United States Patent [19]

Townsend

[11] **3,828,740**

[45] **Aug. 13, 1974**

[54] **ROTARY INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE AND METHOD OF COOLING THE SAME**

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[73] Assignee: **Townsend Engineering Company,** Des Moines, Iowa

[22] Filed: **Apr. 16, 1973**

[21] Appl. No.: **351,606**

Related U.S. Application Data

[63] Continuation-in-part of Ser. No. 286,189, Sept. 5, 1972, Continuation-in-part of Ser. No. 301,096, Oct. 26, 1972.

[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **123/44 E,** 123/43 C

[51] **Int. Cl.** **F02b 57/00**

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 123/44 E, 44 C, 44 D, 43 C

[56] **References Cited**

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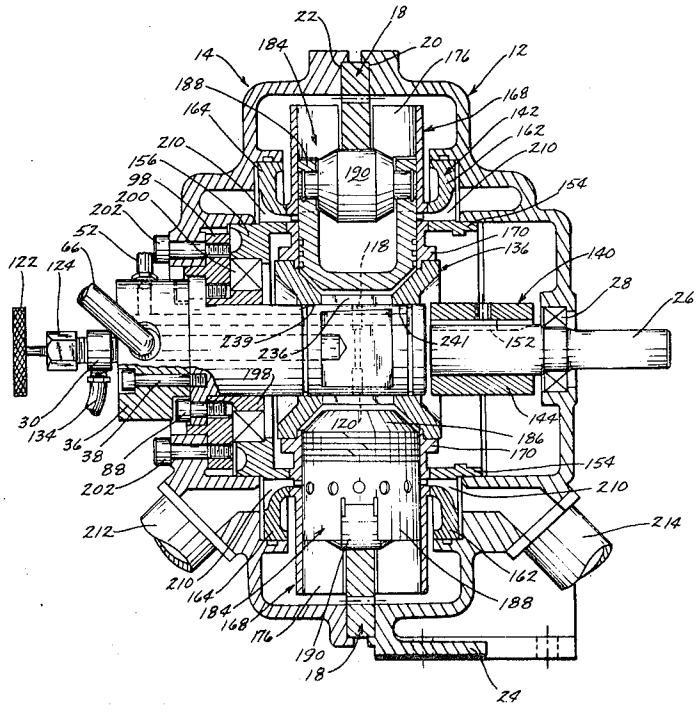
Primary Examiner—C. J. Husar

Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Zarley, McKee, Thomte & Voorhees

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A rotary internal combustion engine is disclosed and generally comprises a rotor means which is rotatably mounted on a stationary core mounted in an engine frame. The rotor means has a plurality of cylinders spaced radially thereon. A free floating piston is slidably mounted in each of the cylinders with the heads of the pistons being positioned towards the center of the rotor. A roller is mounted in the skirt end of the piston which rides against a circular cam. The centrifugal force created by the rotation of the rotor causes the pistons to follow the internal cam surface of the cam during rotation. The inner end of the core is provided with fuel and air ports adapted to communicate with the cylinders as the rotor rotates with respect to the core. An air passageway is formed in the core and is in communication with the air port and an air pump to provide a supply of air for purging, cooling and charging the cylinders. A fuel passageway is provided in the core and is in communication with the fuel ports and a supply of fuel to supply fuel under pressure to the fuel ports. An adjustable needle valve is provided in the fuel passageway to permit the precise adjustment or metering of the fuel being the cam being shaped so that the compression is increased as the piston approaches its position of maximum compression. The cam is shaped to provide a dwell adjacent the area of maximum compression to permit the piston to be maintained at the position of partial expansion to permit complete combustion of the fuel-air mixture to increase combustion efficiency. The cylinders are exhausted by means of openings extending around the cylinder. The exhaust from each cylinder is exhausted through its individual exhaust openings with the exhaust in the cylinder being purged by the air being supplied thereto from the air pump. The air also permits the cylinders to be recharged and forces the pistons radially outwardly into engagement with the cam. The air also cools the inside surface of the cylinder. The preferred embodiment includes an even number of cylinders, ordinarily two or four with a cam plate having a pair of oppositely disposed lobes. The preferred cam plate is designed to condense the compression stroke and the expansion stroke into a shorter period of time so that less heat is lost to the walls of the cylinder therefore requiring less cooling. The shortened compression and expansion time also permits additional time for the cooling cycle.

9 Claims, 20 Drawing Figures



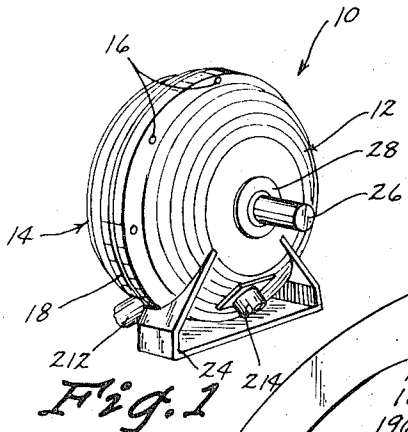


Fig. 1

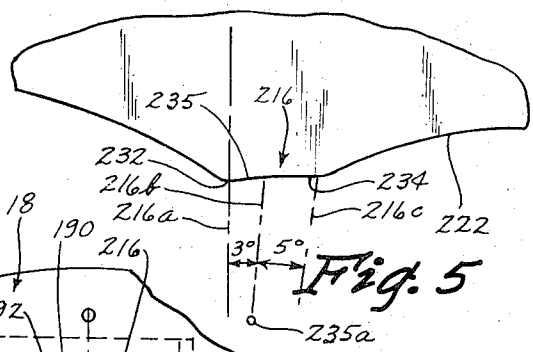


Fig. 5

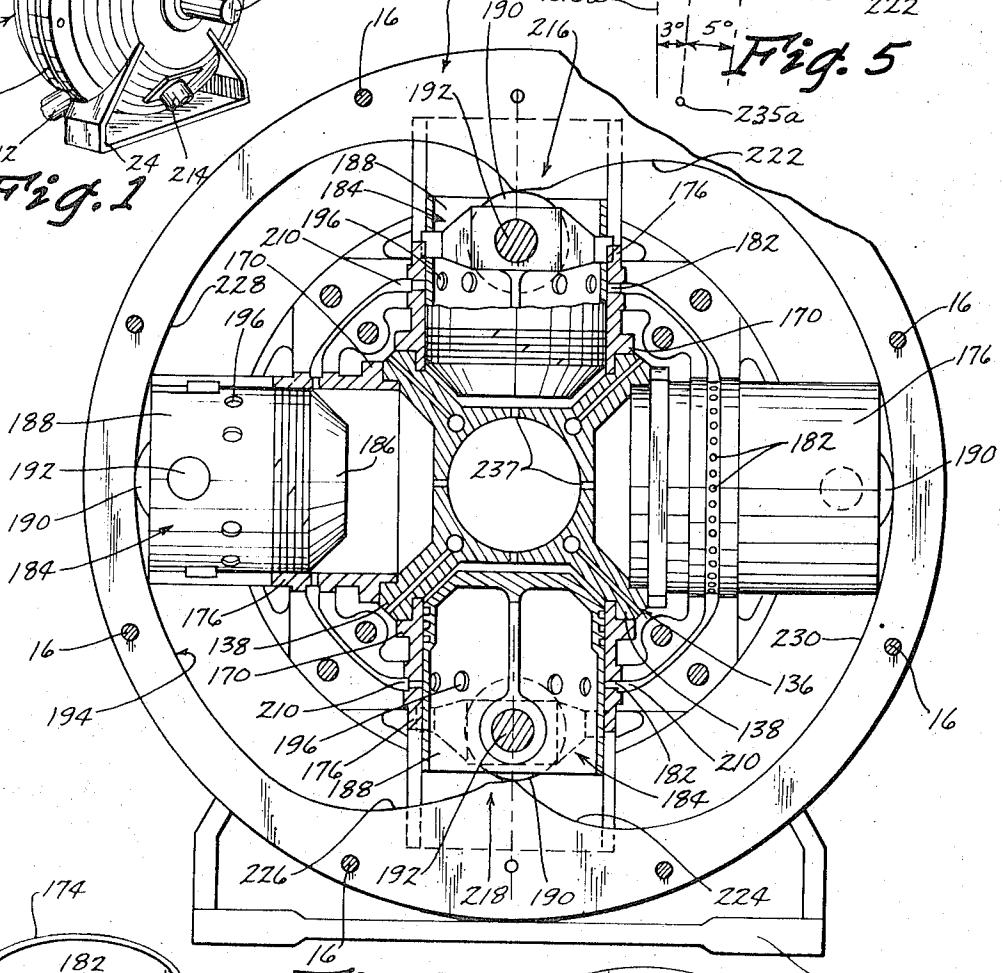


Fig. 2

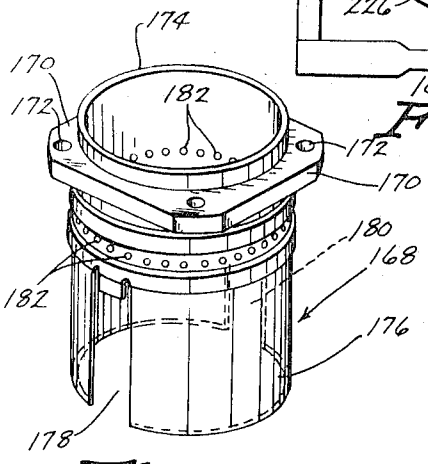


Fig. 3

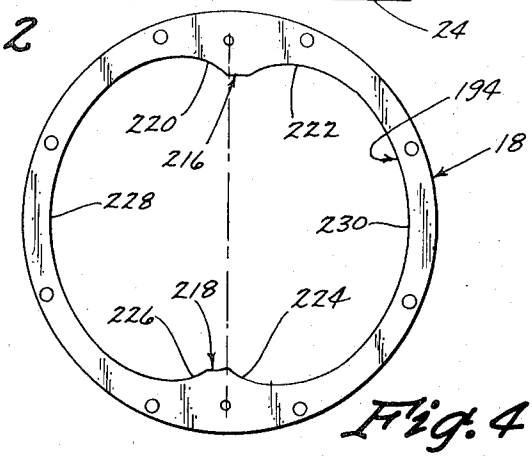


Fig. 4

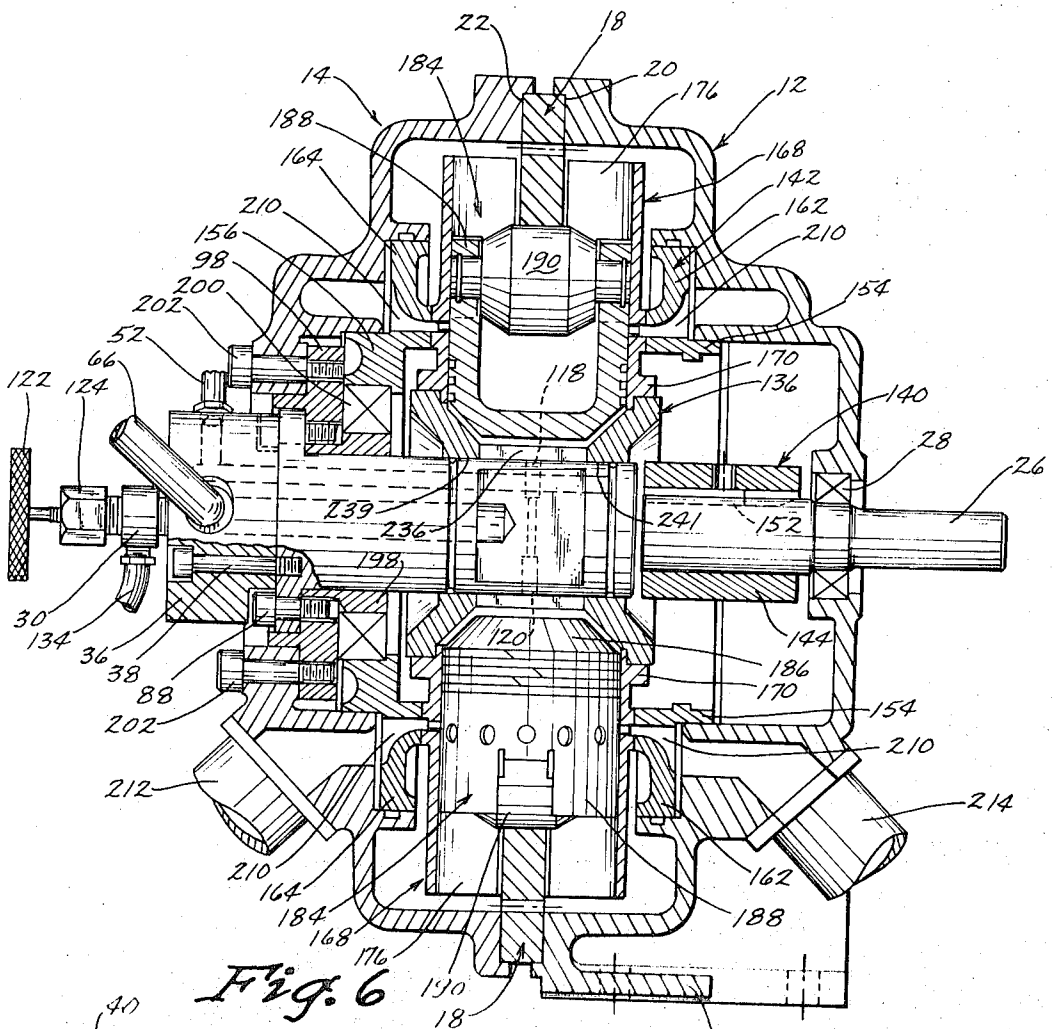

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Fig. 6

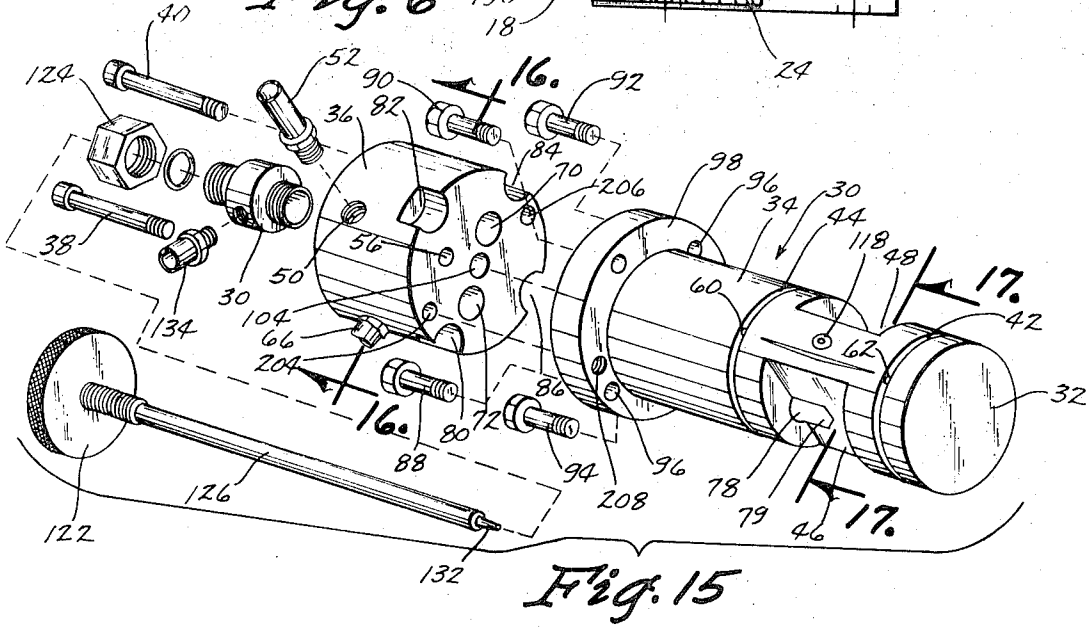

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Fig. 15

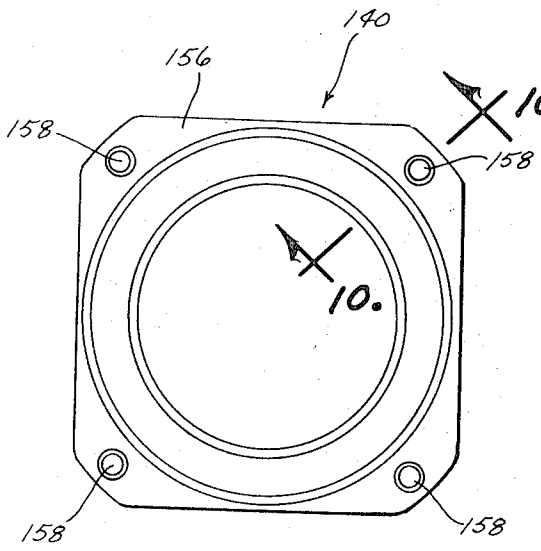


Fig. 7

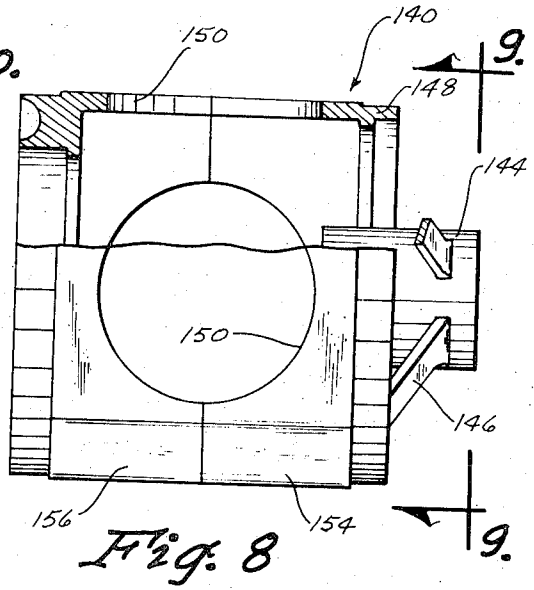


Fig. 8

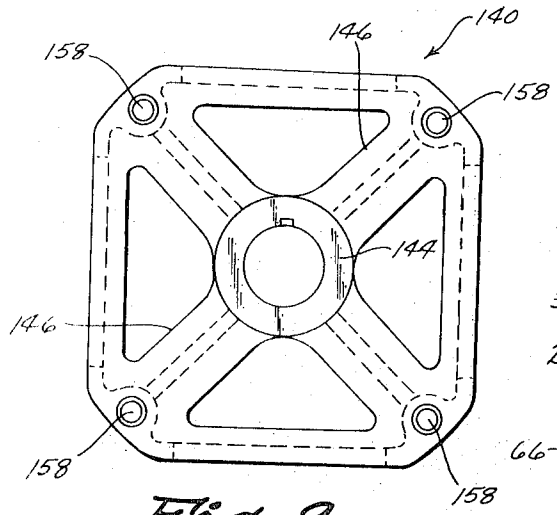


Fig. 9

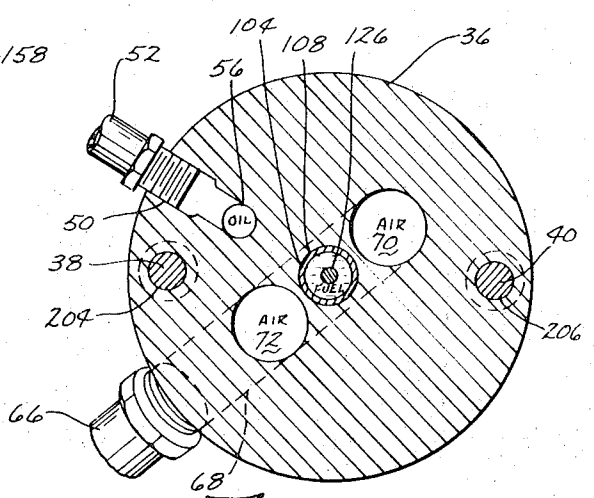


Fig. 16

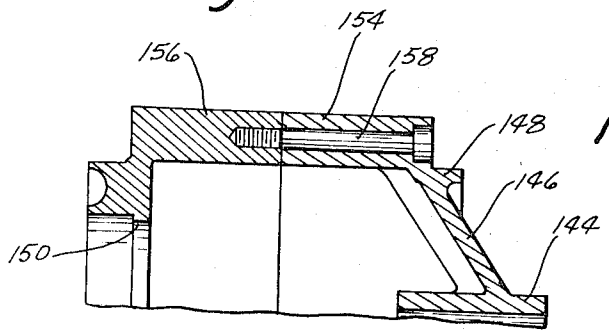


Fig. 10

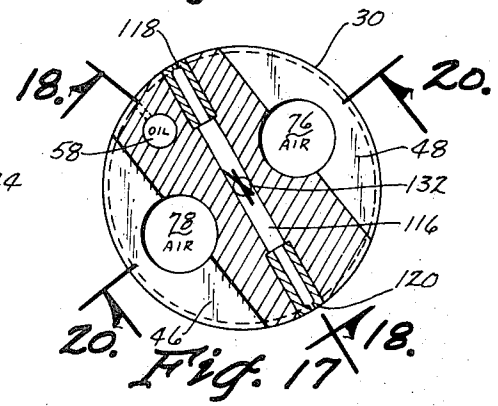


Fig. 17

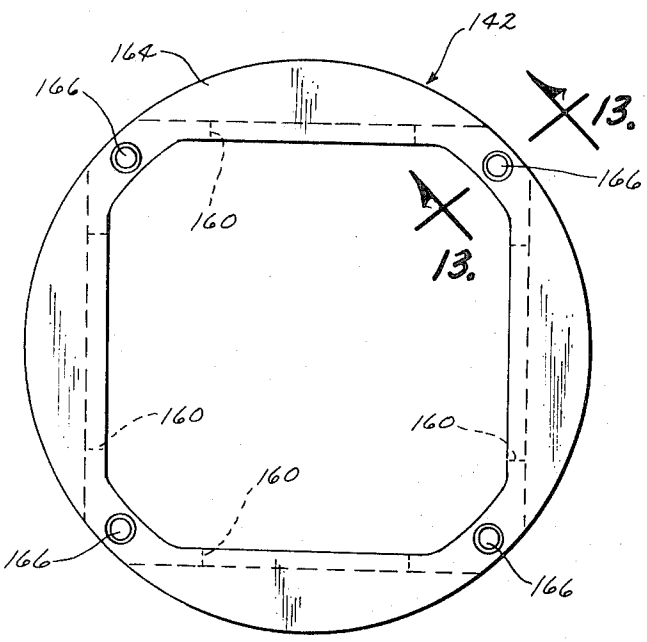


Fig. 11

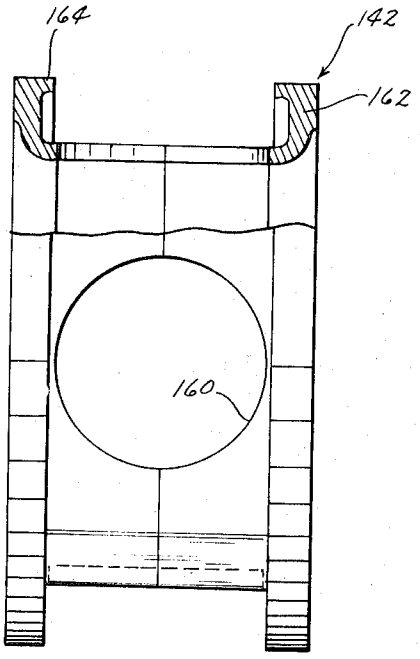


Fig. 12

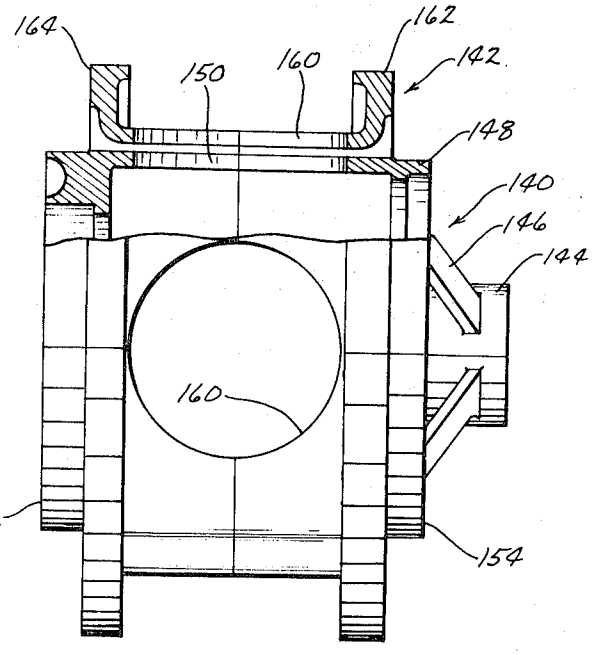


Fig. 14

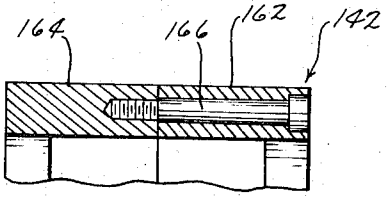


Fig. 13

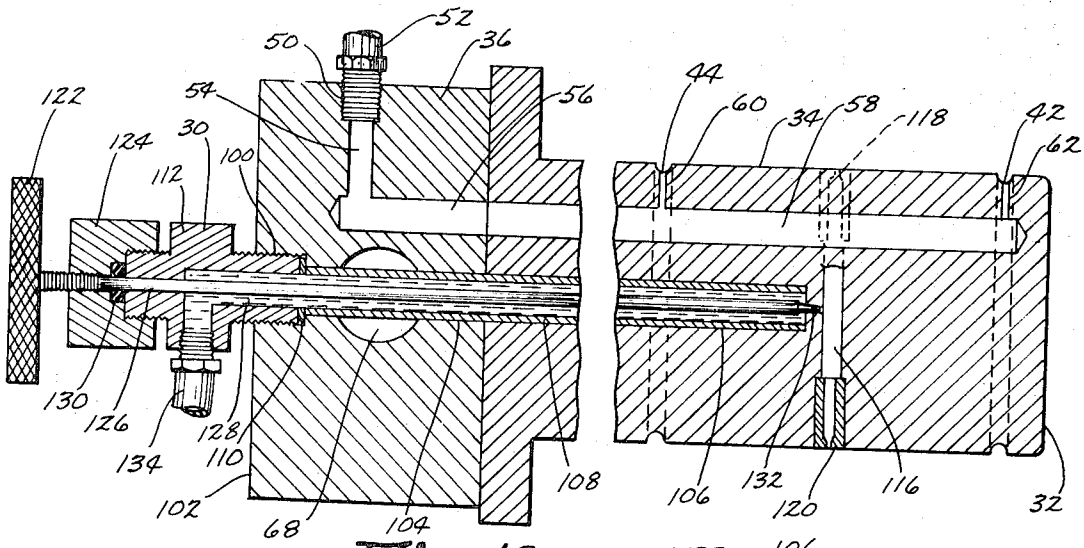


Fig. 18

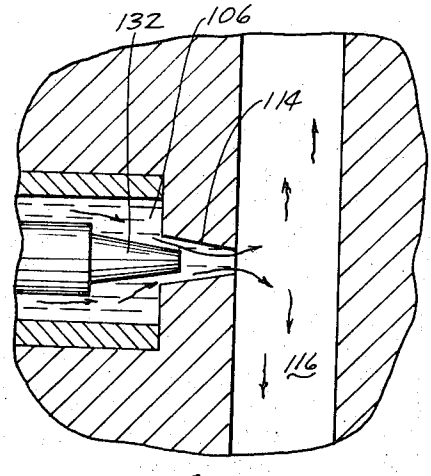


Fig. 19

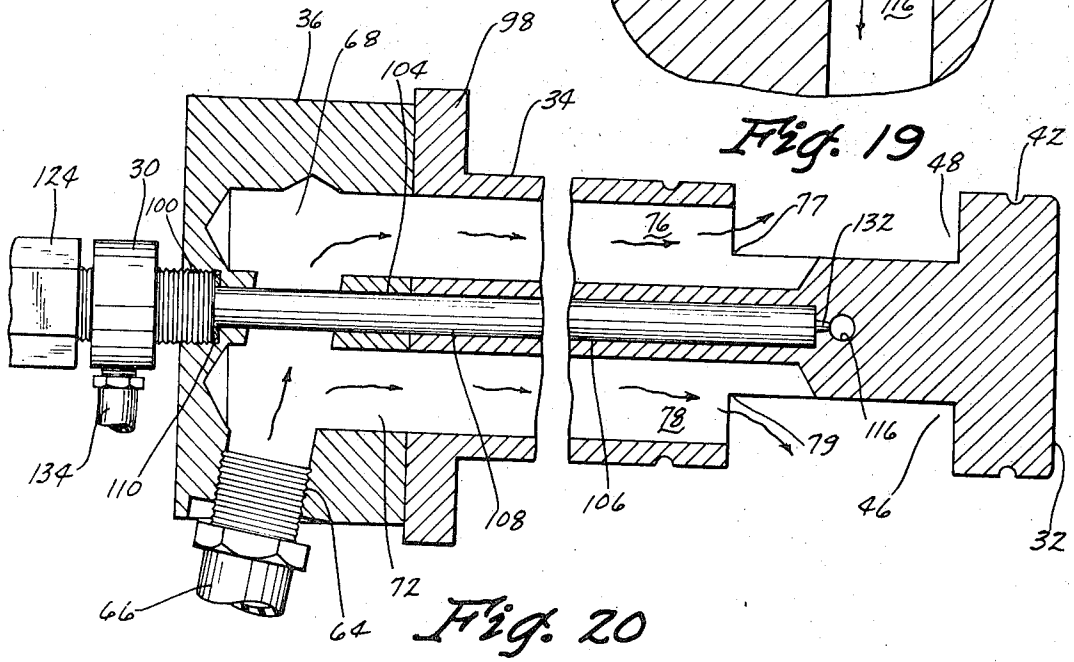


Fig. 20

ROTARY INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE AND METHOD OF COOLING THE SAME

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This application is a continuation-in-part application of co-pending U.S. Pat. applications, Ser. No. 286,189 filed Sept. 5, 1972, and U.S. Pat. Ser. No. 301,096 filed Oct. 26, 1972.

In the usual internal combustion engines, the heat generated by the explosion is partly dissipated or conducted into the walls of the surrounding metals, and as it is conducted through the walls, it is radiated off to the air from fins on the outer surface of the cylinders, or is conducted into a liquid coolant in a jacket around the cylinders.

In rotary internal combustion engines of the cam type, the rollers of the pistons are forced outwardly into engagement with the cam plates so that the rollers will follow the shape of the cam plate. Frequently, the centrifugal force is not enough to overcome the vacuum effect when the pistons are required to suck in their charge of air in conventional fashion.

In a conventional engine of either the compression or spark ignition type, there is a problem of detonation and/or pre-ignition caused by the sudden pressure and temperature rise immediately after ignition while the crank is still near the top center where there is very little volume into which the gas can expand. To cope with this problem, a combustion deterrent such as lead has been used to slow the burning of the fuel, or the fuel has been slowly injected into the cylinder as in diesel engines so that the combustion will take place slowly as the piston expands down into the cylinder. This solution requires very careful timing and control and it is inefficient since some of the burning is retarded until the piston has been considerably moved towards an expanded position.

Conventional rotary internal combustion engines have experienced some problems in the manner of sealing the respective cylinders, air ports, gas ports, etc. Elaborate sealing mechanisms have been attempted but the problem is largely unsolved. A further problem existing in existing rotary internal combustion engines is in supplying air and fuel to the respective cylinders at the proper time in an efficient manner.

Therefore, a principal object of the invention is to provide an unique method and means of cooling an internal combustion engine.

A further object of the invention is to provide a rotary internal combustion engine in which the exhaust is passed out of the individual cylinders instead of through a common valve port.

A further object of the invention is to provide a method and means for preventing excessive pressure and temperature from occurring in the cylinders during combustion.

A further object of the invention is to provide a rotary internal combustion engine wherein the pistons are maintained in a partially expanded position immediately after maximum compression to permit complete combustion without excessive pressures and temperatures being experienced.

A further object of the invention is to provide a rotary internal combustion engine comprising a stationary core having the rotor rotatably mounted thereon.

A further object of the invention is to provide a rotary internal combustion engine including means for supplying air thereto for purging, cooling and recharging the cylinders.

A further object of the invention is to provide a rotary internal combustion engine wherein air under pressure is employed to force the pistons outwardly into engagement with the cam plate.

A further object of the invention is to provide a rotary internal combustion engine having improved efficiency.

A further object of the invention is to provide a rotary internal combustion engine which is economical to manufacture and durable in use.

These and other objects will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In the instant invention, a stationary core is provided in the engine frame upon which the rotor rotates. A plurality of radially spaced cylinders are mounted on the rotor with a piston being movably mounted in each of the cylinders. A cam plate is provided on the frame and has a cam surface thereon which is engaged by the rollers secured to each of the pistons so that the pistons will be moved between positions of compression and expansion as the rotor is being rotated with respect to the core. A rotatable shaft is secured to the rotor and extends outwardly from the frame.

A fuel passageway extends through the core for supplying fuel to the respective cylinders. A needle valve is positioned in the fuel passageway to permit the precise control of the fuel being supplied to the cylinders. An air passageway extends through the core for supplying air to the cylinders for charging, cooling and purging the cylinders. An oil passageway extends through the core for supplying oil to a pair of spaced apart annular grooves formed in the periphery of the core to provide a seal between the core and the rotor. The oil also serves to lubricate the rotor and core.

The preferred embodiment of the cam plate comprises a pair of lobes positioned 180° apart on the cam plate. A slightly curved cam surface is provided on each of the lobes adjacent the position of maximum compression so that the pistons may partially move to an expanded position immediately after the point of maximum compression to achieve substantially complete combustion without causing excessive pressure and temperature within the cylinder.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

This invention consists in the construction, arrangements and combination of the various parts of the device, whereby the objects contemplated are attained as hereinafter more fully set forth, specifically pointed out in the claims, and illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the engine of this invention;

FIG. 2 is an enlarged sectional view seen along lines 2—2 of FIG. 1 with portions thereof cut-away to more fully illustrate the invention:

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of one of the cylinders of the engine:

FIG. 4 is a plan view of the cam plate employed in the engine:

FIG. 5 is an enlarged partial plan view of the cam plate of FIG. 4:

FIG. 6 is a sectional view of the engine as would be seen along lines transverse to the sectional view of FIG. 2:

FIG. 7 is an end view of one of the rotor members:

FIG. 8 is a partial top view of the rotor of FIG. 7:

FIG. 9 is an end view of the rotor member as seen along lines 9—9 of FIG. 8:

FIG. 10 is an enlarged sectional view seen along lines 10—10 of FIG. 7:

FIG. 11 is a plan view of another of the rotor members:

FIG. 12 is an end view of the rotor member of FIG. 11:

FIG. 13 is an enlarged sectional view seen along lines 13—13 of FIG. 11:

FIG. 14 is a top view of the rotor members with portions thereof cutaway to more fully illustrate the invention:

FIG. 15 is an exploded perspective view of the core of the engine:

FIG. 16 is an enlarged sectional view seen along lines 16—16 of FIG. 15:

FIG. 17 is an enlarged sectional view seen along lines 17—17 of FIG. 15:

FIG. 18 is an enlarged partial sectional view seen along lines 18—18 of FIG. 17:

FIG. 19 is an enlarged partial sectional view seen along lines 18—18 of FIG. 17; and

FIG. 20 is an enlarged sectional view seen along lines 20—20 of FIG. 17.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The engine of this invention is designated by the reference numeral **10** and generally comprises engine frames **12** and **14** secured together by bolts **16** or other suitable means as seen in FIGS. **1** and **2.** As shown in FIG. **1,** a circular cam plate **18** is positioned between the frames **12** and **14** with the bolts **16** extending therethrough. Cam plate **18** is positioned with respect to the peripheral edges of frames **12** and **14** by the annular recesses **20** and **22** formed therein respectively (FIG. **6**). Frame **12** includes a bracket portion **24** extending therefrom for mounting the engine.

Drive or rotor shaft **26** rotatably extends inwardly through the frame **12** and is supported therein by a main bearing **28.** The numeral **30** refers generally to a core which extends through frame **14** into engine **10** so that its inner end **32** is positioned closely adjacent the inner end of the shaft **26.** Core **30** is comprised of core members **34** and **36** which are secured together by a pair bolts **38** and **40.** Core member **34** is provided with a pair of spaced apart annular oil grooves **42** and **44** formed in the peripheral surface thereof as seen in FIG. **15.** A pair of cut-away areas or notches **46** and **48** are also formed in core member **34** on opposite sides thereof as also seen in FIG. **15.**

Core member **36** is provided with an internally threaded port **50** having an oil fitting or conduit **52** mounted therein. Port **50** communicates with a bore **54** extending radially inwardly therefrom as seen in FIG. **18.** The inner end of bore **54** communicates with a longitudinally extending bore **56** which communicates with a longitudinally extending bore **58** formed in core member **34.** A radially extending oil passageway **60** extends from bore **58** and communicates with oil groove **44.** An oil passageway **62** extends from bore **58** and communicates with the oil groove **42.** Oil unnder pressure is supplied through the oil conduit **52** so that oil will be supplied to the oil grooves **42** and **44** to lubricate the rotor which is rotatably mounted thereon as will be explained in more detail hereinafter. The oil in the grooves **42** and **44** also serves to provide a seal between the rotor and the core as also will be described hereinafter.

Core member **36** is provided with an internally threaded port **64** having an air line **66** threadably mounted therein. Air line **66** is in communication with a source of air under pressure. Port **64** communicates with an air compartment **68** having a pair of spaced apart air passageways or bores **70** and **72** extending longitudinally therefrom. Core member **34** is provided with a pair of elongated air passageways or bores **76** and **78** which communicate with the bores **70** and **72.** As seen in FIG. **20,** the inner ends of the bores **76** and **78** communicate with the notches **48** and **46** respectively to provide air ports **77** and **79** respectively. As seen in FIG. **15,** four notches, **80, 82, 84** and **86** are formed in the exterior surface of core member **36** adjacent the inner end thereof which are adapted to receive the head portion of the bolts **88, 90, 92** and **94** respectively which extend through openings **96** formed in the flange portion **98** of core member **34.**

An internally threaded bore **100** is formed in the outer end **102** of core member **36.** An elongated bore **104** extends longitudinally through the core member **36** from the inner end of the bore **100** and communicates with an elongated longitudinally extending bore **106** formed in core member **34.** The numeral **108** refers to an elongated metal tube which is positioned in the bores **104** and **106** as seen in FIG. **18.** Tube **108** is provided with a flat head portion **110** which engages the inner end of a fitting **112** threadably mounted in the bore **100.** A tapered valve seat or opening **114** is provided in the core member **36** at the inner end of bore **106** which communicates with a transversely extending bore or passageway **116.** Bore **116** extends radially outwardly to the periphery of core member **34** and has a pair of replaceable fuel jets **118** and **120** mounted in the outer ends thereof respectfully.

The numeral **122** refers to a manually adjustable needle valve which is threadably mounted in the collar **124** which is threadably secured to the outer end of the fitting **112.** Needle valve **122** rotatably extends through a bore **126** formed in fitting **112,** through bore **128** formed in fitting **112** and through the elongated tube **106.** Suitable seal means **130** embraces the needle valve **122** as also illustrated in FIG. **18.** The inner end of needle valve **122** is provided with a tapered head portion **132** which is complementary to the valve seat **114** to permit the valve seat **114** to be selectively opened and closed through the rotational movement of the needle valve **122.** Fuel line **134** is threadably connected to the fitting **112** and communicates with the bore **128** to supply fuel thereto and to the interior of the tube **106,** valve seat **114** and bore **116.** Fuel line **134** is in communication with a source of suitable fuel under pressure.

The numeral **136** refers to a rotor means rotatably mounted on core member **34** and comprising rotor members **138, 140** and **142.** Rotor member **140** com-

prises a hub portion **144** and spokes **146** which extend radially outwardly therefrom to a rim portion **148.** Rim portion **148** is provided with four circular openings **150** formed therein. Hub portion **144** is secured to shaft **126** by any suitable means such as a key **152** or the like. Rim portion **148** is comprised of rim members **154** and **156** held together by bolts **158.** Rotor member **142** embraces rotor member **140** and has four circular openings **160** formed therein which register with the openings **150** in rotor member **140.** Rotor member **142** comprises a pair of members **162** and **164** secured together by bolts **166.** The numeral **168** refers to a cylinder which is mounted in each of the openings **160** and having a flange portion **170** engaging rotor member **138** as illustrated in FIG. **6.** Each of the cylinders **168** is secured to the rotor member **138** by means of screws or the like extending through the openings **172** formed in flange **170** and being received by the rotor member **138.**

Each of the cylinders **168** generally comprises an inner end portion **174** and a skirt portion **176.** Skirt portion **176** is provided with opposing slots **178** and **180** formed therein and a plurality of exhaust openings **182** which extend through the cylinder around the circumference thereof. A piston **184** is slidably mounted in each of the cylinders **168** and generally comprises a head portion **186** and a skirt portion **188.** A roller **190** is mounted on shaft **192** which is secured to skirt portion **188.** Roller **190** rolls upon the cam surface **194** of the cam plate **18** to cause the piston to move with respect to the cylinder as the rotor of the engine rotates. The configuration of the cam plate will be explained in more detail hereinafter. Each of the pistons is provided with a plurality of openings **196** formed in the skirt portion and extending therethrough.

The numeral **198** refers to a bushing which embraces core member **34** and which supports a bearing **200.** As seen in FIG. **6.** the rim portion **156** of rotor member **144** engages and is supported by the bearing **200.** The inner ends of bolts **88, 90, 92** and **94** are threadably secured to the bushing **198** as also illustrated in FIG. **6.** Bolts **202** extend through frame **14** and are threadably secured to the bushing **198.** Bolts **38** and **40** extend through the openings **204** and **206** of core member **36** and are threadably received by the threaded openings **208** in flange **98** of core member **34.**

An exhaust chamber **210** is provided in the engine and extends around each of the cylinders as illustrated in FIG. **6.** The exhaust chamber **210** is in communication with a pair of exhaust pipes **212** and **214.** The exhaust chamber **210** is in communication with the exhaust openings **182** in the cylinders **168.**

Cam surface **194** of cam plate **18** includes oppositely disposed lobes **216** and **218.** Each of the lobes are provided with a "dwell" area as will be explained in more detail hereinafter. For purposes of description, the cam surfaces closely adjacent the opposite sides of lobe **216** will be indicated by the reference numerals **220** and **222** respectively. The cam surfaces closely adjacent the opposite sides of lobe **218** will be indicated by the reference numerals **224** and **226** respectively. The cam surface approximate midway between **226** and **220** will be referred to by the reference numeral **228** while the cam surface approximately midway between **222** and **224** will be referred to by the reference numeral **230.**

FIG. **5** illustrates lobe **216** in somewhat greater detail. The maximum projecting portion of lobe **216** will be referred to by the reference numeral **232.** The engagement of the piston roller with **232** causes the piston to be moved inwardly with respect to its cylinder to achieve maximum compression at the top center. As seen in FIG. **5,** the lobe **216** is provided with a "dwell" portion **234** which has a radius measured from the geometric center of cam plate **18,** whereupon the piston will be maintained in a stationary position. Portion **234** spans a distance of about 5° and has a typical radius of 4.75 inches. Cam portion **236** connects the maximum projecting portion **232** with portion **234.** Portion **235** spans a distance of 3° and has a typical radius of 1 inch. Portion **235** permits the piston to be moved slightly to an expanded position for a period after maximum compression as will be explained in more detail hereinafter. Inasmuch as lobes **216** and **218** are identical, lobe **218** will not be described in detail. The lines **216***a*, **216***b* and **216***c* are radius lines extending from the geometric center of the cam plate **18.** Lines **216***a* and **216***b* span 3° and define cam portion **235.** Lines **216***b* and **216***c* span 5° and define cam portion **234.** The center **235***a* of the arc of portion **235** appears on line **216***b*.

In operation, fuel under pressure is constantly supplied to the interior of the tube **106** and the bore **116.** The only time that fuel will pass from the jets **118** and **120** is when the jets communicate with the open inner ends of the cylinders **168** by way of the ports **237** formed in rotor member **138.** When the fuel jets **118** and **120** do communicate with the cylinders **168,** fuel will be sprayed into the interior of the cylinders. Air under pressure is constantly supplied to the air chamber **68** so that air will be discharged from the inner ends of bores **76** and **78** (ports **77** and **79**) when the notches **46** and **48** communicate with the interiors of the respective cylinders through the ports **237** as the rotor is being rotated around the stationary core **30.** Oil under pressure is also supplied to the oil grooves **42** and **44** as previously described so that lubricating oil is provided between the inside surface of the annular shoulders **239** and **241** of rotor element **138** and the exterior surface of core member **34.** The film of oil between the core member **34** and the rotor member **138** also serves to seal the ports **237** with respect to the area outwardly of the rotor.

FIG. **2** illustrates the top and bottom pistons in firing positions. In the position of FIG. **2,** the rollers on the pistons are on the top dead center areas **232** of the lobes **216** and **218** respectively. Inasmuch as the operation of the top piston is identical to the operation of the bottom piston (FIG. **2**), only the operation or cycles of the top piston will be described. Assuming that the air and fuel have been supplied to the interior of the cylinder, the shape of the cam compresses the fuel and air mixture to the maximum compression ratio at top dead center, at which time ignition is started. Before the pressure in the cylinder can build up beyond desired limits, the piston is permitted to expand slightly to its dwell position (**234**) and is held in the same position of expansion until combustion has been completed. During the dwell period, the combustion builds the pressure up to the maximum pressure possible with consumption of the total charge but the pressure is not above desired limits because the volume of the combustion chamber has been predetermined by the dwell in the cam. After complete combustion and substan-

tially all of the chemical energy of the fuel has been converted to heat, the piston is allowed to expand and to convert that heat energy into mechanical energy, or torque, but not until all of the combustion is complete and the entire force of the combustion is available at the beginning of the expansion stroke, after the dwell.

The slight dwell after top dead center provides many advantages. First, it eliminates the possibility of peak pressures rising too high because as long as the ignition timing is late enough to allow the piston to expand to its dwell volume, the combustion can never build up to a pressure higher than is possible in that dwell volume. Secondly, the accuracy necessary for ignition timing is much less because within extreme limits, it is only necessary to time the ignition late enough to allow the piston to get to its dwell position ahead of the combustion. If the ignition is later than desired and the piston gets to its dwell position farther ahead of the ignition than is necessary, there is no great loss because the combustion will catch up while the piston is dwelling. The third advantage is the rate of burning. Inasmuch as the engine can be timed late to eliminate detonation, it is now possible to use a fast burning fuel mixture with no lead or cumbustion deterrents. Since the combustion is taking place in a chamber which is large enough to contain the entire expanded charge at a satisfactory pressure, there is no reason to delay combustion thereby permitting the use of a fuel in a volatized condition as well as a lead free and pollutant free fuel.

The fact that the engine provides fast burning without excessive pressures and detonation makes it possible to use a high air-to-fuel ratio as well as volatized fuel in order to get complete combustion to eliminate carbon monoxide and unburned hydrocarbons. Additionally, since the pressure and temperature in the combustion chamber is limited, the excessive high temperatures which produce oxides of nitrogen are avoided. The efficiency of the engine is also improved because of the advantage that the completely expanded gas at the top of the expansion stroke is utilized throughout the full length of the expansion stroke instead of retarding part of the combustion until the piston has moved to a position of partial expansion. In summary, the shape of the cam permits a maximum compression at top center to provide ignition temperatures. The piston is then permitted to slightly move towards expansion to a position of dwell at which the combustion chamber is large enough to contain the total consumed charge without exceeding a desired maximum pressure. The position of dwell is maintained until combustion is substantially complete before expansion movement of the piston is continued to complete expansion and exhaust. The exact timing of the ignition is controlled by the point at which the fuel is injected similar to a conventional diesel, but the ignition is timed late enough to allow the piston to reach the dwell position ahead of the combustion pressure build-up.

Assuming that combustion has occurred and that the piston has moved past the dwell area, the piston begins to move outwardly towards a position of expansion with respect to the cylinder so that the roller moves from the dwell portion of the cam plate onto the cam surface indicated by **222** with the expansion movement of the piston causing the rotor **136** and shaft **26** to be rotated. The curvature or sweep of the cam surface at **222** is such that the piston is allowed to move towards a position of expansion at a comparatively rapid rate after the dwell and after substantially complete combustion. The piston continues to expand due to the combustion forces on the head thereof until the head of the piston has moved past the exhaust openings **182** in the cylinder to permit the exhaust gases to be exhausted outwardly therethrough. Such exhausting occurs with regard to the cam plate at approximately **230.**

As previously stated, air under pressure is constantly being supplied to the notches **46** and **48** to permit air to be forced into the cylinders when the notches **46** and **48** communicate therewith through the ports **237** during the rotation of the rotor and cylinders. The air under pressure is forced into the cylinder which aids in scavenging the exhaust gases from the cylinders when the top of the piston has been moved below the openings **182.** The dwell of the piston at the bottom of the stroke (**230**) is easily modified by the shape of the cam, and the time involved is at least 50 percent more of the total time of a conventional **4**-stroke cycle. During that entire time, ambient air from the air blower is being forced through the cylinder and out the exhaust holes **182** in the side of the cylinder. The air not only scavenges the exhaust from the cylinder but aids in cooling the engine as well as recharging the cylinder for the next cycle. The volume of air passing outwardly through the openings **182** is not nearly as much as is needed to cool a cylinder from its outside surface. However, the inside surface temperature of the cylinder (300° to 500°) is far higher than the outside surface of the cylinder, and therefore the heat transfer rate between the inside cylinder surface and the air is much faster than would be possible when cooling the cylinder from the outside. Therefore, it has been found that a lesser amount of air on the inside of the cylinder is quite adequate because of the greater temperature difference and its faster cooling rate. Furthermore, since the pistons are controlled by the shape of a cam, it is a simple matter to allow the compression stroke, and especially the expansion stroke, to be condensed into a shorter period of time so that less heat is lost into the walls of the cylinder therefore requiring less cooling. Further, as the compression and expansion time is shortened, more time is allowed for the cooling cycle.

The forcing of the air into the cylinders also achieves an additional result. In conventional rotary engines, centrifugal force is employed to maintain the pistons out against the cam. Centrifugal force alone is not enough to overcome the vacuum effect when the pistons are required to suck in their charge of air in the conventional manner. In this engine, the blower or air pump is used to charge the cylinders which forces the air into the cylinders under pressure so that rather than a vacuum which retards the outward movement of the pistons, a pressure is provided which adds to the centrifugal force to move the pistons out against the cam. The air pressure against the pistons insures that the rollers on the pistons will follow the cam as well as provide a supercharging effect.

The air fed to the interior of the cylinder is then compressed as the roller on the piston approaches **224** on the cam surface. The piston is moved inwardly into the cylinder thereby closing the openings **182** so that the air in the cylinder can be compressed. The air is compressed and the fuel is sprayed into the cylinder when

the jets **118** and **120** register with ports **237** to cause the ignition thereof as previously described.

An extremely important feature of this invention is the fact that vibration problems are greatly reduced. In a conventional crank engine, the reciprocating pistons and other reciprocating parts all tend to cause vibration. The vibration problem is substantially reduced due to the fact that two diametrically opposing pistons are moving in opposite directions at all times. Because there are two lobes on the cam, a complete cycle of operation is obtained twice in every revolution in each of the pistons. Furthermore, the mounting of the pistons diametrically opposite each other, and firing them together, causes one to neutralize the other in a way that a couple-type force is applied to the rotor so that the load on the bearings of the rotor is minimized. Additionally, the firing force against the piston is taken directly by, and in line with, the cam so that all of the forces of explosions are concentrated in the cam, which is the one member most capable of withstanding such forces. The combustion forces in the cylinder cause the cylinders to urge the rotor member **138** inwardly into sealing engagement with the stationary core member **34** to provide a positive seal.

Thus, it can be seen that the rotary internal combustion of this invention involves an unique method to cool the cylinders thereof by introducing cool air to the interior thereof over a substantial portion of the engine cycle, thus resulting in a much improved engine of greater efficiency. It can also be seen that a novel means has been provided for achieving maximum combustion efficiency by providing a slight dwell area behind top dead center on the cam lobes. The air fed through the cylinders not only cools the cylinders but aids in forcing the pistons out against the cam plate. Thus it can be seen that a rotary combustion engine has been provided which accomplishes at least all of its stated objectives.

I claim:

1. The method of cooling an internal combustion engine having a frame means, an output shaft, a plurality of cylinders each having a reciprocating piston operatively secured to said output shaft, comprising,

introducing combustible fuel into said cylinders and combusting said fuel to force said pistons to move through an expansion stroke in said cylinders,

and introducing ambient air directly into said cylinders for a period of time greater than the time period consumed by the power portion of the expansion stroke of said pistons after combustion of said fuel to purge the exhaust gases resulting from combustion, and to cool the pistons and the interiors of said cylinders.

2. The method of claim **1** wherein ambient air is introduced into said cylinders for at least one-half of the total cycle time of said pistons in said cylinders.

3. The method of causing the reciprocating pistons in a rotary cam type internal combustion engine to move outwardly into engagement with the cam plate means extending therearound, comprising the following steps:

introducing combustible fuel into the cylinders in which said pistons are reciprocatably mounted and combusting said fuel to force said pistons to move through an expansion stroke in said cylinders,

forcing ambient air through said cylinders after combustion of said fuel for a greater period of time than the period of time consumed by the power portion of the expansion stroke of said pistons to purge the exhaust gases resulting from combustion,

introducing air under pressure into said cylinders to force said pistons outwardly into engagement with said cam plate means and to provide air for charging the cylinders for subsequent mixture with a combustible fuel.

4. A rotary internal combustion engine comprising,

an engine frame means,

a rotor means mounted on said frame,

a plurality of cylinders mounted on said rotor means,

a piston movably mounted in each of said cylinders and being movable between compression and expansion positions with respect thereto,

a cam plate means on said frame means extending around said rotor means and having a cam surface,

a roller means mounted on each of said pistons which engages and rolls upon said cam surface to cause said piston to be moved in said cylinder as said rotor means is rotated with respect to said cam plate,

said cam surface having at least one lobe provided thereon which extends towards said rotor means, each of said pistons being moved to its maximum compression position as the roller means thereon engages said lobe,

fuel supply means for supplying fuel to said cylinders,

and air supply means for supplying air under pressure to said cylinders to force said roller means on said pistons into engagement with said cam surface and to recharge the cylinder with air for subsequent mixture and combustion with said fuel said air supply means supplying air to said cylinders for a greater period of time than the time consumed by the power portion of the expansion stroke of the pistons.

5. An internal combustion engine, comprising,

an engine frame means having a rotatable shaft extending outwardly therefrom

a plurality of cylinder means,

a piston movably mounted in each of said cylinders and being movable between compression and expansion positions with respect thereto,

means for supplying combustible fuel to said cylinders,

and air supply means for supplying a source of relatively cool ambient air directly through the interior of saiid cylinders after combustion of said fuel has taken place to purge the cylinder of the exhaust gases of said combustible fuel, and to cool the pistons and the interior of said cylinders

said air supply means supplying air to said cylinders for a greater period of time than the time consumed by the power portion of the expansion stroke of the pistons.

6. The engine of claim **5** wherein said engine is a rotary engine, and the power portion of the expansion stroke of said pistons is limited to a smaller period of time than the period of time that ambient air is supplied to said cylinders by a cam plate, said pistons operatively and movably engaging said cam plate.

7. The engine of claim 6 wherein said expansion stroke is limited to approximately one-fourth of the period of time of said cycle and said air supply means supplies ambient air to said cylinders at least one-half of the time period of each cycle.

8. The engine of claim 5 wherein at least one exhaust opening is formed in said cylinders, said exhaust opening being closed by the piston in said cylinder during a predetermined portion of the movement of said piston with respect to said cylinder, said exhaust openings permitting communication between the interior of said cylinder and the atmosphere when said piston is in its expanded position.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein said ambient air is forced into and through said cylinders.

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