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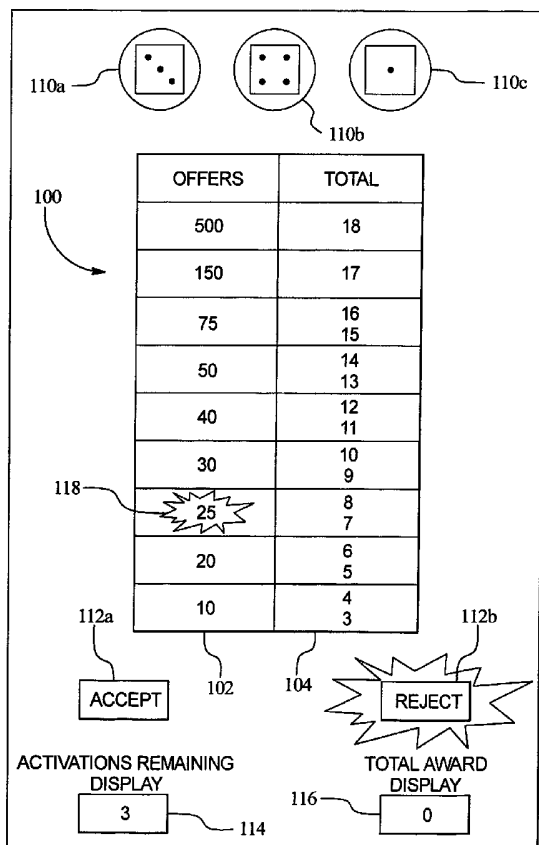
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- (71) Applicant: **IGT [US/US]**; 9295 Prototype Drive, Reno, NV 89521 (US).
- (72) Inventor: **KAMINKOW, Joseph, E.**; 35 Sharps Circle, Reno, NV 89509 (US).
- (74) Agent: **MASIA, Adam, H.**; Bell, Boyd & Lloyd LLC, P.O. Box 1135, Chicago, IL 60690-1135 (US).
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(54) Title: GAMING DEVICE HAVING AN OFFER / ACCEPTANCE GAME WHEREIN EACH OFFER IS BASED ON A PLURALITY OF INDEPENDENTLY GENERATED EVENTS



(57) Abstract: A gaming device displaying a plurality of award offers to a player based on a multiple independently generated events. A plurality of indicators including several components are activated for at least two activations. The indicators randomly generate and indicate components wherein the components determine one of the award offers. The award offer associated with the indicated components is presented to the player. The gaming device enables the player to accept or reject the award offer. If the player accept the award offer in one of the activations, the player receives an award associated with the award offer. If the player rejects the award offer, the gaming device continues to activate the indicators and generate new award offers until the player accepts one of the award offers or until there are no activations remaining in the game.

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SPECIFICATION

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

**“GAMING DEVICE HAVING AN OFFER / ACCEPTANCE GAME WHEREIN
EACH OFFER IS BASED ON A PLURALITY OF INDEPENDENTLY
GENERATED EVENTS”**

5

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Gaming devices such as slot, poker, blackjack and keno machines having primary games and secondary or bonus games or schemes are well known. One well known bonus game provides a player with a series of different award offers consisting of credits or dollars. The player may accept or reject any individual award offer in the series, however, the player must accept the final award offer if no previous award offer is accepted. If the player accepts an award offer, the player keeps the award and the bonus game terminates. If the player rejects the award offer, the gaming device provides a new award offer for player acceptance. The bonus game continues to provide new award offers until an award offer is accepted or the award offer is the final award offer.

Several implementations of this type of bonus scheme have been employed in gaming machines of various types. While this type of gaming device has achieved significant popularity in the gaming industry, players may lose interest in the game after playing the game repeatedly. Accordingly, there is a need for new gaming devices having improved award offer bonus schemes.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a gaming device having an improved award offer bonus scheme, wherein the player may improve an award offer during the bonus round. The bonus game enables the player to select an initial choice that either is the initial award offer or that the game uses to provide an initial award offer. The gaming device then enables the player to modify the initial award offer, creating a subsequent or modified award offer, which may be more or less than the initial award offer. The game repeats this process a predetermined number of times. In one embodiment, the game sequentially increases the likelihood of decreasing the player's award offer each time the player rejects an award offer.

In one embodiment, to modify the award offer, the player picks a masked selection from a plurality of masked selections. The picked selection yields a modifying value. The gaming device reveals the modifying value and determines a new award offer based on the modifying value.

5 In another embodiment of the present invention, the gaming device provides a plurality of offers associated with a plurality of positions. The gaming device further provides a plurality of position changes that modify the player's position and offer. Upon the initiation of the bonus round, the player obtains a position and an offer. The gaming device randomly selects a position change
10 and the player's position and offer are modified by the selected position change. The selected position change is associated with a terminator. The gaming device enables the player to either accept the provided offer or enable the gaming device to select another position change in an attempt to modify the provided offer. The bonus round proceeds until the player accepts the provided
15 offer or the gaming device randomly selects a position change with an associated terminator.

In an alternative embodiment, the gaming device displays a plurality of award offers, which are each associated with at least two components. The components may be letters, numbers, values, symbols, characters, colors or
20 any suitable component or combination of components. In addition, the gaming device displays at least two indicators, which include a plurality of the components. Each of the indicators independently randomly generates and indicates one of the plurality of components for at least two activations. The indicated components determine the award offer presented to a player in each
25 of the activations. The player may accept or reject the award offer in each of the activations by activating an offer acceptor. The offer acceptor may be a button or any suitable type of control.

If the player accepts one of the award offers in the activations, an award associated with the selected award offer is provided to the player and added to
30 the player's total award. If the player rejects the award offer, the processor activates the indicators again to generate a new award offer. The processor continues to activate the indicators and present award offers to the player until the player accepts one of the award offers in the activations or until there are no

activations remaining. An activations remaining display indicates the number of activations remaining in a game and a total award display indicates the total award accumulated by the player in the game. The total award indicated by the total award display at the end of the game is the award provided to the player.

5 In one embodiment, at least one total value or number is associated with each of the award offers. Each of the indicators includes a plurality of components wherein each of the components represents a number or value. The indicators independently, randomly generate and indicate one of the components on each indicator for at least two activations of the indicators. The
10 indicated components are combined or summed to produce a total number or total value in each of the activations. The total value determines the award offer presented to the player. The player may accept or reject the award offer in each activation by activating the offer acceptor. If the player accepts the award offer, the award associated with the award offer is provided to the player and
15 added to the player's total award in the game as indicated in the total award display. The game ends and the player receives the total award indicated in the total award display.

 If the player rejects or does not accept the award offer and there are activations remaining in the game, the gaming device activates the indicators
20 again. The indicated components are used to determine and present another award offer to the player. The gaming device continues to activate the indicators and present award offers to the player until the player accepts one of the award offers or until there are no activations remaining in the game. If there are no activations remaining in the game, the player receives the award
25 associated with the last award offer provided to the player in the game. As described above, the game ends and the player receives the total award indicated in the total award display.

 In another embodiment, the indicators include dice wherein the components on the dice are symbols, which represent numbers or values. The
30 dice are activated or rolled to independently, randomly indicate one of the symbols on each of the dies in each activation of the dice. The numbers or values associated with the indicated symbols on the dies are summed or added together to produce a total value in each activation. The total value determines

the award offer presented to the player in each activation. The player then may accept or reject the presented award offer as describe above. The dice may be displayed to the player in a video form or as mechanical dice units mounted on the top of the cabinet of the gaming device.

5 In a further embodiment, a probability of being indicated is associated with each of the components on the indicators. The probabilities may be predetermined, randomly determined, determined by the player's wager or according to any suitable determination method. In another embodiment, a probability of being determined or designated by the processors is associated
10 with each of the award offers. The probability may be determined using any of the methods described above. The processor determines one of the award offers based on the probabilities and then causes the indicators to generate and indicate components associated with the determined award offer. The probabilities associated with the award offers may include at least one different
15 probability, a plurality of different probabilities or all of the probabilities may be different. In the dice embodiment described above, the probabilities of being indicated associated with each of the components on the dice equals the actual probabilities of each of the symbols or components being indicated on each of the dies. The processor generates and indicates components on the indicator
20 based on the probabilities.

In another embodiment, a probability of being indicated is associated with each of the combinations of the components on the indicators. In this embodiment, the processor determines a combination of components and then causes the indicators to generate and indicate the determined combination of
25 components. The award offer associated with the determined combination of components is then presented or provided to the player in the game.

It is therefore an advantage of the present invention to provide a gaming device having an improved award offer / acceptance game.

Additional features and advantages of the present invention are
30 described in, and will be apparent from, the following Detailed Description of the Invention and the figures.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

Figs. 1A and 1B are perspective views of alternative embodiments of the gaming device of the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a schematic block diagram of the electronic configuration of one
5 embodiment of the gaming device of the present invention.

Figs. 3A through 3D are front elevation views of the display of one embodiment of the improved award offer bonus scheme illustrating the selection of an initial offer from a plurality of offers.

Figs. 3E through 3J are front elevation views of the display of one
10 embodiment of the improved award offer bonus scheme illustrating the modification of an existing offer.

Figs. 4A through 4C are front elevation views of the display of a preferred embodiment of the improved award offer bonus scheme illustrating the selection of an initial offer.

Figs. 4D through 4L are front elevation views of the display of one
15 preferred embodiment of the improved award offer bonus scheme illustrating the replacement of an existing offer.

Figs. 5A through 5F are front elevation views of the display of another embodiment of the improved award offer bonus scheme having a varying
20 number of selectable masked choices.

Fig. 6 is a front elevation view of the display of a further embodiment of the improved award offer bonus scheme having an additional offer display.

Figs. 7A through 7E are front elevation views of the display of another embodiment of the improved award offer bonus scheme having offer ranges in
25 which the offer replacement or modification changes when the offer enters a different range.

Figs. 8A through 8G are front elevation views of the display of another embodiment of the improved award offer bonus scheme having a plurality of offers associated with a plurality of positions and a plurality of terminators
30 associated with a plurality of position changes.

Figs. 9A through 9D are front elevation views of the display of another embodiment of the improved award offer bonus scheme having a plurality of terminators associated with a plurality of position changes and a plurality of

positions.

Figs. 10A through 10B are front elevation views of the display of another embodiment of the improved award offer bonus scheme having offer ranges in which the number of offer replacements or modifications changes when the offer enters a different range.

Fig. 11 is an enlarged elevation view of the display device of a further embodiment of the present invention illustrating a plurality of symbol indicators which determine an award offer in the game.

Figs. 12A and 12B are perspective views of embodiments of the gaming device of the present invention shown in Fig. 11.

Fig. 13 is a schematic block diagram of the electronic configuration of the embodiment of Fig. 11.

Figs. 14A, 14B, 14C and 14D are enlarged elevation views illustrating an example of the embodiment of Fig. 11 where the player begins the game with three activations of the symbol indicators.

Fig. 15 is an enlarged elevation view of one of the display devices of another alternative embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Gaming Device and Electronics

Referring now to the drawings, and in particular to Figs. 1A and 1B, gaming device 10a and gaming device 10b illustrate two possible cabinet styles and display arrangements and are collectively referred to herein as gaming device 10. The present invention includes the game (described below) being a stand alone game or a bonus or secondary game that coordinates with a base game. When the game of the present invention is a bonus game, gaming device 10 in one base game is a slot machine having the controls, displays and features of a conventional slot machine, wherein the player operates the gaming device while standing or sitting. Gaming device 10 also includes being a pub-style or table-top game (not shown), which a player operates while sitting.

The base games of the gaming device 10 include slot, poker, blackjack or keno, among others. The gaming device 10 also embodies any bonus triggering events, bonus games as well as any progressive game coordinating with these base games. The symbols and indicia used for any of the base,

bonus and progressive games include mechanical, electrical or video symbols and indicia.

In a stand alone or a bonus embodiment, the gaming device 10 includes monetary input devices. Figs. 1A and 1B illustrate a coin slot 12 for coins or tokens and/or a payment acceptor 14 for cash money. The payment acceptor 14 also includes other devices for accepting payment, such as readers or validators for credit cards, debit cards or smart cards, tickets, notes, etc. When a player inserts money in gaming device 10, a number of credits corresponding to the amount deposited is shown in a credit display 16. After depositing the appropriate amount of money, a player can begin the game by pulling arm 18 or pushing play button 20. Play button 20 can be any play activator used by the player which starts any game or sequence of events in the gaming device.

As shown in Figs. 1A and 1B, gaming device 10 also includes a bet display 22 and a bet one button 24. The player places a bet by pushing the bet one button 24. The player can increase the bet by one credit each time the player pushes the bet one button 24. When the player pushes the bet one button 24, the number of credits shown in the credit display 16 decreases by one, and the number of credits shown in the bet display 22 increases by one. A player may cash out by pushing a cash out button 26 to receive coins or tokens in the coin payout tray 28 or other forms of payment, such as an amount printed on a ticket or credited to a credit card, debit card or smart card. Well known ticket printing and card reading machines (not illustrated) are commercially available.

Gaming device 10 also includes one or more display devices. The embodiment shown in Fig. 1A includes a central display device 30, and the alternative embodiment shown in Fig. 1B includes a central display device 30 as well as an upper display device 32. The display devices display any visual representation or exhibition, including but not limited to movement of physical objects such as mechanical reels and wheels, dynamic lighting and video images. The display device includes any viewing surface such as glass, a video monitor or screen, a liquid crystal display or any other static or dynamic display mechanism. In a video poker, blackjack or other card gaming machine embodiment, the display device includes displaying one or more cards. In a

keno embodiment, the display device includes displaying numbers.

The slot machine base game of gaming device 10 preferably displays a plurality of reels 34, preferably three to five reels 34, in mechanical or video form on one or more of the display devices. Each reel 34 displays a plurality of 5 indicia such as bells, hearts; fruits, numbers, letters, bars or other images which preferably correspond to a theme associated with the gaming device 10. If the reels 34 are in video form, the display device displaying the video reels 34 is preferably a video monitor. Each base game, especially in the slot machine base game of the gaming device 10, includes speakers 36 for making sounds or 10 playing music.

Referring now to Fig. 2, a general electronic configuration of the gaming device 10 for the stand alone and bonus embodiments described above preferably includes: a processor 38; a memory device 40 for storing program code or other data; a central display device 30; an upper display device 32; 15 mechanical symbol indicators 110; a sound card 42; a plurality of speakers 36; and one or more input devices 44. The processor 38 is preferably a microprocessor or microcontroller-based platform which is capable of displaying images, symbols and other indicia such as images of people, characters, places, things and faces of cards. The memory device 40 includes random 20 access memory (RAM) 46 for storing event data or other data generated or used during a particular game. The memory device 40 also includes read only memory (ROM) 48 for storing program code, which controls the gaming device 10 so that it plays a particular game in accordance with applicable game rules and pay tables.

25 As illustrated in Fig. 2, the player preferably uses the input devices 44 to input signals into gaming device 10. In the slot machine base game, the input devices 44 include the pull arm 18, play button 20, the bet one button 24 and the cash out button 26. A touch screen 50 and touch screen controller 52 are connected to a video controller 54 and processor 38. The terms "computer" or 30 "controller" are used herein to refer collectively to the processor 38, the memory device 40, the sound card 42, the touch screen controller and the video controller 54.

In certain instances, it is preferable to use a touch screen 50 and an associated touch screen controller 52 instead of a conventional video monitor display device. The touch screen enables a player to input decisions into the gaming device 10 by sending a discrete signal based on the area of the touch
5 screen 50 that the player touches or presses. As further illustrated in Fig. 2, the processor 38 connects to the coin slot 12 or payment acceptor 14, whereby the processor 38 requires a player to deposit a certain amount of money in to start the game.

It should be appreciated that although a processor 38 and memory
10 device 40 are preferable implementations of the present invention, the present invention also includes being implemented via one or more application-specific integrated circuits (ASIC's), one or more hard-wired devices, or one or more mechanical devices (collectively referred to herein as a "processor"). Furthermore, although the processor 38 and memory device 40 preferably
15 reside in each gaming device 10 unit, the present invention includes providing some or all of their functions at a central location such as a network server for communication to a playing station such as over a local area network (LAN), wide area network (WAN), Internet connection, microwave link, and the like.

With reference to the slot machine base game of Figs. 1A and 1B, to
20 operate the gaming device 10, the player inserts the appropriate amount of tokens or money in the coin slot 12 or the payment acceptor 14 and then pulls the arm 18 or pushes the play button 20. The reels 34 then begin to spin. Eventually, the reels 34 come to a stop. As long as the player has credits remaining, the player can spin the reels 34 again. Depending upon where the
25 reels 34 stop, the player may or may not win additional credits.

In addition to winning base game credits, the gaming device 10, including any of the base games disclosed above, also includes bonus games that give players the opportunity to win credits. The gaming device 10 preferably employs a video-based display device 30 or 32 for the bonus games. The
30 bonus games include a program that automatically begins when the player achieves a qualifying condition in the base game.

In the slot machine embodiment, the qualifying condition includes a particular symbol or symbol combination generated on a display device. As

illustrated in the five reel slot game shown in Figs. 1A and 1B, the qualifying condition includes the number seven appearing on three adjacent reels 34 along a payline 56. It should be appreciated that the present invention includes one or more paylines, such as payline 56, wherein the paylines can be
5 horizontal, diagonal or any combination thereof.

Offer Modification

Referring now to Figs. 3A through 3J, one embodiment of the improved award offer bonus scheme of the present invention includes modifying such as by increasing or decreasing an existing offer by mathematically altering it, as
10 discussed in more detail below. The gaming device includes a screen or display 100 which preferably includes a touch screen. The display and particularly the touch screen enables the player to select an award offer from a plurality of award offers. A plurality of masked selections 102, 104 and 106 are illustrated in Figs. 3A through 3D. It should be appreciated that while three
15 selections are illustrated, two or more selections are contemplated. Appropriate messages such as "MAKE A SELECTION" or "SELECT AN AWARD OFFER" are preferably provided to the player visually, or through suitable audio or audiovisual displays in conjunction with the plurality of selections.

The player picks one of the masked initial award offers or selections 102,
20 104 or 106, and the game provides or generates an initial award offer 108, 110 or 112, respectively. The gaming device also preferably reveals each of the available initial award offers 108, 110 and 112 associated with selections 102, 104 and 106, respectively, as illustrated in Fig. 3D, so that the player knows whether the player has made a good or bad selection. In one example, the
25 player chooses the selection 104, and the game reveals the initial award offer 110 having a value of 50 credits as illustrated in Figs. 3B and 3C. The gaming device preferably includes an award offer display 113, which displays the initial award offer 114 as illustrated in Figs. 3C and 3D.

In one embodiment, the gaming device selects and distributes the
30 plurality of masked initial award offers from a larger pool (not illustrated) of initial award offers available during the bonus game. The pool of initial award offers may, for example, include nine possible initial award offers ranging from +10 to +100 credits, although any size pool is contemplated by the present invention.

The pool may alternatively include negative initial award offers. The gaming device preferably randomly selects the plurality of initial award offers from the pool of initial award offers (not illustrated) each time the bonus game is initiated. It is also contemplated that the gaming device may assign a weight factor or probability to each initial award offer in the pool such that award offers having higher weight factors or probabilities have a greater chance of being selected. This weight factor or probability may be consistent throughout the entire bonus game or change from play to play during the bonus game.

The bonus game as described above reveals or unmask the remaining initial award offers 108 and 112 as illustrated in Fig. 3D. If the player would have chosen the selection 102, the player would have obtained the initial award offer 108 worth 100 credits, and if the player would have chosen the selection 106, the player would have obtained the initial award offer 112 worth 75 credits.

After establishing the initial award offer, the gaming device enables the player to modify the initial award offer and form a subsequent or new award offer. The subsequent or new award offer is based on or dependent on the initial award offer. It should be appreciated that the subsequent or new award offer may be of lesser, greater or equal value than the selected award offer, adding an element of risk to the bonus game. It should be appreciated that the initial award offer is preferably positive as discussed above.

Referring now to Figs. 3E through 3J, after establishing an initial award offer, the gaming device provides the player with a second display 116. The second display 116 includes the initially selected award offer 114 in the award offer display 113, a value display 118 and a plurality of masked selections 120, 122 and 124. It should be appreciated that the number of masked selections may vary in accordance with the present invention.

The value display 118 includes a plurality of positions or points 126 or a ranking of positions or points and a plurality of associated offer modifiers 128. In this embodiment, the ranking of positions or points and modifiers or offer modifiers are displayed in a tabular format although other suitable displays are contemplated. Each position, point or number of points has an associated offer modifier. The offer modifier in one embodiment is measured in credits. The offer modifiers 128 are not new award offers. Rather, the gaming device uses

the offer modifiers 128 to modify the initially selected award offer 114 (and subsequent award offers) to produce a new or modified award offer. The points 126 which the player chooses or obtains as described below, correspond to or determine which offer modifiers 128 the game uses to modify the award offer.

5 The player picks one of the masked selections 120, 122 or 124. The gaming device reveals and provides a number of points associated with the selection. The gaming device may select the points for this portion of the bonus game from a larger pool of points (not illustrated). The gaming device preferably randomly selects points from the pool and randomly assigns the
10 points to each of the selections 120, 122 and 124. The point pools (not illustrated) may be weighted via a weight factor or probability associated with each point. The weight factor or probability may be consistent throughout the bonus game or vary from play to play in the bonus round.

 In one example, the player chooses selection 124, which reveals the
15 point 136 having a value of "1" as illustrated in Fig. 3F. The gaming device preferably reveals or unmask the remaining, non-chosen points 132 and 134 as illustrated in Fig. 3G. The gaming device also highlights or otherwise indicates the offer modifier associated with the selected point in the value display 118. In this embodiment, the value display 118 highlights the offer
20 modifier of twenty-five, which is associated with the selected point value of "1" as illustrated in Fig. 3G.

 The gaming device modifies the award offer and specifically adds the designated offer modifier 128 of "25" to the initial or previous offer of "50." Another embodiment includes multiplying the modifier by the initial or previous
25 offer. Other suitable mathematical operations or calculations may be performed or desired by the implementor. The addition of the modified offer 128 creates a modified or subsequent award offer 138 of 75 credits, which is displayed in the award offer display 113 as illustrated in Figs. 3G and 3H.

 The present invention includes enabling the player to accept the modified
30 award offer 138 or reject it and continue to play the bonus game. Fig. 3H includes accept and reject indicators or buttons 140 and 142, respectively, enabling the player to register his or her decision. That is, the game enables the player to accept or reject an offer award after the first modified award offer.

Another embodiment includes enabling the accept or reject function after the initial award offer, second or any subsequent modification. In the illustrated embodiment, the accept and reject buttons are labeled "STOP" and "GO."

If the player accepts the subsequent award offer 138, the gaming device
5 provides the player with the award offer and updates the player's total credits with the accepted or provided award offer. The gaming device preferably does not enable the player to obtain any more award offers and thereby terminates the bonus game. If the player rejects the modified award offer 138, thereby
10 risking it for the chance at receiving a modified award offer of greater value, the gaming device enables the player to obtain a modified or subsequent award offer as illustrated in Figs. 3I and 3J. The new or second subsequent award offer 144 is based on the immediately previous award offer 138 as illustrated in Fig. 3J, and a selected point 132 of "-1" which yields an offer modifier of "-25" credits, which decreases the previous award offer by 25 to award offer 144 of
15 "50."

Thus, after the player rejects the first subsequent award offer 138, the gaming device enables the player to generate another offer modifier 128 in the same manner as described above. When the player selects a point 132 with a value of "-1," the game generates the offer modifier 128 of "-25" credits. The
20 gaming device thereby reduces or modifies the player's previous award offer 138, resulting in a third award offer 144 of "50" credits as illustrated in Fig. 3J. The gaming device enables the player to accept this offer, terminating the bonus round, or continue as described previously. The game preferably ends after a predetermined number of award offers are rejected such as after three
25 rejections or four total award offers made to the player.

In one preferred embodiment, the gaming device of the present invention further includes structuring the point pools such that later point distributions yield a greater chance of generating a negative number of points and thus credits for the player and generating a relatively high positive number of points
30 and thus credits for the player. That is, the present invention includes later offers being potentially riskier and potentially yielding higher award offers.

Offer Replacement

Referring now to Figs. 4A through 4L, another embodiment of the improved award offer bonus scheme of the present invention includes replacing award offers with related award offers. The award offers are related by an order of their values. The gaming device of this embodiment enables the player to individually select an initial award offer, similar to the above embodiment, from a plurality of masked award offer selections and thereafter receive a new or replaced award offer, which is based on the initial award offer. The replaced award offer may be greater than, less than or equal to the value of the previous award offer.

In this embodiment, the display 200 includes the value display 218 and a plurality of masked selections 202, 203, 204, 205 and 206. The value display 218 includes a ranking of positions 226 and associated award offers 228, which differ from the offer modifiers 128 in the previous embodiment, which mathematically modify previous offers. The display 200 enables the player to select an initial number, ranking, point or position 226 which is associated with an initial award offer. The player picks from the five masked selections as illustrated in Figs. 4A through 4C, although any suitable number of selections may be employed. In this embodiment, the ranking, points or positions 226 which are initially player selected designate award offers 228, and the award offers 228 replace the previously selected award offers instead of modifying the previous award offers.

In one preferred embodiment, the value display 218 is similar to a chart used to record and display best sellers such as book or record sales. The current number or position 226 represents the rank, place or spot on the chart (i.e., number 1 meaning a number one best selling book or record) and the award offers 228 are the game credits associated with that position on the chart. The object is to move to or as close to the number 1 rank or position as possible and thereby receive the highest number of credits. After establishing the initial rank or position on the chart that the game generates from the player's initial pick, as indicated above, the game enables the player to modify the player's current position on the value display 218. A positive number moves the player's position a number of positions closer to the number 1 position and a negative

number moves the player's position 226 a number of positions away from the number 1 position.

After the player picks one of the masked initial positions or selections to generate an initial position such as position 209 of "18," the gaming device preferably reveals the other possible initial positions 208, 210, 211 and 212 associated with the selections 202, 204, 205 and 206, respectively (best seen in Fig. 4C). In this example, the player chooses the selection 203 which reveals the associated initial position 209 of "18" as illustrated in Figs. 4B and 4C. The initial positions 208 through 212 may be any of the illustrated possible positions 226 including positions "1" to "25." The possible positions 226 in one implementation are weighted so that the game more likely generates less valuable positions, such as "18" or "24" than middle valued positions, such as "12" or high valued positions, such as "3."

The value display 218 preferably indicates or designates the initial position as illustrated in Fig. 4C. The value display also highlights or otherwise marks an associated award offer of eight credits. The value display 218 may display a label 250 such as "WEEK 1" which enhances the theme of the game by showing different positions at different times or stages of the game.

After establishing the initial position, the gaming device provides a second selection display 216 as illustrated in Figs. 4D through 4L, which includes value display 218 and a plurality of masked selections 219, 220, 221, 222, 223 and 224. Although six selections are illustrated, two or more selections are contemplated.

The player picks one of the masked selections. The gaming device reveals a number, rank or position move or point associated with such selection. In this example, the player chooses selection 224 revealing position move or point of "+3" as illustrated in Fig. 4E. It should be appreciated that the selected point 236 is not a new award offer or credit amount. Rather the point 236 is used to determine the modification of the player's current position or spot on the value display 218, which corresponds to an award offer that replaces the original offer. The position could also be associated with an award modification as explained above.

In this example, the player selected an initial position of "18," which has a corresponding award offer of eight as illustrated in Fig. 4C. The player subsequently selects the move 236 of "+3." The game accordingly changes the initial position by three places or positions closer to position 1, creating a new
5 position of 15 and a new offer of twelve as illustrated in Fig. 4F. That is, the player's position changes three spots towards the number 1 position. The new award offer 228 of twelve is displayed by the value display 218 and marked by the label 252 as "WEEK 2" as illustrated in Figs. 4E and 4F. It should be appreciated that the value display 218 may display the initial and new position
10 250 and 252, respectively, simultaneously or only the new position 252. The gaming device preferably reveals or unmask the remaining non-chosen points 231, 232, 233, 234 and 235 associated with the remaining selections 219, 220, 221, 222 and 223, respectively, as illustrated in Fig. 4F.

The preferred embodiment includes enabling the player to accept the
15 new award offer or reject the award offer and continue to play the bonus game. The gaming device provides the previously described accept and reject indicators or buttons 240 and 242 respectively labeled "STOP" and "GO," as illustrated in Fig. 4G.

If the player accepts the new award offer, the gaming device provides the
20 player with the new award offer and terminates the bonus game. If the player rejects the new award offer, the bonus game continues in like fashion, wherein in this example: (i) the player picks one of the masked selections from the group of selections 219 through 224 as illustrated in Figs. 4G and 4H; and (ii) the gaming device reveals position move 235 of zero as illustrated in Fig. 4H,
25 such that the player's position on the display does not change after the third offer as illustrated by position 253 in Fig. 4I. The game also reveals the other position moves as illustrated in Fig. 4I. At this point, again the player may accept or reject the award offer as illustrated in Fig. 4J.

In one embodiment of the present invention, the game automatically
30 rejects the award offer 228 if there is no risk to the player, e.g., when the current award offer is the lowest possible offer illustrated here as one credit in association with the twenty-fifth position. This auto-executing feature occurs only when the current award offer is not the final offer, that is, when the game

will provide another award offer to the player.

As illustrated in Fig. 4K, the player selects selection 219 which provides a +4 position move 231. The game changes the position by four places or positions closer to position 1, creating a new position of 11 and a new offer of 5 30 as illustrated in Fig. 4L. The offer of 30 is displayed by the value displayed 218 and marked by the label 254 as "WEEK 4" as also illustrated in Fig. 4L. The gaming device also reveals the remaining non-chosen points associated with the remaining masked selections as further illustrated in Fig. 4L. The player may then either reject the offer if there are any more remaining offers or 10 accept the offer and end the bonus game. If there are no more remaining offers, the player's award is 30. It should be appreciated that this multi-step bonus game provides an interesting and exciting bonus game for players.

It should also be appreciated from previous example that the present invention includes positive position moves, negative position moves and no 15 position moves. The present invention further includes assigning the masked selection values to make advancement more difficult or less difficult or more hazardous or less hazardous as the game advances. That is, the implementor may make advancement more difficult by increasing the number of negative moves and/or lower positive moves. The implementor may make advancement 20 more hazardous by increasingly placing larger positive and negative moves or points in the selection groups, whereby the average value of the points stays the same, but the potential for obtaining high negative position moves as well as high positive position moves increases with each selection. It should also be appreciated that the gaming device may provide the player a replay of the game 25 if the player achieves a certain level such as the first position. In such instance, the player would get the awards achieved in both the initial play and any replays.

In the embodiment of Figs. 4A to 4L, the number of masked selections increased from 5 in Figs. 4A to 4C to 6 in Figs. 4D to 4L. It should be 30 appreciated that the number of masked player selections can remain constant throughout the bonus round. In a further embodiment illustrated in Figs. 5A through 5F, the number of player selectable choices or masked selections may decrease or otherwise vary during the bonus game. In Fig. 5A, the gaming

device provides a display 300 having seven masked selections 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324 and 325. The player picks one of the masked selections. The gaming device reveals the position associated with such selection. In Fig. 5B, the player chooses the selection 319 revealing the initial position 336 of 12 as
5 illustrated in Fig. 5B. The gaming device preferably reveals or unmask the remaining non-chosen positions 337 to 342 associated with the remaining selections 320, 321, 322, 323, 324 and 325, respectively, as illustrated in Fig. 5C.

In the next round of the bonus game illustrated in Figs. 5D through 5F,
10 the gaming device provides six masked selections 319, 320, 321, 322, 323 and 324. The player picks one of the masked selections. The gaming device reveals the position moves or points associated with such selection. In the illustrated example, the player chooses selection 324 revealing the position move point 341 having a value of -1 as illustrated in Fig. 5E. The gaming
15 device preferably reveals or unmask the remaining non-chosen position moves or points 336, 337, 338, 339 and 340 associated with the remaining selections 319, 320, 321, 322 and 323, respectively, as illustrated in Fig. 5F.

A further alternative embodiment is illustrated in Fig. 6. This embodiment includes the value display 418, the positions 426, the associated offers 428 and
20 the accept and reject buttons 440 and 442 as described previously. However, in this embodiment, the bonus game includes an award offer display 412 showing the various replaced positions 426 and offers 428 associated with the positions 426.

It should be appreciated that the alternative embodiments of the
25 improved award offer bonus scheme of the present invention can be simultaneously implemented in a single bonus round or each implemented individually in different bonus rounds. The determination of when to implement such alternative embodiments could also be randomly determined.

Offer Ranges

30 Referring now to Figs. 7A through 7E, in another embodiment of the present invention, the game is adapted to: (i) replace or modify a player's current offer with higher award offers when the player's offer resides within a particular offer range; and (ii) replace or modify a player's current award offer

with higher or lower award offers when the player's offer resides within another award offer range. In one preferred implementation, the player upgrades the award offers through the range where the award offers can only increase until obtaining an award offer in a second range, wherein the player has to decide
5 whether it is worth risking the current award offer and potentially receiving a lower award offer. The multiple ranges may be implemented with an award offer modification embodiment illustrated in Figs. 3A through 3J, or with an award offer replacement embodiment illustrated in Figs. 4A through 4L. For purposes of illustration, only an award offer replacement embodiment is
10 illustrated and described below.

In Fig. 7A, the display 500 includes an award offer display 518 that has a plurality of ranks or positions 526 and a displayed award offer 528 associated with each rank or position. This example provides twenty-two ranks positions 526 and award offers 528 spanning from one to one thousand. As illustrated,
15 the same award offer 528 may be associated with two or more positions 526. The display 500 also includes an accept button 540 and a reject button 542, which have the functionality described above. The display 500 also includes an offers or moves remaining indicator 544, which shows the player how many more times the player may reject a current award offer and obtain a new award
20 offer.

In one implementation, the award offer display 518 includes a trail or path that a marker 550, representing the player, moves along as the player generates new award offers. This particular trail includes an upward slope, wherein the marker 550 moves upwardly, and a downward slope, wherein the
25 marker 550 moves downwardly. The slopes are differentiated by different audio, visual or audiovisual messages 520 and 522.

This embodiment may provide messages, such as messages 520 and 522, which describe the different risks of playing while the player's offer exists in a particular range. Alternatively, the game does not provide this information.
30 The message 520, corresponding to the nine positions on the upward slope (not including the top position), informs the player that the player's offer 528 only moves up if the player selects to keep moving while the marker 550 resides in one of the upward slope positions. The message 522, corresponding to the

thirteen downward slope positions 526 (including the top position), informs the player that the player's offer 528 can move up or down if the player selects to keep moving while the marker 550 resides on the top position or on one of the downward slope positions 526.

5 In one embodiment of the present invention, the gaming device includes an area in the memory device 40 that stores one or more tables having position changes 546 one through twelve, move changes 548 that add or subtract moves from the moves remaining indicator 544 and an offer plus/minus indicator 560, which the game generates when the player's current offer resides
10 on the downward slope. When the player picks the keep moving button 542, an input is sent to the processor 38, whereby the processor randomly generates either a position change 546 or a move change 548. If applicable, the processor also generates an offer plus/minus indicator 560.

The display 500 may be adapted to inform the player of the actual values
15 stored in the memory device 40. Either or both the position 546 or move change 548 generation or the plus/minus indicator 560 generation may be weighted so that, e.g., the game generates one of the move changes 548 less than 1/7th of the time, or the game generates an offer increase fifty-five percent of the time, etc.

20 As illustrated in the display 500 of Fig. 7A, in one implementation the player begins with three moves and at the start position. The message 520 informs the player that the player can only increase the offer by selecting the keep moving button 542. In the display 502 of Fig. 7B, after the player picks the keep moving button 542 a first time, the game generates a position change 546
25 of four from the memory device 40 but does not generate a plus/minus indicator 560. The marker 550 moves four positions upward along the path of the offer display 518 so that the player's new award offer is three. The moves remaining display 544 shows one less move. Since the player's award offer still resides on the uphill side of the display 518, the player would wisely pick the keep
30 moving button 542 again.

In the display 504 of Fig. 7C, after the player picks the keep moving button 542 a second time, the game generates a move change 548 of "add move" from the memory device 40. The plus/minus indicator 560 is inapplicable

here because the game does not generate a position change. That is, even on the downhill side the game does not generate an indicator 560 when it generates a move change 548. The marker 550 stays in the same position 526 so that the player's award offer remains three. The moves remaining display 5 544 shows one additional move. Since the player's offer still resides on the uphill side of the display 518, the player would again wisely pick the keep moving button 542 again.

In the display 506 of Fig. 7D, after the player picks the keep moving button 542 a third time, the game generates a position change 546 of six from the memory device 40, but does not generate a plus/minus indicator 560. The 10 marker 550 moves six positions 526 upward along the path of the offer display 518 so that the player's new award offer is ten. The moves remaining display 544 shows one less move. Since in this implementation, the uppermost position 526 is considered to be on the downhill side of the display 518, the player has to 15 weigh the risk of picking the keep moving button 542 again. In alternative implementations as discussed below, the uppermost position 526 may be considered to be on the uphill side of the display 518 or as a separate range altogether in which the offer 528 always decreases, so that the player has to backtrack positions 526 to move past the top position.

In the display 508 of Fig. 7E, after the player picks the keep moving button 542 a fourth time, the game generates a position change 546 of eleven from the memory device 40 and additionally generates the plus indicator 560. The marker 550, therefore, moves eleven positions downward, i.e., creating a 20 positive change in the player's offer 528, which is now five hundred. If the game had generated a minus eleven position 526 change, the marker would move ten positions to the start position and stop.

Likewise, if the player generates a position change 546 that exceeds the last and most valuable position, e.g., corresponding to the one thousand offer 528, the game in one implementation just provides the last offer. Thus, in the 30 player's current position 526 having an associated offer 528 of five hundred, any positive position change 546 results in the player's achievement of the highest offer 528. The moves remaining display 544 again shows one less move. Since in this implementation, the position 526 associated with the five hundred

award 528 is on the downhill side of the display 518, the player again has to weigh the risk of picking the keep moving button 542.

In another implementation, the game may be adapted to weight the position moves 546 as a function of the player's current position 526. That is, the game has, e.g., one weighting system for when the player keeps moving after achieving one of the offers 528 fifteen through fifty and another weighting system for when the player keeps moving after achieving one of the offers 528 one hundred through five hundred. In this implementation, the offer plus/minus indicator 560 can be weighted to generate negative changes 546 more often than positive changes 546, and/or the changes 546 can also be weighted to generate higher numbers so that the game tends to set the player back further to a lesser position 526. In any of these weighting systems, the move changes 548 may be weighted as desired by the implementor.

Although one implementation for providing varying offer ranges has been illustrated, the varying offer ranges may be combined differently than as illustrated in Figs. 7A to 7E. As described above, in one implementation, a third range having only decreasing offers is mixed in with one or more increase only and/or increase/decrease ranges. In another implementation, an increase/decrease range occurs first, followed by an increase only range. In another implementation, a decrease only range occurs at the end of the positions, so that the player must back up to try for a higher position. Any type of range may be adapted to include one, more than one or all of the positions 526, so that each position 526 in one implementation includes a different type of range. In any of these combinations, a positive and or negative move changes 548 may be included in the selection pool as desired by the implementor.

Referring now to Figs. 8A through 8G, in another embodiment of the present invention the game is adapted to: (i) replace or modify a player's current offer with a higher award offer; (ii) replace or modify the maximum award offer with a higher maximum award offer; (iii) replace selected position changes with termination symbols or terminators; and (iv) enable the player to accept or reject each modified award offer. This modified award offer embodiment may be implemented with an award offer modification embodiment as illustrated in Figs. 3A through 3J or with an award offer replacement embodiment as illustrated in

Figs. 4A through 4L. For purposes of this application, only an award offer replacement embodiment is illustrated and described below.

In Fig. 8A, the display 600 includes an award offers display 618 which has a plurality of ranks or positions 626 and a displayed award offer 628 associated with each rank or position. This examples provides twenty-four positions 626 and award offers 628 initially spanning from one to twenty. It should be appreciated that any suitable number of positions and award offers are contemplated by the present invention. As illustrated, the same award offer may be associated with two or more positions. In this embodiment, the display 10 600 includes an offer display 644 which displays the current award offer, an accept award offer indicator or button 648, and a reject award offer indicator or button 642 which have the functionality described above.

In one embodiment of the current invention, the award offer display 618 includes a trail or path having a marker 650 representing the player. The 15 marker moves along as the player generates modified award offers. The illustrated trial includes an upward slope wherein the marker 650 moves upwardly toward a peak position associated with the maximum award offer 620 and a downward slope wherein the marker 650 moves downwardly. It should be appreciated that the maximum award offer 620 may be associated with any 20 position of the trail, path or sequence. In this embodiment, the award offers associated with the plurality of positions increase up the upward slope and decrease down the downward slope. The slopes may be differentiated by different audio, visual or audiovisual messages.

In one embodiment of the present invention, the gaming device includes 25 an area in the memory device 40 that stores one or more tables having a plurality of position changes 646 which are illustrated on the display 646. Each position change represents the number of positions along the award offer path or sequence 618 that the marker 650 will be moved. It should be appreciated that these position changes may or may not be display. It should also be 30 appreciated that weighted probabilities may be associated with the position changes. At the initiation of the bonus scheme and when the player uses the reject award offer indicator 648, an input is sent to the processor 38, whereby the processor randomly selects one of the position changes 646. In the

illustrated embodiment, the gaming device displays the plurality of position changes and indicates to the player the selected position change.

In this embodiment, upon the triggering of the bonus scheme, the gaming device randomly selects a position change from the plurality of position changes 646. The marker 650 is subsequently moved along the path the number of positions corresponding to the selected position change. After the gaming device has moved the marker 650 the number of positions corresponding to the selected position change, the selected position change is associated with a termination symbol or terminator. The player is offered the offer associated with the current position indicated by the marker as the players initial award offer. In one embodiment, the maximum award offer 620 is modified by combining the initial offer with the prior maximum award offer. The player may either accept or reject the initial award offer. If the player accepts the initial award offer, the gaming device provides the player the award offer, the player cannot obtain any more award offers and the bonus game ends. If the player rejects the award offer, the gaming device selects another position change. If the gaming device subsequently selects a position change with an associated termination symbol or terminator, the bonus game ends and the player may receive a consolation award. If the subsequently selected position change is not associated with a termination symbol or terminator, the marker is moved the number of positions corresponding to the selected position change. As described above, after the marker 650 is moved, the randomly selected position change is associated with a termination symbol or terminator. The players award offer is modified by combining the prior award offer with the offer associated with the markers current position. The maximum award offer 620 is further modified by combining the prior modified maximum award offer with the offer associated with the markers current position. The player may accept the modified award offer, thereby ending the bonus game or reject the modified award offer in an attempt to obtain a higher award offer or the maximum award offer. The game proceeds as described above until either the player obtains the maximum award offer or the gaming device selects a position change associated with a termination symbol or terminator. If the marker is moved to the peak position, the gaming device provides the player the maximum award offer,

the player cannot obtain any more award offers and the bonus scheme ends.

In one example, as illustrated in the display 600 of Fig. 8A, the player begins at the start position 624. In the display 602 of Fig. 8B, upon the initiation of the bonus scheme, the gaming device randomly selects a position change of five 652 from the plurality of position changes 646. The marker 650 moves five positions upward along the path of the offer display 618 so that the player's initial award offer is one as illustrated in Fig. 8B. The initial award offer is indicated in the award offer amount display 644. The maximum award offer 620 is modified by combining the players initial award offer with the initial maximum award offer. As illustrated in Fig. 8B, the maximum award offer is modified to twenty-one by combining the players initial award offer of one with the initial maximum award offer of twenty. Furthermore, as described above, the position change of five positions is associated with a termination symbol or terminator 654 for subsequent position change selections. In an alternative embodiments, the maximum award offer does not have to be modified, the modification could be randomly determined or could be modified based on number of moves.

In this embodiment, the player may either accept the initial award offer using the accept indicator 648 or reject the initial award offer using the reject award indicator 642. In an alternative embodiment the player is not able to accept the initial award offer. In this embodiment, the gaming device will automatically select another position change and the game will proceed as described above. In another embodiment, the gaming device automatically rejects any award offer if subsequent or potential award offers are at least of an equal value to the initial award offer.

Referring to the display 604 of Fig. 8C, upon the player using the reject indicator 642 to reject the initial award offer, the gaming devices randomly selects another position change from the plurality of position changes 646. The gaming device randomly selected the position change of eight 652. The marker 650 moves eight positions upward along the path of the offer display 618 over the peak position and downward along the path to a position with an associated award offer of three. As described above, the position change of eight is associated with a termination symbol or terminator for subsequent position change selections. It should be appreciated that the prior selected position

change remains associated with a termination symbol or terminator. The player's award offer is modified to four by combining the prior award offer of one with the award offer of three associated with the markers current position. The gaming device displays the modified award offer 644. The maximum award offer 620 is also modified to twenty-four by combining the prior maximum award offer of twenty-one with the award offer of three associated with the markers 650 current position. The player may either accept or reject the modified award offer of four as described above.

As seen in the display 606 of Fig. 8D, using the reject indicator 642, the player rejected the modified award offer. The gaming device randomly selected another position change from the plurality of position changes. The gaming devices selects the position change of thirteen 652, and the marker 650 is moved thirteen positions downward along the path of the offer display to a position with an associated award offer of one. The position change of thirteen is associated with a termination symbol or terminator for subsequent position change selections. The players award offer is modified to five by combining the prior award offer of four with the current award offer of one. The offer display 644 displays the new modified award offer. The maximum award offer 620 is also modified to twenty-five by combining the prior maximum award of twenty-four with the current award offer of one.

As illustrated in the display 608 of Fig. 8E, the player chose to reject the award offer of five. Accordingly, the gaming device randomly selected the position change of one. Having completed the downward slope of the path of the offer display 618, the marker 650 circles back to the upward slope of the path. The position change of one is associated with a termination symbol or terminator for subsequent position change selections.

In one embodiment, for completing one cycle of the offer display path the award offers 628 associated with each position on the path are modified. In this embodiment, the award offers associated with the non-peak positions increase by one, and the maximum award offer associated with the peak position increased by five to thirty. It should be appreciated that the award offer associated with each position may be randomly increased or increased according to some pre-determined mathematical formula. In an alternative

embodiment, the award offers associated with a plurality of positions may increase. In another embodiment, the offers associated with a plurality of positions may increase, decrease, remain the same or any combination thereof.

As illustrated in Fig. 8E, the award offer associated with marker's new
5 position 626 is two. Accordingly, the player's award offer is further modified to seven by combining the prior modified award offer of five with the current award offer of two. The offer display 644 reflects this modification. Additionally, the maximum award offer 620 is further modified to thirty-two by combining the prior modified maximum award offer of thirty with the current award offer of two. The
10 player may either accept or reject the award offer of seven as described above.

As seen in display 610 of Fig. 8F, the player rejected the award offer of seven and the gaming device randomly selected another position change. The selected position change is associated with a termination symbol or terminator
15 654 and the bonus game ends. In this embodiment, with the selection of a position change with an associated termination symbol or terminator, the player receives a consolation prize of two credits.

In an alternative embodiment, when a position change with an associated termination symbol or terminator is selected, the bonus game ends and the player obtains no award. In another embodiment, the player obtains the award
20 offer associated with the marker's 650 last position. In another embodiment, as illustrated in Fig. 8G, the player obtains the last modified award offer, in this case seven. In this embodiment, since the player does not risk losing a modified award offer by the selection of a termination symbol or terminator, the player is motivated to continue rejecting award offers until either a terminator
25 symbol is obtained or the maximum award offer is obtained.

Referring to Figs. 9A through 9D, in an alternative embodiment of the present invention, when the player rejects the offer associated with the markers current position 626, the rejected position is associated with a termination symbol or terminator. In this embodiment, if the marker is subsequently moved
30 to a prior visited position with an associated termination symbol or terminator, the bonus game ends. The additional feature of this embodiment provides increased risks and entertainment to the player because the player must avoid termination symbols or terminators not only in the plurality of position changes

but also on the path of award offers itself.

Referring now to Fig. 9A, upon the initiation of the bonus scheme, as described above, the gaming device randomly selects the position change of seven. Accordingly, the marker 750 moved from the start position, upward
5 along the path of the offer display 718 to a position seven moves away as illustrated in Fig. 9B. The selected position change of seven is associated with a termination symbol or terminator. The award offer of two associated with the seventh position of the offer display 718 is the players initial award offer. The
10 award offer of two is displayed in the award offer display 744. The maximum award offer 720 is modified to twenty-two by combining the initial maximum award offer of twenty with the players initial award offer of two. As described above, the player may either accept or reject the initial award offer.

As also illustrated in Fig. 9B, the initial award offer is rejected. As described above, the gaming device selects another position change from the
15 plurality of position changes and, if no termination symbol or terminator is selected, moves the marker 750 the corresponding number of positions on the path of the offer display. After the marker 750 is moved, the prior visited position is associated with a termination symbol or terminator. Accordingly, as
20 illustrated in Fig. 9C, the seventh position on the path is no longer associated with an award offer of two, but is now associated with a termination symbol or terminator 756.

As illustrated in Fig. 9C, the gaming device selected a position change of three and the marker 750 moved three positions upward along the path to the
25 tenth position of the offer display. The tenth position is associated with an award offer of two. As described above, the player's initial award offer is modified to four by combining the prior award offer of two with the current award offer of two. The modified award offer is displayed in the award offer display. Additionally, the maximum award offer 720 is modified to twenty-four as
30 described above. The player may either accept or reject the modified award offer. In this case, the player rejects the modified award offer and the gaming device randomly selects another position change. A terminator becomes associated with the markers 750 prior visited position.

As illustrated in Fig. 9D, the gaming device randomly selected the position change of twenty and the marker was moved twenty positions. As described above, as the player completes one cycle of the award offer path, the offer amount associated with each position is increased. It should be appreciated that the increase in the associated offer amount has no effect on the positions that have become associated with termination symbols or terminators. As illustrated in Fig. 9D, the position the marker 750 landed on had an associated termination symbol or terminator and the bonus game ends. In this embodiment, the player obtains the last modified award offer.

Referring to Fig. 10A, in another embodiment of the present invention, the gaming device provides the player a plurality of marker moves. Each marker move represents one time the player may move the marker along the path to a new position. The number of marker moves remaining is displayed in the moves remaining indicator 852. In this embodiment, each time the player rejects a current award offer, the marker moves remaining is decreased by one. If the player has no marker moves remaining, then the gaming device provides the last modified offer, the player cannot obtain any more offers and the bonus game terminates. It should be appreciated that in this embodiment, the bonus game terminates when either the player accepts an award offer, the player obtains the maximum award offer, or the player has no marker moves remaining.

In a further embodiment including marker moves, as illustrated in Fig. 10B, a plurality of positions are associated with a plurality of move changes that modify the number of remaining marker moves. The modified number of marker moves is displayed in the moves remaining indicator. It should be appreciated that the move changes, if any, associated with each position may be masked or displayed to the player. If the move change is masked, then the move change is revealed when the marker is moved to that position. In this embodiment, the positions are separated into two ranges. The first range begins at the marker start position and proceeds up the upward slope of the path and ends at the peak position. The second range includes positions on the downward slope of the path. In this embodiment, the plus move changes 830 are associated with the positions from the first range and the minus move changes 832 are

associated with the positions from the second range. In an alternative embodiment, the minus move changes 832 are associated with positions from the first range and the plus move changes 830 are associated with the positions from the second range. In an alternative embodiment, plus move changes 830 and minus move changes 832 may be associated with positions from either range. In this embodiment, if the marker current position is associated with a move change, the players number of moves remaining is modified according to the associated move change.

In a further alternative embodiment of the present invention, a reverse could be associated with one or more of the positions. If the marker lands on a position having an associated reverse, the direction of the marker movements changes or reverses.

Independently Generated Events

Referring to Fig. 11, another embodiment of the present invention is illustrated where the award offers are determined based on a plurality of independently determined components. In this embodiment, the gaming device includes an award offer display 100 which displays a plurality of award offers 106 in column 102. The gaming device also includes at least two indicators and preferably a plurality of indicators such as indicators 110a, 110b and 110c. The indicators include a plurality of components which determine the award offers in each of the activations of the indicators. The components may be letters, values, numbers, symbols, characters, colors or any other suitable component. It should be appreciated that any number of indicators and components may be employed in a game.

The gaming device enables the player to accept or reject (i.e., not accept) an award offer presented to the player in a game. An offer acceptor such as an accept button 112a enables the player to accept or reject a particular award offer in the game. In another embodiment, the gaming device also displays a offer rejecter such as a reject button 112b, which enables a player to reject a particular award offer in a game. In a game, the player activates the offer acceptor or the offer rejecter to accept or reject one or more offers in a game.

A total award display 116 indicates the total award accumulated by the player in the game. At the end of the game the player receives the total award indicated in the total award display 116. Additionally, an activations remaining display 114 is also displayed to the player, where the activations remaining display indicates the number of activations of the indicators that remain in the game. When the number of activations indicated by the activations remaining display equals zero, the player does not have any activations remaining in the game and therefore, the game ends.

One embodiment of the present invention is illustrated in Fig. 12A where the award offer display, indicators, and other related elements of the game are displayed on the display device 32. In this embodiment, the present invention is displayed in a video format where the player interacts with the elements of the game either by touching the components of the game, such as on a touch screen, or by pressing or activating buttons (not shown) included on the cabinet of the gaming device, which communicate with the elements on the display device. In another embodiment shown in Fig. 12B, the indicators are mechanical dice units, such as dice units 210a, 210b and 210c which are mounted to the top of the cabinet of the gaming device. In an alternative preferred embodiment, the mechanical dice are mounted in the housing or top box of the cabinet. The mechanical dice units simulate the roll of the dice and each independently rotate and indicate a component to the player. It should be appreciated that any number of dice units may be employed in a game. It should also be appreciated as illustrated in Fig. 13, the processor 38 will control the mechanical indicators 210.

Referring to Fig. 14A, an example of one embodiment of the present invention is illustrated where three indicators such as dies 110a, 110b and 110c are employed in a game to determine an award offer in each activation of the game. The indicators include components or symbols, which represent values or numbers. The award offers are based on the sum of the values or numbers associated with the indicated components on the indicators. The player begins the game with four activations as illustrated in Fig. 14A and thereby the player will continue to activate the indicators until the player accepts one of the award offers in the game or there or no activations remaining in the game.

The gaming device activates the indicators or dice 110a, 110b and 110c in the first activation of the game. As shown in Fig. 14A, the indicators independently randomly generate and indicate a three, a four and a one on the dies 110a, 110b and 110c, respectively. The total value of the numbers or sum of the numbers represented by the symbols indicated on the dice is eight. Therefore, the total value of eight as indicated by the indicators is used to determine an award offer in this activation of the game. The gaming device determines that the award offer 118 including an award of twenty-five equals the total value of eight indicated by the indicators in that activation. The player now activates or presses the offer acceptor 112a or the offer rejecter 112b to accept or reject the award offer of twenty-five in that activation. The player decides to reject the award offer of twenty-five and therefore activates the offer rejecter 112b. The player now has three activations remaining in the game as indicated by the activations remaining display 114, and a total award of zero as indicated by the total award display 116.

Referring to Fig. 14B, the gaming device activates the indicators for a second time in the game. The indicators independently and randomly indicate components, values or numbers of four, four and six on indicators 110a, 110b and 110c, respectively. The total value indicated by the indicators is fourteen. The gaming device compares the total value of fourteen indicated by the indicators with the award offers in the award offer display 100 and displays or presents the award offer of fifty to the player. The player must now decide if the player wants to accept or reject the award offer of fifty. Although the award offer of fifty is greater than the award offer of twenty-five presented to the player in the previous activation, the player decides to reject the award offer of fifty by activating or pressing the award rejecter 112b. The player still does not have an award in the game as indicated by the total award display 116. In addition, the player now has two activations remaining in the game as indicated by the activations remaining display 114.

Referring to Fig. 14C, the gaming device randomly activates the indicators again. The symbol indicators independently indicate components, values or numbers of one, one and two on indicators 110a, 110b and 110c, respectively. The total value indicated by the symbol indicators is four. The

gaming device determines the award offer in the award offer display 100 that corresponds to the total value of four indicated by the indicators. The total value of four corresponds to an award offer of ten. The award offer of ten in this activation is less than either of the first two award offers in the game. Thus, the player took a risk and rejected the previous award offers and now received a much smaller award offer in the game. The player again decides to reject the award offer of ten and activate or press the award rejecter 112b. The player now has one activation remaining in the game and therefore in this embodiment must accept the next award offer presented to the player in the game. The player's total award in the game is zero as indicated by the total award display 116.

Referring to Fig. 14D, the gaming device activates the indicators 110a, 110b and 110c for the fourth time in the game. The indicators randomly indicate the symbols or numbers six, six, and six on indicators 110a, 110b, and 110c, respectively. The total value associated with the numbers indicated on the indicators is eighteen, which is the highest total value in this game. The total value of eighteen is associated with the largest award offer of five hundred (124) in the award display 100. In this example, the player automatically receives the award offer of five hundred because the player does not have any activations remaining as indicated on the activations remaining display 114. The gaming device automatically activates the offer acceptor 112a and the player accepts the award offer of five hundred is transferred to the total award display 116. Since there are no activations remaining in the game, the game ends and the player receives the total award of five hundred. It should be appreciated that in one embodiment, if the player obtains the highest award or offer, the processor will not allow the player to accept such offer or award. It should also be appreciated that a confirm button or confirmation indicator could be provided in the gaming device which requires the player to confirm the player's acceptance or rejections of offers.

Referring to Fig. 15, a further embodiment of the present invention illustrated where the indicators include components which are numbers. The indicators are activated in one or more activations and indicate one or more numbers, which are independently and randomly generated by the processor in

the gaming device. The indicators 210a, 210b, and 210c indicate numbers such as the numbers two, four and one, respectively. It should be appreciated, however, that other suitable symbols, numbers or values may be indicated by the symbol indicators. In this embodiment, the numbers indicated by the symbol indicators are added or summed together to provide a total value of seven. This total value is associated with an award offer 25 and the determined award offer is presented to the player in the game as described above.

In another embodiment of the present invention, a probability of being indicated by each indicator is associated with the components on the indicators. In this embodiment, the probabilities associated with the components on the indicators determines which components will be indicated by the indicators in the activations of a game. In one aspect of this embodiment, each of the components on the indicators is associated with the same probability. Therefore, each component has an equal probability or likelihood of being indicated by an indicator in an activation of a game. In another aspect of this embodiment, a plurality of the components on the indicators are associated with different probabilities. In a further aspect of this embodiment, all of the probabilities associated with the components on the indicators are different.

In a further embodiment of the present invention, the award offers include at least one relatively large award and a plurality of relatively small awards. A probability of being indicated or presented to the player is associated with the award offers so that the probability associated with the award offer including the relatively large award is less than the probabilities associated with the award offers including the relatively small awards. In one embodiment, the probability associated with the award offer including the relatively large award is less than at least one of the probabilities associated with the award offers including the relatively small awards. In a further embodiment, the probability associated with the award offer including the relatively large award is less than a plurality of the probabilities associated with the award offers including the relatively small awards. In another embodiment, the probability associated with the award offer including the relatively large award is less than all of the probabilities associated with the award offers including the relatively small awards. It should be appreciated that the one or more of the award offers may include a relatively

large award and the distribution and/or the value of the awards in the game may be any suitable award distribution and values.

In another embodiment, a probability of being indicated by the indicators is associated with a combination of components in each activation such that one
5 combination of components is more likely than another combination of components in an activation of the game. In this embodiment, the processor randomly determines a combination of components for an activation and then causes the indicators to indicate that combination of components in that
10 activation. Similarly, a probability of being determined may be associated with each of the award offers in an activation such that the processor randomly determines the components associated with the determined award offers in an activation to provide those award offers to a player in that activation. It should be appreciated that any suitable probabilities may be associated with the components on the indicators, the combination of components or the award
15 offers in the game. It should also be appreciated that the probabilities described above may change in each activation or a plurality of activations of the indicators in a game.

It should be understood that various changes and modifications to the presently preferred embodiments described herein will be apparent to those
20 skilled in the art. Such changes and modifications can be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention and without diminishing its intended advantages. It is therefore intended that such changes and modifications be covered by the appended claims.

CLAIMS

The invention is claimed as follows:

1. A gaming device comprising:
 - 5 a plurality of award offers;
at least two independently operable indicators, each including a plurality of components;
an offer acceptor for enabling a player to accept one of the award offers;
and
 - 10 a processor operable to activate the indicators for at least two activations, cause each indicator to independently randomly generate one of the components of said indicator in each activation, display the award offer associated with a combination of the indicated components in each activation to the player, enable the player to accept the award offer using the offer acceptor
15 for at least one of the activations and provide an award associated with the award offer when the player accepts the award offer in one of the activations or when there are no activations remaining.
2. The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the combination equals the sum of the indicated components.
- 20 3. The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the components include at least one of the components selected from the group consisting of: numbers, values, symbols, characters and colors.
4. The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the number of activations is randomly determined.
- 25 5. The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the number of activations is predetermined.
6. The gaming device of Claim 5, wherein the predetermined number of activations is based on a wager made by the player.
7. The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein at least two combinations
30 of the indicated components are associated with a plurality of the award offers.
8. The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein at least two of the award offers are associated with at least two of the combinations of indicated components.

9. The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the award offers include at least one relatively large award and a plurality of relatively small awards.

10. The gaming device of Claim 9, which includes a probability of being indicated and presented to the player in an activation associated with
5 each of the award offers.

11. The gaming device of Claim 10, wherein the probability associated with the award offer including the relatively large award is less than at least one of the probabilities associated with the award offers including the relatively small
10 awards.

12. The gaming device of Claim 10, wherein the probability associated with the award offer including the relatively large award is less than a plurality of the probabilities associated with the award offers including the relatively small
15 awards.

13. The gaming device of Claim 10, wherein the probability associated with the award offer including the relatively large award is less than all of the probabilities associated with the award offers including the relatively small
20 awards.

14. The gaming device of Claim 10, wherein the probabilities associated with the award offers change in each activation of the indicators.

15. The gaming device of Claim 10, wherein the probabilities associated with the award offers change in a plurality of activations of the
25 indicators.

16. The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes an offer rejector for enabling a player to reject at least one of the award offers presented to the
30 player in the activations.

17. The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes a probability of being indicated by the indicators associated with each combination of the components on the indicators, wherein the processor randomly determines one of the combinations of components in an activation based on the probabilities
35 and causes the indicators to indicate said combination of components.

18. The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes a probability of being indicated associated with each of the components on the indicators, wherein the processor independently randomly indicates the components on the
40

indicators based on the probabilities.

19. The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the indicators are dice and wherein the components are symbols on the dice.

20. The gaming device of Claim 19, which includes a probability of
5 being indicated associated with each symbol on the dice.

21. The gaming device of Claim 20, wherein the probabilities associated with the symbols on the dice equal the actual probabilities of the symbols being indicated on the dice.

22. A gaming device comprising:
10 a plurality of award offers;
at least two independently operable indicators, each including a plurality of components;
a probability of being indicated associated with each of the components on the indicators;
15 an offer acceptor for enabling a player to accept one of the award offers presented to the player; and

a processor operable to activate the indicators for at least two activations, cause each indicator to independently randomly generate one of the components of said indicator in each activation based on the probabilities
20 associated with said components, display the award offer associated with a combination of the indicated components in each activation to the player, enable the player to accept the award offer using the offer acceptor for at least one of the activations and provide an award associated with the award offer to the player when the player accepts the award offer in one of the activations or
25 when there are no activations remaining.

23. The gaming device of Claim 22, wherein the indicators are dice and wherein the components are symbols on the dice.

24. The gaming device of Claim 23, which includes a probability of being indicated associated with each symbol on the dice.

30 25. The gaming device of Claim 24, wherein the probabilities associated with the symbols on the dice equal the actual probabilities of the symbols being indicated on the dice.

26. The gaming device of Claim 22, wherein the probability associated with at least one of the components on the indicators changes in each activation.

27. The gaming device of Claim 22, wherein the probabilities associated with a plurality of the components on the indicators changes in each activation.

28. The gaming device of Claim 22, wherein the probability associated with at least one of the components on the indicators changes in a plurality of activations.

29. The gaming device of Claim 22, wherein the probabilities associated with a plurality of the components on the indicators changes in a plurality of activations.

30. A gaming device comprising:
a plurality of award offers;
a plurality of events;
an offer acceptor for enabling a player to accept one of the award offers;
and

a processor operable to independently randomly generate at least two of the events for a plurality of activations, display the award offer associated with a combination of said generated events to the player, enable the player to accept the award offer using the offer acceptor for at least one of the activations and provide an award associated with the award offer when the player accepts the award offer in one of the activations or when there are no activations remaining.

31. The gaming device of Claim 30, wherein the generated events include at least two indicators, each of the indicators randomly indicating at least one component of a plurality of components.

32. The gaming device of Claim 30, wherein the generated events include a least one pair of dice, each of the dies randomly indicating at least one symbol of a plurality of symbols on each of the dies.

33. The gaming device of Claim 30, wherein at least two combinations of the generated events are associated with a plurality of the award offers.

34. The gaming device of Claim 30, wherein the combination of the generated events is associated with at least two award offers.

35. A method of playing a gaming device, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) activating a plurality of independent indicators, each of the indicators including a plurality of components;

5 (b) determining an award offer from a plurality of award offers associated with a combination of indicated components on the indicators;

(c) enabling the player to accept or reject the award offer; and

(d) repeating steps (a) to (c) for at least one activation until the player accepts one of the award offers in the activations or until there are no
10 activations remaining.

36. The method of Claim 35, which includes the step of associating a probability with each of the components on the indicators wherein the components on the indicators in each activation are determined based on said probabilities.

15 37. The method of Claim 36, which includes the step of changing the probabilities associated with each of the components in each activation of the indicators.

38. The method of Claim 36, which includes the step of changing the probabilities associated with each of the components in a plurality of the
20 activations.

39. The method of Claim 35, which includes the steps of determining the components to indicate prior to step (a) and causing the indicators to indicate the determined components in each activation.

40. The method of Claim 35, wherein the steps (a) to (d) are provided
25 to the player through a data network.

41. The method of Claim 40, wherein the data network is an internet.

42. A method of playing a gaming device, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) displaying a plurality of independent indicators, each of the
30 indicators including a plurality of components wherein a probability of being indicated is associated with each of the components on the indicators;

(b) activating the independent indicators and randomly indicating one of the components on each of the indicators based on the probabilities

associated with the components;

(c) determining an award offer from a plurality of award offers associated with a combination of the indicated components on the indicators;

(d) enabling the player to accept or reject the award offer; and

5 (e) repeating steps (b) to (d) for at least one activation until the player accepts one of the award offers in the activations or until there are no activations remaining.

43. The method of Claim 42, which includes the step of changing the probabilities associated with each of the components in each activation of the
10 indicators.

44. The method of Claim 42, which includes the step of changing the probabilities associated with each of the components in a plurality of the activations.

45. The method of Claim 42, which includes the steps of determining
15 the components to indicate prior to step (a) and causing the indicators to indicate the determined components in each activation.

46. The method of Claim 42, wherein at least two of the probabilities associated with the components are different.

47. The method of Claim 42, wherein a plurality of the probabilities
20 associated with the components are different.

48. The method of Claim 42, wherein all of the probabilities associated with the components are different.

49. The method of Claim 42, wherein the steps (a) to (e) are provided to the player through a data network.

25 50. The method of Claim 49, wherein the data network is an internet.

FIG. 1A

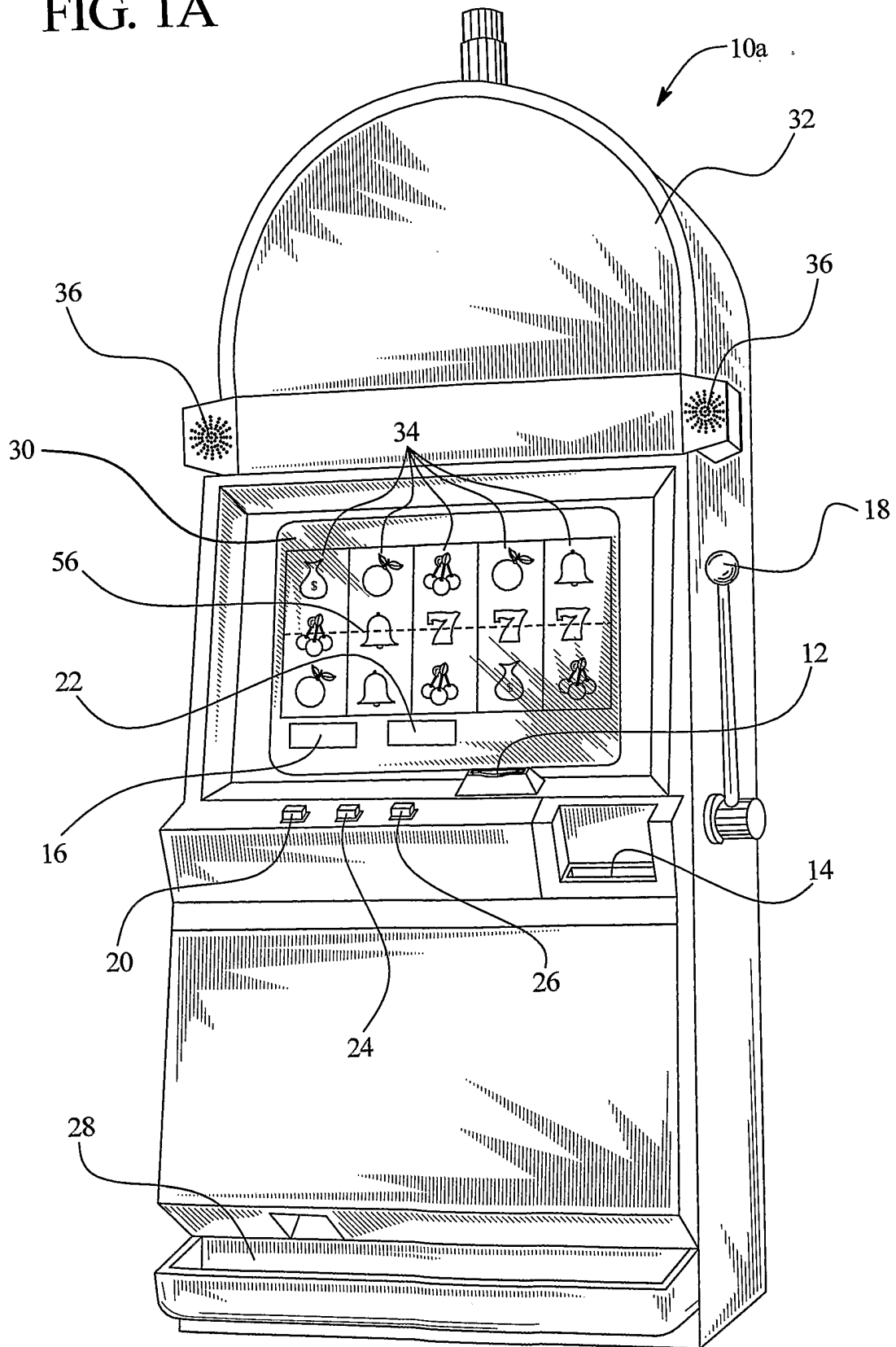


FIG. 1B

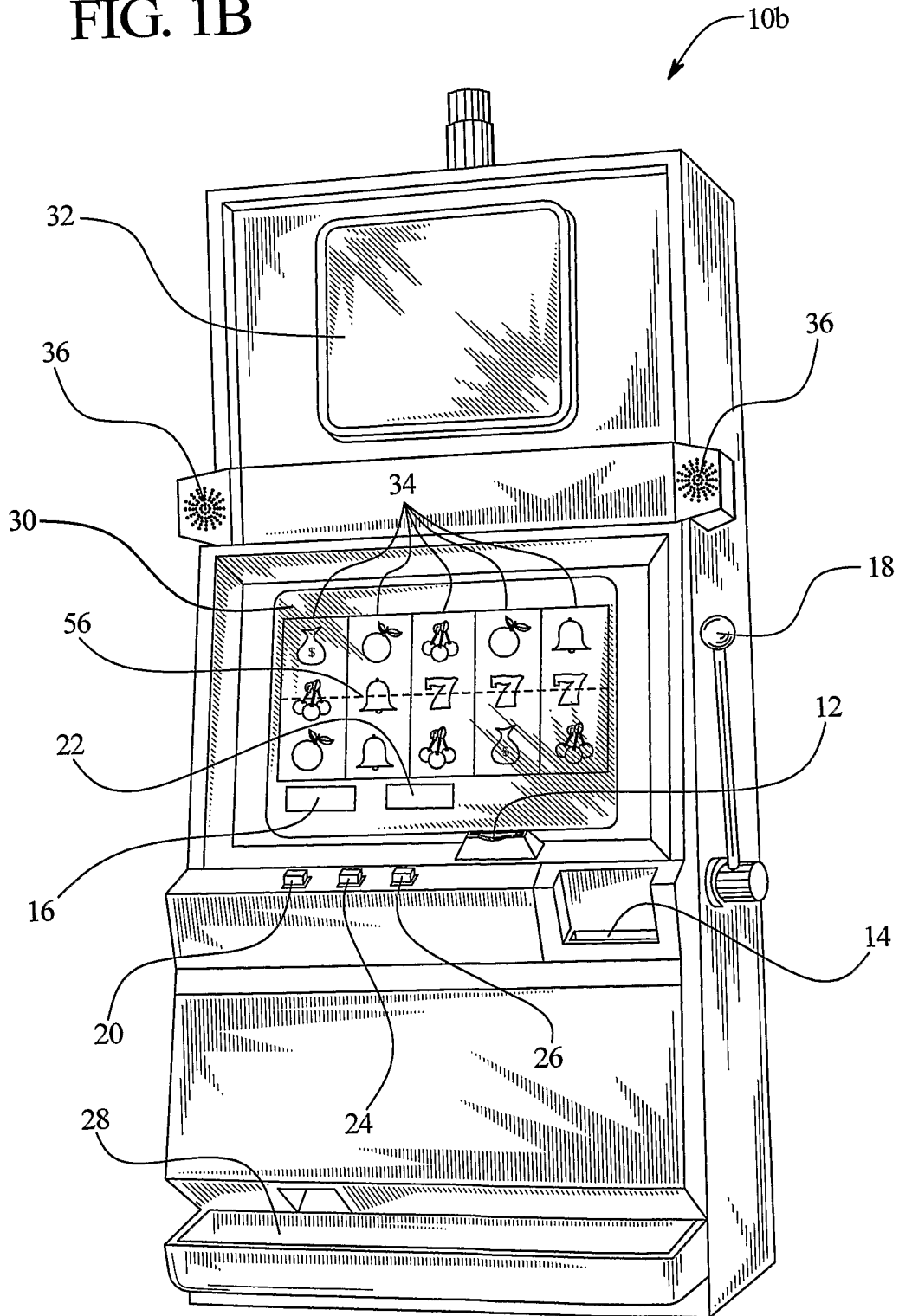


FIG. 2

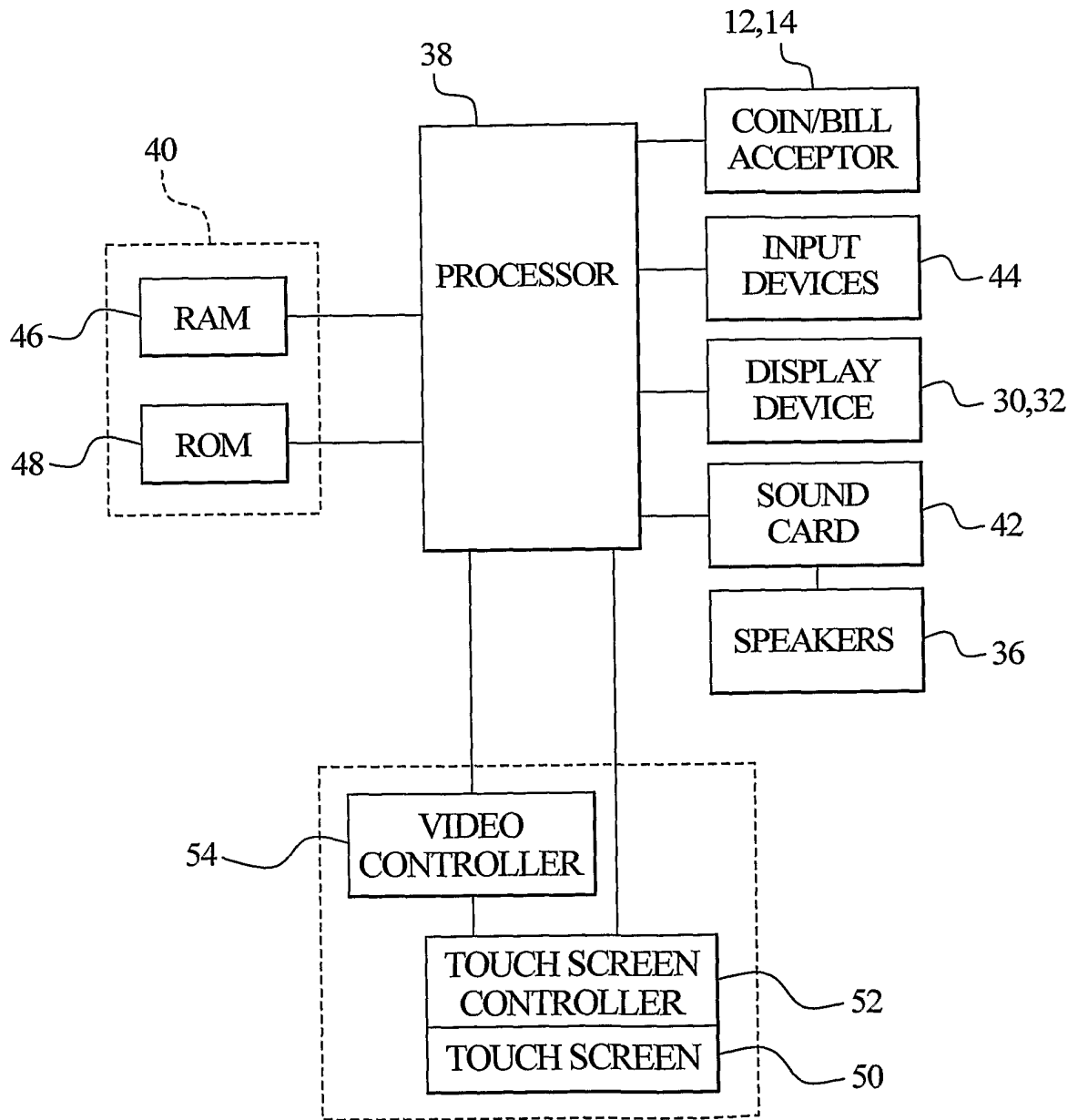


FIG. 3A

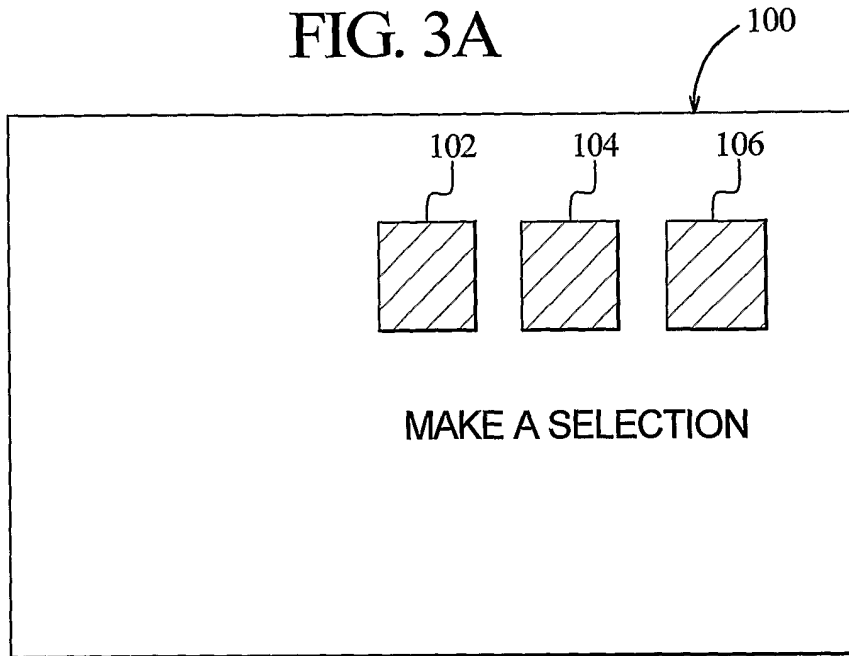


FIG. 3B

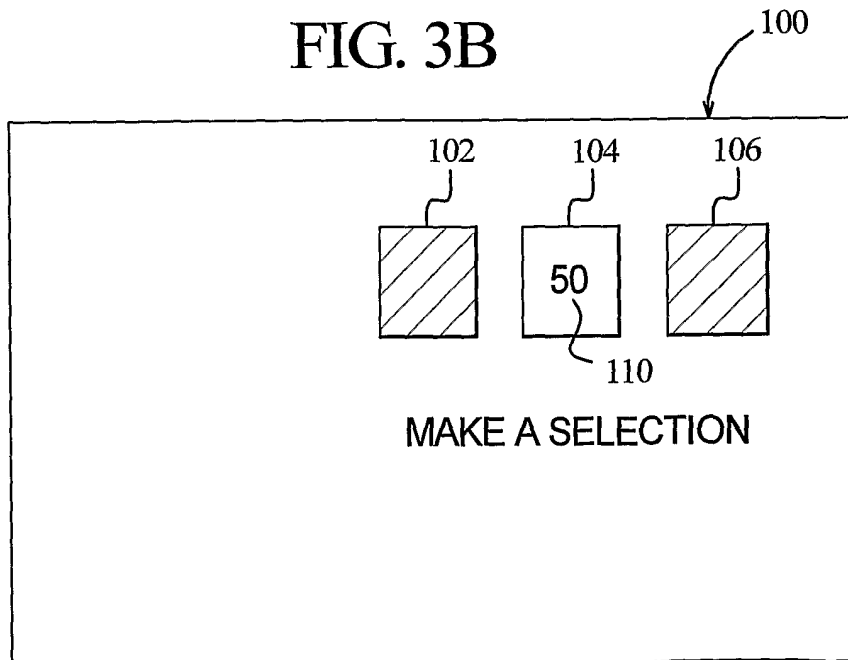


FIG. 3C

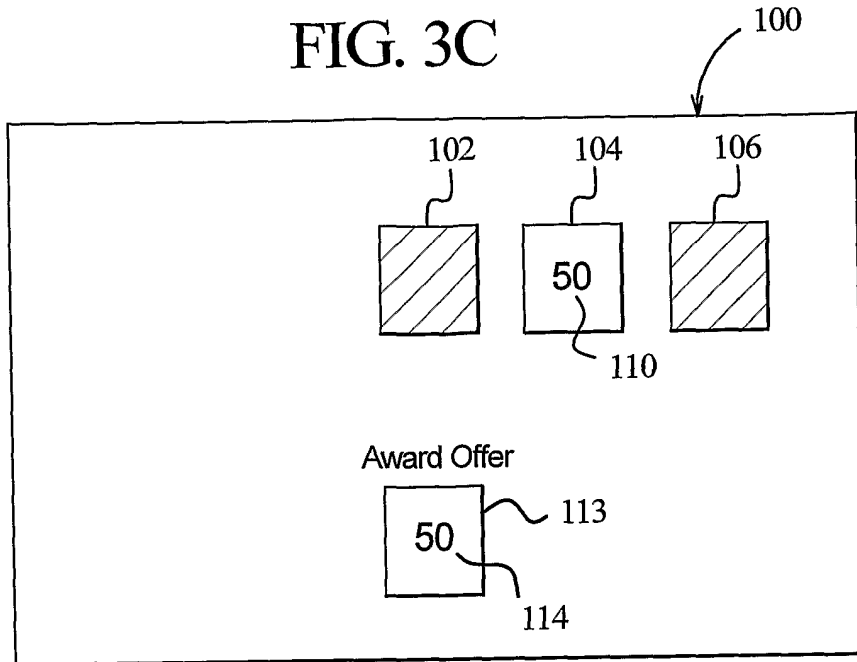


FIG. 3D

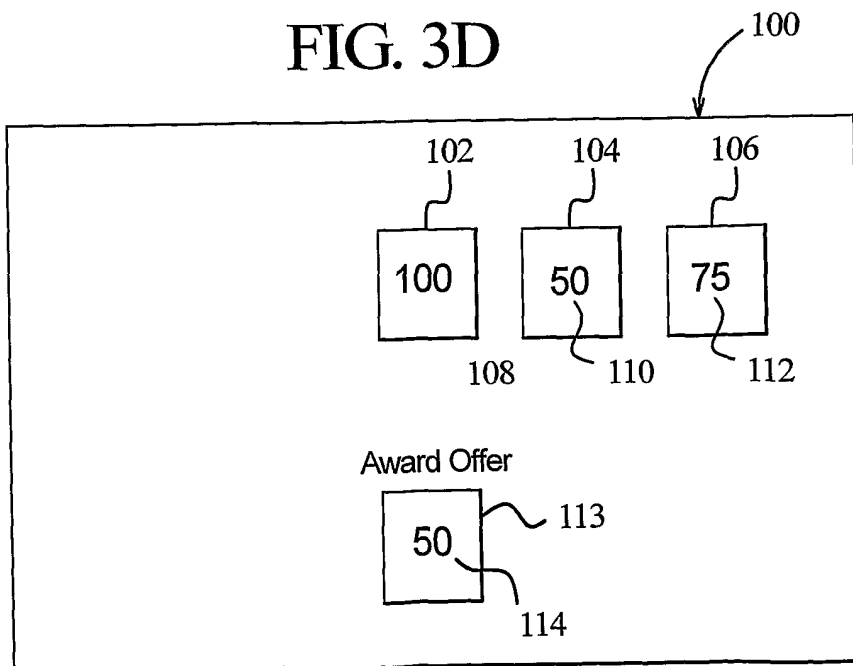


FIG. 3E

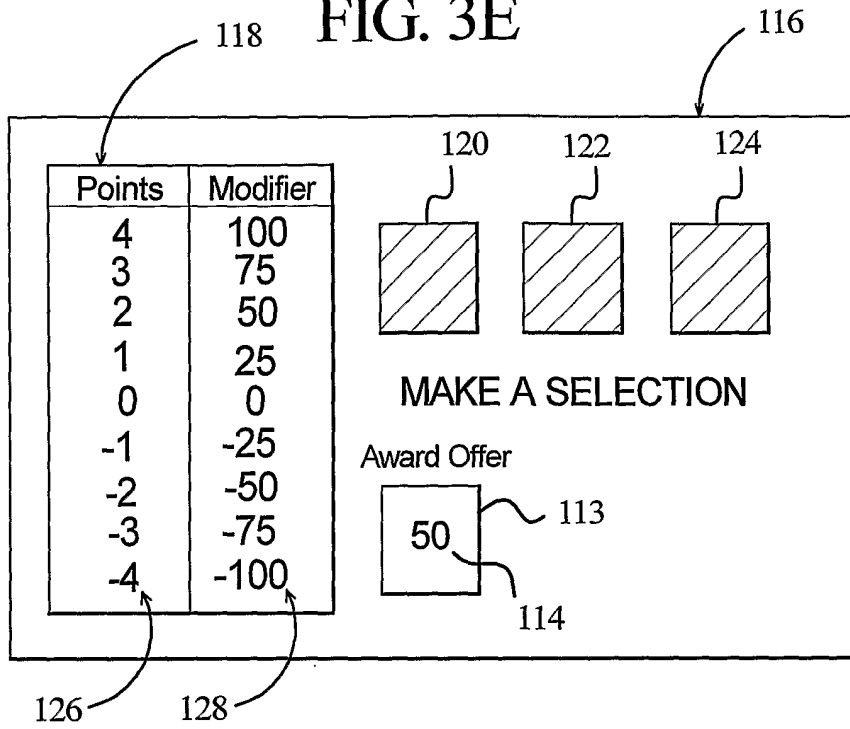


FIG. 3F

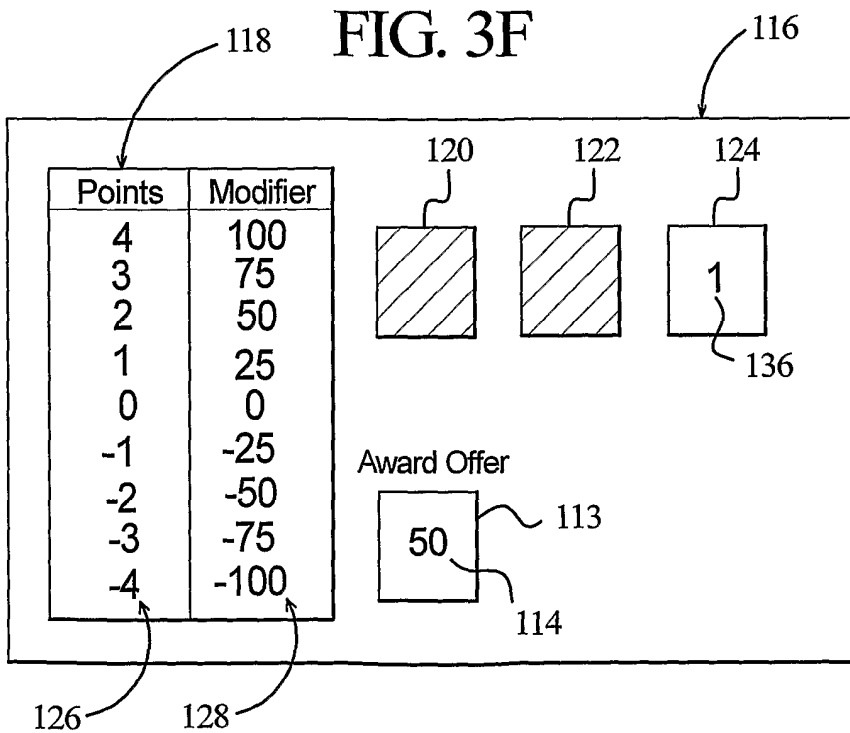


FIG. 3G

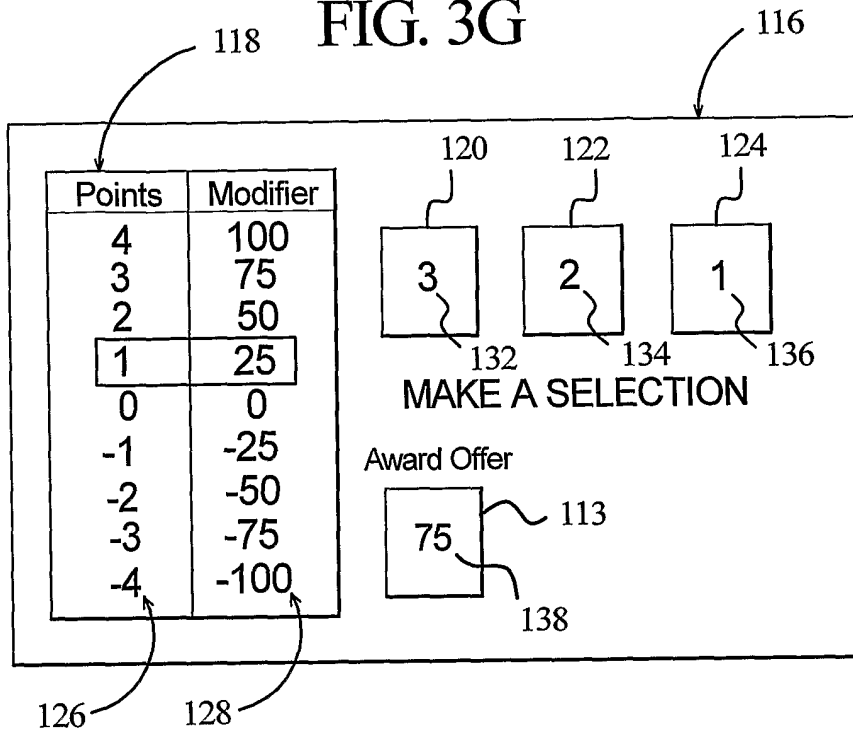


FIG. 3H

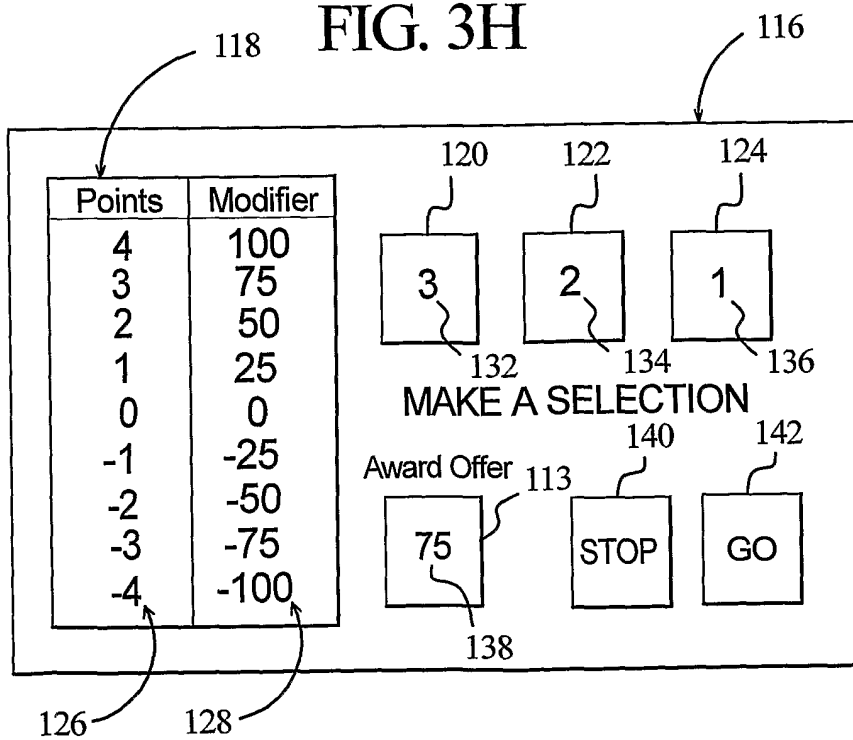


FIG. 3I

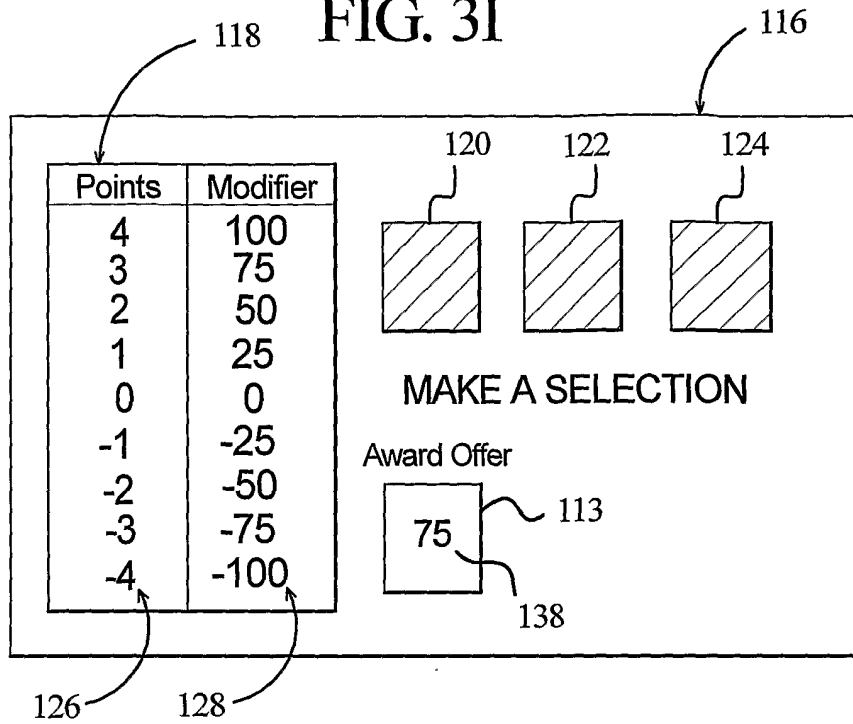


FIG. 3J

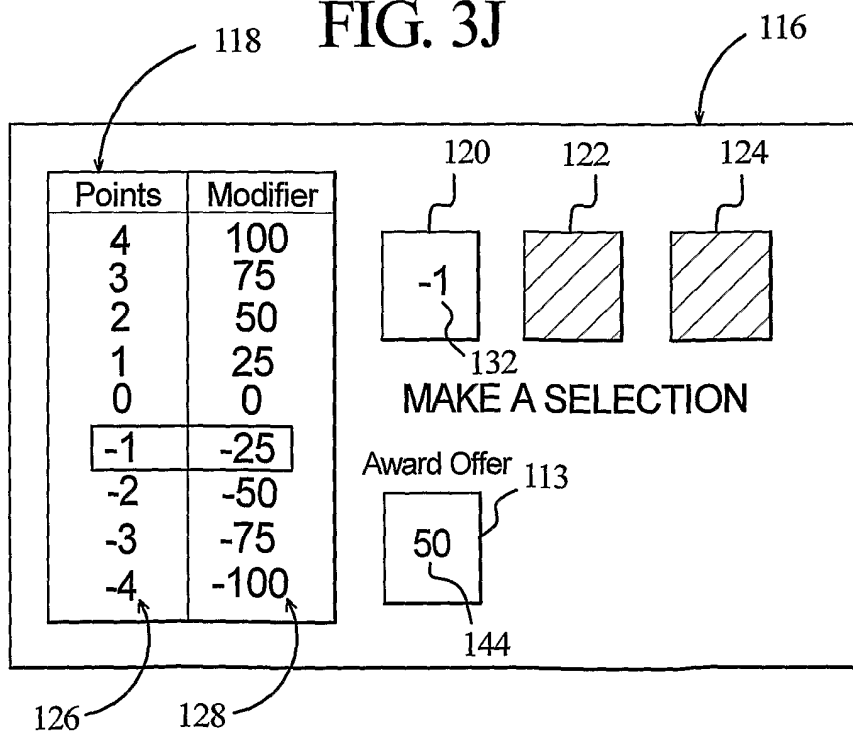


FIG. 4A

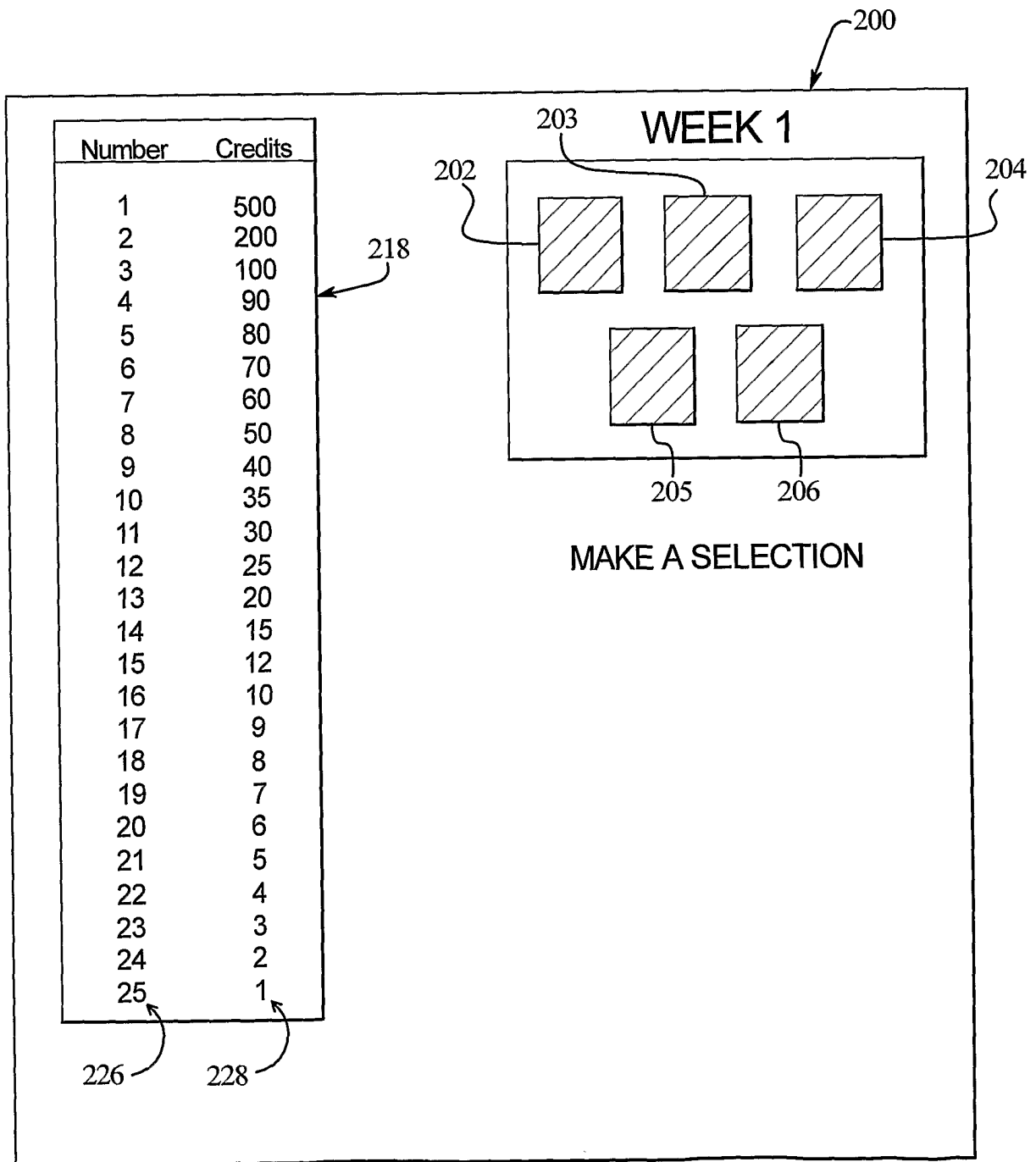


FIG. 4B

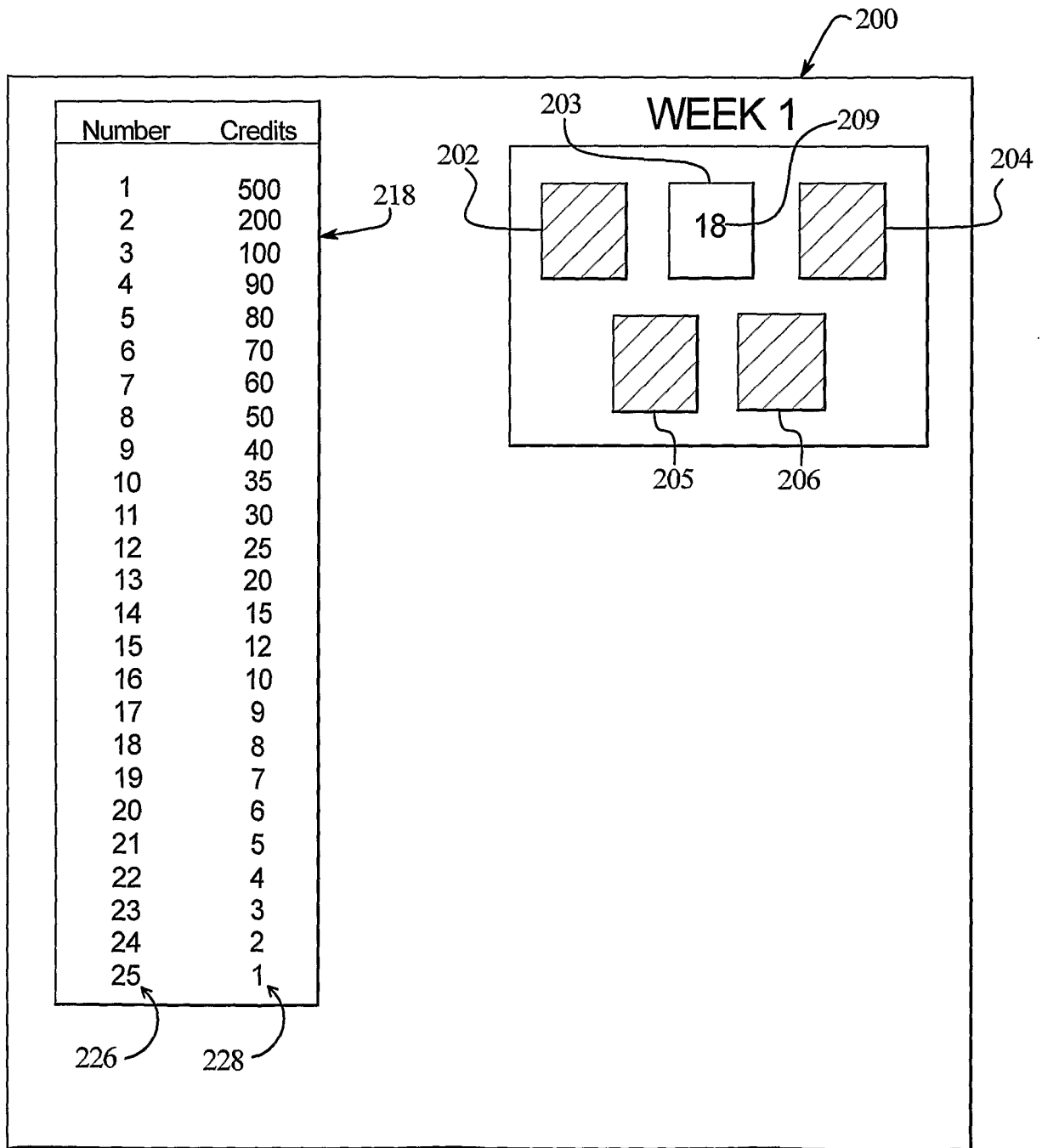


FIG. 4C

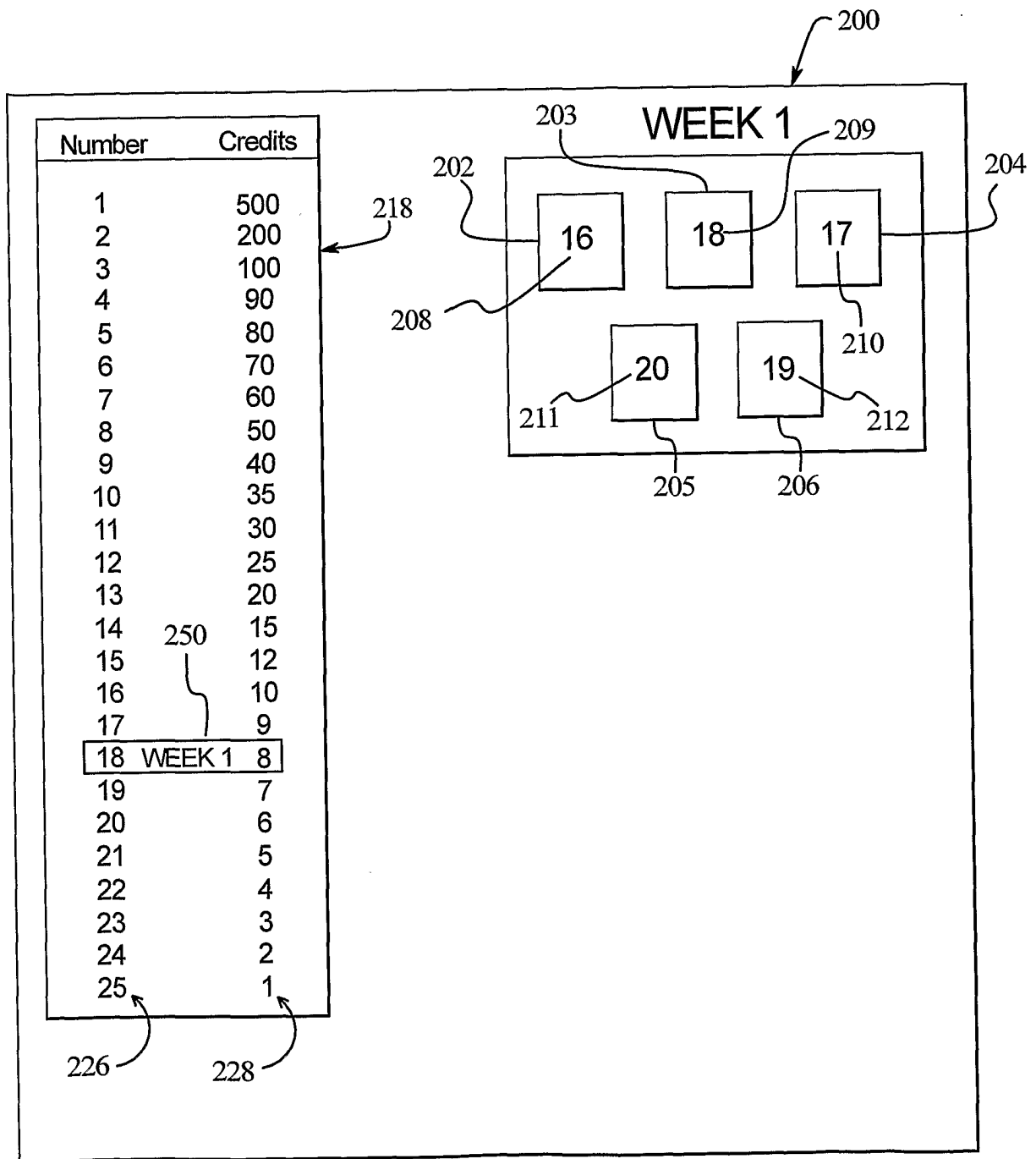


FIG. 4D

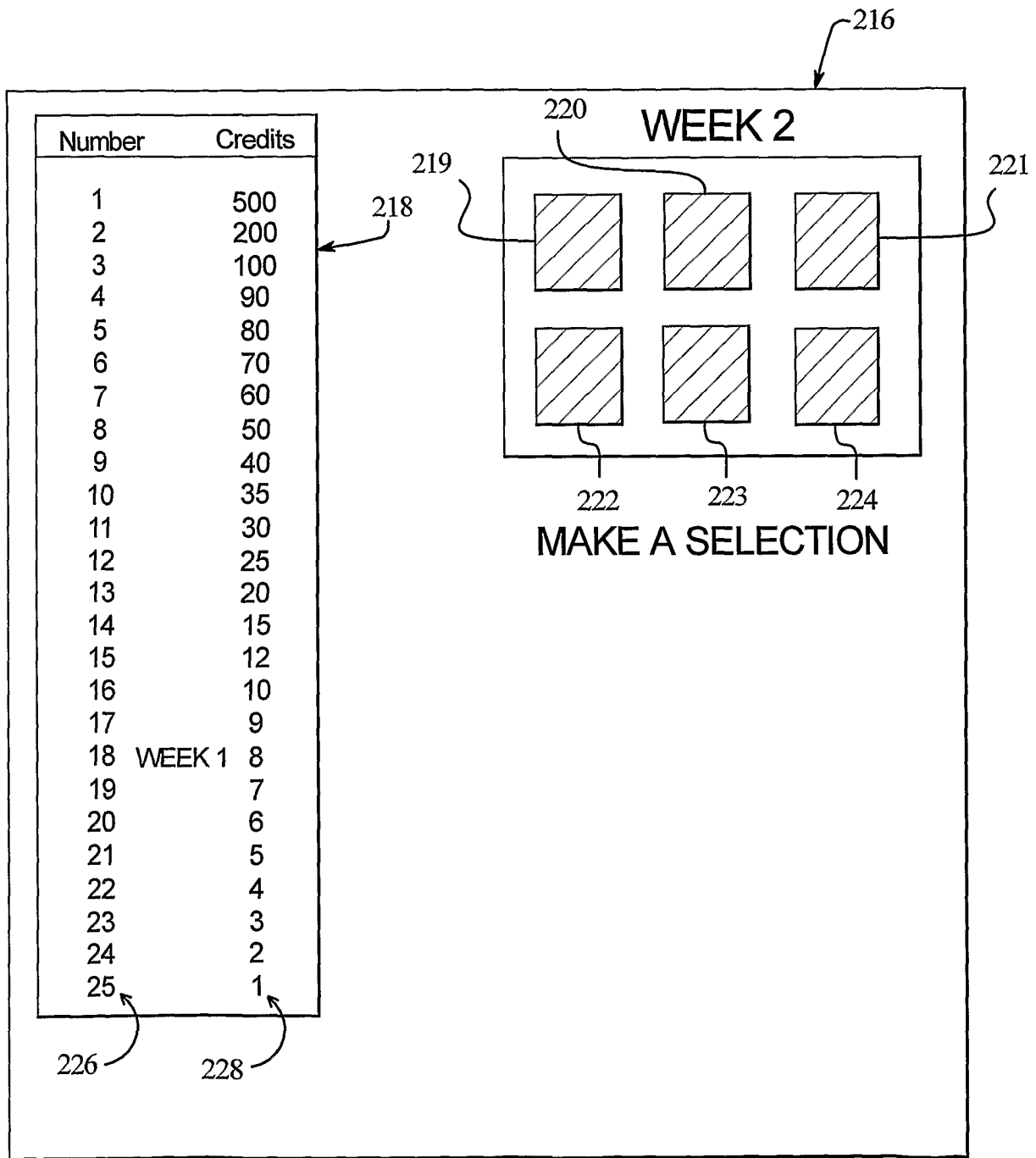


FIG. 4E

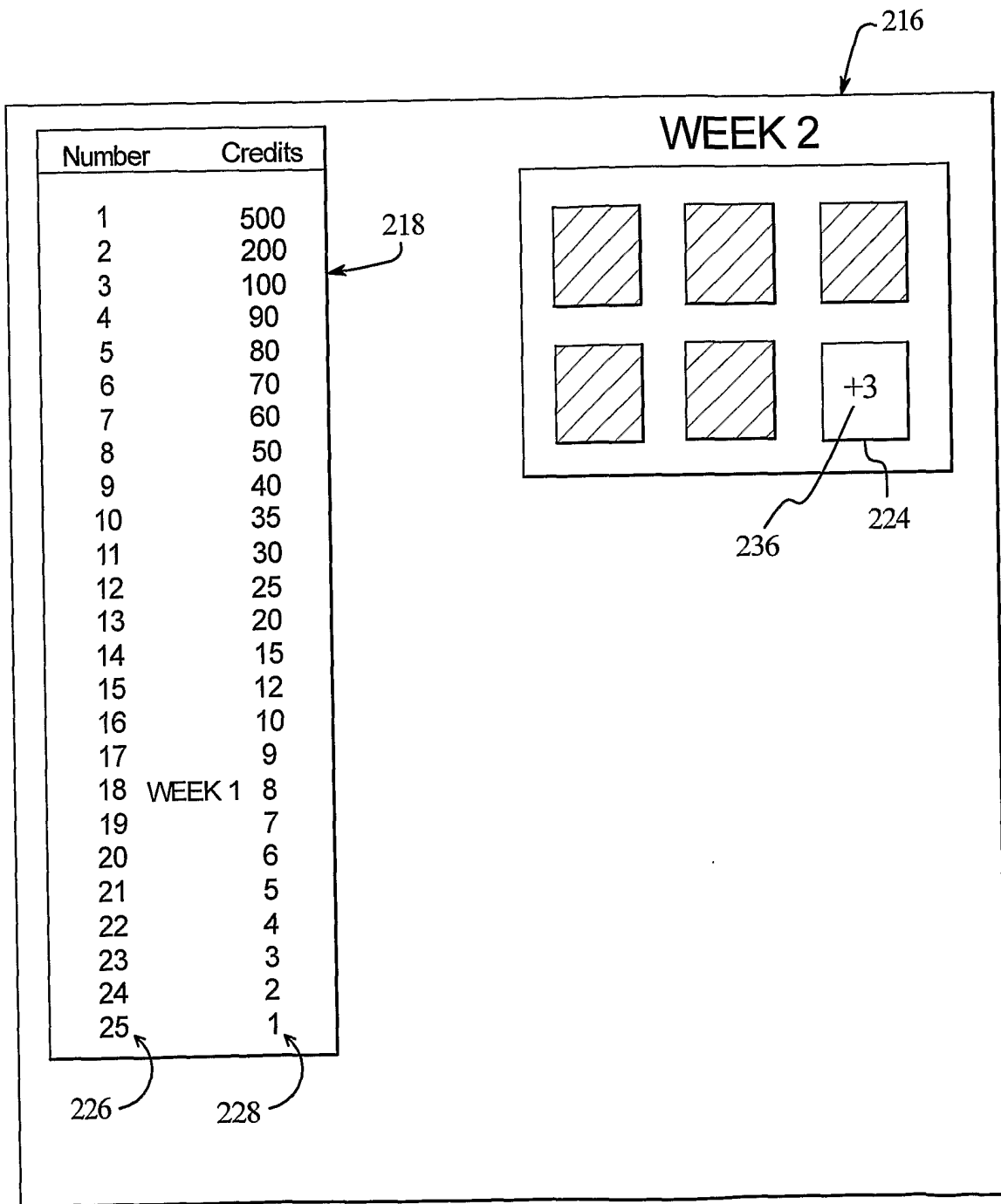


FIG. 4F

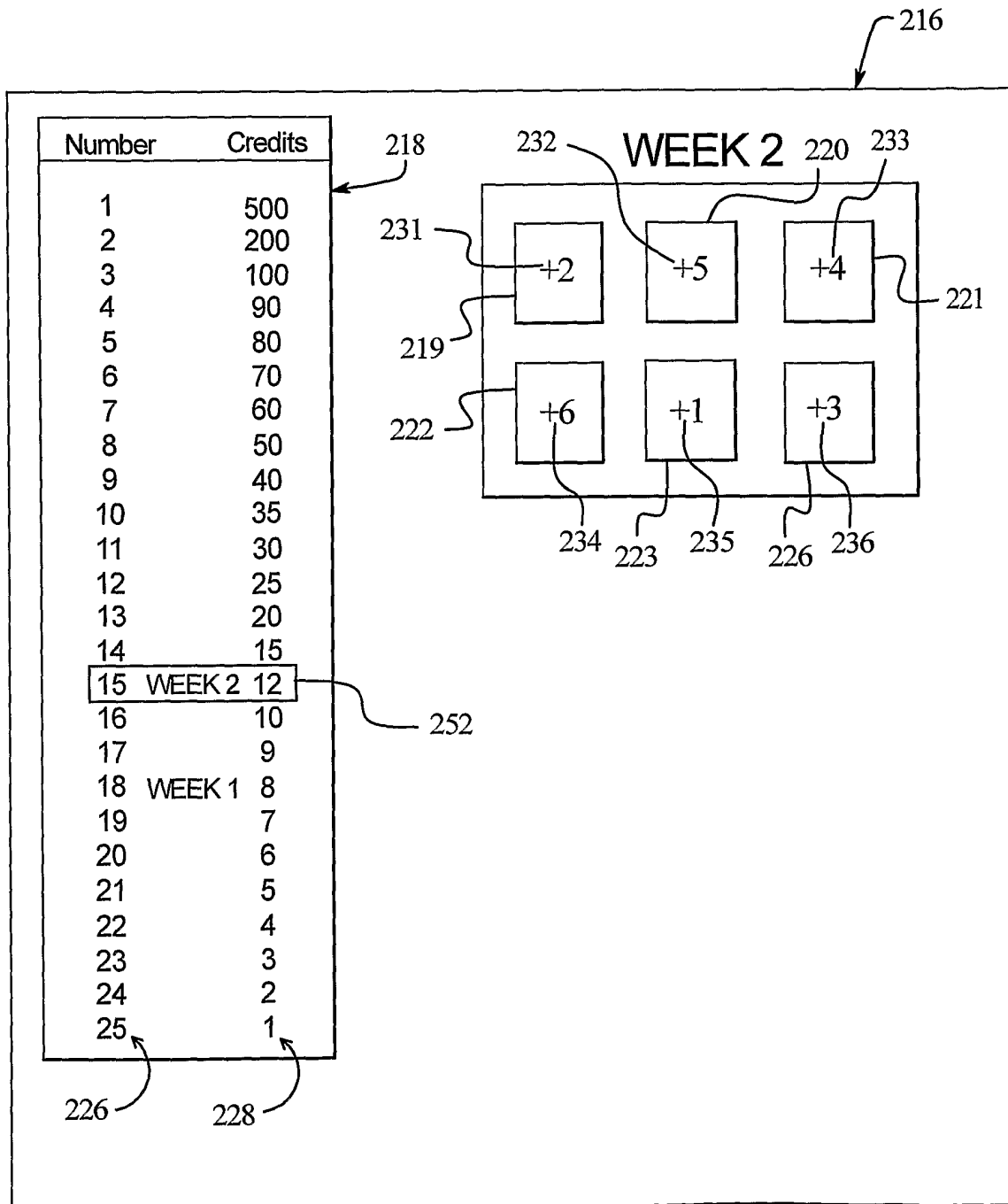


FIG. 4G

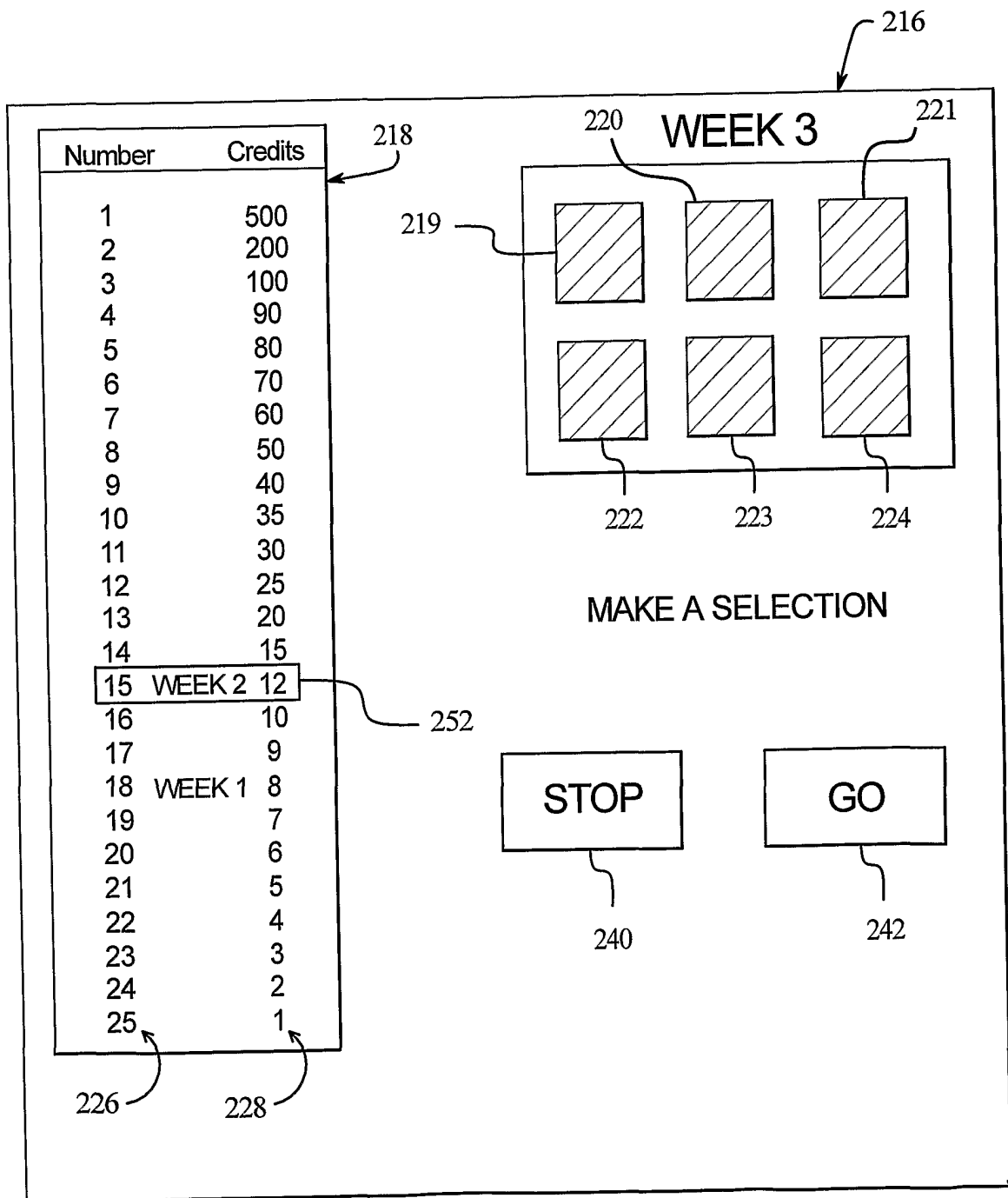


FIG. 4H

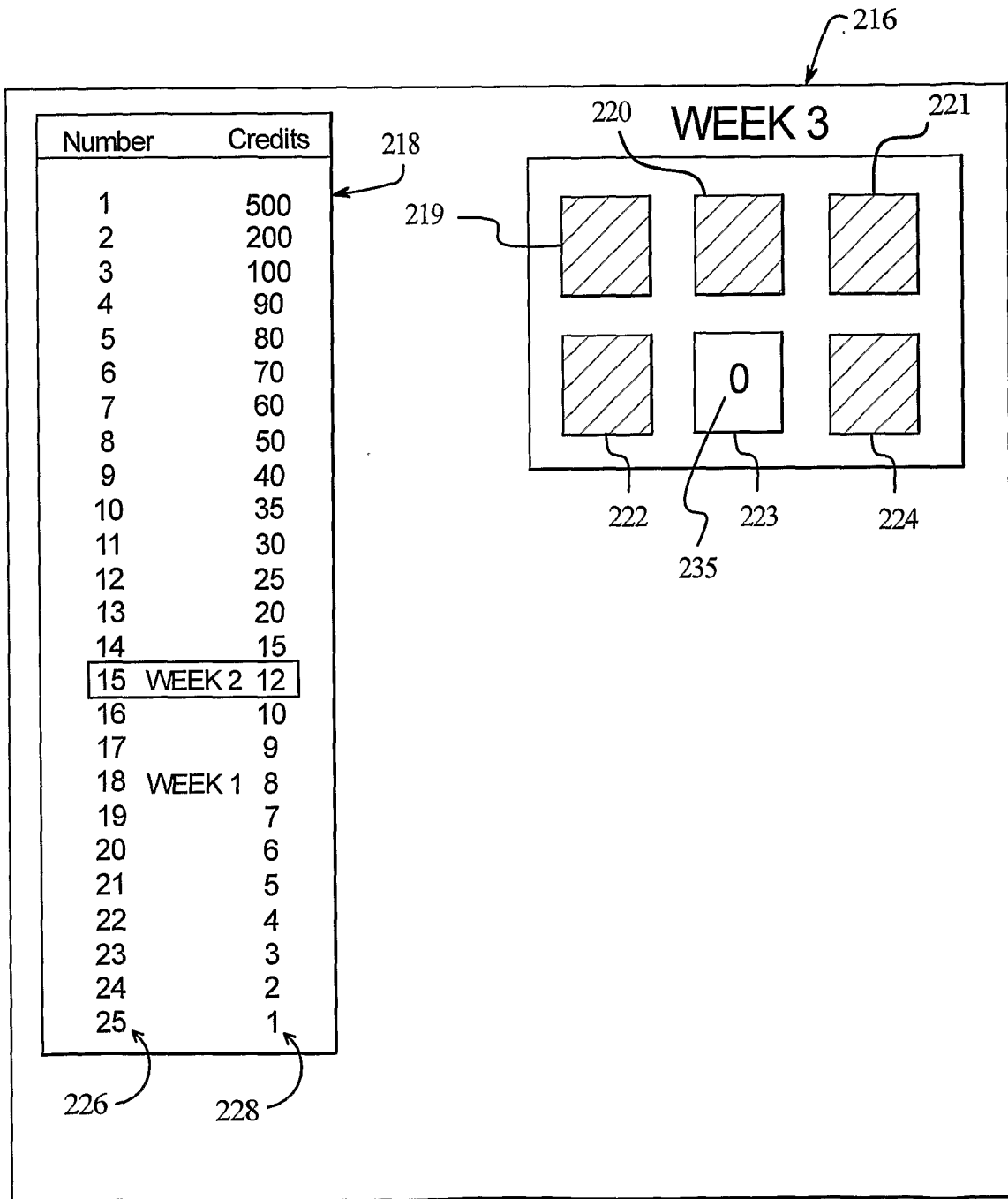


FIG. 4I

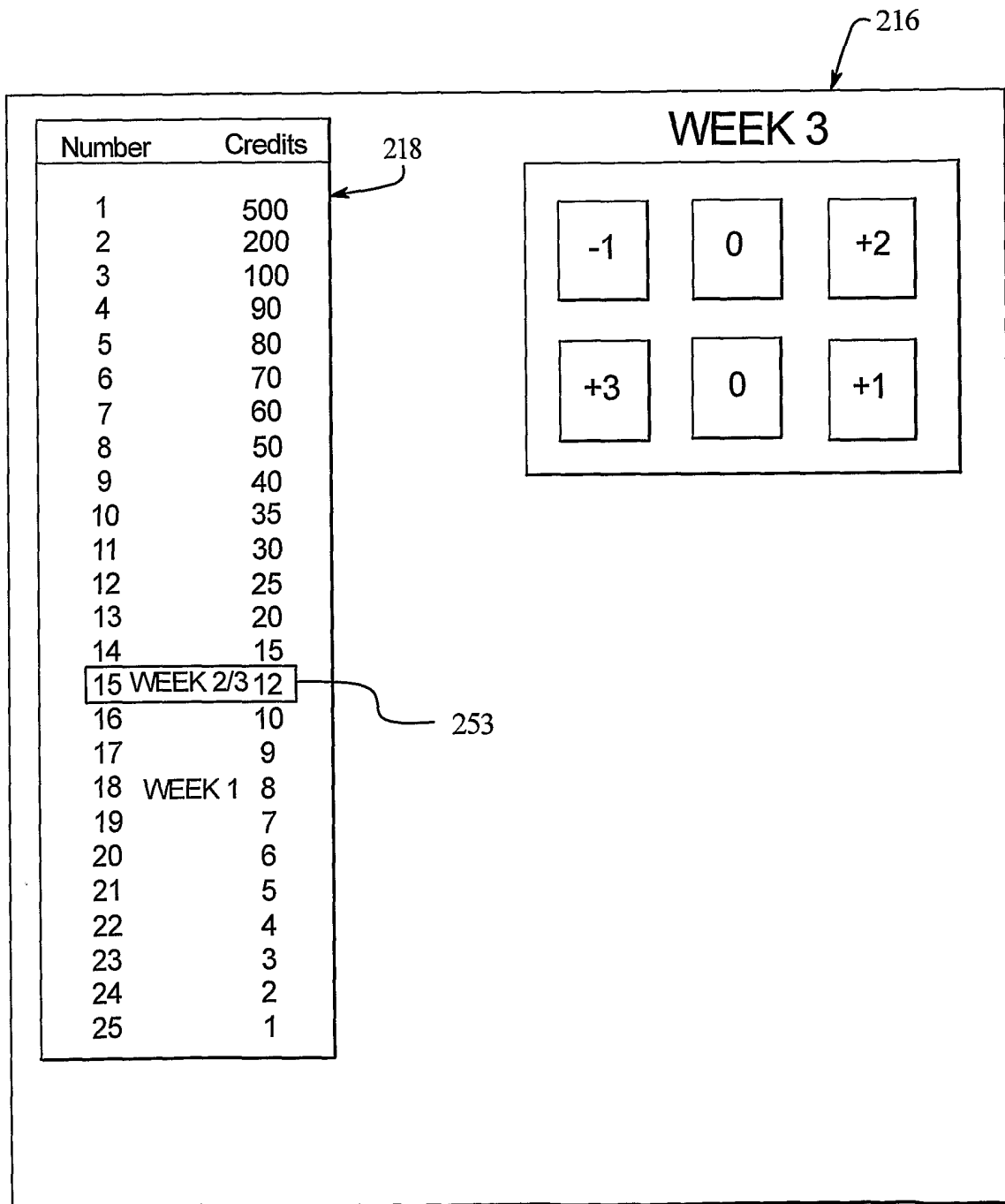


FIG. 4J

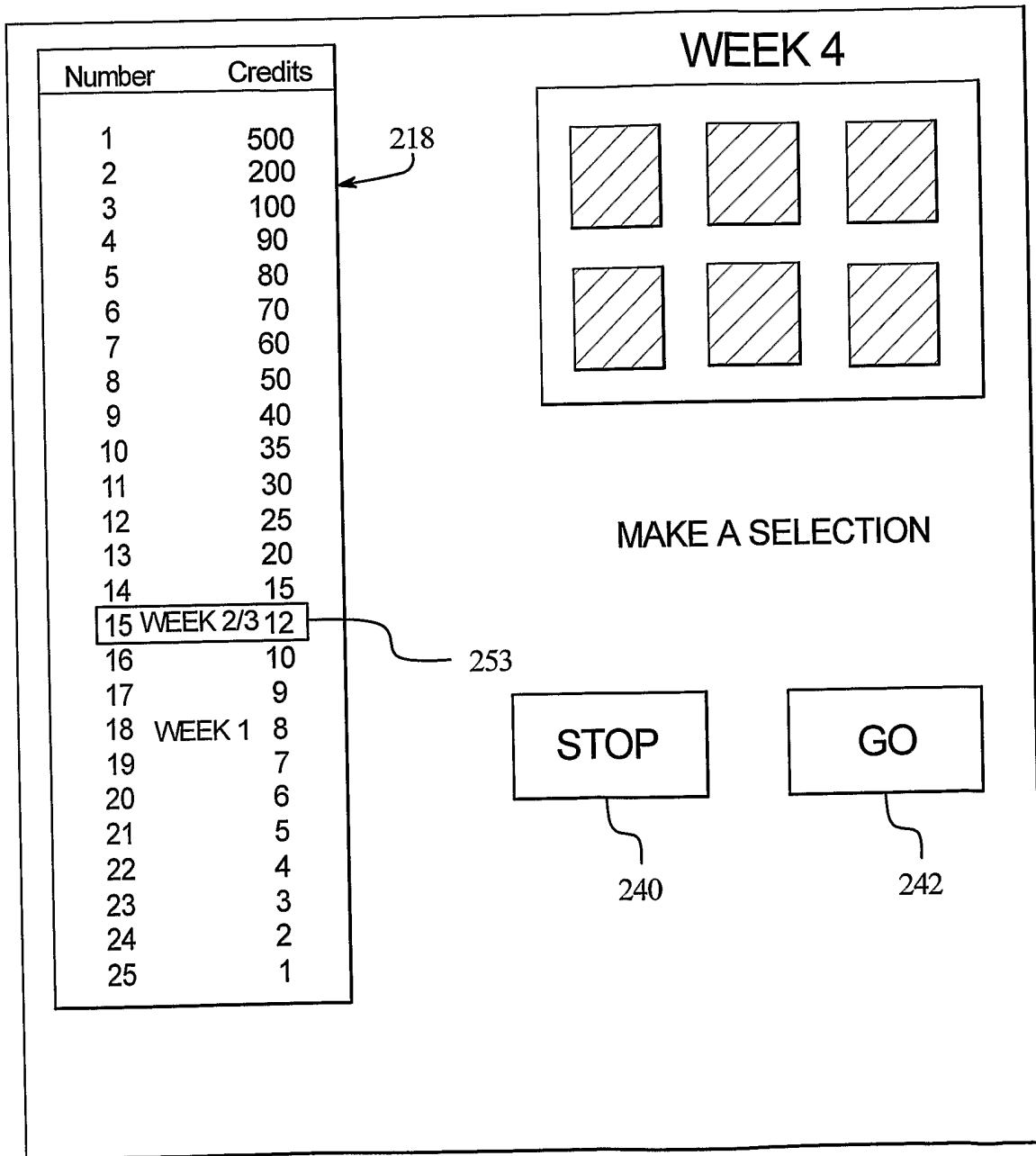


FIG. 4K

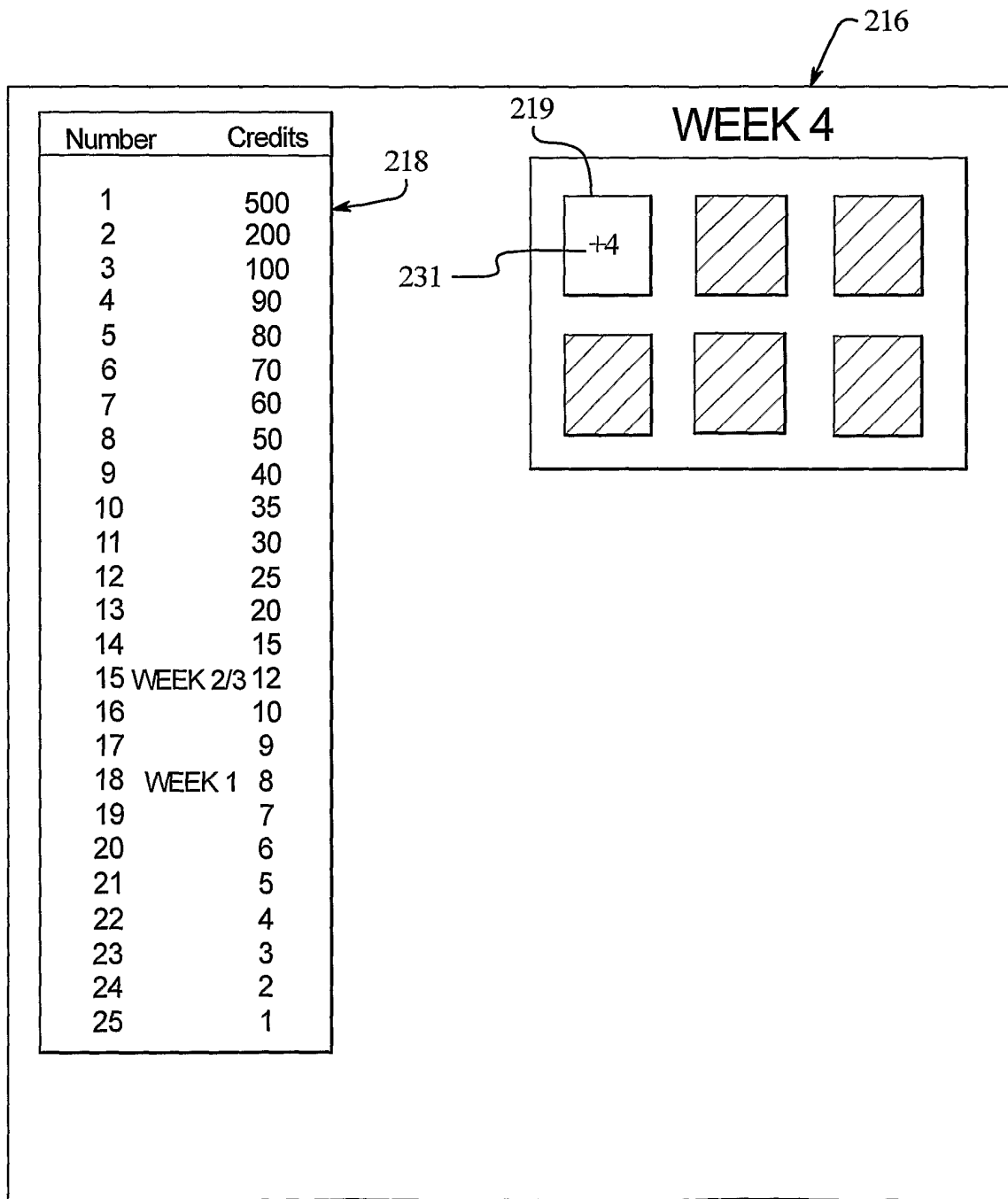


FIG. 4L

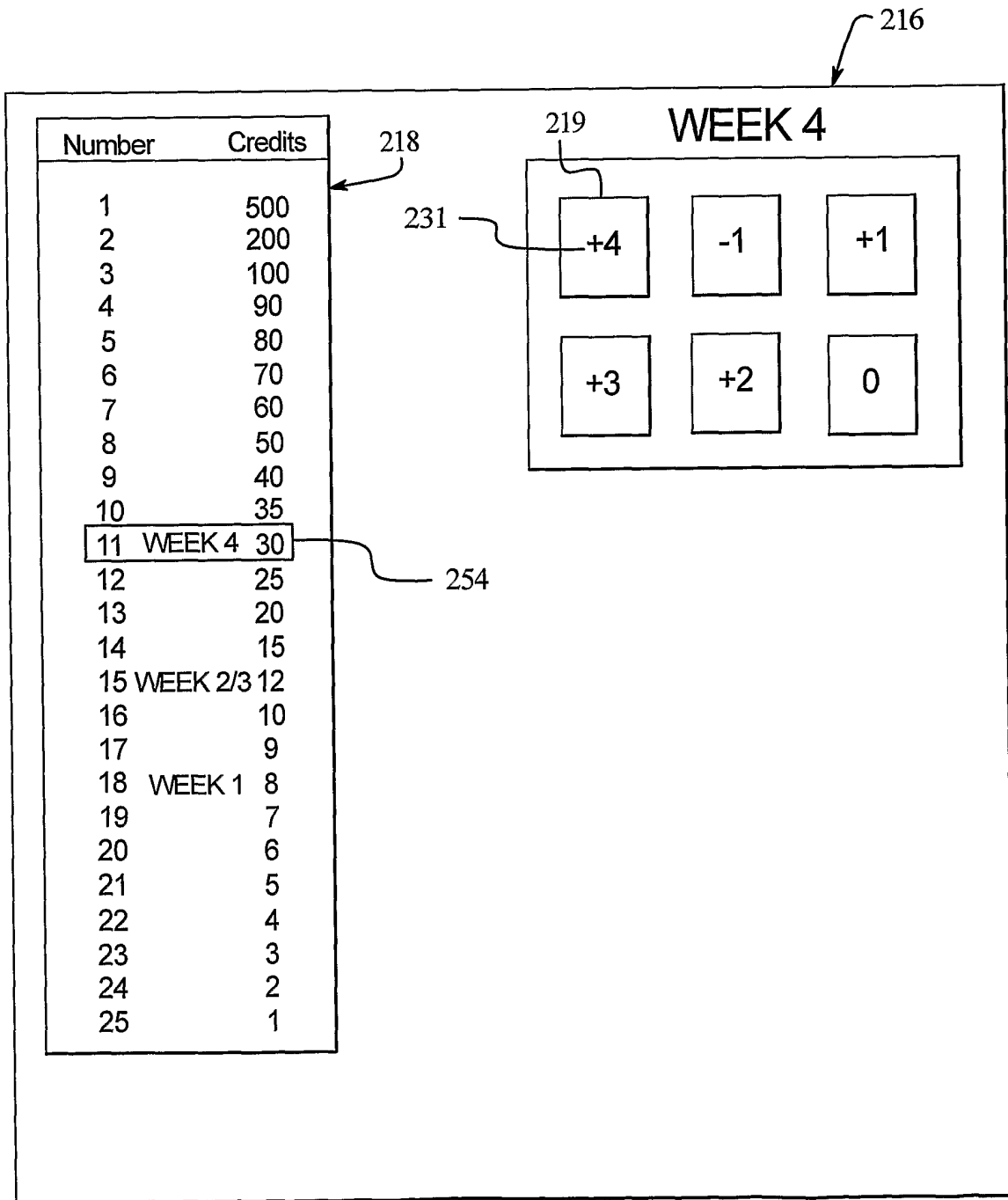


FIG. 5A

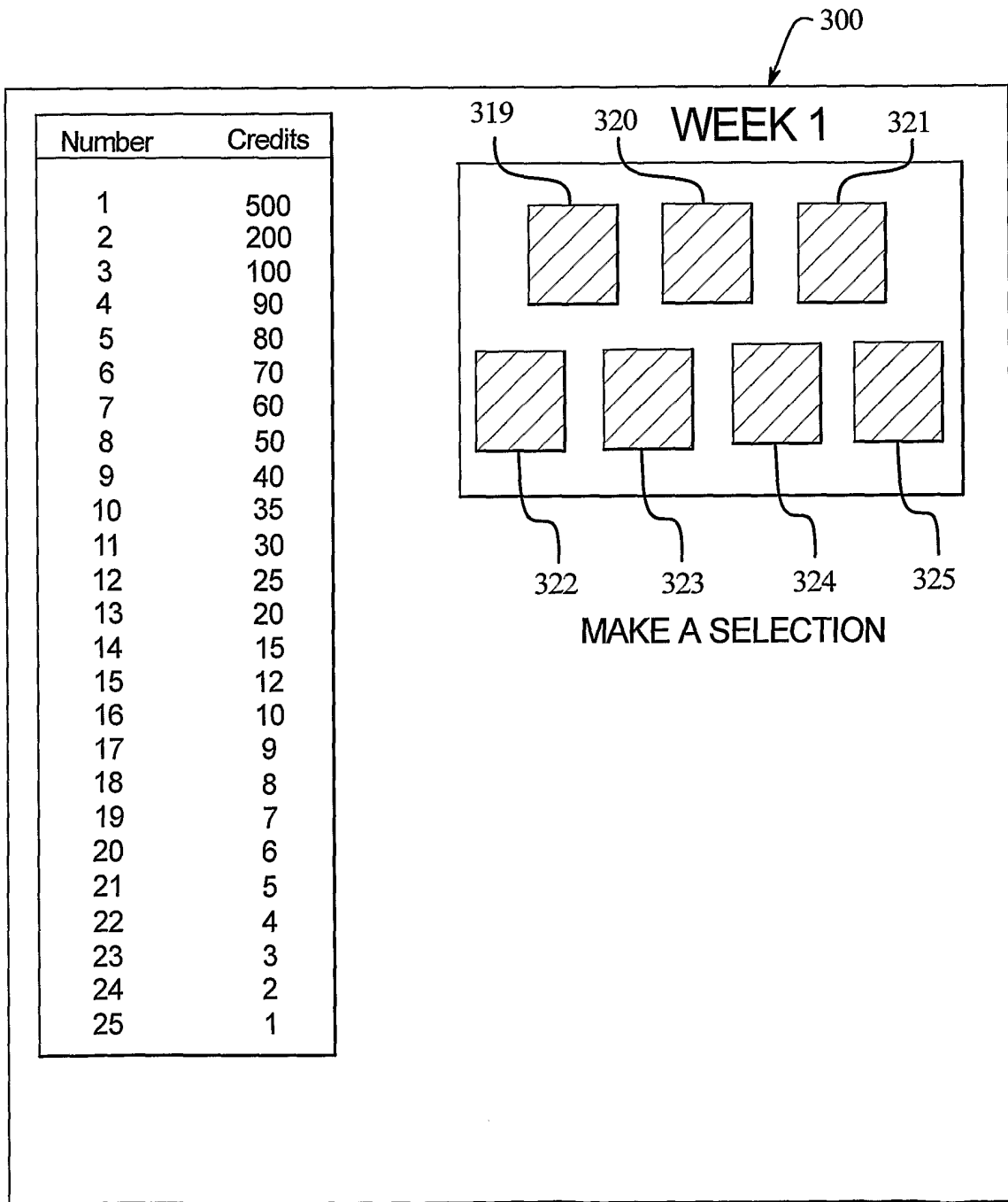


FIG. 5B

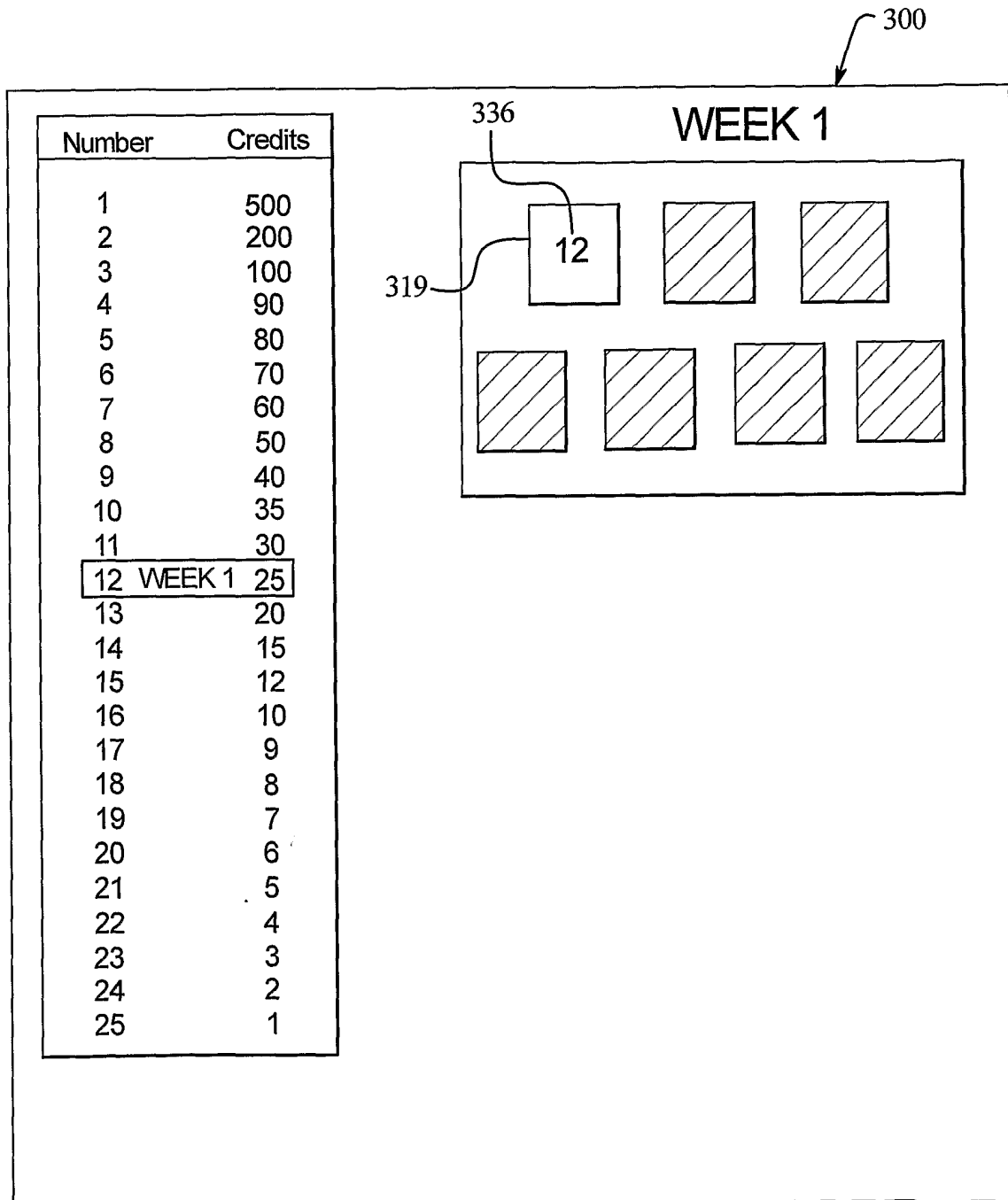


FIG. 5C

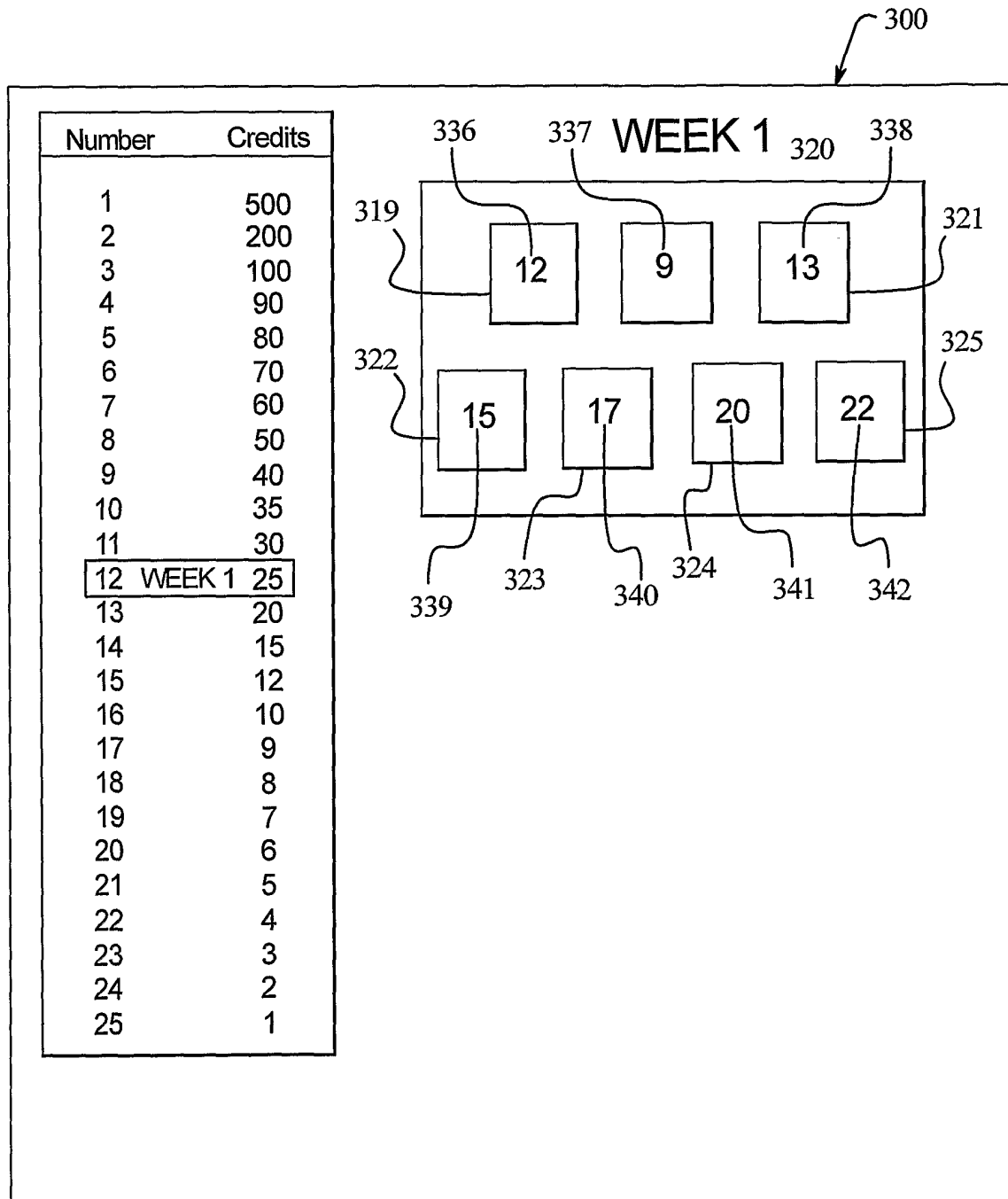


FIG. 5D

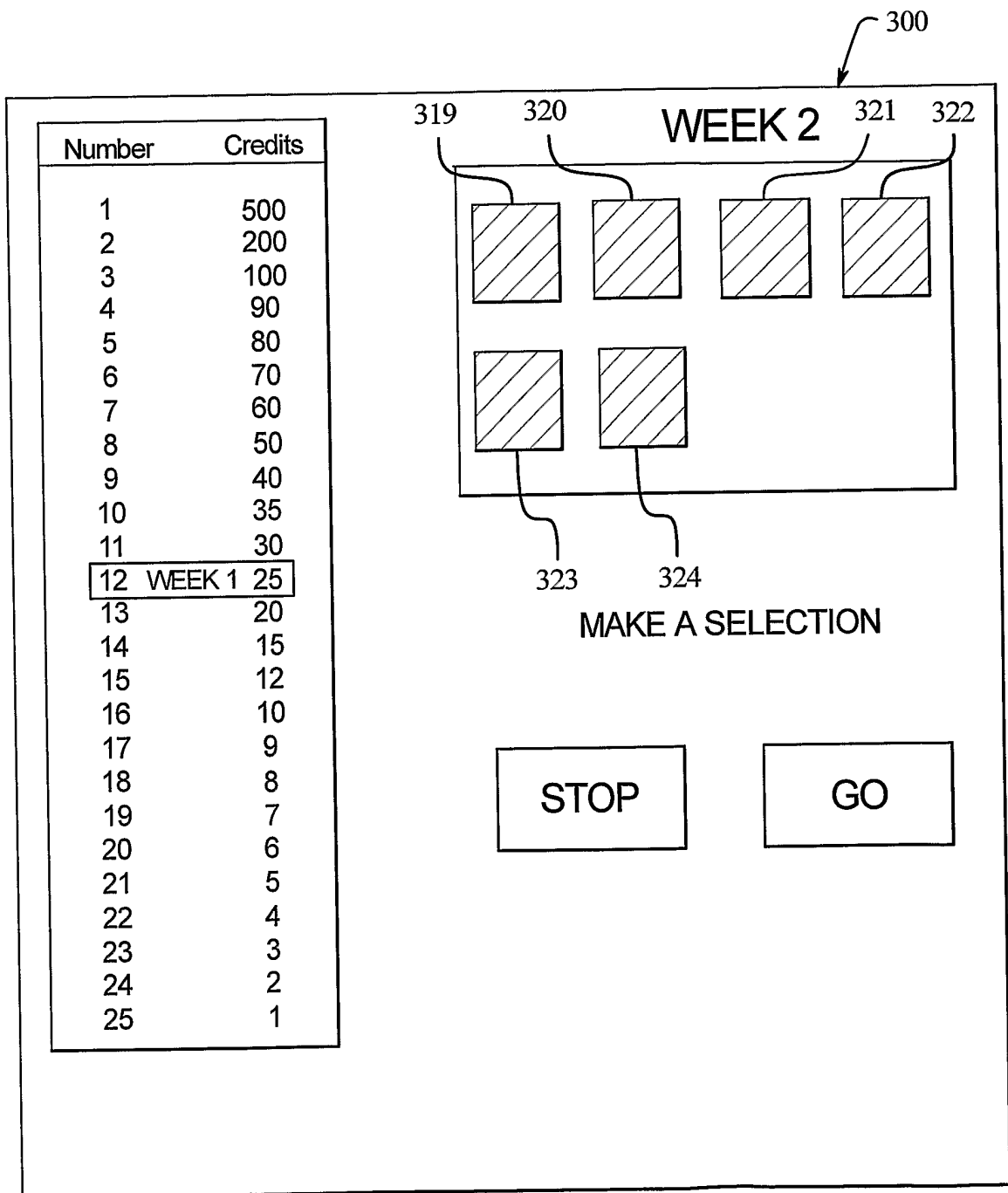


FIG. 5E

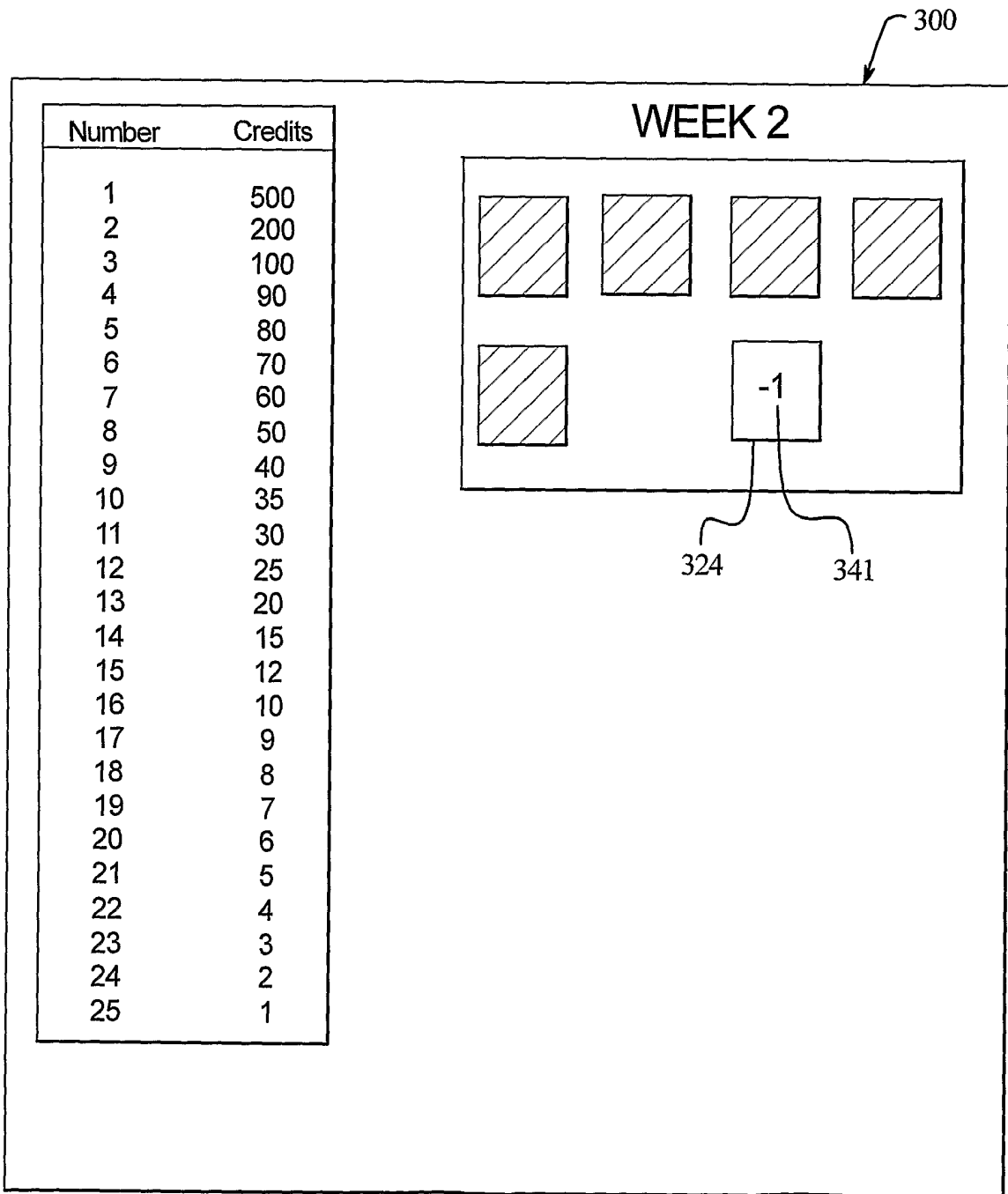


FIG. 5F

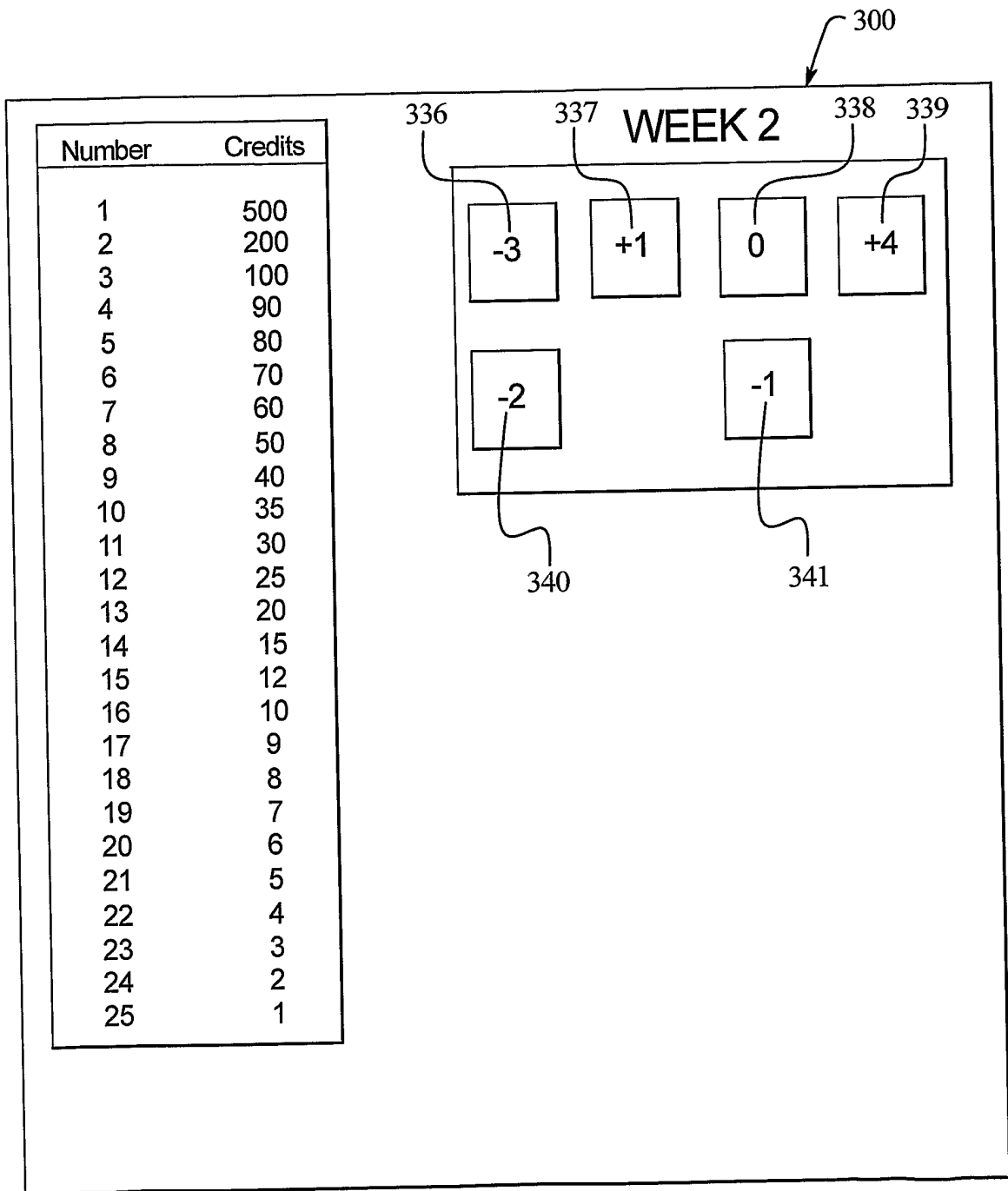


FIG. 6

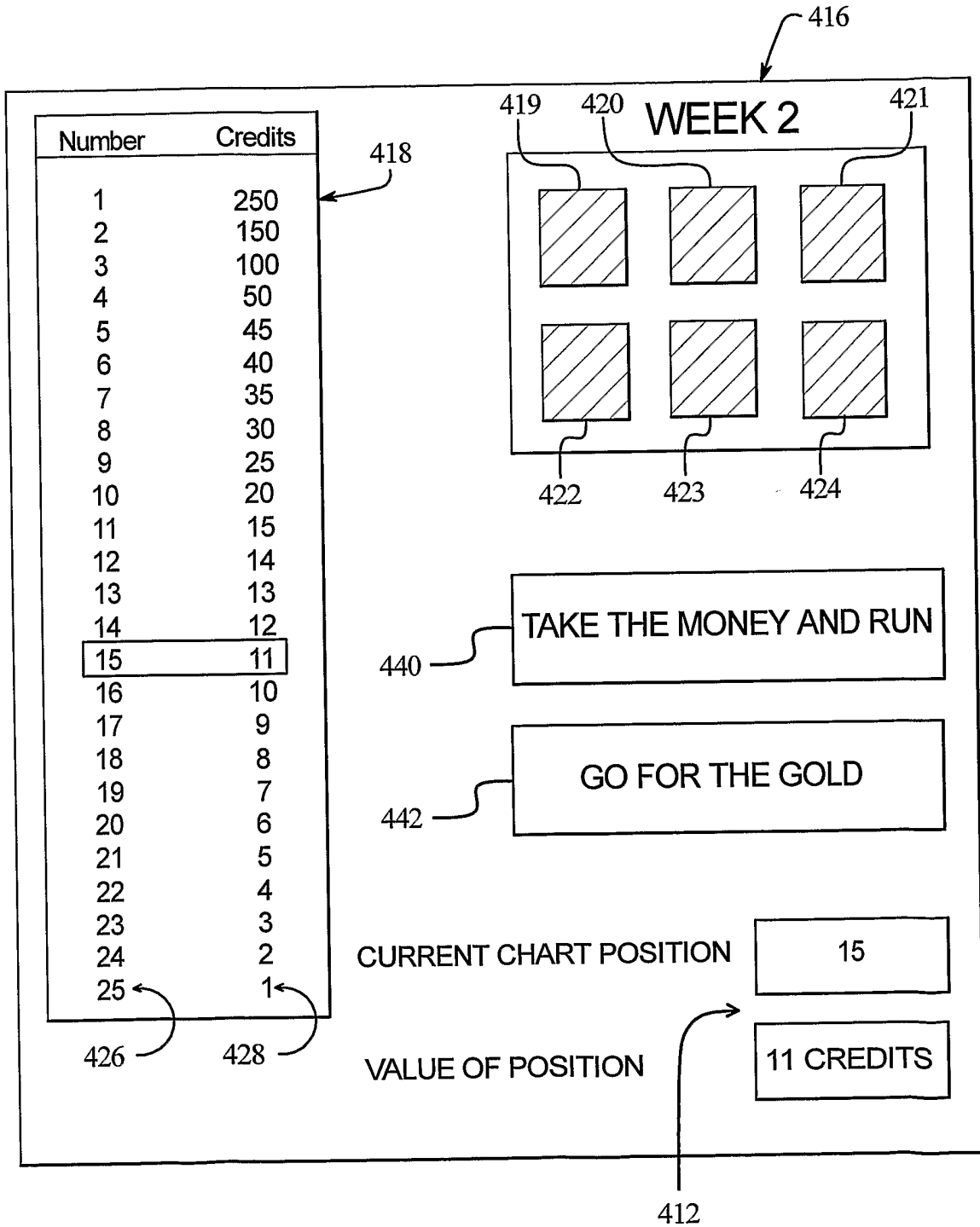


FIG. 7A

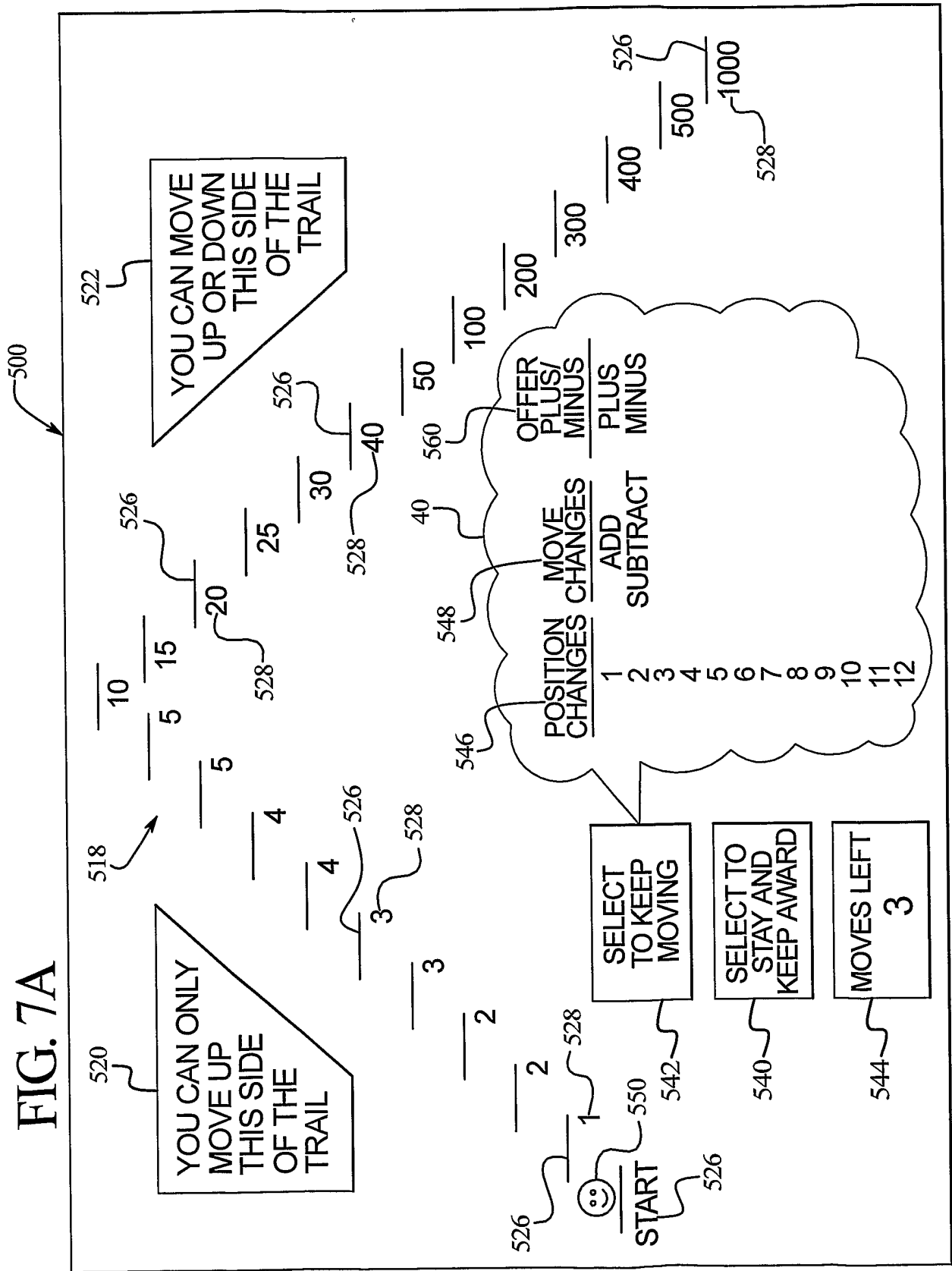
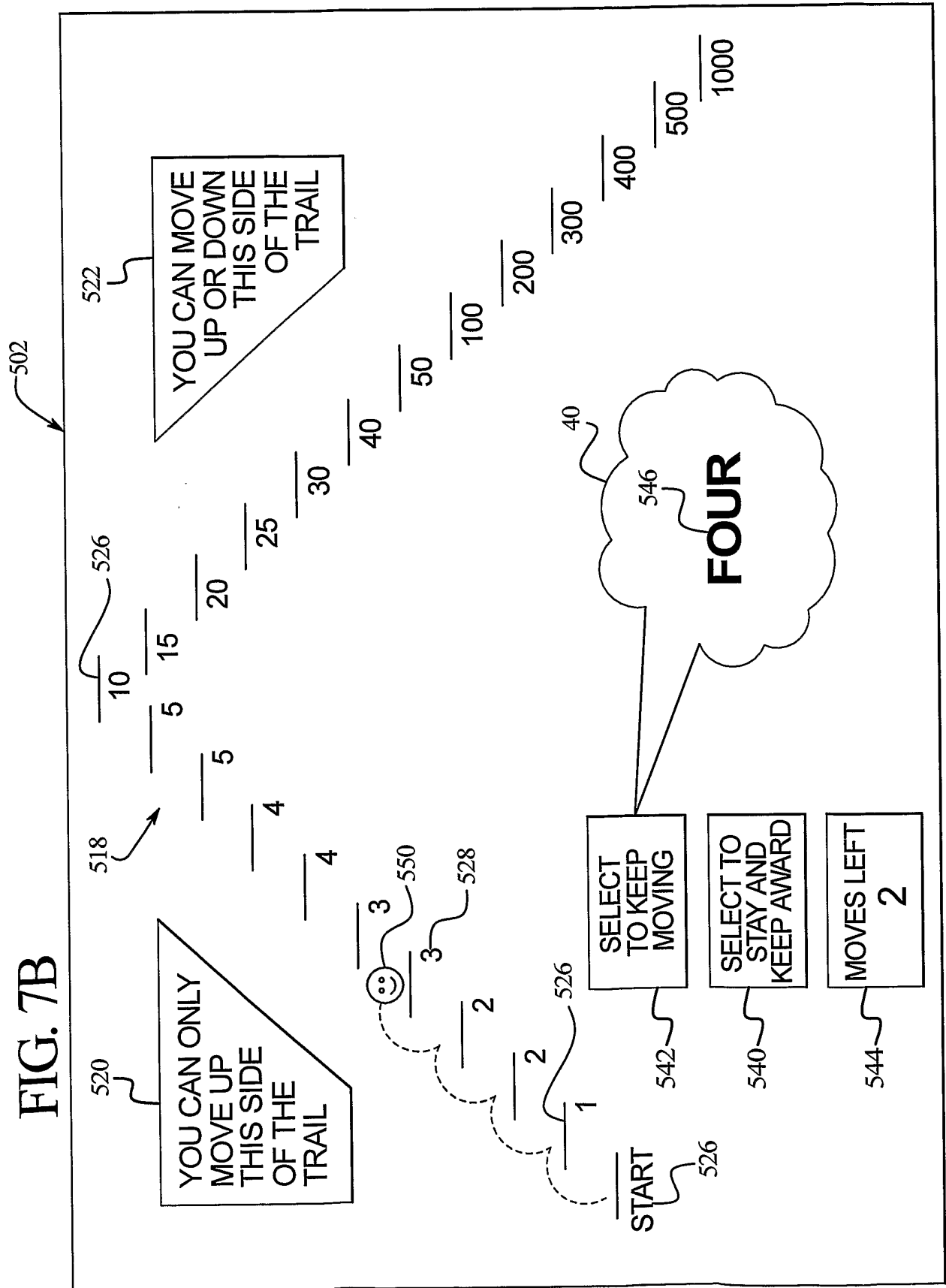
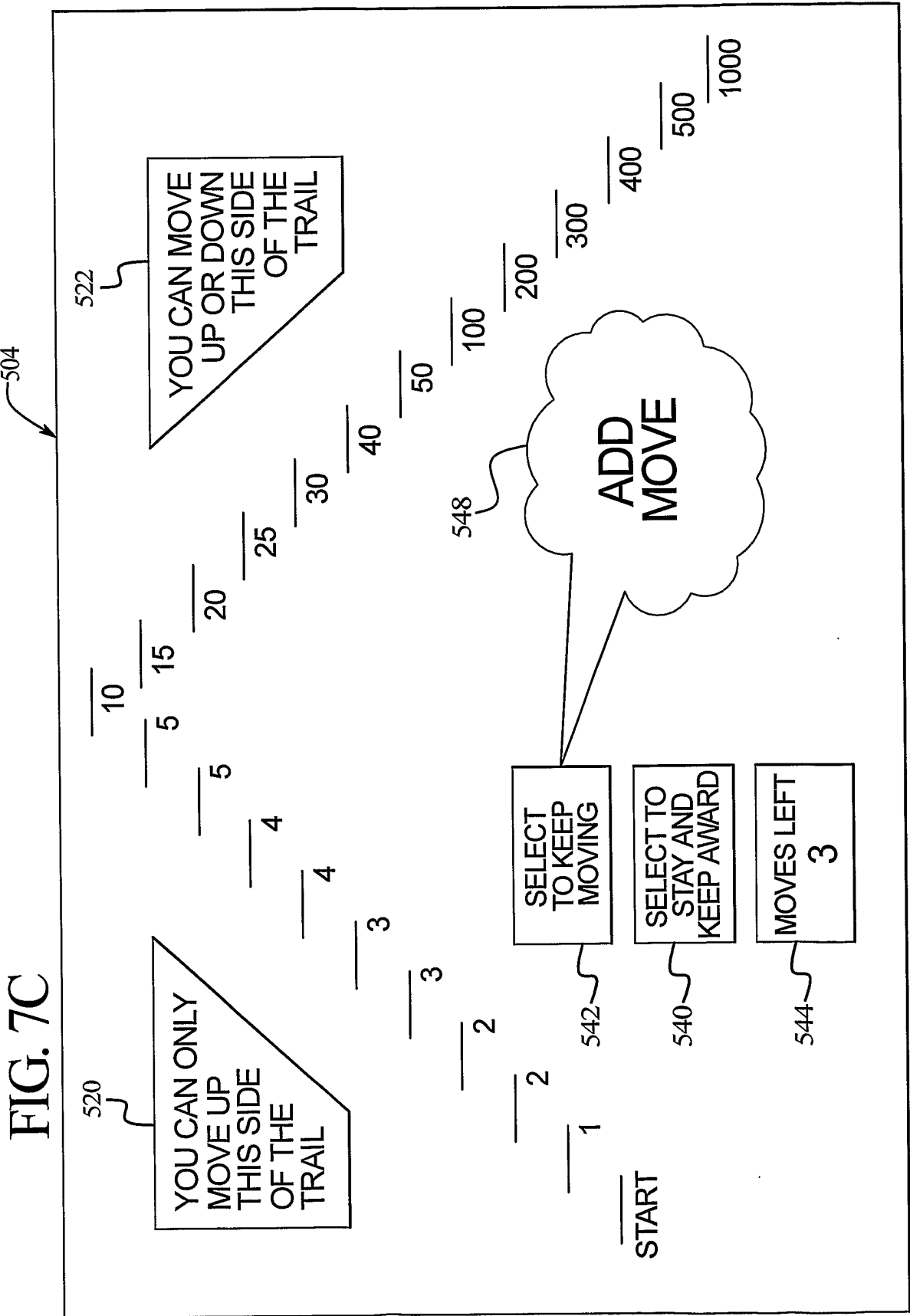


FIG. 7B





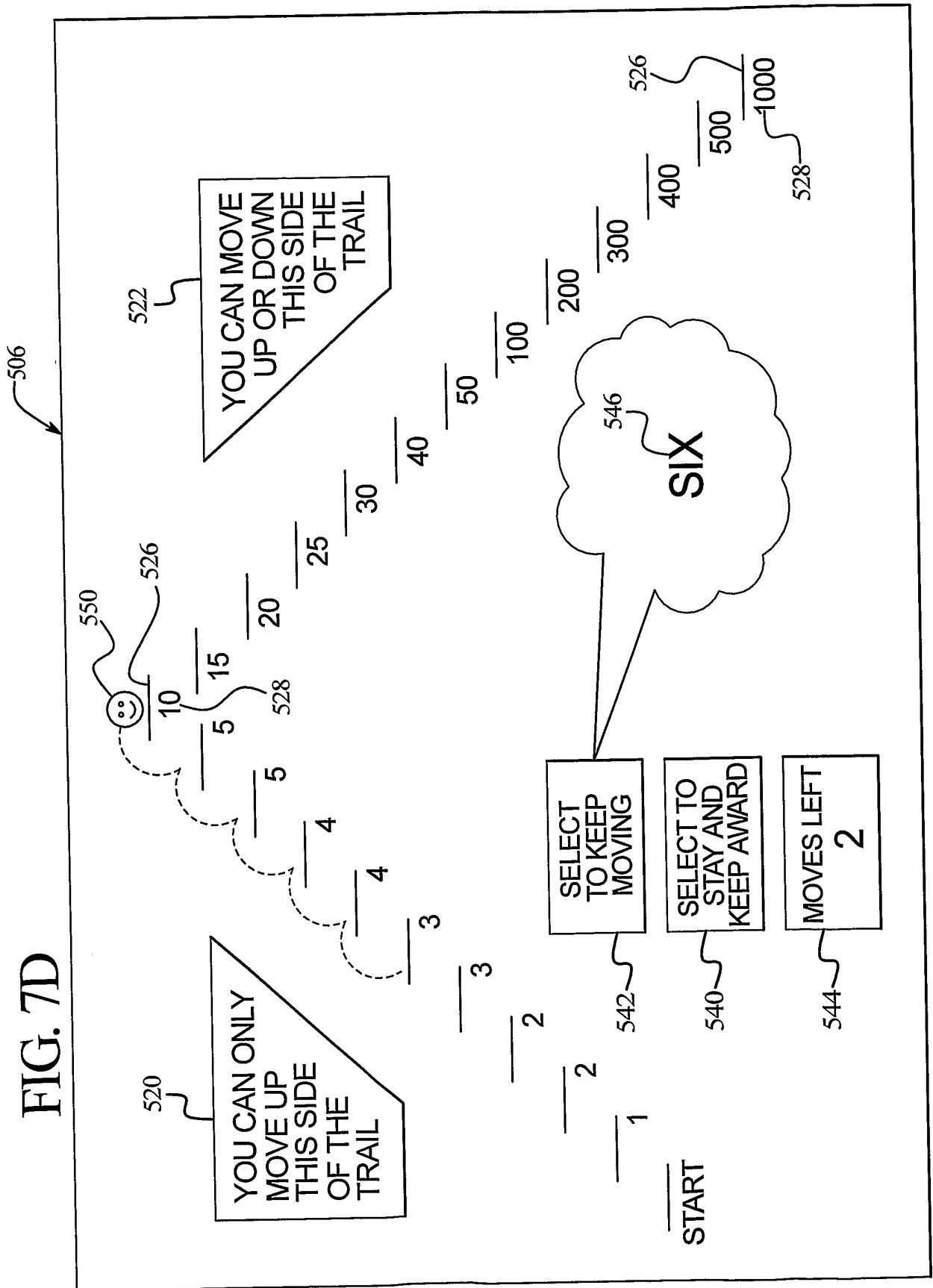
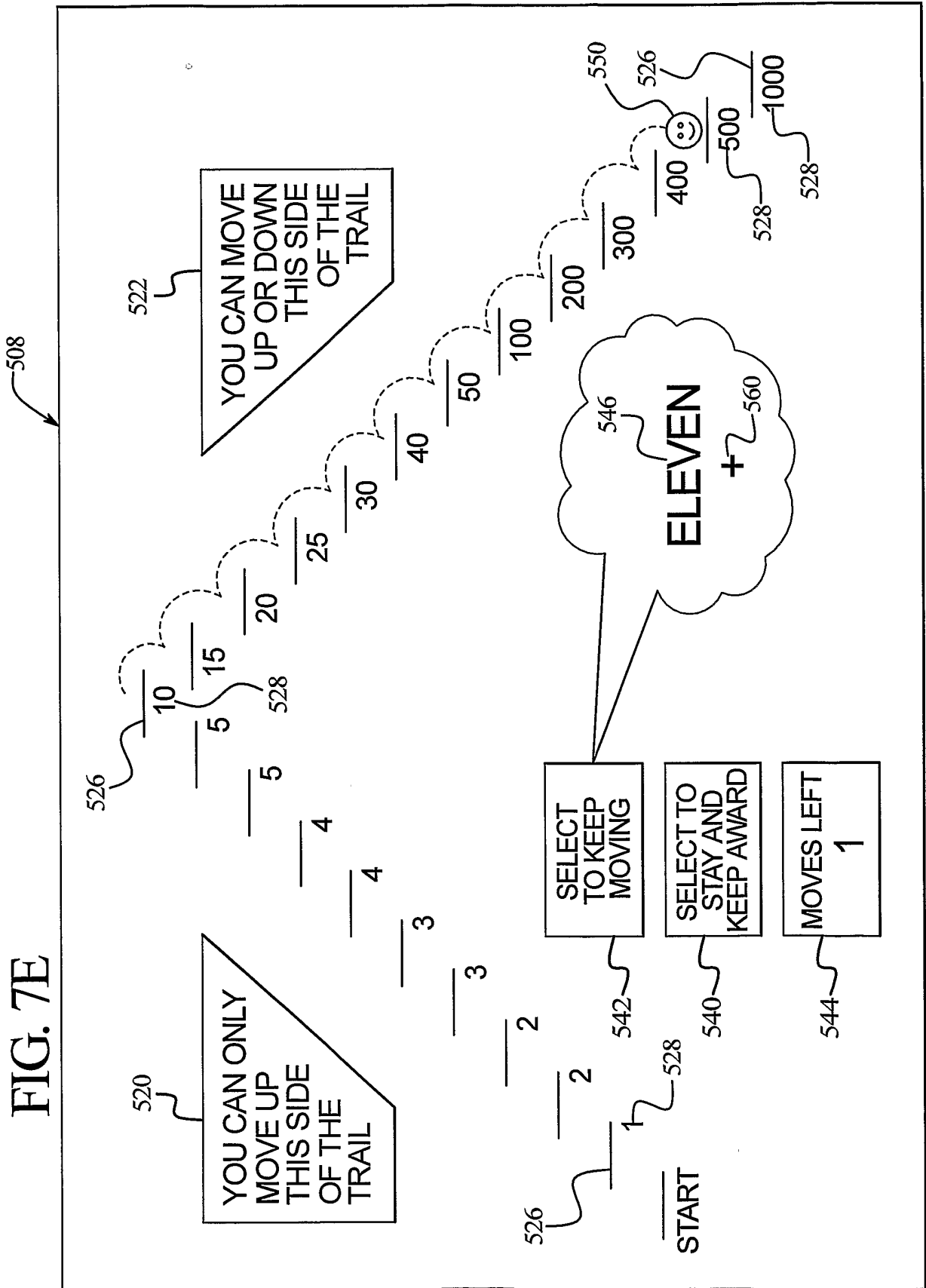
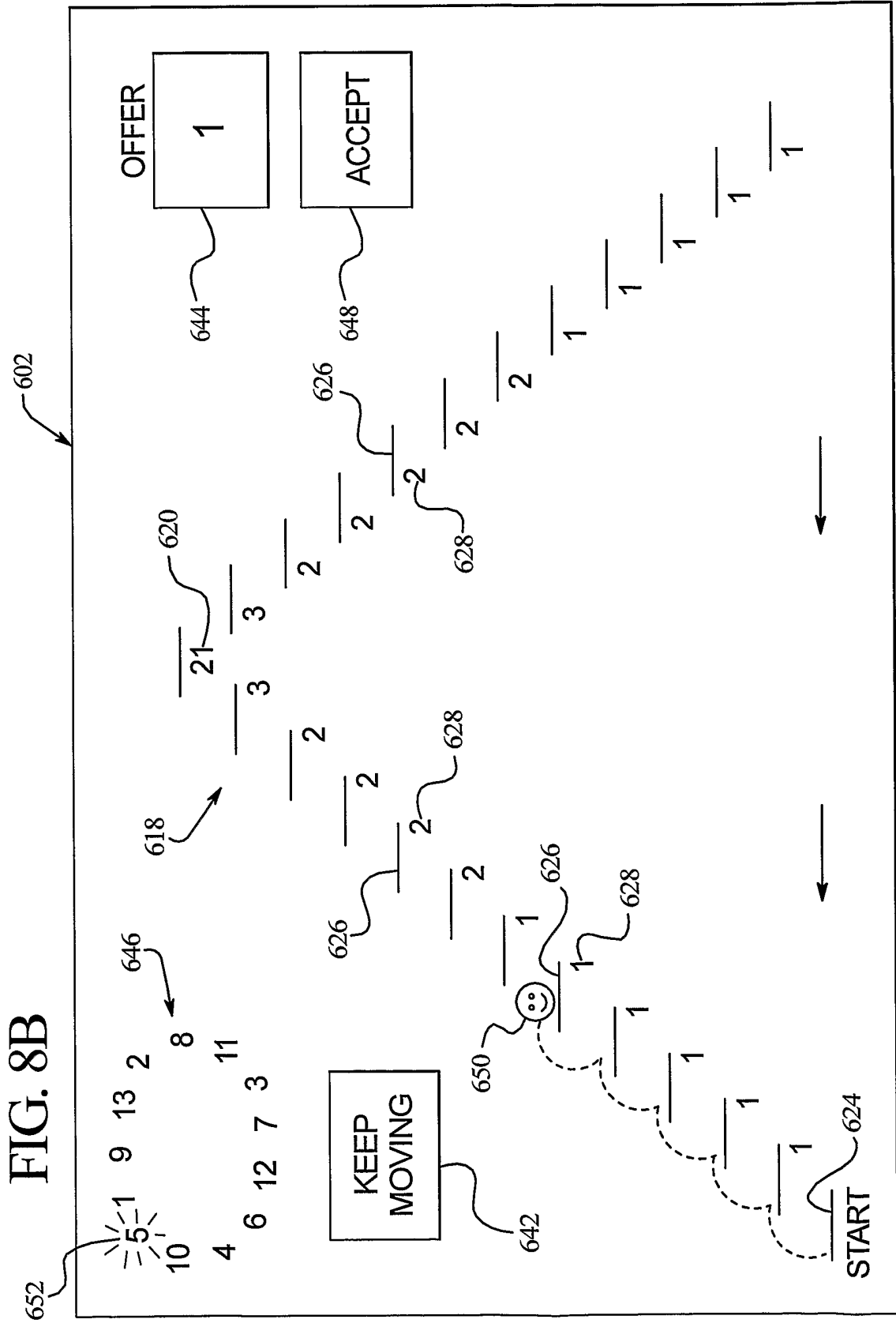
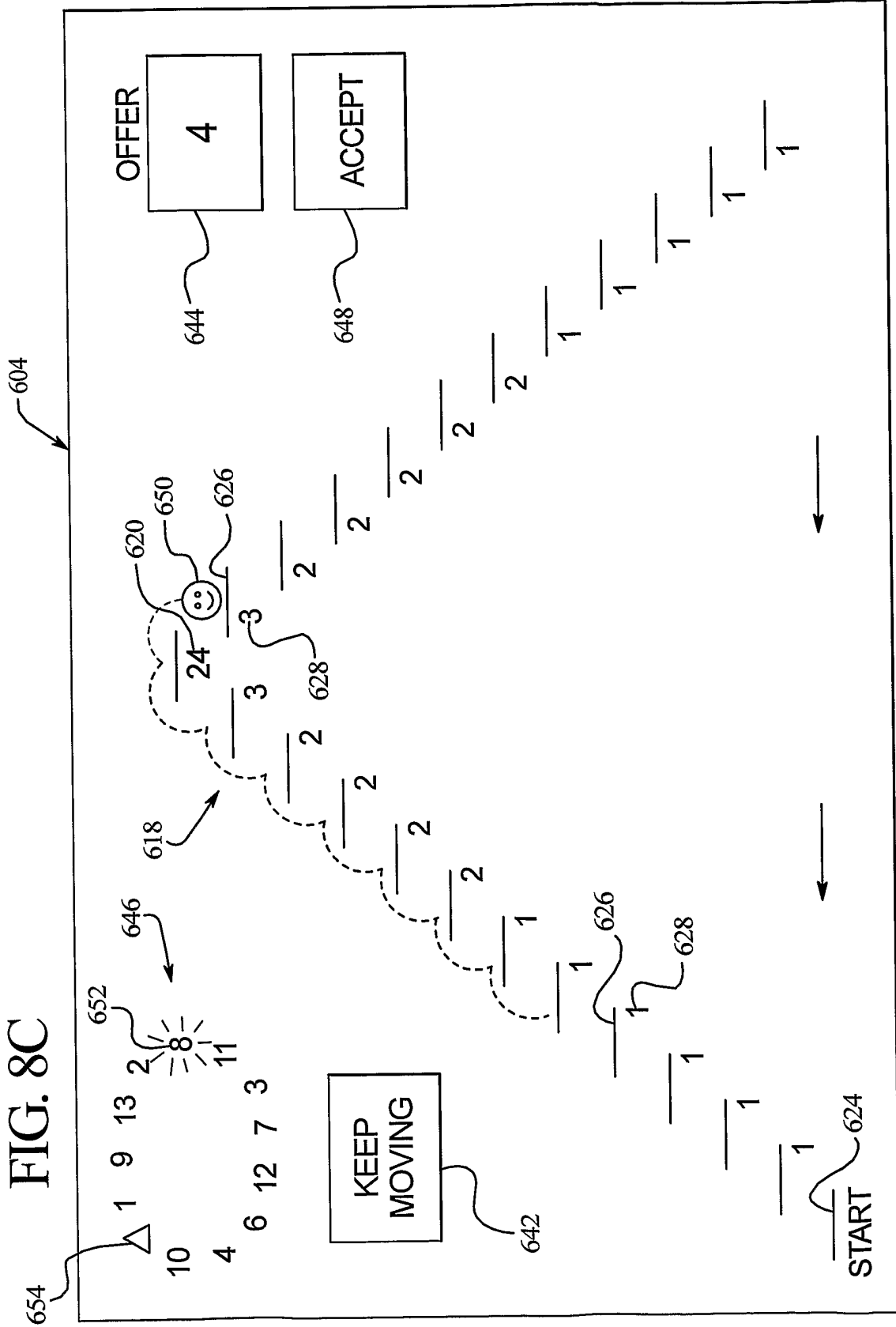


FIG. 7E







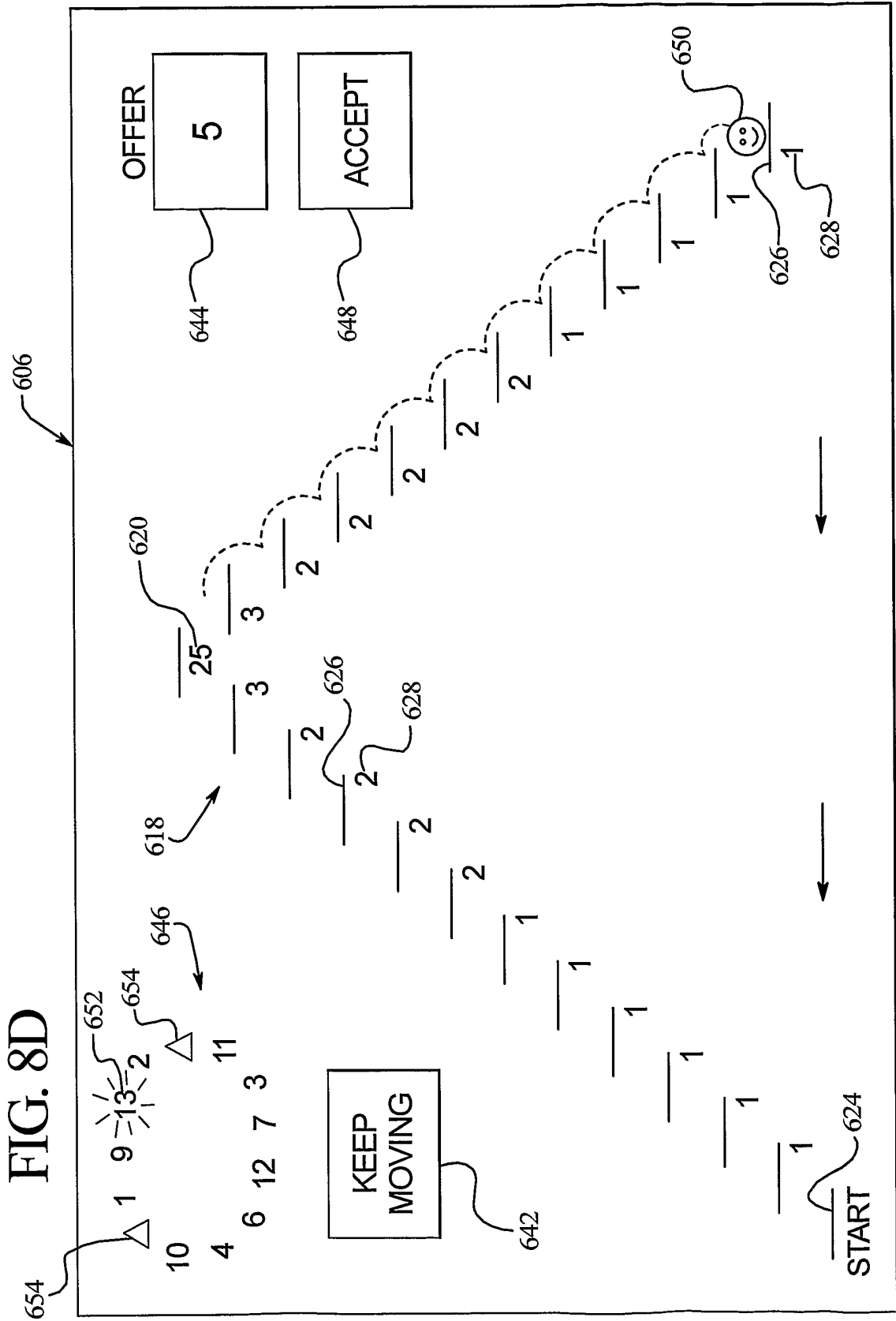
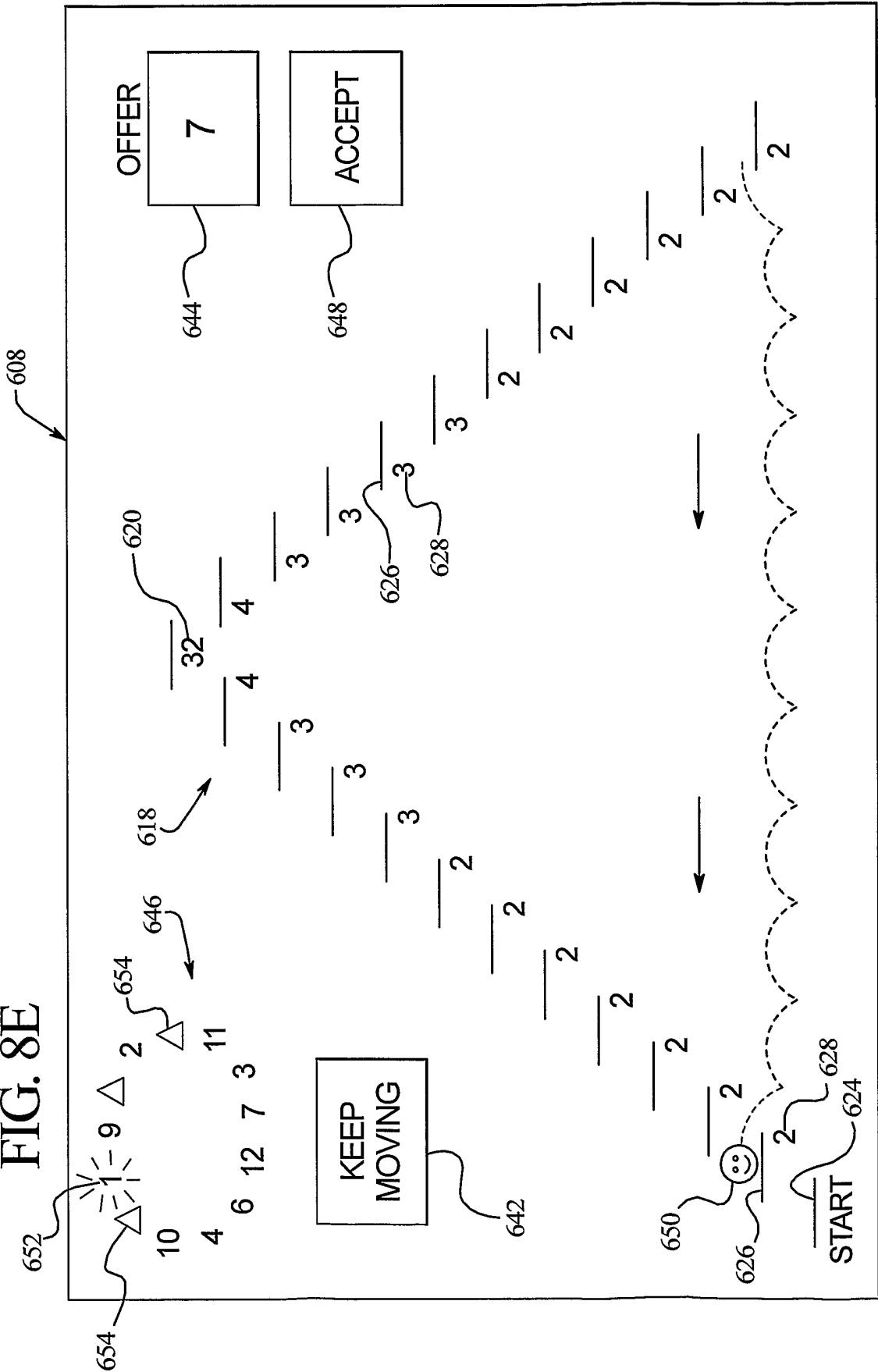


FIG. 8E



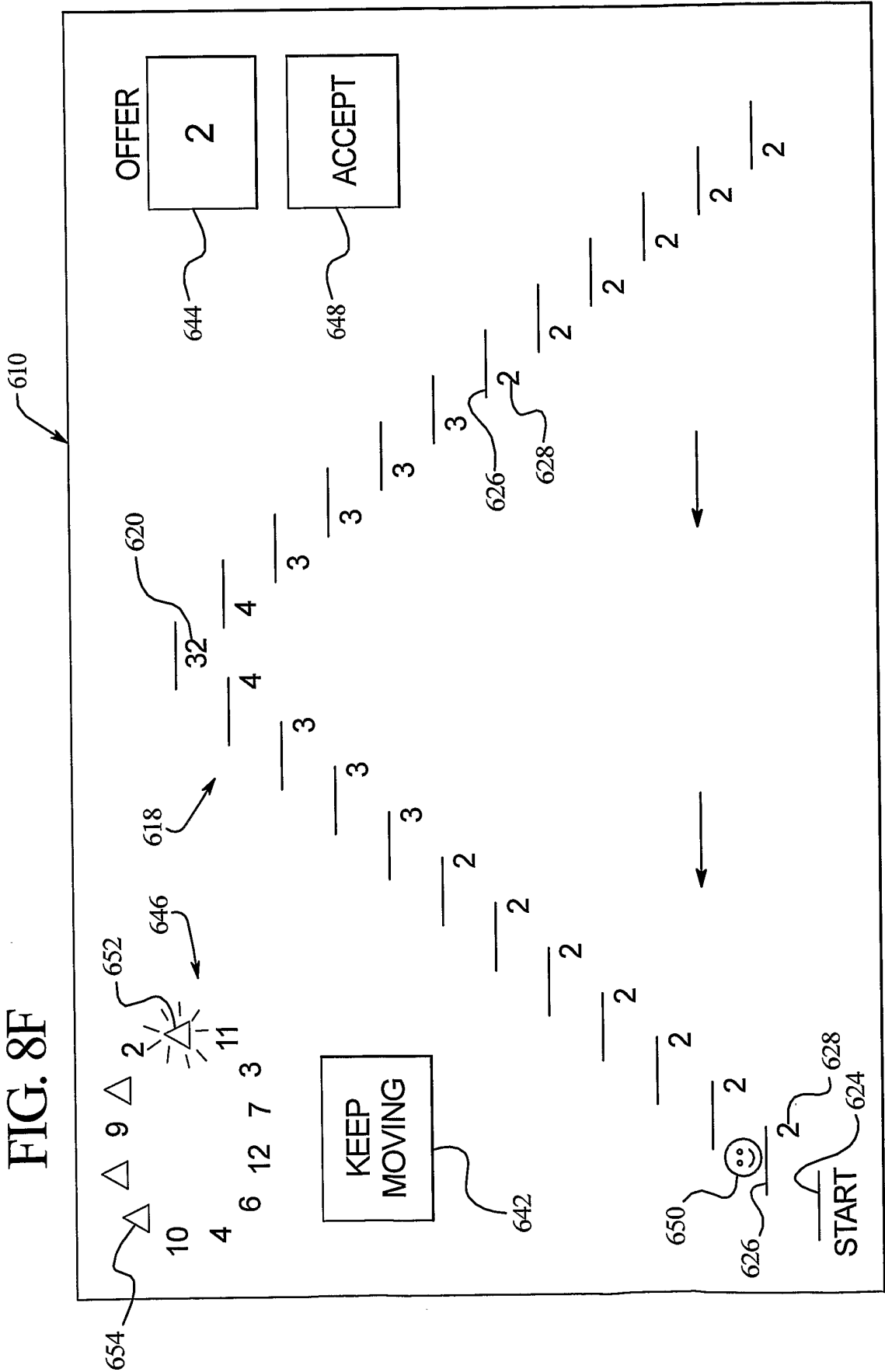


FIG. 8G

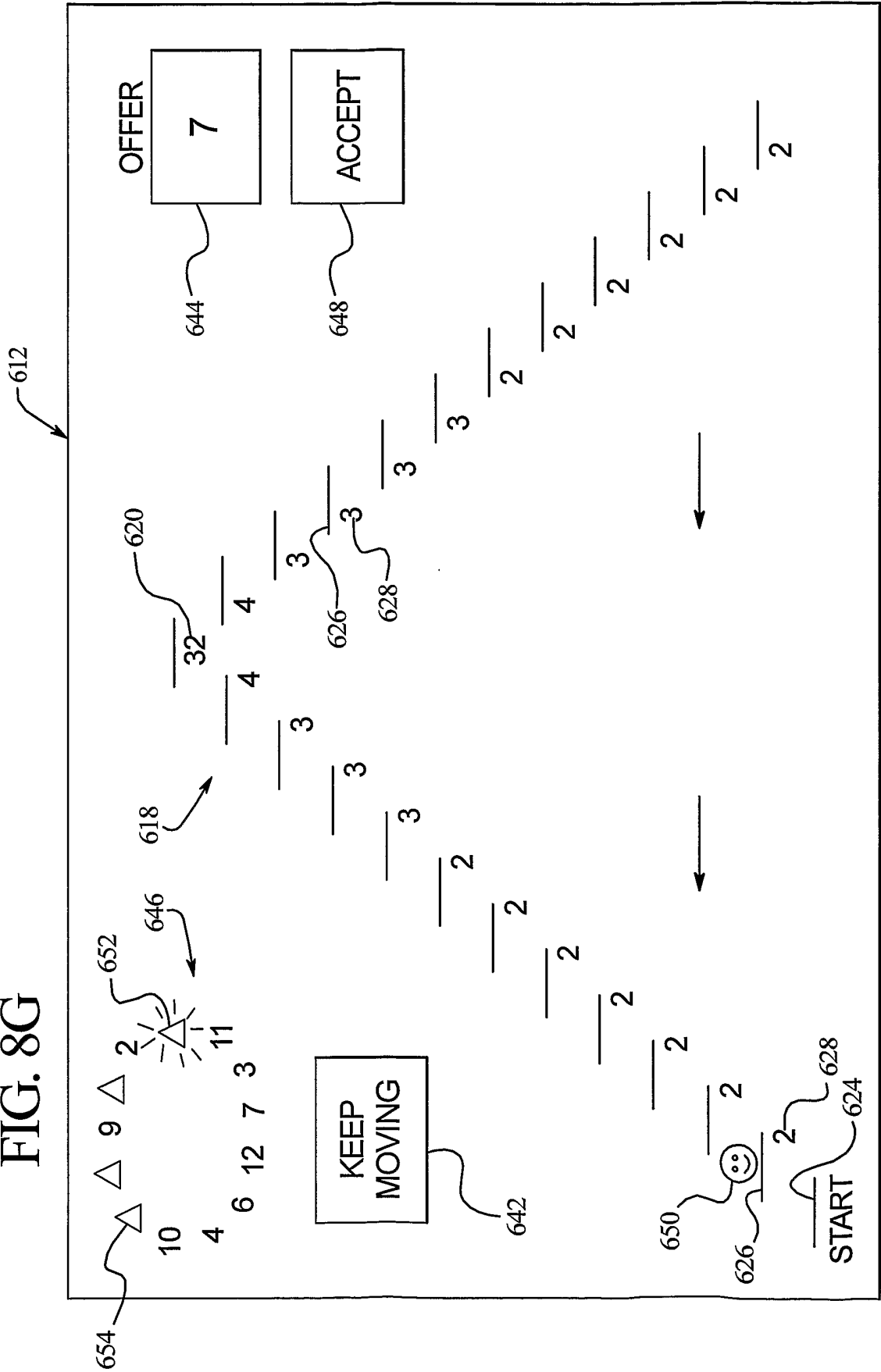


FIG. 9A

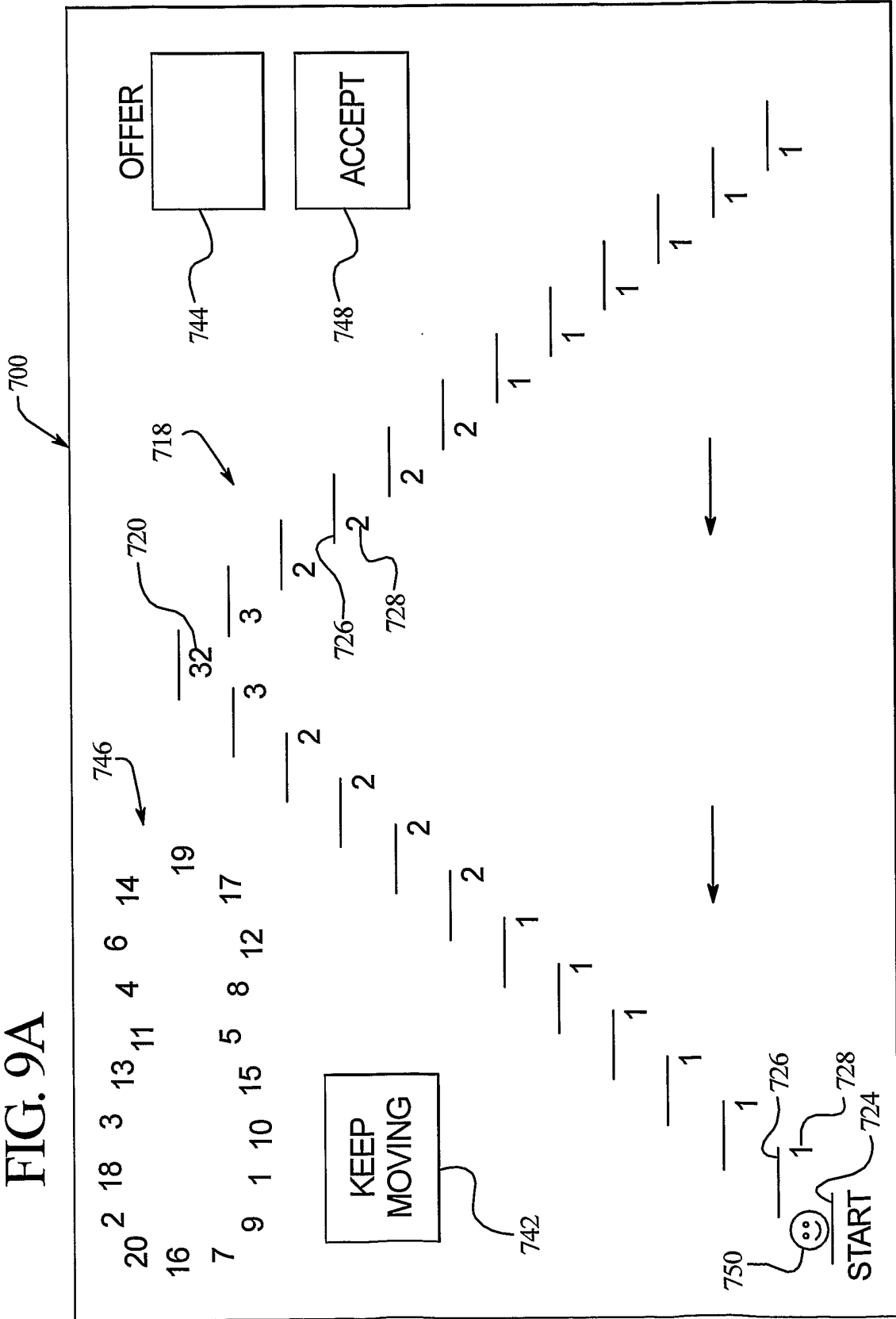


FIG. 9B

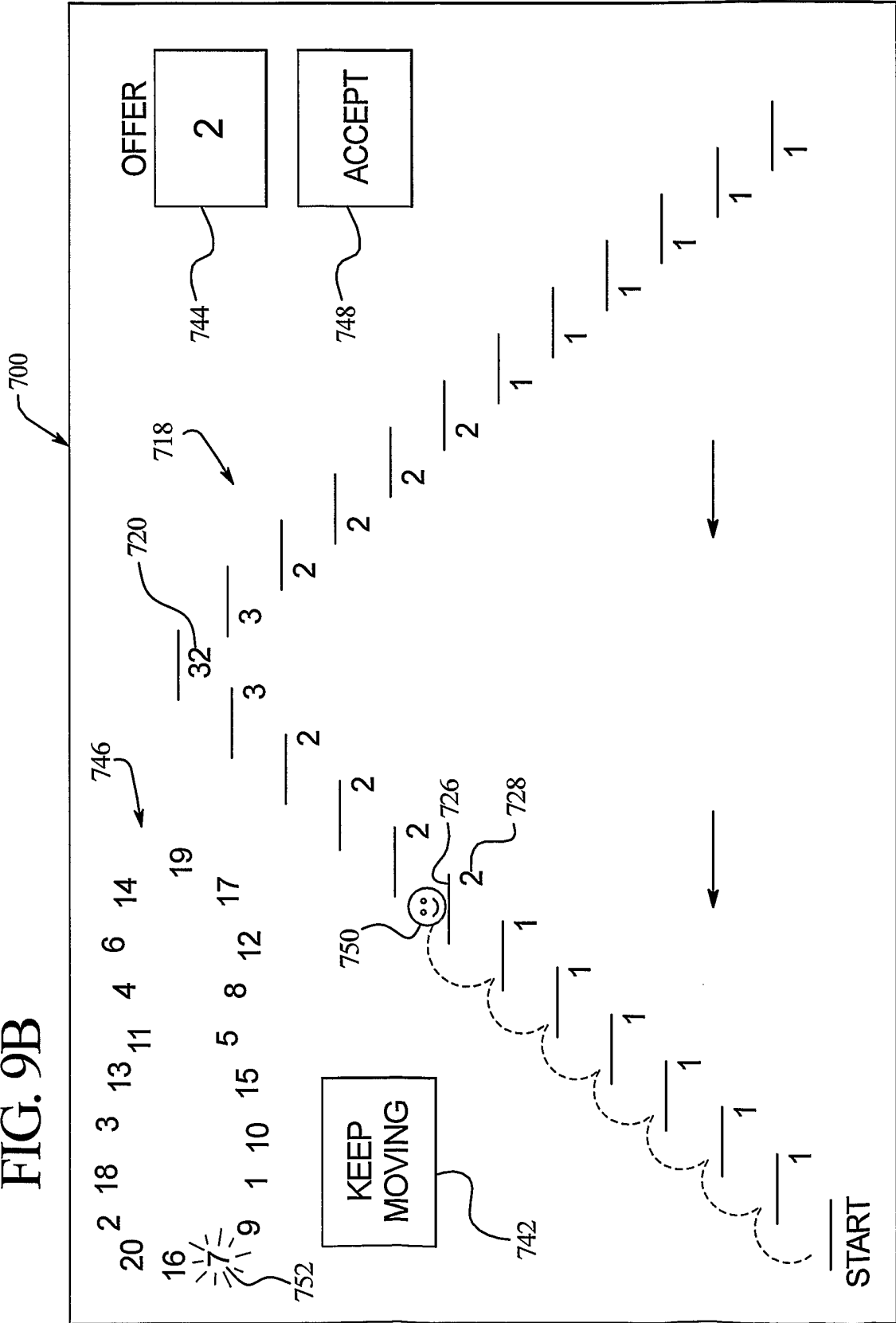
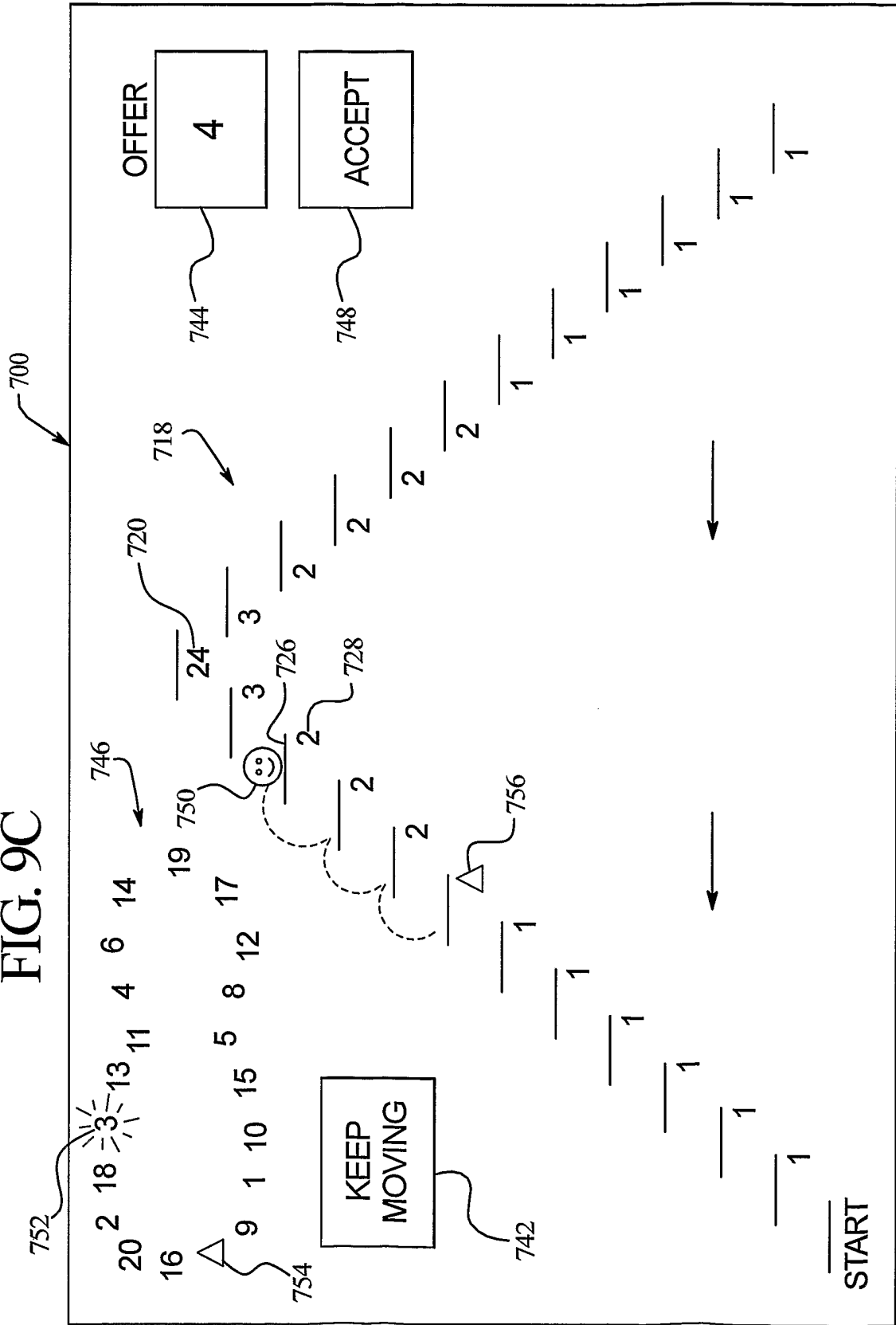


FIG. 9C



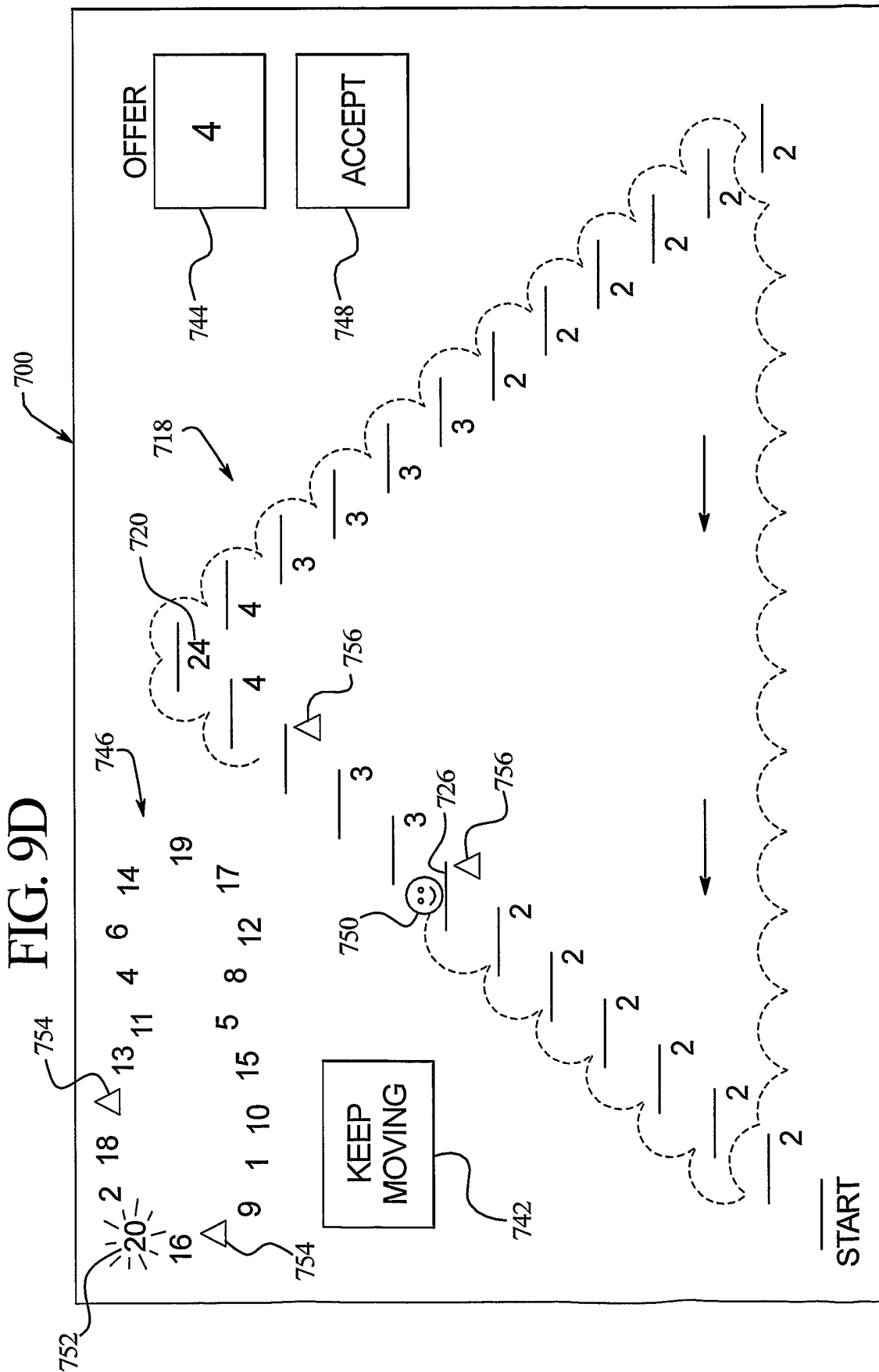


FIG. 10A

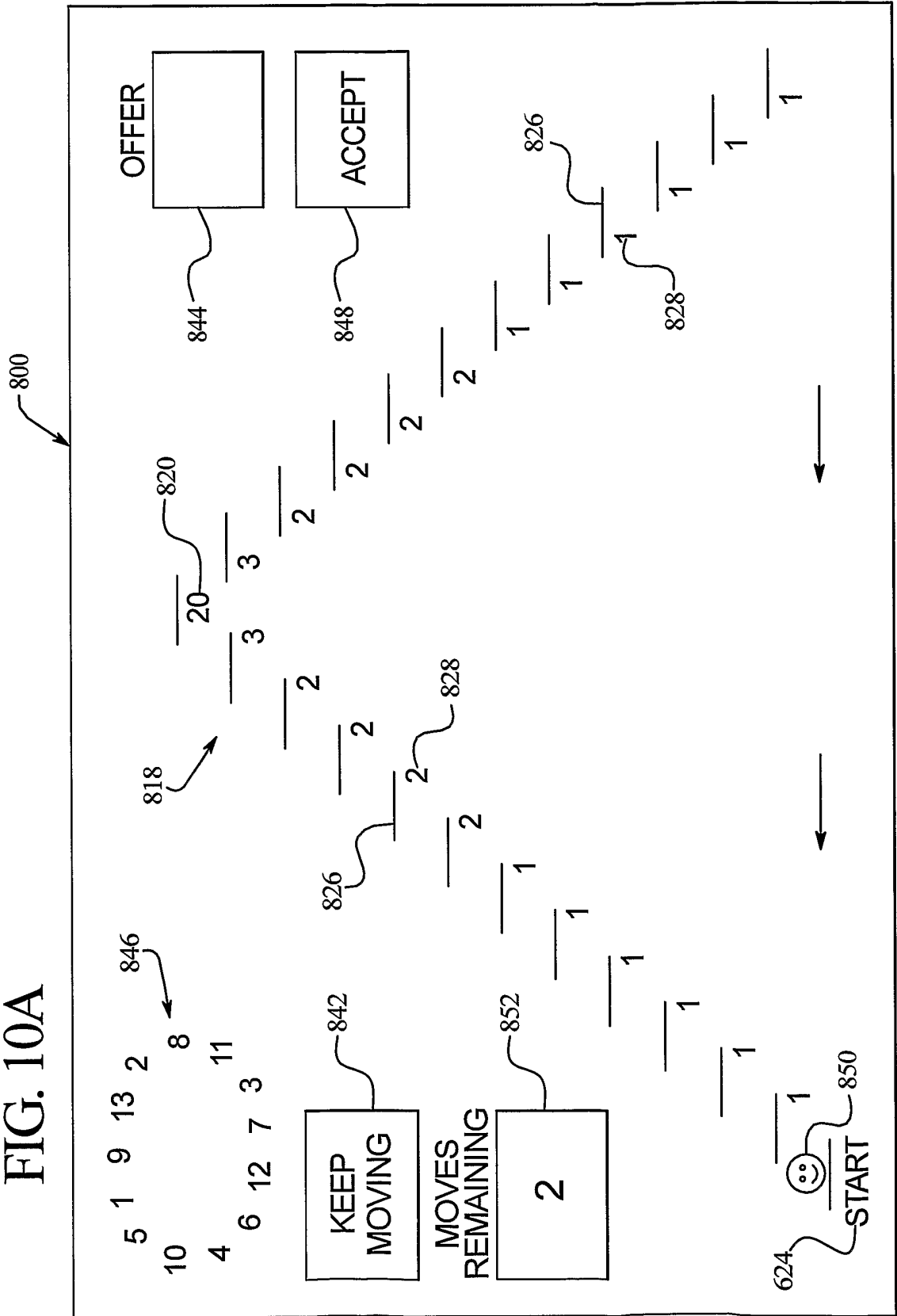


FIG. 10B

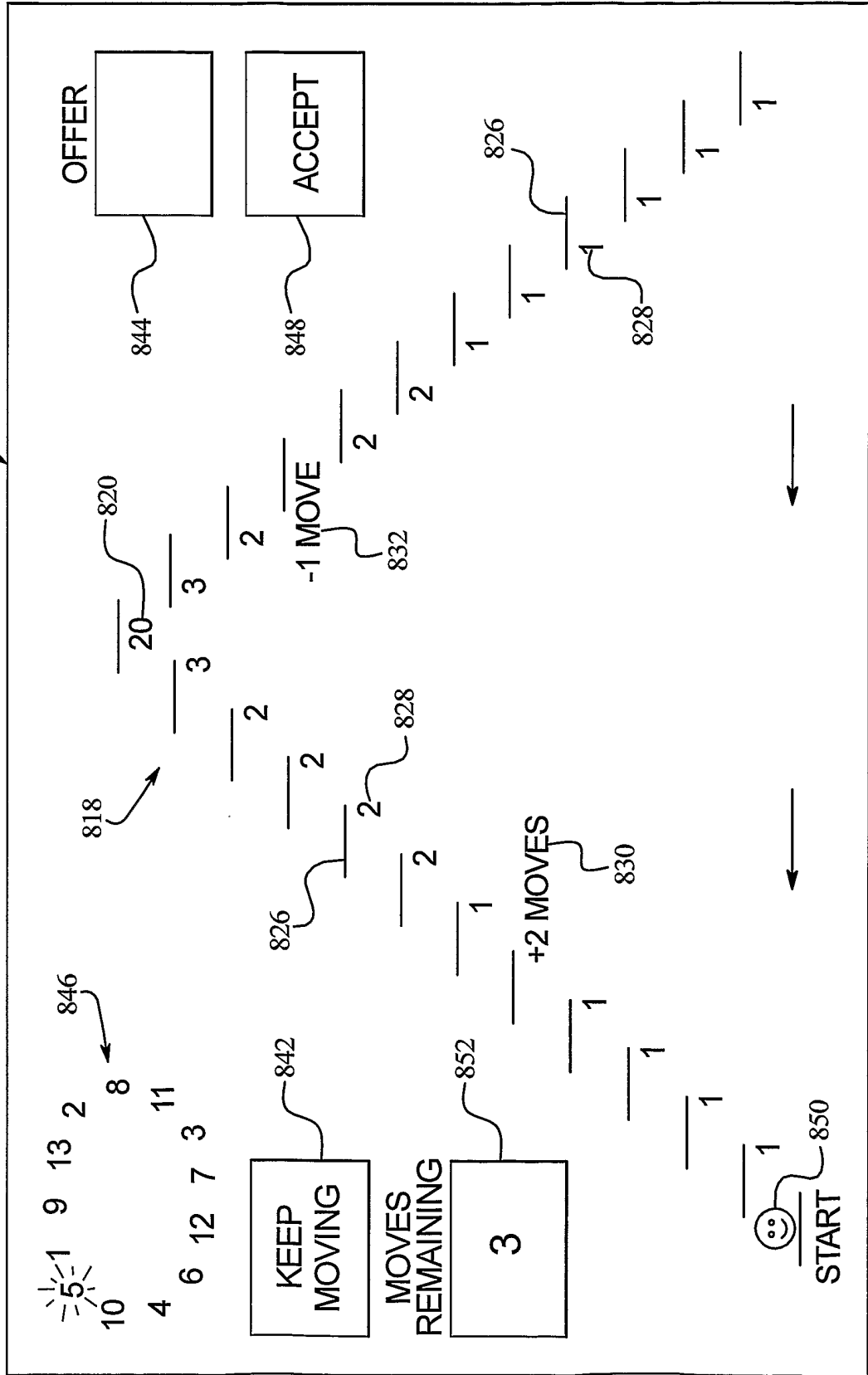
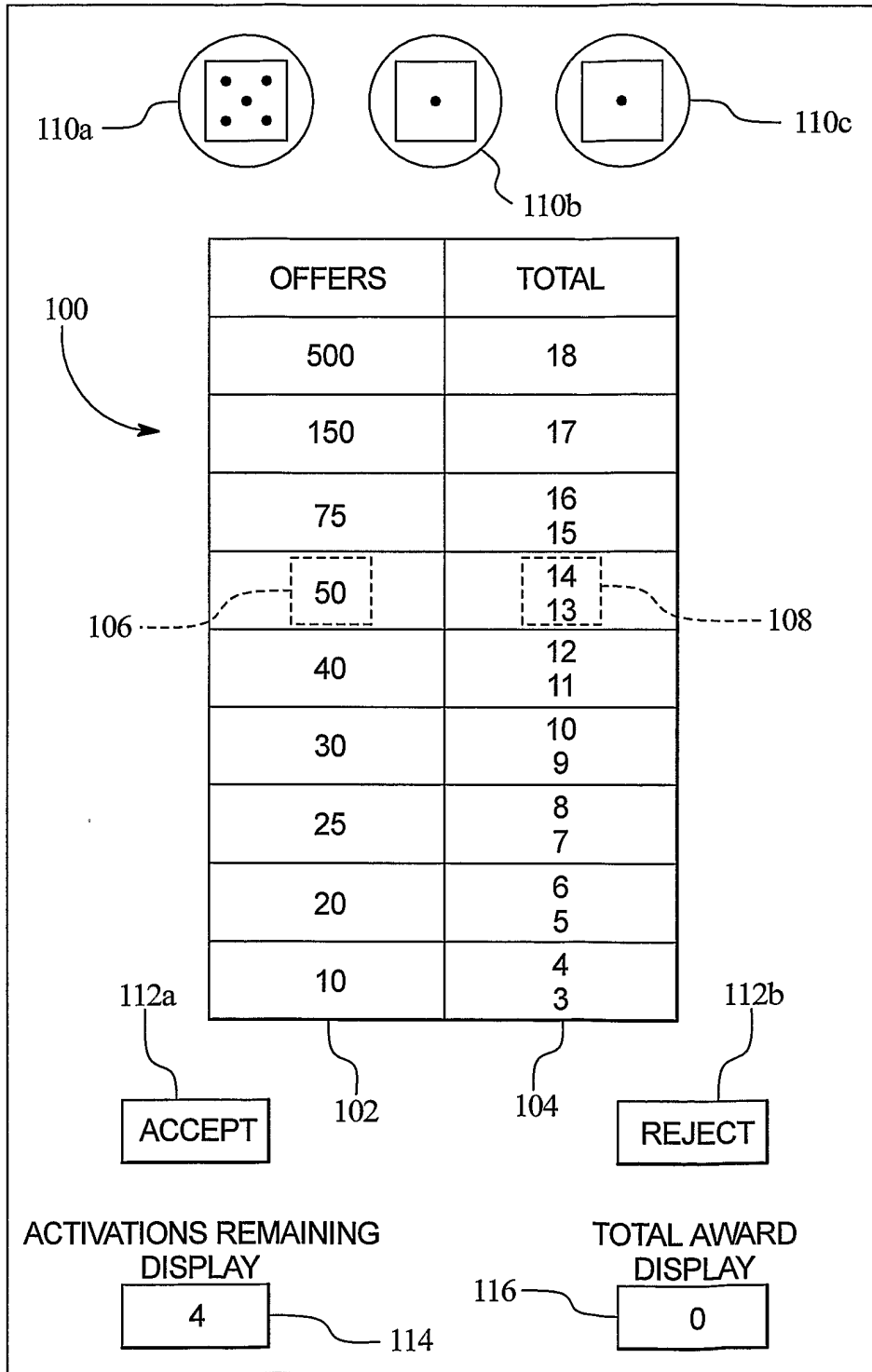
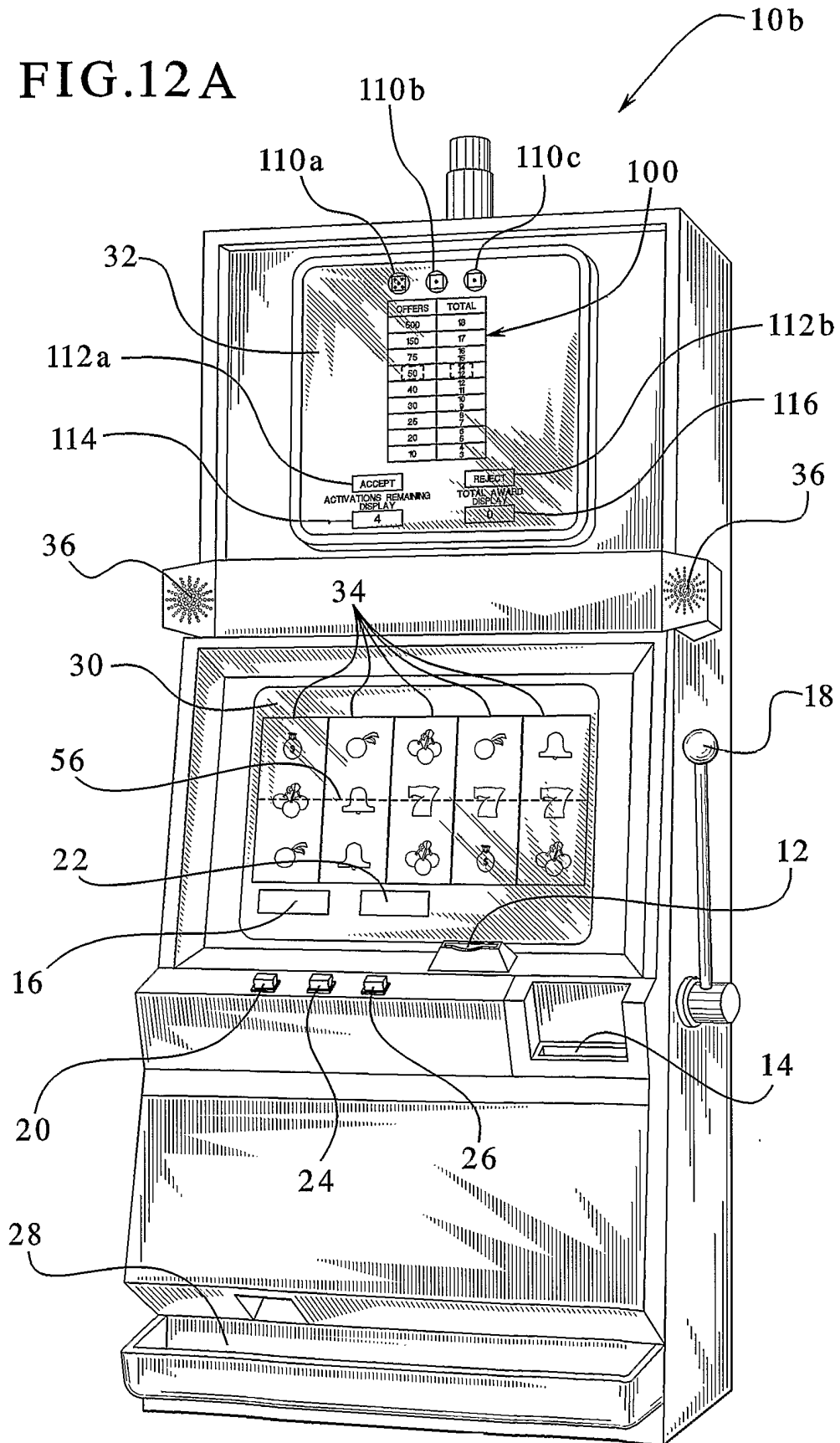


FIG. 11



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FIG.12A



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FIG. 12B

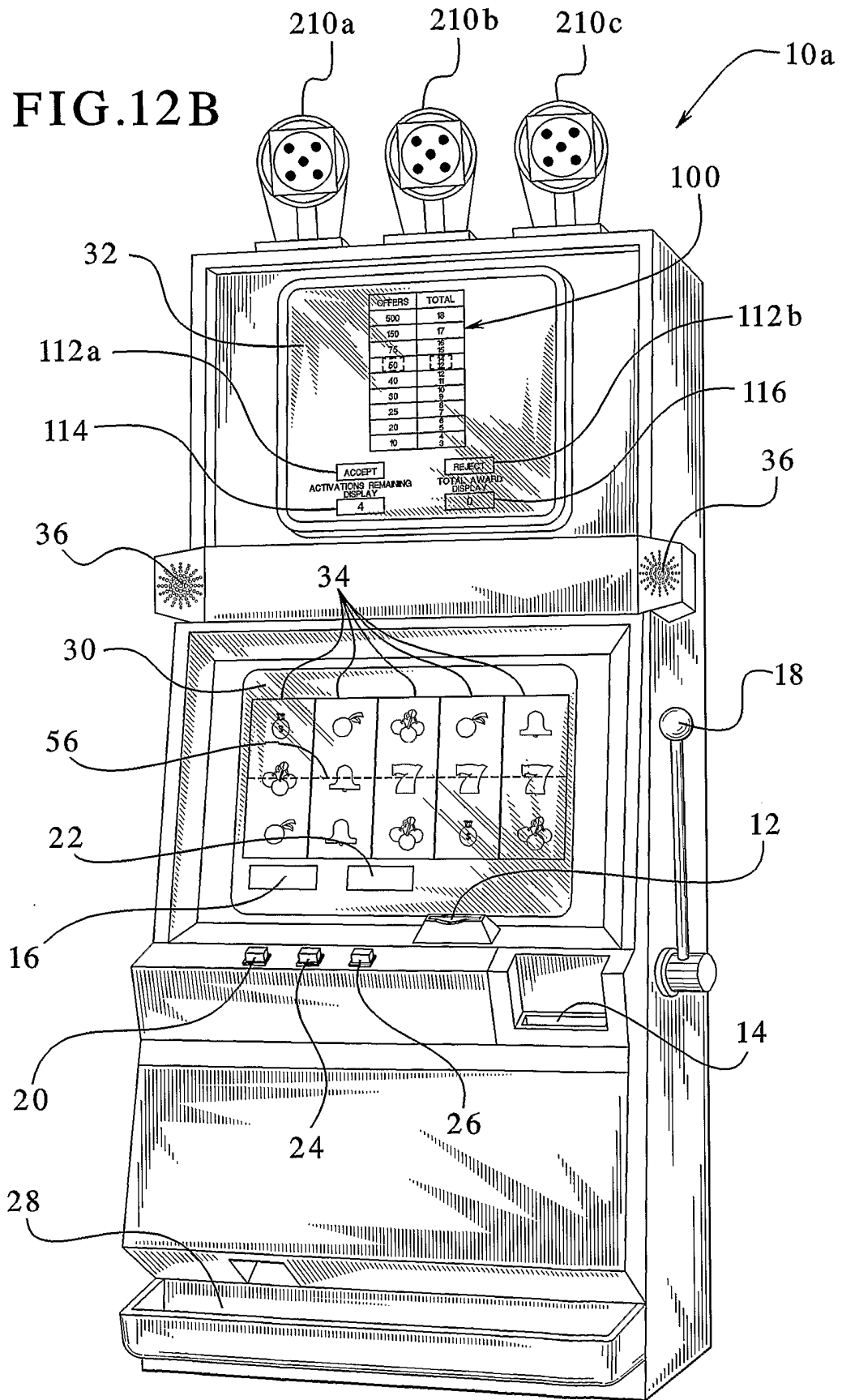


FIG.13

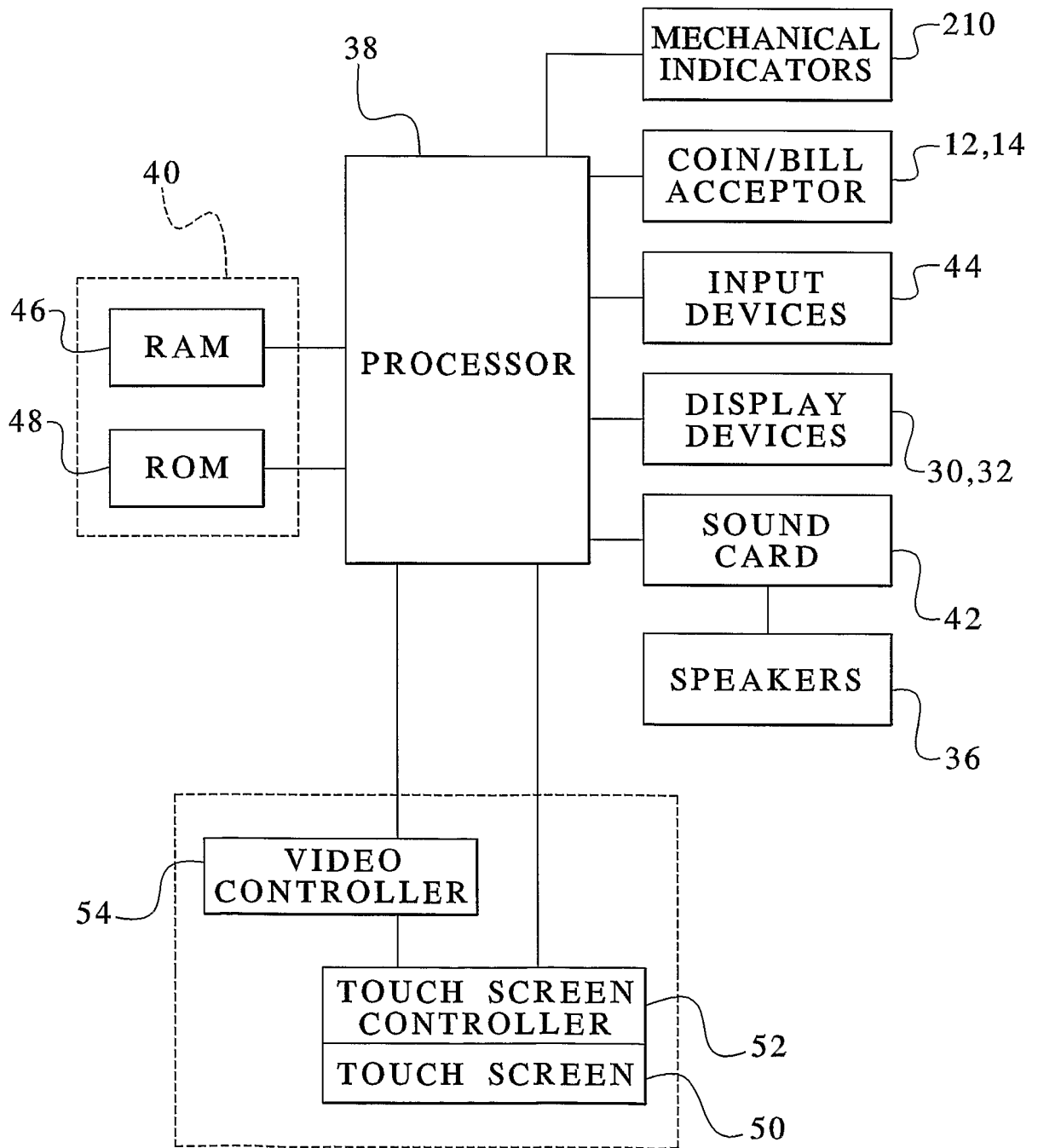


FIG. 14A

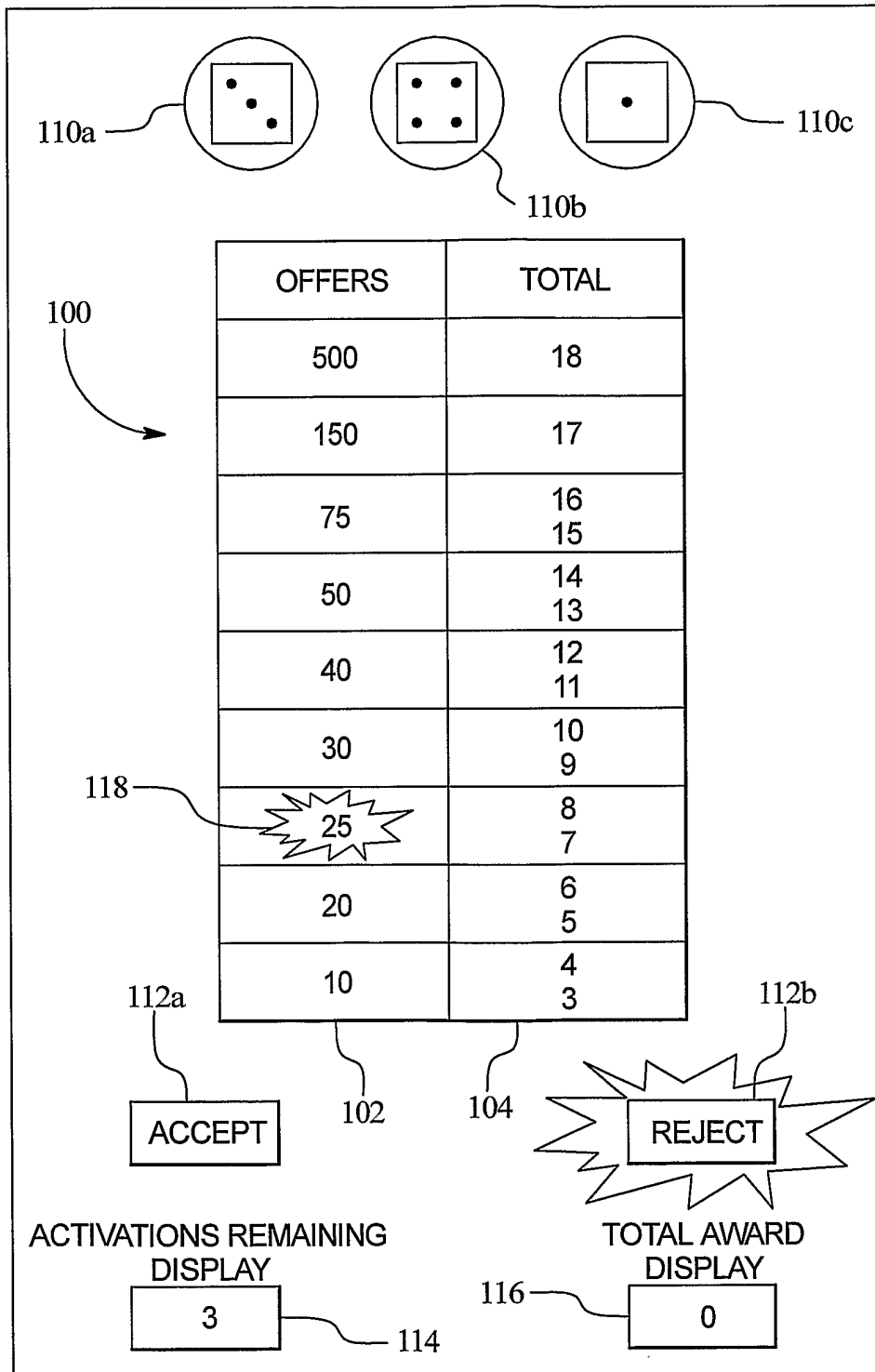


FIG. 14B

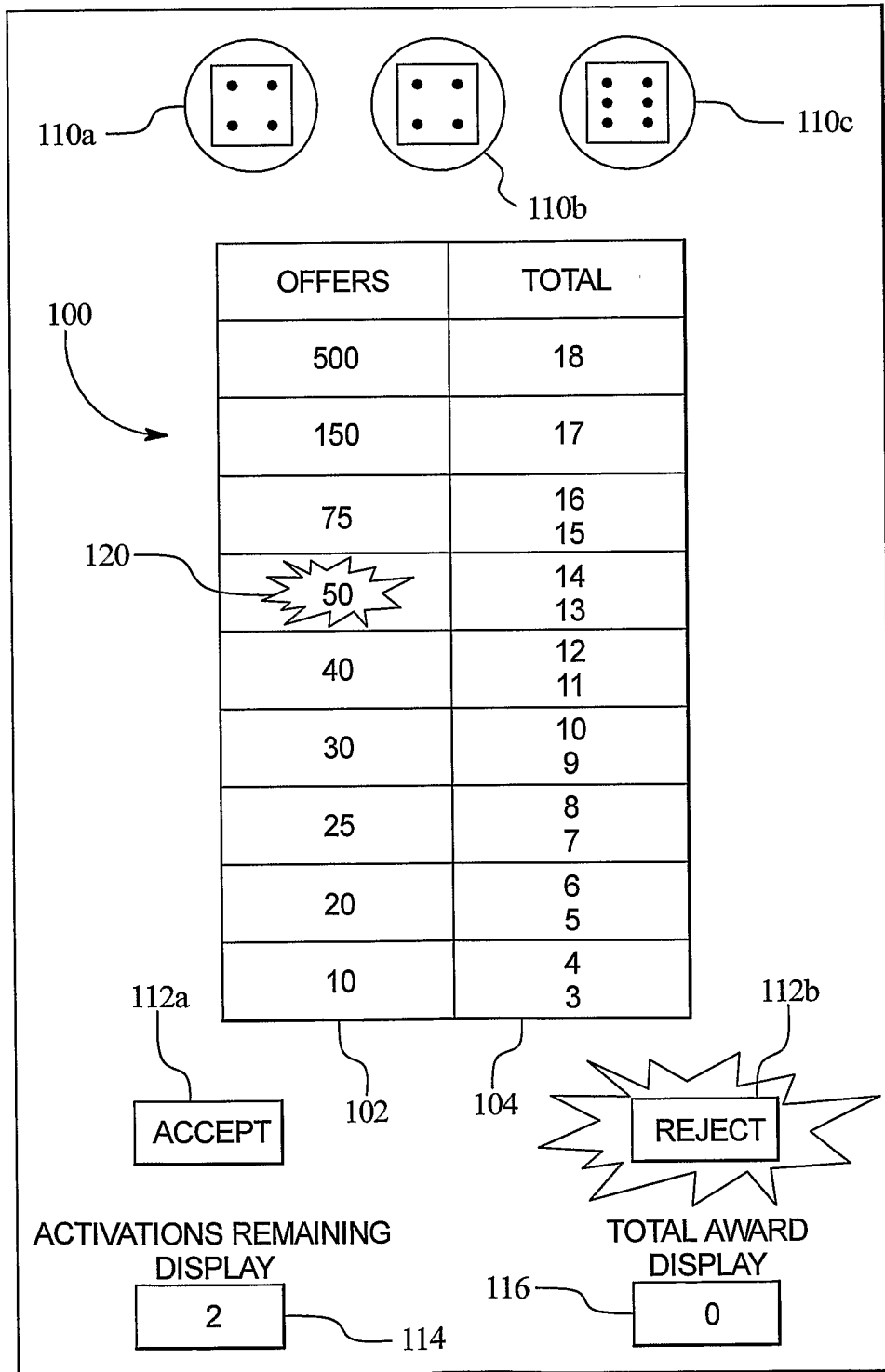


FIG. 14C

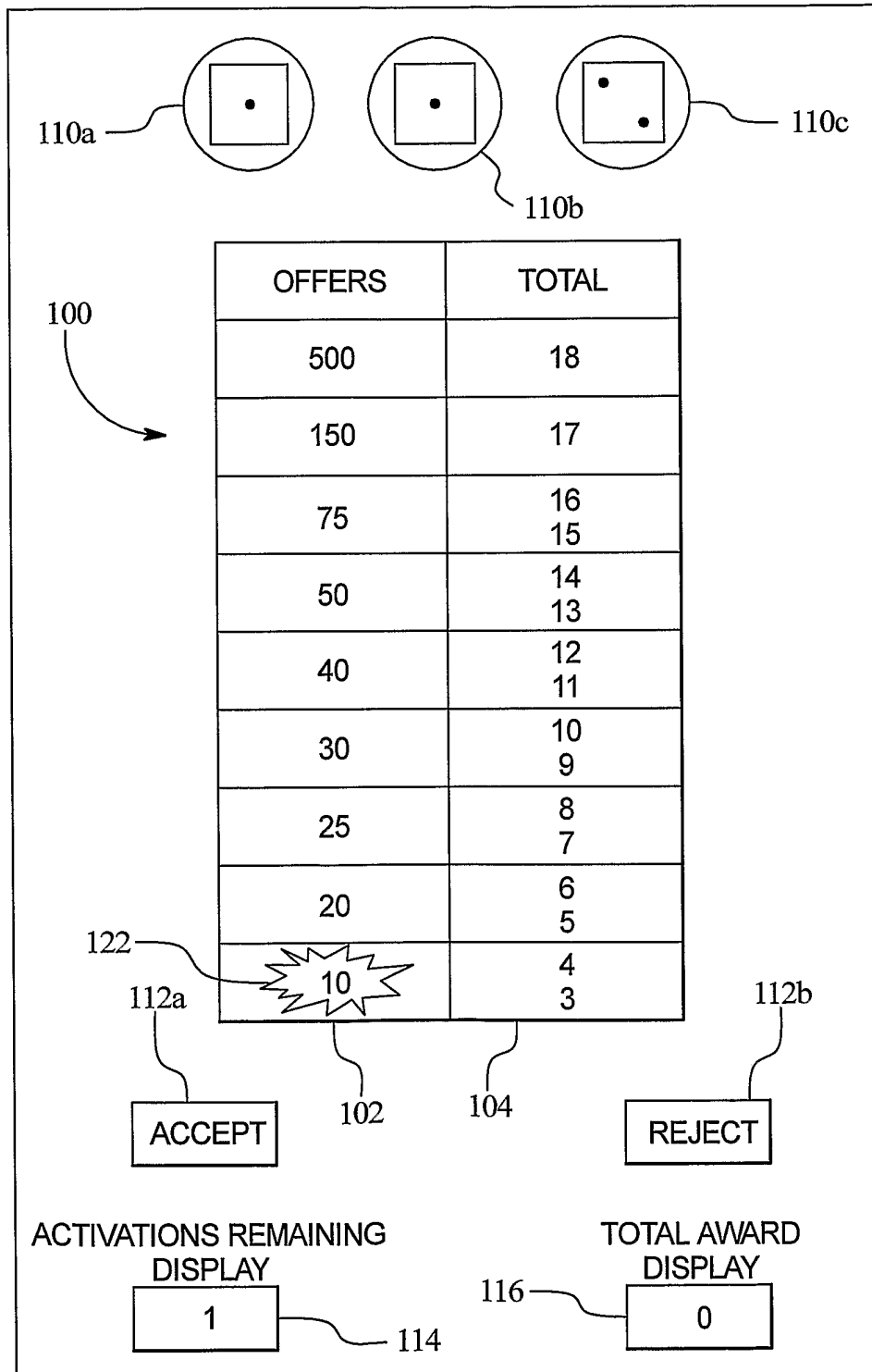


FIG. 14D

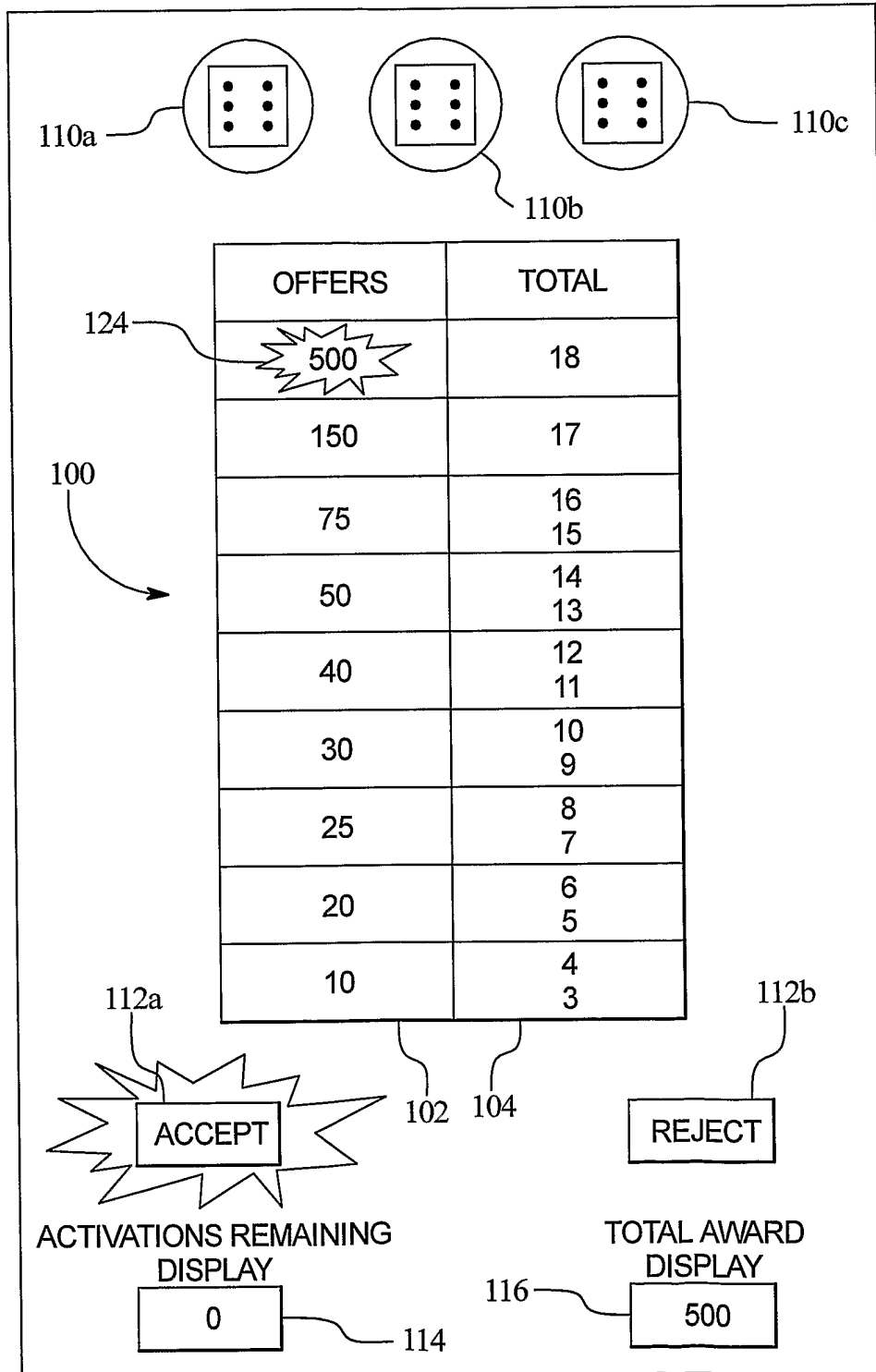


FIG. 15

