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(54) **Improved trail and endurance saddle.**

(57) The present invention provides an improved trail and endurance saddle which, in one embodied form, comprises a modified Western saddle tree, an upper saddle covering including a seat and upper flaps, and underside saddle covering including a panel and underflaps, the saddle coverings being disposed on the saddle tree. In more detail, the improved saddle further comprises a leather wrapped, internally padded tree and seat to absorb shock when horse riding and to form fit the contour idiosyncrasies of a wide variety of horsebacks. A nylon rigging is attached to the saddle tree as opposed to the leather to avoid displacement typically caused by stretching of the leather. An adjustable cinch is attached across the front, middle and rear of the saddle tree with heavy gauge nylon webbing for improved structural strength and for easy maintenance. The adjustable cinch is movable to the front and to the rear and is lowered out of the way of the horse rider's knees to fit varying size horses and to adapt to varying styles of riding. Accordingly, the inventive saddle provides an extremely comfortable close contact fit for both horse and rider and provides even distribution of the rider's weight across the saddle seat.

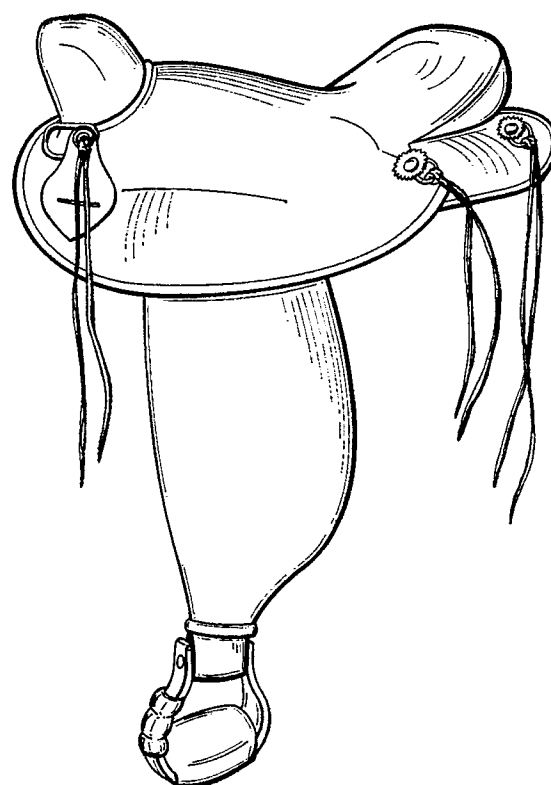


FIG. 1

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IMPROVED TRAIL AND ENDURANCE SADDLE

Field of the Invention

The subject invention relates to an improved saddle construction, and more particularly to an all-leather soft-seat saddle construction comprising internal padding which acts as a shock absorber for both horse and rider and provides a form fit for the individual contour of a horse's back, yet returns to its original shape when removed ready for the next horse.

Description of the Prior Art

Horse riding enthusiasts have long enjoyed trail and endurance riding. In this respect, it is important for the trail and endurance enthusiast to equip the horse with relatively light weight saddle designed to provide a balanced ride. One important feature of these saddles in 50 and 100-mile races and on trail rides is the adaptability of the saddle construction to varying types of terrain and weather across the United States and to provide a balanced, comfortable fit for both horse and rider.

Many conventional saddles contain high spots in the saddle seat which prevent even distribution of the rider's weight across the saddle seat. Such saddles have also posed a problem of saddle trees having relatively high horns which pose the disadvantage of hitting the rider's chest or stomach when climbing hills.

Typically, known western saddles comprise sheepskin under the saddle for padding. Over time, however, such sheepskin wears and mats down rapidly, eventually providing little or no shock absorbance for which such padding was originally intended.

Moreover, as most horseback contours vary to some degree, i.e., bumps and notches are not uniform nor symmetrical in all cases, the saddle should conform to the surface idiosyncrasies of the particular horseback being ridden.

Conventional saddles attach a rigging to the leather, but over time, the leather stretches. Additionally, a cinch is generally located at the rider's knee and may interfere with the custom fit of a particular horse or varying style of riding.

Representative of these conventional saddles are those disclosed in U.S. Patent Nos. 4,771,590; 3,112,592; 3,286,440; 3,698,608; 4,287,705; and 4,502,266.

Accordingly, those skilled in the art have recognized a significant need for an improved saddle construction which provides an all-leather attractive appearance and a balanced ride. Additionally,

those skilled in the art have recognized a need to avoid high spots in the saddle seat, but to provide even distribution of the rider's weight across the saddle seat to the rider's thighs. Moreover, a significant need has been recognized for a fabrication of a cinch which is adjustable and fabricated from durable materials for strength and easy maintenance to fit any horse in any style of riding. The present invention fulfills these needs.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides an improved trail and endurance saddle which, in one embodied form, comprises a modified Western saddle tree, an upper saddle covering including a seat and upper flaps, and underside saddle covering including a panel and underflaps, the saddle coverings being disposed on the saddle tree. In more detail, the improved saddle further comprises a leather wrapped, internally padded tree and seat to absorb shock when horse riding and to form fit the contour idiosyncrasies of a wide variety of horsebacks. A nylon rigging is attached to the saddle tree as opposed to the leather to avoid displacement typically caused by stretching of the leather. An adjustable cinch is attached across the front, middle and rear of the saddle tree with heavy gauge nylon webbing for improved structural strength and for easy maintenance. The adjustable cinch is movable to the front and to the rear and is lowered out of the way of the horse rider's knees to fit varying size horses and to adapt to varying styles of riding. Accordingly, the inventive saddle provides an extremely comfortable close contact fit for both horse and rider and provides even distribution of the rider's weight across the saddle seat.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

Figure 1 illustrates a side perspective view of the improved trail and endurance saddle in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention; and

Figure 2 is a side view illustrating rigging of the improved saddle affixed to the saddle tree in accordance with one embodiment of present invention;

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The subject invention relates to an improved saddle construction and, more particularly, to an all-leather soft-seat saddle-construction comprising internal padding which acts as a shock absorber for both horse and rider and yet provides a conforming fit for the individual horseback, yet returns to its original shape when removed, ready for the next horse.

The present invention provides an improved trail and endurance saddle which, in one embodied form, comprises a modified Western saddle tree, an upper saddle covering including a seat and upper flaps, and underside saddle covering including a panel and underflaps, the saddle coverings being disposed on the saddle tree. In more detail, the improved saddle further comprises a leather wrapped, internally padded tree and seat to absorb shock when horse riding and to form fit the contour idiosyncrasies of a wide variety of horsebacks. A nylon rigging is attached to the saddle tree as opposed to the leather to avoid displacement typically caused by stretching of the leather. An adjustable cinch is attached across the front, middle and rear of the saddle tree with heavy gauge nylon webbing for improved structural strength and for easy maintenance. The adjustable cinch is movable to the front and to the rear and is lowered out of the way of the horse rider's knees to fit varying size horses and to adapt to varying styles of riding. Accordingly, the inventive saddle provides an extremely comfortable close contact fit for both horse and rider and provides even distribution of the rider's weight across the saddle seat.

In more detail, as shown in Figure 1, the saddle 10 comprises a western tree 10, having a seat between about 12 to about 18 inches with a cantle of between about 1 1/2 to 4 1/2 inches. Preferably, the seat is 15 inches, with a 3 inch cantle.

The seat is internally padded and encased within soft moccasin leather. Preferably, the padding for the internal portion of the leather seat is a light-weight sponge foam of between about 1/4 to 1 inch thickness and preferably 3/4 inch thickness of padding.

The saddle tree has high and wide wither clearance and the tips, front and rear, are flared to minimize digging into the horse's shoulder or back. Bars 20 inch long are padded and wrapped in rough-out leather to help prevent the pad from slipping.

The rigging is attached to the tree as opposed to the leather to minimize displacement which is conventionally due to the stretching of leather over time as the saddle is worn.

The cinch is attached across the front, middle and rear of the tree with heavy gauge nylon web-

bing. The cinch is adjustable by means of a buckle and is adjustable to 7/8, 3/4 and 5/8 to fit horses of varying size and contour, and to adapt to a variety of styles of horse riding.

The inventive saddle is constructed to weigh no more than about 20 pounds, and preferably from 16 to 17 pounds in weight.

The cinch is attached across the front, middle and rear of the saddle tree with heavy gauge nylon for strength and ease of maintenance. The adjustability allows the cinch to be positioned below the rider's knee and is adjustable to the front and to the rear to fit a wide variety of horses and to adapt to various styles of riding.

The heavy gauge nylon attaches the stirrups to the saddle tree directly under the rider for a balanced ride. Accordingly, the nylon provides free movement like English leather saddles, but the rider is afforded the comfort of Western fenders. The fenders are also adjustable with Blevin buckles.

A pair of stirrups are preferably composed of nylon with padded tread for more comfortable fit for the rider's feet. The stirrups are free-swinging.

Preferably, the ring is fabricated from brass.

The Blevin buckles include plural burn holes preferably having brass grommets for long-lasting wear.

Accordingly, the present invention provides an extremely comfortable fit for both horse and rider and affords close contact of the rider to the horse. Additionally, the improved saddle construction in accordance with the present invention provides an all-leather attractive appearance and a balanced ride which avoids high spots in the saddle seat and which provides even distribution of the rider's weight across the saddle seat to the rider's thighs.

Claims

1. An improved trail and endurance saddle, comprising a modified Western saddle tree, an upper saddle covering including a seat and upper flaps, and underside saddle covering including a panel and underflaps, the saddle coverings being disposed on the saddle tree, a leather wrapped, internally padded tree and seat to absorb shock when horse riding and to form fit the contour idiosyncrasies of a wide variety of horsebacks, a nylon rigging attached to said saddle tree, an adjustable cinch attached across the front, middle and rear of the saddle tree with heavy gauge nylon webbing for improved structural strength and for easy maintenance

2. The improved trail and endurance saddle as defined in Claim 1, wherein said cinch is movable to the front and to the rear and is lowered out of

the way of the horse rider's knees to fit varying size horses and to adapt to varying styles of riding.

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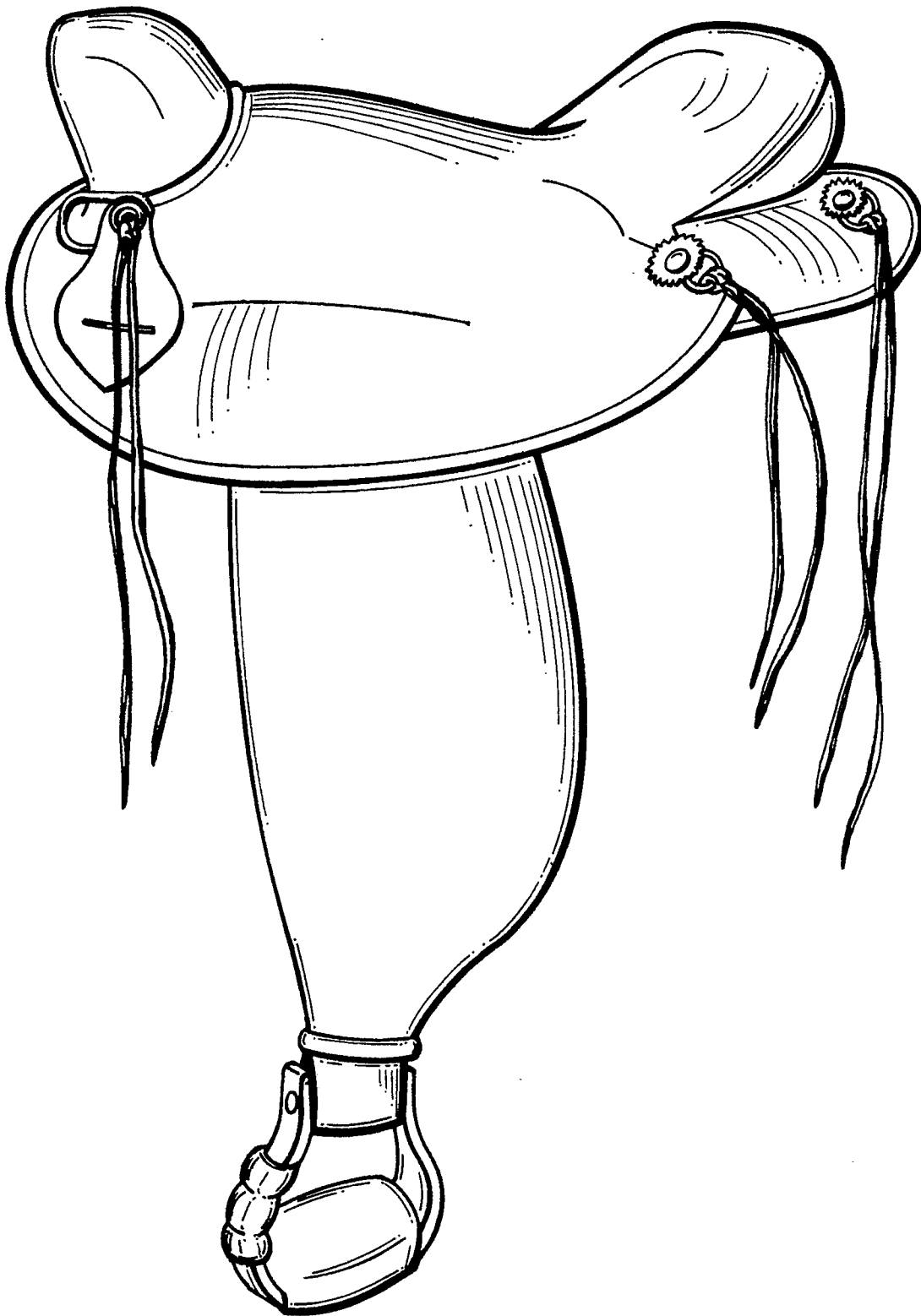


FIG. 1

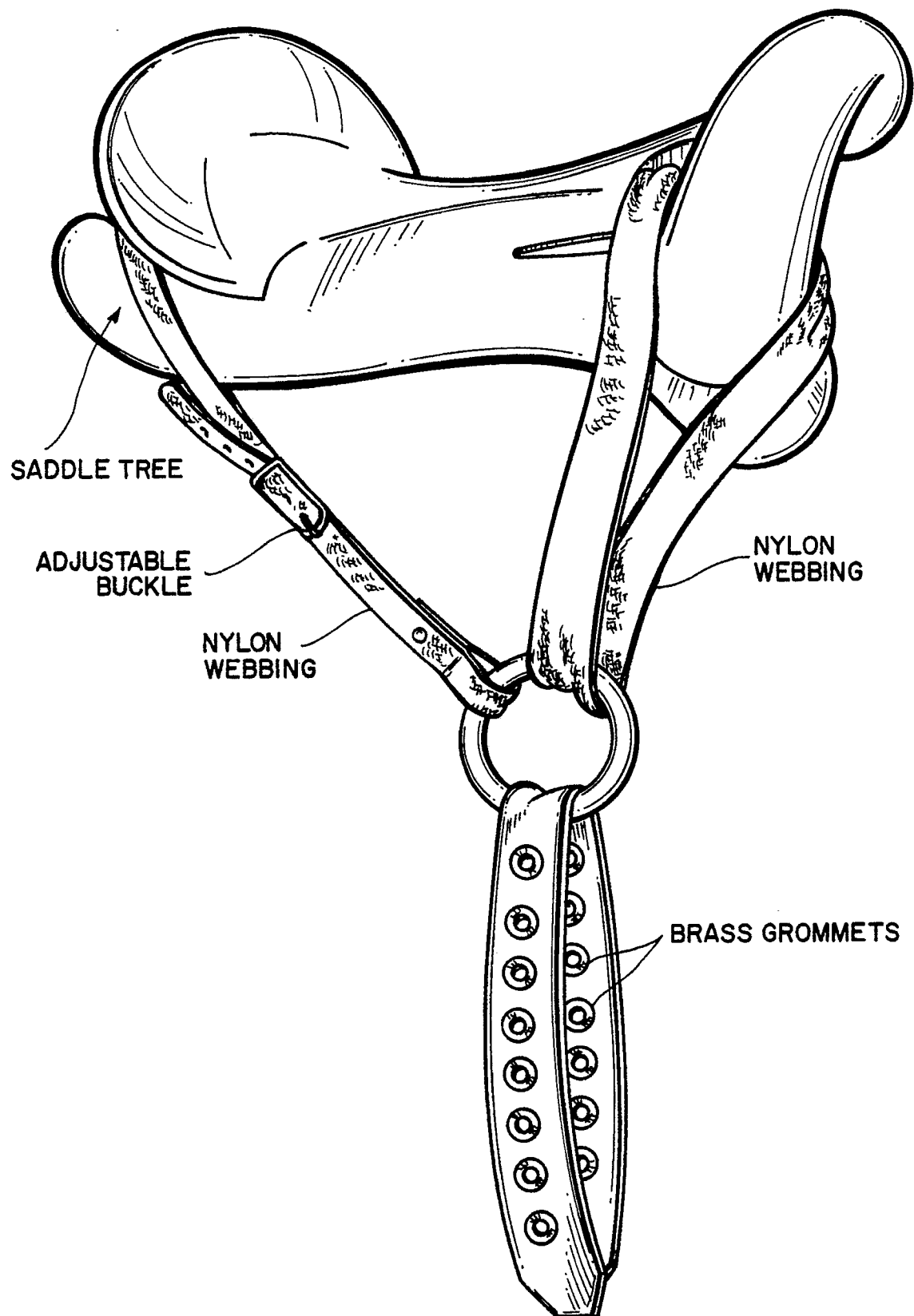


FIG. 2



European Patent
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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

EP 90 30 7474

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.5)
A	US-A-4 745 734 (BROWN) * Column 1, lines 39-43; column 2, lines 21-46; figures * -----	1	B 68 C 1/02
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.5)
			B 68 C
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 02-10-1990	Examiner MARTIN A.G.M.
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			