

19



Europäisches Patentamt  
European Patent Office  
Office européen des brevets



11 Publication number: **0 557 676 A2**

12

### EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

21 Application number: **92830263.7**

51 Int. Cl.<sup>5</sup>: **A63B 26/00, A63B 41/00,  
A47C 3/16**

22 Date of filing: **27.05.92**

30 Priority: **27.02.92 IT MI920171 U**

71 Applicant: **LEDRAGOMMA S.r.l.**  
**Zona Industriale**  
**I-33010 Osoppo (Udine)(IT)**

43 Date of publication of application:  
**01.09.93 Bulletin 93/35**

72 Inventor: **Donde, Steno, c/o Ledragomma S.r.l.**  
**Zona Industriale**  
**I-33010 Osoppo (Udine)(IT)**

84 Designated Contracting States:  
**AT BE CH DE DK ES FR GB LI LU NL**

74 Representative: **Cicogna, Franco**  
**Ufficio Internazionale Brevetti Dott.Prof.**  
**Franco Cicogna Via Visconti di Modrone,**  
**14/A**  
**I-20122 Milano (IT)**

54 **Soft oval for exercising, physiotherapy or for sitting on.**

57 The present invention relates to a soft plastic material oval ball for gymnastics exercises and physiotherapy use, as well as for sitting use, which comprises a oval shape body which can be inflated and deflated, and is made of a soft plastic material, preferably a resilient vinyl material.

The ball, which has a major diameter varying from 50 to 180 cm and a minor diameter which can vary from 30 to 120 cm, has been specifically designed for gymnastics exercises, as well as a functional seat, having a curative effect, for a proper alignment of the user backbone.

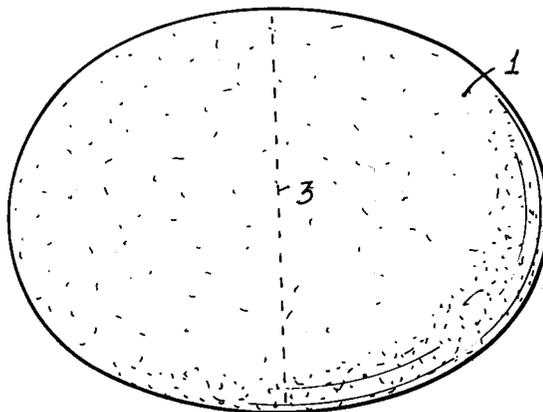


FIG. 1

EP 0 557 676 A2

## BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a soft plastic material oval ball for gymnastics exercises and physiotherapy use, as well as for sitting use.

As is known, mainly for persons which must remain for a long time in a set position during the working jobs, very important is the need of discharging or releasing the accumulated muscle stresses, in order to provide the necessary relaxation.

Also known is the fact that this stress can be released by performing suitable physical exercises.

However, since a lot of persons can not solve this problem by performing the necessary exercises at gymnastics palestras, several methods have been designed and suggested for performing these gymnastics exercises at the user home, usually by means of suitable implements.

Some of these implements comprise, for example, one or more small ball-like elements, of a deformable pneumatic type, which allow the user's muscles to be properly extended so as to properly exercise the joints and release the stress.

While the above mentioned implements have been found to be useful, they, however, require a comparatively long exercising time with complex physical exercises which do not provide the user with the possibility of easily releasing his/her stress.

There are also known deformable pneumatic elements, also of ball configuration, having a comparatively large size, which allow the user to perform several gymnastics exercises; however, also these implements, because of their truly spherical shape have a rather poor stability.

## SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Accordingly, the aim of the present invention is to overcome the above mentioned drawbacks, by providing an improved implement which allows an user to perform in a very easy way a lot of gymnastics exercises and which, moreover, can also be used for physiotherapy uses in general.

Within the scope of the above mentioned aim, a main object of the present invention is to provide such an exercising implement which is very stable and specifically designed for providing the user with a safe support during the gymnastics exercises.

Another object of the invention is to provide such an implement which can be easily inflated and deflated so as to fit its resiliency to the specific exercises to be performed by the user.

Yet another object of the present invention is to provide such an implement which can also be used as a seat having curative properties and, in particu-

lar, adapted to allow the user to suitably align his/her backbone.

According to one aspect of the present invention, the above mentioned aim and objects, as well as yet other objects, which will become more apparent hereinafter, are achieved by a soft plastic material oval ball for gymnastics exercises and physiotherapy use, as well as for sitting use, having the features of the main claim.

Further characteristics and advantages of the implement according to the present invention will become more apparent hereinafter from the following detailed disclosure of a preferred, though not exclusive, embodiment thereof, which is illustrated, by way of an indicative, but not limitative, example, in the figures of the accompanying drawings, where:

Figure 1 is a side view illustrating the oval ball implement according to the present invention;

Figures 2 and 3 are respectively a longitudinal cross-sectional view and a transversal cross-sectional view illustrating the ball implement according to the present invention;

and

Figure 4 illustrates a possible use procedure of the subject ball as a curative seat by an user.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

With reference to the figures of the accompanying drawings, the oval configuration ball implement 1 according to the present invention has a substantially elongated shape, which provides the implement with a good stability, said ball implement having preferably a major diameter 2 which can vary from 50 to 180 cm and a minor diameter 3 which can vary preferably from 30 to 120 cm.

The oval ball implement 1, more specifically, comprises a soft plastic material layer 4, preferably made of a resilient vinyl material, having any suitable thickness, and which can be gradually inflated and deflated in order to provide it with the desired resiliency characteristics.

In this connection it should be pointed out that the above mentioned materials will have a great resistance against the mechanical stresses and a very long duration in addition to an easy cleaning characteristic.

In this connection it should be apparent that the subject oval ball implement can be also made starting from any other suitable materials, and it can also be constructed with diameters different from those which have been specifically above mentioned.

While the invention has been disclosed and illustrated with reference to a preferred embodi-

ment thereof, it should be apparent that the disclosed embodiment is susceptible to several modifications and variations all of which will come within the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

5

**Claims**

1. A ball implement for performing physical exercises in general, characterized in that said ball implement comprises a oval configuration body of a soft plastic material which can be inflated and deflated. 10
2. A ball implement according to Claim 1, characterized in that said body is preferably made of a resilient vinyl material layer. 15
3. A ball implement according to Claims 1 and 2, characterized in that said oval body has a minor diameter varying from 30 to 120 cm. 20
4. A ball implement according to Claims 1 to 3, characterized in that said ball implement is specifically designed for performing gymnastics exercises in general, medical exercises, physiotherapy exercises and the like. 25
5. A ball implement according to one or more of the preceding claims, characterized in that said implement is so designed and constructed as to provide a sitting surface for an user to allow said user to proper align his/her backbone. 30

35

40

45

50

55

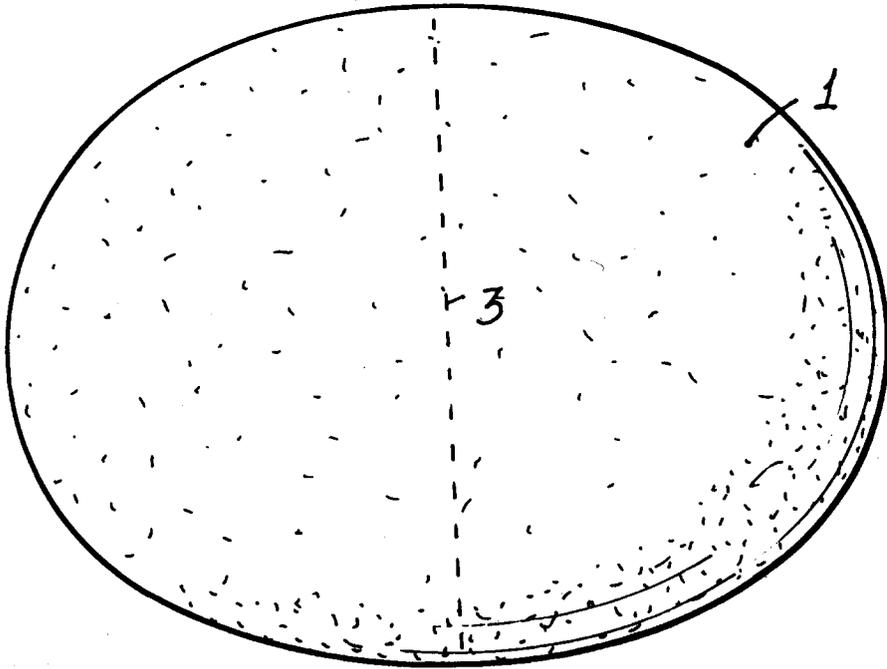


FIG. 1

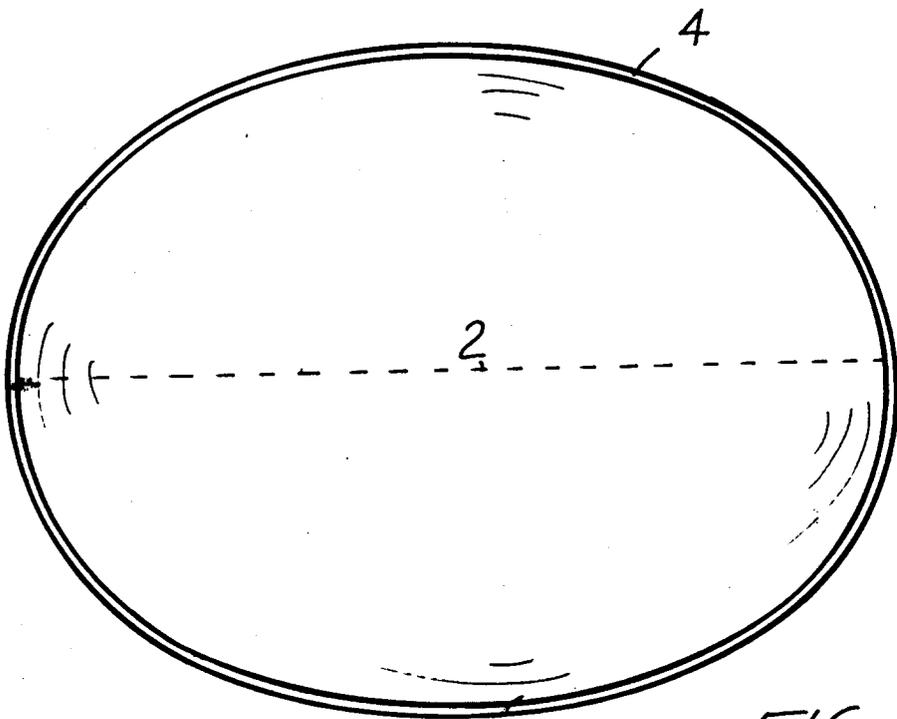


FIG. 2

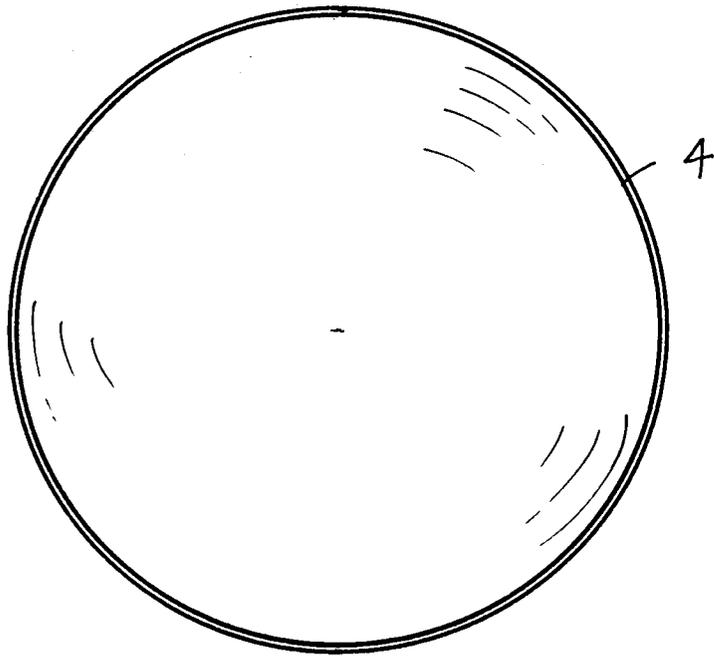


FIG. 3

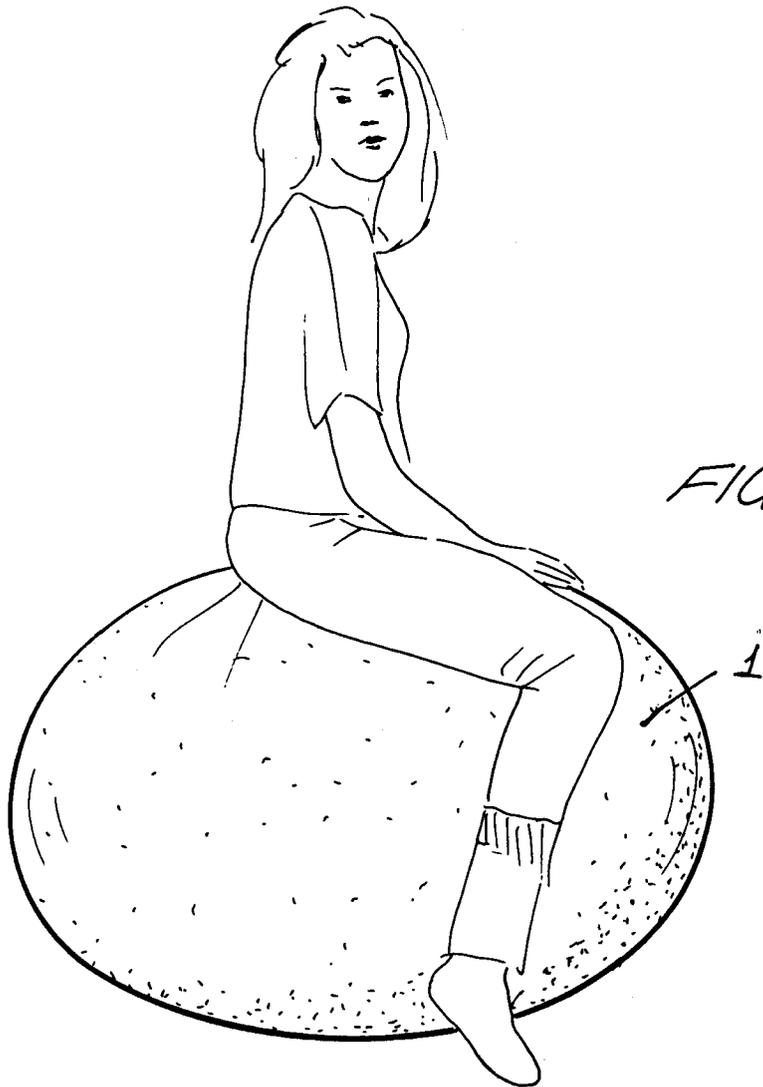


FIG. 4