

United States Patent Application Publication 2002/0039919 entitled "Gaming Machine With Video and Audio Indicia Changed Over Time," which is hereby incorporated by referenced herein.

[0074] Further, the images supplied by superimposed video image 18 may be personalized if the identity of a player is known. For example, if it is known that a player enjoys sports, the symbols, reels and other images supplied by video image 18 may be personalized with a sports theme.

[0075] FIG. 12 is a block diagram of a control system suitable for operating the gaming machine. The control system includes a central processing unit with a microcontroller 30 and system memory 32. The memory 32 preferably comprises a separate read-only memory (ROM) and battery-backed random-access memory (RAM). It will be appreciated, however, that the system memory 32 may be implemented on any of several alternative types of memory structures or may be implemented on a single memory structure. For example, the read-only memory may be replaced or supplemented with a mass storage unit such as a removable flash memory or a hard drive. The system memory may be used to store game-related data associated with the chance games played on the gaming machine. The game-related data may, for example, include game code, math tables, a random number generator, audio resources, and video resources. The player may select an amount to wager and other game play functions via the touch screen keys 26 (if provided) or button panel 24. The wager amount is signaled to the microcontroller 30 by a coin/credit detector 34. In response to the wager, the microcontroller 30 executes the game code which generates a randomly based outcome. In the case of slots, the microcontroller 30, based on the randomly generated outcome, rotates and stops the mechanical reels 12a, 12b, 12c at the selected outcome. Also, the microcontroller 30 selectively accesses the video resources to be included in the video image 18 provided by the video display 14a (FIG. 2a) or 14b (FIG. 2b) and the audio resources to be played through one or more audio speakers 36 mounted to a housing of the slot machine. If the outcome corresponds to a winning outcome identified on the pay table, the microcontroller 30 instructs a payoff mechanism 38 to award a payoff for that winning outcome to the player in the form of coins or credits.

[0076] While the present invention has been described with reference to one or more particular embodiments, those skilled in the art will recognize that many changes may be made thereto without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention. For example, instead of the video image 18 depicting a bonus game triggered by a start-bonus outcome on the mechanical slot reels 12a, 12b, 12c, the roles of the video image 18 and the slot reels may be reversed. The video image 18 may depict a basic game including a start-bonus outcome for triggering a bonus game involving spins of the slot reels.

CONCLUSION

[0077] Various embodiments of a gaming machine with a superimposed video image have been disclosed. Although specific embodiments have been illustrated and described herein, it will be appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art that any arrangement which is calculated to achieve the same purpose may be substituted for the specific embodi-

ments shown. This application is intended to cover any adaptations or variations of the present invention.

[0078] The terminology used in this application is meant to include all of these environments. It is to be understood that the above description is intended to be illustrative, and not restrictive. Many other embodiments will be apparent to those of skill in the art upon reviewing the above description. Therefore, it is manifestly intended that this invention be limited only by the following claims and equivalents thereof.

We claim:

1. A gaming machine comprising:
 - a primary game display operable to display the outcome of a wagering game in response to a wager;
 - a secondary game display overlaying the primary game display and operable to display the results of a secondary game.
2. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the secondary game display is a flat panel transmissive display positioned in front of the primary game display.
3. The gaming machine claim 2, wherein the transmissive display is a liquid crystal display.
4. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the secondary game comprises a bonus game.
5. The gaming machine of claim 4, wherein the primary game display is operable to display a sequence of symbols in a symbol array having at least one row and a plurality of columns, the sequence defining a first award, and further wherein the bonus game comprises a reordering of the sequence of symbols in the symbol array.
6. The gaming machine of claim 4, wherein the primary game display is operable to display a sequence of symbols in a symbol array having at least one row and a plurality of columns, the sequence defining a first award, and further wherein the secondary game display is operable to change the appearance of at least one symbol in the primary game display.
7. The gaming machine of claim 6, wherein the secondary game display is operable to highlight an area around at least one of the plurality of columns.
8. The gaming machine of claim 6, wherein the secondary game display is operable to change the color of at least one symbol in the primary game display.
9. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the primary game display is operable to display a sequence of symbols in a symbol array having at least one row and a plurality of columns, the sequence defining a first award, and further wherein the secondary game is operable to copy at least one symbol from the primary game display to a saved collection of symbols displayed on the secondary game display.
10. The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the secondary game comprises a wagering game played in response to a second wager.
11. The gaming machine of claim 10, wherein the secondary game comprises a sports based game.
12. The gaming machine of claim 11, wherein the sports based game comprises horse racing.
13. The gaming machine of claim 10, wherein the secondary game is an animated game.
14. The gaming machine of claim 10, wherein the secondary game comprises a game selected from the group consisting of keno, bingo, video slots, and roulette.