

SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR CONDUCTING A DRAGON POKER GAME
WITH A JACKPOT

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The embodiments of the present invention relate to a dragon poker game involving four thirteen-card hands provided from a conventional card deck of 52 playing cards plus two jokers played by a player against a dealer and a “Dragon” hand.

BACKGROUND

[0002] Pai Gow is one of the most popular casino games offered in casinos today. Pai Gow conventionally involves players and a dealer setting seven-card hands into a two-card low hand and five-card high hand. Payouts are based on a comparison of each player’s two-card low hand against the dealer’s two-card hand and each player’s five-card high hand against the dealer’s five-card high hand. If the player wins both hands, the player wins the wager; if the dealer wins both hands, the player loses the wager; and if each the dealer and the player win one hand, the player pushes the wager. The Dragon poker game detailed herein involves thirteen-card hands which a player and dealer set into a five-card high rear hand, five-card middle hand and three-card low front hand. A third hand deemed a Dragon hand is also set into a five-card rear back hand, five-card middle hand and three-card low front hand.

[0003] Advantageously, the embodiments of the present invention are suitable for electronic gaming devices and a live table game environment.

SUMMARY

[0004] Accordingly, one method of conducting a game of poker according to the embodiments of the present invention comprises dealing four face-down, thirteen-card hands from a conventional deck of 52 playing cards plus two jokers. The two remaining cards are used for a bonus hand. A dealer and player each receive one of the four face-down, thirteen-card hands and a third hand is designated as a Dragon hand (i.e., fictional player). The dealer and player each set their hands with a five-card back hand, five-card middle hand and a three-card front hand where the rank of the rear hand must outrank the middle hand and the middle hand must outrank the front hand. In one embodiment, the player sets his hand first

followed by the dealer hand which is set according to a “house way” followed by the Dragon hand which is also set according to the house way. Points are earned based on a comparison of the player’s, dealer’s and Dragon’s back hands, middle hands and front hands, respectively. Points are earned for winning at least two of the three set hands, and also for bonus hands. Points equate to money as determined by an operator (e.g., 1 point equals \$10).

[0005] In one embodiment, a jackpot is generated when the Dragon wins two or three set hands resulting in the player and the dealer being required to pay money into a running jackpot which carries over to subsequent plays of the game until the player or dealer wins at least two of the three set hands and wins the jackpot.

[0006] The embodiments of the present invention are well-suited for live games of chance or electronic systems such as standalone gaming devices, networked gaming devices and online systems accessible via player terminals such as laptops, desktops and hand held devices (e.g., smart phones and tablets). With online systems, players in remote locations may access and play against a virtual/simulated dealer according to the same rules as the live embodiment.

[0007] Other variations, embodiments and features of the present invention will become evident from the following detailed description, drawings and claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] Fig. 1 illustrates a block diagram of a standalone electronic gaming device for conducting a Dragon poker game according to the embodiments of the present invention;

[0009] Fig. 2 illustrates a block diagram of a wireless system accessible by a mobile device for conducting a Dragon poker game according to the embodiments of the present invention;

[0010] Figs. 3a-3h illustrate an exemplary play of Dragon poker according to one of the embodiments of the present invention;

[0011] Fig. 4 illustrates a points list according to the embodiments of the present invention;

[0012] Fig. 5 illustrates a game scoreboard according to the embodiments of the present invention;

[0013] Figs. 6a-6e illustrate an exemplary play of Dragon poker according to one of the embodiments of the present invention;

[0014] Fig. 7 illustrates an updated game scoreboard according to the embodiments of the present invention;

[0015] Figs. 8a-8e illustrate an exemplary play of Dragon poker according to one of the embodiments of the present invention;

[0016] Fig. 9 illustrates an updated game scoreboard according to the embodiments of the present invention;

[0017] Figs. 10a-10f illustrate an exemplary play of Dragon poker according to one of the embodiments of the present invention;

[0018] Fig. 11 illustrates an exemplary two-card bonus pay table according to the embodiments of the present invention; and

[0019] Fig. 12 illustrates a flow chart detailing one method of conducting a game according to the embodiments of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0020] For the purposes of promoting an understanding of the principles in accordance with the embodiments of the present invention, reference will now be made to the embodiments illustrated in the drawings and specific language will be used to describe the same. It will nevertheless be understood that no limitation of the scope of the invention is thereby intended. Any alterations and further modifications of the inventive feature illustrated herein, and any additional applications of the principles of the invention as illustrated herein, which would normally occur to one skilled in the relevant art and having possession of this disclosure, are to be considered within the scope of the invention claimed.

[0021] The embodiments of the present invention may be facilitated by an electronic gaming device whereby a single player plays against the electronic gaming device's processor as described herein. A block diagram of the electronic gaming device 200 is shown in Fig. 1. The exemplary electronic gaming device 200 may include a central processing unit (CPU) also deemed a processor 205 which controls the electronic gaming device 200 based on instructions stored in program read-only memory (ROM) 210 and pay table ROM 215. Program ROM 210 stores executable instructions related to the operation of the gaming device and which are generally permanent. CPU 205 may be connected to a video controller 220 which provides output to one or more video displays 225. Similarly, an audio controller 230 provides

audio output as dictated by the CPU 205 through speakers 235. The aforementioned components, and others, may be attached to a circuit board forming a motherboard. In another embodiment, the electronic gaming device may be linked to a central game server which allows players to select from a number of games via the electronic gaming device 200. In such an embodiment, one or more processors integrated into the central server control the gaming device 200 based on instructions stored in program read-only memory.

[0022] A user interface 240 may respond to buttons on button panel or display incorporating touch screen technology or any other devices providing means for users to communicate with, and instruct, the electronic gaming device 200. Wager memory 245 stores an amount of money/credits deposited into the electronic gaming device 200 by a player and specific wager information related to each play of the electronic gaming device 200. Payout system 250 includes a coupon printer or similar device for receiving money/coupon from the electronic gaming device 200.

[0023] Those skilled in the art will recognize that the configuration and features of the electronic gaming device 200 disclosed herein are exemplary and may be altered in any number of ways without impacting the embodiments of the present invention.

[0024] Fig. 2 shows a block diagram of a wireless system 300 which may be used to facilitate remote play of the blackjack game according to the embodiments of the present invention. The wireless system 300 comprises a game server 305, including one or more processors 310 running game software, and remote devices (e.g., smart phones, laptops, desktops, etc.) 315 configured to access said game server 305 facilitating game play on the remote devices 315.

[0025] Fig. 12 shows a flow chart 900 detailing one method of conducting a game according to the embodiments of the present invention. At 905, four hands comprising 13 cards each are dealt from a conventional deck of fifty-two playing cards and two Jokers. At 910, the player selects a player hand, dealer/house hand and Dragon (or “San”) hand. The fourth hand is discarded or alternatively used as a replacement hand for one of the other hands. At 915, the player sets his thirteen cards into a five-card rear hand, five-card middle hand and three-card front hand such that the rear hand must outrank the middle hand and the middle hand must outrank the front hand. At 920, the dealer hand is revealed and set according to a pre-established “house way.” At 925, the player’s rear hand, middle hand and front hand are compared to the dealer’s rear hand, middle hand and front hand, respectively, to determine

which hands have the highest poker rank. The Jokers are deemed wild cards. At 930, the Dragon hand is revealed and set according to the house way. At 935, the winning rear hand, middle hand and front hand from step 925 are compared to the Dragon's rear hand, middle hand and front hand, respectively. At 940, points are awarded for winning two or more hands and bonus hands (i.e., strong poker hands). To win the player or dealer must win at least two of the three hands. If the Dragon hand wins at least two of the three hands, the player and dealer pay into a running jackpot. If each the player, dealer and Dragon win one of the three hands, the player pays the house one or more game units – this creates the house edge. The house wins all ties and the Dragon wins ties with the player. If the Dragon set hands win two or more set hands and/or bonus hand points, the player and dealer pay into the running jackpot. If player or dealer set hands result in bonus hand points, the player pays the dealer or vice versa but the Dragon does not pay bonuses. Dragon bonuses can be offset by player or dealer bonuses earned during the same hand of the game. Bonus points are paid whether the running jackpot is paid or not.

[0026] Figs. 3a-3h show a play of a game according to the embodiments of the present invention. As shown in Fig. 3a, four poker hands 400, 405, 410 and 415 are initially dealt (by a dealer or processor) with each hand 400-415 comprising 13 cards. The four poker hands 400-415 are dealt from a conventional deck of 52 playing cards having four suits comprising spades, clubs, diamonds and hearts with each suit having cards of rank Ace, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, Jack, Queen and King. In one embodiment, two Jokers are also included in the deck of playing cards and are deemed wild. One hand 400 is selected by, or provided to, the player, one hand 415 is selected by, or provided to, the dealer/house 415, one hand 410 is designated as the Dragon (or “San”) hand and a final hand 405 is discarded. Optionally, the fourth hand may be played rather than discarded. In one embodiment, the player selects each of the hands for the player, house and Dragon. In alternative embodiments, the dealer may select the hands, the hands may be selected randomly or some combination of the player, dealer and/or randomness may be used. When two Jokers are incorporated into the deck, the two remaining cards 6♠ 411, 6♦ 412 are used to determine a pair bonus bet. The player may place an optional pair bonus bet prior to the hands 400-415 being revealed. If the bonus cards 411, 412 form a pair, the player wins the pair bonus bet and is paid according to a pre-established bonus payout table (a winner in this instance). Fig. 3b shows the player hand 400, Dragon hand 410 and dealer hand 415 revealed. Fig. 3c shows the player hand 400 and dealer hand 415 each being set into a back five-card hand 400-1, 415-1, middle five-card hand 400-2, 415-2 and front three-card hand 400-3, 415-3 wherein the back five-card

hand must outrank the middle five-card hand and the middle five-card hand must outrank the front three-card hand. In one embodiment, the dealer hand 415 and Dragon hand 410 are set according to a pre-established “house way” as determined by the house (in one embodiment, the house way is modeled after the Pai Gow house way). Fig. 3c also shows the set hands of the player and dealer being compared. In this example, the player wins the front three-card hand and middle five-card hand while the dealer wins the five-card back hand. Winning is determined by conventional poker rankings. Fig. 3d shows the Dragon set hands 410-1, 410-2 and 410-3 being compared to the player set hands 400-1, 400-2 and dealer set hand 415-3, respectively. As shown, the player front hand 400-1 wins against the Dragon front hand 410-1, the Dragon middle hand 410-2 wins against the player middle hand 400-2 and the dealer back hand 415-3 wins against the Dragon back hand 410-3. Fig. 3d notes bonus points (+2) for the front player hand 400-1 comprising 3 of a kind (i.e., 3 Aces) and bonus points (+3) for the back Dragon hand 410-3 comprising four of a kind (i.e., four eights).

[0027] Fig. 3e shows that the Dragon hand 410 won the hand since 2 of the 3 set Dragon hands 410-1, 410-2 had the highest rank amongst the player, dealer and Dragon. Figs. 3f, 3g and 3h show a point tabulation comprising points for bonus hands, as referenced above, and points (+2) for the Dragon for winning 2 of the 3 set hands. Points may be earned for high ranking set hands and winning at least 2 of the 3 set hands as depicted in Fig. 4. List 450 lists exemplary bonus points and winning 2 and 3 of the set hands. As shown in Figs. 3f, 3g and 3h, the dealer pays the Dragon running jackpot five units; the player pays the running jackpot three units (five units earned by the dragon minus two units earned by the player); and the dealer pays the player two earned units. Thus, if units are \$10, the running jackpot is at \$80.

[0028] Fig. 5 shows a game scoreboard 475 which tracks hands won by the house (H), player (P) and Dragon (D). For example, P2 means the player won two of the set hands that play of the game while H3 means the house won all three set hands. The scoreboard 475 is configured such that each row 476 records a game play (i.e., hand). As shown, the scoreboard 475 comprises 10 rows 476. In a live game the scoreboard is positioned proximate the game table and includes a dealer input interface for the dealer to input results of each game play. The scoreboard for the live table is similar to a Baccarat display. Row 476-1 shows the results of the hand shown in Figs. 3a through 3h.

[0029] Figs. 6a-6e show an exemplary play of Dragon poker according to one of the embodiments of the present invention. As shown in Fig. 6a, four poker hands 500, 505, 510 and 515 are initially dealt (by a dealer or processor) with each hand 500-515 comprising 13 cards. One hand 515 is selected by, or provided to, the player, one hand 510 is selected by, or provided to, the dealer/house, one hand 505 is designated as the Dragon hand and a final hand 500 is discarded. As shown, the two remaining cards 2♥ 511, 3♥ 512 are used to determine a pair bonus bet (no bonus in this instance). Fig. 6b shows the player hand 515, Dragon hand 505 and dealer hand 510 revealed. Fig. 6c shows the player hand 515 and dealer hand 510 each being set into a back five-card hand 515-1, 510-1, middle five-card hand 515-2, 510-2 and front three-card hand 515-3, 510-3 wherein the back five-card hand must outrank the middle five-card hand and the middle five-card hand must outrank the front three-card hand. As described above, in one embodiment, the dealer hand 510 and Dragon hand 505 are set according to the pre-established house way. Fig. 6c also shows the set hands of the player and dealer being compared. In this example, the player wins the middle five-card hand while the dealer wins the three-card front hand and five-card back hand. Winning is determined by conventional poker rankings. Fig. 6d shows the Dragon set hands 505-1, 505-2 and 505-3 being compared to the player set hand 515-2 and dealer set hands 510-1, 510-3 respectively. As shown, the house dealer front hand 510-1 wins against the Dragon front hand 505-1, the Dragon middle hand 505-2 loses against the player middle hand 515-2 and the dealer back hand 510-1 loses against the Dragon back hand 505-1. Fig. 6e shows the player paying the house \$10 as a result of the hand whereby each the player, dealer and Dragon won a set hand. The running jackpot remains unchanged at \$80.

[0030] Fig. 7 shows the game scoreboard 475 updated with row 476-2 showing the results of the hand shown in Figs. 6a through 6e.

[0031] Figs. 8a-8e show an exemplary play of Dragon poker according to one of the embodiments of the present invention. As shown in Fig. 8a, four poker hands 600, 605, 610 and 615 are initially dealt (by a dealer or processor) with each hand 600-615 comprising 13 cards each. One hand 615 is selected by, or provided to, the player, one hand 600 is selected by, or provided to, the dealer/house, one hand 605 is designated as the Dragon hand and a final hand 610 is discarded. As shown, the two remaining cards J♣ 611, Q♣ 612 are used to determine a pair bonus bet (no bonus in this instance). Fig. 8b shows the player hand 615, Dragon hand 605 and dealer hand 600 revealed. Fig. 8c shows the player hand 615

and dealer hand 600 each being set into a back five-card hand 615-1, 600-1, middle five-card hand 615-2, 600-2 and front three-card hand 615-3, 600-3 wherein the back five-card hand must outrank the middle five-card hand and the middle five-card hand must outrank the front three-card hand. As described above, in one embodiment, the dealer hand 600 and Dragon hand 605 are set according to the pre-established house way. Fig. 8c also shows the set hands of the player and dealer being compared. In this example, the player wins the three-card front hand, middle five-card hand and five-card back hand. Winning is determined by conventional poker rankings. Fig. 8d shows the Dragon set hands 605-1, 605-2 and 605-3 being compared to the player set hands 615-1, 615-2 and 615-3, respectively. As shown, the player front hand 615-1 wins against the Dragon front hand 605-1, the player middle hand 615-2 wins against the Dragon middle hand 605-2 and the player back hand 615-3 loses against the Dragon back hand 605-3. Fig. 8e shows the hand result with the player winning the current Dragon jackpot of \$80 plus \$20 from the house. The player has to pay the Dragon \$30 for the 4 of a kind giving the player a net gain of \$70 for this hand. The house pays the player \$20 plus pays the Dragon \$30 for the 4 of a kind totaling \$50. The Dragon jackpot was won by the player, but a new jackpot has begun with the bonus hand payouts totaling \$60.

[0032] Fig. 9 shows the game scoreboard 475 updated with row 476-3 showing the results of the hand shown in Figs. 8a through 8e.

[0033] Figs. 10a-10f show an exemplary play of Dragon poker according to one of the embodiments of the present invention. As shown in Fig. 10a, four poker hands 700, 705, 710 and 715 are initially dealt (by a dealer or processor) with each hand 700-715 comprising 13 cards each. One hand 715 is selected by, or provided to, the player, one hand 700 is selected by, or provided to, the dealer/house, one hand 705 is designated as the Dragon hand and a final hand 710 is discarded. As shown, the two remaining cards 2♣ 711, 3♦ 712 are used to determine a pair bonus bet (no bonus in this instance). Fig. 10b shows the player hand 715 revealed and Fig. 10c shows the player hand 715 set into a front three-card hand 715-1, middle five-card hand 715-2 and rear five-card hand 715-3. Fig. 10d shows the set hands of the player and dealer being compared. In this example, the player wins the middle five-card hand and back five-card hand while the dealer wins the three-card front hand. Winning is determined by conventional poker rankings. Fig. 10e shows the Dragon set hands 705-1, 705-2 and 705-3 being compared to the player set hands 715-1, 715-2 and dealer set hand 700-1, respectively. As shown, the house dealer front hand 700-1 wins against the Dragon front hand 705-1, the Dragon middle hand 705-2

wins against the player middle hand 715-2 and the Dragon back hand 705-1 wins against the player back hand 715-1. Fig. 10f shows the results of the hand with the Dragon winning two out of three set hands and earned a straight flush bonus such that the player and dealer each pay the Dragon \$60 raising the jackpot to \$180.

[0034] Fig. 11 shows an exemplary two-card bonus pay table 800 according to the embodiments of the present invention.

WE CLAIM:

1. An electronically implemented method of conducting a poker game comprising:
 - displaying on an electronic gaming device four face-down poker hands comprising thirteen cards each from a conventional deck of playing cards;
 - designating a player hand, dealer hand and Dragon hand responsive to selection inputs by a player via an electronic gaming user interface;
 - revealing on said display said player hand;
 - setting said player hand into a five-card rear hand, five-card middle hand and three-card front hand responsive to inputs by a player via said electronic gaming user interface;
 - revealing on said display said dealer hand;
 - setting said dealer hand into a five-card rear hand, five-card middle hand and three-card front hand based on a house way programmed into a processor;
 - comparing said player's five-card rear hand, five-card middle hand and three-card front hand to said dealer's five-card rear hand, five-card middle hand and three-card front hand, respectively, to determine winning hands based on poker ranks;
 - revealing on said display said dragon hand;
 - setting said dragon hand into a five-card rear hand, five-card middle hand and three-card front hand based on a house way programmed into a processor;
 - comparing winning hands from said comparison of said player's five-card rear hand, five-card middle hand and three-card front hand to said dealer's five-card rear hand, five-card middle hand and three-card front hand, respectively, to said dragon's five-card rear hand, five-card middle hand and three-card front hand, respectively, to determine winning hands based on poker ranks; and
 - awarding points based in bonus hand ranks and the player, dealer or dragon winning two of the three set hands.

ABSTRACT

A method of conducting a game of poker comprises dealing four face-down, thirteen-card hands from a conventional 52 deck of playing cards plus two jokers. The two remaining cards are used for a bonus hand. A dealer and player each receive one of the four hands and a third hand is designated as a Dragon hand (i.e., fictional player). The dealer and player each set their hands with a five-card rear hand, five-card middle hand and a three-card front hand where the rank of the rear hand must outrank the middle hand and the middle hand must outrank the front hand. Points are earned based on a comparison of the player's, dealer's and Dragon's rear, middle and front hands, respectively. A jackpot is generated when the Dragon wins two of the three set hands and/or bonus hands resulting in the player and the dealer being required to pay money into a pot which carries over to subsequent plays of the game until the player or dealer wins at least two of the three set hands and wins the jackpot.