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(54) **Hybrid laser-arc welding method for welding zinc coated steel**

(57) A method of welding at least two metal sheets protected by a zinc coating that has a low vaporizing temperature. The metal sheets are placed on top of each other and a head of a welding machine is passed over the sheets. The head of the welding machine is configured such that a laser is positioned in front of a

GMAW welding or MIG brazing device. The laser cuts a channel into the metal sheets in order to allow the protective zinc coating to vaporize and escape. The GMAW welder or MIG brazing device then follows the laser and deposits a material that fills the channel to weld the two pieces together.

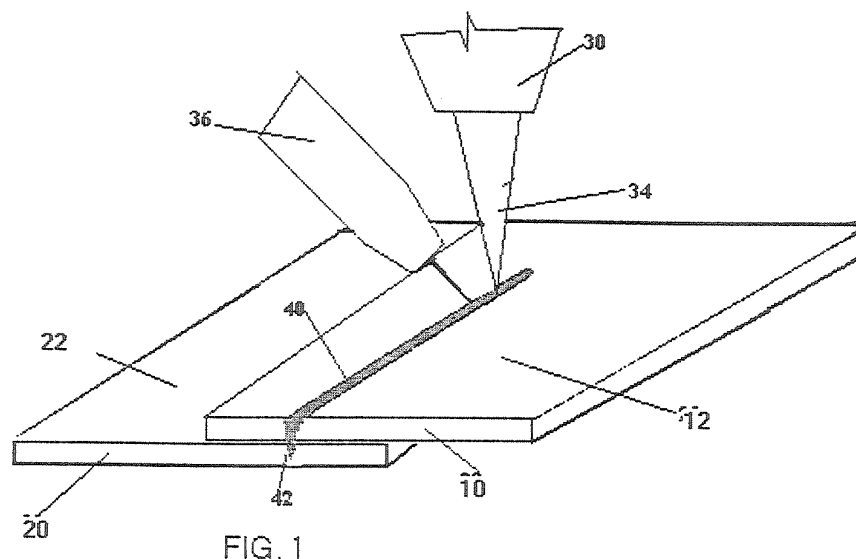


FIG. 1

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