

(19)



Europäisches Patentamt

European Patent Office

Office européen des brevets



(11)

EP 0 917 896 A1

(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(43) Date of publication:
26.05.1999 Bulletin 1999/21

(51) Int. Cl.⁶: **A63F 7/24, A63F 7/06**

(21) Application number: **97830570.4**

(22) Date of filing: **04.11.1997**

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

(71) Applicant:
FRABOSK CASALINGHI S.p.A.
25067 Lumezzane S.A. (Brescia) (IT)

(72) Inventor: **Ghidini, Tiziano**
25067 Lumezzane S.A. (Brescia) (IT)

(74) Representative: **Sutto, Luca**
Bugnion S.p.A.,
Via Dante 17
25122 Brescia (IT)

(54) Apparatus for playing simulated table sport games and the like

(57) It is provided an apparatus for playing simulated table sport games and the like, comprising a plurality of substantially flat movable game units (1) and at least one drive implement (5) having at least one main end portion (7) which is partly flexible and is intended for pressing down on an edge band (2) of a movable unit (1), so as to transmit a push to said movable unit which is directed substantially parallelly to a playing surface.

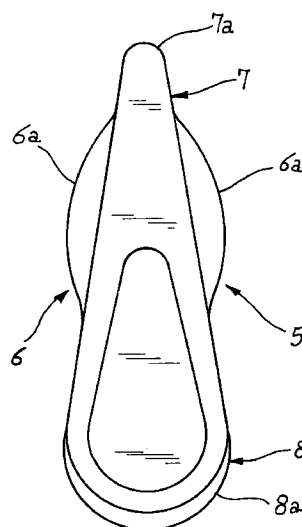


FIG. 4

EP 0 917 896 A1

Description

[0001] The present invention relates to an apparatus for playing simulated table sport games and the like, comprising a plurality of movable game units each defined by a substantially flat element to be put on a playing surface.

[0002] It is known that for some table games or games to be played on flat surfaces such as tiddlywinks, token-shaped flat pieces or discs are used that are caused to move forward, during the game, by pressing the edge thereof with a disc of same or preferably larger size. Generally, pressure exerted on the edge of a disc not only aims at moving the disc forward but also at transmitting a push to the same with an upwardly-directed component, so as to give rise to a disc trajectory at least partly separated from the playing surface.

[0003] In this way, by simulating a flea's jump, partial or complete overlapping of a disc upon another or snapping of the disc into a cup or in any case displacement thereof as required by the game rules can be achieved.

[0004] Practically, above all in the case in which the playing surface consists of a cloth as in billiard tables, each disc pressed by another disc advances and moves by subsequent jumps and only in the case of very short distances, that is for limited pressures and pushes, displacements without separation from the play table occur, that is substantially parallel to the table itself.

[0005] Where discs and means for controlling the same of the type briefly described above are used, it is therefore impossible to play games in which sliding displacements of the disc, that is displacements in contact with the rest surface, are mainly contemplated, for the purpose of exerting impulsive pushes or thrusts against other movable elements, which elements may be flat as the discs or of any other shape, in the form of a ball for example. Actually, displacements by jumps either prevent other movable elements that are to be moved in the desired direction on a playing surface from being hit by one disc or reduce their possibility of being hit, above all when there is a great distance between the disc and the element to be hit because the strong pressure to be exerted in these cases easily involves jumps of little precision and the absence of sliding displacements.

[0006] Under this situation, the technical task underlying the present invention is to devise an apparatus for playing simulated table sport games and the like capable of substantially obviating the above mentioned limits.

[0007] Within the scope of this technical task it is an important aim of the invention to devise an apparatus for playing simulated table sport games and the like enabling movable game elements being part of the apparatus to be moved and directed in a precise trajectory.

[0008] The technical task mentioned and the aim specified are substantially achieved by an apparatus for playing simulated table sport games and the like which is characterized in that it comprises at least one drive

implement for said units having a central grip portion to be manually grasped and at least one main end portion which is partially flexible and is intended for pressing down on an edge band of one said movable unit so as to transmit a push thereto which is directed substantially parallel to the playing surface.

[0009] The description of a preferred but non-exclusive embodiment of an apparatus in accordance with the invention is now given hereinafter, by way of non-limiting example, with the aid of the accompanying drawings, in which:

- Fig. 1 is a plan view of a movable game unit of the apparatus in accordance with the invention;
- Fig. 2 is a side view of the unit shown in Fig. 1;
- Fig. 3 is a side view of a movable unit of greater thickness than the unit shown in Fig. 2;
- Fig. 4 is a top view of a drive implement of the apparatus;
- Fig. 5 is a bottom view of the implement shown in Fig. 4;
- Fig. 6 is a side view of the implement of Fig. 4;
- Fig. 7 is a perspective view of a playing field in accordance with the invention.

[0010] With reference to the drawings, the apparatus in accordance with the invention comprises a plurality of movable game units 1, each defined by a flat element substantially in the form of a token, to be put on a playing surface and sliding thereon.

[0011] For example, if one wishes to simulate football, each movable unit represents a football player. Preferably, the movable unit 1 acting as a goalkeeper is of greater thickness (see Fig. 3) than the other football players (see Fig. 2), so as to give it a greater weight and a larger section. In this way the possibility that the goalkeeper may be moved by other movable elements 1 is reduced, while there is an increase in the possibility of hindering the ball trajectory.

[0012] The goalkeeper may also have a non-circular form, a square form for example.

[0013] Each movable unit 1 comprises an edge band 2 defining a sunken area 3 towards the inside of each face.

[0014] On the one hand, this sunken area enables a greater adhesion of the movable game unit 1 to the playing surface and, on the other hand, it offers the possibility of inserting removable adhesive elements carrying symbols and numbers for distinguishing teams and players. Due to the use of removable adhesive elements, the movable game units 1 can "wear" the shirts of the different teams that meet by turns.

[0015] The movable units 1 on each face have contour corners 4 of a curved profile having a radius of curvature of limited value. The curved profile of the contour corners 4 has the function of facilitating sliding of the movable element 1.

[0016] In an original manner, the apparatus comprises

at least one drive implement 5, preferably one implement for each individual taking part in the game, capable of acting on each movable unit 1 in order to cause those unit displacements that are judged the most appropriate. The drive apparatus 5 is comprised of a central grip portion 6 adapted to be manually grasped, between the forefinger and thumb for example, and a main end portion 7 which is partly flexible and is intended for being pressed down on the edge band 2 of a movable unit 1.

[0017] The particular structure and conformation of the main end portion 7 hereinafter described is capable of transmitting a push to each movable unit 1, which push is directed substantially parallelly to the playing surface, i.e. is adapted to exclusively cause sliding displacements of said unit while avoiding lifting, separations and jumps relative to the playing surface itself.

[0018] In order to achieve the above stated aim, the end portion 7 has a flattened shape substantially terminating with a rounded or curved point, confined between two opposite faces 7b at least one of which is intended to define the push face to be pressed down on the edge band 2 of the movable unit 1. This push face is provided, at least at point 7a, with a smoothed corner 7c. For example, if contour corners 4 in unit 1 have a curved profile with a radius of curvature corresponding to one millimetre, the radius of corner 7c is made of about 0.6 millimetres.

[0019] In addition, the main end portion 7, in order to be provided with a certain degree of flexibility, is of a progressively reduced thickness towards point 7a. For example, faces 7b are both inclined to an angle α preferably of $2^{\circ}40'$ (see Fig. 6).

[0020] The drive implement 5 advantageously comprises, in addition to the main end portion 7 designed to carry out sliding displacements of the movable unit 1, an auxiliary flattened end portion 8 which has a rounded contour 8a, is substantially rigid and is confined between two opposite faces 8b at least one of which is an active face provided with a chamfered edge 8c, of an inclination of 35° , for example.

[0021] The chamfered edge 8c is intended for pressing down on the edge band 2 of a movable unit 1 so as to transmit an obliquely directed push relative to the playing surface to the movable unit itself, that is a push adapted to give rise to a trajectory detaching from the playing surface and causing a jump of the movable unit.

[0022] Advantageously, both the main end portion 7 and auxiliary end portion 8 are comprised of two push faces and two active faces respectively, that is they have smoothed corners 7c and chamfered corners 8c on both faces, so that either face of the drive implement 5 can be indifferently used.

[0023] Practically, the drive implement 5 thoroughly appears as a shovel-like element having two end portions adapted to perform different functions. The main end portion 7, pressed against the edge band 2 of a unit 1, slides on said unit and, due to the small radius of cor-

ner 7c at point 7a, transmits a reaction thrust onto the contour corner 4, which thrust is directed substantially parallelly to the unit faces.

[0024] The auxiliary end portion 8, on the contrary, gives rise, with its chamfered edge 8c, to a reaction thrust having a component transverse to the unit faces, so that said unit is lifted upwardly.

[0025] In addition, as clearly shown in Fig. 4, the central grip portion 6 of the drive implement 5 has preferably rounded projecting edges 6a to enable intervention on the movable units 1 when the latter are in a position hardly accessible to the drive implement usually employed. In this case the drive implement 5 is used rotated through 90° and grasped with both hands placed at the main end portion 7 and the auxiliary end portion 8, respectively. Thus, one of the projecting edges 6a of the central grip portion 6 becomes an active part and exerts a push on the movable unit 1.

[0026] With reference to Fig. 7, generally identified by 9 is a playing field which may comprise a table 10 consisting of a surface 10a of rigid material having a low friction coefficient and suitably delimited by protective rims 10b adapted to prevent all movable game elements, that is football players and ball, from coming out of the table.

[0027] The invention achieves important advantages.

[0028] Actually, the combination of the movable game units simulating football players for example, and the drive implement in accordance with the invention enables diversified and precise displacements of such units to be carried out and consequently strokes of various type to be obtained by said units acting on other movable elements, such as a ball-shaped element 12 simulating a ball.

[0029] In the case in which football is being played, the movable game unit 1, activated by the drive implement 5, is intended to be directed against a ball-shaped element 12 simulating a ball.

[0030] Advantageously, the ball-shaped element 12, in order to be able to easily roll on the playing field and stop within limited spaces, is made of a soft material or in any case a material having a high friction coefficient such as silicone, rubber, polystyrene, sponge or the like.

[0031] The main end portion of the drive implement 5 ensures accomplishment of even very long sliding displacements along the playing surface, because also in the case of important pressures, the direction of the transmitted pushes is not altered.

[0032] The auxiliary end portion enables imagination to be added in creating playing actions because the movable units can jump over other units disposed on the same trajectory, thereby describing more complicated trajectories that are not only of the sliding type.

Claims

1. An apparatus for playing simulated table sport games and the like, comprising a plurality of mov-

ble game units (1) each defined by a substantially flat element to be put on a playing surface, characterized in that it comprises at least one drive implement (5) for moving said movable game units (1) and provided with a central grip portion (6) to be manually grasped and at least one main end portion (7) which is partially flexible and is intended for pressing down on an edge band (2) of one said movable unit (1), so as to transmit a push thereto which is directed substantially parallelly to the playing surface.

2. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that each of said movable game units (1) comprises an edge band (2) inwardly confining a sunken area (3). 15
3. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that each of said movable game units (1) has contour corners (4) of a curved profile. 20
4. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that said main end portion (7) of said drive implement (5) has a flattened and substantially point-shaped (7a) conformation comprising at least one push face (7b) provided with a smoothed corner (7c) at least at said point (7a). 25
5. An apparatus as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that said point (7a) of said main end portion (7) has a substantially rounded conformation. 30
6. An apparatus as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that said drive implement (5) comprises a flattened and substantially rigid auxiliary end portion, which auxiliary end portion has at least one active face (8b) provided with a chamfered edge (8c) intended for pressing down on an edge band (2) of said movable unit (1), so as to transmit a push to the movable unit which is directed obliquely to the playing surface. 35 40
7. An apparatus as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that said auxiliary end portion (8) has a rounded contour (8a) at said chamfered edge (8c). 45
8. An apparatus as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that said main end portion (7) of a flattened conformation has a progressively reduced thickness towards said point (7a). 50
9. An apparatus as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that said main end portion (7) comprises two push faces (7b) both provided with smoothed corners (7c) and said auxiliary end portion (8) comprises two active faces (8b) both provided with chamfered edges (8c). 55

10. An apparatus as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that said chamfered edge (8c) has an inclination angle approximately of 35° relative to said active face (8b).

11. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that it further comprises a ball-shaped element cooperating with said movable game units.

12. An apparatus as claimed in claim 11, characterized in that said ball-shaped element is made of a soft material.

FIG. 1

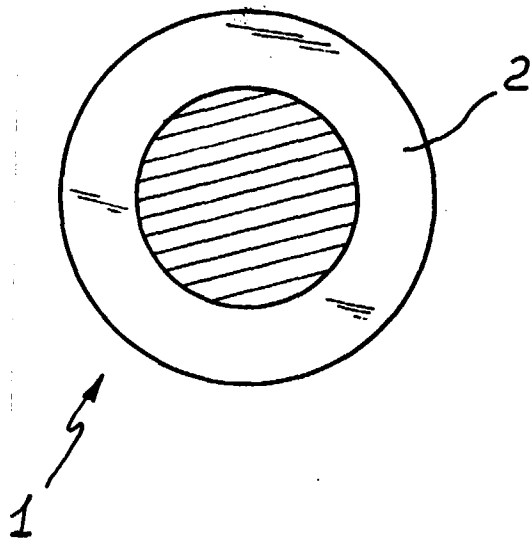


FIG. 2

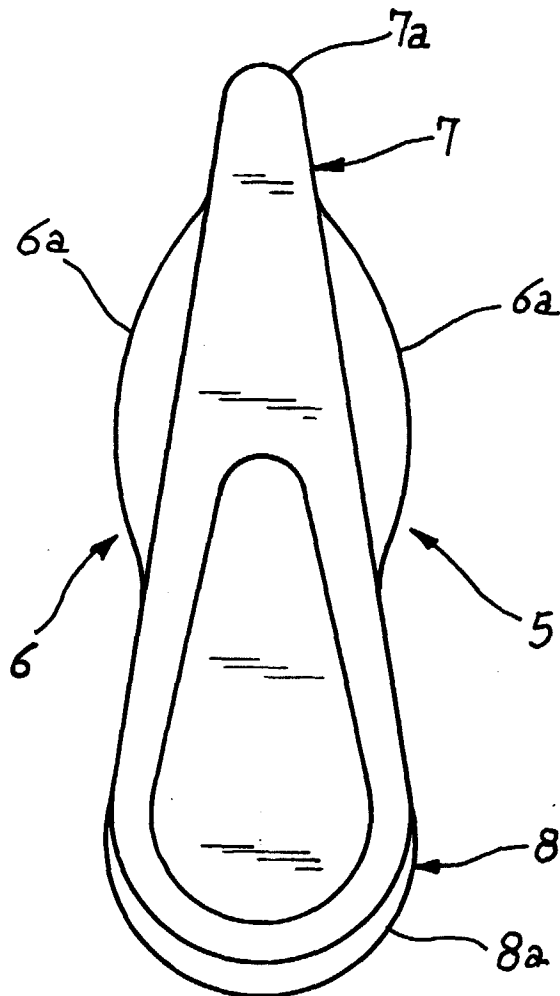
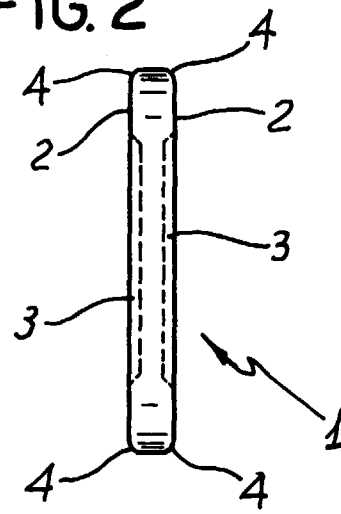


FIG. 4

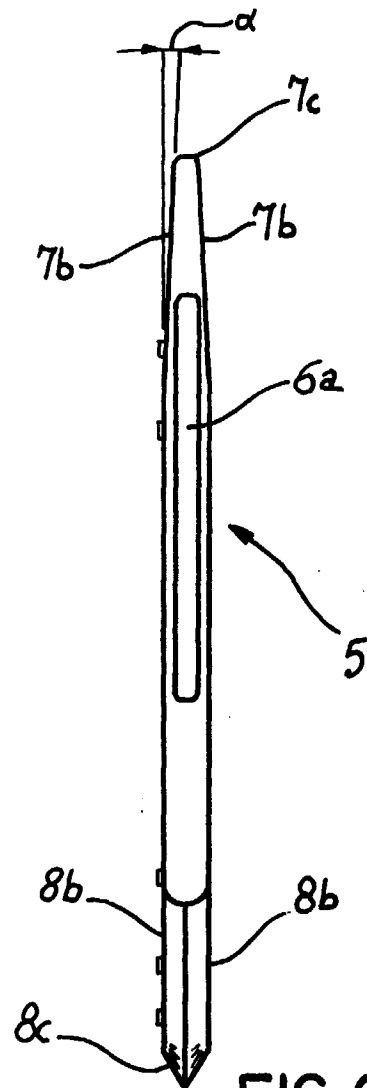


FIG. 6

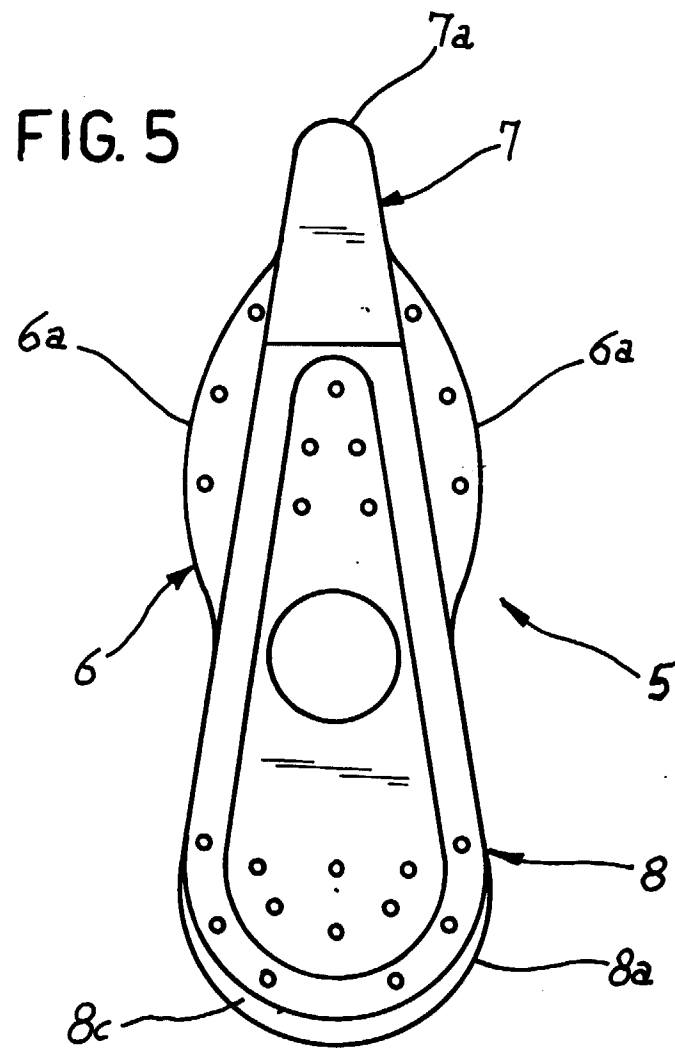
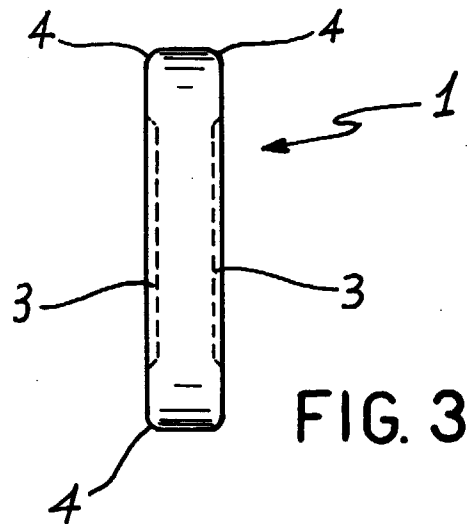
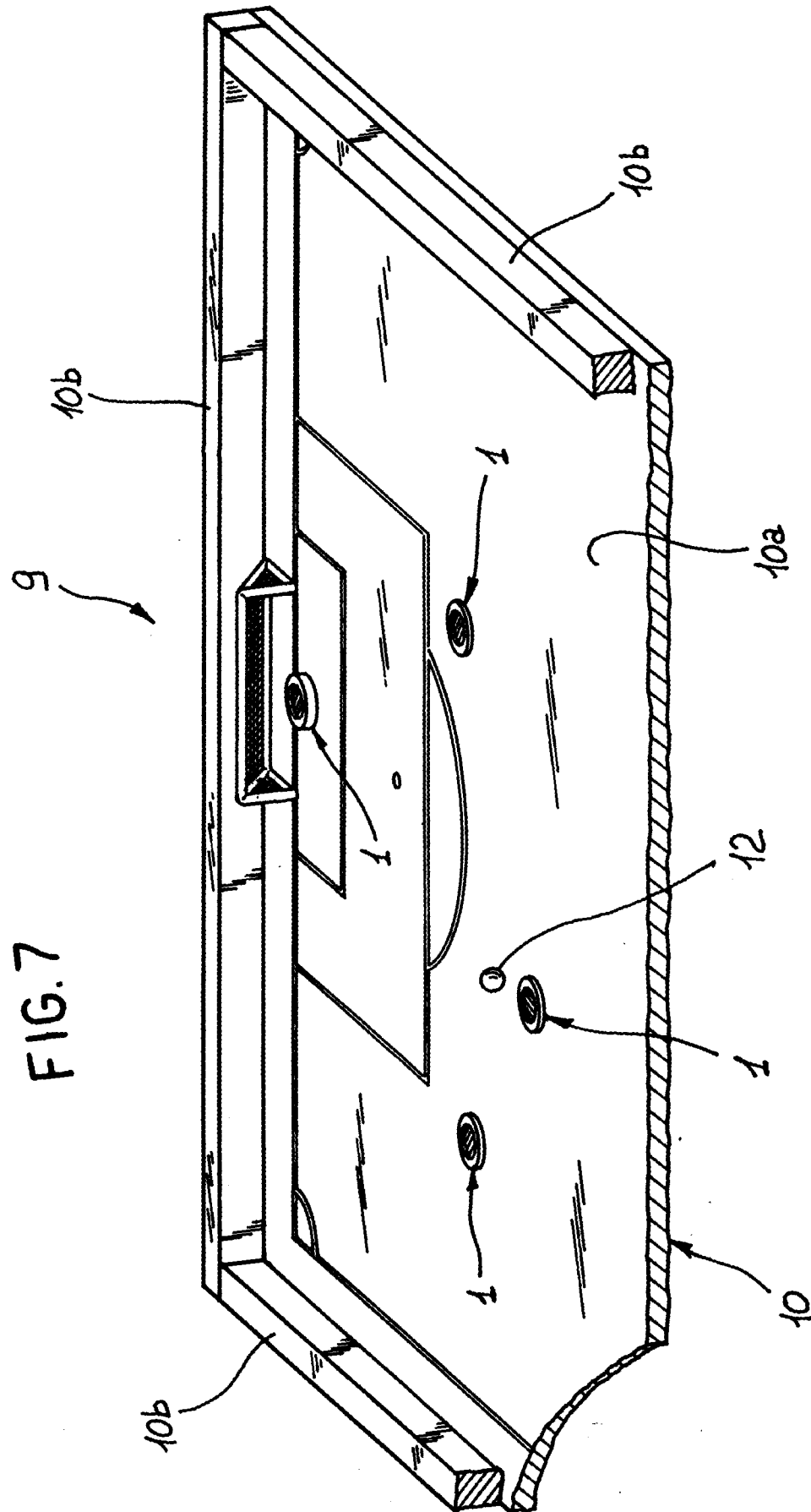


FIG. 7





European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 97 83 0570

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)
X	GB 366 276 A (READ) * page 2, line 68 - line 95; figures * ---	1-5	A63F7/24 A63F7/06
X	DE 648 041 C (L. KLEEFELD & CO. SPIELWARENFABRIK) * figures * ---	1	
A	DE 85 21 931 U (SCHUHN) * figure 2 * ---	1,6	
A	US 3 547 443 A (LACSON) * figure 4 * ---	2	
A	US 4 357 017 A (SCHNEIDER ET AL.) * figure 3 * ---	2	
A	EP 0 766 980 A (BRIGHTMORE) * figure 2 * ---	3	
A	US 3 741 544 A (WOLFF, JR.) * column 1, line 5 - line 12 * -----	1	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6)
			A63F
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 24 March 1998	Examiner Raybould, B
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			

EPO FORM 1503 03.82 (P04C01)