METHODS IN POKER RELATED CARD GAMES

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention in general relates to poker related card games and in particular to a method for determining a set of hole cards and a method to play a poker related card game using the method for determining a set of hole cards.

BACKGROUND

The global poker boom continues. The number of different poker games available on the Internet increases and TV programs show poker games on a daily basis.

There is currently a tremendous interest in playing poker games. One of the more popular poker games, if not the most popular poker game, is "Texas Holdem". This game starts with each player being dealt two cards face down, after which a betting round in which a player may pass or make a bet. Once a bet is made, other players may call the bet, increase the bet, or fold the player's hand. The betting may be continued until there are no further increases, and all players have either called the last bet or folded. Next three community cards, common to all players are dealt face up. The players evaluate their hands, each player using his or her two face down cards, together with the three community cards. A second betting round is followed. Thereafter, a fourth community card is dealt face up, followed by a third betting round. Finally, a fifth community card is dealt face up, followed by a fourth betting round. The hands of all remaining players, that is all players who did not fold in any of the betting round, are compared. The winner is the player who achieves the highest hand according to standard poker rankings: royal flush, straight flush, four of a kind, full house, flush, straight, 3 of a kind, two pair, one pair, high card. The winner takes the pot. In the case no single person achieves the highest poker hand rank, the pot is typically split between the ones having hands with equally high poker ranks.

Another relatively popular poker game is Omaha, which may be played as a player against player game. In the Omaha game, each player is initially dealt a hand of four cards face down. Then a betting round takes place, in which a player may pass or make

a bet. Once a bet is made, other players may call the bet, increase the bet or fold the player's hand. The betting round is finished when all players have either called the last bet or folded their cards. A flop of three cards is then dealt face up, after which a second betting round takes place. After the second betting round a fourth card is dealt face up. This card is called the turn or fourth street. This card can be used by all players. A third betting round takes then place in the same way as the third betting round. Subsequently, a fifth card, being the river or fifth street, is dealt face up. A fourth betting round then takes place. After the fourth betting round is finished, the remaining players then have to show their hands. Each player has to use two of the initially received hole cards together with three of the five community cards to form a five-card hand. The player having the best five-card hand wins the pot. In case two or more players have equally good hands based on standard poker ranking the pot is divided among said players.

Still another card game is 5-card stud poker, which is also is a player-against-player game. This game starts by dealing a set of two cards to each player, wherein one card is dealt face down and the other is dealt face up. The face down card is thus only revealed for the player having received it, whereas it remains un-known to the other players. A first betting round then tales place, after which each player receives a third face up card called the third street. Thereafter a second betting round takes place, after which a fourth face up card called the fourth street is dealt to each player. This may be followed by a third betting round. Finally a fifth face up card called the fifth street is dealt to each player. The players may then bet a last time based on the limited information of the other players' cards, knowing four of each players' five cards, and the complete information about their own hand.

Still yet another poker game is 7-card stud poker, which like 5-card stud poker is played as a player-against-player card game. In 7-card stud poker each player is dealt a first hand of three cards of which two are dealt face down and one is dealt face up. After a first betting round, each player is dealt a fourth card face up called the fourth street. Then a second betting round, followed by being dealt a fifth card face up, being the fifth street, a third betting round, being dealt a sixth face up card, and a fourth betting round takes place. Then each player is dealt a seventh card face down, called the seventh

street, after which a final betting round can take place. Each player has then received seven cards, of which three cards are unknown to the other players.

Thus, Texas Holdem and Omaha as well as 5-card stud poker and 7-card stud poker are poker card games that typically are played as a player-against-player game.

Player-against-player games usually take a considerable amount of time due to the number of time consuming betting rounds and the time spent during which the players try to read other players' cards. The consequence of time consuming player-against-player hands may be that the profit margin for the house decreases, since the house takes a percentage of the pot to make a profit. For this reason player-against-player games may not be that appreciated by commercial gambling establishments.

In addition, since the game is a player-against-player game, some customers might get intimidated to play, knowing that other players may be professional card players having considerable experience.

There is thus a need for a game with which the commercial gambling establishments may improve their profits. It is also desired to reduce the time spent when betting and the time spent when attempting to read other players' cards, thereby providing a turnaround time for each hand, which would improve the profit margin.

It would also be advantageous to provide a game that is not intimidating to inexperienced players.

SUMMARY

An object of the present invention is to provide a method within a poker related card game for delivering an excitement during the dealing of hole cards to a player of the poker related card game.

According to one aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method within a poker related card game, for determining a set of hole cards to play for at least one

player, the method comprising the steps of a dealer dealing three sets of cards, each set comprising at least two cards, where at least one set of cards is dealt to each one of the at least one player, and wherein the at least one player is given one option selected from the group consisting of playing a first set of cards, discarding the first set of cards, and playing a second set of cards; and discarding the first and second sets of cards, and playing the third set of cards, wherein each discarded set of cards automatically is assigned the dealer's set of cards.

According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method within a poker related card game, for determining a set of hole cards to play for at least one player, the method comprising the steps of a dealer dealing four sets of cards, each set comprising at least two cards, where at least one set of cards is dealt to each one of the at least one player, and wherein the at least one player is given one option selected from the group consisting of playing a first set of cards by the player, discarding the first set of cards, and playing a second set of cards, discarding the first and second sets of cards, and playing the third set of cards; and discarding the first, second and third sets of cards, and playing the fourth set of cards, wherein each discarded set of cards automatically is assigned as a bank's set of cards.

It should be emphasized that the term "comprises/comprising" when being used in the specification is taken to specify the presence of the stated features, integers, steps or components but does not preclude the presence or addition of one or more other features, integers, steps or components or groups thereof.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In order to explain the invention and the advantages and features thereof in more detail, embodiments will be described below, references being made to the accompanying drawings, in which

Figures 1A and 1B present a flowchart illustrating embodiments of method steps;
Figures 2A and 2B present a flowchart illustrating embodiments of method steps; and
Figure 3 presents a schematic layout illustrating embodiments of a gaming area.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

With reference to figure 1A some embodiments of a method for determining a set of hole cards, being applied to a poker game will now be described.

According to some embodiments the card game may be played individually by one player or by more players up to seven players, where each player is playing against the bank.

The game may be played using a gaming terminal, according to some embodiments.

Reference will also be made to figure 3 illustrating a schematic layout of a gaming area 300 according to some embodiments. This layout may be used when using a playing terminal.

Each player playing the game is assigned one playing area. The gaming area 300 comprises a betting area 302 where the player makes his/her bet. The gaming area 300 further comprises a player area 304, a first bank area 306 and a second bank area 308. In addition the gaming area may comprise a discard activating area 310 and a play activating area 312.

In the following the rules for determining hole cards for a player in a card game are represented by various method steps.

According to some embodiments the method may start with the step of making a bet by a player, step 102. This player typically places a chip as an initial bet in the betting area 302. Having made the bet, the step of dealing by the dealer a first set of two cards to the player in step 104, by for instance placing these two cards face down in the player's area 304. These two cards, being the first set, are then evaluated by the player in step 106, after which the player decides whether to activate the play activation area, for example by pressing a play button, with the intention to play these cards or to activate

the discard activation area, for example by pressing a discard or muck button, in step 108.

It should be mentioned that the dealer may be realized by a function adapted to deal cards, for instance in a playing terminal.

If the player chooses to discard them, that is basically answering the interrogation in step 108 negatively by an "N", the following step of the method of playing a card game is step 110, assigning the discarded first set of cards to the bank as its first set of cards. By discarding the set of two cards placed in the player area 304, these two cards will hence automatically be assigned as the bank's first set of cards. These cards may therefore be moved to the first bank area 306, as indicated in figure 3.

The dealer then deals a second set of two cards to the player in step 112, from the stack of cards by placing the set in the player area 304. The player then evaluates this second set of cards in step 114.

According to some embodiments the player may have no possibility to see the second set of two cards face up, before he or she has discarded the first set of two cards.

It is again up to the player to determine whether to activate the play activating area 312, by for instance moving a cursor to the play activation area and click, or activate the play activation area on a touch screen with for example a finger, meaning to play these current two cards or to activate the discard activating area 310 in a similar way, in step 116. If the player chooses not to play these two cards, the interrogation in step 116 is answered in a negatively way by an "N". This second set of cards will then automatically be moved from the player area 304 and placed in the bank's second area 308, now being assigned to the bank.

According to the flowchart in figure 1A, the following step of the method is therefore the step of assigning the discarded second set of cards to be the bank's second set of two cards.

Similarly to the case after negatively answering step 108 above, by negatively answering the step 116 by the player, the second set of two cards is thus automatically assigned to the bank, and since the bank received a first set in step 110, the set of cards in step 118 is thus the bank's second set of two cards.

The next step of the method of determining hole cards, now according to figure 1B, is the step of dealing a third set of two cards to the player, step 120. This step is performed by placing the novel two cards in the player area 304.

According to some embodiments the player may have no possibility to see the third set of two cards face up, before he or she has discarded the second set of two cards.

The step of evaluating the third set of two cards is now performed by the player in step 122.

As the player has previously discarded the first set of cards in step 108 and discarded the second set of cards in step 116, the player is now obliged to play the third set of cards, in step of the player having to play the third set, step 124.

Before continuing further according the method for determining hole cards, other scenarios according to which the player can receive his or her cards to play will be described.

If for instance, the player answers the interrogation in step 108 in a positive way, by answering "Y", the player accepts the first set of cards as his first set of two playing cards.

In this case the first set of cards placed in the player area 304 remains in the player area, after the player has activated the play activating area 312 by for instance pressing a play button.

For this reason, the dealing of the second set of cards is automatically assigned to the bank as the bank`s first set of cards, in step 128. The second set of cards, being he bank`s first set may thus be placed in the first bank area 306.

Moreover, another scenario is the one according to which the player answers the interrogation is step 108 negatively, by activating the discard activating area 310, and in addition makes the choice to play the second set of card by answering "Y" in the interrogation in step 116, by activating the play activating area 310. According to this scenario the bank has been assigned the first set of cards, in step 110, but also that the player has accepted to play the second set of cards in step 116.

For this reason the third set of cards is accordingly assigned to the bank as the bank's second set of two cards in step 130, being dealing a third set of two cards to the bank to be placed in the second bank area 308.

Accordingly, at this stage the player has thus elected a set of card, and the bank has been given its two sets of hole cards, which may be reflected in the step of confirming the player`s set of cards and the bank`s two sets of cards, in step 130.

The method for determining hole cards for a player in a poker related card game is therefore ended.

This method for determining hole cards may advantageously be incorporated in a standard Texas Holdem game, bringing new excitement into the game.

This method for determining hole cards may also be continued by a method to play a poker related card game, in which game each one of the players individually plays against a bank.

In the following an example is described in which the method to play a poker related cards game is applied to standard Texas Holdem.

This method may start by the step of establishing the player's set of cards and the bank's two set of cards, step 202. By using a gaming area such as the one illustrated in figure 3, each player then has one set of cards to play, said set for instance being placed in the player area 304 and the bank a first and second set of cards, for instance being placed in the first bank area 306 and the second bank area 308, respectively.

This stage may be succeeded by the step of dealing the flop, in step 204. According to some embodiments the flop comprises three community cards is dealt and placed in an area that is common for all players. The flop is dealt face-up and are thus visible to all players in the case there are more then one player playing the game.

Having dealt the flop in step 204, the step of dealing the turn is performed, step 206. The turn is typically also a community card, being common for all players, and which therefore is dealt face-up being visible to all players.

After having dealt the turn in step 206, the river being the fifth community card being common to all players, is then dealt in step 208. The number of community cards is thus five, comprising the flop of three cards, the single turn card, and the single river card.

Having presented five community cards, the player is now obliged to elect a hand of five cards from the player's two hole cards and the five community cards. This is performed in step 210.

The player can elect any combination of five cards from his own hand of two cards, being the two hole cards and the five face-up community cards, of the total seven cards.

One possible hand to elect by the player in step 210 may thus be to "play the board", which means that the player elects the five community cards as his hand to play with.

Subsequent to the player electing his hand in step 210, the step of electing cards for the bank is performed in step 212. This step of electing cards comprises electing two hands of five cards from each set of two cards and the five community cards. The bank thus

elects two hands of five cards, whereas the player only has the possibility to elect one hand of five cards.

Having elected the five-card that the player intends to play with in step 210 and having elected the two hands with which the bank intends to play in step 212, determining the poker rank of these hands is now executed.

According to some embodiments this comprises the step 214, determining the poker rank of player's poker hand, followed by the step of determining the best bank poker rank of the elected two hands, in step 126.

The order of execution of these two steps may be reversed according to some embodiments. The step of determination of the best bank poker hand of the elected two hands, step 216 may thus precede the step of determining the player poker hand of the elected single hand, step 214.

According to still some embodiments, the determination of the bank poker rank of one of the two five-card hands may be performed first, after which the player poker rank is determined, followed by the determination of the bank poker rank for the second five-card hand.

The relative order of the determinations can obviously be changed.

Having determined these poker ranks, the step of comparing the player's poker rank and the best bank poker rank is now performed in step 218.

Once the comparison is done, the step of determining whether the player has the highest poker rank or not may now be performed in step 220.

In the case it is determined in step 220 that the player does not have the highest poker rank, the step of determining whether the bank has the highest poker rank or not may be performed in step 222.

In the case it is determined in step 222 that the bank does not have the highest poker rank, answering "N" in the interrogation of step 222, the next step is concluding that the player and the bank have equal poker rank, in step 224.

If this is actually the case, the bank may be refunding the player's bet, in the subsequent step 226.

However, if it is determined in the interrogation of step 220, determining whether the player has the highest poker rank or not, that the player indeed has the highest, that is that the interrogation is answered positively with a "Y", the subsequent step of the method is the step of the bank evaluating the player's card combination, in step 228, after which the bank may pay the player in dependence of the player's bet and the player's card combination, in step 230.

According to some embodiments the bank may thus pay the player both according to the bet, and according to the card combination of the elected single five-card hand, as determined in step 210.

According to one scenario for which the bank pays double the bet to a winner, the bank would pay the player at least double his/her bet in step 230.

According to a similar scenario the bank may have to pay the winning player a bonus in dependence of the winner's single five-card hand. For a given hand, for example ten times the bet of the player may have to be paid to the winner by the bank.

In the case the interrogation in step 222 was answered positively by a "Y", conforming that the best bank poker rank was higher than the player's poker rank, the subsequent step of the method of playing the card game may be step 232 in which the bank is cashing in the bet.

It is emphasized that the present embodiments of the method to determines a set of hole cards and the method to play a poker game, for which the hole cards have been determined following the method for determining a set of hole cards, can be varied in many ways, of which the alternative embodiments as presented are just a few examples. These different embodiments are hence non-limiting examples. The scope of the present invention, however, is only limited by the subsequently following claims.

In analogy with the method to determine hole cards for Texas Holdem, the method to determine hole cars may well be applied to 5-card stud poker in which sets of cards are dealt to each player, where each set comprises two cards, according to some embodiments.

According to some embodiments a method within a poker related card game, for determining a set of hole cards to play for at least one player, may comprise the steps of a dealer dealing four sets of cards, each set comprising at least two cards, where at least one set of cards is dealt to each one of the at least one player, and wherein the at least one player is given one option selected from the group consisting of playing a first set of cards by the player, discarding the first set of cards, and playing a second set of cards, discarding the first and second sets of cards, and playing the third set of cards; and discarding the first, second and third sets of cards, and playing the fourth set of cards, wherein each discarded set of cards automatically is assigned as a bank's set of cards. In short four sets of cards may thus be dealt by the dealer, of which the player can choose one hand in way similar to the one described in connection with figures 1A and 1B.

According to some embodiments the game may be a table game that is played in a live environment, for instance, a casino. According to such an embodiment, the playing area may comprise a betting area 302, a player area 304, a first bank area 306 and second bank area 308. Thus, the discard activating area 310 and the play activating area 312 may not be available in such an embodiment. Rather, if a player chooses to discard a set of cards the player places the set of cards in the bank's first or second area, and in case the player has chosen to play the first area, the dealer places the subsequent two sets of cards in the dedicated bank areas, with the second set of cards in the first bank area and

the third set of cards in the second bank area. As previously described, the two bank sets and the player's own set are not preferably not visible to other players.

Within a live environment such as a casino, the dealer may be realized by a physical person dealing said cards.

According to some embodiments the dealer may deal cards from a single deck of cards or alternatively deal cards from a stack comprising more cards, for example from a stack comprising two or more decks of cards.

The player may have the option to increase or raise his or her after step 102 in the method for determining a set of hole cards. This increase may be performed in the case the player has discarded the first and the second sets of cards, having to accept the third, of a total of three set of cards. Dependent on the set of two cards, the player can for instance in a step 123, raise the bet a multiple of times, for instance 2, 3, 4 or 5 times.

According to some embodiments, the player may not be permitted to look at this third set of cards prior to raising his bet, but rather a raise in bet may have to be performed prior to looking at the third set of cards, that is in a step 121, following the method as illustrated in figures 1A and 1B.

According to yet some embodiments the player may be paid a bonus amount of money dependent on the elected particular 5-card hand, in addition to the amount of money won by having the best poker rank hand.

According to some other embodiments the method for determining hole cards may be used in a card game played by more than seven players in one hand, wherein more than one deck of cards can be used.

The dealer may also be dealing cards from a stack of cards wherein the stack may comprise one or more jokers. The presence of a joker in the hand being presented by a player, may be reasons to pay a bonus to the player by the bank.

According to some embodiments a method for determining hole cards to play for a player may comprise a dealer dealing three sets of cards, each set comprising four cards, where at least one set of cards is dealt to each one of the at least one player, and wherein the at least one player is given one option selected from the group consisting of playing a first set of cards by the player, discarding the first set of cards, and playing a second set of cards; and discarding the first and second sets of cards, and playing the third set of cards, wherein each discarded set of cards automatically is assigned as a bank's set of cards.

Such an embodiment may be applied to improve the step of dealing hole cards in Omaha, wherein each player is dealt four cards, as earlier described.

According to some embodiments a method for determining hole cards to play for a player may comprise a dealer dealing three sets of cards, each set comprising three cards, where at least one set of cards is dealt to each one of the at least one player, and wherein the at least one player is given one option selected from the group consisting of playing a first set of cards by the player, discarding the first set of cards, and playing a second set of cards; and discarding the first and second sets of cards, and playing the third set of cards, wherein each discarded set of cards automatically is assigned as a bank's set of cards.

Such an embodiment may be applied to improve the step of dealing hole cards in 7-card stud poker, wherein each player is dealt three cards, as was described above.

It is thus easy to understand that the embodiments comes with a number of advantages of which one is providing a game that is easy to learn since it is based on standard poker rankings.

Another advantageous feature at least of some embodiments is that the betting time is reduced, causing a reduced turnaround time.

Still another advantage is that it is more attractive to commercial gambling establishments, since the method may improve their profit margins.

Moreover, since the method of determining hole cards is especially suited for games, which are played as a player-against-bank game, would-be customers cannot be intimidated to play by to professional card players since each player plays individually against the bank. During one hand, in a game with six participating players, two players may for instance win against the bank, a third may have a poker rank equal to his or her bank rank, and three may lose against their bank, during the same hand.

CLAIMS

1. A method within a poker related card game, for determining a set of hole cards to play for at least one player, the method comprising the steps of:
   - a dealer dealing three sets of cards, each set comprising at least two cards, where at least one set of cards is dealt to each one of the at least one player, and wherein the at least one player is given one option selected from the group consisting of:
   - playing a first set of cards;
   - discarding the first set of cards, and playing a second set of cards; and
   - discarding the first and second sets of cards, and playing the third set of cards,

   wherein each discarded set of cards automatically is assigned as a bank's set of cards.

2. The method within a poker related card game according to claim 1, wherein the step of playing the first set is followed by the step of dealing by the dealer a second and a third set of cards to the bank.

3. The method within a poker related card game according to claim 1, wherein the steps of discarding the first set and playing the second is followed by the step of dealing by the dealer a third set of cards to the bank.

4. The method within a poker related card game according to claim 1, wherein each set of cards comprises two cards.

5. The method within a poker related card game according to claim 1, wherein each set of cards comprises three cards.

6. The method within a poker related card game according to claim 1, wherein each set of cards comprises four cards.

7. A method for playing a poker related card game, said method comprising the method for determining a set of hole cards to play for at least one player according to claim 1.

8. A method within a poker related card game, for determining a set of hole cards to play for at least one player, the method comprising the steps of:

- a dealer dealing four sets of cards, each set comprising at least two cards, where at least one set of cards is dealt to each one of the at least one player, and wherein the at least one player is given one option selected from the group consisting of:
- playing a first set of cards;
- discarding the first set of cards, and playing a second set of cards;
- discarding the first and second sets of cards, and playing the third set of cards; and
- discarding the first, second and third sets of cards, and playing the fourth set of cards,

wherein each discarded set of cards automatically is assigned as a bank's set of cards.

9. The method within a poker related card game according to claim 8, wherein the step of playing the first set is followed by the step of dealing by the dealer a second, a third and a fourth set of cards to the bank.

10. The method within a poker related card game according to claim 8, wherein the steps of discarding the first set and playing the second is followed by the step of dealing by the dealer a third and fourth set of cards to the bank.

11. The method within a poker related card game according to claim 8, wherein the steps of discarding the first and second sets of cards and playing the third set of cards is followed by the step of dealing by the dealer a fourth set of cards to the bank.

12. The method within a poker related card game according to claim 8, wherein each set of cards comprises two cards.

13. The method within a poker related card game according to claim 8, wherein each set of cards comprises three cards.

14. The method within a poker related card game according to claim 8, wherein each set of cards comprises four cards.

15. A method for playing a poker related card game, said method comprising the method for determining a set of hole cards to play for at least one player, according to claim 8.