

a magnetoresistive layer, having a central active region and first and second laterally opposed end regions terminating in first and second sides;

first and second lead tabs overlaying said magnetoresistive layer at said first and second end regions and terminating at said first and second sides, said lead tabs comprising a material that is relatively resistant to 16 milling;

first and second hard bias layers contacting said first and second sides; and

first and second electrically conductive lead layers overlaying at least a portion of said first and second electrically conductive pads.

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