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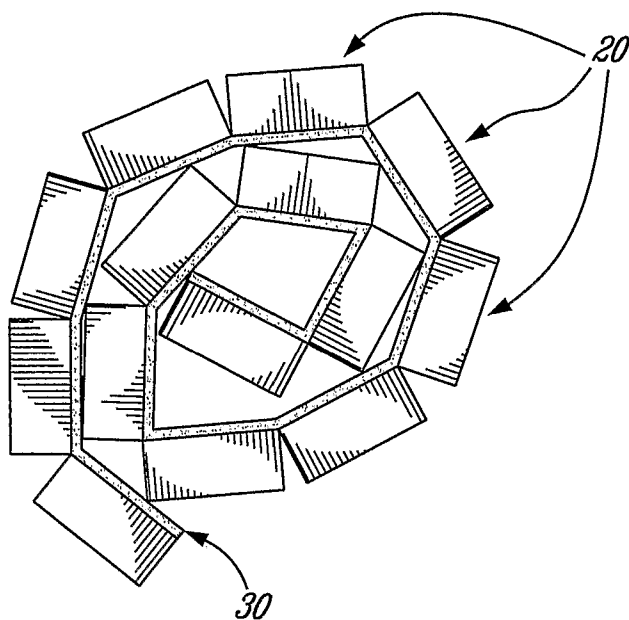
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(54) Title: MODULAR SURFACE COVERING ASSEMBLY



(57) Abstract: This invention relates to an improved surface covering assembly. The assembly consists of a plurality of elongated adjacent panels which, in a preferred embodiment, are attached to an elongated sheet of flexible material. The sheet can further comprise covering such as synthetic turf, carpet, etc. The surface covering assembly can thus be rolled/folded and unrolled/unfolded as desired. Multiple assemblies can be joined together to cover larger areas.

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AMENDED CLAIMS
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1. A surface covering assembly comprising:
- 5 a) an elongated sheet made of flexible material, said sheet defining an upper side and an underside;
- b) a plurality of adjacent panels, each said panel being fixedly attached to said underside of said sheet, each pair of said adjacent panels forming a linear joint about which one of said pair of adjacent panels may be folded in relation to the other;
- 10 whereby said panels are located between said surface and said sheet when said assembly is installed on said surface.
2. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one of said panels is laterally offset with respect to the longitudinal axis of the assembly, said at least one offset panel having an exterior portion and said at least one offset panel creating an opening in said assembly.
- 15 3. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 2, wherein said at least one offset panel comprises an upper side and said opening defining a panel-free area on said underside of said sheet, said offset panel upper side and said panel-free area.
- 20 4. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 3, further comprising complementary fastening means.
5. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 4, wherein said complementary fastening means are male and female Velcro™ patches.
- 25 6. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein said panels are made of material chosen in the list of following products: expanded or extruded polypropylene, foam, expanded or extruded polytetrafluoroethylene, expanded or extruded polyethylene, ethylene propylene diene monomer (EPDM), crumb rubber tire, plastic, natural or synthetic rubber, polyurethane.
- 30 7. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein said panels are made of a rigid material.

8. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein said panels are made of wood.
- 5 9. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein said panels are made of a combination of materials chosen in the list of following products: expanded or extruded polypropylene, foam, expanded or extruded polytetrafluoroethylene, expanded or extruded polyethylene, ethylene propylene diene monomer (EPDM), crumb rubber tire, plastic, natural or synthetic rubber, polyurethane, wood.
- 10 10. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein said sheet is a flexible floor covering.
11. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein said sheet is carpet or
15 linoleum.
12. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein said sheet is geotextile fabric.
- 20 13. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein said sheet is a rubber sheet.
14. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein said sheet is a game-playing synthetic surface.
- 25 15. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein said sheet is synthetic turf.
16. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein said sheet and said panels
30 further comprise generally aligned draining holes.
17. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein the surface defined by said flexible sheet is greater than the surface defined by said adjacent panels and wherein said

surface defined by said flexible sheet defines a portion which extends beyond at least one side of said surface defined by said adjacent panels.

5 18. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 17, wherein said portion of said surface of said flexible sheet that extends beyond said surface of said adjacent panels further comprises fastening means.

10 19. A surface covering assembly as claimed in claim 18, wherein said fastening means are Velcro™ patches.

20. A surface covering system for covering an area, said system comprising a plurality of surface covering assemblies, each said assembly comprising:

15 a) an elongated sheet made of flexible material, said sheet defining an upper side and an underside;

b) a plurality of adjacent panels, each said panel being fixedly attached to said underside of said sheet, each pair of said adjacent panels forming a linear joint about which one of said pair of adjacent panels may be folded in relation to the other;

whereby said panels are located between said surface and said sheet when said assembly is installed on said surface; and

20 wherein said assemblies are adjacently disposed to cover said area.

21. A surface covering system for covering an area as claim in claim 20, further comprising at least one joining panel, said joining panel comprising fastening means.

25 22. A method for covering an area, having boundaries, with surface covering assemblies, each said assembly comprising an elongated sheet made of flexible material and having an upper side and an underside, and a plurality of adjacent panels, each said panel being fixedly attached to said underside of said sheet, each pair of said adjacent panels forming a linear joint about which one of said pair of adjacent panels may be folded in relation to the other, each
30 said assembly being rollable, said method comprising the steps of:

a) providing an assembly in rolled form;

b) unrolling said assembly on said area;

c) adjusting, if necessary, said assembly to remove gaps between said assembly and said boundaries;

d) adjusting, if necessary, said assembly to remove gaps between said assembly and other already installed assemblies;

e) repeating steps a), b), c) and d) until said area is covered.

whereby said panels of said assemblies are located between said surface and said sheets when said assemblies is installed on said surface

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23. A method as claimed in claim 22, wherein each said assembly is attached to its neighboring assemblies with the use at least one joining panel comprising fastening means and wherein said method further comprises the step of installing at least one said joining panel between said neighboring assemblies.

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