored oval is “bumped” off the grid 114 by a huge bumper car which enters the screen and bumps the selected yellow-colored oval. After the huge bumper car bumps the selected yellow-colored oval, the yellow-colored oval is made clear as shown by FIG. 2q.

[0056] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2p, the player then selects the second blue (B) bumper car 1166c" and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 3, row 3 to form a horizontal line (row three) having five blue colored bumper cars. Accordingly, the five ovals which form row three are cleared as shown by FIG. 2r.

[0057] In FIG. 2r, the score table 110 indicates the formation of two lines and the player is awarded 200 points making the player’s total number of points earned 3,300. Also shown by FIG. 2r is a silhouette of the second blue (B) bumper car 1166c" which used to form the horizontal line. The silhouette of the second blue (B) bumper car 1166c" is shown below the other bumper cars 1166a"-b" and 1166d" which are yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114. The banner 112 in FIG. 2r displays the message “You must now remove one block. Click on the block you want gone.”

[0058] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2r, the player then selects the yellow-colored oval having the coordinates column 1, row 4 for being “bumped” off the grid 114. The yellow-colored oval is “bumped” off the grid 114 by the huge bumper car which enters the screen and bumps the selected yellow-colored oval. After the huge bumper car bumps the selected yellow-colored oval, the yellow-colored oval is made clear as shown by FIG. 2s.

[0059] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2s, the player then selects the purple (P) bumper car 1166a" and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 4, row 5. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 4, row 5 is shown as being purple (P) in FIG. 2s and a silhouette of the purple (P) bumper car 1166a" is shown below the other bumper cars 1166b" and 1166d" which are yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

[0060] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2s, the player then selects the first blue (B) bumper car 1166b" and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 1, row 3. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 1, row 3 is shown as being blue (B) in FIG. 2t and a silhouette of the first blue (B) bumper car 1166b" is shown below the third blue (B) bumper car 1166d" which is yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

[0061] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2t, the player then selects the third blue (B) bumper car 1166d" and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 2, row 3. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 2, row 3 is shown as being blue (B) in FIG. 2u.

[0062] After the third blue (B) bumper car 1166d" is positioned within the grid 114, a set of five new bumper cars 1166a"-e" including one black (B) bumper car 1166c" are presented to the player at the bottom of the grid 114 as shown by FIG. 2v. This signifies that the player has successfully completed four turns and the beginning of a new turn. Since the player has successfully completed four turns, the score table 110 in FIG. 2v indicates that the player has earned 4,300 points and that four turns have been played.

[0063] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2v, the player then selects the second red (R) bumper car 1166a" and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 5, row 4. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 5, row 4 is shown as being red (R) in FIG. 2w and a silhouette of the second red (R) bumper car 1166a" is shown below the other bumper cars 1166a" and 1166d" which are yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

[0064] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2w, the player then selects the blue (B) bumper car 1166d" and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 3, row 3. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 3, row 3 is shown as being blue (B) in FIG. 2x and a silhouette of the blue (B) bumper car 1166d" is shown below the other bumper cars 1166a" and 1166c" which are yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

[0065] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2x, the player then selects the first red (R) bumper car 1166b" and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 5, row 3. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 5, row 3 is shown as being red (R) in FIG. 2y and a silhouette of the first red (R) bumper car 1166b" is shown below the other bumper cars 1166a" and 1166c" which are yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

[0066] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2y, the player then selects the orange (O) bumper car 1166a" and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 1, row 1. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 1, row 1 is shown as being orange (O) in FIG. 2z and a silhouette of the orange (O) bumper car 1166a" is shown below the black bumper car 1166c" which is yet to be selected and placed in the grid 114.

[0067] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2z, the player then selects the black (B) bumper car 1166c" and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 2, row 1. Accordingly, the oval having the coordinates column 2, row 1 is shown as being black (B) in FIG. 2aa. Since a black-colored bumper car is positioned in the oval having the coordinates column 2, row 1, a line cannot be formed using this oval.

[0068] After the black (B) bumper car 1166c" is positioned within the grid 114, a set of five new bumper cars 1166a"-d" are presented to the player at the bottom of the grid 114 as shown by FIG. 2ab. This signifies that the player has successfully completed five turns and the beginning of a new turn. Since the player has successfully completed five turns, the score table 110 in FIG. 2aa indicates that the player has earned 5,300 points and that five turns have been played.

[0069] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2aa, the player then selects the purple (P) bumper car 1166b" and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 5, row 5 to
form a horizontal line (row five) having five purple colored bumper cars. Accordingly, the five ovals which form row five are cleared as shown by FIG. 2ab.

[0070] In FIG. 2ab, the score table 110 indicates the formation of three lines and the player is awarded 300 points making the player’s total number of points earned 5,600. Also shown by FIG. 2ab is a silhouette of the purple (P) bumper car 116a”” ” having five red colored bumper cars in the horizontal line and the five ovals which form row five are cleared as shown by FIG. 2ab. The silhouette of the purple (P) bumper car 116a”” ” is shown below the other bumper cars 116a”” ” and 116a”” ” which are to be selected and placed in the grid 114. The banner 112 in FIG. 2ab displays the message “You must now remove one block.” Click on the block you want gone.”

[0071] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2ab, the player then selects the black-colored oval having the coordinates column 2, row 1 for being “bumped” off the grid 114. The black-colored oval is “bumped” off the grid 114 by the huge bumper car which enters the screen and bumps the selected black-colored oval. After the huge bumper car bumps the selected black-colored oval, the black-colored oval is made clear as shown by FIG. 2ac. It is recommended to first bump off black bumper car(s) before bumping off other colored bumper cars, since black bumper cars prevent the formation of lines as indicated above.

[0072] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2ac, the player then selects the first red (R) bumper car 116c”” ” and moves it to the position having the coordinates column 5, row 5 to form a vertical line (column five) having five red colored bumper cars. Accordingly, the five ovals which form column five are cleared as shown by FIG. 2ad.

[0073] In FIG. 2ad, the score table 110 indicates the formation of four lines and the player is awarded 400 points making the player’s total number of points earned 6,000. Also shown by FIG. 2ad is a silhouette of the red (R) bumper car 116c”” ” which was used to form the vertical line. The silhouette of the red (R) bumper car 116c”” ” is shown below the other bumper cars 116c”” ” and 116c”” ” which are to be selected and placed in the grid 114. The banner 112 in FIG. 2ad displays the message “You must now remove one block.” Click on the block you want gone.”

[0074] While viewing the screen of FIG. 2ad, the player then selects the orange-colored oval having the coordinates column 1, row 1 for being “bumped” off the grid 114. The orange-colored oval is “bumped” off the grid 114 by the huge bumper car which enters the screen and bumps the selected orange-colored oval. After the huge bumper car bumps the selected orange-colored oval, the orange-colored oval is made clear as shown by FIG. 2ae.

[0075] It is apparent that the video bingo-type game continues until all the ovals of the grid 114 are full and the player cannot position any bumper cars in the grid 114, or it is determined that it is impossible to place five bumper cars for completing a line. The final score for the player and other information, such as the player’s identification information, is preferably saved in a scoring database located remotely from the player, such as at a remote server accessible via the Internet. The operator of the remote server can then determine if the player’s score passed a predetermined threshold for awarding the player money and or prizes.

[0076] During play, different sounds are played to indicate various occurrences, such as the formation of a line, the selection of an already occupied oval, the completion of a turn and the start of a new turn, the uncovering of sponsor coins, the bumping off of a bumper car off the grid 114, the selection of a bumper car for positioning in the grid 114, the placement of a bumper car in the grid 114, and the end of the game.

[0077] After each game the banner 112 displays an interstitial, e.g., a dynamic flash move advertising a product or service. The interstitial could be the same or be randomly selected from a series of interstitials. When the interstitial has been played or the player initiates a game, the huge bumper car preferably comes into the screen and bumps away the interstitial.

[0078] With reference to FIG. 3, there is shown the video card game of the present invention implemented as a stand-alone computer system, i.e., a casino-type video bingo-type game system, designated generally by reference numeral 300. The video bingo-type game system 300 includes a graphical user interface 302 displaying the various screen shots, such as the exemplary screen shots illustrated by FIGS. 1-2ac, a player console 304 for interacting with the graphical user interface 302, and a light/sound alarm 303 for sounding sounds and providing flashes of light during play. The player can also interact with the graphical user interface 302 via a touch screen display 306 as known in the art. The player console 304 includes a plurality of buttons 308, including buttons for selecting and placing the bumper cars in the grid, for selecting which bumper car to “bump” from the grid, a “CASHOUT” button, etc.

[0079] The system 300 also includes a coin slot 310 for accepting coins and a payout bin 312 for awarding coins to the player. The amount of coins awarded is determined according to the number of points earned by the player either during a single play of the video bingo-type game or multiple plays of the video bingo-type game (i.e., progressive jackpot).

[0080] What has been described herein is merely illustrative of the principles of the present invention. For example, the video bingo-type game described above and implemented as the best mode for operating the present invention are for illustration purposes only. Other arrangements and methods may be implemented by those skilled in the art without departing from the scope and spirit of this invention.

In the claims:
1. A method for playing a game, the method comprising the steps of:
a. providing a game board including a matrix having a plurality of elements;
b. providing a plurality of markers;
c. marking at least one element of the plurality of elements using at least one marker of the plurality of markers upon receiving at least one input;
d. unmarking a set of elements of the plurality of elements upon meeting a first predetermined condition;
e. terminating the game upon meeting a second predetermined condition; and
f. repeating steps b-d if the second predetermined condition is not met.
2. The method according to claim 1, wherein each of the markers has an associated type selected from a predetermined set of types.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the first predetermined condition is met when the set of elements of the plurality of elements is marked with markers of the same type, wherein the set of elements is selected from the group consisting of elements of a row, column, or diagonal of the matrix.

4. The method according to claim 1, wherein the steps are executed by a computing device within a network.

5. The method according to claim 2, wherein one of the types of the predetermined set of types of markers is a spoiler type, and an element marked using a marker of the spoiler type does not contribute to meeting the first predetermined condition.

6. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of selectively unmarking at least one element of the plurality of elements upon meeting the first predetermined condition, wherein the at least one element does not belong to the set of elements.

7. The method according to claim 5, wherein the step of providing a plurality of markers comprises the step of controlling the percentage of markers provided having the spoiler type.

8. The method according to claim 2, wherein the step of providing a plurality of markers comprises the step of one of randomly and non-randomly selecting the type of marker for each of the plurality of markers.

9. The method according to claim 2, wherein the step of providing a plurality of markers comprises the step of selecting the type of marker for each marker according to the types of markers currently marking elements of the plurality of elements.

10. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of awarding points for at least one of meeting the first predetermined condition and marking elements of the plurality of elements using the at least one marker.

11. The method according to claim 10, further comprising the step of exchanging awarded points for prizes.

12. The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of providing a plurality of markers comprises the step of providing the plurality of markers in groups, wherein the markers of a first group are all used for marking elements before the next group is provided.

13. The method according to claim 12, further comprising the step of awarding points for marking elements of the plurality of elements with all of the markers belonging to a group.

14. The method according to claim 1, wherein the second predetermined condition is marking all of the elements of the plurality of elements.

15. A gaming device for playing an interactive computerized game, the gaming device comprising a processor configured to enable game play, the gaming device comprising:

   means for receiving at least one user input;

   means for displaying a game board including a matrix having a plurality of elements;

   means for displaying a plurality of markers;

   means for marking at least one element of the plurality of elements in accordance with the received at least one user input using at least one marker of the plurality of markers;

   means for unmarking a set of elements of the plurality of elements upon meeting a first predetermined condition; and

   means for terminating the game upon meeting a second predetermined condition.

16. The gaming device of claim 15, further comprising means for assigning each marker of the plurality of markers an associated type selected from a predetermined set of types.

17. The gaming device of claim 16, wherein the first predetermined condition is met when the set of elements of the plurality of elements is marked with markers of the same type, wherein the set of elements is selected from the group consisting of elements of a row, column, or diagonal of the matrix.

18. The gaming device of claim 16, wherein one of the types of the predetermined set of types of markers is a spoiler type, and an element marked using a marker of the spoiler type does not contribute to meeting the first predetermined condition.

19. The gaming device of claim 15, wherein the processor further comprises means for selectively unmarking at least one element of the plurality of elements upon meeting the first predetermined condition, wherein the at least one element does not belong to the set of elements.

20. The gaming device of claim 18, wherein the processor further comprises means for controlling the percentage of markers provided having the spoiler type.

21. The gaming device of claim 16, wherein the processor further comprises means for randomly and non-randomly selecting the type of marker for each of the plurality of markers.

22. The gaming device of claim 16, wherein the processor further comprises means for selecting the type of marker for each marker according to the types of markers currently marking elements of the plurality of elements.

23. The gaming device of claim 15, wherein the processor further comprises means for awarding points for at least one of meeting the first predetermined condition and for marking elements of the plurality of elements.

24. The gaming device of claim 16, wherein the processor further comprises means for providing the plurality of markers in groups, wherein the markers of a first group are all used for marking elements before the next group is provided.

25. The gaming device of claim 24, wherein the processor further comprises means for awarding points for marking elements of the plurality of elements with all of the markers belonging to a group.

26. The gaming device of claim 15, wherein the second predetermined condition is marking all of the elements of the plurality of elements.

27. A computer readable medium storing a set of programmable instructions configured for execution by at least one processor for providing a player an opportunity to play a plurality of sequential interactive computerized game rounds, the programmable instructions comprising:
means for displaying a game board including a matrix
having a plurality of elements;
means for displaying a plurality of markers;
means for marking at least one element of the plurality of
elements using at least one marker of the plurality of
markers upon receiving at least one input;
means for unmarking a set of elements of the plurality of
elements upon meeting a first predetermined condition;
and
means for terminating the game upon meeting a second
predetermined condition.

28. A casino video gaming device for playing an interactive computerized game comprising:
means for displaying a game board including a matrix
having a plurality of elements;
means for displaying a plurality of markers;
means for marking at least one element of the plurality of
elements using at least one marker of the plurality of
markers upon receiving at least one input;
means for unmarking a set of elements of the plurality of
elements upon meeting a first predetermined condition;
means for terminating the game upon meeting a second
predetermined condition; and
means for awarding a player for at least one of meeting the
first predetermined condition and for marking elements of the plurality of elements.

29. A game comprising:
a game board including a matrix having a plurality of
elements;
a plurality of markers;
means for enabling a player to selectively mark elements
of the plurality of elements using the markers;
means for unmarking a set of elements of the plurality of
elements upon meeting a predetermined condition; and
means for awarding the player for at least one of meeting the
first predetermined condition and for marking elements of the plurality of elements;
wherein the game is terminated upon meeting a second
predetermined condition.

30. A method for playing a game, the method comprising the steps of:
providing a set of markers;
moving each marker of the set of markers to a respective
position of a game board;
removing at least three markers from the game board
upon meeting a predetermined condition; and
terminating the game when the predetermined condition
can no longer be met.

31. The method according to claim 30, wherein two of the
at least three icons are positioned along the same line of the
game board.