Sept. 18, 1928. 1,684,566

M. H. WINKLER

TEN YARD LINE

Filed July 12, 1927

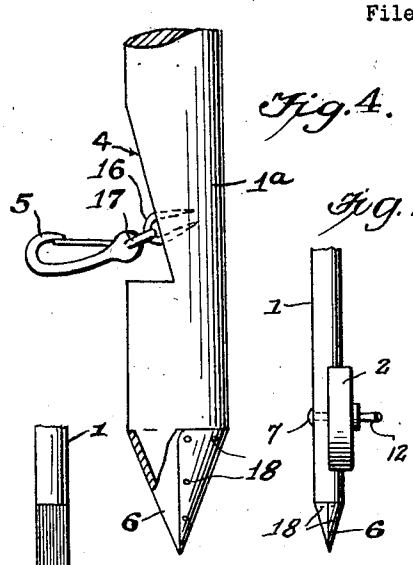


Fig. 4.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 1.

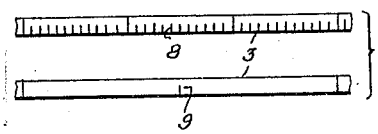


Fig. 3.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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TEN-YARD LINE.

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This invention has reference to measuring devices used in football games, consisting of what is known as a "ten yard line", and its objects are to easily determine the exact location of the ball; to obtain a precise knowledge of distance so necessary under the circumstances, to aid in the measuring off of a penalty, to facilitate the duties of a linesman, and to insure proper placement or replacement of the ball.

Heretofore, it has been customary for a ten yard line to consist merely of two uprights connected by a chain, cord, or rope, etc., with no provision for obtaining any exactness as regards the intermediate distances. Such has led to ugly situations arising in the midst of the confusion prevalent during a football game, makes the official the sole judge of determining distance, and has been the cause of much dissatisfaction on the part of players, officials, and spectators alike. However, by having at hand the means for measuring required distances such unpleasantness may be avoided and the exact distance determined.

With the above and further objects in view, the invention consists in the novel arrangement, construction, and combination of parts hereinafter described, and as illustrated in the accompanying drawing, wherein:

Figure 1 is an elevation of a ten yard line constructed in accordance with the invention,

Figure 2, a detail view illustrating the manner of affixing the measuring tape to one of the poles, and

Figure 3, a detail view of the measuring tape showing fragmentary portions of the tape in top and bottom plan.

Figure 4 is a detail view on an enlarged scale of the lower portion of one of the poles.

The ten yard line consists of two standards or poles, such as indicated at 1 and 1^a respectively. Both are preferably of the same structure, length, and material with the exception that pole 1 is cut away above its lower end to accommodate the circular case 2 in which is housed the measuring tape 3, while pole 1^a is cut away, as shown at 4, to provide a notch in which is anchored a conventional snap hook 5. The snap hook is anchored in the notch, as seen in Figure 5, by one or more staples 16 driven into the pole 1^a, as shown, and having the ring 17 of the snap hook loosely engaged therewith. Each pole has a pointed metal tip 6 secured by tacks 18 or other means about its lower extremity, and is adapted to be supported in upright position by having its pointed end thrust into the ground in the customary manner.

The tape case 2 may be of any suitable weather proof material and is suitably fastened to pole 1 by a bolt or screw 7. Any conventional tape reel may be employed in this connection but for the purposes of the invention the tape 3 is marked on its upper side in feet and inches, as seen at 8, and on its lower side in yards, as seen at 9. The tape is adapted to unroll from the case through opening 10 and its free end is provided with a ring 11 for engagement with the snap hook 5 of the pole 1^a. When not in use the tape is withdrawn into the case by turning the reel handle 12.

During the progress of a game, the ten yard line is positioned on one side of the playing field and is brought into use immediately upon the first play or "down"; one of the poles being placed in parallel alignment with the football and the other at a point ten yards distant from the ball in advance of the latter. The tape, having been previously connected to pole 1^a, is therefore stretched to its intended length and the arrangement is such that the line measures exactly ten yards from point of pole to point of pole. As is generally known, it is the primary object of the attacking team, or that team having possession of the ball, to advance the same ten yards or from pole to pole in an allotted number of "downs" against the resistance of the opposing or resisting team. Not infrequently, the advancement or set back of the ball is due to a penalty inflicted on either team as prescribed for in the rules governing the game and in measuring off the distance required in either case the result has heretofore been obtained by the official merely pacing off the distance, which is at best but an approximate measurement. Since such penalties are usually in the nature of a loss or gain in distance and may have an important bearing on the outcome of the game, an exact determination of the distance is desirable. Moreover, it is necessary after each "quarter" or period into which the time of play is divided to change the location of the ball from one part of the field to another and to so place it in its new location that its position relative to the field of play corresponds to its former position. This too has resulted in but mere guess work in determining the new location due to a lack of proper measuring instruments. With the present in-

vention, however, guess work is eliminated and exact measurements are determined by the tape which can be readily detached from pole 1^a; the latter being left in its position as a marker to prevent error as to the original location of the ten yard line. The special markings on the tape permit measurements to be made in yards and feet, and fractions thereof.

The line poles 1 and 1^a may be marked with colors, as shown at 15.

By providing a tape so mounted between line poles as hereinbefore set forth, all guess work on the part of officials is done away with and exactness, when necessary, will always be assured without the need of other than the ten yard line.

Having thus described the invention, what I claim as my invention is:

1. A ten yard line for foot ball games comprising two poles having pointed ends, one of said poles having a cut-out above its pointed end and the other pole having a notch above its pointed end, a tape case fastened in the cut-out of the first pole, a tape within the said case and adapted to unroll therefrom, and a fastener anchored in the notch of the second pole and adapted to engage the free end of the tape for detachably securing the latter to said second pole.

2. In a ten yard line for football games, a pole having a ground-penetrating end and a cut out above said end, a tape case fastened to the pole within the cut out thereof, and a tape within the said case and adapted to unroll therefrom.

3. In a ten yard line for football games comprising two poles, each of which is pointed at one end whereby it is adapted to be supported in upright position by having its pointed end thrust into the ground, a tape line, a tape reel for said line mounted on one of said poles adjacent its ground-engaging end, and means on the other pole adjacent the ground-engaging end for engaging and holding the free end of the tape line.

In testimony whereof I have affixed my signature.

MOSES H. WINKLER.