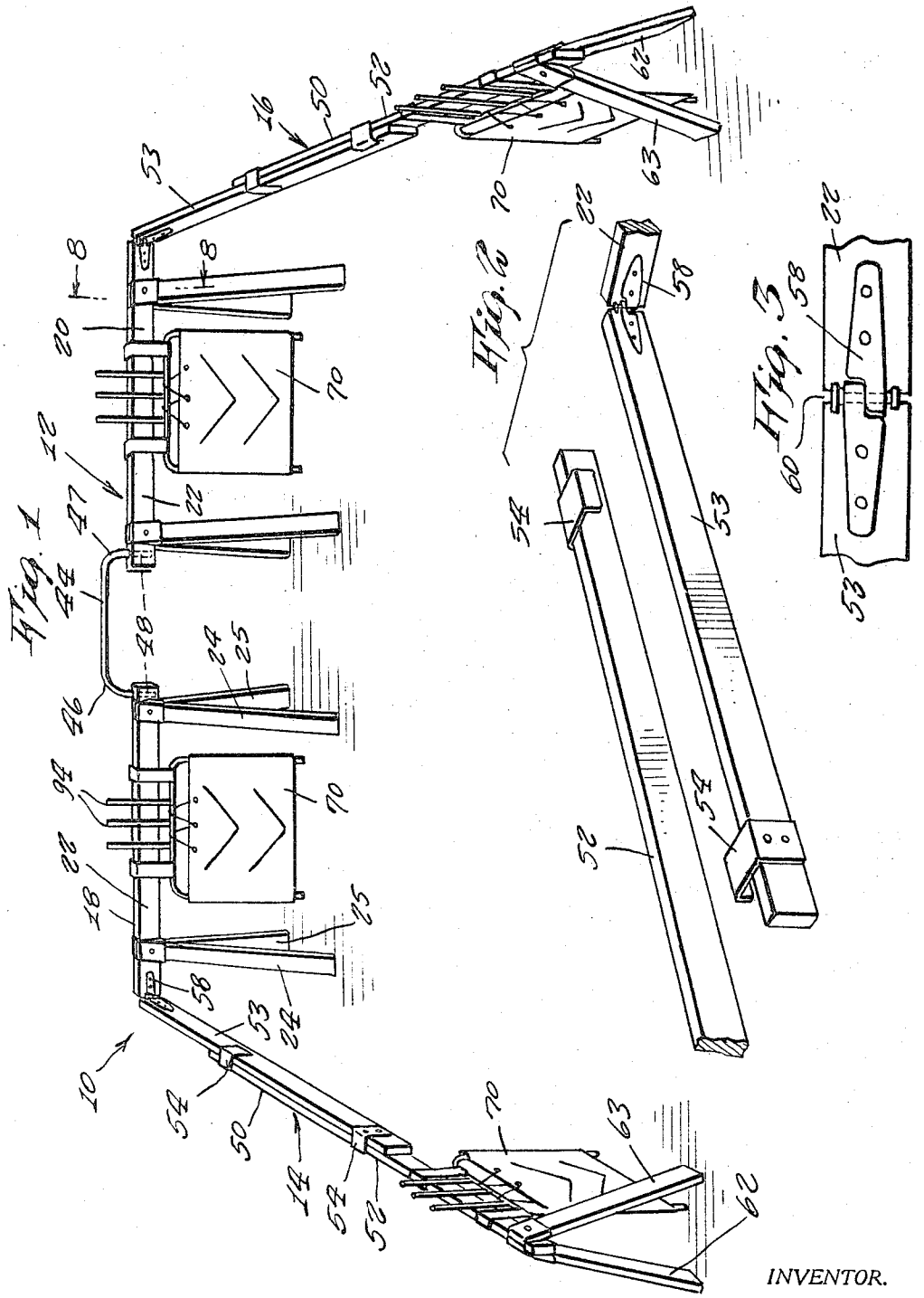
Aug. 27, 1968 Z. NEDWICK 3,398,954

FOOTBALL PASS PRACTICE FENCE

Filed March 7, 1966 2 Sheets-Sheet 1



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FOOTBALL PASS PRACTICE FENCE

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Fig. 4

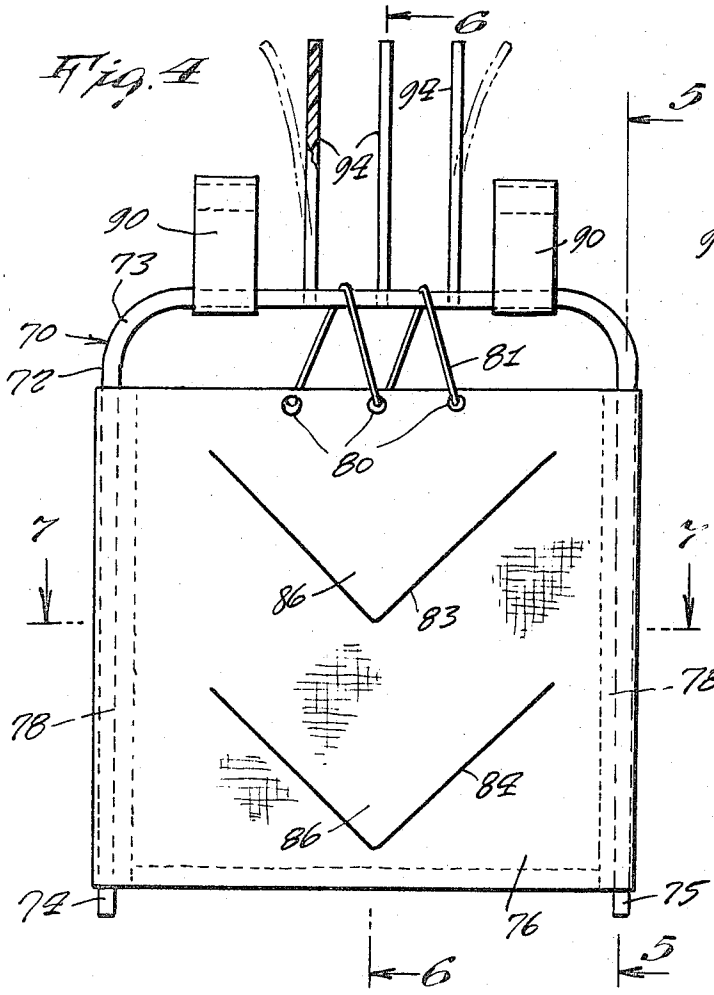


Fig. 5

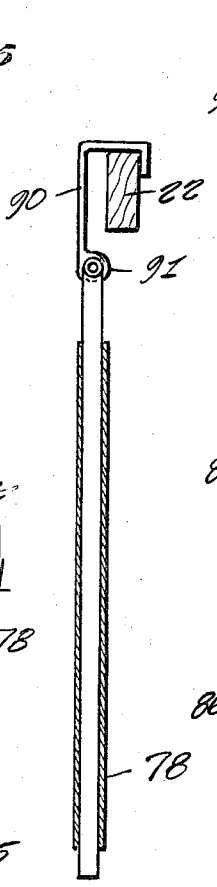


Fig. 6

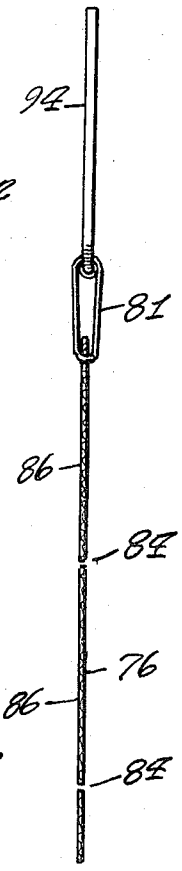


Fig. 7

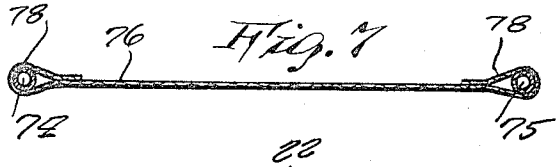


Fig. 8

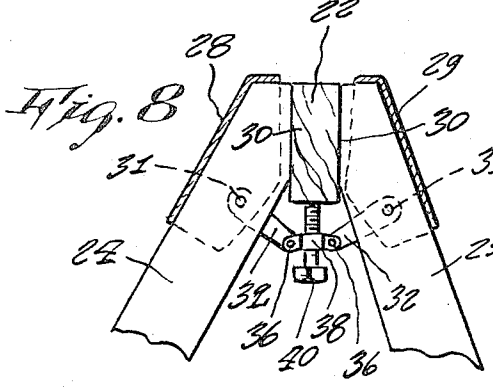
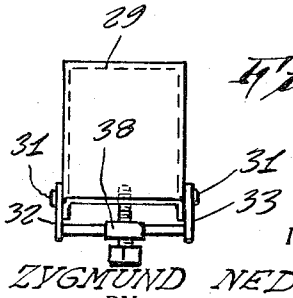


Fig. 9



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FOOTBALL PASS PRACTICE FENCE

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10 Claims. (Cl. 273—55)

This invention relates to a football player practicing device.

The primary object of this invention is to provide a practice fence surrounding a football passer which will simulate the conditions surrounding the passer in a game or scrimmage, and which will create as realistically as possible a scrimmage or game situation where the passer throws a football to his receiver while avoiding the risk of injury when scrimmaging in learning or training situations.

Another object of this invention is to promote the accuracy of passing by providing the practice fence with lanes through which the passer must throw and in which lanes the receivers must locate and coordinate with the passer, the lanes being established at a shoulder level average over which the passer must throw the football downfield to his receivers.

A further object of this invention is to further provide spaced obstructions on the practice fence to simulate players placed to block the downfield viewing by the passer as would occur during a game.

Still another object of the invention is to so construct the practice fence that the scrimmage line height of the apparatus will cause the passer to drop back a proper distance before passing which he might not do if no obstruction were before him, and also in the event a football was not thrown accurately and it carommed off from the practice fence, there would be an opportunity for the practicing football player to react to the deflected football as sometimes occurs in game situations.

Yet another object of this invention relates to the use of the above practice fence by a single player, thereby freeing his blocking teammates to separately practice their skills during his practice period which will promote or develop the accuracy of the single player in his passing as he must throw between the lanes and over the top horizontal rail of the fence.

Further objects of the invention will appear as the description proceeds.

To the accomplishment of the above and related objects, my invention may be embodied in the form illustrated in the accompanying drawings, attention being called to the fact, however, that the drawings are illustrative only, and that change may be made in the specific construction illustrated and described within the scope of the appended claims.

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of the practice fence assembly;

FIGURE 2 is a detail exploded view of the practice fence railing;

FIGURE 3 is an elevational view of a hinge assembly shown in FIGURE 1;

FIGURE 4 is a front elevational view of one of the blocking units;

FIGURE 5 is a vertical sectional view taken on line 5—5, FIG. 4;

FIGURE 6 is a vertical sectional view taken on line 6—6, FIG. 4;

FIGURE 7 is a horizontal sectional view taken on line 7—7, FIGURE 4;

FIGURE 8 is a cross-section of the rail support and attaching structure taken on line 8—8, FIGURE 1;

FIGURE 9 is an end elevational view of the structure shown in FIGURE 8.

Referring in detail to the drawings, the practice fence 10 is shown in FIGURE 1, in its assembled operating position, and is formed of a front section 12 and side sections 14, 16 hingedly connected at corresponding ends respectively to the ends of the front section 12 in a manner as will be hereinafter described.

The front section 12 embodies a pair of like fence units 18, 20 having the form of a "horse" structure such as commonly used in the building construction trades. Each of the fence units 18, 20, includes a top rail 22 and an inverted V-shaped pair of supporting legs 24, 25 at each end thereof. The rails 22 and legs 24, 25 are preferably made of wood of suitable dimensions. Each rail 22 and its supporting legs are detachably secured together for quick and easy assembly and disassembly by a clamping unit 26, shown in detail in FIGURES 8 and 9. Fitted respectively, to the upper end of each leg 24, 25 is a metal cap 28, 29 that engages the top, sides and outer edge of each leg. It will be seen that the upper part of each leg at its inner edge is beveled as at 30 to provide a flat face for abutting engagement with the sides of the rail 22. Pivoted to the parallel sides of each cap adjacent their lower edges as at 31, are shackle links 32, 33. The other ends of the shackle links 32, 33 are respectively secured to the ends of a pair of yoke bars 36 pivotally supported by a central boss 38. A bolt 40 is threaded through the boss 38. It is thus seen that by placing each cap on the upper end of a leg with the bolt 40 directed towards the underside of the rail 22 positioned between the beveled faces 30 of the legs, that a turning of the bolt 40 to bear on the underside of the rail will draw the upper ends of the legs into clamping engagement with the rail. In this manner, the legs and rails are quickly assembled. The length of the legs 24, 25 is such as dispose the rails 22 at shoulder height.

The fence units 18, 20 are aligned as shown in FIGURE 1, and in spaced end to end relation. An inverted U-shaped bar 44 having arms 46, 47 interconnects adjacent opposed ends of the fence units 18, 20, with the lower terminal end of each arm fitting within a bore 48 at each of said ends and which bore extends downwardly only part way into the rail.

The fence side sections 14, 16 are identical and each comprises an extensible rail 50 made up of two rail elements 52, 53 disposed in side overlapping relationship. A U-shaped clamp 54 is secured at the inner end of each rail element on the outer face thereof, and being of a width such as to overhang the upper side of the other overlapping rail element, as shown in FIGURES 1 and 2. Thus, the two rail sections 52, 53 when interengaged by the U-clamps 54 are held thereby in longitudinal alignment while permitting sliding movement of one rail section relative to the other to adjust the length of the rail 50. The outer end of each rail section 53 of each side fence section 14, 16 is secured to the outer end of a rail 22 of the fence units 18, 20 by a hinge 58 having a removable hinge pin 60. An inverted V-shaped supporting leg structure 62, 63 similar to 24, 25 of the front fence units 18, 20 is detachably connected to the outer end of each rail element 52 to support the same, there being a like clamping cap structure employed to effect the connection as described hereinabove. It is accordingly seen that the fence side sections 14, 16 may be angularly related to the front section 12 in any selected position or may be moved to be each in longitudinal alignment with the front section for a purpose to be hereinafter described. As with the rails 22, 22, the extensible rails 50 are also disposed at shoulder height.

Suspended from the rails of the fence front and side sections are panels 70, which in the use of the practice fence represent defensive pass rusher players with relation

to the player practicing passing. The panels **70** are identical and are shown in detail in FIGURES 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Forming the panel **70** is an inverted U-shaped metal frame **72** preferably of aluminum tubing having a horizontal upper support section **73** and depending parallel side arms **74, 75**, the lower ends of which clear the ground. Spanning the arms **74, 75** is a sheet of suitable fabric **76** such canvas or sail cloth which is hemmed at its vertical sides as at **78** to telescopically receive therein an associated side arm, the dimensions being such that the side arms **74, 75** will hold the sheet taut. The upper and lower sides of the sheet are also hemmed, and provided at the upper side is a row of grommeted openings **80**. A cord or rope **81** of nylon or any other suitable material is looped through the openings **80** and around the horizontal support section **73**, see FIGURE 4, of the U-frame to support and retain the sheet in position on the side arms **74, 75**. The fabric sheet **76** is slit as at **83, 84** to provide flaps **86** which function to permit the passage of wind through the sheet to obviate the same acting as a sail and to thereby prevent the fence from toppling over. A pair of hanger brackets **90** each having an eye **91** at its lower end pivotally receiving the horizontal support section **73** of the U-frame **72**, serves to support the panel **70** from the rail on which it is hung, in the manner clearly shown in FIGURE 5. The hanger brackets **90** are spaced apart each being adjacent a side arm of the U-frame.

Positioned on the horizontal support section **73** of the U-frame and between the hanger brackets **90** is an upstanding row of spaced vertical flexible rods **94** of any suitable plastic material such as nylon, or rubber, each having its lower end portion secured in any desired manner to the horizontal support section. The flexible rods **94** lie in the same plane as the panel **70**, are equally spaced apart and extend above the upper side of the rail.

While only four panels **70** have been shown mounted on the practice fence sections, it is to be understood that any number may be utilized as desired and mounted on any fence section as may be deemed necessary for practice purposes.

As indicated hereinabove, each panel **70** represents a defensive pass rusher, and the flexible rods **94** on the panel represent an upraised arm of a pass rusher operating as in a game to stop or deflect a thrown football. Between these rods **94** of adjacent panels, are lanes through which the player practicing passes throws the football, and receivers must coordinate with the passer and locate in these lanes through which the ball should be thrown, as well as over the "shoulder level" rails, thus promoting accuracy and pass-receiver timing. The panels are placed to block the downfield viewing by the passer as would occur in a game, and the scrimmage line height of the practice fence will cause the passer to drop back a proper distance before passing which he might not do if no obstruction were before him. The panels **70** may be hung at selected spacings to simulate various rushing alignments and create different numbers and sizes of lanes, through which the ball should pass. The fence side sections **14, 16** represent the outside rushers, and the extensible adjustment of the rails **50** thereof will govern the distance or depth of penetration by an outside rusher, as desired by the coach. Lanes are also created underneath the rails **50** between the outside legs **24, 25** of the front section **12** and the side legs **62, 63** which permit a player to run out for a pass from a backfield position, as in a game; and also, a backfield player may run outside the end legs in a lateral or flanking direction enroute and prior to receiving a forward pass. The use of the practice fence promotes development of accuracy, since the passer must throw between lanes and over the horizontal rail.

While certain novel features of my invention have been shown and described and are pointed out in the annexed claims, it will be understood that various omissions, substitutions and changes in the forms and details of the device illustrated and in its operation can be made by those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit of the invention.

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

1. A football practice fence comprising:
(a) a front section;
(b) parallel side sections each connected at corresponding ends to an end of said front section;
(c) a horizontal rail at substantially the height of the shoulder of a passer in each section;
(d) supporting legs for each rail;
(e) readily attachable and detachable means connecting said supporting legs to its associated rail;
(f) a plurality of flat panels suspended in spaced relation on said rails, each representing a defensive pass rusher player; and
(g) a plurality of flexible upstanding rods at the upper end of each panel and projecting above the rail on which said panel is suspended sufficiently to represent an upraised arm of said pass rusher,
whereby, with a player positioned facing said fence sections to practice throwing passes, said upstanding rods will stop or deflect a thrown football, the panels will serve to block the downfield view, and the spacing between the rods of adjacent panels will define lanes through which the player throws the football to practice throwing passes.

2. The football practice fence of claim **1**, wherein said front section comprises:
(a) a pair of like fence units each including a horizontal rail with supporting legs at the ends of each rail,
(b) said supporting legs at each rail end including two laterally inclined leg members, and
(c) said readily attachable and detachable connecting means comprising
(d) a cap fitted on the upper end of each leg member,
(e) a hub,
(f) a pair of shackle links pivotally connecting each said cap to said hub, and
(g) a vertical bolt threaded through said hub engaging the underside of the associated rail,
whereby in the assembly of the leg members to the rail with the rail between the upper ends of the leg members, the pressure applied by the bolt on said rail will clamp the leg members to said rail in fixed supporting relationship.

3. The football practice fence of claim **2**, including:
(a) an inverted U-shaped bar having parallel side arms connecting said front fence units in spaced relationship,
(b) there being a bore extending part way downwardly from the top of the rail of each unit in the opposed adjacent ends of the rails, each bore detachably receiving the lower end portion of an associated side arm.

4. The football practice fence of claim **3**, wherein:
(a) the horizontal rail of each fence side section is extensible and comprises,
(b) a pair of side by side overlapping rail members,
(c) bracket means secured to the inner end of each rail member and fitted over the top portion of the other rail member whereby to retain both rail members in longitudinal alignment and permitting sliding movement therebetween to effect extension or retraction in the length of the horizontal rail of each side section.

5. The football practice fence of claim **4**, including:
(a) a readily attachable and detachable hinge unit connecting each of the corresponding inner ends of the horizontal rail of each side section to the outer end of the horizontal rail of each front fence unit.

6. The football practice fence of claim **5**, wherein the supporting legs for the horizontal rail of each side section are located at the outer end thereof and are identical as to the said inclined leg members and clamping means of

the supporting legs for the horizontal rails of said front fence units.

7. The football practice fence of claim 6, wherein each said panel comprises:

(a) an inverted metal frame having a horizontal support section and a pair of depending parallel side support arms,

(b) a fabric sheet having vertical side hems each telescopically receiving therein a side support arm.

(c) there being a horizontal row of openings in the top portion of said fabric sheet, and

(d) flexible cord means looped through said openings and over the horizontal support section for supporting and retaining the fabric sheet on the metal frame.

8. The football practice fence of claim 7, including:

(a) at least one flap formed in said fabric sheet to define an opening therein for the passage of wind therethrough.

9. The football practice fence of claim 8, wherein:

(a) said plurality of upstanding vertical flexible rods are disposed in horizontally spaced relation on the

horizontal support section and fixedly secured at their lower ends thereto.

10. The football practice fence of claim 9, wherein:

(a) said flexible rods of a plastic material and of the same diameter and height,

(b) the length of said flexible rods being such as to extend above the top side of the horizontal rail on which said panel is suspended, and

(c) a pair of readily mountable and demountable bracket means pivotally connected at their lower ends to the horizontal support section for interengagement with the horizontal rail to suspend the panel therefrom.

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