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(54) **Flexible saddle tree**

(57) Flexible saddle tree for horse riding saddles constructed by two front and rear zones (3) and (5) respectively, provided with grooves in their internal, transversal zones in which the ends of two pairs of pieces (6)

made of leather are introduced, covering two metal flanges on their internal zone, which are introduced at the same time as the leather pieces, into the pieces (2) and (4), the internal flanges being made of metal.

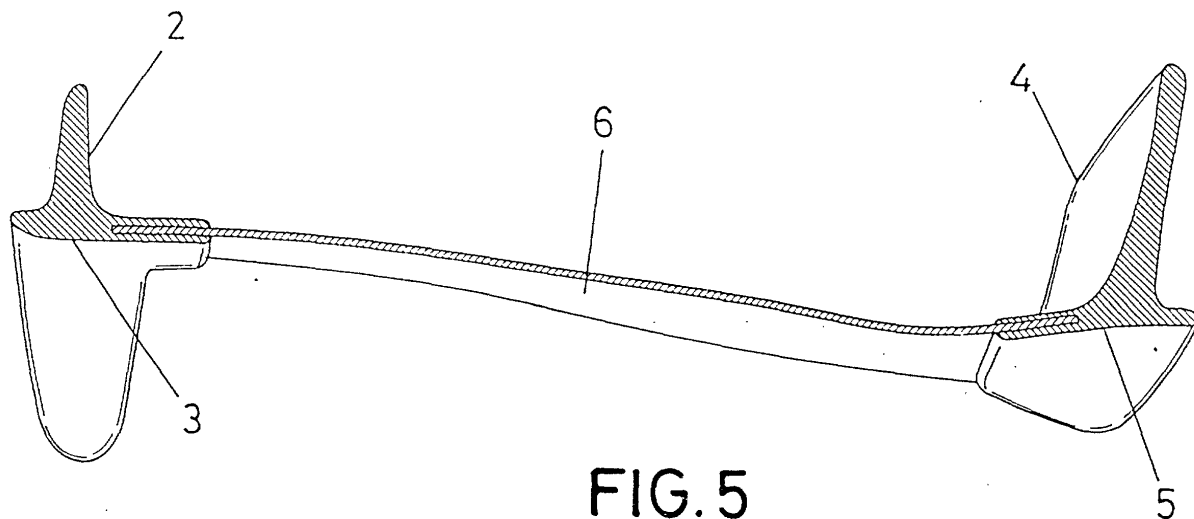


FIG. 5
A-B

Description

OBJECT OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present specification refers to a flexible saddle tree for horse riding saddles the aim of which lies in allowing the subsequent assembly of a horse riding saddle on itself, the saddle tree having longitudinal and transversal flexibility providing the saddle constructed with this saddle tree with a substantially improved comfort for the rider, and also providing an improved adherence between the rider and the horse.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] This invention has its application within the saddlery industry or industries dedicated to the manufacturing of horse's saddles and harnesses and the like.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] US patent 2001/0005980 discloses a "Western style saddle" formed by two identical pieces joined along one of their long arms, each one of the pieces having a sinusoidal perimeter and on the surface of its external sides incorporating thick protectors fixed by means of leather rivets so that the saddle formed by the described pieces adapts to the surface of the horse's body.

[0004] Spanish patent application number 009900252 discloses a "Saddle tree for horse riding saddles" formed by two warped nippers determined by peripheral rods which can house a padding, a leading bridge curved between both nippers to support the leading edge of the seat, a rear bridge curved between both nippers, a detachable leading arch which can be housed in a transversal passage of the leading edge of the seat and some first means suitable for fitting the leading arch to the saddle tree.

[0005] A "Riding saddle" with a remarkably lightened structure is disclosed in European patent number 1081092.

[0006] German patent number 19924383 discloses a "Horse riding saddle" provided with additional support elements both in the front and back zones.

[0007] A "Horse riding saddle" whose parts are gradually coupled to the central zone allowing an easy replacement, is disclosed by French patent application number 9904659.

[0008] US patent number 6223509 discloses a "Rigid saddle tree for riding saddles" formed by a leading part of the bridge from which two longitudinal prolongations originate separated by a wide opening, on which the assembly of the elements of the saddle is carried out.

[0009] Austrian patent number 406767 discloses a "Saddle bridge part" provided with light flexibility.

[0010] However, the applicant is unaware of the current existence of an invention which configured as a flexible saddle tree for horse riding saddles allows the piec-

es constituting a riding saddle subsequent to the assembly of this saddle tree, to incorporate girths and counter girths along with the edges of the upper skirt made of leather and cotton batting which makes up the padding, allowing a better adherence between rider and horse in accordance with the longitudinal and transversal flexibility provided by the invention described in this specification.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0011] The flexible saddle tree for horse riding saddles object of this invention is configured as an evident novelty within its specific field of application incorporating a longitudinal and transversal flexibility when the saddle is completely assembled.

[0012] More specifically, the flexible saddle tree for horse riding saddles object of the invention consists of two rigid pieces making up the front and rear zones thereof, adopting the pieces the arched configuration, with an arched vertical ledge and incorporating two sinusoidally shaped leather bands in the internal zones of each of the pieces, which located on the right and left side unite both parts having a metal flange inside the leather parts, which stiffening of the joining provides the riding saddle with longitudinal and transversal flexibility once it has been assembled using this saddle tree.

[0013] The pieces arranged in the front and rear zones are provided with the pertinent grooves for the incorporation of two leather or skin bands into their sides which by covering the flanges in their upward and downward zones with other such metal bands and positioned along the right left sides make up the saddle tree which will be later provided with the pertinent padding, leather and other elements needed for the construction of a saddle.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0014] To complete the description being given here and with the object of providing a better understanding of the features of the invention, this specification is accompanied as an integral part thereof by a set of drawings in which for illustrative purposes and no limiting the following has been represented:

Figure 1. - Shows a perspective view of the rear zone object of the invention corresponding to a flexible saddle tree for horse riding saddles.

Figure 2. - Again shows a perspective view of the object shown in figure 1, seen from the opposite side.

Figure 3. - Corresponds to a plan view of the object shown in figures 1 and 2.

Figure 4. - Shows a new plan view of the object shown in figure 3 seen from the opposite or downward side.

Figure 5. - Finally shows an A-B view of the object

shown in figure 3.

PREFERRED EMBODIMENT OF THE INVENTION

[0015] In the light of these drawings it can be seen how the flexible saddle tree for horse riding saddles consists of a main body (1) formed by a front piece (2) and a rear piece (4), the front piece having an arched zone (3) for its adaptation to the horse's body and the piece (4) having a rear ledge (5) also to allow its adaptation to the surface of the horse's body when the tree is covered with the pertinent padding elements and external zone.

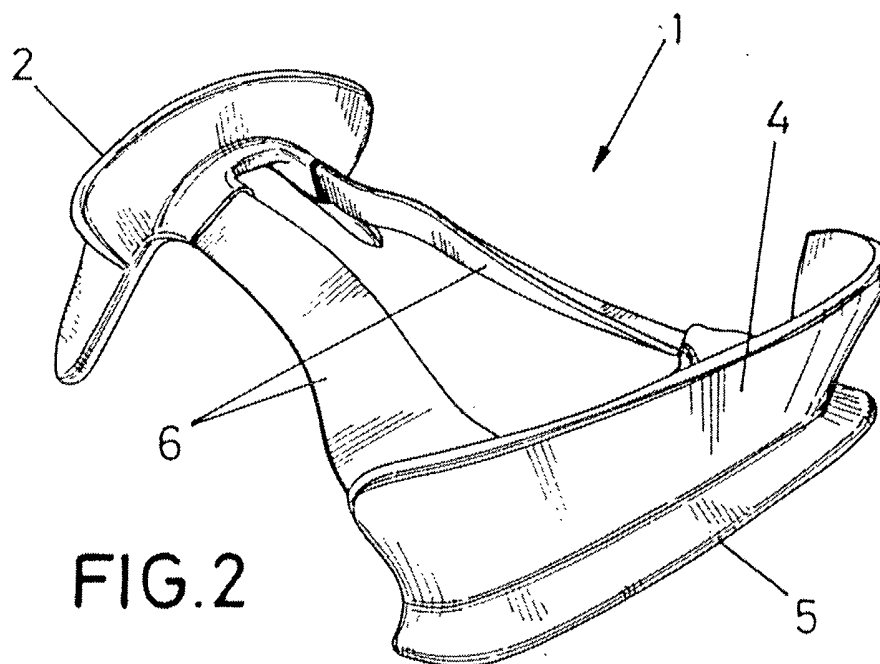
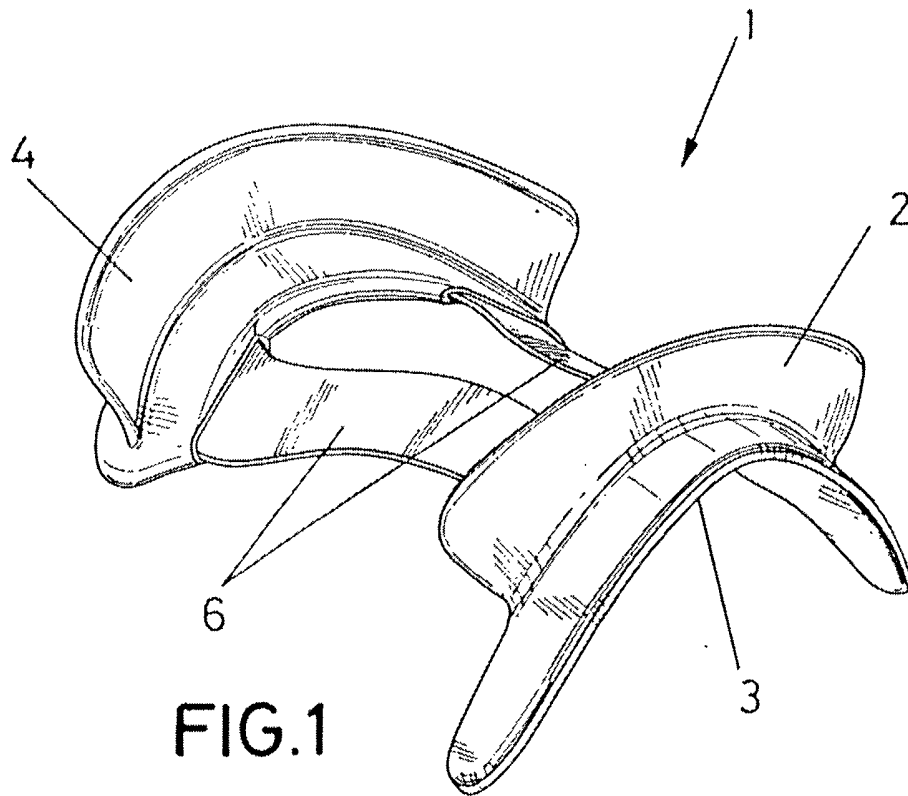
[0016] The pieces (2) and (4) are joined to each other by means of two metal flanges covered by leather pieces (6) which cover their upper as well as their lower zones, introducing the ends both of the covering pieces (6) and the metal flanges, incorporated therein, in grooves found in the pieces (2) and (4) in which they are stiffened with the pertinent fastening elements.

[0017] Because of the incorporation of the two metal flanges which unite the pieces (2) and (4) duly covered by the leather pieces (6) on the upper and bottom zones, when the riding saddle is finished this will have a longitudinal and transversal flexibility which will provide the rider with improved comfort while at the same time will lead to a better conjunction between the rider and the horse.

[0018] The invention may be adapted to any kind of saddle due to the fact that only and exclusively the structure or saddle tree is configured.

Claims

1. Flexible saddle tree for horse riding saddles to be subsequently provided with corresponding padding and leather in its external zone, incorporating girths and counter girths, **characterised by** being constructed by two pieces (2) and (4) of rigid material, having curved ledges (3) and (5) in their front and rear zones respectively, the pieces (2) and (4) being provided in their internal zone with grooves in which the ends of the two pairs of pieces (6) made of leather are introduced, covering the upper and lower zones of two metal flanges the ends of which are also introduced in the grooves of pieces (2) and (4).
2. Flexible saddle tree for horse riding saddles in accordance with the first claim, **characterised in that** the flanges covered by the two pairs of leather pieces (6) are flexible and made of metal.



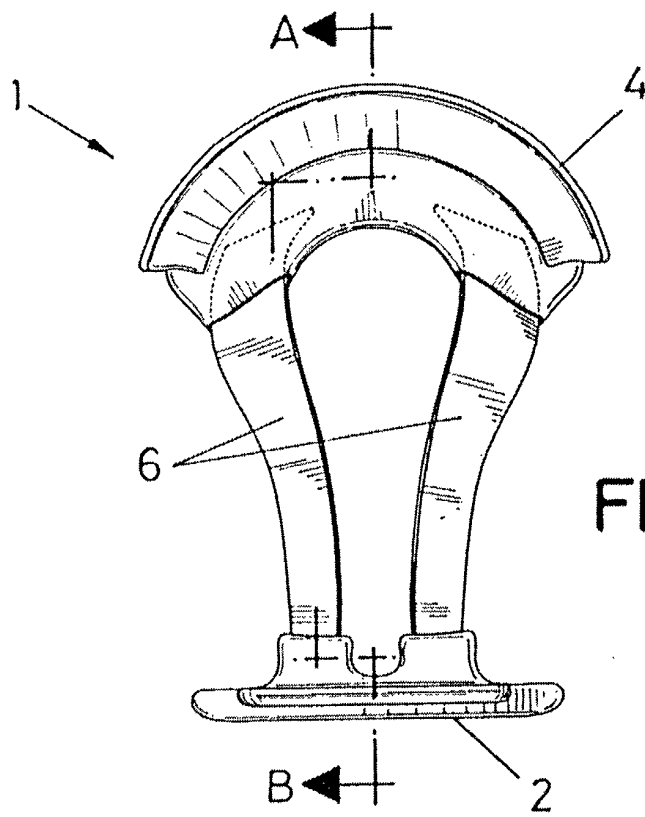


FIG. 3

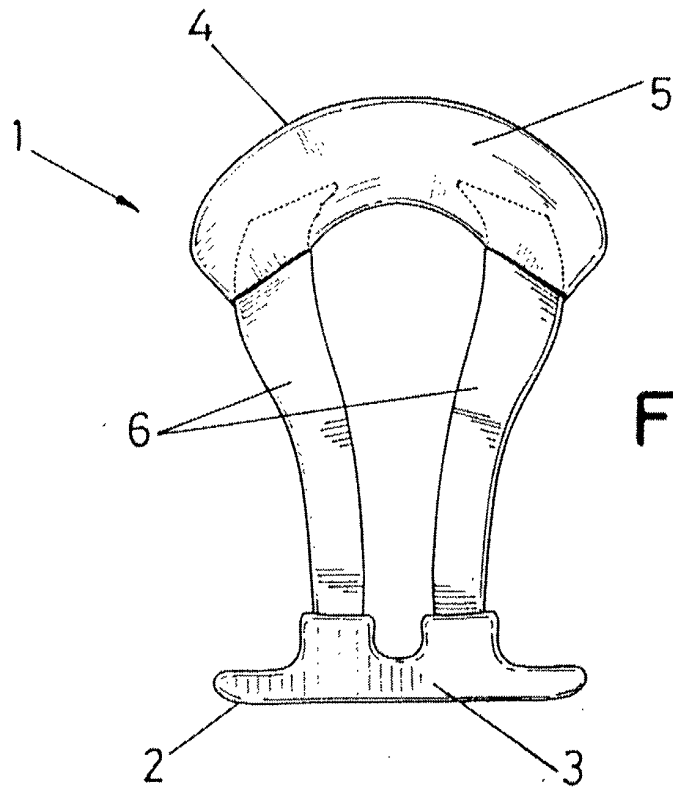


FIG. 4

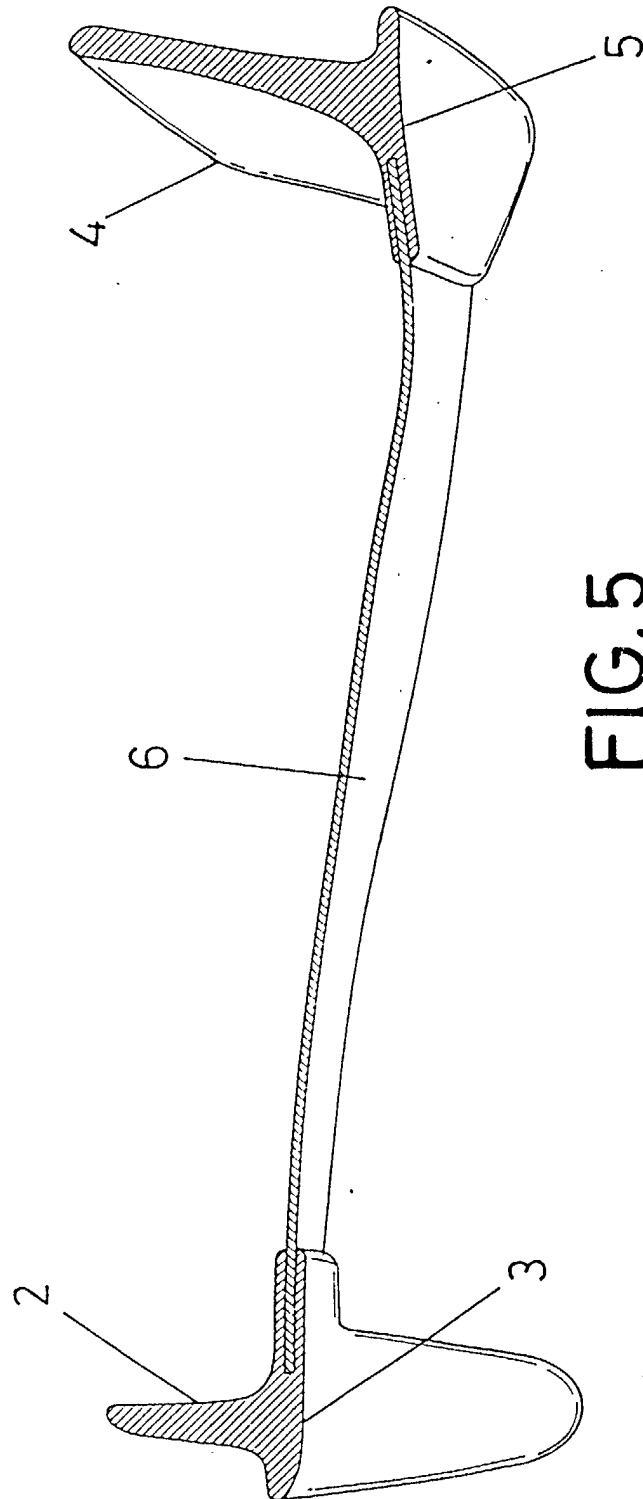


FIG. 5
A-B



European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 02 38 0062

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)
A	US 6 263 647 B1 (WALKLEY W J) 24 July 2001 (2001-07-24) * column 1, line 5 - line 11 * * column 4, line 33 - line 47; figures 1,5,8 * -----	1	B68C1/02
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7) B68C
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 16 May 2003	Examiner Sunde11, 0
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 03/02 (P04C01)

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 02 38 0062

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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16-05-2003

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 6263647	B1	24-07-2001	NONE

EPO FORM P0459

For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82