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Brainerd et al.

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[54] **FORMED SHEET METAL CARABINER GATE**

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[51] **Int. Cl.⁶** **A44B 21/00**

[52] **U.S. Cl.** **182/3; 24/573.5**

[58] **Field of Search** 182/3, 5; 24/573.5, 24/598.2, 599.1, 599.6, 599.7, 599.8, 599.9, 600.3, 601.5

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Primary Examiner—Alvin C. Chin-Shue

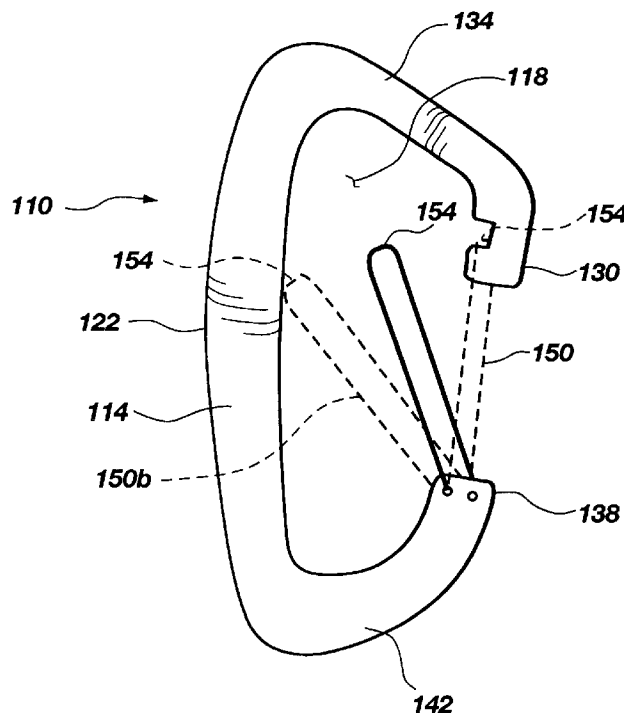
Assistant Examiner—Richard M. Smith

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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A gate for carabiners is disclosed including a first wing, a second wing and a bridge connecting the two. The first wing, the second wing and the bridge are stamped or otherwise cut out of a sheet of metal or other durable, bendable material. The wings are then bent relative to the bridge so that they oppose one another and form sides of the gate. One end of the gate is attached to the carabiner, while an opposing end of the gate is provided with a catch to selectively close an opening in the carabiner, and thereby selectively hold ropes or other items within the carabiner. In accordance with one aspect of the invention, a liner is disposed about the carabiner gate to limit wear caused to ropes, etc., by the carabiner gate. In accordance with another aspect of the invention, the area between the wings is filled with a filler to increase the strength of the gate.

27 Claims, 6 Drawing Sheets



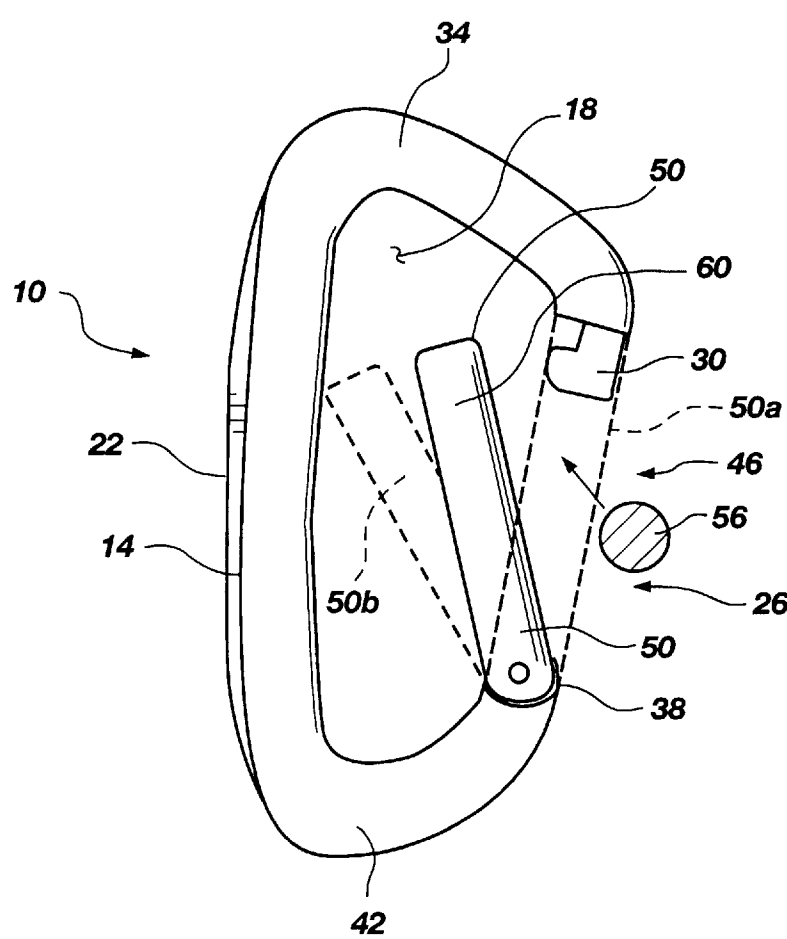


Fig. 1A
(PRIOR ART)

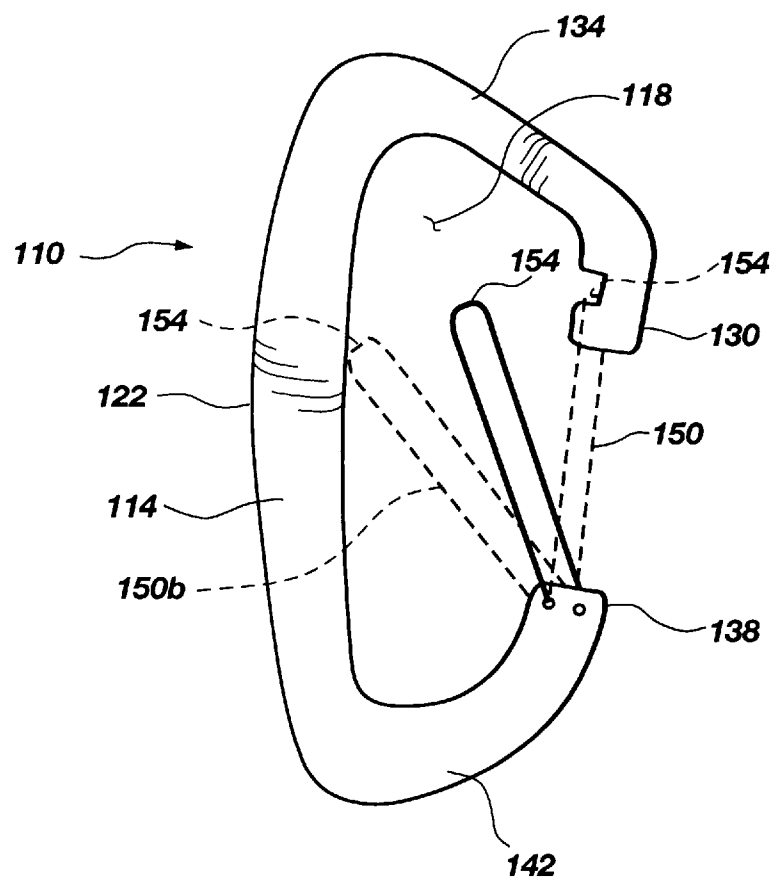


Fig. 1B

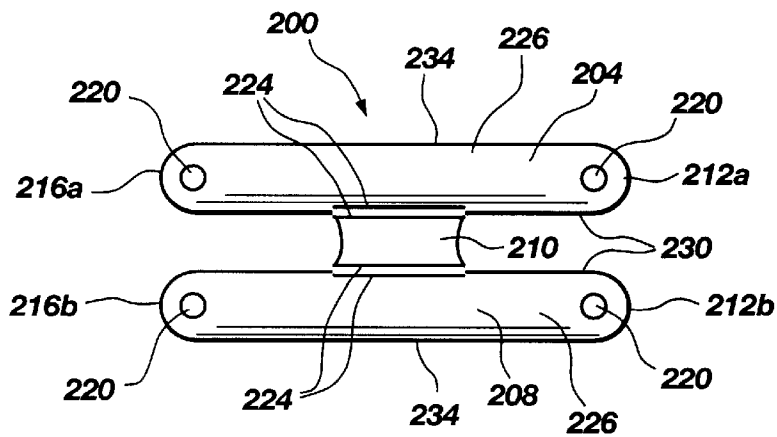


Fig. 2

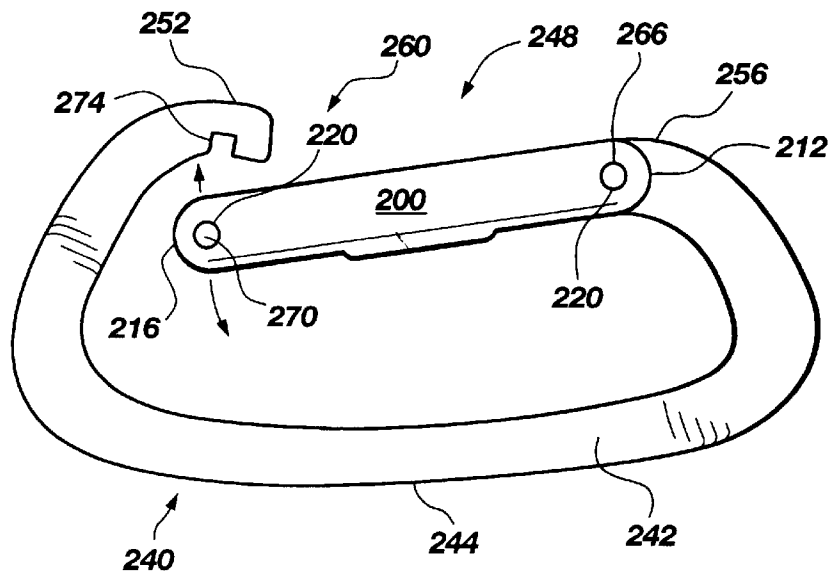


Fig. 2A

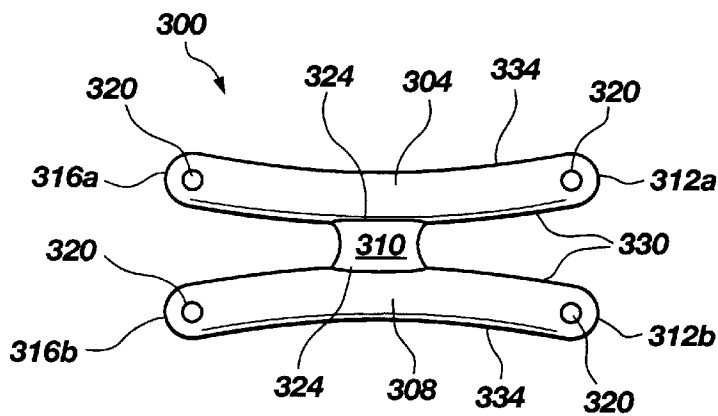


Fig. 3

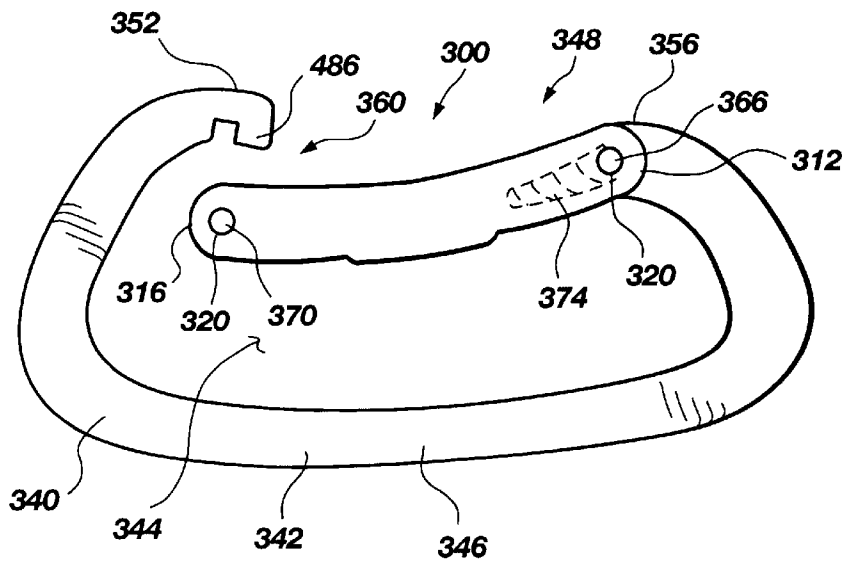


Fig. 3A

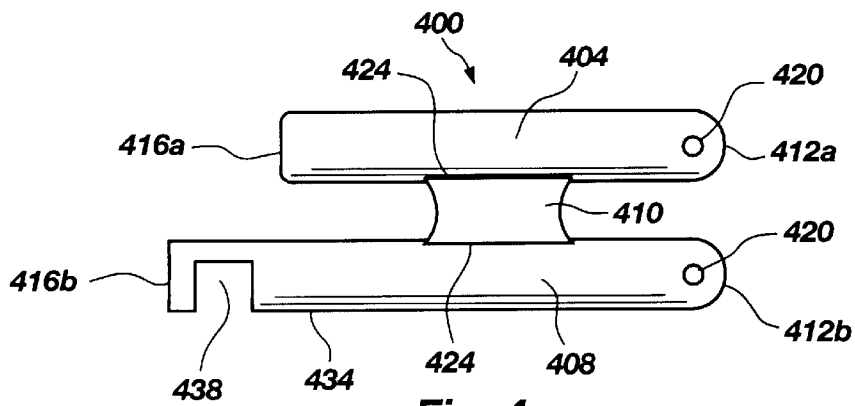


Fig. 4

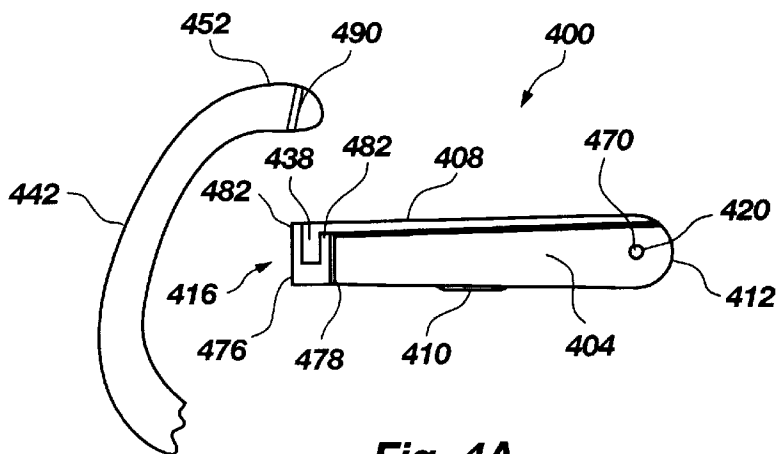


Fig. 4A

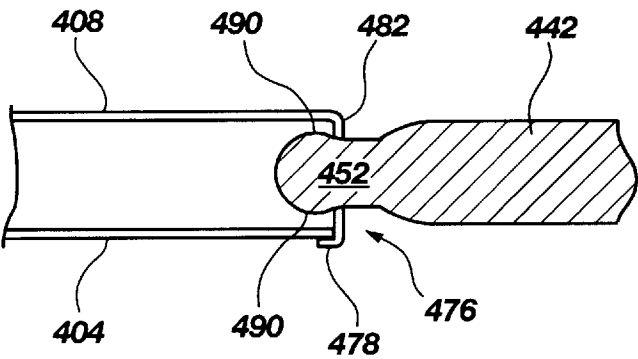


Fig. 4B

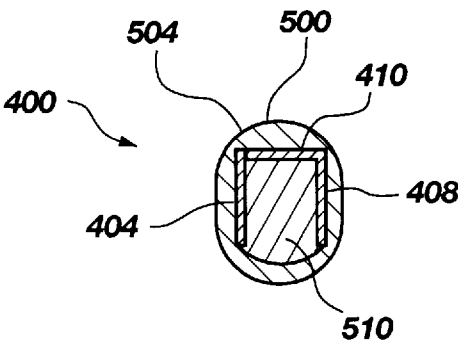


Fig. 5

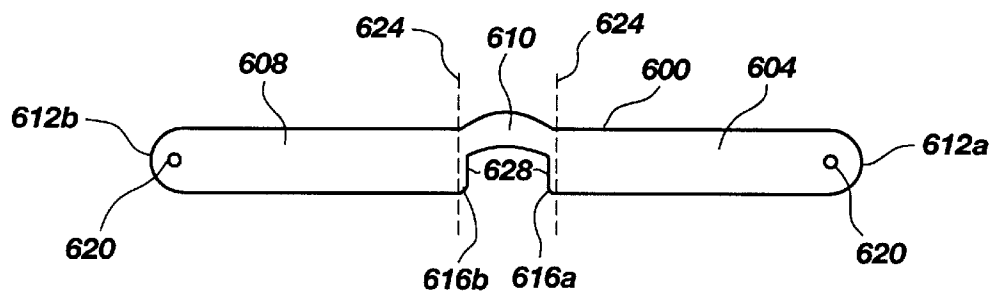


Fig. 6

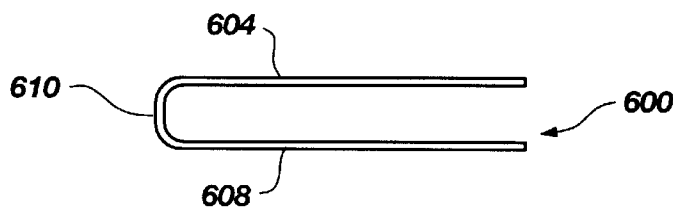


Fig. 6A

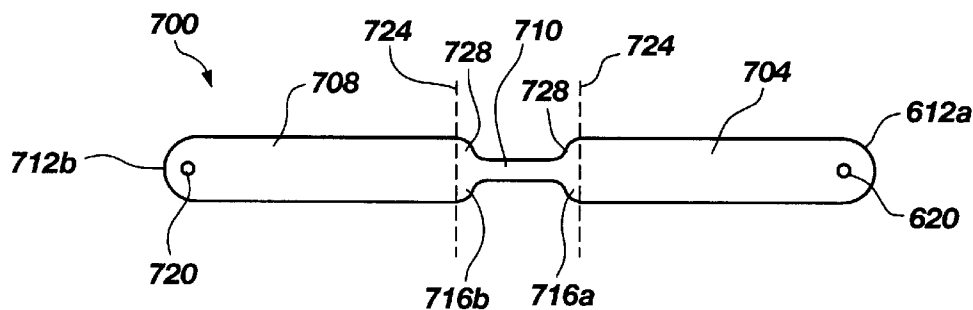


Fig. 7

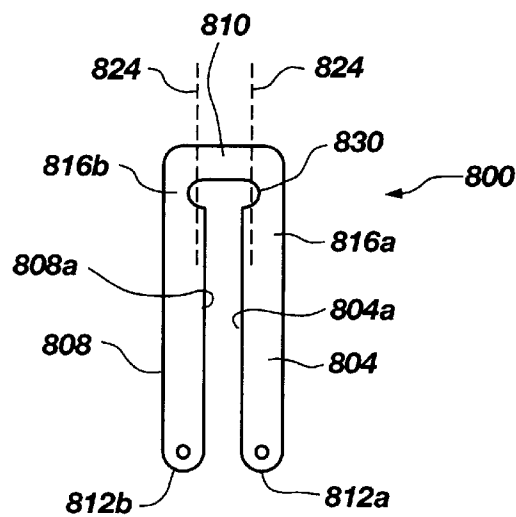


Fig. 8

FORMED SHEET METAL CARABINER GATE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to an improved gate for a carabiner, and in particular, to a carabiner gate formed from sheet metal, such as may be used in rock climbing and rappelling.

The use of carabiners by rock climbers and rappellers has become widespread. As is shown in FIG. 1A, a carabiner, generally indicated at 10, is typically formed of a metallic body 14 which is formed into a generally prolate loop so as to circumscribe an opening or void 18. The carabiner 10 has a back portion 22, and a front portion, generally indicated at 26, which is either generally straight, as shown in FIG. 1A, or is concave.

The front portion 26 of the carabiner 10 is formed by an upper, free end 30 which extends downwardly from a top portion 34 of the carabiner body 14 in a hook-like manner, and a lower free end 38 which extends upwardly from a bottom portion 42 of the body. The space between the upper free end 30 and the lower free end 38 provides an opening, generally indicated at 46, through which climbing/rappelling ropes may be passed into the void 18 circumscribed by the body.

The opening 46 is selectively closed by a gate 50 which is pivotally attached to the lower free end 38. Typically, the gate is biased in a closed position, represented by the dashed lines 50a. In such a position, the gate prevents a rope which is held within the carabiner 10 from being pulled out through the opening 46. The gate also usually provides structural support to the body in tension. When it is desired to position another rope 56 within the carabiner 10, the rope is placed against the gate 50 and sufficient force is applied to overcome the biasing. This moves the gate into the position shown at 50, or even into the position shown at 50b. Those familiar with carabiners will appreciate that the rear portion 22 often provides a limitation to the distance which the gate 50 can be displaced.

Once the rope 56 is positioned within the void 18 circumscribed by the carabiner 10, the pressure on the gate 50 is released and it returns to the position shown at 50a. The rope 56 is thus properly held within the carabiner 10.

As shown in FIG. 1A, the gate 50 is generally cylindrical. Such a gate 50 has the advantage that it is easy to use, and the rounded outer surface 60 provides little friction against the rope 56. Those familiar with rock climbing and rappelling will be familiar with the high cost of ropes and the importance of minimizing wear. Unlike most other applications, a climber or rappeller must not use worn ropes, as one broken rope can result in severe injury or even death.

One problem with the gate 50 shown in FIG. 1A is that they are generally expensive to produce. Typically the gates are machined out of bar stock or extrusion metal. Machining the metal is generally more expensive and time consuming than other approaches such as stamping. Once the gate 50 has been machined, a spring (not shown) or some other biasing device must be loaded prior to attachment to the body 14 of the carabiner 10.

To overcome the problems and expense of machined gates, an alternative arrangement was developed in which the machined gate 50 is replaced by a piece of curved wire-like piece of metal. Referring now to FIG. 1B, there is shown a carabiner 110 with a body 114 circumscribing a void 118. The body 114 has a back side 122 and a generally

straight front side 126. The body 114 also has a top portion 134 and a bottom portion 142 which support an upper free end 130 and a lower free end 138, respectively to form an opening 146.

Instead of having a machined gate, such as that shown in FIG. 1A, the opening 146 is selectively closed by a wire which is attached at each end to the lower free end 138. The wire forming the gate 150 is attached to the lower free end 138 in such a manner as to have a biased position, shown at 150a, in which a top 154 of the gate 150 rests in a notch 160 formed in the upper free end 130. In such a position, a rope (not shown) cannot be pulled through the opening 146.

The wire gate 150 has several advantages over the machined gate discussed above. First, it is easier to make and is less expensive. Second, it does not require a spring or other resilient member to be added. Rather, the biasing force is created by tension within the piece of metal. Third, the piece of metal provides the carabiner with less weight.

The wire gate 150 does have disadvantages. First, the wire causes increased wear on climbing and rappelling ropes. Instead of passing over one cylindrical body, the rope passes over two wires having a smaller curvature, causing greater wear. Additional concern is that some less experienced climbers may view the carabiners as being less safe due to the thinness of the wire compared to the conventional gate.

Thus, there is a need to provide a carabiner gate which overcomes the respective disadvantages of each type of currently available carabiner. Such a gate must be economical, durable and easy to use.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Thus, it is an object of the present invention to provide a carabiner gate which is easy to use and economical to make.

It is another object of the invention to provide a carabiner gate which may be made without machining or casting.

It is another object of the invention to provide a carabiner gate which minimizes wear on climbing and rappelling ropes.

It is another object of the invention to provide such a carabiner gate which facilitates access to the biasing mechanism within the gate.

It is yet another object of the invention to provide a carabiner gate which has a size similar to that of machined gates, but less weight.

It is still another object of the invention to provide a method for making gates which facilitates the making of gates having different shapes and sizes.

The above and other objects of the invention are realized in specific illustrated embodiments of a carabiner gate in which the gate is stamped or otherwise formed from sheet metal. After the sheet metal is stamped or otherwise cut, the piece of metal is bent to form a gate having a traditional size. For ease of reference, the term "stamped" as used herein is meant to include stamping, laser cutting and other methods of cutting the carabiner gate from a sheet of metal.

In accordance with one aspect of the invention, the stamped gate is formed with first and second wings connected to one another by a bridge. After the gates have been stamped, each wing is bent adjacent the bridge so that the wings provide sides to the gate. The wings are connected to one another at a first end through the lower free end of the carabiner body by a pin so as to attach the gate to the carabiner. At an opposing second end of the gate, the first and second wings are attached to one another by another pin.

In accordance with another aspect of the invention, the pin rests within the notch provided in the upper free end of the

carabiner body to limit movement of the gate. Alternatively, an end piece is formed at one end of the first and second wings and extends is folded to provide a catch which causes the gate to engage the upper free end of the body.

In accordance with another aspect of the invention, the bridge connecting the first and second wings is disposed at the second end of each wing so that when the wings or bridge is bent, the bridge forms the catch for engagement with the carabiner.

In accordance with another aspect of the invention, the wings and the bridge are covered with a layer of material to prevent the edges of the wings from wearing on climbing and rappelling ropes which are used with the carabiner. The material may simply be a thin layer of a durable fabric wrapped about the exterior of the gate. In the alternative, the bent gate can be dipped into a material which is then solidified to not only provide an exterior layer to the gate, but also to fill the area between the wings to provide additional support. The material can also be molded around the gate.

In accordance with another aspect of the invention, the stamped wings are generally arcuate so as to provide a gate which is attachable to the body of the carabiner so as to provide a concave front portion.

The stamped gates allow gates of different profiles to be stamped or otherwise formed from a sheet of metal such as steel. Rather than machining the gates from pieces of metal, a simple die change allows numerous different designs of gates to be formed.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The above and other objects, features and advantages of the invention will become apparent from a consideration of the following detailed description presented in connection with the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1A shows a side view of a carabiner made in accordance with the teachings of the prior art;

FIG. 1B shows a side view of an alternate embodiment of the carabiners of the prior art;

FIG. 2 shows a plan view of a carabiner gate made in accordance with the teachings of the present invention.

FIG. 2A shows a side view of a carabiner body, and the carabiner gate shown in FIG. 2, folded and attached to the carabiner body;

FIG. 3 shows a side view of an alternate embodiment of a carabiner gate made in accordance with the teachings of the present invention;

FIG. 3A shows a fragmented view of a carabiner body with the gate of FIG. 3 attached thereto.

FIG. 4 shows a plan view of yet another embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 4A shows a perspective view of the embodiment shown in FIG. 4 after the gate has been bent into the desired shape to form a carabiner gate; and

FIG. 4B shows a fragmented cross-sectional view of the second/free end of the carabiner gate of FIGS. 4 and 4A in a nesting arrangement with an upper free end of a carabiner body.

FIG. 5 shows a cross-sectional view of a carabiner gate having a layer of material disposed thereabout, and wherein the area between the wings is filled with material.

FIGS. 6–8 show views of alternate embodiments of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Reference will now be made to the drawings in which the various elements of the present invention will be given

numeral designations and in which the invention will be discussed so as to enable one skilled in the art to make and use the invention. It is to be understood that the following description is only exemplary of the principles of the present invention, and should not be viewed as narrowing the pending claims.

Referring to FIG. 2, there is shown a plan view of a carabiner gate, generally indicated at 200. The gate 200 is formed with a first wing 204 and a second wing 208. The two wings 204 and 208 are connected by a bridge 210. While shown in FIG. 2 as being small in length, the bridge could extend the entire length of the wings.

Each wing has a first end, 212a and 212b respectively, and a second end, 216a and 216b respectively. A hole 220 is formed in the wings 204 and 208 adjacent each respective end. The holes 220 provide receptacles for pins (not shown) which are used to hold the gate 200 to a carabiner (FIG. 2A) and to allow the gate to catch on the carabiner body.

The gate 200 will typically be made of a durable metal, such as stainless steel, 4130 alloy steels, titanium, or aluminum and will be about 0.05 to 0.125 inches thick. At such a thickness, gates 200 can be rapidly stamped or cut out of sheets of metal without the complication and expense involved with machining the gates. The open design also allows for greater access to any biasing member such as a spring.

After each gate has been stamped out, the wings 204 and 208 and/or the bridge 210 are bent along bending lines 224 so that the wings extend in a parallel direction: the top edges 230 of the wings being disposed at a similar distance from one another as the bottom edges 234 of the wings, and so that inner face 226 of each wing faces the inner face of the opposing wing.

Referring now to FIG. 2A, there is shown a side view of the carabiner gate 200 of FIG. 2 attached to a carabiner body 240. As with the prior art embodiments, the carabiner 240 includes a body 242 with a back portion 244 and a front portion 248. The front portion 248 is formed by the upper free end 252 and the lower free end 256, and the opening 260 disposed between the two which is selectively closed by the carabiner gate 200.

The gate 200 is attached to the lower free end 256 of the carabiner body 242 by placement of a pin 266 through the hole 220 in the first end 212 of the gate in a conventional manner. The attachment of the carabiner gate 200 to the lower free end 256 allows the opposing second or free end 216 of the gate to pivot in the conventional manner.

The second or free end 216 of the carabiner gate 200 has a pin 270 extending through the hole 220. When the carabiner gate 200 is in a closed position, the pin 270 nests within the notch 274 which is positioned in the upper free end 252 of the carabiner body 242. If the pin 270 or some other stop mechanism were not provided, the gate 200 would be able to pivot out beyond the upper free end 252 of the carabiner body 242 and would provide little, if any, protection against the rope accidentally slipping from the carabiner, and no structural support to the body when in tension.

While not shown in FIG. 2A, the carabiner gate 200 will typically have a spring or other biasing member disposed therein. The biasing member can be attached to the gate 200 and to the lower free end 256 in a number of ways which will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

Referring now to FIG. 3, there is shown an alternate embodiment of the stamped carabiner gate, generally indicated at 300, made in accordance with the teachings of the

present invention. The gate **300** includes a first arcuate wing **304** and a second arcuate wing **308**. The two arcuate wings **304** and **308** are connected by a bridge **310**. Typically, the wings **304** and **308** will arc away from the bridge, i.e., the side of each wing along which the bridge is attached will be generally convex. However, the wings **304** can be made to curve inwardly.

Each wing has a first end, **312a** and **312b** respectively, and a second end, **316a** and **316b** respectively. Holes **320** are formed in the wings so that one hole is adjacent each respective end. As with the previous embodiment, the holes **320** provide receptacle for pins (not shown) which are used to hold the gate **300** to a carabiner (FIG. 3A) and to allow the gate to catch on the carabiner body.

As with the prior embodiment, the carabiner gate **300** includes one or more bending lines **324** adjacent the attachment of the bridge to each respective wing **304** and **308**. The wings **304** and **308** are bent relative to the bridge **310** so that the lower/inner edges **330** of each wing and the upper/outer edges of each wing **334** are disposed generally parallel with the corresponding edge of the other wing, and so that the lower/inner edges and the upper/outer edges are disposed apart from each other approximately the same distance.

Referring now to FIG. 3A there is shown a side view of the carabiner gate **300** discussed relative to FIG. 3 attached to a carabiner **340**. As with the prior art embodiments, the carabiner **340** includes a body **342** formed in a prolate loop so as to circumscribe a void **344**. The carabiner body **342** includes a back portion **346** and a front portion **348**. The front portion **348** is formed by the upper free end **352** and the lower free end **356**, and an opening **360** disposed between the two which is selectively closed by the carabiner gate **300**. Due to the arcuate nature of the carabiner gate **300**, the front portion **348** of the carabiner **340** is effectively concave. Those familiar with rock climbing and rappelling will appreciate that such a design is often more convenient to use than the straight carabiner gate **200** shown in FIGS. 2 and 2A, as the concave nature of the carabiner gate **300** facilitates the sliding of ropes into the void **344**.

Those familiar with making carabiners, however, will appreciate that concave gates are usually more complex and more expensive to make. In contrast, with the present invention, the arcuate carabiner gate **300** is simple and economical to form and can be done by the simple replacement of a die in the stamping machine.

The gate **300** is attached to the lower free end **356** of the carabiner body **342** by placement of a pin **366** through the hole **320** in the first end **312** of the gate in a conventional manner. The attachment of the carabiner gate **300** to the lower free end **356** allows the opposing second or free end **316** of the gate to pivot in the conventional manner.

The second or free end **316** of the carabiner gate **300** has a pin **370** extending through the hole **320**. When the carabiner gate **300** is in a closed position, the pin **370** nests within the notch **374** which is positioned in the upper free end **352** of the carabiner body **342**. If the pin **370** or some other stop mechanism were not provided, the gate **300** would be able to pivot out beyond the upper free end **352** of the carabiner body **342** and would provide little, if any, protection against the rope accidentally slipping from the carabiner, nor provide strength when the body is placed under tension.

Also shown in FIG. 3A, is a shadowed representation of the biasing mechanism **374**, typically a spring, which is disposed in the gate to force the second or free end **316** into contact with the upper free end **352** of the carabiner body

342 and thereby prevent ropes from accidentally being pulled through the opening **360**.

Referring now to FIG. 4, there is shown yet another embodiment of a stamped carabiner gate, generally indicated at **400**, made in accordance with the present invention. The stamped carabiner gate **400** includes a first wing **404** and a second wing **408** with at least one bridge **410** extending between the two.

The wings each include a first end, **412a** and **412b**, respectively, and a second end, **416a** and **416b**, respectively, disposed opposite the first ends. As with the prior embodiments, the first ends **412a** and **412b** have holes **420** disposed therein for receiving a pin. The second ends **416a** and **416b**, however, do not have holes. Rather, the second end **416a** of the first wing **404** has a blunt ending. The second wing **408**, in contrast, extends beyond the end **416a** of the first wing **404** a distance slightly greater than the width of the bridge **410** separating the first and second wings.

A notch **438** is formed in the outer edge **434** of the second wing **408**. The depth of the notch **438** is typically between one-half and three-quarters of the width of the second wing **408**. As will be explained in additional detail below, the notch effectively replaces the pins **270** and **370** disposed in the respective second ends **216** and **316** of the prior embodiments.

After the gate **400** is stamped from a sheet of metal, the wings **404** and **408** are bent with respect to the bridge **410** along the bending lines **424**. The second end **416b** of the second wing **408** is then bent toward and slightly around the second end **416a** of the first wing **404**. In such a manner, the second end **416b** of the second wing **408** serves as a catch mechanism, and no pin is needed to prevent the gate **400** from extending beyond the upper free end (shown in FIGS. 2A and 3A at **252** and **352**, respectively).

When folded, the wings **404** and **408**, etc, form a gate **400** as shown in FIG. 4A. The gate **400** has the first and second wings, **404** and **408**, respectively, which are connected by a bridge **410**. At the first end **412**, the two wings **404** and **408** are connected by a pin **470** in the usual manner. At the opposing second end **416**, however, the two wings **404** and **408** are connected by a catch **476** formed from the second end **416b** of the second wing. Preferably, the second end **416b** of the second wing **408** forms a small overwrap **478** which can be pressed or welded to the first wing **404** to provide added stability.

While the catch **476** can be used with a conventional upper free end such as those shown in FIG. 2A at **252** and in FIG. 3A at **352**, the tabs **482** of the catch provide additional advantages. Those familiar with carabiners will appreciate that the hook-like upper free end (**252** in FIG. 2A or **352** in FIG. 3A) has a significant disadvantage. Referring momentarily to FIG. 3A, the hook **486** has a tendency to get caught in clothing and other climbing equipment. However, the hook **486** is needed to allow the pin **370** to nest when the gate **300** is in a closed position.

Referring again to FIG. 4, the tabs **482** engage a rib **490** formed on the upper free end **452** of the carabiner body **442**. The tabs **482** are disposed so as to have a slight frictional engagement with the rib **490** when under tension, and an "interference" engagement when no tension is present. The tabs **482** provide an equally secure engagement, but without the need for a hook **486** (FIG. 3A).

Referring now to FIG. 4B, there is shown a fragmented, cross-sectional view of the catch **476** engaging the upper free end **452** of the carabiner body **442**. The tabs **482** engage

the rib **490** of the upper free end **452** to provide a secure nesting arrangement which is less likely to catch on clothing and other materials.

Referring to FIG. 5, there is shown a cross-sectional view of a gate **400** made in accordance with the teachings of the present invention. The gate **400** consists of first and second wings, **404** and **408** respectively, which are joined by a bridge **410**. The gate **400** is circumscribed by a liner **500** which is disposed about the gate to protect ropes being used with the gate from wearing on the edges of the first and second wings **404** and **408** respectively. Those familiar with rock climbing or rappelling will appreciate that the edges of the wings could significantly increase wear on the ropes if left uncovered.

The liner **500** can be formed of numerous materials. For example, the liner **500** could be formed from a graphite composite, a thermo-plastic resin, or could simply be a nylon sleeve which wraps about the gate **400**. The liner **500** could even be textured, as shown at **504** to give additional traction to the finger or thumb of a climber attempting to open the gate, while leaving the remainder of the liner smooth to decrease friction and wear on the ropes. Typically, the outer surface of the liner will be knurled.

In addition to the liner **500**, a filler **510** may also be provided. The filler **510** fills the void between the first and second wings, **404** and **408** respectively, to give the gate **400** a more solid, secure feeling. The filler **510** also provides additional support to the gate **400**.

If a filler **510** is used, it will typically be formed out of the same material as the liner **500**. Thus for example, the filler **510** and the liner **500** may both be formed of a thermoplastic resin as one piece. This can be accomplished by covering the ends **412** and **416** of the gate **400** and then coating the gate in resin, etc. The resin is then cured. Alternatively, a rigid material may be used for the filler **510** and a resilient material used for the liner **500**. Those skilled in the art will recognize numerous different liners **500** and fillers **510** which may be used to achieve desired characteristics for the gate **400**, as well as numerous methods for applying filler/plastic.

Referring now to FIG. 6, there is shown yet another embodiment of the present invention. The gate **600** is formed by first and second wings, **604** and **608**, respectively, which are cut in a liner arrangement. The first and second wings **604** and **608** are connected by a bridge **610**. In such an arrangement, the first ends **612a** and **612b** are disposed at opposing ends of the gate **600** when it is formed from a piece of sheet metal. The second ends **616a** and **616b** are disposed adjacent each other and adjacent the bridge.

In order for the holes **620** in the first ends **612a** and **612b** to be disposed adjacent each other, so that they may be attached to the carabiner, the wings **604** and **608** are bent along bending lines **624** at the second ends **616a** and **616b**. Once the gate **600** has been bent, the bridge **610** is positioned to engage the carabiner body (not shown) so the gate **600** selectively closes the opening therein. Typically, the gate **600** will be coated with a thermo-setting plastic or a liner formed of some other material to provide a surface which is comfortable to work with.

In order to ensure secure engagement with the carabiner body (not shown) the second ends **616a** and **616b** are bent to form tabs **628** which will extend inwardly as discussed with respect to FIGS. 4A and 4B. The tabs **628** help to ensure that the gate **600** will not accidentally open during use.

In FIG. 6A, there is shown a top view of the gate **600** wherein the second ends **616a** and **616b** have been bent to

that the bridge **610** is positioned perpendicular to the wings **604** and **608**. In such a position, the bridge **610** forms the catch which prevents over rotation of the gate **600** when it is attached to the carabiner.

Referring now to FIG. 7, there is shown a plan view of yet another embodiment of the present invention. The gate **700** is formed of first and second wings, **704** and **708**, respectively. The wings **704** and **708** are attached by a bridge **710** which connects the second ends **716a** and **716b**, while the first ends **712a** and **712b** of the wings remain unattached. To draw the holes **720** near the first ends **712a** and **712b** toward each other sufficiently, the wings are bent along bending lines **724** adjacent the second ends **716a** and **716b**. Thus, the bridge **710** interacts with the carabiner body (not shown) to limit movement of the gate. Tabs **728** may also be formed to provide a secure engagement with the carabiner body.

In FIG. 8, there is shown yet another embodiment of a carabiner gate, generally indicated at **800**, in which the gate is formed from a sheet of metal, rather than by machining a piece of metal. The gate **800** is formed of first and second wings **804** and **808**, respectively. When the gate **800** is cut from a piece of sheet metal, the first ends **812a** and **812b** are positioned adjacent one another, as are the second ends **816a** and **816b**. However, rather than being disposed between the wings **804** and **808**, the bridge **810** extends outwardly from the second ends **816a** and **816b** and then across to the opposing arm.

To form a gate for use on a carabiner, the bridge **810** is bent along bending lines **824** so that the wings **804** and **808** face each other. A notch **830** may be formed in the second end **816a** and **816b** of each gate **804** and **808** so that the bridge is disposed above a lower edge of each wing, **804a** and **808a** respectively, when the gate **800** is bent into shape.

Thus there is disclosed a stamped carabiner gate which overcomes many of the disadvantages of the prior art. The gate can be formed in numerous different ways out of a sheet of metal. Forming the gate out of sheet metal reduces cost without reducing performance. Those skilled in the art will recognize numerous modifications which may be made without departing from the scope or spirit of the invention. The appended claims are intended to cover such modifications.

What is claimed is:

1. A carabiner gate for use with a carabiner having a prolate loop for circumscribing a void, and an opening for enabling the placement of items within the void, the gate comprising:

first and second elongate wings, for forming a carabiner gate, the wings being disposed such that each has an inner face disposed so as to generally face the opposing wing, each wing having a first end and a second end, the second end of the second wing extending beyond the second end of the first wing a sufficient length that the second end of the second wing can be folded so as to contact the second end of the first wing;

a bridge disposed so as to connect the first wing to the second wing; and

attachment means disposed on the wings for connecting the wings to the prolate loop adjacent the opening and in a pivotable arrangement such that the first and second wings selectively close the opening in the prolate loop of the carabiner.

2. The carabiner gate of claim 1, wherein the second end of the second wing comprises a notch formed therein for nesting about the carabiner.

3. The carabiner gate of claim 2, wherein the second wing has a width and an outer edge, and wherein the notch extends from the outer edge between one-half and three-quarters of the width.

4. The carabiner gate of claim 2, wherein the first and second wings are disposed generally parallel to one another, and wherein the second end of the second wing is disposed generally perpendicular to the first and second wings so as to connect the second wing to the first wing and form a catch between the first and second wings.

5. The carabiner gate of claim 4, wherein the catch formed by the second end of the second wing includes at least one tab disposed adjacent the notch for frictionally engaging the carabiner.

6. The carabiner gate of claim 1, wherein the gate further comprises a liner disposed about the first and second wings and the bridge so as to circumscribe the gate.

7. The carabiner gate of claim 6, wherein the liner is formed of a composite material.

8. The carabiner gate of claim 6, wherein the liner is formed of a thermo-setting resin.

9. The carabiner gate of claim 6, wherein the liner is formed of a thermo-plastic resin.

10. The carabiner gate of claim 6, wherein the liner is formed of a resilient material.

11. A carabiner gate for use with a carabiner having a prolate loop for circumscribing a void, and an opening for enabling the placement of items within the void, the gate comprising:

first and second elongate wings, for forming a carabiner gate, the wings being disposed such that each has an inner face disposed so as to generally face the opposing wing, each wing having a first end and a second end; a bridge disposed so as to connect the first wing to the second wing; and

attachment means disposed on the wings for connecting the wings to the prolate loop adjacent the opening and in a pivotable arrangement such that the first and second wings selectively close the opening in the prolate loop of the carabiner; and

wherein the gate further comprises a filler disposed between the first and second wings, the filler being made from a different material than the bridge.

12. The carabiner gate of claim 11, wherein the gate and the filler are circumscribed by a liner.

13. The carabiner gate of claim 12, wherein the liner has a textured surface disposed thereon.

14. The carabiner gate of claim 11, wherein the filler comprises at least one of the group consisting of composite material, thermo-setting resins and thermoplastic resins.

15. A method for making a carabiner gate for attachment to a carabiner defined by a prolate loop with an opening on one side thereof, the carabiner gate being pivotably attached to the carabiner to selectively close the opening, the method comprising:

(a) cutting a gate from a sheet of metal, the gate having first and second wings and a bridge disposed therebetween;

(b) bending the gate such that the first and second wings are disposed so as to face one another so as to define an area between the first and second wings;;

(c) disposing a filler in the area between the first and second wings; and

(d) attaching a first end of the gate to the carabiner such that the carabiner pivots to selectively close the opening in the carabiner.

16. The method of making a stamped carabiner gate of claim 15, wherein each wing is attached to the bridge at an attachment point, and wherein step (b) comprises, more specifically, bending each wing relative to the bridge adja-

cent the attachment point so that the wings are disposed opposite one another.

17. The method of making a stamped carabiner gate of claim 15, wherein the gate has a second end opposite the first end, and wherein the method further comprises forming a catch at the second end of the gate.

18. The method of making a stamped carabiner gate of claim 17, wherein each wing has a second end, and where forming the catch comprises, more specifically, forming holes in the second end of each wing and passing a pin through said holes so as to connect the first and second wings.

19. A method for making a carabiner gate for attachment to a carabiner defined by a prolate loop with an opening on one side thereof, the carabiner gate being pivotably attached to the carabiner to selectively close the opening, the method comprising:

(a) cutting a gate from a sheet of metal, the gate having first and second wings and a bridge disposed therebetween;

(b) bending the gate such that the first and second wings are disposed so as to face one another; and

(c) attaching a first end of the gate to the carabiner such that the carabiner pivots to selectively close the opening in the carabiner;

wherein each wing has a second end disposed opposite the first end of the gate, the second end of the second wing extending beyond the second end of the first wing and wherein the method further comprises forming a catch, wherein forming of the catch comprises, more specifically, bending the second end of the second wing into contact with the second end of the first wing.

20. The method of making a stamped carabiner gate of claim 19, wherein the method further comprises disposing a notch in the second end of the second wing such that the notch is disposed between the first and second wings when the second end of the second wing is bent into contact with the second end of the first wing.

21. The method of making a stamped carabiner gate of claim 20, wherein the method further comprises disposing tabs adjacent the notch and positioning the tabs such that the tabs engage the carabiner when the carabiner enters the notch.

22. The method of making carabiner gate of claim 17, wherein each wing has a second end, and where forming the catch comprises, more specifically, disposing the bridge adjacent the second end of the wings so that the bridge extends between the wings, thereby forming a catch adjacent the second end.

23. The method of making a carabiner gate of claim 22, wherein the method further comprises forming a notch in at least one wing adjacent the bridge.

24. A method for making a carabiner gate for attachment to a carabiner defined by a prolate loop with an opening on one side thereof, the carabiner gate being pivotably attached to the carabiner to selectively close the opening, the method comprising:

(a) cutting a gate from a sheet of metal, the gate having first and second wings and a bridge disposed therebetween, each of the wings having first and second ends;

(b) bending the gate such that the first and second wings are disposed so as to face one another; and

(c) attaching the first end of each wing of the gate to the carabiner such that the carabiner pivots to selectively close the opening in the carabiner;

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wherein the method further comprises bending the second ends of the wings toward the opposing wing so as to form tabs adjacent the bridge, the tabs being disposed to frictionally engage the carabiner body.

25. The method of making a stamped carabiner gate of claim 15, wherein the method further comprises positioning a liner about the gate so as to circumscribe the gate and minimize friction by the wings of the gate.

26. The method of making a carabiner gate of claim 25, wherein the method comprises, more specifically, selecting

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a liner having a textured outer surface and disposing the liner about the gate.

27. The method of making a stamped carabiner gate of claim 15, and wherein the method further comprises positioning filler material between the first and second wings, the filler material being formed from a different material than the wings and bridge.

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