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PROTECTIVE DEVICE FOR BASEBALL PLAYERS OR THE LIKE

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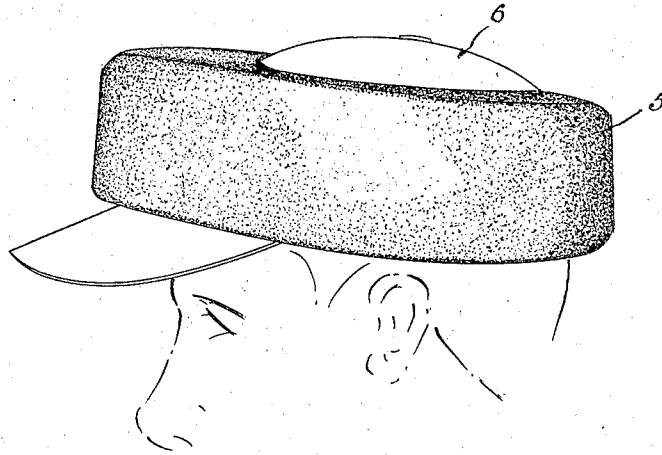


Fig. 1

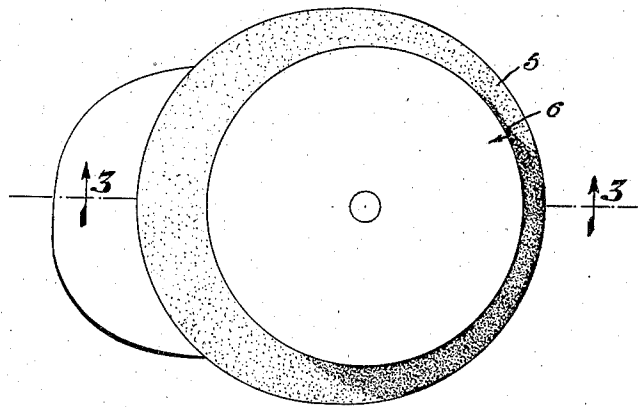


Fig. 2



Fig. 3

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PROTECTIVE DEVICE FOR BASEBALL PLAYERS OR THE LIKE

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1 Claim. (Cl. 2—3)

My invention relates to a protective device to be worn by baseball players, particularly those engaged in batting. It also has a certain applicability to various other sports, as will be apparent from the ensuing description.

One of the objects of my invention has been to provide a skull protective device to be worn by baseball players, particularly those engaged in the act of batting, in order to protect the wearer from injury, or even death, from balls thrown by the pitcher.

A second object of my invention has been to provide a protective device of the type described which, although effective for the purpose contemplated, can be discarded readily by the player after he has completed his turn at bat and taken up other duties incident to the game.

A third object of my invention has been to provide a protective instrumentality of the general character disclosed, which may be useful in protecting participants in various other forms of athletic activity, such as lacrosse, polo, and other games in which the players are exposed to blows from balls thrown or struck by other participants in the game.

Referring now to the drawing, Figure 1 is an elevation of the side of the head of a baseball player or other athletic participant, showing the device of my invention, placed in position over the cap and along the side of and around the head.

Figure 2 is a perspective view, showing the cap with the protector in position.

Figure 3 is a sectional view taken on line 3—3, of Figure 2.

In general, my invention contemplates a protective band of resilient, shock-absorbent material, formed to fit over the cap and around the sides of the head of a baseball player or other athlete. The band, indicated at 5, embodies sufficient material effectually to absorb the shock of a thrown baseball, but the band is not thick enough to be too cumbersome for practical use. The band may consist of a single unitary piece of material, or, depending upon the exact nature of the material used, may be segmented. It also may be fastened and unfastened at some connecting point, or may be a unitary piece which is fitted over the top of the head, or the cap, or visor thereof. In the case of a baseball player who regularly bats from one side of the plate, it is preferable to have the material thicker at the side on which contact from a thrown ball is likely to come. If desired, the other side may be correspondingly thinner. The band may be configured also to afford protection to the ear.

The preferred material of my invention is porous or sponge rubber, for the reason that I have found that it is most effective as a shock resistant agent, and at the same time, in order to provide a sufficiently thick band to insure the desired protection, it is not necessary that the band of this material be unduly heavy in weight, or cumbersome in size. It is apparent that there may be many other materials, however, which would also be effective in accomplishing the stated objects of my invention. If desired for reasons of appearance, the rubber or other material may be coated over on the outside in order to provide a smooth and trim appearing surface.

Although for the purposes of baseball, I believe that it is preferable to provide a band which is readily detachable from the head or from the top of the cap, if desired it is possible to constitute the band as a component part of the participant's cap, and when so constituted the band may be thicker on the exposed side of the cap. Or, otherwise if desired, the band may be fitted only with a visor, and serve as a cap as well as a protector.

It should be noted that the band is not designed to extend to and cover the top of the player's head. The great majority of injuries incurred by thrown baseballs are due to the impact of the ball at some point in the approximate area over which the band extends, as illustrated in Figure 1. The temporal region of the human skull is thin and susceptible to skull fractures and other cranial injuries. On the other hand, should the baseball player be struck at or near the top of the head, in the area as indicated at 6, the blow is usually a glancing one, and the shock is, of course, correspondingly lessened. The skull also is somewhat thicker at this point and over the areas below the lower surface of the band, illustrated in Figure 1. An injury occurring as the result of a blow at some point on this area is not apt to be as serious as one which occurs at some point in the area protected by the band.

In the case of baseball players, the device of my invention not only provides a very effective protective means, but in addition, is not at all cumbersome to handle. The player customarily places the device over the top of his cap when about to take his turn at bat. As soon as his turn at bat is completed, regardless of whether he becomes a base runner or returns to the bench, he can immediately remove the device. If the device is a component part of the cap, it can be so designed as to be readily detachable therefrom, or if desired can be worn constantly. On very

hot days or in the case of players undergoing a very considerable amount of exertion, such as the catcher, my device has a further utility in that it can be soaked in cold water and worn continuously as a cooling and refreshing medium.

Having fully described my invention, I desire to be limited only by the ensuing claim:

A skull protective device for baseball players or the like comprising a band of sponge rubber,

said band adapted to encircle and grip the head and of sufficient width to protect the temporal region of the head, said band having a portion which is of relatively greater thickness than the rest, said band adjustable so that the wearer may place the thick portion on the side of the head toward that from which the blow is most apt to come.

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