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Neck seal

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A flexible neck seal (24') for use in an oil film bearing assembly for a roll (10) in a rolling mill having a tapered neck (14). Neck seal (24') is mounted for rotation with roll (10) and comprises a solid circular body having radially outwardly projecting, rubbing flanges (32', 34') aligned with which are axially spaced radially inwardly directed ridges (56, 58) for contact with tapered neck (14).

NECK SEAL**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**1. Field of the Invention

5 This invention relates generally to rolling mill oil film bearings, and is concerned in particular with an improved neck seal employed to retain oil in and to exclude contaminants from such bearings.

2. Description of the Prior Art

10 With reference initially to Figure 1, a known oil film bearing assembly is partially shown as including a roll 10 having an end face 12, and a tapered neck section 14 leading to a reduced diameter end section 16 surrounded by a sleeve 18. The sleeve is keyed or otherwise fixed to the roll neck for rotation therewith within a bushing 20 fixed in a chock 22.

15 A flexible neck seal 24 is received on the tapered neck section 14 for rotation therewith. The seal has a circular body with inboard and outboard lips 26, 28 in contact with the neck surface. The outboard lip 28 is reinforced by a spring, and is separated from the seal body by a gap 30. First and second axially spaced flanges 32, 34 project radially outwardly from the seal body, and a third flinger 36 projects angularly towards the chock 22.

20 The seal body is internally reinforced by an embedded steel cable 38 and coiled spring 40, and is externally constrained by a metal retaining band 42 located between the flanges 32, 34.

25 The flanges 32, 34 have oppositely directed lips arranged to frictionally contact the shoulders of a seal end plate 44, the latter being fixed to the chock 22 and cooperating therewith to define a sump 46. An inner seal ring 48 and a water guard 50 complete the seal assembly.

30 In operation, the roll 10, neck seal 24, inner seal ring 48 and sleeve 18 rotate together, while the bushing 20, chock 22, seal end plate 44 and water guard 50 remain stationary. Oil is supplied continuously between the sleeve 18 and bushing 20. The thus supplied oil is hydrodynamically formed into a film at the bearing load zone before emerging from between the sleeve and bushing for collection in the sump 46.

The lip seal 28, flinger 36 and outboard flange 34 serve to retain oil in the bearing, whereas the water guard 50, inner seal ring 48 and inboard flange 32 serve to exclude cooling water and entrained contaminants from penetrating into the bearing.

5 Proper seating and positioning of the neck seal 24 on the tapered roll neck section 14 is critical to the avoidance of leakage problems. However, because of the gap 30, the outboard portion of the seal body under the outboard flange 34 lacks radial support, with the main contact between the seal body and the roll neck being at 52 under the inboard flange 32. Thus, when the seal is mounted on 10 the roll neck, friction at 54 between the end of the sleeve 20 and the unsupported portion of the seal body can cause the seal to seat in an offset position. The mispositioning is random, virtually impossible to detect, and can cause leakage.

It would be desirable to eliminate or at least significantly minimize the above described problem.

15 Any discussion of documents, devices, acts or knowledge in this specification is included to explain the context of the invention. It should not be taken as an admission that any of the material formed part of the prior art base or the common general knowledge in the relevant art in Australia on or before the priority date of the claims herein.

20 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In accordance with a first aspect of the present invention there is provided a neck seal for use in an oil film bearing assembly for a roll in a rolling mill, the roll having a neck with an intermediate tapered section leading to a reduced diameter end section contained within a sleeve, with the sleeve being fixed in relation to 25 the roll neck and being journaled for rotation in a bushing fixed within a chock, said neck seal being adapted to be mounted on the tapered section of the roll neck for rotation therewith at a location surrounded by a seal end plate fixed to the chock, said neck seal including:

30 a flexible circular body having axially spaced radially outwardly projecting first and second flanges configured and dimensioned to sealingly contact the seal end plate;

a metal retaining band encircling the exterior of said body between said first and second flanges;

first and second axially spaced ridges projecting radially inwardly from said body for contact with the tapered section of the roll neck, said first and second ridges being respectively aligned substantially radially with and radially joined to said first and second flanges by solid intermediate portions of said body; and

5 a third ridge projecting radially inwardly from said body for contact with the tapered section of the roll neck, said third ridge being located between and spaced axially from both said first and second ridges, and being radially aligned with and radially spaced from said retaining band by a solid intermediate portion of said body.

10 In accordance with a second aspect of the present invention there is provided a neck seal for use on the tapered neck section of a roll in a rolling mill, said neck seal including:

a circular body having a tapered bore configured and dimensioned to accommodate axial mounting of said neck seal on said tapered neck section;

15 axially spaced first and second flanges projecting radially outwardly from said body;

a metal retaining band encircling the exterior of said body between said first and second flanges;

20 axially spaced first and second ridges projecting radially inwardly from said body into said bore for contact with said tapered neck section, said first and second ridges being respectively aligned substantially radially with and integrally joined to said first and second flanges by solid intermediate portions of said body; and

25 a third ridge projecting radially inwardly from said body into said base for contact with said tapered neck section, said third ridge being located between and axially spaced from both said first and second ridges, and being aligned with and radially spaced from said retaining band by a solid intermediate portion of said body.

30 The support ridges minimise frictional resistance to axial movement of the seal body into its seated position on the tapered section of the roll neck.

Advantageously, additional compliance ridges are added to the seal body at its interface with the end of the sleeve. The compliance ridges may be deformable to ease radial positioning of the seal body.

Comprises/comprising" when used in this specification is taken to specify the presence of stated features, integers, steps or components but does not preclude the presence or addition of one or more other features, integers, steps, components or groups thereof.

5 **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

These and other features and advantages of the present invention will now be described in greater detail with continued reference to the accompanying drawings, wherein:

10 Figure 1 is a partial cross sectional view through a seal assembly embodying a neck seal of conventional design; and

Figure 2 is a view similar to Figure 1 showing a seal assembly incorporating a neck seal in accordance with the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

15 With reference to Figure 2, where components other than the neck seal are identical to those illustrated in Figure 1 and thus have been identified by the same reference numerals, it will be seen that the neck seal 24' of the present invention has a solid circular body with inboard and outboard lips 26', 28', inboard and outboard flanges 32', 34', a flinger 36' and an outer metal retaining band 42.

20 The seal body is additionally provided with axially spaced first and second ridges 56, 58 projecting radially inwardly for contact with the tapered neck section 14. The ridges 56, 58 are respectively aligned substantially radially with and are radially joined to the flanges 32', 34' by solid intermediate portions of the seal body.

25 Preferably, a third inwardly projecting ridge 60 is located between and spaced axially from both the first and second ridges 56, 58. Ridge 60 is aligned radially with the outer metal retaining band 42 and is separated therefrom by a solid intermediate portion of the seal body.

30 The ridges 56, 58, 60 provide radial support for and precise positioning of the flanges 32', 36' and the metal retaining band 42, while also beneficially reducing frictional resistance to axial seating of the neck seal on the roll neck. The ridges 56, 58 and 60 are also compliant and thus serve to compensate for manufacturing tolerances.

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Fourth compliance ridges 62 are preferably provided on the outboard side of the seal body for contact with the end of the sleeve 20. The ridges 62 are deformable to accommodate radial shifting of the seal body with respect to the sleeve, thus avoiding frictionally induced distortion of the seal body as it is pushed into its seated position.

THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. A neck seal for use in an oil film bearing assembly for a roll in a rolling mill, the roll having a neck with an intermediate tapered section leading to a reduced diameter end section contained within a sleeve, with the sleeve being fixed in relation to the roll neck and being journalled for rotation in a bushing fixed within a chock, said neck seal being adapted to be mounted on the tapered section of the roll neck for rotation therewith at a location surrounded by a seal end plate fixed to the chock, said neck seal including:
- 5 a flexible circular body having axially spaced radially outwardly projecting first and second flanges configured and dimensioned to sealingly contact the seal end plate;
- 10 a metal retaining band encircling the exterior of said body between said first and second flanges;
- 15 first and second axially spaced ridges projecting radially inwardly from said body for contact with the tapered section of the roll neck, said first and second ridges being respectively aligned substantially radially with and radially joined to said first and second flanges by solid intermediate portions of said body; and
- 20 a third ridge projecting radially inwardly from said body for contact with the tapered section of the roll neck, said third ridge being located between and spaced axially from both said first and second ridges, and being radially aligned with and radially spaced from said retaining band by a solid intermediate portion of said body.
2. The neck seal as claimed in claim 1 further including an end face on said body, said end face having radially spaced fourth ridges projecting axially from said body for contact with said sleeve.
- 25 3. A neck seal for use on the tapered neck section of a roll in a rolling mill, said neck seal including:
- a circular body having a tapered bore configured and dimensioned to accommodate axial mounting of said neck seal on said tapered neck section;

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axially spaced first and second flanges projecting radially outwardly from said body;

a metal retaining band encircling the exterior of said body between said first and second flanges;

5 axially spaced first and second ridges projecting radially inwardly from said body into said bore for contact with said tapered neck section, said first and second ridges being respectively aligned substantially radially with and integrally joined to said first and second flanges by solid intermediate portions of said body; and

10 a third ridge projecting radially inwardly from said body into said base for contact with said tapered neck section, said third ridge being located between and axially spaced from both said first and second ridges, and being aligned with and radially spaced from said retaining band by a solid intermediate portion of said body.

15 4. A neck seal substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to Figure 2 of the accompanying drawing.

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