PARTIALLY REMOVABLE GLOVE

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ABSTRACT

A protective glove extends upward from the wrist at least partway toward the elbow but is partially removable from the thumb and four fingers by a seam extending across the back of the hand. The seam is preferably secured with a watertight closure such as a loop and hook fabric fastening strip, a zipper and the like. The glove preferably includes an insulating fabric liner, such as wool or polypropylene fabric, for use in skiing or snow sports. Alternatively, the entire glove may be formed of a non-porous foamed elastic fabric, such as neoprene, for water sports.
FIG. 5
PARTIALLY REMOVABLE GLOVE

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] The present application claims priority to the provisional application for a “Partially Removable Glove”, having Ser. No. 60/660,797 and attorney docket # 162.01, filed on Mar. 11, 2005, which is incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates to gloves, and more particularly to insulating gloves used in skiing and other sports.

[0003] Gloves intended for skiing and other sports wherein the wearer is exposed to low temperature require multiple or thick layers of insulation, as well as durable waterproof materials and fabrics. Such gloves frequently extend beyond the wrist and cover at least a portion of the forearm below the elbow, thus precluding snow, ice or water from entering under the sleeve of the wearer’s jacket.

[0004] While such a glove can be very comfortable, the combination of materials and layers provided to achieve such comfort and durability inherently limits the dexterity of the gloves hands. Accordingly, skiers find it necessary to remove the glove from their hand when for example using a cell phone, taking something from their pocket, unfolding a map and the like. Afterwards considerable time and manipulation is required with the other gloved hand to replace the removed glove.

[0005] Others have attempted to solve this problem by providing gloves that allow for the one or more of the fingers to be partially exposed. For example U.S. Pat. No. 4,704,743 teaches deploying a zipper that extends from the base of the thumb on the palm side of the hand around the index finger and back to about the base of the thumb on the back side of the hand. This configuration, while exposing the thumb and index finger requires considerable dexterity to open and close, which can be difficult when the other hand is gloved. Further, as the opening extends around both side of the hand, it can interfere with the wearer’s grip and dexterity when the glove is on and removable portion is closed.

[0006] U.S. Pat. No. 5,444,874 teaches a glove having a series of three opening flaps along the wrist and lower hand portions. While opening the flaps may improve the dexterity of the remaining gloves thumb and fingers, these portions must be removed when the wearer desires the full dexterity of a bare hand. Thus, the wearer must go through the elaborate process of opening the three flaps as well as removing the finger-covering portion in an additional step.

[0007] U.S. Pat. No. 4,651,350 appears to teach a partially removable glove with a flap that covers the thumb and a separate flap or pouch that cover the remaining fingers. While the thumb covering flap has a seam opening for uncovering only a portion of the thumb, the finger-covering flap is a mitten for all four fingers. The mitten portion flap folds over the back of the hand when the four fingers are exposed, resulting in a seam across the palm. If the seam does not have overlapping fabric from both sides, it is subject to leakage or water, ice and snow, as well as simply drafts. If the palm seam deploys a physical closure or layers of overlapping fabric from both side this extra bulk will interfere with the wearer’s grip when the fingers are not exposed. Further, as this glove deploys two separate finger protective flaps, it requires more effort and dexterity to remove and replace with the other hand gloved.

[0008] U.S. Pat. No. 6,810,530 also teaches a glove with a flap that covers the thumb and a separate flap or pouch that covers the remaining four fingers. Both fold back over the back of the hand when the fingers are exposed, thus forming a seam across the palm. Although the finger and thumb covering flaps can be tucked under an elastic band at the wrist, they still leave a seam across the wearer’s palm. Further, as this glove also deploys two separate finger protective flaps, it requires more effort and dexterity to remove and replace with the other hand gloved. The palm seam can interfere with the wearer’s grip when the fingers are not exposed. Further, it is anticipated that the separate thumb flap will interfere with the gloves flexibility when the hand is fully enclosed and protected.

[0009] Accordingly, there is a need for a type of ski or other glove that provides thermal insulation, hand protection and moisture exclusion that can be removed quickly to expose the more dexterous bare fingers, as well as replaced quickly. There is also a need for such a glove wherein the means to expose the finger and palms does not in fact render the glove stiffer or cause discomfort when the hand is fully enclosed and protected.

[0010] It is therefore a first object of the present invention to overcome the aforementioned deficiencies of the prior art and provide a glove that keeps hands protected, warm and dry by enclosing the fingers and thumb in a flexible fabric.

[0011] It is yet another object to provide a glove that extends back from the wrist towards the elbow to provide for maximum protection for water and moisture intrusion.

[0012] It is a further object to provide a glove with the aforementioned benefits and advantages that is partially removable to provide maximum dexterity without removal of the entire glove.

[0013] Yet another object is to provide for the gloves partial removal and replacement in a manner that is rapid and can be performed with the opposite hand fully gloved.

[0014] A further object is to provide the above benefits of partial removal without compromise to the overall water and moisture tightness of the glove.

[0015] An additional object is to provide the qualities and benefits of a partially removable portion yet without interfering in the wearers grip or comfort when the glove is not removed.

[0016] A still further objective is to provide a glove wherein the removable portion cannot be readily detached from the glove and thus subject to loss or damage.

SUMMARY OF INVENTION

[0017] In the specification below the terms above (or upper) and below (or lower) refer to relative positions of elements of the invention with respect to anatomical features, including the hand, wrist, digits, forearm and elbow. Specifically, the terms “above” and “upper” refer to the direction from or at the features that are closer to end of the
fingers. In contrast, the term “below” or “lower” refers to features that are closer to the forearm or wrist side of the hand.

[0018] In the present invention, the first object is achieved by providing a glove having a tubular sleeve portion for covering at least the wrist to mid hand, a finger protective portion subdivided into a first tubular member for receiving the thumb and at least a second tubular member for receiving one or more fingers. The finger protective portion is detachably connected to the tubular sleeve portion in the backhand oriented side, providing a seam between the tubular sleeve and the finger protective portion.

[0019] A second aspect of the invention is characterized in that the finger protective portion is connected to the tubular sleeve portion in the palm oriented side from just below the little finger diagonally across the palm to below the first thumb joint adjacent to the wrist. This configuration provides the maximum dexterity without removal of the entire glove. Further, the resulting seam for partial removal does not interfere with the wearer’s grip or cause discomfort. The opening seam on the opposite or backside of the hand is readily rendered substantially water tight such that the wearer’s hands are protected, warm and dry by enclosing the fingers and thumb in a flexible material or fabric. In addition, the partial removal and replacement is rapid and can be performed with the gloved hand.

[0020] The above and other objects, effects, features, and advantages of the present invention will become more apparent from the following description of the embodiments thereof taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[0021] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a first embodiment of the invention in an open state, exposing at least a portion of the thumb and four fingers.

[0022] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of a second embodiment of the invention, exposing at least a portion of the thumb and four fingers.

[0023] FIG. 3 is a plan view of the first embodiment in the closed state as viewed from above the palm side of the wearer’s hand.

[0024] FIG. 4 is a plan view of the first embodiment in the closed state as viewed from below the backside of the wearer’s hand.

[0025] FIG. 5 is a sectional view through the seam in FIG. 4, and reference line A-A’ in FIG. 3.

[0026] FIG. 6 is an alternative embodiment of the invention showing a sectional view across the seam in FIG. 5 taken at reference line B-B’ in FIG. 3.

[0027] FIG. 7 is a plan view of the third embodiment in the closed state as viewed from above the palm side of the wearer’s hand.

[0028] FIG. 8 is a plan view of the third embodiment in the closed state as viewed from below the backside of the wearer’s hand.

[0029] FIG. 9 is a plan view of the fourth embodiment in the closed state as viewed from above the palm side of the wearer’s hand.

[0030] FIG. 10 is a plan view of the fourth embodiment in the closed state as viewed from below the backside of the wearer’s hand.

[0031] FIG. 11 is a sectional view through the seam in FIG. 10 at reference line C-C’.

[0032] FIG. 12 is a plan view of the fourth embodiment in the closed state as viewed from above the palm side of the wearer’s hand.

[0033] FIG. 13 is a plan view of the fourth embodiment in the closed state as viewed from below the backside of the wearer’s hand.

[0034] FIG. 14 is an elevation of just the trigger finger and the adjacent portion of the hand in the fourth embodiment with the liner, shown in a dashed line, removed from the trigger finger.

[0035] FIG. 15 is a plan view of the fifth embodiment in the closed state as viewed from above the palm side of the wearer’s hand.

[0036] FIG. 16 is a plan view of the fifth embodiment in the closed state as viewed from below the backside of the wearer’s hand.

[0037] FIG. 17 is a plan view of the sixth embodiment in the closed state as viewed from above the palm side of the wearer’s hand.

[0038] FIG. 18 is a plan view of the sixth embodiment in the closed state as viewed from below the backside of the wearer’s hand.

[0039] FIG. 19 is a plan view of the seventh embodiment in the closed state as viewed from above the palm side of the wearer’s hand.

[0040] FIG. 20 is a plan view of the seventh embodiment in the closed state as viewed from below the backside of the wearer’s hand.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0041] Referring to FIGS. 1 through 20, wherein like reference numerals refer to like components in the various views, there is illustrated therein a new and improved partially removable glove, generally denominated 100 herein.

[0042] In accordance with the present invention, partially removable glove 100 generally comprises a tubular sleeve portion 110 for covering from at least about the wrist to mid hand, a finger protective portion 120 subdivided into a first tubular member 124 for receiving the thumb and at least a second tubular member 125 member for receiving one or more fingers. The finger protective portion 120 encloses the fingers and thumb in a flexible fabric. The finger protective portion 120 is connected to the tubular sleeve portion in the palm oriented side opposite side which cover the back of the wearer’s hand it merely overlaps the tubular sleeve 110 to provide a seam 130 between the tubular sleeve 110 and the finger protective portion 120. As illustrated in FIG. 4, the overlapping seam opening 130 extends diagonally with respect to the principle axis of the tubular sleeve from behind the little finger (L in the figure) to below the thumb (Th in the figure, with other finger or digits labeled d).
Thus, as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, the finger protective portion 120 is partially removable from the tubular sleeve 110 to expose the base thumb and digits at or above (that is on the side closer to the elbow) the first knuckle of each finger, thus rapidly providing the wearer the benefits of the improved dexterity of the unprotected thumb and four digits. Further, as the partially removed finger protective portion 124 is still attached to the tubular sleeve covering the wrist and the upper portion of the hand, it is not subject to loss as would be a completely removable portion. Moreover, the thumb and four digits can be rapidly inserted back into the finger protective portion 120 after the task that had required greater finger dexterity is completed. As will be more fully appreciated from the description of additional and preferred embodiments below, there are additional benefits of the instant invention beyond keeping the hands and finger protected, warm and dry. As the tubular sleeve optionally extends back from the wrist towards the elbow water, snow and ice are precluded from entering into the glove, as well as a shirt or sleeve jacket of the wearer. Further, the seam location and construction for partially removing finger protective portion 120 provides the maximum dexterity without removal of the entire glove. In addition, the partial removal and replacement of finger protective portion 120 is rapid and can be performed with the gloved hand. In other aspects of the invention the seam 130 provided for partial removal is optionally rendered substantially watertight. Further, in the preferred embodiments seam 120 does not interfere with the wearer’s grip or cause discomfort.

In the embodiment shown in FIG. 1 a separate tubular member is provided for each of the four digits. In contrast, in the embodiment in FIG. 2, a mitten, the second tubular 125 member is a flattened pouch for receiving all four digits, it being understood that the term digits represents a finger other than the thumb.

FIGS. 3 and 4 more fully illustrate the construction of the glove 100. FIG. 3 is a plan view from the palm side of the hand of the glove of FIG. 1 to illustrate that the tubular member 110 is connected to the finger protective member at its bottom edge 126. The finger protective member is preferably cut on a bias with respect to the common axis of the hand and arm, as edge 126 extends from point A, just below the thumb, to point B just below the little finger. The opposite side of edge 126, shown in FIG. 4 is not attached to tubular sleeve 110, forming the overlapping seam or opening 130. It should be noted that as the tubular member 110 extends up the hand to just below the first knuckle, terminating at edge 111, the finger protective portion 120 and tubular sleeve overlap between finger protective portion edge 126 and tubular sleeve edge 111. Cutting the finger protective portion at a bias and providing the seam on the back side of the hand provides the least restriction of the seam on the motion of the fully protective hand, that is when the glove is worn in the normal configurations, and facilitates the removal of the finger protective portion in one continuous motion with the other hand.

FIG. 5 is a section view at through seam 130 and the bottom edge 126 of finger protective portion 120, corresponding to reference line A-A' in FIG. 4. Thus on the palm side of the wearer’s hand between point A and B the inner tubular sleeve 110 is stitched or otherwise attached to finger protective portion 120. Whereas on the backside of the hand the between reference points A and B inner tubular sleeve 110 is not attached to finger protective portion 120, defining seam region 130.

Further, a handle 160 in the form of a fabric strip, a loop or hook and the like is preferably attached to the finger protective portion 120 close to the edge that forms seam 130. Thus, the wearer can grasp handle 160 to pull the finger protective portion 120 of glove 100 up away from tubular sleeve 110 to expose the wearer’s thumb and fingers.

It should be appreciated that in the preferred embodiments the distal end of tubular sleeve 110 has a first aperture at edge 112 for receiving the end of the thumb (11 in the Figure) and a second aperture at edge 111 for receiving the remaining four fingers. The end of tubular sleeve 110 is thus closed at region 113, between the thumb and the index finger (1 in the figure).

FIGS. 7 and 8 illustrate the construction of a third embodiment of the glove that includes a thermally insulating fabric liner 140. The thermally insulating fabric liner is preferably attached to the inner layer of the outer fabric that forms tubular sleeve 110 at closed region 113. Alternatively, the thermally insulating fabric liner can be attached to the tubular sleeve at additional or alternative locations. More preferably in the embodiment, the thermally insulating fabric has a slot 141 near the top 1/3 of the thumb where the fabric overlaps such that the thumb tip can be easily exposed through the slot. The thermally insulating fabric is preferably wool or polypropylene fabric, for use in skiing or snow sports. Alternatively, the entire glove may be formed of a non-porous foam elastic fabric, such as neoprene, for water sports.

It should be appreciated that the seam 130 is optionally simply the overlapping portion of tubular sleeve 110 and finger protective portion 120. However, depending on the gloves field of use it may be preferable to provide a substantially watertight seal via a closure at seam 130. Such a seal may be providing by lining the mating surface of seam 130 with at least one of "VELCRO" type hook and loop detachable fastener, or providing a closure device such as a zipper, a latch, one or more snaps and the like at or about seam 130. Further, providing a substantially expandable elastic fabric at and around seam 130 can also facilitate a tighter or water tight closure, as the fabric contracts around the hand and/or seal surfaces. It should be appreciated that the glove itself can be fabricated from expandable elastic fabric, foam elastic fabric, nylon fabric, leather, thermally insulating flame and fire-resistant fabrics and the like, as well as combinations and/or layers thereof depending on the intended end-use.

Alternatively, as shown in FIG. 6, the watertight seal may be formed by an elastic foam fabric (i.e. Neoprene) 610. Preferably, as shown in FIG. 6, a first section of elastic foam fabric 610 is attached to the upward facing surface of the tubular sleeve 110 at edge 111. A second section of elastic foam fabric 611 is attached to the downward facing surface of finger protective portion 120 at seam 130 to face the first section 160. A cinch cord 650 may circumscribe the seam and the palm of the hand for urging the overlapping portion of the seal closed. The cinch cord 650 is encased in a surrounding fabric tube or sheath 640 that circumscribes the hand around seam 130 on the backside of the hand and the sewed or stitched seam 126 wherein the tubular sleeve
110 and the finger protective portion 120 on the palm side of the hand overlap. Thus, shortening the cinch cord 650 by conventional means urges the overlapping portions of the finger protective portion 120 and tube sleeve 110 at seam 130 together to compress the strips of elastic foam fabric 610 and 611 together to form a substantially watertight seal. It should be appreciated that numerous alternatives exist to provide the variable compression of cinch cord 150, such as elastic cords, circumscribing strips of elastic fabric, elastic material, including elastic fabric and the like.

[0052] FIGS. 9 and 10 illustrate yet another embodiment of the invention in which the finger protective portion 120 is contiguous with the tubular sleeve 110 on the palm side of the hand and has a closable seam 130 disposed on the backside of the hand from about behind the thumb running diagonally, with respect to the principal axis of the forearm, to about behind the little finger (from point E to D). As in the other embodiments, removal of the thumb and all four fingers from the finger protective sleeve 120 at the open seam 130 results in the unconnected finger protective portion flapping downward from about the palm side of the hand. In the more preferred embodiment of the invention, the portion of the fabric that forms the finger protective sleeve 120 on the backside of the hand, in FIG. 9, overlaps a portion of the fabric that forms the distal end of the tubular sleeve 110 on the backside of the hand. FIG. 11 is a cross-section through reference lines C-C in FIG. 10 to better illustrate this overlapping region, which is labeled 1000 in FIG. 10.

[0053] In addition, any of the embodiments described above may include a cinching cord closure 150 (or any other type of compressing closure, such as a “Velcro” loop, hook and strap, snaps and the like) at the proximal end of the tubular sleeve (proximal end is closest to the elbow), as shown FIG. 1. Such closures may also be deployed to form a seal for closing and render substantially watertight seam 130, or any adjacent portion of overlapping material in the tubular sleeve 110 and the finger protective portion 120.

[0054] FIGS. 12 and 13 illustrate still another embodiment of the invention in which the portion 1220 of liner 1230 covering the finger adjacent to the thumb (“trigger finger”) is partially removable, as it is effectively slit 1210 over half the finger’s circumference just above the adjacent knuckle. While the slit can be on either the back or palm side of the handle, it is shown as on the palm side of the finger so that the flap folds backward onto the back side of the hand when the “trigger finger” is removed. FIG. 14 is an elevation of just the trigger finger and adjacent portion of the hand showing the position of the liner when removed from the trigger finger shown in a different dashed line 1220 while the other half circumference remains attached.

[0055] FIGS. 15 and 16 illustrate still another embodiment of the invention in which the finger and thumb portions of the glove that would normally be uncovered when the flap (finger protective portion 120) is open are covered by stretchable fabric liner 1510 (like “SPANDEX™”, rather than a wool liner. No liner is present on the portion of the hand not covered by the stretchable liner.

[0056] FIGS. 17 and 18 illustrate still another embodiment of the invention in which only the four fingers of the glove has a stretchable fabric liner 1710 when the flap 120 is uncovered. The thumb is bare. No liner is present on the portion of the hand not covered by the stretchable liner. While liner 1710 is preferably a stretchable fabric like “SPANDEX™”, it is also optionally any other material, such as wool, rayon, “NEOPRENE™”, “LYCRA™” and the like.

[0057] FIGS. 19 and 20 illustrate still another embodiment of the invention in which the liner 1910 covering the thumb is partially removable, as it is effectively slit at 1920 over half the thumbs circumference just above the adjacent knuckle. The slit is on the palm side of the thumb so that when the thumb is removed the excess portion extends toward the back of the hand, so as to not interfere with the gripping surface of the thumb. This liner is preferably a stretchable fabric like “SPANDEX™”, but is optionally any other material, such as wool, rayon, “NEOPRENE™”, “LYCRA™” and the like.

[0058] While the invention has been described in connection with a preferred embodiment, it is not intended to limit the scope of the invention to the particular form set forth, but on the contrary, it is intended to cover such alternatives, modifications, and equivalents as may be within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

1. A glove comprising,
   a) a flexible tubular sleeve for covering from about between the wrist and the elbow at the proximal end, to about the middle of the hand at the distal end,
   b) a flexible finger protective sleeve open at the first end and subdivided into a first tubular member for receiving the thumb and at least a second tubular member for receiving one or more finger, wherein the closed ends of each tubular member seal the second end of said finger protective sleeve,
   c) wherein said finger protective portion is detachably connected to said tubular sleeve to form an overlapping seam at the portion of the tubular sleeve behind the thumb and fingers.

2. The glove according to claim 1 wherein the overlapping seam is disposed on the portion of said tubular sleeve and said finger protective sleeve behind the thumb and little finger on the back of the hand with said finger protective sleeve connected to said tubular sleeve at least within the palm of the hand.

3. The glove according to claim 1 wherein said first tubular sleeve has a first and second aperture at the distal end, wherein the first aperture is disposed to coincide with the first tubular member of said flexible finger protective sleeve for receiving the thumb and the second aperture is disposed with respect to the second tubular member of said finger protective sleeve for receiving one or more fingers.

4. The glove according to claim 1 further comprising a thermally insulating fabric liner having a first portion disposed within said tubular sleeve for covering at least the back of the hand and the wrist and a second portion extending to cover the thumb and the remaining four fingers.

5. The glove according to claim 1 wherein the overlapping seam opening of said finger protective sleeve extends diagonally with respect to the principle axis of the tubular sleeve from about below the little finger to below about the thumb.
6. The glove according to claim 1 further comprising a handle attached to said finger protective sleeve for urging the uncovering of the finger and thumb from the overlapping seam.

7. The glove according to claim 1 further comprising a closure device for gathering the excess fabric surrounding the proximal end of said tubular sleeve to urge it to tightly fit around the corresponding portion of the wrist or forearm.

8. The glove according to claim 7 wherein the closure device is a cinching cord that extends around the corresponding portion of the wrist or forearm.

9. The glove according to claim 4 wherein the portion of the thermally insulating fabric liner that covers the thumb comprises a slot for exposing the thumb tip through the insulating liner.

10. A glove according to claim 4 wherein a portion of the thermally insulating fabric liner extends to overlaps the fabric adjacent to the slot defining two overlapping fabric portions have an inner slot and an outer slot.

11. The glove according to claim 1 wherein the second tubular member of said flexible finger protective sleeve extends to the end thereof for receiving the four fingers.

12. The glove according to claim 1 further comprising a third, fourth and fifth tubular member in said flexible finger protective sleeve wherein the second, third, fourth and fifth tubular members are disposed with respect to said tubular sleeve for separately receiving each of the four fingers of the hand.

13. The glove according to claim 1 wherein the overlapping seam is optionally opened or sealed by a closure.

14. The glove according to claim 13 where the closure provides a substantially watertight seal.

15. The glove according to claim 13 where substantially watertight seal is formed by a closure selected from the group consisting of a pair of hook and loop fabric fastening strips, a zipper, a latch, and one or more snaps.

16. The glove according to claim 14 wherein the seal is rendered substantially watertight by elastic foam fabric covering contacting overlapping surfaces at the seam on both the said tubular sleeve and said finger protective sleeve.

17. The glove according to claim 16 wherein the closure urges the elastic foam fabric that contacts overlapping portion of the seam towards each other to close the seam.

18. The glove according to claim 17 wherein the closure is a cinch cord.

19. The glove according to claim 1 further comprising a stretchable fabric liner comprising a first portion connected to the distal end of said tubular sleeve extending to cover at least one of the thumb and the four fingers.

20. The glove according to claim 1 further comprising a fabric liner having a first portion connected to the distal end of said tubular sleeve extending to cover at least one of the thumb and the four finger wherein a portion of said fabric liner covering at least one digit is partially slit around the circumference so as to enable the partial removal and extension of the digit from underneath said fabric liner.

21. A glove comprising,
   a) a flexible tubular sleeve for covering from about between the wrist and the elbow at the proximal end to a point below about the first or lower finger joint on the hand at the distal end,
   b) a flexible finger protective sleeve open at the first end and subdivided into a first tubular member for receiving the thumb and at least a second tubular member for receiving one or more fingers, wherein the closed ends of each tubular member seal the second end of said finger protective sleeve,
   c) wherein said finger protective portion is contiguous with said tubular sleeve on the palm side of the hand and has a closable seam disposed on the backside of the hand running from about below the thumb diagonally, with respect to the principal axis of the forearm, to about below the little finger,
   d) whereby upon removal of the thumb and all four fingers from the finger protective sleeve at the open seam results in the unconnected finger protective portion flapping downward from about the palm side of the hand.

22. A glove according to claim 21 wherein a portion of the fabric that forms said finger protective sleeve on the backside of the hand overlaps a portion of the fabric that forms the distal end of the said tubular sleeve on the backside of the hand.

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