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MAGNETIC TAPE CARTRIDGE

This invention relates to a magnetic tape cartridge for an audio equipment, a video equipment or the like, and more particularly to a magnetic tape cartridge including a magnetic tape arranged in a casing for recording and playing-back.

Generally, in a magnetic tape cartridge of such type, a magnetic tape is arranged in a casing while being kept contacted with tape guides for guiding traveling of the tape. Thus, in use of the magnetic tape cartridge, the magnetic tape travels while being contacted with the surface of each of the tape guides, so that the tape guides are conventionally made of a metal material exhibiting rub resistance and resistance to wear. Unfortunately, this causes the processing and manufacturing costs of the cartridge to be significantly increased. In order to avoid the disadvantage, a synthetic resin material such as polyacetal resin, polyamide resin, ultra-high-molecular-weight polyethylene or the like is used for the tape guides so as to permit them to exhibit satisfactory rub resistance and resistance to wear for a long period of time, as disclosed in Japanese Utility Model Publication No. 23834/1985.

More particularly, the tape guides are made of a synthetic resin material mainly consisting of polyacetal, because it facilitates formation of the tape guides and is not costly as compared with a metal material. Unfortunately, the result of an endurance traveling test which the inventors carried out on tape guides made of such a synthetic material revealed that the material tends to cause the tape guides to produce powdered dust by wearing due to contacting with the magnetic tape over a long period of time, which then adheres to the surface of a magnetic

tape, to thereby lead to dropout of data recorded on the tape. Also, the wearing of the tape guides causes scraping of the tape. In particular, a conventional magnetic tape which is made of a polyester film having a magnetic layer deposited thereon and of which the surface contacted with the tape guides is 0.010 to 0.014 μ m in roughness is significantly increased in frictional resistance to the tape guides made of a synthetic resin material such as the above-described material mainly consisting of polyacetal, to thereby increase rewinding torque and deteriorate jitter (reproduced image), leading to lowering of the quality.

The present invention has been made in view of the foregoing disadvantages of the prior art.

The present invention may provide a magnetic tape cartridge which is capable of ensuring the safe operation of a magnetic tape over a long period of time.

The present invention may provide a magnetic tape cartridge which is capable of permitting a tape guide means to exhibit resistance to wear sufficient to ensure the safe traveling of a magnetic tape over a long period of time.

The present invention may provide a magnetic tape cartridge which is capable of preventing the traveling of a magnetic tape from wearing a casing to produce dust.

The present invention may provide a magnetic tape cartridge which is capable of permitting a magnetic tape to exhibit resistance to scraping sufficient to ensure the safe and positive operation of the tape over a long period of time.

The present invention may provide a magnetic tape cartridge which is capable of safely operating a magnetic tape while preventing data

stored on the tape from being dropped out.

The present invention may provide a magnetic tape cartridge which is capable of being assembled and manufactured at a low cost.

The present invention may provide a magnetic tape cartridge which is capable of being significantly decreased in weight.

In accordance with the present invention, a magnetic tape cartridge is provided. The magnetic tape cartridge includes a magnetic tape drawably wound on a pair of tape holders rotatably arranged in a casing and including a polyester film and a magnetic layer formed on at least one of both surfaces thereof and a tape guide means for guiding the traveling of the magnetic tape in the casing while keeping the magnetic tape contacted therewith. The polyester film of the magnetic tape includes a means for improving resistance to scraping of the magnetic tape. The tape guide means contacted with the polyester film of the magnetic tape is made of a ultra-high-molecular-weight polyolefin.

The means for improving resistance to scraping of the magnetic tape is formed by incorporating, into the polyester film, a filler capable of absorbing bromothymol blue, which is a basic indicator, thereon, the absorbed indicator showing a blue colour.

The surface of the magnetic tape contacted with the tape guide means has a face roughness of $0.015\ \mu\text{m}$ to $0.023\ \mu\text{m}$ based on R_a (centre line average height) determined according to a surface roughness testing method defined in JIS B0601.

The filler has a size of at least $5\text{m}^2/\text{g}$ based on a BET value.

Now, the present invention will be described hereinafter with reference to the accompanying drawing; wherein:

the single figure is an exploded perspective view showing an embodiment of a magnetic tape cartridge according to the present invention.

The single figure shows an embodiment of a magnetic tape cartridge according to the present invention. A magnetic tape cartridge of the illustrated embodiment includes a casing 10 comprising an upper casing member 12 and a lower casing member 14 joined together to define a space in the so-formed casing 10. In the casing 10 are rotatably arranged a pair of tape holders or tape reels 16, on which a magnetic tape is drawably wound so as to be stretched therebetween. The magnetic tape 18 includes a polyester film and a magnetic layer deposited or formed on at least one of both surfaces of the polyester film. Also, in the casing 10 is arranged a tape guide means 20 for guiding the traveling of the magnetic tape 18 in the casing 10, so that the magnetic tape 18 travels while being kept contacted with the tape guide means 20. In the illustrated embodiment, the tape guide means 20 comprises two tape guides rotatably arranged in the casing 10. The polyester film of the magnetic tape 18 includes a means for improving resistance to scraping of the magnetic tape, which, in the illustrated embodiment, is constructed by incorporating, into the polyester film of the magnetic tape 18, a basic filler capable of absorbing bromothymol blue thereon, which is a basic indicator, the absorbed indicator showing a blue colour.

Also, the tape guides 20 contacted with the polyester film of the magnetic tape 18 each are made of ultra-high-molecular-weight polyolefin.

The filler which exhibits basic properties typically includes Al_2O_3 . A filler other than the basic filler is not suitable for use for the magnetic tape 18 in the present invention, because it fails to provide the magnetic tape or polyester film with satisfactory resistance to scraping or grinding. The words "resistance to scraping" or "resistance to grinding" used herein in connection with the magnetic tape indicate properties of the magnetic tape which prevent it from being rubbed off or scraped off due to contacting with the tape guides during the traveling. Also, bromothymol blue is used as the basic indicator because it carries out color change at a suitable pH value when conformability between the polyester film and the filler is judged and it attains color development when it is absorbed on the filler. The filler has a size of $5\text{m}^2/\text{g}$ or more based on a BET value. The BET value below $5\text{m}^2/\text{g}$ deteriorates the surface properties of the non-magnetic support of the magnetic tape, to thereby remarkably adversely affect the electromagnetic conversion characteristics of the magnetic tape formed. Also, the amount of the filler added to the polyester film is preferably less than 5% by weight.

An increase in the amount of addition of the basic filler to the polyester film causes the magnetic tape to exhibit improved resistance to scraping correspondingly. However, it renders the surface of the magnetic tape 18 rough correspondingly, so that the magnetic tape fails to exhibit satisfactory electromagnetic conversion characteristics. Also, it increases the wearing of the tape guides 20. Thus, it was found that the surface of the magnetic tape 18 contacted with the tape guides 20 must have a roughness within a range between $0.015\mu\text{m}$ and $0.023\mu\text{m}$ based on R_a (center line average height) measured according to a surface roughness testing method defined in JIS (Japanese Industrial Standard) B0601.

The tape guides 20, in the illustrated embodiment,

each comprise a roller made of a ultra-high-molecular-weight polyolefin which exhibits satisfactory resistance to wear, sliding properties and self-lubricating properties. The so-formed rollers 20 each are rotatably fitted on a support pin 22, so that the magnetic tape which is adapted to be delivered from one of the tape reels 16 and wound up on the other tape reel may travel while being contactedly guided along the outer periphery of each of the rollers 20. The tape guides 20 are preferably made of ultra-high-molecular-weight polyethylene of a molecular weight as high as 800,000 or more which has good wearing characteristics, because it does not produce powders or dust due to wearing even after the tape travels thereon over a long period of time. For example, an experiment by the inventors revealed that a material consisting of ultra-high-molecular-weight polyethylene having a molecular weight of 800,000 or more as a main component and an inorganic material in an amount of 10 to 40% by weight as a filler is preferably used for the tape guides, because it effectively prevents both tape guides and magnetic tape from being damaged due to wearing, scraping and the like. The inorganic material used as the filler includes, for, example, aluminum silicate or the like.

The following table shows the results of a tape traveling test which the inventors carried out on the tape guides in both the above-described embodiment and the prior art.

Tape Guide	Table				UHMW Polyolefin			
	Brass	Polyacetal	Reference Example	Reference Example	Embo Example	Embo Example	Reference Example	Reference Example
Base Filler	PA	PA	10-14	15-23	10-14	15-23	24-	
Roughness (nm)	10-14	10-14	15-23	10-14	15-23	24-		
Rew Time *1	Number of Passes	50	0	29	0	50	40	
	Time (sec)	5.7	--	7.7	--	5.3	8.7	
	Tape Scratch	O	--	Δ	--	O	Δ	
	Guide Scratch	O	--	Δ~X	--	O	Δ~X	
DO Measurement	Dropout	OK	NG	OK	NG	OK	NG	
after 50 Passes	Tape Scratch	O	X	O	Δ	O	Δ	
of FF-Rew *2	Guide Scratch	O	X	Δ	Δ	O	X	
DO Measurement	Dropout	OK	NG	NG	NG	OK	NG	
after 100 Passes	Tape Scratch	O	X	Δ	X	O	X	
of Play-Rew *3	Guide Scratch	O	X	X	Δ	O	X	

Remarks: UHMW: Ultra-High-Molecular-Weight

PA: Prior Art, Embo: Embodiment

*1: Time required for traveling a tape for 20 seconds and rewinding it under torque of 250g·cm using a general purpose tape deck. The operation was repeated fifty times.

*2, *3: Dropout measured after traveling of a tape using a general purpose tape deck.

OK: 35 dropouts/min or less.

O: Equal to the prior art.

Δ: Somewhat inferior to the prior art.

X: Inferior to the prior art.

As can be seen from the foregoing, the present invention is so constructed that the polyester film of the magnetic tape contains the basic filler which absorbs a basic indicator bromothymol blue thereon, the absorbed indicator showing a blue colour & the tape guide means contacted with the polyester film is formed of ultra-high-molecular-weight polyolefin. Such construction provides the magnetic tape and tape guide means with good resistance to scraping and resistance to wear, respectively, resulting in preventing dropout of data stored on the magnetic tape and preventing the tape guide means from producing powders or dust due to wearing, while significantly reducing the processing costs and weight of the tape guide means as compared with the metal tape guides in the prior art. Thus, the magnetic tape cartridge of the present invention is effectively improved in quality and ensures the safe and positive operation over a long period of time. Also, the present invention contributes to a decrease in weight of the cartridge and a reduction in manufacturing cost of the cartridge.

While a preferred embodiment of the present invention has been described with a certain degree of particularity with reference to the drawing, obvious modifications and variations are possible in light of the above teachings. It is therefore to be understood that within the scope of the appended claims, the invention may be practiced otherwise than as specifically described.



Claims:

1. A magnetic tape cartridge comprising:

a magnetic tape drawably wound on a pair of tape holders rotatably arranged in a casing and including a polyester film and a magnetic layer formed on at least one of both surfaces thereof; and

a tape guide means for guiding the travelling of said magnetic tape in said casing while keeping said magnetic tape contacted therewith;

said polyester film of said magnetic tape including a means for improving resistance to scraping of said magnetic tape comprising a filler incorporated in said polyester film, said filler having a basicity such that a basicity indicator comprising Bromothymol blue shows blue when absorbed on said filler;

said tape guide means contacted with said magnetic tape being made of a ultra-high-molecular-weight polyolefin;

the surface of said magnetic tape contacted with said tape guide means having a face roughness within a range between $0.015\mu\text{m}$ and $0.023\mu\text{m}$ based on R_a (center line average height) determined according to a surface roughness testing method defined in JIS B0601; and

said filler having a size of at least $5\text{m}^2/\text{g}$ based on a BET value.

2. A magnetic tape cartridge as defined in claim 1, wherein said ultra-high-molecular-weight polyolefin is ultra-high-molecular-weight polyethylene having a molecular weight of 800,000 or more.

3. A magnetic tape cartridge as defined in claim 1, wherein said tape guide means is made of a material consisting of ultra-high-molecular-weight polyethylene having a molecular weight of 800,000 or more as a main component and aluminium silicate of 10 to 40% by weight as a filler.



4. A magnetic tape cartridge as defined in claim 1, 2 or 3,
wherein said filler is Al_2O_3 ;

said Al_2O_3 being added in an amount less than 5% by
weight.
