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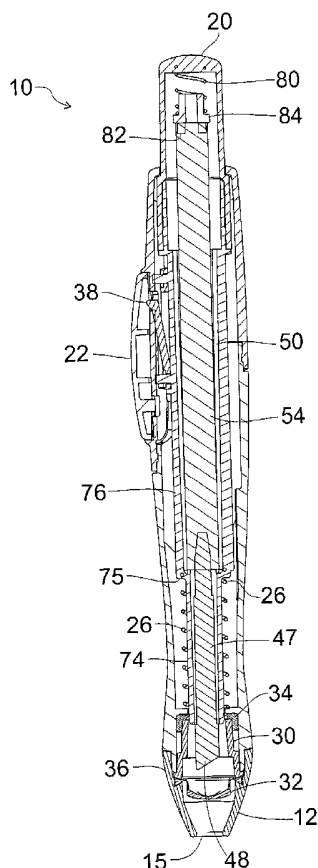
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(54) Title: CAPLESS RETRACTABLE SEALED MARKING INSTRUMENT



(57) Abstract: A capless, retractable marking instrument (10) has an airtight cavity incorporated in a housing portion (14). The airtight cavity has a chamber portion (30), a wiper seal (34) at one end of the chamber portion (30) and a seal portion (32) at the opposite end of the chamber portion (30). The seal portion (32) is positioned at the forward nib end of the marking instrument (10). The seal portion (32) has an aperture (116) defined by a cross-slit construction that includes two interconnecting linear slits (118, 120). The linear slits (118, 120) define flaps (122) which flex outwardly and back corresponding to the direction of travel of the nib portion (48) of the marketing instrument (10). The flaps (122) roll outwardly when the nib portion (48) is in the extended position and when the nib portion (48) is retracted the flaps (122) gently wipe any excess ink from the nib portion (48) and return to a closed, sealed position to maintain an airtight barrier in the cavity thereby substantially eliminating evaporation of the ink through the nib portion (48).



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B. FIELDS SEARCHED
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 U.S. : 401/99, 101, 107, 108, 111

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 3,525,573 A (FEND) 25 August 1970 (25.08.1970), Figs. 3 and 4.	1-4, 7-12, 14, 15, 19, 21-31, 33
Y	US 5,048,990 A (HASHIMOTO et al) 17 September 1991 (17.09.1991), column 2, lines 14-23.	5, 6, 13, 18
X		23, 26-30, 32
Y	US 6,036,385 A (BISTRACK) 14 March 2000 (14.03.2000), Fig. 28.	16
Y	US 4,544,297 A (GROSSIORD) 01 October 1985 (01.10.1985), Figs. 6 and 7.	20
Y	US 5,439,143 A (BROWN et al) 08 August 1995 (08.08.1995), Figs. 7-14.	23-30, 32

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

See patent family annex.

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