

SMOKING ARTICLE FILTER WITH ANNULAR RESTRICTOR AND DOWNSTREAM VENTILATION

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a smoking article such as a cigarette which includes a
5 filter having a cavity.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to the invention there is provided a smoking article comprising a tobacco rod adapted to produce mainstream smoke and a filter operative with said tobacco rod, said filter
10 having an upstream end portion and a downstream end portion, said filter comprising a central cavity located between said upstream end portion and said downstream end portion, a flow restricting filter segment located upstream of said cavity and including an impermeable insert surrounded by a tubular segment of an air transmissive material and a ventilation zone at a location along said cavity and downstream of said flow restricting segment, said ventilation zone
15 in communication with said cavity.

Also according to the invention there is provided a method of making a filter for a smoking article comprising establishing 2-up restrictor assemblies by inserting restrictor inserts in opposite ends of 2-up hollow filter segments, combining said 2-up restrictor assemblies in alternating relation with 2-up upstream filter segments to form a first filter rod, cutting said first
20 filter rod into 2-up subassemblies, cutting and separating said 2-up sub-assemblies into spaced apart pairs of 1-up sub-assemblies and disposing 2-up downstream filter segments between spaced apart pairs of 1-up sub-assemblies to establish complete 2-up filter assemblies.

Also according to the invention there is provided a method of making a cigarette comprising forming a tobacco rod, cutting the tobacco rod into 2-up tobacco rods, disposing a 2-
25 up filter assembly according to the invention between the 2-up tobacco rods and attaching the 2-up filter assembly to the 2-up tobacco rods with a tipping paper to form a 2-up cigarette, and cutting the 2-up filter assembly centrally to form a pair of cigarettes.

By '2-up' is meant a double length component.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1A is a side view of a smoking article including a filter having a flow restricting filter segment of a preferred embodiment, wherein the filter tipping paper has been partially unfolded to reveal internal filter components.

Fig. 1B is a side view of a smoking article including a filter having a flow restricting filter
35 segment and an upstream filter segment, wherein the filter tipping paper has been partially unfolded to reveal internal filter components.

Fig. 2 is a side view of a smoking article including a filter having a flow restricting filter segment of a preferred embodiment, wherein the filter tipping paper has been partially unfolded to reveal internal filter components.

Figure 3 provides a general representation of DAPTC combiner arranged to perform combining steps of a preferred method of manufacturing the smoking article.

Figure 4 is a representation of a dual hopper max (DH MAX) which has been adapted to conduct certain further filter combining operations on its drums and to tip pairs of tobacco rods with the resultant combined filters.

Figs. 5 and 6 are representations of those further combining steps and tipping operations that are performed on the DH MAX.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Presently disclosed embodiments provide the benefit of a highly ventilated smoking article with desired amounts of resistance to draw and/or provisions for facilitating high speed cigarette manufacturing utilizing high speed filter rod and cigarette making equipment.

Referring now to Fig. 1A, a preferred embodiment provides a smoking article comprising a tobacco rod 12 and a filter 14 connected with the tobacco rod 12 by a tipping paper 16. Preferably, the filter 14 comprises an upstream end portion 20 of the tipping paper 16, a mouthpiece filter segment 22 at a downstream end portion 25 of the filter 14, and an annular flow restricting filter segment 26 situated between the mouthpiece filter segment 22 and the upstream end portion 20 of the filter 14.

In an embodiment, as shown in Fig. 1B, a second, upstream filter segment 23 is optionally located upstream of the flow restricting filter segment 26. Preferably, the mouth filter segment 22 and the optional upstream filter segment 23 are low particulate efficiency filter segments preferably constructed from cellulose acetate tow of about 5.0 denier per filament to about 25 denier per filament (e.g. 6.0 denier, 7.0 denier, 8.0 denier, 9.0 denier, 10.0 denier, 11.0 denier, 12.0 denier, 13.0 denier, 14.0 denier, 15.0 denier, 16.0 denier) and approximately 10,000 total denier to approximately 50,000 total denier (td), such as 35,000 td. Also preferably, the mouth filter segment 22 and the optional upstream filter segment 23 are each independently approximately 5 mm to approximately 10 mm in length.

Preferably, the flow restricting filter segment 26 comprises an impermeable insert 18 and an air transmissive tubular portion 30 located upstream of a cavity 46 in which smoke from tubular portion 30 mixes with air supplied by ventilation zone 40 comprised of ventilation holes 75 formed in the tipping paper 16.

In this embodiment, the tubular filter segment 30 is preferably constructed from low density cellulose acetate tow (sometimes referred to as a hollow acetate tube or HAT). Preferably, the HAT is approximately 5mm to approximately 30mm in length. More preferably

the HAT is approximately 15mm to approximately 25mm in length. Also preferably, the HAT is approximately 0.5mm to approximately 2mm thick.

In another embodiment, the tubular portion 30 can be formed from porous foam, paper or other cellulosic materials so long as the material is air transmissive. The tube 30 can be made via other forming techniques such as molding or extruding the tube or forming a tube with a longitudinal seam. Preferably, the tubular support 30 provides desired firmness throughout length of the filter 14.

Preferably, the flow restriction filter segment 26 is configured to contribute sufficient pressure drop such that the smoking article 10 presents a resistance to draw of at least 40mm water or greater, preferably in the range of approximately 50 mm to approximately 120mm water. For example, the flow restrictor insert 18 can have a diameter of approximately 4mm to approximately 8mm and more preferably approximately 5mm to approximately 7mm.

In an embodiment, an insert 18 is plunged in one end of the tubular portion 30. Preferably, the insert 18 is constructed of a smoke impermeable material such as plastic, polymer or a metal. Most preferably, the insert 18 is made of a non-permeable material such as high density polyethylene (HDPE), extruded or compressed cellulosic material, and/or a closed-cell foam such as paper-foam, tobacco foam, and/or polyethylene foam. The insert 18 is impermeable to smoke so as to force drawn smoke to flow around the insert 18 and through the permeable tubular portion 30.

In a preferred embodiment, the impermeable material used to form the insert 18 is flavored. Examples of flavorants include licorice, sugar, isosweet, fructose syrup, cocoa, lavender, cinnamon, cardamom, apium graveolens, fenugreek, cascarrilla, sandalwood, bergamot, geranium, honey essence, rose oil, vanilla, lemon oil, orange oil, mint oils, cassia, caraway, cognac, jasmine, chamomile, menthol, cassia, sage, spearmint, ginger, coriander, coffee and the like.

In this embodiment, the insert 18 has tapered ends with end to end symmetry that facilitates high speed filter rod making because the insert 18 works the same whether or not the rod making machine orients one end of the device first or reverses it.

Preferably, the cavity 46 is defined by an inner periphery of the tubular segment 30, and the open space between the upstream end of the mouthpiece segment 22 and the downstream end of the insert 18. The ventilation zone 40 communicates with the cavity 46 at a location downstream of the flow restrictor insert 18.

In this embodiment, the ventilation zone 40 comprises a plurality of ventilation holes which extend through the tipping paper 16. Because the tubular segment 30 is formed by an air transmissive material, perforations need not be made in and/or extend through the tubular filter segment 30. This arrangement facilitates the use of online laser perforation techniques to provide ventilation holes during the manufacture of the smoking article 10.

Manufacture of the smoking articles 10 described above can be facilitated with the use of pre-perforated tipping paper.

The ventilation zone 40 is established with a first circumferential row (and optionally second and possibly third rows) of ventilation holes through the tipping paper 16 and optionally the filter tube 30. Accordingly, air is preferably drawn through the ventilation holes of the ventilation zone 40 and into the cavity 46 defined between the flow restrictor insert 18 and the mouthpiece filter segment 22.

Preferably the ventilation zone 40 is located at a downstream location near or adjacent to the flow restriction filter segment 26 so that air drawn through the ventilation zone 40 is allowed to mix with the mainstream smoke in the cavity 46 before arriving at the mouthpiece filter 22.

Preferably, the distance between the ventilation zone 40 and the mouthpiece filter 22 is at least 5 mm or in the range of approximately 5 mm to approximately 20 mm.

Preferably, the ventilation zone 40 achieves a ventilation level of the smoking article of at least about 25% and more preferably at least about 50% to about 90%, e.g. 60%, 70%, or 80%.

Optionally, a second zone of ventilation may be located upstream of the flow restriction filter segment 26 in addition to the downstream ventilation zone 40 as described above.

Preferred dimensions for an 83 mm smoking article include, for example, a filter length of 27 mm, a mouth end filter segment length of 7 mm, vent holes 12 mm from the mouth end of the smoking article, a tubular portion length of 13 mm, an insert length of 5 mm, and an upstream cellulose acetate filter segment length of 7 mm.

Referring now to Figure 2, a smoking article 10 includes a tobacco rod 12 and a filter 14. Preferably, the filter 14 includes a flow restricting filter segment 26 adjacent the upstream end portion 20 of the tipping paper 16. Preferably, the flow restricting filter segment 26 has a length of approximately 3 mm to approximately 10 mm, more preferably approximately 3 mm to approximately 7 mm in length.

In a preferred embodiment, the flow restricting filter segment 26 includes an insert 18 at least partially surrounded by an air transmissive material 35 such as HAT. In this embodiment, the flow restricting filter segment 26 is upstream of a cavity 46 and a ventilation zone 40. The cavity is defined by an inner periphery of a tubular segment 30. The cavity 46 is further defined by the open space between the upstream end of the mouthpiece filter segment 22 and the downstream insert 18. The mouthpiece filter segment 22 and restrictor segment 26 are contained within the tubular portion 30. The tubular portion 30 is defined by a thick, stiff paper wrap, such as Parliament® type paper. Preferably, flow restricting filter segment 26 is in a condition of being plunged in the tubular portion 30.

In this embodiment, the insert 18 has end-to-end symmetry, and is plunged into the short hollow acetate tube 35 that is substantially the same length as the insert 18. Because the insert

18 is impermeable, smoke drawn through the filter is diverted through the air transmissive material of HAT 35, and around the flow restrictor insert 18 and into the cavity 46.

Preferably, the flow restriction filter segment 26 and the mouthpiece filter 22 are spaced by a distance sufficient to reduce impaction of particulate smoke components upon the upstream face of the mouthpiece filter 22. Preferably, the flow restriction segment 26 is spaced approximately 4mm to approximately 20mm from the mouthpiece filter segment 22, more preferably the flow restriction segment 26 is spaced approximately 5mm to approximately 15mm from the segment 22.

In a preferred embodiment, the filter may be constructed from simple combining techniques typically used in the industry for manufacturing cigarettes at high speeds.

In the Figure 2 embodiment, a desired amount of resistance to draw can be achieved while maintaining the desired degree of high ventilation throughout the puff count. The latter attribute is achieved by placement of the ventilation zone 40 downstream of the flow restrictor 26. By placing the ventilation zone 40 in spaced apart relation to the mouthpiece filter plug 22, mixing of air drawn into the filter 14 through the ventilation zone 40 with mainstream smoke drawn from the tobacco rod 12 is facilitated.

During smoking, good mixing is evidenced by production of uniform stain patterns at the buccal end of the mouthpiece filter 22.

During a puff, mainstream smoke is drawn through around the insert 18, through the air transmissive material 35 of the tubular portion, and into the cavity 46 where it is mixed with ventilation air that is drawn into the cavity 46 via the ventilation zone 40.

In a preferred embodiment, the ventilation zone 40 comprises a plurality of ventilation holes 75, which extend through the tipping paper 16, and optionally, partially into or through the tubular segment 30. This arrangement facilitates the use of online laser perforation techniques to provide ventilation holes 75 during the manufacture of the smoking article 10. Other techniques may be used to create the ventilation zone 40 such as using off-line, pre-perforated tipping paper, mechanical perforation, electrostatic perforation and other techniques.

Figures 3-6 illustrate an exemplary method of manufacturing smoking articles including the flow restriction filter segment 26 of Fig. 1B. Along flutes of a drum 504 pairs of HAT segments 30 are each respectively situated between opposing pairs of 2-up inserts 18, 18' and are pushed together so that a pair of 2-up HAT restrictor assemblies are established on each flute, which assemblies are each 26 mm long. The pairs are then fed or placed into a first hopper 501 of an upstream section 506 of a DAPTC combiner. From the first hopper 501, the 2-up HAT restrictor assemblies are separated and fed in spaced apart relation onto an endless feed belt 505 of the DAPTC combiner.

Similarly, continuous cellulose acetate filter rods are produced and cut into a plurality of CA 6-up/84mm long rods, which are fed or placed into a second hopper 507 of the DAPTC

combiner. During combining operations the 6-up rods are further cut and sorted into 2-up/14mm segments and placed in alternating relation to the restrictor assemblies on the feed belt 505.

At the downstream travel portion of the feed belt 505 a rotating spacer drum 508 establishes a continuous, closed-up procession 515 of the alternating 2-up restrictor assemblies and 2-up CA segments in mutually abutting, end to end relation with one after another. Downstream of the rotating spacer drum 508, the procession is transferred onto a ribbon of plug wrap 513. A garniture belt 509 draws both the procession 515 and the plug wrap 513 through a garniture 511 whereat a plug wrap 513 is wrapped about the procession of plugs 515 so as to form a continuous filter rod 521. Preferably one or more glue guns 517 apply a desired pattern of glue continuously and/or at spaced locations along the ribbon of plug wrap 513 to retain filter rod 521 in its final form.

Downstream of the garniture 511 a cutter 517 severs the continuous rod 521 so as to form a 6-up restrictor/upstream segment assembly (rod) 519. The 6-up rod 519 preferably comprises the following segments from one end to the other: a 1-up/7mm CA segment; a first 26mm/2-up restrictor assembly segment; a 14mm/2-up CA segment; a second 26mm/2-up restrictor assembly segment; a second 14mm/2-up CA segment; a third 26mm/2-up restrictor assembly segment; and a second, 1-up/7mm. The 6-up rods 519 are then fed or placed into a first hopper 170 of the dual hopper max.

Referring now to Figs. 4 and 5, the 6-up/120mm rods 519 are then cut into three 2-up rods 521 at drum 222, then graded at drum 224 aligned at drum 226, whereupon each are cut centrally and spaced apart into opposing pairs of sub-assemblies along each flute of the drum 232. Each sub-assembly comprises a 1-up/7mm CA segment (corresponding to the upstream segment 23 in Fig. 1B), an insert 18 and a 1-up HAT segment, whose open end portion is directed inwardly along the respective drum flute. The pairs of sub-assemblies are spaced apart sufficiently to receive 2-up/14mm CA plugs 523.

The 2-up plugs 523 are constructed from similar cutting grading and aligning operations on 6-up/84mm long filter rods at drums 242, 244 and 246 of the DH MAX represented in Fig. 4, with further cut, grade and align operations occurring at or about the drum 248.

Referring back to operations at 238, the plugs are brought together at drum 250 to form a complete 2-up filter structure 525, which are then fed in between pairs of spaced apart filter rods 527, as illustrated in Fig. 6, and wrapped with tipping paper 529 in accordance with the usual tipping operations of a dual hopper max to form a completed 2-up cigarette structure 531. Thereafter, the 2-up cigarette structure 531 is severed and the cigarettes are all aligned at drum 264 whereupon they are directed to a packer 266 from whence they go to a cartoner 268 and to a case packer 270.

In an embodiment, flavorants or colorants can be added to the material surrounding the flow restriction device 26. Examples of flavorants include licorice, sugar, isosweet, fructose syrup, cocoa, lavender, cinnamon, cardamom, apium graveolens, fenugreek, cascarilla, sandalwood, bergamot, geranium, honey essence, rose oil, vanilla, lemon oil, orange oil, mint oils, cassia, caraway, cognac, jasmine, chamomile, menthol, cassia, ylang-ylang, sage, spearmint, ginger, coriander, coffee and the like.

The embodiments as shown and described herein provide the benefit of a highly ventilated smoking article with desired amounts of resistance to draw and provisions for facilitating high-speed cigarette manufacturing on conventional cigarette making equipment.

It will be understood that the foregoing description is of the preferred embodiments, and is, therefore, merely representative of the article and methods of manufacturing the same. It can be appreciated that variations and modifications of the different embodiments in light of the above teachings will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art. For example, other air-permeable materials could be used to construct the HAT. Accordingly, the exemplary embodiments, as well as alternative embodiments, may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the articles and methods as set forth in the attached claims.

CLAIMS:

1. A smoking article comprising:

a tobacco rod adapted to produce mainstream smoke; and

a filter operative with said tobacco rod, said filter having an upstream end portion and a downstream end portion, said filter comprising:

a central cavity located between said upstream end portion and said downstream end portion;

a flow restricting filter segment located upstream of said cavity and including an impermeable insert surrounded by a tubular segment of an air transmissive material; and

a ventilation zone at a location along said cavity and downstream of said flow restricting segment, said ventilation zone in communication with said cavity.

2. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein the tubular segment has a length equal to or exceeding a length of the insert.

3. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein said air transmissive material is selected from the group consisting of a hollow acetate tube, carbon on tow, carbon paper, thick and/or heavy paper, and combinations thereof.

4. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein said insert is in a condition of having been plunged into said tubular segment.

5. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein said tubular segment at least partially defines said cavity.

6. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein said insert is fully contained within said tubular segment.

7. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein said insert has a sliding fit with said tubular segment.

8. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein said insert is coextensive with the filter length and/or there is no filtering material between the flow restricting filter segment and a downstream end of the tobacco rod.

9. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein said filter and tobacco rod are attached with tipping paper and wherein said ventilation zone is defined by at least one row of perforations in said tipping paper.

5 10. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein said smoking article includes an optional first filter plug upstream of said flow restricting filter segment and a second filter plug at a mouth end of said filter.

10 11. The smoking article of Claim 10, wherein at least one of said first filter plug segment and said second filter plug segment comprises cellulose acetate tow of about 5 denier to about 25 denier per filament.

12. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein the predetermined resistance-to-draw of said smoking article is approximately 40 millimeters water or above.

15 13. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein said insert is formed from a material selected from high density polyethylene, polypropylene, nylon, compressed or extruded cellulosic material, closed cell foams, and/or combinations thereof.

20 14. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein said insert includes at least one flavorant.

15. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein said insert has end-to-end symmetry.

16. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein said insert includes an impermeable end wall.

25 17. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein said insert is a solid plug press fitted into a hollow acetate tube.

18. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein said insert is injection molded.

30 19. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein said smoking article has a ventilation level at least about 25%.

20. The smoking article of Claim 1, wherein said smoking article has a ventilation level at
35 least about 50% to about 90%.

21. A method of making a filter for a smoking article comprising:

establishing 2-up restrictor assemblies by inserting restrictor inserts in opposite ends of 2-up hollow filter segments;

combining said 2-up restrictor assemblies in alternating relation with 2-up upstream filter segments to form a first filter rod;

cutting said first filter rod into 2-up subassemblies;

cutting and separating said 2-up sub-assemblies into spaced apart pairs of 1-up sub-assemblies; and

disposing 2-up downstream filter segments between spaced apart pairs of 1-up sub-assemblies to establish complete 2-up filter assemblies.

22. A method of making a cigarette comprising:

forming a tobacco rod;

cutting the tobacco rod into 2-up tobacco rods;

disposing a 2-up filter assembly according to Claim 21 between the 2-up tobacco rods and attaching the 2-up filter assembly to the 2-up tobacco rods with a tipping paper to form a 2-up cigarette; and

cutting the 2-up filter assembly centrally to form a pair of cigarettes.

23. A method of making a cigarette comprising:

placing an impermeable insert in an opening of a tubular segment of air transmissive material to form a flow restricting segment;

placing the flow restricting segment between a downstream filter segment and an upstream filter segment such that the impermeable insert is at an upstream end of the tubular segment and attaching the segments together with plug wrap to form a flow restricting filter; and

attaching a tobacco rod to an upstream end of the flow restricting filter to form a cigarette.