May 30, 1967 R. N. LATINA 3,321,771

BASEBALL GLOVES

Filed July 6, 1965 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

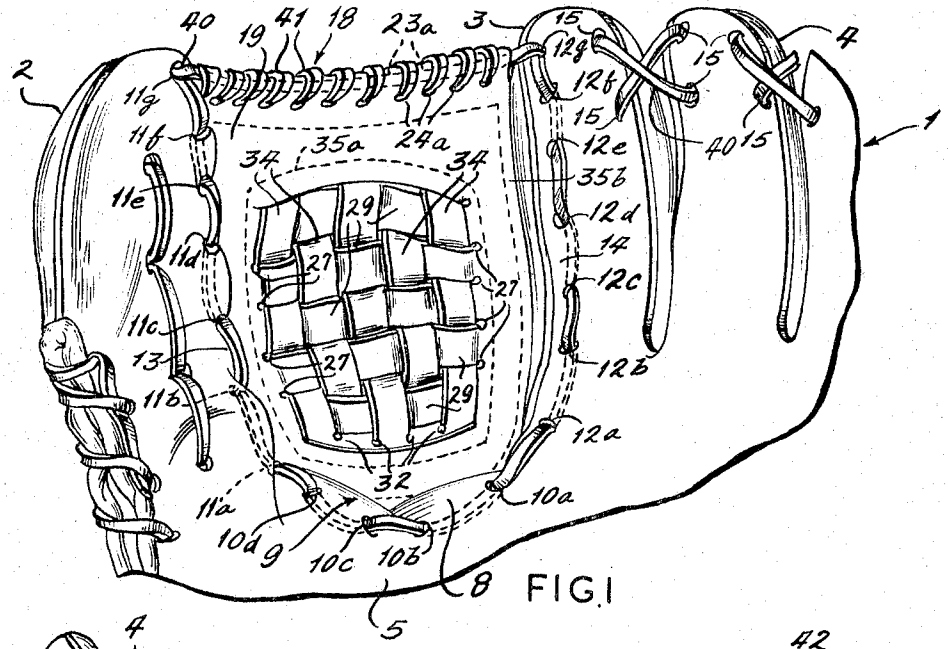


FIG.1

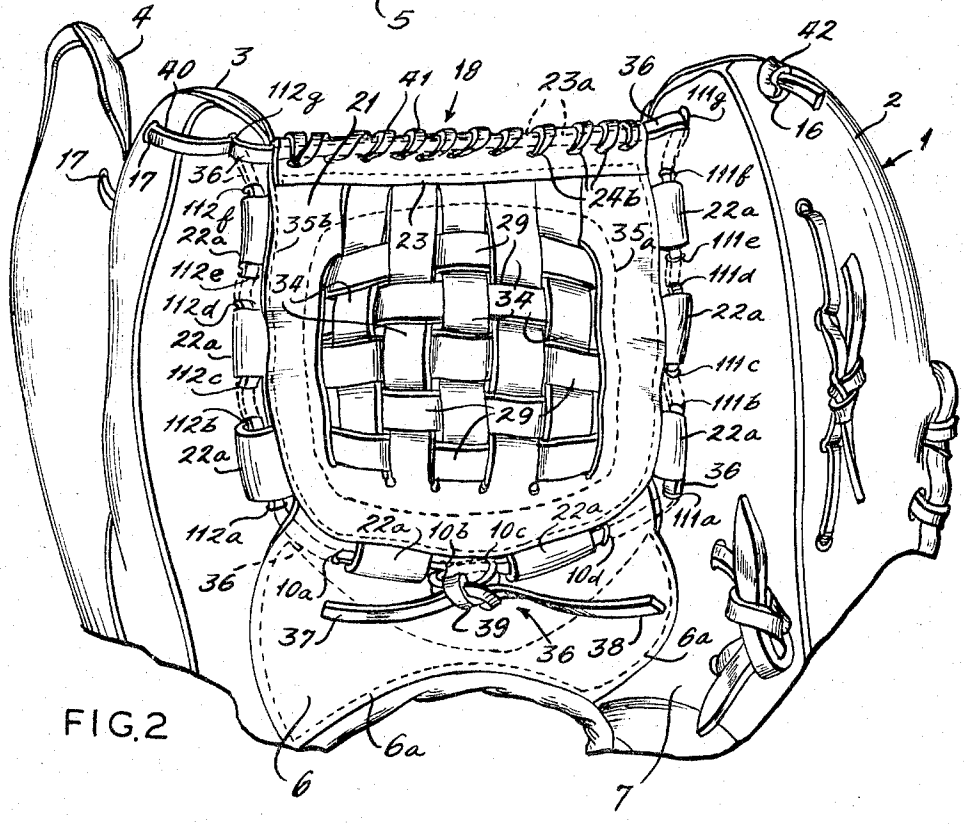


FIG.2

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BASEBALL GLOVES

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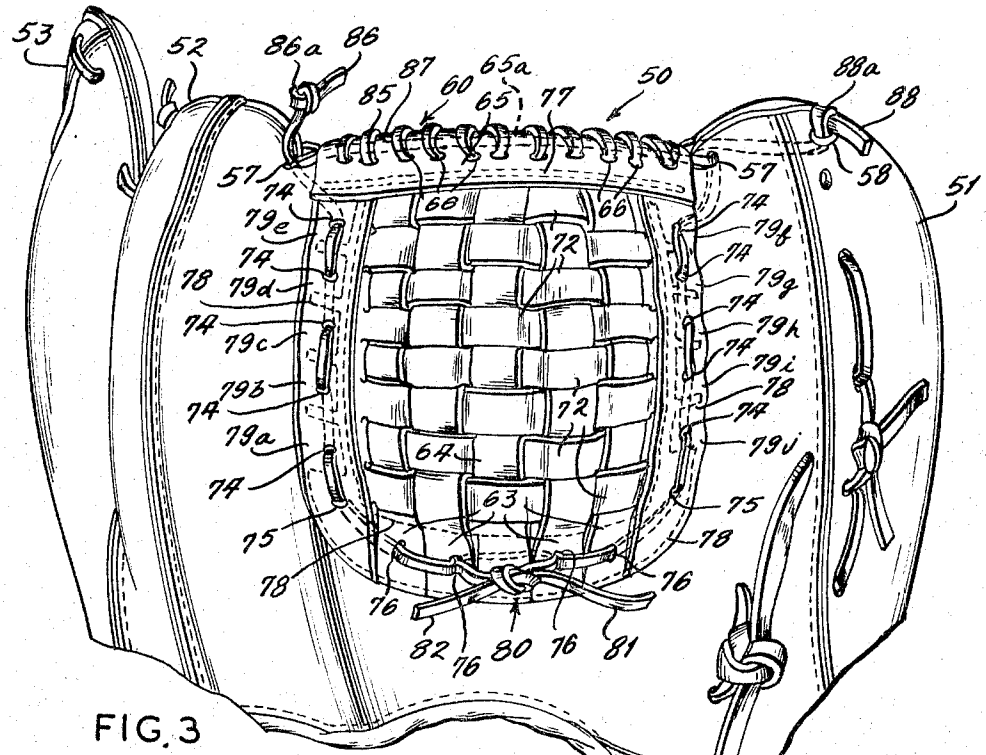


FIG. 3

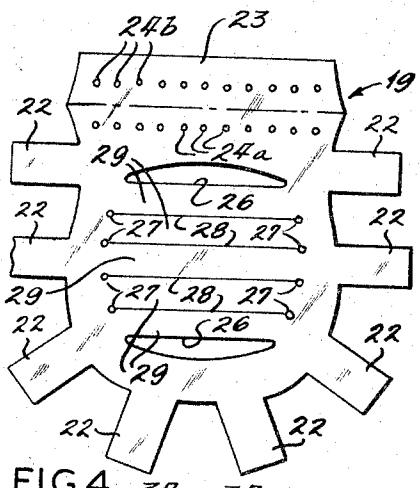


FIG. 4

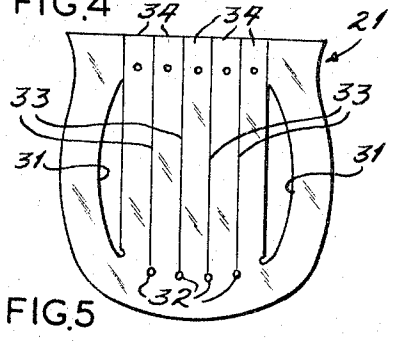


FIG. 5

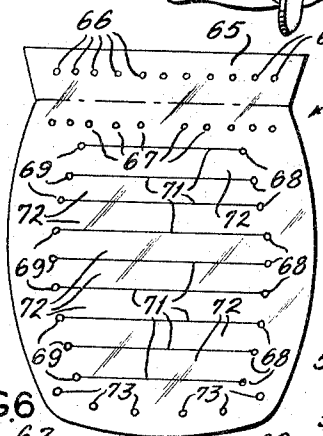


FIG. 6

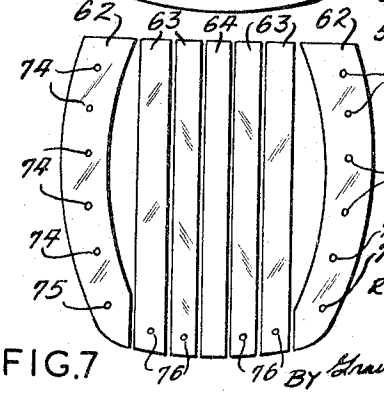


FIG. 7

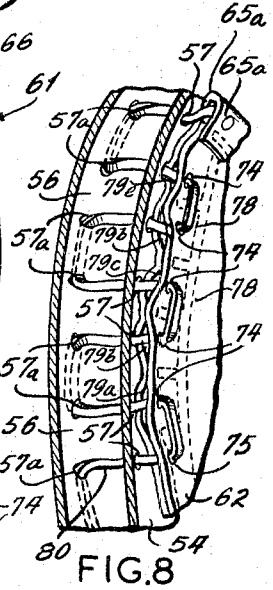


FIG. 8

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3,321,771

BASEBALL GLOVES

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Filed July 6, 1965, Ser. No. 469,735
9 Claims. (Cl. 2—19)

The present invention relates to baseball gloves or mitts, and more particularly to a new web or backstop for a baseball glove.

In most baseball gloves a web or backstop is provided between the thumb and forefinger sections. The purpose of the backstop is to receive the initial impact energy from catching a ball, and then transfer this energy through various structural connections into the glove body.

Many backstop constructions and lacing arrangements have been suggested to efficiently transfer the impact energy into the glove body, but in most cases the energy is dissipated at the expense of highly stressing portions of the glove or mitt. For example, solid webs have been designed with special lacing to transmit impact energy into the glove as stresses in a plurality of zones. In other arrangements a network of lacings has been provided to avoid the necessity of using eyelets to strengthen lacing aperture along the margins of the thumb and forefinger sections of the glove. Still other constructions utilize several independent, spaced webs to form the backstop for distributing stresses through the glove or mitt body.

The present invention overcomes the impact energy dissipation problem of prior glove constructions in a unique manner, and it will be understood that the invention is applicable to gloves and mitts, and that for convenience reference will be made to gloves. The web or backstop appertaining to the invention has a ball impact zone defined by a basket weave construction that provides a ball catching area with the capability to absorb a substantial portion of the impact energy before it can be transmitted into the lacings. Moreover, the basket weave construction provides the backstop with a gripping action which aids in catching a ball, yet prevents wedging of the ball in the backstop. The basket weave backstop is secure to the glove along the margins of the thumb and forefinger sections and the adjoining portion therebetween in any desired manner.

It is therefore an important object of the invention to provide a baseball glove with a backstop that absorbs substantial impact energy from catching a ball.

It is another object of the invention to provide a baseball glove with a backstop that absorbs substantial impact energy from catching a ball and that grips the ball yet prevents wedging of the ball in the backstop.

It is another object of the invention to provide a baseball glove with a basket weave backstop. It is another object of the invention to provide a baseball glove with a basket weave backstop for absorbing impact energy of a ball and gripping the ball on catching.

It is a further object of the invention to provide a baseball glove with a backstop that includes a central ball catching portion having a basket weave construction and a stress dissipating border portion by which the backstop is mounted in a glove.

It is still a further object of the invention to provide a baseball glove that includes a backstop with a central portion having a basket weave construction and with a border portion having attachment means of either lacing apertures or loops.

These and other objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the ensuing description and the appended claims taken in conjunction with the drawings wherein:

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FIG. 1 illustrates a portion of the face of a baseball glove with the preferred basket weave style backstop of the invention;

FIG. 2 illustrates the rear portion of the glove shown in FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 depicts a portion of another baseball glove with another basket weave style backstop of the invention;

FIG. 4 illustrates in a flat pattern the face ply of the basket weave backstop seen in FIG. 1;

FIG. 5 illustrates in a flat pattern the rear ply of the basket weave backstop seen in FIG. 2;

FIG. 6 illustrates the face ply of the backstop seen in FIG. 3;

FIG. 7 illustrates the rear plies of the backstop seen in FIG. 3; and

FIG. 8 illustrates in a sectional view the lacing arrangement for the glove construction shown in FIG. 3, said lacing arrangement being typical.

With reference to the drawings, and in particular FIGS. 1, 2, 4, and 5, a baseball glove generally designated by the numeral 1, includes a thumb section 2 and finger sections 3 and 4 that are formed partly by extensions of palm ply 5, and partly by rear ply material 7. Between thumb section 2 and finger section 3, palm ply 5 has a reinforcing extension 6 (see FIG. 2) which is folded back over part of the rear ply material 7 of glove 1 and stitched down along stitch line 6*a*. Thus, extension 6 forms a reinforcement for palm margin 8 at the crotch 9 between thumb section 2 and finger section 3. Palm margin 8 has a series of apertures 10*a*, 10*b*, 10*c* and 10*d* that extend through rear ply material 7 and extension 6. The thumb section 2 and finger section 3 of glove 1 have a series of apertures 11*a*, 11*b*, 11*c*, 11*d*, 11*e*, 11*f* and 11*g*, and apertures 12*a*, 12*b*, 12*c*, 12*d*, 12*e*, 12*f* and 12*g*, respectively, which are located along margins 13 and 14 respectively of the palm ply portions of thumb section 2 and finger section 3. Rear ply material 7 has apertures 111*a* through 111*g* corresponding to apertures 11*a* through 11*g*, and apertures 112*a* through 112*g* corresponding to apertures 12*a* through 12*g*. Also, the palm ply portions of finger sections 3 and 4 have additional lacing apertures 15. The rear ply material 7 has an additional lacing aperture 16 in the thumb section 2, and additional lacing apertures 17 in the finger sections 3 and 4.

In the preferred embodiment, backstop 18 is formed from two flat pieces, face ply 19 and rear ply 21 (see FIGS. 4 and 5). Adjoining the outer borders of the sides and bottom edge, face ply 19 has tabs 22 for forming lacing loops 22*a* (see FIG. 2). Face ply 19 has a top part 23 for forming lacing tunel 23*a*. Also, top part 23 has a row of lacing apertures 24*a* and a corresponding row of lacing apertures 24*b*. In the central area of ply 19, the ply has cutouts 26 near the top part and bottom edge. Also, ply 19 is pierced by holes 27 and also by slashes or cuts 28, which with cutouts 26 provide central weaving strips 29 extending from side to side of ply 19. The rear ply 21 has cutouts 31 on each side thereof, as well as being pierced by holes 32 near the bottom edge thereof. A series of slashes or cuts 33 extend from holes 32 through the top margin of ply 21 providing weaving strips 34 with free ends to facilitate interweaving with weaving strips 29 of ply 19. While the strips 29 are side-to-side and strips 34 are bottom-to-top, it is understood that these positions can be interchanged and other directions can be used if desired.

After the face ply 19 and rear ply 21 have been formed, the backstop 18 is made by interweaving the weaving strips 34 of ply 21 with the weaving strips 29 of ply 19 to achieve a basket weave format as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. The face ply 19 and the rear ply 21 are temporarily

held in the proper position and stitched together along stitch line 35*a* forming a stitched border around the ball catching area of the basket weave format. Each tab 22 of face ply 19 is folded back on itself and its free end is positioned to be caught up in stitch line 35*b* underneath the sides and bottom edges of ply 21 and temporarily stuck in place. The top part 23 of face ply 19 is folded back over the top edge of ply 21 to cover the free ends of weaving strips 34. The fold is made so that the apertures 24*a* are in registry with apertures 24*b* and the top part of ply 21 is adjacent the apertures 24*a* and 24*b*. The top part 23 is temporarily stuck in place until it can be stitched. The back stop 18 is stitched a second time along stitch line 35*b* to secure tabs 22 and top part 23, thus finishing the back stop 18 with lacing loops 22*a* and lacing tunnel 23*a* ready to be laced to the glove 1.

Backstop 18 is positioned between thumb section 2 and finger section 3 with the bottom part adjacent the crotch 9, such that the lowermost lacing loops 22*a* extend between apertures 10*a*–10*d*, and the side loops 22*a* are adjacent apertures 111*a*–111*g* and apertures 112*a*–112*g*. Lacing member 36 has an end 27 and an end 38. Beginning with lacing end 37, the lacing 36 enters aperture 10*b* in palm extension 6 at the rear of the crotch 9 and emerges from aperture 10*b* at palm margin 8, passes along margin 8 and enters aperture 10*c*, and emerges at aperture 10*c* in palm margin 6. Lacing 36 then passes through adjacent loop 22*a* and then into aperture 10*d*. It then emerges at aperture 10*d* in palm margin 8, passes along margin 8 to the junction with margin 13 and enters aperture 11*a*. It emerges at aperture 111*a* and passes through the next adjacent loop 22*a*, before being threaded into aperture 111*b*. The lacing sequence continues through apertures 11*g*, 111*c*, adjacent loop 22*a*, aperture 111*d*, 11*d*, 11*e*, 111*e*, adjacent loop 22*a*, and apertures 111*f*, 11*f*, 11*g*, 111*g*. The lacing 36, emerges at aperture 111*g* at the rear ply material 7 of the thumb section 2 and passes through lacing tunnel 23*a* before entering aperture 112*g* at the rear ply material 7 of the finger section 3. As the lacing sequence continues, the lacing 36 exits at aperture 12*g* in margin 14, passes along margin 14 and enters aperture 12*f*, exits at aperture 112*f*, passes through adjacent loop 22*a*, enters aperture 112*e*, exits at aperture 12*e*, passes along margin 14 and enters aperture 12*d*. As the sequence continues, lacing 36 exits at aperture 112*d*, passes through adjacent loop 22*a*, enters aperture 112*c*, exits at aperture 12*c*, passes along margin 14, enters aperture 12*b*, exits at aperture 112*b*, passes through adjacent loop 22*a* and enters aperture 112*a*. Lacing 36 exits at aperture 12*a* in margin 14 and passes along margin 14 to the juncture with margin 8 and then enters aperture 10*a*, emerges from aperture 10*a* in palm extension 6 and passes through adjacent loop 22*a*. The lacing 36 enters aperture 10*b* in palm extension 6 at the rear of crotch 9 and tunnels between palm extension 6 and palm margin 8, internally of crotch 9 and then exits from aperture 10*c* in palm extension 6. The lacing 36 terminates with lacing end 38, and lacing ends 37 and 38 are tied together forming knot 39. Hence, it will be appreciated that backstop 18 is securely held in place along thumb section 2, finger section 3 and crotch 9.

Another lacing member 40 ties finger sections 3 and 4 and others (not necessary to illustrate) together and forms marginal wrapping 41 on backstop 18. Beginning with knotted end 42 (FIG. 2) lacing 40 enters aperture 16 and exits at aperture 11*g* in margin 13, enters lacing tunnel 23*a* and exits at the first aperture 24*a* in the face ply 19. The lacing 40 is spiral wrapped through the remaining apertures 24*a* and 24*b*. The lacing 40 enters the last aperture 24*b* a second time and exits from tunnel 23*a* where it enters aperture 12*g* in margin 14 and passes across the rear of the finger section 3 and enters aperture 17. Lacing 40 continues through a cross pattern (FIG. 1) in apertures 15 and 17 and terminates in a knot at the last finger section (not shown).

Referring now to FIGS. 3, 6, 7 and 8, another embodiment of the invention is illustrated. A baseball glove 50 (similar to glove 1) includes a thumb section 51 and finger sections 52 and 53.

Glove 50 has a rear shell 54 forming part of thumb section 51 and finger sections 52 and 53, as well as other finger sections (not shown). A palm ply forms another portion of the thumb section 51 and finger section 52, however, only an extension part 56 (see FIG. 6) is necessary to depict.

The rear shell 54 has a series of lacing apertures 57, and the palm ply has mating apertures 57*a* (see FIG. 6). Also, rear shell 54 has an aperture 58. Additional apertures are provided for lacing the finger sections 52 and 53 and others together similarly as in glove 1.

In the embodiment with glove 50, another backstop 60 is formed from a face ply 61, rear edge plies 62, weaving strips 63 and weaving strip 64. Face ply 61 has a top part 65 with lacing apertures 66 and lacing apertures 67. Top part 65 is adapted to fold over and form a lacing tunnel 65*a* within the fold margin above apertures 66 and 67. Ply 61 has pierces 68 along one side and pierces 69 along the other side. In between pairs of pierces 68 and 69 are cuts 71. The cuts 71 divide the central area of face ply 61 into weaving strips 72. Also, ply 61 has lacing aperture 73 along the bottom edge. Rear edge plies 62 have lacing apertures 74 and 75, and weaving strips 63 each have a lacing aperture 76. Weaving strip 64 does not require a lacing aperture.

After the backstop 60 piece parts have been cut out, weaving strips 63 and weaving strip 64 are interwoven with weaving strips 72. The strips are stuck to face ply 61 with aperture 76 of strips 63 aligned with aperture 73 and with the strip 64 aligned between the inner strips 63. The plies 62 are stuck to face ply 61 so that the apertures 75 register with the outermost apertures 73 and with the most distant ends from apertures 75 adjacent apertures 67. The top part 65 is folded over strips 63 and strip 64, and edge plies 62 with apertures 66 in registry with apertures 67. The strips 63 and strip 64 and edge plies 62 are sewn in place to face ply 61 along stitch line 77 of top part 65 and stitch line 78 along edge plies 62, and strips 63 and strip 64. The stitch line 78 forms lacing pockets 79*a*–79*j* around apertures 74.

Backstop 60 is placed between thumb section 51 and finger section 52, adjacent the margin of shell 54 extending between thumb section 51 and finger section 52. Lacing member 80 having an end 81 and 82 secures backstop 60 in position. Beginning with end 81, lacing 80 passes through aperture 76 of the strip 63 adjacent the right side of strip 64, as viewed in FIG. 3 and through aperture 73 aligned therewith, but not through associated apertures 57 and 57*a* (not shown). The lacing 80 passes along face ply 61 and passes through apertures 73 and 76 adjacent the left side of strip 64 as viewed in FIG. 3, and passes through the aperture 76 of the outer adjacent strip 63; and through aperture 73 and apertures 57 and 57*a* (not seen) in registry therewith. Then as seen in FIG. 6 beginning at the lower portion the lacing 80 passes along the face margin of palm ply extension 56 into aperture 57*a*, through apertures 57, aperture 73 (not seen) and aperture 75 in registry therewith. Next, lacing 80 passes along ply 62 and into aperture 74 and pocket 79*a*, through apertures 57 and 57*a* and along the face margin of palm ply extension 56. The lacing sequence continues through aperture 57*a*, aperture 57, pocket 79*b*, aperture 74; along edge ply 62 through adjacent aperture 74, pocket 79*c* and apertures 57 and 57*a* in registry therewith; along the face margin of extension 56 through adjacent aperture 57*a* and aperture 57, pocket 79*d* and aperture 74 in registry therewith; along edge ply 62 through adjacent aperture 74 and pocket 79*e*, aperture 57 and aperture 57*a* in registry therewith; along the face margin of extension 56

through aperture **57***a*, aperture **57** and into tunnel **65***a*. The lacing **80** passes through tunnel **65***a* over to thumb section **51**. Next, lacing **80** passes through the apertures **57** and **57***a* (not seen) of thumb section **51**, the apertures **73** and the apertures **74**, the pockets **79***f*, **79***g*, **79***h*, **79***i* and **79***j*, and then into aperture **75** adjacent pocket **79***j* and aperture **73** in registry therewith, all in the same sequence as illustrated by FIG. 6. Finally, lacing **80** passes along the palm ply (not seen) into apertures **57***a* and **57** (not shown) and through aperture **73** and aperture **76** in registry therewith of strip **63** adjacent edge ply **78** (as seen to the right in FIG. 3); then into aperture **76** of adjacent strip **63**; then along the margin of the palm piece between thumb section **51** and finger section **52**, through adjacent aperture **57***a* and **57** (not shown) and through apertures **73** and **76** adjacent the left side of strip **64** in registry therewith, as viewed in FIG. 3. The ends **81** and **82** of lacing **80** are tied into a knot **83**.

Another lacing **85** starts at end **86** (at the left in FIG. 3), which has a knot **86***a*, and passes through apertures **57** and **57***a*, adjacent tunnel **65***a*, then is wrapped around border **87** of backstop **60** passing through apertures **66** and apertures **67** in registry therewith. The lacing **85** enters aperture **66**, at the far right viewed in FIG. 3, a second time and passes through part of tunnel **65***a* and into aperture **57***a* (not shown) tunneling through thumb section **51** and emerging from aperture **58** where end **88** terminates in a knot **88***a*.

The disclosed forms of the invention are generally characterized by a backstop having a central area constituted by interwoven strips to provide a basket weave ball catching portion, and a border of continuous members connected to the interwoven strips to receive and absorb the ball impact stress and rapidly dissipate such stress. The invention is also characterized by means for attaching the backstop to the body of the glove in such manner as to promote the dissipation of the stresses without the need for complicated lacing means.

It will be appreciated that numerous variations of forming the basket weave backstop and lacing the backstop into a baseball glove or mitt will be suggested by the embodiments disclosed herein; however, all such variations are deemed to be within the scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A baseball glove including spaced apart elongated thumb and finger sections forming a crotch opening outwardly along the length of said thumb and finger sections, a backstop device located in the crotch opening between said sections, said backstop device comprising a plurality of strips arranged in two groups interwoven crosswise relative to each other thereby forming a flexible ball catching area, and means connecting said backstop device to the glove between said thumb and finger sections.

2. The glove set forth in claim **1** wherein said means connecting said backstop strips to the glove includes support means extending between the outer extremities of said thumb and finger sections remote from the crotch, the adjacent ends of the strips of one group being carried by said support means.

3. A baseball glove including a thumb section and a spaced finger section, a backstop, and lacing means securing said backstop between said thumb section and said finger section, said backstop comprising a first ply member having a central portion and a border portion including an upper edge portion, said central portion being provided with first weaving strips, and a second ply member having a central part and having a border forming one edge part, said second ply being provided with second weaving strips in the central part extending from said one edge and ending in initially free ends, said first weaving strips being interwoven with said second weaving strips and the upper edge of said border portion being folded along a fold line and secured with said upper edge of said border portion lapped over said one edge of said border of said second ply.

4. The glove of claim **3** wherein said upper edge is provided with apertures adjacent said fold line and a lacing member passed through said apertures and over said fold line to form a binding.

5. A baseball glove including a palm ply and a rear shell, said palm ply and said rear shell being secured together to form a thumb section and a finger section spaced apart by an adjoining section, said thumb section, adjoining section and finger section together defining a continuous margin and having lacing apertures adjacent said margin; a backstop positioned between said thumb section and said finger section comprising a first ply having a central portion, a border portion coextensive with said continuous margin, and a top portion, said central portion having first weaving strips, said border portion having tabs, and a second ply having a central region, a border region coextensive with said border portion, and top region, said central region having second weaving strips extending through said top region, said first ply being secured to said second ply with said top portion folded over said top region forming a lacing tunnel, with said tabs folded under said border region forming lacing loops mated to said lacing aperture, and with said second weaving strips interwoven with said first weaving strips; and lacing means passing through said apertures, said lacing loops and said lacing tunnel to secure said backstop between said thumb section and said finger section adjacent the continuous margin.

6. A baseball glove including a palm ply and a rear shell, said palm ply and said rear shell being secured together to form a thumb section and a finger section spaced apart by an adjoining section, said thumb section, adjoining section and finger section together defining a continuous margin and having first lacing apertures adjacent said margin; a backstop positioned between said thumb section and said finger section comprising a first ply having a central portion, a border portion coextensive with said continuous margin, and a top portion, said central portion having first weaving strips, said border portion having second lacing apertures adjacent said adjoining section; a second ply having a central region, a border region coextensive with said border portion, and a top region, said central region having second weaving strips extending through said top region, said border region having third lacing apertures adjacent said continuous margin, said first ply being secured to said second ply with said top portion folded over said top region forming a lacing tunnel, with said border portion and said border region forming lacing pockets for said third apertures adjacent said thumb section and said finger section and having said second apertures in registry with said third apertures adjacent said adjoining section and with said second weaving strips interwoven with said first weaving strips; and lacing means passing through said first apertures, said lacing pockets and said third aperture in registry therewith, said second apertures and the third aperture in registry therewith, and said lacing tunnel to secure said backstop between said thumb section and said finger section adjacent the continuous margin.

7. In a baseball glove having a body with thumb and first finger sections spaced apart, the improvement of a backstop device disposed in the body space between the thumb and first finger sections, and means connecting said backstop to the thumb and finger sections of the body, said backstop comprising a first ply having a marginal portion and a first plurality of strips extending outwardly from said marginal portion with said strips being parallel and terminating in free ends, a second ply having at least two opposite margins and a second plurality of strips extending between and connecting said opposite margins, said strips of said first and second plies being woven together to form a flexible interlaced area within said backstop forming a ball catching and impact absorbing surface in the body.

8. The baseball glove set forth in claim 7 wherein said first ply has said marginal portion directed between said thumb and finger sections and said first strips extending lengthwise of said thumb and finger sections, and said second ply has said second strips extending crosswise of said first strips and interwoven therewith to constitute a substantially closed flexible surface in said backstop.

9. The baseball glove set forth in claim 8 wherein said second ply has two other marginal portions connected to said two opposite margins to constitute a complete margin about said backstop.

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