United States Patent

Raut

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[45] **Jan. 25, 1972**

[54] TETHERED BALL BASEBALL PRACTICE DEVICE

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Related U.S. Application Data

[63] Continuation-in-part of Ser. No. 793,698, Jan. 24, 1969, abandoned.

[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **273/26 E**

[51] **Int. Cl.** **A63d 15/10**

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 273/26, 29 A, 58 C, 95, 97 R, 273/98, 200; 24/90.1, 98, 102 T, 114.5, 115.1, 123, 123.1, 143, 143.4

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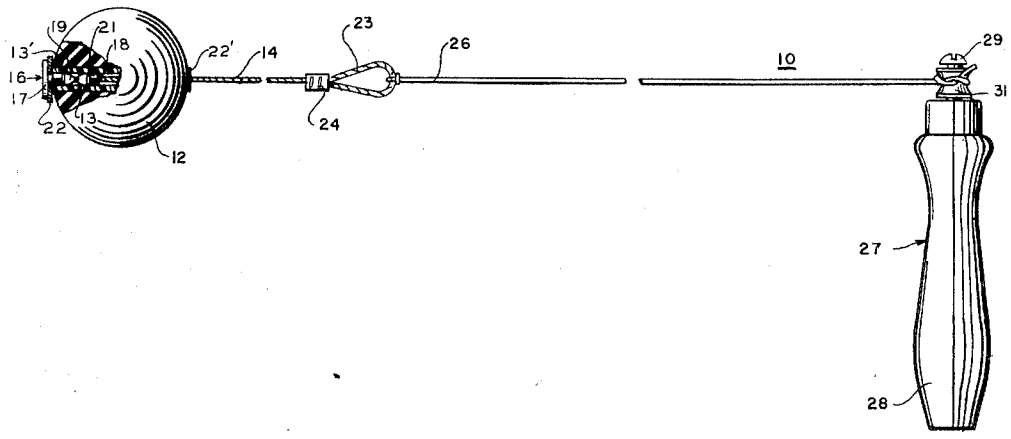
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A baseball practice device which includes a ball of rubberlike material having a transverse bore, a metal cable length having an end portion extending into said bore, and an anchor mounted on the end portion. A flange of the anchor is engaged by the ball. A rigid tube is mounted in the bore. A cord is attached at one end of the cable remote from the anchor, and the cord, cable, and ball are swingable around an operator to give orbital motion to the ball.

6 Claims, 3 Drawing Figures



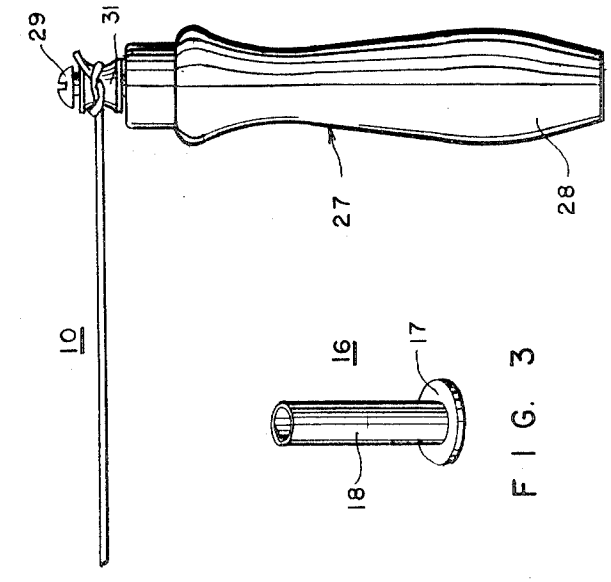


FIG. 3

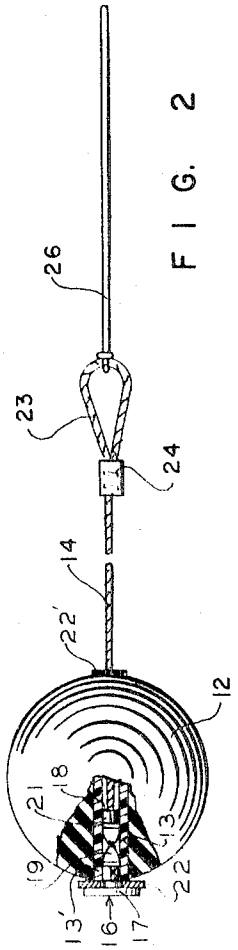


FIG. 2

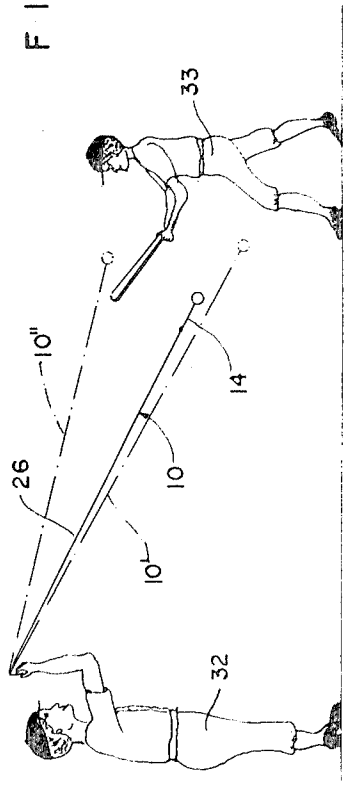


FIG. 1

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TETHERED BALL BASEBALL PRACTICE DEVICE

This is a continuation-in-part of my copending application, Ser. No. 793,698 filed Jan. 24, 1969, now abandoned.

This invention relates to a baseball practice device. More particularly, this invention relates to a practice device having a ball on a line which can be swung around an operator for swinging the ball into position for batting practice.

In such a baseball practice device, the line on which the ball is carried is suddenly and heavily loaded at and near the ball when the ball is engaged by a bat. However, other parts of the line are not heavily loaded. An object of this invention is to provide a line for such a practice device in which the portion thereof near the ball is of strong resilient material capable of supporting the load when the ball is engaged by the bat while the remainder of the line is of lightweight material such as cord or string so that the line is not too heavy to be swung.

Briefly, this invention provides a baseball training or practice device which includes a ball having a diametral opening therethrough which receives a steel cable which is strong and can accept the loads involved. At one end of the cable is mounted an anchor having an outwardly extending flange which engages the ball to prevent release of the ball from the cable. The cable forms one portion of a line which supports the ball. The remainder of the line is formed of string or the like which is of light weight so that the line is light enough that it can be swung around the head of an operator. A handle at the opposite end of the line can be provided with a swivel support for the far end of the line.

The above and other objects and features of the invention will be apparent to those skilled in the art to which this invention pertains from the following detailed description and the drawing, in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a practice device constructed in accordance with an embodiment of this invention, an operator and a batter being shown using same;

FIG. 2 is a view in side elevation of the practice device illustrated in FIG. 1 on an enlarged scale; and

FIG. 3 is a perspective view on an enlarged scale of a cable anchor forming a part of the device, prior to assembly with a cable thereof.

In the following detailed description and the drawings, like reference characters indicate like parts.

In FIGS. 1 and 2 is shown a baseball practice device **10** constructed in accordance with an embodiment of this invention, alternate positions of the device being shown in dashed lines at **10'** and **10''** in FIG. 1. As shown most clearly in FIG. 2, the practice device **10** includes a ball **12** having a diametrically extending bore **13**. The ball can be formed of resilient vulcanized rubber or other rubberlike material which is resilient but sufficiently strong to be hit by a bat. A tube **13'** of tough rigid material such as nylon is mounted in the bore **13** with the walls of the bore fitting tightly against the tube **13'**. One end portion of a steel cable **14** extends through the interior of the tube **13**. An end fitting or anchor **16** is attached to that end portion of the cable **14**. As shown in FIG. 3, the anchor **16** includes a disc-shaped base **17** and a hollow stem **18**. The cable end extends into the hollow stem **18**. The anchor is formed of deformable metal and, as shown in FIG. 2, the stem is crimped at **19** and **21** to hold the cable and anchor in assembled relation. A rigid washer **22** is mounted on the fitting **16** in position to engage the wall of the ball **12** and an outer end of the tube **13'**. The tube **13'** is a little longer than the diameter of the ball **12**, and an inner end portion **22'** of tube **13'** extends inwardly of the ball **12** so that the cable **14** engages the interior of the tube **13'** but does not engage the ball **12** itself. The opposite

end portion of the cable is formed into a loop **23** which is held by a ring **24** crimped on the cable. One end of an elongated string **26** is attached to the loop **23**. The opposite end of the string is carried by a handle **27**. The cable **14** and the string **26** together form a line on which the ball is carried.

The handle **27** includes a body **28**, which is formed to be readily held. A stud **29** extends outwardly from the body **28**. A spool-shaped ring **31** is rotatably mounted on the stud **29**. The end of the string **26** remote from the ball **12** and the cable **14** is attached to the ring **31** so that when an operator **32** (FIG. 1) swings the ball **12** and the line supporting same, the ball travels orbitally around the operator and the operator can direct the ball to position for hitting by a batter **33**. The steel cable, being adjacent the ball takes the violent load caused by hitting of the ball. The cable can be approximately one foot long as the major portion of the load occurs within that distance from the ball. The remainder of the line does not receive such a violent load and is formed of string or cord which can be sufficiently strong to support the ball as the ball swings around the operator but is sufficiently light in weight that the operator does not have difficulty in swinging the ball and line round and round. The string can be of such a length as swings the ball at a convenient distance from the operator. Preferably, the length of the string portion of the line is approximately 8 feet.

The baseball practice device illustrated in the drawing and described above is subject to structural modification without departing from the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

Having described my invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by letters patent is:

1. A baseball practice device which comprises a ball having a transverse bore, a metal cable length having an end portion extending into said bore, an anchor mounted on said end portion, said anchor having an outwardly extending flange supported by the ball, an opposite end portion of the cable length extending outwardly of the bore, a cord attached at one end to the opposite end portion of the cable, and handle means connected to an opposite end of the cord, the cord, cable, and ball being swingable around an operator to give orbital motion to the ball.

2. A baseball practice device as in claim 1 wherein the handle has a swivel connection with the cord.

3. A baseball practice device as in claim 1 wherein the metal cable length is approximately 1 foot long and the cord is approximately 8 feet long.

4. A baseball practice device which comprises a ball having a transverse bore, a metal cable length having an end portion extending into said bore, an anchor mounted on said end portion, said anchor including a tubular stem and a disc at one end of the stem having a flange portion extending outwardly of the stem, the end portion of the cable being received inside the stem and held therein, the flange portion being supported by a face of the ball, an opposite end portion of the cable length extending outwardly of the bore, and means connected to the opposite end portion of the cable length for swinging the cable length and the ball orbitally to bring the ball into position to be hit by a practice batter.

5. A baseball practice device as in claim 1 wherein the ball is formed of resilient rubberlike material and a rigid tube is mounted in the bore, the cable engaging the rigid tube at an inner end of the bore.

6. A baseball practice device as in claim 5 wherein the rigid tube is slightly longer than the diameter of the ball, an inner end portion of the tube extending inboard of the inner end of the bore of the ball.

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