A mask comprising a face covering component and an attached resilient, plastic component, wherein the resilient plastic component is secured to the rear of the face covering component, and wherein the resilient plastic component is adapted to hold the mask on the face of a user without the need for any independent holding means. The face covering component comprises two eye openings for the eyes of a user wearing the mask, and can comprise an image of a costume character. The face covering component can preferably be made of paper or a resilient plastic material. The face covering component can be a full-face mask, an upper-face mask, or an eye-covering mask. The resilient plastic is adapted to roll upon itself into a cylinder and the ends of the plastic layer tend to hold the mask to the temples of the wearer.
FIG. 3
SELF-HOLDING MASKS

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to partial or full face masks for use to masquerade, for disguise, for Halloween or other occasions when a user or wearer desires to wear a face-covering article, namely, a mask, by itself or as a component of a costume. According to the present invention, the masks disclosed herein are adapted to be held on the face of the user without the need for a strap, string, or other rear-of-the-head holding means. Rather, the masks are adapted to self-hold onto the user’s face merely by the inherent resiliency of the masks themselves to tend to roll into a cylinder such that the edges of the mask grip to the temples of the wearer. The resiliency also enables the masks to roll into a compact cylinder during non-use to reduce the surface area of the same for ease of storage.

[0002] BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION AND DISCLOSURE

On Halloween or at costume, masquerade and disguise events and parties, children and adults often wear a partial or full face mask to temporarily conceal their identity. The masks can be a component of an overall costume or a separate costume element. However, traditionally, these masks have required either a string, elastic band, or other holding mechanism extending behind the head of the wearer to maintain the same so that the face mask is maintained in position on the face of the wearer, with nose of the mask superimposed over the nose of the wearer, eye holes of the mask aligned with the eyes of the wearer, and the other components of the mask, if any, similarly in place to cover the wearer’s corresponding features. The use of a string or elastic band behind the wearer’s head can often be uncomfortable or present an undesirable look, i.e., may negatively impact on the effect sought to be provided by the disguising face mask. Additionally, masks are often large and bulky, i.e., big enough to entirely cover a user’s face, and require a user to carry around the same or find a location to place the same when it is not desired to be worn. The large item, i.e., the unused face mask can be too bulky for easy storage and thus a new face mask which easily and by its own resiliency rolls into a tightly roller cylinder is highly desirable.

[0003] The present invention thus discloses full or partial face masks which can be worn by a user which are adapted to be held on the face of the user merely by the inherent resiliency and tendency of the same to roll into a tight cylinder. The edges of the plastic cylinder, either the mask itself or an interior component of the mask will “grip” the temples of the wearer and maintain the same on the wearer’s face, as desired. However, when the mask is removed from the wearer, the same inherent tendency of the mask to roll into a cylinder and hold the same on the wearer’s face will also allow the mask to roll into a small and tightly wrapped cylinder for storage. The resilient plastic is adapted to tightly roll the mask into itself when not in use to reduce the surface area of the mask, thus allowing it to be more easily stored or carried. That same resilient plastic is adapted to both hold the mask on the face of the user without the need for any additional nor back-of-head touching or securing means.

[0004] The resilient (in connection with the present invention, the term “resilient” is meant to convey the concept that the layer tends to roll itself into a tightly wound cylinder) plastic layer comprises two outwardly extending edges or ends which are adapted, when the face mask is unwound and secured across the face of the wearer, to hold onto the temples of a user. The resiliency will maintain the position of the mask on the user’s face. The natural resiliency of the plastic to roll itself back into a tightly wound cylinder causes the exterior edges or ends of the mask to tend to roll inwardly—as it would when not in use—and thus those edges, by themselves, will hold the mask against the temples of a wearer’s face. This will hold the same in position, all without the use of elastic bands or strings tied or extending behind the wearer’s head. The resiliency of the mask thus replaces any additional holding mechanism normally required for masks, such as a string, elastic band or rope around a user’s back of head to hold the same in place.

[0005] The face covering portion on the exterior of the mask is preferably made of paper or a resilient plastic, but other materials are envisioned so long as it, too, is adapted to roll upon itself with the resilient plastic to tend to condense its surface area. The face covering and exterior facing portion can have an image printed or carried thereon, likely of a superhero, cartoon character, or other individual which a user wishes to portray. That face covering portion generally comprises two eye openings which correspond in location to the eyes of a wearer, so that a user can see through the mask, and may also contain a similar section and/or an opening for the user’s nose.

[0006] At least three embodiments of the present invention are currently envisioned. In the first embodiment, the face covering portion comprises a full face mask so as to cover the entire face of a wearer. In this embodiment, the resilient plastic layer is separate from the external disguise component. The integrated face mask is preferably secured to the face of the wearer by the resilient, plastic layer, horizontally extending across the eyes openings, with an end or edge of the resilient plastic layer extending to both sides of the disguise or face covering portion. Thus, when the face mask is unrolled, against the bias of the resilient plastic to roll back into a cylinder, the edges of the plastic layer will hold the mask on the wearer’s head as the edges will contact and hold onto the temples of the wearer.

[0007] In a second embodiment, the face covering portion comprises an upper-face mask to substantially cover the user’s eyes and forehead. Like with the first embodiment, this embodiment preferably comprises a resilient plastic component horizontally across the eye openings. In a third embodiment, the face covering portion is only adapted to cover the user’s eyes, and can resemble in shape and dimensions, a fanciful pair of sunglasses. In all three embodiments, the ends of the resilient plastic layer extend outwardly, horizontally in each direction from the face covering component, to reach and thus have an edge hold onto the temple of a user’s face to maintain and hold the plastic layer and the attached or integrated face mask in place on a wearer’s face. Additionally, in all three embodiments, the resilient plastic layer secured to the face covering component can either cover the eye openings, thereby shielding the eyes of the user from being visibly seen by others, or can also be provided with eye openings which correspond in size and location to those openings on the face covering component.

DESCRIPTION OF PRIOR ART

[0008] To the Applicant’s knowledge, there are no disguising or masquerading face (full or partial) masks known in the prior art which are adapted to be worn on the face of a user and be held thereon merely by the resiliency of a plastic component of the mask itself, without the need for a strap or
string extending around and behind the head of a wearer to hold the same onto the wearer.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention comprises a full or partial face covering adapter to be worn by a user and which comprises a face covering component and a resilient plastic component. The resilient plastic component is preferably secured to the rear of the face covering component, i.e., the resilient plastic layer is in contact with the user’s face. In this manner, the resilient plastic component is adapted to hold the decorative layer of the mask onto the face of the user without the need for any independent holding means (string or elastic). The face covering component (to which the plastic resilience layer is secured) comprises two eye openings for the eyes of a user wearing the mask, and can carry a decorative image, such as a celebrity, a superhero, or a costume character, and is preferably made of paper or can be the exterior of the same resilient plastic layer of material. The face covering component can be a full-face mask, an upper-face mask, or an eye-covering mask. The resilient plastic layer is adapted to roll upon itself (with a tendency to roll back into a tightly wound cylinder) when not in use to reduce the surface area of the mask and make the same easier to store.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a front plan view of one of three different embodiments disclosed of the present invention, all self-holding masks (a partial, a half face mask and a full face mask). FIG. 2 is a front elevation view of one embodiment of present invention, a self-holding full-face mask, shown in its rolled-up condition when taken from its cylindrical package, then unrolled to illustrate intended use and the right-most figure showing the mask as intended to be worn on a wearer’s head, with side edges of the plastic resilient layer of the mask gripping the temples of a user’s head;

FIG. 3 is a front view of the unrolled and only partially covering face mask, i.e., without a forehead and chin covering component but showing the eyeglass portion for the eyes and a nose covering piece cut out therefrom which will lay upon the nose of the wearer, hinged at the top thereof;

FIG. 4 is a front elevation view of another embodiment the present invention, a self-holding to the face, half-face mask, shown in the rolled-up condition and showing the same with a pair of eye cut outs and a nose contouring piece, along with a crown-like section;

FIG. 5 is a front and partial side perspective view of a the embodiment of the present invention shown in FIG 5, a self-holding partial surface and crown portion of a mask, again shown secured around the wearer’s head and the manner by which the edges of the resilient plastic layer tend to grip the temples of a wearer’s head;

FIG. 6 is a side plan view of another embodiment of the present invention as it would appear in its rolled up compact condition, a function of the inherent tendency of the layer of resilient plastic to roll up into a cylinder; and

FIG. 7 is a side and front perspective view of the embodiment of the present invention shown in FIG. 6, shown worn on a wearer’s face and head with the plastic and resilient layer extending across the eye portion thereof and the lateral edges of the mask gripping into the temples of the wearer.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS AND THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Description will now be given of the invention with reference to the attached FIGS. 1-7. It should be understood that these figures are exemplary in nature and in no way serve to limit the scope of the invention as the invention will be defined by the claims, as interpreted by the Courts in an issued US Patent.

FIGS. 1, 4, and 6 are three embodiments of the present invention, self-holding masks 10, 20, and 30. The first embodiment is a full face mask; the second (FIGS. 4 and 5) is that of a face mask and crown portion and the third embodiment is an eye-covering face mask (FIGS. 6, 7 and 8). The masks, 10, 20, and 30 are shown worn on a wearer’s head H in FIGS. 2, 5 and 7, respectively. FIG. 1 shows a container C for holding the first embodiment 10 in storage, until removed for use. A first embodiment of the present invention discloses a self-holding mask 10 comprising a full-face, preferably paper-comprising and covering mask comprising an outer, face covering component 12 and an inside, yet attached inner and resilient plastic component 14. A second embodiment 20 of the present invention discloses a half mask with crown section, i.e., a self-holding mask 20 comprising an upper and outer face covering mask comprising an outer face covering component 22 and an inner resilient plastic layer (for extending across the eyes of the wearer) or component 24. A third embodiment (see FIGS. 6 and 7) of the present invention discloses a self-holding eye mask portion of a mask 30 comprising an outer face-covering, preferably paper or plastic component 32 and an inner resilient (or the same component) plastic component 34. In all three embodiments, the outer masks are preferably decorated plastic or paper to simulate a desired character or face-covering mask for the wearer. In all three embodiments, the outside of the inner plastic and resilient layers are secured to the inside of the outer paper by gluing, adhesive, being integrated therewith or other adhering. In an embodiment, the plastic and inner resilient layer is integrated with and to the outer layer as a single layer comprising the face mask.

All three disclosed embodiments comprise an outer face-covering portion which is adapted to comprise an image, such as of a celebrity, a superhero, or a cartoon character, etc., which a wearer wishes to portray. Outer face-covering portion 12, 22, and 32 are preferably made of paper, a resilient plastic, or other material which is adapted to easily roll into a cylinder because the underlying layer of plastic is biased to roll upon itself, thereby reducing the mask’s surface area during storage and non-use. All three embodiments are preferably adapted to roll inwardly into a tight cylinder, i.e., there is an inherent bias to roll upon itself when not in use to reduce the surface area of the mask. The tendency to roll into a cylinder is based on the inherent resiliency of the underlying or face-contacting layer of plastic which not only causes the mask to assume a small storage cylindrical shape but also allows the mask unit and its outside edges or contact surfaces to grip and hold the same onto the temples of the wearer. In this manner, the user can have the mask held onto his/her face without any string or elastic extending behind the wearer’s head. Rather, the lateral side edges of the plastic layers of material, tending to roll inwardly, tend to dig into and grip onto the temples of the wearer, to hold the same in place.
A first embodiment of the present invention can be seen in FIGS. 1 and 2. Self-holding mask 10 comprises outer face-covering portion 12, which in this example is adapted to comprise the image of the Incredible Hulk, and inner resilient plastic layer or component 14 is held within the paper outer face covering portion preferably extending across the wearer's eyes from side to side and from just above the eye holes to just below the eye holes. Of course, the resilient plastic inner layer can extend beyond the top of the eye holes and below the eye holes. But, in any event, the lateral extension of the resilient plastic layer places the side edges or contact surfaces 27 at or about the temples of the wearer’s head. Resilient plastic component 14 comprises two external and side ends 15, one on both ends of the plastic component 14. Those side ends or edges are generally parallel to one another (extending along a basically vertical axis) and extend vertically along the side of the wearer’s head, with the edges in contact with the temples T of the wearer. Ends 15 are adapted to abut the temples T or sides of a user’s face and the internally biasing tendency of the plastic layer, i.e., its resiliency to tend to roll into a cylinder will hold the mask on the wearer’s face. Face covering component 12 comprises two eye holes 16 which line up with the eyes of the inner plastic layer and the eyes of a wearer when in use. The eye holes can be solid with plastic yet translucent material or can be cut out holes. Thus, a user can wear mask 10 to completely or partially conceal the identity of his face. Unlike masks known in the prior art, which require a string, rope, or other holding means around the back of the head or neck of a user to maintain the mask on the user’s face, the present inventive self-holding mask 10 is adapted to maintain its position on a user’s face merely by the resiliency of the plastic component 14 and specifically ends or edges 15 coming into contact with the temples T of the wearer and the natural tendency of the plastic layer to roll back into a tight cylinder. That resiliency of the ends 15 of the plastic layer force the ends to tend to bias or roll inwardly into a cylinder in the same manner that the plastic layer tends to roll the mask 10 into a tight cylinder for storage, when not in use. However, upon abutting the side or temples T of the user’s face, the ends 15 will hold the mask 10 in place thereon, without the requirement of any independent string, elastic band or holding mechanism. Outer face-covering component 12 can also comprise a nose-opening or flap 18 (see FIG. 3) or a nose cutout and contour 19 of the mask (See FIGS. 5 and 7) for the nose of the user to project therethrough when in use can be provided.

Other embodiments of the present invention, seen in FIGS. 3 and 4, disclose a self-holding upper-face or half-face mask 20 with a crown section 31 (FIGS. 4 and 5) which comprise outer and decorative face-covering component 22 and inner resilient plastic component 24, attached thereto. Here, in FIGS. 4 and 5, the paper face-covering component 22 comprises an upwardly extending section, a crown, 31. Face-covering component 22 comprises eye openings 26 and is adapted to cover the area from just below the eyes to extend upon and can also extend above the forehead of a user, to more fully cover the face of the wearer, to maximum disguise and masquerade advantage. A nose cut-out or contour 19 can be provided or a nose flap (like that shown in FIG. 3, element 18) to either allow the nose to be seen or hidden, as desired. Here, too, however, the inner surface of the paper, decorative face mask is provided with a resilient, plastic inside layer which tends to roll the entire face mask into a tight cylinder. The lateral edges 15 of the inner layer 24 will come into contact with the temples T of the wearer’s head H to maintain the same. When the mask is removed, the tendency of the inside plastic layer to roll upon itself will tend to form a tight cylinder, convenient for storage within or not a cylinder C (See FIG. 1).

Another embodiment of the present invention, a self-holding eye-covering-only mask 30, can be seen in FIGS. 6 and 7. Mask 30 also comprises an outer face-covering and decorative component 32, which is adapted to cover only the eyes of a user—in the manner of a super hero’s eye mask—and an inner resilient plastic component 34 with side edges or ends 35. Here, too, the front layer can be a separate yet integrated layer to the resilient layer or, alternatively, the mask can be formed of a single layer of resilient plastic where the outside surface of the plastic is decorated, as desired. FIG. 6 shows the mask rolled onto itself, a function of the natural tendency of the same to roll into a tight cylinder, and FIG. 7 shows the same worn on a wearer with the ends or edges 35 in contact with the temples T of the head H of the wearer. While the ends 35, just as ends 15 and 24 disclosed above, can extend outwardly past the outer face-covering component or can be entirely covered by face-covering component, the width of the plastic layer need only extend sufficiently laterally so that the side edges or ends can extend beyond the front face of the wearer so that the edges “grip” and hold the mask onto the wearer—all as a consequence of the tendency of the plastic layer to re-roll into a tight cylinder. In an alternative embodiment, the side edges which contact the temples of the wearer can be mere points, not vertical edges at all, so long as they “dig in” to the wearer’s face and/or temples to hold the same in place. Also, those points can be contacts for additional features or characteristics to be provided to the masks, as, for example, color change can be accomplished, lights can be provided, hologram effect provided, all activated by the points of contact which serve both to hold the mask onto the wearer’s face and to be the location of some mechanical or electrical switching site for the characteristics to be selectively changeable.

Additionally, face-covering component 32 comprises eye openings 36, but inner plastic layer component 34 can be configured to extend across and cover the eye openings 36 to completely conceal the eyes of a wearer to maximum disguise effect. In the case where plastic component 14, 24, or 34 covers eye openings 16, 26, or 36, respectively, the plastic component shall be a material, generally transparent or translucent so that a user can see through the plastic so that his vision is not blocked, but the dark tint of the plastic will still conceal the eyes of the user, in the same manner as sunglasses. Thus, the eye portion of the plastic component can either be solid plastic yet translucent to allow the wearer’s eyes to see through it or the eye portion can be physical openings or cut outs for the eyes to look therethrough. Here, like in the other embodiments, edges or ends 35 of resilient plastic component 34 are adapted to have an inherent tendency to roll upon itself into a tight cylinder, i.e., bend inwardly upon the mask 30 so as to hold the mask 30 on the face of a user when the ends 35 come into contact with the temples or side of the user’s face.

In all embodiments of the present invention, the resiliency of the plastic and face-covering material preferably allows the mask to roll upon itself into a cylinder when not in use to reduce the surface area (forming a tight cylinder) of the mask and thereby make it easier for carrying and/or storage of the same. The present invention also aims to overcome the necessity for a string, rope, or rubber band-type strap around
the back or neck of a user, which can often be uncomfortable. The inherent resiliency of the plastic layer, comprising either the mask entirely or a component of a paper mask component which faces forward, tends to hold the mask to the temples of the wearer.

[0025] In an alternate embodiment the resilient layer could also have a top and/or bottom edge which could "grip" or come into gripping contact with the wearer’s forehead, chin, neck, etc. Again, the inherent resiliency of the plastic layer would tend to have an edge or contact point come into contact with one or more contact points or surfaces of the wearer’s face to hold the same thereon. Also, the edges/contact points could be provided with small rubber coatings and/or double sided tape so that the same more effectively grips the wearer’s face and surface to hold the said thereon, even in active play and movement. Alternatively, too, the edges or contact points can be provided with medical-grade adhesive or with a set of bumps, ridges, surface discontinuities, etc. and/or grip-enhancing edges/surfaces, all to the advantage of holding the same to the wearer’s face.

[0026] The mask would also work well with the resilient material extending laterally or up and down beyond the wearer’s temples or eyebrow level so that the said could extend to grip at the wearer’s ears or above the eyes, below the nose, below the lower lip, below the chin, etc. Also, the resilient edges or contact points, extending towards the temples could actually simulate small, thin plastic sunglasses and contact against the temples, the ears, the rear of the ears, etc.

[0027] As another embodiment of the invention, the resilient material can also be made of UV protective or other sunblocking sunshade/filtering material to protect the wearer’s eyes when worn outdoors. Again, the eyes of the wearer are provided with a direct line of sight through cut outs of the flexible, resilient eye portion or, alternatively, the flexible sheet extends across the eyes, like sunglasses, to totally block the direct line of sight (and the line of sun rays) to the eyes.

[0028] It will be understood by those of ordinary skill in the art that various changes may be made and equivalents may be substituted for elements without departing from the scope of the invention. In addition, modifications may be made to adapt a particular feature or material to the teachings of the invention without departing from the scope thereof. Therefore, it is intended that the invention not be limited to the particular embodiments disclosed, but that the invention will include all embodiments falling within the scope of the claims.

What is claimed:
1. A disguising mask comprising:
   - a face covering, forwardly projecting decorative component extending to cover at least a portion of the face of a wearer; and
   - a resilient plastic component, wherein said resilient plastic component is secured to said face covering, forwardly projecting decorative component;
   - wherein said face covering, forwardly projecting decorative component comprises a half-face mask.
2. A mask as claimed in claim 1, wherein said face covering, forwardly projecting decorative component comprises a full-face covering mask.
3. A mask as claimed in claim 1, wherein said face covering, forwardly projecting decorative component comprises a half-face mask.
4. A mask as claimed in claim 1, wherein said face covering, forwardly projecting decorative component comprises only an eye-covering mask.
5. A mask as claimed in claim 1, wherein said resilient plastic component comprises eye openings.
6. A mask as claimed in claim 1, wherein said face covering, forwardly projecting decorative component comprises a decorative image of a costume character.
7. A mask as claimed in claim 1, wherein said face covering, forwardly projecting decorative component made of paper.
8. A mask as claimed in claim 1, wherein said face covering, forwardly projecting decorative component comprises resilient plastic which tends to bias towards rolling into a cylinder of a diameter less than the dimension between said ends.
9. A decorative face mask comprising:
   - a face covering and outwardly decorative component; and
   - a resilient internal, face-contacting plastic component;
   - wherein said internal, face-contacting plastic component is secured to the rear of said face covering and outwardly decorative component; and
   - wherein said resilient plastic component comprises two laterally extending ends, said ends being adapted to hold said mask on the face of a user without the need for any independent holding means.
10. A mask as claimed in claim 9, wherein said resilient internal, face-contacting plastic component is further adapted to roll upon itself and into a cylinder when not in use for storage.
11. A mask as claimed in claim 9, wherein said face covering and outwardly decorative component is a full-face mask.
12. A mask as claimed in claim 9, wherein said face covering and outwardly decorative component is a half-mask.
13. A mask as claimed in claim 9, wherein said face covering and outwardly decorative component is an eye-covering mask.
14. A mask as claimed in claim 9, wherein said resilient internal, face-contacting plastic comprises eye openings.
15. A mask as claimed in claim 9, wherein said resilient internal, face-contacting plastic further comprises an image of a costume character.
16. A mask as claimed in claim 9, wherein said face covering and outwardly decorative component is made of paper.
17. A mask as claimed in claim 9 wherein supplemental edges are provided in addition to said laterally extending ends to provide a contact surface between said mask and the wearer’s face.
18. A mask as claimed in claim 9 wherein said laterally extending ends are provided with an enhanced gripping material.
19. A mask as claimed in claim 18 wherein said enhanced gripping material comprises small pieces of rubber, adhesive, double sided tape, or another gripping material.
20. A mask as claimed in claim 9 wherein said resilient internal, face-contacting plastic component is provided with an eye protecting coating.

* * * * *