Nov. 16, 1965 J. NOVICK 3,217,430

HEEL PROTECTORS

Filed Nov. 5, 1963

FIG. 1

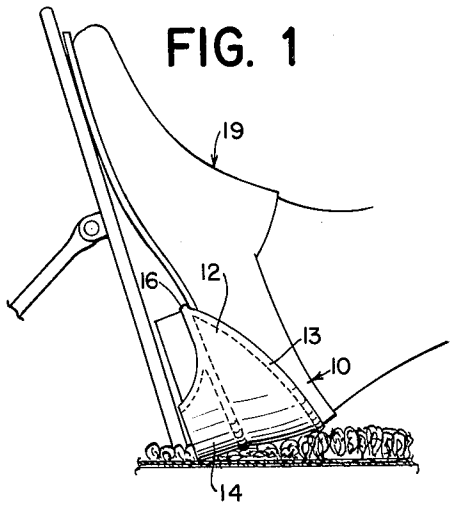


FIG. 5

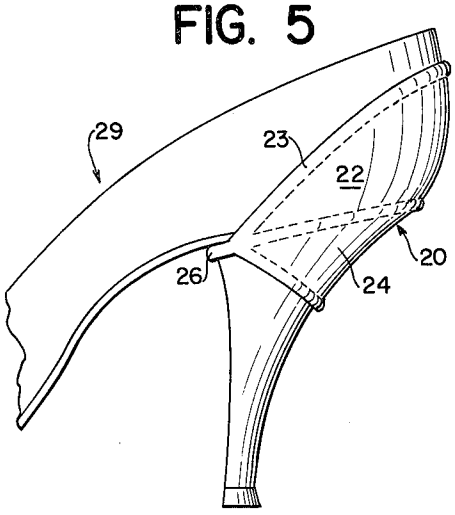


FIG. 2

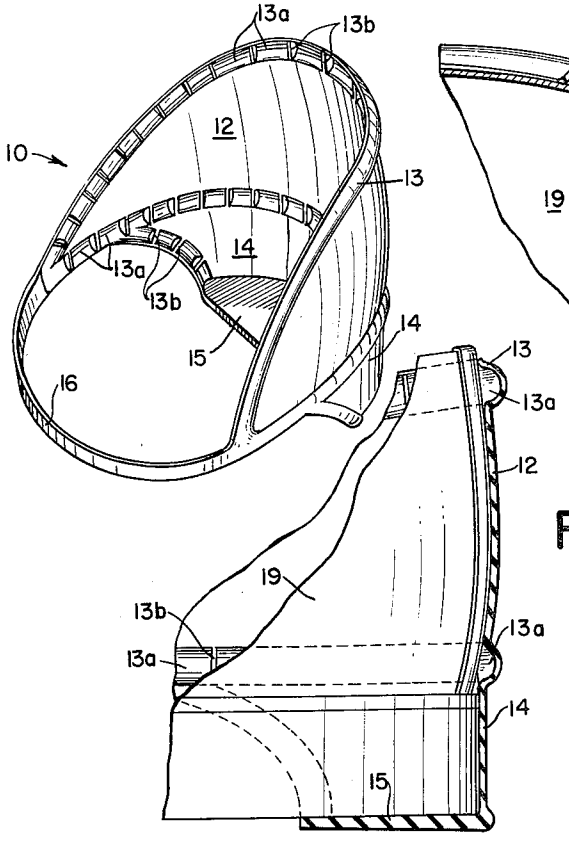


FIG. 3

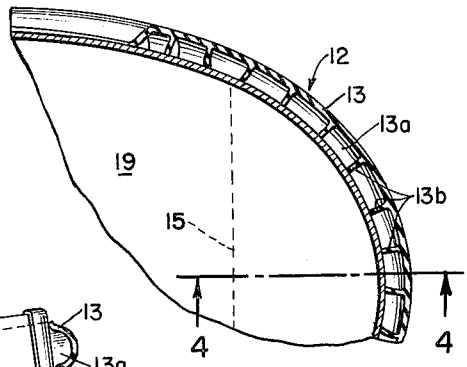


FIG. 4

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HEEL PROTECTORS

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The present invention relates to heel protectors, and more particularly to protectors adapted for all sizes of ladies' and men's shoes, without danger of slipping off.

Various shoe and heel attachments have been designed and used, serving as mud guards, sole and heel protectors, and also for protecting the bottoms of men's trousers. The present invention relates to the kind of heel protectors most advantageously used when operating an automobile, for protecting both the heel of the driver's shoe and also the carpet in the vehicle against scuffing and wear.

Particularly with low-built cars, the back portion of the driver's heel as well as the counter portion of his shoe practically rests on the floor. Constant shifting from the accelerator pedal to the brake keeps scuffing the shoe. No matter how clean the floor pad, tiny particles of sand and dirt brought into the car act as abrasives, and tend to scuff the shoes.

The inventive heel protectors have the purpose of eliminating these and other drawbacks, and of providing an efficient protection for the driver's shoe.

Attachments of this kind have usually been provided with straps passing around the front portion of the shoe, so as to hold the attachments in place. These straps are cumbersome, impractical and also unpleasing to the eye. Some of the heel and shoe protectors have been made with full heel taps or soles without which they could not be held firm on the shoe.

A particular ladies' heel protector became known, for example, in which a coil spring connects the upper edge of the shoe with a socket or sole plate. The spring is embedded in the hem of the forward edge of the shoe protector. This attachment is believed to be most disadvantageous because the spring tends to crush the upper counter of the shoe, while the hook used to hold the spring in place is most likely to tear the wearer's hosiery.

Other, molded type, heel protectors have also been used which, however, are adapted to particular shoe or heel sizes only. The shapes of such molded attachments will fit only particular shoe contours and/or heights. Consequently, the attachments will either slip off easily or have to be purchased individually for each kind of shoe. This is particularly true of ladies' shoes which come in many shapes, sizes and measurements, even for the same wearer. Thus, lady drivers would have to own more than one heel protector if they wish to use, as they actually do, various shoe models while driving a car.

It is one of the objects of the present invention to dispense with the drawbacks inherent with previously known heel protectors. A single model or size of ladies' and men's protector may be provided, according to the present invention, which will fit all sizes, models and shapes of shoes; these protectors will not slip off and will prove most comfortable to wear.

It is another object of the invention to provide heel protectors which do not require front straps at all, and do not have to rely on a heel tap either for their support. All hooks, springs and other rather clumsy mechanical elements are being dispensed with, thereby providing a simple yet foolproof heel protector device.

According to a major feature of the invention, the heel protector comprises a top portion hugging part of the wearer's shoe back, and a bottom portion partly engaging the heel. In ladies' heel protectors, the bottom portion

extends far enough to provide protection against wear and scuffing when wearing the protector while driving a car.

According to another feature of the invention, a resilient strap is provided which is made to embrace the breast of the heel, and serves as the only means of holding the novel heel protector on the shoe.

According to yet another inventive feature, at least a portion of the heel protector hems and/or edges may include a reinforcement which will bind and hug the back part of the heel and counter. In a preferred embodiment, this reinforcement may include a sectional rim portion having air pockets therein, separated by wall portions. This rim will adhere to the shoe owing to the vacuum produced when said rim portion is stretched out to some extent on the wearer's shoe.

The various objects, features and attendant advantages of the present invention will become more apparent from the following description of two exemplary, preferred embodiments, when considered in conjunction with the accompanying drawing, wherein

FIG. 1 is a side view of a heel protector for men, according to the present invention, in use;

FIG. 2 is a perspective frontal view of the heel protector of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a partly sectional, partial top view of the same protector, illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2, as applied to a man's shoe;

FIG. 4 is a vertical sectional view taken on line **4—4** of FIG. 3; and

FIG. 5 is a side elevational view of a lady's heel protector according to the invention.

In a first exemplary embodiment, illustrated in FIGS. 1 through 4, a heel protector is generally designated **10**, for a man's shoe **19**, and comprises a top portion **12** and a bottom portion **14**, a fastening strap portion **16** being attached substantially between said two portions. The top portion **12** has a curved shape adapted to follow the shoe counter, while the bottom portion **14** includes a small sole portion **15** which may be made of a somewhat stronger material than the rest of the heel protector so as better to withstand wear. FIGS. 1–4 are various views of the same heel protector **10**, of which FIGS. 3 and 4 also include portions of the shoe **19** visible in FIG. 1.

The inventive heel protectors are preferably made from an elastic material, e.g. thin rubber, plastic, or the like. The protectors may also consist of a textile material, while the hem portion to be described hereafter in more detail consists of rubber or plastic. A backing of patent leather may also be used in connection with the inventive heel protectors.

As can best be seen from FIG. 4, the top portion **12** is surrounded by a peripheral hem portion **13** which includes regularly spaced compartments **13*a*** separated by walls **13*b***. Similar structure appears at the hem of the bottom portion **14**, and at the strap **16**, as illustrated in FIG. 2. It should be noted, however, that the compartments **13*a*** and separating walls **13*b*** may be provided over part of the hem only, e.g., at the outer edges of the top and bottom portions **12**, **14**, but may be omitted between them, in the hem portion forming the continuation of the forward strap portion **16**.

When the heel protector **10** is pulled over the shoe **19** in a somewhat stretched condition, the air pockets or compartments **13*a*** exert a slight vacuum effect, hugging thereby safely the wearer's shoe. The walls **13*b*** prevent the hem portion from collapsing under the pull, creating a continuous section of small air pockets, so that the vacuum effect will not be reduced.

In a second preferred embodiment, shown in FIG. 5, a heel protector **20** is shown for ladies' shoes **29**, which has similar parts as those of the previously described men's heel protector **10**. A top portion **22** is joined to a bottom

portion **24**, the frontal connecting edge between these portions being formed by a heel-hugging strap portion **26**. Although not shown in detail for this embodiment, the protector **20** may also have hem portions **23** for either or both of the portions **22**, **24**, with or without small air pockets or compartments and walls therebetween, as has been described hereinabove.

The ladies' shoe protector **20** does not have a sole portion attached to the bottom portion **24**. The heel of the shoe **29** passes through a recess of the bottom portion **24**. It will be understood by those skilled in the art that the heel protector **20** shown herein merely represents an exemplary model from which variations are possible in size, height, shape and contour, so as to provide various heel protector models adapted for various kinds of ladies' shoes. Within certain limits, however, the same heel protectors will fit certain basic shoe and heel contours.

The strap **16** may be made of tubular, solid or other shape of plastic or similar material, with or without air pockets for producing a vacuum effect. At this portion, it is mainly the tension over the heel breast which holds the heel protector; FIG. 2, therefore, shows a solid strap for the preferred men's heel protector **10**.

It will be understood that several variants and deviations from the above-described two preferred embodiments of the inventive heel protectors are possible which are entirely within the scope of the present invention, except as limited by the attached claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A heel protector for a heel having a breast portion, comprising, in combination, a top portion having a shape adapted to hug part of the counter of the wearer's shoe, a bottom portion partly contiguous with said top portion and having a shape adapted to hug part of said heel of the shoe, and elastic strap means connected to said top and said bottom portions at lateral regions of their contact and adapted to hug said breast portion, said strap means being the sole expedient by which the heel protector is attached to the shoe, at least one of said top and said bottom portions having peripheral hem portions for lending

rigidity to the respective portion, so as to hug the shoe in closely adjacent relationship, said hem portions at least partly consisting of a sectioned beading providing a vacuum effect, when the heel protector is fastened to the shoe, so as to exclude dirt from the parts of the shoe covered by the heel protector.

2. A heel protector as defined in claim **1**, wherein the upper edge of said top portion and the lateral edge of said bottom portion are provided with said beading, the sections therein including substantially equidistant wall portions defining therebetween air compartments for producing said vacuum effect.

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