BASEBALL GLOVE WITH ILLUMINATED TARGET AREA

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ABSTRACT

An illuminating sports glove is disclosed that includes a baseball or softball glove and at least one integrated illumination system. Each illumination system includes at least one power source, at least one lamp means, and at least one switch. Preferably, the baseball glove is a catcher's mitt with covered LEDs integrated into the outer rim of the catching side of the catcher's mitt. When the switch is in a closed position, the catcher's mitt presents an illuminated target pattern. The illuminated glove provides a target at which a thrower of an object can aim.
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CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] Not Applicable.

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

[0002] Not Applicable.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0003] This invention relates to baseball or softball gloves, and more particularly to such gloves having illuminated targets.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0004] Baseball gloves are well known in the art. Various forms of baseball gloves have developed after becoming accepted in the late 1800's. Overtime, baseball gloves have evolved into various shapes and sizes for different purposes and preferences. [0005] One example of this specialization is the development of catcher's mitts. In baseball, the catcher is responsible for catching balls pitched from the pitcher. As a professional pitcher can throw a ball in excess of 90 miles-per-hour, a catcher mitt has more padding then other types of baseball gloves. In addition, a catcher's mitt provides a target at which a pitcher aims. Typically, catcher's mitts are round in shape, providing a distinct target for the pitcher.

[0006] Baseball is a popular sport in America, and played under a variety of conditions. As baseball is typically played outside, the lighting conditions will vary greatly throughout the day and can be affected by cloudy weather. Therefore, a need exists for a baseball glove that can be illuminated to provide an easily seen target for the thrower of a ball. Preferably, the illuminated glove will indicate the center or pocket of the glove to improve the accuracy of the throw.

[0007] The prior art includes a baseball glove that lights up after being impacted by a baseball. (Rawlings LS85R Lightning Series 8.5" Youth Light Up Baseball Glove). However, this glove does not teach using an illuminated glove to provide a target before a ball is thrown. Also, this glove teaches using a light in the web portion of a baseball glove, but does not teach how to provide an illumination means in the edges of a catcher's mitt. Therefore a need exists for a baseball glove that provides an illuminated target, especially for a catcher's mitt, as the accuracy of a pitch is an important part of baseball and affects whether the pitch is called a strike or a ball.

[0008] Therefore, there is a need for a baseball glove that provides an illuminated target pattern presenting a readily seen target. The present invention accomplishes these objectives.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] The present device is an illuminating sports glove, such as a baseball or softball glove. The illuminating glove includes a glove and at least one illumination system integrated into the glove. Each illumination system includes at least one power source, at least one lamp means, and at least one switch electrically disposed between the at least one power source and the at least one lamp means. When the at least one switch is in a closed position, the at least one power source powers the at least one lamp means.

[0010] In a preferred embodiment, the glove is a catcher's mitt with the at least one lamp means integrated into the outer rim of the catching side of the catcher's mitt. When the at least one switch is in a closed position, the catcher's mitt presents an illuminated target pattern. The illuminated target pattern provides a target at which a thrower of an object can aim. A more visible target increases the opportunity for an accurate throwing of an object.

[0011] The at least one lamp means is covered by a non-opaque protective material integrated into the outer rim of the catching side of the catcher's mitt. The protective material protects the at least one lamp means from the impact of baseballs or softballs and protects from the harsh playing conditions of baseball or softball. A preferred embodiment of the at least one lamp means includes a plurality of LEDs integrated into the outer rim of the catching side of the catcher's mitt.

[0012] The present invention is an illuminated glove that produces an illuminated target pattern presenting a readily seen target. Other features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following more detailed description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, which illustrate, by way of example, the principles of the invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0013] FIG. 1 is a front perspective view of the invention, illustrating a glove and an illumination system;

[0014] FIG. 2 is a front perspective view of the invention, illustrating an embodiment of the at least one lamp means using LED lights;

[0015] FIG. 3 is a front perspective view of the invention, illustrating an embodiment of the at least one lamp means using tube-like light strips; and

[0016] FIG. 4 is a right-side perspective view of the invention, illustrating an integrated power source.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0017] With respect to the drawings, FIG. 1 illustrates an illuminating sports glove 10, such as a baseball or softball glove 10. The illuminating sports glove 10 includes a baseball glove 20 and at least one illumination system 30 integrated into the baseball glove 20. The glove is preferably a traditional leather glove, but a leather-like material may be used, if desired. Each illumination system 30 includes at least one power source 32, at least one lamp means 34, and at least one switch 36 electrically disposed between the at least one power source 32 and the at least one lamp means 34. When the at least one switch 36 is in a closed position, the at least one power source 32 powers the at least one lamp means 34.

[0018] In one embodiment, the at least one switch 36 is electrically disposed between the at least one power source 32 and the at least one lamp means 34 via a conductor means 38 (FIG. 1) that forms a complete circuit with the at least one power source 32 when the at least one switch 36 is closed. A preferred embodiment of the at least one power source 32 uses two AA batteries. The switch 36 is preferably a simple mechanical switch that completes the circuit when manually moved to a closed position.
In a preferred embodiment, as illustrated in FIGS. 1 & 4, the at least one power source 32 and the at least one switch 36 are contained together in a power unit 39. Preferably, the power unit 39 is integrated into the invention via a pocket 46 fixed to a non-catching side 43 of the baseball glove 20, as illustrated in FIG. 4. Preferably, the power unit 39 is removably fixed into the pocket 46 via a cover flap 48 (FIG. 4). The cover flap 48 is preferably fastened using a hook-and-loop type fastener 49 (FIG. 4), though other fastening means can be used, such as a button type fastener (not shown), if desired. With the power unit 39 removably integrated into the invention, the at least one power source 32 can be replaced from time to time as needed.

In the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 2, the baseball glove 20 is a catcher's mitt 40 having a catching side 42 with an outer rim 44. In a preferred embodiment, the at least one lamp means 34 is integrated into the outer rim 44 of the catching side 42 of the catcher's mitt 40. When the at least one switch 36 is in a closed position, the catcher's mitt 40 presents an illuminated target pattern 50 (FIGS. 2 & 3). The illuminated target pattern 50 provides a target at which a thrower of an object can aim. Also, the illuminated target pattern 50 provides a more visible target than a baseball glove 20 would provide by itself. A more visible target increases the opportunity for an accurate throwing of an object. Also, an illuminated target pattern 50 provides a pleasurable visual experience for a person throwing an object at the illuminated target pattern 50 and for a person holding the invention.

In another preferred embodiment, the at least one lamp means 34 is covered by a non-opaque protective material 80 (FIG. 2) integrated into the outer rim 44 of the catching side 42 of the catcher's mitt 40. Preferably, the protective material 80 is made of a durable rubber material, but can be made of any suitable durable material, such as a durable plastic material, if desired. The protective material 80 protects the at least one lamp means 34 from the impact of a high velocity hard object, such as a baseball. The protective material 80 also provides protection from the harsh conditions of baseball, such as dirt, moisture, and temperature extremes. In a preferred embodiment, the protective material 80 and the at least one lamp means 34 have a low profile on the catching side 42 of the catcher's mitt 40 to avoid interfering with the effectiveness of the catcher's mitt 40.

A preferred embodiment of the at least one lamp means 34 includes a plurality of LEDs 60 (FIG. 2) integrated into the outer rim 44 of the catching side 42 of the catcher's mitt 40. Preferably commercially available LEDs are used to minimize production costs. Such LEDs preferably provide a bright light with a low consumption of power. An alternate embodiment of the at least one lamp means 34 includes at least one tube-like light strip 70 (FIG. 3) integrated into the outer rim 44 of the catching side 42 of the catcher's mitt 40.

While a particular form of the invention has been illustrated and described, it will be apparent that various modifications can be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. For example, the protective cover 80 can be made from different color material for targeting or decorative purposes. Also, at least one power source 32 can be internally integrated into the baseball glove 20 to avoid using an external pocket 46. Accordingly, it is not intended that the invention be limited, except as by the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. An illuminating sporting glove comprising:
   a sporting glove;
   at least one illumination system integrated into the sporting glove, each illumination system including at least one power source, at least one lamp means, and at least one switch electrically disposed between the at least one power source and the at least one lamp means;
   whereby when the at least one switch is in a closed position, the at least one power source powers the at least one lamp means.

2. The device of claim 1 wherein the sporting glove is a catcher's mitt having a catching side with an outer rim.

3. The device of claim 2 wherein the at least one lamp means is integrated into the outer rim of the catching side of the catcher's mitt, whereby when the at least one switch is in a closed position, the catcher's mitt presents an illuminated target pattern.

4. The device of claim 3 wherein the at least one lamp means is covered by a non-opaque protective material integrated into the outer rim of the catching side of the catcher's mitt.

5. The device of claim 4 wherein the at least one lamp means includes a plurality of LEDs integrated into the outer rim of the catching side of the catcher's mitt.

6. The device of claim 4 wherein the at least one lamp means includes at least one tube-like light strip integrated into the outer rim of the catching side of the catcher's mitt.