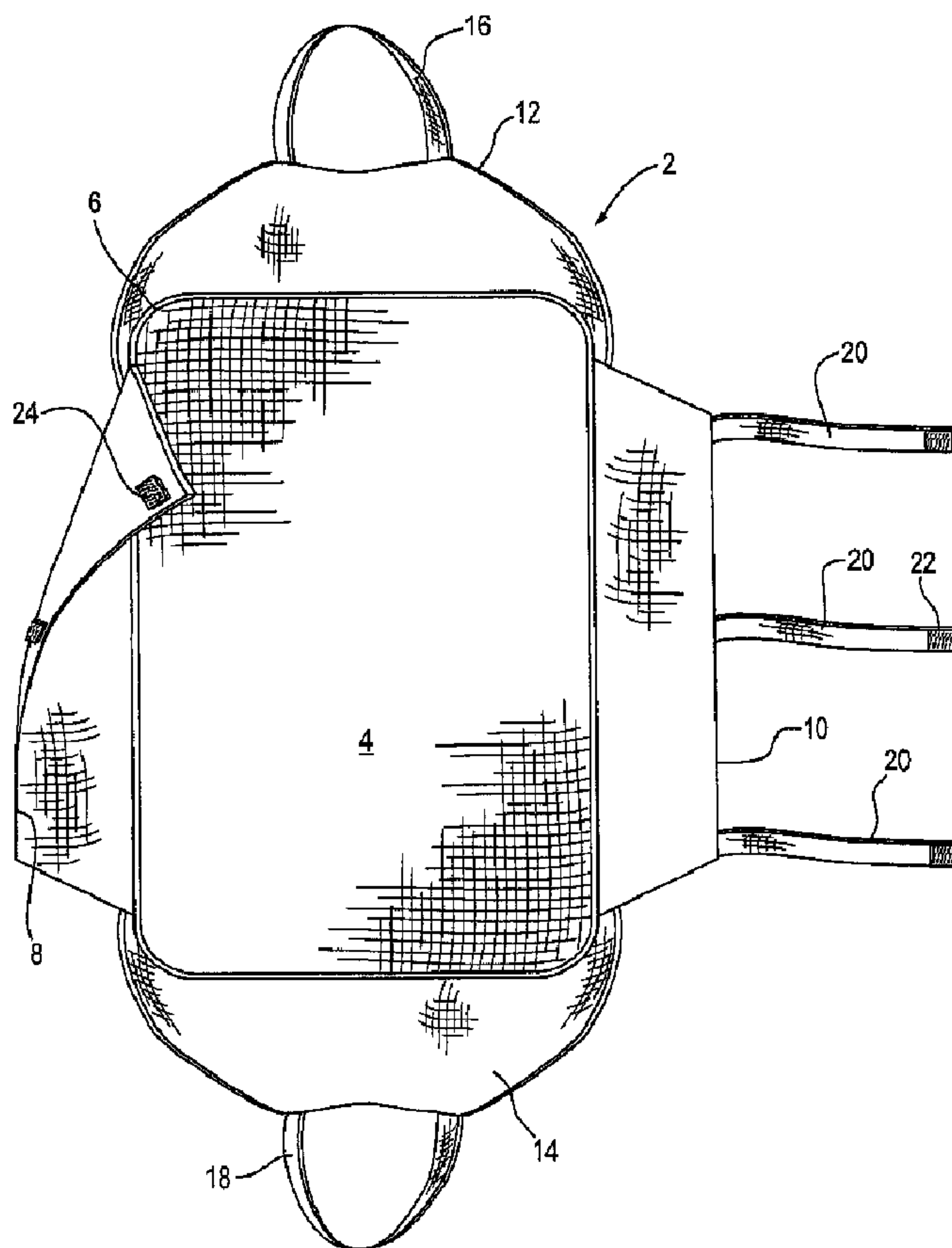




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(54) Titre : ORGANISEUR DE RANGEMENT
(54) Title: PACKING ORGANIZER



(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

A packing organizer is disclosed for use with a suitcase, trunk or similar article. The packing organizer has a base with a top surface adapted to receive items to be packed, a bottom surface, opposed ends and opposed sides. A side flap extends from each

(57) **Abrégé(suite)/Abstract(continued):**

of the opposed sides of the base and an end flap extends from each of the opposed ends of the base. At least one handle extends from at least one of the side or end flaps. Retaining means extend from at least one of the side flaps or end flaps and are adapted to matingly engage with cooperating fastening means on the other of the side flaps or end flaps. The end flaps, side flaps and the retaining means are dimensioned to extend over items packed on the base to at least partially enclose and secure the packed items.

ABSTRACT

A packing organizer is disclosed for use with a suitcase, trunk or similar article. The packing organizer has a base with a top surface adapted to receive items to be packed, a bottom surface, opposed ends and opposed sides. A side flap extends from
10 each of the opposed sides of the base and an end flap extends from each of the opposed ends of the base. At least one handle extends from at least one of the side or end flaps. Retaining means extend from at least one of the side flaps or end flaps and are adapted to matingly engage with cooperating fastening means on the other of the side flaps or end flaps. The end flaps, side flaps and the retaining means are dimensioned to extend over items packed on the base to at least partially enclose and secure the packed items.

PACKING ORGANIZER**Field of the Invention**

The present invention is concerned with a packing organizer. More specifically, the present invention is directed to a packing organizer for a suitcase, trunk or similar article which permits a user to divide and organize the contents of a suitcase, thereby making it easier to find and access packed items while travelling.

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Background of the Invention

Various packing organizers are currently available on the market, such as packing cubes, hanging suitcase shelves, suitcase dividers, liners and rigid trays. Each of these prior packing organizers have disadvantages.

Packing cubes require that a significant time be spent in organizing and packing items therein. Further, it is sometimes difficult and time consuming identifying and retrieving items from the packed cubes.

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Hanging suitcase shelves have the disadvantage that they must be hung for items to be packed and retrieved, as they collapse when not hung, rendering clothes inaccessible. Such a hanging shelf system and travel organizer is known from WO 2011034653 A1.

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Known suitcase dividers typically attach to the lid of a suitcase and divide opposing sections of the suitcase into separate compartments. Such dividers make the suitcase lid heavy and unwieldy. Further, such dividers require a large space to lay flat both sides of the suitcase when packing and unpacking and generally cannot be used with the suitcase racks typically provided by hotels, which require the lid of the suitcase to rest against a wall. An example of such a suitcase divider is known from U.S. Patent 4,854,432.

The use of rigid trays for organizing a suitcase or trunk are also known. These can be undesirable as they waste space by leaving gaps between items placed below the tray. They are also difficult to grasp when the tray is inside the suitcase, and they allow clothing and other items to fall off the sides of the tray easily during the insertion and removal of the tray from the suitcase.

U.S. Patent 3,861,504 to McGraw discloses one example of a liner or cube for a suitcase. The purpose of the disclosed liner is to enable ready inspection of the contents of a suitcase without having to remove all items therefrom. Specifically, the
10 liner is similar to a packing cube and is made of a transparent material so that the contents therein can be readily viewed. The liner has a closure means, such as a zipper, for packing and unpacking of contents and includes at least one handle for carrying the liner and lifting the same out of the suitcase. The liner is sized to fit snugly within the interior of a suitcase to limit movement of the same. More than one liner can be provided and the patent also discloses in this regard two side-by-side liners or cubes fit snugly in a suitcase. A disadvantage of such a packing organizer is that a significant amount of time is required to pack and organize the liner as well as in identifying and retrieving items therefrom. Access to the contents of the liner can only be provided by opening the liner and searching through and removing the items desired.

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U.S. Patent 2,384,332 discloses a luggage fitting which can be easily removed from a suitcase and hung in an outstretched condition in a closet or the like. The fitting is designed for retaining garments, such as dresses, without wrinkling the same. The fitting includes top and bottom sections which are hingedly connected to a base section. The sections are formed of a lightweight fiberboard to provide suitable stiffness to support the garment. A hanger post is provided for hanging the garment at one end of the fitting and the lid of the suitcase is provided with means for retaining the fitting. In use, the fitting is extended in a flat condition, the clothes are hung on the hanger
30 post, and then the bottom section is raised to be substantially parallel to the top section and partially enclose the garments between the top and bottom sections. The fitting is then inserted into the lid of the suitcase. On removal, the fitting is opened to a flat condition and can be hung in a closet.

Summary of the Invention

In accordance with one embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a packing organizer which includes a base portion having a top surface adapted to receive items to be packed, a bottom surface, opposed ends and opposed sides. A side flap extends from each of the opposed sides; and an end flap extends from each of the opposed ends. At least one handle extends from at least one of the side or end flaps. Retaining means extend from at least one of the side flaps or end flaps and are adapted to matingly engage with cooperating fastening means on the other of the side flaps or end flaps. The end flaps, side flaps and retaining means are of a dimension to extend over items packed on the base to at least partially enclose and secure the packed items.

In accordance with another embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a packing organizer comprising: a substantially rigid base member having opposed sides and ends; a flexible side wall extending continuously around the base member, the side wall having securing means for securing packed items on the base; and gripping means extending from the side wall at the ends of the base member.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Figure 1 is a top view of a packing organizer according to the present invention;

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the packing organizer with packed items therein and inserted into a suitcase on top of other packed items;

Figure 3 is a perspective view of the packing organizer with items packed therein, inserted in a suitcase;

Figure 4 is a perspective view of an alternative packing organizer of the present invention; and

Figure 5 is a perspective view of the embodiment of Figure 4 shown with items packed therein.

Detailed Description of Preferred Embodiments

Figure 1 illustrates a packing organizer 2 which has a base or bottom surface 4. The base 4 is generally flat and of a material which is light-weight, and sufficiently semi-rigid or rigid to support items packed thereon. In a preferred embodiment, the base 4 consists of a generally rectangular outer wire frame 6 which is covered with a suitable light weight fabric. Examples of suitable light weight fabrics are nylon, cotton, cotton blends, and polyester although any other suitable fabric could be utilized.

10 The base 4 could also be formed of cardboard or plastic materials which have the desired strength and flexibility.

The base 4 is of a size to fit within a suitcase. Preferably, the base 4 is of a length and width slightly smaller than the interior of a suitcase so that it can be readily inserted and removed therefrom.

The organizer 2 includes side flaps 8 and 10 and end flaps 12, 14. The flaps are also made of lightweight flexible material. The flaps can be of any suitable material such as any cloth, nylon, plastic, etc. The side flaps 8, 10 and end flaps 12, 14 are of a
20 dimension such that they can be folded over items 30 packed on the base to at least partially enclose and aid in the retention of the same. Handles 16 and 18 are provided on the end flaps 12, 14 to permit easy insertion and removal of the organizer 2 from a suitcase.

Further, the flaps can be of the same or different lengths/varying dimensions such that they at least partially surround or fully envelope the packed items. Pockets (not shown) may be provided in some or all of the flaps for securing smaller items to be packed, such as jewellery, toiletries, cosmetics, etc.

30 The organizer 2 is also provided with hold down or retaining straps 20 on one of the side flaps 10. At the ends of the straps are fastener means 22, such as Velcro or other suitable fastener means. The other side flap 8 is provided with cooperating fasteners 24 to releasably retain the straps.

As shown in Figure 2, when in use, items 30, such as clothing and other accessories, are placed on the base 4, the side flaps 8, 10 and end flaps 12, 14 are folded over items 30 to partially enclose the items 30 forming a basket to retain the items 30. The retaining straps 20 are extended over the items 30 and secured in mating engagement with the cooperating fasteners 24 on the other side flap 10 to assist in retaining and securing the items 30 in place. As illustrated in Figure 2, the packing organizer 2 can be packed with items 30 and placed on top of other items 32 already packed in the suitcase 40.

10 Alternately, the organizer 2 can be placed in the bottom of a suitcase 40 as shown in Figure 3. In this arrangement, additional items could be placed on top of the organizer 2 within the suitcase 40 or alternatively several of the organizers 2 can be used in a single suitcase, with the organizers being stacked on top of each other.

The packed organizers 2 can be readily removed from the suitcase by lifting with the handles 16, 18. Once removed, the organizer can be placed on any flat surface, such as a table, bed, floor, etc. where items can be easily seen and removed from the organizer without disturbing all items packed in the suitcase 40.

20 Figures 4 and 5 illustrate an alternate arrangement of the packing organizer 2, where a continuous side 42 is provided in place of flaps. Although a mesh side wall 42 is illustrated, it will be appreciated that the side wall 42 could be of any flexible light weight material. The side 42 is continuous around the base 4 and is of a dimension to form sides partially enclosing items 30 placed on the base 4. In this embodiment, items are placed on the base 4 and the sides 42 lifted upwardly and secured around the items through the use of retaining straps 20 in a similar manner to those used with the flaps. The straps can be secured in with any suitable fasteners, such as snaps, ties, Velcro®, buttons, buckles etc.

30 Alternately, in place of retaining straps, a draw string (not shown) can be provided around the top edge of the side 42, which can be tightened over the packed items.

Further, the packing organizer can include dividers (not shown) to divide the organizer into compartments or sections, to aid in further organizing packed items.

The present invention provides a very lightweight packing organizer that will enable travellers to readily pack items in an organized manner and to easily access packed items, without disturbing the contents of the entire suitcase and without adding substantial weight to the suitcase. The organizer will keep the packed items organized and neat and readily accessible to avoid travellers having to expend significant time and effort in locating or removing items from a packed suitcase.

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Having thus described preferred embodiments of the present invention, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that various modifications can be made thereto. The scope of the claims should not be limited by the preferred embodiments set forth herein, but should be given the broadest interpretation consistent with the description as a whole.

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

1. A packing organizer comprising:

a base having a top surface adapted to receive items to be packed, a bottom surface, opposed ends and opposed sides;

a side flap extending from each of the opposed sides;

an end flap extending from each of the opposed ends;

at least one handle extending from at least one of the side or end flaps; and

retaining means extending from at least one of the side flaps or end flaps and adapted to matingly engage with cooperating fastening means on the other of the side flaps or end flaps;

wherein said end flaps, said side flaps and said retaining means are of a dimension to extend over items packed on the base to at least partially enclose and secure the packed items.

2. The packing organizer according to claim 1, wherein the base is of a semi-rigid material selected from the group consisting of cardboard, plastic and fabric.

3. The packing organizer according to claim 1 or 2, wherein two handles are provided, one associated with each of the end flaps.

4. The packing organizer according to claim 1, wherein the base comprises a flexible material stretched over a rigid frame.

5. The packing organizer according to claim 4, wherein the rigid frame is a generally rectangular wire frame.

6. The packing organizer according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the retaining means are a plurality of straps.

7. The packing organizer according to any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein the flaps are of lightweight material.
8. The packing organizer according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the flaps are mesh.
9. The packing organizer according to any one of claims 1 to 8, wherein the handles are looped straps.
10. The packing organizer according to any one of claims 1 to 9, wherein the fastening means are selected from the group consisting of snaps, hook and loop fasteners, buttons, ties, buckles and any combinations thereof.
11. A packing organizer comprising:
 - a substantially rigid base member having opposed sides and ends;
 - a flexible side wall extending continuously around the base member, said side wall having securing means for securing packed items on said base; and
 - gripping means extending from the side wall at the ends of the base member.
12. The packing organizer according to claim 11, wherein the securing means comprises cooperating means on opposite sides of said side wall.
13. The packing organizer according to claim 12, wherein the cooperating means are straps and strap retaining means.
14. The packing organizer according to any one of claims 11 to 13, wherein the side wall is mesh.
15. The packing organizer according to any one of claims 11 to 13, wherein the side wall is a flexible lightweight material.
16. The packing organizer according to any one of claims 11 to 15, wherein the gripping means are handles.

17. The packing organizer according to claim 16, wherein the handles are looped strap material.

18. The packing organizer according to any one of claims 11 to 17, wherein the strap retaining means are selected from the group consisting of buttons, ties, hook and loop fasteners, snaps, and combinations thereof.

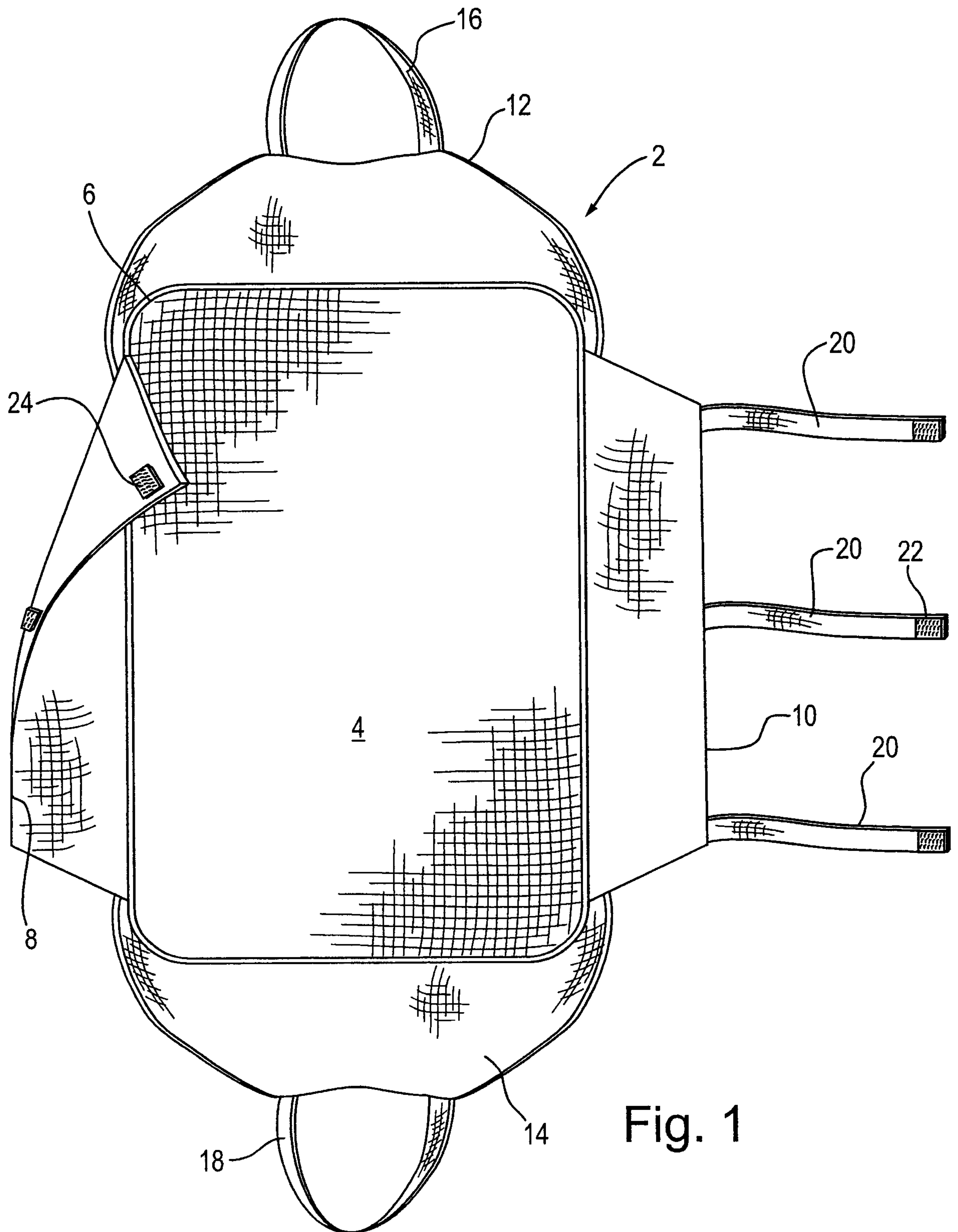


Fig. 1

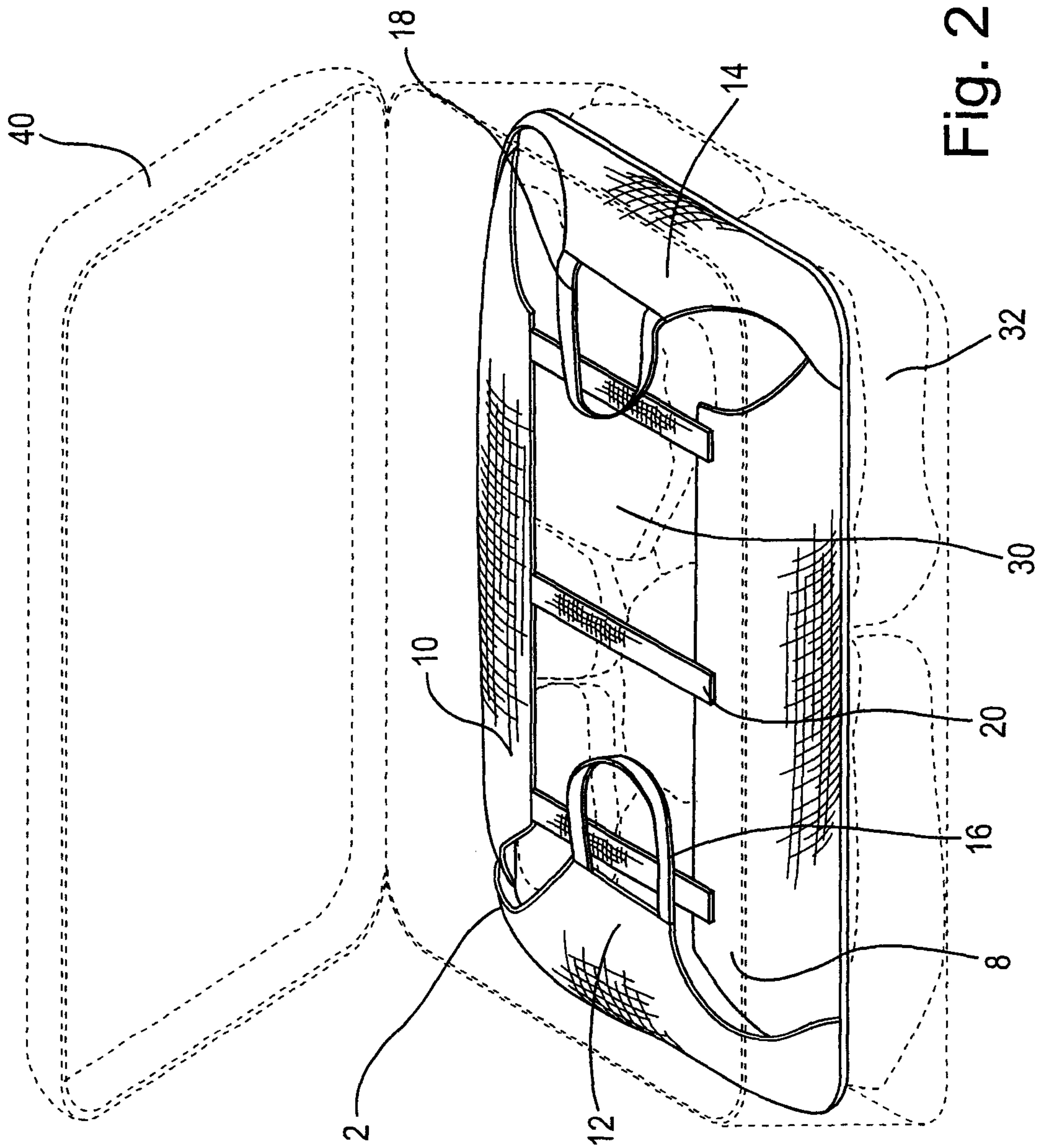


Fig. 2

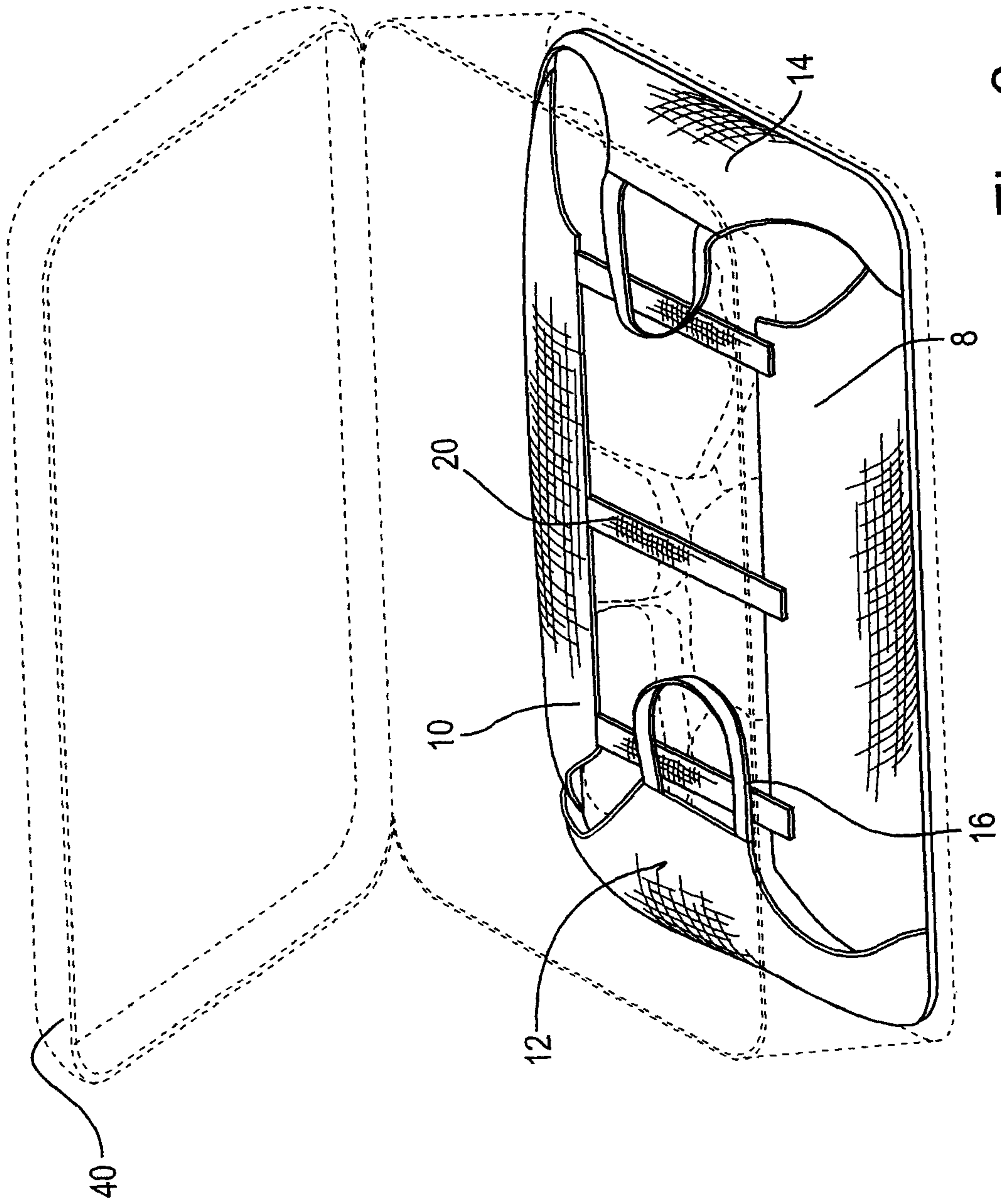


Fig. 3

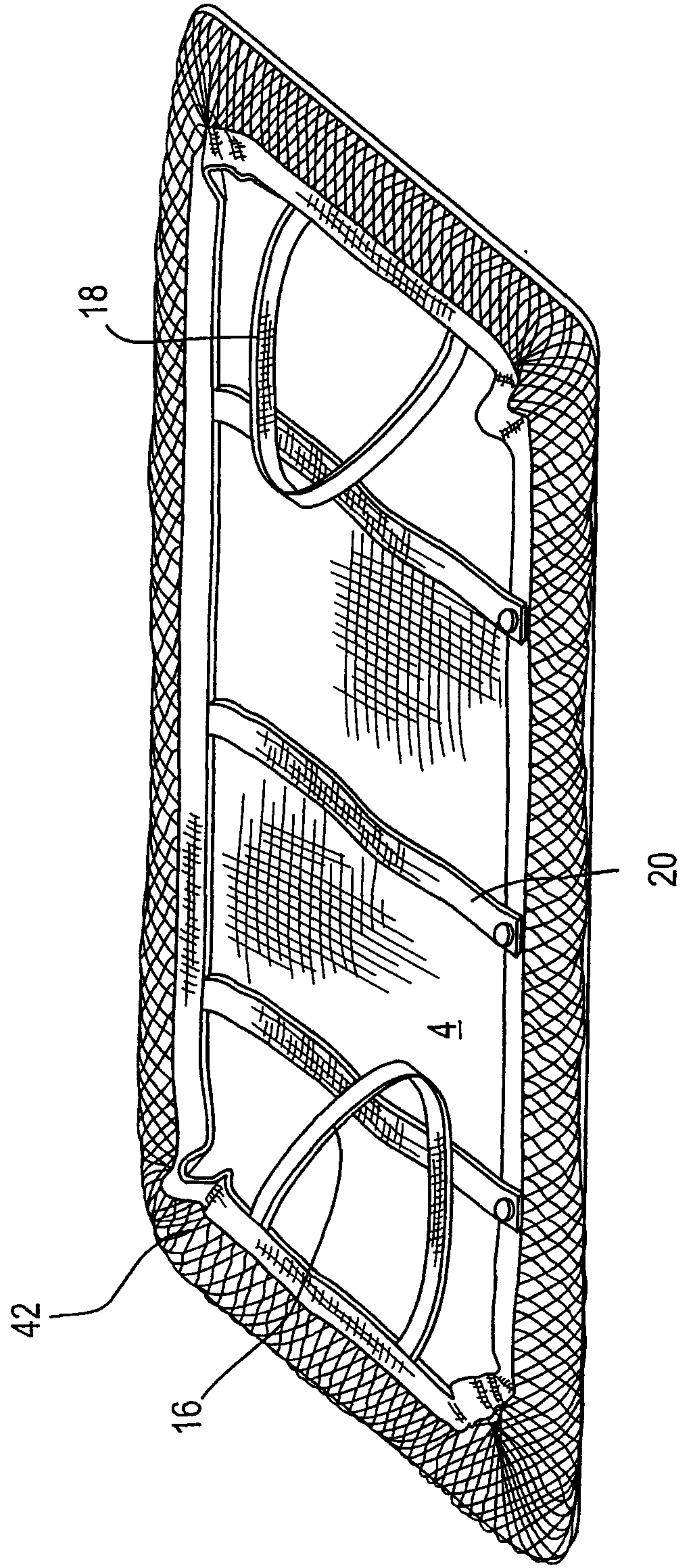


Fig. 4

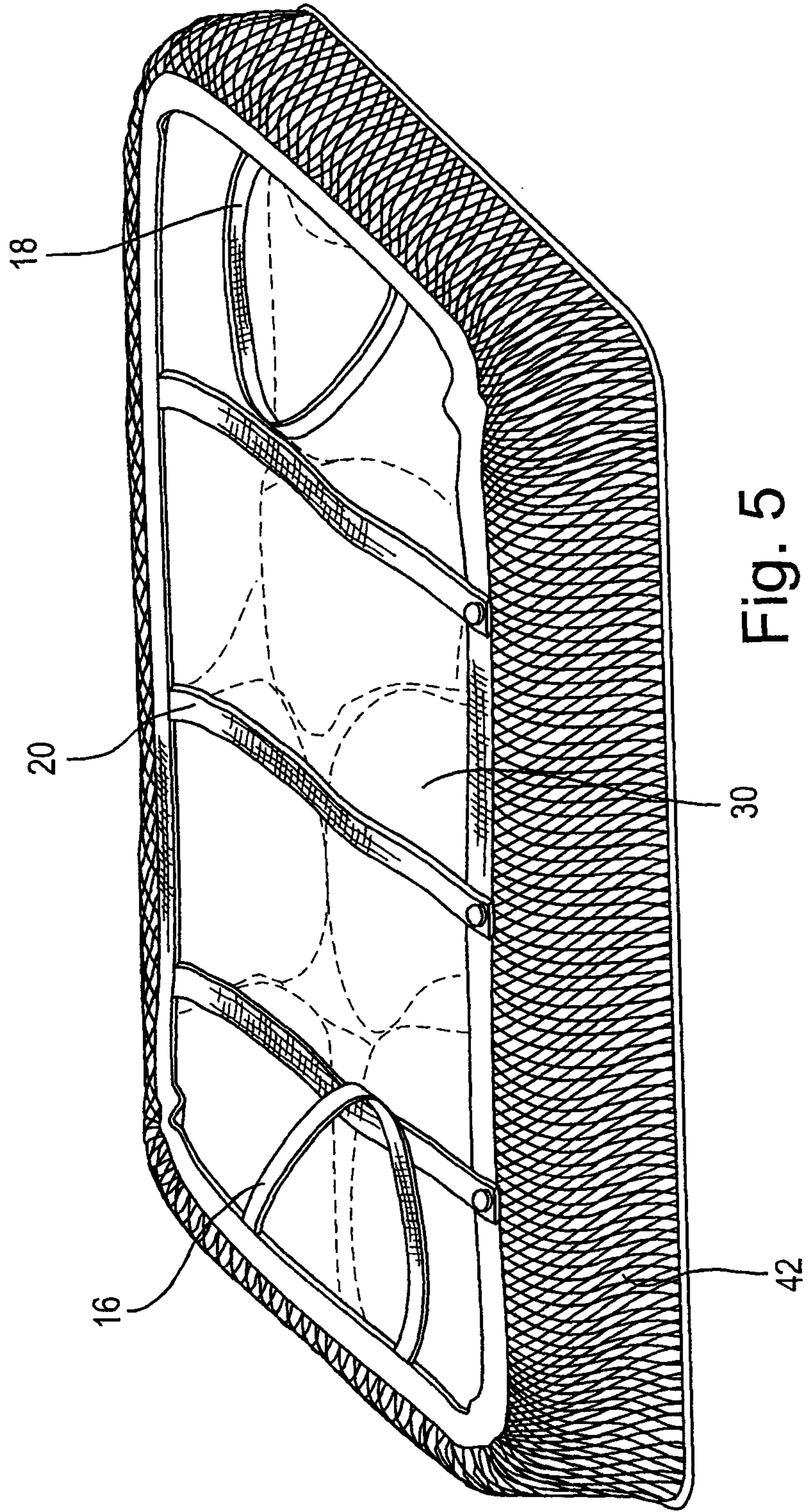


Fig. 5

