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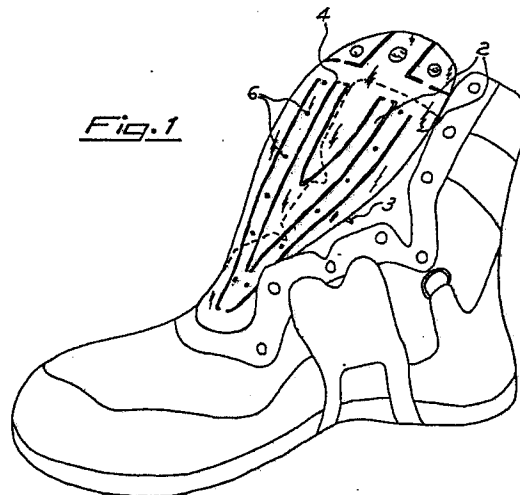
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The title of the invention has been amended (Guidelines for Examination in the EPO, A-III, 7.3).

54 **Tongue for a sports shoe.**

57 A sport footwear is described, provided with a tongue having inflatable compartments, for a more secure fit to the user's foot.

Fig. 1



Description

"IMPROVED SPORT FOOTWEAR"

This invention relates to improved sport footwear and, more particularly, to footwear suitable for exercise activities in a gymnasium or on specially equipped fields.

It is known that footwear for sporting purposes must perform as a stable and comfortable support point for the body while subject to various types of stress. This is particularly important for those activities where the precise control of the feet and of the relating support bases becomes the primary factor for a good result of the sport or athletic activity under way, as it is for instance the case for running or jumping activities. It is therefore a factor of primary importance that the shoe fits over the foot in the best way, whereby it forms with it, so to speak, an integral body, thereby avoiding, as far as possible, mutual displacements between the footwear and the foot, since this would lead more easily to uncertainties in the trajectory and also to ankle straining or dislocations.

There has now been devised, and it is an object of this invention, a type of footwear that enables the upper of the footwear, and in particular its boot-like extension to be securely fitted and fastened to the foot of the person wearing it, whereby a comfortable but secure grip is assured around the ankle and around the instep.

This is obtained, in combination with padding of the upper, through the adoption of an inflatable tongue, whereby said tongue fits the particular anatomical shape and avoids possible gaps or empty regions between the upper and the foot, and so that, owing to the presence of an air cushion, a non-traumatic taking over of possible shocks just at the instep is guaranteed. Another advantage provided by the footwear tongue according to this invention is the compensation of the inequalities or bumps due to the interlacement of the laces in the buckling zone. Now this invention will be described more particularly based on a preferred embodiment thereof, shown for illustration only, but without any meaning of limitation, in the attached drawing, where:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of footwear provided with the tongue according to this invention; and

FIGURE 2 shows a plan view of the tongue of Fig. 1.

As it is shown in Fig. 1, the sport footwear of the boot extension type is provided with a double wall tongue 1, within which there are arranged some bags 2 which can be inflated through a small side tube 3 which is in turn provided with a valve for inflating, through a suitable tool. As it is best seen in Fig. 2, inflatable bags 2 are all mutually connected, whereby pressure is uniformly distributed according to the shape of the weld lines 4. Inflatable bags 2 have a slightly curved outline which diverges from the tongue base to the tongue tip, i.e. following the shape of said tongue, while at the free end of tongue 1 weld lines 4 are arranged in such a way as

to define three bags, mutually connected as well, wherein the two lateral side ones are in the shape of quadrants of a circle. In order to avoid that the latter end inflatable bags, after inflating, take an excessively cushion-like shape, due to the position and structure thereof, welding spots or areas 5 are provided in a central region of these end bags respectively.

At the intermediate area of tongue 1, in order to allow for a certain degree of aeration of the foot fitted inside the footwear, two rows of through perforations 6 are provided, whose outline follows the one of the longitudinal inflatable bags 2. The base of the inventive tongue, which must be fastened to the shoe upper, extends into a flap 7 of the same gas-tight material comprising the walls of the inflatable bags 2.

Owing to the mutual interconnection of the several bags comprising the inventive tongue 1, possible pressure forces non-uniformly transmitted from outside cause only the displacement of a certain amount of air from the compressed area to the other less compressed regions, whereby the gas pressure within tongue 1 remains as uniform as possible and enables the limb fitted inside the footwear to go through slight relative displacements while a perfect contact with all the areas of the shoe is maintained.

While this invention has been described in particular based on an embodiment thereof, as shown in the drawings, it is understood that changes and/or modifications can be made thereto without departing from the spirit and scope of the protection thereof.

Claims

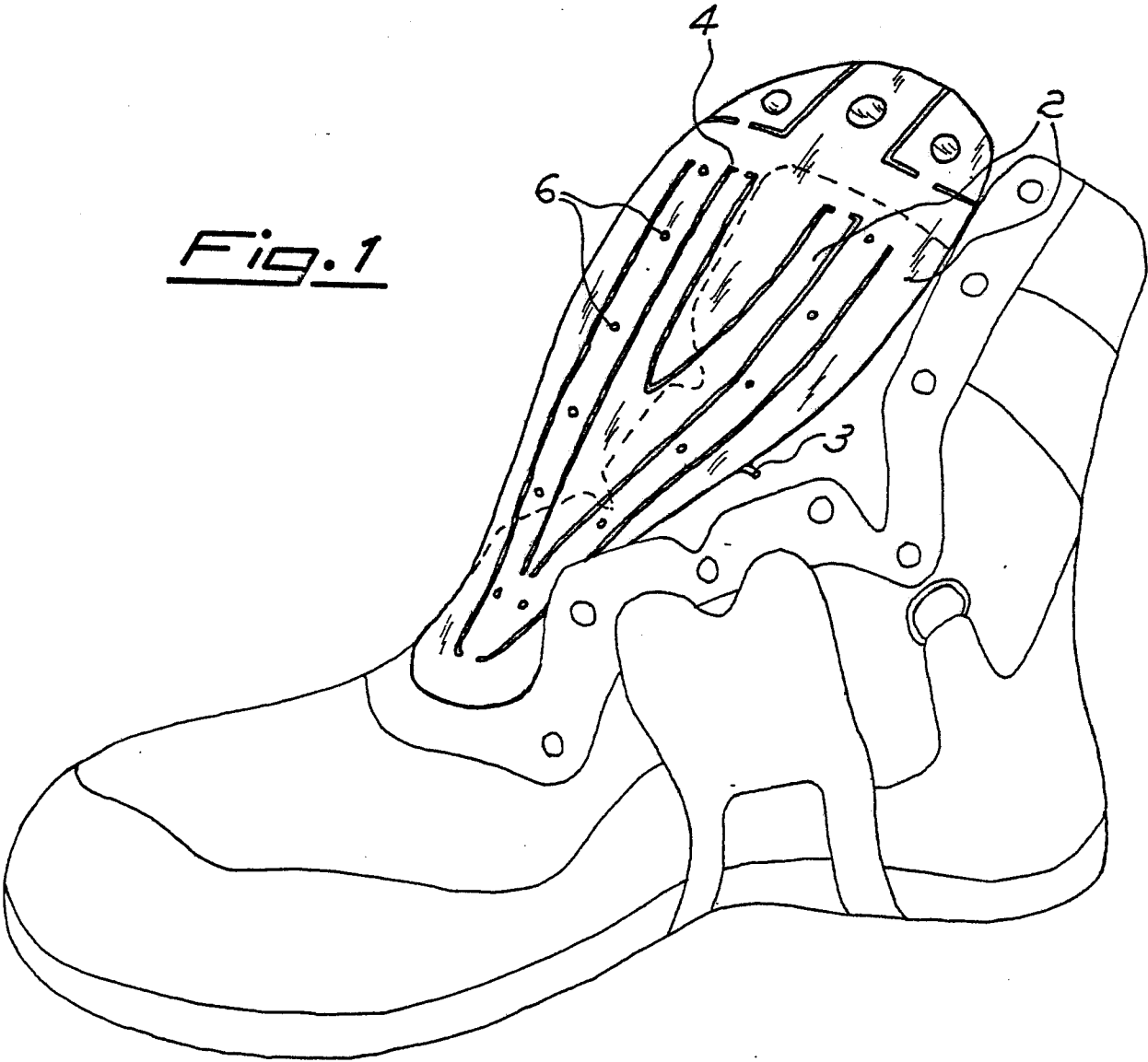
1. Improved sport footwear, characterized in that the tongue thereof is provided with a double wall which allows pressurized air to be blown therein whereby the tongue takes an inflated shape.

2. Footwear according to claim 1, characterized in that said inflatable tongue (1) is comprised of a number of mutually interconnected bags (2) and is provided with a small side tube (3) for inflating air intake.

3. Footwear according to claim 2, characterized in that said tongue (1) is provided with aeration apertures (6) arranged according to one or more longitudinal lines, the base of said tongue (1) being extended into a flap (7) for fastening to the shoe.

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Fig. 1



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Fig. 2

