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SYSTEM OF LINKING BIOMETRIC INDICIA TO SPORTS EQUIPMENT

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ABSTRACT

A system of linking biometric indicia to sports memorabilia is disclosed. The system features: obtaining an athlete celebrity; selecting a gripped article of sports equipment, specific to the athlete celebrity’s sport; preparing a grip template based on the athlete’s grip on a template article of sports equipment; obtaining a plurality of target articles of sport equipment; placing indicia on at least one of the target equipment with reference to the template, whereby the target equipment becomes novelty biometric equipment; obtaining a plurality of sports fan; and distributing, to at least one sports fan, the novelty biometric equipment.
SYSTEM OF LINKING BIOMETRIC INDICIA TO SPORTS EQUIPMENT

[0001] This application claims priority of U.S. Provisional application No. 61/246,113 filed Sep. 26, 2009 to Jason Ventura for System of Linking Biometric Indicia to Sports Equipment.

INTRODUCTION

[0002] Makers of sporting equipment seek out celebrity athletes to endorse sporting equipment. Frequently, these athletes allow the affixure of their signatures to the surface of sporting equipment. The consumer associates the athlete's excellence with that of the sporting equipment.

[0003] Celebrity athletes stand out from the mass of humanity, not only for what they can do on the playing field, but also on the physical gifts that contribute to their performance. Some sports favor large individuals, whose size and strength is typically represented in their hands. A handprint is more interesting and revealing than an autograph.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0004] 1. Field of the Invention

[0005] The present invention relates to a system of linking biometric indicia to sports memorabilia. More specifically, a celebrity athlete’s handprint is affixed to the surface of sporting equipment pertaining to the athlete’s particular sport.

[0006] 2. Description of the Prior Art

[0007] Sporting equipment with handprints are disclosed in U.S. patents. However, the handprint typically aims to train a sports novice in proper hand placement upon the equipment.

[0008] U.S. Pat. No. 7,041,015 to Sowards teaches a Basketball Shooting Aid. Sowder’s patent features first and second patches, in the shape of human hands, on the surface of a basketball.


BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0011] It is an object of the present invention to provide a system for linking a celebrity athlete’s handprint to the surface of sports equipment.

[0012] Another object of the present invention is to provide an article of sporting equipment that has significance as memorabilia.

[0013] A further object of the present invention is to provide the sponsors of spectator events with miniaturized game balls as premium giveaways at events.

[0014] A further object of the present invention is to provide an article of sporting equipment that reveals an athlete celebrity’s handprint in response to an environmental stimulus such as temperature, light, or humidity.

[0015] These and other objects of the invention are accomplished by obtaining an athlete celebrity; selecting a gripped article of sports equipment, specific to the athlete celebrity’s sport; preparing a grip template based on the athlete’s grip on a template article of sports equipment; obtaining a plurality of target articles of sports equipment; placing indicia on at least one of the target equipment with reference to the template, whereby the target equipment becomes novelty biometric equipment; obtaining a plurality of sports fan; and distributing, to at least one sports fan, the novelty biometric equipment.

[0016] Other objects and further scope of applicability of the present invention will become apparent from the detailed description given hereinafter. However, it should be understood, that the detailed description and specific examples, while indicating preferred embodiments of the invention, are given by way of illustration only, since various changes and modifications within the spirit and scope of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from this detailed description.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0017] The system of linking biometric information to sporting equipment starts with obtaining a celebrity athlete. The athlete’s handprint is placed on an article of sports equipment. The athlete typically grips or touches the equipment during the course of the athlete’s performance or competition. Any type of ball, racket, or club is an example of sporting equipment.

[0018] Examples of gripped articles of sporting equipment include basketballs, footballs, rugby balls, baseballs, and volleyballs. Further example, include golf clubs, tennis rackets, and baseball bats.

[0019] Also, a steering wheel on a professional racecar driver’s vehicle is a gripped article of sporting equipment. However, that driver’s handprint might ultimately find itself on a steering wheel for the family minivan. In this example, the placement of the handprint on the steering wheel might be achieved via a steering wheel cover. With other equipment the handprint is slightly indented into the form of the material of the ball or club, and not just an overlay.

[0020] Once one has obtained the athlete, and selected the gripped article, a grip template is prepared. The grip template is based on the athlete’s grip. The template is applied to a three-dimensional object, merely pressing a hand on a flat surface does not suffice. However, a flat handprint might be manipulated with the assistance of computer software or a human with technical artistic ability.

[0021] The handprint is not limited to the traced outline of the hand, but also indicates within that outline where the hand is not in contact with the particular sporting equipment. In other words, what might appear if the athlete had gripped the ball with ink stained hands. The level of detail is limited. Not every crease and fold of the athlete’s hand will necessarily be duplicated.

[0022] Target articles of sporting equipment are the precursors of what the sports fan ultimately receives. Hence, the manufacturer must obtain a plurality of target articles of sports equipment. The target articles might conform to the regulation dimensions for use in actual play, or might be miniaturized for novelty.

[0023] The manufacturer places the handprint indicia on at least one of the target equipment with reference to the template. At this point, the target equipment is transformed into a piece of novelty biometric equipment.
In one preferred embodiment, the indicia might be ink. The inks might glow in the dark, or in the presence of black light. The indicia might not be visible until the application of heat or cold, in the case of heat and cold sensitive inks, respectively. Other inks might be invisible until water is applied. The inks might be one color or several colors.

In a preferred embodiment, the indicia are tactile in nature. The surface of the article might be smoothed or roughen in the handprint area to differentiate that area from the rest of the sporting equipment.

In another preferred embodiment, the indicia involve both the use of ink and a roughening or smoothing of the handprint area.

The final step is to distribute the novelty biometric equipment to at least one sports fan. A plurality of sports fans might be obtained in a number of ways, including traditional sales and marketing, and or sports events. The biometric equipment might be sold or given away as a premium promotional item.

The invention being thus described, it will be obvious that the same may be varied in many ways. Such variations are not to be regarded as a departure from the spirit and the invention, and all such modifications are intended to be included within the scope of the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A system of linking biometric information to sports equipment comprising:
   - obtaining an athlete celebrity;
   - selecting a gripped article of sports equipment, specific to the athlete celebrity’s sport;
   - preparing a grip template based on the athlete’s griped handprint on a template article of sports equipment;
   - obtaining a plurality of target articles of sport equipment;
   - placing indicia on at least one of the target equipment with reference to the template, whereby the target equipment becomes novelty biometric equipment;
   - obtaining a plurality of sports fan; and
   - distributing, to at least one sports fan, the novelty biometric equipment.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the indicia is an ink selected from a group of inks consisting of: glow in the dark ink, florescent ink, black light reactive ink, heat sensitive thermal ink, cold sensitive ink, and hydrocreative ink.

3. The system of claim 1, further comprising smoothing the surface of the equipment the template covers, thereby providing the sports fan with a tactile sense of the indicia.

4. The system of claim 1, further comprising roughing the surface of the equipment the template covers, thereby providing the sports fan with a tactile sense of the indicia.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein the target article is a miniature sports equipment, and further comprising reducing the size of the indicia in proportion to the target article.

6. The system of claim 1, wherein the athlete is a famous basketball player and the template and target article of sports equipment are basketballs.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein the athlete is a famous baseball player and the template and target article of sports equipment are baseballs.

8. The system of claim 1, wherein the athlete is a famous football player and the template and target article of sports equipment are footballs.

9. The system of claim 1, wherein the athlete is a famous volleyball player and the template and target article of sports equipment are volleyballs.

10. The system of claim 1, wherein the athlete is a famous rugby player and the template and target article of sports equipment are rugby balls.

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