(19) **United States**

(12) **Patent Application Publication** (10) Pub. No.: **US 2006/0211466 A1**

Ward et al. (43) **Pub. Date: Sep. 21, 2006**

(54) **WAGERING GAME WITH TEMPORALLY INDEPENDENT OUTCOMES**

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(21) Appl. No.: **11/081,433**

(22) Filed: **Mar. 16, 2005**

Publication Classification

(51) **Int. Cl.**
A63F 9/24 (2006.01)
(52) **U.S. Cl.** **463/16**

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A method for playing a wagering game includes receiving a first wager input and a second wager input from a player for playing a single game cycle of a wagering game. A first randomly selected outcome is selected from a plurality of outcomes in response to the first wager input, and a second randomly selected outcome of the plurality of outcomes is selected in response to the second wager input. The first randomly selected outcome is indicated temporally independent of indicating the second randomly selected outcome.

—10

Feed the Fish

—27

PAYS   Touch anywhere to bet one pellet.

—   26

5
2
1

help/pays

credits 400

cost bet
1   1   total bet
+
1
collect

21

23

24   16a

16b

22

Fig. 1
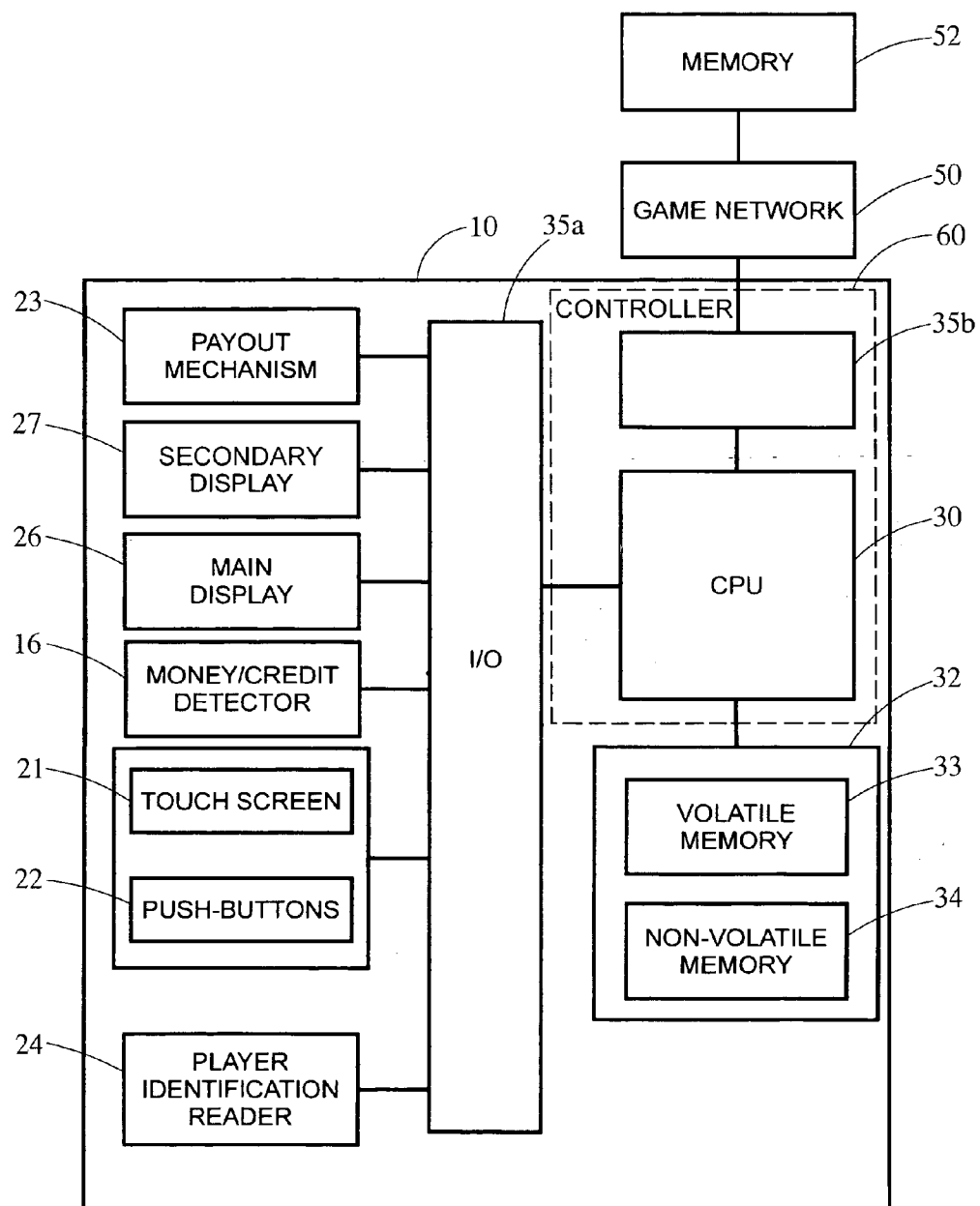
Fig. 2

Ⓐ   RECEIVE FIRST WAGER
Ⓑ   RECEIVE SECOND WAGER
Ⓒ   INDICATE FIRST OUTCOME
Ⓓ   INDICATE SECOND OUTCOME

TIME

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Fig. 5

Touch anywhere to bet one pellet.

PAYS

100
25
10
5
2

help/pays

credits 400

cost 5

bet 1

total bet 5

collect

Touch anywhere to bet one pellet.

PAYS

500
125
50
25
10

help/pays

credits 400

cost 5

bet 5

total-bet 25

collect

Fig. 6

Fig. 7

Fig. 8

Fig. 9

Fig. 10

Fig. 11
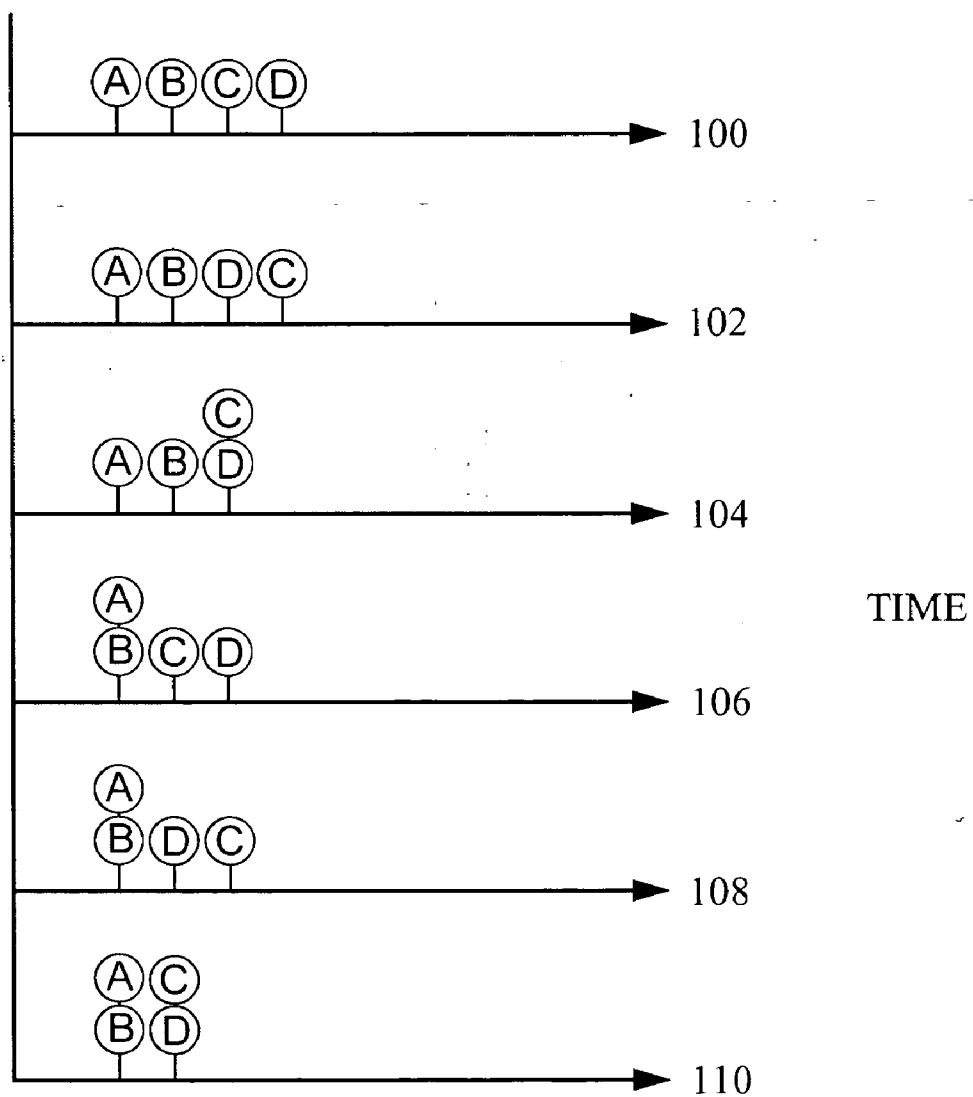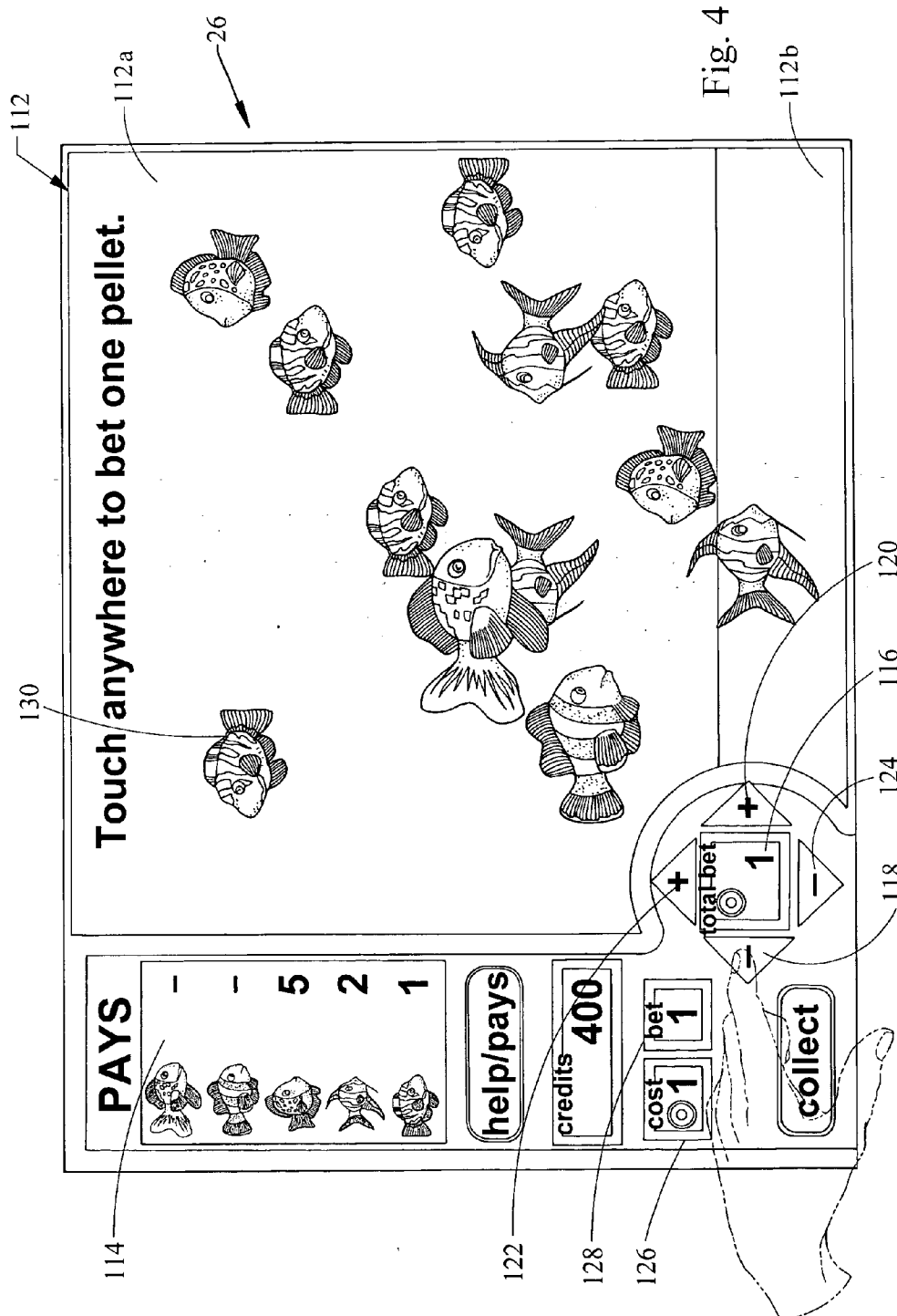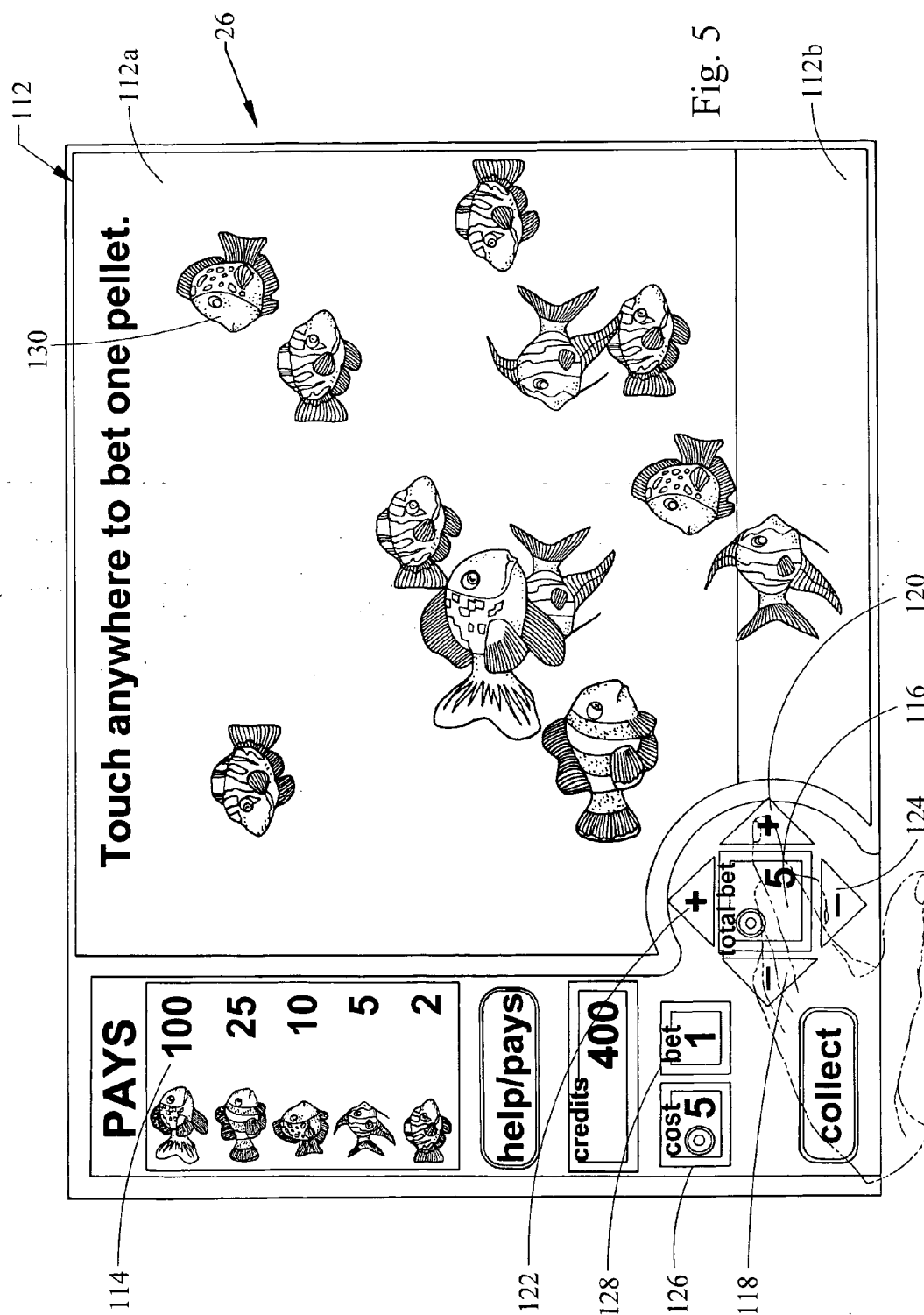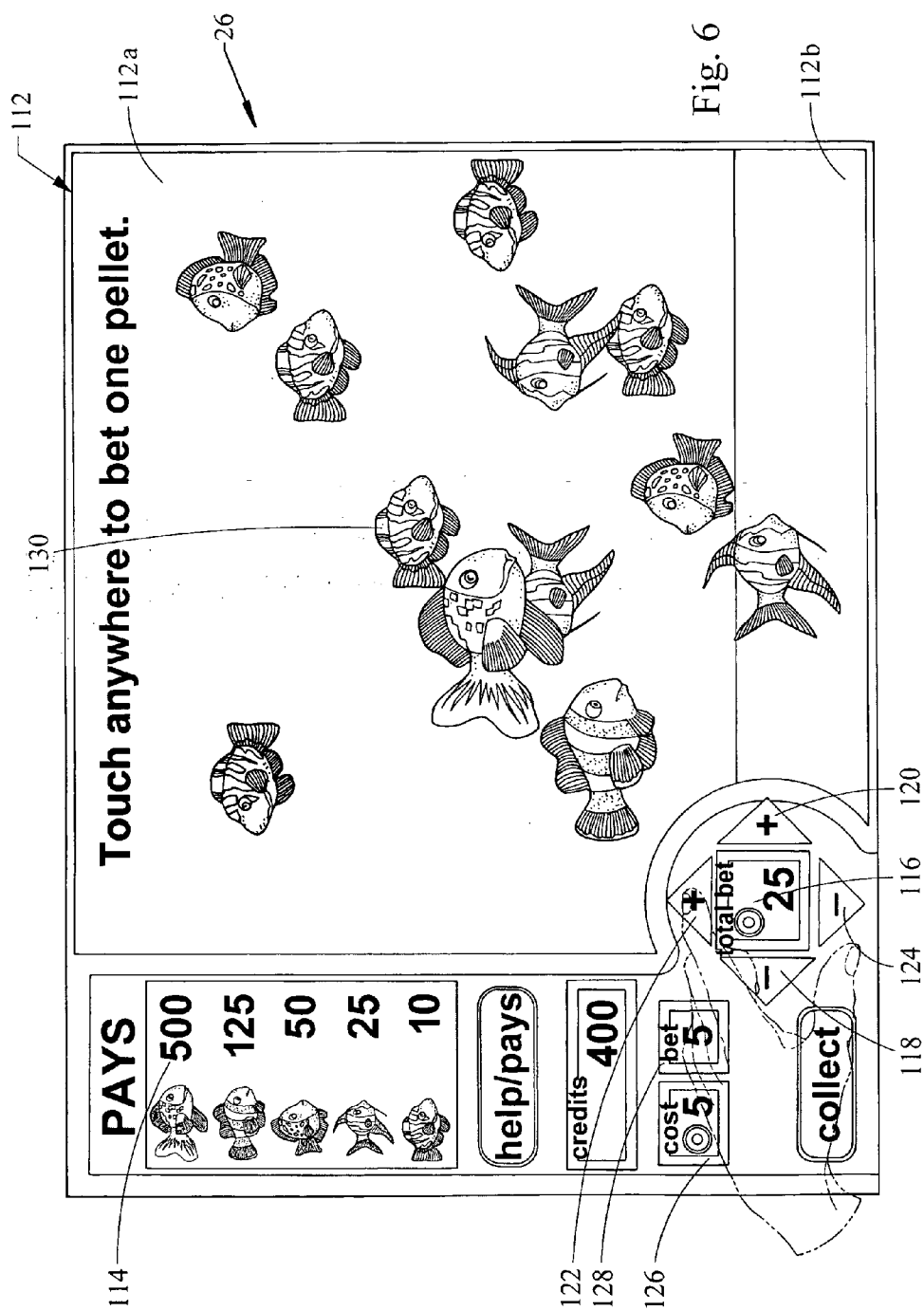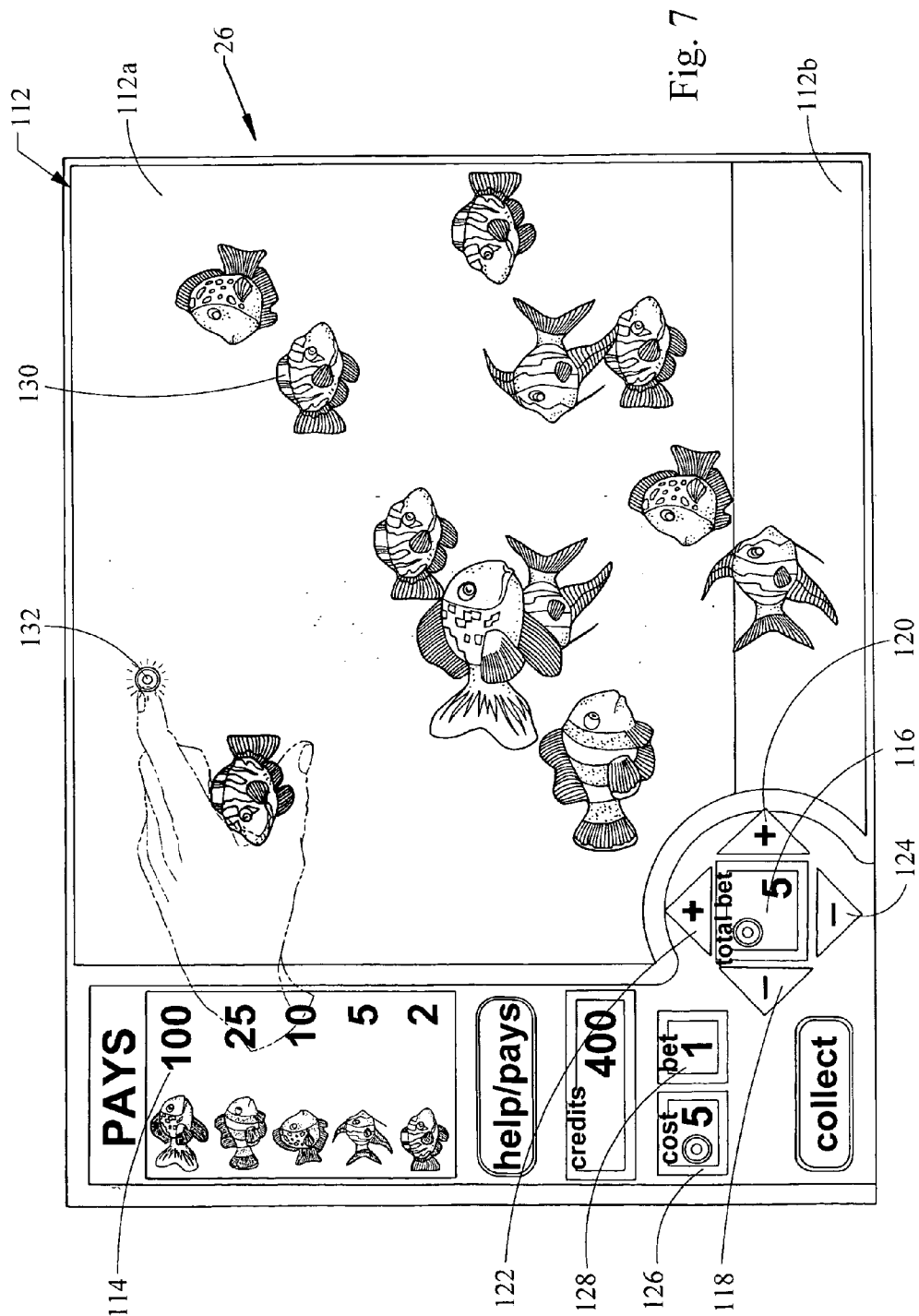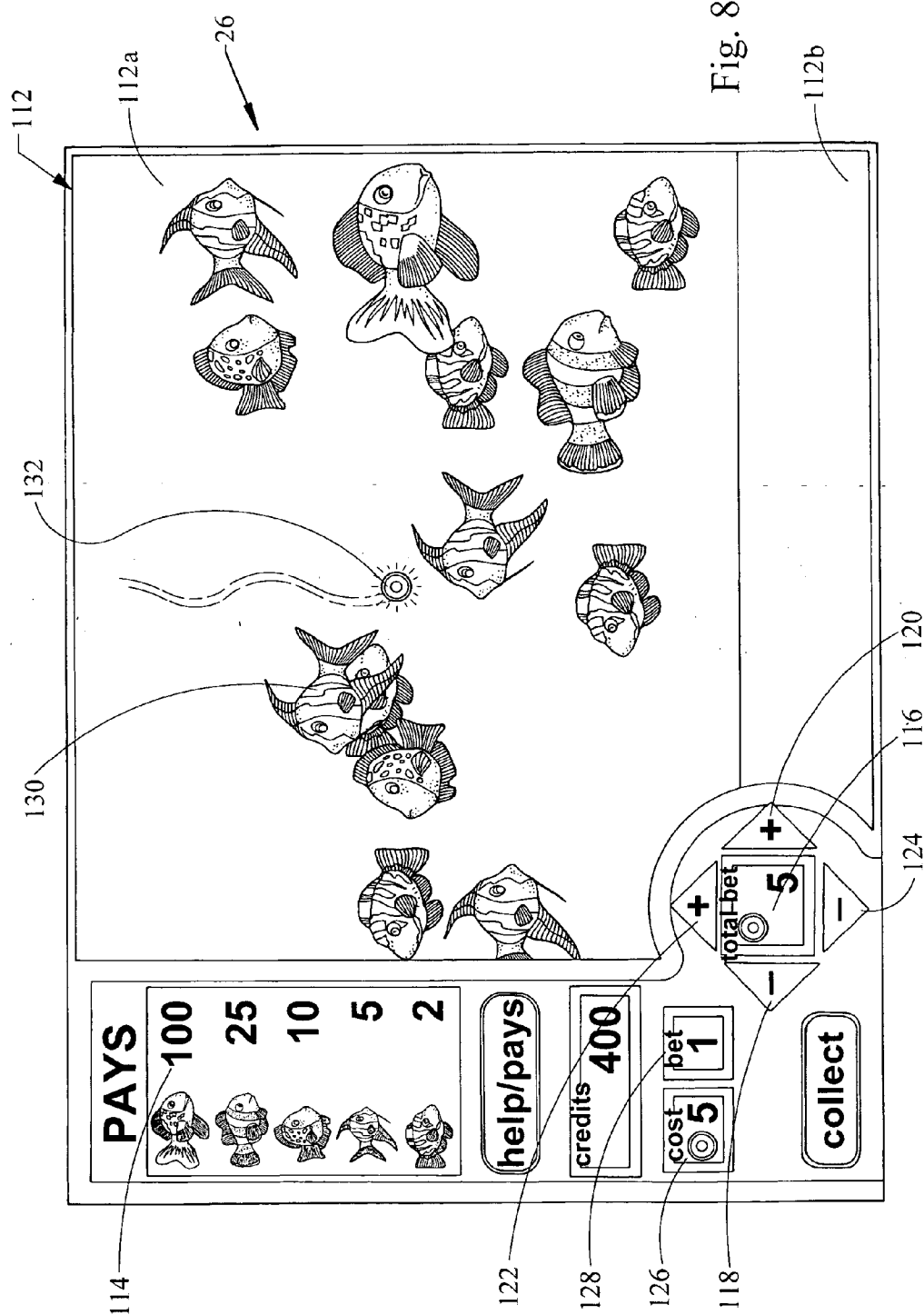
Fig. 12

WAGERING GAME WITH TEMPORALLY INDEPENDENT OUTCOMES

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates generally to gaming terminals for playing a wagering game and, more particularly, to a gaming terminal having a plurality of temporally independent outcomes.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Gaming machines, such as slot machines, video poker machines, and the like, have been a cornerstone of the gaming industry for several years. Generally, the popularity of such machines with players is dependent on the likelihood (or perceived likelihood) of winning money at the machine and the intrinsic entertainment value of the machine relative to oth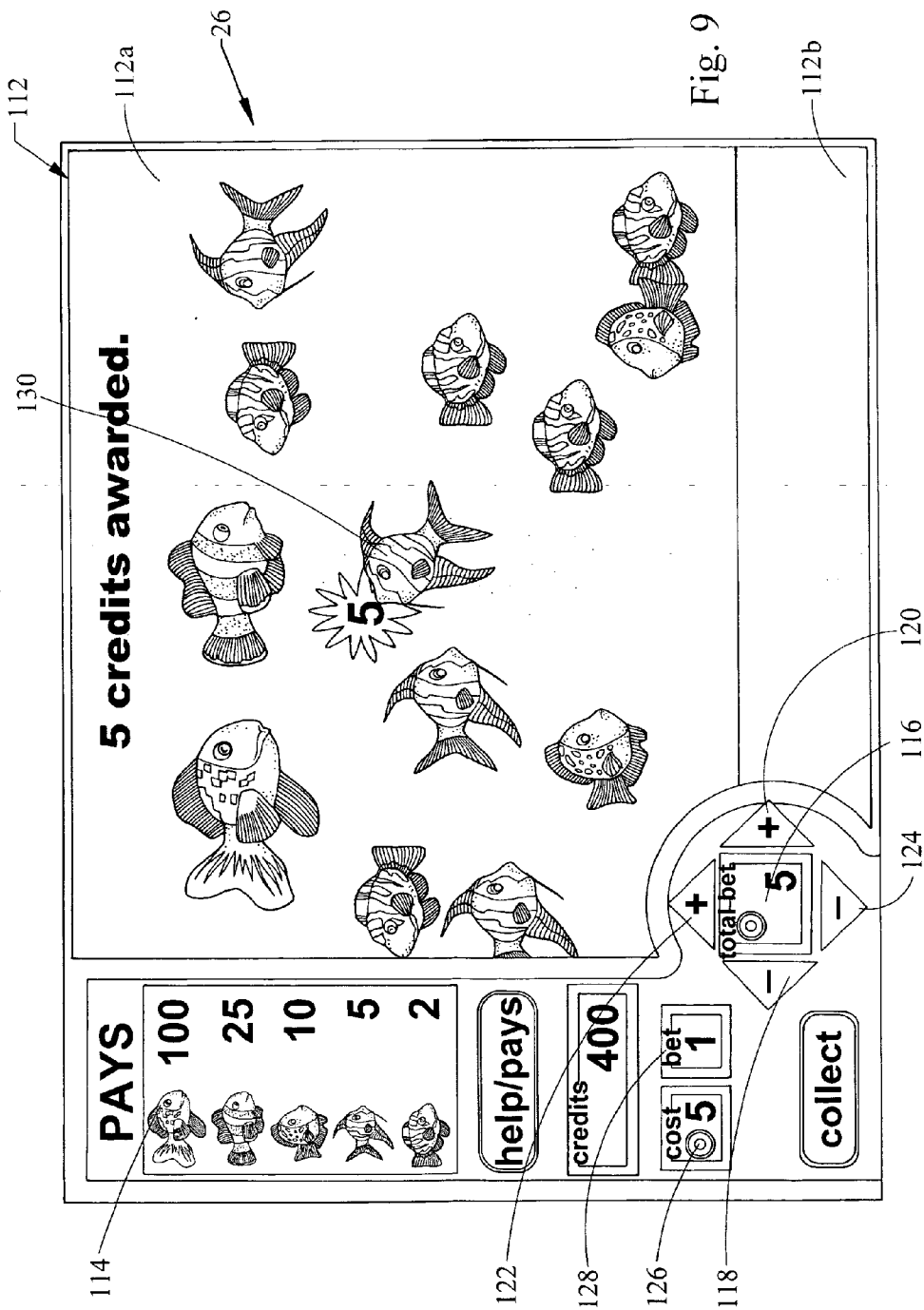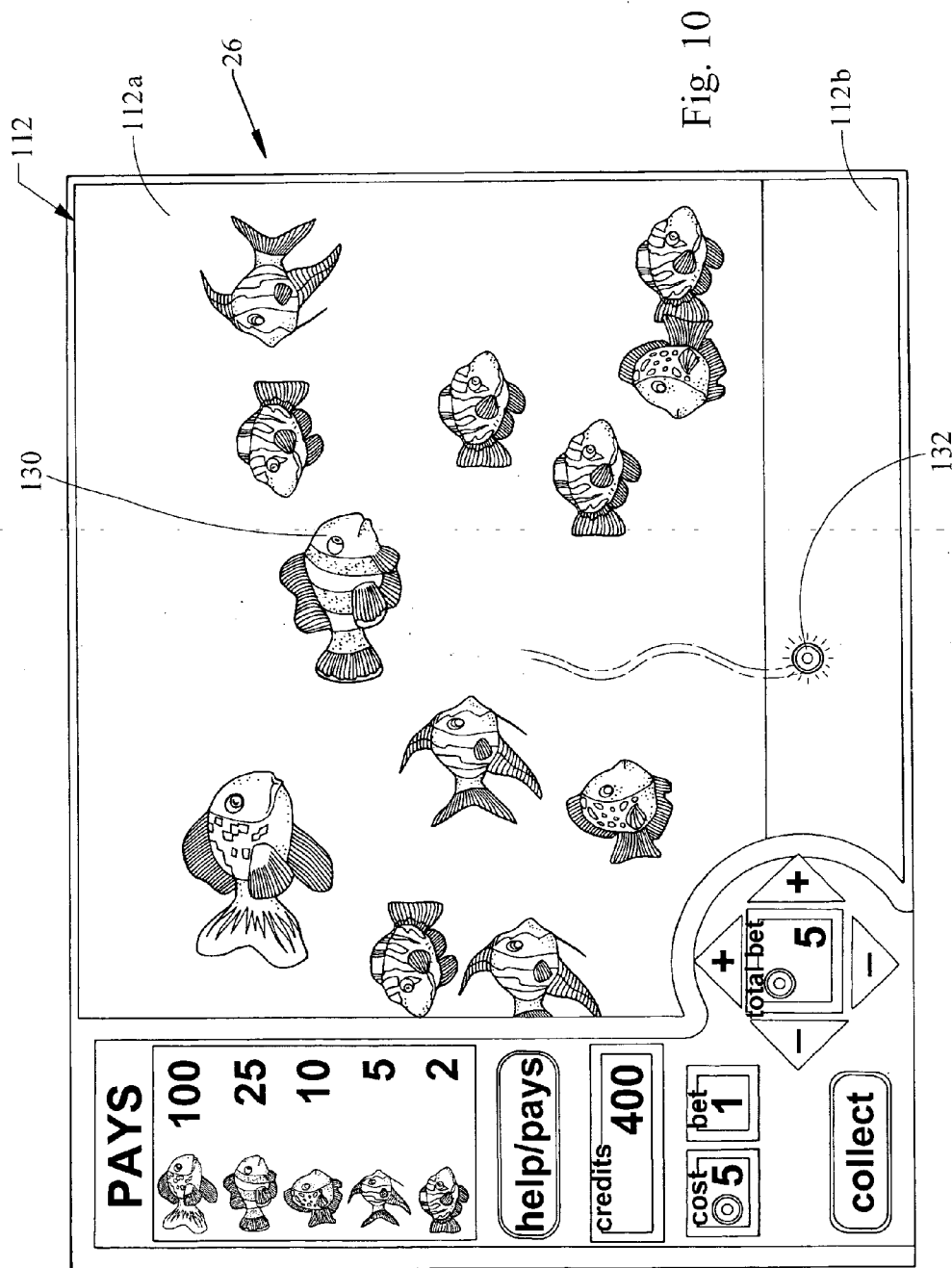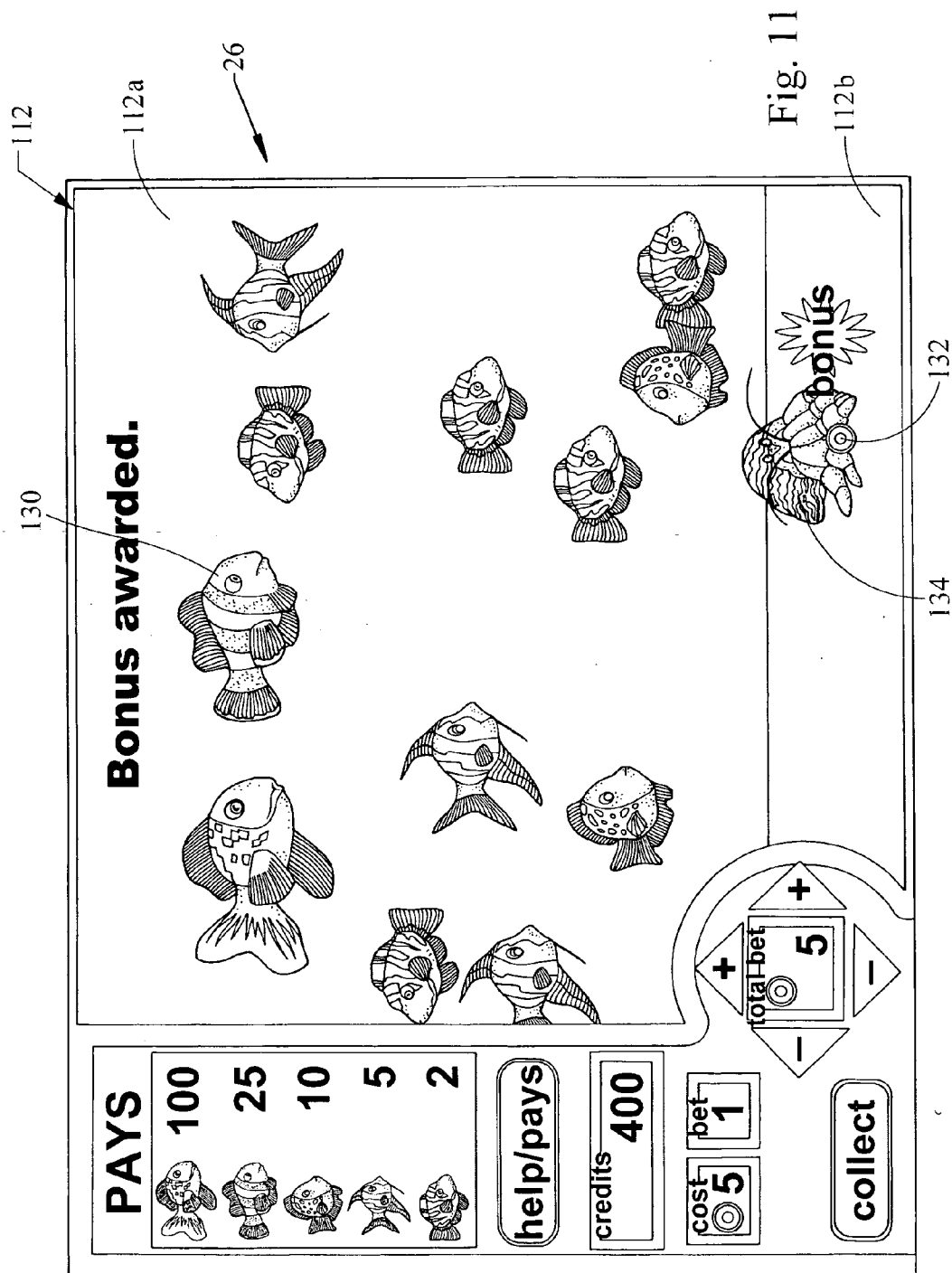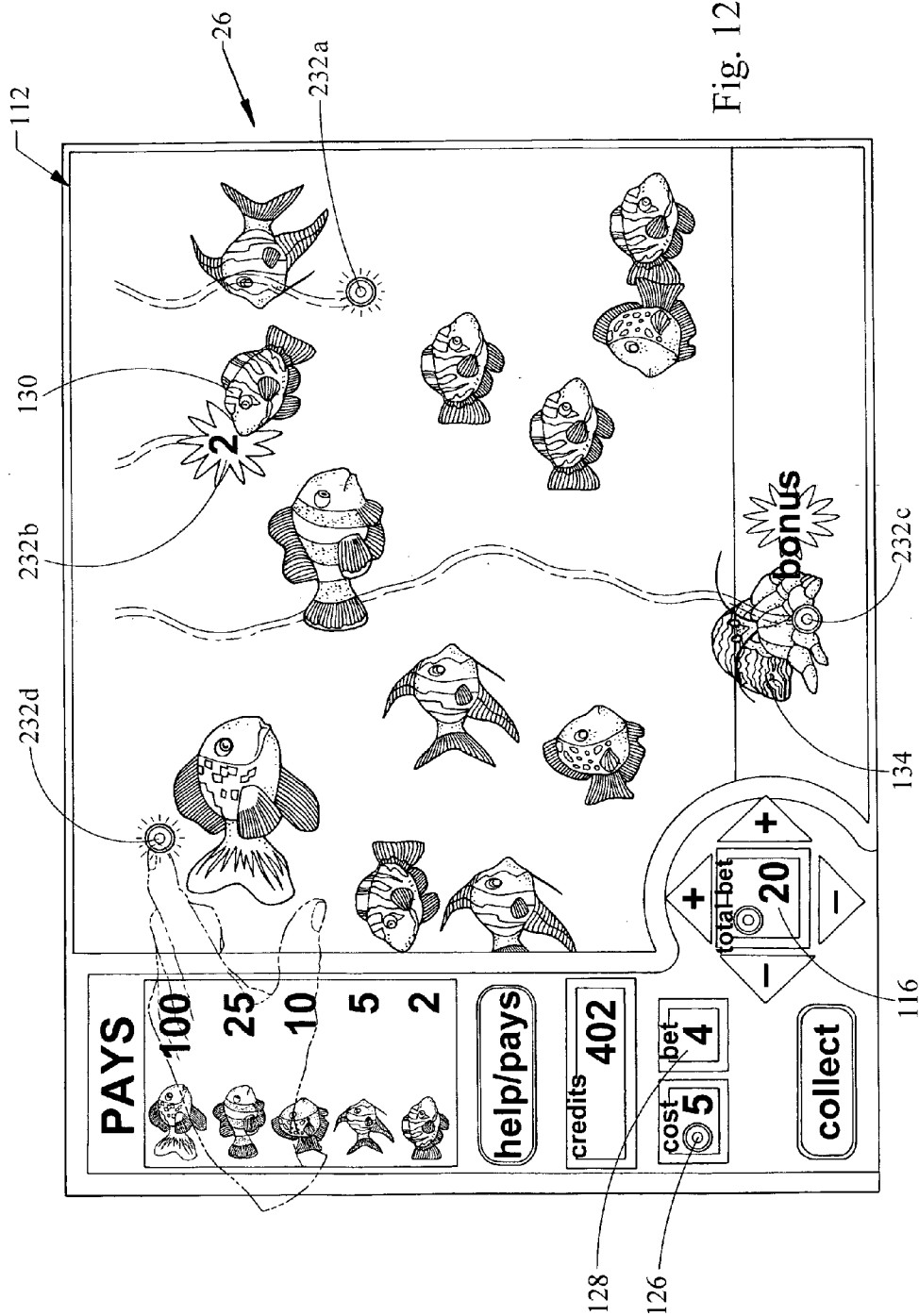er available gaming options. Where the available gaming options include a number of competing machines and the expectation of winning each machine is roughly the same (or believed to be the same), players are most likely to be attracted to the most entertaining and exciting of the machines.

[0003] Consequently, shrewd operators strive to employ the most entertaining and exciting machines available because such machines attract frequent play and, hence, increase profitability to the operator. In the competitive gaming machine industry, there is a continuing need for gaming machine manufacturers to produce new types of games, or enhancements to existing games, which will attract frequent play by enhancing the entertainment value and excitement associated with the game.

[0004] One concept that has been successfully employed to enhance the entertainment value of a game is that of a "secondary" or "bonus" game which may be played in conjunction with a "basic" game. The bonus game, which is entered upon the occurrence of a selected event such as a start-bonus outcome of the basic game, may comprise any type of game, either similar to or completely different from the basic game. Such a bonus game produces a significantly higher level of player excitement than the basic game because it provides a greater expectation of winning than the basic game.

[0005] Some current wagering games provide the player with the choice of selecting multiple wagers, each wager having a corresponding randomly selected outcome. For example, a wagering game receives a plurality of wager inputs from the player and, then, the corresponding plurality of outcomes is indicated. One problem associated with this type of wagering games is that the outcomes are indicated in the received order of their corresponding wager inputs. For example, a first outcome, which corresponds to a first wager input, is indicated before a second outcome, which corresponds to a second wager input, if the first wager input is received before the second wager input. Thus, the outcomes are temporally dependent on their respective wager input. Using a first-received first-indicated pattern tends to decrease the entertainment and value of the wagering game because the player may get bored of such a repetitive and predictable pattern.

[0006] Thus, there is a need to provide a wagering game that indicates game outcomes temporally independent of each other, irrespective of the time that their corresponding wager inputs were received. The present invention fulfills this and other needs.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] A method for playing a wagering game includes receiving a first wager input and a second wager input from a player for playing a single game cycle of a wagering game. A first randomly selected outcome is selected from a plurality of outcomes in response to the first wager input, and a second randomly selected outcome of the plurality of outcomes is selected in response to the second wager input. The first randomly selected outcome is indicated temporally independent of indicating the second randomly selected outcome.

[0008] In another aspect of the present invention, a method for conducting a wagering game includes receiving a plurality of wager inputs from a player for playing a single game cycle of a wagering game. A plurality of outcomes corresponding to the plurality of wager inputs is selected in response to the receiving step, each one of the corresponding outcomes being randomly selected from a plurality of outcomes. The corresponding outcomes are each indicated temporally independent of each other.

[0009] In an alternative aspect of the present invention, a gaming system for playing a wagering game on a gaming terminal includes a display on the gaming terminal for displaying at least two outcomes of a plurality of outcomes. The at least two outcomes are randomly selected in response to each outcome receiving a corresponding wager input from a player playing a single game cycle of the wagering game. The gaming system further includes a controller coupled to the display. The controller is programmed to indicate on the display the at least two outcomes temporally independent of each other.

[0010] The above summary of the present invention is not intended to represent each embodiment, or every aspect, of the present invention. Additional features and benefits of the present invention are apparent from the detailed description, figures, and claims set forth below.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

[0011] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a video gaming terminal according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[0012] FIG. 2 is a block diagram of the gaming terminal of FIG. 1.

[0013] FIG. 3 is an illustration representing the timeline of multiple wagers and their respective outcomes, according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[0014] FIG. 4 is an illustration of a game screen having a low-paying paytable, according to the present invention.

[0015] FIG. 5 is an illustration of the game screen of FIG. 4 having a high-paying paytable.

[0016] FIG. 6 is an illustration of the game screen of FIG. 4 having a higher bet.

[0017] FIG. 7 is an illustration of the game screen of FIG. 4 having a fish pellet shown in an initial location.

[0018] **FIG. 8** is an illustration of the game screen of **FIG. 7** having the fish pellet shown in an intermediate location.

[0019] **FIG. 9** is an illustration of the game screen of **FIG. 7** having the fish pellet shown as being swallowed by a fish.

[0020] **FIG. 10** is an illustration of the game screen of **FIG. 7** having the fish pellet shown in a final location.

[0021] **FIG. 11** is an illustration of the game screen of **FIG. 7** having a bonus game awarded.

[0022] **FIG. 12** is an illustration of the game screen **FIG. 4** having a plurality of fish pellets, according to another embodiment of the present invention.

[0023] While the invention is susceptible to various modifications and alternative forms, specific embodiments are shown by way of example in the drawings and are described in detail herein. It should be understood, however, that the invention is not intended to be limited to the particular forms disclosed. Rather, the invention is to cover all modifications, equivalents, and alternatives falling within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE ILLUSTRATED EMBODIMENTS

[0024] Referring to **FIG. 1**, a gaming terminal **10** is used in gaming establishments such as casinos. With regard to the present invention, the gaming terminal **10** may be any type of gaming terminal and may have varying structures and methods of operation. For example, the gaming terminal **10** may be a mechanical gaming terminal configured to play mechanical slots, or it may be an electromechanical or electrical gaming terminal configured to play a video casino game, such as blackjack, slots, keno, poker, etc.

[0025] The gaming terminal **10** includes input devices, such as a wager acceptor **16**, a touch screen **21**, a push-button panel **22**, and a player-identification card reader **24**. For output the gaming terminal **10** includes a payout mechanism **23** and a main display **26**. The main display **26** displays information about the basic wagering game and, optionally, displays information about a bonus wagering game and a progressive wagering game. The gaming terminal **10** may optionally include a secondary game display **27** for displaying the bonus wagering game, or for displaying award amounts of a progressive game. While these typical components found in the gaming terminal **10** are described below, it should be understood that numerous other elements may exist and may be used in any number of combinations to create various forms of a gaming terminal.

[0026] The wager acceptor **16** may be provided in many forms, individually or in combination. The wager acceptor **16** may include a note acceptor **16***a* or coin slot acceptor **16***b* to input value to the gaming terminal **10**. Or, the wager acceptor **16** may include a card-reading device for reading a card that has a recorded monetary value with which it is associated. The card may also authorize access to a central account, which can transfer money to the gaming terminal **10**.

[0027] The push button panel **22** is typically offered, in addition to the touch screen **21**, to provide players with an option on how to make their game selections. Alternatively, the push button panel **22** provides inputs for one aspect of

operating the game, while the touch screen **21** allows for inputs needed for another aspect of operating the game.

[0028] The operation of the basic wagering game is displayed to the player on the main display **26**, which can also display the bonus game associated with the basic wagering game. The main display **26** may take the form of a cathode ray tube (CRT), a high resolution LCD, a plasma display, a LED, or any other type of video display suitable for use in the gaming terminal **10**. As shown, the main display **26** includes the touch screen **21** overlaying the entire monitor (or a portion thereof) to allow players to make game-related selections. Alternatively, the gaming terminal **10** may have a number of mechanical reels to display the game outcome.

[0029] The player-identification card reader **24** allows for the identification of a player by reading a card with information indicating his or her true identity. Currently, casinos use the identification provided to reward certain players with complimentary services or special offers. For example, a player may be enrolled in the gaming establishment's players' club and may be awarded certain complimentary services as that player collects points in his or her player-tracking account. The player inserts his or her card into the player-identification card reader **24**, which allows the casino's computers to register that player's wagering at the gaming terminal **10**.

[0030] A player begins play of the basic wagering game by inserting a wager input into the wager input accepter **16** of the gaming terminal **10**. In direct response to the wager, the gaming machine provides the player with one or more cycles of the game. For each "game cycle," the gaming machine generates at least one random event using a random number generator at the beginning of the cycle and provides an award to the player for a winning outcome of the random event. A player can select play by either using the touch screen **21** or the push-button panel **22**. One or more outcomes of a plurality of outcomes are randomly selected in response to the wagering input by the player. One of the pluralities of randomly selected outcomes is a start-bonus outcome, which can include any variations of symbols or symbol combinations triggering a bonus game.

[0031] As shown in **FIG. 2**, the various components of the gaming terminal **10** are controlled by a central processing unit (CPU) **30**, also referred to as a processor (such as a microprocessor or microcontroller). To provide the gaming functions, the CPU **30** executes one or more game programs. The CPU **30** performs the random selection of an outcome from the plurality of outcomes of the wagering game. The CPU **30** is also coupled to or includes a system memory **32**. The system memory **32** may comprise a volatile memory **33** (e.g., a random-access memory (RAM)) and a non-volatile memory **34** (e.g., an EEPROM). It should be appreciated that the CPU **30** may include one or more microprocessors. Similarly, the memory **32** may include multiple RAM and multiple program memories.

[0032] Communications between the peripheral components of the gaming terminal **10** and the CPU **30** occur through input/output (I/O) circuits **35***a*. As such, the CPU **30** also controls and receives inputs from the peripheral components of the gaming terminal **10**. Further, the CPU **30** communicates with external systems via the I/O circuits **35***b*. Although the I/O circuits **35** may be shown as a single block, it should be appreciated that the I/O circuits **35** may include a number of different types of I/O circuits.

[0033] The gaming terminal 10 is typically operated as part of a game control network 50 having control circuitry and one or more memory devices 52. The gaming terminal 10 often has multiple serial ports, each port dedicated to providing data to a specific host computer system that performs a specific function (e.g., accounting system, player-tracking system, progressive game control system, etc). To set up a typical serial communication hardware link to the host system, the typical RS-232 point-to-point communication protocol that is often present in the gaming terminal 10 is converted to an RS-485 (or RS-485-type) master-slave protocol so as to take advantage of some of the advantages of the RS-485 capability (e.g., multi-drop capability that allows many gaming terminals 10 to communicate with the game control network 50). To perform this function, a custom interface board may be used by the gaming terminal 10 for each communication port in the gaming terminal 10. It should be noted that the gaming terminal 10 can initially be designed to be configured for a typical RS-485 protocol, instead of the typical RS-232 protocol. Further, the gaming terminal 10 may simply be designed for an Ethernet connection to the game control network 50.

[0034] The gaming terminal 10 and associated gaming control system is capable of executing wagering games on or through a controller 60. Controller 60, as used herein, comprises any combination of hardware, software, and/or firmware that may be disposed or resident inside and/or outside of a gaming terminal 10 or like machine which may communicate with and/or control the transfer of data between the gaming terminal and a bus, another computer, processor, or device, and/or a service and/or a network. The network may include, but is not limited to a peer-to-peer, client/server, master/slave, star network, ring network, bus network, or other network architecture wherein at least one processing device (e.g., computer) is linked to at least one other processing device. The controller 60 may comprise the I/O circuits 35a, 35b and the CPU 30. In other embodiments, the CPU 30 may be housed outside of the controller 60, and a different processor may be housed within the controller 60. The controller 60, as used herein, may comprise one or more controllers. In one implementation, each gaming terminal 10 comprises, or is connected to, a controller 60 enabling each gaming terminal 10 to transmit and/or receive signals, preferably both, in a peer-to-peer arrangement. In another example, the controller 60 may be adapted to facilitate communication and/or data transfer for one or more gaming terminals 10 in a client/server or centralized arrangement. In one aspect, shown in FIG. 2, the controller 60 may connect the gaming terminal 10 via a conventional I/O port and communication path (e.g., serial, parallel, IR, RC, 10bT, etc.) to a game network 50, which may include, for example, other gaming terminals connected together in the network 50.

[0035] Referring now to FIG. 3, a plurality of timelines is shown to illustrate the time sequence of four exemplary events that are associated with a wagering game. The four events include the following: A) receive first wager, B) receive second wager, C) indicate first outcome, and D) indicate second outcome. The first outcome is associated with the first wager and the second outcome is associated with the second wager. Thus, in response to the wagering game receiving the first wager from the player, the wagering game indicates the first outcome from a plurality of randomly selected outcomes. Similarly, in response to the

wagering game receiving the second wager from the player, the wagering game indicates the second outcome from the plurality of outcomes.

[0036] The first wager and the second wager are made during the same game cycle of the wagering game. In addition, the receipt of the wager includes any steps required to initiate a game-play sequence, such as, e.g., touching a screen to make a fish-food pellet appear as described below in reference to FIGS. 4-12.

[0037] A first timeline 100 shows the first wager A being received before the second wager B, and the first outcome C being indicated before the second outcome D. The first timeline 100 follows a first-received first-indicated pattern, in which each outcome is temporally dependent on the corresponding wager. This type of pattern generally, but not necessarily, implies that an outcome associated with an earlier received wager should be indicated before an outcome associated with a later received wager. Thus, the first outcome C may be referred to as being dependent, as a function of time, on the first wager A, and the second outcome D may be referred to as being dependent, as a function of time, on the second wager B. Another way of describing the relationship between the outcomes C, D and the corresponding wagers A, B is to say that the outcomes C, D are temporally dependent on the corresponding wagers A, B. Further, it can be implied that the second outcome D is temporally dependent on the first outcome C because the second outcome D will not be indicated until the first outcome C has been indicated.

[0038] A second timeline 102 shows the first wager A being received before the second wager B, and the second outcome D being indicated before the first outcome C. The pattern exemplified in the second timeline 102 is generally unexpected by the player because it does not follow the first received first-indicated pattern of the first timeline 100. In this example, the player observes the outcome associated with a later wager before the player observes the outcome associated with an earlier wager.

[0039] A third timeline 104 shows the first wager A being received before the second wager B, and the first outcome C being indicated generally simultaneously with the second outcome D. Although the two wager inputs A, B were received at different points in time, the corresponding outcomes C, D are indicated generally simultaneously.

[0040] A fourth timeline 106 shows the first wager A being received generally simultaneously with the first wager B, and the first outcome C being indicated before the second outcome D. Although the two wager inputs A, B were received generally simultaneously, the corresponding outcomes C, D are indicated at different points in time, i.e., the first outcome C before the second outcome D.

[0041] A fifth timeline 108 shows the first wager A being received generally simultaneously with the first wager B, and the second outcome D being indicated before the first outcome C. Although the two wager inputs A, B were received generally simultaneously, the corresponding outcomes C, D are indicated at different points in time, i.e., the second outcome D before the first outcome C.

[0042] A sixth timeline 110 shows the first wager A being received generally simultaneously with the first wager B, and the first outcome C being indicated generally simulta-

neously with the second outcome D. In this example, the outcomes C, D are indicated generally at the same point in time.

[0043] Referring to **FIG. 4**, the main display **26** includes a game screen **112** and a paytable **114**, according to one embodiment that provides the ability to have the various time sequences illustrated in **FIG. 3**. The game screen **112** includes a main screen **112***a* and a secondary screen **112***b*. A paytable **114** illustrates the awards that may be awarded to a player based on predetermined criteria, e.g., the smallest fish awards one credit and the biggest fish awards five credits.

[0044] A total bet indicator **116**, which indicates the total amount of credits wagered by the player during a game cycle of the wagering game, is located at the bottom of the main screen **112***a* and adjacent to the secondary screen **112***b*. The total bet indicator **116** is surrounded by four selection keys: a bet-amount decrease key **118**, a bet-amount increase key **120**, a bet-number increase key **122**, and a bet-number decrease key **124**. Further, a cost indicator **126** and a bet indicator **128** are located below the paytable **114**. In addition, a plurality of swimming fish **130**, which are used to indicate the outcome of the player's wager, are displayed in the main screen **112***a*.

[0045] The player can choose different kinds of food for feeding the fish **130**. Wagering the lowest type of food costs one credit per pellet and has a low paytable **114**. After making at least one wager, the players is directed to touch the main display **26** anywhere within the screen **112** to initiate the time sequence for indicating the corresponding randomly selected outcome. Some exemplary outcomes are described in more detail below.

[0046] Referring to **FIG. 5**, the player has optionally selected a higher-pay fish-food pellet. Using the bet-amount increase key **120**, the player has increased the cost per wager (or bet) to five credits. The cost per wager is shown by the cost indicator **126**. Optionally, the paytable **114** has now changed to a high paytable that awards higher awards than the low paytable, e.g., the smallest fish awards two credits and the biggest fish awards one hundred credits.

[0047] Referring to **FIG. 6**, the player has optionally selected multiple wagers. Using the bet-number increase key **122**, the player has increased the number of wagers per game cycle. As shown by the bet indicator **128**, the player has selected to make five wagers. Because each wager cost five credits, the total bet, as indicated by the total bet indicator **116**, is now twenty-five credits.

[0048] Referring to **FIG. 7**, the player touches the screen **112** to make a pellet **132** appear. The pellet **132** has cost the player five credits and it is the sole wager that has been received by the wagering game. In general, the player can touch the screen **112** anywhere to provide an initial location for the pellet **132**.

[0049] Referring to **FIG. 8**, the pellet **132** drifts down slowly towards the secondary screen **112***b*. As the pellet **132** drifts down, the fish **130** swim near the pellet. Optionally, the length of time that it takes the pellet to drift downwards can vary from game cycle to game cycle and can be nonlinear. For example, the pellet **132** can drift slower in the upper half of the main screen **112***a* than in the lower half of

the main screen **112***a*. Alternatively, the pellet **132** can travel horizontally if bumped by a fish **130** or if it is pushed by a water current.

[0050] Referring to **FIG. 9**, the pellet **132** has been shown eaten by a fish **130**. The award paid for this type of fish is five credits. Thus, the randomly selected outcome corresponding to the five credit wager received from the player is a five credit award. The length of time that has occurred between the time that the player has initiated the pellet **132** (i.e., the player touched the screen) and the time that the fish **130** has eaten the pellet **132** can be random and/or nonlinear. For example, assuming everything else is the same, the length of time between the touching of the screen **112** and the eating of the pellet **132** can be longer or shorter when the wagering game receives a second wager from the player.

[0051] **FIG. 10** illustrates an outcome for the pellet **132** that is different from the outcome in **FIG. 9**. In **FIG. 10**, the pellet **132** has been alternatively shown as falling to the bottom of the screen **112**, in the secondary screen **112***a*. If none of the fish **130** eat the pellet **132**, it disappears. Consequently, the player has not won any awards.

[0052] Referring to **FIG. 11**, another alternative outcome to the wager input can be a bonus outcome. The pellet **132** has dropped to the secondary screen **112***a*. Although none of the fish **130** has eaten the pellet **132**, a crab **132** comes onto the secondary screen **112***a* and snatches the pellet **132** to award the player a bonus. The bonus can be, for example, a bonus game, a progressive game, a bonus award, etc.

[0053] Referring to **FIG. 12**, a further alternative can be shown as the player has made multiple wager inputs, which results in a situation that is generally similar to the first second timeline **102** and third timeline **104** in **FIG. 3**. Specifically, the player has made four wagers (shown by the bet indicator **128**) for five credits each (shown by the cost indicator **126**) for a total bet of twenty credits (shown by the total bet indicator **116**). The player has touched the screen **112** to initiate pellets **232***a*-**232***d*, wherein the suffixes "a,""b,""c," and "d" indicate the sequential ordering of the placement of the wagers. Specifically the first pellet **232***a* is located in the right-most part of the screen **112**, the second pellet **232***b* is located in the right-central part of the screen **112**, the third pellet **232***c* is located in the left-central part of the screen **112**, and the fourth pellet **232***d* is located in the left-most part of the screen **112**.

[0054] The first pellet **232***a*, which is the first wager of the player, has drifted less than half way down the screen **112**. The second pellet **232***b*, which is the second wager of the player that is initiated after the first pellet **232***a*, has already been eaten by a fish **130** for a two credit award. Thus the outcome corresponding to the second pellet **232***b*, i.e., the two credit award for the second wager, has been indicated before the outcome corresponding to the first pellet **232***a*, wherein the first pellet **232***a* is still drifting downwards.

[0055] The third pellet **232***c*, which is the third wager of the player that is initiated after the first pellet **232***a* and the second pellet **232***b*, has already reached the bottom of the screen **112** and has been snatched by a crab **234** for a bonus award. Thus, the outcome corresponding to the third pellet **232***c*, i.e., the bonus award for the third wager, has been indicated before the outcome corresponding to the first pellet **232***a* and generally simultaneously with the outcome corresponding to the second pellet **232***b*.

[0056] The outcome corresponding to the fourth pellet 232*d*, which is the fourth wager of the player that is initiated after the first three pellets 232*a*-232*c*, has not been indicated yet. Potentially, the outcome corresponding to the fourth pellet 232*d* can occur after, before, or generally simultaneously with the outcome corresponding to the first pellet 232*a*.

[0057] In the examples described above, the random selection of an outcome is indicated at least in part by the location on the touch-screen that the player has chosen. In an alternative aspect of the invention, the award associated with a corresponding location on the touch-screen can change as a function of time. For example, it is assumed that the player can choose a location to drop a pellet from up to fifty discrete locations (#1-#50). In each one of the fifty locations, there is a corresponding award. The CPU continuously updates and changes the awards every 2 seconds. The player makes a first wager in location #33 at time zero, resulting in a zero credit award. Then, the player makes a second wager in location #33 two seconds later, resulting in a maximum credit award. Alternatively, in another example the selection of an outcome can be based on a random number that is drawn instantly on the player's touch. Thus, the award can be provided entirely as a function of time.

[0058] Optionally, for each time interval in each one of the discrete locations, the CPU could assign the time between "wager input" and "indicated outcome" from an nearly infinite list of times. For example, for each two-second interval in each one of the fifty discrete locations the CPU could assign a time of one second, for a pellet being eaten at the top, and a time of five seconds, for a pellet being eaten at the bottom.

[0059] In addition, because casinos like high coin-input rate, the pace of play can be changed to increase the rate of wagers received. For example, if the machine is being played slow, such as when the player takes a long time between wagers, the fish can speed up to show more aggression—i.e., the fish are hungry—to increase the speed of the game independent of the time the player takes between wagers. Thus, instead of indicating that a pellet has reached the bottom in five seconds, the game may indicate that the pellet has reached the bottom in three seconds.

[0060] In the examples described above in reference to FIGS. 4-12, the player's selection of a desired wager, using any of the four selection keys 118-124, and the initiation of the pellets 132, 232 is to be understood as being one step, i.e., receiving a wager input. Thus, the temporal independence of the outcomes to each other can occur regardless of the number of intermediate steps, which may be required from the player after selecting a desired wager and before indicating a corresponding outcome.

[0061] While the temporal independence of the outcomes has been described with regard to a fish-feeding theme, many other themes can be employed to achieve a similar effect on a wagering game. For example, the player may place the wager in the form of floating balloons and the outcomes, which correspond to the height or distance of each balloon's trajectory, can be indicated at different times. Another theme can be related to a game where the player chooses the location of butterfly nets in a field, wherein the outcomes correspond to whether the butterflies fly into the nets. Yet another theme can be related to a game where the player coordinates a small army, wherein the outcomes correspond to whether the army wins a battle.

[0062] In an alternative aspect of the invention, multiple outcomes are indicated in response to the player selecting a single location on the touch-screen. For example, in response to a first wager input and a second wager input, the player touches the touch-screen in a single location to initiate, generally simultaneously, corresponding pellets. The outcomes corresponding to each of two pellets are temporally independent of each other.

[0063] Alternatively, some of the multiple outcomes can be indicated at a time later than the time that the player has selected the single location on the touch-screen. For example, referring to the above example, a first pellet is initiated after the player has touched the touch-screen. After the first pellet has traveled a predetermined distance, the first pellet spawns a second pellet. Thus, the excitement level of playing the game may increase because the player may root for the second pellet to spawn before the first pellet is eaten by a fish.

[0064] Optionally, the amount of the wager input is offered to the player at a discount based on the number of pellets that are purchased. For example, assuming that the normal cost per single pellet is one credit, the player can buy three pellets for two credits, five pellets for three credits, etc.

[0065] While the invention is susceptible to various modifications and alternative forms, specific embodiments thereof have been shown by way of example in the drawings and herein described in detail. For example, the temporal independence of the selected outcomes can occur in any wagering game, including a basic game, a bonus game, and a progressive game. The basic game, for example, can be slots, poker, keno, bingo, blackjack, or roulette. Optionally, the temporal independence of the selected outcomes can occur in a bonus game that is triggered by a start-bonus outcome (e.g., an outcome in slots that includes a predetermined reel symbol or symbol combination). It should be understood, however, that it is not intended to limit the invention to the particular forms disclosed, but on the contrary, the intention is to cover all modifications, equivalents, and alternatives falling within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of conducting a wagering game, comprising:

receiving a first wager input and a second wager input from a player for playing a single game cycle of a wagering game;

selecting a first randomly selected outcome from a plurality of outcomes in response to said first wager input and a second randomly selected outcome of said plurality of outcomes in response to said second wager input; and

indicating said first randomly selected outcome temporally independent of indicating said second randomly selected outcome.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said indicating includes displaying at least one of said first randomly selected outcome and said second randomly selected outcome on a display.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising inputting a player choice to trigger a gaming sequence of said wagering game for each one of said first randomly selected outcome and said second randomly selected outcome.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein said inputting step includes contacting a location of a touch-screen display.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein said first wager input is received before said second wager input and said first randomly selected outcome is indicated after said second randomly selected outcome.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said wagering game is selected from a group consisting of a basic game, a bonus game, and a progressive game.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of said first randomly selected outcome and said second randomly selected outcome is a bonus-triggering outcome that triggers a bonus game.

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising awarding an award for each one of said first randomly selected outcome and said second randomly selected outcome.

9. A computer readable storage medium encoded with instructions for directing a gaming terminal to perform the method of claim 1.

10. A method of conducting a wagering game, comprising:

receiving a plurality of wager inputs from a player for playing a single game cycle of a wagering game;

selecting a plurality of outcomes corresponding to said plurality of wager inputs in response to said receiving step, each one of said corresponding outcomes being randomly selected from a plurality of outcomes; and

indicating each one of said corresponding outcomes temporally independent of each other.

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising determining the size of an award based on a location on a touch-screen chosen by the player.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein said location is chosen by contacting a touch-screen of a video display to trigger an award-determining gaming sequence.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein said determining step is based at least in part on the length of time of said gaming sequence.

14. A computer readable storage medium encoded with instructions for directing a gaming terminal to perform the method of claim 10.

15. A gaming system for playing a wagering game on a gaming terminal, comprising:

a display on said gaming terminal for displaying at least two outcomes of a plurality of outcomes, said at least two outcomes being randomly selected in response to each of said at least two outcomes receiving a corresponding wager input from a player playing a single game cycle of said wagering game; and

a controller coupled to said display and programmed to indicate on said display said at least two outcomes temporally independent of each other.

16. The gaming system of claim 15, wherein said display is a touch-screen display.

17. The gaming system of claim 15, wherein said controller is further programmed to present on said display a gaming sequence of said wagering game for each one of said at least two outcomes, said gaming sequence being triggered by a player input.

18. The gaming system of claim 15, wherein said controller is further programmed to indicate a second one of said at least two outcomes before a first one of said at least two outcomes, said second one of said at least two outcomes having a corresponding wager input that is received after a corresponding wager input of said first one of said at least two outcomes.

19. The gaming system of claim 15, wherein said wagering game is selected from a group consisting of a basic game, a bonus game, and a progressive game.

20. The gaming system of claim 15, wherein at least one of said at least two outcomes is a bonus-triggering outcome.

21. The gaming system of claim 15, wherein said controller is further programmed to provide an award for at least one of said at least two outcomes, said award being dependent on a choice inputted by the player.

22. The gaming system of claim 15, further comprising a wager input device coupled to said processor, said wager input device having a wager-amount adjustability feature and a wager-number adjustability feature.

23. The gaming system of claim 15, wherein said wagering game has a fish-feeding theme.

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