

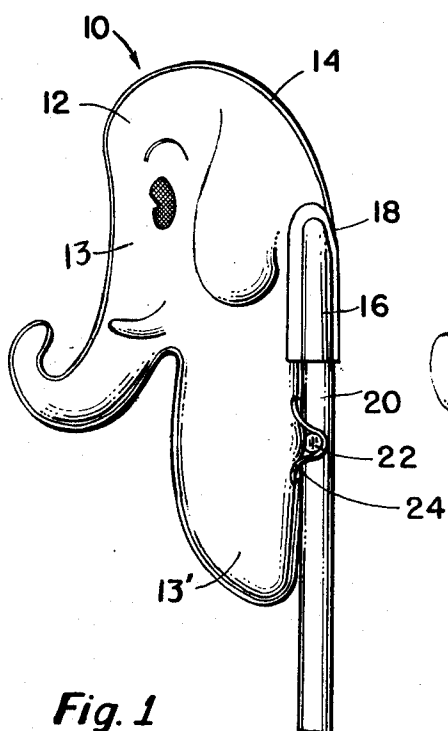
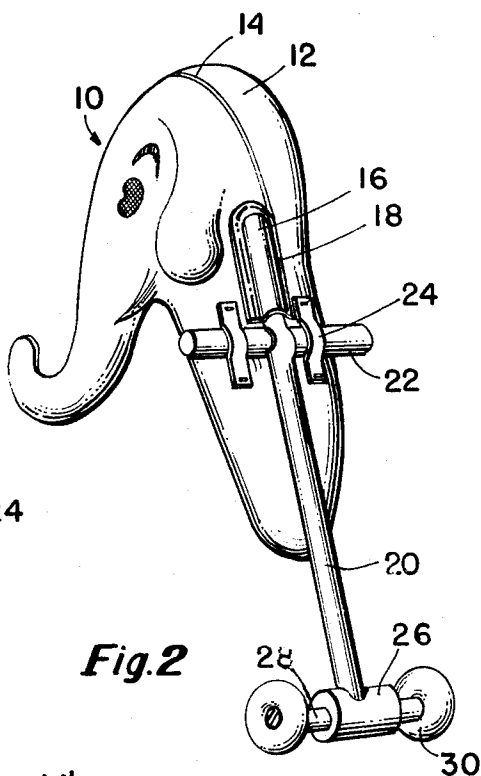
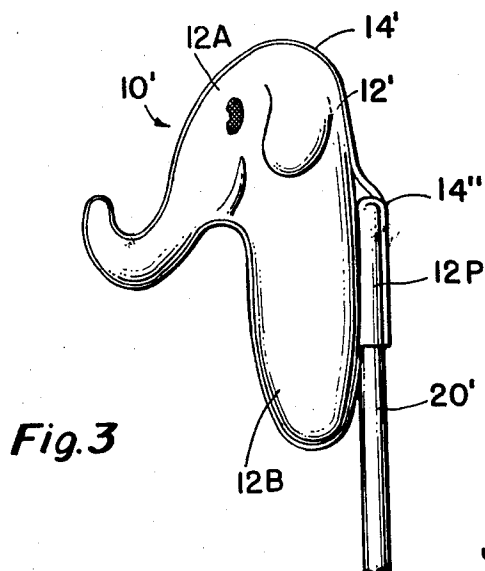
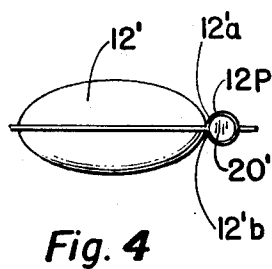
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INFLATABLE TOYS

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INFLATABLE TOYS

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This invention relates to inflatable toys and, in particular, to inflatable plastic figure toys provided in assembly with rigid supporting means holding said toys erect.

It is a primary object of this invention to provide new and improved toys which comprise an inflatable portion and a rigid member or assembly for supporting said inflatable portion erect and for coacting therewith to enhance the utility of said toy.

Another object is to provide a new and improved means for supporting and carrying an inflatable toy erect on a support which may be easily held in the hand.

Still another object is to provide an improved structure for an inflatable toy which includes simple means for supporting an inflated bag erect on a rod or stick by means of a pocket formed with and projecting from said bag whereby said pocket may be formed of the same material of which said inflatable bag is formed during a singular heat sealing operation enclosing said bag without the expenditure of labor to effect multiple sealing operations thereafter. The sealing operation may be accomplished by an electronic sealing means between dies.

Still another object is to provide new and improved means for supporting an inflated body, on a rigid elongated rod member or the like in a manner such that said inflated body will be prevented from rotation about said rod member.

Yet another object is to provide an improved structure in an inflated toy with means for securing an inflated body on the end of a stick whereby said toy may be used as a simulated riding toy or the like.

The above brief description, as well as further objects, features and advantages of the present invention will be best appreciated by reference to the following detailed description which makes reference to the drawing wherein:

Fig. 1 shows in front elevation an inflatable toy assembly embodying features of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is an isometric view of the toy illustrated in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a front elevation of another embodiment of the present invention; and

Fig. 4 is an end view of Fig. 3.

Referring now specifically to the drawing, Figs. 1 and 2 illustrate a toy in the form of a mock animal made out of an inflated bag which is secured to a rigid assembly rod for supporting or holding said inflatable bag erect. The combination of inflated bag and support permits said toy to be easily held and manipulated and provides a structure which enhances the versatility of inflatable toys.

Inflated body 12 consists of a head portion 13 extending to an elongated portion 13' projecting downward therefrom representing the neck and possibly part of the upper torso of an animal such as the illustrated elephant figure.

The inflatable body 12 may be made of two or more sheets of flexible plastic such as polyvinyl chloride which have been die cut to the desired contour and sealed in a circumscribing sealing line to provide an enclosure which,

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when inflated by air pressure, will yield the desired shape such as illustrated. A pocket 16 is provided projecting downward and opening at the bottom on the rear surface of the inflatable body 12 for receiving the end of the supporting member 20 as illustrated. Said pocket 16 is formed by sealing an elongated flap or strip of flexible vinyl plastic sheeting against the wall of body 12 with a border-extending sealing line 18 which extends about the side and top edges of said flap and forms an enclosure, one wall of which is provided by said flap and the other by the wall of body 12. The dimensions of the pocket and sealing line 18 are such that the end of the rod 20 will be engaged therein in a manner to permit it to hold and support the body 12 upright thereon when said rod is held erect and body 12 is inflated and in a semi-rigid condition.

Further support may be provided for the inflated body 12 by means of a cross-member 22 which is rigidly affixed to and projects laterally from the elongated rod member 20 near the top end thereof. The cross-member 22 is illustrated as being secured to the inflatable body 12 by means of a pair of short strips 24 of flexible plastic sheeting which loop over the extremities of said cross-member and are secured to the wall of the body 12 by means of welding. When the body 12 is inflated, it is held in a secure assembly with the assembly of members 20 and 22. The toy illustrated in Fig. 2 may be straddled by a child in the manner of a hobby-horse toy and carried across a room in riding simulation by grasping the cross-bar 22.

To permit the assembly 10 to be wheeled across a floor or surface an elongated cylindrical bearing 26 is secured to the lower end of body 20 in which a shaft 28 is rotatable. Wheels 30 are mounted at the end of said shaft.

The embodiment of Figs. 3 and 4 illustrates a further method of supporting an inflated body on a rigid rod or the like. The toy 10' consists of an elongated inflatable body 12' shown as being in the form of a mock elephant. The inflated body 12' consists of a head portion 12A extending from an elongated neck portion 12B and is made of at least two sheets of flexible plastic such as vinyl having a circumscribing weld line 14' which totally encloses the figure portion of said toy such that it may be inflated and maintained inflated to provide the general shape illustrated. A pocket 12P is formed at the rear of the inflatable body portion 12' and is utilized to engage the end of a rigid support such as the illustrated cylindrical rod 20'. The pocket 12P may be formed by cutting the sheets of flexible plastic, which are contour welded to form the inflated body 12', to a shape such that when the circumscribing weld line 14' is provided, flexible elongated portions of said sheets will protrude beyond said weld line at the rear of said figure. Said flap portions 12'a and 12'b illustrated in the end view, Fig. 4, may be joined to form an elongated pocket which is open at the bottom, by the provision of a further weld line 14'' extending parallel to and along the border of the assembly of 12'a and 12'b and across the top of said flap portions but ending near the bottom of said assembly providing an opening to 12P. The dimensions of the pocket are such that the rod 20' may be pushed into the opening at its lower end and will support said inflated body 12' when the latter is in its semi-rigid inflated condition. The extension of the sealing line 14'' across the top of 12P prevents the support member 20' from being pushed out of said pocket.

The aforescribed constructions and assembly techniques may be utilized in the design of a variety of inflatable toys which are enhanced in play value by the provision of a rigid supporting member which may be held in the hand to support the toy or secured to other

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members or assemblies comprising part of the toy. A latitude of modification and substitution is intended in the foregoing disclosure and in certain instances some features of the invention will be used without a corresponding use of other features. Accordingly it is appropriate that the appended claims be construed broadly and in a manner consistent with the spirit and scope of the invention.

Having thus described the invention, what I claim is:

1. An inflatable toy comprising in combination, a first section representing a toy figure made of an inflatable plastic bag, a rigid elongated rod member, one end of said rod member being slidably assembled with said bag for holding it erect thereon when said bag is inflated, said plastic bag being fabricated of a flexible heat sealable thermoplastic plastic and being made air-tight for inflation by a circumscribing sealing line welding sheets of said plastic together, an elongated pocket made of said plastic and integrally formed adjacent the inflatable section of said bag for engaging and holding a length of said rod member said pocket providing support for said bag on said rod member, and a crossbar affixed to said rod member, means securing said crossbar to said inflatable bag to prevent the rotation of said rod and said bag when the latter is inflated.

2. A toy in accordance with claim 1 whereby the means for securing said crossbar to said inflatable bag comprises a flap of said flexible plastic extending over said crossbar and heat sealed to the walls of said bag whereby said flap holds said crossbar against said bag in a semi-rigid engagement therewith when the latter is inflated.

3. An inflatable toy assembly comprising in combination:

(a) An inflatable unit which is shaped and decorated to represent at least part of a toy figure,

(b) An elongated pocket unit integrally joined to said inflatable unit, and

(c) A rigid elongated rod member,

(d) The upper end portion of said elongated rod member slideably fitting into said elongated pocket in such a manner that said inflatable unit is maintained in an erect position on said rod member during normal use of the inflated toy assembly,

(e) Said inflatable toy assembly comprising two separate sheets of flexible heat sealable thermoplastic material, each of said sheets consisting of a figure section which has an outline generally corresponding to the shape of the toy figure and a pocket section which generally has the outline of an oblong half-pocket,

(f) Said two sheets being joined together by a welded sealing line which runs closely adjacent the entire outer border of said figure section so that the area within this outer border constitutes an air-tight inflatable unit,

(g) Said two sheets being also joined together by a welded sealing line which runs along a substantial portion, but not all of the outer border of said pocket section,

(h) Said figure section and said pocket section having a common sealing line along the inner longitudinal boundary portion of said pocket section,

(i) Said elongated pocket having an opening at its lower end which is large enough to receive, engage and hold one end portion of a rigid elongated rod member,

(j) Said elongated pocket being closed at its upper end sufficiently to prevent said rod member from sliding therethrough.

4. An inflatable toy assembly comprising in combination:

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(a) An inflated unit which is shaped and decorated to represent at least part of a toy figure.

(b) Said inflated unit comprising two similarly shaped sections of flexible heat sealable thermoplastic material.

(c) An elongated pocket unit integrally joined to said inflated unit.

(d) A rigid elongated rod member.

(e) Said elongated pocket unit having an opening at its lower end which is large enough to receive, engage and hold one end portion of said rigid elongated rod member.

(f) Said elongated pocket unit being closed at its upper end sufficiently to prevent said rod member from sliding therethrough, the improvement which comprises:

(g) Said inflated unit having an elongated surface portion which is substantially free from longitudinal curvature, said elongated surface portion being at least as long as the longest dimension of said elongated pocket.

(h) Said elongated pocket unit being aligned with and integrally joined to said inflated unit along said elongated portion of the surface of the unit which is substantially free from longitudinal curvature.

5. A toy comprising the combination of an inflatable member made of a flexible thermoplastic sheeting which is shaped and decorated to resemble at least part of a toy figure, means assembling said inflatable member in semi-rigid engagement with a rod member for supporting said inflatable member erect, when inflated, thereon, said assembly means comprising an oblong strip of flexible plastic sheeting welded to the exterior wall of said inflatable member whereby it forms an oblong pocket with said wall of essentially constant diameter, the means welding said oblong strip to said inflatable member wall comprising a sealing weld line formed by electronic sealing means between dies and extending peripherally about said strip save for an interruption in said sealing line near the bottom end of said strip providing an opening therein of essentially the same diameter as said rod member, a sufficient length of said rod member fitted into said pocket to afford upright support thereto when said rod member is held erect, a crossbar extending laterally from said rod member below said pocket, means securing said crossbar in semi-rigid engagement with said inflated body preventing rotation of said toy on said rod member, said crossbar securing means comprising flexible sheeting extending across said crossbar and welded on each side thereof to said inflatable member, there being wheels rotationally mounted at the other end of said rod member for engaging the ground as said rod member is carried oblique to the ground.

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