

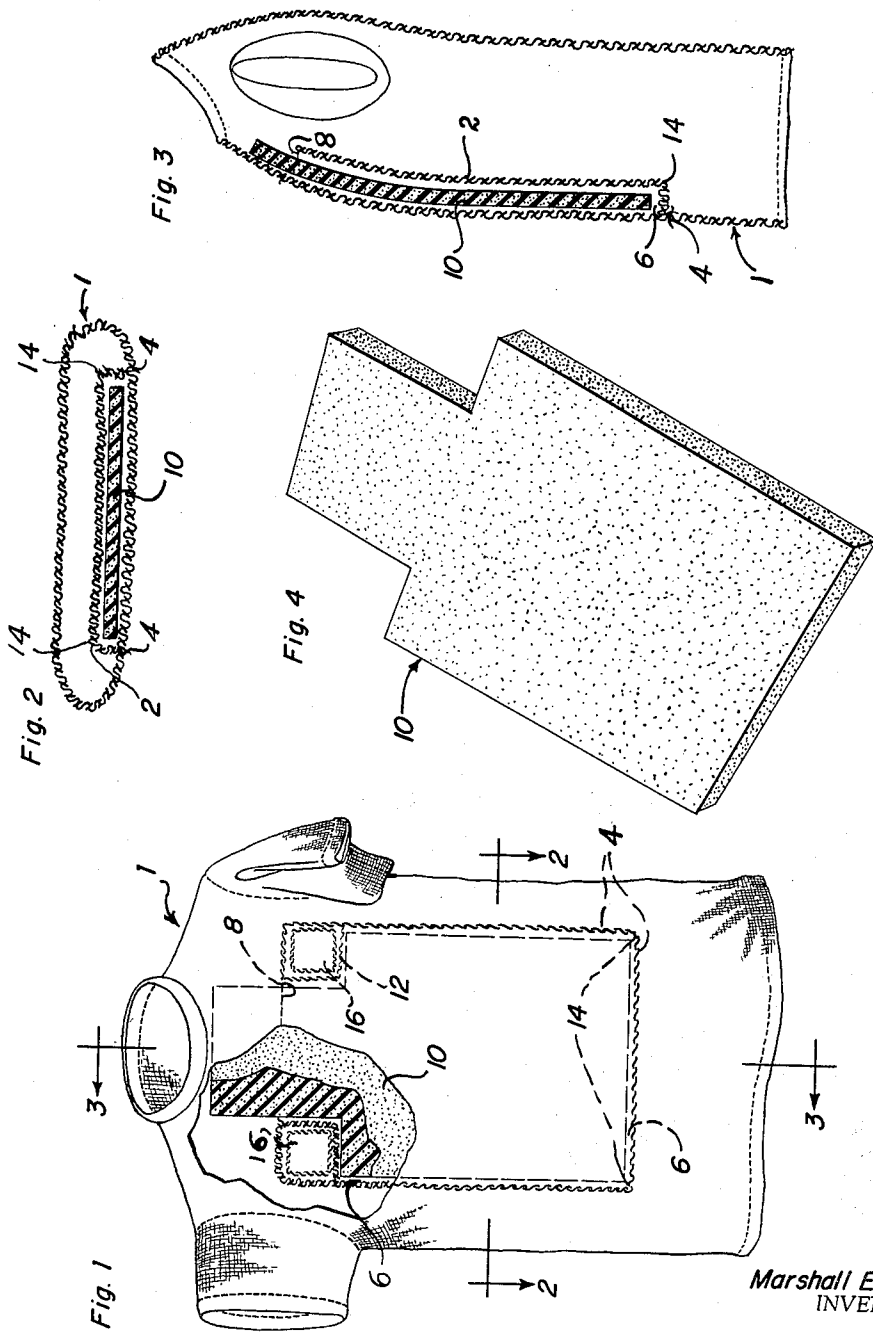
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PROTECTIVE GARMENT FOR ATHLETES

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PROTECTIVE GARMENT FOR ATHLETES
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This invention relates to improvements in protective garments for athletes and the like, and more particularly to a garment for children playing games which utilize a missile such as a ball, which could strike a child, and perhaps cause serious injury.

In the playing of games which utilize a ball and bat, the person receiving the ball or the person standing behind the bat is often unable to catch the ball or fend off the bat which could result in the player getting hit in the chest, abdomen, or other parts of the body, which could result in serious or even fatal injury.

The present invention is so designed as to absorb part of the shock and impact force of a ball should the ball find its way through the catching glove and hit the body or if a bat should be swung in such an arc as to hit the person who is immediately behind the bat in the chest or abdomen.

Various pads have been proposed heretofore, for protection of parts of the body, but these, for the most part were bulky and cumbersome and did not lend ease of movement of the athlete, as such padding did not flex and conform to the body, furthermore, the padding, for the most part, was a separate garment and usually required a hardness to hold the garment in place, which further hampered movement of the player using such a padded arrangement and increased the likelihood that such a garment would not be used.

The present invention is so constructed that it may be worn with ease, and it may be made in the form of a T-shirt which has an inside pocket or receptacle therein to receive a shock absorbing pad of sponge rubber or other elastomer sponge material, so that the elastomer sponge material may be removed from the receptacle or pocket to enable the garment to be washed or otherwise cleaned. Furthermore, the T-shirt or sweat shirt is a garment which is acceptable to young athletes.

An object of this invention is to provide a garment in which provision is made to receive a sponge like shock absorber pad of elastomer material to impede a shock from a missile.

Another object of the invention is to provide a garment having a pocket on the forward side thereof to receive a sponge elastomer shock absorber material to protect the front of the body, particularly the heart-lung area, from injury from a missile, should the player be struck thereby.

A further object of the invention is to provide, for game participants, a garment which has an open-top pocket or receptacle therein to receive a sponge elastomer shock absorber material so as to reduce injury from a fast moving ball or the like which might strike the body in the region of the heart, which could, in certain instances cause instant death.

Still a further object of the invention is to provide a sponge elastomer material retaining pocket which has a portion of the top open and is so formed that when the sponge elastomer material is distorted and fitted into the pocket or receptacle in a manner that it can not be accidentally dislodged, but may be easily distorted and removed.

Yet another object of the invention is to provide, for a T-shirt or the like, a removable protective pad for the chest area, which construction allows the garment to be washed as frequently as necessary and the pad to be washed or otherwise cleaned separately and perhaps less frequently.

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A further object of the invention is to provide, in a T-shirt, a sweat shirt, or the like, means for holding a protective pad in place, which shirt may be used without the pad when the wearer is not participating in a game, thereby reducing the amount of equipment required for players.

A still further object of the invention is to provide, particularly for young players, an athletic garment which may be padded for protection of the chest area, but which protective pad is unobtrusive and which does not impede the movement of the player.

A final object of the invention is to provide protection for participants in a rugged game, which is easy and inexpensive to apply to a garment, yet which will protect vital areas of the body either from the impact of missiles, playing pieces, or from falls.

With these objects in view and others which will become manifest as the description proceeds, reference is to be had to the accompanying drawing in which like reference characters designate like parts in the several views thereof, in which:

FIG. 1 is a front elevational view of a T-shirt showing a receptacle or pocket on the inside of the front portion of the shirt and showing a sponge or elastomer pad fitted therein, with parts being broken away and parts being shown in section to bring out the details of construction;

FIG. 2 is a sectional view taken on line 2—2 of FIG. 3, looking in the direction indicated by the arrows;

FIG. 3 is a sectional view taken on line 3—3 of FIG. 1, looking in the direction indicated by the arrows; and

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the pad of sponge elastomer material shown apart from the garment.

With more detailed reference to the drawing, the numeral 1 designates generally a shirt, such as a T-shirt, the body portion of which shirt is made to fit the contours of the person wearing it. The front portion of the shirt 1 has a piece fabric 2 stitched thereonto, as indicated at 4, so as to form a pocket or receptacle 6. The sides and bottom of the pocket are closed by stitching the fabric piece 2 to the garment. The top 8 is necked in and is left partially open to receive an elastomer sponge element, such as sponge rubber, plastic, or the like therein by distorting.

A rectangular pattern of stitching 12 is formed on each side of the necked in portion 8 and the elastomer sponge pad 10 is so formed as to be complementary to the pocket or receptacle formed with the necked in portion 8. By having the rectangular portions 12 stitched inward from the general rectangular form of the pocket or receptacle 6, the elastomer sponge or pad or shock absorber element 10, when deformed and placed within the receptacle or pocket 6, is retained in place even during the most rigorous athletic practice or play. However, the elastomer sponge pad or shock absorber element 10 may be readily deformed and removed from the receptacle or pocket 6 when it is desired to clean either the garment or the pad and the elastomer sponge pad or shock absorber element 10 may be replaced in the receptacle or pocket 6.

The use to which the garment is to be put will regulate the thickness of the elastomer pad 10 within the pocket or receptacle 6, however, for smaller children, who play with relatively soft balls, one-half to three-quarter inches of elastomer sponge padding will suffice to retard or reduce the impact of a blow on critical parts of the body. However, such thickness may be used as to perform the necessary protective function for the particular application for which it is to be used.

It is preferable to have the corners of the pockets 6 "boxed," as indicated at 14, so that the elastomer sponge

pad 10 will fit on all sides. The stitching 12 also forms a box padded portion 16.

While the invention has been described and illustrated in some particularity as being for the chest area of a T-shirt, it is to be understood that the boxed pocket or receptacle with the "necked-in" upper portion may be applied to other garments or other portions of a shirt, as the particular game requirements indicate or the needs of a particular player may indicate.

The protection provided by the present device is so simple to make and to use that the use thereof could find ready use in all sports of a character in which the chest and abdomen area is subject to injury.

Having thus clearly shown and described the invention what is claimed as new and desired to be secured by Letters Patent is:

1. A protective garment for athletes and the like comprising:
 - (a) a shirt-like garment of conventional type,
 - (b) a fabric portion superposed on the inside of the front of said garment, stitching securing the sides and the bottom of said fabric portion to said garment to form a pocket-like receptacle,
 - (c) said superposed fabric portion having stitching at the top portion thereof securing it to the shirt-like garment for a portion of the width thereof in such manner as to form a "necked-in" portion at the top of said receptacle,
 - (d) an inverted, T-shaped, deformable, elastomer, sponge-like pad complementally fitted in said pocket-like receptacle and being held in place by the "necked-in" portion formed by the stitching across a portion of the top of said pocket-like receptacle.
2. A protective garment for athletes and the like comprising:

- (a) a T-shirt like garment for covering the greater portion of the torso,
- (b) a sheet of fabric superposed on the inside of the front of said garment and stitching securing the sides and bottom of said superposed fabric sheet to said garment to form a boxed, pocket-like receptacle,
 - (1) said boxed, pocket-like receptacle having stitching across a portion of the top securing it to said garment and so arranged as to form a rectangle at each upper side of said pocket so as to form a necked-in mediate portion of lesser width than the width of the main portion of the receptacle,
- (c) an inverted, T-shaped, resilient, deformable pad of sponge-like elastomer material complementally fitted in said boxed, pocket-like receptacle, with the lower portion of the pad of greater width than the "necked-in" portion of the pocket-like receptacle,
 - (1) said pad having a "necked-in" portion which extends upward through said open, necked-in portion of said pocket-like receptacle, and
 - (2) said pad being removably held in place by said stitching which forms said necked-in top portion of said pocket-like receptacle.

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