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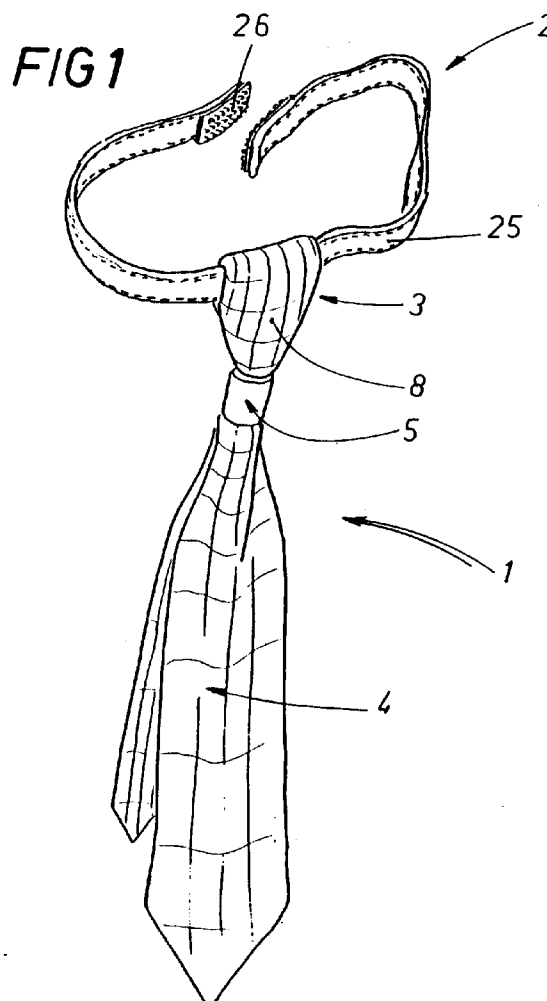
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(54) **Modular necktie.**

(57) A necktie consisting of a supporting collar (2) to be fitted round the collar of a garment, and a first portion (3) and a second portion (4) placed in view over the garment with which the necktie (1) is worn and which is modular in that the first and second portions (3, 4) are separate components joined together by a coupling (5) placed between them and made in such a way as to constitute an interchangeable connecting element for the said first portion (3) and the second portion (4); the coupling (5) may be made by different processes and in different shapes and allows the tie (1) to be changed completely in appearance by simply changing one of the two portions (3 or 4).



The present invention relates to a modular necktie.

It is known that a necktie usually consists of a single strip of decorative fabric worn round the collar of a shirt or blouse and knotted in front. A necktie may be divided basically into three parts, called collar, knot and tongue or end.

The parts that most characterise a necktie, that is to say, those that are always visible, are the knot and the tongue. The knot is usually made by the wearer when he or she puts the tie on and is triangular in shape, with the narrow end facing down. The knot is the central feature linking the collar, which is placed round the collar of the shirt and which supports the tie, to the tongue, which hangs loosely from it at the front of the body.

The collar is not visible and may have rigid or semirigid reinforcements to improve the shape of the tie and allow it to better maintain its shape.

Neckties with ready-made knots are also known. In ties of this type, the knot forms an integral part of the tongue, while the collar consists of a band or elastic strap attached to the knot and having fasteners at each end designed to fix it round the shirt collar.

Other known types of neckties include preshaped inserts in various materials placed inside the strip of fabric in order to confer the shape and appearance of a typical tie knot and tongue.

So-called bow-ties have two identical tongues tapering in a horizontal direction towards the centre in the manner of butterfly wings and joined at their narrow ends by a central knot.

In all the cases described above, the appearance of the tie can only be changed by changing the entire tie if it consists of a single piece of material or by changing the visible parts of the tie in those cases where the collar is separate from the rest of the tie, that is to say, the knot and the tongue.

The aim of the present invention is to provide a modular necktie, that is to say, a necktie made in such a way that its appearance can be completely changed without replacing all its visible elements.

This aim is achieved by the invention disclosed herein whose technical characteristics are laid out in the claims below and whose advantages are apparent from the detailed description which follows, with reference to the accompanying drawings, which illustrate preferred embodiments of the invention by way of example and in which:

- Figure 1 is a perspective view of a modular necktie made in accordance with the present invention;
- Figure 2 is an exploded perspective view of the modular necktie illustrated in Figure 1;
- Figures 3 to 6 are cross sections of some of the components of the modular necktie illustrated in Figures 1 and 2;
- Figure 7 is a perspective view of another em-

bodiment of the modular necktie made in accordance with the present invention;

- Figure 8 is a longitudinal side view of the modular necktie illustrated in Figure 7, with some parts cut away to show the parts inside;
- Figure 9 is a perspective view of yet another embodiment of the modular necktie illustrated in Figure 1;
- Figure 10 is a perspective rear view of a different modular necktie, of the type known as bow-tie;
- Figure 11 is a perspective view of a component, namely one of the cores, of the necktie shown in Figure 7;
- Figure 12 is the cross section through XII-XII of the component illustrated in Figure 11.

The invention will now be described with reference to the drawings listed above. The numeral 1 indicates the modular necktie made in accordance with the present invention which consists of a collar 2, a first portion 3 and a second portion 4.

The collar 2 is designed to be fixed round the collar of a garment, as a shirt for example, usually in such a way as to be hidden from view by the shirt collar itself. The first portion 3 and the second portion 4 are supported by the collar 2 and are designed to be always in view over the shirt. In practice, the first portion 3 and the second portion 4 are the parts which give the tie 1 its distinctive appearance.

According to the present invention, the tie 1 is made up of separate modular elements, including at least 3 elements in view over the shirt, namely the aforesaid first and second portions 3 and 4 and an intermediate element or coupling 5 placed between the first and second portions 3 and 4. The main purpose of the said coupling 5 is to connect the first portion 3 and the second portion 4 to each other (see Figs. 1 and 10).

The tie 1 may be made in the more common style, with the first portion 3 vertically aligned above the second portion 4 (see Fig. 1) or it may be a bow-tie in which the first portion 3 and the second portion 4 are practically the same and aligned horizontally (see Fig. 10).

For convenience and clarity, reference in this description will be to a traditional style of tie where normally the first portion 3 is called the knot and the second portion 4 the tongue or end.

Therefore, in the description which follows, the portions 3 and 4 will be referred to as knot 3 and tongue 4, respectively.

Fig. 2 shows that the knot 3 and the tongue 4 each consist of a preshaped core 6, 7 wrapped in, and attached to, a cover 8, 9 made of fabric or similar material. The cores 6 and 7 may be made of any suitable material, for example of the kind which can be moulded and deformed so that when the tie 1 is assembled and put on by the wearer, it assumes a natural ap-

pearance.

With reference to the embodiment illustrated in Figs. 1 and 2, it can be seen that the shape of the core 6 of the knot 3 is substantially the same as that of a classic tie knot, that is to say, basically triangular, with a narrow bottom end almost cylindrical in shape (the "vertex" of the triangle) and wider and flatter at the top (the "base" of the triangle). The core 7 of the tongue 4 is more cylindrical in shape, with a broader bottom end 23. Therefore, the narrow cylindrical ends of the cores 6 and 7 form sockets 10 open in the direction of the coupling 5. The broader, flatter ends of the cores 6 and 7 may be full, as shown in Figs. 5 and 6, or hollow, as shown in Fig. 11; in both cases, they are appropriately shaped to confer the desired form. The embodiment illustrated in Figs. 11 and 12 is more pliable than the one with the full cores illustrated in Figs. 5 and 6, irrespective of the material used.

Cores 6 and 7 and coupling 5 are equipped with fasteners 10 and 11; for example, the cylindrical ends of cores 6 and 7 may form sockets 10 designed to accommodate corresponding coaxial pins 11, either identical or different, as illustrated, made on opposite ends of the coupling 5. As shown in Fig. 2, the pins 11 have one or more enlargements 11i designed to fit into the sockets 10. As already mentioned, the cores 6 and 7 are preferably made of a pliable material that gives under pressure so that the pins 11 with the enlargements 11i can be pressed into the sockets 10 and held firmly thanks to the elasticity of the material of which the cores 6 and 7 are made. The pins 11 need not have the enlargements 11i, and, instead, added strength may be provided by fitting small magnets in the sockets 10 designed to hold the pins 11 and to sustain the component elements or modules of the tie 1.

The cover 8 is bag-shaped, fits right over the matching core 6 and has a hole or opening 16 at the bottom end to allow the pin 11 to be fitted into the corresponding socket 10 in the core 6. As shown in Fig. 2, the top of the cover 8 has a flap 17 designed to be folded over and fastened to the back of the cover 8 itself. Once fastened at the back of the cover 8, the flap 17 forms a loop 18 through which the collar 2 passes. The flap 17 may be fastened to the back of the cover 8 in any of various ways, for example, by stitching, gluing or with press studs 24 which make it possible to quickly unfasten the flap 17 to replace the collar 2, which may consist of a band or strap 25 equipped at each end with rapid, adjustable fasteners such as Velcro 26, for example. In the absence of the flap 17, the collar 2 may be fixed to the cover 8 of the knot 3 by stitching or gluing. The size of the cover 8 may be such as to allow the insertion of an appropriately shaped element 32 which guarantees that the knot 3 takes on the desired shape.

The cover 9 is tubular at the top to fit it over the corresponding core 7 whilst the bottom end is left free

to hang loosely just like an ordinary necktie.

Referring again to Fig. 2, the coupling 5 consists of a central block 12 with the pins 11 at opposite ends of it. The central block 12 may be slightly elongated so as to constitute an item of embellishment while at the same time acting as a spacer between the knot 3 and the tongue 4. The central block 12 may be made in many shapes and materials of various kinds. For example, it may be made of metal or imitation metal, or of opaque or transparent plastic. The central block 12 may be full or hollow at 15, as illustrated in Figs. 2 to 4. The hollow 15 may be used to accommodate mechanical and/or electronic devices or, if the block 12 is made of transparent material, it may be filled with a fluid, for a example, a coloured liquid. In the latter case, the core 6 acts as a stopper. The central block 12 may be manufactured according to any of several processes, for example by mechanical machining, die forming or blow moulding, and it may be made in a single piece or in two or more pieces, as shown in Figs. 3 and 4.

Externally, too, the central block 12 may have a wide variety of shapes and sizes, with decorations, inscriptions or, as shown in Figs. 2 and 4, recesses designed to accommodate precious, semiprecious and synthetic stones, either fixed or removable, to provide embellishment and decorative finish. The central block 12 may be further embellished with decorative, cryptographic elements.

As illustrated in Figs. 7 and 8, the central block 12 may be wider than the sections of the knot 3 and the tongue 4 nearest to it so as to make the tie 1 look as if it were made in a single piece and as if the central block 12 itself were a ring placed over the tongue 4 and pushed up as far as the knot 3.

The central block 12 may have one or more longitudinal holes 21 in it through which a string-style collar 2 passes (see Figs. 7 and 8). In this case, the central block 12 has a recess 13 to accommodate an elastic device 19 capable of retaining the collar string 2. The elastic device 19, of known type, may consist of a pressure-release stud 28 fitted in such a way that it can slide axially inside the recess 13 and having a crosswise hole 29 that comes into alignment with the longitudinal hole 21 and that is crossed by the collar string 2. The stud 28 has a spring 30 fitted over it which tends to push it out of the central block 12 in such a way as to press and stop the collar string 2 against the central block 12, as illustrated in Fig. 8. With reference to the latter figure, it can be seen that the core 6 also has longitudinal holes or grooves 22 through which the collar string 2 passes. The longitudinal holes 21 and 22 may terminate at the front of the tie 1 so that the free ends of the collar string 2 hang down over the visible side of the tongue 4 and may have attached to them a decorative item or badge 31, constituting a further embellishment of the tie 1.

The stud 28 may be on the visible (Fig. 7) or hid-

den (Fig. 8) side of the tie 1. If the stud is visible, it too may mount a precious or semi-precious stone 14, as illustrated in Fig. 7.

Again with reference to a traditional style necktie, the tongue 4 may consist of a pendant 20 in various forms, as illustrated in Fig. 9, where the pendant is a watch.

As already said, the tie 1 may also be a bow-tie, as shown in Fig. 10. In this case, the cores 6 and 7 are identical and are attached horizontally aligned at opposite ends of the coupling 5. The central block 12 of the coupling 5 has at least one longitudinal hole 21 corresponding to the longitudinal holes or grooves 22 in the cores 6 and 7 designed to allow the collar 2 to pass through them, as shown in Fig. 10. In this case too, the central block 12 may be made in various forms, as described with reference to the traditional style necktie.

Therefore, the modular necktie 1 makes it possible to obtain a large number of variations on a basic style with a very small number of pieces, that is to say, without having to change the entire tie to modify its appearance.

This has considerable economic advantages not only for the manufacturer but also for the consumer.

Indeed, the latter may initially purchase only the base modules and then at later stages only those modules required to change the external appearance of the tie, namely, the knot 3, the coupling 5 or the tongue 4.

Claims

1) A necktie consisting of a supporting collar (2) to be fitted around the collar of a garment, and a first portion (3) and a second portion (4) placed in view over the garment with which the necktie (1) is worn, the said necktie being characterized in that it comprises at least three distinct elements worn in view over the garment and consisting of the aforesaid first and second portions (3, 4) and an intermediate element or coupling (5) placed between the said portions and made in such a way as to constitute an interchangeable connecting element joining the first and second portions (3, 4).

2) The necktie according to claim 1, characterized in that the said first portion (3) and the said second portion (4) each consist of a preshaped internal part or core (6, 7) and an external part or cover (8, 9) made of fabric or a similar material, the said cores (6, 7) and the said coupling (5) being equipped with corresponding press fasteners (10, 11), the said covers (8, 9) having on the ends nearest the said coupling (5) at least one hole or opening (16) to allow the passage of said press fasteners (10 or 11).

3) The necktie according to claim 2, characterized in that the said coupling (5) consists of a central

block (12) with the said press fasteners (10) at each end and constituting both an ornament and a spacer for the said cores (6, 7) of the said first and second portions (3, 4).

4) The necktie according to claim 3, characterized in that the said central block (12) is wider than the ends of the portions (3, 4) nearest to it.

5) The necktie according to claim 3, characterized in that the said central block (12) has one or more recesses designed to accommodate precious, semi-precious or synthetic stones (14).

6) The necktie according to claim 3, characterized in that the said central block (12) of the said coupling (5) is made in one or more parts and has at least one recess or hollow (15) to accommodate mechanical and/or electronic devices.

7) The necktie according to claim 3, characterized in that the said central block (12) of the said coupling (5) has at least one longitudinal hole (21) through which the collar (2) passes.

8) The necktie according to claim 3, in which the said first portion (3) is placed above the said second portion (4) in substantially vertical alignment, characterized in that the said coupling (5) is made in one or more parts and is hollow so that it can be filled with a liquid, in which case the said core (6) of the first portion (3) acts as a stopper for the coupling (5).

9) The necktie according to claim 3, in which the said first portion (3) is placed above the said second portion (4) in substantially vertical alignment, characterized in that the said cover (8) of the first portion (3) has a flap (17) designed to be folded over and fastened to the back of the cover 8 itself so as to form a loop (18) through which the collar (2) passes.

10) The necktie according to claim 3, in which the said first portion (3) is placed above the said second portion (4) in substantially vertical alignment, characterized in that the said central block (12) of the said coupling (5) has at least one longitudinal hole (21) through which the collar (2) passes and a recess (13) to accommodate an elastic device (19) capable of retaining the collar (2) itself.

11) The necktie according to claim 10 characterized in that the core (6) of the said first portion (3) has longitudinal holes or grooves (22) through which the collar (2) passes, the bottom end of the longitudinal hole (21) in the said coupling (5) giving onto the visible side of the said second portion (4); the free ends of the said collar (2) going through the longitudinal holes (22) in the core (6) of the said first portion (3) and also through the longitudinal hole (21) in the said coupling (5), and having attached to them a decorative item or badge (31) on the visible side of the said coupling (5).

12) The necktie according to claim 1, in which the said first portion (3) is placed above the said second portion (4) in substantially vertical alignment, characterized in that the said second portion (4) consists of a pendant (20).

13) The necktie according to claim 7 in which the said first portion (3) is the same as the said second portion (4) and in substantially horizontal alignment, characterized in that the said cores (6, 7) have at least one longitudinal hole or groove (22) corresponding to the longitudinal hole (21) in the said central block (12) for the passage of the said collar (2).

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14) The necktie according to claim 1 characterized in that the said coupling (5) is made of metal or imitation metal.

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15) The necktie according to claim 1 characterized in that the said coupling (5) is made of transparent material.

16) The necktie according to claim 2 characterized in that the said cores (6, 7) are made of a pliable material, of which some parts are of reduced thickness.

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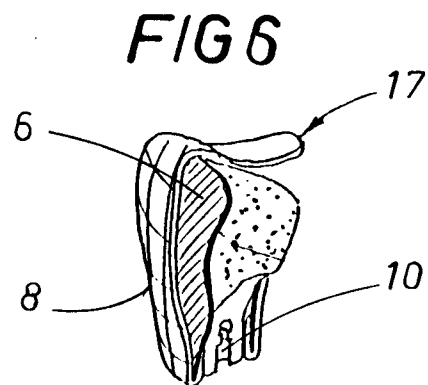
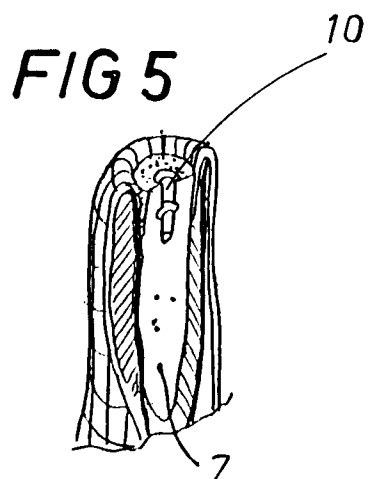
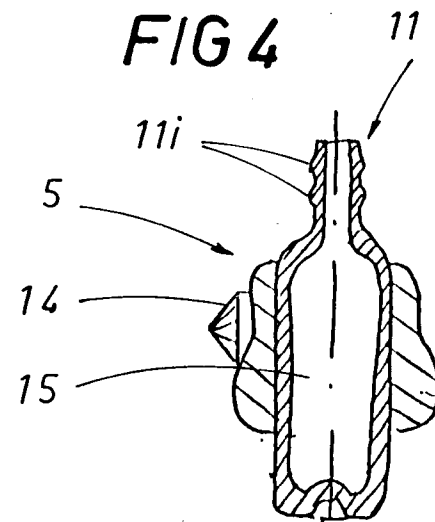
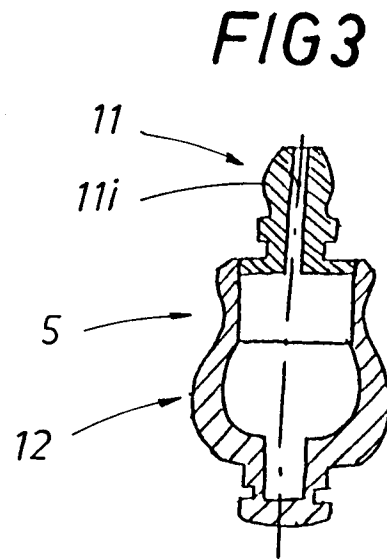
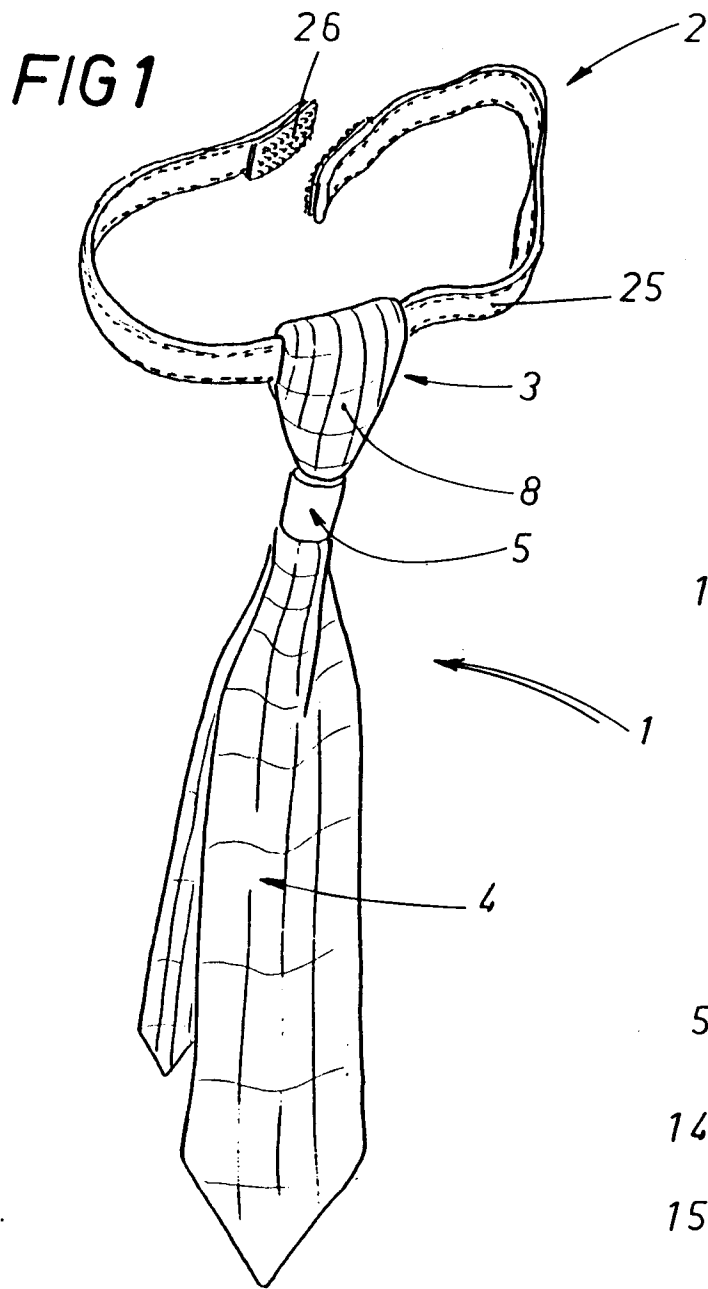
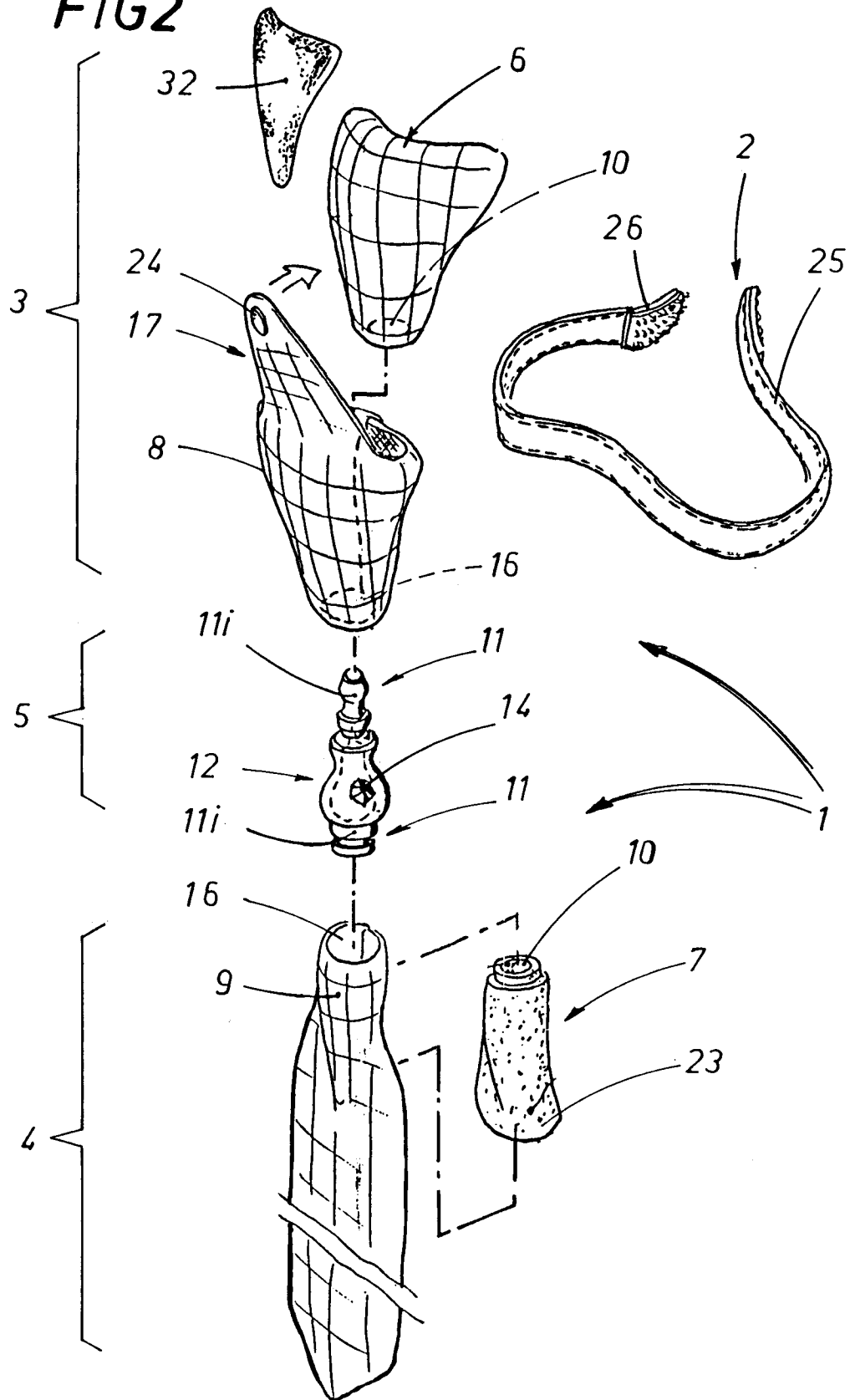
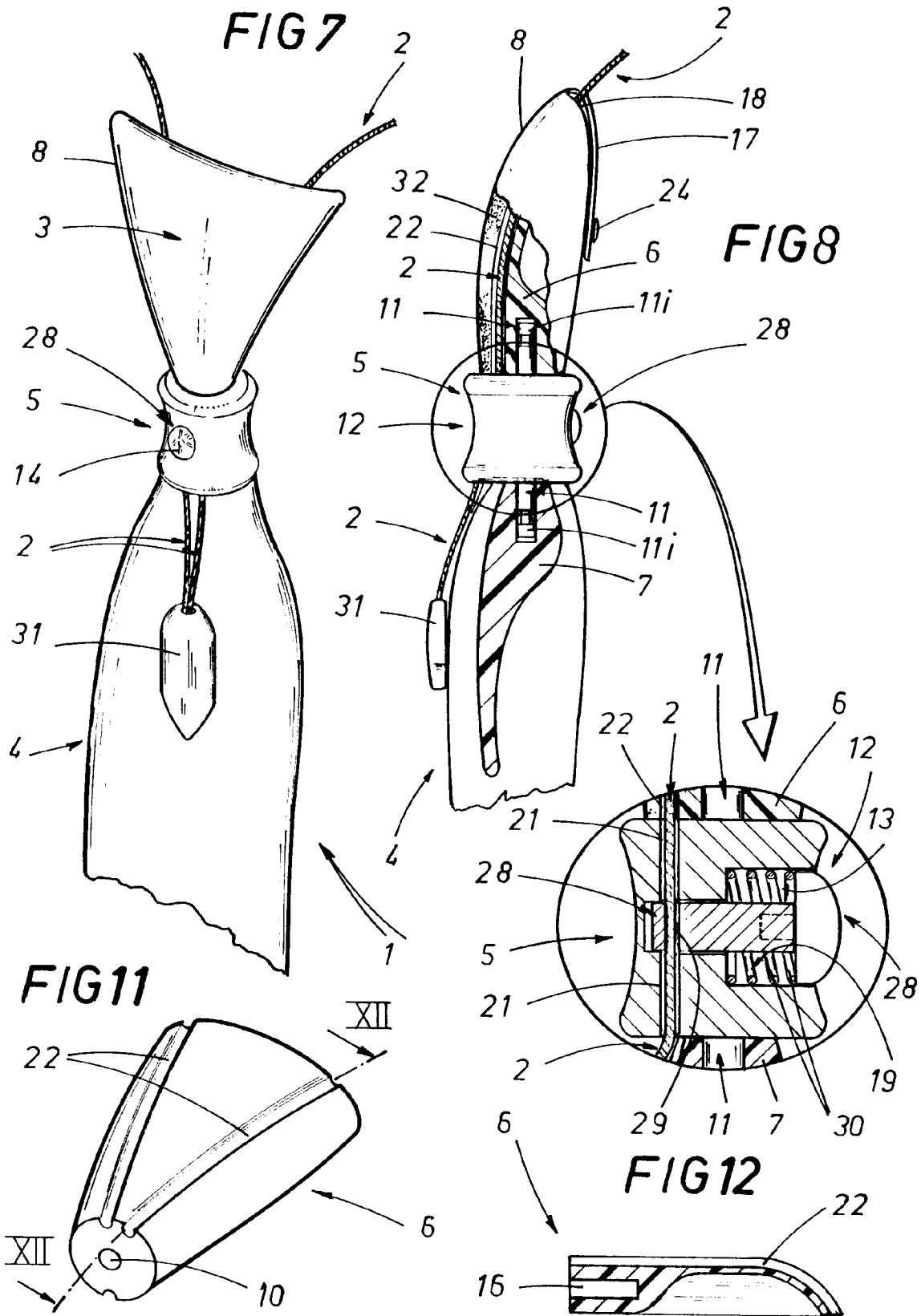


FIG2





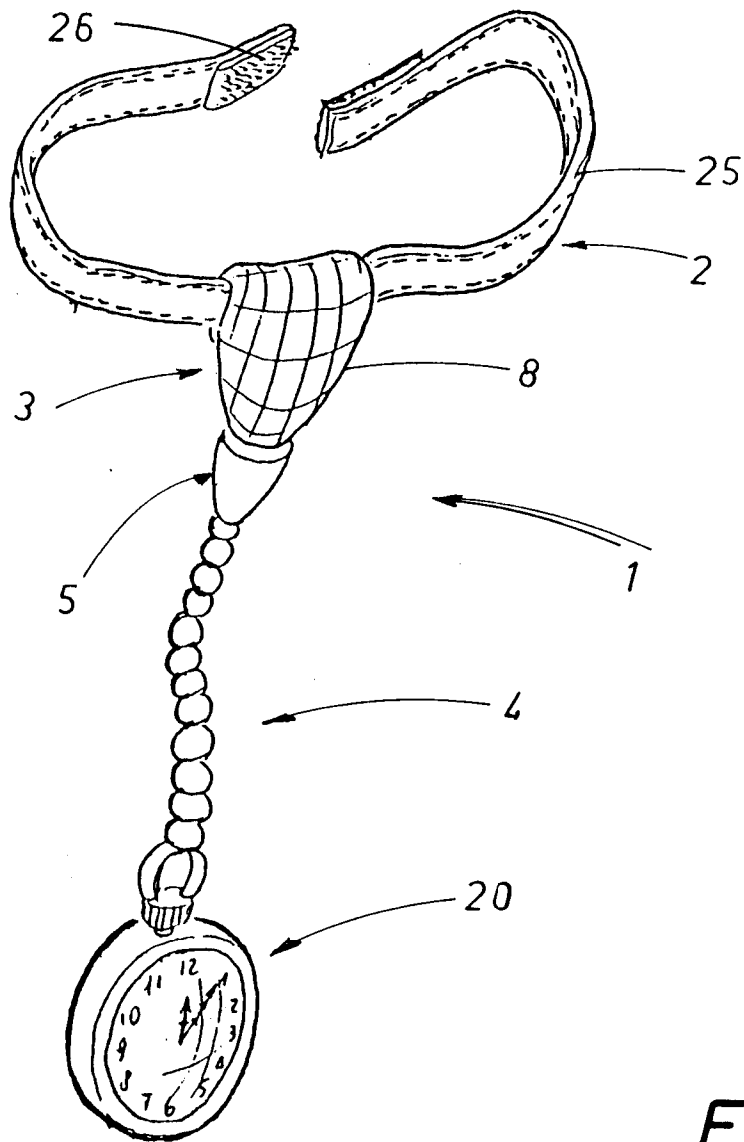


FIG 9

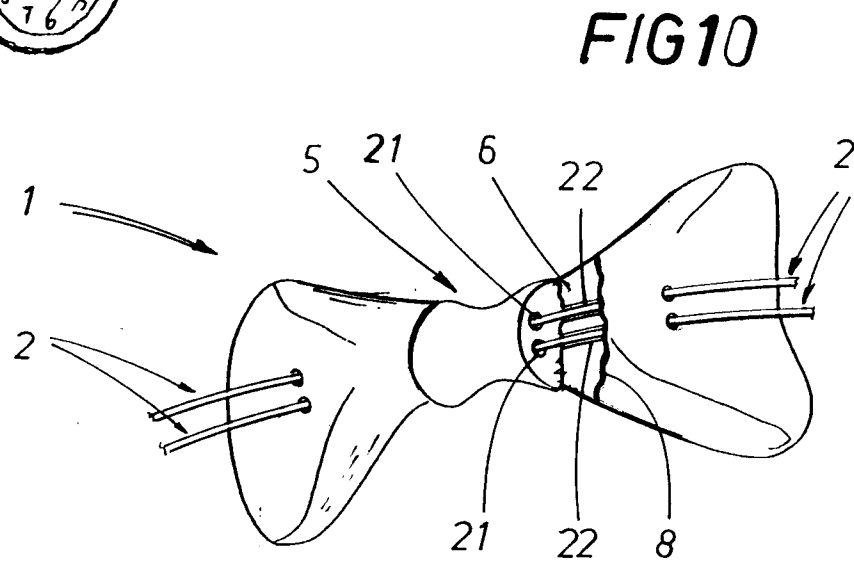


FIG 10



European Patent
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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 95 83 0056

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.6)
A	US-A-2 440 880 (A. F. TABORSKI) * column 3, line 41 - line 55 * * figures 1-8 *	1	A41D25/02
A	US-A-5 088 120 (CHEN-CHOU YEN) * figures 1-6 *	1	
A	WO-A-79 00894 (C. J. MALLOY) * claims 1-4,6-14; figures 1-12 *	1	
A	DE-C-33 13 181 (CHEN CHENG CHUN) * figures 1,2 *	1	
A	US-A-4 283 797 (M. SEIDER)		
A	EP-A-0 568 769 (J. LANGENBERG)		
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6)
			A41D
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
THE HAGUE		11 July 1995	Fairbanks, S
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