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A. PARK

2,448,731

GRIPPING MEANS FOR GAME BALLS

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Fig. 1.

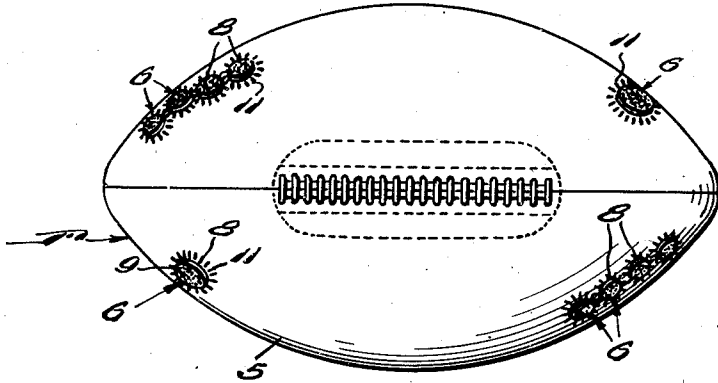


Fig. 2.

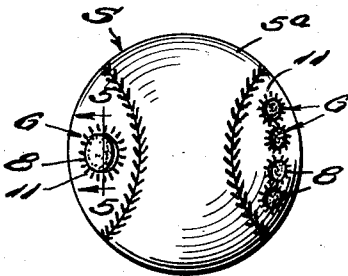


Fig. 4.



Fig. 3.

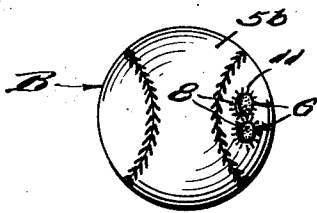
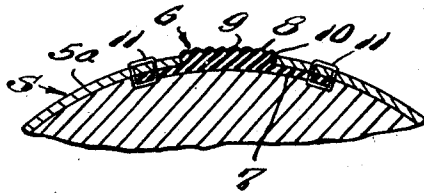


Fig. 5.



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GRIPPING MEANS FOR GAME BALLS

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6 Claims. (Cl. 273-60)

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This invention relates to improved gripping means for game balls, and has more particular reference to means applied to the conventional shaped leather casing of a game ball to enable players to obtain a firm grip thereon and thereby facilitates handling, spinning or curving of the ball, as occasion may require.

An object of the present invention is to provide gripping means of the above kind which is of a simple nature, readily applicable to the shaped leather casing of a game ball, and highly efficient for the intended purpose.

A further object of the invention is to provide a game ball with a gripping element that may be readily and firmly applied so as to resist ready damage or destruction, and which will not noticeably modify the normal action and characteristics of the ball.

The exact nature of the present invention will become apparent from the following description when considered in connection with the accompanying drawing, in which:

Figure 1 is a top plan view of a football equipped with gripping means embodying the present invention.

Figure 2 is a view similar to Figure 1 illustrating the invention as applied to a ball of the type commonly used in playing "softball."

Figure 3 is a view similar to Figure 2, illustrating the invention as applied to an ordinary baseball.

Figure 4 is an enlarged perspective view of one of the gripping elements, per se, and

Figure 5 is a fragmentary sectional view taken on line 5-5 of Figure 2.

Referring in detail to the drawing, the present invention is applicable to various types of game balls which embody a shaped leather casing, such as the football F shown in Figure 1, the softball S shown in Figure 2, or the ordinary baseball B shown in Figure 3. In each instance, the game ball includes a shaped leather casing 5, 5a or 5b. In each case, the leather casing is provided with a plurality of gripping elements 6 for anti-slipping engagement by the fingertips or the fingertips and thumb-tip of the hand gripping the ball.

Each gripping element comprises a thin rubber disc 7 having a central raised portion 8 which is of slightly greater thickness than that of the leather casing of the ball and which has a suitably roughened surface 9, the raised portion 8 being preferably of circular form as shown.

In applying each gripping element to the game ball, the leather casing of the latter is provided with an opening or aperture 10 of substantially

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the same size and shape as the raised portion 8 of the gripping element and through which the latter protrudes, the marginal portion of the disc 7 which projects beyond the raised portion 8 being disposed against the inner surface portion of the leather casing in surrounding relation to the opening 8 and being suitably secured to the leather casing as by stitching 11, cementing or the like. In this way, the gripping element is firmly attached and held to the casing of the ball with the roughened surface 9 of the raised portion 8 nearly flush with the outer surface of the casing so that the gripping element does not materially interfere with the normal action and characteristics of the game ball. The raised portion 8 is made of sufficient size to just afford enough gripping surface required for the tips of the finger or of the thumb, the gripping elements for the thumb being slightly larger than those for the fingers.

In applying the invention with respect to the casing 5 of a football F as shown in Figure 1, a set of gripping elements is preferably provided adjacent each end of the ball, four of the gripping elements being provided in a row for engagement by the tips of the fingers and one being provided at an adjacent point for engagement by the tip of the thumb of the same hand. These sets of gripping elements are provided at opposite ends of the football in reversed relation so that the gripping elements for the fingers and that for the thumb will be properly disposed.

In applying the invention to a softball as shown in Figure 2, a plurality of four of the gripping elements are provided in a row for engagement by the tips of the fingers and another is provided at a spaced point for engagement by the tip of the thumb, this arrangement being desired by reason of the fact that softballs are thrown underhanded and are invariably gripped by all of the fingers and the thumb of the same hand when thrown.

In applying the invention to an ordinary baseball as shown in Figure 3, it is simply necessary to provide two of the gripping elements in adjacent relation for engagement by the fingertips of two fingers of the hand, a baseball being usually gripped in this way when pitching the same, especially when curving the ball.

From the foregoing description, it is believed that the construction, manner of use and advantages of the present invention will be readily understood and appreciated by those skilled in the art. Modifications and minor changes in

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details are contemplated, such as fall within the scope of the invention as claimed.

What I claim is:

1. In combination with a game ball including a shaped leather casing provided with an opening of a size substantially corresponding to the area of a finger or thumb tip, a gripping element comprising a resilient disc having its margin secured to the inner surface of said casing in surrounding relation to said opening, said disc having a substantially central raised portion fitting and protruding outwardly through said opening and having a roughened outer surface.

2. In combination with a game ball including a shaped leather casing provided with an opening of a size substantially corresponding to the area of a finger or thumb tip, a gripping element comprising a resilient disc having its margin secured to the inner surface of said casing in surrounding relation to said opening, said disc having a substantially central raised portion fitting and protruding outwardly through said opening and having a roughened outer surface, said raised portion being of a uniform thickness slightly greater than the thickness of said casing.

3. In combination with a game ball including a shaped leather casing provided with a row of adjacent openings of a size substantially corresponding to the area of a finger tip, and a gripping element associated with each of said openings, each gripping element comprising a resilient disc having its margin secured to the inner surface of said casing in surrounding relation to the associated opening, said disc having a substantially central raised portion fitting and protruding through said adjacent opening and having a roughened outer surface.

4. In combination with a football including a shaped leather casing provided at least at one end with a plurality of adjacent openings arranged in a row and another opening in spaced relation to the first named openings to respectively correspond to the position of the fingertips and the thumb-tip of a hand gripping the ball, and a gripping element associated with each of said openings, each gripping element comprising

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a resilient disc having its margin secured to the inner surface of said casing in surrounding relation to the associated opening, said disc having a central substantially raised portion fitting and protruding through said opening and having a roughened outer surface.

5. In combination with a baseball of the softball type including a shaped leather casing provided with a plurality of adjacent openings arranged in a row and a further opening spaced from the first named openings to respectively correspond to the positions of the fingertips and thumb of a hand gripping the ball, a gripping element associated with each of said openings, each gripping element comprising a resilient disc having its margin secured to the inner surface of said casing in surrounding relation to said opening, said disc having a substantially central raised portion fitting and protruding through the adjacent opening and having a roughened outer surface.

6. In combination with a conventional baseball including a shaped leather casing provided with a pair of adjacent openings corresponding to the area of a fingertip, a gripping element associated with each of said openings, each gripping element comprising a resilient disc having its margin secured to the inner surface of said casing in surrounding relation to said opening, said disc having a substantially central raised portion fitting and protruding through said opening and having a roughened outer surface.

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The following references are of record in the file of this patent:

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