



Europäisches Patentamt

European Patent Office

Office européen des brevets



(11)

EP 0 916 293 A2

(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(43) Date of publication:
19.05.1999 Bulletin 1999/20

(51) Int. Cl.⁶: **A47F 7/02**, G04B 37/16

(21) Application number: **98118335.3**

(22) Date of filing: **28.09.1998**

(84) Designated Contracting States:
**AT BE CH CY DE DK ES FI FR GB GR IE IT LI LU
MC NL PT SE**
Designated Extension States:
AL LT LV MK RO SI

(72) Inventor: **Caramel, Claudio Palmi**
35139 Padova (IT)

(74) Representative:
Modiano, Guido, Dr.-Ing. et al
Modiano & Associati SpA
Via Meravigli, 16
20123 Milano (IT)

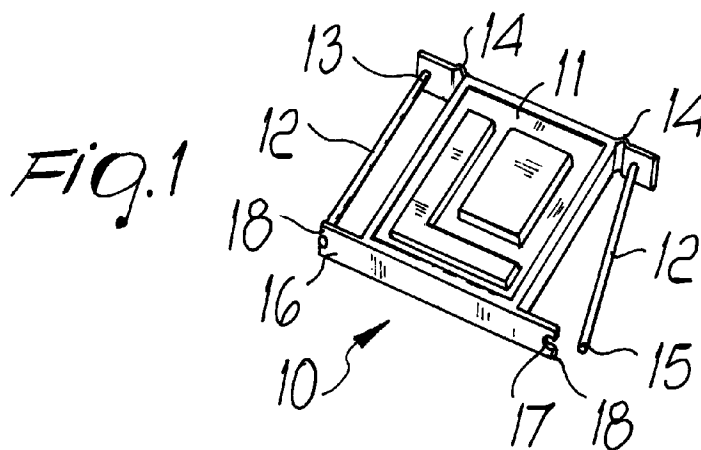
(30) Priority: **13.11.1997 IT PD970078 U**

(71) Applicant: **MORELLATO S.p.A.**
35013 Citadella (Padova) (IT)

(54) Watch-strap holder plate

(57) A watch-strap holder plate comprising a body (11) from which two pins (12) protrude monolithically from mutually opposite positions and are hinged to the body (11); the pins (12) engage, by means of their free ends (15), in complementarily shaped seats (17) which

are rigidly coupled to the body (11). Each one of the pins (12) is suitable to enter the seat (17) formed at each end of a watch-strap for display.



EP 0 916 293 A2

Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a watch-strap holder plate.

[0002] Watch-straps are usually shown to the buyer arranged so that their two components are mutually associated one partially on top of the other; accordingly, in order to display them adequately the buyer must pick them up and arrange them for example next to the watch to see if they are suitable.

[0003] Particular kinds of display for watch-straps are currently commercially available which are generally constituted by a semiannular body the two ends whereof form an opening through which each one of the two components of a strap can be easily inserted.

[0004] In this manner, the display in actual fact replaces the dial of the watch.

[0005] Once the watch-strap has been associated with the semiannular body of the display, it is in fact immediately laid out flat and is accordingly better appreciated, since it can be tried directly on the wrist of a user, exactly as if the strap were already mounted on the watch.

[0006] The fact should be stressed that with this display the potential buyer of the watch-strap is able to immediately appreciate its shape, the styling line of the model, the finishings and the qualitative characteristics of the material it is made of simply while fastening it to his wrist.

[0007] Unfortunately, when using this type of display it often happens that the two components of the watch-strap, which can rotate freely, easily exit through the opening formed by the two ends of the semiannular body.

[0008] A watch-strap supporting display has recently become commercially available which is constituted by a body having a substantially flat structure (and accordingly a configuration which is substantially equivalent to the structure of the case of a watch) and from which two pairs of thin L-shaped tabs protrude from two mutually opposite sides.

[0009] Each one of said pairs of L-shaped tabs has converging free ends which form, between them, a free space through which it is possible to engage each one of the two components of a watch-strap which can be displayed as it appears during use in this case as well.

[0010] Generally, the exposed face of the body of the display also bears the manufacturer's trademark or a symbol or a caption describing the characteristics of the watch-strap.

[0011] In this manner, therefore, the trademark or identification symbol of the manufacturer is immediately evident to the user without having to look for it in the internal part of the watch-strap anymore.

[0012] Unfortunately, when using this display the tabs are rather fragile due to the repeated bendings performed for each insertion/removal of the components of said watch-strap.

[0013] It should also be noted that the space for insertion/removal is minimal and therefore the step for fitting the two components in the L-shaped tabs is very difficult and awkward.

[0014] The aim of the present invention is to provide a plate with which it is possible to associate the two components of a watch-strap to allow to display it and which at the same time solves all the above-mentioned drawbacks of conventional plates.

[0015] Within the scope of this aim, a particular object of the present invention is to provide a plate which allows easy and repeated operations for the insertion/removal of the two components of a watch-strap without causing breakage or failure of the plate.

[0016] Another object of the present invention is to provide a watch-strap holder plate which ensures a good aesthetic result.

[0017] Another important object of the present invention is to provide a watch-strap holder plate which has a simple structure and is very practical in operation.

[0018] Another object of the present invention is to provide a watch-strap holder plate which does not allow simple disengagement of the two components of the strap without the intervention of the user.

[0019] Another object of the present invention is to provide a watch-strap holder plate which can be reused several times thanks to a constructive structure which ensures good durability.

[0020] Another important object of the present invention is to provide a watch-strap holder plate which can be adapted for the display of straps having any configuration and of any model and size.

[0021] Another object of the present invention is to provide a watch-strap holder plate which can be manufactured easily by means of conventional equipment and with known methods.

[0022] This aim, these objects and others which will become apparent hereinafter are achieved by a watch-strap holder plate, characterized in that it comprises a body from which two pins protrude monolithically from mutually opposite positions and are hinged to said body, said pins engaging, by means of their free ends, in complementarily shaped seats which are rigidly coupled to said body, each one of said pins being suitable to enter a seat formed at each end of a watch-strap for display.

[0023] Further characteristics and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following detailed description of a preferred but not exclusive embodiment thereof, illustrated only by way of non-limitative example in the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a watch-strap holder plate according to the present invention;

Figure 2 is a perspective view of a watch-strap holder plate according to the invention in the active configuration;

Figure 3 is a top view of the watch-strap holder plate shown in Figure 2;

Figure 4 is a side view of the watch-strap holder plate of Figure 2.

[0024] With reference to the above figures, a watch-strap holder plate according to the invention is generally designated by the reference numeral 10 and comprises a body 11 which is substantially flat and, in this embodiment, has a rectangular contour whose dimensions substantially correspond to the conventional dimensions of the case of a watch.

[0025] Two rod-like pins 12 protrude from the body 11, starting from mutually opposite positions, and are joined thereto at first ends 13 by means of film hinges 14.

[0026] Each pin 12 has, in this case, a circular cross-section and has a second free end 15.

[0027] Two tabs 16 further protrude from the body 11, also starting from mutually opposite positions, and are substantially parallel with respect to the pins 12; each tab has a reduced length, and a seat 17 is formed therein which is shaped complementarily to the dimensions of the second end 15 of each pin 12, so that it can accommodate it appropriately.

[0028] In particular, access to each one of the seats 17 is allowed by means of a fork-like shape 18 whose dimensions are conveniently smaller than those of each free second end 15, so that the second end 15 is inserted in the seat 17 by elastic deformation of the fork 18, which accordingly provides a subsequent retaining grip in order to prevent the accidental escape of the free end 15.

[0029] In particular, the two pins 12 can be disengaged from the respective seats 17 due to the action of the user, who forces them to exit through the fork-like profile 18.

[0030] Each pin 12 is suitable to enter the seat formed by means of stitches in each end of a watch-strap, which is shown schematically and designated by the reference numeral 19 in the above figures, so that the plate 10 described with the present invention constitutes an effective display for the strap.

[0031] In this regard, an exposed face 20 can be located on the body 11 and there can be a trademark, a design or an identification symbol of the manufacturer of the strap on such face.

[0032] In practice it has been observed that the intended aim and all the objects have been achieved.

[0033] Preferably, the watch-strap holder plate 10 is made of plastics by injection molding, for example made of polypropylene or of another material, so long as it has suitable mechanical characteristics.

[0034] The watch-strap holder plate 10 can also be conveniently subjected to a finishing process by sand-blasting.

[0035] An important advantage has been achieved with the present invention in that a watch-strap holder plate has been provided which allows to display watch-straps, ensuring repeated insertions and removals without causing breakage or failure.

[0036] Another advantage is obtained by virtue of the fact that a watch-strap holder plate has been provided which has a simple structure and is very practical in operation.

[0037] Another advantage is obtained with the present invention in that a watch-strap holder plate has been provided which can be manufactured at a low cost and according to per se known and conventional techniques and treatments.

[0038] The present invention is susceptible of numerous modifications and variations, all of which are within the scope of the same inventive concept.

[0039] The materials employed, so long as they are compatible with the contingent use, as well as the dimensions, may be any according to requirements.

[0040] All the details may also be replaced with other technically equivalent elements.

[0041] The disclosures in Italian Utility Model Application No. PD97U000078 from which this application claims priority are incorporated herein by reference.

[0042] Where technical features mentioned in any claim are followed by reference signs, those reference signs have been included for the sole purpose of increasing the intelligibility of the claims and accordingly, such reference signs do not have any limiting effect on the interpretation of each element identified by way of example by such reference signs.

Claims

1. A watch-strap holder plate, characterized in that it comprises a body from which two pins protrude monolithically from mutually opposite positions and are hinged to said body, said pins engaging, by means of their free ends, in complementarily shaped seats which are rigidly coupled to said body, each one of said pins being suitable to enter a seat formed at each end of a watch-strap for display.
2. The watch-strap holder plate according to claim 1, characterized in that said pins are joined to said body by means of film hinges.
3. The watch-strap holder plate according to claim 1, characterized in that said pins are rod-shaped and in that said seats are defined in tabs, which protrude monolithically from said body parallel to said pins, said seats being shaped complementarily to said pins.
4. The watch-strap holder plate according to claim 3, characterized in that said tabs have, at said seats, a fork-like profile which forms an opening which is smaller than the dimensions of said pins.
5. The watch-strap holder plate according to claim 1, characterized in that said body is flat and has

dimensions which are comparable to those of the case of a watch.

6. The watch-strap holder plate according to claim 5, characterized in that an exposed face is located on said body, a symbol, a letter, a design for the identification of the manufacturer of said watch-strap being formed thereon. 5
7. The watch-strap holder plate according to claim 1, characterized in that it is provided by injection-molding plastics. 10

15

20

25

30

35

40

45

50

55

