



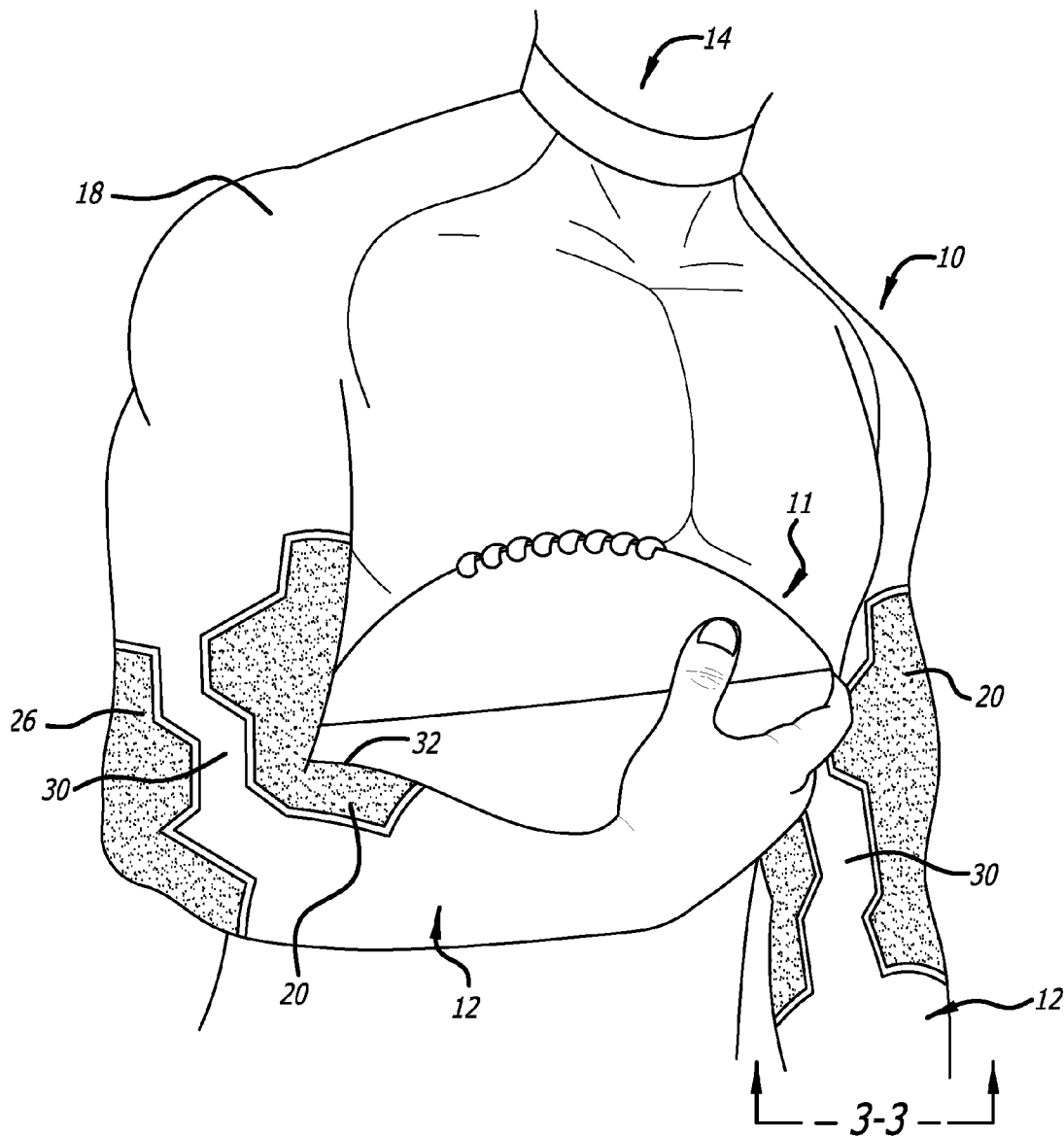
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**Dossman**(10) **Pub. No.: US 2010/0000005 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Jan. 7, 2010**(54) **SPORTS COMPRESSION SHIRT****Publication Classification**(76) Inventor: **Craig Dossman**, Long Beach, CA  
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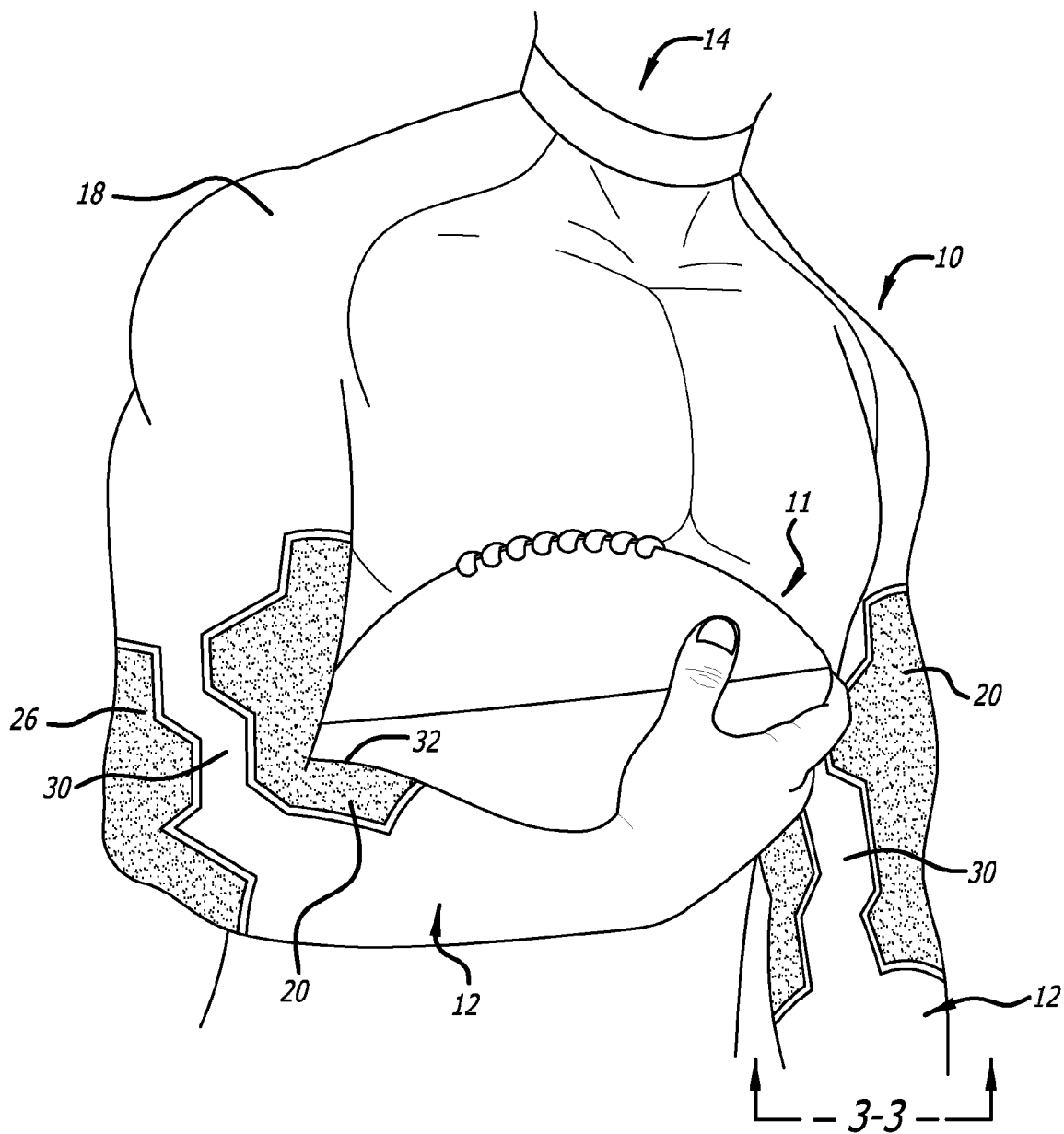
Correspondence Address:

**FULWIDER PATTON LLP**  
**HOWARD HUGHES CENTER, 6060 CENTER**  
**DRIVE, TENTH FLOOR**  
**LOS ANGELES, CA 90045 (US)**(57) **ABSTRACT**

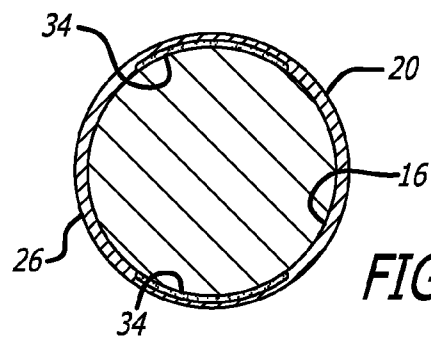
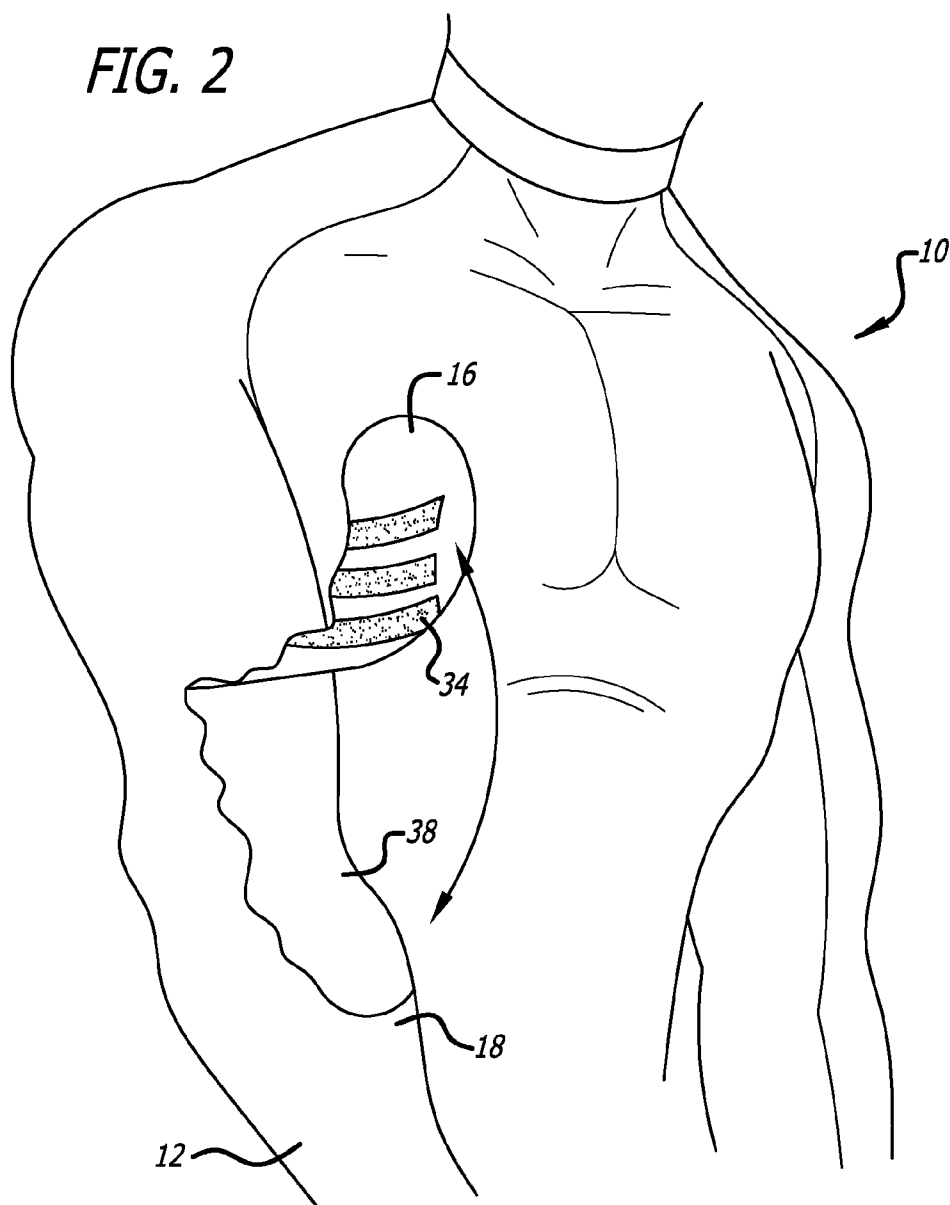
A sports jersey/shirt suited for athletic participation, and particularly suitable for playing football, rugby, and the like where carrying a leather ball is involved. The shirt has several features that enhance the wearer's ability to firmly carry the ball with minimal slippage while improving the comfort of the shirt. The jersey includes a tactified surface on the outside surface of the sleeve where the ball contacts the arm as the player carries the ball in a tucked position. The surface is tacky to the touch to improve the connection between arm, shirt, and ball, thereby promoting enhanced ball security.

(21) Appl. No.: **12/167,023**(22) Filed: **Jul. 2, 2008**

**FIG. 1**

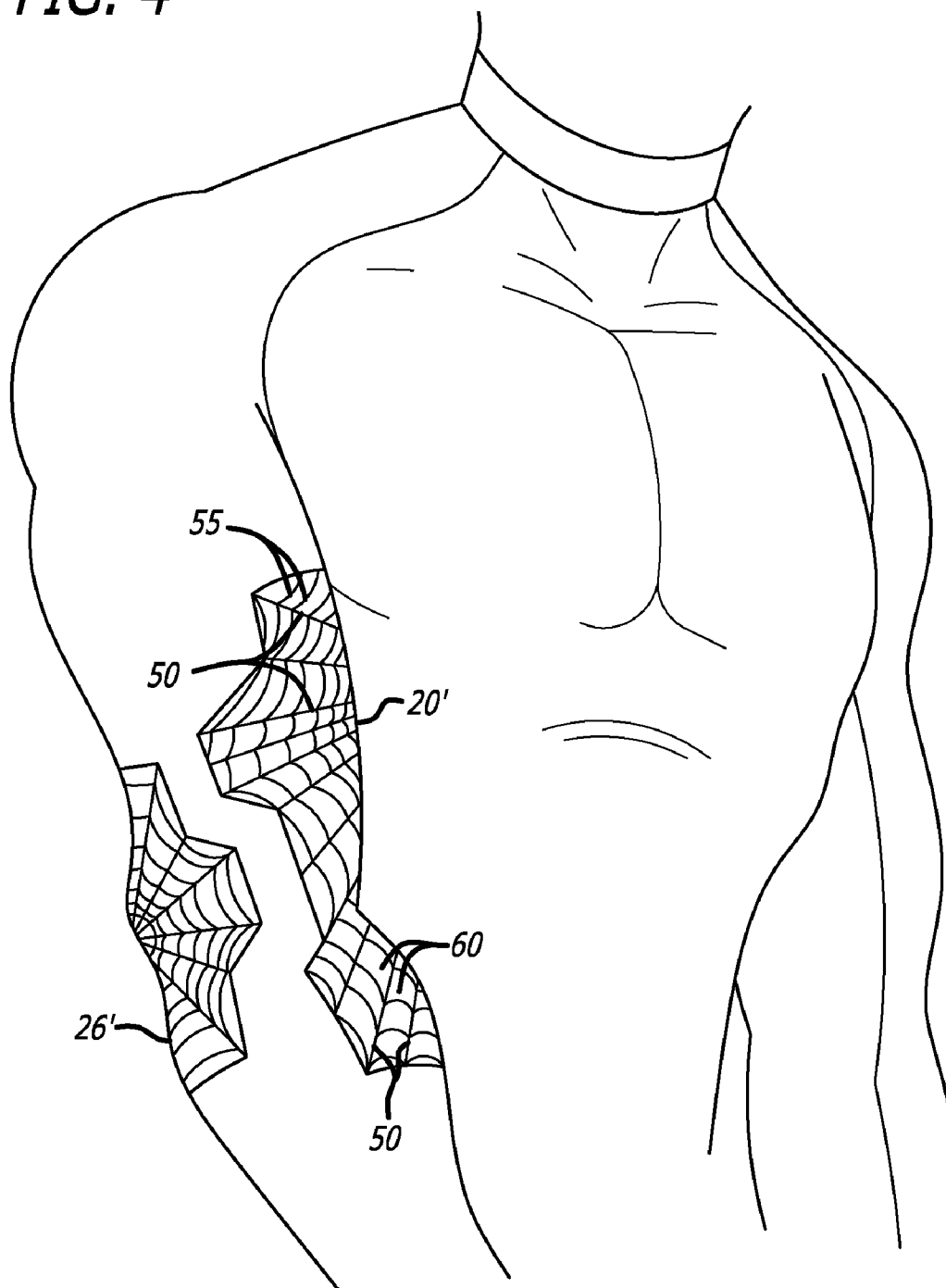


**FIG. 2**



**FIG. 3**

**FIG. 4**



## SPORTS COMPRESSION SHIRT

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

**[0001]** The present invention relates generally to sports apparel, and more particularly to a shirt or jersey that is particularly suited for football players due to the built-in features that enhance ball security.

**[0002]** Football is a game that is often decided by the team that commits the fewest turnovers. In particular, a costly fumble can make the difference between a close victory and a defeat. While most coaches preach ball security to their players every day, even the most skilled players have the ball stripped from their possession from time to time. A fumble that results in a change of possession is at the least a momentum changer, and at most a game changing event. A ball carrier with a reputation for fumbling the ball will find himself the focus of even greater attention from defenders who will try to strip the player of the ball. As young players seek to move up to the next level, from high school to college, and college to the pros, the ability to avoid fumbling is critical to achieving the highest level. Even high school programs and recreational leagues would take any legal measures to prevent their players from fumbling the ball.

**[0003]** Football, however, is a contact sport that is usually played outdoors. The elements, moisture, grass, sweat, and humidity combine to make the surface of the ball and the player's hands slippery. This, coupled with the fact that defenders try to violently separate the ball from the ball carrier on virtually every play, make the task of maintaining a firm grasp of the ball very challenging. Rib pads, shoulder pads, wrist guards, and the like often come in contact with the ball at disadvantageous angles and contribute to reduced contact that the player needs to control the ball. Moreover, arm pads and wristbands that help protect the ball carrier's forearms and wrists from injury can slide up and down the player's arms during play and may further contribute to an unstable contact with the ball. These devices can also interact disadvantageously with the player's jersey to create an uneven contact surface. The foregoing all contribute to the problem of fumbling, and underscores the unmet need in the industry for a device that can aid in the prevention of fumbling and resist movement while positioned on the player's arm.

**[0004]** There have been other attempts to solve the problem of overcoming perspiration using garments and the like. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 4,068,318 to McMahon discloses a wrist band that has a fabric cover with an anti-slip powder on the inner surface that can be transmitted through the wrist band when it is rubbed by a hand, racket handle, or other object. U.S. Pat. No. 4,316,926 to Kaminstein discloses a non-slip material which is useful as a handle grip covering, and includes a curved surface coated with a tackifier resin. U.S. Pat. No. 5,146,628 to Herrmann et al. discloses a glove having patterned polyurethane coating adhered to an outer surface. Detty, U.S. Pat. No. 5,168,577, discloses an elbow brace with the horizontal seam worn on the medial side of the elbow or knee and a vertical seam worn on the lateral side of the joint disclosed. The seams' locations are said to prevent bunching of material on the medial side opposite the knee or elbow when the limb is bent. The elbow brace is made of a double laminate with an elastomeric material such as neoprene on the outside and a polymeric material such as nylon on the inside. Kelly, U.S. Pat. No. 5,418,980, discloses a friction enhancing wristband, particularly suitable for athletic use, comprising an elastic moisture absorbing sleeve having a

high friction surface located over a major portion of the wristband. Coalter, U.S. Pat. No. 6,192,519, discloses an arm pad for use by a contact sports player, such as a football player and provides a protective pad which improves the ability of the wearer of the sports pad to hold on to a ball, such as a football. While each of these devices seeks to solve a problem faced by athletes relating to unsure gripping surfaces, they are unsuitable or ill-suited to the problem at hand and do not overcome the shortcomings discussed above.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

**[0005]** The present invention is a sports jersey/shirt suited for athletic participation, and particularly suitable for playing football, rugby, and the like where carrying a leather ball is involved. The shirt has several features that enhance the wearer's ability to firmly carry the ball with minimal slippage while improving the comfort of the shirt. The present invention has particular benefit to ball carriers and receivers in that improved ball security is enhanced. The jersey includes a tactified surface on the outside surface of the sleeve where the ball contacts the arm as the player carries the ball in a tucked position. The surface is tacky to the touch to improve the connection between arm, shirt, and ball, thereby promoting enhanced ball security.

**[0006]** The tactified surface in a preferred embodiment can take the form of an outwardly radiating pattern, such as a spider web pattern, emanating just above the bicep and forearm where the point of a football is held in a normal carrying motion. The radiating pattern may alternate degrees of tactile response for heightened responsiveness. The sleeves of the jersey preferably include non-slip surfaces in the form of arches or rings on the inside surface at the wrist to resist the sleeve from riding up or down the arm, creating a more stationary point of contact for the ball. The elbow crease is formed to prevent binding or bunching of material when the arm is folded in the ball-carrying position, ensuring a smoother surface for better contact with the ball. The jersey also includes skid guards on the back of the sleeve and a closed-hole mesh under the arms for maximum ventilation, moisture transport, and heat dissipation. The jersey utilizes brilliant colors and eye-catching designs to garner notice and acceptance with a younger market.

**[0007]** Other features and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the following detailed description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings which illustrate, by way of example, the features of the invention

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

**[0008]** FIG. 1 is an elevated perspective view of a first preferred embodiment of the present invention;

**[0009]** FIG. 2 is an elevated perspective view of the first preferred embodiment with tactified portions removed and the sleeve cut away to reveal frictional surfaces on the interior of the sleeve;

**[0010]** FIG. 3 is a cross sectional view along lines 3-3 of FIG. 1 showing the sleeve of the embodiment of FIG. 1; and

**[0011]** FIG. 4 is an embodiment showing a radiating pattern of tactile sections.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

**[0012]** The present invention is a sports jersey 10 that may be worn in connection with various team sports, and in par-

ticular rugby, football, and sports where a player is carrying a ball 11. As shown in FIG. 1, the jersey 10 will typically have an open-ended torso section and first and second arm sleeves 12, and a neck hole 14. The jersey 10 will also have an inner surface 16 that is adjacent the player's body and an external surface 18 that comes in contact with, among other things, a ball 11. The majority of the jersey 10 is preferably made of a synthetic material selected for high ventilation, moisture transport, and heat dissipation, although other forms of robust, lightweight material such as nylon, and nylon blends can also be used. Other possible fabrics include polyester blends, and fabrics that wick moisture away from the skin to create a dry touch and dry fit.

[0013] Each sleeve 12 includes a tactified section 20 that extends from the upper bicep to the forearm of the user, or two separate patches including the bicep and the forearm such that the material is in opposition when the arm is folded in a position for carrying a football. The tactified section 20 is positioned along an upper surface (when the palms are held face up) so that the tactified surface 20 is adjacent a ball when it is carried under the arm like a running back. The tactified surface 20 can be natural or synthetic, but is selected to increase the friction coefficient between the ball and the jersey to enhance control. PBC or polyurethane are two preferred materials, as are silicone, neoprene, pad printing, excalibur jelly print ink, silicone ink, and Cleartex™. The tactified material must be durable, expandable, remain tacky when wet, maintain the same gripping characteristics in all climates, be washable, and preferably dyeable to match the other parts of the shirt.

[0014] The sleeves may also include a skid guard 26 on the elbow area that may be padded to reduce shock to the arm during contact with the ground. The skid guard 26 is preferably of a reduced friction material to resist injury when a player contacts the ground, such as a plastic or nylon material that is smooth and has a lower friction coefficient than the surrounding portion of the jersey. Alternatively, the skid guard can be made of the same material as the tactified section 20.

[0015] Between the skid guard 26 and the tactified section 20 at the elbow crease 32 is a strip of lightweight material 30 such as a mesh material that resists bunching, binding, and collecting in the elbow crease. The lightweight material 30 can be positioned at the arm pits in addition to the elbow crease to promote heat dissipation, wick moisture from the player, and permit air to enter and cool the player. The lightweight material 30 preferably includes a narrow strip that between the skid guard 26 and tactified section 20 and creates enough spacing to prevent the skid guard and the tactified section from inhibiting free movement of the elbow joint, particularly when flexed as is the case when a football is carried as shown in FIG. 1.

[0016] As shown in FIG. 2, in a preferred embodiment the jersey 10 has a plurality of non-slip strips 34 of material along an inner surface 16 that promote adherence of the sleeve to the player's arm 38. The strips 34 cooperate to adhere the jersey to the player's arm and, more particularly the player's wrist to resist movement of the sleeve 12 up and down the player's arm during motion. The security of the sleeve and the resistance to movement of the sleeve with respect to the player's arm provides a more consistent surface with fewer wrinkles, bunching, and twisting. If the sleeve 12 is smoothly held against the player's arm, the contact of the ball 11 to the player's arm through the jersey 10 will be increased and

control will be enhanced. The strips can be adhesive, but more preferably constructed of a smooth but non-slip material that naturally resists sliding across the skin. The interaction of the strips 34 to the arm 38 or wrist will be further promoted by a tight fit, further increasing the frictional relationship between the strips 34 on the interior surface 16 of the jersey 10 and the player's skin 38. Alternatively, the sleeve can include elastic loops (not shown) at the wrist that accommodates the player's fingers to keep the shirt sleeve taught and prevent the sleeve from sliding up the player's arm.

[0017] FIG. 3 shows a cross sectional view of the sleeve, where the tactified portion 20 is opposite the skid guard 26, and strips 34 are located along the inner surface 16. The number, position, and shape of the strips 34 can be altered to suit the needs of the player, where juniors may require fewer strips while college and pro players could require five or more strips to maintain the sleeves in position. The most optimal position for the strips is at the wrist, although other positions are also possible.

[0018] FIG. 4 illustrates a pattern of the tactified material 20' and skid guard 26' in the form of a spider web pattern. Each pattern can comprise a series of radiating lines 50 intersected by circumferential lines 55 to create a series of radially extending areas 60 as shown. The pattern can include alternating areas 60 in the radial or circumferential directions (or both) that have different levels of tactified response. This can cause tactile feedback for subtle movements of the ball, increasing the awareness and focus of the player on the position of the ball 11. This heightened sensitivity to movement and contact with the ball promotes greater reliability in handling the ball and prevents fumbling that can occur otherwise.

[0019] To apply the tactified material to the shirt, a latex material such as Cleartex™ sold by Zeller International is applied to a transfer sheet such as that used in iron-on applications and dried to form laminated sheets. The laminated sheets are then cut into specific shapes or a stencil may be used to form the correct shapes. The shaped sheets are then applied to the jersey and heated or pressurized to transfer the Cleartex™ material to the jersey in the desired pattern. The Cleartex™ material can also be dyed using a screen printing dye to create the desired look and appearance of the tactified material.

[0020] The foregoing description is intended to be illustrative of the concept of the present invention, but not limit the scope of the invention to the just described embodiments. For example, other uses of the just described shirt or jersey could include non-slip material on the shoulders to prevent movement of shoulder pads, and shirts worn below vests such as those worn by police officers so that the vests do not slip over the surface of the shirt. Thus, one of ordinary skill in the art will readily appreciate that there are many modifications and substitutions that can be made to the just described invention without departing from the spirit of the present invention, and said modifications and substitutions are intended to be incorporated into the scope of the invention. Therefore, the scope of the invention is intended to be limited only by the ordinary and customary meaning of the words and terms of the claims appended hereto.

I claim:

1. An improved athletic shirt having a torso and first and second arm sleeves, the improvement comprising:  
non-slip material selectively applied to opposing surfaces of said first and second arm sleeves when the jersey is positioned for carrying a football.

2. The improved athletic shirt of claim 1 further comprising non-slip material on said torso opposite said non-slip material on said first and second arm sleeves.

3. The improved athletic shirt of claim 2 further comprising means for preventing the first and second arm sleeves from sliding up a user's arm.

4. The improved athletic shirt of claim 3 wherein said means for preventing the first and second arm sleeves from sliding up a user's arm comprises a non-slip material applied to an inner surface of said first and second arm sleeves.

5. The improved athletic shirt of claim 3 wherein said shirt includes a mesh material.

6. The improved athletic shirt of claim 5 wherein said mesh material wicks moisture away from a surface of the shirt.

7. The improved athletic shirt of claim 3 wherein the non-slip material is a latex blend.

8. The improved athletic shirt of claim 3 further comprising a skid guard at respective elbow areas of said first and second arm sleeves.

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