

Description**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION****5 Field of the Invention**

This invention relates to motor control apparatus and, more particularly, to a circuit which is adapted to sense a motor overload condition whereupon motor operation is controlled to alleviate that condition, such as by reversing the motor, reducing the drive current supplied to the motor or interrupting the drive current so as to stop the motor.

Description of the Prior Art

Motor control circuitry has long been used in driving, regulating and controlling the operation of an electric motor. Often, such motor control circuitry is intended to provide protection against motor damage and, for those applications in which the motor is used with user-operated devices, to prevent personal injury to the user.

One example of a controllable motor adapted for use in a human environment is found in recording/reproducing apparatus, such as a video tape recorder (VTR). Many commercially available VTR's employ a cassette holder to receive a tape cassette which then is loaded into the VTR. Typically, an electric motor is mechanically coupled to the cassette holder and is driven to move that cassette holder between a load/unload position whereat the tape cassette may be loaded onto or unloaded from the holder, and a record/playback position whereat the tape cassette is brought into operable relationship with electromechanical record/reproducing apparatus. Usually, the simple actuation of a START switch energizes the motor to drive the cassette holder, either from its load/unload position to its record/playback position or from its record/playback position to its load/unload position. It is recognized, however, that uncontrolled motor operation may lead to personal injury of the user. For example, the user may accidentally locate his finger in the path of the cassette holder as it moves from its load/unload position to its record/playback position, resulting in possibly severe damage or painful injury.

To minimize this risk of personal injury, various safeguards have been proposed to prevent the user from inadvertently placing his finger in the path of motor-driven apparatus. Unfortunately, even the most detailed precautions often are defeated or, at the least, result in complicated and often difficult manipulation by the user in loading or unloading a tape cassette from its holder. Accordingly, as an alternative, protection arrangements have been proposed which stop a cassette loading operation should the user's finger become entangled in the equipment. While this may prevent further injury, such arresting apparatus often relies upon mechanical elements which, while stopping the movement of the drive motor nevertheless does nothing about the continued supply of drive current thereto. As a result, the motor may be subjected to a current overload condition in which excess motor current flows therethrough. Consequently, the motor may be damaged and may burn out.

Another difficulty associated with mechanical protection devices is attributed to the fact that such devices often are quite large and bulky and are not easily incorporated into portable VTR's, such as video cameras. In particular, 8mm video cameras which record on and play back from an 8mm cassette are quite small and cannot easily accommodate the aforementioned protection devices.

In recognition of the danger of motor overload, some relatively simple techniques have been proposed to prevent the motor from burning out due to excess motor current drawn thereby. For example, the motor may be designed to exhibit limited torque which also limits the current; or the motor drive circuit may impose an inherent limitation on the maximum current that may be supplied thereby. Such proposals limit the power that can be exerted by the motor and often require a motor and motor drive circuit that are relatively expensive to design and manufacture.

One simple alternative to special motor design is the use of a fuse connected in series between the power supply from which the motor is driven and the motor drive circuit, or even the motor itself. While a fuse may prevent the motor from drawing excess current and, thus, avoid burn-out, a "blown" fuse must be replaced, and this may result in frequent servicing of the motor-driven equipment. In the environment of consumer equipment, it may be difficult for a user to carry out even the relatively simple task of replacing a fuse, thus making it more difficult for the user himself to maintain and service his equipment.

An alternative to the use of a simple fuse relies upon a variable power supply which is controlled to reduce the current supplied thereby to the motor when an overload condition is sensed. For example, when overload is sensed, the power supply voltage may be reduced to prevent motor burn-out. However, if a common power supply is used to provide energy both for the motor and for other circuits used with the motor-driven equipment, a change in the power supply voltage which is intended to prevent motor burn-out may induce malfunctions

or faults in other circuitry that is supplied with that same power supply voltage. To avoid this possibility, a separate power supply is needed for the exclusive use of the motor and motor drive circuitry. This, however, is expensive, adds to the complexity of the overall equipment, and increases the size and weight of the motor-driven apparatus.

One proposed protection circuit which is intended to prevent motor burn-out yet does not require a separate power supply and does not vary the power supply voltage that is used by other circuitry connects a current limiting circuit in series between the motor drive circuit and the power source from which motor current is derived. The current limiting circuit includes active devices, such as FET's, bipolar transistors, or the like, and functions to limit the current flowing from the power supply to the motor. The current limiting circuit is sensitive to current flowing therethrough to the motor such that when this motor current increases in magnitude, the impedance of the current limiting circuit likewise increases. Hence, the current permitted to flow through this circuit to the motor is limited so as not to exceed some predetermined level.

Unfortunately, the use of a current limiting circuit of the aforementioned type increases the power dissipation of the overall circuitry due to the fact that the impedance connected in series with the power supply increases. Furthermore, the use of transistors and other active elements in the current limiting circuit inherently dissipates power even when such devices are quiescent, as when the motor current is well below the aforementioned predetermined level. Consequently, if the motor and motor protection circuitry are used in portable equipment, the battery pack power source normally used with that equipment will exhibit a shorter effective life because of the increased power dissipation in the current limiting circuit. Moreover, such current limiting circuitry is rather bulky and, thus, is unsuitable for portable, compact equipment such as portable video cameras.

US-A-4 677 356 discloses a DC motor drive control device which corresponds to the preamble of claim 1.

JP-A-59 152 556 discloses a motor controller whereby the direction of the motor is reversed on detection of overload conditions. No mention is made in this document of circuitry for varying the magnitude of the motor drive current.

Finally, US-A-4 663 573 discloses circuitry for varying the drive current to a motor between two discrete values; the circuitry employs a switch between two resistors at the base input of a transistor driving the motor.

OBJECTS AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Therefore, it is an object of the present invention to provide protection circuitry for use with motor-driven apparatus to prevent injury to a user, damage to the motor and damage to the equipment with which that motor is used.

Another object of this invention is to provide motor control apparatus for controlling the operation of a motor in the event of an overload condition, yet avoids the aforementioned disadvantages, drawbacks and defects of prior art proposals.

A still further object of this invention is to provide motor control apparatus which functions to limit the current supplied to a motor so as to prevent motor overload, yet is compact, does not dissipate significant amounts of power and is well-suited for use in portable motor-driven equipment, such as a video recorder.

An additional object of this invention is to provide motor-driven tape cassette loading apparatus in which a motor controller detects motor load conditions so as to control the motor, such as by stopping it.

The present invention will become readily apparent from the ensuing detailed description, and the novel features will be particularly pointed out in the appended claims.

In accordance with this invention, a motor controller for a cassette loading and unloading mechanism in a combined video camera and recorder is provided as given in claim 1.

As one aspect of this invention, the overload detector includes an enable circuit selectively operable during certain modes when motor overload is to be detected.

As a feature of this invention, the drive circuit includes a power source, variable impedance switches selectively energized for coupling the motor to that power source, and a bias circuit for varying the impedance of those switches to limit the current supplied through such switches to the motor. As an aspect of this feature, the aforementioned output signal produced by the overload detector is coupled to the bias circuit for varying the impedance of the variable impedance switches.

As another aspect of this feature, the variable impedance switches are connected as plural transistors (e. g. FET's or bipolar transistors) in H-configuration to couple the motor to the power source. The transistors are selectively energized to supply current to the motor in forward or reverse directions. The transistors may be further operated to brake the motor or to interrupt motor current such that the motor slows and stops.

In accordance with another feature of this invention, the control circuit includes a timer for sensing the presence of the aforementioned output signal for a predetermined time duration before controlling the motor

drive current.

As yet a further feature of this invention, the overload detector includes a current level generator for generating a current level signal representative of the motor current, a reference generator for providing a reference signal representative of a reference motor current, and a comparator for comparing the current level signal to the reference signal to produce the aforementioned output signal if the current level signal exceeds the reference signal. Preferably, the current level generator comprises a resistor connected in series with the motor to produce a voltage thereacross in response to the motor current.

In one advantageous application of the present invention, the controlled motor is used in a tape cassette loader by which a tape cassette is loaded and unloaded in a record/playback device, such as a VTR, video camera, or the like.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The following detailed description, given by way of example and not intended to limit the present invention solely thereto, will best be understood in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of motor control circuitry which incorporates the present invention;
 FIG. 2 is a partial block, partial schematic diagram of one motor control circuitry;
 FIG. 3 is a partial block, partial schematic diagram of the motor control circuitry of the present invention;
 FIG. 4A is a perspective view of a portable video camera having a motor-driven cassette loader in which the present invention finds ready application;
 FIG. 4B is a perspective view of the video camera illustrating one possible cause of motor overload; and
 FIG. 5 is a partial block, partial schematic diagram of a prior art technique for limiting the current supplied to a motor so as to prevent motor overload.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Before discussing the present invention in detail, reference first is made to FIG. 5 which illustrates a prior art technique for preventing motor overload by limiting the current supplied to a motor. In this prior art circuit, motor current is supplied from a power supply 115 to a motor 120 by a motor drive circuit 110. A current limiting circuit 100 is interposed in the series circuit comprised of the power supply, the motor drive circuit and the motor. As shown, motor drive circuit 110 is formed as a so-called H-bridge of transistor pairs with motor 120 connected between transistors 200 and 230 of one pair and also between transistors 210 and 220 of another pair. A control logic circuit 125 responds to command signals from a controller (not shown) to selectively energize pairs of transistors. For example, when control logic circuit 125 energizes transistor pair 200, 230, current flows from power supply 115 through current limiting circuit 100, through transistor 200, through motor 120 and through transistor 230 to ground. As a result, motor 120 is driven in a first direction, such as the forward direction.

If the command signals command reverse motor drive, control logic circuit 125 energizes transistor pair 210, 220, whereupon current flows from power supply 115, through current limiting circuit 100, through transistor 210, through motor 120 and through transistor 220 to ground. It is seen that current now flows through motor 120 in the opposite direction, thus reversing the direction of motor movement. The command signals may command a dynamic braking operation, whereupon either transistors 200 and 210 are turned on or transistors 220 and 230 are turned on. Whichever pair of transistors is energized, the terminals of motor 120 are supplied with the same voltage, thus providing a short-circuit to dynamically brake the motor.

Finally, the command signals may command a stop operation, whereby motor 120 coasts to a stop. In response to this command, control logic circuit 125 de-energizes all of the transistors, thus interrupting current flow to motor 120.

Current limiting circuit 100 includes active devices, namely, transistors, field effect transistors (FET's) and the like. As current flows through these active devices, the impedance exhibited thereby increases. This has a self-limiting effect on the current supplied from power supply 115 to motor 120 because as the current level tends to increase, as by reason of a motor overload condition, the impedance of the current limiting circuit likewise increases which, in turn, opposes the increase in current levels. For example, if the movement of the motor is constrained, as by reason of an obstruction in the path of movement of a device driven by that motor, the current supplied to motor 120 tends to increase. But for current limiting circuit 100, this increase in current could reach an overload condition, whereupon the motor may burn out. But, by reason of the self-limiting effect of the current limiting circuit, such high current levels are avoided.

Unfortunately, current limiting circuit 100 is a source of power dissipation even when acceptable current levels are drawn by motor 120. If power supply 115 is comprised of a battery, such as if the apparatus with which the illustrated circuitry is used is portable equipment, such power dissipation drastically reduces the ef-

fective life of that battery. Furthermore, current limiting circuit 100 normally is rather bulky and may not be suitable for compact, portable equipment, such as portable video cameras having a VTR driven by motor 120.

The disadvantages associated with the prior art circuitry shown in FIG. 5 are avoided by the present invention which is illustrated by the block diagram of FIG. 1. In the following description, like reference numerals are used in different drawing figures to identify the same components.

The motor control circuitry shown in FIG. 1 is comprised of a motor drive circuit 3 which drives motor 2 with drive current, the magnitude of this current being sensed by a current detector 4. The overall operation of the motor drive circuit and current detector is controlled by a controller 5. As will be described in greater detail below, motor drive circuit 3 includes drive transistors, FET's, or the like which are selectively energized to supply current to motor 2 connected thereto. The conductivity or impedance of these drive elements is controlled by a bias circuit, thereby determining the magnitude of the current which flows through motor 2. In one embodiment, these drive elements are connected in pairs to the motor in an H-configuration; and respective pairs of these drive elements are selectively energized to determine the direction of current flowing through the motor. Controller 5 is coupled to motor drive circuit 3 and is adapted to select those transistor pairs to be energized and, thus, the controller determines the operating direction of the motor.

Current detector 4 is adapted to detect the magnitude of the current flowing through motor 2 and to compare this detected current level to a reference level representing a maximum, permissible motor current. It is appreciated that the motor may be considered to be overloaded when its current exceeds this amount. Of course, excess currents may be drawn by motor 2 even when the motor is not overloaded, such as during a start-up operation, and current detector 4 is designed to be immune from such non-overloaded, high current conditions.

An overload output signal is supplied to motor drive circuit 3 from current detector 4 when motor 2 is overloaded. This output signal serves to increase the impedance of the motor drive elements and thereby reduce the current supplied to the motor. In one embodiment, the output signal from current detector 4 is supplied to a bias circuit included in the motor drive circuit; and the bias circuit functions to adjust the bias voltage supplied to the drive elements so as to increase their impedances.

The overload output signal produced by current detector 4 also is supplied to controller 5 which responds thereto to generate control signals for motor drive circuit 3, thereby providing further control over the motor current supplied to motor 2. Preferably, the controller determines which of the drive elements included in the motor drive circuit are to be energized, and this, in turn, defines the direction of current flowing through motor 2, whether the motor is to be braked, and whether the motor is to be stopped. For example, controller 5 may respond to the overload output signal produced by current detector 4 to command a dynamic braking operation of motor 2. Alternatively, the controller may command a stop operation, as by interrupting the current supplied to the motor. As a still further alternative, controller 5 may change the pair of drive elements which have been energized in the motor drive circuit, thereby supplying current in the reverse direction to reverse the operation of the motor. Depending upon the environment in which the motor is used, any of these alternatives may be adopted to relieve the motor overload. Of course, as yet another alternative, it may be sufficient merely for the overload output signal produced by current detector 4 to be used by motor drive circuit 3 to increase the impedance of the drive elements and, thus, reduce the magnitude of the current supplied to the motor.

Controller 5 also is adapted to supply an enable signal to current detector 4 to enable the current detector to sense a motor overload condition during certain operating modes of motor 2. For example, motor 2 may be operated under conditions for which a safety mode is preferred; and motor current should be detected and limited. When operating in the safety mode, controller 5 enables current detector 4 to sense the motor current. However, during other modes, such as during diagnostic testing, assembly, and the like, it may be desired to disable current detector 4 -- and controller 5 thus does not supply the aforementioned enable signal to the current detector. As a result, high motor currents will not be sensed and the current detector will not function to initiate a reduction in motor current, a reversal in motor current or an interruption of motor current.

One example of motor control apparatus to implement the block diagram shown in FIG. 1 is illustrated in FIG. 2. Although particular circuits and subcircuits are illustrated as being included in specific functional blocks, it will be appreciated that such designations merely are for convenience and are not intended to limit the present invention solely thereto. For example, control logic circuit 6 is illustrated as being included in motor drive circuit 3. It will be appreciated that it is equally appropriate to consider the control logic circuit as included in controller 5. In any event, for convenience, the circuits and subcircuits described below are assumed to be included in the circuit blocks shown in FIG. 2.

Motor drive circuit 3 is shown as being comprised of control logic circuit 6, a bias circuit 7 and a power control circuit 8 of variable impedance switches 9-12 which, in the present embodiment, are illustrated as an H-configuration of field effect transistors (FET's). The control logic circuit, bias circuit and power control circuit all are coupled to a voltage supply of operating potential V_{cc} to be energized thereby. This source of operating potential also supplies the drive current I_m for motor 2.

Control logic circuit 6 is adapted to receive control signals from controller 5 and functions to decode those control signals for selecting particular ones of switches 9-12 to be energized. It will be recognized that, although FET's are shown and described herein, other suitable drive elements may be used, such as bipolar transistors or other variable impedance switching elements.

Let it be assumed that the control signals supplied by controller 5 to control logic circuit 6 are 2-bit control signals. The following schedule summarizes the switch pairs that are energized and the resulting motor operation:

<u>Control Signal</u>	<u>Energized Switches</u>	<u>Motor Operation</u>
01	9, 12	Forward motion
10	10, 11	Reverse motion
11	9, 10 (or 11, 12)	Braking
00	None	Stop

Bias circuit 7 is coupled to control logic circuit 6 and supplies energizing (or drive) signals to those switches 9-12 which have been selected by controller 5. The bias circuit also is adapted to respond to an overload output signal produced by current detector 4 to vary the bias voltages applied thereby to switches 9-12 and thus vary the impedances or conductivity of such switches. As the bias circuit decreases the conductivity of the switches, the magnitude of the motor current supplied therethrough also decreases. Thus, by controlling bias circuit 7, the magnitude of the motor current may be controlled.

Assuming that switches 9-12 are FET's, these FET's are connected as follows: the gate of each FET is coupled to bias circuit 7 to receive an energizing signal produced by control logic circuit 6 and a bias voltage. The drain electrodes of FET's 9 and 10 are connected in common to voltage supply $+V_{cc}$, and the source electrodes of these transistors are connected to the drain electrodes of FET's 11 and 12. The source electrodes of FET's 11 and 12 are connected in common to current detector 4. Motor 2 is connected across the junction defined by FET's 9, 11 and 10, 12.

FET's 9-12 are energized in mutually exclusive pairs. It will be recognized that when FET's 9 and 12 are energized by the control signal decoded by control logic circuit 6, current flows from voltage supply $+V_{cc}$ to FET 9, through motor 2 and through FET 12 to current detector 4. Alternatively, when FET's 10 and 11 are energized, current flows from the voltage supply through FET 10, through motor 2 and through FET 11 to current detector 4. The motor current thus is reversed in polarity so as to reverse the operation of the motor. If FET's 9 and 10 are energized, a short circuit is connected across motor 2 to dynamically brake that motor. A similar dynamic braking effect is achieved if FET's 11 and 12 are energized. Of course, when none of the FET's is energized, no current flows from the voltage supply to the motor. As mentioned above, the magnitude of the current which flows through motor 2 is a function of the conductivity of the energized FET's which, in turn, is determined by bias circuit 7.

Current detector 4 is comprised of a comparator 13 which functions to compare a voltage derived from motor current I_M to a reference voltage V_{ref} which represents a maximum permitted motor current. In this regard, a resistor 13B is connected in series with power control circuit 8 such that the current which flows through the motor and the power control circuit also flows through resistor 13B to a reference potential, such as ground. The voltage V_R developed across resistor 13B represents the level of the motor current and is coupled to one terminal, such as the non-inverting input, of comparator 13. Reference voltage V_{ref} is coupled to the other terminal, shown as the inverting input, of the comparator. As one example, comparator 13 may be a differential amplifier, an operational amplifier, or the like. The output of comparator 13 is coupled by a resistor 14 to a transistor 15, shown, for example, as an npn transistor, whose collector electrode is connected to bias circuit 7. In the illustrated embodiment, when the voltage V_R indicative of motor current I_M exceeds the permitted current level represented by reference voltage V_{ref} , a positive output is produced by comparator 13 which renders transistor 15 conductive to supply a low signal level to bias circuit 7.

Comparator 13 is illustrated as having an energizing input coupled to voltage supply V_{cc} by way of a switch 13A which, when closed, energizes the comparator and thus enables it to operate. Switch 13A may comprise any conventional switching device, such as a transistor switch, or the like, and is adapted to be closed by a mode signal supplied from controller 5. This mode signal may be thought of as an enable signal to enable current detector 4 to operate and is produced when the circuitry operates in the safety mode.

Controller 5 is adapted to supply a suitable control signal to control logic circuit 6 in response to a selected mode of operation for motor 2. A predetermined control signal is supplied in response to a detected overload condition. As shown, control signal generator 19 receives the mode signal which, for the safety mode, is a logic low signal that serves to close switch 13A and, thus, enable comparator 13. This safety mode signal also enables control signal generator 19 to generate the control signal which reverses or stops motor 2, as may be desired. Thus, when the mode signal level is low, motor overload is prevented.

Controller 5 also includes a timer 16 having an inverting enabling input coupled to transistor 15 and a timing input coupled to receive timing pulses generated by a suitable clock circuit (not shown). It is recognized that timer 16 is enabled by transistor 15 to count these timing pulses. When a predetermined pulse count is reached, that is, after a predetermined time duration following the enabling thereof, timer 16 produces an output signal. The timer also includes a clear input CLR which, when supplied with a logic high signal, as when the mode signal is high, inhibits timer 16 from responding to the output of transistor 15. The output of timer 16 is coupled to one input of an AND gate 17, the other input of which is an inverting input coupled to transistor 15. The output of AND gate 17 is coupled to one input of an AND gate 18 whose other input is an inverting input connected to receive the mode signal. It is appreciated that AND gate 18 is enabled when the mode signal is low, as when motor 2 operates in the safety mode, but this AND gate is disabled when the mode signal is high. The output of AND gate 18 is coupled to control signal generator 19 and is adapted to trigger the control signal generator to generate the control signal by which motor 2 is reversed or, if desired, stopped.

The manner in which the motor control apparatus illustrated in FIG. 2 operates now will be described. Let it be assumed that the motor operates in its safety mode. Thus, the mode signal is a logic low signal. Although not shown herein, it will be recognized that any suitable external circuitry, such as a microprocessor or host machine, may be used to supply the mode signal. In any event, when the mode signal is low, switch 13A is closed and timer 16 and AND gate 18 are enabled.

Let it be further assumed that the control signals being generated by control signal generator 19 energize FET's 10 and 11, resulting in motor current I_M flowing through motor 2 in the illustrated direction. This motor current also flows through resistor 13B of current detector 4 to produce a current level voltage V_R representative of the magnitude of this motor current. If the current level voltage V_R is less than the reference voltage V_{ref} , comparator 13 produces a low output signal to render transistor 15 nonconductive. It is desirable to select the reference voltage V_{ref} as the maximum, safe motor current level. If, as an example, motor 2 is obstructed, the motor draws more current from voltage source $+V_{cc}$ and the motor current I_M increases. If this motor current I_M increases so as to overload the motor such that $V_R > V_{ref}$, comparator 13 produces a logic high signal output. Consequently, transistor 15 is rendered conductive to supply a logic low signal to bias circuit 7 and to timer 16. The bias circuit responds to this logic low signal to increase the impedance of switches 9-12, such as by reducing their conductivity. Consequently, the motor current I_M decreases and this alleviates the overload condition.

If the motor current I_M is reduced sufficiently, $V_R < V_{ref}$ and transistor 15 is turned off. However, if the reduction in motor current does not result in $V_R < V_{ref}$, transistor 15 remains conductive. Timer 16 is enabled when transistor 15 is turned on and timing pulses are counted. After the timer counts a predetermined number of such pulses, an output signal is supplied to AND gate 17. The AND gate had been enabled by the logic low signal produced by transistor 15; and if this logic low signal remains, the output of timer 16 passes through AND gate 17 and through previously enabled AND gate 18 to trigger control signal generator 19. The control signals now produced by the control signal generator may be such that all of switches 9-12 are de-energized and motor 2 coasts to a stop. Alternatively, these control signals may be such as to de-energize switches 10 and 11 and energize switches 9 and 12 so as to reverse the operation of the motor. It is expected that such reversal will remove the obstruction or other condition which resulted in motor overload.

If motor current I_M is reduced below the detected overload condition prior to the time that timer 16 counts the predetermined number of pulses, transistor 15 will be rendered non-conductive to disable the timer and AND gate 17. Thus, a trigger signal will not pass from the timer through AND gates 17 and 18 to control signal generator 19. Hence, there will be no change in the current supplied to the motor, other than the reduction in motor current level by bias circuit 7, as discussed previously.

It is appreciated that timer 16 is adapted to prevent control signal generator 19 from being triggered erroneously when motor current I_M undergoes relatively brief high level excursions. For example, the motor current will exhibit a high level for a relatively brief time duration when motor 2 first is turned on. It is preferred that the operation of the motor not be reversed or stopped immediately following this turn-on. Timer 16 prevents this. Timer 16 also avoids undesired changeover in motor operation that might otherwise occur in response to spurious current spikes that may be present in the motor current.

While timer 16 has been described as a pulse counter, it is appreciated that alternative timing devices may be provided, such as a conventional delay line or other timing circuit adapted to time out after a predetermined

duration initiated by the output signal produced by comparator 13.

For non-safety operating modes of motor 2, the mode signal is a logic high signal to open switch 13A, thereby disabling comparator 13. This logic high mode signal also resets and maintains timer 16 in its reset condition. Hence, the timer does not supply a time-out signal to AND gate 17. Furthermore, the logic high mode signal disables AND gate 18, thereby preventing a spurious trigger signal from being applied to control signal generator 19. Control signal generator 19 merely responds to the logic high mode signal to supply control signals to control logic circuit 6 which, in turn, applies energizing signals to a selected pair of switches by way of bias circuit 7. Moreover, by disabling the operation of comparator 13, no output signal is produced thereby and transistor 15 remains non-conductive. Hence, bias circuit 7 does not increase the impedance (or reduce the conductivity) of switches 9-12. Consequently, in non-safety modes of operation, motor current need not be limited by the bias circuit under the control of current detector 4.

The current detector 4 and motor drive circuit 3 of the present invention are illustrated in FIG. 3. Controller 5 is omitted from the figure; and current detector 4 and control logic circuit 6 are seen to be substantially the same in FIG. 3 as in FIG. 2.

The switches included in power control circuit 8 are comprised of bipolar transistors 9-12 in place of the FET's discussed above in conjunction with FIG. 2. Nevertheless, as was the case for FIG. 2, transistors 9-12 are energized in respective pairs to control the direction of current flow through motor 2. In addition, and as was discussed previously, motor 2 is dynamically braked if transistor pair 9, 10 is energized or if transistor pair 11, 12 is energized. Similarly, when all of the transistors are de-energized, motor current is interrupted and motor 2 coasts to a stop.

Bias circuit 7 is illustrated in greater detail and is comprised of switches 7A-7D connected to the base electrodes of transistors 9-12, respectively, and diodes 7E-7H having their anodes connected to the base electrodes of transistors 9-12, respectively, and their cathodes connected in common to the collector of transistor 15. Switches 7A-7D are illustrated as mechanical switches, but it will be recognized that each switch preferably is a conventional solid-state switching device. Control logic circuit 6 functions to decode the control (or command) signals supplied thereto by controller 5 (not shown); and the decoded signals serve to energize, or close, respective ones of switches 7A-7D. These switches are connected in common to a source of operating potential 1A which supplies a voltage V_s through each closed switch to the base electrode of the transistor connected thereto. For example, to drive motor 2 in the forward direction, switches 7A and 7C are closed such that energizing potential is supplied from source 1A through switch 7A to the base electrode of transistor 10 and through switch 7C to the base electrode of transistor 11. Transistors 10 and 11 thus are energized to supply current from source 1A through transistor 10 to motor 2 and from motor 2 through transistor 11 to resistor 13B of current detector 4. If switches 7A and 7C are opened and switches 7B and 7D are closed, transistors 10 and 11 are de-energized while transistors 9 and 12 are turned on to supply current to motor 2 in the reverse direction. Control logic circuit 6 responds to the command signals supplied thereto to close those switches 7A-7D determined by the command signals and thereby direct the motor current I_M flowing through motor 2.

In operation, if the motor current I_M flowing through motor 2 and resistor 13B exceeds a predetermined level, thus indicative of an overload condition, the current level signal V_R produced across resistor 13B exceeds the reference voltage V_{ref} , whereupon comparator 13 produces a logic high output signal. This signal renders transistor 15 conductive to supply a logic low signal to the common-connected cathodes of diodes 7E-7H. Consequently, these diodes are forward biased to shunt a substantial portion of the energizing voltage from the base electrodes of those transistors which are conducting, and also to apply relatively low base voltages to the non-conducting transistors. As a result, the base bias voltages of the transistors in power control circuit 8 are reduced to reduce their conductivity and increase the impedance exhibited by each. Therefore, the magnitude of the current flowing through those transistors which are energized by control logic circuit 6, such as the current flowing through transistors 10 and 11, is reduced. This, in turn, reduces the motor current I_M and alleviates the overload condition. Hence, possible damage to the motor and other apparatus is avoided.

Consistent with the foregoing example, let it be assumed that the impedance of transistors 10 and 11 are represented as R_{10} and R_{11} , the resistance of motor 2 is represented as R_M and the resistance of resistor 13B is represented as R . It is seen that such resistances R_{10} , R_{11} and R are connected in series across voltage source 1A. When comparator 13 produces an output signal to render transistor 15 conductive, diodes 7F and 7G conduct to reduce the base voltages of transistors 10 and 11, thereby increasing the effective resistances R_{10} and R_{11} . Hence, the maximum current I_{max} that may flow from voltage source 1A through motor 2 may be expressed as follows:

$$I_{max} = \frac{V_s}{R_{10} + R_M + R_{11} + R}$$

Thus, bias circuit 7, and particularly diodes 7E-7H, increase the resistance presented by H-configuration

transistors 9-10 to limit the current I_M flowing through motor 2 when an overload condition is detected by comparator 13. The motor current thus is effectively controlled to prevent damage.

FIGS. 4A and 4B illustrate one embodiment of apparatus in which the motor control circuit of the present invention finds ready application. In particular, FIGS. 4A and 4B depict a video camera 20 which may be a portable video camera, such as an 8mm video camera, having a VTR incorporated therein. Video camera 20 includes a cassette holder 24 adapted to receive a video tape cassette 27 and movable between a pop-up load/unload position, as shown in FIG. 4A, and a retracted position, shown in FIG. 4B, whereby the tape cassette 27 may be loaded onto cassette holder 24 and then located at a record/playback position to enable video signals to be recorded on and played back from the tape by the VTR (not shown).

Video camera 20 includes a housing 21, a camera lens 22 and a cassette compartment door 23 having a window 23a. Cassette holder 24 supports supply and take-up reels 26a and 26b and is formed with an end plate 25 to shield tape cassette 27 when the cassette is loaded into the cassette receiving compartment of the camera. The motor described above in conjunction with FIGS. 2 and 3 is used to drive cassette holder 24 from its load/unload position shown in FIG. 4A to its retracted position shown in FIG. 4B. This is carried out as a safety mode operation to prevent injury to the user of camera 20 and to prevent the motor which drives holder 24 from being overloaded and from burning out.

Typically, tape cassette 27 is loaded onto cassette holder 24, whereafter door 23 is closed and the motor (not shown) drives the cassette holder to its retracted position. A switch may be actuated when door 23 is closed to change over the mode signal shown in FIG. 2 to a logic low signal, thereby enabling comparator 13 and timer 16, as described above.

If, while cassette holder 24 is driven to its retracted position, the operator inadvertently places his finger in the path of travel of the cassette holder, such as shown in FIG. 4B, plate 25 will pinch the user's finger. This obstruction will prevent holder 24 from reaching its retracted position and the current supplied to motor 2 will increase to its overload level. If the user does not take corrective action for a predetermined time, such as on the order of 1-2 seconds; for example, if he does not remove his finger or if he does not attempt to eject the tape cassette, timer 16 times out to trigger control signal generator 19. The control signal generator then supplies command signals to control logic circuit 6 which, in one embodiment, de-energizes the FET's, transistors or other variable impedance switches included in power control circuit 8, whereupon motor 2 stops. In an alternative embodiment, the command signals supplied to the control logic circuit from control signal generator 19 reverse the pair of switches which had been energized theretofore, thereby reversing the direction of current flow through motor 2 and reversing the motor. In this alternative embodiment, cassette holder 24 now is driven automatically to return to its load/unload position.

In addition to the foregoing command signals produced by control signal generator 19 in response to the output signals produced by comparator 13 and timer 16, the comparator output also is used to increase the impedance of the variable impedance switches so as to reduce the level of motor current I_M . This immediate reduction in motor current removes the overload condition and reduces the force that may be exerted on the user's finger by the motor-driven cassette holder.

While the present invention has been particularly shown and described with reference to preferred embodiments, it will be readily apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art that various changes and modifications may be made.

For example, controller 5 may be implemented by a simple microprocessor, such as the microprocessor that normally is included in the equipment with which the present invention is used, such as in video camera 20. Furthermore, the present invention is not limited solely to the FET's or bipolar transistors which have been discussed above. Alternative switches typically used to supply drive current to a motor may be used.

Claims

1. A motor controller for a cassette loading and unloading mechanism in a combined video camera and recorder (120), said controller comprising : drive means (3) for supplying drive current, to a motor (2) comprising a power source (1a), variable impedance switch means (8) comprising a plurality of transistor means (9-12) connected in a bridge configuration to couple said motor (2) to said power (1a) and selectively energizable to supply current to said motor in first or second directions, and bias means (7) for varying the impedance of said variable impedance switch means (8) to limit current supplied therethrough to said motor (2); overload detecting means (4) coupled to said motor for detecting the magnitude of current flowing through said motor to produce an output signal if motor overload, resulting from an overload in said mechanism, causes said current to exceed a predetermined threshold level; means for coupling the output signal produced by said overload detecting means (4) to said bias means (7) for varying the im-



transistors 9-10 to limit the current I_M flowing through motor 2 when an overload condition is detected by comparator 13. The motor current thus is effectively controlled to prevent damage.

FIGS. 4A and 4B illustrate one embodiment of apparatus in which the motor control circuit of the present invention finds ready application. In particular, FIGS. 4A and 4B depict a video camera 20 which may be a portable video camera, such as an 8mm video camera, having a VTR incorporated therein. Video camera 20 includes a cassette holder 24 adapted to receive a video tape cassette 27 and movable between a pop-up load/unload position, as shown in FIG. 4A, and a retracted position, shown in FIG. 4B, whereby the tape cassette 27 may be loaded onto cassette holder 24 and then located at a record/playback position to enable video signals to be recorded on and played back from the tape by the VTR (not shown).

Video camera 20 includes a housing 21, a camera lens 22 and a cassette compartment door 23 having a window 23a. Cassette holder 24 supports supply and take-up reels 26a and 26b and is formed with an end plate 25 to shield tape cassette 27 when the cassette is loaded into the cassette receiving compartment of the camera. The motor described above in conjunction with FIGS. 2 and 3 is used to drive cassette holder 24 from its load/unload position shown in FIG. 4A to its retracted position shown in FIG. 4B. This is carried out as a safety mode operation to prevent injury to the user of camera 20 and to prevent the motor which drives holder 24 from being overloaded and from burning out.

Typically, tape cassette 27 is loaded onto cassette holder 24, whereafter door 23 is closed and the motor (not shown) drives the cassette holder to its retracted position. A switch may be actuated when door 23 is closed to change over the mode signal shown in FIG. 2 to a logic low signal, thereby enabling comparator 13 and timer 16, as described above.

If, while cassette holder 24 is driven to its retracted position, the operator inadvertently places his finger in the path of travel of the cassette holder, such as shown in FIG. 4B, plate 25 will pinch the user's finger. This obstruction will prevent holder 24 from reaching its retracted position and the current supplied to motor 2 will increase to its overload level. If the user does not take corrective action for a predetermined time, such as on the order of 1-2 seconds; for example, if he does not remove his finger or if he does not attempt to eject the tape cassette, timer 16 times out to trigger control signal generator 19. The control signal generator then supplies command signals to control logic circuit 6 which, in one embodiment, de-energizes the FET's, transistors or other variable impedance switches included in power control circuit 8, whereupon motor 2 stops. In an alternative embodiment, the command signals supplied to the control logic circuit from control signal generator 19 reverse the pair of switches which had been energized theretofore, thereby reversing the direction of current flow through motor 2 and reversing the motor. In this alternative embodiment, cassette holder 24 now is driven automatically to return to its load/unload position.

In addition to the foregoing command signals produced by control signal generator 19 in response to the output signals produced by comparator 13 and timer 16, the comparator output also is used to increase the impedance of the variable impedance switches so as to reduce the level of motor current I_M . This immediate reduction in motor current removes the overload condition and reduces the force that may be exerted on the user's finger by the motor-driven cassette holder.

While the present invention has been particularly shown and described with reference to preferred embodiments, it will be readily apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art that various changes and modifications may be made.

For example, controller 5 may be implemented by a simple microprocessor, such as the microprocessor that normally is included in the equipment with which the present invention is used, such as in video camera 20. Furthermore, the present invention is not limited solely to the FET's or bipolar transistors which have been discussed above. Alternative switches typically used to supply drive current to a motor may be used.

Claims

1. A motor controller for a cassette loading and unloading mechanism in a combined video camera and recorder (120), said controller comprising: drive means (3) for supplying drive current, to a motor (2) comprising a power source (1a), variable impedance switch means (8) comprising a plurality of transistor means (9-12) connected in a bridge configuration to couple said motor (2) to said power (1a) and selectively energizable to supply current to said motor in first or second directions, and bias means (7) for varying the impedance of said variable impedance switch means (8) to limit current supplied therethrough to said motor (2); overload detecting means (4) coupled to said motor for detecting the magnitude of current flowing through said motor to produce an output signal if motor overload, resulting from an overload in said mechanism, causes said current to exceed a predetermined threshold level; means for coupling the output signal produced by said overload detecting means (4) to said bias means (7) for varying the im-



- pedance of said variable impedance switch means (8) in response to said output signal; and control means (5, 6) coupled to said drive means and responsive to said output signal for controlling the drive current supplied by said drive means to said motor (2), thereby controlling motor operation, whereby said bias means (7) includes a plurality of energizing switch means (7A-7D), each coupled between said power source (1a) and the base electrode of a respective one of said transistor means (9-12) and activated by an energizing signal to apply an energizing current to the base electrodes of the transistor means coupled thereto; characterised by a plurality of shunting diodes (7E-7H) each connected between said overload detecting means and the base electrode of a respective one of said transistors, for shunting, in response to said output signal, a substantial portion of said energizing current from the base electrodes of those transistors which are energized to decrease the current flowing therethrough.
2. The controller of claim 1, wherein said overload detecting means (4) includes enable means (13a) selectively operable when motor overload is to be detected for enabling said overload detecting means to detect said motor current.
 3. The controller of claim 1 or 2 wherein said plurality of transistor means (9-12) comprise field effect transistors.
 4. The controller of claim 1 or 2 wherein said plurality of transistor means (9-12) comprise bipolar transistors.
 5. The controller of claim 1 or 2, wherein said control means includes means for supplying energizing signals to selected pairs of transistor means to cause forward or reverse movement of said motor, or to cause braking of said motor.
 6. The controller of claim 5, wherein said means for supplying energizing signals is additionally operable to de-energize all of said transistor means (9-12) for interrupting current to said motor (2) and thereby causing said motor to stop.
 7. The controller of any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein said control means (5, 6) includes timer means (16) for sensing the presence of said output signal from a predetermined time duration before timing out and controlling the drive current supplied to said motor (2).
 8. The controller of claim 7, wherein said timer means (16) includes enable means selectively operable when motor overload is to be detected for enabling said timer means.
 9. The controller of claims 7 or 8, wherein said control means (5, 6) further includes control signal generating means (19) coupled to said timer means (16) for generating control signals when said timer means times out, said control signals being supplied to said drive means for determining at least the polarity of said drive current.
 10. The controller of any one of claims 1 to 9, wherein said overload detecting means (4) comprises current level generating means (13B) for generating a current level signal representative of the motor current; reference means for providing a reference signal (V_R) representative of a reference motor current and comparator means (13) for comparing said current level signal to said reference signal to produce said output signal if said current level signal exceeds said reference signal.
 11. The controller of claim 10, wherein said control means (5, 6) includes enabling means for providing an enabling signal when motor overload is to be detected; and wherein said comparator means comprises differential amplifier means (13) having a power supply terminal, a source of operating voltage, and switch means operated by said enabling signal to connect said power supply terminal to said source of operating voltage.
 12. The controller of claim 10, wherein said current level generating means comprises resistance means connected in series with said motor to produce a voltage thereacross in response to said motor current.
 13. A cassette loading and unloading mechanism in a combined video camera and recorder with the controller of any of claims 1 to 12, and comprising : a movable cassette holder (25) for receiving a tape cassette (27), driven by said motor (2) between a load/unload position and a record/playback position, said controller being operative for selectively stopping or reversing said motor (2).



14. The mechanism of claim 13, wherein said mechanism comprises a cassette holder (24, 25, 27) movable between a pop-up cassette receiving position and a retracted position.
- 5 15. The mechanism of claim 14, wherein said control means energizes said loading means to drive said cassette holder (24, 25, 27) in a reverse direction if an overload is detected while said cassette holder is driven from said cassette receiving position to said retracted position.
- 10 16. The mechanism of claims 14 or 15, wherein said control means de-energizes said loading means to stop said cassette holder (24, 25, 27) if an overload is detected while said cassette holder is driven from said cassette receiving position to said retracted position.
- 15 17. The mechanism of claims 14, 15 or 16, wherein said control means (5, 6) reduces the driving force exerted by said loading means on said cassette holder (24, 25, 27) if an overload is detected while said cassette holder is driven from said cassette receiving position to said retracted position.

Patentansprüche

1. Motorsteuerung für einen Kassettenlade- und entlademechanismus in einer mit einem Recorder (120) kombinierten Videocamera, wobei die Steuerung aufweist:
 20 eine Antriebseinrichtung (3) zum Liefern eines Antriebsstroms zu einem Motor (2), die aufweist:
 eine Spannungsquelle (1A), eine veränderbare Impedanzschalteinrichtung (8), die mehrere Transistoreinrichtungen (9 bis 12) aufweist, die in einer Brücken-Konfiguration miteinander verbunden sind, um den Motor (2) mit der Spannungsquelle (1A) zu koppeln, und die wahlweise einschaltbar ist, um einen Strom zum Motor in einer ersten oder zweiten Richtung zu liefern, und
 25 eine Vorspannungseinrichtung (7) zum Verändern der Impedanz der veränderbaren Impedanzschalteinrichtung (8), um den Strom zu begrenzen, der über sie zum Motor (2) geliefert wird;
 eine Überlastermittlungseinrichtung (4), die mit dem Motor gekoppelt ist, um die Größe des Stroms zu ermitteln, der durch den Motor fließt, um ein Ausgangssignal zu erzeugen, wenn der Motor überlastet ist, was eine Folge einer Überlast in diesem Mechanismus ist, wodurch der Strom einen vorgegebenen Schwellenwertpegel übersteigt;
 eine Einrichtung zum Koppeln des Ausgangssignals, das durch die Überlastermittlungseinrichtung (4) erzeugt wird, mit der Vorspannungseinrichtung (7), um die Impedanz der veränderbaren Impedanzschalteinrichtung (8) in Abhängigkeit von dem Ausgangssignal zu verändern; und
 35 eine Steuereinrichtung (5, 6), die mit der Antriebseinrichtung gekoppelt ist und die in Abhängigkeit von dem Ausgangssignal den Antriebsstrom steuert, der durch die Antriebseinrichtung zum Motor (2) geliefert wird, wodurch der Motorbetrieb gesteuert wird, wobei die Vorspannungseinrichtung (7) mehrere Speiseschalteinrichtungen (7A bis 7D) aufweist, die jeweils zwischen der Spannungsquelle (1A) und dem Basisanschluß eines entsprechenden Transistors der Transistoreinrichtung (9 bis 12) gekoppelt ist und die durch ein Speisesignal aktivierbar ist, um einen Speisestrom zum Basisanschluß der daran gekoppelten Transistoreinrichtung anzulegen;
 40 gekennzeichnet durch mehrere Shunt-Dioden (7E bis 7H), von denen jede zwischen der Überlastermittlungseinrichtung und dem Basisanschluß eines entsprechenden Transistors der Transistoren geschaltet ist, um in Abhängigkeit vom Ausgangssignal einen wesentlichen Teil des Speisestroms von den Basisanschlüssen derjenigen Transistoren, die eingeschaltet sind, zu shunten, damit der durch sie fließende Strom verringert wird.
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2. Steuerung nach Anspruch 1, wobei die Überlastermittlungseinrichtung (4) eine Schalteinrichtung (13a) aufweist, die wahlweise betätigbar ist, wenn eine Motorüberlast ermittelt werden soll, zum Einschalten der Überlastermittlungseinrichtung, um den Motorstrom zu ermitteln.
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3. Steuerung nach Anspruch 1 oder 2, wobei die Mehrzahl der Transistoreinrichtungen (9 bis 12) aus Feldeffekttransistoren besteht.
4. Steuerung nach Anspruch 1 oder 2, wobei die Mehrzahl der Transistoreinrichtungen (9 bis 12) aus bipolaren Transistoren besteht.
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5. Steuerung nach Anspruch 1 oder 2, wobei die Steuereinrichtung eine Einrichtung zum Liefern von Speisesignalen zu ausgewählten Transistorpaareinrichtungen aufweist, um eine Vorwärts- oder Rückwärts-



bewegung des Motors oder ein Bremsen des Motors zu bewirken.

- 5 6. Steuerung nach Anspruch 5, wobei die Einrichtung zum Liefern von Speisesignalen zusätzlich alle Transistoreinrichtungen (9 bis 12) abschalten kann, um den Strom zum Motor (2) zu unterbrechen und um dadurch den Motor zu veranlassen, daß er anhält.
7. Steuerung nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 6, wobei die Steuereinrichtung (5, 6) eine Zeittakteinrichtung (16) aufweist, um die Anwesenheit des Ausgangssignals einer vorgegebenen Zeitdauer zu ermitteln, bevor sie Pause macht und den Antriebsstrom, der zum Motor (2) geliefert wird, steuert.
- 10 8. Steuerung nach Anspruch 7, wobei die Zeittakteinrichtung (16) eine Einschalteneinrichtung aufweist, die wahlweise betreibbar ist, wenn eine Motorüberlast ermittelt werden soll, um die Zeittakteinrichtung einzuschalten.
- 15 9. Steuerung nach Anspruch 7 oder 8, wobei die Steuereinrichtung (5, 6) weiter eine Steuersignalerzeugungseinrichtung (19) aufweist, die mit der Zeittakteinrichtung (16) gekoppelt ist, um Steuersignale zu erzeugen, wenn die Zeittakteinrichtung Pause macht, wobei die Steuersignale zur Antriebseinrichtung geliefert werden, um zumindest die Polarität des Antriebsstroms zu bestimmen.
- 20 10. Steuerung nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 9, wobei die Überlastermittlungseinrichtung (4) eine Strompegelerzeugungseinrichtung (13B) aufweist, um ein Strompegelsignal zu erzeugen, das für den Motorstrom repräsentativ ist; eine Referenzeinrichtung zum Bereitstellen eines Referenzsignals (V_{ref}), das für einen Motorreferenzstrom repräsentativ ist, und eine Komparatoreinrichtung (13), um das Strompegelsignal mit dem Referenzsignal zu vergleichen, um das Ausgangssignal zu erzeugen, wenn das Strompegelsignal das Referenzsignal übersteigt.
- 25 11. Steuerung nach Anspruch 10, wobei die Steuereinrichtung (5, 6) eine Einschalteneinrichtung zum Bereitstellen eines Einschaltsignals aufweist, wenn eine Motorüberlast ermittelt werden soll; und wobei die Komparatoreinrichtung eine Differenzverstärkereinrichtung (13) aufweist, die einen Spannungsversorgungsanschluß hat, eine Quelle einer Betriebsspannung und eine Schalteinrichtung, die durch das Einschaltsignal betätigt wird, damit sie den Spannungsversorgungsanschluß mit der Betriebsspannungsquelle verbindet.
- 30 12. Steuerung nach Anspruch 10, wobei die Strompegelerzeugungseinrichtung eine Widerstandseinrichtung aufweist, die seriell mit dem Motor verbunden ist, um eine Diagonalspannung in Abhängigkeit vom Motorstrom zu erzeugen.
- 35 13. Kassettenlade- und entlademechanismus in einer mit einem Recorder kombinierten Videocamera mit einer Steuerung nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 12, die aufweist: einen bewegbaren Kassettenhalter (25) zur Aufnahme einer Bandkassette (27), die durch den Motor (2) zwischen einer Lade/Entladeposition und einer Aufzeichnungs/Wiedergabeposition angetrieben werden kann, wobei die Steuerung wahlweise den Motor (2) stoppen oder umkehren kann.
- 40 14. Mechanismus nach Anspruch 13, wobei der Mechanismus einen Kassettenhalter (24, 25, 27) aufweist, der zwischen einer Auftauch-Kassettenaufnahmeposition und einer zurückgezogenen Position bewegbar ist.
- 45 15. Mechanismus nach Anspruch 14, wobei die Steuereinrichtung die Ladeeinrichtung gespeist, um den Kassettenhalter (24, 25, 27) in einer umgekehrten Richtung anzutreiben, wenn eine Überlast ermittelt wird, während der Kassettenhalter von der Kassettenaufnahmeposition in die zurückgezogene Position angetrieben wird.
- 50 16. Mechanismus nach Anspruch 14 oder 15, wobei die Steuereinrichtung die Ladeeinrichtung abschaltet, um den Kassettenhalter (24, 25, 27) anzuhalten, wenn eine Überlast ermittelt wird, während der Kassettenhalter von der Kassettenaufnahmeposition in die zurückgezogene Position angetrieben wird.
- 55 17. Mechanismus nach Anspruch 14, 15 oder 16, wobei die Steuereinrichtung (5, 6) die Antriebskraft reduziert, die durch die Ladeeinrichtung auf den Kassettenhalter (24, 25, 27) ausgeübt wird, wenn eine Überlast ermittelt wird, während der Kassettenhalter von der Kassettenaufnahmeposition in die zurückgezogene Position angetrieben wird.



Revendications

1. Dispositif de commande de moteur pour mécanisme de charge et de décharge de cassette d'un ensemble camescope (120) combinant une caméra vidéo et un magnétoscope, ledit dispositif de commande comprenant : un moyen d'activation (3) servant à fournir un courant d'activation à un moteur (2), qui comprend une source d'alimentation électrique (1a), un moyen de commutation à impédance variable (8) comprenant une pluralité des moyens formant des transistors (9 à 12) qui sont connectés suivant une configuration en pont de façon à coupler ledit moteur (2) à ladite source d'alimentation électrique (1a) et peuvent être sélectivement excités pour fournir du courant audit moteur dans un premier ou un deuxième sens, et un moyen de polarisation (7) servant à faire varier l'impédance dudit moyen de commutation à impédance variable (8) afin de limiter le courant fourni par son intermédiaire audit moteur (2) ; un moyen (4) de détection de surcharge couplé audit moteur pour détecter l'intensité du courant circulant dans ledit moteur afin de produire un signal de sortie si une surcharge du moteur, résultant d'une surcharge se produisant dans ledit mécanisme, fait que ledit courant dépasse un niveau de seuil prédéterminé ; un moyen servant à coupler le signal de sortie produit par ledit moyen (4) de détection de surcharge audit moyen de polarisation (7) afin de faire varier l'impédance dudit moyen de commutation à impédance variable (8) en réponse audit signal de sortie ; et un moyen de commande (5, 6) couplé audit moyen d'activation et répondant audit signal de sortie en commandant le courant d'activation fourni par ledit moyen d'activation audit moteur (2) de façon à commander le fonctionnement du moteur, où ledit moyen de polarisation (7) comporte une pluralité de moyens commutateurs d'excitation (7A à 7D), chacun d'eux étant couplé entre ladite source d'alimentation électrique (1a) et l'électrode de base de l'un, respectif, desdits moyens formant des transistors (9 à 12) et étant excité par un signal d'excitation de façon à appliquer un courant d'excitation à l'électrode de base du moyen formant un transistor auquel il est couplé ; caractérisé par une pluralité de diodes de dérivation (7E à 7H) qui sont chacune connectées entre ledit moyen de détection de surcharge et l'électrode de base de l'un, respectif, desdits transistors, afin de dériver, en réponse audit signal de sortie, une partie importante dudit courant d'excitation vis-à-vis des électrodes de base de ceux des transistors qui ont été excités, afin de diminuer le courant qui passe dans ces derniers.
2. Dispositif de commande selon la revendication 1, où ledit moyen de détection de surcharge (4) comporte un moyen de validation (13a) pouvant être sélectivement mis en oeuvre lorsqu'une surcharge du moteur doit être détectée afin d'autoriser ledit moyen de détection de surcharge à détecter ledit courant du moteur.
3. Dispositif de commande selon la revendication 1 ou 2, où ladite pluralité de moyens formant des transistors (9 à 12) comprend des transistors à effet de champ.
4. Dispositif de commande selon la revendication 1 ou 2, où ladite pluralité de moyens formant des transistors (9 à 12) comprend des transistors bipolaires.
5. Dispositif de commande selon la revendication 1 ou 2, où ledit moyen de commande comporte un moyen servant à fournir des signaux d'excitation à des paires sélectionnées de moyens formant des transistors afin de produire un mouvement vers l'avant ou vers l'arrière dudit moteur, ou bien de provoquer le freinage dudit moteur.
6. Dispositif de commande selon la revendication 5, où ledit moyen servant à fournir des signaux d'excitation peut en outre être mis en oeuvre de façon à cesser d'exciter tous lesdits moyens formant des transistors (9 à 12) afin d'interrompre le courant envoyé audit moteur (2) et amener ainsi le moteur à s'arrêter.
7. Dispositif de commande selon l'une des revendications 1 à 6, où ledit moyen de commande (5, 6) comporte un moyen formant une minuterie (16) qui sert à détecter la présence dudit signal de sortie depuis une durée prédéterminée avant épuisement de son temps imparti et à commander le courant d'activation fourni audit moteur (2).
8. Dispositif de commande selon la revendication 7, où ledit moyen formant une minuterie (16) comporte un moyen de validation qui peut être sélectivement mis en oeuvre lorsqu'une surcharge du moteur doit être détectée, afin de valider ledit moyen formant une minuterie.
9. Dispositif de commande selon la revendication 7 ou 8, où ledit moyen de commande (5, 6) comporte en outre un moyen (19) générateur de signaux de commande qui est connecté audit moyen formant une minuterie (16) afin de produire des signaux de commande lorsque ledit moyen formant une minuterie arrive



à la fin de son temps imparti, lesdits signaux de commande étant fournis audit moyen d'activation afin de déterminer au moins la polarité dudit courant d'activation.

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10. Dispositif de commande selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 9, où ledit moyen de détection de surcharge (4) comprend un moyen (13B) générateur de niveau de courant servant à produire un signal de niveau de courant représentatif du courant du moteur, un moyen de référence servant à produire un signal de référence (V_R) représentatif d'un courant de référence du moteur, et un moyen comparateur (13) servant à comparer ledit signal de niveau de courant audit signal de référence afin de produire ledit signal de sortie si ledit signal de niveau de courant dépasse ledit signal de référence.
 11. Dispositif de commande selon la revendication 10, où ledit moyen de commande (5, 6) comporte un moyen de validation servant à produire un signal de validation lorsqu'une surcharge du moteur doit être détectée ; et où ledit moyen comparateur comprend un moyen amplificateur différentiel (13) possédant une borne d'alimentation en tension, une source de tension de fonctionnement et un moyen de commutation mis en oeuvre par ledit signal de validation afin de connecter ladite borne d'alimentation électrique à ladite source de tension de fonctionnement.
 12. Dispositif de commande selon la revendication 10, où ledit moyen générateur de niveau de courant comprend un moyen formant une résistance connecté en série avec ledit moteur afin qu'il ne soit produit une tension aux bornes de ce moyen en fonction dudit courant du moteur.
 13. Mécanisme de chargement et de déchargement de cassette d'un camescope doté du dispositif de commande selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 12, et comprenant : un porte-cassette mobile (25) destiné à recevoir une cassette de bande (27), entraîné par ledit moteur (2) entre une position de charge/ décharge et une position d'enregistrement/lecture, ledit dispositif de commande ayant pour fonction de, sélectivement, arrêter ou inverser ledit moteur (2).
 14. Mécanisme selon la revendication 13, où ledit mécanisme comprend un porte-cassette (24, 25, 27) mobile entre une position relevée de réception de cassette et une position rétractée.
 15. Mécanisme selon la revendication 14, où ledit moyen de commande excite ledit moyen de charge afin d'entraîner ledit porte-cassette (24, 25, 27) dans le sens inverse si une surcharge est détectée pendant que ledit porte-cassette est entraîné de ladite position de réception de cassette à ladite position rétractée.
 16. Mécanisme selon la revendication 14 ou 15, où ledit moyen de commande cesse d'exciter ledit moyen de charge afin d'arrêter ledit porte-cassette (24, 25, 27) si une surcharge est détectée pendant que ledit porte-cassette est entraîné de ladite position de réception de cassette à ladite position rétractée.
 17. Mécanisme selon la revendication 14, 15 ou 16, où ledit moyen de commande (5, 6) réduit la force d'entraînement exercée par ledit moyen de charge sur ledit porte-cassette (24, 25, 27) si une surcharge est détectée pendant que ledit porte-cassette est entraîné de ladite position de réception de cassette à ladite position rétractée.