

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
15 May 2003 (15.05.2003)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 03/039284 A1

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: **A43B 23/00**

(21) International Application Number: PCT/US02/35509

(22) International Filing Date:
5 November 2002 (05.11.2002)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
10/007,676 5 November 2001 (05.11.2001) US

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(81) Designated States (national): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH,

GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, OM, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

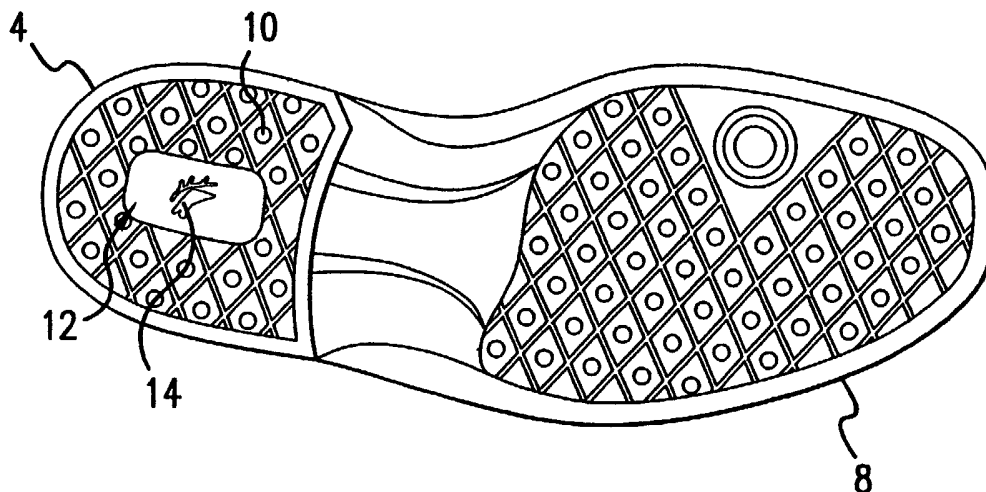
(84) Designated States (regional): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, SK, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Declarations under Rule 4.17:

— as to the applicant's entitlement to claim the priority of the earlier application (Rule 4.17(iii)) for the following designations AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, OM, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW, ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, SK, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG)

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: SHOE AND METHOD FOR SHOWING INDICIA



(57) Abstract: The invention includes an apparatus and method for displaying indicia, such as a logo or trademark, on a shoe (2). A window (12) is provided in the shoe. Indicia (14) appear on a removable member (16) and are displayed through the window.

WO 03/039284 A1



— of inventorship (Rule 4.17(iv)) for US only

Published:

— with international search report

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

SHOE AND METHOD FOR SHOWING INDICIA**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION****Priority Claim**

This Application claims the benefit of U.S. Patent Application No. 10/007,676 filed on November 5, 2001.

Field of the Invention

The invention relates to footwear and particularly to the display of indicia, such as logos or trademarks, on an item of footwear. The invention is a shoe having a transparent window. Indicia appear on a removable member engaging an interior surface of the shoe and are visible through the transparent window. A method of practicing the invention also is provided.

Description of Related Art

The footwear business is highly competitive and the display of indicia is commercially desirable. For the purposes of this application, "indicia" mean markings conveying items of information or of decoration. Examples of indicia include logos, trademarks, colors, patterns and artworks. "Identifying indicia" may be used to identify a make or model of shoe or to identify a manufacturer. The term "shoe" means any item of footwear, including without limitation a shoe, boot, athletic or adventure footwear, ski boots, and other similar items.

Modern materials and manufacturing techniques make possible innovation in the display of indicia on a shoe. A shoe may display indicia in any of a number of ways, including printing, embossing, embroidering, through the use of an applique, through the use of a molded shape, and many others. The prior art teaches a transparent air bladder incorporated into the heel or sole of a shoe having indicia located in the interior of the air bladder or incorporated permanently into the structure of the shoe. In the prior art shoe, the indicia are visible through the air bladder. The present invention differs from the prior art in that the indicia are viewed through a window in the shoe, not through an air bladder. Also, the indicia of the present invention appear on a removable member and are not printed on the air bladder or otherwise incorporated

31 permanently into the structure of the shoe.

32 **Summary of the Invention**

33 The present invention provides for the display of indicia in a shoe. A
34 window is provided in the shoe communicating from an interior surface of the
35 shoe to an exterior surface of the shoe. Indicia appear on a removable member
36 that engages the interior surface of the shoe. The indicia of the removable
37 member are aligned with the window so that the indicia are displayed to an
38 observer through the window. The indicia may be identifying indicia to
39 commercially distinguish the shoe from other makes or models of shoes or to
40 distinguish the shoe from the shoes of other manufacturers.

41 The use of a removable member allows great flexibility in the use and
42 display of indicia on a shoe. A manufacturer may, for example and without
43 limitation, inexpensively adjust the indicia to reflect local market conditions or
44 languages, to vary the indicia seasonally, to provide private labeling for a
45 retailer, to provide personalized or monogrammed shoes, or to provide any other
46 marking that a consumer may find desirable. The use of the removable member
47 allows a manufacturer, retailer, or other interested person to inexpensively
48 create shoes that, for example, commemorate a special event, affiliation,
49 person, place or product. Indicia appearing on the removable member and
50 displayed in the window may be used to identify any person, item, group, or
51 interest of any kind.

52 **Brief Description of the Drawings**

53 Fig. 1 is a side view of a shoe.

54 Fig. 2 is a bottom view of a shoe.

55 Fig. 3 is a side view of an insole.

56 Fig. 4 is a bottom view of an insole.

57 Fig. 5 is a sectional view of a shoe.

58 Fig. 6 is a rear perspective view of an alternative embodiment.

59 Fig. 7 is a sectional view of an alternative embodiment.

60 **Description of an Embodiment**

61 Referring to Fig. 1, a shoe 2 has a heel 4, an upper 6 and a sole 8. From
62 Fig. 2, the heel 4 has an exterior surface 10. A window 12 appears in the heel
63 4. The window 12 is composed preferably of a transparent or semi-transparent
64 polymer forming a durable, water tight seal with heel exterior surface 10.

65 Indicia 14 are visible to a consumer through the window 12. The indicia
66 14 may be identifying indicia 14 that convey information such as to identify a
67 make, model or manufacturer of the shoe. The indicia 14 may be decorative or
68 may comprise any marking that a consumer may find commercially desirable.

69 Indicia 14 appear on a removable member 16 (Figs. 3, 4). The removable
70 member 16 is placed in the shoe 2 so that indicia 14 are visible through window
71 12.

72 The removable member 16 comprises indicia-bearing member 18 bonded
73 to an insole 20. The indicia-bearing member 18 preferably is composed of a
74 resilient material to cushion the foot and to reduce damage to the window 12
75 resulting from contact between window 12 and indicia-bearing member 18. The
76 preferred material for the indicia-bearing member 18 is a high-memory sponge.
77 An example of such sponge is "Poron®" sold by Rodgers Corporation, which is
78 located in Connecticut. The indicia-bearing member 18 preferably is of a color
79 contrasting to the color of the sole 8. In one embodiment, the indicia-bearing
80 member 18 is yellow in color while the sole 8 is black. The particular indicia 14
81 and the colors used are a matter of choice to be selected by the designer and
82 are not a part of the invention. The insole 20 preferably also is composed of a
83 resilient material to increase comfort of the wearer.

84 Fig. 5 is a cross-section of shoe 2 with insole 20 and indicia-bearing
85 member 18 installed. Heel 4 of shoe 2 defines a heel interior surface 22 and a
86 heel exterior surface 10. Window 12 communicates between the heel interior
87 surface 22 and heel exterior surface 10. When the insole 20 and indicia-bearing
88 member 18 are inserted into shoe 2, indicia 14 are displayed through window
89 12 to a consumer.

90 The heel interior surface 22 (Fig. 5) defines a heel interior volume 24.
91 When the insole 20 and indicia-bearing member 18 are installed in shoe 2, the
92 indicia-bearing member 18 intrudes into the heel interior volume 24. The
93 intrusion of the indicia-bearing member 18 into the heel interior volume 24
94 serves to locate the indicia 14 with respect to the window 12. The indicia 14
95 preferably are located close enough to the window 12 for ready observation of
96 the indicia 14 by a consumer. The indicia 14 are located at a pre-selected depth
97 from the window 12 to provide a commercially attractive appearance.

98 While a window 12 communicating through heel 4 is the embodiment
99 described above, other configurations are contemplated by the invention.
100 Window 12 may communicate between any shoe interior surface 26 and any
101 shoe exterior surface 28. For example, window 12 may appear in sole 8 and
102 communicate between sole exterior surface 30 to sole interior surface 32.
103 Window 12 may appear in tongue 34 and communicate between a tongue
104 interior surface 36 and a tongue exterior surface 38. Window 12 may appear in
105 upper 6 and communicate between an upper interior surface 40 and an upper
106 exterior surface 42.

107 In the event that a window 12 location other than the heel 4 location is
108 selected, a removable member 16 appropriate to the window 12 location also is
109 selected. When a window 12 communicates through an upper 6, a removable
110 member 16 adapted to display indicia 14 through said window 12 is selected.
111 Likewise, when a window 12 communicating through a tongue 34 or a sole 8 is
112 selected, a removable member 16 adapted to display indicia 14 through the
113 window 12 in the tongue 34 or the sole 8 is selected. Without limitation, a
114 removable member 8 in the situation of a window 12 through an upper 6 or
115 tongue 34 may take the form of an insert or shoe liner. A removable member
116 16 in the situation of a window 12 through a sole 8 may comprise an insole 20.

117 Indicia 14 include any markings or objects applied to the indicia-bearing
118 member 18 using any means of the art, including without limitation printing,
119 embossing, casting, painting, cutting, carving, burning, melting and molding.

120 Indicia may include contained gases or liquids and may include artificial lights.
121 Indicia 14 also include insertion of objects of any type into heel interior volume
122 24 for display through window 12.

123 An alternative embodiment is illustrated by Figs. 6 and 7. Window 12
124 appears in a shoe counter 44 corresponding to the portion of the upper 6
125 adjacent to the posterior of heel 4. Window 12 communicates between a
126 counter interior surface 46 and a counter exterior surface 48. Indicia 14 appear
127 on an upward extending portion 50 of alternative insole 52. The upwardly
128 extending portion 50 extends upward from heel 4 so that indicia 14 appearing
129 on the upwardly extending portion 50 are visible through window 12. The
130 location of indicia 14, window 12 and upwardly extending portion 50 may be
131 selected by the designer. Upwardly extending portion 50 may extend above
132 counter 44. Indicia 14 may be embossed or recessed into upwardly extending
133 portion 50 so that indicia 14 appear at a preselected distance from window 12
134 to achieve an aesthetic effect.

135 The flexibility of the present invention allows inexpensive personalization
136 of said indicia 14 by a manufacturer, retailer, consumer or other interested
137 person. Indicia 14 of any type, such as a monogram, sports team logo, image
138 of a favored motor vehicle, political or religious affiliation, names of loved ones
139 or any information whatsoever may be displayed. A manufacturer may provide
140 supplies to a consumer to personalize the indicia 14 displayed by the removable
141 member 16.

142 The method of the present invention comprises providing a window 12
143 communicating from a shoe interior surface 26 to a shoe exterior surface 28 and
144 providing a removable member 16 engaging the shoe interior surface 26, the
145 removable member 16 bearing indicia 14, the indicia 14 being visible through
146 said window 12.

147 Many different embodiments of the above invention are possible. This
148 application is intended to address all possible embodiments and is limited only as
149 described in the following claims:

1 I claim:

1 1. An apparatus comprising:

2 a. a shoe having a shoe interior surface and a shoe exterior
3 surface; and

4 b. a window communicating between said shoe interior surface
5 and said shoe exterior surface; and

6 b. a removable member engaging said shoe interior surface; and

7 c. indicia appearing on said removable member, said indicia being
8 aligned with said window such that said indicia may be observed through
9 said window.

1 2. The apparatus of claim 1, said window being comprised of a
2 transparent or substantially transparent polymer.

1 3. The apparatus of claim 2, said shoe interior surface being a heel
2 interior surface, said shoe exterior surface being a heel exterior surface said
3 window communicating between said heel exterior surface and said heel
4 interior surface.

1 4. The apparatus of claim 3, said removable member comprising:

2 a. an insole engaging said shoe interior surface; and

3 b. an indicia-bearing member bonded to said insole.

1 5. The apparatus of claim 4, said heel interior surface defining a heel
2 interior volume, said indicia-bearing member extending into said heel interior
3 volume.

1 6. The apparatus of claim 5, said window being bonded to said heel
2 exterior surface such that said window forms a substantially water-tight seal
3 with said heel exterior surface.

1 7. The apparatus of Claim 1, said indicia comprising identifying indicia.

1 8. The apparatus of claim 2, said shoe having a sole, said sole having a

2 sole interior surface and a sole exterior surface, said window communicating
3 between said sole interior surface and said sole exterior surface.

1 9. The apparatus of claim 2, said shoe having an upper, said upper
2 having an upper interior surface and an upper exterior surface, said window
3 communicating between said upper interior surface and said upper exterior
4 surface.

1 10. The apparatus of claim 2, said shoe further comprising a tongue, said
2 tongue having a tongue interior surface and a tongue exterior surface, said
3 window communicating between said tongue interior surface and said
4 tongue exterior surface.

1 11. The apparatus of claim 2, said removable member being adapted to
2 allow personalization of said indicia.

1 12. An apparatus comprising:

- 2 a. a shoe having a counter, a counter interior surface and a
3 counter exterior surface;
- 4 b. a window communicating between said counter interior surface
5 and said counter exterior surface;
- 6 c. an alternative insole engaging said counter interior surface;
- 7 d. indicia appearing on said alternative insole, said indicia being
8 aligned with said window such that said indicia may be observed through
9 said window.

1 13. The apparatus of claim 12, said window being comprised of a
2 transparent or substantially transparent polymer.

1 14. The apparatus of claim 13, said window being bonded to said shoe
2 exterior surface such that said window forms a substantially water-tight seal
3 with said counter exterior surface.

1 15. The apparatus of claim 14, said alternative insole having an upwardly
2 extending portion, said indicia appearing on said upwardly extending portion.

1 16. A method for displaying indicia on a shoe comprising:

- 2 a. providing a window in said shoe,
- 3 b. providing a removable member exhibiting indicia,
- 4 c. aligning said removable member and said shoe so that said
- 5 indicia are displayed in said window.

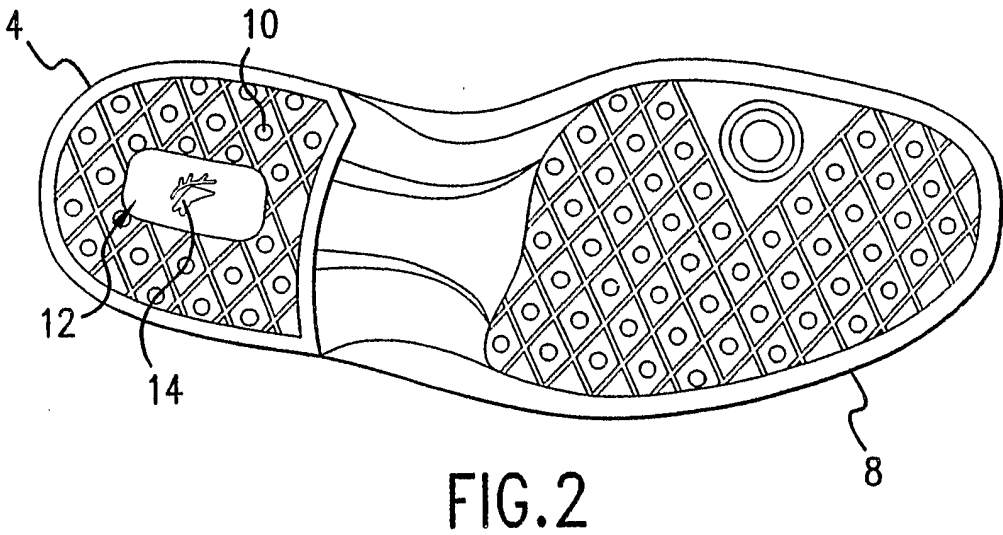
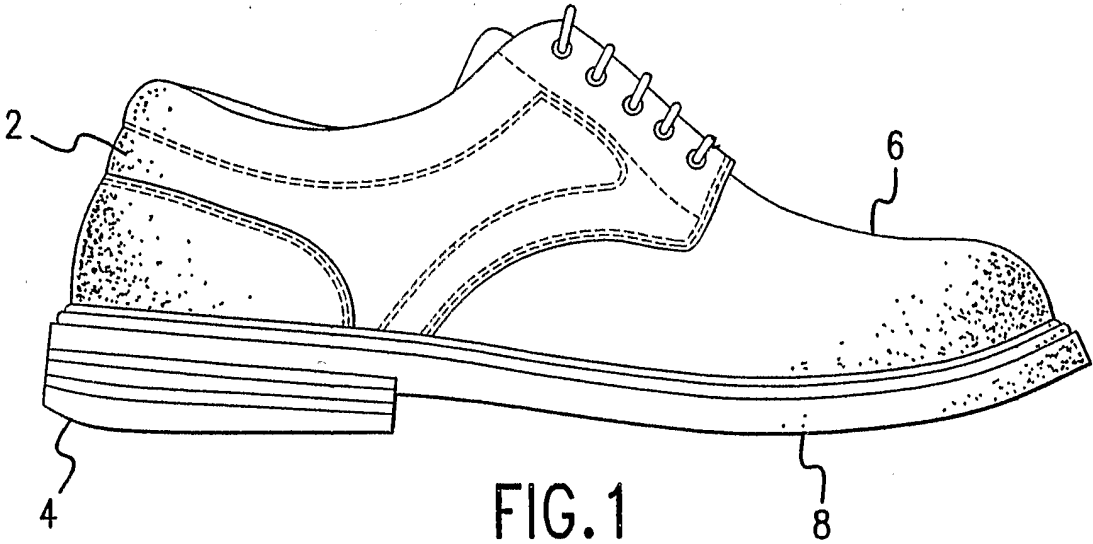
1 **17.** The method of claim 16 further comprising:

- 2 a. said window communicating between a shoe interior surface
- 3 and a shoe exterior surface,
- 4 b. said removable member comprising an insole and an indicia-
- 5 bearing member bonded to said insole.

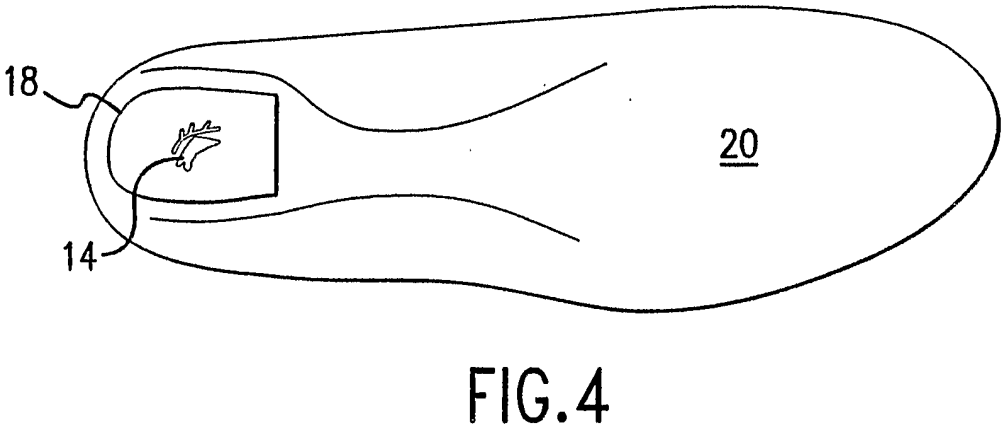
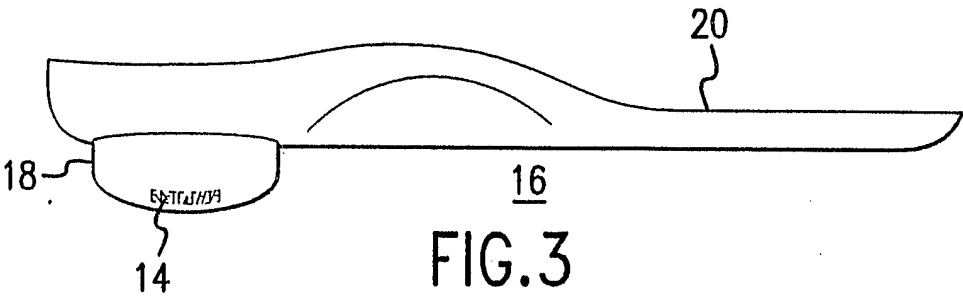
1 **18.** The method of claim 17 further comprising:

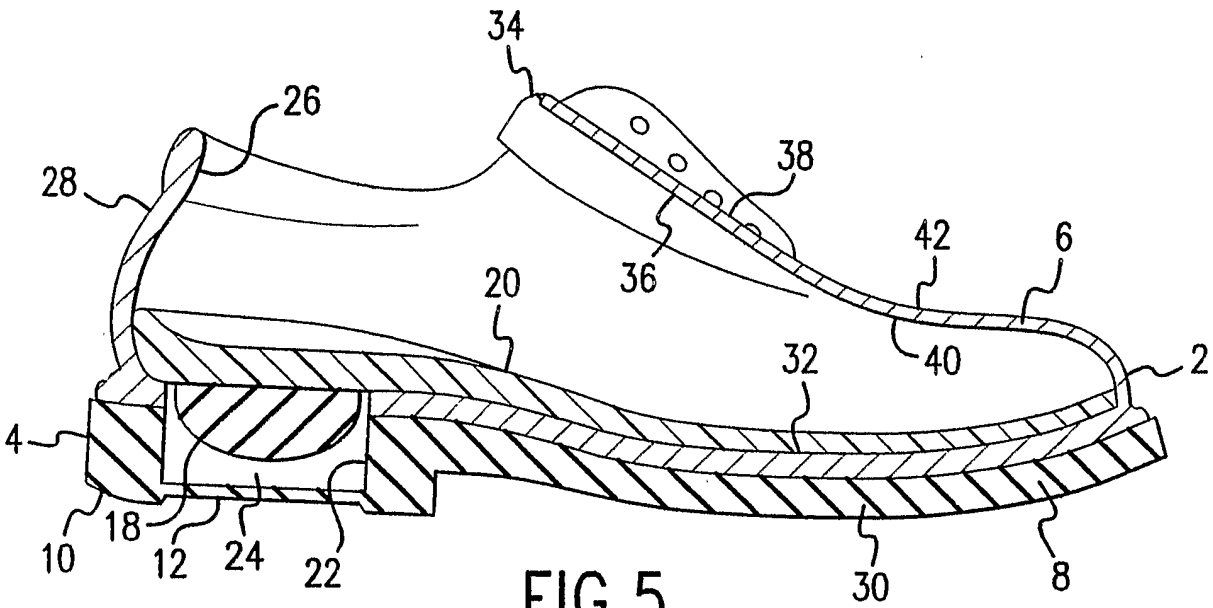
- 2 a. said shoe having a heel,
- 3 b. said window communicating through said heel.

1/4



2/4





4/4

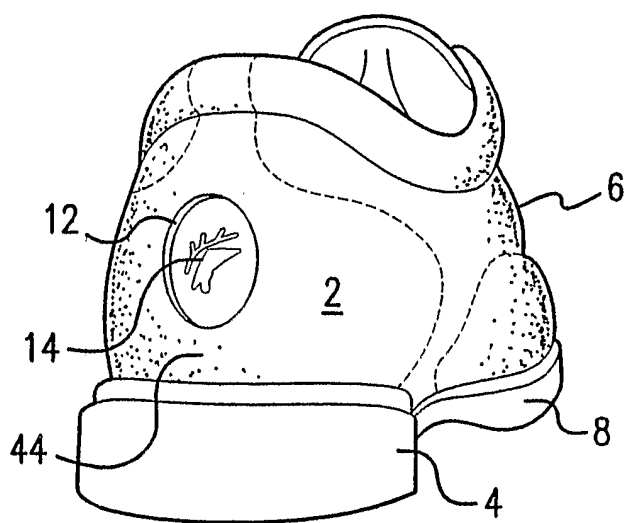


FIG. 6

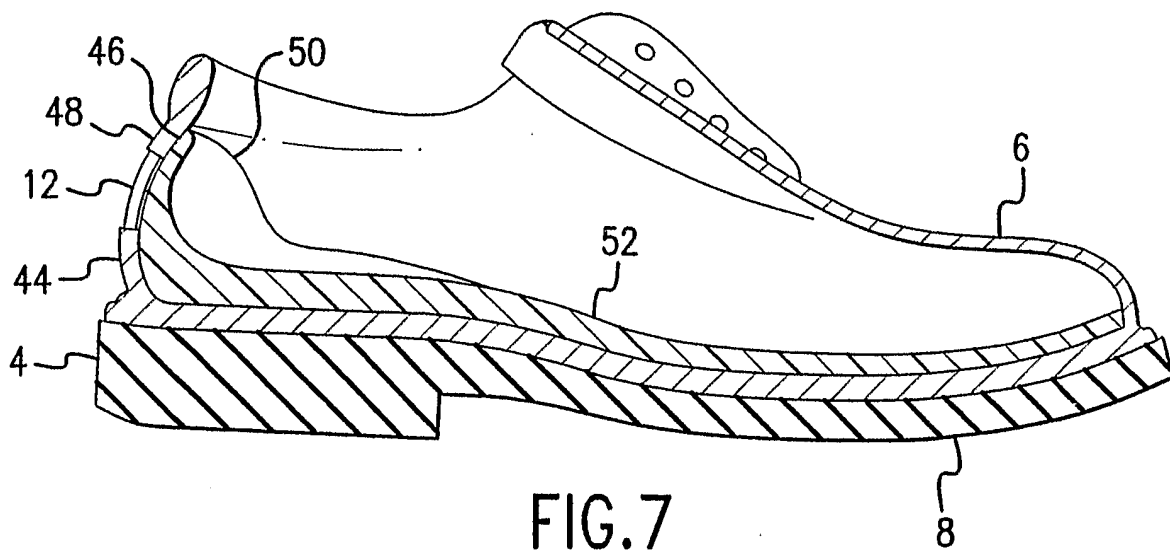


FIG. 7

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US02/25509

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(7) : A43B 23/00

US CL : 36/132, 136, 137, 83, 112, 43, 44, 25R, 28, 34R, 35R, 37; D2/964

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 36/132, 136, 137, 83, 112, 43, 44, 25R, 28, 34R, 35R, 37; D2/964

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched
none

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)
BRS Text search

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5,367,795 A (IVERSON et al.) 29 November 1994, entire document.	1-2, 7-11 and 16
X	US 4,852,276 A (SAVOCA et al.) 01 August 1989, entire document.	1
X	US 4,712,314 A (SIGOLOFF) 15 December 1987, entire document.	1-3 and 7-11
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Y		16

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

☐ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

15 January 2003 (15.01.2003)

Date of mailing of the international search report

29 JAN 2003

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