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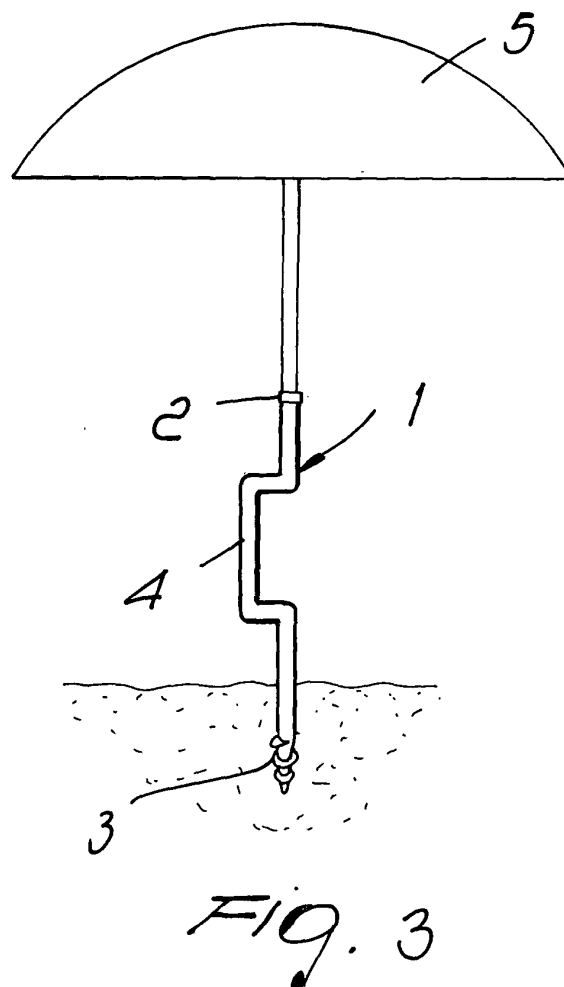
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(54) **Tubular element for supporting a beach sunshade and/or garden sunshade and the like**

(57) A tubular supporting element (1) for a beach and/or garden sunshade and the like, comprising, at one end, a tip portion (3) which has a helical contour and is adapted to be driven into the ground or sand.



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Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a tubular element for supporting beach and/or garden sunshades and the like. More particularly, the invention relates to a tubular element which constitutes the lower portion of the supporting tube of beach and/or garden sunshades.

[0002] As is known, conventional beach and/or garden sunshades are constituted, in most cases, by two fundamental parts: a first tubular element, with a tip which is generally made of plastics and is designed to be driven into the sand or ground, and a second tubular element adapted to support the covering element, which is made of fabric or other material and which opens and closes by means of a mechanism on the second tubular element. The second tubular element is inserted within the first tubular element and locked by means of a fastening mechanism.

[0003] However, known types of sunshades suffer the drawback that they cannot be driven easily into the sand and/or ground.

[0004] When the user needs to drive the first tubular element into the sand and/or ground, he must in fact use all his weight to push the first tubular element so that its tip penetrates the ground. The user is usually forced to rotate the tubular element so as to make the tip penetrate increasingly. However, this operation is extremely difficult and in any case, even when completed, the first tubular element is not driven into the ground by an extent which is sufficient to prevent the sunshade from being uprooted, for example in case of gusts of wind.

[0005] A sunshade uprooted by the wind is an extremely dangerous object for nearby people.

[0006] Therefore, efforts have been deployed to devise a first tubular element for supporting the sunshade which is capable of penetrating the ground easily. However, currently known solutions have not yielded satisfactory results.

[0007] The aim of the present invention is to provide a tubular supporting element for a beach and/or garden sunshade which can be driven easily into the ground without requiring the user to use excessive force.

[0008] Within this aim, an object of the present invention is to provide a tubular supporting element for a beach and/or garden sunshade which allows the user, with an extremely simple operation which is absolutely not tiring, to drive the tubular element into the ground or sand to a depth which is sufficient to ensure that the sunshade will not be uprooted by a gust of wind.

[0009] Another object of the present invention is to provide a tubular supporting element for a beach and/or garden sunshade which allows very firm anchoring to the sand and/or ground.

[0010] Another object of the present invention is to provide a tubular supporting element for a sunshade which is highly reliable, relatively simple to provide and at competitive costs.

[0011] This aim and these and other objects, which will

become better apparent hereinafter, are achieved by a tubular supporting element for a beach and/or garden sunshade and the like, characterized in that it comprises, at one end, a tip portion which has a helical contour and is adapted to be driven into the ground or sand.

[0012] Further characteristics and advantages of the invention will become better apparent from the description of a tubular element according to the invention, illustrated by way of non-limiting example in the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Figure 1 is a view of a first embodiment of the tubular element according to the invention;

Figure 2 is a view of a variation of the tubular element according to the present invention;

Figure 3 is a view of the use of the tubular element according to the invention.

[0013] With reference to the figures, the tubular supporting element for a beach and/or garden sunshade, according to the present invention, comprises a tubular element 1 which has a generally circular cross-section and has, at its upper end, i.e., the end intended to allow the insertion of a second tubular element for supporting a covering element 5 of the sunshade, locking means 2 which allow to lock the second tubular element in the first tubular element.

[0014] The end of the tubular element 1 which is designed to be driven into the ground, designated by the reference numeral 3, is conveniently provided with a helical tip, so as to allow to insert the tubular element 1 into the ground by rotating the tubular element. In this manner, the helical tip 3 behaves like a sort of auger, which allows to drive the tubular element 1 easily into the ground or sand.

[0015] In order to make it easier to rotate the tubular element 1 provided with the helical tip 3, the tubular element 1 conveniently has, for example at its substantially central region, a portion 4 which is crank-shaped, i.e., a deformation of the tubular element 1 which in a certain region is spaced from its longitudinal axis in order to form a bend which indeed creates a sort of crank.

[0016] In this manner, the user might grip the tubular element 1 with one hand proximate to the locking means 2 and with the other hand at the crank-shaped region, so as to impart to the tubular element 1 a rotary force, with great ease, thus allowing the tip 3 of the tubular element 1 to penetrate deeply into the sand and/or ground, thus allowing to have an extremely stable placement of the tubular element 1.

[0017] Figures 1 and 2 illustrate by way of example two possible embodiments of the crank-shaped portion 4.

[0018] Conveniently, the helical contoured tip 3 can be provided with a double helix or with a single helix, and preferably the end of the tip is rounded so as to avoid danger during the transport of the tubular element 1.

[0019] In practice it has been found that the tubular element according to the invention fully achieves the in-

tended aim and objects, since it can be driven easily into the sand or ground, by way of the helical tip provided at one of its ends, and also by way of the crank-shaped portion of the tubular element.

[0020] All the details may be replaced with other technically equivalent elements. 5

[0021] The disclosures in Italian Utility Model Application no. MI2005U000049 from which this application claims priority, are incorporated herein by reference.

[0022] 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. 10 15

Claims

1. A tubular supporting element (1) for a beach and/or garden sunshade and the like, **characterized in that** it comprises, at one end, a tip portion (3) which has a helical contour and is adapted to be driven into the ground or sand. 20 25
2. The tubular element according to claim 1, **characterized in that** said tubular element is provided, at a central region, with a crank-shaped portion (4). 30
3. The tubular element according to claim 2, **characterized in that** said crank-shaped portion (4) of the tubular element (1) consists of a portion of said tubular element which is deformed so as to be spaced from the longitudinal axis of said tubular element. 35
4. The tubular element according to claim 1, **characterized in that** it comprises, at the end which lies opposite with respect to said helical tip (3), locking means (2) for a second tubular element, which is adapted to be inserted in said tubular element, said second tubular element supporting a covering portion (5) of said sunshade. 40
5. The tubular element according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** said helical contoured tip (3) has a rounded end. 45
6. A sunshade, **characterized in that** it comprises a tubular element according to one or more of the preceding claims. 50

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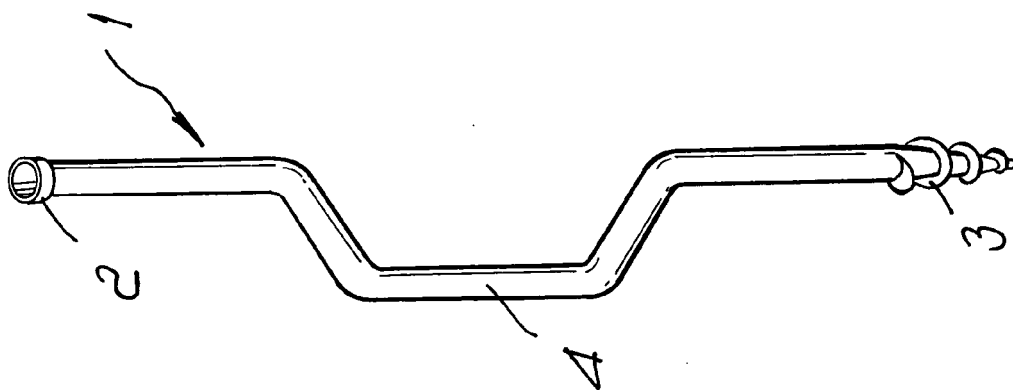


Fig. 1

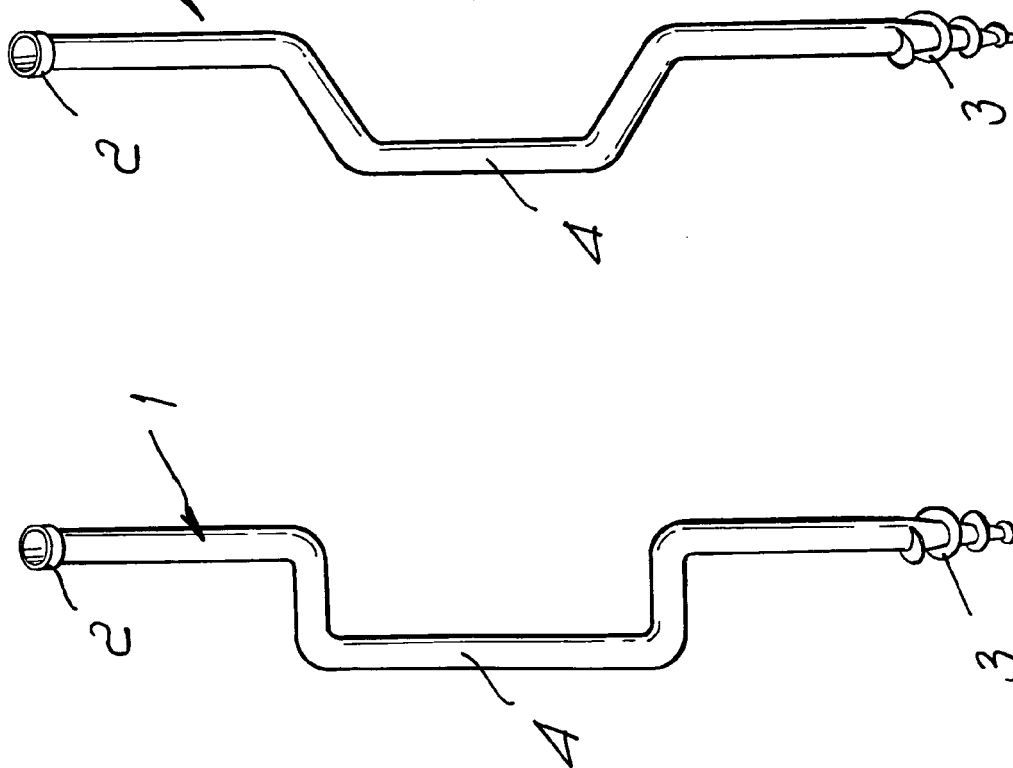


Fig. 2

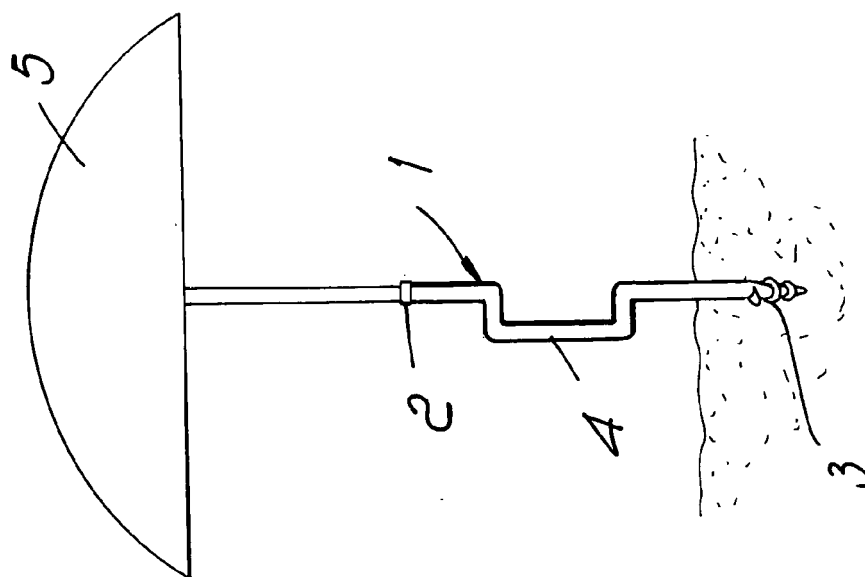


Fig. 3



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 06 00 2991

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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 27 June 2006	Examiner Escudero, R
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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