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April 3, 1962 A. W. MEEHAN 3,027,574

WATER SKI

Filed Oct. 6, 1960

FIG. 1.

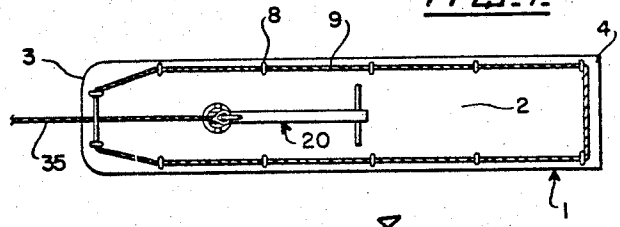


FIG. 3.

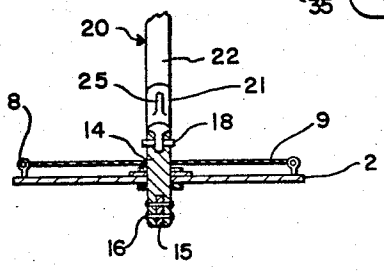


FIG. 2.

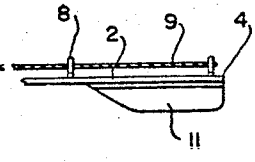


FIG. 5.

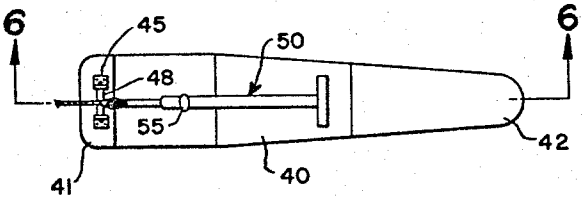


FIG. 4.

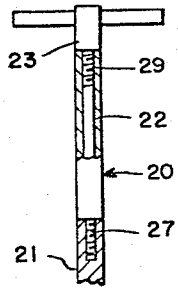
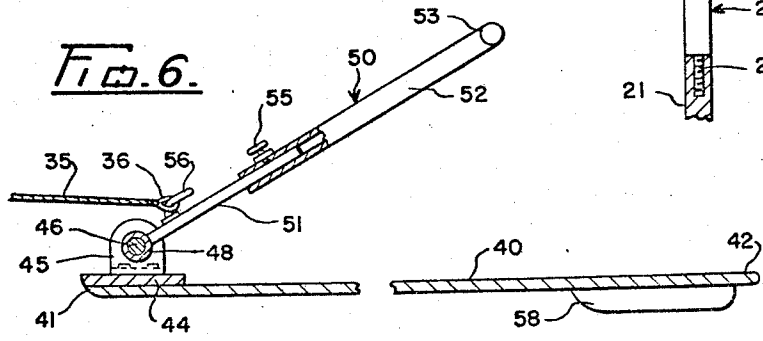


FIG. 6.



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WATER SKI

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8 Claims. (Cl. 9—310)

My invention relates to improvements in water ski.

The object of the invention is to provide means whereby a person riding a water ski being towed behind a power boat may control the movement of the ski with far greater facility than he could hope to do by shifting his weight in the conventional manner.

A further and important object is to provide means for attaching the towline to the ski which will ensure that said line is quickly and automatically released should the skier lose his balance and fall while skiing.

Referring to the accompanying drawings:

FIGURE 1 is a plan of a ski fitted with the present invention.

FIGURE 2 is a fragmentary elevation.

FIGURE 3 is a section taken on the line 3—3 of FIGURE 2.

FIGURE 4 is a section taken on the line 4—4 of FIGURE 2.

FIGURE 5 is a plan of a modified form of the ski.

FIGURE 6 is an enlarged fragmentary section taken on line 6—6 of FIGURE 5.

In the drawings like characters of reference indicate corresponding parts in each figure.

The numeral 1 indicates a ski consisting of a flat, relatively narrow board 2 which has an upwardly curved tip or prow 3 and a stern 4. Adjacent to the side edges 5 of the board suitably spaced eyed standards 8 are provided and extending through said standards is a guard line 9 formed by a length of cord which completely encircles the board, see particularly FIGURE 1. As shown best in FIGURES 2 and 3, the guard line 9 is supported by the eyed standards 8 a short distance above the top surface of the board 2 and thus will serve as a handhold for the skier when manipulating the ski both in the water and out. Beneath the stern 4 of the board 2 a centrally disposed skeg 11 is provided which serves to stabilize the direction of the ski.

A short vertical rudder post 14 is journalled in the board 2, which post is disposed midway between the side edges 5 and closer to the prow 3 than to the stern 4. The post 14 is forked at its lower end to receiver a rudder 15 which is secured in position by means of bolts 16. The upper end of the post 14 is also forked and is fitted with a transversely extending pin 18. Swingingly mounted upon the pin 18 is a steering column 20 which is made up of three parts viz: a base socket 21, a tubular extension 22 and a T-shaped handle 23. A hook 25 is provided on the forward edge of the socket 21 and said socket is internally threaded to receive a spigot 27 formed on the lower end of the extension 22. The opposite end of the extension is also internally threaded to receive a spigot 29 formed on the handle 23.

The line 35 used to tow the ski 1 is fitted with a ring 36, see FIGURE 2. The end of the line 35 is entered beneath the guard line 9 at the prow 3 and the ring 36 is fastened to the hook 25 on the steering column 20 which when in normal position of use is rearwardly inclined. It will be noted that two of the eyed standards 8 on the prow of the ski support a portion of the guard line 9 so as to define a fairlead through which the tow line 35 extends as shown in FIGURES 1 and 2.

The modified form of the ski shown in FIGURES 5 and 6 consists of a flat board 40 having a prow 41 and a stern 42. A reinforcing member 44 is secured to the prow

41 and fitted to said member are transversely spaced brackets 45 which support a shaft 46. Rockingly mounted on the shaft 46 between the brackets is a sleeve 48 which forms part of an extensible handle generally indicated by the numeral 50.

The handle 50 is made up of a relatively short rod 51 which is telescopically received in the lower end of a tubular shaft 52 and secured to the upper end of said shaft is a hand grip 53. A clamping bolt 55 is fitted to the shaft 52 so that said shaft may be locked in selected position upon the rod 51. The rod 51 is provided with a hook 56 which is adapted to receive the ring 36 of the towline 35.

Beneath the stern 42 of the board 40 a narrow elongated skeg 58 is provided to give directional stability to the ski as it is being towed through the water.

Assuming the intended user of the ski is reasonably skilled at the sport the take off would be accomplished in the following manner. The skier crouches or stands on the rear portion of the partly submerged ski and grips the column 20 in both hands to steady himself and to keep said column at a fairly acute angle to said rear portion of the ski. At the appropriate moment the user signals the operator of the power boat to proceed and the increasing momentum of the ski causes it to plane out of the water so as to ride entirely on the water surface. By swinging the steering column to the left or the right the skier will turn the post 14 and turn the rudder 15, thus steering the ski so that it turns in the required direction.

Should the skier lose his balance and realize he is about to fall he will release the column 20 and the pull on the towline 35 will swing said column about the pin 18 toward the prow 3. When the column 20 approaches the dotted line position of FIGURE 2 the ring 36 is automatically released from the hook 25 whereupon the ski is freed from the line and may settle in the water. The skier who may jump clear of the ski or attempt to ride it to a standstill is able to cling to the ski in the water by use of the guard line 9 and when the boat circles to pick him up is able to again fasten the ring 36 to the hook 25 without difficulty.

If the skier is a novice at the sport and wishes to ride the ski either in a sitting, crouching or reclining position, he may do so by removing the tubular extension 22 from the steering column 20. The handle 23 is then secured directly to the base socket 21, so that the handle 23 is disposed in close proximity to the board 2 and can be conveniently gripped by a skier in one of the abovementioned positions.

In using the modified ski the handle 50 is first adjusted as to length to suit the individual skier and the towline is attached to the hook 56 with the handle disposed substantially in the position shown in FIGURE 6. The skier shifts his weight on the board to change direction much in the manner of using the conventional ski and the skeg 11 prevents the board from yawing particularly during a turn. Should the skier lose his balance and release the handgrip 53 the handle 50 will swing forward as previously described so that the towline 35 will automatically disconnect from the ski.

What I claim is:

1. A ski comprising a flat relatively narrow board having an upturned prow, a vertical rudder post journalled in the board forward of its mid-length position, a rudder secured to the rudder post beneath the board, a steering column pivotally connected to the rudder post above the board, an upturned hook carried by the steering column adjacent the rudder post, said steering column normally being supported in a rearwardly inclined position, said hook being adapted to be engaged by the eyed end of a towline and to be disengaged thereby when the steering

column is allowed to swing forwardly of its pivotal connection.

2. A ski as claimed in claim 1, wherein a skeg is secured to the underside of the board adjacent its stern.

3. A ski as claimed in claim 1, wherein fairlead means are provided on the prow for aligning the towline with the board.

4. A ski as claimed in claim 1, wherein a plurality of eyed standards are provided in spaced relation around the board and above its surface and a guard line is reeved through said eyed standards, the prow being provided with two of the standards, said two standards supporting a portion of the guard line, said towline extending beneath said guard line portion and being supported thereby against lifting when the ski is in normal use.

5. A ski as claimed in claim 1, wherein said steering column has a base socket and a tubular extension and a T-shaped handle is adapted to be selectively secured to the base socket and the tubular extension.

6. A ski comprising a flat relatively narrow board having a prow and a stern, a transverse shaft mounted above

the prow, a handle rockingly mounted on said shaft for swinging movement in the plane of the longitudinal axis of the board, said handle normally being supported in a rearwardly inclined position, a handgrip at the upper end of the handle, an upturned hook adjacent the lower end of the handle, said hook being adapted to be engaged by the eyed end of a towline and to be disengaged thereby when the handle is allowed to swing forwardly of its normal inclined position.

7. A ski as claimed in claim 6 and means for adjusting the length of the handle.

8. A ski as claimed in claim 6 wherein the stern of the board is fitted with a depending skeg.

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