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(54) Gaming table and barrier therefor

(57) A gaming-table 2 with a betting space 6 has a barrier 10 between the edge of the table 2 and the betting space 6. This barrier 10 hinders the deliberate or accidental movement of a gaming chip onto the betting space 6 of the table 2 by sliding or flicking the gaming chip and, therefore, prevents any tampering with bets that have been placed on the betting space.

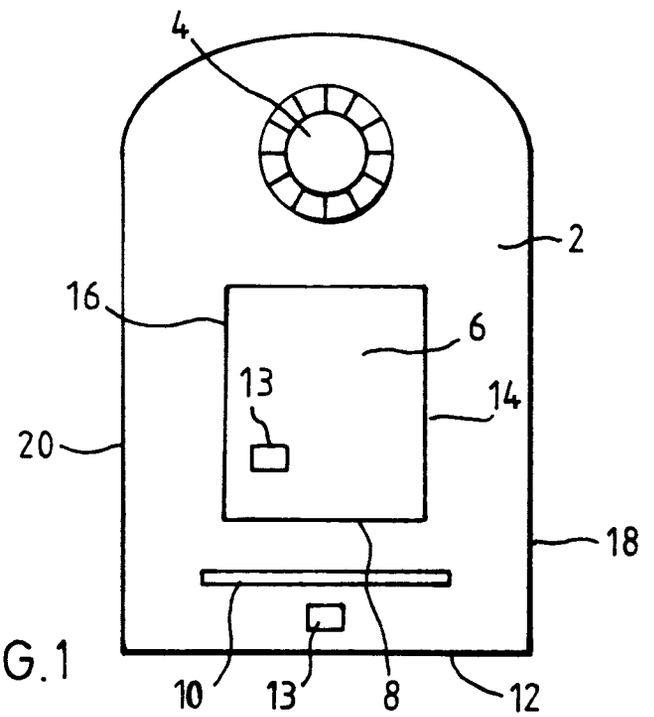

FIG.1

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Description

The invention relates to a gaming-table and a barrier therefor.

Gambling upon the outcome of chance events is a popular pastime, and forms the basis of a large industry. One aspect of the industry is gambling on the outcome of sporting events, mediated through bookmakers, for example. A further aspect of the gambling industry is based around casinos.

A casino provides the opportunity to bet upon a number of different games of chance, such as card games, or roulette.

The game of roulette is based upon the spinning of a wheel which is divided into coloured and numbered segments. A ball is allowed to drop at random into one segment of the spinning wheel, and the segment in which the ball lands indicates the winning colour and number. Bets may be placed on both the number and colour of the segment in which the ball rests at the end of the spin.

Bets are commonly placed by moving gaming chips onto a betting space on a roulette table. The betting space is an area on the surface of the table that is divided and marked in such a way that the numbers and colours of the wheel are represented. In this way, bets may be placed upon a specific outcome of the game. A correct selection of the outcome of the spin is rewarded by the casino, while an incorrect selection results in loss of the chips, or money, to the casino.

Clearly it is important to the casino that no bets are placed upon the outcome of the spin once the result of the game is known or, indeed, shortly before the ball comes to rest.

The problem with current gaming-tables, such as those described above, is that position of gaming chips may be affected by the actions of the gamblers around the table, once the game has ended. Gaming chips may be accidentally, or deliberately, knocked onto the table, which could affect the number of gaming chips on the winning section of the betting space. This movement of chips is clearly undesirable for those running the casino or gambling table. The problem of chips being moved onto the betting space either accidentally or deliberately has been addressed in part by visual monitoring of the table, but this is expensive and not always reliable.

It is an object of the present invention to provide a gaming-table that deters and hinders the deliberate tampering with chips on the betting space. It is a further object of the invention to prevent the accidental movement of chips onto the betting space.

Therefore, in a first aspect, the present invention provides a gaming table with an upper surface delimited by an edge and including a betting space, characterised in that there is provided a barrier on the upper surface between the edge of the table and the betting space.

A gaming-table is any table upon which money, or chips that represent money, may be placed. The table need not necessarily be an integral part of the game on which the bets are being placed, although this may indeed by the case. For example, a roulette wheel may either be built into the gaming-table, or be on a separate table. Whilst we prefer that the gaming-table be a roulette table, it will be appreciated that the present invention relates to any table which contains a betting space, and is not limited by the nature of the game upon which the bets are being placed.

The term "betting space", as we have previously discussed, refers to that area of the upper surface of the gaming-table which is divided and marked in such a way that bets may be placed upon the specific outcomes of the game.

For the purposes of this description, the "bottom edge" of the betting space is defined as the bottom line of the betting space when the numbers of the betting space are viewed in an upright orientation. For roulette tables in which the roulette wheel is an integral part of the table, the bottom edge of the betting space is usually located on the opposite side of the table to the wheel.

The term "barrier", as mentioned previously, refers to any physical means for preventing or hindering the accidental or deliberate movement of gaming chips onto the betting space once the allowed period for placing bets has passed. The barrier may be an integral part of the table, or may be manufactured separately and subsequently attached to the table.

In a preferred embodiment of this invention, the barrier extends upwards from the upper surface of the table, in order to prevent the accidental or deliberate sliding of gaming chips onto the betting space once the game has ended. We prefer that the barrier extends upwards from the upper surface of the table to a height of less than 10 cm above the upper surface of the gaming-table. A barrier that is too high would prevent or hinder the normal placing of bets onto the betting space. In a preferred embodiment, the barrier extends to a height of substantially 1 cm above the upper surface of the gaming-table.

The barrier is located between the edge of the table and the betting space, and may surround the betting space, which is normally rectangular in shape, on 2, 3 or 4 sides. However, in a preferred alternative embodiment, we envisage that a barrier could be placed between only one edge of the betting space and the corresponding edge of the table. If this is the case, we prefer that the barrier is located between the bottom edge of the betting space and the adjacent edge of the table. Many of the attempts to interfere with the result of the game come from this end of the table.

The barrier may be formed integrally with the body of the gaming-table, or made separately and subsequently attached to the gaming-table. We prefer that the barrier is made from a transparent material, since a transparent barrier is considered to be aesthetically more pleasing. We particularly prefer that the barrier is made from acetate or other polymer

In the case where the barrier is manufactured sep-

arately from the gaming-table, we prefer that means are provided by which the barrier may be attached to the table, such as holes for receiving screws. However, it will be appreciated that other means of attachment are available, such as rivets, adhesives or any other suitable means.

The barrier is typically straight, although this is not an absolute requirement of the present invention. We prefer that the barrier be a straight bar of between 10cm and 2m in length. We particularly prefer that the barrier is a straight bar of approximately 35 cm in length. We also prefer that the barrier has an approximately square cross-section, although this is, again, not an absolute requirement of the present invention. It will be appreciated that the length, cross-section, and other features of the bar may be varied according to the dimensions of the gaming-table.

The invention will be further described by way of example with reference to the accompnying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a plan view of a gaming-table forming an embodiment of the present invention;
Figure 2(a) is a side view of a barrier of the embodiment of Figure 1;
Figure 2(b) is an end view of the barrier shown in Figure 2(a);
Figure 3 shows a modification of the embodiment of Figure 1, and
Figure 4 shows another modification of the embodiment of Figure 1.

Figure 1, shows, in plan view, a gaming-table 2 according to the present invention. The gaming-table 2 is a roulette table. The roulette table 2 is of standard construction, and need not be discussed in detail here The roulette wheel 4 is located at one end of the table 2. The betting space 6 is located in the middle of the table 2 and the bottom edge 8 of the betting space 6 is located on the opposite side of the table 2 to the roulette wheel 4, adjacent the bottom edge 12 of the table 2. When viewing the table 2 from the bottom edge 12, the numbers on the betting space 6 appear in an upright orientation.

Players may stand around any part of the table 2, and bets are placed on the betting space 6. The barrier 10 is shown to be located between the bottom edge 8 of the betting space 6 and the corresponding bottom edge 12 of the table 2. This barrier 10 can be seen to prevent chips from being pushed or flicked from the edge of the table 2 onto the betting space 6. Thus it is very difficult for a player to surreptitiously move a chip 13 into the betting space once the table operator has announced "no more bets".

It will be appreciated that a barrier may also be placed between the other edges 14, 16 of the betting space 6 and the adjacent edges 18, 20 of the table 2 respectively. Such barriers would prevent players from other areas of the table 2 from moving chips 13 onto the betting space 6 deliberately or accidentally once the game has ended.

It will be further be appreciated that the barrier 10 need not be straight, as shown in Figure 1, but may be curved, or adopt any other configuration consistent with the prevention of movement of gaming chips.

Although Figure 1 shows a roulette table 2, it will be appreciated that a barrier 10 may be used on any gaming-table 2, as we have described.

Figures 2(a) and 2(b) show a side elevation and end elevation respectively of a barrier 10 suitable for use in the present invention. The breadth b and height h of the preferred embodiment are 35cm and 1cm respectively. The barrier 10 contains three holes 22 which provide means to attach the barrier 10 to the gaming-table 2. The number of holes 22 required in the barrier 10 will, of course, depend upon the length of the barrier 10 itself, and a suitable number of holes 22 will be apparent to a reader skilled in the art taking account of the material of the barrier 10 and its dimensions. In order to secure the barrier 10 to the table 2 a screw is passed through each hole 22 and screwed into the table 2 at the appropriate location.

While the barrier 10 is shown as having a square cross-section in Figure 2(b), it will be appreciated that other shapes may serve equally well, such as a rectangular or trapezoidal shape or any other suitable shape.

Figure 3 illustrates a side elevation of a gaming-table 2, incorporating an alternative barrier means. Rather than extending upwards from the surface of the table 2, a groove 24 is provided in the table 2 between the betting space 6 and the edge of the table. This arrangement would also serve to prevent the movement of chips onto the betting space 6 since any chips pushed or flicked towards the betting space 6 will slide into the groove 24 and abut against the upwardly extending wall 26. The groove is designed to be of a suitable depth and width such that chips would not be able to be pushed along the table and easily cross over the groove 24, and a suitable depth and width for the groove 24 would be apparent to the skilled man.

Figure 4 shows an end view of an alternative barrier shape 10a, which incorporates a lip 10a' to prevent chips from spinning onto the betting space 6. The lip 10a' faces towards the edge of the table 2. Barriers that are domed, for example, may still allow chips to bounce over the top, whilst a lip 10a' as shown in Figure 4 provides an additional bar to the movement of chips.

The height k from the upper surface of the table 2 to the underside 11 of the lip 10a' is preferentially greater than the height of a gaming chip. Such an arrangement would provide an improved barrier to the unwanted movement of chips onto the betting space 6 since the leading edge of a chip will lodge underneath the lip 10a'.

Claims

1. A gaming-table with an upper surface having an edge and including a betting space designated on the upper surface and spaced from the edge, characterised in that there is provided a barrier on the upper surface between the edge of the table and the betting space.

2. A gaming-table according to claim 1, wherein the barrier extends upwards from the upper surface of the table.

3. A gaming-table according to claim 2, wherein the barrier extends upwards from the upper surface of the table to a height of less than 10cm above the upper surface.

4. A gaming-table according to claim 3, wherein the barrier extends upwards from the upper surface of the table to a height of about 1cm above the upper surface. table.

5. A gaming-table according to claim 1, wherein the barrier comprises a recess in the table upper surface.

6. A gaming-table according to any preceding claim wherein the barrier is located between the bottom edge of the betting space and the adjacent edge of the table.

7. A gaming-table according to any preceding claim, wherein the gaming-table is a roulette table.

8. A barrier suitable for attachment to a gaming-table, as claimed in any of the preceding claims.

9. A barrier according to claim 8, wherein the barrier is made of transparent material.

10. A barrier according to claim 8 or 9, wherein means is provided for attaching the barrier to the gaming-table.

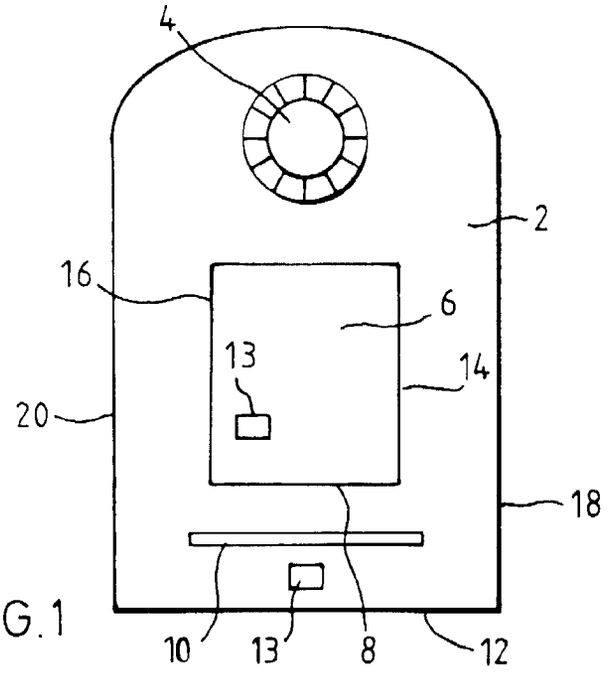

FIG.1

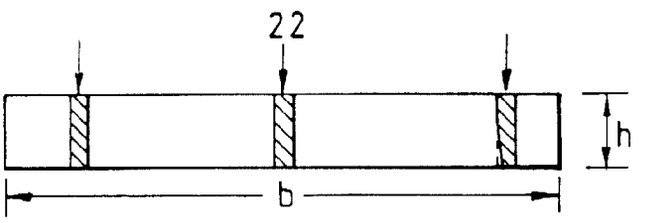

FIG.2a

FIG.2b

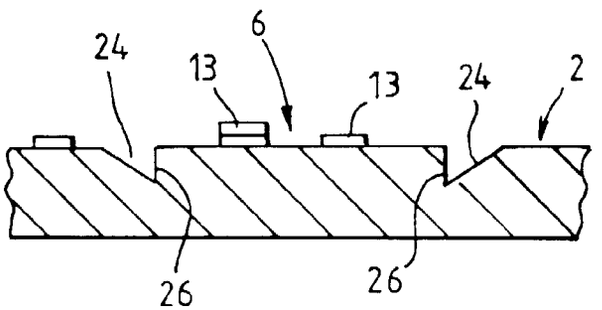

FIG.3

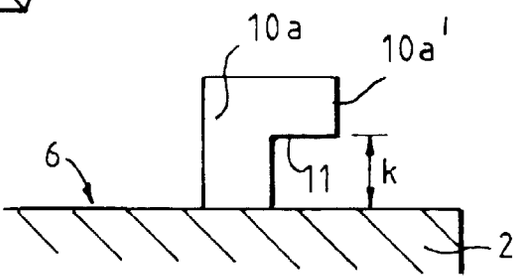

FIG.4