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3:06-CV-01719 GAINES MANUFACTURING V. HILLMAN GROUP INC

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\*CMP.\*

Case 3:06-cv-01719-IEG-NLS Document 1 Filed 08/23/06 Page 2 of 24

Plaintiff Gaines Manufacturing, Inc. ("GAINES") alleges as follows:

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# THE PARTIES

- 1. GAINES is a California corporation with its principal place of business at 12200 Kirkham Road, Poway, California. GAINES is engaged in the business of designing, manufacturing and selling residential mailboxes and address plaques.
- 2. GAINES is informed and believes that defendant The Hillman Group, Inc. ("DEFENDANT") is a Delaware corporation, with its principal place of business at 10590 Hamilton Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio. DEFENDANT is engage in the business of making, offering for sale and selling residential address plaques.

# JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 3. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. sections 1331 and 1338(a), this Court has original and exclusive jurisdiction in this matter over each of the following claims:
  - Patent Infringement, 35 U.S.C. section 271. a.
- 4. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. sections 1331, 1338(b) and 1367, this Court has original or supplemental jurisdiction in this matter over each of the remaining claims.
- 5. GAINES is informed and believes that DEFENDANT is subject to personal jurisdiction in this judicial district in that DEFENDANT is marketing the products complained of herein to distributors within this judicial district.
  - 6. Venue properly lies in this district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. section 1391(b)(2).

### **GENERAL ALLEGATIONS**

- 7. GAINES has been engaged in the business of designing, manufacturing and selling residential mailboxes and address plaques for many years. GAINES' products have a reputation in the industry for being of high quality.
- 8. GAINES is the owner of United States Patent No. D508,539, which issued August 16, 2005. The '539 Patent covers an ornamental design for an address display which may be used for residential or commercial properties ("Softcurve® Address Display"). A true and correct copy of the '539 Patent is attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by this reference.

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- 9. GAINES is the owner of United States Patent No. D476,692, which issued July 1, 2003. The '692 Patent also covers an ornamental design for an address display ("Roundtangle® Address Display"). A true and correct copy of the '692 Patent is attached hereto as Exhibit B and incorporated herein by this reference.
- 10. GAINES sells products throughout the United States and Canada including in large consumer chains, such as The Home Depot, Menards and Lowes. GAINES sells its own version of the Softcurve® Address Display and the Roundtangle® Address Display. A copy of a digital photograph which depicts GAINES Softcurve® address plaque are attached as Exhibit C and incorporated herein by this reference. GAINES' products are marked with GAINES' applicable United States patent numbers.
  - 11. DEFENDANT and GAINES are competitors.
- 12. In the Fall of 2005, GAINES met with the buyer for The Home Depot regarding adding GAINES' address displays, including its Softcurve® address plaque, to the GAINES products already carried by The Home Depot. GAINES advised The Home Depot buyer that its designs were protected by United States patents. After a very positive meeting, The Home Depot rejected GAINES' Softcurve® address plaque.
- 13. Shortly after GAINES meeting with The Home Depot, The Home Depot started carrying DEFENDANT's address plaque product which is the same or substantially similar to the designs of the '539 Patent and the '692 Patent and nearly identical to GAINES' Softcurve® address plaque product. DEFENDANT's infringing address plaque is sold in the United States at The Home Depot under the name Perfect Home. A copy of a digital photograph which depicts DEFENDANT's Perfect Home address plaque are attached as Exhibit D and incorporated by this reference.
- 14. GAINES is informed and believes that DEFENDANT, alone or in conjunction with persons working for The Home Depot, intentionally copied GAINES' Softcurve® address plaque design.

- 15. GAINES is informed and believes that DEFENDANT contracts for the manufacture of some or all of its products from vendors located outside the United States and then imports such products into the United States for sale.
- 16. GAINES' and DEFENDANT's address plaques are sold without numbers so that the consumer can customize the plaque for his/her own address. Consequently, in addition to losing sales of address plaques due to DEFENDANT's infringing product, GAINES has lost sales of the numbers sold to complete the address displays.
- 17. GAINES is informed and believes that it has lost sales at The Home Depot and in other retail locations as a result of DEFENDANT's infringing address plaques.
  - 18. DEFENDANT's address plaques are not licensed by GAINES.

# First Cause of Action

# Patent Infringement (35 U.S.C. Section 271)

- 19. GAINES refers to and incorporates herein by reference paragraphs 1 through 18 of this Complaint as though set forth in full herein.
- 20. DEFENDÁNT's manufacture, offers to sell and/or sales of its Perfect Home address plaques, and any substantially similar plaques, in the United States directly infringe, literally or under the doctrine of equivalents, GAINES' '539 Patent and '692 Patent in violation of 35 U.S.C. § 271(a).
- 21. GAINES is informed and believes that DEFENDANT has contributed and is contributing to the infringement, literally or under the doctrine of equivalents, of GAINES' '539 Patent and '692 Patent in violation of 35 U.S.C. § 271(b).
- 22. GAINES is informed and believes that DEFENDANT has induced and is inducing the infringement, literally or under the doctrine of equivalents, of GAINES' '539 Patent and '692 Patent in violation of 35 U.S.C. § 271(c).
- 23. GAINES has no adequate remedy at law and is, therefore, entitled to a preliminary and permanent injunction prohibiting further infringement by DEFENDANT.
- 24. DEFENDANT's infringing activities have been with actual or constructive knowledge of GAINES' patents and competing products and are willful and deliberate.

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GAINES is entitled to recover treble damages pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 284, reasonable attorneys' fees and expenses of litigation pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 285, and prejudgment interest pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 284.

25. As a result of DEFENDANT's infringing activities, GAINES has been damaged in an amount to be proved at trial, but believed to be in excess of \$2,800,000. At a minimum, GAINES is entitled to recover a reasonable royalty for the acts of infringement by DEFENDANT.

## **Second Cause of Action**

# Unfair Competition/Unfair Business Practices

# Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code Section 17200

- 26. GAINES refers to and incorporates herein by reference paragraphs 1 through 25 of this Complaint as though set forth in full herein.
- 27. DEFENDANT has attempted to and has obtained economic benefit from copying GAINES' patented address plaque designs.
- 28. DEFENDANT's unauthorized sale of imitations of GAINES' Softcurve® address plaque which infringe GAINES' patents constitute unfair and fraudulent business practices within the meaning of California's Unfair Trade Practices Act, California Business & Professions Code sections 17200 et. seq.
- 29. DEFENDANT's unfair and deceptive business practices have damaged GAINES in an amount to be proved at trial, but believed to be in excess of \$2,800,000.
- 30. DEFENDANT's unfair and deceptive business practices have and will continue to injure GAINES, its authorized dealers and the public unless and until they are enjoined by this Court.

## **Third Cause of Action**

# Common Law Unfair Competition

31. GAINES refers to and incorporates herein by reference paragraphs 1 through 30 of this Complaint as though set forth in full herein.

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- 32. DEFENDANT's acts as alleged herein constitute unfair competition under common law principals.
- 33. DEFENDANT's unfair and deceptive business practices have damaged GAINES in an amount to be proved at trial, but believed to be in excess of \$2,800,000.
- 34. GAINES is informed and believes that each of the acts and omissions by DEFENDANT complained of were willful or in reckless disregard of GAINES' rights, thereby supporting the award of exemplary damages.

# Fourth Cause of Action

# Intentional Interference with Prospective Economic Advantage

- 35. GAINES refers to and incorporates herein by reference paragraphs 1 through 34 of this Complaint as though set forth in full herein.
- 36. GAINES is informed and believes that DEFENDANT knew, or by the exercise of reasonable care should have known, that GAINES sells its products throughout the United States in The Home Depot and that GAINES offered its Softcurve® address plaques for sale to The Home Depot in 2005.
- 37. GAINES is informed and believes that DEFENDANT intentionally copied GAINES' patented designs in order to take sales to The Home Depot away from GAINES.
- 38. DEFENDANT had a duty not to copy GAINES' patented designs for manufacture, offer for sale, and/or sale within the United States.
- 39. DEFENDANT's actions have damaged GAINES in an amount to be proved at trial but believed to be in excess of \$2,800,000.
- 40. GAINES is informed and believes that each of the acts and omissions by DEFENDANT complained of were willful or in reckless disregard of GAINES' rights, thereby supporting the award of exemplary damages.

#### **PRAYER**

WHEREFORE, GAINES prays for relief as follows:

41. For an injunction, including a temporary restraining order, preliminary injunction and permanent injunction, enjoining DEFENDANT, its agents, affiliates, employees, and those

1	persons in active concert or participation or privity with it who receive actual notice of the order								
2	by personal service or otherwise, from manufacturing, offering for sale and selling address								
3	plaques which contain or utilize the designs embodied in the '539 Patent and the '692 Patent;								
4	42. For punitive and/or exemplary damages;								
5	43. For monetary damages in an amount according to proof, including								
6	DEFENDANT's profits;								
7	44. For interest on said damages at the legal rate from and after the date such								
8	damages were incurred;								
9	45.	For costs, including re	easonable attorneys fees; and						
10	46.	For such other and fur	rther relief as the Court deems proper.						
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12	DATED: Au	gust 22, 2006	HENDERSON & CAVERLY LLP						
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14			By first [Couls						
15			Kristen E. Caverly Attorneys for Plaintiff Gaines						
16			Manufacturing, Inc.						
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19		DEN	MAND FOR JURY TRIAL						
20	Plaint	iff GAINES hereby der	nands trial by jury.						
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22	DATED: Au	gust 22, 2006	HENDERSON & CAVERLY LLP						
23			$C_1 \subseteq C_1$						
24			By furth (Culs Kristen E. Caverly						
25			Attorneys for Plaintiff Gaines Manufacturing, Inc.						
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# (12) United States Design Patent (10) Patent No.:

Gaines et al.

# (10) Patent No.: (45) Date of Patent:

US D508,539 S \*\* Aug. 16, 2005

#### (54) ADDRESS DISPLAY

(76) Inventors: Theodore Edward Gaines, Gaines

Manufacturing, Inc., 12200 Kirkham Rd., Poway, CA (US) 92064; Donald Bruce Galnes, Gaines Manufacturing, Inc., 12200 Kirkham Rd., Poway, CA

(US) 92064

(\*\*) Term: 14 Years

(21) Appl. No.: 29/187,932

(22) Filed: Aug. 5, 2003

(51) LOC (8) Cl. ...... 20-03

> D20/17, 22, 27, 28–29, 38, 39–42, 99; D12/193; 40/299.01, 330, 541, 543, 545, 549, 606.18, 606.19, 607.13, 611.05, 612, 618, 624, 642.01, 651; 362/812; D10/109,

114, 121

#### (56) References Cited

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D68,627 S	* 11/1925	Horton D20/43
D94,943 S	* 3/1935	Best D20/17
D147,045 S	<b>*</b> 7/1947	Holmquist D20/17
D160,754 S	* 10/1950	Wallace D10/114
D279,485 S	* 7/1985	Brennan D20/17
D388,126 S	* 12/1997	Rath D20/42
D476,692 S	7/2003	Gaines et al.
D477,033 S	7/2003	Gaines et al.
D477,367 S	7/2003	Gaines et al.
D478,935 S	* 8/2003	Gearhart et al D20/10

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FRONTGATE, Frontgate retail catalog, prior to Nov. 1, 2001, p. 84, Cornerstone Brands, Inc., USA\*\*.

Frontgate.Com, Internet website, prior to Nov. 1, 2001, (current printout provided as representative of pre-Nov. 1, 2001 content), Cornerstone Brands, Inc., USA and worldwide \*\*.

Whitehall Products.com, internet website, prior to Nov. 1, 2001 (current printout provided as representative of pre-Nov. 1, 2001 content), Whitehall Products, USA and worldwide\*\*.

Whitehall Products, product brochure, prior to Feb. 9, 2001, Whitehall Products, USA.

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Elements, Inc., product brochure, 1998, Elements, Inc., USA.

Gaines Manufacturing, Inc., HouseMark Address Plaque product brochure, available Feb. 2002, Gaines Manufacturing, Inc., USA.

Gaines Manufacturing, Inc., HouseMark Roundtangle Address Plaque, available for purchase Feb. 2002, Gaines Manufacturing, Inc., USA.

Gaines Manufacturing, Inc., HouseMark Oval Address Plaque, available for purchase Feb. 2002, Gaines Manufacturing, Inc., USA.

\* cited by examiner

Primary Examiner—Robert M. Spear (74) Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Henderson & Caverly LLP; Kristen E. Caverly

### (57) CLAIM

The ornamental design for an address display, as shown and described.

#### DESCRIPTION

FIG. 1 is a front perspective view of an address display showing the new design;

FIG. 2 is a front elevational view thereof;

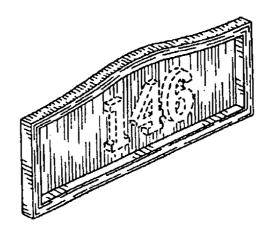
FIG. 3 is a rear elevational view thereof;

FIG. 4 is a right side elevational view thereof;

FIG. 5 is a left side elevational view thereof;

FIG. 6 is a top plan view thereof; and,

FIG. 7 is a bottom plan view thereof.



# US D508,539 S Page 2

Any broken line illustration of environmental structure in the drawings represents environmental structure and forms no part of the claimed design.

1 Claim, 2 Drawing Sheets

U.S. Patent

Aug. 16, 2005

Sheet 1 of 2

US D508,539 S

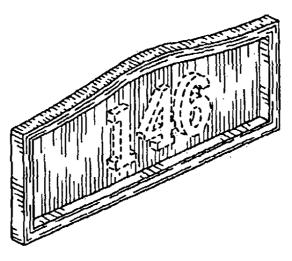


FIG.I

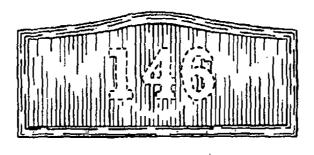


FIG. 2

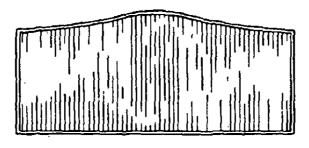


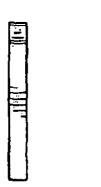
FIG. 3



Aug. 16, 2005

Sheet 2 of 2

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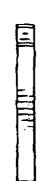


FIG. 4

FIG. 5

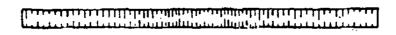


FIG. 6

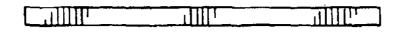


FIG. 7

# (12) United States Design Patent (10) Patent No.:

Gaines et al.

US D476,692 S

(45) Date of Patent:

Jul. 1, 2003

#### (54) ADDRESS SIGNBOARD

(76) Inventors: Theodore Edward Gaines, Gaines Manufacturing, Inc., 12200 Kirkham Rd., Poway, CA (US) 92064; Donald Bruce Gaines, Gaines Manufacturing, Inc., 12200 Kirkham Rd., Poway, CA

(US) 92064

(\*\*) Term: 14 Years

(21) Appl. No.: 29/150,830

Nov. 29, 2001

(51) LOC (7) Cl. ...... 20-03 (52) U.S. Cl. ...... D20/17; D20/41

(58) Field of Search ...... D20/10, 11, 12, D20/17, 39, 41, 42, 99; D10/109, 114, 121; 40/1, 124.1, 124.5, 489, 541, 543, 545, 549, 551, 553, 568, 584, 612, 618

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D57,485 S	+	4/1921	Telling D20/39
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			-

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FRONTGATE.COM, internet website, prior to Nov. 1, 2001 (current printout provided as representative of pre-Nov. 1, 2001 content), Cornerstone Brands, Inc., U.S.A. and worldwide, 4 pages.

WHITEHALL PRODUCTS.COM, internet website, prior to Nov. 1, 2001 (current printout provided as representative of pre-Nov. 1, 2001 content), Whitehall Products, U.S.A. and world-wide, 4 pages.

WHITEHALL PRODUCTS, product brochure, prior to Nov. 1, 2001, Whitehall Products, U.S.A., 2 pages.

\* cited by examiner

Primary Examiner-Robert M. Spear (74) Attorney, Agent, or Firm-Henderson & Caverly LLP; Kristen E. Caverly

#### CLAIM (57)

The ornamental design for an address signboard, as shown and described.

#### DESCRIPTION

FIG. 1 is a front perspective view of an address signboard showing the new design;

FIG. 2 is a front elevational view thereof;

FIG. 3 is a rear elevational view thereof;

FIG. 4 is a right side elevational view thereof;

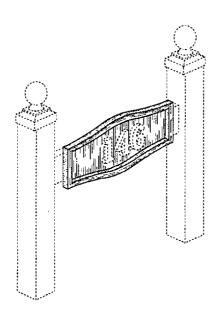
FIG. 5 is a left side elevational view thereof;

FIG. 6 is a top plan view thereof; and,

FIG. 7 is a bottom plan view thereof.

Any broken line illustration of environmental structure in the drawings is not part of the design sought to be patented. In the drawings, those portions of the design obscured by broken lines form no part of the claimed design.

## 1 Claim, 3 Drawing Sheets

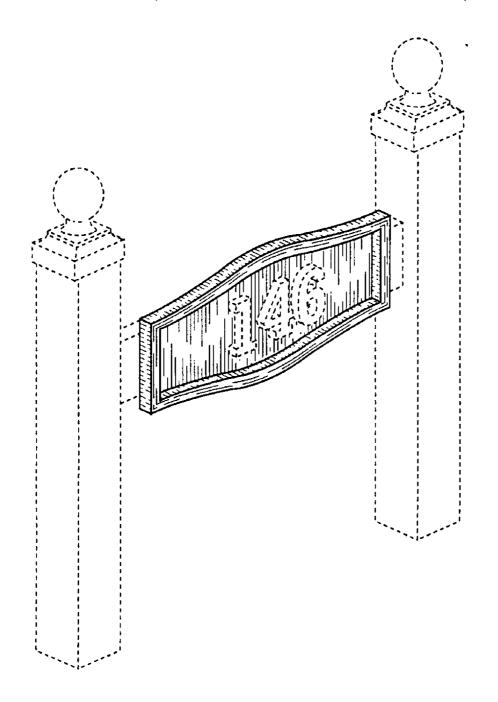


U.S. Patent

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U.S. Patent

Jul. 1, 2003

Sheet 2 of 3

US D476,692 S

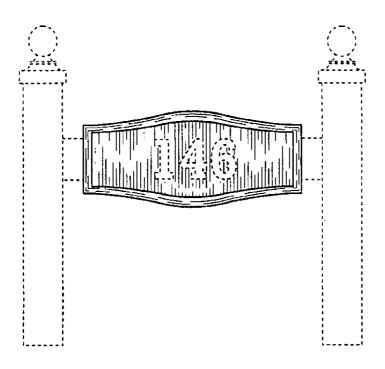


FIG. 2

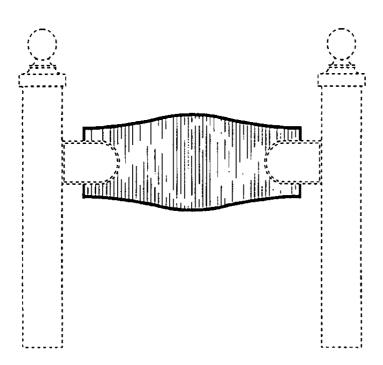


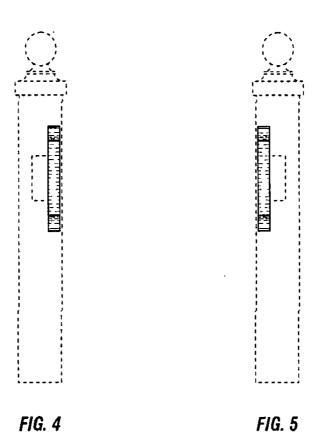
FIG. 3



Jul. 1, 2003

Sheet 3 of 3

US D476,692 S



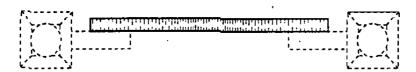
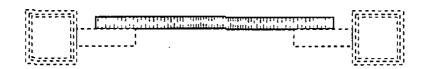
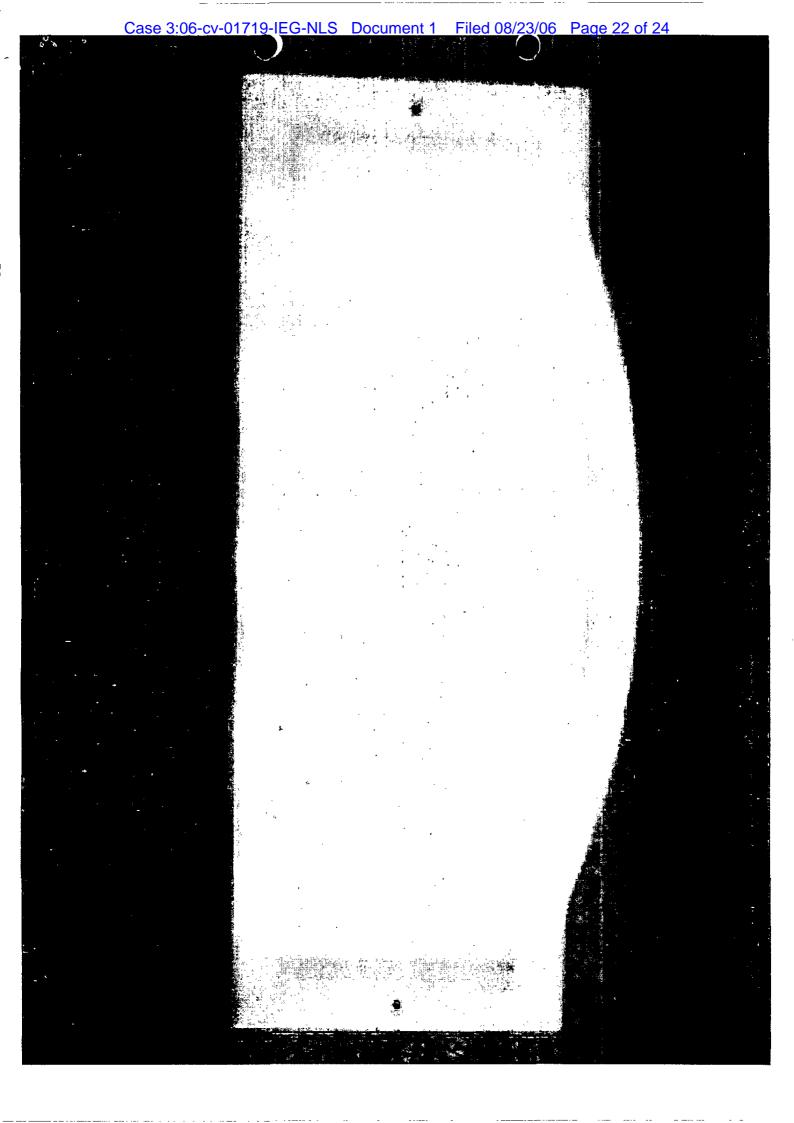


FIG. 6







AO 120 (Rev.3/04)

# Mail Stop 8 Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

# REPORT ON THE FILING OR DETERMINATION OF AN ACTION REGARDING A PATENT OR TRADEMARK

In Compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 290 and/or 15 U.S.C. § 1116 you are hereby advised that a court action has been filed in the U.S. District Court San Diego on the following Patents or Trademarks:							
DOCKET NO.	DATE FILED	U.S. DISTRICT COURT					
06cv1719-IEG(NLS)	August 23,2006	United States District Court, Southern District of California					
PLAINTIFF		DEFENDANT					
Gaines Manufacturing, Inc.		The Hillman Group, Inc.					
PATENT OR TRADEMARK NO.	DATE OF PATENT OR TRADEMARK	HOLDER OF PATENT OR TRADEMARK					
1 US D508,539 S	August 16, 2005	Theodore Edward Gaines, Donald Bruce Gaines, Gaines Manufacturing					
2 US D476,692 S	July 1, 2003	Theodore Edward Gaines, Donald Bruce Gaines, Gaines Manufacturing					
3							
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In the al	pove-entitled case, the fol	lowing patent(s)/trademark(s) have been included:					
DATE INCLUDED	INCLUDED BY						
	Amendment	Answer Cross Bill Other Pleading					
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Copy 3 - Upon termination of action, mail this copy to Director

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Copy 4 - Case file copy

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V. NATURE OF SUIT (PLACE	E AN X IN ONE BOX ONLY)								_
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140 Negotiable Instrument	320 Assault. Libel & Slander	365 Personal Injury - Product Liability		L ' '		20 Copyrights		☐ 450 Commerce/ICC Rat	ies/eic.
150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment	330 Federal Employers' Liability	_		- 630 Liquor Laws	H.	30 Patent		☐ 460 Deportation	
151 Medicare Act	340 Marine	368 Asbestos Personal l Product Liability	Dinta	640 RR & Truck	٣	SOCIAL SECURI	TY	470 Racketeer Influence Corrupt Organizations	x1 and
151 Medicare Act  152 Recovery of Defaulted Student	340 Marine 345 Marine Product	PERSONAL PROP	ERTY	650 Airtine Regii	,, <u> </u>	61 HIA (13958)		□ 810 Selective Service	
Loans (Excl. Veterans)	Liability	370 Other Fraud		690 Other		62 Black Lung (923)		S50 Securities/Commod	intecs
☐ 153 Recovery of Overpayment	350 Motor Vehicle	371 Truth in Lending		LABOR		63 DIWC/DIWW (405		Exchange	
of Veterans Benefits	355 Motor Vehicle Product	☐ 380 Other Personal		710Fair Labor Standards Act		H SSID Tale XVI	Ť	375 Customer Challeng	e 12 USC
1(4) Stockholders Suits	Liability	Property Damage		720 Labor/Mgmt Relations	<u>                                      </u>	65 RSI (405(e))		B91 Agricultural Acts	
190 Other Contract	360 Other Personal Injury	☐ 385 Property Damage		730 Labor/Mgmt, Reporting	& <b> </b> _	FEDERAL TAX ST	JITS	☐ 892 Economic Stabiliza	tion Act
195 Contract Product Liability	CIVIL PLOURS	Product Liability	TONE	Disclosure Act	P 83	70 Taxes (U.S. Plaintif Defendant)		393 Environmental Mat	
REAL PROPERTY	CIVIL RIGHTS	PRISONER PETIT		740 Railway Labor Act	Ĺ		L L	2 894 Energy Allocation /	
210 Land Condemnation	P 441 Votatg	510 Motions to Vacate Habeas Corpus	Sentence	790 Other Labor Litigation		71 1RS - Third Party 6 USC 7609	L	N95 Freedom of Informa	
220 Forcelosure	442 Femileyment			791 Empl. Ret. Inc	ı			200 Appeal of Fee Dete	munther

VI. ORIGIN (PLACE AN X IN ONE BOX ONLY)

444 Welfare
440 Other Civil Rights

240 Tort to Land

☑1 Original Proceeding	2 Removal from State Court	☐ 3 Remanded from Appelate Court	☐4 Reinstated Reopened	or D5 Transferred from another district (specify)	6 Multidistrict Litigation	O7 Appeal to District Judge from Magistrate Judgment
VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT;		K IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTIO frep 23	N D	emand \$2,800 plus	, 000	S only if demanded in complaint: MAND: YYES □NO
VIII. RELATED CASE	(S) IF ANY (See Inst	ructions): JUDGE			Docket Nu	ımber
DATE O	u 22,2	006		SIGNATURE OF ATTOR	NEY OF RECORD	te Gur

;;ODMA\PCDOCS\WORDPERFECT\22816\1 January 24, 2000 (3:10pm)

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