

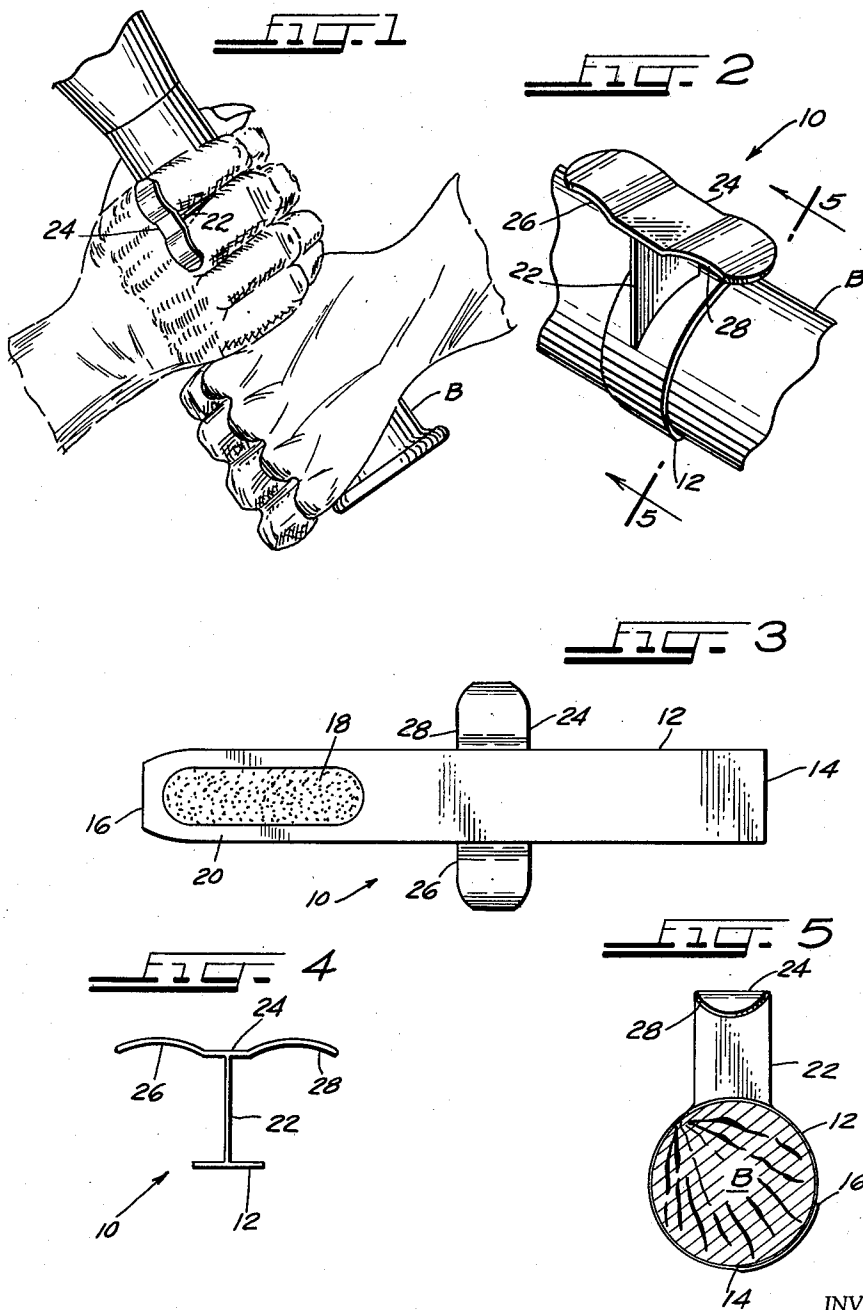
April 9, 1963

E. C. KAPANOWSKI

3,084,938

SAFETY HANDGRIP

Filed March 26, 1962



INVENTOR
EDWARD C. KAPANOWSKI
BY
Silverman, Mullin & Cass
ATT'YS.

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SAFETY HANDGRIP

Edward C. Kapanowski, 3609 S. Paulina St.,
Chicago 9, Ill.

Filed Mar. 26, 1962, Ser. No. 182,302

1 Claim. (Cl. 273-72)

This invention relates generally to safety handgrips for athletic equipment, tools, and the like and more particularly relates to an improved handgrip of the character described having novel means for engaging the fingers of a hand during use of the said equipment, tools or the like.

In the specification, the invention will be described and illustrated in connection with a baseball bat, although it should be understood that the invention can be used with equal advantage in connection with other articles such as golf clubs, axes, hammers, etc..

It is well known that one of the problems attendant the use of long-handled instruments of the type described is that they tend to slip from the hands due to the nature of their use. Thus, for example, a relatively common occurrence in the game of baseball is the sight of a bat flying loose from the hands of a batter as he swings at the ball. The dangers attendant such a free flying bat are, of course, obvious, particularly when the same is propelled toward a crowd of spectators observing the game.

In an effort to prevent such accidents, baseball players have employed numerous precautionary measures, such as sprinkling the bat handle with rosin, applying pine tar, wearing thin high-friction gloves, or covering the bat handle with tape and other similar substances. However, these measures have proved ineffectual and the accidents continue to occur with disturbing frequency.

Other attempts to cope with the problem have included the provision of handgrip devices which were attached to the bat handle and which purportedly prevented the bat from slipping out of the batter's grip. However, these prior handgrips were invariably characterized by certain obvious disadvantages as attested to by the virtual non-use thereof. Thus, for example, the prior devices often comprised protruding ridges or indented grooves built into the bat handle as a permanent part thereof. Such permanently positioned ridges or grooves not only failed to solve the problem, but were further objectionable because the hand sizes of individual batsmen differ as do their batting habits in the specific manner in which they grip the bat or position their hands.

Other prior devices comprised a plurality of individual parts which could be positioned in adjustably spaced relationship on the bat handle. The latter devices were objectionable because the proper use thereof was unduly complicated and detracted from the high degree of concentration required for skillful batting. Furthermore, the substantial bulk of these devices was frequently discomforting to the batter. In the latter regard, it is well known that most baseball players prefer to grip the smooth wood of the bat handle directly with their hands, with no uneven or protruding articles therebetween.

It is, therefore, an important object of this invention to provide a safety handgrip for baseball bats, or the like, which overcomes all of the disadvantages described hereinabove.

Another important object of the invention is to afford a safety handgrip of the character described which is small in size and functions in a novel manner whereby the same does not interfere with normal batting habits. A related object is to afford such a handgrip which is most comfortable to the user thereof. In this regard, the invention comprises a thin band which is mountable on a bat handle, said band having a thin strap extend-

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ing therefrom which is positionable through any adjacent pair of the batter's fingers.

A further object is to provide a safety handgrip of the character described which may be removably attached to a bat handle so that the same may be readily detached for use with other bats.

Still another object is to afford a safety handgrip of the character described which is adjustable so the same may be mounted on handles of virtually any dimension.

Yet another object is to provide a safety handgrip of the character described which may be comfortably used by all batsmen irrespective of their hand size, batting habits, or batting orientation, viz., left or right handed.

Still a further object is to afford a safety handgrip of the character described which may be readily released by the batter when desired. The batter thus may release and drop the bat in the usual manner after hitting the ball.

Another object is to provide a safety handgrip of the character described which may be inexpensively fabricated as a standardized mass-produced item, and yet is most durable and efficient for the purposes intended.

For the purpose of facilitating an understanding of my invention, I have illustrated in the accompanying drawings a preferred embodiment thereof, from an inspection of which, when considered in connection with the following description, my invention, its mode of construction, assembly and operation, and many of its advantages should be readily understood and appreciated.

Referring to the drawings in which the same characters of reference are employed to indicate corresponding or similar parts throughout the several figures of the drawings:

FIG. 1 is a fragmentary perspective view of a safety handgrip embodying the principles of the invention and showing the same in actual use by a batsman;

FIG. 2 is an enlarged fragmentary perspective view showing the invention operationally mounted on a bat handle;

FIG. 3 is a bottom plan view of the invention in the open and inoperative condition;

FIG. 4 is an end elevational view thereof; and

FIG. 5 is a sectional view taken on the plane of line 5-5 in FIG. 2 and viewed in the direction indicated.

Referring now to the various figures of the drawings, the reference numeral 10 indicates generally a safety handgrip embodying the principles of the invention. The handgrip 10 comprises a flexible, elongated band 12 having ends 14 and 16. Fastening means, such as a coating of a suitable pressure-sensitive adhesive 18 is applied to an area of the bottom surface of the band 12 adjacent the end 16, as indicated in FIG. 3 of the drawings. Preferably, the adhesive 18 does not extend to the extremities of the band 12 so that there is provided an adhesive-free marginal area such as 20 for facilitating the operational mounting and removal of the handgrip 10.

Projecting upwardly from the top surface of the band 12 is a thin web or strap 22. It will be noted that the strap 22 lies in a plane parallel to the longitudinal axis of the band 12. Secured to the upper extremity of the strap 22, and transversely thereof, is a finger engaging member 24. It will thus be noted that the member 24 lies in a plane transverse to the longitudinal axis of the band 12 so that the finger engaging member, band and strap 22 comprise a generally I-shaped structure as viewed in FIG. 4 of the drawings. The member 24 is generally symmetrical in configuration and the same is provided with a pair of arcuate or curved segments 26 and 28 for reasons which will become apparent as the description proceeds.

Operation of the handgrip 10 may now be described with particular reference being had to FIGS. 1, 2 and 5 of the drawings. The band 12 is operationally mounted on a bat handle B by merely wrapping the same thereupon in tight encircling relationship and adhering the end 16 to the end 14. The batsman now grips the bat in his normal manner with the exception that he positions the strap 22 up in the crotch between any two adjacent fingers of one of his hands (see FIG. 1). The curved segments 26 and 28 of the finger engaging member 24 now abut or bear upon the two affected fingers in comfortable contour accommodating relationship. With the handgrip thus positioned and employed, it has been found that it is virtually impossible for the bat B to fly free from the batsman's grip. Thus, for example, even if the batsman were inadvertently to open or extend all of the fingers of one or both of his hands, the cooperating action of the member 24 against the two affected fingers would nonetheless prevent the bat from flying free.

Despite the described efficient results obtained with my novel handgrip, it is most important to note that the same does not discomfort or interfere in any way with the batsman. It will thus be seen that the operationally mounted band 12 comprises a virtual "outer skin" for the bat handle B so that the batsman does not feel or even sense the presence thereof. The thin strap 22 likewise is gripped between a pair of adjacent fingers in a manner which renders its presence virtually imperceptible. Similarly, the finger engaging member 24, with its arcuate segments 26 and 28, gently engages the two affected fingers in comfortable contour accommodating relationship. It will, however, be appreciated that the bat may nonetheless be readily released and dropped by the batsman when this becomes necessary, as prior to running the bases. In this regard, the strap 22 preferably is made with standardized length sufficient to accommodate the fingers of the largest human hands.

The band 12 and strap 22 may be fabricated from any suitable sturdy, thin and flexible materials, such as various textiles, leathers, plastics, etc. The finger engaging member 24 desirably should be more semi-rigid in nature, and for this purpose, various commonly used plastics are ideally suited. Actually, the entire handgrip 10 may be inexpensively integrally molded from a suitable plastic material.

It will, of course, be appreciated that the pressure sensitive adhesive fastening means illustrated permits the band 12 to be operationally mounted on virtually all normal sized bat handles. At the same time, the band 12 may be readily detached and mounted on different bat handles and to this end, the adhesive-free marginal area

20 facilitates this operation. It should also be appreciated that other forms of fastening means may likewise be employed such as suitable hooks, clips or snaps. In addition, the band 12 may be made as an endless loop from a highly elastic material such as rubber, in which case additional fastening means could be dispensed with entirely.

From the foregoing description and drawings, it should be apparent that I have provided a novel safety handgrip which is most efficient and yet in no way discomforting to the user thereof. The handgrip may be removably attached to any bat handle and used by any batsman irrespective of his hand size or batting habits. In addition, the invention may be inexpensively fabricated in a single standardized size.

It is believed that my invention, its mode of construction and assembly, and many of its advantages should be readily understood from the foregoing without further description, and it should also be manifest that while a preferred embodiment of the invention has been shown and described for illustrative purposes, the structural details are nevertheless capable of wide variation within the purview of my invention as defined in the appended claim.

What I claim and desire to secure by Letters Patent of the United States is:

A safety handgrip for handles comprising a thin and flexible band, a pressure sensitive adhesive on a portion of the bottom surface of said band adjacent one end thereof, a marginal portion of said one end being adhesive free whereby said band may be adjustably and detachably mounted on a handle, a thin and flexible strap projecting upwardly from the top surface of said band in a plane parallel to the longitudinal axis of said band, a finger engaging member secured transversely to the upper end of said strap, and an arcuate segment on said member on either side of said strap, said strap being positionable between an adjacent pair of fingers whereupon said arcuate segments engage said fingers in substantial contour accommodating relationship.

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