Description

This invention relates to apparatus for reproducing digital signals from magnetic tape in which a clock signal is generated from the reproduced signal.

Transmission systems for transmitting information having a burst-shape signal waveform, such as recording and reproducing apparatus, are known in which a plurality of rotary heads are mounted on the periphery of a tape guide drum and have, for example, an equal angular spacing, such as. for example, an angular spacing of 180° between the heads. A magnetic tape is wrapped around the periphery of the tape guide drum over an angular distance which is less than 180° and may, for example, be 90°. An example of such recording and reproducing apparatus is disclosed in our European patent application no 0092403.

In this prior recording and reproducing apparatus, a radio frequency (RF) signal is reproduced by the rotary head during the normal playback mode and has a signal waveform of a burst-shape which has a high signal level as shown in Figure 1A of the accompanying drawings. This is because signals recorded on the tape are reproduced only when the rotary head is effectively in contact with the tape. The RF signal reproduced by the rotary head is waveform-equalized by a waveform equalization circuit, is waveform-shaped by a waveform shaping circuit, and is then fed to a phase locked loop (PLL) circuit. The PLL circuit is provided so as to generate a clock signal from the reproduced digital signal.

When the level of the RF signal is sufficiently large, a voltage controlled oscillator (VCO) of the PLL circuit is locked and placed in a stable state as shown in Figure 1B of the accompanying drawings. When the level of the RF signal is, on the other hand, very small, which means that substantially no signal exists, the VCO of the PLL circuit is not in the locked condition and is in a free-running state as illustrated in Figure 1B, so that the VCO runs freely. Thus, the oscillation frequency of the VCO will vary near the free-running frequency, and the unstable state will be maintained until a normal level RF signal arrives again.

This is also true for high speed playback modes such as the fast forward (FF) search mode and the rewind (REW) search mode. Thus. in the high speed playback mode, the plurality of rotary heads scan a plurality of tracks during one scan, such that at that time each head generates an output when it scans the tracks whose azimuths are coincident with the head, and each head generates no output when it scans the tracks whose azimuths are not coincident with the head, so that an RF signal which has a so-called bead-shape, shown in Figure 2A of the accompanying drawings, is obtained.

Thus, the PLL circuit to which such an RF signal is supplied will be locked and placed in a stable state at a location on the tape where the level of the RF signal is sufficiently large, but it will not be locked, as shown in Figure 2B of the accompanying drawings, and will be in a free-running state and become unstable at locations on the tape where no RF signal exists, or at a trough portion of the RF waveform having the bead-shape.

In prior apparatus in which the level of the RF signal becomes small, the PLL circuit is released from the locked state and the PLL circuit is put into the free-running state, and under these conditions there are various defects of the apparatus.

First, the capture range (oscillation frequency range of the VCO in which the PLL circuit can be locked to the input signal which is being varied from the initial state, so that the PLL circuit is not in a locked state) cannot be widened. Even if the capture range could be widened, the pull-in time of the PLL circuit (that is, the time necessary for locking the PLL circuit) becomes long, and the locking range of the PLL circuit (oscillation frequency range of the VCO in which the PLL circuit can maintain the locked state to the input signal when the input signal is being varied from the initial state such that the PLL circuit is in the locked state) is not substantially widened. At the present time, the locked range is about ± 2 to 3% under the best conditions. In addition, adjustment of the free-running frequency of the VCO is required. Furthermore, even if the recovery time of the PLL circuit (that is, the time period from the time when the PLL circuit is unlocked to the time when it is locked again) from a drop-out of the RF is short, then the PLL circuit will be locked for a long period of time.

Also, in the prior waveform equalization circuit, the waveform equalization characteristic for equalizing a waveform of a signal reproduced from the tape is fixed to that which occurs in the normal playback mode. As a result in the case of, for example, a high speed playback mode or a variable speed playback mode, such as when the relative speed between the tape and the head becomes faster or slower than the speed in the normal playback mode, the waveform equalization characteristic which is fixed to the normal playback mode cannot properly operate with the various playback modes, because the frequency of the data is shifted upwardly or downwardly in response to the relative speed. This defect causes the data error rates to be increased.

German patent specification DE-A1-29 51 022 discloses an apparatus for reproducing digital signals from magnetic tape using a controlled current source amplifier in a phase locked loop for locking a voltage controlled oscillator to the digital data, without being disturbed by drop-outs in the digital signal.

French patent specification FR-A-2 512 574 discloses an apparatus for reproducing analogue video signals with different speeds. In order to maintain the relative head-to-tape speed at a constant value, a

synchronization signal is derived from the reproduced signal, and this is converted by means of a frequency-to-voltage converter to an analogue motor control voltage.

European patent specification EP-A2-0 075 948 discloses the use of a similar principle when reproducing digital signals from a disc. Reference is also made to tape reproduction. It further discloses a comparing circuit for supplying the motor control voltage.

According to the present invention there is provided apparatus for reproducing digital signals from magnetic tape, the apparatus comprising : a rotary head for reproducing digital data from said tape ;

a motor for driving said rotary head ;

a motor drive means for supplying an output to said motor ;

a switch means connected to said motor drive means and in a first position supplying a normal speed signal thereto and in a second position supplying a high speed signal thereto ;

a comparing circuit connected to said switch means to supply said high speed signal ;

a phase locked loop circuit for receiving an output signal from said rotary head and including a voltage controlled oscillator and a phase comparing/data extracting circuit which receives an input from said voltage controlled oscillator so as to compare the phase of the output of said voltage controlled oscillator with the phase of the reproduced digital signal ;

a charge pump circuit connected to receive the output of said phase comparing/data extracting circuit ;

a first low-pass filter for receiving the output of said charge pump circuit and for supplying an input to said voltage controlled oscillator so as to lock said voltage controlled oscillator on said reproduced digital signal ; and a second low-pass filter for receiving the output of said first low-pass filter and supplying an input to said comparing circuit for comparing it with a reference voltage so as to control said motor such that the relative head-to-tape speed is substantially the same in the normal and the high speed reproduction modes.

The invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings, throughout which like parts are referred to by like references, and in which :

Figures 1A and 1B are signal waveform diagrams for explaining a prior example ;

Figures 2A and 2B are signal waveform diagrams for explaining a prior example ;

Figure 3 is a block diagram for an embodiment of apparatus for reproducing a digital signal and according to the invention ;

Figures 4A to 4F are signal waveform diagrams for explaining the operation of the embodiment of Figure 3 ;

Figures 5A to 5F are signal waveform diagrams for explaining the operation of the embodiment of Figure 3 ;

Figure 6 is a waveform equalization characteristic graph for explaining the operation of a variable waveform equalization circuit shown in Figure 3 ;

Figure 7 is a graph of a VCO control voltage for explaining the operation of a VCO shown in Figure 3 ;

Figure 8 is a circuit diagram showing one example of a practical circuit arrangement of a PLL circuit shown in Figure 3 ;

Figures 9A to 9I are timing waveform diagrams for explaining the operation of the PLL circuit shown in Figure 8 ;

Figure 10 is a circuit diagram showing one example of a practical circuit of a high speed envelope detecting circuit shown in Figure 3 ;

Figure 11 is a circuit diagram showing an example of a practical circuit arrangement of a tracking comparator circuit shown in Figure 3 ;

Figure 12 is a block diagram illustrating one example of a practical circuit of a random walk filter shown in Figure 3 ; and

Figures 13A to 13C are timing waveform diagrams for explaining the operation of a filter shown in Figure 12.

Figure 3 is a block diagram illustrating the overall circuit arrangement of an embodiment of the present invention. A rotary head 1 typifies a plurality of rotary heads which are mounted on the periphery of a tape guide drum at an angular spacing of 180°. The tape guide drum is not shown. These rotary heads are alternately switched by a switching pulse, and outputs are derived from the heads. Although not shown, a magnetic tape, is wrapped around the periphery of the tape guide drum over an angular distance of, for example 90°.

As shown in Figure 3, the reproduced signal (RF signal) which is read out from a recording medium such as, for example, the magnetic tape by the head 1 is amplified by an amplifier 2 and supplied to a variable waveform equalization circuit 3 in which it is waveform equalized. The output from the variable waveform equalization circuit 3 is supplied to a waveform shaping circuit 4 in which it is waveform-shaped and then fed to a PLL circuit 5. The PLL circuit 5 comprises a phase comparing/data extracting circuit 6 which receives the output of the waveform shaping circuit 4. A charge pump circuit 7 receives the output of the phase comparing/data extracting circuit 6 and supplies an output to a low-pass filter 8 of a complete integration type. A VCO 9 receives an output of the low-pass filter 8, and supplies an input to the phase comparing/data extracting circuit 6.

The output of the amplifier 2 is also supplied to a high-speed envelope detecting circuit 10, in which the envelope of the reproduced signal (RF signal) is full-wave rectified at high speed, and converted to an

envelope waveform. The detected output from the envelope detecting circuit 10 is supplied to a tracking comparator 11 in which it is compared with a threshold level that can be automatically varied in response to the envelope waveform, so as substantially to detect a point where the RF signal drops out. The output from the tracking comparator 11 is supplied to a random walk filter 12 in which the unstable portion (flapping or oscillatory portion) which exists at the side edges of the output waveform of the tracking comparator 11 is removed. In other works, the tracking comparator 11 and the random walk filter 12 serve as a form of wave-shaping means for wave-shaping the envelope output. The random walk filter 12 is supplied with a clock signal which has a frequency which results from dividing the oscillator frequency of the VCO 9 by a predetermined factor. Thus, in the random walk filter 12, the state transition speed is changed by the phase-compared frequency, so that the occurrence of unused time can be reduced as compared with a filter using a normal fixed clock signal.

The output from the random walk filter 12 is supplied to the charge pump circuit 7 as a control signal which controls the charge pump operation. Specifically, when the control signal is, for example, at a high level, the charge pump operation will be carried out, or the feedback loop will be closed, and the PLL circuit 5 will be locked. On the other hand, when the control signal is at a low level, the charge pump operation is stopped, and the feedback loop is opened, and the PLL circuit 5 is placed in the holding state. In this case, the envelope detecting circuit 10, the tracking comparator 11 and the random walk filter 12 form a feed-forward system.

Also, at the output side of the low-pass filter 8, another low-pass filter 13 is connected. The low-pass filter 13 may comprise a low-pass filter having a relatively large time constant, such that noise contained in the output from the low-pass filter 8 will be removed. The output from the low-pass filter 13 is supplied to a control signal generating circuit 14 which generates in response to the output of the low-pass filter 13 corresponding to the relative speed between the tape and the head 1, or in other words in response to the control voltage of the VCO 9, a control signal which is supplied to the variable waveform equalization circuit 3 in modes other than the recording mode and the normal playback mode such as, for example, the high speed playback mode and the variable speed playback mode. The variable waveform equalization circuit 3 is constructed so it can change its waveform equalization characteristic in response to the relative speeds in a manner such that, for example, when the relative speed is higher than that of the normal playback, the waveform equalization characteristic is shifted to the upper side in frequency by a predetermined amount as compared to that in the normal playback mode, and when the relative speed is lower than that of the normal playback mode, the waveform equalization characteristic is shifted to the lower side in frequency by a predetermined amount as compared to the normal playback mode. Thus, the waveform equalization characteristic of the variable waveform equalization circuit 3 is always set at the best data error rate. The output from the low-pass filter 13 is supplied to one input terminal of the comparing circuit 15. Another input terminal of the comparing circuit 15 receives a reference voltage from a reference voltage source 16. The reference voltage is set at a value equal to the control voltage for the VCO 9, which is generated at the output side of the low-pass filter 8 during the normal playback mode.

The output from the comparing circuit 15 is supplied to a contact a of a switching circuit 17 which is supplied at its other contact b with a control voltage generated in the normal playback mode. The switching circuit 17 is switched to its contact a by a mode switching signal from a microcomputer (not shown), during the high speed playback mode and it is switched to the contact b during the normal playback mode.

The output from the switching circuit 17 is supplied through a drive circuit 18 to a drum motor 19 which drives a drum on which the rotary head is mounted. The drum motor 19 is controlled such that during the high speed playback mode, the compared error signal from the comparing circuit 15 will become zero, or the control voltage from the VCO 9 during the high speed playback mode will become equal to the control voltage for the VCO 9 during the normal playback mode. In other words, the relative speed between the tape and the head 1 in the high speed playback mode will become equal to the relative speed between the tape and the head 1 in the normal playback mode.

Figures 4A to 4F are signal waveform diagrams for explaining the operation of the circuit of Figure 3 in the normal playback mode. When an RF signal S1 illustrated in Figure 4A, which contains noise and a drop-out, is supplied to the envelope detecting circuit 10, it is full-wave rectified by the evelope detecting circuit 10, and the envelope waveform signal S2 illustrated in Figure 4B is produced at the output of the envelope detecting circuit 10. The envelope waveform signal S2 is supplied to the tracking comparator 11 where it is compared with the threshold level which can automatically be varied in response to the level of the envelope waveform signal S2. The result is that the tracking comparator 11 generates at its output an output signal S3 which is illustrated in Figure 4C. As can be seen in Figure 4C, during a period in which the signal S3 has a low level, the envelope waveform signal S2 corresponding to the RF signal S1 does not reach the threshold level, and the RF signal S1 has a poor waveform. On the other hand, during the period in which the signal S3 has a high level, the envelope waveform S2 corresponding

to the RF signal S1 reaches the threshold level and thus the RF signal S1 will have a good waveform. For this condition, since the noise of the envelope waveform as well as the noise of the system are superimposed upon the waveform of the output signal S3 from the tracking comparator 11, a signal having a beard-shape occurs near the side edge of the signal. Thus, the waveform of the output signal does not have a desirable form.

Therefore, the output signal S3 of the tracking comparator 11 is supplied to the random walk filter 12 to remove the flapping portion. As a result, the random walk filter 12 generates at its output an output signal S4 which has a satisfactory waveform as illustrated in Figure 4D.

At the output side of the waveform shaping circuit 4, an output signal S5 is obtained which is shown in Figure 4E, which results from the waveform equalizing of the RF signal S1 shown in Figure 4A and the waveform shaping of the signal. When the output signal S5 is compared with the output signal S4 illustrated in Figure 4D, and which occurs at the output of the random walk filter 12, it is seen that when the output signal S4 from the random walk filter 12 has a high level, good date (OK) are found in the output signal S5 which is generated by the waveform shaping circuit 4, while when the output signal S4 has a low level, bad data (NG) occur in the output signal S5. In other words, when the output signal S4 from the random walk filter 12 has a high level, the output signal S5 from the waveform shaping circuit 4 is a good signal, and is a signal suitable to be supplied to the PLL circuit 5. On the other hand, when the output signal S4 from the random walk filter 12 has a low level, the output signal S5 from the waveform shaping circuit 4 is not satisfactory, and this signal is unsuitable to be supplied to the PLL circuit 5.

Thus, the output signal S4 from the random walk filter 12 is supplied to the charge pump circuit 7 to control it. The output signal S5 from the waveform shaping circuit 4 is supplied to the phase comparing/data extracting circuit 6 where it is phase compared with the signal from the VCO 9. The phase compared error signal from the phase comparing/data extracting circuit 6 is supplied to the charge pump circuit 7. During this time, when the output signal S4 from the random walk filter 12 has a high level, the charge pump circuit 7 will be placed in an operable state, so as to allow charging current to flow to the low-pass filter 8, so that the feedback loop of the PLL circuit 5 will be substantially closed and the PLL circuit 5 will be put into a locked state. When the output signal S4 is, on the other hand, at a low level, the charge pump circuit 7 will be placed into an inactive state which inhibits the flow of charging current into the low-pass filter 8, so that the feedback loop of the PLL circuit 5 is substantially opened so as to place the PLL circuit 5 in a holding state and, thus, the VCO 9 will oscillate in the locked condition.

At that time, the VCO 9 will be supplied with an output signal S6, which is shown in Figure 4F, from the low-pass filter 8. As a result, the oscillating frequency of the VCO 9 will be stabilized at a substantially constant oscillating frequency and will not return to a predetermined free running frequency.

Figures 5A to 5F are signal waveform diagrams showing signal waveforms at various points in the high speed playback mode. Since the operation of the respective circuits are similar to those in the playback mode, the signal waveforms corresponding to those illustrated in Figures 4A to 4F are marked with the same reference numerals S1 to S6.

Since in the prior art the unlocking of the PLL circuit by an external disturbance or the like only depends on the feedback system of the PLL circuit itself, the capture range cannot be widened and the pulling time cannot be reduced. In the embodiment described above, since the state of the RF signal is detected by other circuits, such as a feed-forward system circuit, so as to control the feedback system circuit, it is possible to have a clock extracting circuit which includes the PLL circuit which strongly resists external disturbances, and in which the capture range and the locking range are wide and the pulling time is short, and where substantially no adjustments are required.

In operation, the variable waveform equalization circuit 3 will be described with reference to Figures 6 and 7.

When the waveform equalization characteristic of the variable waveform equalization circuit is examined, the waveform equalization characteristic during the normal playback mode is represented by, for example, a curve a illustrated in Figure 6, and the control voltage S6 relative to the VCO 9 at that time is placed at a position or level shown by reference a in Figure 7.

When the reproducing apparatus is placed, for example, in the high speed playback mode and the relative speed between the tape and the head become faster than the normal playback mode, the control voltage S6 to the VCO 9 will be raised up to the position or level illustrated by b in Figure 7. Accordingly, the constant of the variable form equalization circuit is varied by the control signal from the control signal generating circuit 14, so that the waveform equalization characteristic of the circuit 3 is shifted upwardly in frequency by a predetermined amount as shown by curve b in Figure 6. When the relative speed becomes, on the other hand, lower than that in the normal playback mode, the control voltage to the VCO 9 will be lowered to the position or level shown by reference c in Figure 7. Consequently, the constant of the variable waveform equalization circuit 3 is varied by the control signal from the control signal generating circuit 14, so that the

waveform equalization characteristic of the variable waveform equalization circuit 3 is shifted downwardly in frequency by a predetermined amount as illustrated by the curve c in Figure 6.

By way of example, consider data of a continuous pattern of a minimum transition interval (Tmin = 1T) of a signal that is digitally recorded. Although in the normal playback mode, the frequency is placed at a position f_1 on the frequency axis of Figure 6, if the relative speed increases, the frequency is shifted upwardly to a position f_2. thus, if the waveform equalization characteristic is fixed to the characteristic shown by the curves a in Figure 6, the data cannot be covered by the waveform equalization characteristic shown by the curve a in a substantial manner, so that the error rate in the data becomes higher. Therefore, when the relative speed becomes higher, the waveform qualization characteristic of the variable waveform equalization circuit 3 is shifted, so that it becomes the characteristic shown by curve b, such that the frequency of the data of the 1T pattern is substantially placed at the position of the peak portion of the waveform equalization curve b, so that a so-called eye pattern for the 1T pattern data will be opened. Thus, the data can be extracted precisely and the error rate of the data can be improved.

Conversely, when the relative speed becomes slower, the frequency of the 1T pattern data will be lowered to a position f_3. Then if the waveform equalization characteristic is fixed to the curve a, the error rate of the data will increase. Therefore, when the relative speed becomes slower, the waveform equalization characteristic of the variable waveform equalization circuit 3 is shifted so as to take the characteristic shown by the curve c as described above. Consequently, the frequency of the 1T pattern data is placed substantially at the position of the peak portion of the waveform equalization curve c, so that the eye pattern for 1T pattern data is opened. Thus, the data can be extracted in a precise manner and the error rate of the data will be decreased. This is also true for 2T and 4T patterns as well.

Referring again to Figure 3, when the PLL circuit 5 is in the locked state, the control voltage to the VCO 9 substantially indicates the relative speed between the tape and the head 1. Thus, in the high speed playback mode where the switching circuit 17 is switched to contact a, the control voltage to the VCO 9 will be supplied through the low-pass filter 13 to the comparing circuit 15 where it is compared with the reference value from the reference voltage source 16. Then the compared error signal from the comparing circuit 15 is supplied through the contact a of the switching circuit 17 to the drive circuit 18 and to the drum motor 19.

In this manner, by closing the loop in the high speed playback mode, the error voltage of the PLL circuit 5, or the control voltage to the VCO 9 can be approximated to that utilized in the normal playback mode. In other words, this operation is the same as the operation for making the relative speed between the tape and the head 1 constant, so that the relative speed between the tape and the head 1 in the high speed playback mode becomes equal to the relative speed in the normal playback mode.

Figure 8 is a circuit diagram illustrating one example of a practical circuit arrangement of the PLL circuit 5. An input terminal 20 is connected to the output of the waveform shaping circuit 4 of Figure 3, and a signal S7 which corresponds to the signal S5 shown in Figure 4E and 5E, and is also shown in Figure 9A, is supplied to the D input terminals of D-type flip-flop circuits 21 and 22, and is also supplied through an exclusive-OR (E-OR) circuit 23 to the clock input terminal of the flip-flop circuit 21. The output signal from the VCO 9 is supplied to a D-type flip-flop circuit 24 which generates at its outputs a signal S8 illustrated in Figure 9B. The signal S8 is supplied through NOR circuits 25 and 26 to a clock output terminal 27 and forms a reproduced clock signal.

The signal S8 from the flip-flop circuit 24 is supplied to the clock terminal of the flip-flop circuit 22, and the inverted outputs from the flip-flop circuits 21 and 22 are supplied to an E-OR circuit 28 which generates at its output a signal S9 which is the feedback signal. Figure 9C illustrates a signal $\overline{S9}$ which comprises the inverted signal S9. The output from the flip-flop circuit 22 is supplied to a D input terminal of a D-type flip-flop circuit 29, and to an E-OR circuit 30. Then an inverted output from the flip-flop circuit 24 is supplied to the clock terminal of the flip-flop circuit 29, and the output from the flip-flop circuit 29 is supplied to a data output terminal 31, and comprises the reproduced data.

The output from the flip-flop circuit 29 is supplied to the E-OR circuit 30 so that the E-OR circuit 30 will generate at its output a signal S10 which is a reference signal. Figure 9D shows a signal $\overline{S10}$ which results from inverting the signal S10. The PLL circuit 5 is operated such that the durations of the signal S10 and S9 are equal to each other.

The signals S9 and S10 are supplied to a NOR circuit 32 and to a NAND circuit 33 which are included in the phase comparing/data extracting circuit 6. The NOR circuit 32 generates and produces at its output a signal S11 which is shown in Figure 9E, and the NAND circuit 33 generates and supplies to its output a signal S12 shown in Figure 9F. The signals S11 and S12 are respectively supplied to a NAND circuit 34 and to a NOR circuit 35 of the charge pump circuit 7. At an input terminal 36, which is connected to the output of the random walk filter 12 of Figure 3, the signal S4 shown in Figures 4D and 5D are supplied to the NAND circuit 34 and is supplied through a NAND circuit 37 to the NOR circuit 35. The result is that the NAND circuit 34 generates at its output a signal S13, shown in Figure 9G, and the NOR circuit 35 generates at its output a signal S14, shown in Figure 9H.

The charge pump circuit 7 includes diodes 38 and 39 connected in opposite polarity to each other. The cathode of the diode 38 is connected to the output of the NAND circuit 34 and the anode is connected to a connection point P between the diodes 38 and 39. The anode of the diode 39 is connected to the output of the NOR circuit 35 and the cathode is connected to the connection point P. The signal S13 is supplied to the diode 38, and the signal S14 is supplied to the diode 39, with the result that a signal S15, illustrated in Figure 9I, occurs at the connection point P and comprises the phase-compared error signal.

If there are many time periods in which the signal S15 is at a low level (L), the oscillating frequency of the VCO 9 will be increased, and when there are many time periods in which the signal S15 is at high level (H) the oscillating frequency of the VCO 9 will be decreased. In other words, when the time periods in which the signal S15 is at a low level increases, the charges accumulated in an integration capacitor 40 of the low-pass filter 8 are discharged, so that the output (the VCO control voltage) of an integrating type amplifier 41 is increased so as to increase the oscillating frequency of the VCO 9. On the other hand, when the time periods during which the signal S15 is at a high level increases, then a current flows into the integration capacitor 40 which accumulates the charges so that the output (the VCO control voltage) of the integrating type amplifier 41 decreases, and the oscillation frequency of the VCO 9 decreases. Also, when the signal S15 is in a high impedance state (Z), the feedback loop is opened to place the PLL circuit 5 in the holding state, and the VCO control voltage will be held in the holding state so that the VCO 9 oscillates at a frequency when the PLL circuit 5 is locked.

The above described operation explains the normal operation accomplished with the feedback system of the PLL circuit 5. In this embodiment, the feedback system is controlled by the feed-forward system. Specifically, when the output signal S4 supplied to the input terminal 36 from the random walk filter 12 has a high level, the operation of the charge pump circuit 7 depends on the signals S11 and S12. When the output signal S4 is alternatively at a low level, then regardless of the levels of the signals S11 and S12, the signal S13 becomes of high level, and the signal S14 becomes of low level, so that the diodes 38 and 39 are both reverse biased. In consequence, the feedback loop is opened, and the PLL circuit 5 is unlocked and then placed in a holding state. Then the VCO voltage is held at the same voltage and the VCO 9 oscillates at the frequency determined by such voltage when the PLL circuit 5 is locked. In other words, when the output signal S4 becomes low in response to a portion of unsatisfactory data of the signal S7, the PLL circuit 5 is placed in a holding state so that even if the PLL circuit 5 is released from being locked, the oscillating frequency of the VCO 9 will not be returned to the predetermined free-running frequency, but the VCO 9 will oscillate at the oscillating frequency which existed when the PLL circuit 5 was locked, and the oscillating operation of the VCO 9 will be stable.

Figure 10 shows an example of a practical circuit of the high speed envelope detecting circuit 10. A signal is supplied at an input terminal 43 which is connected to the output side of the amplifier 2 of Figure 3, and is converted from an unbalanced signal to a balanced signal by a cascade amplifier which comprises transistors 44, 45, 46, 47, 48 and 49. The balanced signal is then converted in impedance by a differential amplifier formed by transistors 50 and 51, and is then detected by a detector comprising transistors 52 and 53. The result is that there is obtained an output signal whose envelopes have been detected. Output terminals 54 and 55 are connected to the input side of the tracking comparator 11 of Figure 3. Since the outputs from the envelope detecting circuit 10 are emitter-follower outputs, high speed envelope detection is possible. Transistors 56 and 57 are connected in a Darlington connection and are used for impedance conversion.

Figure 11 shows an example of a practical circuit of the tracking comparator 11. Input terminals 58 and 59 are connected to the output terminals 54 and 55 of the envelope detecting circuit 10. The input terminal 58 forms the signal input, and the input terminal 59 forms the reference signal input. The input signals applied to the input terminals 58 and 59 are supplied to a differential amplifier, formed of transistors 60 and 61, which converts the impedance. Then they are supplied to transistors 62 and 63 where potentials of the signals are increased and supplied to a differential amplifier comprising transistors 64 and 65, and to a differential amplifier comprising transistors 66 and 67 where they are amplified.

The signals amplified by the transistors 64, 65, 66 and 67 are converted in impedance by a differential amplifier comprising transistors 68 and 69, and are then fed to a comparator 70. The comparator 70 compares the signal supplied to its non-inverting input terminal with the reference level (threshold level) supplied to its inverting input terminal. This reference level can automatically be varied in response to the level of the envelope waveform. For this purpose, the input terminals of the comparator 70 are connected to integrating capacitors 71 and 72, respectively. An output terminal 73 is connected to the output of the comparator 70.

Since the reference level can automatically be varied in response to the level of the envelope waveform, it is possible automatically to match the reference level with the level of the RF signal, and also it is possible to detect accurately when the head 1 crosses the track during high speed playback mode.

Transistors 74 and 75 are limiters and transistors 77, 78 and 79 are used to lower the reference level

during the normal playback mode. Transistors 80 and 81 are used to set a bias voltage.

Figure 12 is an example of a practical circuit of the random walk filter 12. An input terminal 82 is connected to the output terminal 73 shown in Figure 11 of the tracking comparator 11. The input terminal 82 is connected to the D input of a D-type flip-flop circuit 83. The flip-flop circuit 83 is supplied at its clock terminal with a clock signal supplied at a clock terminal 84 which is connected to the output side of the VCO 9 of Figure 3 through an inverter 85. The output from the flip-flop circuit 83 is supplied to a D input terminal of a D-type flip-flop circuit 86, as well as to an E-OR circuit 87 and to an up/down (U/$\overline{D}$) terminal of an up/down counter 88. The up/down counter 88 is placed in the count up condition when the signal supplied to its up/down terminal (U/$\overline{D}$) has a high level, and it is put into a countdown condition when the signal has a low level.

The clock signal supplied to the clock terminal 84 is supplied through the inverter 85 and an inverter 89 to the clock terminal of the flip-flop circuit 86, and to the up/down counter 88. The inverted output from the flip-flop circuit 86 is supplied to the E-OR circuit 87, and the output of the E-OR circuit 87 is supplied to a clear terminal CLR of a D-type flip-flop circuit 90 and serves as the reset signal. The D input terminal of the flip-flop circuit 90 goes to a high level, and the flip-flop circuit 90 is supplied at its clock terminal with an inverted output of a D-type flip-flop circuit 91 provided at the output of the up/down counter 88. The output from the flip-flop circuit 90 is supplied to an enable terminal $\overline{Ep}$ of the up/down counter 88 so that when the signal supplied to the enable terminal $\overline{Ep}$ has a low level, the up/down counter 88 is placed in the counting condition, and when the signal is supplied to the enable terminal $\overline{Ep}$ at high level, the up/down counter 88 is placed into the counting stop condition.

A signal from a ripple carry terminal $\overline{RC}$ of the up/down counter 88 is supplied to the D input terminal of the flip-flop circuit 91, and the clock signal which has been inverted by the inverter 85 is supplied to the clock terminal of the flip-flop circuit 91. The inverted output from the flip-flop circuit 91 is supplied to the clock terminal of a D-type flip-flop circuit 92 and the output from the flip-flop circuit 86 is supplied to the D input terminal of the flip-flop circuit 92. The output from the flip-flop circuit 92 is supplied to an output terminal 93, and this output is supplied to the charge pump circuit 7 illustrated in Figure 3 as the control signal.

The up/down counter 88 assumes sixteen conditions from, for example, 0 to 15 during operation. When the up/down counter 88 is supplied with a signal S_I shown in Figure 13A at the input terminal 82, the up/down counter 88 starts the count-up operation at a time t_0 illustrated in Figure 13B. When the counted value of the up/down counter 88 reaches 15 (the maximum value) at a time t_1, an output signal S_0 which appears at the output terminal 93, and is illustrated in Figure 13C, goes to a high level. When this input signal S_I has a low level at a time t_2, the up/down counter 88 starts the countdown operation. When the counted value of the up/down counter 88 reaches zero (minimum value) at a time t_3, the output signal S_0 goes to low level. When the input signal S_I goes to high level again at a time t_4, the up/down counter 88 starts the count-up operation. However, when the input signal S_I becomes low level at a time t_5, the up/down counter 88 carries out count-down operations. In other words, between the times t_4 and t_5, before the counted value of the up/down counter 88 reaches the maximum value of 15, the up/down counter 88 enters the count-down operation. Accordingly, since the counted value of the up/down counter 88 does not reach the maximum, the output signal S_0 maintains the low level during this period. Thereafter, since the counted value of the up/down counter 88 reaches the minimum value, the output signal S_0 maintains the low level and holds that level.

When, at a time t_6, the input signal S_I goes to a high level, again the up/down counter 88 starts to count up. When the counted value of the up/down counter 88 becomes 15 (the maximum value) at a time t_7, the output signal S_0 goes to high level. When the input signal S_I goes to low level at a time t_8, the up/down counter 88 starts count-down operation. However, when at a time t_9, the input signal S_I goes high, at this time the up/down counter 88 enters the count-up operation from time t_9. In other words, between the times t_8 and t_9 before the counted value of the up/down counter 88 reaches the minimum value which is zero, the up/down counter 88 starts the count-up operation. Thus, since the counted value of the up/down counter 88 does not reach the minimum value of zero, the output signal S_0 maintains a high level during this time period. Then since the counted value of the up/down counter 88 reaches the maximum value at a time t_{10}, the output signal S_0 maintains high level.

As above described, by passing the output of the tracking comparator 11 through the random walk filter 12, unstable factors such as flapping portions which are produced near the side edges of the pulse of the input signal S_I are removed, so that the signal is shaped in waveform and a satisfactory signal is generated.

As the state of the RF signal (that is, the reproduced data) is detected by the circuit in the feed-forward system, and the feedback system of the PLL circuit is controlled by the detected output, the PLL circuit used resists external disturbances and the capture range of the lock range of the PLL circuit can be extended to be more than ± 20% and the pull-in time of the PLL circuit will be about 20 microseconds in the normal playback mode and 5 microseconds if the RF signal is in good condition and, thus, the pull-in oper-

ation can be carried out at high speed. Since also the free-running frequency does not occur, a frequency adjustment is unnecessary and recovery from drop-out can be quickly accomplished. Also. false locking is difficult and unlikely to occur, and if it does occur, such false locking can easily be released. Embodiments of PLL circuit according to the present invention are very suitable for use with recording and reproducing apparatus for producing information of burst-shape waveform, data communication and similar applications.

Also, since the waveform equalization characteristic can be automatically varied by the VCO control voltage, which corresponds to the relative speed between the tape and the head in response to the relative speed in the high speed playback mode and the variable speed playback mode, it is possible to decrease the error rate of the data.

Attention is drawn to our copending European application no. 86303034.2 (EP-A-199584) from which the present application is divided and which claims similar subject matter.

Claims

1. Apparatus for reproducing digital signals from magnetic tape, the apparatus comprising :

a rotary head (1) for reproducing digital data from said tape ;

a motor (19) for driving said rotary head (1) ;

a motor drive means (18) for supplying an output to said motor (19) ;

a switch means (17) connected to said motor drive means (18) and in a first position supplying a normal speed signal thereto and in a second position supplying a high speed signal thereto ;

a comparing circuit (15) connected to said switch means (17) to supply said high speed signal ;

a phase locked loop circuit (5) for receiving an output signal from said rotary head (1) and including a voltage controlled oscillator (9) and a phase comparing/data extracting circuit (6) which receives an input from said voltage controlled oscillator (9) so as to compare the phase of the output of said voltage controlled oscillator (9) with the phase of the reproduced digital signal ;

a charge pump circuit (7) connected to receive the output of said phase comparing/data extracting circuit (6) ;

a first low-pass filter (8) for receiving the output of said charge pump circuit (7) and for supplying an input to said voltage controlled oscillator (9) so as to lock said voltage controlled oscillator (9) on said reproduced digital signal ; and

a second low-pass filter (13) for receiving the output of said first low-pass filter and supplying an input to said comparing circuit (15) for comparing it with a reference voltage so as to control said motor (19) such that the relative head-to-tape speed is substantially the same in the normal and the high speed reproduction modes.

2. Apparatus according to claim 1 including a variable waveform equalization means (3) and a wave shaping means (4) connected between said rotary head (1) and said phase comparing/data extracting circuit (6), and a control signal generating means (14) for receiving the output of said second low-pass filter (13) and supplying an input to said variable waveform equalization means (3).

3. Apparatus according to claim 2 including a high speed envelope detecting means (10) for receiving the output of said rotary head (1), a tracking comparator (11) for receiving the output of said high speed envelope detecting means (10), and a random walk filter (12) for receiving the output of said tracking comparator means (11) and an output from said voltage controlled oscillator (9) and for supplying an input to said charge pump circuit (7).

Ansprüche

1. Vorrichtung zur Wiedergabe digitaler Signale vom Magnetband, mit

einem drehbaren Kopf (1) zur Wiedergabe digitaler Daten von diesem Band,

einem Motor (19) für den Antrieb des drehbaren Kopfes (1),

einer Motorsteuereinrichtung (18) zur Zuführung eines Ausgangssignals zum Motor (19),

einer Schalteinrichtung (17), die an die Motorsteuereinrichtung (18) angeschlossen ist und dieser in einer ersten Stellung ein Normalgeschwindigkeitssignal und in einer zweiten Stellung ein Hochgeschwindigkeitssignal zuführt,

einer Vergleichsschaltung (15), die an die Schalteinrichtung (17) angeschlossen ist, um das Hochgeschwindigkeitssignal zuzuführen,

einer Phasenregelschaltung (5) zum Empfangen eines Ausgangssignals vom drehbaren Kopf (1), die einen spannungsgesteuerten Oszillator (9) und eine Phasenvergleichs/Datenabrufschaltung (6) umfaßt, welche ein Eingangssignal vom spannungsgesteuerten Oszillator (9) empfängt, um die Phase des Ausgangssignals des spannungsgesteuerten Oszillators (9) mit der Phase des wiedergegebenen Digitalsignals zu vergleichen,

einer Ladungspumpschaltung (7), die zum Empfangen des Ausgangssignals der Phasenvergleichs/Datenabrufschaltung (6) angeschlossen ist,

einem ersten Tiefpaßfilter (8) zum Empfangen des Ausgangssignals der Ladungspumpschaltung (7) und zum Zuführen eines Eingangssi-

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ation can be carried out at high speed. Since also the free-running frequency does not occur, a frequency adjustment is unnecessary and recovery from drop-out can be quickly accomplished. Also. false locking is difficult and unlikely to occur, and if it does occur, such false locking can easily be released. Embodiments of PLL circuit according to the present invention are very suitable for use with recording and reproducing apparatus for producing information of burst-shape waveform, data communication and similar applications.

Also, since the waveform equalization characteristic can be automatically varied by the VCO control voltage, which corresponds to the relative speed between the tape and the head in response to the relative speed in the high speed playback mode and the variable speed playback mode, it is possible to decrease the error rate of the data.

Attention is drawn to our copending European application no. 86303034.2 (EP-A-199584) from which the present application is divided and which claims similar subject matter.

Claims

1. Apparatus for reproducing digital signals from magnetic tape, the apparatus comprising :

a rotary head (1) for reproducing digital data from said tape ;

a motor (19) for driving said rotary head (1) ;

a motor drive means (18) for supplying an output to said motor (19) ;

a switch means (17) connected to said motor drive means (18) and in a first position supplying a normal speed signal thereto and in a second position supplying a high speed signal thereto ;

a comparing circuit (15) connected to said switch means (17) to supply said high speed signal ;

a phase locked loop circuit (5) for receiving an output signal from said rotary head (1) and including a voltage controlled oscillator (9) and a phase comparing/data extracting circuit (6) which receives an input from said voltage controlled oscillator (9) so as to compare the phase of the output of said voltage controlled oscillator (9) with the phase of the reproduced digital signal ;

a charge pump circuit (7) connected to receive the output of said phase comparing/data extracting circuit (6) ;

a first low-pass filter (8) for receiving the output of said charge pump circuit (7) and for supplying an input to said voltage controlled oscillator (9) so as to lock said voltage controlled oscillator (9) on said reproduced digital signal ; and

a second low-pass filter (13) for receiving the output of said first low-pass filter and supplying an input to said comparing circuit (15) for comparing it with a reference voltage so as to control said motor (19) such that the relative head-to-tape speed is substantially the same in the normal and the high speed reproduction modes.

2. Apparatus according to claim 1 including a variable waveform equalization means (3) and a wave shaping means (4) connected between said rotary head (1) and said phase comparing/data extracting circuit (6), and a control signal generating means (14) for receiving the output of said second low-pass filter (13) and supplying an input to said variable waveform equalization means (3).

3. Apparatus according to claim 2 including a high speed envelope detecting means (10) for receiving the output of said rotary head (1), a tracking comparator (11) for receiving the output of said high speed envelope detecting means (10), and a random walk filter (12) for receiving the output of said tracking comparator means (11) and an output from said voltage controlled oscillator (9) and for supplying an input to said charge pump circuit (7).

Ansprüche

1. Vorrichtung zur Wiedergabe digitaler Signale vom Magnetband, mit

einem drehbaren Kopf (1) zur Wiedergabe digitaler Daten von diesem Band,

einem Motor (19) für den Antrieb des drehbaren Kopfes (1),

einer Motorsteuereinrichtung (18) zur Zuführung eines Ausgangssignals zum Motor (19),

einer Schalteinrichtung (17), die an die Motorsteuereinrichtung (18) angeschlossen ist und dieser in einer ersten Stellung ein Normalgeschwindigkeitssignal und in einer zweiten Stellung ein Hochgeschwindigkeitssignal zuführt,

einer Vergleichsschaltung (15), die an die Schalteinrichtung (17) angeschlossen ist, um das Hochgeschwindigkeitssignal zuzuführen,

einer Phasenregelschaltung (5) zum Empfangen eines Ausgangssignals vom drehbaren Kopf (1), die einen spannungsgesteuerten Oszillator (9) und eine Phasenvergleichs/Datenabrufschaltung (6) umfaßt, welche ein Eingangssignal vom spannungsgesteuerten Oszillator (9) empfängt, um die Phase des Ausgangssignals des spannungsgesteuerten Oszillators (9) mit der Phase des wiedergegebenen Digitalsignals zu vergleichen,

einer Ladungspumpschaltung (7), die zum Empfangen des Ausgangssignals der Phasenvergleichs/Datenabrufschaltung (6) angeschlossen ist,

einem ersten Tiefpaßfilter (8) zum Empfangen des Ausgangssignals der Ladungspumpschaltung (7) und zum Zuführen eines Eingangssi-

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gnals zum spannungsgesteuerten Oszillator (9), um den spannungsgesteuerten Oszillator (9) auf das wiedergegebene Digitalsignal zu verriegeln, und

einem zweiten Tiefpaßfilter (13) zum Empfangen des Ausgangssignals des ersten Tiefpaßfilters und Zuführen eines Eingangssignals zur Vergleichsschaltung (15) zwecks Vergleich desselben mit einer Referenzspannung, um den Motor (19) so zu steuern, daß die Relativgeschwindigkeit des Kopfes zum Band im Normal- und in Hochgeschwindigkeits-Wiedergabemodus im wesentlichen die gleiche ist.

2. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 1 einschließlich einer variablen Wellenform-Ausgleichseinrichtung (3) und einer Wellenformungseinrichtung (4), die den drehbaren Kopf (1) mit der Phasenvergleichs/Datenabrufschaltung (6) verbinden, und einer Steuersignal-Erzeugungseinrichtung (14) zum Empfangen des Ausgangssignals des zweiten Tiefpaßfilters (13) und Zuführen eines Eingangssignals zur variablen Wellenform-Ausgleichseinrichtung (3).

3. Vorrichtung nach Anspruch 2 einschließlich einer Hochgeschwindigkeits-Hüllkurven-Erfassungseinrichtung (10) zum Empfangen des Ausgangssignals des drehbaren Kopfes (1), einer Nachführungkomparatoreinrichtung (11) zum Empfangen des Ausgangssignals der Hochgeschwindigkeits-Hüllkurven-Erfassungseinrichtung (10) und einem Monte-Carlo-Filter (12) zum Empfangen des Ausgangssignals der Nachführungskomparatoreinrichtung (11) und eines Ausgangssignals vom spannungsgesteuerten Oszillator (9) und zum Zuführen eines Eingangssignals zur Ladungspumpschaltung (7).

Revendications

1. Dispositif pour reproduire des signaux numériques provenant d'une bande magnétique, le dispositif comprenant :

une tête tournante (1) pour reproduire des données numériques provenant de la bande ;

un moteur (19) pour entraîner la tête tournante (1) ;

un moyen d'entraînement de moteur (18) pour fournir un signal de sortie au moteur (19) ;

un moyen commutateur (17) connecté au moyen d'entraînement de moteur (18) et fournissant, dans une première position, un signal de vitesse normale à celui-ci et fournissant, dans une seconde position, un signal de vitesse élevée à celui-ci ;

un circuit comparateur (15) connecté au moyen commutateur (17) pour fournir ledit signal de vitesse élevée ;

un circuit à boucle à blocage de phase (5) pour recevoir le signal de sortie de la tête tournante (1) et incluant un oscillateur à fréquence réglée par variation de tension (9) et un circuit comparateur de phases/extracteur de données (6) qui reçoit un signal d'entrée de l'oscillateur à fréquence réglée par variation de tension (9) de manière à comparer la phase du signal de sortie de l'oscillateur à fréquence réglée par variation de tension (9) à la phase du signal numérique reproduit ;

un circuit à pompage de charge (7) connecté pour recevoir le signal de sortie du circuit comparateur de phases/extracteur de données (6) ;

un premier filtre passe-bas (8) pour recevoir le signal de sortie du circuit à pompage de charge (7) et pour fournir un signal d'entrée à l'oscillateur à fréquence réglée par variation de tension (9) de manière à bloquer l'oscillateur à fréquence réglée par variation de tension (9) sur ledit signal numérique reproduit ; et

un deuxième filtre passe-bas (13) pour recevoir le signal de sortie du premier filtre passe-bas et pour fournir un signal d'entrée au circuit comparateur (15) destiné à le comparer à une tension de référence de manière à commander le moteur (19) de telle sorte que la vitesse relative de la tête par rapport à la bande est effectivement identique dans le mode de reproduction à vitesse normale et dans le mode de reproduction à vitesse élevée.

2. Dispositif selon la revendication 1, incluant un moyen égaliseur de forme d'onde variable (3) et un moyen conformateur d'onde (4) connectés entre la tête tournante (1) et le circuit comparateur de phases/extracteur de données (6), et un moyen générateur de signaux de commande (14) pour recevoir le signal de sortie du deuxième filtre passe-bas (13) et pour fournir un signal d'entrée au moyen égaliseur de forme d'onde variable (3).

3. Dispositif selon la revendication 2, incluant un moyen détecteur d'enveloppe à vitesse élevée (10) pour recevoir le signal de sortie de la tête tournante (1), un comparateur de centrage (11) pour recevoir le signal de sortie du moyen détecteur d'enveloppe à vitesse élevée (10), et un filtre de parcours aléatoire (12) pour recevoir le signal de sortie du moyen comparateur de centrage (11) et le signal de sortie de l'oscillateur à fréquence réglée par variation de tension (9) et pour fournir un signal d'entrée au circuit à pompage de charge (7).