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(54) **Container system & oscillating toy**

Behältersystem und Schwingspiel

Système de récipient et jouet oscillant

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(73) Proprietor: **Natura Cosméticos S.A.**
Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo (BR)

(72) Inventor: **Miozzo, Maria Filomena Padron**
Sao Paulo,SP (BR)

(74) Representative: **Darby, David Thomas et al**
Abel & Imray,
20 Red Lion Street
London WC1R 4PQ (GB)

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Description

[0001] This invention relates to a container system provided with an interchangeable base, the innovative structural concept of which confers more stability, reducing the chances of the user inadvertently knocking it down. This container system is mainly useful for containing toiletry products, such as toilet soap or shampoo. This invention also acts as an oscillating toy.

[0002] In GB 1 451 898 there is described a toy figure comprising a lower hollow, substantially hemispherical base portion with a weight element, a moulded hollow inverted cup like upper body portion, and a cap portion shaped to fit snugly on the upper portion. The portions preferably are secured together by ultrasonic welding.

[0003] DE 647350 describes a device for securing a ballast weight in a thin-walled toy body, for example, in the base portion of a self-righting toy figure.

[0004] Another example of prior art is disclosed in the document US 5,088,948, which discloses a buoyant beverage container assembly including a beverage container, a buoyant sleeve and a body of heavy ballast material encapsulated between a bottom cap and a retainer cap. The bottom cap includes a collar which, in combination with the retainer cap, defines an annular pocket in which the buoyant sleeve is secured.

[0005] Another example of prior art is disclosed in the document FR 557.381, which discloses a toy figure having a body comprising an integral, semi-spherical base portion including a ballast element.

[0006] Yet another example of prior art is disclosed in the document US 5,662,241, which discloses a container system comprising a container for liquids and a stand. The lower end of the container for liquids is removably mounted on a stand, which includes a chamber to collect moisture.

[0007] The present invention provides a container system comprising a base having at least one curved surface and provided with an element of ballast adjacent to said curved surface, and a bottle to contain products comprising a bottom part, the container system being characterised in that the base is interchangeably and detachably coupled directly to the bottom part of the bottle.

[0008] The present invention further provides an oscillating toy comprising a base having at least one curved surface and provided with an element of ballast adjacent to said curved surface, and a bottle to contain products comprising a bottom part, wherein the base is interchangeably and detachably coupled directly to the bottom part of the bottle.

[0009] In a further aspect of the present invention, there is provided a soap bowl comprising a base having at least one curved surface and provided with an element of ballast adjacent to said curved surface, and a closed cover having a substantially semi-spherical shape, the cover being detachably coupled to the base, the edge of the cover co-operating with the base.

[0010] According to the specific disclosures of this invention, there is preferably provided a base of substantially semi-spherical shape, with a hollow portion, associated either with a bottle or with a cover also of substantially semi-spherical shape, in this case with the purpose of providing, as an example, a toilet soap bowl.

[0011] Since this base is equipped with a ballast element, the container system it comprises will act as a tumbler, making it more difficult for it to be inadvertently knocked down. Such a feature is extremely useful during a bath, when shampoo or toilet soap containers are frequently knocked down by the user.

[0012] Further to that, the modular nature of the present container system facilitates its manufacturing and assembling, and minimises the corresponding costs.

[0013] The oscillating toy according to the present invention is useful, for instance, to entertain a child during the bath, and at the same time exercising the child's psychomotor capability, when trying to oscillate the toy to a maximum angle without letting it tumble.

[0014] The present invention will be better understood through the following description given as an example, with references to the enclosed drawings, in which:

Figure 1 represents an exploded view of a first preferential embodiment of the container system of the present invention.

Figure 2 is a lateral view of the system shown in Figure 1, with a cross-section view of the base.

Figure 3 represents an exploded view of a second preferential embodiment of the container system of the present invention.

Figure 4 is a lateral view of the system shown in Figure 3, with a cross-sectional view of the base.

[0015] Referring to Figures 1 to 4, one can see that both preferential embodiments of the container system 1, 20 of the present invention comprise a base 2 of substantially semi-spherical shape, provided with an element of ballast 3, which in turn includes a wall 4 and a weight 5. Base 2 further includes a chamber 30.

[0016] Thus, when base 2 is attached to a bottle 6 (Figures 1 and 2) or to a cover 21 (Figures 3 and 4), it confers upon the container system 1, 20 a substantial stability, rendering difficult its accidental knockdown. Obviously weight 5 must be of such a magnitude as to lower significantly the centre of gravity of the container system 1, 20.

[0017] Concerning the first preferential embodiment of the container system 1, shown in Figures 1 and 2, base 2 is attachable to a portion of the bottom 7 of bottle 6, and is provided with means of locking 8, in the form of a diametrical slit 9, which is in turn adapted to fit in with teeth 10 located in the internal surface of base 2.

[0018] According to this embodiment, the bottom portion 7 of bottle 6 is depressed in relation to the remainder of the outer surface of the bottle, and a peripheral annular portion 11 of base 2 has a reduced thickness in relation to the rest of base 2, so as to ensure an adequate seating between the base and bottle 6. Further, it can be particularly seen in Figure 2 that the bottom portion 7 is adapted to penetrate chamber 30 of base 2.

[0019] Yet according to Figures 1 and 2, bottle 6 preferably comprises a cap 35, which fits to a threaded portion (not shown) substantially opposed to the bottom portion 7 of bottle 6, which prevents the exit of the liquid contained therein.

[0020] Specifically in accordance with the disclosures of this invention, a collar 36 is contemplated, which is centrally bored to fit in with said threaded portion of bottle 6, and which is preferably held in the position shown in Figures 1 and 2 by cap 35 or by inter fitting slits or depressions existing in bottle 6 and collar 36.

[0021] Collar 36, according to an alternative embodiment of the invention, is made of a substantially rigid material and of a relevant weight when compared to the element of ballast 3 and to the container system 1 when filled in.

[0022] Thus, the angle of maximum oscillation of the bottle, i.e. the greatest angle in relation to the horizontal plane that the container system may oscillate around its geometrical axis without tumbling can be made to vary, in many ways, depending on the dislocation of the centre of gravity of system 1 along its respective vertical geometric axis, by filling chamber 30 with water or other adequate material. Thus, a ludic character may be imparted to container system 1, ensuring, for instance, that the system 1 will tumble only when reaching a maximum oscillation angle of about 45°.

[0023] Such a possibility allows the constitution of a toy capable to entertain a child during bath, for instance, at the same time that it exercises the child's psychomotor capability, when the child tries to oscillate container system 1 to the maximum, without knocking it down. System 1 may also be configured with its centre of gravity positioned in such a manner that it returns to the vertical position when empty, independently of the inclination it has been submitted to.

[0024] Collar 36 is preferably provided with pendent flaps 37, which modify the centre of gravity of container system 1, as they are incorporated to bottle 6 in different sizes, which enhances the ludicrous character mentioned above.

[0025] As shown in Figures 3 and 4, another preferential embodiment of container system 20, object of this invention, comprises a cover 21, of substantially semi-spherical shape, with an edge 22 also with its thickness reduced in comparison with the rest of cover 21, allowing the adequate setting of cover 21 into base 2.

[0026] In this second embodiment, the container system 20 can be used to hold an object, such as a toilet soap bar, which will be stored in chamber 30 of base 2

and inside cover 21. Further to that, wall 4 preferably will be provided with a textured area 25, which will minimise the dislocation of the object held by container system 20. Wall 4 may be attached to base 2 by means of saliences or projecting means.

[0027] The annular periferic region 11 of base 2 may present a substantially sine curve configuration, as particularly shown in Figures 1 and 3, or any other, with the possibility even of irregular configurations, provided the bottom portion 7 of bottle 6, or the edge 22 of cover 21 present a compatible configuration. Further to that, base 2, bottle 6 and cover 21 must be preferably shaped in the sense of the external surfaces of container systems 1, 20 being uniform, without any relevant level differences or discontinuities in the joints between base 2, bottle 6 and cover 21.

[0028] Finally, base 2, bottle 6 and cover 21 are preferably made of rigid plastic, but presenting a small degree of resilience to allow the inter coupling of these elements by snap-on setting.

[0029] In summary, the present container system includes a base having at least one curved surface, and ballast means adjacent to said curved surface. The base is preferably hollow and provided with a smooth, outwardly curved surface that enables the base to rock to and fro. The ballast means preferably comprises one or more weights fixed either on or in close proximity to the interior surface of the base, which means enable the base to right itself after it has been knocked.

[0030] A bottle or cover is detachably mounted upon the base, the weight and position of the ballast preferably being selected having regard to the weight and configuration of the said bottle or cover so as substantially to improve the stability of the entire container system. Preferably, the bottle or cover are configured so as to be mounted within the hollow base, and advantageously, corresponding interlocking means are provided on the two elements releasably to secure them together. The bottle or other receiving means may be provided with additional weight at or near the top thereof, so as to affect the manner in which the container system rocks. The container system may be used to store, for example, toilet soap, shampoo or other toiletry products.

Claims

1. A container system (1) comprising a base (2) having at least one curved surface and provided with an element of ballast (3) adjacent to said curved surface, and a bottle (6) to contain products comprising a bottom part (7), the container system being **characterised in that** the base (2) is interchangeably and detachably coupled directly to the bottom part (7) of the bottle (6).
2. A system according to claim 1, wherein said base (2) has a substantially semi-spherical shape and a

chamber (30), the element of ballast (3) being located in the interior of the chamber (30).

3. A system according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the bottom part (7) of the bottle (6) is provided with means of locking (8) that fit with teeth (10) located on the inner surface of the base (2). 5
4. A system according to claim 3, wherein said locking means (8) comprises a diametrical slit (9) and the bottom part (7) is depressed in relation to the outer surface of bottle (6), an annular peripheral region (11) of base (2) having its thickness reduced in comparison with that of the rest of the base (2). 10
5. A system according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said ballast element (3) comprises a wall (4) and a weight (5). 15
6. An oscillating toy comprising a base (2) having at least one curved surface and provided with an element of ballast (3) adjacent to said curved surface, and a bottle (6) to contain products comprising a bottom part (7), **characterized in that** the base (2) is interchangeably and detachably coupled directly to the bottom part (7) of the bottle (6). 20
7. An oscillating toy according to claim 6, additionally comprising a collar (36) attachable to bottle (6) at a location substantially opposed to the base (2). 25
8. Soap bowl (20), comprising a base (2) having at least one curved surface and provided with an element of ballast (3) adjacent to said curved surface, and a closed cover (21) having a substantially semi-spherical shape, **characterized in that** the cover (21) is detachably coupled to the base (2), the edge (22) of the cover co-operating with the base (2). 30
9. Soap bowl according to claim 8, wherein said base (2) has a substantially semi-spherical shape and a chamber (30), the element of ballast (3) being located in the interior of the chamber (30). 35
10. Soap bowl according to claim 8 or 9, wherein said ballast element (3) comprises a wall (4) and a weight (5). 40
11. Soap bowl according to claim 10, provided with a textured area (25) located on the wall (4). 45
12. Soap bowl according to claim 8, wherein said edge (22) and an annular peripheral region (11) of base (2) have reduced thickness in comparison with that of the rest of the cover (21) and base (2), respectively. 50

Patentansprüche

1. Ein Behältersystem (1) mit einem Fußelement (2) mit mindestens einer gewölbten Oberfläche und ausgestattet mit einem Ballastelement (3) unmittelbar neben der genannten gewölbten Oberfläche sowie mit einer Flasche (6) zur Einfüllung von Produkten mit einem Bodenteil (7), wobei sich das Behältersystem dadurch auszeichnet, dass das Fußelement (2) auswechselbar und abnehmbar ist und direkt an das Bodenteil (7) der Flasche (6) angesteckt wird.
2. Ein System wie in Patentanspruch 1, wobei das genannte Fußelement (2) im Wesentlichen die Form einer Halbkugel hat und über eine Kammer (30) verfügt, die in ihrem Inneren das Ballastelement (3) enthält.
3. Ein System wie in Patentanspruch 1 oder 2, wobei das Bodenteil (7) der Flasche (6) mit einem Verschluss (8) ausgestattet ist, der in die Zähne (10) an der Innenfläche des Fußelements (2) passt.
4. Ein System wie in Patentanspruch 3, wobei der genannte Verschluss (8) einen diametralen Schlitz (9) hat, und das Bodenteil (7) im Verhältnis zur äußeren Oberfläche der Flasche (6) eingedrückt ist, und der ringförmige Randbereich (11) des Fußelements (2) im Vergleich zur restlichen Außenwand des Fußelements (2) ebenfalls in seiner Dicke reduziert ist.
5. Ein System wie in Patentanspruch 1 oder 2, wobei das genannte Ballastelement (3) eine Wand (4) und ein Gewicht (5) enthält.
6. Ein hin- und herwackelndes Spielzeug mit einem Fußelement (2) mit mindestens einer gewölbten Oberfläche und ausgestattet mit einem Ballastelement (3) unmittelbar neben der genannten gewölbten Oberfläche sowie mit einer Flasche (6) zur Einfüllung von Produkten mit einem Bodenteil (7), das sich dadurch auszeichnet, dass das Fußelement (2) auswechselbar und abnehmbar ist und direkt an das Bodenteil (7) der Flasche (6) angesteckt wird.
7. Ein hin- und herwackelndes Spielzeug wie in Patentanspruch 6, zusätzlich ausgestattet mit einer Manschette (36), die auf die Flasche (6) aufsteckbar ist und an einer dem Fußelement (2) wesentlich entgegengesetzten Stelle angebracht ist.
8. Seifenschale (20) mit einem Fußelement (2) mit mindestens einer gewölbten Oberfläche und einem Ballastelement (3) unmittelbar neben der genannten gewölbten Oberfläche sowie einem geschlossenen Deckel (21), der im Wesentlichen die Form einer Halbkugel hat, die sich dadurch auszeichnet,

dass der Deckel (21) auf das Fußelement (2) aufgesteckt wird und von diesem abnehmbar ist, wobei die Kante (22) des Deckels mit dem Fußelement (2) kooperierte.

9. Seifenschale wie in Patentanspruch 8, wobei das genannte Fußelement (2) im Wesentlichen die Form einer Halbkugel hat und über eine Kammer (30) verfügt, die im Inneren das Ballastelement (3) enthält.
10. Seifenschale wie in Patentanspruch 8 oder 9, wobei das genannte Ballastelement (3) eine Wand (4) und ein Gewicht (5) hat.
11. Seifenschale wie in Patentanspruch 10, ausgestattet mit einem strukturierten Bereich (25), der sich auf der Wand (4) befindet.
12. Seifenschale wie in Patentanspruch 8, wobei die genannte Kante (22) und ein ringförmiger Randbereich (11) des Fußelements (2) im Vergleich zum Rest des Deckels (21) und des Fußelements (2) jeweils in ihrer Dicke reduziert sind.

Revendications

1. Système de récipient (1) comprenant une base (2) ayant au moins une surface incurvée et munie d'un élément de ballast (3) adjacent à ladite surface incurvée, et un flacon (6) pour contenir des produits comprenant une partie de fond (7), le système de récipient étant **caractérisé en ce que** la base (2) est directement couplée de manière interchangeable et détachable à partie de fond (7) du flacon (6).
2. Système selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ladite base (2) a une forme sensiblement hémisphérique et une chambre (30), l'élément de ballast (3) étant placé à l'intérieur de la chambre (30).
3. Système selon la revendication 1 ou 2, dans lequel la partie de fond (7) du flacon (6) est munie d'un moyen de verrouillage (8) qui s'adapte à des dents (10) placées sur la surface intérieure de la base (2).
4. Système selon la revendication 3, dans lequel ledit moyen de verrouillage (8) comprend une fente diamétrale (9) et la partie de fond (7) est abaissée par rapport à la surface extérieure du flacon (6), l'épaisseur d'une région périphérique annulaire (11) de la base (2) étant réduite par rapport à celle du reste de la base (2).
5. Système selon la revendication 1 ou 2, dans lequel ledit élément de ballast (3) comprend une paroi et un poids (5).

6. Jouet oscillant comprenant une base (2) ayant au moins une surface incurvée et munie d'un élément de ballast (3) adjacent à ladite surface incurvée, et un flacon (6) pour contenir des produits comprenant une partie de fond (7), le système de récipient étant **caractérisé en ce que** la base (2) est directement couplée de manière interchangeable et détachable à la partie de fond (7) du flacon (6).

7. Jouet oscillant selon la revendication 6, comprenant, en outre, un collier (36) qui peut être attaché au flacon (6) en un endroit sensiblement opposé à la base (2).

8. Bol à savon (20) comprenant une base (2) ayant au moins une surface incurvée et munie d'un élément de ballast (3) adjacent à ladite surface incurvée, et un couvercle fermé (21) ayant une forme sensiblement hémisphérique, **caractérisé en ce que** le couvercle (21) est couplé de manière détachable à la base (2), le bord (22) du couvercle coopérant avec la base (2).

9. Bol à savon selon la revendication 8, dans lequel ladite base (2) a une forme sensiblement hémisphérique et une chambre (30), l'élément de ballast (3) étant placé à l'intérieur de la chambre (30).

10. Bol à savon selon la revendication 8 ou 9, dans lequel ledit élément de ballast (3) comprend une paroi (4) et un poids (5).

11. Bol à savon selon la revendication 10, muni d'une zone texturée (25) placée sur la paroi (4).

12. Bol à savon selon la revendication 8, dans lequel l'épaisseur d'une région périphérique annulaire (11) et de la base (2) est réduite, respectivement, par rapport à celle du reste du couvercle (21) et de la base (2).

FIG. 1

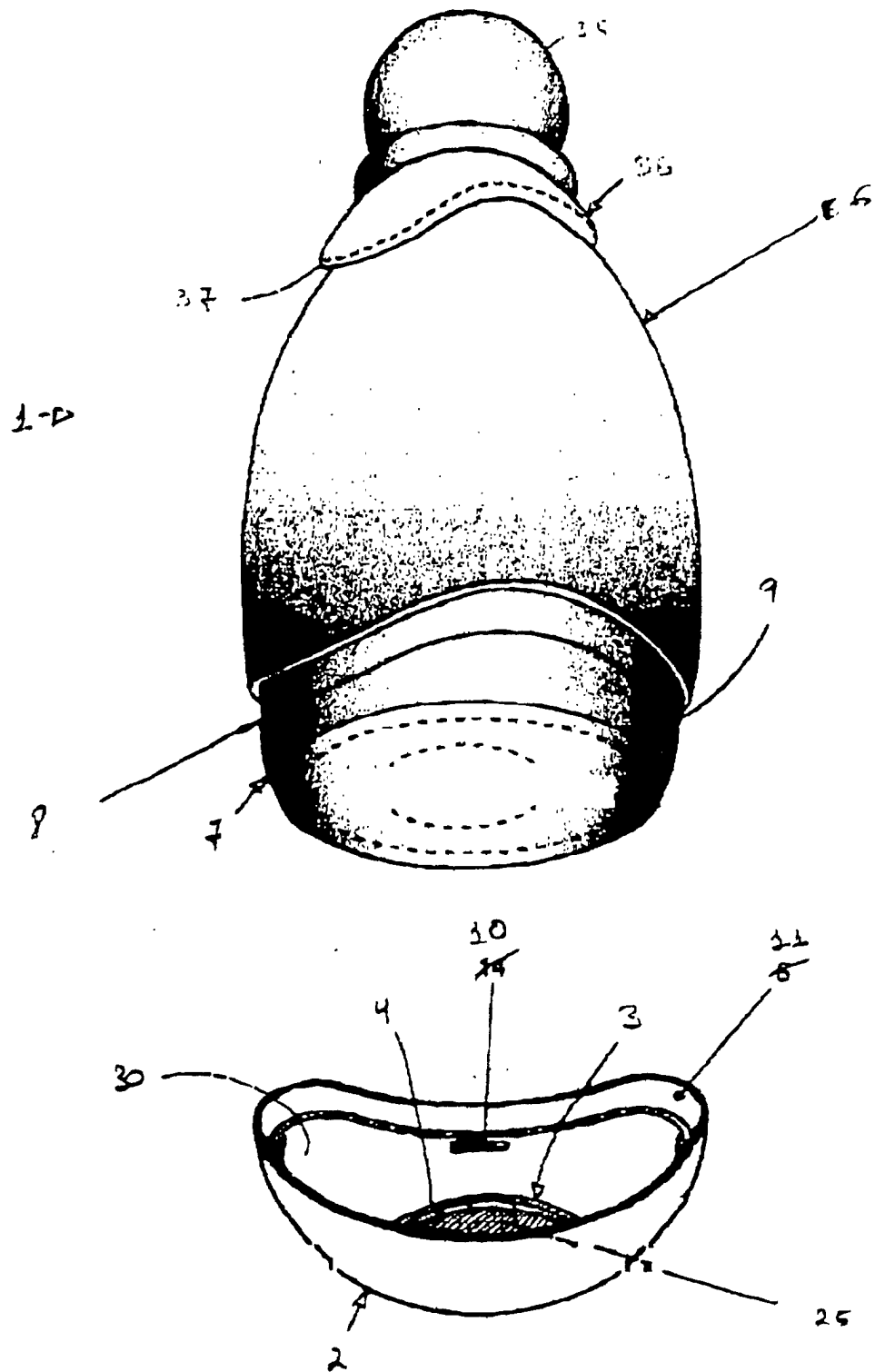


FIG. 2

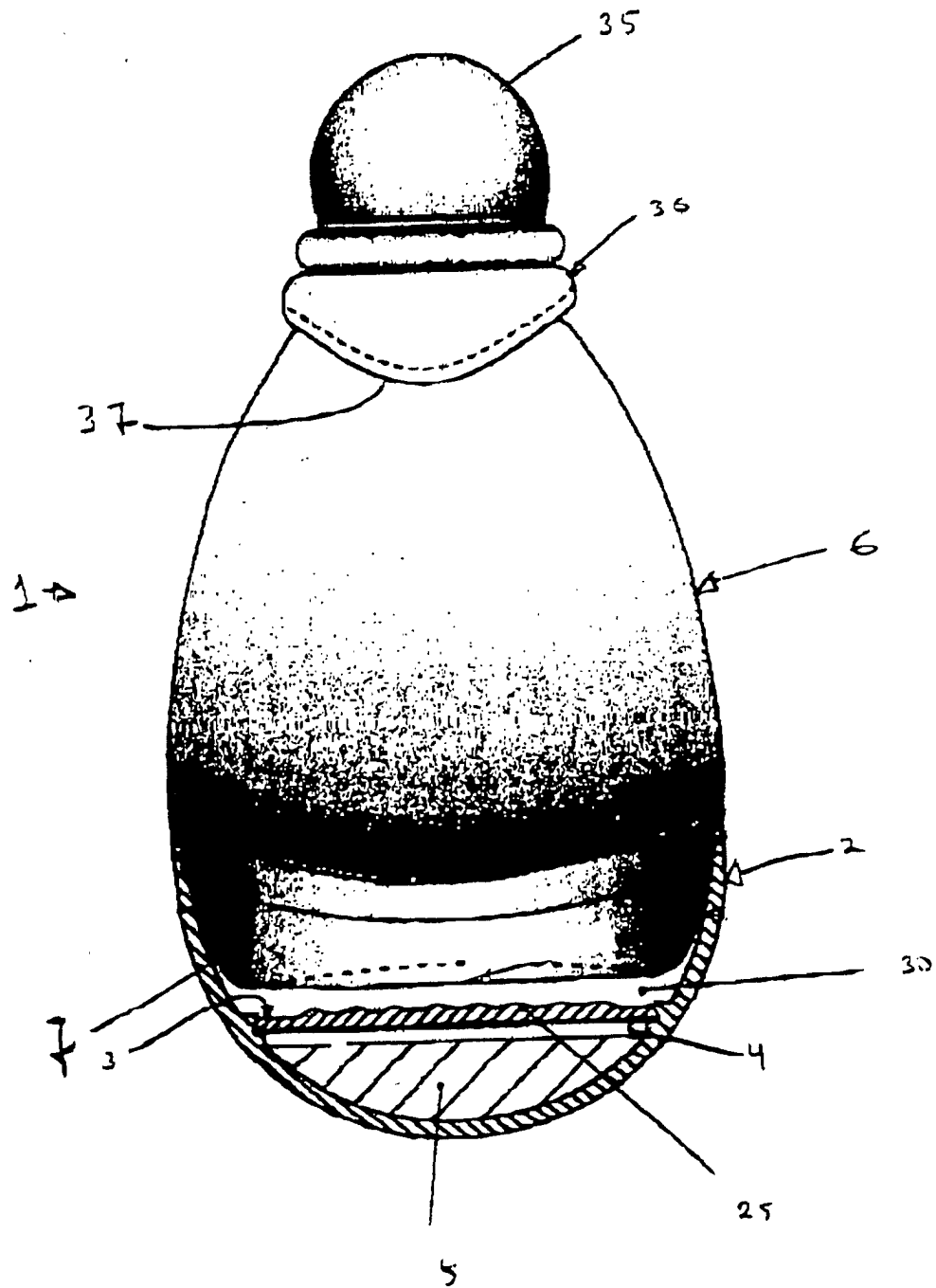


Fig. 3

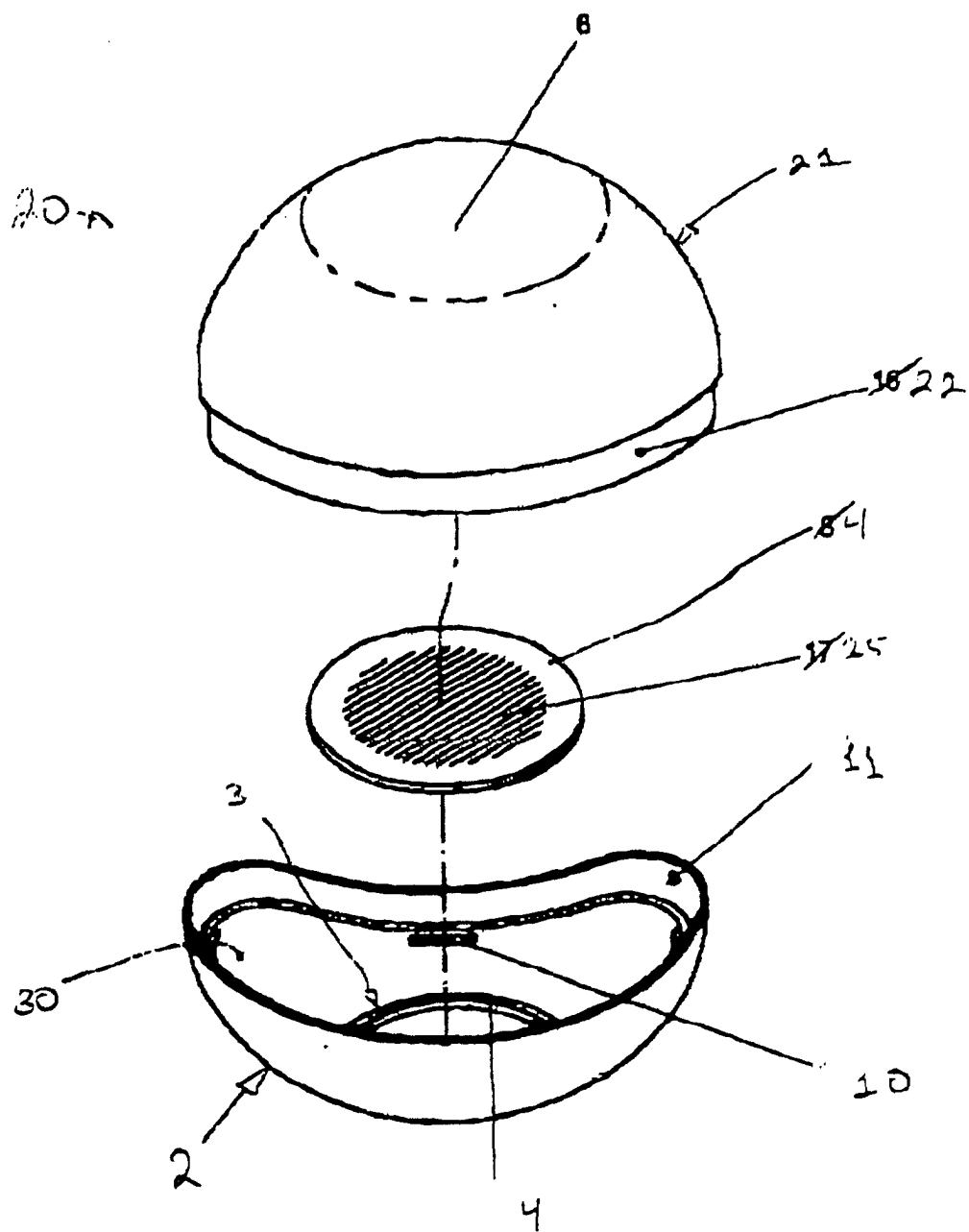


Fig. 4

