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(54) **ATHLETIC SHORTS**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

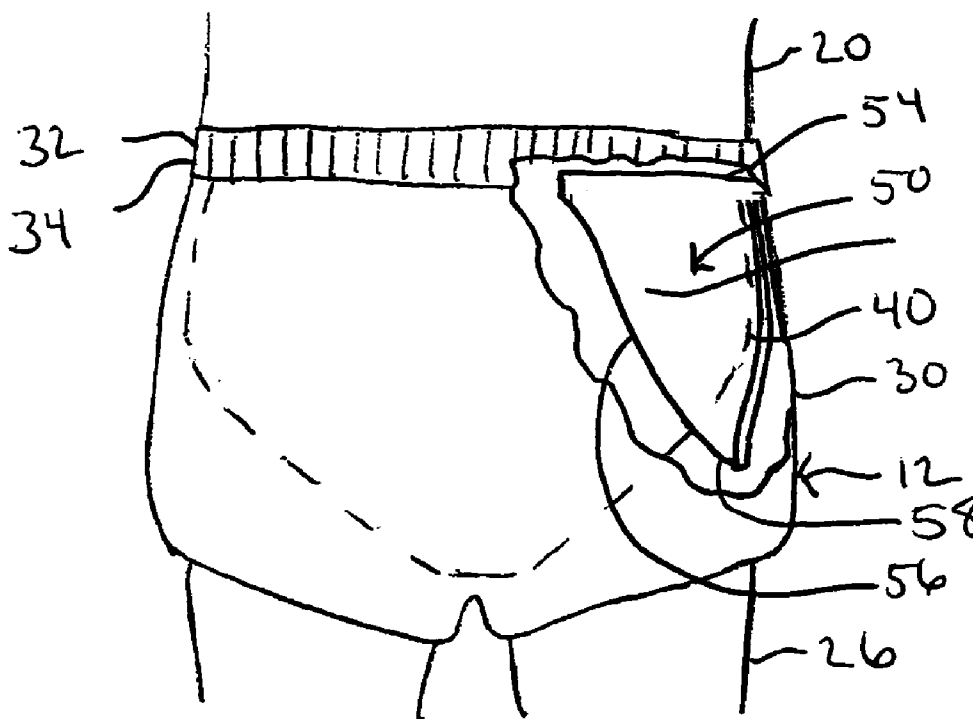
Embodiments presented herein provide athletic shorts having an integral pocket operable to stabilize motion of cargo contained therein. In accordance with the embodiments presented herein, a pocket defined by a pocket assembly is substantially stabilized from anterior/posterior movement when the athletic shorts are worn during exercise by the extended sewing edge provided by the pocket assembly superior edge that extends significantly beyond the pattern defining the pocket in combination with the panel of material defined between the pocket and the pocket assembly anterior edge and the pocket assembly posterior edge that extend from the pocket assembly superior edge at downward angles towards an apex.

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*A41D 27/20* (2006.01)



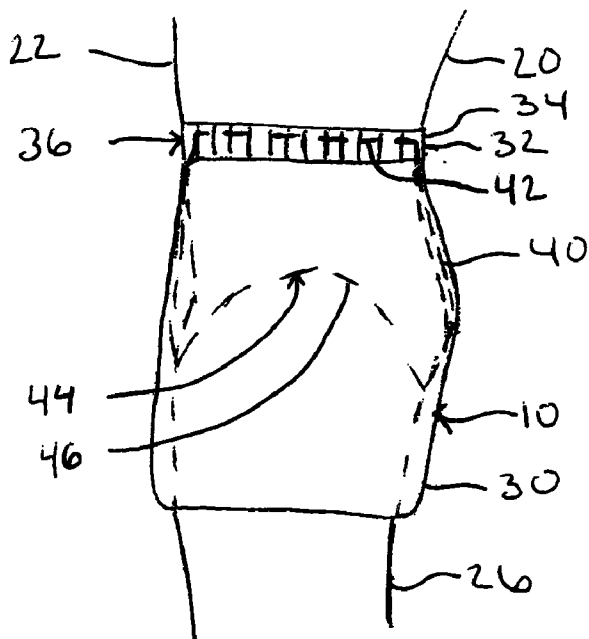


FIG. 1 (Prior Art)

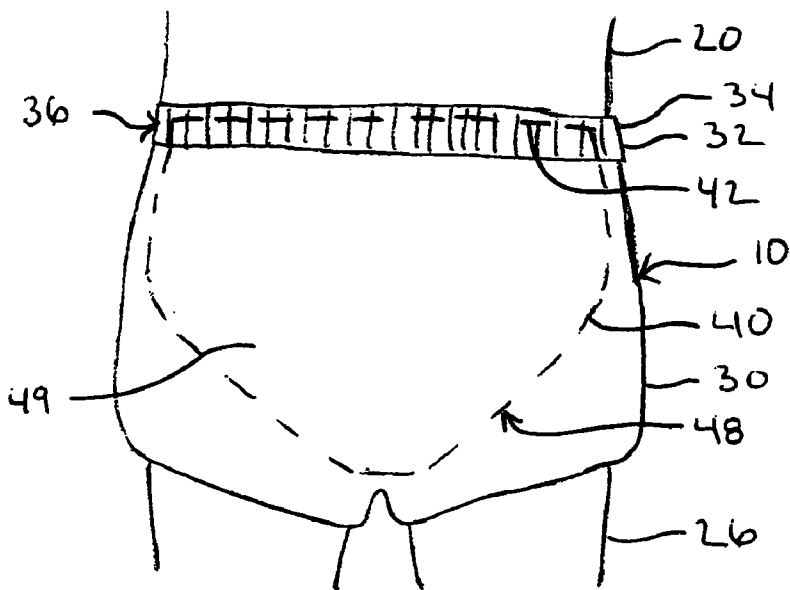


FIG. 2  
(Prior Art)

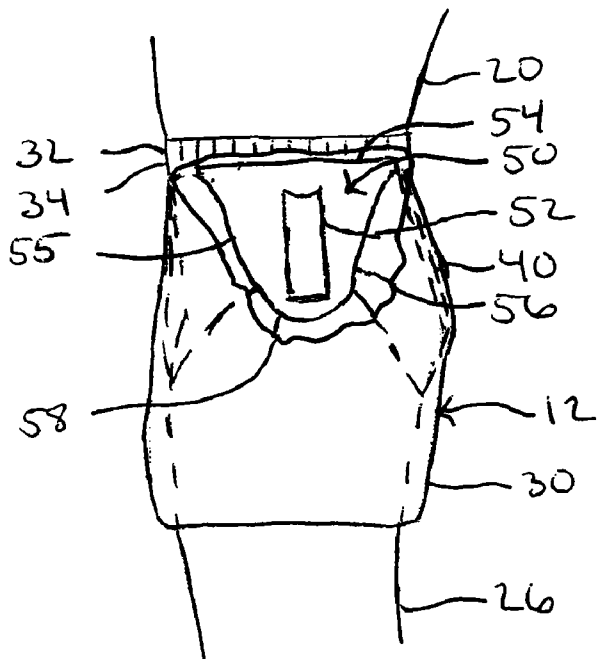


FIG. 3

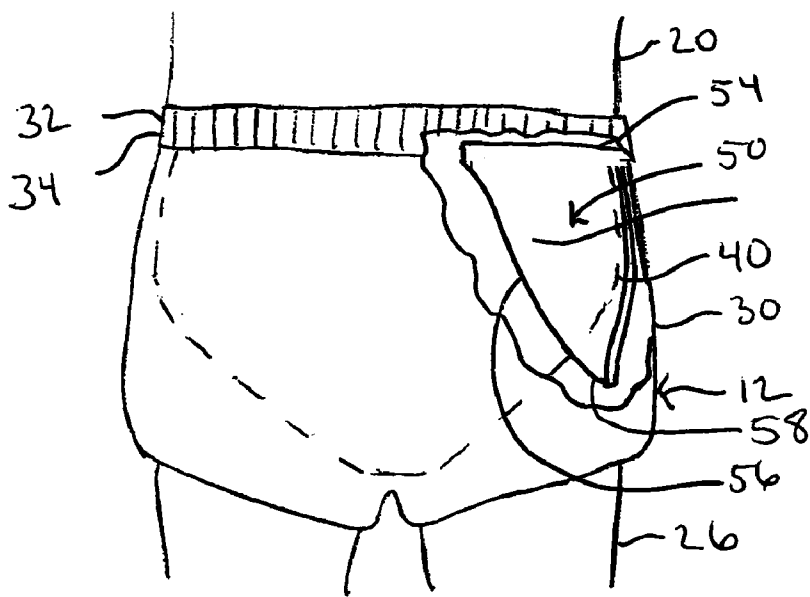


FIG. 4

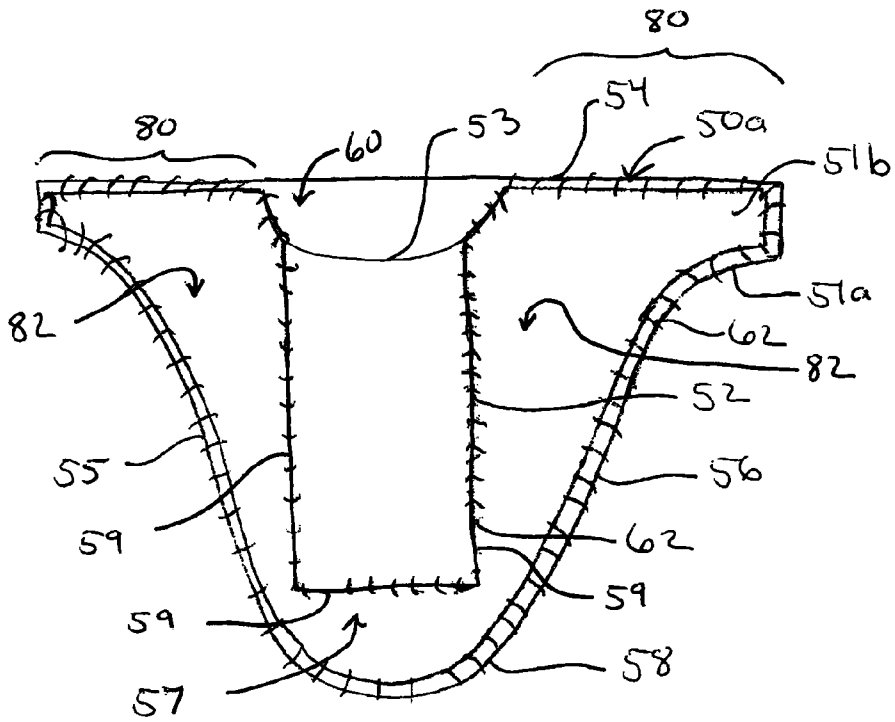


FIG. 5

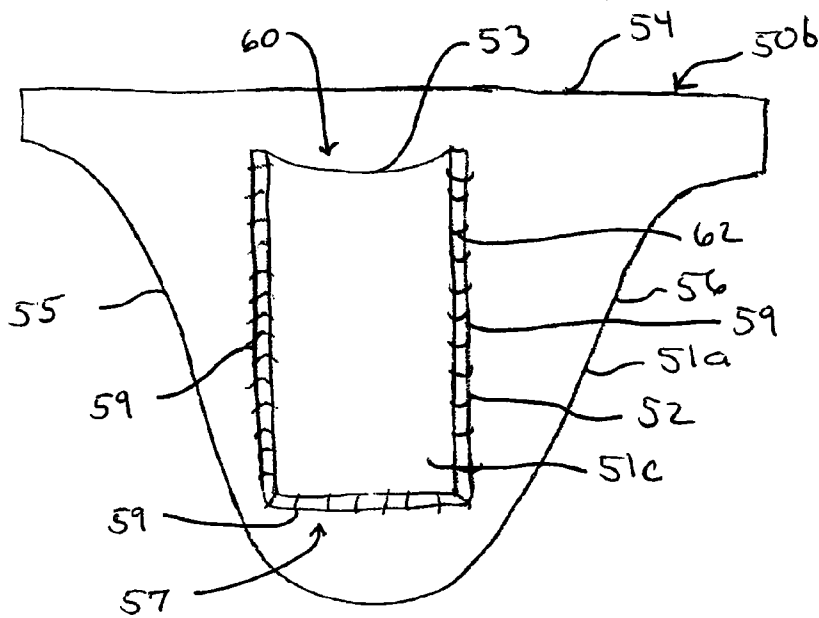


FIG. 6

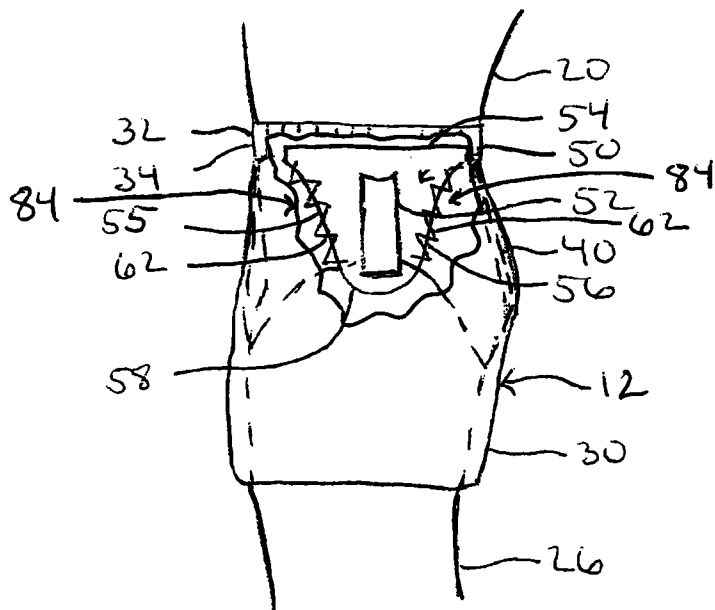


FIG. 7

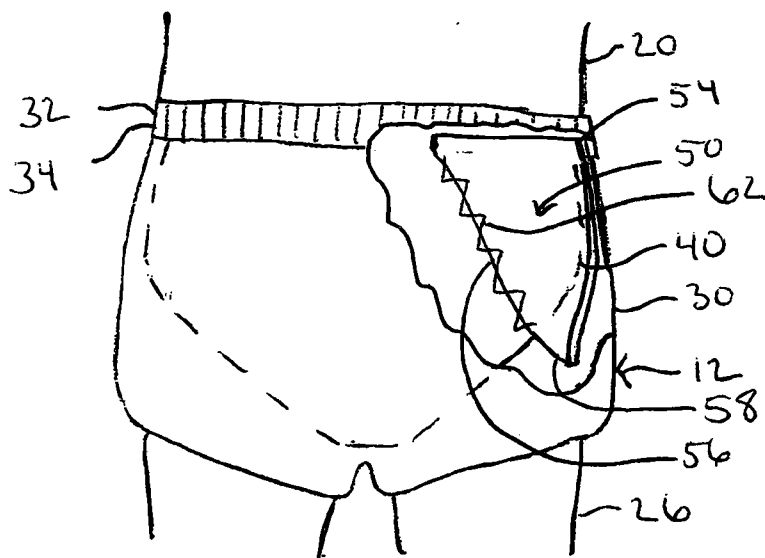


FIG. 8

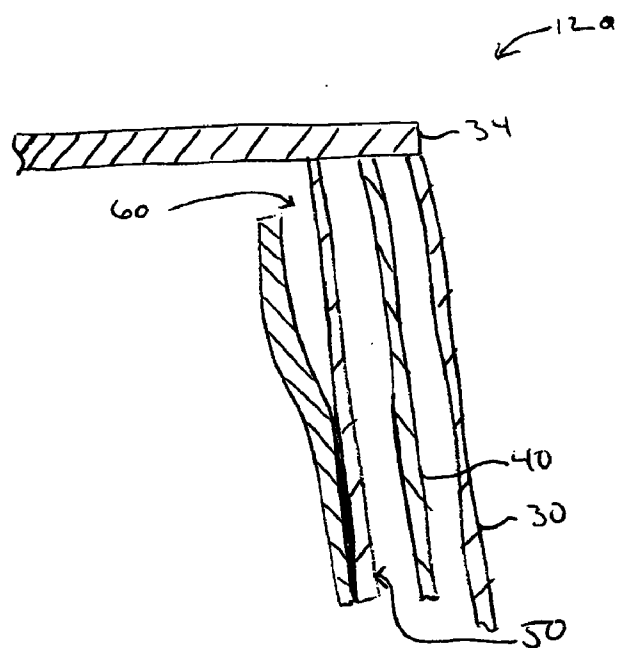


FIG. 9

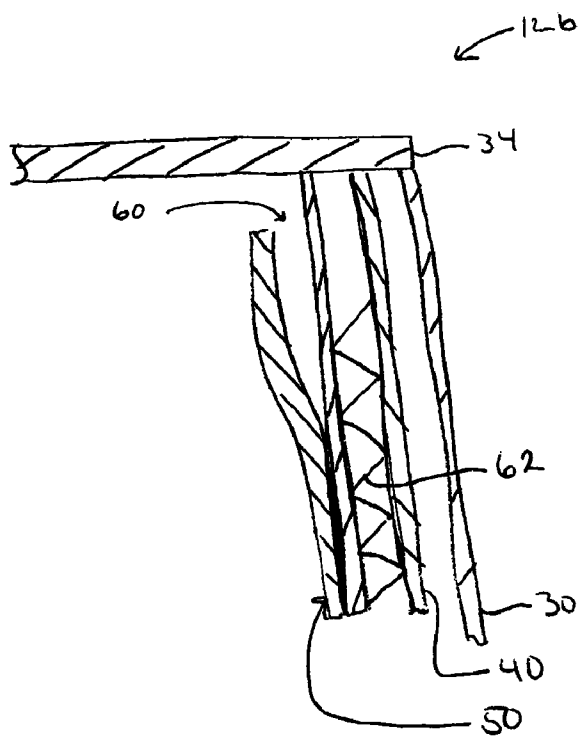


FIG. 10

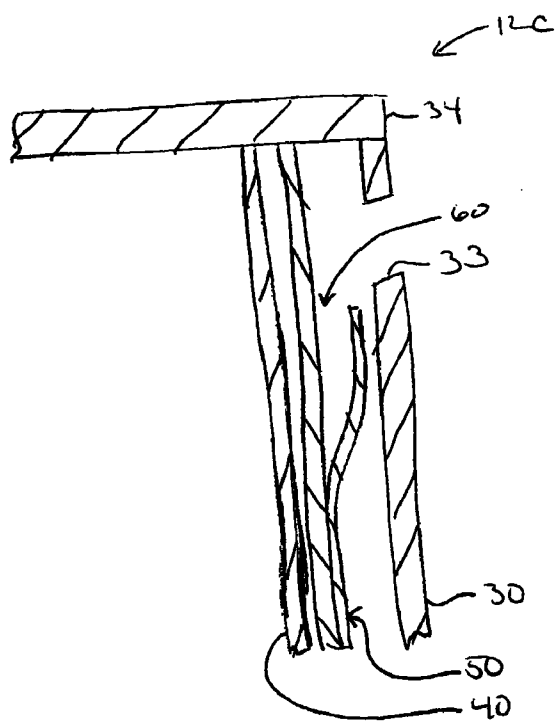


FIG. 11

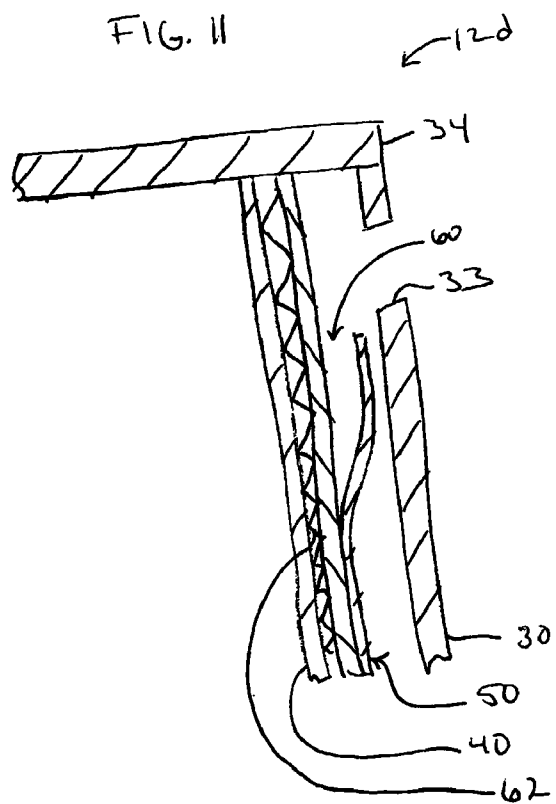


FIG. 12

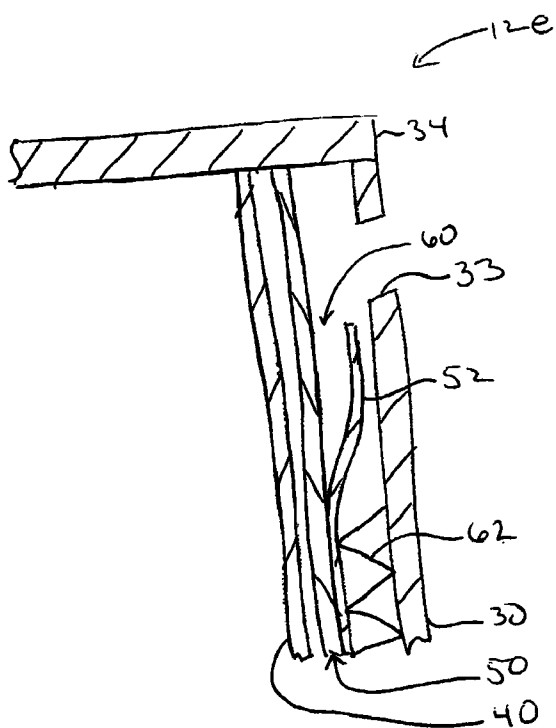


FIG. 13

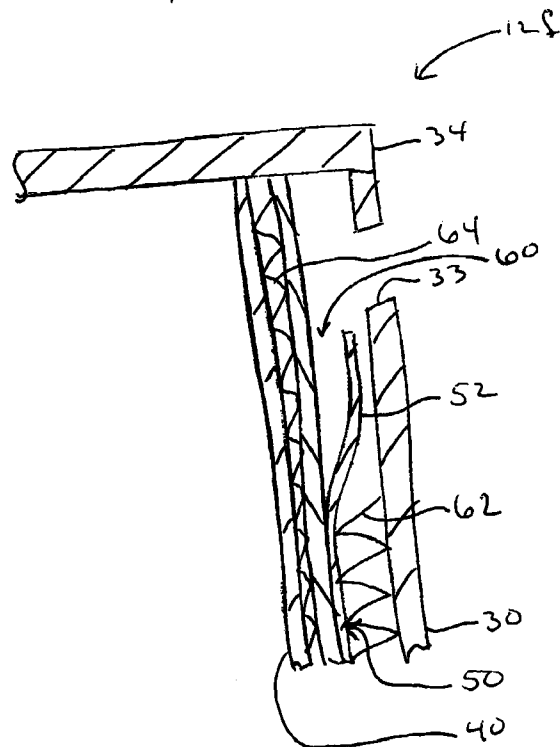


FIG. 14



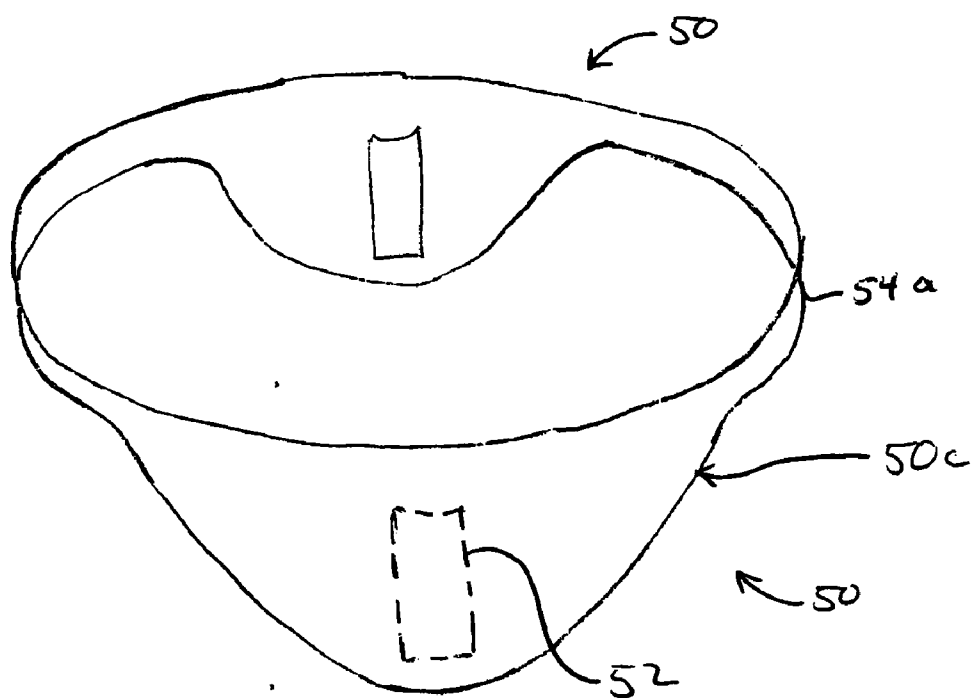


FIG. 15

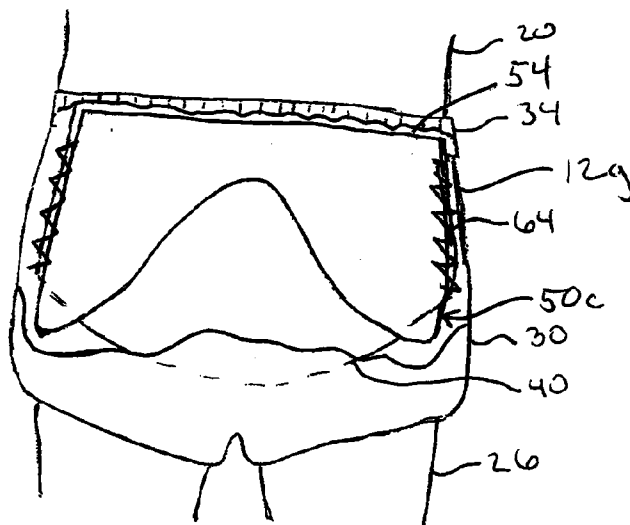


FIG. 16

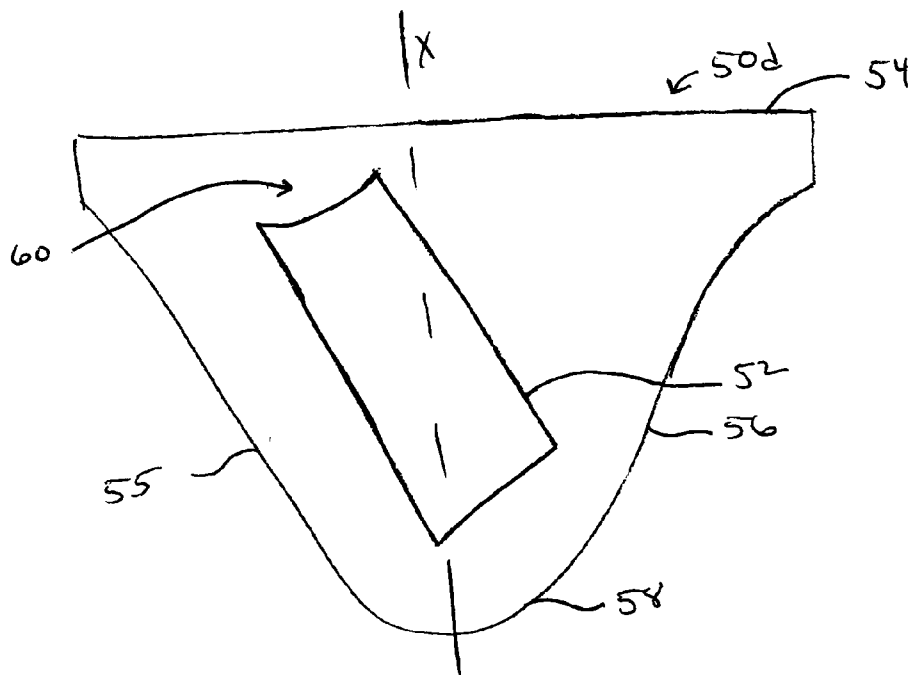


FIG. 17

**ATHLETIC SHORTS**

**FIELD**

[0001] The present invention is related generally to articles of apparel, and in particular, to athletic shorts which are suitable for use by male and female wearers.

**BACKGROUND**

[0002] It is common that exercise enthusiasts such as runners wear athletic shorts that comprise a textile outer shell and an integral inner liner. Both the outer shell and the inner liner define a waistband and two leg apertures. The outer shell is commonly tailored to provide a very loose fit to allow for unrestricted movement of the legs and the underlying muscles of the lower body. The inner liner is commonly provided to provide support to the male reproductive anatomy as well as a modesty feature. The inner liner may be shaped as trunks or as briefs. It is common that only the waistband of the inner liner is sewn into the waistband of the outer shell creating an integral garment that is fixed at the waistband but provides separate mobility away from the waistband, with the inner liner hanging from the waistband of the outer shell.

[0003] With the advent of portable electronic devices such as radios, cell phones, and media players, athletes have been provided limited ways to carry such devices while exercising.

[0004] It is known that athletic shorts may be provided with a small rectangular pocket, referred to as a key pocket, which is sewn along a top edge into the waistband of the inner liner and hangs therefrom. The key pocket is located between the user's leg and the inner liner. The key pocket may have a fold-over opening at the waistline. The key pocket is usually sized to just accommodate a very small item such as a key or a few coins. The key pocket simply hangs from the waistband much like the inner liner. Some athletic shorts provide side pockets that may hold larger items. They are usually pockets having a generalized rectangular shape that extend from a side seam in the hip or leg portion of the outer shell and hang therefrom between the outer shell and the user's leg.

[0005] Whether it is the key pocket or the side pocket, during exercise, such as running, the pocket containing a relatively heavy object, such as a portable electronic device, will tend to swing in a lateral and/or anterior/posterior motion. This motion is undesirable for many reasons, such as, but not limited to, being distracting to the person, causing chafing of the leg, potential shock damage to the device, and potential ejection of the electronic device from the pocket.

[0006] It would therefore be desirable to provide athletic shorts that securely hold a portable electronic device.

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

[0007] Embodiments are illustrated by way of example and not by way of limitation in the figures of the accompanying drawings, in which like references may indicate similar elements throughout the various figures unless otherwise specified.

[0008] FIG. 1 is a side view of a pair of athletic shorts shown in position on a wearer, in accordance with the prior art;

[0009] FIG. 2 is a posterior view of a pair of athletic shorts shown in position on a wearer, in accordance with the prior art;

[0010] FIG. 3 is a side partial cut-way view of a pair of improved athletic shorts shown in position on a wearer in accordance with an embodiment;

[0011] FIG. 4 is a posterior partial cut-way view of the pair of improved athletic shorts in accordance with the embodiment of FIG. 3;

[0012] FIG. 5 is a front view of an embodiment of a pocket assembly wherein the pocket assembly comprises a first fabric piece and a second fabric piece;

[0013] FIG. 6 is a front view of another embodiment of a pocket assembly wherein the pocket assembly comprises a first fabric piece and a third fabric piece, wherein the third fabric piece is of a rectangular pattern substantially sized as the resulting pocket;

[0014] FIG. 7 is a side partial cut-way view of a pair of improved athletic shorts shown in position on a wearer in accordance with another embodiment;

[0015] FIG. 8 is a posterior partial cut-way view of the pair of improved athletic shorts shown in position on a wearer in accordance with the embodiment of FIG. 7;

[0016] FIG. 9 is a side cross-sectional view of the improved athletic shorts showing the outer layer, inner liner and pocket assembly in accordance with the embodiment of FIGS. 3 and 4;

[0017] FIG. 10 is a side cross-sectional view of the improved athletic shorts showing the outer layer, inner liner and pocket assembly in accordance with an embodiment wherein the inner liner and the pocket assembly are coupled together;

[0018] FIG. 11 is a side cross-sectional view of the improved athletic shorts showing the outer layer, inner liner and pocket assembly in accordance with an embodiment wherein the pocket assembly is between the inner liner and the outer layer;

[0019] FIG. 12 is a side cross-sectional view of the improved athletic shorts showing the outer layer, inner liner and pocket assembly in accordance with another embodiment;

[0020] FIG. 13 is a side cross-sectional view of the improved athletic shorts showing the outer layer, inner liner and pocket assembly in accordance with another embodiment;

[0021] FIG. 14 is a side cross-sectional view of the improved athletic shorts showing the outer layer, inner liner and pocket assembly in accordance with another embodiment;

[0022] FIG. 15 shows a perspective view of an embodiment of a double pocket assembly that comprises two pocket assemblies integrally coupled about a waistband;

[0023] FIG. 16 shows a posterior partial cut-way view of a pair of improved athletic shorts comprising the double pocket assembly shown in position on a wearer; and

[0024] FIG. 17 shows a front view of another embodiment of a pocket assembly wherein the pocket the pocket is oriented on a bias away from a vertical orientation so as to be substantially parallel with the anterior edge of the pocket assembly.

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

[0025] In the following description, embodiments of apparatus and methods will be disclosed. For purposes of explanation, specific numbers, materials, and/or configurations are set forth in order to provide a thorough understanding of the embodiments. However, it will also be apparent to those

skilled in the art that the embodiments may be practiced without one or more of the specific details, or with other approaches, materials, components, etc. In other instances, well-known structures, materials, and/or operations are not shown and/or described in detail to avoid obscuring the embodiments. Accordingly, in some instances, features are omitted and/or simplified in order to not obscure the disclosed embodiments. Furthermore, it is understood that the embodiments shown in the figures are illustrative representations and are not necessarily drawn to scale.

**[0026]** Reference throughout this specification to “one embodiment” or “an embodiment” means that a particular feature, structure, or characteristic described in connection with the embodiment is included in at least one embodiment of claimed subject matter. Thus, the appearances of the phrase “in one embodiment” or “an embodiment” in various places throughout this specification are not necessarily all referring to the same embodiment. Furthermore, the particular features, structures, or characteristics may be combined in one or more embodiments.

**[0027]** Reference will now be made to embodiments illustrated in the drawings and specific language which will be used to describe the same. It will nevertheless be understood that no limitation of the scope of the invention is thereby intended. Alterations and further modifications of the illustrated embodiments and further applications of the principles of the invention, as would normally occur to one skilled in the art to which the invention relates, are also within the scope of the invention.

**[0028]** The following embodiments are described referencing novel elements added to athletic shorts of conventional construction. Athletic shorts of conventional construction comprise an outer layer and an inner liner. It is anticipated and understood that the novel elements may be incorporated in athletic shorts of other construction without departing from the scope of the invention.

**[0029]** The present invention teaches athletic shorts with one or more pockets that permit the containment of cargo, such as, but not limited to a portable electronic device, and substantially prevents the cargo and pocket from swinging in a lateral and/or anterior/posterior motion while facilitating relatively unrestricted flexion and extension of the legs.

**[0030]** FIGS. 1 and 2 show a side view and posterior view, respectively, of a pair of athletic shorts 10 shown in position on a wearer 20 in accordance with the prior art. The athletic shorts 10 have an outer layer 30 and an integral inner liner 40 shown by dashed line. The outer layer 30 has an outer layer superior edge 32 defining a waistline 34. The inner liner 40 has an inner liner superior edge 42. The inner liner superior edge 42 may be coupled in functional relation with the outer layer 30 by sewing stitches or other conventional means along the waistline 34 adjacent the outer layer superior edge 32, thus permitting the inner liner 40 to float relatively freely within the outer layer 30 of the athletic shorts 10. As shown in FIG. 2, the approximate location of an inferior edge 48 of a posterior portion 49 of the inner liner 40 is shown by dashed line.

**[0031]** As shown, a conventional horizontal waistline 34 comprises a retention means 36 that extends substantially continuously along the circumference of the waistline 34. The athletic shorts 10 may be retained about the individual's abdomen 22 by retention means 36, such as string draw, elastic, button and hole, or other mechanical means, whether in partial or complete combination.

**[0032]** The outer layer 30 of the athletic shorts 10 may be made of natural fibers such as cotton, or synthetic fibers such as nylon, polyester, polypropylene, or various blends of natural and synthetic fibers. Manufacturers of suitable fabrics include Burlington Industries, Inc. of Hurt, Va., Milliken Research Corporation of Spartanburg, N.C., and Yagi & Co., Ltd., of Osaka, Japan.

**[0033]** The inner liner 40 may substantially consist of a resilient or stretchlastic material including natural fibers such as cotton, synthetic fibers such as polyester or polypropylene, nylon, or various blends of natural and synthetic fibers such as cotton and polyester. LYCRA® brand spandex, or various COOLMAX® textiles made or licensed by E.I. Dupont de Nemours Company can be used, and the like. Further, various textiles made by Milliken Research Corporation of Spartanburg, N.C., Burlington Industries, Inc. of Hurt, Va., or Darlington Fabrics Corporation of New York can be used, and the like. A stretchlastic material can consist of two-way, three-way or any other type of stretchlastic material.

**[0034]** Alternately, the inner liner 40 can partially or substantially consist of a relatively non-stretchlastic material made of cotton, and the like. It can be readily understood that different textile materials made of a particular material, such as cotton, can exhibit a wide range of elongation properties and be stretchlastic or non-stretchlastic, depending upon the type and size of the fibers, and also the type and size of the knit or weave.

**[0035]** The inner liner 40 can also include elastic material bordering the edge 44 of openings 46 for accommodating the wearer's legs 26. Alternately, the inner liner 40 need not include elastic material 24 bordering the edge 44 of openings 46 for accommodating the wearer's legs 26.

**[0036]** FIGS. 3 and 4 show a side partial cut-way view and a posterior partial cut-way view, respectively, of a pair of improved athletic shorts 12 shown in position on a wearer 20 in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. The improved athletic shorts 12 comprises the athletic shorts of the prior art further comprising an integral pocket assembly 50. The pocket assembly 50 defines a generalized triangular shape including a pocket assembly superior edge 54, a pocket assembly anterior edge 55 and a pocket assembly posterior edge 56. The pocket assembly anterior edge 55 and the pocket assembly posterior edge 56 extend from the pocket assembly superior edge 54 at downward angles defining an apex 58 so as to create an arcuate or V shaped configuration.

**[0037]** The pocket assembly 50 comprises a pocket 52 depending from adjacent the pocket assembly superior edge 54 extending towards the apex 58. FIG. 5 shows a front view of an embodiment of a pocket assembly 50a wherein the pocket assembly 50 comprises a first fabric piece 51a substantially completely overlaid by a second fabric piece 51b with the pocket 52 defined by coupling the two fabric pieces 51a, 51b together about three sides 59 of a generalized rectangular pattern 57, by way of example, but not limited thereto, by sewing stitches 62 or other conventional means, with a pocket superior edge 53 remaining open defining a pocket opening 60 operable to accept cargo therethrough. It is understood and appreciated that the pocket 52 may define other geometric shapes suitable for a particular purpose, such as, but not limited to, various shapes of electronic devices.

**[0038]** It is understood and appreciated that the pocket opening 60 may comprise many configurations, such as, but not limited to, a simple opening as shown and a fold-over flap. It is also understood and appreciated that the pocket opening

may comprise a closure means such as a zipper, button, hook-and-loop fastener, among many others.

[0039] FIG. 6 shows a front view of another embodiment of a pocket assembly 50b wherein the pocket assembly 50b comprises a first fabric piece 51a partially overlaid by a third fabric piece 51c, wherein the third fabric piece 51c is of a generalized rectangular pattern substantially sized as the resulting pocket 52. The pocket 52 is defined by coupling the two fabric pieces 51a, 51c together about three sides 59 of the third fabric piece 51c, by way of example, but not limited thereto, by sewing stitches or other conventional means, with a pocket superior edge 53 remaining open defining a pocket opening 60 operable to accept cargo therethrough. It is understood and appreciated that the pocket 52 may define other geometric shapes suitable for a particular purpose, such as, but not limited to, various shapes of electronic devices.

[0040] The fabric pieces 51a, 51b, 51c may comprise the same textile or comprise a first textile material which consists of a relatively less stretchlastic, or non-stretchlastic material, and a second textile material which consists of a relatively stretchlastic material. Wherein at least one of the fabric pieces 51a, 51b, 51c is of a stretchlastic textile material, the pocket 52 may conform to and better retain the cargo placed therein.

[0041] Referring again to FIGS. 3 and 4, the pocket assembly superior edge 54 may be coupled in functional relation with the inner liner 40 by sewing stitches or other conventional means along the waistline 34 adjacent the outer layer superior edge 32, in accordance with an embodiment. In this embodiment, the pocket assembly 50 may float relatively freely between the inner liner 40 the wearer's leg 26. FIG. 9 is a partial side cross-sectional view of the improved athletic shorts 12a showing the outer layer 30, inner liner 40 and pocket assembly 50 in accordance with the embodiment of FIGS. 3 and 4.

[0042] FIGS. 7 and 8 show a side partial cut-way view and a posterior partial cut-way view, respectively, of a pair of improved athletic shorts 12 shown in position on a wearer 20 in accordance with another embodiment, wherein the pocket assembly 50 is coupled in functional relation with the inner liner 40 by sewing stitches or other conventional means along the waistline 34 and for at least a portion of one or both of the pocket assembly anterior edge 55 and pocket assembly posterior edge 56. In this embodiment, a substantial portion of the pocket assembly 50 is coupled to the inner liner 40. FIG. 10 is a partial side cross-sectional view of the improved athletic shorts 12b showing the outer layer 30, inner liner 40 and pocket assembly 50 in accordance with the embodiment of FIGS. 7 and 8 wherein the inner liner 40 and the pocket assembly 50 are coupled together.

[0043] FIG. 11 is a partial side cross-sectional view of the improved athletic shorts 12c showing the outer layer 30, inner liner 40 and pocket assembly 50 in accordance with another embodiment wherein the pocket assembly 50 is between the inner liner 40 and the outer layer 30. The pocket assembly 50 is coupled in functional relation with the outer layer 30 and the inner liner 40 by sewing stitches or other conventional means along the waistline 34 adjacent the outer layer superior edge 32 with the pocket assembly 50 extending between the outer layer 30 and the inner liner 40. In accordance with an embodiment, the pocket assembly 50 may float relatively freely between the outer layer 30 and the inner liner 40.

[0044] FIG. 12 is a partial side cross-sectional view of the improved athletic shorts 12d showing the outer layer 30, inner liner 40 and pocket assembly 50 in accordance with another

embodiment. The pocket assembly 50 is coupled in functional relation with the outer layer 30 and the inner liner 40 by sewing stitches or other conventional means along the waistline 34 adjacent the outer layer superior edge 32 with the pocket assembly 50 extending between the outer layer 30 and the inner liner 40. The pocket assembly 50 is coupled to the inner liner 40 along at least a portion of one or both of the pocket assembly anterior edge 55 and pocket assembly posterior edge 56 by sewing stitches 62.

[0045] FIG. 13 is a partial side cross-sectional view of the improved athletic shorts 12e showing the outer layer 30, inner liner 40 and pocket assembly 50 in accordance with another embodiment. The pocket assembly 50 is coupled in functional relation with the outer layer 30 and the inner liner 40 by sewing stitches or other conventional means along the waistline 34 adjacent the outer layer superior edge 32 with the pocket assembly 50 extending between the outer layer 30 and the inner liner 40. The pocket assembly 50 is coupled to the outer layer 30 along at least a portion of one or both of the pocket assembly anterior edge 55 and pocket assembly posterior edge 56 by sewing stitches 62. Access to the pocket 52 may be made via outer layer opening 33 in the outer layer 30.

[0046] FIG. 14 is a partial side cross-sectional view of the improved athletic shorts 12f showing the outer layer 30, inner liner 40 and pocket assembly 50 in accordance with another embodiment. The pocket assembly 50 is coupled in functional relation with the outer layer 30 and the inner liner 40 by sewing stitches or other conventional means along the waistline 34 adjacent the outer layer superior edge 32 with the pocket assembly 50 extending between the outer layer 30 and the inner liner 40. The pocket assembly 50 is coupled to the outer layer 30 and the inner liner 40 along at least a portion of one or both of the pocket assembly anterior edge 55 and pocket assembly posterior edge 56 by sewing stitches 62. Access to the pocket 52 may be made via outer layer opening 33 in the outer layer 30.

[0047] In the above embodiments wherein the pocket assembly 50 is between the outer layer 30 and the inner liner 40, access to the pocket opening 60 may be made through an opening (not shown) in the waistline 34, through an opening 33 in the outer layer 30, or through an opening (not shown) in the inner liner 40.

[0048] FIG. 15 shows a perspective view of an embodiment of a double pocket assembly 50c that comprises two pocket assemblies 50 integrally coupled defining a continuous pocket assembly superior edge 54a. FIG. 16 shows a posterior partial cut-way view of a pair of improved athletic shorts 12g comprising the double pocket assembly 50c shown in position on a wearer 20. The continuous pocket assembly superior edge 54a may be coupled in functional relation with the outer layer 30 and inner liner 40 by sewing stitches or other conventional means as described for the pocket assembly superior edge 54 of the pocket assembly 50 of embodiments of FIGS. 3-4 and 9-14.

[0049] FIG. 17 shows a side view of another embodiment of a pocket assembly 50d wherein the pocket 52 is orientated on a bias away from a vertical axis X so as to be substantially parallel with the anterior edge 55 of the pocket assembly 50d.

[0050] Referring again to FIG. 5 by way of example, in accordance with the embodiments presented herein, the pocket 52 defined by the pocket assembly 50 is substantially stabilized from anterior/posterior movement when the athletic shorts are worn during exercise by the extended sewing edge 80 provided by the pocket assembly superior edge 54

that extends significantly beyond the pattern defining the pocket 52 in combination with the panel of material 82 defined between the pocket 52 and the pocket assembly anterior edge 55 and the pocket assembly posterior edge 56 that extend from the pocket assembly superior edge 54 at downward angles towards an apex 58 so as to create an arcuate or V shaped configuration.

[0051] Referring again to FIG. 7 by way of example, in accordance with other embodiments presented herein, the pocket 52 defined by the pocket assembly 50 is substantially stabilized from anterior/posterior movement by the extended sewing edge 80 provided by the pocket assembly superior edge 54 that extends significantly beyond the pattern of the pocket 52 in combination with the panel of material 82 defined between the pocket 52 and the pocket assembly anterior edge 55 and the pocket assembly posterior edge 56 that extend from the pocket assembly superior edge 54 at downward angles towards an apex 58 so as to create an arcuate or V shaped configuration. The pocket assembly 50 is also substantially stabilized from lateral movement by an extended sewing edge 84 provided by the pocket assembly anterior edge 55 and the pocket assembly posterior edge 56 being at least partially coupled to either the inner liner 40 and/or the outer layer 30.

[0052] The athletic shorts taught in the present embodiments can be advantageous for casual, recreational, or athletic use, e.g., in such varied sports as running, soccer, basketball, volleyball, and tennis.

[0053] While the invention has been described in connection with specific embodiments thereof, it will be understood that it is capable of further modification, and this application is intended to cover any variations, uses, or adaptations of the invention following, in general, the principles of the invention and including such departures from the present disclosure as come within known or customary practice in the art to which the invention pertains and as may be applied to the essential features hereinbefore set forth, and as fall within the scope of the invention and the limits of the appended claims.

We claim:

1. A pair of athletic shorts comprising:

an outer layer including an outer layer superior edge defining a waistline;

an inner liner comprising an inner liner superior edge coupled to the waistline; and

a pocket assembly defining a generalized triangular shape including a pocket assembly superior edge, a pocket assembly anterior edge, and a pocket assembly posterior edge, the pocket assembly anterior edge and the pocket assembly posterior edge extend from the pocket assembly superior edge at downward angles defining an apex, the pocket assembly further comprising a pocket defining a pocket opening operable to accept cargo therein, the pocket depending from adjacent the pocket assembly superior edge extending towards the apex, the pocket assembly superior edge coupled to the waistline such that the pocket assembly hangs therefrom.

2. The pair of athletic shorts of claim 1 wherein the pocket assembly comprises a first fabric piece substantially completely overlaid by a second fabric piece with the pocket defined by coupling the first fabric piece and second fabric piece together about three sides of a generalized rectangular pattern with a pocket superior edge remaining open defining the pocket opening.

3. The pair of athletic shorts of claim 1 wherein the pocket assembly comprises a first fabric piece partially overlaid by a third fabric piece, wherein the third fabric piece is of a generalized rectangular pattern substantially sized as the pocket, the pocket being defined by the coupling of the first fabric piece and third fabric piece together about three sides of the third fabric with a pocket superior edge remaining open defining the pocket opening.

4. The pair of athletic shorts of claim 1 wherein the pocket assembly superior edge is coupled in functional relation with the inner liner along the waistline adjacent the outer layer superior edge wherein the pocket assembly may extend between the inner liner and a leg of a wearer.

5. The pair of athletic shorts of claim 1 wherein the pocket assembly superior edge is coupled in functional relation with the inner liner along the waistline adjacent the outer layer superior edge and at least a portion of one or both of the pocket assembly anterior edge and pocket assembly posterior edge being coupled to the inner liner.

6. The pair of athletic shorts of claim 1 wherein the pocket assembly being coupled in functional relation with the outer layer and the inner liner along the waistline adjacent the outer layer superior edge with the pocket assembly extending between the outer layer and the inner liner.

7. The pair of athletic shorts of claim 1 wherein the pocket assembly being coupled in functional relation with the outer layer and the inner liner along the waistline adjacent the outer layer superior edge with the pocket assembly extending between the outer layer and the inner liner, the pocket assembly being coupled to the inner liner along at least a portion of either one or both of the pocket assembly anterior edge and pocket assembly posterior edge.

8. The pair of athletic shorts of claim 1 wherein the pocket assembly being coupled in functional relation with the outer layer and the inner liner along the waistline adjacent the outer layer superior edge with the pocket assembly extending between the outer layer and the inner liner, the pocket assembly being coupled to the inner liner along at least a portion of either one or both of the pocket assembly anterior edge and pocket assembly posterior edge, the outer layer further comprising an outer layer opening adjacent the pocket opening of the pocket.

9. The pair of athletic shorts of claim 1 wherein the pocket assembly being coupled in functional relation with the outer layer and the inner liner along the waistline adjacent the outer layer superior edge with the pocket assembly extending between the outer layer and the inner liner, the pocket assembly being coupled to the outer layer and the inner liner along at least a portion of one or both of the pocket assembly anterior edge and pocket assembly posterior edge, the outer layer further comprising an outer layer opening adjacent the pocket opening of the pocket.

10. The pair of athletic shorts of claim 1 wherein the pocket assembly comprises a double pocket assembly including two pocket assemblies integrally coupled defining a continuous pocket assembly superior edge, wherein the continuous pocket assembly superior edge is coupled in functional relation with the outer layer and inner liner adjacent the outer layer superior edge.

11. The pair of athletic shorts of claim 1 wherein the pocket is orientated on a bias away from a vertical axis so as to be substantially parallel with the anterior edge of the pocket assembly.