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- (71) Applicant and
- (72) Inventor: LADUE, Michelle [US/US]; 1584 Route 79,
Windsor, New York 13865 (US).
- (74) Agent: LEVY, Mark; MARK LEVY & ASSOCIATES,
PLLC, PRESS BUILDING-STE. 902, 19 Chenango Street,
Binghamton, New York 13901 (US).
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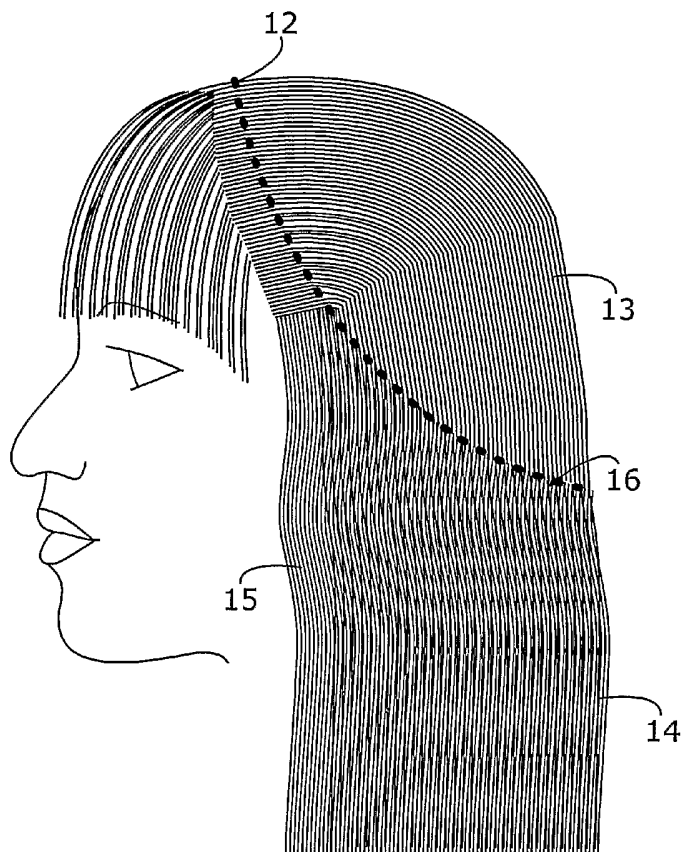
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: HAIR EXTENSION DEVICE



(57) Abstract: A hair extension device that allows a user to add supplemental, natural, human hair strands to the natural hair of the user. The hair extension device includes a filament formed into a circular or oval shape to encircle the head. Hair weft lengths are attached to the filament along an arcuate length of the filament. When the device is positioned on the head, the hair strands of the hair weft lengths extend down the sides and back of the user. The natural hair held beneath the filament is pulled up and forward, then backward over the filament, blending together the natural hair of the user and the supplemental hair strands .

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HAIR EXTENSION DEVICERelated Application:

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The present patent application is a continuation-in-part of United States provisional patent application serial no. 60/647,781, filed January 31, 2005, the priority of which is hereby claimed.

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Field of the Invention:

The present invention relates to hair extension devices, and more particularly to a clipless and non-adhesive hair extension device.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

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One of the most attractive features of people, especially women, has always been their hair. This fact has been known for thousands of years, which explains certain religious sects' edict to cover or even cut women's hair. For those women who are unaffected by such restrictions, however, long, luxurious human hair is an asset that results in improved appearance and self esteem. Unfortunately, due to age, disease or genetics, not everyone is fortunate enough to have a full complement of naturally hair. For those, hair pieces and wigs are often the answer.

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Numerous methods and devices for creating the appearance of thicker or longer hair exist in the prior art. When adding supplemental natural or synthetic hair to that of an individual, the typical method involves applying the supplemental hair directly to the individual's natural hair, either by gluing the strands of hair to the natural hair or by bonding strands of the supplemental hair to the natural hair using a durable bonding material. Applying additional hair strands to an individual's natural hair is a meticulous process that requires hours of

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application time. Additionally, after time, the supplemental hair strands tend to unravel or fall out. More supplemental hair must be reapplied or the supplemental strands must be removed, often causing a great deal of damage to the individual's natural hair.

An alternate method of providing hair extensions for a user involves adding to an individual's natural hair by using hair clips to attach strands of supplemental hair to the user's natural hair. While this method is effective in providing the appearance of longer or thicker hair for the user, the addition of hair clips tends to be quite cumbersome during use. The user cannot easily wash her natural or supplemental hair with the hair clips in the hair. Moreover, adding hair clips to the hair involves excessive time.

Description of the Related Art:

Hair extension devices exist that do not require the use of hair clips, gluing, bonding or other intrusive methods of adding supplemental hair to natural hair.

United States Patent No. 1,351,427, issued August 31, 1920 to Veronika Krasmauskis, describes a hair-dressing attachment for forming artificial side or ear puffs. The article consists of two switches of hair connected together by a cord or wire crossed over the head to support the switches at the side of the head so that, when the puffs are formed up from the switches, they will be in the proper position.

United States Patent No. 1,424,845, issued August 8, 1922 to William E. Nolan, describes transformations or wigs of the long-hair type that are worn principally by women and in distinction to toupees and to other hair-dress devices employing permanently-bobbed or other set styles of hair.

United States Patent No. 1,607,926, issued November 23, 1926 to Bernard A. Sterling, describes a hairdressing attachment for use at the back of the head to conceal a bob and give hair that

has been bobbed an unbobbed appearance. The structure may be secured in place upon the head with means for locking the attachment positively and firmly in place and against accidental displacement.

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United States Patent No. 1,638,016, issued August 9, 1927 to Jesse Oppenheim, describes hair dressing appliances and devices employed for the attachment of hair pieces to bobbed hair so that the wearer will present, for dress or other purposes, the appearance of having long hair which may be dressed or manipulated in any desired style.

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United States Patent No. 2,865,380, issued December 23, 1958 to Princess Mitchell, describes hairpieces and methods of hair preparation whereby a short hair dress may be rapidly converted into a long hair dress.

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United States Patent No. 3,280,826, issued October 25, 1966 to Christina M. Jenkins, describes a hair piece composed of commercial or false hair adapted to be applied to the human head by securing the same to existing live hair.

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United States Patent No. 2,621,663, issued to Christina M. Jenkins, contemplates mounting on the head a base of attachment for the commercial hair by interweaving strands of live hair with a base material and then attaching a switch, weft or like accessory of commercial hair to the base. With this method, the commercial hair is permanently attached to the live hair and serves to give the live hair the appearance of greater length and thickness as well as cover bald spots, thin spots, or scars.

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United States Patent No. 4,600,029, issued July 15, 1986 to Ueberschaar, describes a hairpiece having individual hairs adjustably secured about a circular filament. The hairpiece is then placed on the user's head, the filament sandwiched beneath an upper layer and above an underlying layer of hair on the head, so the natural hair of the user is blended with the supplemental hair on the hairpiece. Each hair is individually applied to the filament, requiring a tedious, inordinately complicated process in assembling the hairpiece. Additionally, as each hair is added

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to the filament individually, only a single row of individual hair strands may be attached to the filament, thereby limiting the amount of hair that is attachable to the hairpiece. As such, the thickness of the supplemental hair is restricted to the level
5 of a single row of individual hair strands.

Therefore, there is a need for a hair extension device that avoids or eliminates the use of hair clips, glue or bonding material but provides a quick and efficient method of adding
10 supplemental hair to a user's natural hair. Moreover, there is a need for a device that provides numerous layers of supplemental hair strands, such that the supplemental hair provided for the user may have varying levels of thickness and length.

15 It is an object of the invention therefore to provide a hairpiece that may be sandwiched between layers of natural hair and be invisible to an observer and supply additional volume and length of hair to the head.

20 A further object of the present invention is to provide means whereby the circular filament, if traversing a part line, will be virtually invisible in its crossing.

Another object of the invention is to provide means whereby
25 the hair may be massed or distributed in lesser or greater amounts depending upon the desired hair style or problem of the wearer.

A still further object of the invention is to provide means
30 whereby additional segments of hair may be secured as may be desired.

Another object of the invention is to provide a hairpiece of the type described which may be used as a "ponytail" or the like,
35 or as a "bun".

A still further object of the invention is to provide means whereby the additional hairpiece may be sandwiched between layers of natural hair so that the frictional relationship of the added
40 hairpiece on the natural hair and the fixed roots of the lapping

natural hair anchors the same in the adjusted place position and the hair, with its sandwiched hairpiece in place, may be shampooed, wet, as in swimming without dislodgement of the hairpiece.

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Another object of the invention is to provide means whereby hair of contrasting shades on the hairpiece may be used wherefore the effect of "streaking" in the hair is secured, if desired, without the need to bleach or color the natural hair.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In accordance with the present invention, there is provided
15 a hair extension device that allows a user to create the appearance of having additional amounts of hair without the need for: gluing hair extensions to the natural hair of the user; using supplemental hair clips; or gluing the device onto the scalp of the user. The hair extension device includes a durable
20 filament formed into a circular or oval shape set on the user's head and encircling the head. Hair weft lengths are first sewn to one another in a direction substantially perpendicular to the major axis thereof. The weft lengths are generally affixed to the filament by laying in the filament at a predetermined
25 position along the major axis of the weft lengths, proximate the sewn position of the weft lengths, and then folded over and either sewn or glued and sewn in place proximate an arcuate section thereof.

30 The hair extension device is set upon the head of a user, with the portion of the filament having the hair weft lengths attached being positioned on the lower portion of the user's head, covering the sides and back thereof. The section of the filament that is not covered with the hair weft lengths is
35 situated on the crown of the user and extends down the head near the ears of the user. When the device is properly positioned, supplemental hair strands of the hair weft lengths extend down past the user's natural hair.

The hair of the user that is held beneath the filament is pulled forward by the user, simply by running the user's fingers through the user's natural hair and pulling the hair up and then backward over the filament. The user's natural hair therefore covers the filament and blends with the supplemental hair strands extending off of the filament.

The strength of the filament and the weight of the hair weft lengths allow the hair extension device to be set upon and maintained on the head of the user without the need for additional securing measures. The hair extension device does not require use of clips or glue in order to stabilize the device to the user's head.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

A complete understanding of the present invention may be obtained by reference to the accompanying drawing, when taken in conjunction with the detail description thereof and in which:

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FIGURE 1 is a plan view of a hair extension device according to the present invention;

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FIGURE 2 is an in situ, perspective view of the hair extension device with the hair of the user placed over the device; and

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FIGURES 3a - 3c illustrate the process of affixing natural and artificial hair to the filament of the inventive hair extension device.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

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The present invention is a hair extension device that is releasably attached to the head of a user and allows the user to create the appearance of having additional hair. The extension device is designed to affix to the head of a user without the need for gluing hair extensions to the natural hair, gluing the

device onto the scalp of the user or attaching the device using supplemental hair clips.

FIGURE 1 shows a plan perspective view of the hair extension device 10, which includes a durable filament 12 to which a plurality of hair weft lengths 16 is attached. The hair weft lengths 16 are made with a plurality of supplemental, natural or artificial hair strands 14 that are bound together along the widths thereof to create the weft lengths 16. The hair strands 14 are generally arranged in a parallel manner with each other and bound at one-quarter to one-half of the lengths of each of the strands 14 to form the hair weft lengths 16.

The filament 12 is formed into a circular or oval shape, so that the filament 12 can be set upon and encircle the head 13 of a user. The hair weft lengths 16 are affixed along an arcuate section of approximately half of the circular filament 12. The hair weft lengths 16 are attached to approximately half of the circumference of the filament 12, but may be attached to more or less than half of the filament 12. It should also be understood that, in an alternate embodiment, suitable glue or adhesive may be used to attach hair weft lengths 16 to one another upon folding over filament 12.

The hair weft lengths 16 are made from natural, human hair strands 14, which are preferably natural but may be synthetic hair of varying lengths, colors, diameters, and textures suitable for supplementing a user's natural hair. The filament 12 may be made from Nylon, polyethylene, Dacron or any other type of durable material including but not limited to fishing line.

Referring now to FIGURE 2, the filament 12 is set on top of the user's natural hair 15 and encircles the user's head 13. The circular filament 12 is placed on the head 13 such that the section of the filament 12 with hair weft lengths 16 attached is positioned on the lower portion of the head 13. The remainder of the filament 12 is positioned on the crown of the head 13. The hair strands 14 of the hair weft lengths 16 extend down past the user's natural hair 15 along the back and sides of the user.

The hair 15 of the user that is held beneath the filament 12 is pulled up and over the filament 12 so that the filament 12 is invisible. The user generally simply runs the user's fingers through the user's natural hair 15 and pulls the hair up and then backward over the filament 12. The user's natural hair 15 therefore covers the filament 12 and blends with the supplemental hair strands 14 extending off of the filament 12.

The strength and rigidity of the filament 12 and the weight of the hair weft lengths 16 allows the hair extension device 10 to be set upon and maintained on the head 13 of the user without the need for any additional securing measures. The hair extension device 10 does not require use of clips or glue in order to stabilize the device 10 to the user's head.

Referring now to FIGURES 3a - 3c, a plurality of hair weft lengths 16 is sewn together at one-quarter to one-half the length of strands 14, shown as reference number 15, in parallel in order to combine multiple layers of hair strands 14 into a single weft length 16 (FIGURE 3a). Once the lengths 16 are sewn together with thread 20, the lengths 16 are then folded open with approximately between one-quarter and one-half of the hair strands 14 on one side and the remainder of the hair strands 14 on the other side.

Referring now to FIGURE 3b, filament 12 is laid on top of the sewn portion 15 of lengths 16. The lengths 16 are then folded over the filament 12, sandwiching filament 12, and finally sewn via thread 20 and/or sewn and glued, so that the filament 12 is maintained between the top, bound portions of the hair weft lengths 16. The hair weft lengths 16 are bound to at least half of an arcuate length of the circumference of the filament 12 in the preferred embodiment. Although one method of securing the hair weft lengths 16 to the filament 12 is described, the hair weft lengths 16 may be sewn to the filament in any manner consistent with maintaining the hair weft lengths 16 to approximately at least half of an arcuate section of the filament 12.

The hair weft lengths 16 are then folded (arrows 22, FIGURE 3a), and again sewn together via thread 20. The final device 10 has the arcuate portion of filament 12 attached to weft lengths 16, as shown in FIGURE 3c.

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Since other modifications and changes varied to fit particular operating requirements and environments will be apparent to those skilled in the art, the invention is not considered limited to the examples chosen for purposes of disclosure, and covers all changes and modifications which do not constitute departures from the true spirit and scope of this invention.

Having thus described the invention, what is desired to be protected by Letters Patent is presented in the subsequently appended claims.

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What is claimed is:

1. A hair extension device for attachment to the head of a user, comprising:

5 a) a filament having an arcuate periphery; and

b) a plurality of hair weft lengths proximate said filament along at least a portion of said arcuate length thereof.

10 2. The hair extension device for attachment to the head of a user, in accordance with claim 1, wherein at least one of said plurality of hair weft lengths comprises individual lengths of hair bound together along the widths thereof.

15 3. The hair extension device for attachment to the head of a user, in accordance with claim 2, wherein said plurality of hair weft lengths comprises at least one of the group: natural human hair, synthetic hair, hair strands of predetermined texture, hair strands of predetermined length, hair strands of predetermined diameter, and color.

20 4. The hair extension device for attachment to the head of a user, in accordance with claim 1, wherein said filament is durable.

25 5. The hair extension device for attachment to the head of a user, in accordance with claim 4, wherein said filament comprises at least one of the group: Nylon, polyethylene, and Dacron.

30 6. The hair extension device for attachment to the head of a user, in accordance with claim 1, wherein said filament is configured as at least a partial shape of one of the group: oval, elliptical, and circular.

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7. The hair extension device for attachment to the head of a user, in accordance with claim 1, further comprising a thread, and wherein said hair weft lengths are selectively sewn proximate said filament with said thread to form a sewn portion, whereby said filament is sandwiched between said hair weft lengths.

8. The hair extension device for attachment to the head of a user, in accordance with claim 7, wherein said sewn hair weft lengths are sewn by machine.

9. The hair extension device for attachment to the head of a user, in accordance with claim 7, further comprising glue and wherein said hair weft lengths are glued to one another at said sewn portion, folded, and resealed to form a loop, sandwiching said filament.

10. A method of creating a hair extension device for attachment to the head of a user, the steps comprising:

a) providing a plurality of strands of hair;

b) sewing said plurality of strands of hair together to form a weft thereof; and

c) attaching said hair weft to a filament.

11. The method of creating a hair extension device for attachment to the head of a user in accordance with claim 10, the steps further comprising selecting said plurality of strands of hair to have characteristics from at least one of the group: natural human hair, synthetic hair, hair strands of predetermined texture, hair strands of predetermined length, hair strands of predetermined diameter, and color.

12. The method of creating a hair extension device for attachment to the head of a user in accordance with claim 10, the steps further comprising selecting said filament to be durable.

13. The method of creating a hair extension device for
attachment to the head of a user in accordance with claim 12, the
steps further comprising fabricating said filament with material
comprising at least one of the group: Nylon, polyethylene, and
5 Dacron.

14. The method of creating a hair extension device for
attachment to the head of a user in accordance with claim 10, the
steps further comprising configuring said filament at least as a
.0 partial shape of one of the group: oval, elliptical, and
circular.

15. The method of creating a hair extension device for
attachment to the head of a user in accordance with claim 10,
.5 further comprising selectively sewing said hair weft lengths
proximate said filament with a thread to form a sewn portion,
whereby said filament is sandwiched between said hair weft
lengths.

16. The hair extension device for attachment to the head of
.0 a user, in accordance with claim 15, wherein said sewn hair weft
lengths are sewn by machine.

17. A method of positioning a hair extension device, having
5 a filament and a plurality of hair weft lengths, on the head of a
user, the steps comprising:

a) placing a portion of a filament having hair weft
lengths attached thereto on a top portion of a head of a
0 user, the remainder of said filament being positioned on a
lower portion of said head; and

b) positioning the hair of said user up and over said
filament so that said filament is hidden.

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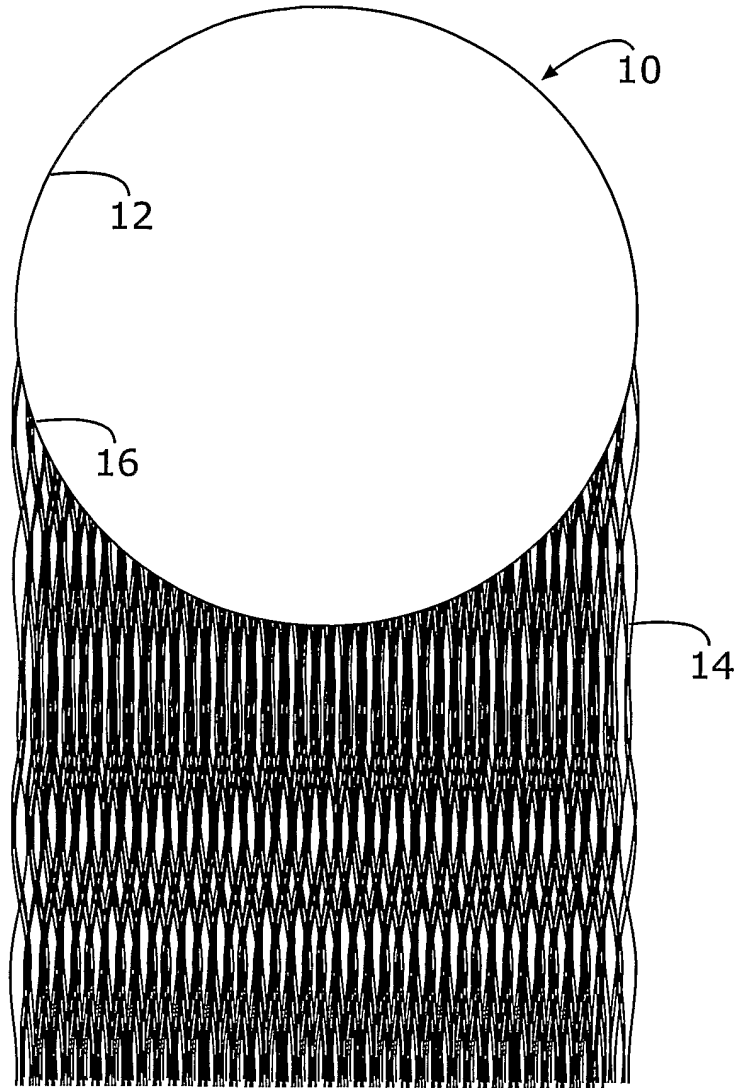


Fig. 1

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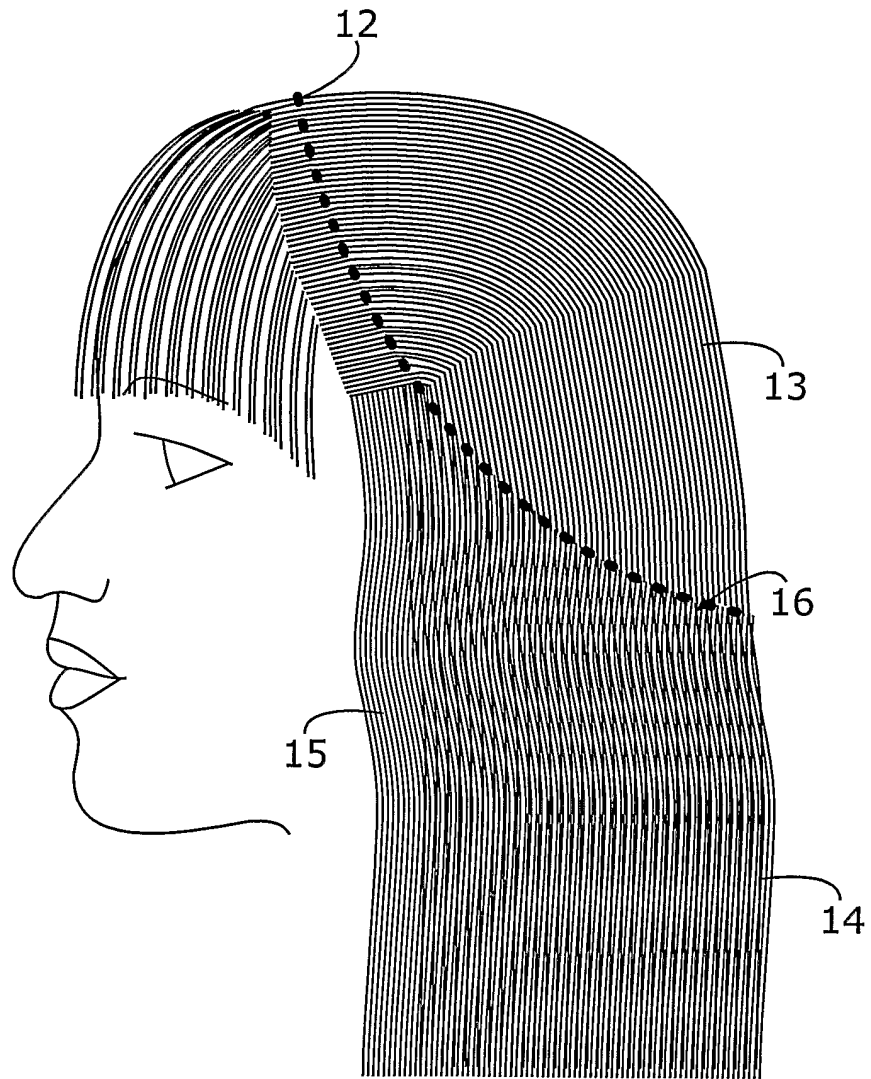


Fig. 2

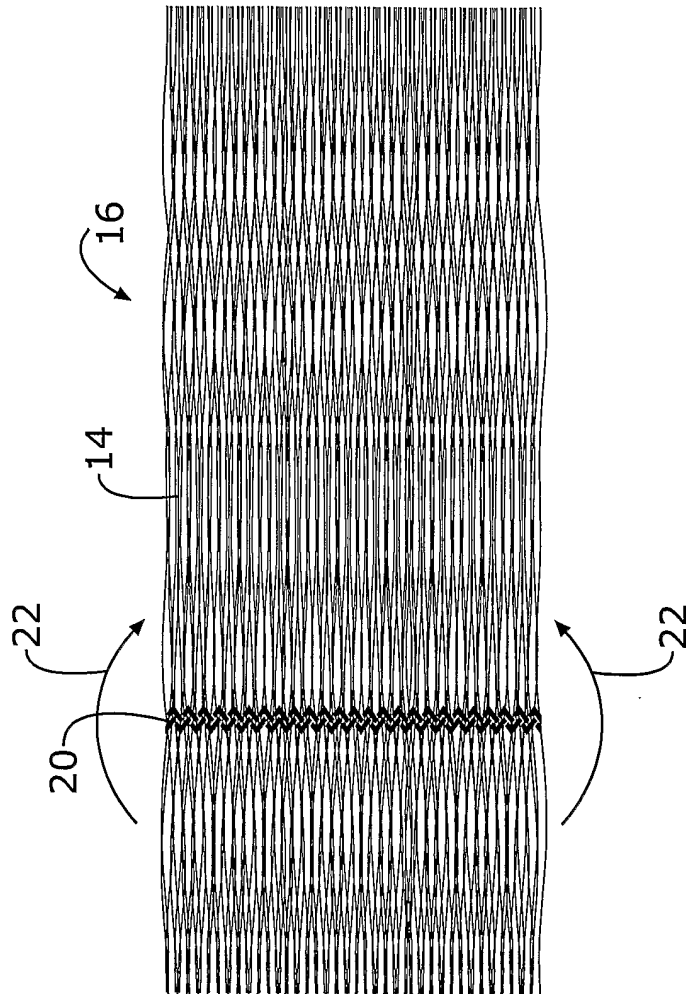


Figure 3a

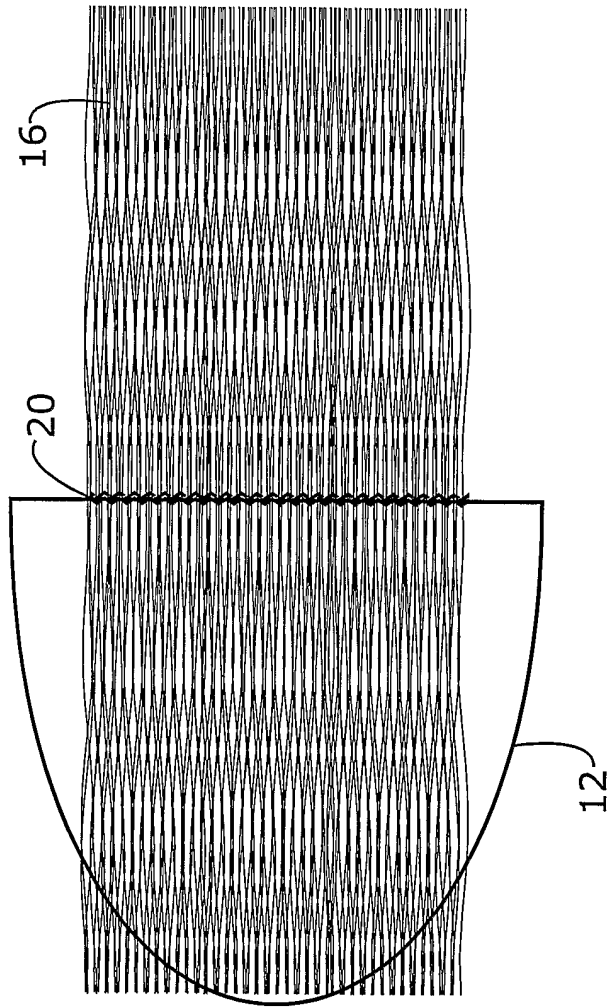


Figure 3b

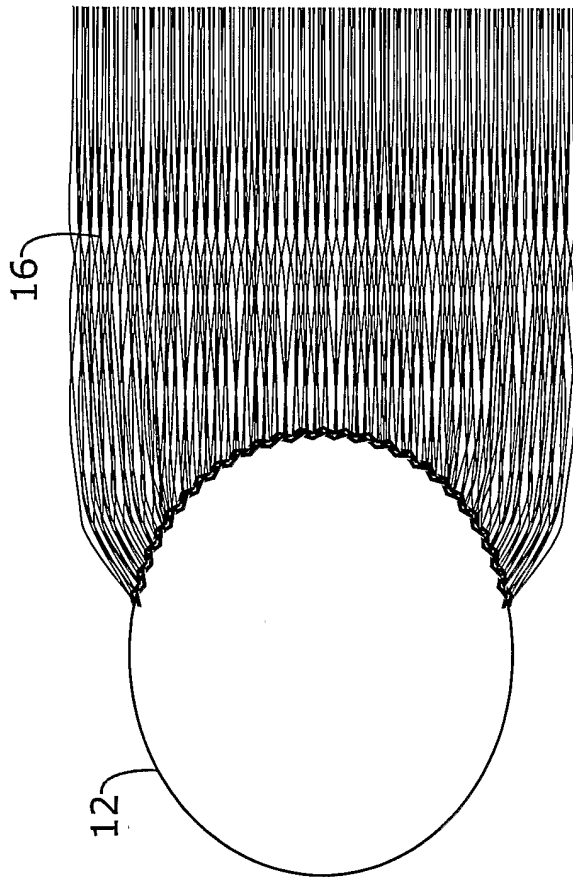


Figure 3c

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US06/03283

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC: **A41G 3/00(2006.01)**

USPC: 132/53

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 132/53, 56, 201

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 3,280,826 A (JENKINS) 25 October 1966, see figures 8-13.	1-17
X	US 4,600,029 A (UEBERSCHAAR) 15 July 1986, see entire document.	1-6
X	US 5,551,452 A (BARLOW) 03 Spetember 1996, see entire document.	1-6
X	US 6,830,054 B1 (ROSS-KUEHN) 14 December 2004, see entire document.	1-17

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

"A"	document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"T"	later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"E"	earlier application or patent published on or after the international filing date	"X"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
"L"	document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	"Y"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
"O"	document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	"&"	document member of the same patent family
"P"	document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed		

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Name and mailing address of the ISA/US

Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Facsimile No. (571) 273-3201

Authorized officer

For
Todd E. Manahan *J. Libby*
Telephone No. 703 308-0858