A game and method for playing a game is provided. The game includes a field of play depicting a race track or course divided into spaces for the movement of tokens from start to finish. The game involves dice or another random data generator that produces data corresponding to the tokens, with each token advancing one space forward with each production of the item of data to which it corresponds. The possible outcomes of the game have varying probabilities of occurring. These probabilities depend on the different preferences and handicaps that are placed on the occurrence of the possible outcomes relative to each other. Players can select possible outcomes and can make a wager on the occurrence of their selected outcomes. Payouts are made on selections that actually occur based on their probabilities and any probability modifications made by the Sponsor.
DICE HORSE RACING GAME

BACKGROUND

[0001] 1. Technical Field

[0002] This invention relates generally to games and contests based on varying probabilities (and odds) of possible outcomes and, more particularly, to a game or contest where such variations in probability (and in odds) depend on relative preferences and handicaps given to the possible outcomes, and can be customized to the needs or objectives of participants.

[0003] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0004] As is known, many games of chance involve different probabilities and odds for the possible outcomes. Those differing probabilities and odds generally depend on the likelihood of a particular number or other item of data being generated. For example, various games of dice are based on the chance a given number will occur. The probability that any given number will be generated by a roll of the dice depends on the number of ways in which the dice can produce that number relative to the total number of possible combinations. Similarly, various card games rely on the relative likelihood of drawing or receiving particular cards or combinations of cards.

[0005] Some horse-racing and similar games have been developed that use dice, cards, or a combination of dice and cards. Some of these games involve possible outcomes that are equally likely to occur and that do not vary in probability. These games are deficient in that they do not offer participants the opportunity to accept greater risk in order to have a chance at higher returns. Other games have outcomes that vary in probability, but such variations depend on chance events that cannot readily be ascertained or quantified. The resulting deficiency is a game lacking in certainty and predictability. Still other games may involve outcomes of differing probabilities that can be ascertained. The deficiencies in such games, however, lie in their undue complexity, their lack of flexibility, their inability to be readily customized to the specific wants or needs of a sponsor or participant, and the absence of active participation by participants. Finally, all of these games share a failure to simulate in a realistic manner the true pace, action, and excitement of horse racing.

[0006] Therefore, it would be desirable to develop a game that (i) is relatively simple to play and understand, (ii) offers a range of possible outcomes (and combinations thereof) having readily determinable probabilities of occurring, (iii) has flexibility enabling participants to readily make any desired modifications to the field of play or structure of any race (or every race), (iv) has flexibility allowing participants to readily make any desired modifications to the probabilities and odds of any one or more possible outcomes (or combinations thereof) in any race (or every race), (v) can be customized for a participant, by a participant, or by a sponsor in order to provide the desired field of play, structure of race, probabilities, and odds, (vi) allows the sponsor to set the applicable odds in each race by factoring in both the relative probabilities and the desired margin, (vii) realistically simulates the look, feel, eb and flow, pace, excitement, and action of actual horse racing, and (viii) allows for active participation by any number of players during the course of a race.

SUMMARY

[0007] Accordingly, provided is a game and method for playing a game that modify the relative probabilities and odds of various possible outcomes by advantaging certain outcomes with relative preferences and by burdening other outcomes with relative handicaps. Each such possible outcome of a contest can have its own unique preference or handicap. Alternatively, any two or more possible outcomes in a given contest could share a common preference or handicap for that contest. The preferences and handicaps given to the different possible outcomes can vary from contest to contest. Each potential outcome advances one step closer to occurring each time it is specifically identified by a roll of a die (or by some other random data generator). The game and method overcome the disadvantages and drawbacks of the prior art.

[0008] Desirably, the game and method have the flexibility to enable adjustments to be made to the structure and field of play each time a race is run. This flexibility allows the probabilities of possible outcomes to be modified and readily determined from race to race. The flexibility further permits a race to be run for any number of participants, whether it be a single race run for one person or for many people. Moreover, when a race is run for multiple participants, certain parameters of that race can be modified and customized specifically to fit the needs and objectives of any one or more individual participants. The flexibility of the game and method provides the opportunity to change the number of possible outcomes from race to race. This flexibility provides greater variety and interest, and offers the participants the opportunity to have greater control over different scenarios.

[0009] Moreover, allowing race-to-race modifications to the structure of a race (e.g., distance), the number of entrants in a race, and the applicable odds, cause the game and method to more closely resemble and simulate an actual card or day of racing. In addition, the game and method give participants the opportunity to customize any particular race or series of races in order to produce a field, structure, number of entrants, and relative probabilities and odds that meet certain objectives.

[0010] Finally, by advancing each horse only one space at a time for each identifier rolled or drawn, the game and method realistically simulate the gradual movement of horses in a race, and the excitement, pace, action, look, and feel of real racing. Finally, by permitting the throw of multiple dice (or the generation of multiple items of data at a time), multiple players can actively participate in the conduct of a race. Each of several players can simultaneously throw the different dice used in a race, or different players can take turns. This active participation further adds to the enjoyment and excitement of a race. The game and method provide the excitement and realistic feel of a race without requiring participants to have any specialized knowledge or experience about racing.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0011] The objects and features of the present disclosure, which are believed to be novel, are set forth with particularity in the appended claims. The present disclosure, both as to its organization and manner of operation, together with further objectives and advantages, may be best understood
by reference to the following description, taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, as set forth below.

[0012] FIG. 1 is a top view of the field of play of the game and method in accordance with the principles of the present disclosure;

[0013] FIG. 2 is a top view of a field of play for an alternative embodiment of the game and method in accordance with the principles of the present disclosure;

[0014] FIG. 3 is a top view of a field of play for an alternative embodiment of the game and method in accordance with the principles of the present disclosure; and

[0015] FIG. 4 is a top view of a field of play for an alternative embodiment of the game and method in accordance with the principles of the present disclosure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE EXEMPLARY EMBODIMENTS

[0016] The exemplary embodiments of the Game and methods of use disclosed are discussed in terms of horse racing (or a race among other things) and, more particularly, in terms of varying the probabilities and odds of potential outcomes by varying the relative preferences and handicaps of such outcomes. The Game may be employed in a number of different settings, including without limitation a board game, an electronic game, an online game, a video game, a casino game, and a lottery game. It is contemplated that any particular running of the Game can be customized to any Participant's specifications. Accordingly, the Sponsor or any Player can specify, for example, the number of Tokens in a race or the number of Spaces between each Token's Starting Point and Finish Line. It is further contemplated that the Game can be played either physically or electronically. It is further envisioned that the Game may be passively or actively operated.

[0017] The Game benefits from several advantages, including enabling adjustments to be made to the structure and Field of play each time a Race is run. The ability to make these adjustments allows the probabilities of possible Outcomes to be modified and readily determined from Race to Race, permits a Race to be run for any number of Players, and allows certain parameters of a Race to be customized specifically to fit the needs and objectives of any one or more individual Participants. This flexibility provides greater variety and interest, and affords Participants the opportunity to have greater control over different scenarios. Moreover, Race-to-Race modifications resemble an actual card or day of racing, and the Space-by-Space advancement of Tokens simulates the gradual movement of horses in a race. This provides the Game with the excitement, pace, action, look, and feel of real racing. Finally, the Game allows active participation by multiple Players, which further adds to their enjoyment and excitement.

[0018] As used herein:

[0019] the term “Game” refers to the game that is the subject of the present disclosure; the term “Sponsor” refers to the person or entity that organizes, supervises, runs, or oversees play of the Game; the term “Players” refers to the players other than the Sponsor who participate in any Race; the term “Participants” refers to the Players and the Sponsor, collectively;

[0020] the term “Data” refers to the numerals, colors, names, images, symbols, objects, or other items that are identified by a Participant; the term “Token” refers to a physical or electronic token or label that separately identifies each horse (or other object), with each such token or label corresponding to one or more items of Data; the term “Random Data Generator” refers to a mechanical or electronic means for generating random numbers or Data, including without limitation a single die or multiple dice;

[0021] the term “Field” refers to the game board comprising a field of play resembling, depicting, or representing a track or other course, which can be in the shape of an oval or ellipse (or any other shape) and may be physical or electronic in form, and which may keep track of any or all of the position, movement, progress, status, and results of the various Tokens; the term “Space” refers to the multiple spaces into which a Field is divided, where each such space represents a possible position for the placement of one or more Tokens; the term “Starting Point” refers to the Space on the Field that is the starting position of a Token (regardless of whether all Tokens share a common starting position or two or more Tokens have different starting positions); the term “Finish Line” refers to the Space on the Field that is the ending point for a Token (regardless of whether all Tokens share a common ending point or two or more Tokens have different ending points); the term “Lane” refers to a separate lane or track within the Field applicable to a particular Token or Tokens, and containing a certain number of Spaces applicable to such Token or Tokens between the Starting Point and the Finish Line;

[0022] the term “Race” refers to a running of the Game wherein the Tokens begin at their respective Starting Points and traverse a given Field by advancing Spaces in a manner described herein until they Finish; the term “Finish” refers to a Token's reaching or crossing the Finish Line;

[0023] the term “Contest” refers to a series of Races, including without limitation a certain number of successive Races each of which has independently generated Data, or multiple Races that are, in part, simultaneously run using commonly generated Data applicable to all part of each such Race (but where such Races differ in their Field or configuration, including without limitation variation in their respective Starting Points, Finish Lines, or numbers of Spaces;

[0024] the term “Outcome” means any result (or combination of results) of a Race or Contest, including without limitation the following: the first Token to Finish is the winner, the second Token to Finish takes second place, the third Token to Finish comes in third place, the first two or the first three Tokens to Finish and their order of Finish; and the winners of two or more Races in a Contest;

[0025] the term “Selection” refers to a Player's selection of any of the possible Outcomes that are made available to him or her; the term “units” refers to the amount of points, money, chips, benefits, or other units that a Player stakes on the occurrence of his or her Selections; the term “Results” refers to the actual occurrence of the possible Outcomes; the term “Completed” refers to the Finish by a sufficient number of Tokens in order for the Results to be determined;

[0026] the term “Chance” refers to the chance or likelihood that any of the possible Outcomes will occur relative to the chances or likelihoods that another possible Outcome
will occur; the term “Base Odds”, with respect to any possible Outcome, means the inverse of the Chance of such possible Outcome occurring; the term “Odds Mods”, with respect to any possible Outcome, refers to any modifications to the Base Odds of such possible Outcome; the term “Final Odds”, with respect to any potential Outcome, refers to the product of the Base Odds of such possible Outcome and the Odds Mods of such possible Outcome, and the term “Probabilities”, with respect to any possible Outcome in any Race or Contest, refers to any or all of the Chances, the Base Odds, the Odds Mod, and the Final Odds applicable to such possible Outcome in such Race or Contest;

[0027] the term “Payout Amount” refers to the amount of Units that a Selection of an Outcome would win for a given stake of Units if the Outcome were to actually occur; the term “Race Parameters” refers to the number of Tokens in the Field for any particular Race, the number of Spaces any or all of the Tokens must advance in order to Finish a Race, the possible Outcomes IQ made available as potential Selections by Players, the Odds Mods, and the amount of Units that can be staked by Players, any or all of which can vary from Race to Race; the term “Display” refers to one or more mechanical and/or electronic displays that show the status of the Race, which may include, without limitation, any or all of the position of the Tokens, the progress of the Tokens, the numbers/colors/names or other Data represented by the Tokens, the Odds for any one or more possible winning Selections, and the Results and Payout Amounts for any Completed Race or Contest.

[0028] The following discussion includes a description of the Game and method for playing a game, in accordance with the principles of the present disclosure. Reference will now be made in detail to the exemplary embodiments of the disclosure, which are illustrated in the accompanying figures.

[0029] The Game, and the method for playing a game, each simulates horse racing (or any other desired type of racing, for example, dog racing and the like). The Game can have any number of Players. A Player’s success depends on chance, but the possible Outcomes do not all share the same probability. Some potential Outcomes have a greater probability of occurring, while others are less likely to occur. This variation in probabilities is based on the preferences that advantage, and the handicaps that disadvantage, the potential Outcomes relative to each other.

[0030] The game board comprises a field of play resembling, depicting, or representing a track or other race course. This can be in the shape of an oval or ellipse (or any other shape), and may be physical or electronic in form. The game board may keep track of any or all of the position, movement, progress, status, and results of the various horses (or other objects) in the race.

[0031] The Field of play can exist as a board or other physical platform that provides the demarcations necessary or helpful to playing the Game and running a Race. The Field of play enables each Token to be placed on its Starting Point, and for each Token to advance to other Spaces as the Data associated with such Token are rolled or drawn. The Field of play, therefore, indicates the status of the Race and the progress of the Tokens in the Race. In addition to or in place of a physical board or platform, the Field of play may exist in electronic form. An electronic Field of play depicts the course for the Race, as well as the Race’s status and the Tokens positions and progress. Electronic images of the Tokens appear in their respective Starting Points, and advance toward the Finish Line as the Data corresponding to such Tokens are rolled or drawn. In a preferred embodiment, the Game includes one or more mechanical and/or electronic Displays.

[0032] Referring to FIG. 1, in a preferred embodiment, the Field has a fixed Finish Line 100. The fixed Finish Line 100 marks the Race’s end point, to which a Token 40-50 must advance in order to Finish. The first Token 40-50 to Finish by crossing or reaching the Finish Line 100 is the winner, the second to do so takes second place, the third to do so comes in third place, etc.

[0033] The Field is divided into multiple Spaces 4-34. Each Space represents a possible position for the placement of one or more Tokens 40-50 at the start of and throughout a Race. The number of Spaces 4-34 may vary from race to race. The Field may be divided into any number of Spaces 4-34.

[0034] Still referring to FIG. 1, each horse (or other object) in the Race is separately identified by a physical or electronic Token 40-50. Each such Token represents one or more items of Data 60-70. Such Data 60-70 may consist of a numeral, color, name, image, symbol, object, or other item. Any number of two or more Tokens 40-50 may comprise the Field for any particular Race. In a preferred embodiment, each Token 40-50 is represented by a physical or electronic image of a horse that advances from Space to Space 4-34 along a race track, with such image bearing the particular color and/or number (or other Data) corresponding to such Token 40-50. Each Token 40-50 starts a Race in a specifically designated Space 18-28.

[0035] Still referring to FIG. 1, each Token 40-50 in a Race has its own unique starting point 18-28. The Tokens’ varying Starting Points 18-28 cause some Tokens 40-50 to start a Race closer to the Finish Line 100 than other Tokens 40-50. For example, in FIG. 1, Token #242 starts a Race closer to the Finish Line 100 than Token #446. Similarly, the Tokens staggered Starting Points 18-28 cause some Tokens 40-50 to start a Race further from the Finish Line 100 relative to other Tokens 40-50. For example, in FIG. 1, Token #650 has a starting point that is further from the Finish Line 100 than Token #548. Some Tokens 40-50 may have a starting point that is closer to the Finish Line 100 than certain Tokens 40-50 and further from the Finish Line 100 than certain other Tokens 40-50. For example, in FIG. 1, Token #344 starts a Race further from the Finish Line than Token #140, but closer than Token #548. The Tokens differing Starting Positions 18-28 cause the Tokens 40-50 to have preferences and/or handicaps relative to each other.

[0036] A Token 44, for example, has preferences over other Tokens 46-50 that have Starting Positions 26-30 behind it, and has handicaps relative to other Tokens 40-42 that have Starting Positions 20, 22 ahead of it. The magnitude of a Token’s 40-50 preference or handicap relative to another Token 40-50 is in direct proportion to the number of Spaces 4-34 between their respective Starting Positions.

[0037] In a preferred embodiment, a Race is run by rolling a single six-sided die or multiple six-sided dice containing Data corresponding to the Tokens 40-50 in the Race. Alter-
natively, a die or dice having fewer or more than six sides can be used. In another alternative, the Data are generated by another Random Data Generator that produces one or more items of Data at a time. In a preferred embodiment, the number of different Data that are generated and used in any particular Race is the same as the number of Tokens 40-50 in such Race.

[0038] Still referring to FIG. 1, each time a die or other Random Data Generator produces an item of Data, the Token 40-50 corresponding to such item of Data advances one Space 4-34 in the direction 80 of the Finish Line 100. In the event multiple dice simultaneously are thrown, or if another Random Data Generator produces more than one item of Data at a time, each Token 40-50 corresponding to the item of Data so thrown or drawn advances one Space 4-34 in the direction 80 of the Finish Line 100 for each such item of Data thrown or drawn. The Race is won by the first Token 40-50 that advances a sufficient number of Spaces 4-34 necessary for it to Finish, with the results for the other Tokens 40-50 likewise being determined by the order in which they Finish the Race.

[0039] Before any particular Race begins (i.e., before the initial roll of the die or dice, or before the initial production of Data by the Random Data Generator), Players can make a Selection from the possible Outcomes made available to them. A Player can stake a certain amount of Units on the occurrence of his or her Selections.

[0040] If multiple dice are used (or if another Random Data Generator produces more than one item of Data at a time) one die (or one of the items of generated Data) will be distinguishable from the others. This allows the Participants to identify the order of priority in which each die (or each item of generated Data) will be read in the event it is necessary to determine the order of finish of any two or more Tokens that otherwise would finish in a tie for any position in a Race and whose order of finish would affect the Results of such Race.

[0041] In a preferred embodiment, each number, color, name, or other item of Data has an equal probability of being produced by the Generator. The relative probabilities of the various possible Outcomes depend upon the Starting Points 18-28 of the Tokens 40-50 relative to each other. Thus, the number of Spaces 4-34 between the Tokens’ 40-50 respective Starting Points 18-28 and the Finish Line 100, and the number of Tokens 40-50 in the Race.

[0042] Now referring to FIG. 2, as an alternative to a fixed Finish Line (applicable to all Tokens) and Starting Points that vary among the Tokens, all Tokens 110-120 can share a fixed Starting Point 70 but have varying Finish Lines 74-79. Alternatively, referring now to FIG. 3, the Tokens 211-216 can vary both in their Starting Positions 231-236 and in their Finish Lines 251-256.

[0043] Alternatively, referring now to FIG. 4, each Token 411-416 can advance along its own Lane 421-426, with each Lane 421-426 containing a certain number of Spaces 511-515 applicable to that Token between the Starting Point 480 and the Finish Line 490. In this embodiment, each Token 411-416 shares a common Starting Point 480 and Finish Line 490, but the Tokens 411-416 vary in the number of Spaces 511-515 they must advance in order to cross the Finish Line 490. A Token 411-416 advances one Space 511-515 in the direction 470 of the Finish Line 490 each time its corresponding item of Data is rolled or drawn. Each Token 411-416 moves forward within its own dedicated Lane 421-426 from Starting Point 480 around the course to the Finish Line 490.

[0044] In each of these preferred embodiments, the Results are determined by the order in which the Tokens Finish the Race, with the Probabilities of the various possible Outcomes being a function of the relative number of Spaces that each of the Tokens must advance to Finish and the number of Tokens in the Race.

[0045] Each Player is awarded Units depending on several factors: (i) the occurrence of the Player’s Selection; (ii) the amount of Units that the Player had staked on the Selection; (iii) the Chance of (and the Base Odds against) such Selection occurring relative to the other possible Outcomes; and (iv) any Odds Mods applied to such Selection’s Base Odds. The Sponsor may determine and make these probability modifications, which may vary from race to race.

[0046] Each possible Outcome will have associated with it a Payout Amount. The amount of Units a Player would win for making a Selection that actually occurs would be a function of the Payout Amount and the amount of Units staked by such Player.

[0047] The Sponsor can permit any Player to customize any or all of the Race Parameters for any Race or Contest. Likewise, the Sponsor itself can customize any or all of the Race Parameters for any Race or Contest. Moreover, because the Game involves Probabilities that are independent of other Players participation, the Game enables the Sponsor to run multiple Races that, in whole or in part, share commonly generated Data. The Sponsor, therefore, can customize for different Players (or allow different Players themselves to customize) within a single Contest any or all of the Race Parameters that are applicable to such Players respective Races or Contests. Likewise, different Race Parameters can be applied for or by a single Player within a single Contest to allow such Player to make Selections in different Races. There is no minimum or maximum number of Players who may participate in any Race or Contest.

[0048] It will be understood that various modifications may be made to the embodiments disclosed herein. Therefore, the above description should not be construed as limiting, but merely as exemplification of the various embodiments. Those skilled in the art will envision other modifications within the scope and spirit of the claims appended hereto.

What is claimed is:
1. A game comprising:
   (a) a field having a plurality of spaces and a finish line;
   (b) a plurality of tokens representing data, whereby each of said plurality of tokens corresponds to certain specified data;
   (c) a starting point for each of said plurality of tokens;
   (d) a means for generating said data;
   (e) wherein each of said plurality of tokens advances each time said data is produced corresponding to each of said plurality of tokens until a game is completed, with the order of finish of each of said plurality of tokens
being determined by the order in which each of said plurality of tokens finishes the game;

(f) wherein players select any of the plurality of possible outcomes of a race that are made available for their selection;

(g) wherein the players stake a certain amount of units on each of said selections that they make for a race;

(h) a means for determining the probabilities of possible outcomes;

(i) a means for computing payout amounts for each said selection of said outcomes; and

(j) wherein, the players are credited a certain amount of said units based on their selections and said payout amounts.

2. A game according to claim 1, wherein said field contains said plurality of spaces determined by any participant.

3. A game according to claim 1, wherein each said starting point of each of said plurality of tokens is determined by any of the participants.

4. A game according to claim 1, wherein at least two of said plurality of tokens in a race share said starting point for said race.

5. A game according to claim 1, further comprising:

(a) all of said plurality of tokens share said starting point; and

(b) each of said plurality of tokens has its own unique finish line.

6. A game according to claim 5, wherein at least two of said plurality of tokens share said finish line.

7. A game according to claim 5, wherein the finish line of each of said plurality of tokens is determined by any of the participants.

8. A game according to claim 1, wherein any of the participants determines the number of said plurality of tokens.

9. A game according to claim 1, further comprising a display.

10. A game according to claim 1, wherein a single starting point and a single finish line apply to each of said plurality of tokens, but wherein each of said plurality of tokens vary in the number of spaces applicable to them between said starting point and said finish line.

11. A game according to claim 10, further comprising separate lanes applicable to each of said plurality of tokens.

12. A game according to claim 11, wherein any of said participants may determine said number of spaces applicable to any of said plurality of tokens.

13. A game according to claim 1, wherein said game is operated as a casino game.

14. A game according to claim 1, wherein said game is operated as a lottery game.

15. A game according to claim 1, further comprising customization of said race parameters by any of the participants.

16. A method for playing a game, comprising the steps of:

(a) determining a number of spaces, a finish line and starting point;

(b) determining a number of tokens;

(c) determining said number of spaces between said starting point and said finish line applicable to said tokens;

(e) determining the possible outcomes available to players for their selection;

(f) giving preferences to certain of said tokens and said possible outcomes relative to certain other of said tokens and said possible outcomes;

(g) giving handicaps to said certain tokens and said possible outcomes relative to certain other of said tokens and said possible outcomes;

(h) determining data by means of a random data generator;

(i) determining said data that corresponds to each of said tokens in a particular race; and

(j) determining probabilities of said possible outcomes.

17. A method for playing a game according to claim 16, wherein any of the participants vary said number of spaces between said starting point and said finish line applicable to any of said tokens.

18. A method for playing a game according to claim 16, wherein any of the participants vary said probabilities of said possible outcomes.

19. A method for playing a game according to claim 16, wherein any of the participants vary said number of said tokens.

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