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(71) Applicant *(for all designated States except US)*: **TRIREME MEDICAL, INC.** [US/US]; 7060 Koll Center Parkway, Suite 300, Pleasanton, CA 94566 (US).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants *(for US only)*: **KONSTANTINO, Eitan** [US/US]; 29 Meadow Court, Orinda, CA 94563 (US). **DE LOS SANTOS, Jayson** [US/US]; 2949 Seriana Way, Union City, CA 94587 (US). **FELD, Tanhum** [IL/IL]; Moshav Merhavya, 19105 (IL).

(74) Agents: **HESLIN, James, M.** et al.; Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP, Two Embarcadero Center, Eighth Floor, San Francisco, CA 94111-3834 (US).

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(54) **Title**: BALLOON CATHETER WITH IMPROVED COLUMN STRENGTH AND TORQUE TRANSMISSION

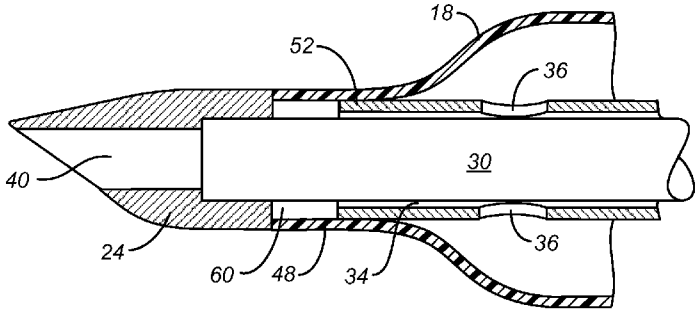


FIG. 3C

(57) **Abstract**: A balloon catheter capable of delivering torque and pushing through obstructions includes a relatively weak balloon segment of a catheter and rotatable asymmetric tip. A reinforcement sleeve increases column strength and torque transmission to push the balloon and rotate the tip to facilitate passage through said obstructions. The tip is preferably asymmetric around its axis, usually being beveled, and the reinforcement slide includes a slide lock mechanism which increases shaft flexibility after balloon deployment.

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