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(54) **Footwear supporting and displaying device**

(57) The finding relates to a support and display device for a pair of footwear articles, composed of a supporting surface for the soles, provided with a hooking means for display, with bendable parts to retain the toe of the footwear articles and with a slider movable on a stem to be inserted laterally into the upper of the footwear articles. The bendable parts and the slider are realized so that they cannot move in the direction to release the footwear articles from the support-display device.

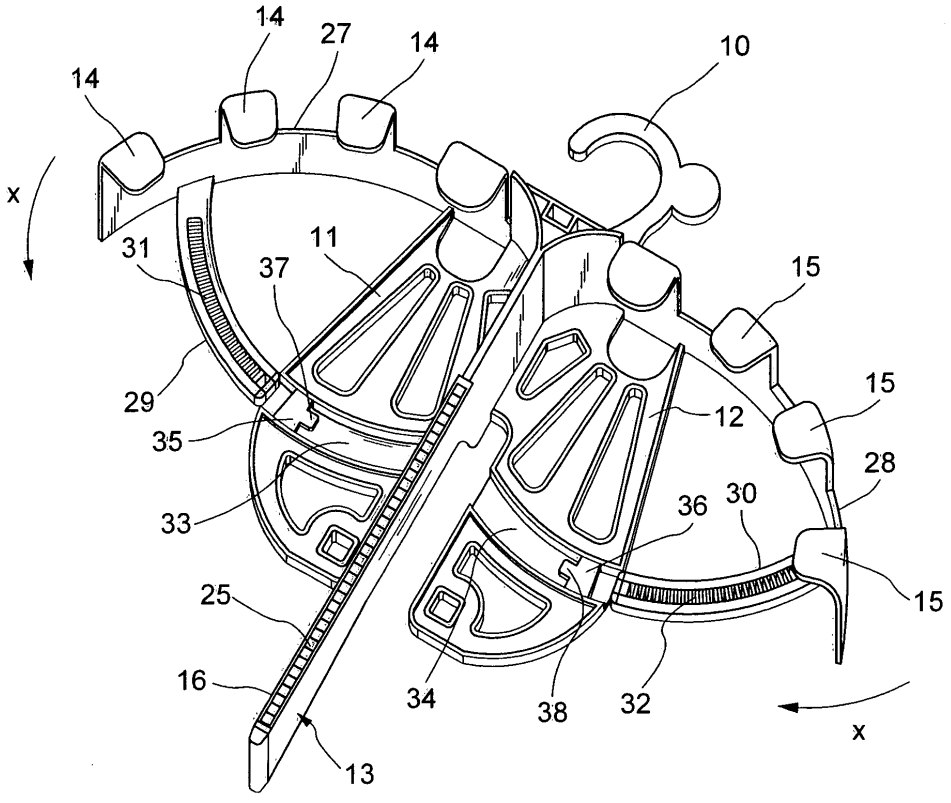


Fig.1

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## Description

**[0001]** The present invention relates to a support and display device for a pair of footwear articles, especially but not exclusively for slippers.

**[0002]** These support-display devices are already known per se and utilized especially on supports accessible to the public for sale in supermarkets or shopping malls, where purchasers choose the product on their own and take it to the checkouts for payment.

**[0003]** In the case of footwear articles, the supports are generally made of plastic material and present, integral with a supporting means for arranging each of them in view in the display device, for example a hook, two supporting surfaces for the sole of a pair of footwear articles. These surfaces are completed in the part facing the hook with shaped parts to retain and contrast the toe of the footwear articles, which are thus presented paired and arranged vertically on display, with the toe facing upward. In these conditions, the footwear articles are constrained to the support in different ways, in any case so as to prevent excessive movement thereof with respect to the support. In some cases, the footwear articles are mutually constrained, while in others they are retained by shaped parts that penetrate these footwear articles, for example by a stem provided on the support in a position to separate the pair of footwear articles.

**[0004]** Prior art means to retain footwear articles on the support-display device nonetheless interfere with the opening of the footwear articles, so that would-be purchasers are unable to insert their feet into the footwear articles to try them on, without detaching the footwear articles from the support-display device. However, detachment of the footwear articles from the support-display device implemented by would-be purchasers who wish to try them on, creates serious problems of management of the article as, if the purchase is not finalized, the presentation assembly is often not reconstructed or may be reconstructed erroneously, without reliable support of said footwear articles or also pairing footwear articles having different characteristics of shape, dimensions or the like.

**[0005]** This being stated, it is now the object of the present finding to produce a support-display device of the aforesaid type, which supports the pair of footwear articles in a firm, safe and reliable manner, while allowing would-be purchasers to try them on without detaching them from this support.

**[0006]** Another object is to provide a support display device that allows users to try on the footwear articles as specified, but which prevents users from detaching them from the support until the time in which the purchase is finalized, when detachment can be carried out by sales personnel.

**[0007]** To achieve the aforesaid objects and others that will be apparent from the description below, the finding relates to a support-display device for footwear articles having the characteristics indicated in the enclosed claims.

**[0008]** The finding will now be described in greater detail with reference to an embodiment thereof, provided purely by way of example and reproduced in the accompanying drawings, in which:

- figure 1 shows a perspective top view of a support-display device for footwear articles, according to the finding;
- figure 2 shows a perspective view of a support-display device according to the finding, with a pair of footwear articles inserted therein, ready to be constrained to the support;
- figure 3 shows a perspective view of an enlarged detail of the support of figure 2;
- figure 4 shows a plan view of the slider utilized in the support-display device of the finding;
- figures 5 and 6 show plan views of the support-display device of figure 1, respectively in the open and closed position.

**[0009]** With reference firstly to figures 1 and 2, the support-display device according to the finding, illustrated therein, is produced by moulding of plastic material and comprises a hanging means, such as a hook 10 or the like for connection to a rack or other support, from which hanging means there derive two supporting surfaces 11 and 12, essentially flat, discontinuous if required, for the support of the sole of a pair of footwear articles 40 and 41 in figure 2. The two surfaces 11 and 12 are divided by a central stem 13, projecting with respect thereto, which acts as divider between the footwear articles. Perpendicular to the surfaces 11 and 12, there are provided shaped areas 14 and 15, which have the function of retaining the toe and, if required, part of the side of the footwear articles.

**[0010]** To constrain the footwear articles to the support-display device, even when this is disposed in a vertical position, the stem 13 is provided with a longitudinal guide 16 on which there is mounted slidingly a slider 17 (figures 3 and 4) substantially double U-shaped. More precisely, the slider 17 is provided with a central body 18 shaped in such a way as to be inserted in the guide 16 and slide thereon. On the sides of the central body 18 there are located two U-shaped portions, respectively 19 and 20, with shorter internal wings 21 and 22 and longer and elastically flexible outer wings 23 and 24. Due to this configuration, when the slider 17 is made to slide on the guide 16 in the direction of the toe of the footwear articles 40, 41, the side of the upper thereof is inserted in the openings between the wings, respectively 21, 23 and 22, 24, with the wings 21 and 22 remaining on the outside of the footwear articles and the wings 23 and 24 laterally penetrating the opening thereof, although, due to their lateral positioning, without obstructing or preventing insertion of the feet of would-be purchasers wishing to try on the footwear articles.

**[0011]** To prevent would-be purchasers from detach-

ing the footwear articles from the support-display device, there are also provided means to prevent the slider 17 from moving in the opposite direction to that of insertion in the opening of the footwear articles. These means in particular consist of a toothing 25 presented superiorly by the stem 13, formed by a plurality of aligned and forward inclined teeth, i.e. facing toward the toe of the footwear articles, and upward. With this toothing there engages a flexible tab 26 carried by the central part of the slider 17 and projecting rearward to cooperate with the toothing 25, operating as a ratchet, i.e. sliding on the teeth in the forward movement and engaging in the space between two subsequent teeth to prevent any rearward movement of the slider. The footwear articles are thus locked in position and are stably and non-removably retained between the slide 17 and the projections 14 and 15 operating on the toe.

**[0012]** To better block the footwear articles in position on the support-display device, the shaped areas 14 and 15 that retain the toe, extend laterally on flexible parts 27 and 28 which, after positioning of the footwear articles on the support, can be bent according to the arrows X until they adhere to the sides of the two footwear articles.

**[0013]** Also in this case means are provided to prevent opening of the flexible parts 27 and 28 in the opposite direction to the arrow X. These means can also be composed of a flexible tab and of a cooperating ratchet toothing. More specifically, the flexible parts 27 and 28 each carry an arched projection 29 and 30, provided with teeth 31, 32 in the form of openings disposed in succession, shaped to facilitate insertion in one direction.

**[0014]** The arched projections 29 and 30, following movement in the direction X of the flexible parts 27 and 28 slide in a guide 33, 34 produced in the surfaces 12 and 11 and engage under a bridge 35, 36 positioned over the guides 33, 34, each bridge carrying a flexible tab 37, 38 capable of sliding on the toothing 31, 32 following movement in the direction X, due to the shape of the teeth, while the same tab engages between the teeth, blocking all movement, when an attempt is made to move the flexible parts 27 and/or 28 in the opposite direction to X.

**[0015]** In this way, the footwear articles remain firmly positioned on the support-display device, regardless of the dimension thereof, can be tried on by would-be purchasers, but cannot be removed from said support.

## Claims

1. Support and display device for a pair of footwear articles (40,41), comprising removable supporting means, such as a hook (10) or the like, two supporting surfaces (11,12) for the sole of the footwear articles, disposed side by side and mutually separated by a dividing stem (13), the supporting surfaces (11,12) presenting shaped parts (14,15), suitable to retain and contrast at least the toe of the footwear articles, **characterized in that** along the dividing stem (13) there is slidingly mounted a double U-shaped slider (17), whose components (19,20) are suitable to be inserted in the side of the upper of each footwear article to retain it in position on the device.

2. Device as claimed in claim 1, **characterized in that** each U-shaped component (19,20) of the slider engages with the inside and respectively with the outside of the side of the upper of each footwear article.

3. Device as claimed in claim 1 or 2, **characterized in that** the outer arm (23, 24) of each U-shaped component (19, 20) of said slider (17) is formed by an elastically flexible strip suitable to be inserted inside the footwear article.

4. Device as claimed in one of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** said shaped slider (17) is mounted slidingly on a longitudinal guide (16) presented by said stem (13).

5. Device as claimed in claim 4, **characterized in that** the coupling between the guide (16) and the stem (13) and the shaped slider (17) is provided with stop means (25, 26) suitable to allow movement of the slider (17) only in the direction of the toe of the footwear articles.

6. Device as claimed in claim 5, **characterized in that** said stop means are composed of a plurality of teeth (25) inclined and aligned on a surface of the stem (13), and of a flexible tab (26) presented by the slider (17), suitable to slide elastically on said teeth during movement of the slider toward the toe of the footwear articles and to engage with said teeth to block any movement of the slider (17) in the opposite direction.

7. Device as claimed in one of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** said shaped parts (14,15) to retain and contrast at least the toe of the footwear articles are presented by supporting parts (27,28) at least partly flexible or movable in a direction away from or toward the external side of each footwear article.

8. Device as claimed in claim 7, **characterized in that** stop and guide means (29 - 38) are provided for said supporting parts (27, 28), suitable to allow movement thereof exclusively in the direction (X) toward the side of the respective footwear article.

9. Device as claimed in claim 8, **characterized in that** said stop and guide means are composed of a plurality of teeth (31, 32) and respectively of a flexible tab (37,38) sliding on said teeth when moved in a direction (X) and suitable to be locked there between

when moved in the opposite direction, the teeth and the tab being presented by parts integral with the supporting surface of the footwear and with said further shaped parts, or vice versa.

**10.** Device as claimed in at least one of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** it is produced by moulding of plastic material.

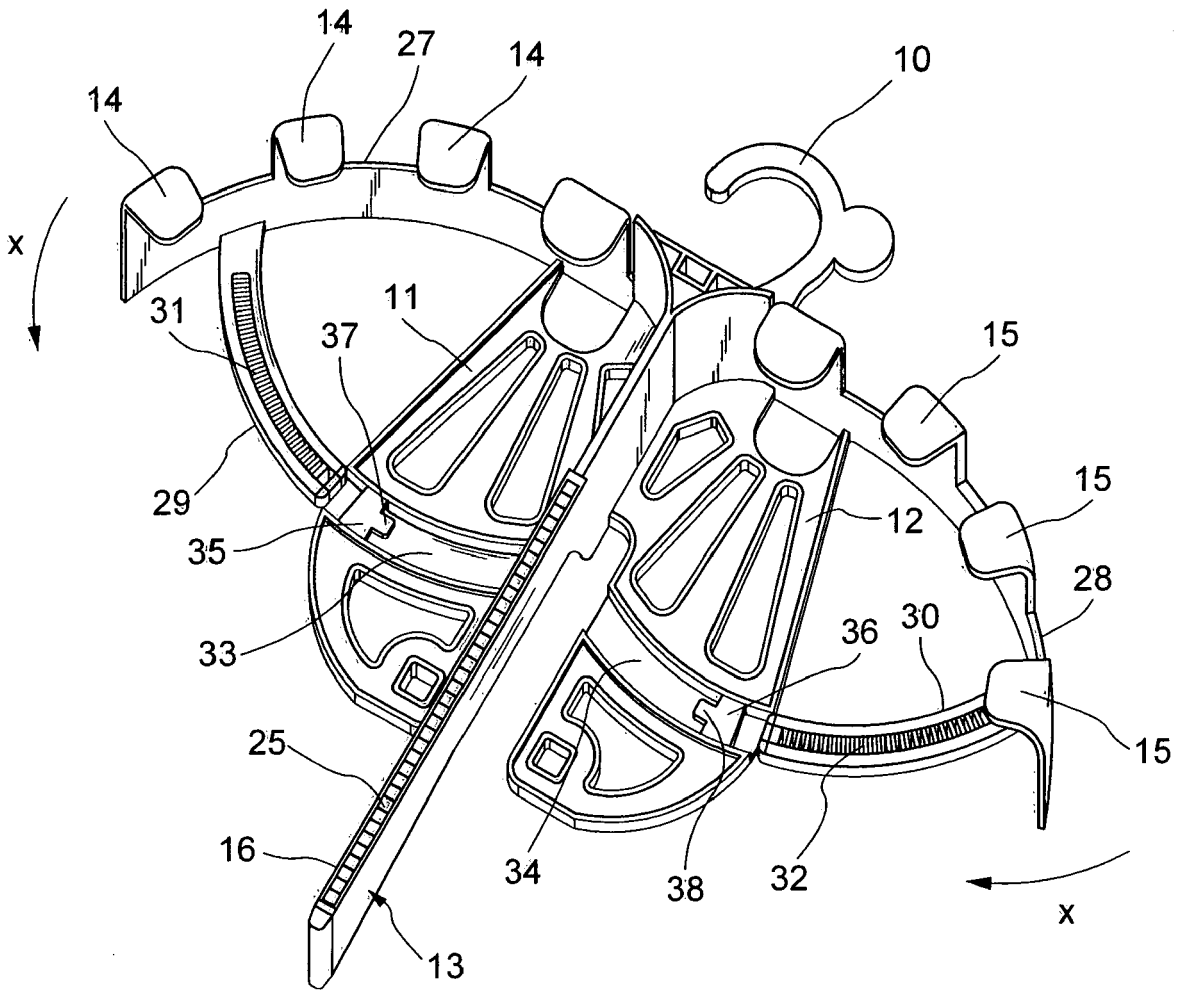
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Fig.1

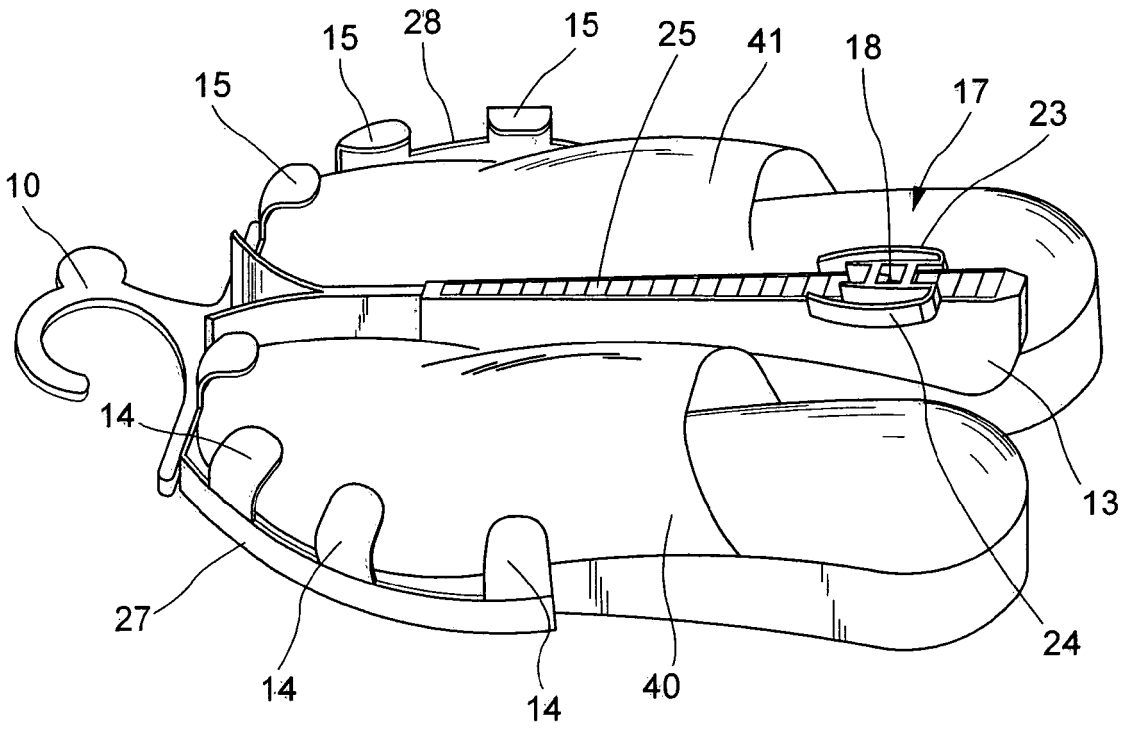


Fig. 2

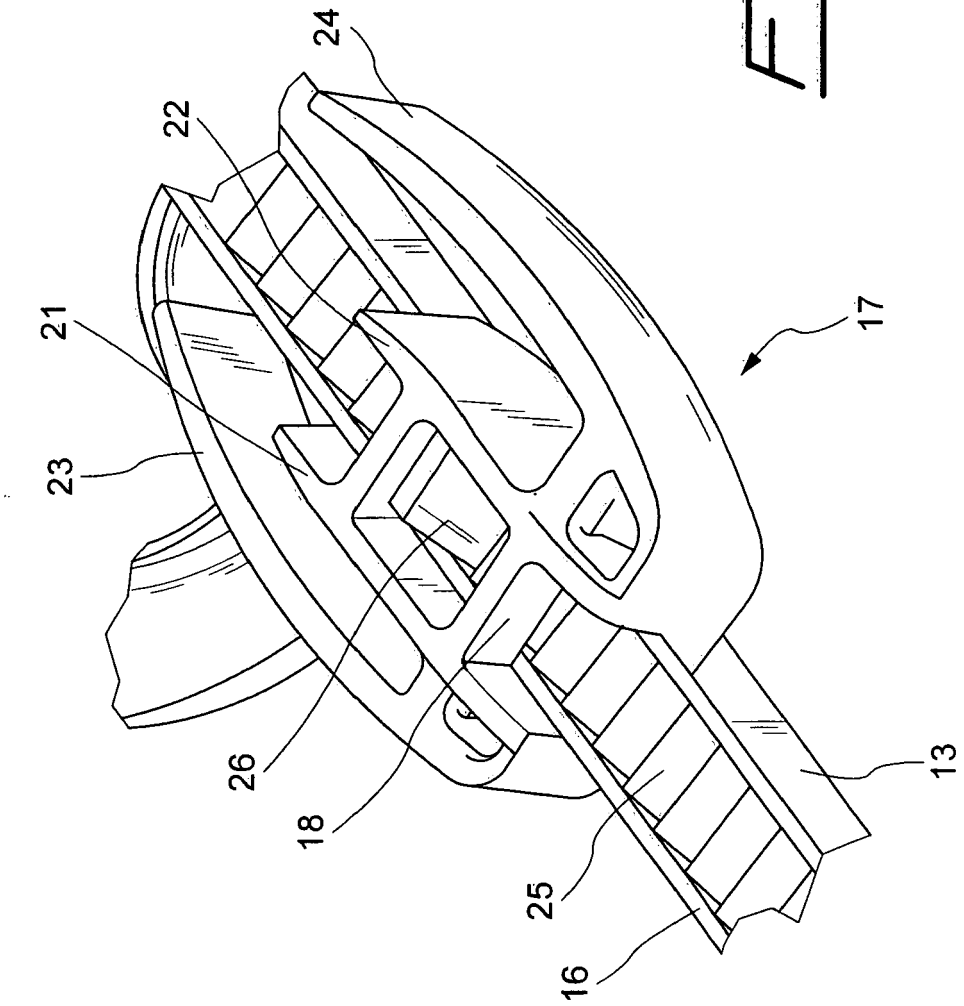


Fig.3

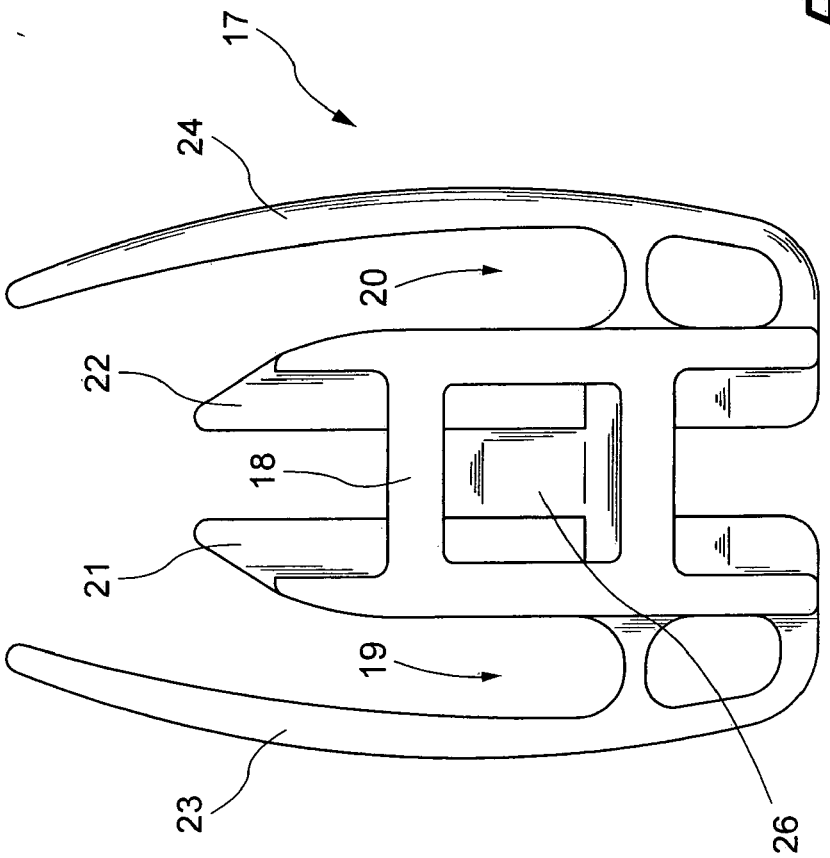


Fig.4

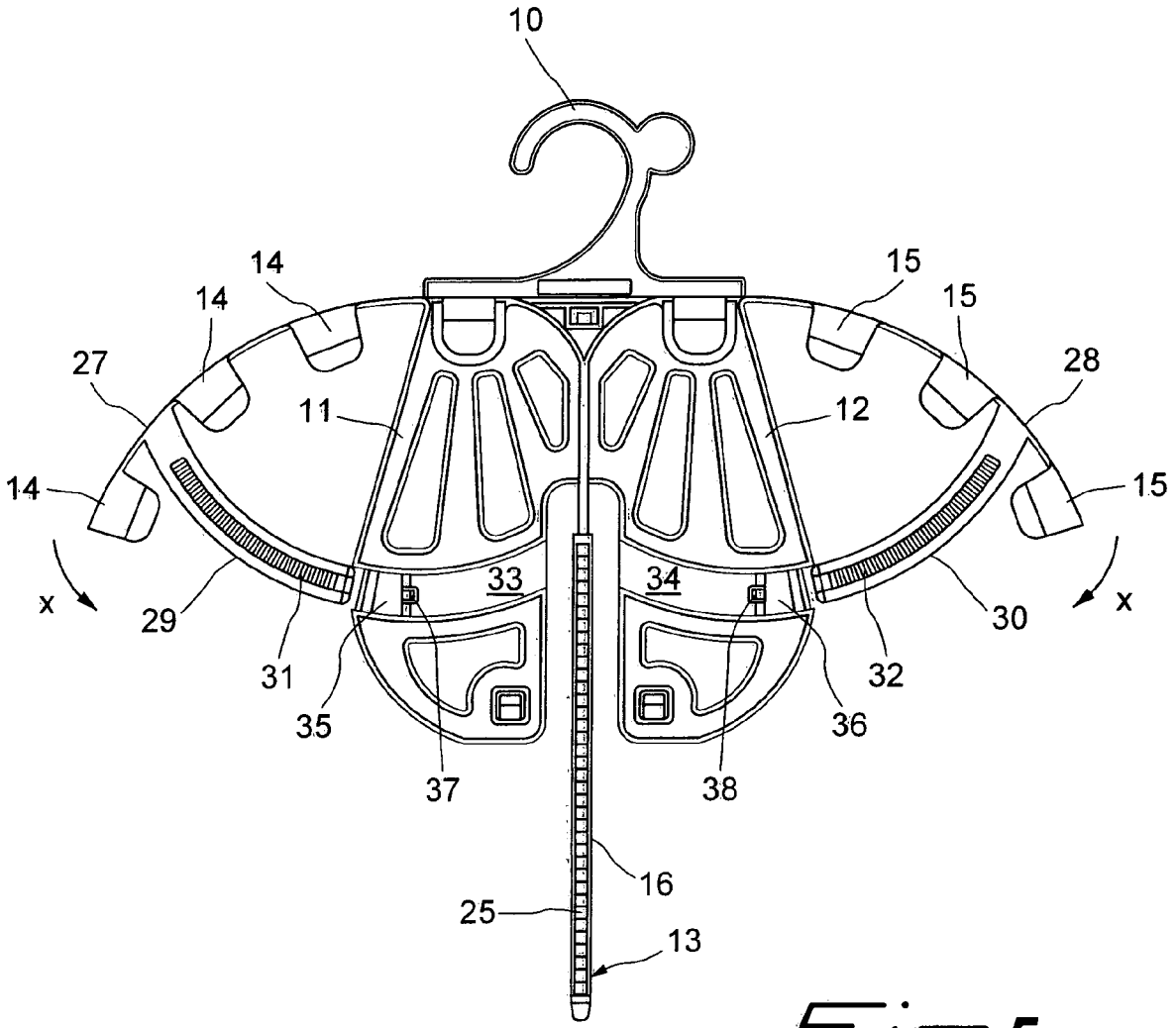
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Fig. 5

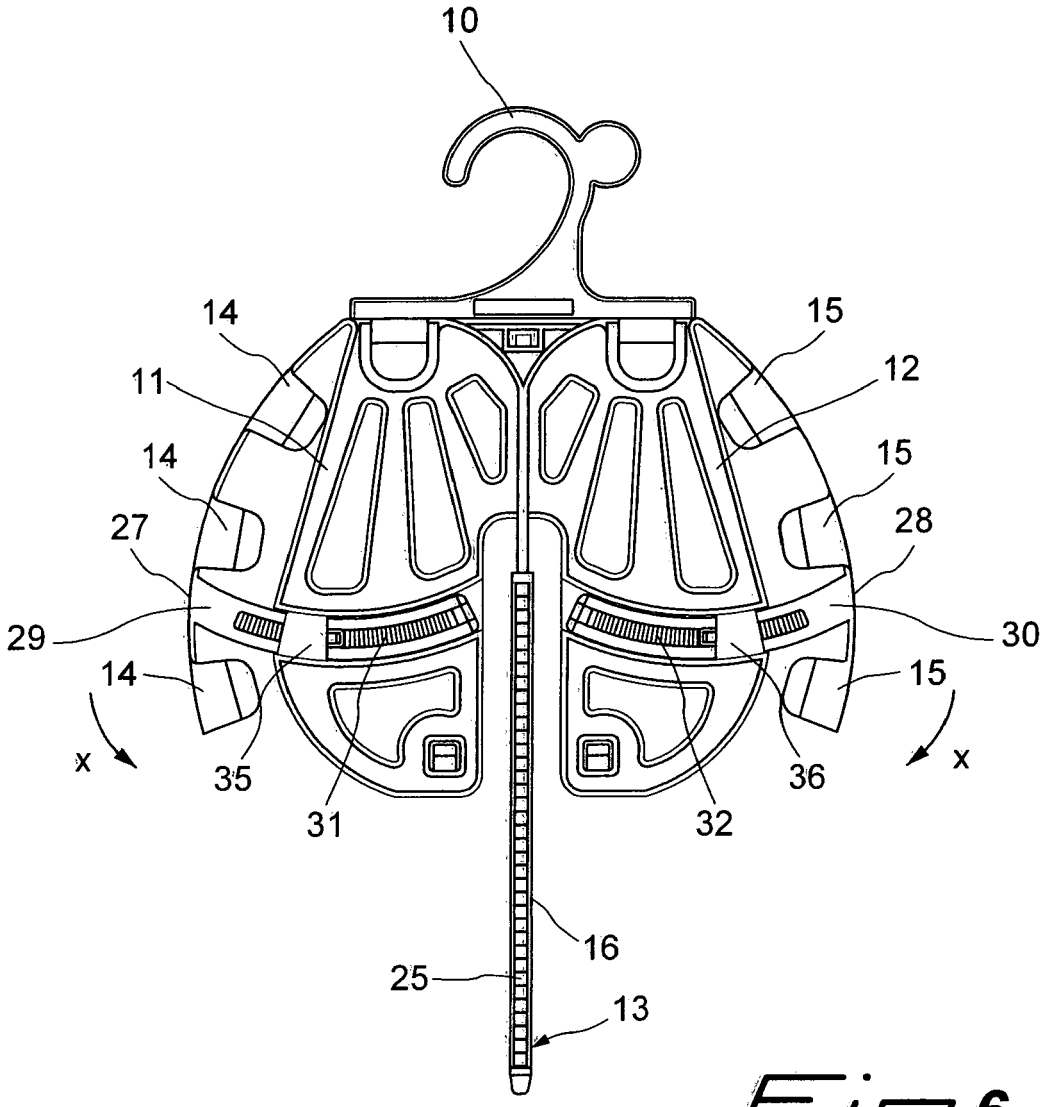


Fig. 6

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# EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 08 00 9544

## DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

| Category | Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages | Relevant to claim | CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC) |
|---|---|---|---|
| X | US 3 747 774 A (KULIK JOHN)<br>24 July 1973 (1973-07-24)<br>* the whole document *<br>----- | 1,3,4,10 | INV.<br>A47G25/00 |

TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)

A47G
A47F
A43B

The present search report has been drawn up for all claims

| Place of search | Date of completion of the search | Examiner |
|---|---|---|
| Munich | 13 August 2008 | Reichhardt, Otto |

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## ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO. EP 08 00 9544

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13-08-2008

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