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Mares

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(54) **MODULARIZED AMUSEMENT RIDE AND TRAINING SIMULATION DEVICE**

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(73) Assignee: **Meteoro Amusement Corporation**, Lansing, NY (US)

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(21) Appl. No.: **09/814,083**

(22) Filed: **Mar. 21, 2001**

Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation of application No. 09/219,297, filed on Dec. 21, 1998, now Pat. No. 6,227,121, which is a continuation-in-part of application No. 09/098,043, filed on Jun. 16, 1998, now Pat. No. 6,098,549, which is a continuation-in-part of application No. 08/742,465, filed on Nov. 1, 1996, now Pat. No. 5,791,254.

(60) Provisional application No. 60/050,980, filed on Jun. 20, 1997, and provisional application No. 60/007,206, filed on Nov. 3, 1995.

(51) **Int. Cl.**[7] **A63G 31/00**

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **104/76**; 104/53; 104/55

(58) **Field of Search** 104/53, 55, 56, 104/57, 58, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 74, 84, 75, 83, 76, 77, 78; 105/149.1, 149.2

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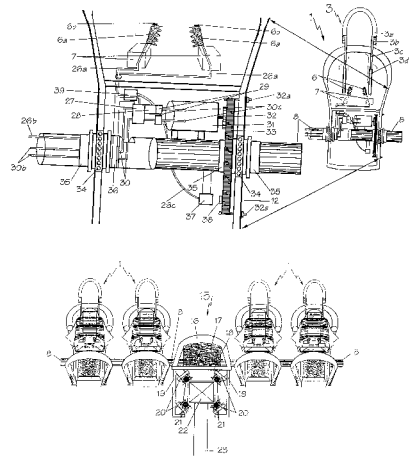
Primary Examiner—Mark T. Le
(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Jeffrey D. Myers

(57) **ABSTRACT**

An amusement device comprising a modularized pod, in which one or more riders sit and are restrained, and which spins under power about a horizontal axis according to the passenger's active control. The riders control the spinning of the pod, either forward or backward, by pressing buttons on the passenger's handgrips located inside the pod. The modularized pod may be used in conjunction with many different types of amusement devices, including, but not limited to roller coasters, carrousels, Ferris wheels, virtual reality units, centrifugal tumblers. The modularized pod may also be used in conjunction with flight and space training and simulation units.

17 Claims, 17 Drawing Sheets



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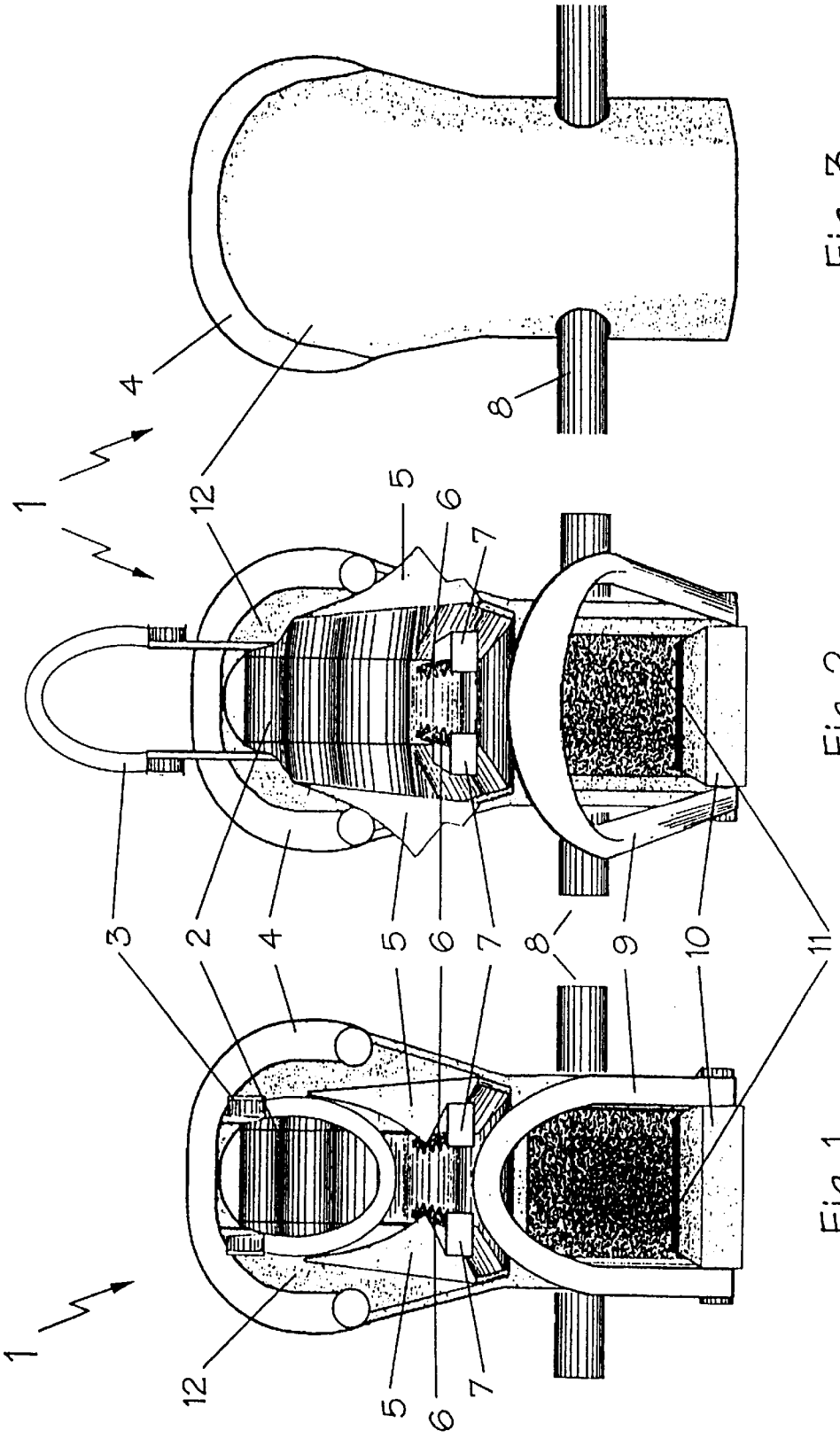

Fig. 3

Fig. 2

Fig. 1

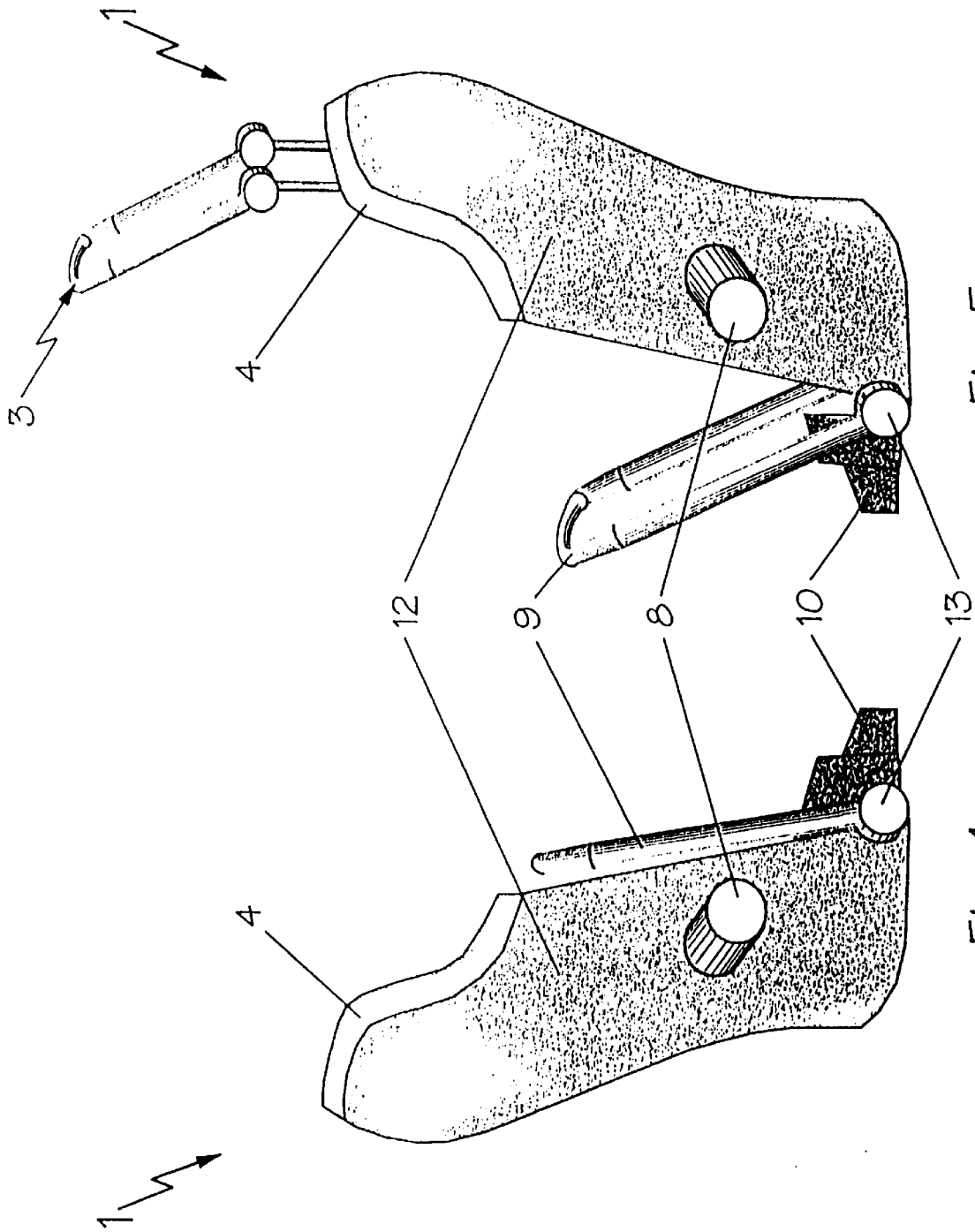

Fig. 5

Fig. 4

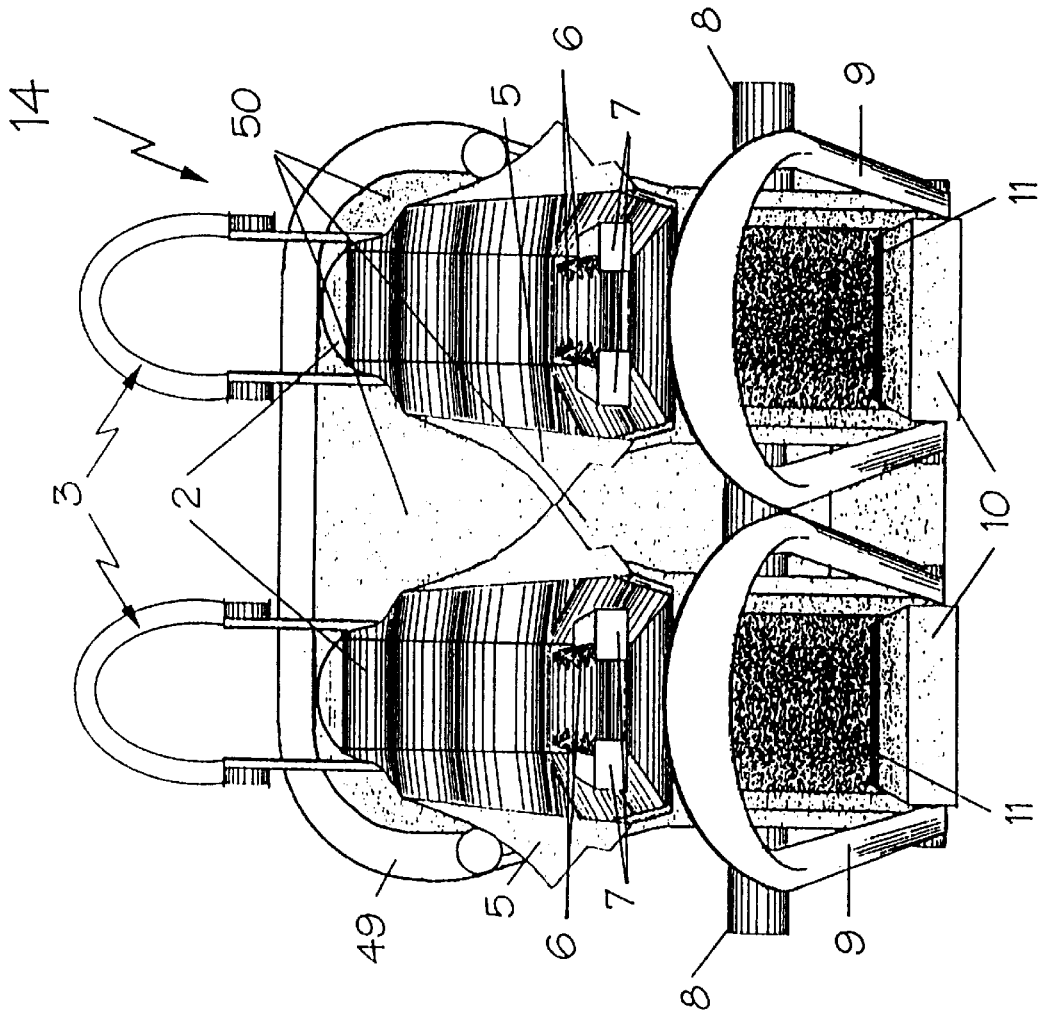

Fig. 6

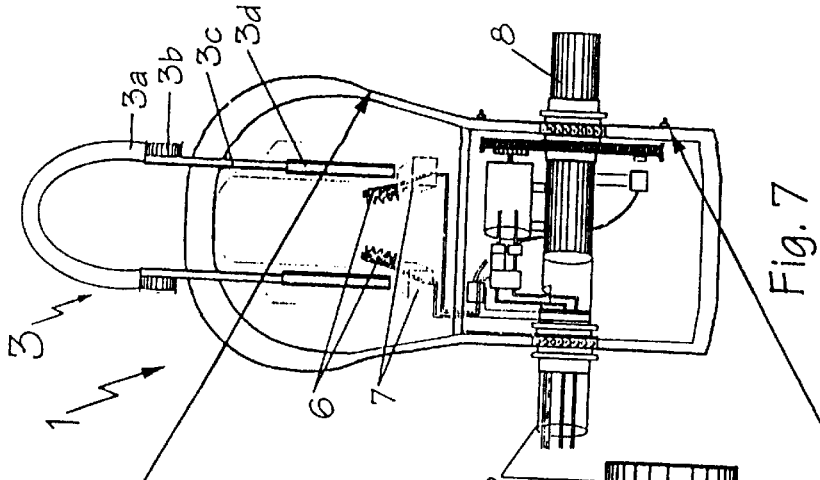
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Fig. 7

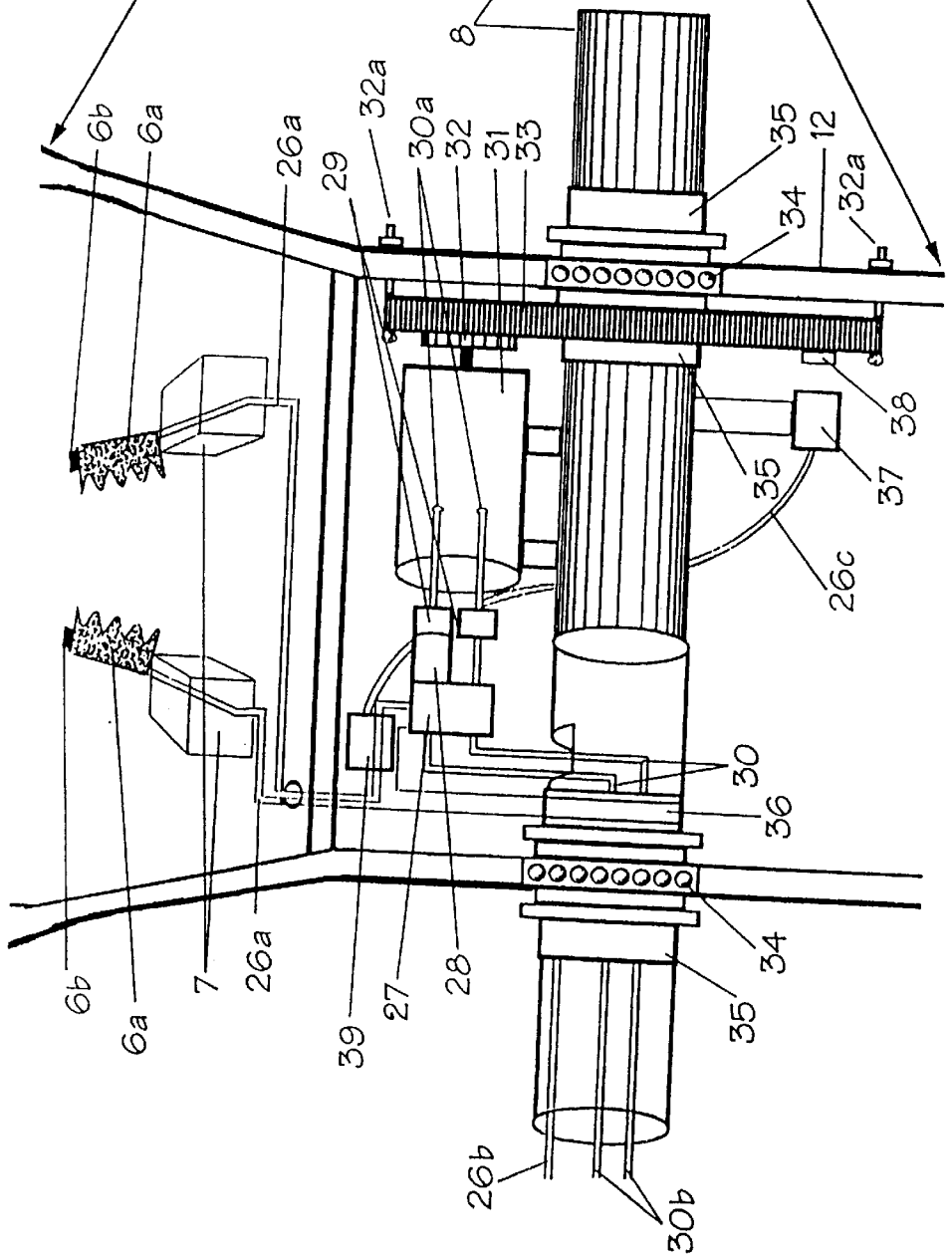
6b
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Fig. 8

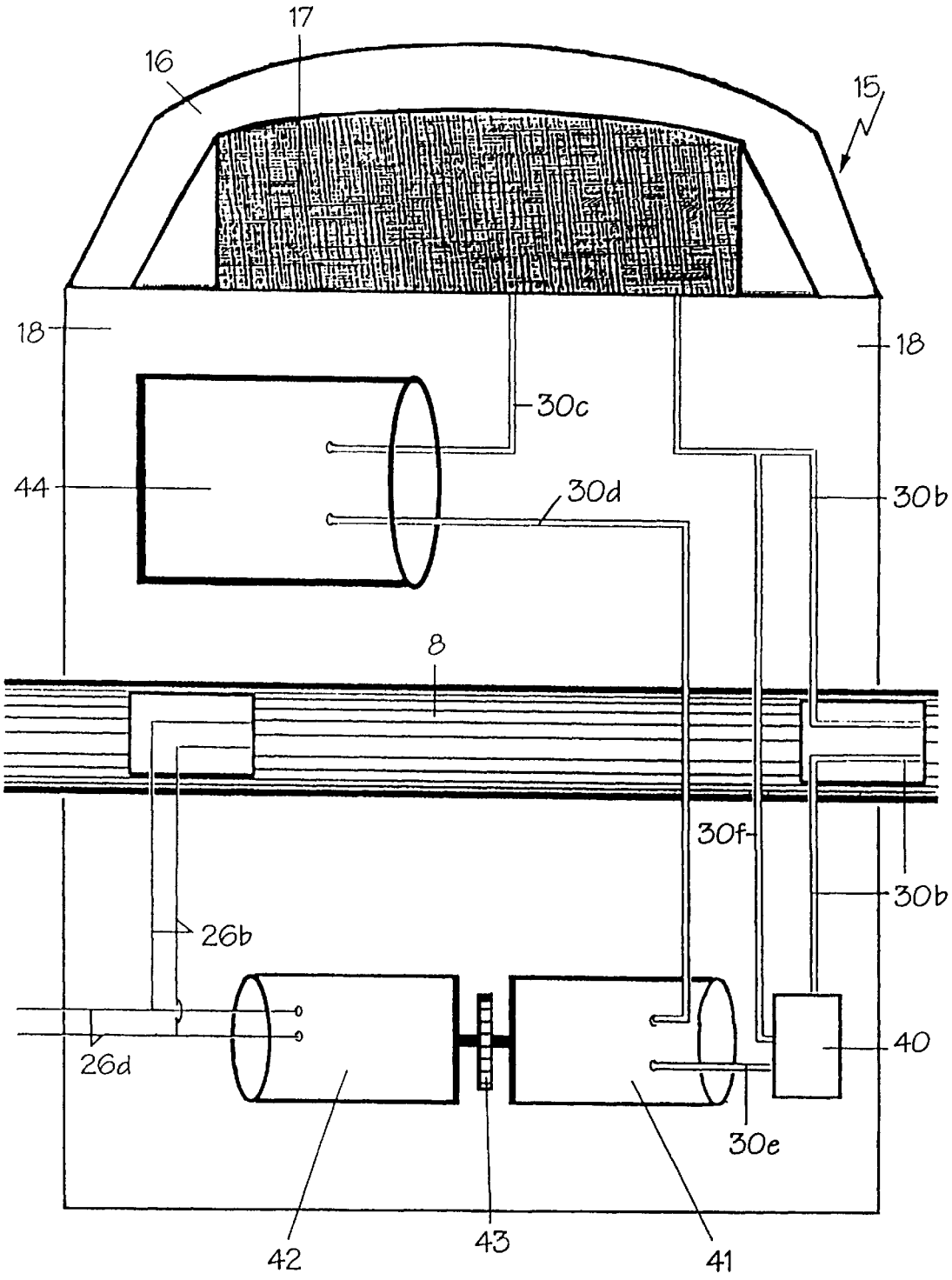

Fig. 9

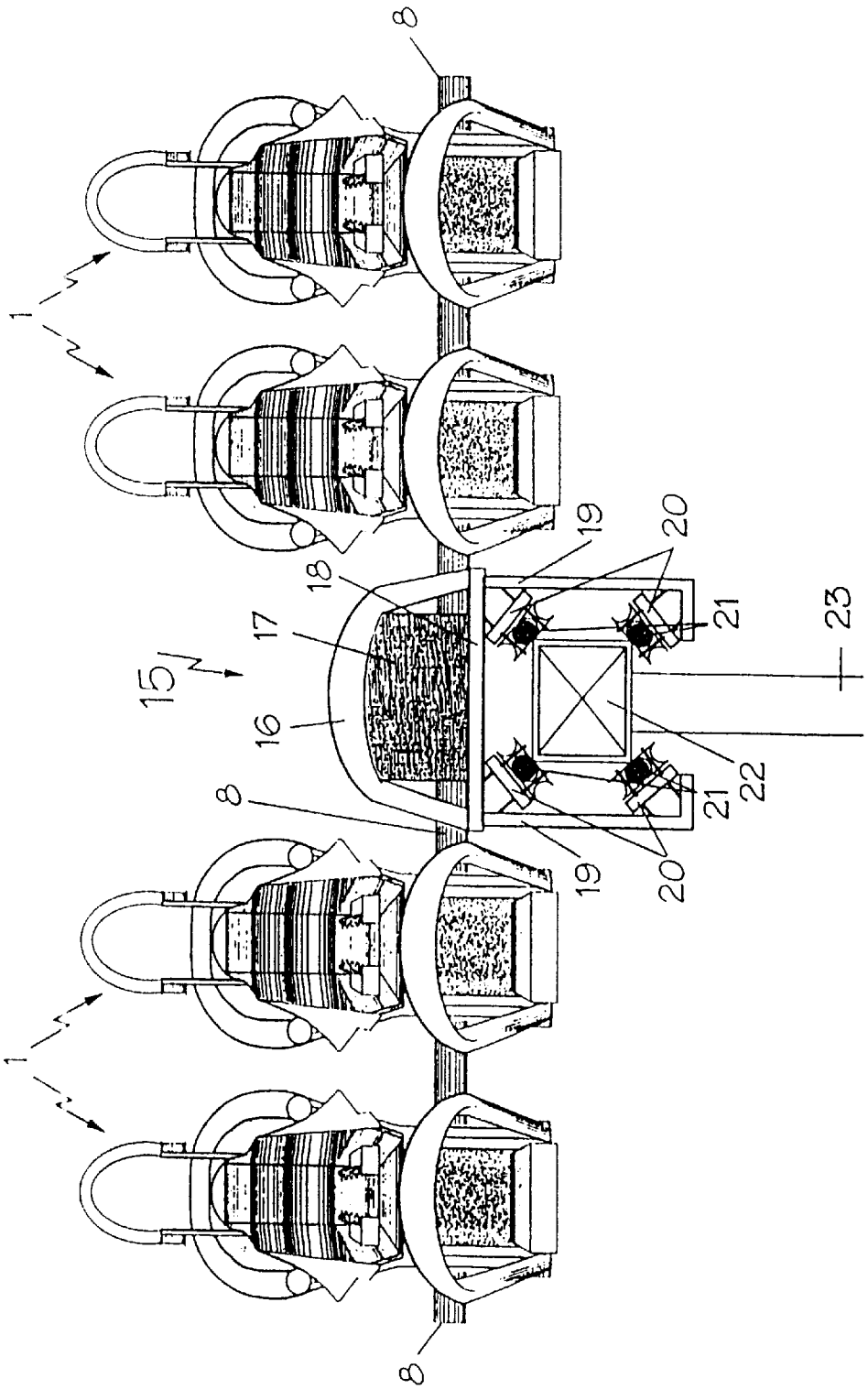

Fig. 10

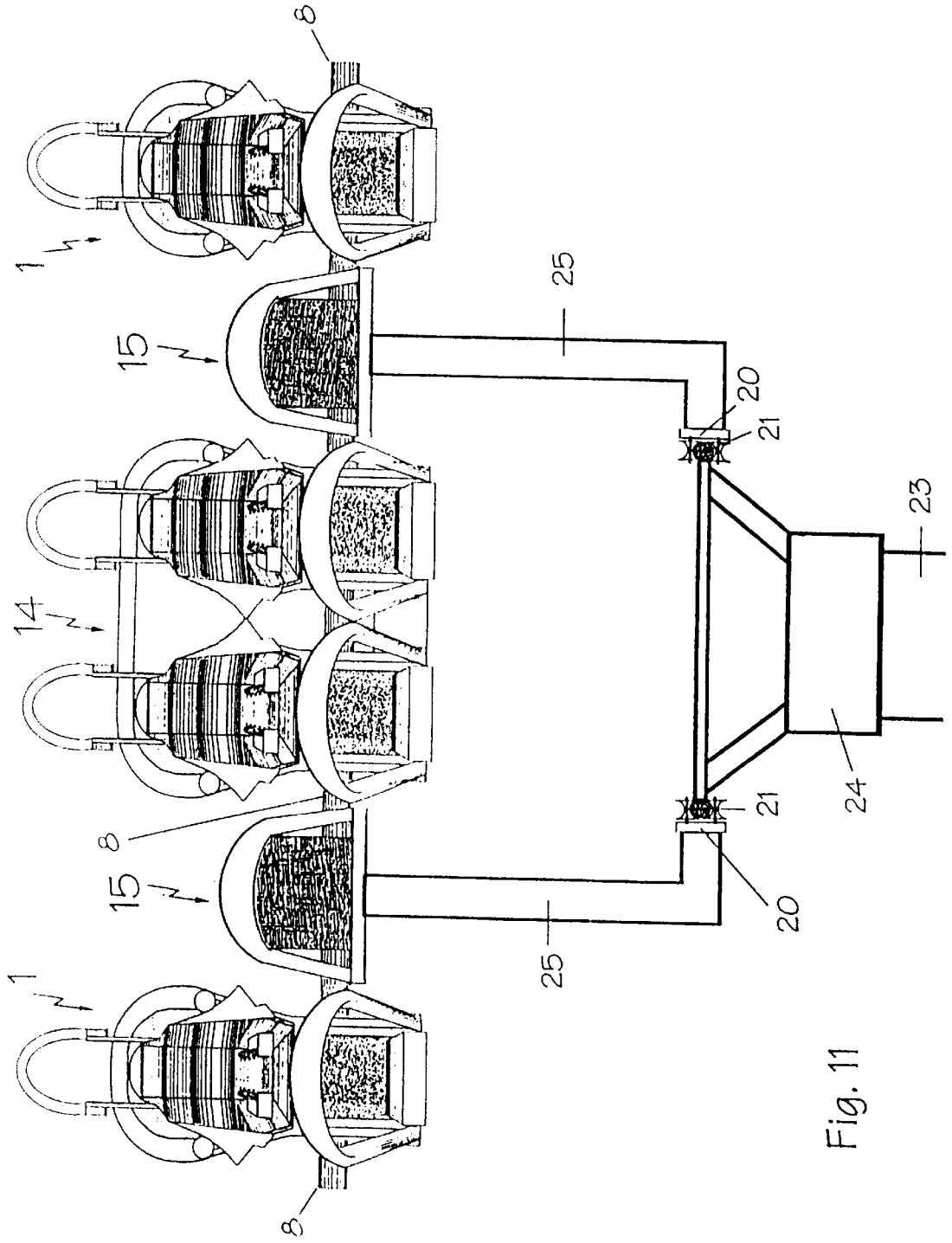

Fig. 11

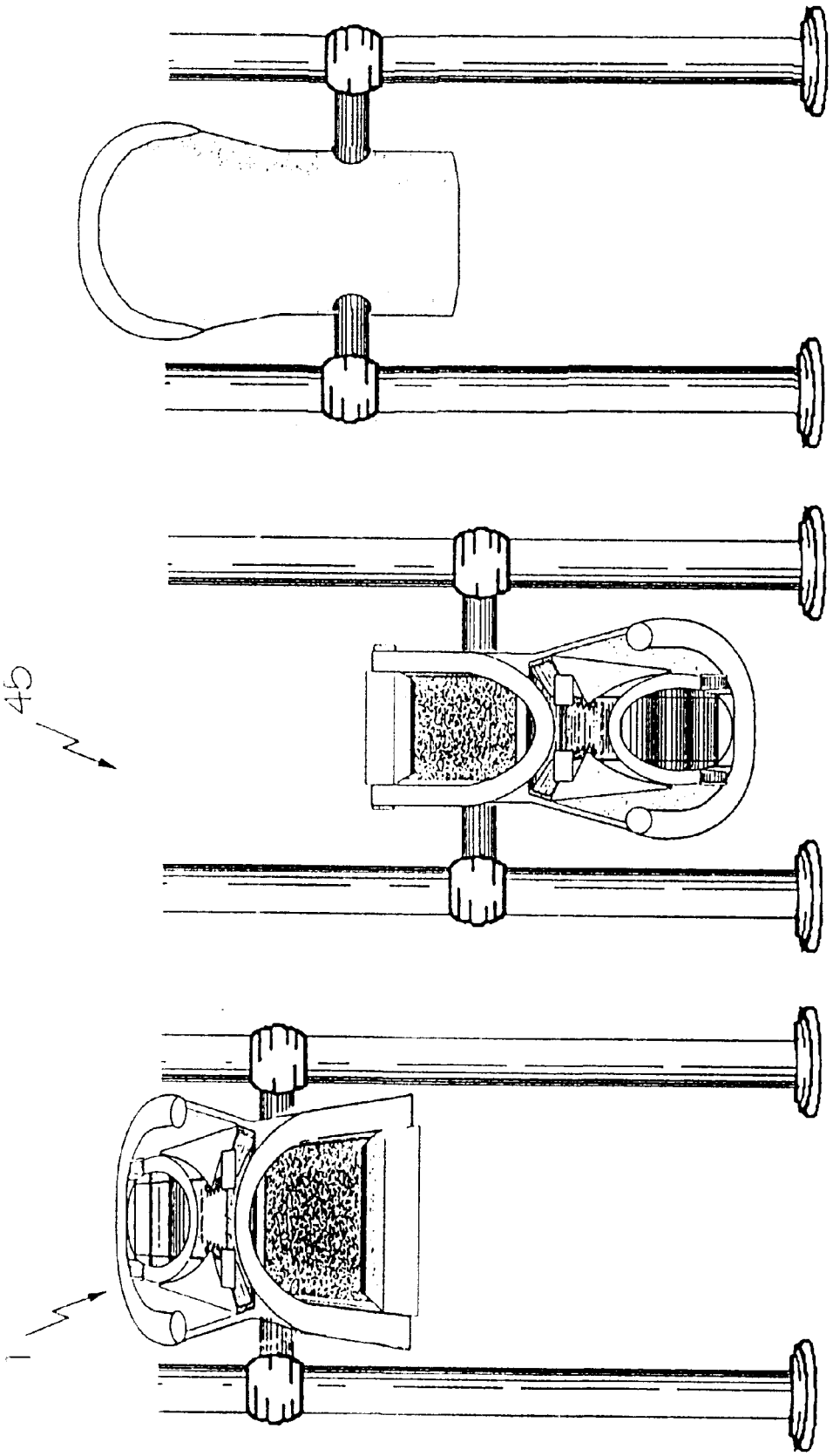

Fig. 12

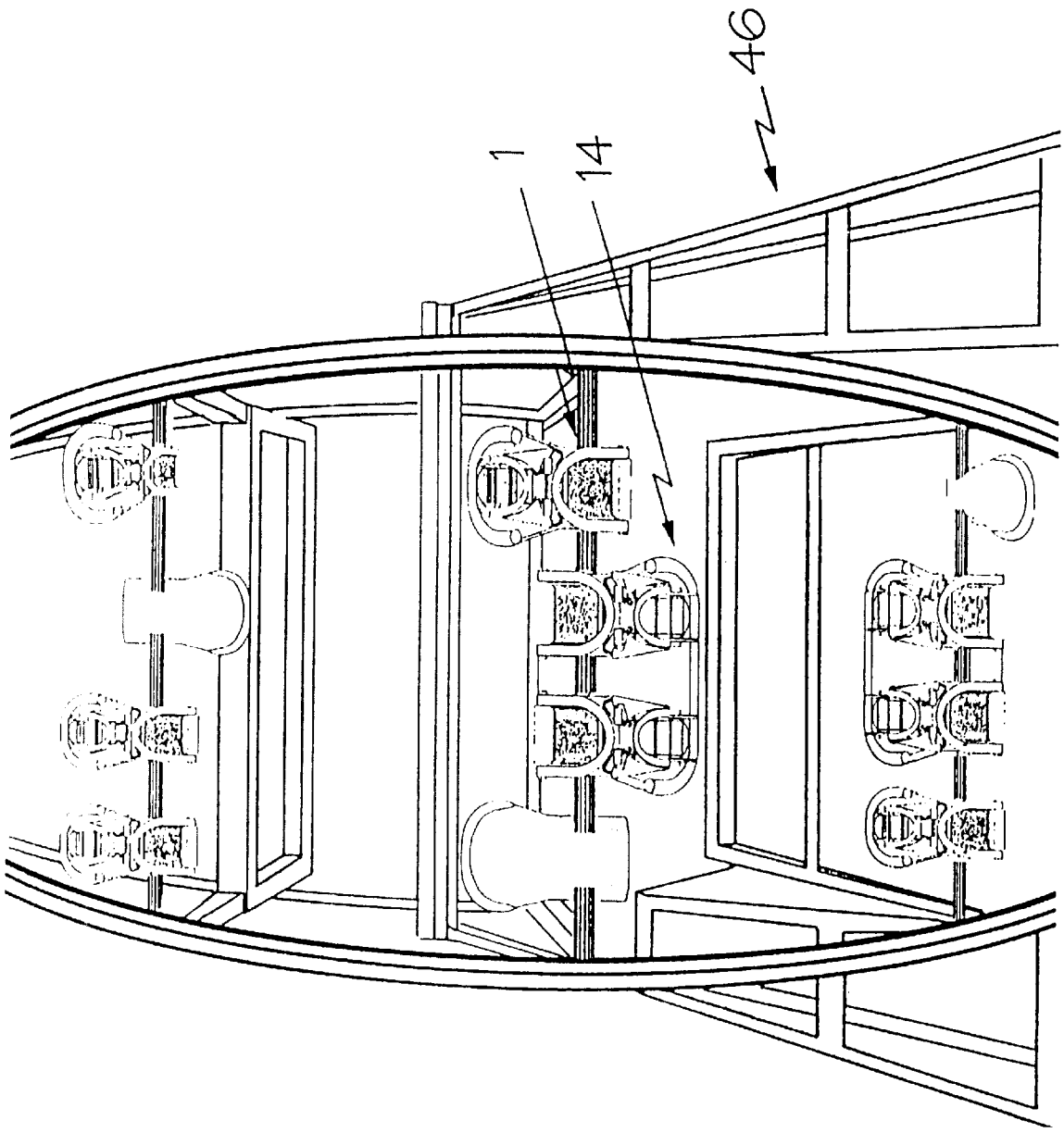

Fig. 13

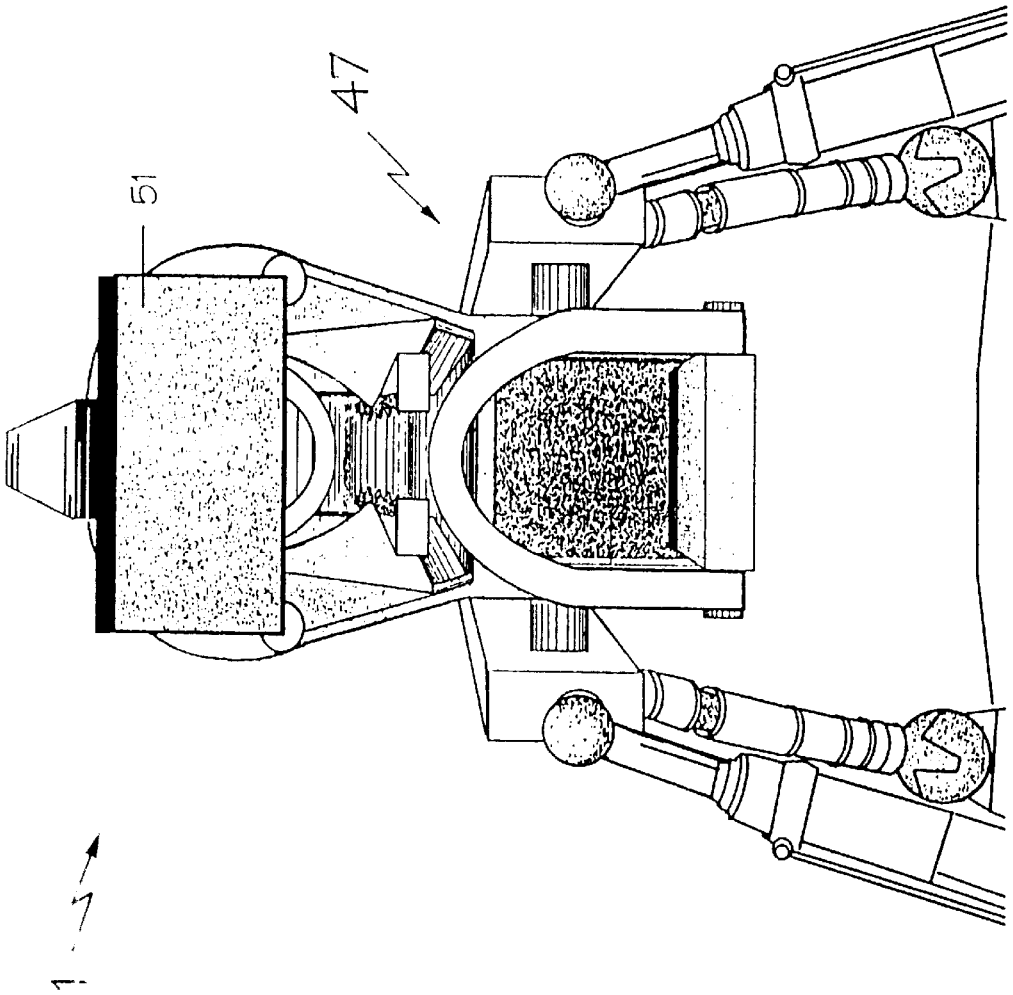

Fig. 14

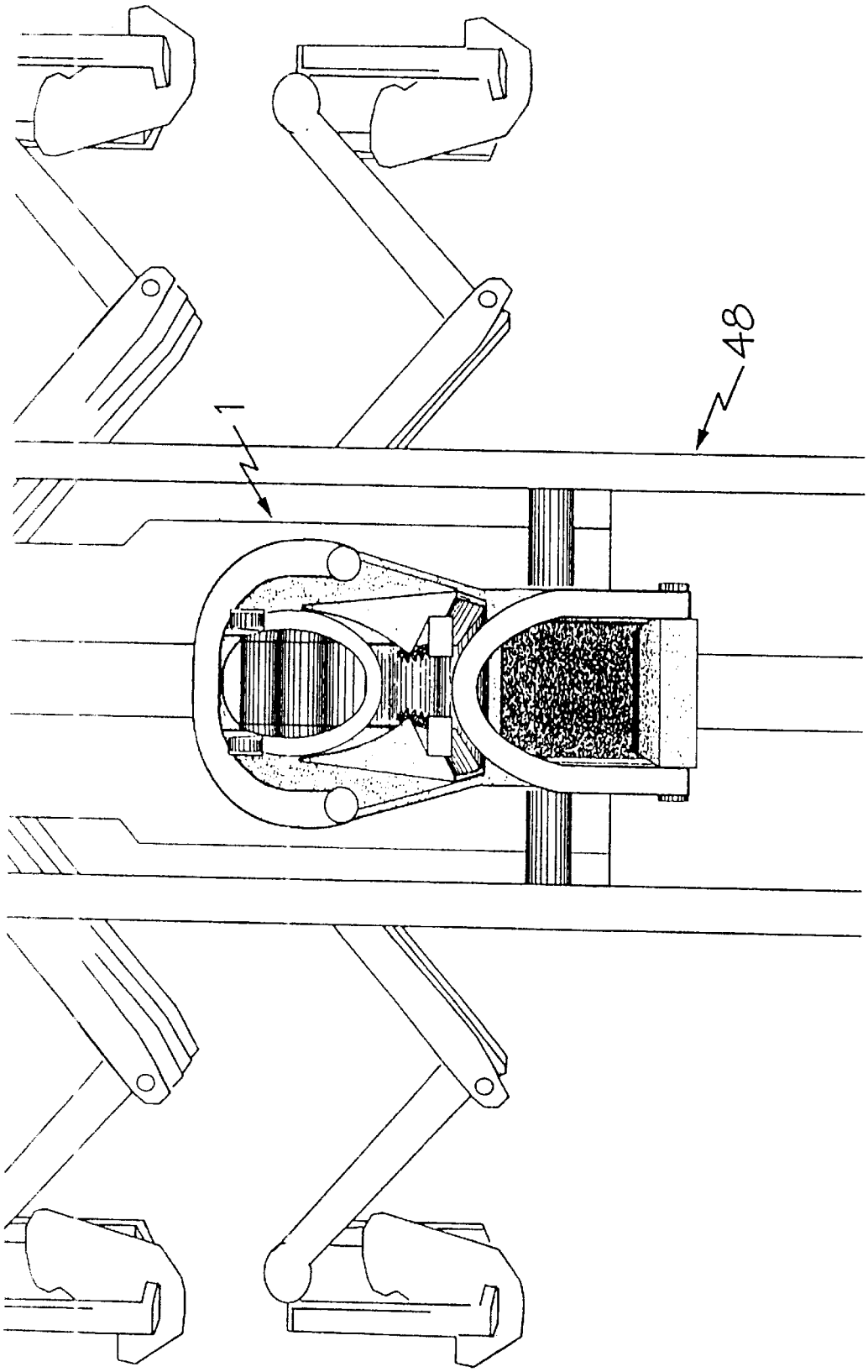

Fig. 15

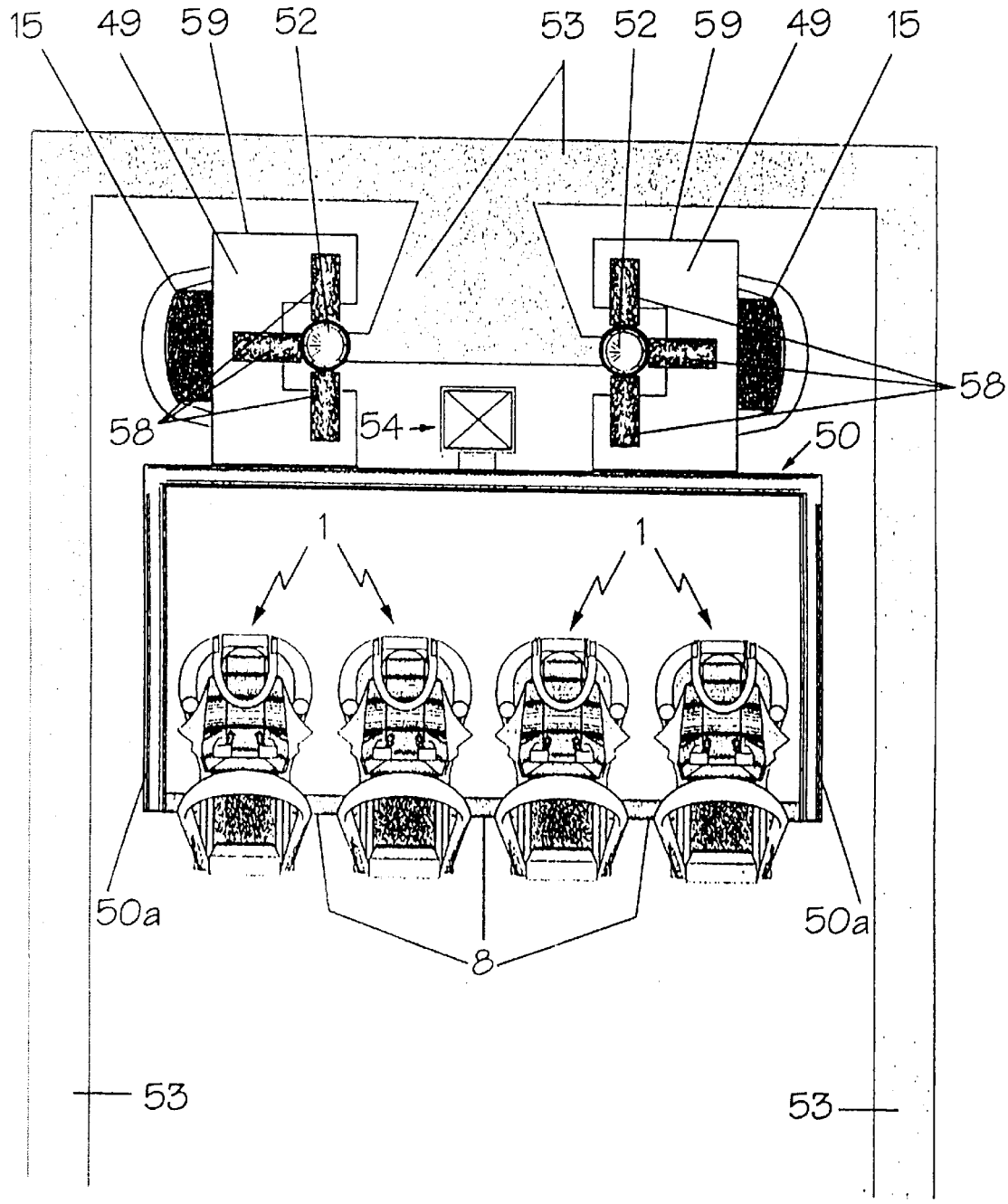

Fig. 16

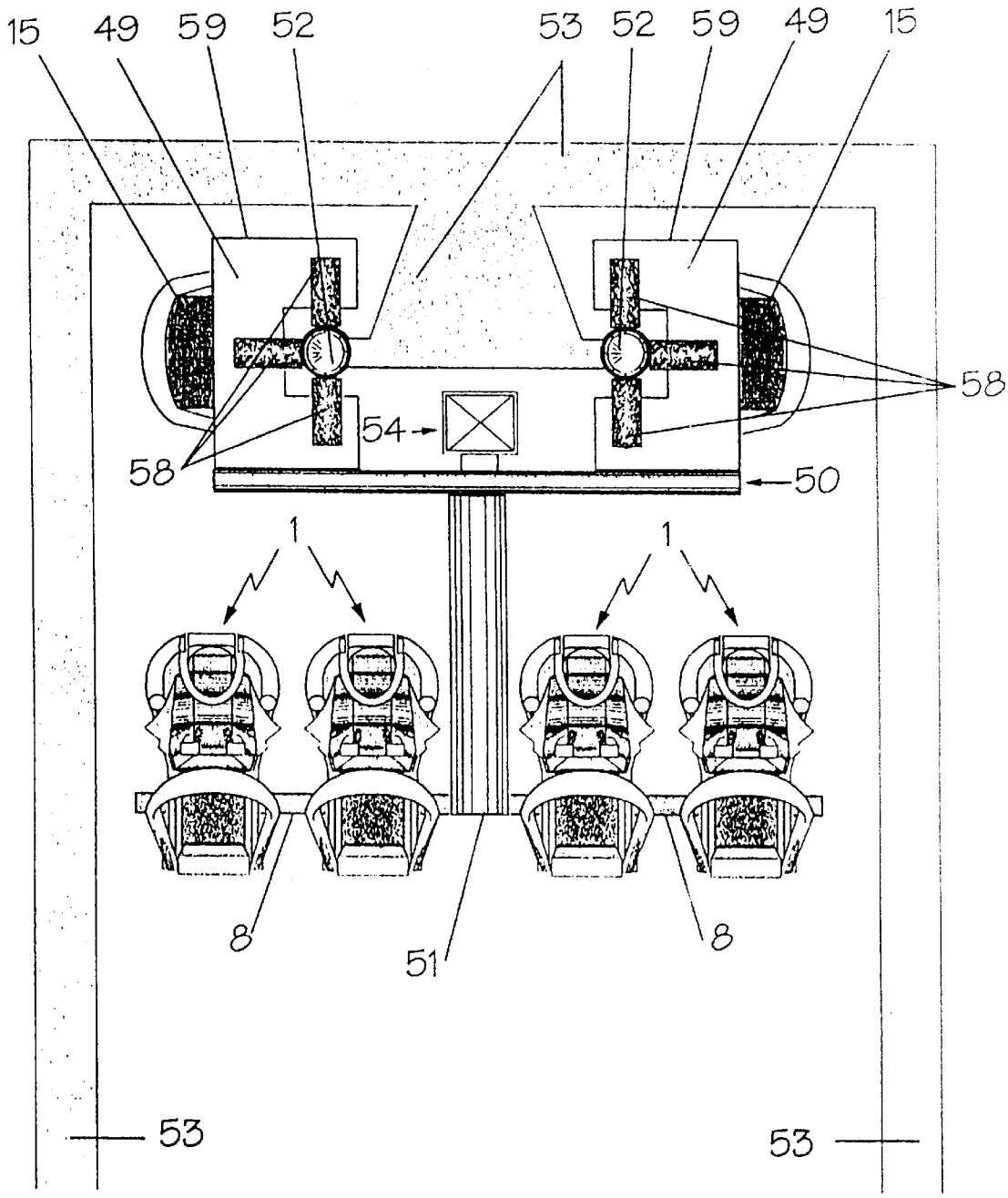

Fig. 17

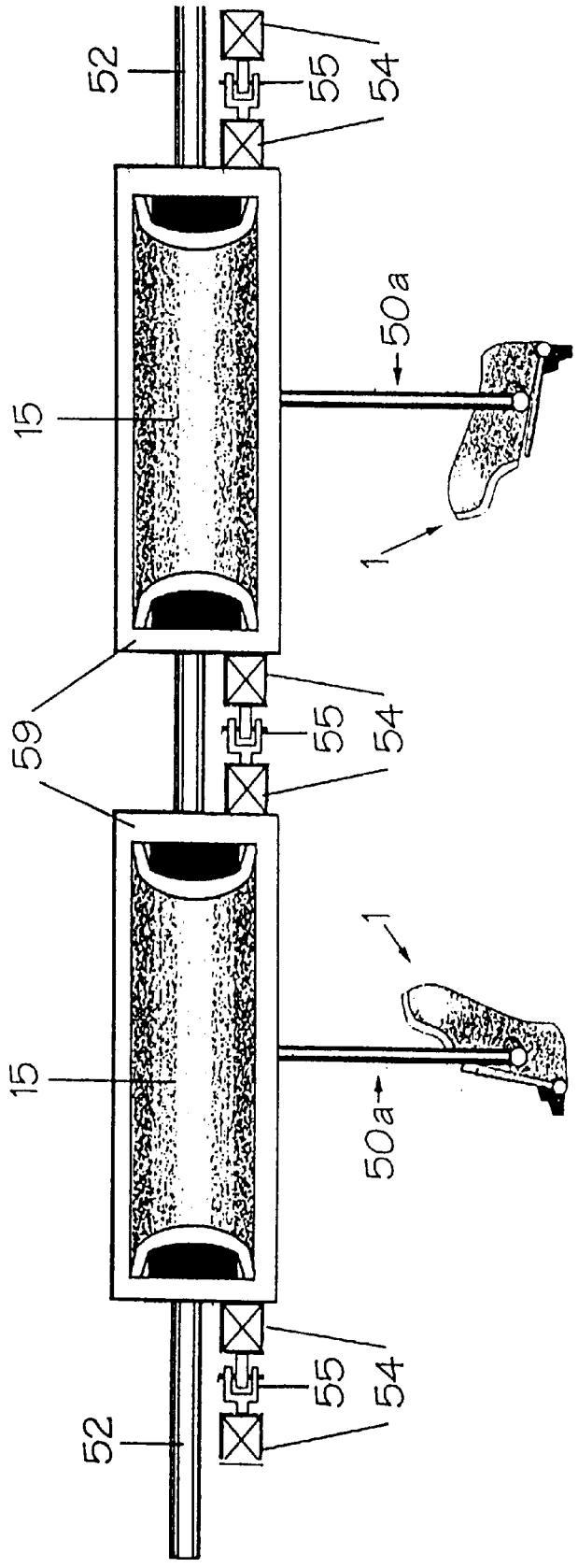

Fig.18

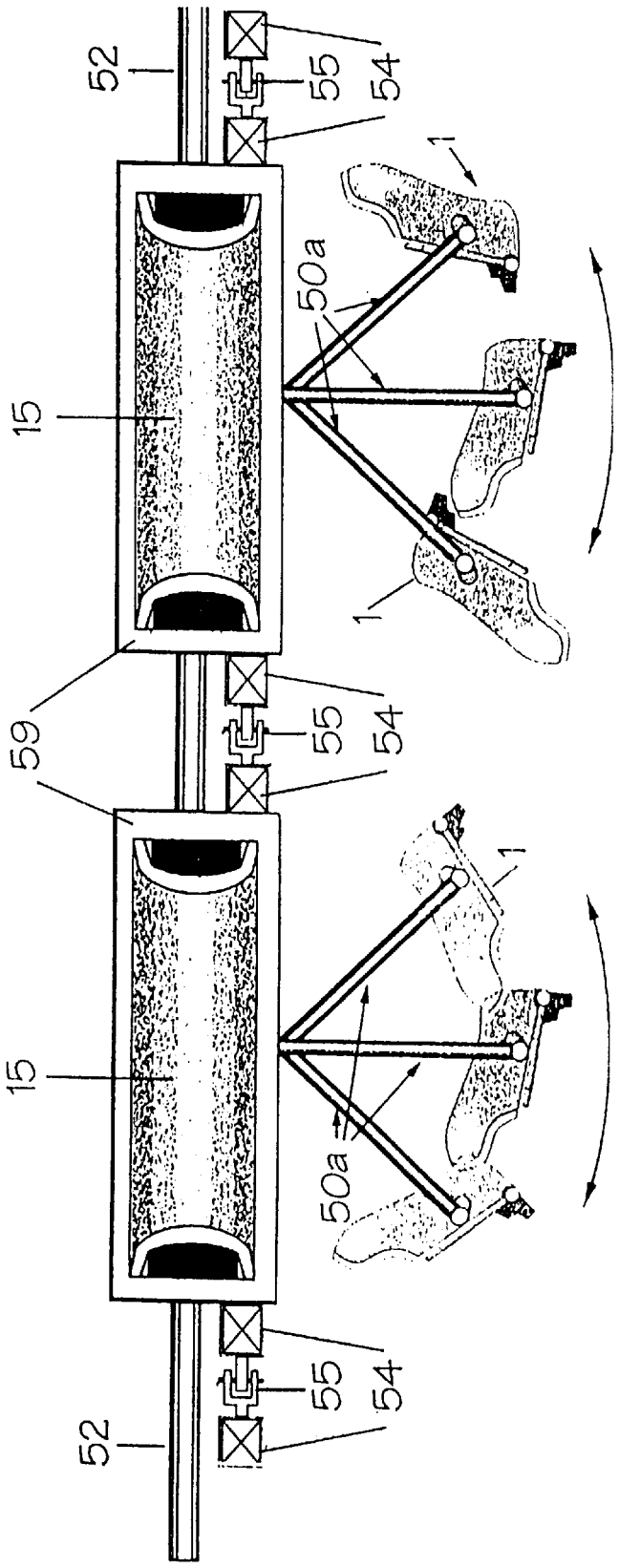

Fig 19

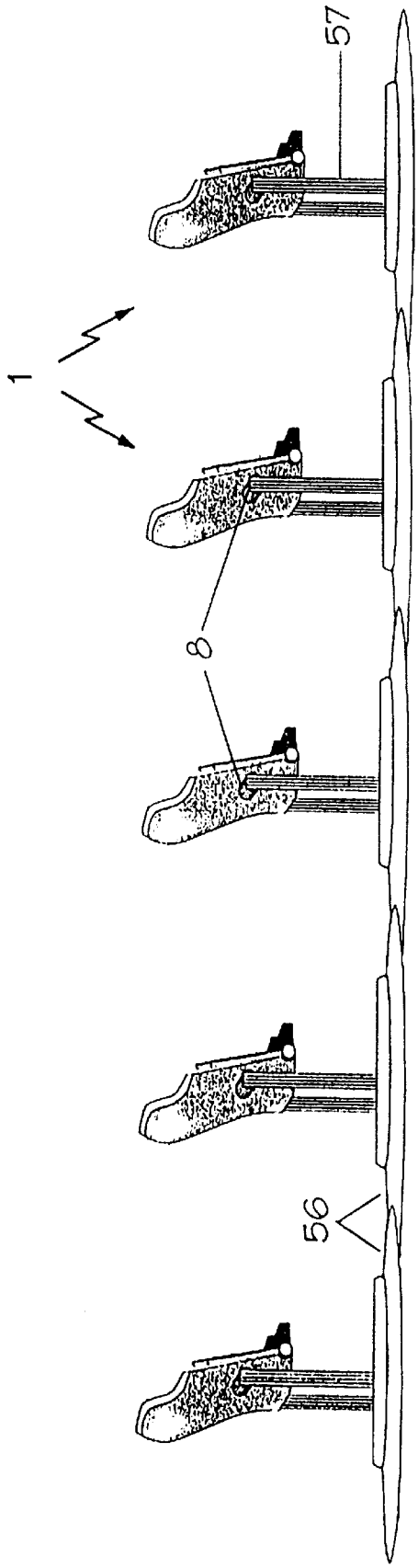

Fig. 20

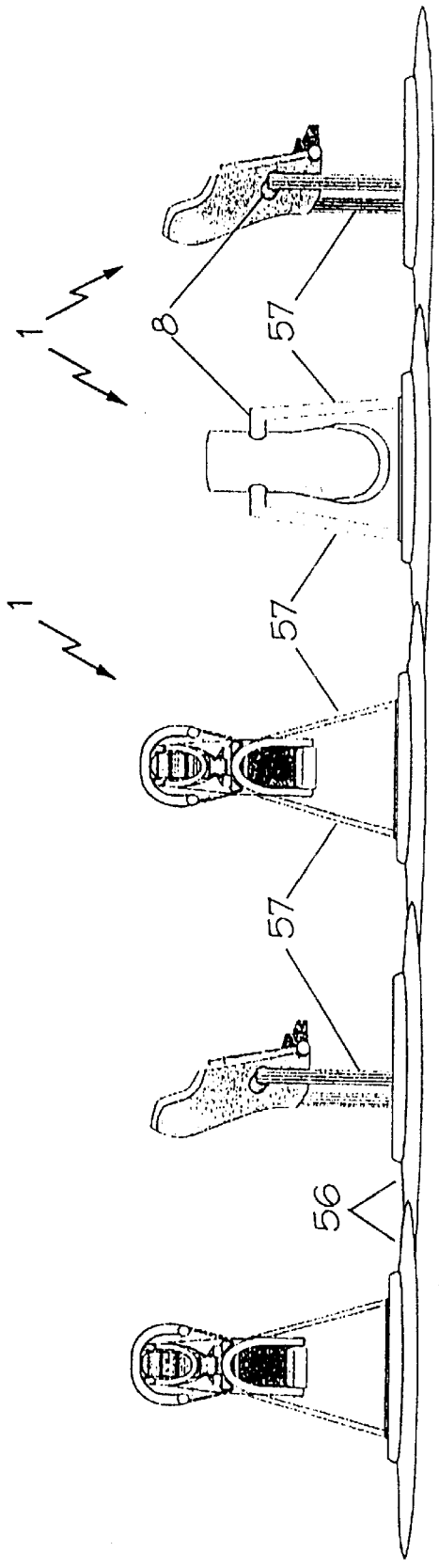

Fig. 21

MODULARIZED AMUSEMENT RIDE AND TRAINING SIMULATION DEVICE

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation application of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/219,297, filed on Dec. 21, 1998, entitled "Modular Amusement Ride and Training Simulation Device", and issued as U.S. Pat. No. 6,227,121, which is a continuation-in-part application of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/098,043, entitled "Modularized Amusement Ride and Training Simulation Device", filed Jun. 16, 1998, and issued a U.S. Pat. No. 6,098,549 which is a continuation-in-part application of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 08/742,465, entitled "Full Range of Motion Roller Coaster", filed Nov. 1, 1996, and issued as U.S. Pat. No. 5,791,254 on Aug. 11,1998, which claimed the benefit of the filing of Provisional Application Ser. No. 60/007,206, entitled "Amusement or Basic Transportation Device Using a Ball (Sphere) and Track or Tube", filed on Nov. 3, 1995, which are all incorporated herein by reference. U.S. patent application Ser. No. 08/742,465 also claimed the benefit of the filing of Provisional Application Ser. No. 60/050,980, entitled "Modularized Amusement Ride Device", filed on Jun. 20, 1997, which is also incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention (Technical Field)

The present invention relates to amusement apparatuses, such as carrousels, ferris wheels, centrifugal tumblers, virtual reality arcade and motion picture devices, roller coasters, and flight training and simulation systems.

2. Background Art

A problem with many amusement devices is that they are static in that the rider achieves substantially the same ride each time. Certain rides permit some degree of passenger control, such as the ubiquitous Tilt-A-Whirl® found at many fairs and amusement parks.

The present invention permits the creation of rides, both new and retrofitted, in which the passenger may spin in a pod in a manner controlled by the passenger and independent of other passengers. This is achieved by motor control of a brake system by the passenger of a pod which rotates about an axle at substantially the center of gravity of the pod.

Examples of rides which provide some rotation capabilities, with or without passenger control, are U.S. Pat. No. 4,545,574, to Sassak (spherical body with no axle); U.S. Pat. No. 4,501,434, to Dupuis (spherical body spinning about a bottom connection); U.S. Pat. No. 4,170,943, to Achrekar (pods swinging about an end thereof); U.S. Pat. No. 2,499,470, to Duncan (spherical body rotating about trunnions, like a cannon); U.S. Pat. No. 2,498,450, to Pewitt (rotation not about an axle and apparently not about a point substantially at the center of gravity); U.S. Pat. No. 2,135,230, to Courtney (swingable seats about a point near the top of the seat); and U.S. Pat. No. 142,605, to Yates (rotation about pivots with no passenger control).

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION (DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION)

The present invention is of an amusement device comprising: a seat for at least one passenger; a frame for supporting the seat; an axle attached to a carriage, the frame attached to and fully rotatable about the axle; a track allowing the carriage to travel; carriage contacts for disposing the carriage on the track; the frame being fully rotatable about the axle and at substantially the center of gravity of the frame and the seat; and a control device for selectively allowing and preventing free rotation of the frame about the axle. In the preferred embodiment, the seat comprises a restraint for restraining the passenger through motions in all three planes. The seat may be for multiple passengers. The carriage contacts comprise at least one set of wheels and the track comprises a rail disposed between the wheels of the at least one set of wheels, with the wheels preferably being concave-shape and the rail tubular or box shaped. The control device preferably comprises a brake system for braking rotation of the seating means about the axle, with the brake system being activated by passenger activation of the control device, such as by a combination of a passenger pull lever, a disk brake, and calipers which engage with the disk brake when the passenger pulls on the lever. The brake system is preferably activated by a motor, which may be programmable.

The present invention is also of an amusement device comprising: a seat for at least one passenger; a frame for supporting the seating means; an axle about which the frame is freely rotatable, the axle being attached to a carriage; and a brake system connected to at least one of the frame and carriage; wherein the frame is fully rotatable about the axle and at substantially a center of gravity of the frame and the seat. In the preferred embodiment, a motor is employed which, when engaged by a passenger, is capable of pushing the frame around the axle forward and backward and of temporarily locking the frame to the axle and when released returns the frame and the seating means to a relative upright and neutral position. The device may be attachable by the axle to amusement rides such as carrousels, Ferris wheels, centrifuge devices, and sets of height and swivel adjustable legs. A computer electronically attached to the device preferably tracks the flight path and spins of the device and outputs the flight path and spins of the device. The computer can also generate and transmit virtual reality images to the passenger. Control means are preferably provided for controlling the brake system, most preferably by passenger activation of the control means, which may comprise a passenger pull lever, a disk brake, and calipers which engage with the disk brake when the passenger pulls on the lever.

An objective of the present invention is to create a new amusement device and flight/space training and simulation device. The device presents the rider with the opportunity to control his/her own ride, to the extent that the rider can choose whether to spin the device forward or backward or whether to spin at all. This device liberates the rider from simply being strapped into a seat, which locks the rider's body into a single position relative to the carriage in which the rider sits. And, for the first time, riders who are seated in otherwise typical amusement rides, such as carrousels, Ferris wheels, zippers, centrifugal rides and the like, may spin at will, without the need for gravity assistance. This device also presents flight and space training and simulation devices the opportunity to create unusual attitude experiences for trainees.

The objective of the invention is attained in part by providing a modularized pod which is capable of containing one or more riders and which spins under power, and at the riders' control, about a an axis which is horizontal, relative to the rider's seated position. The modularized pod may be built to contain a single rider, or multiple riders, depending upon the owner's desire.

The objective of the invention is further attained by creating a device which is capable of working in conjunction

with many different devices, including, but not limited to roller coasters, carrousels, Ferris wheels, virtual reality units, centrifugal tumblers. The device may also be used in conjunction with flight and space training and simulation units. This versatile unit is therefore capable of being used for a variety of applications.

Other objects, advantages and novel features, and further scope of applicability of the present invention will be set forth in part in the detailed description to follow, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, and in part will become apparent to those skilled in the art upon examination of the following, or may be learned by practice of the invention. The objects and advantages of the invention may be realized and attained by means of the instrumentalities and combinations particularly pointed out in the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The accompanying drawings, which are incorporated into and form a part of the specification, illustrate several embodiments of the present invention and, together with the description, serve to explain the principles of the invention. The drawings are only for the purpose of illustrating a preferred embodiment of the invention and are not to be construed as limiting the invention. In the drawings:

FIG. **1** is a front view of a modularized pod which is configured for a single rider, the pod in a closed and locked position;

FIG. **2** is a front view of the pod as depicted in FIG. **1** in an open position, the pod being open and ready for a rider to enter and be seated;

FIG. **3** is a back view of the pod as depicted in FIG. **1** in a closed and locked position;

FIG. **4** is a side view of the pod as depicted in FIG. **1** in a closed and locked position;

FIG. **5** is a side view of the pod as depicted in FIG. **1** in an open position;

FIG. **6** is a front view of a modularized pod, which is configured for two riders; the pod being in an open position, ready for two riders to enter and be seated;

FIG. **7** is a cut-away view of the rear of the pod as depicted in FIG. **3** which reveals the working inner mechanisms of a pod;

FIG. **8** is an expanded, cut-away view of the working inner mechanisms of the pod as depicted in FIG. **7**;

FIG. **9** is detailed overhead view of the hydraulic pump box, which is connected to the pod by hydraulic and electrical lines, but which is placed in an area separate from the pod;

FIG. **10** is a front view of a set of four pods, which are configured for single riders, as depicted in FIG. **2**, and which are placed upon a roller coaster carriage, which travels upon an innovative monorail track;

FIG. **11** is a front view of a set of three pods, one of which is configured for two riders as depicted in FIG. **6**, and two of which are configured for single riders as depicted in FIG. **2**; the set of three pods is placed upon a roller coaster carriage which travels on a traditional two rail, steel roller coaster track;

FIG. **12** is a front view of a pod as depicted in FIG. **2** which is configured for a single rider and which is installed upon two vertically moving poles of a carrousel;

FIG. **13** is a front view of a pod as depicted in FIG. **2**, and a front view of a pod as depicted in FIG. **6** which is configured for two riders and which is installed upon an arm of a Ferris wheel;

FIG. **14** is a front view front of a pod as depicted in FIG. **2** which is configured for a single rider and which is installed upon the four legs of a virtual reality device which displays computer generated images on a screen placed in front of the rider's point of view;

FIG. **15** is a front view of a pod as depicted in FIG. **2** which is configured for a single rider and which is installed upon one leg and carriage of a large centrifugal spinning device;

FIG. **16** is a front view of a set of four **(4)** pods which are configured for single riders and which are installed under the carriage of a suspended looping roller coaster and which are attached to said carriage by a frame which has two outside arms;

FIG. **17** is a front view of a set of four **(4)** pods which are configured for single riders and which are installed under the carriage of a suspended looping roller coaster and which are attached to said carriage by a single central arm;

FIG. **18** is a side view of the suspended looping roller coaster depicted in FIG. **16**;

FIG. **19** is a side view of the suspended looping roller coaster device depicted in FIG. **16**, and which depicts the motion achievable by swinging the arms of the frame;

FIG. **20** is a side view of a set of pods which are suspended above, and attached to, a moving sidewalk that has the capacity to partially rotate individual segments of the sidewalk while the sidewalk is moving either forwards or backwards; and

FIG. **21** is similar to FIG. **20** with the addition that FIG. **21** shows some of the potential turning and spinning motion configurations that could be experienced by riders of such a moving sidewalk.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS (BEST MODES FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION)

The present invention is a modularized amusement ride and training simulation device comprising an axle about which spins a frame and a body attached to the frame which allows a pilot to enter and exit, a seat within the body for seating at least one pilot riding inside who activates and controls the spin of the seat, a means for pilot control of the spin of the frame, such as hand controls, a means for propelling the spin of the frame, either forwards or backwards, such as an electric or an hydraulic motor, a means for stopping and locking the frame at any attitude about the axle, a means for releasing the about the axis so that the frame returns to a relative upright and neutral position in the event the pilot releases the hand controls, a restraint or harness system which restrains the pilot on the seat and within the confines of the body, the sum of which comprises a modularized spinning pod device ("Pod"). For simple amusement purposes, the pilot may control the spin of the Pod about in one plane about an axle; for more complex amusement devices and for flight training and simulation, the pilot may control the Pod's attitude in one, two or three dimensions.

Alternatively, the Pod may be automatically activated to spin or come to rest by a motor, which is controlled by a programmed set of commands. The Pod may be arranged and placed with sets of other Pods for amusement rides, such as carrousels, Ferris wheels, roller coasters, centrifugal tumbling devices, or upon moving platforms, such as a

"moving sidewalk" or the bed or a truck. The Pod may be used in an arcade environment, placed in conjunction with a virtual reality computer generated simulation. Alternatively, the Pod may be used for flight simulation in three dimensions.

In a roller coaster configuration, the roller coaster may comprise a clear tube in which at least a portion of the track is disposed, surrounded by a fluid or a solid. The roller coaster may comprise at least two track systems, each of the track systems supporting an independent roller coaster ride.

A capsule, or pod, concept can be built as a unitized module. Such a pod can be utilized in amusement machines such as roller coasters and in other devices and for other purposes as well. For example, current day rides, such as a Ferris Wheel, a merry-go-round, a carousel, or other turning or spinning amusement rides can be retrofitted with pods in order to create new and amusing effects.

Further, a pod can be combined with three dimensional "virtual reality" computer generated images in order to produce a completely new amusement device, one in which the occupant of the pod can simultaneously experience physical tumbling and spinning while "riding" computer generated amusement rides or experiences. The computer generated graphics concerning the movements and tumbling effects of the pod may be used for personal computer game generation and use, such as building and riding computerized roller coasters and other amusement devices.

The pod may, for example, be created as follows: place a capsule capable of containing a human being on an axle which is placed under the occupant's seat. The capsule has a seat which is designed along the concept of the couches upon which astronauts sit. The occupant is held into the capsule by means of a five-point safety harness system, an inflatable bladder which encircles and positions the occupant's head, a foot rest, and two doors, or wings, which hinge along the outside of the occupant's shoulders down to the occupant's feet, which open outward to allow entry into the capsule. Upon entry into the capsule, and after fastening the five-point safety harness, the occupant closes the two wings over the occupant in order to restrain the occupant's arms and legs within the confines of the capsule. The bladder is then automatically inflated about the occupant's head in order to restrain the occupant's head within the capsule.

Once restrained within the capsule, the occupant has controls at the occupant's fingertips which allow the occupant to spontaneously control the tumbling motion of the capsule, either forward, backward or no tumbling at all. In addition, the tumbling effect could be controlled by the amusement ride operator, or by a computer, with either preprogrammed or spontaneous tumbling or spinning effects.

A capsule is driven about the axle upon which it rests by a system of motors, gears, electronic controls and possibly chains or pulleys in order to physically drive the capsule around the axle. The capsule is programmed to return to an upright and locked position for occupant entry and departure as well as whenever power is lost to the device.

A capsule, or pod, can be individually installed or may be combined with other pods, devices, or machines in order to create new amusement rides or to retrofit older rides. One completely new ride which may be created is as follows: Place a pod at the end of an axle, which is connected to spinning shaft, which is installed within a frame which rolls upon a track. This device allows the occupant of each pod to simultaneously tumble, spin, move forward or backward and to rise and fall with the motion of the device on the track.

Now referring to the figures, the present invention is of a modularized pod in which the rider(s) have control of the pod over a range of motor-driven motion in one or more axes. In the preferred embodiment, the range of motor-driven motion is in a single axis about an axle.

FIG. **1** shows the preferred pod assembly **1** of the pod as configured for a single rider. Pod **1** is comprised of a seat for a single rider **2**, a head, neck and chest restraint bar assembly **3**, a protective top cushion **4**, which is mounted on the pod body **12**, two retractable arm restraints **5**, two hand grips with respective spin control buttons **6**, two armrests **7**, an hollow axle **8** about which Pod **1** spins, a leg and lap restraint bar **9**, a protective foot restraint box **10**, and a back-of-leg kick restraint plate **11**, which connects to the pod body **12**.

Access to the pod is via the side or the front. Restraints **3** and **9** may be of any type known to the art, taking into account that the rider rotate the pod upside down, and the pod may be moved horizontally, vertically and laterally at times by the particular mechanism to which the pod is attached. Thus, restraints **3** and **9** may be rigid (e.g., bars) or flexible (e.g., straps) or any combination of the two. Likewise, seat **2** may be contoured, provided with padding, bracing, support and the like, in order to provide for rider comfort and safety. The terms "seat," "seating means" and "seating" as used throughout the specification and claims, are intended to mean the rider carrier for sitting or standing or being in a prone position, that is the position in which a rider rides an amusement device, such as a roller coaster, carousel, Ferris wheel, or the like and is limited to the common meaning of "seat" but rather that the rider is "seated" or disposed within the pod.

FIG. **2** illustrates Pod **1** where restraints **3**, **5**, and **9** are open and ready for a rider to enter the pod and to subsequently strap or bar herself into place. FIG. **3** illustrates the back view of Pod I where restraints **3**, **5**, and **9** are closed and are thus not visible to the viewer from this point of view.

FIG. **4** illustrates the side view of Pod I where restraints **3**, **5**, and **9** are closed. FIG. **5** illustrates the side view of an open Pod **1** as depicted in FIG. **2**. In FIG. **5**, pivot **13** acts to allow leg and lap restraint **9** to tilt outward, down and away from the pod in order to allow rider entrance into the pod. FIG. **5** also depicts head, neck and chest restraint bar assembly **3** in a raised and open position.

FIG. **6** illustrates the front view of a preferred pod assembly **14** of the pod as configured for two riders. Pod **14** is comprised of two seats **2**, for two riders, two head, neck and chest restraint bar assemblies **3**, dual protective top cushion **49**, which is mounted on the pod body **50**, four retractable arm restraints **5**, four hand grips with respective spin control buttons **6**, four armrests **7**, an hollow axle **8** about which Pod **14** spins, a two leg and lap restraint bars **9**, two protective foot restraint boxes **10**, and two back-of-leg kick restraint plates **12**, which connect to the dual pod body **50**.

FIG. **7** illustrates a cut-away view of the rear of the pod as depicted in FIG. **3** which reveals the working inner mechanism of Pod **1** as well as the working mechanism of head, neck and chest restraint bar assembly **3**. Head, neck and chest restraint collar **3***a* is connected to pivots **3***b*, which are connected to telescoping pistons **3***c*, which raise and lower within cylinders **3***d*. In order to raise restraint assembly **3**, collar **3***a* pivots upward on pivots **3***b*, while telescoping pistons **3***c* raise upward within cylinders **3***d* in order to allow a rider enter and sit in Pod **1**.

FIG. **8** is an expanded, cut-away view of the working inner mechanism of the pod as depicted in FIG. **7**. Spin

control button **6***b,* which is attached to handgrip **6***a,* transmits an electrical signal via electrical wires **26***a,* through hand control override switch box **39**, to a four-way hydraulic fluid direction control valve **27**. Valve **27** opens to allow hydraulic fluid to pass into hydraulic flow control valve **28**, through a hydraulic fluid accumulator **29**, through hydraulic fluid lines **30***a,* into hydraulic motor **31**. Hydraulic motor **31** drives gear **32**, which connects to, and drives, ring gear **33**. Ring gear **33** is connected to body **12** via a set of connecting bolts **32***a*. Body **12** rotates about hollow axle **8** via the pod/axle roller bearing assembly **34**. Roller bearing assembly **34** is held in place with pod/axle restraint collars **35**. Electrical current is obtained for spin control button **6***a* and for hand control override box **39** via brush contacts with slip ring **36**, which obtains electrical power via electrical wires **26***b,* which are positioned inside hollow axle **8**. Hydraulic fluid lines **30***b* carry hydraulic fluid to and from valve **27** from hydraulic pump box **15**, which is depicted in FIG. **9**. Electric positioning sensor **37** detects the position of gear ring positioning reflector **38**. Electric positioning sensor **37** transmits electrical signals via electrical wires **26***c* to hand control override box **39**.

FIG. **9** illustrates a detailed overhead view of hydraulic pump box assembly **15**, which is connected to a pod by hydraulic fluid lines **30***b,* electric lines **26***b* and by hollow axle **8**, which rests upon, and is attached to the floor pan **18** of hydraulic pump box assembly **15**. Hydraulic fluid travels to and from valve **27**, as depicted in FIG. **8**, via hydraulic fluid lines **30***b*. Hydraulic fluid lines **30***b* carry hydraulic fluid to and from hydraulic pressure relief valve **40** and hydraulic fluid radiator **17**. Hydraulic fluid line **30***c* carries hydraulic fluid from radiator **17**, which is situated between cowling **16** and floor pan **18** of hydraulic pump box **15**, to hydraulic fluid reservoir **44**. Hydraulic fluid line **30***d* carries hydraulic fluid from reservoir **44** to hydraulic pump **41**, which is driven by electric motor **42** via power transfer mechanism **43**. Hydraulic pump **41** pumps hydraulic fluid via hydraulic line **30***e* to pressure relief valve **40**. Hydraulic line **30***f* acts as a return line for hydraulic fluid to pressure relief valve **40** in the event hydraulic pressure builds in the hydraulic fluid system. Electric motor **42** is powered from an outside electrical power source via electrical lines **26***d,* which also transfer electrical power to switch box **27**, spin control buttons **6***a* and to hand control override box **39**, which is depicted in FIG. **8**.

The following occurs when a rider in a pod activates a spin control button **6***a*. Button **6***a* transmits a signal through hand control override box **39**, to four-way hydraulic fluid direction control valve **27**. Fluid direction control valve **27** releases hydraulic fluid into hydraulic flow control valve **28**. Flow control valve **28** releases hydraulic fluid into hydraulic fluid accumulator **29** and then via hydraulic fluid line **30***a* into hydraulic motor **31**. Hydraulic motor **31** then drives drive gear **32**, which in turn drives ring gear **33**, thereby turning pod body **12** about hollow axle **8**,as ring gear **33** is connected to pod body **12** with connecting bolts **32***a*. Hydraulic fluid is transferred from hydraulic pump box **15** depicted in FIG. **9** to the hydraulic spinning mechanism depicted in FIG. **8**.

In the event a rider releases both spin control buttons **6***a,* positioning sensor **37** senses whether ring gear positioning reflector **38** is immediately in front of positioning sensor **37**, which means that Pod **1** is in a relative upright position, and if not, then an electric signal is relayed to hand control override switch box **39** via electrical wires **26**. Hand control override switch box **39** then directs fluid direction control valve **27** to release hydraulic fluid into hydraulic flow control valve **28**. Flow control valve **28** releases hydraulic fluid into hydraulic fluid accumulator **29** and then via hydraulic fluid line **30***a* into hydraulic motor **31**. Hydraulic motor **31** then drives drive gear **32**, which in turn drives ring gear **33**, thereby turning pod body **12** about hollow axle **8** until pod body **12** is in a relative upright position, as indicated when ring gear positioning reflector **38** is immediately in front of positioning sensor **37**, and hand control override switch box **39** shuts off. An electric motor or other power drive device may be employed rather than the preferred hydraulic motor.

FIG. **10** illustrates a front view of four pods **1**, which are configured for single riders, as depicted in FIG. **2**, and which are placed upon a roller coaster carriage consisting of hydraulic pump box **15** and monorail carriage **19**, which travels upon monorail track structure **22**, which is supported by track support pylon **23**. Monorail carriage **19** is attached to roller assemblies **20**, which encapsulate and roll upon rails **21**, which are attached to monorail track structure **22**.

FIG. **11** is a front view of a set of three pods, one of, which is a Double Pod **14** as depicted in FIG. **6**, and two of which are Pod **1**, as depicted in FIG. **2**, and which are placed upon two rollercoaster carriages consisting of hydraulic pump box **15** and dual rail carriage support legs **25**, which travel upon traditional dual rail track structure **24**, which is supported by track support pylon **23**. Dual rail carriage support legs **25** are attached to roller assemblies **20**, which encapsulate and roll upon rails **21**, which are attached to traditional dual rail track structure **24**.

FIG. **12** is a front view of Pod **1**, as depicted in FIG. **2**, which is configured for a single rider, and which is installed upon a carousel **45**.

FIG. **13** is a front view front of Pod **1**, as depicted in FIG. **2**, and of Double Pod **14** pod as depicted in FIG. **6**, and which is installed upon an arm of a Ferris wheel **46**.

FIG. **14** is a front view front of Pod **1**, as depicted in FIG. **2**, which is configured for a single rider, and which is installed upon the four legs of a virtual reality device **47** which displays computer generated images on screen **51** placed in front of the rider's point of view.

FIG. **15** is a front view of Pod I as depicted in FIG. **2**, which is configured for a single rider, and which is installed upon one leg and carriage of a large centrifugal spinning device **48**.

FIG. **16** illustrates a set of four Pods **1** which are installed under carriage **59** of a suspended looping roller coaster, which is comprised of two bogies **49** and wheel sets **58**, and which are attached to carriage **59** by frame **50**, which has two outside arms **50***a*. Outside arms **50***a* are attached to axle **8**. Pods **1** rotate about axle **8**. Wheel sets **58** of the two bogies **49** ride upon rails **52**, which are supported and suspended by the roller coaster track support system **53**. Carriage **59** is attached to other carriages **59** by linkage arm **54**.

FIG. **17** is a variation of FIG. **16** and illustrates a set of four Pods **1** which are installed under carriage **59** of a suspended looping roller coaster, and which are attached to carriage **59** by frame **50**, which has one central inside arm **51**. Central inside arm **51** is attached to axle **8**. Pods I rotate about axle **8**. Wheel sets **58** of the two bogies **49** ride upon rails **52**, which are supported and suspended by the roller coaster track support system **53**. Carriage **59** is attached to other carriages **59** by linkage arm **54**.

FIG. **18** illustrates a side view of FIG. **16**, which is comprised of a set of Pods **1** installed below carriage **59** of a suspended looping roller coaster. Pods **1** are attached to carriage **59** by frame **50**, which has two outside arms **50***a*.

Carriage **59** rides upon rails **52**. Carriage **59** is attached to other carriages **59** by carriage linkage arms **54** and secured by carriage link pins **55**. Arms **50***a* may either be fixed to carriage **59** or may swing below carriage **59**.

FIG. **19** is similar to FIG. **18**, and shows frame **50** and arms **50***a* in a swinging motion, both forward and back, relative to the direction of travel of carriage **59**. FIG. **19** also shows Pods **1** spinning about axle **8** as arms **50***a* swing forward and backward.

FIG. **20** illustrates a side view of individual Pods **1** which are suspended by legs **57** above moving sidewalk **56**, which has the capacity to partially rotate individual sidewalk segments from side-to-side while sidewalk **56** moves forward.

FIG. **21** is similar to FIG. **20**, and shows the ability of individual segments of sidewalk **56** to rotate from side-to-side, as well as for individual Pods **1** to rotate about axle **8** as sidewalk **56** moves forward.

Although the invention has been described in detail with particular reference to these preferred embodiments, other embodiments can achieve the same results. Variations and modifications of the present invention will be obvious to those skilled in the art and it is intended to cover in the appended claims all such modifications and equivalents. The entire disclosures of all references, applications, patents, and publications cited above, and of the corresponding application(s), are hereby incorporated by reference.

What is claimed is:

1. A roller coaster ride comprising:

a carriage;

a track along which said carriage travels;

a seat mount attached to said carriage and extending on either side of said carriage; and

four seats attached to said seat mount and which spin about said seat mount, two on either side of said carriage, each seat comprising a passenger restraint; and

wherein said four seats are configured to rotate 360 degrees about a common axis of said seat mount.

2. The ride of claim **1** wherein said carriage comprises wheels.

3. The ride of claim **1** comprising a plurality of cariages and sets of four seats.

4. The ride of claim **1** wherein said seats rotate and stop rotating automatically according to a predetermined routine during travel of said carriage along said track.

5. The ride of claim **1** wherein said seats spin freely during travel of said carriage along said track.

6. The ride of claim **1** wherein said axis is perpendicular to a direction of travel of said carriage.

7. The ride of claim **1** wherein said seat mount comprises an axle.

8. A roller coaster ride comprising:

a carriage;

a track along which said carriage travels;

a seat mount attached to said carriage and extending on either side of said carriage; and

a plurality of seats attached to said seat mount and which spin about said seat mount, each seat comprising a passenger restraint; and

wherein said plurality of seats are configured to rotate 360 degrees about a common axis of said seat mount.

9. The ride of claim **8** wherein said plurality of seats numbers four.

10. The ride of claim **9** wherein said plurality of seats comprises one or more seats on either side of said carriage.

11. The ride of claim **9** wherein said plurality of seats comprises one or more seats within said carriage and one or more seats on either side of said carriage.

12. The ride of claim **8** comprising a plurality of carriages and sets of seats.

13. The ride of claim **8** wherein said seats rotate and stop rotating automatically according to a predetermined routine during travel of said carriage along said track.

14. The ride of claim **8** wherein said seats spin freely during travel of said carriage along said track.

15. The ride of claim **8** wherein said axis is perpendicular to a direction of travel of said carriage.

16. The ride of claim **8** wherein said carriage comprises wheels.

17. The ride of claim **8** wherein said seat mount comprises an axle.

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