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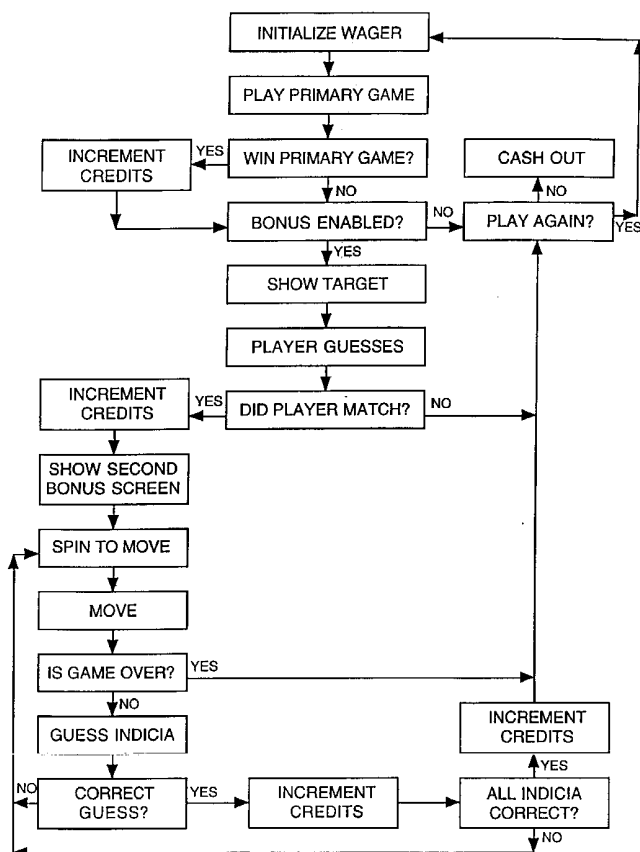
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(54) Title: GAMING DEVICE AND METHOD



(57) Abstract: A method and device (10) for gaming, in which a primary game is played toward a winning outcome, and includes a bonus game that may be triggered by a particular outcome or outcomes. The bonus game is made up of a series of successive games centered around a common theme or directed toward a common outcome.



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For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

Gaming Device and Method

Technical Field

The following invention is generally related to instrumentalities and methodologies in gaming devices. More specifically, the instant invention is directed to
5 a gaming device having a primary game having not only a winning outcome, but also a triggering outcome for a secondary game. Most specifically, the secondary game consists of a series of gaming propositions, all directed toward a common theme or outcome.

Background Art

10 The purpose of playing any game is to win the game. While a player may initially find enjoyment in trying to win a particular game, the proposition of repeatedly playing the same game eventually becomes tiresome. Accordingly, several games have been developed to offer a "bonus" game, which offers a player the prospect of engaging in a different gaming proposition. Most bonus games consist of
15 only one round of bonus play. These games are often enjoyable, but disappointingly short in duration.

Disclosure of Invention

The present invention is distinguishable over the prior art in a multiplicity of ways. For example, the instant invention retains the player's interest by providing the
20 player with a device and method for enjoying several different gaming propositions in a single gaming session.

Further, the instant invention allows a player to participate a series of gaming propositions, all directed toward a common theme or outcome.

Industrial Applicability

25 The industrial applicability of this invention shall be demonstrated through discussion of the following objects of the invention.

Accordingly, it is a primary object of the present invention to provide a new and novel device and method for gaming in which a player is offered a series of secondary gaming propositions for more chances at success.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a device and method for gaming in which a player has the opportunity to participate in a series of related gaming propositions, all directed toward a common theme or outcome.

5 Viewed from a first vantage point, it is an object of the present invention to provide a gaming device, comprising, in combination a display, wagering means, and a processor interposed between said display and said wagering means to initiate play of a primary game on said display upon activation of said wagering means, said display having at least one outcome which triggers a first bonus, wherein said first bonus has at least one outcome which triggers a second bonus.

10 Viewed from a second vantage point, it is an object of the present invention to provide a method for gaming, the steps including displaying a primary game, allowing a wager, generating an outcome for said primary game as a function of said wager having been made, enabling a first bonus upon the occurrence of at least one outcome from said primary game, and enabling a second bonus upon the occurrence of at least one outcome from said first bonus.

15 These and other objects will be made manifest when considering the following detailed specification when taken in conjunction with the appended drawing figures.

Brief Description Of Drawings

Figure 1 is a flowchart of the methodology according to the present invention.

20 Figure 2 is a depiction of the apparatus associated therewith.

Figure 3 is a depiction of a primary game screen, embodied in an RXC matrix.

Figure 4 is a depiction of a first bonus screen.

Figure 5 is a depiction of a second bonus screen.

Best Mode(s) for Carrying Out the Invention

25 Considering the drawings, wherein like reference numerals denote like parts throughout the various drawing figures, reference numeral 10 as shown in FIG. 2 is directed to the device according to the present invention.

In its essence, the device 10 includes a housing 16 which supports a visual display 2, preferably a video monitor, therewithin. The display 2 may include a window 8 for 30 special messages or for incrementing counting of credits accumulated by the player. The device also includes an LED readout 4 for prompting the player and can provide similar verbiage as the window 8 or in lieu thereof, to stimulate the player. The device includes an inlet 6 for the reception therein for coins, currency or the like to auger in the

inception of play. A plurality of decision-making buttons 12 are located on the face of the apparatus 10, preferable below the display 2 and a pull handle 14 can be used to initiate play as an alternative to supplement the decision-making buttons 12. A coin hopper, ticket printer, or other device 18 may be included to effectuate an output of an
5 award due the player. The device 10 may have a top portion 32 with a display thereon having a motif correlative with the game to be played and can include a payable. A plurality of speakers 34 may be included on the device for aural interaction with the player. The apparatus also includes a processor P coordinating all functions and a random number generator G operatively coupled thereto for generating outcomes. A
10 card 9 provided with an information strip 17 can be read via input 7 as a substitute or supplement to credit transfers as well as player identification.

More specifically, and with reference to FIG. 3, greater details with respect to the video display 2 can be explored. The display 2 features a plurality of symbols 20 arranged in a row and column (RXC) matrix 21. Paylines 22 correspond to areas on the
15 matrix in which winning combinations may be located. The preferred embodiment features a 3X5 matrix with either 9, 15 or 25 paylines.

Referring to FIG. 1, the flow chart associated with the apparatus of FIGS. 2 and 3 can be explored. Initially, the player plays the game with a maximum bet or less. Preferably, but optionally, a maximum bet enables the features of the invention.
20 Assume a maximum bet is required. If the player plays with less than a maximum bet, the outcome is determined by the symbols displayed according to the display in FIG. 3. If the player opts to play with a maximum bet, then after the initial outcome is displayed, the player is immediately rewarded if the initial outcome corresponds to a value on an associated payable. Whether or not the player wins, the initial outcome is
25 compared to a predetermined set of outcomes that trigger a bonus game.

In the preferred embodiment, a triggering outcome enables a first bonus event, utilizing the display as shown in FIG. 4. Ideally, all bonus events are tied to solving a problem which entails identifying three independent indicia. The first bonus event is directed to matching the first indicia. The first indicia 40 is exposed to the player above
30 a playfield containing unexposed cards 41. Preferably, there are five unexposed cards 41 in the playfield. The player is allowed to select one card which becomes exposed upon selection. If the exposed card matches the first indicia 40, the player is awarded a bonus and allowed to move to a second bonus event. Assume the game bonus theme involves three variables: matching a person, a place and a thing. In the first bonus

round, the player is trying to match one of the three variables to the indicia 40. Assume the first indicia is a person. The five unexposed cards 41 are directed to five people, one of whom "matches" indicia 40. More particularly, the player is trying to determine which of the five people represented by the cards "hid" the player's inheritance.

5 The second bonus event utilizes the display shown in FIG. 5. The preferred embodiment is a game board 50 containing a series of "locales" 52, defining a playing path. Some of the locales 52 may contain award amounts or multipliers, while others are game-ending locales. The player appears as a counter piece 54 on the board. A random number generator, pictured as a spinner 56, is activated, which indicates the
10 locale to which the player's counter piece is to move to next. The player spins and advances the counter piece 54 to the appropriate locale. If the locale is a game-ending locale, the game ends and the player is awarded all credits accumulated from the bonus portion of the session and returned to the primary game. If the locale is not a game-ending locale, the player has an opportunity to guess the value of a pre-selected,
15 unexposed second indicia. Continuing with the inheritance theme, the player must decide what kind of inheritance was hidden. For example, the inheritance or treasure may be currency, bullion, gems, negotiable instruments, rare coins, stamps, etc. A playfield of exposed cards 58, preferably consisting of five cards, appears below the game board 50. The cards 58 contain random indicia corresponding to the
20 inheritance/treasure. If the player selects the card matching the second indicia, an award is credited to the player, and the game continues, with the player spinning and moving again. Once the second indicia is matched, play continues in the same manner to match the third indicia. Typically, the third indicia shows five potential sites where the inheritance was hidden. If the player matches all three indicia, the player is
25 awarded all credits accumulated from the bonus portion of the session and returned to the primary game. The game continues until either all three indicia are matched or until the player lands on a game-ending locale.

Moreover, having thus described the invention, it should be apparent that numerous structural modifications and adaptations may be resorted to without
30 departing from the scope and fair meaning of the instant invention as set forth hereinabove and as described hereinbelow by the claims.

Claims

I Claim:

Claim 1 - A gaming device, comprising, in combination:

a display,

5 wagering means, and

a processor interposed between said display and said wagering means to initiate play of a primary game on said display upon activation of said wagering means, said display having at least one outcome which triggers a first bonus, wherein said first bonus has at least one outcome which triggers a second bonus.

10 Claim 2 - A device according to claim 1 wherein said first bonus is defined by a first indicia, a first plurality of unexposed cards representing random indicia, choice means for choosing one of said plurality of unexposed cards, and comparison means for whether said chosen card matches said first indicia.

15 Claim 3 - A device according to claim 2 wherein said first plurality of unexposed cards is five.

 Claim 4 - A device according to claim 2 wherein said second bonus is defined by random means for pre-selecting a second indicia, a plurality of exposed cards representing random indicia, decision means for selecting a card from said plurality of exposed cards, and comparison means for determining whether the indicia of said
20 selected card matches said second indicia.

 Claim 5 - A device according to claim 4 wherein said plurality of exposed cards is five.

 Claim 6 - A device according to claim 4 wherein said second bonus is further defined by random means for pre-selecting a third indicia, a plurality of exposed cards
25 representing random indicia, decision means for selecting a card from said plurality of exposed cards, and comparison means for determining whether the indicia of said selected card matches said third indicia.

 Claim 7 - A device according to claim 6 wherein said plurality of exposed cards is five.

30 Claim 8 - A device according to claim 6 wherein said second bonus is further defined as a series of locales, random counter means for indicating magnitude of position changes about said series of locales, and position means for indicating a particular locale on said series of locales according to the value of said random counter means.

Claim 9 - A device according to claim 8 wherein said series of locales includes a subset of locales containing randomly-generated award values.

Claim 10 - A device according to claim 9 wherein said series of locales includes a subset of locales containing outcomes triggering the end of said second bonus.

5 Claim 11 - A device according to claim 10 wherein said subset of locales containing outcomes triggering the end of said second bonus is randomly chosen each time prior to engaging said random counter means.

Claim 12 - A method for gaming, the steps including:

10 displaying a primary game,
 allowing a wager,
 generating an outcome for said primary game as a function of said wager having been made,
 enabling a first bonus upon the occurrence of at least one outcome from said primary game, and
15 enabling a second bonus upon the occurrence of at least one outcome from said first bonus.

Claim 13 - The method of claim 12 wherein the first bonus includes providing an opportunity to match a person.

20 Claim 14 - The method of claim 13 wherein the second bonus includes matching a thing.

Claim 15 - The method of claim 14 wherein a bonus includes matching a place.

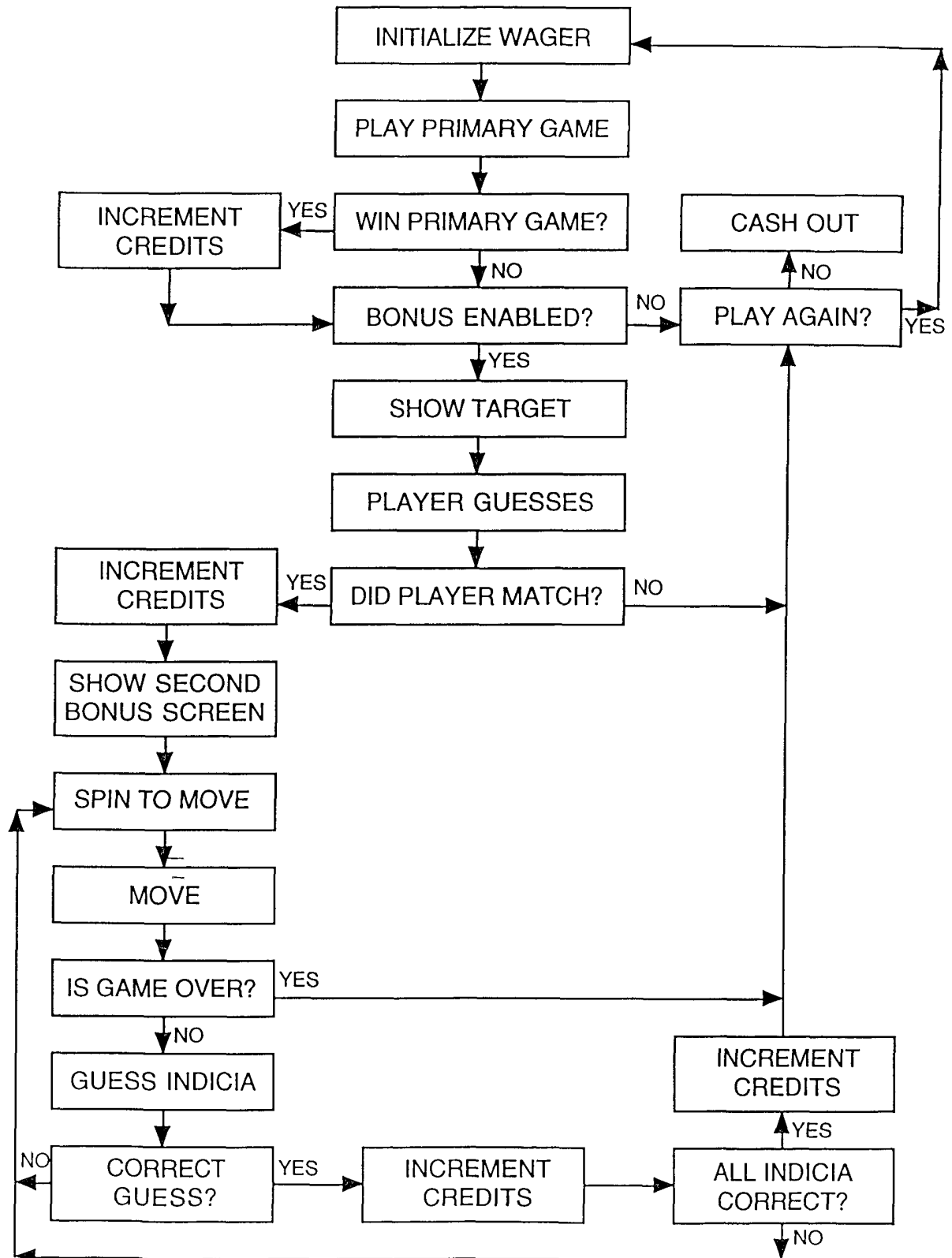


Figure 1

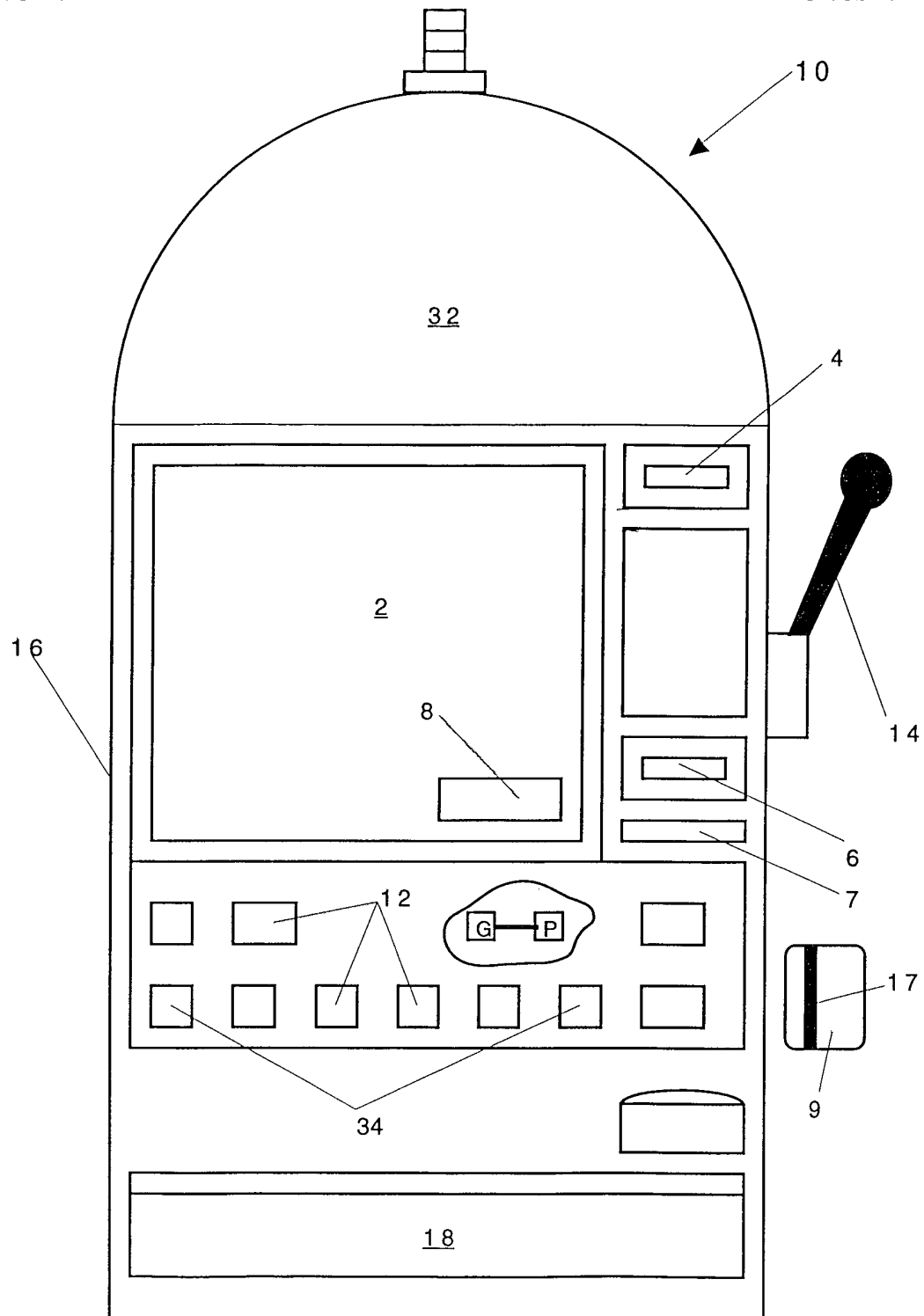


Figure 2

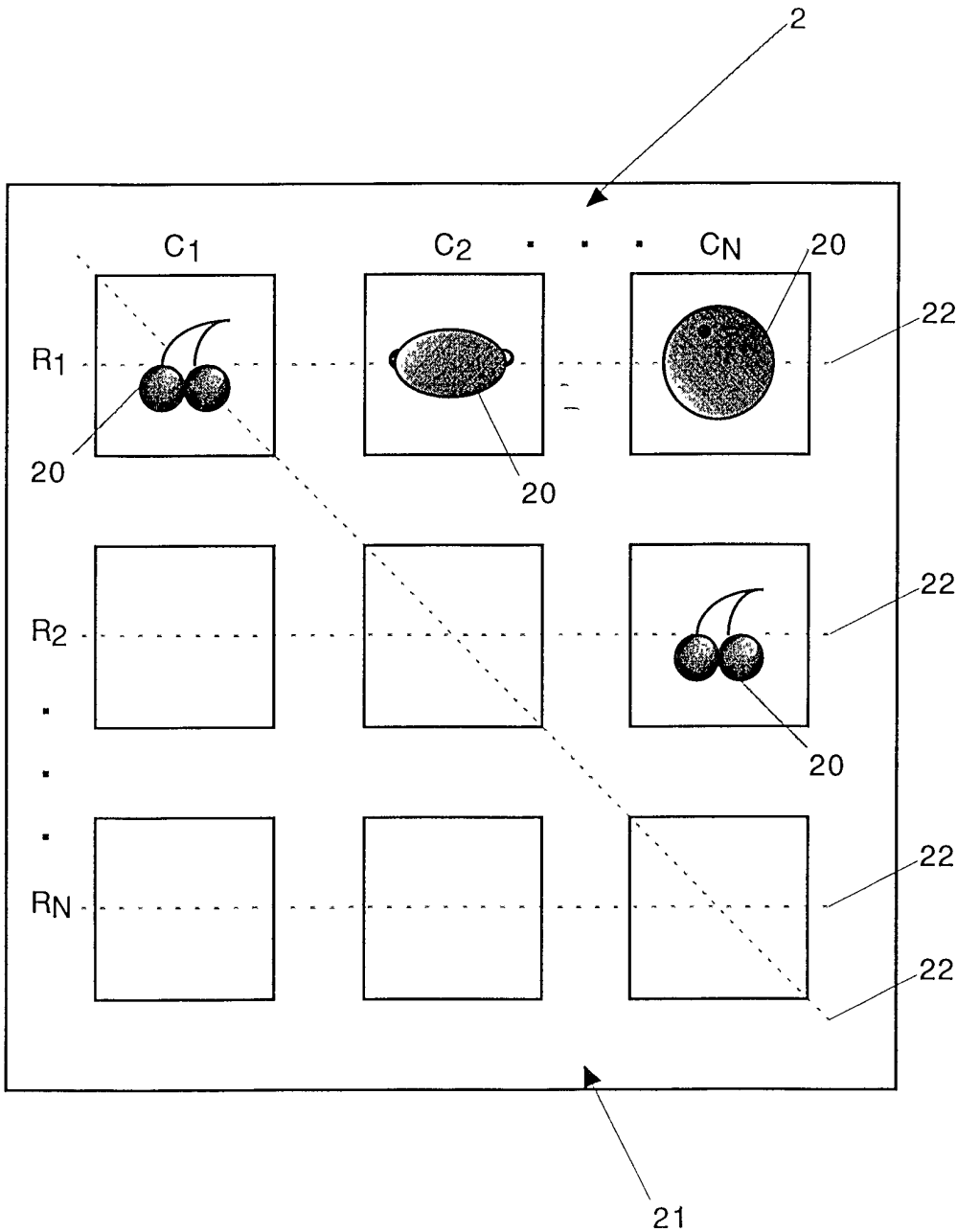


Figure 3

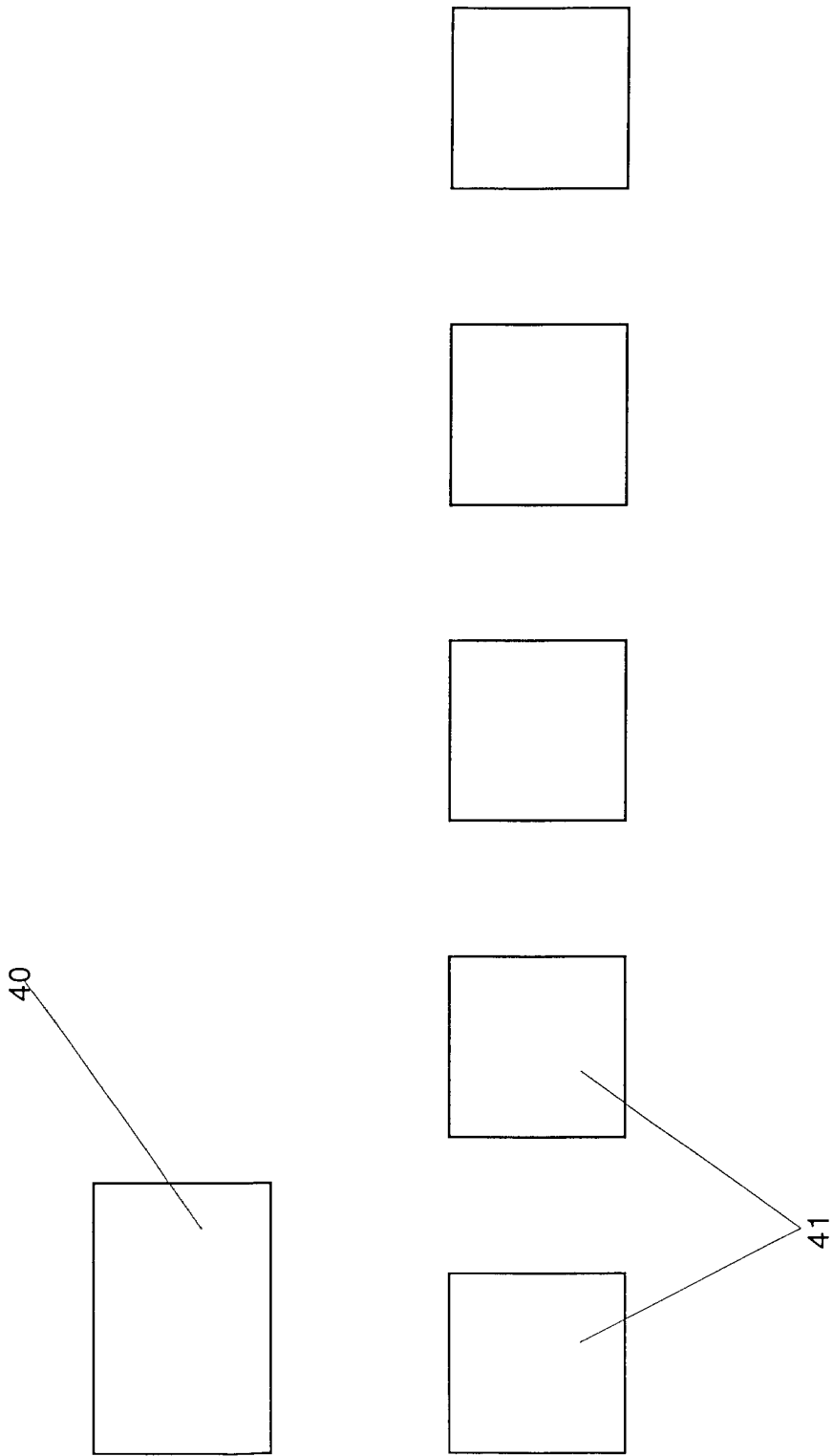


Figure 4

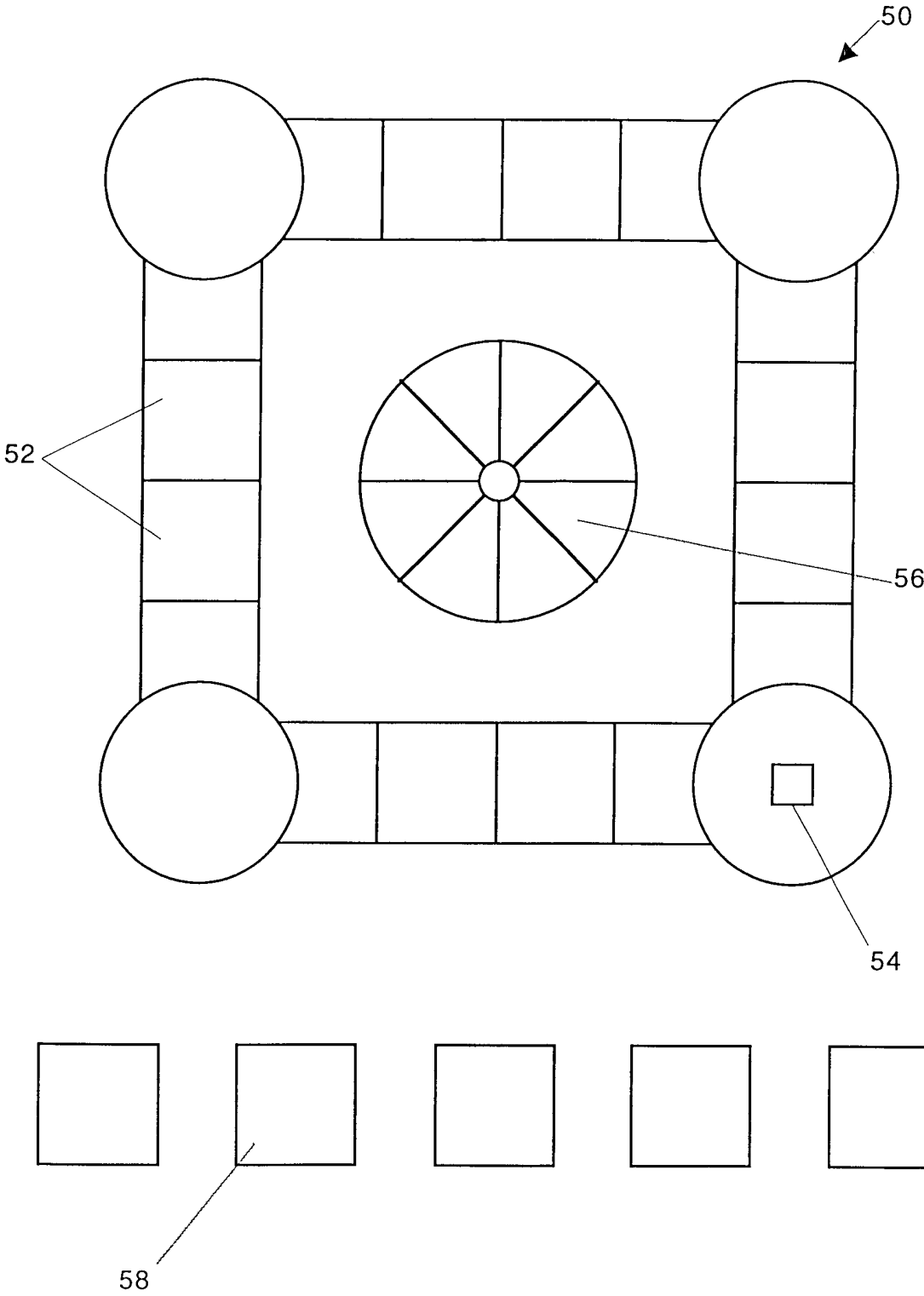


Figure 5

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US01/27763**A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER**

IPC(7) :G07F 17/34

US CL :Please See Extra Sheet.

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 163/25, 26, 27, 16, 20

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X,P	US 6,159,097 A (GURA) 12 December 2000, see entire document.	1-15
X	US 5,788,573 A (BAERLOCHER et al.) 04 August 1998, see entire document.	1, 12
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Y		2-11,13-15



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C



See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents	"I" Later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"X" document of particular relevance, the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
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"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	"A" document member of the same patent family
"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	
"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	

Date of the actual completion of the international search

19 NOVEMBER 2001

Date of mailing of the international search report

09 DEC 2001

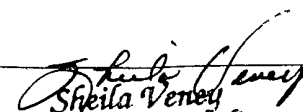
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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US01/27763

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER.
US CL : 463/25