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(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication****Cullen et al.**(10) **Pub. No.: US 2004/0155077 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Aug. 12, 2004**(54) **COMBINATION BEACH TOWEL AND
KNAPSACK**(76) Inventors: **Dennis R. Cullen**, Glenview, IL (US);
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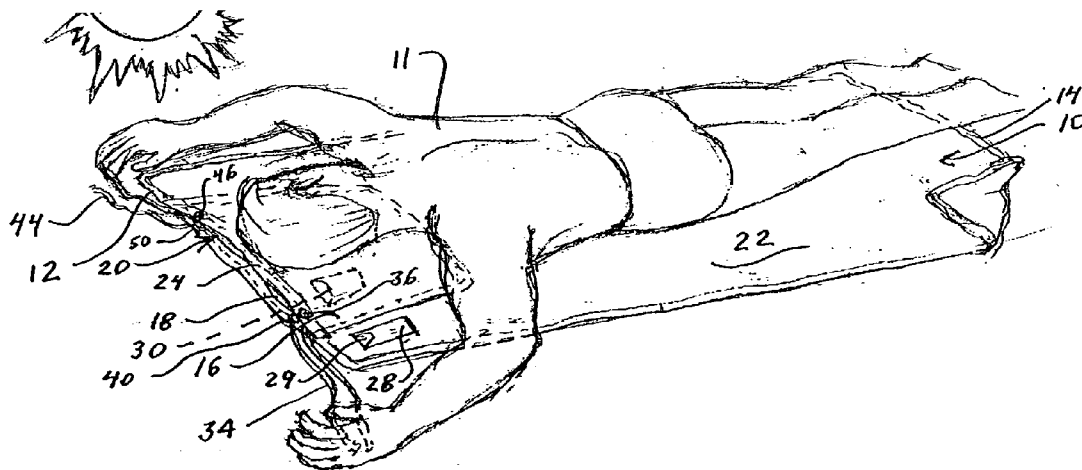
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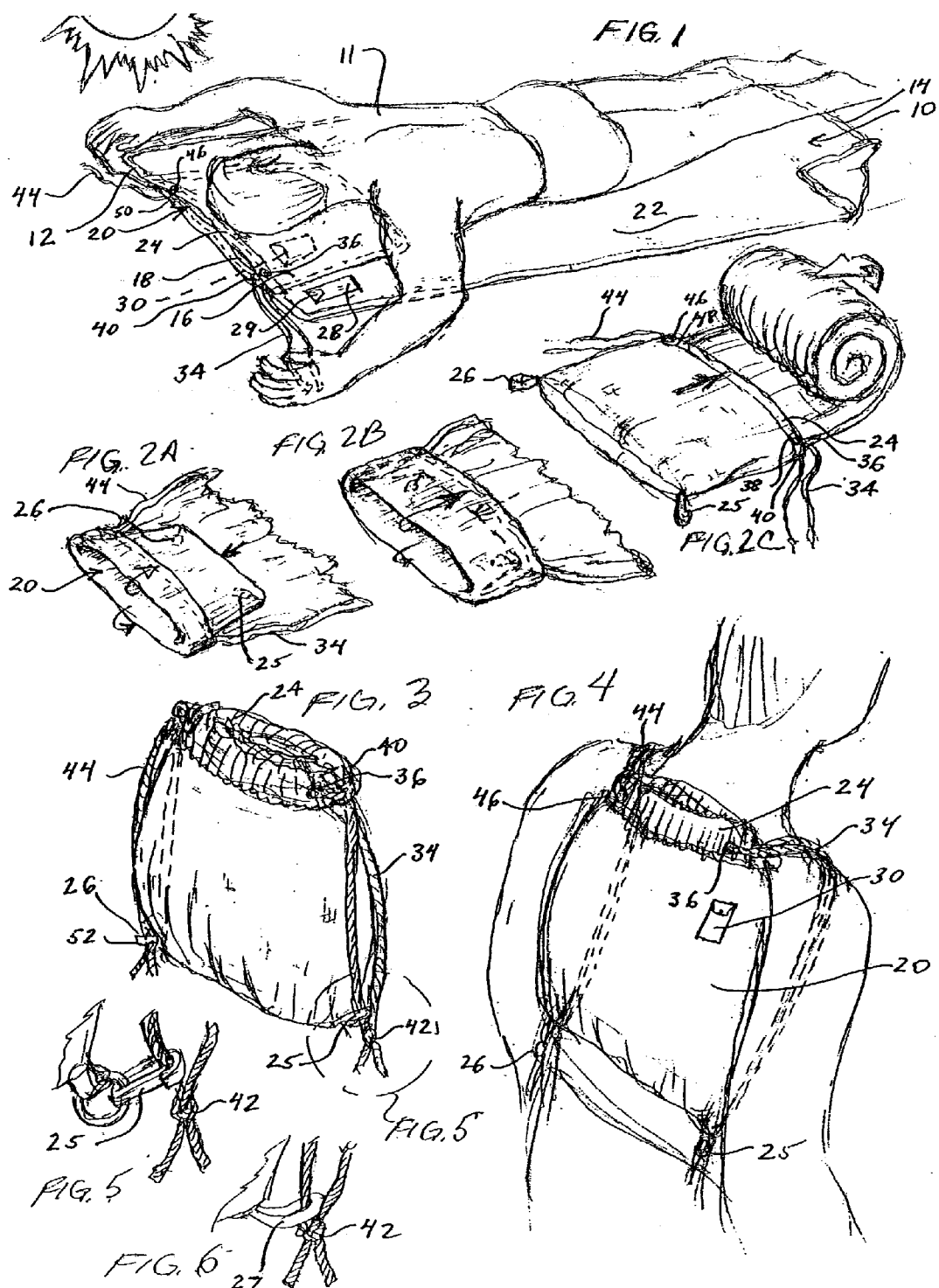
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CHICAGO, IL 60606 (US)**(21) Appl. No.: **10/361,257**(22) Filed: **Feb. 10, 2003****Publication Classification**(51) **Int. Cl.⁷ A45F 4/02; A45C 15/00;****A45F 3/04**(52) **U.S. Cl. 224/153; 224/576; 224/627**(57) **ABSTRACT**

A combination beach towel and knapsack in which the towel has a storage pocket or compartment at its top. The storage pocket has two clasp or similar fastening devices inside of the pocket. There are two drawstrings around the perimeter of the top of the pocket that when pulled, draws the top of the storage pocket into a closed position. The ends of the drawstrings are provided with fasteners.

When the towel is to be folded and placed into the storage position, the storage pocket is turned inside out. The towel is folded or stuffed into the inverted pocket and the drawstrings are pulled. The fasteners at the ends of the drawstrings are received by the clasps and securely retained. Each drawstring functions as a shoulder strap to be worn over the user's shoulder.

The storage pocket also has room to store miscellaneous small items such as suntan lotion and a radio. A separate compartment can also be provided inside of the pocket to securely store small items such as money or keys.





COMBINATION BEACH TOWEL AND KNAPSACK**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

[0001] This invention relates to an improved combination beach towel and self-contained carrying-tote bag that further functions as a knapsack. When the towel is used as a beach towel, it is a full sized towel that has separate provisions to store loose items such as suntan lotion, keys, money and other miscellaneous items that one takes to a beach or swimming pool. When the towel is in its storage tote bag configuration, it has provisions to store not only the loose items, but to contain itself within the tote portion of the towel. There are further provisions for the tote bag to have self-contained straps so that the tote bag can be worn as a knapsack.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIOR ART

[0002] People going to the beach or swimming pool normally are required to carry their own towel. Generally these towels are oversized beach towels that not only are used for drying the user, but also serve the function of providing a mat or protective surface for the user to lie upon. This protects the user from the hot sand and keeps the sand off of the user's body. When people go to the beach or pool they also carry numerous items for safety and comfort. Suntan lotion and sunglasses are required for personal safety. In addition they carry car keys, swim goggles, radios, cassette players, portable telephones and other similar items. Some people carry these items in a separate bag or purse. All types of materials have been used for tote bags including plastic, leather, rubberized nylon and other synthetic materials of varying designs. These separate bags are carried in addition to the large beach towel.

[0003] An improvement was the combination of a beach towel and tote bag. Several combination devices have been utilized in the past. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 5,346,308 discloses a beach towel that has a compartment or a bag front wall sewn onto the front of the beach towel. There is a flap that covers the compartment when the towel is folded into the storage configuration. There is also a zippered storage compartment. There is one or more shoulder straps attached to the bag for carrying it.

[0004] Another example of the prior designs is illustrated in U.S. Pat. No. 5,533,653. This illustrates a tote bag and towel that has at least one pocket to hold personal items. A zipper closes the pocket. A series of panels are attached to each other to form pockets. The panels must be carefully folded in order for the towel to fit into the pocket. A snap closure is provided to close the top pocket.

[0005] U.S. Pat. No. 5,618,110 illustrates a combination beach towel that has its own storage compartment. When the towel is folded, it is turned inside out and the towel is captured inside of the pocket. There is a drawstring around the top of the pocket to close the pocket when the towel is stuffed inside. There are also provided separately sewn in shoulder straps so that the towel can be carried as a backpack.

[0006] U.S. Pat. No. 5,785,219 illustrates a knapsack that has its open top connected to a mat. The mat is stored in the knapsack. There is a flap but no drawstrings to close the top.

[0007] U.S. Pat. No. 6,105,188 illustrates a child sleeping system that has two blankets. There is a base blanket and a

cover blanket. A pouch holds the folded blanket. There are carrying straps sewn into the knapsack. The system does not use any drawstrings to close the top.

[0008] None of these patents disclose the concept of using the drawstrings as shoulder straps. Furthermore none use the drawstrings as the shoulder straps by using hooks or other fasteners to attach the drawstrings to the pack. Applicant's invention provides an improvement over the prior art devices and solves several problems that the prior art devices did not address. Applicant's invention provides a full sized beach towel that has its own storage compartment that stores the towel for carrying. By merely turning the storage compartment inside out, the towel can be stuffed into the storage compartment for transporting the towel. Applicant's invention further provides a drawstring closure that closes the storage compartment when the towel is stored inside of it. The drawstrings are provided with fastening means that attach to clips on the towel. The clips are normally stored inside of the compartment but are exposed when the compartment is turned inside out and the towel is stored within the storage compartment. The drawstrings form shoulder straps so that the beach towel can be carried as a knapsack. This is a major improvement over the prior art devices which required separate shoulder straps to be attached to the tote bag to be carried as a knapsack. Applicant's device eliminates the need for separately attached straps.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] Applicant's invention is a combination beach towel and knapsack. With the towel in its unfolded position, there is a storage compartment or storage pocket at its top. The storage compartment has an open top and is closed on the other sides. There are two clips, rings or similar fastening devices mounted inside of the pocket. There are two drawstrings around the perimeter of the pocket that when pulled draws the top of the storage compartment into a closed position. The ends of the drawstrings are provided with fasteners. This may be knots, loops, rings or other similar fasteners.

[0010] When the towel is to be folded and placed into the storage position, the storage compartment or storage pocket is turned inside out. The towel is folded or stuffed into the inverted pocket and the drawstrings are pulled. The fasteners at the ends of the drawstrings are received by the fastening devices and securely retained. Each drawstring functions as a shoulder strap to be worn over the user's shoulder. Thus, a knapsack is formed that allows the user to transport the folded towel without using his or her hands.

[0011] The pocket also has room to store miscellaneous small items such as suntan lotion and a radio. A separate compartment can also be provided inside of the pocket to securely store small items such as money or keys. This separate compartment can have a zipper or other closure type top.

OBJECTS AND ADVANTAGES

[0012] Thus it is an object of the invention to provide a beach towel that has a storage compartment or storage pocket in which the towel can be folded or stuffed for storage.

[0013] It is another object to provide a beach towel that has a storage compartment or pocket that has at least one drawstring or similar closure cord to close the compartment after the towel is stuffed inside.

[0014] It is another object to provide a combination beach towel with a storage compartment that has drawstrings that serve the dual purpose of closing the storage compartment and functioning as shoulder straps for carrying the folded towel as a knapsack. The advantage is that the beach towel can be folded or stuffed into its own storage compartment and then worn as a knapsack, leaving the user's hands free.

[0015] It is yet another object to provide a combination beach towel and knapsack that has a compartment for storing miscellaneous items used at a beach and pool. Yet another object is to provide a combination beach towel and knapsack that has extra storage compartments for storing keys, money and other items separately from the storage compartment in which the towel is stored.

[0016] Another object is to provide a beach towel and knapsack that has a waterproof compartment for storing items.

[0017] These and other objects and advantages will be apparent from reading the following description of the drawings and description of the preferred embodiment.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0018] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the inventive combination towel and knapsack in its open position with the user lying on the towel.

[0019] FIG. 2A is a perspective view with portions removed of the combination towel and knapsack with the storage pocket beginning to be turned inside out.

[0020] FIG. 2B is a perspective view with portions removed of the inventive towel with the storage compartment further turned inside out.

[0021] FIG. 2C is a perspective view with portions removed of the inventive towel with the storage compartment fully turned inside out.

[0022] FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the inventive towel with the towel fully stuffed into the storage compartment, the drawstrings pulled to close the top, and the drawstrings forming shoulder straps.

[0023] FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the inventive combination towel worn as a knapsack.

[0024] FIG. 5 is an enlarged view of the fastener means used to fasten the drawstring.

[0025] FIG. 6 is an enlarged view of an alternative fastener means.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0026] Turning first to FIG. 1, there is shown the inventive combination towel and knapsack 10 in its fully opened position with a person 11 lying on the towel 10. The towel 10 can be made of standardly available materials such as cotton or cotton blends or synthetics. The towel 10 is normally rectangular in shape, with a top 12 and a bottom 14. There is a towel surface 22 that is generally soft and

absorbent. Usually the length is between sixty inches and eighty-four inches and the width is about thirty inches. The towel can be dyed numerous colors and have designs placed on either side as is commonly known in the art.

[0027] In one embodiment there is a rectangular pocket panel 16 that is a piece of material sewn onto the face of the towel 10. The pocket panel is stitched to the towel 10 on three sides, leaving an open unsewn top 18. Shapes other than rectangular can be used as long as an open top is presented. The pocket panel 16 and the towel surface 22 form a storage pocket 20. The inside of the storage pocket 20 can be lined with a waterproof material if desired. At the top of the storage pocket 20 is a string channel 24. This can be made from a portion of the pocket and the towel folded over and sewn closed. The channel extends around the entire perimeter of the storage pocket 20. There are preferably four openings in the string channel as will be more fully described herein.

[0028] As seen in FIG. 2A there are two fastener means 25 and 26 inside of the storage pocket 20. A flexible material attaches these to the inside of the storage pocket 20. The fastener means can be rings, clips, clasps with a pivotable locking member mounted on a hinge or other similar device. The preferred faster means are clasps such as illustrated in FIG. 5 that are preferably mounted toward the bottom of the pocket 20. However, as seen in FIG. 6, a loop 27 may also be used as a fastener means. Other devices could also be used such as rings or various commonly available clips.

[0029] Also as seen in FIG. 1, there may also be additional pockets such as external pocket 28. This pocket is dimensioned to receive such items as keys, money or a cellular telephone. There is a closure device such as a flap 29 that can have at its end any type of fastener to close the flap and secure the contents. Typical fasteners include a snap fastener, Velcro closure, pin or zipper.

[0030] The option of an internal pocket 30 that is sewn inside of the storage pocket 20 is also provided. This pocket can be used to store items such as money, keys, identification and other personal items brought to the beach. There is a flap or zipper closure at the top to securely store the items. Other types of closures can also be used with equal success.

[0031] As seen in FIGS. 2A through 2C, the towel can be stored inside of the storage pocket 20. To achieve this, the storage pocket 20 is turned inside out. In FIG. 2A the top 18 is folded over by turning itself outwardly over itself. FIG. 2B shows the pocket 20 progressively moved down over the towel 10. In FIG. 2C the pocket 20 is completely turned inside out and the bottom of the pocket 20 is now located at the along an edge of the towel. The storage pocket 20, in its reversed orientation, receives the towel, which is folded or stuffed inside of the storage pocket 20. The fastener means 25 and 26, which were originally mounted inside of the pocket 20, are now oriented outside of the pocket 20 and at the side of the pocket 20 opposite the open top 18. The string channel 24 can be seen extending around the perimeter of the storage pocket 20.

[0032] There is a first cord or string 34 that is pulled through the string channel 24 around the entire perimeter of the open top 18. The first cord 34 enters the channel 24 from an open end 36 that is surrounded by a grommet 38 for strength. It exists from exit opening 40. The ends of the cord

34 are tied together in a knot 42 forming an endless cord. There is a second cord or string 44 that is also received in the string channel 24. The second cord 44 enters the channel 24 through open end 46 that may also have a grommet 48 around it. The second cord 44 extends around the entire perimeter of the open top 18 just as the first cord 34. It exits the channel 24 at exit opening 50. The ends of the second cord 44 are also tied together in a knot 52. The first and second cords 34 and 44 form continuous looped cords with one end being received and held in the channel 24 and the second end terminating at the knots 42 and 52 respectively.

[0033] In FIG. 3, the entire towel has been folded or stuffed into the storage pocket 20. The first cord 34 has its end adjacent to the knot 42 attached to the fastening means 25. The second cord 44 has its end adjacent to the knot 52 attached to the fastening means 26. In this manner the cords 34 and 44 have their tops retained within the string channel 24 and their respective ends attached to the fastening means 25 and 26. The cords are pulled in opposite directions causing the open top 18 to close. The towel is securely held within the storage pocket 20. The cords 34 and 44 form shoulder straps through which the user's arms are placed. This is illustrated in FIG. 4. The towel can thus be carried like a knapsack.

[0034] The cords 34 and 44 can be adapted with adjustment clips to adjust the length of the cords. The clips can be any one of a number of commonly used types that receive and allow adjustment of the length of the cords. Thus the length of the shoulder straps can be adjusted to allow the knapsack to be worn by the user. Alternatively the ends of the cords 34 and 44 can be tied at different points along their length to lengthen or shorten the length of the cords.

[0035] While the invention has been described in conjunction with a specific embodiment, it is evident that many alternatives, modifications and variations will be apparent to those skilled in the art in light of the foregoing description. Accordingly, it is intended to embrace all such alternatives, modifications and variations as fall within the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A combination towel and knapsack comprising:

a towel having top and bottom portions;

a pocket at the top portion of the towel, the pocket having an open top;

fastener means disposed inside of the pocket when the towel is in a first unfolded orientation and disposed on the outside of the pocket when the towel is in a second folded orientation when the pocket is turned inside out;

a channel formed at the open top of the pocket;

closure means for closing the open top, the closure means comprising at least one drawstring having first and second ends, the first end retained in the channel;

complementary fastener receiving means disposed at the second end of the drawstring and adapted for engaging the fastener means when the pocket is turned inside out;

whereby the first end of the drawstring is retained in the channel at the top portion of the towel and the second

end is engaged by the fastener means forming a carrying strap when the towel is in the second folded orientation.

2. The combination towel and knapsack of claim 1 wherein the closure means comprises a pair of drawstrings, each drawstring having the first end retained in the channel and two complementary fastener receiving means disposed at the second end, and two fastener means disposed inside of the pocket which are engaged by the complementary fastener receiving means when the towel is in the second folded orientation when the pocket is turned inside out.

3. The combination towel and knapsack of claim 2 wherein the two fastener means are each comprised of a clasp attached to the inside of the pocket.

4. The combination towel and knapsack of claim 3 wherein the complementary fastener receiving means comprises a knot tied at the second end of each of the pair of drawstrings, the knots adapted to be received by one of the clasps.

5. The combination towel and knapsack of claim 3 wherein the complementary fastener receiving means comprises a ring attached to the second end of each of the pair of drawstrings, the rings adapted to be received by one of the clasps.

6. The combination towel and knapsack of claim 1 and further comprising a waterproof liner disposed on the inside of the pocket.

7. The combination towel and knapsack of claim 1 and further comprising a compartment disposed inside of the pocket, the compartment having an open side with closure means for closing the open side.

8. The combination towel and knapsack of claim 1 and further comprising a personal item compartment disposed on the towel, the personal item compartment having an open side for allowing access to the personal compartment, and closure means for closing the open side.

9. The combination towel and knapsack of claim 1 wherein the pocket is formed by a pocket patch of material attached to a surface of the towel along three sides, with the open side defining the open top.

10. A combination towel and knapsack comprising:

a towel having top and bottom portions;

a pocket panel having a plurality of sides, one of the sides being a top, the pocket panel affixed to the towel along all of its sides except the top, the affixed pocket panel defining a pocket with an open top;

a channel disposed around the open top;

fastener means disposed inside of the pocket when the towel is in a first unfolded orientation, and disposed outside of the pocket when the pocket is turned inside out;

a pair of drawstrings retained in the channel for selectively pulling the open top from an open to a closed position, each drawstring having a first end retained in the channel and a second end remote from the channel,

complementary fastener receiving means at the second end of each drawstring, the complementary fastener means adapted for engaging the fastener means when the pocket is turned inside out; and

a pair of carrying straps formed by the first end of the drawstring being retained in the channel and the second end being engaged by the fastener means.

11. The combination towel and knapsack of claim 10 wherein the channel is formed from a portion of the pocket panel and portion of the towel folded over and attached to itself.

12. The combination towel and knapsack of claim 10 wherein the fastener means are comprised of at least two clasps attached to the inside of the pocket.

13. The combination towel and knapsack of claim 10 wherein the complementary fastener receiving means comprises a knot tied at the second end of each drawstring, the knots adapted to be received by one of the fastener means.

14. The combination towel and knapsack of claim 10 wherein the complementary fastener receiving means comprises a ring attached to the second end of each drawstring, the rings adapted to be received by one of the fastener means.

15. The combination towel and knapsack of claim 10 and further comprising a waterproof liner disposed on the inside of the pocket.

16. The combination towel and knapsack of claim 10 and further comprising a compartment disposed inside of the pocket, the compartment having an open side with closure means for closing the open side.

17. The combination towel and knapsack of claim 10 and further comprising a personal item compartment disposed on the towel, the personal item compartment having an open side for allowing access to the personal item compartment, and closure means for closing the personal item compartment.

18. A combination towel and knapsack comprising:

a rectangular towel with top and bottom portions;

a pocket disposed at the top of the towel, the pocket having an open top that is in parallel alignment with the top of the towel;

a channel disposed about the open top;

entrance and exit openings for allowing access to the channel;

a drawstring with one end disposed within the channel and a second end remote from the channel, the drawstring entering the channel through the entrance opening and leaving the channel through the exit opening;

fastener means disposed inside of the pocket when the towel is in a first unfolded orientation, and disposed outside of the pocket when the towel is in a second folded orientation with the pocket turned inside out;

the second end of the drawstring adapted for engaging the fastener means when the pocket is in the second folded orientation;

whereby when the towel is in the second position, the drawstring has one end in the channel and the second end engaged by the fastener means thereby forming a carrying strap adapted to be worn over a user's shoulder.

19. The combination towel and backpack of claim 18 and further comprising a second drawstring with one end disposed within the channel and a second end remote from the channel, the second drawstring entering the channel through the entrance opening and leaving the channel through the exit opening, the second end of the second drawstring adapted for engaging the fastener means when the pocket is in the second orientation, the first and second drawstrings forming a pair of carrying straps adapted to be worn over the user's shoulders.

20. The combination towel and backpack of claim 19 wherein the fastener means comprise a pair of clasps adapted for receiving the second end of the drawstrings when the towel is in the second orientation.

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