

United States Patent

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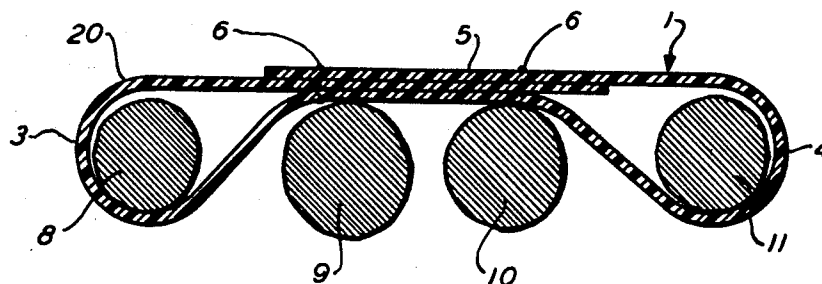
[54] **FINGER SUPPORT FOR BOWLERS**
6 Claims, 5 Drawing Figs.

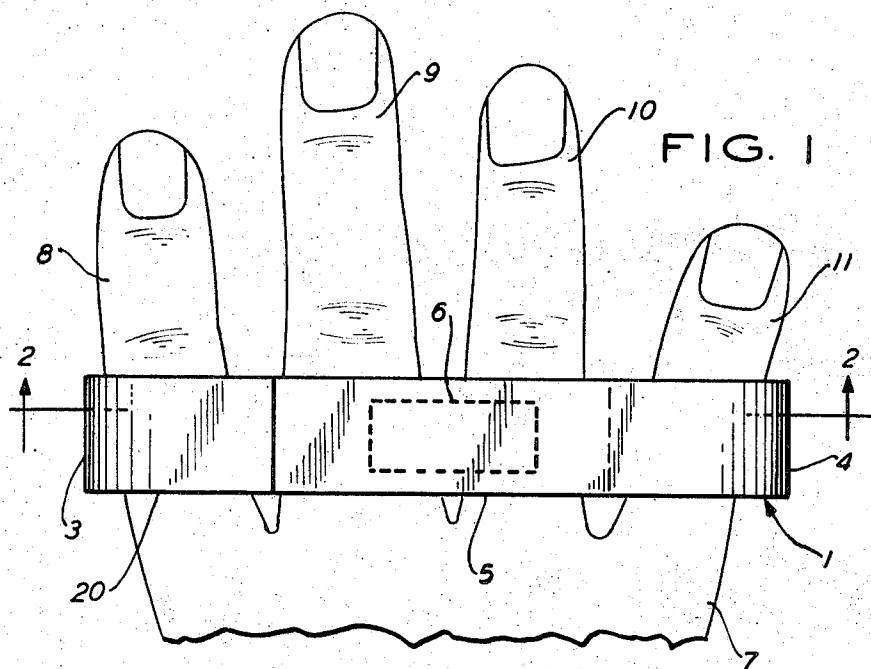
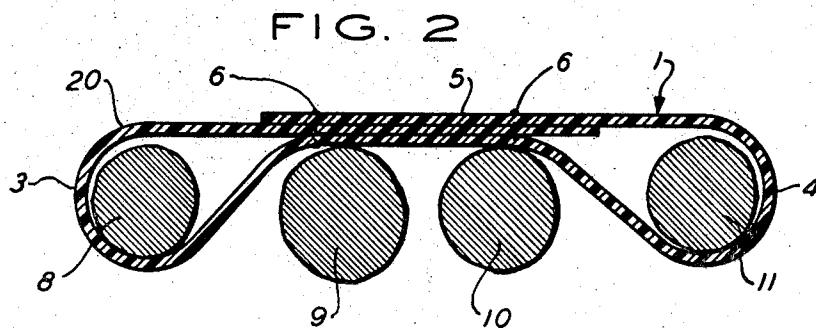
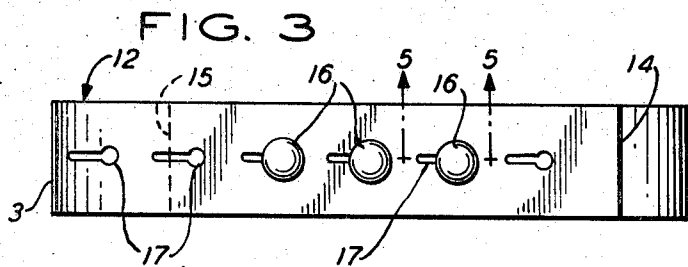
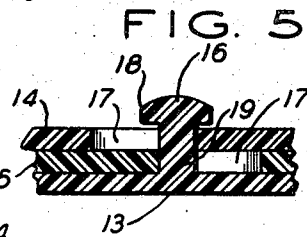
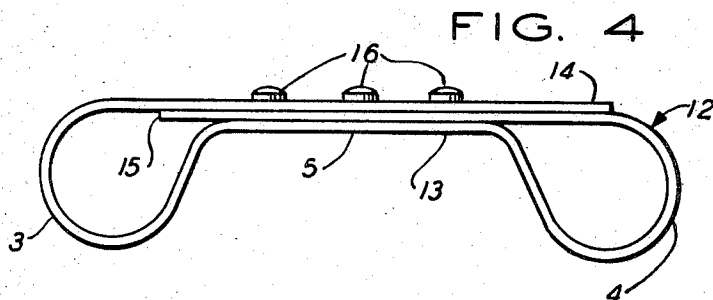
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ABSTRACT: A finger support for bowlers in the form of an elongated member extending transversely the fingers between the palm and the first adjacent finger joints and having two flexible end loop portions encircling the index finger and the little finger respectively, and a supporting middle portion engaging the backs of the middle finger and the ring finger.





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FINGER SUPPORT FOR BOWLERS

My invention relates to a finger support which is placed on the bowling hand of a bowler and which is particularly suited for use with the generally used three-fingered bowling balls.

In bowling the word "mix" is used to indicate the quality of the action of the ball upon the pins and depends upon the "lift" or nature of the release and followthrough, particularly upon the fingering of the ball during the delivery period; especially at the moment of release. Such fingering depends upon the manner in which the index finger and little finger act upon the surface of the ball during the portion of the delivery period prior to the time at which the thumb and these two fingers break contact with the ball, and to a larger degree upon the action of the middle and ring fingers upon the edges or rims of the corresponding fingerholes of the ball at the moment the ball leaves the hand. It is during this brief moment that the so-called "lift" is applied to the ball, and any deficiencies in the fingering at this time, particularly in the nature of the forces exerted on the ball by these two fingers, will deleteriously effect the "lift" and the "mix".

I have found that it is possible to obtain a greater ball speed, as well as substantial improvement in the "lift" and uniformity thereof, by providing on the bowling hand means to support the middle and ring fingers from the index and little fingers while at the same time providing lateral support and interspacing for the latter two fingers. In accordance with the invention such means comprise an elongated body which, when positioned on the hand, extends transversely thereof between the palm and the first adjacent finger joints thereof, and which has a relatively flat middle portion adapted to engage the backs of the middle and ring fingers and two end loop portions extending below the surface of the middle portion so as to encircle the index finger and the little finger respectively and being flexible to permit the latter two fingers to engage the bowling ball.

In a preferred embodiment of my invention the finger support is provided with adjusting means to adjust the same to hands of different sizes and also to adjust the lateral support and interspacing of the index and little fingers to meet the personal preferences of the bowler.

In order that my invention may be clearly understood and readily carried into effect, I shall now describe the same in more detail with reference to the accompanying drawing in which:

FIG. 1 is a plan view of a finger support according to my invention shown in position on the hand of a bowler;

FIG. 2 is a section along line 2-2 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a plan view of an adjustable type support according to my invention;

FIG. 4 is a side elevation of the support of FIG. 3; and

FIG. 5 is a sectional view on an enlarged scale along line 5-5 of FIG. 3.

The elongated finger support 1 illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2 comprises a strip-shaped member 20 formed of strong and relatively flexible material, such as leather, or a plastic or rubber composition, and having a width less than the distance between the palm of hand 7 and the first adjacent joints of the fingers 8 to 11. Support 1 has two end loop portions 3 and 4 and a middle portion 5 which is formed of a middle section and two end sections of member 20 sewn together at 6 (see FIG. 2) to thereby form the three-ply middle portion 5 which is relatively rigid and flat, and which has a length substantially that of the width of the middle finger 9 and ring finger 10.

The support is positioned on the bowling hand 7 with the end loop portion 3 encircling the index finger 8 and the end loop portion 4 encircling the little finger 11 with the flat middle portion 5 engaging the outer surfaces of middle finger 9 and ring finger 10 between the palm of the hand the first joints of the fingers.

From FIG. 2 it will be seen that, when the support is in use with the tips of fingers 8 and 11 in contact with the surface of the ball and fingers 9 and 10 extending into the corresponding fingerholes in the ball, the support will provide lateral support and interspacing to fingers 8 and 11. When, during delivery,

the thumb has been withdrawn from the thumb hole in the ball and fingers 8 and 11 have broken contact with the ball surface there is a brief period during which only the tips of fingers 9 and 10 will be in contact with edges of the corresponding fingerholes. During this brief, but critical period in which the "lift" is applied to the ball, fingers 9 and 10 form the only contact with the ball and will be well supported against backward movement thereof by the middle portion 5 which in turn is supported by the widely spaced fingers 8 and 11.

Member 1 may be made of various materials, such as plastic coated metal, moulded plastic or rubber, but I prefer to make the same of a strip of thermoplastic material having a width about that of the distance between the palm and the adjacent finger joints, for instance three-fourths to 1 inch, and a thickness of about one-sixteenth to three thirty-seconds of an inch.

Referring now to FIGS. 3, 4 and 5, the finger support shown therein is formed of a folded strip 12 of molded plastic or rubber composition having a substantially flat middle portion 13 and two end loop end portions 3 and 4 adapted to encircle the index finger and little finger respectively. The middle portion 13 and end portions 14 and 15 of strip 12 are held together in an adjustable manner to form the relatively flat and rigid middle portion 13 of the support which is adapted to engage the back surfaces of the middle and ring fingers of a bowler. For this purpose, the middle portion 13 is provided with three equidistantly spaced rivet-shaped protuberances 16 (see FIG. 5) and each of the end portions 14 and 15 is provided with six buttonhole-shaped openings 17 spaced apart the same distances as protuberances 16. The protuberances 16 and openings 17 are formed during the moulding of strip 12 and thus the entire support may be inexpensively manufactured in one operation. As shown in FIG. 5 protuberance 16 has a head 18 and a shaft 19 which is slightly longer than the thicknesses of portions 14 and 15 whereas the openings 17 are in the form of narrow slits which on their ends adjacent the end of strip 12 are enlarged to fit around shafts 19. Instead of using molded protuberances 16 it is, of course, possible to use metal protuberances which are riveted to portion 13 or other types of fasteners which are well known in the art.

While I have described my invention in connection with specific examples and materials I do not desire to be limited thereto as obvious modifications and constructions will readily present themselves to one skilled in this art.

I claim:

1. A finger-controlling device for a bowler's hand, comprising a straplike elongated body adapted to extend transversely of the hand between the palm and the first adjacent finger joints, said body having a middle supporting portion adapted to engage the backs of the middle and ring fingers and two flexible end portions forming loops adapted to encircle the little finger and the index finger respectively, means including said middle portion to support the backs of the middle and ring fingers, said flexible end portions affording means permitting the little and index fingers to contact the surface of the bowling ball during the delivery thereof.

2. The invention defined in claim 1 comprising adjusting means to adjust the distance between the end loop portions.

3. The invention defined in claim 1 in which the elongated body is a folded strip of thermoplastic material forming said flexible end loop portions.

4. The invention defined in claim 1 comprising adjusting means including a plurality of equidistantly spaced openings on at least one end of the body and a plurality of equidistantly spaced protuberances at the middle portion thereof.

5. A finger controlling device for a bowler's hand comprising:

a generally flat, flexible finger supporting means for engaging the backs of the middle and ring fingers of a hand in the area between the palm and first adjacent finger joints; first and second flexible finger receiving means connected to opposite ends of the finger supporting means for receiving the little and index fingers respectively; and

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the distance between the two finger receiving means being such that the finger supporting means is rendered sufficiently taut to urge the middle and ring fingers forwardly toward the palm when the little and index fingers are received in the finger receiving means and are splayed as in a conventional bowling ball delivery grip.

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5 6. The finger controlling device of claim 5 wherein the device comprises a flexible, relatively narrow, unitary elongate body, portions of the body constituting the finger supporting means and looped portions of the body constituting the finger receiving means.

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