We claim:

1. A backup ring for a face seal for an earth boring bit, comprising:

a ring shaped member having an inner surface adjacent the face seal and an outer surface that is at least in part exposed to drilling fluids, said outer surface comprising an edge segment that is harder than the balance of said member.

2. The ring of claim 1, wherein:

said edge segment extends to at least two adjacent sides.

3. The ring of claim 1, wherein:

said edge segment has uniform thickness.

4. The ring of claim 1, wherein:

said edge segment has non-uniform thickness.

5. The ring of claim 1, wherein:

said edge segment runs continuously.

6. The ring of claim 1, wherein:

said edge segment is discontinuous.

7. The ring of claim 1, wherein:

said edge segment is made of the same material as the balance of said member but has altered properties to make said segment more durable to wear or tearing.

8. The ring of claim 1, wherein:

said edge segment is a different and harder material than the balance of said member.

9. The ring of claim 1, wherein:

said edge segment further comprises a projection.

10. The ring of claim 1, wherein:

the hardness of said edge segment is at least 46 durometer on the Shore A scale.

CLAIMS

1. A roller cone bit assembly, comprising:

a bit body comprising a plurality of roller cones sealed to said body with a respective face seal that is backed up by a backup ring;

said backup ring comprising a ring shaped member having an inner surface adjacent the face seal and an outer surface that is at least in part exposed to drilling fluids, said outer surface comprising an edge segment that is harder than the balance of said member, said edge segment out of contact with a respective said cone.

2. The assembly of claim **1**, wherein:

said edge segment extends to at least two adjacent sides.

3. The assembly of claim **1**, wherein:

said edge segment has uniform thickness.

4. The assembly of claim **1**, wherein:

said edge segment has non-uniform thickness.

5. The assembly of claim **1**, wherein:

said edge segment runs continuously.

6. The assembly of claim **1**, wherein:

said edge segment is discontinuous.

7. The assembly of claim **1**, wherein:

said edge segment is made of the same material as the balance of said member but has altered properties to make said segment more durable to wear or tearing.

8. The assembly of claim **1**, wherein:

said edge segment is a different and harder material than the balance of said member.

9. The assembly of claim **1**, wherein:

said edge segment further comprises a projection.

10. The assembly of claim **1**, wherein:

the hardness of said edge segment is at least 46 durometer on the Shore A scale.