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C. K. FRENCH

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COMBINED HANDLE AND REEL FOR WATER SKI ROPE

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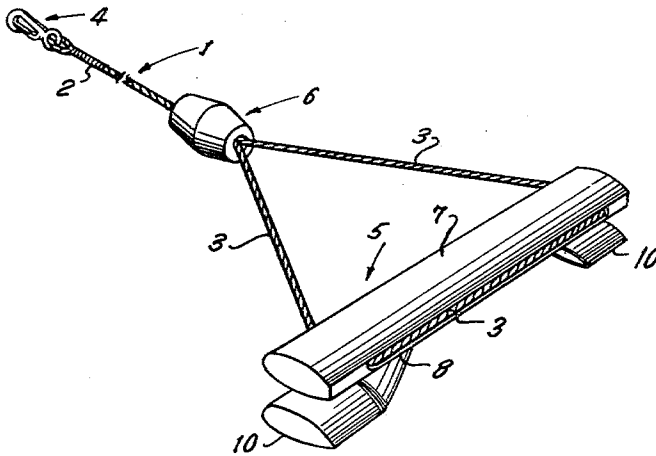


FIG. 1

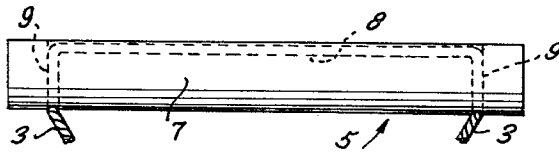


FIG. 2

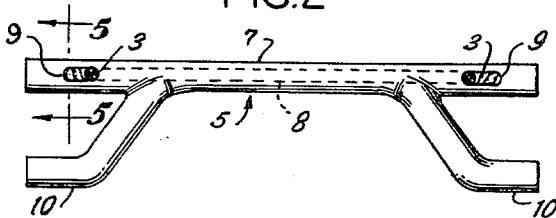


FIG. 3

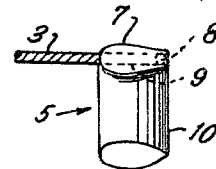


FIG. 4

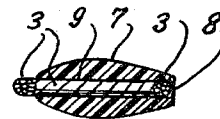


FIG. 5

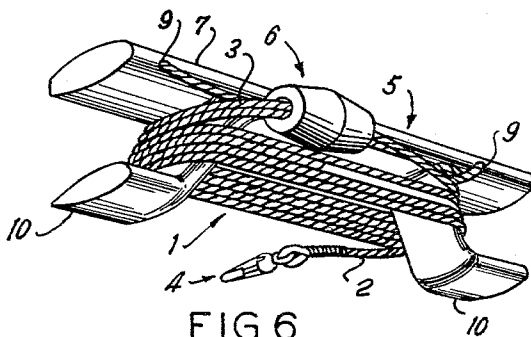


FIG. 6

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3,174,702 COMBINED HANDLE AND REEL FOR WATER SKI ROPE

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3 Claims. (Cl. 242—85.1)

This invention relates to a combined handle and reel for a water ski rope, and it concerns more particularly a handle for a tow rope of the type commonly used with water skis having means for winding the rope thereon when not in use.

In water skiing it is common practice to employ a tow rope having a handle on an end portion thereof adapted to be grasped in the hand of a person on water skis, and having a hook on the end thereof opposite the handle for engagement with an eye bolt rearwardly of the transom of a towing boat.

The handle ordinarily consists of an elongated piece of wood, round in transverse section, which is arranged transversely relative to the direction of towing and has the adjacent end portion of the rope, which has a loop therein, passed thru a longitudinal groove in the back side of the handle and extending thru a pair of transverse holes communicating with said groove positioned adjacent opposite ends of the handle.

A type of rope which advantageously may be used as a ski rope as described, and which is preferred by many because of its light weight and the fact that it does not become water logged, and is resistant to rot, while at the same time being characterized by its strength, is formed of strands of plastic material which are loosely woven together about a common center to form an open, flexible tubular structure, the diameter of which varies inversely with its length.

From one to four ski ropes, for example, may be towed from the same boat. When not in use the ski ropes may lie loosely in the bottom of the boat, so that they are likely to become flattened, kinked, twisted, and tangled, particularly when the rope is of the type described. Although the several ski ropes of a group do not usually become tangled with each other, the individual ski ropes themselves often become badly tangled and require the expenditure of time and effort to condition them for use.

This invention contemplates a combined handle and reel for a ski rope which consists essentially of an elongated handle having substantially the same structure as a conventional handle, as described, and adapted to be used in the same manner, having means for winding the rope thereon when not in use so that the rope is maintained in good condition, available for instant use when needed.

The invention further contemplates a combined handle and reel for a ski rope as described having surface contours such that it is movable as a plane on or thru water.

An object of the invention is to provide a combined handle and reel for a ski rope as described which is characterized by its convenience as well as its attractive appearance and its simple, rugged construction and its light weight, and which is durable in use and advantageously may be formed in one piece of molded plastic material and is adapted to be produced in large numbers at little expense.

The invention will be readily understood by referring to the following description and the accompanying drawing, in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view showing the top, back side, and left end of a combined handle and reel embodying the invention having a ski rope operatively connected thereto, showing the ski rope unwound and extending forwardly in its towing position and showing the combined

handle and reel of the invention in position to be grasped by the person being towed;

FIG. 2 is a longitudinal view of the combined handle and reel showing the top thereof, as illustrated in FIG. 1, and showing the ski rope fragmentarily;

FIG. 3 is a longitudinal view taken at right angles to the view shown in FIG. 2, showing the front side of the combined handle and reel;

FIG. 4 is a transverse view showing the left end of the combined handle and reel;

FIG. 5 is a sectional view taken on the line 5—5 of FIG. 3; and

FIG. 6 is a perspective view showing the bottom, front side, and right end of the combined handle and reel and showing the ski rope wound thereon.

Referring to FIG. 1 of the drawing, the numeral 1 designates generally a ski rope having a forward end portion, relative to the direction of towing, indicated by the numeral 2, and having a rearward end portion 3 which is looped upon itself.

A hook having a spring biased catch, designated generally by the numeral 4, is connected to the forward end portion 2 of the ski rope 1, for use in removably connecting it to a towing boat (not shown), and a combined handle and reel embodying the invention, indicated generally by the numeral 5, is operatively connected to the looped rearward end portion 3 thereof as hereinafter described.

A tubular float, indicated generally by the numeral 6, which is received on the ski rope 1, is positioned adjacent the looped rearward end portion 3 thereof.

The combined handle and reel 5, which advantageously may be formed in one piece of molded plastic material, has an elongated handle portion 7, the contour of which, as hereinafter described, is such that it is movable as a plane on or thru water.

The handle portion 7 has a width substantially greater than its height and has a continuously curved top, bottom, and leading edge, relative to the direction of towing. The trailing edge thereof, which is relatively narrow, is generally planar.

The maximum height of the handle portion 7 coincides with an imaginary line extending longitudinally thereof and spaced rearwardly from its leading edge a distance corresponding to substantially one-third of its width.

The handle portion 7 has a longitudinal groove 8 in its trailing edge which communicates at its ends with a pair of holes 9 extending transversely thru the handle portion 7 from its leading edge to its trailing edge and positioned adjacent opposite ends thereof. The looped rearward end portion 3 of the ski rope 1 is passed thru the groove 8 and the holes 9 of the handle portion 7.

A pair of angularly bent integral arms 10, the surfaces of which have contours corresponding to the contour of the handle portion 7 whereby they are likewise movable as planes on or thru water, depend from the under side of the handle portion 7, in mutually aligned, spaced apart relation to each other.

The angularly bent arms 10 are inclined downwardly and longitudinally outwardly in opposite directions from points spaced longitudinally inwardly from opposite ends of the handle portion 7, and then extend longitudinally outwardly in parallel, spaced apart relation to the corresponding end portions of the handle portion 7.

The angularly bent arms 10, with the adjacent end portions of the handle portion 7, form oppositely facing hooks adapted to receive between them successive passes of the ski rope 1 as it is wound thereon, as illustrated in FIG. 6.

The angularly bent arms 10 are spaced apart a distance sufficient to permit an intermediate portion of the handle

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portion 7, between the angularly bent arms 10, to be easily grasped in the hand.

The invention may be modified in various ways without departing from the spirit and scope thereof.

I claim:

1. A combined handle and reel for a water ski rope comprising a shaped, molded body, formed of molded plastic material, having an elongated handle portion which, in use, is arranged transversely relative to the direction of towing, said handle portion having a longitudinal groove in its trailing edge, relative to the direction of towing, and a pair of holes communicating with said groove at its ends and extending transversely thru the handle from its leading edge to its trailing edge, for engagement by a looped end portion of a ski rope, and a pair of angularly bent integral arms depending from said handle portion, in mutually aligned, spaced apart relation to each other, and extending longitudinally outwardly in opposite directions below opposite end portions of said handle portion, in parallel, spaced apart relation thereto, said angularly bent arms defining between them and corresponding end portions of said handle portion a pair of oppositely facing hooks adapted to receive between them successive passes of the ski rope as it is wound thereon.

2. A combined handle and reel for a water ski rope comprising an elongated handle portion which, in use, is arranged transversely relative to the direction of towing, said handle portion having a width substantially greater than its height and having a continuously curved top, bottom, and leading edge, relative to the direction of towing, the trailing edge thereof being relatively narrow and generally planar, the maximum height of said handle portion coinciding with an imaginary line extending longitudinally thereof and spaced rearwardly from its leading edge a distance corresponding to substantially one-third of

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its width, the contour of said handle portion being such that it is movable as a plane on or thru water, and a pair of angularly bent integral arms, the surfaces of which have contours corresponding substantially to the contour of said handle portion whereby they are likewise movable as planes on or thru water, depending from the under side of said handle portion, in mutually aligned, spaced apart relation to each other, said angularly bent arms being inclined downwardly and longitudinally outwardly in opposite directions from points spaced longitudinally inwardly from opposite ends of said handle portion, and then extending longitudinally outwardly in parallel, spaced apart relation to the corresponding end portions of said handle portion.

3. The structure of claim 2, said handle portion having a longitudinal groove in its trailing edge, relative to the direction of towing, and a pair of holes communicating with said groove at its ends, and extending transversely thru said handle portion from its leading edge to its trailing edge, for engagement by a looped end portion of a ski rope, said angularly bent arms, with the adjacent end portions of said handle portion, forming oppositely facing hooks adapted to receive between them successive passes of the ski rope as it is wound thereon, and said angularly bent arms being spaced apart a distance sufficient to permit an intermediate portion of said handle portion, between said angularly bent arms, to be easily grasped in the hand.

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