ABSTRACT: A baseball glove construction in which the outer shell is made up of a new arrangement of components that more closely conforms the glove to a shape which allows more than the usual control over the glove by the hand, and also a glove construction in which the lining shell is assembled with a unique arrangement of seams such that when inserted in the outer shell lumps and wear-creating gathers are avoided.
1

BASEBALL GLOVE CONSTRUCTION

This application is a continuation of application Ser. No. 671,796, filed Sept. 29, 1967, now abandoned.

This invention relates to baseball gloves and particularly to a unique construction in which an outer shell and a lining shell are formed and fitted to produce a more readily controllable glove and to provide a smooth surface in the ball-catching portion to maintain its shape free of lumps and ridges. A problem of long standing with baseball players is the lack of control over the glove when it is hit by a fast-moving ball or when the player has to make a catch in a difficult situation where only the glove hand is available. The lack of control is in large part due directly to the wide open and broad hand opening at the wrist strap and button lap and the long prevailing provision of an opening inside of the usual wrist strap which latter opening prevented any revisions in the traditional manner of making gloves.

A problem, also of long standing, is the inability of glove linings to remain for long in a shape that will not develop lumps and knotty seams which seriously affect the desired smooth lay of the palm after a period of use. A prime reason for the knotty or lumpy seams is the way of the lining shell sewing is performed. Prior art glove construction have the lining shell composed of two plies in which one ply is wider than the other so that tunnels are formed to receive the fingers, but in sewing the plies the edges in the crotch area turn in such a manner that the edges turn outward to form hard lumps or ridges when inserted in the outer shell. These edges turn upward under the palm ply of the outer shell so that ridges are impressed in the palm ply after a short period of use. The location of the seam edges is generally in the ball-catch area of the palm ply which results in rapid wear of the ply and also produces an uncomfortable feel for the player when hit by a ball.

It is, therefore, an important object of this invention to construct a baseball glove which embodies features that overcome the problems of prior art glove constructions.

It is an important object of this invention to construct a glove or mitt with a new outer shell arrangement that results in more easily conforming the glove shape to the player's hand and increases the degree of control over the glove. It is also an important object of this invention to provide a new way of constructing a glove lining shell in which the turning of the seams is avoided, especially in the crotch areas.

Another object of this invention is to provide a glove constructed in a manner to avoid lumps and knots in the ball catching area of the palm ply of the outer shell.

Other objects of this invention are to overcome the problems of prior art constructions for baseball gloves and to embody a new and unique construction having the features hereinafter enumerated.

One embodiment of the present invention will be set forth in the following description, having reference to the several views in the accompanying drawings wherein a prior art example is shown for convenience.

In the drawings:
FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the rear side of a baseball glove in which the features of this invention are incorporated;
FIG. 2 is a fragmentary view of the wrist adjustment employed in the glove of FIG. 1;
FIG. 3 is a fragmentary rear view of the lining shell construction of the present invention;
FIG. 4 is a sectional view taken at line 4-4 in FIG. 3;
FIG. 5 is a fragmentary front view of the lining shell in which the presently improved construction is seen;
FIG. 6 is a fragmentary view of the rear side of a lining assembly of prior art construction;
FIG. 7 is a greatly enlarged fragmentary view of the face side of the lining in FIG. 6;
FIG. 8 is a section view taken at line 8-8 in FIG. 6 of the present art;
FIG. 9 is a view similar to FIG. 3 but showing a modification in the manner of constructing the lining shell;
FIG. 10 is a modification upon the construction shown in FIG. 9; and
FIG. 11 is a transverse sectional view taken at line 11-11 in FIG. 10.

The baseball glove of this invention is seen in its assembled condition at FIG. 1. The glove is provided with an outer shell having a back ply made up collectively of a number of separate pieces and indicated collectively by the reference numeral 11, and a face ply (not believed necessary to show, but of the general one-piece character shown in FIG. 1) of Latina U.S. Pat. No. 2,995,756, and FIG. 2 of U.S. Pat. No. 2,995,757, both issued Aug. 15, 1961, the back stop or sixth finger of the patented gloves being replaced by the herein disclosed backstop) that are joined at boundaries of edges 12 and 13 by one or more lengths of thong 14 which are looped through suitable openings 15. The thong 14 also is threaded through openings 16 across the base edge 17 of the hand opening 18 for the insertion of a player's hand.

The characteristics of the improved outer shell as seen in FIG. 1 will be dealt with first. The back ply 11 of the outer shell is composed of a plurality of strips which, beginning at the little finger side 19 of the glove and extending to the thumb side 20, are indicated at 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26. The strip or fourchette 22 is joined by a seam 27 to strip 21 and by a second seam 28 to strip or fourchette 23. Strip or fourchette 24 is joined by seam 29 to strip or fourchette 28 and by a seam 30 to strip or fourchette 24, and a seam 31 joins strip or fourchette 25 to strip 26. When assembled the strips constitute the back ply 11 of the glove 10 in which is provided adjacent finger stalls 32, 33, 34 and 35, and thumb stall 36. A suitable backstop web 37 is secured between the thumb stall 36 and the adjacent finger stall 35. It can be seen that the strips collectively extend lengthwise of the shell from the outer extremities of the fingers and thumb to the hand opening 18 thereby avoiding the usual enlarged wrist and hand opening and doing away with the usual type of wrist strap and button lap, all of which have been common construction with prior gloves. The strips are shaped so that the glove shell is tapered down to the reduced hand opening 18, but can be opened up at the sides 12 and 13 during manufacture to receive the lining shell of FIG. 3, or the modified of FIGS. 9 or 10. The present back ply construction therefore produces a glove that is considerably stronger than prior art examples, is capable of hugging the player's hand in a more secure manner, and is free of excessive openings that create looseness problems and develop areas of structural weakness where tearing usually starts.

Baseball players' hands differ greatly in size and players have distinct preferences for a snug or loose fit of a glove at the hand opening 18. While an average opening 18 is provided, the same is rendered adjustable by a pair of straps extending across the back ply 11. It is seen that one strap portion 38 is anchored near the base of the thumb 36 by having its hidden end secured to the binding 13 and its exposed end (FIGS. 1 and 8) is provided with a loop held by a suitable rivet 39. Fastening means for the straps can be of any convenient character such as a slip buckle mounted in the loop and comprised of a pair of D-shaped rings 40 and 41. Another strap portion 42 has one end 43 threaded through both buckle rings 40 and 41 and then turned back on itself around ring 40 and under ring 41 where it may be frictionally cinched by the rings. The hidden opposite end of strap portion 42 is secured in the edge binding 12 near the base of the little finger 32 remote from the thumb 36. The intermediate length of the strap portion 42 is held in position across the back ply by loops 44 and 45 carried by the finger straps 23 and 24, such loops being preferably formed by slash cuts in the strips. It is of course, appreciated that the adjustment strap portions 38 and 42 may be reversed so that the slip buckle or other fastening means is located adjacent the base of the little finger. It is also appreciated that the loops 44 and 45 may be stitched to the strips 23 and 24 rather than being formed integrally as shown. Other variations on installation of the adjustable wrist
3
strap can be adopted, like putting the fastening or slip buckle means on strap 42 adjacent portion 36.

The glove lining shell 46 of the present glove may be seen in FIGS. 3, 4 and 5, and in some part in FIG. 1. The shell 46 is composed of a facing ply 47 and a backing ply 48. The facing ply 47 in layout plan is seen in FIG. 5 to have a plurality of finger extensions 49, 50, 51 and 52, and a thumb extension 53. The finger extensions have crotch areas 54, 55 and 56, and there is a crotch area 57 between the thumb extension 53 and the adjacent finger extension 52. On the other hand the back ply 48 as seen in FIG. 3 is composed of finger strips 58, 59 and 60 and an enlarged finger strip 61 which includes the thumb extension 62. These strips are secured together at seams 63, 64 and 65, and said seams end at crotch areas 66, 67 and 68 respectively. The crotch area 69 adjacent the thumb extension 62 is substantially coextensive with the face ply crotch area 57 as may be seen in FIG. 6. The crotch areas 66, 67 and 68 for the finger extensions 58, 59, 60 and 61 (FIG. 3) respectively are spaced a greater distance inwardly from the extremities of the back ply 48 by the adjacent crotch areas 55 and 56 of the face ply 47, thereby creating substantially flat web portions 70, 71 and 72 in the face ply 47 that are exposed between the extension strips of the back ply 48.

As may be seen in FIGS. 3 and 4 the back ply finger extensions 58, 59, 60 and 61 are wider than the associated extensions 49, 50, 51 and 52 of the facing ply 47. This difference in width is important to form tunnels or pockets 73 between the face ply 47 and the back ply 48 in the finger extensions when the marginal edges are secured together by stitching. The stitching thread 73 (FIG. 3) runs around the edges of the little finger extension 56, passed the crotch area 54 of the face ply 47 and runs to the crotch area 66, then similarly along the edges and crotch areas of the succeeding finger extensions to the edge of the extension 61. This run of stitching may continue at 74 passed the crotch area 69 adjacent the thumb extension 62. In the example shown, crotch second line of stitching 75 extends into the crotch area 69 for the thumb to retain the facing and backing plies substantially flat and prevents wrinkling and buckling when the lining shell is installed within the outer shell.

Turning now to FIGS. 6, 7 and 8, a typical example of the prior art is shown in sufficient detail to illustrate the problem which the present invention overcomes. In FIG. 6 the lining shell 77 has the crotch areas 78, 79 and 80 for both the face and back plies substantially in alignment, and the stitching 81 secures the margins 82 and 83 together. As may be seen in FIG. 7, the edges 82 and 83 in the respective crotch areas 78, 79 and 80 must turn because of the way they are sewn together, and the turn is into the face ply which produces a hard ridge or projection that pushes into the face ply of the outer shell. As may be more clearly seen in FIG. 8, the turned edges 82 and 83 project outwardly. The resulting projections 82 and 83 form a series of hard ridges that soon interrupt the smooth condition of the palm ply of the outer shell, especially in the ball-catchting area of the glove.

In FIG. 9 the lining shell 46a is modified with respect to the backing ply 48a while the facing ply 54, 55 and 56 from that seen in FIG. 5. More specifically the backing ply 48a is composed of shortened finger strips 58a, 59a, 60a and 61a, and a shortened thumb strip 62a. These strips are stitched or seamed together at seams 63a, 64a and 65a. Changes over the view of FIG. 3 make up the modification, it being understood that the usual layer of padding (not included for sake of clarity) is provided for the lining shell. In other respects the view of FIG. 9 is similar to FIG. 3 and like reference numerals will refer to like parts. The shell of FIG. 9 conserves on the use of the glove lining material by not extending the finger and thumb strips out to the full length of the finger and thumb extensions on the facing ply. However, the stitching 73 and 74 is usually required to hold the padding in position.

A further modification is seen in FIGS. 10 and 11 where the lining for a glove or mitt may consist principally of the facing ply 47, as in FIGS. 5 and 9, to which is secured strip means 77 in position to extend crosswise of the glove at the position between the crotches in the facing ply and the most inwardly or deepest penetration of the stitching 73a. Thus, the means 77 is secured in position by the stitching and by proper looping (FIG. 11) the means 77 can provide stalls for the fingers. These stalls provide pressure points for the fingers, just as do the backing ply 48 or 48a previously described, thereby giving the player secure control over the glove under playing conditions. The several fingers receiving loops are seen in FIG. 11 at 78, 79, 80 and 81, whereas in FIG. 4 a similar arrangement is provided with the material of the loops independent of each other.

It can now be appreciated in what manner the construction of the present invention overcomes the problem of the prior art constructions, and also improves the overall construction of gloves so that a considerably neater glove results and one with a longer lasting ball-catch when used. In the foregoing description it is to be understood that the term glove shall also include mitts.

I claim:

1. In a baseball glove having an outer shell formed with finger stalls, the improvement in a lining shell having face and back plies, each ply having finger extensions with the extensions of the back ply being wider than the extensions of the face ply and each of said plies having crotch areas between the finger extensions with the crotch areas in said plies being out of registry, and stitching securing the finger extensions with the marginal edges in overlapping adjacency such that the wider extensions of the back ply are raised relative to the extensions of the face ply to form finger-receiving tunnels, said stitching being continued past the crotch area of one ply and into and around the crotch area of the other ply.

2. The glove improvement set forth in claim 1 and in which the crotch areas of the face are disposed closer to the outer extremities of the finger extensions than the crotch areas of the back ply, said stitching retaining the marginal edges of said back ply flatwise on said face ply.

3. The glove improvement set forth in claim 1 and in which the lining shell is formed with a thumb-receiving tunnel having face and back plies, said thumb tunnel being spaced from an adjacent finger tunnel by a crotch area, stitching joining the margins of said thumb tunnel plies, and other stitching extending about said last crotch area for securing the crotch area plies against wrinkling.

4. In a baseball glove the improvement of an outer shell composed of face and back plies joined together to form finger and thumb stalls and intervening crotch areas inwardly of the outer free extremities of said stalls, said plies having margins in adjacent, substantially overlapping and interconnected relationship to define a hand opening into said outer shell to communicate with said finger and thumb stalls, said hand opening being located a greater distance from said crotch areas than the distance from said crotch areas to said outer free extremities, lining means disposed in said outer shell and including at least one ply extending into said stalls, and means at each side of said hand opening connecting said face and back plies and holding said lining means in position, said last means effectively restricting the width of said hand opening to a dimension that is less than the width of the glove across the finger stalls adjacent the crotch areas.

5. The improvement set forth in claim 4 and in which said back ply of the outer shell is composed of a plurality of pieces or plies extended endwise and extending from the outer free extremities of said stalls to said hand-opening margin, and said lining means is composed of a second ply at least partially extending into certain of said stalls.

6. The improvement set forth in claim 4 and in which other means is carried by said lining means adjacent the entrances to said finger and thumb stalls to provide a ball-catch within or pressure points within the glove for control thereof by the fingers of the wearer.