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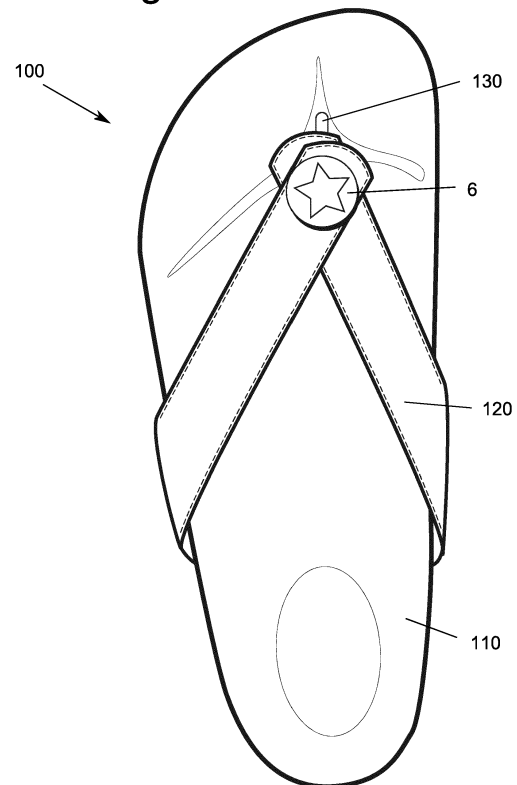
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(54) **Shoe system with interchangeable upper shoe part**

(57) The invention relates to a shoe system (100), comprising a sole (110) and an interchangeable upper shoe part (120) for receiving a foot of a user, wherein the sole and the upper shoe part are provided with cooperating fastening means for releasable fastening. The fastening means comprise a button closure, comprising a button, an attaching member for attaching the button to the sole and a decorative member (6), wherein the button has an upper side that is arranged to releasably receive the decorative member.

Fig. 1A



Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a shoe system, comprising a sole and an interchangeable upper shoe part for receiving a foot of a user, wherein the sole and the upper shoe part are provided with cooperating fastening means for a releasable fastening.

[0002] Several shoe systems with interchangeable upper shoe parts are known in the relevant art. The shoe system according to the preamble is for instance described in US2013/0091734. The known shoe system provides a shoe sole with a side-to-side slot for receiving a removable strap, with the strap having ends that may be joined so as to form a shoe upper shoe part. The known shoe system has the advantage that it allows a user easy coordination with a variety of his or her clothing. The known shoe system uses different, rather straight forward fastening means known per se in the relevant art to join the outer ends of the strap. Examples of fastening means include Velcro, snap fits and loops. Consequently the resulting appearance of the known shoe system can be described as rather conventional.

[0003] It is the object of the present invention to provide a shoe system according to the preamble having a unique fashionable appearance.

[0004] The shoe system according to the present invention is thereto characterized in that the fastening means comprise a button closure, comprising a button, an attaching member for attaching the button to the sole or the upper shoe part and a decorative member, wherein the button has an upper side that is arranged to releasably receive the decorative member.

[0005] Although button systems as described in the characterizing part of the main claim are known per se in the art of clothing, they have never before been proposed for use as a closure system on shoes. This may be related to the rather large size of the known button system that is designed to draw attention to it. One specifically suitable known button system is described in WO2012/173475 of the two inventors of the present invention.

[0006] Using the known button system allows the shoe system to be personalized by the user to a large extent. Furthermore it allows the design of new and unique footwear as will follow from the description of the preferred embodiments.

[0007] According to a first unique and elegant preferred embodiment the upper shoe part comprises a strap for engaging the foot, wherein the button closure further comprises a button hole to receive the button, wherein one or more button holes are situated on one or more outer ends of the strap. Different forms of straps, such as V-shaped straps or T-shaped straps, can be folded over the foot of the user and releasably fastened to the button. The button may either be present on another outer end of the strap or on a thong part intended to be placed between toes of the foot of the user, wherein the thong part is comprised in the sole and wherein the button is

attached to the thong part. The position of the button closure at the fore foot adjacent to the toes allow the straps to optimally follow the shape of the foot providing a comfortable fit.

[0008] According to a different unique preferred embodiment the upper shoe part comprises an ankle strap for engaging the ankle of the foot, wherein the ankle strap is further arranged for engaging the button. The ankle strap may be used alone or in combination with the straps engaging the foot as described above.

[0009] In yet another unique preferred embodiment the decorative member is arranged to form the upper shoe part. Such a decorative member may be used alone as well as in combination with the straps and/or ankle straps described above.

[0010] When a strap is used for engaging the foot the fastening means need to be supplemented with auxiliary fastening means to releasably fasten the strap to the sole at a second position. In the known shoe system the sole is provided with a slot extending over the width of the shoe forming a passage for the strap. As an alternative according to the invention the sole is provided with one or more bores extending over the width of the shoe and the straps are provided at the outer ends with auxiliary fastening means for releasable attachment to the bores.

[0011] According to a unique alternative embodiment the sole and the strap are provided with auxiliary cooperating fastening means for releasable fastening the strap against the backside of the sole.

[0012] In a practical embodiment the sole is provided with a recess running along part of the outer circumference of the sole at the backside of the sole, wherein the recess is arranged for accommodating part of the strap.

[0013] Preferably the auxiliary cooperating fastening means comprise hook and loop fastener, such as Velcro.

[0014] The invention will now be further elucidated with reference to the following figures, in which:

Figure 1A schematically shows a top view of a first embodiment of the shoe system according to the invention in a closed position;

Figure 1B schematically shows the first embodiment of figure 1A in an open position;

Figure 1C schematically shows a side view of part of the first embodiment;

Figure 1D schematically shows a top view of another part of the first embodiment;

Figure 2 schematically shows a cross sectional view of the button closure of the shoe system according to the invention;

Figure 3A schematically shows a top view of a second embodiment of the shoe system according to the invention;

Figure 3B schematically shows a top view of a third embodiment of a shoe system according to the invention;

Figure 3C schematically shows a side view of a fourth embodiment of a shoe system according to the in-

vention;

Figure 3D shows a fifth embodiment of a shoe system according to the invention;

Figure 4 schematically shows a top view of alternative auxiliary fastening means.

Figure 5A schematically shows a side view of a sixth embodiment of a shoe system according to the invention;

Figure 5B schematically shows part of the sixth embodiment in more detail.

Figure 6A schematically shows a side view of a seventh embodiment of a shoe system according to the invention;

Figure 6B schematically shows a top view of the seventh embodiment when taken apart; and

Figure 6C schematically shows the seventh embodiment when assembled.

[0015] In all figures equal parts are designated by equal reference numerals.

[0016] Figures 1A through 1D schematically show a first preferred embodiment of a shoe system 100 according to the invention. Shoe system 100 comprises a sole 110 for receiving a user's foot. An interchangeable upper shoe part 120 is releasably fastened to the sole 110 such that it forms a loop around the foot. Cooperating fastening means releasably attach the upper shoe part 120 to the sole 110. The cooperating fastening means comprise a button closure comprising a button 1 and a decorative member 7, which is to be releasably received in the upper side of the button 1. The upper shoe part comprises a strap 120 that is provided at its outer end with button holes 103 for receiving the button 1. The sole 110 comprises a thong part 130 intended to be placed between the toes of the foot of the user. The button 1 is attached to the top of the thong part 130. The sole 110 is provided with auxiliary fastening means formed by a slot 111 extending over the width of the sole forming a passage for the strap 120. The strap is guided through the slot 111 and closed on top of the forefoot by pushing button holes 103 over button 1 on thong part 130. The strap 120 in the closed position forms a V-shape for engagement of the foot.

[0017] The thong part 130 is an upright or post provided at its free end with the button 1. In the preferred embodiment a small piece of material, such as leather, is present at the free end of the thong part to receive the button. Consequently the button rests on the forefoot adjacent to the toes.

[0018] Figure 2 shows a preferred embodiment of a button closure as part of the shoe system according to the present invention. The button closure shown is disclosed in WO2012/173475 of the two inventors of the present invention. The button closure known from WO2012/173475 is enclosed herein by reference. Figure 2 shows a longitudinal section of a combination of a button 1 and a decorative member 6 according to the invention, wherein button 1 is manufactured from one piece of

plastic. Button 1 is provided with a recess 21 in which protrusion 10 of decorative member 6 can be received. Decorative member 6 is embodied here as an upper button part 7 which forms the actual decorative member and an edge 8 of which is seam-folded around a part 9 which is provided with a protrusion 10 which can be received in recess 21 and then be releasably secured using resilient member 5. Resilient means are formed by an annular additional recess 22 arranged around recess 21, whereby a plastic edge 23 between recess 21 and additional recess 22 can bend outward to allow passage of protrusion 10. Button 1 can for instance be attached to a piece of material 11, such as thong part 130, using an attaching member, such as a pin 3 or a screw.

[0019] Figure 3A shows a second embodiment of a shoe system 200 according to the present invention. The second preferred embodiment differs only from the first preferred embodiment of figure 1 with respect to the upper shoe part 226. The upper shoe part 226 is formed by the decorative member 226 that has a shape, in this case a flower shape, large enough to provide a grip for the user's foot. The decorative member 226 is received in button 1 on thong part 130.

[0020] Figure 3B shows a third embodiment of a shoe system 300 according to the present invention. The second preferred embodiment differs only from the first preferred embodiment of figure 1 with respect to the upper shoe part 320. The upper shoe part 320 has a general T-shape and consists of a strap 320A and a strap 320B. Strap 320A has a button hole 103 at its outer end to receive the button 1. At its other outer end strap 320A is provided with a loop to receive strap 320B. Strap 320B is guided through slot 111 in sole 110. In the second preferred embodiment straps 320A and 320B are each separately interchangeable.

[0021] Figure 3C shows schematically a fourth preferred embodiment 400 of a shoe system 400 according to the present invention. Shoe system 400 also differs from the above embodiments with respect to the upper shoe part 420. The upper shoe part 420 is an ankle strap 420 for engaging the ankle of the foot. Thereto ankle strap 420 is provided at one of its outer ends with a large loop for engaging the ankle. The loop may consist of two loose ends that can be tied in a knot. At its other outer end ankle strap 420 is provided with a smaller loop functioning as a button hole 103 to receive button 1.

[0022] Figure 3D shows a fifth preferred embodiment of a shoe system 500 according to the present invention. Shoe system 500 differs with respect to the above preferred embodiments with respect to the upper shoe part 520. Upper shoe part 520 is arranged to receive the forefoot. Upper shoe part 520 is a strap having a button hole 103 at its first outer end and a button 1 at its second outer end. Strap 520 can be guided through slot 111 present in sole 110. Shoe system 500 furthermore lacks a thong part.

[0023] Figure 4 schematically shows alternative auxiliary fastening means that take the place of slot 111 in

sole 110. The alternative auxiliary fastening means are generally arranged to fasten the strap to both sides of the sole. The alternative auxiliary fastening means shown comprise one or more bores 112 extending over the width of the sole 110. Each of the straps is arranged at its outer ends for cooperation with the auxiliary fastening means for releasable fastening to the bores, for example by openings. Preferably tubes 113 having internal screw threads are received in the bores and screws 114 are used to fasten the outer ends of the straps to the bores. The straps 120 and 420 are divided into two parts.

[0024] Figures 5A and 5B schematically show a sixth embodiment of a shoe system according to the invention. The sixth embodiment provides alternative auxiliary fastening means to the ones shown in figure 1D and 4.

[0025] In the sixth embodiment the strap 620 is guided along part of the outer circumference of the sole 110 near the heelpiece of the sole. Along part of the contact surface between the strap and the side of the sole releasable fastening means are present. In the shoe system 600 the sole 110 and the strap 620 are provided with hook and loop fastener.

[0026] The sole is provided with a recess 115 running along part of the outer circumference of the sole 110 at the backside of the sole. The recess 115 is preferably arranged for accommodating part of the strap 620. A strip of Velcro is situated in the recess 115 and another strip of Velcro is situated on the part of the strap.

[0027] In the preferred embodiment shown the cooperating fastening means comprise hook and loop fastener, such as Velcro. However, other known means for releasable fastening may be used, e.g. snap buttons.

[0028] The strap 620 in the closed position forms a V-shape for engagement of the foot, as in the first embodiment. The alternative auxiliary fastening means shown in figures 5A and 5B may also be used in other embodiments especially embodiment 300 shown in figure 3B, wherein strap 320B can be arranged for releasable fastening against the side of the sole, preferably at the backside of the sole.

[0029] Figures 6A, 6B and 6C schematically show a seventh embodiment of a shoe system according to the invention. The seventh embodiment provides alternative auxiliary fastening means to the ones shown in figure 1D, 4, 5A and 5B.

[0030] The sole 110 is provided with auxiliary fastening means 116 extending from the sides of the sole 110. The auxiliary fastening means 116 are generally strap shaped. In the seventh embodiment the upper shoe part 720 can be releasably attached to the auxiliary strap shaped fastening means 116 to form a continuing upper shoe part at first sight. Along part of the contact surface between the strap 720 and the auxiliary straps 116 releasable fastening means are present. In the shoe system 700 the auxiliary straps 116 are provided with hook and loop fastener, such as Velcro.

[0031] The upper shoe part 720 has a general T-shape and consists of a strap 720A and a strap 720B. Strap

720A has a button hole 103 at its outer end to receive the button 1. At its other outer end strap 720A is provided with a loop to receive strap 720B. Just as in the second preferred embodiment straps 720A and 720B are each separately interchangeable. The upper shoe part 720 can alternatively also be V-shaped like upper shoe part 120 shown in figure 1A.

[0032] It is noted that the shoe system according to the invention is not limited to the embodiments shown, but extends to all possible combinations of the embodiments. Furthermore the positions of the button(s) and the button hole(s) may be reversed in all embodiments. The shape and length of the stem are arranged to accommodate overlapping outer ends of any of the straps or strap combinations. The position of the (alternative) auxiliary fastening means can be adapted to the desired position of the strap(s).

[0033] The shoe system according to the invention therefore extends to all embodiments falling within the scope of protection of the appended claims, which must be interpreted in light of the figures and the accompanying description.

Claims

1. Shoe system, comprising a sole and an interchangeable upper shoe part for receiving a foot of a user, wherein the sole and the upper shoe part are provided with cooperating fastening means for releasable fastening, **characterized in that**, the fastening means comprise a button closure, comprising a button, an attaching member for attaching the button to the sole or the upper shoe part and a decorative member, wherein the button has an upper side that is arranged to releasably receive the decorative member.
2. Shoe system according to claim 1, wherein the upper shoe part comprises a strap for engaging the foot, wherein the button closure further comprises a button hole to receive the button, wherein one or more button holes are situated on one or more outer ends of the strap.
3. Shoe system according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the sole comprises a thong part intended to be placed between toes of the foot and wherein the button is attached to the thong part.
4. Shoe system according to one or more of the preceding claims, wherein the upper shoe part comprises an ankle strap for engaging the ankle of the foot, wherein the ankle strap is further arranged for engaging the button.
5. Shoe system according to one or more of the preceding claims, wherein the decorative member is ar-

ranged to form the upper shoe part.

6. Shoe system according to claim 2, wherein the sole and the strap are provided with auxiliary cooperating fastening means for releasable fastening the strap against the backside of the sole. 5
7. Shoe system according to claim 6, wherein the sole is provided with a recess running along part of the outer circumference of the sole at the backside of the sole, wherein the recess is arranged for accommodating part of the strap. 10
8. Shoe system according to claim 6 or 7, wherein the auxiliary cooperating fastening means comprise hook and loop fastener, such as Velcro. 15
9. Shoe system according to claim 2, wherein the sole is provided with one or more bores extending over the width of the shoe and the strap is provided at the outer ends with auxiliary fastening means for releasable fastening to the bores. 20
10. Shoe system according to claim 2, wherein the sole is provided with a slot extending over the width of the shoe forming a passage for the strap. 25

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Fig. 1A

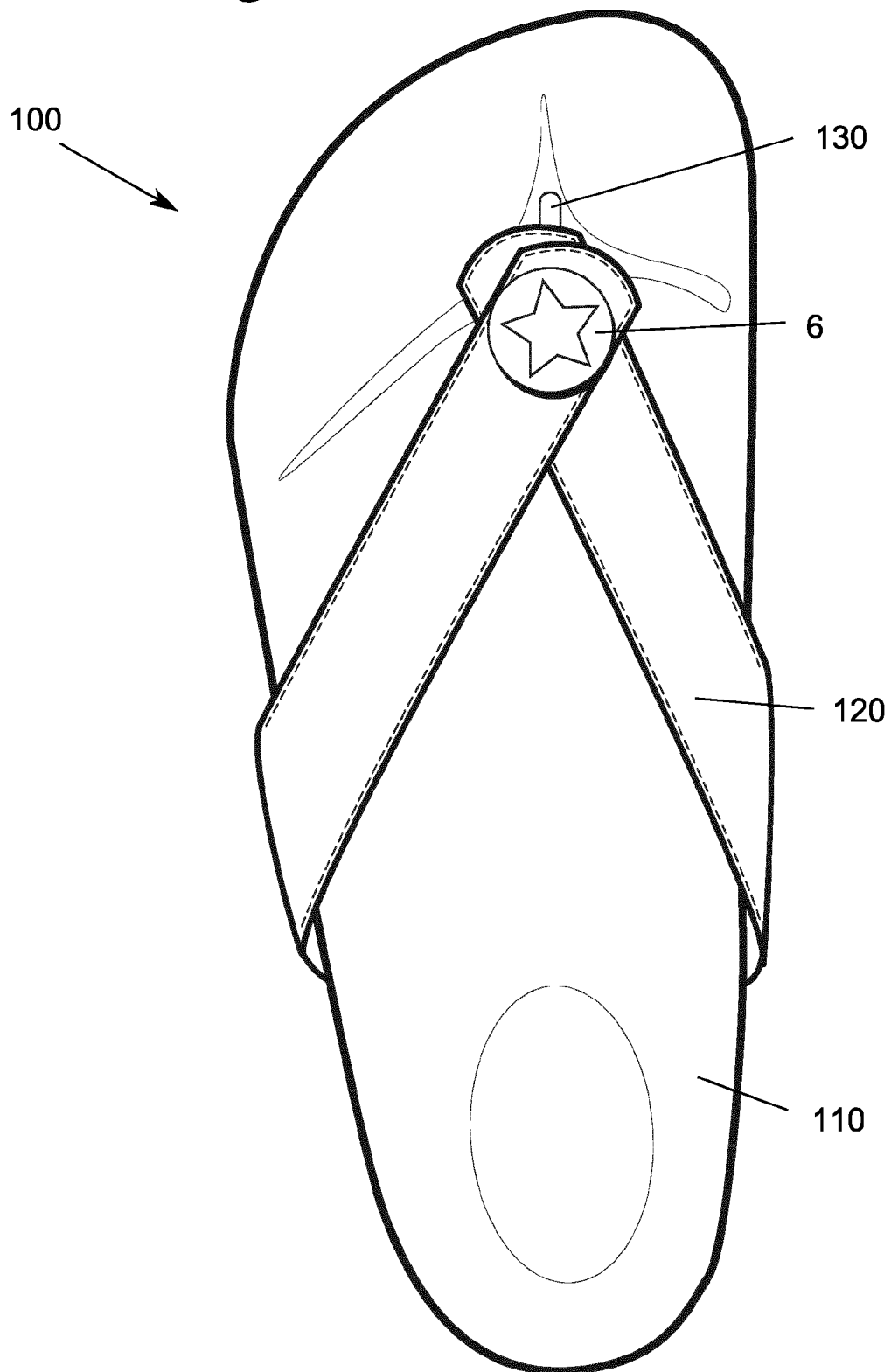
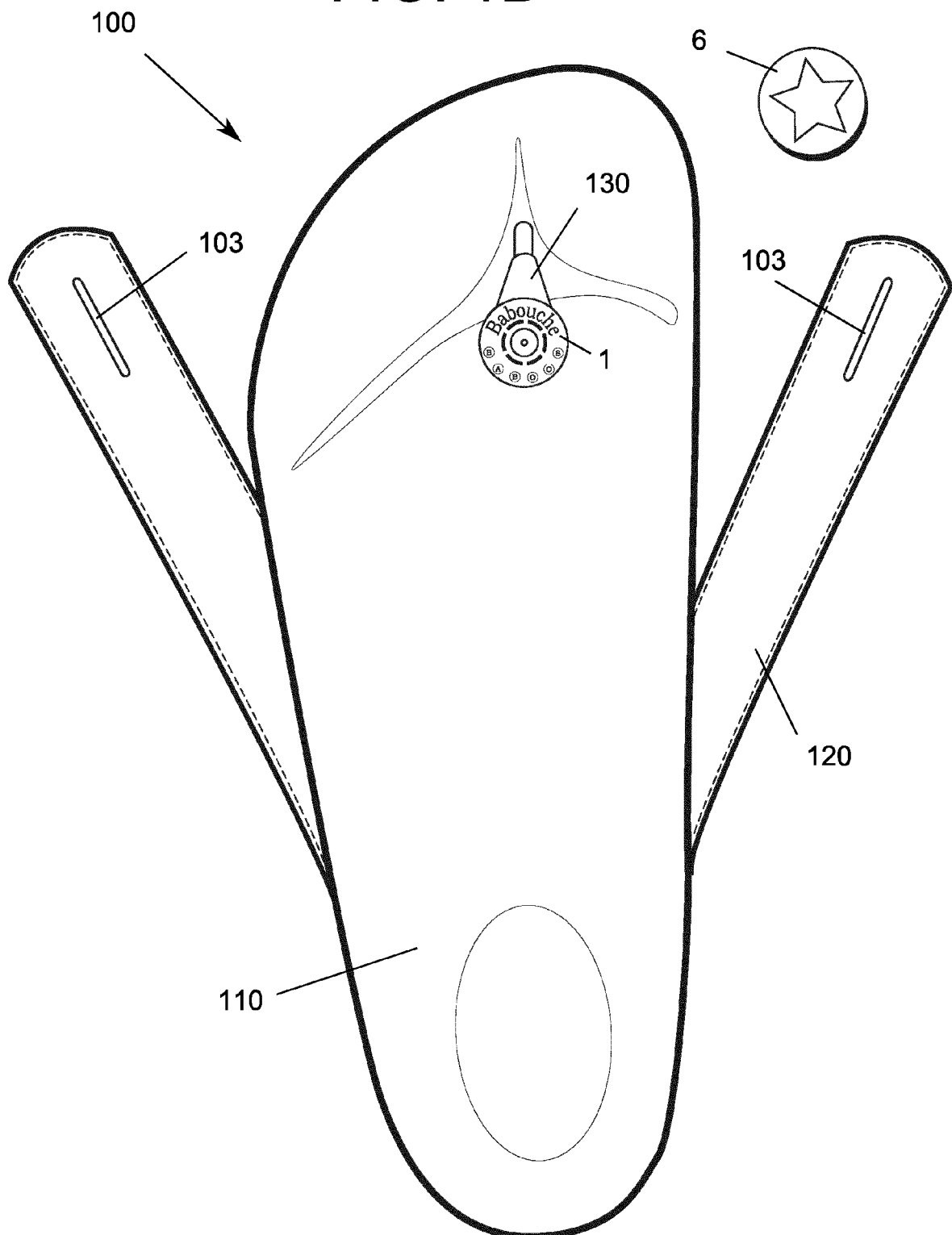


FIG. 1B



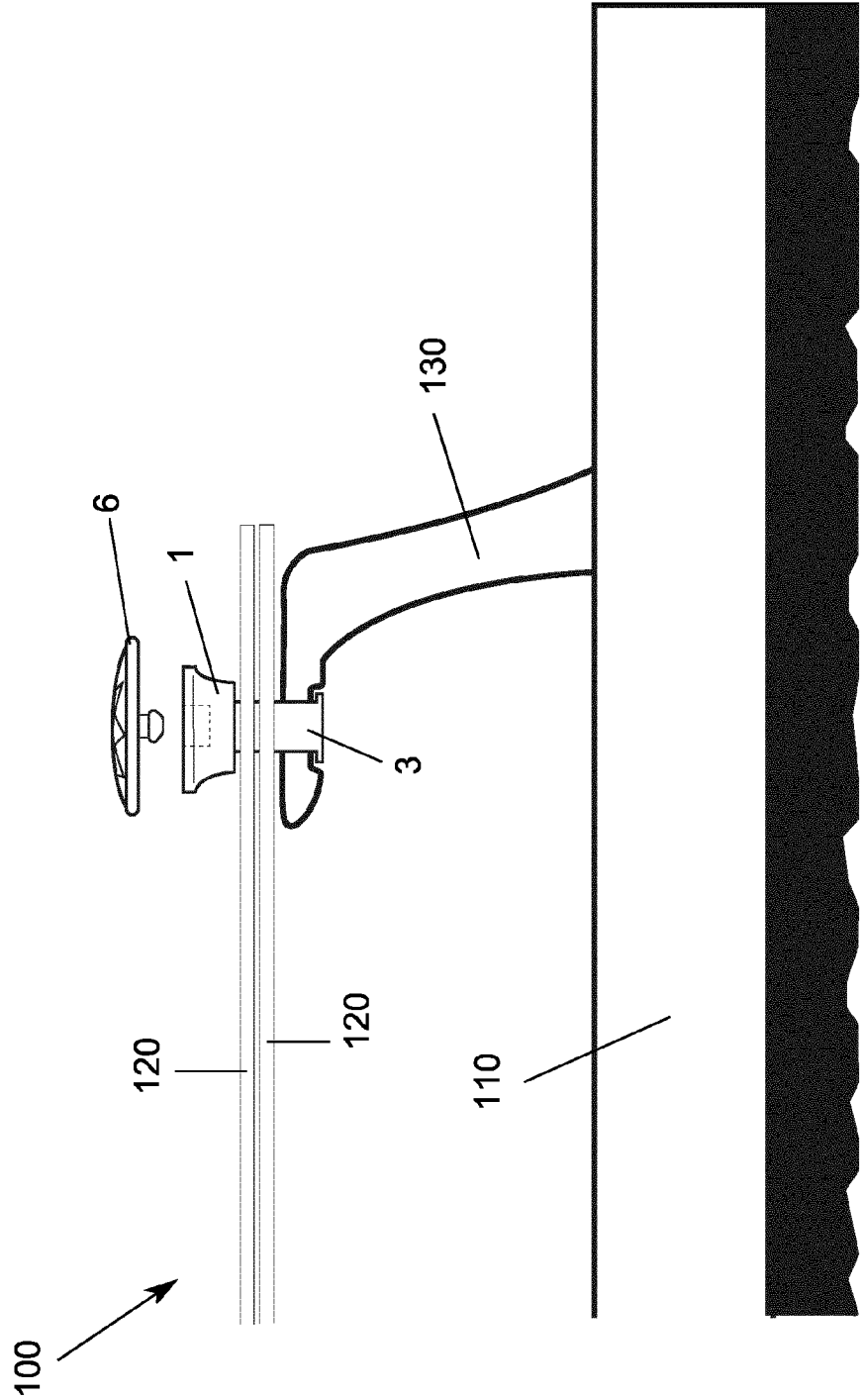


FIG. 1C

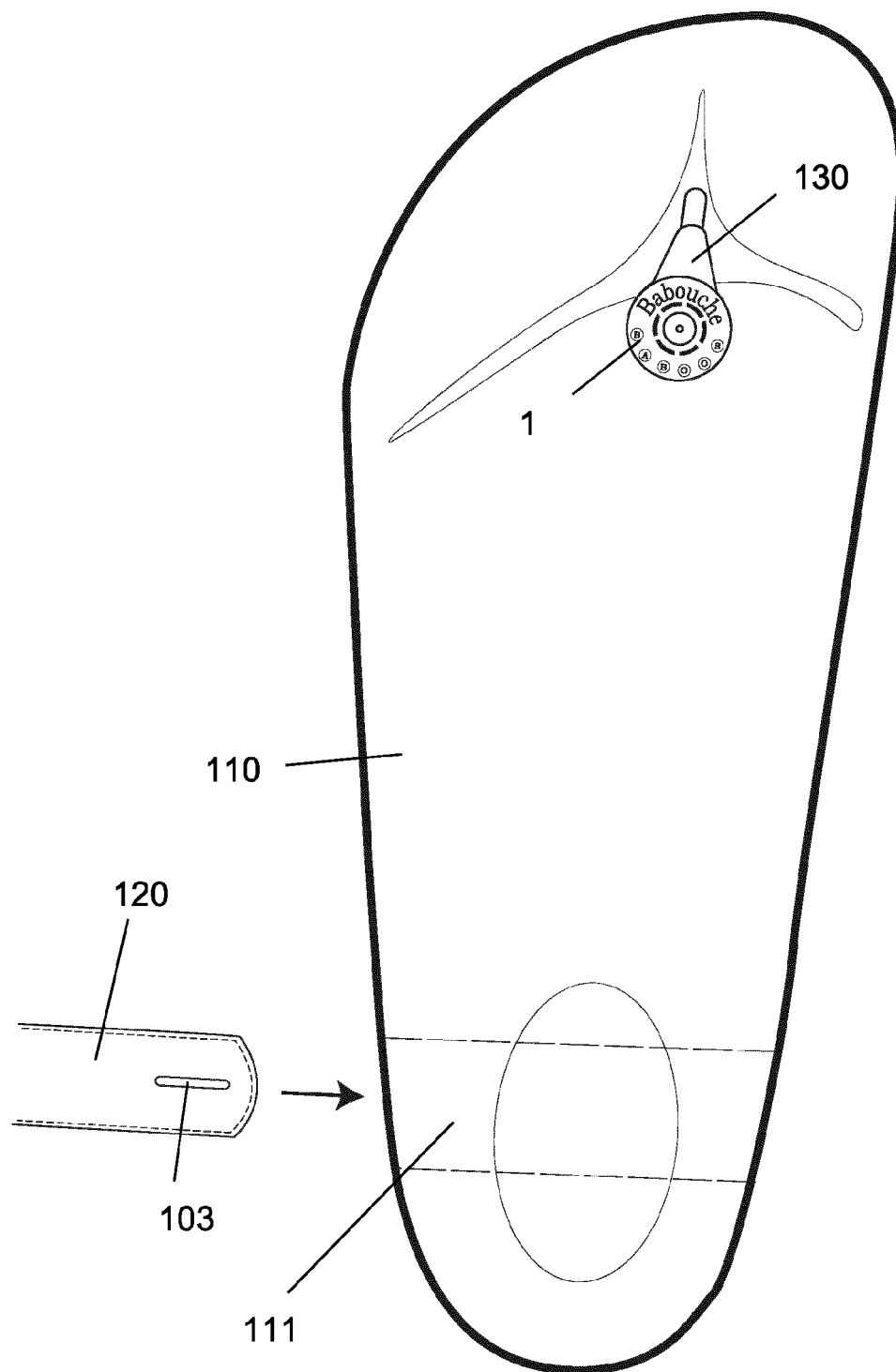


FIG. 1D

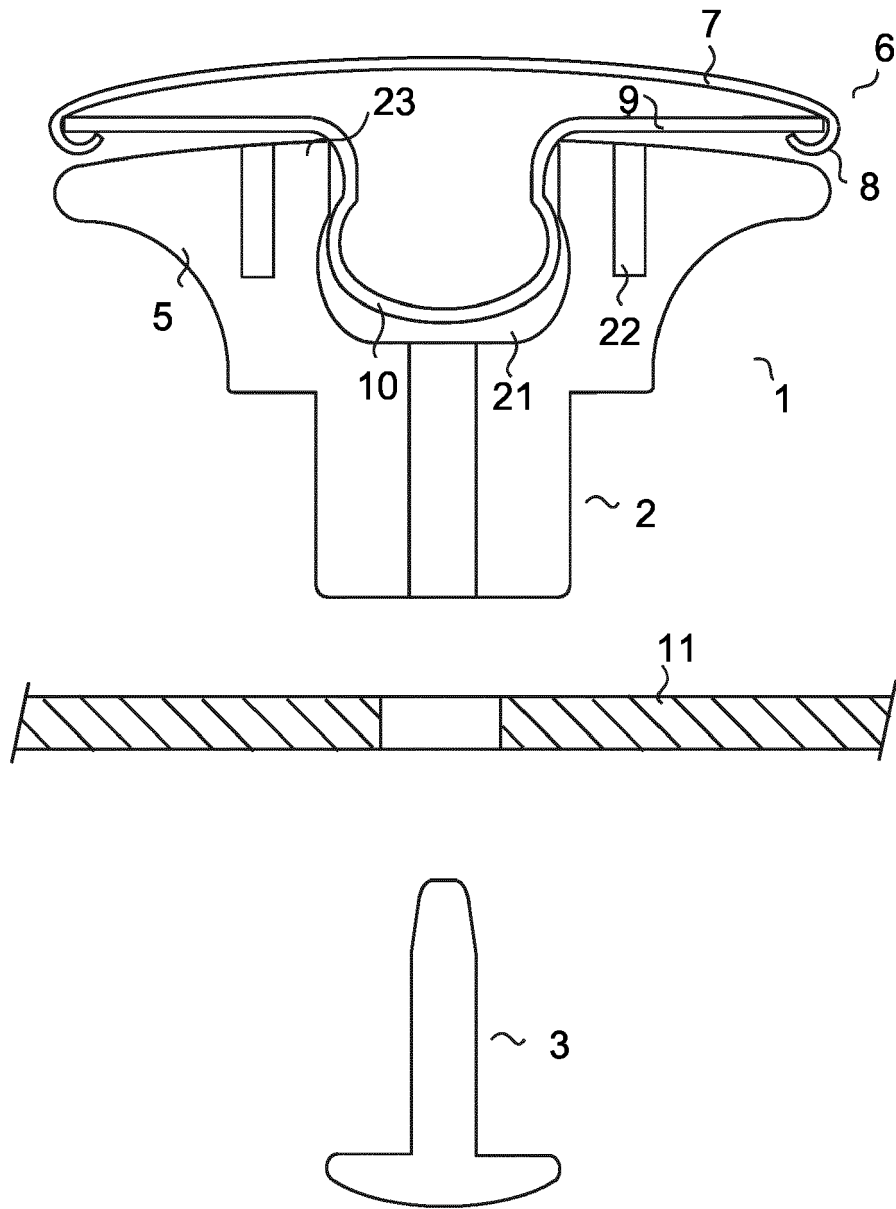


FIG. 2

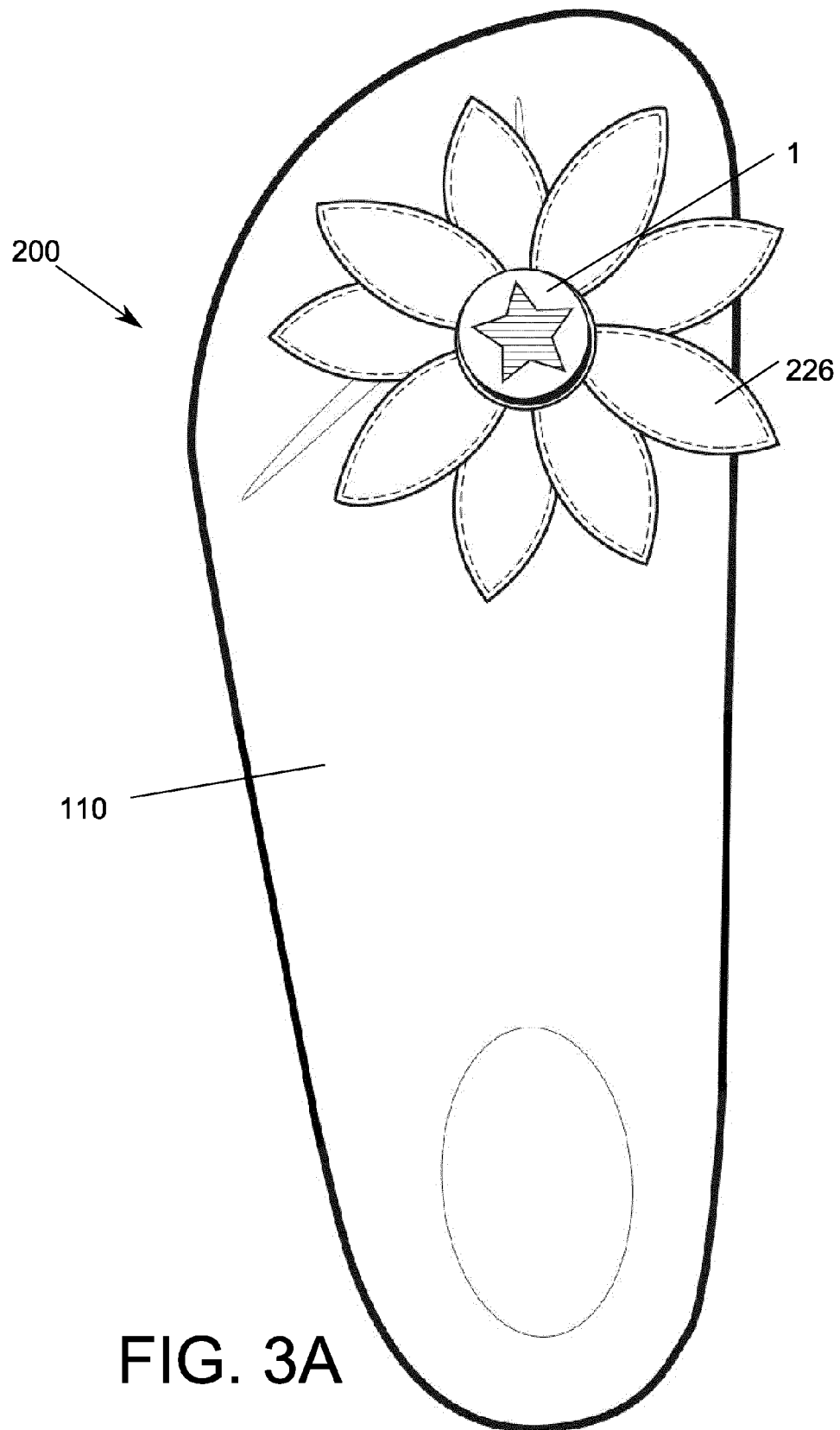


FIG. 3B

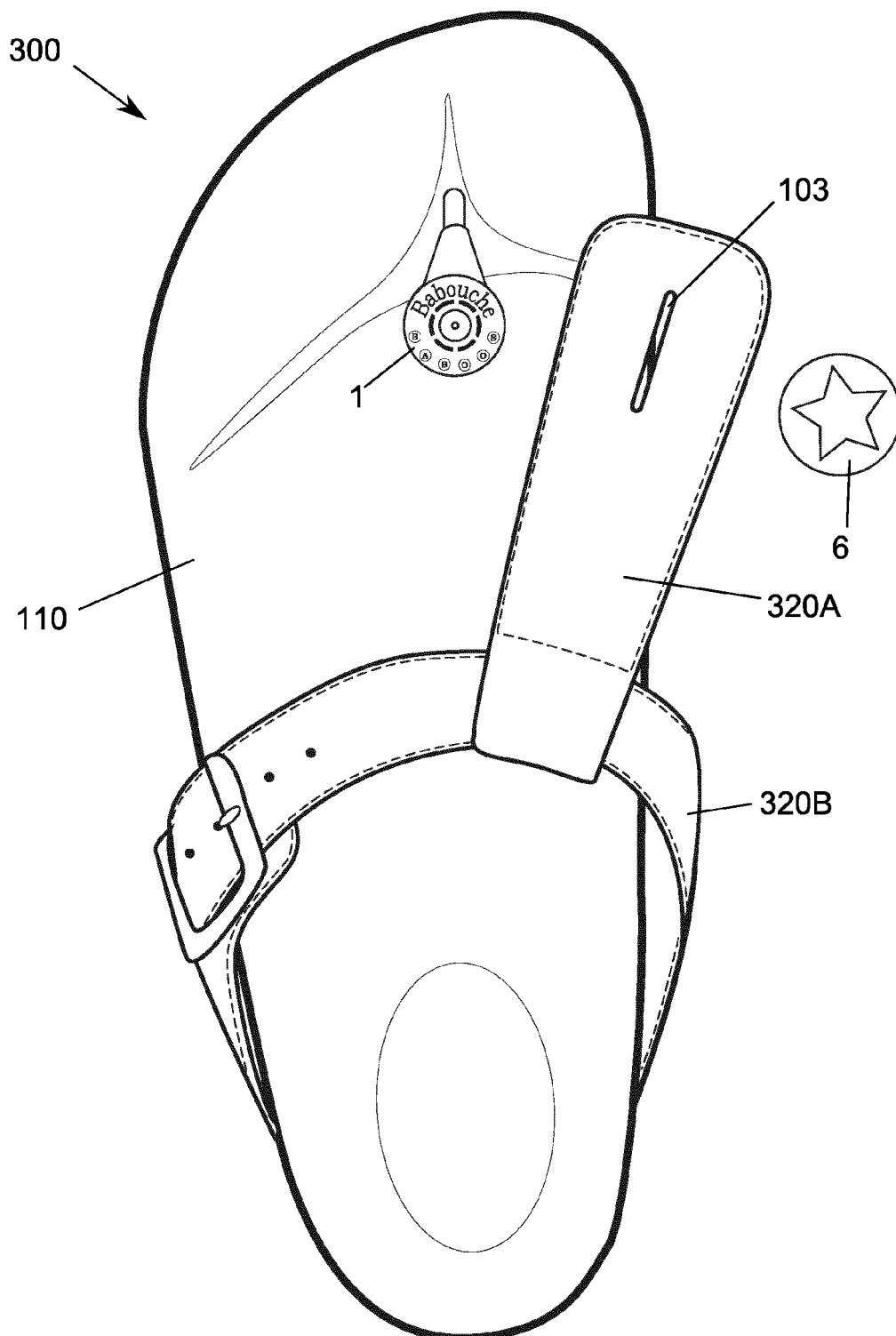


FIG. 3C

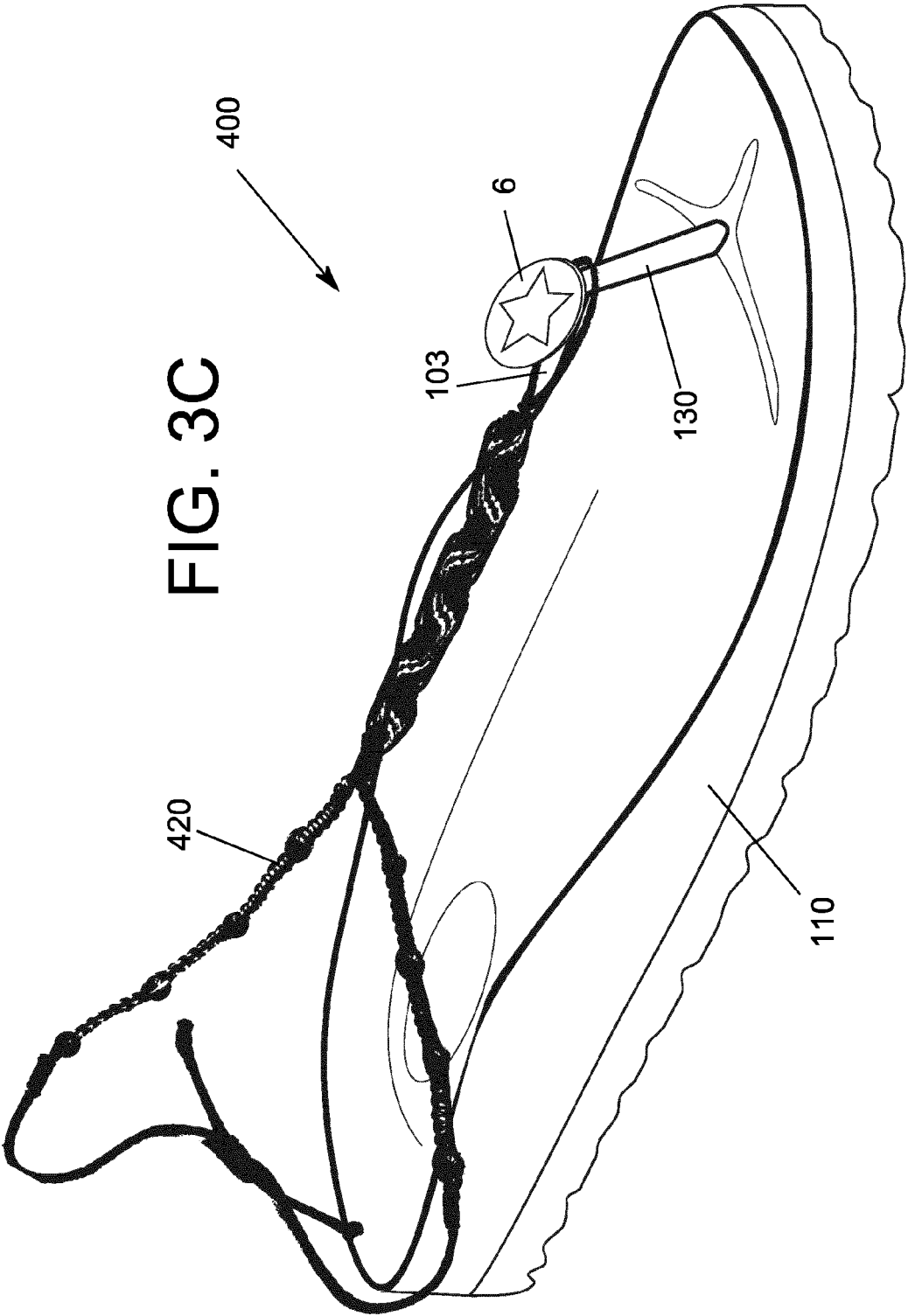


FIG. 3D

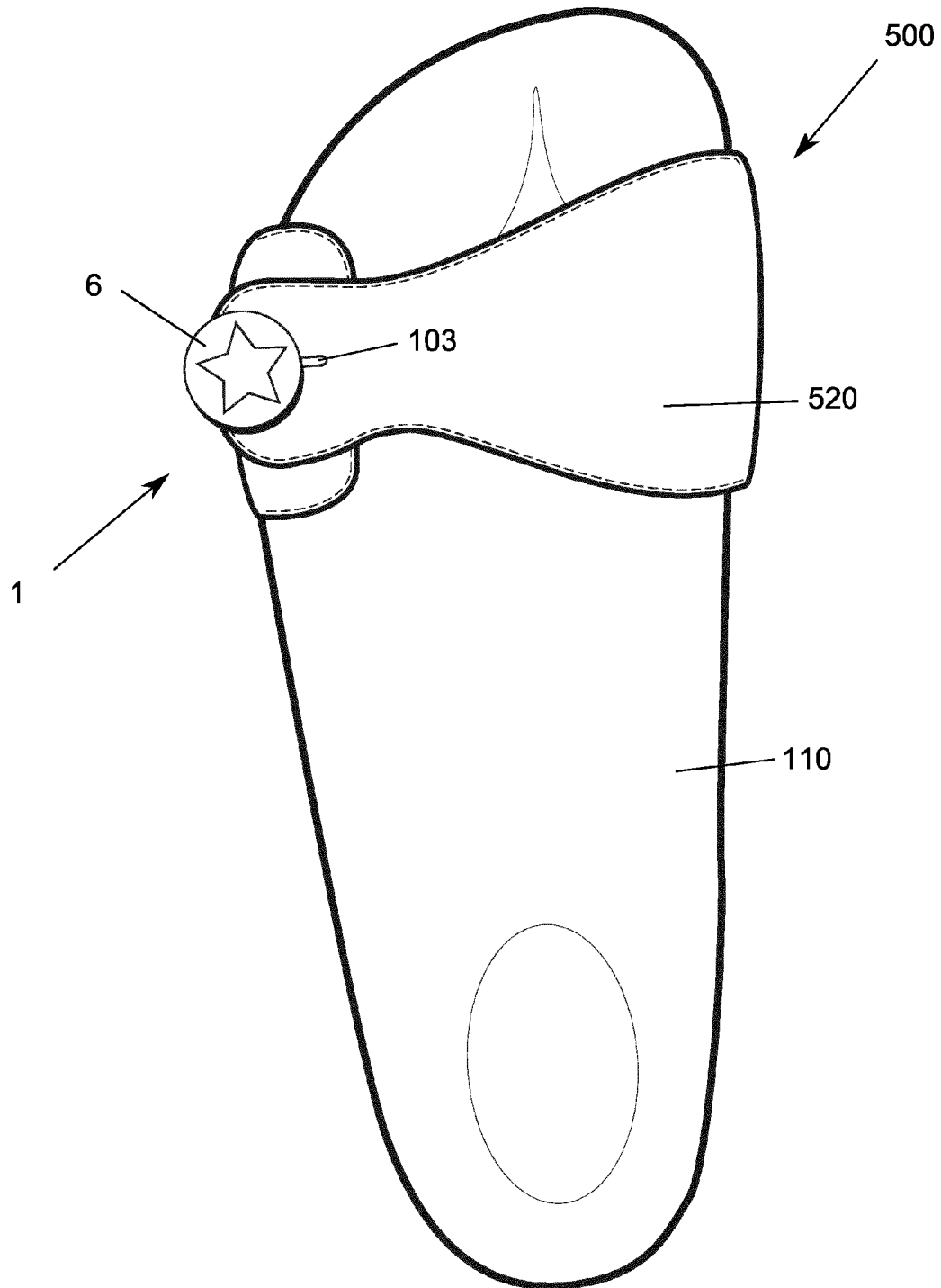
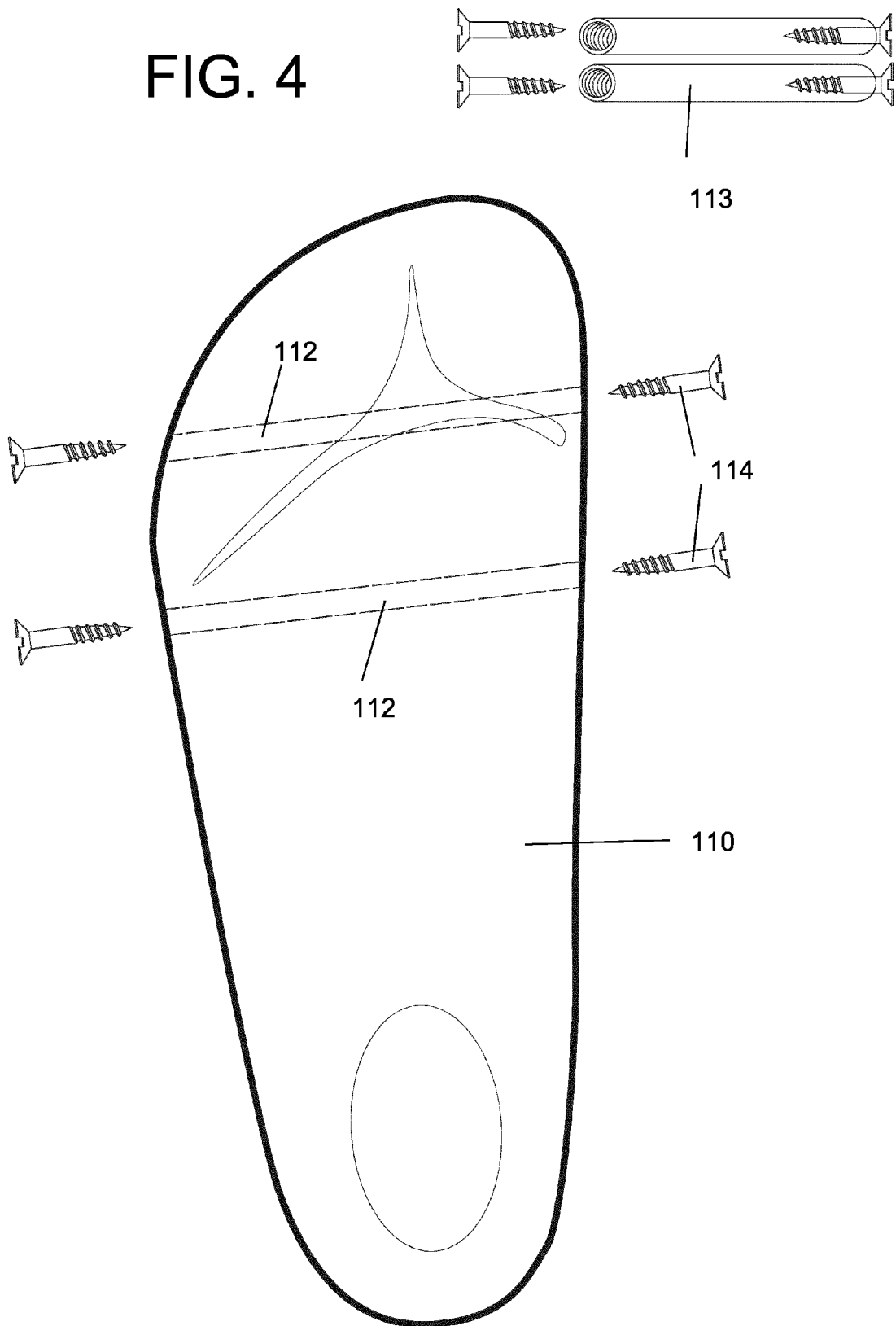


FIG. 4



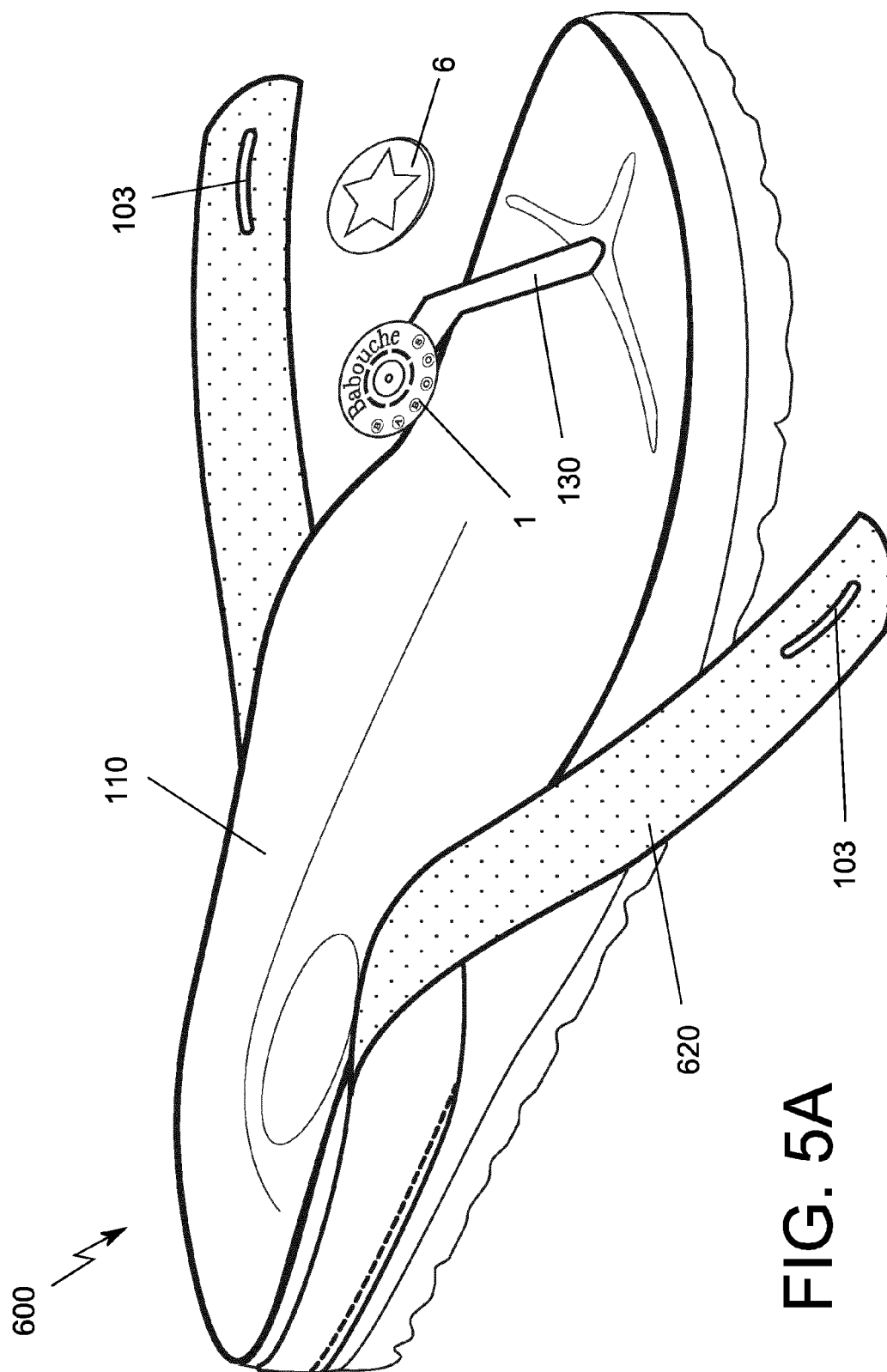


FIG. 5A

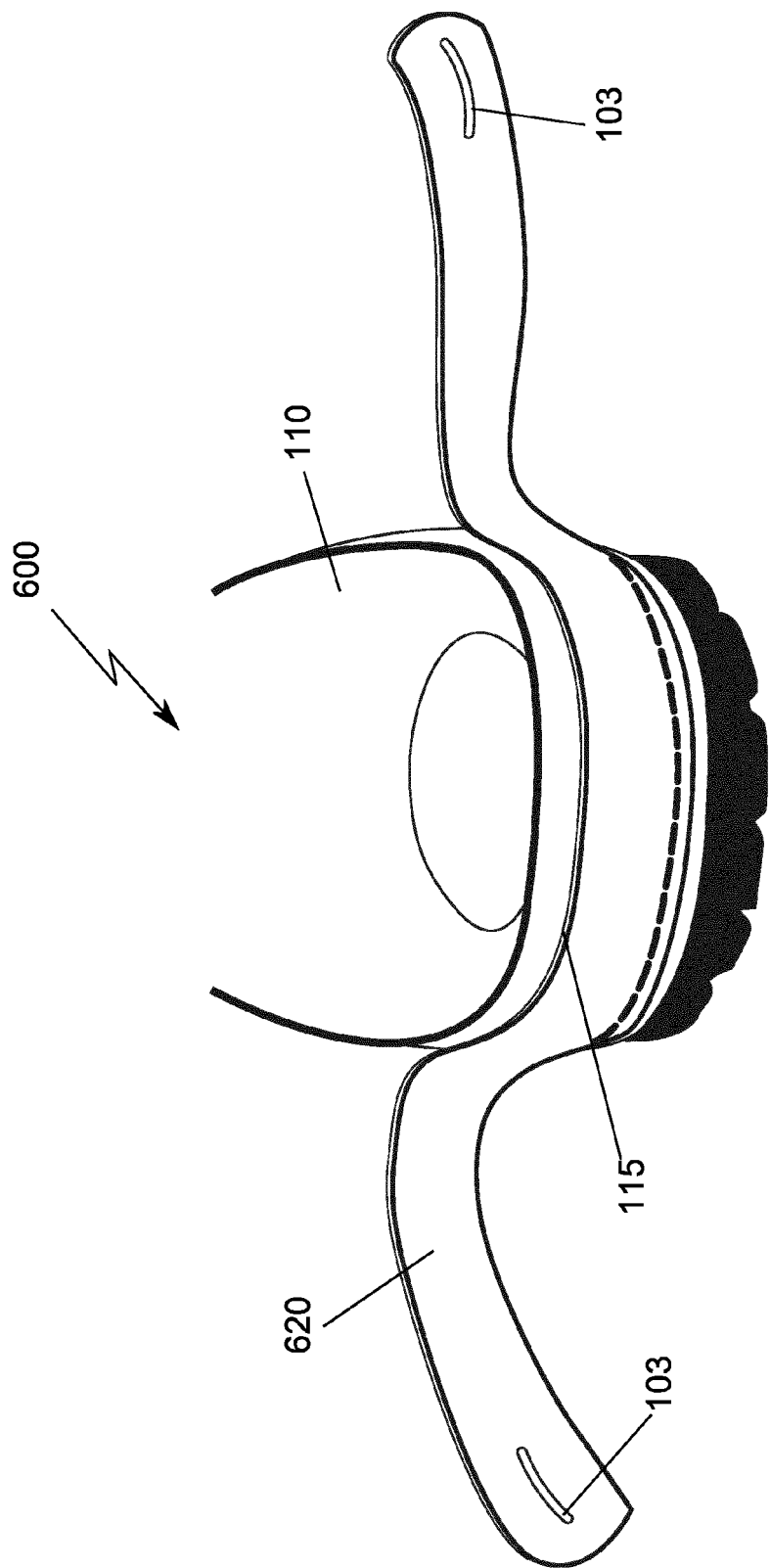
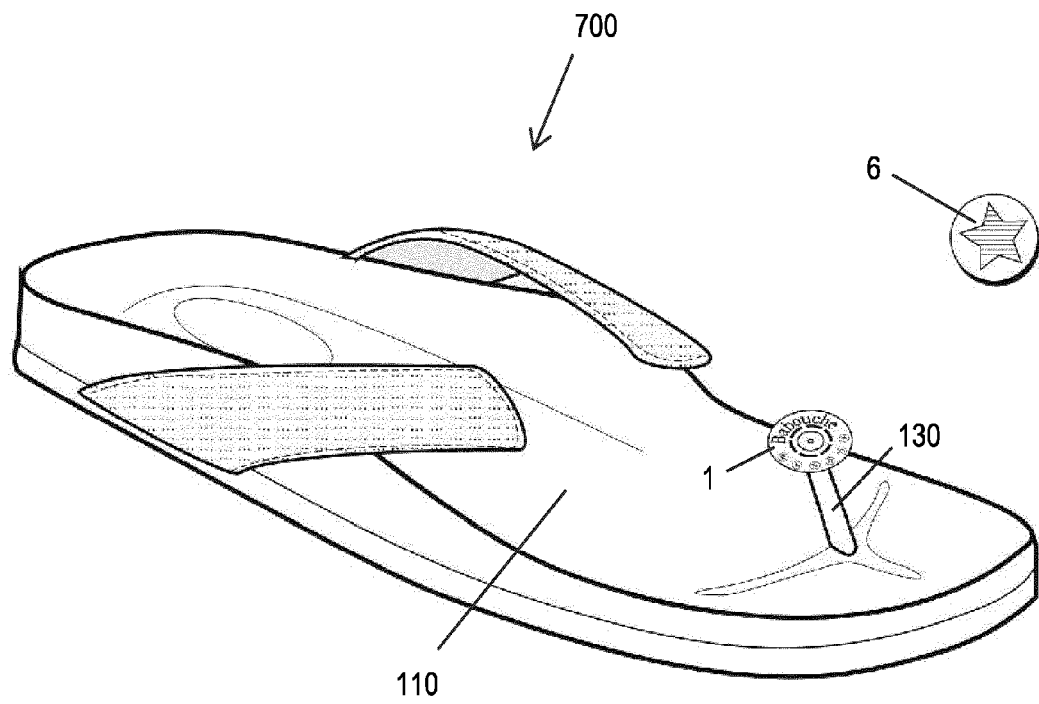


FIG. 5B

Fig. 6A



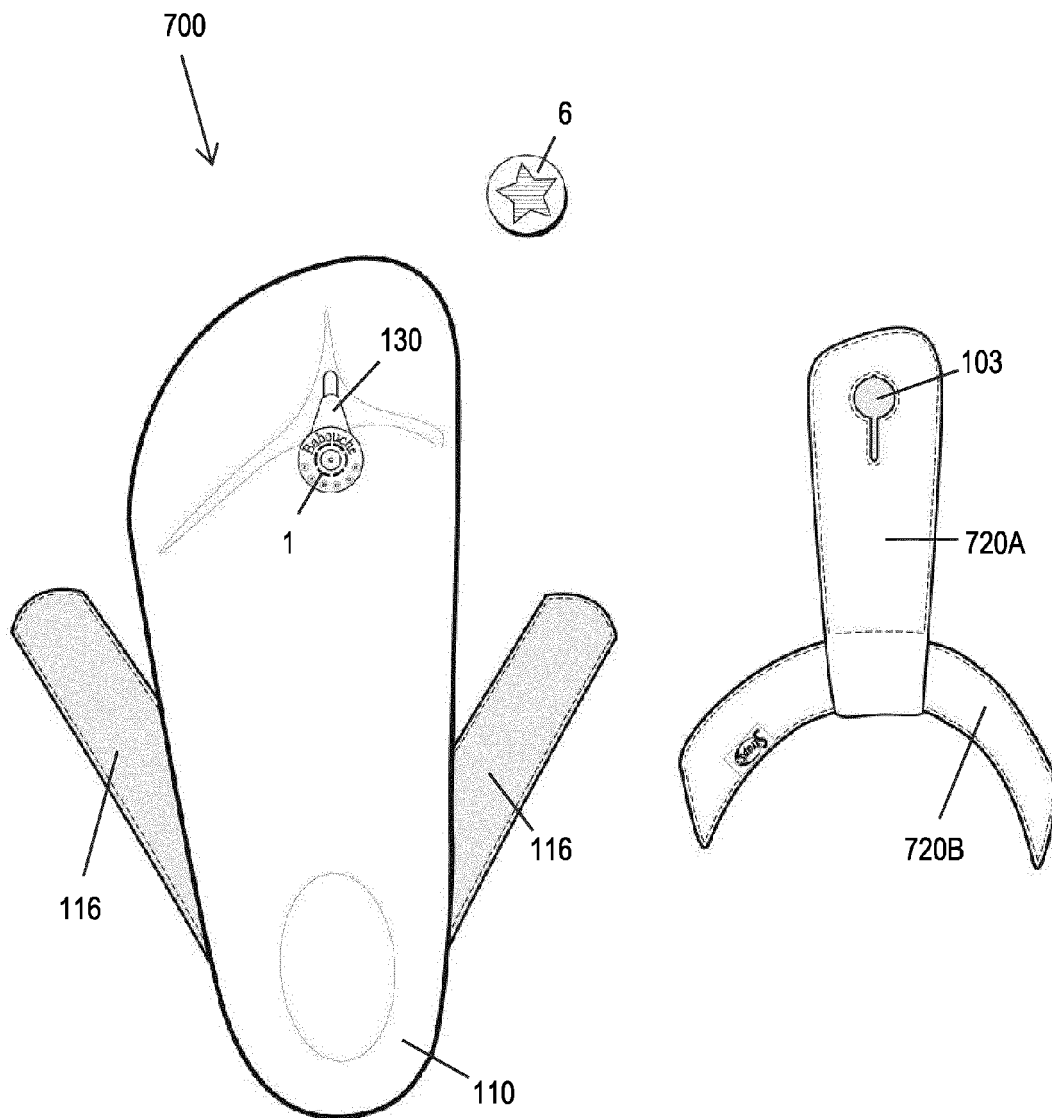


Fig. 6B

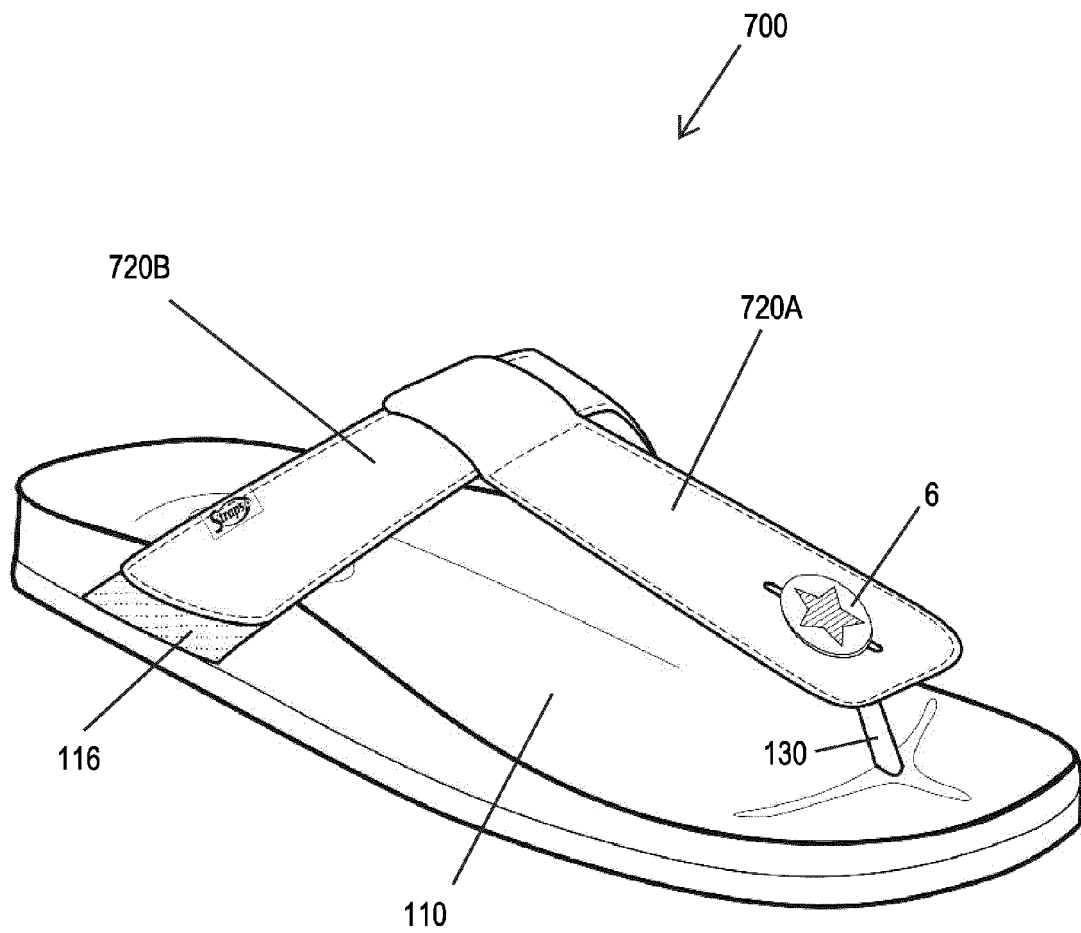


Fig. 6C

REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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