May 17, 1955 W. C. BLECKMAN 2,708,326

TROTLINE HOLDER

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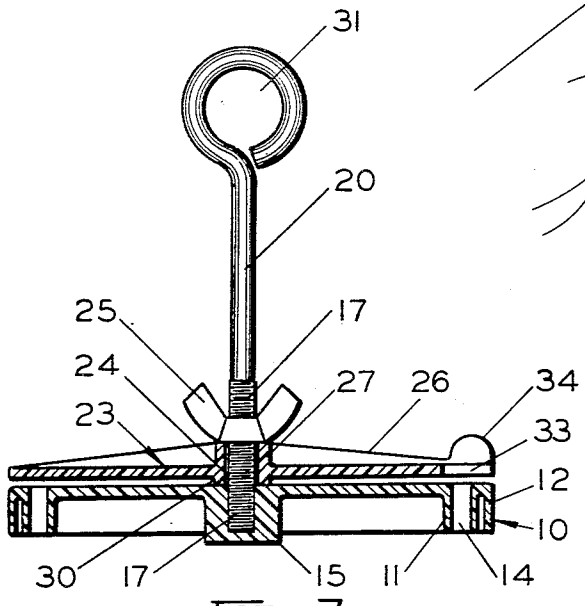


FIG.-2

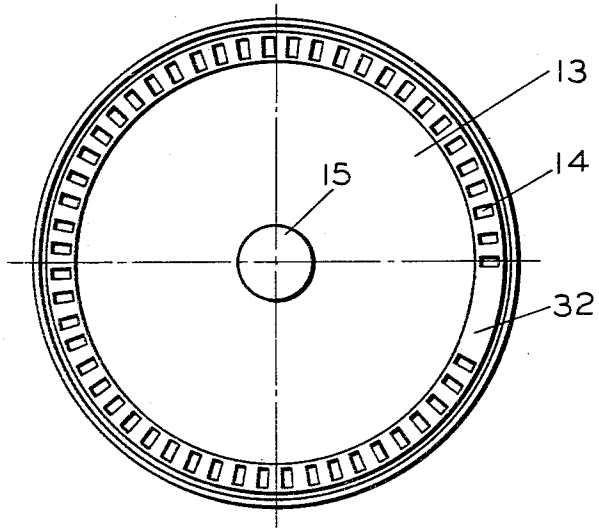


FIG.-3

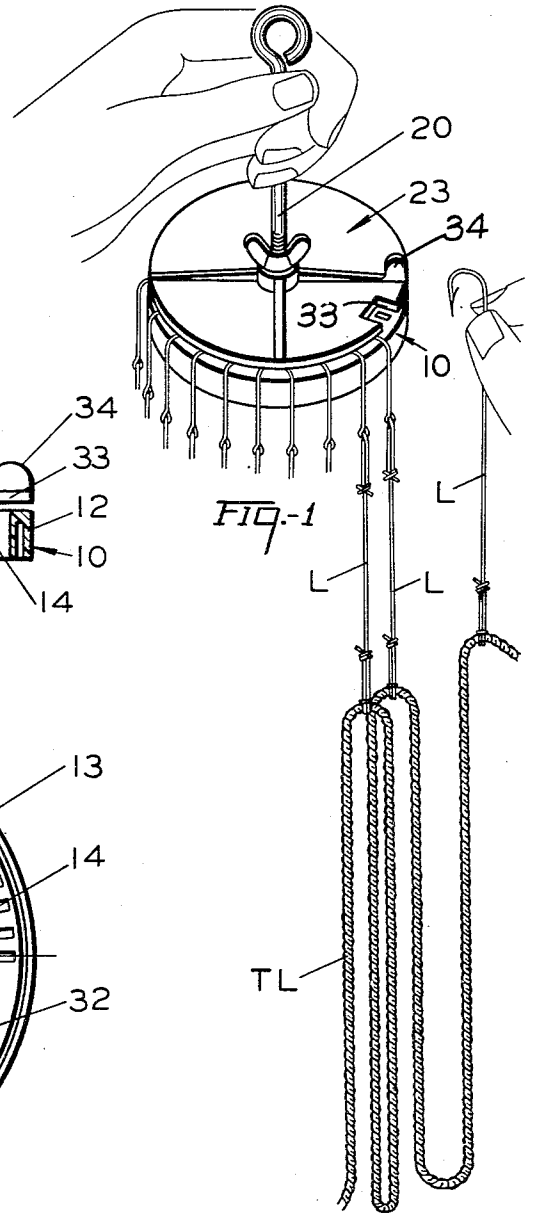


FIG.-1

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TROTLINE HOLDER

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5 Claims. (Cl. 43—57.5)

This invention relates to improvements in trotline jigs, and more particularly to an improved holder and retaining device for keeping in place, in spaced relation, a number of like units to be kept separated, such as the hooks and staging lines or leaders, either attached to or separate from a trotline.

It is well known to fishermen who utilize even only occasionally, a trotline extended across or into a stream, that much time and considerable personal hazards are involved in putting out, taking in, and retaining between periods of usage, trotlines of the usual types, including those in which the staging lines or leaders with hooks affixed are either of snap-on or tie-on type. These prevalent and long known difficulties arise from the normal tendency of a plurality of fish hooks, particularly when attached to a number of relatively short lines, to become entangled and sometimes almost irretrievably fouled and snarled. The handling of trotlines is for reasons noted, fraught with considerable hazard to the person, particularly the hands and clothing of the user. The present invention accordingly has as its major and general objectives, to obviate the several noted difficulties and hazards.

Otherwise and somewhat more particularly stated, the present invention objectively provides an arrangement in which the several hooks and the leaders or staging lines connected thereto may be isolated, either individually or in small pluralities, and thus kept free of any possibility of entanglement or personal injury, the improved facilities for thus isolating the hooks being desirably supplemented by hook-shrouding means which will positively preclude any accidental disengagement of the hooks from the jig or holder except when intentionally to be removed therefrom.

A still further and important object of the invention is attained in a trotline jig providing the advantages aforesaid, and which will afford a maximum number of hook-retaining seats for holding the hooks safely and securely within a device having a minimal span or area, thus minimizing the required space in a tackle kit, boat or in fact in any carrying device.

A further and somewhat general object of the invention is realized in an improved jig or holder particularly designed for trotlines and which is of a rugged, permanent construction, and yet which is characterized by a low production cost.

An additional and important object is realized in a device of the character noted, which is exceedingly useful as a holder for spacing the individual hooks and leaders incident to assembly of same to the main line, as well as in assembly of the leaders to the hooks, whether the arrangement is of tie-on or snap-on type.

The foregoing and numerous other objects will more clearly appear from the following detailed description of a presently preferred embodiment of the invention, particularly when considered in connection with the accompanying drawing, in which:

Fig. 1 is a view in perspective showing the manner of

use of the jig and the relation of the hooks and line elements thereto;

Fig. 2 is a central transverse sectional view taken in a vertical plane, assuming the device to be held in normal upright position, the stud being shown in elevation, and

Fig. 3 is a bottom plan view of the jig.

Referring now by characters of reference to the drawing, a base plate of the holder is indicated generally at **10**, and is preferably of a circular or substantially circular form and includes a relatively heavy angular rib portion **11** located just inwardly of a peripheral flange or skirt **12**, both of the formations **11** and **12** depending substantially at a right angle to the plane of a bed plate structure **10**.

The plate **10** is provided in its peripheral region with a plurality of evenly angularly spaced recesses **14** which extend perpendicular to the plane of said plate. Each of these in the example of the present disclosure, is, without restriction but with certain production advantages, of a rectangular form approaching a square outline, and each recess **14** is of a size to accommodate at least one of the hooks of the trotline, although in case the hooks be of small size, usually two for example, of such small hooks may be inserted in the individual recesses **14**. It will be noted that the depth of the portion **11**, hence the depth of each of the several hook-receiving seats provided by recesses **14** is such that the point and barb portions of the several hooks are completely shrouded by the walls of the recesses **14**. Centrally of the plate **10**, which may be formed as by molding as of a suitable moldable plastic material, is a tapped socket having a central depending boss **15** which provides an upwardly opening socket therein shaped for threadedly receiving the lower threaded portion **17** of a stud **20**.

As a clamping member coacting with the plate **10** at times for the purpose as will appear, for securely holding the hooks in position in the several recesses **14**, there is provided a cover generally indicated at **23**. The cover is centrally or axially apertured as at **24** to receive the stud **20**, so that the cover is at times rotatable about the latter member as a pivot, except when clamped against the base plate **10**, as by a wing nut **25**. For strength, dependent upon materials used, it is sometimes desirable to provide the cover **23** with a plurality of radial ribs, the number of which is shown as four, and which are indicated at **26**, merging axially into a hub **27**.

Depending from a central region of the cover **23** is an annular spacer rib **30** which, as will appear from the sectional view of the structure, prevents the cover from being clamped too closely to the adjacent face of the plate **10**. This provision assures that, since the bight of each of the several hooks extends above the recesses **14**, the hooks will not be inadvertently deformed or flattened as the cover is clamped to the plate.

Further with respect to the stud **20**, this is preferably extended above the plate **10** such a distance that it may serve conveniently as a handle incident to carrying, loading or unloading the jig, and for further facility in carrying, the top of the stud **20** is provided with a loop portion exemplified as a top eye **31**.

In the formation of the plate **10**, a single row of the hook-receiving recesses **14** may be utilized as shown, such row being confined to the periphery of the plate for best access. It is preferred, however, to space the recesses laterally of each other, somewhat evenly as shown. Assuming, as shown by the drawing, a single substantially peripheral arrangement of the recesses **14**, it is preferred that a portion of the peripheral region of the plate be left imperforate, as exemplified by the area indicated at **32**. Such imperforate area is by preference of somewhat greater angular extent than the individual recesses **14** for the hooks, and is of an angular extent comparable to

a marginally-open recessed formation indicated at 33 in the cover 23. It will now have become apparent that when the jig is loaded to the desired extent with the hooks, with the barbs and points thereof extended downwardly into the recesses 14, and the cover clamped in place, the latter may be so rotated before clamping, as to bring the recessed formation 33 over the imperforate area 32, whereby none of the hooks will underlie recessed formation 33 and such that all of the hooks as are seated in the several recesses 14, will be completely covered, or at least the barb and bight portions thereof fully shrouded by the imperforate marginal portions of the cover.

As a convenience to assist in digital rotation of the cover over the plate 10, when the clamp nut is released, there is provided an upwardly projecting finger tab 34 on one or more of the ribs 26.

The manner of usage of the jig is now thought to have become evident from the detailed description of its elements and features, but it may be noted for completeness that the device is highly useful, among other ways, in rigging a trotline. For such purpose the nut 25 is backed off at threaded upwardly along the threaded portion of the shank 17, and the cover 23 thus rendered free to be lifted or to rotate. With the cover and plate thus in relatively displaceable relation but in parallel planes, the hooks are inserted, if desired, one at a time in the spaced recesses 14, and the cover 23 is brought downwardly against the bights of the hooks. The eyes of the several hooks may then be tied, snapped to or otherwise attached to the several staging lines or leaders L, and the latter in turn tied to the main trotline TL. If desired, the individual hooks where attached to the individual leaders or staging lines, may be introduced one or two at a time, to the successive recesses 14 by successive angular steps of displacement of the cover in such manner as to expose the several recesses 14 beneath the recessed formation 33 of the cover one or two at a time. It will be observed that, immediately following such insertion of the hooks, the succesive steps of rotation of the cover will thereupon cause the same to overlie the bights of the several hooks seated in the plate 10, thus preventing casual or unintended separation of the hooks from the plate of the jig.

Incident to transportation or storage of the complete trotline assembly it has been pointed out as a preference to bring the recessed formation 33 of the cover over the imperforate region 32 of the body. Thus, with the cover 23 securely clamped in place, it is impossible for any of the hooks to fali out of place and the whole assembly may safely be carried in any position and even with other elements of fishing tackle and the like, without the hazard of fouling and without damage either to the line or the person.

Incident to setting out the completed trotline, it is usual to anchor one end, for example the shore end of the line, following which as the line is moved out stream, the clamp nut 25 is loosened sufficiently to permit the aforesaid step-by-step partial rotation of cover 23, whereupon the hooks and therewith the stage lines or leaders may be removed, one at a time as the line is payed out, and thus by successive steps until the entire line is removed in orderly fashion from the jig and the outermost end of the trotline suitably anchored. The reverse order of steps will obviously be followed as the line is reapplied to the jig.

It will now have appeared that the arrangement as described and illustrated, will serve fully to realize each of the several objectives hereinabove expressed, as well as other advantages which will be noted to those skilled in the art from the manner of usage of the arrangement. Although the device has been described by particularized reference to a single preferred embodiment, the detail of description should be understood solely as illustrative, and not in any limiting sense, numerous variants being possible within the intended scope of the claims hereunto appended.

I claim as my invention:

1. In a holder for trotlines, a substantially circular plate provided over the greater part of its peripheral region with a plurality of substantially evenly spaced apertures, said apertures being inwardly spaced from the peripheral margin of said plate, each such aperture being of a proportion to receive the barb ends of one or more hooks, a threaded stud element extending axially of and secured to the plate, a substantially circular cover for the plate provided with an axial bore through which said stud element slidably extends, the cover being characterized by an imperforate margin except for a peripheral aperture adapted to be brought to overlie a limited number of the hook apertures in the plate, a central extension below the cover adapted to limit the extent of approach of the cover to the plate so as to retain the cover and plate in spaced relation, said stud being provided with a threaded portion extending above the normally lowermost position of the cover, a nut above the cover adapted to engage said threaded stud portion, the nut being adapted for threaded movement upwardly along said stud so as to permit increasing separation of said plate and said cover, whereby to enable insertion of the hooks in said plate apertures through the space between said plate and cover, the plate being characterized by a limited peripheral portion of imperforate character whereby to retain the hooks, staging positioned with respect to the plate by means of the cover when the cover aperture is brought to overlie the said imperforate peripheral part of the plate, and clamped in such position by means of the nut, and a finger tab connected to said cover to assist in digital rotation of the cover over the plate when the nut is released.

2. In a holder for trotlines, a substantially circular plate provided over the greater part of its peripheral region with a plurality of substantially evenly spaced upwardly opening apertures, each such aperture being of rectangular shape and of a proportion to receive the barb ends of one or more hooks, a threaded stud element extending axially of and detachably secured to the plate, a substantially circular cover for the plate provided with an axial bore through which said stud element extends, the cover being characterized by having an imperforate margin except for an edgewise open peripheral aperture adapted to be brought to overlie a limited number of the hook apertures in the plate, an annular spacer rib forming a central extension below the cover, the rib being adapted to limit the extent of approach of the cover to the plate so as to retain the cover and plate in spaced parallel relation, said stud being provided with a threaded portion extending somewhat above the normally lowermost position of the cover, a wing nut above the cover, engaging said threaded stud portion, the nut being adapted to determine the uppermost position of said cover, the cover being slidably movable upwardly along said stud so as to permit insertion of the hooks in said said plate apertures through the space provided between the plate and cover, the plate being characterized by a limited peripheral portion of imperforate character and of an angular extent conforming substantially to that of the said cover aperture, whereby to retain the hooks and staging positioned with respect to the plate by means of the cover when the cover aperture is brought to overlie the said imperforate peripheral part of the plate, and clamped in such position by means of the nut, a radial rib on said cover, and a finger tab on said rib to assist in digital rotation of the cover over the plate when the nut is released.

3. In a hook-holding device, a plate having a series of spaced hook-receiving recesses, said recesses being spaced inwardly from the outer margin of said plate, a cover for the plate, the cover being adapted to overlie said recesses, said cover being provided with a recessed formation in

a marginal region to permit introduction of one or more hooks downwardly through said recessed formation into said recesses, means for keeping the cover movably positioned over the plate, means disposed between the plate and the cover for keeping said plate and cover in spaced relation so as to accommodate the hook portions which extend above the recesses and plate, means for retaining the cover in position over the plate, whereby to hold the hooks in said recesses, and means on said cover to assist digital rotation of said cover over said plate.

4. In a holder for trot lines or the like, a plate provided with a plurality of hook-receiving recesses, said recesses being spaced inwardly from the outer margin of said plate, a plate cover guidedly movable over the plate, the cover being formed to overlie and to serve as a closure for the recesses, the cover being characterized in that its margin includes a recessed formation that permits access to the plate recesses through the plane of the cover, a rib disposed between the plate and the cover, said rib being adapted to maintain said plate and cover in spaced relation above the uppermost portions of said recesses, whereby to accommodate the bight portions of the hooks which extend above the recesses and the plate, clamping means for retaining the cover in position over the plate, whereby to hold the hooks in said recesses, and means connected to said cover to assist digital rotation of said cover over said plate upon release of said clamping means.

5. A trot line holder including a plate having a flat upper face, the plate being provided with a plurality of substantially evenly spaced recesses, said recesses being spaced inwardly from the outer margin of said plate, each recess being of a proportion to receive the barb ends of one or more hooks, a cover for the plate, the cover having a flat lower face, a pivot member carried centrally of the plate and about which the cover is rotatable,

the cover being characterized by having an imperforated margin except for a recessed formation adapted to be brought to overlie a limited number of the recesses of said plate, the cover being rotatively movable so as to permit the recessed formation of the cover to be brought over and away from the recesses of the plate, a central extension below the cover adapted to abut the flat face of said plate to limit the extent of approach of the cover to the plate so as to maintain the cover and plate in spaced parallel relation outwardly of the extension, whereby to accommodate the bight portions of the hooks which extend above the recesses and the plate, clamping means for preventing rotative movement of said cover, and for holding the cover in position over the plate, the plate being characterized by having a limited portion of imperforate character whereby to retain the hooks in the plate recesses when the recessed formation is brought to overlie the said imperforate portion of the plate, and clamped in such position by said means, and a tab connected to said cover to assist digital rotation of said cover over said plate when said clamping means is released.

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