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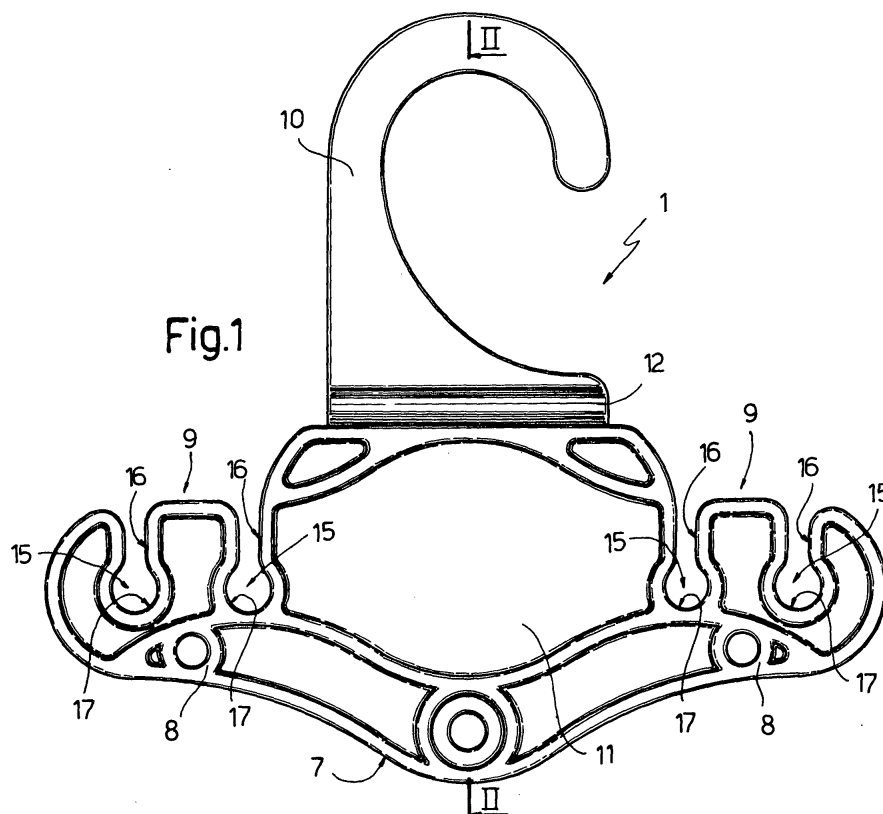
Remarks:

Amended claims in accordance with Rule 86 (2) EPC.

### (54) Display for flip-flop shoes

(57) Described herein is a display (1) for shoes (2) bearing a thong portion (3) able to be insinuated in use between the big toe and the second toe of the user's foot; the display (1) is provided with a central portion (7) so shaped as to be able to be hung from a support, and with a pair of lateral portions (8) extending in overhang from

opposite parts of the central portion (7) and bearing, each, an engagement section (9) for a thong portion (3) of a shoe (2); each engagement section (9) comprises at least two recesses (15) able to be selectively engaged in firm fashion by the thong portion (3) of a shoe (2) to define at least two possible positions of fastening of the shoe (2) to the display (1).



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## Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a display for flip-flop shoes, i.e. those frontally bearing a thong portion able to be insinuated in use between the big toe and the second toe of the user's foot.

[0002] As is well known, flip-flop shoes are essentially formed by a sole and by an upper strip part, substantially V-shaped, frontally defining the thong portion and fastened to the sole at the thong portion itself and in two other rear lateral points. More specifically, the upper part comprises opposite elongated lateral portions extending substantially in a V from the thong portion and fastened, at their own free ends, to opposite lateral portions of the sole.

[0003] In order to display the described shoes in points of sales or in trade shows or the like, use is widely made of hook displays which allow to hang the shoes in twos to a support structure, e.g. a rack.

[0004] Known displays essentially comprise a central portion having superiorly a hook shape and opposite lateral portions extending horizontally from the central portion and defining, each, an engagement slot for the thong portion of a related shoe.

[0005] In practice, each pair of shoes is displayed arranging the shoes on a same vertical plane and engaging them, at their thong portions, to the opposite lateral portions of the display.

[0006] To maintain the coplanarity between each pair of displayed shoes, regardless of the size of the shoes, in particular be they for men, women or children, the slots provided on the lateral portions of the display have sufficient amplitude as to allow to position the thong portions more or less far from the central portion. In practice, a certain play is provided between the slots and the related thong portions that engage them, thereby being able to vary the position of the shoes in the horizontal direction according to their size, in order to avoid aesthetically displeasing superpositions between them.

[0007] Due to the presence of the aforesaid play, it is necessary to make use of additional fastening elements, such as bands, ropes, clips or similar elements, to secure the shoes at the lateral portions of the display in the desired positions. For this purpose, it is often necessary to drill a certain number of holes in the displays, in order to allow the passage and/or the securing of the aforesaid additional fastening elements.

[0008] The solution described above has the drawback of being quite impractical and of requiring relatively long times for fastening each pair of shoes to its display. This is particular disadvantageous when, in the point of sale, the shoes need to be repositioned on the display after they are tried on by potential purchasers.

[0009] Moreover, the fastening system described above does not allow the repeatability of the positioning of shoes having the same size and shape.

[0010] The object of the present invention is to provide a display for flip-flop shoes, which allows to overcome,

in simple and economical fashion, the drawbacks connected with the known displays specified above.

[0011] The aforesaid object is achieved by the present invention, as it pertains to a display for shoes, as defined in claim 1.

[0012] For a better understanding of the present invention, a preferred embodiment shall be described hereafter, purely by way of non limiting example and with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a front elevation view of a display for flip-flop shoes according to the present invention; Figure 2 is a section according to the line II - II of Figure 1; and

Figures 3 through 5 show lateral and reduced scale views of the display of Figure 1 in a configuration of use with flip-flop shoes of different sizes.

[0013] In the accompanying figures, the reference number 1 globally designates a display for a pair of shoes 2 (Figures 3 through 5) of the flip-flop type, i.e. of the type frontally bearing a thong portion 3 able to be insinuated in use between the big toe and the second toe of the user's foot.

[0014] In particular, as shown in Figures 3 through 5, a flip-flop shoe 2 is essentially formed by a sole 4 and by an upper strip part 5, substantially V-shaped, frontally defining the thong portion and fastened to the sole 4 at the thong portion 3 itself and in two other rear lateral points. More specifically, the upper part 4 comprises opposite elongated lateral portions 6 extending substantially in a V from the thong portion 3 and fastened, in correspondence with their own free ends, to opposite lateral portions of the sole 4.

[0015] With reference to the accompanying figures, the display 1 is preferably made of plastic material by moulding an integrally comprises a central portion 7 so shaped as to be hung from a support (not shown, for example a rack), and a pair of lateral portions 8 extending in overhang from opposite parts of the central portion 7 itself and bearing, each, an engagement section 9 for a thong portion 3 of a related shoe 2.

[0016] In particular, the central portion 7 comprises an upper segment 10 shaped as a hook and a lower segment 11 from whose opposite sides extend the respective lateral portions 8.

[0017] Advantageously, between the upper and lower segments 10, 11 of the central portion 7, is obtained an intermediate segment 12 with reduced section defining a hinge to allow the folding of the upper segment 10 on the lower segment 11.

[0018] Said folding capability is suitable to allow the arrangement of the display 1 in a configuration of minimum bulk for packing.

[0019] According to an important aspect of the present invention, each engagement section 9 comprises at least two recesses 15 able to be selectively engaged in secure fashion by the thong portion 3 of a shoe 2 to define at

least two possible positions for securing the shoe 2 itself to the display 1.

**[0020]** In greater detail, each recess 15 has its concavity oriented towards the upper segment 10 and comprises an inlet area 16 for the entry of the thong portion 3 of the shoe 2 and a bottom area 17 having an open circumferential profile.

**[0021]** Advantageously, the inlet area 16 has a narrowed section relative to the bottom area 17 in order to prevent the accidental extraction of the thong portion 3 once it is housed in the bottom area 17 itself.

**[0022]** As shown in Figures 3 through 5, the shoes 2 are hung from the respective lateral portions 8 of the display in vertical position along a same plane of lay and in lateral contact with each other; this is obtained simply by placing the thong portion 3 of each shoe 2 in engagement in one of the recesses 15 of the related lateral portion 8.

**[0023]** Figures 3 through 5 show the manners of securing shoes 2 having different sizes to the display 1. In particular, Figure 3 refers to children's shoes 2, which are placed with respective thong portions 3 in engagement in the recesses 15 proximate to the central portion 7; Figure 4 refers to women's shoes 2, one of which is positioned with the thong portion 3 engaged in the recess 15 proximate to the central portion 7 and the other is hung, at the opposite side, from the outermost recess 15; Figure 5, lastly, refers to men's shoes 2, which are positioned with the respective thong portions 3 engaged in the outermost recesses 15.

**[0024]** As is readily apparent, the solution described herein allows a high versatility of use of the display 1 without the need to use additional fastening elements and assuring that the shoes 2 are firmly secured in the position of display.

**[0025]** Moreover, the positioning of each shoe 2 on the display 1 is particularly simple, requiring a single operation, i.e. the insertion of the thong portion 3 in the selected recess 15.

**[0026]** Lastly, the display 1 allows the repeatability of the positioning of shoes 2 having the same size and shape.

**[0027]** Lastly, it is readily apparent that the display 1 described and illustrated herein can be subject to modifications and variants, without thereby departing from the scope of protection of the claims.

**[0028]** In particular, each engagement section could include a number of recesses 15 greater than two, thereby allowing an even greater versatility of use of the display 1.

**[0029]** Moreover, the display 1 is suitable for any type of shoe having a thong portion able to be inserted between the big toe and the second toe of the user's foot, regardless of the shape of the upper part 5, in particular whether it is formed by one or more strip elements or provided with additional components of a different kind, e.g. bearing a semi-ring housing the big toe.

## Claims

1. Display (1) for shoes (2) bearing a thong portion (3) able to be insinuated in use between the big toe and the second toe of the user's foot, said display (1) comprising a central portion (7) so shaped as to be able to be hung from a support, and a pair of lateral portions (8) extending in overhang from opposite parts of the central portion (7) and bearing, each, an engagement section (9) for a said thong portion (3) of a said shoe (2), **characterised in that** each said engagement section (9) comprises at least two recesses (15) able to be selectively engaged in firm fashion by the thong portion (3) of a said shoe (2) to define at least two possible positions of fastening of the shoe (2) to the display (1).
2. Display as claimed in claim 1, **characterised in that** each said recess (15) has an inlet area (16) having a narrowed section relative to a bottom area (17) in such a way as to prevent the accidental extraction of said thong portion (3) once it is housed in the bottom area (17).
3. Display as claimed in claim 2, **characterised in that** said bottom area (17) of each recess (15) has an open circumferential shape.
4. Display as claimed in any of the previous claims, **characterised in that** said central portion (7) comprises an upper segment (10) shaped as a hook, a lower segment (11) from whose opposite sides extend the respective said lateral portions (8), and an intermediate segment (12) with reduced section defining a virtual hinge to allow the folding of said upper segment (10) on said lower segment (11).
5. Display as claimed in claim 4, **characterised in that** said recesses (15) have their concavity oriented towards said upper segment (10) of said central portion (7).

## Amended claims in accordance with Rule 86(2) EPC.

1. Display (1) for shoes (2) each bearing a thong portion (3) able to be insinuated in use between the big toe and the second toe of the user's foot, said display (1) comprising a central portion (7) so shaped as to be hung on a support, and a pair of lateral portions (8) protruding from opposite parts of the central portion (7) and bearing, each, an engagement section (9) for such a thong portion (3) of such a shoe (2); each engagement section (9) comprising at least two recesses (15) able to be selectively engaged firmly by such a thong portion (3) of such a shoe (2) to define at least two possible positions of fastening of the shoe (2) to the display (1); each said recess

(15) having an inlet area (16) with a narrowed section relative to a bottom area (17) in such a way as to prevent an accidental extraction of such a respective thong portion (3) once it is housed in the bottom area (17); **characterised in that** said recesses (9) are all aligned along a common direction. 5

**2.** Display as claimed in claim 1, **characterized in that** all recesses (9) lie along a same plane. 10

**3.** Display as claimed in claim 1 or 2, **characterised in that** said bottom area (17) of each recess (15) has an open circumferential shape.

**4.** Display as claimed in any of the previous claims, **characterised in that** said central portion (7) comprises an upper segment (10) shaped as a hook, a lower segment (11) from whose opposite sides extend the respective said lateral portions (8), and an intermediate segment (12) with reduced section defining a virtual hinge to allow the folding of said upper segment (10) on said lower segment (11). 15 20

**5.** Display as claimed in claim 4, **characterised in that** said recesses (15) have their concavity oriented towards said upper segment (10) of said central portion (7). 25

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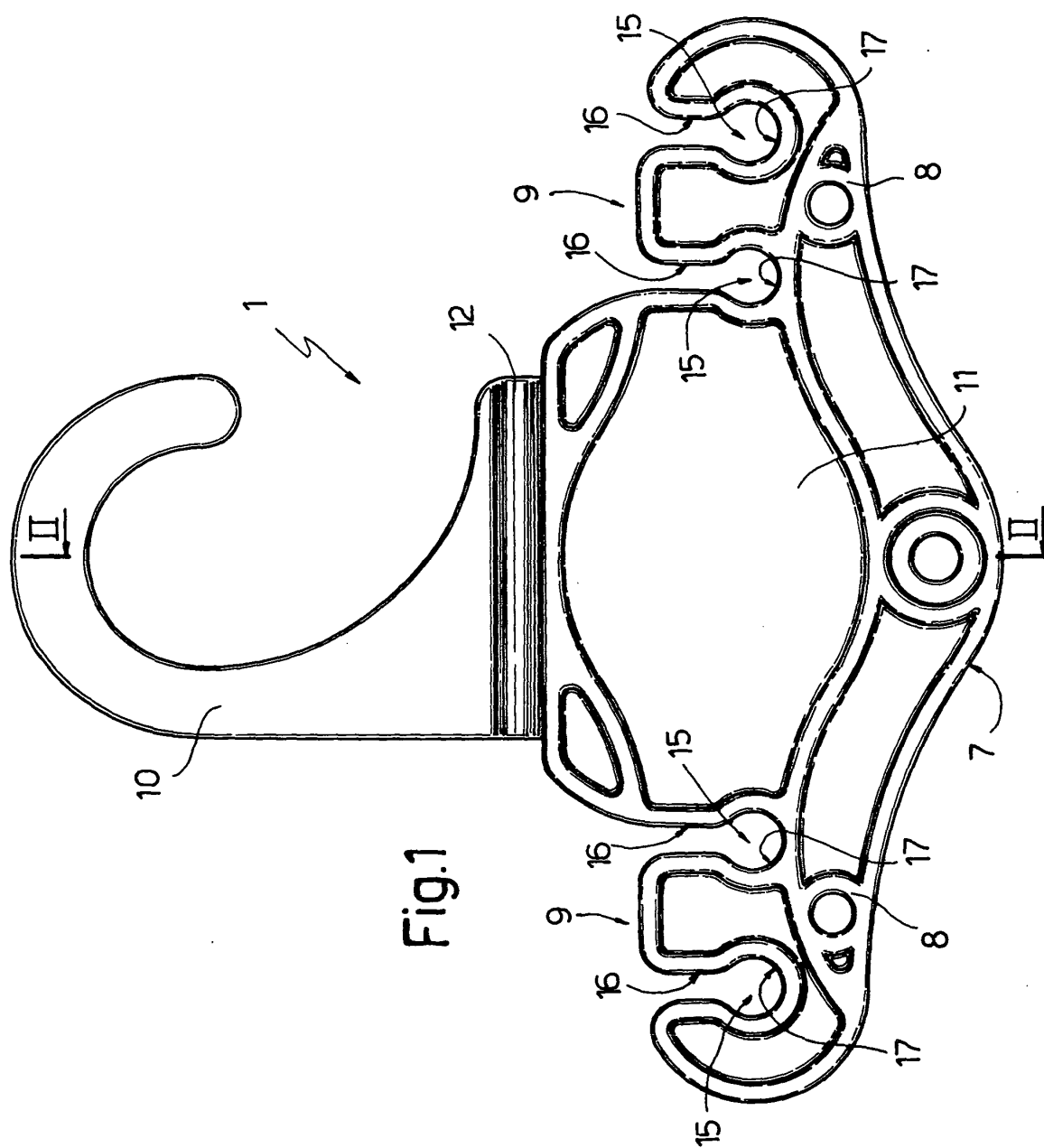


Fig.1

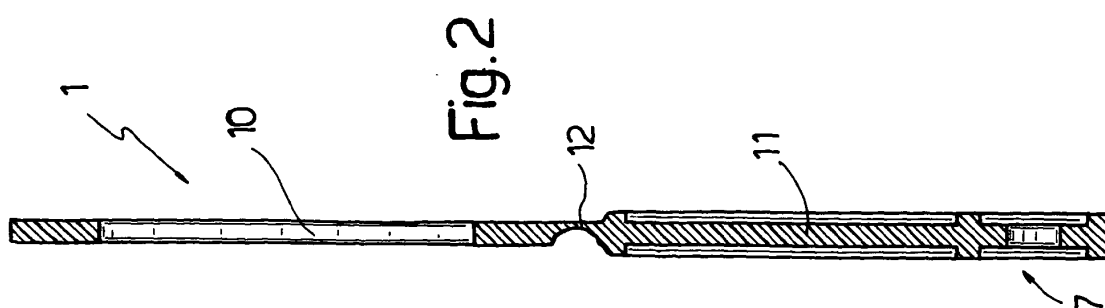
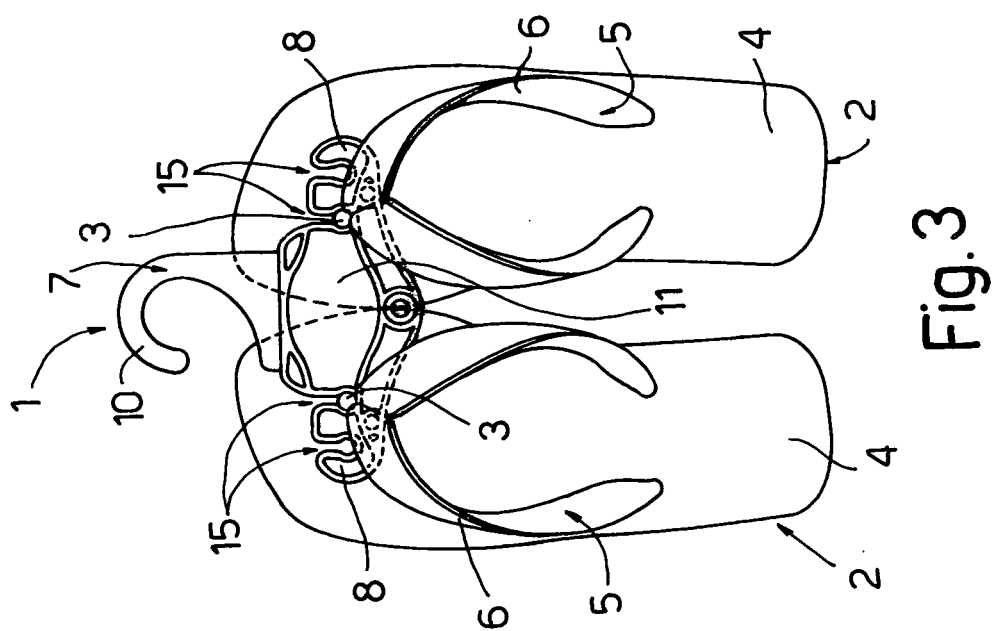
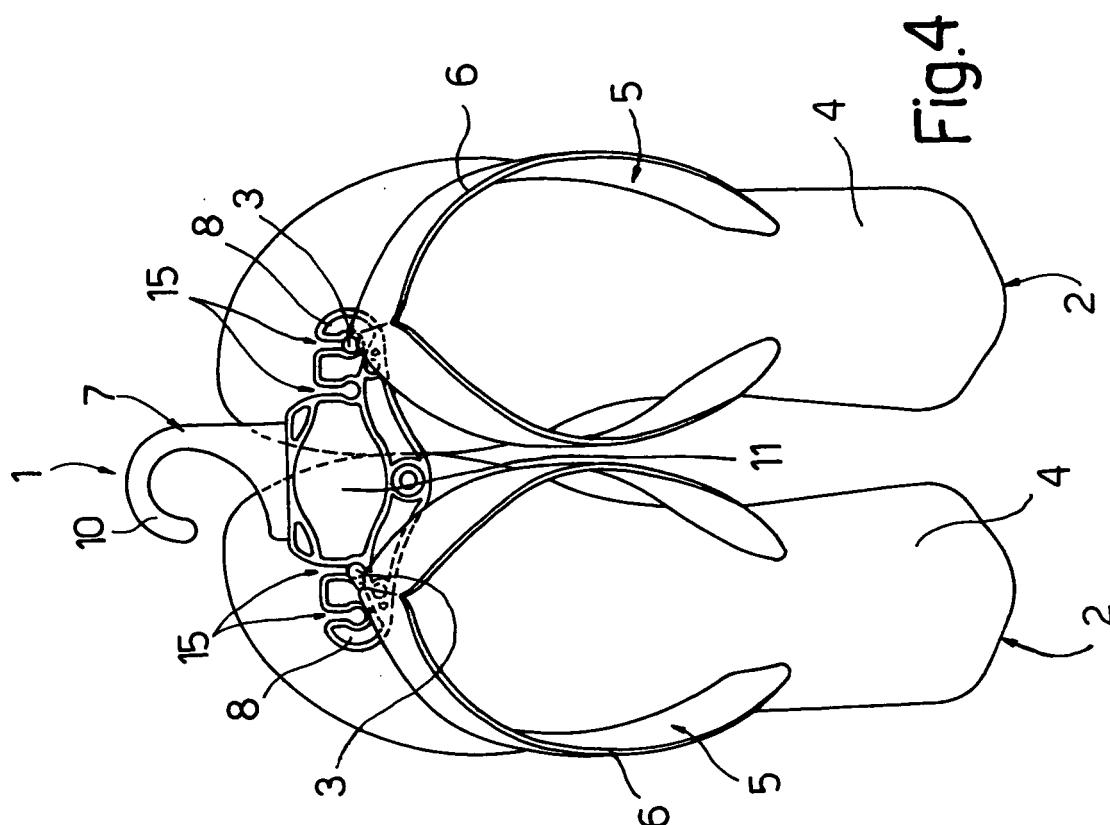


Fig.2



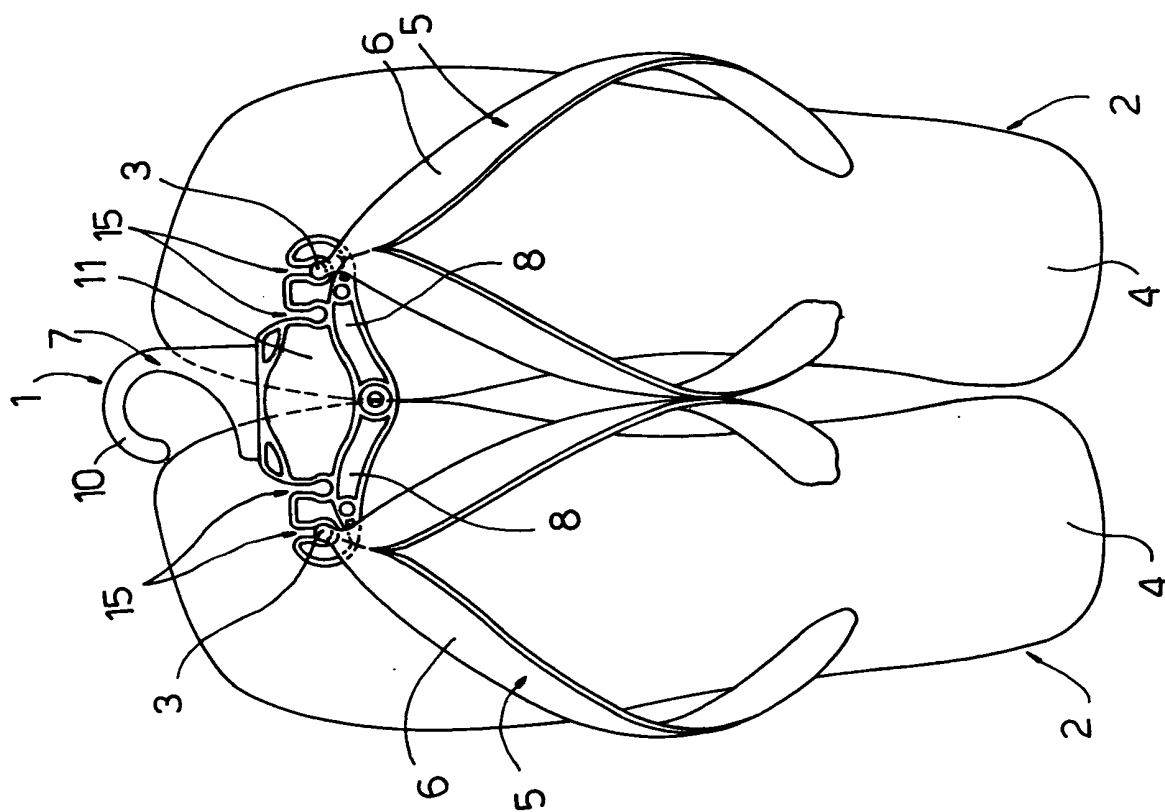


Fig. 5



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)
X	GB 2 343 374 A (WOODWORTH PETER MICHAEL) 10 May 2000 (2000-05-10) * page 8, last paragraph - page 9, line 2 * * figures *	1-3	A47F7/08 A47G25/00
X	----- EP 1 421 880 A (FONSECA S P A DE) 26 May 2004 (2004-05-26) * figures *	1,2	
X	----- US 2002/108976 A1 (CARMICHAEL DAVID) 15 August 2002 (2002-08-15) * page 7, paragraph 26 * * figures * -----	1	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)
			A47F A47G
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search The Hague		Date of completion of the search 14 December 2004	Examiner van Hoogstraten, S
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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EPO FORM 1503 03.82 (P04C01)



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

EP 04 42 5524

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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14-12-2004

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