



US 20100019454A1

(19) **United States**

(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Saleh

(10) **Pub. No.: US 2010/0019454 A1**

(43) **Pub. Date: Jan. 28, 2010**

(54) **DEVICE AND METHOD FOR PLAYING A
CARD GAME**

Publication Classification

(51) **Int. Cl.**
A63F 1/06

(2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **273/292**

(57) **ABSTRACT**

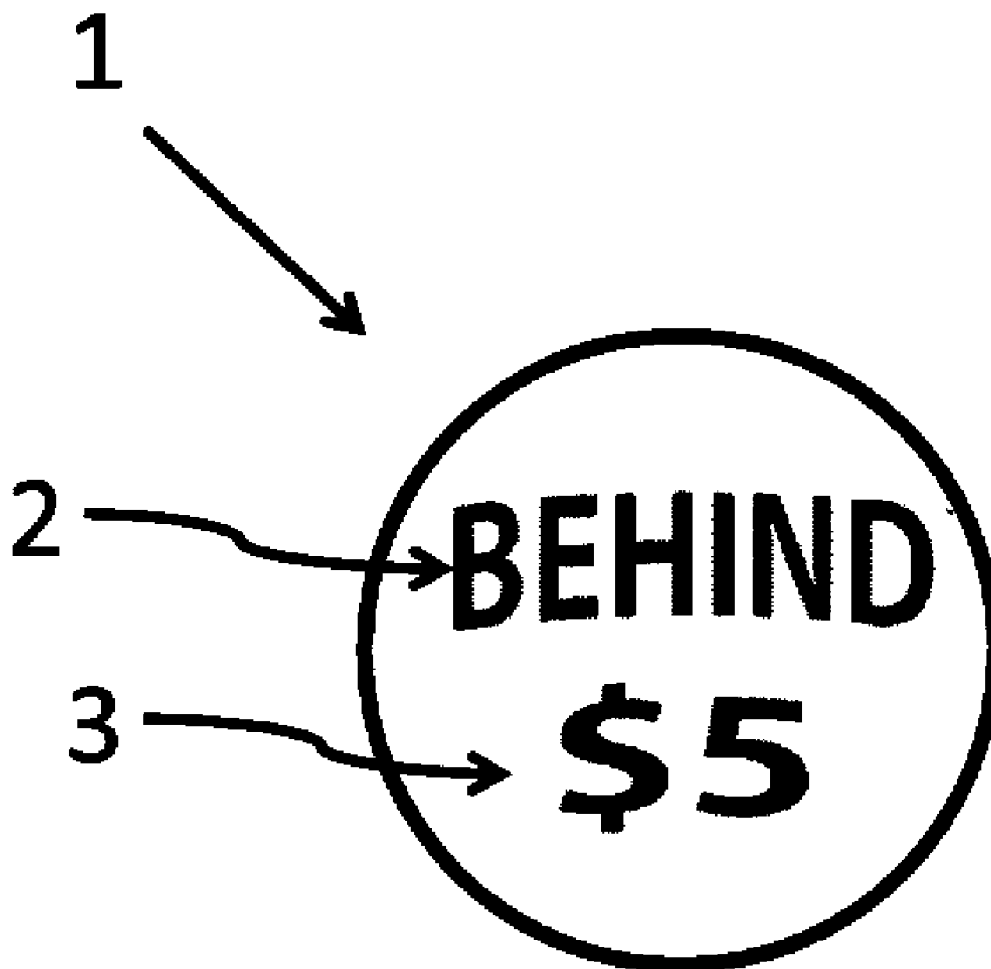
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A device and method for playing a card game is described. The device displays a phrase to indicate that there is money behind a player besides the money on the table and a dollar amount to indicate how much is behind the player. The device itself does not have any monetary value but indicates to the cameras, players, floor man, dealer and the rest of the spectators that a particular player or players has money behind or is waiting on chips. A method of using the device is also disclosed. The device can be displayed at the start of a card game, before a hand is dealt, to indicate when a player has more money behind than the money he or she has on the table.

(21) **Appl. No.: 12/177,811**

(22) **Filed: Jul. 22, 2008**



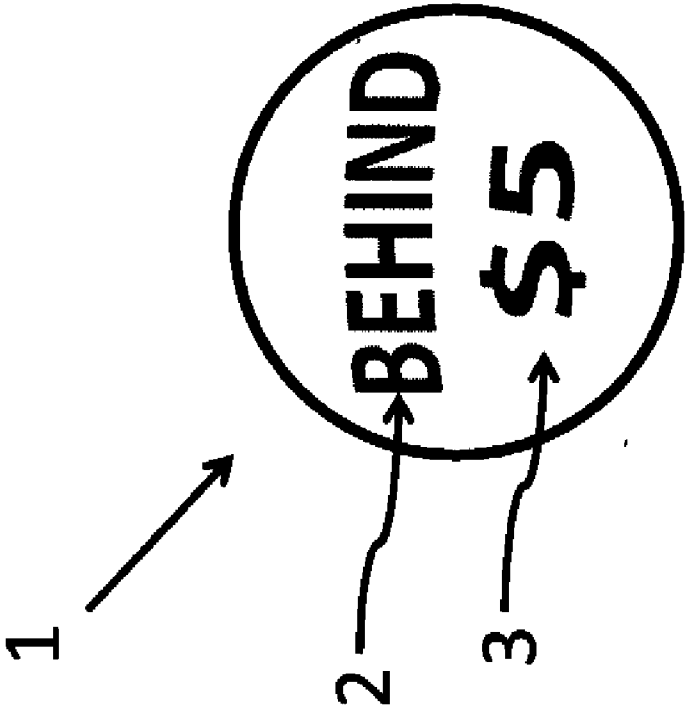


FIG. 1

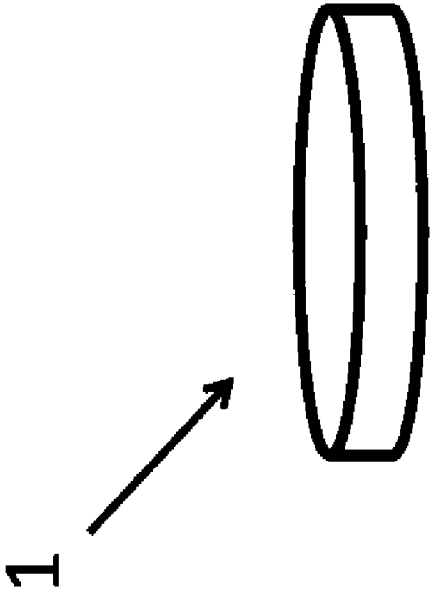


FIG. 2

DEVICE AND METHOD FOR PLAYING A CARD GAME

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to playing a card game. More specifically, the invention relates to a device and method for playing a card game in which players may require additional funding.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Poker is a well-known card game that is often played in casinos. In a poker game, players place a bet in a central pot based on the value of a card combination (“hand”) in their possession. The player that has the highest valued hand, or the player that remains after all other players make an un-called bet (have “folded”), wins.

[0003] Often at cash games played at casinos, there are a given set of rules for putting money on the table and taking it off (“table stakes”). A player cannot bet more money than he or she had on the table at the beginning of that hand and consequently cannot put in more money once a hand is dealt. Thus, if a player bets until he or she is out of chips, he or she is considered all in, and cannot add cash to the bets. In between hands however, a player is free to re-buy or add on so long as their entire amount does not exceed the maximum buy-in. Table stakes limit the amount a player can win or lose in the play of a single hand.

[0004] Players have the option of purchasing chips from a dealer or a chip runner. Players will often buy chips from a runner when casinos have a limit as to how much money can be at a table at one time. If chips are purchased from a chip runner, the dealer announces how much money the player “is behind” and the player can take a hand and make bets with that money as if he had chips. There are no chips on the table to indicate how much money is behind the player.

[0005] There are several disadvantages of indicating the amount of “money behind” a player in a game by a dealer’s announcement. First, the announcement is made at the beginning of the game and can be easily forgotten by the players during a hand. For example, during the play of game, a player may make a bet based on what money is actually on the table, not remembering that a player may have more money behind. The player may bet more or less than he or she would have if he or she had known that there was more money behind another player. Having an indicator would alleviate the problem of having the player dispute a bet, claiming that he or she did not know that another player had additional money behind.

[0006] Second, during poker it is more advantageous for a player to not speak during a game, i.e., keep a poker face, to avoid revealing any clues of the next move to other players. Having to ask if there is money behind or how much money is behind a player could signal to the other players that the player’s next move is based on how much money is behind another player.

[0007] Third, announcing the amount of money behind a player once during the beginning of the game may not be heard by the other players and spectators in a loud casino. Also, the security cameras and floor men of the casino have no indication of how much money is behind a player. This is disadvantageous for security purposes.

[0008] While there are many methods of playing casino card games, no methods in the prior art disclose a method of

playing a card game with a device that is displayed at the beginning of a game to indicate the amount of money behind each player that is not on the table. What is needed is a device and an improved method of playing a card game to indicate to the players, spectators, and casino floor men and cameras the amount of money behind each player during a game, if any.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] The invention is a device and an improved method for playing a card game. In one embodiment, the device for playing a card game in which players can require additional funding has no monetary value. The device comprises a display of a phrase indicating that there is money behind at least one player, and a display of a money value. The money value indicates an amount of money behind at least one player, whereby at least one said device can be put on display at a start of a card game to indicate an amount of money behind at least one player. The device can be a button, disk, chip, a sign, and an electronic means of displaying the phrase “Money Behind” and “Behind”.

[0010] A method of playing a card game involving at least one player is also disclosed in which a device having no monetary value, as described above, is initially displayed at a start of a card game when a player has money behind. The card game continues with placing bets, dealing and completing the card game according to conventional rules, whereby the device indicates the amount of money behind of at least one player during the card game.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0011] FIG. 1 is a top orthogonal view of a device used for playing a card game in accordance with the present invention; and

[0012] FIG. 2 is a side perspective view of a device used for playing a card game in accordance with the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0013] The present invention is a device and method for playing a card game in which players may require additional funding. The device and method can be used in any card game in which a dealer lacks sufficient chips at a gambling table to fund players’ requests for additional chips, or where a dealer prefers not to deplete his or her reserve of chips to fund players’ requests for additional chips. More specifically, the invention includes a chip or button and a method of using the chip or button during a card game to signify that a certain player has “money behind” and is waiting for his chips. Briefly, having “money behind” means that a player has money in addition to the money already present on a gaming table. This often occurs when there is a limit as to how much money can be present on a table at a given time, usually set by a casino’s house rules for security reasons.

[0014] Non-limiting embodiments of the device 1 are shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. As shown in FIG. 1, the device 1 displays a phrase 2 to indicate that there is money behind a player. For example, the phrase 2 could be “Money Behind” or the word “Behind” followed by a dollar amount 3. The dollar amount 3 displayed on the device 1 indicates the amount of money that is behind a player. The dollar value 3 could range anywhere from \$1.00 to as high as \$100,000 or more, depending on the stakes at a particular table. The device 1 can be made in different colors to indicate different money values.

[0015] The device itself does not have any monetary value but indicates to the cameras, players, floor man, dealer and the rest of the spectators that a particular player or players has money behind and is waiting on chips. The device communicates with the “money behind” phrase 2 that there is “money on the table” even when there are no chips or money physically on the table and further indicates the amount of money behind a player with its display of a dollar amount 3.

[0016] As illustrated in FIG. 1, the device 1 can be in the shape of a button, chip or disk, and can be made from different materials, e.g., plastic, wood, etc. The device 1 can resemble a “missed blind” button, a “dealer button”, or a “poker chip”, as long as it includes a “money behind”-type phrase 2 and a dollar value 3 on it. The device 1 can also be a sign, an electronic display, or be in any tangible form that displays that a player has “money behind” on or near a gaming table.

[0017] A method of using the “money behind” device is also disclosed. In general, the money behind device will be displayed at the start of a card game, before the players bet and the hand is dealt, to indicate when a player has more “money behind” than the money he or she has on the table. In a preferred embodiment, the device and method can be used for playing a poker game.

[0018] At cash games played at casinos, there are a given set of rules for putting money on the table and taking it off (“table stakes”). Because casinos usually have a limit as to how much money is on the table, the players can buy chips from a dealer or a runner. When chips are purchased from a chip runner, the dealer announces how much money the player “is behind” and the player can take a hand and make bets with that money as if he had chips. In an improved method according to the present invention, this announcement is replaced with displaying the device of the present invention to indicate the amount of money behind a player. The game is then played according to the conventional rules, including steps of having players make initial bets, the dealing of the cards, and completion of the game. If a player with money behind loses a hand, the dealer determines how much money is owed to the winner and collects that money when the runner arrives and pays the correct players.

[0019] During a table stakes game, a player may not place more money or casino chips on the table until a new hand is started. Players cannot put in more money mid-hand. Each player has only the stack started with and the money behind the stack, if any. A player cannot add to his or her stack after being dealt a winning hand, which sets a maximum on the amount the players can win or lose in a hand.

[0020] Because the amount of money a player has on the table is fixed once a hand begins, it is possible that a player will face a bet he or she cannot call in full. In this case, the player goes “all in” and partially calls the bet with the remaining chips. Going all in guarantees that the player will see the showdown for this hand and have an opportunity to win, but only for the part of the opponents bets were matched. Once action is completed on that round, the dealer creates what is called a side pot, where all action above and beyond what the all-in player had chips for occurs. All future bets on the hand likewise go into the side pot.

[0021] This method can present a problem if there is money behind a player but another player does not know or forgot about the money behind. For example, a player may strategically bet a greater amount than he or she normally would if it is believed that the other player does not have enough to

match the bet and go all in. This bet would backfire on a player that is unaware of any money behind the other player. Having and displaying a “money behind” device would alleviate such a problem.

[0022] The device and its use during a game provide several additional improvements to the typical method of playing poker without the device. The device smooths the progress of the game and provides a clear indication of what is on the table. This allows the game to move faster and allows everyone to know at any time during the game which players have money behind them. It prevents the players from asking (being forced to talk) “How much does he have?” or “How much is he behind?” and even more so, it will prevent players from claiming that they “did not know someone was behind in chips” (as mentioned above).

[0023] Also, because of the loud environment of casinos, a display of the money behind a player would be more beneficial than simply announcing the money behind since the announcement may not be heard. Lastly, the device and method are an improvement for security purposes, because the money behind a player is clearly displayed for the casino’s cameras and floor men to see.

[0024] While the foregoing describes the device and a method of playing a game using the device of the present invention, it is understood that the description is not intended to limit the invention. On the contrary, it is intended to cover all alternative modifications and equivalents that may be included in the spirit and the scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A device having no monetary value for playing a card game in which players can require additional funding comprising:

- a display of a phrase indicating that there is money behind at least one player; and
- a display of a money value, wherein the money value indicates an amount of money behind at least one player, whereby at least one said device can be put on display at a start of a card game to indicate an amount of money behind at least one player.

2. A method of playing a card game involving at least one player comprising the steps of:

- initially displaying a device having no monetary value at a start of a card game when a player has money behind, wherein the device further comprises (1) a display of a phrase to indicate that there is money behind at least one player and (2) a display of a money value that indicates an amount of money behind at least one player; and
- placing bets, dealing and completing said card game according to conventional rules said card game, whereby said device indicates the amount of money behind at least one player during said card game.

3. The device of claim 1, wherein said device is selected from a group consisting of a button, disk, chip, a sign, and an electronic means of display.

4. The method of claim 2, wherein said device is selected from a group consisting of a button, disk, chip, a sign, and an electronic means of display.

5. The device of claim 1, wherein said phrase is selected from a group consisting of “Money Behind” and “Behind”.

6. The method of claim 2, wherein said phrase is selected from a group consisting of “Money Behind” and “Behind”.