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Ostrander

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[54] **BELT BUCKLE AND BELT STRAP COMBINATION**

[76] Inventor: **Robert K. Ostrander,** 497 Prospect St., Maplewood, N.J. 07040

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[51] **Int. Cl.²** **A44B 11/22;** A41F 3/00

[58] **Field of Search** 24/176, 186, 177, 77; 2/325, 311

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Primary Examiner—Bernard A. Gelak

Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Kirschstein, Kirschstein, Ottinger & Frank

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A belt strap having a first end and a second end with at least one hole extending through the first end and a plurality of holes extending through the second end. A belt buckle is provided which includes a loop and a generally S-shaped hook. The first end of the belt strap is passed through the loop and the hook is passed through one of the holes therein. The second end of the strap is passed through the loop and placed in registry with the hook. The hook is then passed through the hole in the second end to prevent the first end of the belt strap from moving relative to the second end of the belt strap.

1 Claim, 5 Drawing Figures

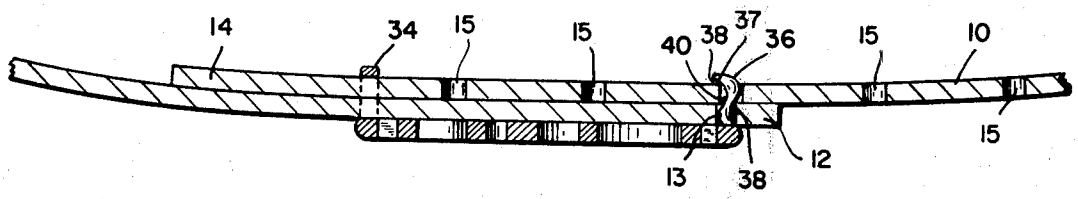
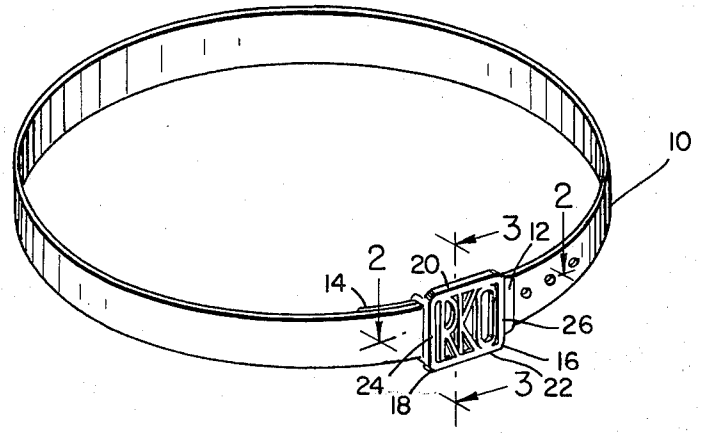


FIG. 1



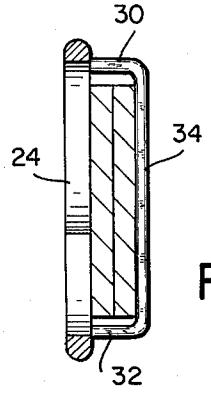


FIG. 3

FIG. 2

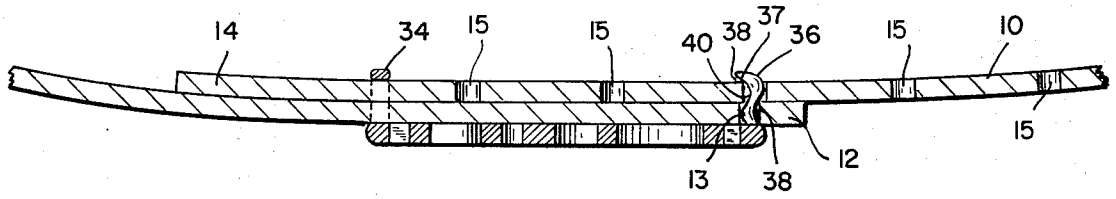


FIG. 5

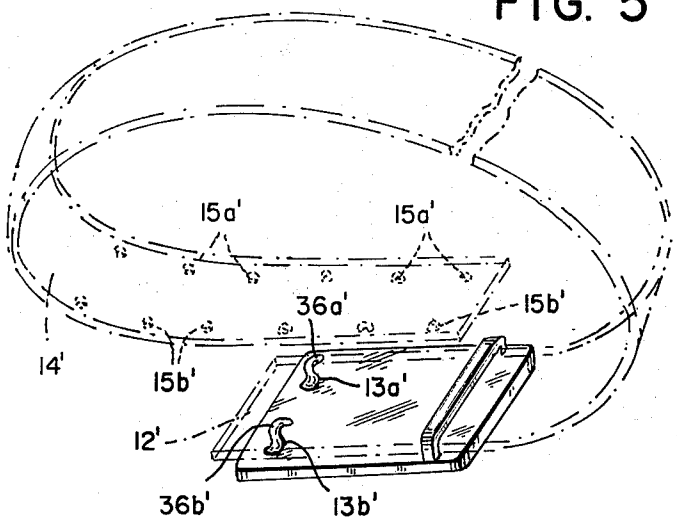
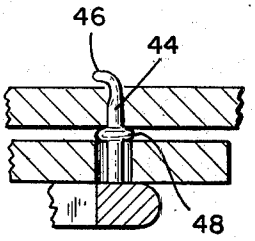


FIG. 4



BELT BUCKLE AND BELT STRAP COMBINATION

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

A belt buckle which can be used on a plurality of different belts.

2. Description of the Prior Art

With the increased fashion consciousness of many men, more and more attention is being directed to the style and design of belts. Not too many years ago most belts were approximately 1 inch or less in height and had a plain buckle. Today, nearly all belts are approximately two and one-half inches in height and many have a decorated buckle. In addition, many belts are colored and have decorations thereon.

In order to have different appearing belts, it is desirable to have belt buckles that can be used with a variety of different belt straps. Quite obviously, such belt buckles must be able to effectively and reliably prevent the movement of the ends of any belt strap with which they are used.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Purposes of the Invention

It is an object of the present invention to provide an improved belt buckle.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a belt buckle of improved aesthetic quality, having no visible signs of attachment to the belt strap.

Still another object of the present invention is to provide an improved belt buckle which can be used with a plurality of different belt straps.

Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a belt buckle which can be used with a plurality of different belt straps and having means to hold the two ends of the belt strap from moving relative to each other with the means being designed to restrain movement of each end of the belt strap.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a belt buckle which can be used with a plurality of different belt straps and wherein the buckle can be easily removed from one belt strap and used with a second belt strap.

A still further object of the present invention is to provide a belt buckle which is capable of achieving the above and other objects and is economical to manufacture.

Other objects of the invention in part will be obvious and in part will be pointed out hereinafter.

Brief Description of the Invention

According to the present invention the foregoing as well as other objects are achieved by a belt buckle member which includes a decorative face. The decorative face can consist in one form of the present invention of a rectangular periphery having four sides, two of which are elongated. Secured to the decorative face is a belt loop which is designed so as to be able to receive each end of a belt strap. Also secured to the decorative face is a hook. The hook is defined as having a first portion and a second portion. The first portion includes a concave part which faces away from the loop. The second portion extends downwardly from the first portion and includes a concave part which faces the loop.

In use, the belt buckle is first attached to the strap by passing the first end of the strap through the loop and passing the hook through one of the holes therein. The strap is then positioned about a person's torso and the second end of the belt strap is passed through the loop. When the overlying portions of the belt strap form a belt of the proper dimension the hook is passed through the hole in the second end of the strap. The concave part of the first portion of the hook restrains one end of the belt from being pulled away from the buckle and in a similar fashion the concave part of the second portion of the hook restrains the second end of the strap from being pulled away from the buckle.

When it is desired to remove the buckle from the belt, the belt is manipulated so that the hook no longer extends through the hole in the second end of the belt strap. The second end is then removed from the belt buckle loop. The belt strap can then be removed from the belt buckle by removing the hook from the hole in the first end of the belt strap and passing the belt strap through the belt buckle loop. The buckle is now available for use on another belt strap.

The invention accordingly consists in the features of construction, combination of elements and arrangement of parts which will be exemplified in the belt buckles hereinafter described and of which the scope of application will be indicated in the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In the drawings:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a belt buckle and belt strap according to the present invention;

FIG. 2 is an enlarged sectional view taken substantially along the line 2—2 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is an enlarged sectional view taken substantially along the line 3—3 of FIG. 1; and

FIG. 4 is a sectional view of a modified belt hook.

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of an alternative embodiment of the invention with the belt strap shown in phantom lines.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

In FIGS. 1 and 2, a belt strap 10 is shown which can be made out of leather, plastic or any other suitable material. Belt strap 10 has a constant height throughout its length and includes a first end 12 and a second end 14. Extending through the first end 12 is at least one hole 13 and extending through the second end 14 are a plurality of holes 15. The hole 13 which extends through the first end 12 can be placed in registry with any of the holes 15 which extend through the second end 14.

A belt buckle 16 is provided and includes a rectangular periphery 18. Buckle 16 can be made from any suitable ferrous material or for that matter any other material which has sufficient strength and rigidity to serve as a belt buckle. While belt buckle periphery 18 is shown as being rectangular and including elongated sides 20 and 22 and shorter sides 24 and 26, it should be understood that this arrangement is for illustrative purposes only and is not a limitation on the shape of the front face of buckles which may be used. Any decoration can be secured to the buckle periphery 18 and in the drawings the initials RKO are shown as being formed from an appropriate material which material is

secured to the elongated sides **20** and **22** of the buckle **18.**

As shown in FIG. **3,** a loop **28** is formed by legs **30** and **32,** a cross bar **34** and the side **24** of the belt buckle **16.** Legs **30** and **32** extend away from the side **24.** The legs **30** and **32** are in vertical alignment and parallel to each other and perpendicular to cross bar **34.** The cross bar **34** extends between the portions of legs **30** and **32** remote from side **24** thereby forming the loop **28** encircling the area **37.** It is to be appreciated that the enclosed area **37** defined by legs **30** and **32,** cross bar **34** and side **24** is large enough to accommodate both the first end **12** and second end **14** of belt strap **10.**

In order to provide a locking means which would hold the first and second ends **12** and **14** of the strap **10** in a releasably fixed relationship there is provided a hook **36.** The hook **36** is generally S-shaped and extends outwardly or away from the mid-portion of edge **26** of the belt buckle **16.** The hook **36** includes a first portion **38** and a second portion **40.** The first portion **38** includes a concave part which faces away from the loop **28,** while the second portion **40** includes a concave part which faces toward loop member **28.** The hook **36** can be secured to the side **26** of the buckle **16** in any conventional manner and the precise means of connecting the hook to the side does not form a part of the present invention.

An alternative embodiment of the invention is shown in FIG. **5** wherein the belt buckle **16'** is provided with two hook members **36***a'* and **36***b'*. If a belt buckle according to this embodiment is used, the belt strap ends **12'** and **14'** will be provided with holes **13***a'* and **13***b'* and **15***a'* and **15***b'*, respectively, through which the hook members **36***a'* and **36***b'* may extend. The holes **13***a'* and **13***b'* have a diameter smaller than the diameter of the hook members **36***a'* and **36***b'* so that the friction between the walls of the holes **13***a'* and **13***b'* and the hook members **36***a'* and **36***b'* will keep the belt buckle **16'** secured to the belt strap end **12'**.

While the following discussion concerns use of a belt buckle having only one hook member, it is to be understood that as to a belt buckle of the alternative embodiment the same is applicable.

In use, the first end **12** of belt strap **10** is passed through the loop **28** formed by legs **30** and **32,** cross bar **34** and side **24** of buckle **16.** The hook **36** is then passed through one of the holes **13** in the first end **12** of the belt strap **10.** The belt strap **10** is then positioned about a person's torso and the second end **14** of the belt strap **10** is passed through the loop **28.** When the overlying portions of the first end **12** and the second end **14** of the belt strap **10** form a belt of the proper dimension the hook **36** is passed through the hole **15** in the second end **14** of the belt strap **10** in registry with hole **13.** The tension exerted by the first end **12** of belt strap **10** bears against the concave part of first portion **38.** The tension in the second end **14** of belt strap **10** bears against the concave part of the second portion **40** of the hook **36.** The hook **36** prevents the belt strap ends from moving relative to each other and releasably secures the ends of the strap **10** with respect to each other. As can be seen in FIG. **2,** the bottom portion **37** of the hook **36** bears against the under surface **38** of the second end **14** of belt strap **10.**

In an alternative use, the belt strap **10** is placed about a person's torso with the first end **12** and the second end **14** passed through the loop **28.** The hole **13** in the first end **12** of the belt strap **10** is placed in registry with the hole **15** in the second end **14** of belt strap **10** so that the belt strap is of the appropriate dimension. Hook **36** is then passed through the holes and prevents the belt strap ends from moving relative to each other as described above.

When it is desired to remove the buckle from the belt, the buckle **16** is manipulated so that the hook **36** no longer extends through the hole in the second end **14** of the belt strap **10.** The second end **14** is then passed through the loop **28.** The belt strap can then be removed from the belt buckle by removing the hook **36** from the hole in the first end **12** of belt strap **10,** and passing the belt strap **10** through the loop **28.** A significant feature of the present invention is the ease with which the buckle can be removed from the belt strap.

It is to be noted that alternatively buckle **16** can be manipulated so that hook **36** is removed from the hole **13** and the hole **15.** Then the belt strap ends are pulled through the loop **28.**

If it is desired to keep the belt buckle secured to the belt strap, the first end **12** of the belt strap **10** extends continually through the loop **28** and the hook **36** extends through the hole **13** in the first end **12** of belt strap **10.** The belt strap and buckle can then be used as previously described, when desired.

If desired, the shape of the hook can be varied so that the belt buckle may be fixedly mounted to the belt strap. As an example, the hook shown in FIG. **4** can be used which includes a straight section **44** and a hooked end **46** at the bottom thereof. Located at the mid-portion of hook **36** is an enlargement **48** which is circular in cross section having a diameter larger than the diameter of the hole **13** in the first end **12** but which can be forced through the hole. Enlargement **48** enables the hook to continually extend through the hole in first end **12** of belt strap **10** without slipping therefrom as may be desirable when the buckle is continuously secured to a belt strap. The use of the belt buckle hook shown in FIG. **4** is the same as that previously described.

Since the belt buckle is not mounted on the belt strap by visible means, a belt buckle of improved aesthetic quality is provided.

It thus will be seen that there is provided a belt buckle and belt strap combination which achieves the various objects of the invention and which is well adapted to meet the conditions of practical use.

What is claimed is:

1. A belt and belt buckle combination comprising:

a. a belt strap, having a constant height throughout its length, said belt strap including a first and a second end, said first end having at least one hole extending therethrough, said second end having a plurality of holes extending therethrough;

b. two elongated sides;

c. two shorter sides, said shorter sides joining said elongated sides to form a buckle periphery;

d. a decoration secured to said buckle periphery;

e. a pair of legs mounted to said buckle periphery on the back thereof, extending away from one of said shorter sides, said legs being in vertical alignment and parallel to each other;

f. a cross bar extending between said pair of legs in spaced relationship to said shorter side to form a loop structure defining an enclosed area adapted to receive said first and second ends; and

g. at least one S-shaped hook member secured to the other of said shorter sides extending away from said buckle periphery in the same direction as said pair of legs, said hook member having a first concave portion facing away from said loop structure and a second concave portion facing towards said loop structure, said first end and said second end extending through said loop structure, said at least one hole in said first end being in registry with at least one of said plurality of holes in said second end said hook member extending through said at least one hole in said first end and said at least one hole in said second end in registry with said at least one hole in said first end, a portion of said first end of said belt strap bearing against said first concave portion of said hook member and a portion of said second end of said belt strap bearing against said second concave portion of said hook member so that said at least one hook member prevents said first and second ends from moving relative to each other, said at least one hole in said first end having a diameter smaller than said first concave portion so that when said hook member is passed through said at least one hole said buckle periphery will be secured to said first end by friction.

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