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(54) **BLACKJACK GAME WITH ADDITIONAL BETTING OPTIONS**

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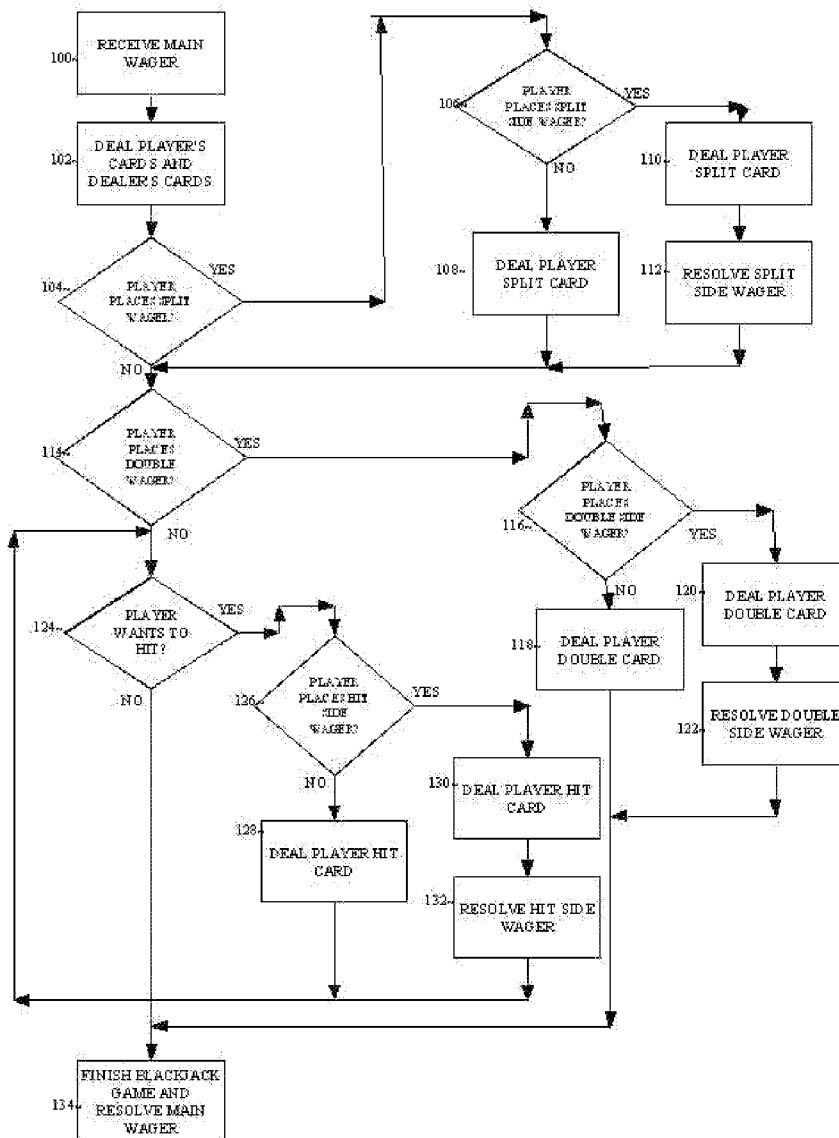
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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A blackjack game which offers additional betting options. After a player is dealt his or her initial cards, the player can make a wager on the next card if the player hits or doubles. If the player wishes to split, the player can make a wager that the next card dealt will match the previous two identical cards.

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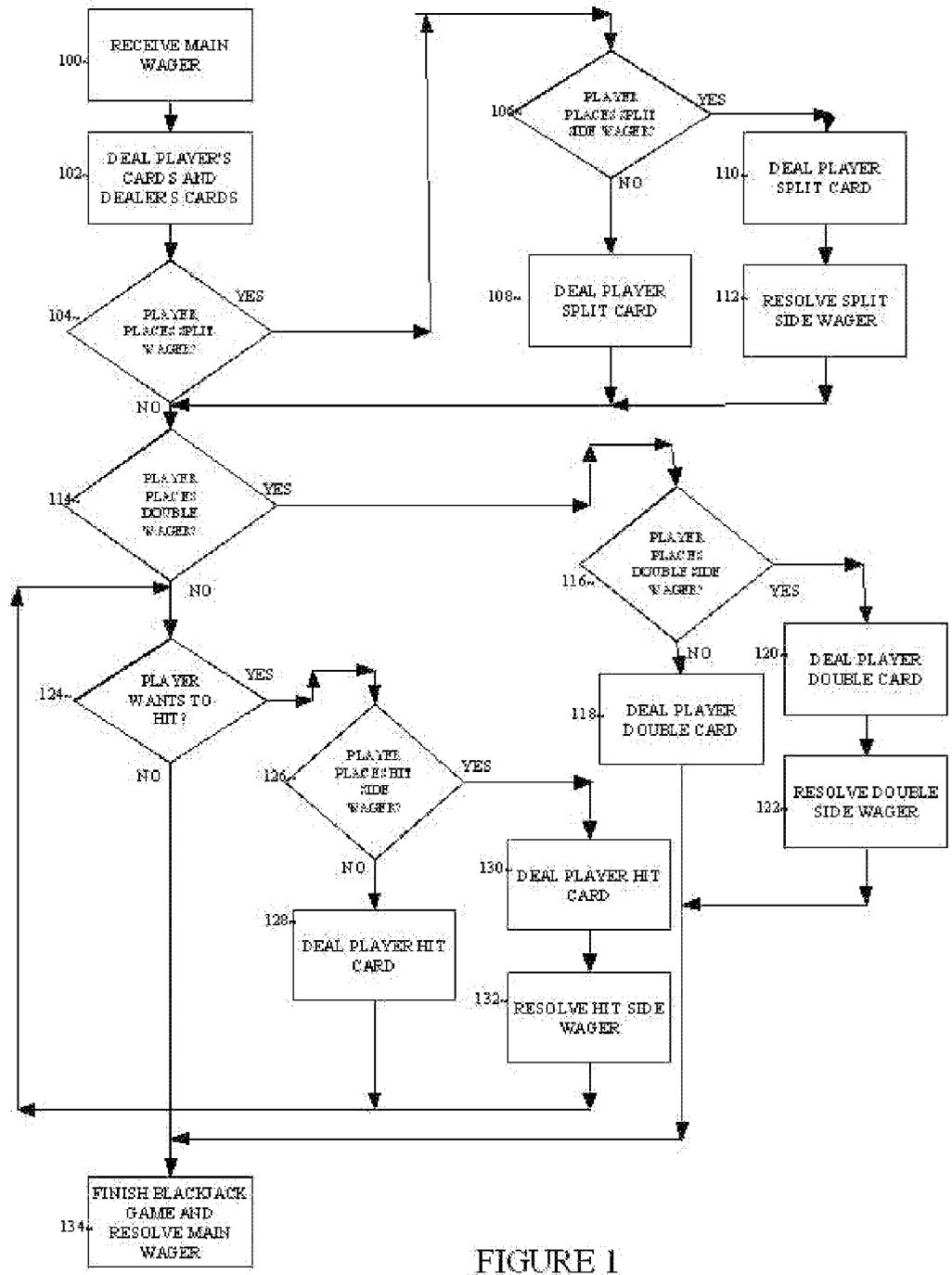


FIGURE 1

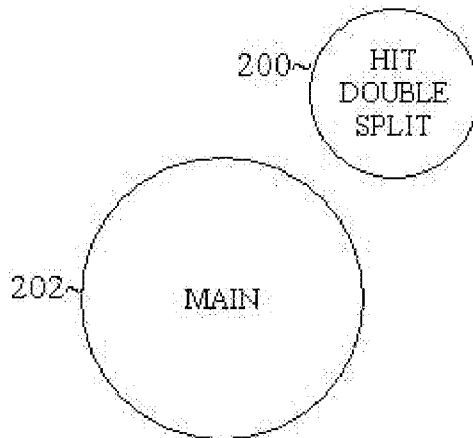


FIGURE 2A

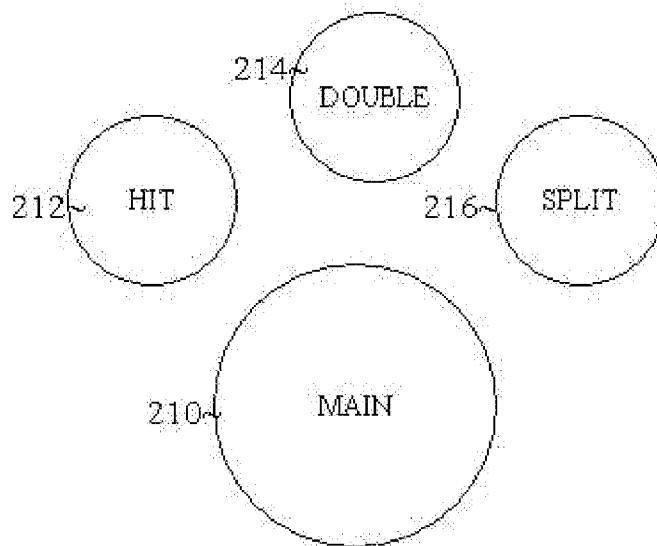


FIGURE 2B

BLACKJACK GAME WITH ADDITIONAL BETTING OPTIONS

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims benefit to provisional application No. 60/845,902, filed Sep. 9, 2006, which is incorporated by reference herein in its entirety.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The present general inventive concept is directed to a method, apparatus, and computer readable storage medium directed to a blackjack game that offers additional betting options.

[0004] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0005] Casino blackjack is one of the most popular games in the casino. Casinos are always looking for new and improved versions of blackjack wherein the casino has the ability to earn additional money.

[0006] What is needed is a slot machine that can allow a player to play and/or view results in a more entertaining and exciting fashion.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] It is an aspect of the present invention to provide a blackjack game with additional betting options.

[0008] The above aspects can be obtained by a method that includes (a) receiving a main wager from a player; (b) dealing a player's initial hand to the player and a dealer's initial hand to a dealer; (c) allowing the player to place a double wager alongside the main wager and if the player places a double wager then offering the player to make a double side wager, and if the player wishes to make the double side wager then receiving the double side wager from the player, dealing a double card to the player, wherein if the player made the double side wager, then if the double card is a predetermined card, then the player wins the double side wager and the double side wager is paid according to a payable otherwise the player loses the double side wager; and (d) finishing the blackjack hand to resolve the main wager.

[0009] The above aspects can also be obtained by a method that includes: (a) receiving a main wager from a player; (b) dealing a player's initial hand to the player and a dealer's initial hand to a dealer; (c) allowing the player to take a hit and if the player takes a hit then offering the player to make a hit side wager, and if the player wishes to make the hit side wager then receiving the hit side wager from the player, dealing a hit card to the player, wherein if the player made the hit side wager, then if the hit card is a predetermined card, then the player wins the hit side wager and the hit side wager is paid according to a payable otherwise the player loses the hit side wager; and (d) finishing the blackjack hand to resolve the main wager.

[0010] The above aspects can also be obtained by a method that includes (a) receiving a main wager from a player; (b) dealing a player's initial hand to the player and a dealer's initial hand to a dealer; (c) if the initial hand comprises two equally ranked cards and the player splits, then if the player wishes to make a split side wager then receiving a split side wager from the player and dealing a third card to the player, wherein if the player made the split

side wager, then if the third card matches rank with one of the equally ranked cards then the player wins the split side wager and the split side wager is paid according to a payable otherwise the player loses the split side wager; and (d) finishing the blackjack hand to resolve the main wager. [0011] These together with other aspects and advantages which will be subsequently apparent, reside in the details of construction and operation as more fully hereinafter described and claimed, reference being had to the accompanying drawings forming a part hereof, wherein like numerals refer to like parts throughout.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] Further features and advantages of the present invention, as well as the structure and operation of various embodiments of the present invention, will become apparent and more readily appreciated from the following description of the preferred embodiments, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings of which:

[0013] FIG. 1 is a flowchart illustrating an exemplary method of implementing a blackjack game, according to an embodiment;

[0014] FIG. 2A is a first example of a betting layout used in accordance with embodiments described herein; and

[0015] FIG. 2A is a second example of a betting layout used in accordance with embodiments described herein.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0016] Reference will now be made in detail to the presently preferred embodiments of the invention, examples of which are illustrated in the accompanying drawings, wherein like reference numerals refer to like elements throughout.

[0017] The present inventive concept relates to a method, apparatus, and computer readable storage to implement an improved blackjack game that offers additional betting options.

[0018] After a player is dealt his or her initial two cards, the player is presented with additional betting options. These betting options can provide the player with additional excitement, and can also provide the house with additional avenues to generate additional action. The additional side bets can be required to be either: equal to the main blackjack wager; or equal or less than the main blackjack wager; or equal or more than the main blackjack wager; or any amount.

[0019] If the player's first two cards are identical, the player can split his hand into two hands by placing an additional wager equal to the original wager, then the two cards are split into two hands and each hand is played out separately.

[0020] In an embodiment, when the player wishes to split, in addition to placing the additional wager, the player can optionally place a split side wager. If the next card dealt matches the previous two cards (which already match since the player is splitting), the player wins a payout on the split side wager. If the next card dealt does not match the previous two cards, then the player loses the split side wager.

[0021] In an embodiment, the player may be allowed to place a split side wager only if the player has a pair of certain cards. For example, the player may be allowed to place the split side wager if the player has either aces or eights. Table

I is a sample payable that can be used for the split side wager which the player can make if the player has aces or eights. In a further embodiment, the player may always be allowed to place a split side wager as long as the ranks of the initial cards match.

TABLE I

Number of Decks	If the dealer up card matches as the player's pair	If the dealer up card is different from the player's pair
1	40 to 1	20 to 1
2	15 to 1	12 to 1
4 to 8	11 to 1	11 to 1

[0022] Of course, the payouts in Table I is merely exemplary, and other payout structures can be used as well. If the player makes the split side wager, then the player is not allowed to place a hit side wager or a double side wager during the same game. Alternatively, if the player makes the split side wager, then the player would be allowed to place a hit side wager and/or a double side wager during the same game.

[0023] If, after viewing the initial two cards, the player wishes to double, then the player can place an additional wager alongside his or her original wager.

[0024] In an embodiment, the player can also optionally place a double side wager, wherein the player is betting on the outcome of the double (next) card. The player would win a payout based on the double card. If the double card is not a predetermined card, then the player would lose the double side wager.

[0025] For example, if the player places the double side wager and the double card is a ten valued card, then the payout on the double side wager is 2 to 1, otherwise the player loses the double side wager.

[0026] If, after viewing the initial two cards, the player wishes to hit, then the player can place an additional optional hit side wager, in which the player is betting on the outcome of the hit (next) card. The player would win a payout based on the hit card. If the hit card is not a predetermined card, then the player would lose the hit wager.

[0027] For example, if the player places the hit side wager and the hit card is a 2 through 7, then the player is paid even money, otherwise the player loses the hit side wager. FIG. 1 is a flowchart illustrating an exemplary method of implementing a blackjack game, according to an embodiment.

[0028] The method can start with operation 100, which receives the player's main wager. This can be done as known in the art.

[0029] The method can proceed to operation 102, which deals the player's two cards and the dealer's two cards. This can be done as known in the art.

[0030] From operation 102, the method can proceed to operation 104, which determines if the player wishes to place a split wager. If the player wishes to place a split wager the player can indicate as such by placing a split wager identical in size to the main wager and the method can then proceed to operation 104 which determines if the player wishes to place a split side wager. If the player wishes to place the split side wager the player can do so by placing the split side wager in a betting circle.

[0031] If in operation 104, the player does not wish to place the split side wager, then the method can proceed to

operation 108, which deals the player his or her split card and the method can proceed to operation 114.

[0032] If in operation 104, the player does wish to place the split side wager (and has placed the split side wager), then the method can proceed to operation 110 which deals the player the split card. The method can then proceed to operation 112, which resolves the split side wager according to predetermined rules, as described herein. The method can then proceed to operation 114.

[0033] From either operation 104, 108, or 112, the method can proceed to operation 114, which determines if the player places a double wager. If the player wishes to place a double wager the player can place the double wager alongside the main wager. If the determining in operation 114 determines that the player places the double wager (and the player then places the double wager), the method can then proceed to operation 116, which determines if the player places a double side wager. The player can place the double side wager by placing the double side wager in a betting circle.

[0034] If the determining in operation 116 determines that the player does not place the double side wager, then the method can proceed to operation 118, which deals the player a double card (the next card in the deck). The method can then proceed to operation 134.

[0035] If the determining in operation 116 determines that the player does place the double side wager, then the method can proceed to operation 120, which deals the player a double card (the next card in the deck). The method can then proceed to operation 122, which resolves the double side wager according to predetermined rules, as described herein. The method can then proceed to operation 134.

[0036] From operation 114 (or possibly operation 132), the method can proceed to operation 124, which determines if the player wishes to hit. The player indicates he wishes to hit typically by pointing on the table to the dealer. If the player does not wish to hit, then the method can proceed to operation 134, which finishes the blackjack game and resolves the main wager.

[0037] If the determining in operation 124 determines that the player wishes to hit, then the method can proceed to operation 125, which determines if the player wishes to place a hit side wager. The player can place a hit side wager in a betting circle if the player so desires. If the determination in operation 126 determines that the player does not place a hit side wager, then the method can proceed to operation 128, which deals the player a hit card (the next card in the deck). The method can then proceed to operation 124.

[0038] If the determination in operation 126 determines that the player does place a hit side wager, then the method can proceed to operation 130, which deals the player a hit card (the next card in the deck). From operation 130, the method can proceed to operation 132, which resolves the hit side wager according to predetermined rules, as described herein. The method can then proceed to operation 124.

[0039] It is noted that any bets can be resolved at any time and not in the order illustrated in FIG. 1. For example, operation 112, which resolves the split side wager, can be performed at any time, such as at the end of the game when the dealer is accounting for the main wager.

[0040] FIG. 2A is a first example of a betting layout used in accordance with embodiments described herein.

[0041] A main wager betting circle 202 can be used by the player to place the player's main blackjack wager. A side

wager betting circle **200** can be used by the player to place the player's side blackjack wager. A single betting circle can be used for all three of the side bets described herein (hit side bet, double side bet, and split side bet).

[0042] FIG. 2A is a second example of a betting layout used in accordance with embodiments described herein.

[0043] A main wager betting circle **210** can be used by the player to place the player's main blackjack wager. A hit side bet betting circle **212** can be used by the player to place the player's hit side bet. A double side bet betting circle **214** can be used by the player to place the player's double side bet. A split side bet betting circle **216** can be used by the player to place the player's split side bet.

[0044] Examples of embodiments described herein will now be presented. A blackjack game is offered on a casino table game using standard Las Vegas rules (e.g., 6 deck shoe, dealer stands on soft 17, player can resplit pairs up to three times, blackjack pays 2:1). The double side wager pays as follows: if the double card is a ten valued card, then the payout on the double side wager is 2 to 1, otherwise the player loses the double side wager. The hit side wager pays as follows: if the hit card is a 2 through 7, then the player is paid even money, otherwise the player loses the hit side wager. The split side wager is paid according to Table I, i.e., a win pays 11:1.

[0045] John bets \$1 on the main wager. John is dealt a 10h and a 5c, the dealer's upcard is a 9h. John wishes to hit and John also places a \$1 hit side wager. The hit card (next card dealt) is a 10c. John loses the hit side wager (since the card is not a 2 through 7). The blackjack game is finished and since John busted (exceeded 21) John also loses his \$1 main wager. Thus John has lost \$2.

[0046] As another example, John bets \$1 on the main wager. John is dealt a 10h and a 5c, the dealer's upcard is a 9h. John wishes to hit and John also places a \$1 hit side wager. The hit card (next card dealt) is a 7c. John wins the hit side wager (since the card is a 2 through 7) and wins \$1 on the hit side wager. The blackjack game is finished and since John busted (exceeded 21) John loses his \$1 main wager. Thus John has broken even.

[0047] As another example, John bets \$1 on the main wager. John is dealt a 10h and a 5c, the dealer's upcard is a 9h. John wishes to hit and John also places a \$1 hit side wager. The hit card (next card dealt) is a 6c. John wins the hit side wager (since the card is a 2 through 7) and wins \$1 on the hit side wager. The blackjack game is finished and the dealer's hole card is revealed which turns out to be a 10d. Since John has a point total of 21, this beats the dealer's point total of 19, and John wins the main wager as well for \$1. Thus, John has won \$2 overall.

[0048] As another example, Gina bets \$1 on the main wager. Gina is dealt a 5h and a 6c, and the dealer's upcard is a 4c. Gina wishes to double and places a double wager of \$1. Gina also wishes to place a double side wager and places a double side wager of \$1. The double card is dealt (the next card) to Gina which is a 5c. Since this is not a ten valued card, Gina loses the double side wager. The blackjack game is continued and the dealer's hole card is revealed to be a 10h. The dealer then draws (since under standard blackjack rules the dealer draws until the dealer has 17 or higher) and the dealer draws a 9s. Since the dealer has busted (the dealer exceeds 21), Gina wins the main wager for \$1. Thus Gina has broken even.

[0049] As another example, Gina bets \$1 on the main wager. Gina is dealt a 5h and a 6c, and the dealer's upcard is a 4c. Gina wishes to double and places a double wager of \$1. Gina also wishes to place a double side wager and places a double side wager of \$1. The double card is dealt (the next card) to Gina which is a 10c. Since this is a ten valued card, Gina wins the double side wager and wins \$2. The blackjack game is continued and the dealer's hole card is revealed to be a 10h. The dealer then draws (since under standard blackjack rules the dealer draws until the dealer has 17 or higher) and the dealer draws a 9s. Since the dealer has busted (the dealer exceeds 21), Gina wins the main wager for \$1. Thus Gina has won \$3 overall.

[0050] As a further example, Fred bets \$1 on the main wager. Fred is dealt a 8h and a 8c, and the dealer's upcard is a 10s. Fred wishes to split and places \$1 additional wager to split. Fred wishes to place a split side wager and places a split side wager of \$1. The split card (next card dealt) to Fred is a 10c. Fred loses the split side wager since the split card is not equal to 8. The game continues as normal with Fred now playing two hands with \$1 bet on each of them.

[0051] As a further example, Fred bets \$1 on the main wager. Fred is dealt a 8h and a 8c, and the dealer's upcard is a 10s. Fred wishes to split and places \$1 additional wager to split. Fred wishes to place a split side wager and places a split side wager of \$1. The split card (next card dealt) to Fred is a 8c. Fred wins the split side wager since the split card is equal to 8. Thus Fred wins \$11. The game continues as normal with Fred now playing two hands with \$1 bet on each of them. It is noted that if the dealer's upcard were also an eight (and the game was being dealt with one deck, using Table I), then Fred's payout on the win on the split side wager would be higher.

[0052] A casino can offer all three side wagers (hit side wager, double side wager, split side wager) at once, can offer only one (any one) of these three side wagers (e.g., offer the split side wager only, the double side wager only, or the hit side wager only), or any combination of two of the side wagers as well (e.g., the hit side wager+double side wager, or the hit side wager+split side wager, or the double side wager+split side wager). If a casino wishes to offer less than all three side wagers, then a modified flowchart can be created from FIG. 1 with the side wager(s) which are not offered be eliminated from the FIG. 1. For example, if the split side wager isn't available, then operation **106** is not available and the method flows from operation **104** directly to operation **108**. If the hit side wager isn't available, then operation **126** is not available and the method would flow from operation **124** to operation **128**. If the double side wager is not available, then operation **116** is not available and the method would flow from operation **114** to operation **118**.

[0053] The embodiments herein can be implemented using any standard 52 card deck of cards. Any other number of decks can be used as well, such as 2-10 decks. A continuous shuffling machine can also be used as well. Any embodiments described herein can also be used with non-standard decks of cards, such as decks with one or more wild card(s), Spanish decks, etc. Any embodiments described herein can also be applied to other variations of blackjack as well, such as "Spanish 21." The embodiments described herein can also be applied to any other casino games as well, such as baccarat.

[0054] For example, the wagers described herein can be applied to baccarat as follows. When the baccarat dealer has dealt the dealer two cards that are equal in rank and the dealer is going to take a third card, the player can place a wager that the third card will match in rank to the two dealer cards. The payouts can be the same as described herein. Similarly, if the player is dealt two player cards equal in rank and the player is going to take a third card, the player can place a wager that the third card will match in rank to the two player cards.

[0055] It is also noted that any and/or all of the above embodiments, configurations, variations of the present invention described above can mixed and matched and used in any combination with one another.

[0056] Moreover, any description of a component or embodiment herein also includes hardware, software, and configurations which already exist in the prior art and may be necessary to the operation of such component(s) or embodiment(s).

[0057] Further, the operations described herein can be performed in any sensible order. Any operations not required for proper operation can be optional. Further, all methods described herein can also be stored on a computer readable storage to control a computer.

[0058] The many features and advantages of the invention are apparent from the detailed specification and, thus, it is intended by the appended claims to cover all such features and advantages of the invention that fall within the true spirit and scope of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation illustrated and described, and accordingly all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A method to play a hand of blackjack, the method comprising:

receiving a main wager from a player;

dealing a player's initial hand to the player and a dealer's initial hand to a dealer;

allowing the player to place a double wager alongside the main wager and if the player places a double wager then offering the player to make a double side wager, and if the player wishes to make the double side wager then receiving the double side wager from the player, dealing a double card to the player, wherein if the player made the double side wager, then if the double card is a predetermined card, then the player wins the double side wager and the double side wager is paid according to a payable otherwise the player loses the double side wager; and

finishing the blackjack hand to resolve the main wager.

2. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the player wins the double side wager when the double card is a ten valued card.

3. The method as recited in claim 2, wherein a payout on the double side wager when the double card is a ten valued card is 2:1.

4. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising: if the player does not double, then if the player wishes to make a hit side wager then receiving a hit side wager from the player and dealing a hit card to the player, wherein if the player made the hit side wager, then if the hit card is a predetermined card, then the player

wins the hit side wager and the hit side wager is paid according to a payable otherwise the player loses the hit side wager; and

5. The method as recited in claim 4, wherein if the hit card is a 2 through 7 then the player wins the hit side wager.

6. The method as recited in claim 5, wherein a payout on the hit side wager when the hit card is a 2 through 7 is even money.

7. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising: if the initial hand comprises two equally ranked cards and the player splits, then if the player wishes to make a split side wager then receiving a split side wager from the player and dealing a third card to the player, wherein if the player made the split side wager, then if the third card matches rank with one of the equally ranked cards then the player wins the split side wager and the split side wager is paid according to a payable otherwise the player loses the split side wager.

8. The method as recited in claim 7, wherein the split side wager is only allowed if each of the equally valued cards is ranked either an 8 or an Ace.

9. The method as recited in claim 4, further comprising: if the initial hand comprises two equally ranked cards and the player splits, then if the player wishes to make a split side wager then receiving a split side wager from the player and dealing a third card to the player, wherein if the player made the split side wager, then if the third card matches rank with one of the equally ranked cards then the player wins the split side wager and the split side wager is paid according to a payable otherwise the player loses the split side wager.

10. A method to play a hand of blackjack, the method comprising:

receiving a main wager from a player;

dealing a player's initial hand to the player and a dealer's initial hand to a dealer;

allowing the player to take a hit and if the player takes a hit then offering the player to make a hit side wager, and if the player wishes to make the hit side wager then receiving the hit side wager from the player, dealing a hit card to the player, wherein if the player made the hit side wager, then if the hit card is a predetermined card, then the player wins the hit side wager and the hit side wager is paid according to a payable otherwise the player loses the hit side wager; and

finishing the blackjack hand to resolve the main wager.

11. The method as recited in claim 10, further comprising: if the player does not hit, then allowing the player to place a double wager alongside the main wager and if the player places a double wager then offering the player to make a double side wager, and if the player wishes to make the double side wager then receiving the double side wager from the player, dealing a double card to the player, wherein if the player made the double side wager, then if the double card is a predetermined card, then the player wins the double side wager and the double side wager is paid according to a payable otherwise the player loses the double side wager; and finishing the blackjack hand to resolve the main wager.

12. The method as recited in claim 11, further comprising: if the initial hand comprises two equally ranked cards and the player splits, then if the player wishes to make a split side wager then receiving a split side wager from the player and dealing a third card to the player,

wherein if the player made the split side wager, then if the third card matches rank with one of the equally ranked cards then the player wins the split side wager and the split side wager is paid according to a payable otherwise the player loses the split side wager.

13. The method as recited in claim **10**, further comprising: if the initial hand comprises two equally ranked cards and the player splits, then if the player wishes to make a split side wager then receiving a split side wager from the player and dealing a third card to the player, wherein if the player made the split side wager, then if the third card matches rank with one of the equally ranked cards then the player wins the split side wager and the split side wager is paid according to a payable otherwise the player loses the split side wager.

14. A method to play a hand of blackjack, the method comprising:

receiving a main wager from a player;
dealing a player's initial hand to the player and a dealer's initial hand to a dealer;

if the initial hand comprises two equally ranked cards and the player splits, then if the player wishes to make a split side wager then receiving a split side wager from the player and dealing a third card to the player, wherein if the player made the split side wager, then if the third card matches rank with one of the equally ranked cards then the player wins the split side wager and the split side wager is paid according to a payable otherwise the player loses the split side wager; and finishing the blackjack hand to resolve the main wager.

15. The method as recited in claim **14**, wherein the split side wager is only allowed if each of the equally valued cards is ranked either an 8 or an Ace.

16. The method as recited in claim **14**, further comprising: allowing the player to place a double wager alongside the main wager and if the player places a double wager then offering the player to make a double side wager, and if the player wishes to make the double side wager then receiving the double side wager from the player, dealing a double card to the player, wherein if the player made the double side wager, then if the double card is a predetermined card, then the player wins the double side wager and the double side wager is paid according to a payable otherwise the player loses the double side wager.

17. The method as recited in claim **14**, wherein if the player wishes to make a hit side wager then receiving a hit side wager from the player and dealing a hit card to the player, wherein if the player made the hit side wager, then if the hit card is a predetermined card, then the player wins the hit side wager and the hit side wager is paid according to a payable otherwise the player loses the hit side wager.

18. The method as recited in claim **16**, wherein if the player does not double, then if the player wishes to make a hit side wager then receiving a hit side wager from the player and dealing a hit card to the player, wherein if the player made the hit side wager, then if the hit card is a predetermined card, then the player wins the hit side wager and the hit side wager is paid according to a payable otherwise the player loses the hit side wager.

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