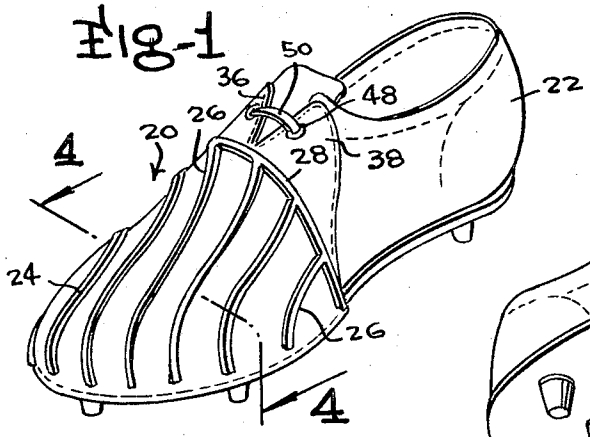
Aug. 25, 1970 R. C. RANDALL, JR 3,525,165

FOOTBALL SHOE CONSTRUCTION

Filed Aug. 12, 1968

Fig-1



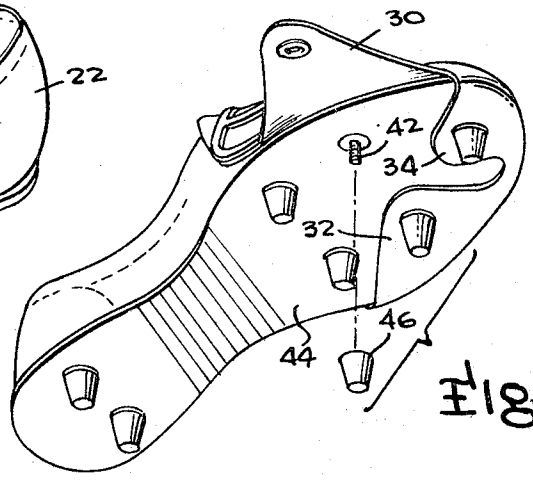


Fig-2

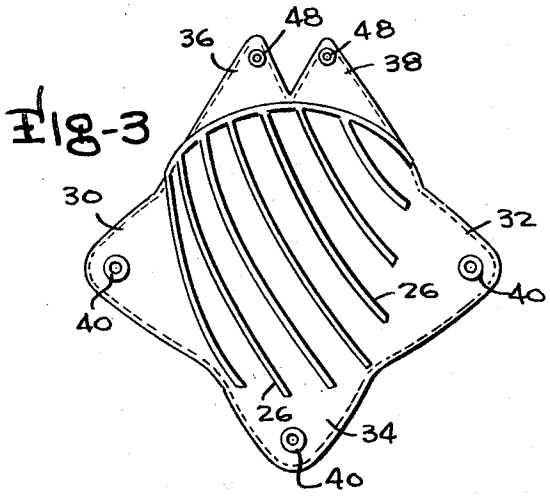


Fig-3

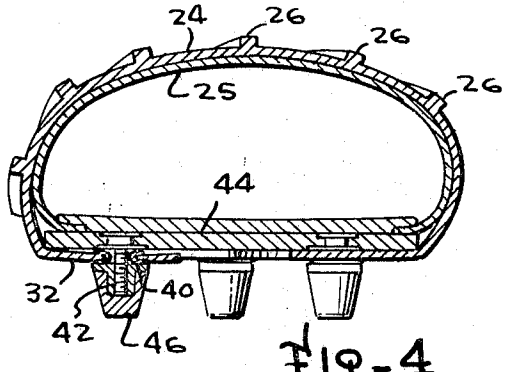


Fig-4

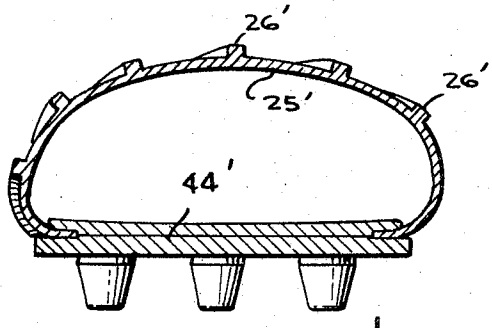


Fig-6

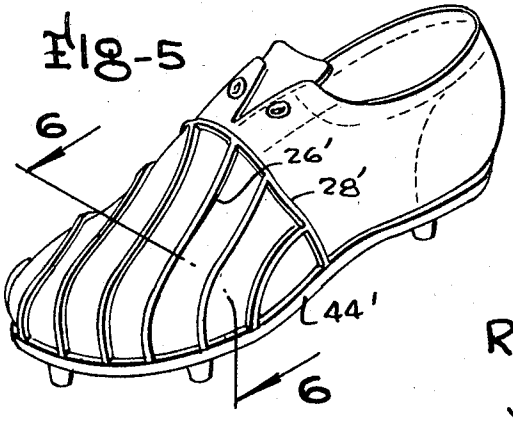


Fig-5

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FOOTBALL SHOE CONSTRUCTION

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Int. Cl. A43b 00/00
U.S. Cl. 36—2.5 7 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A football shoe in which the toe portion is provided with upwardly extending friction enhancing ridges oriented at an angle of approximately 60° with respect to the axis of the shoe with one embodiment employing the toe portion in the form of a removable cap being attachable to the shoe by holes in the end of tabs folded beneath the sole of the shoe to fit over the cleat lugs of the shoe and to be retained in position by the cleats.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention is related to the field of footwear and is specifically directed to footwear for use by football players. Being more specific, the invention is directed to a football shoe construction in which the toe portion of the shoe is provided with friction enhancing ridges for enabling the obtainment of a greater degree of spin of the football about its axis when kicked by a player.

Many previously known football shoe constructions have attempted to incorporate means for enhancing the ability of the wearer to punt, place kick or drop kick a football with greater dexterity so as to achieve additional distance in his kick or additional accuracy of the kick. Improvements in this field have been directed to both unitary shoe constructions and to attachments for connection to a conventional shoe.

For example, U.S. Pat. No. 1,677,370 discloses a soft toe apparatus **9** etc. built into the shoe for aiding in the kicking of a football. Another U.S. Pat. No. 2,661,547 discloses a toe member formed of rigid material permanently affixed to the margins of the sole of the shoe. The device of this patent obviously would constitute a great hazard to the other players and has consequently failed to be accepted by the sport.

Another construction illustrated in U.S. Pat. No. 726,198 employs a toe cap formed of rubber or the like permanently connected to the toe by sewing or pasting thereto.

Other football kicking aids have employed attachments connectable to a shoe by means of straps or the like such as is shown in U.S. Pat. Nos. 3,348,842 and 2,782,531. Unfortunately, devices of this sort tend to become dislodged during use and consequently have not been accepted by the sport. Moreover, none of the previously known attachment devices provide means capable of fixedly maintaining the attachment in the exact proper position on the shoe so as to enable consistency of kicking results.

The primary defect of the prior shoes with built-in kicking surfaces is that they have been heavy and bulky and constitute a hazard to the other players.

Therefore, the prior art devices have suffered from a number of defects such as being expensive to manufacture, dangerous to the user and other participants, unreliable and in general failing to provide any substantial kicking benefits to the user.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

This invention comprises the provision of a football shoe having a toe portion formed with upward extending friction enhancing ridges oriented at an angle of approximately 60° with respect to the longitudinal axis of the shoe in the portion of the toe portion engaged by a football during kicking operation. Moreover, one embodiment of this invention provides for the toe portion to be removable in that it is connected to the shoe by means of tabs extending beneath the sole of the shoe and having openings in their ends receivable over the cleat lugs extending downwardly from the sole. The tabs are clamped in position by tightening of the cleats on the lugs in an obvious manner so as to eliminate all possibility of the attachment becoming detached from the shoe.

Therefore, it is the primary object of this invention to provide a new and improved football shoe toe construction.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of one embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 2 is a bottom perspective view of the embodiment of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a top plan view of the embodiment of FIG. 1;

FIG. 4 is a sectional view taken along lines **4—4** of FIG. 1;

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a second embodiment; and

FIG. 6 is a sectional view taken along lines **6—6** of FIG. 5.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

The object of this invention is obtained by the provision of a football shoe construction having two embodiments, one of which is a permanent unitary shoe construction and the other of which is in the form of a removable attachment connectable to a conventional football shoe.

The first embodiment illustrated in FIG. 1 comprises a removable attachment generally designated **20** which is attached to a conventional football shoe **22** in a manner to be discussed hereinafter.

Attachment **20** comprises a toe cover **24** having an upper or outer friction enhancing surface over its entire extent. The friction enhancing surface comprises a plurality of ribs **26** each being of square cross-sectional configuration. The rearward termination of the friction enhancing ribs is in the form of a traverse laterally oriented rib **28** located in a plane extending transversely with respect to the shoe. The forward end of each of the friction enhancing ridges is adjacent the sole of the shoe.

Connector means for attaching attachment **20** to the shoe is in the form of two side lugs **30** and **32** and a forward lug tab **34**. Moreover, the connecting means for attaching the attachment to the shoe also includes a pair of rearward lacing tabs **36** and **38**. Each of the lug tabs is provided with a metal grommet **40** having an opening which is fitted over the cleat lug **42** extending downwardly from the sole **44** of the shoe.

FIG. 4 illustrates the manner in which the grommet fits over the lug so that a cleat **46** can be screwed downwardly to abut against the tab to retain the attachment in place. The manner of attachment is also clearly illustrated in FIG. 2.

Moreover, the lacing tabs **36** are provided with a lacing grommet **48** alignable with a lacing opening in the shoe so that the shoe's lacing **50** lacingly attaches the lacing tabs **36** to the shoe in an obvious manner best illustrated in FIG. 1.

FIGS. 5 and 6 illustrate the second embodiment of the invention in which the friction enhancing surface is formed as part of the shoe toe surface os that ribs **26'** extend upwardly from the toe **25'** of the shoe. The ridges **26'** are oriented in exactly the same manner as the ridges **26** discussed previously and extend from a rearward trans-

verse ridge 28' as shown in FIG. 5. Moreover, the forward termination of the ridges is adjacent the sole 44' as shown in FIGS. 5 and 6.

It should be understood that many variations of this invention will occur to those skilled in the art which will not depart from the spirit and scope of this invention as set forth in the following claims.

I claim:

1. A kicking aid for removable attachment to a football shoe of the type having cleat lugs for enabling the attachment and removal of the cleats from the shoe, said aid comprising a relatively flexible toe cover portion covering the toe portion of the shoe, a friction enhancing surface forming the top surface of said toe cover portion including a plurality of upwardly etxending ridges for imparting additional spin to a football kicked by the wearer of the shoe and connector means comprising a plurality of lug tabs each having an opening on one end fittable over one of said cleat lugs so that the subsequent attachment of a cleat to the said one of said lugs clamps the tab in position and lacing tabs having openings aligned with the lacing openings of the shoe for enabling a lacing attachment of the lacing tabs to the upper portion of the shoe for maintaining said kicking aid on the football shoe.

2. The invention of claim 1 wherein said friction enhancing surface includes a plurality of upwardly extending spaced ridges.

3. The invention of claim 2 wherein said toe cover and tab means are formed of leather.

4. The invention of claim 3 wherein the hole in each tab is in a metal grommet fixedly attached to the tab.

5. A football shoe having a toe portion formed of a friction enhancing surface including a plurality of upwardly extending parallel ridges oriented at an angle of approximately 60° with respect to the longitudinal axis of the shoe, said ridges being positioned across the entire toe portion of the shoe.

6. The invention of claim 5 wherein the rearward termination of said ridges is in the form of a lateral plane oriented rearward ridge and the front termination of said friction enhancing ridges is adjacent the sole of the shoe.

7. The invention of claim 6 wherein each ridge is of square cross-sectional shape.

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PATRICK D. LAWSON, Primary Examiner