An improved number/bib holder for the purpose of holding an identification number on a person or item to be worn. An embodiment of the invention comprises an elastic belt with identification sign holding means including preferably two sign holding elements each having an elongated projection that generally points in the direction from which it is fastened to the belt and both elongated projections preferably in opposition to one another to trap the identification sign via engagement in holes close to the identification sign’s perimeter. Another embodiment includes a belt with identification sign holders appropriately spaced: the belt has two ends, a loop on the first end, and fastenable fasteners on the second end. The second end of the belt comprises a first and second fastener adapted for releasable attachment to the first end. Another embodiment comprises an item to be worn including preferably two identification sign holders with elongated projections disposed generally in opposition and that generally both point in the direction from which they are fastened to the item to be worn such that they trap the identification sign on the item to be worn.
NUMBER/BIB HOLDER

CROSS REFERENCE—RELATED PROVISIONAL PATENT APPLICATIONS


BACKGROUND—FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates to a system used to attach a race identification number used by athletes in competition or anywhere an identification number is required or desired.

BACKGROUND

[0003] During athletic events athletes are often required to wear a number to positively be identified. Race organizers supply these numbers to contestants in an athletic event. Some examples of athletic events are Triathlons, Duathlons, Running or Bicycle races. But not confined to these.

[0004] These race identification numbers are commonly made from reinforced paper (usually tyvek or the like) approximately 8 inches by 6 inches (generally between 7 to 8” by 5 to 8” tall) with one hole in each corner but can vary in size and are attached using safety pins often supplied by the race organizer.

[0005] There are many drawbacks of the use of safety pins to fasten the race numbers in place. Many people do not like the idea of having to put pinholes through their expensive clothing. Pins may start fraying holes in material and, pins, if left in after an athletic event combined with perspiration often rust causing rust stains on the garments. Also a major drawback of using pins occurs when the event is a multi-sports event such as a Triathlon—a sport were the contestant must swim, bicycle and then run and must be wearing a race identification number when they cross the finish line. Since it is not practical to swim with an identification number attached to your swimsuit or wet suit, athletes often use makeshift belts using underwear elastic rubber bands and pin the race identification number to the makeshift belt. These belts often were cumbersome to put on in a race when time is of the essence. When the contestant tries to put on the belt over their heads or step into it inadvertently the race number can be twisted around the belt. Some athletes make their own belts using elastic and hook and loop fasteners and since the number is attached in the middle of the belt the hook and loop fasteners generally have to be closed in back so as to allow the race number to be in front. And often when trying to close the hook and loop fasteners the hook and loop fasteners can be easily crossed and do not hold, as well as. And often this has to be done while running.

Prior art solutions have a number of disadvantages.

[0006] In addition the above inventions and/or their features, heretofore known suffer from drawbacks and disadvantages in combinations in the following areas:

[0007] Causes user discomfort through excess weight, bouncing and chafing

[0008] Lack optimal ergonomics relative to the human body

[0009] Unreliable retention of identification sign

[0010] Employ features which present obstacles to optimal athletic or general performance limited versatility for range of uses and range of users

[0011] Difficult to use and/or inconvenient to use

III. OBJECTS AND ADVANTAGES

[0012] The novel bib/race number holding system described and example of embodiments shown in figures included is believed to offer many benefits over existing bib/race belt holding systems.

[0013] A confluence of geometry elements and materials provide for a more comfortably worn, lighter, intuitive, manufacturable bib/race belt holding system. Important to this design is its ease of manufacturing. It can be constructed using inexpensive and easily obtained materials, assembled using conventional manufacturing equipment, produced easily and inexpensively as well as with light and comfortable readily available materials giving an aesthetically pleasing highly functional, versatile solution for its desired purpose.

IV. SUMMARY

[0014] In accordance with the present invention the following discloses a bib holding system for holding race number bibs and the like items.

[0015] Disclosed is a race # belt (with integrated number holding element(s)) and race # belt loops (with integrated number holding element(s). The race number fastening element of the invention can be incorporated into a belt loop (or loops) or the like instead of directly affixed to the belt. This allows the race belt holding system to be assembled to a belt so that the race # holding capability can be added to any belt or belt like system by the user at any time.

[0016] Race # number holding element(s) can be applied, affixed, attached, sewed, grommeted, attached with integrally molded/formed fastening receptacle(s)/stud(s), and/or otherwise affixed to other forms of clothing/gear such as shirts, singlets, shorts, waist packs/bags, water bottle packs, water bottle belt systems, hydration reservoir systems or other fancy packs, back packs or the like.

[0017] These bib holding elements can be incorporated into a number of items to be worn by a user either permanently affixed to that item or removably affixed via loops, snaps, tabs and snaps, studs, or the like, but one of the benefits of the disclosed invention is its ability to hold a race number or the like in place on a user’s worn item in an ultra-light weight extremely low impact manner. This ability to integrate the invention in such a lightweight low impact manner lends itself to be integrated in some cases permanently affixed to the item worn.

V. DRAWING FIGURES

[0018] In order that the invention may be fully understood, the novel “Number/Bib Holder”, the invention will now be
described by way of example and with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

[0019] FIG. 1 shows a back view, FIG. 2 a top view, and FIG. 4, a front view, of a preferred embodiment of the disclosed invention. FIG. 3 being a close-up of the top view showing the biased closure. Some individual features/parts are labeled 1A through 12A. Feature/part labeled 1A is preferably stretch webbing or the like commonly found in the waistband of underwear or the like. This substantially shear and stretchy belt or the like material preferably forms the foundation to which other components are integrated, formed/constructed integrally, sewn, attached, grommeted, glued, bonded, staked, trapped and/or the like. Although 1A is preferably stretch band or the like material it can be constructed of other stretchy, pliable or somewhat pliable material such as lycra, stretch mesh, webbing, ribbon, belt or the like appropriately edge bound or the like or integrally edge bound or the like or not although it is not preferable that this part is not edge bound in some manner to inhibit fraying. It is preferable that this part is as sheer and light as possible given the constraints of its use to comfortably support what it is desired to hold. Feature/part 2A is preferably an adjustment tri-glide, adjuster part or the like commonly found on waist packs and back packs of the like to hold straps in place and/or keep them from slipping. This part is preferably made as is common in the industry molded/fabricated from nylon, acetal, light metal or some other plastic or the like. Feature/part 3A is preferably a loop or connector part or the like commonly found on waist packs and back packs of the like to loop webbing through. This part is preferably made as is common in the industry molded/fabricated from nylon, acetal, light metal or some other plastic or the like. Part 1A is preferably assembled to 2A and 3A in a manner that is common in the industry to function as is desired as a loop (part 3A) that slides/adjusts to size the belt or the like with adjuster (part 2A) acting as an adjusting member and/or a holding member for the excess strapping/belt or the like. A tail end of the belt or the like can be affixed, sewn or the like as shown to the center rung of the tri-glide adjuster or the like (part 2A). Also, the tail end can be free and just be fed over/ed through the tri-glide or the like to act as a hold down (which is also common in the industry). Feature/part 4A, race number/bib attachment means is preferably die cut from flat sheet stock polypropylene, nylon, or some other tough flexible preferably sewable or the like plastic or the like. 4A is preferably die cut, molded or the like in the shape or similar shape as depicted in the drawings (manufacturing requirements taken into account for the particular manufacturing process) and is preferably made from material that can be sewn to 1A, a preferable stitching pattern shown in broken line, although there are many other ways this part can be held to 1A. See FIG. 3A for an example of how a race number/bib “I” (see FIG. 10) can be assembled. Feature/part 5A, closure release grab element/feature is preferably die cut or the like from hypalon material or the like and preferably sewn to 1A and closure mating element 7A (preferably velcro or the like although this and its mating fastener could be exchanged for a number of fasteners/components to achieve similar results with varying degrees of success, examples include but are not limited to snap(s), button(s)/button hole(s), clasps, etc.). Tail end of 1A is preferably sandwiched between 5A and 7A and then preferably sewn in place. Stitch line “X” is preferably sewn through 5A, 1A, 6A (closure mating element), and 1A again so that this closure assembly is preferably biased in a folded over/creased or the like position (see FIG. 13 for example of this preferably biased over/creased geometry). Although 5A is preferably made from hypalon or the like it can be made of other fabric, rubber, a label/logo, label material, vinyl, plastic, leather or the like sheet material although this part is preferably made of a material that is water proof, resistant, or the like, does not fray, is durable and provides appropriate gripability. This part can have integrally molded, formed, added and or punched or the like gripping elements/features to facilitate gripping the closure area can be manipulated easily although hypalon is quite grippable by itself. Also this part can be made integrally from belt 1A with bias stitching (see FIG. 12), in this case belting 1A is brought around from back and becomes this element which in this case is preferably made from waist band elastic, webbing or the like and stitched to itself through velcro or the like closure element 6A. Feature/part 6A, velcro closure or the like element is preferably cut from strip or sheet or the like velcro fastener material or the like (hook, loop, and/or combinations or the like) and is preferably sewn in place to 1A preferably sandwiching a tail end of 6A in between the fold over of 1A and 5A (if 5A is constructed from a separate part from 1A). See FIG. 12 and FIG. 11 for some variations on this construction. Feature/part 7A, velcro closure or the like element is preferably cut from strip or sheet or the like velcro fastener material or the like (hook, loop, and/or combinations or the like) and is preferably sewn in place to 5A preferably sandwiching tail end of 1A in between 7A and 5A.

[0020] FIG. 5, FIG. 6, and FIG. 7 show a back, bottom/top and front view respectively, of a preferred embodiment of the disclosed invention.

[0021] FIG. 8 and FIG. 9 show use instructions/suggestions for the preferred embodiment shown in FIG. 4 and FIG. 10 (and others). The race number/bib can be trapped behind (or in front if desired although less desirable in many cases) attachment element 4A (pin elements on element 4A are fed through pre-punched holes as shown in FIG. 8/FIG. 9) and then this assembly is pressed flat as shown in FIG. 9 and FIG. 10. It is also noted that the number/bib can be worn higher on the belt by poking holes similar to the ones generally provided on the number/bib about the same distance from the vertical edges but farther down (as desired by the user) giving the result of placing the number higher on the belt. Generally race number belts are made from a tyvek or similar material and a small hole (similar to the ones already provided) can be placed in them with a ballpoint pen or the like suitable to attach to, as shown.

[0022] FIG. 11, FIG. 12, FIG. 13, FIG. 15 and FIG. 16 show some closure examples for the preferred embodiment although options similar to FIG. 13, 14 in most cases are preferable. Also options similar to FIG. 11 and FIG. 12 in some cases may be preferable. Options with buckle elements (similar to those shown in FIG. 15 and FIG. 16) are less preferable in many cases because of the weight and hard edges a buckle element although in some cases a buckle or the like closure with adjuster or loop/trap-down element or elements may be preferable. FIG. 14 shows how the preferable closure could be used (the loop or the like element is preferably trapped in the creux area labeled “Y”.) FIG. 13 shows a bottom/top view of half of the preferable closure
means the other half would preferably be similar to shown mating half in FIG. 14. FIG. 12 shows a bottom/top view of half of another embodiment of a preferable closure means the other half would preferably be similar to shown mating half in FIG. 14. FIG. 11 shows a bottom/top view of half of another embodiment of a preferable closure means the other half would preferably be similar to shown mating half in FIG. 14 (in most cases the embodiment shown in FIG. 11 would be less preferable than the above mentioned embodiments). FIG. 11 shows an embodiment without biasing means/stitch “X” shown in FIG. 4. FIG. 15 shows a view of another embodiment of a preferable closure means a buckle (commonly used in the industry on waist packs, belts, etc.) and tri-glide/adjuster (as mentioned before) or the like (in many cases the embodiment shown in FIG. 15 would be less preferable than the above mentioned embodiments).

FIG. 16 shows a view of another embodiment of a preferable closure means a buckle and fabric or the like loop or the like (in many cases the embodiment shown in FIG. 16 would be less preferable than the above mentioned embodiments). Also although not pictured (and in many cases this is not preferable) adjustment can be on both sides as desired instead of just one side. There are components commonly found in the industry and methods commonly found in industry for accomplishing this. For example, if the left side of the buckle assembly in FIGS. 15 and 16 is essentially mirrored (using a buckle with appropriate features on both male and female sides) this will provide adjustment on both sides.

FIG. 17 shows another embodiment of the preferred number/bib attachment means of invention. In this embodiment one or more of the number/bib attachment means are preferably sewn to a fabric or the like loop or the like. The loop is constructed in a manner which is common in the industry (folded over itself and sewed which is most common) is preferably constructed from fabric ribbon, webbing, cut fabric, stretch webbing/band elastic (in cases where it is desirable for it to stretch to fit different belt widths or fit over a variety of forms) or the like. The loop allows the number/bib attachment means to slide on the belt or other belt-like objects. It should be noted that the number/bib attachment means HOLDERS can be attached to loops or the like element(s) in other ways to get the same or similar results—attached by grommeting, with a pin and socket (see FIG. 19 for an example another example of a snap or snap stud arrangement directly or through the loop or the like), gluing, heat bonding/staking, integrally molded/insert molded with the loop or the like, trapped, etc. or the like. As mentioned above, similarly the loop can also be integrally molded, formed, die cut or the like in plastic or the like material as one with the number attachment means—two examples of this are shown in FIGS. 17a/17b and FIG. 17c.

Also as mentioned above one side of the race number/bib attachment means can be moveable on a loop/tri-glide or the like and the other side fixed more directly or directly to the belt via sewing, grommeting, heat bonding or the like. See FIGS. 11-16 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 18 shows another embodiment of the preferred number/bib attachment means of invention. In this embodiment one or more of the number/bib attachment means are preferably attached to a fabric or the like loop(s) or the like. FIG. 18a shows number placed behind the elongated projection which can be done, but in front of the projection as shown in the right side of FIG. 18 is usually more preferable. FIG. 18b shows the sign holding element of this embodiment by itself without loop and belt strap installed. The part shown in FIG. 18b is preferably made from thin sheet, preferably plastic from 0.03" to 0.08" thick. See FIG. 4 and FIG. 17 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 19 (FIG. 19a is a side view cross section of this assembly assembled) shows another embodiment of the preferred number/bib attachment means of invention. In this embodiment one or more of the number/bib attachment means are preferably attached to an object through the fabric or the like material on that object. A pin and retainer, pin and socket or other mating assembly such as the one pictured in this example fasten the number/bib retaining means to an object for retaining the number/bib. The number attachment parts can be molded, die cut, and/or formed or the like or combinations thereof from plastic, rubber, metal and/or combinations thereof. See FIG. 4 and FIG. 17 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 20 shows another (though less preferable in many cases) embodiment of the preferred number/bib attachment means of the invention with belt. A belt configured as shown in this figure that does not continue behind the race number/bib may in some cases be preferable for the elimination of weight although in most cases this configuration may not be preferable depending on its use environment, material of race number/bib, performance requirements, etc. See FIG. 17 and FIG. 4 descriptions for further explanation of the number/bib attachment means in another embodiment as well as a description of preferable materials and variations (race number attachment means and belt materials and construction would preferably be constructed as mentioned above in FIG. 4 and others). The number/bib attachment means can also be closure means for the belt and/or see FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means which can be incorporated at any place around belt if desired. FIG. 21 shows another (though less preferable in many cases) embodiment of the preferred number/bib attachment means of the invention with belt without closure (a step-into version using a preferably stretchy belt material and different sizes may be desired and/or an adjuster can be integrated (as discussed and commonly used in the industry) to get adjustment for sizing.

FIG. 22 shows another embodiment/variation of the preferred number/bib attachment means of invention. See FIG. 4 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 23 shows another embodiment/variation of the preferred number/bib attachment means of invention in which the number/bib attachment means are assembled to the belt or the like with a grommet, plastic, metal or the like rivet, pin and receptacle, heat stake or the like, etc. FIGS.
FIG. 23a shows another embodiment of invention in which the race number/bib attachment means are assembled to the belt or the like with a plastic or the like stud, grommet, plastic, metal or the like rivet, heat stake or the like, etc. See FIG. 4 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 24a shows another embodiment of invention in which the race number/bib attachment means are assembled to the belt or the like with a plastic or the like stud, grommet, plastic, metal or the like rivet, heat stake or the like, etc. See FIG. 4 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 25 shows another embodiment of invention in which the race number/bib attachment means are assembled to the belt or the like with a plastic or the like stud, grommet, plastic, metal or the like rivet, heat stake or the like, etc. See FIG. 4 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 26 shows another embodiment of invention in which the race number/bib attachment means are assembled to the belt or the like with a plastic or the like stud, grommet, plastic, metal or the like rivet, heat stake or the like, etc. See FIG. 4 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 27 shows another embodiment of invention in which the race number/bib attachment means are assembled to the belt or the like with a plastic or the like stud, grommet, plastic, metal or the like rivet, heat stake or the like, etc. See FIG. 4 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 28 shows another embodiment of invention in which the race number/bib attachment means are assembled to the belt or the like with a plastic or the like stud, grommet, plastic, metal or the like rivet, heat stake or the like, etc. See FIG. 4 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 29 shows another embodiment of invention in which the race number/bib attachment means are assembled to the belt or the like with a plastic or the like stud, grommet, plastic, metal or the like rivet, heat stake or the like, etc. See FIG. 4 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 30 shows another embodiment of invention in which the race number/bib attachment means are assembled to the belt or the like with a plastic or the like stud, grommet, plastic, metal or the like rivet, heat stake or the like, etc. See FIG. 4 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 31 shows another embodiment of invention in which the race number/bib attachment means are assembled to the belt or the like with a plastic or the like stud, grommet, plastic, metal or the like rivet, heat stake or the like, etc. See FIG. 4 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 32 shows another embodiment of invention in which the race number/bib attachment means are assembled to the belt or the like with a plastic or the like stud, grommet, plastic, metal or the like rivet, heat stake or the like, etc. See FIG. 4 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 33 shows another embodiment of invention in which the race number/bib attachment means are assembled to the belt or the like with a plastic or the like stud, grommet, plastic, metal or the like rivet, heat stake or the like, etc. See FIG. 4 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 34 shows another embodiment of invention in which the race number/bib attachment means are assembled to the belt or the like with a plastic or the like stud, grommet, plastic, metal or the like rivet, heat stake or the like, etc. See FIG. 4 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 35 shows another embodiment of invention in which the race number/bib attachment means are assembled to the belt or the like with a plastic or the like stud, grommet, plastic, metal or the like rivet, heat stake or the like, etc. See FIG. 4 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 36 shows another embodiment of invention in which the race number/bib attachment means are assembled to the belt or the like with a plastic or the like stud, grommet, plastic, metal or the like rivet, heat stake or the like, etc. See FIG. 4 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

FIG. 37 shows another embodiment of invention in which the race number/bib attachment means are assembled to the belt or the like with a plastic or the like stud, grommet, plastic, metal or the like rivet, heat stake or the like, etc. See FIG. 4 description for further explanation of an embodiment similar to this as well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.
well as a description of preferable materials, more explanation and construction. See FIGS. 11-16 for belt or the like closure means.

[0044] Although the description above contains many specificities, these should not be construed as limiting the scope of the invention but as merely providing illustrations of some of the presently preferred embodiments of this invention. The embodiments detailed in the figures and described herein can be combined in a variety of manners with varying success, for example the number/bib holding elements as pictured in the figures can be combined/integrated with different belt and closure means, some shown in FIGS. 11-16.

[0045] Also, while the invention has been described by reference to illustrative embodiments, it is not intended that the novel device be limited thereby, but that modifications thereof are intended to be included as falling within the broad spirit and scope of the foregoing disclosure, the following claims and the appended drawings.

VI. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[0046] References will now be made to the drawings in which the various elements of the present invention will be given reference designations and in which the invention will be discussed so as to enable one skilled in the art to make and use the invention. It is to be understood that the following description is only exemplary of the principles of the present invention, and should not be viewed as narrowing the pending claims.

[0047] FIG. 1 shows a back view, FIG. 2 a top view (the bottom view being a mirror image of FIG. 2), and FIG. 4, a front view, of a preferred embodiment of the disclosed invention. FIG. 3 being a close-up of the top view showing the biased closure. Some individual features/ parts are labeled 1A through 7A. Preferable stitch lines are represented with dashed lines, zig-zag lines.

[0048] FIG. 4, front view of the preferred embodiment shows a length of elastic stretch belt or the like 1A of length sufficient for wearing around someone’s waist. Once a preferable slide adjust part is fed on one end of the belt with the center rung visible on the bottom side of the belt (under, over, under the three rungs of the slider part 2A), an end of the belt and the like (it could be nylon webbing or the like although it is less preferable) is folded back on itself through a preferable rectangular-shaped loop 3A of plastic or the like, folding the belt back-side to back-side and then fastening the folded over end to the center rung (see FIG. 2) of the tri-glide slider or the like 2A preferably by sewing the belt end to itself with the center tri-glide rung trapped in the fold-over (although it could be fastened in a number of other ways in place on the tri-glide like with rivets, grommets, glue, heat fused, etc).

[0049] FIG. 3 shows a side view close-up of the preferable closure end of the disclosed invention. The remaining free end of the preferable stretch belt 1A, (the end opposite referable loop 3A) is trapped preferably sewn between a small swatch of preferable hook fastener 7A (commonly referred to as hook Velcro) or the like and a preferable tongue-shaped hypalon or the like part 5A which preferably extends beyond the sewn/trapped end of 1A and Velcro 7A or the like making a thin extension which makes it easier to thread into the loop 3A when the user puts the belt on. This preferable layering of the parts 7A, 1A and 5A, (preferable hook Velcro, stretch belting and hypalon or the like) preferably covers the distal end of 1A. The hypalon tongue-like part 5A covers a portion of the back side of the distal end of belting 1A and the Velcro square/swatch part 7A covers a portion of the front side sandwiching belting 1A between. On the same front side of belting 1A the mating faster to hook Velcro 7A is preferably sewn leaving a preferable slight space of about three to ten times the width of a run of loop 3A between these mating fasteners sewn on the same front side of belting 1A. Mating Fasteners 6A and 7A can be mated by folding over belting 1A along the gap between the Fasteners 6A and 7A forming cross “X” (FIG. 14) so that the distal end of belting 1A covered by hypalon tongue 5A on the back surface folds over on itself, front side to front side and is preferably sewn biased in this position somewhat close to the fold line. The preferable stitch line “X” in FIG. 4 preferably sews through hypalon tongue 5A a folded over portion of belting 1A, velcro loop fastener 6A and then through the unfolded overlapped portion of belting 1A forming a biased mateable fastening area with cross “Y” (FIG. 14) for trapping a the free rung of loop 3A, and thus holding the belt around the waist of the user with adjustment of the belt by tri-glide slider 2A.

[0050] Identification holder elements 4A (FIG. 4) at least one but preferably two (more that two could be used although it is less preferable) integrated into the belt are preferably formed die-cut, molded or the like from somewhat flexible plastic or the like. They are preferably made from thin sheet, preferably cut from plastic from 0.03” to 0.08” thick. These preferably somewhat flat tongue-shaped holders elements 4A are preferably sewn at the base end opposite the tongue tip to the belting 1A, (being careful to leave the elongated projection free to move away from belting 1A) and tongue tips (not elongated projection tips) facing each other and at a distance that is preferable to hold an identification sign. The sign holders 4A are preferably placed closer to the mateable fastener end than the opposite loop end so the size adjustable tri-glide slider can size the belt as small as desirable (although the pair of sign holders can be centered, or placed along the belt anywhere as long as they still function as desired). Preferably internal to each tongue-shaped holder 4A an elongated projection 1B (FIG. 8) is cut out/such that its length is preferably along the center length of the tongue-shape, yet not all the way to the base leaving a flat area for connecting holder 4A to belting 1A. The distal end of projection 1B preferably points generally toward the base of the preferably tongue-shaped holder 4A with supports 9B (FIG. 9) arching around on preferably either side of projection 1B extending from the base of holder 4A, connecting to the base of elongated projection 1B and thus joining the projection 1B to the base of tongue-shaped holder 4A. On either side of the base of projection 1B are relief cut-outs 9A (FIG. 4) sized to provide relief for an identification sign and allow holder part 4A to sit flat against belting 1A when identification sign “T” (FIGS. 9-10, etc.) is placed on projection 1B. The first of preferably two holding elements with its elongated projection 1B has a base, length and distal end generally defining a first projecting direction “C” (FIG. 9), the first holding element further having a fastening location where the holder is fastened to the belt defining a first fastening location at the base of preferably tongue-shaped holder element 4A. The general projecting
direction “C” (FIG. 9) defines the dominant direction of projection from the projection’s base 12A (FIG. 8) where the identification sign “I” (FIG. 9) is held opposed to the other holding element, in the general direction that the projection protrudes through the hole in the sign “I” and generally in the direction of the holder’s fastening location to the belt. The second holding element is preferably in the same geometry as the first holding element but configured and attached to the belt in such a way that it acts in opposition to the first holding element to hold the sign “I” trapped between the holding elements. The second holding element with its elongated projection also preferably has a base, length and distal end generally defining a second projecting direction, the second holding element further having a fastening location where the holder is fastened to the belt defining a second fastening location at the base of the second preferably tongue-shaped holder element. The first projecting direction generally points in the direction of the first fastening location and away from the second holding element. The second projecting direction generally points in the direction of the second fastening location and away from the first holding element; and both the first and second elongated projections are fastened to the belt such that they overlay the front surface of the belt. It should be noted that the elongated projection could take a number of forms and shapes allowing generally the same function (although in many cases less preferable than the disclosed preferred embodiment). The elongated projection could have an arrow shaped distal end as shown in FIG. 23 as well as many other forms including a crook at the end as shown in FIG. 26, or wavy, zig-zag, hooked end, etc. and still function although with different degrees of success. FIG. 26 shows an elongated projection with a crook in the end “D” and a general projection direction “C” wherein the general projection direction “C” defines the dominant direction of projection from the projection’s base 11A where the identification sign “I” is held opposed to the other holding element, in the general direction that the projection protrudes through the hole in the sign “I” and generally in the direction of the holder’s fastening location to the belt.

Another embodiment of the preferred invention is shown in FIG. 17 wherein the holding elements as disclosed and described above are preferably sewn, riveted or integrally molded (FIG. 17c and 17b) to loops that can slide on the belt so that they can be added or removed at any time, slide to accept an even wider range of sign sizes, be worn on a fancy pack, etc.

The holding elements themselves (at least one) can be mounted to an item of clothing as depicted in FIG. 36 or other item like a fancy pack water bottle belt etc. Attachment to the host item (clothing item, fancy pack, water bottle pack, etc.) can be accomplished in a number of ways including sewing, riveting/grommeting/heat staking (FIGS. 23, 23b, 23c), heat fusing, through the use of loops (FIGS. 17, 18), velcro, snaps, they can be integrally molded, etc.

Operation

See FIGS. 8-14. To put the novel “number/bib holder” on the user would put the belt around the waist, hold the end of the belt with the loop 3A in one hand and the other end in the other hand, and upon un-mating the closure end the user feeds the end of the folded-over preferably biased closure 8A in FIG. 14 (or 5A in FIG. 13) through (see arrow M) the loop 3A (FIG. 14). The fed-through rung of loop 3A rests in the crux “Y” formed by the fold over/bias, and the mateable fasteners are mated together, fastening the belt around the waist. To add a number/bib/identification sign to the belt or number holding system (see FIGS. 8-10) the user feeds one side of the number behind the elongated projection feeding the projection through a hole in the sign close to its perimeter (a pre-punched hole or by forcing the elongated projection through the sign material making a hole). Upon pulling the whole number holder element out away from the belt (or other clothing or the like item) and pulling its elongated projection out toward and then away from the belt (or other item) the sign can be fed onto the elongated projection via a hole in the sign close to its perimeter and then the number holder element can be pressed flat trapping the number in place. Once one side of the number is trapped in place another corner or opposite edge can be trapped in this way holding the sign on the belt (or other item) for display trapped between the sign holding elements (see FIG. 10). In FIG. 8 arrow 8b shows how the sign can be threaded behind and onto the elongated projection and then trapped in place in front of the projection but behind the projection extensions 9b and in front of the belt 1A. Waist-size adjusting slider 2A can be slid closer to loop element 3A to make the belt bigger and slide further from the loop 3A to make the belt smaller.

Summary Ramifications, and Scope

Accordingly the reader will see that there are a number of advantages of the disclosed “number/bib holder” which can provide an effective, easily adjustable, intuitive to use, comfortable, lightweight, chafe-free, versatile and simple to manufacture, method of displaying an identifying number/bib.

Although the description above contains many specificities, these should not be construed as limiting the scope of the invention, but merely providing illustrations of some of the presently preferred embodiments of this invention.

Thus the scope of the invention should be determined by the appended claims and their legal equivalents, rather than by examples given.

We claim:

1. An elastic belt for attachment around the waist of a wearer comprising:

   a first end and a second end, a front surface and a back surface;

   waist securing means whereby the first end can be secured to the second end around the waist of a user;

   the belt also comprising a first holding element and a second holding element, the first holding element is disposed closer to the first end than the second holding element and the second holding element is disposed closer to the second end than the first holding element;

   the first holding element having an elongated projection with a distal end generally defining a first projecting direction, the first holding element further having a fastening location where the holder is fastened to a portion of the belt defining a first fastening location;
the second holding element having a second elongated projection with a distal end generally defining a second projecting direction, the second holding element further having a fastening location where the holder is fastened to portion of the belt defining a second fastening location;

the first projecting direction is somewhat parallel to the front surface of the belt and generally points in the direction of the first fastening location and away from the second holding element;

the second projecting direction is somewhat parallel to the front surface of the belt and generally points in the direction of the second fastening location and away from the first holding element;

the first holding element and the second holding element are spaced from one another at a distance sufficient for holding various size identification signs

whereby an identification sign can be held between the holding elements by engaging the opposed first and second elongated projections in a first and a second hole appropriately spaced somewhat close to the perimeter of the sign.

2. The belt of claim 1, wherein the first end of the belt includes a first fastener and the second end of the belt includes a second fastener adapted for releasable attachment to the first fastener.

3. The belt of claim 1, wherein the first end of the belt comprises a loop and the second end of the belt comprises a first and a second fastener adapted for releasable attachment to one another whereby the second end can be secured to itself through the loop at the first end, whereby the belt can be secured around the waist of a user.

4. The belt of claim 3, wherein the second end of the belt is affixed biased on itself such that the first and second fasteners when unfastened are generally biased toward each other.

5. The belt of claim 3, wherein the first fastener is attached to the belt such that it generally faces outward away from the front surface of the belt and the second fastener comprises an extension.

6. The belt of claim 1, wherein first and second holding elements are comprised of plastic.

7. The belt of claim 6, wherein the first and second fasteners are substantially flat, die-cut from flat sheet stock or molded in a substantially flat form.

8. The belt of claim 1, wherein the each of the first holding element and second holding elements are integrated with a loop for engaging the belt.

9. An elastic belt for attaching various size identification signs around the waist of a wearer comprising:

a first end and a second end, a front surface and a back surface;

the first end comprises a loop;

The second end comprises a first and a second fastener adapted for releasable attachment to one another whereby the second end can be secured to itself through the loop at the first end wherein the belt can be secured around the waist of a user;

further, the belt also comprises a first holder and a second holder, both the first and the second holders are adapted for removably holding various size identification signs;

the first holder is disposed closer to the first end of the belt than the second holder and the second holder is disposed closer to the second end of the belt than the first holder;

whereby various identification signs can be removably attached to the belt about the waist of a wearer for display on the wearer.

10. The belt of claim 9, wherein the second end of the belt is affixed biased on itself such that the first and second fasteners when unfastened are generally biased toward each other.

11. The belt of claim 9, further wherein the first fastener is attached to the belt such that it generally faces outward away from the front surface of the belt and the second fastener comprises an extension.

12. The belt of claim 10, further wherein the first fastener is attached to the belt such that it generally faces outward away from the front surface of the belt and the second fastener comprises an extension.

13. The belt of claim 9, wherein the first holder comprises an elongated projection with a distal end generally defining a first projecting direction and the second holder comprises an elongated projection with a distal end generally defining a second projecting direction, both the first and second projecting directions are somewhat parallel to the front surface of the belt.

14. The belt of claim 13, further wherein the first holder has a fastening location where the holder is fastened to the belt defining a first fastening location and the second holding element further has a fastening location where the holder is fastened to the belt defining a second fastening location, the first projecting direction generally points in the direction of the first fastening location and away from the second holding element and the second projecting direction generally points in the direction of the second fastening location and away from the first holding element.

15. The belt of claim 9, wherein the first and second holding elements are comprised of plastic.

16. Holders for removably affixing various size identification signs for display on a item or items to be worn by a user comprising:

a first holding element having an elongated projection with a distal end generally defining a first projecting direction, the first holding element further having a fastening location where the holder is fastened to the item to be worn defining a first fastening location;

a second holding element having an elongated projection with a distal end generally defining a second projecting direction, the second holding element further having a fastening location where the holder is fastened to the item to be worn defining a second fastening location;

the first projecting direction generally points in the direction of the first fastening location and away from the second holding element;

the second projecting direction generally points in the direction of the second fastening location and away from the first holding element;

both the first and the second projecting directions overlay and are generally parallel to the front surface of the item to be worn and further, the first holding element
and the second holding element are spaced from one another at a distance sufficient for holding various size identification signs;

whereby an identification sign can be held between the holding elements by engaging the opposed first and second elongated projections in a first and a second hole appropriately spaced somewhat close to the perimeter of the sign thereby allowing the item to be worn, to removeably hold various size identification signs for display.

17. The holders of claim 16, wherein the first and second holding elements are comprised of plastic.

18. The holders of claim 17, wherein the first and second fasteners are substantially flat, cut from flat sheet stock or molded in a substantially flat form.

19. The holders of claim 16, wherein the each of the first holding element and second holding elements comprise a loop for engaging a belt.

20. The holders of claim 16, wherein each of the first holding element and second holding element comprise a protruding fastener and mating receptacle for fastening the holding element to the item to be worn.