



(12) **EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION**

(43) Date of publication:  
**14.05.2003 Bulletin 2003/20**

(51) Int Cl.7: **B65D 75/02, B65D 85/02**

(21) Application number: **01309535.1**

(22) Date of filing: **12.11.2001**

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

(72) Inventor: **Williams, Paul**  
**Blackpool FY3 9LW (GB)**

(74) Representative: **Thomson, Paul Anthony et al**  
**Potts, Kerr & Co.,**  
**15, Hamilton Square**  
**Birkenhead, Merseyside CH41 6BR (GB)**

(71) Applicant: **ContiTech Antriebssysteme GmbH**  
**30165 Hannover (DE)**

(54) **Packaging sleeve for endless belt, blank and method for forming said sleeve**

(57) A sleeve forming blank 10 for packaging an endless belt comprises a sheet having five parallel fold lines 11,12,13,14,15 defining six separate wall forming sections. The first 21, second 22 and third 23 sections are foldable to define a tubular part enclosing a first side of an endless belt, a tab 28 provided on the first end of the elongate blank 10 being insertable into a first slot 29 provided in the blank 10, to fasten the blank 10 to the

endless belt while allowing a plurality of similar belts to be nested inside on another. Once the endless belt 31 is ready to be displayed prior to sale, the fifth 25 and sixth 26 sections of the blank 10 can be folded around the opposite side of the belt, and a tab 32 can be inserted into a slot 33 in the tubular part such that the folded blank 10 defines an open ended sleeve wrapped around the sides of the endless belt 31 to constrain the belt 31 into an elongate display configuration.

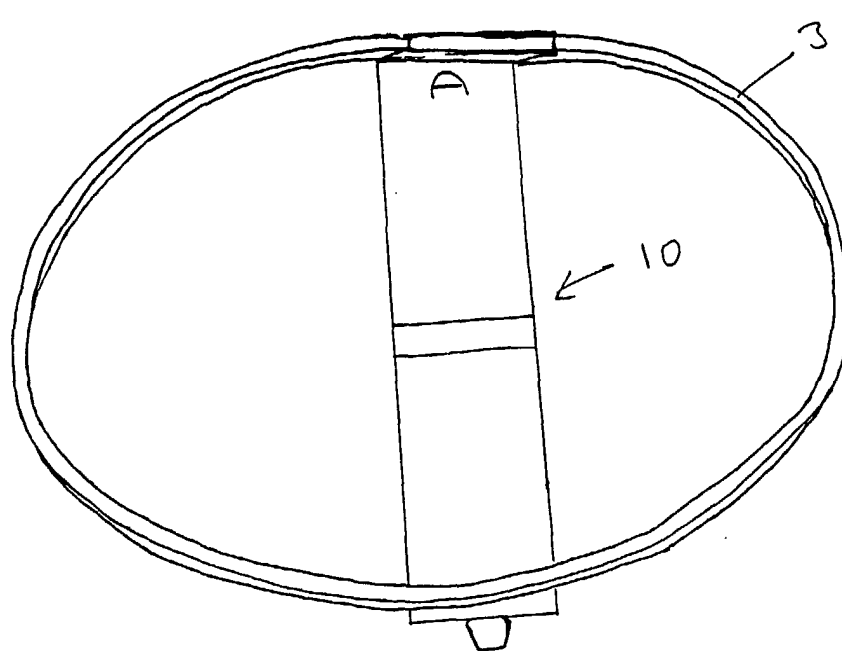


Fig. 4

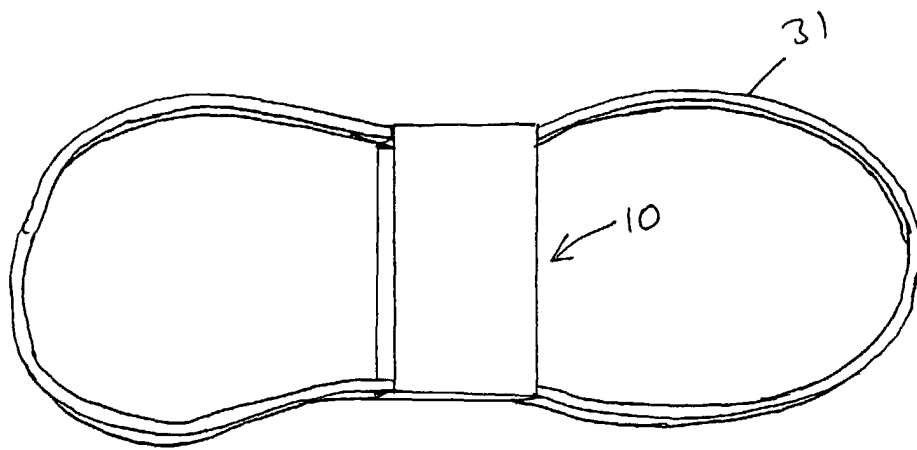


Fig.6

## Description

**[0001]** The present invention relates to a packaging sleeve for an endless belt and more particularly a packaging sleeve that allows a plurality of endless belts to be nested within one another during transportation and storage.

**[0002]** Endless belts, such as drive belts for automotive use, tend to naturally adopt a substantially circular or oval configuration. Such a configuration is not particularly suitable for displaying the belts prior to sale. Furthermore, the belts do not present a sufficient surface area for the provision of information, such as information regarding the relevant applications for which the belt is suitable, or for identification of the manufacturer. As such, endless belts are currently packaged for general sale in open ended cardboard sleeves, such as that shown in Fig. 1, comprising a front panel 1, a rear panel 2 and side panels 3,4. The sleeve serves several functions. Firstly, as shown in Fig. 2, the sleeve constrains the belt 5 into a narrow, elongate configuration (usually a figure 8 form) by engaging opposed sides of the belt. This allows the belt to be displayed, usually by hanging the upper region of the belt over an elongate support member. Secondly the front and rear panels 1,2 of the sleeve provide flat surfaces upon which the manufacturer's name can be printed as well as technical information relevant to the belt and its applications. The sleeve can be decorated and coloured in order to render the product more attractive to consumers.

**[0003]** While such known packaging is particularly suitable for displaying belts for sale, such known packaging causes the belt to take up a large space envelope during transportation and storage. Since packaging, shipping and warehousing costs are all related to the volume of space taken up by the products, in order to reduce these costs products are required to be packed as densely as possible. The optimum packing density for endless belts is achieved by nesting several belts inside one another to form a block of belts. This form of packing is impossible with the prior art packaging sleeves.

**[0004]** It is of course possible to pack the belts before the sleeves are attached thereto and to fasten the sleeves to the belts at the point of sale. However, such a solution has a number of disadvantages, not least of which would be the likelihood of the wrong sleeve being attached to the belt or the risk that the sleeve of one manufacturer might be fastened to a possibly inferior belt from another manufacturer. As such, it is preferable to attach the sleeve to the belt at the point of manufacture.

**[0005]** According to the invention there is provided a method of packaging an endless belt comprising wrapping a first portion of a packaging device formed from a sheet material blank around a section of a first side of the endless belt and securing a free edge of at least part of the first portion to a second portion of the packaging

device to define a tubular part surrounding the section of the first side of the endless belt in order to retain said packaging device on said endless belt during transportation and storage of the endless belt while allowing a further same or similar endless belt to fit or be nested within the first endless belt, a third portion of the packaging device, extending from said second portion, the method including the further step of securing at least a part of the third portion of the packaging device to the first or second portion of the packaging device when the third portion of the packaging device has been wrapped around a section of the second side of the endless belt, opposite said first side, the second side of the belt having been urged towards the first side, such that the packaging device defines a sleeve or composite sleeve engaging the sides of the endless belt to constrain the endless belt in a substantially elongate configuration for display purposes.

**[0006]** The free end of the second portion of the packaging device may be secured to a portion of the tubular part defined by the first portion or may be secured to a portion of the blank spaced from said tubular part. The free end of the first portion and/or the free end of the second portion may be secured to a respective portion of the blank by means of adhesive, stapling or by inserting a tab provided on the respective free end of the first portion and/or of the second portion into a respective slot provided on a respective portion of the blank.

**[0007]** Further, according to the present invention there is provided an elongate sheet material blank arranged to be made into a sleeve for packaging an endless belt, said blank comprising first and second opposed ends, said first end being securable to a portion of the blank to define a first tubular part capable of surrounding a section of one side of an endless belt, said second end of the blank being securable to a further portion of the blank, preferably a portion of the blank defining said first tubular part, to define a sleeve or further tubular part capable of surrounding a section of the opposite side of the endless belt to constrain the endless belt in a substantially elongate configuration for display purposes.

**[0008]** Preferably the region of the blank defining said first tubular part comprises, extending from the first end of the blank towards the second end, a first wall forming section, a second wall forming section and a third wall forming section, said first, second and third sections being defined by first, second and third substantially parallel fold lines, an extension on the first end of the blank defining a projection, tab or flap, whereby, when folded to form said first tubular part, said first wall forming section forms an inner wall of the first tubular part, said second wall forming section forms an front or upper wall of the first tubular part and said third wall forming section forms an outer wall of the first tubular part, a portion of the blank adjacent the third wall forming section defining a base or rear wall of the first tubular part, the projection, tab or flap defined by the extension of the first end of

the blank being securable to said portion of the blank such that the first tubular part can be formed around a side of an endless belt. Preferably said projection, tab or flap is secured to said portion of the blank by insertion into a slot provided in said portion of the blank. Alternatively, the projection, tab or flap may be adhesively secured to said portion of the blank or may be secured thereto by other securing means such as a staple or double sided tape.

**[0009]** Preferably fourth and fifth fold lines are provided on the blank, said fourth and fifth fold lines being arranged substantially parallel to the first, second and third fold lines and being provided approximately midway between said first and second ends of the blank, said fourth and fifth fold lines being spaced apart by a distance approximately equal to the distance between the second and third fold lines, the distance between the third and fourth first fold lines being substantially equal to the distance between the fifth fold line and the second end of the blank, whereby, when folded, the section of the blank between the third and fourth fold lines defines a rear or base panel of a sleeve, the section of the blank between the fourth and fifth fold lines defines a side panel of the sleeve and the section of the blank between the fifth fold line and the second end of the blank defines a front or upper panel of the sleeve, the front panel being securable to the first tubular part, preferably to the front or upper wall of the first tubular part, such that the blank can define a closed sleeve.

**[0010]** Preferably a tab or flap is provided on the second end of the blank, said tab being receivable in a corresponding slot on the first tubular part to allow the front panel to be secured to the first tubular part. Alternatively the front panel may be securable to the tubular part by means of adhesive or other securing means such as a staple or double sided tape.

**[0011]** According to a further aspect of the invention there is provided a packaging device for an endless belt formed from an elongate sheet material blank, said device having a tubular part or portion provided at one end of the device, said tubular part being capable of enclosing a section of one side of an endless belt, a second end of the device being securable to a portion of the device, preferably a portion of the device defining said tubular part, to enclose a section of the opposite side of the endless belt to constrain the endless belt in a substantially elongate configuration for display purposes.

**[0012]** Preferably said tubular part is formed by a loop of material secured to a portion of the blank forming the device by means of a projection, tab or flap provided on a first end of the blank, said tab being received in a corresponding slot in said portion of the blank. Alternatively, said tab or flap might be secured to said portion of the blank by means of an adhesive or other fastening means such as a staple or double sided tape.

**[0013]** The second end of the device may be securable to said portion of the device by means of a tab or flap provided on the second end of the device, said tab

or flap being receivable in a corresponding slot provided on said portion of the device defining the tubular part. Alternatively, the second end of the sleeve may be secured to said portion of the device by means of adhesive or other securing means such as a staple or double sided tape.

**[0014]** According to a further aspect of the invention there is provided a packaging device for an endless belt, said device comprising a first tubular part or portion forming one side of a second larger tubular portion.

**[0015]** According to a further aspect of the invention there is provided a packaging device for an endless belt, said device comprising a first tubular part or portion forming one side of a second larger tubular portion in combination with an endless belt wherein one part of the endless belt extends through the first tubular portion and an opposite part of the belt extends through the second tubular portion.

**[0016]** The present invention will be described further, by way of example, with reference to figures 3 to 11 of the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Fig. 3 is a plan view of a sleeve forming blank according to the invention;

Fig. 4 is a perspective view from above showing the blank of Fig. 1 fitted to an endless belt to allow the belt to be adopt a configuration suitable for transportation and/or storage of the belt

Fig. 5 is a perspective view of several endless belts, each having a blank as shown in the sleeve of Fig. 1 fitted thereto, nested together in order to achieve optimum packing density;

Fig. 6 is a perspective view from above showing a sleeve formed from the blank of Fig. 1 fitted to an endless belt to restrain the belt into a configuration suitable for display prior to sale;

Fig. 7 is a sectional view of the blank of Fig. 3 taken on line A-A, during a first stage of forming a sleeve for packaging an endless belt;

Fig. 8 is a sectional view of the blank of Fig. 3 during a second stage of forming a sleeve for packaging an endless belt;

Fig. 9 is a sectional view of the blank of Fig. 3 during a third stage of forming a sleeve for packaging an endless belt, the blank at this stage forming the partially formed sleeve shown in Fig. 4;

Fig. 10 is a sectional view of the blank of Fig. 3 during a fourth stage of forming a sleeve for packaging an endless belt;

Fig. 11 is a sectional view of the blank of Fig. 3 during a final stage of forming the sleeve shown in Fig. 6.

**[0017]** A blank 10 for forming a sleeve for packaging an endless belt according to the invention comprises an elongate rectangular sheet of suitable material, such as stiff cardboard, having five parallel score or fold lines 11,12,13,14,15 defining, from a first end of the blank 10

towards a second end, first 21, second 22, third 23, fourth 24, fifth 25 and sixth 26 separate wall forming sections.

**[0018]** The first 21, second 22 and third 23 wall forming sections are foldable to define a box-like tubular part for enclosing a first side of an endless belt, said first wall forming section 21 forming an inner wall of the tubular part, said second wall forming section 22 forming an front or upper wall of the tubular part and said third wall 23 forming section forming an outer wall of the tubular part, a portion 27 of the fourth section 24 adjacent the third wall forming section 23 defining a base or rear wall of the tubular part. A tab 28 is provided on the first end of the elongate blank 10, said tab 28 being insertable into a first slot 29 provided in the blank 10, to fasten the blank 10 to the endless belt while allowing a plurality of similar belts to be nested inside on another in order to minimise the storage space taken up by the belts. A further fold line is provided between the tab 28 and the first section 21 of the blank to allow the tab to be folded. A further crescent shaped slot 30 is provided in the blank 10 adjacent the first slot 29 such that the tab 28 can be inserted under the second slot 30 after being inserted through the first slot 29 to retain the tab 28 parallel to the portion 27 of the blank defining the base of the tubular part. The fifth 25 and sixth 26 wall forming portions remain flat and unfolded when the blank 10 is in the transportation/storage position as shown in Figs. 4 and 5.

**[0019]** Fig. 4 shows the blank 10 attached to an endless belt 31, the first, second and third wall forming sections 21,22,23 being wrapped around a side of the endless belt to define a tubular part therearound, the tab 28 provided on a first end of the blank 10 being inserted through the first slot 29 and back under the second slot 30 to secure the blank 10 to the endless belt 31. As shown in Fig. 5, with the blank 10 attached to the endless belt 31, a plurality of endless belts (in this case seven), each having a further blank secured to one side thereof, can be nested within one another to minimise the storage space required by the belts. The belts are nested within one another with the tubular parts of the blanks arranged adjacent one another such that the flat portions of the blanks are stacked on top of one another.

**[0020]** Once the endless belt 31, having the blank 10 attached thereto, is ready to be displayed prior to sale, the fifth 25 and sixth 26 sections of the blank 10 can be folded around the second side of the belt, opposite the first side, to enclose said belt, and a tab 32, provided on the second side of the blank and separated from the sixth section 26 of the blank 10 by a further fold line, can be inserted into a slot 33 provided in or adjacent to the fold line between the second 22 and third 23 sections (i. e. in the tubular part) to secure the sixth section 26 to the tubular part, such that the folded blank 10 defines an open ended sleeve wrapped around the sides of the endless belt 31 to constrain the belt 31 into an elongate figure 8 form display configuration. The outer surfaces

of the folded blank 10 defining the sleeve can be printed with technical information about the belt, details of the applications for which the belt is intended and identification of the manufacturer and can be decorated and/or coloured to render the product more attractive to consumers.

**[0021]** The method of forming the packaging sleeve of Figs. 4 to 6 from the blank 10 of Fig. 3 will now be described in more detail with reference to Figs. 7 to 11.

**[0022]** Initially, as shown in Fig. 7, the first 21, second 22 and third 23 sections of the blank are folded about their respective fold lines 11,12,13 around a side of the endless belt 31. Next (Fig. 8) the tab 28 is inserted through the slot 29 such that the first, second and third section 21,22,23 define a close tubular part enclosing a section of one side of the belt 31. As can be seen from Fig. 7, The first section 21 and the third section 23 are substantially equal in width, such that they define two equal length sides of the tubular part, and the distance between the third fold line 13 and the slot 29 is substantially equal to the width of the second section 22, such that the tubular part thus formed is substantially rectangular in cross section. To complete the attachment of the blank 10 to one side of the endless belt 31 the end of the tab 28 is inserted under the further slot 30 (as shown in Fig. 9). The endless belt 31 can now be packed for transportation and storage with the blank 10 attached thereto. In particular one or more further belts can be nested inside the belt 31 to minimise the space occupied by the belts.

**[0023]** Once the belt 31 has reached the point at which the belt 31 is required for display or sale, the second side of the belt, opposite to the first side, can be pushed towards the first side to urge the belt 31 into an elongate configuration (as shown in Fig. 6) and the fifth 25 and sixth 26 sections of the blank 10 can be folded up around second side of the belt 31, as shown in Fig. 10, such that the blank 10 forms a sleeve around both sides of the belt 31. As shown in Fig. 11, to complete formation of the sleeve, the tab 32 on the second side of the blank 10 is inserted into the slot 33 in the fold line 12 between the second and third sections 22, 23 of the blank to secure the sixth section 26 to the tubular part. As can be seen from Figs. 10 and 11, the width of the third section 23 of the blank is substantially equal to the width of the fifth section 25 and the width of the fourth section 24 is substantially equal to the width of the sixth section 26 such that, when folded and assembled as described above, the blank defines a closed sleeve having a rectangular cross section.

**[0024]** In use, the steps shown in Figs. 7 to 9 are undertaken at the point of manufacture of the belts, ensuring that the correct sleeve is attached to each belt, while the steps shown in Figs. 10 and 11 are undertaken at the point of sale.

**[0025]** By permitting a number of endless belts to be packed nested within one another while having the partially formed sleeves attached thereto, the space re-

quired for transportation and storage of the belts is greatly reduced. Using the prior art sleeve design shown in Figs. 1 and 2, a space envelope for an average belt equates to 0.00089 cu meters. Using the sleeve formed from the blank shown in Fig. 3, such that a number of belts can be nested within one another, the space envelope for an average belt is reduced to 0.00023 cu meters, which 75% less space than that occupied by the belt when fitted with the conventional sleeve. As such, packaging, storage and freight costs can be reduced by 75% when using the blank and sleeve according to the present invention.

**[0026]** While, in the preferred embodiment described above, the first section is secured to a portion of the fourth section by means of a tab 28 inserted into a slot 29, it is envisaged that the tab 2, or other projection or flap provided on the first end of the blank, can be secured to said portion of the fourth section by means of adhesive or other securing means such as a staple.

## Claims

1. A method of packaging an endless belt comprising wrapping a first portion of a packaging device formed from a sheet material blank around a section of a first side of the endless belt and securing a free edge of at least part of the first portion to a second portion of the packaging device to define a tubular part surrounding the section of the first side of the endless belt in order to retain said packaging device on said endless belt during transportation and storage of the endless belt while allowing a further same or similar endless belt to fit or be nested within the first endless belt, a third portion of the packaging device, extending from said second portion, the method including the further step of securing at least a part of the third portion of the packaging device to the first or second portion of the packaging device when the third portion of the packaging device has been wrapped around a section of the second side of the endless belt, opposite said first side, the second side of the belt having been urged towards the first side, such that the packaging device defines a sleeve or composite sleeve engaging the sides of the endless belt to constrain the endless belt in a substantially elongate configuration for display purposes.
2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the free end of the second portion of the packaging device is secured to a portion of the tubular part defined by the first portion
3. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the free end of the second portion of the packaging device is secured to a portion of the blank spaced from said tubular part.
4. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the free end of the first portion and/or the free end of the second portion is secured to a respective portion of the blank by means of adhesive, stapling or by inserting a tab provided on the respective free end of the first portion and/or of the second portion into a respective slot provided on a respective portion of the blank.
5. An elongate sheet material blank arranged to be made into a sleeve for packaging an endless belt, said blank comprising first and second opposed ends, said first end being securable to a portion of the blank to define a first tubular part capable of surrounding a section of one side of an endless belt, said second end of the blank being securable to a further portion of the blank, preferably a portion of the blank defining said first tubular part, to define a sleeve or further tubular part capable of surrounding a section of the opposite side of the endless belt to constrain the endless belt in a substantially elongate configuration for display purposes.
6. A blank as claimed in claim 5, wherein the region of the blank defining said first tubular part comprises, extending from the first end of the blank towards the second end, a first wall forming section, a second wall forming section and a third wall forming section, said first, second and third sections being defined by first, second and third substantially parallel fold lines, an extension on the first end of the blank defining a projection, tab or flap, whereby, when folded to form said first tubular part, said first wall forming section forms an inner wall of the first tubular part, said second wall forming section forms an front or upper wall of the first tubular part and said third wall forming section forms an outer wall of the first tubular part, a portion of the blank adjacent the third wall forming section defining a base or rear wall of the first tubular part, the projection, tab or flap defined by the extension of the first end of the blank being securable to said portion of the blank such that the first tubular part can be formed around a side of an endless belt.
7. A blank as claimed in claim 6, wherein said projection, tab or flap is secured to said portion of the blank by insertion into a slot provided in said portion of the blank.
8. A blank as claimed in claim 6, wherein the projection, tab or flap is adhesively secured to said portion of the blank or is secured thereto by other securing means such as a staple or double sided tape.
9. A blank as claimed in any one of claims 6 to 8, wherein fourth and fifth fold lines are provided on the blank, said fourth and fifth fold lines being ar-

ranged substantially parallel to the first, second and third fold lines and being provided approximately midway between said first and second ends of the blank, said fourth and fifth fold lines being spaced apart by a distance approximately equal to the distance between the second and third fold lines, the distance between the third and fourth first fold lines being substantially equal to the distance between the fifth fold line and the second end of the blank, whereby, when folded, the section of the blank between the third and fourth fold lines defines a rear or base panel of a sleeve, the section of the blank between the fourth and fifth fold lines defines a side panel of the sleeve and the section of the blank between the fifth fold line and the second end of the blank defines a front or upper panel of the sleeve, the front panel being securable to the first tubular part, preferably to the front or upper wall of the first tubular part, such that the blank can define a closed sleeve.

10. A blank as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 9, wherein a tab or flap is provided on the second end of the blank, said tab being receivable in a corresponding slot on the first tubular part to allow the front panel to be secured to the first tubular part.

11. A blank as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 9, wherein the second end of the blank is securable to the tubular part by means of adhesive or other securing means such as a staple or double sided tape.

12. A packaging device for an endless belt formed from an elongate sheet material blank, said device having a tubular part or portion provided at one end of the device, said tubular part being capable of enclosing a section of one side of an endless belt, a second end of the device being securable to a portion of the device to enclose a section of the opposite side of the endless belt to constrain the endless belt in a substantially elongate configuration for display purposes.

13. A packaging device as claimed in claim 12, wherein said second end of the device is securable to a portion of the device defining said tubular part.

14. A packaging device as claimed in claim 12 or claim 13, wherein said tubular part is formed by a loop of material secured to a portion of the blank forming the device by means of a projection, tab or flap provided on a first end of the blank, said tab being received in a corresponding slot in said portion of the blank.

15. A packaging device as claimed in claim 12 or claim 13, wherein said tubular part is formed by a loop of material secured to a portion of the blank forming

the device by means of a projection, tab or flap provided on a first end of the blank, said tab or flap being securable to said portion of the blank by means of an adhesive or other fastening means such as a staple or double sided tape.

16. A packaging device as claimed in any one of claims 12 to 15, wherein the second end of the device is securable to said portion of the device by means of a tab or flap provided on the second end of the device, said tab or flap being receivable in a corresponding slot provided on said portion of the device defining the tubular part or the second end of the sleeve being securable to said portion of the device by means of adhesive or other securing means such as a staple or double sided tape.

17. A packaging device for an endless belt, said device comprising a first tubular part or portion forming one side of a second larger tubular portion.

18. A packaging device for an endless belt, said device comprising a first tubular part or portion forming one side of a second larger tubular portion in combination with an endless belt wherein one part of the endless belt extends through the first tubular portion and an opposite part of the belt extends through the second tubular portion.

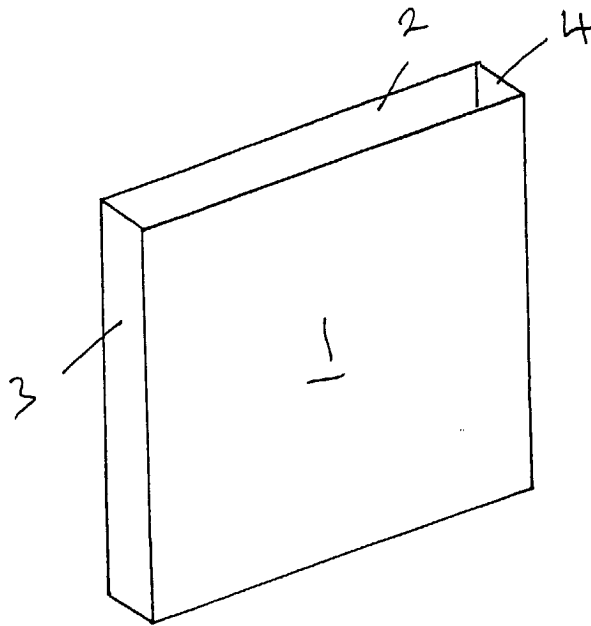


Fig. 1

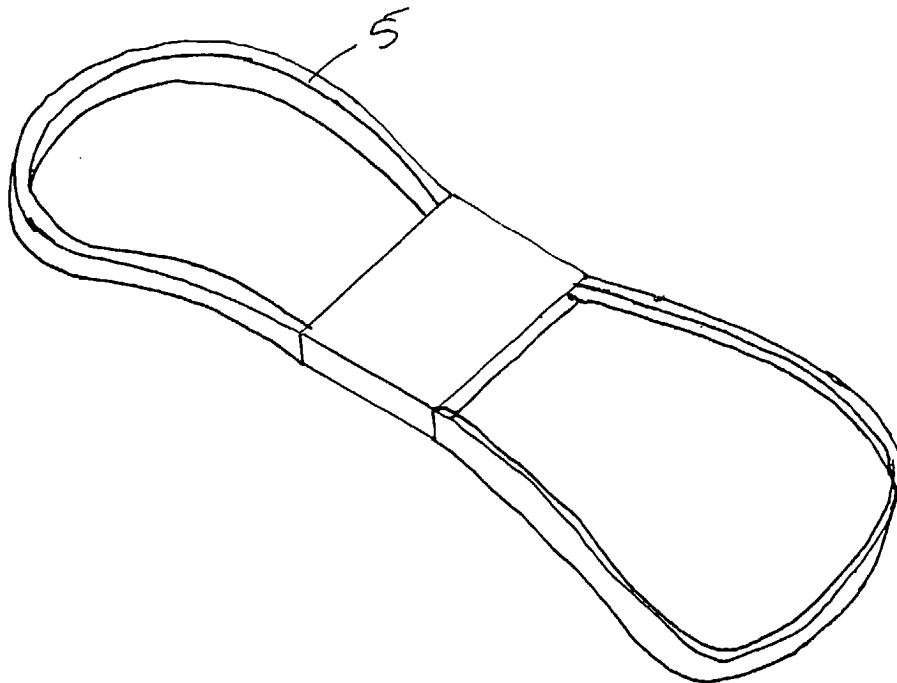


Fig. 2



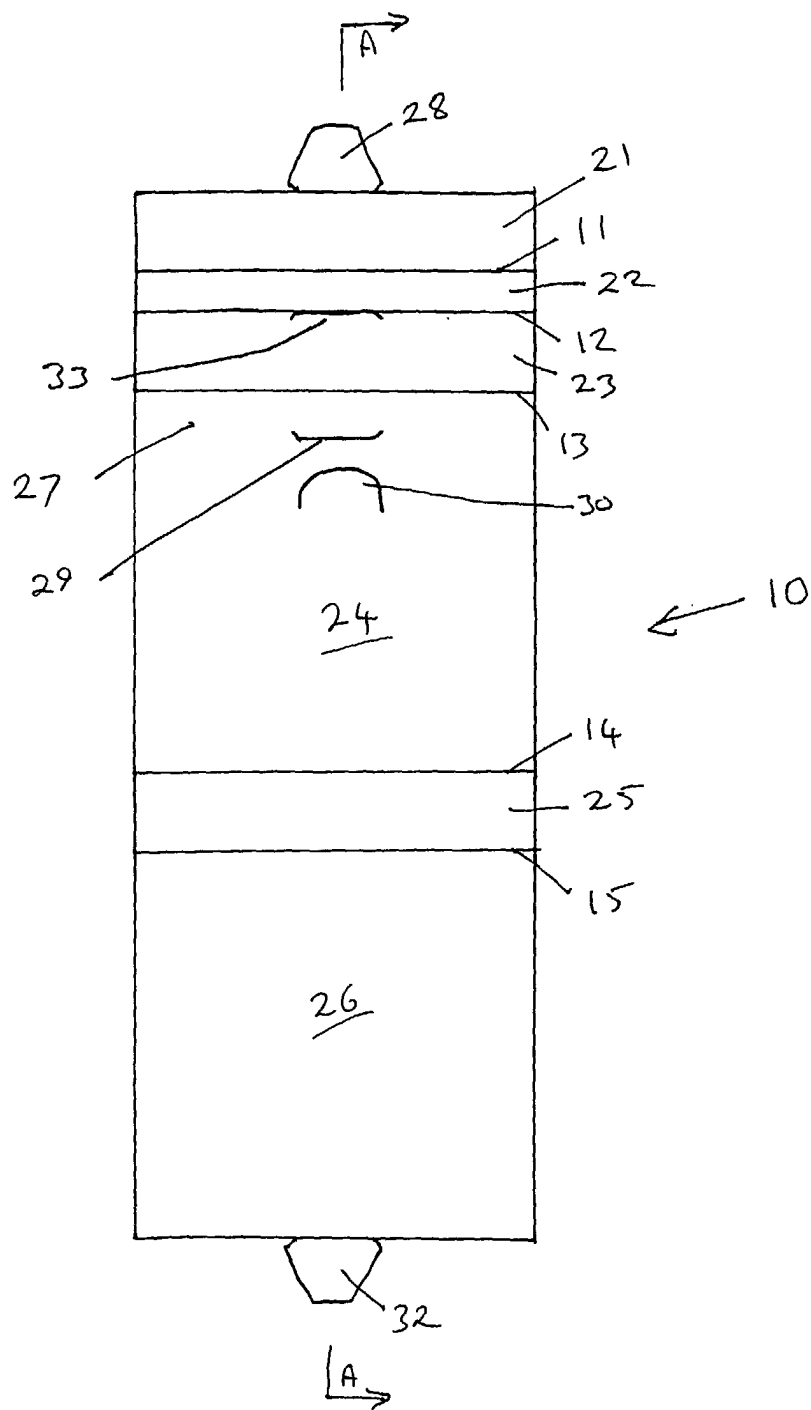


Fig. 3

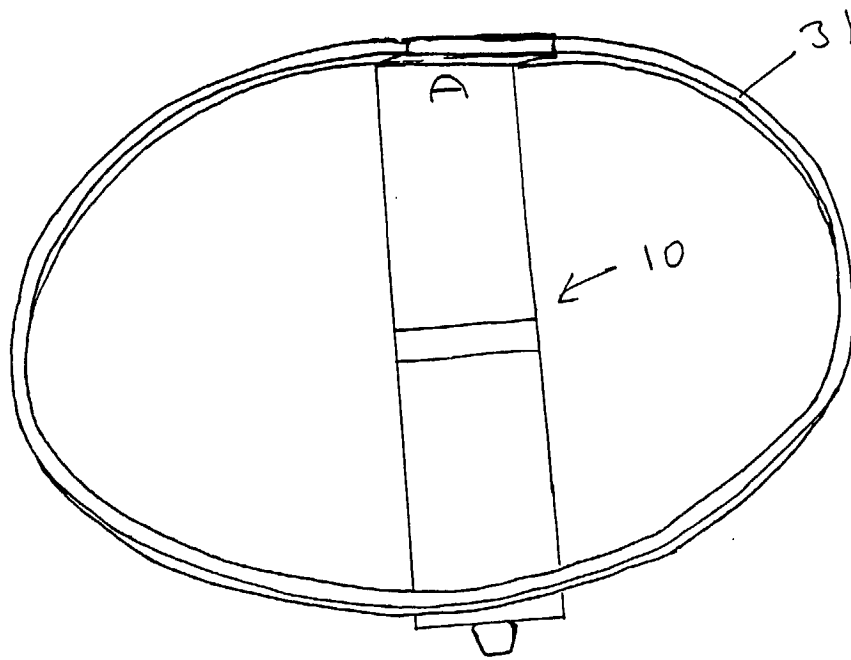


Fig. 4

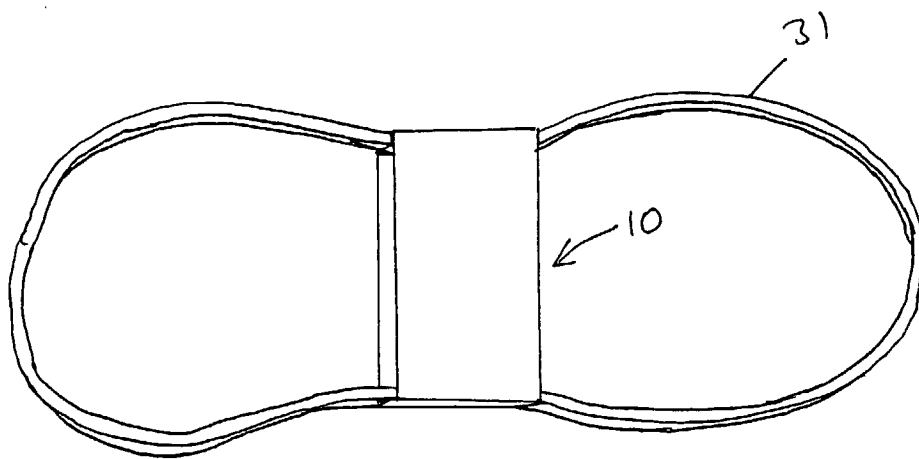


Fig. 6

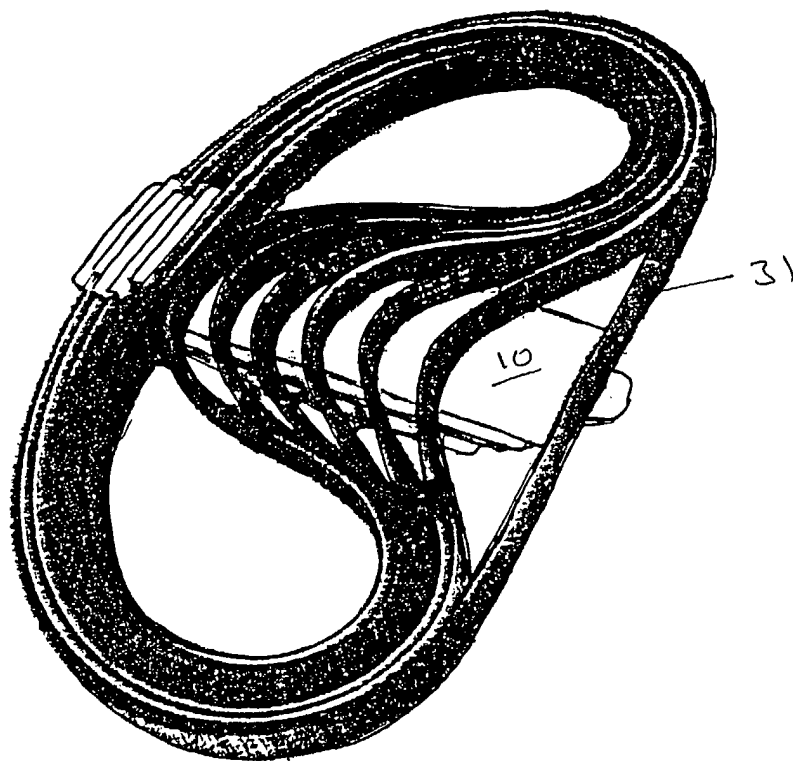
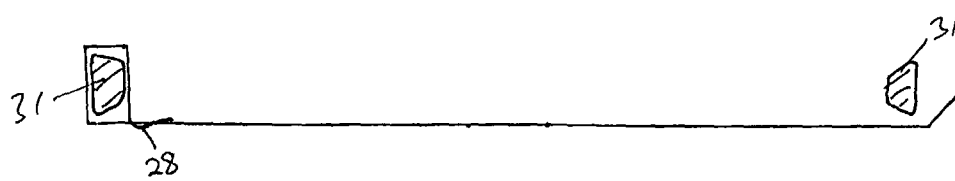
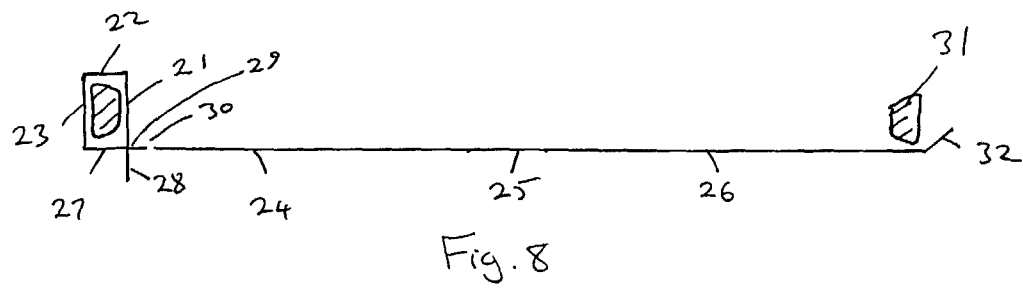
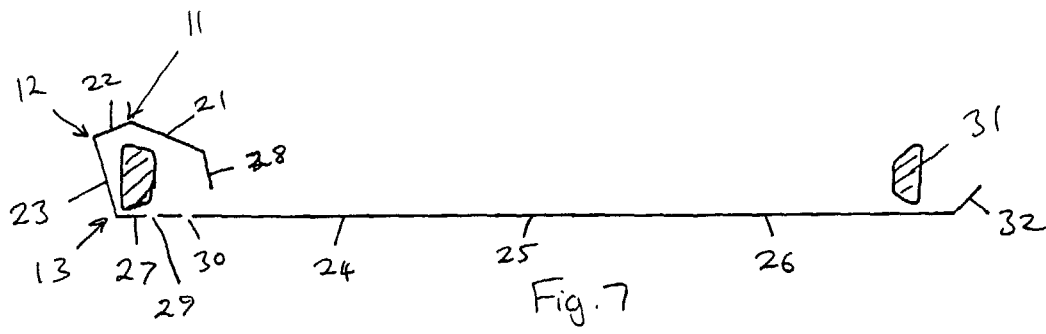
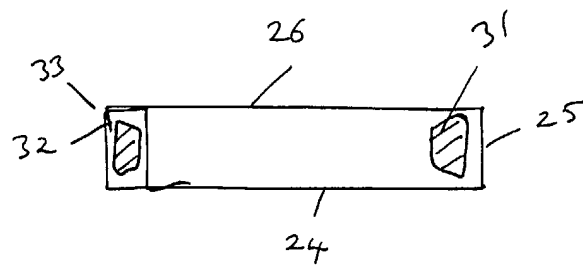
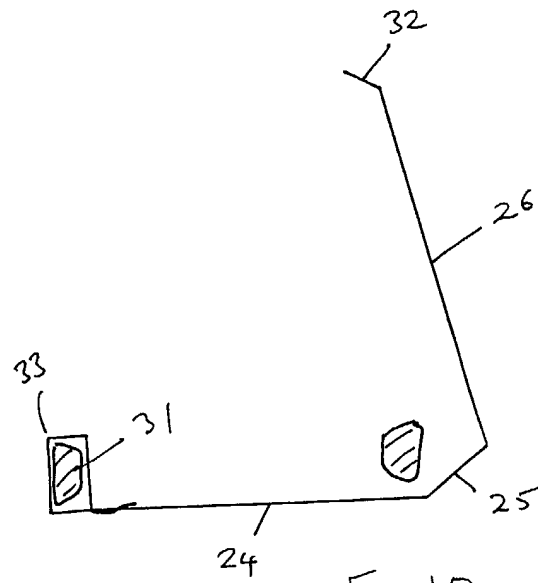


Fig.5







European Patent  
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# EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number  
EP 01 30 9535

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.7)
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			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
THE HAGUE		6 June 2002	Bridault, A
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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT  
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EP 01 30 9535

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