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[56]

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[54] **WRESTLING HELMET**
10 Claims, 3 Drawing Figs.

[52] U.S. Cl. 2/3
 [51] Int. Cl. A42b 1/08
 [50] Field of Search 2/3, 6, 9

ABSTRACT: A wrestler's helmet is made from a continuous piece of knitted fabric which is elastic in mutually perpendicular directions.

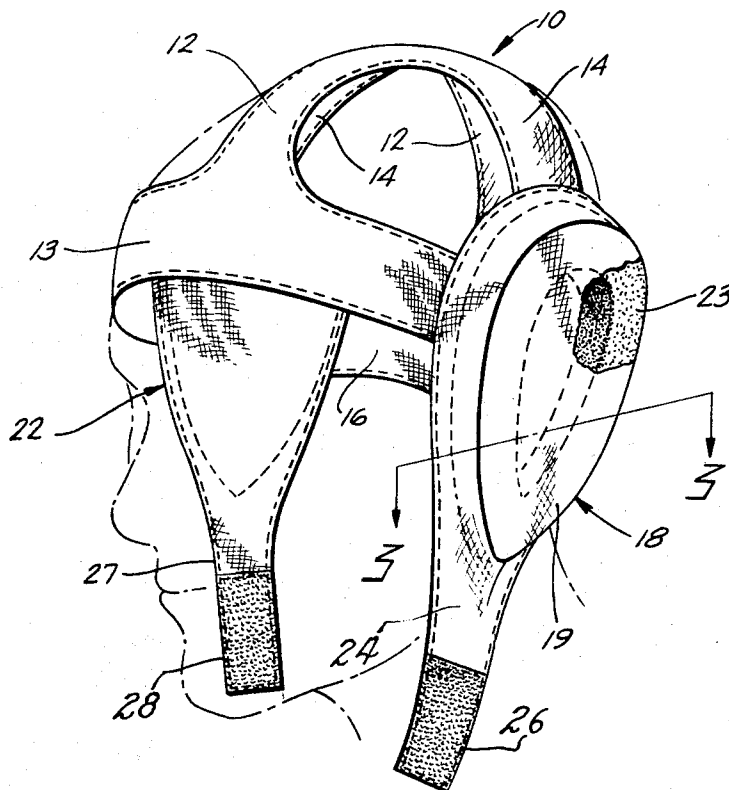


FIG. 1

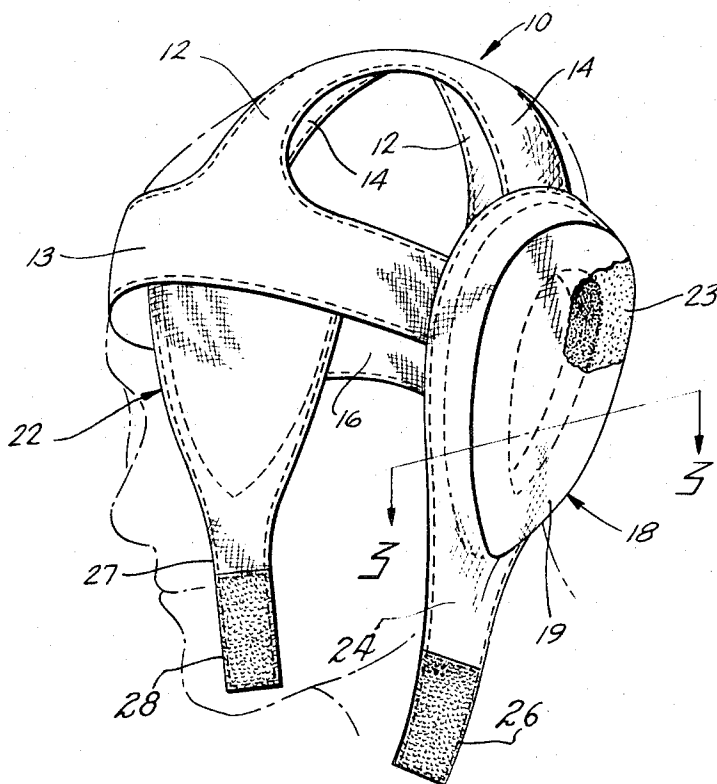


FIG. 2

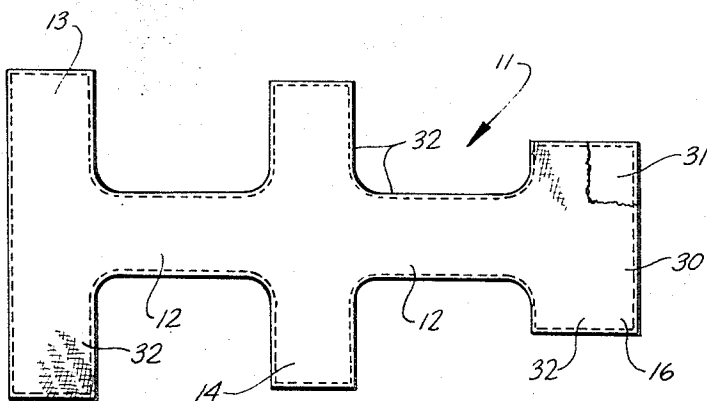
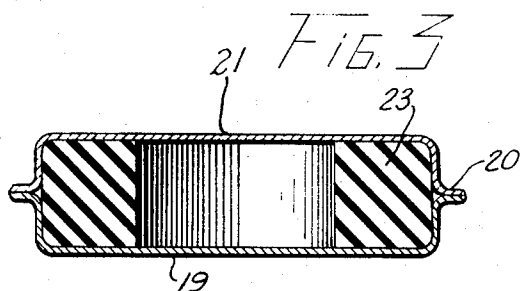


FIG. 3



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WRESTLING HELMET

This invention relates to protective head gear worn by wrestlers to provide an ear-protecting guard which is comfortable to the wearer, and presents no hazard to either the wearer or his opponent.

The helmet of this invention is lightweight, cool, comfortable, and stays in place with a positive fit without adjustments or having to be of different sizes. There are no mechanical parts to wear out or replace.

The helmet is made of a continuous piece of fabric which is substantially equally elastic in mutually perpendicular directions. The fabric is cut in the shape of a cross with two transverse straps at opposite ends of one leg of the cross. The ends of the fabric straps are attached to earpieces which carry a chin strap to secure the helmet in place. Preferably, the earpieces and chin strap are made of the same fabric which is elastic in mutually perpendicular directions.

These and other aspects of the invention will be more fully understood from the following detailed description and the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the preferred helmet of the invention;

FIG. 2 is a view of the crownpiece of the helmet before it is sewn to the earpieces; and

FIG. 3 is a view taken on line 3-3 of FIG. 1.

Referring to FIG. 1, a helmet 10 includes a continuous piece of fabric 11 (FIG. 2) which includes an elongated central strap 12, an elongated transverse front strap 13 formed integrally at its center with one end of the central strap, a middle strap 14 which intersects at its center the center of the central strap and is formed integrally therewith, and a rear strap 16 formed integrally at its center with the end of the central strap opposite that end which is formed integrally with the front strap.

As shown best in FIG. 2, the front and middle straps are about the same width, but the front strap is longer than the middle strap. The middle strap is longer than the rear strap, but the rear strap is about one third wider than the middle strap.

As shown best in FIG. 1, the left ends of the front, middle and rear straps are each secured by sewing to the front, top, and rear, respectively, of a left earpiece 18 which is an enclosed envelope made of an outside sheet 19 stitched around its periphery 20 to the periphery of an inside sheet 21 of a size and shape identical with that of the outside sheet.

The right ends of the front, middle and rear straps are each secured by stitching to a right earpiece 22 identical with the left earpiece.

As shown best in FIG. 3, a sponge rubber or plastic ring 23 is secured in the hollow pocket of each ear piece. The ring fits around the ear of the wearer and protects it.

An elongated left chin strip 24 is secured to the lower portion of the left earpiece and includes on its inside surface a piece 26 of Velcro pile. An elongated right chin strip 27 is secured at one end to the lower portion of the right earpiece. A piece 28 of Velcro loops is secured to the outer surface of the right chin strip so the two chin strips can be secured together to form a continuous adjustable chin strap which fits snugly under the wearer's chin and holds the helmet firmly in place on his head.

As shown in FIG. 1, each chin strip extends substantially vertically downward to fit under the lower portion of the wearer's jaw bone. This prevents the chin strap from being forced up off the wearer's chin and thereby prevents accidental removal of the helmet during wrestling.

Preferably, the front, middle and rear straps, the earpieces, and the chin strips are of fabric made of spandex yarn, which is the generic name for a manufactured fiber in which the fiber-forming substance is a long chain synthetic polymer comprised of at least 85 percent of a segmented polyurethane. Spandex fabric is substantially equally elastic in mutually perpendicular directions so that a helmet of only one size can make a comfortable, snug fit on heads of a variety of shapes

and sizes without any adjustments except to secure the chin strips together to the comfort of the wearer.

Preferably, the piece which forms the front, middle and rear straps is made of an outer sheet 30 secured to an inner sheet 31 by stitches 32 around the edges of the sheets. As shown best in FIG. 1, the earpiece and chin strips are formed integrally and are also made up of the inner and outer sheets 19 and 21. The double sheet construction improves the overall strength of the helmet without reducing its elasticity. Moreover, the integral construction of the straps which fit over the crown of the wearer's head and the integral construction of the chin strips and respective earpieces improve the overall elasticity or stretchability of the helmet so that it can fit heads of a wide variety of sizes and shapes without producing undue pressure or discomfort because the tension applied to the helmet is distributed over substantially its entire area.

As shown best in FIG. 1, the elongated central strap lies over the sagittal crest of the wearer (shown only in phantom line) and the relatively wide rear strap fits snugly over and just under the rear portion of the wearer's skull. The front strap fits relatively low over the wearer's forehead so that when the helmet is pulled snugly in place and secured by the chin strips, it will not be accidentally dislodged during wrestling.

The elimination of stitches at the intersection of the front, middle and rear straps and where the chin strips join their respective earpieces improves the overall elasticity and stretchability of the helmet because, if these pieces were merely stitched together, they would lose their elasticity in the area of the stitching. The edges of the opposing pieces which form the straps, earpieces and chin strips are sewn together with an overlock stitch which permits the stretching required for a comfortable and adjustable fit.

I claim:

1. A wrestler's helmet comprising a continuous piece of knitted fabric which is substantially equally elastic in mutually perpendicular directions, the piece including: (a) an elongated central strap adapted to fit longitudinally on the sagittal crest of the wearer and extending at its front end from the vicinity of the forehead to the back of the head; (b) an elongated transverse front strap formed integrally with the front end of the central strap; (c) an elongated transverse middle strap formed integrally with and extending from opposite sides of the middle of the central strap; and (d) an elongated transverse rear strap formed integrally with the rear end of the central strap, a right earpiece secured to the right ends of the front, middle and rear straps, a left earpiece secured to the left ends of the front, middle and rear straps, and a chin strap connected to the earpieces.

2. A helmet according to claim 1 in which the chin strap is formed of a first elongated elastic chin strip secured at one end to one earpiece, and a second elongated elastic chin strip secured to the other earpiece, and means for securing the strips together to form a chin strap.

3. A helmet according to claim 2 in which each chin strip is formed integrally with its respective earpiece; and the earpieces, chin strips and said continuous piece of fabric are made of the same material.

4. A helmet according to claim 1 in which the continuous piece of knitted fabric is made of two sheets stitched together to provide a double thickness, and the stitching securing the sheets together is of the type to permit stretching of the sheets in the area where they are stitched together.

5. A helmet according to claim 1 in which the rear strap is substantially wider than the front strap.

6. A helmet according to claim 1 in which the earpiece, chin strap and said continuous piece of fabric are all of the same material.

7. A wrestler's helmet comprising a first sheet of flexible and stretchable knitted fabric shaped to fit snugly on the head of a wrestler, the first sheet being substantially equally elastic in mutually perpendicular directions and including stretchable and flexible right and left earpieces each shaped to fit over the right and left ears, respectively, of the wrestler, a separate

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stretchable and flexible outside sheet disposed over each ear-
piece, means bonding the periphery of each earpiece to its
respective outside sheet to form a pocket between each ear-
piece and respective outside sheet, a separate elastic and flexi-
ble ring disposed in each pocket, each ring being shaped to fit
around a respective ear of the wrestler, and a chin strap con-
nected to the earpiece.

8. A wrestler's helmet comprising a continuous piece of
knitted fabric which is substantially equally elastic in mutually
perpendicular directions, the piece including: (a) an elon-
gated central strap adapted to fit longitudinally on the sagittal
crest of the wearer and extending at its front end from the
vicinity of the forehead to the back of the head; (b) an elon-
gated transverse front strap formed integrally with the front
end of the central strap; (c) an elongated transverse middle
strap formed integrally with and extending from opposite sides
of the central strap; and (d) an elongated transverse rear strap
formed integrally with the rear end of the central strap; a right
earpiece shaped to fit over the right ear of the wrestler and
secured to the right ends of the front, middle and rear straps; a
left earpiece shaped to fit over the left ear of the wrestler and
secured to the left ends of the front, middle and rear straps,
each earpiece comprising: (a) a continuous inner piece of
knitted fabric which is substantially equally elastic in mutually
perpendicular directions; (b) an outer piece disposed over the
inner piece and comprising a continuous piece of knitted
fabric which is substantially equally elastic in mutually per-

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pendicular directions; (c) means securing the periphery of the
outer piece to the inner piece to form a pocket between the
outer piece and the inner piece; and (d) an elastic and flexible
ring disposed in the pocket, the ring being shaped to fit around
a respective ear of the wrestler; and a chin strap connected to
the earpieces.

9. A helmet according to claim 8 in which the chin strap is
formed of a first elongated chin strip formed integrally with
one earpiece, and a second elongated chin strip formed in-
tegrally with the other earpiece, and means for securing the
strips together to form a chin strap.

10. A wrestler's helmet comprising a flexible and stretcha-
ble knitted fabric shaped to fit snugly on the head of a wres-
tler, the fabric being substantially equally elastic in mutually
perpendicular directions, and including right and left ear por-
tions each shaped to fit over the right and left ears, respective-
ly, of the wrestler, separate ear pieces of flexible and stretcha-
ble knitted fabric disposed over each ear portion of the hel-
met, each earpiece being substantially equally elastic in mu-
tually perpendicular directions, means securing the periphery
of each earpiece to its respective ear portion to form a pocket
between each ear portion and respective earpiece, a separate
elastic and flexible ring disposed in each pocket, each ring
being shaped to fit around a respective ear of the wrestler, and
a chin strap connected to the pockets.

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