

[54] **QUARTERBACK FOOTBALL TRAINER WITH ATTACHABLE TARGET UNIT**
[75] Inventor: **Zygmund Nedwick**, Glen Cove, N.Y.
[73] Assignee: **Athletics Devices, Inc.**, Glen Cove, N.Y.
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[52] **U.S. Cl.** **273/55 R, 273/105 R**
[51] **Int. Cl.** **A63b 67/00**
[58] **Field of Search** **273/55 R, 55 A, 55 B, 55 C, 273/181 F, 26 A, 29 A, 29 B, 105 R**

[56] **References Cited**

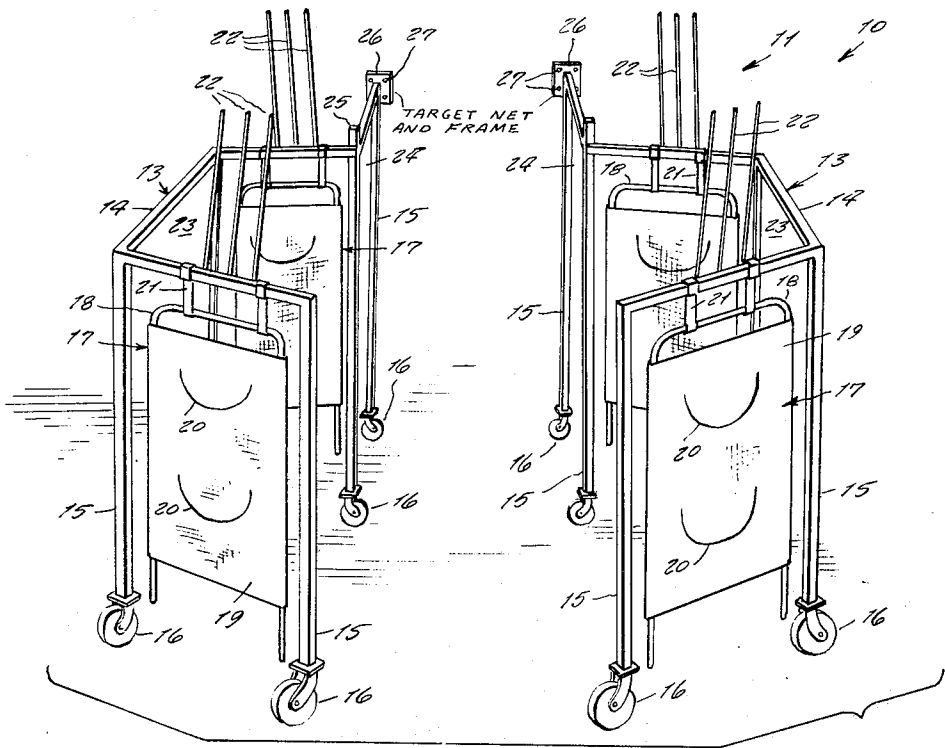
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Primary Examiner—Richard C. Pinkham
Assistant Examiner—Theatrice Brown
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Carl Miller

[57] **ABSTRACT**
An apparatus for developing skill in playing football, the device consisting of a target game unit and a training unit which are detachably attached together; and in which the training unit includes a pair of upstanding frames mounted upon caster wheels so to be movable across the ground, the frames supporting several simulated player rusher's consisting of a fabric sheet stretched on a depending frame and the sheet having slits; and the target game unit consisting of netting pockets formed on a fabric sheet supported along its edges by tension springs from a tubular metal frame provided with means for being retained in an erect position while players toss a ball or the like into the pockets.

1 Claim, 5 Drawing Figures



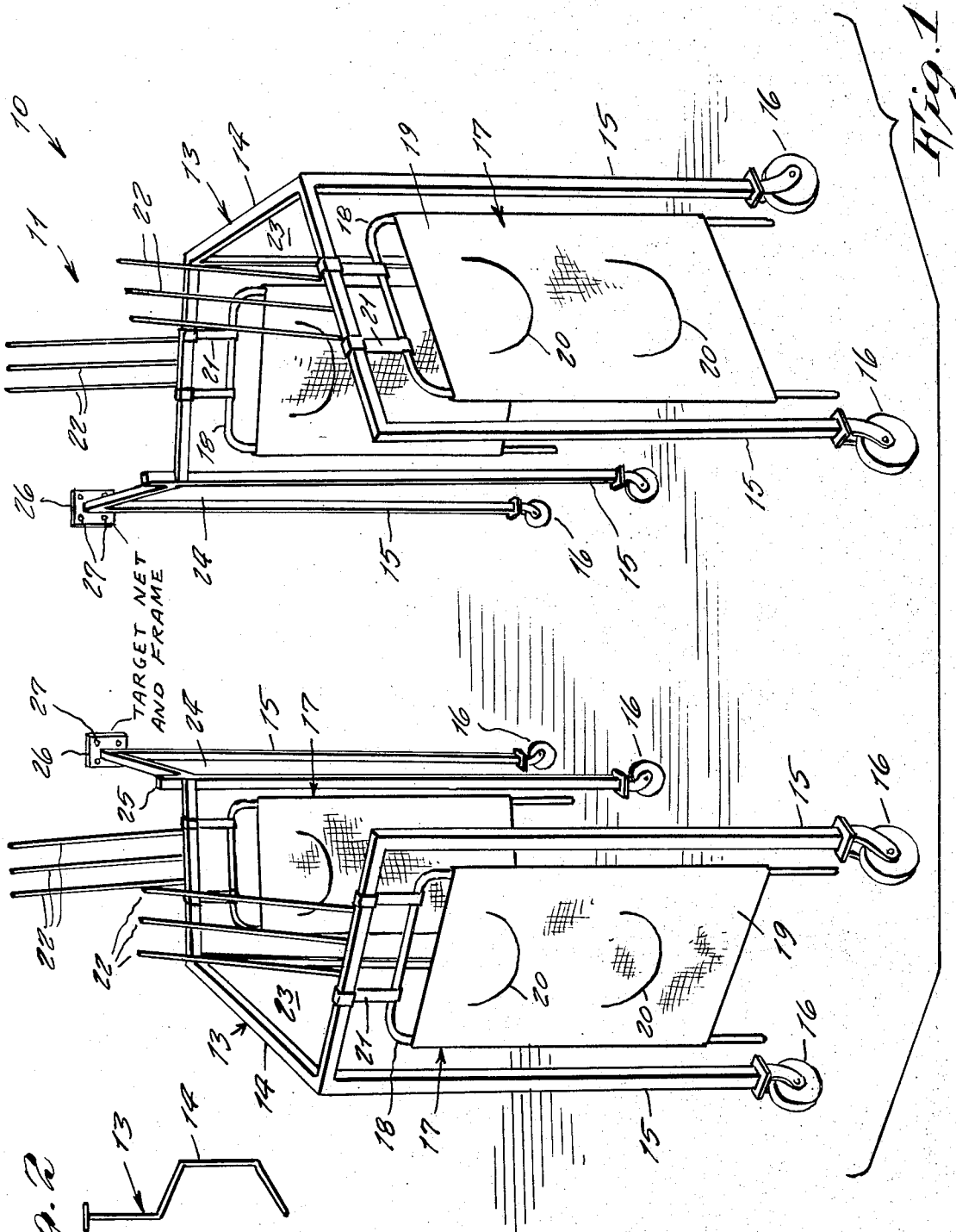


Fig. 1

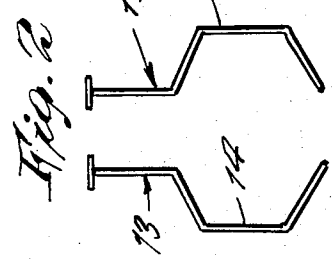


Fig. 2

INVENTOR
ZYGMUND NEDWICK
BY *Carl Miller*
ATTORNEY

Fig. 3

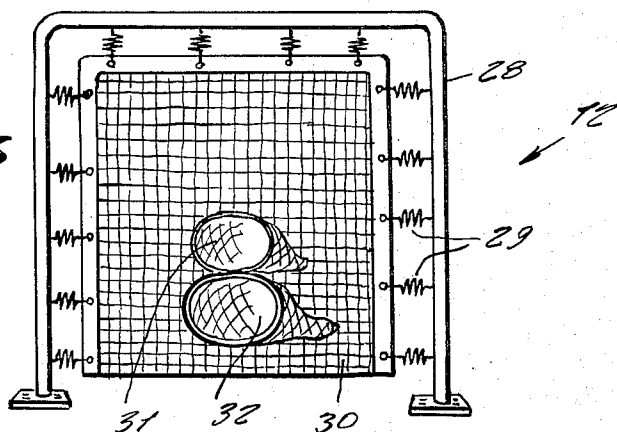


Fig. 4

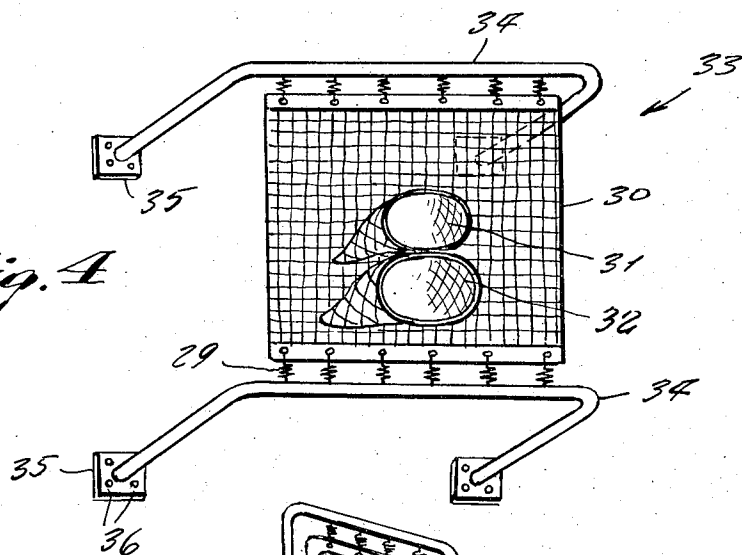
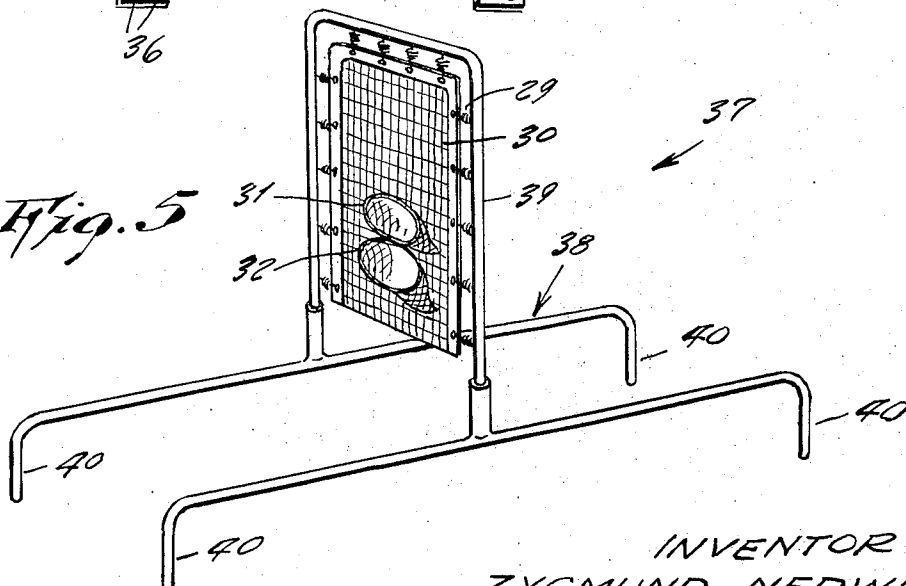


Fig. 5



INVENTOR
 ZYGMUND NEDWICK
Carl Miller
 ATTORNEY

QUARTERBACK FOOTBALL TRAINER WITH ATTACHABLE TARGET UNIT

This invention relates generally to football practicing equipment, and which is an improvement over the applicant's U.S. Pat. No. 3,398,954.

A principle object of the present invention is to provide an improved quarter back football trainer of practical construction for being readily movable upon a playing field for use.

Another object is to provide a quarter back football trainer which selectively can support a target game unit.

Still another object is to provide a combination quarter back football trainer and target game unit which can be manufactured by modern mass production methods.

Other objects are to provide a combination quarter back football trainer and target game unit which is simple in design, inexpensive to manufacture, rugged in construction, easy to use and efficient in operation.

Further objects of the invention will appear as the description proceeds.

To the accomplishment of the above and related objects, my invention may be embodied in the form illustrated in the accompanying drawings, attention being called to the fact, however, that the drawings are illustrative only, and that changes may be made in the specific construction illustrated and described within the scope of the appended claims.

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the football trainer.

FIG. 2 is a plain view thereof.

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of one design of target game unit.

FIG. 4 and 5 are perspective views showing modified designs of the target game unit.

Referring now to the drawings in detail, the reference numeral 10 represents a combination target game and quarter back football trainer according to the present invention wherein there is a training unit 11 and a target game unit 12.

Referring more particularly at this time to FIGS. 1 and 2 of the drawing, the quarter back training unit 11 is shown consisting of a pair of upstanding square tubular steel frames 13 of identical construction except that one is left shaped and the other is reversed therefrom so to be right shaped (as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2), and each of which includes horizontal top bars 14 supported on vertical legs 15 which at their lower ends are mounted upon rubber caster wheels 16. A plurality of simulated player rusher's 17 are supported in defending positions from the top bars 14, each of these defense pass rushers 17 including an invested U-shaped steel frame 18 on which there is fitted a fabric panel 19 having a pair of semi-circular slits 20. The rushers are attached to the bars 14 by straps 21. Upstanding plastic rods 22 are secured to top bars 14 and are located over the defense pass rushers 17; the rods representing the upraised aim of a pass rushes operating as in a game to stop or deflect a thrown football.

It is to be noted that each frame 13 includes four horizontal bars 14 secured together at their corners and extending angularly respective to each other, as shown, and the bar being supported upon five legs 15, so to form four arches, two of which contain the rushers 17. A arch between those containing the rushers and one endmost arch form passing lanes 23 and 24 respectively.

A cup 25 is mounted upon bar 14 so to receive a middle guard.

An end of an endmost guide rail or bar 14 has a plate 26 secured thereto and which has mounting screw openings 27 for securement to the target game unit 12.

The target game unit 12 illustrated in FIG. 3 is shown to include a U-shaped, horizontal, tubular steel frame 28 which by means of tension coil springs 29 support a horizontal netting panel 30 which is provided with netting basket pockets 31 and 32 for receiving a ball tossed thereto.

In FIG. 4 a modified construction of target game unit 33 includes a frame consisting of two inverted U-shaped leg units 34 each of which is provided with mounting plates 35 having openings 36 to receive mounting screws. The leg units 34 support the springs 29, and panel 30 with pockets 31 and 32.

In FIG. 5 a further modified construction of a target game unit 37 is shown which includes frame 38 to support the springs 29 and panel 30 with pockets 31 and 32. The frame 38 includes vertical U-shaped portion 39 supported on legs 40.

Thus there is provided a combination target game and quarter back football trainer of novel type and which in summary incorporates the following unique features:

A horizontal rail supported by a plurality of leg stands and set at some median shoulder-level height of rusher players dependent on the game level of the players e.g. professional down to and through Little Leagues. The purpose of this shoulder level rail is to enhance the passer to raise the ball sufficiently to pass over this rail and so aid in the development of the desirable high overhand throwing motion for accuracy, linear alignment of the arm and body muscles, and for less chance of blockage of the forward pass as against the lower sidearm passing motion.

Also another reason for this shoulder level rail is to cause the passer to drop back a proper distance for passing. Also caroms off this rail may result as sometimes happen in a game and to which players must react.

Also simulated rush players are hung on this rail with arms upraised (plastic rods) and this creates passing lanes through which the passer must throw the ball to his receivers. The receiver in turn must locate in alignment with these lanes to receive the ball since otherwise the up-raised plastic rod 'arm' would obstruct the ball.

Also the simulated rusher players may be hung on the shoulder level rail in places as may be anticipated by the coach in forthcoming games.

However in addition to the above features and others as listed in the aforementioned patent the following other improvements are being offered for patent letters.

A pair of GUIDE RAILS as an entrance to the unit to create a pathway through which the passer must retreat to enter into a passing "pocket" or place from which to pass figuratively protected by teammates. The said GUIDE RAILS are his reference to the directness or straightness in his backward retreat to an appointed passing spot. Such a direct retreat taking as little time as possible is important inasmuch as the drop-back retreat without such straightness consumes time in seconds or fractions of seconds that provides the rusher

players with the favorability in additional time to block the passed ball or entirely thwart the passing effort by tackling the passer.

Also the horizontal rails and therefore the simulated rusher players they uphold are to be in a proximate position to the passer since such proximity is the most realistic in actual games. Practice in such closer quarters will gain for the passer a familiarity to the real, game-like situations for which he is preparing.

Therefore the horizontal rails supporting the simulated rushers are offset ANGULARLY to surround the passer closely as most often happens in a game.

Also that the aforementioned ANGULAR offset of the horizontal rails is of sufficient degree and extension in distance so that legs attached thereto and supporting the horizontal rails at the terminals of the angles create a FOUR-POST STAND for each half or one side of the unit.

Also one such leg is common to the end of a Guide Rail and an additional leg supports the Guide Rail at its origin.

Thus two such halves form the simulated passing; "pocket".

Also on each half unit a receiving cup is located on the horizontal rail at a point above the leg that is common to a Guide Rail. The two cups receive an overhead piece functioning both as a tie-in for securing the two half units and to act as an additional player rusher at the Middle Guard or Middle Line Backer position and which also has up-raised plastic rods as an 'arm'.

Thus the coach has a variety of places to set the simulated rusher players to simulate defenses and therefore such location of passing lanes as he may anticipate in future games.

Also each of the supporting legs, ten in all, is bolted (plate to plate) to a large rubber, caster swivel wheel to aid in the wheeling of the apparatus on and off the fields or to locate variously on the practice field to practice from center of field, at the right or left "hash" marks or at various yard lines.

In addition a stretched target net within a frame could be secured by bolting plate to plate or received in 'cups' as described previously at the entrance point atop the Guide Rails. The target would be made of netting of smaller mesh than the diameter of a football and one, two or more target hole openings of similar or various diameters would locate therein while behind each opening and attached to the net an additional bag-like netting would catch and hold a ball thrown through the opening in the target netting. This bag-like netting can be likened to the familiar basket ball net except that one end is drawn together and tied thus not permitting a ball to pass through and so in effect "catching" the thrown ball.

Thus a player could practice for accuracy when alone at such times when other players were not there to receive his passes.

Also for youngsters, as well as adults, such an apparatus with target attached thereon scaled to the level of the players can be interesting as a game and as a test of skill played in gyms, outdoors and on home properties and following established rules for a game. For example, an offensive player would designate a particular target hole opening and if he threw the ball accurately into the designated target hole opening he would

achieve a credit in yards gained UNLESS the defensive player who followed could offset the gain by equalling the offensive player's accuracy. A designated target hole of smaller dimension would be worth a credit in a greater amount of yards gained. If one player missed the designated target hole opening and the opposing player did not the result is a gain in yards for the offense, or a penalty loss to the offense. If both are inaccurate or both are accurate then there is no change and a loss of down results.

It is clear that a set of rules can be developed to establish a game of interest and a test of skill while developing skills among players.

If area permitted additional targets detached from the unit, on stands, could be set to the sides also, for general variety and change in direction of throwing.

It must be understood also, that the TARGET GAME only, detached from the training unit apparatus and supported on a suitable stand or bracketed to a wall, post or tree or any suitable place, could be used in the conduct of the game if so desired.

The material for the Quarter Back Football Trainer and Target Game combination is suggested to be of square steel tubing, weld construction, or of round tubing and appropriate fittings for attaching parts, or of inexpensive pressed steel tube and fittings as for the Target Game.

While certain novel features of my invention have been shown and described and are pointed out in the annexed claims, it will be understood that various omissions, substitutions, and changes in the forms and details of the device illustrated and in its operation can be made by those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit of the invention.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. In a quarterback football trainer with attachable target unit, said target unit being adaptable for catching a tossed football, and said football trainer is used to develop a football player, the combination of a trainer consisting of two separate upstanding frames in spaced apart position from each other, each frame including horizontal top bars supported on vertical legs mounted upon caster wheels, each frames supporting a pair of simulated player rushers in defending position, a pair of arches formed by each said frames serving as a pair of passing lanes, a mounting plate secured on one end of each said frame, and a target unit detachably supported across a space between said frames including a corresponding mounting plate at each end for securement to said frame mounting plates, each said rusher including an inverted U-shaped frame supporting a fabric panel having a pair of slits, each said frame supporting said rushers being provided with rods extending upwardly above said rushers, said rods representing the upraised arm of a pass rusher to thwart a thrown football, a cup being mounted upon one said top bar of each said frame so to receive a middle guard, and said target game device comprising a rectangular netting provided with a pair of basket pockets in adjacent edge contact with each other and located closer toward one end of said netting, said netting being supported by peripheral tension coil springs to a target unit frame.

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