United States Patent [19]

Wilkins

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[45] **Nov. 4, 1975**

[54] **SKI EQUIPMENT CARRYING APPARATUS**

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[51] **Int. Cl.**[2]..... **B65D 71/00**

[58] **Field of Search**..... 224/45 S, 45 R, 42.1 E, 224/5 Z; 280/11.37 K; 190/60, 41, 51; 150/52, 52 A; 206/515; 70/58, DIG. 58; 211/605 K; 24/221 R; 292/DIG. 3; 232/23

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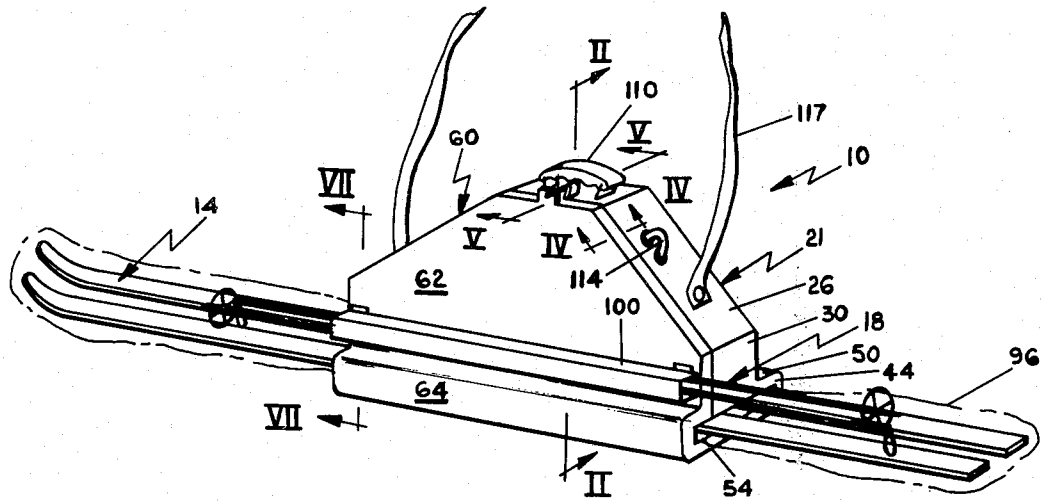
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Assistant Examiner—Kenneth Noland
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Price, Heneveld, Huizenga & Cooper

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A rigid case preferably molded from impact-resistant plastic for protecting and carrying skis, ski boots, ski poles and other skiing equipment together in a single package or unit. The case includes separate compartments for a pair of ski boots and for the central sections of a pair of skis including any bindings mounted thereon. The pole holding apparatus is accessible and releaseable from the case interior only when the boot and ski compartments are unlocked and opened. To carry all necessary ski equipment together in the case on a vehicular ski rack, a pair of skis is secured in the case and the skis and case together are mounted on the rack.

33 Claims, 13 Drawing Figures



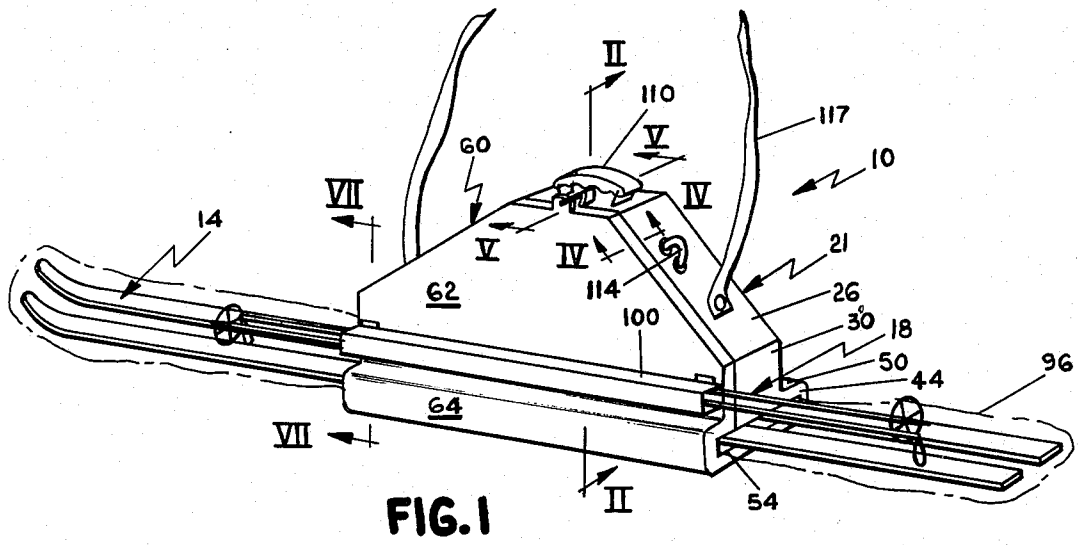


FIG. 1

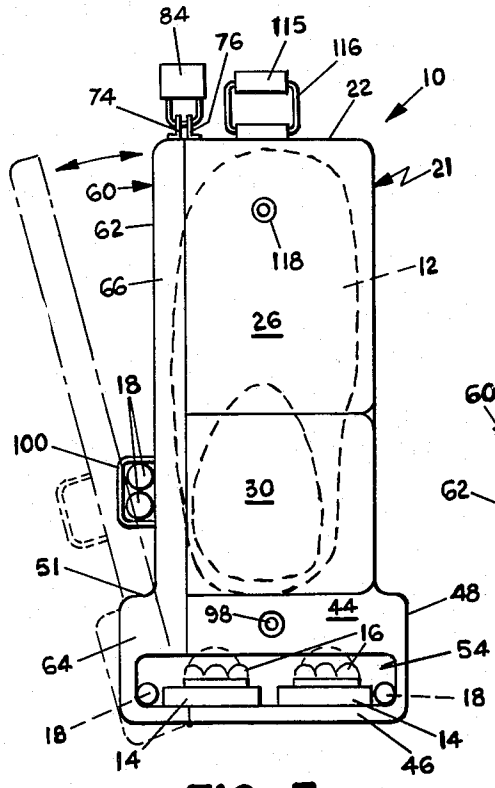


FIG. 3

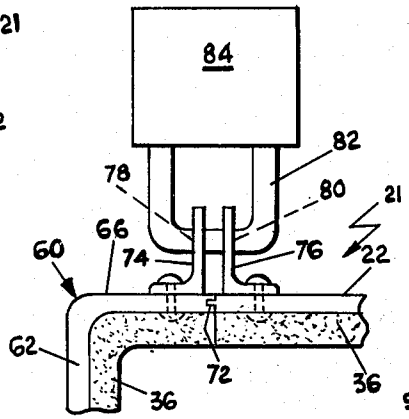


FIG. 5

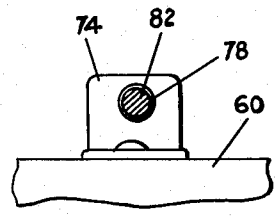


FIG. 5a

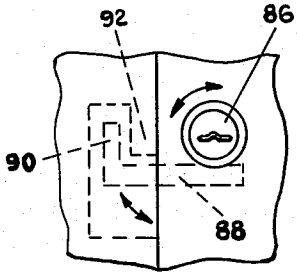


FIG. 6a

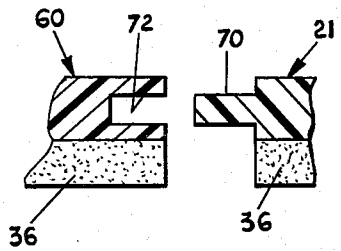


FIG. 4

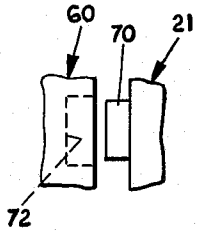


FIG. 4a

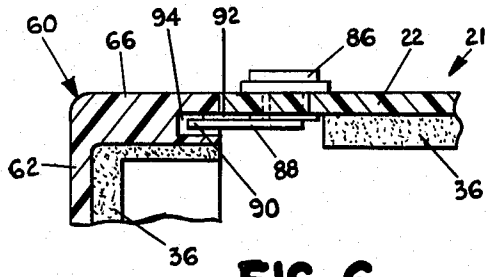


FIG. 6

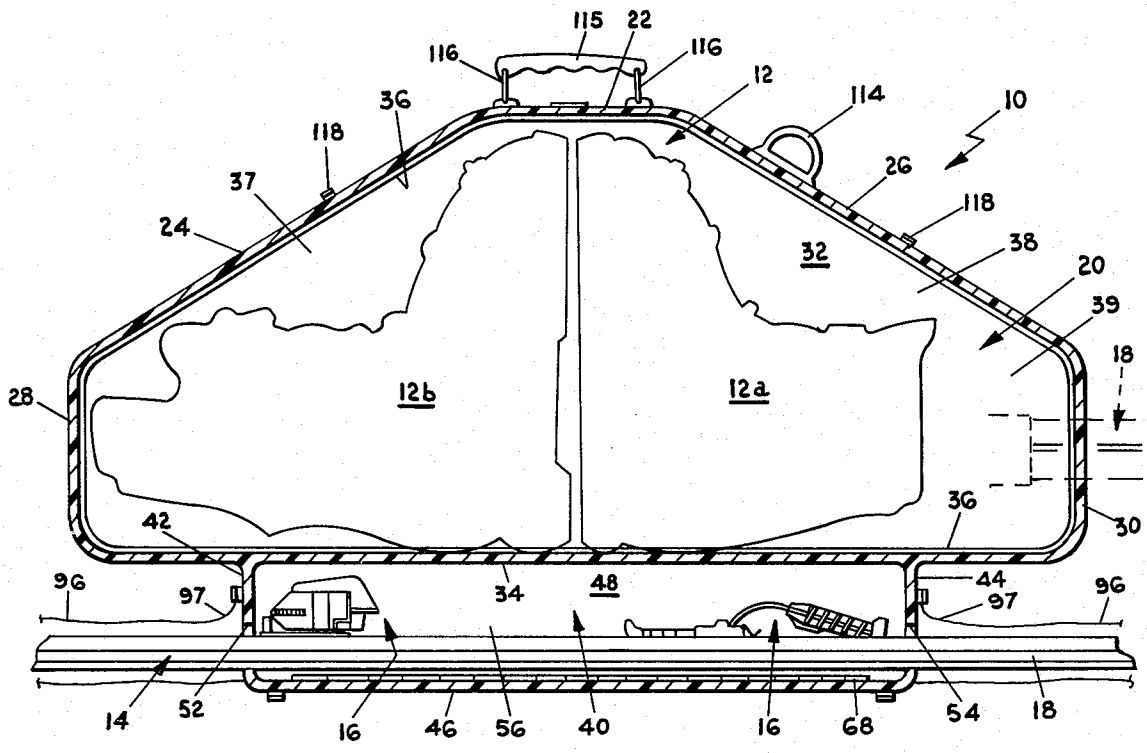


FIG. 2

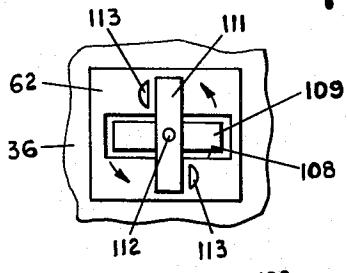


FIG. 9

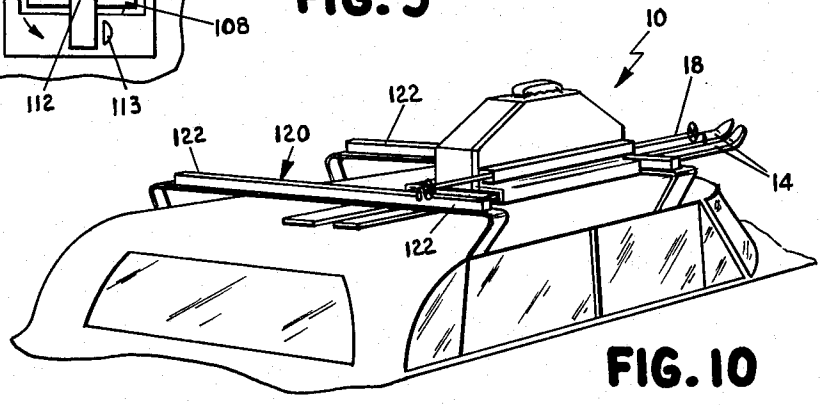


FIG. 10

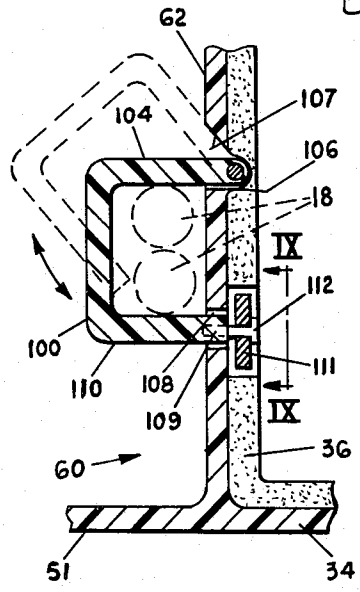


FIG. 7

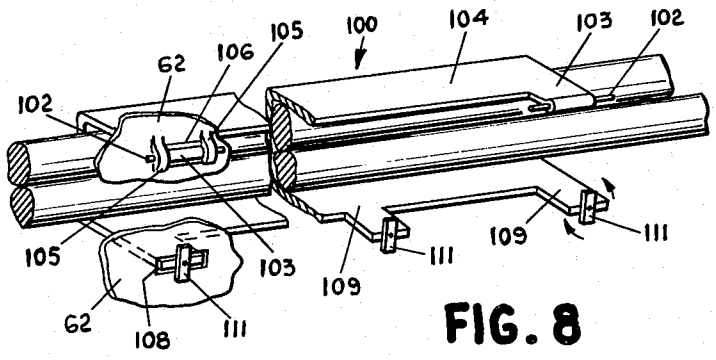


FIG. 8

SKI EQUIPMENT CARRYING APPARATUS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to carrying devices for ski equipment and, more particularly, to a case for protecting ski equipment and for carrying all types of ski equipment together in a single package either by hand or in or on a vehicle.

Carrying devices for ski equipment are well known. Prior-known devices have included various means for transporting pairs of boots as well as pairs of skis and ski poles. Typical of the prior-known devices are illustrated and described in Pfleider U.S. Pat. No. **3,272,413** and Larson U.S. Pat. No. **718,242.**

The prior-known ski equipment carrying devices suffered from several drawbacks. No means were provided for carrying all required ski equipment needed by the skier in a single package or unit while providing essential protection for the equipment. Most devices provided only for hand carrying a portion of the necessary equipment, i.e., boots alone, boots and poles together, or skis and poles together. In those devices which provided for carrying boots, skis, and poles together, inadequate protection was provided for the critical portions of the equipment. Thus, the ski boots were merely clamped to a planar surface and left exposed to snow, ice, abrasion, rough handling, and the like. Similarly, the ski edges, as well as the bindings mounted on the skis, were left exposed, often resulting in the dulling and abrasion of the ski edges as well as the misadjustment of the bindings. Since the adjustment of the bindings is critical to the release of the skier's foot during falls, such lack of protection could prove to be very dangerous to the skier. Further, in such prior-known combined devices, it was very difficult to carry additional equipment such as adjusting tools, files, ski wax, mittens or gloves, extra socks, and the like, all of which are necessary for skiing.

The prior-known devices also failed to prevent theft or unauthorized use of the equipment carried thereon. The skis and poles could merely be lifted out of the devices while the boots could be unclamped and thus easily removed.

Further, none of the prior-known devices provided means for carrying all of the required ski equipment together in a single package when the equipment was being transported in or on a vehicle such as an automobile, airplane or the like. Skis, poles, and boots all had to be separated and inserted in separate portions of the vehicle. Special equipment such as automobile roof-top ski racks could be used only for the skis and poles and not the boots. It was very difficult to assemble all the required equipment in a single package before loading the vehicle resulting in the substantial risk that certain equipment would be left behind.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Accordingly, it is a purpose of the present invention to provide a case for carrying all necessary ski equipment together in a single package in a manner providing protection against damage to and misadjustment of that equipment. The device provides protective enclosures for the critical portions of the ski equipment including the ski boots and the binding areas and edges of the skis and enables the skier to securely lock all of his ski equipment together to prevent unauthorized use.

The present case enables the skier to assemble all miscellaneous equipment such as gloves, small tools, ski wax, and some additional clothing together with the skis, poles, and boots in a complete package prior to leaving for a ski area to ensure that all required equipment is taken along. Further, the case is easily handled by any skier and provides a simple, efficient, carrying device for both new and old types of ski equipment. The device is adapted to be carried either by hand or mounted on conventional types of vehicular ski racks such that all the required equipment is both protected from damage and retained together in a unit.

In the preferred embodiment, the invention is a rigid carrying case molded from impact-resistant plastic or the like including an upper compartment for enclosing and holding a pair of ski boots and a lower compartment for supporting a pair of skis adjacent to one another and below the ski boots. The ski-supporting compartment encloses the area of the skis which includes the bindings thereby preventing damage to and misadjustment of the bindings. A side cover is hingedly secured over both compartments and includes means for securely locking the boots and skis in their respective compartments.

Apparatus is also provided for holding a pair of skis adjacent the ski boots including a hinged channel member which partially encloses the poles and is releasable only from the interior of the case. Flexible, detachable covers are used for covering the tip and heel portions of the skis which protrude from the lower compartment in order to prevent the marring of the ski edges.

The case may be carried either by hand with a handle or with a shoulder strap detachably secured thereto. When the skis are mounted in the case, the entire case including the skis is especially adapted to be mounted on a conventional automobile ski rack.

These and other objects, advantages, purposes, and features of the invention will become more apparent from a study of the following description taken in conjunction with the drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of the invention illustrated with a pair of skis and ski poles received therein;

FIG. **2** is a sectional side elevation of the carrying case taken along plane II—II of FIG. **1** and illustrating the separate case compartments for receiving a pair of ski boots and a pair of skis;

FIG. **3** is an end elevation of the case shown in FIGS. **1** and **2**;

FIG. **4** is an enlarged, sectional view illustrating the stabilizing tabs located between the case cover and the main portion of the case taken along plane IV—IV of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **4***a* is an enlarged plan view of the stabilizing tabs shown in FIG. **4**;

FIG. **5** is a fragmentary, sectional view of the portion of the case illustrating one apparatus for locking the cover to the case taken along plane V—V of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **5***a* is a side view of the locking apparatus shown in FIG. **5**;

FIG. **6** is a fragmentary, sectional view illustrating an alternative locking apparatus for the case;

FIG. **6***a* is a fragmentary, plan view of the locking apparatus shown in FIG. **6**;

FIG. 7 is a sectional view of the ski pole holding and locking apparatus taken along plane VII—VII of FIG. 1;

FIG. 8 is a broken, rear perspective view of the hinged, locking, ski pole holding channel shown in FIG. 7;

FIG. 9 is a rear view of the locking apparatus for locking the ski pole channel from inside the case taken along plane IX—IX of FIG. 7; and

FIG. 10 is a perspective view of the carrying case mounted on a typical vehicular ski rack by means of a pair of skis secured within the case.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring now to the drawings in greater detail, FIGS. 1–3 illustrate the ski equipment carrying case **10** carrying a pair of ski boots **12**, a pair of skis **14** including bindings **16** for securing a skier's boots to the skis, and a pair of ski poles **18**. All of the necessary ski equipment including the boots, poles, and skis may be fitted and protected within the case **10** and carried as a unit.

As is best seen in FIGS. **2** and **3**, case **10** comprises a main or primary portion **21** and a hinged cover **60** thereover. These portions are preferably both molded from impact-resistant plastic such as high-density polyethylene and define an upper compartment **20** for carrying boots **12** and a lower compartment **40** for holding and enclosing skis **14** and bindings **16** and in some instances a pair of poles **18**. Upper compartment **20** is formed by a top wall **22**, sloped walls **24** and **26**, end walls **28** and **30**, and a fixed side wall **32**. A bottom wall or partition **34** separates upper compartment **20** from lower compartment **40** and helps rigidify and strengthen the case.

The height of the upper compartment **20** between partition **34** and top wall **22** is made sufficiently large to accommodate the length of the soles of generally the largest ski boots. The length of the compartment **20** between end walls **28** and **30** is made sufficiently long to accommodate both standard type boots, **12***a* in FIG. **1**, or more modern high-backed type boots **12***b* in FIG. **1**. The entire upper compartment **20** is lined with a layer of soft, flexible, resilient, protective material **36** such as neoprene or foam rubber. Layer **36** provides protection for the boots and other equipment stored within compartment **20** as well as a means for dampening the vibration and rattling of such equipment therein. Both types of boots **12***a* and **12***b* are adapted to be received within compartment **20** on the backs of their heels with the bottoms of their soles in abutting relationship as shown in FIG. **2**. The pair of boots **12** is received in upper compartment **20** without the necessity for any clamping device as was necessary with the prior-known ski carrying cases. When the boots are inserted in this manner, additional storage spaces for other ski equipment such as gloves, mittens, extra socks or other clothing, small tools such as files and the like are provided at spaces **37, 38**. When standard height boots are inserted, space **39** is also available for storage.

Lower compartment **40** is integrally molded and formed simultaneously with upper compartment **20**. As is best seen in FIGS. **1** and **3**, lower compartment **40** has a width wider than the width of upper compartment **20** in order to provide sufficient room for the side-by-side support of skis **14**. It includes end walls **42** and **44** extending downwardly from the bottom of partition **34** beneath the upper compartment, a bottom wall **46**, a fixed side wall **48** and top wall **50** extending laterally of the side of the upper compartment. End walls **42** and **44** include elongated apertures **52** and **54** which receive a pair of skis therein on their bottoms in side-by-side relationship with the central portion including bindings **16** received between end walls **42** and **44** and enclosed thereby. Elongated apertures **52** and **54** are sufficiently long to allow a pair of poles to be mounted therein beside skis **14** as a means for carrying the poles (see FIGS. **2** and **3**). The tip and heel portions of the skis **14** extend out of the apertures **52** and **54** as shown in FIGS. **1** and **2**. When skis **14** are fitted in this manner, additional storage space in the lower compartment **40** is provided in area **56** above the ski bindings **16**. Location of the lengthy skis in the lower compartment at the bottom of the case as opposed to other locations balances the case and makes it easy to handle.

Hinged cover **60** provides a pivotable side wall covering for both the upper compartment **20** and lower compartment **40**. Cover **60** includes an upper portion **62** shaped to correspond to the outline of the upper compartment **20** and a lower portion **64** providing a top wall **51**, a side wall, a portion of the bottom wall, and the remainder of end apertures **52** and **54** for the lower compartment **40**. The upper portion **62** also includes an inwardly turned flange **66** forming a portion of top wall **22**, sloped walls **24** and **26**, and end walls **28** and **30**.

Cover **60** is pivotally secured to the main portion **21** of the case via an elongated hinge **68** riveted or otherwise secured to the interior of the lower compartment. Such placement inside the case prevents tampering or removal of the hinge and thus unauthorized opening of the case. It is also possible to provide an integral living hinge in place of separate hinge **68** by molding a hinge of flexible plastic at the time the main portion **21** and cover **60** are molded.

As shown in FIGS. **4**, **4***a*, and **5**, the edges of both the primary portion of the case **21** and the hinge cover **60** include mating male and female, rectangular tabs or tongues and receptacles or grooves **70** and **72**, respectively. The tabs and receptacles provide a means for stabilizing and locating the hinge cover in its closed position over compartments **20** and **40**.

As shown in FIGS. **5** and **5***a*, one type of locking apparatus for securing hinge cover **60** to main portion **21** of case **10** includes upstanding locking members or eyelets **74** and **76**. Members **74** and **76** include aligned apertures **78** and **80** therein for receiving the U-shaped shank **82** of a padlock **84**. Locking members **74** are generally L-shaped in cross section as shown in FIG. **5** and are riveted in place by suitable rivets or other similar securing means in alignment with one another adjacent the edges of flange **66** and top wall **22**. Preferably, members **74** and **76** are formed from steel or another tough, resilient, strong material sufficient to keep the case locked together.

An alternative device for locking hinged cover **60** to the main portion **21** of case **10** includes a key-operated rotatable locking sleeve **86** having an L-shaped locking arm **88** rotatably mounted on the bottom thereof below top wall **22**. Arm **88** includes a flange **90** which, when locked, projects behind abutment **92** molded in a receptacle **94** in a thickened portion of flange **66** generally across from and in alignment with locking sleeve

86. As will be understood from FIG. 6*a*, the key may be used to rotate arm 88 and flange 90 out of abutment with abutment 92 to allow the hinged cover to be opened for insertion and removal of the skis, ski poles, and ski boots.

In order to prevent the marring or abrasive damage of the sharpened bottom edges on the protruding tips and heels of skis 14 when supported in lower compartment 40 (FIGS. 1 and 2), flexible vinyl or cloth covers 96 for those respective portions are provided. Covers 96 include tabs 97 for snapping the covers onto the snaps 98 provided in appropriate locations on end walls 42 and 44 of lower compartment 40 as shown in FIGS. 2 and 3.

Although poles 18 may be carried with skis 14 in lower compartment 40 as mentioned above, the preferred manner of carrying a pair of ski poles 18 is with locking channel member 100 (FIGS. 1, 3, and 7–9). Channel 100 holds and encloses the middle portion of poles 18 and is hingedly secured to upper portion 62 of side hinged cover 60 generally parallel to lower compartment 40. The hinges for channel 100 are formed by pins 102 passed through extending tabs 103 formed on the ends of channel flange 104 and projections 105 molded on the interior of wall 62 on either side of slots 106 in that wall. Slots 106 flare outwardly and upwardly at an angle through the thickness of wall 62 to provide spaces 107 (FIG. 7) allowing rotation of the channel member 100 upwardly for insertion and removal of the ski poles from inside the channel.

A particular feature of the pole-holding and enclosing channel 100 is that it can be released only from the interior of the case after the hinged cover 60 has been unlocked and opened. As shown in FIGS. 7–9, slots 108 extend through wall 62 in alignment with three flanges 109 extending from channel flange 110. Flanges 109 each include a rotatable locking bar 111 pivotally anchored to their ends by pivot pins, screws, or the like 112. Once poles 18 have been inserted in channel 100, the channel is closed with flanges 109 extending through slots 108 and bars 111 flush with the flange ends. Bars 111 are then rotated to transverse positions across slots 108 until stopped by upstanding abutments 113 on the rear face of wall 62 (FIGS. 7, 8, and 9). Layer 36 is cut away around slots 108 to allow such locking rotation (FIG. 9). Cover 60 is then closed and locked. Poles are locked in channel 100 and can only be removed upon opening cover 60.

An eyelet 114 is riveted or otherwise secured on one of the sloping walls 24 or 26 as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. Eyelet 114 is preferably formed either from metal or the same plastic material used to mold the case 10 and provides a means for locking or chaining the case, including all of the ski equipment locked and secured therein, to a post, pole, tree, or similar fixed object should it be desired to leave the ski equipment unattended.

OPERATION

As will now be apparent, the boots 12, skis 14, including bindings 16, and poles 18 are all inserted and at least partially enclosed within the rigid case 10 after the cover 60 has been opened. Additional equipment may be placed in areas 37, 38, 39, or 56 after insertion of boots and poles therein. Poles 18 are inserted in channel member 100 which is pivoted downwardly and locked via bars 111. Alternatively, if channel 100 is not included on case 10, poles 18 may be carried in slots 52, 54 with skis 14. The hinged cover is then closed and locked using one of the two alternative locking devices including locking members 74 and 76 or rotatable lock sleeve 86. The case, together with all of the necessary equipment needed for skiing, may then be carried by hand using molded handle 115 secured by suitable pivotal securing means 116 on top wall 22 or by means of an elongated shoulder strap 117 secured to sloping walls 24 and 26 by snaps 118 or other similar securing means (see FIGS. 1 and 2).

The present invention also enables all of the required ski equipment to be carried as a unit or package when the skis are mounted in the conventionally known manner on a vehicular ski rack 120 using clamping arms 122 (FIG. 9). The side-by-side relationship of the skis resting on their bottoms in apertures 52 and 54 of the lower compartment 40 positions the skis for attachment to the rack. Since only a minimal amount of the case projects below the bottom surfaces of the skis when they are properly mounted in case 10 (see FIG. 2), the height of the ski rack 120 above the roof or other portion of the vehicle carrying the rack provides sufficient room for leaving the case mounted on the skis. When used in this manner, virtually all equipment needed by the skier may be carried on the vehicle in one area with all of the equipment being protected within the case from snow, ice, abrasive damage, or the like.

Although apertures 52 and 54 are illustrated as being shaped to support the skis side by side on their bottoms, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that the apertures and the lower compartment 40 could be designed to hold the skis on their side edges with their bottom surfaces abutting one another. Since certain of the conventionally known vehicular ski racks are designed to carry skis in this manner, such an alternate design for the case 10 would enable various embodiments of the case to fit virtually all types of vehicular ski racks.

As further protection against theft or other loss of the present ski case 10, the case may be provided with identification numbers stamped, inscribed, or otherwise permanently imprinted thereon. The identification numbers can be recorded by a central agency, such as an insurance company or the case manufacturer, to identify and help locate the lost or stolen case and return it to its rightful owner.

While several forms of the invention have been shown and described, other forms will now be apparent to those skilled in the art. Therefore, it will be understood that the embodiments shown in the drawings and described above are merely for illustrative purposes, and are not intended to limit the scope of the invention which is defined by the claims which follow.

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. A case for carrying various ski equipment, including skis and ski boots, together in a single package comprising means for enclosing and carrying a pair of ski boots, said means having a pair of external surfaces defining ends of said anchoring means; means for carrying a pair of skis adjacent said ski boot enclosing means including means for covering and supporting at least a central portion of said skis to support the skis with the case and to protect any bindings mounted thereon; the

pair of skis, when supported by said carrying means, having their tip and heel portions extending beyond said external surfaces of said boot enclosing means; closure means providing access to said boot enclosing and ski-carrying means for insertion and removal of said boots and skis therein; and means for lifting and carrying said case whereby said case can be manually carried with said lifting and carrying means or attached to a vehicular ski carrier by said extending ski portions.

2. The case of claim **1** further including means for holding a pair of ski poles adjacent said boots and skis.

3. The case of claim **2** wherein said pole holding means include means for holding and supporting the central portions of a pair of poles and comprise a portion of said ski carrying means.

4. The case of claim **2** wherein said ski-supporting means is a rigid compartment formed beneath said boot enclosure means; said central portion covering and supporting means including means for supporting a pair of skis side by side on their bottoms whereby said skis may be mounted on a ski carrier atop a vehicle with said poles and boots secured thereto by said case.

5. The case of claim **1** wherein said boot enclosure means includes a rigid, boot-holding compartment above said ski-carrying means; said boot compartment including means for supporting a pair of ski boots on their heels in sole-to-sole abutting relationship.

6. The case of claim **5** wherein said boot enclosure means further include means for partially enclosing and holding a pair of ski poles adjacent said ski boots and skis; said pole enclosing and holding means including means for releasing said enclosing and holding means for removal of the poles therefrom, said releasing means being releasable only from the interior of said case; said ski-carrying means comprising a rigid compartment formed beneath said boot enclosure means; said central portion covering and supporting means including means for supporting a pair of skis side by side on their bottoms whereby said skis may be mounted on a ski carrier atop a vehicle with said poles and boots also retained by said case.

7. The case of claim **1** wherein said enclosure means include a rigid upper compartment for holding a pair of ski boots on the backs of their heels in sole-to-sole relationship; said ski-carrying means including a rigid, lower compartment beneath said upper compartment for holding and enclosing the central portion of the skis; partition means for separating said upper and lower compartments; said closure means including a side cover hingedly secured to said case over both of said compartments for allowing simultaneous access to both compartments; means for locking said side cover in its closed position over said compartments; said compartments and side cover all being molded from impact-resistant, synthetic material.

8. The case of claim **7** wherein said compartments each include storage areas for small tools, gloves, ski wax, and the like; said upper compartment being lined with a layer of foamed material.

9. The case of claim **7** wherein the tips and heels of the skis project from said lower compartment when mounted therein; said case including covers formed from flexible material for enclosing the tip and heel portions of the skis which project from said lower compartment; means for removably securing said covers to the exterior of said case after said covers are placed over said skis.

10. The case of claim **7** including a shoulder strap for carrying said entire case including boots, skis, and poles and means for removably securing said strap to said case.

11. The case of claim **7** wherein the edges of said side cover and the edges of the remainder of said case which mate with said side cover edges when said cover is closed include mating tongues and grooves for maintaining said side cover and the remainder of said case in alignment and for adding structural rigidity to said case.

12. The case of claim **1** in combination with at least one ski supported by said ski carrying means of said case and a ski carrier for vehicles of a type including means secured to a vehicle for supporting and holding said ski and case combination by engaging portions of said case and ski combination.

13. The improved ski carrier of claim **12** wherein said ski enclosing means include a rigid lower compartment in said case; said boot-supporting and enclosing means including a rigid upper compartment above said lower compartment including means for holding a pair of ski boots on the backs of their heels in sole-to-sole relationship including a partition separating said upper compartment from said lower compartment.

14. The improved ski carrier of claim **13** wherein said lower compartment includes elongated apertures at either end thereof extending generally across the width of said case for receiving and supporting a pair of skis on their bottoms in side-by-side relationship, the tip and heel ends of the skis projecting from said elongated apertures for attachment to said supporting means secured to the vehicle.

15. The improved ski carrier of claim **14** including covers formed from flexible material for enclosing the tip and heel portions of the skis which project from said lower compartment; means for removably securing said covers to the exterior of said case after placing said covers on said skis.

16. The improved ski carrier of claim **13** wherein said case includes means for holding a pair of ski poles.

17. The case of claim **1** wherein said ski-carrying means are located generally below said ski boot enclosing means.

18. The case of claim **17** wherein said ski-carrying means include a compartment for generally enclosing and surrounding the central portions of the skis when supported therein.

19. The case of claim **17** wherein said ski-carrying means include a compartment separate from said ski boot enclosing means, said compartment having two ends and a slot in each end, said slots being aligned with one another for receiving a pair of skis therein such that the tip and heel portions of the skis protrude from said compartment through said slots.

20. The case of claim **19** including pole holding means for holding a pair of ski poles adjacent any skis which are in said compartment.

21. The case of claim **20** wherein said pole holding means include portions of said slots, said slots being sufficiently wide to receive the poles therein adjacent the skis.

22. The case of claim **1** wherein said ski carrying means include cover means extending outwardly from said ski covering and supporting means for covering the extending tip and heel portions of any skis supported

thereby, said cover means generally conforming to the shape of the extending ski portions.

23. The case of claim **1** wherein said access means for insertion and removal of said boots and skis include closure means having a side cover for covering both said boot enclosing means and ski carrying means and means for hingedly securing said side cover over said boot enclosing means and ski carrying means.

24. A case for carrying various ski equipment, including skis and ski boots, together in a single package comprising means for enclosing and holding a pair of ski boots; means for supporting a pair of skis adjacent to one another and adjacent the boots, said ski-supporting means including means for enclosing the central portion of the pair of skis including any binding mounted thereon while the tips and heels of the skis project from said ski enclosing means; closure means for opening and closing said case for insertion and removal of said boots and skis in said boot-enclosing and ski-supporting means; and means for lifting and carrying said case; said boot enclosure means including a rigid, boot-holding compartment above said ski-supporting means; said boot compartment including means for supporting a pair of ski boots on their heels in sole-to-sole abutting relationship; said boot enclosure means further including means for partially enclosing and holding a pair of ski poles adjacent said ski boots; said pole enclosing and holding means including means for releasing said enclosing and holding means to remove the poles therefrom; said releasing means being releasable only from the interior of said case; said ski-supporting means comprising a rigid compartment formed beneath said boot enclosure means; said central portion enclosing means including means for supporting a pair of skis side by side on their bottoms whereby said skis may be mounted on a ski carrier atop a vehicle with the poles and boots secured thereto by said case; said ski pole holding means including a channel member for enclosing at least a middle portion of a pair of ski poles; hinge means for pivotally securing said channel on said case; said pole release means including pivotal securing means for holding said channel closed.

25. The case of claim **24** wherein said closure means includes a separate side portion covering both said boot and ski compartment and means for hingedly securing said side portion at the bottom of said case for opening and closing said case; said lifting and carrying means including a handle at the top of said case.

26. A case for carrying various ski equipment, including skis and ski boots, together in a single package comprising means for enclosing and holding a pair of ski boots; means for supporting a pair of skis adjacent to one another and adjacent the boots, said ski-supporting means including means for enclosing the central portion of the pair of skis including any binding mounted thereon while the tips and heels of the skis project from said ski enclosing means; closure means for opening and closing said case for insertion and removal of said boots and skis in said boot-enclosing and ski-supporting means; and means for lifting and carrying said case; said enclosure means including a rigid upper compartment for holding a pair of ski boots on the back of their heels in sole-to-sole relationship; said ski-supporting and enclosing means including a rigid, lower compartment beneath said upper compartment for holding and enclosing said central portion of said skis; partition means for separating said upper and lower compartments; said closure means including a side cover hingedly secured to said case over both of said compartments for allowing simultaneous access to both compartments; means for locking said side cover in its closed position over said compartments; said compartments and side cover all being molded from impact-resistant, synthetic material; said side cover including means for holding a pair of ski poles thereon, said pole-holding means having a channel member for enclosing at least a middle portion of a pair of ski poles; hinge means for pivotally securing said channel on said cover; and locking securing means for holding said channel closed, said locking securing means including channel release means accessible only from the interior of said case.

27. A rigid carrying case for ski boots, ski poles, skis, and other skiing equipment molded from high-impact resilient plastic comprising a first compartment for enclosing and holding a pair of ski boots; a partition; a second compartment separated from and located below said first compartment by said partition for supporting a pair of skis and generally covering the central area of the skis and any bindings mounted thereon; a cover hingedly secured over a side of both of said compartments for access thereto; and means for attaching a pair of ski poles on the exterior of said case; said pole-attaching means including release means for releasing the poles only from the interior of said case when said cover is open; and means for lifting and carrying said case.

28. The carrying case of claim **27** wherein said first compartment is contoured to hold the pair of boots while they rest on the backs of their heels and have their soles in abutting relationship.

29. The carrying case of claim **27** wherein said second compartment includes laterally elongated, oppositely aligned apertures for receiving the pair of skis adjacent one another in side-by-side relationship; the tip and heel portions of the skis projecting from said apertures when the skis are received in said second compartment.

30. A rigid carrying case for ski boots, ski poles, skis, and other skiing equipment molded from high-impact, resilient plastic comprising a first compartment for enclosing and holding a pair of ski boots; a partition; a second compartment separated from and located below said first compartment by said partition for supporting a pair of skis and enclosing the central area of the skis and any binding mounted thereon; a cover hingedly secured over a side of both of said compartments for access thereto; and means for attaching a pair of ski poles on the exterior of said case; said pole-attaching means including release means for releasing the poles only from the interior of said case when said cover is open; and means for lifting and carrying said case; said ski pole attaching means including a channel and hinge means for securing said channel to the interior of said cover for pivotal movement allowing insertion of said cover for pivotal movement allowing insertion of said poles in said channel; said release means including flanges extending through apertures in said cover and locking bars pivotally secured to the ends of said flanges for pivoting across said apertures on the interior of said cover to prevent pivotal movement of said channel and removal of said poles unless said cover is open and said locking bars are accessible.

31. A rigid carrying case for ski boots, skis, and other skiing equipment comprising a first compartment for enclosing and carrying a pair of ski boots, said first compartment having a pair of external surfaces defining ends of said first compartment; a partition; a second compartment separated from and located generally below said first compartment by said partition including means for supporting a pair of skis such that their tip and heel portions extend beyond said external surfaces of said first compartment and means for generally covering the central area of the skis and any bindings mounted thereon when supported by said supporting means; cover means providing access to said compartments; and means for lifting and carrying said case whereby said case can be manually carried with said lifting and carrying means or attached to a vehicular ski carrier by said extending ski portions.

32. The carrying case of claim 31 wherein said second compartment includes two generally opposing ends, each end including an aperture for receiving a pair of skis adjacent one another therein, said two apertures being generally aligned such that the tip and heel portions of the skis project through said apertures when the skis are received in said second compartment.

33. The carrying case of claim 32 including means for holding a pair of ski poles.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

PATENT NO. : 3,917,137

DATED : November 4, 1975

INVENTOR(S) : Douglas S. Wilkins

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent are hereby corrected as shown below:

Column 6, line 63;

"anchoring" should be --enclosing--.

Signed and Sealed this

sixth Day of *April 1976*

[SEAL]

Attest:

RUTH C. MASON
Attesting Officer

C. MARSHALL DANN
Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks