United States Patent [19]

Waters

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[54] **CUSTOM FORMED WIG BLOCK**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** **223/66**

[51] **Int. Cl.** **A45d 44/14; D06c 15/00**

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 223/66, 67, 68; 132/5, 132/54; 269/321 WW

[56] **References Cited**

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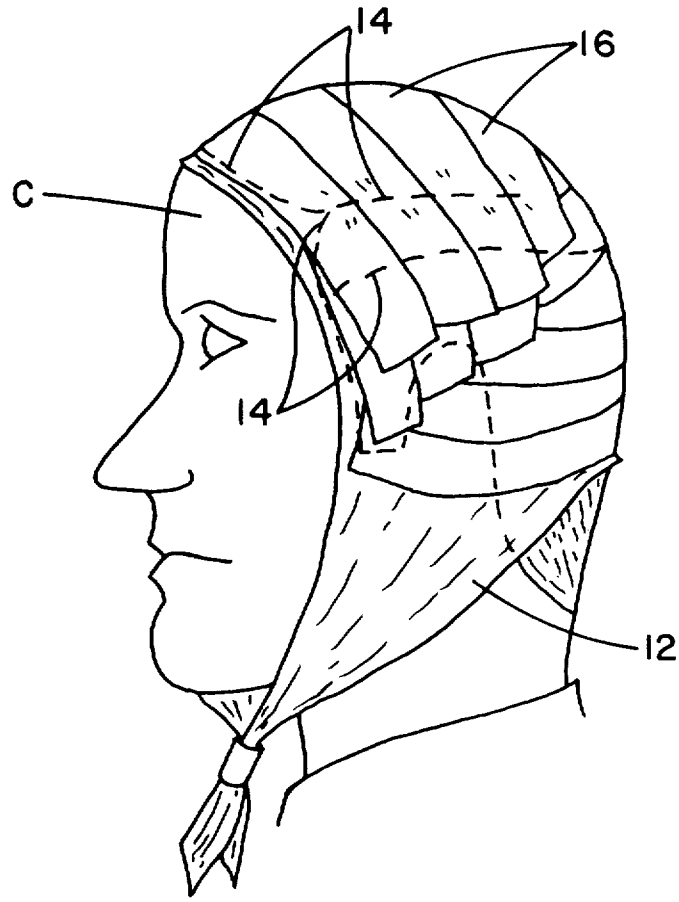
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Primary Examiner—Geo. V. Larkin

[57] **ABSTRACT**

An impression is first taken of the portion of a customer's head to be covered by a hairpiece and then is used as a mold die to form a wig stand conforming exactly to the customer's head shape. The material from which the stand is made is a lightweight, rigid, polymeric foam material such as a polyurethane foam comprising monthane and polyisonate having a density of 2½ to 10 pcf and a hardness of 10 to 75 on the Shore A scale capable of being formed in an open mold.

2 Claims, 3 Drawing Figures



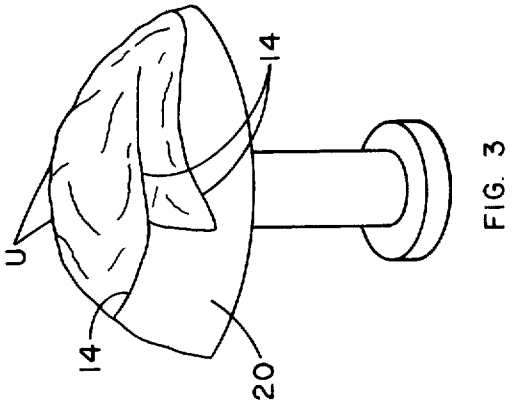


FIG. 3

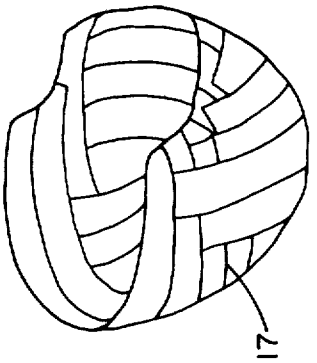


FIG. 2

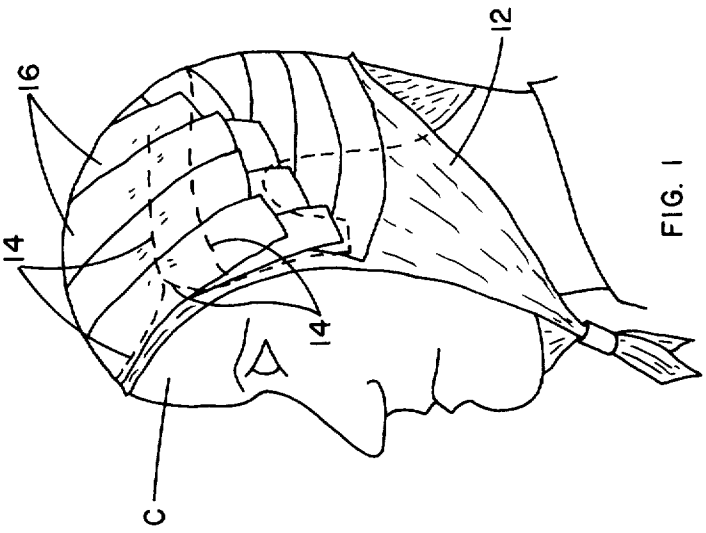


FIG. 1

CUSTOM FORMED WIG BLOCK

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to new and improved wig blocks. It is known that the closer that a wig block conforms to the head of the person for which a particular wig is made, the better the fit, and the better the storage of the hairpiece thereon. Further such a wig block is more satisfactory when cleaning and blocking the hairpiece. Therefore, the present invention is the first attempt to provide a wig block wherein the area beneath the hairpiece is an exact replica of a customer's head, thus promoting better cleaning, blocking and storage. U.S. Pat. No. 3,189,035 is exemplary of the prior art.

Since the wig block is going to be mailed along with the hairpiece to the customer, the block must be of light-weight material. On the other hand, it must be dense enough to hold the pins used in making the hairpiece without crumbling and to withstand impacts and bumps which are caused by dropping or bumping the wig block against something hard.

With these purposes in mind, the wig block according to the present invention is formed from a light-weight, rigid, polymeric foam material that is capable of being formed in an open mold. Further, the material should have a density in the range of 8–10 pounds per cubic foot or a Shore A 60–70 hardness which will provide the durability necessary, yet is soft enough to permit pins to be inserted thereinto easily by hand.

It is therefore a principal object of the present invention to provide a wig block having the portion thereof which lies beneath the hairpiece as an exact replica of the corresponding portion of a customer's head.

It is further an object of the present invention to provide a wig block having the same configuration as the customer's head, wherein not only is the hairpiece made on said head block, but the head block is sent along with the hairpiece to the customer for storage of the hairpiece when not in use.

It is still a further object of the present invention to provide a wig block formed of a light-weight material which is within a density range so as to receive and hold straight pins used in making hairpieces and not to dent or deform if dropped.

Other objects and a fuller understanding of the invention will become apparent upon reading the specification in view of the following drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view illustrating the first step of the method;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view illustrating the mold into which the foaming material is poured; and

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the wig block according to the present invention.

Turning now to FIG. 1, there is illustrated the customer's head C from which an exact replica is to be formed. It is well known that the human head like fingerprints are all somewhat different, and no two heads have the same pattern U of undulations, creases, lumps, and the like. Previously when building a hair piece wigmakers have first selected one of several standard head shapes or sizes which they keep on hand, however no attempt has been made to use the customer's head to make an impression which is used as a die to mold a wig block having a portion thereof corresponding exactly to the area of the customer's head to be covered. In the

first step of the process, according to the present invention, a transparent film material **12** such as Saran, a thin polyethylene or polymeric sheeting, or the like is pulled onto the head and stretched tight across the area to be covered by the hairpiece. The hairline **14** is then marked with a ballpoint pen or some similar marking instrument showing the shape and size of the hairpiece.

The next step includes the application of gauze-like strips **16** of plaster of Paris. The strips **16** are first dipped into water and then pressed tightly onto the head across the plastic sheeting **12**. After a period of four to eight minutes, the plaster of Paris strips **16** set up and become hard, and at the same time the hairline markings **14** which have been marked on the transparent film **12** bleed through onto the interior of the plaster of Paris. After the plaster of Paris sets up, it is removed from the head and forms the mold die **17**.

A coating of wax is then applied to the inner surface of the die **17** which acts as a mold release agent. Silicon or other mold release agents can be substituted for wax.

The foaming materials are then mixed and poured into the mold die **17** and, as they foam, the area of the wig block which will support the hairpiece is formed to correspond exactly to the customer's head.

After the foaming material sets up, it is removed from the mold frame **17**, a hole is drilled for the block holder, and the die is then cut out along the inside markings and used to mark the hairline on the block **20** itself to use as a guide for placing the hairpiece thereon. The wig block **20** is then used to make the hairpiece initially, which may be accomplished by means of several well-known techniques, and is not within the scope of the present invention. Upon completion of the hairpiece, the wig block along with the hairpiece is shipped to the customer where it is used to store the hairpiece when not in use, as well as being used to support the hairpiece during the cleaning and blocking operations which must be performed periodically.

The preferred foaming agent is a polyurethane foam formed by combining approximately 50% by weight of monthane and approximately 50% by weight of polyisonate. Such a foam has a density in the range of 8 pounds per cubic foot to provide a head block that is sufficiently light in weight, and yet extremely durable to retain pins and resist dents and deformations when dropped or bumped against foreign objects. Although the monthane and polyisonate are preferred materials, it should be realized that any light-weight, rigid, foam material capable of being molded in an open mold may be used. The process can be carried out by the oneshot process, the prepolymer technique, the semi-prepolymer technique or the frothing technique. In addition, it should be kept in mind that any other materials used as the foaming agents should still remain within the density range of 2½ to 10 pounds per cubic foot and hardness of 1–75 on the Short A scale.

Although the specification has been directed toward blocks for head wigs, it should also be recognized that the same technique could be used in the construction of a block for holding chin beards or any other type of wig.

The detailed description hereinabove is specific to a preferred embodiment and should be understood as given by way of illustration and example only, the spirit and scope of the invention being limited solely by the following claims:

What is claimed is:

1. A custom molded wig block useful for the manufacture and storage of a hairpiece, said block being formed of a light-weight, rigid, molded, polymeric foam material having a density range of 2½ to 10 pounds per cubic feet and hardness of 10–75 on the Shore A scale, the surface of said block lying immediately beneath said hairpiece, when in place thereon, including a pattern of undulations and creases which conform exactly to the configuration of the corresponding area of a prescribed customer's head.

2. The wig block according to claim 1 wherein said foam material comprises a combination of 50% by weight monthane and 50% by weight polyisonate.

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Disclaimer and Dedication

3,897,892.—*James L. Waters*, Greensboro, N. C. CUSTOM FORMED WIG BLOCK. Patent dated Aug. 5, 1975. Disclaimer and Dedication filed June 19, 1989, by the inventor.

Hereby disclaims and dedicates to the Public the entire term of said patent.

[*Official Gazette September* 12, 1989]