

#4

Example Provisional Patent Application (PPA)

In due course, this Provisional patent application (PPA) was re-written and filed as a utility (non-provisional) patent application in the U.S. Patent Office. The patent was eventually granted as **US Patent No. 8,286,967**

*The following example is provided for educational purposes only in connection with **ELG's Practical Guide to PROVISIONAL PATENT APPLICATIONS** for the Cost-Conscious Inventor.*

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CRAPS-BASED SIDE WAGER FOR BLACKJACK CARD GAME (CRAPJACK)

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] Blackjack, also known as Twenty-One or by various other names, is a popular card game, often quoted as the most widely played casino banked game in the world. The traditional game is played with one or more standard decks of playing cards. At the beginning of each round, the player places a bet and receives an initial hand of two cards. The basic rules of the game involve adding the value of the two initial card hand in hopes of being dealt a value of 21. If a value of less than 21 is dealt, the player may choose to be dealt single cards until they either reach a value of 21, or reach a lesser value the player feels comfortable holding at, or reach a value that exceeds 21. As between each player and the dealer independently, the winner holds a hand with a value of or nearest to 21 without exceeding it. The complete rules of play for Blackjack are well documented and well known to those in the gaming field.

[0002] The gaming industry is in constant pursuit of new gaming methods as well as modifications to existing gaming methods that will attract new players and maintain the interest of current players. One such technique found effective in many game scenarios is the use of an optional side wager. Side wagers are typically made and resolved while the normal game play is temporarily suspended. Various types of side wagers for games such as slots and Poker have proven moderately successful to capture player interest. However, with respect to the game of Blackjack specifically, side wagers have not been applied with much effectiveness. Examples of some attempted side wagers include US Patent No. 5,695,192 to Brown which describes a Blackjack game having a Craps-based side bet. According to this game method, a player must achieve a qualified hand before they become eligible for the optional side wager. Brown suggests a predetermined two-card combination in order to become eligible for participating in the Craps-based side bet. In the preferred embodiment of this game, each player having a Blackjack and beating the dealer becomes eligible to place a Craps wager and roll the dice. Three possible outcomes of the Craps roll are permitted. A first outcome based on a roll sum of 7 or 11; a second outcome based on a roll sum of 2, 3 or 12; and a third outcome based on a roll sum of the Point numbers 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 or 10.

[0003] US Patent No. 6,708,974 to Brown describes a method for playing Poker with a Craps side bet similar in many respects to that described above in connection with Brown's '192 patent. In this patent, however, a poker player becomes eligible to make a craps side wager in response to the first dealer down card being a spade. Also, like in the '192 patent, the Craps proposition outcomes are not tied to card values, but rather to the roll sum of two dice falling within one of three number groups.

[0004] US Patent No. 5,857,676 to Whitson describes a combination card and dice game based loosely on the combined games of Craps and Blackjack. According to this game method, a player chooses to either play cards or dice. Once the decision is made, the dealer turns over one card which becomes a target card. Then, a pair of dice is rolled. If the roll sum of the dice equals the face value of the target card, the player wins provided they bet on the dice. If the target card is a face card, then the card bettor automatically loses. Dice roll sums of 11 or 12 are automatic winners.

[0005] Accordingly, there are no examples of prior art Blackjack style card games offering a side bet based on two rolled dice using familiar Craps rules in combination with an unqualified hand consisting of the first two cards dealt a player (or the dealer).

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] The subject invention provides an optional side bet in a card game of Blackjack. The side bet is placed before any cards are dealt, and can take several variations. Game play begins like in traditional Blackjack with the player being dealt two initial cards. If the player has made the optional side wager, the Blackjack game is temporarily suspended while two dice are rolled. Winning or losing the side bet is based on the sum of two rolled dice in relation to the first two cards dealt to the player who has made the optional side wager. If the sum of the two rolled dice is 2, 3 or 12, the side bet is automatically lost similar to the Come-Out roll in the game of Craps. If the sum of the two rolled dice is 7 or 11, the side bet is automatically won. If the sum of the rolled dice is anything other (4, 5, 6, 8, 9 or 10) then a Point is established and the player wins the side bet if one of their dealt cards has a value equal to the Point.

[0007] In one variation of the game, dice roll sums of 2 and 3 are considered points rather than automatic losers/craps. Several other variations on the basic game method are also possible.

According to another variation, instead of (or in addition to) determining a Point-based win on the value of any one player card equaling the Point, it can be based on the combined value of both player cards. In this variation, the first “ten” value card is deemed to have a “zero” Point value for purposes of the side wager, and card sums greater than fourteen are reduced by ten. According to yet another variation, the side wager may be resolved based on the dealer’s initial up card (or on the Dealer’s first two cards when both are revealed) rather than the player’s first two cards. Still further variations are proposed.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0008] This invention provides an optional Craps-like side wager to a regular game of Blackjack, which may be played as a real-life table game with physical cards, or via electronic representations thereof through a computer, gaming terminal, the Internet, or the like. The general principle of the game is to play Blackjack as per the traditional method. No substantive changes are proposed for the traditional rules, play or payouts of Blackjack. The optional side wager is based on the initial two cards that are dealt to the player, or in one alternative, to the dealer. The optional side wager is resolved independently of the play of the Blackjack wager.

[0009] The preferred method of this invention is described with reference to Figures 1-5. To start the game, players are invited to make two wagers -- one for traditional Blackjack and one for the optional side wager. Based on house rules and mathematical analysis, the two wagers can be of equal or different values, where either the Blackjack or the Craps wager may or may not exceed the other. A Point is established by rolling two standard, six-sided die as used in the traditional game of Craps. Dice are either rolled mechanically by the dealer, electronically/virtually by the player or dealer, or by any method of triggering the dice to roll based on available technology. If house rules allow, the dice may be rolled mechanically by the player. The player’s goal is to either roll a 7 or 11, or avoid rolling a 2, 3 or 12 and have either of their cards match the total sum of the numbers on the dice as rolled. The method of determining whether the player’s cards match the dice can be obtained from a plurality of options which are described below, and may include the use of the dealer’s cards in one variation.

[0010] Winners of the optional side wager will be paid at predetermined odds. In order to qualify for winning the optional side wager, the player must have placed the optional wager prior

to any cards being dealt or dice rolled. Winning wagers for the optional side wager can be based on a variety of factors. For example, automatic winners are based solely on the outcome of the roll of the dice. As in the Come-Out roll in the traditional game of Craps, automatic winners occur when the roll sum of the two dice is 7 or 11, and automatic losers occur when the roll sum is 2, 3 or 12. Players can be paid if 7 or 11 are rolled, and automatically lose if 2, 3 or 12 are rolled. If an automatic win or loss does not occur, a Point is established by the outcome of the dice. Therefore, Points can be established as any of the numbers 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 or 10. (In other variations, the roll sums of 2 or 3 can be treated as Points instead of automatic losers.) When a Point is established, the optional side wager is won if either one of the player's two initial cards match the Point. For example, if the Point rolled is a 6, and the player receives card values of 4 and 6, the wager is paid because the 6 value card matches the roll sum 6 (i.e., the Point) on the dice. The 4 value card is not relevant in this instance for resolving the wager.

[0011] Figures 1-5 describe the basic game method as outlined above, in the context of three players (Player 1, Player 2, and Player 3) and a dealer. In these examples, Player 1 is dealt an initial two cards A-J. Player 2 is dealt an initial two cards 4-6. Player 3 is dealt an initial two cards 7-8. Figure 1 describes, in table form, the various roll sum combinations which will result in wins or losses for each player, provided they make the optional side wager described herein.

[0012] Specific examples are given in Figures 2-5. In these examples, it is suggested or presumed that all three players make the optional side wager prior to being dealt the initial two cards in the game of Blackjack, and that the dealer or a designated player rolls the dice to resolve the optional side wager for all players simultaneously. Alternatively, the optional side wager may be resolved by each player individually rolling the two dice to determine whether their optional side wager wins or loses.

[0013] In these examples, Figure 2 represents a scenario where the rolled dice sum equals 7, which is established as an automatic winner as in the Come-Out roll in Craps. Thus, Players 1, 2 and 3 win the optional side wager. If the roll sum had been 11 instead of 7, the same result would have been obtained, because the optional side wager is resolved as would be the Come-Out roll in the game of Craps, with both numbers 7 and 11 resulting in automatic wins.

[0014] Figure 3 describes a scenario where the roll sum of the dice equals 12. As in the traditional game of Craps, a roll sum of 12 (on the Come-Out roll) results in an automatic loss and the optional side wagers for Players 1, 2 and 3 are lost as a result. In game play versions

where roll sums of 2 and 3 are automatic losers, the same result would be obtained if the roll sum had been 2 or 3.

[0015] Figure 4 represents a scenario in which the Point number 8 is established by the roll sum of dice as shown. In this case, when a Point is established rather than an automatic win or automatic loss, the player's cards are individually compared to the established Point number. Player 1 loses the optional side wager because neither of their first two dealt cards (A-J) are an 8. Likewise, Player 2 loses the optional side wager. Player 3 wins the optional side wager, however, because one of their dealt cards is an 8. Once the optional side wager is resolved, play resumes according to the normal rules of Blackjack.

[0016] Figure 5 shows a scenario in which the roll sum equals 5 and this is the established Point. None of the players win the optional side wager, because none of the players have a 5 value card. Additional bonuses can be paid for card pairs that equal the Point total (Fig. 6A), or the sum of two paired cards that equal the Point total. For example, Figure 6A depicts a scenario in which the dice roll/Point is a 5 and the player is dealt two 5's. A bonus win scenario may be triggered. Figure 6B shows a scenario where a dice roll of double 4's results in a roll sum of 8, and the player is dealt an 8 card. Bonuses may be crafted on any number of principles. In one variation of the game, bonuses are paid automatically if the roll of the dice is any double, regardless of the player card values. In another scheme, a bonus may be triggered if the player is dealt a 7 or an Ace and the roll sum is 7 or 11. See, for example, Figure 6C. In this scenario, the numbers 7 and 11 are automatic winners on the roll of the dice and cannot be Points. However, the player in this example was dealt a 7 card for which there could be no established Point to match. Thus, the player is paid a bonus, on top of the automatic win, for receiving a 7. Equally, an Ace which has a Point total of 11 would result in a similar outcome if the roll sum is 11.

[0017] According to a first alternative embodiment of this invention, graphically illustrated in Figure 7, the optional side wager may be resolved on the total sum of the two cards that are initially dealt to a player, rather than on the individual face values of each card. According to this embodiment, the first 10 value card (10, J, Q, K) may be assigned a 0 Point value for purposes of calculating the card sum. For example, a King and a 2 would have a card sum of two. A 10 and a 6 would have a card sum of six. Two ten value cards would equal 10, however. All other hands that result in a card sum less than 12 would be counted as is. For example, a 6

and a 4 on the first two cards would be considered a 10. If the established Point were a 10, then the player would win the side wager.

[0018] For all hands where the sum of the two initially dealt cards exceeds 14, then 10 would be subtracted from this total to determine the corresponding number to be matched against the Point. For example, if the player is dealt a 9 and an 8, the total would be 17. Since there is not a combination of two dice that can equal 17, 10 would be subtracted from the total which, in this case, would leave 7. Bonuses can be paid for pairs that equal the Point total. Thus, if the established Point were an 8 and the player is dealt two 4's, then this would pay at an extra predetermined bonus (as in Figure 6B).

[0019] Figure 7 describes this alternative embodiment wherein Player 1 is dealt a A-J, Player 2 is dealt 4-6, and Player 3 is dealt 7-8. According to these principles, the card sum of Player 1 equals 11 ($11 + 0 = 11$). The card sum for Player 2 equals 10 ($4 + 6 = 10$). The card sum for Player 3 equals 5 ($7 + 8 - 10 = 5$). Tables are provided below each player hand in Figure 7 representing the various dice sums that will result in wins for the respective players based on the two cards dealt. The tables in this example represent a rule set in which each card individually AND the card sums are compared against the two rolled dice. This would give the player three opportunities to win. If either of the two initial cards matches the Point, the player wins the optional side wager (i.e., value of card 1, value of card 2, and sum of cards 1+2). Additionally, if the sum of the two cards matches the Point as calculated above, the player would also win. Additional bonuses as suggested above can be paid for pairs that equal the Point or when doubles are thrown with the dice.

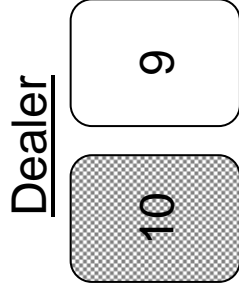
[0020] Figure 8 shows a second alternative embodiment of the invention, wherein the dealer's cards are used to compare against the Come-Out roll of the dice. Naturally, the optional side wager must be resolved in this scenario at a time when the dealer has two exposed cards. In this example, the dealer has cards of 9 and 10. Thus, if a Point rolled by the dice is 10, then all players who place the optional side wager would win. A similar result would occur if the established Point were 9, or if a 7 or 11 were thrown. All players would lose if the Come-Out roll were a 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 or 12. Alternatively, the outcome of the side wager would be determined only by the value of the dealer's exposed card, and independent of the value of the non exposed card. In this way the side wager would be resolved prior to the dealer exposing their second card.

[0021] Yet another variation of this game not illustrated in the drawings but easily appreciated by those of skill in the field would entail resolving the optional side wager based on all of the player cards that are obtained by the resolution of their Blackjack hand. Thus, the optional side wager could not be determined until the end of play. Whatever cards the player adds to his or her hand by the process of “hitting” as per the traditional rules of Blackjack may be included in determining the outcome of the side wager using any combination of the methods above. For example, if the Point established is a 4 and the player is dealt a 10 and a 2 initially, but later hit and received a 4 card, they would win the optional side wager. Naturally, many variations of this basic optional side wager may be carried out within the context of the rules as described herein.

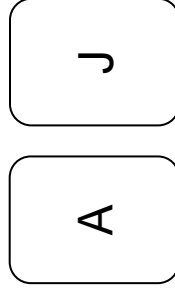
[0022] The foregoing invention has been described in accordance with the relevant legal standards, thus the description is exemplary rather than limiting in nature. Variations and modifications to the disclosed embodiment may become apparent to those skilled in the art and fall within the scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for playing Blackjack including an optional side wager as shown and described above.



Player 1

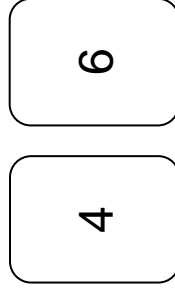


Side Wager

WINS	LOSES
7, 11*	2, 3, 12*
10	4
	5
	6
	8
	9

* Automatic

Player 2

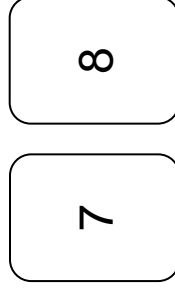


Side Wager

WINS	LOSES
7, 11*	2, 3, 12*
4	5
6	8
	9
	10

* Automatic

Player 3



Side Wager

WINS	LOSES
7, 11*	2, 3, 12*
8	4
	5
	6
	9
	10

* Automatic

Fig. 1

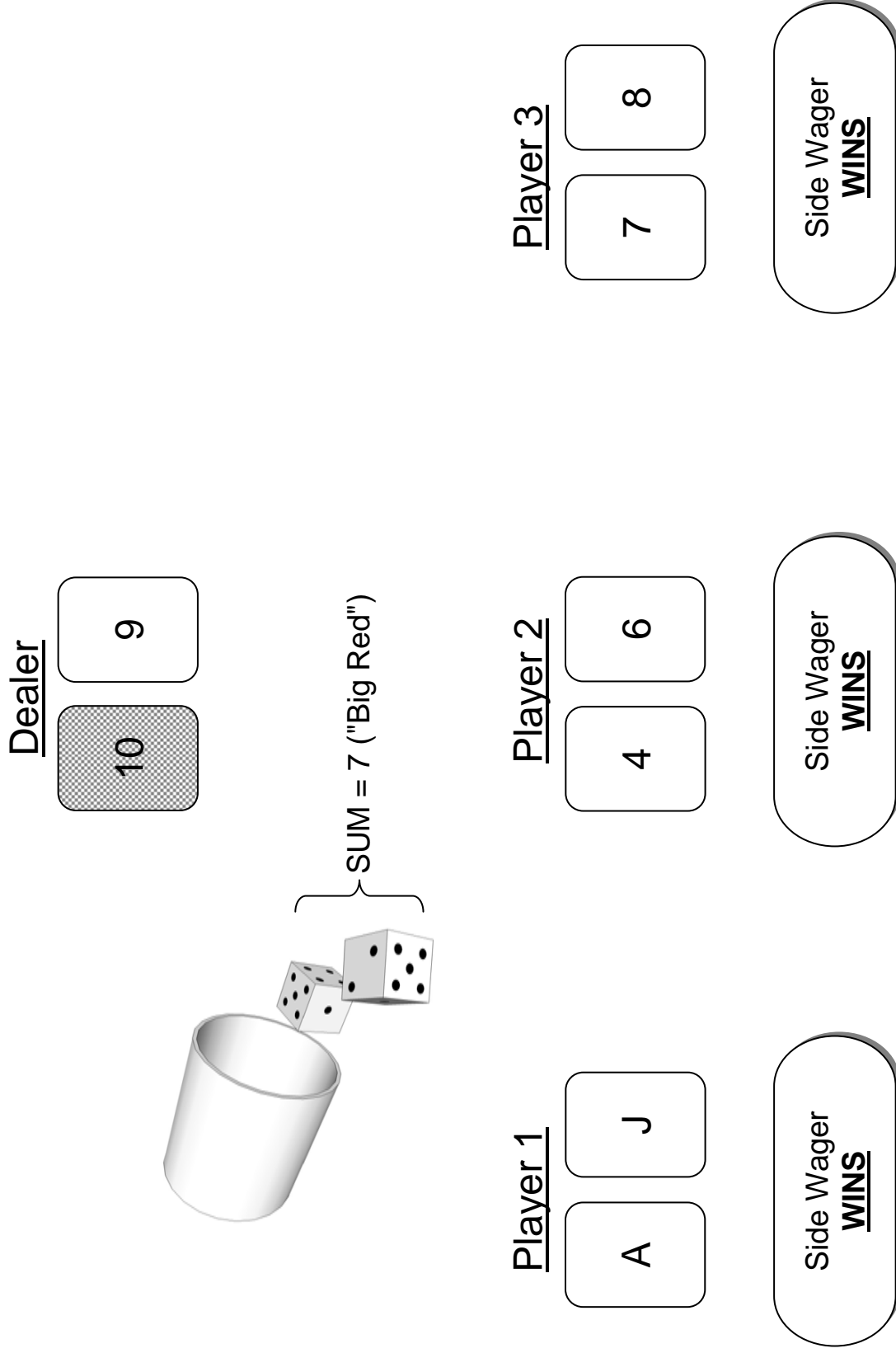


Fig. 2

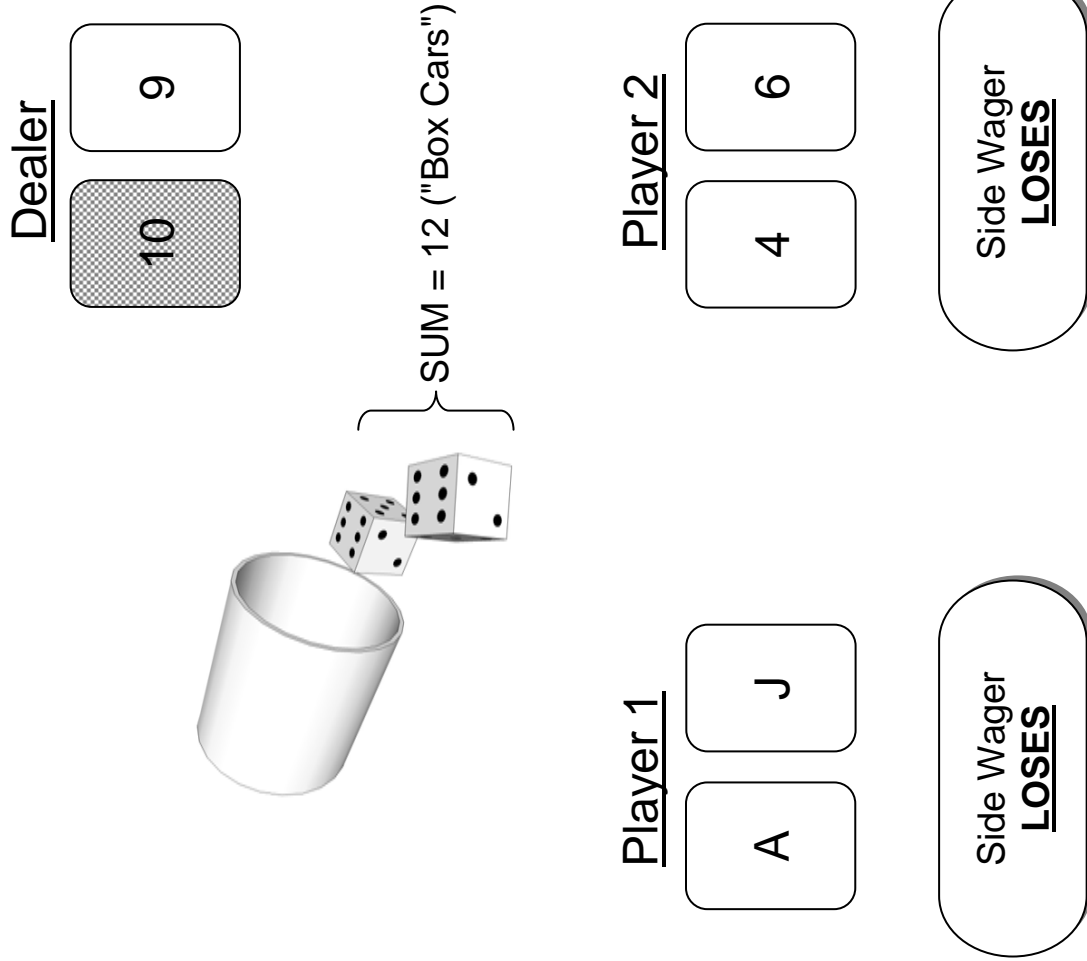
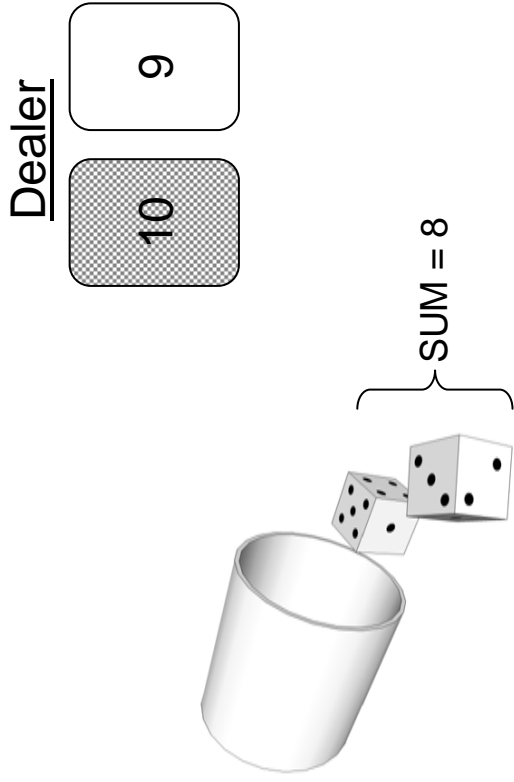


Fig. 3



Player 1

A J

Side Wager LOSES

Player 2

4 6

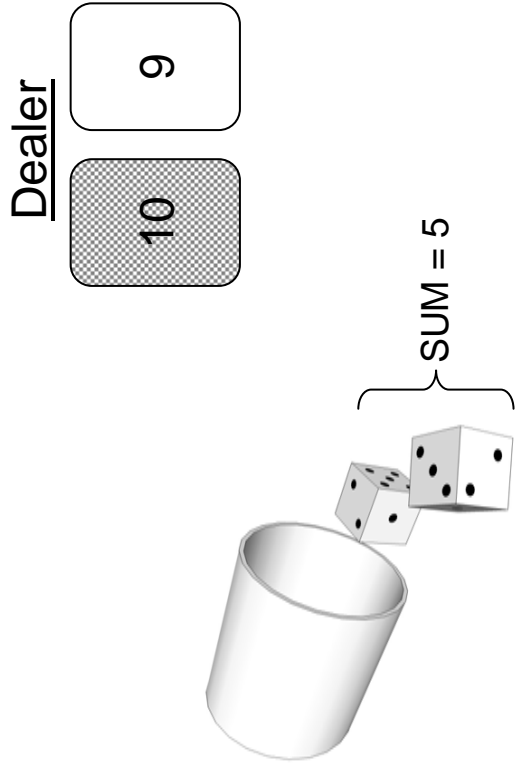
Side Wager LOSES

Player 3

7 8

Side Wager WINS

Fig. 4



Player 1

A J

Side Wager
LOSES

Player 2

4 6

Side Wager
LOSES

Player 3

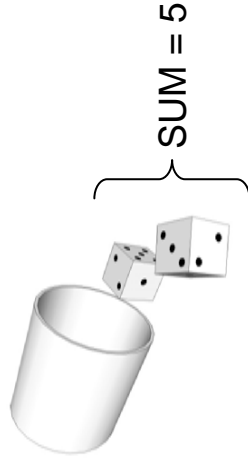
7 8

Side Wager
LOSES

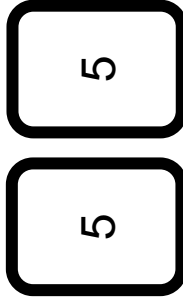
Fig. 5

Bonus Examples

Double Card Bonus



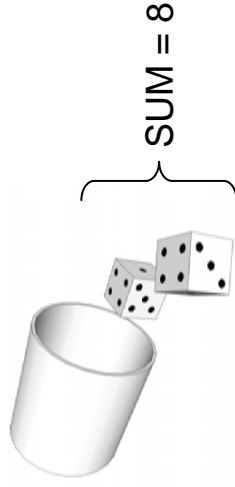
Player



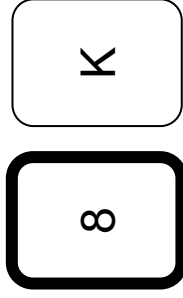
Side Wager
BONUS WIN

Fig. 6A

Double Dice Bonus



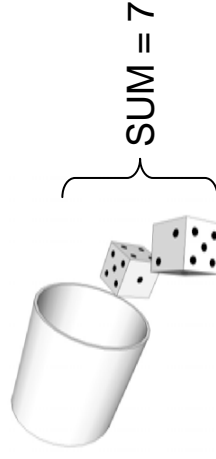
Player



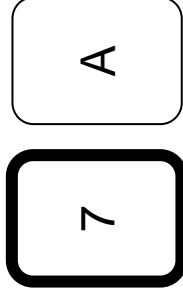
Side Wager
BONUS WIN

Fig. 6B

Seven-Card Bonus



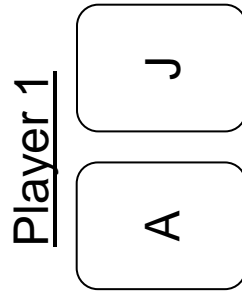
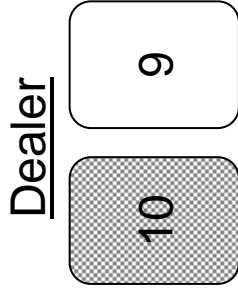
Player



Side Wager
**AUTOMATIC
WIN + BONUS**

Fig. 6C

1ST ALTERNATIVE EMBODIMENT

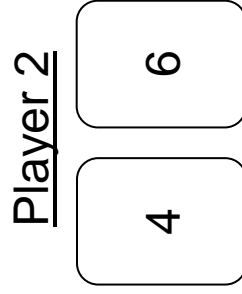


Card Sum = 11

WINS	LOSES
7, 11*	2, 3, 12*
10	4
	5
	6
	8
	9

Side Wager

* Automatic

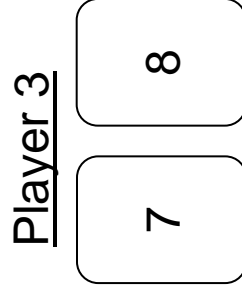


Card Sum = 10

WINS	LOSES
7, 11*	2, 3, 12*
4	5
6	8
10	9

Side Wager

* Automatic



Card Sum = 5

WINS	LOSES
7, 11*	2, 3, 12*
5	4
8	6
	9
	10

Side Wager

* Automatic

Fig. 7

2ND ALTERNATIVE EMBODIMENT

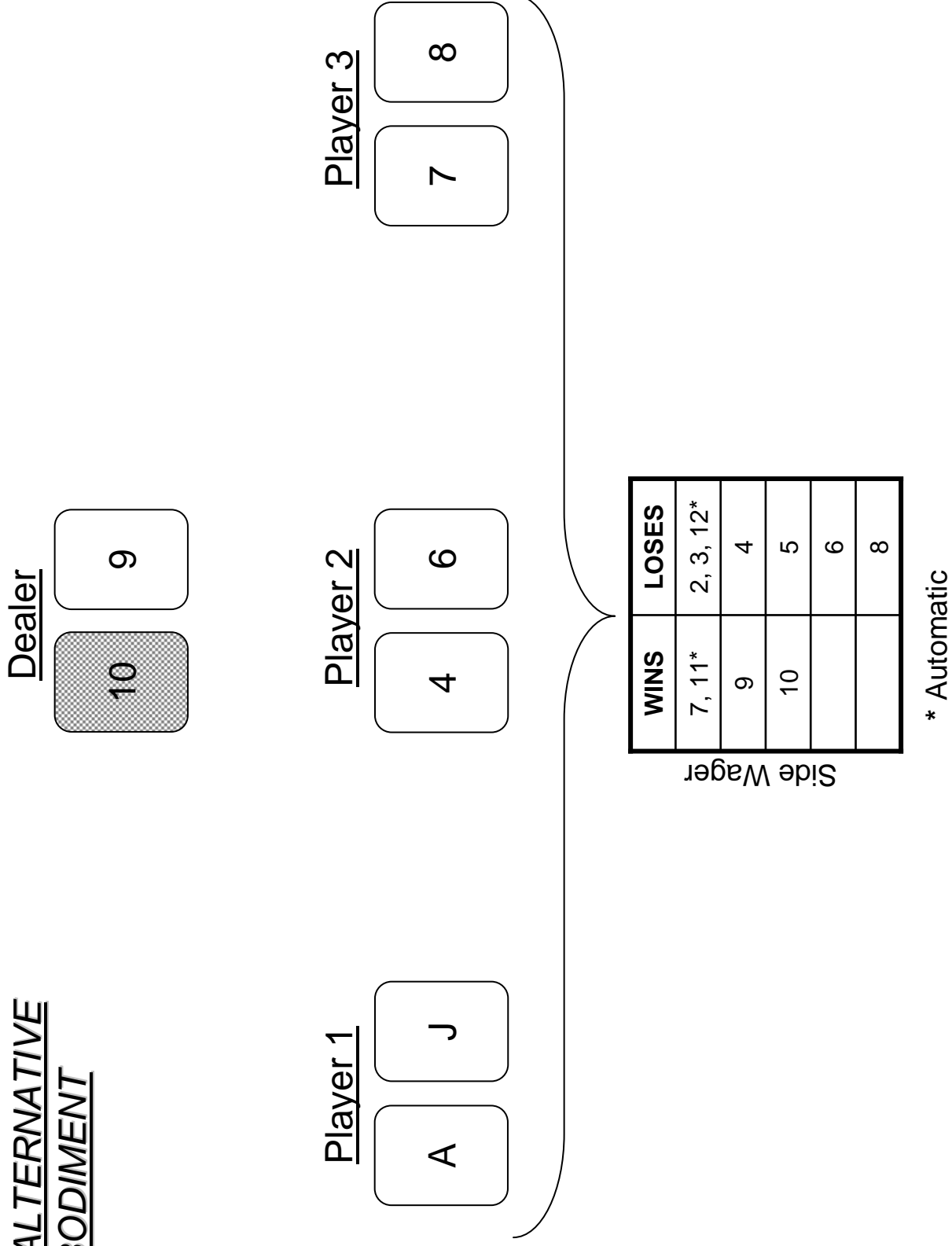


Fig. 8