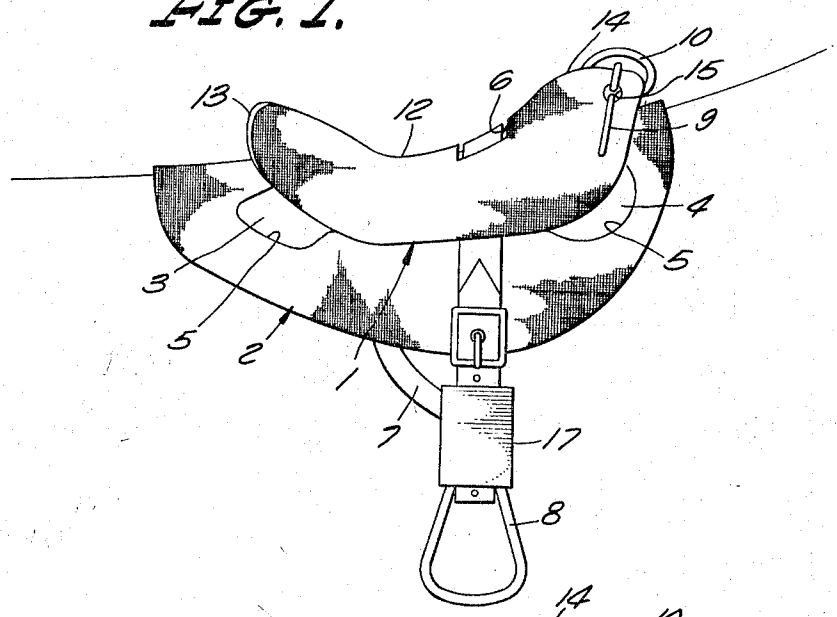
June 6, 1967 J. V. LE LAURIN, JR 3,323,286

LIGHTWEIGHT RIDING SADDLE

Filed Nov. 26, 1965

FIG. 1.



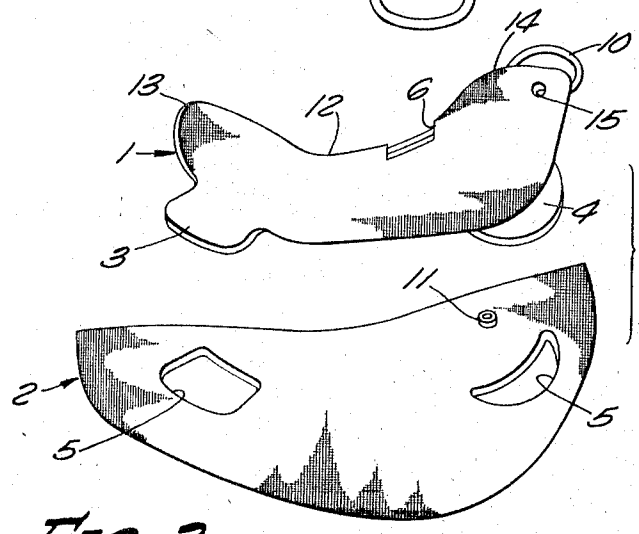
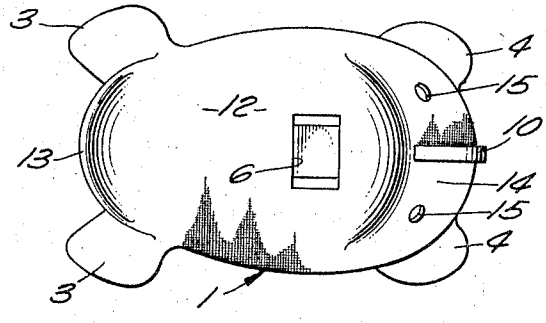


FIG. 2.

FIG. 3.



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United States Patent Office 3,323,286 Patented June 6, 1967

3,323,286

LIGHTWEIGHT RIDING SADDLE

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Filed Nov. 26, 1965, Ser. No. 510,009
10 Claims. (Cl. 54—44)

This invention relates to a saddle and more particularly to a combination pad and saddle tree.

Typical saddles including English saddles and Western saddles are normally constructed from a strong but heavy material. Although such heavy saddles may be desirable and even necessary for heavy duty use, they are difficult for a woman or child to handle. Furthermore, the typical saddle made of leather covering a wooden frame is not particularly attractive unless the leather is decorated by costly ornamentation.

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide an attractive and lightweight saddle.

It is a further object of this invention to provide a lightweight saddle comprising a saddle tree and a saddle pad formed into an integral unit by a means for attaching the saddle tree to the saddle pad.

It is still a further object of this invention to provide an attractive and colorful saddle. These and further objects of this invention can more fully be understood by reference to the following figures wherein:

FIGURE 1 is a side elevation view of the saddle of my invention.

FIGURE 2 is a side elevation view of the separated pad and tree-seat which are the principle components of my saddle.

FIGURE 3 is a plan view of the tree-seat used in my saddle.

The main features of my invention as illustrated in FIGURE 1 are a lightweight tree-seat **1** and pad **2** to which the tree-seat is connected. The tree-seat is attached to the pad by means of rear projections **3** and front projections **4** on the tree-seat which fit into the pockets **5** of the pad. A slot **6** in the tree-seat is provided for lacing of cinch strap **7** and stirrup **8**. The tree-seat may be further secured to the pad by means of strap **9** which is laced through the tree and the pad, the free end being available for tying on ropes or other gear. A web **10** may be provided as a hand hole and secured to the front of the tree-seat.

FIGURE 2 illustrates the pad and tree-seat separated. The main feature of the pad is the front and rear pockets identified as **5** into which the projections of the tree-seat fit to maintain a secure attachment of the tree-seat to the pad and prevent the seat from slipping. The pad may be provided with grommets **11** to receive strap **9** which further secures the tree-seat to the pad.

The pad should be of a lightweight material and yet its thickness should be such as to produce a sufficient cushioning effect. Any typical prior art pad material such as leather lined with wool skin, wool, covered sponge rubber, etc. may be used. The preferred material for the pad, however, is canvas filled with a suitable packing material such as goat hair. The goat hair filled canvas pad is desirable because of its low cost, great cushioning effect, strength, and ability to be shaped and dyed to form an attractive appearance. The filling material is preferably goat's hair or other animal hair, however, filling materials such as wool or foam rubber may also be satisfactorily used. The shape of the pad and location of the pockets may vary somewhat depending upon the nature of the tree-seat. Normally, the pad will be somewhat larger than the tree-seat to present a pleasing appearance and also to act as a pad for the cinch strap and stirrups.

FIGURES 2 and 3 illustrate the tree-seat. Preferably the tree-seat is fabricated from a strong lightweight material such as glass fiber-reinforced resin. The tree-seat may be of any desirable shape, FIGURE 3 showing a seat having a central seat portion **12** formed integrally with cantle **13** and fork **14**. Although the saddle of this invention is particularly useful in a lightweight saddle of the English type, it may be provided with a horn if desired. Slots **6** are provided for lacing stirrup leathers and cinch straps to the tree. The cinch and stirrup straps may be sewn together at the middle portion of the tree and laced up across and down through the slots which prevents slipping. Additional securement of the tree-seat to the pad can be obtained by providing corresponding slots in the pad and thus lacing the pad and tree together by means of the cinch strap and stirrups. Holes **15** are also provided for fastening the pad to the tree by means of strap **9**.

A strong yet lightweight tree-seat may be formed as a single unit from a molded shell of yieldable glass fiber-reinforced resin. This construction gives the saddle great rigidity coupled with light weight. Any desired shape or type of tree-seat may be used in this invention. Exemplary of saddle styles that come within this invention are the English and Western saddles.

The tree-seat is covered by a suitable padding material, preferably an attractive fabric which also provides substantial cushioning effect. A fabric particularly suitable for this purpose is Acrilan pile. Various colors for the seat covering material may be used and they may be chosen so that they are complementary with the color of the pad. The seat covering material may be attached to the tree-seat by various fastening means, however, it is preferred to glue the fabric to the tree. Preferably, the edges of the tree-seat are covered so that the fiber glass will not cut into the canvas pad and pockets of the canvas pad. In addition to the Acrilan pad, any other suitable pile material may be used, any padding and covering material which may be affixed to the tree-seat being within the scope of this invention.

An important feature of this invention is the provision for an especially attractive and colorful saddle. Thus, the pad and tree-seat covering may be made of colorful and attractive materials. The color scheme may also be carried out by various other features such as, for example, the sleeve **17** covering the buckle that fastens the stirrup to the stirrup leather. Thus, materials which will aid in carrying out this color scheme are especially suitable in the present invention.

Having thus described the invention, I claim:

1. A saddle comprising a pad and tree-seat, said tree-seat having outwardly extending projections along the edge of the seat in substantially the same plane as the seat and said pad having pockets receiving said projections to thereby secure said tree-seat to said pad.

2. The saddle of claim **1** wherein corresponding holes are provided in said pad and said seat whereby said seat can be laced to said pad.

3. The saddle of claim **1** wherein said tree-seat has slots for lacing a cinch strap and stirrup strap.

4. The saddle of claim **1** wherein said tree-seat is covered with a padding material.

5. The saddle of claim **1** wherein said pad is canvas filled with a padding material.

6. The saddle of claim **1** wherein said tree-seat is a fiber glass reinforced resin.

7. The saddle of claim **1** wherein said seat is covered by a material comprising Acrilan pile.

8. The saddle of claim **1** wherein said tree-seat is secured to said pad by means of cinch strap and stirrup straps laced through slots in said pad and said saddle tree.

9. The saddle of claim 8 wherein the tree-seat is further secured to the pad by means of holes and lacing.

10. The saddle of claim 1 wherein the tree-seat is a fiber reinforced resin shell filled with rigid plastic foam.

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