April 16, 1929. W. A. SCHUTT 1,709,041

FOOTBALL INDICATOR

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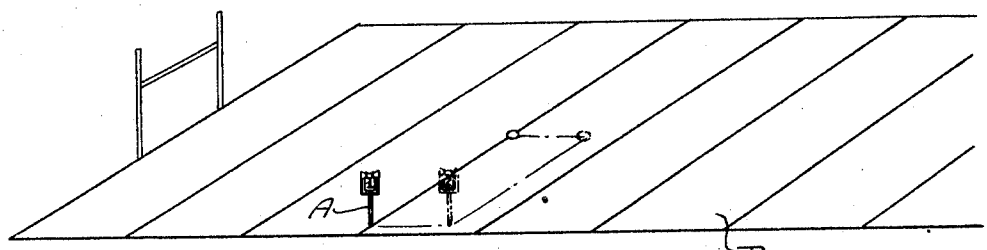



Fig. 1.

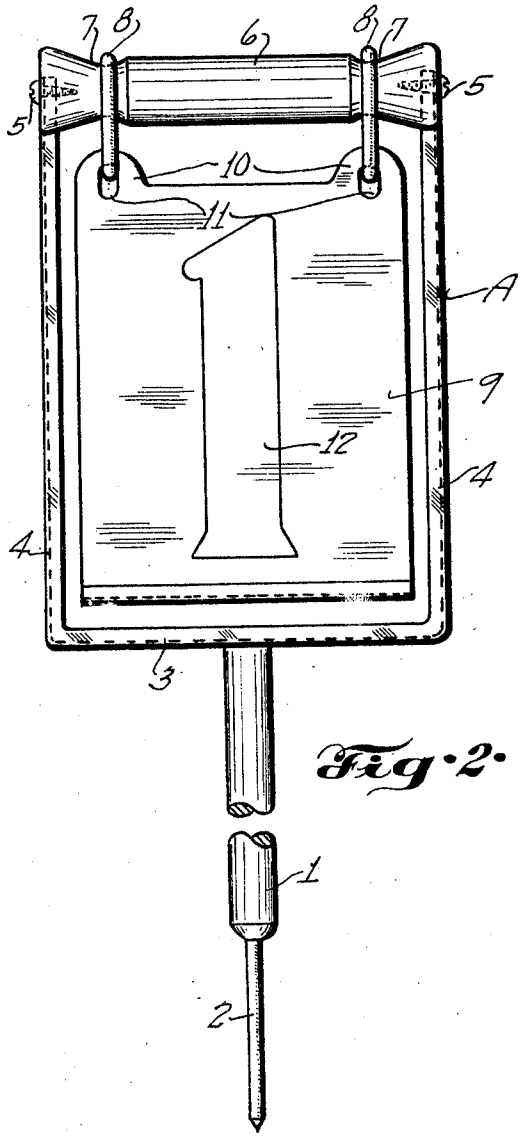



Fig. 2.

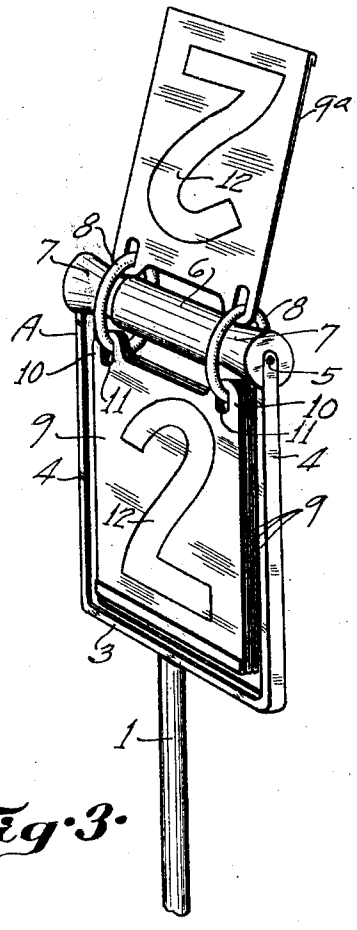



Fig. 3.

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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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## FOOTBALL INDICATOR.

Application filed October 18, 1926. Serial No. 142,456.

This invention relates generally to football paraphernalia and, more particularly, to a certain new and useful improvement in devices especially adapted for visually designating or indicating the particular "down" in a "four-down gain" period of football of Rugby type.

The game of Rugby football is usually played upon a field of certain dimensions divided between the opposite goals by surface lines or markings into spaces of five yards each, and the particular side or team having the ball must, according to the prescribed rules of the game, make a total "gain" toward the goal of the other side or team of ten yards on each four successive so-called "downs" or suffer the penalty of losing the ball. It is, accordingly, very desirable, if not important, both to the players, officials, and the interested spectators that record be promptly made, and they be informed, of the particular "down" in the so-called four-down period. The object of my present invention is hence to provide, as a new article of manufacture, a simple, inexpensive, and durable device for the purpose, which may be readily portably shifted with and as the players move up or down on the field, which may be conveniently engaged with and on the field in self-supporting upstanding position at the proper location, and which may with facility be manipulated to visually indicate both to the players, officials, and spectators, when viewed from either up or down the field, the particular "down" of the set or period.

And with the above and other objects in view, my invention resides in the novel features of form, construction, arrangement, and combination of parts hereinafter described and pointed out in the claim.

In the accompanying drawing,—

Figure 1 is a fragmental perspective view of a Rugby football playing-field equipped with a "down" indicator of my invention;

Figure 2 is an elevational, partly broken, view of the indicator; and

Figure 3 is a fragmental reduced perspective view of the indicator as when being manipulated to indicate the particular "down" of a set or period.

Referring now more in detail and by reference characters to the accompanying drawing, which illustrates a preferred embodiment of my indicator, my new football "down" indicator A includes a standard comprising a post 1 of suitable height and material, preferably reduced and pointed or sharpened at its lower end, as at 2, for convenient removal engagement with the playing-ground B for self-supporting the standard in upstanding position. Suitably welded or otherwise rigidly fixed at its cross-piece or bight 3 upon the upper end of post 1, is a substantially U-shaped frame whose legs 4, 4, are presented upwardly. Disposed between, and suitably supportingly secured, as by screws 5, to the legs 4, 4, at their upper end, is a cross-piece or gripping-handle 6.

Adjacent its opposite ends the handle 6 is preferably circumferentially grooved, as at 7, and loosely disposed on the handle 6 at its grooves 7, are rings 8, 8.

Of relatively reduced size to fit loosely within, and for swingable movement through, said frame, is a plurality of plates 9, preferably four in number and similar in form and structure, except for the "down" indicating symbols or numbers carried thereby, as will shortly appear, each of said plates being formed at its upper margin with a pair of projecting ears 10 having slotted openings, as at 11, whereby the plates 9 are adapted to accommodate, and for support relatively to the standard by, the rings 8.

Disposed upon the opposite side faces of the several respective plates or members 9, are suitable symbols 12, such as the numerals 1 to 4, inclusive, respectively, said numerals being so reversely disposed upon the plates in consecutive order or arrangement that the same "down" indicating symbol will be visually exposed as the indicator is viewed from either side.

Hence, in use and practice, and, for instance, in the beginning of a particular "four-down" period, or set, the indicator is disposed in self-standing position upon the field B at the proper location from which, according to the prescribed rules of the game, the necessary "gain" towards the opposing team's goal must be made in such period or set by the particular team to retain possession of the ball, the several plates 9 being manipulated to expose on opposite sides of the standard and both to the players, officials, and the spectators the numeral 1. The indicator thereby is designed

to, and does, inform the players and spectators that, of such particular "four-down" period or set, this is the first "down". Play being had and the players having advanced, that is to say, having made a "gain" in such "down" a distance down the field, as indicated by the dot-and-dash lines, Figure 1, the indicator is portably shifted correspondingly and again disposed in self-supporting position upon the field preferably in alignment with the shifted position of the players, as indicated in dotted lines in Figure 1, the one respective outer plate $9^a$ being swingably manipulated from one side of the standard to the other as illustrated in Figure 3, so that the two then outer plates of the set shall then visually expose on opposite sides of the standard the numeral 2, the indicator thereby similarly informing the players, officials, and spectators that such succeeding "down" is the second "down" of the period or set, and so on throughout the game, respective plates 9, after each "four-down" period or set, again visually exposing to view the first numeral 1.

My new indicator is of simple, inexpensive, and durable structure, may be conveniently shifted from location to location and manipulated throughout the game, and is exceedingly efficient in the performance of its intended functions.

I am aware that changes in the form, construction, arrangement, and combination of the several parts of my new indicator may be made and substituted for those herein shown and described without departing from the nature and spirit of my invention.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

As a new article of manufacture, a portable indicator for use in football games, the same including a rigid standard comprising a post pointed at its lower end, a rigid U-shaped frame fixed centrally at its bight to the upper end of the post, the legs of the frame being presented upwardly, a gripping-handle extending transversely of and between and fixed at its opposite ends to the upper ends of said legs, the handle being circumferentially grooved adjacent its opposite ends and the standard being adapted at its post for removable upstanding self-supporting engagement with the playing-field, rings loosely disposed in the grooves of the gripping-handle, and a plurality of plates each having spaced apertured ears at an end and loosely engaging at said ears with the rings to swingably depend within the frame, said plates bearing upon their opposite successive faces "down" indicating symbols in reversely disposed consecutive arrangement and being adapted for swingable manipulation relatively to the rings and frame and about the gripping-handle as an axis, whereby the plates are adapted to visually expose the same symbol on opposite sides of the standard, the gripping-handle also being adapted to function as a carrying member in transporting the indicator from place to place, on the playing-field, and as a pressure-receiving member in removably upstanding the indicator in the ground.

In testimony whereof, I have signed my name to this specification.

WILLIAM A. SCHUTT.