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(54) Circular knitting machine with jacquard pattern control mechanism

(57) A circular knitting machine and a jacquard pattern control mechanism therefor is provided in which knitting instrumentalities (27) slidably mounted in grooves in a rotating member, such as a needle cylinder, sinker cap or dial, are controlled by a rocker bar supporting member (40) slidably mounted in each groove behind the knitting instrumentality (27), the rocker bar supporting member (40) has at least one butt (41a) thereon and a rocker bar (44) pivotally mounted on the rocker bar supporting member and having magnetically attractable sections (44f, 44a) at opposite ends thereof. A magnetic attraction device (50) selectively attracts the magnetically attractable sections of the rocker bar to pivot the rocker bar to control the selection of knitting instrumentalities (27) to be moved from inactive to active positions, and a cam system (31, 32, 35, 46, 48) for moving the rocker bar supporting member (40) and selected knitting instrumentalities.

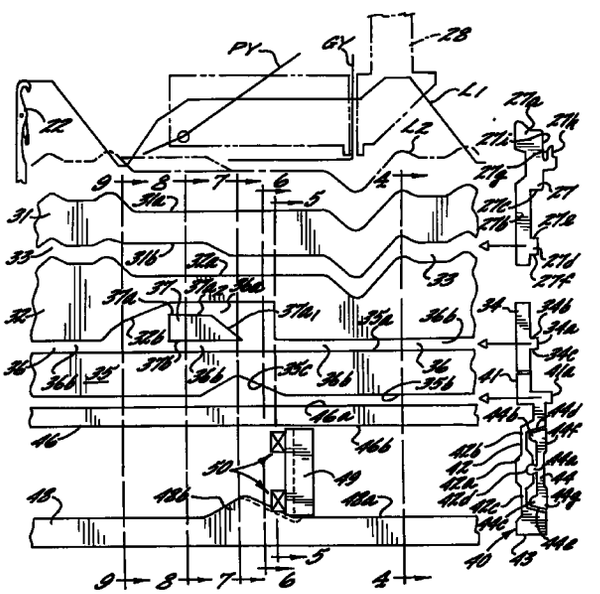

Fig. 1.

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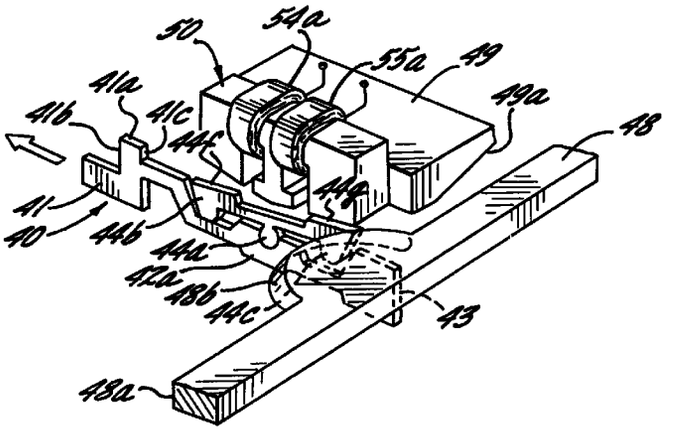

50
54a
55a
49
49a
48
41a
41b
41c
44f
44g
41
40
44b
44a
42a
43b
44c
43
48a

Fig. 2.

Description

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to circular knitting machines and more particularly to a jacquard pattern control mechanism for such circular knitting machines.

Background of the Invention

Circular knitting machines typically include a rotating needle cylinder having vertical grooves therein, in which cylinder needles are slidably mounted for movement between active (knitting) and inactive (welt) positions. In some machines, such needles are also movable to an intermediate (tuck) position.

Single knit circular knitting machines normally include a sinker cap mounted on top of the needle cylinder for rotation with the needle cylinder. The sinker cap has radial grooves therein, equal in number and corresponding to the grooves in the needle cylinder. A sinker is slidably mounted in each groove in the sinker cap for radial movement between active (extended) and inactive (retracted) positions. To produce some knit fabrics, the sinkers are moved selectively to a plurality of different active or extended positions to bring different portions of the sinkers into cooperative relation with the needles to form different stitch loops.

Separate cam systems are provided for operating the needles and the sinkers to move the needles and sinkers between the inactive positions and the active positions or intermediate positions or combinations thereof. Typically, the needles and sinkers have operating butts thereon which coact with cam tracks to control and operate the needles and sinkers.

In order to produce a variety of relatively intricate stitch patterns in the knit fabric, jacquard pattern control mechanisms are commonly provided and used. Such jacquard pattern control mechanisms typically select certain knitting needles for movement to the active (knitting) position while maintaining the other knitting needles in the inactive (welt) position.

Most jacquard pattern control mechanisms rely on multiple jacks in the sinker cap grooves and intricate pattern selection control devices for selecting the particular jacks to operate the sinkers. One example of such a control mechanism is disclosed in Japanese patent Laid-Open No. 45755/91 (Publication No. 03045755A). Such control mechanisms operate rather slowly which limits the production speed of the circular knitting machine and the complexity of the control mechanism obstructs the visibility of the various components, making it difficult to monitor the operation of the sinkers or to feed the knitting yarns to the needles through the yarn guides, etc.

Another example of a jacquard pattern control mechanism is disclosed in United States Patent No. 5,174,131. As is typical, the control mechanism is disclosed in patent No. 5,174,131 associated with knitting needles. Although this patent states that the control mechanism can be used to control the sinkers, no disclosure is provided as to the manner in which this control mechanism can be adapted to control the sinkers. Even in the control of the knitting needles, the control mechanism of patent No. 5,174,131 has several other disadvantages and deficiencies. For example, the rocker bar of the needle selection system is mounted directly on the knitting needle which has only one operating butt thereon. Additionally, the rocker bar is provided with a plurality of protruding butts for coaction with cam tracks to control the needle. If the butt of the knitting needle should become damaged, as frequently occurs, such as by knitting a yarn with a knot therein, the knitting needle will become uncontrollable, prompting the danger that one or more of the butts on the rocker bar may be broken. Further, the cam system associated with the rocker bar, as disclosed in patent No. 5,174,131, has a vertical cross section. Therefore, if an outside force acts on the rocker bar, the butt(s) thereon may disengage from the cam track(s).

Jacquard pattern control mechanisms must include a pattern selection device for the needles and/or sinkers. Such pattern selection devices have taken many different forms, examples of which may be found in United States Patent No. 5,375,436; 5,241,288; 4,905,484; 3,518,845 and 3,283,541 and in Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 299554/87. In U.S. Patent Nos. 5,375,436; 5,241,288 and 4,905,484 and Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 299554/87, the pattern selection devices comprise an electromagnetic device combining a permanent magnet and an electromagnet. In each of these devices, the magnetic force of the permanent magnet is cancelled or demagnetized by the electromagnet to control the knitting needles. Therefore, the magnetic force of the electromagnet must be limited to the magnetic force of the permanent magnet. In order to obtain the necessary attraction for needle selection, both the permanent magnet and the electromagnet must be large. Because of space limitations, it is therefore difficult to install the requisite number of magnets to perform the needle selection function.

U.S. Patent Nos. 3,518,845 and 3,283,541 disclose an electromagnetic device including a plurality of electromagnets for performing the needle selection function. In these devices, two separate electromagnets are utilized, one for selecting the needles for movement to the active position and another for selecting the needles to remain in the inactive position. In practice, these electromagnetic devices are too large and very expensive.

Summary of the Invention

With the foregoing in mind, it is an object of the present invention to provide a jacquard pattern control mechanism for a circular knitting machine which is equally adaptable to control of needles and sinkers and

which obviates the aforementioned disadvantages and deficiencies of prior jacquard pattern control mechanisms.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide an electromagnetic selection device for a jacquard pattern control mechanism which generates a strong attraction with a relatively limited power usage and which may be located in a small, limited space.

These objects of the present invention are achieved by a jacquard pattern control mechanism which includes a rocker bar supporting member slidably mounted in the groove of the needle cylinder or sinker cap with the needle or sinker to control the needle or sinker. A rocker bar is mounted on the rocker bar supporting member for pivotal movement about a medial pivot and has at least one magnetically attractable section at each end thereof. The rocker bar is devoid of protruding butts because the end portions of the bar serve to engage at least one rocker bar controlling cam. The rocker bar supporting member has at least one butt thereon which coacts with an actuating cam.

Preferably, an intermediate member is disposed between the rocker bar supporting member and the knitting needle or the sinker. This intermediate member has at least one protruding butt thereon which coacts with an intermediate cam track.

An electromagnetic selection device is provided in operative association with the magnetically attractable sections of the rocker bar to pivot the rocker bar selectively in accordance with a predetermined pattern. Preferably, the electromagnetic selection device includes a permanent magnet and first and second electromagnets connected to respective ends of the permanent magnet in series.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Figure 1 is a fragmentary, schematic view of the jacquard pattern control mechanism of the present invention;

Figure 2 is an enlarged, fragmentary perspective view of the rocker bar supporting member, rocker bar, rocker bar cam and electromagnetic selection device of the present invention;

Figure 3 is a fragmentary elevational view of the rocker bar and the electromagnetic selection device shown in Figure 2;

Figure 3A is a schematic view of the electromagnetic selection device and the wiring diagram therefor;

Figure 4 is a fragmentary vertical selection view taken substantially along line 4-4 in Figure 1;

Figure 5 is a fragmentary vertical sectional view taken substantially along line 5-5 in Figure 1;

Figure 6A is a fragmentary sectional view taken substantially along line 6-6 in Figure 1 showing the sinker and jacquard pattern control mechanism in pile forming selection;

Figure 6B is a view similar to Figure 6A showing the sinker and jacquard pattern control mechanism in non-pile selection;

Figure 7A is a fragmentary sectional view taken substantially along line 7-7 in Figure 1 showing the pattern control mechanism in pile forming selection;

Figure 7B is a view similar to Figure 7A showing the pattern control mechanism in non-pile selection;

Figure 8A is a fragmentary sectional view taken substantially along line 8-8 in Figure 1 showing the pattern control mechanism in pile forming selection;

Figure 8B is a view similar to Figure 8A showing the pattern control mechanism in non-pile selection;

Figure 9 is a fragmentary sectional view taken substantially along line 9-9 in Figure 1;

Figure 10 is a reduced schematic view similar to Figure 1 illustrating another embodiment of the present invention for forming high and low pile in a knit fabric;

Figure 12 is a perspective view illustrating a sinker for making high and low pile in a knit fabric;

Figure 12 is a fragmentary sectional view similar to Figure 9 showing an intermediate retractable cam in retracted position;

Figure 13 is an enlarged detail of the intermediate cam shown in Figure 12;

Figure 14 is a schematic view similar to Figure 1 of a further embodiment of the present invention showing the pattern control mechanism for controlling knitting needles;

Figure 15 is a fragmentary vertical sectional view showing the mechanism shown in Figure 14; and

Figure 16 is a schematic view similar to Figure 10 of a still further embodiment of the present invention for forming high and low pile in a knit fabric.

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

Referring now more specifically to the drawings and particularly to Figures 1-7, there is illustrated schematically and sectionally the core part of a circular knitting machine, generally indicated at **20**, which incorporates the jacquard pattern control mechanism of the present invention. Circular knitting machine **20** includes a rotary needle cylinder **21** having a multiplicity of grooves (not shown in Figures 1-7) therein. A knitting needle **22** is mounted for vertical sliding movement in each of the grooves in the needle cylinder **21**.

Circular knitting machine **20** further includes a cam block **23** mounted inside the needle cylinder **21** and mounts a needle cam **24** for raising and lowering the needles **22** between an active (knitting) position and an inactive (welting) position.

A rotary sinker cap or dial **25** is mounted on top of the needle cylinder **21** and has a multiplicity of grooves **26** extending radially from the outer periphery to the inner periphery thereof. A sinker **27** is slidably mounted in each of the sinker grooves **26** for movement between

an active (extended) position and an inactive (retracted) position. A sinker cam block **30** is mounted above the sinker cap **25** and mounts on its lower surface an inner sinker cam **31** and an outer sinker cam **32** in facing relation to the grooves **26** in sinker cap **25**.

Sinker **27** has a main section **27a** and an extension section **27b**. The outer end of the main section **27a** defines a vertical edge **27c**. A butt **27d** protrudes upwardly from extension section **27b** and has vertical edges **27e** and **27f**. The main section **27a** has a nose **27g** defining a first top edge **27h** for forming pile loops from a pile yarn **PY**. Main section **27a** has a second top edge **27i** for forming ground or non-pile stitch loops from a ground yarn **GY**. Pile yarn **PY** and ground yarn **GY** are fed to the needles **22** by a yarn carrier **28** (Figures 4-7).

Cam **31** has a side edge **31a** that engages the vertical edge **27c** of sinker **27** and a side edge **31b** which cooperates with a side edge **32a** on cam **32** to define a cam track **33** which receives the butt **27d** and controls sinker **27** by engagement of side edge **31b** with vertical edge **27e** and side edge **32a** with vertical edge **27f**. Cam **32** has another side edge **32b**, the function of which will be described presently.

An intermediate member **34** is disposed in each sinker groove in sinker cap **25** outwardly of sinker **27** (Figure 4). Intermediate member **34** has a butt **34a** thereon which has a first vertical edge **34b** and a second vertical edge **34c** (Figure 1). A first intermediate cam **35** is mounted on cam block **30** adjacent cam **32** and has a first side edge **35a** which cooperates with side edge **32b** to define a cam track **36**. Cam track **36** receives butt **34a** on intermediate member **34** and controls and moves intermediate member **34** by engagement of side edge **32b** with vertical edge **34b** and side edge **35a** with vertical edge **34c** (Figure 1). A second intermediate cam **37** is disposed in cam track **36** and has a first side edge **37a** and a second side edge **37b**. Side edge **37a** has a first sloped or angled section $37a_1$, and a second straight section $37a_2$. Side edge **37b** of cam **37** is straight and parallel to side edge **35a** of cam **35**. Cam **37** divides cam track **36** into two branches **36a** and **36b**. If butt **34a** on intermediate member **34** is caused to follow branch **36a** of cam track **36**, side edge **37a** of cam **37** engages vertical edge **34c** of butt **34a** and moves intermediate member **34** into contact with sinker **27** and moves sinker **27** further toward the needles **22**. Such movement brings the nose **27g** of sinker **27** into operative position to form pile loops over top edge **27h**. Thereafter, side edge **32b** returns intermediate member **34** back to its retracted position which corresponds to branch **36b** of cam track **36**.

The second intermediate cam **37** is preferably mounted on cam block **30** for movement between an extended, operative position and a retracted, inoperative position (Figures 12 and 13). Accordingly, cam block **30** is provided with a recess **30a** into which an inner end **38a** of a threaded operating member **38** extends. Cam **37** is mounted on the inner end **38a** of operating member **38** by receiving this inner end **38a** in a cavity **37c** in cam **37**. Cavity **37c** is larger than the inner end **38a** of operating member **38** such that cam **37** may move a predetermined amount longitudinally or axially of operating member **38**. A coil spring **39** is positioned around operating member **38** between cam **37** and the bottom of recess **30a** to bias cam **37** toward the inner end of operating member **38** and toward its operative position. Thus, cam **37** protects the butt **34a** from damage from outside forces which may act thereon.

A rocker bar supporting member **40** (Figure 2) is slidably mounted in each sinker groove **26** outwardly of intermediate member **34**. Rocker bar supporting member **40** includes an inner end section **41**, the lower portion of which is received in sinker groove **26** and the upper portion of which includes a butt **41a**. Butt **41a** includes a first vertical edge **41b** and a second vertical edge **41c**.

Rocker bar supporting member **40** includes a medial section **42** having a central portion **42a** and opposite end portions **42b** and **42c**. The lower portion of central portion **42a** is received in sinker groove **26** and the upper portion of which has a recess or socket **42d** therein. Opposite end portions **42b** and **42c** of medial section **42** are of less height than central portion **42a** such that the top edges thereof are recessed below the top edge of the central portion **42a**. Finally, rocker bar supporting member **40** includes an outer end section **43**, the lower portion of which is received in sinker groove **26**.

A rocker bar **44** is mounted on the medial section **42** of rocker bar supporting member **40** for pivotal movement by a circular pivot protrusion **44a** which is received in socket **42d**. Rocker bar **44** has symmetrical opposite end portions **44b** and **44c** which are beveled, wedge-shaped at their outer extremities at **44d** and **44e**. The lower portions of opposite end portions **44b** and **44c** are bulbous-shaped and serve to engage the upper edges of end portions **42b** and **42c** of medial section **42** of rocker bar supporting member **40** to limit the pivotal movement of rocker bar **44**. The upper sections **44f** and **44g** of end portions **42b** and **42c** are magnetically attractable and are raised above the central portion of rocker bar **40**.

A rocker bar supporting member cam **46** is carried by cam block **30** adjacent cam **35**. Cam **46** has a side edge **46a** which is straight and spaced from a second side edge **35b** of cam **35** to define therewith a cam track **47** which receives and controls butt **41a** on rocker bar supporting member **40**. Cam **35** has a concave section **35c** in its second side edge **35b** corresponding to the location of second intermediate cam **37**.

Cam **46** has a second side edge **46b** which is positioned to engage wedge-shaped end **44d** of rocker bar **44** when rocker bar **44** is pivoted to have end portion **44b** extended to maintain the rocker bar **44** and rocker bar supporting member **40** in the inactive, retracted position. A rocker bar actuating cam **48** is mounted on

cam block **30** and has a side edge **48a** spaced from side edge **46b** a distance equal to the length of rocker bar **44**. Side edge **48a** engages the wedge-shaped end **44e** when rocker bar **44** is pivoted to position end portion **44c** in extended position. Cam **48** has a protruding portion **48b** in side edge **48a** in alignment with and of the same shape as the concave section in side edge **35b** of cam **35**. The protruding portion **48b** preferably has a trapezoidal-shaped cross section corresponding to the wedge-shape of the end **44e** of rocker bar **44**.

Upstream of protruding portion **48b** of cam **48**, a cancelling cam **49** is positioned above the path of travel of rocker bar **44** and includes an upwardly and outwardly sloped surface **49a** to engage a pivoted or tilted rocker bar **44** and cam rocker bar **44** back to a level or neutral position. Cancelling cam **49** will function irrespective of the direction in which rocker bar **44** is pivoted.

A magnetic attraction selection device, generally indicated at **50**, is positioned immediately downstream of cancelling cam **49** and above the path of travel of rocker bar **44** such that the rocker bar **44** on the rocker bar supporting member **40** passes closely therebeneath. Selection device **50** is positioned upstream of protruding portion **48b** of cam **48**.

Selection device **50** includes two magnetic attraction means **51** and **52** (Figures 2 and 3) disposed in position to attract magnetically the magnetic attractable sections **44f** and **44g**, respectively, of rocker bar **44** when rocker bar **44** passes therebeneath. Preferably, magnetic attraction selection device **50** comprises a permanent magnet **53** in the center and first and second electromagnets **54** and **55** on opposite sides thereof, which define the magnetic attraction means **51**, **52**. Permanent magnet **53** and electromagnets **54** and **55** are all supported by a support member **56**. Preferably, the outer tip **53a** of permanent magnet **53** has a mushroom-shaped cross section for reasons to be described presently.

Electromagnets **54** and **55** include first and second exciting coils **54a**, **55a** on opposite sides of permanent magnet **53** and first and second cores **54b**, **55b** inside and extending to the left and right, respectively, of the coils **54a**, **55a**. The outer tips **54c**, **55c** of the cores **54b**, **55b** are slanted upwardly and outwardly from the inside to the outside to accommodate sufficient pivotal movement of rocker bar **44** without contact with these tips **54c**, **55c**. Also preferably, the magnetically attractable sections **44f** and **44g** of rocker bar **44** slant downwardly and outwardly for this same reason.

The coils **54a**, **55a** are connected in series (Figures 3 and 3A). By applying positive or negative voltage to the electromagnets **54**, **55**, the tips **54c**, **55c** selectively attract magnetically attractable sections **44f**, **44g** of rocker bar **44**. For example, when positive voltage is applied from **A** to **B** (Figure 3A), the first magnetic field **53b** of the permanent magnet **53** is cut-off or cancelled by the magnetic flux generated by the first electromagnet **54**. At the same time, the magnetic flux generated by the second electromagnet **55** and the cut-off or cancelled first magnetic field of permanent magnet **53** enhance the second magnetic field **53c** of the permanent magnet **53**, thereby resulting in a stronger magnetic field. This stronger magnetic field causes the tip **55c** of the core **55b** to attract magnetically the magnetically attractable section **44g** of rocker bar **44**. Such attraction pivots rocker bar **44** to move wedge-shaped end **44e** into contact with side edge **48a** of cam **48**.

When a negative voltage is applied from **A** to **B**, the opposite electromagnetic reaction occurs, in that the second magnetic field **53c** of permanent magnet **53** is cut-off or cancelled by the magnetic flux of electromagnet **55** and the first magnetic field **53b** of permanent magnet is enhanced by the magnetic flux of electromagnet **54** and by the cut-off second magnetic field **53c** of permanent magnet **53**. Such magnetic field causes the first electromagnet **54** to attract the magnetically attractable section **44f** of rocker bar **44** to move wedge-shaped end **44d** into engagement with side edge **46b** of cam **46**.

Referring now to Figures 10 and 11, there is illustrated another embodiment of the present invention in which like elements are referred to by like reference characters with the prime notation added. In accordance with this embodiment, sinker **27'** has a first nose **27g'** defining a first top edge **27h'** for forming high pile loops. Sinker **27'** also has a second nose **127g** between the first nose **27g'** and the second top edge **27i'** and defining a third or intermediate top edge **127j** for forming low pile loops.

Sinker cam **31'** has a top edge **31a'** and a bottom edge **31b'**. Intermediate cam **32'** has a top edge **32a'** and a bottom edge **32b'**. A second intermediate cam **37'** is provided between side edges **32b'** and **35a'** of cam **35'** in cam track **36'** to divide cam track **36'** into a first branch **36a'** and a second branch **36b'** for forming high pile loops. A third intermediate cam **137** is mounted in cam track **36'** downstream of second intermediate cam **37'** for forming low pile loops. Third intermediate cam **137** has a first side edge **137a** and a second side edge **137b** which are spaced apart a lesser distance than the side edges **37a'** and **37b'** of second intermediate cam **37'**.

Rocker bar actuating cam **48'** has a first protrusion **48b'** in alignment with second intermediate cam **37'** and a second protrusion **148b** downstream thereof in alignment with third intermediate cam **137**. Similarly, cam **35'** has a first concave section **35c'** and a second concave section **135c**.

A first magnetic selection device **50'** is provided upstream of protrusion **48b'** for attracting selectively the magnetically attractable sections **44f' and 44g'** of rocker bar **44'**. A second magnetic selection device **150** is mounted between protrusions **48b'** and **148b**. Second magnetic selection device **150** is of the same construction as first magnetic selection device **50'** and

therefore will not be described again. Cancelling cams **49'** and **149** are provided upstream of the first and second magnetic selection devices **50'** and **150**, respectively.

Referring now to Figures 14 and 15, there is illustrated a further embodiment of the present invention in which like elements are referred to by like reference characters with the double prime notation added. A circular knitting machine **20"** is illustrated with a needle cylinder **21"** having a multitude of grooves **221a** in the periphery thereof. A knitting needle **22"** is slidably mounted in each groove **221a** and coacts with a sinker **27"** to form stitch loops which combine to form a knit fabric, as described herein a jacquard pile fabric. Needle **22"** has a shank **222a** with a butt **222b** protruding therefrom. A pair of needle operating cams **71** and **72** mounted on a cam holder **70** define a cam track **73** which moves needle **22"** up and down in the conventional manner.

An intermediate jack member **234** is slidably mounted in groove **221a** in cylinder **21"** beneath needle **22"**. Intermediate jack member **234** has an upper butt **234a** adjacent the upper end thereof and a lower butt **234b** at a medial portion thereof beneath the upper butt **234a**. Intermediate member **234** includes an extension or tail **234c** beneath the lower butt **234b**. A first intermediate cam **74** defines a cam track **75** which receives upper butt **234a** on intermediate jack member **234**. A second intermediate cam **76** defines a first cam track **77** and a second cam track **78**. Cam track **77** receives the lower butt **234b** when needle **22"** is selected for movement upwardly to the knitting position and cam track **78** receives the lower butt **134b** when needle **22"** is to be maintained in the welt position.

A rocker bar supporting member **40"** is mounted for sliding movement in groove **221a** of cylinder **21"** for lateral movement to control the action of intermediate jack member **234**. Rocker bar supporting member includes a bifurcated upper end portion **241** which has opposed legs **241a, 241b** which receive the extension or tail **234c** of intermediate jack member **234** therebetween. Upper end portion **241** has a first butt **241c** thereon and a second butt **241d** spaced beneath the first butt **241c**.

A first rocker bar supporting member operating cam **80** defines a cam track **81** which receives butt **241c** for controlling the upper portion of rocker bar supporting member **240**. A second cam **82** defines a cam track **83** which receives and controls butt **241d**.

A medial section **242** of rocker bar supporting member **240** includes a socket **242d** for pivotally mounting a rocker bar **44"**. Rocker bar **44"** has a circular protrusion **44a"** mounted in socket **242d** and has magnetically attractable section **44f"** and **44g"**. Rocker bar **44"** also has wedge-shaped ends **44d"** and **44e"**.

A rocker bar actuating cam **80** defines a cam track **81** for receiving and controlling rocker bar **44"**. A cancelling cam **49"** is disposed adjacent the entrance to cam track **81** to engage and position rocker bar **44"** level or in neutral position.

A first magnetic selection device **50"** is mounted upstream of cam track **81** and immediately downstream of cancelling cam **49"** and beside the path of travel of rocker bar **44"**. First magnetic selection device **50"** includes magnetic attraction means **51"** and **52"** for attracting selectively the magnetically attractable sections **44f"** and **44g"** of rocker bar **44"**. A second magnetic device **250** may be placed downstream from first magnetic selection device **50"** should it be desired to further control needle **22"**, such as to move the same to a tucking position. Of course, second magnetic selection device **250** should be preceded by a second cancelling cam **249**, and should be followed by a second cam **82**.

Referring now to Figure 16, there is illustrated still another embodiment of the present invention in which like elements are referred to by similar reference characters in which the last two digits are the same as previous reference characters in Figure 10 preceded by the prefixes "3" or "4". In accordance with this embodiment, sinker **327** has a first nose **327g** defining a first top edge **327h**. Sinker **327** has a second nose **427g** between the first nose **327g** and the second top edge **327i** and defining a third or intermediate top edge **427j** for forming low pile loops.

Sinker cam **331** has a top edge **331a** and a bottom edge **331b**. First intermediate cam **332** has a top edge **332a** and a bottom edge **332b**. A second intermediate cam **337** is provided between bottom edge **331b** of cam **331** and a top edge **335a** of cam **335** in cam track **336** to divide cam track **336** into a first branch **336a** for forming low pile loops and a second branch **336b** for forming no pile loops. A third intermediate cam **437** is mounted in cam track **336** downstream of second intermediate cam **337** and has a first edge **437a** for forming high pile loops and a second edge **437b** for forming no pile loops. Third intermediate cam **437** divides cam track **336** into a third branch **336c** and a continuation of second branch **336b**.

The bottom edge **331b** of sinker cam **331** has a second **331b'** which extends from a point in vertical alignment with the top of the upwardly inclined portion of top edge **337a** of second intermediate cam **337** to a point overlying the middle of the upwardly inclined portion of top edge **437a** of third intermediate cam **437**. This section **331b'** engages the forward edge **327e** of sinker butt **327d** to control positively the sinker **327** to prevent sinker **327** from advancing further than is necessary for low pile formation until the same is forcibly advanced by third intermediate cam **437**. Bottom edge **331b** has a section **331b"** which permits such forcible advancement of sinker **327** by third intermediate cam **437**.

Similarly, the bottom edge **332b** of first intermediate cam **332** inclines downwardly immediately downstream of second intermediate cam **337** as indicated at **332b'** and then upwardly at third intermediate cam **437** as

indicated at **332b"**. The bottom edge **332b** engages the forward edge **334b** of butt **334a** on intermediate jack member **334** to control positively any advancing movement of the intermediate jack member **334** due to engagement of the rear edge **334c** of butt **334a** with second intermediate cam **337** or third intermediate cam **437**.

Cam **335** has a bottom edge **335b** which has a first concave section **335c** therein in alignment with second intermediate cam **337** and a second concave section **435c** in alignment with third intermediate cam **437**. These concave sections **335c** and **435c** permit advancement of rocker bar supporting member **341** and then positively retracts rocker bar supporting member **341** by engaging butt **341a** thereof.

Cam **348** has a first protrusion **348b** in alignment with second intermediate cam **337** and a second protrusion **448b** in alignment with third intermediate cam **437**. A first magnetic selection device **350** is provided upstream of protrusion **348b** for attracting selectively sections **344f** and **344g** of rocker bar **344**. A second magnetic selection device **450** is mounted between protrusions **348b** and **448b** for attracting selectively sections **344f** and **344g** of rocker bar **344**. Cancelling cams **349** and **449** are provided upstream of the first and second magnetic selection devices **350** and **450**, respectively.

The operation of the various embodiments will now be described. When sinker **27** is to be advanced, a signal from a controller (not shown) is sent to the magnetic selection device **50** to cause electromagnet **55** to attract magnetically attractable section **44g** of rocker bar **44** (Figure 3) to pivot rocker bar **44** and move wedge-shaped end **44e** into extended position. By this time, ground yarn **GY** is supplied from yarn carrier **28** and crosses over top edge **27i** of sinker **27** and is fed to the knitting needle **22**.

As rocker bar **44** moves with rotating sinker cap **25**, wedge-shaped end **44e** engages the protrusion **48b** of cam **48** and rocker bar **44** and rocker bar supporting member **40** are pushed inwardly toward the cylinder **21**. Rocker bar supporting member **40** engages and pushes inwardly intermediate member **34** such that butt **34a** engages the inwardly slanting section **37a$_1$** of side edge **37a** of second intermediate cam **37** which pushes intermediate member **34** even further inwardly toward cylinder **21**.

Intermediate member **34** engages sinker **27** and advances sinker **27** to its most extended inward position in which nose **27g** is in position to receive pile yarn **PY** from yarn carrier **28** across the top edge **27h** thereof to form a pile loop in concert with needle **22** (Figures 8A and 9). When butt **34a** reaches the straight section **37a$_2$** of side edge **37a** of second intermediate cam **37**, the tip of nose **27g** of sinker **27** is preferably at least 0.3 mm inward from the circumferential action line **L$_1$** (Figure 1) of the knitting needle **22**. Therefore, formation of a pile loop at least 0.3 mm from the tip of nose **27g** is ensured and will prevent such pile loop from prematurely slipping off of top edge **27h** of sinker **27**.

While intermediate member **34** is being pushed further out by second intermediate cam **37**, butt **41a** on rocker bar supporting member **40** engages the outwardly slanting portion of concave section **35c** of first intermediate cam **35** which returns rocker bar supporting member **40** and thus rocker bar **44** to their original retracted positions. Of course, it is possible to omit intermediate member **34** and have rocker bar supporting member **40** act directly on sinker **27**. Suitable modification of the cam system would be required.

When sinker **27** is not to be advanced, a signal is sent to electromagnet **54** so as to attract magnetically attractable section **44f** of rocker bar **44** to pivot rocker bar **44** to extend wedge-shaped end **44d**. Rocker bar **44** does not engage rocker bar actuating cam **48** and therefore rocker bar **44** and rocker bar supporting member **40** do not move inwardly in groove **26** of sinker cap **25**. Consequently, intermediate member **34** is not pushed inwardly and butt **34a** thereon remains in branch **36b** of cam track **36**. Sinker **27** is thus only controlled by cam track **33** and both the pile yarn **PY** and ground yarn **GY** are fed to needle **22** and form ground stitch loops across second top edge **27i** of sinker **27**. The action line **L$_2$** (Figure 1) shows the action of sinker **27** forming pile and non-pile loops in the knitted fabric.

In the foregoing manner, the circular knitting machine **20** forms a figured jacquard pile fabric having pile and non-pile areas based on the pattern signal output by the controller (not shown). For convenience, the action line **L$_1$** of needle **22** shows movement of needle **22** only between the welting and knitting positions. However, it is contemplated that needle **22** may be moved between three positions --knitting, tucking and welting -- by a known needle selection device. Also, the cams **31**, **32**, **35**, **46** and **48** are illustrated as units formed in a straight line. It is contemplated, however, that such cams may be formed by multiple cam segments if it is more convenient.

In the sinker embodiment illustrated in Figures 10 and 11, the sinker **27'** has three operative positions. The first of these positions is the high pile forming position; the second position is the low pile forming position; and the third position is the ground loop or non-pile forming position. To move sinker **27'** to the first position, a signal is sent to electromagnet **55'** to attract magnetically attractable section **44g'** of rocker bar **44'** to pivot rocker bar **44'**. Wedge-shaped end **44e'** engages the first protrusion **48b'** of cam **48'** and moves the rocker bar **44'** and rocker bar supporting member **40'** inwardly. Rocker bar supporting member **40'** moves intermediate member **34'** inwardly to cause butt **34a'** thereon to engage second intermediate cam **37'** and move sinker **27'** to its innermost position. Pile yarn **PY** will be fed to needle **22'** across top edge **27h'** of nose **27g'** to form a high pile loop.

Meanwhile, butt **41a'** on rocker bar supporting

member **40** engages the outwardly slanting portion of concave section **35c'** of side edge **35b'** of cam **35** to return rocker bar supporting member **40'** to its original position. Rocker bar **44'** passes under second cancelling cam **149** which returns rocker bar **44'** to its neutral position.

When low pile is to be formed, a signal is sent to second magnetic selection device **150** and particularly to electromagnet **155** to attract section **44g'** of rocker bar **44'**. Wedge-shaped end **44e'** then engages second protrusion **148b** of cam **48'** to push rocker bar supporting member **40'** inwardly to cause butt **34a'** on intermediate member **34'** to engage third intermediate cam **137**. Third intermediate cam **137** pushes sinker **27'** to its second position such that second nose **127g** receives pile yarn **PY** on second top edge **127g** thereof to form low pile loops.

When non-pile loops are to be formed, signals are sent to electromagnets **54'** and **154** to attract section **44f'** of rocker bar **44'**. Rocker bar **44'** thus passes protrusions **48b'** and **148b** and rocker bar supporting member **40'** and intermediate member **34'** are not pushed inwardly. Sinker **27'** is thus controlled only by cams **31'** and **32'** and forms only ground or non-pile loops across top edge **27i'** of sinker **27'**.

The sinker embodiment illustrated in Figure 16 operates virtually the same as the embodiment illustrated in Figures 10 and 11 except that sinker **327** is controlled positively at all times. Accordingly, the operation of this embodiment will not be described further.

The jacquard pattern control mechanism of the present invention is not limited to making jacquard pile fabrics. Such control mechanism can be used to control selectively knitting instrumentalities, such as sinkers, cylinder needles, dial needles and jacks, etc. to at least two different paths.

In the embodiment illustrated in Figures 14 and 15, needle **22"** may be moved between at least two positions, i.e., welting and knitting positions. When needle **22"** is not to be raised, but is to be maintained in the welting position, a signal is sent to electromagnet **55"** of magnetic selection device **50"** to attract section **44g"** of rocker bar **44"**. Wedge-shaped end **44e"** of rocker bar **44"** is moved to extended position and engages the upwardly inclined surface **80a**, which has a trapezoidal cross section, of cam **80** to raise rocker bar supporting member **240** upwardly. Butt **241c** of rocker bar supporting member **240** engages cancel cam **100** immediately below the bifurcated end **241** of rocker bar supporting member **240** and bifurcated end **241** is pushed outwardly by the slanting portion **100a** of cam **100**.

Bifurcated end **241** pushes out extension **234c** of intermediate member **234**. Butt **234b** on intermediate member **234** does not enter cam track **77** of cam **76** but passes thereby and does not move upwardly. Accordingly, needle **22"** remains in the welting position.

After rocker bar **44"** passes the summit **80b** of cam **80**, butt **241d** of rocker bar supporting member **240** engages a downward slanting section **110a** of an intermediate cam **110**, thus returning rocker bar supporting member **240** to its original position. The extension **234c** of intermediate member **234** returns to its original position and butt **234b** enters cam track **78** on cam **76**.

To raise knitting needle **22"**, a signal is sent to electromagnet **54"** so as to attract section **44f"** of rocker bar **44"**. Rocker bar **44"** thus passes beside section **80a** of cam **80** and is not raised upwardly. Butt **241c** does not engage cancelling cam **100** and extension **234c** is not pushed outwardly. Therefore, butt **234b** enters cam track **77** and intermediate member **234** is raised upwardly by cam **76** and knitting needle **22"** is raised to the knitting position.

If desired, needle **22"** can be raised to a tucking position. In such event, second magnetic attraction device **250** is provided, as is second cam **82**.

According to the present invention, the bevelled wedge-shaped ends of the rocker bar **44**, **44'** or **44"** firmly engage the rocker bar operating cams **48**, **48'** or **80** which have a trapezoidal-shaped cross section. Therefore, the rocker bar **44**, **44'** or **44"** does not come off of the cam **48**, **48'** or **80** thereby ensuring control with no selection errors. Furthermore, the rocker bar **44**, **44'** or **44"** is free of protruding butts, thereby reducing the possibility of breakage of a butt even when there is a selection error.

In addition, at the point where the sinker **27** or **27'** changes direction, the vertical edges **27c** and vertical edge **27e** are held by the side edges of cam **31**. Accordingly, it is possible to run the circular knitting machine **21** with a jacquard pattern as a knitting machine producing a non-patterned fabric.

Furthermore, the magnetic attraction devices **50**, **50' 150**, **50"** and **250** can be small and fit into very limited spaces because only the rocker bar **44**, **44'** or **44"** is being controlled. Accordingly, the production of a wide variety of jacquard patterns under computer control can now be accomplished.

Claims

1. A circular knitting machine having knitting instrumentalities for forming knit fabric including a rotating member having a plurality of grooves in which said knitting instrumentalities are slidably mounted, and control means for controlling said knitting instrumentalities to produce a jacquard knit fabric, characterized in that said control means comprises

   a plurality of rocker bar supporting members each slidably mounted in the same groove as one of said knitting instrumentalities, each of said rocker bar supporting members including at least one butt protruding therefrom,

   a plurality of elongate rocker bars having magnetically attractable opposite end portions and each being pivotally mounted on one of said

rocker bar supporting members for movement about a medial pivot, opposite end portions of said rocker bar being adapted to be selectively moved between operative and inoperative positions,

magnetic attracting means operatively associated with said opposite end portions of said rocker bars for selectively attracting one of said magnetically attractable opposite end portions to pivot said rocker bars and selectively move one of said opposite end portions to said operative position and the other of said opposite end portions to said inoperative position,

rocker bar operating cam means engageable with the end portion of said rocker bar in said operative position for either moving said rocker bar and said rocker bar supporting member from a retracted position to an extended position to engage and move said knitting instrumentality or maintaining said rocker bar and said rocker bar supporting member in said retracted position, and

control cam means engageable with said knitting instrumentalities for controlling said knitting instrumentalities and for moving the same to at least one knitting position upon movement of said rocker bar supporting member to its extended position and for maintaining said knitting instrumentality in a non-knitting position when said rocker bar supporting member is in its retracted position.

2. A circular knitting machine according to Claim 1 wherein said rotating member comprises a sinker cap and said knitting instrumentalities comprise sinkers.

3. A circular knitting machine according to Claim 1 wherein said rotating member comprises a needle cylinder and said knitting instrumentalities comprise knitting needles.

4. A circular knitting machine according to Claim 1, 2 or 3, including an intermediate member having at least one operating butt thereon slidably mounted in each of said grooves between said knitting instrumentality and said rocker bar supporting member, and intermediate cam means for moving said intermediate member from a retracted position to an extended position.

5. A circular knitting machine according to any of claims 1 to 4 wherein said opposite end portions of said rocker bar have a bevelled wedge shape and wherein said rocker bar operating cam means has a trapezoidal-shaped cross section.

6. A circular knitting machine according to Claim 2 wherein said sinker has a plurality of sinker noses for forming stitch loops of different sizes and wherein said rocker bar has a plurality of magnetically attractable sections at said opposite end portions for controlling said sinker to produce stitch loops of varying size.

7. A circular knitting machine according to Claim 4 wherein said rotating member is a sinker cap and said knitting instrumentalities are sinkers, said sinkers having a plurality of noses for forming ground knit stitch loops and pile stitch loops.

8. A circular knitting machine according to Claim 7 wherein said intermediate cam means is movable between an operative position in which said intermediate cam means is engageable by said butt on said intermediate member to produce both pile and ground stitch loops and an inoperative position in which said intermediate cam means is not engageable with said butt on said intermediate member to produce only ground stitch loops.

9. A circular knitting machine according to Claim 3 including an intermediate jack member slidably mounted in each groove of said needle cylinder between said needle and said rocker bar supporting member and having a pair of spaced apart butts thereon, said intermediate jack member being rockable to move one of said butts thereon between an operative position and an inoperative position, and wherein said rocker bar supporting member is operatively associated with said intermediate jack member for selectively rocking said intermediate jack member between its operative and inoperative positions, and said rocker bar operating cam means includes means for selectively operating said rocker bar supporting member to rock said intermediate jack member.

10. A circular knitting machine according to Claim 2 wherein said sinkers each have a butt thereon and wherein said control cam means defines a cam race receiving said sinker butts therein and having opposed edges contacting forward and rearward edges of said sinker butts to positively control advancing and retracting movement of said sinkers.

11. A circular knitting machine according to Claim 4 wherein said knitting instrumentalities comprise sinkers and wherein said intermediate cam means also positively moves said intermediate member from the extended position to the retracted position.

12. A pattern control mechanism for a circular knitting machine having knitting instrumentalities slidably mounted in grooves in at least one rotatable member, said pattern control mechanism comprising

a plurality of rocker bar supporting members adapted to be slidably mounted in the grooves of the rotating member with the knitting instrumentalities and having at least one operating butt thereon,

an elongate rocker bar having magnetically attractable sections at opposite end portions thereof, said rocker bar being pivotally mounted on said rocker bar supporting member for movement about a medial pivot thereon,

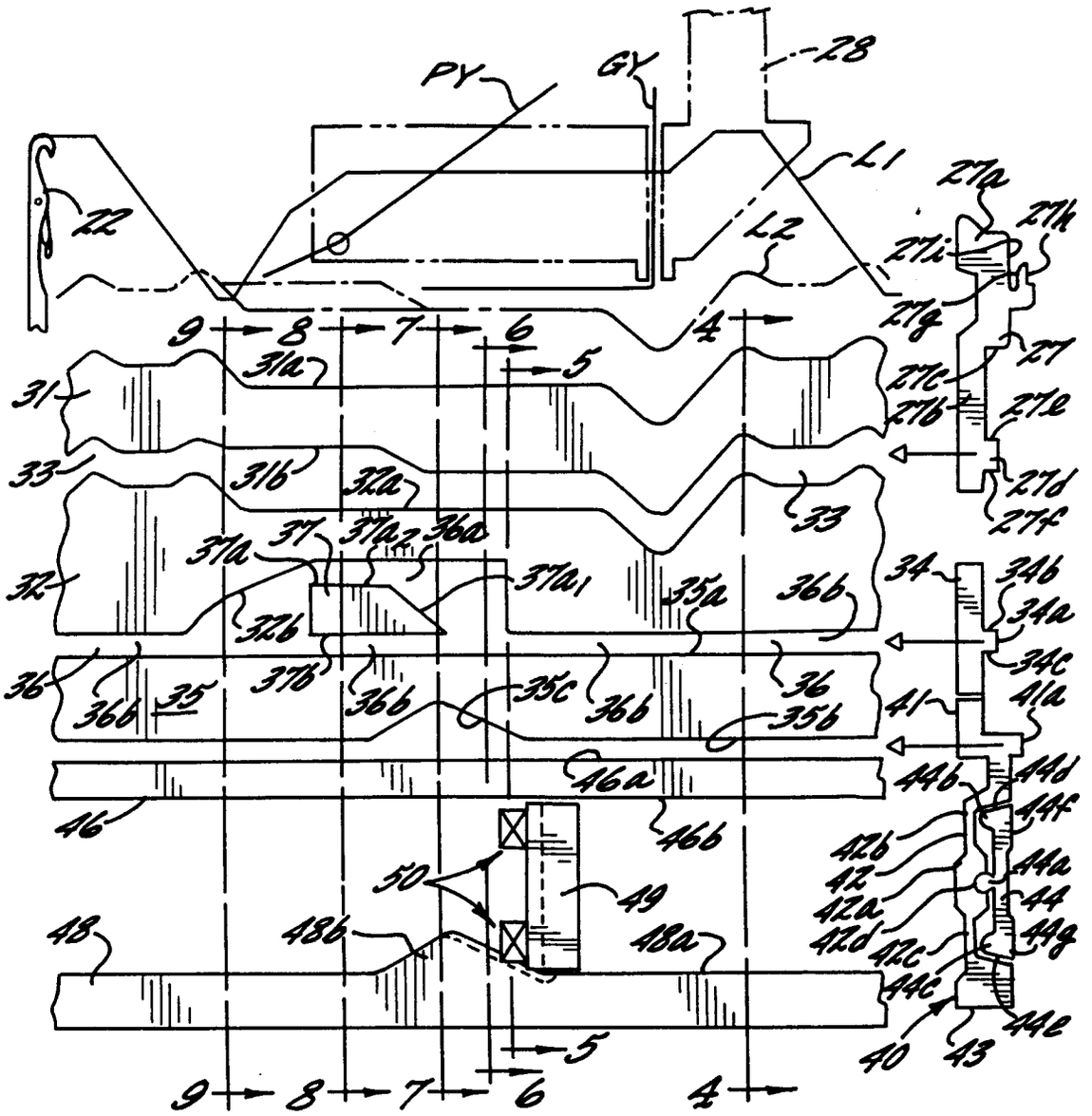
rocker bar operating cam means for moving said rocker bar and said rocker bar supporting member longitudinally upon engagement with one end of said rocker bar and for maintaining said rocker bar in a retracted position upon engagement with the other end thereof, and

magnetic attracting means operatively associated with said magnetically attractable sections of opposite end portions of said rocker bar for attracting selectively said magnetically attractable sections to control the knitting instrumentalities in a predetermined pattern.

13. A machine or control mechanism according to any preceding Claim wherein the magnetic attracting means comprises an elongate permanent magnet and first and second electromagnets connected to opposite ends of said permanent magnet in series.

14. A machine or control mechanism according to Claim 13 wherein said permanent magnet has an outer tip adjacent said rocker bar which has a mushroom-shaped cross section.

15. A machine or control mechanism according to any preceding Claim wherein said magnetically attractable sections of said rocker bar slant downwardly and outwardly from the medial portion of said rocker bar.


PY
GY
28
L1
L2
22
27a
27h
27i
27g
27
27c
27b
27e
27d
27f
9
8
7
6
5
4
31
31a
33
316
32a
32
37a
37
37a2
360
37a1
35a
366
326
34
346
34a
34c
36
366
35
37b
35c
35b
41
41a
46
46a
466
44b
44d
44f
426
42
44a
420
44
42d
42c
44g
44c
44e
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43
50
49
48
486
48a

Fig. 1.

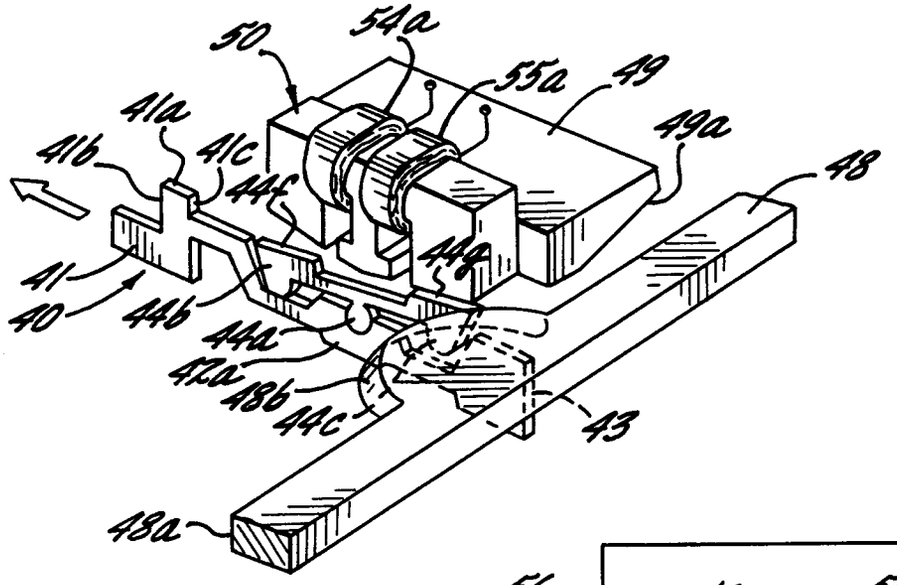


Fig. 2.

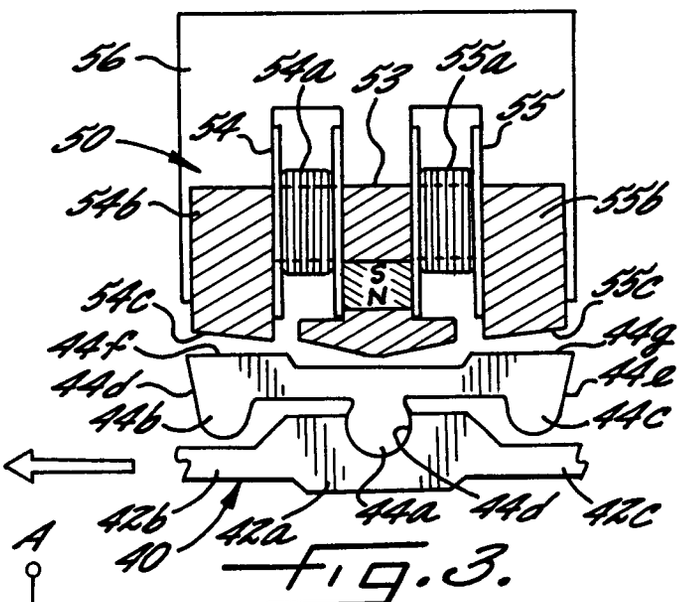


Fig. 3.

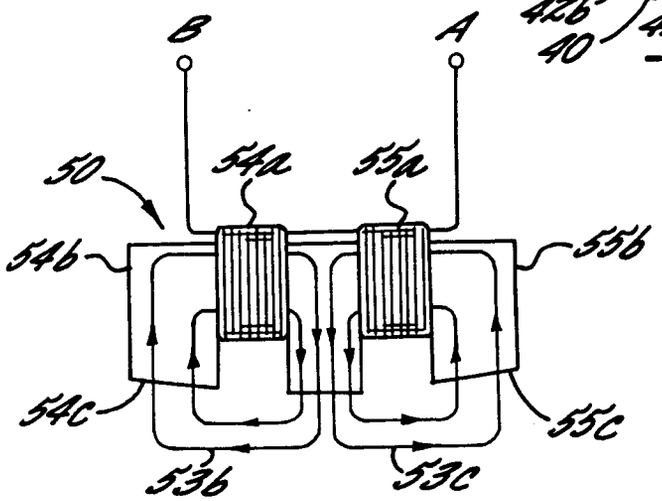
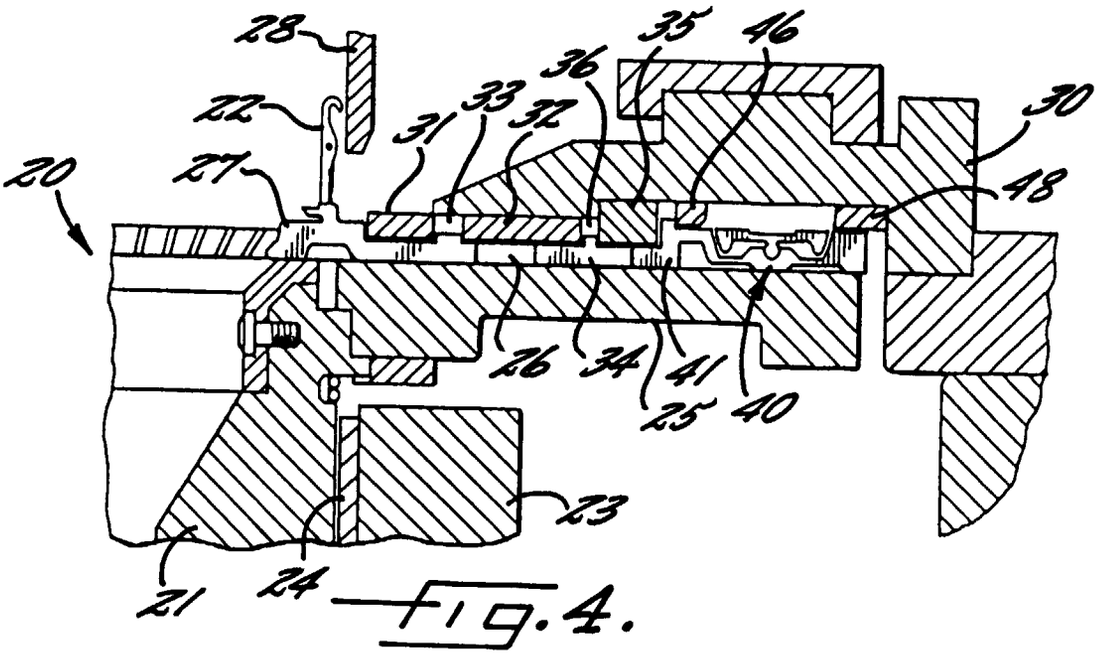


Fig. 3A.


28
22
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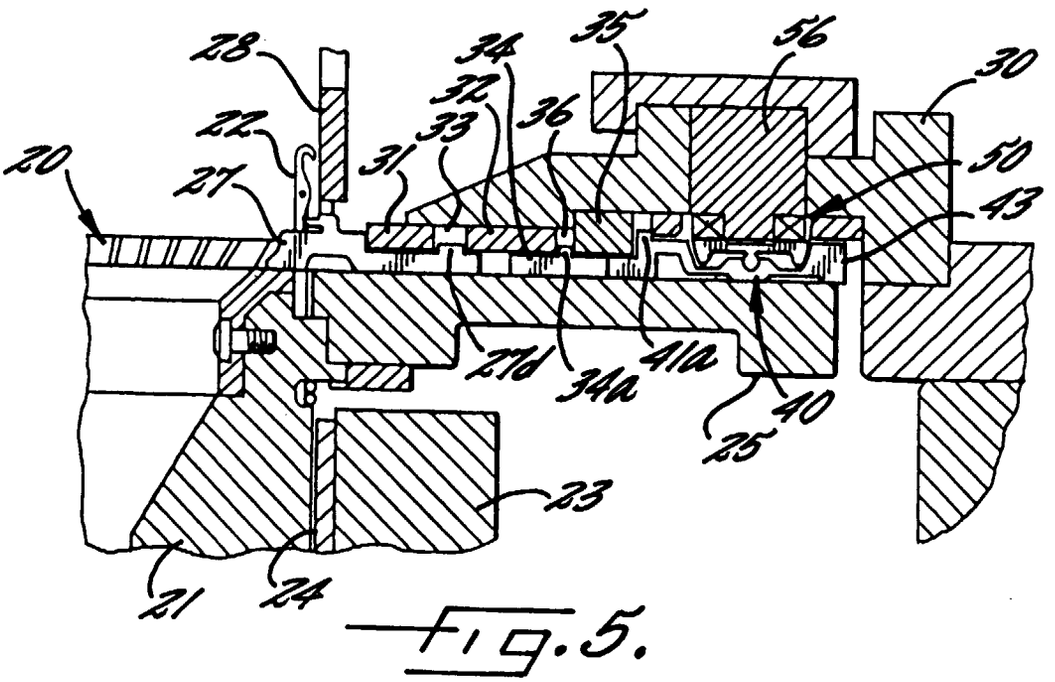
24

Fig. 4.


28
22
27
20
31
33
32
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36
56
30
50
43
27d
34a
41a
25
40
23
21
24

Fig. 5.

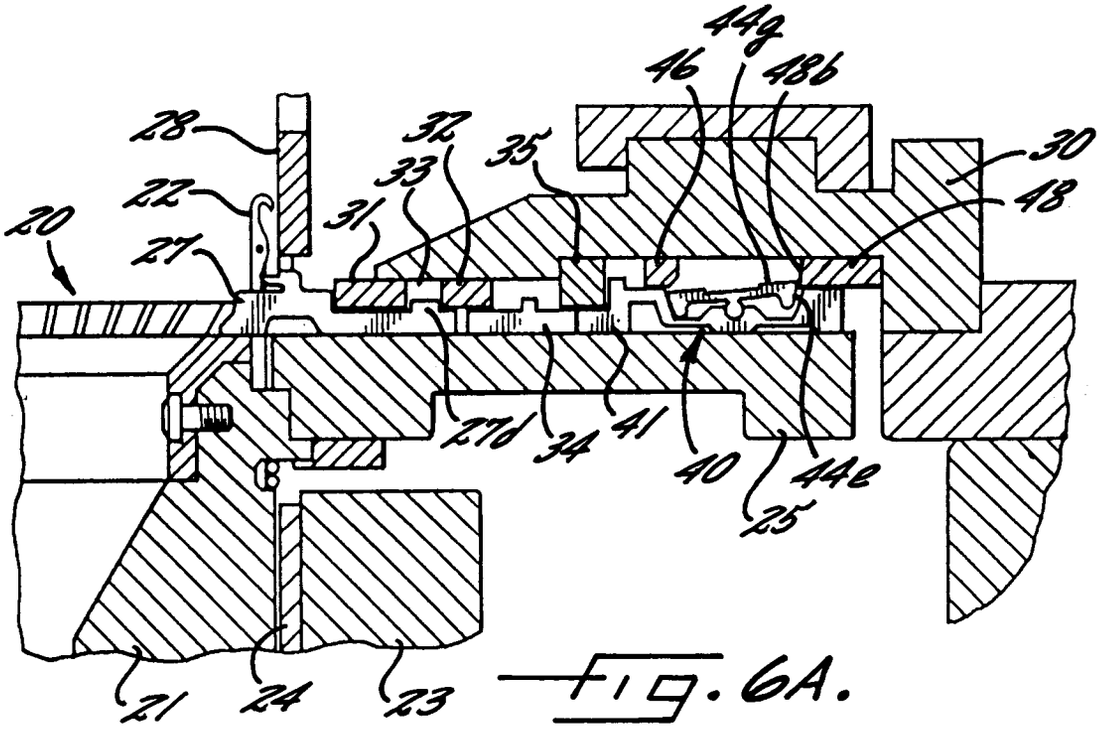

44g
46
48b
28
32
35
30
33
22
31
48
20
27
27d
34
41
40
44e
25
21
24
23

FIG. 6A.

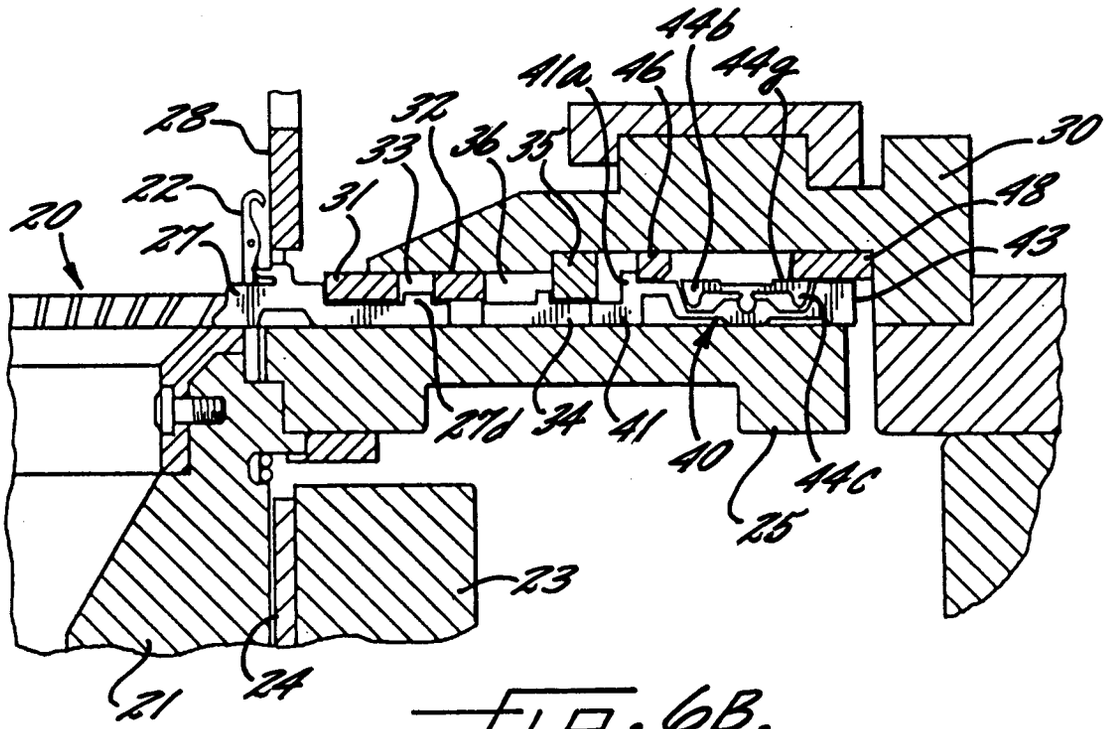
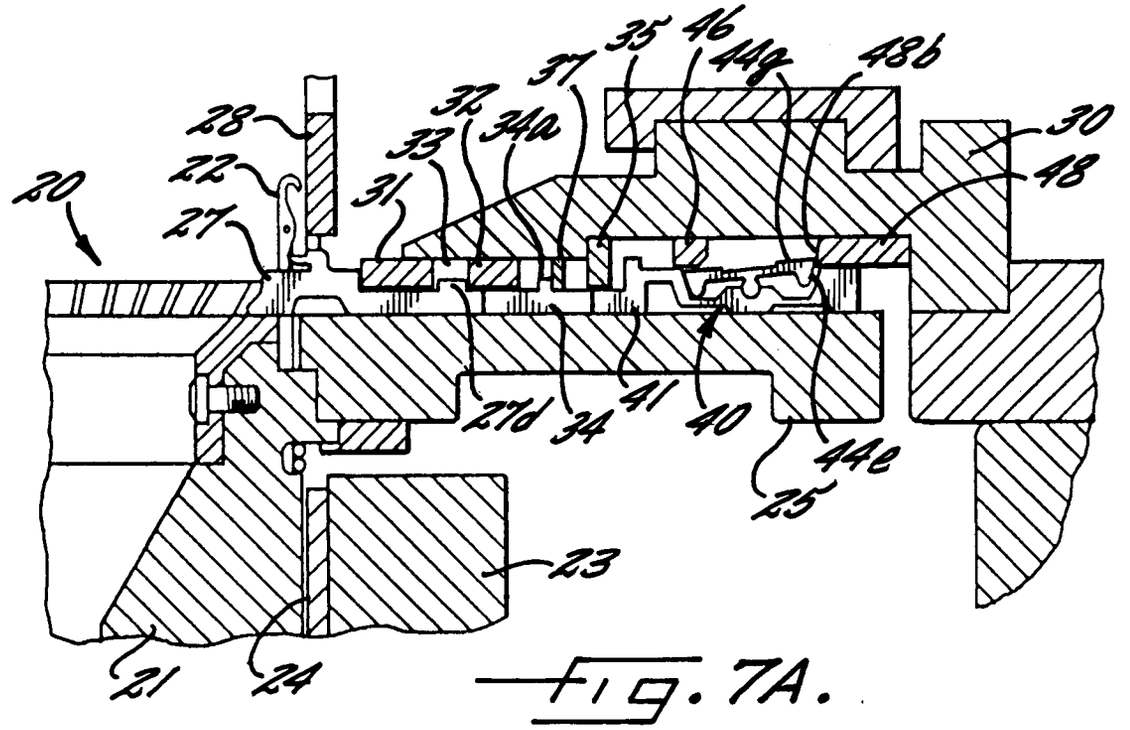

44b
41a
46
44g
28
32
36
35
30
33
22
31
48
20
27
43
27d
34
41
40
44c
25
23
21
24

FIG. 6B.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21
22
23
24
25
27
27d
28
30
31
32
33
34
34a
35
37
40
41
44a
44b
46
48
48b

Fig. 7A.

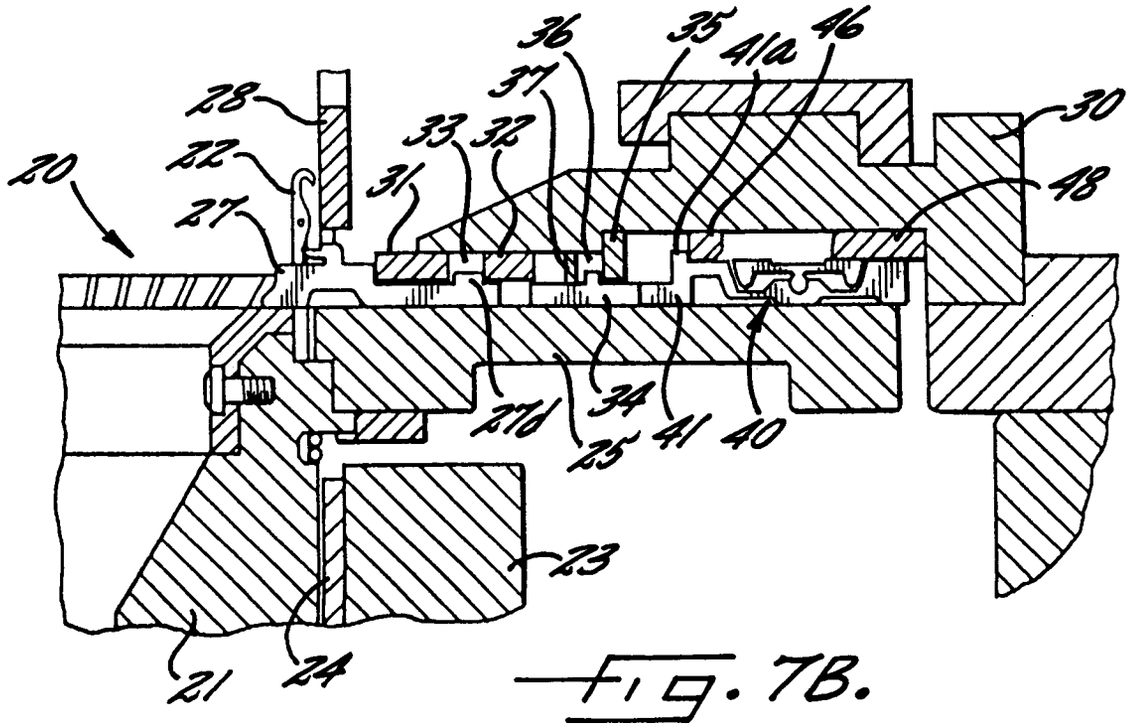

20
21
22
23
24
25
27
27d
28
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
40
41
41a
46
48

Fig. 7B.

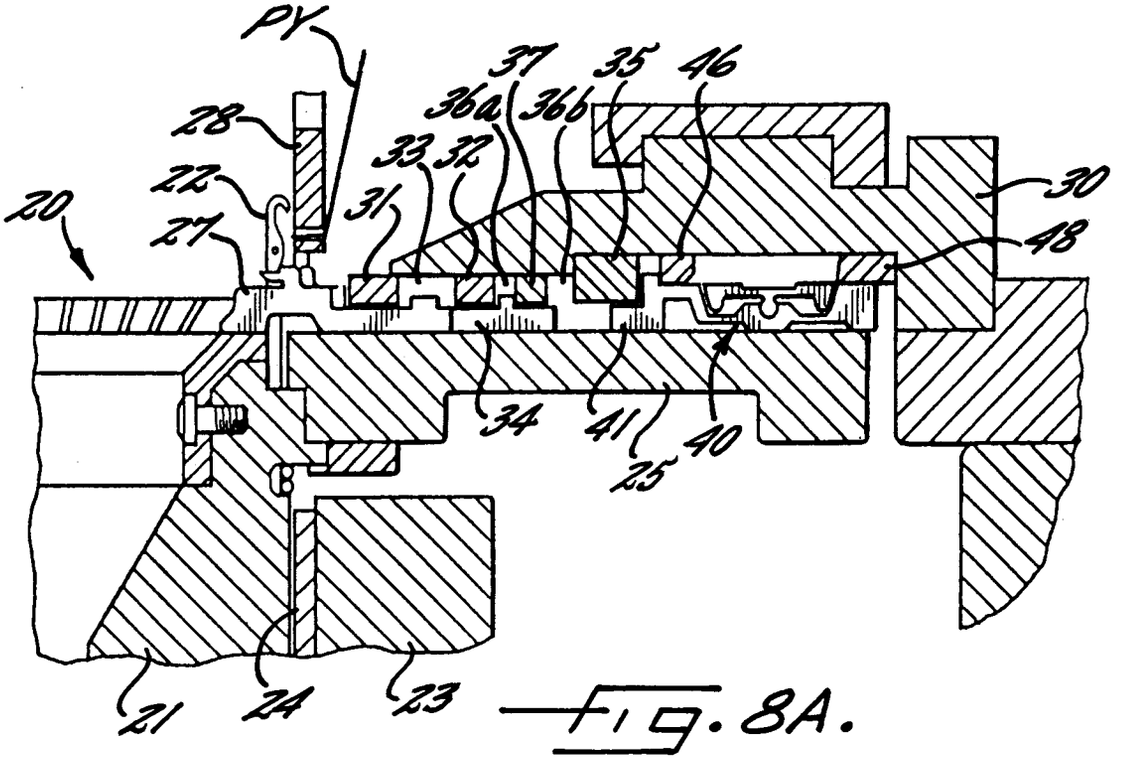
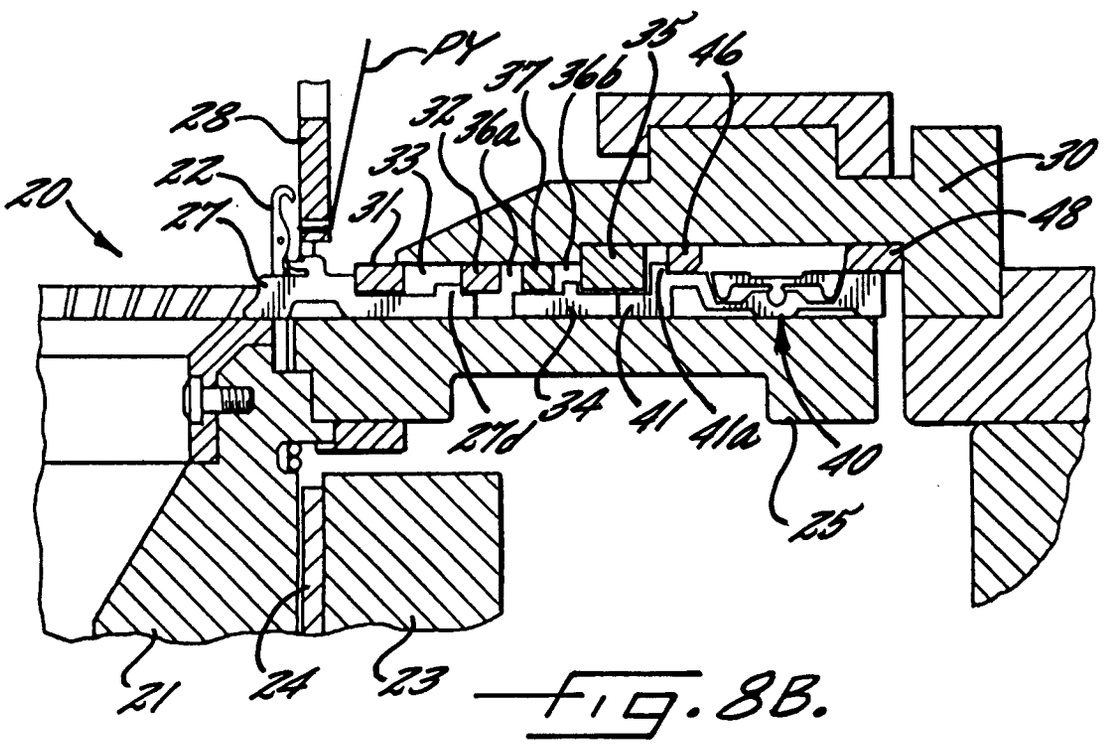

PY
37
35
46
36a
36b
28
33
32
22
30
20
27
31
48
34
41
40
25
21
24
23

Fig. 8A.


PY
35
46
37
36b
28
32
36a
33
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20
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48
27d
34
41
41a
40
25
21
24
23

Fig. 8B.

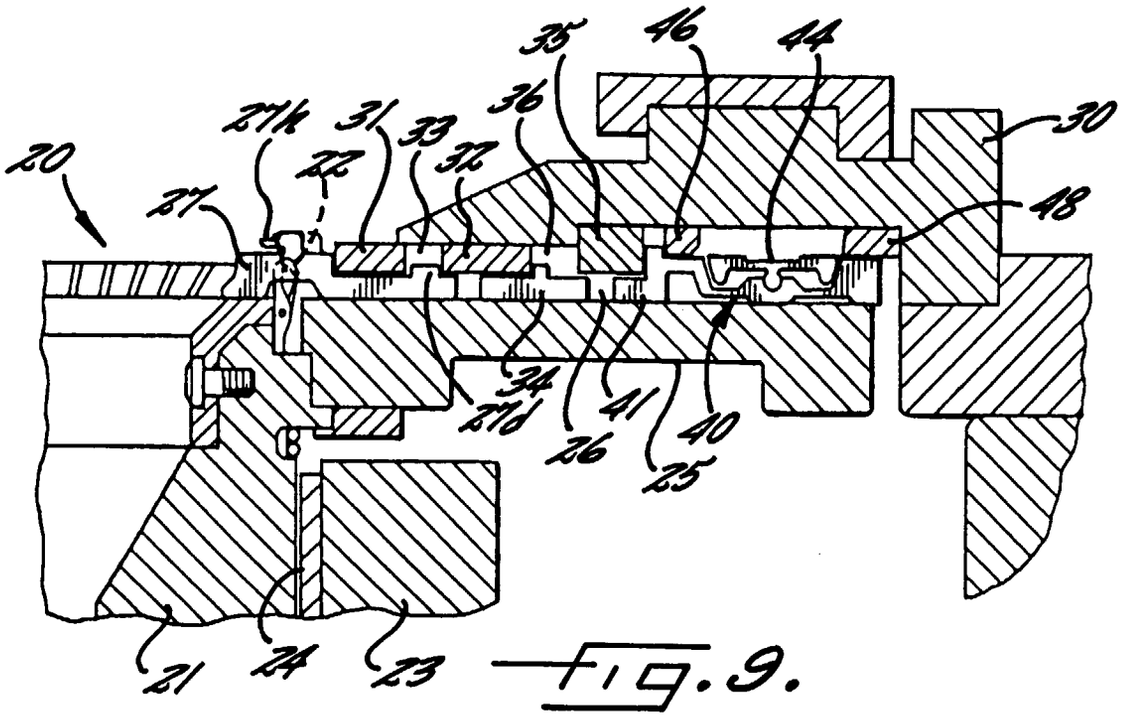
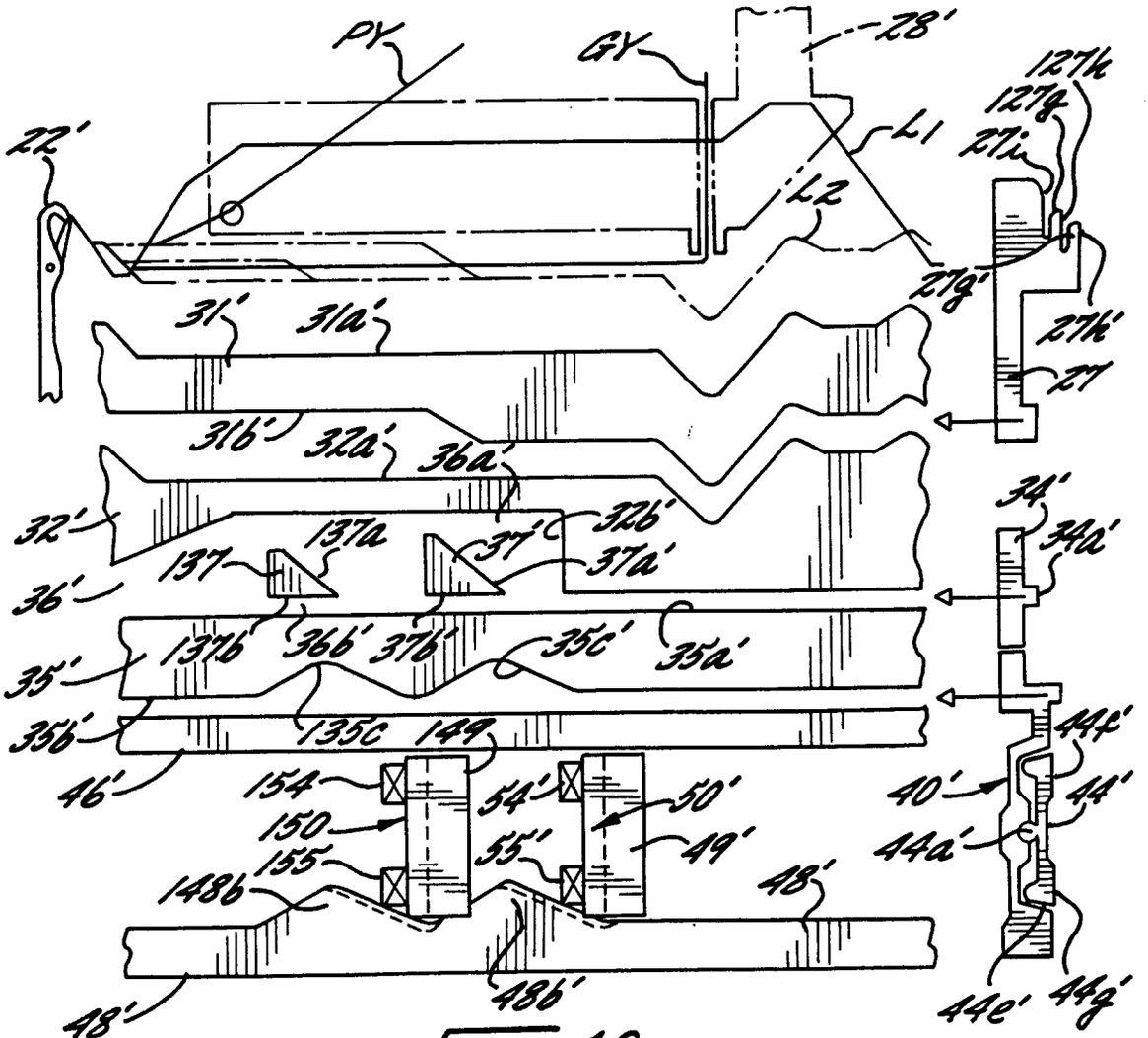


Fig. 9.


PY
GY
28'
L1
L2
22'
127k
127g
27i'
27g'
27k'
27
31'
31a'
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32a'
36a'
32'
34'
34a'
137a
37'
37a'
137
36'
35'
137b
36b'
37b'
35c'
35a'
35b'
135c
149
46'
154
54'
50'
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155
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148b
48'
48''
486'
44e'
44g'

Fig. 10.

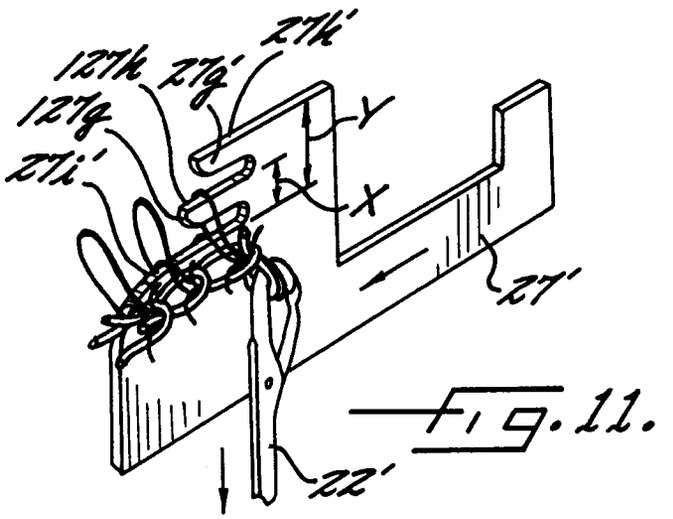
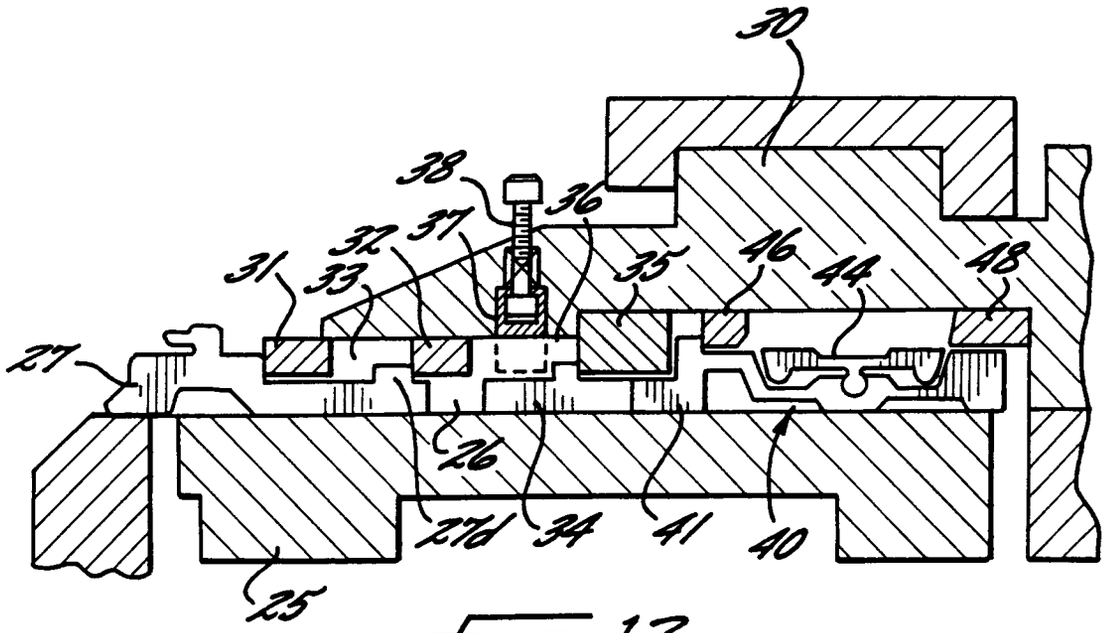

27k'
127k
27g'
127g
Y
27i'
X
27'
22'

Fig. 11.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32
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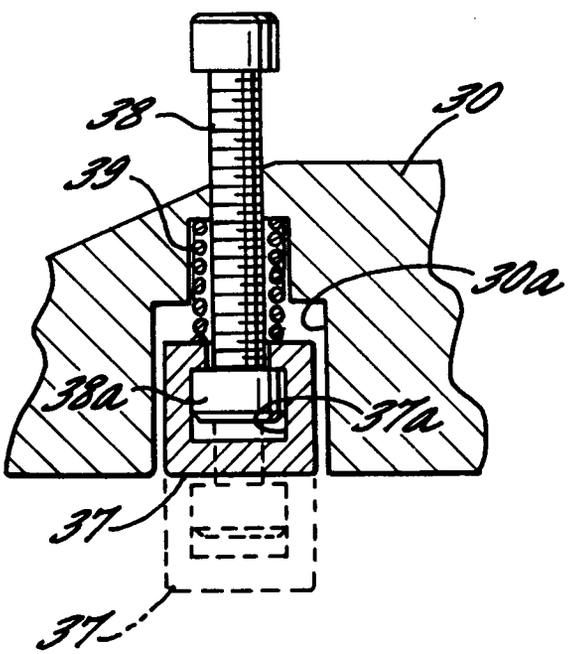
46
44
48
27
26
27d
34
41
40
25

Fig. 12.


38
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39
30a
38a
37a
37
37

Fig. 13.

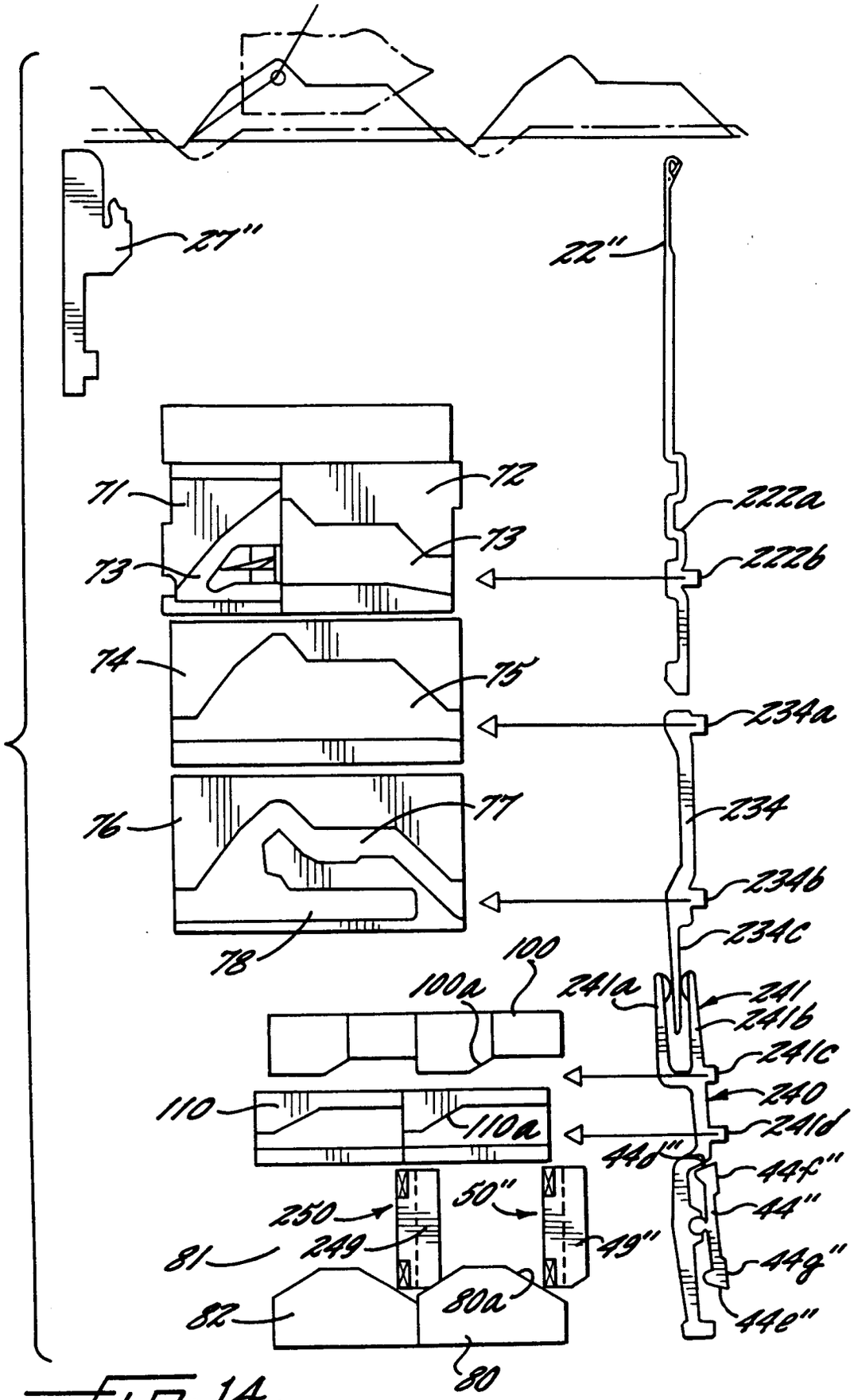
27"
22"
71
72
73
73
222a
222b
74
75
234a
76
77
234
234b
78
234c
100
100a
241a
241
241b
241c
240
110
110a
241d
44d"
44f"
44"
50"
250
249
49"
81
44g"
82
80a
44e"
80

Fig. 14.

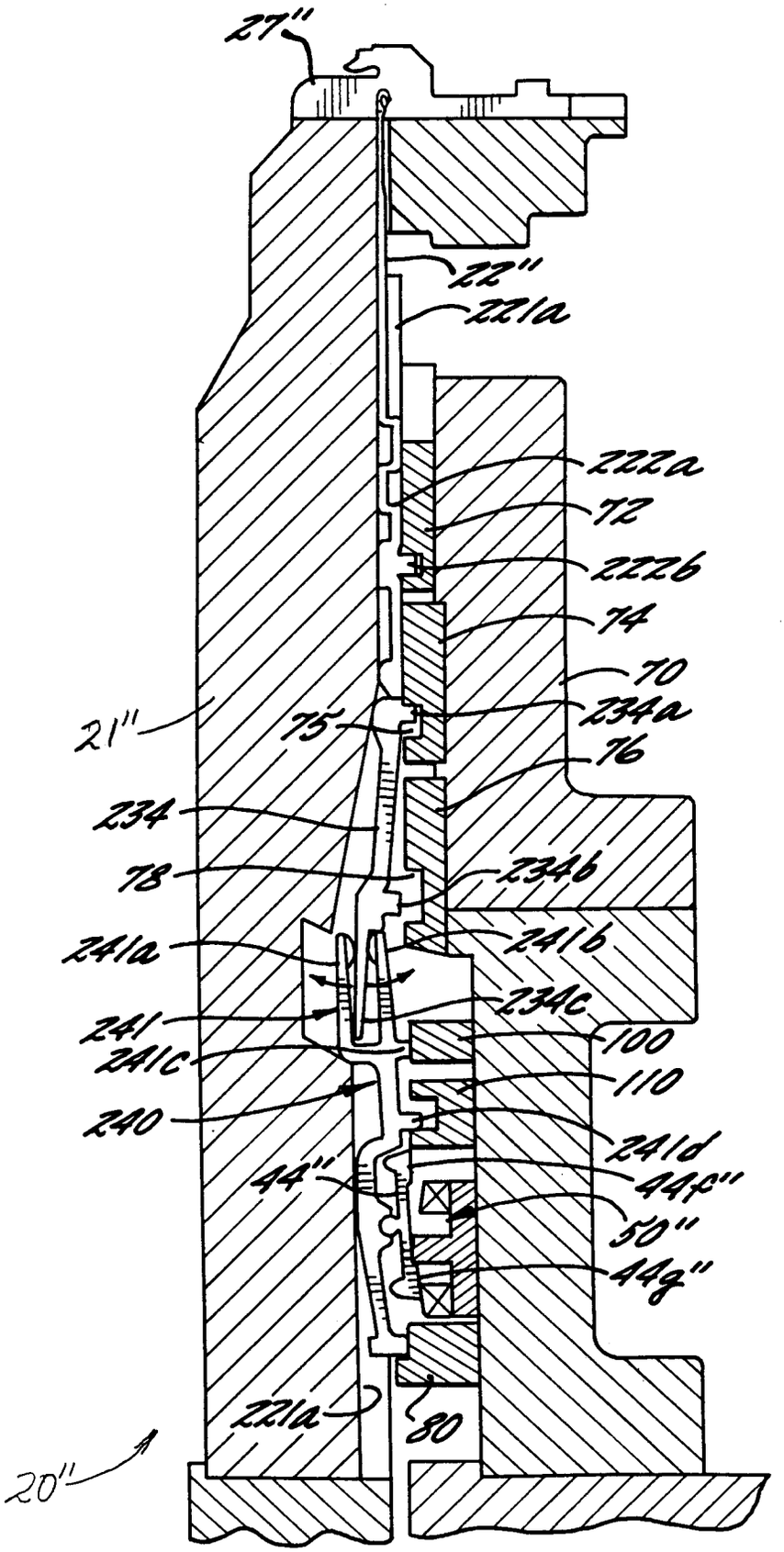
27"
22"
221a
222a
72
222b
74
70
234a
75
21"
76
234
234b
78
241a
241b
234c
241
100
241c
110
240
241d
44"
44c"
50"
44g"
221a
80
20"

Fig. 15.

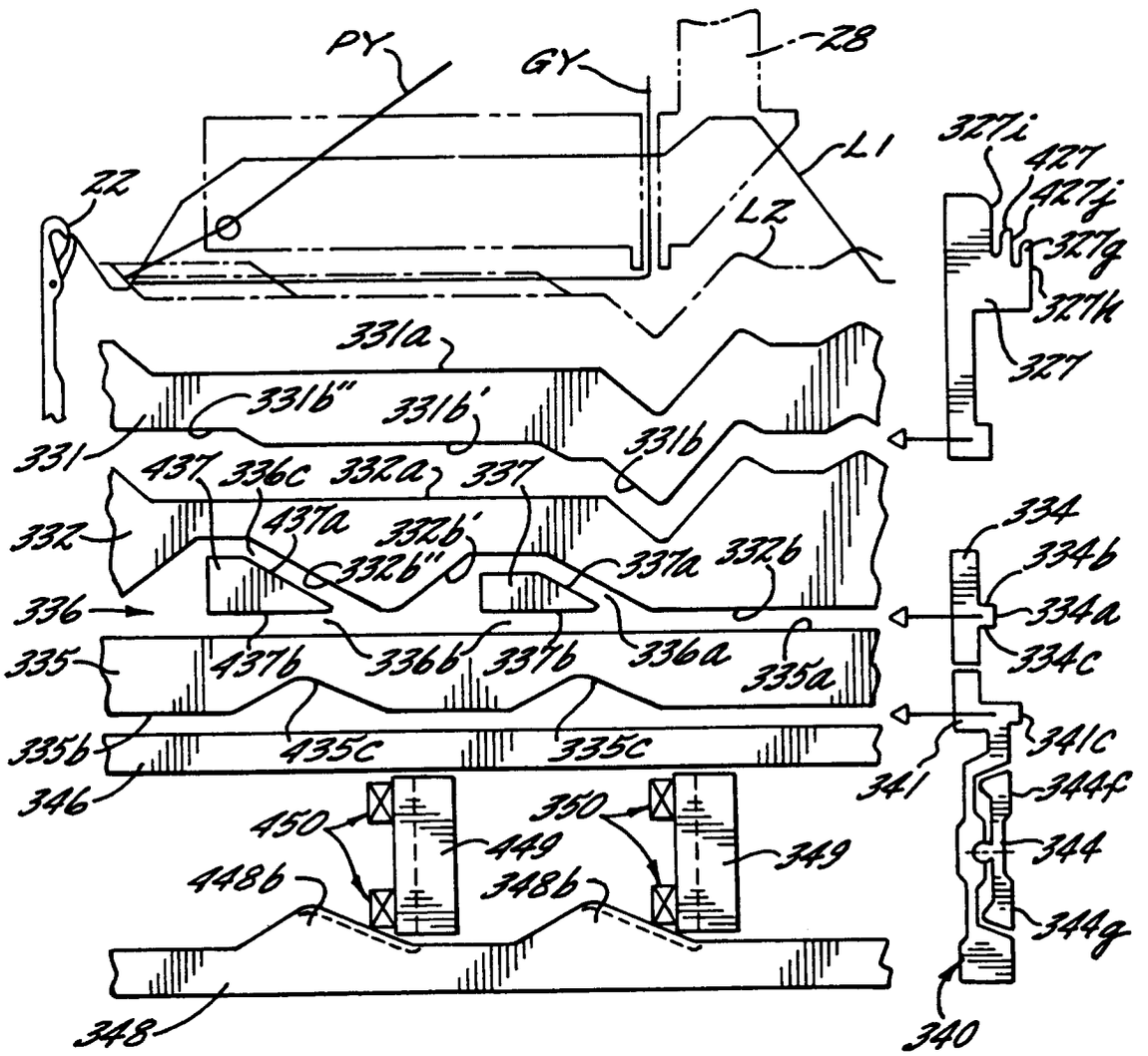
PY
GY
28
L1
L2
22
327i
427
427j
327g
327h
327
331a
331b"
331b'
331b
331
437
336c
332a
337
332
437a
332b'
332b"
337a
332b
336
335
437b
336b'
337b
336a
335a
335b
435c
335c
346
450
449
350
349
448b
348b
348
334
334b
334a
334c
341c
341
344f
344
344g
340

Fig. 16.