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- *before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments*
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GAME FOR COMPUTER AND SLOT MACHINE

BACKGROUND

The present invention relates to slot machine games and more particularly relates to a game using a tiered array of symbols which spin initially concurrently then stop in succession. More particularly the present invention comprises a computer or slot machine game in which a screen display comprises an array of reels which are assembled so as to present as a geometric cubic shape.

PRIOR ART

The electronic game industry has been expanding at a rapid rate due in particular to the rapid expansion of the internet and the ease of access that provides. This has spawned a growing demand for games for pure entertainment or for gaming as a result of which there has been a wide variety of games produced. The challenge in the electronic game industry is to create games which are novel, will satisfy the community thirst for entertainment and provide the requisite level of intellectual stimulation, bet returns and consumer interest. To attract consumers to play computer and slot games, game creators have incorporated rewards, bonuses and the like into the games. Bonuses and rewards may be awarded in a variety of ways such as but not limited to choosing symbols and betting on combinations.

INVENTION

The present invention provides an alternative slot machine and computer game providing a player with a wide variety of options within the one game.

In one broad form the present invention comprises

a game which can be played on a screen of a slot machine or computer, wherein the game comprises at least one row of symbols, numbers or the like which are displayed on said

screen such that the row/s collectively form a predetermined geometric shape; wherein the rows include at least one row having at least two symbols, numbers or the like and at least one other row having at least one symbol or number; wherein each said rows are capable of spinning horizontally or vertically; wherein said rows initially spin simultaneously then stop spinning in succession.

Preferably, the rows spin in succession from a top row to a bottom row or from a bottom row to a top row such that the rows form spinning reels.

The player may achieve an array of symbols or numbers which are of a kind when said reels spin. Preferably, there are at least three rows forming at least three reels which spin horizontally wherein said reels formed by said rows collectively form a pyramid.

The numbers or symbols prior to spinning appear on one face of the pyramid. When said reels are not spinning, they are in two dimensions and when they start to spin they change from two to three dimensions. When the reels stop spinning they change from three dimensions back to two dimensions. The screen display further comprises balance, win and bet buttons.

In another broad form the present invention comprises:

a game for display on a screen of a slot machine or computer; wherein the game includes a display including a plurality of rows which collectively form a generally pyramidal structure wherein said pyramidal structure includes at least a first row having at least one symbol or number, a second row adjacent said first row having a greater number of symbols or numbers than said first row and a third row having a greater number of symbols than said second row; wherein each said rows spin initially simultaneously at the commencement of said game and then progressively stop in succession row by row;

wherein the player attempts to match symbols from one row to like symbols of another row. According to one embodiment a player seeks to achieve a symbol or number match of up to ten of a kind. Preferably, the pyramid has three or four faces each of which faces include said rows of symbols or numbers.

In another broad form the present invention comprises:

a game for display on a screen of a slot machine or computer; the game including a generally pyramidal display collectively formed by a plurality of rows each including at least one symbol, number or the like; wherein each said rows are capable of spinning; wherein said rows initially spin simultaneously then stop spinning in succession; wherein the player attempts to match symbols of the same kind from each row.

According to one embodiment the game pyramid has three or four faces each of which faces include said rows of symbols or numbers.

The game pyramid is arranged such that a player may elect to play one or more of the faces of the pyramid wherein each face represents an independent game and the pyramid may flip to the next face at the option of the player.

In another broad form according to a method aspect, the present invention comprises;

a method of playing a game which can be played on a screen of a slot machine or computer, wherein the method comprises the steps of

- a) providing at least one row which is/are displayed on said screen such that the row/s form a predetermined cubic geometric shape, each said rows incorporating at least one said rows having at least two symbols, numbers or the like;
- b) providing at least one other row having one symbol or number;
- c) allowing each said rows to spin horizontally;

d) allowing each said rows to initially spin simultaneously then stop spinning in succession from a top row to a bottom row or from a bottom row to a top row.

At least one of said symbols or numbers on said geometric shape represent an independent reel; wherein the player may achieve an array of symbols or numbers which are of a kind when said reels spin.

Preferably, there are at least three rows forming three reels wherein said reels formed by said rows form a pyramid.

According to another embodiment, there are provided four rows wherein one said rows includes n symbols and the remaining three rows have $n-1$, $n-2$, $n-3$ symbols.

In another broad form of the method aspect the present invention comprises:

a method of playing a game which can be played on a screen of a slot machine or computer, wherein the method comprises the steps of;

a) providing rows of symbols which are displayed on said screen such that they form a predetermined cubic geometric shape incorporating a plurality of horizontal rows including at least one row having at least two symbols, numbers or the like;

b) providing at least one other row having at least one symbol or number; wherein each said rows are capable of spinning horizontally;

c) allowing said rows to initially spin simultaneously then stop spinning in succession from a top row to a bottom row or from a bottom row to a top row.

d) allowing a player to play said game to achieve an array of symbols or numbers which are of a kind when said rows spin.

In another broad form of the method aspect, the present invention comprises:

a method of playing a slot machine or computer game which includes a pyramid structure

comprising rows of symbols, the method comprising the steps of ;

- a) selecting at least one face of a display pyramid having a plurality of rows of symbols wherein an upper row has more symbols than a lower row;
- b) making a wager on the outcome of selection of predetermined symbols occurring on a face of said pyramid.

According to one embodiment the method further comprises the step of electing to play 1 to n faces of the pyramid wherein n is the maximum number of faces of the pyramid selected by the player.

In another broad form the present invention comprises:

a game for playing on an electronic device such as a slot machine, computer or the like: the game comprising rows of symbols or numbers disposed in a plurality of parallel and/or intersecting rows; wherein each symbol or number or row of symbols or numbers is capable during the course of playing the game of undergoing a temporary transformation or displacement from a start position along or within a predetermined plane: wherein each symbol and/or row represents an independent reel and wherein the object of the game requires a player to achieve on a second and any subsequent screen displays, like symbols or numbers in any row or in predetermined positions in said rows.

Preferably, the screen display comprises rows of numbers and/or symbols disposed in a triangular pyramid which initially appears in two dimensions, wherein when the game is in operation, each symbol and/or number in each row undergoes transformation or displacement whereupon an initial array of symbols or numbers are randomly altered from the initial display responsive to a play command from a player.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The present invention will now be described in more detail according to preferred but non limiting embodiment and with reference to the accompanying illustrations wherein:

Figure 1 shows an elevation view of a game pyramid according to a preferred embodiment of the invention.

Referring to figure 1 there is shown a pyramid face 1 which comprises four rows 2, 3, 4 and 5. On each row there are game symbols which appear randomly such that a player may achieve matched symbols in one or more rows. Any symbols or numbers may be used on each row. A player has the possibility of achieving 10 of a kind if all symbols on one face of the pyramid are matched. The pyramid may be two dimensional or comprise two, three or four faces. The player may elect to play each face in sequence flipping from one to four or more faces wherein each face represents an independent game.

The player may play one to n games in sequence wherein the pyramid rotation would continue until all n games have been played. Although figure 1 shows a pyramid having four rows, it will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that a pyramid of potentially any number of rows and symbols could be used employed in the game. Preferably the pyramid would have between 4 - 20 rows with the object of the game to match as many symbols as there are symbols available on one face.

In addition to use on slot machines the game may be adapted to computers for play via the internet or for individual play.

The primary object of the game is to match symbols on the display following a play with

a pay table. Following a play, the player receives on the display a random fall of numbers or symbols which pay according to the pay table. According to one embodiment, the initial screen which is displayed to the player comprises a two dimensional array of symbols and/or numbers arranged in rows which include horizontal and inclined rows. The payout table may be based on a result which allows predetermined symbols and/or numbers to be displayed in any position on the face of the pyramid and in any row. According to one embodiment when a play is executed the rows spin in unison about a vertical axis following which the rows stop spinning sequentially from a top row to a bottom row. In an alternative embodiment the transformation of the face of the pyramid may be a morphing transition from one state to another. Traditionally, symbol displays in slot machines have appeared in horizontal rows spinning in adjacent vertical planes. According to the invention, the display may initially appear in two dimensions following which a morphing transition reveals three dimensional components bearing the symbols and /or numbers. The rows may rotate in planes at an angle to the horizontal or in horizontal planes or the individual symbols or the symbols may pop out and return.

The number of symbols or numbers on the display will determine the statistical outcome of the game and the number of like symbols or numbers of the same kind will determine the payout. Preferably the outcome of a game is entirely random.

According to an alternative embodiment, the typical game may have an additional feature whereby a predetermined event during the initial play will trigger a second game state and possibly a number of subsequent game states in which the player can gain bonus rewards by clicking on an icon or performing a predetermined activity until a trigger

event cancels the second and subsequent games states and returns the player to the first game state. When a second game state is triggered, the screen display will change to a new image or form of presentation and generally undergoes a physical transformation. The game may be adapted as a skills game for one or multiple players at the same or remote locations.

It will be recognized by persons skilled in the art that numerous variations and modifications may be made to the invention as broadly described herein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1 A game which can be played on a screen of a slot machine or computer, wherein the game comprises at least one row of symbols, numbers or the like which are displayed on said screen such that the row/s collectively form a predetermined geometric shape; wherein the rows include at least one row having at least two symbols, numbers or the like and at least one other row having at least one symbol or number; wherein each said rows are capable of spinning horizontally or vertically; wherein said rows initially spin simultaneously then stop spinning in succession.

2 A game according to claim 1 wherein said rows spin in succession from a top row to a bottom row or from a bottom row to a top row.

3 A game according to claim 1 wherein each row represents a spinning reel.

4 A game according to claim 3 wherein the player may achieve an array of symbols or numbers which are of a kind when said reels spin.

5 A game according to claim 4 wherein there are at least three rows forming at least three reels which spin horizontally.

6 A game according to claim 5 wherein said reels formed by said rows collectively form a pyramid.

7 A game according to claim 6 wherein said numbers or symbols prior to spinning appear on one face of the pyramid.

8 A game according to claim 7 wherein when said reels are not spinning, they are in two dimensions and when they start to spin they change from two to three dimensions.

9 A game according to claim 8 wherein when said reels stop spinning they change

from three dimensions back to two dimensions.

10 A game according to claim 9 wherein the screen display further comprises balance, win and bet buttons.

11 A game for display on a screen of a slot machine or computer; wherein the game includes a display including a plurality of rows which collectively form a generally pyramidal structure wherein said pyramidal structure includes at least a first row having at least one symbol or number, a second row adjacent said first row having a greater number of symbols or numbers than said first row and a third row having a greater number of symbols than said second row; wherein each said rows spin initially simultaneously at the commencement of said game and then progressively stop in succession row by row; wherein the player attempts to match symbols from one row to like symbols of another row.

12 A game according to claim 11 wherein the player seeks to achieve a symbol or number match of up to ten of a kind.

13 A game according to claim 12 wherein said rows spin horizontally.

A game according to claim 14 wherein said numbers or symbols prior to spinning appear on one face of the pyramid.

14 A game according to claim 13 wherein each said row is a spinning reel.

15 A game according to claim 14 wherein when said reels are not spinning they are in two dimensions and when they start to spin they change from two to three dimensions.

16 A game according to claim 15 wherein when said reels stop spinning they change from three dimensions back to two dimensions.

17 A game according to claim 16 wherein the pyramid has three or four faces each of

which faces include said rows of symbols or numbers.

18 A game for display on a screen of a slot machine or computer; the game including a generally pyramidal display collectively formed by a plurality of rows each including at least one symbol, number or the like; wherein each said rows are capable of spinning; wherein said rows initially spin simultaneously then stop spinning in succession; wherein the player attempts to match symbols of the same kind from each row.

19 A game according to claim 14 wherein said numbers or symbols prior to spinning appear on one face of the pyramid.

20 A game according to claim 19 wherein each said row is a spinning reel.

21 A game according to claim 20 wherein when said reels are not spinning they are in two dimensions and when they start to spin they change from two to three dimensions.

22 A game according to claim 21 wherein when said reels stop spinning they change from three dimensions back to two dimensions.

23 A game according to claim 22 wherein the pyramid has three or four faces each of which faces include said rows of symbols or numbers.

24 A game according to claim 23 wherein said pyramid is arranged such that a player may elect to play one or more of the faces of the pyramid wherein each face represents an independent game and the pyramid may flip to the next face at the option of the player.

25 A method of playing a game which can be played on a screen of a slot machine or computer, wherein the method comprises the steps of

a) providing at least one row which is/are displayed on said screen such that they

form a predetermined cubic geometric shape incorporating at least one said rows having at least two symbols, numbers or the like;

- b) providing at least one other row having one symbol or number;
- c) allowing each said rows to spin horizontally;
- d) allowing each said rows to initially spin simultaneously then stop spinning in succession from a top row to a bottom row or from a bottom row to a top row.

26 A method according to claim 25 wherein each row is a reel.

27 A method according to claim 26 wherein at least one of said symbols or numbers on said geometric shape represent an independent reel; wherein the player may achieve an array of symbols or numbers which are of a kind when said reels spin.

28 A method according to claim 27 wherein there are at least three rows forming three reels.

29 A method according to claim 28 wherein said reels formed by said rows form a pyramid.

30 A method according to claim 29 wherein said numbers or symbols appear on at least one face of the pyramid.

31 A method according to claim 30 wherein when said reels are not spinning they are in two dimensions and when they start to spin they change from two to three dimensions.

32 A method according to claim 31 wherein when said reels stop spinning they change from three dimensions back to two dimensions.

33 A method according to claim 32 comprising the further step of providing balance, win and bet buttons.

34 A method according to claim 25 or 33 wherein there are provided four rows

wherein one said rows includes n symbols and the remaining three rows have $n-1$, $n-2$, $n-3$ symbols.

35 A method according to claim 34 wherein each symbol is contained in or on a pyramid.

36 A method of playing a game which can be played on a screen of a slot machine or computer, wherein the method comprises the steps of;

- a) providing rows of symbols which are displayed on said screen such that they form a predetermined cubic geometric shape incorporating a plurality of horizontal rows including at least one row having at least two symbols, numbers or the like;
- b) providing at least one other row having one symbol or number; wherein each said rows are capable of spinning horizontally;
- c) allowing said rows to initially spin simultaneously then stop spinning in succession from a top row to a bottom row or from a bottom row to a top row.
- d) allowing a player to play said game to achieve an array of symbols or numbers which are of a kind when said rows spin.

37 A method according to claim 36 wherein each row forms a reel.

38 A method according to claim 37 wherein at least one of said symbols or numbers on said geometric shape represent an independent reel; wherein there are at least three rows forming three reels.

39 A game according to claim 38 wherein said reels formed by said rows form a pyramid.

40 A game according to claim 39 wherein said numbers or symbols appear on one face of the pyramid.

41 A game according to claim 40 wherein when said reels are not spinning they are in two dimensions and when they start to spin they change from two to three dimensions.

42 A game according to claim 40 wherein when said reels stop spinning they change from three dimensions back to two dimensions.

43 A game according to claim 42 wherein the screen display further comprises balance, win and bet buttons.

44 A method of playing a slot machine or computer game which includes a pyramid structure comprising rows of symbols, the method comprising the steps of ;

a) selecting at least one face of a display pyramid having a plurality of rows of symbols wherein an upper row has more symbols than a lower row:

b) making a wager on the outcome of selection of predetermined symbols occurring on a face of said pyramid.

45 A method according to claim 44 wherein a player can elect to play 1 to n faces of the pyramid wherein n is the maximum number of faces of the pyramid selected by the player.

46 A game for playing on an electronic device such as a slot machine, computer or the like: the game comprising rows of symbols or numbers disposed in a plurality of parallel and/or intersecting rows; wherein each symbol or number or row of symbols or numbers is capable during the course of playing the game of undergoing a temporary transformation or displacement from a start position along or within a predetermined plane: wherein each symbol and/or row represents an independent reel and wherein the object of the game requires a player to achieve on a second and any subsequent screen

displays, like symbols or numbers in any row or in predetermined positions in said rows.

47 A game according to claim 41 wherein, said screen display comprises rows of numbers and/or symbols disposed in a triangular pyramid which initially appears in two dimensions, wherein when the game is in operation, each symbol and/or number in each row undergoes transformation or displacement whereupon an initial array of symbols or numbers are randomly altered from the initial display responsive to a play command from a player.

1/1

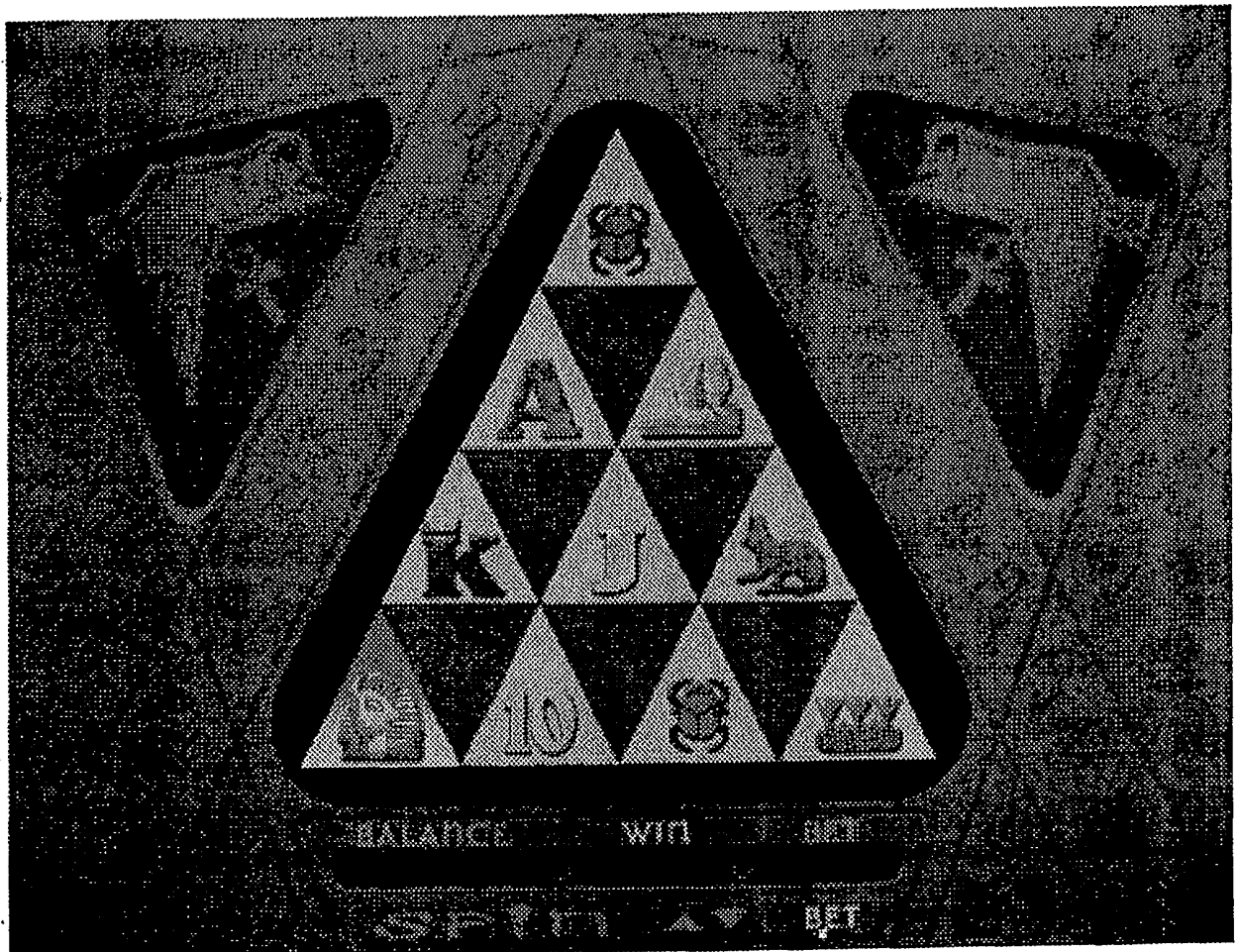


FIGURE 1

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/AU 01/01074

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER																						
Int Cl ⁷ : A63F 13/00, 5/04, G07F 17/34																						
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC																						
B. FIELDS SEARCHED																						
Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)																						
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched																						
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used) DWPI: 1. Computer game etc and spin etc and stop and succession etc 2. Computer game etc and spin etc and stop and simultaneous etc																						
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT																						
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.																				
X	US 4198052 A (GAUSELMANN) 15 April 1980 Abstract	1-43, 47																				
X	US 5413342 A (KAPLAN) 9 May 1995 Claim 1	1-43, 47																				
X	Derwent Abstract Accession No 96-316775/32, Class P36, JP 08141166 A (SANYO BUSSAN KK) 4 June 1996 Abstract	1-43, 47																				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex																						
<p>* Special categories of cited documents:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>"A"</td> <td>Document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance</td> <td>"T"</td> <td>later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"E"</td> <td>earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date</td> <td>"X"</td> <td>document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"L"</td> <td>document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)</td> <td>"Y"</td> <td>document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"O"</td> <td>document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means</td> <td>"&"</td> <td>document member of the same patent family</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"P"</td> <td>document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>			"A"	Document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"T"	later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention	"E"	earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date	"X"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone	"L"	document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	"Y"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art	"O"	document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	"&"	document member of the same patent family	"P"	document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed		
"A"	Document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"T"	later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention																			
"E"	earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date	"X"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone																			
"L"	document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	"Y"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art																			
"O"	document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	"&"	document member of the same patent family																			
"P"	document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed																					
Date of the actual completion of the international search 17 December 2001		Date of mailing of the international search report 24 DEC 2001																				
Name and mailing address of the ISA/AU AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE PO BOX 200 WODEN ACT 2606 AUSTRALIA E-mail address: pct@ipaaustralia.gov.au Facsimile No.: (02) 6285 3929		Authorized officer PETER WARD Telephone No.: (02) 6283 2129																				

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/AU 01/01074

C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	GB 2031632 A (HEYWOOD) 23 April 1980 Abstract	1-43, 47
X	US 4518098 A (FLEISCHER) 21 May 1985 Abstract	1-43, 47
X	DE 19520015 A (BALLY WULFF AUTOMATEN GMBH) 28 November 1996 Abstract	1-43, 47

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No.

PCT/AU 01/01074

Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This international search report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
2. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:
3. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a)

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. A game /method of playing a game as claimed in claims 1-43, 47
 2. A method of playing a game as claimed in claims 44, 45
 3. A game as claimed in claim 46
- as reasoned on extra sheet

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. ☒ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.: 1-43, 47

Remark on Protest

- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
- ☐ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/AU01/01074

Supplemental Box

(To be used when the space in any of Boxes I to VIII is not sufficient)

Continuation of Box No: II

The different inventions are:

1. A game/method including at least one row of symbols wherein the rows initially spin simultaneously and stop in succession as claimed in claims 1-43,47
2. A method of playing a game including selecting at least one face of a display pyramid and making a wager on the outcome as claimed in claims 44,45
3. A game comprising rows of symbols etc wherein each is capable of undergoing transformation and wherein each symbol and/or row represents an independent reel and the object of the game requires a player to achieve on a second and any subsequent screen like symbols etc as claimed in claim 46.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No.

PCT/AU 01/01074

This Annex lists the known "A" publication level patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned international search report. The Australian Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

Patent Document Cited in Search Report			Patent Family Member					
US	4198052	NONE						
US	5413342	NONE						
GB	2031632	AT	3455/79	DE	2926601	ES	479943	
		NL	7903423	US	4262906			
US	4581098	EP	178409	JP	61097991			
DE	19520015	NONE						