EP(UK) 1667590 CLAIMS:

1. A system for fixing a bone, the system comprising:

a bone plate including a unitary clip portion (24, 26) configured to wrap at least partially around a bone and including a pair of aligned apertures; and

a fastener (44) configured to be received by the aligned apertures, the fastener being extendable through the bone between the aligned apertures (46), to lock to the clip portion by means of engagement with the clip portion at a perimeter of at least one of the aligned apertures; and

an apparatus for forming holes in bone,

wherein the clip portion includes a pair of opposing arms (34, 36) and a bridge region (38) connecting the opposing arms (34, 36), and characterised in that the clip portion is configured to be received on a rib bone so that the bridge region (38) is disposed adjacent a superior surface of the rib bone.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the fastener has a thread.

3. The system of claim 2, wherein the perimeter of the at least one aperture includes an offset lip (74, 76) configured to engage the thread of the fastener so that the fastener is locked to the clip portion.

4. The system of any preceding claim, the bone plate further comprising a spanning portion (40) configured to extend along the bone and joined unitarily to the clip portion at least substantially through only one of the opposing arms.

5. The system of any preceding claim, wherein the clip portion (24, 26) is generally U-shaped.

6. The system of claim 4, the clip portion being a first clip portion (52), wherein the bone plate further comprises a second clip portion (64) connected to the first clip portion through the spanning portion (62).

7. The system of claim 6, the clip portion and the spanning portion being included in a first plate component, and wherein the bone plate further comprises a second plate component (54) including the second clip portion and configured to be secured to the bone and connected to the first plate component (52) via the spanning portion (40).

8. The system of claim 6, the bone plate further comprising:

a first plate component (52) including the first clip portion which is configured to wrap partially around a bone, and the spanning portion, which is configured to extend from the first clip portion along the bone; and

a second plate component (54) configured to be connected to the first plate component (52) via the spanning portion and including the second clip portion, which is configured to wrap partially around the bone.

9. The system of any of claims 6 to 8, wherein each of the first and second clip portions includes a pair of aligned apertures configured to receive a threaded fastener that secures such clip portion to the bone.

10. The system of any one of claims 7 to 9, wherein the spanning portion and the second clip portion are configured to overlap and abut one another when the first and second plate components are connected to one another.

11. The system of any one of claims 7 to 10, wherein each of the second clip portion and the spanning portion includes a pair of apertures disposed laterally to one another, and wherein the pairs of apertures are configured to be aligned when the first and second plate components are connected to one another.

12. The system of any one of claims 6 to 11, wherein each of the first and second clip portions is configured to be disposed adjacent generally opposing surfaces of the bone, and wherein the spanning portion is configured

to extend at least substantially along only one of the generally opposing surfaces.

13. The system of any one of claims 6 to 12, wherein the spanning portion is unitary with the first clip portion.

14. The system of any of claims 1 to 3, wherein the bone plate comprises:

at least two clip portions, each clip portion having a pair of arms (34, 36) configured so that such clip portion receives the bone between the pair of arms; and

a spanning portion (40) connected to the clip portions at least substantially through only one of the arms of each clip portion and configured to extend along the bone between the at least two clip portions, to span a discontinuity in the bone.

15. A system of any of claims 1 to 3, wherein the bone plate comprises:

at least two clip portions, wherein the clip portions are generally U-shaped and configured to receive a bone so that each clip portion is disposed adjacent generally opposing surfaces of the bone; and

a non-U-shaped spanning portion connecting the at least two clip portions and configured to span a discontinuity in the bone when the clip portions receive the bone.

16. The system of any of claims 1 to 3, wherein the bone plate comprises:

a spanning portion configured to be disposed on a rib bone; and

a plurality of clip portions which are connected to the spanning portion, every clip portion of the bone plate extending transversely from the spanning

portion in the same general direction and extending to an opposing side of the rib bone when the spanning portion is disposed axially on the rib bone.

17. The system of any of claims 1 to 3, wherein the bone plate comprises:

a spanning portion configured to be disposed axially on a rib bone and having opposing edges; and

two or more clip portions (24, 26) connected to the spanning portion and extending generally from the same opposing edge, wherein no clip portions extend from the other opposing edge.

18. The system of any preceding claim, wherein at least one of the aligned apertures is elongate.

19. The system of any preceding claim, wherein each of the aligned apertures is elongate.

20. A kit for fixing a bone, comprising:

the system of any preceding claim, an instrument for measuring one or more dimensions of the bone, and an instrument (130, 180) for bending at least a portion of at least one of the at least bone plates intraoperatively.