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Cable Retaining Apparatus

5 The present invention relates to a cable retaining apparatus and relates particularly, but not exclusively, to a cleat for holding three high voltage sheathed electrical cables used in three phased power distribution.

10 In three phased power transmission cables, if a short circuit occurs between any of the cables, the electromechanical force set up between the cables causes a sudden, large movement of the cable in opposite directions. At the high voltages of power distribution cables, this is
15 extremely dangerous, with potential to cause injury to personnel and damage to the cables and surrounding equipment.

 As a result, it is known to use cable cleats in order to hold the three cables together. This is particularly the
20 case where the cables are attached to a wall and regularly spaced strong cleats are used to hold the cables together in the event of a short circuit.

 One example of such a cable cleat uses a band of metal
25 that is wound around a split pin to vary the size of the aperture created by the metal band. At the ring end of the split pin, a handle is provided, typically made from a rigid wire, to rotate the split pin. The handle is then clipped into engagement with part of the cleat to retain the band in
30 a locked position. Such a cleat has the advantage that it can operate over a wide variety of different diameters of cable. However, the cleat is very difficult to install and the process of winding the band onto the split pin and

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locking the cable is difficult and often result in hand injuries.

Preferred embodiments of the present invention seek to
5 overcome the above disadvantages of the prior art.

According to the present invention, there is provided a cable retaining apparatus for retaining at least one cable, the apparatus comprising a band adapted to be wrapped around
10 at least one cable and clamping means for holding a first end of said band relative to a second end of said band, said clamping means comprising:-

a body portion fixedly mounted to said first end of
15 said band, said body portion having axle mounting means for mounting an axle thereto, said axle mounting means containing at least one first aperture extending therethrough for receiving at least one retaining pin;

20 an axle rotatably mounted to said axle mounting means of said body portion, said axle having

band engaging means for removably connecting said axle to said second end of said band,

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axle rotation means for allowing the axle to be rotated relative to said body portion and

at least one pin engaging surface adapted to be
30 aligned with said first aperture such that when said retaining pin extends through said first aperture and engages said pin engaging surface said axle is

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prevented from rotating relative to said axle mounting means.

By providing a rotatable axle with perpendicular
5 apertures that align with apertures in an axle mounting means provides the advantage that the cable cleat of the present invention is easily and safely installed. The split pin devices of the prior art have the disadvantage that they are difficult to use, in particular because the metal of the band
10 must be quite strong and is therefore quite stiff and where small cables are used, the pin must be rotated many times in order to reduce the length of the band so as to provide a gripping force to the cables. Furthermore, the final tightening and clipping of the handle is difficult, leading
15 to hand injuries.

In the device of the present invention, the use of a pin as the locking device with associated apertures provides the advantage that the locking mechanism is much easier and
20 safer to operate than those of the prior art, thereby reducing the likelihood of hand injuries. Furthermore providing an axle rotating means such as a hexagonal head that a ratchet socket spanner can engage makes the tightening of the band significantly easier.

25 In a preferred embodiment at least one pin engaging surface comprises at least one second aperture extending through said axle perpendicular to said axle, said second aperture alignable with said first aperture to receive the or each retaining pin therethrough.

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In another preferred embodiment at least one pin engaging surface comprises an external surface of said axle.

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In a preferred embodiment the body portion comprises at least one base portion attached to said band and side portions extending from said base portion, said side portions having said axle mounting means extending therethrough.

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In another preferred embodiment the axle mounting means comprises an aperture in each of said side portions and a collar mounted to at least one of said side portions, first aperture extending through said collar.

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Using a collar to provide the apertures into which the locking pin is located provides the advantage that the collar is easily manufactured and added to the cleat and assists in the mounting of the axle. It also allows the pin to be partially inserted, that is through the aperture in the collar and then by applying a light pressure to the pin and rotating the axle, the second aperture in the axle will become aligned with the first aperture in the collar then allowing the pin to enter the second aperture when they become aligned. This makes the process of locking the cleat into position significantly easier than in the prior art.

In a further preferred embodiment the band engaging means comprises a third aperture extending at least partially through said axle.

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The third aperture may comprise a slot adapted to receive an end portion of said band, wherein rotation said axle causes said band to become fixedly attached to said axle.

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The use of a slot in the axle, in particular where the axle is rotated with a ratchet socket spanner or similar

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tool, provides the advantage that the first stages of the locking of the band are straightforward. The distal end of the band is simply inserted into the slot and the axle rotated. The band only needs to be held into position until
5 slightly beyond a half turn has been completed when the band then applies a gripping force to itself.

In a referred embodiment the rotation means comprises tool engaging means for engaging a tool adapted to apply a
10 rotational force to said axle.

By using tool engaging means to apply a rotational force to the rotation means of the apparatus provides the advantage that a simple tool such as a ratchet socket spanner
15 can be used to tighten the band of this cable cleat. This reduces the weight and cost of production of the cleat by removing one of the components and reduces the likelihood of hand injuries.

20 A preferred embodiment of the present invention will now be described by way of example only, and not in any limitative sense, with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

25 Figure 1 is a perspective view part of the device of the present invention;

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the device of Figure 1 with the addition of the axle;

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Figure 3 is a perspective sectional view of part of the device of Figure 2;

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Figure 4 is a partial sectional view, cut perpendicular to that shown in Figure 3, of the device shown in Figure 2;

Figure 5 is a close-up view similar to that in Figure 4 showing the device in use;

Figure 6 is a perspective view of an alternative embodiment of a device of the present invention in use with cables;

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Figure 7 is a close up perspective view of the device of Figure 6;

Figure 8 is a sectional view of a portion of the device of Figure 6 cut through the winding and locking parts;

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Figure 9 is a perspective view of the device of Figure 6 without the cables;

Figure 10 is a sectional view of the device of Figure 9;

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Figure 11 is a perspective view of an alternative winding and locking mechanism of the present invention; and

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Figure 12 is a sectional view of the locking mechanism of Figure 11.

Referring to the figures, a cable retaining apparatus or cable cleat 10 for retaining at least one, and most typically three cables 12, has a band 14, typically of a metal material that is used to extend around the cables 12. The cleat has clamping means 16 that is used to hold a first

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end 18 of band 14 relative to a second end 20 of the band. The clamping means 16 as a U-shaped body portion 22 to which the first end 18 of band 14 is attached by welding. The body portion has axle mounting means in the form of apertures 24 and 26 that are formed in the upstanding arms 28 and 30 of U-shaped body portion 22. At least one of the apertures 24 and 26, in the embodiment shown as aperture 24, has a collar 32 that has at least one aperture, preferably a pair of apertures and ideally a plurality of pairs of first apertures 34 extending therethrough. These apertures 34 are sized to receive a clip pin 36, see Figure 6.

Rotatably mounted in apertures 24 and 26 is an axle 38. The axle 38 has band engaging means, in the form of slotted aperture 40, into which the second tapering end 20 of band 14 can be inserted, as shown in Figures 2 and 4. The axle also has axle rotation means in the form of a hexagonal head 42 that co-operates with a tool, such as a ratchet socket spanner (not shown), to apply a rotational force to the axle. The axle 38 contains a second aperture 44 that works in co-operation with the first apertures 34 to receive pin 36.

Use of the cable cleat 10 will now be described. The band 14 of cleat 10 is wrapped around the cables 12 that it is to hold. The first end 18 of band 14 is attached to the base of U-shaped body portion 22. As seen in Figure 5, the band 14 initially points in a clockwise direction (as viewed in this figure) before it is bent around the base of U-shaped body portion 22 and then extends to cover over the upper surface of the base of U-shaped body portion 22 in an anti-clockwise direction. As a result, the first end 18 of band 14 is formed in a U-shape which helps maintain its fixed engagement with the body portion 22. The band 14 wraps

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around the cables 12 and in the examples shown in the figures, the band extends twice around the cables 12. Looking in detail at Figure 5, the portions of the band 14 shown in the uppermost part of Figure 5 show two layers of the band in very close proximity. In the lower portion of Figure 5 the two layers of band 14 are slightly separated. The first layer of band 14 runs around the three cables and then the band is fed through the clamping means 16 between the base of U-shaped body portion 22 and axle 38 before wrapping around the cables again and the second end 20 of band 14 being brought into engagement with axle 38.

As seen in Figures 2 and 4, the second end 20 of band 14 is fed through slot 40 in axle 38. A tool, such as a ratchet socket spanner, is engaged with hexagonal head 42 and a clockwise rotational force is applied to the head 42 and axle 38. This causes the band 14 to wrap around axle 38 as seen in Figures 5, 6 and 7. This in turn pulls the band 14 into engagement with cables 12 as shown in Figures 6 and 7.

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When sufficient gripping force is applied by band 14 to cables 12, the clip pin 36 is introduced into the first aperture 34. If the first aperture 34 and second aperture 44 are not aligned with each other, only the end portion 46 of pin 36 will extend through first aperture 34. The hexagonal head 42 of axle 38 is rotated a little further whilst a gentle pressure is applied onto pin 36 until the first and second apertures 34 and 44 are aligned. Then the end portion 46 of pin 36 will extend through the first aperture 34 of collar 32, through the second aperture 44 and further through the opposing first aperture 34 on the other side of collar 32. In the sectional view in Figure 8, it can be seen that the axle 38 is provided with two apertures 44

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that receive the pin 36. It should be noted that the axel may be provided with only a single pin receiving aperture 44 in order to strengthen the axel or alternatively could be provided with more such apertures. Because pin 36 is a
5 spring clip pin, the pin will remain in place unless sufficient force is applied to the pin to pull it out.

As slight variation to this method, the axle 38 can be introduced through the apertures 24 and 26 of upstanding arms
10 28 and 30 after the band 14 has been wrapped around the cables 12. If larger cables are used, the band 14 may not be able to extend around the cables more than once, and in this instance a single layer of band 14 provides the clamping force. Similarly, if the band is too long, further layers of
15 the band can be used by wrapping the band around the cables more than twice. Alternatively, the band can be cut to a suitable length.

It will be appreciated by persons skilled in the art
20 that the above embodiments have been described by way of example only and not in any limitative sense, and that the various alterations and modifications are possible without departure from the scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

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For example, an alternative embodiment of the present invention is shown in Figures 9 and 10 in which an additional feature of a mounting bracket 50 is shown. The bracket 50 has a first wall 52 for engaging a surface the bracket is to
30 be mounted to and a second wall 54 for engaging the band 14 and, in use, the cables 12. The first and second walls 52 and 54 are connected by a pair of side walls 56 and together form an access 58 through which the band 14 can pass. The

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first wall 52 has a fixing aperture 60 that receives a fixing device (not shown) such as a screw or bolt, that fixes the bracket to the surface. A second aperture 62, in second wall 54, allows access to the fixing device. When the
5 bracket is fixed in place the cables 12 are placed against the second wall 54 and the band 14 wrapped around them and through access 58 until the end 20 can extend through aperture 40. The band is then tightened around the cables 12 as previously described.

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In a further alternative, a different locking mechanism is provided, as shown in Figures 11 and 12. In this example the hexagonal head 42 of axel 38 extends into collar 32. The multiple apertures 34 have been replaced by a single aperture
15 34a. The aperture is aligned so that when clip pin 36 extends through aperture 34a a flat portion of the pin engages a flat surface of hexagonal head 42 where it extends into the collar 32.

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Claims

1. A cable retaining apparatus for retaining at least one cable, the apparatus comprising a band adapted to be wrapped
5 around at least one cable and clamping means for holding a first end of said band relative to a second end of said band, said clamping means comprising:-

a body portion fixedly mounted to said first end of
10 said band, said body portion having axle mounting means for mounting an axle thereto, said axle mounting means containing at least one first aperture extending therethrough for receiving at least one retaining pin; and

15 an axle rotatably mounted to said axle mounting means of said body portion, said axle having

band engaging means for removably connecting said axle to said second end of said band,

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axle rotation means for allowing the axle to be rotated relative to said body portion, and

at least one pin engaging surface adapted to be
25 aligned with said first aperture such that when said retaining pin extends through said first aperture and engages said pin engaging surface said axle is prevented from rotating relative to said axle mounting means.

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2. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein at least one pin engaging surface comprises at least one second aperture extending through said axle perpendicular to said axle, said

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second aperture alignable with said first aperture to receive the or each retaining pin therethrough.

3. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein at least one
5 pin engaging surface comprises an external surface of said axle.

4. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said body portion comprises at least one base portion attached to said band and side portions extending
10 from said base portion, said side portions having said axle mounting means extending therethrough.

5. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said axle mounting means comprises an
15 aperture in each of said side portions and a collar mounted to at least one of said side portions, first aperture extending through said collar.

6. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding
20 claims, wherein said band engaging means comprises a third aperture extending at least partially through said axle.

7. An apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said third aperture comprises a slot adapted to receive an end portion
25 of said band, wherein rotation said axle causes said band to become fixedly attached to said axle.

8. An apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said rotation means comprises tool engaging
30 means for engaging a tool adapted to apply a rotational force to said axle.

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9. A cable retaining apparatus for retaining at least one cable substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.