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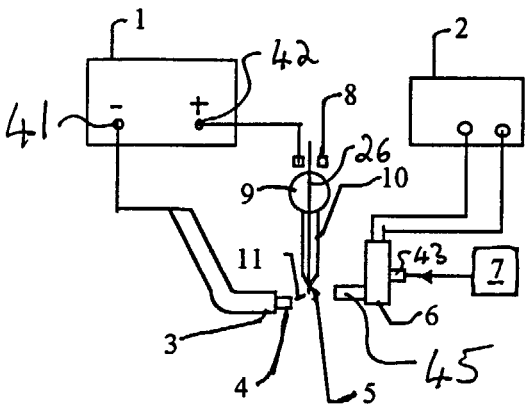
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(54) Title: A BALL FORMING PROCESS



(57) Abstract: A ball forming process is for forming a ball (32) of metal on a metal wire (26) in a wire bonder (20). The process includes generating a glow discharge (11) between an electrode (4) and an end (5) of the metal wire (26) to form a ball (32) of metal at the end (5) and the wire (26). The ball is formed in a gaseous atmosphere comprising greater than 96 % by volume of nitrogen and substantially no hydrogen.

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