

button **78** before activating any other selected game. Therefore, play in this embodiment is much like play on separate conventional gaming machines.

[**0107**] In another embodiment of the invention, the game activation functions of play buttons **78** may be included in a single, and preferably [multi-functional]multifunctional, player input element such as “master start button”**80**, such term including associated responsive circuitry of the gaming device. Master start button **80** is preferably configured for various modes of starting play of the selected games, which games, as previously described, may be of varying classes and types. In one aspect of the embodiment, activation of master start button **80** starts all selected games simultaneously. In a related aspect, games started simultaneously by master start button **80** may have their playing times determined and coordinated by digital microprocessor **110** (**FIG. 3**) such that each game outcome is displayed in an ordered (e.g. clockwise, left to right, etc.) or random sequence within predetermined intervals of one another. Alternatively, games started simultaneously by master start button **80** may be timed and coordinated by digital microprocessor **110** such that each game outcome is displayed simultaneously.

[**0108**] Master start button **80** may also be configured to start each of the selected games sequentially in an ordered or random fashion. In this embodiment, the games may be synchronized such that the game outcomes are displayed sequentially or simultaneously, as previously discussed. Games started sequentially by master start button **80** may also be finished randomly or in a specific order.

[**0109**] In a still further aspect of the embodiment, a master start button **80** may be configured to provide a player the option of simultaneous play of tournament games in [gaming]tournament windows **100** and of other games of chance in individual gaming windows **88**. Thus, for players entered into a tournament who desire to play games of chance at the same time as the tournament games, master start button **80** may provide the player the opportunity to push a single button to start both categories of games.

[**0110**] Preferably, a player will be provided with player input [controls]devices **76** (e.g., keyboard **81**, touchscreen locations on single display screen **72**, play buttons **78**, a mouse, etc.) allowing the player to select the various options for starting and finishing assorted modes of play.

[**0111**] In a further related embodiment, games activated by play buttons **78** or a master start button **80** may have “play times” determinable by the player wherein one or more game outcomes are displayed “prematurely,” or in a delayed manner, on single display screen **72**. For example, a player may be provided with one or more player input control [buttons]devices **76** among play buttons **78** with which to selectively stop “play” of one or more particular games such that the one or more game outcomes are immediately displayed. This embodiment is particularly suitable for providing a player with a “feeling of control” over the spinning reels of reel slot machine games, but may also be applied to any of the various games available in gaming machine **70**. In the event a player does not “stop play” within a predetermined period of time, a timer (not shown) associated with digital microprocessor **110** will automatically trigger digital microprocessor **110** to display the game outcome(s).

[**0112**] With reference to **FIG. 3**, during “play” of the selected games, digital microprocessor **110** of gaming

machine **70** randomly generates numbers representing the gaming indicia appropriate for each selected game of chance. Digital microprocessor **110** then displays the game outcome indicia on single screen display **72** and determines winning game outcomes for each of the games by matching the generated numbers to those found in paytables in ROM **112** or in storage medium **118**. As in conventional gaming machines, a player with one or more winning game outcomes on gaming machine **70** may receive a payout for each win in the form of additional game credits, currency, and/or other designated prizes.

[**0113**] With reference to **FIG. 2**, individual gaming windows **88** which have winning outcomes may have those particular outcomes revealed to a player through various means, including those winning windows enlarging, expanding and contracting in size, and/or being subjected to distinctive illumination schemes, such as an increase in intensity for winning out coming windows **88**, or a flashing surrounding border.[.] Various distinctive audio sounds may also typically accompany one or more winning outcomes.

[**0114**] One of skill in the art will recognize that the multiple gaming capabilities of the gaming machine of the present invention allow for new and interesting variations of traditional games of chance. In one embodiment of a method of play according to the present invention, a particular outcome or level of winning on one or more games selected for simultaneous, sequential, or random play triggers a microprocessor in gaming machine **70** to activate one or more “bonus” games, in which a player is permitted the opportunity to attempt to achieve winning game outcomes at no additional cost to the player (i.e., without the input of additional currency or the wagering of available credits). Referring again to **FIG. 2**, the bonus games are played in one or more individual gaming windows **88** on single display screen **72**[.] and may be displayed and played mutually concurrently with other games of chance. Typically, each winning bonus game outcome has an associated pay value represented by an amount of coins, credits or other designated prizes awarded to the player.

[**0115**] The bonus games may be of the same, similar or completely different class or type as the games in which the winning outcome(s) were achieved. For example, a reel slot machine game on gaming machine **70** may have an outcome characterized by the display of three of the same symbols on adjacent reels, causing a microprocessor within the gaming machine to automatically enter the player in one or more bonus games of video poker (or some other game(s) of chance).

[**0116**] A win on one bonus game may also automatically trigger one or more second bonus games of the same or varying type or class of games of chance. In a further aspect of the embodiment, a player achieving a certain game outcome or level of winning is provided with a plurality of bonus games comprising differing classes of games of chance. For example, a specific game outcome in one or more games may trigger one bonus game of each of an electronic reel slot machine, an electronic video poker game, an electronic blackjack game, an electronic keno game, etc.

[**0117**] Further, games according to the invention may be set at varying levels on a ladder, so the term “bonus” games is not to be interpreted as restrictive but rather enabling. Specifically, an additional wager may or may not be required