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(54) **BLACKJACK GAME WITH SIDE BET
WAGER**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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The present invention is directed to a blackjack wagering game including the steps of: wagering a first amount on an underlying blackjack game involving a player playing against a dealer; wagering a second amount on a side bet bonus game integrated with the underlying blackjack game, wherein the wager includes selecting at least one particular suit; providing one or more cards to the player and the dealer to form a player's initial hand and a dealer's initial hand; determining the outcome of the side bet bonus game wager, wherein the outcome depends on at least one of card of one of the initial hands including one or more cards of the at least one selected suit; and playing the underlying blackjack card game to determine a final outcome for the blackjack wager.

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(63) Continuation-in-part of application No. 11/300,088, filed on Dec. 14, 2005.

BLACKJACK GAME WITH SIDE BET WAGER**RELATED APPLICATION DATA**

[0001] This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/300088, filed Dec. 14, 2005.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**[0002] 1. Field of the Invention**

[0003] The present invention relates to games of chance, such as card games, and more particularly to a card game, such as blackjack or variants thereof, that facilitates multiple wagering opportunities.

[0004] 2. Background of the Art

[0005] Card games have always been popular as wagering games. The history of card games reaches back into biblical times. One of the most popular card games, especially for gambling or gaming uses is the card game known as blackjack ("Twenty-One" or "21"), the general rules of which are well known throughout the world. A summary of the rules is provided below.

[0006] The basic game of blackjack is played with one or more standard decks of cards wherein each rank of card is associated a numerical value (e.g., royalty is worth 10 points, Aces may be 1 or 11 points at the changeable option of the player, and actual numbers have equal point values, that is 1=1, 2=2, 3=3, etc.). The object of the game for the players is to be dealt or otherwise develop a hand of cards having a cumulative value closer to 21 than the dealer's hand, provided that no hands that exceed 21 remain in play.

[0007] Players are each initially dealt hands consisting of two cards which are displayed face up to compete against the dealer's hand of two cards, with one card of the two dealer cards being displayed face up while the other dealer card is hidden (e.g., face down). The rules of the basic game then provide a round in which each player has the opportunity to maintain the initial hand as dealt (referred to as "sticking" or "standing") or to receive additional cards (referred to as "hitting"). Cards can be added to the player hand in a player hand determination portion of the round until the cumulative value of the hand exceeds 21 or until the player indicates that he will stand with the present point count. A player with a cumulative hand value greater than 21 loses the game before the dealer has exercised the stand/hit options (referred to as "busting") and any wager that player has made is relinquished.

[0008] Once this player hand determination portion of the round has been completed, the dealer reveals the hidden or "hole" card to the players and either stands or hits. In this basic version of the game of blackjack, the dealer does not have the ability to decide whether to stand or hit. Rather, the decision is dictated by the house rules. For example, house rules may dictate that the dealer must typically take another card if the cumulative hand value equals 16 or less and must stand on any hand having a value of 17. In other variants of the game of blackjack, the dealer must take a hit on a "soft" 17, that is, a 17 that was made by a hand comprising two or more cards, at least one of the cards being an Ace that can be used to provide a total hand count of 7 (with the Ace counting as 1) or 17 (with the Ace counting as 11). Accordingly, if the dealer's hand should eventually exceed 21, the

dealer loses the game. Upon the dealer losing, the remaining players (that is, players who have not yet busted and their hands are still in play) win and are paid based on their wagers. In the event that both the player and dealer have the same value hands, this is a known as a "push" and the wager is returned to the player.

[0009] The house or casino has the advantage because the blackjack player must play and complete their hand before the dealer plays or completes his hand. However, blackjack is relatively simple to understand and is a fast and easy card game for most players to play. Additionally, many players may exercise some form of strategy when playing the game which betters their odds of winning. These strategies are often based on assessing a combination of factors such as the player's initial hand value, an estimation of the dealer's hand based on the one visible card and mathematical probability that the hidden card will be of a particular value, along with the chances that taking any additional cards will cause the player or dealer to eventually bust.

[0010] While the basic game of blackjack is a relatively fast-paced card game, it is always desirable to offer the players opportunities for variations in the game to maintain their long-term interest. Other betting options are desirable for the blackjack player other than just varying the size of their wagers. Additional betting options increase the revenue earned by each table. A blackjack game is needed that has wagering opportunities which permit the blackjack player to have a chance to win a large bet (as a regular option or an option after losing a number of conventional bets to the dealer) without the risk of losing a large amount.

[0011] Attempts have been made to vary the basic game of blackjack to provide players with additional wagering options as compared to the wagering options in the basic game. For example, some of these variants allow for a player to wager on the dealer's hand value being higher than the player's hand value but not more than 21. Other variants allow the player to wager on the value of the dealer's hidden card. In yet other variants, the players are allowed to make separate wagers on the initial hand with payouts dependent on the rank or suit of the cards dealt. In still other variants, the players are allowed to make separate wagers having payouts that depend on the player's cards and the dealer's viewable card being forming a traditional poker hand such as a straight or flush.

[0012] Another example of a blackjack variant wager is Royal Match 21™ game marketed by Shuffle Master, Inc., which includes an optional side bonus bet for Blackjack that considers only the first two cards that the player receives. If the cards are a King and Queen of the same suit (i.e., a "Royal Match"), the player wins. The game also includes an Optional Crown Treasure™ bonus wager which may provide awards to the player if the player and the dealer each receive a "Royal Match."

[0013] A series of Patents have been issued (including U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,012,719; 6,293,551; 6,371,867; 6,481,719; 6,523,831; 6,863,274; and 6,902,167, Webb) disclose side bet wagers on cards used in blackjack games, often but not always in a poker-type arrangement of cards.

[0014] Many blackjack variants have not been successful for reasons such as the variations unduly decrease the pace of game play, lack exciting betting options or a large jackpot

type of payout, or incorporate side wagering options that are not widely utilized by players because they are confusing or their benefits are unknown, minimal or just unappreciated. Thus, there is a need in the art to provide variants of the basic blackjack game which, among other things, include easily understood wagering options and large payouts that do not significantly slow down the game play. Furthermore, there is always a need to provide additional alternatives for people that enjoy games of chance.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0015] The present invention solves the problems cited above, among other things, by providing a blackjack wagering game having a unique side bet bonus game that provides a wager resulting at relatively high multiples of the wager.

[0016] In one aspect, the present invention is directed to a method of playing a blackjack wagering game that includes the steps of: wagering a first monetary amount on an underlying blackjack game involving a player playing against a dealer; wagering a second monetary amount on a side bet bonus game integrated with the underlying blackjack game, wherein the step of placing the side bet bonus game wager includes selecting at least one particular suit as an element of the side bet wager game; providing one or more cards to each of the player and the dealer to form a player's initial hand and a dealer's initial hand; and determining the outcome of the side bet bonus game wager, wherein the outcome of the side bet wager depends on at least one of the initial hands including one or more cards of the at least one selected suit; and playing the underlying blackjack card game to determine a final outcome for the blackjack wager.

[0017] In preferred embodiments of the present invention, the step of providing one or more cards to the player and the dealer to form a player's initial hand and a dealer's initial hand includes providing two cards to the player and two cards to the dealer, wherein only one of the dealer's cards is displayed openly to the player before the player may elect to stand or hit.

[0018] In one exemplary embodiment of the invention, the player selects the one suit for a single wager. In another, the player is provided with the opportunity to place multiple wagers and select one or more than one suit for each wager. In yet another exemplary embodiment, the suit is selected randomly (e.g., by a random event selector, card cut, processor, etc.). The outcome of the side bet bonus wager may depend on the player's initial hand including one or more cards of any selected suit. Preferably, a winning outcome of the side bet bonus wager depends on the player's initial hand including all cards of one selected suit.

[0019] Alternatively, the outcome of the side bet bonus wager may depend on the player's initial hand and dealer's displayed card including one or more cards of a selected suit. A winning outcome of the side bet bonus wager may then depend on the player's initial hand and dealer's displayed card including all or a specific minimum number of cards of one selected suit. For example, the wager may also be made that specific sets of cards (such as the player's cards or the player's cards and the dealer's up card) have exactly 1, 2 or 3 cards of a specific suit. The specific cards may vary with each game or format, and the award amount will depend upon the probability of any specific card combination event

occurring. For example, wagers may be placed on any one of spades, hearts, diamonds or clubs, and the specific combinations of, for example, A-K, A-2, any running cards (e.g., 2-3, 6-7, 10-J, etc.) or with multiple decks, even paired cards of the selected suit. A point to be considered is that the suit may be selected independent of the card combinations, as opposed to having a fixed wager on only predetermined suit and card combinations.

[0020] The blackjack wagering game of the present invention may also include the step of paying an award on a winning side bet bonus wager, wherein the award is a multiple of the second monetary amount. The multiple used to determine the award for a winning outcome on the side bet bonus wager may be modified or increased depending on the factors relating to attributes associated with the cards forming the initial hands other than their respective suits. For example, the multiplier may be modified if the player's initial hand or dealer's initial hand is a blackjack (sum of ranks) or pair according to the rules of poker, or a combination thereof. The multiplier may also be modified depending on the quantity of decks used to play the underlying blackjack game. Preferably, the side bet bonus wager pushes if the player's initial hand includes only one card of any selected suit.

[0021] These and other aspects of the present invention will become more readily apparent to those having ordinary skill in the art from the following detailed description of the invention taken in conjunction with the detailed description of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0022] The following description illustrates various exemplary and preferred embodiments of the game of the present invention, but is not intended to limit the scope thereof.

[0023] The present invention is directed to a system and method for providing an auxiliary game to an underlying game of blackjack which can be played by one or more players and is configured or adapted to provide an award (also referred to herein as a "bonus" or "side bet bonus" award) at an intermediate stage of the game prior to determining the ultimate outcome of the underlying blackjack game.

[0024] In one embodiment of the present invention, a blackjack wagering game played according to the standard rules of blackjack is integrated with a bonus side bet game. The bonus bet may be optional or mandatory. The game of the present invention is played by first placing an ante wager on the underlying game of blackjack and by making a second side bet wager. The player, or other wagerer, selects one or more possible card suits (e.g., clubs, diamonds, hearts and/or spades) in addition placing the side bet wager. The selection of at least one particular suit can be a distinct step in the practice of this described game. The game may also be played with a predetermined suit predetermined as an element of each side bet (e.g., only spades).

[0025] Preferably, each side bet wager comprises a separate bet on the selected suit. Thus, one to four separate bets may be placed in a traditional game of blackjack using standard cards. For example, in a live table game, the side bet may be placed by placing poker chips in a particular

location within a designated side bet area of the table having indicia printed thereon to represent the four suits and four possible wagering selections. Alternatively, one or more suits may be chosen randomly by an independent apparatus, such as an electronic device or a spinning wheel, prior to the start of a new game. The selected suit would be displayed to the players and dealer.

[0026] After placing side bet wager, cards are then provided to the player and the dealer to form a player's initial hand and a dealer's initial hand. In a preferred embodiment, the player's initial hand is compared with the side bet wager, that is, to determine if the cards in the player's initial hand are of the same suit as the one or more suits selected as part of placing the side bet wager. Alternatively, one or both cards of the player's initial hand and the one displayed card in the dealer's initial hand may be used to compare with the one or more suits selected in the side bet wager to determine a winner. Depending on the game rules and winning criteria, the side bet award is granted, if appropriate. After determining the outcome of the side bet, the underlying blackjack game is played to a final outcome. The determination may be made visually by the players and dealer and/or the determination may be identified and indicated to the table by an automated card reading systems, by way of non-limiting example, such as that disclosed in U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/622,321 and U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,460,848; 6,517,435; 6,517,436; 6,520,857; 6,527,271; 6,530,836; 6,530,837; and others, which applications are incorporated herein by reference.

[0027] The side bet award is preferably expressed as a mathematical formula or odds payout, such as in a pay table, which prescribes the winning criteria and amount to be awarded in relation to the winning criteria and the amount wagered. Preferably, the amount to be awarded is expressed as a multiple of the amount wagered. The multiplier may be the same or different, depending on the winning criteria satisfied.

[0028] For example, a greater multiplier may be applied to the bonus wager if the player's initial hand includes two suited cards of the same value, or a ranked hand according to the rules of poker, such as a pair, rather than any two different cards of the same suit. A greater multiplier may also be employed to determine the bonus award if the player's initial hand along with the dealer's displayed card includes one or more suited cards that form a ranked hand according to the rules of poker. Similarly, different multipliers may be employed if the player's initial hand includes cards of a particular rank or a blackjack consisting of cards of the selected suit. The award amount for winning hands may also be modified depending on the number of decks used in the game. Alternatively, the award may be all or a portion of a progressive jackpot. The relative portion of the jackpot awarded may also depend on the cards in the player's initial hand.

[0029] A preferred embodiment of the game is described below. In this embodiment, if the suit of a single card in the player's initial hand matches a selected suit, this results in a push (i.e., neither a win nor loss and the bet is returned). If both cards in the player's initial hand are of the same suit as a selected suit, the side bet wins odds. The bonus award is expressed as a multiple of the amount wagered. The specific multiplier to be used in calculating the award depends in part

on which winning criteria is satisfied, and the game being played, that is, the amount of decks incorporated in the game. An exemplary pay table for this embodiment is shown below.

Number of Decks	No Match	One Match	Two Match	Two Match and a Pair	Two Match and a Blackjack
1	Loss	Push	7 to 1	NA	40 to 1
2	Loss	Push	7 to 1	20 to 1	25 to 1
3	Loss	Push	7 to 1	15 to 1	25 to 1
4	Loss	Push	7 to 1	15 to 1	25 to 1
5	Loss	Push	7 to 1	15 to 1	25 to 1
6	Loss	Push	7 to 1	15 to 1	25 to 1
7	Loss	Push	7 to 1	15 to 1	25 to 1
8	Loss	Push	7 to 1	15 to 1	25 to 1

[0030] The above payable contains the winning criteria and mathematical formulas, in terms of a multiple of the monetary amount placed as a side bet wager, used in the following illustrative examples of the aforementioned preferred embodiment. In the examples, the game will be primarily described with respect to the traditional game of blackjack, but it should be readily apparent that the award or bonus wager and other features of the present invention can be applied to other variants of blackjack, such as Spanish 21™ game, other card games or other types of gambling games. If a special deck of cards is used, the payout odds are likely to be different. It should also be readily apparent that various other winning criteria and formulas may be used in conjunction with games of the present invention.

EXAMPLE 1

[0031] In a blackjack game using 1 deck according to the present invention, the player makes an underlying blackjack wager of \$10 and side bet wagers of \$5 on hearts and \$5 on diamonds. In this example, the dealer's up card is not considered. The initial hands are shown below:

Player's Hand	Dealer's Up-Card
Ace♥ Jack♥	9♦

[0032] Since the player selected hearts, and the player's hand satisfies one of the criteria described in the pay table above (i.e., "Two match and a blackjack"), the player has won the side bet bonus award of \$200 (40× the side bet amount of \$5) according to the formula in the payable (i.e., "40 to 1") associated with this criteria and amount of decks of cards used in the game. Although the dealer's up card is a diamond, and the player selected a diamond, the player loses the \$5 bet because in this embodiment of the present invention, the suit of the up card in the dealer's initial hand is not considered. After the side bets are resolved the underlying blackjack game continues to an ultimate resolution. Any amounts due to the player based on the outcome of the underlying blackjack game are granted independently of the side bet bonus award.

EXAMPLE 2

[0033] In a blackjack game using 4 decks according to the present invention, the player makes an underlying blackjack

wager of \$10 and a side bet wager of \$5 on hearts. The dealer's up card is not considered in this example. The initial hands are shown below:

Player's Hand	Dealer's Up-Card
10♥ Jack♥	9♦

[0034] Since the player selected hearts, and the player's hand satisfies one of the criteria described in the pay table above (i.e., "Two match"), the player has won the side bet bonus award of \$35 (7× the side bet amount of \$5) according to the formula in the payable (i.e., "7 to 1") associated with this criteria. Although the player's cards have the same count value (i.e., "10") it should be noted that these cards do not form a pair according to the rules of poker. After these side bets are resolved the underlying blackjack game continues to an ultimate resolution.

EXAMPLE 3

[0035] In a blackjack game using 4 decks according to the present invention, the player makes an underlying blackjack wager of \$10 and side bet wagers of \$5 on hearts and \$5 on clubs. The dealer's up card is not considered in this example. The initial hands are shown below:

Player's Hand	Dealer's Up-Card
Jack♥ Jack♦	9♣

[0036] With regard to the side bet on hearts, the player's hand satisfies one of the criteria described in the pay table above (i.e., "One match"), and the bet pushes (i.e., the player's bet of \$5 is returned) in accordance with the formula in the payable. With regard to the side bet of \$5 on clubs, the player's hand includes no cards having clubs (i.e., "No match"). Thus, the player loses this bet in accordance with the pay table above. The underlying blackjack game continues to an ultimate resolution after these side bets are resolved.

EXAMPLE 4

[0037] In a blackjack game using 8 decks according to the present invention, the player makes an underlying blackjack wager of \$10 and a side bet wager of \$5 on clubs. The dealer's up card is not considered in this example. The initial hands are shown below:

Player's Hand	Dealer's Up-Card
Jack♣ Jack♣	9♥

[0038] Since the player selected clubs, and the player's hand satisfies one of the criteria described in the pay table above (i.e., "Two match and a pair"), the player has won the side bet bonus award of \$75 (15× the side bet amount of \$5)

according to the formula in the payable (i.e., "15 to 1") associated with this criteria and amount of decks used in the game. The underlying blackjack game continues to an ultimate resolution after these side bets are resolved.

EXAMPLE 5

[0039] In a blackjack game using 6 decks according to the present invention, the player makes an underlying blackjack wager of \$10 and side bet wagers of \$5 on hearts, \$5 on clubs, \$5 on spades and \$5 on diamonds. Only the player's cards are considered in this example for receiving the side bet. The initial hands are shown below:

Player's Hand	Dealer's Up-Card
6♠ 6♠	Ace♣

[0040] The player loses the side bet wagers on hearts, clubs and diamonds, for a total loss of \$15, but wins the side bet wager on spades. Since the player's hand includes two spades and qualifies as a pair according to the rules of poker, the player wins a side bet bonus award of \$75 (15× the side bet amount of \$5) according to the formula in the payable (i.e., "15 to 1") associated with this criteria and amount of decks used in the game. The underlying blackjack game continues to an ultimate resolution after these side bets are resolved.

[0041] For example, the game proceeds and dealer's hole card is revealed to show a blackjack hand as follows:

Player's Hand	Dealer's Hand
6♠ 6♠	Ace♣ Jack♥

[0042] It should be noted that although the player has lost the \$10 ante on the underlying blackjack game and the three side bets of \$5.00 each for a combined total of \$25.00, the player has still won the bonus award of \$75, and thus has positive winnings of \$50.

EXAMPLE 6

[0043] In a blackjack game using 6 decks according to the present invention, the player makes an underlying blackjack wager of \$10 and side bet wagers of \$5 on hearts and \$5 on clubs. In this example, the dealer's up card is considered along with the player's cards for comparison with the criteria set forth in the payable. The initial hands are shown below:

Player's Hand	Dealer's Up-Card
8♥ 6♣	Jack♣

[0044] The player loses the side bet wager on hearts for a loss of \$5, but wins the side bet wager on clubs for clubs since the dealer's up card is included for comparison with the criteria. Since the player's hand and dealer's up card

includes two clubs, the player wins a side bet bonus award of \$35 (7× the side bet amount of \$5) according to the formula in the paytable (i.e., “7 to 1”) associated with this criteria and amount of decks used in the game. The underlying blackjack game continues to an ultimate resolution after the side bets are resolved.

[0045] In the above description, variations within the generic principles of the invention have been alluded to or described. One of ordinary skill in the art can develop other alternatives or additions within the scope of the invention. For example, special wagering features such as coin accepting slots, proximity detectors, or other wager indicators (particularly for the side bet wager) can be provided on the gaming table for the play of the exemplary blackjack game. Progressive bonuses may be designed for use with the appearance of special hands (e.g., dealer and player matching suited blackjacks or the like). Such a progressive bonus may be indicated on a special meter. Other options and components may be added to the play of the game without avoiding the underlying generic concepts disclosed in this description and the claims of the invention.

[0046] For example, the underlying game could be another casino-style card game such as baccarat, pai gow poker, or a specialty poker game. In the case of Pai Gow poker, each player and the dealer receive 7 cards. The players and the dealer “set” their hands, forming a five card hand and a two card hand. A side bet on the occurrence of a designated suit in the player’s two card hand and/or the dealer’s two card hand could be offered. Or, the designated suit can be in one or more cards in the five card hands, or combinations of the five and two card hands. Other casino games such as Baccarat could be played in a manner similar to the blackjack game described in detail above. The odds would have to be adjusted, as the player’s have more control over the positioning of cards in Pai Gow poker.

[0047] Although exemplary and preferred aspects and embodiments of the present invention have been described with a full set of features, it is to be understood that the disclosed system and method may be practiced successfully without the incorporation of each of those features. It is to be further understood that modifications and variations may be utilized without departure from the spirit and scope of this inventive system and method, as those skilled in the art will readily understand. Such modifications and variations are considered to be within the purview and scope of the appended claims and their equivalents.

What is claimed is:

1. A blackjack wagering game having a side bet bonus game comprising:

- a) wagering a first amount on an underlying blackjack game involving a player playing against a dealer;
- b) wagering a second amount on a side bet bonus game integrated with the underlying blackjack game, wherein the wager includes selecting at least one particular suit associated with a winning event in the side bet bonus game;
- c) providing one or more cards to the player and the dealer to form a player’s initial hand and a dealer’s initial hand;

d) determining the outcome of the side bet bonus game wager, wherein the outcome depends on at least one card in one of the initial hands including one or more cards of the at least one selected suit;

e) playing the underlying blackjack card game to determine a final outcome for the blackjack wager.

2. The blackjack wagering game according to claim 1, wherein the player selects the at least one suit.

3. The blackjack wagering game according to claim 1, wherein the player is provided with the opportunity to place multiple wagers and select more than one suit.

4. The blackjack wagering game according to claim 1, wherein the at least one suit is selected randomly.

5. The blackjack wagering game according to claim 1, further comprising the step of paying an award on a winning side bet bonus wager, wherein the award is a multiple of the second monetary amount.

6. The blackjack wagering game according to claim 5, wherein the multiple increases depending on the amount of decks used in the underlying blackjack game.

7. The blackjack wagering game according to claim 1, wherein the side bet bonus wager pushes if the player’s initial hand includes only one card of the at least one selected suit.

8. The blackjack wagering game according to claim 1, wherein the outcome of the side bet bonus wager depends on the player’s initial hand including one or more cards of the at least one selected suit.

9. The blackjack wagering game according to claim 8, wherein a winning outcome of the side bet bonus wager depends on the player’s initial hand including all cards of the at least one selected suit.

10. The blackjack wagering game according to claim 1, wherein the step of providing one or more cards to the player and the dealer to form a player’s initial hand and a dealer’s initial hand further comprises providing two cards to the player and two cards to the dealer, wherein one of the dealer’s cards is displayed openly to the player.

11. The blackjack wagering game according to claim 10, wherein the outcome of the side bet bonus wager depends on the player’s initial hand and dealer’s displayed card including one or more cards of the selected suit.

12. The blackjack wagering game according to claim 10, wherein a winning outcome of the side bet bonus wager depends on the player’s initial hand and dealer’s displayed card including all cards of the selected suit.

13. The blackjack wagering game according to claim 10, wherein a winning outcome of the side bet bonus wager depends on the player’s initial hand including two cards of the at least one selected suit, wherein the two cards are of the same selected suit.

14. The blackjack wagering game according to claim 10, wherein the side bet bonus wager pushes if the player’s initial hand includes only one card of the at least one selected suit.

15. The blackjack wagering game according to claim 10, further comprising the step of paying an award on a winning side bet bonus wager, wherein the award is a multiple of the second monetary amount.

16. The blackjack wagering game according to claim 15, wherein the multiple increases if the player’s initial hand is a blackjack.

17. The blackjack wagering game according to claim 15, wherein the multiple increases if the player's initial hand forms a ranked hand according to the rules of poker.

18. The blackjack wagering game according to claim 15, wherein the multiple increases if the player's initial hand forms a pair according to the rules of poker.

19. A blackjack wagering game having a side bet bonus game, comprising the steps of:

- a) wagering a first amount on an underlying blackjack game involving a player playing against a dealer;
- b) wagering a second amount on a side bet bonus game integrated with the underlying blackjack game, wherein the wager includes selecting at least one particular suit to be associated with a winning event in the side bet bonus game;
- c) providing two cards to the player and two cards to the dealer to form a player's initial hand and a dealer's initial hand, wherein the player's two cards are displayed and one of the two dealer's cards is displayed;
- d) determining the outcome of the side bet bonus game wager, wherein the outcome depends on at least one card of the at least one initial hand including one or more cards of the at least one selected suit; and
- e) playing the underlying blackjack card game to determine a final outcome for the blackjack wager.

20. The blackjack wagering game of claim 19, wherein the outcome of the side bet bonus wager depends on the player's initial hand including one or more cards of the at least one selected suit.

21. The blackjack wagering game of claim 19, wherein a winning outcome of the side bet bonus wager depends on the player's initial hand including two cards of the at least one selected suit.

22. The blackjack wagering game of claim 19, wherein a winning outcome of the side bet bonus wager depends on the player's initial hand including two cards of the at least one selected suit, wherein the two cards are of the same selected suit.

23. The blackjack wagering game of claim 19, wherein the side bet bonus wager pushes if the player's initial hand includes only one card of the at least one selected suit.

24. The blackjack wagering game of claim 19, further comprising the step of paying an award on a winning side bet bonus wager, wherein the award is a multiple of the second monetary amount.

25. The blackjack wagering game of claim 19, wherein the multiple increases if the player's initial hand is a blackjack.

26. The blackjack wagering game of claim 19, wherein the multiple increases if the player's initial hand forms a pair according to the rules of poker.

27. A blackjack wagering game having a side bet bonus game comprising:

- a) wagering a first amount on an underlying blackjack game involving a player playing against a dealer;
- b) wagering a second amount on a side bet bonus game integrated with the underlying blackjack game, wherein the second amount wager includes selecting at least one particular suit to be associated with a winning event in the side bet bonus game;
- c) selecting at least a single card rank or a two card rank, card combination or card order within the second amount wager;
- d) providing one or more cards to the player and the dealer to form a player's initial hand and a dealer's initial hand;
- e) determining the outcome of the side bet bonus game wager, wherein the outcome depends on at least one card in one of the initial hands including one or more cards of the at least one selected suit and one of the single card rank or a two card rank, card combination or card order;
- e) playing the underlying blackjack card game to determine a final outcome for the blackjack wager.

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