Abstract: A method of playing a game of chance, such as poker, using a plurality of cards, the game having a bonus feature, the method including the steps of: (a) designating one or more of the cards as a bonus trigger; (b) dealing one or more cards to each player's hand; (c) evaluating each player's hand to determine if it is a winning hand; (d) determining if the or each winning hand is participating in the bonus feature; (e) determining if any winning hand includes a bonus card; (f) awarding a bonus to the or each winning hand which was participating in the bonus feature and which includes a bonus card. Players can elect to participate in the bonus feature by placing a side bet.

Title: A GAME OF CHANCE AND A METHOD OF AWARDING A BONUS PRIZE IN A GAME OF CHANCE
A Game Of Chance And A Method Of Awarding A Bonus Prize In A Game
Of Chance

Field of the invention

[001] This invention relates to a game of chance and skill, a method of awarding a bonus prize in a game of chance and apparatus for enabling the game. In particular, the invention can be applied to a card game which is suited for use in a casino and which can be played either as a table game or on an electronic gaming machine (EGM) or the like.

[002] In this specification, the term "game of chance" is used to denote both games in which the result is determined randomly and games in which the playerplaces value at risk (as in a bet or wager) and may exercise some skill or judgment but in which the outcome is influenced to some degree by chance. Most common casino table and wagering card games such as poker and other games including those referred to in the specification are considered to be games of chance for the purpose of this specification.

Background of the invention

[003] In this specification unless the contrary is expressly stated, where a document, act or item of knowledge is referred to or discussed, this reference or discussion is not an admission that the document, act or item of knowledge or any combination thereof was at the priority date, publicly available, known to the public, part of common general knowledge; or known to be relevant to an attempt to solve any problem with which this specification is concerned.

[004] Card games that involve playing against a dealer, playing against a pay table or both are limited in the variety they can offer. Card games traditionally use complete decks of cards (e.g., 52 cards) and on occasions, use Joker cards or specialty cards to create certain game play elements and hands for players. The use of a designated set of cards which is familiar to the players in many instances allows the players to calculate what their chances are of winning. This is not usually the case with slot machines. This is because individual symbol distributions are not necessarily
published, and symbol probabilities can be weighted by mapping and software
techniques unknown to players.

[005] There are many wagering games used for gambling. Such games
should be exciting to arouse players' interest and uncomplicated so they can be
understood easily by a large number of players. Ideally, the games should include one
or more wagering opportunities during the course of the game, yet be able to be
played rapidly to a wager resolving outcome. Exciting play, the opportunity to make
more than one wager and rapid wager resolution enhance players' interest and
enjoyment because the frequency of betting opportunities and bet resolutions is
increased.

[006] Wagering games, particularly those intended primarily for play in
casinos, should provide players with a sense of participation and control, the
opportunity to make decisions, and reasonable odds of winning. The game must also
meet the requirements of regulatory agencies.

[007] Another element of play in casino games and particularly casino table
card games is the wagering structure. There are a multitude of card games that are
based on one or more decks of conventional playing cards. Among the most popular
of these games is poker, wherein a player's fortunes are determined by a well-known
hierarchy of card combinations. Card games that are variants of poker are also very
popular, such as Let It Ride™ stud poker, Caribbean Stud™ poker, Three Card™,
poker, Crazy-4-Poker™ game and the like. This is due, at least in part, to the basic
nature of the underlying game itself, combining elements of both strategy and luck.
Additionally, poker-variants allow an existing player-base to capitalize on their pre-
existing knowledge of a game and to apply that knowledge in novel settings. The two
most popular forms of traditional poker are draw poker and stud poker.

[008] In a conventional hand of 5-card draw poker, a single 52-card deck of
shuffled playing cards is used. Each player begins a hand by contributing an initial or
"ante" bet to a common pool or "pot", the pot ultimately going to the owner of the
winning hand. The dealer then distributes five face-down cards to each player, the
remaining cards in the deck being set aside for later use. Each player evaluates the
cards that he or she has been dealt and each, in turn, is given an opportunity to discard
one or more of the original five (5) cards from the dealt hand. The dealer gives the
player replacement cards for those cards that have been discarded by dealing
additional cards face-down from the top of the remaining cards in the deck. Following
the deal, one or more rounds of betting take place, during which time each player may
make an initial raise, a check wager, fold (drop-out), match a previous raise, re-raise
or raise a previous bet. The meanings of these wagering terms are well known to those
skilled in the art and typical definitions of same may be found in, for example,
Hoyle's Rules of Games, pp. 75-102, by Morehead and Mot-Smith, 1963, the
disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference. At the conclusion of all of the
wagering rounds, the players display their hands and the holder of the highest ranking
poker hand takes all of the money in the pot. Low hand and split-pot variants of the
game are also common.

[009] Stud poker is the most popular form of "open poker," wherein each
player is dealt some cards (but less than all cards to enable bluffing and strategic play)
that are face-up and, hence, available for viewing by the other players. Studpoker
commonly comes in at least two varieties: 5-card and 7-card, the two being of
approximately equal popularity. Other games with different numbers of cards such as
2-card, three-card, four-card and six-card poker may also be played with similar rules.
In five-card stud poker, the dealer gives each player a face-down (or "hole" card) and
a face-up card. Thus, at the start of each round of play each player knows his own two
cards and one card of each of his opponents. After the first two cards are dealt, a
wagering round ensues, during which time each player contributes his or her wager to
the pot or folds, losing the ante wager and forfeiting any chance at winning the pot. A
typical description of the rules that govern this round might be found in, for example,
Hoyle's Rules of Games, pp. 75-102, by Morehead and Mot-Smith, 1963, the
disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference. After the wagering round,
another card is dealt face-up to each player. This is followed by another wagering
round. Alternating dealing and wagering rounds continue until each player has a total
of five cards: four face-up cards and a concealed hole card. After the final bets have
been placed, each player who has not dropped out during the deal/wager rounds
reveals his or her hole card. The owner of the highest ranking 5-card poker hand wins
and takes whatever amount is in the pot. Equal high hands would split the pot.
Seven-card stud poker differs slightly from 5-card poker. First, in 7-card poker each player typically initially receives two cards face-down and one card face-up. A bidding round then ensues. The dealer then gives each player another face-up card, which is followed again by a bidding round. Deals (of one face-up card) and bids are alternated until each player has four face-up cards and two face-down cards. Finally, a third and final face-down card is dealt to each player (making a total of seven cards). This is followed by a last bidding round. The winner of the hand is the player who can form the highest ranking 5-card poker hand from his seven cards.

As is well known to those skilled in the art, five-card poker hands without wild cards are ranked from "Royal Flush" (highest) to "High Card(s) in Hand" (lowest). In some variations of poker, the ace may also act as the lowest card in the deck to form a straight when used in a sequence like A, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Additionally, a "wild card"—often the "joker" card may be designated, so that a person who holds that card may declare its value to be that of any card in the deck, the presumption being that the declared card value will help that player form a better poker hand.

At its core, poker is a vehicle for gambling. Commonly the quantities wagered are monetary, but that is not strictly required and poker chips, credits, matches, and other non-pecuniary tokens have been used in place of money to help the players determine who is winning with or without exposing them to financial loss. Of course, casinos are in the business of providing people with the opportunity to gamble and, given the popularity of poker among the general populous, it only stands to reason that casinos would desire to offer this game in some form or another to those who seek to play it. However, conventional-rules, player-versus-player poker is not particularly well suited for use in a casino.

A casino that offers traditional poker to its clientele typically does so by providing a dealer and a room in which to play, but the casino's dealer does not actually participate in the game as a player: His or her dealer function is just to distribute the cards and referee the game. The casino makes its money by taking some percent of all of the money wagered (the "rake") or by leasing the room to the participants. The cost of the lease may be measured in time (e.g., a fixed amount per hour) or by a count of the number of hands played. Traditional poker games are not
particularly favoured by casinos because the casino does not make as much money acting as a landlord as it would if it were an active participant in the game.

[014] Similarly, from the standpoint of the gaming public, traditional poker has some disadvantages which have tended to make it less desirable as a casino game. First, traditional poker is readily available "at home," e.g., at the Friday night poker session, and there is no particular need for most people to travel to a casino to play it. Second, when an individual wins at traditional poker, it is at the expense of the other players/participants. Third, private poker games are not subject to the house rake, so that all money played in the game remain with players, thereby lowering potential losses to the entire group of players and raising the amount of money taken home by the entire group of players. Many people prefer to play against the "house" (i.e., the casino) so that their winning hand does not necessarily result in a loss by a fellow player, who may be an acquaintance. Finally, traditional poker does not offer the excitement associated with "jackpot" type games. That is, a royal flush in traditional poker—as improbable as that card combination is—will result in winning only the amount in the pot and nothing more. Many players seek out games where there is some possibility of "winning big," an option that is not available under conventional poker rules.

[015] As a consequence of these disadvantages, casinos have introduced a variety of poker-type game variants to address the shortcomings discussed previously. One obvious advantage of these variant poker-type games from the casino's point of view is that the casino becomes an active participant in the game (as the house) and can control payout rates and odds and, as a consequence, can increase the revenue taken from the game. Additionally, these poker-type games are very attractive to many of the gambling public, and the mere fact that they are available in a particular casino has the potential to increase consumer traffic and revenue there.

[016] A variety of innovative stratagems have been employed to make poker-type games more appealing to casino gamblers. For example, many poker-variants are designed to let the players compete against the house, rather than against each other. In other cases, progressive betting has been utilized, wherein the player may increase his or her bet during the play of a hand. This makes the game more exciting to the
player and potentially more profitable for the casino. Jackpots have been introduced, including progressive jackpots that increase in size until unique player events occur, wherein certain card combinations in the player's hand result in an enhanced payout to that player. Finally, computer implementations of these games are always an attractive possibility, with video based casino games, computer games, multiplayer platforms and internet games becoming increasingly popular.

[017] In addition to novel games being introduced into casinos, novel betting formats have also been introduced. It is still beneficial to provide additional wagering formats and structures to add both interest to the game and better control over house retention and player awards.

**Summary of the Invention**

[018] The preferred embodiment of this invention introduces a bonus feature to card games that can be used in table card games, slot machine Draw Poker games (played against a paytable), games played against paytable and dealer, such as 3 Card Poker® games, 4 Card Poker™ games, and the like, and traditional Blackjack games that play mainly against a dealer but include some different pay events as bonus type elements (Insurance, Blackjack, pairs, streaks of cards, consecutive blackjack wagers, etc.). These latter games may take the form of traditional table games, mixed physical games and electronic inputs or fully electronic table games, known as multi-terminal games or Multiplayer Platforms. The invention creates variety in payout events and allows one card from the deck to be selected as having more significance or importance than others.

[019] According to a first aspect of the invention there is provided a method of playing a game of chance using a plurality of value indicators, the game having a bonus feature, the method including the steps of:

(a) at least one player placing a wager in an underlying game;

(b) designating one or more of the value indicators as a bonus trigger;

(c) allocating one or more value indicators to each player's hand in the underlying game;

(d) evaluating each player's hand to determine if it is a winning hand;
(e) determining if the or each winning hand is participating in the bonus feature;

(f) determining if any winning hand includes a bonus value indicator;

(g) awarding a bonus to the or each winning hand which was participating in the bonus feature and which includes a bonus value indicator.

According to a second aspect of the invention there is provided a method of playing a game of chance using a plurality of playing cards from at least one deck of standard playing cards, the game having a bonus feature, and the method including the steps of:

- at least one player placing a wager in an underlying card game;
- designating one or more of the playing cards at least by rank as a bonus trigger;
- allocating at least one playing card to each player's hand in the underlying game;
- evaluating each player's hand to determine if it is a winning hand;
- determining if each winning hand is participating in the bonus feature;
- determining if any winning hand includes a designated bonus trigger;
- awarding a bonus to each winning hand which was participating in the bonus feature and which includes a designated bonus trigger.

Preferably a player must make a side bet wager to participate in the bonus feature. Preferably also a playing card is designated as a bonus trigger by random selection of at least playing card rank. Preferably also a playing card is designated as a bonus trigger by predefinition of at least playing card rank according to rules of the game. Preferably also the underlying game is a poker game in which a player's hand is compared with a paytable.

According to a third aspect of the invention there is provided a method of implementing a bonus feature in a game of chance using at least a plurality of value indicators for play of an underlying game, the method including the steps of:
(a) designating one or more of the value indicators or an extra value indicator as a bonus trigger indicator;

(b) allocating one or more value indicators to each player’s at least initial or partial hand;

(d) evaluating each player’s initial, partial or final hand to determine if it is a winning hand;

(e) determining if the winning hand or each winning hand is participating in the bonus feature;

(f) determining if any winning hand includes a bonus value indicator;

(g) awarding a bonus to the or each winning hand which was participating in the bonus feature.

[023] The invention also provides a method of playing a game including such a bonus feature.

[024] Each player’s participation in the bonus feature can be optional or be an automatic element of play in the underlying game.

[025] Each player can elect to participate in an optional bonus feature by making a side bet.

[026] The method can include the step of awarding a standard prize to winning hands not participating in the bonus feature but having (or not having) the extra value indicator.

[027] The value indicators can be playing cards.

[028] A player or the dealer can nominate or designate the bonus card before the players have viewed their cards and/or before the cards are dealt.

[029] The bonus card can be an ace, joker, specialty card or any other designated playing card, preferably of a specific rank.

[030] The method can include the step of permitting each player to make an additional wager after the replacement cards have been dealt.
According to a forth aspect of the invention there is provided an electronic gaming machine (EGM) having a memory, a processor and a display, the EGM being adapted to implement the above-mentioned methods.

According to a fifth aspect of the invention there is provided an electronic gaming machine in single player or multiplayer format adapted to implement the above methods.

According to a sixth aspect of the invention there is provided a multi-terminal electronic gaming machine adapted to implement the above methods.

Brief Description of the Drawings

An embodiment or embodiments of the present invention will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a flow diagram illustrating an embodiment of the invention;

Figure 2 is a paytable showing standard and bonus payouts;

Figure 3 is a schematic representation of an electronic gaming machine (EGM);

Figure 4 is a schematic representation of a multi-terminal EGM.

Figure 5 illustrates an arrangement for playing a table game implementing the present invention.

Detailed Description of the Invention

The invention will be described with reference to the accompanying figures. A game embodying the invention can be played by one or more players. In one version, each player plays against a paytable, so that each player with a winning hand receives a prize. In another version, the players’ hands are mutually evaluated to determine a single winner. In still another version, the players’ hands may be evaluated in comparison with a dealer’s hand to determine one or more winners. These versions can be played as a table game, or on an EGM.

In the paytable of Figure 2, the value of the cards in not relevant to the payout except in the case of a Royal Flush and a high pair (Jacks or better). For
example, three twos pay the same as three nines. There are also four of each kind of
ranked card (e.g., clubs, diamonds, hearts and spades for each rank). The bonus card
feature provides a means of differentiating the value or identity of one card.

[042] In an embodiment of the invention, one or more value indicators, such
as a predetermined card, are designated to trigger a bonus prize.

[043] Using the example of Draw Poker, a player is dealt five cards, and has
the option to discard between none and 5 cards. The discarded cards are replaced, and
based on the particular rules designated for the game, the resulting hand is paid
against a paytable. The better (higher ranking, or in case of low poker, the lower
ranking) the combination, the higher the prize.

[044] In one embodiment of the invention, the Ace card (or one or more of
the Ace cards) can be designated as the bonus card. A hand with the bonus card
receives double the standard prize where the bonus card is involved in a winning
combination.

[045] The bonus feature can be activated by an additional wager or side bet
or be an automatic part of the underlying game.

[046] The bonus prize can be based on the side bet, or on the initial wager,
or on the combination of the initial wager and the side bet.

[047] In a first embodiment of the invention, a deck of cards (e.g., a standard
deck of 52 cards) is used to play poker, and one or more cards in the deck are
designated as bonus cards.

[048] Each player places an initial wager (the "ante") to enter the underlying
game. Those players wishing to activate the bonus feature may then be required place
an additional wager (the side bet).

[049] The symbols or cards are dealt to the players as an initial or partial
hand of playing cards.

[050] Players can elect to discard from none to all their cards, and
replacement cards are dealt for the discarded cards.
The players' hands of cards are then evaluated and winning hands are awarded a prize according to a paytable. Those winning hands which are eligible for the bonus according to rules described for the present invention are paid the bonus.

The bonus card can be designated at the beginning of the game or at another point in the game. In particular, the bonus card can be designated randomly by the gaming system or by revelation of a previously provided, but not revealed or revealed display of a bonus card after the players' hands have been evaluated. In another embodiment the bonus card can be designated by one of the players prior to the cards being dealt. In a live game this may be done by allowing the player to pick the bonus card from a bonus deck of cards that are not otherwise used in the game. In an EGM, the bonus card may be selected from a virtual bonus deck which is navigated using the EGM touchscreen or input buttons. The bonus card deck may comprise a full standard deck of cards (having all cards from all four suites) or a selected subset of cards for example only face cards (jack, queen and king) or only aces.

A non-limiting embodiment of the invention applied to a draw poker game is illustrated in the flow diagram of Figure 1.

One or more players initially elect to participate in a game at 102.

Each player can then elect to participate in the bonus feature by, for example, placing a side bet at 104.

When the initial wagers and side bets are placed, initial wagering is closed and the initial cards forming an initial hand are dealt at 108.

Each player can then elect to discard none to all the initial cards dealt to that player at 110.

Replacement cards are dealt at 112 to replace the discarded cards.

The players' hands are then evaluated at 114.

First, the hands are checked against a paytable at 116 to see if they have won a prize. If a hand has not won a prize, that player's interest in the game ends.
A further round of wagering (not shown) can take place after the replacement cards have been dealt.

However, if a hand wins a prize, a check or examination of the winning hand is made at 120 to determine whether the player with that hand had elected to participate in the bonus function. If the player did not choose the bonus option, the standard prize is awarded to the player at 122. If the player did choose the bonus option, the bonus prize is awarded at 126.

The paytable of Figure 2 shows the standard payout and the bonus payout for a poker game with a standard 52 Card deck where the player is paid for a pair of Jacks or better, up to a Royal Flush. The column on the right hand side displays the bonus paytable whenever an Ace is involved. As a Royal Flush already includes an Ace by definition, this does not change.

In an alternative embodiment, the game of Blackjack could be played where any win against the dealer with an Ace (excluding Blackjack) is paid at an increased (over 1:1) rate, such as 3:2 or twice the normal value of award, or a flat amount (e.g., from the minimum wager amount at a table up to the maximum wager amount at a table, or even outside that range). Other games like 3 Card Poker® games that play against a paytable on one bet and the dealer on another may incorporate a bonus in both parts of the game.

In a further embodiment of the invention, the bonus card can be selected on a game-by-game basis. Alternatively, a player or the dealer can nominate the bonus card before the cards are dealt or a random number generator may designate the card. It is to be noted that this bonus card is not merely a match symbol award (as in US Patent No. 6,227,969 (Yoseloff), but requires that the card be part of the hand and then the award for that hand, if any, is increased.

The bonus card can be selected on a sequential basis (e.g., beginning with 2, then 3, then 4, etc. up to Ace), selected by a player or dealer, or it can be selected on a random or pseudo-random basis by a random number generating system.

In the context of a table game, one deck of cards (real or virtual) can be used to deal the players’ hands, and a separate second deck (real or virtual) can be used for the selection of the bonus card. For example, the second deck can be shuffled
and cut to decide the bonus card, preferably by an automatic shuffler such as the ACE® shuffler from Shuffle Master, Inc.

[068] A live or hybrid table apparatus for the play of the game may comprise a flat gaming surface, individual player positions having card receiving area and wagering positions for an underlying wager and a side bet wager, and a card display area for the bonus card display. The card display area may be a display screen or an area to hold a physical card.

[069] The game can be played on a multi-terminal gaming machine, a multi-layer platform, a slot machine or using a deck of cards.

[070] A bonus prize is awarded in any instance where a designated bonus card is included in a player's winning hand, or may be limited to where the card is an essential part of winning rank for a player's winning hand. For example, if the bonus card is a 2, and the player's winning hand is four aces, even though the 2 is a kicker or other card in the hand, it is not part of the structure that causes the hand to be a winner. On the other hand, if the bonus card is a 2 and the player's winning hand is a straight of 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, then the bonus card is an essential part of the winning rank of the hand. The bonus may be percentage increases in underlying awards, multipliers of underlying awards, free plays (or free spins at the same underlying wager amount), or fixed amounts for awards.

[071] In various implementations, the designated card may be used to beat the dealer in a game like Blackjack and some Poker games, or to improve on a paytable prize as in some poker games. For example, in blackjack, if the bonus card is preselected, a player may be allowed to double or triple the value of a bonus card if it is one of the first two cards in a player's hand. For example, if the bonus card is a six, and the first two cards of the player's hand are a 6 and an 8, for a traditional count of 14, the player can double the value of the 6 to 12, and the initial hand count becomes 20, which is a significant advantage to the player. The changing of the value of the card may be to allow increasing the value by a specific amount (e.g., 1 or 2), and the change may preclude forming a count of 21 or another value (e.g., 20) to control the odds of a dealer hand winning in the game. In a poker game, the designated card may be an artificially high ranking card, whatever its actual rank. In that case, if a player
has a flush of 2, 4, 6, 7 and Jack (with the 2 again being the designated bonus card) and the dealer had a flush of 6, 8, 10, Jack, Ace, the bonus card "2" could be considered the highest ranked card in the deck for purposes of pairs or flushes and the player hand with the 2 as part of the rank determining cards (here the flush) would win in a circumstance in which the player would ordinarily lose. In another embodiment of blackjack, if the player and dealer tie or "push" (standard rules dictate that neither the player nor the dealer wins and the player keeps his wager but wins nothing) then if either one has the designated bonus card in their hand then the presence of the bonus card causes them to win. In this instance the payout ratios may be altered such that if a player wins due to the presence of the bonus card in the event of a tie then the player only wins aportion (e.g. half) or in some cases an increased multiple (e.g. twice) what would normally be paid for a win. It is also preferred that if the dealer were to win due to the presence of a bonus card, the player could then lose only a fraction of their bet, say half, instead on losing the entire bet.

[072] The preferred option is in Poker games played against a paytable and/or dealer where the paytable has a list of prizes paid based on certain attainable combinations. The popular game of Draw Poker is familiar to many players as a simple poker game where players play against a paytable. Players are only paid when they get certain highlighted card combinations. As an example, the invention allows the inclusion of a nominated card to increase any prize, whether or not the nominated or designated card is part of the winning rank in the hand.

[073] Variants can include different cards being nominated as the bonus card; awarding of different bonuses in different win instances; consecutive hands with bonus cards being involved in a pay further augment bonus prize values.

[074] Figure 3 is a schematic representation of an electronic gaming machine (EGM) 300 suitable for use with an embodiment of the present invention. The EGM includes a display 308 and a number of input buttons 312 to enable the player to initiate actions or make responses as required during the game. In a game where the player is playing against the house, the player's hand is displayed face up on the screen as it is dealt and the house hand is shown face down on the screen. Touch "buttons" 310 can be provided on the screen in addition to or instead of the buttons
312. In a further non-limiting configuration, one or more of the players can be located in separate locations, and the player terminals or hand-held devices or player screens in rooms can be connected to the controller via communication links (e.g., hardwired or wireless). Standard protocols, software, hardware and processor languages may be used in these communication links, without any known limitation. There are hundreds of available computer languages that may be used, among the more common being Ada; Algol; APL; awk; Basic; C; C++; Cobol; Delphi; Eiffel; Euphoria; Forth; Fortran; HTML; Icon; Java; Javascript; Lisp; Logo; Mathematica; MatLab; Miranda; Modula-2; Oberon; Pascal; Perl; PL/I; Prolog; Python; Rexx; SAS; Scheme; sed; Simula; Smalltalk; Snobol; SQL; Visual Basic; Visual C++; and XML.

[075] Any commercial processor may be used either as a single processor, serial or parallel set of processors in the system. Examples of commercial processors include, but are not limited to Merced™, Pentium™, Pentium II™, Xeon™, Celeron™, Pentium Pro™, Efficeon™, Athlon, AMD and the like.

[076] Display screens may be segment display screens, analogue display screens, digital display screens, CRTs, LED screens, Plasma screens, liquid crystal diode screens, and the like.

[077] The EGM 300 can be programmed to display a poker game played according to an embodiment of the invention. Thus the player's hand can be dealt face up and the bonus card can be selected from a full deck and displayed face down. The player can elect to participate in the bonus feature before the bonus card is disclosed.

[078] Various alternative wagering opportunities can be provided by dealing the player and bonus cards face down and then displaying the cards in one of several ways. For example, the player's cards and the bonus card can be dealt face down and the player can elect to participate in the bonus before any player cards are disclosed. The player cards can be displayed one at a time, with an opportunity to participate in the bonus feature after each card is disclosed while the bonus card remains face down.

[079] Other wagering methods can readily be implemented by a skilled worker based on the disclosure of the invention herein.

[080] A bonus card can be decided at a point in the game of the player's choosing or as determined by the specific rules of the game, but preferably before any
of the player's cards or any other cards in the deck or set (real or virtual) have been disclosed to the player. This is to prevent a player from selecting cards known to be in the player's hand, which would be less than random. For example, the bonus card can be displayed before the cards are dealt, or before the player views cards or makes a decision as whether to change one or more cards. In a further alternative, the randomly selected bonus card can be displayed after the player has changed one or more cards. A still further possibility is to display the bonus card after the house hand has been disclosed. Different bonus prizes can be determined by the time at which the bonus card is displayed.

[081] Figure 4 is a schematic illustration of a multi-terminal EGM 400. Players are seated around a table 406. Each player is provided with a personal screen 408 to 416 to display each player's hand to the player. A processor 404 controls the play and responds to player inputs.

[082] A community display 402 is visible to all players. The community display 402 can display the bonus card 428 face down until the point in the game where it is to be disclosed or disclose it earlier.

[083] The community display can display all players' hands 418, 420, 422, 424, 426 face down until wagering has finished. The cards of each hand can be displayed one at a time when wagering has finished. However, where the players are playing against each other, as distinct from against the house, an option is to display only the winning hand.

[084] Figure 5 shows a table game arrangement for playing a game implementing an embodiment of the invention. A table 502 has a number of players seated around it so they can play the player's hands 508, 510, 512, 514, 516, and a dealer position 506.

[085] The dealer deals the player hands from a first deck or set of cards. When the players have had an opportunity to change cards if they choose to do so, the remainder of the first deck is set aside.

[086] In one embodiment, the dealer can also have a second deck of cards 504, and this deck can be used to determine the bonus card.
Wherever it is used, the word "comprising" is to be understood in its "open" sense, that is, in the sense of "including", and thus not limited to its "closed" sense, that is the sense of "consisting only of. A corresponding meaning is to be attributed to the corresponding words "comprise", "comprised" and "comprises" where they appear.

It will be understood that the invention disclosed and defined herein extends to all alternative combinations of two or more of the individual features mentioned or evident from the text. All of these different combinations constitute various alternative aspects of the invention.

While particular embodiments of this invention have been described, it will be evident to those skilled in the art that the present invention may be embodied in other specific forms without departing from the essential characteristics thereof. The present embodiments and examples are therefore to be considered in all respects as illustrative and not restrictive, and all modifications which would be obvious to those skilled in the art are therefore intended to be embraced therein.
Claims

1. A method of playing a game of chance using a plurality of value indicators, the game having a bonus feature, the method including the steps of:
   (a) at least one player placing a wager in an underlying game;
   (b) designating one or more of the value indicators as a bonus trigger;
   (c) allocating one or more value indicators to each player's hand in the underlying game;
   (d) evaluating each player's hand to determine if it is a winning hand;
   (e) determining if each winning hand is participating in the bonus feature;
   (f) determining if any winning hand includes a bonus value indicator;
   (g) awarding a bonus to the or each winning hand which was participating in the bonus feature and which includes a bonus value indicator.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein each player can elect to participate in the bonus feature.

3. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein a player elects to participate in the bonus feature by placing a side bet.

4. A method as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, including the step of awarding a standard prize to winning hands not participating in the bonus feature.

5. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the value indicators are playing cards.

6. A method as claimed in claim 5 including the step of permitting each player to make an additional wager after the replacement cards have been dealt.

7. A method as claimed in claim 5 wherein the bonus card is designated after step (d).
8. A method as claimed in claim 5 wherein a player, a processor or the dealer nominates the bonus card before the players have viewed their cards or before the cards are dealt.

9. A method as claimed in claim 5 wherein the bonus card is a playing card of a specific rank.

10. A method as claimed in claim 5 wherein cards are dealt to players from a first deck and the bonus card is selected from a second deck of cards.

11. A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the game is a table game.

12. An electronic gaming machine adapted to implement the method of claim 5.


14. A method of playing a game of chance using a plurality of playing cards from at least one deck of standard playing cards, the game having a bonus feature, and the method including the steps of:

   at least one player placing a wager in an underlying card game;

   designating one or more of the playing cards at least by rank as a bonus trigger;

   allocating at least one playing card to each player's hand in the underlying game;

   evaluating each player's hand to determine if it is a winning hand;

   determining if each winning hand is participating in the bonus feature;

   determining if any winning hand includes a designated bonus trigger;

   awarding a bonus to each winning hand which was participating in the bonus feature and which includes a designated bonus trigger.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein a player must make a side bet wager to participate in the bonus feature.
16. The method of claim 15 wherein a playing card is designated as a bonus trigger by random selection of at least playing card rank.

17. The method of claim 15 wherein a playing card is designated as a bonus trigger by predefinition of at least playing card rank according to rules of the game.

18. The method of claim 15 wherein the underlying game is a poker game in which a player’s hand is compared with a paytable.

19. An electronic gaming machine (EGM) apparatus comprising a player input, memory and a display, wherein the memory comprises software enabling play of the method of claim 14 and display of information relative to the play.
FIGURE 1

102 PLAYERS PLACE INITIAL WAGER

104 PLAYERS PLACE BONUS WAGER

106 WAGERING FINISHED?

108 DEAL CARDS

110 DISCARDS?

112 DEAL REPLACEMENT CARDS

114 EVALUATE HANDS

116 WINNING HANDS?

120 BONUS CARD?

124 BONUS WAGER?

126 PAY BONUS

128 PLAY AGAIN?

130 END GAME
FIGURE 2

TABLE 1
PAYTABLE WITH BONUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Combination</th>
<th>Prize</th>
<th>Prize with Ace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair of Jacks or higher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Pair</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 of a kind</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flush</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full House</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four of a kind</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Straight Flush</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Flush</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

**A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER**

| Int. Cl. | A63F 1/00 (2006 01) |

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

### B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

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

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

| DWPI +keywords: card game, side wager, special card and similar terms |

### C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category*</th>
<th>Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages</th>
<th>Relevant to claim No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td>WO 1993/010869 A1 (JONES) 10 June 1993</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td>US 2003/0155716 A1 (PARKER) 21 August 2003</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C

See patent family annex

* Special categories of cited documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'A'</th>
<th>Special categories of cited documents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'A'</td>
<td>Document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 'T' | later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention |

| 'E' | Earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date |

| 'X' | Document of particular relevance, the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone |

| 'L' | Document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) |

| 'Y' | Document of particular relevance, the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art |

| 'O' | Document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means |

| 'K' | Document member of the same patent family |

| 'P' | Document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed |

Date of the actual completion of the international search 28 June 2007

Date of mailing of the international search report 6 JUL 2007

Name and mailing address of the ISA/AU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PO BOX 200, WODEN ACT 2606, AUSTRALIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail address <a href="mailto:pct@ipaustralia.gov.au">pct@ipaustralia.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facsimile No (02) 6285 3929</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Authorized officer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Xavier Gisz</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ISO 9001 Quality Certified Service)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone No (02) 6283 2064</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This Annex lists the known "A" publication level patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned international search report. The Australian Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WO 93 10869</td>
<td>AU 18750/95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AU 32220/93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AU 33126/89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AU 68058/98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BR 9402668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NL 8900970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US 4948134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US 5288077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US 5374067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US 5382025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US 5382025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US 6070878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US 6312330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US 6485368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WO 9521665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US 2003155716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US 6889981</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Due to data integration issues this family listing may not include 10 digit Australian applications filed since May 2001.