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(54)

A punching apparatus

(57)

A punching apparatus comprises a feed section (4) for supplying sheets to a punch section (6) and a reception section (8) for receiving punched sheets from the punch section. In one embodiment, the apparatus includes a picker device for separating a pile of sheets from a stock of sheets supplied by the feed section so that the pile of sheets can be transported through the punch section. The picker device comprises a wedge which is reciprocated horizontally a lift arm which reciprocates with the wedge to move an end thereof into the stack of sheets and a cam mechanism for causing the end of the lift arm to move first generally horizontally and then upwards. In another embodiment, at least two of the punch, feed and reception sections have at least one sheet aligner, the position of which is adjustable within the section and a common manual drive is provided for adjusting the positions of the sheet aligners.

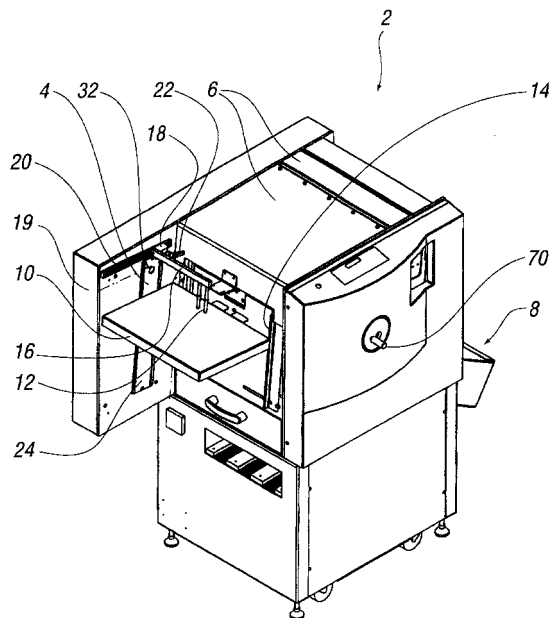


FIG. 1



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
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Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
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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 April 2002	Examiner Pussemier, B
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p>			

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CLAIMS INCURRING FEES

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing more than ten claims.

- ☐ Only part of the claims have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claim(s):
- ☐ No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims.

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

see sheet B

- ☒ All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.
- ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the Search Division did not invite payment of any additional fee.
- ☐ Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid, namely claims:
- ☐ None of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims:



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 01 30 3519

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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 April 2002	Examiner Pussemier, B
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p>			

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LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION
SHEET B

Application Number
EP 01 30 3519

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. Claims: 1-6,10-13

A punching apparatus comprising feed, punch and reception sections with a picker device having a wedge, a lift arm and a cam mechanism for moving the lift arm.

2. Claims: 7-13

A punching apparatus comprising feed, punch and reception sections with sheet aligners having a common manual drive for adjusting their positions.

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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