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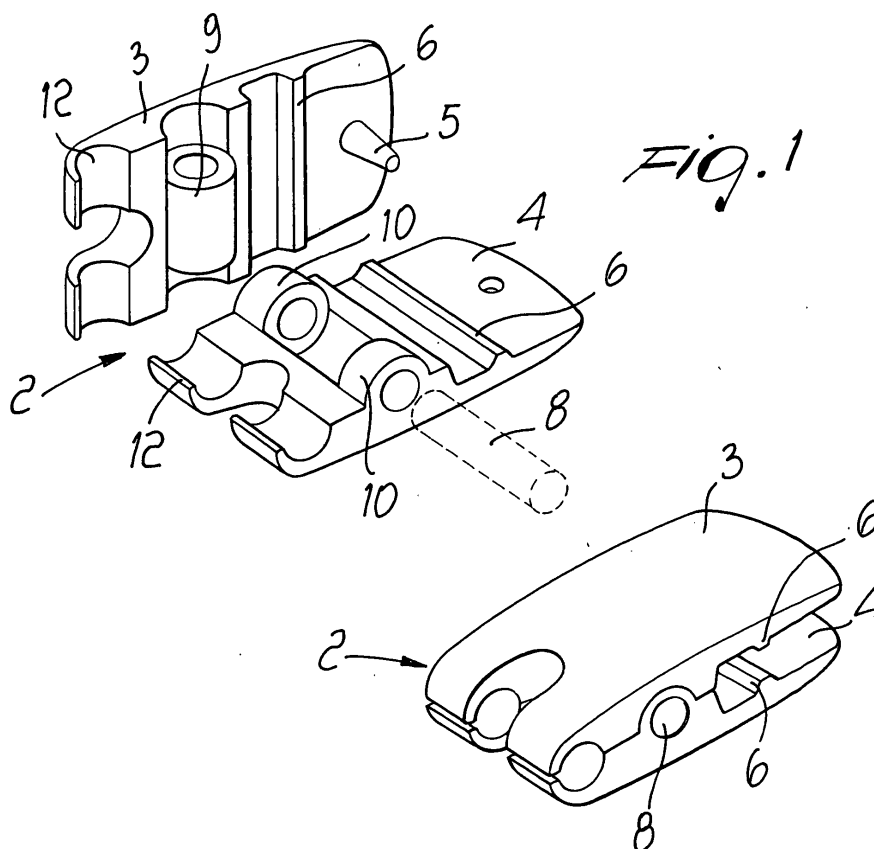
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(54) **Buckle for bridles**

(57) A buckle for bridles made of leather and the like, comprising a buckle body (2) in which a leather strip (7) is adapted to enter and engage, the body (2) being constituted by a first element (3) and a second element (4),

one of which is provided with a pin (5) that is rigidly coupled on its internal surface, fixing means (8) being provided in order to keep the first element (3) and the second element (4) of the buckle body (2) coupled, the fixing means (8) being detachable.



Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a buckle for bridles made of leather and the like. More particularly, the invention relates to a buckle for bridles that is very simple in terms of assembly and replacement of worn parts.

[0002] As is known, in the field of equestrian sports, bridles have an essential role in governing the horse. Bridles are usually made of leather and are connected to the harness or breast-piece of the horse by means of a buckle. Such buckle is normally fitted on the leather bridle by means of stitches and stamping-outs of the leather. In known types of solution, the leather is skived and folded back, with subsequent stamping-out or die cutting, and is then sewn around the buckle, thus making it prone to break.

[0003] Therefore, known types of solution do not allow a quick replacement of the bridles and moreover do not ensure adequate resistance to stresses.

[0004] Another solution of a known type uses a buckle constituted by a monolithic body inside which the leather of the bridle is inserted and locked by means of a pin, while the frame and a corresponding prong is connected to the opposite end of said body.

[0005] The solution proposed above solves some of the drawbacks noted earlier, but it is difficult to insert the strip of leather or bridle element within the body and then perform fixing by means of the pin, since the user is required to provide, by means of a bradawl, the hole required to make the pin pass.

[0006] Moreover, the pin, by being a removable element, which as such can be detached from the rest of the body of the buckle, can be lost if it is necessary to replace the bridle.

[0007] The aim of the present invention is to provide a buckle for bridles made of leather and the like that is simple to assemble without requiring the aid of particular tools.

[0008] Within this aim, an object of the present invention is to provide a buckle for bridles made of leather and the like that allows quick replacement of the bridle as well as a quick adjustment thereof.

[0009] Another object of the present invention is to provide a buckle that is highly reliable, relatively simple to provide and at competitive costs.

[0010] This aim and these and other objects that will become better apparent hereinafter are achieved by a buckle for bridles made of leather and the like, comprising a buckle body in which a strip of leather is adapted to enter and engage, characterized in that said buckle body is constituted by a first element and a second element, one of said first and second elements being provided with a pin that is rigidly coupled on its internal surface, fixing means being provided in order to keep said first element and said second element of the buckle body coupled, said fixing means being detachable.

[0011] Further characteristics and advantages of the

invention will become better apparent from the description of a preferred but not exclusive embodiment of the buckle according to the present invention, illustrated by way of non-limiting example in the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Figure 1 is an exploded perspective view of the body of the buckle;

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the body of the buckle in the assembled condition; and

Figure 3 is a perspective view of the body of the buckle with the corresponding frame and prong, with the bridle inserted within the buckle.

[0012] With reference to the figures, the buckle according to the present invention, generally designated by the reference numeral 1, comprises a buckle body 2, constituted by a first element 3 and a second element 4, which are adapted to be mutually coupled and complementary to each other. One of said first and second elements 3 and 4 is provided with a pin 5, which is rigidly coupled thereto and is adapted to abut against the internal surface of the opposite element. In the figures, the pin 5 is shown rigidly coupled to the first element 3, but of course it can also be rigidly coupled to the second element 4.

[0013] Conveniently, the internal surface of the first and second elements is provided with at least one ridge 6, which is adapted to allow better locking of a strip 7 of leather or the like, which is inserted within the body 2 of the buckle and constitutes, together with other leather elements, a bridle or other accessories.

[0014] Conveniently, the first and second elements 3 and 4 of the body 2 of the buckle are provided so that they are coupled to each other and are locked by means of fixing means, such as an elastic dowel 8. For this purpose, at one of the first and second elements 3 and 4 of the body 2 of the buckle there is a cylindrical portion 9, which is adapted to allow the passage of the elastic dowel 8. The size of said cylindrical portion is limited to a portion of the width of the first or second elements that constitute the body 2 of the buckle.

[0015] The opposite element of the buckle body is provided with two corresponding cylindrical portions 10, whose dimensions are such as to be arranged laterally adjacent to the cylindrical element 9, so as to constitute a single tubular passage for the elastic dowel 8, said passage extending along the entire width of the first and second elements 3 and 4 that constitute the body 2 of the buckle.

[0016] At the opposite end, adapted to allow the insertion of the leather strip 7, the first and second elements 3 and 4 that constitute the body 2 of the buckle are provided with an arc-like portion 12, which mates with the arc-like portion of the opposite element so as to define a passage for the insertion of a frame 13 with the corresponding prong 14.

[0017] Operation of the buckle according to the inven-

tion is as follows.

[0018] Substantially, when the buckle is open, i.e., when the first and second elements 3 and 4 that constitute the body 2 of the buckle are separated, the leather strip 7 is placed in contact with one of the two elements, and the second element, particularly the element provided with the pin 5, is coupled to the opposite element, so that the strip 7 is clamped between two elements 3 and 4, so that the pin 5 "bites" into the bridle. At this point, the frame 13 with the corresponding prong 14 is inserted and then the elastic dowel 8 is inserted, allowing to keep the first and second elements 3 and 4 assembled, so that the pin 5 presses against the leather strip 7.

[0019] The presence of the ridges 6 at the internal surfaces of the first and second elements 3 and 4 allows to bite the leather of the strip 7, as shown in Figure 3, ensuring further retention of the strip in addition to the retention already provided by the pin 5.

[0020] Therefore, since the pin 5 is rigidly coupled to one of the two elements 3 and 4 that constitute the buckle body 2, the pin cannot be lost accidentally and cannot disengage.

[0021] Moreover, the presence of the ridges 6 helps to improve the retention of the strip inside the buckle.

[0022] With the buckle proposed above, it is extremely easy to assemble the buckle with the corresponding strip inserted therein, and therefore perform rapid replacements and repairs as well as adjustments of said strip 7.

[0023] In practice it has been found that the buckle according to the invention fully achieves the intended aim and objects, since it allows to assemble the buckle and the strip without the aid of any tool and therefore allows rapid replacement of the parts of the buckle and an effective adjustment of the strip.

[0024] The buckle thus conceived is susceptible of numerous modifications and variations, all of which are within the scope of the appended claims; all the details may further be replaced with other technically equivalent elements.

[0025] In practice, the materials used, as well as the contingent shapes and dimensions, may be any according to requirements and to the state of the art.

[0026] The disclosures in Italian Patent Application No. MI2004A001155 from which this application claims priority are incorporated herein by reference.

[0027] Where technical features mentioned in any claim are followed by reference signs, those reference signs have been included for the sole purpose of increasing the intelligibility of the claims and accordingly such reference signs do not have any limiting effect on the interpretation of each element identified by way of example by such reference signs.

Claims

1. A buckle for bridles made of leather and the like, comprising a buckle body (2) in which a strip (7) of leather is adapted to enter and engage, **characterized in that** said buckle body (2) is constituted by a first element (3) and a second element (4), one of said first and second elements (3, 4) being provided with a pin (5) that is rigidly coupled on its internal surface, fixing means (8) being provided in order to keep said first element (3) and said second element (4) of the buckle body (2) coupled, said fixing means (8) being detachable.
2. The buckle according to claim 1, **characterized in that** said fixing means comprise an elastic dowel (8), which is adapted to engage in cylindrical portions (9, 10) that are formed complementarily on the internal surfaces of said first and second elements (3, 4) that constitute the body (2) of the buckle.
3. The buckle according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the internal surface of at least one of said first and second elements (3, 4) is provided with at least one ridge (6).
4. The buckle according to claim 3, **characterized in that** each internal surface of said first and second elements (3, 4) that constitute the body (2) of the buckle has at least one ridge (6) in the region where said bridle makes contact.
5. The buckle according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** it comprises a frame (13) with a prong (14) that is connected to an end of said first and second elements (3, 4) constituting the body (2) of the buckle, said end lying opposite the end that engages said strip (7).
6. The buckle according to claim 5, **characterized in that** the end of said first and second elements (3, 4) that is adapted to allow the engagement of said frame (13) is arc-like, so as to form a passage for said frame (13) provided with a prong (14).

