

(19) World Intellectual Property
Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
16 June 2005 (16.06.2005)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2005/053568 A2

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: **A61D**

AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/IB2004/052630

(22) International Filing Date: 1 December 2004 (01.12.2004)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
60/525,880 1 December 2003 (01.12.2003) US

(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

(71) Applicant and
(72) Inventor: **POLON, Arthur, J** [US/US]; P.O. Box 802135, Valencia, CA 91380-2135 (US).

Published:
— without international search report and to be republished upon receipt of that report

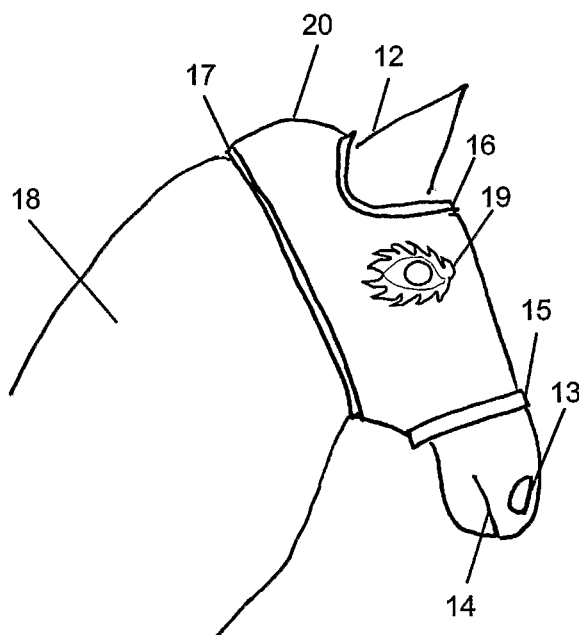
(74) Agent: **OPPEDAHL, Carl**; Oppedahl & Larson LLP, 256 Dillon Ridge Road P O Box 5068, Dillon, CO 80435-5068 (US).

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM,

(54) Title: HORSE INSECT MASK WITH EYES

(57) Abstract: A horse insect mask has images of eyes thereupon. This creates the illusion of no mask at all and completely changes the appearance of the horse when wearing such as mask rather than a prior-art insect mask. This avoids the prior-art result of a horse that looks blindfolded and unhappy.



WO 2005/053568 A2

Description

HORSE INSECT MASK WITH EYES

Cross-reference to related applications

- [1] This application claims priority from US appl. no. 60/525,880 filed December 1, 2003, which application is incorporated herein by reference for all purposes.

Background

- [2] Horses sometimes get flies in their eyes. This can be merely annoying to a horse, but it sometimes can lead to eye irritation and infection. Some flies, for example, will try to lay eggs in the eyes of horses. It is thus extremely desirable to protect the eyes from flies.

- [3] A related concern is the comfort and health of a horse when it is being transported. It is very desirable to keep dust and shavings from getting into a horse's eyes while the horse is being transported, for example by means of a horse trailer.

- [4] A typical prior-art approach to these problems is to put a mask over the eyes of the horse. The mask is made of an open-mesh fabric. The open mesh has openings that are large enough to permit the horse to see through the openings, and yet are small enough to keep flies out. Such masks are effective at keeping flies out of the eyes of the horse, and at keeping dust and shavings from the eyes of the horse. Patents discussing fly masks for horses include US pat. no. 4662156, US pat. no. 5440864, US pat. no. 6128891, and US pat. no. Des. 459556, all of which are incorporated herein by reference for all purposes.

- [5] This approach, however, has significant drawbacks, not so much for the horse as for the people who see the horse. For a human observer, especially a human observer who lacks experience with horses or fly masks, the appearance of the masked horse can be extremely disconcerting. The human observer may feel that the horse has been blindfolded and is unhappy. It is not unheard-of for passers-by who see a horse that is wearing a fly mask to assume that the horse is being treated cruelly, and to report the perceived cruelty to the authorities.

Summary of the invention

- [6] A horse insect mask has images of eyes thereupon. This creates the illusion of no mask at all and completely changes the appearance of the horse when wearing such as mask rather than a prior-art insect mask. This avoids the prior-art result of a horse that looks blindfolded and unhappy.

Description of the drawing

- [7] The invention will be described with respect to a drawing in several figures.
- [8] Fig. 1 shows a prior-art horse insect mask.
- [9] Fig. 2 shows a horse insect mask with eyes in accordance with the invention.
- [10] Where possible, like reference numerals have been used to show like elements of the figures.

Detailed description

- [11] Fig. 1 shows a prior-art fly mask. Horse 8 may be seen, having ears 12, nose 13, and mouth 14. Mask 11 is also visible in Fig. 1, comprising neck opening 17, ear opening 16, and snout opening 15. The mask 11 is made of a mesh material selected to keep flies out and yet to permit the horse to see through the openings of the mesh. Importantly, it will be appreciated that the eyes of the horse are not visible. This can be disconcerting for human observers.
- [12] Turning now to Fig. 2, what may be seen is that the mask 20 of the invention, which may otherwise be identical to the mask 11 of Fig. 1, bears one or more eye images 19. There can be a single eye image 19 in which case it may be in the middle of the mask, like a cyclops. Many owners will instead prefer that there be two eye images 19, disposed symmetrically on the mask 20. The images need not be in direct juxtaposition to the actual locations of the eyes of the horse 18, and indeed it may be desirable to put the eye images 19 toward the front of the mask (as viewed by a viewer in front of the horse 18) so that the images 19 may be easily seen from the front of the horse 18.
- [13] The artistic efforts reflected in the mask 20 may well create the illusion that there is no mask at all, through appropriate choices of color for the mask generally and through the depiction of the eye images 19.
- [14] It will be appreciated that the eye images 19 can be applied to the outer surface of the mask 20 in a way that is not particularly visible from the inside. When this is done, the horse 18 cannot see the design, yet the horse 18 may well benefit from the presence of the eye images 19 because of the smiles of the humans nearby who see the images 19.
- [15] Preferably the ink used for the eye images 19 is odorless, and can for example be a type of ink usable on backpacks and sneakers. The eye images 19 can for example be silk-screen printed or hand-painted. The entire mask 20 can be made of mesh and this is thought preferable as it permits the skin of the horse to breathe. Alternatively the mask 20 can be of mesh simply in two areas, one around each of the two eyes of the horse, or can be mesh in a single area surrounding both of the eyes of the horse. For the comfort of the horse there can be plush or soft material around one or all of the openings 17, 16, and 15.
- [16] While eye images are thought to be preferable, other images such as eyeglasses, eyebrows, nose, ears, and hair may be useful.
- [17] The relationship between a horse 18 and its owner (omitted for clarity in Fig. 2) can be a warm and fun relationship. A mask 20 such as that of the invention can have a playful aspect that is fun for the owner and thus works to the benefit of the horse 18. The mask 20 can be something that an owner will *want* to put on the horse rather than being a mask 17 that the owner puts onto the horse only with some reluctance. It will thus be appreciated that an owner who might otherwise be reluctant to put a fly mask

on a horse will be more comfortable doing so, and this works to the benefit of the horse in terms of ocular health and comfort.

Claims

- [1] An insect mask for an animal having a head, the head having eyes, the mask having an inside disposed toward the animal and having an outside, the mask comprising:
a mask shaped to fit the head of the animal and covering at least the areas of the eyes of the head of the animal;
said mask having mesh fabric in at least the areas of the eyes of the animal;
said mask bearing at least one eye image visible from the outside thereof;
the mesh fabric having openings large enough to permit vision therethrough; the openings small enough to exclude flies.
- [2] The insect mask of claim 1 wherein the number of eye images is two.
- [3] The insect mask of claim 2 wherein the eye images are symmetrically positioned relative to a center line of the mask.
- [4] The insect mask of claim 1 wherein the animal for which the mask is shaped is a horse.
- [5] The insect mask of claim 1 wherein the number of eye images is one.
- [6] The insect mask of claim 5 wherein the eye image is centrally positioned.
- [7] The insect mask of claim 1 wherein the entirety of the mask comprises mesh.
- [8] The insect mask of claim 7 further comprising non-mesh material around a neck opening, an ear opening, and a snout opening.
- [9] The insect mask of claim 8 wherein the non-mesh material is soft or plush.
- [10] A method for use with an animal having a head, the head having eyes, the method comprising the step of:
placing an insect mask on the head of the animal, said insect mask having mesh in at least the area of the eyes, said mask bearing at least one externally visible eye image;
whereby insects are kept away from the animal, while the anatomical appearance of the animal retains an image of at least one eye.
- [11] A fly mask for a horse, the fly mask having facial indicia thereon, wherein the decorative fly mask comprises;
a flexible mesh fly mask shaped to fit a head of the horse;
the mask comprising an outer surface which is premanufactured to simulate the general appearance of a face, wherein the premanufactured outer surface comprises facial indicia selected from the group consisting of eyes, eyeglasses, eyebrows, nose, ears, and hair.
- [12] A method of placing a fly mask onto a horse wherein the method comprises:
selecting a fly mask with mesh in the area of eyes of the horse and having at least one eye image visible from outside of the mask;
providing a horse;
addressing the horse; and

attaching the selected fly mask to the head of the horse;
whereby insects are kept from the eyes of the horse, and whereby an image of at
least one eye is retained.

[Fig. 1]

