

PERRIUS POKER AND OTHER BINGO GAME VARIATIONS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/937,227, entitled "Bingo Game Morphed to Display Non-Bingo Outcomes" and filed on Sep. 8, 2004. This application also claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application Nos. 60/592,410, entitled "Draw Bingo" and filed Jul. 30, 2004. The foregoing applications are hereby incorporated by reference for all purposes.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present disclosure relates to gaming networks and, more particularly, to a gaming network providing a multi-player bingo game.

[0003] Gaming in the United States is divided into Class I, Class II and Class III games. Class I gaming includes social games played for minimal prizes, or traditional ceremonial games. Class II gaming includes bingo and bingo-like games. Bingo includes games played for prizes, including monetary prizes, with cards bearing numbers or other designations in which the holder of the cards covers such numbers or designations when objects, similarly numbered or designated, are drawn or electronically determined, and in which the game is won by the first person covering a previously designated arrangement of numbers or designations on such cards. Such an arrangement will sometimes be referred to herein as a "game-winning pattern" or a "game-ending pattern." Class II gaming may also include pull tab games if played in the same location as bingo games, lotto, punch boards, tip jars, instant bingo, and other games similar to bingo. Class III gaming includes any game that is not a Class I or Class II game, such as a game of chance typically offered in non-Indian, state-regulated casinos.

[0004] Two basic forms of bingo exist. In traditional bingo, the players purchase cards after which a draw takes place. The first player to achieve a designated pattern wins. In one type of bingo game known as Bonanza Bingo, the draw for the game takes place before the players know the arrangements on their bingo cards. After the draw occurs, the players may purchase cards and compare the arrangements on the cards to the drawn numbers to determine whether predetermined patterns are matched. Play continues in Bonanza Bingo until at least one of the players matches a designated game-winning pattern. Bonanza Bingo may also encompass bingo variations wherein a partial draw is conducted for some numbers (generally fewer than the number of balls expected to be necessary to win the game) prior to selling the bingo cards. After the bingo cards are sold, additional numbers are drawn until there is a winner.

[0005] As indicated above, a bingo game is played until at least one player covers a predetermined game-winning pattern on the player's bingo card. The game may also include interim winners of prizes based on matching predetermined interim patterns on the bingo card using the same ball draw. The interim pattern wins do not terminate the bingo game. For interim pattern awards, players covering certain interim patterns may receive an additional award as the game continues. Some exceptional bingo versions may allow

bingo draws beyond those needed to achieve the bingo game win so as to pay out interim pattern wins at a desired rate. The game-winning awards are generally pari-mutuel in nature. That is, the bingo win award is based upon the total amount wagered on a given occurrence of the bingo game. However, interim pattern awards typically are not pari-mutuel.

[0006] Gaming machines such as slot machines and video poker machines have proven to be very popular. However, many games of chance that are played on gaming machines fall into the category of Class III games, which may be subject to stricter approval and regulation. Many gaming establishments have a limited number of gaming machines for playing Class III games and a greater number of gaming machines for playing Class II games, such as bingo.

[0007] As such, it would be desirable to provide a gaming system wherein a Class II game may be played on a gaming machine with at least some of the "look and feel" of a Class III game, such as a slot game or a card game. It would also be desirable to provide variations of existing bingo games to increase player interest.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] The present invention provides methods and devices for providing a bingo game having aspects of a non-bingo game such as a Class III game, preferably on a network of gaming machines. Some implementations of the invention provide a bingo game having aspects of a card game, such as a poker game. Some such implementations include a bingo card display in which areas of a bingo card correspond with playing cards. Some implementations of the invention provide bingo cards having more than one bingo number associated with an area of the bingo card. Other implementations of the invention allow a winning pattern, such as an interim win pattern, to be formed from hits on more than one bingo card. For example, a winning pattern may be formed by hits along a corresponding line of multiple bingo cards being played by a single player (e.g., along the same diagonal line). Alternatively, a winning pattern may be formed by hits on the same corresponding area of multiple bingo cards being played by a single player (e.g., hits on the lower left area of each bingo card).

[0009] Preferred implementations provide games with easily recognizable bingo play. Accordingly, some implementations involve a 5x5 bingo card, wherein areas of the bingo card correspond with non-bingo symbols such as playing cards, and 75 randomly chosen numbers for game play. Bingo numbers are also assigned to areas of the bingo card, although these bingo numbers may or may not be displayed on the card. The randomly chosen numbers may be indicated by a "ball drop" involving a predetermined number of balls. Alternative implementations involve other types of bingo cards, including bingo cards with more or fewer areas, and the use of more or fewer than 75 randomly chosen numbers for game play.

[0010] However, alternative embodiments use various NxN and NxM bingo cards, wherein N and M are predetermined integers. For example, some implementations use a 4x13 or a 13x4 bingo card, allowing each card of a 52-card deck to be mapped to the bingo card. Other implementations use a mapping of playing cards in a deck having more or