July 11, 1967 T. E. SHELBY 3,329,971

COMBINATION LEG PROTECTOR AND STADIUM SEAT

Filed March 15, 1965

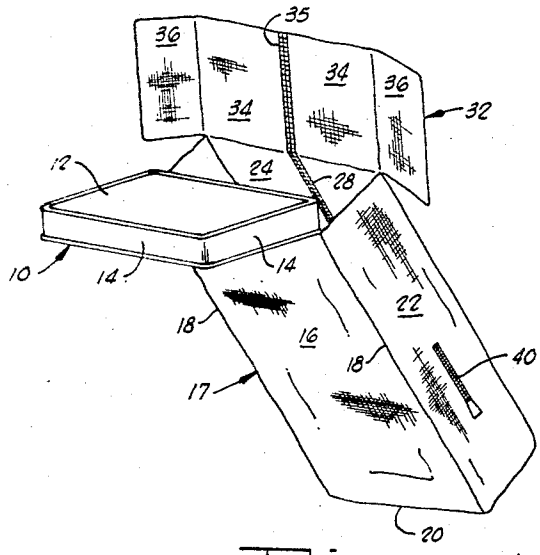


Fig. 1

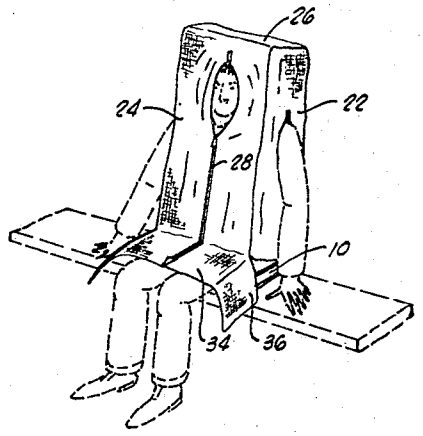


Fig. 4

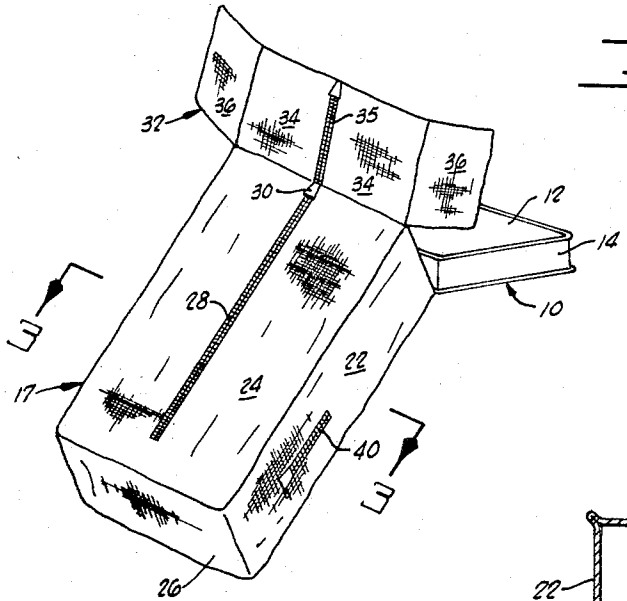


Fig. 2

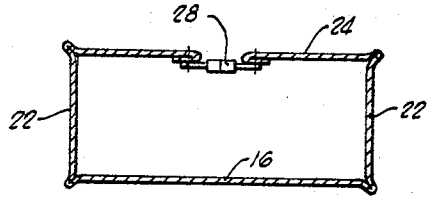


Fig. 3

INVENTOR.
TED E. SHELBY

BY Dunlap & Laney
ATTORNEYS

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COMBINATION LEG PROTECTOR AND STADIUM SEAT

Ted E. Shelby, P.O. Box 11, Nicoma Park, Okla. 73066

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1 Claim. (Cl. 2—69)

This invention relates to a combination stadium seat and leg protector which enhances the comfort of a spectator at sports conducted in a stadium or arena. More particularly, but not by way of limitation, the present invention comprises a stadium cushion having secured along one edge thereof, a zippered enclosure which may be wrapped around the legs of a spectator sitting upon the stadium seat.

The spectator sport of football is being increasingly patronized in the United States, and baseball continues to be a sport which draws large numbers of fans. In other countries, such sports as soccer and rugby are more popular, and like football and baseball, are played in stadiums and arenas and viewed by spectators seated in the stadium. In any of these sports, it is desirable that the spectator be as comfortable as possible during the duration of the contest and since they sometimes last as long as two hours, it is desirable that the discomfort of hard wooden or concrete seats be alleviated by cushions or similar devices upon which the spectators can sit during the contest. Various types of cushions have heretofore been provided for this purpose.

In addition to comfort in sitting, it is further desirable that some type of warmth and protection be provided for the legs and feet of the spectator if the sport is played during a season, or in a climate, where it is cold and damp. Thus, protection is frequently desirable for either the feet and legs of the spectator where it is cold and dry, or for the torso and lap of the spectator in the eventuality that it is raining or snowing during the athletic contest.

The present invention provides a combination stadium seat and leg enclosure or protector which provides a comfortable seat and an enclosure for surrounding the legs to enhance the comfort and enjoyment of spectators at athletic contests. The invention can be further utilized to provide a rain covering or protective shield for protecting the upper portion of the body from precipitation during the viewing of athletic contests.

Broadly described, the present invention comprises a seat portion having an upper panel and a lower panel interconnected by a side panel, and, in combination with the seat portion, a leg enclosing portion which can be opened to facilitate placing the legs and feet therein and then closed to form an enclosure completely surrounding the legs and feet. The leg enclosure portion is attached to one edge of the seat portion, and in storing and carrying the device, the seat may be folded neatly into the leg enclosure portion to form a compact package.

In a preferred embodiment of the invention, a lap flap is provided and is secured along one of the edges of the leg protector portion adjacent the open end thereof and is positioned to cover the lap of the spectator seated upon the seat portion.

It should be noted that in both the basic and the preferred embodiments of the invention, the leg protector portion of the device can alternatively be extended upwardly from the seat portion and utilized as a covering and protector for the upper body of the spectator to shield the body from rain, snow, sleet or other precipitation. To this end, the device has incorporated therein, a fastening device suitable for permitting the leg protector portion to be closed except for an opening to permit viewing, and is further characterized in having closable

openings in each side of the protector portion to permit the arms of the spectator to be extended therethrough.

To more specifically and in greater detail characterize the preferred embodiment of the invention, the combination stadium seat and leg protector of the invention comprises a seat portion of generally rectangular shape having an upper panel, a lower panel and four side panels interconnecting the upper and lower panels. The interior of the seat portion is filled with foam rubber or other suitable soft, resilient material in accordance with conventional practice. Extending from the longitudinal edge formed by the intersection of one of the side panels with the lower panel is an elongated, generally rectangular back panel which constitutes one of the panels included in the leg protector portion of the device. The back panel has secured to opposed longitudinal edges thereof, a pair of opposed side panels and further has secured to the lower transverse edge thereof a bottom panel. A bifurcated top panel extends between the side panels and is secured along its longitudinal edges to the side panels and to the bottom panel of the leg protector portion. Secured to the upper transverse edge of the segmented panels are a pair of lap flap panels and the lap flap panels in turn are provided with a pair of wing panels secured to the lap flap panels along the distally disposed edges thereof. In the preferred embodiment of the invention, the section of the bifurcated top panel and the lap flap panels are joined together by a zipper which extends parallel to the longitudinal edges of the bifurcated top panels with the zipper being directionally oriented so as to permit an opening to be left in the segmented top panel to permit the spectator to observe the athletic contest while being protected by the leg protector portion when the latter is used to cover the upper portion of the body. Zippered openings are also provided in the two side panels of the leg protector portion to permit the arms of the spectator to be extended therefrom when the invention is used to cover the upper body.

From the foregoing description of the invention, it will have become apparent that it is an important object of the invention to provide a device for enhancing the comfort of spectators viewing an outdoor presentation in a stadium, arena or the like.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a combination stadium seat and leg protector for use at athletic contests and the like.

An additional object of the present invention is to provide a combination stadium seat and leg protector which can be easily used to surround and protect the legs from intense cold, and to simultaneously provide a soft seat for a spectator at athletic contests.

An additional object of the present invention is to provide a combination stadium seat and leg protector which can be folded into a compact bundle for transport from one location to another.

Yet another object of the invention is to provide a combination stadium cushion and leg protector which, in a dual use, can be used as a stadium seat and rain protector for the upper portion of the body.

A further object of the invention is to provide a combination stadium cushion and leg protector which can be economically constructed and is characterized by a long and durable service life.

In addition to the foregoing described objects and advantages, additional objects will become apparent as the following detailed description of the invention is read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings which illustrate the invention.

In the drawings:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of the combination stadium cushion and leg protector as the same would

appear when viewed from behind a spectator using the invention.

FIGURE 2 is a perspective view of the combination stadium cushion and leg protector as the same would appear when viewed from the front and to one side of a spectator using the invention.

FIGURE 3 is a sectional view taken along line 3—3 of FIGURE 2.

FIGURE 4 is a perspective view of the combination stadium cushion and leg protector illustrating the manner in which the invention may be used as a rain protector for covering the upper portion of the body of a spectator.

Referring now to the drawings in detail, and particularly to FIGURE 1, reference character **10** generally designates a stadium cushion having a top panel **12**, a bottom panel opposite the top panel and not visible in FIGURE 1, and side panels **14** interconnecting the top panel **12** and the bottom panel. A suitable soft, resilient material, such as foam rubber, is positioned within the stadium cushion **10** according to conventional construction, and one of the side panels **14** may be provided with a zipper or other suitable closing device to permit the foam rubber or other resilient material to be placed inside the cushion.

Attached to the longitudinal edge which forms an intersection between one of the side panels **14** and the bottom panel of the stadium cushion **10** is a back or rear panel **16** of the leg protector portion of the invention, designated generally by reference character **17**. The back panel **16** has a pair of oppositely disposed longitudinal edges **18** and a lower transverse edge **20**. Connected to each of the opposed longitudinal edges **18** is a generally rectangular side panel **22** which is connected along one longitudinal edge to the back panel **16**. A second longitudinal edge of each of the side panels **22** is connected to one segment of a bifurcated top panel designated generally by reference character **24**. At the bottom or lower end of the leg protector portion **17**, a foot panel **26** is connected between the bifurcated top panel **24** and the back panel **16**, and extends between and is connected to the side panels **22**.

The two sections of the bifurcated top panel **24** are detachably connected to each other through a suitable closure member which preferably takes the form of a zipper **28** as illustrated in the drawings. The sliding tab **30** of the zipper is oriented to close the zipper from the top or upper part of the leg protector portion **17** downwardly towards the foot panel **26**.

A third portion of the structure included in a preferred embodiment of the invention is the lap protector portion designated generally by reference character **32**. The lap protector portion includes a pair of central panels **34** which are secured along one transverse edge to the upper transverse edges of the two parts of the bifurcated top panel **24** of the leg protector portion **17**. A second zipper **35** is provided for joining the central panels **34** of the lap flap **32** to each other. Joined to the lateral edges of each of the central panels **34** is a wing panel **36**. The size and configuration of the central panels **34** and wing panels **36** is such that the lap of the spectator is well protected, and the wing panels may be folded beneath the hips of the spectator to assure warmth as well as protection from spilled beverages and the like.

The primary use of the combination leg protector and stadium seat of the invention is for providing a soft cushion for the spectator during the athletic contest and a warm covering or protector for the legs. To use the device, the spectator first unzips the zippers **35** and **28** so as to permit the sections of the bifurcated top panel **24** and the two central panels **34** of the lap flap **32** to be pulled apart from each other. The legs of the spectator may then be inserted in the leg protector portion with the feet resting against the foot panel **26**. The two sections of the bifurcated top panel may then be pulled together and the zipper closed downwardly. If it is desired to use the lap flap **32**, the zipper **35** may also be closed. On the other hand, the lap flap **32** may be folded downwardly so as to leave the lap uncovered.

An alternate or secondary use of the invention is as a rain covering or protector. This use of the invention is best illustrated in FIGURE 4. In referring to FIGURE 4, it will be perceived that the spectator is seated upon the stadium cushion **10** and the back panel **16** is extended upwardly along the back of the spectator. The leg protector portion is then used as a covering for the upper body by pulling the two segments of the bifurcated top panel **24** across the chest of the spectator and zipping the zipper **28** up to a position where a small opening is left for the face or head of the spectator to permit the athletic contest or the like to be viewed. For the purpose of permitting the invention to be used in this manner, a pair of small zippers **40** or other suitable fastening devices are provided in the side panels **22** at a position adapted to permit the arms of the spectator to be passed therethrough so that all of the upper body of the spectator except the arms are protected and surrounded by the leg protector portion of the invention. It will be noted in referring to FIGURE 4 that the lap flap **32** continues to function as a protector and covering for the lap of the spectator when the device is used as a rain protector in the manner illustrated.

When use of the combination leg protector and stadium seat is finished, it may be compactly folded by folding the stadium seat **10** back into the leg protector portion **17** and also folding the lap flap inside the leg protector portion.

From the foregoing description of the invention, it will have become apparent that the invention constitutes a versatile and useful piece of equipment for use by fans at spectator events of long duration. The invention is preferably constructed of a heavy duck or other water resistant material, but may also be fabricated from plastic or various treated fabrics which will be substantially impermeable to water, and which will also provide the desired degree of thermal insulation.

Although certain specific embodiments of the invention have been herein described as exemplary of one way in which the invention can be constructed and used, it will be readily apparent that many innovations and modifications can be made in the structure and use without departure from the basic principles which underlie the invention. Insofar as these modifications continue to rely upon the basic principles which are herein set forth and which underlie the invention, such modifications are deemed to be circumscribed by the spirit and scope of the invention except as the same may be necessarily limited by the appended claim or reasonable equivalents thereof.

What is claimed is:

A device for enhancing the comfort of a spectator observing an outdoor spectacle while seated comprising:

a seat cushion including

a generally rectangular top panel,

a generally rectangular bottom panel,

side panels extending between and interconnecting said top and bottom panels, and

soft resilient cushioning means between said top and bottom panel; and

a leg and torso protecting portion flexibly connected to said seat portion and including

an elongated, generally rectangular back panel having two opposed, parallel longitudinal edges and two opposed, parallel transverse edges, said back panel being connected by one of said transverse edges to said cushion along an edge thereof defined by the intersection of one of the side panels of said cushion with the bottom panel thereof,

a generally rectangular, bifurcated top panel having two opposed transverse edges and two opposed longitudinal edges and extending parallel

to said back panel and including a pair of substantially equi-sized panel sections disposed on opposite sides of the bifurcation in said bifurcated top panel, said bifurcation extending from one of the transverse edges of said bifurcated top panel parallel to the longitudinal edges thereof for a major portion of the distance between said transverse edges,

a foot panel interconnecting said other transverse edge of the bifurcated top panel to the transverse edge of said back panel which is opposite the transverse edge of the back panel which is connected to said cushion,

a zipper including a sliding tab carried by adjacent edges of said equi-sized panel sections, said zipper being positioned to join said panel sections when said sliding tab is positioned on said adjacent edges at the points thereon closest to the foot panel, and to separate said panel sections when said sliding tab is positioned on said adjacent edges at the points thereon furthest away from said foot panel,

a pair of spaced, elongated side panels interconnecting the longitudinal edges of said bifurcated top panel and back panel, said elongated side panels each having an opening formed therein to permit the arms of a spectator to be passed therethrough,

zippers for releasably closing each of the arm openings in said elongated side panels, and

a lap flap secured to said one transverse edge of the bifurcated top panel and dimensioned to cover said cushion, said lap flap comprising

a pair of oppositely disposed, central panels connected respectively to said two opposed sections of said bifurcated panel and adapted to be extended over said cushion, said central panels each including an edge aligned with one of said adjacent edges of said equi-sized panel sections,

a wing panel connected to each of said central panels, and

a zipper for connecting said central panels to each other along the edges thereof which are aligned with said adjacent edges.

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PATRICK D. LAWSON, *Primary Examiner.*

JORDAN FRANKLIN, *Examiner.*

H. H. HUNTER, *Assistant Examiner.*