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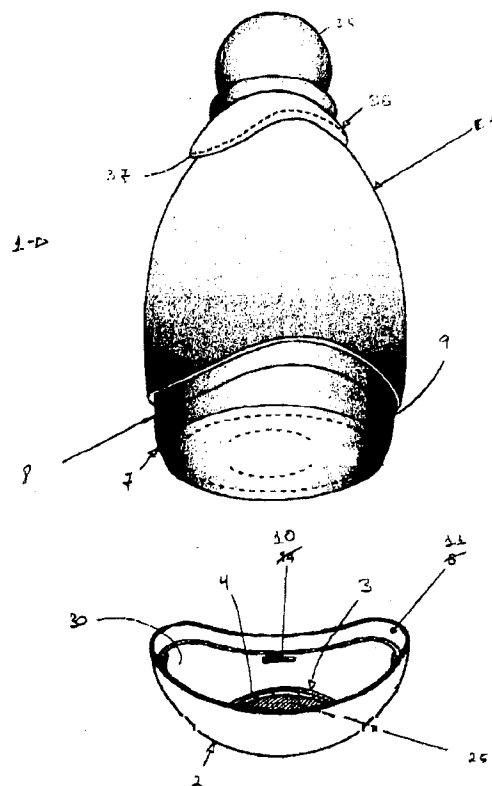
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(54) Container system & oscillating toy

(57) A container system 1, 20 comprises a base 2 having at least one curved surface and one element of ballast 3 adjacent to said curved surface. The system 1, 20 may hold toiletry products, such as toilet soap or shampoo, and confers more stability, reducing the chances of the user inadvertently knocking it down. A cover 21 may be attached to the base, or a bottle 6, the bottom portion 7 of which is configured for attachment to the base, so as to provide an oscillating toy.

FIG. 1



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Description

Scope of the invention

[0001] This invention relates to a container system provided with an interchangeable base, the innovative structural concept of which confers more stability, reducing the chances of the user inadvertently knocking it down. This container system is mainly useful for containing toiletry products, such as toilet soap or shampoo. This invention also acts as an oscillating toy.

[0002] According to the specific disclosures of this invention, it is preferably provided a base of substantially semi-spheric shape, with a hollow portion, associated either with a bottle or with a cover also of substantially semi-spheric shape, in this case with the purpose of providing, as an example, a toilet soap bowl.

[0003] Since this base is equipped with a ballast element, the container system it comprises will act as a tumbler, making it more difficult for it to be inadvertently knocked down. Such feature is extremely useful during a bath, when shampoo or toilet soap containers are frequently knocked down by the user.

[0004] Further to that, the modular nature of the present container system facilitates its manufacturing and assembling, and minimizes the corresponding costs.

[0005] These objectives of the present invention are achieved through a container system characterized for comprising a base provided of at least one curved surface, and an element of ballast adjacent to said curved surface.

[0006] An alternative embodiment of the invention is represented by an oscillating toy, comprising a base provided of at least one curved surface, and an element of ballast adjacent to said curved surface, and a bottle, the bottom of which can be coupled to the base. This oscillating toy is useful, for instance, to entertain a child during the bath, and at the same time exercising the child's psychomotor capability, when trying to oscillate the toy to a maximum angle without letting it tumble.

Detailed Description of the Invention

[0007] The present invention will be better understood through the following description given as an example, with references to the enclosed drawings, in which:

[0008] Figure 1 represents an exploded view of a first preferential embodiment of the container system subject matter of present invention.

[0009] Figure 2 is a lateral view of the system shown in Figure 1, with a cross-section view of the base

[0010] Figure 3 represents an exploded view of a second preferential embodiment of the container system subject matter of present invention.

[0011] Figure 4 is a lateral view of the system shown in Figure 3, with a cross-section view of the base

[0012] Referring to Figures 1 to 4, one can see that

both preferential embodiments of the container system 1 - 20 of the present invention comprise a base 2 of substantially semi-spheric shape, provided with an element of ballast 3, which in turn includes a wall 4 and a weight 5. Base 20 further includes a chamber 30.

[0013] Thus, when base 2 is attached to a bottle 6 (Figures 1 and 2) or to a cover 21 (Figures 3 and 4), it confers upon the container system 1 - 20 a substantial stability, rendering difficult its accidental knockdown. Obviously weight 5 must be of such a magnitude as to lower significantly the center of gravity of the container system 1 - 20.

[0014] Concerning the first preferential embodiment of the container system 1, shown in Figures 1 and 2, base 2 is attachable to a portion of the bottom 7 of bottle 6, and is provided with means of locking 8, in the form of a diametrical slit 9, which is in turn adapted to fit in with teeth 10 located in the internal surface of base 2.

[0015] According to this embodiment, the bottom portion 7 of bottle 6 is depressed in relation to the remainder of the outer surface of the bottle, and an peripheral annular portion 11 of base 2 has a reduced thickness in relation to the rest of base 2, so as to ensure an adequate seating between the base and bottle 6. Further, it can be particularly seen in Figure 2 that the bottom portion 7 is adapted to penetrate chamber 30 of base 2.

[0016] Yet according to Figures 1 and 2, bottle 6 preferably comprises a cap 35, which fits to a threaded portion (not shown) substantially opposed to the bottom portion 7 of bottle 6, which prevents the exit of the liquid contained therein.

[0017] Specifically in accordance with the disclosures of this invention, a collar 36 is contemplated, which is centrally bored to fit in with said threaded portion of bottle 6, and which is preferably held in the position shown in Figures 1 and 2 by cap 35 or by inter fitting slits or depressions existing in bottle 6 and collar 36.

[0018] Collar 36, according to an alternative embodiment of the invention, is made of a substantially rigid material and of a relevant weight when compared to the element of ballast 3 and to the container system 1 when filled in.

[0019] Thus, the angle of maximum oscillation of the bottle, i.e. the greatest angle in relation to the horizontal plane that the container system may oscillate around its geometrical axis without tumbling can be made to vary, in many ways, depending on the dislocation of the center of gravity of system 1 along its respective vertical geometric axis, by filling chamber 30 with water or other adequate material. Thus, a ludic character may be imparted to container system 1, ensuring, for instance, that the system 1 will tumble only when reaching a maximum oscillation angle of about 45°.

[0020] Such possibility allows the constitution of a toy capable to entertain a child during bath, for instance, at the same that it exercises the child's psychomotor capability, when the child tries to oscillate container system

1 to the maximum, without knocking it down. System 1 may also be configured with its center of gravity positioned in such a manner that it returns to the vertical position when empty, independently of the inclination it has been submitted to.

[0021] Collar 36 is preferably provided with pendent flaps 37, which modify the center of gravity of container system 1, as they are incorporated to bottle 6 in different sizes, which enhances the ludic rows character mentioned above.

[0022] As shown in Figures 3 and 4, another preferential embodiment of container system 20, object of this invention, comprises a cover 21, of substantially semi-spherical shape, with an edge 22 also with its thickness reduced in comparison with the rest of cover 21, allowing the adequate setting of cover 21 into base 2.

[0023] in this second embodiment, the container system 20 can be used to hold an object, such as a toilet soap bar, which will be stored in chamber 30 of base 2 and inside cover 21. Further to that, wall 4 preferably will be provided with a textured area 25, which will minimize the dislocation of the object held by container system 20. Wall 4 may be attached to base 2 by means of saliences or projecting means 26.

[0024] The annular periferic region 11 of base 2 may present a substantially sine curve configuration, as particularly shown in Figures 1 and 3, or any other, with the possibility even of irregular configurations, provided the bottom portion 7 of bottle 6, or the edge 22 of cover 21 present a compatible configuration. Further to that, base 2, bottle 6 and cover 21 must be preferably shaped in the sense of the external surfaces of container systems 1, 20 being uniform, without any relevant level differences or discontinuities in the joints between base 2, bottle 6 and cover 21.

[0025] Finally, base 2, bottle 6 and cover 21 are preferably made of rigid plastic, but presenting a small degree of resilience to allow the intercoupling of these elements by snap-on setting.

[0026] In summary, the present invention relates to a container system comprising a base having at least one curved surface, and ballast means adjacent to said curved surface. The base is preferably hollow and provided with a smooth, outwardly curved surface that enables the base to rock to and fro. The ballast means preferably comprises one or more weights fixed either on or in close proximity to the interior surface of the base, which means enable the base to right itself after it has been knocked.

[0027] A bottle, cover, or a receptacle, container or other receiving means may be detachably mounted upon the base, the weight and position of the ballast being selected having regard to the weight and configuration of the said bottle, cover or other receiving means so as substantially to improve the stability of the entire container system. Preferably, the bottle, cover or other receiving means are configured so as to be mounted within the hollow base, and advantageously, corresponding

interlocking means are provided on the two elements releasably to secure them together. The bottle or other receiving means may be provided with additional weight at or near the top thereof, so as to affect the manner in which the container system rocks. The receptacle, container or other receiving means may be used to store, for example, toilet soap, shampoo or other toiletry products.

Claims

1. A container system (1 - 20) characterized for comprising a base (2) having at least one curved surface, and an element of ballast (3) adjacent to said curved surface.
2. A system according to Claim 1, characterized by said base (2) presenting a substantially semi-spheric shape and a chamber (30), and the system (1) being additionally provided with a bottle (6), the bottom portion of which (7) is provided with means of locking (8) that fit with teeth (10) located on the inner surface of the base (2)
3. A system according to Claim 2, characterized by said locking means (8) comprising a diametrical slit (9) and by the bottom portion (7) being depressed in relation to the outer surface of bottle (6), and by the annular periferic region (11) of base (2) having its thickness reduced in comparison with that of the rest of the base (2).
4. A system according to Claim 1, characterized by said base (2) presenting a substantially semi-spheric shape and a chamber (30), with the system (20) additionally comprising a cover (21) presenting a substantially semi-spheric shape, the edge of which (22) fits with base (2)
5. A system according to Claim 1, characterized by said edge (22) and the annular periferic region (11) of base (2) presenting reduced thickness in comparison with that of the rest of the cover (21) and base (2), respectively.
6. A system according to Claim 1, 2 or 4, characterized by said ballast element (3) comprising a wall (4) and a weight (5).
7. An oscillating toy, characterized by comprising a base (2) which presents at least one curved surface, an element of ballast (3) adjacent to said curved surface, and a bottle (6) the bottom portion of which is attachable to base (2)
8. A toy, according to Claim 7, characterized by additionally comprising a collar (36) attachable to bottle

(6) at a location substantially opposed to the base
(2).

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FIG. 1

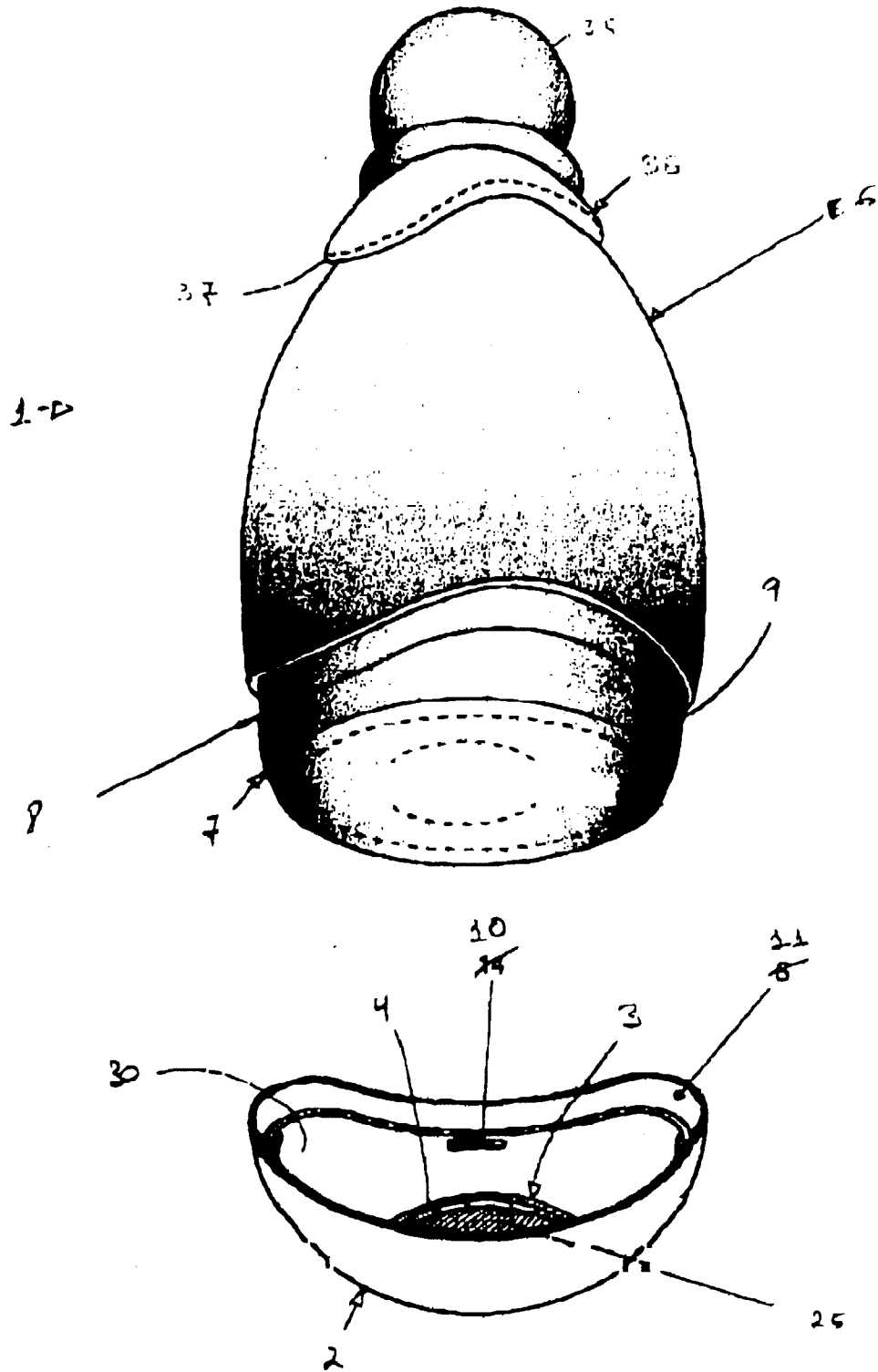


FIG. 2

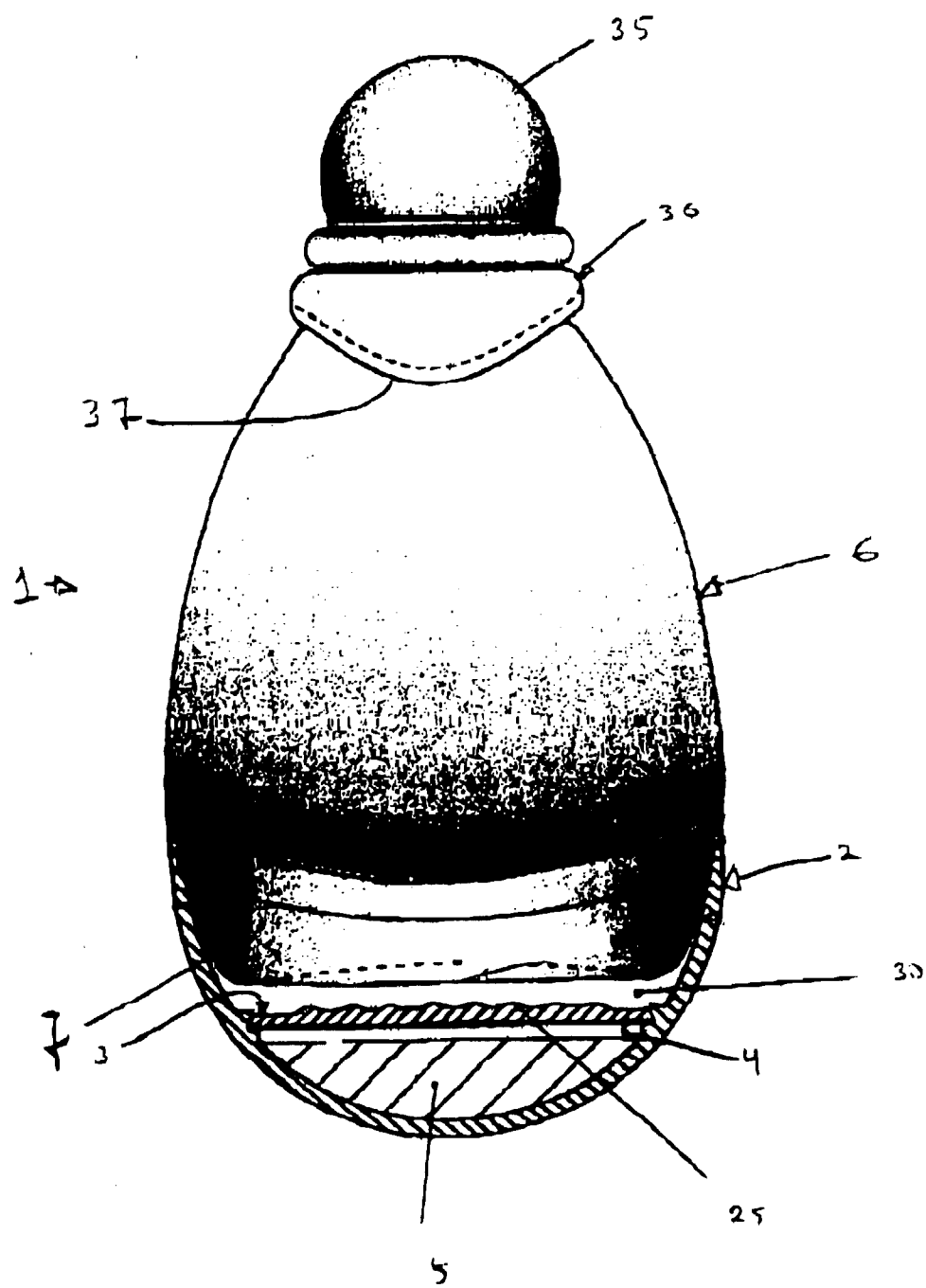


Fig. 3

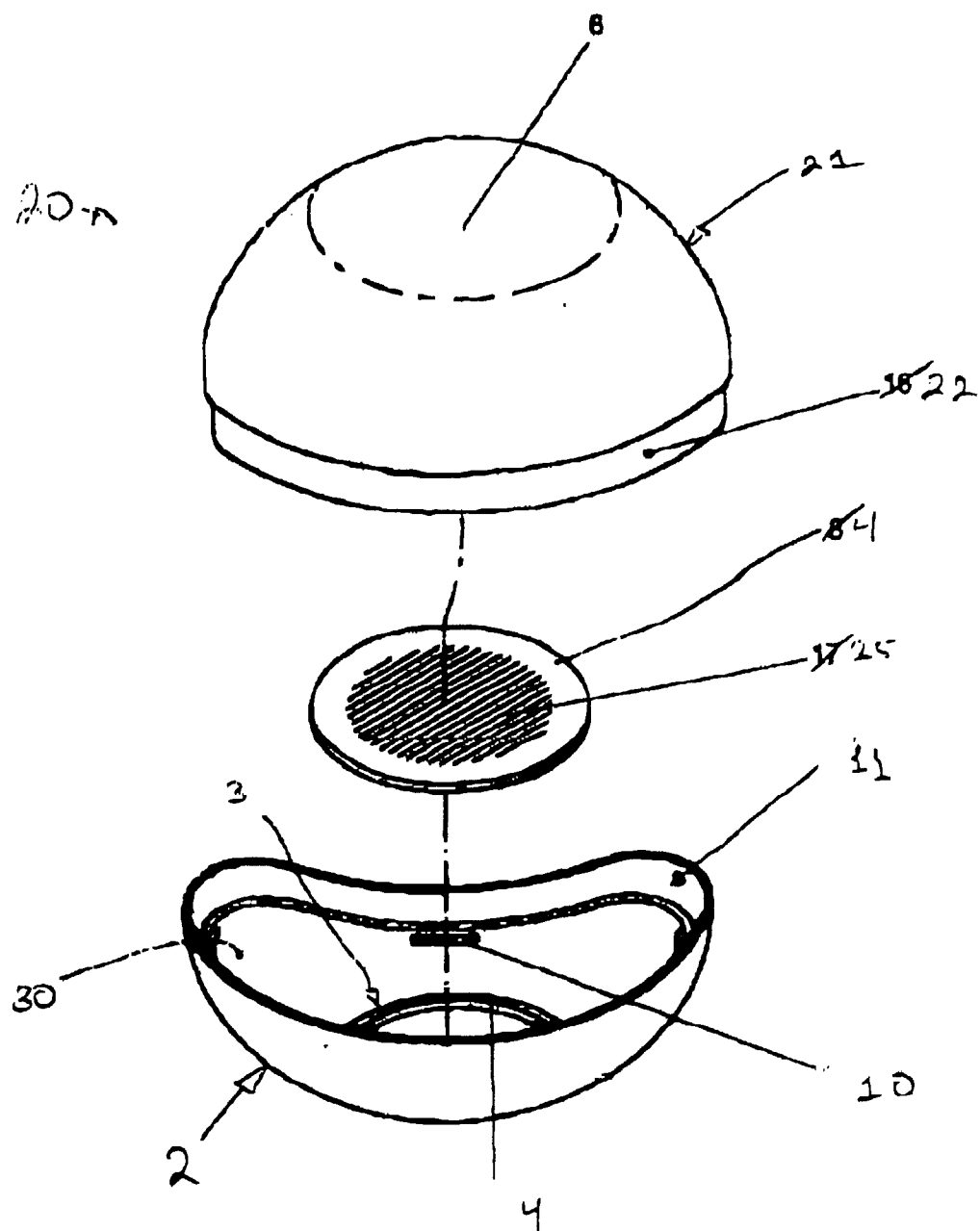
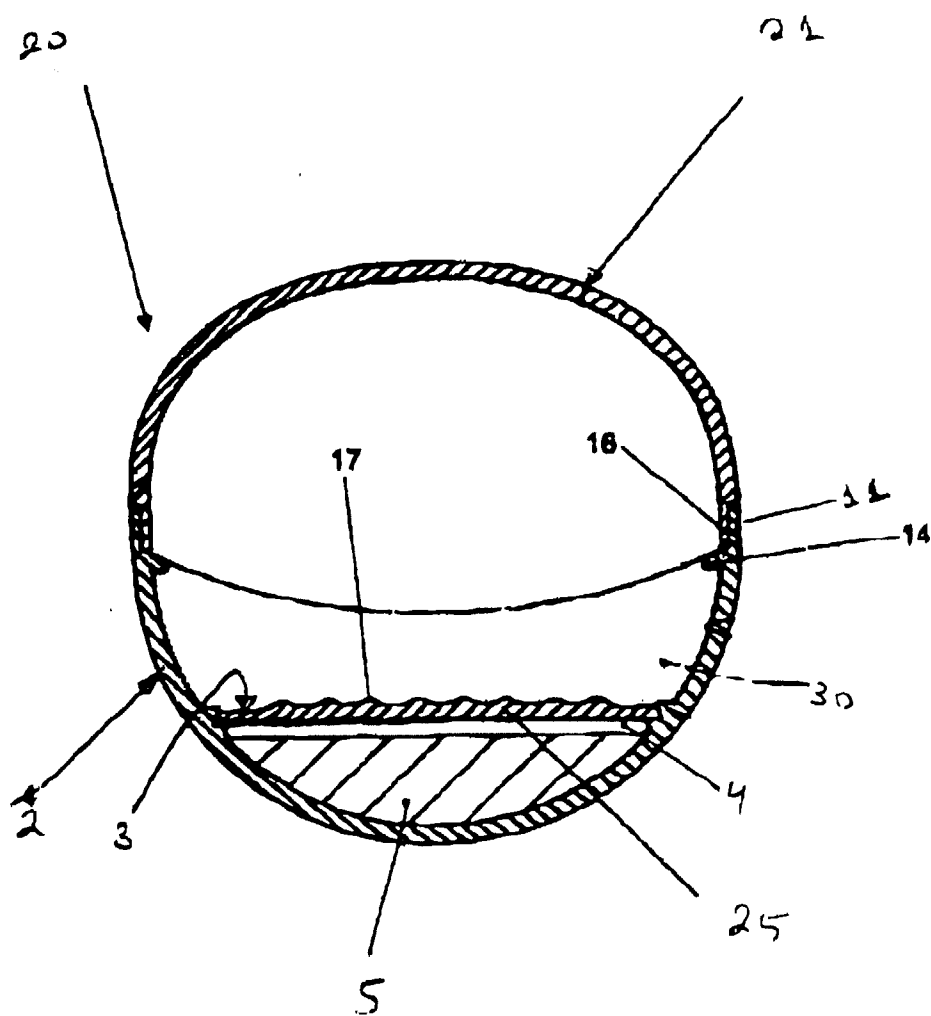


Fig. 4





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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 98 30 8943

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)
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A	* the whole document *	2, 3, 5, 7, 8	
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 16 February 1999	Examiner SERRANO GALARRAGA, J
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			

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 98 30 8943

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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16-02-1999

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