METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR MAKING AN ABSORBENT COMPOSITE

A method and apparatus for making an absorbent composite from continuous tow is disclosed. The method and apparatus includes the steps of or means for spreading a crimped tow; de-registering the crimped tow; shaping the de-registered tow to a substantially rectangular cross-section; and distributing a particulate onto the shaped tow. The step of or means for spreading the tow uses at least two banding jets.

Declarations under Rule 4.17:
— as to applicant’s entitlement to apply for and be granted a patent (Rule 4.17(ii)) for all designations
— as to the applicant’s entitlement to claim the priority of the earlier application (Rule 4.17(iii)) for all designations

Published:
— with international search report
— before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments

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For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.
INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
   IPC(7) : D021 1/18
   US CL : 28/282
   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)

   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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category *</th>
<th>Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages</th>
<th>Relevant to claim No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>JP 60-26537 B2 (SUZUKI et al) 02 October 1982 (02.10.1982), see page 65 and figure 4.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5-8, 10, 11, 13-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>US 6,253,431 B1 (AMES et al) 03 July 2001 (03.07.2001), column 4, line 8 through column 7, line 23 and figure 1.</td>
<td>1-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>US 3,796,035 A (WATSON) 12 March 1974 (12.03.1974), see figure 1 and columns 2-4.</td>
<td>1-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>US 4,468,845 A (HARRIS) 04 September 1984 (04.09.1984), see entire disclosure.</td>
<td>1-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>US 3,095,343 A (BERGER) 25 June 1963 (25.06.1963), see entire disclosure.</td>
<td>1-18</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>US 3,017,309 A (CRAWFORD et al) 16 January 1962 (16.01.1962), see entire disclosure.</td>
<td>1-18</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. See patent family annex.

Date of the actual completion of the international search
17 September 2005 (17.09.2005)

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