PACKAGE OF STRETCH SOCKS

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Fig. 5

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AGENTS
The present invention relates to improved forms of a stocking package. The method of marketing stockings heretofore employed has usually been for the manufacturer to secure the two stockings forming a pair to one another by means of paper tape or the like. The stockings are then packaged several to a box and shipped in this manner to the retailer. The retail dealer then merchandises the stockings by selecting several representative colors and placing them on a display table for examination by customers. Alternatively he may place his entire stock on a compartmented display table.

This form of marketing possesses several disadvantages, a principal one being the inability of the customer to visualize how a particular stocking will appear or fit when in stretched, wearing condition. This is particularly undesirable with the advent of the so-called "stretch stockings." Another disadvantage is that the form of display now employed requires considerable space to properly present the stockings. Moreover, such a display procedure results oftentimes in a mixing of sizes and colors due to continuous customer handling, which requires continuous re-sorting of the stockings to restore them to their proper place. Further, stockings are quite often separated from their mates which oftentimes requires considerable effort to re-mate them, or results in the loss of a complete pair of stockings. It has been found that these foregoing and related disadvantages can be eliminated by the provision of a stocking package in which two stockings are applied over a single flat insert by which a complete pair of stockings will be retained thereon in a fairly rigid state with no possibility of the stockings becoming separated, and will similarly give to the wearer a visual presentation of how the stocking will appear in worn condition prior to purchasing the same.

It is therefore a principal object of the present invention to provide a stocking package that will present a pleasing appearance to a customer, and will permit him to visualize prior to purchase how the stocking will appear in wearing condition.

Yet another object of the present invention is the provision of a stocking package that will visually present "stretch socks" in a wearing condition.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a stocking package that will permit of full display of various sizes and colors in a very small area.

Another object of the present invention is the provision of a stocking package that permits a retailer to maintain a full complement of stockings in a neat manner for examination by customers without a corresponding disarrangement of the stockings.

Other and additional objects will become manifest from the ensuing description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

To the accomplishment of the foregoing and related ends, the present invention then consists of the means hereinafter fully described and particularly pointed out in the claims, the annexed drawings and the following description setting forth in detail certain means in carrying out the invention, such disclosed means illustrating, however, but one of the various ways in which the principle of the invention may be employed.

The present invention is illustrated by way of example in the accompanying drawings, in which—Fig. 1 is a front elevation of an improved form of an insert for use in forming a stocking package made in accordance with the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a front elevation of an improved form of an insert for use in forming a stocking package made in accordance with the present invention.

Fig. 3 is a front elevation of still another form of a stocking package using the insert shown in Fig. 1 to form the package of the present invention.

Fig. 4 is the stocking package of Fig. 2 in folded position.

Fig. 5 is the stocking package of Fig. 3 in folded position.

Referring now to the drawings, an illustrative embodiment of a stocking package made in accordance with the present invention, and generally designated by reference numeral 10, is shown.

The stocking package 10 comprises a flat, oblong strip insert or board 70 of sheet material made preferably from cardboard, chipboard, or related paper-type material. The insert 70 is of a weight and strength sufficient to support the stockings in a flat position, and yet retain its rigidity and original configuration when the stockings are placed thereon and still possess a certain degree of flexibility.

The insert 70 is provided with a forward or leading edge 71 and a trailing or rear edge 72, each of which are generally straight and substantially parallel with respect to one another. The lower end of the leading edge 71 and the trailing edge 72 are united to one another by means of a rounded toe portion 73. The upper end of the leading edge 71 and the trailing edge 72 are connected by a substantially straight edge portion 74. A folding line 74a may be provided on the insert 70, if desired. The length of the insert 70 must be of a length at least sufficient to fully support the stockings in a slightly tensioned, flat, laid out state, and, in certain instances, it will be found advantageous to have the insert 70 somewhat longer than the stockings cannot thereby. Similarly, the width of the insert 70 must be sufficient to place the stocking in a flat, slightly tensioned state when placed thereon to facilitate the forming of the package 10 as well as insuring the positive retention of the stockings thereon in their desired state.

The insert 70 is positioned within a first stocking 75 with the foot portion and the ankle portion of the insert 70 supporting and engaging the corresponding parts of the stocking 75. This construction will result in the first stocking 75 being held in a flat, extended, and slightly tensioned state. The insert 70 carrying the first stocking 75 is positioned within a second or mating stocking 76 in the same manner as the insert 70 was positioned within the first stocking 75. This construction results in a flat, supported, laid out and slightly tensioned state, and which will present the stocking in a state similar to that when worn and provides for their shipping, stocking and merchandising without the disadvantage heretofore encountered.

It will be found advantageous, particularly when the
stocking package 10 contains large size stockings, to provide means for reducing the size of the package to facilitate packing, shipping and storing. While, as hereinaf

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ore stated, the insert 70 must be of a strength sufficient to support the stocking in a substantially rigid or partially erect state, the insert 70 may be provided, as hereinafore indicated, with a score or folding line 74a transverse to the long axis of the insert 70 which will permit the stocking package 10 to be folded upon itself to reduce the size of the package, as shown in Figs. 4 and 5. While the folding line 74a may be positioned at any suitable point on the insert 70, it is preferred, as shown, that it be located at substantially the midpoint of the insert 70 so that the stocking package 10 may be folded in half, with the bottom and top ends being in substantial alignment with one another.

Reference is now to be had to Figs. 2 and 4 wherein one form of a stocking package utilizing the form of insert of Fig. 1 is shown. In this form of the stocking package, the stockings 75 and 76 are placed on the insert 70 with the heel portion of at least the stocking 76 resting against and engaging the flat face of the insert 70. The insert carrying the tensioned or slightly stretched stockings in this manner may then be folded along its folding line 74a upon itself with the heel portion being contained within or between the folded portions of the insert 70. Thus it is possible to eliminate a positive heel portion configuration from the insert without departing from the spirit and scope of the broad invention.

Reference is now to be had to Figs. 3 and 5 wherein another form of a stocking package employing so-called stretchable socks with the insert 70 is illustrated. The stretchable socks 77, 77a are positioned on the insert 70 with the heel portion of the stocking resting against the trailing edge 72 of the insert 70. Thus, it is possible, particularly when using stretchable stockings, such as men's stretch nylon socks, to employ the insert 70 without leaving too large a heel bulge along the trailing edge 72. This is due to the fact that stretchable hose 77 will be placed on the insert in an expanded, tensioned state. Thus, with no heel portion on the insert, the heel portion will not be highly stretched in comparison with the remainder of the stretching, resulting in the formation of only a small loose heel portion against the trailing edge of the insert 70.

It is to be noted that an identification bearing rider or saddle 82 is applied to the upper portion of the stocking package. It should be noted to further insure the proper retention of the stockings on the insert that the upper free ends of the stocking may be hooked on the upper corners of the stocking and the rider placed there over. Further, in the formation of the folded stocking package, the insert may be folded and a rider employed to engage the outer surface of the upper end of the insert 70 with the opposite end engaging the outer surface of the toe portion of the sock.

Alternative forms of positioning the rider means are disclosed in detail in my copending parent application Serial No. 445,041, now Patent No. 2,696,295. Such alternative forms can be used equally well with the stocking package made in accordance with the present invention.

By the term "stocking" used herein and in the appended claims, it is used to define men's, women's, and children's socks and stockings of the type known as ankle socks, as well as socks extending as far as part way up on the calf of a wearer, such as argyle. The term "stockings" is not to include ladies' full fashioned sheer hosiery normally sold in full leg length as so-called "nylons." It has been found that the sheerness of such hosiery is likely to result in possible damage to the yarn by snagging or the like when a full leg length insert is positioned therein and placing the stocking in a slightly tensioned state. Moreover, a leg length insert which would properly support full length nylon hosiery in a flat, laid out state would be economically unfeasible from a shipping and marketing standpoint due to its weight and general bulkiness. However, in view of very recent developments toward the development of stretch ladies' nylon hosiery which corresponds to the men's one size stretch socks, it is possible to form a ladies' nylon hosiery package of the stretch nylon type, since the nylon hosiery in an unstretched state will be comparatively short in length and will not be likely to be snagged. However, with hosiery of this type, a transparent covered package such as shown in my copending parent application Serial No. 445,041, now Patent No. 2,696,295, should be used.

Machines for forming the stocking packages are disclosed in my copending parent application Serial No. 445,041, now Patent No. 2,696,295, as well as in my copending divisional application Serial No. 564,400, filed February 9, 1955.

I claim:

1. A sock package comprising a one-piece, elongated, flat substantially stiff strip insert of sheet material, said strip insert having a substantially straight leading edge and a substantially straight trailing edge, said leading edge and said trailing edge being substantially parallel to one another, a first sock enveloping said insert in a flat slightly tensioned state, and a second mating sock enveloping said insert and said first sock in a flat slightly tensioned state.

2. A sock package in accordance with claim 1 in which the heel portion of the outer sock is positioned on the flat face of the insert.

3. A sock package in accordance with claim 1 in which both the inner and outer socks carried by the insert have their heel portions positioned on the flat face of the insert.

4. A sock package in accordance with claim 1 wherein the insert is provided with a folding line positioned transverse to the long axis of said insert, said folding line positioned at a point on said insert to permit the folding of the sock package upon itself so that the bottom of the package will be in substantial alignment with the top edge of said package.

5. A stretchable sock package comprising a one-piece, elongated, flat, substantially stiff strip insert of sheet material, said insert having a substantially straight leading edge and a substantially straight trailing edge, said leading edge being substantially parallel to one another, a first stretchable sock enveloping said insert in a flat stretched state and a second mating sock enveloping said insert and said first sock in a flat stretched state, said insert having a width greater than the normal relaxed width of said socks when in an unstretched state.

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