

processing for determining stop positions of the reels, the CPU 31 senses the timings at which the reel stop buttons 7a, 7b, 7c have been pressed, in accordance with the signals output from the reel stop button sensors 44 through 46, thereby acquiring symbol numbers PN assigned to the timings. The CPU 31 reads number-of-frames data by reference to the stop table in accordance with the symbol number PN, thereby controlling the reel drive motors 51 through 53 such that the reels spin by only the number of frames over which the reels are to coast, the number being instructed by the data. The reel drive motors 51 through 53 are constituted of stepping motors, and the CPU 31 imparts, to the reel drive motors 51 through 53, drive pulses in a number corresponding to the number of frames over which frames are to coast.

[0144] Subsequently, a determination is made as to whether or not all reels have stopped (step S30). Processing pertaining to steps S27 through S30 is repeated until all spinning reels come to a halt. When all reels have stopped, the CPU 31 processing proceeds to step S31. If masking operation is in progress, the masking operation is terminated. Specifically, the CPU 31 makes the voltage signals 21a, 22a, and 23a inactive.

[0145] Next, the CPU 31 determines whether or not a win has been achieved (step S32). If a win has been achieved, the payline where the win has been achieved is displayed (step S33).

[0146] Subsequently, the CPU 31 determines whether or not the win corresponds to a win involving payment of tokens (step S34). If the win corresponds to the win involving payout of tokens, the CPU 31 controls individual sections such that tokens are paid out in a number corresponding to the winning combination, by reference to the win determination symbol combination table TBL3 (step S35).

[0147] If the win does not correspond to payout of tokens, the CPU 31 omits processing pertaining to step S35 and advances processing to step S36, thereby determining whether or not there has been achieved a win corresponding to any one of the bonus games, such as a regular bonus, a normal big bonus, and a super big bonus, if the win corresponds to any one of the bonus games, the CPU 31 performs predetermined processing for advancing the bonus game (step S37). In contrast, if the win does not correspond to any bonus game, the CPU 31 determines whether or not the win is a REPLAY game (step S38). If the symbols that would constitute a winning combination are symbols which would constitute a PLUM winning combination, the CPU 31 returns processing to step S22. If the symbols are not symbols which would constitute a PLUM winning combination, a round of processing operations is terminated.

[0148] As has been described, the slot machine 1A performs masking operation. Consequently, the slot machine 1A can report to the player determination of a win for the BB prize. Further, the player does not need to shift his or her line of sight in order to ascertain a report. The geometries of the non-mask areas NM substantially coincide with the contours of specific symbols. Hence, even when the player does not know rules of a game in detail, the player can infer rules that a win is achieved in the slot machine 1A if symbols whose contours coincide with the geometries of the non-mask areas NM are stopped at the payline. Moreover, if masking operation is performed, specific symbols which pass through

the non-mask areas NM become clearly visible. Hence, even a beginner can stop specific symbols at a payline. In addition, when specific symbols come to a halt in non-mask areas NM, a presentation effect is yielded, whereby the player is afforded a satisfaction of completing inset puzzles.

[0149] In the first embodiment, contours of specific symbols are formed in the left reel liquid crystal panel 21, in the center reel liquid-crystal panel 22; and in the right reel liquid-crystal panel 23, by boring. In lieu of the left reel liquid-crystal panel 21, the center reel liquid-crystal panel 22, and the right reel liquid-crystal panel 23, liquid-crystal panels having no bored portions may be employed. In this case, as shown in FIG. 13, a transparent electrode to be formed on at least one of the first and second substrates may be a transparent electrode in which portions identical in shape with the non-mask areas NM are formed by boring. More specifically, the transparent electrode of the first substrate is imparted with the shape of a hatched section shown in FIG. 13, and a transparent electrode of the second substrate is formed into a rectangular shape. Alternatively, transparent electrodes of the first and second substrates are formed into the shape of the hatched section shown in FIG. 13.

[0150] When the voltage signals 21a, 22a, and 23a have become active, the voltage V is applied to the liquid-crystal corresponding to the mask areas MS, whereas the voltage V is not applied to the liquid-crystal corresponding to the non-mask areas NM. Consequently, only the liquid-crystal located in the mask areas MS can be made translucent.

[0151] In the first embodiment, contours of the specific symbols are formed in the left reel liquid-crystal panel 21, the center reel liquid-crystal panel 22, and the right reel liquid-crystal panel 23, by boring. Hence, the geometries of the non-mask areas NM and those of the mask areas MS are determined uniquely.

[0152] Alternatively, liquid-crystal panels having bored portions formed therein may be laminated to form a plurality of layers. In this case, the geometries of bored portions in the respective liquid-crystal panels may be substantially matched with the contours of the respective symbols, thereby selectively supplying a voltage to the liquid-crystal panels. The CPU 31 is required to perform masking operation in the following manner. First, in accordance with predetermined rules, the CPU 31 determines whether to perform masking operation. Second, when the masking operation is determined to be performed, the CPU 31 specifies a winning combination corresponding to a prize group specified by the internal lottery data ISD. Third, the CPU 31 selects a liquid-crystal panel corresponding to symbols constituting a specified winning combination. The transparency of the overall thus-selected liquid-crystal panel is adjusted uniformly, thereby supplying a voltage so as to make the entire liquid-crystal panel translucent and terminating power supply to the remaining liquid-crystal panels, thus making the panels transparent. The masking operation may be performed when a win is determined for the BB prize through internal lottery and during a period of super big bonus. As a result, report of a small winning combination having been determined during a super big bonus can be performed through use of the liquid-crystal panel assuming a shape similar to that of the mask area MS.

[0153] A plurality of liquid-crystal panels described in connection with FIG. 13 may be laminated to form a