What is claimed is:

1. An online gaming system comprising

a deal server for generating an encrypted set of randomized gaming elements;

a play server for controlling a set of operations within a game, the play server coupled to the deal server for receiving the encrypted set of randomized gaming elements from the deal server in response to commands; and

an audit server coupled to the play server, the audit server for sending and receiving information between the play server and one or more online players communicating with the audit server via the internet, wherein the deal server and the play server ~~are disconnected from~~ cannot communicate with the internet and cannot be accessed by the one or more online players, creating fair play conditions for an online game.

2. The online gaming system as defined in claim 1 wherein the encrypted set of randomized gaming elements are selected from the group consisting of: a simulated deck of cards, a set of dice throws and a set of wheel spins.

3. The online gaming system as defined in claim 2 wherein the encrypted set of randomized gaming elements comprise a simulated deck of cards and the deal server is configured to create a random ordering of the simulated deck of cards and thereafter to encrypt the randomized deck.

4. The online gaming system as defined in claim 3 wherein the play server is configured to generate a set of commands for transmission to the deal server, including: “new deal”, “new card” and “finish deal”, where the “new deal” command causes the deal server to send an encrypted deal to the play server, the “new card” command causes the deal server to send the next card in the randomized deck to the play server, and the “finish deal”

command causes the deal server to send a proper decryption key to the play server, allowing for the play server to decrypt the encrypted deal.

5. The online gaming system as defined in claim 4 wherein the play server is configured to generate an additional pair of commands for transmission to the deal server, including: a “start session” command and an “end session” command, where the “start session” command is sent before initiating a first game of a multiple game set and the “end session” is sent at the completion of the final game of the multiple game set, wherein the multiple number of decryption keys associated with the multiple encrypted deals are held by the deal server until reception of the “end session” command, where the multiple decryption keys are forwarded to the play server in response to the receipt of the “end session” command.

6. The online gaming system as defined in claim 1 wherein each server is housed in a separate, physically secure location.

7. The online gaming system as defined in claim 6 wherein each server is additionally retained in a locked enclosure.

8. The online gaming system as defined in claim 6 wherein each server is controlled by a separate, independent entity.

~~**9.** A method of providing fair play in an online gaming environment, the method comprising the steps of:~~

~~providing separate and distinct servers for controlling different aspects of an online game, including a deal server, a play server and an audit server;~~

~~creating, in the deal server, a randomized set of gaming elements associated with a selected online game;~~

~~encrypting the randomized set of gaming elements;~~

signing the encrypted, randomized set of gaming elements with an electronic signature associated with the owner of the deal server;

transmitting the set of randomized gaming elements to the play server, as well as through the internet to any players, the transmission to the players necessarily occurring through the audit server;

verifying a "fair deal" at the play server by authenticating the electronic signature of the owner of the deal server;

continuing to send commands from the play server to the deal server for requesting and receiving additional gaming elements, wherein neither the play server nor the deal server are connected to the internet; and

continuing to receive commands from players at the play server from the audit server and in response sending additional gaming elements through the audit server to the players.

10. The method as defined in claim 9 wherein the audit server performs an additional encryption on the gaming elements transmitted to the players.

11. The method as defined in claim 9 wherein prior to encrypting the randomized set of gaming elements, the deal server adds prefix/suffix information to the randomized set of gaming elements so as to prevent attacks against the encryption.

12. The method as defined in claim 9 wherein prior to signing the encrypted, randomized set of gaming elements, the deal server adds an expiration date to the set of gaming elements.

13. The method as defined in claim 9 wherein prior to signing the encrypted, randomized set of gaming elements, the deal server adds

~~information identifying the organization that owns and controls the deal server.~~

~~**14.** The method as defined in claim 9 wherein the gaming elements comprise a simulated deck of playing cards, and the play server is configured to transmit at least three commands to the deal server: a "new deal" command, a "new card" command", and a "finish deal" command, where the "new deal" command causes the deal server to send an encrypted deal to the play server, the "new card" command causes the deal server to send the next card in the randomized deck to the play server, and the "finish deal" command causes the deal server to send a proper decryption key to the play server, allowing for the play server to decrypt the encrypted deal.~~

~~**15.** The method as defined in claim 14, wherein in response to receiving a "new card" command, the deal server creates both a "face up" and a "face down" version of each card, with both versions transmitted to the play server in response to a "new card" command.~~