Feb. 23, 1965 V. T. BRANDT 3,170,175

BUOYANT SWIMMING DEVICE

Filed Sept. 6, 1963

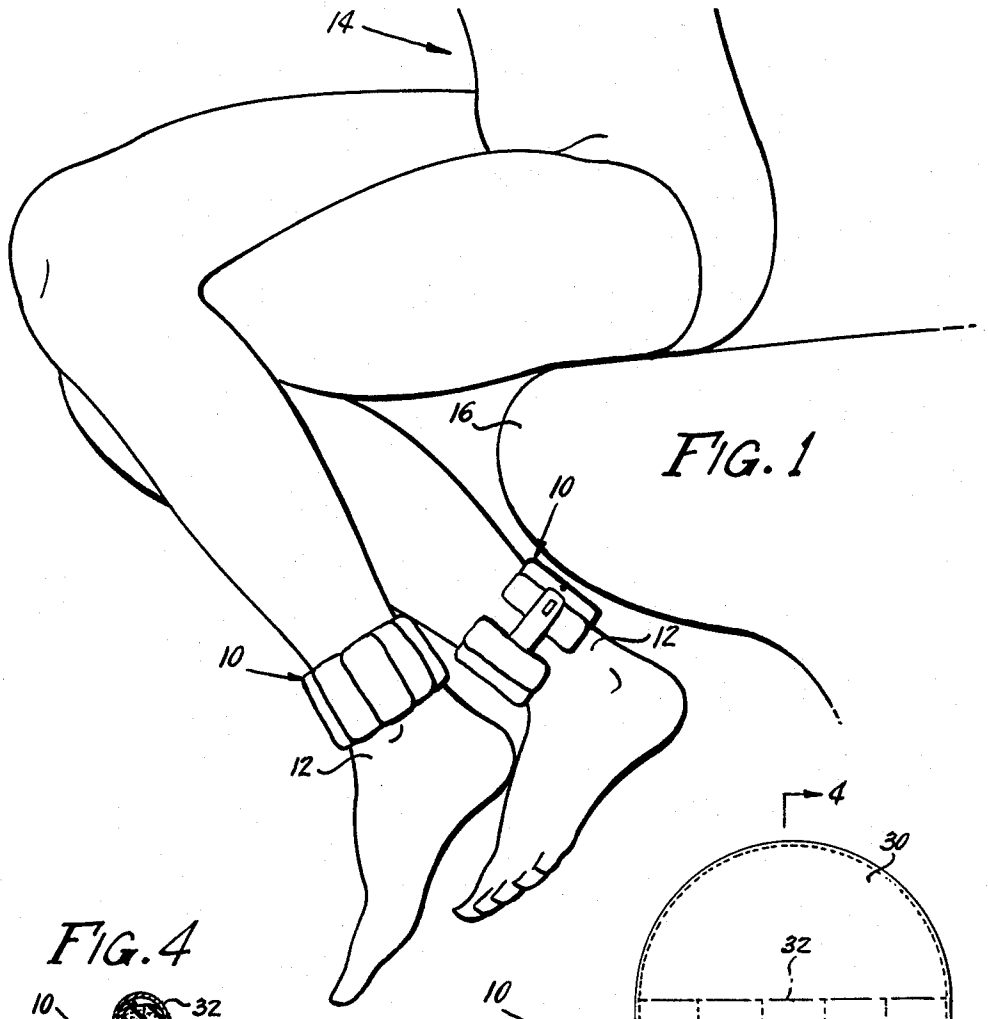


FIG. 1

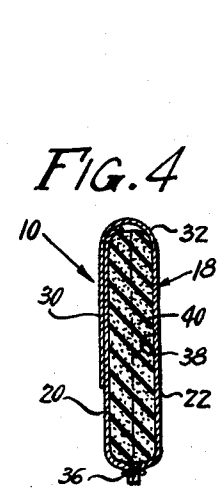


FIG. 4

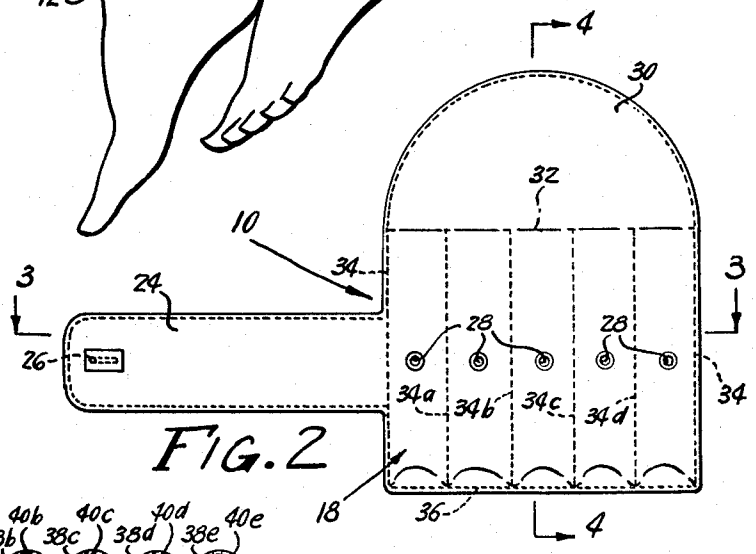


FIG. 2

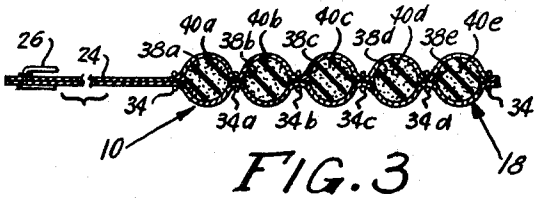


FIG. 3

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BUOYANT SWIMMING DEVICE

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This invention relates to a buoyant swimming device and relates more particularly to a device to be secured in circumscribing relation around a portion of a swimmer's body, specifically the ankles thereof, to assist in swimming and in learning to swim.

A primary object of the instant invention is the provision of a buoyant swimming device which is sturdy and durable in construction, reliable and efficient in operation, and relatively simple and inexpensive to manufacture, assemble, utilize, and maintain.

Another object of this invention is to provide a device of the type described which may be received in circumscribing relationship around the ankles of an inexperienced or learning swimmer to facilitate maintaining his legs in a freely floating condition.

Yet another object of this invention is to provide such a device which is sufficiently buoyant to maintain the swimmer's legs in floating relationship when the swimmer is relaxed and his legs are freely extended, yet insufficient to preclude lowering of the legs when downward force is exerted by the swimmer.

A further object of this invention is the provision of a buoyant swimming device which is readily adjustable to accommodate body portions of varying size.

A still further object of the instant invention is the provision of a swimming aid providing adjustable buoyant force so that swimmers of different sizes and weights may utilize the same.

An additional object of this invention is to provide a buoyant swimming device which is readily and adjustably secured in circumscribing relation to a portion of a swimmer's body.

Another object of this invention is the provision of a device of the character described which is relatively small and flat, having no buckles or other such means capable of accidentally catching on each other and tripping the user.

Other and further objects reside in the combination of elements, arrangement of parts, and features of construction.

Still other objects will in part be obvious and in part be pointed out as the description of the invention proceeds and as shown on the accompanying drawing wherein:

FIGURE 1 is a pictorial representation of a portion of a swimmer sitting on the side edge of a swimming pool or the like with a buoyant swimming device in accordance with the instant invention secured in circumscribing relation around each ankle, the right ankle being circumscribed by a "right" pattern as shown in FIGURES 2, 3, and 4, and the left ankle being circumscribed by a "left" pattern, which latter may be considered the mirror image of FIGURE 2, or exactly like FIGURE 2 except that the tab extends rightwardly from the pockets instead of leftwardly;

FIGURE 2 is a front elevational view of a "right" of the preferred embodiment of a buoyant swimming device with the related parts of its pouch means opened outwardly for illustrative clarity;

FIGURE 3 is a transverse cross-sectional view looking downwardly substantially on line 3—3 of FIGURE 2, with parts broken away for illustrative convenience; and

FIGURE 4 is a vertical cross-sectional view taken substantially on line 4—4 of FIGURE 2, with the flap cover folded inwardly in closed relationship.

Like reference characters refer to like parts throughout the several views of the drawing.

Referring now to the drawing in general, a buoyant swimming device in accordance with the instant inventive concept is designated generally by the reference numeral **10** and is shown in FIGURE 1 as secured in circumscribing relation around the ankles **12** of a swimmer shown partially at **14** as sitting on the edge of a swimming pool **16** or the like.

The buoyant swimming device **10** is comprised basically of a pouch means **18** including a first face member **20** having an inner surface adapted to be received against the body portion of the swimmer **14** when in use, a second face member **22** having an outer surface disposed away from the body portion of the swimmer **14**, a tab member **24** including a hook member **26** secured adjacent its terminal end and adapted to cooperate with one of a plurality of spaced eye members **28** secured to, or integral with, the outer surface of the second face member **22**, and a flap cover **30** hingedly secured at **32** to the second face member **22** and adapted to fold into engagement with the inner surface of the first face member **20** as shown in FIGURE 4.

The first and second face members **20** and **22**, respectively, are secured to each other along their sides as shown at **34** and bottom as shown at **36** by stitching or other conventional means to define therebetween at least one pocket **38** for removable reception of a buoyant means **40** of any conventional commercial manufacture. Preferably, a plurality of pockets **38***a*, **38***b*, **38***c*, **38***d*, and **38***e* are defined between the first and second face members **20** and **22**, respectively, by a plurality of spaced parallel stitching or other securing means **34***a*, **34***b*, **34***c*, and **34***d*, each pocket being designed to removably receive a discrete portion of buoyant means **40***a*, **40***b*, **40***c*, **40***d*, and **40***e*.

The use and operation of the device of the instant invention will now be apparent. Depending upon the size and weight of the individual utilizing the device **10**, one or a plurality of buoyant means **40** are inserted into the pockets **38** defined within the pouch means **18** with the flap cover **30** open as shown in FIGURE 2. The flap cover **30** is then folded over at **32** as shown in FIGURE 4 against the inner surface of the first face member **20** and the device **10** is wrapped around the body portion such as the ankle **12** of the swimmer **14**, the hook member **26** being selectively engaged in one of the eye members **28** depending upon the dimension of the body portion being circumscribed. The portion of the hook means which is exposed in this wrapped placement, is a flat surface which is substantially coplanar with the exposed surface of the tab. It will be noted that the flap cover **30** is held securely between the body portion and the inner surface of the first face member **20** to preclude accidental displacement of the buoyant means **40** and the flaps preferably extend downwardly. If a "right" is placed on a left ankle, the flap will extend upwardly which is less efficient in holding the buoyant means in the pocket. Thus a swimmer may use two lefts or two rights instead of the more conventional left and right.

It will be readily understood that both the pouch means **18** and the buoyant means **40** may be formed of any suitable materials. Also, the particular number of pockets **38** and relative dimension of the device **10** may be readily varied as desired. Further, while the device **10** has been illustrated as dimensioned to be received in circumscribing relation around the ankles of a swimmer, it will be understood that this device may be utilized in relation to other body portions, although it is preferably designed for

use with a portion of the leg of the swimmer as described hereinbefore.

It will now be seen that there is herein provided an improved buoyant swimming device which satisfies all of the objectives of the instant invention, and others, including many advantages of great practical utility and commercial importance. If utilized as illustrated, the device **10** will maintain the legs of the swimmer in a substantially horizontally extending floating relation. An experienced swimmer does very little kicking, depending basically on the power of his arms to propel him through the water. This device will therefore relieve the swimmer of the necessity to exert energy in maintaining his feet on the water surface, decreasing fatigue and increasing swimming efficiency. On the other hand, an inexperienced or learning swimmer has difficulty in maintaining his legs on the surface of the water since, although the remainder of the body will normally float, the legs have a tendency to sink. This device maintains the legs in a substantially horizontally extending floating relationship to assist such swimmers.

The device of the instant invention is quite flexible in use, being adapted to contain a relatively small amount of buoyant material for children or persons of slight build, while being capable of receiving larger amounts of buoyant material for swimmers of greater weight. Also, the device will readily accommodate body portions of varying dimensions.

Since many embodiments may be made of the instant inventive concept, and since many modifications may be made of the embodiments hereinbefore shown and described, it is to be understood that all matter herein is to be interpreted merely as illustrative and not in a limiting sense.

I claim:

1. A buoyant swimming device comprising pouch means including a first rectangular face flexible member,

a second similar shaped flexible member peripherally secured to said first face member along only three consecutive edges, the second edge in this series being a bottom edge thus defining a pocket between the two said members, the pocket thereby having a sealed bottom and an open top,

buoyant means received in said pocket up to the level of the top of said pocket,

a flexible flap cover extending from and across the unsecured edge of said second member and foldable over said unsecured edge and then extendable parallel to and outside of a major top portion of said first member,

a flexible tab member extending lengthwise perpendicularly from a first of said consecutive edges of said first and second face members,

hook members secured to the terminal end of said tab member constructed so as to provide a flat surface substantially coplanar with the extension of the exterior face of said second member, and including a projecting hook outstanding from the exterior face of the extension of said first face member,

and a plurality of horizontally spaced eye means at the same level as the hook means and secured to the outer surface of said second face member to selectively receive said hook,

the total horizontal length of the tab and the portion of the pocket beyond the selected eye being such as to accommodate the device to being circumscribed about varying sized portions of a swimmer's body,

whereby when the flat surface of the tab is in outermost or exposed relationship with a member of a swimmer's body, the flap cover will be both in contact with the swimmer and also held closely to the outer face of said first face member to keep the cover in closed position to thus preclude accidental displacement of said buoyant means away from said pocket.

2. A structure in accordance with claim 1 wherein

the length of the rectangular pocket portion and the tab is such as to be received in circumscribing relation to an ankle.

3. A structure in accordance with claim 2 wherein two devices comprise a set,

a first one of the devices of the set being constructed as a left and

the second of the devices of the set being constructed as a right or the mirror image of said first device,

whereby the swimmer may elect to circumscribe each device on an ankle with each tab either facing the other ankle, or each pocket portion facing the other ankle, and the flap covers both extend with their distal ends terminating downwards.

4. A structure in accordance with claim 2 wherein two devices comprise a set,

both devices of the set being of the same hand, that is, both lefts or both rights,

whereby a single design only is required by the maker, and the swimmer may elect to circumscribe either device on either ankle with each tab either facing the other ankle, or each pocket portion facing the other ankle.

5. A structure in accordance with claim 2 wherein

said first and second rectangular face flexible members are secured together along spaced parallel lines which are also parallel to and an equal length with a first one of said consecutive edges,

to define a plurality of individual pockets for the reception of individual buoyant means.

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