United States Patent [19]

Purple

[11] **3,896,981**

[45] **July 29, 1975**

[54] **PROTECTIVE SKI TRANSPORT BAG**

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[21] Appl. No.: **442,668**

[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **224/45 S;** 224/49; 150/52 R; 280/11.37 K

[51] **Int. Cl.** **B65d 71/00**

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 224/45 S, 45 H, 46, 55, 224/5 Z, 5 E; 280/11.37 K; 150/52 R; 206/390; 229/53

[56] **References Cited**

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Primary Examiner—Robert J. Spar
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A disposable bag formed of thin foldable material having a central pocket for receiving a pair of ski poles and a pair of side pockets for holding skis. In a preferred embodiment, at least one of the opposing walls of the central pocket is provided with an opening through which intermediate portions of the poles may be gripped for carrying the entire bag and its contents in sling fashion, using the poles to provide a handle and to distribute the suspending force. The bag protects the skis during transport, as when mounted on an automobile ski rack, may be folded when empty and carried by the skier in a pocket until use is required and, because of its inexpensive construction, may be discarded after it has served its purpose.

7 Claims, 7 Drawing Figures

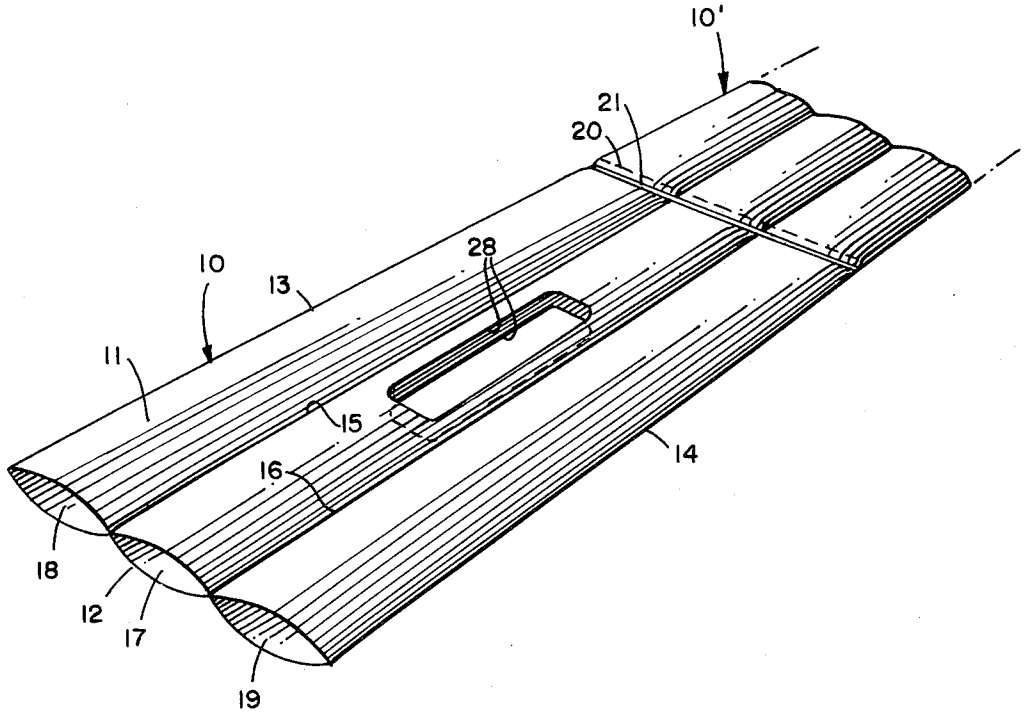


FIG. 1

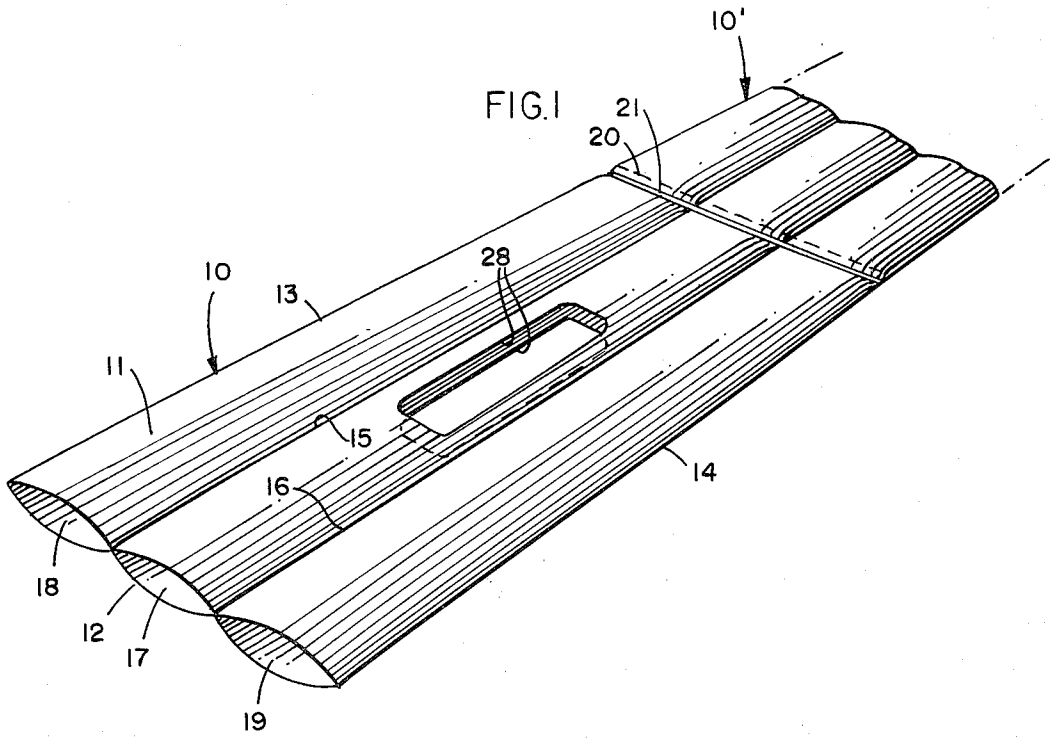


FIG. 2

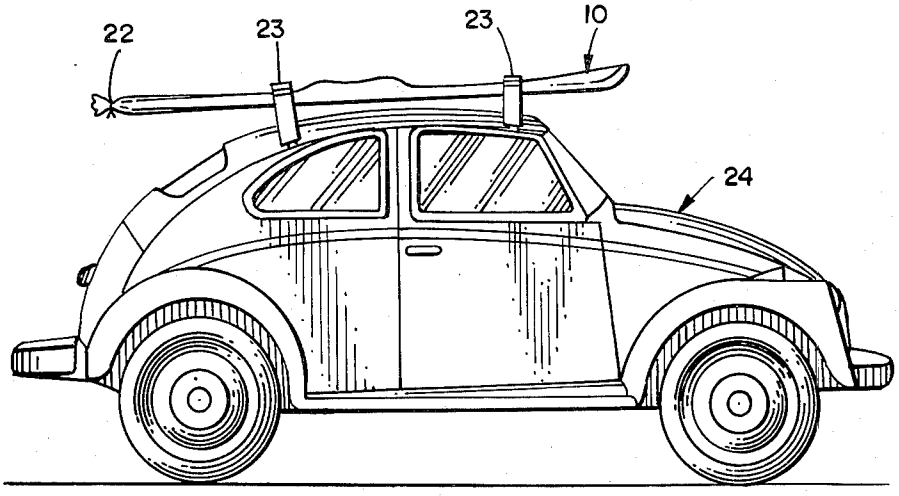


FIG. 3

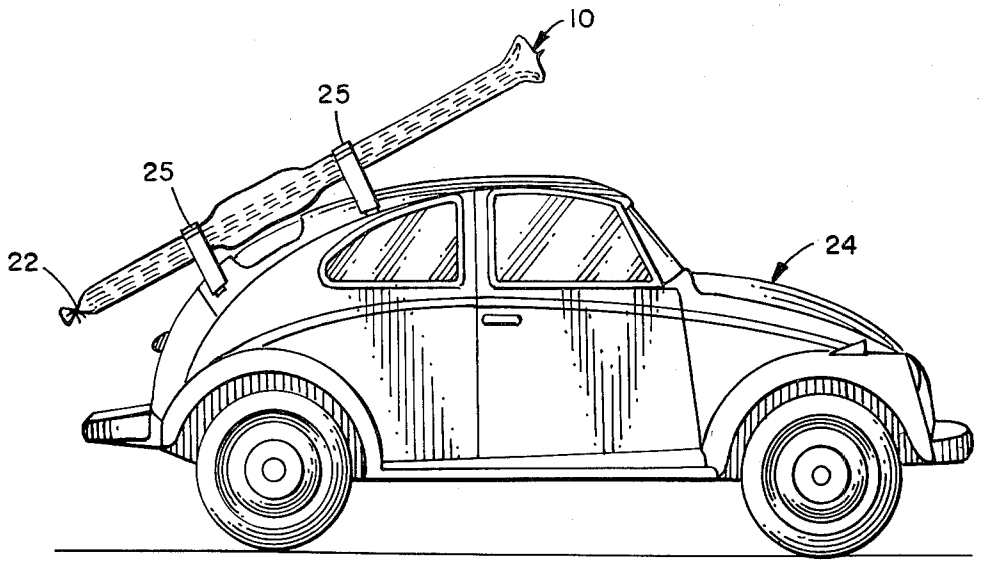


FIG. 4

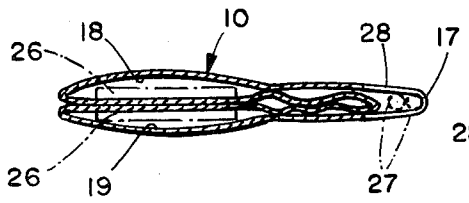


FIG. 5

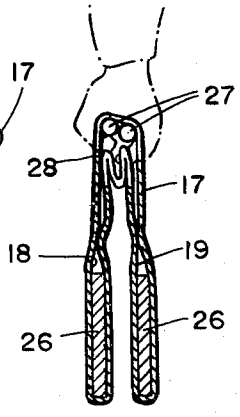


FIG. 7

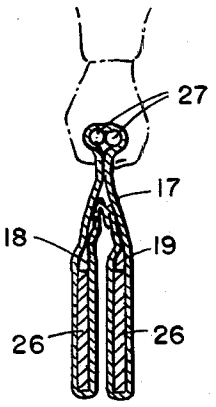
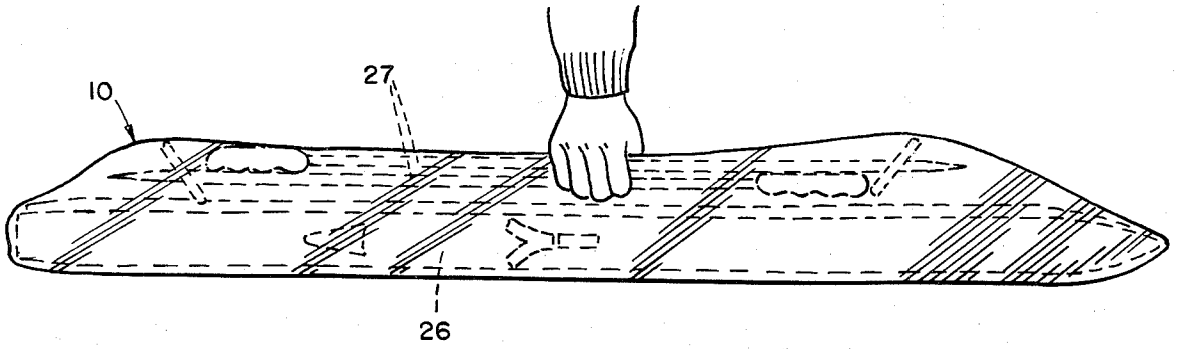


FIG. 6



PROTECTIVE SKI TRANSPORT BAG

BACKGROUND

Ski bags of various types are known in the art, as illustrated by the constructions shown in U.S. Pat. Nos. **2,180,686, 2,250,388, 3,336,961,** and **2,118,875.** Such bags are frequently padded and, in general, provide adequate protection for the skis during storage or when they are handled and transported by commercial carriers. For the most part, conventional ski bags are really items of luggage; they are sturdy items intended for repeated use and are relatively bulky even when empty.

U.S. Pat. No. **3,225,987** discloses a frame for interconnecting a pair of skis and a pair of poles in such a way that the entire assembly may be mounted on a conventional automobile ski rack and, when removed from the rack, may be hand-carried as a rigid unit. While the frame members maintain the skis and poles in spaced relation, thereby preventing scratching and other possible damage occasioned by direct contact during transport (an advantage which even cushioned ski bags seldom provide), the frame members themselves are relatively bulky and must therefore be stored in some fashion when the skis and poles are to be used.

SUMMARY

One aspect of this invention lies in the recognition that conventional storage bags and ski-carrying devices fail to protect skis, bindings, and poles in a common circumstance where such protection would be particularly desirable, namely, when the skis and poles are being transported on an automobile ski rack. During such transport, the ski equipment is commonly exposed to road dirt and salt water splashed from the road surface. The forceful impact of water and particulate matter on the skis would be expected to affect a wax finish and might even damage the permanent surface finish of the skis and poles. Since the skis are fully exposed to the elements during transport, dirt, salt and ice collecting in the bindings must ordinarily be removed when the destination has been reached if such bindings are to perform their safety release function when put to use. Even when the bindings are so cleaned, there is always the danger that permanent damage affecting their operation will have occurred (and remain undetected until a failure results) because of corrosion, abrasion, and jamming caused by such exposure. Finally, conventional racks make no provision for holding straps and buckles so that they do not slap against the roof or rear deck of a moving car and while an experienced skier would be expected to tie the straps to prevent them from flapping in the airstream it is still possible, even probable, that the tied straps will become loosened and contact the roof or deck, distracting the occupants of the car and perhaps even damaging the finish of the automobile.

Accordingly, it is a main object of this invention to provide a ski transport bag which is especially suitable for use in protecting skis, bindings, and poles during transport on the rack of an automobile. Another object is to provide a bag which, despite the thin flexible material from which it is formed, may be used as a device for holding together a pair of skis and ski poles and for hand-carrying all of such equipment to and from the ski area. In that connection, it is a specific object to provide a transport bag which not only protects the skis from abrasive contact with each other and with the poles, but which also is so flexible and compact that it may be folded and placed in the pocket of a parka or other item of clothing until further use is required.

An additional aspect of the invention lies in providing a protective ski carrying device which is relatively inexpensive to manufacture and purchase, so inexpensive that if necessary or desirable such carrier may be discarded after a single use or after only limited use. It is contemplated that the ski-carrying bags might be available to the dealer or purchaser in roll form, each bag being one of a series and being separable from the others along a perforated tear line.

A particularly significant feature of the invention lies in providing a thin disposable protective bag which depends on its contents for stiffness and rigidity and which utilizes the stiffness and dimensions of ski poles to form a carrying handle for the entire assembly. More specifically, the bag comprises a pair of sheets of plastic, paper, or other suitable material joined together along their longitudinal side edges and also sealed together along a pair of spaced longitudinal inner lines. The inner lines are spaced apart to define a central pocket for receiving a pair of ski poles and are also spaced from the side edges to define a pair of side pockets for receiving a pair of skis. Because of the flexibility or pliability from which the bag is formed, a user may readily grasp intermediate portions of the poles while they are contained within the central pocket and thereby use the poles as a handle, and as a stiffening frame or spine, for supporting the ski-containing side pockets in sling fashion. In the best mode presently contemplated for practicing the invention, the walls of the central pocket are provided with a pair of aligned apertures through which mid-portions of the poles may be directly gripped to provide, in effect, a direct handle for suspending and carrying the bag and its contents. A somewhat similar result may be achieved by providing the central pocket with only a single wall opening and, as already indicated, less effective results may be achieved by eliminating the wall openings completely and by gripping the ski poles with the material of the bag interposed between the user's hand and the poles.

In the disclosed embodiment, each of the three pockets is permanently sealed at one end. Preferably, the seal line is disposed immediately adjacent a perforation line which separates one bag from the next in a series of multiple bags. Thus, when use or purchase is desired, a bag may be separated from the series by tearing it away from the rest along the perforated separation line. The opposite end of the bag is open for insertion and removal of the ski equipment but the pockets at such opposite end would normally be closed by suitable tie bands or other temporary closing devices after the skis and poles are placed within their respective compartments or pockets.

Other objects, features, and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the drawings and detailed description.

DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view showing a complete transport bag embodying the present invention, the bag being shown prior to separation from the next bag in an integrally formed series.

FIG. 2 is an elevational view showing a bag and its contents supported in flat condition on an automobile ski rack.

FIG. 3 is an elevational view depicting the bag and its contents supported in folded condition on a conventional automobile ski rack.

FIG. 4 is a sectional view showing the bag in folded condition and also indicating in phantom the shafts of a pair of poles supported in the central pocket.

FIGS. 5 and 6 illustrate the manner in which intermediate portions of the poles may be grasped through the opening of the central pocket for sling-supporting and carrying the bag and its contents.

FIG. 7 is a sectional view similar to FIG. 5 but illustrating a manner of carrying the bag and its contents in the absence of an intermediate opening provided in the central pocket.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

In the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 1, the numeral 10 generally designates a bag formed of thin flexible, water-resistant and generally tough, durable material such as plastic. Polyethylene film has been found particularly effective but other polyolefins and other plastic materials such as polyvinylacetate, polyvinylchloride, polyesters and polyurethanes may also be used. Furthermore, paper and other cellulosic materials treated by conventional techniques to make it water resistant is believed suitable, and it is believed apparent that combinations or laminates of various plastics and papers may also be highly effective.

Bag 10 consists essentially of a pair of flat elongated walls 11 and 12 joined together along their longitudinal side edges 13 and 14, and sealed together along a pair of longitudinally extending inner lines 15 and 16. It will be observed that the inner lines are spaced apart to define a central pocket 17 and are also spaced from the longitudinal side edges to define a pair of side pockets 18 and 19. The term "joined" as used herein is intended to refer to the fact that walls 11 and 12 meet along the longitudinal zones or edges 13 and 14, it being understood that if desired such walls may be integrally formed and that the bag may be extruded in tubular form.

Bag 10 may be one of a connected series integrally formed from the same sheet material and separable along transverse perforation lines 20. Thus, FIG. 1 depicts two such bags, 10 and 10', which have not yet been separated from each other along tear line 20. Since bags 10 and 10' are identical, and since they are part of a multiplicity of bags joined in end-to-end series, only one such bag will be described in detail herein.

Bag 10 is closed at one end by a transverse sealing line 21 which is parallel with perforation line 20 and is disposed in close proximity thereto. When bags 10 and 10' are separated from each other along tear line 20, bag 10 will constitute a complete unit with three pockets each open at one end and closed at the other. By tearing the bags apart along line 20, the open ends of the pockets of the next bag 10' in the series will be exposed.

Side pockets 18 and 19 are each large enough to receive a ski and its bindings, the length of the pockets exceeding the length of the skis so that the open ends may be closed by a suitable tie band 22 in the manner illustrated in FIG. 2. Other conventional closing means such as string, wire or suitable clips may be used or, if desired, and if there is a sufficient length of plastic material, the bag itself may be tied into a knot at a point beyond the ends of the skis.

FIG. 2 illustrates the bag and its contents supported in flat condition (i.e., with each ski assuming the same position in spaced-apart relation) on a conventional ski rack 23 mounted upon the roof of an automobile 24. In FIG. 3 a somewhat different ski rack, also conventional, is illustrated; however, the main difference with regard to the present invention is that the bag has been folded so that outer pockets 18 and 19 are in contiguous relation and the skis 26 have their bottom surfaces in direct opposition. FIG. 4 more clearly illustrates the relationship of the parts when the bag is so folded. Since the material of the bag is thin, any conventional rack capable of supporting skis in the opposed relation generally represented in FIG. 3 will also be able to support such skis when they are contained within a folded bag 10 as represented in FIGS. 3 and 4.

The position of ski poles 27 within central pocket 17 is indicated in FIG. 4. Hand carrying of the bag and its contents is greatly facilitated by the provision of a pair of aligned openings 28 (FIG. 1) in the walls of the central pocket intermediate the ends thereof. The opening permits a user to grasp intermediate portions of the poles directly through the openings and to suspend the entire bag and its contents by the poles in the manner illustrated in FIGS. 5 and 6.

If desired, only a single opening 28 may be provided in one of the walls of the central pocket; such an arrangement has the disadvantage of requiring the bag to be oriented so that the opening is exposed to the user before the shafts of ski poles 27 may be directly gripped but it does have the possible advantage of providing greater protection for the poles themselves during transport of the equipment on an automobile ski rack. As indicated in FIG. 7, less satisfactory results may be achieved by eliminating openings 28 entirely; in that event, the intermediate portions of the poles may still be gripped, the main difference being that a layer of plastic or paper will be interposed between the user's hand and the shafts of the poles. The interposed layer of material will tend to make it more difficult to achieve a secure gripping action. It will be observed that where at least one opening 28 is provided and the poles are gripped through that opening, the opening itself tends to limit the extent to which the bag may be shifted relative to the user's hand, thereby providing additional security against the possibility that the bag and its contents might slip out of balance or might somehow be released accidentally by the user.

While in the foregoing I have disclosed an embodiment of the invention in considerable detail for purposes of illustration, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that many of these details may be varied without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

I claim:

1. A protective ski transport bag formed of thin foldable sheet material selected from the group consisting of plastic film and paper, said bag having a pair of flat elongated walls joined together along their longitudinal side edges and also sealed together along a pair of longitudinal inner lines, said inner lines being spaced apart to define a central pocket open at one end of the bag for receiving a pair of ski poles, said inner lines also

being spaced from the longitudinal side edges of said bag to define a pair of side pockets open at said one end of said bag for receiving a pair of skis, each side pocket being adapted to receive a single ski, said side pockets being substantially longer than the skis receivable therein and all of said pockets being substantially equal in length, said bag and its contents having handle means formed by manually gripping intermediate portions of the poles to hold said poles together within said central pocket and thereby form a sling for suspending the side pockets and the skis therein in balanced condition, said walls being permanently joined together to close said pockets at the end of said bag opposite from said one end.

2. The bag of claim **1** in which said bag is one of a series of identical bags joined end-to-end and formed integrally from the same sheet material, each bag being separable from the other bags of said series along transverse tear lines disposed at the ends of said bags and delimiting each bag from the others.

3. The structure of claim **2** in which each bag of said series is sealed at one end along a transverse seal line disposed in close proximity to each transverse tear line.

4. The structure of claim **3** in which said transverse tear lines and said transverse seal lines are parallel with each other.

5. The structure of claim **3** in which said transverse tear line is defined by a series of perforations.

6. The structure of claim **1** in which at least one wall defining said central pocket is provided with an opening intermediate the length of said bag through which intermediate portions of ski poles disposed within said central pocket may be gripped by a user to provide a carrying handle for the bag and its contents.

7. The structure of claim **1** in which said walls defining said central pocket are provided with a pair of aligned openings intermediate the length of said bag through which intermediate portions of ski poles disposed within said central pocket may be gripped by a user to provide a carrying handle for the bag and its contents.

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