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A DIGITAL MEDIA PLAYER****Publication Classification**(76) Inventor: **J. Patrick Volk**, Colleyville, TX
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A45F 5/00 (2006.01)
A42B 1/24 (2006.01)Correspondence Address:
SCHEEF & STONE, L.L.P.
500 N. Akard, Suite 2700
DALLAS, TX 75201 (US)(52) **U.S. Cl.** **224/181**(21) Appl. No.: **12/619,798**(57) **ABSTRACT**(22) Filed: **Nov. 17, 2009****Related U.S. Application Data**(60) Provisional application No. 61/223,235, filed on Jul. 6,
2009.

Headgear which includes a pocket for securing a media player to the interior of the headgear. The pocket defines at least one opening configured for receiving the media player. In one embodiment, the headgear includes controls for operating the media player while the headgear is being worn.

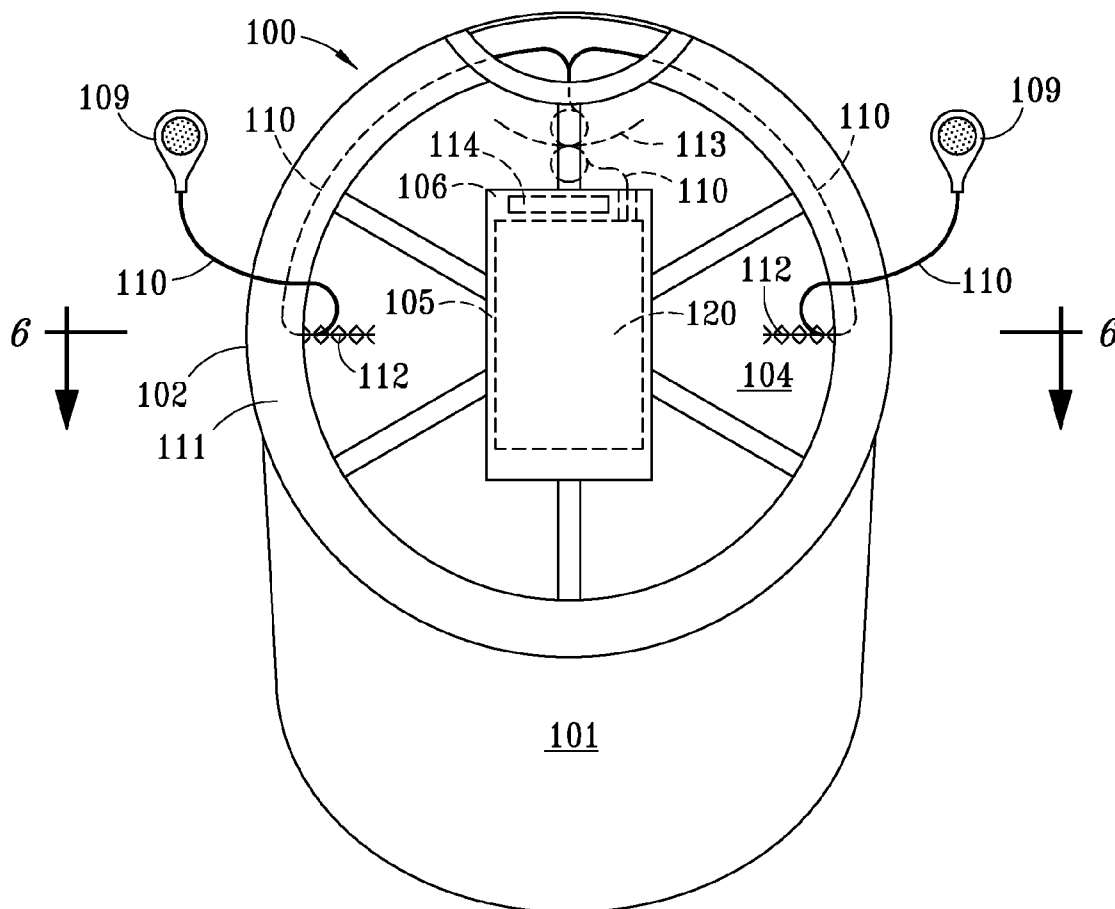


FIG. 1

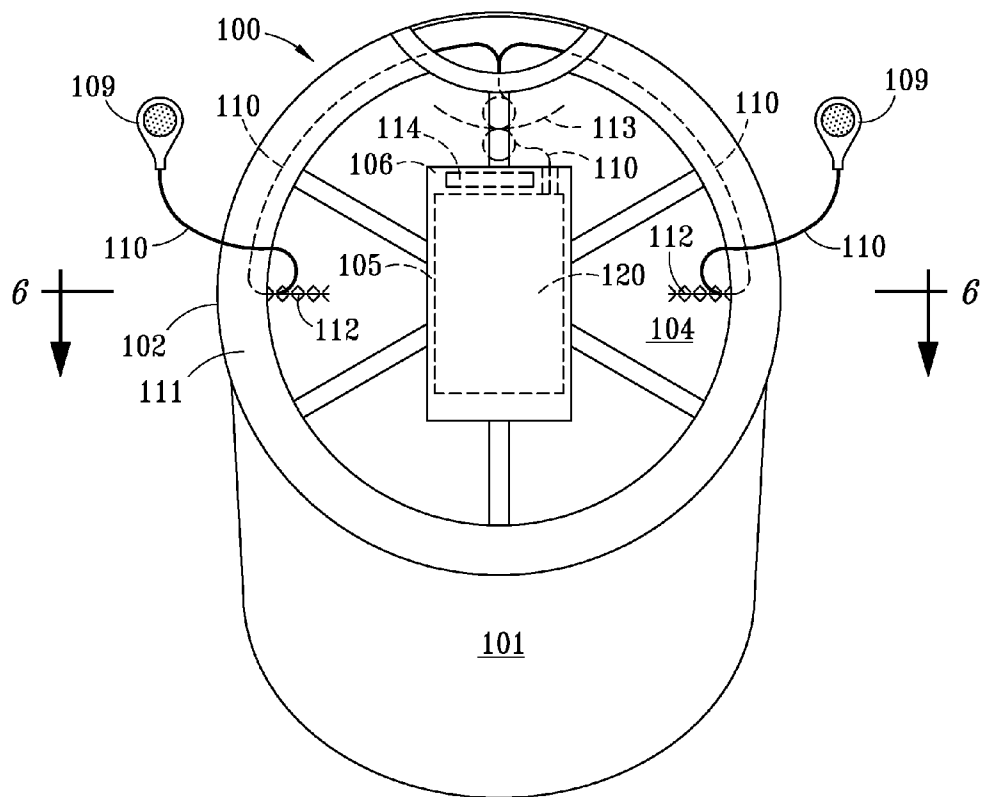


FIG. 2

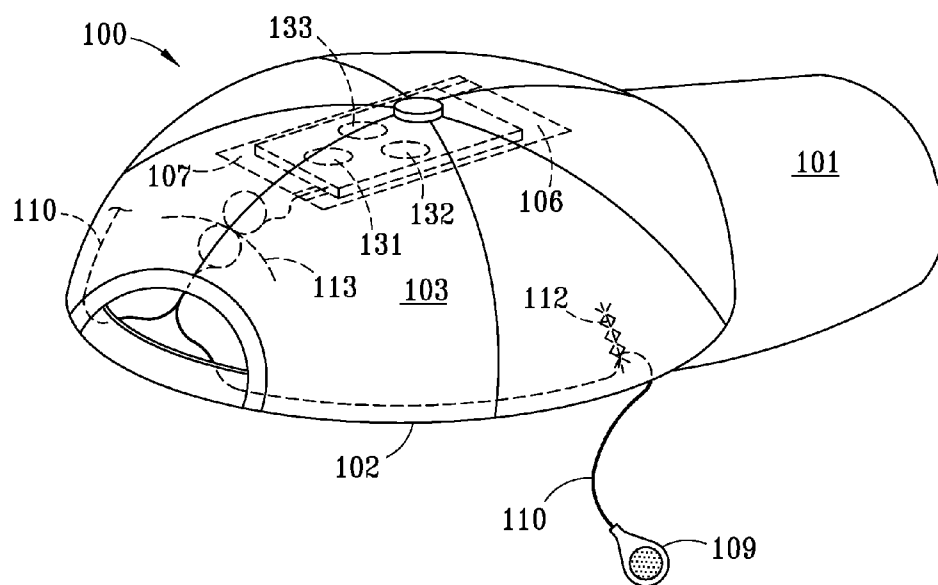


FIG. 2A

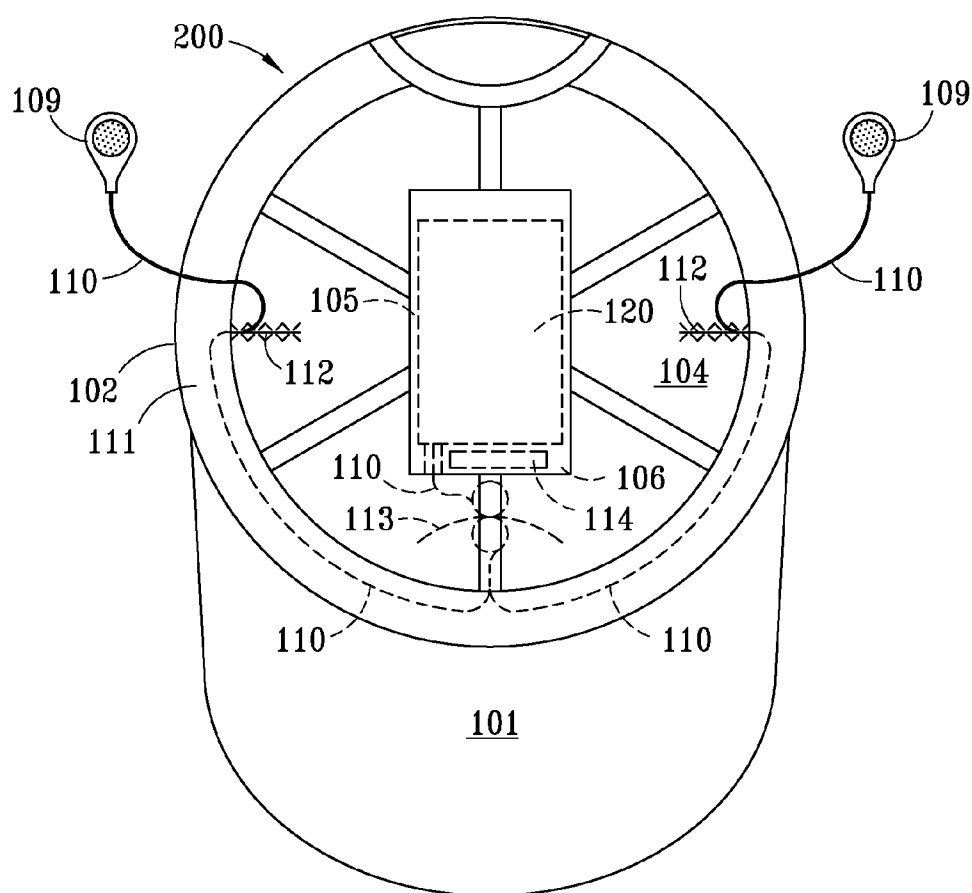


FIG. 3

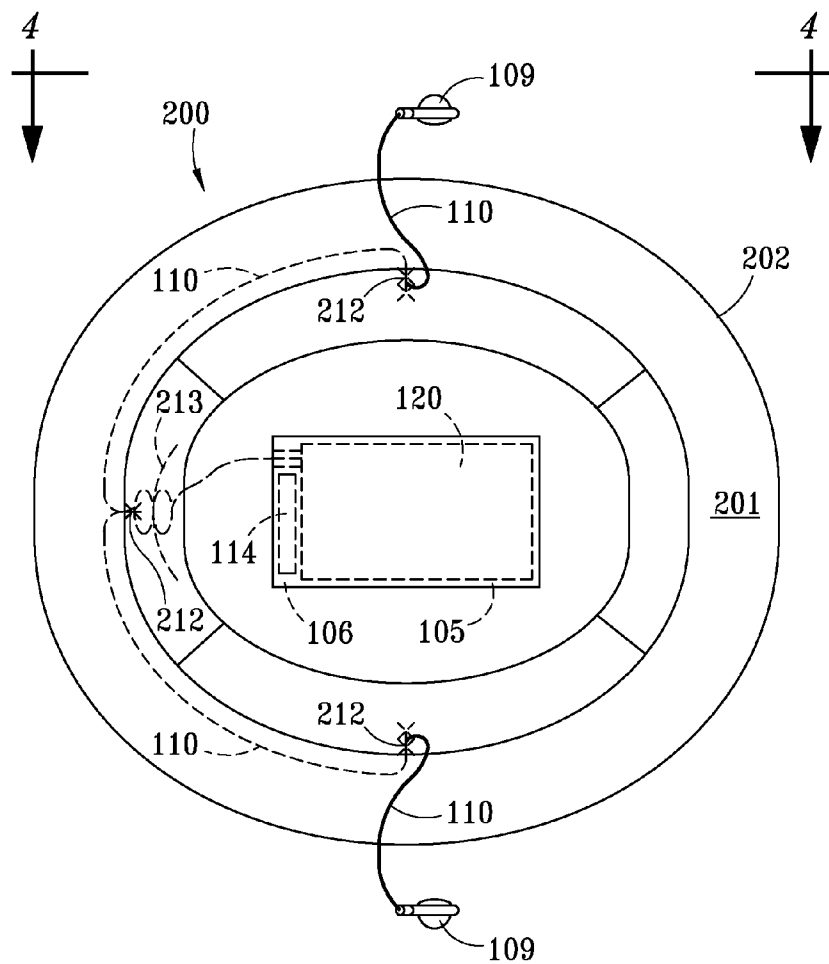


FIG. 4

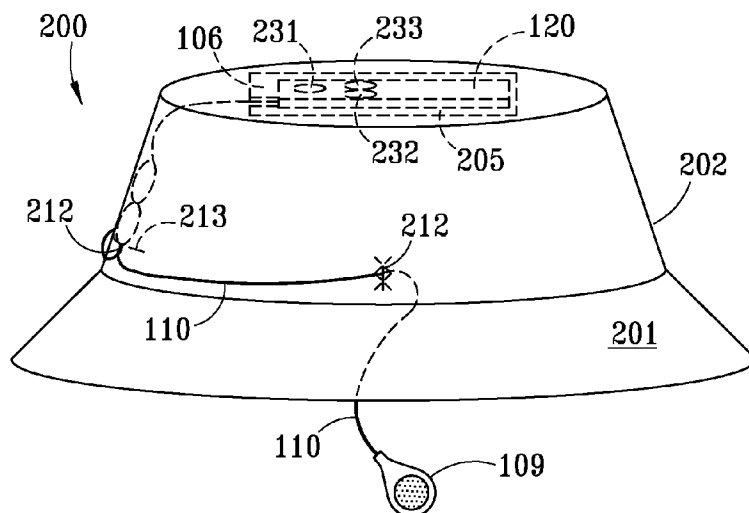


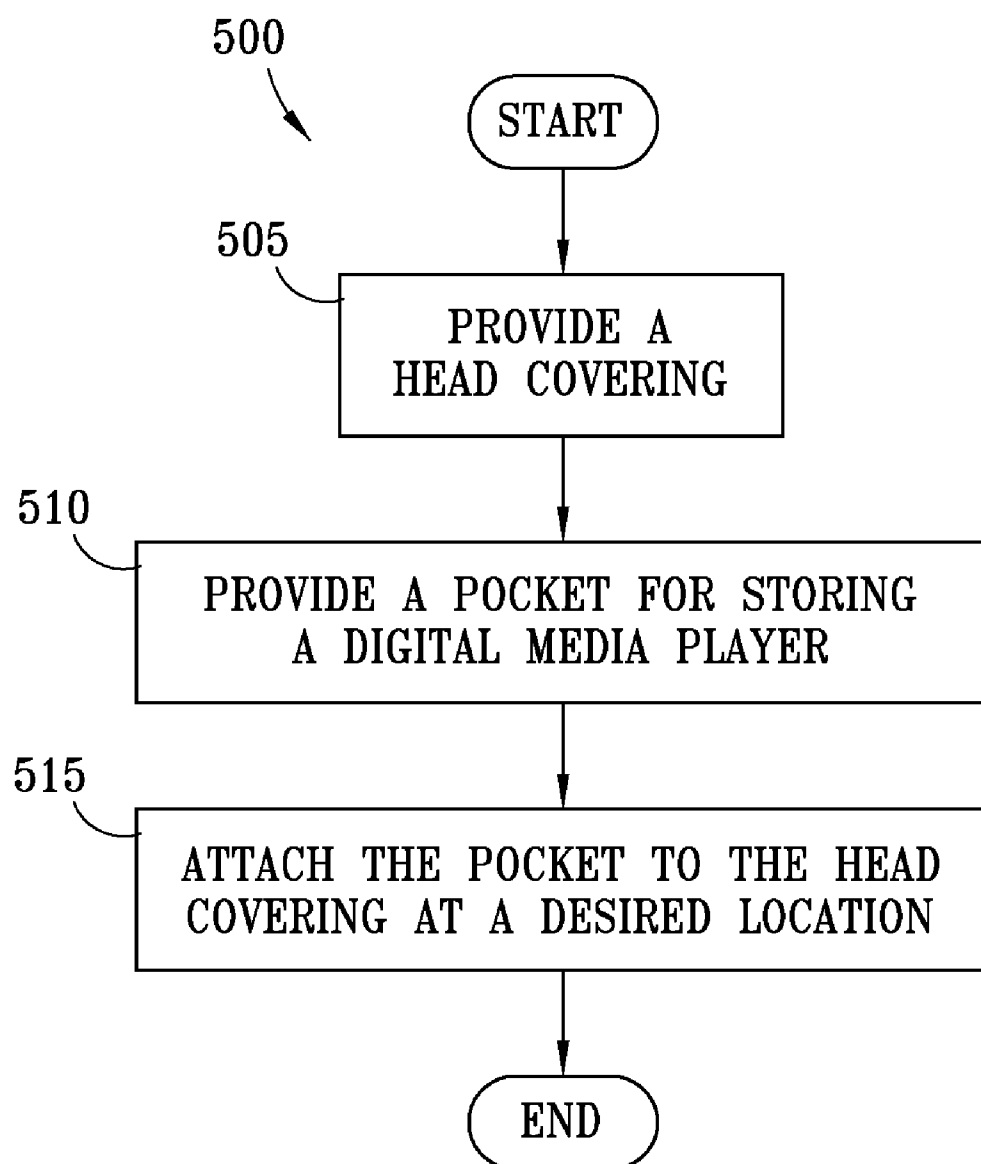
FIG. 5

FIG. 6

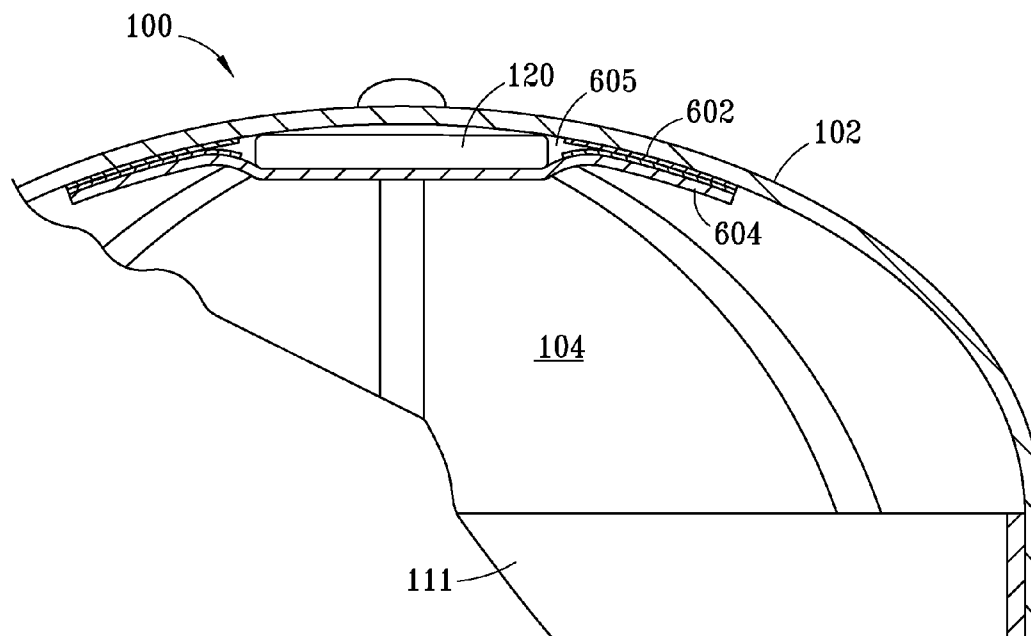
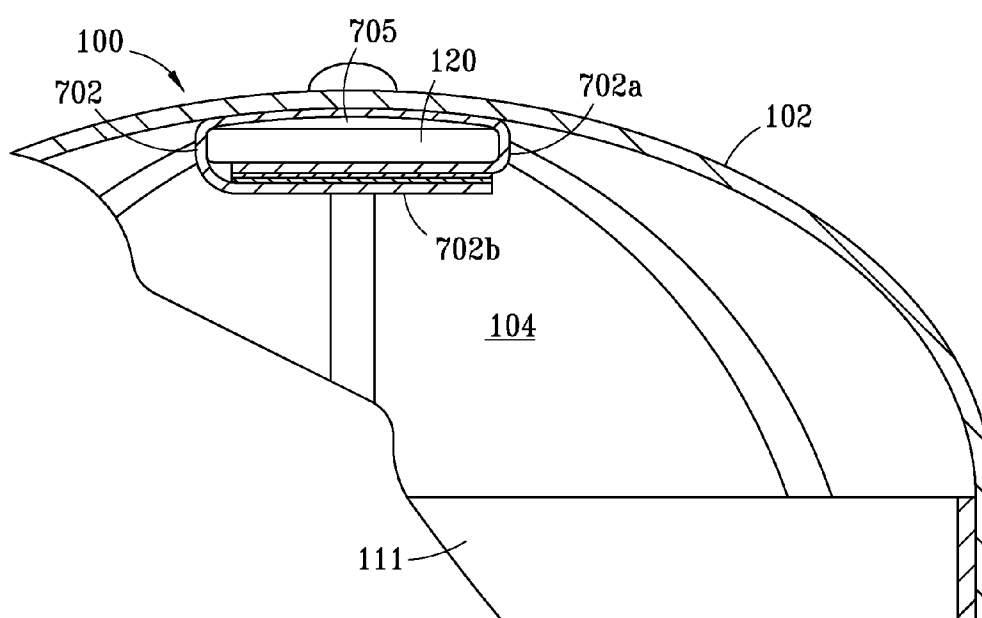


FIG. 7



APPARATUS AND SYSTEM FOR CARRYING A DIGITAL MEDIA PLAYER

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present invention relates generally to an apparatus and system for carrying a media player and, more particularly, to an apparatus and system for carrying a media player atop a user's head.

BACKGROUND

[0002] Thanks in part to digital media players such as Apple's iPod™ and Microsoft's Zune™, individuals in modern society have access to more media: music, movies, TV shows, and books, than at any other time in history. These devices store large volumes of media in digital formats on increasingly smaller devices allowing a user of the digital media player access to a wide variety of media in seemingly any location. Despite their small size, use of digital media players do create some problems for the user. For example, the digital media player may hinder the user's ability to multitask. In operation, it is often necessary to set the digital media player on a nearby surface so that the user may perform another function that requires both hands. In doing so, the digital media player limits the user's range of motion to the radius of the headphones or speakers. In addition, the wires of the headphones may interfere with the user's other tasks. Furthermore, if the user wishes to leave the particular area in which he/she is using the digital media player, the user must pick up and carry the digital media player with a hand, further limiting the ability of the user to multitask while using the digital media player.

[0003] Many devices have been developed to solve these problems. In one example, clothing with attachment locations for the digital media player allows the user to wear the digital media player. However, the digital media player is difficult to control through clothing. In addition, use of wired headphones with such articles of clothing necessitate that a wire travel up the user's neck to the user's ears. Users find this uncomfortable, and if the wire becomes pinched, any movement by the user will jerk the headphones from the user's ears causing the user pain and frustration.

[0004] Other devices attempt to solve these problems by placing the digital media player in the user's headgear. Some headgear devices suffer problems in that they even permanently attach the digital media player to the headgear. Permanent attachment to the headgear makes it virtually impossible to use the digital media player without wearing the headgear. Furthermore, permanent attachment to the headgear renders it difficult to add or remove media from the digital media player. Modern headgear devices for carrying a digital media player are often also placed in a such a way as to make wearing the device uncomfortable to the user. For example, many devices of this type place the media player along the headband of the headgear, decreasing the area in which the user may place his/her head. In headgear of a fitted variety, this will cause discomfort to the user. Furthermore, it places additional pressure on the digital media player, increasing the likelihood of digital media player failure or operation of the digital media player in an undesired manner. Still other headgear devices place the digital media player along the headgear headband at the back of the user's head preventing the user from lying down while using the device. This limits the activities in which the user may participate while using the device.

For example, many weightlifting exercises require the user to lay down while exercising, placing the weight of the user's head directly onto the digital media player further increasing the likelihood of digital media player failure.

[0005] Therefore, what is needed is a system and an apparatus for carrying a media player that overcomes the problems of prior art devices.

SUMMARY

[0006] The present invention, accordingly, provides an apparatus for carrying a media player, such as a digital media player, the apparatus comprising headgear and a pocket secured on the interior of the headgear for securing the media player. The pocket has an interior and an exterior, and a means for attaching said pocket to a head covering. The pocket also includes at least one pocket opening.

[0007] The disclosed embodiments also provide a system for carrying a digital media player comprising a head covering having an exterior and an interior, and a digital media player. The system also includes a pocket for securing the digital media player attached to the head covering, the pocket having an exterior and an interior. The pocket includes at least one pocket opening. The system also comprises controls for operating the digital media player, the controls accessible while said head covering covers a head.

[0008] The disclosed embodiments also provide a method for producing a digital media player carrying device comprising the steps of providing a head covering, and providing a pocket for storing a digital media player. The method continues by attaching the pocket to the head covering at a desired location.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] For a more complete understanding of the present invention, and the advantages thereof, reference is now made to the following descriptions taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing, in which:

[0010] FIG. 1 is a plan view illustrating exemplary elements of an apparatus embodying features of the present invention;

[0011] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the apparatus of FIG. 1;

[0012] FIG. 2A is a plan view illustrating an alternate embodiment of FIG. 1;

[0013] FIG. 3 is a plan view illustrating exemplary elements of an alternative apparatus embodying the present invention;

[0014] FIG. 4 is an elevation view of the alternative apparatus of FIG. 3 taken along line 4-4 of FIG. 3;

[0015] FIG. 5 illustrates a high-level flowchart embodying exemplary steps of the present invention;

[0016] FIG. 6 exemplifies an alternate embodiment of the invention, taken along the line 6-6 of FIG. 1; and

[0017] FIG. 7 exemplifies a further alternate embodiment of the invention, taken along the line 6-6 of FIG. 1.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0018] The making and using of the presently preferred embodiments are discussed in detail below. It should be appreciated, however, that the present invention provides many applicable inventive concepts that can be embodied in a wide variety of specific contexts. The specific embodiments

discussed are merely illustrative of specific ways to make and use the invention, and do not limit the scope of the invention.

[0019] Referring to FIG. 1, there is shown a head covering 100 exemplifying one of the disclosed embodiments. As illustrated, the head covering 100 comprises a ball cap having a cap 102 and a bill 101 extending from a frontal portion of the cap 102. By way of example, but not limitation, the head covering 100 may include, in addition to a baseball cap, a cowboy hat, a helmet, a fez, a turban, a wig, and the like effective for covering a user's head. The cap 102 defines an interior 104 and an exterior 103 (FIG. 2).

[0020] A pocket 105 defining at least one opening (discussed in further detail below) is preferably detachably attached to the interior 104 of the head covering 100 by way of a hook and loop material, such as Velcro®, positioned between the pocket 105 and the interior 104. Alternatively, the pocket may be attached to the interior 104 by other suitable means, such as fabric glue, stitching, and the like, effective for attaching the pocket 105 to any type of head covering 100.

[0021] Preferably, the pocket 105 is located proximate to the center of the interior 104, aligning the pocket 105 over the top of a user's head when the head covering 100 is worn. The pocket 105 is preferably suitably sized for holding a media player 120, such as a digital media player, such as an Apple iPod™, Microsoft Zune™, or other similar device. In addition, the pocket 105 is preferably fabricated from a material resistant to water. In the illustrated embodiment, the pocket 105 comprises two layers of a water-resistant material, such as water-resistant canvas or synthetics, or any suitable material effective for containing the media player 120 while resisting water or perspiration penetration into the area in which the media player 120 rests. The pocket 105 may also be fabricated from an elastic natural or synthetic material that would allow the pocket 105 to stretch to accommodate varying sizes of the media player 120 while also exerting a compressive force against the media player 120, thereby securing the media player 120 within the pocket 105.

[0022] Placement of the pocket 105 and the media player 120 directly over the user's head when the user wears the head covering 100 provides a comfortable and protected location for wearing the digital media player 120. At this location, the media player 120 does not cause discomfort to the user or place additional pressure on the user's head at lining 111 where the head covering 100 secures to the user's head. In addition, placement of the pocket 105 and the digital media player 120 directly over the user's head when the user wears the head covering 100 places no additional pressure on the media player 120 as is the case in prior art methods. This significantly decreases the likelihood that the media player 120 will fail or operate in an undesired manner. Furthermore, placement of the pocket 105 and the media player 120 directly over the user's head avoids areas of high user perspiration concentration. These areas are typically located along the lining 111 where the head covering 100 grips or secures to the user's head. Furthermore, placement of the pocket 105 over the top of the user's head allows the user to perform tasks utilizing both hands without interference from dangling wired earphones, and it allows use of the media player 120 free from the limitations of prior art devices and methods.

[0023] The pocket 105 defines an opening 106 allowing for insertion and removal of the digital media player 120 from within the pocket 105. The opening 106 optionally comprises at least one fastener 114, including but not limited to Velcro®,

snaps, or the like, for at least partially closing a respective opening. The at least one fastener 114 provides additional stabilization and security of the media player 120 in the pocket 105. Furthermore, as illustrated, the at least one fastener 114 at the opening 106 covers only a portion of the opening 106, providing an opening for the passage of one or more wires or other device into and out of the pocket 105. One skilled in the art will appreciate that alternative embodiments may not include this opening and are contemplated and incorporated by the disclosed embodiments. In the illustrated embodiment, the opening 106 includes the portion uncovered by the fastener allowing earphones 109, including ear buds, headphones, and the like, to pass from inside of the pocket 105 to outside of the pocket 105. In this manner, the head covering 100 may be worn with the bill 101 extending over the user's face, or over the back of the user's neck without compromising the usability of the disclosed embodiments.

[0024] The earphones 109 preferably include two earphones coupled via wires 110 to the media player 120. The wires 110 are preferably positioned within the lining 111 that comprises a portion of the interior 104. The wires 110 pass from the interior 104 of the head covering 100 to the exterior 103 of the head covering 100 through at least one hole 112 for each earphone. In the illustrated embodiment, the at least one hole 112 comprises two holes allowing each earphone 109 to pass through a separate hole 112. Excess portions of the wires 110 are optionally secured by a securing mechanism 113, such as ties, additional pockets, or Velcro® strips, located within the head covering 100 or on the pocket 105. One skilled in the art will understand that the apparatus may be used with alternative earphones 109, including but not limited to wireless headphones, or wired headphones connected by a securing band, and the like. In alternative forms, the wires 110 may or may not pass from the interior 104 of the head covering 100 to the exterior 103 of the head covering 100 through holes 112, these alternative forms are contemplated and included herein as part of the disclosed embodiments.

[0025] Referring now to FIG. 2, there is shown a perspective view of the exterior 103 of head covering 100 of FIG. 1. In the illustrated embodiment, the exterior 103 preferably comprises an on/off button 131, next/fast forward button 132, and last/rewind button 133. Placement of the controls 131, 132, 133 coincides with the placement of the media player 120 within the pocket 105 such that the user may operate the media player 120 utilizing the controls 131, 132, 133. One skilled in the art will recognize that any suitable means for controlling the media player 120 from outside of the pocket 105 are contemplated and included herein as part of the disclosed embodiments. In an alternative embodiment, the controls 131, 132, 133 are located on the wires 110 or the earphones 109 and include more or fewer controls than those described herein as necessary to appropriately operate the digital media player 120. Preferably, the location of the controls 131, 132, 133 comprises a location of comfort to the user. For example, as illustrated in FIG. 2 the controls 131, 132, 133 comprise a location near the portion of the pocket 105 located at the greatest distance from the bill 101.

[0026] FIG. 2A exemplifies a head covering 200 as an alternative embodiment 200 of the head covering 100 of FIG. 1. As depicted therein, the head covering 200 is similar to the head covering 100, but for the orientation of the media player 120 which oriented 180° from that shown in FIG. 1. Accordingly, the opening 106 is proximate to the bill 101 and the

wires 110 preferably run from the media player 120 along the front portion of the liner 111 to respective holes 112.

[0027] Referring to FIG. 3, there is shown a head covering 200 exemplifying an alternative embodiment. As illustrated therein, the head covering 200 comprises a fishing hat having a bill 201 and a cap 202. The cap 202 has an exterior 203 (FIG. 4) and an interior 204. The interior 204 comprises a portion of the cap 202 in contact with the object on which the head covering 200 rests.

[0028] The pocket 105, defining at least one opening 106, is attached to the interior 204 near a center of the interior 204. In the illustrated embodiment, the at least one opening 106 is oriented toward the rear of the head covering 200. The rear of the head covering 200 comprises that portion of the head covering 200 intended to cover the back of a user's head. The opening 106 comprises the fastener 114, such as Velcro® or snaps for at least partially closing the opening. One skilled in the art will understand that the fastener 114 on the opening 106 is optional and may or may not be incorporated in any one embodiment. The fastener 114 provides additional stabilization and security of the media player 120 in the pocket 105. Furthermore, as illustrated, the fastener at the first opening 106 covers only a portion of the first opening 106, providing an opening for the passage of a wire or other device into the pocket 105. One skilled in the art will understand that alternative embodiments do not include this opening, and are contemplated by the disclosed embodiments. In the illustrated embodiment, the first opening 106 includes the portion uncovered by the fastener 114 allowing earphones 109 to pass from inside of the pocket 105 to outside of the pocket 105.

[0029] In one embodiment, the earphones 109 are coupled via wires 110 to the media player 120. The wires 110 are placed within a lining 211 that comprises a portion of the interior 204. The wires 110 preferably pass from the interior 204 of the head covering 200 to the exterior 203 of the head covering 200 through at least one hole 212. In the illustrated embodiment, the at least one hole 212 is depicted as three holes, one located at the rear of the head covering 200, and one each located at each side of the head covering 200. The side of the head covering 200 comprises those portions intended to coincide with a wearer's ear when a user wears the head covering 200. The three holes 212 allow the wires 110 to pass from the interior 204 of the head covering 200 to the exterior 203 of the head covering 200, and then pass from the exterior 203 of the head covering to the interior 204 of the head covering, allowing each of the earphones 109 to be proximate to each of a user's ears. Excess portions of the wires 110 are preferably secured by a securing mechanism 213, such as ties, or additional pockets located within the head covering 200.

[0030] Referring now to FIG. 4, there is shown an elevation view of the exterior 203 of head covering 200 taken along line 4-4 of FIG. 3. In the illustrated embodiment, the exterior 203 comprises on/off button 231, next/fast forward button 232, and last/rewind button 233, collectively controls 230. Placement of the controls 230 coincides with the placement of the media player 120 such that the user may operate the digital media player 120 utilizing the controls 230. One skilled in the art will recognize that any suitable means for controlling the media player 120 from outside of the pocket 105 are contemplated and included herein as part of the disclosed embodiments.

[0031] Referring now to FIG. 5, there is shown a flow chart illustrating operative steps of a method for producing a device

for carrying a digital media player. The process begins at step 505, wherein the method provides a suitable head covering as described above with respect to FIG. 1. In step 510, a pocket, such the pocket 105, is provided for storing a media player 120. The process concludes at step 515 where the pocket is attached to the head covering by any suitable means, as described above with respect to FIG. 1. In this manner a user may produce a device for carrying a digital media player as described herein utilizing any head covering the user desires.

[0032] In alternative embodiments, the pocket 105 may be sized to accommodate different types and sizes of media players. By way of example, with reference to FIG. 6, at least one first strip of Velcro® 602 is secured to the interior 104 of the head covering 102, the media player 120 is suitably positioned on the first strip 602, and a complementary (i.e., hook or loop) second piece of Velcro® 604 is laid over first strip 602, thereby securing the media player between the first and second strips of Velcro®, the space occupied by the media player 120 forming a pocket 605 analogous to the pocket 105 (FIG. 1). In this manner, the pocket 105 may accommodate varying sizes of the digital media player 120. Alternatively, the strip 602 secured to the interior of the head covering 102 may comprise a single swatch of Velcro® which may or may not define an opening for the media player 120.

[0033] By way of a further example of an alternative embodiment, and with reference to FIG. 7, a wrap 702 is secured to the interior 104 of the head covering 102. The wrap 702 includes Velcro® hook material on a first side 702a and a complementary Velcro® loop material on a second side 702b. The media player 120 is positioned on the wrap 702 and the wrap is wrapped to envelope the media player, and secured thereto via the hook and loop material.

[0034] Accordingly, the disclosed embodiments provide numerous benefits over prior art methods of carrying a digital media player. For example, the disclosed embodiments provide an apparatus for carrying a digital media player that allows independent use of a user's headphones or ear buds free from attachment to a head covering. In addition, the disclosed embodiments provide an apparatus for carrying a digital media player that may be used while the user is sweaty, the user is multi-tasking, or the user is lying down. Finally, the disclosed embodiments provide an apparatus for carrying a digital media player such that the digital media player may easily be controlled while in operation, and easily removed at the user's leisure.

[0035] It is understood that the present invention may take many forms and embodiments. Accordingly, several variations may be made in the foregoing without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention. For example, the pocket may be located on the interior or exterior of the head covering, the pocket may be located near the center of the head covering or off of center of the head covering, and/or, when the head covering is a "baseball cap" style of head covering, as exemplified in FIGS. 1-2A, the pocket may be located on the bill of the head covering. Still further, a pocket may be formed on a shirt of a user, the pocket being located, for example, proximate to the front or back side of the neckline of the shirt, and being configured as described above for receiving a media player. In addition, a wide variety of listening devices, such as wireless headphones, wired headphones joined by a securing band, wireless speakers, or Bluetooth™ supported car stereo equipment may be used with the apparatus. Still further, the

controls may comprise buttons, a clear plastic window, an opening exposing the digital media player's controls, or other controlling mechanism.

[0036] Having thus described the present invention by reference to certain of its preferred embodiments, it is noted that the embodiments disclosed are illustrative rather than limiting in nature and that a wide range of variations, modifications, changes, and substitutions are contemplated in the foregoing disclosure and, in some instances, some features of the present invention may be employed without a corresponding use of the other features. Many such variations and modifications may be considered obvious and desirable by those skilled in the art based upon a review of the foregoing description of preferred embodiments. Accordingly, it is appropriate that the appended claims be construed broadly and in a manner consistent with the scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for carrying a media player, the apparatus comprising:

a pocket configured for receiving and securing a media player; and
means for attaching said pocket to a head covering.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising said head covering to which said pocket is attached.

3. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising said head covering to which said pocket is attached, said head covering including at least one control for operating said media player, said at least one control being accessible while said head covering covers a head.

4. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising said head covering to which said pocket is attached, said head covering including at least one control for operating said media player, said at least one control being accessible while said head covering covers a head, said at least one control further including buttons located on the exterior of said head covering, said buttons corresponding to at least one control on said media player.

5. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising said head covering to which said pocket is attached, said head covering including at least one control for operating said media player, said at least one control being accessible while said head covering covers a head, said at least one control comprising an opening in said head covering exposing at least one control of said media player.

6. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising:

said head covering, said pocket being affixed to the interior of said head covering;

at least one earphone;

wires coupling said at least one earphone to said media player; and

wherein said head covering defines at least one opening through which said wires pass from said media player positioned within the interior of said head covering to said at least one earphone located externally of said head covering.

7. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said pocket is fabricated from a water resistant material.

8. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said pocket is fabricated from an elastic material capable effective for stretching to accommodate said media player.

9. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said pocket comprises a wrap configured for enveloping said media player, said wrap further including a hook and loop material for securing said wrap about said media player.

10. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said at least one pocket opening comprises securing means for securing said media player in said pocket, said securing means defining an opening for the passage of wires extending from said media player secured within said pocket to earphones located externally of said pocket.

11. A system for carrying a media player comprising:

a head covering;

a media player;

a pocket configured for securing said media player to the interior of said head covering; and

at least one control for operating said media player, said at least one control being accessible from an exterior side of said head covering while said head covering covers a head.

12. The system of claim 11 further comprising:

at least one earphone;

wires for coupling said at least one earphone to said media player; and

wherein said head covering defines at least one opening for allowing said wires to pass from said media player positioned within the interior of said head covering to said earphones located externally of said head covering.

13. The system of claim 11 further comprising:

at least one earphone; and

wires for coupling said at least one earphone to said media player, said at least one control for operating said media player being positioned on said wires.

14. The system of claim 11 further comprising:

at least one earphone;

wires for coupling said at least one earphone to said media player; and

wherein said head covering defines at least one opening for allowing said wires to pass from said media player positioned within the interior of said head covering to said earphones located externally of said head covering.

15. The system of claim 11, wherein said at least one control comprises buttons positioned on said head covering, said buttons corresponding to an operating mechanism on said media player.

16. The system of claim 11, wherein said at least one control defines an opening in said head covering exposing an operating mechanism on said media player.

17. The system of claim 11, wherein said pocket comprises an elastic material effective for stretching to accommodate said digital media player.

18. The system of claim 1, wherein said at least one pocket opening comprises securing means for securing said media player in said pocket, said securing means defining an opening for the passage of wires extending from said media player secured within said pocket to earphones located externally of said pocket.

19. The system of claim 1, wherein said pocket comprises a wrap configured for enveloping said media player, said wrap further including a hook and loop material for securing said wrap about said media player.

20. A method for producing a device for carrying a media player, the method comprising a step of attaching a pocket to an interior portion of a head covering, said pocket being sized for receiving said media player and securing said media player to said interior portion of a head covering.