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(54) **HELMET-MOUNTED MOUTH GUARD
RETAINER**

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ABSTRACT

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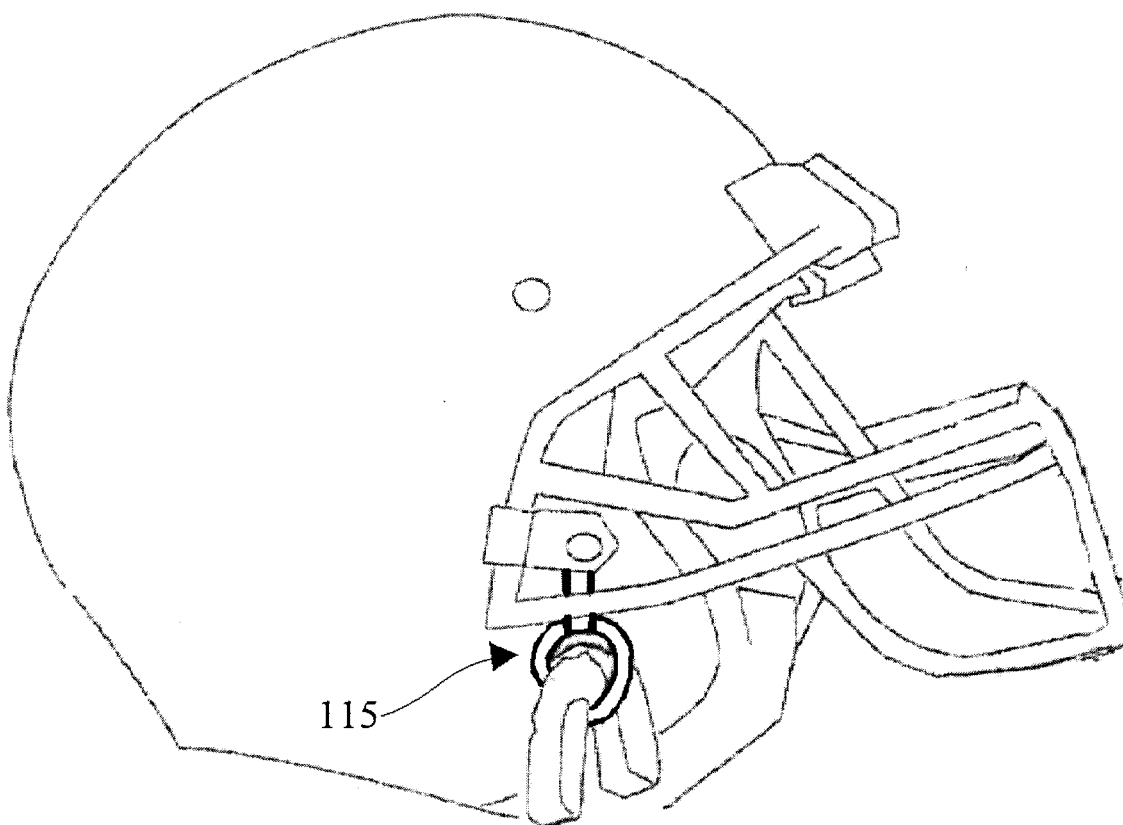
Disclosed is a mouth guard retaining device comprising a mounting member capable of being mounted to a helmet or facemask and a retaining member capable of retaining a mouth guard. Certain embodiments may also comprise a flexible connecting member attached to both the mounting member and the retaining member. Some embodiments will be formed of substantially a single piece of rubber.

Publication Classification

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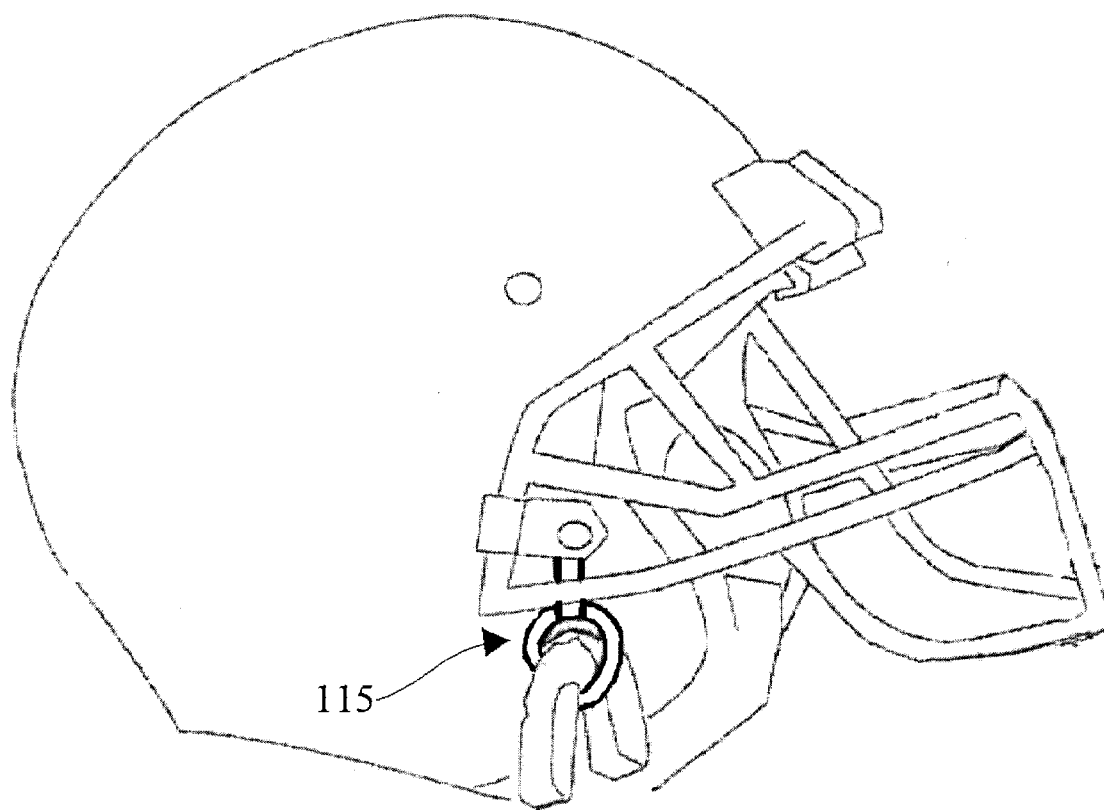


Figure 1

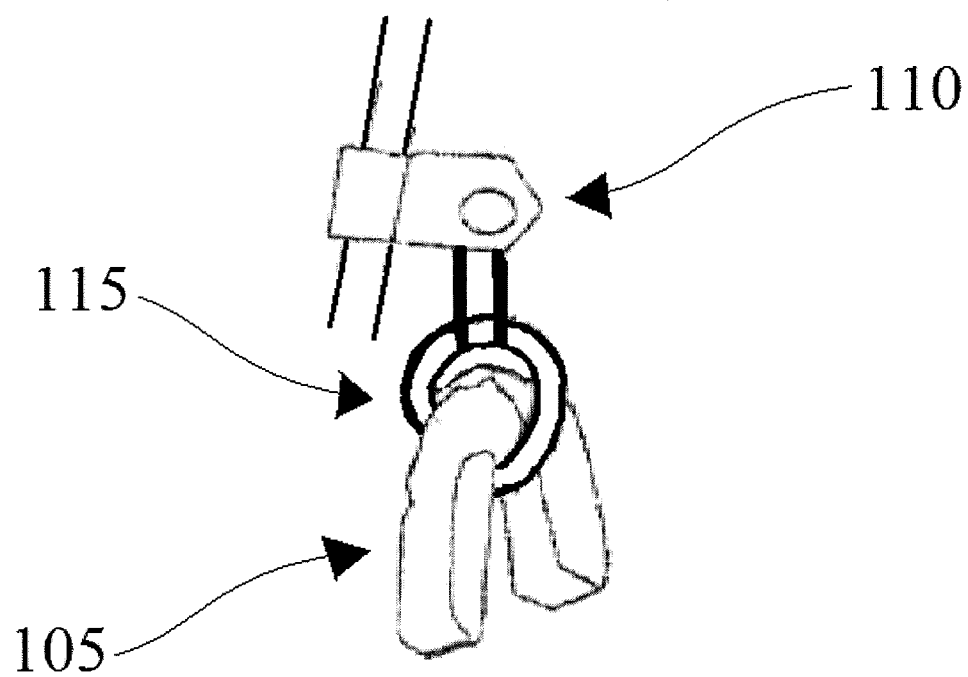


Figure 2

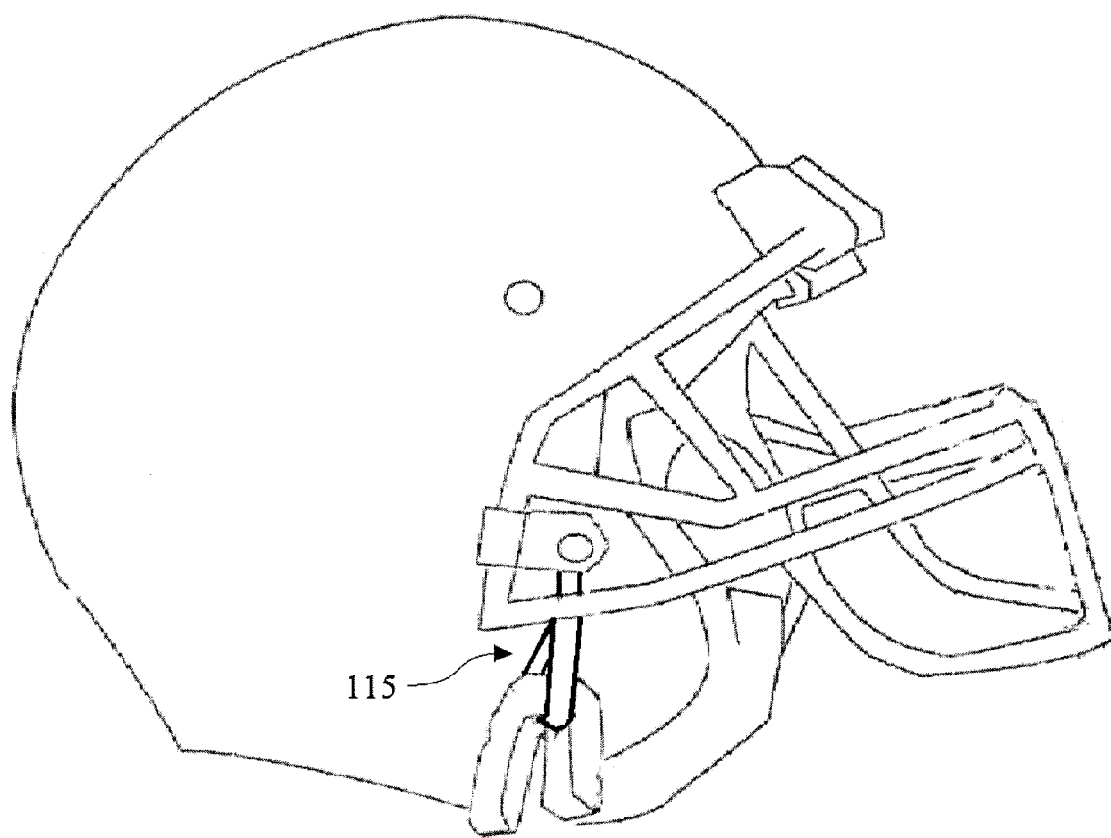


Figure 3

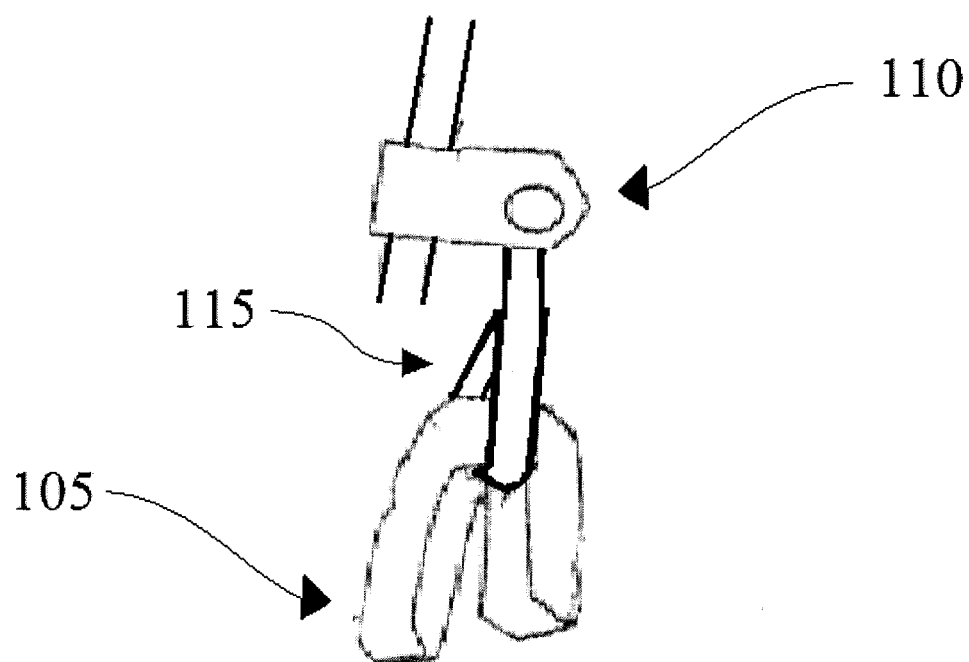


Figure 4

HELMET-MOUNTED MOUTH GUARD RETAINER

FIELD

[0001] Embodiments described herein are employed for retaining mouth guards. More particularly, embodiments relate to an apparatus for retaining mouth guards, required for certain sporting events, mounted to a helmet.

BACKGROUND

[0002] Mouth guards are required for participation in many common sporting events to protect the teeth and jaw of the participants. This requirement applies to professional sports, amateur sports, and children's leagues as well. Mouth guards come in a wide variety of colors, shapes, configurations and materials. Nearly all mouth guards are capable of being flexed to at least a slight degree. Mouth guards commonly impair the athlete's ability to speak and occasionally inhibit the athlete's ability to breathe fully. For these reasons, athletes commonly remove their mouth guards periodically during a sporting event, for example in between plays or while an athlete is not actively participating. This can lead to misplacing the mouth guard or contaminating the mouth guard with an unsanitary material, for example, dropping the mouth guard on the ground. What is needed is a convenient and reliable system for retaining a mouth guard while participating in a sporting event.

SUMMARY

[0003] Disclosed embodiments include an apparatus which may be mounted to a helmet and served to retain a mouth guard using an enclosed loop at the first end. The second end of the apparatus may be mounted to a helmet at a conventional screw or rivet point.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0004] FIG. 1 is a diagram of an embodiment of a mouth guard retainer mounted to a traditional football helmet.

[0005] FIG. 2 shows a more detailed view of an embodiment of a mouth guard retainer.

[0006] FIG. 3 shows an alternative embodiment of a mouth guard retainer mounted to a traditional football helmet.

[0007] FIG. 4 shows a more detailed diagram of an alternative embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0008] The preferred embodiment of FIG. 1 is shown attached to a traditional football helmet 101 with an attached face mask 102. The face mask 102 is connected to the helmet 101 using a plurality of fasteners. The fasteners are most frequently nut-and-bolt fasteners or rivets although other types of fasteners are known in the art.

[0009] The mouth guard retainer 115 is attached to the helmet 101 at one of the same fastener points that secures the face mask 102 to the helmet 101. It will be appreciated that many sports other than football require similar helmets 101 with attached face masks 102. The disclosed mouth guard retainer 115 may be attached to these varieties of helmets 101 using a similar attachment point.

[0010] Certain embodiments of the disclosed mouth guard retainer 115 may be thought of as having three sections

although the retainer 115 will frequently be a single continuous piece. Certain embodiments will have a mounting point 120, a connecting member 125 and a retaining member 130. The mounting point 120 may be used to fasten the mouth guard retainer 115 to a helmet 101. The retaining member 130 may be used to physically retain a mouth guard 105. Connecting member 125 attaches the retaining member 130 to the mounting point 120.

[0011] Alternate embodiments of the disclosed mouth guard retainer 115 may be thought of as having two sections although the retainer will frequently be a single continuous piece. Certain embodiments will have a mounting point 120 and an elongated retaining member 130 attached directly to the mounting point 120.

[0012] The disclosed mouth guard retainer 115 may be made of many different materials. Certain preferred embodiments may be made of silicone, rubber, leather, polymer, or other flexible materials. Alternative embodiments may be made of cloth, wood or metal. Other embodiments may be made of a combination of materials. For example purposes only, the mounting point 120 may be made of metal and attached to connecting member 125, which may be made of cloth. The cloth connecting member 125 may then be attached to a silicone retaining member 130.

[0013] It will be appreciated that many sporting events, contact sports and other activities require the use of both a helmet 101 and mouth guard 105. The disclosed device 115 may be utilized in substantially the same manner for any activity which requires both a helmet 101 and a mouth guard 105.

[0014] The mouth guard retaining device 115 may be attached to a helmet 101 in a variety of ways. The mouth guard retaining device 115 may be attached to the helmet 101 using a fastener that attaches a facemask 102 to the helmet 101. The mouth guard retainer 115 may also be attached using a fastener that attaches a chin-strap to the helmet 101. The mouth guard retainer 115 may also be attached to a helmet 101 using its own fastener. These fasteners may be snap fasteners, screws, nut-and-bolt fasteners, or rivets among other known fasteners.

[0015] The terms and descriptions used herein are set forth by way of illustration only and are not meant as limitations. Those skilled in the art will recognize that many variations are possible within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined in the following claims, and their equivalents, in which all terms are to be understood in their broadest possible sense unless otherwise indicated.

What is claimed is:

1. A mouth guard retaining device comprising:
 - a mounting member capable of being mounted to a helmet or facemask;
 - a retaining member capable of retaining a mouth guard;
 - a flexible connecting member attached to both the mounting member and the retaining member.
2. The device of claim 1, further comprising a helmet.
3. The device of claim 2, further comprising a face mask.
4. The device of claim 3, wherein the mounting member is fastened to the helmet by a fastener that also attaches the face mask to the helmet.
5. The device of claim 3, wherein the mouth guard retaining device is formed of substantially a single piece of rubber.
6. The device of claim 1, wherein the device is entirely comprised of flexible materials.

7. A mouth guard retaining device comprising:
a mounting member capable of being mounted to a helmet or facemask;
an elongated retaining member capable of retaining a mouth guard, wherein the elongated retaining member forms a loop with both ends of said loop being attached to the mounting member.
8. The device of claim 7, further comprising a helmet.
9. The device of claim 8, further comprising a face mask.
10. The device of claim 9, wherein the mounting member is fastened to the helmet by a fastener that also attaches the face mask to the helmet.
11. The device of claim 9, wherein the mouth guard retaining device is formed of substantially a single piece of rubber.
12. A protective helmet comprising:
a face mask;
a mouth guard retaining device, wherein the mouth guard retaining device is attached to said helmet;
said mouth guard retaining device comprising a mounting point and a retaining loop.

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