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Abstract

A gaming terminal (210) is provided which can have different configurations at different times with the configuration differing as to which ones, of a plurality of possible game outcomes, are associated with one or more of the game prizes. In one aspect, a game operator can select which outcome to associate with a preferably progressive prize. In some aspects, associations of outcomes with prizes can be selected by players and/or may occur automatically at periodic, random or predetermined times.
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Invention Title: Electronic Gaming Apparatus and Method with Variable Winning Outcome

The following statement is a full description of this invention, including the best method of performing it known to me/us:-
ELECTRONIC GAMING APPARATUS AND METHOD
WITH VARIABLE WINNING OUTCOME

The present invention is directed to an electronic gaming apparatus such as an electronic slot machine, simulated card game, keno game and the like, in which at least one prize is associated with different outcomes at different time periods.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The attractiveness, to users, of the various types of electronic gaming devices has many aspects, one of which is generally related to novelty. I.e., while some users may prefer to repeatedly use one or a few favorite types or styles of gaming terminals, it is believed that many users enjoy trying out gaming devices that appear new to them, i.e., which have a new or different type of play and/or prize structure, or are otherwise new to the user. For example, it is believed that at least some players may be more likely to return to a casino at a later time if they perceive that the games may have a different configuration, compared to configurations during a previous visit. However, most gaming terminal play occurs in the context of a regulatory environment in which there is substantial cost and/or delay involved in getting approval for certain new types of gaming terminals. Accordingly, it has often been difficult or infeasible to rapidly reconfigure the prize structure or manner of play of a gaming terminal without an undesirable amount of cost or delay. Accordingly, it would be useful to provide a gaming terminal apparatus and method which permits reconfiguration of at least some aspects of the game, e.g., to give an appearance or impression of novelty, but preferably in a manner which is less likely to require an expensive or relatively time-consuming level of regulatory review.

Changes in gaming terminals, in addition to appeal to users, can also provide benefits to casinos or other game operators. For example, in some circumstances game operators may consider it useful to have the ability to relatively rapidly reconfigure gaming terminals, e.g., to respond to perceived changes in player preferences, traffic flow patterns and the like, which may change in relatively rapid time frames. Accordingly, it would be advantageous to provide game operators with an ability to reconfigure aspects of the game, preferably on a relatively rapid basis.

In some situations, it is believed that the attractiveness of a gaming terminal may be enhanced if players perceive that they have an impact on how the game is configured.
For example, some players may wish to play games in which prizes are associated with the players' favorite or "lucky" card hands and the like.

SUMMARY

According to an aspect of the present invention, there is provided a gaming device comprising:

a primary wagering game operable upon a wager by a player;

a plurality of different awards;

a plurality of different predetermined game outcomes, wherein a plurality of said predetermined game outcomes are winning game outcomes, at least one of said predetermined game outcomes is a losing game outcome, and each predetermined winning game outcome is initially associated with one of said awards and a probability of being obtained;

a memory device;

a display device; and

a processor operable with said memory device and said display device to:

(a) enable the player to select one of said different predetermined winning game outcomes;

(b) enable the player to select one of said different awards;

(c) reassociate said selected award with said selected predetermined winning game outcome without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes,

(d) store said reassociation of said selected predetermined winning game outcome for a first time period;

(e) enable the player to play the primary wagering game; and

(f) provide the player said selected award if the player obtains the selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said first time period.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a gaming device comprising:

a primary wagering game operable upon a wager by a player;

a plurality of different awards;

a plurality of different predetermined game outcomes, wherein a plurality of said predetermined game outcomes are winning game outcomes, at least one of said
predetermined game outcomes is a losing game outcome, and each predetermined
winning game outcome is initially associated with one of said awards and a probability of
being obtained;

- a memory device;
- a display device; and
- a processor operable with said memory device and said display device to:
  - enable a game operator to select one of said different predetermined
    winning game outcomes;
  - enable the game operator to select one of said different awards;
  - reassociate said selected award with said selected predetermined
    winning game outcome without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities
    associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes,
  - store said reassociation of said selected predetermined winning game
    outcome for a first time period;
  - enable the player to play the primary wagering game; and
  - provide the player said selected award if the player obtains the selected
    predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said first
    time period.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a gaming
device comprising:

- a primary wagering game operable upon a wager by a player;
- a plurality of awards;
- a plurality of different predetermined game outcomes, wherein a plurality of said
  predetermined game outcomes are winning game outcomes, at least one of said
  predetermined game outcomes is a losing game outcome, and each predetermined
  winning game outcome is initially associated with one of said awards and a probability of
  being obtained;
- a memory device;
- a display device; and
- a processor operable with said memory device and said display device to:
  - enable the player to select a first one of said plurality of awards;
  - enable the player to select a first one of said different predetermined
    winning game outcomes;
(c) reassociate said first selected award with said first selected predetermined winning game outcome without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;

(d) store said reassociation of said first selected predetermined winning game outcome for a first time period;

(e) enable the player to play the primary wagering game for said first time period;

(f) provide the player said first selected award if the player obtains the first selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said first time period;

(g) enable the player to select a second one of said plurality of awards;

(h) enable the player to select a second one of said different predetermined winning game outcomes;

(i) reassociate said second selected award with said second selected predetermined winning game outcome without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;

(j) store said reassociation of said second selected predetermined winning game outcome for a second time period;

(k) enable the player to play the primary wagering game for said second time period; and

(l) provide the player said second selected award if the player obtains the second selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said second time period.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a gaming device comprising:

a primary wagering game operable upon a wager by a player;

a plurality of awards;

a plurality of different predetermined game outcomes, wherein a plurality of said predetermined game outcomes are winning game outcomes, at least one of said predetermined game outcomes is a losing game outcome, and each predetermined winning game outcome is initially associated with one of said awards and a probability of being obtained;
a memory device;
a display device; and

a processor operable with said memory device and said display device to:

(a) enable a game operator to select a first one of said plurality of awards;
(b) enable the game operator to select a first one of said different predetermined winning game outcomes;
(c) reassociate said first selected award with said first selected predetermined winning game outcome without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;
(d) store said reassociation of said first selected predetermined winning game outcome for a first time period;
(e) enable the player to play the primary wagering game for said first time period;
(f) provide the player said first selected award if the player obtains the first selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said first time period;
(g) enable the game operator to select a second one of said plurality of awards;
(h) enable the game operator to select a second one of said different predetermined winning game outcomes;
(i) reassociate said second selected award with said second selected predetermined winning game outcome without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;
(j) store said reassociation of said second selected predetermined winning game outcome for a second time period;
(k) enable the player to play the primary wagering game for said second time period; and
(l) provide the player said second selected award if the player obtains the second selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said second time period.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of operating a gaming device, said method comprising the steps of:
enabling a player to select one of a plurality of different predetermined game outcomes, wherein a plurality of said predetermined game outcomes are winning game outcomes, at least one of said predetermined game outcomes is a losing game outcome, and each of said predetermined winning game outcomes is initially associated with an award and a probability of being obtained;

(b) enabling the player to select one of a plurality of awards;

(c) reassociating a selected predetermined winning game outcome with said selected award without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;

(d) storing said reassociation of said selected predetermined winning game outcome for a first time period;

(e) enabling the player to play a primary wagering game; and

(f) providing the player said selected award if the player obtains the selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during the first time period.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of operating a gaming device, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) enabling a game operator to select one of a plurality of different predetermined game outcomes, wherein a plurality of said predetermined game outcomes are winning game outcomes, at least one of said predetermined game outcomes is a losing game outcome, and each of said predetermined winning game outcomes is initially associated with an award and a probability of being obtained;

(b) enabling the game operator to select one of a plurality of awards;

(c) reassociating a selected predetermined winning game outcome with said selected award without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;

(d) storing said reassociation of said selected predetermined winning game outcome for a first time period;

(e) enabling the player to play a primary wagering game; and

(f) providing the player said selected award if the player obtains the selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during the first time period.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of operating a gaming device, said method comprising the steps of:
enabling a player to select a first one of a plurality of awards;

(b) enabling the player to select a first one of a plurality of different predetermined game outcomes, wherein a plurality of said predetermined game outcomes are winning game outcomes, at least one of said predetermined game outcomes is a losing game outcome, and each predetermined winning game outcome is initially associated with one of said awards and a probability of being obtained;

(c) reassociating a first selected predetermined winning game outcome with said first selected award without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;

(d) storing said reassociation of said first selected predetermined winning game outcome for a first time period;

(e) enabling the player to play the primary wagering game for said first time period;

(f) providing the player said first selected award if the player obtains the first selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said first time period;

(g) enabling the player to select a second one of said plurality of awards;

(h) enabling the player to select a second one of said different predetermined winning game outcomes;

(i) reassociating said second selected predetermined winning game outcome with said second selected award without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;

(j) storing said reassociation of said second selected predetermined winning game outcome for a second time period;

(k) enabling the player to play the primary wagering game for said second time period; and

(l) providing the player said second selected award if the player obtains the second selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said second time period.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of operating a gaming device, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) enabling a game operator to select a first one of a plurality of awards;
enabling the game operator to select a first one of a plurality of different predetermined game outcomes, wherein a plurality of said predetermined game outcomes are winning game outcomes, at least one of said predetermined game outcomes is a losing game outcome, and each predetermined winning game outcome is initially associated with one of said awards and a probability of being obtained;

(c) reassociating a first selected predetermined winning game outcome with said first selected award without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;

(d) storing said reassociation of said first selected predetermined winning game outcome for a first time period;

(e) enabling a player to play the primary wagering game for said first time period;

(f) providing the player said first selected award if the player obtains the first selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said first time period;

(g) enabling the game operator to select a second one of said plurality of awards;

(h) enabling the game operator to select a second one of said different predetermined winning game outcomes;

(i) reassociating said second selected predetermined winning game outcome with said second selected award without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;

(j) storing said reassociation of said second selected predetermined winning game outcome for a second time period;

(k) enabling the player to play the primary wagering game for said second time period; and

(l) providing the player said second selected award if the player obtains the second selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said second time period.

In one embodiment, a gaming terminal in which at least one prize (such as a progressive prize or other prize) which can be won at the gaming terminal, is associated with a first game outcome during the first time period and associated with a second game outcome during a second time period. For example, a gaming terminal may be
configured, during a first time period, such that a progressive prize is won at a simulated poker game terminal, in response to an “all hearts” royal flush and is won, during a second time period, in response to an “all spades” royal flush. Preferably, the game operator can provide input to reconfigure among various selected winning outcomes, e.g., in response to inputting a key (such as a physical key and/or a code or password). In other embodiments, gaming terminals may be configured to allow a player or user to select, from among a plurality of options, which option will be associated with a given prize. In yet another options, the gaming terminal may be configured to automatically reconfigure itself, periodically, at random time or according to a preprogrammed schedule of changes.

In one embodiment, the gaming terminal is a draw terminal. Although it may be possible to provide embodiments in which optimal card-draw strategies for the prize associated with the selectable outcome are identical to card draw strategies for other prizes, in at least one embodiment it is believed to add to game interest if a player is forced to choose between a first card draw strategy which optimizes probability of winning at least a first prize associated with the selectable outcome and a different card draw strategy which optimizes the probability of winning at least a second prize.

Although numerous gaming terminals are configured such that different amounts or levels of wager can be accepted and different potential prizes are available, depending on the level of wager, in at least one embodiment of the present invention the game is configured such that wagers may be accepted and no additional or further wager is required in order for the player to be eligible to win the prize which is associated with a selectable outcome.

The gaming terminal may have different configurations at different times with the configuration differing as to which ones, of a plurality of possible game outcomes, are associated with one or more of the game prizes. In one embodiment, a game operator can select which outcome to associate with a, preferably progressive, prize. In some embodiments, association of outcomes with prizes can be selected by players and/or may occur automatically at periodic, random or predetermined times.
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a flow chart depicting a gaming process according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a block diagram of a gaming terminal according to an embodiment of the present invention; and

Fig. 3 is a front elevational view of a display showing winning hand options according to one embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

As depicted in Fig. 1, when the gaming terminal can have the winning outcome (i.e., an outcome associated with at least one of the prizes) selected by a gaming operator (e.g., a casino employee or the like) the process can begin with the operator selecting a setup screen 112. If a player or user is permitted to select a winning outcome, the gaming terminal may be configured such that the setup screen or display (or controls) are substantially always available (in which case there is no need for a step of selecting a setup screen) or may be displayed only in response to a command such as a command to select a setup screen 112. In other options, a user or player may be permitted to select winning outcomes in response to certain game situations such as a predefined (previous) game outcome, i.e., in some configurations a player may “win” an opportunity to select future winning outcomes. If the user does not select a setup procedure 114 the process proceeds to normal wager and game play.

When selection of winning outcomes is permitted only by a game operator, in response to selection of a setup screen 112, the terminal will preferably prompt for the
entry of a key 116 such as by showing a prompt on a gaming terminal display 212 (Fig. 2). The key may be a password or code, input through one or more input keys 214 and known only to authorized game operators, or can be a physical key fitting a lock in the gaming terminal (not shown). The gaming terminal will provide a display 310 (Fig. 3) of winning options which may be selected 118. The display of options can be provided on the gaming terminal display device 212 (such as a CRT, LCD device and the like) or can be shown by graphics on the face of the gaming terminal. In some options, the available winning hand options may be separately known or provided to a gaming operator, e.g., in printed form or the like. When the options are shown on the display screen 212, they are preferably accompanied by numbers or other selection identifiers 312abc.

In one embodiment, the winning hand which is selected will be associated with a progressive prize. It is further possible to provide configurations in which a winning hand can be associated with a nonprogressive prize. It is further possible to provide configurations in which two or more different winning outcomes can be selected, either associated with the same prize or associated with two different prizes. In general, there are advantages to providing a system in which the prize or prizes associated with selectable winning outcomes are progressive prizes. In many situations, it is believed that there is relatively less regulatory concern with changes in what types of events “trigger” the award of a progressive prize (since typically, some or all of a progressive prize is funded through previously-made wagers) and accordingly, it is believed that at least some regulatory jurisdictions will readily permit devices which can be reconfigured to define or select among different progressive-prize winning outcomes or “triggers”, even when different winning outcomes may have different odds or probabilities of occurring. It is believed that in most progressive prize games, a change in the probability of the progressive prize trigger occurring will not affect such factors as the long-term-average game operator hold or similar factors and will typically affect only the average frequency and average magnitude of progressive prize wins.

In the embodiment depicted in Fig. 3, the selectable winning outcomes 312abc are three of the possible outcomes in an electronic draw poker game. The odds for the first two options 312ab are identical and are greater than the odds for the third option
Accordingly, the display depicted in Fig. 3 preferably also shows odds for the various options so that the selection can be made with knowledge of the odds.

After the various options are displayed, the gaming terminal will receive input, indicating which option is selected. Information indicative of the selection is stored, e.g., in a gaming terminal memory. Preferably, the gaming terminal provides a display of which option was selected and is currently in effect. At this point, the gaming terminal can receive a normal wager in a wager acceptor and perform a normal round of play. Although it is possible to provide configurations in which an additional wager must be placed in order to be eligible for the prize associated with the selected winning option, preferably, a player is eligible for the prize associated with the selected winning option (should it occur) in response to the normal wager and no additional wager is required. In response to a round of play, the gaming terminal processor (preferably in addition to evaluating the outcome for possible award of prizes associated with non-selectable outcomes) determines whether the outcome matches the selected option. If so, the system will credit or pay-out (or provide a notice regarding pay-out of) the prize associated with the selected option.

In one embodiment, the selected winning outcome is in effect only for a single (or a predetermined number of) game rounds or for a predetermined time period. In another option, the selected winning option is in effect until a new section is made. In another option, after a predetermined period of time during which no play occurs at the gaming terminal the winning hand or winning outcome option reverts to a default option.

In light of the above description, a number of advantages can be seen. The present invention provides a gaming terminal which can readily be reconfigured, e.g., to change, for one or more prizes of the game, which game outcome is associated with (results in) such prize. The invention can be configured such that the reconfiguration is likely to involve relatively little difficulty, time or expense in receiving regulatory approval, e.g., by associating selectable outcomes with progressive prizes, by providing all options with substantially identical odds, and/or by implementing the invention substantially without the need for modifying basic game-outcome-determining software.

The changing of gaming terminal configurations, as described herein, can enhance user
interest and increase the amount of play, can increase game operator flexibility, and the like.

A number of variations and modifications of the invention can be used. It is possible to use some aspects of the invention without using others. For example, it is possible to provide for associating a given prize with two different game outcomes, during two different time periods, without allowing players or users to make such selection. Although the invention has been described in the context of an electronic draw poker game, the invention can also be implemented in a context of other electronic gaming devices such as other electronic card games, keno games, roulette or other wheel games, slot machine games, and the like. Selected gaming outcomes can be implemented individually on each of a plurality of terminals, or system-wide throughout a plurality of different gaming terminals. When the prize associated with a selectable winning outcome is a multi-terminal progressive prize (i.e., a progressive prize which may be won at any of a plurality of different gaming terminals, which are typically networked to a central computer), it is preferred that a selection of a winning outcome will be applied such that all gaming terminals involved in the multi-terminal prize will have a selected winning outcome which has a probability of occurring or "odds" which is the same as the odds of the selected winning outcome. It is noted that it is possible to define operable multi-terminal progressive prize systems in which two or more terminals have different odds of winning the progressive prize; however, it is believed that it may be relatively more difficult, expensive or time consuming to design, implement and/or obtain regulatory approval of a selectable-winning-outcome system in a multi-terminal progressive system if two or more terminals can have different odds of winning the progressive prize as a result of a winning outcome selection.

It is also possible to configure systems in which all of the winning hand or winning-outcome options which may be selected among, have the same odds of occurring. It is believed that, in general, it will be relatively less difficult, expensive and time-consuming to design, implement and/or obtain regulatory approval for a selectable-winning-outcome gaming terminal or system if all odds of winning remains substantially the same (on a long term average) regardless of which option is selected. It is believed that a system which presents options, all of which have the same odds of occurring, is
especially appropriate for systems where the player or user may make the selection. In another embodiment, rather than (or in addition to) allowing a player or a game operator to select a winning outcome, the system (e.g. a gaming terminal or cluster controller processor) will automatically select a winning outcome. In this situation, screen selection, prompting, display and receiving steps described above 124 are not needed. In various embodiments, automatic, and preferably random, selection among options is performed by the gaming terminal at times which are random, periodic, or according to a programmed or predetermined schedule. Preferably, the present invention can be implemented substantially without modifying the main game outcome-determining software (i.e., software which provides a preferably random or pseudo-random outcome in response to initiation of a round of play) and it is believed that, in at least some jurisdictions, it will be relatively less difficult, expensive and/or time consuming to obtain approval for implementation of a system according to the present invention in the absence of the need to modify the main game outcome-determining software.

The present invention, in various embodiments, includes components, methods, processes, systems and/or apparatus substantially as depicted and described herein, including various embodiments, subcombinations, and subsets thereof. Those of skill in the art will understand how to make and use the present invention after understanding the present disclosure. The present invention, in various embodiments, includes providing devices and processes in the absence of items not depicted and/or described herein or in various embodiments hereof, including in the absence of such items as may have been used in previous devices or processes, e.g. for improving performance, achieving ease and/or reducing cost of implementation. The present invention includes items which are novel, and terminology adapted from previous and/or analogous technologies, for convenience in describing novel items or processes, do not necessarily retain all aspects of conventional usage of such terminology.

The foregoing discussion of the invention has been presented for purposes of illustration and description. The foregoing is not intended to limit the invention to the form or forms disclosed herein. Although the description of the invention has included description of one or more embodiments and certain variations and modifications, other variations and modifications are within the scope of the invention, e.g. as may be within
the skill and knowledge of those in the art, after understanding the present disclosure. It is intended to obtain rights which include alternative embodiments to the extent permitted, including alternate, interchangeable and/or equivalent structures, functions, ranges or steps to those claimed, whether or not such alternate, interchangeable and/or equivalent structures, functions, ranges or steps are disclosed herein, and without intending to publicly dedicate any patentable subject matter.
The claims defining the invention are as follows:

1. A gaming device comprising:
   a primary wagering game operable upon a wager by a player;
   a plurality of different awards;
   a plurality of different predetermined game outcomes, wherein a plurality of said predetermined game outcomes are winning game outcomes, at least one of said predetermined game outcomes is a losing game outcome, and each predetermined winning game outcome is initially associated with one of said awards and a probability of being obtained;
   a memory device;
   a display device; and
   a processor operable with said memory device and said display device to:
   (a) enable the player to select one of said different predetermined winning game outcomes;
   (b) enable the player to select one of said different awards;
   (c) reassociate said selected award with said selected predetermined winning game outcome without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes,
   (d) store said reassociation of said selected predetermined winning game outcome for a first time period;
   (e) enable the player to play the primary wagering game; and
   (f) provide the player said selected award if the player obtains the selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said first time period.

2. The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein said processor is operable to enable the player to select a second of said different predetermined winning game outcomes, reassociate said selected award with said second selected predetermined winning game outcome without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes, store said reassociation of said second selected predetermined winning game outcome for a second time period, enable the player to play the primary wagering game for said second time period and provide the player said selected award if the player obtains the second
selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said second time period.

3. A gaming device comprising:
   a primary wagering game operable upon a wager by a player;
   a plurality of different awards;
   a plurality of different predetermined game outcomes, wherein a plurality of said predetermined game outcomes are winning game outcomes, at least one of said predetermined game outcomes is a losing game outcome, and each predetermined winning game outcome is initially associated with one of said awards and a probability of being obtained;
   a memory device;
   a display device; and
   a processor operable with said memory device and said display device to:
   (a) enable a game operator to select one of said different predetermined winning game outcomes;
   (b) enable the game operator to select one of said different awards;
   (c) reassociate said selected award with said selected predetermined winning game outcome without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes,
   (d) store said reassociation of said selected predetermined winning game outcome for a first time period;
   (e) enable the player to play the primary wagering game; and
   (f) provide the player said selected award if the player obtains the selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said first time period.

4. The gaming device of Claim 3, wherein said processor is operable to enable the game operator to select a second of said different predetermined winning game outcomes, reassociate said selected award with said second selected predetermined winning game outcome without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes, store said reassociation of said second selected predetermined winning game outcome for a second time period, enable the player to play the primary wagering game for said second
time period and provide the player said selected award if the player obtains the second selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said second time period.

5. A gaming device comprising:
   a primary wagering game operable upon a wager by a player;
   a plurality of awards;
   a plurality of different predetermined game outcomes, wherein a plurality of said predetermined game outcomes are winning game outcomes, at least one of said predetermined game outcomes is a losing game outcome, and each predetermined winning game outcome is initially associated with one of said awards and a probability of being obtained;
   a memory device;
   a display device; and
   a processor operable with said memory device and said display device to:
   (a) enable the player to select a first one of said plurality of awards;
   (b) enable the player to select a first one of said different predetermined winning game outcomes;
   (c) reassociate said first selected award with said first selected predetermined winning game outcome without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;
   (d) store said reassociation of said first selected predetermined winning game outcome for a first time period;
   (e) enable the player to play the primary wagering game for said first time period;
   (f) provide the player said first selected award if the player obtains the first selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said first time period;
   (g) enable the player to select a second one of said plurality of awards;
   (h) enable the player to select a second one of said different predetermined winning game outcomes;
   (i) reassociate said second selected award with said second selected predetermined winning game outcome without causing any reassociation of the awards or...
probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;

(j) store said reassociation of said second selected predetermined winning game outcome for a second time period;

(k) enable the player to play the primary wagering game for said second time period; and

(l) provide the player said second selected award if the player obtains the second selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said second time period.

6. A gaming device comprising:

a primary wagering game operable upon a wager by a player;
a plurality of awards;
a plurality of different predetermined game outcomes, wherein a plurality of said predetermined game outcomes are winning game outcomes, at least one of said predetermined game outcomes is a losing game outcome, and each predetermined winning game outcome is initially associated with one of said awards and a probability of being obtained;
a memory device;
a display device; and

a processor operable with said memory device and said display device to:

(a) enable a game operator to select a first one of said plurality of awards;
(b) enable the game operator to select a first one of said different predetermined winning game outcomes;
(c) reassociate said first selected award with said first selected predetermined winning game outcome without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;
(d) store said reassociation of said first selected predetermined winning game outcome for a first time period;
(e) enable the player to play the primary wagering game for said first time period;
(f) provide the player said first selected award if the player obtains the first selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said first time period;

(g) enable the game operator to select a second one of said plurality of awards;

(h) enable the game operator to select a second one of said different predetermined winning game outcomes;

(i) reassociate said second selected award with said second selected predetermined winning game outcome without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;

(j) store said reassociation of said second selected predetermined winning game outcome for a second time period;

(k) enable the player to play the primary wagering game for said second time period; and

(l) provide the player said second selected award if the player obtains the second selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said second time period.

7. A method of operating a gaming device, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) enabling a player to select one of a plurality of different predetermined game outcomes, wherein a plurality of said predetermined game outcomes are winning game outcomes, at least one of said predetermined game outcomes is a losing game outcome, and each of said predetermined winning game outcomes is initially associated with an award and a probability of being obtained;

(b) enabling the player to select one of a plurality of awards;

(c) reassociating a selected predetermined winning game outcome with said selected award without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;

(d) storing said reassociation of said selected predetermined winning game outcome for a first time period;

(e) enabling the player to play a primary wagering game; and
(f) providing the player said selected award if the player obtains the selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during the first time period.

8. The method of Claim 7, which further includes the steps of:

(g) enabling the player to select a second of said different predetermined winning game outcomes;

(h) reassociating said selected award with said second selected predetermined winning game outcome without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;

(i) storing said reassociation of said second selected predetermined winning game outcome for a second time period;

(j) enabling the player to play the primary wagering game for said second time period; and

(k) providing the player said selected award if the player obtains the second selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said second time period.

9. The method of Claim 7, wherein the steps are provided to the player through a data network.

10. A method of operating a gaming device, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) enabling a game operator to select one of a plurality of different predetermined game outcomes, wherein a plurality of said predetermined game outcomes are winning game outcomes, at least one of said predetermined game outcomes is a losing game outcome, and each of said predetermined winning game outcomes is initially associated with an award and a probability of being obtained;

(b) enabling the game operator to select one of a plurality of awards;

(c) reassociating a selected predetermined winning game outcome with said selected award without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;
storing said reassociation of said selected predetermined winning game outcome for a first time period;

(e) enabling a player to play a primary wagering game; and

(f) providing the player said selected award if the player obtains the selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during the first time period.

11. The method of Claim 10, which further includes the steps of:

(g) enabling the game operator to select a second of said different predetermined winning game outcomes;

(h) reassociating said selected award with said second selected predetermined winning game outcome without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;

(i) storing said reassociation of said second selected predetermined winning game outcome for a second time period;

(j) enabling the player to play the primary wagering game for said second time period; and

(k) providing the player said selected award if the player obtains the second selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said second time period.

12. The method of Claim 10, wherein the steps are provided to the player through a data network.

13. A method of operating a gaming device, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) enabling a player to select a first one of a plurality of awards;

(b) enabling the player to select a first one of a plurality of different predetermined game outcomes, wherein a plurality of said predetermined game outcomes are winning game outcomes, at least one of said predetermined game outcomes is a losing game outcome, and each predetermined winning game outcome is initially associated with one of said awards and a probability of being obtained;
reassociating a first selected predetermined winning game outcome with said first selected award without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;

(d) storing said reassociation of said first selected predetermined winning game outcome for a first time period;

(e) enabling the player to play the primary wagering game for said first time period;

(f) providing the player said first selected award if the player obtains the first selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said first time period;

(g) enabling the player to select a second one of said plurality of awards;

(h) enabling the player to select a second one of said different predetermined winning game outcomes;

(i) reassociating said second selected predetermined winning game outcome with said second selected award without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;

(j) storing said reassociation of said second selected predetermined winning game outcome for a second time period;

(k) enabling the player to play the primary wagering game for said second time period; and

(l) providing the player said second selected award if the player obtains the second selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said second time period.

14. The method of Claim 13, wherein the steps are provided to the player through a data network.

15. A method of operating a gaming device, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) enabling a game operator to select a first one of a plurality of awards;

(b) enabling the game operator to select a first one of a plurality of different predetermined game outcomes, wherein a plurality of said predetermined game outcomes are winning game outcomes, at least one of said predetermined game outcomes is a losing
game outcome, and each predetermined winning game outcome is initially associated with one of said awards and a probability of being obtained;

(c) reassociating a first selected predetermined winning game outcome with said first selected award without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;

(d) storing said reassociation of said first selected predetermined winning game outcome for a first time period;

(e) enabling a player to play the primary wagering game for said first time period;

(f) providing the player said first selected award if the player obtains the first selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said first time period;

(g) enabling the game operator to select a second one of said plurality of awards;

(h) enabling the game operator to select a second one of said different predetermined winning game outcomes;

(i) reassociating said second selected predetermined winning game outcome with said second selected award without causing any reassociation of the awards or probabilities associated with each of said non-selected predetermined winning game outcomes;

(j) storing said reassociation of said second selected predetermined winning game outcome for a second time period;

(k) enabling the player to play the primary wagering game for said second time period; and

(l) providing the player said second selected award if the player obtains the second selected predetermined winning game outcome in the primary wagering game during said second time period.

16. The method of Claim 15, wherein the steps of enabling the player to play the primary wagering game are provided to the player through a data network.

DATED this Fourth Day of May, 2004

IGT

Patent Attorneys for the Applicant

SPRUSON & FERGUSON
Fig 1

Select setup 
Screw?

Prompt for entry of key

Display wining hand options

Receive input indirectly select option

Receive normal vector and position normal round as play

Fig 2

Display 216

Input keys 216

Memory

Processor

218

WringMicro

22

Fig 3

1. Left-to-right order: A K Q J 10
2. High-to-low order: 10 J Q K A
3. Normal (any order): A ♠ K ♠ Q ♠ J ♠ 10 ♠

Outcome

Matches selected option?

Yes

pay (progressive prize)

No

Display for minimum time pause

Set winning hand to determine

Pay (progressive prize)