

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
6 February 2003 (06.02.2003)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 03/010760 A1

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: **G11B 5/39**,
5/40, 5/11

(21) International Application Number: PCT/GB02/03366

(22) International Filing Date: 22 July 2002 (22.07.2002)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
09/911,555 23 July 2001 (23.07.2001) US

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(81) Designated States (*national*): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, OM, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

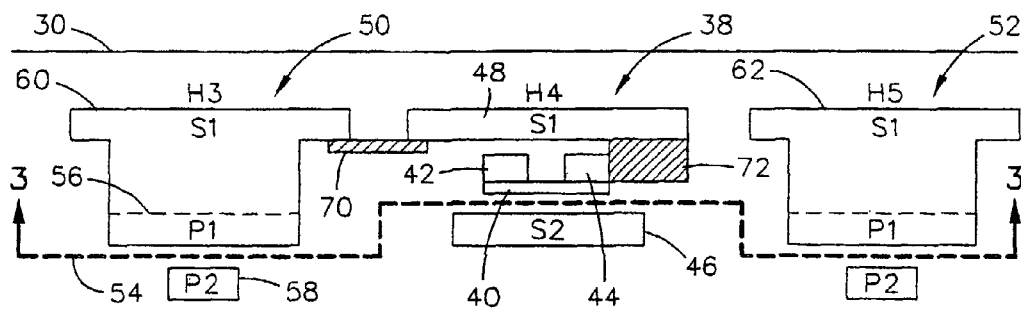
(84) Designated States (*regional*): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, SK, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

— with international search report

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: READ/WRITE HEAD ASSEMBLY



(57) Abstract: A magnetic head assembly with an air bearing surface (ABS) layer over a double-shielded magnetoresistive (MR) sensor and a write gap formed between two spaced magnetic pole tips (P1, P2), with an optional write-gap shield (S1) disposed so that one magnetic pole tip is disposed between the write-gap shield and the other magnetic pole tip. At least one of the MR element shields (S1) is electrically connected to one of the MR signal lead conductors (44) (preferably the one having the most positive potential) and the one magnetic pole tip (and/or the optional write-gap shield) is coupled to the clamped MR element shield (48) with an electrical conductor (70). For multi-track read/write arrays, the connection between adjacent reader shield and writer pole and/or shield is provided independently for each read/write pair in the array, thereby equalizing the voltage environments to reduce variations in the chemical/mechanical erosion of the read and write head ABS layers.

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