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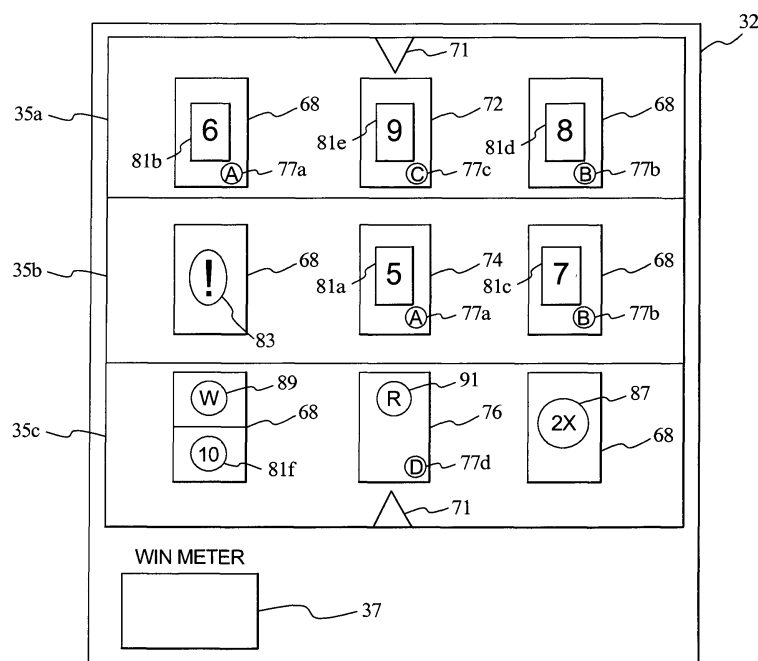
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(54) **Gaming device having symbol game with multiple award**

(57) The present invention provides a gaming device which includes a plurality of symbols. A first selection is chosen from a first set of symbols. A second reel is chosen from a second set of symbols. The first and second set of symbols have a first characteristic and a second characteristic. A third or modifier selection is chosen from a third set of symbols. The symbols in the

third set of symbols have at least a first characteristic. The award a player receives includes a first characteristic component based on the first characteristics of the first selection, second selection and third selection. The award also includes a second characteristic component based on the second characteristic of the first and second selections and a second characteristic, if any, of the third selection.

**FIG. 4**



## Description

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

**[0001]** Gaming devices such as slot machines, video poker machines, blackjack machines and keno machines are well known. Slot and other gaming machines having primary and bonus games or schemes are also well known. Such gaming devices have schemes in which a player has one or more opportunities to place wagers and interact with the gaming device. When the player achieves a predetermined condition or triggering event in a primary game, a bonus game may begin and provide the player with an opportunity to receive additional awards.

**[0002]** Since players continue to seek more entertainment and enjoyment from different types of gaming devices, it is desirable to provide players with gaming devices with new gaming schemes which provide added excitement and entertainment.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

**[0003]** The present invention provides a gaming device and, in particular, a primary game or a bonus game of a gaming device which includes a plurality of symbols which each include one or more characteristics. The award, if any, provided to the player is based on the related characteristics or a correlation between characteristics of two or more of the symbols selected from the plurality of symbols.

**[0004]** In one embodiment of the present invention, the plurality of symbols are displayed to the player on a plurality of reels. A first selection or selected symbol, is chosen from a first set of symbols on a first reel. A second selection or selected symbol, is chosen from a second set of symbols on a second reel. A third selection or selected symbol, also referred to in one preferred embodiment as a modifier selection, is chosen from a third set of symbols on a third reel. In one preferred embodiment, a plurality of the symbols on the first and second reels include a value characteristic and a second characteristic such as a color. In one preferred embodiment, a plurality of the symbols on the third reel include a functional characteristic and a second characteristic such as color. The second characteristic is preferably of the same type as the second characteristic of the symbols in the first and second sets of symbols on the first and second reels. The corresponding characteristics of the first selection, second selection and the third selection or modifier selection are independently or separately evaluated to determine any correlations between said characteristics and an award, if any, the player receives.

**[0005]** More specifically, in this embodiment, the processor of the gaming device or the player activates the reels. The processor randomly selects a symbol on the first reel as the first selection, a symbol on the second reel as a second selection and a symbol on the third reel

as the third selection or modifier selection. In one embodiment, the reels spin along a vertically extending axis. Preferably, the first selection, second selection and third or modifier selection are displayed along a payline or other symbol indicator. The player receives an award based on the characteristics of the selected symbols. The award includes multiple components which are determined by at least two independent evaluations based on correlated characteristics. In one embodiment, the first evaluation is based on the value characteristic, if any, of the first selection, the second selection and the functional characteristic of the third selection. The second evaluation is based on a second characteristic of the first selection, second selection and the third or modifier selection and any correlation between such characteristics. Thus, in this embodiment, the first component of the award is the sum of the value characteristics, if any, of the first and second selections as modified by the functional characteristic of the third or modifier selection. The second component of the award is based on the second or other characteristics or one or more or any correlation between the second or other characteristics of the first selection, the second selection and the third or modifier selection. It should be appreciated that the correlation could be any suitable correlation such as the sum of like characteristics, other mathematical functions for characteristics, the matching of like or related characteristics of two or more predetermined characteristics.

**[0006]** As indicated above, the sets of symbols include characteristics (besides value characteristics) which are adapted to provide winning outcomes. For example, the symbols may have characteristics such as different colors, letters, characters, images or any other representations of characteristics. If the first selection and second selection includes matching, related or any other predetermined combination of such characteristics, the processor provides the player with an additional component of the award. For example, if the first selected symbol and the second selected symbol include a matching characteristic, the award provided to the player includes another or second component. Likewise, if the third or modifier selection also includes the matching characteristic, the award provided to the player includes a larger second component. Accordingly, the total award provided to the player is based on the multiple characteristics of the chosen selections, and in particular determined in different ways, such as an award component which is the sum of the value characteristics of the chosen selections and an award component provided for any matching or related characteristics of the chosen selections.

**[0007]** In one embodiment, the set of symbols also include symbols with only one characteristic. This characteristic is referred to as a sole or single characteristic. In one embodiment, one or more awards are provided to the player if two or more of the selected symbols include a single characteristic.

**[0008]** In one embodiment, the third set of selections have functional characteristics including, but not limited to, a multiplier characteristic, a repeat characteristic and a wild characteristic. The multiplier characteristic causes the processor to multiply the combined value of the value characteristics, if any, of the first selection and the second selection by the multiplier of the third selection.

**[0009]** The repeat characteristic causes the processor to reactivate the first and second reels to display a new first selection and a new second selection. The player is then provided one or more additional components of the total award which is based on the characteristics of the new first selection and the new second selection and third or modifier selection.

**[0010]** A wild characteristic can be matched with any of the characteristics of the symbols in the sets of symbols on the first and second reels. If the first selection and the second selection have a matching characteristic and the modifier selection includes a wild characteristic, the wild characteristic can be matched with the characteristic common to the first selection and second selection and thus provides the player with a larger second characteristic or component award.

**[0011]** In one embodiment, the third selection may be have a ship characteristic which does not perform any function.

**[0012]** It should be appreciated that the number of the selection sets or reels may vary in accordance with the present invention.

**[0013]** It is therefore an advantage of the present invention to provide a gaming device having a multi-characteristic symbol game with multiple award components.

**[0014]** Additional features and advantages of the present invention are described in, and will be apparent from, the following Detailed Description of the Invention and the figures.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

### **[0015]**

Figs. 1A and 1B are perspective views of alternate embodiments of the gaming device of the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a schematic block diagram of the electronic configuration of one embodiment of the gaming device of the present invention.

Fig. 3 is a front elevation view of a display device displaying a set of reels in one embodiment of the present invention including a first selection, a second selection and a third or modifier selection.

Fig. 4 is a front elevation view of a display device displaying a set of reels in one embodiment of the present invention including a first selection, a second selection and a third or modifier selection.

Fig. 5 is a front elevation view of a display device displaying a set of reels in one embodiment of the

present invention including a new first selection, a new second selection and a third or modifier selection.

Figs. 6 is a front elevation view of a display device displaying a set of reels in one embodiment of the present invention including a first selection, a second selection and a third or modifier selection.

Fig. 7 is a front elevation view of a display device displaying a set of reels in one embodiment of the present invention including a first selection, a second selection and a third or modifier selection.

Fig. 8 is a front elevation view of a display device displaying a set of reels in one embodiment of the present invention including a first selection, a second selection and a third or modifier selection.

Fig. 9 is a front elevation view of a display device displaying a set of reels in one embodiment of the present invention including a first selection, a second selection and a third or modifier selection.

Fig. 10 is a front elevation view of a display device displaying a set of reels in one embodiment of the present invention including a first selection, a second selection and a third or modifier selection.

Fig. 11 is a front elevation view of a display device displaying a set of reels in one embodiment of the present invention including a first selection, a second selection and a third or modifier selection.

Fig. 12 is a front elevation view of a display device displaying a set of reels in one embodiment of the present invention including a first selection, a second selection and a third or modifier selection.

Figs. 13A, 13B and 13C are front elevation views of a display device displaying a set of reels in one embodiment of the present invention including a first selection, a second selection, a new first selection, a new second selection and a third or modifier selection.

Fig. 14 is a front elevation view of a display device displaying a set of reels in one embodiment of the present invention including a first selection, a second selection and a third or modifier selection.

Fig. 15 is a front elevation view of a display device displaying a set of reels in one embodiment of the present invention including a first selection, a second selection and a third or modifier selection.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

### Gaming Device and Electronics

**[0016]** Referring now to the drawings, and in particular to Figs. 1A and 1B, gaming device 10a and gaming device 10b illustrate two possible cabinet styles and display arrangements and are collectively referred to herein as gaming device 10. The present invention includes the game, described below, being a bonus or game that coordinates with a base game. Gaming device 10 in one base game can be a slot machine having the controls,

displays and features of a conventional slot machine, or a video card game such as poker, blackjack, etc. The player can operate the gaming device while standing or sitting. Gaming device 10 also includes being a pub-style or table-top game (not shown), which a player operates while sitting. The base games of the gaming device 10 include slot, poker, or blackjack. The symbols and indicia used for any of the base and progressive games include mechanical, electrical or video symbols and indicia.

**[0017]** In a stand alone or a bonus embodiment, the gaming device 10 includes monetary input devices. Figs. 1A and 1B illustrate a coin slot 12 for coins or tokens and/or a payment acceptor 14 for cash money. The payment acceptor 14 also includes other devices for accepting payment, such as readers or validators for credit cards, debit cards or smart cards, tickets, notes, etc. When a player inserts money in gaming device 10, a number of credits corresponding to the amount deposited is shown in a credit display 16. After depositing the appropriate amount of money, a player can begin the game by pulling arm 18 or pushing play button 20. Play button 20 can be any play activator used by the player which starts any game or sequence of events in the gaming device.

**[0018]** As shown in Figs. 1A and 1B, gaming device 10 also includes a bet display 22 and a bet one button 24. The player places a bet by pushing the bet one button 24. The player can increase the bet by one credit each time the player pushes the bet one button 24. When the player pushes the bet one button 24, the number of credits shown in the credit display 16 decreases by one, and the number of credits shown in the bet display 22 increases by one. At any time during the game, a player may "cash out" by pushing a cash out button 26 to receive coins or tokens in the coin payout tray 28 or other forms of payment, such as an amount printed on a ticket or credited to a credit card, debit card or smart card.

**[0019]** Gaming device 10 also includes one or more display devices. The embodiment shown in Fig. 1A includes a central display device 30, and the alternative embodiment shown in Fig. 1B includes a central display device 30 as well as an upper display device 32. The display devices display any visual representation or exhibition, including but not limited to movement of physical objects such as mechanical reels and wheels, dynamic lighting and video images. The display device includes any viewing surface such as glass, a video monitor or screen, a liquid crystal display or any other static or dynamic display mechanism. In a video poker, blackjack or other card gaming machine embodiment, the display device includes displaying one or more cards.

**[0020]** The slot machine base game of gaming device 10 preferably displays a plurality of reels 34, preferably three to five reels 34, in mechanical or video form on one or more of the display devices. Each reel 34 displays a plurality of indicia such as bells, hearts, fruits,

numbers, letters, bars or other images which preferably correspond to a theme associated with the gaming device 10. If the reels 34 are in video form, the display device displaying the video reels 34 is preferably a video monitor. Each base game, solely in the slot machine base game of the gaming device 10, includes speakers 36 for making sounds or playing music.

**[0021]** Referring now to Fig. 2, a general electronic configuration of the gaming device 10 for the stand alone and bonus embodiments described above preferably includes: a processor 38; a memory device 40 for storing program code or other data; a central display device 30; an upper display device 32; a sound card 42; a plurality of speakers 36; and one or more input devices 44. The processor 38 is preferably a microprocessor or microcontroller-based platform which is capable of displaying images, symbols and other indicia such as images of people, characters, places, things and faces of cards. The memory device 40 includes random access memory (RAM) 46 for storing event data or other data generated or used during a particular game. The memory device 40 also includes read only memory (ROM) 48 for storing program code, which controls the gaming device 10 so that it plays a particular game in accordance with applicable game rules and pay tables.

**[0022]** As illustrated in Fig. 2, the player preferably uses the input devices 44 to input signals into gaming device 10. In the slot machine base game, the input devices 44 include the pull arm 18, play button 20, the bet one button 24 and the cash out button 26. A touch screen 50 and touch screen controller 52 are connected to a video controller 54 and processor 38. The terms "computer" or "controller" are used herein to refer collectively to the processor 38, the memory device 40, the sound card 42, the touch screen controller and the video controller 54.

**[0023]** In certain instances, it is preferable to use a touch screen 50 and an associated touch screen controller 52 instead of a conventional video monitor display device. The touch screen enables a player to input decisions into the gaming device 10 by sending a discrete signal based on the area of the touch screen 50 that the player touches or presses. As further illustrated in Fig. 2, the processor 38 connects to the coin slot 12 or payment acceptor 14, whereby the processor 38 requires a player to deposit a certain amount of money in to start the game.

**[0024]** It should be appreciated that although a processor 38 and memory device 40 are preferable implementations of the present invention, the present invention also includes being implemented via one or more application-specific integrated circuits (ASIC's), one or more hard-wired devices, or one or more mechanical devices (collectively referred to herein as a "processor"). Furthermore, although the processor 38 and memory device 40 preferably reside in each gaming device 10 unit, the present invention includes providing some or all of their functions at a central location such

as a network server for communication to a playing station such as over a local area network (LAN), wide area network (WAN), Internet connection, microwave link, and the like.

**[0025]** With reference to the slot machine base game of Figs. 1A and 1B, to operate the gaming device 10, the player inserts the appropriate amount of tokens or money in the coin slot 12 or the payment acceptor 14 and then pulls the arm 18 or pushes the play button 20. The reels 34 then begin to spin. Eventually, the reels 34 come to a stop. As long as the player has credits remaining, the player can spin the reels 34 again. Depending upon where the reels 34 stop, the player may or may not win additional credits.

#### Multi-Characteristic Symbol Bonus Game

**[0026]** One embodiment of the present invention provides a gaming device which includes a plurality of reels 35a, 35b and 35c having a plurality of symbols 68 as generally illustrated in Figs. 1A, 2A and 3. The symbols are displayed within a display device 32. In one embodiment generally illustrated in Fig. 1A, the reels are mechanical, extend outwardly from the gaming device cabinet and are spun horizontally along a vertically extending axis. A set of indicators 71 are provided at the top center position of the display device and at the bottom center position of the display device. The indicators designate selected symbols from the plurality of selected symbols on the reels. It should be appreciated that the reels could be video reels as generally illustrated in Fig. 1B. It should also be appreciated that the symbols could be selected from other display devices beside reels such as wheels or other indicators of symbols from sets of symbols.

**[0027]** In the above embodiment and generally with reference to Fig. 3, the first reel displays a first selection 72, or selected symbol, which is chosen from the first set of symbols on the first reel; the second reel displays a second selection 74, or selected symbol, which is chosen from the second set of symbols on the second reel; and the third reel displays a third selection or modifier selection 76, which is chosen from the third set of symbols on the third reel. The sets of symbols on the first reel, second reel and third reel have one or more characteristics associated with the symbols. In one embodiment, the characteristics include an award characteristic represented by award values 81a through 81f and another characteristic represented by letters 77a through 77d. It should be appreciated that the characteristic could be any other suitable characteristic. It should also be appreciated that the display could include a win meter 37.

**[0028]** The award a player receives is determined by the characteristics of the symbols selected as the first selection, second selection and third or modifier selection. In one embodiment, the award includes a plurality of components. One component of the award is based

on or is equal to the sum of the value characteristics, if any, of the first selection and second selection and function characteristic of the third or modifier selection. The other components of the award is based on the combination of any additional characteristic(s) of the first selection, second selection and third or modifier selection.

**[0029]** In one embodiment, the symbols 68 within the sets of symbols on the first reel and second reel include value characteristics, single characteristics and functional characteristics. The value characteristics 81a through 81e are preferably in the form of a number indicating an amount of credits the player receives as illustrated in Fig. 4. In this embodiment, one component of the player's award is based on the sum of the value characteristics on the first and second selection as modified by the functional characteristic of the third selection or modifier selection.

**[0030]** The single characteristics 83 of the symbols are represented by exclamation points and illustrated in Fig. 4. It should be appreciated, however, that the single characteristic may have any form or design. The single characteristic is the only characteristic of a sole symbol within the plurality of symbols. If a plurality of sole symbols are selected which include a single characteristic, the player achieves a single characteristic award. A predetermined award is associated with obtaining a plurality of symbols having a single characteristic. In one example, if a player receives a first selection and a second selection which each include a single characteristic, the player receives a predetermined award amount such as 250 credits. The set of symbols on the third reel may also include sole symbols with single characteristics. Accordingly, if a symbol selected as the first selection or the second selection includes a single characteristic and the third selection or modifier selection also includes a single characteristic, the player also receives a predetermined award such as 250 credits. In this example, if the first selection, the second selection and the third or modifier selection each include a single characteristic, the player may receive a greater predetermined award amount, such as 1000 credits. Thus, in one embodiment of the present invention, one component of the award is determined based on the presence of any single characteristics. In this embodiment, the other component awards would not be provided to the player.

**[0031]** In one embodiment, the functional or other characteristics which may be associated with the first selection, second selection or third selection or modifier selection include or are represented by letters 77a through 77d which are displayed adjacent to the value characteristic. Examples of letter characteristics are shown in Fig. 4. The letter associated with each symbol is selected from a set of letters used by the gaming device. The symbols could also include other characteristics associated with the symbols such as colors. In one embodiment, only one letter, color or such characteristic is associated with each symbol.

**[0032]** In one embodiment, the symbols on the third

reel or the modifier selections include value characteristics, a single characteristic, multiplier characteristics, wild characteristics and repeat characteristics. An example of the multiplier characteristic 87 is provided in Fig. 4. In one embodiment, multipliers are associated with a plurality of symbols in the third set of symbols which are on the third reel. Each multiplier is predetermined and displayed by the modifier selection in the form of a number adjacent to an "X". In an alternative embodiment, the multiplier is randomly determined by the processor, prior to or after being selected. If the modifier selection includes the multiplier characteristic, the processor multiplies the combined value of the value characteristics, if any, of the first selection and the second selection by the multiplier to determine the player's award.

**[0033]** The wild characteristic 89 matches any characteristic associated with the characteristics on the symbols (preferably excluding the value characteristics). In one example, the first selection 72 and second selection 74 may display a matching letter 77c as illustrated in Fig. 6. If the modifier selection includes a wild characteristic, the wild characteristic matches the letter characteristic of the first selection and the second selection to provide a characteristic award which is a component of the total award and based on the number and/or the type of such matching characteristics.

**[0034]** The repeat characteristic 91, illustrated in Figs. 4 and 5, causes the processor to reactivate the reels 35a and 35b displaying the first selection and second selection. When the reels stop, the reels display a new first selection and new second selection. The processor determines the value characteristic component of the player's total award which is the sum of the value, if any, of the original first selection, the original second selection, the new first selection and the new second selection. The other components of the player's award provided to the player is based on the characteristic combinations of the original first selection, original second selection, and the third or modifier selection and the characteristic combinations of the new first selection, new second selection, and third or modifier selection.

**[0035]** It should be appreciated that the characteristics described above for any of the selections are examples and should not be construed as limiting the number of, or type of, characteristics which may be associated with the selections. It should also be appreciated that the award amounts for matching or related characteristics may vary depending on the type of characteristics included in the selections. It should also be appreciated that the number of selections may vary in accordance with the present invention.

#### Example Game Outcomes

**[0036]** The following is an explanation of certain example game outcomes for one embodiment of the present invention. It should be appreciated that the char-

acteristics associated with the selections for the examples below could be associated with any of the selections while still providing the same overall outcome. Thus, in one embodiment, the order of the selections does not matter. In an alternative embodiment, the order of the selections may produce different outcomes.

**[0037]** In one example, the first selection 72 includes a value characteristic 81c and the second selection 74 includes a value characteristic 81d as illustrated in Fig. 7. If the modifier selection 76 includes a single characteristic 83, then the value component of the total award is equal to the sum of the values for both of the value characteristics 81c and 81d, which is 7 and 8 credits, respectively. Thus, the player receives a value component award of 15 credits. The processor then performs a second evaluation for any awards based on second or other characteristics of the selections. The first selection and second selection each have a letter characteristic, 77a and 77b, respectively. Because the letter characteristics do not match, the player does not receive a second characteristic award component of the total award. Therefore, the player receives a total award of 15 credits.

**[0038]** In another example, the first selection 72 includes a value characteristic 81c, the second selection 74 includes a value characteristic 81d, and the third or modifier selection includes a multiplier characteristic 87 as illustrated in Fig. 8. The player receives a value component award equal to the sum of the values 81c and 81d, multiplied by the multiplier, which in this example is two. Thus, the player receives a value component award of 30 credits. Because the first selection and second selection have no second characteristics that match, there is no second characteristic component award of the total award. Thus, the total award to the player is 30 credits.

**[0039]** In another example, the first selection 72 includes a value characteristic 81c, the second selection 74 includes a value characteristic 81d, and the third or modifier selection includes a value characteristic 81f as illustrated in Fig. 9. The player receives a value component of the total award equal to the sum of the values 81c and 81d of the first selection and second selection, in addition to the value 81f associated with the third or modifier selection. Thus, the player receives a value component award of 25 credits. Although the modifier also includes a wild characteristic 89, the first selection and second selection have no second characteristics that match. Thus, there is no second characteristic component award of the total award. The total award to the player is 25 credits.

**[0040]** In another example, the first selection 72 includes a value characteristic 81e and the second selection 74 includes a single characteristic 83, as illustrated in Fig. 10. If the modifier selection 76 includes a single characteristic 83, the player receives a value component award equal to the value of the first selection, or 9 credits. In addition, the player receives a second char-

acteristic component award equal to the predetermined award, such as 250 credits, for the association of single characteristics in the second selection and third or modifier selection. Thus, the total award is equal to 259 credits.

**[0041]** In another example (not illustrated), the first selection includes a value characteristic, the second selection includes a single characteristic, and the modifier selection includes a multiplier characteristic. The player receives a value component of the total award equal to the value of the first selection multiplied by the multiplier. Because the first selection and second selection have no second characteristics that match, there is no second characteristic component award.

**[0042]** In another example (not illustrated), the first selection includes a value characteristic, the second selection includes a single characteristic, and the modifier selection includes a value characteristic. The player receives a value component of the total award equal to the sum of the value of the first selection and the value of the modifier selection. Because the first selection and second selection have no second characteristics that match, there is no second characteristic component of the total award.

**[0043]** In another example, the first selection and second selection include single characteristics 83, as illustrated in Fig. 11. In this example, the third or modifier selection also includes a single characteristic 83, and the player receives a predetermined award associated with achieving three single characteristics with the first selection, second selection and third or modifier selection, such as 1000 credits. Because the single characteristic carries no value, there is no value component of the total award. Thus, the total award is 1000 credits.

**[0044]** In another example, the first selection and second selection include single characteristics 83 and the third or modifier selection includes a multiplier characteristic 87, as illustrated in Fig. 12. The player receives a second characteristic award equal to the predetermined award for achieving two single characteristics with the first selection and second selection, multiplied by the multiplier, which in this example is two. Thus, the player receive a total award of 500 credits.

**[0045]** In another example (not illustrated), the first selection and second selection include single characteristics and the modifier selection includes a value characteristic. The player receives a value component of the total award equal to the value of the modifier selection. The player also receives a second characteristic component of the total award equal to the predetermined value for achieving two single characteristics with the first selection and the second selection.

**[0046]** In another example, the first selection 72 includes a value characteristic 81a and the second selection 74 also includes a value characteristic 81c, as illustrated in Fig. 13A. If the modifier selection includes a repeat characteristic 91, the first and second reels are reactivated. The player then receives a new first selec-

tion 72a including a value characteristic 81b and a new second selection 74a including a value characteristic 81d, as illustrated in Fig. 13B. Accordingly, the player receives a value component award equal to the values of the first selection, second selection, new first selection and new second selection, which is 26 credits. The letter characteristics 77a of the new first selection, the new second selection and modifier selection are the same. As a result, the player receives a second characteristic component award equal to the predetermined award for the matching or correlation of the letter characteristic of the selections. Thus, the player receives a total award equal to the predetermined award for the matching letter characteristic (not illustrated) in addition to the 26 credits for the value component of the award.

**[0047]** In another example, the first selection 72 includes a value characteristic 81a, the second selection 74 includes a value characteristic 81c, and the modifier selection includes a repeat characteristic 91. The new first selection includes a value characteristic 81d and the new second selection includes a single characteristic, as illustrated in Fig. 13C. The player receives a value component of the total award equal to the sum of the values 81a, 81c and 81d of the first, second and new first selections, respectively, or 20 credits. The player does not receive a second characteristic component of the total award because there are no matching characteristics between the first selection, second selection and modifier selection or the new first selection, new second selection and modifier selection.

**[0048]** In another example (not illustrated), the first selection includes a value characteristic, the second selection also includes a value characteristic, and the modifier selection includes a repeat characteristic. The new first selection and new second selection both include single characteristics. The player receives a total award equal to the sum of the values of the first and second selections. The player also receives a second characteristic component of the total award equal to the predetermined award for achieving two single characteristics with the new first selection and the new second selection. The player does not receive any other second characteristic component of the total award because there are no matching characteristics between the first selection, second selection and modifier selection, or the new first selection, new second selection and modifier selection.

**[0049]** In another example, the first selection includes a value characteristic 81 b and the second selection includes a sole characteristic 83. The modifier selection includes a repeat characteristic 91, as illustrated in Fig. 14A. When the reels are reactivated, the player receives a new first selection which includes a value characteristic 81 c and a new second selection which includes a value characteristic 81e. The player then receives a value component of the total award equal to the sum of the values 81b, 81c and 81e for the values of the first selection, new first selection and new second selection, or

22 credits. Because the new first selection and new second selection have no second characteristics that match, there is no second characteristic component of the total award. Thus, the total award to the player is 22 credits as illustrated in Fig. 14B.

**[0050]** In another example (not illustrated), the first selection includes a value characteristic and the second selection includes a single characteristic. When the reels are reactivated, the player receives a new first selection and a new second selection, each of which includes a single characteristic. The player receives a value component of the total award equal to the value of the first selection. The player also receives a second characteristic award equal to the predetermined award for the association of two single characteristics with the new first selection and new second selection.

**[0051]** In another example, the first and second selections 72 and 74 include single characteristics 83. The modifier selection includes a repeat characteristic, as illustrated in Fig. 15. When the reels are re-activated, the player receives a new first selection and a new second selection which include single characteristics 83. The player receives no value component of the total award. The player does, however, receive a second characteristic component of the total award equal to the predetermined award value for the association of two single characteristics with the first selection and second selection, in addition to the predetermined award for the association of two single characteristics with the new first selection and the new second selection. Thus, the player receives a total award of 500 credits.

**[0052]** The game of the present invention can additionally provide an award which includes an award for three or more sole or single characteristics. In one example, the first selection has the sole characteristics, the second selection has a value characteristic and another characteristic and the third selection has a reverse characteristic. When the new first and new second selections are obtained, they each include a sole characteristic and thus the player is provided an award for obtaining the three sole characteristics. If the second selection before the respin has a sole characteristic instead of a value characteristic, then the player obtains an award for the four sole characteristics.

**[0053]** It should be understood that various changes and modifications to the presently preferred embodiments described herein will be apparent to those skilled in the art. Such changes and modifications can be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention and without diminishing its intended advantages. It is therefore intended that such changes and modifications be covered by the appended claims.

## Claims

1. A gaming device comprising:

a display device;  
a processor in communication with said display device;  
a first plurality of symbols having a first characteristic and a second characteristic;  
a first selection generated by the processor from the first plurality of symbols and displayed by the display device;  
a second selection generated by the processor from the first plurality of symbols and displayed by the display device; and  
an award provided to a player based on the characteristics of the first selection and second selection, said award including a first characteristic component based on at least one correlation, if any, between the first characteristic of the first and second selections and a second characteristic component based on at least one correlation, if any, between the second characteristic of the first and second selections.

2. The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the first characteristic is a value characteristic and the first characteristic component of the award includes the sum of the value characteristics of the first and second selections.
3. The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes a third selection generated by the processor from a second plurality of symbols having at least one characteristic, wherein the first characteristic component of the award is also determined based on at least one characteristic of the third selection.
4. The gaming device of Claim 3, wherein the first characteristic of the first plurality of symbols are value characteristics and at least one characteristic of the second plurality of symbols is a modifier characteristic, wherein the first characteristic component of the award includes the sum of the value characteristics of the first and second selections, modified by the modifier characteristic of the third selection.
5. The gaming device of Claim 4, wherein the modifier characteristic of the second plurality of symbols is a multiplier characteristic, and the first characteristic component of the award includes the sum of the value characteristics of the first and second selections, multiplied by multiplier characteristic of the third selection.
6. The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes a third selection generated by the processor from a second plurality of symbols having at least one characteristic, wherein the first characteristic component of the award and the second characteristic component of the award are also determined based



on at least one characteristic of the third selection.

7. The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes a third selection generated by the processor from a second plurality of symbols having at least one characteristic, wherein the second characteristic component of the award is also determined based on at least one characteristic of the third selection. 5
8. The gaming device of Claim 7, wherein at least one characteristic of the second plurality of symbols is a modifier characteristic, and wherein the second characteristic component of the award is based on the correlation of the second characteristics of the first and second selections and modified by the modifier characteristic of the third selection. 10
9. The gaming device of Claim 7, wherein at least one characteristic of the second plurality of symbols includes a wild characteristic for correlating with the second characteristic of the first and second selections, wherein the second characteristic component of the award is based on whether the first selection, second selection and third selection have correlated characteristics. 15
10. The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes a third selection generated by the processor from a second plurality of symbols having a first characteristic and a second characteristic, wherein the first characteristic component of the award is based on at least one correlation, if any, between the first characteristic of the first, second and third selections, and the second characteristic component of the award is based on at least one correlation, if any, between the second characteristic of the first, second and third selections. 20
11. The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes a third selection generated by said processor from a second plurality of symbols having at least one repeat characteristic, wherein if the third selection includes a repeat characteristic, the processor provides a new first selection and a new second selection, wherein the first characteristic component of the award is based on a correlation, if any, of the first characteristic of the first and second selections and the first characteristic of the new first and second selections. 25
12. The gaming device of Claim 11, wherein the first characteristic is a value characteristic and the first characteristic component of the award includes the sum of the value characteristics of the first and second selections and the new first and second selections. 30
13. The gaming device of Claim 1, which further in- 35

cludes a plurality of sole symbols having a sole characteristic, wherein the first and second selections may be selected from the sole symbols and wherein the award includes a sole characteristic component if the first selection and second selection are sole symbols.

14. The gaming device of Claim 13, which includes a third selection generated by the processor from a second plurality of symbols having at least one characteristic and said plurality of sole symbols, and wherein the award includes a sole characteristic component if two or more of the first, second and third selections have sole characteristics. 40
15. The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes a plurality of reels, wherein the symbols and the first and second selections are displayed on said plurality of reels. 45
16. The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the first characteristic is a value and the second characteristic is a color. 50
17. The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the display device includes mechanical reels. 55
18. The gaming device of Claim 17, wherein the mechanical reels rotate along a vertically extending axis.
19. The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes a third selection generated by said processor from a second plurality of symbols having at least one characteristic, wherein at least one characteristic of the third selection is selected from the group consisting of: a modifier characteristic, a repeat characteristic, a skip characteristic, and a wild characteristic.
20. A gaming device comprising:
  - a plurality of symbols having a plurality of characteristics including a value characteristic and a second characteristic;
  - a first selection chosen from said plurality of symbols;
  - a second selection chosen from said plurality of symbols; and
  - an award provided to a player, said award having a value component based on a correlation, if any, of the value characteristics of the first and second selections and a second component based on a correlation, if any, of the second characteristic of the first and second selections.
21. The gaming device of Claim 20, which includes a third selection chosen from a plurality of modifier

symbols each having at least one characteristic, wherein at least one of the value component of the award and the second component of the award are based on a correlation, if any, with at least one characteristic of said modifier symbol of the third selection.

**22.** The gaming device of Claim 21, wherein the modifier symbols include a multiplier characteristic, and wherein the value component of the award is the sum of the value characteristics associated with the first selection and the second selection multiplied by a multiplier characteristic, if any, associated with the third selection.

**23.** The gaming device of Claim 21, wherein one of the characteristics of the modifier symbols is a modifier characteristic, wherein the value component of the award is the sum of the value characteristics of the first selection and second selections modified by the modifier characteristic, if any, of the third selection.

**24.** The gaming device of Claim 21, which includes a plurality of reels, wherein the first, second and third selections are displayed on said plurality of reels.

**25.** The gaming device of Claim 21, which further includes a plurality of sole symbols, wherein the first, second and third selections may be one of the sole symbols and wherein the award includes a sole characteristic component if at least two of the first, second and third selections are sole symbols.

**26.** The gaming device of Claim 21, wherein one of the characteristics of the modifier symbols is a repeat characteristic which causes a new first selection and a new second selection to be chosen, each having a value characteristic and a second characteristic, wherein the value component of the award provided to the player is based on a correlation, if any, between the value characteristics of the first selection, second selection, new first selection and new second selection.

**27.** The gaming device of Claim 21, wherein at least one characteristic of the modifier symbols includes a wild characteristic which correlates with at least one of the second characteristics of the first and second selections, wherein the second component of the award is based on a correlation, if any, of the second characteristic of the first selection, second selection and the characteristic of the third selection.

**28.** The gaming device of Claim 20, which includes a third selection chosen from a plurality of modifier symbols each having at least one characteristic,

wherein at least one of said modifier symbols has a second characteristic and wherein said second component of said award is based a correlation, if any, of the second characteristic of the first, second and third selections.

**29.** The gaming device of Claim 20, wherein the first characteristic of said first selection and second selection is a value and the second characteristic of said first selection and second selection is a color.

**30.** A gaming device comprising:

a display device;  
a processor in communication with said display device;  
a first plurality of symbols having a first characteristic and a second characteristic;  
a second plurality of symbols having a sole characteristic;  
a third plurality of symbols having at least a modifier characteristic;  
a first selection generated by the processor from the first and second plurality of symbols and displayed by the display device;  
a second selection generated by the processor from the first and second plurality of symbols and displayed by the display device;  
a third selection generated by the processor from said second and third plurality of symbols; and  
an award provided to a player based on the characteristics of the first, second and third selections, said award including a first characteristic component based on a correlation, if any, between the first characteristic of the first, second and third selections, a second characteristic component based on a correlation, if any, between the second characteristic of the first, second and third selections, and a sole characteristic component of the award if two or more of the first, second and third selections have sole characteristics.

**31.** The gaming device of Claim 30, wherein the third plurality of symbols include a second characteristic.

**32.** A method for operating a gaming device comprising the steps of:

(a) selecting a first symbol from a plurality of symbols having a first characteristic and a second characteristic;  
(b) selecting a second symbol from said plurality of symbols;  
(c) determining a first characteristic component of an award based on at least one correlation, if any, between the first characteristic of the first

selection and second selection;  
 (d) determining a second characteristic component of said award based on at least one correlation, if any, between the second characteristic of the first and second selection; and 5  
 (e) providing said award, if any, to the player based on the first characteristic component and the second characteristic component.

**33.** The method of Claim 32, which further includes the steps of: 10

selecting a third symbol from a plurality of modifier symbols having at least one characteristic; 15  
 and  
 determining the first characteristic component of said award based on a correlation, if any, of the first characteristic of the first symbol, second symbol and at least one characteristic of the third symbol. 20

**34.** The method of Claim 32, which further includes the steps of:

selecting a third symbol from a plurality of modifier symbols having at least one characteristic; 25  
 and  
 determining the second characteristic component of said award based a correlation, if any, of the second characteristic of the first symbol, second symbol and at least one characteristic of the third symbol. 30

**35.** The method of Claim 32, which further includes the steps of: 35

selecting a third symbol from a plurality of modifier symbols having at least one characteristic;  
 determining the first characteristic component of said award based a correlation, if any, of the first characteristic of the first symbol, second symbol and at least one characteristic of the third symbol; and 40  
 determining the second characteristic component of said award based on at least one correlation, if any, between the second characteristic of the first symbol, second symbol and at least one characteristic of the third symbol. 45

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FIG.1A

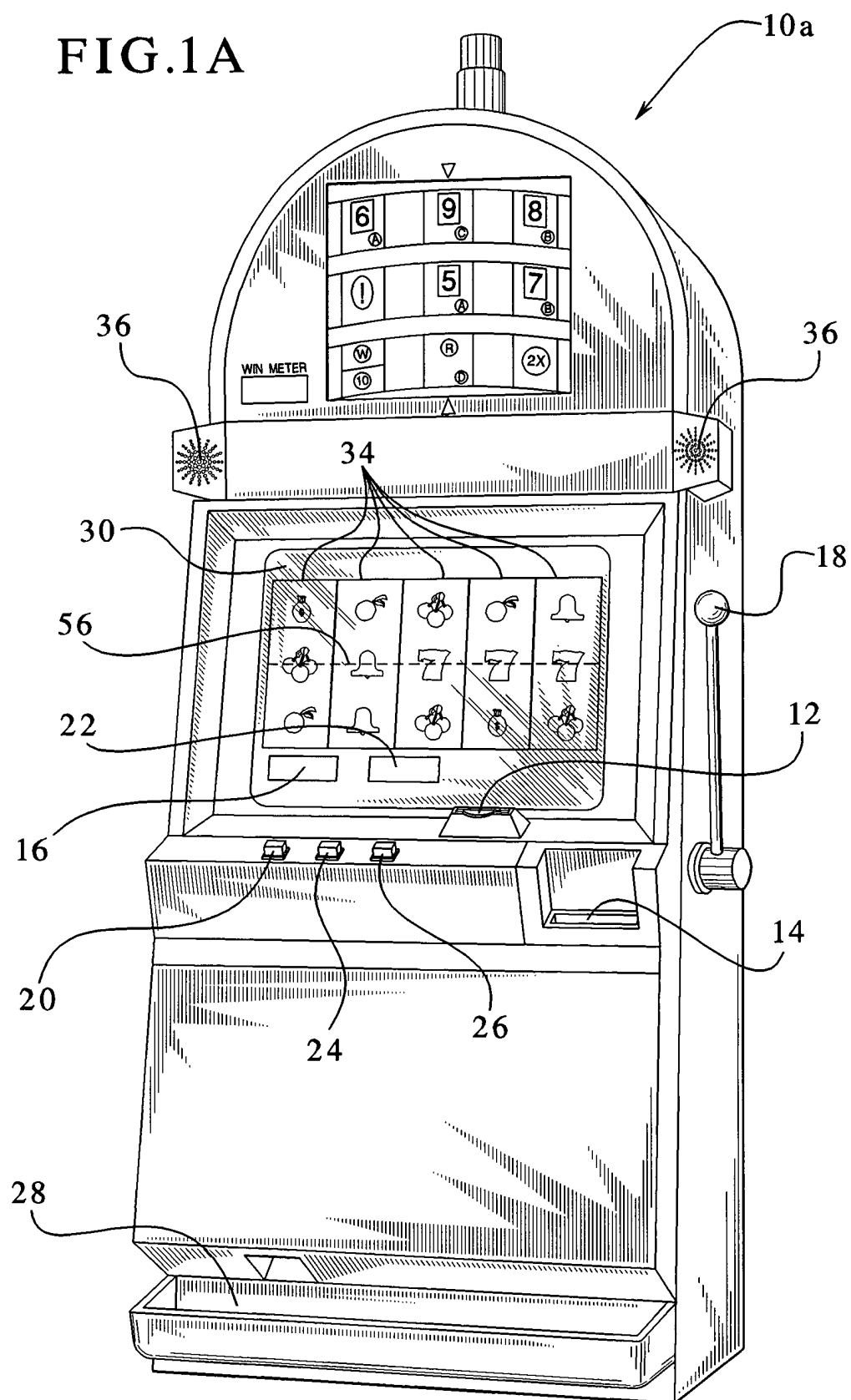


FIG.1B

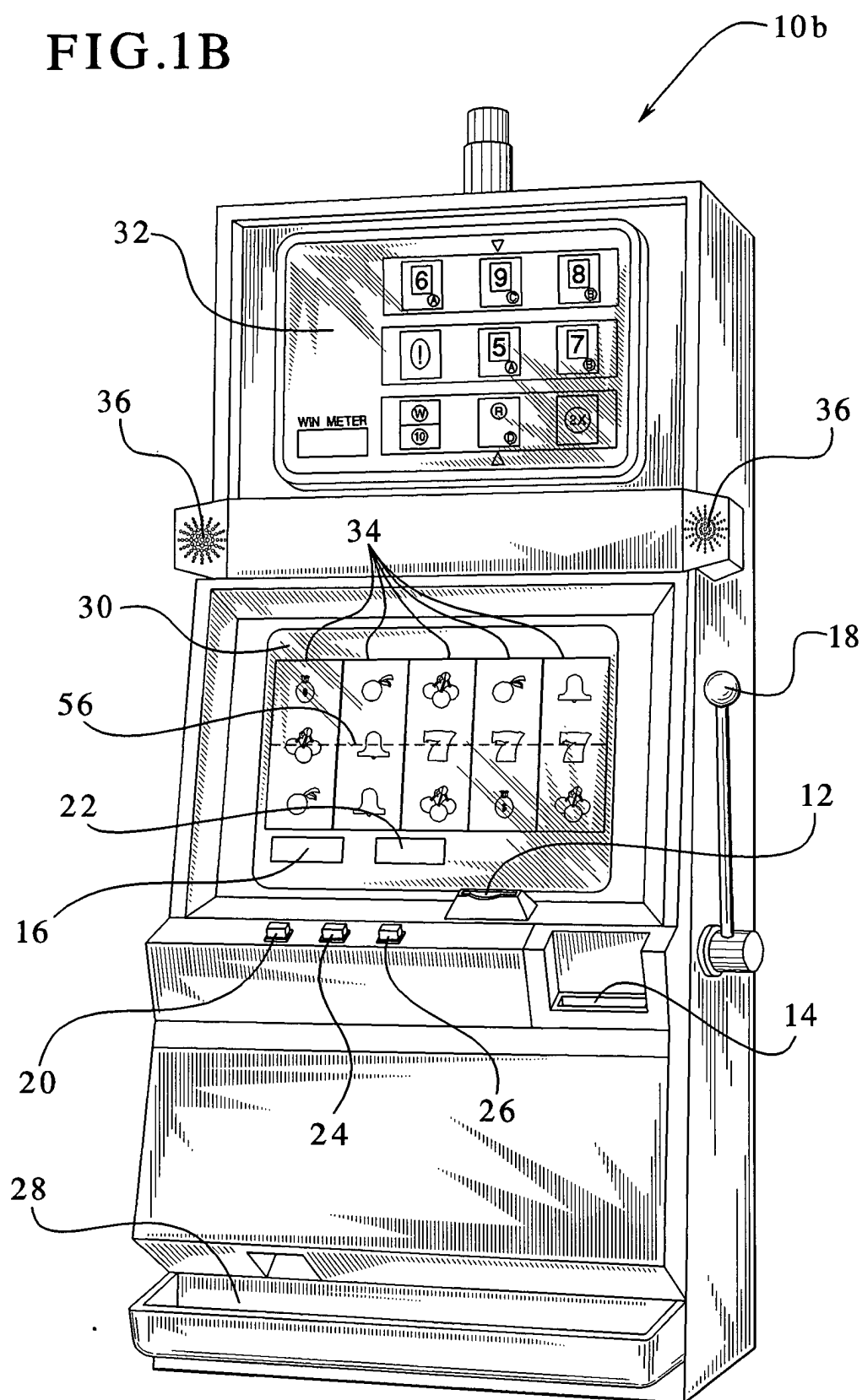


FIG.2

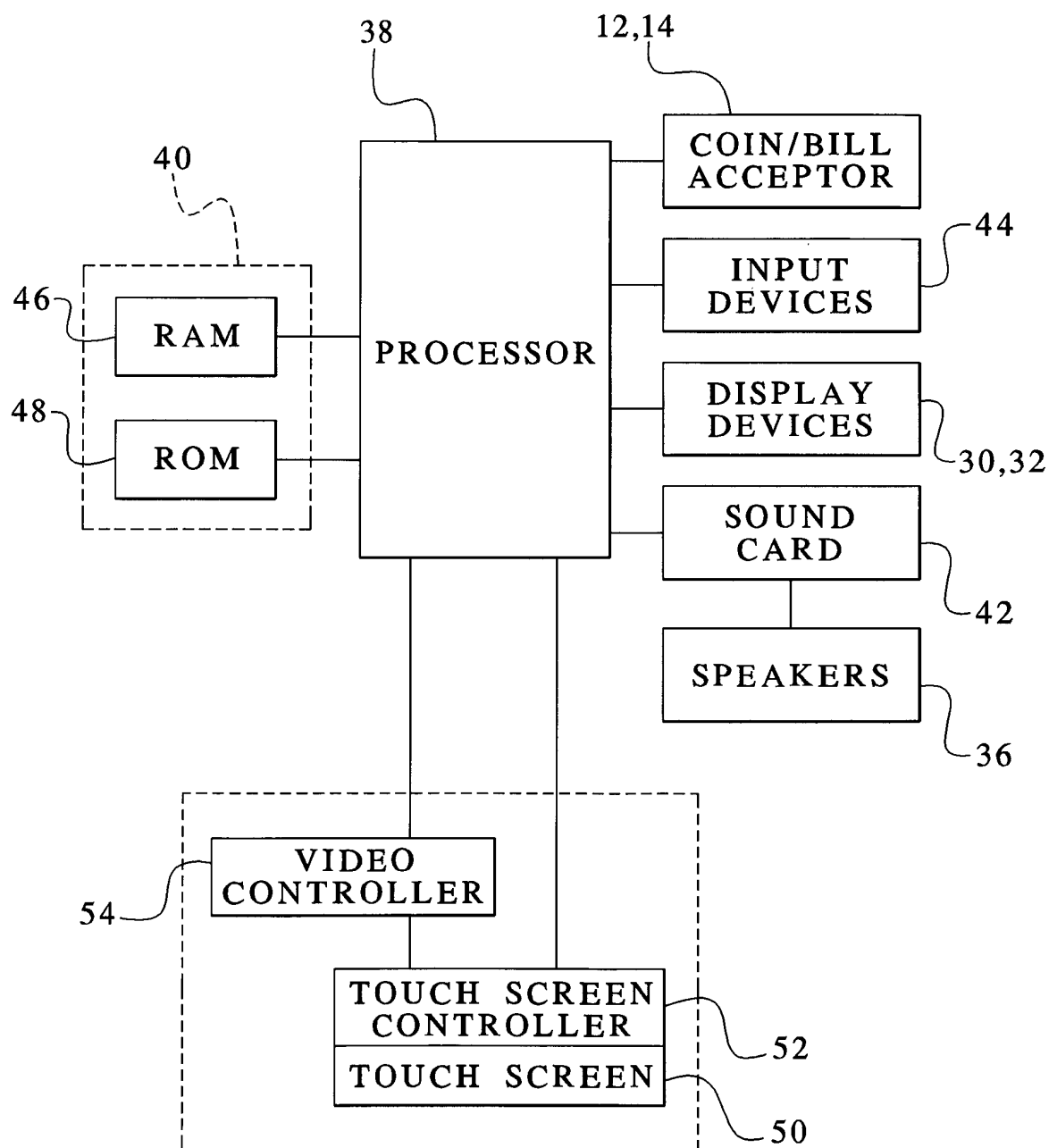


FIG. 3

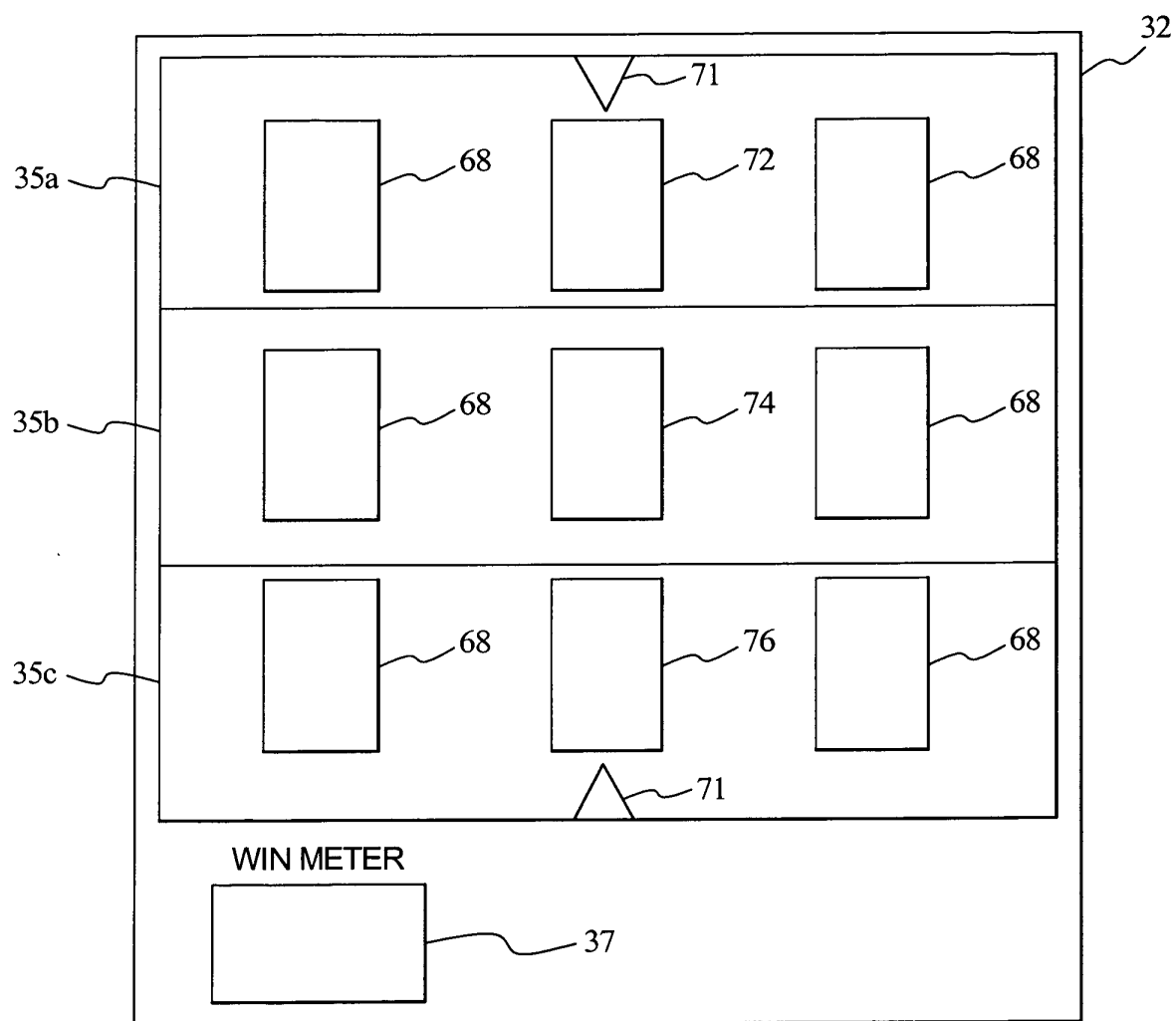


FIG. 4

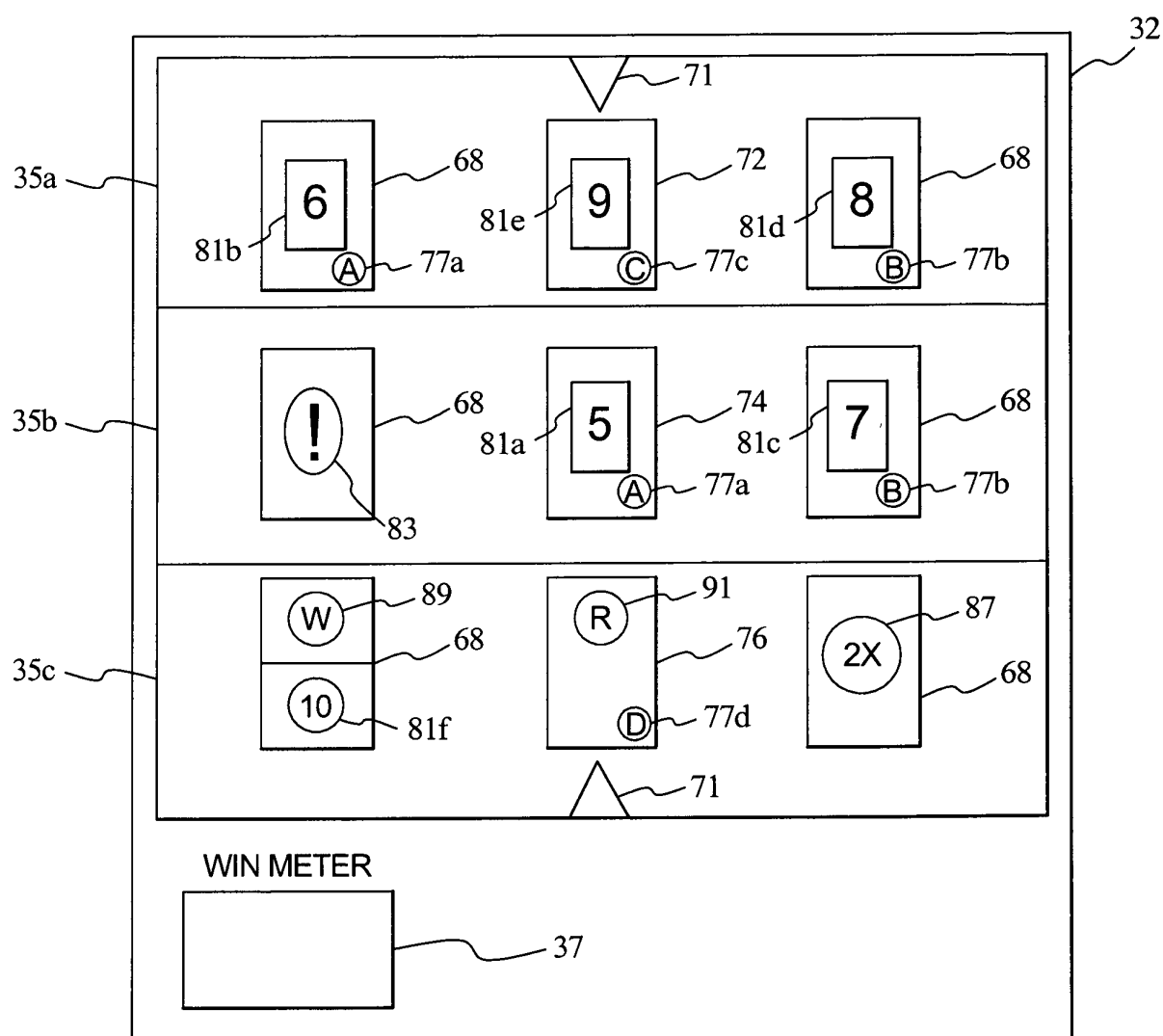




FIG. 5

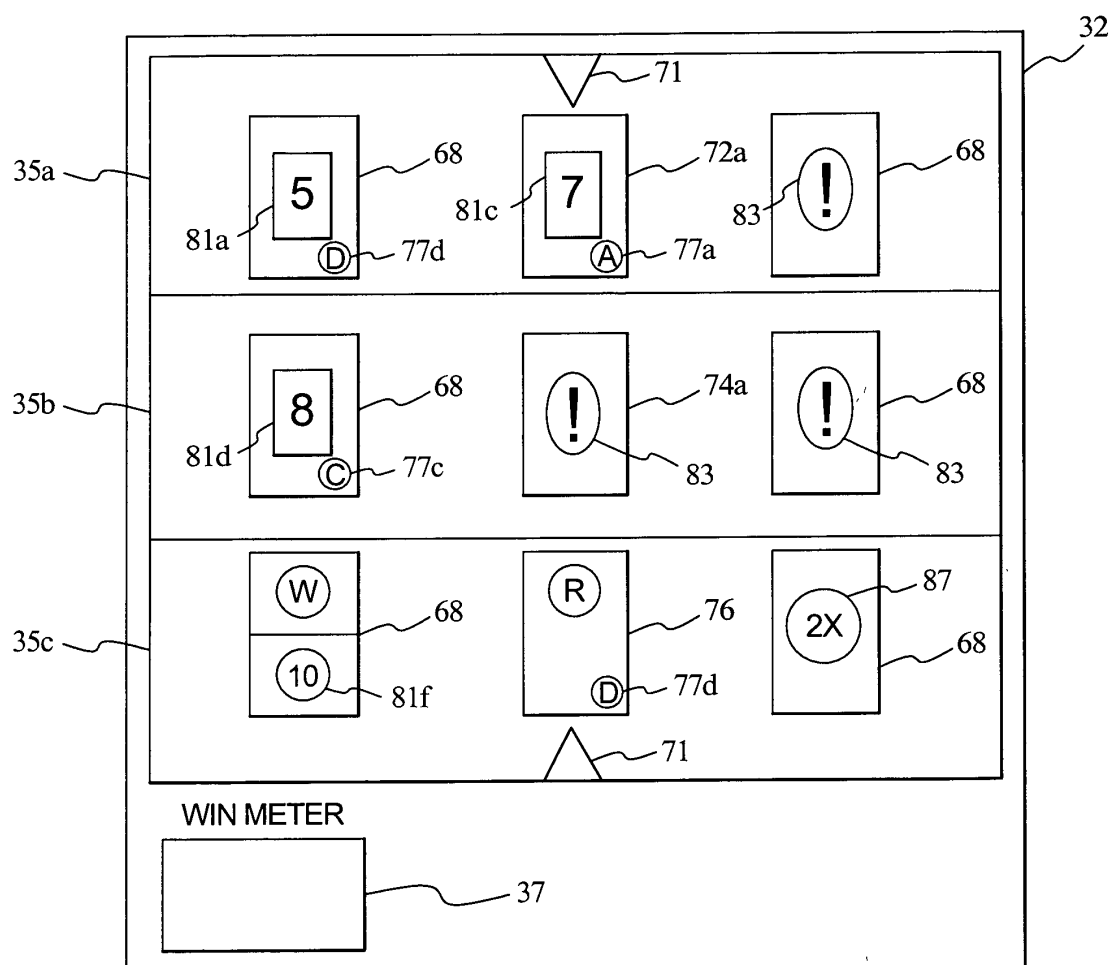


FIG. 6

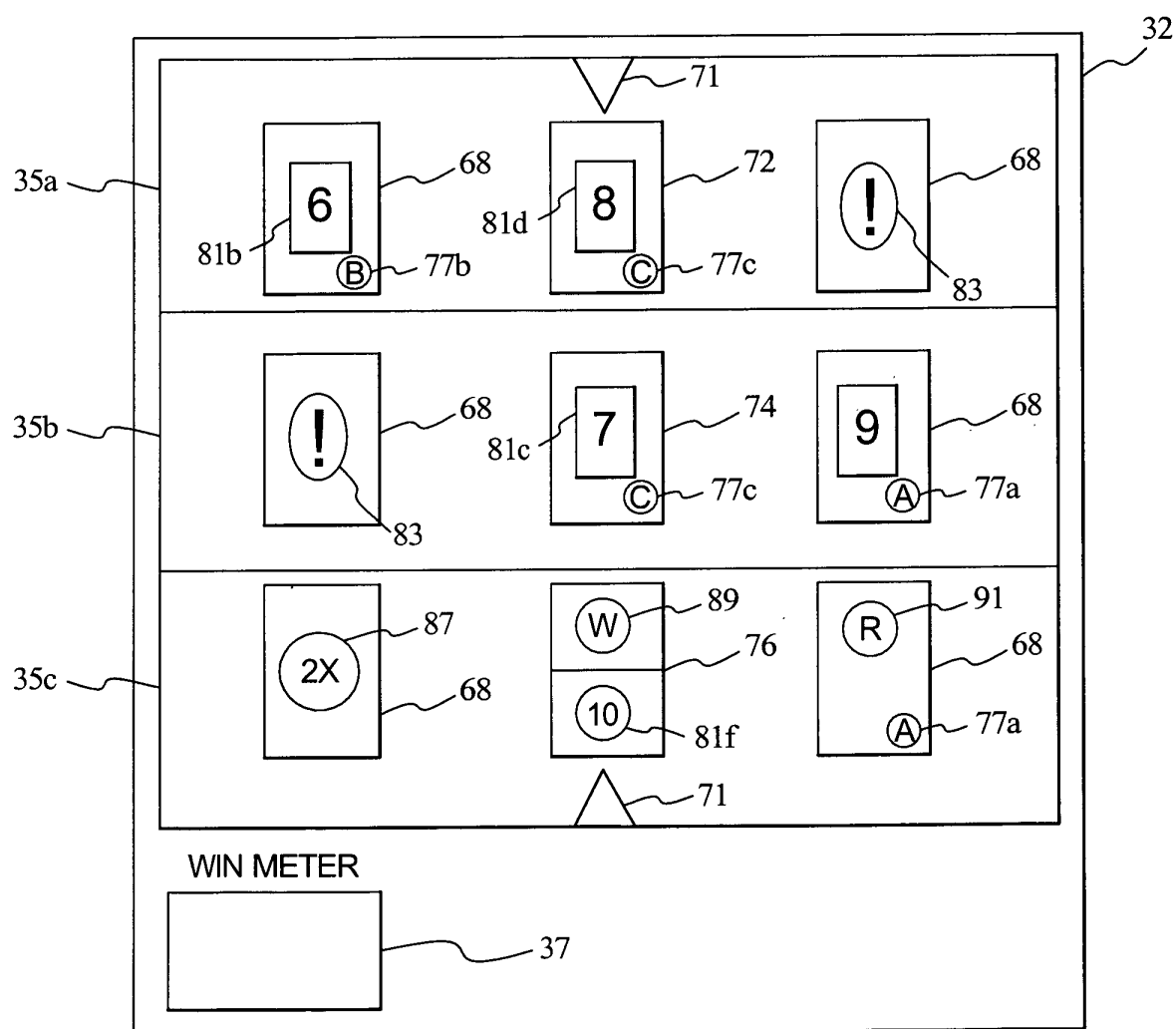


FIG. 7

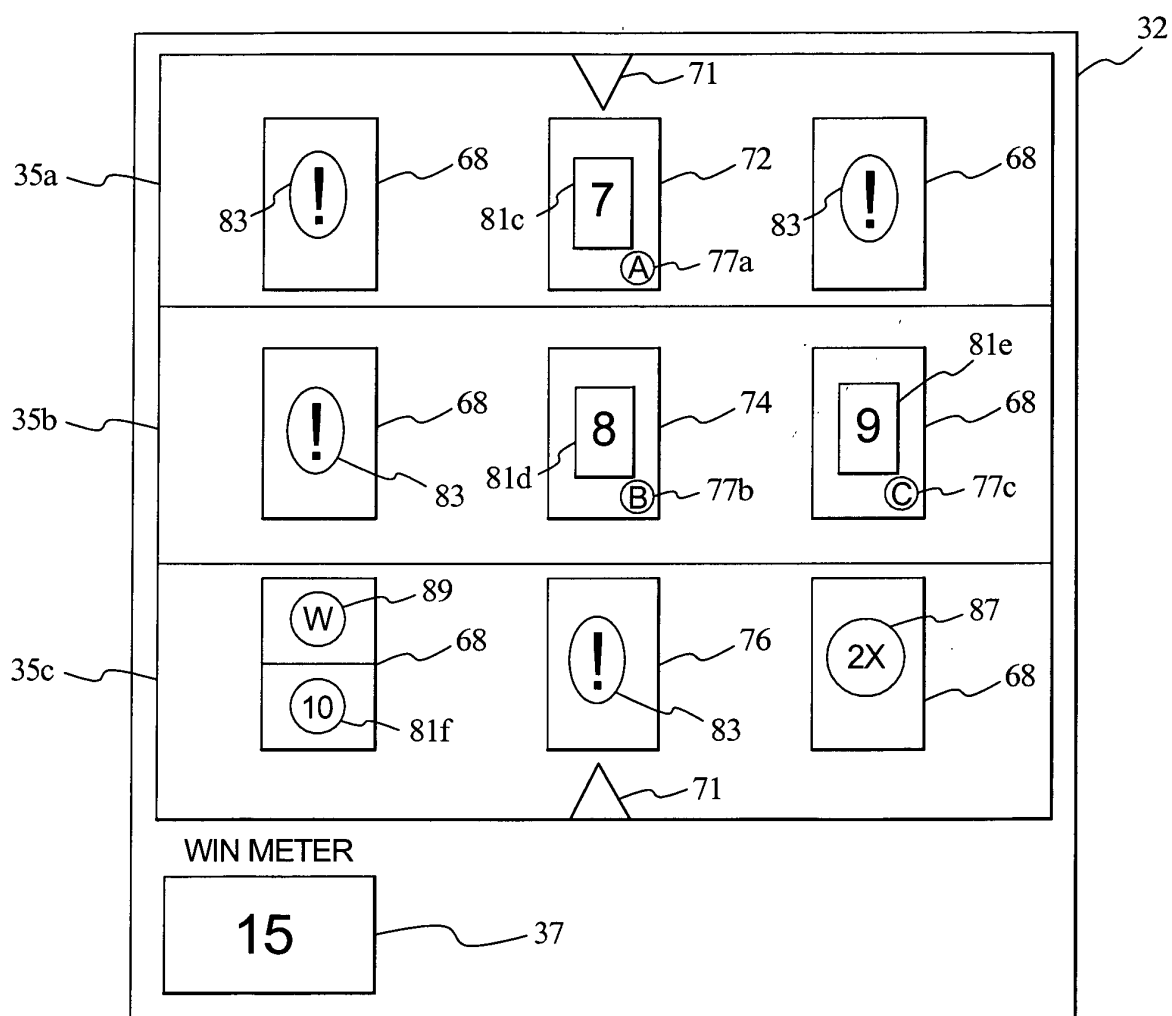


FIG. 8

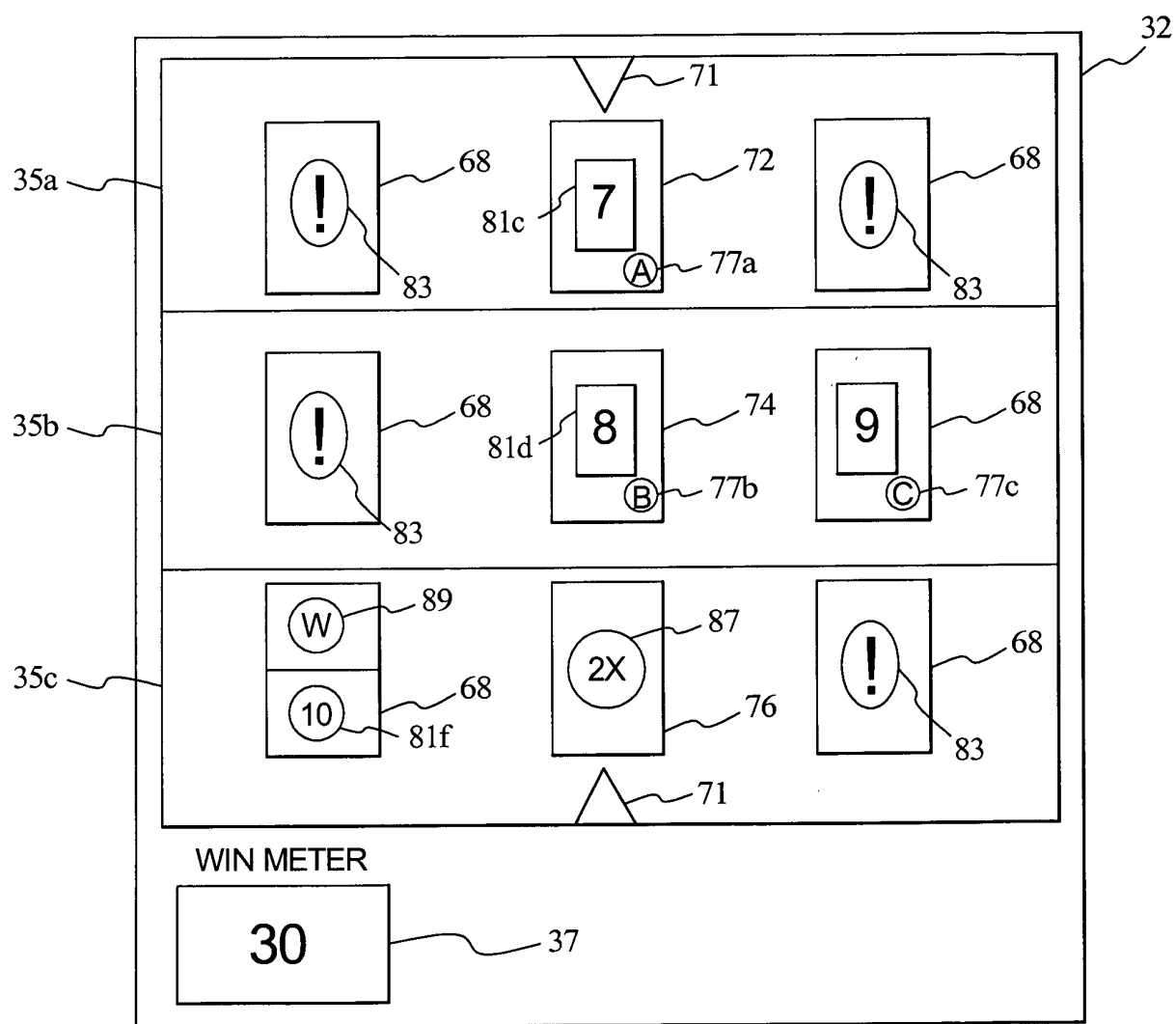


FIG. 9

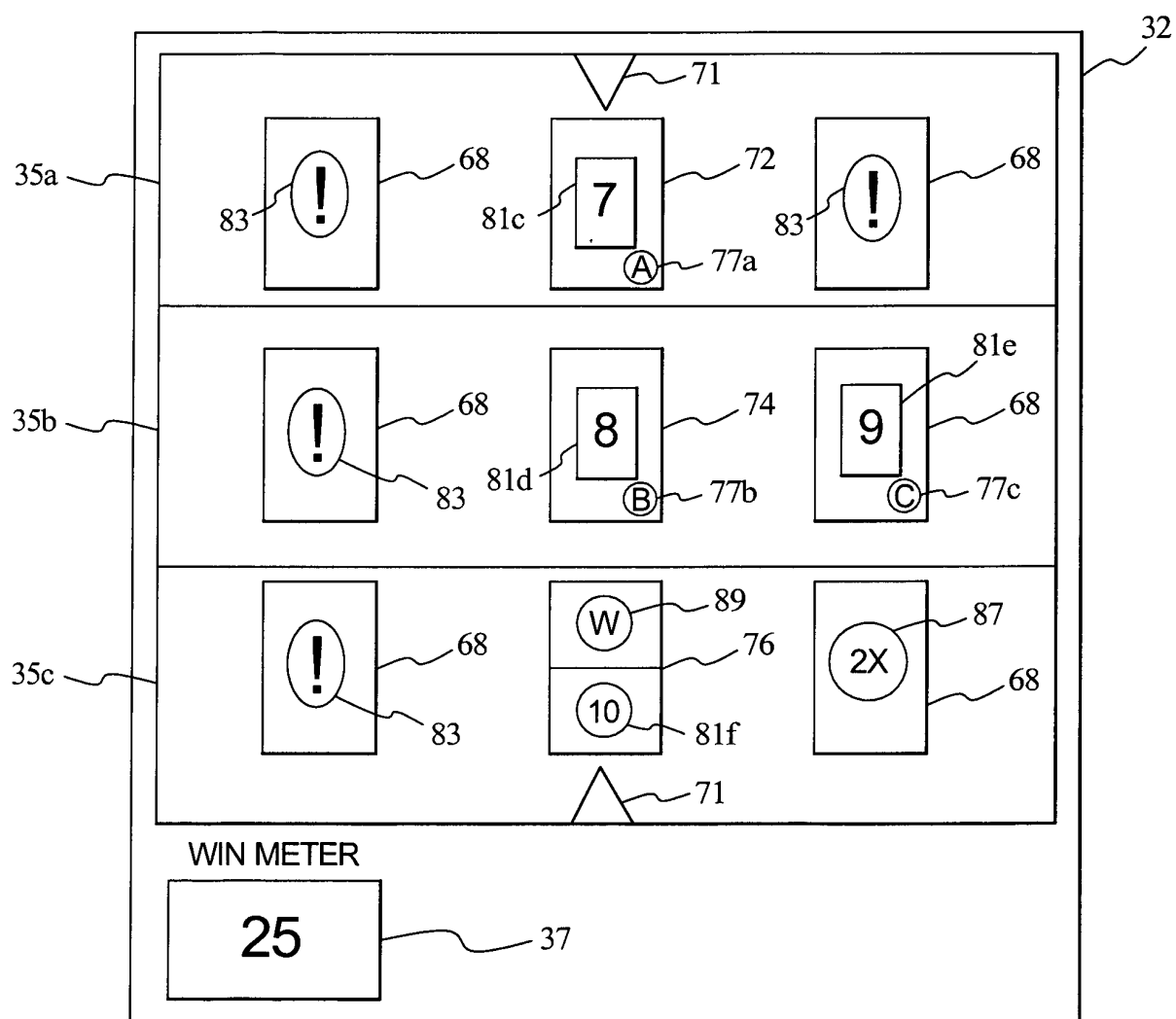


FIG. 10

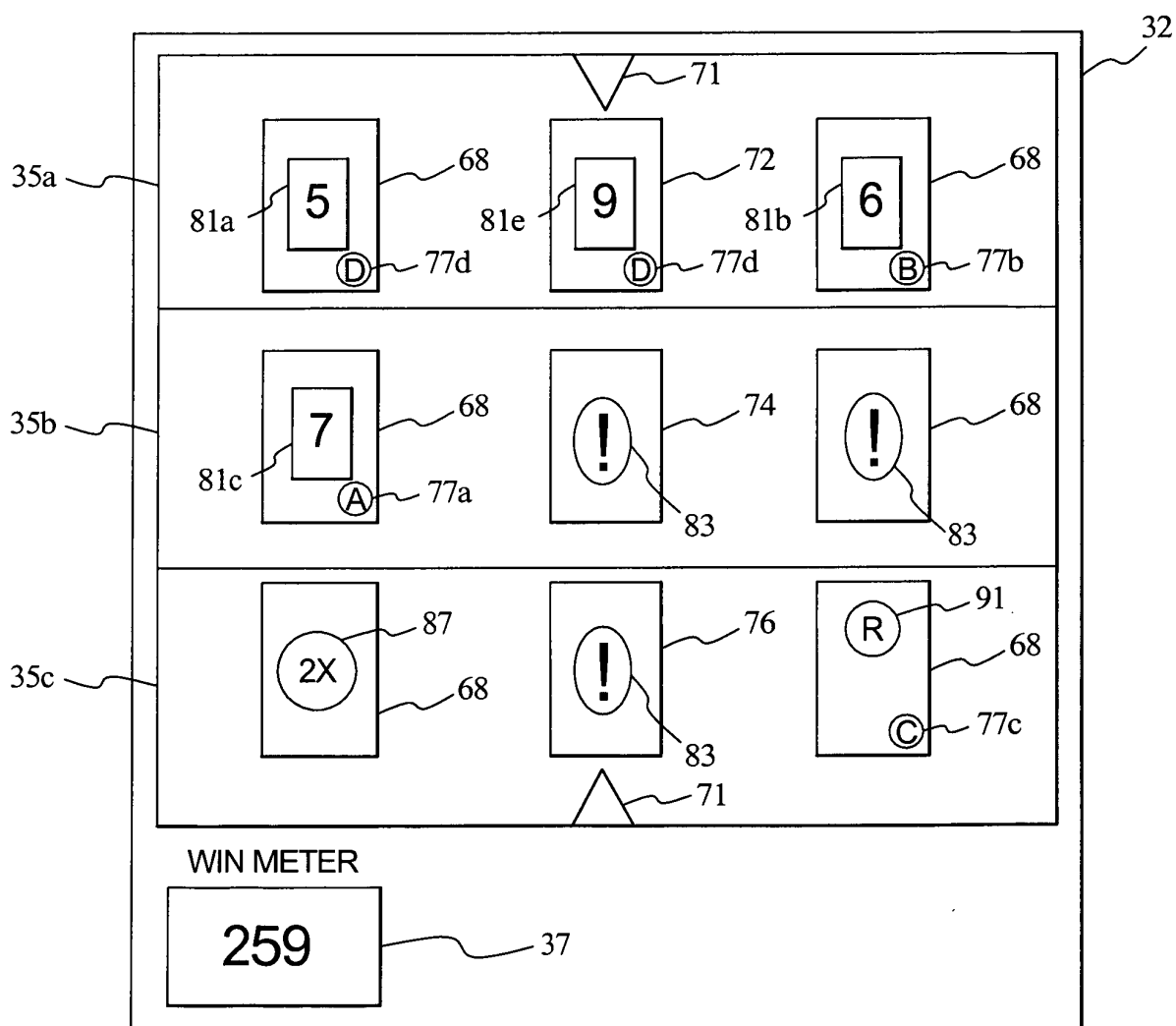


FIG. 11

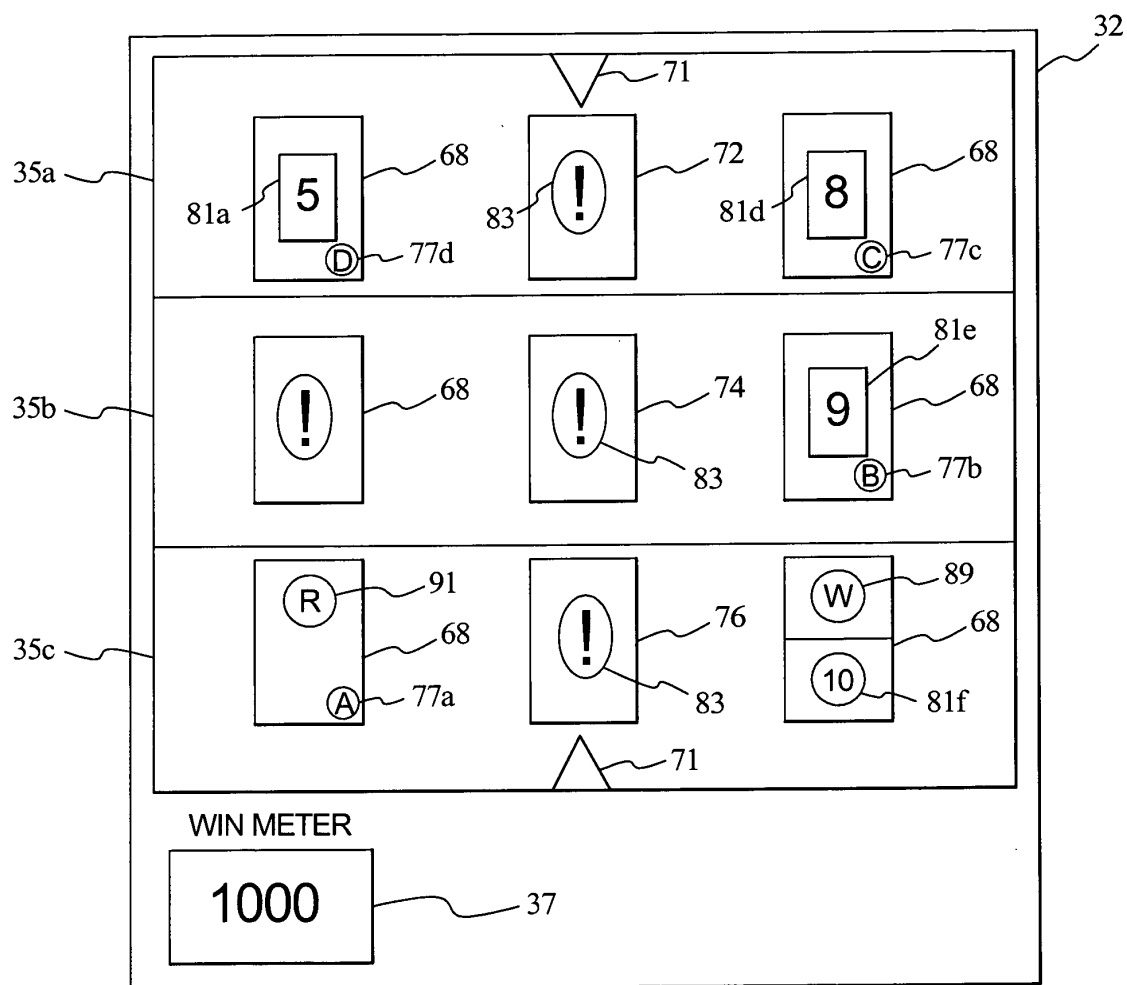


FIG. 12

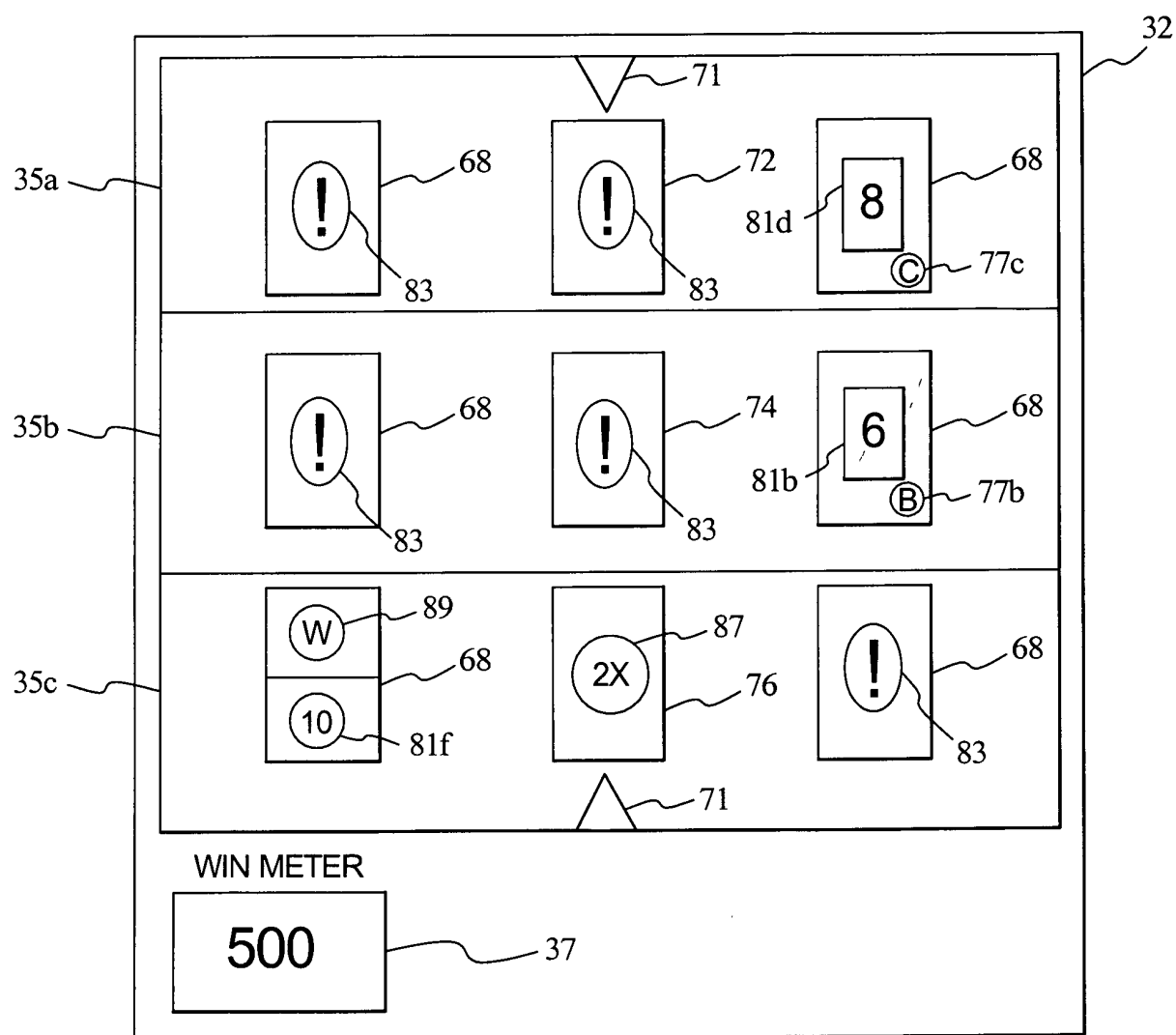




FIG. 13A

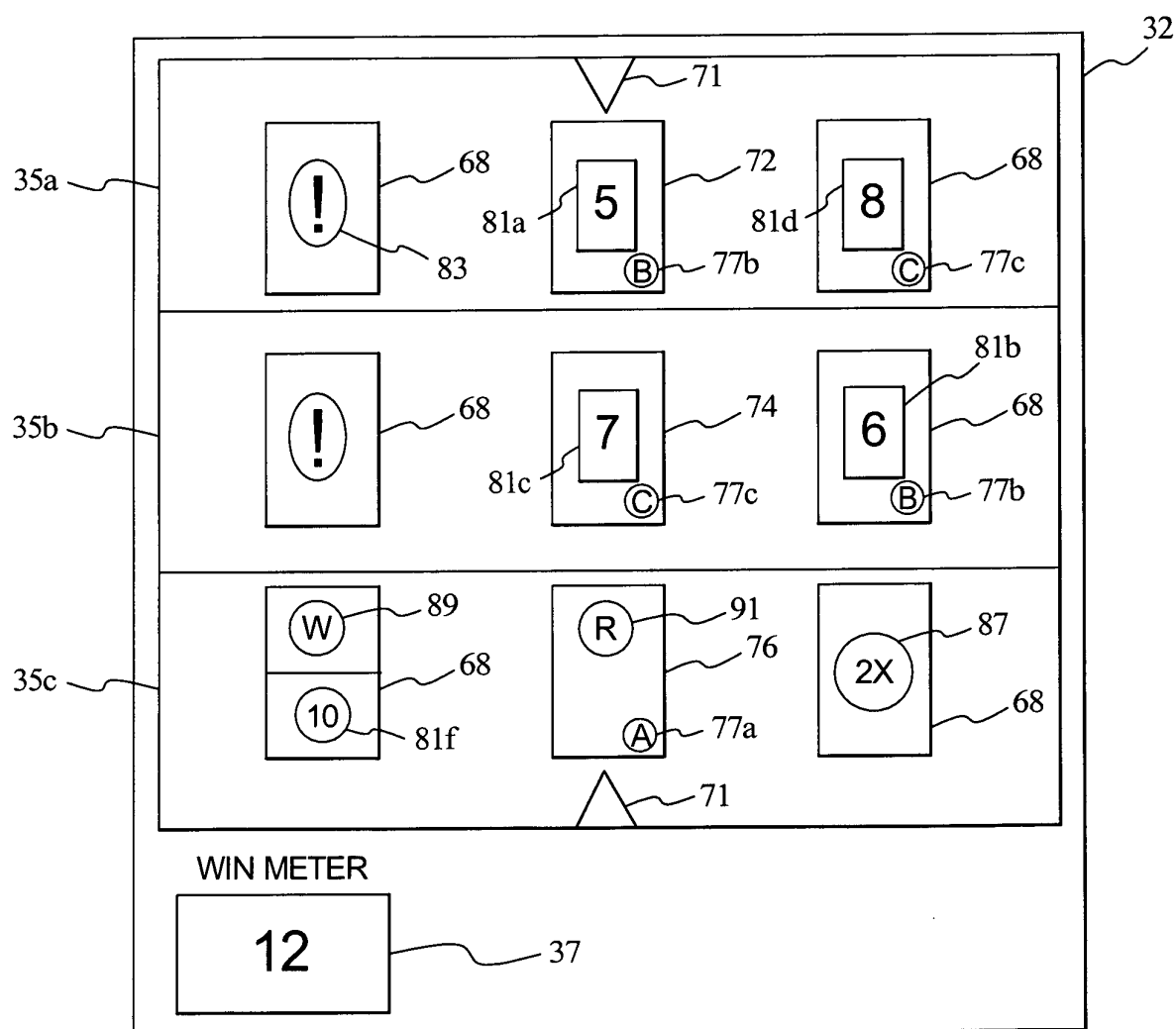


FIG. 13B

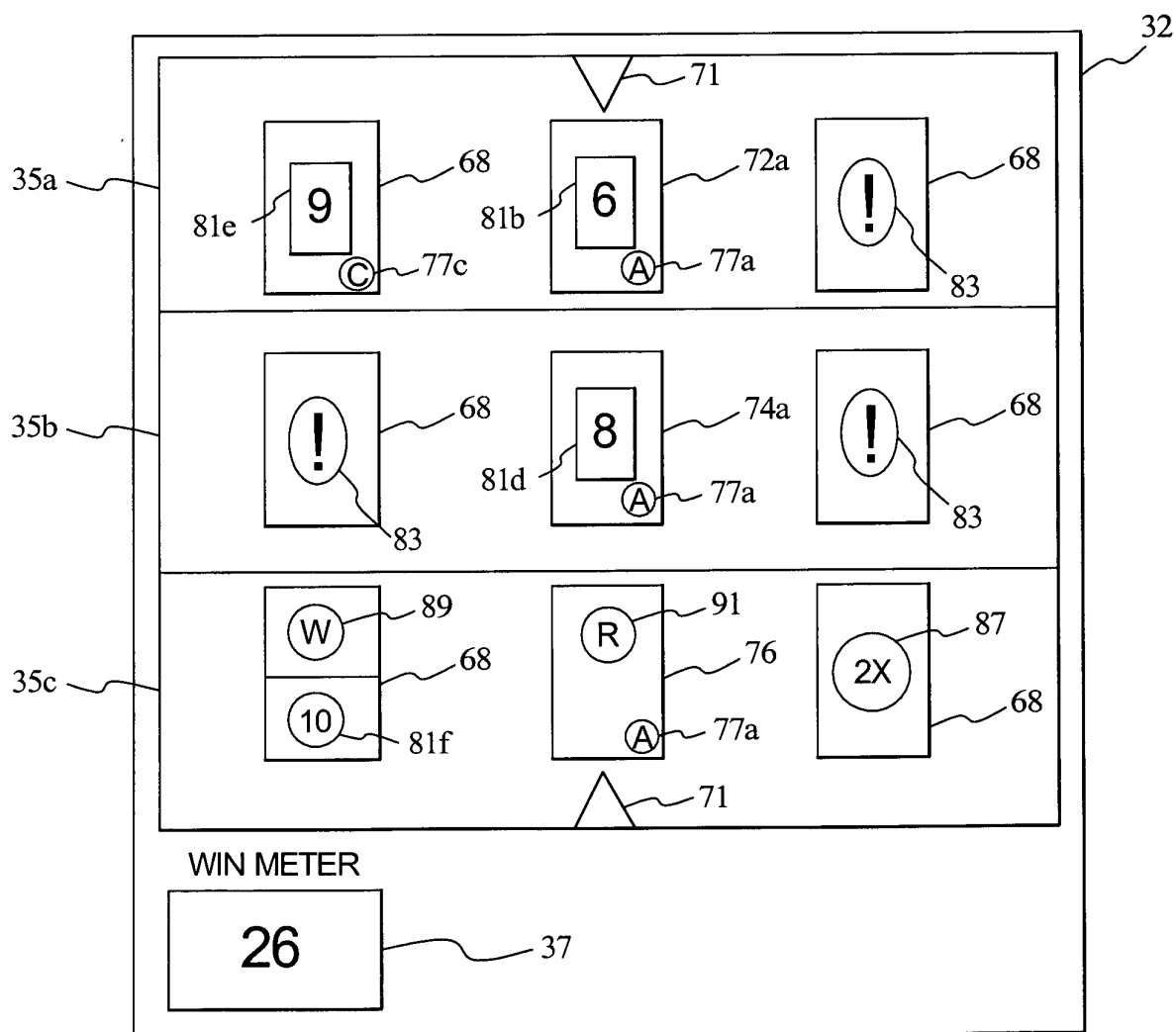


FIG. 13C

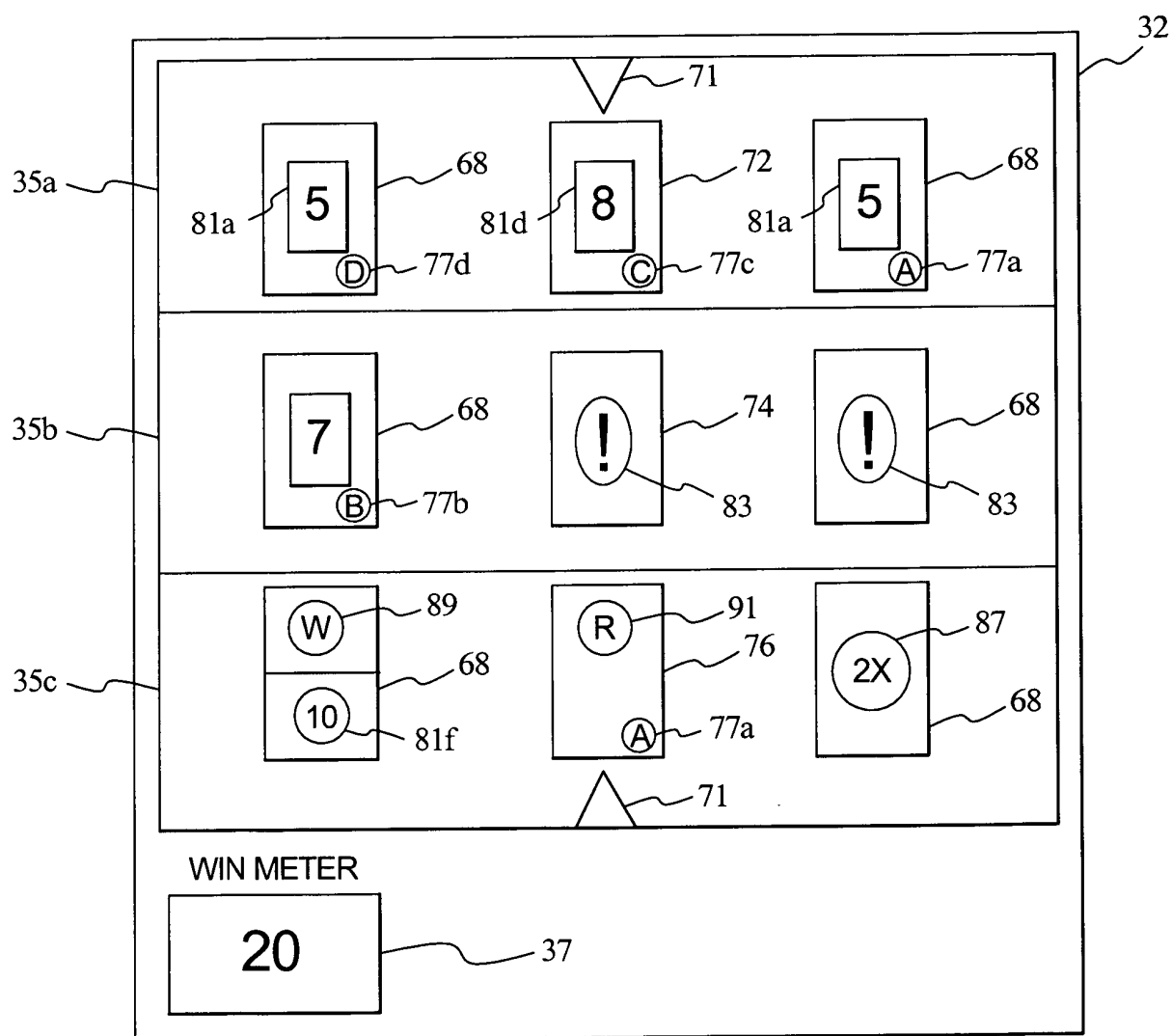


FIG. 14A

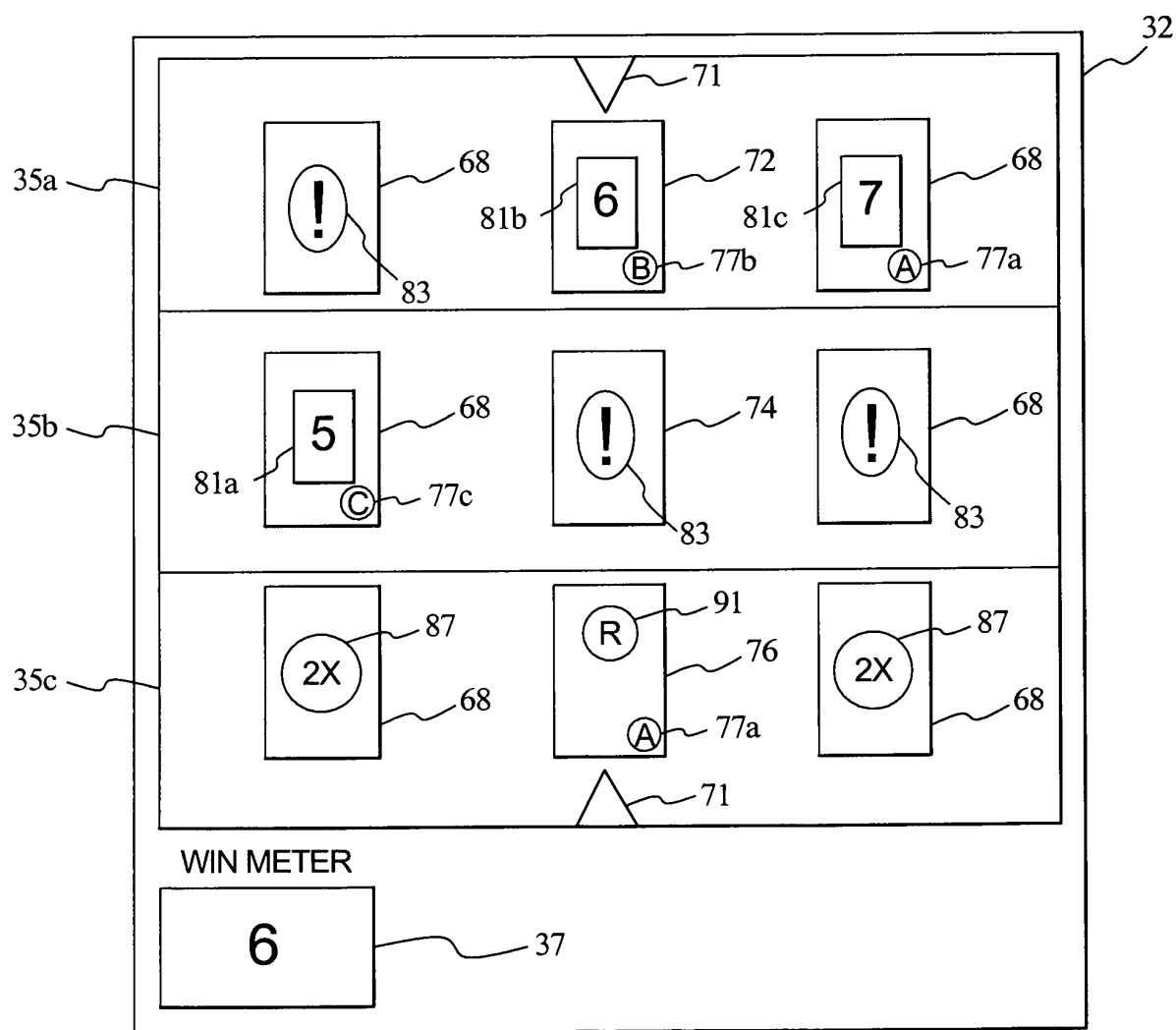


FIG. 14B

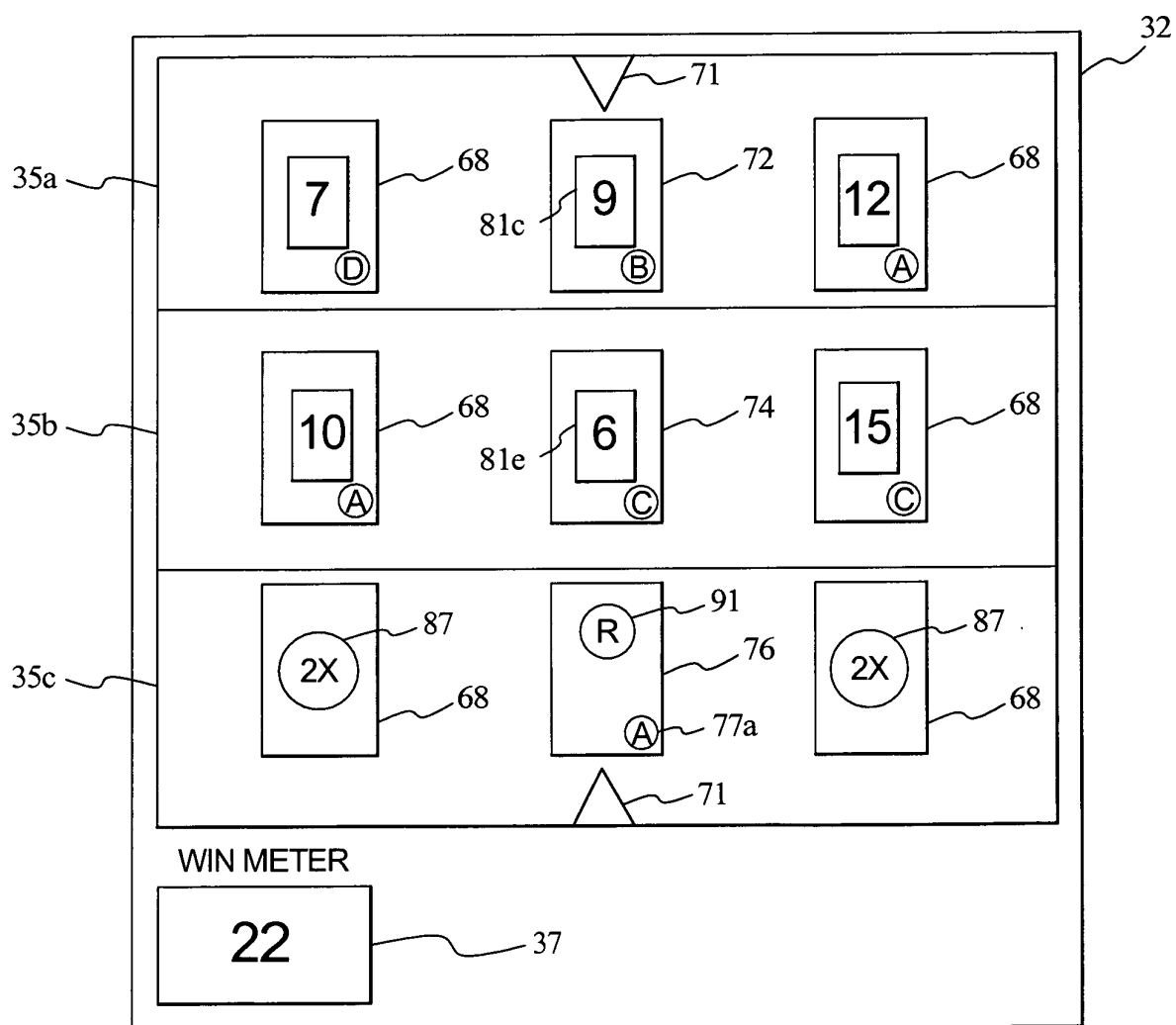


FIG. 15

