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**Carruth et al.**

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(54) **FASHION ACCESSORY OF INTEGRATED CONTINUOUS UNITS AND METHODS OF MAKING THEREOF**

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**F16G 13/16** (2006.01)  
**F16G 15/12** (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**  
USPC ..... **59/83**; 59/80; 59/85; 59/90; D11/12;  
D11/13

(58) **Field of Classification Search** ..... 59/78, 80,  
59/82, 83, 84, 85, 90, 91, 92; D11/3, 12,  
D11/13

See application file for complete search history.

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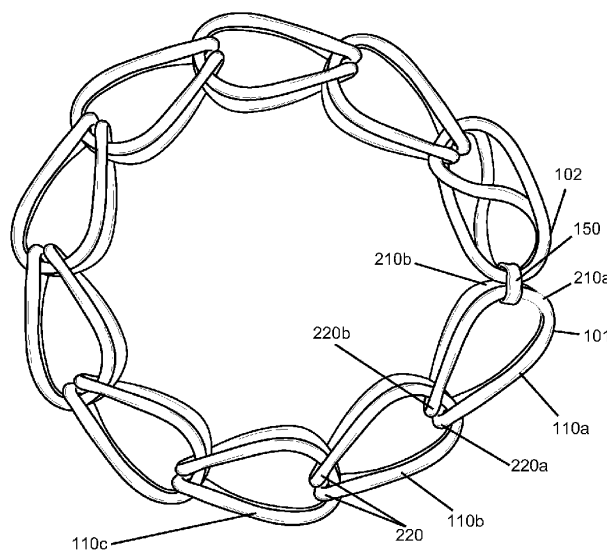
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*Primary Examiner* — David B Jones

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A fashion accessory featuring a plurality of units connected together to form a continuous chain having a first end and a second end. The first end and second end are connected together via a locking means. Each unit is a loop. The units each occupy a folded configuration. In the folded configuration, the unit is folded in half to form a first top arc and a second top arc that are positioned next to each other, and a first bottom hook and a second bottom hook that are positioned across from each other. Adjacent units are fed through both bottom hooks and subsequently moved to occupy the folded configuration.

**8 Claims, 2 Drawing Sheets**



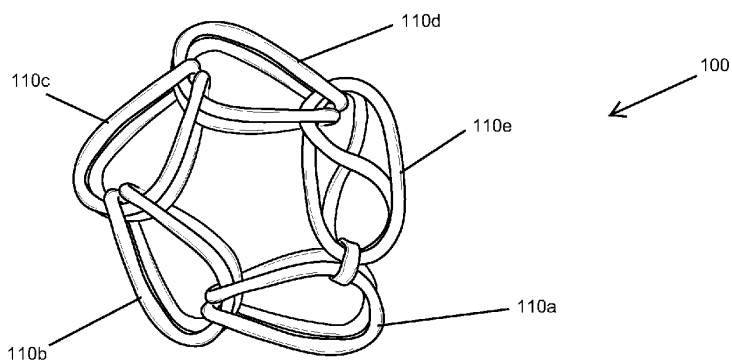


FIG. 1

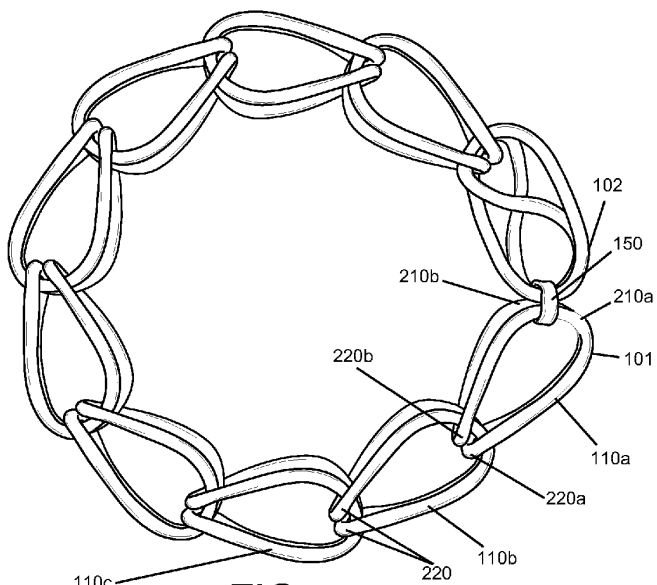


FIG. 2

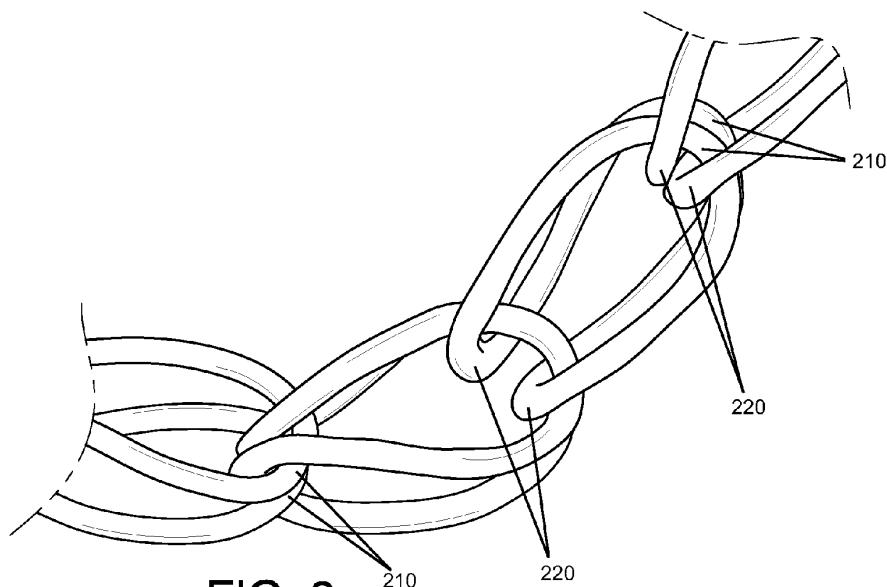


FIG. 3

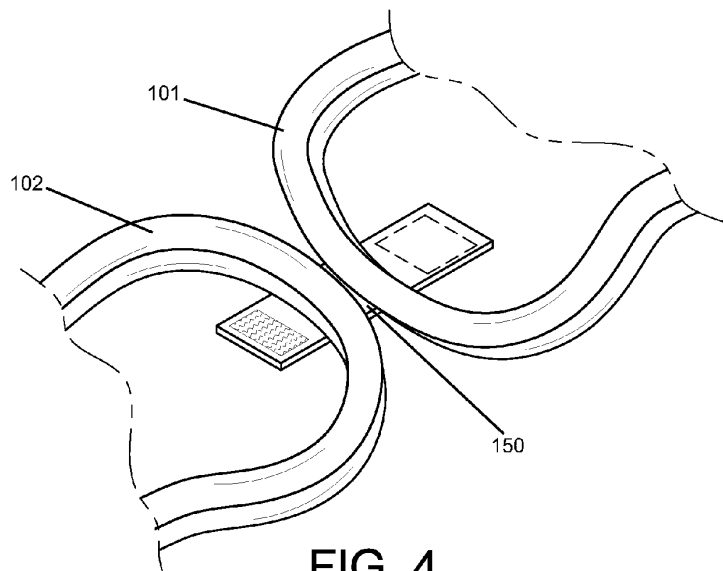


FIG. 4

**FASHION ACCESSORY OF INTEGRATED  
CONTINUOUS UNITS AND METHODS OF  
MAKING THEREOF**

CROSS REFERENCE

This application claims priority to U.S. provisional application Ser. No. 61/361,990 filed Jul. 7, 2010, the specification of which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to a fashion accessory, more particularly to an accessory made from integrated continuous units.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention features a novel fashion accessory, which may be used for a variety of purposes and applications. For example, in some embodiments, the accessory of the present invention is used as a necklace, a bracelet, an anklet, a dog collar, a luggage tag holder, a headband, a hatband, an eyeglasses holder, a backpack accessory, a keychain, the like, or a combination thereof. The present invention is in no way limited to the aforementioned applications.

Any feature or combination of features described herein are included within the scope of the present invention provided that the features included in any such combination are not mutually inconsistent as will be apparent from the context, this specification, and the knowledge of one of ordinary skill in the art. Additional advantages and aspects of the present invention are apparent in the following detailed description and claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a fashion accessory of integrated continuous units and methods of making thereof.

FIG. 2 is a top view of a fashion accessory of integrated continuous units and methods of making thereof.

FIG. 3 is an exploded view of a fashion accessory of integrated continuous units and methods of making thereof.

FIG. 4 is an alternate embodiment of a fashion accessory of integrated continuous units and methods of making thereof.

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED  
EMBODIMENTS

Referring now to FIGS. 1-4, the present invention features a novel fashion accessory **100**. The accessory **100** of the present invention features a plurality of integrated continuous units **110**, in some embodiments geometrically-shaped units. In some embodiments, the units are bands (e.g., similar to hair bands, which are well known to one of ordinary skill in the art).

As used herein, the term “connecting mechanism” refers to any appropriate linking, interlinking, looping, and interlocking of the units **110**.

The accessory **100** of the present invention comprises a plurality of units **110**, for example a first unit **110a**, a second unit **110b**, a third unit **110c**, a fourth unit **110d**, a fifth unit **110e**, etc. In some embodiments, the accessory **100** comprises three or more units **110**. In some embodiments, the accessory **100** comprises four or more units **110**. In some embodiments, the accessory **100** comprises five or more units **110**. In some embodiments, the accessory **100** comprises six

or more units **110**. In some embodiments, the accessory **100** comprises seven or more units **110**. In some embodiments, the accessory **100** comprises eight or more units **110**. In some embodiments, the accessory **100** comprises nine or more units **110**. In some embodiments, the accessory **100** comprises ten or more units **110**.

The units **110** are loops. In some embodiments, the units **110** have a generally rounded shape (prior to integration into the accessory), similar to how a hair band has a generally rounded shape. In some embodiments, the units **110** have an alternate general shape, for example a triangular shape, a star shape, a rectangle shape, a pentagon shape, a hexagon shape, an irregular shape, etc. The present invention is not limited to the aforementioned shapes.

In some embodiments, the units **110** are flexible. In some embodiments, the units **110** are rigid. In some embodiments, the units **110** are constructed from a material comprising elastic, allowing for the units **110** to stretch.

In some embodiments, a decorative component is disposed on one or more of the unit **110**. Decorative components are well known to one of ordinary skill in the art. For example, in some embodiments, the decorative component is glitter, a bead, a sticker, a flower, a bow, a key ring, a luggage tag, a dog tag, a locket, a picture, a glow-in-the dark component, the like, or a combination thereof. The present invention is not limited to the aforementioned decorative components. The decorative components may be directly or indirectly attached to the units **110**.

The units **110** are interlocked to form a continuous chain (e.g., via a connecting mechanism). For example, as shown in FIG. 3, to form the chain, a first unit **110a** is folded (e.g., in half) in a folded configuration, wherein the folded configuration has a first top arc **210a** and a second top arc **210b** that are positioned next to each other, and a first bottom hook **220a** and a second bottom hook **220b**, wherein the bottom hooks **220** are positioned across from each other. A second unit **110b** is fed through both bottom hooks **220** of the first unit **110**, then the second unit **110b** is folded to the folded configuration (as described above). A third unit **110c** is fed through both bottom hooks **220** of the second unit **110**, then the third unit **110c** is folded to the folded configuration (as described above). Additional units **110** are added as described until a desired length or number of units **110** is achieved.

When the units **110** are interlocked to form a continuous chain, the accessory has a first end **101** and a second end **102**. The first end **101** and second end **102** can be connected together via a locking means **150**. The locking means **150** may be one or more of any securing or locking devices well known to one of ordinary skill in the art, for example a mating-type engagement, e.g., a clip mechanism, a snap mechanism, a hook mechanism, a latch mechanism, a magnet mechanism, a hook-and-loop fastener mechanism, the like, or a combination thereof. Other similar mechanisms are well known to one of ordinary skill in the art. In some embodiments, the ends **101**, **102** are temporarily connected together or permanently connected together.

As used herein, the term “about” refers to plus or minus 10% of the referenced number. For example, an embodiment wherein the accessory **100** is about 10 inches in length as measured from the first end **101** to the second end **102** includes an accessory **100** that is between 9 and 11 inches in length.

The disclosures of the following U.S. Patents are incorporated in their entirety by reference herein: U.S. Design Pat. No. D450614; U.S. Pat. No. 6,880,364; U.S. Pat. No. 7,040,120; U.S. Pat. No. 7,293,429; U.S. Design Pat. No. D592537;

U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/0043077; U.S. Patent Application No. 2008/0190137; U.S. Patent Application No. 2009/0255295.

## EXAMPLE 1

## Construction

Example 1 describes an example of constructing the accessory **100** of the present invention. In some embodiments, the accessory **100** of the present invention is constructed by linking the units **110** through a predetermined looping or linking guide; however, the present invention is not limited to this manufacturing or construction process or method. The guide may, for example, comprise a linear device continuous from a first end and a second end, wherein the first end and the second end are each open ends of the guide. The guide may be replaced with any other type device that services the same function as would be evident and obvious to those of ordinary skill in the art.

In some embodiments, a first unit **110a** is placed against the guide such that the first unit **110a** is folded substantially or in part back over on itself over a dominant axis of the guide, thereby creating a smaller area of overlapping enclosed space within the band when viewing from an axis perpendicular to the fold and where such enclosed space is also partially defined by the guide (e.g., or if not guide is used, defined partially by the axis of the fold). A second unit **110b** is then placed through such newly created smaller interior space of the first unit **110a** and the second band **110b** is similarly folded upon itself to create a smaller interior space while partially remaining within the smaller created interior space of the first unit **110a**, thereby linking the first unit **110a** and the second unit **110b** without compromising the continuity of the units **110**. A third unit **110c** is then placed within the newly created smaller interior space of the second unit **110b** along the same method as previously described. Similarly, the third unit **110c** is then folded upon itself while still remaining partially enclosed within the smaller created enclosed interior space of the second unit **110b**. More units **110** can be added depending on the desired length for the article.

When the desired length and/or desired number of units **110** has been achieved, the accessory **100** has a first end **101** and a second end **102**. The first end **101** and the second end **102** can be connected via a locking means **150**. The locking means **150** may be one or more of any securing or locking devices well known to one of ordinary skill in the art, for example a mating-type engagement, e.g., a clip mechanism, a snap mechanism, a hook mechanism, a latch mechanism, a magnet mechanism, a hook-and-loop fastener mechanism, the like, or a combination thereof. Other similar mechanisms are well known to one of ordinary skill in the art.

Various modifications of the invention, in addition to those described herein, will be apparent to those skilled in the art from the foregoing description. Such modifications are also intended to fall within the scope of the appended claims. Each reference cited in the present application is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

Although there has been shown and described the preferred embodiment of the present invention, it will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art that modifications may be made thereto which do not exceed the scope of the appended claims. Therefore, the scope of the invention is only to be limited by the following claims.

The reference numbers recited in the below claims are solely for ease of examination of this patent application, and are exemplary, and are not intended in any way to limit the

scope of the claims to the particular features having the corresponding reference numbers in the drawings.

What is claimed is:

1. A fashion accessory (**100**) comprising a plurality of units (**110**) connected together to form a continuous chain having a first end (**101**) and a second end (**102**), the first end (**101**) and second end (**102**) are connected together via a locking means (**150**), wherein a unit (**110**) is a generally round loop that is elastic and flexible, wherein the units (**110**) each occupy a folded configuration, in the folded configuration the unit (**110**) is folded in half to form a first top arc (**210a**) and a second top arc (**210b**) that are positioned next to each other, and a first bottom hook (**220a**) and a second bottom hook (**220b**) that are positioned across from each other, wherein adjacent units (**110**) are fed through both bottom hooks (**220**) and subsequently moved to occupy the folded configuration; wherein the unit (**110**) is a flexible, elastic hair band.

2. The accessory (**100**) of claim 1 comprising six or more units (**110**).

3. The accessory (**100**) of claim 1 comprising eight or more units (**110**).

4. The accessory (**100**) of claim 1 comprising ten or more units (**110**).

5. The accessory (**100**) of claim 1 comprising twelve or more units (**110**).

6. The accessory (**100**) of claim 1, wherein a decorative component is disposed on one or more of the units (**110**).

7. A fashion accessory (**100**) consisting of a plurality of units (**110**) connected together to form a continuous chain having a first end (**101**) and a second end (**102**), the first end (**101**) and second end (**102**) are connected together via a locking means (**150**), wherein a unit (**110**) is a generally round loop that is elastic, and flexible, wherein the units (**110**) each occupy a folded configuration, in the folded configuration the unit (**110**) is folded in half to form a first top arc (**210a**) and a second top arc (**210b**) that are positioned next to each other, and a first bottom hook (**220a**) and a second bottom hook (**220b**) that are positioned across from each other, wherein adjacent units (**110**) are fed through both bottom hooks (**220**) and subsequently moved to occupy the folded configuration;

wherein the unit (**110**) is a flexible, elastic hair band.

8. A method of forming a novel fashion accessory (**100**) from a plurality of flexible, elastic hair band units (**110**) comprises:

(a) obtaining a plurality of units (**110**);

(b) folding a first unit (**110a**) in half to a folded configuration, wherein the folded configuration has a first top arc (**210a**) and a second top arc (**210b**) that are positioned next to each other, and a first bottom hook (**220a**) and a second bottom hook (**220b**) that are positioned across from each other;

(c) feeding a second unit (**110b**) through the first bottom hook (**220a**) and the second bottom hook (**220b**) of the first unit **110**;

(d) folding the second unit (**110b**) to the folded configuration;

(e) feeding a third unit (**110c**) through the first bottom hook (**220a**) and the second bottom hook (**220b**) of the second unit (**110**);

(f) folding the third unit (**110c**) to the folded configuration;

(g) repeating the steps (c) through (f) of feeding, then folding, for additional unit (**110**) until a desired length or number of units (**110**) is achieved, wherein the units **110** are interlocked to form a continuous chain, wherein the accessory has a first end **101** and a second end **102**;

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