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(12)





(11) **EP 3 669 709 A1**

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(51) Int Cl.:

- (43) Date of publication: 24.06.2020 Bulletin 2020/26
- (21) Application number: 19216702.1
- (22) Date of filing: 16.12.2019
- (84) Designated Contracting States:
 AL AT BE BG CH CY CZ DE DK EE ES FI FR GB GR HR HU IE IS IT LI LT LU LV MC MK MT NL NO PL PT RO RS SE SI SK SM TR Designated Extension States:
 BA ME Designated Validation States:
 KH MA MD TN
- (30) Priority: 17.12.2018 IT 201800011166

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A47F 5/11 (2006.01)

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(54) STEP-LIKE FOLDABLE DISPLAY STAND AND ASSEMBLY METHOD OF SUCH A STEP-LIKE FOLDABLE DISPLAY STAND

(57) Folding display stand (1) made of sheet material, comprising at least one rear wall (2), at least a pair of side walls (3', 3") and a plurality of substantially horizontal shelves (4) interposed between the side walls (3', 3") and wherein the rear wall (2), the side walls (3', 3") and the shelves (4) are formed from a front sheet element (6), a rear sheet element (7) and at least one intermediate sheet element (8). Each of the sheet elements (6, 7, 8) has a central portion (9, 12, 15) and a pair of lateral end portions (10A, 10B; 13A, 13B; 16A, 16B) respectively defined by first (11A, 11B), second (14A, 14B) and third (17A, 17B) fold lines which are substantially parallel. The sheet elements (6, 7, 8) are joined together by fastening means which fasten the respective lateral end portions (10A, 10B; 13A, 13B; 16A, 16B) to each other, so that said first (11A, 11B), second (14A, 14B) and third (17A, 17B) fold lines will be parallel to each other and the sheet elements (6, 8) have respective cut-out central portions (9, 15) to form respective flat panels (18A, 18B) that are designed to be folded along respective fourth fold lines (19A, 19B), substantially perpendicular to the first, second and third fold lines (11A, 11B; 14A, 14B; 17A, 17B) to form at least two shelves (4) in step-like staggered relationship.



Description

Technical Field

[0001] The present invention generally finds application in the field of paper processing and advertising and particularly relates to a folding display stand.

Background art

[0002] Folding stands have been long known to be used in small- and large-scale retail applications to display various types of products, such as cosmetic or pharmaceutical products.

[0003] A first drawback of this display stands is their very large size in the assembled or folded state.

[0004] In an attempt to at least partially obviate this drawback folding display stands have been developed, which are collapsed to reduce the space required thereby when they do not perform their function, e.g. during transportation or storage.

[0005] US2011011814 discloses a product display stand formed with a single specially-shaped cardboard panel and having a single shelf.

[0006] The panel comprises a substantially rectangular main portion having a pair of foldable side edges formed by corresponding vertical fold lines and an upper portion that extends upwards from a horizontal fold line located on the top edge of the top panel.

[0007] This stand has various panels and folds, as well as various joints and mountings which stiffen its structure. [0008] A first drawback of this display stand, and of prior art display stands in general, is that they have complex structures in terms of both numbers of panels in use and fold lines to be formed to obtain the structure in the operating configuration.

[0009] A further drawback of these arrangements is that the systems that are used to fix the panels together and hence stiffen the structure are rather complex to make.

[0010] Another common drawback of these arrangements is that they are very difficult to assemble, which increases assembly times.

[0011] This drawback leads to an increase of manufacturing times and final production costs.

Technical Problem

[0012] In view of the prior art, the technical problem addressed by the present invention is to provide a folding display stand that can be easily manufactured and assembled and has a sturdy construction.

Disclosure of the invention

[0013] The object of the present invention is to obviate the above drawback, by providing a folding display stand that is highly efficient and relatively cost-effective.

[0014] A particular object of the present invention is to provide a folding display stand of the aforementioned type that affords simple manufacture and assembly.

[0015] A further object of the present invention is to provide a folding display stand that has a stiff structure, suitable to support the articles on display.

[0016] Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a folding display stand of the aforementioned type that can be simply folded and stacked.

10 [0017] A further object the present invention is to provide a folding stand of the aforementioned type that provides stable support to the products on display.

[0018] Another object of the present invention is to provide a folding display stand of the aforementioned type

¹⁵ that allows products to be on display in lower shelves in their entirety without being covered by the upper shelves. [0019] These and other objects, as more clearly explained hereinafter, are fulfilled by a folding display stand made of a sheet material as defined in claim 1, comprising

20 at least one substantially flat and vertical rear wall, at least one pair of substantially vertical side walls and a plurality of substantially horizontal shelves interposed between the side walls, wherein the rear wall, the side walls and the shelves are formed from a front sheet ele-

²⁵ ment, a rear sheet element and at least one intermediate sheet element, which are coupled together to define a foldable structure that is able to alternate from an idle configuration with the sheet elements in mutually overlapping relationship to an operating configuration with ³⁰ the sheet elements in mutually spaced relationship and

the sheet elements in mutually spaced relationship and with the shelves in step-like staggered relationship.
 [0020] In addition, each of the sheet elements has a central portion and a pair of lateral end portions which are defined by substantially parallel first, second and third
 fold lines.

[0021] In a peculiar aspect of the invention, the sheet elements are joined together by fastening means which fasten the respective lateral end portions to each other in such a manner that the first, second and third fold lines

40 will be parallel to each other, the front element and the at least one intermediate element have respective cutout central portions to form respective flat panels designed to be folded along respective fourth fold lines, substantially perpendicular to the first, second and third

⁴⁵ fold lines and to form, when folded into the operating configuration, at least two step-like staggered shelves. Furthermore, the front element has a bottom edge and the fourth fold line is located proximate to the bottom edge to define a crosspiece adapted to further stiffen the ⁵⁰ foldable structure when the latter is in the operating state.

foldable structure when the latter is in the operating state.
 [0022] Therefore, the display stand has the advantage of being particularly simple to form, assemble and collapse.

[0023] Furthermore, this structure is particularly stiffand sturdy, thereby providing stable support to the products on display.

[0024] In a further object, the invention relates to a method of assembling the aforementioned display stand,

as defined in claim 10.

[0025] Advantageous embodiments of the invention are defined in accordance with the dependent claims.

Brief description of the drawings

[0026] Further characteristics and advantages of the invention will be more apparent from the detailed description of a few preferred, non-exclusive embodiments of a folding display stand according to the invention, which are described as non-limiting examples with the help of the following drawings, in which:

FIGS. 1 and 2 are perspective views, from the front and the rear respectively, of a folding display stand of the present invention in the operating state;

FIG. 3 is a front perspective view of the folding display stand of Fig. 1 in its idle state;

FIG. 4 is a front view of the front panel of Fig. 1 in the deployed state;

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of front panel of Fig. 4 in the folded state;

FIG. 6 is a front view of the rear panel of the display stand of Fig. 1 in the deployed state;

FIG. 7 is a perspective view of the rear panel of Fig. 6 in the folded state;

FIG. 8 is a front view of the at least one intermediate panel of the display stand of Fig. 1 in the deployed state;

FIG. 9 is a front view of the at least one intermediate panel of Fig. 8 in the folded state;

FIG. 10 is a perspective view of the display stand of Fig. 1 in a partially assembled state.

Detailed description of a preferred exemplary embodiment

[0027] Particularly referring to the figures, there is shown a folding display stand, generally referenced by numeral 1, which is made of a sheet material and comprises at least one substantially flat and vertical rear wall 2, at least a pair of substantially vertical side walls 3', 3" and a plurality of substantially horizontal shelves 4 interposed between the side walls 3', 3".

[0028] The display stand 1 may be intended for use in shops or other points of sale for displaying a multiplicity of products or articles for sale, such as cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, stationery articles, candies or other similar products.

[0029] The rear wall 2, the side walls 3', 3" and the shelves 4 are formed from a front sheet element 6, a rear sheet element 7 and at least one intermediate sheet element 8.

[0030] In addition, the sheet elements 6, 7, 8 are coupled together to define a foldable structure that can be alternated from an idle configuration with the sheet elements 6, 7, 8 in mutually overlapping relationship, as shown in FIG. 3, to an operating configuration with the

sheet elements 6, 7, 8 in mutually spaced relationship and with the shelves 4 in vertically and horizontally steplike staggered relationship, as shown in FIG. 1.

[0031] Thus, the products on display in the lower shelves may be viewed in their entirety without being covered by the upper shelves.

[0032] As used hereinafter, the term "idle configuration" is intended to designate a collapsed configuration in which the sheet elements 6, 7, 8 overlap to form a collapsed and flattened structure during storage to min-

10 collapsed and flattened structure during storage to min imize bulk.

[0033] In addition, as used hereinafter the term "operating configuration" is intended to designate a configuration in which the display stand 1 forms a deployed struc-

¹⁵ ture for displaying the products or articles, which is vertically arranged, substantially orthogonal to a support surface.

[0034] In a well-known manner, the sheet material of the elements 6, 7, 8 may be selected from the group

²⁰ comprising paper, cardboard, plastic or similar material, such as copper, as long as it has high ductility properties.
 [0035] Therefore, as shown in FIGS. 1 to 9, the front element 6 defines the side walls 3', 3" and the rear element 7 defines the rear wall 2.

²⁵ [0036] As best shown in the figures, the front element
 6 has a central portion 9 and two lateral end portions
 10A, 10B defined by substantially parallel first fold lines
 11A, 11B.

[0037] It shall be noted that the central portion 9 of the
front element 6 is in the form of a strip and has the lateral end portions 10A, 10B extending from its lateral ends with a substantially inclined shape to define the pair of side walls 3, 3".

[0038] In a preferred embodiment of the invention, as
shown in FIGS. 4 and 5, each inclined lateral end portion 10A, 10B of the front element 6 is divided into two parts, referenced 10', 10" along an inclined fold line 11' and formed such that, as the display stand 1 is being assembled, they may be folded one on top of the other to reinforce the pair of side walls 3', 3" of the display stand 1.

force the pair of side walls 3', 3" of the display stand 1.
[0039] The rear element 7 comprises a central portion 12 and two lateral end portions 13A, 13B defined by second fold lines 14A, 14B, also substantially parallel, as best shown in FIGS. 6 and 7.

⁴⁵ [0040] Furthermore, the at least one intermediate element 8 also has a central portion 15 and two lateral end portions 16A, 16B defined by substantially parallel third fold lines 17A, 17B.

[0041] In a peculiar aspect of the invention, the lateral end portions 10A, 10B; 13A, 13B; 16A, 16B of the sheet elements 6, 7, 8 are coupled together by fastening means so that the first 11A, 11B, the second 14A, 14B and the third 17A, 17B fold lines will be parallel to each other.

[0042] Advantageously, the central portion 9 of the front element 6 and the central portion 15 of the intermediate element 8 are cut out to form respective flat panels 18A, 18B that can be folded along respective substantially horizontal fourth fold lines 19A, 19B, perpendicular

to the first 11A, 11B, the second 14A, 14B and the third 17A, 17B fold lines.

[0043] Furthermore, the flat panels 18A, 18B have a substantially rectangular shape and may be folded along respective fourth fold lines 19A, 19B into the operating configuration and, once folded, are designed to form at least two of the shelves 4 in step-like staggered relationship, to stiffen the structure in the operating configuration.

[0044] By this arrangement the flat panels 18A, 18B are also substantially perpendicular to the first 11A, 11B, the second 14A, 14B and the third 17A, 17B fold lines.

[0045] It shall be noted that the intermediate element 8 also has a substantially rectangular shape and is divided into two parts, referenced 8', 8" in the figures along its fourth fold line 19B.

[0046] Furthermore, the end portions 16A, 16B of the intermediate element 8 extend on the side of the part 8" of the central portion 15 that faces away from the foldable flat panel 18B.

[0047] Preferably, the foldable flat panels 18A, 18B have respective free edges 20A, 20B located on the side opposite to that of the fourth fold lines 19A, 19B and adapted to be coupled to the central portion 15 of the intermediate element 8 and the central portion 12 of the rear element 7.

[0048] Conveniently, as shown in FIGS. 4, 5, 8 and 9, the front element 6 and the at least one intermediate element 8 have respective pairs of projections 21A, 21B formed along the free edges 20A, 20B, that can fit into corresponding aligned slits 22A, 22B respectively formed in the central portion 15 of the intermediate element 8, in particular on the part 8", and in the central portion 12 of the rear element 7 to removably couple the sheet elements 6, 7, 8 and keep the structure in the operating configuration.

[0049] A folding display stand 1 may be also formed with more than two, e.g. three or more shelves 4, like in the embodiment of the figures that show a pair of intermediate elements 8, having central portions 15 and lateral end portions 16A, 16B of different heights.

[0050] In addition, each intermediate element 8 has a respective flat panel 18B that can be folded along respective fourth fold lines 19B and with respective free edges 20B.

[0051] Therefore, the foldable panels 18B may be coupled to the central portion 15 of the next intermediate element 8 or the central portion 12 of the rear element 7 respectively.

[0052] According to a further peculiar aspect of the invention, the front element 6 has a bottom edge 23 and the fourth fold line 19A of the first foldable panel 18A is spaced apart from the bottom edge 23 of the front panel 6 to define a crosspiece 24 that stiffens the foldable structure when the latter is in the operating state.

[0053] In the operating state of the display stand 1, the bottom edge 23 usually rests on the ground, a shelf or a counter and the fourth fold line 19B of the second foldable panel 18B is spaced apart from the free edge 20A of the

first panel 18A.

[0054] In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the at least one intermediate element 8, and the rear element 7 also have respective bottom edges 25, 26 which, in the

⁵ operating state of the display stand 1, usually rested on the ground, a shelf or a counter, like the bottom edge 23 of the front element 6.

[0055] Preferably, the pair of aligned slits 22A, 22B formed in the respective central portions 15, 12 of the intermediate 8 and rear 7 elements are respectively par-

allel to the bottom edge 25, 26. [0056] In particular, the pair of aligned slits 22A are spaced apart from the bottom edge 25 at a short distance, equal to the height of the crosspiece 24, whereas the

¹⁵ second pair of slits 22B of the rear panel 7 is parallel to and spaced apart from the first pair of slits 22A.

[0057] The first and second pairs of slits 22A, 22B are formed in such a manner that, while the display stand 1 is being assembled, the first pair of projections 21A of

the first panel 18A fit into the first pair of slits 22A of the central portion 15 of the intermediate element 8 and the second pair of projections 21B of the second panel 18B fit into the second pair of slits 22B of the central portion 12 of the rear element 7.

²⁵ [0058] Likewise, in the embodiment of the figures, while the display stand 1 is being assembled, the second pair of projections 21B of the flat panel 18B of one of the intermediate elements 8 fit into the second pair of slits 22B of the central portion 12 of the rear element 7, where-

³⁰ as the second pair of projections 21B of the other intermediate element 8 fit into a third pair of slits 22C of the central portion 15 of the next intermediate element 8.
 [0059] In a further aspect, the invention relates to a method of assembling a display stand 1 made of sheet
 ³⁵ material as described above.

³⁵ material as described above.
[0060] First, the two lateral end portions 10A, 10B in the front element 6 are folded along the first fold lines 11A, 11B respectively, such that they will be substantially perpendicular to the central portion 9 of the same front
⁴⁰ panel 6. Furthermore, the parts 10', 10" may be folded

one on top of the other as described above. [0061] Then, the two lateral end portions 16A, 16B of

each intermediate element 8 are folded along the third fold lines 17A, 17B, such that they will be substantially

⁴⁵ perpendicular to the central portion 15 of the same intermediate panel 8.

[0062] Also, the first flat panel 18A is folded along the fourth fold line 19A and the second flat panels 18B are folded along the respective fourth fold lines 19B, such that they will be substantially perpendicular to the respective central portions 9, 15 of the elements 6, 8, as shown in FIGS. 5 and 9.

[0063] The first lateral end portion 13A in the rear element 7 is folded along its second fold line 14A and the second lateral end portion 13B is folded along its second fold line 14B, such that the two lateral end portions 13A, 13B are arranged substantially perpendicular to the central portion 12 of the rear element 7, as shown in FIG. 7.

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[0064] Now the rear element 7 may be simply coupled to the at least one intermediate element 8 and the latter may be coupled to the front element 6, so that:

- their respective bottom edges 26, 25, 23 are coplanar;
- the central portions 12, 15 of the rear element 7 and the intermediate element 8 are vertically arranged between the two lateral end portions 10A, 10B of the front element 6 and substantially perpendicular thereto;
- the first pair of projections 21A of the first flat panel 18A fit into the corresponding first pair of slits 22A of the central portion 15 of the intermediate element 8 so that the panel 18A will be horizontal and substantially parallel to the bottom edges 23, 25, 26 of their respective panels 6, 8, 7;
- the second pair of projections 21B of the second flat panel 18B fits into the corresponding second pair of slits 22B of the central portion 12 of the rear panel 7, once again such that the panel 18B will be horizontal and substantially parallel to the bottom edges 23, 25, 26 of the respective panels 6, 8, 7 or the first panel 18A;
- the two lateral end portions 10A, 10B of the front element 6 overlap and are coupled by fastening means to the two lateral end portions 13A, 13B of the rear element 7 respectively;
- the two lateral end portions 16A, 16B of the intermediate element 8 overlap and are coupled by fastening means to the two respective lateral end portions 10A, 10B of the front element 6.

[0065] Likewise, in the illustrated embodiment, the rear element 7 may be simply coupled to one of the intermediate elements 8, the other intermediate element 8 may be coupled to the front element 6 and the two intermediate elements 8 may be coupled together.

[0066] It will be appreciated that the first flat panel 18A has been folded to form the lower shelf 4', the second flat panels 18B have been used to form the intermediate shelves 4", 4", the central portion 12 of the rear element 7 has been used to form the rear wall 2 and the lateral end portions 10A, 10B of the front element 6 have been used to form the respective side walls 3', 3" of the display stand 1.

[0067] Advantageously, the lateral end portions 10A, 10B; 13A, 13B; 16A, 16B of the respective sheet elements 6, 7, 8 are fastened together by bonding, stapling or with other fastening means.

[0068] Alternatively, a different assembly sequence may be also used, without departure from the scope of the present invention.

[0069] For example, the lateral ends 10A, 10B; 13A, 13B; 16A, 16B of the respective sheet elements 6, 7, 8 ⁵⁵ may be first folded, the rear element 7 may be later moved close to the intermediate element 8 and the latter may be moved close to the front element 6, as shown in FIG.

10 and the respective lateral end portions 10A, 10B; 13A, 13B; 16A, 16B may be later bonded together with the fastening means.

[0070] Then, the display stand 1 so assembled may be collapsed into the idle configuration, as shown in FIG. 3 and packaged for sale, not shown.

[0071] The alternation from the idle configuration to the operating configuration may be performed by a user once he/she has pulled the display stand 1 out of the package

- ¹⁰ and has folded the flat panels 18A, 18B to fit the respective projections 21A, 21B into the corresponding aligned slits 22A, 22B, and possibly 22C, as discussed above.
 - **[0072]** The display stand structure of the invention is susceptible of a number of changes and variants, within
- ¹⁵ the inventive concept as disclosed in the appended claims.

[0073] While the folding display stand structure has been described with particular reference to the accompanying figures, the numerals referred to in the disclosure

20 and claims are only used for the sake of a better understanding of the invention and shall not be intended to limit the claimed scope in any manner.

[0074] Reference herein to "one embodiment" or "the embodiment" or "some embodiments" indicates that a

²⁵ particular characteristic, structure or member that is being described is included in at least one embodiment of the inventive subject matter.

[0075] Furthermore, the particular characteristics, structures or members may be combined together in any suitable manner to provide one or more embodiments.

Industrial applicability

[0076] The present invention may find application in ³⁵ industry, because it can be produced on an industrial scale in the paperprocessing and advertising industries.

Claims

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1. A folding display stand (1) made of sheet material, comprising:

- at least one substantially flat and vertical rear wall (2);

- at least a pair of substantially vertical side walls (3', 3");

- a plurality of substantially horizontal shelves (4) interposed between said side walls (3', 3"); wherein said rear wall (2), said side walls (3', 3") and said shelves (4) are formed from a front sheet element (6), a rear sheet element (7) and at least one intermediate sheet element (8),

wherein said sheet elements (6, 7, 8) are coupled together to define a foldable structure that can be alternated from an idle configuration with said sheet elements (6, 7, 8) in mutually overlapping relationship, to an operating configura-

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tion with said sheet elements (6, 7, 8) in mutually spaced relationship and with said shelves (4) in step-like staggered relationship;

wherein each of said sheet elements (6, 7, 8) has a central portion (9, 12, 15) and a pair of lateral end portions (10A, 10B; 13A, 13B; 16A, 16B) respectively defined by first (11A, 11B), second (14A, 14B) and third (17A, 17B) fold lines which are substantially parallel;

characterized in that said sheet elements (6, 7, 8) are joined together by fastening means at their respective lateral end portions (10A, 10B; 13A, 13B; 16A, 16B) such that said first (11A, 11B), second (14A, 14B) and third (17A, 17B) fold lines will be parallel to each other, said front 15 element (6) and said at least one intermediate element (8) having respective central portions (9, 15) cut out to form respective flat panels (18A, 18B) that can be folded along respective fourth fold lines (19A, 19B) substantially perpendicular 20 to said first (11A, 11B), second (14A, 14B) and third (17A, 17B) fold lines to form, once folded into said operating configuration, at least two of said shelves (4) in step-like staggered relation-25 ship, said front element (6) having a bottom edge (23) and said fourth fold line (19A) being located proximate to said bottom edge (23) to define a crosspiece (24) adapted to further stiffen said foldable structure when the latter is in the operating state. 30

- 2. Display stand as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that said foldable flat panels (18A, 18B) have a substantially rectangular shape and have respective free edges (20A, 20B) that can be coupled to the 35 central portion (15) of said at least one intermediate element (8) and the central portion (12) of said rear element (7) respectively.
- 40 3. Display stand as claimed in claim 2, characterized in that said free edges (20A, 20B) have respective pairs of projections (21A, 21B) that can fit into corresponding aligned slits (22A, 22B) formed in the central portions (15, 12) of said at least one intermediate element (8) and said rear element (7) to remov-45 ably couple said sheet elements (6, 7, 8) together and keep the structure in the operating configuration.
- 4. Display stand as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that said at least one intermediate element (8) 50 also has a substantially rectangular shape and is divided into two parts (8', 8") along said fourth fold line (19B), said end portions (16A, 16B) of said intermediate element (8) laterally extending from the side (8") of the central portion (15) that faces away from 55 the foldable flat panel (18B).
- 5. Display stand as claimed in claim 1, characterized

in that the central portion (9) of said front element (6) is in the form of a strip and has said lateral end portions (13A, 13B) extending from its lateral ends with a substantially inclined shape to define said pair of side walls (3, 3").

- 6. Display stand as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that it comprises two intermediate elements (8) having said central portions (15) and said lateral end portions (16A, 16B) of different heights.
- 7. Display stand as claimed in any of the preceding claims, characterized in that said sheet material is selected from the group comprising paper, cardboard and plastic.
- 8. Display stand as claimed in any of the preceding claims, characterized in that said fastening means are bonding means.
- 9. Display stand as claimed in any of the preceding claims, characterized in that it comprises two or more intermediate elements (8) having respective panels (18B) that can be folded along respective fourth fold lines (19B) to form three or more shelves (4).
- **10.** A method of assembling a folding display stand (1) made of a sheet material as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 9, comprising the steps of:

- folding said two lateral end portions (10A, 10B) of said front element (6) along said first fold lines (11A, 11B) respectively, such that they will be substantially perpendicular to the central portion (9);

- folding said two lateral end portions (16A, 16B) of said intermediate element (8) along said third fold lines (17A, 17B), such that they will be substantially perpendicular to said central portion (15) of said intermediate panel (8);

- folding said first flat panel (18A) along said fourth fold line (19A) and said second flat panels (18B) along respective fourth fold lines (19B), such that they will be substantially perpendicular to the respective central portions (9, 15) of said sheet elements (6, 8);

- folding said first lateral end portion (13A) of said rear element (7) along its respective second fold line (14A) and folding said second lateral end portion (13B) along said second fold line (14B) such that said two lateral end portions (13A, 13B) will be perpendicular to said central portion (12) of said rear element (7);

- coupling said rear element (7) with said at least one intermediate element (8) and the latter with said front element (6), such that their respective bottom edges (26, 25, 23) will be coplanar, said central portions (12, 15) will be arranged vertically between said two lateral end portions (10A, 10B) and substantially perpendicular thereto, said projections (21A, 21B) will fit into the corresponding slits (22A, 22B), said lateral end portions (10A, 10B) will overlap and be coupled by said fastening means respectively to said two lateral end portions (13A, 13B) and such that said two lateral end portions (16A, 16B) will overlap and be coupled by said fastening means to the respective lateral end portions (10A, 10B).

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FIG. 1









FIG. 4



FIG. 5















FIG. 10



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number EP 19 21 6702

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REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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