

[54] **POCKETED CATCHER AND PROJECTOR**

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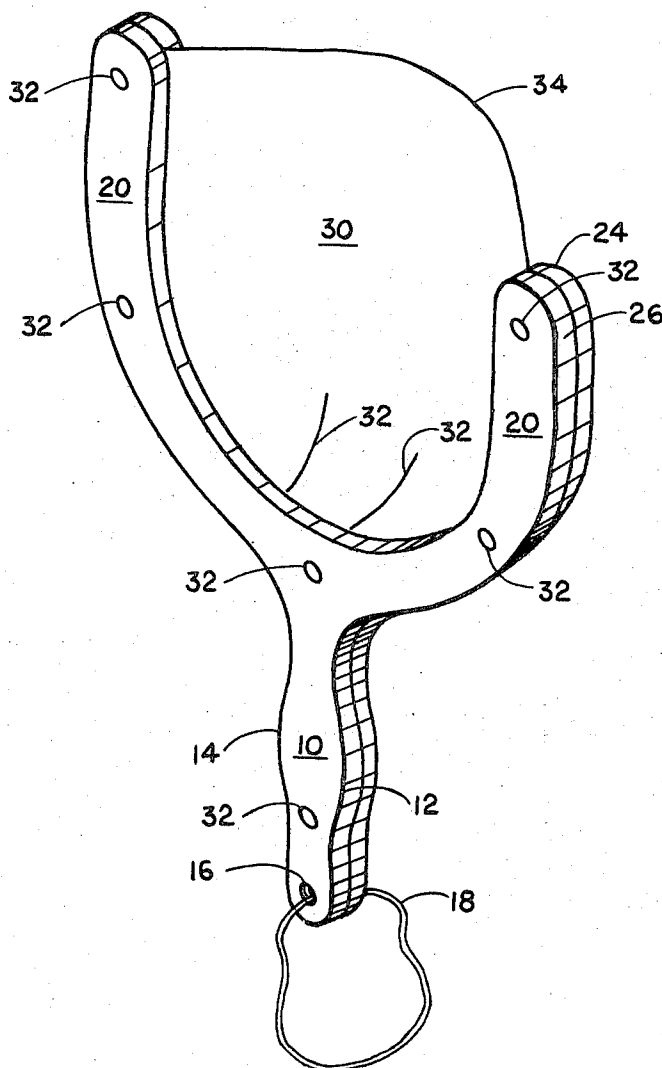
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[57] ABSTRACT

A racquet-like article for catching and throwing a ball has a handle and two arms extending from the handle in a bifurcated manner and a sheet of flexible material extends between the arms in a manner forming a scoop-like pocket.

11 Claims, 3 Drawing Figures



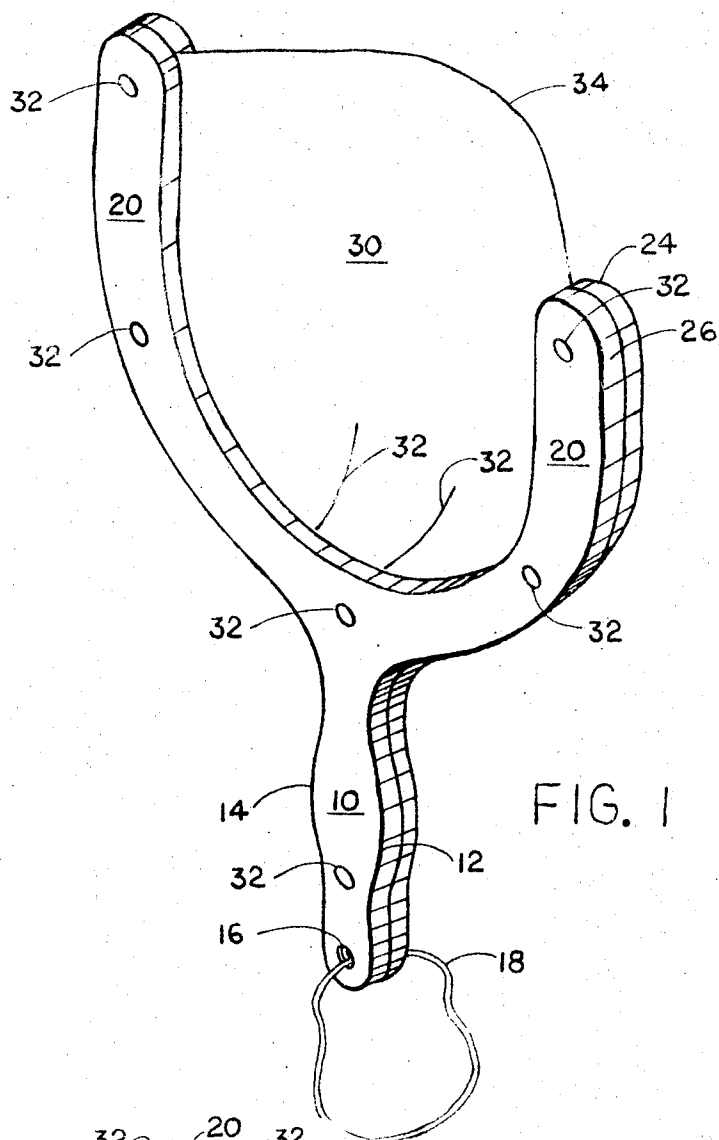
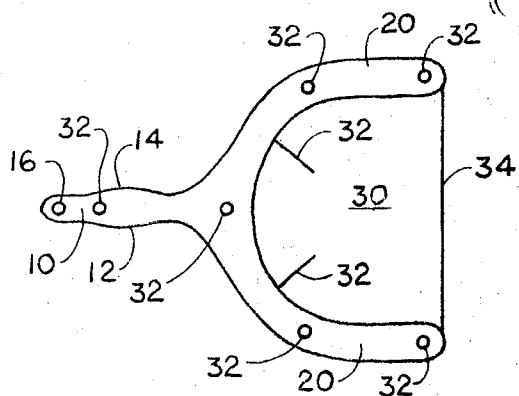


FIG. 2

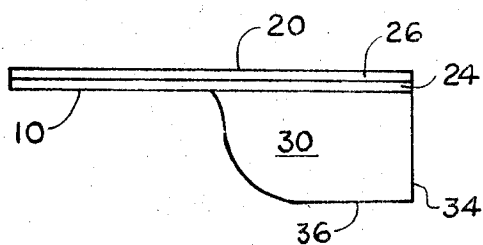


FIG. 3

POCKETED CATCHER AND PROJECTOR

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

My invention relates to sports equipment for catching and throwing a ball and includes a handle, two bifurcated arms, and a sheet forming a scoop-like pocket between the arms. The sheet material, although having some flexibility, tends to keep its shape to maintain the pocket function.

Use of a ball in one form or another sometimes with associated equipment is characteristic of many forms of games and sports. The objects of my invention include to provide a novel racquet-type article of sports equipment for use with any type of ball that bounces, that can be played by one person such as in a handball court, against a wall, etc., or that can be used in pairs by two persons on the beach, at school grounds, in parks, etc., and that can be used by various age people from childhood past middle age.

My invention will be best understood, together with additional objectives and advantages thereof, from a reading of the following description, read with reference to the drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a specific embodiment of my new sports equipment.

FIG. 2 is a plan view on reduced scale.

FIG. 3 is a side view.

My article of sports equipment includes a handle 10. Preferably the handle bows at 12, 14 to each side in its middle. Handle 10 has an opening 16 in its end and a looped thong-like member 18 extends through opening 16 to fit around the wrist of a player to retain the handle against loss.

Two arms 20 extend from one end of handle 10 in a bifurcated, generally semi-annular configuration. The space between arms 20 is wider across the bifurcation than the depth of the bifurcation. The arms at the end of the bifurcation are generally parallel and the inner end of the bifurcation has a shape that is generally parabolic and fairs into the generally parallel outer arm portions.

A sheet 30 of flexible material extends between arms 20 and is attached thereto continuously throughout the bifurcation. The handle and arms can be laminated by a plurality of plies 24, 26, and the edges of sheet 30 can be attached to arms 20 by being laminated between plies 24, 26 as shown particularly in FIG. 1. Although the handle and arms may be made of metal or plastic (such as fiberglass reinforced plastic), one suitable material for lamination is wood. Fasteners 32 are shown securing laminates 24, 26 together, this showing being illustrative only as to style and placement of fasteners.

Sheet 30 is shown as solid. It may be made of leather, cloth or plastic. Sheet 30 is flexible but it has sufficient rigidity to substantially hold its shape in scoop-like pocket configuration as against inversion or vigorous manual swinging movements, whereby, during use in play, the sheet tends to keep its general shape between catchings of the ball. Whatever the material, preferably sheet 30 is leather-like as to qualities of flexibility. Sheet 30 is wider and longer than the bifurcation of arms 20 so as to extend to one side of the plane of arms 20 thereby forming a scoop-like pocket to catch a ball. Sheet 30 has pleats 32 to accommodate formation of the sheet from normal planar disposition to its scoop-like pocket configuration.

The end edge 34 of sheet 30 between the ends of arms 20 ends in a plane normal to the ends of arms 20. Sheet 30 in its scoop-like, pocket configuration has a bottom portion 36 which in cross-section in a plane extending longitudinally relative to handle 10 and normal relative to the plane of bifurcation has a contour in its middle to outer portion which is substantially straight and parallel to the latter plane. The scoop-like pocket has a depth about half of the distance between arms 20. The space between arms 20 is wider across the bifurcation than the depth of the bifurcation. A representative length of the combination of handle 10 and arms 20 is 14 inches, a representative width across arms 20 is 11 inches, and handle 10 can be about 1 inch wide.

It can be said generally that the configuration of my article of sports equipment is a forked racquet or it is like a sling shot with a glove connected between the arms. The article can be used with any type of ball that bounces. How it would be used in catching or throwing a ball will be obvious from the description and from the drawings.

I claim:

1. An article of sports equipment for catching and throwing a ball comprising:

a. A body having a handle and two arms extending from one end of the handle in bifurcated, generally semi-annular configuration, and their outer ends being parallel, and

b. a sheet of flexible material positioned between said arms and handle end and attached thereto, the sheet being wider and longer than the bifurcation so as to extend to one side of the plane of said arms thereby forming a scoop-like pocket which extends from said one end of said handle along said arms and between them to catch a ball.

2. The subject matter of claim 1 in which said sheet is attached continuously to said arms throughout the bifurcation.

3. The subject matter of claim 1 in which said body is laminated by a plurality of plies and the edges of said sheet are attached to said arms by being laminated between said plies of said body.

4. The subject matter of claim 3 in which said sheet is leather-like as to qualities of flexibility and said body is wooden and there are fasteners holding the laminates together.

5. The subject matter of claim 1 in which said sheet has sufficient rigidity to substantially hold its shape in scoop-like pocket configuration as against inversion or vigorous manual swinging movements, whereby, during use in play, the sheet tends to keep its general shape between catchings of the ball.

6. The subject matter of claim 1 in which said sheet is solid.

7. The subject matter of claim 1 in which the scoop-like pocket has a depth about half of the distance of the width between said arms, said space between said arms being wider across the bifurcation than the depth of said bifurcation.

8. The subject matter of claim 1 in which the inner end of the bifurcation has a shape generally parabolic that fairs into generally parallel arms at the outer end of the bifurcation.

9. The subject matter of claim 1 in which said handle bows to each side in its middle and said handle has an opening in its end, and a looped thong-like member ex-

tending through said opening to fit around the wrist of the player to retain the handle against loss.

10. An article of sports equipment for catching and throwing a ball comprising:

- a. A body having a handle and two arms extending 5
from one end of the handle in bifurcated, generally semi-annular configuration, and
- b. a sheet of flexible material between said arms and 10
attached thereto, the sheet being normally wider and longer than the bifurcation so as to extend to one side of the plane of said arms thereby forming a scoop-like pocket to catch a ball, in which said sheet has pleats to accomodate formation of said sheet from normal planar disposition to its scoop-like pocket configuration, the edge of said sheet 15
between the ends of said arms ending at a plane normal to the ends of said arms, said sheet in said scoop-like, pocket configuration having a bottom portion which in cross-section in a plane extending longitudinal relative to said handle and normal relative to the plane of the bifurcation has a contour 20
in its middle to outer portion which is substantially straight and parallel to said latter plane.
- 11. An article of sports equipment for catching and 25
throwing a ball, comprising:
 - a. a body having a handle and two arms extending

from one end of the handle in bifurcated, generally semiannular configuration, the inner end of the bifurcation being generally parabolic and fairing into generally parallel arms at the outer end of the bifurcation;

b. a sheet of flexible material between said arms and attached thereto substantially throughout the bifurcation, the sheet being normally wider and longer than the bifurcation so as to extend to one side of the plane of said arms thereby forming a scoop-like pocket to catch a ball;

c. said sheet being leatherlike as to qualities of flexibility and having sufficient rigidity to substantially hold its shape in scoop-like pocket configuration as against inversion or vigorous manual swinging movements, whereby, during use in play, the sheet tends to keep its general shape between catchings of the ball; and

d. said sheet in said scoop-like, pocket configuration having a bottom portion which in cross-section in a plane extending longitudinal relative to said handle and normal relative to said plane of said arms has a contour in its middle to outer portion which is substantially straight and generally parallel to said plane of said arms.

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