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(54) **TRAVEL AND OUTDOOR PLAYMAT**

(57) A playmat (2) for receiving and maintaining a plurality of cards (10) in a user-selected configuration is disclosed. The playmat (2) comprises a first section (4) and a second section (6) rotatably attached to the first section (4). Each section (4, 6) comprises a planar support structure (8) configured to receive a plurality of cards (10). The length of the sections (4, 6) extends parallel to a common longitudinal axis (Y). Each section (4, 6) comprises a plurality of rows (20, 20') extending parallel to the longitudinal axis (Y). Each section (4, 6) comprises a holding structure (12) having a length (L_4) and a height

(H_1, H'_1, H''_1) and being arranged and configured to clamp the plurality of cards (10) towards the support structure (8). The length (L_4) of the holding structure (12) and the height of the rows (20, 20', 20'') is selected in such a manner that:

- A) the holding structure (12) can receive and hold at least two nonoverlapping cards and
- B) the cards (10) can be maintained in the holding structure (12) when being in a rotated configuration, in which two opposite corners (C_1, C_3) of the cards (10) extend along a line being parallel with the longitudinal axis (Y).

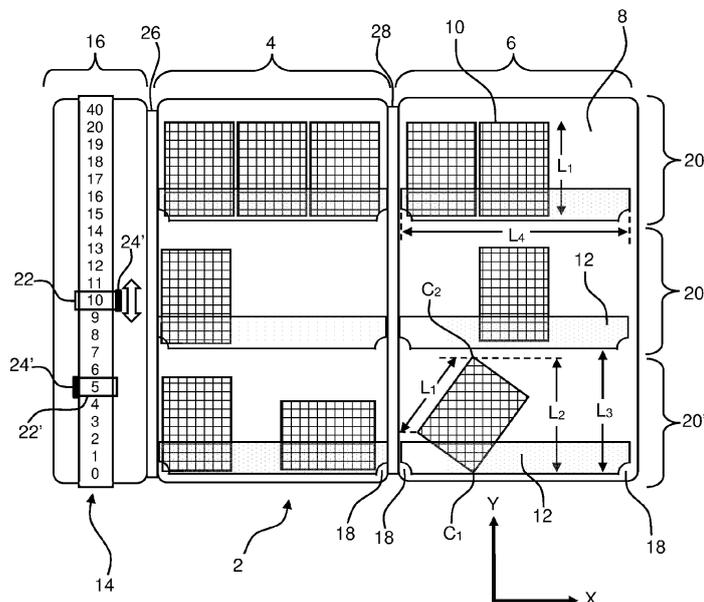


Fig. 1A

Description**Field of invention**

5 **[0001]** The present invention relates to a playmat for receiving playing cards in order to maintain the configuration of the cards.

Prior art

10 **[0002]** When playing with cards outdoors, wind and rain can be a challenge for the card players. In these situations, it is often required to pack up the cards. Especially windy conditions are problematic as it has the added risk of scattering cards around.

[0003] When playing cards on a train or a bus, in which a game is suddenly interrupted e.g. if the train or bus arrives at the final destination, it would also be desirable to have a way to maintain the card configuration so that the game can be continued afterwards.

15 **[0004]** Accordingly, it would be an advantage to be able to provide a solution that makes it possible to interrupt a game and maintain the card configuration so that the game can be continued afterwards.

[0005] It is an object of the present invention to provide a solution that makes it possible to interrupt a card playing game and maintain the card configuration so that the game can be continued afterwards.

20 **[0006]** A known solution is disclosed in GB393338A wherein a device for playing cards is disclosed. While the device allows for cards to be held and maintained during a card game, the device is not suitable for outdoor usage.

Summary of the invention

25 **[0007]** The object of the present invention can be achieved by a playmat as defined in claim 1 and by a system as defined in claim 10. Preferred embodiments are defined in the dependent subclaims, explained in the following description and illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

[0008] The playmat according to the invention is a playmat for receiving and maintaining a plurality of cards, wherein the playmat comprises a first section and a second section rotatably attached to the first section, wherein each section comprises a planar support structure configured to receive a plurality of cards, wherein the length of the sections extend parallel to a common longitudinal axis, wherein each section comprises a plurality of rows extending perpendicular or parallel to the longitudinal axis, wherein each section comprises a holding structure having a length and a height and being arranged and configured to clamp the plurality of cards towards the support structure, wherein the length of the holding structure and the height of the rows is selected in such a manner that:

- 35
- A) the holding structure can receive and hold at least two non-overlapping cards and
 - B) the cards can be maintained in the holding structure when being in a rotated configuration, in which two opposite corners of the card extend along a line being parallel with the longitudinal axis.

40 **[0009]** Hereby, it is possible to provide a user-friendly playmat that makes it possible to arrange cards in a card configuration which can be maintained by means of the playmat. The playmat can be unpacked in a fast manner simply by opening the playmat. Accordingly, by means of the playmat according to the invention it is possible to interrupt a game and continue the game afterwards simply by closing and opening the playmat. Moreover, the playmat provides the user large freedom of motion with respect to the cards which can be rotated when received by the holding structure.

45 **[0010]** In one embodiment, the playmat is configured to receive and maintain a plurality of cards of up to 63 x 88 mm.

[0011] In one embodiment, the playmat is configured to receive and maintain a plurality of cards of up to 63 x 88 mm, wherein the cards are arranged in a configuration, in which the length of the cards extends parallel to the length of the section.

[0012] In one embodiment, the playmat is configured to receive and maintain a plurality of cards of up to 63 x 88 mm, wherein the cards are arranged in a configuration, in which the length of the cards extends perpendicular to the length of the section.

[0013] In one embodiment, the playmat is configured to receive and maintain a plurality of cards being smaller than 63 x 88 mm.

55 **[0014]** In one embodiment, the playmat is configured to receive and maintain a plurality of cards being smaller than 63 x 88 mm, wherein the cards are arranged in a configuration, in which the length of the cards extends parallel to the length of the section.

[0015] In one embodiment, the playmat is configured to receive and maintain a plurality of cards being smaller than 63 x 88 mm, wherein the cards are arranged in a configuration, in which the length of the cards extends perpendicular

to the length of the section.

[0016] In one embodiment, the playmat is configured to receive and maintain a plurality of cards being larger than 63 x 88 mm.

[0017] In one embodiment, the playmat is configured to receive and maintain a plurality of cards being larger than 63 x 88 mm, wherein the cards are arranged in a configuration, in which the length of the cards extends parallel to the length of the section.

[0018] In one embodiment, the playmat is configured to receive and maintain a plurality of cards being larger than 63 x 88 mm, wherein the cards are arranged in a configuration, in which the length of the cards extends perpendicular to the length of the section.

[0019] In one embodiment, the holding structure is configured to receive three or more non-overlapping cards.

[0020] In one embodiment, the holding structure is configured to receive four or more non-overlapping cards.

[0021] In one embodiment, the holding structure is configured to receive five or more non-overlapping cards.

[0022] In one embodiment, the playmat comprises a first section and second section rotatably attached to the first section by a one-piece body.

[0023] Each section comprises a planar support structure configured to receive a plurality of cards. Hereby, the cards can be maintained in a planar configuration.

[0024] In one embodiment, the length of the first section extends parallel to the length of the second section.

[0025] In one embodiment, each section comprises a plurality of rows extending perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

[0026] In one embodiment, each section comprises a plurality of rows extending parallel to the longitudinal axis.

[0027] In one embodiment, each section comprises a resilient or flexible holding structure having a length and a height and being arranged and configured to clamp the plurality of cards towards the support structure.

[0028] In one embodiment, the holding structure comprises a flexible material. By the term "flexible material" is meant a material that can be bent in order to function as a hinge joint when attached to two separated structures. Hereby, it is possible to rotatably attach one structure to another structure by means of the flexible material.

[0029] By ensuring that the length of the holding structure and the height of the rows are selected in such a manner that the holding structure can receive and hold three non-overlapping cards of up to 63 x 88 mm it is possible to provide a solution having a desired capacity for receiving and containing cards.

[0030] By ensuring that the length of the holding structure and the height of the rows are selected in such a manner that the cards can be maintained in the holding structure when being in a rotated configuration, in which two opposite corners of the card extend along a line being parallel with the longitudinal axis, it is possible to provide a user-friendly solution, in which the cards can easily be inserted, removed and moved (e.g. rotated) when received by the holding structure.

[0031] In one embodiment, the holding structure is made in an elastically deformable material. Hereby, it is possible to provide a simple and reliable solution, in which the holding structure can receive and maintain cards inserted into the holding structure.

[0032] In one embodiment the holding structure is made in a transparent material that is suitable for use with dry-erase markers so that notes can be written on it and wiped off again indefinitely.

[0033] In one embodiment, the holding structure extends perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the section.

[0034] In one embodiment, the holding structure extends parallel to the longitudinal axis of the section.

[0035] In one embodiment, the first section and the second section comprise two rows.

[0036] In one embodiment, the first section and the second section comprise three rows.

[0037] In one embodiment, the first section and the second section comprise four rows.

[0038] In one embodiment, the playmat comprises a third section rotatably attached to the second section.

[0039] In one embodiment, the playmat comprises a third section and a fourth section, wherein the second section is rotatably attached to the third section, wherein the third section is rotatably attached to the fourth section.

[0040] In one embodiment, the holding structures extend parallel to each other. Hereby, the storage capacity of the playmat can be optimized.

[0041] In one embodiment, the holding structures are basically rectangular. This may be an advantage because most cards have a rectangular geometry.

[0042] In one embodiment, the playmat comprises an elastic band extending at least partly along the longitudinal axis, wherein the elastic band is arranged and configured to maintain the playmat in a closed configuration. Hereby, it is possible to use the elastic band to provide a fast, user-friendly and secure closure of the playmat.

[0043] In one embodiment, the playmat comprises a resilient member arranged and configured to maintain the playmat in a closed configuration when folded. Hereby, the resilient member can in an easy, reliable and simple manner be used to keep the playmat closed when folded).

[0044] In one embodiment, the playmat comprises a resilient member provided with numbers and one or more indicator(s) slidably attached to the resilient member. Hereby, it is possible to keep track of the score in an easy manner. Moreover, the resilient member can be used for several purposes (indication of score and locking the playmat when

folded).

[0045] The indicators slidably attached to the resilient member provide an advantage by helping in keeping score of certain game mechanics that would otherwise have to be remembered or written down in a variety of card games, such as (but not limited to): victory points, number of games played, iterations of specific actions, counting insubstantial resources, etc.

[0046] In one embodiment, the resilient member is an elastic band.

[0047] In one embodiment, the sections are equally shaped. In one embodiment, the sections are equally sized. Hereby, it is possible to provide a simple and user-friendly playmat, in which each section provides the same user options.

[0048] In one embodiment, the end section is smaller than the first section and the second section.

[0049] In one embodiment, the width of the end section is smaller than the width of the first section and the second section.

[0050] The system according to the invention is a system comprising a playmat according to the invention and a number of markers configured to be detachably attached to a card, wherein the marker is folded and comprises two free ends configured to be detachably arranged at each side of a card.

[0051] Hereby, the system can be used in order to attach additional score to the cards.

[0052] In one embodiment, the holding structure comprises corner portions, in which material is removed. Hereby, it is possible to attach the holding structure to the support structure by a stitching process and achieve a great degree of flexibility in the corner region of the holding structure.

[0053] In one embodiment, the corner portion is formed as an area corresponding to a quarter of a circle.

[0054] In one embodiment, the first section and the second section comprise three rows.

[0055] In one embodiment, the flexible separation structure is made of an elastic fabric.

[0056] The playmat is designed to allow the cards received by the holding structure to be maintained in place even when the wind blows.

[0057] The playmat makes it possible to move the playmat (when folded) from one location to another location without changing the configuration of the cards. This is a great advantage if weather conditions require a sudden relocation when the cards are used outdoors.

[0058] The playmat is designed to be folded in such a manner that the cards can be removably inserted into the holding structures which are hidden and protected in a safe manner at the inside surface of the playmat.

[0059] The playmat is also designed to be folded in such a manner that the cards can be removably inserted into the holding structures which are exposed on the outside. Accordingly, the playmat is configured to be used when not much space is available (it can be used in very cramped conditions).

[0060] In one embodiment, the support structure comprises an inner layer (the inside surface of the support structure) made in fabric.

[0061] In one embodiment, the support structure comprises an inner layer made in duchesse satin.

[0062] In one embodiment, the support structure comprises an inner layer made in black duchesse satin.

[0063] In one embodiment, the support structure comprises a binding material (the outside surface of the playmat) made of polyurethane.

[0064] In one embodiment, the holding structure is made in an elastic thermoplastic polyurethane.

[0065] In one embodiment, the holding structure is made in a clear and elastic thermoplastic polyurethane.

[0066] In one embodiment, the holding structure is made in a thermoplastic polyurethane having a thickness in the range 100-500 μm .

[0067] In one embodiment, the holding structure is made in a thermoplastic polyurethane having a thickness in the range 200-400 μm .

[0068] In one embodiment, the holding structure is made in a thermoplastic polyurethane having a thickness in the range 250-350 μm .

[0069] In one embodiment, the holding structure is made in a thermoplastic polyurethane having a thickness of 300 μm .

[0070] In one embodiment, a layer of cardboard is provided between the inner layer and the binding material (the outside surface) of the support structure. Hereby, it is possible to enhance the mechanical stiffness.

[0071] In one embodiment, the upper edge of the holding structure is arranged in a non-zero distance from the underlying support structure, where in the non-zero distance is larger than the thickness of the card.

[0072] In one embodiment, the support structure is compressible so that a card can easily be received by the holding structure. This can be achieved by pressing down the support structure when inserting the card into the holding structure.

[0073] In one embodiment the end section has a resilient member that extends across the section.

[0074] In one embodiment the resilient member is flexible enough to hold a large quantity of cards such that multiple stacks of cards can be held during a game.

[0075] In one embodiment, the quantity of cards is 100 or less cards.

[0076] In one embodiment, the quantity of cards is 100 or less cards that are sleeved in one or more plastic sleeves.

[0077] In one embodiment, the resilient member is flexible enough to hold a card stack with a height of 5 cm.

[0078] In one embodiment, the resilient member is flexible enough to hold a card stack with a height of 4 cm.

[0079] In one embodiment, the resilient member is flexible enough to hold a card stack with a height of 3 cm.

[0080] It is beneficial that the separation section is arranged to be flexible and of a width such that it is possible for the user to fold the end section towards the play area with a plurality of cards held in place by the resilient member.

5 [0081] Hereby, the resilient member can be utilized to keep a plurality of cards secure during outdoor usage where windy weather may cause cards to be moved.

[0082] As the end section is placed next to the first and second section which form the play area, the combination of having the end section together with the resilient member allows the player to have an extended play area, wherein the cards can be held securely.

10 [0083] This allows for a better flexibility when playing card games. In many card games two stacks of cards are often used, as there is a stack of undealt cards called the talon and a pile of cards for discarded or used cards.

[0084] In one embodiment, the second section is folded over such that that the play area is formed only by the first section and the end section.

15 [0085] Hereby it is possible to minimize the surface area taken by the playmat. This makes it easier for the user to use the playmat in areas with limited space, e.g. on a train.

[0086] In one embodiment a system comprises the playmat and a number of markers, wherein the markers are configured to be detachably attached to a card, wherein the marker is folded and comprises two free ends configured to be detachably arranged at each side of a card.

[0087] Hereby users can keep track of e.g., scores of individual cards.

20 [0088] In some games dices are used to indicate certain effects e.g. so-called counters. By using the markers space can be preserved and also the usability in e.g. windy weather is improved as the marker is attached securely to the cards.

[0089] The markers also stay in place without harming the cards when the playmat is folded up mid-game - something that is impossible with dice or other solid markers.

25 [0090] Furthermore, the markers' special shape when folded is designed to make it easy to attach them to a card or the holding structure.

[0091] Hereby a good alternative to solid markers such as dice is presented.

[0092] In one embodiment the markers are constructed in paper.

[0093] In one embodiment a resilient member is placed on both sides of the end section.

30 [0094] In one embodiment there are two or more resilient members placed on the side of the end section that corresponds to an open configuration of the playmat. Hereby it is possible to have multiple areas to insert a stack of cards.

[0095] In one embodiment the width of the resilient member is sized such that approximately one third of the cards' surface is kept under the resilient member.

[0096] Hereby a secure hold is ensured.

35 [0097] In one embodiment the width of the resilient member is sized such that approximately one fourth of the cards' surface is kept under the resilient member.

[0098] In one embodiment the width of the resilient member is sized such that approximately one fifth of the cards' surface is kept under the resilient member.

[0099] In one embodiment the width of the resilient member is sized such that approximately half of the cards' surface is kept under the resilient member.

40 [0100] In one embodiment the stack of cards can be placed along the whole length of the end sections and still be held securely in place by the resilient member.

[0101] In one embodiment the playmat is configured to be folded in a configuration where it can act as a secret card holder.

45 [0102] Hereby the playmat can be a useful alternative for holding the cards in your hands, especially in games where a large plurality of cards is required to be held at once.

[0103] In one embodiment the playmat is configured to act as a secret card holder by folding it in a triangular manner and having the end section facing towards the player, while the second section is placed at the bottom.

[0104] In one embodiment the playmat is configured to act as a secret card holder by folding it in a triangular manner and placing it upright such that the first and second section act as secret card holders for players sitting opposite of each other.

50 [0105] In one embodiment the playmat is placed upright and the end section and the second section are folded inwards towards the player, such that the playmat acts as a screen hereby being useful as a secret card holder.

[0106] In one embodiment the sections are designed to be of a lower height such that when the playmat is used in a secret card holder configuration wherein it is upright, the player can still easily see the playing field.

55

Description of the Drawings

[0107] The invention will become more fully understood from the detailed description given herein below. The accom-

panying drawings are given by way of illustration only, and thus, they are not limitative of the present invention. In the accompanying drawings:

- Fig. 1A shows the inside of a playmat according to the invention;
- 5 Fig. 1B shows the playmat shown in Fig. 1A in a closed configuration;
- Fig. 2A shows a playmat 2 according to the invention. The playmat basically corresponds to the one shown in Fig. 1A;
- Fig. 2B shows the playmat shown in Fig. 2A seen from the side;
- Fig. 3 shows the playmat shown in Fig. 2A and Fig. 2B seen from outside;
- Fig. 4A shows a card and four markers attached to the card;
- 10 Fig. 4B shows a plurality of markers each attached to an adjacent marker;
- Fig. 5 shows a plurality of markers inserted into a holding structure of a second section of a playmat according to the invention;
- Fig. 6A shows a side view (the long side) of a playmat according to the invention in a closed configuration;
- Fig. 6B shows a front view of the playmat shown in Fig. 6A;
- 15 Fig. 6C shows a front view (the short side) of the playmat shown in Fig. 6A and in Fig. 6B;
- Fig. 7A shows a side view of a playmat according to the invention in a closed configuration;
- Fig. 7B shows a front view of the playmat shown in Fig. 7A;
- Fig. 7C shows a front view of the playmat shown in Fig. 7A and in Fig. 7B;
- Fig. 8 shows a playmat shown in Fig. 7A;
- 20 Fig. 9A shows a first view of a playmat according to the invention and
- Fig. 9B shows a second view of a playmat shown in Fig. 9A.
- Fig. 10 shows a playmat wherein a resilient member is used for holding a plurality of cards.
- Fig. 11 shows a playmat wherein a resilient member is used for holding a plurality of cards.
- Fig. 12 shows the playmat as seen in Fig. 1. in a folded configuration.
- 25 Fig. 13 shows the playmat in a secret card holder configuration.
- Fig. 14 shows the playmat in a secret card holder configuration.
- Fig. 15 shows the playmat in a secret card holder configuration.

Detailed description of the invention

30 [0108] Referring now in detail to the drawings for the purpose of illustrating preferred embodiments of the present invention, a playmat 2 of the present invention is illustrated in Fig. 1A.

[0109] Fig. 1A illustrates the inside of a playmat 2 according to the invention. The playmat 2 comprises a first section 4 and a second section 6 interconnected by a flexible and/or bendable separation structure 28. The separation structure 28 allows the playmat 2 to be folded so that the first section 4 and the second section 6 are brought into a configuration in which the second section 6 is brought into contact with and covers the first section 4. The separation structure 28 may be made in an elastic fabric. The first section 4 and a second section 6 comprise a planar support structure 8.

[0110] The playmat 2 comprises an end section 16 rotatably attached to the first section 4. This means that the end section 16 is configured to be brought into a configuration in which the end section 16 is brought into contact with the first section 4 or alternatively is brought into contact with the outside portion of the second section 6 (if the second section is brought into contact with the first section 4).

[0111] Both the first section 4 and the second section 6 comprise three rows 20, 20', 20". Each of the rows 20, 20', 20" are configured to receive and maintain a plurality of cards 10 in a fixed position. This can be accomplished by means of the holding structure 12 that extends perpendicular to the length of the sections 4, 6.

45 [0112] The playmat 2 is configured to receive and maintain a plurality of cards 10. Accordingly, the cards 10 may be arranged in a user-selected configuration.

[0113] The length of the sections 4, 6 extends parallel to a common longitudinal axis Y. It can be seen that the plurality of rows 20, 20', 20" extend parallel to the longitudinal axis Y. Each section 4, 6 comprises a holding structure 12 having a length L_4 and a height H_1, H'_1, H''_1 (see Fig. 2A). Each holding structure 12 is arranged and configured to clamp the plurality of cards 10 towards the support structure 8. The holding structures 12 extend parallel to the width axis X indicated.

[0114] The length L_4 of the holding structure 12 and the height of the rows 20, 20', 20" is selected in such a manner that:

- A) the holding structure 12 can receive and hold three non-overlapping cards of up to 63 x 88 mm and
- B) the cards (10) can be maintained in the holding structure 12 when being in a rotated configuration, in which two opposite corners C_1, C_3 of the card 10 extend along a line being parallel with the longitudinal axis Y. Hereby, it is possible to provide a user-friendly playmat 2 that enables a large freedom of motion with respect to the cards 10.

[0115] It is important to underline that the dimensions of the playmat 2 can be selected differently in order to make

the playmat 2 fit to cards being smaller or larger than 63 x 88 mm.

[0116] The cards 10 have a length L_1 that is up to 88 mm. It can be seen that the diameter L_3 of the cards 10 is shorter than the distance L_3 between the bottom portion of a holding structure 12 and the bottom portion of the above-arranged holding structure 12. Accordingly, the card 10 can be rotated without colliding with the above-arranged holding structure 12.

[0117] It can be seen that the length L_4 of the holding structure 12 is greater than three times the width of the card 10. Therefore, the holding structure 12 can receive and hold three non-overlapping cards 10 as the ones illustrated in Fig. 1A. Since there are three rows 20, 20', 20" in each of the two sections 4, 6, the playmat can contain 18 cards in total.

[0118] The playmat can be of great value if a game is suddenly interrupted, e.g. because it starts raining or if the train or bus arrives at the final destination. The playmat 2 can be packed up in a fast manner and the card configuration can be maintained. Accordingly, the game can be continued afterwards simply by opening the playmat 2.

[0119] The holding structure 12 is provided with corner portion 18, in which material is removed (an area corresponding to a quarter of a circle). Hereby, it is possible to attach the holding structure 12 to the support structure 8 by a stitching process and achieve a great degree of flexibility in the corner region of the holding structure 12.

[0120] In one embodiment, the upper edge of the holding structure 12 is arranged in a non-zero distance from the underlying support structure 8, wherein the non-zero distance is larger than the thickness of the card.

[0121] In one embodiment, the support structure 8 is compressible so that a card 10 can easily be received by the holding structure 12. This can be achieved by pressing down the support structure 8 when inserting the card 10 into the holding structure 12.

[0122] The holding structure 12 is made in at least partly transparent material so that the card can be seen through the holding structure 12. In a preferred embodiment, the holding structure 12 is made in an elastic material that regains its original geometry when a deformation object (e.g. a plurality of cards) is removed from the holding structure 12.

[0123] The end section 16 is rotatably attached to the first section 4 by means of a flexible/bendable separation structure 26. The end section 16 comprises a resilient member 14 provided with a list of numbers and two slidably arranged indicators 22, 22' each comprising a protruding portion 24, 24' protruding in different directions so that one can tell the difference between the indicators 22, 22'. The first indicator 22 surrounds the number 10 indicating the score of a first player, wherein the second indicator 22' surrounds the number 5 indicating the score of a second player. The indicators 22, 22' are configured to slide along the length of the resilient member 14 that extends parallel to the longitudinal axis Y.

[0124] The indicators 22, 22' provide an advantage by helping in keeping score of certain game mechanics that would otherwise have to be remembered or written down in a variety of card games, such as (but not limited to): victory points, number of games played, iterations of specific actions, counting insubstantial resources, etc.

[0125] It is important to stress that the end section 16 may comprise a resilient member 14 without any numbers. In fact, a version without any numbers and without any slidably arranged indicators is shown in Fig. 9A.

[0126] Fig. 1B illustrates the playmat 2 shown in Fig. 1A in a closed configuration.

[0127] Fig. 2A illustrates a playmat 2 according to the invention. The playmat 2 basically corresponds to the one shown in Fig. 1A and thus the reference numbers correspond to equal or equivalent elements. All cards 10 except for one card 10 have, however, been removed. Moreover, only the lower portion of the resilient member 14 is complete since the top portion thereof is not shown.

[0128] Fig. 2A shows the width W_1 of the first separation structure 28 and the width W_2 of the second separation structure 28. Moreover, the widths W_3 , W_4 , W_5 are indicated in Fig. 2A. Likewise, the heights H_1 , H'_1 , H''_1 of the holding structures 12 are shown. Moreover, the heights H_3 , H'_3 , H''_3 of the rows 20, 20', 20", respectively, are shown. Finally, the heights H_2 , H'_2 , H''_2 of the portion of each row 20, 20', 20" that is not covered by a holding structure 12 are indicated. The total height of the sections 4, 6 is also shown.

[0129] In one embodiment, W_3 is 100 mm.

[0130] In one embodiment, W_4 is 230 mm.

[0131] In one embodiment, W_5 is 230 mm.

[0132] In one embodiment, H_4 is 360 mm.

[0133] It can be seen that the rows 20, 20', 20" are equally shaped and sized. Accordingly, the following equations are fulfilled:

$$(1) H_1 = H'_1 = H''_1$$

$$(2) H_2 = H'_2 = H''_2$$

$$(3) H_3 = H'_3 = H''_3$$

- 5 [0134] Fig. 2B illustrates the playmat 2 shown in Fig. 2A seen from the side. It can be seen that the separation structures 26, 28 are thinner than the sections 4, 6. In a preferred embodiment, the separation structures 26, 28 are made in a flexible material.
- [0135] Fig. 3 illustrates the playmat 2 shown in Fig. 2A and in Fig. 2B seen from the outside. This means that the playmat 2 shown in Fig. 2A has been turned around (rotated 180 degrees) with respect to the longitudinal axis of the playmat 2. The playmat 2 is in an open configuration.
- 10 [0136] Fig. 4A illustrates a card 10 and four markers 30, 30' attached to the card 10. Each marker 30, 30' is detachably attached to the card 10. The central portions on each side of the contacting portions of the markers 30, 30' are glued together, wherein no glue is provided at the free ends of the folded markers 30, 30'. Accordingly, markers 30, 30' are provided with free ends configured to be detachably arranged at each side of a card 10 as shown in Fig. 4A. The markers 30, 30' indicate a number that can indicate an additional score of the card 10.
- 15 [0137] Fig. 4B illustrates a plurality of markers 30, 30' each attached to an adjacent marker 30, 30'.
- [0138] The markers 30, 30' can be separated from each other before they are attached to a card 10. In one embodiment, perforations are provided between adjacent markers 30, 30'.
- [0139] In Fig. 5 a plurality of markers 30, 30' are inserted into a holding structure 12 of a second section 6 of a playmat according to the invention.
- 20 [0140] Fig. 6A illustrates a side view (the long side) of a playmat 2 according to the invention in a closed configuration. The playmat 2 corresponds to the one shown in Fig. 2A, Fig. 2B and Fig. 3.
- [0141] Fig. 6B illustrates a front view of the playmat 2 shown in Fig. 6A, whereas Fig. 6C illustrates a front view (the short side) of the playmat 2 shown in Fig. 6A and in Fig. 6B.
- [0142] It can be seen that the first separation structure 28 is arced hereby allowing the first section 4 to be brought into contact with the second section 6. Likewise, the second separation structure 26 is arced hereby allowing the second section 6 to be brought into contact with the end section 16.
- 25 [0143] Fig. 7A, Fig. 7B and Fig. 7C illustrate different views of a playmat 2 according to the invention in a closed configuration. The playmat 2 basically corresponds to the one shown in Fig. 6A, Fig. 6B and Fig. 6C, however, the playmat 2 does not comprise any indicator like the one shown in Fig. 6B and Fig. 6C.
- 30 [0144] Fig. 8 illustrates the playmat 2 shown in Fig. 7A, Fig. 7B and Fig. 7C. It can be seen that the playmat 2 does not comprise any indicator like the one shown in Fig. 6B and Fig. 6C.
- [0145] Fig. 9A and Fig. 9B illustrate different views of a playmat 2 according to the invention in an open-closed configuration. The playmat 2 basically corresponds to the one shown in Fig. 2A and Fig. 2B, however, the playmat 2 neither comprises any indicator nor any numbers (on the counting structure) as the playmat 2 shown in Fig. 2A and Fig. 2B.
- 35 [0146] Fig. 10 shows the playmat 2 in an open configuration.
- [0147] The end section 16 has a resilient member 14 that extends across the section.
- [0148] There is a plurality of cards 32 held by the resilient member 16.
- [0149] It is an advantage that the resilient member 14 can be used to hold a plurality of cards 32.
- [0150] Hereby, the resilient member 14 can be utilized to keep a plurality of cards 32 secure during outdoor usage wherein problems like windy weather may cause cards to be moved.
- 40 [0151] As the end section 16 is placed next to the first and second section 4, 6 which form the play area, the combination of having the end section together with the resilient member 14 allows the player to have an extended play area, wherein the cards can be held securely.
- [0152] This allows for a better flexibility when playing card games. In many card games two stacks of cards 32 are often used, as there is a stack of undealt cards called the talon and a pile of cards for discarded or used cards.
- 45 [0153] The resilient member 14 is flexible enough to hold a large quantity of cards such that multiple stacks of cards can be held during a game.
- [0154] The separation section 26 is arranged to be flexible and of a width such that it is possible for the user to fold the end section towards the play area with a plurality of cards held in place by the resilient member.
- 50 [0155] In one embodiment the quantity of cards 32 is 100 or less cards.
- [0156] In one embodiment the quantity of cards 32 is 100 or less cards that are sleeved in one or more plastic sleeves.
- [0157] In one embodiment, is flexible enough to hold a stack of cards 32 with a height of 5 cm.
- [0158] Fig. 11 shows the playmat 2 in an open configuration.
- [0159] A larger stack of cards 32 are held in place by the resilient member 14.
- 55 [0160] The stack of cards 32 corresponds to a typical deck size.
- [0161] The width of resilient member 14 is appropriately sized such that approximately one third of the cards' surface are kept under the resilient member.
- [0162] Hereby a secure hold is ensured.

[0163] In both Fig. 10 and 11, it can be seen that the stack of cards 32 can be placed along the whole length of the end sections and still be held securely in place by the resilient member.

[0164] In both Fig. 10 and 11 the resilient member 14 does not have a tracker, however, in other embodiments this can be added.

5 **[0165]** Fig 12 shows the playmat as in Fig 1.A wherein the second section is folded on the back of the first section (not shown).

[0166] The playmat still provides the same benefits as seen in Fig 1.A, however, by folding the second section it is possible to have a smaller play area which makes the playmat more suited for limited spaces e.g., a table in a train.

10 **[0167]** This is possible by having the separation section 28 made of a sufficiently flexible material and with dimensions to ensure that the second section 6 can be folded behind the first section 4.

[0168] Fig. 13-15 show the playmat 2 in "secret card holder" configuration.

[0169] In some card games e.g. bridge the player needs to keep the content of their hand hidden from their opponents. When the playmat is placed in a "secret card holder" configuration, the playmat 2 can act as an alternative to the player holding their cards in their hand.

15 **[0170]** In Fig. 13, the playmat 2 is folded in a "triangular" manner, such that the first section 4 and the second section 6 are facing away from each other.

[0171] Hereby it is possible to place cards 10 in the holding structure 12 without the opponents being able to see the cards.

20 **[0172]** In Fig. 14, the playmat 2 is used a "screen" in that it is upright and folded partially inwards. Hereby the player has ample space to place their cards 10 in the holding structures 12 during a game.

[0173] In Fig. 15, the playmat 2 is folded in a "triangular" manner and placed such that the second section (not shown) is placed on the table, here either first section 4 or the end section 16 can be used to place cards 10 in the respective holding structure 12.

25 **[0174]** The configuration is useful due to its low height, which is useful in games such as bridge where the player needs to be able to easily see the centre of the playing field.

List of reference numerals

[0175]

30	2	Playmat
	4	Section
	6	Section
	8	Support structure
35	10	Card
	12	Holding structure
	14	Resilient member
	16	End section
	18	Corner portion
40	20, 20', 20"	Row
	22, 22'	Indicator
	24, 24'	Protruding portion
	26	Separation structure
	28	Separation structure
45	30, 30'	Marker
	32	Plurality of cards
	L ₁ , L ₂ , L ₃ , L ₄	Length
	H ₁ , H' ₁ , H" ₁	Height
	H ₂ , H' ₂ , H" ₂	Height
50	H ₃ , H' ₃ , H" ₃ , H ₄	Height
	W ₁ , W ₂ , W ₃ , W ₄ , W ₅	Width
	C ₁ , C ₂	Corner

55 **Claims**

1. A playmat (2) for receiving and maintaining a plurality of cards (10), wherein the playmat (2) comprises a first section (4) and a second section (6) rotatably attached to the first section (4) so that the playmat (2) can be arranged in an

open configuration and in a closed configuration, wherein each section (4, 6) comprises a planar support structure (8) configured to receive a plurality of cards (10), wherein the length of the sections (4, 6) extends perpendicular or parallel to a common longitudinal axis (Y), wherein each section (4, 6) comprises a plurality of rows (20, 20') extending parallel to the longitudinal axis (Y), wherein each section (4, 6) comprises a holding structure (12) having a length (L_4) and a height (H_1, H'_1, H''_1) and being arranged and configured to clamp the plurality of cards (10) towards the support structure (8), **characterised in that** the length (L_4) of the holding structure (12) and the height of the rows (20, 20', 20'') is selected in such a manner that:

- A) the holding structure (12) can receive and hold at least two or more non-overlapping cards and
- B) the cards (10) can be maintained in the holding structure (12) when being in a rotated configuration, in which two opposite corners (C_1, C_3) of the cards (10) extend along a line being parallel with the longitudinal axis (Y).

2. A playmat (2) according to claim 1, **characterised in that** the holding structure (12) is made in an elastically deformable and transparent material.
3. A playmat (2) according to claim 1 or 2, **characterised in that** the first section (6) and the second section (6) comprise three rows (20, 20', 20'').
4. A playmat (2) according to one of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** the holding structures (12) extend parallel to each other.
5. A playmat (2) according to one of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** the holding structures (12) are basically rectangular.
6. A playmat (2) according to one of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** the playmat (2) comprises a resilient member (14) extending at least partly along the longitudinal axis (Y), wherein the resilient member (14) is arranged and configured to maintain the playmat (2) in a closed configuration.
7. A playmat (2) according to claim 6, **characterised in that** the playmat (2) comprises an elastic band (14) arranged and configured to maintain the playmat (2) in a closed configuration when folded.
8. A playmat (2) according to claims 6 and 7, **characterised in that** the one or more indicators (22, 22') are slidably attached to the resilient member (14).
9. A playmat (2) according to one of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** the sections (4, 6) are equally sized.
10. A playmat (2) according to one of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** the playmat (2) comprises an end section (16) that is rotatably attached to one of the sections (4) and (6), the end section (16) being smaller than the first section (4) and the second section (6).
11. System comprising a playmat (2) according to one of the preceding claims and a number of markers (30, 30') configured to be detachably attached to a card (10), wherein the marker (30, 30') is folded and comprises two free ends configured to be detachably arranged at each side of a card (10).

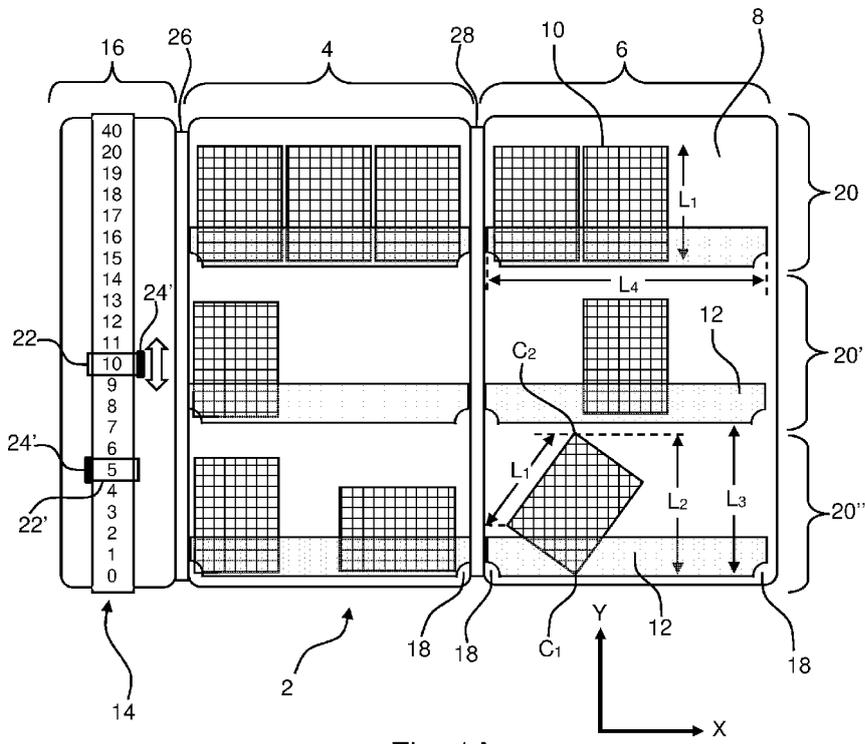


Fig. 1A

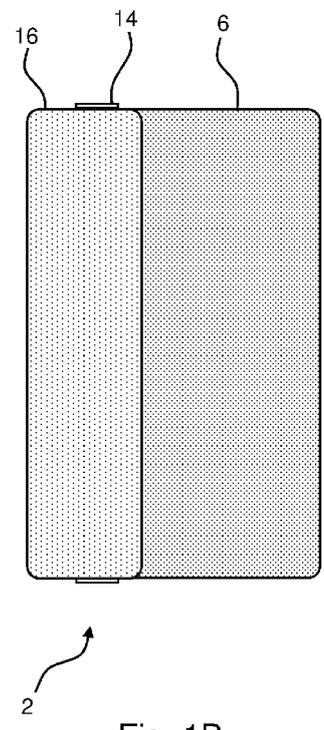
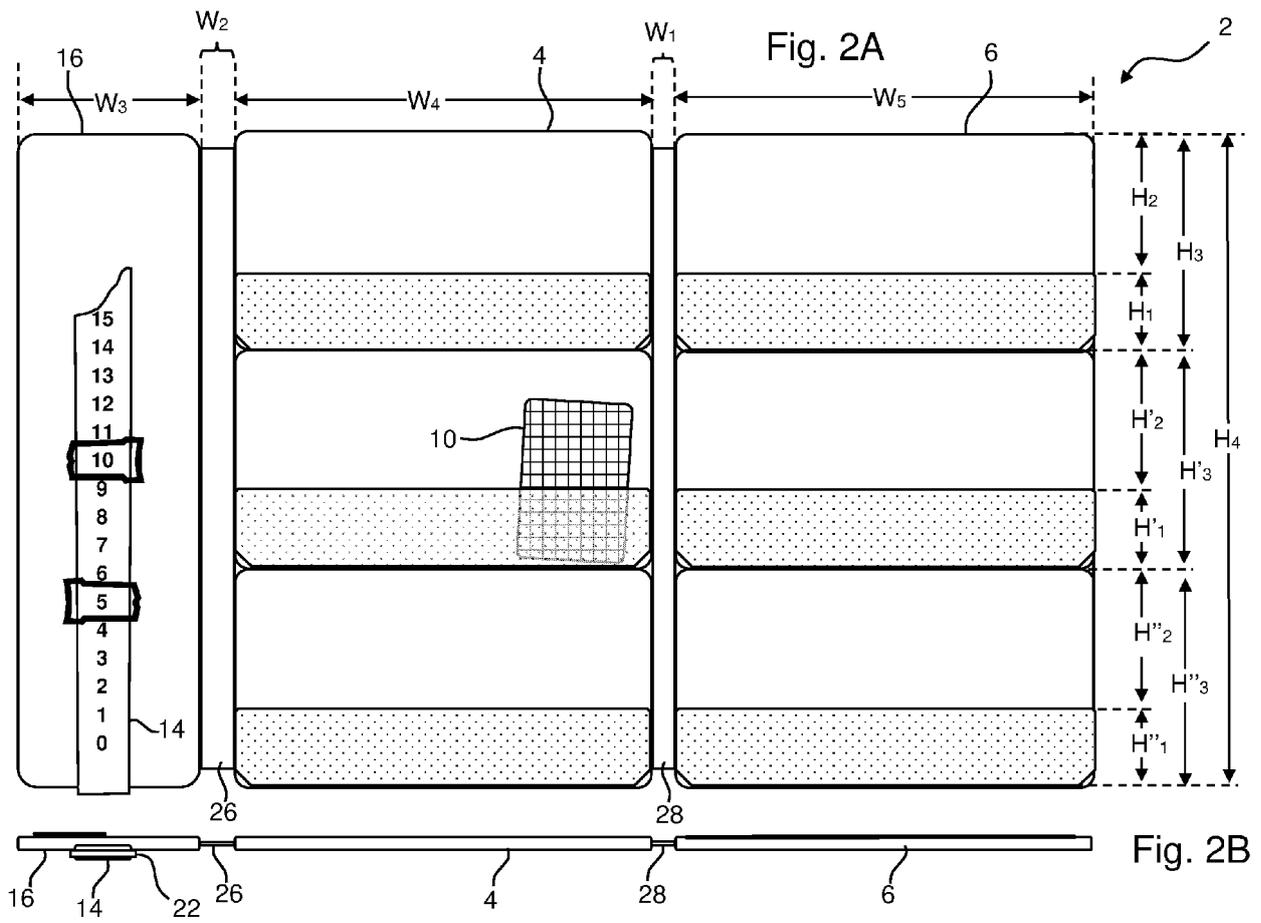


Fig. 1B



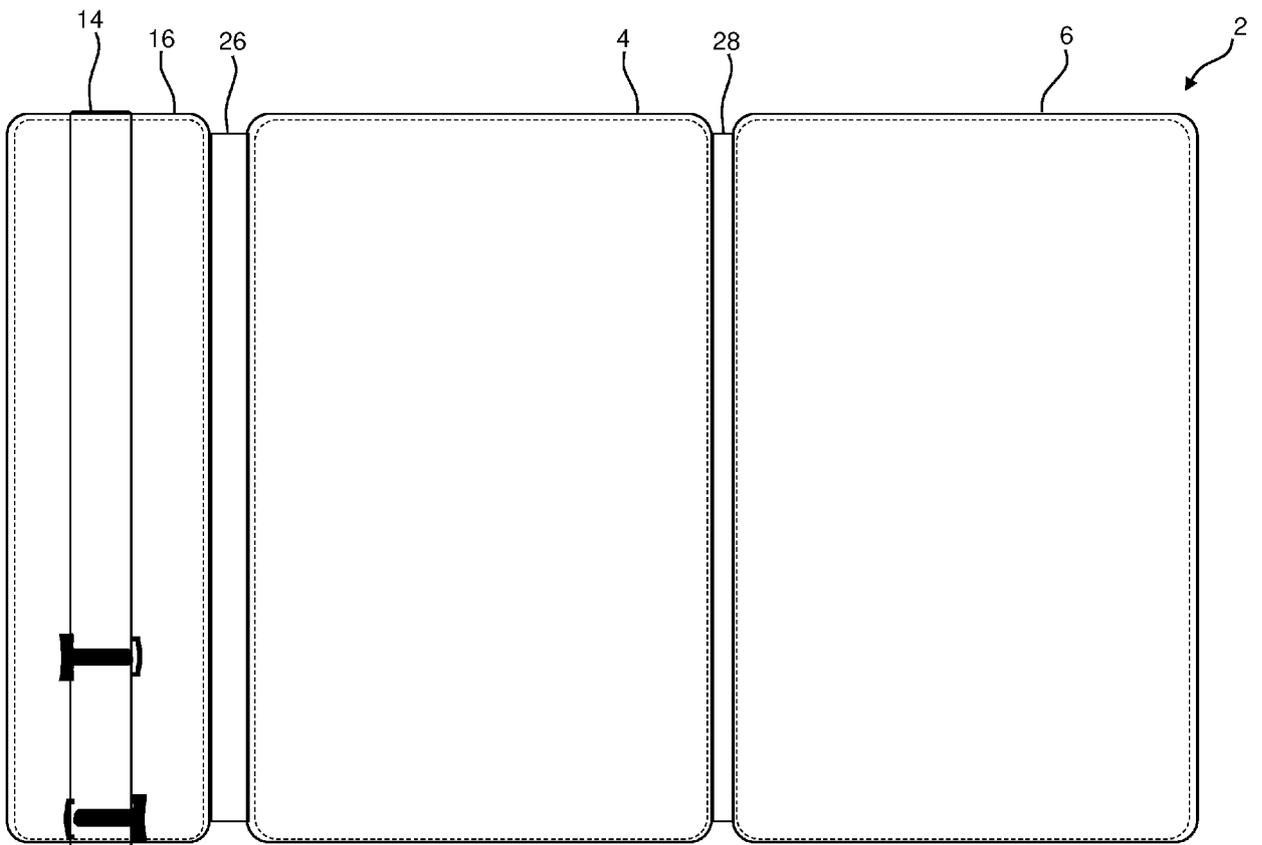


Fig. 3

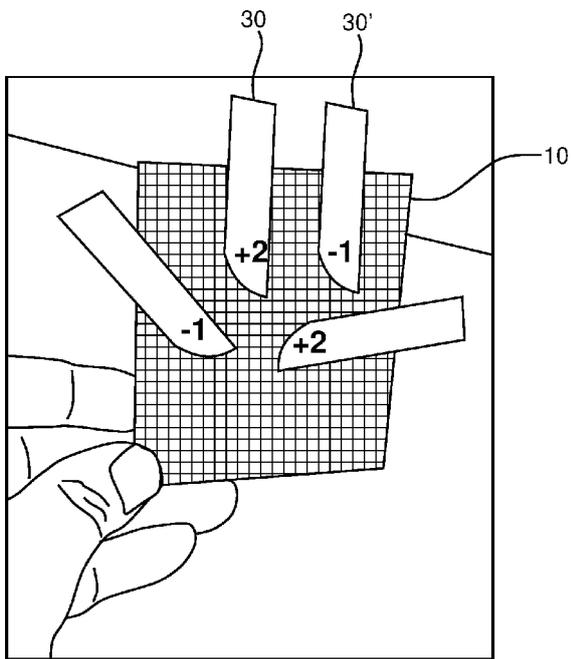


Fig. 4A

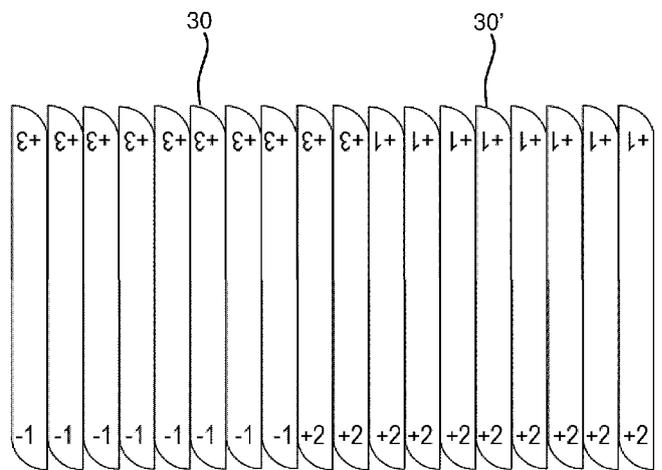


Fig. 4B

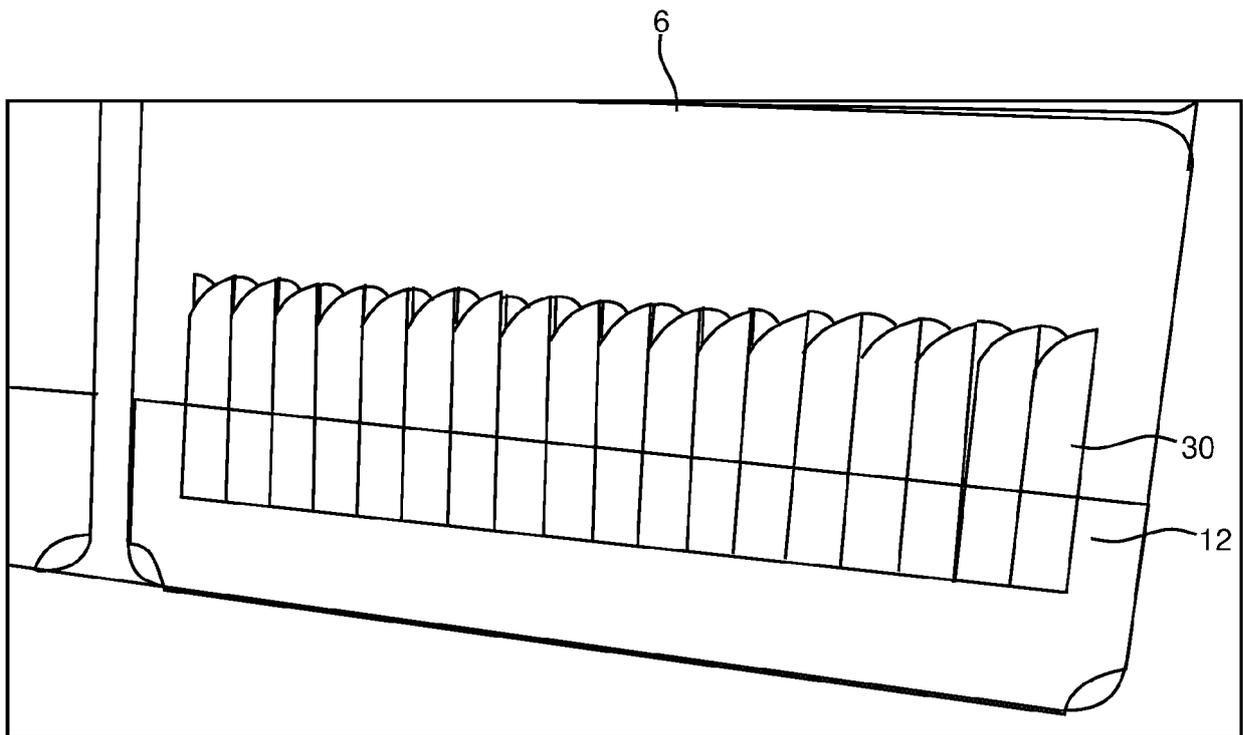


Fig. 5

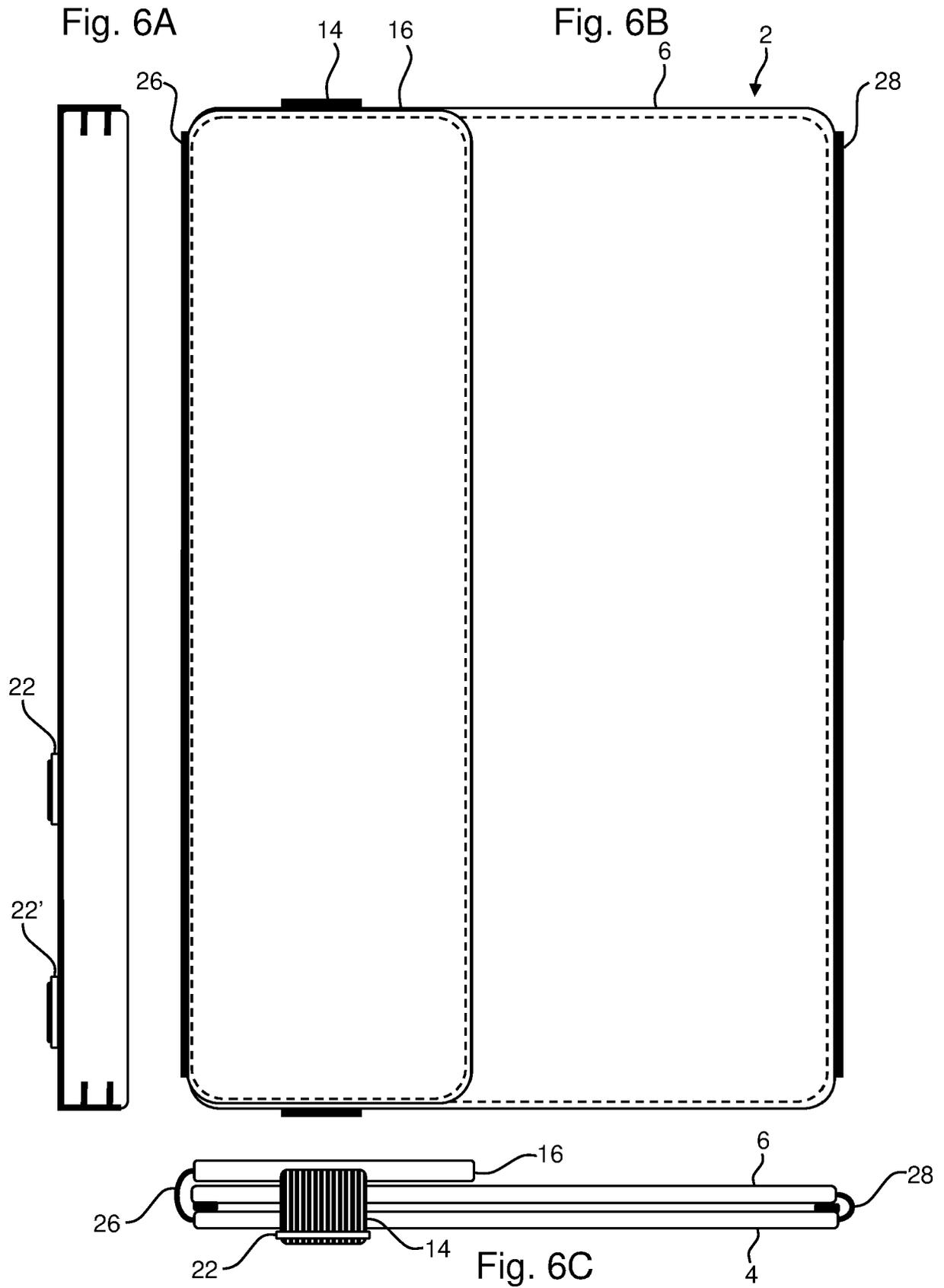


Fig. 7A

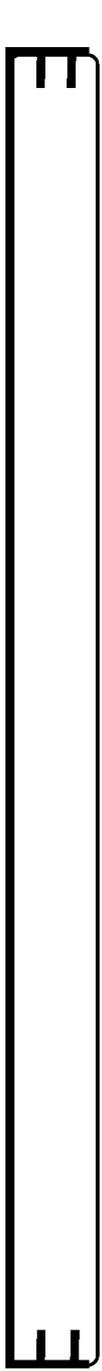


Fig. 7B

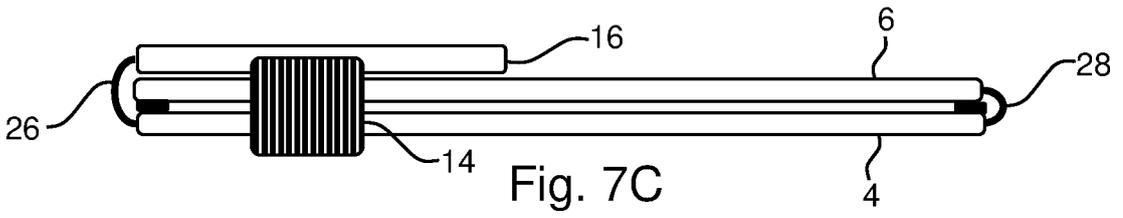
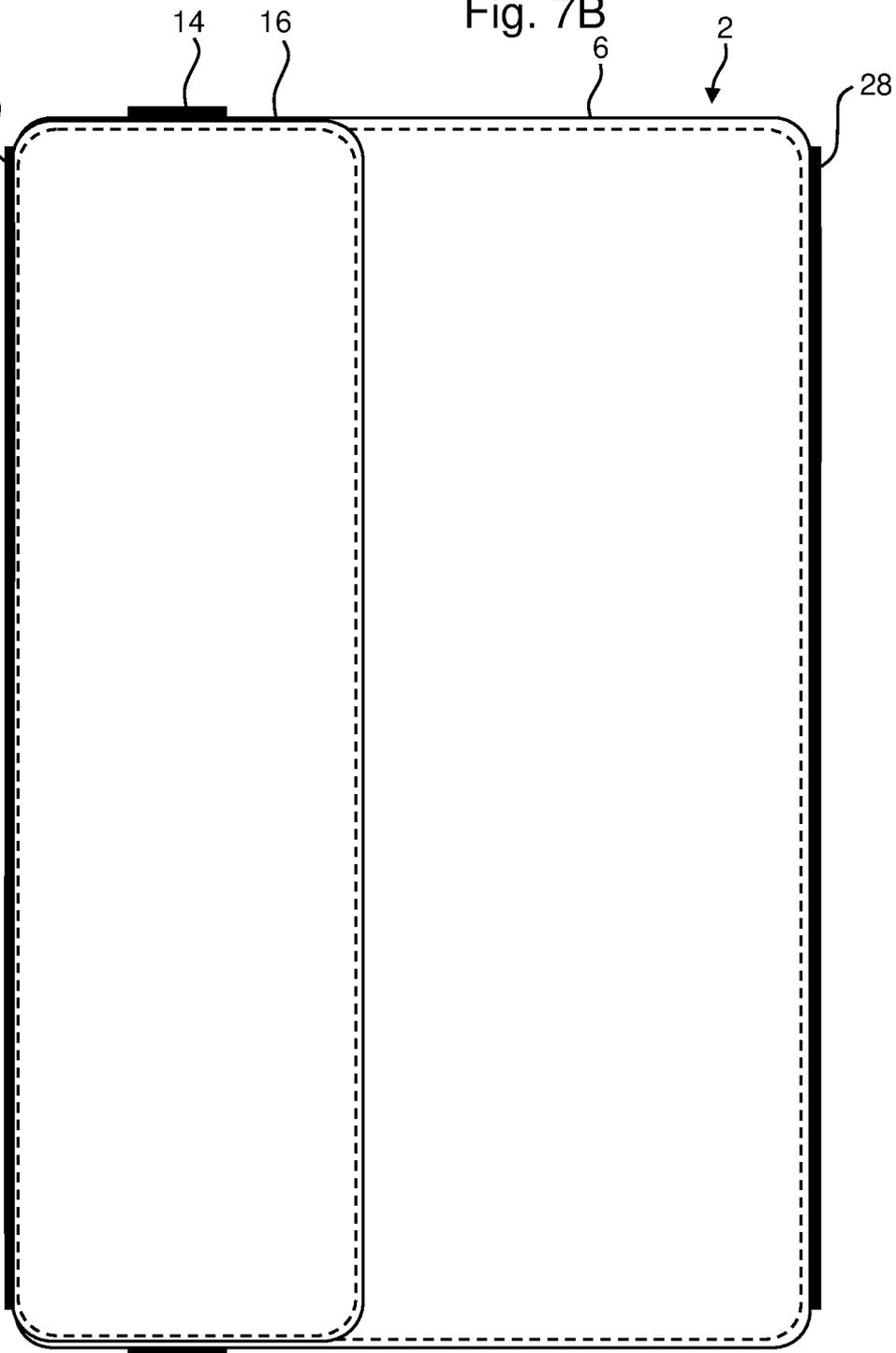


Fig. 7C

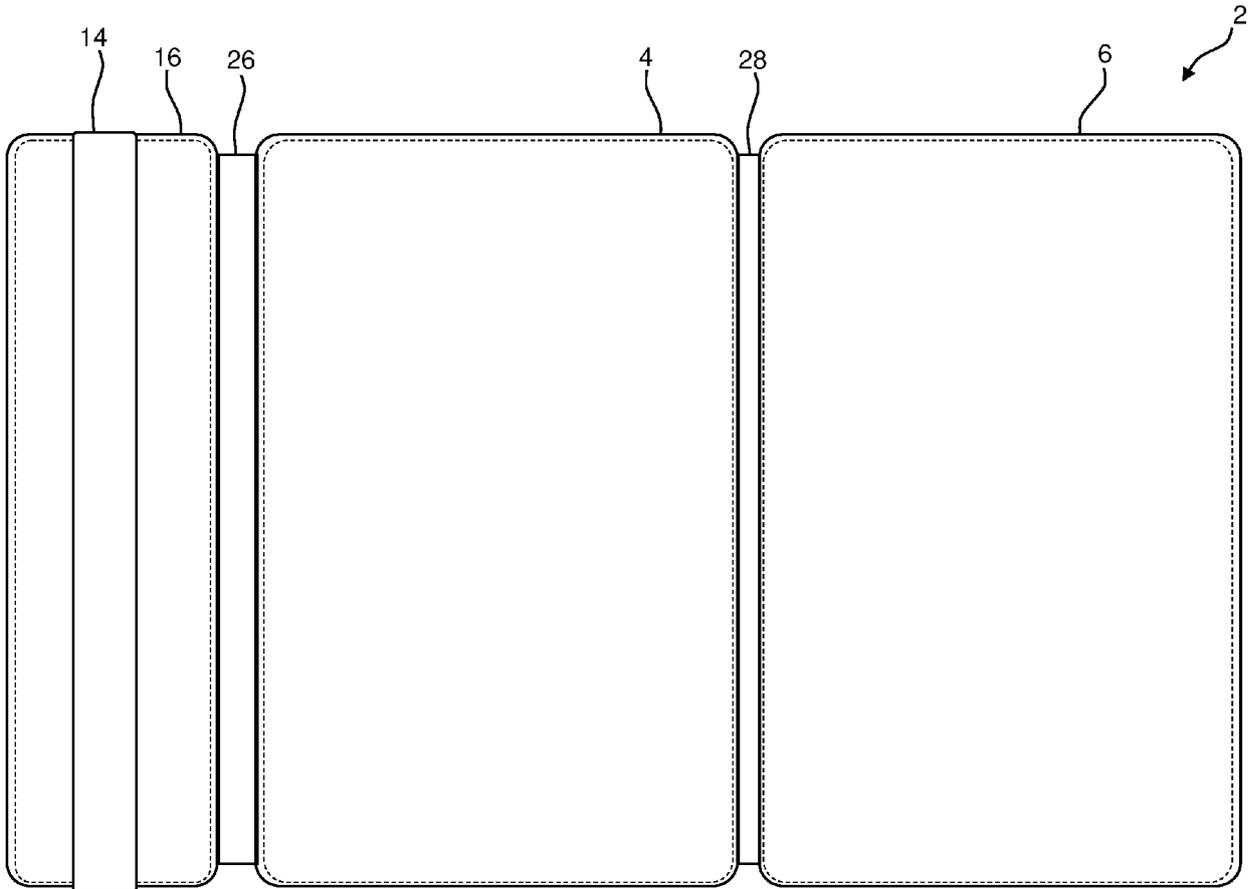


Fig. 8

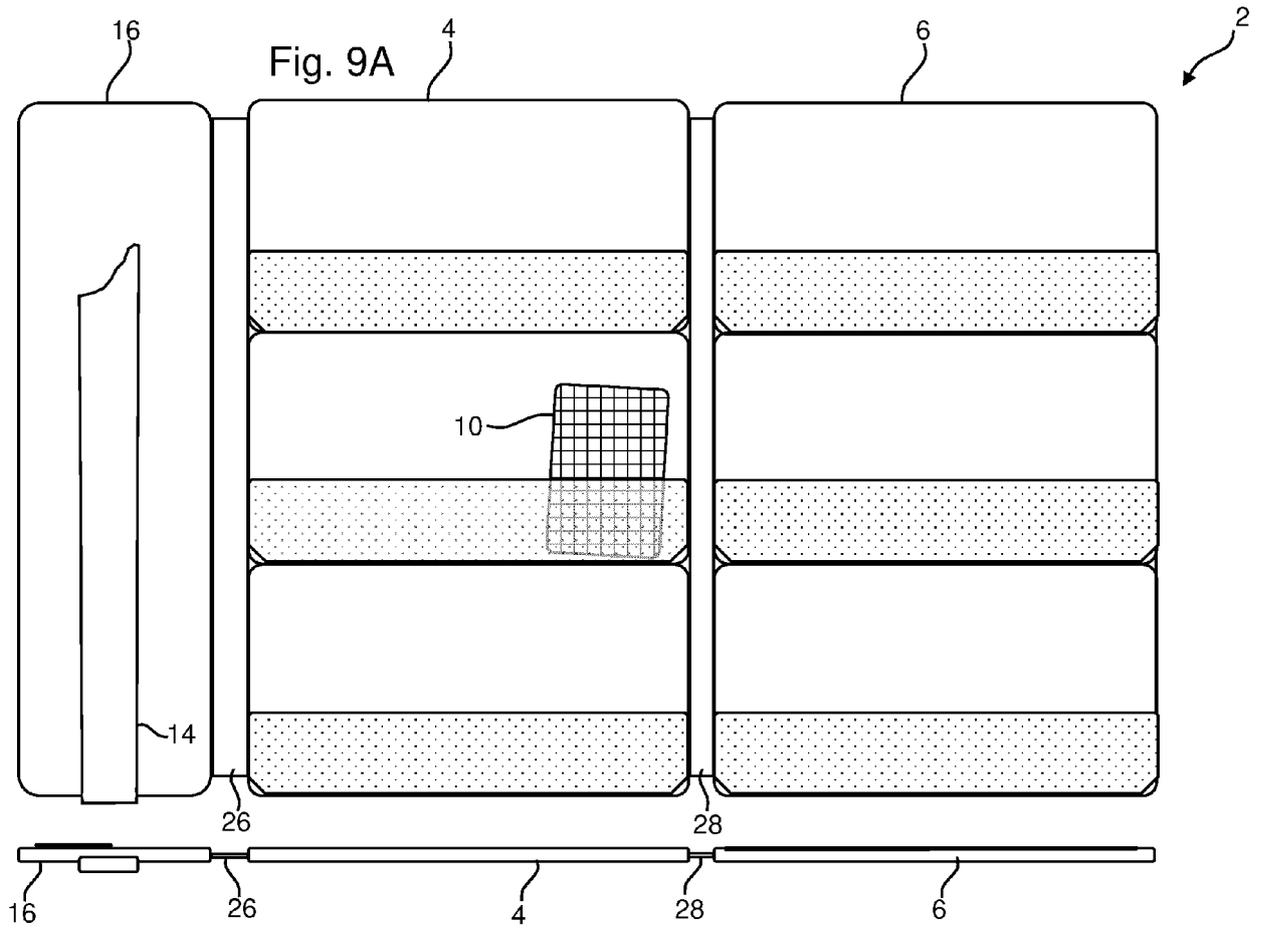


Fig. 9B

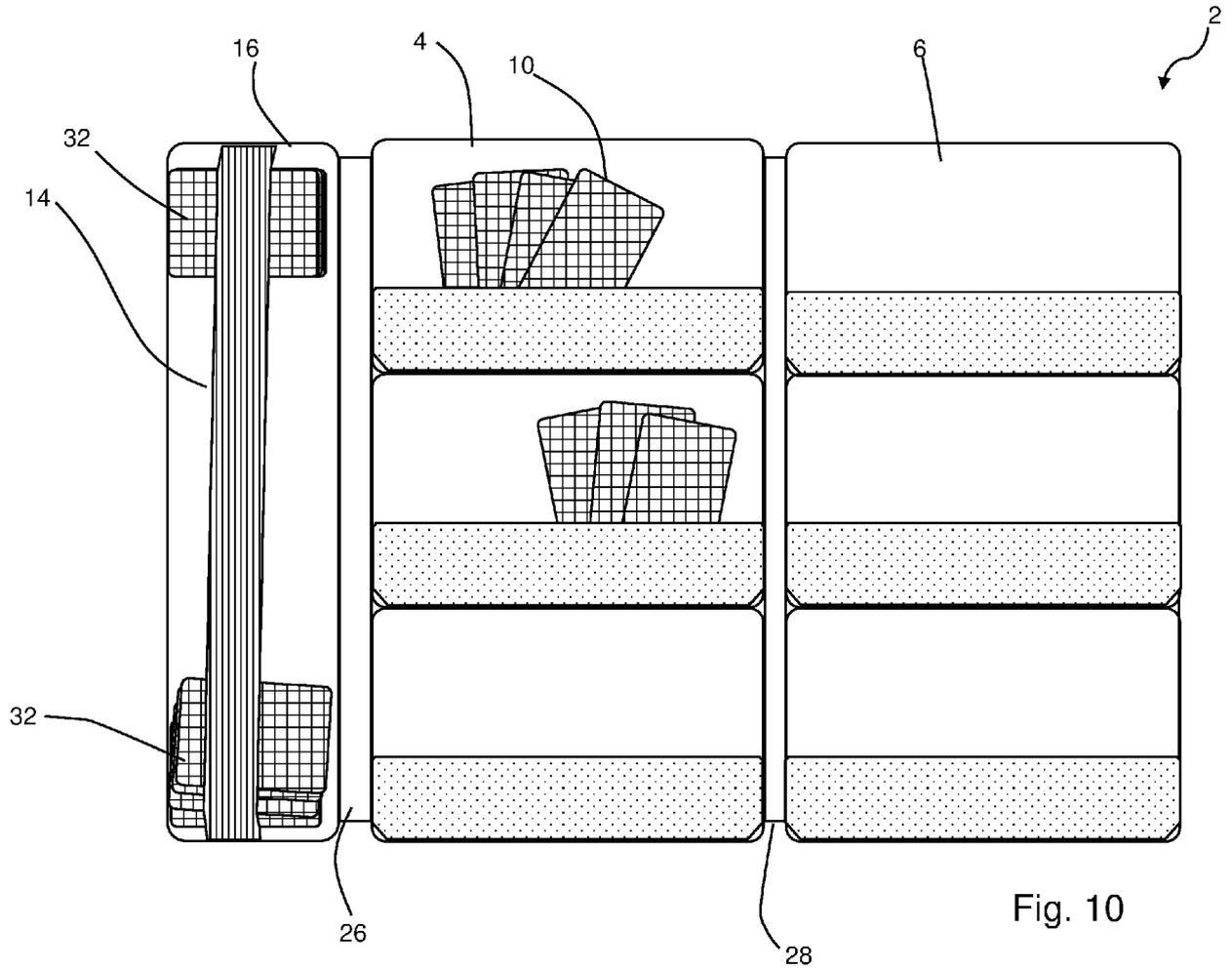


Fig. 10

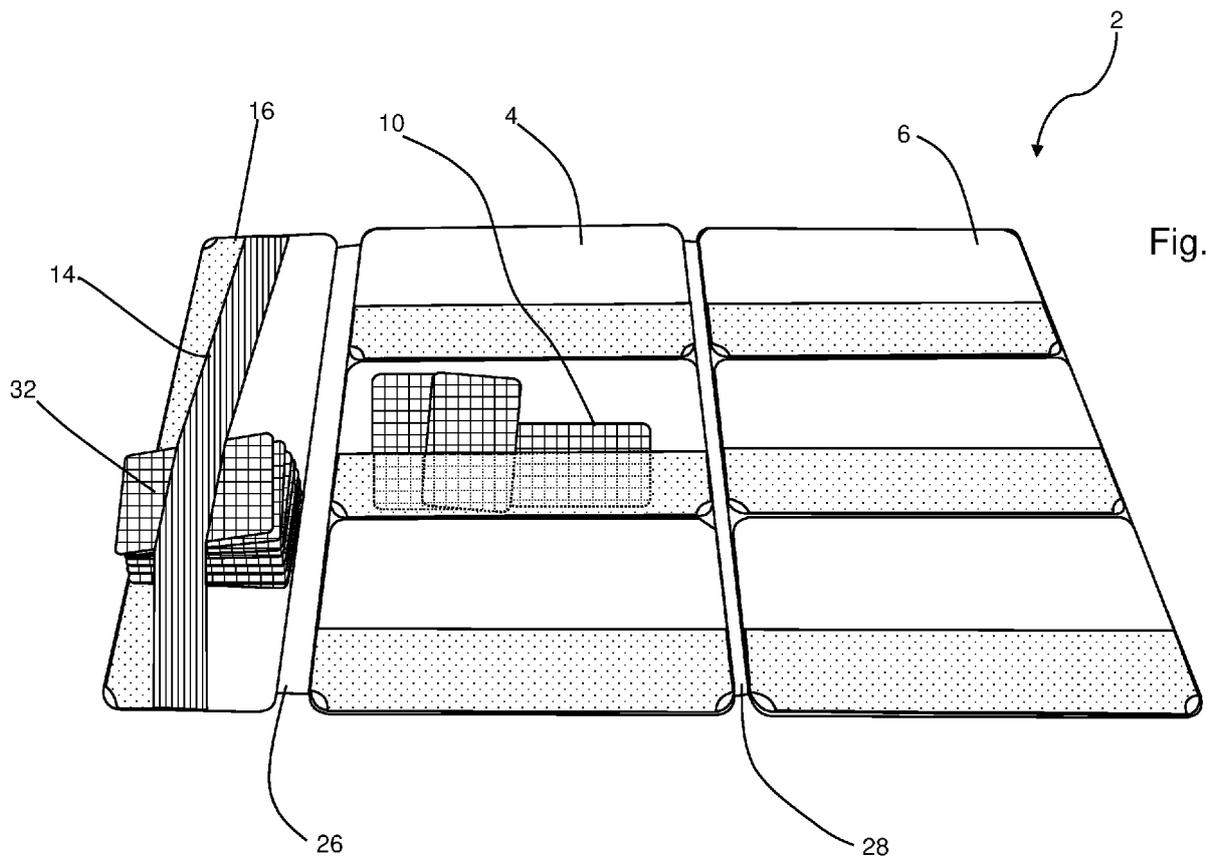


Fig. 11

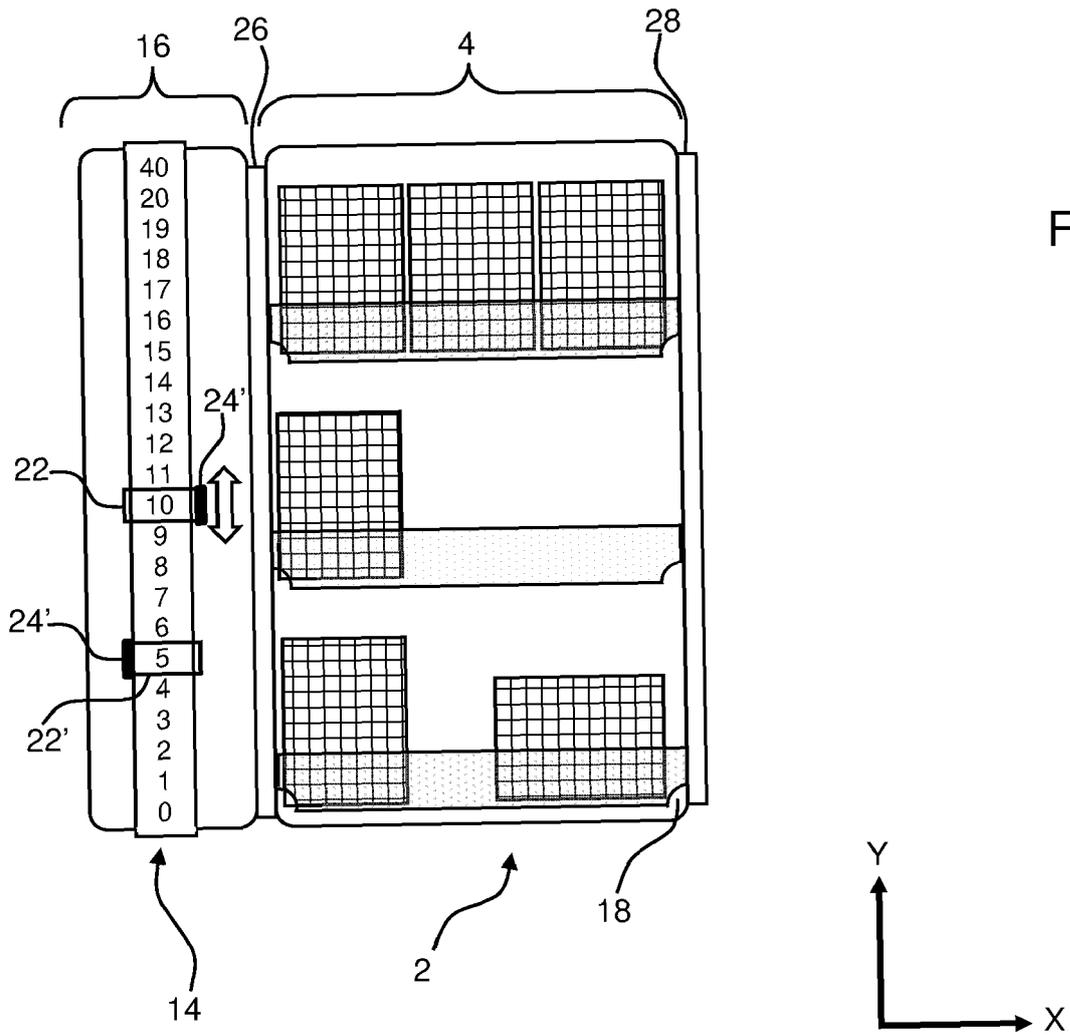


Fig. 12

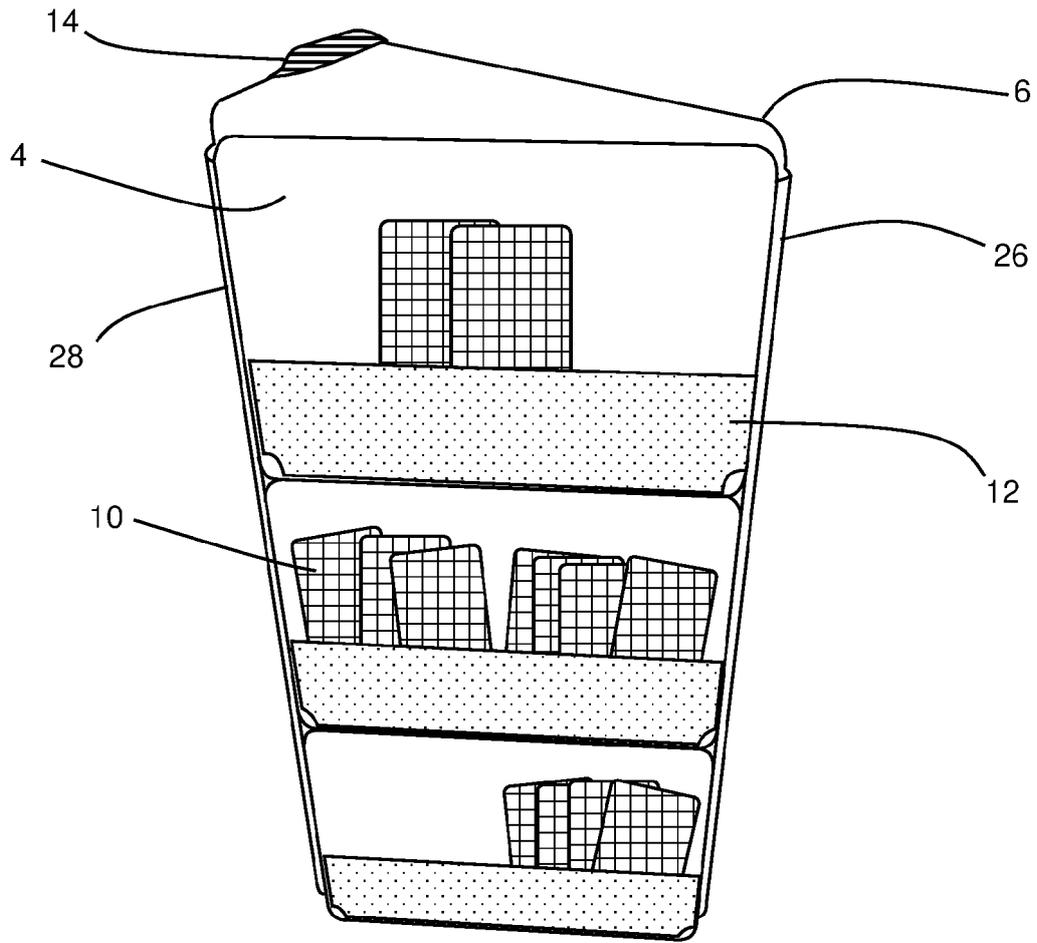


Fig. 13

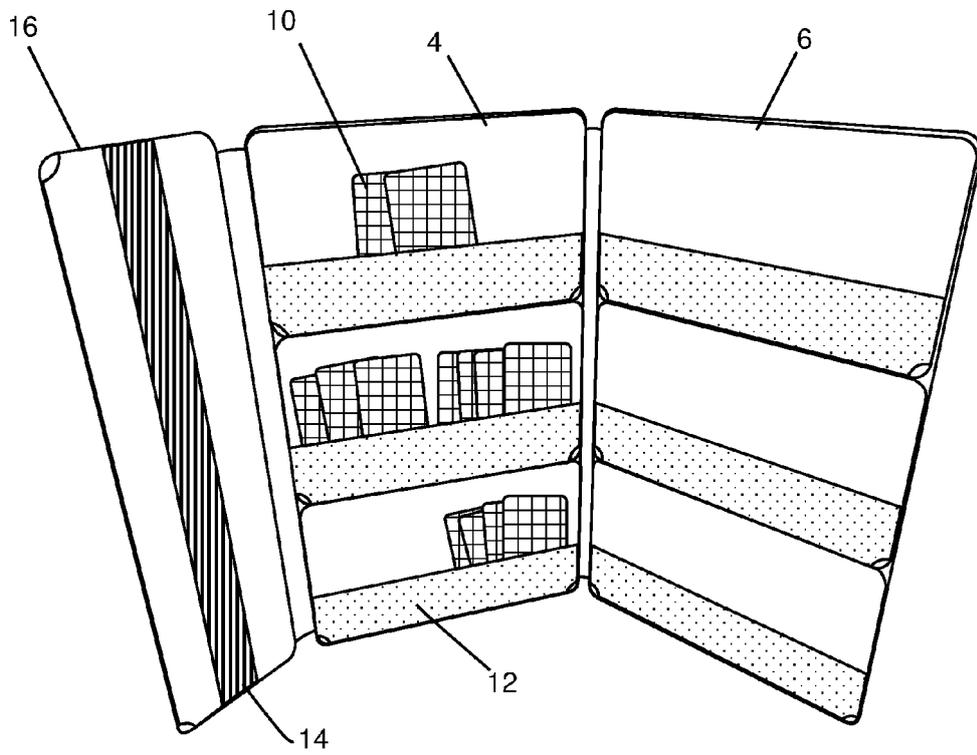
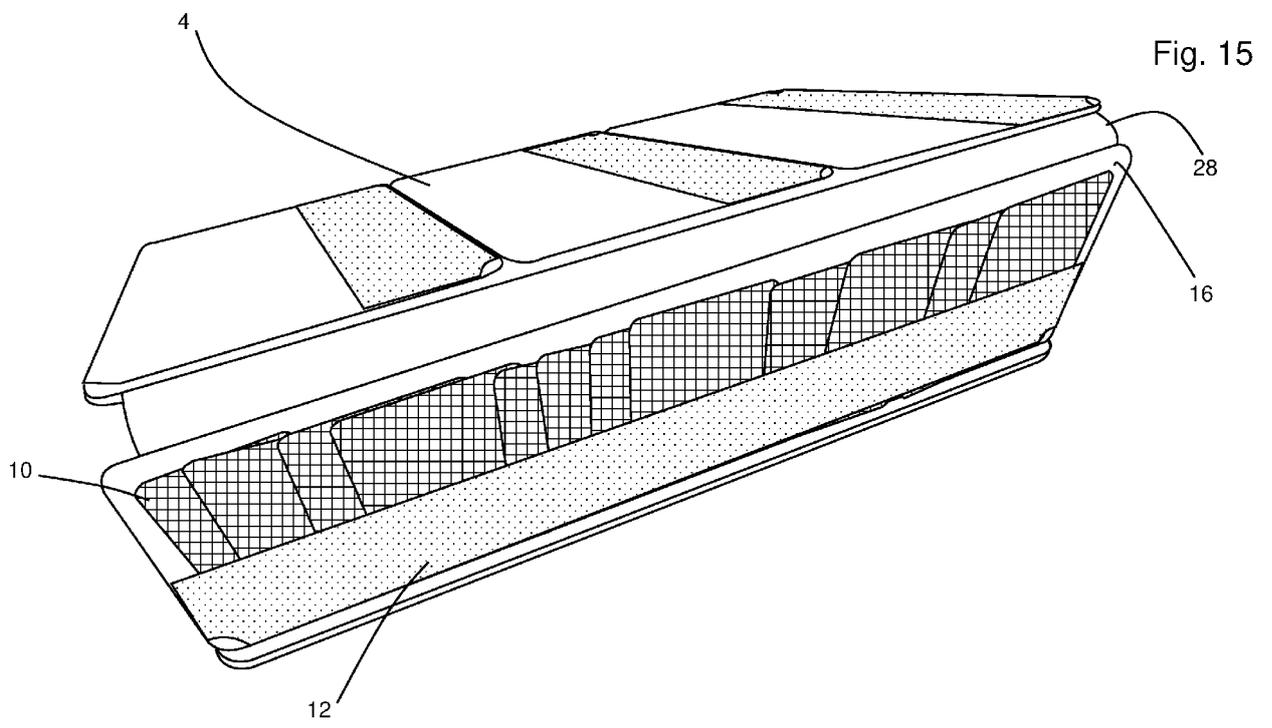


Fig. 14





EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 21 17 7360

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DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

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Y	* page 2, lines 51-56; page 2, lines	2,11	
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Y	US 2003/057647 A1 (RAGO DOMINIC [US] ET AL) 27 March 2003 (2003-03-27) * paragraphs [20]-[21]; figures 3-4 *	11	
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			A63F
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 12 October 2021	Examiner Turmo, Robert
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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5 This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
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12-10-2021

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