March 10, 1942. W. W. MOUCH 2,275,547

BASE MARKER

Filed Feb. 27, 1940 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1.

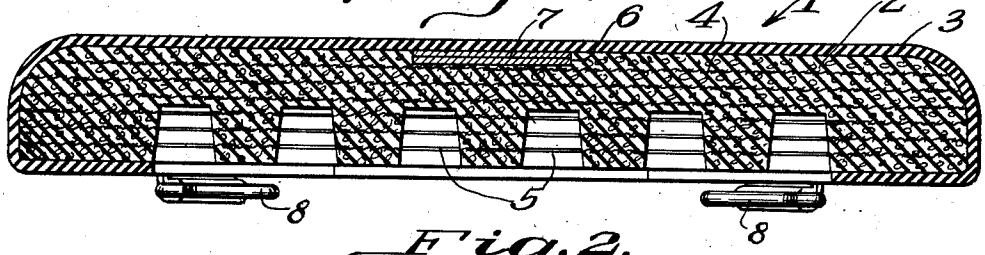


Fig. 2.

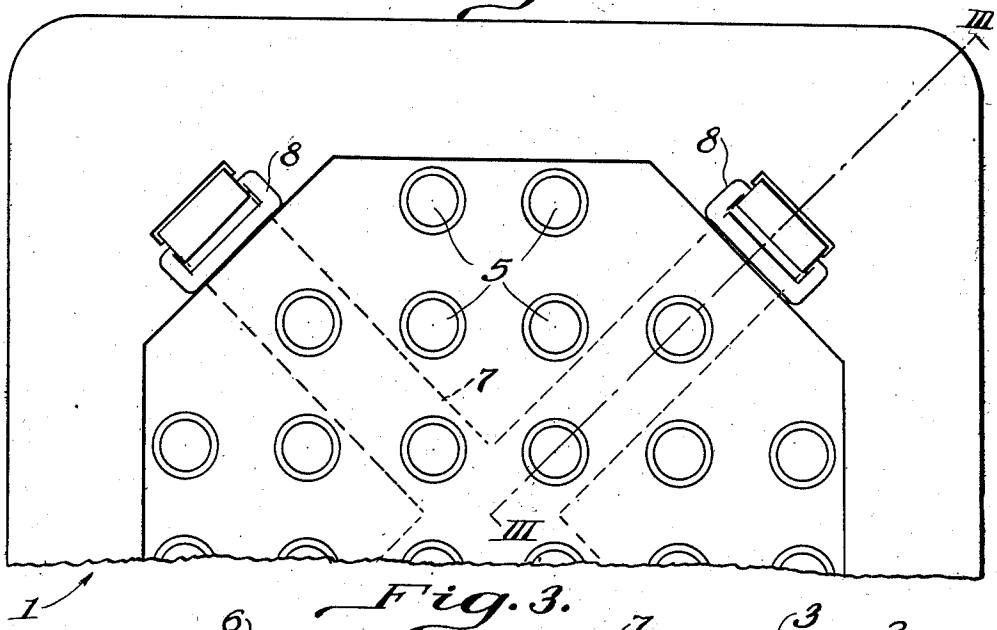


Fig. 3.

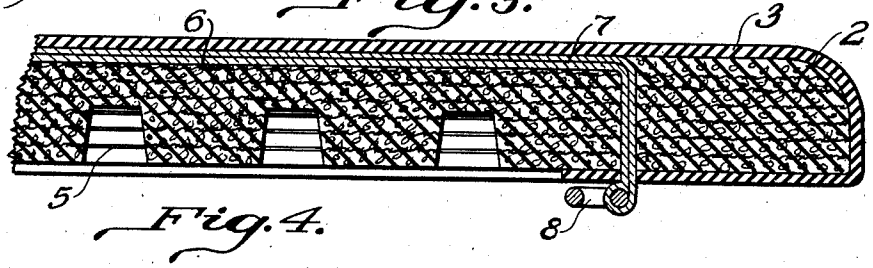
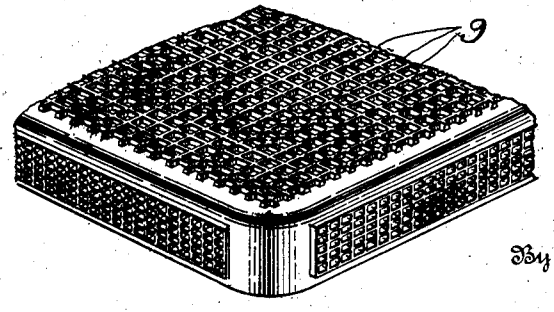


Fig. 4.



Inventor
Warren W. Mouch

By W. J. McDowell
Attorney

March 10, 1942. W. W. MOUCH 2,275,547

BASE MARKER

Filed Feb. 27, 1940 2 Sheets-Sheet 2

Fig. 5.

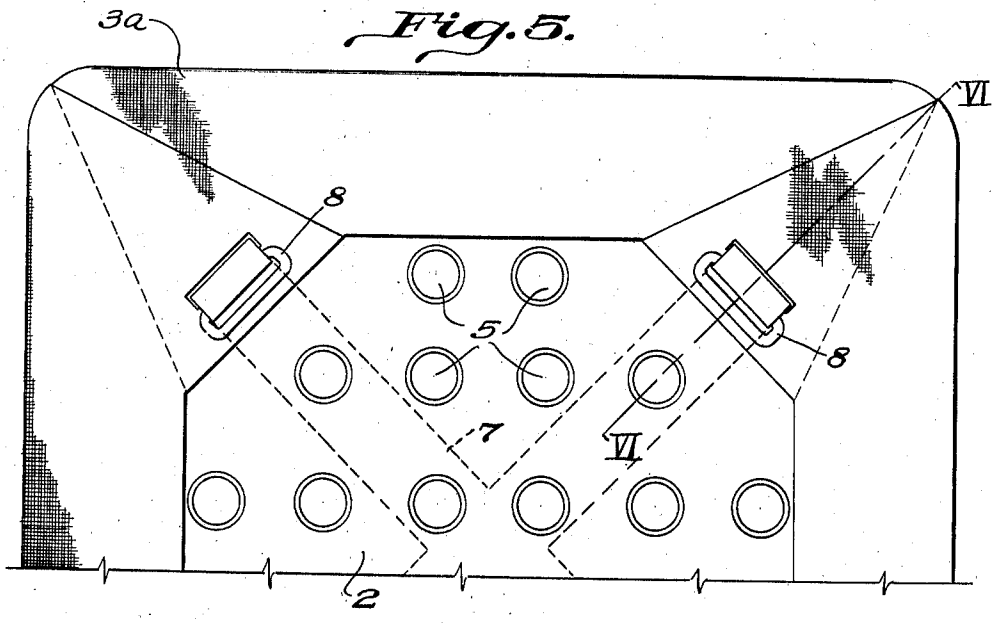
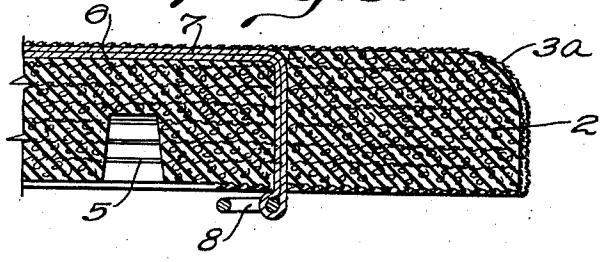


Fig. 6.



Inventor
Warren W. Mouch

By W. J. McDowell
Attorney

Patented Mar. 10, 1942 2,275,547

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,275,547

BASE MARKER

Warren W. Mouch, Columbus, Ohio

Application February 27, 1940, Serial No. 321,077

7 Claims. (Cl. 273—25)

This invention relates to athletic equipment and is more particularly directed to a base marker for use in playing various games such as baseball.

Base markers now in general use comprise fabric sacks which are filled with suitable bulk material such as sand, sawdust, clay or other similar compounds. When such markers are originally formed, they possess a rectangular configuration when viewed from the top and are from three to six inches high. As the filling material is quite solidly packed, the markers have relatively little flexibility and are apt to cause injury to a player's foot coming into forcible contact therewith. These conventional sacks are usually provided with an anchor strap which extends over the top of the marker and down the sides to suitable stake means employed in holding the markers on the playing field surface. Quite frequently in use, the cleats on the players' shoes become entangled in the exteriorly disposed anchor straps and cause the players to trip or fall, in many instances the players being seriously injured.

The conventional markers also, after being used for some time, become soft, due to the disintegration of the filling material and the stretching of the fabric, and lose their shape becoming difficult to see and more apt to wrinkle. Because of the loss in shape of the markers and the difference in thickness before and after use, the players are unable to gage the amount of yieldability and consequently when playing on different fields from time to time are apt to receive serious leg or ankle injuries.

The primary object of the present invention resides in the provision of a base marker which will avoid the objections to the conventional markers by being constructed in such manner and of such materials that it will possess the most desirable shape and height when originally constructed which will be maintained during the entire life thereof. It will be possessed of substantially the same degree of flexibility throughout the full period of usefulness and the upper surface of the marker will be smooth and unbroken so that no objectionable shoulders will be present. The anchoring straps are disposed within the marker entirely out of sight.

Another object of the invention resides in constructing a base marker with a core section and a cover section, the former being composed of a relatively resilient rubber and the latter from a tough wear-resisting rubber. A base marker of similar construction is disclosed in my co-pending application Serial No. 218,615, filed July 11, 1938, of which this application is a continuation-in-part.

It is also an object to reenforce the core section mentioned in the above paragraph by incorporating therein a group of fabric plies which will be permanently bonded with the rubber of the core section by a vulcanizing operation.

A further object resides in providing the core section of the marker with one or more channel-shaped grooves in its upper surface in which anchor strap means may be positioned prior to applying the tough wear-resisting cover section, the end portions of the anchor straps being passed downwardly through the core section to the exterior of the marker at the under side thereof where they may be provided with means for receiving a suitable anchor.

It is also proposed to increase the resiliency of the marker by providing the under side of the core section with a plurality of spaced openings.

For a further understanding of the invention, reference is to be had to the following description and the accompanying drawings in which the invention has been illustrated in the preferred form.

In the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a vertical transverse sectional view taken through a base marker formed in accordance with the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a bottom plan view of a portion of the marker shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a detail vertical sectional view taken on the plane indicated by the line III—III of Fig. 2.

Fig. 4 is a perspective view of a portion of a modified form of base marker.

Fig. 5 is a bottom plan view of a portion of a further modified form of base marker embodying a removable cover.

Fig. 6 is a detail vertical sectional view thereof taken on the plane indicated by the line VI—VI of Fig. 5.

Referring more particularly to the drawings, the numeral 1 designates the marker in its entirety. As in the co-pending application above referred to, the base marker includes a plurality of sections 2 and 3, the former being a core section which is formed of readily yieldable rubber and is substantially flat with a square configuration when viewed in plan. The corners and the upper peripheral edges of the core section 2 are rounded to remove any sharp edges which might injure the players who forcibly contact the marker.

Embedded in the body 2 is a plurality of vertically spaced reenforcing sheets 4 which may be formed of a flexible material such as canvas or other suitable fabrics. The reenforcing elements are positioned in the core section at the time of manufacture, the rubber being securely bonded to the fabric to make the core section an integral unit. The under side of the core section is provided with a plurality of spaced openings 5 which reduce the weight of the core section and also increase its resiliency. The upper side of the section 4 is formed with a cross-shaped groove 6, the arms of which extend diagonally across the section toward the corners. The grooves terminate in spaced relation from the corners in downwardly extending openings, the grooves and the openings receiving anchor straps 7. These members may be formed from leather, fabric or metal, depending upon the desires of the manufacturer and the uses to which the marker may be subjected.

After the anchor strap has been positioned in the grooves and openings in the core section, the cover section 3 is applied. The section 3 substantially surrounds the core section and is formed from a relatively tough rubber of suitable thickness. The under side of the section 3 has an opening in the center through which air may pass to the openings 5 in the core section.

In registration with the vertical anchor strap openings in the core section, the under side of the cover section is provided with openings through which the end portions of the anchor straps project. If desired, the opening in the under side of the cover section may be made sufficiently large to extend around the ends of the anchor straps, in which case the under side of the cover section would not be required to have the smaller openings. The ends of the anchor straps underneath the marker are provided with metallic links 8 which are adapted to receive spikes or other anchor pins used to secure the marker to the playing surface. While the marker has been provided with a cross-shaped anchor strap, it is obvious that a single strap could be used and extended either diagonally or directly across the marker.

After the cover section has been applied to the core section, the marker is vulcanized to integrally unite the parts and form a complete unit. Due to the fabric reenforcing elements, the marker will possess long wearing qualities and be highly resistant to breakage from rough use. By positioning the anchor straps between the core section and the inner surface of the cover section, the upper surface of the marker will be unobstructed, presenting no shoulders or sharp edges with which the cleats on the players' shoes might contact. Because of the long wearing qualities, the marker may be constructed to the most practical thickness which will be maintained throughout its life. By reason of this fact, the marker will be more desirable than conventional markers, since the players will more readily become accustomed to the size and be better able to determine the angle at which the marker should be engaged by their feet.

It is possible that by reason of the cover section having a smooth outer surface, it might become slippery during use, due to moisture from light rains or dew falling when the markers are used in the evenings. To prevent injury to the players resulting from slipping on the marker, the outer surface may be provided with a multiplicity of intersecting ribs 9 as illustrated in Fig. 4. These ribs provide the marker with a moderately rough finish which eliminates the possibility of the players' feet slipping on the marker and yet will not be apt to cause the cleats on the shoes to become caught and trip the players. The upper edges and corners are not provided with the ribs as it is believed to be more desirable to retain the smooth corners to avoid injury to the players who slide into the bases or otherwise forcibly contact the same.

In some instances, it may be found desirable to omit the tough rubber coverings and employ a canvas or other fabric cover which could be permanently attached by vulcanization or removably applied, as indicated in Figs. 5 and 6, so that it might be more readily replaced in the event it became too badly soiled or torn.

In the form of the invention shown in Figs. 5 and 6, the core section 2 is composed of resilient rubber as in the preferred form but is disposed within a fabric cover 3*a* which extends down around the sides of the core section and partially across the bottom. The cover 3*a* is removable to permit removal and replacement when occasion requires.

When the cover is composed of rubber, coloring material may be incorporated therein to give the marker a color which will make it readily visible at all times. One color, for example, which seems to be particularly advantageous for night use is yellow.

While the invention has been illustrated in but a single form, it is obvious that many minor changes may be made in the construction and relation of the various parts without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as set forth in the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A base marker comprising a flat rectangular member having a core section composed of relatively soft rubber, fabric reenforcing elements provided in said core section, said core section having a cross-shaped groove in the upper surface thereof, anchor strap means positioned in said groove, the ends of said strap means extending through said section in spaced relation from the edges thereof, link means carried by the ends of said anchor strap means, and a cover section of tough wear-resisting rubber substantially enclosing said core section, said sections being permanently united by vulcanization.

2. A base marker comprising a flat rectangular member having a core section composed of a plurality of fabric sheets impregnated with relatively resilient rubber, an anchor strap embedded in the upper portion of said core section, a cover section of tough wear-resisting rubber substantially enclosing said core section, said sections being permanently united by vulcanization, the ends of said anchor strap extending downwardly through the core and lower portion of the cover section in spaced relation from the edges thereof, and link means carried by the ends of said anchor strap.

3. A base marker comprising a flat rectangular member having a core section composed of alternate layers of rubber and fabric sheet, anchor strap means disposed in cross-shaped order and embedded in the upper portion of said core, the ends of said anchor straps extending downwardly through the core in spaced relation from the edges thereof, means provided at the ends of said anchor strap means for securing the base to a playing surface, and a cover section of tough wear-resisting rubber substantially surrounding

said core, said soft rubber fabric and cover being permanently united by vulcanization.

4. A base marker comprising a flat member having a square core section composed of alternate plies of fabric and relatively resilient rubber, a cover section of tough wear-resisting rubber substantially surrounding said core section, anchor strap means extending diagonally of the marker between the core and cover sections, the ends of said strap means extending downwardly through the core section and terminating exteriorly of the marker in spaced relation from the corners thereof, and link means carried by the outer extremities of said strap means.

5. In a playing field base marker of the type having a cover section, a core section of predetermined, definite shape removably received by said cover section, said core section being formed of relatively resilient rubber, and anchor strap means having a portion over the core section extending between the cover and the core section.

6. In a playing field base marker of the type having a cover section, a core section comprising a body formed of relatively resilient rubber reenforced with horizontally extending plies of fabric, said core section having a predetermined definite shape and being capable of always reassuming said shape upon removal of weight applied thereto, and anchor strap means having a portion over the core section extending between the cover and the core section.

7. A base marker comprising a flat rectangular member having a core section composed of a plurality of fabric sheets impregnated with relatively resilient rubber, an anchor strap recessed into the upper portion of said core section, a cover section of tough wear-resisting material substantially enclosing said core section, the ends of said anchor strap extending downwardly through the core and lower portion of said cover section in spaced relation from the edges thereof, and means carried by said strap for the reception of anchor spike means.

WARREN W. MOUCH.