June 20, 1961 B. B. STOBBE 2,988,744

BASEBALL GLOVE WITH LACING AT THE FINGER CROTCHES

Filed May 22, 1958

FIG. 1

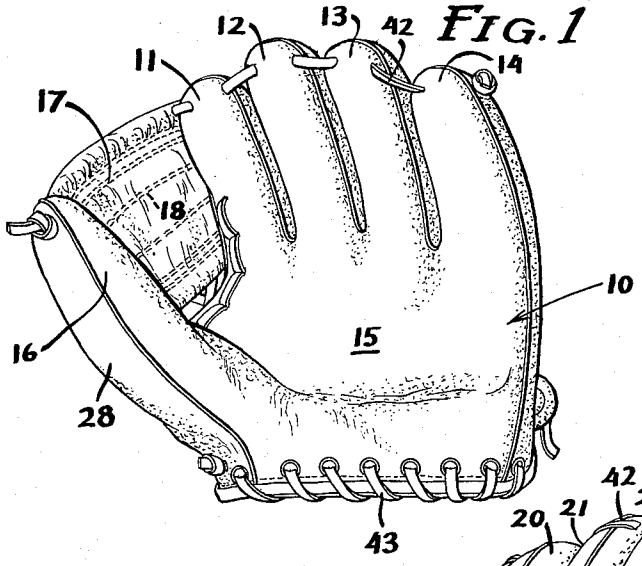



FIG 2

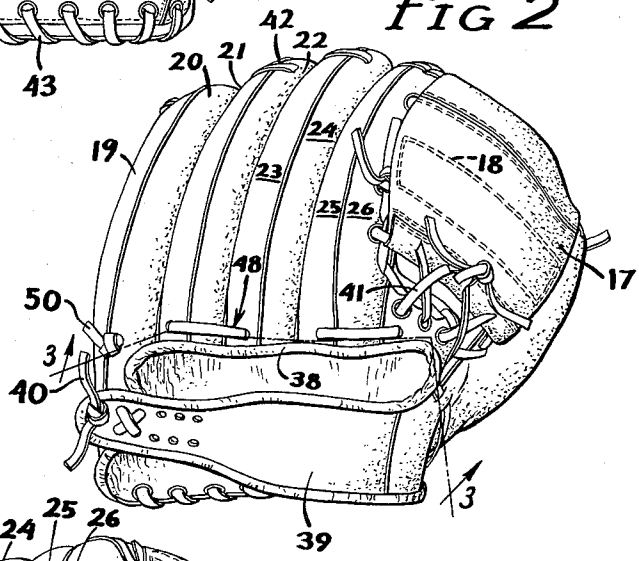
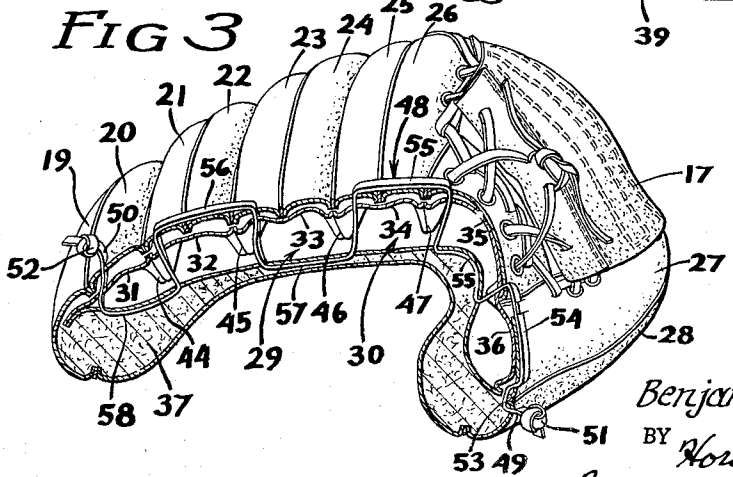



FIG 3




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# BASEBALL GLOVE WITH LACING AT THE FINGER CROTCHES

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This invention relates to baseball gloves and particularly to a means for holding a player's glove on his hand.

Baseball gloves as presently constructed incorporate finger and thumb stalls which are relatively stiff and are laced together to form the sides of a cup or pocket in which the ball is to be caught. It, therefore, is not necessary for the player to insert his fingers completely into the finger stalls to control the movement of the finger stall tips. All that the player need do is to manipulate the base or finger crotch portions of the finger stalls, and the movement of these portions of the glove is then transmitted through the relatively stiff material of the finger stalls to the tips of the stalls to close the pocket around a caught ball.

Baseball players take advantage of the foregoing modern construction of baseball gloves to increase their reach, this being effected by normally holding the glove on the hand with the player's finger tips disposed just beyond the finger crotches of the glove so that the portions of the finger stalls extending beyond the finger tips in effect constitute extensions of the player's fingers. Due to the speed with which a player must act to catch a ball that has just been batted, he does not have time to shift the position of the glove on his hand if it is not already so disposed thereon as to give him this extended reach. The player therefore normally holds the glove in the aforesaid manner, that is, with his finger tips located just beyond the finger crotches of the glove, during an entire inning.

One of the normal movements or positions of a player's hand involves holding the hand with the fingers pointing downwardly so that the glove dangles from the player's finger tips. In this position the glove, of course, is not securely held and it may therefore inadvertently fall off at an inopportune time.

It is accordingly an object of this invention to provide means on a modern baseball glove having relatively stiff finger stalls laced together to provide a readily movable wall of a ball pocket, for gripping a player's finger tips and thereby reducing the possibility that the glove may fall off the player's hand inadvertently, said means being so constructed as to provide no hindrance to the normal functioning of the glove during a game.

As a more specific object, this invention has within its purview the provision of adjustable means on a baseball player's glove for gripping the finger tips of a player's hand to prevent the glove from falling off his hand when the latter is held with the fingers pointing downwardly.

A specific object of this invention is the provision, in a baseball player's glove, of an adjustable lace disposed substantially at the finger crotches of the glove whereby said finger crotches may be constricted around the player's finger tips and thus produce a friction grip between the glove and finger tips by which the glove is safely retained on a player's hand throughout all normal movements thereof.

A feature of this invention is the provision of a lace at the finger crotches of a baseball player's glove for constricting the said finger crotches upon a player's finger tips wherein said lace is made to pass alternately over the backs and fronts of the finger crotches such that a single lace is effective to produce a constricting action upon all of the finger crotches of a glove.



These and other objects and features of this invention will become apparent from the following description when taken together with the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a view of the palm side of a baseball glove, said glove being constructed in accordance with modern design incorporating relatively stiff-fingered stalls laced together;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the back of the baseball glove of FIG. 1, looking from the wrist-contacting portion thereof toward the finger tips; and

FIG. 3 is an enlarged view of the glove of FIG. 2, taken from substantially the same position, but with the glove sectioned substantially at a position indicated by a line 3—3 in FIG. 2 and in the direction of the arrows to show the novel construction at the finger crotches thereof.

The form of glove shown in the accompanying drawings is but one of many to which this invention may be applied, and hence it is to be understood that this form has been selected merely to illustrate a preferred embodiment of the invention.

Referring now to the drawings for a detailed description of the invention, there is shown in FIG. 1 a modern baseball glove which is comprised essentially of a single piece palm and finger portion **10**, the fingers being shown at **11**, **12**, **13** and **14**, the palm at **15**, and the thumb portion at **16**. The palm side of the glove presents a smooth surface to the ball, unbroken by seams or other possible obstructions which might deflect the ball or otherwise interfere with the purpose and action of the glove. Between thumb **16** and the first finger portion **11** is secured a web **17** which, as shown more clearly in FIGS. 2 and 3, is sewn with transversely extending seams **18** and laced to the thumb and first finger portions to provide strength in a direction transversely of the thumb and first finger portion **11** to resist a separation of these digits under the impact of a fast moving ball.

The back of the glove (FIG. 3) is formed by a plurality of longitudinally extending curved strips **19**, **20**, **21**, **22**, **23**, **24**, **25** and **26** appropriately sewn together and sewn at their edge regions to the palm portions **11**, **12**, **13** and **14** to form the finger stalls of the glove. Additional longitudinally extending strips **27** and **28** form the back of the thumb stall and are similarly sewn together and to the thumb portion **16**.

Baseball gloves are, of course, padded to provide a shaped pocket and to protect the player's hand and, accordingly, the glove is provided with a palm liner **29** which again is desirably a single piece **30** of leather interiorly of the palm side of the glove and having finger portions extending outwardly in spaced relation to the finger portions **11**, **12**, **13** and **14**. Also strips **31** to **36** inclusive on the interior of the glove back form the finger stall side walls and back liners and extend outwardly along the inner surfaces of the strips **19** to **27**, respectively. Suitable padding **37** is inserted between the palm liner **29** and the outer front shell of the glove to shape and form the ball catching pocket of the glove and to aid in absorbing the shock and the force of a caught ball.

The finger backs **19** to **26**, inclusive, and the finger back liners **31** to **35** inclusive are sewn together as shown in FIG. 2 at **38** and preferably covered by a suitable protective binding to cover raw edges and remove stress from the longitudinal seams. A wrist strap **39** is sewn at one end to the back of the base region of the thumb stall and is secured to the base region of the little finger stall by means such as lacing **40**. The wrist strap **39** serves to draw the open end of the glove together across the back of the player's wrist while, other lacing **41** is utilized to secure the inner end of the web **17** to the glove portion proper. Another lace or thong **42** ties the finger tips, thumb and web portions together, thereby to prevent

the fingers and thumb from spreading apart and aiding in the shaping and holding of the glove pocket and improving the gripping action in use. Additional lacing 43 provides an openable seam between the palm front and liner at the base of the palm to provide access to the interior of the padded portion of the glove, so that a player may add, remove or shift padding to suit his individual taste and desires.

The function of strap 39 is to assist in holding the glove in place on the player's hand and to keep the glove from falling off when the hand and arm are dropped at the player's side. In this glove, the strap still provides a holding tie across the back of the hand, but it is not the only means utilized for locating the glove longitudinally of the player's hand.

The finger stalls, near the finger crotches, as shown in FIG. 3, at 44, 45, 46 and 47, normally fit relatively loosely upon the player's fingers. The material, in addition to being relatively soft and yieldable, is usually of a size such that the finger openings are larger than the player's finger tips. This looseness is more pronounced and perceptible when the player does not insert his fingers entirely into the finger stalls but holds the glove loosely on his hand, with his finger tips barely entering the finger stalls so that he can take advantage of the additional length of the finger stalls to increase his reach. One's fingers are normally tapered toward their ends so that the narrowest portion of the finger is thus presented to the largest parts of finger crotches. The player does not ordinarily shift the position of the glove on his hand, although he frequently changes the position of his hand and at times causes his hand to hang downwardly. When loosely engaged in the large ends of stalls, the finger tips provide little support for the glove on the player's hand and do not provide all of the control of the glove that might be desired for grasping a caught ball. It might be possible for the glove, when so held, to fall off inadvertently or to be knocked from the player's hand during an attempt to field a hard hit ball.

Structure for providing the desired location of the glove longitudinally of the hand, the desired control movements of the glove and the required retention of the glove position on the hand is supplied by the present invention through the use of means for constricting the openings of the finger stalls at the finger crotches until a snug fit is produced upon the player's finger tips. In the form chosen for illustration, the constricting means comprises a leather lace 48 which extends across the back of the glove, with one of its ends 49 located at the back of the base of the thumb stall and its other end 50 emerging from the glove at one side of the back of the base portion of the little finger stall, the intermediate section of the lace passing alternately over and under the strips 20 to 28, inclusive, and the palm liner 30, so as to pass over and under alternate finger stalls. Knots 51 and 52 in the ends 49 and 50, respectively, of lace 48 prevent the ends thereof from being inadvertently drawn into the interior of the glove where they would be inaccessible unless the glove were opened. The knots 51 and 52 also serve as a means for grasping the ends of the lace 48 to pull the lace across the glove from either end, thereby to constrict the finger stalls at the finger crotches. In addition to friction between the lacing and the material of the glove through which it passes preventing loosening of the lacing after it has been adjusted to provide desired finger stall constriction for normal use, the knots may be tied at positions adjacent the glove surfaces.

It may be observed in FIG. 3 that the lace 48 passes under the palm liner 29 at 53 in the vicinity of the end 49 which is at one side of the base of the thumb stall and then extends over the thumb stall at 54 and back under the palm liner at 55 for a distance approximately coextensive with the web region between the thumb and first finger stalls. It then extends over the backs of the first and third finger stalls, as at 55 and 56, and under the palm liner at the second and fourth finger stalls, as at 57 and 58. The lace then emerges from the side of the finger stall for the little finger through the strip 20. It may be readily understood that the cross-overs from the palm liner to the exterior of the glove back are located, in each instance, in approximate alignment with the partitions between finger stalls to avoid having the lace 48 extend across the space normally provided for the finger of the player.

It may also be understood, of course, that the location of the lace may be altered so that where it is shown passing under the liner it passes over a finger stall and vice-versa, and that instead of a single lace 48, two or more independent laces could be utilized without departing from the spirit of this invention. Also, the lace 48 could extend through the palm portion of the glove, rather than merely through the palm liner.

To adjust the lace 48 to a player's hand, he simply pulls on the exposed end portions of the lace until he has the constriction of the finger stalls over his fingers comfortably tight when the hand is in a desired position in the glove. He may adjust the constriction differently for each finger, or he may limit the constriction to only one or two fingers, merely by manipulating the lace 48 at each finger to tighten or loosen the lace as desired.

It is understood that the foregoing description is merely illustrative of a preferred embodiment of the invention and that the scope of the invention is not to be limited thereto but is to be determined by the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A baseball glove having a palm portion and a thumb stall and first, second, third and fourth finger stalls extending outwardly from the palm portion in directions generally longitudinal to the glove and having a liner for the palm portion and finger stalls, said finger stalls forming finger stall crotches at the junctures thereof with the palm portion, and a single lace cooperating with the liner of the palm portion to constrict said finger stalls, said lace having one end disposed at the base and to the outside of the thumb stall, said lace then passing under the liner, thence outwardly and laterally over the back of the thumb stall, thence inwardly under the liner to one side of the first finger stall, thence outwardly and laterally over the back of the first finger stall, thence inwardly at the crotch between the first and second finger stalls, thence under the liner at the second finger stall and out at the crotch between the second and third finger stalls, thence over the back of the third finger stall and inwardly under the liner at the crotch between the third and fourth finger stalls, and thence outwardly along the outside region of the fourth finger stall, said lace when placed under tension serving to constrict at least one of said stalls.

2. A baseball glove having a palm portion with finger stalls extending outwardly therefrom, said finger stalls including finger backs, and there being a lining for the palm portion and finger stalls, said finger stalls also having crotches therebetween at the junctures of said finger stalls with the palm portion, and a thong laced through said lining and finger backs at positions generally aligned with said crotches and extending over the finger back and under the lining of adjacent finger stalls to provide means for effecting individual constrictions of the finger stalls from the finger back to the lining of each finger stall adjacent said crotches by the application of tension through said thong.

3. In a baseball glove having a palm portion, a thumb stall and a plurality of finger stalls extending outwardly from the palm portion in directions generally longitudinal to the glove and its palm portion, a liner for the palm portion and finger stalls, and wherein said finger stalls have crotches at the junctures thereon with the palm portion, the combination therewith of means for variably constricting the finger stalls at the crotches, said means comprising a thong laced through the finger stalls and

liner adjacent the crotches, said thong extending alternately under the liner at one finger stall and over the adjacent finger stall in alternating relation across the glove and having an end exposed exteriorly of the glove for determining the tension in the throng, said finger stalls having backs which terminate in a continuous edge extending laterally of the palm portion of the glove in normally spaced and opposed relationship thereto, and said thong being laced through the backs of the finger stalls at positions between said edge and said crotches.

4. In a baseball glove having a palm portion, a thumb stall and a plurality of finger stalls extending outwardly from the palm portion in directions generally longitudinal to the glove and its palm portion, a liner for the palm portion and finger stalls, and wherein said finger stalls have crotches at the junctures thereof with the palm portion, the combination therewith of means for variably constricting the finger stalls at the crotches, said means comprising a thong laced through the finger stalls and liner adjacent the crotches, said thong extending alternately under the liner at one finger stall and over the adjacent finger stall in alternating relation across the glove and having an end exposed exteriorly of the glove for determining the tension in the thong, said finger stalls having backs, and said thong having portions extending between the liner and said backs in approximate alignment with said crotches in directions generally perpendicular to the liner.



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