

[54] BOAT TOP

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[51] Int. Cl.<sup>2</sup> ..... B63B 29/02

[58] Field of Search ..... 114/71, 66, 201 R, 203; 9/1 R; 296/98, 100, 101

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[57] ABSTRACT

A boat top having upwardly and inwardly inclined longitudinal side walls including windows and removable front and rear end panels also comprising windows. The end panels are attachable to end frame portions of the side walls. The top edge of each side wall is provided with a flexible canopy segment, the canopy segments having longitudinal end roller bars around which the segments can be rolled up when the canopy segments are not in use and fastened to the top edges of the side walls by straps. When the canopy segments are unrolled, the ends of the roller bars are received in upwardly facing recesses formed in the top frame elements of the front and rear end panels, thereby holding the canopy segments in extended operative position. A longitudinal flap is provided on one of the canopy segments to overlie the junction of the roller bars. If the boat should overturn, the roller bars can automatically disengage from the recesses by falling out, and thereby allow the occupants to escape.

10 Claims, 9 Drawing Figures

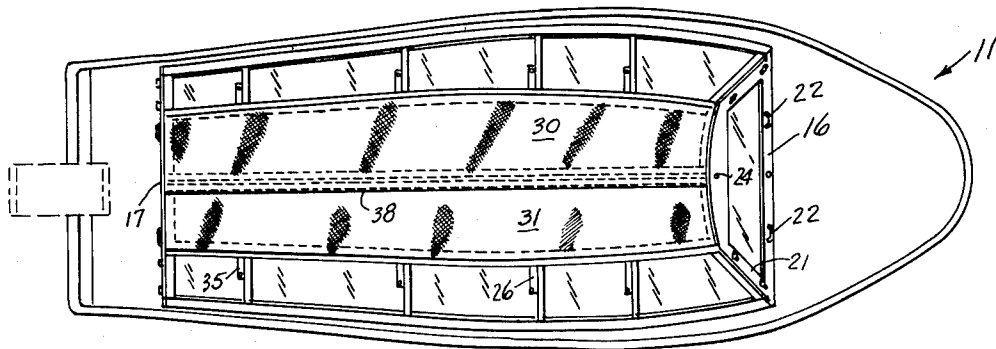


FIG. 1.

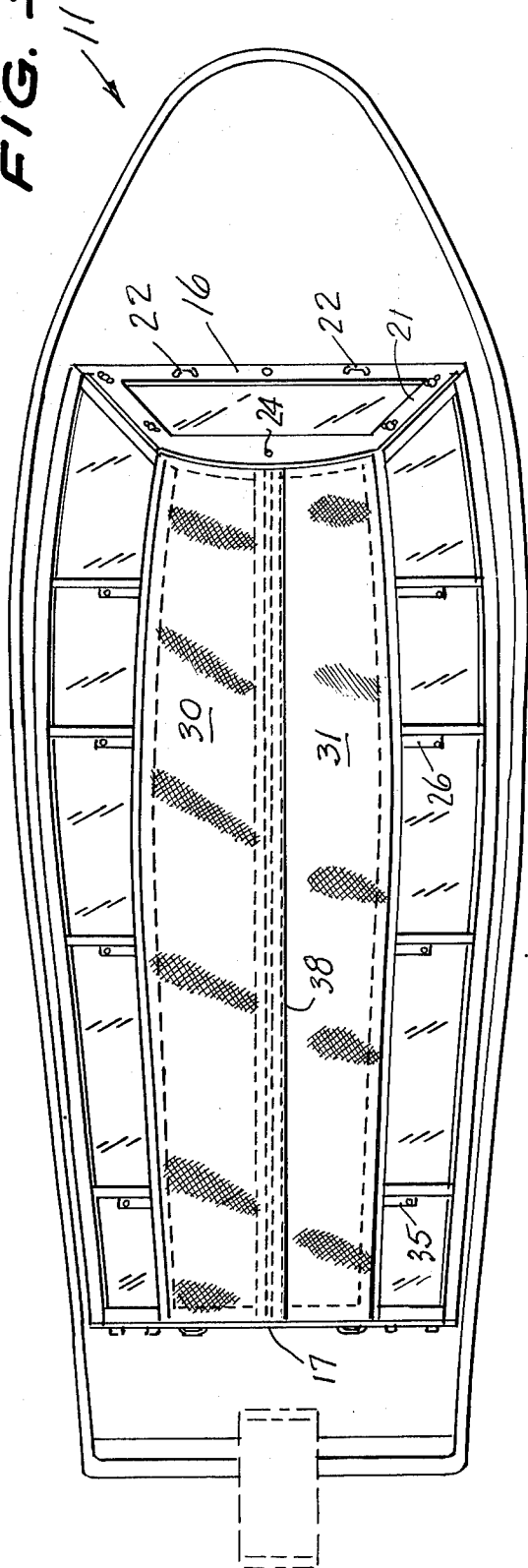
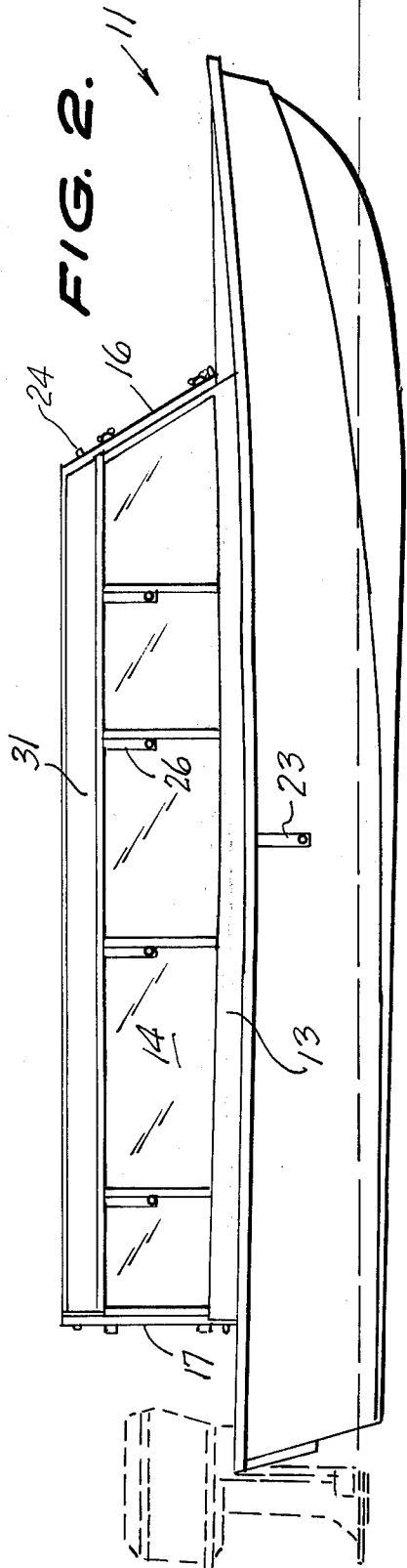
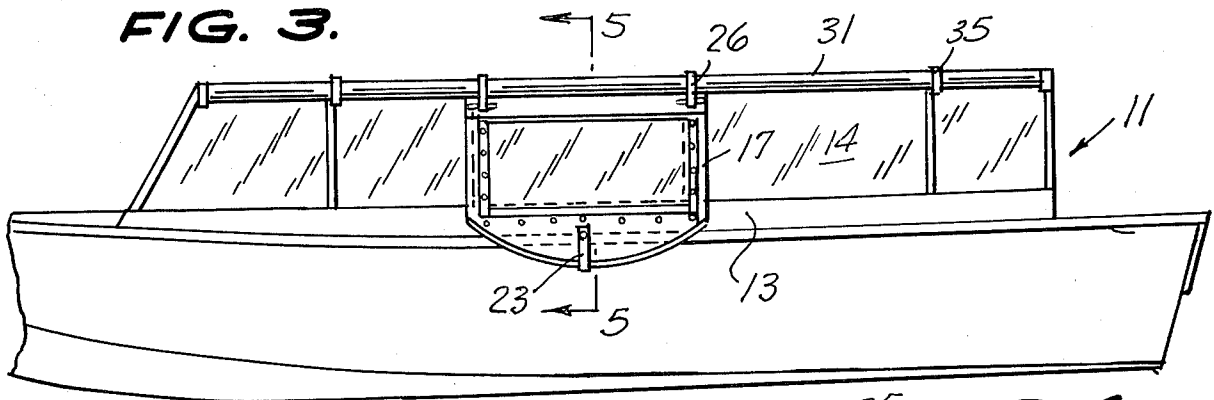


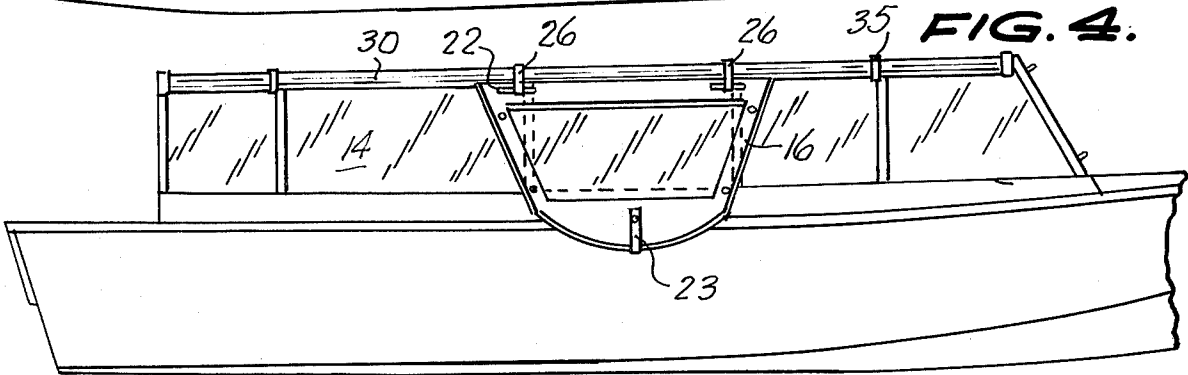
FIG. 2.



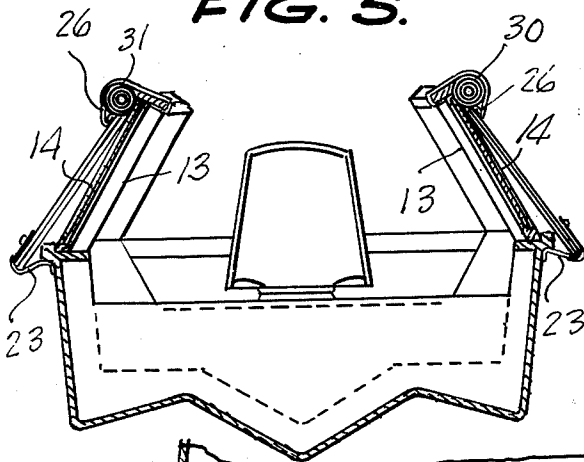
**FIG. 3.**



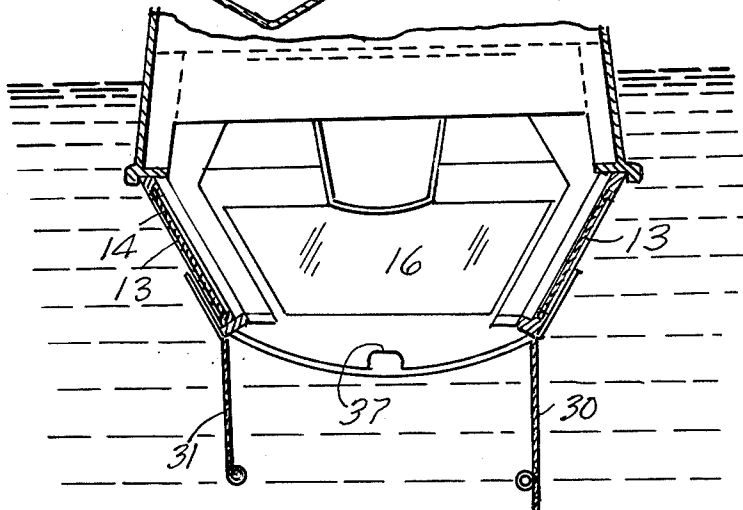
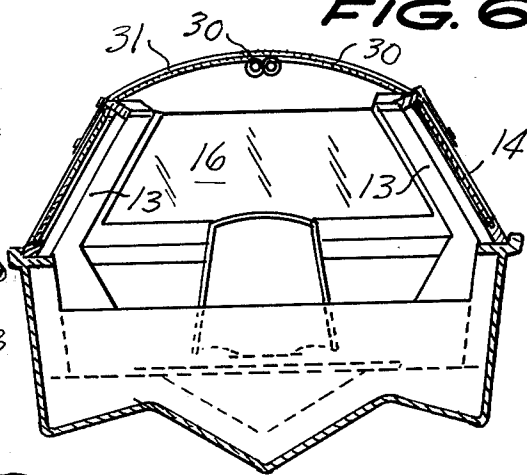
**FIG. 4.**



**FIG. 5.**



**FIG. 6.**



**FIG. 9.**

FIG. 8.

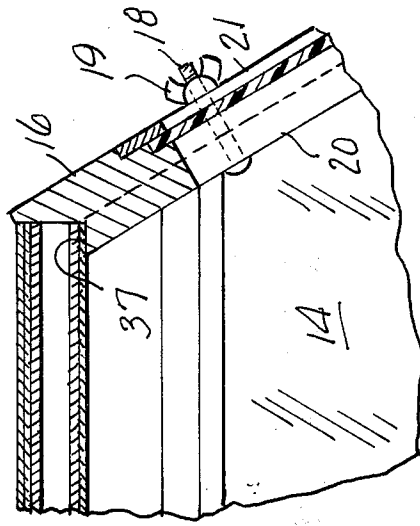
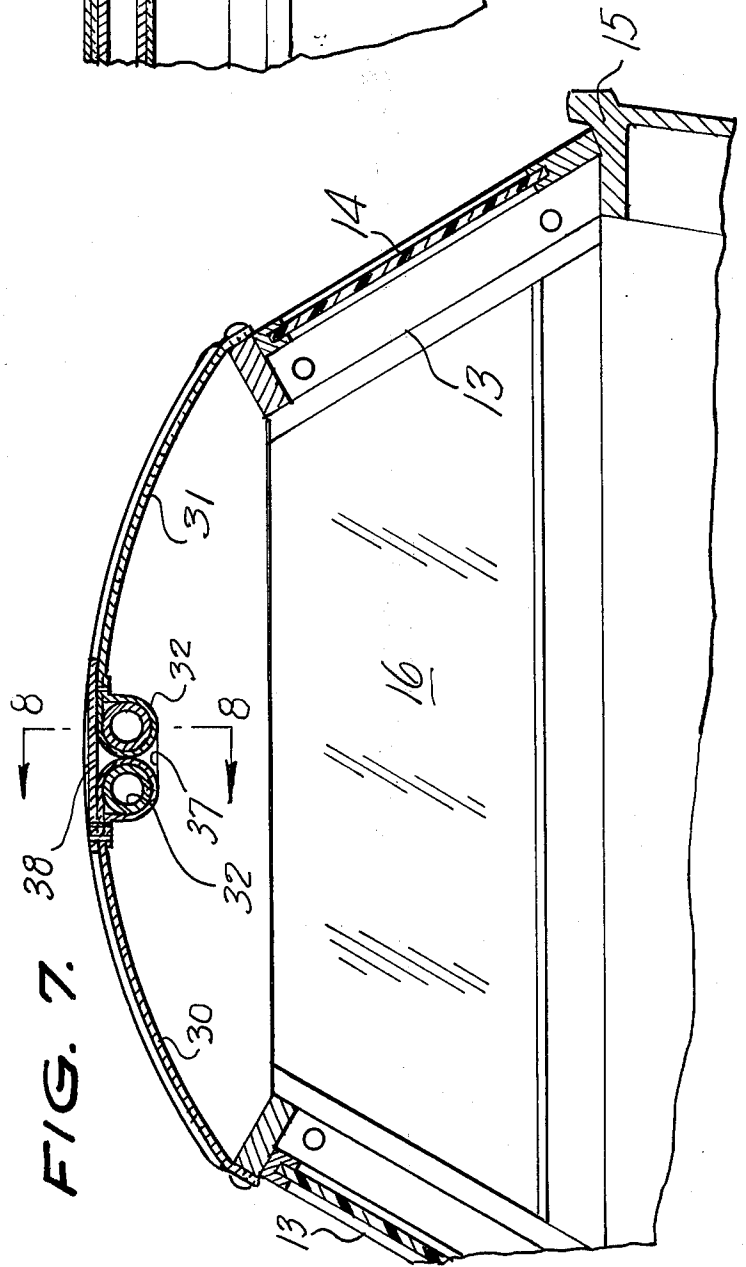


FIG. 7.



## BOAT TOP

This invention relates to boat body structure, and more particularly to a boat body of the type having top canopy elements which can be rolled up when not in use.

A main object of the invention is to provide a novel and improved boat body structure including top canopy elements which can be rolled up when not in use and attached to side portions of the boat body structure, the structure involving very simple components, being easy to set up for use and to detach when use thereof is not required, and automatically disengaging when the boat overturns, whereby to allow the occupants to easily escape from the boat.

A further object of the invention is to provide an improved boat top structure which is inexpensive to manufacture, which is easy to install, and which is designed to provide protection for the occupants of a boat under a wide range of weather conditions.

A still further object of the invention is to provide an improved boat top structure including removable front and end panels and flexible canopy segments which are rolled up and securely fastened to the top edge portions of the side panels of the boat top structure when not in use and which can be easily unrolled and placed in use when necessary, the canopy segments being readily disengageable in case of emergency, such as when the boat is capsized, so as to allow the occupants of the boat to readily escape therefrom, and the boat top structure being arranged to protect the occupants of the boat from falling overboard in rough water and from the action of waves to thereby prevent swamping of the boat, and the boat top structure in general providing complete protection from wind, rain, spray and other adverse weather conditions, as well as providing support means for at times holding a seat to enable an occupant to have an elevated position advantageous for various purposes, such as for observation, fishing, or the like.

Further objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the following description and claims, and from the accompanying drawings, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a top plan view of a boat provided with improved top structure according to the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a side elevational view of the boat of FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary side elevational view of the boat of FIGS. 1 and 2, indicating the manner in which the rear end panel of the boat top structure may be stored when not in use by attaching it to one of the longitudinal side portions of the boat top structure.

FIG. 4 is a fragmentary side elevational view of the boat of FIGS. 1 and 2, showing the opposite side thereof as compared with FIG. 3, and indicating the manner in which the detachable front window panel can be stored when not in use by attaching it to a side portion of the boat top structure.

FIG. 5 is a transverse vertical cross sectional view taken substantially on line 5—5 of FIG. 3.

FIG. 6 is a transverse vertical cross-sectional view similar to FIG. 5, but showing the front window panel in place and the flexible canopy segments in unrolled operative positions overlying the interior of the boat.

FIG. 7 is an enlarged fragmentary transverse vertical cross-sectional view showing the upper portion of FIG. 6.

FIG. 8 is a fragmentary vertical cross-sectional view taken substantially on the line 8—8 of FIG. 7.

FIG. 9 is a fragmentary transverse vertical cross-sectional view generally similar to FIG. 6, but showing the manner in which the flexible canopy segments can fall away from their holding notches when the boat is in a capsized or overturned position to thereby allow the occupants to easily escape from the boat.

Referring to the drawings, 11 generally designates a small boat of the outboard motor type, having a top provided with upwardly and inwardly inclined longitudinal side walls 13, 13 provided with windows 14 and being rigidly secured in any suitable manner to the top edge portions 15 of the sides of the boat. The boat is provided with the removable front and rear transverse end panels 16 and 17, comprising suitable windows. The end panels 16 and 17 are detachably secured to the end portions of the longitudinally extending side wall members 13 by means of suitable bolts 18 and wing nuts 19, as shown in FIG. 8, the bolts being engaged through end frame portions 20 of the side walls and through side frame portions 21 of the end panels. By unfastening the wing nuts 19, the end panels may be readily detached from the front and rear edges of the side wall members. As will be presently explained, the end panels can be stowed at the intermediate portions of the side wall elements when their use is not required. For this purpose, the end panels are provided with loop-shaped brackets 22 at their lower marginal frame portions and the boat is provided with a pair of flexible fastening straps 23, 23 having snap fastener elements engageable with mating snap fastener elements 24 provided on the upper frame portions of the panel. The upper frame members of the side walls are provided with flexible straps 26 having fastener hooks, or the like, lockingly engageable with the supporting loop-shaped brackets 22, 22, whereby the front and rear end panels may be supportingly fastened to the intermediate portions of the side walls 13 in a manner similar to that illustrated in FIGS. 3 and 4. As will be seen from FIG. 4, the front panel member 16 is supported in inverted position against the intermediate portion of one of the side wall portions of the boat and the rear panel member 17 is likewise supported in inverted position against the outer side wall member 13 of the boat in the stowed positions of the end panel members.

As will be readily apparent, when the end panels are fastened at the front and rear ends of the side wall members, namely, in operative positions, they define a closed boat top.

Designated at 30, 31 are respective flexible canopy segments adapted to overlie the enclosure above-mentioned, and define a roof for the boat top. The canopy segments are shaped to cover respective longitudinal halves of the area defined by the top edges of the side wall members 13, 13 and end panels 16 and 17, each flexible canopy segment being secured to a longitudinal top edge of a side wall member 13 and having a tubular rigid roller bar 32 suitably secured to its inner longitudinal edge, the canopy segments 30 and 31 being capable of being rolled up around their rigid roller bars 32 and of being stowed against the top edge portions of the respective side wall members 13 in a manner illustrated in FIGS. 3, 4 and 5. Thus, retaining

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straps 35 are provided, similar to the retaining straps 26, the retaining straps being provided with suitable snap fastener elements for securing them around the rolled up canopy segments 30 and 31. When the canopy segments 30 and 31 are in their operative inwardly extending positions, the end portions of the roller bars 32 are received in side-by-side relationship in upwardly facing notch or recessed portions 37 provided at the midportions of the top frame members of the end panel assemblies 16 and 17. Thus, the notches or recesses 37 lockingly receive the ends of the tubular roller bars 32 and hold the panel segments 30 and 31 in their operative positions overlying the space defined by side wall members 13, 13 and end panels 16 and 17. One of the panel segments 30 is provided with an end flap 38 which extends longitudinally for the full length of the panel segment and is shaped to overlie the rigid end portions of the panel segments, namely, the portions containing the rigid roller bars 32, in the manner illustrated in FIG. 8, so as to cover up the crevice defined between the rigidified inner end edge portions of the panel segments.

The retaining recesses or notch portions 37 are of suitable conformable shape to receive the ends of the roller bars 32, for example, are of horizontally extended U-shape to define retaining recesses normally holding the roller bars 32, 32 in proper positions to maintain the canopy segments 30, 31 in their inwardly extended positions defining a roof-like covering for the passenger space. However, in the event of the boat capsizing, for example, as shown in FIG. 9, the recesses 37 freely permit the ends of the roller bars 32, 32 to slip out of the recesses and allow the canopy segments 30, 31 to drop to depending positions, allowing the occupants to freely escape from the capsized boat.

It will be noted that when the canopy segments 30, 31 and the front and rear end panels 16 and 17 are in operative positions, the passengers are completely protected from waves, spray, and other weather conditions but have 360° visibility. Under more favorable weather conditions, the canopy segments 30, 31 may be rolled up and stowed in the manner above described, along with the front and rear end panel assemblies 16 and 17, which, as above mentioned, may be stowed against the intermediate portions of the side wall members 13, 13.

While a specific embodiment of an improved boat top has been disclosed in the foregoing description, it will be understood that various modifications within the spirit of the invention may occur to those skilled in the art. Therefore, it is intended that no limitations be placed on the invention except as defined by the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A boat top comprising first and second pairs of op-

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posed, upwardly disposed walls defining an enclosure for passengers having a generally rectangular opening at the top, a pair of flexible canopy segments secured along one edge to the top edges of said first pair of walls and being inwardly extensible to overlie and cover the opening of said enclosure, respective rigid roller bars secured to the opposite edges of the canopy segments, said second pair of walls being formed with retaining recesses at the mid-portions of their top edges, said recesses being open at their tops, the opposite end portions of the roller bars being seated in said recesses when the canopy segments are extended to overlie the enclosure and being held in said recesses by gravity but being free to fall out of the recesses if the boat should overturn, said roller bars being liftable out of said recesses and the canopy segments being rollable around the respective rigid roller bars for securement to the top edges of said first pair of walls so as to uncover the opening of the enclosure.

2. The boat top of claim 1, and flexible flap means on the inner longitudinal marginal portion of one of the canopy segments shaped to overlie the roller bars when their ends are received in said retaining recesses.

3. The boat top of claim 2, and wherein said recesses are shaped to receive the ends of the roller bars so as to position the roller bars in side-by-side relationship.

4. A boat top as claimed in claim 1 wherein said first pair of walls comprise longitudinal side walls, and said second pair of walls comprise front and rear end panels.

5. The boat top of claim 4, wherein said front and rear end panels are provided with means to detachably secure them to the end edge portions of the longitudinal side walls.

6. The boat top of claim 5, and means for securing said end panels to the midportions of the respective longitudinal side walls when the end panels are detached from the end edge portions of the longitudinal side walls.

7. The boat top of claim 4, and wherein said rigid roller bars are of tubular shape.

8. The boat top of claim 7, and wherein the top edges of the side walls are provided with spaced flexible fastening strap members for at said time securing the rolled-up canopy segments thereto.

9. The boat top of claim 4, and wherein said longitudinal side walls and front and rear end panels include transparent window portions providing substantially 360° visibility from said passenger enclosure.

10. The boat top of claim 3, wherein each of said recesses is of substantially U-shape both in horizontal and vertical cross-section.

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