United States Patent

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[54] **FOOTBALL DRYER**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** **34/227,** 219/366, 219/400

[51] **Int. Cl.**.....**F26b 19/00**

[58] **Field of Search**.....34/104, 202, 227, 233; 219/400, 366

[56] **References Cited**

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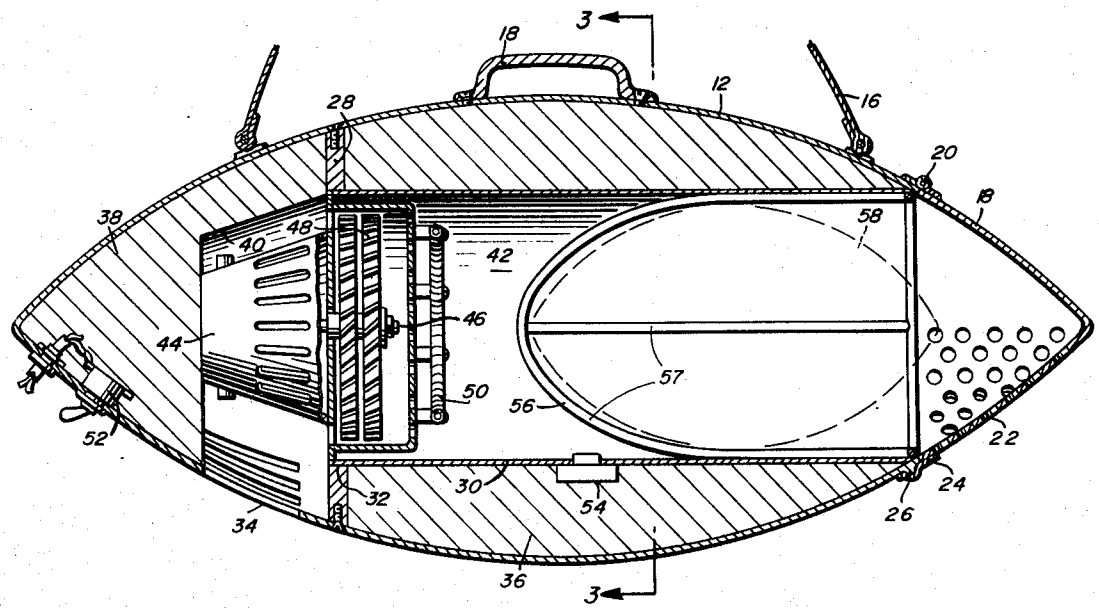
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A hollow housing defining a generally central cavity therein for receiving a football to be dried. The cavity opens outwardly of one end of the housing and the housing includes a cover for the open end of the cavity provided with air outlet openings. The other end of the housing remote from the cover includes an air inlet opening and an air blower assembly is disposed within the housing for pumping air therethrough from the air inlet openings to the air outlet openings. Further, the housing additionally includes internal heating coils over which the air being pumped through the housing is passed.

3 Claims, 4 Drawing Figures



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Fig. 1

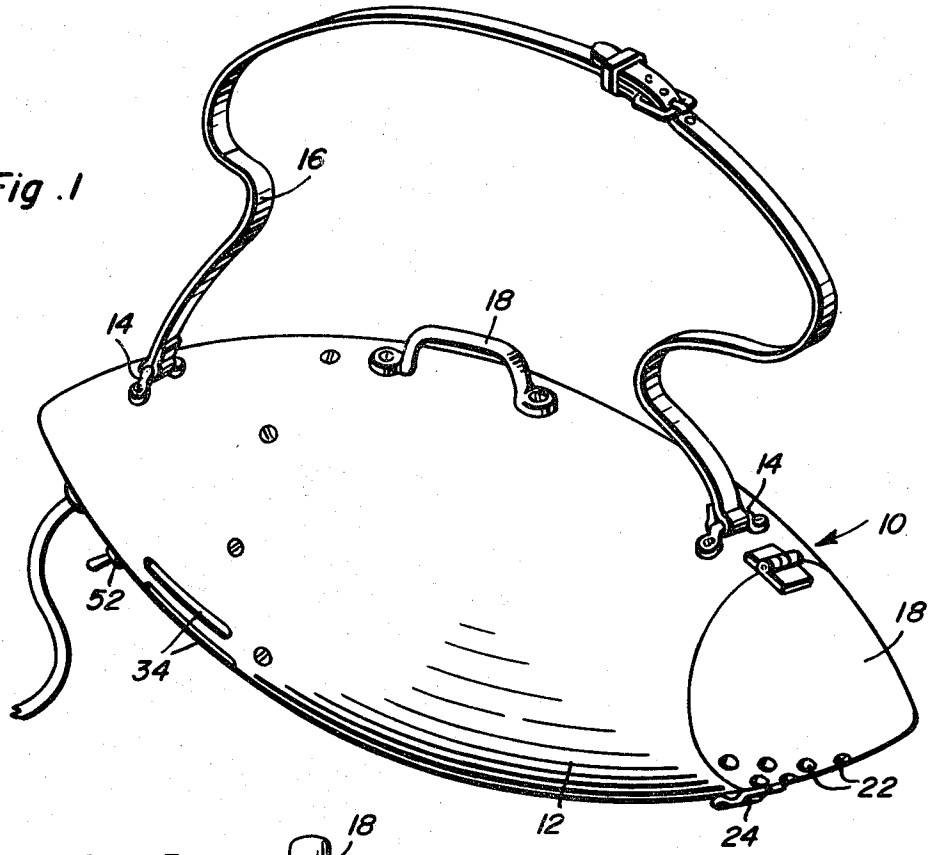
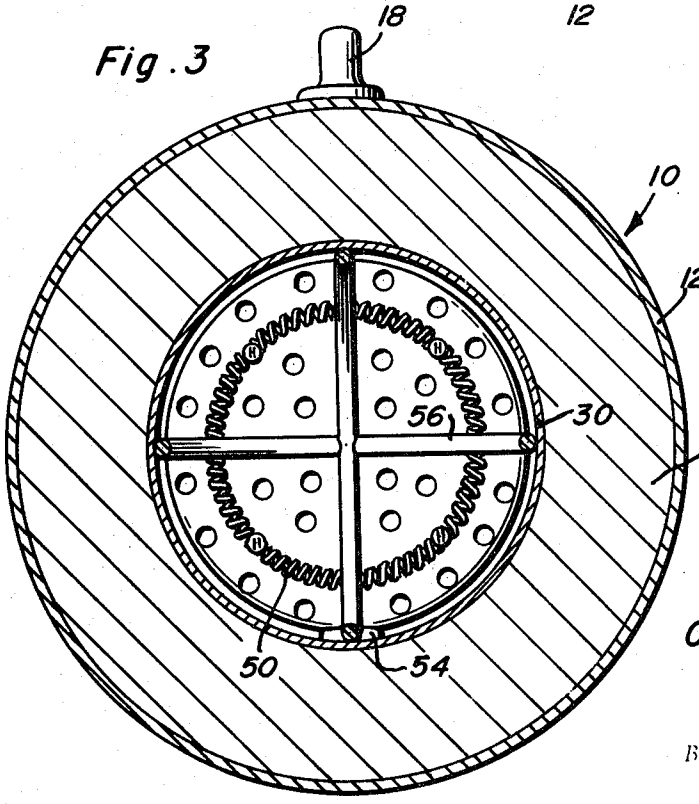


Fig. 3



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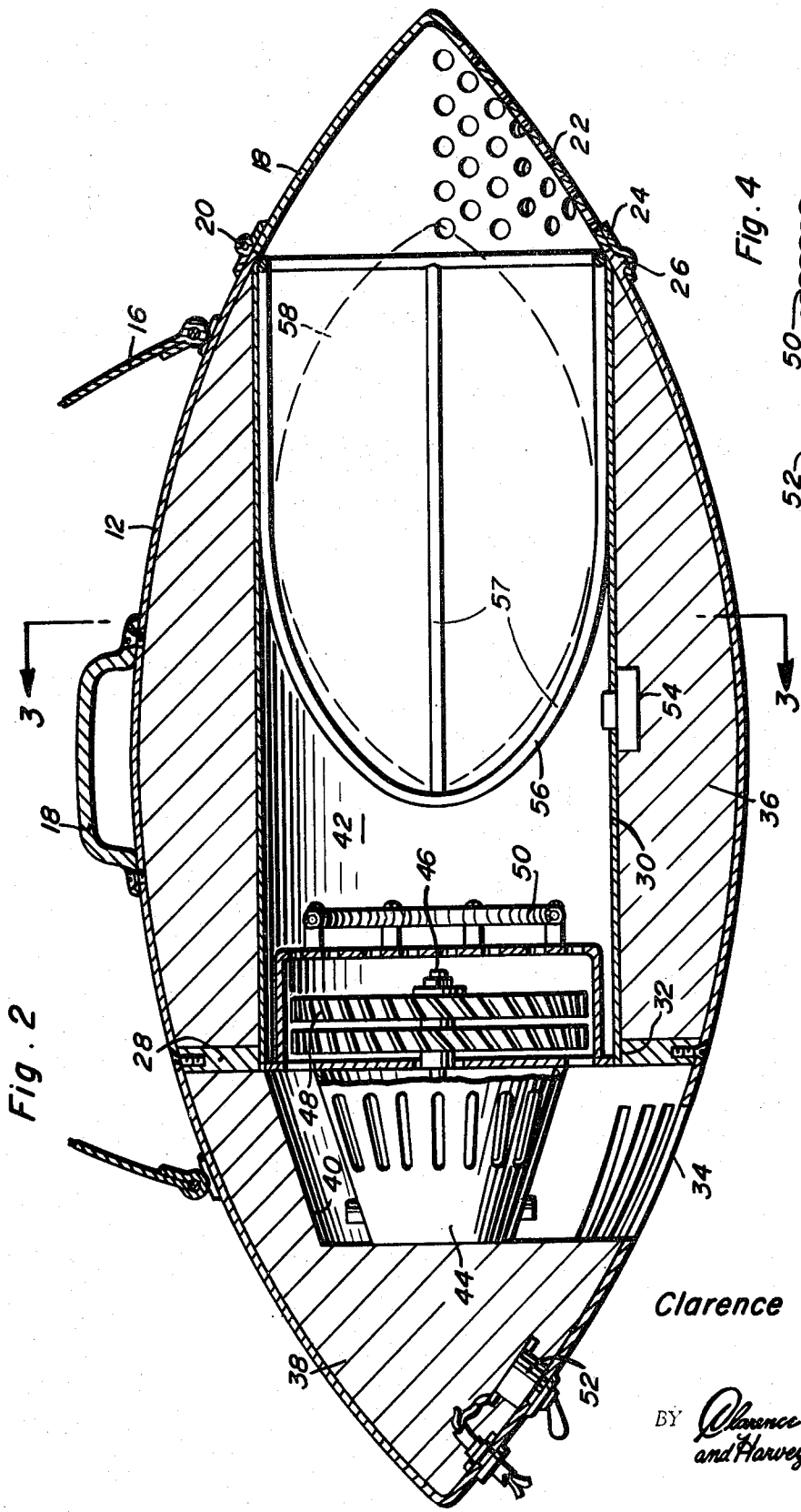


Fig. 2

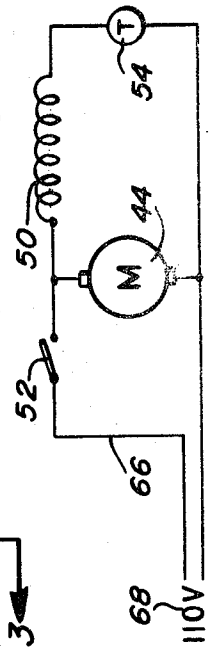


Fig. 4

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FOOTBALL DRYER

The football dryer of the instant invention has been designed to provide an apparatus which will be capable of drying one football while another previously dried football is being used in a football game. In this manner, if a football game is being played in inclement weather, each time a play is completed the football used in the completed play may have mud or other foreign matter wiped therefrom and may be placed within the football dryer after removal of the ball previously dried in the dryer and the last dried football removed from the dryer may be utilized in the next play on the football field. This will of course insure that at least each football play will be started with a dry football.

The present method of maintaining footballs reasonably clean and dry during inclement weather is for two footballs to be used and while one football is in play a person designated to maintain the footballs clean wipes the other football which is not in play with a towel in order to remove mud and other foreign matter as well as water from the outer surface of the football not in play. However, the towels used for wiping the footballs not in play must be at least nearly dry if the football wiped is itself to be at least substantially dried. Accordingly, a towel can be used only once to dry a football inasmuch as it is thereafter too damp to dry the next football. Therefore, a large number of towels would be used during a football game played in inclement weather if a new towel was used to wipe a football after each play of the game. The football dryer of the instant invention enables a single towel to be utilized a plurality of times in wiping mud and other debris from footballs and at least partially drying the footballs. After the footballs have been wiped and at least partially dried, the wiped footballs are placed within the dryer and the drying operation is completed prior to the next play of the football game during which the football being dried will be used. Therefore, the football dryer of the instant invention, when utilized in conjunction with a far smaller number of towels, may be utilized to effectively maintain the two footballs used alternately in a football game clean and dry even when the football game is being played in inclement weather.

The main object of this invention is to provide a football dryer to be utilized in conjunction with a wiping rag or towel during a football game for the purpose of completing the drying operation on a football after the football has been wiped clean and partially dried with a rag of towel.

Another object of this invention, in accordance with the preceding object, is to provide a football dryer which may be readily carried along the sidelines during a football game so as to be maintained in as close proximity to the point at which the football is downed after each play as is possible.

Another important object of this invention is to provide a football dryer of a shape which will be compatible with the shape of the football to be dried therein.

A final object of this invention to be specifically enumerated herein is to provide a football drier which will conform to conventional forms of manufacture, be of simple construction and easy to use so as to provide a device that will be economically feasible, long lasting and relatively trouble free in operation.

These together with other objects and advantages which will become subsequently apparent reside in the details of construction and operation as more fully hereinafter described and claimed, reference being had to the accompanying drawings forming a part hereof, wherein like numerals refer to like parts throughout, and in which:

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of the football dryer illustrating the adjustable shoulder strap and handle for support of the football dryer either from the shoulder or in the hand;

FIG. **2** is an enlarged longitudinal vertical sectional view taken substantially upon a plane passing through the longitudinal centerline of the dryer;

FIG. **3** is a transverse vertical sectional view taken substantially upon the plane indicated by the section line **3—3** of FIG. **2**; and

FIG. **4** is a diagrammatic view of the wiring circuit of the football dryer.

Referring now more specifically to the drawings the numeral **10** generally designates the football dryer of the instant invention. The dryer **10** comprises an elongated housing **12** in the general shape of a football and which is approximately 2½ times the length of a football. The housing **12** includes a pair of anchor members **14** secured thereto at points spaced longitudinally along its upper surface and the opposite end portions of an adjustable length shoulder straps **16** are secured to the anchor members **14**. In addition, the top wall portion of the housing **12** also has a handle **18** secured thereto intermediate the anchor members **14** whereby the housing **12** may also be supported from the hand of the user.

The housing **12** is hollow and includes front and rear ends. The front end of the housing **12** is defined by a conical end section **18** which is hinged to the top wall portion of the housing **12** as at **20**. The end section **18** includes air outlet openings **22** and a spring clip **24** on its free swinging peripheral portion releasably engageable with a detent **26** carried by the housing **12** for releasably securing the end section **18** in the closed position thereof illustrated in FIGS. **1** and **2** of the drawings.

A generally annular partition **28** is secured in the rear end portion of the housing **12** and a generally cylindrical inner wall assembly **30** secured in the housing **12** and projects forwardly of the partition **28** to the open end of the housing **12** closed by the end section **18**. The cylindrical wall assembly **30** has its rear end secured in the central opening **32** defined in the partition **28** and its forward end is secured to the adjacent forward edge portions of the housing **12**.

The lower wall portions of the rear end portion of the housing **12** are provided with air inlet slots **34** and the area between the outer surfaces of the wall assembly **30** and the inner surfaces of the center portion of the housing **12** is filled with a suitable insulative body **36**. In addition, a similar insulative body **38** is seated in the rear end of the housing **12** and includes a recess **40** formed therein which opens downwardly in registry with the slots **34** and forwardly in horizontal registry with the rear end of the central cavity **42** defined within the wall assembly **30**.

An electric motor **44** is supported within the recess **40** rearwardly of the partition **28** and includes a rotary

output shaft portion **46** disposed within the cavity **42** and having air impeller blades **48** mounted thereon. In addition, an electrical resistance heating element **50** is disposed within the cavity **42** forwardly of the impeller blades **48**.

An on-off switch **52** is secured through the undersurface of the rear end of the housing **12** and a thermostat **54** is supported from the lower portions of the wall assembly **30**. In addition, a wire basket **56**, defined by a pair of U-shaped members **57**, is secured within the forward end of the recess and opens forwardly through the front end of the housing **12**. The basket **56** is of a size and shape to snugly receive a football such as football **58** therein and it will be noted that the end section **18** may be swung to and releasably retained in the closed position thereof illustrated in FIG. **2** of the drawings when the football **58** is disposed within the basket **56**.

As can be seen from FIG. **4** of the drawings, the electric motor **44** is connected in parallel within a circuit **66** operatively connected to a suitable source **68** of electrical potential. The circuit **66** has the switch **52** serially connected therein and the electrical resistance heating element **50** is also connected in the circuit in parallel relation with the motor **44**. However, the thermostat **54** is connected in series in that portion of the circuit in which heating element **50** is disposed and thereby controls the latter.

In operation, the user of the football dryer **10** may either carry the housing **12** by the handle **18** or by the shoulder strap **16** and may move along the sidelines during a football game. The circuit **66** may be electrically connected to the source **68** by an extension cord or the like and after each play is completed the football used in that play may be thrown to the sidelines and given to the user of the dryer **10** as a dry ball is thrown back onto the field. The user of the dryer **10** will then wipe the football **58** as clean and as dry as can be accomplished by a towel or rag supplied to him for the purpose and the football is placed within the basket **56** after which the end section **18** may be closed and the switch **52** may be closed in order to actuate both the motor **44** and the electrical resistance heating element **50**. The motor **44** will of course turn the impeller blades **48** and cause air to be pumped through the cavity **42** and out the openings **22**. Of course, the air pumped through the housing **10** passes the electrical resistance heating element **50** and is thus heated for further drying the football **58**.

Then, as the next football play is completed, the football used in that play is thrown to the sideline and the football **58** is thrown back on the field.

The foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention.

What is claimed as new is as follows:

1. A football dryer comprising an elongated hollow football-shaped housing defining a central longitudinal cylindrical chamber therein, one end of said housing including an end section shiftable between operative and inoperative positions closing and opening, respectively, the corresponding end of said chamber, said housing including air inlet means for the end of said chamber remote from said end section of said housing, said air inlet means having air pump means and resistance-type heating element means operatively associated therewith for pumping heated air into the end of said chamber remote form said end section of said housing, said end section including air outlet means for venting the adjacent end of said chamber to the ambient atmosphere when said end section is in its operative position closing the adjacent end of said chamber, said chamber having a diameter only slightly greater than the maximum diameter of the football, a wire basket disposed in said chamber opening endwise outwardly of said end thereof adjacent said end section of said housing, said basket being of a size and shape to snugly receive a football therein and operative to support said football in lengthwise position in said chamber with the maximum diameter surfaces of said football disposed in closely spaced relation relative to the inner surfaces of the walls of said chamber, said basket comprising a plurality of generally U-shaped member disposed in relatively angularly displaced planes intersecting along a line defining the center line of said chamber, said end section being generally conical in shape so as to complete the football shape of said housing when said end section is in its operative position.

2. The combination of claim **1** including an insulative body disposed between the walls of said chamber and the adjacent wall portions of said housing.

3. The combination of claim **1** including an elongated shoulder strap secured at opposite ends to longitudinally spaced portions of one side wall portion of said housing, said strap including means for adjusting its effective length, and a handle attached to said one side wall portion of said housing intermediate said longitudinally spaced one side wall portions.

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