(No Model.)

J. F. HARDING.

NUMBER INDICATOR FOR JOCKEYS.

No. 600,074. Patented Mar. 1, 1898.

Fig. 1.

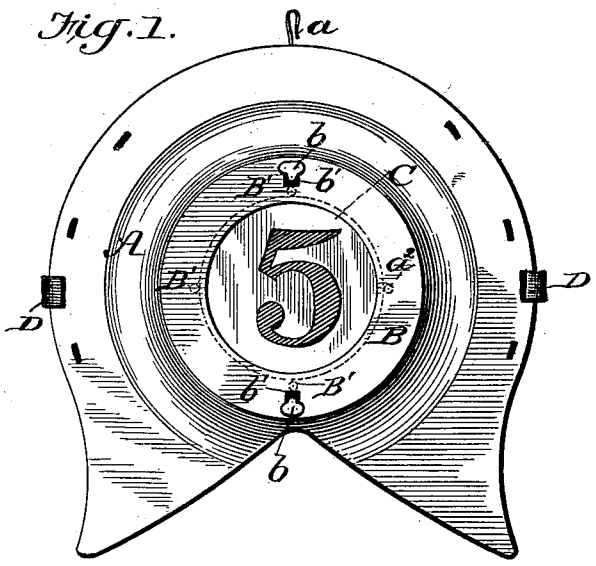


Fig. 2.

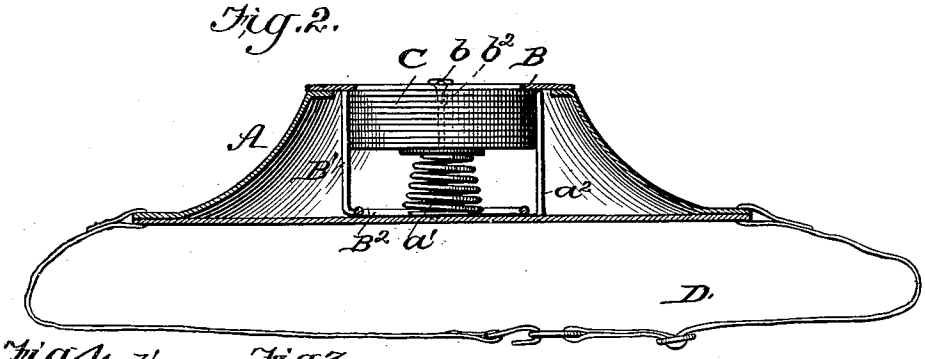


Fig. 4.

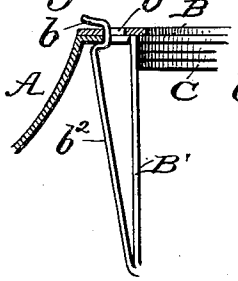
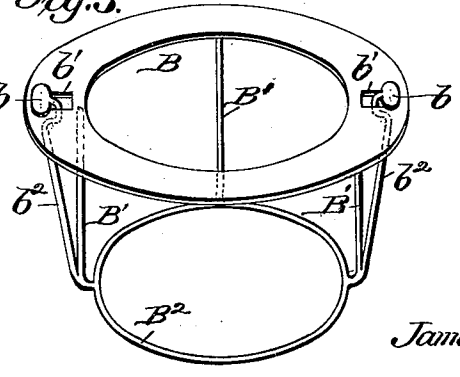


Fig. 3.



WITNESSES:

Jos. A. Ryan

Edw. W. Byrn.

INVENTOR

James F. Harding.

BY Munn & Co.

ATTORNEYS.

THE NORRIS PETERS CO., PHOTO-LITHO., WASHINGTON, D. C.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JAMES F. HARDING, OF PORT DEPOSIT, MARYLAND.

NUMBER-INDICATOR FOR JOCKEYS.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 600,074, dated March 1, 1898.

Application filed May 8, 1897. Serial No. 635,702. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JAMES F. HARDING, of Port Deposit, in the county of Cecil and State of Maryland, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Race-Track Numbers for Horses, of which the following is a specification.

For the convenience of judges, timers, and the public all horses entered in any race at whatever gait are required to be numbered as they are entered—*i. e.*, first entry, "No. 1;" second entry, "No. 2;" third entry, "No. 3;" and so on up to the last entry received at the time set for closing entries. Before the day named for the races the names of all the horses entered for the races are made public, when each horseman knows under what number his horse entered is to race, and on the printed program all the horses entered for the races appear with their numbers. At the hour the race is called the driver of each horse as he comes onto the track is required to go to the judges' stand and have a number corresponding to the published number of the horse he is driving fastened upon each arm near the shoulder, so that both the public and the officials can recognize the horse by the number the driver has upon his arm, the number being more easily remembered than the name and color of a horse. As the heat ends and before the driver can return to the stable he must stop and remove his numbers, leaving them at the judges' stand, for the same numbers are again used or so many of them as there are horses starting in the first heat of the second race, which immediately follows. Now the drivers of the horses in the first heat of this second race must do just as those who drove in the first heat of the first race; and then comes the second heat of the first race, and again the drivers must come to the stand and have their numbers put on each arm and at the end of the heat again remove them, so that they can be used in the next heat, and so on they repeat the operation until the race is ended, which often takes eight or ten heats to decide if the horses in the field are many. As can readily be seen, the annoyance which this practice causes is very great, and especially so if the horse is a spirited one, and they generally are. To avoid this delay and trouble to all concerned, I have devised the "race-track number for horses." This consists of a peculiar form of number-holder and easily-interchangeable numbers which each driver is provided with and retains, as hereinafter more fully described.

Figure 1 is a face view of the number-holder with number in place. Fig. 2 is a central section through the same; Fig. 3, a detail in perspective of the removable number-cage which is detachably secured in the number-holder, and Fig. 4 is a sectional detail.

In the drawings, A represents the number-holder, which may be made of any ornamental or fanciful shape. As shown, it is made in the form of a horseshoe; but it may be shaped like a star, a shield, or any other shape. It is made of pressed sheet metal enameled in any color or with a polished surface or otherwise ornamented. It is made hollow, in two parts, a top and bottom, securely fastened together, and thin at its outer edges and gradually swelling toward the center until it is about one and one-eighth inches thick or deep. In the center is formed a circular hole which forms an opening or window through which the interchangeable numbers show. These interchangeable numbers are formed on disks C, of metal, celluloid, or other suitable material, and are retained in a cage, Fig. 3, composed of a flat circular ring B, a ring B^2, and connecting legs or bars B′ B′ B′. The ring B is of flat sheet metal, slightly larger at its outer circumference than the hole in the holder A, so as to overlap the inner edges of the same, and it has slots b' on opposite sides, through which project the thumb-pieces b of spring-catches b^2. The spring-catches and the legs B′ and ring B^2 of the cage are preferably made of wire, and one side of this cage is left open, there being no leg B′, so that the number disks or plates C may be inserted laterally into the cage and be caught and retained between the ring B above it and a spring in the number-holder A below it.

The number-disk C is first placed in the cage B B′ B^2 close up under the ring B, and the cage is then pressed down through the hole in the frame plate or holder A until the upper bends of the springs b^2 snap back under the edges of the hole in the frame-plate, which locks the parts securely together.

To hold the number-disks C up firmly in

the top of the cage, I have placed a small spring a' at the bottom of the circular hole in the frame-plate A, which spring presses upwardly.

On the side of the cage where there is no leg B′ the number-disks are retained in place when the cage is in the frame-plate by a bar a^2, fixed to the bottom plate and extending to the edge of the circular hole from the said bottom of the frame-plate.

At the top of the frame-plate or number-holder there is a pin-hook a to fasten the device into the seam of the coat at the shoulder, and on each side there is a rubber band D, which extends around the arm to hold the device steadily in place.

Now when the driver comes on the track for the first heat instead of being compelled to go to the judges' stand and stopping to put blanket on his horse while he is having his numbers put on he has my race-track number for horses as a part of his equipment, and already knowing the number he is to wear has simply to remove the cage, select the number necessary for that race, place it at the top of the cage, replace the cage, and when he appears on the track he has nothing to interfere with the convenience of himself or the temper of his horse. He simply wears the number as he does his coat, cap, or any other necessary thing until the entire race is ended.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. A race-track number comprising a hollow casing with central opening and tapering or inclined side walls extending from the central opening down to the lower side of the casing, a set of interchangeable number-plates arranged within the same, means for retaining the number-plates in the casing, and fastening devices at the lower sides of the casing for attaching the same to the person of the rider substantially as and for the purpose described.

2. A race-track number comprising a frame or holder with central opening, a set of interchangeable number-plates and a detachable cage for receiving the number-plates, said cage being provided with spring-catches and adapted to be seated in the central opening of the frame or holder substantially as and for the purpose described.

3. A race-track number comprising a frame or holder A with central opening and retaining-bar a^2 and spring a', in combination with a detachable cage consisting of ring B legs B′ ring B^2 and spring-catches b^2, and a set of interchangeable number-plates substantially as and for the purpose described.

4. A race-track number comprising a frame or holder having thin edges and a thick hollow central part with a hole in its center, and a detachable cage fitting therein and provided with interchangeable number-plates substantially as and for the purpose described.

JAMES F. HARDING.

Witnesses:
GEO. A. ATKINSON,
GEO. C. OLDHAM.