



US 20060091607A1

(19) **United States**

(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Javier

(10) **Pub. No.: US 2006/0091607 A1**

(43) **Pub. Date: May 4, 2006**

(54) **CASINO CARD GAME**

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

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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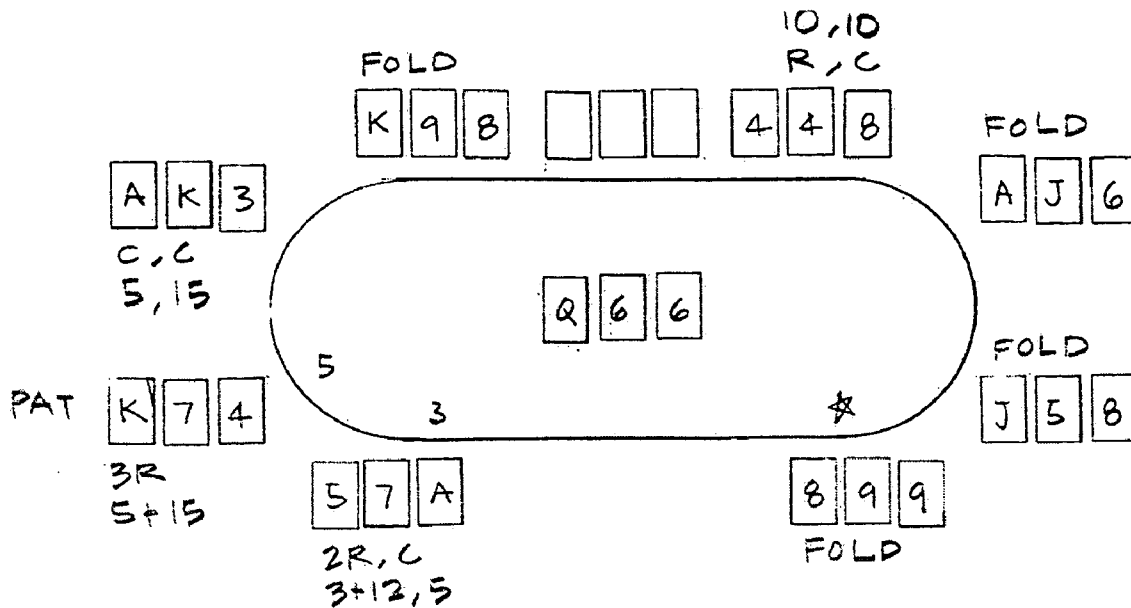
A betting game is described, using a standard 52-deck of cards. Each player receives 3 cards, including an exposed flop hand which indicates a target value. The game is similar to blackjack, in that each player tries to reach a target value for the cards in his hand. An innovative feature is that the target always changes, with each deal of the cards. Players may exchange cards for fresh cards, always keeping a total of 3. Three rounds are played before a winner is determined, and the deal ends.

(21) **Appl. No.: 10/978,170**

(22) **Filed: Oct. 30, 2004**

Publication Classification

(51) **Int. Cl.**
A63F 1/00 (2006.01)



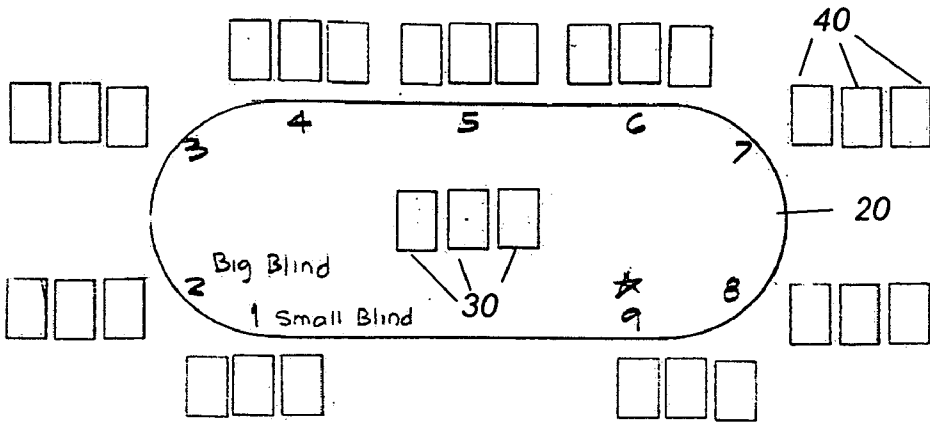


Fig. 1 A

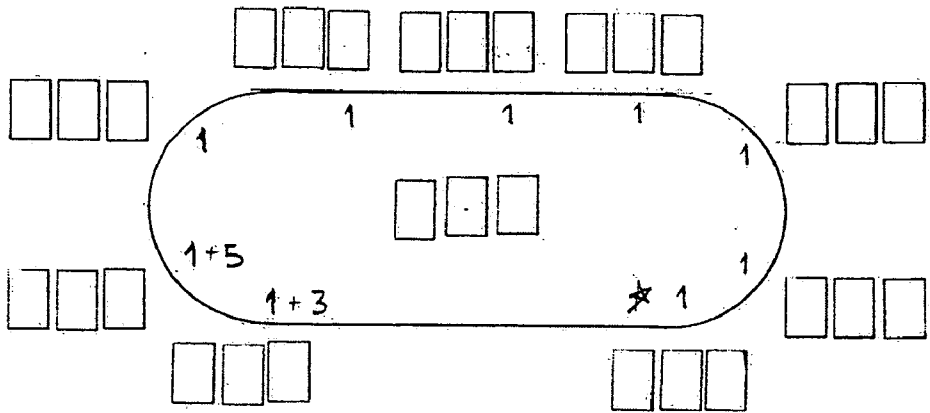


Fig. 1 B

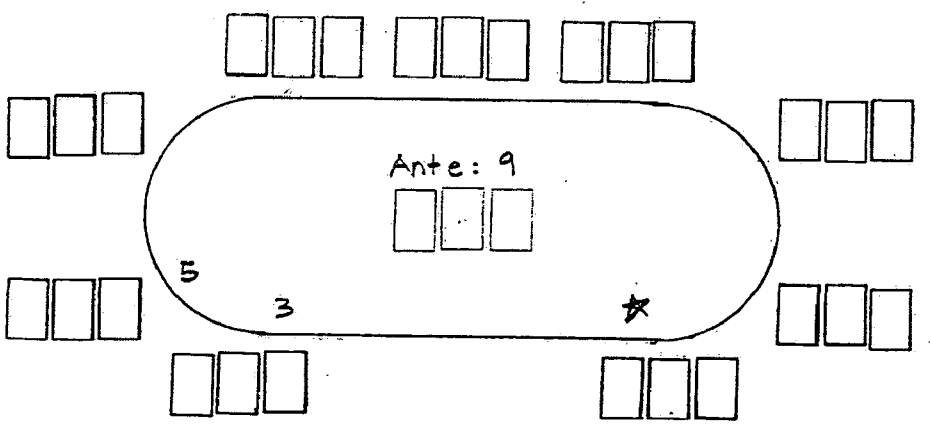


Fig. 1 C

Fig. 1

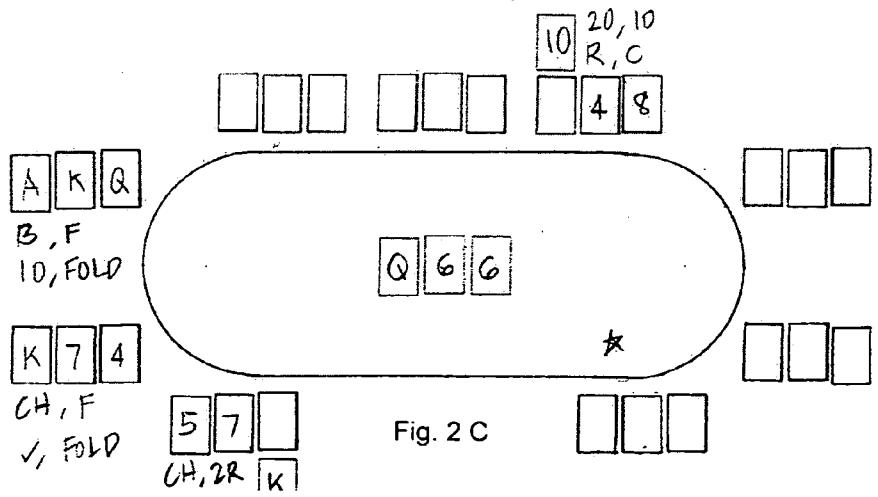
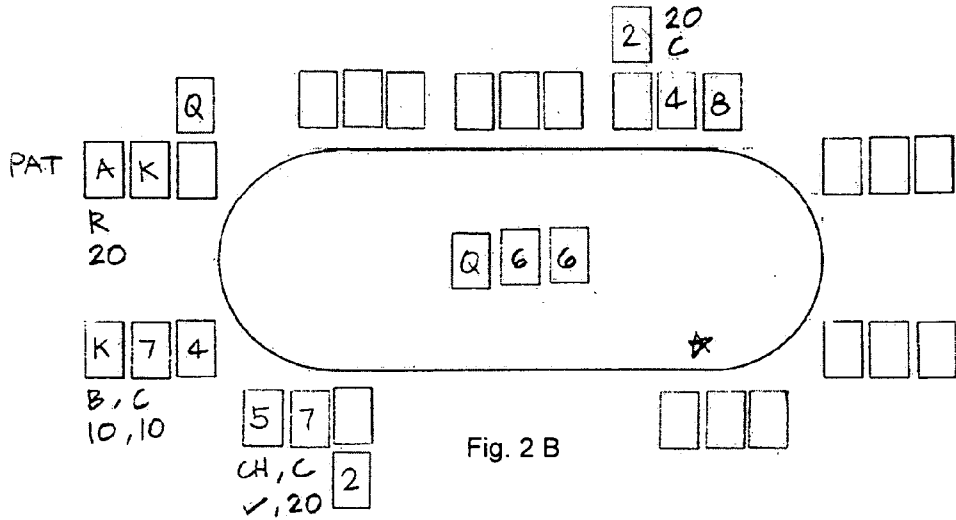
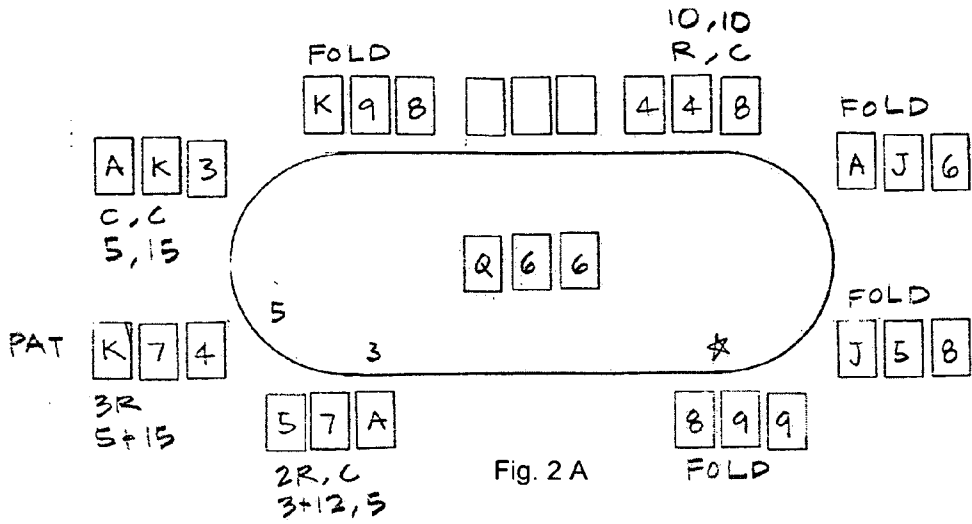


Fig. 2

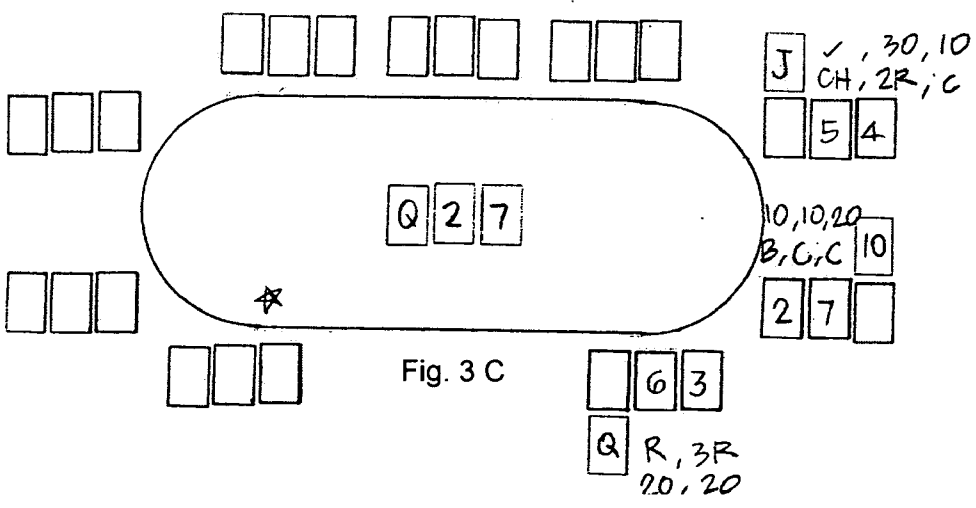
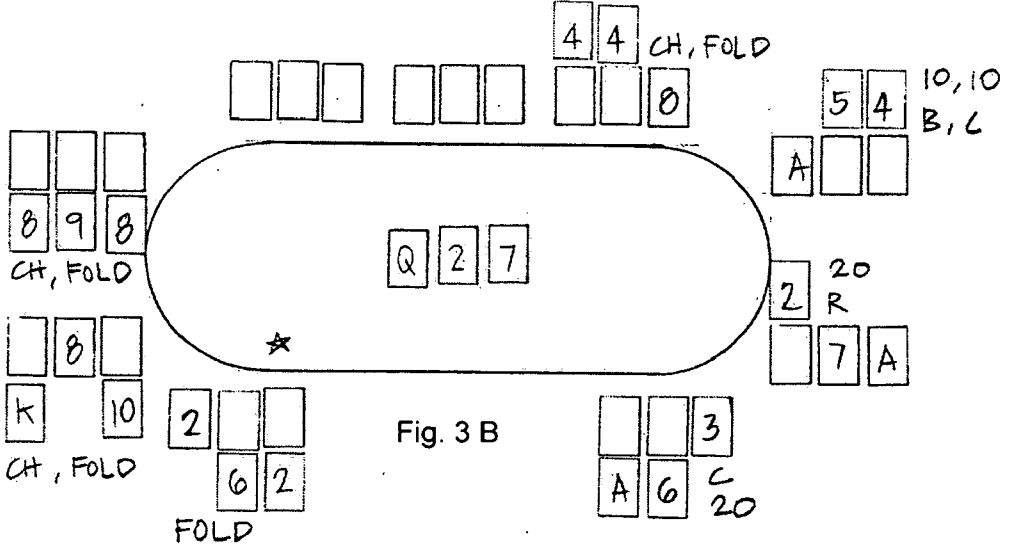
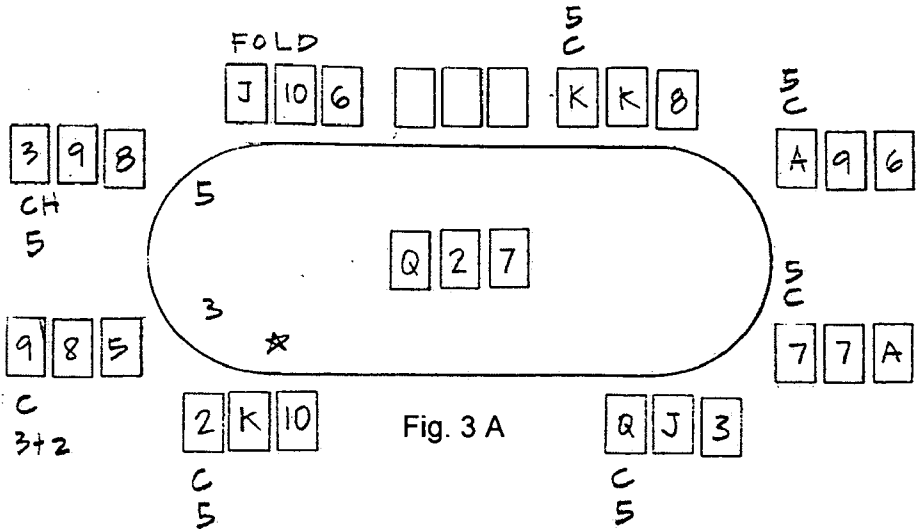


Fig. 3

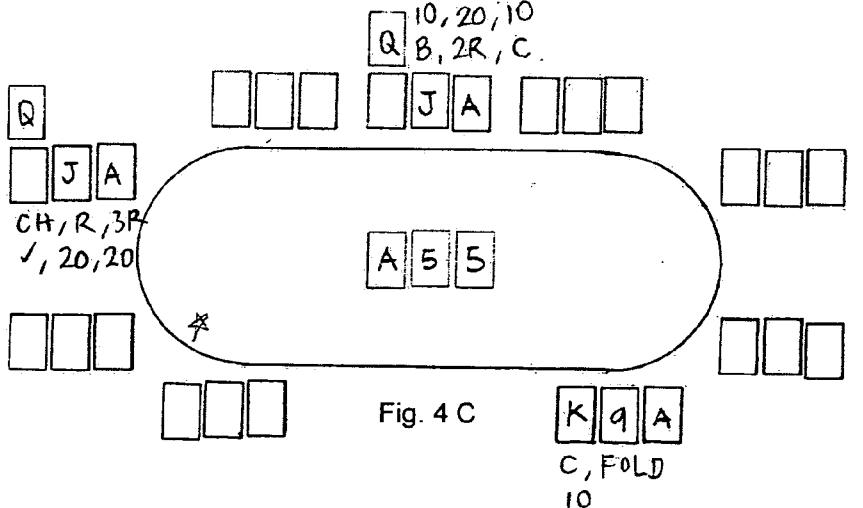
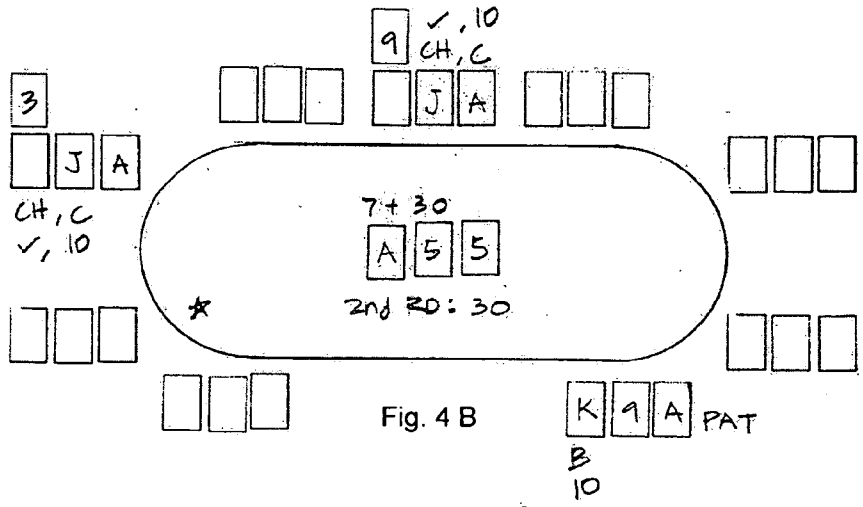
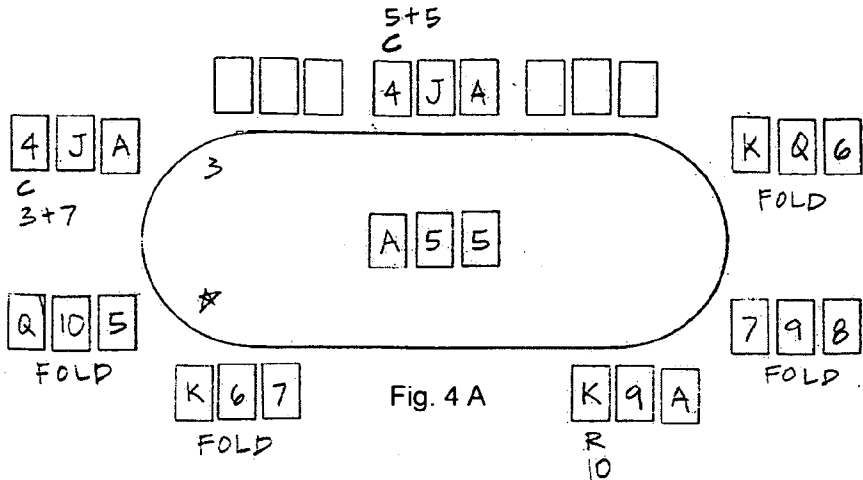


Fig. 4

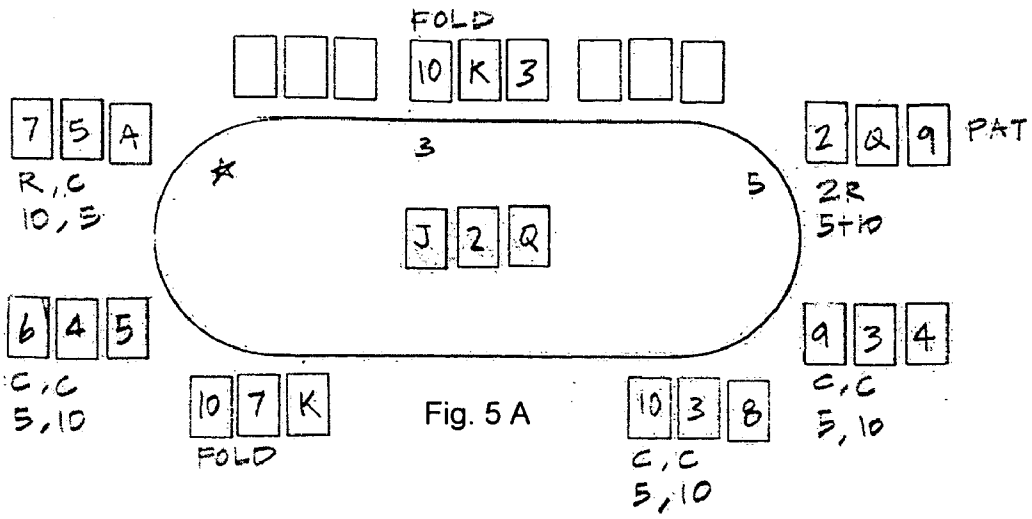


Fig. 5 A

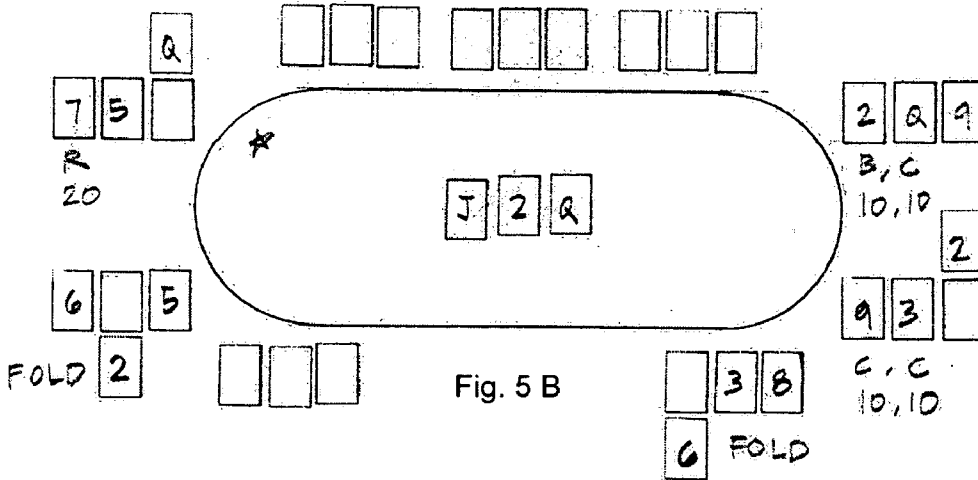


Fig. 5 B

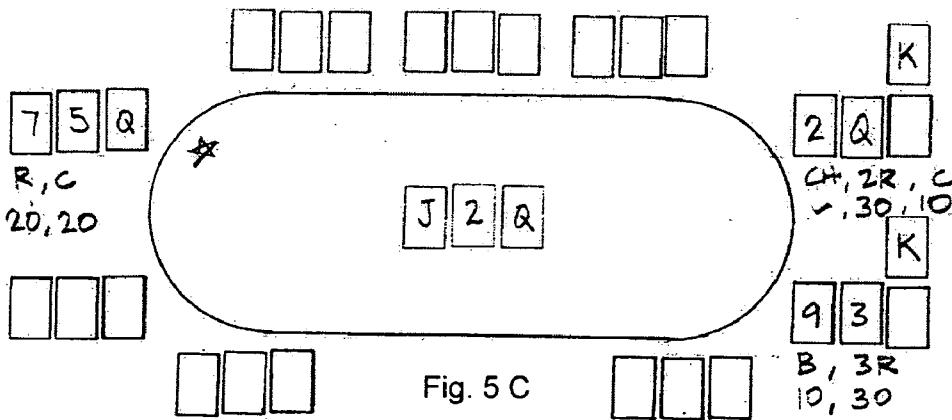


Fig. 5 C

Fig. 5

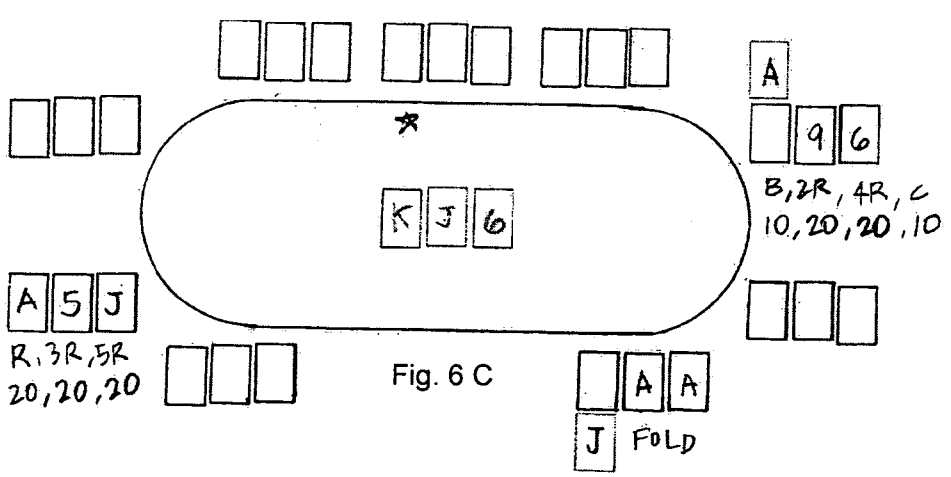
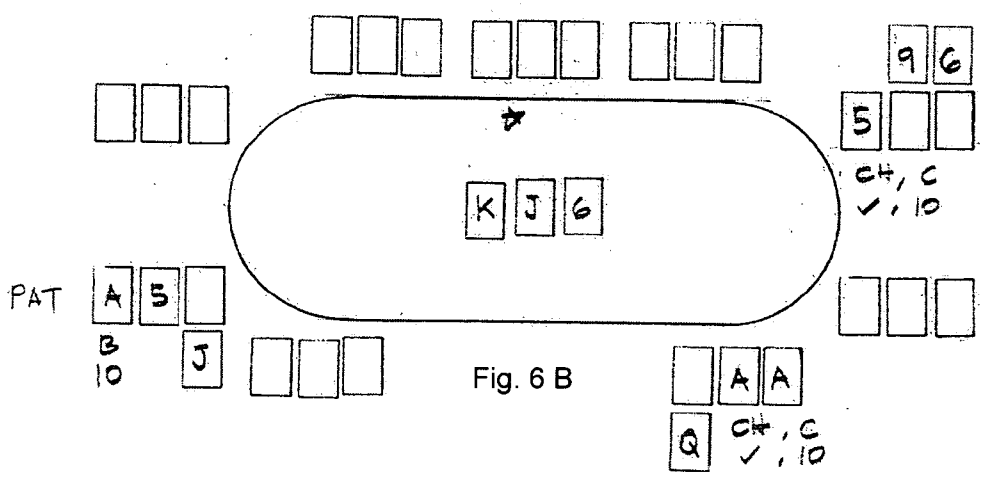
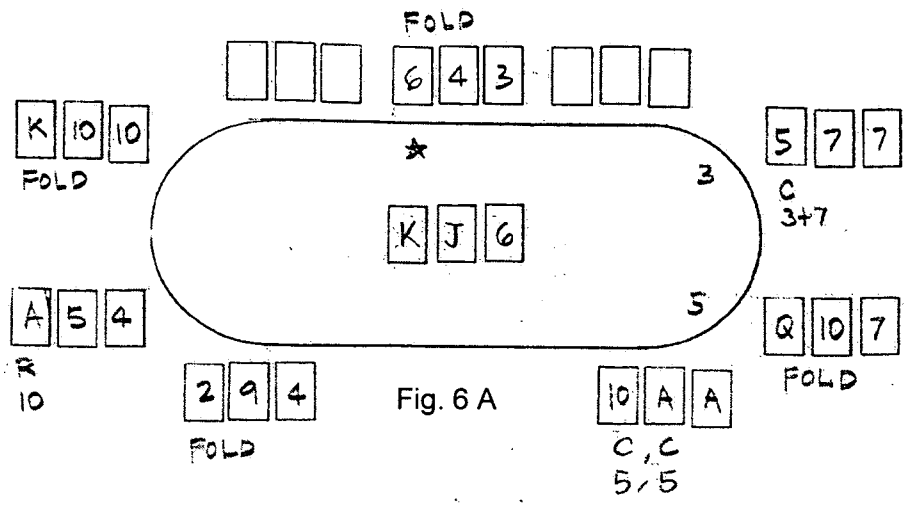


Fig. 6

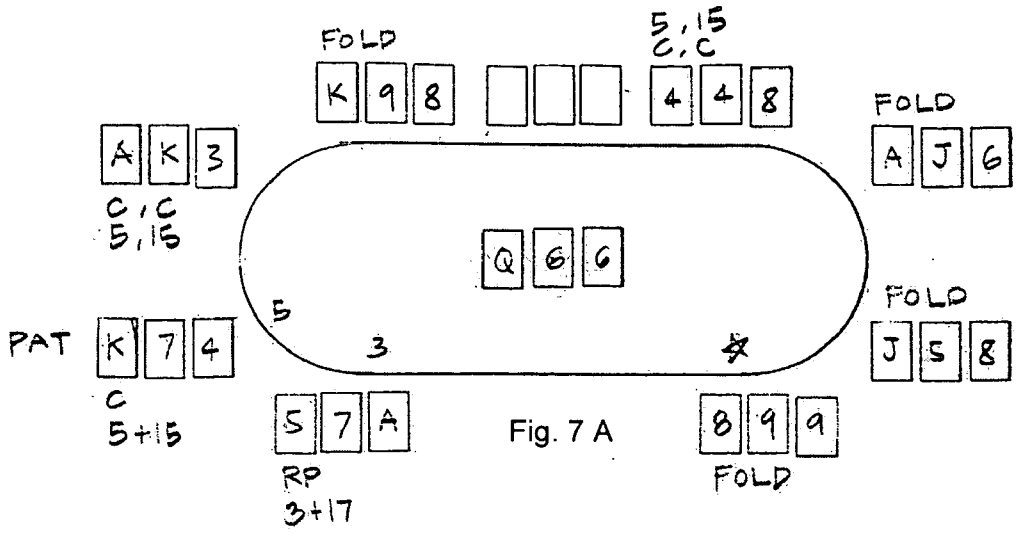


Fig. 7 A

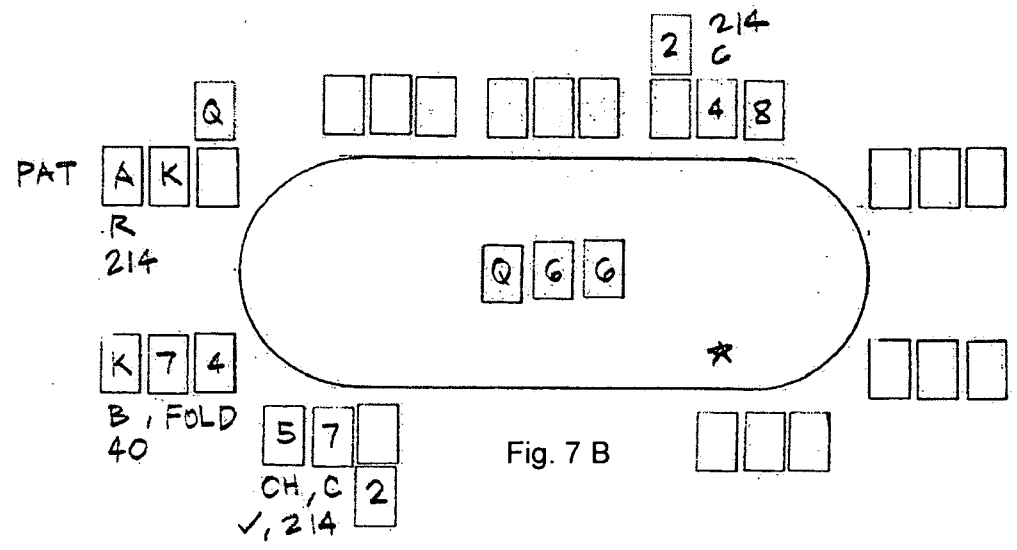


Fig. 7 B

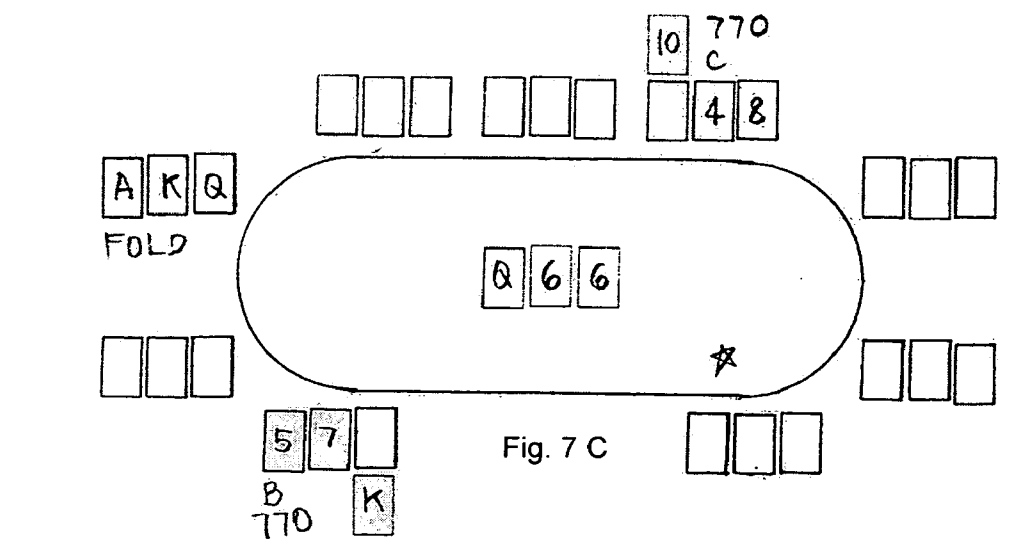


Fig. 7 C

Fig. 7

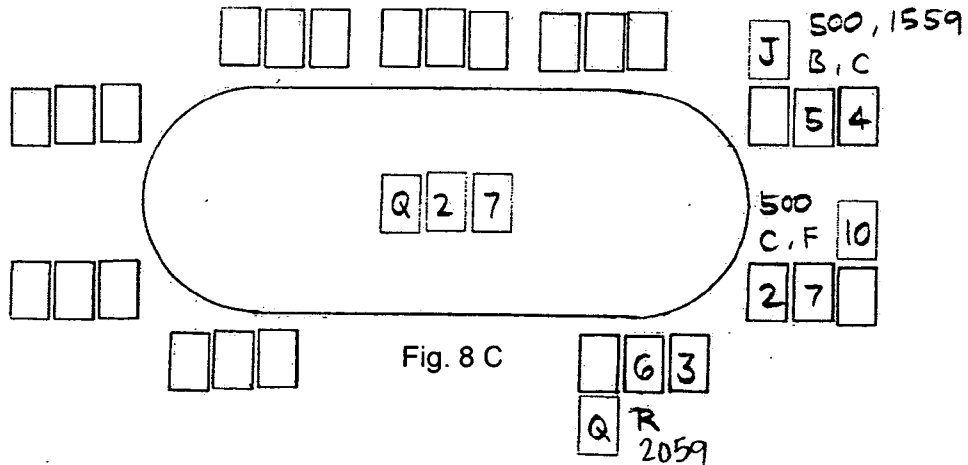
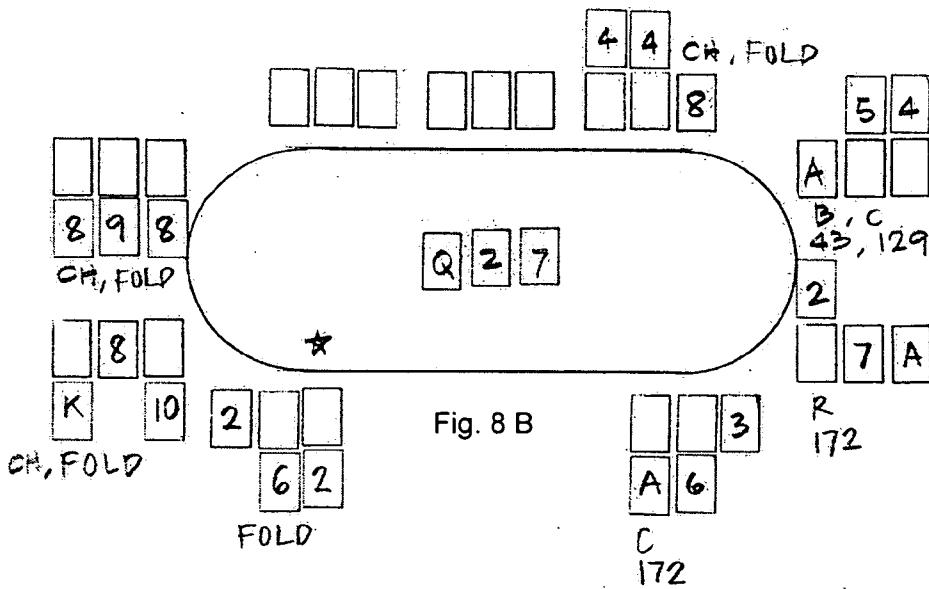
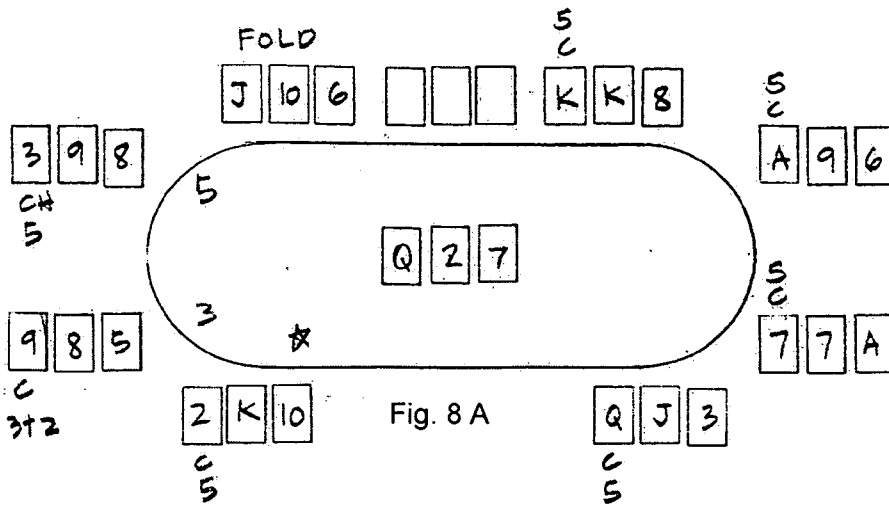


Fig. 8

CASINO CARD GAME

[0001] The present invention incorporates a new card game, suitable for wagering and casino play. The game involves hands of three cards, with multiple draws and betting rounds. An innovative scheme in the invention is a target value that changes with each deal.

BACKGROUND

[0002] The present invention is a game-playing method based on face cards of the type often used in casino card games. It is related to poker games, particularly the type called Texas Hold'em, in the target display hand and in the betting format. However, this game method does not evaluate hands in the same way as poker does, and indeed does not produce 5-card hands. Straights, flushes and full houses are not part of the current invention, though these are well known in the game of poker in its various iterations.

[0003] The current invention also some relationship to the games of Blackjack and baccarat. In Blackjack, or 21, a player is dealt initially 2 cards, and then optionally as many more as desired, one at a time. The object of the game is to score the highest point value possible, without exceeding 21. A player who exceeds 21 goes 'bust', and must fold. The dealer always bets last in turn among the players, and special rules may apply (for instance, when to accept a third card, or stand pat on the two cards initially dealt). Cards are valued at their face value, with 10 points for face cards, and Aces optionally at 1 or 11. This valuation method is exactly as that contemplated in the current invention.

[0004] In Baccarat, the object of the game is to score the highest point value possible, with 9 being the highest possible, in only 2 or 3 cards. Face cards count zero, and aces only 1. A player cannot bust in this game, for tens are not counted in the total. Thus, a hand of 7-A-9 totals to 17, but only counts as 7, since the 10 value is dropped. This game is really only similar to the current invention in the cards used, and in the fact that a hand may frequently contain 3 cards, although often a player retains only 2 cards.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0005] The many objects and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following descriptions, taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, wherein, by way of illustration and example, an embodiment of the present invention is disclosed.

[0006] The drawings constitute a part of this specification and include exemplary embodiments to the invention, which may be embodied in various forms. It is to be understood that in some instances various aspects of the invention may be shown exaggerated or enlarged to facilitate an understanding of the invention.

[0007] FIG. 1 shows a table with a face-down distribution of cards, as would be dealt for the game of the current invention. Views A-B-C show the player station numbers (A), the ante and blind bets (B), and the pot (C) prior to exposure of any cards.

[0008] FIG. 2 displays rounds of betting and hands as would be dealt for a preferred embodiment of the game of the current invention. Views A-B-C show the hands, bets,

and pot accumulation after the 1st round (A), after the 2nd round (B), and after the 3rd round (C) prior to exposure of players' cards.

[0009] FIG. 3 shows the next deal (2nd round) in the same game as displayed in the previous figures. Again, views A-B-C show the hands, bets, and pot accumulation after the 1st round (A), after the 2nd round (B), and after the 3rd round (C) prior to exposure of players' cards.

[0010] FIG. 4 displays the next deal (3rd round) in the same game as displayed in previous figures. Again, views A-B-C show the hands, bets, and pot accumulation after the 1st round (A), after the 2nd round (B), and after the 3rd round (C) prior to exposure of players' cards. Players have entered and exited the game between this deal and the previous deal of FIG. 3.

[0011] FIG. 5 displays the next deal (4th round) in the same game as displayed in previous figures. Again, views A-B-C show the hands, bets, and pot accumulation after the 1st round (A), after the 2nd round (B), and after the 3rd round (C) prior to exposure of players' cards.

[0012] FIG. 6 displays the next deal (5th round) in the same game as displayed in previous figures. Again, views A-B-C show the hands, bets, and pot accumulation after the 1st round (A), after the 2nd round (B), and after the 3rd round (C) prior to exposure of players' cards.

[0013] FIG. 7 displays the same hands and deal of FIG. 2, but with different betting limits ('Pot Limit'). Again, views A-B-C show the hands, bets, and pot accumulation after the 1st round (A), after the 2nd round (B), and after the 3rd round (C) prior to exposure of players' cards. Note that the total pot is much higher than the pot after 3 rounds in FIG. 2.

[0014] FIG. 8 illustrates the same hands and deal of FIG. 3, but with different betting limits ('Pot Limit'). Again, views A-B-C show the hands, bets, and pot accumulation after the 1st round (A), after the 2nd round (B), and after the 3rd round (C) prior to exposure of players' cards. Note that the total pot is much higher than the pot after 3 rounds in FIG. 3.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0015] Detailed descriptions of the preferred embodiment are provided herein. It is to be understood, however, that the present invention may be embodied in various forms. Therefore, specific details disclosed herein are not to be interpreted as limiting, but rather as a basis for the claims and as representative basis for teaching one skilled in the art to employ the present invention in virtually any appropriately detailed system, structure or manner.

[0016] The present invention is a game-playing method based on face cards of the type often used in casino card games. Each card is a token, ideally with only two surfaces, an indicating surface and a blank surface. The blank surface may have a non-indicating design common to all cards in a single deck. The indicating surface will have either a picture, or a number of pips, and a corresponding digit or digits indicating the value of the card, from 1 to 10. 1 is commonly called the Ace, and has the indicator digit A rather than 1.

The picture cards are called face cards, and in a standard deck include 4 kings, four queens, and four jacks.

[0017] The cards in a standard deck are arranged into four suits, commonly spades, hearts, diamonds, and clubs. Each suit has one of each pip card from 2-10, plus one of each face card, and one Ace. Each card has its suit indicated on its face. For the preferred embodiment of the current invention, the suit is not material to game play. Thus, two Kings of different suits carry the same rank or value of 10 points.

[0018] The basic scheme for the preferred embodiment of the present invention is a card game with multiple players, including one person identified as the dealer. In a casino, the dealer likely will be a casino employee and the dealer position will remain unchanged. In a social setting, the dealer may rotate among the players, such that each player has a chance to become dealer.

[0019] The dealer will deal facedown, from a standard deck of shuffled or otherwise mixed deck of cards, a hand of three cards to each player, including the dealer. Also, a "target hand" of three cards is dealt facedown. Each player, including the dealer, may look at his own hand, and no other, as soon as all hands are dealt. At no time between dealing of the cards and the beginning of the process of determination of the winner may any player look at any other players hands, except that every player can view the target hand when it is exposed at the appropriate point in the game.

[0020] At the beginning of each round, a player may exchange up to 3 cards for an equal number of new cards. He gives the discarded cards face down to the dealer, who deals an equal number of new cards facedown to the same player from the deck. Optionally, no exchange will be allowed in the first round only.

[0021] Starting with the player to the left side of the dealer, and progressing in clockwise fashion, each player must place a bet. Optionally, there may be a set "ante" amount to the first bet, in which case every player places the same bet.

[0022] Another option is to have the first two players bet blind, as in Texas Hold'em poker. In this betting scenario, often used in casinos, the first player has the lower "small blind" forced bet, and the second player has the larger "big blind" forced bet. If the betting limits, for example, are 5-10, the small blind player must bet 3 and the big blind player must bet 5 dollars at the beginning of the first round. The remaining players bet in turn. Each player must at least match the amount of the highest bet (\$5 after the big blind bet). A player could additionally raise by the limit amount (\$5 in this example), in which case the remaining players must put in \$10 each, at least, or else fold.

[0023] In subsequent rounds, as called by the dealer, each player has the right to stand pat, or to exchange cards for newly dealt cards, always maintaining 3 cards in his hand. Optionally, in some games the player only has the option of exchanging all 3 cards in his hand for a new set of 3 cards, or standing pat, and thus exchanging no cards.

[0024] In subsequent betting rounds (as is found in the game of poker), the first player may bet the limit amount, or fold. Each subsequent player after the first player must place a bet at least equal to the amount bet by the first player, or "fold" (quit the game). Any player who folds at any point in

the game loses the amount he has bet up to that point in the game, and may no longer participate in the game until a new deal begins.

[0025] If any player places a bet larger than that of the first player, by means of calling and then raising, all subsequent players must at least match the larger bet, or fold. Earlier players must supplement their earlier bets to match the higher bet, or fold.

[0026] On the first and any subsequent round, the dealer is always in the last position to act. The dealer may also determine when a round is finished, and so announce to the players.

[0027] After the first round, or optionally before betting begins during the first round, the dealer exposes the "target" hand, for all to see. The target remains exposed through the remainder of the deal. The target hand provides the target score. The target score is the sum of the values of the three cards in the target hand. The value of each card is described in the following paragraph. The goal of each player is to match the target score, or to come as close as possible to a match, with lower than target scores preferred to higher than target scores.

[0028] In the preferred embodiment, values of each card are as follows:

[0029] 1. Ace=1 or 11

[0030] 2. Face card (K, Q, J)=10

[0031] 3. Spot cards (2-10)=face value

[0032] The Ace takes on the value of either 1 or 11 as selected by the player holding the Ace. In the target hand, the Ace is always valued at 11. Thus, the maximum possible hand is 33 points from AAA. The minimum possible hand for a player is also AAA, valued at 3 points. The minimum possible hand for the target, however, is 222, valued at 6 points.

[0033] After the target hand is exposed, a second round begins. The players are again allowed to exchange cards, and to bet, beginning again with the player to the immediate left of the Big Blind. Players must again at least match the highest bet, or fold. The dealer is the last to bet.

[0034] After the final round of betting, which in the preferred embodiment is the round after the target is exposed, the hands of all players remaining in the game (ie, all who have not folded) are turned face up, and the value of each hand is calculated. The winning hand is the hand that matches the value of the target hand. If there is no matching hand, the winning hand is the hand closest in value, but less than, the value of the target hand. If there is no lower-valued hand, the winning hand is the hand closest in value, but greater than, the value of the target hand.

[0035] In case two hands are of matching value, and each would be the winning hand absent the other, the tie breaking rules are as follows:

[0036] 1. The hand with the highest single card wins.

[0037] 2. If still tied, the hand with the highest second card wins.

[0038] 3. If still tied, the two hands are both winners, and split the pot.

[0039] As in poker, the “pot” is the sum of the accumulated bets of the players. The player with the winning hand collects the pot. If two hands remain tied after the tie breaking rules are applied, the players holding the two tied hands split the proceeds evenly from the pot.

[0040] The game will now be more fully explained through the descriptions of the drawing figures associated with this application. These drawings represent various stages in a table at a casino where the game of the current invention is being played. The table has 9 stations. The betting scheme is 5-10, meaning a 1st-round bet is fixed at 5 chips (except for the little blind bet), and a bet in subsequent rounds is fixed at 10 chips. There are 2 blind bet stations, a big blind bet which must bet the standard 5 ‘blind’ (ie, before looking at his hand), and a little blind station, where the player must bet 3 blind. Station 1 starts out as little blind, station 2 starts out as big blind, and station 9 (or, if vacant, the highest occupied station) as the dealer.

[0041] **FIG. 1 A** displays a casino table with a face-down distribution of cards, as would be dealt for the game of the current invention. Views A-B-C show the player station numbers (A), the ante and blind bets (B), and the pot (C) prior to exposure of any cards. As will be seen in the subsequent figures, the dealer position starts at the last numbered position (9, in this case) and moves one player to the left (clockwise) each new deal. Similarly, the blind betting positions will move 1 hand to the left. Betting units are chips, as is common in a casino. The chips can be valued at \$1.00, as is common, or hold another value.

[0042] **FIG. 1 B** continues with the player in position number 1 making a forced bet of 3 chips for occupying the small blind position, and 1 more for the ante. The player in position number 2 makes a forced bet of 5 chips for occupying the big blind position, and 1 more for the ante. All other players including the dealer ante 1 chip each.

[0043] **FIG. 1 C** shows the final table position before any cards are faced, or even dealt. Position 1 player has a bet of 3 chips, and position 2 has a bet of 5 chips on the table. The pot has the combined ante of 9 chips.

[0044] **FIG. 2 A** displays a new hand, with 8 players (station 5 being unoccupied), after the first hand has been dealt to each player and the flop. The flop is the three-card hand exposed in the middle of the table. In this game, the flop provides the target value that each player wishes to reach, but not exceed. The three cards of Q 6 6 give the flop a target value of 22.

[0045] Continuing with **FIG. 2 A**, the player at position 3 (henceforth, Player 3, etc.) begins the betting round, as players 1 and 2 have already placed their forced bets. The pot holds the combined ante of 8 chips. Player 3 sees the high bet (so far) of 5, and calls. Player 4 folds. Player 6 sees the current bet of 5, and raises 5. Players 7, 8, and 9 all fold. Player 1 raises 12 to raise his total to 15, calling. Player 2, who is still allowed to raise, raises to 20. Players 3, 6, and 2 call, totaling 20 each. The pot now has a total of 88 (8 ante, and 80 bet on the 1st round).

[0046] Moving to **FIG. 2 B**, each player is allowed to exchange cards with fresh cards from the deck. Players 1, 3, and 6 each elect to draw 1 new card. Player 2, who stands pat with his hand, begins the betting with a bet of 10 chips. He is feeling good about his hand, which totals 21, just under

the target of 22, though no other player can see this. (Although all hands are visible in the Figures, the hands are only exposed at the end of the deal, except for the flop [which is always exposed after being dealt] and folded hands [which are only exposed at the option of the player folding].)

[0047] Player 3 also drew a card, as his initial holding of 24 points would “bust”, or exceed the target value of the flop hand. (Alternatively, valuing the Ace=1 pt lowers the hand value to 14, well below the target.) In many games, such as blackjack (21), a bust hand is out of the game, just like a folded hand. In the game of the present invention, a bust hand can still play, but—unless improved by a later draw—it will lose to any hand that is lower in value that (or equals) the target value. Somewhat surprisingly, player 3 exchanged his 3-spot, gambling to receive an Ace or a face. Instead, he received a Queen. He remained in the bidding, hoping to win by standing pat on a hand with value of 21. Thus, he not only met the bet of 10, but raised 10 more, for a level of 20.

[0048] Both Player 1 and Player 6 had originally held hands totaling below the target of 22. Both had 2-card combinations totaling 12, so both kept the two cards and exchanged the third, hoping for a 10-spot or face card to reach the target of 22. Instead, both received deuces, and thus have hands well below the target value. Still, both players called with 20, staying in the bidding, and Player 2, who had initiated the bidding, called with a total of 20. Thus, the round again produced a total betting sum of 80, and the pot was now at 80+80+8=168.

[0049] In the final round, Player 3 began the bidding with a bet of 10, even though he chose to stand pat. Players 6 and 1 again kept their 2-card combinations of value 12 and exchanged the new cards they had just received. Drawing cards worth 10, thus creating a total value of 22, the target, for each, rewarded both. Both players bid strongly, causing Player 3, the bluffer, to fold. Even Player 2, with a strong hand of value 21, sensed the holdings of his opposition and correctly folded, without losing any more money.

[0050] The 3rd round is the final round, shown in **2 C**. When the hands are exposed, Player 1 will win the pot, even though both hands are valued at 22. Under the tiebreaking rules, Player 1’s hand with King high beats the 10 high hand of Player 6.

[0051] Moving now to **FIG. 3**, we start the next deal. In **FIG. 3 A**, for brevity the table is shown after the 1st round of dealing hands and betting. Note that the dealer, small blind, and big blind positions have all moved one position to the left, clockwise around the table. Therefore, Player 2 makes the small blind bet of 3, Player 3 the big blind bet of 5, and all players ante 1 chip. The pot thus starts with 8 chips, and the betting begins with Player 4. The flop hand dealt is Q 2 7, for a target value of 19. Again there are 8 players at 9 stations, with station 5 vacant.

[0052] Player 4 folds. Players 6, 7, 8, 9, and 1 all call the high bet of 5 (made by the big blind). Player 2 calls by betting 2 more chips, to raise his small blind bet to 5. Player 3 checks, so no one has raised. A total of 35 was bet (7 players, 5 each), and the pot total after round one is 8+35=43.

[0053] Players 2 and 3 both check to open the 2nd round betting. Both drew cards to the 2nd round, and both checked to Player 6, who also checked with a non-bust but uninspir-

ing hand. Player 7 drew two cards for a value total of 10, but nevertheless bet 10, perhaps in bluff. Player 8, also having a new total of 10, called and raised 10. Player 9, with yet another hand totaling 10, called the total bet of 20. Players 1, 2, 3, & 6 folded. Player 7 called, ending the betting. A total of 60 was bet in this round, giving a pot total of $8+35+60=103$.

[0054] It is instructive to note that all 3 players remaining in the game (players 7-9) hold, at round 2, an Ace plus a 2-card combination totaling 9. The Ace allows each player to value his hand at 10 ($9+\text{Ace}=1$) or 20 ($9+\text{Ace}=11$). Although 20 is closer to the target value of 19 than is 10, 20 is over target and therefore a bust hand. For this reason, 10, not being a bust hand, will beat 20 on a deal with target 19.

[0055] However, though the Ace is valuable in that it can assume any of two values, all three players discarded their Ace and drew one card to the 3rd round. This is a sound strategy, remembering that their remaining 2-card combination totaled 9 points. By far the most common card value to draw is 10, since all face cards and 10-spots hold this value. In a fresh deck, the chances of drawing one of these '10-cards' is almost 1 in 3, and is 4 times more likely than any other value card. Therefore, when holding a 2-card combination valued at exactly 10 below the target, a sound strategy is to exchange the 3rd card for a fresh card, and hold the 2-card combination. The player's chance is thus about 1 in 3 of drawing a 10, and thus exactly hitting the target value.

[0056] So, all 3 remaining players discarded the Ace they held for a new card in round 3, seen in **FIG. 3 C**. As it happens, all 3 players received a '10-card'. Thus, all were encouraged by reaching the target value hand, as shown in the flop hand. Through a series of bets, as shown in the figure, all 3 players remained in the game, though the betting total reached 40. The total amount bet for the round was $120(3\times 4)$, and the pot total was $8+35+60+120=223$.

[0057] The denouement was swift. As all of the '10-cards' drawn in round 3 outrank any of the individual cards held, the winner came down to the player who drew the highest card. (Although all face cards and 10-spots have the same value of 10, King outranks Queen, which outranks Jack, which outranks a 10-spot.) Since Player 7 drew a Jack, 8 drew a 10-spot, and 9 drew a Queen, Player 9 wins the pot on the basis of the highest card tiebreaker rule. Had all three players drawn the same face card, the result would have been different. (This draw is unlikely, but possible, there being 4 cards in the deck of each rank, differing only in suits. Suits are not considered in the game of present invention.) In this unlikely case, all three would have had the same highest card, that being the card drawn. Player 8, with a 7-spot, then becomes the winner by virtue of holding the highest middle card when the top cards in each hand are equal.

[0058] As a final note on this topic, if the highest and middle cards are equal in two or more hands of equal value, the lowest card must necessarily be equal, in order for the hands to be of equal value. In that case, the hands are tied, and would split the pot equally. We will see an example of this in the next figure.

[0059] **FIG. 4** marks another example of a new deal, the next at the same table. Station 5 is now occupied by a newcomer to the table, while stations 4 and 6 are now

vacant. The little blind, big blind, and dealer positions move to the left, as they do every round. Player 2 is now the dealer; players 3 and 5 are little blind and big blind, respectively. They make their respective bets of 3 and 5, and everyone antes 1, putting 7 chips in the pot.

[0060] The hands are dealt, and the flop hand provides A 5 5 for a target value of 21. (Aces in the flop hand are always valued as 11.) Players 7 and 8 fold. Player 9 bets 5 and raises 5 more, for a total of 10. Player 1 and Player 2 (the dealer) fold. Player 3 calls by betting 7 (which adds to his small blind bet to 10). Player 5 calls by betting 5, which adds to his big blind bet of 5 to equal 10. This ends the betting. The pot has a total of $7+30=37$, and only 3 players remain in the game as we move to **FIG. 4 B**.

[0061] Players 3 and 5, each holding an Ace-Jack combination, sensibly exchange their 3rd card, hoping to draw a '10-card' and bring their hand total to 21, the target value, by valuing the ace as 1. As it happens, neither player drew a 10-card. Player 3 began the betting by checking to Player 5, who in turn checked to Player 9, who would bet the standard 10. Player 9 held a hand valued at 20 as originally dealt, and chose to stand pat, ie did not draw a new card. The other two players called at 10 each. The pot now totals $7+30+30=67$.

[0062] We now enter the 3rd and final round. Since Player 3 and Player 5 were both disappointed in not drawing a '10-card' on the previous round, they each exchanged the card they had just drawn in round 2 for a new card. This is a sound strategy. While the chances of drawing a '10-card' from a fresh deck is slightly less than $\frac{1}{3}$, or 30.8%, the chances of drawing at least one '10-card' from a fresh deck in 2 tries is actually better than 50% (55.5%).

[0063] Indeed, as seen from **FIG. 4 C**, both players 3 and 5 did receive a face card, in fact, the Queen in both cases. Player 3 opened the betting, but checked to Player 5, who bet the standard 10. Player 9 called. Player 3 called the 10 and raised 10, as did Player 5. The level was now at 40. Player 9 folded, Player 3 called by adding 20, and the betting ended. A total of 90 was bet this round, and the pot final total came to $7+30+30+90=157$.

[0064] The facing of the hands revealed that players 3 and 5 were tied. Both had held Ace-Jack combinations throughout, and both drew a Queen to this final round, ending with Ace Queen Jack, valued at 21, matching the target. Players 3 and 5 were entitled to split the pot.

[0065] The next round is recorded in **FIG. 5**. Again, the first diagram, **FIG. 5 A**, takes up the action in the 1st round, after antes, blind bets, and hands are dealt. The flop hand holds Queen Jack 2 for a target value of 22. Once again, the blind betting and dealer positions have shifted clockwise, such that Player 3 is now dealer, Player 5 is small blind, and Player 7 is big blind.

[0066] The unforced betting starts with Player 8, who calls at 5. Players 9 and 2 call. Player 1 folds, and Player 3, the dealer, calls and raises 5. Player 5 folds. Players 7 raises, 8, 9, and 2 all call. The pot now stands at $7+3+5\times 15=85$.

[0067] Moving to **FIG. 5 B**, all remaining players except Player 7 (who stands pat with a hand of value 21) drew one card. Players 2 and 9 drew a card holding a 2-card combination valued at 11. This is not perfect, although a reason-

able holding, with a target of 22. The most likely draw of a '10-card' will result in a hand value of 21, one less than target. Only in the case of drawing an Ace (about a 7.5% chance) will the target be met. However, there is no chance of going bust over target value. As it happened, neither drew a '10-card'. Thus, the value of their respective hands was well under target. These two folded in round 2.

[0068] Player 7 stands pat on a hand valued at 21. The others, Players 3 and 8, each held a desired 2-card combination valued at 12. Each exchanged the 3rd card, hoping to draw a face card. Player 3 was lucky and drew a Queen, thus achieving a hand equal in value to the target value of 22. Player 8 was disappointed in drawing a deuce, leaving him with a hand values at only 14.

[0069] The bidding started with Player 7 who bet 10. Player 8 called. Players 9 and 2 folded, as noted above. Player 3 called, and raised a further 10. The remaining 2 players called, resulting in an amount of 60 bet in round 2. The pot total increased to $7+78+60=145$.

[0070] The final round is round 3, displayed in **FIG. 5 C**. Player 3 stands on her hand of perfect value of 22. Players 7 and 8 each draw a new card, holding on to 12-value 2-card combinations.

[0071] As a side note, Player 7's strategy is questionable. If he truly felt his hand of 21 value was sufficient, he should stand pat throughout. If he wanted instead to increase to the target value of 22, he should have kept the 2-card combination (Queen deuce) totaling 12, and drawn a third card in round 2, and (unless he drew a '10-card') also on round 3. As described above, his chances of reaching the target are better than 50%. By drawing only once, at round 3, he reduced his chances to only about 31%.

[0072] Despite the odds (at least in one case), both Players were rewarded by drawing a face card, specifically a King in each case. Now, unbeknownst to each other, all three players remaining in the game held hands exactly matching the target value of 22.

[0073] Player 7 began the betting, but checked to Player 8, who bet the standard 10. Player 3 called, and raised 10 more, to 20. Player 7 called, and raised another 10, to 30. Player 8 called, and raised yet another 10, to 40. The other players each called at the 40 level. The Total Pot finished at $7+78+60+120=265$.

[0074] The facing of the hands now revealed the winner. The two King-high hands beat the Queen high of Player 3, leaving the other two in the running. The highest middle card, a Queen, belonged to Player 7, who won the pot. (KQx beats Kxx, where x is an unnamed spot card of variable value < 10.)

[0075] The same players and stations play the next deal, which unfolds in **FIG. 6**. As before, we see the 1st round in **FIG. 6 A**, the 2nd round in **FIG. 6 B**, and the 3rd and final round in **FIG. 6 C**.

[0076] In **FIG. 6 A**, we pick up the scene after the cards have been dealt, and the flop hand exposed, providing a target value of 26. The blind bets have been made (Player 7 is now small blind, and Player 8 is big blind.) All players have anted. The betting thereafter was sparse, with only one raise, and 4 players folding and dropping out without betting. (The exception is Player 8, forced to bet as big blind,

but folded after the betting started). Players 2, 7, and 9 are the only players remaining in the game for this deal. The pot holds $7+35=42$ chips.

[0077] **FIG. 6 B** takes up the action. Player 2 has the most desirable 2-card combination of Ace 5, valued at 16. This is highly desirable for three reasons: 1) It is 10 points away from the target of 26, and as we saw above, a '10-card' is the most likely draw; 2) Player 2 has achieved this holding at round 1, thus giving him 2 rounds in which to draw a 10-point card; and 3) in any case, he will hold an Ace-high hand, valuable in the case of breaking a tie. He was reward with a draw of a Jack. Player 7 drew 2 cards to a 5, resulting in a hand valued at 20. Player 9 held on to his 2 Aces, and drew a single card, apparently looking for a 4, instead receiving the more likely face card.

[0078] The betting was very short. Players 7 and 9 checked to Player 2, who bet 10. The other two players called. The pot was very light at this point, with only 30 from this round, and a total of $7+35+30=72$ chips.

[0079] For the 3rd round of **FIG. 6 C**, Player 2 stood pat on his very fine hand. Player 7 kept the two cards he had drawn in the previous round, and miraculously drew the Ace he needed to bring his hand to the target value of 26. (Unknown to him, the other players held 3 Aces between them, leaving only 1 Ace in a regulation deck.) The odds were very much against him drawing the single card he needed from all the cards remaining. Player 9 again held his two Aces, and drawing a single card, was again disappointed in drawing another face card. His hand now values at only 22, 4 short of target.

[0080] The betting started again with Player 7, betting 10. Player 9, realizing his strategy had failed, folded. This left the two players holding target hands betting against each other, each raising in turn, until Player 7 called to end the betting after 5 raises and 120 had been bet. The pot total finished at $7+35+30+120=192$ chips.

[0081] Player 7 must have felt good about his holding an Ace high hand equal to the target value. But Player 2 also held the target value hand with an Ace. The tiebreaker fell to the 2 card held, and Player 2 won the day (and the pot) with Ace-Jack over Ace-9.

[0082] This scenario of a series of hands at a casino table are a good tool for seeing how the game of the current invention is played, including some betting and play strategies. We now turn to a slight change in the betting rules, as displayed in **FIGS. 7 and 8**.

[0083] **FIG. 7** has the same hands dealt as **FIG. 2**, but the betting limits are changed. Bettors bet 5-chip bets the 1st round, as before. But limits on betting are the amount of the pot in subsequent rounds. Not surprisingly, the pot increases dramatically with the higher betting limits.

[0084] Thus, in round 1 (**FIG. 7 A**), only half the players bet a total of 80, with the other half folding. In round 2 (**FIG. 7 B**), Player 2 bet 40, Player 3 raised to 214, and players 6 and 1 called at 214, with Player 2 folding. The pot total at this point—after the 2nd round—came to $8+80+682=770$ chips, compared to 88 at the same point in the 5-10 limit game of **FIG. 2**.

[0085] Finally, at round 3 (see **FIG. 7 C**), Player 1 started the betting at the pot limit of 770. Player 3 now folded, and

Player 6 called. This ended the betting with a grand pot total of 8+80+682+770=2310 chips, almost 10 times the pot total in FIG. 2—with the same cards dealt. Just as in FIG. 2, Player 1 wins the pot over Player 7 by means of the first tiebreaking rule—the hand with the highest card wins ties.

[0086] Finally we come to FIG. 8, a reprise of the deal in FIG. 3 with the new, higher limit betting rules. The cards and betting in the 1st round of FIG. 8 A went exactly as earlier, in FIG. 3. (Note that these new rules are 5-pot limit, rather than 5-10. So 5 chips is still the limit for round 1.) Just as in FIG. 3 A, all players remained in the game after round 1 except Player 4. The pot is at 43.

[0087] In the 2nd round (FIG. 8 B), 4 players folded, as the pot limit of 43 was bet, but the betting level only increased to 172, for a pot of 516.

[0088] The 3rd and final round (FIG. 8 C) found the 3 players at the end stations of 7, 8, and 9 each holding a hand matching the flop hand target value of 19. Player 7 began the betting with the round sum of 500, just below pot limit. Player 8 called, but Player 9 raised to 2059, matched by Player 7, Player 8 folding. The final pot was worth a total of 5177 chips, of which 4618 (89%) was bet in round 3 alone. The final pot in FIG. 8 is some 23 times the value of the final pot in FIG. 3, again due solely to the changed betting scheme.

[0089] While the invention has been described in connection with a preferred embodiment or embodiments, it is not intended to limit the scope of the invention to the particular form set forth, but on the contrary, it is intended to cover such alternatives, modifications, and equivalents as may be included within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A method for playing a game, of the generic type commonly referred to as 'card games', wherein the materials of the game are a set of tokens or cards, each with 2 sides, comprising a first indicating side and a second non-indicating side, wherein said indicating side allows each token or card to be assigned a numeric value, which value is not discernable from said non-indicating side; and wherein each token or card may be placed in a position where only said indicating side is visible; and alternatively, each token or card may be placed in a second position where only said non-indicating side is visible; and wherein the method of play of said game takes the steps of:

- a number of players gather to play said game;
- one of said players is selected the dealer, and distributes an equal number of cards to each player, dealer himself last, in such a fashion that the indicating sides are not visible, and remain not visible until the determination of the winner at the end of the game;
- optionally, if the players desire, betting may occur among the players, in turn, based on who believes he will win the game;
- said dealer deals a dummy hand the same number of cards as distributed to each individual said player;
- said dummy hand is 'exposed', that is, placed in position such that all cards have their indicating sides made visible to all players;

the sum of the values of the indicating sides of the cards in said dummy hand is calculated; said sum comprising the target value;

when the dummy hand is exposed, optionally, a round of betting in turn may occur among the players, in turn, based on who believes he will win the game;

at this point, or later during the game, a player may in turn choose to exit the game, and plays no further, and cannot win the game;

each player in turn is allowed to discard any number of cards in his hand, and be dealt a like number from the dealer, such that the total number of cards he holds is the same as originally dealt to him;

all of the above steps are repeated an arbitrary number of times, except the dummy hand remaining exposed and unchanged;

the winner is determined by exposing all remaining player's hands, after all betting is completed, with the winner being the player holding the hand closest in value to the target value; and,

if betting has been taking place, the winner collects the sum of all bets made during the game.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said indicating tokens comprise a standard 52-card deck of cards, without jokers or other wild cards.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein rules are established to break ties, in the case of more than one player holding a winning hand of equal value; said rule comprising the steps of:

- a. Awarding the victory to the player with the highest value single card;
- b. If any players remain tied, awarding the victory to the player whose second-highest value card is the highest among the second-highest value cards in each remaining players' hand;
- c. repeating this card evaluation step to the third highest card, and so on, until a winner is determined; and,
- d. if no single winner is determinable by this iterative procedure, the remaining players holding equal hands are awarded split victory, and split the pot, if any.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein each player, and the dummy hand, are dealt exactly 3 cards.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein exactly 3 rounds are played according to the iterative steps described therein, after which a winner is determined.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the dealer position moves after each game to the player to the left of the current dealer.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein each player is required to bet a set amount prior to playing, said bet termed the 'ante'.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the two players to the left of the dealer must bet set amounts before receiving cards, said betting called 'blind betting', and wherein said blind betting positions each moves after each game to the player to the left of the current position.

9. The method of claim 1, in which new players may join the game, and old players may leave the game, after each winner is declared, and a new game begins.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein any hand wherein the total of the cards equals a value higher than the target value is defined as a bust hand; a bust hand always loses to a hand equal in value or less than the target; therefore a bust hand cannot win the game unless all hands vying to win are bust hands, in which case the bust hand closest in value to the target value will win.

11. The method of claim 2, in which each spot card is assigned its face value, face cards comprising the Kings, Queens, and Jacks are each valued at 10.

12. The method of claim 2, in which the Ace is assigned a value of either 1 or 11, at the option of the player holding the Ace, except that an Ace in the exposed dummy hand is always valued at 11.

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