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W. E. BLAKENEY

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PROTECTIVE VEST

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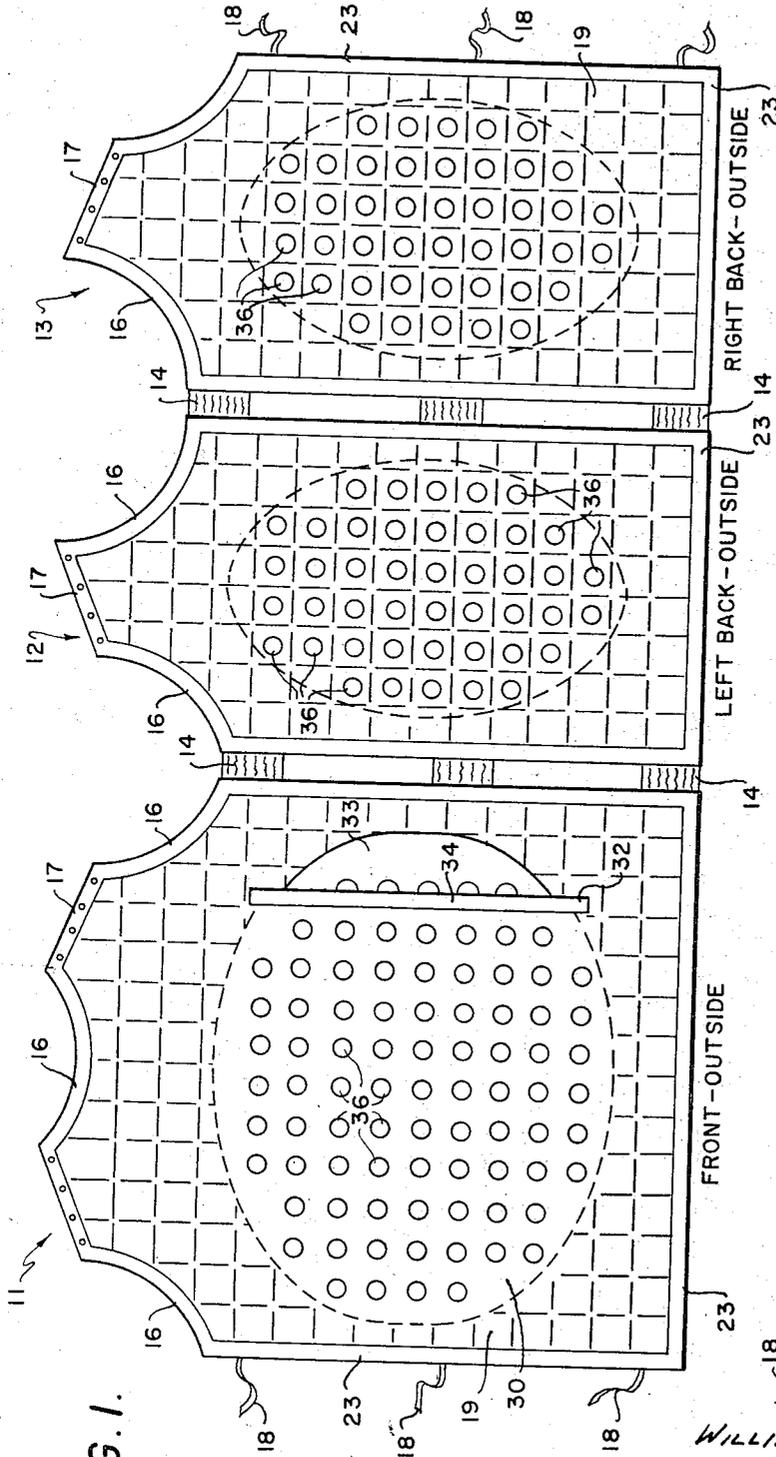


FIG. 1.

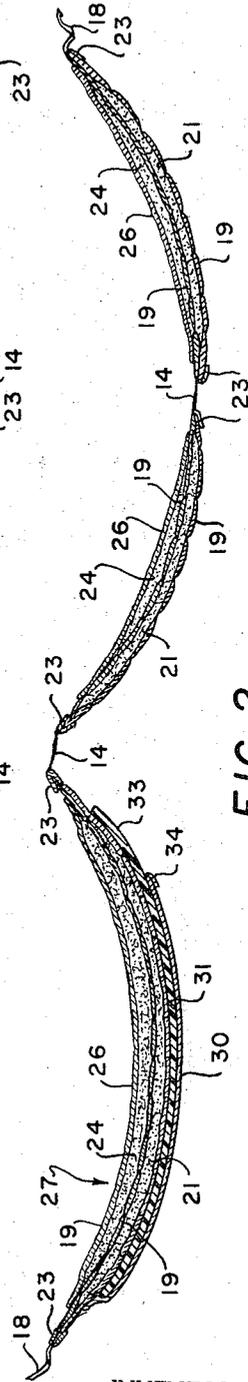


FIG. 2.

INVENTOR.
WILLIAM E. BLAKENEY
BY
Harold W. Adams
his atty

3,337,875

PROTECTIVE VEST

William E. Blakeney, 1352 E. Whitton
Phoenix, Ariz. 85014

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This invention relates to a protective device and more particularly to a vest type protector for athletes and others for safeguarding against chest, abdomen, kidney and back injuries.

Although numerous types of athletic devices have been developed for protecting the chest and abdomen such as for baseball catchers and hockey goalies for instance, all such protectors are heavy and cumbersome and designed for use during brief periods of the particular contest for particular purposes. For instance, a baseball chest protector is and can be worn by the catchers only while catching. During other periods no chest protective equipment is available for the baseball player while fielding, batting or running the bases.

Because of the great and continually increasing interest in Little League athletics, there has developed a tremendous need for a light weight vest type protector for protecting the youngsters participating in this sport; and because of the injuries to these boys a protector is needed for all players and all phases of the game and not simply the catcher. Also, there is a need for a sturdy, light weight and inexpensive vest type protector for numerous other athletes such as jockeys, rodeo performers, race car drivers and the like, and even for use while operating an automobile.

Therefore an object of this invention is to provide a vest type protector that may be worn as an under or outer garment.

Another object of this invention is to provide a light weight vest type chest and back protector including separable semi-rigid or inflexible shields that may be inserted or removed from the vest as desired.

Yet another object of this invention is to provide an easily adjustable, launderable vest type protector that includes one or more separable semi-rigid shields.

These and many other objects are achieved by a vest protector in accordance with the principles of this invention which in general may include a chest protective portion and two back protective portions adjustably interconnected and provided with suitable arcuate edges so as to provide a neck and armholes when brought together to form a vest. The chest and back portions include inside pouches having a suitable padding material therein while the chest portion includes an outer pocket opened on at least one side for receiving a removable, semi-rigid or inflexible shield. Similarly, the back portions may also be provided with outer pockets for separably receiving rigid or semi-rigid shields.

These and numerous other objects and advantages will become apparent from the following detailed description of a preferred embodiment of the invention when read in view of the appended drawing wherein:

FIGURE 1 illustrates an outside view of the interconnected chest and back portions of a protector in accordance with this invention; and

FIGURE 2 is a sectional view taken along the lines 2-2 of FIGURE 1, illustrating a chest shield in a partially withdrawn position.

Referring now to the drawing, a preferred embodiment of a vest type protector in accordance with this invention is shown as comprising a front or chest portion 11 with a left back portion 12 interconnected between the chest portion 11 and a right back portion 13 by suitable elastic straps 14. The respective portions 11, 12 and 13 are provided with arcuate edges 16 which, when the pro-

5 tector is worn, form a neck opening of the proper size and suitable armholes so that the garment can be put on readily. The shoulders 17 are provided with eyelets so that the armholes and the protector may be varied by adjustably lacing the shoulders 17 together. Tie strings 18 are provided for adjustably securing the chest portion 11 to the right back portion 13 and thus also permits the protector to be varied in size. The length of the respective portions 11, 12 and 13 is chosen so as to completely cover the chest and abdomen but of course may be made of any desired length as determined by the particular activity for which the protector is to be worn.

10 Referring to FIGURE 2, the body of the chest and back portions comprise two pieces 19 of any strong, light weight material such as bleached muslin, nylon, cotton, Dacron or the like, with one or more layers 21 of cotton or other material between, quilted together for strength and neatness of appearance. A sturdy binding 23 is stitched around the exterior edges of each portion. An inner elliptical pouch 24 is formed on the inside of the chest portion 11 by stitching a sheet 26 of cloth or other suitable material down over a layer of foam rubber or other resilient shock-absorbing material to provide a fixed chest pad 27. Back pads 28 and 29 are provided similarly on the inside portions 12 and 13.

20 An outer pocket 31 corresponding in size and shape with the inner pocket or pouch 24 is formed on the chest portion by stitching down a sheet of suitable material having an opening 32 to receive a perforated chest shield 33. The chest shield, formed of a semi-rigid or inflexible material such as plastic, leather, cork board or the like, is substantially concavo-convex in transverse cross-section so as to substantially conform to the curvature of the wearer's body. The chest shield 33 corresponds in shape 35 with the outer pocket 31 and is slightly wider at its maximum width than the opening 32, reinforced with a suitable binding 34 so that it may be readily inserted and removed by the wearer but remains in position during normal use of the vest.

40 The shield 33 may therefore be worn by a baseball player while batting, running the bases or catching, and readily removes for play at other intervals. Because the protector vest is light weight it may be worn at all times either as an undergarment or overgarment and may readily be formed of sturdy, washable material. The padding and inner and outer pockets of the chest portion 11 are perforated with holes 36 as well as the padding and inner pockets of the inner patches forming the pockets—and in the back portion 12 and 13 respectively. The perforations 36 in the shield 33 substantially correspond to the perforations in the padding and protector and all perforations 36 extend completely through the protector in order to insure good ventilation. For added protection the back portions 12 and 13 may also be similarly provided with outer, open pockets corresponding in shape to the inner pads for receiving semi-rigid or inflexible shields.

45 Although a preferred embodiment of this invention has been described in detail numerous changes and modifications can be made within the principles thereof which is to be limited only by the scope of the amended claims.

50 What is claimed is:

1. A protective device comprising: a chest portion having arcuate edges thereon; two back portions having arcuate edges thereon; means interconnecting said chest and back portions to form an adjustable vest for a human body, said arcuate edges on said respective portions cooperating to form a neck opening and armholes; inside pads formed internally in said respective chest and back portions; an outer pocket formed on said chest portion corresponding in configuration to said inside pad formed on said chest portion, a curved protective shield corresponding in configuration to said outer pockets removably

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positioned in said pocket, said outer pocket being provided with an opening of a width slightly smaller than the width of said shield whereby said shield may be inserted in and removed from said pocket, and confined within said pocket during normal periods of wear of said protective device.

2. A device as defined in claim 1 wherein said protective shield is formed of a semi-rigid material.

3. A device as defined in claim 1 wherein said back portions are provided with exterior pockets for removably receiving protective shields.

4. A device as defined in claim 2 wherein said protective shield is substantially concavo-convex in transverse sections so as to conform to the curvature of the body of the wearer.

5. A device as defined in claim 1 including ventilation holes formed in said respective chest and back portions.

6. Apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein said inter-

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connecting means include elastic members secured to said chest and back portions.

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JORDAN FRANKLIN, *Primary Examiner.*

J. R. BOLER, *Assistant Examiner.*