

[0084] Here, the mechanical type of the shutter may comprise the non-transparent sheet having a plane surface, and which is slidable and can conceal the whole area of the front display unit. Further, the sheet may have a prescribed opening area, or may be configured by a pair of suitable sheets separated horizontally or vertically to open and close freely.

[0085] Further, the mechanical type of the shutter may also comprise a film that has a prescribed opening area, and the rolling upward and downward of which film is possible.

[0086] Therefore, it is possible that the prescribed area can be switched to be viewed or to be concealed as appropriate if the mechanical type of the shutter which has the prescribed opening area is activated (i.e., sliding, rolling upward/downward).

[0087] In addition, in the case where the shutter configured by the non-transparent sheet and the front display unit is configured by an LCD, the shutter can function as a reflector for the LCD. Similarly, in the case where the shutter configured by the panel and the front display unit is configured by an LCD, the shutter can also function as a reflector for the LCD if the panel is a reflective type and is not transparent.

[0088] Hereinafter, a gaming apparatus according to the embodiment will be described in detail with reference to associated drawings.

[0089] FIG. 2 is a perspective view showing an exterior of a gaming apparatus 1 according to an embodiment of the present invention, and FIG. 3 is a front side view of the gaming apparatus 1.

[0090] The gaming apparatus 1 comprises three spinning reels which variably display symbols, a so-called "pachi-slo machine". A game can be played using a token (coin or medal), or game media, e.g., a card, storing information regarding the value of the game which has been or is to be given to a player. Hereinafter, it is assumed that medals are utilized for playing the game.

[0091] A panel display unit 5, which comprises an LCD and which is the essential part of the present invention, is placed in the middle of a cabinet 2 that forms the gaming apparatus 1.

[0092] Further, the spinning reels 3L, 3C, 3R are placed in a line in the cabinet 2 and a symbol string formed by a plurality of the symbols are shown on the circumference of the respective reels. The spinning reels 3L, 3C, 3R configure the variable display unit in the embodiment. The symbols of the respective reels can be viewed through display windows 4L, 4C, 4R and the panel display unit 5. The respective reels spin at a constant speed (e.g., 80 rpm).

[0093] Although configuration of the panel display unit 5, which is the essential part, will be described later, a display screen 5a, which is configured by an LCD and enables viewing of the spinning reels 3L, 3C, 3R, is placed entirely on the panel display unit 5. The display screen 5a configures the front side display unit in the embodiment and the following elements appear from a player point of view.

[0094] The oblong display windows 4L, 4C, 4R in the middle of the display screen 5a can be viewed by the player. Further, a centerline 8a, a top line 5b and a bottom line 5c,

which are horizontally drawn, and a cross-down line 8d and a cross-up line 8e, which are diagonally drawn can also be viewed on the display windows 4L, 4C, 4R. One, three or five winning lines become active by either an operation of a 1-BET switch 11, a 2-BET switch 12, a MAX-BET switch 13 or insertion of medals to a medal insertion slot 22. The line being active can be identified by lighting of the line and a BET lamps 9a, 9b, 9c.

[0095] Specifically, the 1-BET lamp 9a, the 2-BET lamp 9b, the MAX-BET lamp 9c and a credited medal indicator 19 are placed at the left side of the display windows 4L, 4C, 4R. The 1-BET lamp 9a, the 2-BET lamp 9b and the MAX-BET lamp 9c light according to the number of bet medals (hereinafter referred to as "BET No.") for a single game. Here, in the embodiment, a single game is completed when all the reels have stopped spinning, or the game media is paid out if that is the case.

[0096] The 1-BET lamp 9a lights if the BET No. is one, and one winning line has become active. The 2-BET lamp 9b lights if the BET No. is two, and three winning lines have become active. The MAX-BET lamp 9c lights if the BET No. is three, and all the winning lines (i.e., five lines) have become active. Further, a start acceptance lamp 25 lights if, at least, one winning line has become active. Moreover, the credited medal indicator 19 indicates the number of credited medals.

[0097] A WIN lamp 17, a payouts indicator 18 and a medal acceptance lamp 24 are placed at the right side of the display windows 4L, 4C, 4R. The WIN lamp 17 lights with a prescribed probability if the internally winning of BB or RB occurs. The WIN lamp 17 also lights if the player wins BB or RB. The payouts indicator 18 is configured by a seven-segment LED and indicates the number of medals to be paid out at winning the prize. The medal acceptance lamp 24 blinks when insertion of the medal can be accepted.

[0098] A bonus game counter 20 is placed at the upper right side of the display screen 5a. The bonus game counter 20 indicates the number of RB games and the number of possible RB game winnings, etc., which will be described later.

[0099] A game-stop indicator 31, a replay indicator 32, an RB indicator 33 and a BB indicator 34 are placed in a line at the upper left side of the display screen 5a. The game-stop indicator 31 lights if the elapsed time from the spinning of the reels last time is less than a prescribed time (4.1 seconds in the embodiment). The replay indicator 32 lights when a replay is allowed. The RB Indicator 33 lights while RB is in progress and the BB indicator 34 lights while BB is in progress.

[0100] Further, in a case where the internally winning of the "bell prize" occurs during the "stopping operation assist-time (AT)", the "order of stopping reels" for achievement of the prize is also displayed on the display screen 5a.

[0101] A base 10 is formed below the display windows 4L, 4C, 4R and an indication unit 2a, which displays information regarding the gaming apparatus 1, is placed between the base 10 and the display windows 4L, 4C, 4R.

[0102] Further, the medal insertion slot 22 is placed at the right side of the indication unit 2a, and the 1-BET switch 11, the 2-BET switch 12 and the MAX-BET switch 13 are