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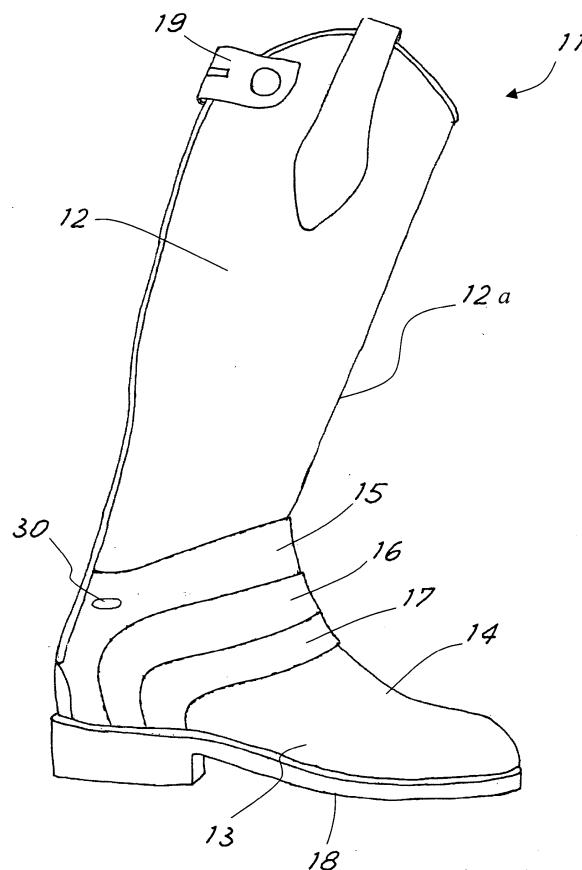
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(54) **Boot having an extensible band**

(57) The present invention concerns a boot comprising a bootleg (12) for wrapping the calf of a user, a sole (18) and an upper (13), said bootleg (12) and said upper (13) being mostly formed of a substantially non-extensible material. A front portion (12a) of the bootleg (12) and a top portion (14) of the upper (13) which during use is placed above the user's foot are connected together by an elastic extensible band (21), which is placed in such a position as to cover the user's instep.



**Fig. 1**

## Description

**[0001]** The present invention relates to a novel boot, particularly a horse riding boot that can provide improved comfort to the rider.

**[0002]** It is known in the art to fabricate horse riding boots having a bootleg to be worn on the calf of the rider, a sole and an upper for covering, in use, the rider's foot. The bootleg and the upper are typically made of leather. The bootleg may be slightly inclined forward with respect to a direction orthogonal to the sole bearing plane, to help the rider to maintain a proper posture as he/she rides. Nevertheless, the conformation of prior art boots does not provide a satisfactory comfort level, particularly when the rider is not on a horse and has to walk. More generally, comfort problems may arise when wearing boots with a relatively high and rigid bootleg; in this condition, the rider may find it difficult to bend the heel, which results in discomfortable walking. In the light of the above state of the art, the object of the invention is to provide a boot that ensures a high level of comfort in any condition of use. A further object of the invention is to provide a boot that can be used in horse riding, providing a high comfort when both riding and walking.

**[0003]** A further object of the invention is to provide a boot that has a relatively simple and inexpensive structure.

**[0004]** Another object of the invention is to provide a boot which is resistant in each portion thereof.

**[0005]** According to the present invention, this object is fulfilled by a boot comprising a bootleg designed to wrap the calf of a user, a sole and an upper, said bootleg and said upper being mostly formed of a substantially non-extensible material, characterized in that a front portion of the bootleg and a top portion of the upper disposed in use above the foot of the user are connected together by an extensible band, which is placed in such a position as to cover the user's instep.

**[0006]** The characteristics and advantages of the present invention will appear from the following detailed description of a practical embodiment, which is given as a non limiting example with reference to the annexed drawings, in which:

- Figure 1 is a perspective view of a boot of the invention;
- Figure 2 is a view like the previous one, with certain parts outlined by broken lines to highlight the extensible band of the boot,
- Figure 3 is a front view of the boot of the previous figures;
- Figure 4 is a rear view of the boot.

**[0007]** Referring to the figures, there is shown a boot 11, particularly a horse riding boot, comprising a bootleg 12 for wrapping the user's leg, a sole 18 and an upper 13 for covering the user's foot. The bootleg 12 and the upper 13 are mostly made of a non-extensible material,

preferably leather. Particularly, the bootleg 12 has at least the front portion 12a made of a non-extensible material. The upper 13 is preferably wholly formed of a non-extensible material.

**[0008]** According to the invention, as shown in Figure 2, the boot comprises an extensible band 21 that connects the top portion 14 of the upper 13 and the front portion 12a of the bootleg 12, i.e. the portion 12a facing towards the upper. The extensible band 21 may be extended in a direction from the upper to the bootleg.

**[0009]** The provision of the extensible band 21 allows easy inclination of the axis 20 of the bootleg 12 with respect to the plane on which the sole 18 lies, thereby affording high footwear comfort. In use, the band 21 is placed on the instep of the user that wears the boot and connects a bottom edge 26 of the bootleg 12 and a top edge 27 of the upper 13.

**[0010]** Advantageously, the extensible band 21 is elastic. This further improves comfort, and prevents wrinkles from forming at the footwear heel, when the bootleg is inclined forward. Advantageously, the band 21 is made of elastic fabric.

**[0011]** The band 21, the bootleg 12 and the upper 13 are continuously fixed to each other, to form a continuous boot wall. Advantageously, the band 21 may be fixed by sewing to the edges 26, 27 of the bootleg and the upper. The opposite edges of the band 21 fixed to the upper and the bootleg are substantially parallel.

**[0012]** In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the band 21 extends from one lateral side 24 to the opposite lateral side 25 of the boot. The opposite ends 31 of the band 21 at the lateral sides of the boot have a substantially rounded, preferably circular arc shape. Advantageously, the band 21 extends up to a distance "a" from the rear side 22 of the boot, which is from 5% to 15%, particularly about 10% the sole length. Advantageously, the band 21 extends to this distance "a" on both boot sides. Preferably, the band 21 has a width "b" which is from 10% to 25% the length of the boot sole 18, preferably about 20%. Advantageously, the bootleg 12 of the boot has an axis 20 that, in the rest position, is inclined with respect to a line orthogonal to the resting plane of the sole 18, particularly forming an angle from 3° to 10°. In Figures 1-2, the boot 11 is shown in the rest position with the bootleg inclined forward.

**[0013]** The provision of the band 21 allows the bootleg 12 to move to a position in which its axis 20 is substantially vertical, without requiring particular efforts or causing discomfort to the boot user.

**[0014]** Particularly, no marked wrinkles are formed in the surfaces of the non-extensible leather parts of the bootleg 12 and the upper 13.

**[0015]** Preferably, the extensible band 21 may elastically extend in a direction from the upper 13 to the bootleg 12 at least by 5%, advantageously 10% to 25% of its width "b". Advantageously, where the upper 13 and the bootleg 12 are not connected together by the band 21, they are directly fixed at their respective edges, e.g. by

sewing, or are possibly integrally formed. According to a preferred embodiment of the invention, the boot also has one or more bands 15-17 made of a non-extensible material, such as leather, which are arranged to cover the extensible band 21.

**[0016]** Advantageously, there may be two or three bands 15-17, as shown in the figure. The bands 15-17 are fixed to opposite sides of the boot, and are free of any constraint in a middle part that covers the extensible band 21. Preferably, the bands 15-17 partially overlap and may mutually slide onto each other to become packed when the bootleg is bended forward and extend when the bootleg is moved to the upright position.

**[0017]** The bands 15-17 protect the extensible band from external agents, and add no difficulty in inclining the bootleg with respect to the sole and the upper. In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the bootleg also has an elastic portion 23 extending longitudinally with respect to its longer dimension. Advantageously, this additional elastic portion 23 has an elongate shape and is disposed in the rear side 22 of the bootleg 12. The elastic portion 23 allows the user to wear the boot even when wearing relatively thick winter trousers which remains in the bootleg 12 during use. A zipper (not shown) extending along the length of the bootleg 12 is advantageously provided on the rear side 22 of the bootleg. The zipper may be adjacent to the elastic portion 23 and assist easy wearing of the boot.

**[0018]** The boot 12 may have a string 19 with a button at its top, to ensure that the zipper and the boot is wholly closed during use. The leg of the boot 11 extends in the direction of height to at least the same length as the sole 18, preferably to the user's knee.

**[0019]** Advantageously, the boot 11 also includes two spur-stopping elements 30 disposed on opposite sides of the boot, at the ankle. Preferably, the elements 30 project out of the boot at one of the bands 15-17.

**[0020]** The above clearly shows that the objects of the present invention have been fulfilled. Particularly, a boot was provided that ensures high comfort in any condition of use. For instance, when a riding boot is concerned, high comfort is ensured when both riding (with the bootleg inclined forward) and walking. The particular position and conformation of the elastic band 21 affords proper bootleg inclination in any condition, with no effort or discomfort for the user. Furthermore, every part of the boot exhibits high resistance, also due to the provision of the bands 15-17 that protect the elastic extensible band.

**[0021]** Also, the boot has a relatively simple and inexpensive structure and does not require extensive use of costly materials. Most of the boot is made of typical footwear materials, such as leather. Those skilled in the art will obviously appreciate that a number of changes and variants may be made to the arrangements as described hereinbefore to meet incidental and specific needs, without departure from the scope of the invention, as defined in the following claims.

**[0022]** The boot structure as described above may be

applied to any kind of boot, also not designed for horse riding.

## 5 Claims

1. A boot comprising a bootleg (12) designed to wrap the calf of a user, a sole (18) and an upper (13), said bootleg (12) and said upper (13) being mostly formed of a substantially non-extensible material, **characterized in that** a front portion (12a) of the bootleg (12) and a top portion (14) of the upper (13) disposed in use above the foot of the user are connected together by an extensible band (21), which is placed in such a position as to cover the user's instep.
2. A boot as claimed in claim 1, **characterized in that** said band (21) is elastic.
3. A boot as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** said band (21) extends from a first lateral side (24) of the boot to a second opposite lateral side (25).
4. A boot as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the extensible band (21) has a width (b), when seen in a direction from the upper (13) to the bootleg (12), from 10% to 25% the length of the sole (18).
5. A boot as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the band (21) extends to a distance "a" from a rear side (22) of the boot, as measured parallel to the extension of the sole (18), said distance "a" being from 5% to 15% the length of the sole (18).
6. A boot as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the bootleg (12) and the upper (13) are made of a flexible material.
7. A boot as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that**, where the bootleg (12) and the upper (13) are not connected together by the extensible band (21), they are directly connected by respective mutually fixed edges.
8. A boot as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the bootleg (12) has an axis (20) that is inclined, at rest, from 3° to 10° to the direction normal to the resting plane of the sole (18).
9. A boot as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the elastic extensible band (21) may extend in a direction from the upper (12) to the bootleg (13), from 10% to 25% of its width (b).

10. A boot as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the bootleg (12) has a second elastic band (23) that extends in its longitudinal direction. 5
11. A boot as claimed in claim 10, **characterized in that** said second elastic band (23) is placed on the rear side (22) of the boot, opposite to the one facing towards the upper (13). 10
12. A boot as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** it has a zipper extending along the bootleg (12), on the rear side (22) of the boot. 15
13. A boot as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that**, when the band (21) is in the extended state, the bootleg may reach a position in which its axis (20) is substantially orthogonal to the resting plane of the sole (18). 20
14. A boot as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** it comprises one or more bands (15-17) of substantially non-extensible material, which are arranged to cover the extensible band (21), said bands being attached to the boot on opposite lateral sides (24, 25) and being free of any constraint in a part that covers the elastic band. 25
15. A boot as claimed in claim 14, **characterized in that** said bands (15-17) partially overlap and may mutually slide onto each other as the bootleg (12) changes its inclination to the resting plane of the sole (18). 30

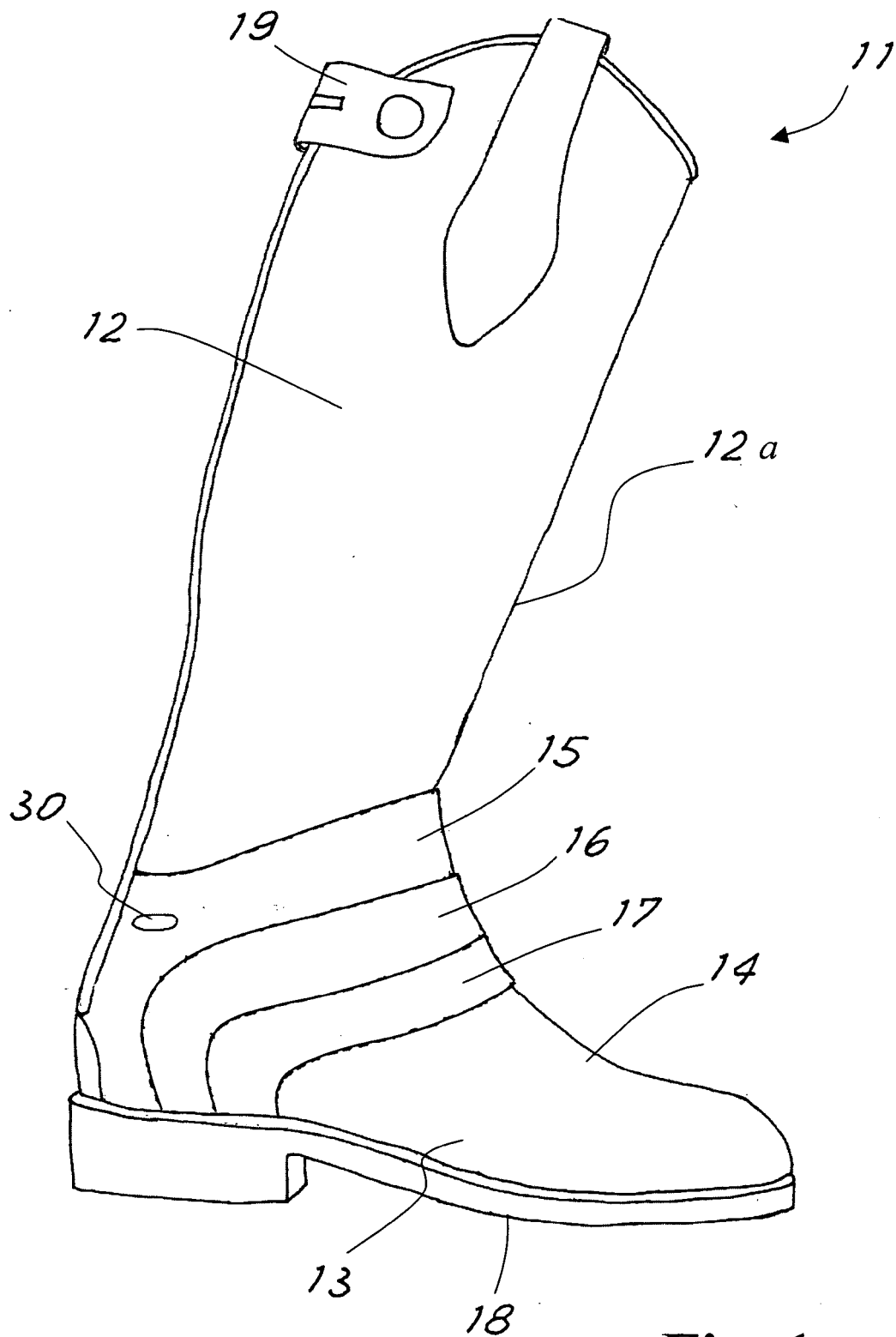
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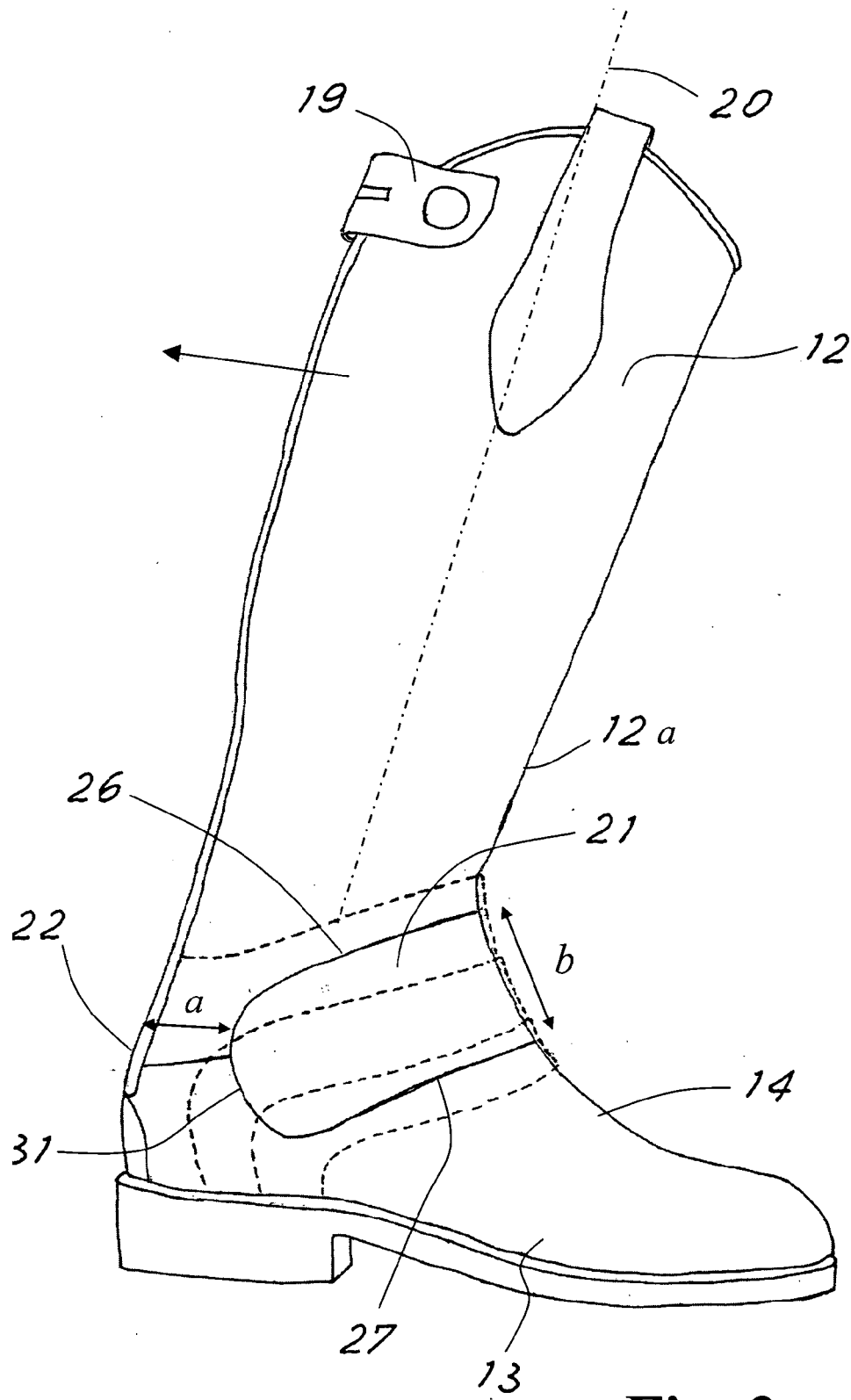
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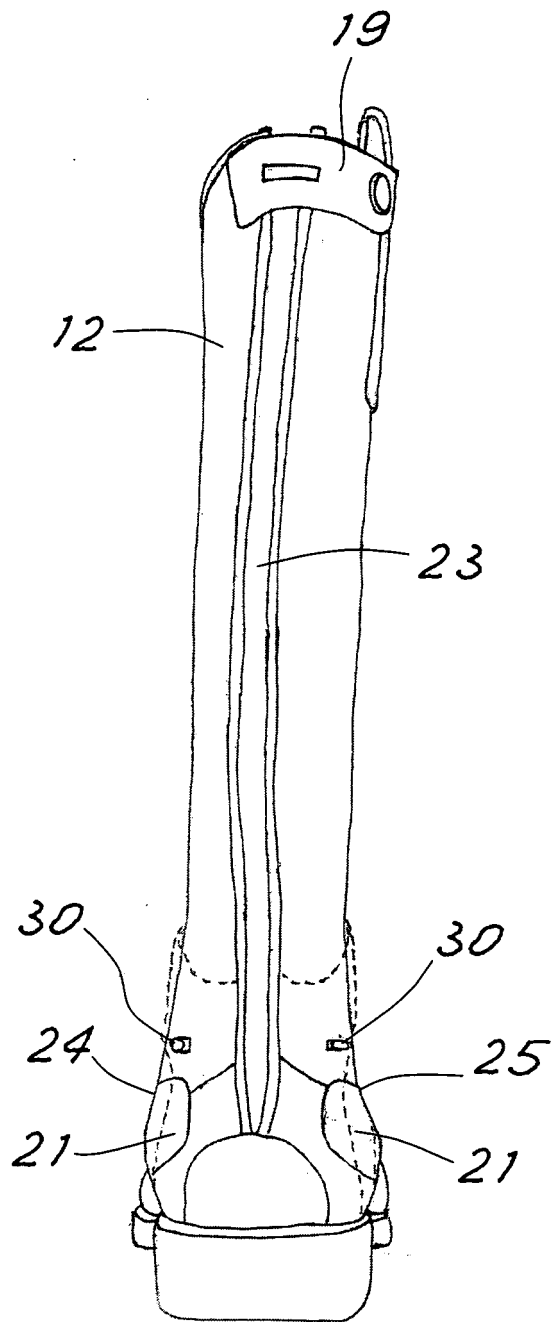
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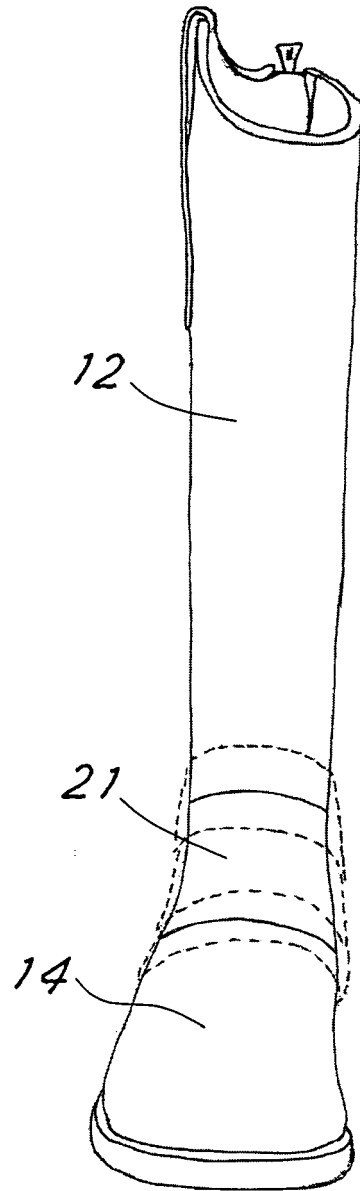
**Fig. 1**



**Fig. 2**



**Fig. 3**



**Fig. 4**



## EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number  
EP 09 42 5443

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| The Hague  |  | 7 April 2010                     | Claudel, Benoît                            |
| CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS<br>X : particularly relevant if taken alone<br>Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category<br>A : technological background<br>O : non-written disclosure<br>P : intermediate document<br>T : theory or principle underlying the invention<br>E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date<br>D : document cited in the application<br>L : document cited for other reasons<br>& : member of the same patent family, corresponding document |  |                                  |  |

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EPO FORM 1503 03.92 (P04C01)



**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT  
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This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.  
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