



(19) **United States**

(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Fargano

(10) **Pub. No.: US 2004/0009802 A1**

(43) **Pub. Date: Jan. 15, 2004**

(54) **UNIVERSAL APPARATUS AND HYBRID METHODS FOR CASINO WAGERING-CARD GAMES**

(76) Inventor: **Thomas Edward Fargano**, Bayonne, NJ (US)

Correspondence Address:
THOMAS EDWARD FARGANO
17 EAST 16th STREET
BAYONNE, NJ 07002-4401 (US)

(21) Appl. No.: **10/194,099**

(22) Filed: **Jul. 12, 2002**

Publication Classification

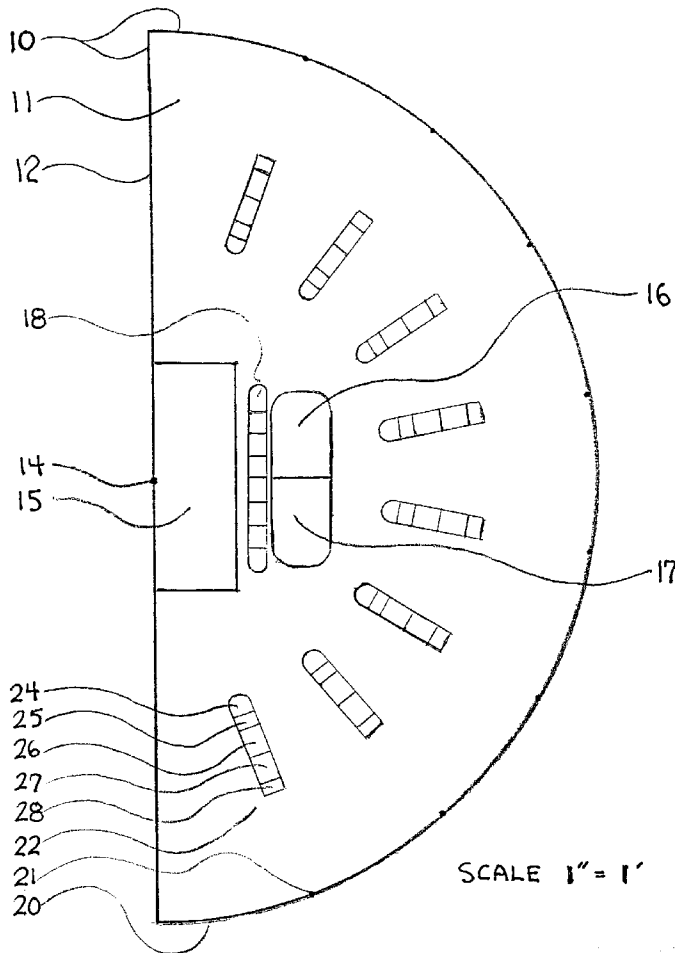
(51) **Int. Cl.⁷** **A63F 9/24**
(52) **U.S. Cl.** **463/13**

(57) **ABSTRACT**

Novel wagering-card gaming methods are provided by a specifically composed master pack having an equal four

ranks to four suits constitution ratio of conventional playing cards. This only eight symbol apparatus is symmetrically formulated to provide lowest common denominated interfacing, aggregating, and provision of games having base numbering systems of, two, four, eight, sixteen, thirty-two, and sixty-four. Foremost provided, is a hybrid baccarat-poker variant method that plays with only two common two-card poker-like hands (16 & 17) that are class and type rated by ranks, suits, and color. A winning tie (25) wager pays 25:1, an eight-symbol bonus (24) wager pays 88:1 and an optional closing call (28) wager and pay-out schedule may be selected by the house associated with the combined outcome of all four cards dealt in the round. This hybrid-variant method further substantially enhances baccarat play by eliminating the complicated third card draw rules and the administrative burden of commission. The entire procedure, rack, and the multitude of markers are removed from play. The house advantage associated with this method is well within the range of acceptance by players, establishments, and gaming regulators in any jurisdiction. The underlying gaming theme is that of, banker-yin, player-yang, and tie-balance. The optional bonus is slot machinelike, and the optional closing call wager is stud poker typical.

GAMING TABLE



GAMING TABLE

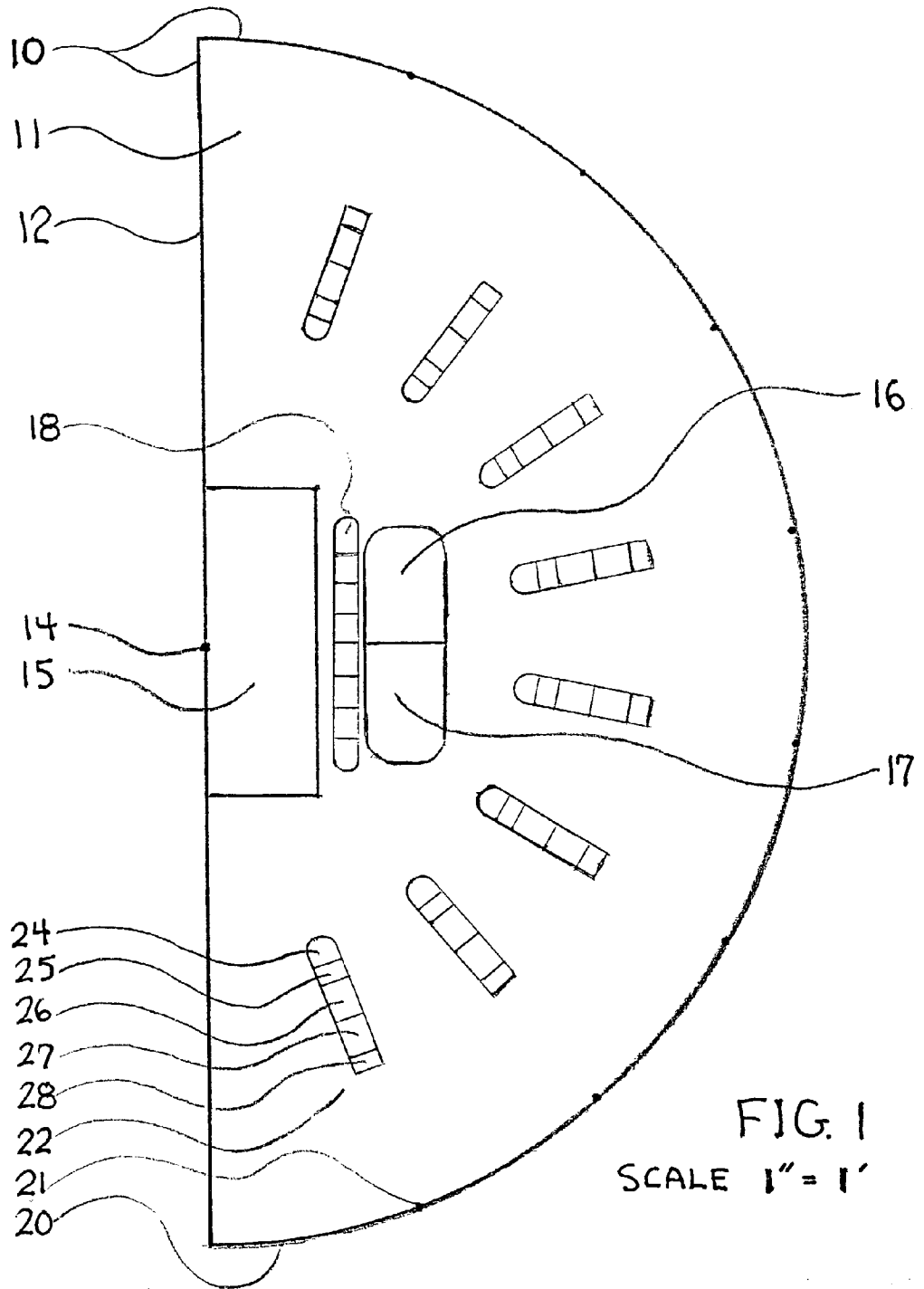


FIG. 1
SCALE 1" = 1'

InfiniEights Royal Baccarat™
HAND RATING INDEX CHART

FIG. 2

<i>Hand Class</i>	<i>Hand Type</i>	<i>Card Ranks</i>	<i>Rating Rule</i>
<i>PAIRs</i>	<i>Flush</i>	A-A>K-K>Q-Q>J-J	<i>one-suit</i>
	<i>Color</i>	A-A>K-K>Q-Q>J-J	<i>two-suits</i>
	<i>Mixed</i>	A-A>K-K>Q-Q>J-J	<i>two-colors</i>
<i>DUOs</i>	<i>Flush</i>	A-K>A-Q>A-J> K-Q>K-J>Q-J	<i>one-suit</i>
	<i>Color</i>	A-K>A-Q>A-J> K-Q>K-J>Q-J	<i>two-suits</i>
	<i>Mixed</i>	A-K>A-Q>A-J> K-Q>K-J>Q-J	<i>two-colors</i>

PAIR > DUO

Flush > Color > Mixed

A > K > Q > J

Rating Rule: 1st by Class > 2nd by Type > 3rd by Ranks
 all Suits are Equal = any Hand can be Tied.

UNIVERSAL APPARATUS AND HYBRID METHODS FOR CASINO WAGERING-CARD GAMES

BACKGROUND

[0001] 1. Field of Invention

[0002] This invention relates to card games suitable for live casino play in commercial gaming establishments catering to an international clientele, in particular it relates to an apparatus and method providing a lowest common denominator for playing a combination of two/four card poker as a variation of baccarat having novel bonus and call wager options.

[0003] 2. Description of Prior Art

[0004] In the casino gaming industry, live table play provides the most exciting, sociable, and entertaining experiences for players and casino staff. Unfortunately, these live manual games are difficult for the establishment to operate and secure primarily due to human factors. Traditional casino card games such as baccarat, blackjack, and stud poker have too few positive attributes for self-securing and ease of operation, and can be difficult to learn and play. Many of these classic games and their modern day variants speed and secure play by using computer-based electronics and electrical-mechanical devices.

[0005] Some of the disadvantages of the above noted games are:

[0006] Baccarat has a commission system that is very time consuming and requires a multitude of non-playable markers to reconcile a 5% fee charged on winning pay-outs associated with the banker hand. The game requires a team of casino employees, and does not offer many wager choices or pay-outs greater than eight to one (8:1).

[0007] Blackjack requires excessive security measures to protect against card counting. Many establishments use eight decks, a dealer down-card reader, and an elaborate time consuming shuffle procedure to minimize the opportunities to cheat. Novice players are fearful of ridicule, and the pay-out odds are low.

[0008] Stud poker and its variants permit player handling and possession of the playing cards. This factor has led to dependency on computer based automation to enhance and secure play.

[0009] U.S. Pat. No. 5,072,946 to Miller on Dec. 17, 1991 discloses a baccarat-like game having limited wagering options, and no face cards whatsoever. The pack of cards used being novel, but opposite of the compilation of cards used in the game taught by the present invention.

[0010] U.S. Pat. No. 5,098,107 to Boylan et al March 1992, discloses a game with some additional wagering options, as does U.S. Pat. No. 5,141,234 also issued to Boylan et al August 1992. Neither game mentions the combination of both hands, or plays with only four cards each round based on the master-pack compilation of the present invention.

[0011] U.S. Pat. No. 5,395,119 to Jacob and Garcia on Mar. 7, 1995 discloses additional wagering options, but also permits counterproductive withdrawal-surrenders. The game plays with as many as six cards per round based on

standard decks. As in all the above noted games, this game not based on the core discovery of the present invention, operates much differently. Moreover, none of the above noted baccarat-variant games operate without the administrative burden of the commission tracking system and its multitude of markers that must be continuously manipulated by the dealer throughout the gaming process. Finally, most premium players are not comfortable with gaming automation or rules that de-socialize play. Personal preferences, superstitions, cultural incompatibilities, and perceived all luck/no skill games further alienate clientele seeking enhanced gaming-entertainment experiences.

[0012] The symbolically symmetrical master-pack apparatus taught herein is novel, as are the wagering-card game methods derived from its improved constitution. Thus none of the above noted patents or classic games in public domain, taken either singly or in combination, are seen to disclose the specific arrangement of concepts and discoveries of the present invention.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0013] The wagering game of the present invention is played with a master-pack of sixty-four conventional playing cards comprising four identical sixteen-card sub-decks, and broadly involves generally well know and accepted procedures and outcomes of baccarat and poker. The pack can be shuffled before each round or once every eight to nine rounds. The gaming method comprises each player placing opening baccarat-typical wagers predicting the winning and/or tie outcomes of only two opposing two-card poker-like hands, and an optional bonus wager predicting that all eight playing symbols shall be present at the conclusion of the two hand/four card round.

[0014] The dealer deals one opening-card face-up to each of the hands. Players examine the two opening cards, and have the option to place a closing wager predicting a combined all card outcome expressed as a four-card poker hand. The dealer deals one closing-card face-up to each of the opposing hands. The dealer identifies the winning hand, tie hands, the bonus outcome and closing-call combination hand outcomes as per a predetermined hand-rating index, and resolves all wagers as per predetermined pay-out odds.

[0015] More specifically, the master-pack has a constitution ratio of four-suits to four-ranks to four sets of cards (4:4:4) and a cubed-like mathematical characteristic of four to the third power ($4 \times 4 \times 4 = 64$), this formulation provides common denominations for integrating card play with base two, four, eight, and thirty-two (2, 4, 8, & 32) number systems. Baccarat, is substantially streamlined and enhanced by eliminating complicated third-card draw rules and the entire commission process and apparatus. As in baccarat, a winning wager on one of the two opposing hands pays one to one (1:1), when a tie occurs a house edge of; 1.66% is provided by tie-surrender collections of one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of wagers placed on either of the common two-card hands. A tie-placed wager wins when said two hands tie, and pays twenty-five to one (25:1), providing a house edge of 13.33%.

[0016] Baccarat-variant play, using only two common two-card poker-like hands per round simulates the play of a pai gow-like two and four tile/domino game. Forming two basic classes of hands providing instant determination of outcomes, the two classes of hands are; pairs and duos.

Further sub-rating is achieved by suit and/or color. Card ranking and/or suiting within a class will break most ties, making the probability of a tie only one in thirty (29:1).

[0017] The optional eight-symbol bonus wager (eight-way) pays eighty-eight to one (88:1), the associated house edge ranges from approximately 5% to 15% depending on pack penetration based on mathematical laws of average and probability.

[0018] The optional call/closing-wager may be placed mid-round to predict a four-of-a-kind, or four-card-straight, consisting the combined outcome of all four cards dealt to both common hands, pay-outs can range from 25:1 to 5:1, the associated house edge can range from about 3.0% to 9.2% and higher, depending on options selected by the house.

[0019] Apparatus is disclosed for playing the wagering game according to the method outlined above. A typical gaming table, with a playing surface, is modified to include specific areas that provide locations for placing the wagers and for displaying the two opposing two-card hands. A display device may be associated with the apparatus for displaying game information.

[0020] It is the Objective(s) of this Invention to:

[0021] (I) Provide a game that is instantly and easily playable by players of any skill level or culture.

[0022] (II) Provide a game that is instantly and easily operable by any average professional dealer

[0023] (III) Provide a game that is acceptable to casino industry licensees and regulators in any jurisdiction.

[0024] (IV) Provide a game that plays fast and decisive yet polite and relaxed, encouraging socialized play.

[0025] (V) Provide a game that clearly defines the dealer region and the individual players regions of the table

[0026] (VI) Provide a game that maintains separation of an individuals' wagers from those of others.

[0027] (VII) Provide a game that has only community cards and/or hands per round of play.

[0028] (VIII) Provide a game that the player plays against himself, rather than the dealer or other players.

[0029] (IX) Provide a game that does not require player contact with the gaming elements (cards)

[0030] (X) Provide a game that does not require or permit wager withdrawals.

[0031] (XI) Provide a game that increases profitability via efficiency of operation.

[0032] (XII) Provide a game that displaces less frequented/difficult games, yet retains the players thereof.

[0033] (XIII) Provide a game that combines the well-known basic-elements of Baccarat and Poker.

[0034] It is an advantage of the game of the present invention that all personnel, equipment, and techniques required to facilitate play are pre-existing in the casino gaming industry, and that the game can be operated and played on any slightly modified mini or standard baccarat

layout using the novel compilation of conventional playing cards, and common casino checks or chips.

[0035] It is another advantage of the game that it attracts a broad range of table game players seeking easy and exciting play wherein either skill, luck, or both can be employed in play strategies.

[0036] Still another advantage of this game is its appeal to the Asian-gaming enthusiasts, who constitute the largest and fastest growing player demographic demanding high stakes live manual play. An Asian version of the gaming layout is available, specifically modified for proper cultural correctness and to make all players feel equally seated, numbered, and positioned for best luck.

[0037] It is yet another advantage of this game of the present invention, that more wager choices having higher pay-out odds are available, and will generate more play action and profits, without exceeding generally well known and acceptable house edges that players and regulators are comfortable with.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0038] FIG. 1 depicts the table layout and apparatus used in playing the wagering game of the present invention.

[0039] FIG. 2 is the hand rating index/chart for identification and determination of outcomes.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0040] Referring to FIG. 1, the apparatus for the wagering game of the present invention includes a typical gaming table 10. The table 10 has a flat surface 11 covered by felt or other appropriate material. The table 10 also having a straight side 12 with house bank/chip tray 15 centrally located between dealer position 14 and large central house/dealing region comprising card receiving zones 16 and 17, and dealers' closing wager management area 18a-h. The table 10 further includes a curved side 20 having eight player positions 21a-h associated with eight corresponding individual wagering areas 22a-h. Each typical wagering area 22 comprising within; smaller wager receiving zones 24, 25, 26, 27, and 28 for receiving an individual players wagering choices in the form of placing typical casino chips (not shown). Also not shown are the playing cards and/or any optional promotional, instructive, and/or aesthetic means.

[0041] The gaming process comprises the steps of;

[0042] (I) Shuffling the 64 cards, placing a cut card in pack to limit penetration to desired number of rounds per shuffle, removing the top four cards to the bottom of the pack.

[0043] (II) The players must place at least one opening wager 26 or 27, and/or 25, and may place a bonus wager 24, all wagers are subject to house set wagering limits and rules.

[0044] (III) The dealer examines the placed wagers, and indicates no more bets.

[0045] (IV) The dealer dealing one card face-up to each receiving zone 16 and 17, opening both opposing hands.

- [0046] (IV) The players examining the two card opening, and may place an optional closing call wager **28**.
- [0047] (V) The dealer examining any optional wagers placed **28** as per limits and rules, and accepts only proper wagers by transferring those wagers to the corresponding call wager management area **18a-h**.
- [0048] (VI) The dealer dealing one card face-up onto each card receiving zone **16** and **17**, closing both hands
- [0049] (VII) The dealer identifying the opposition outcome of the underlying hands, as per Rating Chait **FIG. 2**, and resolving the underlying win, lose, and tie wagers as per predetermined pay-out odds.
- [0050] (VIII) The dealer examining the combined outcome for the possibility of a four-of a-kind, a four-card-straight, and/or an eight-way (all eight symbol) conclusion, resolving all optional wagers as per predetermined pay-out odds.
- [0051] (IX) Repeating steps two (II) through eight (VIII) until the cut card appears and initiates a reshuffling of the sixty-four cards.
- [0052] Predetermined pay-out odds for this preferred embodiment are;
- [0053] 1:1 for a winning Yang/player hand opening wager placed on **27** (surrender one half of wager when tied)
- [0054] 1:1 for a winning Yin/banker hand opening wager placed on **26** (surrender one half of wager when tied)
- [0055] 25:1 for a winning tie hand opening wager on **25**
- [0056] 88:1 for a winning eight-way/all available game symbols wager placed on **24**
- [0057] 20:1 for a winning closing call wager **18**, when combined finish is a four-of a-kind.
- [0058] 9:1 for a winning closing call wager **18**, when combined finish is a straight-flush.
- [0059] 7:1 for a winning closing call wager **18**, when combined finish is a straight-color.
- [0060] 5:1 for a winning closing call wager **18**, when combined finish is a straight-mixed.

BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF OTHER EMBODIMENTS

[0061] The method and/or apparatus of the present invention is not limited to completely manual shoe dealt live casino wagering games of two and four card play, but may be applied or used in many other appropriate games. It is well within the scope of this gaming system to provide play having more or less hands, using more or less cards, and played with automated means such as card shuffling machines, wager detection devices, and other articles common in the casino industry, thus providing additional enhanced outcome probabilities and associated pay-outs.

[0062] It is further within the parameters of this gaming system to provide a player-casino interface ideally suited for play on local gaming machines and/or remote play in and/or

on electronic and telecommunications equipment and systems including, but not limited to personal computers, cable or broadcast television, telephones, Internet and any combination thereof.

I claim:

1) A composition article of gaming-apparatus comprising a plurality of identical sub-decks of conventional playing cards forming a novel master-pack characterized by a four ranks to four suits constitution ratio, the improvement wherein said pack provides means for new, hybrid, and variant wagering-card games involving only eight basic symbols.

2) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein each said sub-deck consists sixteen different said cards, each said card having one of four standard ranks, and one of the four standard suits of said cards.

3) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein said ranks comprise the standard Ace, King, Queen, and Jack royal cards of said playing cards.

4) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein said ranks comprise the standard Ace, Two, Three, and Four spot cards of said playing cards.

5) The apparatus of claim 1, comprising four said sub-decks providing a master pack having a four-ranks to four-suits to four-sub-decks constitution ratio.

6) The apparatus of claim 5, wherein said master pack exists within the electronic and/or upon the mechanical elements of a gaming machine.

7) A method of playing a wagering-card game with a house and a number of players comprising the steps of:

providing a specifically compiled master pack of at least two identical sub-decks, each said sub-deck consisting sixteen conventional playing cards having a four-ranks to four-suits constitution ratio, and

a gaming surface having a central dealer region for receiving said cards, and a plurality of smaller player areas for receiving said wagering,

said players placing at least one opening win and/or tie wager on an underlying-game outcome based on an opposing play of only two, two-card hands common to all said wagering, and giving said players the option to place a bonus-like wager predicting a final all card outcome containing all eight symbols of play.

shuffling said pack to randomize said cards, and

dealing one card face-up to each said hand for examination by said players;

giving each player the chance to place an optional closing wager predicting a premium four card outcome involving a combining of both said hands;

dealing one card face-up to each said hand, identifying the winning, losing, tie, bonus, and combined outcomes as per a predetermined hand rating index chart and rules, and resolving all wagers as per predetermined pay-out odds.

8) The method of claim 7, wherein compiling four said sub-decks provide a master pack having a four-ranks to four-suits to four sub-decks constitution ratio.

9) The method of claim 8, wherein said shuffling provides as many as nine or more rounds of play, without re-shuffling prior to each said round.

10) The method of claim 7, wherein said opening-wagers comprise, a wager predicting a winning two-card common hand designated darkness and yin, a wager predicting a winning two card common hand designated light and yang, a wager predicting an equal tie of both said common hands designated balance, and a bonus wager predicting a overall all eight symbol outcome designated infinity.

11) The method of claim 7, wherein said closing-wager premium outcomes comprise, four cards of one rank, four cards of four ranks, said four cards of one rank being of one color and/or suit, and said four cards of four ranks being of one color and/or suit.

12) The method of claim 7, wherein said ranks comprise the standard Ace, King, Queen, and Jack royal cards of said conventional playing.

13) The method of claim 7, wherein said ranks comprise the standard Ace, Two, Three, and Four spot cards of said conventional playing.

14) The method of claim 7, wherein said gaming surface comprises any of the generally well know and accepted baccarat style gaming layouts modified having re-designated pay-out odds, and to exclude the commission rack and markers.

15) A method and apparatus for playing an only two card per common hand, two hands per common round, and a number of rounds per shuffle baccarat-poker variant wagering-card game for a number of players based on the probable and possible outcomes provided by a master pack consisting essentially an equal number of the generally well known and accepted standard icon symbols of Ace, King, Queen, Jack, Club, Diamond, Spade, and Heart, common on and of conventional playing cards, comprising the steps of;

reducing four-decks of conventional playing cards by removing and excluding from play all the numerically designated Two through Ten spot cards,

shuffling the remaining sixty-four alphabetically designated A, K, Q, and J royal card master pack, placing a cut-card limiting dealing penetration of said pack, shifting a number of said cards from the top to the bottom of said pack;

players placing opening baccarat-typical wagers to participate in game, and giving said players the option to place an eight symbol bonus wager;

dealing an opening card face-up to a common yang player hand;

dealing an opening card face-up to a common yin banker hand;

giving players a chance to examine the opening, and place an optional poker-like call-wager predicting a combined all four-card outcome involving both said hands expressed as a premium poker-typical hand;

examining and accepting appropriate said optional wagers;

dealing one closing card face-up to said yin hand;

dealing one closing card face-up to said yang hand;

rating and identifying all outcomes and resolving all wagers as per pre-determined rating index, rules, and pay-out odds.

repeating the steps excluding the shuffle until the cut card emerges on top of said pack.

16) The method of claim 15, wherein each said card provides two said symbols, each said hand provides four said symbols, and each said round provides eight said symbols.

17) The method of claim 15, wherein said symbols provide random outcomes characterized by matching and non-matching on a basis of rank, suit, and color.

18) The method of claim 15, wherein said wagering-card game is played upon any baccarat-typical gaming table accommodating any number of players and staff.

19) The method of claim 15, wherein said wagering-card game exists within the electronic and/or mechanical elements of a gaming machine.

20) The method of claim 15, wherein said gaming surface comprises a casino table layout apparatus specified herein having a larger central region for the dealing, receiving, and display of said cards, and eight smaller player areas for the placement, receiving, and display of said wagers.

* * * * *