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PORTABLE BASEBALL TRAINING MOUND FOR PITCHERS

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Fig. 1.

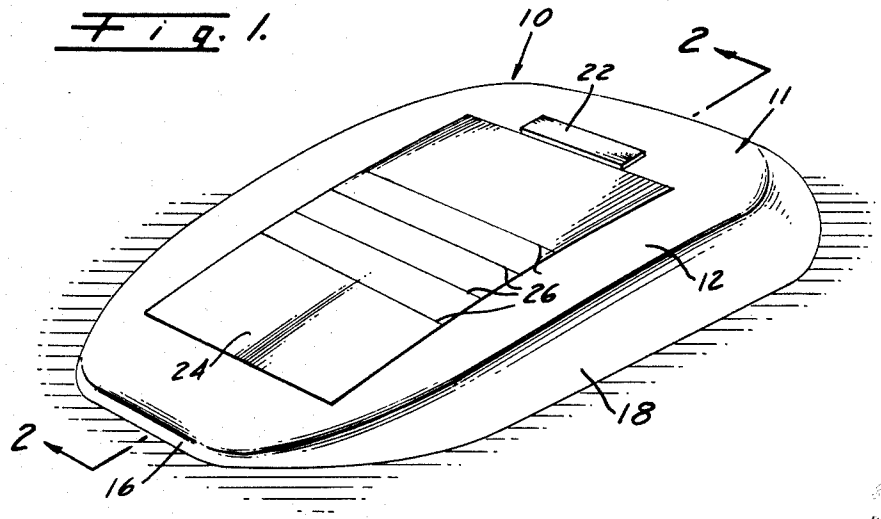


Fig. 2.

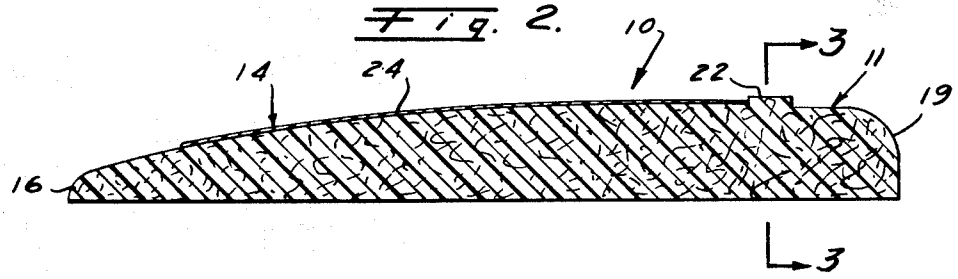


Fig. 3.



Sol J. Friedman,
INVENTOR.
WHANN & McMANIGAL
Attorneys for Applicant
by

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PORTABLE BASEBALL TRAINING MOUND FOR PITCHERS

Sol J. Friedman, Ontario, Calif., assignor to Porta-Mound, Upland, Calif., a corporation of California

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This invention relates generally to athletic training equipment and relates more particularly to portable mounds for baseball pitchers.

While the invention has particular utility in connection with training mounds for baseball pitchers, and is shown and described in such connection, it is to be understood that its utility is not to be confined thereto.

As is well known, the spring training and practice for baseball teams begins early and in many parts of the country weather conditions are such that such practice and training cannot be conducted very well out of doors. Many schools and other institutions do not have the needed indoor facilities for the early practice and training season.

In many cases this practice and training is carried out on the level floor of field houses or the like. However, the training of baseball pitchers on a level floor is not conductive to the best results since such a level floor is not in accordance with the actual conditions of play on fields meeting the official requirements.

For one thing, prescribed official fields require a raised pitcher's mound so that when pitchers are training and/or practicing on a level floor or field, they do not have the proper angular relationship to the rest of the playing field for proper training.

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a pitching mound that may be placed upon a flat floor or other area upon which the trainee or person practicing will have the same angular relationship and conditions as are present on a regulation playing field.

It is another object of the invention to provide a mound of this character that is portable.

It is still another object of the invention to provide a mound or device of this character that will be an aid in the control of the pitcher's pitching.

It is a further object of the invention to provide apparatus of this character with which a trainee or one practicing pitching can develop the proper techniques.

It is a still further object of the invention to provide apparatus of this character with which continued experience in throwing off a regulation mound may be experienced by a person in training or one practicing pitching.

It is another object of the invention to provide a device of this character that is an effective aid to schools and colleges preparing for or engaged in spring training.

It is still another object of the invention to provide a device of this character whereby the pitcher in training or in practice may develop the proper techniques and pitching form.

A further object of the invention is to provide a device of this character that is relatively light in weight and may be easily moved about and/or transported.

It is still another object of the invention to provide a device of this character that is rugged and durable.

A further object of the invention is to provide a device of this character that is relatively inexpensive to manufacture.

The characteristics and advantages of the invention are further sufficiently referred to in connection with the following detailed description of the accompanying drawings, which represent one embodiment. After considering this example skilled persons will understand that variations may be made without departing from the principles disclosed and I contemplate the employment

of any structures, arrangements or modes of operation that are properly within the scope of the appended claims.

Referring to the drawings, which are for illustrative purposes only:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a device embodying the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a sectional view thereof taken on line 2—2 of FIG. 1; and

FIG. 3 is a sectional view taken on line 3—3 of FIG. 2.

Referring more particularly to the drawings, there is shown a pitcher's training mound, indicated generally at **10**, embodying the present invention.

The mound is of relatively light weight material, such as foamed plastic, for example. The plastic used may be polyethelyne, Fiberglas, or the like. Dimensions of the mound are the same, or closely approximate those prescribed by official regulations.

A substantial portion of the top of the mound, as indicated generally at **11**, is relatively flat except as hereinafter described, there being a rear portion or area **12** of said top surface of said mound that is generally parallel with the plane of the underside thereof which would also make it substantially parallel to the floor or ground surface upon which the device is placed and hence may be termed a horizontal portion or area. From the generally horizontal area **12** the top surface **11** of the device curves or is inclined forwardly and downwardly as at **14** and terminates at the forward end in a forwardly and sharply downwardly curved front end portion **16**. The sides **18** and rear end **19** of the mound are curved downwardly and outwardly relative to the top surface.

Adjacent the rear end of the mound is the pitcher's plate **22**. This plate is somewhat raised above the plane of the top surface of the device and is shown as being integral with the mound. It is to be understood, of course, that said pitcher's plate **22** may be a separate piece attached to the mound by any suitable well known adhesive, for example, or it may be a recess in the top surface of the mound. However, it has been found very effective and satisfactory to have the plate raised above the mound surface as shown in the drawings.

Extending forwardly from the plate **22** is a shield **24** which is of sufficient length and width to cover a substantial portion of the top surface of the mound and provide a protecting covering for that portion of the mound upon which the pitcher operates or works. Shield **24** comprises a sheet of wear resistant material, such as rubber, natural or synthetic, plastic, or the like. Resiliency is also a desirable characteristic of said shield and said shield may be approximately ¼-inch thick or any other suitable thickness sufficient to protect the top surface of the mound against damage or wear from the shoes of the pitcher. Any suitable means may be used to secure the shield to the top surface of the mound. This securing means may be of any known adhesive having the required characteristics. For example, an epoxy cement may be used.

Shield **24** is provided with a series of transversely extending parallel lines **26** as an aid in training a pitcher or aiding him in practice. The instructor can better show or instruct the trainee or one practicing the best location for the feet when pitching.

While the mound is made of a light weight material such as a foamed plastic, it is to be understood that it may be made of other material. For example, the mound may be a metal shell formed to provide the desired top surface of the proper shape and size to facilitate the training of pitchers or practice pitching of pitchers.

The device may also be used out of doors on playing fields that do not have a pitcher's mound. For example, the sand lot players and little league players may have

fields or practice or training areas that do not have a pitcher's mound and the present device is particularly useful for such fields or areas.

The invention and its attendant advantages will be understood from the foregoing description and it will be apparent that various changes may be made in the form, construction and arrangement of the parts of the invention without departing from the spirit and scope thereof or sacrificing its material advantages, the arrangement hereinbefore described being merely by way of example, and I do not wish to be restricted to the specific form shown or uses mentioned except as defined in the accompanying claims, wherein various portions have been separated for clarity of reading and not for emphasis.

I claim:

1. A portable pitcher's mound, comprising:

(A) a body of foamed plastic material having a top working surface higher at the rear than at the forward end, said surface having a portion at the rear substantially horizontal to the plane of the underside of the body and a forward end portion curving forwardly and downwardly and terminating at the forward end in a sharply downwardly curved front end portion, the rear and sides of the body curving downwardly and outwardly from the top playing surface;

(B) a pitcher's plate on the top of said mound and extending transversely of said mound adjacent the rear end of the said top surface;

(C) and a shield comprising a sheet of rubber extending from said plate forwardly on said top surface and terminating adjacent the forward end thereof, said shield having substantial width and being secured to the top surface of the body by an adhesive for protection of the top surface against wear and damage from the shoes of the player using said mound, said shield having a plurality of transversely extending parallel lines spaced apart longitudinally relative to the mound and spaced forwardly of the pitcher's plate.

2. In a portable pitcher's mound:

(A) a body of light weight plastic material having a top playing surface higher at the rear than at the forward end, said surface having a substantially horizontal portion at the rear and a forwardly and downwardly curving forward portion extending from said horizontal portion;

(B) a pitcher's plate extending transversely of the mound adjacent the rear end of said playing surface;

(C) and a shield comprising a sheet of resiliant material secured to said top playing surface extending from said plate forwardly on said top surface and terminating adjacent the forward end thereof, said shield having substantial width and providing protection of the top surface against wear and damage from the shoes of the player using said mound.

3. In a portable pitcher's mound:

(A) a light weight body having a top playing surface, higher at the rear than at the forward end, said surface having a substantially horizontal portion at the rear and a forwardly and downwardly curving portion extending from said horizontal portion;

(B) a pitcher's plate extending transversely of the mound adjacent the rear end of said playing surface;

(C) and a shield comprising a sheet of resilient material secured to said top playing surface, extending from said plate forwardly on said top surface and terminating adjacent the forward end thereof, said shield having substantial width and providing protection of the top surface against wear and damage.

4. In a portable pitcher's mound:

(A) a light weight plastic body having a top playing surface higher at the rear than at the forward end, and including a forwardly and downwardly curving forward portion;

(B) a pitcher's plate extending transversely of the mound adjacent the rear end of said playing surface;

(C) and a shield comprising a sheet of cushioning material secured to at least a portion of said top playing surface for protection of the top surface against wear.

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RICHARD C. PINKHAM, *Primary Examiner.*