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### (54) Gaming machine

(57) In one embodiment, a certain number of special games are granted to a player, or the special games are only enabled for a certain time period. The special games may be free bonus games or paid games. At the end (or beginning) of each special game, at least one position in the array of symbols is designated as a special symbol. The special symbol may be a wild card, a scatter symbol, a multiplier, or any other special symbol. The special symbol selected for a particular game is carried over into the next special game, so the special symbols are accumulated and remain in their positions in the array for the series of special games. Awards, if any, are granted after each game based on the use of the special symbol(s) in combination with other symbols across one or more pay lines. The special symbol position in the array (or the special symbol type) may be selected by the gaming machine (10) or by the player. Other embodiments are disclosed where special symbols are designated by the gaming machine (10) or the player.

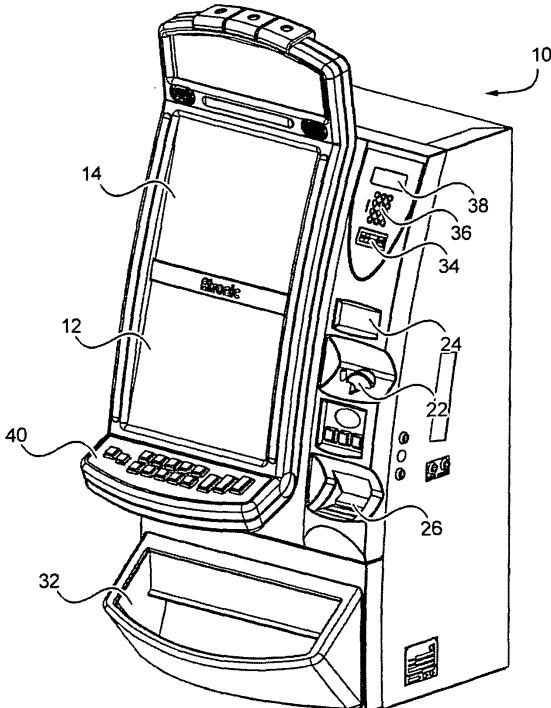


Fig. 1



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## EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number  
EP 03 02 1709

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1	Place of search Munich	Date of completion of the search 30 June 2005	Examiner Lavin Liermo, J
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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT  
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