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IN-LINE ROLLER SKATE WITH ADJUSTABLE WHEELS
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- (57) Claim

1. An in-line roller skate with adjustable wheels, comprising:

a U-shaped frame having a pair of generally parallel wings each provided on an outwardly facing side with a respective longitudinally extending elongate seat including a pair of bores;

two first wheels rotatably mounted between said wings at respective mounting positions disposed at opposite ends of said frame, said seats being provided on said wings between said mounting positions;

two second wheels; and

two elongate wheel supports removably inserted in respective ones of said seats for supporting said second wheels on said frame, said supports each having a shape complementary with or conforming to the respective one of said seats, said supports each having a longitudinal axis, said supports each being provided at opposite ends with wheel seats eccentrically disposed with respect to, or offset from, the longitudinal axis of the respective support, said second wheels

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being rotatably mounted to said wings via said wheel seats, whereby a vertical position of said second wheels relative to said first wheels may be adjusted by removing said second wheels and said supports from said frame, rotating each of said supports 180° about a horizontal axis oriented perpendicularly to the respective longitudinal axis, reinserting said supports in said elongate seats and reattaching said wheels to said frame at said wheel seats.

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COMPLETE SPECIFICATION

FOR A STANDARD PATENT

ORIGINAL

TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANT

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Invention Title: "IN-LINE ROLLER SKATE WITH ADJUSTABLE WHEELS"

The following statement is a full description of this invention, including the best method of performing it known to me:-

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the invention

The present invention relates to an in-line roller skate with adjustable wheels.

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2. Description of the Prior Art

Conventional roller skates with in-line wheels comprise a generally U-shaped frame associated with a boot shell and supporting a plurality of in-line wheels.

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A problem in the use of these skates is that it is not always easy to achieve quick changes of direction, due to the in-line arrangement of the wheels, which can even be four or five.

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This problem leads to the need for the user to technically have two structurally different skates available, depending on whether he must for example perform slalom or a speed race.

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US patent No. 2,412,290 offers a partial solution to this drawback and discloses a skate that has a frame with three in-line wheels, the intermediate wheel is vertically adjustable to facilitate skate maneuverability.

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However, this solution is structurally complicated, because vertical adjustment of the intermediate wheel is achieved by means of a fixing bolt and a system of meshing teeth to provide the desired vertical adjustment.

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US patent No. 3,287,023 discloses a roller skate whose frame includes, at the rear and front parts, seats at different

elevations for the positioning of the rear and front wheels, which can thus be more or less spaced from the ground.

However, even this solution is not ideal, because in order
 5 to vary the arrangement of the wheels it is necessary to disconnect them from the frame and to reposition the wheels in the desired point.

This operation is long and entails the risk of losing a
 10 component as the user first disassembles the wheels and then reassembles them.

US patent No. 5,048,848 discloses an in-line roller skate provided with bushes for axial openings for the purpose of
 15 simplified installation. Two pairs of separate slots, whose axis is perpendicular to the ground, are in fact formed on the wings of the frame of the skate transversely to the wings themselves. Four complementarily shaped bushes can be temporarily positioned inside the two pairs of slots and are
 20 provided with eccentric holes that act as seats for the pivots of the central wheels. The arrangement of these four bushes, in positions that are mutually rotated through 180° , within these slots allows to position the central wheels at a slightly lower elevation than the front and rear ones, so
 25 as to improve turning.

However, even this solution is not free from drawbacks: first of all, to vary the elevation of the central wheels it is necessary, for each wheel, to disengage the two bushes
 30 from the respective openings, turn them, reposition them in the openings, place the wheel back in position, insert the pivot again, and lock it. Therefore, if the user wished to

vary the elevation of the position of the two central wheels, he would have to perform several maneuvers that increase the time required to complete the operation, with the additional possibility of losing or misplacing bushes, bolts, and pivots during these operations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The aim of the present invention is to solve the described technical problems, eliminating the drawbacks of the known art and thus providing a skate with in-line wheels that can be used both for speed skating and for slalom, in which easier turning on sharp curves is required.

Within the scope of this aim, an important object is to provide a skate in which the configuration for speed skating or for slalom can be achieved very quickly and simply.

Another important object is to provide a skate in which the operation for varying the configuration minimizes the possibility of losing the components of the skate.

Another important object is to provide a skate that associates with the preceding characteristics that of being reliable and safe in use.

Another object is to provide a device that has low production costs and may be produced with conventional machines and equipment.

This aim, these objects, and others which will become apparent hereinafter are achieved by an in-line roller skate with adjustable wheels as claimed in the appended claims.

Further objects will become apparent from the following description, which must be considered together with the accompanying drawings, which illustrates, by way of non-limitative example, a particular embodiment.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is an exploded perspective view of a skate according to the invention;

10 Figure 2 is a top plan view of the skate of Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a side view of the skate of Figure 1, with the four wheels arranged in a line so that their axes lie on the same plane of arrangement;

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Figure 4 is a view, similar to Figure 3, of the skate in the slalom configuration, that is to say, with the two central wheels pivoted on an axis that lies on a plane arranged below the plane of the two first wheels;

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Figure 5 is a side sectional view of the frame of the skate of Figure 1, taken along a longitudinal median plane;

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Figure 6 is a sectional view, taken along the plane VI-VI of Figure 4;

Figure 7 is a sectional view, taken along the plane VII-VII of Figure 3;

30 Figure 8 is a partially sectional top view of a support;

Figure 9 is a partially sectional side view of the support

of Figure 8;

Figure 10 is a sectional view, taken along the plane X-X of Figure 9;

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Figure 11 is an exploded sectional view, taken along the plane XI-XI of Figure 4.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION

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With reference to the above figures, the numeral 1 designates a skate that is constituted by a U-shaped frame 2 having parallel wings 3a and 3b that are directed toward the ground 4.

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First wheels 5a and 5b are pivoted to the wings 3a and 3b, at the front end 6 and at the rear end 7, by means of first pivots 8a and 8b. Pivots 8a, 8b are arranged in adapted circular seats formed on the wings and have axes that lie at a same plane 30.

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Two first longitudinal seats 9a and 9b are formed on wings 3a and 3b and are interposed between front end 6 and rear end 7. The seats are mutually identical and are arranged symmetrically with respect to a median plane that lies longitudinally to frame 2.

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Each one of first longitudinal seats 9a and 9b has an essentially rectangular shape with radiused corners. Two preferably elliptical first holes 10a and 10b are formed at the ends. These first holes are arranged symmetrically with respect to a median plane that lies transversely to each one

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of the first longitudinal seats 9a and 9b. The median axes that pass through first holes 10a and 10b are arranged at a plane 31 that is parallel to plane 30 that passes through the axes of first pivots 8a and 8b.

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Advantageously, plane 31 is arranged closer to the ground 4.

Each one of first longitudinal seats 9a and 9b has two concave central recesses 11a and 11b formed starting from the longitudinal edges 12a and 12b.

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Two complementarily shaped supports 13a and 13b are selectively associable with each one of first longitudinal seats 9a and 9b.

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Each one of supports 13a and 13b has two studs 14a and 14b, proximate to its ends. Studs 14a, 14b are shaped complementarily to first holes 10a and 10b and are formed so as to be arranged axially with respect to first holes 10a and 10b. Each one of supports 13a and 13b has two complementarily shaped protrusions 15a and 15b at recesses 11a and 11b.

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Two cylindrical bushes 16a and 16b are associated at right angles with studs 14a and 14b; their axis is arranged eccentrically with respect to the longitudinal median axis of studs 14a and 14b, and the pair of bushes forms second seats for the insertion of two second pivots 17a and 17b for pivoting two second wheels 18a and 18b.

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Advantageously, the staggering between the axis of the bushes and the axis of the studs is equal to the distance

between planes 30 and 31.

Bushes 16a and 16b have longitudinal axes that lie on the same plane and can selectively be arranged on the same
5 plane of arrangement 30 for the pivoting axes of the first wheels, when coupling the supports to first seats 9a and 9b.

Each one of second pivots 17a and 17b has a first head 19a and 19b that can be accommodated in the two studs 14a and
10 14b. A first stem 20a and 20b protrudes at right angles from each first head 19a and 19b and can be inserted in the two bushes 16a and 16b. First stem 20 has a length that corresponds to the width of the pair of wings 3a and 3b of the frame 2.

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A third seat 21 is formed axially and on the opposite side with respect to first head 19a and 19b in each first stem 20a and 20b. The seat is cylindrical and is internally threaded, and accommodates complementarily shaped second
20 stems 22 of two second pivots 23 that can be associated with wings 3a and 3b in opposition with each one of second pivots 17a and 17b.

The operation of the device is as follows: supports 13a and
25 13b can be positioned in the two first longitudinal seats 9a and 9b according to two different conditions. It is thus possible to arrange bushes 16a and 16b so that their axes lie on the same pivoting plane of first wheels 5a and 5b, and in this manner first wheels 5a and 5b and second wheels
30 18a and 18b lie on the same plane of arrangement; this condition is ideal for using the skate in speed skating.

Otherwise, it is possible to arrange bushes 16a and 16b so that their axes lie on a plane that is arranged below the pivoting plane of first wheels 5a and 5b, thus obtaining a slalom configuration for the skate, that is to say, a configuration in which the rolling surfaces of first wheels 5a and 5b are not in contact with the ground 4.

In this manner, second wheels 18a and 18b are pivoted about an axis that lies below the pivoting axis of first wheels 5a and 5b and thus lie on a plane of arrangement that is below the plane of arrangement of first wheels 5a and 5b.

It has thus been observed that the invention has achieved the intended aim and objects, providing a skate with in-line wheels that can be used both for speed skating and for slalom skating by changing the arrangement of the wheels in a simple and rapid manner by virtue of the possibility of extracting the supports, rotating them, and reassembling them to the two first longitudinal seats.

In this manner, the two second wheels can vary their elevation relative to the ground with respect to the two first wheels by a simple and quick operations.

Furthermore, a different configuration of the skate, for speed or for slalom, is achieved by manipulating only two supports that are rather large and are thus clearly visible and easy to grip for the user. Furthermore, should these supports slip out of one's hand during their reassembly to the first seats, they are easily recoverable, because of their rather large size.

The correct positioning of the supports is facilitated by their size and by the fact that each one can be inserted in the first seats from the outside of the wings of the frame of the skate and not from the inside of the wings.

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Furthermore, by positioning one support, both studs are positioned identically and thus correctly, eliminating the risk of having, on the same wing, seats for the central wheels arranged at different elevations.

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In practice, the materials employed, as well as the dimensions of the individual components, may be any according to the specific requirements; thus, for example, the shape of first holes 10a and 10b and of the complementarily shaped studs may be circular, without altering the fact that the median axes that pass through first holes 10a and 10b are arranged at a plane 31 that is parallel to the plane 30 that passes through the axes of first pivots 8a and 8b.

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The claims defining the invention are as follows:-

1. An in-line roller skate with adjustable wheels, comprising:

a U-shaped frame having a pair of generally parallel wings each provided on an outwardly facing side with a respective longitudinally extending

5 elongate seat including a pair of bores;

two first wheels rotatably mounted between said wings at respective mounting positions disposed at opposite ends of said frame, said seats being provided on said wings between said mounting positions;

two second wheels; and

10 two elongate wheel supports removably inserted in respective ones of said seats for supporting said second wheels on said frame, said supports each having a shape complementary with or conforming to the respective one of said seats, said supports each having a longitudinal axis, said supports each being provided at opposite ends with wheel seats eccentrically disposed with respect to, 5 or offset from, the longitudinal axis of the respective support, said second wheels being rotatably mounted to said wings via said wheel seats, whereby a vertical position of said second wheels relative to said first wheels may be adjusted by removing said second wheels and said supports from said frame, rotating each of said supports 180° about a horizontal axis oriented perpendicularly to the 20 respective longitudinal axis, reinserting said supports in said elongate seats and reattaching said wheels to said frame at said wheel seats.

2. The skate according to claim 1 wherein said wheel seats are disposed in additional holes provided in said supports at opposite ends thereof, said wheel

seats protruding from said additional holes, said additional holes having axes being disposed on the longitudinal axes of said supports, said wheel seats having axes offset relative to the axes of said additional holes.

3. The skate according to claim 2 wherein said additional holes are
5 elliptical.

4. The skate according to claim 2 wherein said additional holes are circular.

5. The skate according to claim 1 wherein each elongate seats has a pair
of longitudinal edges, each of said elongate seats being provided with two
10 concave recesses centrally disposed along a respective one of said longitudinal
edges.

6. The skate according to claim 5 wherein said supports are provided
with studs inserted into said holes, each of said supports being provided with a
pair of protrusions conforming to and inserted in said recesses.

7. The skate according to claim 1 wherein said supports are plates each
being substantially symmetrical relative to the respective longitudinal axis, each of
said elongate seats having a generally rectangular shape with rounded corners,
each of said seats being generally symmetrical about a respective vertical axis.

8. The skate according to claim 1 wherein said supports are provided
20 with studs inserted into said holes, said wheel seats including cylindrical bushes
inserted through said studs, said studs having first axes and said bushes having
second axes, said second axes being offset relative to respective ones of said first



axes, said second wheels being rotatably mounted to said wings via pivot pins inserted through respective ones of said bushes and said studs.

9. The skate according to claim 8 wherein said pivot pins each include a head and a stem, said stem being inserted in a respective one of said bushes.

5 10. The skate according to claim 9 wherein said stem is provided with an internally threaded axially located recess or seat, a stem of an additional pivot pin being inserted into said axially located recess or seat.

10 11. The skate according to claim 8 wherein said supports each have two possible operational orientations relative to said elongate seats, one of said possible operational orientations enabling a disposition of the axes of said bushes in a common plane with rotation axes of said first wheels.

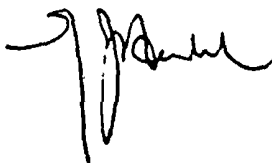
15 12. The skate according to claim 1 wherein said first wheels have rotational axes disposed in a first plane, the longitudinal axes of said supports being located in a second plane spaced from said first plane.

DATED this 29th day of July, 1998.

ROCES S.R.L.

20 By their Patent Attorneys:

CALLINAN LAWRIE

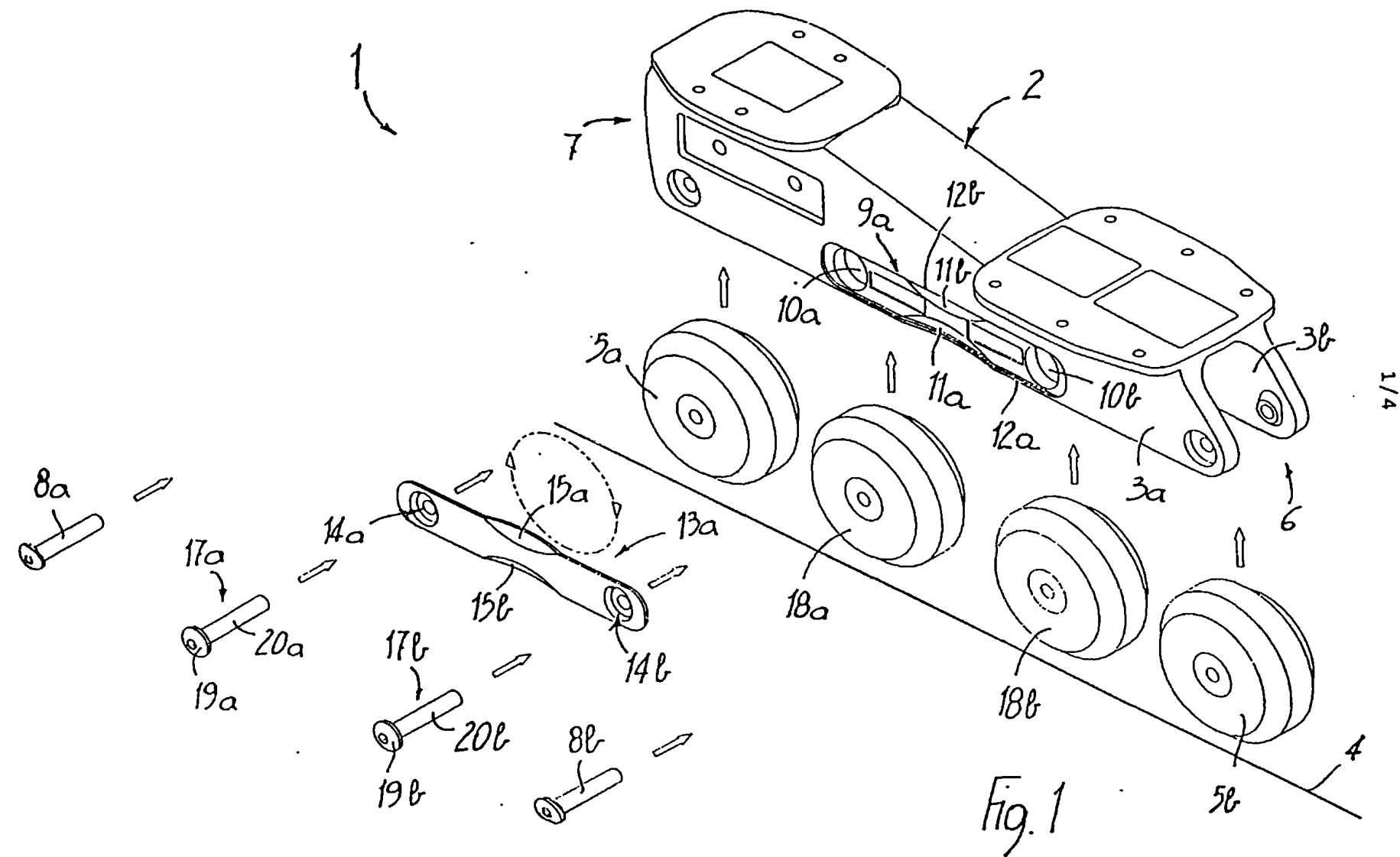


IN-LINE ROLLER SKATE WITH ADJUSTABLE WHEELS

ABSTRACT

An in-line roller skate with adjustable wheels includes a U-shaped frame (2) having first wings (3a, 3b) supporting two first wheels (5a, 5b) there between. On the first wings, between the two first wheels, there is a pair of first longitudinal seats for selectively coupling two complementarily shaped supports (13a, 13b). Second seats for two second wheels (18a, 18b) are formed on the supports, eccentrically with respect to the longitudinal median axis of the skate. The particular coupling of the two supports to the two first longitudinal seats allows to pivot the second wheels along either the same plane of the first wheels, or a different one.

(Ref. Fig. no. 1)



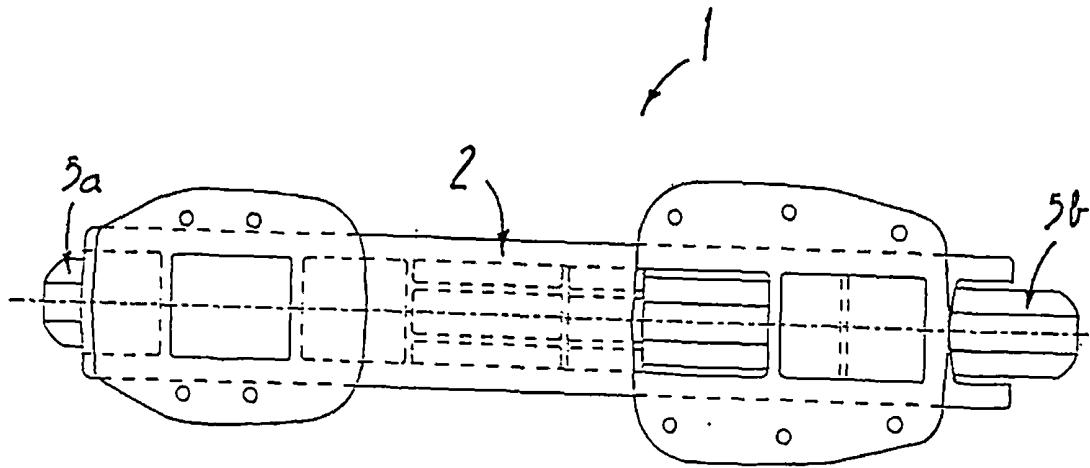


Fig. 2

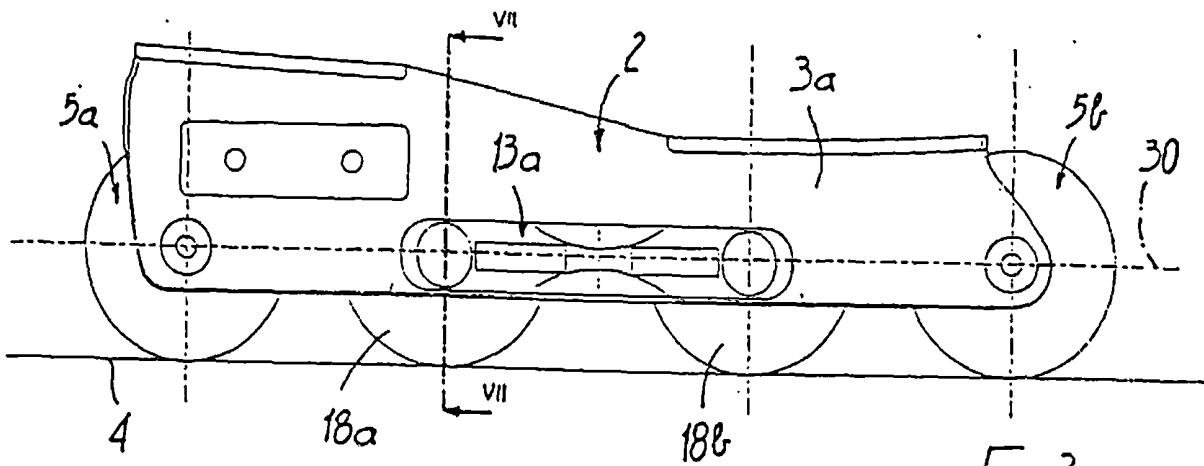


Fig. 3

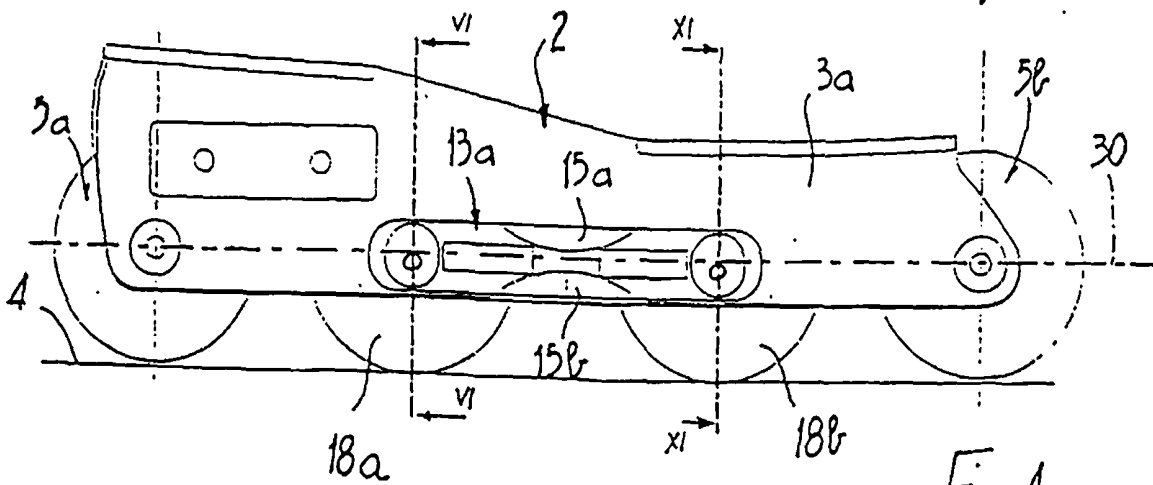


Fig. 4

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