

DESCRIPTION

OPTICAL DISC READOUT METHOD AND APPARATUS WITH FOCUSING
BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

5 The present invention relates to a multibeam type optical disc read apparatus, and more particularly to a multibeam type optical disc read apparatus in which different light beams are applied at the same time to a plurality of adjacent tracks of an optical disc, such CD-ROM, CD-WO, DVD, DVD-ROM, DVD-RAM, MO, and LD and data recorded on the tracks applied with the light beams are read with a record data read system in accordance with a detected output of each reflected light beam.

2. Description of the Related Art

15 A multibeam method is one of the methods of reading record data from a CD-ROM at high speed. With this method, different light beams are applied at the same time to a plurality of adjacent tracks of an optical disc formed with a spiral track, data recorded on the tracks applied with the light beams are read with a record data read system for each track in accordance with a detected output of each reflected light beam, and the read data is sequentially output in the record order by preventing the read data from being duplicated or omitted.

25 Each of a plurality of light beams of such a

multibeam optical disc read apparatus is required to be correctly focussed onto an optical disc signal plane. If not, record data cannot be read with a light beam in an out of focus state. If a focussing optical system is provided for each of a plurality of light beams, it is possible to focus all the light beams onto the optical disc signal plane by independently controlling these focussing optical systems. However, provision of a plurality of focussing optical systems is not practical from both the technical and economical viewpoints. From this reason, a single focussing optical system is generally used. An optical system is associated with aberration. Even if the center of an optical axis is in an in-focus state, a point spaced apart from the center of the optical axis is in an out of focus state. In order to solve this problem, a plurality of light sources for generating a plurality of light beams are disposed in line and adjusted so as to make a light source spaced apart from the optical axis be shifted toward the optical axis.

However, such adjustment is not easy and it is not preferable to use a plurality of light sources (laser diodes) in order to realize a cost effective system. A plurality of light beams are focussed on a signal plane of an optical disc, the focus states of the light beams

are different. Therefore, in order to compensate for the high frequency component attenuation to be caused by the spatial frequency characteristics (MTF) of a detection output of each light beam, a waveshape equalizer circuit is used for raising a gain of the high frequency components of the detection output and suppressing inter-code interference. It is not economical that a plurality of different waveshape equalizer circuits are used for a plurality of light beams.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In a multibeam optical disc read apparatus of this invention, an optical system including an objective lens applies n light beams at the same time to respective n tracks on a signal plane of an optical disc in an in-focus state near at the signal plane, and signal processing means generates an RF signal for each light beam from a detection output of the light beam reflected from the signal plane, and reads data recorded on the tracks to which the light beams were applied, basing upon the detection output of the light beam, wherein the optical system is set so that the signal plane of the optical disc is positioned at the middle of respective in-focus points of the n light beams as viewed along an optical axis direction of the objective lens.

It is therefore possible to avoid a poor in-focus state of each of the n light beams relative to the signal plane and to reliably read record data from an optical disc.

5 According to an embodiment of the invention, grading means diffracts a light beam generated from a single laser diode light source and generates 0 order, +/- first order, ..., +/- m -th order diffraction light beams. The i -th order diffraction light beams are symmetrical
10 relative to the 0 order diffraction light beam. Therefore, the focus states of the i -th order diffraction light beams are identical and the spatial frequency characteristics are also identical, so that the waveshape equalizer circuits of the same characteristics can be
15 used.

 According to an embodiment of the invention, first and second focus control operations are executed by first determining a control amount necessary for focussing the 0 order diffraction light beam onto the signal plane of
20 an optical disc, and then modifying the control amount so that the signal plane of the optical disc is positioned at the middle of the in-focus points of the 0 order, +/- first order, ..., +/- m -th order diffraction light beams.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a block diagram of a multibeam type CD-ROM read apparatus according to an embodiment of the invention.

5 Fig. 2 is a block diagram showing the structure of a computation section shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is a block diagram showing the structure of a parallel-to-serial converter shown in Fig. 1.

10 Fig. 4 is a diagram illustrating an example of the contents of a memory shown in Fig. 3.

Fig. 5 is a flow chart illustrating a read start control process to be executed by a system controller shown in Fig. 1.

15 Fig. 6 is a flow chart illustrating a first focus bias adjustment process shown in Fig. 5.

Figs. 7(1) to 7(3) are diagrams illustrating a focus bias adjustment operation to be executed by the apparatus shown in Fig. 1.

20 Fig. 8 is a diagram illustrating an example of a data read operation of the multibeam type CD-ROM read apparatus shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 9 is a diagram illustrating an example of a data read operation of the multibeam type CD-ROM read apparatus shown in Fig. 1.

25 Fig. 10 is a diagram illustrating an example of the

contents of the memory shown in Fig. 3.

Fig. 11 is a diagram illustrating an example of a data read operation of the multibeam type CD-ROM read apparatus shown in Fig. 1.

5 Fig. 12 is a diagram illustrating an example of the contents of the memory shown in Fig. 3.

Fig. 13 is a diagram illustrating an example of a data read operation of the multibeam type CD-ROM read apparatus shown in Fig. 1.

10 Fig. 14 is a diagram illustrating an example of a data read operation of the multibeam type CD-ROM read apparatus shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 15 is a diagram illustrating an example of a data read operation of the multibeam type CD-ROM read apparatus shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 16 is a diagram illustrating an example of the contents of the memory shown in Fig. 3.

Fig. 17 is a diagram illustrating an example of a data read operation of the CD-ROM read apparatus shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 18 is a diagram illustrating an example of a data read operation of the multibeam type CD-ROM read apparatus shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 19 is a diagram illustrating an example of a data read operation of the multibeam type CD-ROM read

apparatus shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 20 is a diagram illustrating an example of the contents of the memory shown in Fig. 3.

Fig. 21 is a diagram illustrating an example of a data read operation of the CD-ROM read apparatus shown in Fig. 1.

Figs. 22(1) and 22(2) are diagrams illustrating a modification of an optical pickup shown in Fig. 1, with a partial area being omitted.

Fig. 23 is a flow chart illustrating a second focus adjusting process shown in Fig. 5 according to another embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Next, an embodiment of a multibeam type CD-ROM read apparatus will be described with reference to Fig. 1. In Fig. 1, reference numeral 1 represents a CD-ROM formed with a spiral track recorded with data (the outer and inner circumference sides of CD-ROM are indicated by arrows in Fig. 1). CD-ROM 1 is rotated at a constant linear velocity with an unrepresented spindle motor. Reference numeral 2 represents an optical pickup of a multibeam type capable of radiating five light beams. The optical pickup 2 moves from an inner circumference to an outer circumference as record data read advances,

while CD-ROM 1 rotates. The optical pickup 2 applies different light beams 3_1 to 3_5 at the same time to $n = 5$ adjacent tracks of CD-ROM 1, and each reflected light beam is detected (received) with photodetectors PD_1 to PD_5 which output photocurrents as detection signals.

In the optical pickup 2, reference numeral 4 represents a laser diode for radiating a laser beam 3. Reference numeral 5 represents a grating (diffraction grating) disposed perpendicular to the optical axis of the laser diode 4 for diffracting the laser beam to form a -2 order diffraction light beam 3_1 , a -1 order diffraction light beam 3_2 , a 0 order diffraction light beam 3_3 , a +1 order diffraction light beam 3_4 , and a +2 order diffraction light beam 3_5 . Reference numeral 6 represents a beam splitter made of two rectangular prisms glued together. Reference numeral 7 represents a collimator lens for converting each diffused light beam into a collimated light beam. Reference numeral 8 represents an objective lens for focussing the light beams 3_1 to 3_5 passed through the beam splitter 6 and collimator lens 7 onto a signal plane 1 of CD-ROM 1. The optical axis of the objective lens 8 intersects at a right angle with the signal plane 1.

Reference numeral 9 represents a focus actuator for moving the objective lens 8 along a direction

perpendicular to the signal plane 1 of CD-ROM 1 to follow a surface vibration of CD-ROM 1, in order to maintain an in-focus state of each light beam 3_1 to 3_5 relative to the signal plane 1 irrespective of surface vibrations of CD-ROM 1. Reference numeral 10 represents a tracking actuator for moving the objective lens 8 along a radial direction of the signal plane 1 of CD-ROM 1 to follow a center deviation of CD-ROM 1, in order to make each light beam 3_1 to 3_5 correctly trace a corresponding track. The focus actuator 9 and tracking actuator 10 are independently driven by a servo circuit to be described later.

The photodetectors PD_1 to PD_5 are provided in correspondence with the light beams 3_1 to 3_5 , and each outputs a photocurrent proportional to a received light amount. The light beams 3_1 , 3_2 , 3_4 , and 3_5 reflected from the signal plane 1 of CD-ROM 1 pass through the objective lens 8 and collimator lens 7 and are reflected by the beam splitter 6. Thereafter, they pass through an optical system (not shown) including a cylindrical lens, a detector lens and the like and become incident upon the corresponding photodetectors PD_1 to PD_5 .

The optical axis of the optical system constituted of a cylindrical lens, a detector lens and the like is made coincident with the optical axis of the light beam

3₃ of the 0 order diffraction light, and the light beam is made vertically incident upon the signal plane 1 of CD-ROM 1.

The light beams 3₄ and 3₂ (3₅ and 3₁) are the +1
5 order diffraction light and -1 order diffraction light
(+2 order diffraction light and -2 order diffraction
light) of the laser beam 3 made vertically incident upon
the grating 5, are formed in perfect line symmetry with
the light beam 3₃ of the 0 order diffraction light, and
10 applied to the signal plane 1 in perfect symmetry with
the light beam 3₃ vertically incident upon the signal
plane 1 of CD-ROM 1. Therefore, in-focus points P₄ and
P₂ (P₅ and P₁) of a pair of light beams 3₄ and 3₂ (3₅ and
3₁) are at the same position as viewed along the optical
15 axis of the objective lens 8, and in-focus points of the
light beams 3₁ to 3₅ are generally on an arc line.
Therefore, even if the light beam 3₃ is in a perfect in-
focus state relative to the signal plane 1, the other
light beams are not in the perfect in-focus state
20 although they are focussed near the signal plane 1.

The photodetectors PD₁, PD₂, PD₄, and PD₅ output
photocurrents I₁, I₂, I₄, and I₅ proportional to received
light amounts. The photodetector PD₃ is a four-division
photodiode similar to that used for an optical pickup of
25 the ordinary one beam type, and outputs photocurrents I₃-

A, I_3 -B, I_3 -C, and I_3 -D proportional to received light amounts of respective division diodes.

Reference numeral 11 represents a sled motor for moving the optical pickup 2 in the radial direction of CD-ROM 1 during a read or search operation. The sled motor is driven with the servo circuit and moves the optical pickup 2 to a desired position along a forward or reverse direction during the search operation, or gradually moves the optical pickup 2 along the forward direction during the read operation as the read operation of CD-ROM 1 advances.

Reference numeral 20 represents a record data read system which reads at the same time the record data recorded on the tracks applied with the light beams 3_1 to 3_5 , basing upon the light reception outputs of the photodetectors PD_1 to PD_5 of the optical pickup 2, and serially outputs the read record data in the record order of CD-ROM 1 by preventing the read record data from being duplicated or omitted. A focus bias adjustment at the start of the data read operation is performed once before and after an unreadable system judgement. In the record data read system 20, current/voltage converters (I/V) 21_1 , 21_2 , 21_4 , and 21_5 convert the photocurrents I_1 , I_2 , I_4 , and I_5 output from the photodetectors PD_1 , PD_2 , PD_4 , and PD_5 into RF voltage signals RF_1 , RF_2 , RF_4 , and RF_5 .

corresponding to the light beams 3_1 , 3_2 , 3_4 , and 3_5 and output them. Current/voltage converters (I/V) 21_3 -A, 21_3 -B, 21_3 -C, and 21_3 -D convert the photocurrents I_3 -A, I_3 -B, I_3 -C, and I_3 -D output from the photodetector PD_3 into
5 voltage values V_A , V_B , V_C , and V_D and output them.

Reference numeral 22 represents a computation section which performs an arithmetic operation of $(V_A + V_B + V_C + V_D)$ to output an RF signal RF_3 corresponding to the light beam 3_3 , an arithmetic operation of $(V_A + V_C) -$
10 $(V_B + V_D)$ to output a focus error signal, and an arithmetic operation of $(V_A + V_B) - (V_C + V_D)$ to output a tracking error signal. A specific structure of the computation section 22 is shown in Fig. 2. In the computation section, an adder 22_1 performs an arithmetic
15 operation of $(V_A + V_B + V_C + V_D)$ to output the RF signal RF_3 corresponding to the light beam 3_3 . An adder/subtractor 22_2 performs the arithmetic operation of $(V_A + V_C) - (V_B + V_D)$ to output the focus error signal, and an adder/subtractor 22_3 performs the arithmetic
20 operation of $(V_A + V_B) - (V_C + V_D)$ to output the tracking error signal.

Reference numeral 23 represents the servo circuit for performing a focus servo control, a tracking servo control, and a sled servo control. In accordance with
25 the focus error signal FE input from the computation

section 22, the focus actuator 9 is driven so as to make FE zero and focus the light beams 3_1 to 3_5 upon the signal plane 1, and in accordance with the tracking error signal TE input from the computation section 22, the tracking actuator 10 is driven to make TE zero and make (on-track) the light beams 3_1 to 3_5 trace the corresponding tracks.

Because of variation of optical characteristics of the optical pickup 2 and variation of electrical characteristics of the current/voltage converters 21_3 -A to 21_3 -D and the adder/subtractor 22_2 , the focus error signal output from the adder/subtractor 22_2 does not become zero but has an offset value specific to the apparatus, even if the light beam 3_3 is in a perfect in-focus state relative to the signal plane 1 of CD-ROM 1.

15 The focus servo system controls to make zero the focus error signal FE input from the servo circuit 23. Therefore, if the focus error signal output from the adder/subtractor 22_2 is supplied directly to the servo circuit 23, the light beam 3_3 does not enter the in-focus state relative to the signal plane 1 because of the offset value. An error rate of data read from CD-ROM 1 may become too large and data read becomes impossible in some cases.

To solve this problem, an offset adjustment function has been supplied to the focus servo system.

Specifically, the computation section 22 is provided with a focus bias voltage generator circuit 22₁ for generating a variable focus bias voltage V_f under the control of a system controller to be described later, and an adder 22₂,
5 for adding the focus bias voltage V_f to the focus error signal output from the adder/subtractor 22₂ to form the focus error signal FE. By supplying the focus bias voltage V_f suitable for each apparatus to the focus bias system, offset errors of the optical system and
10 electrical system are cancelled out to make the light beam 3₃ be focussed on the signal plane 1.

Reverting to Fig. 1, reference numerals 24₁ to 24₅ represent waveshape equalizers for increasing the high frequency components of the RF signals RF₁ to RF₅ to
15 thereby compensate for high frequency attenuation to be caused by the spatial transmission frequency (MTF) characteristics of the light beams 3₁ to 3₅ and suppress the generation of inter-code interference. The RF signal RF₃ input to the waveshape equalizer 24₃ or the RF signal
20 RF₃ output from the waveshape equalizer 24₃ is input to the servo circuit 23. The servo circuit 23 activates the focus servo control upon judgement of a timing when the value of the focus error signal FE enters a negative feedback region of the focus servo control during a focus
25 search operation. The servo circuit 23 activates the

tracking servo control upon judgement of a timing, by using the RF signal RF_3 , when the light beam 3, enters the negative region of the tracking servo control.

Reference numerals 26_1 to 26_5 represent first signal processing circuits for performing binarization, clock recovery using PLL circuits, bit demodulation, frame sync detection, EFM demodulation, and sub-code demodulation, by using the RF signals RF_1 to RF_5 , and outputting data $DATA_1$ to $DATA_5$ (inclusive of P, Q parities) after the EFM demodulation on the basis of one block unit (unit of 98 frames completing one sub-code frame), together with corresponding A-time (Absolute-time) data AT_1 to AT_5 of the sub-code Q channel. The first signal processing circuits 26_1 to 26_5 serially output the demodulated data $DATA_1$ to $DATA_5$ one symbol (8 bits) after another. The A-time data AT_3 output from the first signal processing circuit 26_3 is input to a system controller to be described later. The first signal processing circuit 26_3 for the RF signal RF_3 has a built-in CLV control circuit (not shown) for making frame sync signals be detected at a constant time interval. A CLV control is performed for an unrepresented spindle motor to thereby rotate CD-ROM 1 at a constant linear velocity.

Upon detection of the frame sync, the first signal processing circuits 26_1 to 26_5 output frame sync detection

signals FS_1 to FS_5 of H level to the system controller. For example, these frame sync detection signals FS_1 to FS_5 are used for judging whether a track jump is completed or not. The first signal processing circuit 26₁ has a
5 built-in jitter amount measuring circuit (not shown) for measuring a jitter amount of the binarized RF signal, and has a function of outputting the measured jitter amount data JD_1 to the system controller. The jitter amount data JD_1 input from the first signal processing circuit
10 26₁ is used for focus bias adjustment.

Reference numeral 30 represents a parallel-to-serial converter (P/S) for receiving in parallel data of one block unit output from the first signal processing circuits 28₁ to 28₅ and serially outputting them in the
15 record order by preventing the data from being duplicated or omitted. The specific structure of the P/S converter 30 is shown in Fig. 3. In Fig. 3, reference numerals 32₁ to 32₅ represent memories each having two storage areas, a first area and a second area, and provided in
20 correspondence with a corresponding one of the first signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₅. The data $DATA_1$ to $DATA_5$ output from the first signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₅ are stored in ones of the first and second areas. Each of the first and second areas has a capacity
25 allowing the data $DATA_1$ to $DATA_5$ of a sufficient number

of block units to be stored therein. Reference numerals 33₁ to 33₅ represent memories each having two storage areas, a first area and a second area, and provided in correspondence with a corresponding one of the first
5 signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₅. The A-time data AT₁ to AT₅ output from the first signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₅ are stored in ones of the first and second areas, together with start addresses A_{1s} to A_{5s} (or a_{1s} to a_{5s}) and end addresses A_{1e} to A_{5e} (or a_{1e} to a_{5e})
10 indicating the location of the corresponding data DATA₁ to DATA₅ in the memories 32₁ to 32₅. Each of the first and second areas has a capacity allowing the A-time data AT₁ to AT₅ of a sufficient number of data sets to be stored therein.

15 Reference numerals 31₁ to 31₅ represent write controllers provided in correspondence with the first signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₅. The write controllers 31₁ to 31₅ control to write the data DATA₁ to DATA₅ output from the first signal processing circuits 26₁
20 to 26₅ in the first or second areas of the memories 32₁ to 32₅, and to write the A-time data AT₁ to AT₅ in the first or second areas of the memories 32₁ to 32₅, together with the start addresses A_{1s} to A_{5s} (or a_{1s} to a_{5s}) and end addresses A_{1e} to A_{5e} (or a_{1e} to a_{5e}) indicating the location
25 of the corresponding data DATA₁ to DATA₅ in the memories

32₁ to 32₅.

The contents of memories 32_f and 33_f (where f = 1 to 5) are shown in Fig. 4. In this example, a write controller 31_f controls to write 15 blocks of each set of data DATA_f (1) to DATA_f (15) in the first area, and to write 15 blocks of each set of data DATA_f (16) to DATA_f (30) in the second area. In the first area of the memory 33_f, the A-time data for each block of the data DATA_f (1) to DATA_f (15) are written as, for example, frames of 23:40:60 to 23:40:74, together with a start address A_{fs} (1) and an end address A_{fe} (1) to a start address A_{fs} (15) and an end address A_{fe} (15) indicating the location of the corresponding data DATA_f (1) to DATA_f (15) in the first area of the memory 32_f. In the second area of the memory 33_f, the A-time data for each block of the data DATA_f (16) to DATA_f (30) are written as, for example, frames of 23:41:48 to 23:41:62, together with a start address a_{fs} (1) and an end address a_{fe} (1) to a start address a_{fs} (16) and an end address a_{fe} (15) indicating the location of the corresponding data DATA_f (16) to DATA_f (30) in the second area of the memory 32_f.

Reference numeral 34 represents a read controller. With reference to the A-time data and the start addresses A_{1s} to A_{5s} (or a_{1s} to a_{5s}) and end addresses A_{1e} to A_{5e} (or a_{1e} to a_{5e}) stored in the memories 33₁ to 33₅, the read

controller 34 reads the data DATA₁ to DATA₅ stored in the memories 33₁ to 33₅ by preventing the data from being duplicated or omitted, and serially outputs the data one symbol after another in the record order (A-time order) of CD-ROM 1. Specific operations of the write controllers 31₁ to 31₅ and read controller 34 will be later described.

Returning back to Fig. 1, reference numeral 40 represents a second signal processing circuit. The second signal processing circuit 40 receives the data serially output from the P/S converter 30, descrambles the data in the unit of one block, and thereafter demodulates Lch and Rch data in conformity with the CD-DA specification through error detection/correction based on CIRC codes (error detection/correction with P parities, deinterleaveing, error detection/correction with Q parities). The second signal processing circuit 40 then demodulates the CD-ROM data from the Lch and Rch data by performing sync detection, descrambling, header detection, and error detection/correction with EDC and ECC codes in accordance with the CD-ROM specification, and thereafter outputs the CD-ROM data to an external host computer.

Reference numeral 50 represents a system controller made of a microcomputer. For the search operation, the

system controller 50 operates to supply a search command to the servo circuit 23, and to drive the sled motor 11 for the search operation to thereby move the optical pickup 2 along the forward or reverse direction of CD-ROM 1 to a desired position. For the read operation, the system controller 50 operates to supply various servo-on commands to the servo circuit 23, and to focus the light beams 3_1 to 3_5 upon the signal plane 1 of CD-ROM 1 to thereby trace adjacent five tracks. Each time record data is read from each track during a proper number of rotations of one or two or more, the system controller 50 supplies the servo circuit 23 with a track jump command of jumping the optical pickup by a predetermined number of tracks in the forward direction.

At the start of a read operation, the system controller 50 monitors the jitter amount data JD_3 input from the first signal processing circuit 26₃ to control the focus bias voltage generator circuit 22₄ and change the focus bias voltage V_f and fix the V_f value when the jitter amount data becomes minimum, or monitors the frame sync detection signals FS_1 to FS_5 input from the first signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₅, during one rotation of CD-ROM 1, to check whether or not any system of the light beams 3_1 to 3_5 cannot read record data because of a track pitch variation, center deviation and the like of

CD-ROM 1. If all the frame sync detection signals FS_1 to FS_5 are H and there is no system unable to read record data, the system controller supplies a general read/write command to the P/S converter 30 to thereby read/write
5 data output from the first signal processing circuit 26_1 to 26_5 to and from the memories 32_1 to 32_5 .

If the frame sync detection signal for one or a plurality of light beams is L for a predetermined time (e.g., 1/75 sec or longer) and data cannot be read, light
10 beams $3_1, 3_j, 3_k, \dots$ to be used for the data read are selected from the light beams 3_1 to 3_5 , and a specific read/write command including read system information "i, j, k, ..." indicating the light beam systems to be used for the data read is supplied to the P/S converter 30 to
15 thereby read/write data $DATA_1, DATA_j, DATA_k, \dots$ output from the first signal processing circuit $26_1, 26_j, 26_k, \dots$ among the first signal processing circuits 26_1 to 26_5 to and from the memories 32_1 to 32_5 .

The general read/write command or specific
20 read/write command output from the system controller 50 is input to the read controller 34 of the P/S converter 30 and transferred from the read converter 34 to the write controllers 31_1 to 31_5 . Upon reception of the general read/write command at the start of the data read,
25 the write controllers 31_1 to 31_5 control to write the data

DATA₁ to DATA₅ output from all the first signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₅ first in the first areas of the memories 32₁ to 32₅. Upon reception of an intercept command from the read controller 34, the read operation
5 is intercepted until a resume command is received, and then the data is written in the second areas. Similarly, when the intercept command is received thereafter, the read operation is intercepted, and when the resume command is received, data is written in the areas not
10 used at the preceding time.

If the write controllers 31₁ to 31₅ receive the specific read/write command at the start of the data read, only the write controllers 31₁, 31_j, 31_k,... indicated by the read system information "i, j, k,..."
15 operate to write the data DATA_i, DATA_j, DATA_k,... output from the first signal processing circuits 26_i, 26_j, 26_k,... first in the first areas of the memories 32_i, 32_j, 32_k,.... Upon reception of the intercept command from the read controller 34, the read operation is intercepted
20 until the resume command is received, and then the data is written in the second areas. Similarly, when the intercept command is received thereafter, the read operation is intercepted, and when the resume command is received, data is written in the areas not used at the
25 preceding read cycle.

After receiving the general read/write command (specific read/write command) from the system controller 50, the read controller 34 supplies the intercept command to the write controllers 31₁ to 31₅ (31_i, 31_j, 31_k,...) and
5 a jump command to the system controller 50, when all A-time data become continuous without omission in the areas among the memories 33₁ to 33₅ (33_i, 33_j, 33_k,...) where data were written by the write controllers 31₁ to 31₅ (31_i, 31_j, 31_k,...) at the present read cycle. With
10 reference to the A-time data and the start and end addresses stored in the areas among the memories 33₁ to 33₅ (33_i, 33_j, 33_k,...) where data were written at the present read cycle, the read controller 34 controls to read and output record data in the order of A-time
15 starting from the oldest A-time, relative to the data stored in the areas among the memories 33₁ to 33₅ (33_i, 33_j, 33_k,...) where data were written at the present read cycle.

Thereafter, upon reception of a jump completion
20 notice from the system controller 50, the read controller 34 supplies the resume command to the write controllers 31₁ to 31₅ (31_i, 31_j, 31_k,...). Thereafter, the read controller 34 supplies the intercept command to the write controllers 31₁ to 31₅ (31_i, 31_j, 31_k,...) and the jump
25 command to the system controller 50, when all A-time data

become continuous without omission in the areas among the memories 33₁ to 33₅ (33_i, 33_j, 33_k,...) not used at the preceding read cycle. With reference to the A-time data and the start and end addresses stored in the areas among the memories 33₁ to 33₅ (33_i, 33_j, 33_k,...) not used at the preceding read cycle, the read controller 34 controls to read and output record data in the order of A-time starting from the A-time next to the A-time corresponding to the one block data lastly output to the second signal processing circuit at the preceding read cycle, relative to the data stored in the areas among the memories 32₁ to 32₅ (32_i, 32_j, 32_k,...) not used at the preceding read cycle. Similar operations are repeated thereafter.

The operation of the embodiment will be described.

Fig. 5 is a flow chart illustrating the overall process to be executed by the system controller 50 at the start of data read, Fig. 6 is a flow chart illustrating a first focus bias adjustment process to be executed by the system controller 50, Figs. 7(1) to 7(3) are diagrams illustrating a focus bias adjustment operation, Figs. 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, and 21 are diagrams illustrating motion positions of the optical pickup 2 relative to CD-ROM 1, and Figs. 10, 12, 16, and 20 are diagrams showing the data contents in the memories 33₁ to 33₅.

It is herein assumed that CD-ROM 1 rotates at a constant linear velocity under CLV control and the focus servo is turned on, and that different five light beams 3_1 to 3_5 are applied at the same time to respective $n =$
5 5 adjacent tracks of CD-ROM 1.

(1) First Focus Bias Adjustment

When an unrepresented host computer designates a read start point of CD-ROM 1 as a frame having A-time, for example, 23:41:0, the system controller 50 determines
10 the position of the track containing the read start A-time frame of CD-ROM 1, the read start point being represented by x (refer to Figs. 8, 9, 11, 13-15, 17-19, and 21). The system controller 50 first supplies the
15 search command to the servo circuit 23 to move the optical pickup 2 so that the light beam 3_1 reaches the position of the track $(x-8)$ (Step S30 shown in Fig. 5). Thereafter, the focus bias voltage generator circuit 22₄ is controlled to initialize V_f as $V_f = 0$ V (Step S31).
20 Thereafter, the system controller 50 supplies a tracking servo-on command and a sled servo-on command to the servo circuit 23 to activate the tracking servo and sled servo (Step S32). Therefore, the light beams 3_1 to 3_5 radiated from the optical pickup 2 are focussed on the tracks $(x-$
25 8) to $(x-4)$ in an track-on state (refer to I in Figs. 8,

9, 11, 13-15, 17-19, and 21). In this state, all the light beams 3_1 to 3_5 are not in an optimum in-focus state because the focus bias adjustment is not still performed.

5 The light beams 3_1 to 3_5 reflected by the signal plane 1 are received by the photodetectors PD_1 to PD_5 which output photocurrents I_1 to I_5 . Of these photocurrents, the photocurrents I_1 , I_2 , I_4 , and I_5 output from the photodetectors PD_1 , PD_2 , PD_4 , and PD_5 are
10 converted into RF signals RF_1 , RF_2 , RF_4 , and RF_5 by the current-to-voltage converters 21_1 , 21_2 , 21_4 , and 21_5 which are waveshape equalized by the waveshape equalizers 24_1 , 24_2 , 24_4 , and 24_5 and input to the first signal processing circuits 26_1 , 26_2 , 26_4 , and 26_5 . Photocurrents I_3 -A to I_3 -
15 D from the photodetector PD_3 are converted into voltage values V_A to V_D by the current-to-voltage converters 21_3 -A to 21_3 -D and added together by the adder 22_1 of the computation section 22 to generate an RF signal RF_3 . The RF signal RF_3 is waveshape equalized by the waveshape
20 equalizer 24_3 and input to the first signal processing circuit 26_3 .

 The optical axis of the optical system constituted of the beam splitter 6, collimator lens 7, objective lens 8, cylindrical lens, a detector lens and the like is made
25 coincident with the optical axis of the light beam 3_3 of

the 0 order diffraction light, and the light beam is made vertically incident upon the signal plane 1 of CD-ROM 1. When the light beam 3_3 is in the perfect in-focus state relative to the signal plane 1, the in-focus points of the other light beams 3_1 , 3_2 , 3_4 , and 3_5 are not in the perfect in-focus state although they are near the signal plane 1.

The light beams 3_4 and 3_2 (3_5 and 3_1) are the +1 order diffraction light and -1 order diffraction light (+2 order diffraction light and -2 order diffraction light) of the laser beam 3 made vertically incident upon the grating 5, are formed in perfect line symmetry with the light beam 3_3 of the 0 order diffraction light, and applied to the signal plane 1 in perfect symmetry with the light beam 3_3 vertically incident upon the signal plane 1 of CD-ROM 1. Therefore, a pair of light beams 3_4 and 3_2 (3_5 and 3_1) has the same cross sectional area on the signal plane and the same spatial transmission frequency characteristics.

The waveshape equalizers 24_1 to 24_5 increase the high frequency components of the RF signals RF_1 to RF_5 to thereby compensate for high frequency attenuation to be caused by the spatial transmission frequency (MTF) characteristics of the light beams 3_1 to 3_5 and suppress the generation of inter-code interference. As described

above, since the light beams 3_1 and 3_5 have the same spatial transmission frequency characteristics (MTF), the waveshape equalizers 24_1 and 24_5 are made to have the same waveshape equalizing characteristics. Similarly, since
5 the light beams 3_2 and 3_4 have the same spatial transmission frequency characteristics (MTF), the waveshape equalizers 24_2 and 24_4 are made to have the same waveshape equalizing characteristics. Therefore, three types of waveshape equalizing characteristics are
10 designed for the five waveshape equalizer circuits 24_1 to 24_5 .

The first signal processing circuits 26_1 to 26_5 make the input RF signals RF_1 to RF_5 be subjected to binarization, clock recovery using PLL circuits, bit
15 demodulation, frame sync detection, EFM demodulation, and sub-code demodulation, and output data $DATA_1$ to $DATA_5$ (inclusive of P, Q parities) after the EFM demodulation on the basis of one block unit, together with corresponding A-time data AT_1 to AT_5 of the sub-code Q
20 channel. The first signal processing circuits 26_1 to 26_5 serially output the demodulated data $DATA_1$ to $DATA_5$ one symbol (8 bits) after another. The A-time data AT_3 is input to the system controller 50. Upon detection of the frame sync signals, the first signal processing circuits
25 26_1 to 26_5 output the frame sync detection signals FS_1 to

FS₆ of H level to the system controller 50. The first signal processing circuit 26₃ measures a jitter amount of the binarized RF signal and supplies the jitter amount data JD₃ to the system controller.

5 In this state, the system controller 50 executes a first focus bias adjustment process during approximately one rotation of CD-ROM 1 (Step S33) in accordance with the sequence shown in the flow chart of Fig. 6. At $V_f = 0$ V, the system controller 50 reads the jitter amount data JD₃ measured by the first signal processing circuit 10 26₃ and stores it in its memory (not shown) as jd(0) (Step S10). Next, the focus bias voltage generator circuit 22₄ is controlled to increase V_f by ΔV (positive value) from 0 V and the jitter amount data JD₃ is read 15 and stored in the memory as jd(+1). The voltage V_f is decreased by ΔV (negative value) from 0 V and the jitter amount data JD₃ is read and stored in the memory as jd(-1) (Step S11).

The values jd(+1), jd(0), and jd(-1) are compared 20 and if $jd(+1) > jd(0) < jd(-1)$ (YES at Step S12), the jitter amount is minimum at $V_f = 0$ V and it can be considered that the focus offset was initially and approximately 0. Therefore, the focus bias voltage generator circuit 22₄ is controlled to set V_f to 0 V (Step 25 S13).

If $jd(+1) < jd(0) < jd(-1)$ (YES at Step S14), it is set that $k = 2$ (Step S15) and $V_f = (+2) \cdot \Delta V$, and the jitter amount JD_3 is read and stored as $jd(+2)$ (Step S16). If $jd(+2) > jd(+1) < jd(0)$ (YES at Step S17), the
 5 jitter amount is minimum at $V_f = (+1) \cdot \Delta V$, and it can be considered that the focus offset at the output of the adder/subtractor 22₂ was initially and approximately $(+1) \cdot (-\Delta V)$. Therefore, the focus bias voltage generator circuit 22₄ is controlled to set V_f to $(+1) \cdot \Delta V$ (Step
 10 S18).

If not $jd(+2) > jd(+1) < jd(0)$ (NO at Step S17), the value k is incremented to 3 (Step S19), and the flow returns to Step S16 to repeat the above operations. If $jd(+k) > jd\{+(k-1)\} < jd\{+(k-2)\}$ (YES at Step S17), the
 15 jitter amount is minimum at $V_f = \{+(k-1)\} \cdot (\Delta V)$, and it can be considered that the focus offset was initially and approximately $\{+(k-1)\} \cdot (-\Delta V)$. Therefore, the focus bias voltage generator circuit 22₄ is controlled to set V_f to $\{+(k-1)\} \cdot \Delta V$ (Step S18).

20 If not $jd(+1) < jd(0) < jd(-1)$ at Step S14, the value k is set to 2 (Step S20). V_f is set to $(-2) \cdot \Delta V$ and the jitter amount JD_3 is read and stored as $jd(-2)$ (Step S21). If $jd(-2) > jd(-1) < jd(0)$ (YES at Step S22), the jitter amount is minimum at $V_f = (-1) \cdot \Delta V$, and it can be
 25 considered that the focus offset at the output of the

adder/subtractor 22₂ was initially and approximately $(-1) \cdot (-\Delta V)$. Therefore, the focus bias voltage generator circuit 22₄ is controlled to set V_f to $(-1) \cdot \Delta V$ (Step S23).

5 If not $jd(-2) > jd(-1) < jd(0)$ (NO at Step S22), the value k is incremented to 3 (Step S24) to repeat the above operations. If $jd(-k) > jd\{-(k-1)\} < jd\{-(k-2)\}$ (YES at Step S22), the jitter amount is minimum at $V_f = \{-(k-1)\} \cdot (\Delta V)$, and it can be considered that the focus
10 offset at the output of the adder/subtractor 22₂ was initially and approximately $\{-(k-1)\} \cdot (-\Delta V)$. Therefore, the focus bias voltage generator circuit 22₄ is controlled to set V_f to $\{-(k-1)\} \cdot (\Delta V)$ (Step S23).

In this focus bias adjustment set state, only the
15 light beam 3₃ is in the perfect in-focus state relative to the signal plane 1 (in Fig. 7(1), the in-focus point P₃ of the light beam 3₃ is coincident with the signal plane 1), and the other light beams 3₁, 3₂, 3₄, and 3₅ are not in the perfect in-focus state and the in-focus points
20 P₁ and P₅ at the outermost circumference are greatly spaced from the signal plane.

According to the invention, after Step S13, S18 or S23, the focus bias voltage generator circuit 22₄ is controlled to change the value V_f by a predetermined
25 amount W_1 to move the objective lens 8 by $L_1/2$ remotely

from the signal plane, where L_1 is a distance (refer to Fig. 7(1)) between the in-focus point P_3 of the light beam 3₃ and the in-focus point P_1 (P_5) of the light beam 3₁ (3₅) along an optical axis direction of the objective lens 8. Namely, at Step S25 or S26, V_f is set to $V_f + W_1$. The signal plane 1 of CD-ROM is therefore positioned at the middle of the in-focus point P_3 of the light beam 3₃ and the in-focus point P_1 (P_5) of the light beam 3₁ (3₅) (refer to Fig. 7(2)), and all the in-focus points P_1 to P_5 are near at the signal plane 1 and are not greatly spaced from the signal plane 1.

After Step S13, S18 or S23, the focus bias voltage generator circuit 22₄ may be controlled to change the value V_f by a predetermined amount W_2 to move the objective lens 8 by $L_2/2$ remotely from the signal plane, where L_2 is a distance (refer to Fig. 7(1)) between the in-focus point P_3 of the light beam 3₃ and the in-focus point P_2 (P_4) of the light beam 3₂ (3₄) along an optical axis direction of the objective lens 8. The signal plane 1 of CD-ROM is therefore positioned at the middle of the in-focus point P_3 of the light beam 3₃ and the in-focus point P_2 (P_4) of the light beam 3₂ (3₄) (refer to Fig. 7(3)). As will be later described, this operation is performed (Steps S38 and S39) during a second focus bias adjustment if the light beam systems 3₁ and 3₅ are

unreadable.

(2) Judgement of System Unable to Read

After the system controller 50 performs the first
5 focus adjustment at Step S32 shown in Fig. 5 to set the
positional relation of the in-focus points P_1 to P_5 of the
light beams 3_1 to 3_5 as shown in Fig. 7(2), the system
controller 50 monitors the frame sync detection signals
10 FS_1 to FS_5 input from the first signal processing circuits
 26_1 to 26_5 , during further one rotation of CD-ROM 1, to
check whether or not any system of the light beams 3_1 to
 3_5 continues to take L level for a predetermined time or
longer (e.g., one block = 1/75 second or longer) and
cannot read record data (Steps S34 to S36).

15

(3) General Read/write Operation (refer to Fig. 8, all
systems of the light beams 3_1 to 3_5 can read record data).

If the judgement of a presence/absence of a record
data unreadable system shows that there is no record data
20 unreadable system, the system controller 50 allocates all
the five light beams 3_1 to 3_5 as the read systems of h
light beams. A continuous read rotation number I is set
as $I = 1$, and a read track jump number J is set as $J =$
 $(n-2) = 3$ (Step S35). The second focus bias adjustment
25 shown in Fig. 5 is executed to check whether the light

beam 3_1 or 3_5 is included in the $h = 5$ read light beams 3_1 to 3_5 (Step S36). In this example, since the light beams 3_1 and 3_5 are included, the second focus bias adjustment process is terminated without changing V_f from $V_f + W_1$.

The signal plane 1 is therefore positioned at the middle of the remotest P_3 and the nearest P_1 (P_5) along the optical direction of the objective lens 8, among the in-focus points P_1 to P_5 of the five read light beams 3_1 to 3_5 , so that P_2 and P_4 are very near to the signal plane 1. Since the in-focus points P_1 to P_5 are originally disposed regularly on generally on an arc line and the position distribution of the in-focus points P_1 to P_5 along the optical axis direction of the objective lens is limited in a narrow area, P_1 , P_3 , and P_5 are also very near to the signal plane 1 as shown in Fig. 7(2). Thereafter, the objective lens 8 moves to follow a surface vibration of CD-ROM 1, under the control of the focus servo system, any of the in-focus points P_1 to P_5 of the light beams 3_1 to 3_5 does not move greatly spaced from the signal plane 1, and all the light beam 3_1 to 3_5 systems can reliably read the record data from CD-ROM 1.

(3-2) Data Read Operation

After the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, in accordance with the A-time data

representative of the latest A-time data AT_3 input from the first signal processing circuit 26₃, and the read start point A-time designated by the host computer, the track jump direction and number are determined so that
5 the light beam 3₁ at the innermost circumference among the $h = 5$ read light beams is focussed in the track-on state on the track $(x-1)$ one track inner than the track x containing the read start point of the A-time.

If the optical pickup 2 is at a position II shown in
10 Fig. 8 after the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, the optical pickup 2 is jumped from the position II by four tracks in the forward direction so that the light beams 3₁ to 3₅ are focussed in the track-on state on the tracks $(x-1)$ to $(x+3)$ (refer to III in Fig.
15 8). Then, reading the record data on the tracks $(x-1)$ to $(x+3)$ at the same time starts, by using five systems including the photodetector PD₁ to first signal processing circuit 26₁, photodetector PD₂ to first signal processing circuit 26₂, photodetector PD₃ to first signal processing circuit 26₃, photodetector PD₄ to first signal
20 processing circuit 26₄, and photodetector PD₅ to first signal processing circuit 26₅. When all the frame sync detection signals FS₁ to FS₅ of H level are input from the first signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₅, the general
25 read/write command is supplied to the P/S converter 30.

Upon reception of the general read/write command, the P/S converter 30 writes the data DATA₁ to DATA₅ output from the first signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₅, into the memories 32₁ to 32₅. After CD-ROM 1 rotates by 5 generally one rotation (in actual, slightly longer than one rotation) and it is confirmed that there is no omission of record data read with the light beam 3₁ to 3₅ systems (refer to IV in Fig. 8), record data write into the memories 32₁ to 32₅ is intercepted, and the record 10 data is serially read from the memories 32₁ to 32₅ in the A-time order by preventing the record data from being duplicated or omitted, to supply the read record data to the second signal processing circuit 40 and supply a track jump command to the system controller 50. The 15 system controller 50 received the track jump command controls the servo circuit 23 to thereby jump the optical pickup 2 by the track jump number J = 3 in the forward direction so that the light beams 3₁ to 3₅ are focussed in the track-on state on the tracks (x+3) to (x+7) (refer 20 to V in Fig. 8).

When all the frame sync detection signals FS₁ to FS₅ of H level are output from the first signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₅, a track jump completion notice is supplied to the P/S converter 30. The P/S converter 30 25 received the track jump completion notice writes the data

DATA₁ to DATA₅ output from the first signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₅, again into the memories 32₁ to 32₅. After CD-ROM 1 rotates by generally one rotation (in actual, slightly longer than one rotation) and it is confirmed that there is no omission of record data read with the light beam 3₁ to 3₅ systems (refer to VI in Fig. 8), record data write into the memories 32₁ to 32₅ is intercepted, and the record data is serially read from the memories 32₁ to 32₅ in the A-time order, starting from the data corresponding to the A-time next to the A-time corresponding to the data lastly output to the second signal processing circuit 40 at the preceding read cycle, by preventing the record data from being duplicated or omitted, to supply the read record data to the second signal processing circuit 40 and supply a track jump command to the system controller 50.

The system controller 50 received the track jump command controls the servo circuit 23 to thereby jump the optical pickup 2 by the track jump number $J = 3$ in the forward direction so that the light beams 3₁ to 3₅ are focussed in the track-on state on the tracks (x+7) to (x+11) (refer to VII in Fig. 8).

The second signal processing circuit 40 receives the data serially output from the P/S converter 30, descrambles the data in the unit of one block, and

thereafter demodulates Lch and Rch data in conformity with the CD-DA specification through error detection/correction based on CIRC codes (error detection/correction with P parities, deinterleaveing, 5 error detection/correction with Q parities). The second signal processing circuit 40 then demodulates the CD-ROM data from the Lch and Rch data by performing sync detection, descrambling, header detection, and error detection/correction with EDC and ECC codes in accordance 10 with the CD-ROM specification, and thereafter outputs the CD-ROM data to an external host computer.

(4) First Specific Read/write Operation (read unable by the light beam system 3₅, refer to Figs. 9 and 10)

15 (4-1) Second Focus Bias Adjustment Process

If the judgement of a presence/absence of a record data unreadable system shows that there is one record data unreadable system of the light beam 3₅ at the outermost circumference, the system controller 50 20 allocates M light beams 3₁ to 3₄ as the read systems of h light beams. M is the maximum number of adjacent light beam systems usable, which is "4" or a combination of light beams 3₁ to 3₄ and $M \geq 3$. The continuous read rotation number I is set as $I = 1$, and the read track 25 jump number J is set as $J = (M-2) = 2$ (Step S34). The

second focus bias adjustment shown in Fig. 5 is executed to check whether the light beam 3_1 or 3_5 is included in the $\underline{h} = 4$ read light beams 3_1 to 3_4 (Step S36). In this example, since the light beam 3_1 is included, the second
5 focus bias adjustment process is terminated without changing V_f from $V_f + W_1$.

The signal plane 1 is therefore positioned at the middle of the remotest P_3 and the nearest P_1 along the optical direction of the objective lens 8, among the in-
10 focus points P_1 to P_4 of the four read light beams 3_1 to 3_4 , so that P_2 and P_4 are very near to the signal plane 1. P_1 , and P_3 are also very near to the signal plane 1 as shown in Fig. 7(2). Thereafter, the objective lens 8 moves to follow a surface vibration of CD-ROM 1, under
15 the control of the focus servo system, any of the in-focus points P_1 to P_4 of the light beams 3_1 to 3_4 does not move greatly spaced from the signal plane 1, and all the light beam 3_1 to 3_4 systems can reliably read the record data from CD-ROM 1.

20 (4-2) Data Read Operation

After the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, in accordance with the A-time data representative of the latest A-time data AT_3 input from the first signal processing circuit 26, and the read
25 start point A-time designated by the host computer, the

track jump direction and number are determined so that the light beam 3_1 at the innermost circumference among the $h = 4$ read light beams is focussed in the track-on state on the track $(x-1)$ one track inner than the track x containing the read start point of the A-time (Step S35).

If the optical pickup 2 is at a position II shown in Fig. 9 after the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, the optical pickup 2 is jumped from the position II by four tracks in the forward direction so that the light beams 3_1 to 3_4 are focussed in the track-on state on the tracks $(x-1)$ to $(x+2)$. Then, reading the record data on the tracks $(x-1)$ to $(x+2)$ at the same time starts, by using four systems including the photodetector PD_1 to first signal processing circuit 26_1 , photodetector PD_2 to first signal processing circuit 26_2 , photodetector PD_3 to first signal processing circuit 26_3 , and photodetector PD_4 to first signal processing circuit 26_4 . When all the frame sync detection signals FS_1 to FS_4 of H level are input from the first signal processing circuits 26_1 to 26_4 , the specific read/write command including the read system information "1, 2, 3, 4" is supplied to the P/S converter 30.

Upon reception of the specific read/write command via the read controller 34, only the write controllers

31₁ to 31₄ indicated by the read system information "1, 2, 3, 4" write one block after another the data DATA₁ to DATA₄ output from the first signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₄, into the first areas of the memories 32₁ to 32₄, and writes the A-time data AT₁ to AT₄ corresponding to the data DATA₁ to DATA₄ and the pairs of start addresses A_{1s} to A_{4s} and end addresses A_{1e} to A_{4e} in the memories 32₁ to 32₄, into the first areas of the memories 33₁ to 33₄. In the example shown in Fig. 9, in the first areas of the memories 33₁ to 33₄, the A-time data is written from the frames of 23:40:60, 23:41:00, 23:41:15, and 23:41:30 (refer to Fig. 10).

The read controller 34 received the specific read/write command checks whether there is no omission of record data read with each read system, by referring to the first areas of the memories 33₁ to 33₄ indicated by the read system information "1, 2, 3, 4" and used at the present read cycle to confirm that the A-time one frame before the start A-time data in the first area of the memory 33₄ is contained in the first area of the memory 33₃, that the A-time one frame before the start A-time data in the first area of the memory 33₃ is contained in the first area of the memory 33₂, and that the A-time one frame before the start A-time data in the first area of the memory 33₂ is contained in the first area of the

memory 33₁.

After the read operation by the optical pickup 2 is performed approximately I = one rotation (in actual, slightly more than one rotation) and the optical pickup 2 reaches a position IV shown in Fig. 9, the contents of the first areas of the memories 33₁ to 33₄ become as shown in Fig. 10 and there is no omission of record data read with the read systems. Therefore, the read controller 34 supplies the intercept command to the write controllers 31₁ to 31₄ to intercept the write operation, and supplies the track jump command to the system controller 50. With reference to the A-time data and the start and end addresses stored in the first areas among the memories 33₁ to 33₄ where data were written at the present read cycle, the read controller 34 controls to read record data in the order of A-time starting from the oldest A-time, relative to the data stored in the first areas among the memories 32₁ to 32₄ where data DATA₁ to DATA₄ were written at the present read cycle, and outputs the read data to the second signal processing circuit 40. In this example, the data from the frame 23:40:60 to the frame 23:41:44 is output.

The write controllers 31₁ to 31₄ received the intercept command intercepts the read operation of the memories 32₁ to 32₄ and 33₁ to 33₄. The system controller

50 received the track jump command supplies the servo circuit 23 with the track jump command indicating a track jump by $J = 2$ tracks in the forward direction to thereby jump the optical pickup 2 from the position IV to a position V shown in Fig. 9. After the light beams 3_1 to 3_4 are focussed in the track-on state on the tracks $(x+2)$ to $(x+5)$, reading record data resumes. When all the frame sync detection signals FS_1 to FS_4 of H level are output from the first signal processing circuits 26_1 to 26_4 , the track jump completion notice is read and supplied to the controller 34.

The controller 34 received the track jump completion notice supplies the resume command to the write controllers 31_1 to 31_4 , and the write controllers 31_1 to 31_4 received the resume command write the data $DATA_1$ to $DATA_4$ output from the first signal processing circuits 26_1 to 26_4 after the track jump, this time into the second areas of the memories 32_1 to 32_4 , and writes the A-time data AT_1 to AT_4 corresponding to the data $DATA_1$ to $DATA_4$ and the pairs of start addresses a_{1s} to a_{4s} and end addresses a_{1e} to a_{4e} in the memories 32_1 to 32_4 , into the second areas of the memories 33_1 to 33_4 . In the example shown in Fig. 9, in the second areas of the memories 33_1 to 33_4 , the A-time data is written from the frames of 23:41:33, 23:41:48, 23:41:63, and 23:42:03 (refer to Fig.

10).

After the read controller 34 supplies the resume command, the read controller 34 checks whether there is no omission of record data read with each read system, by referring to the second areas of the memories 33₁ to 33₄, used at the present read cycle to confirm that the A-time one frame before the start A-time data in the second area of the memory 33₄ is contained in the second area of the memory 33₃, that the A-time one frame before the start A-time data in the second area of the memory 33₃ is contained in the second area of the memory 33₂, and that the A-time one frame before the start A-time data in the second area of the memory 33₂ is contained in the second area of the memory 33₁. After the read operation by the optical pickup 2 is performed approximately I = one rotation (in actual, slightly more than one rotation) and the optical pickup 2 reaches a position VI shown in Fig. 9, the contents of the second areas of the memories 33₁ to 33₄ become as shown in Fig. 9 and there is no omission of record data read with the read systems "1, 2, 3, 4". Therefore, the read controller 34 supplies the intercept command to the write controllers 31₁ to 31₄ to intercept the write operation, and supplies the track jump command to the system controller 50. With reference to the A-time data and the start and end addresses stored in the

second areas among the memories 33₁ to 33₄, where data were written at the present read cycle, the read controller 34 controls to read record data in the order of A-time starting from the A-time next to the one block data
5 lastly output to the second signal processing circuit 40 at the preceding read cycle, relative to the data stored in the second areas among the memories 32₁ to 32₄, where data DATA₁ to DATA₄ were written at the present read cycle, and outputs the read data to the second signal
10 processing circuit 40. In this example, the data from the frame 23:41:45 to the frame 23:42:17 is output.

The write controllers 31₁ to 31₄ received the intercept command intercepts the read operation. The system controller 50 received the track jump command
15 controls to jump the optical pickup 2 from the position VI to a position VII shown in Fig. 9. After the light beams 3₁ to 3₄ are focussed in the track-on state on the tracks (x+5) to (x+8), reading record data resumes. When all the frame sync detection signals FS₁ to FS₄ of H level
20 are output from the first signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₄, the track jump completion notice is read and supplied to the controller 34. Thereafter, similar operations are repeated to read at high speed desired record data from CD-ROM 1 by using the four beams 3₁ to
25 3₄ and by preventing the record data from being

duplicated and omitted.

(5) Second Specific Read/write Operation (read unable by the light beam system 3₄, refer to Figs. 11 and 12)

5 (5-1) Second Focus Bias Adjustment

If the judgement of a presence/absence of a record data unreadable system shows that there is one record data unreadable system of the light beam 3₄, the system controller 50 allocates $M = 3$ light beams 3₁ to 3₃, as the
10 read systems of h light beams, where M is the maximum number of adjacent light beam systems usable, which is "3" or a combination of light beams 3₁ to 3₃, and $M \geq 3$. The continuous read rotation number I is set as $I = 1$, and the read track jump number J is set to $J = (M-2) = 1$.
15 (Step S35). The second focus bias adjustment shown in Fig. 5 is executed to check whether the light beam 3₁ or 3₃ is included in the $h = 3$ read light beams 3₁ to 3₃ (Step S36). In this example, since the light beam 3₁ is included, the second focus bias adjustment process is
20 terminated without changing V_f from $V_f + W_1$.

The signal plane 1 is therefore positioned at the middle of the remotest P_3 and the nearest P_1 along the optical direction of the objective lens 8, among the in-focus points P_1 to P_3 of the three read light beams 3₁ to
25 3₃, so that P_2 is very near to the signal plane 1. P_1 and

P_3 are also very near to the signal plane 1 as shown in Fig. 7(2). Thereafter, the objective lens 8 moves to follow a surface vibration of CD-ROM 1, under the control of the focus servo system, any of the in-focus points P_1 to P_3 of the light beams 3_1 to 3_3 does not move greatly spaced from the signal plane 1, and all the light beam 3_1 to 3_3 systems can reliably read the record data from CD-ROM 1.

(5-2) Data Read Operation

10 After the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, in accordance with the A-time data representative of the latest A-time data AT_3 input from the first signal processing circuit 26, and the read start point A-time designated by the host computer, the track jump direction and number are determined so that the light beam 3_1 at the innermost circumference among the $h = 3$ read light beams is focussed in the track-on state on the track $(x-1)$ one track inner than the track x containing the read start point of the A-time (Step 15 S35).
20

If the optical pickup 2 is at a position II shown in Fig. 11 after the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, the optical pickup 2 is jumped from the position II by four tracks in the forward direction so that the light beams 3_1 to 3_3 are focussed in the track-on 25

state on the tracks (x-1) to (x+1) (refer to III in Fig. 11). Then, reading the record data on the tracks (x-1) to (x+1) at the same time starts, by using three systems including the photodetector PD₁ to first signal processing circuit 26₁, photodetector PD₂ to first signal processing circuit 26₂, and photodetector PD₃ to first signal processing circuit 26₃. When all the frame sync detection signals FS₁ to FS₃ of H level are input from the first signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₃, the specific read/write command including the read system information "1, 2, 3" is supplied to the P/S converter 30.

Upon reception of the specific read/write command via the read controller 34, only the write controllers 31₁ to 31₃, indicated by the read system information "1, 2, 3" write one block after another the data DATA₁ to DATA₃ output from the first signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₃, into the first areas of the memories 32₁ to 32₄, and writes the A-time data AT₁ to AT₃ corresponding to the data DATA₁ to DATA₃ and the pairs of start addresses A_{1s} to A_{3s} and end addresses A_{1e} to A_{3e} in the memories 32₁ to 32₃, into the first areas of the memories 33₁ to 33₃. In the example shown in Fig. 11, in the first areas of the memories 33₁ to 33₄, the A-time data is written from the frames of 23:40:60, 23:41:00, and 23:41:15 (refer to Fig. 12).

The read controller 34 received the specific read/write command checks whether there is no omission of record data read with each read system, by referring to the first areas of the memories 33₁ to 33₃, indicated by
5 the read system information "1, 2, 3" and used at the present read cycle to confirm that the A-time one frame before the start A-time data in the first area of the memory 33₃ is contained in the first area of the memory 33₂, and that the A-time one frame before the start A-
10 time data in the first area of the memory 33₂ is contained in the first area of the memory 33₁.

After the read operation by the optical pickup 2 is performed approximately I = one rotation (in actual, slightly more than one rotation) and the optical pickup
15 2 reaches a position IV shown in Fig. 11, the contents of the first areas of the memories 33₁ to 33₄ become as shown in Fig. 12 and there is no omission of record data read with the read systems. Therefore, the read controller 34 supplies the intercept command to the write controllers
20 31₁ to 31₃ to intercept the write operation, and supplies the track jump command to the system controller 50. With reference to the A-time data and the start and end addresses stored in the first areas among the memories 33₁ to 33₄, where data were written at the present read
25 cycle, the read controller 34 controls to read record

data in the order of A-time starting from the oldest A-time, relative to the data stored in the first areas among the memories 32_1 to 32_3 , where data $DATA_1$ to $DATA_3$ were written at the present read cycle, and outputs the
5 read data to the second signal processing circuit 40. In this example, the data from the frame 23:40:60 to the frame 23:41:29 is output.

The write controllers 31_1 to 31_3 received the intercept command intercepts the read operation. The
10 system controller 50 received the track jump command supplies the servo circuit 23 with the track jump command indicating a track jump by $J = 1$ track in the forward direction to thereby jump the optical pickup 2 from the position IV to a position V shown in Fig. 11. After the
15 light beams 3_1 to 3_3 are focussed in the track-on state on the tracks $(x+1)$ to $(x+3)$, reading record data resumes. When all the frame sync detection signals FS_1 to FS_3 of H level are output from the first signal processing circuits 26_1 to 26_3 , the track jump completion
20 notice is read and supplied to the controller 34.

The controller 34 received the track jump completion notice supplies the resume command to the write controllers 31_1 to 31_3 , and the write controllers 31_1 to 31_3 received the resume command write the data $DATA_1$ to
25 $DATA_3$ output from the first signal processing circuits 26_1

to 26₃ after the track jump, this time into the second areas of the memories 32₁ to 32₃, and writes the A-time data AT₁ to AT₃ corresponding to the data DATA₁ to DATA₃ and the pairs of start addresses a_{1s} to a_{3s} and end addresses a_{1e} to a_{3e} in the memories 32₁ to 32₃, into the second areas of the memories 33₁ to 33₃. In the example shown in Fig. 11, in the second areas of the memories 33₁ to 33₄, the A-time data is written from the frames of 23:41:18, 23:41:33, and 23:41:48 (refer to Fig. 12).

After the read controller 34 supplies the resume command, the read controller 34 checks whether there is no omission of record data read with each read system, by referring to the second areas of the memories 33₁ to 33₃ used at the present read cycle to confirm that the A-time one frame before the start A-time data in the second area of the memory 33₃ is contained in the second area of the memory 33₂, and that the A-time one frame before the start A-time data in the second area of the memory 33₂ is contained in the second area of the memory 33₁.

After the read operation by the optical pickup 2 is performed approximately I = one rotation (in actual, slightly more than one rotation) and the optical pickup 2 reaches a position VI shown in Fig. 11, the contents of the second areas of the memories 33₁ to 33₃ become as shown in Fig. 12 and there is no omission of record data

read with the read systems "1, 2, 3". Therefore, the read controller 34 supplies the intercept command to the write controllers 31₁ to 31₃ to intercept the write operation, and supplies the track jump command to the system controller 50. With reference to the A-time data and the start and end addresses stored in the second areas among the memories 33₁ to 33₃ where data were written at the present read cycle, the read controller 34 controls to read record data in the order of A-time starting from the A-time next to the one block data lastly output to the second signal processing circuit 40 at the preceding read cycle, relative to the data stored in the second areas among the memories 32₁ to 32₃ where data DATA₁ to DATA₃ were written at the present read cycle, and outputs the read data to the second signal processing circuit 40. In this example, the data from the frame 23:41:30 to the frame 23:41:62 is output.

The write controllers 31₁ to 31₃ received the intercept command intercepts the read operation. The system controller 50 received the track jump command controls to jump the optical pickup 2 by the jump track number $J = 1$ from the position VI to a position VII shown in Fig. 11. After the light beams 3₁ to 3₃ are focussed in the track-on state on the tracks (x+3) to (x+5), reading record data resumes. When all the frame sync

detection signals FS_1 to FS_3 of H level are output from the first signal processing circuits 26_1 to 26_3 , the track jump completion notice is read and supplied to the controller 34. Thereafter, similar operations are repeated to read at high speed desired record data from CD-ROM 1 by using the three beams 3_1 to 3_3 and by preventing the record data from being duplicated and omitted.

10 (6) Third Specific Read/write Operation (read unable by the light beam systems 3_4 and 3_5 , refer to Figs. 13 and 12)

(6-1) Second Focus Bias Adjustment

If the judgement of a presence/absence of a record data unreadable system shows that there are two record data unreadable systems of the light beams 3_4 and 3_5 , the system controller 50 allocates $M = 3$ light beams 3_1 to 3_3 as the read systems of h light beams, where M is the maximum number of adjacent light beam systems usable, which is "3" or a combination of light beams 3_1 to 3_3 and $M \geq 3$. The continuous read rotation number I is set as $I = 1$, and the read track jump number J is set to $J = (M - 2) = 1$ (Step S35). The second focus bias adjustment shown in Fig. 5 is executed to check whether the light beam 3_1 or 3_5 is included in the $h = 3$ read light beams

3₁ to 3₃ (Step S36). In this example, since the light beam 3₁ is included, the second focus bias adjustment process is terminated without changing V_f from V_f + W₁.

The signal plane 1 is therefore positioned at the middle of the remotest P₃ and the nearest P₁ along the optical direction of the objective lens 8, among the in-focus points P₁ to P₃ of the three read light beams 3₁ to 3₃, so that P₂ is very near to the signal plane 1. P₁ and P₃ are also very near to the signal plane 1 as shown in Fig. 7(2). Thereafter, the objective lens 8 moves to follow a surface vibration of CD-ROM 1, under the control of the focus servo system, any of the in-focus points P₁ to P₃ of the light beams 3₁ to 3₃ does not move greatly spaced from the signal plane 1, and all the light beam 3₁ to 3₃ systems can reliably read the record data from CD-ROM 1.

(6-2) Data Read Operation

After the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, in accordance with the A-time data representative of the latest A-time data AT₃ input from the first signal processing circuit 26, and the read start point A-time designated by the host computer, the track jump direction and number are determined so that the light beam 3₁ at the innermost circumference among the h = 3 read light beams is focussed in the track-on

state on the track (x-1) one track inner than the track x containing the read start point of the A-time (Step S35).

If the optical pickup 2 is at a position II shown in Fig. 13 after the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, the optical pickup 2 is jumped from the position II by four tracks in the forward direction so that the light beams 3₁ to 3₃ are focussed in the track-on state on the tracks (x-1) to (x+1) (refer to III in Fig. 13). Then, reading the record data on the tracks (x-1) to (x+1) at the same time starts, by using three systems including the photodetector PD₁ to first signal processing circuit 26₁, photodetector PD₂ to first signal processing circuit 26₂, and photodetector PD₃ to first signal processing circuit 26₃. When all the frame sync detection signals FS₁ to FS₃ of H level are input from the first signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₃, the specific read/write command including the read system information "1, 2, 3" is supplied to the P/S converter 30.

Thereafter, quite similar to the case shown in Fig. 11, an operation of reading record data from CD-ROM 1 by approximately one rotation, jumping the optical pickup by the track jump number J = 1, again reading record data from CD-ROM 1 by approximately one rotation, and jumping the optical pickup by the track jump number J = 1 is

repeated (refer to III to VII in Fig. 13) to read record data at high speed in the record order by preventing the record data from being duplicated and omitted.

- 5 (7) Fourth Specific Read/write Operation (read unable by the light beam systems 3_1 and 3_5 , refer to Fig. 14)

(7-1) Second Focus Bias Adjustment Process

If the judgement of a presence/absence of a record data unreadable system shows that there are two record data unreadable systems of the light beams 3_1 and 3_5 , the system controller 50 allocates $M = 3$ light beams 3_2 to 3_4 as the read systems of h light beams, where M is the maximum number of adjacent light beam systems usable, which is "3" or a combination of light beams 3_2 to 3_4 and

15 $M \geq 3$. The continuous read rotation number I is set as $I = 1$, and the read track jump number J is set to $J = (M - 2) = 1$ (Step S35). The second focus bias adjustment shown in Fig. 5 is executed to check whether the light beam 3_1 or 3_5 is included in the $h = 3$ read light beams

20 3_2 to 3_4 (Step S36). In this example, since the light beam 3_1 or 3_5 is not included, the second focus bias voltage generator circuit 22₄ is controlled to change V_f from the value of $V_f = V_f + W_1$ to the value of $V_f = V_f + W_2$ ($W_2 < W_1$) (Step S39) so that $V_f = (V_f + W_1) - W_1 + W_2 = V_f -$

25 $W_1 + W_2$.

The signal plane 1 is therefore positioned at the middle of the remotest P_3 and the nearest P_1 along the optical direction of the objective lens 8, among the in-focus points P_2 to P_4 of the three read light beams 3_2 to 3_4 , so that all the in-focus points P_2 to P_4 are very near to the signal plane 1 (refer to Fig. 7(3)). Thereafter, the objective lens 8 moves to follow a surface vibration of CD-ROM 1, under the control of the focus servo system, all the in-focus points P_2 to P_4 are maintained very near to the signal plane 1, and all the light beam 3_2 to 3_4 systems can more reliably read the record data from CD-ROM 1 than the case of Fig. 7(2).

(7-2) Data Read Operation

After the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, in accordance with the A-time data representative of the latest A-time data AT_3 input from the first signal processing circuit 26, and the read start point A-time designated by the host computer, the track jump direction and number are determined so that the light beam 3_2 at the innermost circumference among the $h = 3$ read light beams is focussed in the track-on state on the track $(x-1)$ one track inner than the track x containing the read start point of the A-time (Step S35).

If the optical pickup 2 is at a position II shown in

Fig. 14 after the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, the optical pickup 2 is jumped from the position II by three tracks in the forward direction so that the light beams 3_2 to 3_4 are focussed in the track-on state on the tracks $(x-1)$ to $(x+1)$. Then, reading the record data on the tracks $(x-1)$ to $(x+1)$ at the same time starts, by using three systems including the photodetector PD_2 to first signal processing circuit 26_2 , photodetector PD_3 to first signal processing circuit 26_3 , and photodetector PD_4 to first signal processing circuit 26_4 . When all the frame sync detection signals FS_2 to FS_4 of H level are input from the first signal processing circuits 26_2 to 26_4 , the specific read/write command including the read system information "2, 3, 4" is supplied to the P/S converter 30.

Thereafter, nearly similar to the case shown in Fig. 11 (in the case of Fig. 14, the write controllers 31_2 and 31_4 control to write the data $DATA_2$ and $DATA_4$ and A-time data AT_2 and AT_4 output from the first signal processing circuits 26_2 to 26_4 , into the memories 32_2 and 32_4 and 33_2 to 33_4 , and with reference to the the A-time data and start and end addresses stored in the memories 33_2 and 33_4 , the read controller 34 controls to read record data stored in the memories 33_2 and 33_4 in the order of A-time by preventing the record data from being duplicated and

omitted), an operation of reading record data from CD-ROM
1 by approximately one rotation, jumping the optical
pickup by the track jump number $J = 1$, again reading
record data from CD-ROM 1 by approximately one rotation,
5 and jumping the optical pickup by the track jump number
 $J = 1$ is repeated (refer to III to VII in Fig. 14) to
sequentially read record data at high speed in the record
order by preventing the record data from being duplicated
and omitted.

10

(8) Fifth Specific Read/write Operation (read unable by
the light beams 3_2 and 3_5 , refer to Figs. 15 and 16)

(8-1) Second Focus Bias Adjustment

If a judgement of a presence/absence of a record
15 data unreadable system shows that there are two record
data unreadable systems of the light beams 3_2 and 3_5 , then
only two light beams 3_3 and 3_4 are adjacent each other
among the remaining three light beams 3_1 , 3_3 , and 3_4 . In
reading at high speed record data of CD-ROM 1 by
20 repetitively performing continuous record data read by
approximately two rotations and track jump, it is
necessary to read record data only with adjacent light
beams. High speed read is possible even for a
combination of read light beams not completely adjacent
25 each other, if continuous record data read of CD-ROM 1

during a plurality of rotations and track jump by predetermined tracks are repeated.

Specifically, continuously reading record data with data readable light beams during approximately $(R+1)$ rotations and track jump by $(Q-1)$ tracks in the forward direction can be repeated if Q is 2 or larger and R is 0 or larger, where Q is the number of tracks representing a distance between the innermost light beam and outermost light beam among the record data readable light beam systems, and R is the maximum number of adjacent record data unreadable light beams between the innermost and outermost record data readable light beams.

In the example shown in Figs. 15 and 16, of the record data readable light beam systems, the innermost light beam is the light beam 3_1 and the outermost light beam is the light beam 3_4 , so that $Q = 3$. In the adjacent record data unreadable light beams between the light beams 3_1 and 3_4 , the maximum number of adjacent record data unreadable light beams is "1" because there is only the light beam 3_2 . As the h read light beam systems, all the three record data readable light beam systems 3_1 , 3_3 , and 3_4 are allocated. The continuous read rotation number I is set as $I = (R + 1) = 2$, and the read track jump number J is set to $J = (Q - 1) = 2$ (Step S35). The second focus bias adjustment shown in Fig. 5 is executed

to check whether the light beam 3_1 or 3_5 is included in the $h = 3$ read light beams 3_1 , 3_3 , and 3_4 (Step S36). In this example, since the light beam 3_1 is included, the second focus bias adjustment process is terminated
5 without changing V_f from $V_f + W_1$.

The signal plane 1 is therefore positioned at the middle of the remotest P_3 and the nearest P_1 along the optical direction of the objective lens 8, among the in-focus points P_1 , P_3 , and P_4 of the three read light beams
10 3_1 , 3_3 , and 3_4 , so that the in-focus point P_4 is very near to the signal plane and also the in-focus points P_1 and P_3 are also near the signal plane 1 (refer to Fig. 7(2)). Thereafter, the objective lens 8 moves to follow a surface vibration of CD-ROM 1, under the control of the
15 focus servo system, all the in-focus points P_1 , P_3 , and P_4 are maintained very near to the signal plane 1, and all the light beam 3_1 , 3_3 , and 3_4 systems can reliably read the record data from CD-ROM 1.

(8-2) Data Read Operation

20 After the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, in accordance with the A-time data representative of the latest A-time data AT_3 input from the first signal processing circuit 26, and the read start point A-time designated by the host computer, the
25 track jump direction and number are determined so that

the light beam 3_1 at the innermost circumference among the $h = 3$ read light beams is focussed in the track-on state on the track $(x-1)$ one track inner than the track x containing the read start point of the A-time (Step 5 S35).

If the optical pickup 2 is at a position II shown in Fig. 15 after the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, the optical pickup 2 is jumped from the position II by four tracks in the forward direction so that the light beams 3_1 , 3_3 , and 3_4 are focussed in the track-on state on the tracks $(x-1)$, $(x+1)$, and $(x+2)$. Then, reading the record data on the tracks $(x-1)$ to $(x+2)$ at the same time starts, by using three systems including the photodetector PD_1 to first signal processing circuit 26₁, photodetector PD_3 to first signal processing circuit 26₃, and photodetector PD_4 to first signal processing circuit 26₄. When all the frame sync detection signals FS_1 , FS_3 , and FS_4 of H level are input from the first signal processing circuits 26₁, 26₃, and 26₄, the specific read/write command including the read system information "1, 3, 4" is supplied to the P/S converter 30.

Upon reception of the specific read/write command via the read controller 34, only the write controllers 31₁, 31₃, and 31₄ indicated by the read system information

"1, 3, 4" write one block after another the data $DATA_1$, $DATA_3$, and $DATA_4$ output from the first signal processing circuits 26_1 , 26_3 , and 26_4 , into the first areas of the memories 32_1 , 32_3 , and 32_4 , and writes the A-time data
5 AT_1 , AT_3 , and AT_4 corresponding to the data $DATA_1$, $DATA_3$, and $DATA_4$ and the pairs of start addresses A_{1s} , A_{3s} , and A_{4s} and end addresses A_{1e} , A_{3e} , and A_{4e} in the memories 32_1 , 32_3 , and 32_4 , into the first areas of the memories 33_1 , 33_3 , and 33_4 . In the example shown in Fig. 15, in the
10 first areas of the memories 33_1 , 33_3 , and 33_4 , the A-time data is written from the frames of 23:40:60, 23:41:15, and 23:41:30 (refer to Fig. 16).

The read controller 34 received the specific read/write command checks whether there is no omission of
15 record data read with each read system, by referring to the first areas of the memories 33_1 , 33_3 , and 33_4 indicated by the read system information "1, 3, 4" and used at the present read cycle to confirm that the A-time one frame before the start A-time data in the first area
20 of the memory 33_4 is contained in the first area of the memory 33_3 , and that the A-time one frame before the start A-time data in the first area of the memory 33_3 is contained in the first area of the memory 33_1 .

After the read operation by the optical pickup 2 is
25 performed approximately $I = \text{two rotations}$ (in actual,

slightly more than two rotations) and the optical pickup 2 reaches a position IV shown in Fig. 15, the contents of the first areas of the memories 33₁, 33₃, and 33₄ become as shown in Fig. 16 and there is no omission of record data read with the read systems. Therefore, the read controller 34 supplies the intercept command to the write controllers 31₁, 31₃, and to 31₄ to intercept the write operation, and supplies the track jump command to the system controller 50. With reference to the A-time data and the start and end addresses stored in the first areas among the memories 33₁, 33₃, and 33₄ where data were written at the present read cycle, the read controller 34 controls to read record data in the order of A-time starting from the oldest A-time, relative to the data stored in the first areas among the memories 32₁, 32₃, and 32₄ where data DATA₁, DATA₃, and DATA₄ were written at the present read cycle, and outputs the read data to the second signal processing circuit 40. In this example, the data from the frame 23:40:60 to the frame 23:41:59 is output.

The write controllers 31₁, 31₃, and 31₄ received the intercept command intercepts the read operation. The system controller 50 received the track jump command supplies the servo circuit 23 with the track jump command indicating a track jump by J = 2 tracks in the forward

direction to thereby jump the optical pickup 2 from the position IV to a position V shown in Fig. 15. After the light beams 3_1 , 3_3 , and 3_4 are focussed in the track-on state on the tracks $(x+3)$, $(x+5)$, and $(x+6)$, reading record data resumes. When all the frame sync detection signals FS_1 , FS_3 , and FS_4 of H level are output from the first signal processing circuits 26_1 , 26_3 , and 26_4 , the track jump completion notice is read and supplied to the controller 34.

10 The controller 34 received the track jump completion notice supplies the resume command to the write controllers 31_1 , 31_3 , and 31_4 , and the write controllers 31_1 , 31_3 , and 31_4 received the resume command write the data $DATA_1$, $DATA_3$, and $DATA_4$ output from the first signal
15 processing circuits 26_1 , 26_3 , and 26_4 after the track jump, this time into the second areas of the memories 32_1 , 32_3 , and 32_3 , and writes the A-time data AT_1 , AT_3 , and AT_4 corresponding to the data $DATA_1$, $DATA_3$, and $DATA_3$ and the pairs of start addresses a_{1s} , a_{3s} , and a_{4s} and end
20 addresses a_{1e} , a_{3e} , and a_{4e} in the memories 32_1 to 32_3 , into the second areas of the memories 33_1 , 33_3 , and 33_4 . In the example shown in Fig. 15, in the second areas of the memories 33_1 , 33_3 , and 33_4 , the A-time data is written from the frames of 23:41:48, 23:42:03, and 23:42:18
25 (refer to Fig. 16).

After the read controller 34 supplies the resume command, the read controller 34 checks whether there is no omission of record data read with each read system, by referring to the second areas of the memories 33₁, 33₃,
5 and 33₄ used at the present read cycle to confirm that the A-time one frame before the start A-time data in the second area of the memory 33₄ is contained in the second area of the memory 33₃, and that the A-time one frame before the start A-time data in the second area of the
10 memory 33₃ is contained in the second area of the memory 33₁.

After the read operation by the optical pickup 2 is performed approximately I = two rotations (in actual, slightly more than two rotations) and the optical pickup
15 2 reaches a position VI shown in Fig. 15, the contents of the second areas of the memories 33₁, 33₃, and 33₄ become as shown in Fig. 16 and there is no omission of record data read with the read systems "1, 3, 4". Therefore, the read controller 34 supplies the intercept command to
20 the write controllers 31₁, 31₃, and 31₄ to intercept the write operation, and supplies the track jump command to the system controller 50. With reference to the A-time data and the start and end addresses stored in the second areas among the memories 33₁, 33₃, and 33₄ where data were
25 written at the present read cycle, the read controller 34

controls to read record data in the order of A-time starting from the A-time next to the one block data lastly output to the second signal processing circuit 40 at the preceding read cycle, relative to the data stored
5 in the second areas among the memories 32_1 , 32_3 , and 32_4 , where data $DATA_1$, $DATA_3$, and $DATA_4$ were written at the present read cycle, and outputs the read data to the second signal processing circuit 40. In this example, the data from the frame 23:41:60 to the frame 23:42:47 is
10 output.

The write controllers 31_1 , 31_3 , and 31_4 received the intercept command intercepts the read operation. The system controller 50 received the track jump command controls to jump the optical pickup 2 by the jump track
15 number $J = 2$ from the position VI to a position VII shown in Fig. 15. After the light beams 3_1 , 3_3 , and 3_4 are focussed in the track-on state on the tracks $(x+7)$, $(x+9)$, and $(x+10)$, reading record data resumes. Thereafter, similar operations are repeated to read at
20 high speed desired record data from CD-ROM 1 by using the three beams 3_1 , 3_3 , and 3_4 and by preventing the record data from being duplicated and omitted.

For example, in order to read the record data from the 9 tracks from the track $(x-1)$ to the track $(x+7)$
25 shown in Fig. 15, only reading the record data of CD-ROM

1 during four rotations and one track jump are required. Therefore, the record data can be read more rapidly than data is read with one light beam from CD-ROM 1 during 9 rotations.

5

(9) Sixth Specific Read/write Operation (read unable by the light beams 3_1 , 3_2 , and 3_4 , refer to Fig. 17)

(9-1) Second Focus Bias Adjustment Process

If a judgement of a presence/absence of a record data unreadable system shows that there are three record data unreadable systems of the light beams 3_1 , 3_2 and 3_4 , it is impossible to read record data with three adjacent light beam systems. However, similar to the case shown in Fig. 15, continuously reading record data with data readable light beams during approximately $(R+1)$ rotations and track jump by $(Q-1)$ tracks in the forward direction can be repeated if Q is 2 or larger and R is 0 or larger, where Q is the number of tracks representing a distance between the innermost light beam and outermost light beam among the record data readable light beam systems, and R is the maximum number of adjacent record data unreadable light beams between the innermost and outermost record data readable light beams.

In the example shown in Fig. 17, of the record data readable light beam systems, the innermost light beam is

the light beam 3_3 , and the outermost light beam is the light beam 3_5 , so that $Q = 2$. In the adjacent record data unreadable light beams between the light beams 3_3 and 3_5 , the maximum number of adjacent record data unreadable light beams is "1" because there is only the light beam 3_4 . As the h read light beam systems, all the two record data readable light beam systems 3_3 and 3_5 are allocated. The continuous read rotation number I is set as $I = (R + 1) = 2$, and the read track jump number J is set to $J = (Q - 1) = 1$ (Step S35). The second focus bias adjustment shown in Fig. 5 is executed to check whether the light beam 3_1 or 3_5 is included in the $h = 2$ read light beams 3_3 and 3_5 (Step S36). In this example, since the light beam 3_5 is included, the second focus bias adjustment process is terminated without changing V_f from $V_f + W_1$.

The signal plane 1 is therefore positioned at the middle of the two in-focus points P_3 and the nearest P_5 of the two read light beams 3_3 and 3_5 , along the optical direction of the objective lens 8, so that the in-focus points P_3 and P_5 are very near to the signal plane (refer to Fig. 7(2)). Thereafter, the objective lens 8 moves to follow a surface vibration of CD-ROM 1, under the control of the focus servo system, all the in-focus points P_3 and P_5 are maintained very near to the signal plane 1, and all the light beam 3_3 and 3_5 systems can reliably read the

record data from CD-ROM 1.

(9-2) Data Read Operation

After the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, in accordance with the A-time data representative of the latest A-time data AT_3 input from the first signal processing circuit 26₃ and the read start point A-time designated by the host computer, the track jump direction and number are determined so that the light beam 3₃ at the innermost circumference among the $h = 2$ read light beams is focussed in the track-on state on the track (x-1) one track inner than the track x containing the read start point of the A-time (Step S35).

If the optical pickup 2 is at a position II shown in Fig. 17 after the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, the optical pickup 2 is jumped from the position II by two tracks in the forward direction so that the light beams 3₃ and 3₅ are focussed in the track-on state on the tracks (x-1) and (x+1). Then, reading the record data on the tracks (x-1) and (x+2) at the same time starts, by using two systems including the photodetector PD₃ to first signal processing circuit 26₃ and photodetector PD₅ to first signal processing circuit 26₅. When all the frame sync detection signals FS₃ and FS₅ of H level are input from the first signal processing

circuits 26₃ and 26₅, the specific read/write command including the read system information "3, 5" is supplied to the P/S converter 30.

Thereafter, nearly similar to the case shown in Fig. 15 (in the case of Fig. 17, the write controllers 31₃ and 31₅ control to write the data DATA₃ and DATA₅ and A-time data AT₃ and AT₅ output from the first signal processing circuits 26₃ and 26₅, into the memories 32₃ and 32₅ and 33₃ to 33₅, and with reference to the the A-time data and start and end addresses stored in the memories 33₃ and 33₅, the read controller 34 controls to read record data stored in the memories 33₃ and 33₅ in the order of At-time by preventing the record data from being duplicated and omitted), an operation of reading record data from CD-ROM 1 by approximately $I = 2$ rotations, jumping the optical pickup by the track jump number $J = 1$, again reading record data from CD-ROM 1 by approximately $I = \text{two}$ rotations, and jumping the optical pickup by the track jump number $J = 1$ is repeated (refer to III to VII in Fig. 17) to sequentially read record data at high speed in the record order by preventing the record data from being duplicated and omitted.

For example, in order to read the record data from the 7 tracks from the track $(x-1)$ to the track $(x+5)$ shown in Fig. 17, only reading the record data of CD-ROM

1 during four rotations and one track jump are required and the record data can be read more quickly than record data is read with one light beam during 7 rotations of CD-ROM 1.

5

(10) Seventh Specific Read/write Operation (read unable by the light beam 3_4 , refer to Fig. 18)

(10-1) Second Focus Bias Adjustment Process

If a judgement of a presence/absence of a record data unreadable system shows that there is one record data unreadable systems of the light beam 3_4 , it is possible to read the record data with the three light beam systems 3_1 to 3_3 as described with the case (5) above (refer to Fig. 11). However, if the case shown in Fig. 15 is incorporated, the record data can be read at higher speed.

In the example shown in Fig. 18, of the record data readable light beam systems, the innermost light beam is the light beam 3_1 and the outermost light beam is the light beam 3_5 so that $Q = 4$. In the adjacent record data unreadable light beams between the light beams 3_1 and 3_5 , the maximum number R of adjacent record data unreadable light beams is "1". As the h read light beam systems, all the four record data readable light beam systems 3_1 to 3_3 , and 3_5 are allocated. The continuous read rotation

25

number I is set as $I = (R + 1) = 2$, and the read track jump number J is set to $J = (Q - 1) = 3$ (Step S35). The second focus bias adjustment shown in Fig. 5 is executed to check whether the light beam 3_1 or 3_5 is included in the $h = 4$ read light beams 3_1 to 3_3 , and 3_5 (Step S36). In this example, since the light beams 3_1 and 3_5 are included, the second focus bias adjustment process is terminated without changing V_z from $V_z + W_1$.

The signal plane 1 is therefore positioned at the middle of the remotest P_3 and the nearest P_1 (P_5) along the optical direction of the objective lens 8, among the in-focus points P_1 to P_3 , and P_5 of the four read light beams 3_1 to 3_3 , and 3_5 , so that the in-focus points are very near to the signal plane (refer to Fig. 7(2)). Thereafter, the objective lens 8 moves to follow a surface vibration of CD-ROM 1, under the control of the focus servo system, all the in-focus points P_1 to P_3 , and P_5 are maintained very near to the signal plane 1, and all the light beam 3_1 to 3_3 , and 3_5 systems can reliably read the record data from CD-ROM 1.

(10-2) Data Read Operation

After the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, in accordance with the A-time data representative of the latest A-time data AT_3 input from the first signal processing circuit 26, and the read

start point A-time designated by the host computer, the track jump direction and number are determined so that the light beam 3_1 at the innermost circumference among the $h = 4$ read light beams is focussed in the track-on state on the track $(x-1)$ one track inner than the track x containing the read start point of the A-time (Step S35).

If the optical pickup 2 is at a position II shown in Fig. 18 after the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, the optical pickup 2 is jumped from the position II by four tracks in the forward direction so that the light beams 3_1 to 3_3 , and 3_5 are focussed in the track-on state on the tracks $(x-1)$ to $(x+1)$, and $(x+3)$ (refer to III in Fig. 18). Then, reading the record data on the tracks $(x-1)$ to $(x+1)$ and $(x+3)$ at the same time starts, by using four systems including the photodetector PD_1 to first signal processing circuit 26_1 , photodetector PD_2 to first signal processing circuit 26_2 , photodetector PD_3 to first signal processing circuit 26_3 , and photodetector PD_5 to first signal processing circuit 26_5 . When all the frame sync detection signals FS_1 to FS_3 , and FS_5 of H level are input from the first signal processing circuits 26_1 to 26_3 , and 26_5 , the specific read/write command including the read system information "1, 2, 3, 5" is supplied to the P/S converter 30.

Thereafter, nearly similar to the case shown in Fig. 15 (in the case of Fig. 18, the write controllers 31₁ to 31₃ and 31₅ control to write the data DATA₁ to DATA₃ and DATA₅ and A-time data AT₁ to AT₃ and AT₅ output from the first signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₃ and 26₅, into the memories 32₁ to 32₃ and 32₅ and 33₁ to 33₃ and 33₅, and with reference to the the A-time data and start and end addresses stored in the memories 33₁ to 33₃ and 33₅, the read controller 34 controls to read record data stored in the memories 33₁ to 33₃ and 33₅ in the order of At-time by preventing the record data from being duplicated and omitted), an operation of reading record data from CD-ROM 1 by approximately $I = 2$ rotations, jumping the optical pickup by the track jump number $J = 3$, again reading record data from CD-ROM 1 by approximately $I =$ two rotations, and jumping the optical pickup by the track jump number $J = 3$ is repeated (refer to III to VII in Fig. 18) to sequentially read record data at high speed in the record order by preventing the record data from being duplicated and omitted.

For example, in order to read the record data from the 11 tracks from the track x to the track $(x+10)$ shown in Fig. 18, only reading the record data of CD-ROM 1 during four rotations and one track jump are required. In contrast, the case shown in Fig. 11 requires reading

the record data of CD-ROM 1 during four rotations and three track jumps.

(11) Eighth Specific Read/write Operation (read unable by
5 the light beams 3_1 , 3_4 , and 3_5 , refer to Figs. 19 and 20)

(11-1) Second Focus Bias Adjustment

If the judgement of a presence/absence of a record data unreadable system shows that there are three record data unreadable systems of the light beams 3_1 , 3_4 , and 3_5 ,
10 record data is omitted if it is read with the remaining two adjacent light beam 3_2 and 3_3 by repetitively performing data read of CD-ROM 1 during one rotation or more and track jump in the forward direction. In this case, record data is continuously read from CD-ROM 1 by
15 using the record data readable one light beam system.

Specifically, as the h read light beam system, the record data readable light beam 3_3 near at the center is allocated among the record data readable light beams 3_2 and 3_3 . The continuous read rotation number I is set
20 infinite, and the read track jump number J is set to $J = 0$.

The second focus bias adjustment shown in Fig. 5 is executed to check whether the light beam 3_1 or 3_5 is included in the $h = 1$ read light beam 3_3 (Step S36). In
25 this example, since the light beams 3_1 and 3_5 are not

included, then it is checked whether the light beam 3₂ or 3₃ is included (Step S38). In this example, since the light beam is included, the focus bias voltage generator circuit 22₄ is controlled to change the value V_f from the value of $V_f + W_1$ to the value of $V_f + W_2$ ($W_2 < W_1$) to terminate the second focus bias adjustment process (at Step S39, it is set that $V_f = (V_f + W_1) - W_1 + W_2 = V_f - W_1 + W_2$).

The signal plane 1 becomes therefore coincident with the in-focus points P_2 and P_3 of the read light beams 3₂ and 3₃ (refer to Fig. 7(3)). Thereafter, the objective lens 8 moves to follow a surface vibration of CD-ROM 1, under the control of the focus servo system, the record data of CD-ROM 1 can be reliably read with the light beam 3₃ system.

(11-2) Data Read Operation

After the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, in accordance with the A-time data representative of the latest A-time data AT_3 input from the first signal processing circuit 26₃ and the read start point A-time designated by the host computer, the track jump direction and number are determined so that the light beam 3₃ at the innermost circumference among the $h = 1$ read light beam is focussed in the track-on state on the track x (Step S35).

If the optical pickup 2 is at a position II shown in Fig. 19 after the second focus bias adjustment process is completed, the optical pickup 2 is jumped from the position II by two tracks in the forward direction so that the light beam 3₃ is focussed in the track-on state on the track (x-1) (refer to III in Fig. 19). Then, reading the record data on the track x, by using one system including the photodetector PD₃ to first signal processing circuit 26₃. When the frame sync detection signal FS₃ of H level is input from the first signal processing circuit 26₃, the specific read/write command including the read system information "3" is supplied to the P/S converter 30.

Upon reception of the specific read/write command via the read controller 34, only the write controller 31₃ indicated by the read system information "3" writes one block after another the data DATA₃ output from the first signal processing circuits 26₃, into the first areas of the memories 32₃, and writes the A-time data AT₃ corresponding to the data DATA₃ and the pairs of start addresses A_{3s} and end addresses A_{3e} in the memory 32₃, into the first areas of the memory 33₃. In the example shown in Fig. 19, in the first areas of the memory 33₃, the A-time data is written from the frame of 23:40:60 (refer to Fig. 20).

Since only one record data read light beam is used as indicated by the read system information "3", the read controller 34 received the specific read/write command refers to the first areas of the memory 33, indicated by
5 the read system information "3" and used at the present read cycle to read the data in the A-time order starting from the oldest A-time from the first area of the memory 32, and outputs the read data to the second signal processing circuit 40, without outputting the intercept
10 command and track jump command. Therefore, the optical pickup 2 will not be jumped, and as CD-ROM rotates, the record data from the track (x-1) is sequentially read with the optical beam 3, and output to the second signal processing circuit 40, by preventing the record data from
15 being omitted.

(12) Ninth Specific Read/write Operation (read unable by the light beams 3₁, 3₂, 3₄, and 3₅, refer to Fig. 21)

(11-1) Second Focus Bias Adjustment

20 If the judgement of a presence/absence of a record data unreadable system at Step S33 shown in Fig. 5 shows that there are four record data unreadable systems of the light beams 3₁, 3₂, 3₄, and 3₅, record data is omitted if it is read with only one remaining light beam 3, by
25 repetitively performing data read of CD-ROM 1 during one

rotation or more and track jump in the forward direction. Also in this case, record data is continuously read from CD-ROM 1.

Specifically, as the h read light beam system, the
5 record data readable light beam 3₃ is allocated among the
h record data readable light beam. The continuous read
rotation number I is set infinite, and the read track
jump number J is set to J = 0 (Step S35).

Thereafter, quite similar to the case shown in Fig.
10 19, the second focus bias adjustment process is performed
to change the value V_f by $-W_1$ (Step S40), and the optical
pickup is jumped in the forward direction to make the
light beam 3₃ in the track-on state on the track (x-1) to
read record data from the track (x-1) with the light beam
15 3₃. In this case, $V_f = (V_f + W_1) - W_1 = V_f$, and the light
beam 3₃ is in the perfect in-focus state as shown in Fig.
7(1).

In the above embodiments, if all the five light beam
systems 3₁ to 3₅ can read the record data, the signal
20 plane of CD-ROM 1 is set at just the middle of the
remotest in-focus point and nearest in-focus point and at
the center of the five in-focus points P₁ to P₅ of the
light beams 3₁ to 3₅ along the optical axis direction of
the objective lens 8. If some of the five light beam
25 systems 3₁ to 3₅ cannot read the record data, the signal

plane of CD-ROM 1 is set at just the middle of the remotest in-focus point and nearest in-focus point and at the center of the h read light beams along the optical axis direction of the objective lens 8. Therefore, if

5 all the five light beam systems 3_1 to 3_5 can read the record data, it is possible to avoid a poor in-focus state on the signal plane of the five light beams 3_1 to 3_5 and reliably read the record data from CD-ROM 1. Similarly, even if some of the five light beam systems 3_1

10 to 3_5 cannot read the record data, it is possible to avoid a poor in-focus state on the signal plane 1 of the h read light beams and reliably read the record data from CD-ROM 1.

If all the five light beam systems 3_1 to 3_5 can read

15 the record data, the system controller 50 performs the focus bias adjustment so that the signal plane of CD-ROM 1 is positioned at the center of the in-focus points P_1 to P_5 of the five light beams 3_1 to 3_5 along the optical axis direction of the objective lens 8. If some of the

20 five light beam systems 3_1 to 3_5 cannot read the record data, the signal plane of CD-ROM 1 is set at the middle of the in-focus points of the allocated h light beams. Therefore, if all the five light beam systems 3_1 to 3_5 can read the record data, it is possible to avoid a poor in-

25 focus state on the signal plane of the five light beams

3₁ to 3₅, and reliably read the record data from CD-ROM 1, regardless of the surface vibration of CD-ROM 1. Similarly, even if some of the five light beam systems 3₁ to 3₅ cannot read the record data, it is possible to
5 avoid a poor in-focus state on the signal plane 1 of the h read light beams and reliably read the record data from CD-ROM 1, regardless of the surface vibration of CD-ROM 1.

In the above embodiments, the number of light beams
10 is set as n = 5. The number of light beams may be set to other values such as 7 and 9. For example, as shown in Fig. 22, if nine light beams 3₁ to 3₉ are used (focus error signal and tracking error signal are generated by using the light beam 3₅ reflected from the signal plane
15 of CD-ROM), the first focus bias adjustment process makes the signal plane 1 be positioned just at the midst of the remotest in-focus point P₅ and nearest in-focus point P₁ (P₉) along the optical axis direction of the objective lens 8 (refer to Fig. 22(1)). If the judgement of a
20 presence/absence of a record data unreadable system shows that there is no record data unreadable system, the light beams 3₁ to 3₉ are allocated as the h read light beams, and it is set that I = 1 and J = 7. The second focus bias adjustment process does not change the value V_f and
25 retains the state of Fig. 22(1).

If the judgement of a presence/absence of a record data unreadable system shows that there are two record data unreadable systems of the light beams 3_1 and 3_9 , the light beams 3_2 to 3_8 are allocated as the h read light beams, and it is set that $I = 1$ and $J = 5$. The second focus bias adjustment process changes the value V_f so that the signal plane is positioned at the middle of the remotest in-focus point P_5 and nearest in-focus point P_2 (P_8) along the optical direction of the objective lens 8 among the in-focus points of the seven read light beams (refer to Fig. 22(2)).

Different from the above, if the light beam systems 3_7 and 3_8 cannot read record data, then $Q = 8$ and $R = 2$. Seven light beam systems 3_1 to 3_6 and 3_9 are allocated as the h read light beams. The continuous read rotation number I is set as $I = (R+1) = 3$ and the track jump number J is set as $J = (Q-1) = 7$. The second focus bias adjustment process does not change the value V_f and retains the state of Fig. 22(1).

The first signal processing circuits 26_1 , 26_2 , 26_4 , and 26_5 may be added with measuring circuits for measuring jitter amounts of the binarized RF signals and outputting jitter amount data JD_1 , JD_2 , JD_4 , and JD_5 , and the second focus bias adjustment process shown in Fig. 5 may be changed as illustrated in Fig. 23.

Referring to Fig. 23, first the system controller 50 stores the value V_f set at the first focus bias adjustment process at Step S3 of Fig. 5 in its memory (not shown) as E (Step S109). Of the jitter amount data 5 JD_1 to JD_5 measured by the first signal processing circuits 26₁ to 26₅, jitter amount data JD_1 , JD_k , ... of the h read light beam systems are read and its average $jd(0)'$ is stored in the memory (Step S110).

Next, the focus bias voltage generator circuit 22₄ 10 is controlled to increase V_f by ΔV (positive value) from E (V) and the jitter amount data JD_1 , JD_k , ... of the h read light beams systems are read and an average value thereof is stored stored in the memory as $jd(+1)'$. The voltage V_f is decreased by ΔV (negative value) from E (V) 15 and the jitter amount data JD_1 , JD_k , ... of the h read light beams systems are read and an average value thereof is stored stored in the memory as $jd(-1)'$ (Step S111).

The values $jd(+1)'$, $jd(0)'$, and $jd(-1)'$ are compared and if $jd(+1)' > jd(0)' < jd(-1)'$ (YES at Step S112), the 20 average jitter amount is minimum at $V_f = E$ (V) and it can be considered that the signal plane 1 of CD-ROM 1 is positioned at the middle of the in-focus points P_1 , P_j , P_k , ... of the h read light beams 3₁, 3_j, 3_k, ... along the optical axis of the objective lens 8, that all the h read 25 light beams are in an optimum state of perfect in-focus,

and that there is no light beam in a state far from the perfect in-focus state. Therefore, the focus bias voltage generator circuit 22₄ is controlled to set V_f to E (V) (Step S113).

5 If $jd(+1)' < jd(0)' < jd(-1)'$ instead of $jd(+1)' > jd(0)' < jd(-1)'$ (YES at Step S114), it is set that $k = 2$ (Step S115) and $V_f = E + (+2) \cdot \Delta V$, and the jitter amount $JD_1, JD_k, \dots$ of the h read light beams are read and stored as $jd(+2)'$ (Step S116). If $jd(+2)' > jd(+1)' < jd(0)'$
 10 (YES at Step S117), the average jitter amount is minimum at $V_f = E + (+1) \cdot \Delta V$ and it can be considered that the signal plane 1 of CD-ROM 1 is positioned at the middle of the in-focus points $P_1, P_j, P_k, \dots$ of the h read light beams $3_1, 3_j, 3_k, \dots$ along the optical axis of the
 15 objective lens 8, that all the h read light beams are in an optimum state of perfect in-focus, and that there is no light beam in a state far from the perfect in-focus state. Therefore, the focus bias voltage generator circuit 22₄ is controlled to set V_f to $E + (+1) \cdot \Delta V$
 20 (Step S118).

 If not $jd(+2)' > jd(+1)' < jd(0)'$ (NO at Step S117), the value k is incremented to 3 (Step S119), and the flow returns to Step S116 to repeat the above operations. If $jd(+k)' > jd\{+(k-1)\}' < jd\{+(k-2)\}'$ (YES at Step S117),
 25 the average jitter amount is minimum at $V_f = \{+(k-1)\} \cdot \Delta V$.

(ΔV) and it can be considered that all the in-focus points $P_i, P_j, P_k, \dots$ of the h read light beams $3_i, 3_j, 3_k, \dots$ are in an optimum state of perfect in-focus. Therefore, the focus bias voltage generator circuit 22, is controlled to set V_f to to $E + \{+(k-1)\} \cdot (\Delta V)$ (Step S118).

If not $jd(+1)' < jd(0)' < jd(-1)'$ at Step S114, the value k is set to 2 (Step S120). V_f is set to $E + (-2) \cdot \Delta V$ and the jitter amount data $JD_i, JD_k, \dots$ are read and stored as an average value $jd(-2)'$ (Step S121). If $jd(0)' > jd(-1)' < jd(-2)'$ (YES at Step S122), the average jitter amount is minimum at $V_f = E + (-1) \cdot \Delta V$ and it can be considered that all the in-focus points $P_i, P_j, P_k, \dots$ of the h read light beams $3_i, 3_j, 3_k, \dots$ are in an optimum state of perfect in-focus relative to the signal plane 1. Therefore, the focus bias voltage generator circuit 22, is controlled to set V_f to to $E + (-1) \cdot (\Delta V)$ (Step S123).

If not $jd(0)' > jd(-1)' < jd(-2)'$ at Step S122, the value k is incremented to 3 (Step S124) and the flow returns to Step S121 to repeat the above operations. If $jd\{-(k-2)\} > jd\{-(k-1)\}' < jd(-k)'$ (YES at Step S122), the average jitter amount is minimum at $V_f = E + \{-(k-1)\} \cdot (\Delta V)$ and it can be considered that all the in-focus points $P_i, P_j, P_k, \dots$ of the h read light beams are in an

optimum state of perfect in-focus relative to the signal plane 1. Therefore, the focus bias voltage generator circuit 22, is controlled to set V_f to $E + \{-(k-1)\} \cdot \Delta V$ (Step S123).

5 After the second focus bias adjustment is completed in the above manner, all the h read light beams $3_1, 3_j, 3_k, \dots$ can enter the perfect in-focus state relative to the signal plane 1, and the in-focus state of the h read light beams relative to the signal plane can be optimized
10 with ease. Thereafter, since the objective lens 8 moves to follow the surface vibration of CD-ROM 1, any of the h read light beams will not become far from the perfect in-focus relative to the signal plane 1, and any of the h read light beam systems can reliably read record data
15 from CD-ROM 1.

 In the second focus bias adjustment processes illustrated in Fig. 6 (Fig. 23), the bias voltage value V_f is determined so that the jitter amount data JD_3 (average jitter amount data $JD_1, JD_j, JD_k, \dots$) measured by
20 the first signal processing circuit 26₃ (circuits 26₁, 26_j, 26_k, ...) becomes minimum to thereby make the light beam 3₃ temporarily enter the in-focus state. Instead, the first signal processing circuit 26₃ (circuits 26₁ to 26₅) may be provided with error detection/correction
25 circuits which descramble the EFM demodulated data in the

unit of one block, perform error detection/correction based on CIRC codes (error detection/correction with P parities, deinterleaveing, error detection/correction with Q parities), measure error rates detected through error detection with P parities, and output error rate data ED_3 (ED_1 to ED_5). JD_3 (JD_1 , JD_j , JD_k , ...) in Fig. 6 (Fig. 23) are replaced by ED_3 (ED_1 , ED_j , ED_k , ...), and the bias voltage value V_f is set so that the value ED_3 (ED_1 , ED_j , ED_k , ...) becomes minimum and the light beam 3₃ is focussed onto the signal plane 1. In this manner, the second focus bias adjustment may be performed.

Measuring the error rate for each light beam system may be performed by the second signal processing circuit. Specifically, the second signal processing circuit 40 is provided with an error detection/correction circuit which measures an error rate detected through error detection with P parities when perform error detection/correction based on CIRC codes (error detection/correction with P parities, deinterleaveing, error detection/correction with Q parities) is performed, and outputs the measured error rate. For the focus bias adjustment, the data $DATA_3$ (data $DATA_1$ to $DATA_5$) output from the first signal processing circuit 26₃ (26₁ to 26₅) are supplied via the P/S converter 30 to the second signal processing circuit 40 which measures the error rate for each light beam

system and outputs error rate data ED_3 (ED_1 to ED_5) of the light beam system 3, (light beam systems 3_1 to 3_5) and sets the bias voltage value V_f which minimizes the value ED_3 (ED_1 , ED_j , ED_k , ...).

5 In the processes of Fig. 23 and their modifications, if there is no record data unreadable light beam system, the bias voltage value V_f is set so that the average jitter amount (average error rate) of all the five light beams becomes minimum. Instead, even if there is no
10 record data unreadable light beam system, the jitter amount of the binarized RF signal or the error rate of read record data may be measured for predetermined two or more light beam systems among the $n = 5$ light beams 3_1 to 3_5 , such as two systems of the light beams 3_1 and 3_3 , two
15 systems of the light beams 3_2 and 3_4 , and three systems of the light beams 3_1 , 3_3 , and 3_5 . The averages of these measured jitter amounts or error rates are used for the focus bias adjustment. Also in this case, it is possible to avoid a poor in-focus state of a light beam on the
20 signal plane 1, irrespective of the surface vibration of CD-ROM 1, and record data can be reliably read from CD-ROM 1.

Instead of measuring the error rate of data symbols read from CD-ROM 1, an error rate of sub-codes read from
25 CD-ROM 1 may be measured to perform the focus bias

adjustment.

Also in the above embodiments, although CD-ROM is rotated at a constant linear velocity, it may be rotated at a constant angular velocity (CAV). Other optical
5 discs with a spiral track of the type different from CD-ROM may also be used such as CD-WO, DVD, DVD-ROM and DVD-RAM, or other optical discs with a concentric track may also be used such as LD and MO. The number of light
beams for reading record data on tracks at the same time
10 may be 3, 7 or the like instead of 5.

CLAIMS

1. A multibeam type optical disc read apparatus in which an optical system including an objective lens applies n light beams at the same time to respective n tracks on a signal plane of an optical disc in an in-focus state near at the signal plane, and signal processing means generates a signal for each light beam from a detection output of the light beam reflected from the signal plane, and reads data recorded on the tracks to which the light beams were applied, basing upon the detection output of the light beam, wherein:

the optical system is set so that the signal plane of the optical disc is positioned at the middle of respective in-focus points of the n light beams as viewed along an optical axis direction of the objective lens.

2. A multibeam type optical disc read apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

focus servo means for making the n light beams always in the in-focus state near at the signal plane of the optical disc, by moving the objective lens to follow a surface vibration of the optical disc,

wherein said focus servo means performs a focus bias adjustment so that the signal plane of the optical disc is positioned at the middle of respective in-focus points



of the n light beams as viewed along an optical axis direction of the objective lens.

3. A multibeam type optical disc read apparatus
5 according to claim 1, further comprising:

focus servo means for making the n light beams always in the in-focus state near at the signal plane of the optical disc, by moving the objective lens to follow a surface vibration of the optical disc; and

10 measuring means for measuring a jitter amount or error rate of a binarized signal for two or more predetermined light beam systems among the n light beams,

wherein said focus servo means performs a focus bias
15 adjustment so that an average of jitter amounts or error rates of binarized signals measured by said measuring means becomes minimum.

4. A multibeam type optical disc read apparatus in which
20 an optical system including an objective lens applies n light beams at the same time to respective n tracks on a signal plane of an optical disc in an in-focus state near at the signal plane, signal processing means generates a signal for each light beam from a detection output of the
25 light beam reflected from the signal plane, and reads



data recorded on the tracks to which the light beams were applied, basing upon the detection output of the light beam, if there are some light beam systems which cannot read record data among the n light beams, h read light
5 beam systems are selected from the remaining record data readable light beam systems, and the record data is read with the set h read light beam systems, wherein:

if the record data can be read with all the n light beam systems, the optical system is set so that the
10 signal plane of the optical disc is positioned at the middle of respective in-focus points of the n light beams as viewed along an optical axis direction of the objective lens; and

if there are some record data unreadable light beam
15 systems among the n light beams, the optical system is set so that the signal plane of the optical disc is positioned at the middle of respective in-focus points of the h read light beam systems as viewed along an optical axis direction of the objective lens.

20

5. A multibeam type optical disc read apparatus according to claim 4, further comprising:

focus servo means for making the n light beams always in the in-focus state near at the signal plane of
25 the optical disc, by moving the objective lens to follow



a surface vibration of the optical disc,

wherein: if the record data can be read with all the
n light beam systems, said focus servo means performs a
focus bias adjustment so that the signal plane of the
5 optical disc is positioned at the middle of respective
in-focus points of the n light beams as viewed along an
optical axis direction of the objective lens; and

if there are some record data unreadable light beam
systems among the n light beams, said focus servo means
10 performs a focus bias adjustment so that the signal plane
of the optical disc is positioned at the middle of
respective in-focus points of the h read light beam
systems as viewed along an optical axis direction of the
objective lens.

15

6. A multibeam type optical disc read apparatus
according to claim 4, further comprising:

focus servo means for making the n light beams
always in the in-focus state near at the signal plane of
20 the optical disc, by moving the objective lens to follow
a surface vibration of the optical disc; and

measuring means for measuring a jitter amount or
error rate of a binarized signal for each light beam
system,

25 wherein if the record data can be read with all the



n light beam systems, said focus servo means performs a focus bias adjustment so that an average of jitter amounts or error rates of binarized signals for each of the n light beam systems measured by said measuring means
5 becomes minimum; and

if there are some record data unreadable light beam systems among the n light beams, said focus servo means performs a focus bias adjustment so that an average of jitter amounts or error rates of binarized signals for
10 each of the n read light beam systems measured by said measuring means becomes minimum.

7. A multibeam optical disc read apparatus comprising:
a light source for generating a light beam;
15 grating means for diffracting the light beam and forming 0 order, +/- first order, ..., +/- n-th order diffraction light beams;

an optical system for focussing the 0 order, +/- first order, ..., +/- n-th order diffraction light beams
20 near at a signal plane of an optical disc; and

signal processing means for generating a signal for each of the 0 order, +/- first order, ..., +/- n-th order diffraction light beams, from a detection output of the diffraction light beam reflected from the signal plane,
25 and reading data recorded on the tracks to which the



diffraction light beams were applied, basing upon the detection output of the diffraction light beam, wherein:

5 said optical system focusses the diffraction light beams so that the signal plane of the optical disc becomes coincident with a middle point of respective in-focus points of the 0 order, +/- first order, ..., +/- n order diffraction light beams, as viewed along an optical axis direction.

10 8. A multibeam optical disc read apparatus according to claim 7, further comprising means for controlling a focussing of said optical system, said controlling means executes a first focus control for determining a control amount necessary for focussing the 0 order diffraction
15 light beam onto the signal plane of the optical disc, and a second focus control for controlling a focussing of said optical system by using the control amount modified by a predetermined value (W_1 or W_2).

20 9. A multibeam optical disc read apparatus according to claim 7, further comprising means for controlling a focussing of said optical system, said controlling means executes a first focus control for determining a control amount necessary for focussing the 0 order diffraction
25 light beam onto the signal plane of the optical disc, and



modifies the control amount by measuring a jitter amount of the signal for each diffraction light beam, in an in-focus state that the 0 order diffraction light beam is focussed onto the signal plane of the optical disc while
5 said optical disc is controlled by the control amount, or in a state deviated by a predetermined amount from the in-focus state.

10. A multibeam optical disc read apparatus according to
10 claim 7, wherein effective detection outputs are determined from the detection outputs of the 0 order, +/- first order, ..., +/- n order diffraction light beams, and said optical system focusses the diffraction light beams so that the signal plane of the optical disc becomes
15 coincident with a middle point of respective in-focus points of the diffraction light beams corresponding to the effective detection outputs, as viewed along an optical axis direction.

20 11. A multibeam optical disc read apparatus according to claim 7, further comprising a waveshape equalizer circuit for compensating high frequency characteristics of the signal, a pair of waveshape equalize circuits provided in correspondence with the +/- i -th order diffraction light
25 beams having the same waveshape equalizing



characteristics.

12. A multibeam optical disc read apparatus in which
different n (n is an odd number of 3 or larger) light
5 beams are applied at the same time to respective n tracks
on a signal plane of an optical disc, a signal for each
light beam is generated from a detection output of the
light beam reflected from the signal plane and waveshape-
equalized by waveshape equalizer means provided for each
10 light beam to raise a gain of high frequency components
and compensate for the high frequency components, and
signal processing means binarizes and demodulates each
signal to read data recorded on the tracks to which the
light beams were applied, wherein:

15 a single laser beam generated by laser beam
generating means is made vertically incident upon a
diffraction grating to generate $(2m+1, m = (n-1)/2)$ light
beams of 0 order, +/- first order, ..., +/- m -th order
diffraction light beams;

20 an optical system including an objective lens
focusses the $(2m+1)$ light beams near onto the signal
plane of the optical system, the optical system being
disposed so that the light beam of the 0 order
diffraction light beam is vertically incident upon the
25 optical disc; and

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of the waveshape equalizer means, a pair of waveshape equalizer means provided in correspondence with the $\pm i$ -th (i is 1, 2, ..., m) order diffraction light beams have said waveshape equalizer characteristics.

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13. A multibeam optical disc read apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the optical system including the objective lens is set so that the signal plane of the optical disc is located at a predetermined position
10 between an in-focus point of the 0 order diffraction light beams and an in-focus point of one of the $\pm m$ -th order diffraction light beams, as views along an optical axis of the objective lens.

15 14. A multibeam type optical disc read apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising:

focus servo means for making the $(2m+1)$ light beams always in the in-focus state near at the signal plane of the optical disc, by moving the objective lens to follow
20 a surface vibration of the optical disc,

wherein said focus servo means performs a focus bias adjustment so that the signal plane of the optical disc is located at a predetermined position between an in-focus point of the 0 order diffraction light beams and an
25 in-focus point of one of the $\pm m$ -th order diffraction



light beams, as views along an optical axis of the objective lens.

15. A multibeam type optical disc read apparatus
5 according to claim 12, further comprising:

focus servo means for making the $2m+1$ light beams always in the in-focus state near at the signal plane of the optical disc, by moving the objective lens to follow a surface vibration of the optical disc; and

10 measuring means for measuring a jitter amount or error rate of a binarized signal for two or more predetermined light beam systems among the n light beams,

wherein said focus servo means performs a focus bias
15 adjustment so that an average of jitter amounts or error rates of binarized signals measured by said measuring means becomes minimum.

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