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FOOTBALL PRACTICING DEVICE

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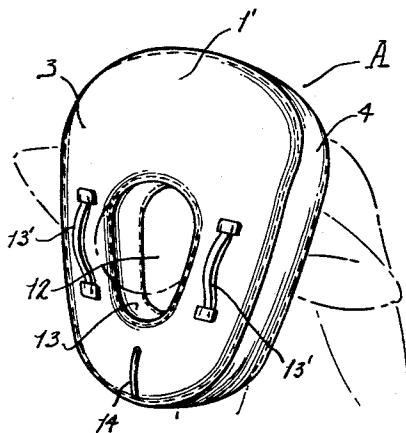


FIG. 1

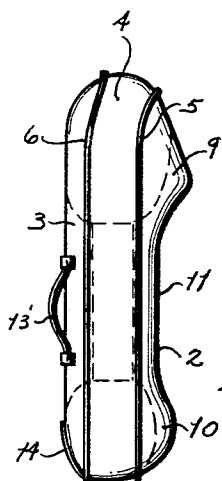


FIG. 2

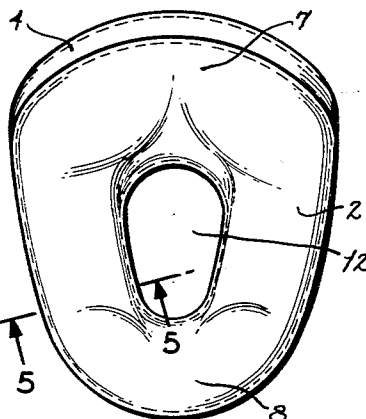


FIG. 3

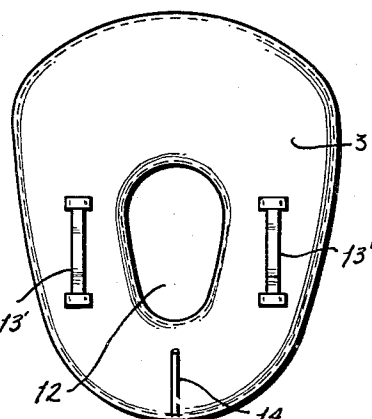


FIG. 4

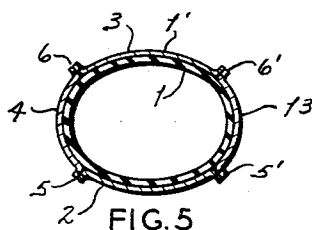


FIG. 5

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FOOTBALL PRACTICING DEVICE

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This invention relates in general to athletic equipment and, more particularly, to a certain new and useful improvement in a hand dummy for perfecting the technique of head blocking in the game of football.

As the game of football has developed through the years, practicing devices and dummies have been conceived, such as, for instance, the traditional tackling dummy, to permit of concentrated training in the various contact aspects of the sport. With respect to blocking, certain hand type dummies, that is, devices which may be manipulated by one player for presenting a target to an opposing player, have been known heretofore, but such have been designed for shoulder blocking training wherein the offensive player will in making engagement place his head to one side or the other of his opponent. Most recently the head block has been contrived as an offensive technique and requires the offensive player driving his head into the midsection of the defensive player, preferably, with his arms bent so that the upper arms provide an extension of the shoulders. By this block the defensive player is kept immediately in front of the charging offensive player and controllably driven away from the developing ball-advancing play. To the present time, there have not been any dummies developed for use in practicing this important type of block.

Thus, it is a primary object of the present invention to provide a hand dummy which may be easily presented by one player as a target for another player, and which is uniquely designed and contoured for promoting the development of skill in head blocking.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a football hand dummy of the type stated which is designed to simulate in general outline the human torso in contacted attitude so that the device provides a realistic, game-encountered condition, and also presents surfaces engageable for use in practicing certain hand and arm maneuvers more popularly known as the hand shiver and the arm shiver.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a device of the character stated which constitutes a reliable protective shield for the individual holding same and serves to provide the requisite training without the necessity of resorting to so-called "live targets" with the ever attendant possibility of injury.

It is a still further object of the present invention to provide a device of the character stated which may be most durably constructed, being hence resistant to wear, despite hard usage; which is safe in use, being yieldable under impact and hence is non-hazardous; and which may be most economically manufactured.

Other objects and details of the invention will be apparent from the following description, when read in connection with the accompanying drawing, wherein:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of a football practicing device constructed in accordance with and embodying the present invention, showing the same from the rearward side and in operative position.

FIGURE 2 is a side view.

FIGURE 3 is a front view.

FIGURE 4 is a rear view.

FIGURE 5 is a transverse section taken on the line 5—5 of FIGURE 3.

Referring now by reference characters to the drawing which illustrates the preferred embodiment of the pres-

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ent invention, A designates a football practicing device or so-called "hand dummy" having a yieldable body comprised of a tubular member 1, inflatable by air or gas, encased within a durable covering 1', as formed of canvas or like material. Said device incorporates a forward face 2, a rearward face 3, and a continuous, outside panel 4; said latter being secured, as by stitching, to the adjacent edges of the front and rear panels 2, 3 as along seams at 5, 6, respectively. Device A is designed to simulate in outline and size the torso of an opposing player, with the upper or shoulders corresponding portion 7 being wider than the lower or hips corresponding portion 8 so that the sides of said body taper downwardly and inwardly, whereby said device A provides a realism-approaching target.

The forward face 2 is of general concave character having transversely extending, forwardly projecting, upper and lower sections 9, 10, respectively, with the intermediate or central transverse zone, as at 11, being thus located relatively inwardly; the purposes of such contouring will be shown more fully hereunder. Substantially centrally of device A, within intermediate zone 11, is an enlarged opening 12, extending through said device A from front to back thereof and the sides of which are defined by a continuous inside panel 13 secured to the adjacent edges of forward and rearward faces 2, 3 as by seams 5', 6', respectively; said opening 12 being of such extent as to permit relatively snugly fitting penetration of a football helmet equipped with the customary face masks (as may best be seen in FIGURE 1), so that in usage a practicing player may project his head therethrough. Thus, opening must be of such size as to receive a football helmet, but must not be greatly in excess thereof, so as to assure a minimum target area for the player's head, for if the same were of a greater area it would reduce materially the development of the desired accuracy in blocking. The rearward face of device A may carry a pair of spaced-apart handles 13, as fabricated of any suitable material, such as canvas, leather, and the like, and being engaged to body A as by stitching, riveting, or other like means. Said handles 13 are disposed on opposite sides of opening 12, within the central portion of device A, to present firm, easily grippable supports for the individual holding the device for operation.

As shown in FIGURE 4, covering 1' may be provided with a line of opening 14, closable as by a slide fastener or the like, to permit facile access to tubular member 1 for inflation thereof or withdrawal, repair, etc. Although device A is described hereinabove as incorporating an inflatable member or bladder, it must be recognized that other "filling" or padding means may be used, such as foam rubber, kapok, synthetic fibres, or any other well known materials for the purpose. However, it has been found that pneumatic member 1 is desirable in that the same does not tend to lose its shape through constant usage, and, if necessary, is more easily replaced, and thus conduces to a relatively longer life.

In actual use, the handles 13 of device A will be gripped by an assisting individual and held in front of that person's body, preferably with the forearms extending forwardly from the waist. Device A, as thus presented, simultaneously serves as a protective shield to the holder as well as a target to the practicing offensive player. Said latter will approach device A from the normal, initial offensive position and upon a signal move forwardly, chargingly and drive his head through opening 12 and with his shoulders being brought into engagement with the portions of device A adjacent opening 12 and below upper projecting section 9. Desirably, the player's arms should be bent with the upper arms extending laterally from the shoulders so as to provide

a continuous, extended line of contact. The purpose of the concavity of the forward face of device A will now become apparent as the same simulates the attitude of the body of a defensive player as he would bend forwardly from the hips under impact of the effected block, so that the offensive player's shoulders will be in forceful contact against the upper chest of the defensive player. Having thus effected such contact, the offensive player will attempt to drive the device A rearwardly against the offered resistance.

Therefore, by use of the hand dummy or device A a player will be accorded a substantially life-like condition for most effective training in head blocking. As indicated above, the use of the present invention also serves to protect the supporting or assisting individual so that body-simulative contact may be accomplished without resort to "live" opposition with attendant injury hazard.

Device A is also especially useful for practice of the so-called "hand shiver" and "arm shiver" techniques wherein a player is contacted by the hands or arms, respectively, of an opposing player with the head of the latter being withdrawn from engagement. The areas of contact for such techniques, as on the shoulders or upper body of an opposing player, are spaced apart for proper force distribution and, hence, the width of device A allows of the natural spacing between the hands and arms as in actual game performance.

Thus, the present invention is adapted for efficient training in head blocking as well as in other football techniques and the unusual and unique design of device A assures of uniformly high-calibre results from its usage. The same may be most economically manufactured and produced in a most durable form so as to resist the expected hard wear.

It should be understood that changes and modifications in the formation, construction, arrangement, and combination of the several parts of the football practicing device may be made and substituted for these herein shown and described without departing from the nature and principle of our invention.

Having thus described our invention, what we claim and desire to secure by letters patent is:

1. A football practicing device comprising a yieldable

body having a forward face, a rearward face, and a continuous side portion disposed between said forward and rearward faces and engaged thereto, said body being of greater width at its upper end than at its lower end so that its lateral portions taper inwardly and downwardly

2. A football practicing device as described in claim 1 and further characterized by the forward face, projecting forwardly above and below the opening beyond the forward edge thereof.

3. A football practicing device as described in claim 2 and further characterized by the opening being of such extent as to permit penetration therethrough of a football helmet equipped with face mask.

4. A football practicing device comprising a yieldable body having a forward face, a rearward face, and a continuous side portion disposed between said rearward and forward faces and engaged thereto, the body of said device being simulative of a human torso so that the upper or shoulders corresponding portion will be of greater width than the lower or hips corresponding portion, the sides of said body tapering inwardly and downwardly, the rearward face of said device being planar, there being forwardly projecting portions in the upper and lower portions of said forward face and spaced apart by a central transverse zone, an opening provided substantially centrally of the body and within the central transverse zone, said opening extending from front to back of the device through the forward and rearward faces, said opening being dimensioned for snugly receiving a football helmet equipped with face mask.

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