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Meyers

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(54) **AXLE ARRANGEMENT FOR A REAR HUB OF A BICYCLE**

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(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC **B62K 25/02** (2013.01); **B60B 35/004**
(2013.01)

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See application file for complete search history.

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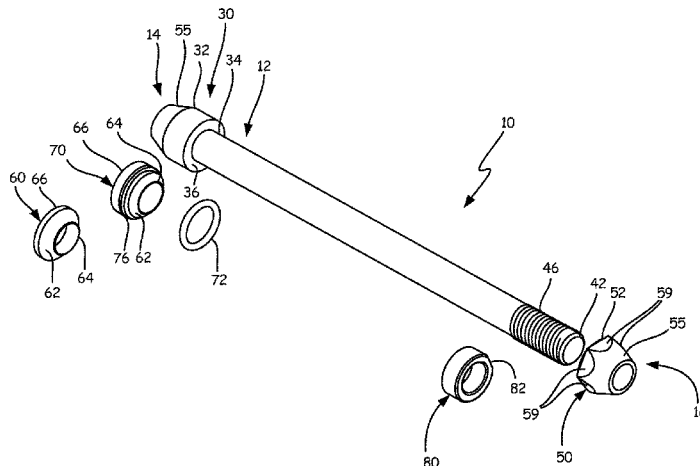
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An axle arrangement for a rear hub of a bicycle includes an axle skewer having at a first end threads formed on an outer surface thereof, and at a second end remote from the first end, an enlarged head having an annular surface facing the first end. A nut has threads to threadably engage the axle shaft at the first end. Each of the enlarged end and the nut are configured with surfaces so as to be fixably secured to couplers of a bicycle trainer. A kit includes the axle arrangement and two or more of a spacer and/or an adapter wherein each of said spacers and/or adapters are separately configured to adapt the axle arrangement to a different manufacturer of a bicycle.

10 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets



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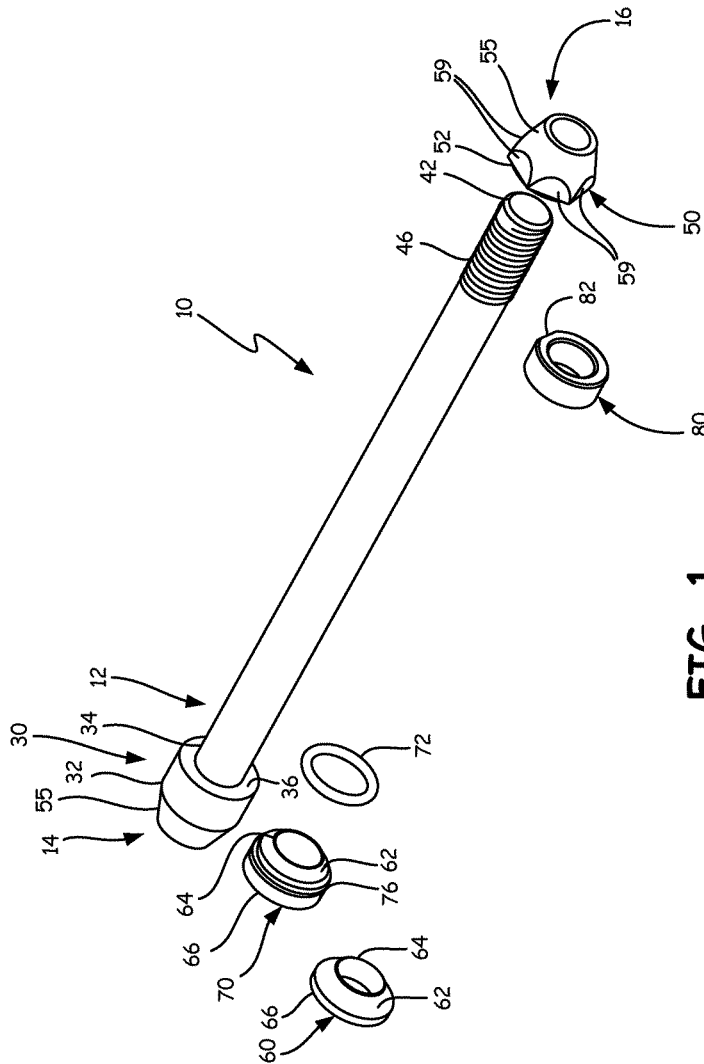


FIG. 1

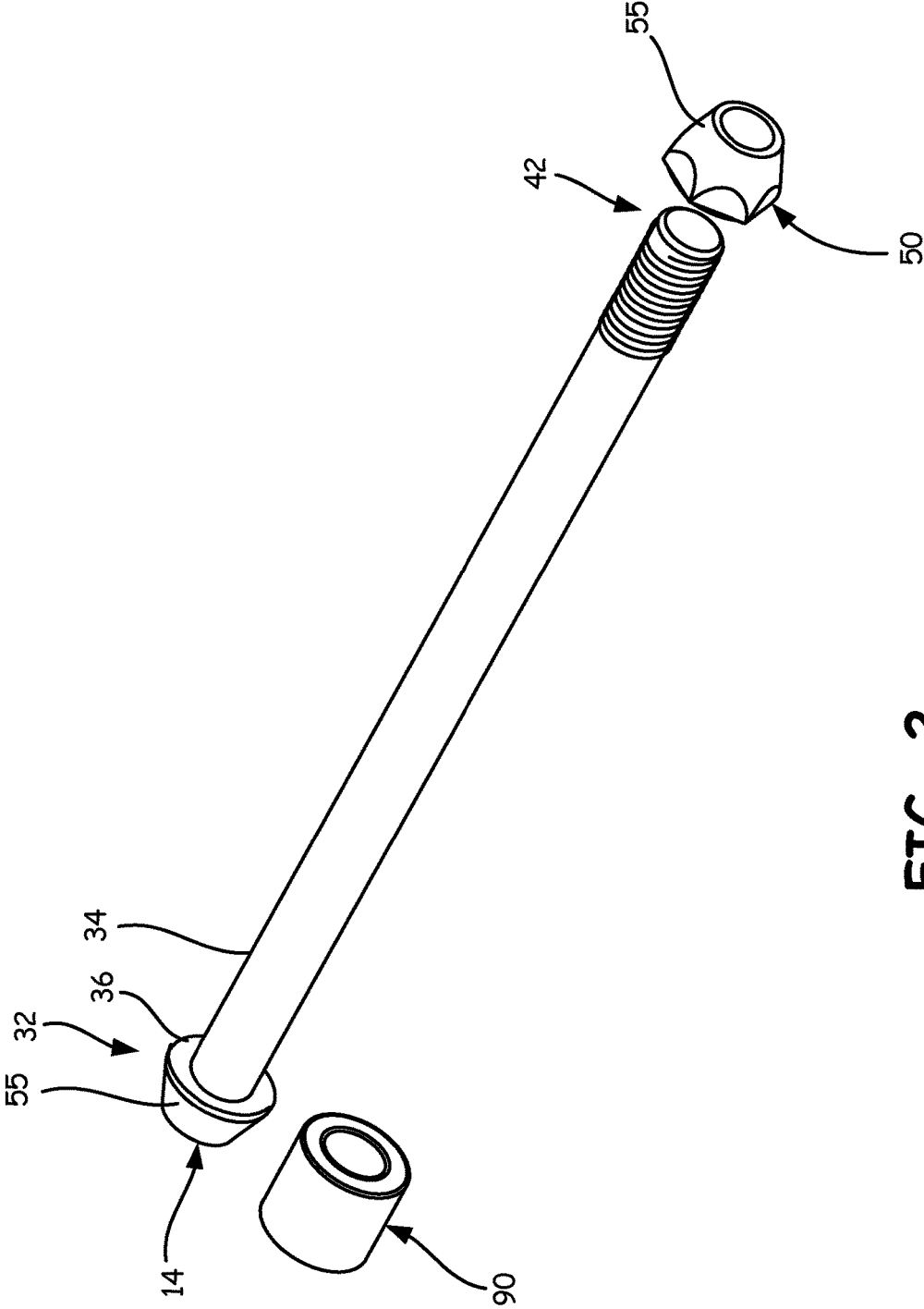


FIG. 2

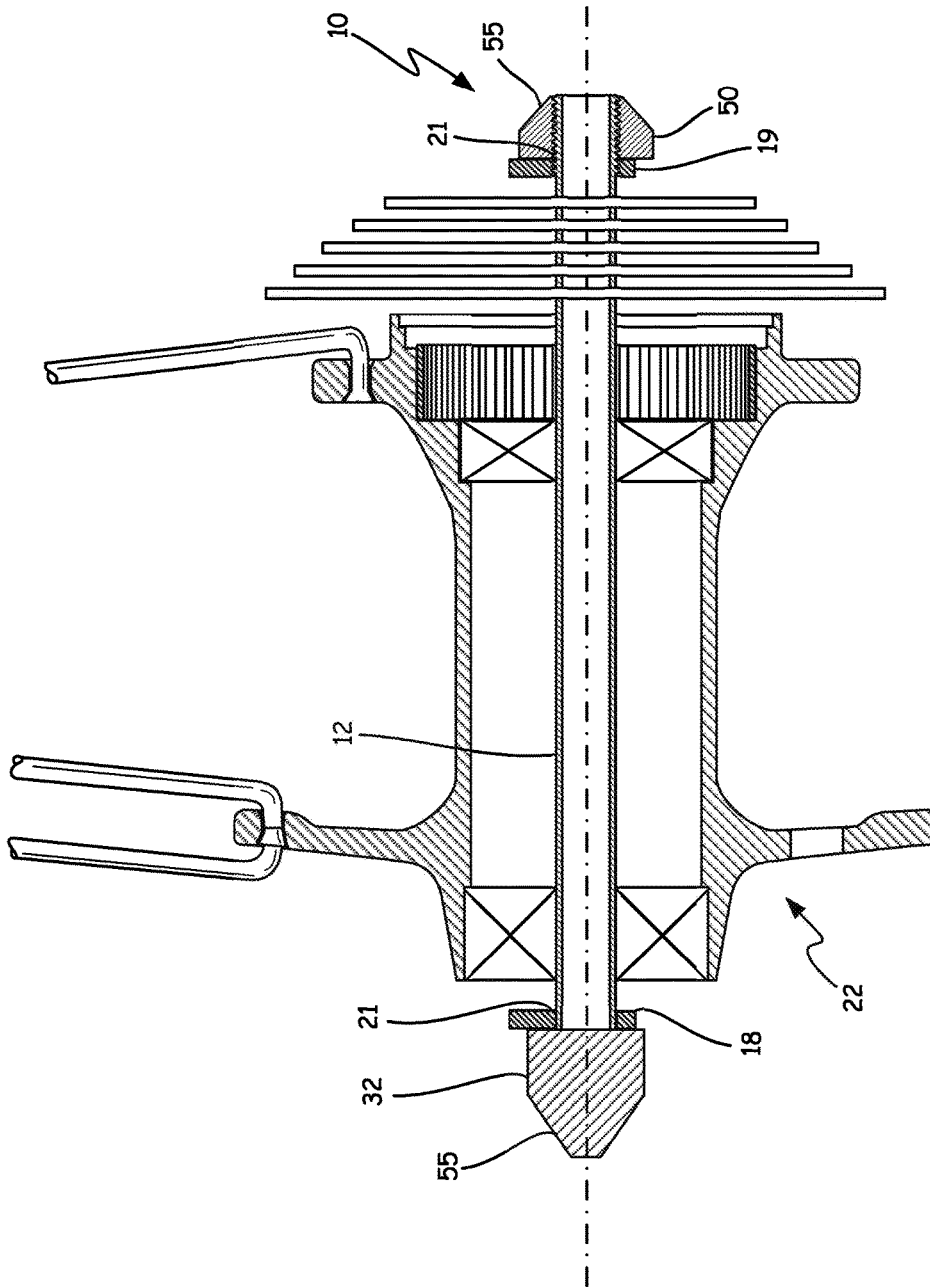


FIG. 3

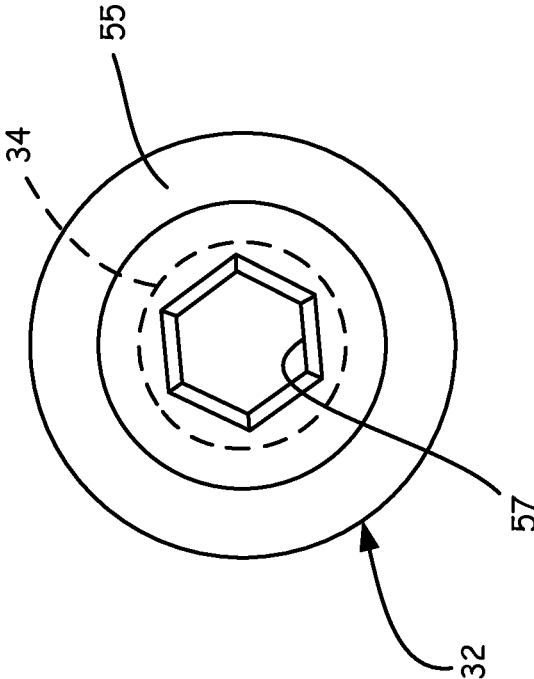


FIG. 4

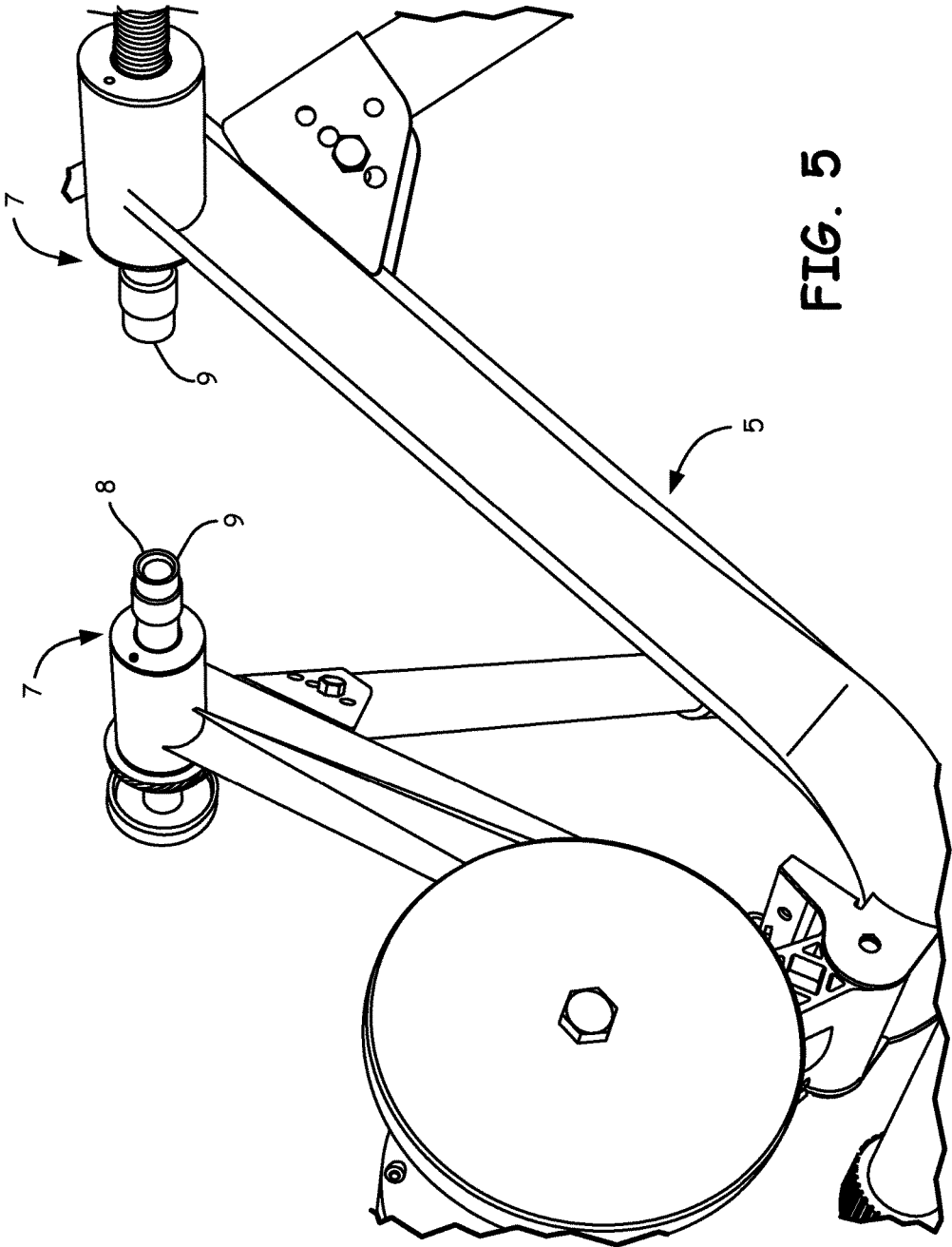


FIG. 5

AXLE ARRANGEMENT FOR A REAR HUB OF A BICYCLE

BACKGROUND

The discussion below is merely provided for general background information and is not intended to be used as an aid in determining the scope of the claimed subject matter.

Thru axles are now being used to fasten the rear wheel assembly to a bicycle and are of size and length to be inserted through apertures in the rear forks as well as through the hub assembly of the rear wheel. Upon insertion of the thru axle through the hub assembly, threads provided on the end of the axle are threaded into one of the rear forks. A head at the other end of the axle includes a recess, for a tool such as an Allen wrench is used to turn the axle. The head engages the other rear fork on the bicycle. For some manufactures, the design and length of the axle is such that neither side when finally mounted to the bicycle has an exposed portion, or much of an exposed portion beyond the outwardly facing surfaces of the forks.

SUMMARY

This Summary and the Abstract herein are provided to introduce a selection of concepts in a simplified form that are further described below in the Detailed Description. This Summary and the Abstract are not intended to identify key features or essential features of the claimed subject matter, nor are they intended to be used as an aid in determining the scope of the claimed subject matter. The claimed subject matter is not limited to implementations that solve any or all disadvantages noted in the background.

A first aspect is an axle arrangement for a rear hub of a bicycle that includes an axle skewer having at a first end threads formed on an outer surface thereof configured to threadably engage a frame fork of a bicycle, and at a second end remote from the first end, an enlarged head having an annular surface facing the first end. A nut has threads to threadably engage the axle shaft at the first end. Each of the enlarged end and the nut are configured with surfaces so as to be fixably secured to couplers of a bicycle trainer.

A second aspect is a kit that includes the above-mentioned axle arrangement and two or more of a spacer and/or an adapter wherein each of said spacers and/or adapters are separately configured to adapt the axle arrangement to a different manufacturer of a bicycle.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an axle arrangement with adapters and a spacer.

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the axle arrangement with another spacer.

FIG. 3 is a sectional view of a rear wheel of a bicycle with the axle arrangement.

FIG. 4 is an end view of an axle skewer.

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a portion of a bicycle trainer.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATIVE EMBODIMENTS

Although the thru axle allows mounting of the rear to the bicycle, the lack of or minimal exposure of end portions inhibits use of the bicycle on a bicycle trainer.

An axle arrangement **10** to overcome this problem is illustrated in the figures and includes a thru axle skewer **12** having ends **14** and **16** configured for attachment to couplers of a bicycle trainer. Such couplers are well known. FIG. 5 illustrates a portion of a bicycle trainer **5** having such couplers indicated at **7**. Each coupler **7** has a recess **8** (typically a cylindrical bore) formed or defined by a perimeter wall **9**.

In FIG. 3 a hub assembly **22** of a bicycle is schematically illustrated with axle arrangement **10**. Typically, receiving ends **18** and **19** of forks (not otherwise illustrated) are called dropout ends. The axle **12** has a shaft diameter suitable for insertion through apertures **21** in the dropout ends **18,19** of the forks as well as through a hub assembly **22** of a bicycle rear wheel.

At a first end **30** of the axle **12**, an enlarged head **32** is fixably secured to the axle shaft **34** to form an integral structure in a manner that typically prevents rotation of the enlarged head **32** separate from the axle shaft **34**. The enlarged head **32** includes an extending annular flange **36** about the axle shaft **34** which contacts an outwardly facing surface **40** of one of the dropout ends **18,19** (herein **18**) when the axle shaft **34** is inserted through the aperture **21** and into the hub assembly **22**.

At the other end **42** remote from the enlarged head **32**, threads **46** are provided on an outer surface. The threads **46** of the shaft extend through and outwardly from the aperture **21** of the other drop out end of the fork.

A nut **50** threadably mates with the second end **42** of the axle **12** on the portion extending outwardly from the aperture **21** of the drop out end **19**. The nut **50** includes an enlarged annular flange **52** that contacts the outwardly facing surface of the second drop out end **19** of the forks **22** when the nut **50** threadably mates with the threads **46** of the axle shaft **34**. Like the enlarged end **32**, the nut **50** is configured so as to form a secure engagement with a coupler of a bicycle trainer. In the embodiment illustrated, both the enlarged end **32** and the nut **50** include a tapered or conical annular surface **55**, extending outwardly away from the forks **22** configured to be at least partially in each corresponding recess **8**. Stated another way, each of the enlarged head **32** and the nut **50** have oppositely facing conical annular surfaces **55** when the nut **50** is threaded upon the skewer, where each of the conical annular surfaces **55** has cross section therethrough reducing in a direction away from the other conical annular surface **55**. Suitable surfaces are provided on the enlarged end **32** and on the nut **50** to allow tightening of the nut **50** on the axle shaft **34** when the axle shaft **34** is maintained (herein via enlarged head **32**) in a stationary position. In the embodiment illustrated, the suitable surfaces of the enlarged end **32** are configured so as to provide a recess **57** suitable for an Allen wrench. On the nut **50**, the suitable surfaces are spaced apart flat surfaces **59** on the flange **52**. It should be understood, the suitable surfaces herein illustrated are advantageous but exemplary in that other suitable surfaces can be used.

In a particularly advantageous embodiment, the length of the axle shaft **34** is of sufficient length to be used on a plurality of bicycles sold by different manufacturers. Depending on the manufacturer, spacers and/or other adapters each of which having an aperture through which the axle shaft **34** can extend therethrough are provided. In a first embodiment, an adapter **60** includes a conical surface **62**. The conically shaped adapter **60** has an aperture **64** through which the shaft **34** can extend. On an end of the adapter **60** opposite the conical surface **62** an enlarged end surface **66** that engages, herein the annular flange **36** of the enlarged

head 32. Since the conical surface 62 of the adapter 60 engages edges of the aperture 21, the adapter 60 centers the shaft 34 in the aperture 21. Two such adaptors are illustrated in FIG. 1 at 60 and 70. Adaptor 70 also includes the conical surface 62, aperture 64 and enlarged end surface 66, but further includes a flexible ring 72 that encircles the adapter 70, being disposed in an annular groove 76 provided therein. The flexible ring 72 also aids in centering the shaft 34 in the aperture 21.

A cylindrical spacer 80 is provided and configured so as to configure the thru axle 12 for use on a bicycle of yet a different manufacturer. The spacer 80 herein by example is disposed at the end 42, and in particular between an outwardly surface of the drop out end 19 of the forks and the annular flange 52 of the nut 50. The spacer 80 encircles some of the threads 46 of the shaft 34 and has a longitudinal length so as to fill the space between the outwardly facing surface of the drop out end 19 of the forks and the annular flange 52 of the nut 50, while allowing the nut 50 to be securely attached to the remaining exposed threads 46 of the shaft 34. The spacer 80 can include a flat surface 82 on the circumference configured to correspond to and engage a corresponding flat surface provided on the drop out end of the fork. Spacer 90 is similar to spacer 80 but has a different longitudinal length and herein is mounted on the end 30.

In one embodiment, the axle skewer 12, nut 50 and two or more spacers 80,90 and/or adaptors 60,70 can be sold as a kit thereby allowing a single product to accommodate a plurality of different bicycle manufacturers.

Although the subject matter has been described in language specific to structural features and/or methodological acts, it is to be understood that the subject matter defined in the appended claims is not necessarily limited to the specific features or acts described above as has been determined by the courts. Rather, the specific features and acts described above are disclosed as example forms of implementing the claims.

What is claimed is:

1. An axle arrangement for a rear hub of a bicycle, comprising:

an axle skewer having:

at a first end, threads formed on an outer surface thereof configured to extend through an aperture in a frame fork of the bicycle, and

at a second end remote from the first end, an enlarged head having an annular surface facing the first end wherein the annular surface of the enlarged head is fixed to the axle skewer such that rotation of the enlarged head is prevented relative to the axle skewer; and

a fastener having threads to threadably engage the axle skewer at the first end, and wherein each of the enlarged head and the fastener are configured with surfaces so as to be fixably secured to couplers of a bicycle trainer, said surfaces comprising oppositely facing annular surfaces when the fastener is threaded upon the skewer; and

an adapter having an aperture configured to receive the first end and through which the axle skewer is slidable such that the adapter is slidable along the axle skewer from the first end, the adapter comprising a first annular surface configured to releasably engage the annular surface of the enlarged head and an annular conical surface extending in a direction opposite the first annular surface.

2. The axle arrangement of claim 1 and further comprising a spacer having an aperture through which the axle skewer slidably extends.

3. The axle arrangement of claim 1 wherein the adapter includes a flexible ring disposed about a circumferential surface of the adapter.

4. A kit comprising an axle arrangement for a rear hub of a bicycle, the kit comprising:

an axle skewer having at a first end threads formed on an outer surface thereof configured to extend through an aperture in a frame fork of the bicycle, and at a second end remote from the first end, and an enlarged head having an annular surface facing the first end wherein the annular surface of the enlarged head is fixed to the axle skewer such that rotation of the enlarged head is prevented relative to the axle skewer;

a nut configured to threadably engage the axle skewer at the first end, wherein each of the enlarged head and the nut are configured with surfaces so as to be fixably secured to couplers of a bicycle trainer wherein the nut has an annular surface configured to face the annular surface of the enlarged head when the nut is threadably engaged with the axle skewer;

a first spacer with an aperture of a size to receive the first end and where the first space is slidable along the axle skewer from the first end, the first spacer having a first axial length along a length of the axle skewer; and

a first spacer with an aperture of a size to receive the first end and where the second spacer is slidable along the axle skewer from the first end, the second spacer having a second axial length along a length of the axle skewer, wherein the first axial length is different than the second axial length.

5. The kit comprising the axle arrangement of claim 4 wherein each of the enlarged head and the nut have oppositely facing conical annular surfaces when the nut is threaded upon the skewer, each of the conical annular surfaces having a cross section therethrough, the cross sections reducing in a direction away from the other conical annular surface.

6. The kit comprising the axle arrangement of claim 4, wherein each of said spacers are separately configured to adapt the axle arrangement to a different manufacturer of a bicycle.

7. The axle arrangement of claim 1, and further comprising at least one spacer with an aperture of a size to receive the first end.

8. The axle arrangement of claim 1, the fastener having an annular surface configured to face the annular surface of the enlarged end when the fastener is threadably engaged with the axle skewer.

9. The kit comprising the axle arrangement of claim 4, where the first spacer comprises a first annular surface configured to releasably engage the annular surface of the enlarged head and an annular conical surface extending in a direction opposite the first annular surface.

10. The kit comprising the axle arrangement of claim 4, wherein each of said spacers are separately configured to adapt the axle arrangement to a different manufacturer of a bicycle.