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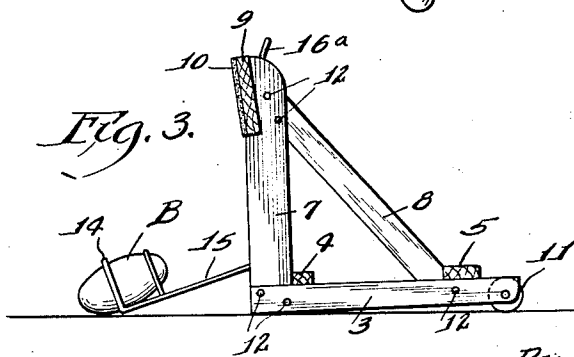
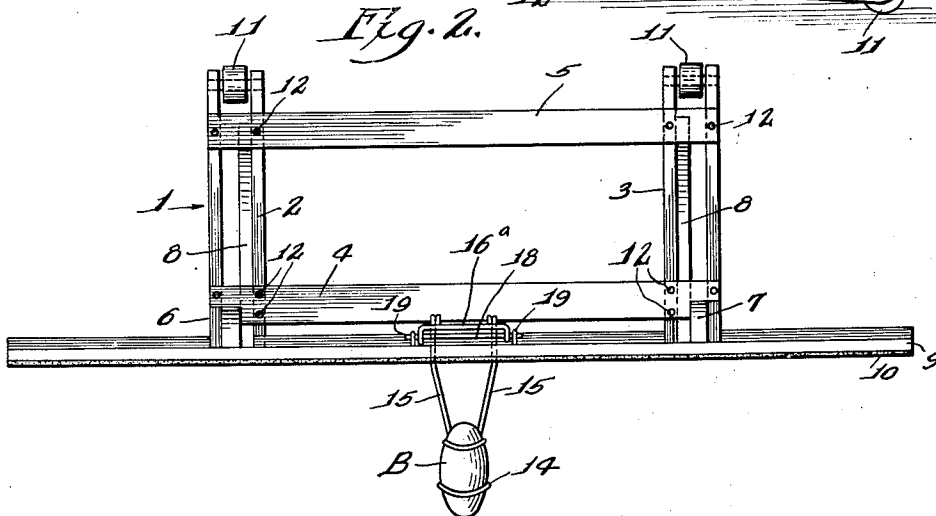
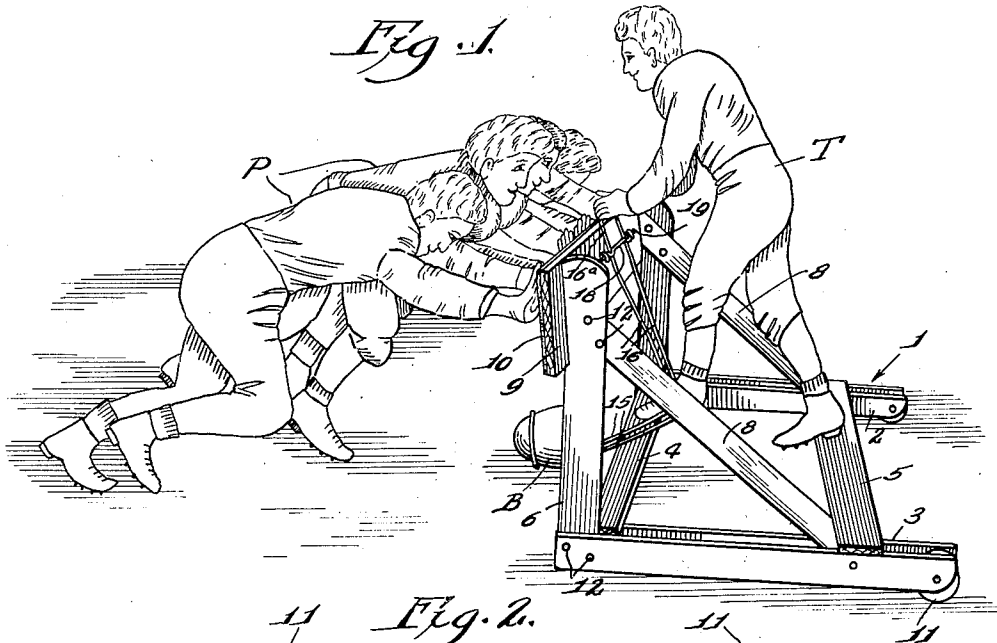
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2,521,649

CHARGING APPARATUS FOR FOOTBALL PLAYERS

Filed June 11, 1947

2 Sheets-Sheet 1



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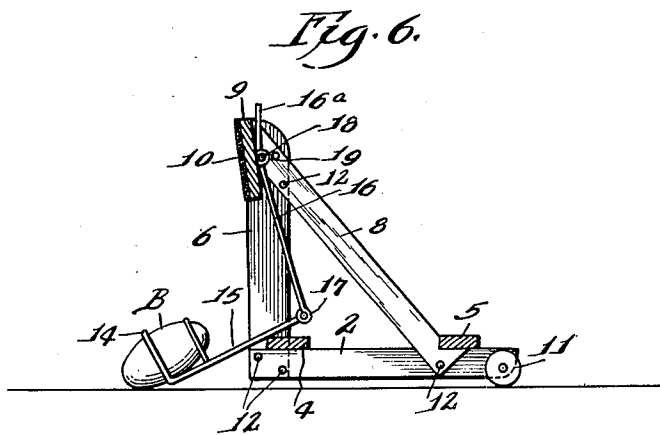
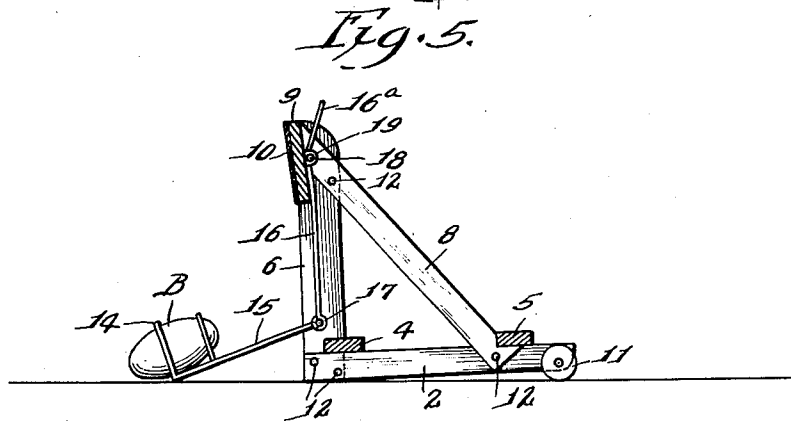
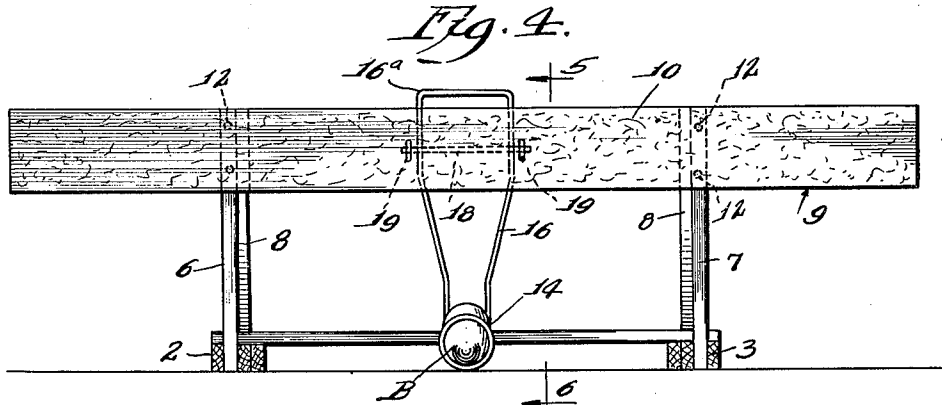
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CHARGING APPARATUS FOR FOOTBALL PLAYERS

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2 Sheets-Sheet 2



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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CHARGING APPARATUS FOR FOOTBALL PLAYERS

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9 Claims. (Cl. 273—55)

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Various types of apparatuses to be charged by football players, in practising, have heretofore been proposed and some of them have been used more or less. So far as I am aware, each such prior apparatus has been designed to develop some one or two things in an individual player or, sometimes, even two players. While individual training is needed, the most important need—team work—has benefited little from the use of such apparatuses.

The object of the present invention is to produce a simple and novel charging apparatus that is not confined to the teaching, training and developing of individuals, but which is especially useful in carrying out mass tactics, thereby developing precise team work, permitting ready comparison of players in action and instantly revealing carelessness, laziness, lack of capacity for coordination, lack of spirit or lack of condition of any player in a group.

Further, specific objects of the invention may be said to produce a charging apparatus that makes daily workouts with the same interesting and attractive, instead of being a drudgery; that trains players to line up to the ball rapidly in proper starting positions; that trains players to keep their eyes on the ball when lined up and to charge instantly when the ball is moved; that trains players to charge hard and low and to follow up each charge with a fast leg drive; that makes it easy to accentuate the importance of the straight arm and greatly to increase its effectiveness; that develops arm drive charges with leg drives; that makes it possible to create perfect coordination in both line and back field charging; that trains a player in the art of pulling out of the line; and that develops strength, speed, agility and alertness in individual players, sharpens their reflexes and, in general, improves their mental and physical condition.

The various features of novelty whereby the present invention is characterized will hereinafter be pointed out with particularity in the claims, but, for a full understanding of the invention and of its objects and advantages, reference may be had to the following detailed description taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective view showing, in actual use on the training field, a charging apparatus constituting a preferred form of my invention; Fig. 2 is a top plan view, on a smaller scale, of said apparatus; Figs. 3 and 4 are, respectively, a side view and a front view of the apparatus; and Figs. 5 and 6 are sections on line 5—6 of

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Fig. 4, showing, respectively, the normal idle positions of the parts and their positions during motion of the apparatus when properly charged.

Referring to the drawings, 1 represents a base or platform, preferably in the form of a rectangular frame work. In the arrangement shown, the platform comprises two like, parallel side beams 2 and 3, each of which is conveniently made of two thick boards about six inches wide standing on edge and spaced a few inches apart; together with two cross members 4 and 5 on top of the beams, one near the front ends and the other a foot or so from the back ends. These cross members are planks stiff enough, when they have a length of about six feet, to support the weight of several persons standing on the platform, each with one foot on the front cross member and the other foot on the rear cross member. Uprights 6 and 7 rise from the front ends of the beams to a height of about three and one half feet, or a little less, each being backed by a brace 8 extending from a point near the upper end of the upright to a point near the rear end of the corresponding beam. Spanning the space between the upper ends of the uprights is a plank 9 placed on edge and ten or twelve feet long, depending on the number of players that are to use the charger at one time, and is in the neighborhood of a foot wide. The front side of this plank or board may be covered by a suitable cushion 10. I have found that a structure built throughout of boards or planks two inches thick is satisfactory.

The structure just described is provided with rolling supporting means at the rear, the front end being adapted to rest on the ground. In the arrangement shown, each of the beams 2 and 3 has at its rear end a roller 11 positioned between the two elements of the beam; the rollers projecting down far enough to hold the rear end of the structure raised above a flat surface on which the rollers are resting.

The plank or board 9 is preferably so mounted on the uprights that when the apparatus is resting on level ground, the plank or board tilts forward at the top as shown in Figs. 3 and 5; an angle of about ten degrees having been found to be satisfactory in the actual use of the apparatus by experienced football players.

The various parts constituting the rigid structure of the apparatus may be secured together in any suitable manner, preferably by means of bolts 12, to permit the apparatus to be kept in a knocked down condition for shipping and storage

and for ready assemblage when the apparatus is to be set up for use.

In the use of the apparatus the plank or board 9 represents the opposing line of a football team against which the practising players are operating. In order more closely to simulate the conditions present in an actual game when two teams line up, I provide a football that is placed on the ground between the charging apparatus and the practising players and that may be moved back by an instructor standing on the platform; thus giving the signal that the line shall charge. In the arrangement shown, an ordinary football B is mounted in a holder 14 composed of heavy wire or light rod material and having two arms or stems 15, extending rearwardly therefrom below the ball and parallel to the axis of the latter. A rocker, 16 conveniently of the hair pin type, is mounted on the back of the plank or board 9, at the center of the latter, so as to swing about a horizontal, transverse axis. The free ends of the legs of the hair pin are hinged to the arms or stems 15 of the ball holder at 17, so that the ball holder may swing up and down relatively to the rocker. In the arrangement shown, the legs of the rocker are connected by a cross element 18 or axle a short distance from the closed end of the rocker; the ends of this axle being engaged in staples 19 driven into the board 9 and serving as bearings for the axle. The parts are so proportioned that the upper end of the rocker projects a little above the board and thus is in easy reach of an instructor T standing on the platform with his hands normally resting on the upper edge of the board. The upper arm 16^a of the rocker slants back a little from the lower arm. Therefore, when the upper end of the rocker is pulled back, as in Fig. 5, the lower arm is laid flat against the back face of board 9 and determines the distance between the ball on the ground and the charger structure. When the instructor desires to snap the ball, he need only strike the upper arm of the rocker with the heel of the palm of his hand and thereby cause the ball to be drawn back sharply to the position that it occupies in Fig. 6.

In using the apparatus, it is placed in any desired location with the ball on the ground in its forward position. A number of players are lined, as for scrimmage, in front of the ball, parallel to the board 9 that represents the opponents. An instructor takes his place on the platform as in Fig. 1 and, if more weight is required, additional ballast, human or otherwise, may be added. Without forewarning, the ball is snapped and the players charge as they would against an opposing line. In charging, the players crouch and extend their arms straight ahead; the palms of their hands held so as to come flat against board 9. The thrusts against the board tend to rock the entire apparatus upward about the common axis of the rollers. Therefore, if the charging of the players is sufficiently sharp, the front end of the apparatus is lifted clear of the ground, leaving it with its rolling support the only contact with the ground. In other words, while the front end of the loaded structure is resting on the ground, only a strong force can drive the apparatus back, just as the opponent met by a charging player will not yield to a weak charge. However, just as an opponent will yield, when hit hard enough, and can then be forced back at an accelerated speed, so properly charging players will overcome the resistance of the apparatus and drive it back rapidly. The forward slant of board 9 serves to bring about a direct lifting component

in the thrust against the board by the players and to avoid any tendency of the players' hands to slide upward off the board when pressing against the same.

It will be seen that the instructor or other observer can detect the slightest fault in any or all of a group of players in starting and carrying out a charge and can, therefore, quickly correct any faults or dismiss a player who may not be able or willing to perform as required.

The apparatus is not confined to practise in line charging but may serve many purposes. Thus, speed in lining up may be developed; pulling a player out of line may be practised; back field charging may also be practised.

It will thus be seen that I have produced an apparatus that is unique in construction and manner of use and which, when properly used, may be made a most important factor in the development of skilful, well conditioned football teams capable of putting forth the maximum effort that is humanly possible.

It is not believed to be necessary to dwell further on the manner of using my new apparatus, as those who know football well will understand how the various aims set forth in the aforesaid objects of the invention may be attained. For example, a whole team may be lined up before the charger to practise the most intricate of plays; all of them developing alertness and improving in the speed of their reactions and timing, whereas the line men, in addition, strengthen all of the muscles that come into play in charging.

While I have illustrated and described with particularity only a single preferred form of my invention, I do not desire to be limited to the exact details thus illustrated and described, but intend to cover all forms and arrangements that come within the definitions of my invention constituting the appended claims.

I claim:

1. In an apparatus of the character described, a long platform adapted to rest on the ground at its front edge, rolling supports at the rear end of the platform to hold the major part of the latter clear of the ground, risers on the front of the platform and a long, wide board fastened to the risers in a horizontal, on-edge position at such an elevation as to be encountered by the outstretched hands of a player charging toward the same in the proper crouching position, the front end of the platform forming with the risers and the board a frame surrounding a large opening through which the ground directly in front of the apparatus is visible to a coach standing on the platform.

2. In an apparatus of the character described, a long platform adapted to rest on the ground at its front edge, roller supports at the rear of the platform to hold the major part of the latter clear of the ground, risers on the front of the platform, and a long, wide board fastened to the risers in a horizontal, on-edge position at such an elevation as to be encountered by the outstretched hands of a player charging toward the same in the proper crouching position; the board having a forward and upward slope, whereby a push against and normal to the front face tends to lift the front end of the apparatus off the ground.

3. In an apparatus of the character described, a long platform adapted to rest on the ground at its front edge, roller supports at the rear of the platform to hold the major part of the latter clear of the ground, risers on the front of the

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platform, and a board from ten to twelve feet long fastened to the risers in a horizontal, upwardly and forwardly sloping, on-edge position at such an elevation as to be encountered by the outstretched hands of a player charging toward the same in the proper crouching position and also to permit the hand of a coach standing on the platform to rest on the board.

4. In an apparatus of the character described, a frame-like structure comprising a platform composed of parallel, spaced beams and transverse members on and connecting the beams together, rolling supports for the rear ends of the beams to hold the rear of the platform raised while the front end is resting on the ground, risers fixed to the front ends of the beams, and a long, wide board fastened to the risers in a horizontal, on-edge position and at such elevation as to be in the path of the outstretched hands of charging players who are crouched as in an actual football game, the front end of the platform forming with the risers and the board a frame surrounding a large opening through which the ground directly in front of the apparatus is visible to a coach standing on the platform.

5. In an apparatus of the character described, a frame-like structure comprising a platform composed of parallel, spaced beams and transverse members on and connecting the beams together, rolling supports for the rear ends of the beams to hold the rear of the platform raised while the front end is resting on the ground, risers fixed to the front ends of the runners, and a long, wide board fastened to the risers in a horizontal, on-edge position and at such elevation as to be in the path of the outstretched hands of charging players who are crouched as in an actual football game; a football, a holder for the ball, and means to mount the holder movably on said structure in a manner to cause the ball to rest on the ground in front of said structure and to be drawn back in simulation of snapping a football in a football game.

6. In an apparatus of the character described, a frame-like platform composed of parallel, spaced beams and two transverse members on and connecting the beams together, one member being at the rear and the other being at some distance rearwardly from the front, rolling supports for the rear ends of the beams to hold the rear of the platform raised while the front end is resting on the ground, risers fixed to the beams in front of the forward frame member and a long, wide board fastened to the risers in a horizontal,

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on-edge position and at such elevation as to be in the path of the outstretched hands of charging players who are crouched as in an actual football game.

7. A charging apparatus comprising a structure composed of a movable platform on which an instructor may stand, a long, wide, horizontal board arranged on edge above the front of the platform, supporting members for the board rising from the platform, a football; and means, including an element operable by the instructor, forming a holder for the ball, movably connected to said structure to allow the ball to rest on the ground in front of the platform and to move it rearwardly in simulation of the snapping of a football from scrimmage.

8. A charging apparatus comprising a rectangular movable platform on which an instructor may stand, uprights near opposite front corners of the platform, a long, wide, horizontal board arranged on edge spanning the upper ends of and fastened to the uprights, a vertical rocker mounted on the board at the middle of the latter, a football, and a holder for the ball hinged to the lower end of the rocker and extending forward to place the ball on the ground in advance of the platform.

9. A charging apparatus for use by football players comprising a movable platform on which coaches may stand, said platform having at the front end a wall rising to the height of forwardly stretched hands of conventionally charging players and high enough to allow such coaches to rest their hands on top of the same, said wall being sufficiently open to make it possible for such coaches to view the ground immediately in front of the apparatus over the entire width traversed by the charging players; a football, a holder for the ball, and means to mount the holder on said wall in a manner to cause the ball to rest on the ground in front of the platform and permit the same to be drawn back by one of said coaches in simulation of snapping the ball in a game.

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