TITLE: ~~GAMING SYSTEM~~ SYSTEM FOR OPERATING A LOTTERY

FIELD

This invention relates to a gaming system enabling a large number of players to participate, and in particular lends itself to a gaming event in which participants can enter in a large number of ways such as by means of the telephone, mobile communication device, or over the internet directly or by email.

BACKGROUND

Gaming events are basically of three types. The first is where participants pay to enter and can receive a prize (usually cash or cash equivalent), the second is where participants can play without paying to enter, and may not receive prizes, and the third are promotional systems where eligibility to enter is associated with the purchase or receipt of goods or services.

Lotteries are defined to include any scheme for the distribution of prizes by chance. Most games of chance involving large numbers of participants are lotteries based on (a) sweepstakes, in which customers purchase lottery tickets, or (b) variants of LOTTO or KENO, in which participants either purchase a pre-allocated set of numbers allocated from a larger group of numbers, or purchase a group of numbers chosen by them from a larger group of numbers, in each case purchasing a ticket at a retail outlet, or by mobile device, or over the internet by email. In some cases such purchases are conducted by mail. In all cases the organiser of the lottery will then select the set of winning numbers, from the same larger group of numbers, in some form of random draw, which is often televised. The participant/s that can match some or all of their numbers with those randomly drawn by the organiser of the lottery win prizes.

United States Patent 7,100,822 addressed problems relating to some of these gaming systems.

One disadvantage of these gaming systems that United States Patent 7,100,822 addressed was in respect of participants needing to go to the retail outlet to purchase the entrance

What we Claim is:

1. A ranking engine for a computerised lottery, which lottery has at least a first prize and which allows the promoter of the lottery to guarantee a winner or joint winners of the first prize or a final pool of entries from which a winner or joint winners of the first prize is found, and wherein in the case of joint winners the number of joint winners of the first prize is less than ten;

   the lottery receiving a plurality of entries from participants, each entry comprising two or more symbols selected from one or more sets of symbols;

   the ranking engine comprising one or more computers;

   the computer or computers:~~;~~

   recording the symbols selected in or on each entry to provide a ranking list of the number of times each symbol was selected, and ~~optionally~~ recording at least the identity or contact details , place, point of entry associated with each entry, and

   ranking and recording the ranking of at least two of the symbols chosen in or on each entry, in order to rank the entries until,

   the winner of the first prize, or

   the joint winners of the first prize, or

   the final pool of entries is selected from which a winner or joint winners of the first prize,

   is found;

   wherein, the winner or joint winners of the first prize is determined by comparing the symbol or symbols in all or at least some of the entries of

all or at least some of the participants against ranking of symbols as set out in the ranking list to make eliminations, by comparing one or more of the symbols chosen in or on each entry against ranking list of the symbols,

wherein, the step of comparing one or more of the symbols in or on each entry against the ranking list of symbols comprises a step of progressively eliminating those relevant entries that have a relevant symbol or symbols ranked lower, or alternatively higher on the ranking list than the symbol or symbols in or on other entries until the winner or joint winners in found;

and wherein the lottery has a predefined close off time and/or date.

2. A ranking engine as claimed in claim 1, wherein the ranking of each symbol takes place following closure of entries into the game.

3. A ranking engine as claimed in either one of claims 1 and 2 wherein the number of entries is at least 10 times greater than the number of symbols in the or each set.

4. A computerised lottery having at least a first prize and which allows the promoter of the lottery to guarantee a winner or joint winners of the first prize or a final pool of entries from which a winner or joint winners of the first prize is found, and wherein in the case of joint winners the number of joint winners of the first prize is less than ten;

the lottery receiving a plurality of entries from participants, each entry comprising two or more symbols selected from one or more sets of symbols;

the lottery using a ranking engine;

the ranking engine comprising one or more computers;

the computer or computers~~;~~:

recording the symbols selected in or on each entry to provide a ranking list of the number of times each symbol was selected, and ~~optionally~~ recording at least the identity , place, point of entry or contact details associated with each entry, and

ranking and recording the ranking of at least two of the symbols chosen in or on each entry, in order to rank the entries until,

the winner of the first prize, or

the joint winners of the first prize, or

the final pool of entries is selected from which a winner or joint winners of the first prize,

is found;

wherein, the winner or joint winners of the first prize is determined by comparing the symbol or symbols in all or at least some of the entries of all or at least some of the participants against ranking of symbols as set out in the ranking list to make eliminations, by comparing one or more of the symbols chosen in or on each entry against ranking list of the symbols,

wherein, the step of comparing one or more of the symbols in or on each entry against the ranking list of symbols comprises a step of progressively eliminating those relevant entries that have a relevant symbol or symbols ranked lower, or alternatively higher on the ranking list than the symbol or symbols in or on other entries until the winner or joint winners in found;

and wherein the lottery has a predefined close off time and/or date.

5. A computerised lottery as claimed in claim 4 wherein the number of entries A is at least 10 times greater than the number of symbols n in the or each set

6. A computerised lottery as claimed in claim 4, wherein the expected number of entries is high enough that the probability that each member of the set of n symbols will be chosen is at least once ~~is substantially certain~~.

7. A computerised lottery as claimed in claim 4, wherein the number of entries A is between 10 times and 500,000 times the number of symbols n.

8. A computerised lottery as claimed in any one of claims 4 to 7, wherein each entry comprises r different symbols selected from the set of n symbols.

9. A computerised lottery as claimed in claim 8, wherein r is a number between 4 and 10.

10. A computerised lottery as claimed in claim 9 wherein r is 6.

11. A computerised lottery as claimed in claim 4, wherein there are two or more sets containing symbols n1, n2…nN and each entry comprises a selection of at least one symbol from each set of symbols.

12. A computerised lottery as claimed in any one of claims 4 to 11, wherein the ranking engine contains additional rules to eliminate ties between symbols.

13. A computerised lottery as claimed in any one of claims 4 to 12, wherein each set of symbols comprises a set of symbols from 2 to 100, with each symbol identified by numerals, or that are numerals.

14. A computerised lottery as claimed in any claim 13, wherein each set of symbols comprises a set of symbols from 2 to 40, with each symbol identified by numerals, or that are numerals.

15. A computerised lottery as claimed in claim 14 where there are two sets of symbols, with the first set comprising a set of symbols from 2 to 10 in number, and the second set comprising a set of symbols from 10 to 40 in number, with each symbol in each set identified by numerals, or that are numerals.

16. A computer program for conducting a computerised lottery having at least a first prize and which allows the promoter of the lottery to guarantee a winner or joint winners of the first prize or a final pool of entries from which a winner or joint winners of the first prize is found, and wherein in the case of joint winners the number of joint winners of the first prize is less than ten;

the lottery receiving a plurality of entries from participants, each entry comprising two or more symbols selected from one or more sets of symbols;

the lottery using a ranking engine;

the ranking engine comprising one or more computers;

the computer or computers:;

recording the symbols selected in or on each entry to provide a ranking list of the number of times each symbol was selected, and ~~optionally~~ recording at least the identity, place, point of entry or contact details associated with each entry, and

ranking and recording the ranking of at least two of the symbols chosen in or on each entry, in order to rank the entries until,

the winner of the first prize, or

the joint winners of the first prize, or

the final pool of entries is selected from which a winner or joint winners of the first prize,

is found;

wherein, the winner or joint winners of the first prize is determined by comparing the symbol or symbols in all or at least some of the entries of all or at least some of the participants against ranking of symbols as set out in the ranking list to make eliminations, by comparing one or more of the symbols chosen in or on each entry against ranking list of the symbols,

wherein, the step of comparing one or more of the symbols in or on each entry against the ranking list of symbols comprises a step of progressively eliminating those relevant entries that have a relevant symbol or symbols ranked lower, or alternatively higher on the ranking list than the symbol or symbols in or on other entries until the winner or joint winners in found;

and wherein the lottery has a predefined close off time and/or date.

17. A computer program for conducting a lottery as claimed in claim 16, wherein the program is adapted to record the entry point to the lottery through or in which the participant purchased the entry and to record other information chosen from the group comprising (a) an identity of a lottery organization, (b) a lottery sub-type, and (c) a country or area; to enable the program to select a winning entry for each of those entry points to the lottery.

18. A method of conducting a lottery having at least a first prize and which allows the promoter of the lottery to guarantee a winner or joint winners of the first prize or a final pool of entries from which a winner or joint winners of the first prize is found, and wherein in the case of joint winners the number of joint winners of the first prize is less than ten;

the lottery receiving a plurality of entries from participants, each entry comprising two or more symbols selected from one or more sets of symbols;

the lottery using a ranking engine;

the ranking engine comprising one or more computers;

the computer or computers:;

recording the symbols selected in or on each entry to provide a ranking list of the number of times each symbol was selected, and ~~optionally~~ recording at least the identity, place, point of entry or contact details associated with each entry, and

ranking and recording the ranking of at least two of the symbols chosen in or on each entry, in order to rank the entries until,

the winner of the first prize, or

the joint winners of the first prize, or

the final pool of entries is selected from which a winner or joint winners of the first prize,

is found;

wherein, the winner or joint winners of the first prize is determined by comparing the symbol or symbols in all or at least some of the entries of all or at least some of the participants against ranking of symbols as set out in the ranking list to make eliminations, by comparing one or more of the symbols chosen in or on each entry against ranking list of the symbols,

wherein, the step of comparing one or more of the symbols in or on each entry against the ranking list of symbols comprises a step of progressively eliminating those relevant entries that have a relevant symbol or symbols

ranked lower, or alternatively higher on the ranking list than the symbol or symbols in or on other entries until the winner or joint winners in found;

and wherein the lottery has a predefined close off time and/or date.

19. A method of conducting a lottery as claimed in claim 18 wherein the results of the lottery are displayed/broadcast in the form of a software or computer driven simulation, the end result of which is based on the ranking of the n symbols.

20. A method of conducting a lottery as claimed in claim 19 wherein the simulation is a competitive simulation.

21. A method as claimed in claim 20 wherein the competitive simulation is a race simulation.