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J. L. HERWEG

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MUSICIAN'S LIP PROTECTOR

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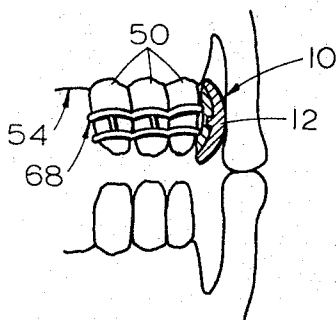


FIG. 1

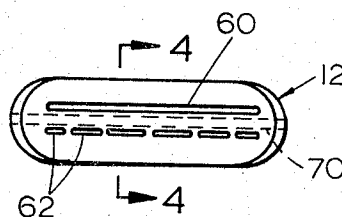


FIG. 2

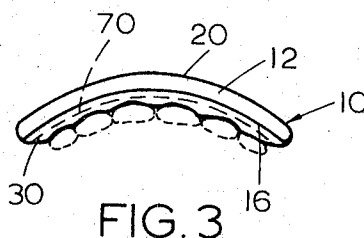


FIG. 3

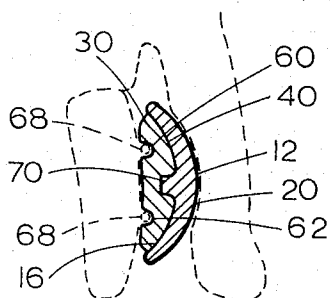


FIG. 4

INVENTOR

JACK L. HERWEG

BY *Hiram D. Stuges*
Agent

1

3,327,580

MUSICIAN'S LIP PROTECTOR

Jack L. Herweg, 1529 Valley St.,
Plattsmouth, Nebr. 68048

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4 Claims. (Cl. 84-453)

This invention relates to protectors for the lip of a musician, and more particularly it is an object of this invention to provide a protector to be disposed between the front teeth and the upper lip of a musician playing an instrument having a mouthpiece such as a bass horn, trumpet, or French horn, the protector being able to protect the upper lip of the musician from being cut and bruised by a tooth brace or a tooth cap protruding forwardly of the front teeth.

A most serious problem has long existed in which students learning to play wind instruments have been required to have braces put on their teeth making it impossible to further continue their playing. Highschool band directors lose many promising musicians this way as they must completely drop out of the playing of mouthpiece instruments and this is even more severely disappointing for the student aspiring to be a musician.

The placing of paraffin between a tooth brace and the upper lip does not solve the problem because paraffin loses its shape from the warmth in the mouth and from the pressure of the mouthpiece.

The problem cannot be solved with adaptations of conventional tooth protectors. They will protect the lip, but are of U-shape in cross section with the flange extending behind the upper front teeth which is exactly the position in which the player must tongue in order to restrict the column of air flowing to the mouthpiece. The result has been the practical necessity for the student to drop the playing of brass instruments.

A further object of the invention is to provide a lip protector that is also capable of protecting the lower lip of the user.

The following drawings illustrate, by way of example only, one way of making the musician's lip protector of this invention, and it will be understood that many other ways can also be used within the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

In the drawings:

FIGURE 1 is a diagrammatic view showing the lips and certain of the teeth of a musician with the lip protector of this invention shown in section because of the removal of a half portion thereof for purposes of illustration.

FIGURE 2 is a rear elevation of the lip protector base portion.

FIGURE 3 is a top plan view of the lip protector with the position of the upper teeth and of a tooth brace being shown in dotted lines.

FIGURE 4 is a cross-sectional view of the lip protector base portion as it would be seen along the line 4-4 of FIGURE 2 but shown in a position of use with an upper lip, teeth and tooth brace portions being diagrammatically shown in dotted lines and with a catalyst setting material of the protector shown in place and in cross-section on the rearward side of the base portion.

The lip protector of this invention is generally indicated at 10 and has a flexible base portion 12 of a size for fitting between the upper teeth and the upper lip of a wind instrument musician, the base portion 12 being formed of a material that will not become permanently deformed by the heat encountered during normal operating conditions.

Base portion 12 is elongated and arcuate in top plan, as best seen in FIGURE 3, so as to have a concave inner

2

side 16 and a convex outer side 20. The base portion 12 is also convex on its outer side, as seen in a transverse cross-section taken vertically through it, as best seen in FIGURE 4, as serves to allow the upper lip of a user as full and normal freedom of movement as possible for the best register and tone.

A catalyst-setting material 30 of the type which is malleable before it has set is attached to the back side of the base portion 12 as is accomplished preferably by the use of a catalyst-setting material of a type that is adhering in its qualities as is glue or the various types of cements, so that it clings to and holds on to the base portion 12.

It is possible that the catalyst-setting material be secured to the base portion 12 by other means such as by means of a layer of cement material 40 extending across the area between the main body 12 and the catalyst-setting material 30, although this is not the preferred construction.

An application of the protector to the upper teeth 50 of an operator 54 at a time when the material 30 is malleable will cause the material 30 to become indented, as seen at 60 and 62 in FIGURE 2 and FIGURE 4, in places where a tooth brace, a tooth cap, not shown, or other protrusion exists, whereby after the material 30 has set and hardened because of its catalyst, then thereafter the protector will tend to protect the upper lip from being cut by a brace 68 or other protrusion.

In order to anchor the material 30 more firmly on the base portion 12, the rear side 16 of the base 12 is provided with a ridge 70 extending horizontally or lengthwise across the horizontal base portion 12 and protruding rearwardly whereby a gripping of the base portion by the material 30 is facilitated.

It is important that the material from which the base portion 12 is formed and also the material 30 both be flexible and resilient after the material 30 has set, although the material 30 is also shape-holding after it has set.

As thus described, a musician's upper lip protector is believed to be revealed which will fulfill the objectives above set forth and make it possible for young musicians who must wear tooth braces to continue their musical careers.

It will be seen that this invention can be changed within the spirit of the following claims and such changes are considered to be within the scope of this invention.

I claim:

1. A musician's upper lip protector having a flexible base portion of a size for fitting between the upper teeth and the upper lip of a wind instrument musician, the said base portion being formed of a substance that will not become permanently deformed by the heat encountered during normal operating conditions, said base portion being horizontally elongated and arcuate in top plan so as to have a concave innerside and a convex outer side when in use position, a catalyst-setting material of a type which is malleable before it is set attached to the exterior of the innermost longitudinally concave surface of said base portion whereby an application of the protector to the upper teeth of an operator at a time when the said material is malleable will cause the material to become indented in places where a tooth brace or other protrusion exists, whereby after said material has set and hardened, then thereafter the protector will tend to protect the upper lip from being cut by such brace or protrusion.

2. The combination of claim 1 in which the back side of said base portion has a ridge extending horizontally across it to facilitate a gripping of said base portion by said material.

3

3. The combination of claim 1 in which not only said base portion but also said material is flexible and resilient after said material has set, although said material is shape-holding after it has set.

4. The combination of claim 1 in which said base portion is also convex on its outer side as seen in a transverse cross-section to allow the upper lip of a user as full and normal a freedom of movement as possible for the best register and tone.

5

4

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RICHARD B. WILKINSON, *Primary Examiner*.C. M. OVERBEY, *Assistant Examiner*.