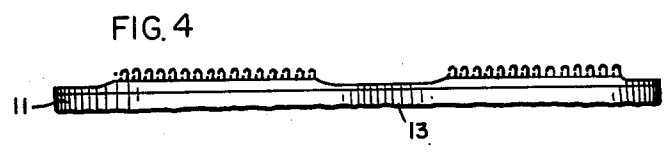
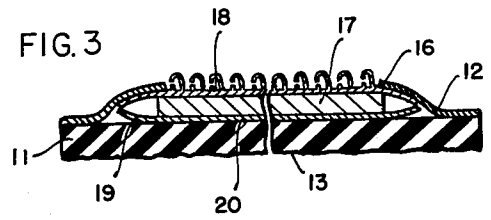
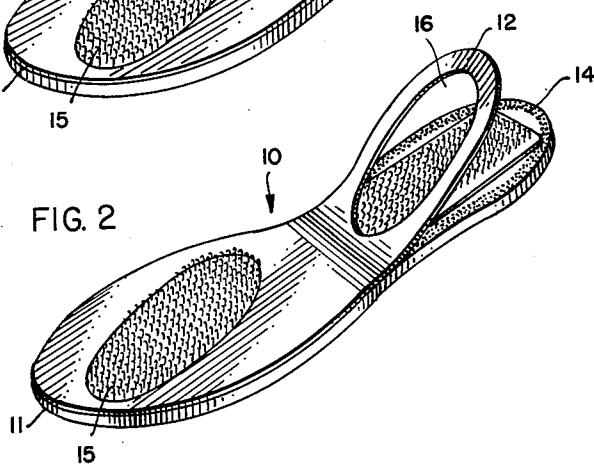
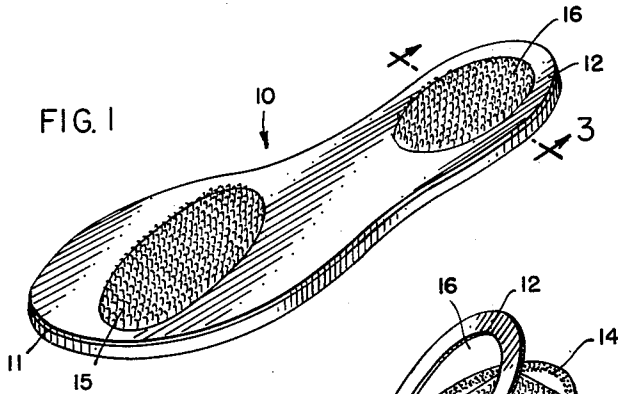


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D. M. PRICE
STRAPLESS SANDAL
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INVENTOR:
DAN M. PRICE
BY
Daton D. Harbaugh
ATT'Y

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3,059,350

STRAPLESS SANDAL

Dan M. Price, 804 N. Montgomery Ave., Litchfield, Ill.
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The present invention relates generally to foot wear and more particularly to a class of foot wear of the sandal type that requires no upper members for engaging the upper surface of the foot or heel to retain the sandal in a wearing position.

In the existing art, there is a plurality of differently shaped sandals for the protection of the foot which not only provides the desirable cushioning and contouring of the lower sole portion but also an upper portion consisting of straps, elastic bands, hooks, etc. for retaining the sandal or sole protector in a wearing position. Several disadvantages have arisen from the retaining devices of the upper portion of the sandals of the prior art such as; breakage of the straps, failure of the elastic material in the resilient bands, the pulling away or disengagement of the straps from the lower portion to which they are attached, and of course, the added time and cost for the securing of these upper retaining devices to form the complete sandal. These disadvantages are but few of the manufacturing problems and the disadvantages to the ultimate consumer are readily apparent to anyone who has worn this type of sandal. The bending over to buckle the straps, the forcing outwardly of the elastic members so the foot may be inserted, and the binding, cutting, and chapping of the skin by these straps and bands are but a few of the disadvantages that the wearer experiences.

It is therefore, the primary object of this invention to eliminate the disadvantages of the prior art and to provide an improved strapless sandal that is retained in the wearing position without the use of upper retaining members to engage the upper surface of the foot.

A specific object of this invention is to provide an improved strapless sandal which is readily attached and removed to only the lower surface of the foot.

Another object of this invention is to provide an improved strapless sandal which is retained in the wearing position by the engagement of a multiplicity of hook elements with the threads of a stocking.

Another object of this invention is to provide an improved strapless sandal which not only retains the sandal to the foot, but provides a cushion for the foot.

A still further object of this invention is to provide an improved strapless sandal which may be secured on a foot by merely stepping down on the sandal with the foot having a stocking thereon.

A still further object of this invention is to provide an improved strapless sandal which is completely flexible to adhere to the contour of the foot during a walking movement.

Another object of this invention is to provide an improved strapless sandal that is inexpensive to manufacture, ruggedly constructed, and adaptable for use by anyone desiring protection for the foot while wearing a stocking.

These being the objects of the present invention, other further desirable characteristics and objects will become evident hereinafter as the specification proceeds.

Fundamentally, the applicant's improved strapless sandal comprises a flat resilient rubber base member that is contoured substantially to the form of a foot surface with the under side thereof roughened for engagement with the ground while the upper side is covered by a thin smooth material such as vinyl or a leatherette. The upper covering has two elongated openings therethrough, one angularly positioned across its forward portion substantially where the ball of the foot is located and the other opening is located across the rear portion substan-

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tially where the heel of the foot is located. Extending upwardly through these openings are a plurality of resilient hook elements which engage the threads of the stocking to hold the sandal in place. These hook elements also provide a cushioning effect as they deform slightly under the weight of the wearer which in turn increases their ability to engage and hold the threads of the stocking. Additional cushioning material such as a sponge rubber is placed in back of the hook elements to increase the cushioning effect.

So that the present invention may be more clearly presented and more easily understood, the applicant now refers to the drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the strapless sandal of this invention;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the strapless sandal of this invention with the upper cover member being partially elevated illustrating the location of the cushioning and retaining members;

FIG. 3 is a sectional view taken along the lines 3—3 of FIG. 1 illustrating the relationship of the base member with the retaining, cushioning and backing members; and

FIG. 4 is a view in side elevation of the invention.

Referring to the drawings the preferred embodiment of the invention is designated by the numeral 10 and includes a base member 11 and a cover member 12. Referring specifically to FIGS. 3 and 4, the base member 12 is preferable formed from a flexible rubber composition of approximately $\frac{3}{16}$ of an inch in thickness with its under side or lower surface 13 roughened to provide sufficient friction in order to give a firm hold on the surface of the ground and to prevent slippage during walking. The upper surface 14 is substantially smooth and flat in contour for receipt of the cover member 12 and to provide a surface for a retaining, cushioning, and backing members to be described.

The cover member 12 is preferable formed from a thin flexible material such as a vinyl or well-known leatherette and provides an elongated opening 15 angularly positioned across a forward portion corresponding to that of the ball of the foot and another elongated opening 16 positioned across a rearward portion corresponding to the heel of the foot. The upper surface of member 12 has a smooth textured finish which has a pleasant appearance while the lower surface is in an unfinished condition with a substantially roughened surface to assist in a bonding operation for securing the cover 12 to the base 11.

Referring specifically to FIG. 3, a cushioning member 17, a retaining member 18, and a backing member 19, are disposed between the cover member 12 and base 11. The cushioning member 17 is preferably a high resilient rubber and may vary in thickness depending upon the type of material used and the desired amount of cushioning required. The retaining member 18 has a thin flexible base with a multiplicity of hook elements integrally formed therewith wherein each of the hook elements extends upwardly approximately $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch at right angles to the base. The retaining member is preferably formed from a plastic like material such as nylon which is sufficiently resilient to engage the threads of a stocking without injury to the stocking material or the foot, and in addition provides a cushion effect.

To insure the proper alignment of the cushion member 17 with the retaining member 18, a cloth backing member 19 is secured about its periphery to the periphery of the retaining member 18 with the cushioning member 17 centrally disposed between. In other words, we have a closed pad 20 arrangement with one surface being the retaining member 18 and the other being the backing member 19 with the cushioning member 17 centrally secured between.

The above mentioned pads 20, consisting of the retaining member 18, cushioning member 17 and backing member 19, are positioned on the base 11 in alignment with the elongated openings 15 and 16 as the member 12 is placed on the base 11. As readily viewed in FIG. 2, these pads have an external contour substantially greater than the elongated openings whereby they may be securely held by the cover upon the cover being secured to the base. Securing the cover 12 to the base 11 may be satisfactorily accomplished by any of the well-known pressure-sensitive-bonding adhesives. As viewed in FIG. 2 the cover member 12 has only its periphery secured to the base 11.

To those skilled in the art it is readily apparent that the strapless sandal of this invention has provided an improved and useful sandal for the protection of the foot which is readily adaptable for application to the foot and eliminated the previously required retaining straps, bands, etc. of the prior art. Moreover, the retaining members of this invention with their upwardly extending hook elements for engagement of the threads of a stocking not only serve as the retaining means and additional cushioning means, but also permits the passage of air between the lowermost portion of the foot and the surface of the sandal which creates a very desirable cooling effect. Furthermore, the strapless sandal of this invention, presents such an extremely thin profile that it is most advantageous for packaging and shipping by the manufacturer and serves as a space saving commodity for the retailer. Likewise, the traveler who never has enough space may easily slip the strapless sandals into a pocket of a suitcase and save weight as well as space.

Although the embodiment of the present invention has been described in specific detail as to its construction and how its objects are attained, this should in no way be construed to limit the scope of the present invention as set forth in the specification and appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A strapless sandal for contact with only the lowermost surface of the foot having a stocking thereon comprising a flexible rubber base member, a resilient cushioning member, a retaining member comprising a plurality of hook elements extending upwardly from a surface of the base member engaged with the stocking, and a flexible cover encircling and retaining the cushioning and retaining members in secured relationship to the surface of the base.

2. A strapless sandal for protection of a foot sole having a stocking thereon comprising a flexible base member having a contour substantially of a foot sole, a cover member for an upper surface of the base, said cover having a first elongated opening therethrough in juxtaposition with the ball of the foot and a second elongated opening in juxtaposition with the heel of a foot, a cushioning member, a retaining member providing a plurality of upwardly extending hook elements, means to centrally secure the cushioning member beneath the retaining member, and a cover member encircling said cushioning and retaining members and securing them in position as the cover is bonded to the base whereby an effective engagement of the retaining hook elements may be made with the threads of the stocking to hold the sandal in position during a walking movement.

3. The invention as set forth in claim 2 wherein the means to centrally secure the cushioning member beneath the retaining member comprises a flexible backing member secured about its periphery to the periphery of the retaining member with the cushioning element disposed therebetween.

4. A strapless sandal for protecting the under surface of a foot having a stocking thereon comprising a flexible base member, a resilient cushioning member secured between a retaining member and a backing member, said retaining member comprising a plurality of upwardly extending semi-rigid hook elements, a flexible cover member having a pair of elongated openings spaced for receipt of the combined cushioning member and retaining elements, said elongated openings being in spaced relationship therewith for alignment with the ball and heel of the foot, and securing means to hold the cover member to the base member whereby the retaining members are secured in alignment for contact with the threads of the stocking near the ball and heel of the foot.

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