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FOOTBALL TRAINING DUMMY

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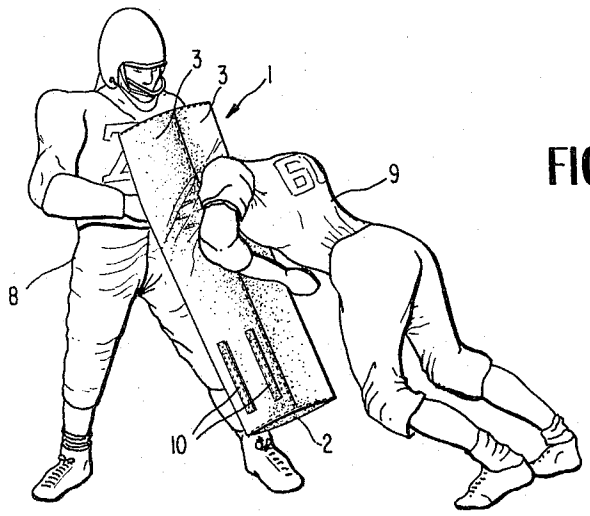


FIG. 1

FIG. 2

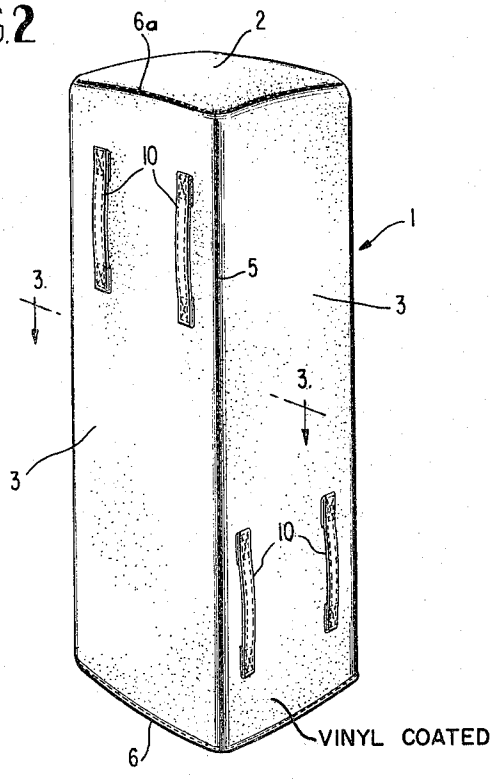
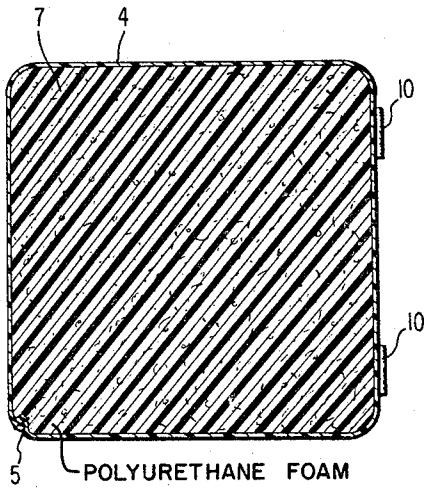


FIG. 3



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FOOTBALL TRAINING DUMMY

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A football training dummy is made square in cross section, with flat, square end surfaces of the same size and shape as the cross section, and with hand holds provided on two adjacent sides each adjacent to one of the end surfaces, so that the dummy can be used with either end uppermost and wear in use is thus divided between two of the sides.

The present invention relates to football training dummies, and more particularly to improvements in the type of football training equipment comprising portable, manipulatable padded bodies which are in use held securely upright on the ground of a playing field by one player to resist the practice thrust of another player.

Such equipment has conventionally been made in the form of a suitably sewed covering fabric enclosing an appropriate solid but yieldable padding fill, forming a body of the order of some four feet in height having a circular cross section some fourteen inches more or less in diameter. Provided sometimes with a single hand hold, this body would be held by a player standing behind it and would serve to withstand and absorb the force of an oncoming player's shoulder thrust, thus giving the latter player experience and training in line bucking and the like very closely simulating that which would be experienced in actual play without subjecting the cooperating player to the rigors and results of body contact such as would be involved in actual play. That is to say, the dummy is a sort of inanimate simulated defensive lineman or back withstanding the plunge of an attacking player in training as a blocker, and it best serves that purpose to the extent that it can be securely positioned and held by hte holding player against displacement by the attacking player while adequately stopping the advance of the latter without imposing on him anything more than minimal shock and of course no physical injury of any kind.

The present invention aims to provide certain useful improvements in such dummies for the purpose of enhancing their total efficiency, protecting the holding player to an increased degree, distributing wear over the entire surface covering instead of allowing wear to be concentrated in a single small area, offering a greater surface area of resistance to the shoulder thrust of the brocker, providing for increased stability, and in general making it possible for both the defense and the blocker trainee to perform their respective functions more effectively and more safely in handling and using the dummy.

The foregoing and other objects and advantages, most of which will be evident to those skilled in the art as the invention is hereinafter explained, are accomplished by the embodiment shown in the accompanying drawing which has been thoroughly tested in actual use and found to be entirely satisfactory and which is accordingly at present preferred. In this embodiment of the invention:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of a dummy incorporating the principles of the invention, shown in actual use in the hands of a player holding it in simulation of a defensive lineman or back at or immediately after thrust by a blocker trainee;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the dummy on a relatively enlarged scale; and

FIG. 3 is a cross sectional view taken on the line 3—3 of FIG. 2 on a still further enlarged scale.

As shown in these figures, the new dummy comprises a body **1** of generally parallelepiped shape; that is to say, it is a solid figure of substantially square cross section having opposite ends **2** which are square and disposed in generaly flat planes normal to the sides **3**, which are four in number and all of which are identical oblong shapes.

Thus the body differs from the conventional dummy which is circular in cross section and whose ends are markedly convex.

The new dummy comprises an outer covering fabric or casing, designated **4** in FIG. 3, best made of stout fabric that is waterproof and wear resistant, such as a vinyl coated nylon textile material of heavy gauge securely stitched along one of the longitudinal side wall vertices **5** and around each of the end wall edges **6** and **6***a* so as completely to enclose a filling **7**. This filling is a solid yieldable padding such as, in the preferred embodiment, polyurethane foam, which has the desirable property of yielding upon impact and promptly springing back to its original shape upon release of the thrust force.

It will be observed in FIG. 2 that the stitching **6** at one end of the casing is different from the stitching **6***a* at the opposite end. This is the result of the mode of manufacture, by which an originally flat blank of fabric is first formed into a tube of square cross section by inside stitching **5** along one of the vertices, and then closed at one end by inside stitching **6***a* securing in place the end **2** shown at the top in FIG. 2, after which the filling **7** is inserted and the other end **2** is sewed in place by the outside stitching **6** shown at the bottom of FIG. 2.

The flat ends or end walls **2** of the dummy enable it to be readily stood on either end on any reasonably flat ground surface. To make it possible for the holding player **8** to hold the dummy upright, or substantially upright, against the impact of a blocker **9** as shown in FIG. 1, the dummy is provided with a novel set of hand holds, or a pair of such sets. As best shown in FIG. 2, these hand holds comprise straps **10**, which may be made of the same kind of fabric as is used for the covering, sewed securely at their opposite ends to the covering, with their intermediate portions loose, or free from the covering, so that the fingers of the holding player may be inserted between the hand hold and the adjacent surface of the covering to grasp the hand hold and thus hold the dummy. Each of the hand holds is sewed to the covering so as to extend longitudinally or lengthwise of the dummy, and the holds of each pair are disposed in parallelism, equidistant from one of the dummy ends **2** and on a portion of one of the side walls **3** quite close to one of the ends. The spacing of the two holds adjacent to one of the ends is such that each can be well grasped by one of the hands of the holding player disposed at about the level of the player's waist when the dummy is stood on the ground with the end **2** adjacent those two hand holds uppermost. This is shown in FIG. 1.

As best shown in FIG. 2, the dummy is equipped with two sets of hand holds **10**. The two sets are sewed identically on two adjacent side walls, and one set is disposed adjacent one of the end walls **2** and the other is located in an exactly corresponding position adjacent the other end wall **2**, i.e., at precisely the same distance from that end wall.

It follows, of course, that the dmmy can be held, by a player as indicated in FIG. 1, grasping either set of hand holds, i.e., with either of the end walls **2** uppermost. In

either case, the impact of the blocker **9** will be taken by the side wall **3** of the dummy opposite the set of hand holds that are held by the player **8**. There are of course two such side walls **3** that are opposite sets of hand holds. Both of them are entirely devoid of hand holds and all other protuberances, being quite smooth and hence well adapted to be struck by the blocker's shoulder, arm or the like without inflicting any injury or undue discomfort. Each of these side walls is flat and broad, as distinguished from the customary rounded or curved surface of the usual dummy, and thus the blocker is far less likely to slide off the surface of the new dummy and the dummy is much less apt to be wrenched from the grasp of the holding player when struck by a glancing blow of the blocker.

Since the new dummy presents the choice of two sets of hand holds to be grasped by the holding player, the two sets can be used alternatively and alternately, so that the wear and tear of impact by the blocker will be equally ditributed and divided between the two opposite smooth surfaces **3**. The only other wear to which the dummy is subjected in use is the abrasion of the end wall **2** over the ground. Since in the new dummy changing the side **3** which is held by the holding player **8**, in order to change the side **3** that receives the thrust of the blocker **9** automatically involves changing the end **2** which is positioned on the ground, it follows that end wall wear also is distributed equally between the two end walls instead of being concentrated on one of them as in the prior art dummies.

In actual use it has been found that players picking up the dummy for use and giving no deliberate thought to the question of wear will hold it about as often with one end uppermost as the other, so that the two plain sides **3** are disposed about equally often for engagement by the blocker. Thus the wear is automatically distributed evenly between those two sides. This, coupled with the unusually broad surface of each of these sides, makes the new dummy considerably longer lived than the prior art dummies of conventional cylindrical shape, and particularly those provided with single hand holds.

I claim:

1. A football training dummy comprising a filler body of yieldable solid material of substantially square cross section having substantially flat top and bottom end surfaces each of the same size and shape as said cross section and four oblong sides, said body being enclosed in a covering of sheet material having means providing a hand hold on each of two adjacent sides each hand hold being adjacent an opposite end surface.

2. A football training dummy as claimed in claim **1** in which each hand hold means is a pair of straps secured at their ends in laterally spaced parallelism lengthwise of the dummy equidistantly from the adjacent end surface.

3. A football training dummy comprising a filler body of yieldable polyurethane foam of substantially square cross section having substantially flat top and bottom end surfaces each of the same size and shape as said cross section and four oblong sides, said body being enclosed in a tight fitting covering of smooth, waterproof vinyl coated fabric conforming to the shape of the filler body and having hand hold means provided on each of two adjacent sides adjacent an opposite end surface, each hand hold means being a pair of straps formed of vinyl coated fabric having their ends sewed to the covering and being disposed in laterally spaced parallelism lengthwise of the dummy equidistantly from the adjacent end surface whereby the dummy is adapted to be held in substantially upright position with one of said end surfaces uppermost by the two hands of a player grasping the intermediate portions of the two straps adjacent said end surface and is adapted to be turned and inverted and similarly held with the other end surface uppermost by grasping the two straps adjacent said other end surface, thereby equalizing wear of the covering, whereby the dummy presents identical appearances and performs identical functions regardless of which end is uppermost in use.

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