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(54) **Flexible hose-carrying handle**

(57) Flexible hose-carrying handle formed by a strip (11) of plastic material that is moulded to include a grip (12) at an end portion thereof and a gudgeon pin (14) at the other end portion thereof.

To the handle there is integrally associated a serrated band (21-22) that engages a slot-like hole (23) so as to form an attachment loop for accessory items (24-25) to be used in conjunction with the hose (17).

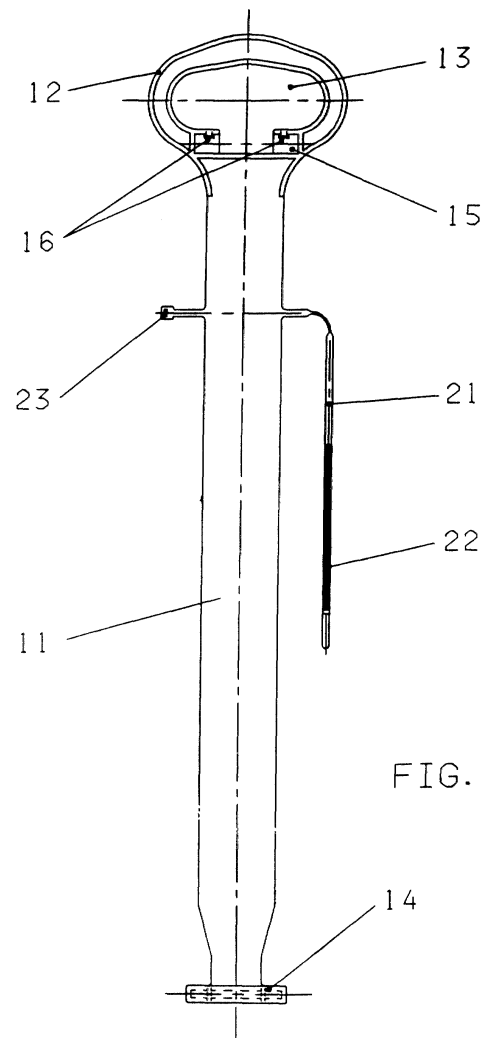


FIG. 1

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Description

[0001] The present invention refers to a flexible handle that is adapted to hold together, both to transport and storage purposes, elongated elements wound into coils, such as flexible hoses for watering applications.

[0002] Handles of the above mentioned kind are known since a long time now in the art. They are constituted by a strip of plastic material, which is moulded as a single-piece construction with a grip, provided at an end portion of such a strip, and a gudgeon pin, which is provided at the other end portion of said strip. The strip itself is wound in a loop-like manner around the coils of the hose to be held compactly tight together, whereas the loop is closed by inserting the pin in the aperture of the handle.

[0003] These prior-art handles are sufficiently functional in general terms. However, they have a number of limitations when used in connection with certain applications. So, for example, in the case that the hose to be transported and stored is a watering hose, the need arises for the use of accessory items and auxiliary devices, such as connectors, fittings, nozzles, spray jets and the like, to be taken into account. These items and devices are normally kept separated from the hose and must be selectively, and individually, connected to the end portions of the same hose exactly when a need arises for any one of them to be used in accordance with particular requirements. The problems and the inconvenience deriving from such a situation can be readily appreciated. In addition, further difficulties and related costs are connected to the packaging of both the hose and the various accessory items thereof, owing to the fact that such accessory items generally require a particular packaging to be associated to the packaging of the hose roll.

[0004] The purpose of the present invention is to provide a flexible hose-carrying handle that is provided with means which are capable of keeping attached to the wound hose also the various accessory items intended for use in connection with the same hose. In this manner, all problems connected with packaging, transporting, handling and storing the entire complex composed of the hose and the various accessory items thereof are solved.

[0005] According to the present invention, this aim is reached in a flexible hose-carrying handle formed by a strip of plastic material provided with a grip and a gudgeon pin adapted to engage said grip, wherein moulded integrally, ie. in a single-piece construction with said strip there are a flexible serrated band and a slot-like hole, in which the free end of said band is adapted to be inserted so as to form a loop for the attachment of the accessory items that have to be kept together with, ie. joined to the hose.

[0006] The features and advantages of the present invention will anyway be more readily and clearly understood from the description that is given below by way of

non-limiting example with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

- Fig. 1 is a view of a hose-carrying handle according to the present invention, as shown in its fully extended, non-working condition;
- Fig. 2 is a cross-sectional view of the hose-carrying handle illustrated in Fig. 1, as shown in its folded condition to form the attachment loop;
- Fig. 3 is a front view of the hose-carrying handle illustrated in Figs. 1 and 2, as shown in a first condition of use thereof;
- Fig. 4 is a front view of the hose-carrying handle illustrated in Figs. 1 and 2, as shown in a second condition of use thereof; and
- Fig. 5 is a front view of the hose-carrying handle illustrated in Figs. 1 and 2, as shown in a third condition of use thereof.

[0007] The hose-carrying handle illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 is constituted essentially by a strip 11 of plastic material having a reduced thickness, so as to assure a considerable flexibility of the same strip.

[0008] According to a first feature of the invention, the strip 11 is moulded to integrally include a grip 12, which is provided at an end portion thereof and has a ring-like aperture 13, and a gudgeon pin 14, which is provided transversally at the other end portion of the strip. Said grip 12 preferably has a H-shaped cross-section and is provided with a receptacle 15 provided with retaining teeth 16.

[0009] When the strip 11 is folded into a loop (Figure 2), the gudgeon pin 14 is caused to pass through the aperture 13 of the grip 12 and to snap-fit into the receptacle 15 by taking advantage of the elasticity of the retaining teeth 16. In this manner, a handle is created that is able to support and carry flexible items 17 wound into a roll, such as watering hoses, as shown in the Figures 3 to 5.

[0010] According to the main feature of the present invention, moulded integrally, ie. in a single-piece construction (see Figures 1 and 2) with said strip 11 there are a flexible band 21, which is provided with a serrated surface, and an appendix provided with a slot-like hole 23. In a preferred manner, the band 21 and the slot-like hole 23 are provided on mutually opposed sides with respect to the strip 11, and the band 21 extends parallelly with respect to the body of the strip 11.

[0011] The strip 11 can be folded and the free end portion thereof is inserted in the slot-like hole 23 until the serrated surface 22 thereof gets eventually engaged in said hole. In this manner, a further attachment loop is created, which may be used to keep together with, ie. joined to the hose various accessory items intended for use in conjunction with the same hose. A connector 24 and a spray nozzle 25 are shown in Figures 3 and 4 by mere way of example. In Figure 3, the accessory items 24 and 25 are held by the band 21 in a non-use condition

thereof, duly attached to the hose-carrying handle, whereas in Figure 4 they are shown as fitted on to the respective end portions of the hose 17, in a ready-for-use condition thereof.

[0012] The band 21, which is integral with the strip 12 of the hose-carrying handle, is useful also in a further condition of use, which is illustrated with reference to Figure 5. In fact, an end portion of the hose 17 (eg. the one carrying the connector 24, in Figure 5) may anyway be kept attached to the strip 11 of the hose-carrying handle by means of the band 21. When the hose is unwound in view of being used, the band stays connected to the same hose without any problem, but with the advantage of having it ready in position when the hose must then be rewound after use.

[0013] As this can be readily noticed, the band 21 is adjustable, in the sense that it can be inserted in the slot-like hole 23 to different lengths, thereby forming variable-diameter attachment loops capable of accommodating one or more accessory items, according to the needs.

[0014] Furthermore, in order to facilitate releasing the band from the slot-like hole, an elastic tooth (not shown in the Figures) may be provided inside the slot-like hole 23 so that it is engaged automatically when inserting the band 21 therein, and is capable of being bent with a finger when the same band has to be released therefrom.

Claims

- the band.
4. Flexible handle according to any of the preceding claims 1 to 3, **characterized in that** the grip (12) has a H-shaped cross-section and is provided with a receptacle (15), provided with elastic teeth (16), for accommodating and retaining the gudgeon pin (14).
1. Flexible handle, adapted to keep together and carry elongated elements wound into coils, such as flexible hoses for watering applications, formed by a strip (11) of plastic material moulded integrally with a grip (12), provided at an end portion of the strip, and a gudgeon pin (14), provided at the other end portion of the strip, **characterized in that** moulded integrally, ie. in a single-piece construction with said strip (11) there are a flexible serrated band (21-22) and a slot-like hole (23), in which the free end of said band is adapted to be inserted so as to form a loop for the attachment of accessory items (24-25) that have to be kept together with, ie. joined to the hose (17).
 2. Flexible handle according to claim 1, **characterized in that** the serrated band (21-22) keeps an end portion of the hose (17) attached to said strip, so as to anyway enable the same hose to be unwound, while staying in a ready condition for the hose to be rewound after use.
 3. Flexible handle according to claim 1 or 2, **characterized in that** the serrated band (21-22) and the slot-like hole (23) are provided on mutually opposed sides of the strip (11), and the slot-like hole (23) is provided with an elastic tooth adapted to engage

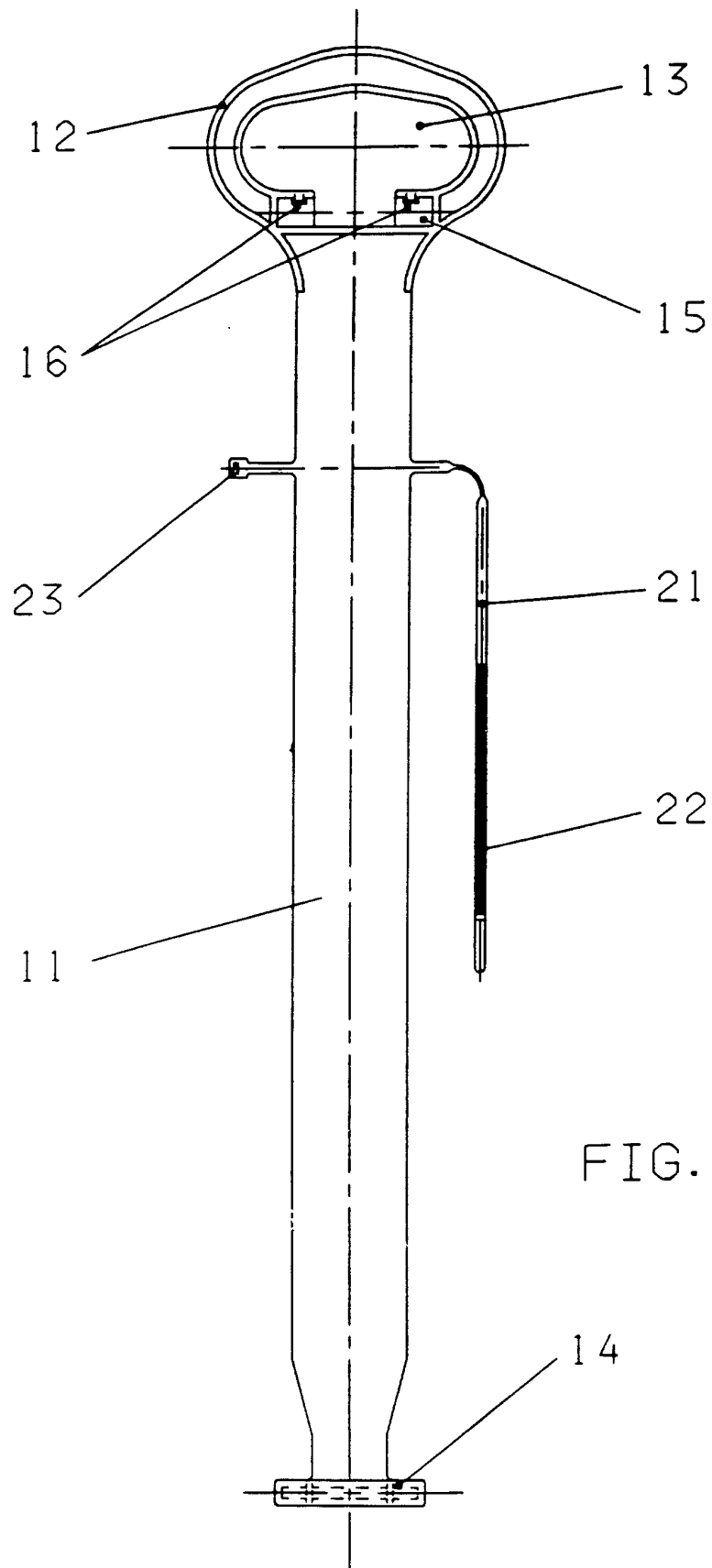
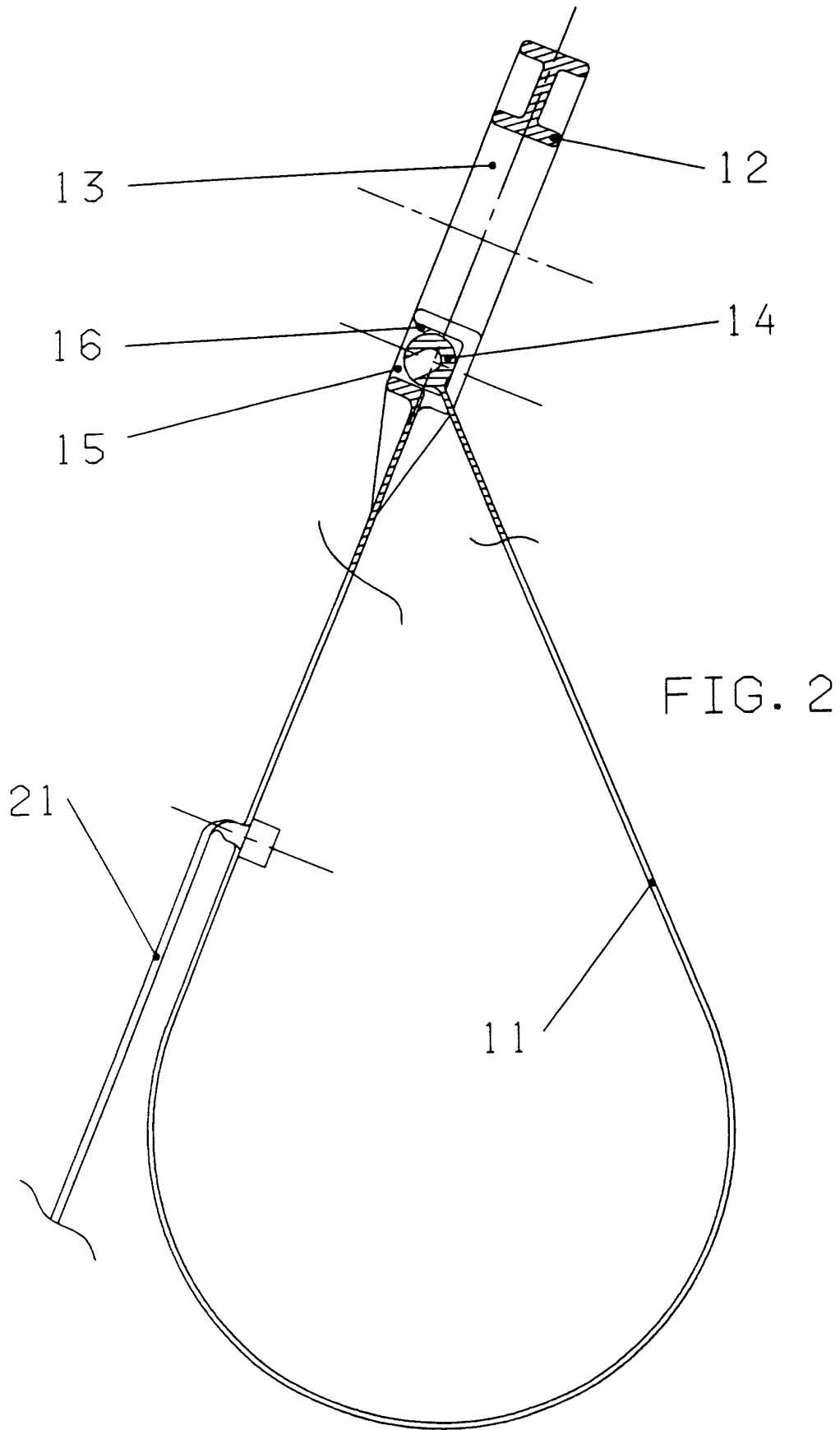


FIG. 1



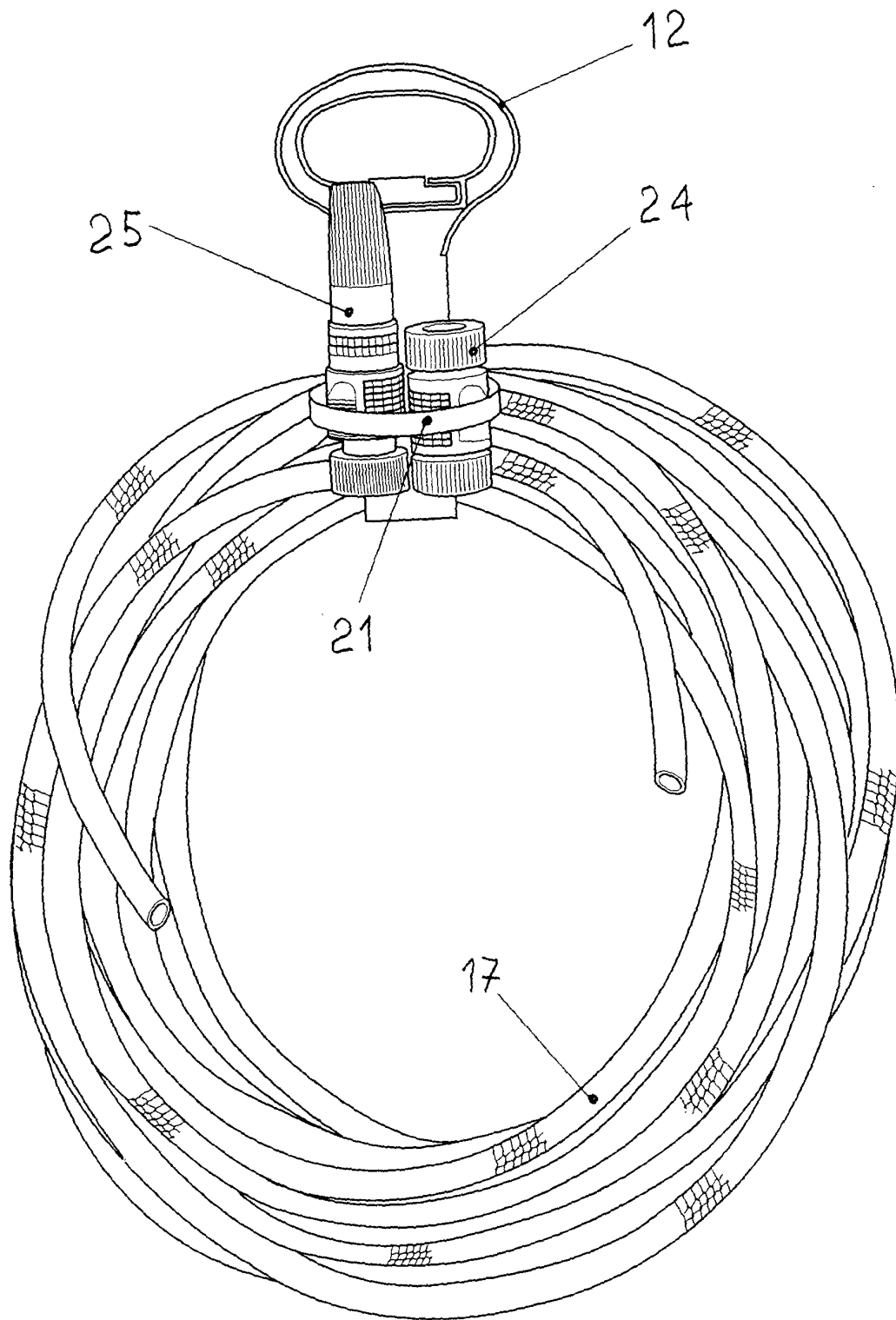


FIG. 3

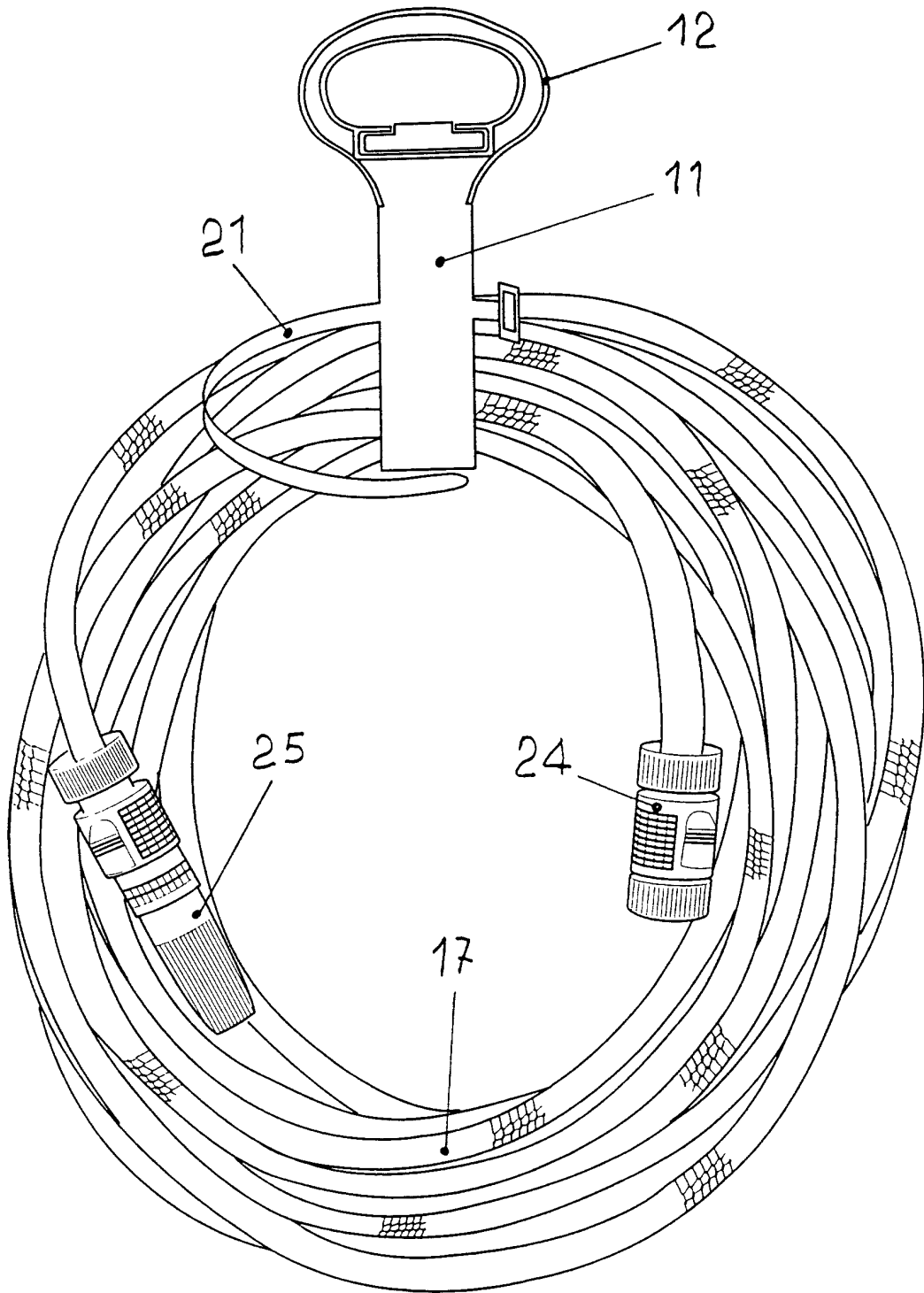


FIG. 4

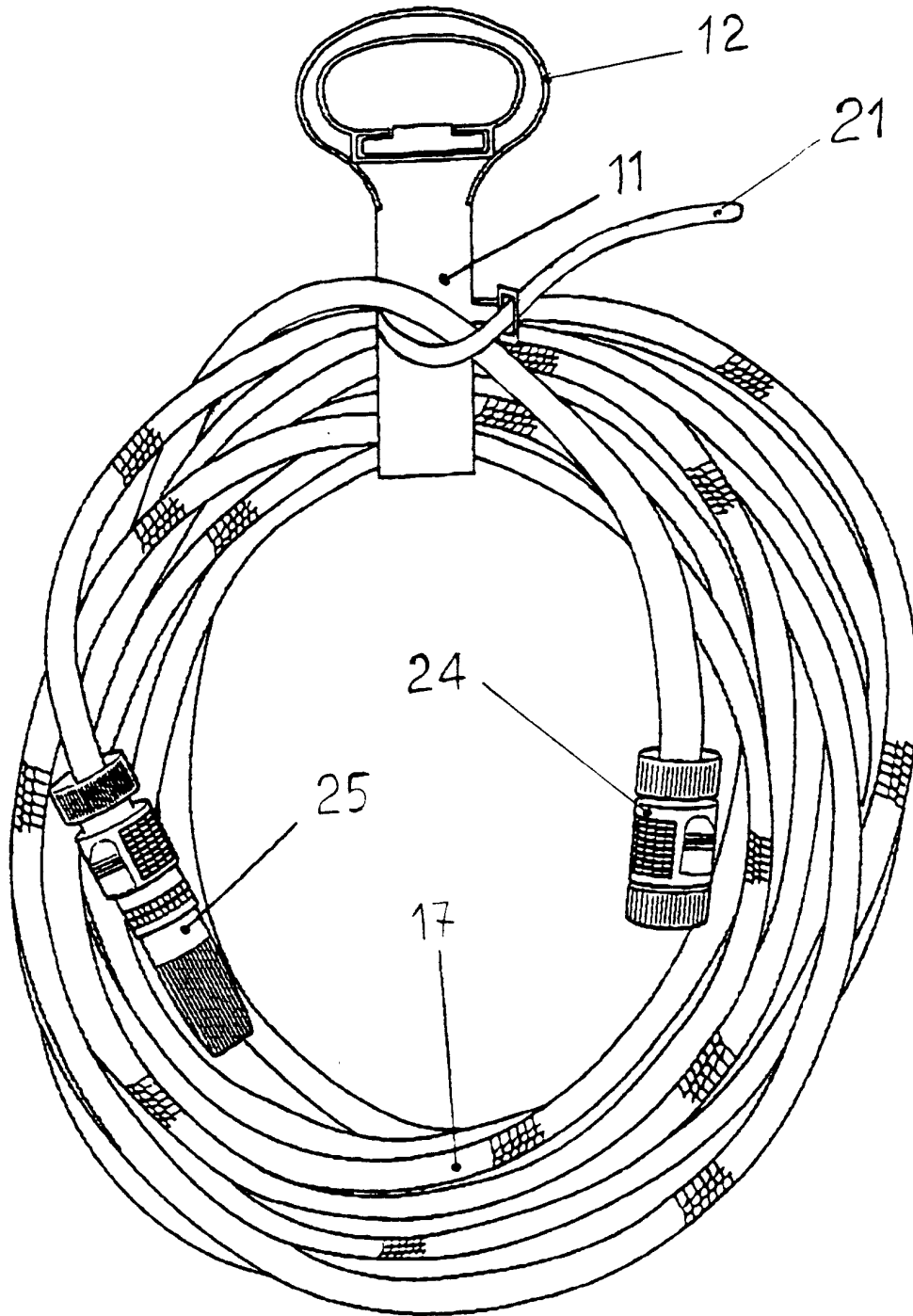


FIG. 5



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 01 10 8342

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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)
A	US 5 348 362 A (ROLLS JAMES B) 20 September 1994 (1994-09-20) * the whole document *	1	A45F5/10
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7) A45F B65G B65D
Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner	
THE HAGUE	30 October 2001	Sigwalt, C	
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
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EP 01 10 8342

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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30-10-2001

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