Hair integration apparatus having cables defining inter-cable spaces. When worn on the head, natural hair extends through the inter-cable spaces with supplemental hair being carried by at least some of the cables. In a preferred embodiment, primary cables extend generally horizontally about the head between locations on an outer band and include reinforcing members to maintain the primary cables in position adjacent the scalp.
HAIR INTEGRATION UNIT
CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION
[0002] Hair integration units and supporting caps are known. Typically, the cap is formed of crocheted cables or bands which intersect each other leaving open areas through which the wearer’s natural hair is drawn. Hair is carried on the crocheted cables to be integrated with the wearer’s natural hair to supplement the natural hair.

[0003] Among the issues with known integration caps is the inability of the crocheted cables to support a significant weight. That is, the crocheted cables are easily stretched and/or deflected such that the weight of the hair (either from length or quantity) may deflect the cap cables and detract from the naturalness of the integration.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION
[0004] The present invention provides an improved hair integration unit wherein primary supplemental hair-carrying cables are reinforced. These, and other cables of the unit, may be crocheted with the reinforcement being accomplished by crocheting over a flexible reinforcing member such as a steel wire. The crocheting allows attachment of the supplemental hair in known manner while the steel wire may be coated (with nylon, for example), to protect the wire.

[0005] In preferred embodiment, the primary cables extend generally horizontally about the head when the apparatus is worn while supporting cables may extend between the primary cables to provide mutual support.

[0006] In accordance with the present invention, the reinforcement of the primary cables allows those cables to carry a greater weight of hair (either from length or quantity) without deflecting or stretching. In this manner, those primary, hair-carrying cables maintain their position adjacent the scalp thus maintaining the overall appearance of the integration.

[0007] In a preferred embodiment, an outer cable or band is sized to lie generally within the natural hairline and may be secured in place through the use of clips, in known manner. Alternatively, or additionally, the unit may be secured in place by other known techniques.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS
[0008] FIG. 1 illustrates a preferred embodiment in accordance with the present invention in position on a head;

[0009] FIG. 2 illustrates a top view of a cap and hair integration unit in accordance with the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION
[0010] FIG. 1 illustrates a head wearing an integration cap in accordance with the present invention. The cap consists of an outer band or cable 10 which may be generally 22 inches in length (circumference), for example. The cable 10 and cap are sized to lie generally within the natural hairline and may be secured in place through the use of clips 11, in known manner.

[0011] Cables 12-16 extend from the band 10 to lie generally horizontally when the cap is in position on the head. The cables 12-16 are preferably made of a flexible and light steel-reinforcing wire having a nylon coating similar to that employed as a fishing leader. A polyester material may be crocheted over this coated steel wire to facilitate the ventilation of hair fibers to the cables, in known manner. In that the prior art typically employs crocheted cables, the cables 12-16 may be viewed as cables of a type generally known to the prior art for carrying supplemental hair with the steel wires functioning as a reinforcement for those prior art crocheted cables.

[0012] Two supporting cables 17 may extend between the circumferential band 10 and the cable 12 to maintain the position of the cable 12 while similar inter-cable members 18 between the cables 12-16 help maintain the cables 12-16 in their desired position on and adjacent the scalp. The cables 17 and 18 may be crocheted and typically do not carry hair. However, if desired, hair may be ventilated to the support members 17 and 18. It is presently contemplated that the cable 17 can be eliminated in many, if not all, instances.

[0013] In use, the cap (with supplemental hair attached) is positioned on the user’s head and the natural hair is pulled through the inter-cable spaces between the band 10 and the cables 12-17 and 18, in known manner. The hair carried by the band and cables intermixes with the natural hair to integrate with that hair and provide a pleasing enhancement to the hair. The enhancement may be by additional length (commonly called a hair extension) or by additional bulk (commonly called a hair addition). In either case, hair integration units employing the wire-reinforced primary cables provide a more uniform and natural look by providing more uniformity in the addition of hair and by maintaining the cables in the desired position while also maintaining their close proximity to the scalp.

[0014] FIG. 2 illustrates a top view of a cap in accordance with the present invention as viewed from the top of the head in FIG. 1. As illustrated, the cables 12-16 extend between different locations on the outer band 10 about the head and lie generally horizontally when the cap is worn. Clips or combs 11 (see FIG. 1) may be used to secure the unit in place, in known manner. Additionally, loops 20 may be employed wherein natural hair is drawn through the loops to help maintain the position of the unit (and the several cables which form it) in position. Loops 20 may be secured to the hair adjacent the scalp, as desired, and in any known manner—through the use of cramped beads or adhesives, for example.

[0015] Hair may be secured to any of the cables 10, 12-16, 17 and 18, as desired, in any known manner. Hair is shown attached to the cable or band 10 in FIG. 2, and is representative of hair as attached to the others of the cables. Hair is not illustrated with respect to the other cables for the sake of clarity. Additionally, natural hair is shown passing through one of the loops 20 in FIG. 2, again for illustrative purposes. Any or all of the loops 20 may be employed in similar manner, as desired or necessary.

[0016] Obviously, many modifications and variations of the present invention are possible in light of the above
teachings. For example, the cables 12-16 will have hair ventilated to them of a desired length and density. The circumferential band or cable 10 may have hair ventilated to it, as desired. The cables 18 are for support purposes primarily and typically would not have hair ventilated to them. The support cables 17, while providing a function similar to those of the cables 18, may also have hair ventilated to them, as desired. However, in many instances, the cables 17 may be eliminated while more or fewer of the support cables 18 may be employed dependent upon the particular enhancement desired. It is therefore to be understood that, within the scope of the appended claims, the invention may be practiced otherwise than as specifically described.

What is claimed is:

1. Hair integration apparatus adapted to be worn on the head within the natural hairline and having a plurality of cables defining inter-cable spaces, the spaces being adapted to accept natural hair there through, wherein the cables include primary cables adapted to extend generally about at least the back of the head and generally at the scalp line when the apparatus is worn, the hair enhancing apparatus further comprising:
   supplemental hair secured to said primary cables in sufficient quantity to deflect said primary cables; and
   reinforcing means reinforcing said primary cables for maintaining said primary cables in position when the apparatus is worn.
2. The hair integration apparatus of claim 1 wherein said cables are crocheted, said reinforcing means comprising flexible reinforcing members.
3. The hair integration apparatus of claim 2 wherein said reinforcing members comprise coated steel wire.
4. The hair integration apparatus of claim 3 wherein said steel wire is coated with nylon.
5. The hair integration apparatus of claim 1 wherein said primary cables extend generally horizontally about the head when the apparatus is worn.
6. The hair integration apparatus of claim 5 wherein said cables further include supporting cables extending between said primary cables.
7. The hair integration apparatus of claim 1 further comprising an outer band defining the outer extension of said apparatus.
8. The hair integration apparatus of claim 7 wherein said primary cables extend between different locations on said outer band.
9. The hair integration apparatus of claim 8 wherein said primary cables extend generally horizontally about the head when the apparatus is worn.
10. The hair integration apparatus of claim 9 wherein said cables are crocheted, said reinforcing means comprising flexible reinforcing members.
11. The hair integration apparatus of claim 10 wherein said reinforcing members comprise coated steel wire.
12. The hair integration apparatus of claim 11 wherein said steel wire is coated with nylon.
13. The hair integration apparatus of claim 12 wherein said cables further include supporting cables extending between said primary cables.
14. The hair integration apparatus of claim 13 further comprising supplemental hair secured to said outer band.

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