



(19) **United States**

(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Birkenmeyer et al.

(10) **Pub. No.: US 2015/0321078 A1**

(43) **Pub. Date: Nov. 12, 2015**

(54) **METHOD OF UTILIZING DICE RELATED TO A SIDE BET**

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC ... *A63F 1/00* (2013.01); *A63F 1/04* (2013.01);
A63F 2001/003 (2013.01)

(71) Applicant: **Innovative Gaming Concepts, LLC**,
Boynton Beach, FL (US)

(72) Inventors: **Brian Patrick Birkenmeyer**, Boynton
Beach, FL (US); **Joseph Leonard**
Birkenmeyer, Boynton Beach, FL (US)

(57) **ABSTRACT**

(21) Appl. No.: **14/467,847**

(22) Filed: **Aug. 25, 2014**

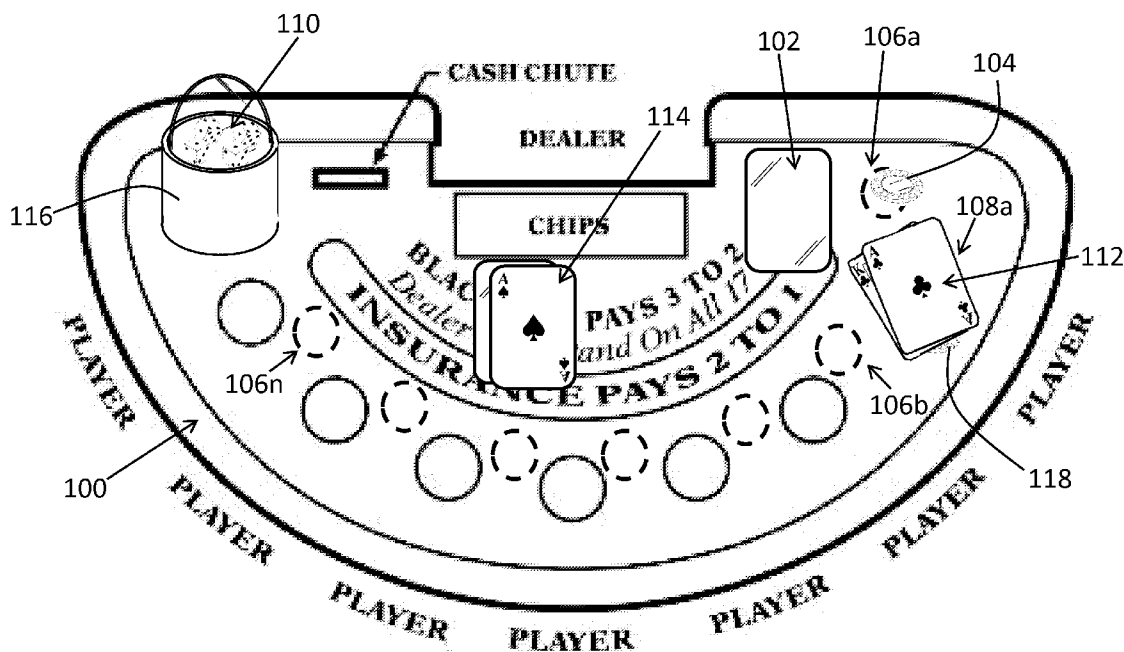
Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Provisional application No. 62/009,752, filed on Jun.
9, 2014, provisional application No. 61/989,779, filed
on May 7, 2014.

Publication Classification

(51) **Int. Cl.**
A63F 1/00 (2006.01)
A63F 1/04 (2006.01)

A method of utilizing dice related to a side bet that includes providing at least one deck of playing cards with four suits of varying rank used in connection with a base game and then placing a side bet associated with the base game, wherein the side bet corresponds to a side game having a triggering event based on a unique value associated with a plurality of the playing cards and utilizes at least one dice having a plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one dice. The method also includes dealing at least two playing cards corresponding to the triggering event, and causing the at least one dice to display one of the plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one dice that are then added and compared to a corresponding player payout on a payout scale, or progressive jackpot, associated with the side game.



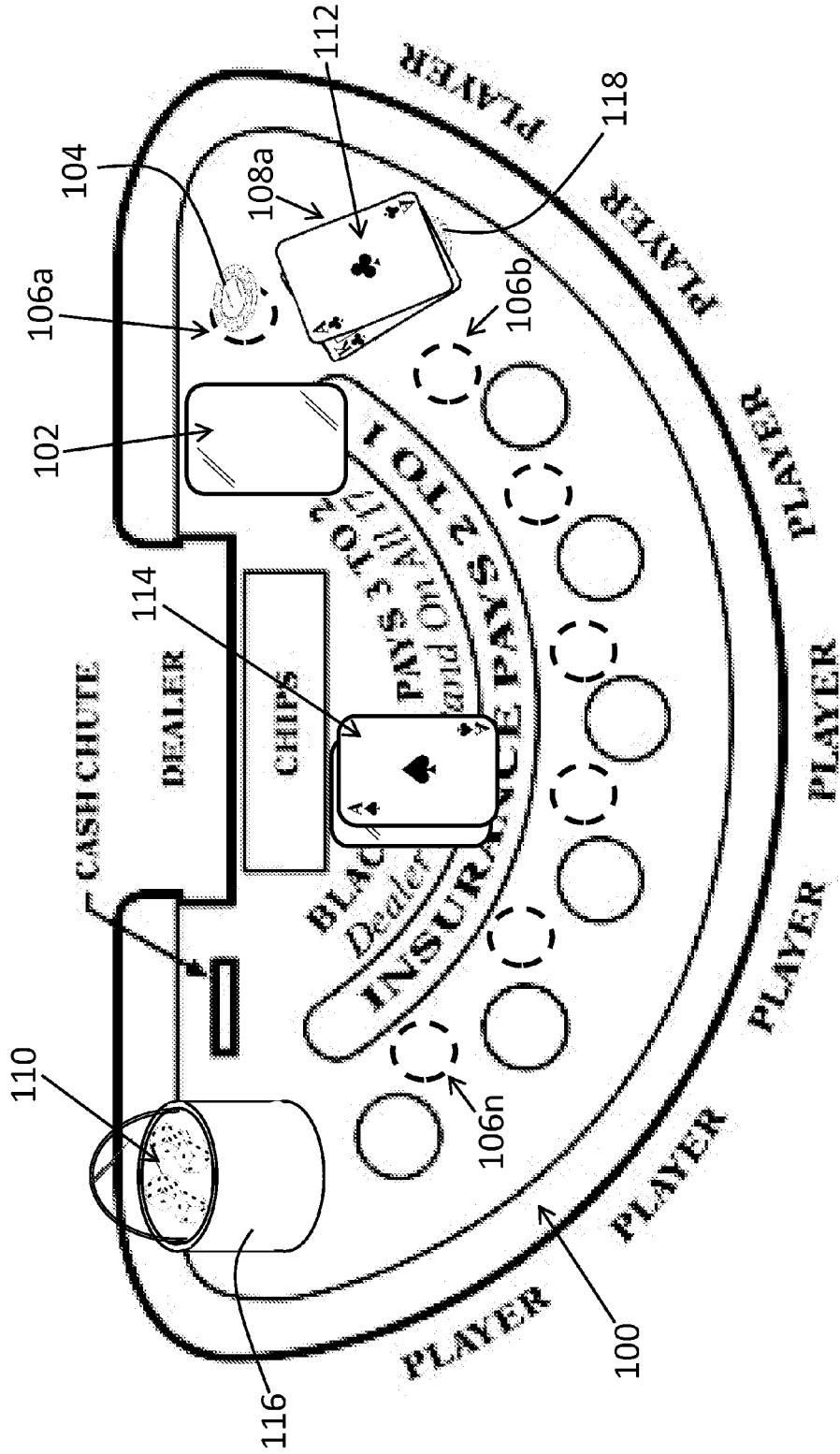


FIG. 1

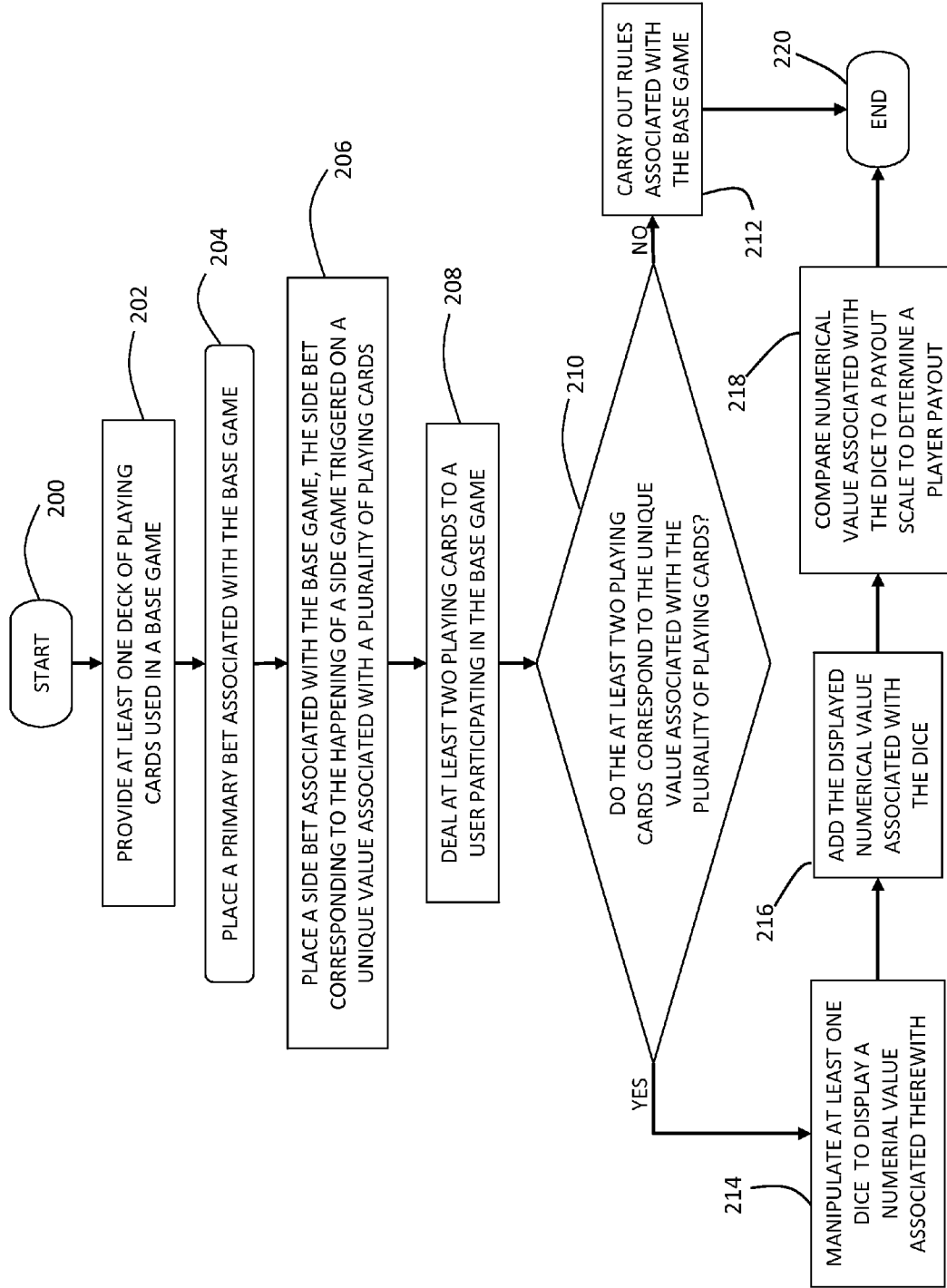
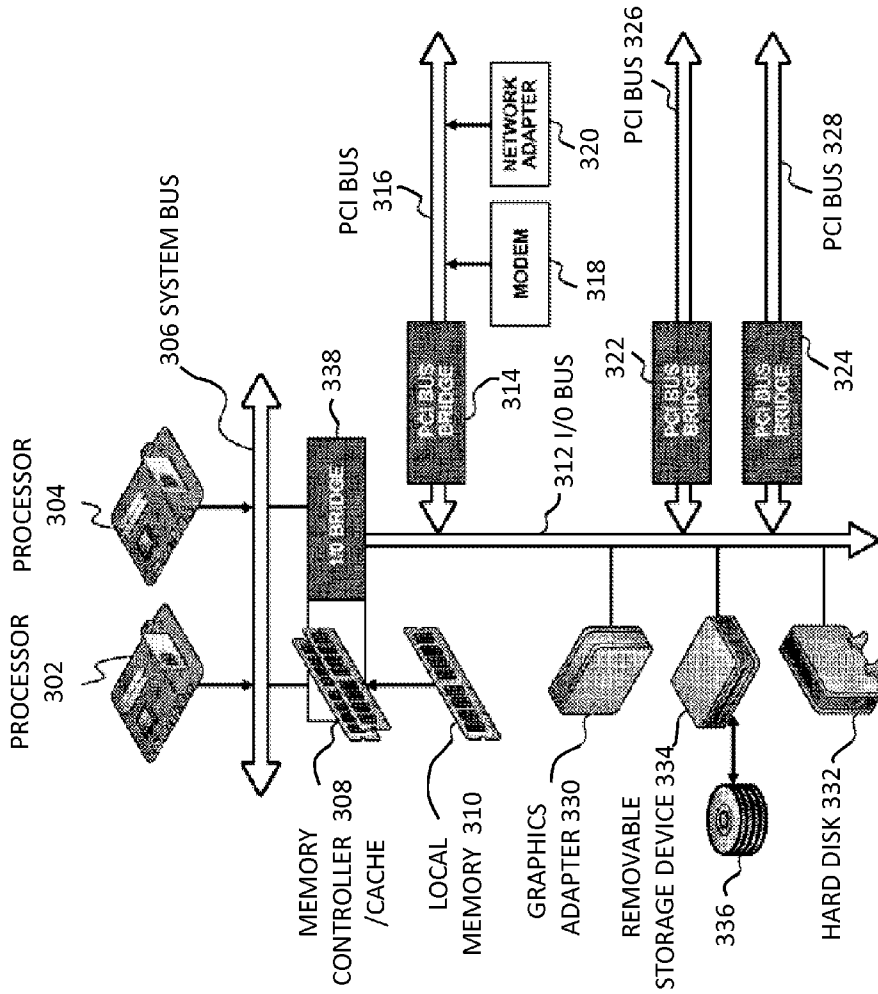


FIG. 2



300
FIG. 3

METHOD OF UTILIZING DICE RELATED TO A SIDE BET

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 62/009,752 filed Jun. 9, 2014 and U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/989,779 filed May 7, 2014, the entirety of both are incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates generally to methods of gaming and, more particularly, relates to a method of placing a side bet in a card game and conducting a side game related to that side bet.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Side bets for casino games are known in the art but have a number of drawbacks. For example, some side bets for card games are based on a player's or dealer's existing hand and therefore lack the drama and excitement involved in an additional game to determine whether the side bet pays off. Some exemplary side bets for card games, specifically Blackjack, involve providing a player an additional payout(s) based on the type of suit (e.g., spades, hearts, diamonds, rank (e.g., 9, 10, Jack, Queen), or combination of suit and rank of the dealer's and/or player's cards. While these side bets do have some practical effect on, and provide some incentive to, novice players, it is desired to provide a game with more excitement to players of both novice and professional skill. Additionally, many of those known side bets do not provide an attractive payout incentive for both the player and the "house."

[0004] Some other known side bets require a secondary game that is activated upon the happening of an event associated with the "base game" or "primary game." Many of these secondary games, however, have rules of playing or carrying out the side game that are complicated and too difficult for the player to grasp. For example, some of those known secondary games utilize the rules for the game of "craps," which many gamers are either unfamiliar with or desire not to combine the intricacies of the craps rules with a primary game.

[0005] Other side games fail to make play more interesting because they use the same playing medium for determining the player payout for the side game as they do the base game. For example, the primary game will use cards to determine a player payout and the side game will also use cards to determine the player payout. Other known side games that do utilize a different medium than the base game to determine a player payout, do not use the same scoring rules as the base game to dictate the player payout in order to generate a more consistent and easy to understand side game.

[0006] Therefore, a need exists to overcome the problems with the prior art as discussed above.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] The invention provides a method of utilizing dice related to a side bet that overcomes the hereinafore-mentioned disadvantages of the heretofore-known devices and methods of this general type and that provides a player the ability to participate in a side game utilizing dice and, upon

the happening of an event triggered through the dealing of playing cards, e.g., a 21 in Blackjack, award a player a payout based on the amount of the side bet, card value, random dice outcome, and payout scale associated with.

[0008] With the foregoing and other objects in view, there is provided, in accordance with the invention, a method of utilizing dice related to a side bet, with the method including the steps of (1) providing at least one deck of playing cards having four suits with each of the four suits having playing cards associated therewith of a varying rank, (2) placing a side bet associated with a base game utilizing the at least one deck of playing cards, wherein the side bet corresponds to a side game having a triggering event based on a unique value associated with a plurality of the playing cards and the side game utilizes at least one dice having a plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one dice, (3) dealing at least two of the playing cards to at least one user participating in the base game and wherein the at least two playing cards correspond to the triggering event, (4) causing (e.g., manipulating or dispensing), in at least one user attempt, the at least one dice to display a random outcome of one of the plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one dice, and (5) adding the displayed one of the plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one dice to generate a combined dice value corresponding to at least one of a player payout on a payout scale and a qualifying value for a progressive jackpot associated with the side game. Some of these steps, particularly steps 1-4 may be carried out in different times and in a different order.

[0009] In accordance with a further feature of the present invention, each of the four suits of the playing cards includes thirteen ranks having at least one value from 1 through 11 in association with the base game.

[0010] In accordance with another feature of the present invention, the unique value is 21, is a natural blackjack, or is another value or characteristic of the playing cards.

[0011] In accordance with yet another feature of the present invention, the plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one dice is an accumulated value of at least 21.

[0012] In accordance with another feature, an embodiment of the present invention includes the side game utilizing at least four dice each having a plurality values associated therewith, wherein the at least four dice are caused (e.g., manipulated) to display one of the plurality of numerical value associated therewith to generate a combined dice value corresponding to the player payout on the payout scale associated with the side game.

[0013] In accordance with a further feature of the present invention, the combined dice value ranges from 4-24 and/or the payout scale includes a portion of player payouts of an escalating value. The escalating value of the portion of player payouts increases based on a playing card scoring hierarchy associated with the base game. Said another way, the player payouts increase akin to a scoring hierarchy associated with the base game, e.g., higher payout in the side game for a 21, as opposed to a 15, because 21 is greater than 15 in the game of Blackjack. The portion of player payouts may also have an escalating value based on an increasing value of the combined dice value.

[0014] In accordance with another feature, an embodiment of the present invention includes causing, in at least one user attempt, at least two dice to each display one of the plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one dice, wherein one of the plurality of numerical values associated

with the each of the at least two dice corresponds to one hand of a poker hand hierarchy having a player payout on a payout scale associated with the side game.

[0015] In accordance with yet another feature, an embodiment of the present invention includes causing, in the at least one user attempt, the at least one dice to display the one of the plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one dice using a self-contained dice holding container that encapsulates the at least one dice.

[0016] In accordance with a further feature of the present invention, the at least two of the playing cards are dealt to at least one player participating in the base game.

[0017] In accordance with the present invention, a method of utilizing dice related to a side bet includes providing at least one deck of playing cards having four suits with varying ranks ranging from 1-11, placing a side bet associated with a base game utilizing the at least one deck of playing cards, the side bet corresponding to a side game having a triggering event based on a value of 21 associated with a plurality of the playing cards and the side game utilizing at least four dice, each of the four dice having numerical values associated therewith ranging from 1-6, initiating the side game by dealing at least two of the playing cards corresponding to the triggering event to at least one player participating in the base game, and manipulating, in at least one user attempt, the at least four dice to display the numerical values associated therewith to generate a combined dice value, the combined dice value corresponding to a player payout on a payout scale associated with the side game.

[0018] In accordance with the present invention, another method of utilizing dice related to a side bet includes having a computer readable medium with a program embodied thereon that is executable by a processor on a video gaming machine for performing the steps of (1) initiating a base game utilizing a representative deck of playing cards having four suits, each of the four suits having representative playing cards associated therewith of a varying rank, (2) receiving a side bet from a user participating in the base game utilizing the representative deck of playing cards, wherein the side bet corresponds to a side game having a triggering event based on a unique value associated with a plurality of the representative playing cards and the side game utilizes at least one representative dice having a plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one representative dice, (3) dealing at least two of the representative playing cards to the user participating in the base game, the at least two of the representative playing cards corresponding to the triggering event, and (4) causing, in at least one user attempt, the at least one representative dice to display one of the plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one representative dice, wherein the one of the plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one representative dice corresponds to a player payout on a payout scale associated with the side game.

[0019] Although the invention is illustrated and described herein as embodied in a method of utilizing dice related to a side bet, it is, nevertheless, not intended to be limited to the details shown because various modifications and structural changes may be made therein without departing from the spirit of the invention and within the scope and range of equivalents of the claims. Additionally, well-known elements of exemplary embodiments of the invention will not be described in detail or will be omitted so as not to obscure the relevant details of the invention.

[0020] Other features that are considered as characteristic for the invention are set forth in the appended claims. As required, detailed embodiments of the present invention are disclosed herein; however, it is to be understood that the disclosed embodiments are merely exemplary of the invention, which can be embodied in various forms. Therefore, specific structural and functional details disclosed herein are not to be interpreted as limiting, but merely as a basis for the claims and as a representative basis for teaching one of ordinary skill in the art to variously employ the present invention in virtually any appropriately detailed structure. Further, the terms and phrases used herein are not intended to be limiting; but rather, to provide an understandable description of the invention. While the specification concludes with claims defining the features of the invention that are regarded as novel, it is believed that the invention will be better understood from a consideration of the following description in conjunction with the drawing figures, in which like reference numerals are carried forward. The figures of the drawings are not drawn to scale.

[0021] Before the present invention is disclosed and described, it is to be understood that the terminology used herein is for the purpose of describing particular embodiments only and is not intended to be limiting. The terms “a” or “an,” as used herein, are defined as one or more than one. The term “plurality,” as used herein, is defined as two or more than two. The term “another,” as used herein, is defined as at least a second or more. The terms “including” and/or “having,” as used herein, are defined as comprising (i.e., open language). The term “coupled,” as used herein, is defined as connected, although not necessarily directly, and not necessarily mechanically. The term “providing” is defined herein in its broadest sense, e.g., bringing/coming into physical existence, making available, using, and/or supplying to someone or something, in whole or in multiple parts at once or over a period of time.

[0022] As used herein, the terms “about” or “approximately” apply to all numeric values, whether or not explicitly indicated. These terms generally refer to a range of numbers that one of skill in the art would consider equivalent to the recited values (i.e., having the same function or result). In many instances these terms may include numbers that are rounded to the nearest significant figure. In this document, the term “longitudinal” should be understood to mean in a direction corresponding to an elongated direction of the dice shaker. The terms “program,” “software application,” and the like as used herein, are defined as a sequence of instructions designed for execution on a computer system. A “program,” “computer program,” or “software application” may include a subroutine, a function, a procedure, an object method, an object implementation, an executable application, an applet, a servlet, a source code, an object code, a shared library/dynamic load library and/or other sequence of instructions designed for execution on a computer system.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0023] The accompanying figures, where like reference numerals refer to identical or functionally similar elements throughout the separate views and which together with the detailed description below are incorporated in and form part of the specification, serve to further illustrate various embodiments and explain various principles and advantages all in accordance with the present invention.

[0024] FIG. 1 is a downward-looking top view of an exemplary table used in conjunction with one embodiment of a method of utilizing dice related to a side bet;

[0025] FIG. 2 is a process flow diagram depicting the steps included in a method of utilizing dice in connection with a side bet in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention; and

[0026] FIG. 3 is a block diagram of an exemplary data processing system that may be implemented as a video gaming device carrying out the method of FIG. 2.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0027] While the specification concludes with claims defining the features of the invention that are regarded as novel, it is believed that the invention will be better understood from a consideration of the following description in conjunction with the drawing figures, in which like reference numerals are carried forward. It is to be understood that the disclosed embodiments are merely exemplary of the invention, which can be embodied in various forms.

[0028] The present invention provides an exciting side game method used in connection with a base card game wherein the optional side bet initiates a side game utilizing at least one dice that enables the player to obtain a significant payout based on a roll of the dice. As used herein, the term “dice” shall be defined as referring to both the singular “die” and plurality “dice.” Embodiments of the invention include this side game only be activated upon the happening of the player obtaining a 21 in the game “Blackjack.” Thereafter, the numerical value of the dice dictates the player payout associated with the side game. The term “side game” is defined as any additional action or series of actions taken by the user in connection with an action or series of actions associated with a base game.

[0029] Referring now to FIG. 1 in connection with the process flow diagram shown in FIGS. 2 and 3, one embodiment of the present invention is shown depicted. More specifically, FIG. 1 depicts an exemplary Blackjack table 100 for the present invention to be carried out on. In other embodiments, the present invention may be carried out on another gaming table operable to be used with playing cards, an electronic processing assembly having a display, and the like. The base game may be Blackjack, poker, or other game utilizing playing cards. FIG. 1 shows several advantageous features of the present invention, but, as will be described below, the invention can be provided in several shapes, sizes, combinations of features and components, and varying numbers and functions of the components.

[0030] The first example of a method of utilizing dice in a side bet, as shown in FIGS. 1-3, includes providing a table 100 used to support playing cards, an electronic processing assembly with a display operable to display “representative playing cards” (i.e., a visual depiction of images emulating playing cards). As shown in FIG. 2, the method may begin at step 200 and immediately proceed to the step 202 of providing at least one deck of playing cards. The term “deck of playing cards,” without the modifier “representative,” is defined as physical cards having four suits (e.g., spades, hearts, diamonds, clubs), with each of the four suits having playing cards associated therewith of a varying rank (e.g., 2, 3, 4, etc.). In most embodiments, the deck of playing cards includes at least 52 playing cards with each suit having 13 ranks associated therewith. When the present invention is used with a base game of Blackjack, each of the four suits of

the playing cards includes the aforementioned thirteen ranks that have at least one value from 1 through 11 in association with the base game. Said another way, the playing card “two” has a value of “2,” the playing card “jack” has a value of “10,” and the playing card “ace” has a value of “1” and/or “11.” An exemplary deck of playing cards 102 are depicted in FIG. 1, but said cards 102 may be located and/or covered in other areas and/or dealt using various devices such as a shoe, electronic shoe, or a dispensing or shuffling device and/or by hand.

[0031] Next, the process continues to step 204 of placing a primary bet, e.g., wager 118, used in connection with the base game. If the base game is Blackjack, as shown in FIG. 1, this would entail placing a wager 118 in the portion 108a-n associated with each player participating in the base game and/or placing the side bet. In some embodiments of the present invention, as is the custom in most gaming applications, the placing of the primary bet is a prerequisite to the player being able to place the side bet. Alternatively, however, the primary bet may not be required to place the side bet as the administrator may give the option to the viewing public of the base game to place the side bet.

[0032] The next step 206 of the present invention includes placing a side bet associated with the base game that utilizes at least one deck of playing cards. The term “side bet” is an optional wager placed in connection with a base game wager and is generally considered a risk of against an outcome of a future event. As shown in FIG. 1, this may include a sum of money represented with one or more chips 104. In other embodiments, this may include other objects of value or points utilized in a point-scoring system. Preferably, the table 100 will have various portions 106a-n demarcated for the placement of the side bet, wherein the letter “n” represents any number of side betting portions typically dictated by the amount of players or base game bet portions 108a-n in the base game.

[0033] Advantageously, the side bet placed by the player corresponds to a side game having a triggering event based on a unique value associated with a plurality of the playing cards or representative playing cards used in the base game. The term “unique value” is any numerical value or characteristic associated with the playing cards that is not effectuated by every playing card at any one given hand. In the preferred embodiment, the unique value is a natural blackjack. Said another way, when used with the base game Blackjack, if the total associated numerical value of the first two cards equals 21 based on a ten, a jack, a queen, or a king, and an ace, the triggering event has been satisfied and the side game is initiated for only those who participating in the placement of the side bet/wager. In other embodiments, the unique value is 21 regardless of how many or the type of playing cards it takes to reach the value of 21. In further embodiments, the unique value may be based on the characteristic of the playing cards dealt to a player, e.g., a pair, consecutive cards, or cards of the same suit, or if more than two cards are utilized, then a full-house (three of one playing card rank, plus 2 of another playing card rank), a flush (five playing cards of the same suit), or other poker hands within a poker hand hierarchy as described herein.

[0034] Advantageously, the side game utilizes at least one dice having a plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one dice. FIG. 1 depicts exemplary dice 110 used in connection with the present invention. Contrary to many other known side bet games, utilizing dice that the player or

other party can manipulate to ascertain an increased payout to the player creates an additional layer of excitement to the base game that is desired by many players and gaming entities alike. When this payout is associated with a scoring system typically utilized in Blackjack for the ease of understanding for the player, e.g., dice total of 21 as desired in the standard base game of Blackjack, that excitement is only exacerbated.

[0035] In one embodiment, the plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one dice is an accumulated value of at least 21. Said another way, the dice employed with the use of the side game are of a polygonal shape and total at least a numeral value of 21. In the preferred embodiment, the method utilizes at least 4 standard hexagonal dice each having numerical values ranging from 1-6, with a numerical value placed on each face of the dice. This not only lowers the cost associated with carrying out the present invention—as standard dice are mass produced—but it also creates a more interactive side game because there are more dice being manipulated. Utilizing at least four standard six-sided dice also advantageously permits the combined dice value of the four dice to achieve a possible total value of 21. This provides the ability of the four dice to overlap with the valuation of the playing cards used in the base game Blackjack. As mentioned, this creates an easy to understand and remember side game that utilizes a payout scale associated with the value system in Blackjack, i.e., the closer the dice value gets to 21, without going over, the higher the player payout is. In other embodiments of the present invention, however, a single icosikahenagonal or icosihenagonal dice, i.e., a dice having 21 side faces, may be utilized with each side face having an associated numerical value. In further embodiments, another polygonal shaped dice with varying numerical ranges and/or unique values may be utilized.

[0036] After the side bet is placed in step 206, the process continues to step 208 of dealing at least two of the playing cards to at least one user participating in the base game. These playing cards are from the aforementioned at least one deck employed by the base game. The user may advantageously be the at least one player participating in the base game. In other embodiments, however, the user may be the administrator (e.g., dealer), player, or other party participating in or connected with the base game.

[0037] After the at least two playing cards are dealt to the user, the next step 210 includes inquiring as to whether the at least two playing cards correspond to the triggering event, i.e., a unique value associated with a plurality of playing cards. If the answer to the inquiry is “no” then, as reflected in step 212, the base game carries out in accordance with its rules and the side bet is collected by the administrator of the base game, e.g., a casino, or otherwise lost by the player. Alternatively, the side bet can be collected before the base game is carried out and the side game may be initiated and carried before the base game is carried out. For example, FIG. 1 depicts a base game of Blackjack carrying out an exemplary method in accordance with the present invention. As shown in FIG. 1, a player is dealt two cards 112, e.g., an ace of clubs and a king of clubs, corresponding to the triggering event, e.g., a natural blackjack. Therefore, the player would then be eligible to participate in the side game and earn a payout with odds preferably above or on par with the odds associated with the base game. In some embodiments of the present invention, the triggering event will be based on one or both of the dealer’s cards 114 and/or the player’s cards 112 to give the player incentive to place a side bet on every round of betting

associated with the base game. The base game of Blackjack will then be carried out in accordance with standard house rules known by those of skill in the art. After step 212, the process terminates in step 220.

[0038] If the answer to the inquiry in step 210 is “yes,” i.e., the at least two playing cards correspond to the triggering event as depicted in FIG. 1, then the process continues to step 214 of initiating the side game and dispensing or manipulating (e.g., to move or control with a limb of a user, with an apparatus, or with the assistance of an electronic device), or otherwise causing, in at least one user attempt, the at least one dice to display one of the plurality of numerical values associated therewith. In some embodiments, the dice may be dispensed by a user using a dice shaker or with a user’s hand. In other embodiments, the dice may be displayed after the user initiates a “start-stop roll” icon on an electronic device or with using voice activation and/or an emulated dice roll movement that is recognized by an electronic device. To achieve maximum excitement, it is preferred that the player manipulates the dice to display a numerical value, but in other embodiments, the administrator may manipulate the dice. As discussed above, when four dice are utilized in connection with the side game, all four dice are manipulated or otherwise caused to display one of the plurality of numerical values associated therewith to generate a combined dice value. In one embodiment, it is the most upwardly facing face of the dice that is used to determine the combined dice value. Said another way, it is the face of the dice that is parallel and noncoplanar with a ground surface upon which the dice rest (excluding the face flush with the ground surface) that is used to determine the combined dice value. In other embodiments, another face of the dice may be chosen to determine the combined dice value.

[0039] Moreover, in one embodiment the user uses only one attempt to cause the at least one dice to display a numerical value associated therewith. In other embodiments, the user may take more than one attempt to manipulate, dispense, or otherwise cause one or more dice to display a numerical value. Said another way, the user may have more than one chance to dispense one or more dice to achieve a particular numerical value (e.g., two dice rolls from one or more dice to achieve a 21) or may have one attempt to manipulate the dice per every dice used in connection with the side game (e.g., out of three dice used with the side bet, a user rolls one dice to display a numerical value, then a user rolls a second dice to display a numerical value, and then a user rolls a third dice to display a numerical value).

[0040] With reference specifically to FIG. 1, in one embodiment of the present invention the dice used in connection with the side game are caused to display one of their numerical values using a self-contained dice holding container 116. Many gaming establishments require that any dice utilized on their tables either be outside of the reach or access of the player’s hand(s) and/or be within a controlled environment. Advantageously, the present invention may include a container 116 that encapsulates the dice used in the side game and, when the player qualifies for participating in the side game, he or she manipulates (e.g., by depressing a button or portion of the container 116 or by shaking the container 116) the container 116 to display one of the numerical values associated with the dice 110. In one embodiment, one or more portions of the container 116 holding the dice 110 are transparent or translucent to permit the user to visually see their movement and the corresponding numerical values after

manipulation. This permits the method of not only complying with regulations established by the gaming establishment, but also provides excitement to the player by creating an interactive and visually stimulating process. In other embodiments, the dice 110 may be rolled solely by a user's hand(s) or with a container that is not self-contained (i.e., a device that does not encapsulate the dice therein).

[0041] After the dice 110 have been manipulated in step 214, step 216 includes adding the displayed numerical value (s) associated with the at least one dice to generate a combined dice value. If only one dice is used, the combined dice value will be the value of only the face displayed by the single dice. If multiple dice are used, each value associated with the displayed face of the dice will be added. In some embodiments, the dice may only utilize characteristics of playing cards, e.g., clubs, spades, etc., and that is the value that is displayed. Using characteristics associated with playing cards makes it particularly advantageous when using the present invention in connection with the game of poker.

[0042] Next, step 218 includes comparing the numerical values associated with the at least one dice manipulated by the user to either a payout scale associated with the side game to determine a player payout or a qualifying value associated with a progressive jackpot. With reference below to Table 1 depicting an exemplary pay scale, a displayed numerical value associated with one dice or a combined dice value (left column)—totaling dice values up to 24—corresponds to the odds associated with the player payout (right column). Said another way, the value of the dice dictates the amount the gaming establishment or administrator pays the player based on the side bet. For example, taking the second row of Table 1, if a user placed a side bet of \$20 and rolled dice that indicated a value of 6, the final player payout would be \$200 or $\$20 \times 10$. Taking another example, if a user placed a side bet of \$10, rolled dice that indicated a value of 21, and (as shown in FIG. 1) receives a suited natural blackjack, the final player payout would be \$2000 or $\$10 \times 200$. In some embodiments of the present invention, the final payout is not monetary, but rather any other value system, e.g., points or qualifying for a future event or tournaments.

TABLE 1

Dice Value	Odds (Payout)
4-16 and 22-24	10-1
17	20-1
18	20-1
19	30-1
20	50-1
21, with user dealt a natural blackjack	100-1
21, with user dealt a suited natural blackjack	200-1
21, with user dealt a natural blackjack that includes an ace and king of hearts	1000-1

[0043] As Table 1 depicts, one embodiment of the present invention provides a payout scale that corresponds the numerical value of the dice to the basic premise associated with the game of Blackjack, or that the greater the value of the dice, without going over the value of 21, effectuates a higher payout. The pay scale in Table 1 is only an example of a preferred embodiment and other odds or dice values and ranges of dice values, along with corresponding characteristics associated with the at least two playing cards dealt in step

208, and player payouts may be varied without deviating from the spirit and scope of the present invention.

[0044] Advantageously, the pay scale in Table 1 can be seen having a significantly greater payout when the dice value corresponds with the maximum value achievable in the game of Blackjack, thereby creating a side game that is not only easy to understand, but also that is remarkable. The pay scale in Table 1 can also be seen including player payouts of an escalating value. Advantageously, as discussed, the escalating value is based on an increasing value of the single or combined dice value to emulate the aforementioned premise associated with the base game of Blackjack. After the step 218 is completed, the process may terminate in step 220. The steps 202, 204, 206, 208 are preferably carried out in the sequence shown in FIG. 2, but may vary in sequence without deviating from the spirit and scope of the present invention. An advantageous aspect of the present invention is side bet being a prerequisite to the participation in the side game. Said another way, the user can not participate in the side game without placing the side bet, thereby providing the administrator of the base game more revenue associated therewith.

[0045] While Table 1 provides exemplary payouts associated with a combined dice value, the combined dice value may also be used to determine whether a player qualifies for a progressive jackpot. Said another way, the combined dice value may be compared to a qualifying value for the progressive jackpot that increases based on all losing side bets over one or more tables. For example, if the player obtains a natural blackjack qualifying him or her for the side game, he or she will then roll the dice. If the combined dice value is 21 and the administrator of the side game has set the qualifying value to win the progressive jackpot at 21, the user will win the value of the progressive jackpot. Alternatively, the administrator may set the qualifying value as the user receiving an ace and king of hearts in the base game and rolling a 21 with the dice in order to win the progressive jackpot. Following in the above example, if the combined dice value is 20 and the administrator of the side game has set the qualifying value to win the progressive jackpot at 21, the user will not win the progressive jackpot and the side bet may be contributed to the progressive jackpot pool or portion thereof.

[0046] In another embodiment of the present invention, at least two dice are used with the side game and the dice values associated with the at least two dice correspond to one hand of a poker hand hierarchy having a player payout on a payout scale associated with the side game. Said another way, the payout from a user's dice roll is dictated by what values the dice display. Standard poker hand hierarchies are known in the art. For example, they range in increasing rank categories from "high card" (e.g., an ace), "a pair" (e.g., two jacks), "two pair" (e.g., two jacks and two fives), "three-of-a-kind" (e.g., three jacks), "straight" (e.g., a two, a three, a four, a five, and a six), "flush" (e.g., playing cards of the same suit), "full house" (e.g., two jacks and three eights), "four-of-a-kind" (e.g., four jacks), "straight flush" (e.g., a two, a three, a four, a five, and a six, all of the same suit), and a "royal flush" (e.g., a ten, a jack, a queen, a king, and an ace, all of the same suit). While only two dice may be used, it is preferable that 4-5 standard six-sided dice be used. In said manner, the user will cause the dice to display an associated value associated therewith. For example, if the side game is initiated based on a triggering event from the base game, the user will roll five dice. If the five dice display a two, a three, a four, a five, and

a six, the user has obtained a straight. A payout scale associated with the side game will have varying player payouts corresponding to varying poker hands on the standard known poker hand hierarchy. In alternative embodiments of this variation, four dice may be utilized, with each of the four dice corresponding to a suit and having thirteen sides corresponding to a rank used with the playing cards, e.g., two through an ace. Moreover, five dice may be utilized, with each of the five dice having thirteen sides corresponding to a rank used with the playing cards, in conjunction with four dice having four sides corresponding to the four suits associated with playing cards. Additionally, in an alternative embodiment of this variation the side game may utilize five dice with each of the five dice having thirteen sides corresponding to a rank used with the playing cards and an electronic display on each of the side faces that displays a randomly generated suit. The random generation of the suit may be activated by a motion sensor encapsulated within each dice such that the suit is generated by the roll of the dice and displays the suit upon the cessation in movement of the dice after being rolled. The number of dice and the number of faces associated therewith may vary without deviating from the scope of the present invention.

[0047] Alternatively, the present invention may be carried out such that the user causes, in at least one user attempt, the at least one dice to display one of the plurality of values associated with the at least one dice, wherein the displayed one of the plurality of values associated with the at least one dice correspond to a "side game player payout." The side game player payout is of an increasing value corresponding to a playing card value hierarchy associated with the base game. Said another way, the player payout and/or odds increases based on or corresponding to the rules of the playing card rank associated with the base game. For example, as shown above in Table 1, the greater numerical value of the dice increases the payout odds in portions of the payout scale up until the value of 21 is reached (i.e., the greatest numerical value that can be reached in Blackjack). In another example, the value associated with the dice may increase from five dice displaying two pairs, e.g., two threes and two fours, to five dice displaying five clubs, e.g., a flush, which in the base game of poker is an increase in value among the playing card value hierarchy. As such, a user that rolls the two pair will be compensated less than a user rolling the flush. Again, this side game player payout may correspond to a pay scale or may correspond to a progressive jackpot.

[0048] When the present invention is used with the base game Blackjack, the base game may be played using a Blackjack table 100, any amount of desired decks of cards, e.g. 4, 6, or 8, a self-contained shaker with four (4) dice, a pay table and/or progressive jackpot display. The blackjack table 100 may also have a rack card and/or felt on blackjack table explaining side game instructions and a corresponding pay table. The base game and side game can be played as live table game in a gaming establishment, e.g., a casino, a virtual table game in a gaming establishment or online over a network (e.g., using the Internet), or an electronic/slot machine game in a gaming establishment. Moreover, the present invention can also be carried out online over network or offline using a desktop computer, mobile device, tablet, a smartphone, or any other electronic processing device with or without wireless or LAN capabilities.

[0049] With reference to FIG. 3, the data processing system 300 may be a symmetric multiprocessor (SMP) system

including one or more processors 302 and 304 connected to system bus 306. Alternatively, a single processor system may be employed. Also, connected to system bus 306 is memory controller/cache 308, which provides an interface to local memory 310. An I/O bus bridge 338 is connected to system bus 306 and provides an interface to I/O bus 312. The memory controller/cache 308 and I/O bus bridge 338 may be integrated as depicted. The processors 302, 304 in conjunction with memory controller 308 control what data is stored in memory 310. The processor 302 and/or 304 and memory controller 308 can serve as a data counter for counting the rate of data flow to the memory 310 or from the memory 310 and can also count the total volume of data accessed to or from the memory 310. The processor 302 or 304 can also work in conjunction with any other memory device or storage location.

[0050] Peripheral component interconnect (PCI) bus bridge 314 connected to I/O bus 312 provides an interface to PCI local bus 316 that may be employed for one or more of the displays utilized for displaying the representative images of the playing cards, dice, or any other image associated with the steps of the present invention. In addition, a number of modems 318, or wireless cards, may be connected to PCI bus 316. Typical PCI bus implementations will support four PCI expansion slots or add-in connectors. PCI includes, but is not necessarily limited to, PCI-X and PCI Express components. Communication links to a network of computers or computing devices used to carry out the present invention over a network between an administrator and a player may be provided through the modem 318 and network adapter 320 connected to PCI local bus 316 through add-in boards.

[0051] Additional PCI bus bridges 322 and 324 provide interfaces for additional PCI buses 326 and 328, from which additional modems or network adapters may be supported. In this manner, the data processing system 300 allows connections to a multiple network of computers and/or computing devices. A graphics adapter 330 and hard disk 332 may also be connected to I/O bus 312 as depicted, either directly or indirectly to achieve a more visually appealing display of the representative playing cards and/or dice.

[0052] Those of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that the hardware depicted in FIG. 3 may vary. For example, other peripheral devices, such as optical disk drives and the like, also may be used in addition to or in place of the hardware depicted. The depicted example is not meant to imply architectural limitations with respect to the present invention.

[0053] The steps of the present invention, which are explained in more detail above, can be embodied in a computer program that is executable by one of the above-described processors 302, 304 that may be on (e.g., communicatively coupled to) a video gaming machine. Computer programs (also called computer control logic) are stored in memory such as main memory 310, removable storage drive 334, removable media 336, hard disk 332, and signals. Such computer programs, when executed, enable the computer system to perform the features of the present invention as discussed herein. In particular, the computer programs, when executed, enable the processor 302 and/or 304 to perform the steps of the present invention.

[0054] In this document, the terms "computer program medium," "computer usable medium," and "computer readable medium" are used to generally refer to media such as main memory 310, removable storage drive 334, removable media 336, hard disk 332, and/or signals. These computer

program products are means for providing software to the computer system. The computer readable medium allows the computer system to read data, instructions, messages or message packets, and other computer readable information from the computer readable medium. The computer readable medium, for example, may include non-volatile memory, such as Floppy, ROM, Flash memory, Disk drive memory, CD-ROM, and other permanent storage. It is useful, for example, for transporting information, such as data and computer instructions, between computer systems. Furthermore, the computer readable medium may include computer readable information in a transitory state medium such as a network link and/or a network interface, including a wired or wireless network, which allows a computer to read such computer readable information.

[0055] As such, the video gaming machine implemented with carrying out the above-described steps may include a computing means, e.g., a processor, and a storing means, e.g., a memory. The processor is operable to run one or more programs/applications and interfaces associated with the video gaming machine or stored on the memory in order to effectuate the data transfer and communications required by the present invention. The video gaming machine may also have other components or features that may include an image capturing element, lights, multiple displays, or other transducers.

[0056] While the present invention is primarily discussed in conjunction with the use of dice employed with the side game, alternative embodiments of the present invention provide for variations that do not include dice. For example, in some alternative embodiments of the present invention, when the triggering event is met the player: (1) spins a substantially circular structure about a fixed pivot such that when the circular structure stops spinning, a pointer is directed to indicia depicted on a backdrop that represents a numerical value corresponding to a player payout; (2) activates a random number generator representing a numerical value corresponding to a player payout; or (3) spins a substantially circular structure about a fixed pivot—similar to the game roulette—such that when the circular structure stops spinning, ball falls into a recess having indicia depicted thereon that represents a numerical value corresponding to a player payout.

[0057] A method of utilizing dice related to a side bet in connection with base game has been disclosed that creates excitement and provides significant payouts that both attract users to gaming establishments and creates a more enjoyable playing experience when the player participates in the base game. The placement of the side bet initiates a possible side game utilizing a plurality of dice that enable the player to obtain a significant payout based on a roll of the dice. The side game is advantageously activated upon the happening of the player obtaining a threshold event, e.g., obtaining a 21 in the game “Blackjack.” Thereafter, the numerical value of the dice dictates the player payout associated with the side game.

1. A method of utilizing dice related to a side bet, the method comprising:

providing at least one deck of playing cards, the at least one deck of playing cards having four suits with each of the four suits having playing cards associated therewith of a varying rank;

providing a dice-shaking apparatus sized and shaped to house and retain at least one physical dice, the at least one physical dice operably configured to generate a ran-

dom dice outcome capable of equaling a number within a numerical range of 17-21;

placing a side bet associated with a base game utilizing the at least one deck of playing cards, the side bet corresponding to a side game having a triggering event based on a unique value associated with a plurality of the playing cards, the side game utilizing the at least one physical dice having a plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one physical dice;

dealing at least two of the playing cards to at least one user participating in the base game, the at least two playing cards corresponding to the triggering event;

causing with the dice-shaking apparatus, in, and as part of, the side game and in at least one user attempt, the at least one physical dice to roll, stop, and be supported by a surface to display one of the plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one physical dice; and adding the displayed one of the plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one physical dice to generate a combined dice value, the combined dice value equaling the number within the numerical range of 17-21 that corresponds to at least one of a player payout on a payout scale and a qualifying value for a progressive jackpot associated with the side game.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein:

each of the four suits of the playing cards includes thirteen ranks, the thirteen ranks having at least one value from 1 through 11 in association with the base game.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein:

the unique value is a natural blackjack.

4. (canceled)

5. The method according to claim 3, wherein the side game utilizes at least four physical dice each having a plurality values associated with each of the at least four physical dice and further comprising:

causing, in, and as part of, the side game and in the at least one user attempt, each of the at least four physical dice to roll, stop, and be supported by a surface to display one of the plurality of numerical values associated with each of the at least four dice; and

adding the displayed one of the plurality of numerical values associated with the at least four physical dice to generate the combined dice value.

6. The method according to claim 5, wherein:

the combined dice value ranges from 4-24.

7. The method according to claim 5, wherein:

the payout scale includes a portion of player payouts of an escalating value based on an increasing value of the combined dice value.

8. The method according to claim 1, wherein:

the side bet is a prerequisite to the side game.

9. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

causing, in the at least one user attempt, at least two physical dice to each display one of the plurality of values associated with the at least two physical dice, the one of the plurality of values associated with the each of the at least two physical dice corresponding to one hand of a poker hand hierarchy having at least one of a player payout on a payout scale and a qualifying value for a progressive jackpot associated with the side game.

10. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

causing, in the at least one user attempt, the at least one physical dice to display the one of the plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one physi-

cal dice using the dice-shaking apparatus, having the at least one physical dice self-contained therein, the dice shaking apparatus encapsulating the at least one physical dice.

11. The method according to claim **1**, further comprising: dealing the at least two of the playing cards to at least one player participating in the base game.

12. A method of utilizing dice related to a side bet, the method comprising:

providing at least one deck of playing cards, the at least one deck of playing cards having four suits with varying ranks ranging from 1-11;

providing at least one of an electronic and mechanically-actuated device sized and shaped to house and retain at least four standard six-sided physical dice, the at least four standard six-sided physical dice operably configured to generate a random dice outcome that equals a number within a numerical range of 17-21;

placing a side bet associated with a base game utilizing the at least one deck of playing cards, the side bet corresponding to a side game having a triggering event based on a value of 21 associated with a plurality of the playing cards, the side game utilizing at least four standard six-sided physical dice;

initiating the side game by dealing at least two of the playing cards corresponding to the triggering event to at least one player participating in the base game; and manipulating with the at least one of the electronic and mechanically-actuated device, in, and as part of, the side game and in at least one user attempt, the at least four physical dice to roll, stop, and be supported by a surface to display the numerical values associated therewith to generate a combined dice value, the combined dice value equaling the number within the numerical range of 17-21 that corresponds to a player payout on a payout scale associated with the side game.

13. The method according to claim **12**, further comprising: manipulating, in the at least one user attempt, the at least four physical dice to display the combined dice value in a self-contained dice holding container.

14. The method according to claim **12**, wherein: the payout scale includes a portion of player payouts of an escalating value, the escalating value of the portion of player payouts increasing based on a playing card scoring hierarchy associated with the base game.

15. The method according to claim **12**, wherein: the triggering event is based on a natural blackjack.

16. A computer readable medium having embodied thereon a program, the program being executable by a processor on a video gaming machine for performing a method of utilizing dice related to a side bet, the method comprising:

initiating a base game utilizing a representative deck of playing cards having four suits, each of the four suits having representative playing cards associated therewith of a varying rank;

receiving a side bet from a user participating in the base game utilizing the representative deck of playing cards, the side bet corresponding to a side game having a triggering event based on a unique value associated with a plurality of the representative playing cards, the side game utilizing at least one representative dice having a plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one representative dice that are capable of reaching a number within a numerical range of 17-21;

dealing at least two of the representative playing cards to the user participating in the base game, the at least two of the representative playing cards corresponding to the triggering event;

causing, in, and as part of, the side game and in at least one user attempt, the at least one representative dice to display one of the plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one representative dice; and

adding the one of the plurality of numerical values associated with the at least one representative dice to generate a combined dice value, the combined dice value equaling the number within the numerical range of 17-21 that corresponds to at least one of a player payout on a payout scale and a qualifying value for a progressive jackpot associated with the side game.

17. The computer readable medium according to claim **16**, wherein:

each of the four suits of the representative playing cards includes thirteen ranks, the thirteen ranks having at least one value from 1 through 11 in association with the base game.

18. The computer readable medium according to claim **17**, wherein:

the unique value is a natural blackjack.

19. The computer readable medium according to claim **16**, wherein the side game utilizes at least four representative dice each having a plurality values associated with each of the at least four representative dice and further comprising:

causing, in, and as part of, the side game and in the at least one user attempt, each of the at least four representative dice to display one of the plurality of numerical values associated with each of the at least four representative dice in the side game; and

adding the displayed one of the plurality of numerical values associated with the at least four dice to generate the combined dice value, the combined dice value ranging from 4-24.

20. A method of utilizing dice related to a side bet, the method comprising:

providing at least one deck of playing cards, the at least one deck of playing cards having four suits with each of the four suits having playing cards associated therewith of a varying rank;

providing at least one of an electronic and mechanically-actuated device sized and shaped to house and retain at least one physical dice having a plurality of numerical values associated with the at least physical one dice, the at least one physical dice operably configured to generate a random dice outcome that equals a number within a numerical range of 17-21;

placing a side bet associated with a base game utilizing the at least one deck of playing cards, the side bet corresponding to a side game having a triggering event based on a unique value associated with a plurality of the playing cards, the side game utilizing the at least one physical;

dealing at least two of the playing cards to at least one user participating in the base game, the at least two playing cards corresponding to the triggering event; and

causing with the at least one of an electronic and mechanically-actuated device, in, and as part of, of the side game and in at least one user attempt, the at least one physical dice to roll, stop, and be supported by a surface to generate the random dice outcome that equals the number

within the numerical range of 17-21 that corresponds to a side game player payout of an increasing value corresponding to a playing card value hierarchy associated with the base game.

* * * * *