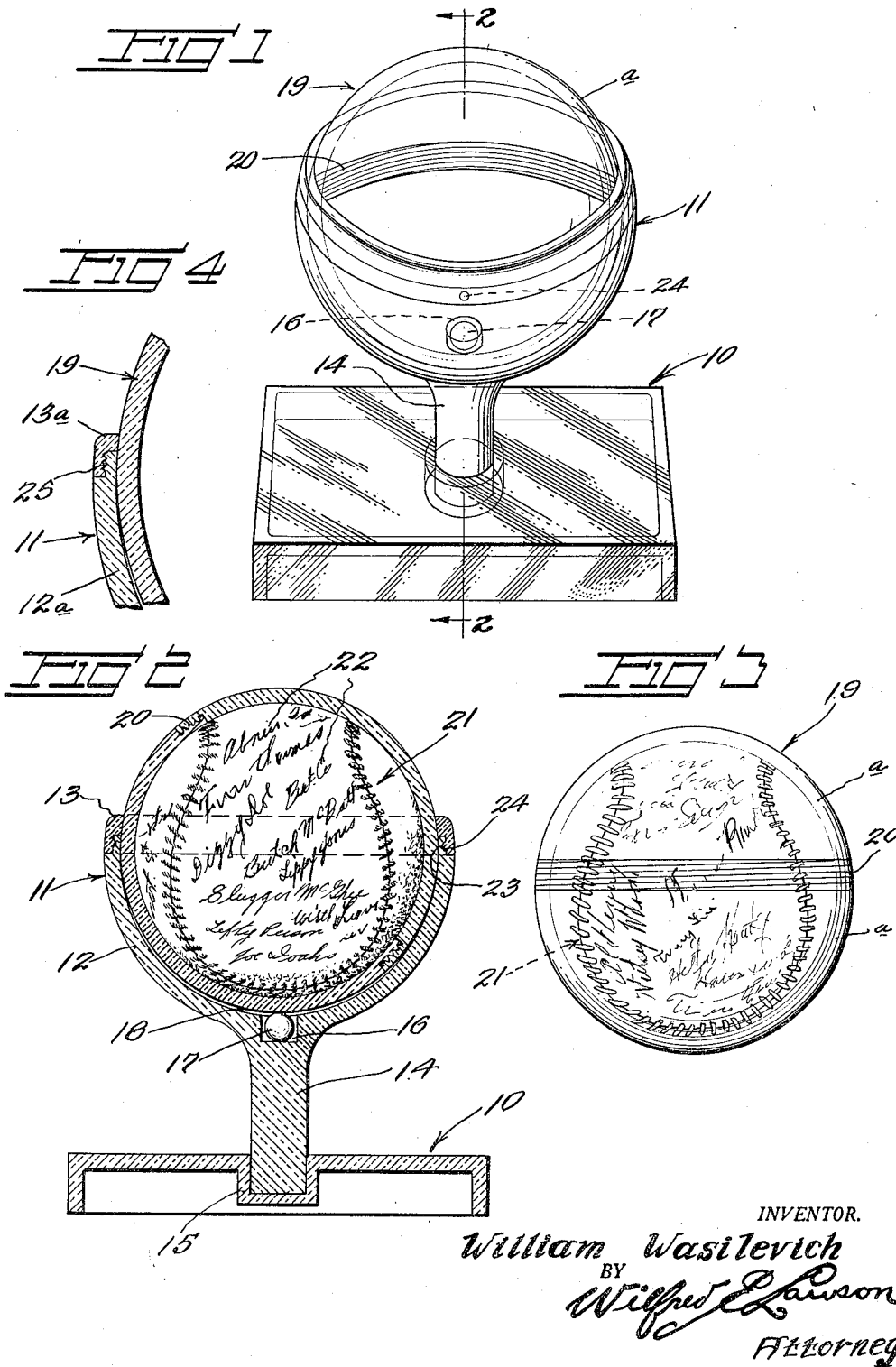


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 DEVICE FOR PRESERVING AND DISPLAYING
 AUTOGRAPHED BASEBALLS
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DEVICE FOR PRESERVING AND DISPLAYING
AUTOGRAPHED BASEBALLS

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6 Claims. (Cl. 206—44)

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This invention relates generally to the preservation for display purposes of an article or articles having curio interest for many persons such, for example, as trophies of the nature of baseballs or similar spheres upon which are placed the autographs of players.

It is a principal object of the present invention to provide a means whereby such articles may be preserved in a clean and attractive condition and protected against deterioration and at the same time be easily presented to view so that autographs thereon may be observed and studied.

Another object of the invention is to provide a device of the above described character wherein such autographed article is supported in such manner that it may be easily turned over or around to any position so that any part of the surface of the article can be readily seen, without, at the same time, requiring that the article be handled and thus be exposed to damage or be made unattractive by being dirtied.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a means for preserving and displaying an article of the character stated, wherein the article is enclosed in an airtight transparent casing which in turn is supported in a suitable supporting base in such manner that the casing can be rotated to any position so that the surface of the article can be easily observed through the casing.

Another object of the invention is to provide a casing and support for an article of the character described, both of which are of transparent material and wherein the casing is in the form of a two-part sphere in which the article is tightly housed and the support is formed to receive the sphere and has means connected therewith for preventing the sphere from being removed from the support while at the same time permitting the sphere to be turned or rotated to any position for ready observation of the enclosed article.

The invention will be best understood from a consideration of the following detail description taken in connection with the accompanying drawing forming a part of the specification, with the understanding, however, that the invention is not to be limited to the exact details of construction shown and described since obvious modifications will occur to a person skilled in the art.

In the drawing:

Figure 1 is a view in perspective of a protec-

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tive and display device constructed in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 2 is a vertical sectional view taken substantially on the line 2—2 of Figure 1 and showing an autographed article in the encasing sphere, such article being shown in elevation.

Figure 3 is a view in elevation of the autographed sphere enclosing casing or shell.

Figure 4 is a fragmentary detail showing an alternate construction.

Referring now more particularly to the drawing the numeral 10 generally designates the base or foot for the article forming the present invention. This base or foot is here shown as being of rectangular form and having a flat top surface but it is to be understood that the invention is not confined or restricted to the use of a foot of this specific configuration.

The device of the present invention is formed throughout of a suitable transparent material such as a transparent resin, preference being had for synthetic resins of the group generally identified as Vinylites. Such resins are of clear transparency and tough or strong and are not subject to easy damage by chemicals or other substances. However, it is to be understood that the invention is not restricted to the use of this particular type of resin but that use may be made of any other composition of a suitable nature.

Supported upon the foot and forming a part of the base structure is a cradle unit 11 which is formed in two parts, the lower part, designated 12, being in the form of a semi-spherical cup or receptacle and the upper part being in the form of a ring 13 which is joined to the rim of the lower part as is clearly shown in Figure 2.

Joined to the underside of the lower part 12 of the cradle unit is the post or stem 14, the lower end of which is secured to the foot 10 in any suitable manner. In the construction here illustrated the foot 10 is shown of hollow form with a socket 15 at approximately the center thereof, in which the lower end of the stem 14 is fixed. This may be fixed in the socket by press fit or by screw threads as desired. If preferred or found feasible, however, the foot, stem and lower part of the cradle unit may be molded as one piece and it is also contemplated to make the foot 10 as a solid block of material.

In the bottom of the cup or lower part 12 of the cradle unit there is formed the recess or socket 16. This, as shown, is at the upper end of the stem 14. This socket is provided to receive a ball 17 which may be of metal or of the

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plastic material of which the rest of the device is formed and the depth of the socket is such as compared with the diameter of the ball as to cause the ball to project very slightly above the inside surface 18 of the cup.

Adapted to position within the cradle unit is the hollow sphere 19 which, of course, is formed of the same transparent material as the rest of the device. This sphere is divided into the two portions *a* which are joined together by the overlapping screw threaded portions 20. In the manufacture of the device the threaded portions will be finished off to have a high polish so that when the two halves of the hollow sphere are joined together the screw thread connection between the two parts will be substantially invisible.

The transparent sphere is formed with a relatively thin wall and has an inside diameter substantially the same as the overall diameter of the article which is to be housed therein. Such article is shown in elevation in Figure 2 and is generally designated 21 and is here disclosed as a baseball upon the surface of which one or more autographs 22 of players are shown. By separating the two sections *a* of the transparent sphere or casing the ball may be placed within the sphere and when the screw threaded portions 20 are joined together the ball will be tightly encased in the sphere so that the surface of the ball and the autographs appearing therein will be well protected against the elements and also against disfiguration as would otherwise be the case if the ball were handled unprotected.

The outside diameter of the encasing sphere 19 is substantially equal to the inside diameter of the cradle unit. The ring 13 of the cradle unit is removed and the transparent casing or hollow sphere 19 with the ball therein is placed in the lower portion 12 as shown to rest upon the ball 17. The plane of the edge of the portion 12 of the cradle unit passes through the radial center of such lower part which is of semi-spherical form, and through the center of the sphere but the inside diameter of the ring 13 is slightly less than the diameter of the transparent sphere at its radial center so that when the ring 13 is placed back in position upon the rim or edge of the lower part 12 of the cradle unit and secured to such edge, the ring will function to prevent the removal of the transparent casing or sphere with the contained ball.

Any suitable means may be employed for securing the ring 13 to the lower part 12. In Figure 2, as well as in Figure 1, the means shown consists of slight depressions 23 formed in the outer side of the lower part 12 adjacent to the edge thereof with buttons 24 formed upon the overlapping inner face portion of the ring 13 for sliding engagement in the depressions 23. These depressions and buttons are very lightly formed so that the natural resiliency of the plastic material will make it possible to snap the buttons into the depressions when the ring 13 is pressed into place so as to lock the ring.

Use may also be made of screw threads between the opposing surfaces of the ring and lower portion of the cradle unit as indicated at 25 in Figure 4. In this figure the lower part of the cradle unit is designated 12*a* and the ring is designated 13*a*.

From the foregoing it will be apparent that there is provided in the present invention not only a novel combination in the autographed game piece and the tightly encasing transparent shell but there is also provided novel means whereby the encased game piece or baseball can

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be placed on display in such a manner that the ball can be turned in any way so that the autographs thereon may be easily seen and at the same time protected from injury or disfiguration such as might result from constant handling.

When the sphere is in the support it will rest lightly upon the anti-friction ball 17 so that it can be very smoothly turned as desired. Use may be made of the cradle unit for rotatably supporting the hollow sphere with the baseball therein, without employing the underlying anti-friction ball 17 if desired but the employment of the ball 17 makes the sphere turn more smoothly.

I claim:

1. A preserving and display device for an autographed trophy exemplified by a baseball, comprising a hollow transparent sphere in which the trophy is tightly encased and a supporting base unit for the sphere upon which the sphere is sustained for free rotation, wherein said supporting base unit comprises a cuplike lower portion in which the sphere is cradled, and means joined to the rim of such lower portion for retaining the sphere in position therein while at the same time permitting free rotation of the sphere.

2. A preserving and display device for an autographed trophy exemplified by a baseball, comprising a hollow transparent sphere in which the trophy is tightly encased and a supporting base unit for the sphere upon which the sphere is sustained for free rotation, wherein said base unit comprises a hollow semi-sphere in which said trophy encasing sphere rests, and an annulus encircling the sphere and detachably engaged with the rim of the semi-sphere, said annulus functioning to prevent removal of the sphere from the semi-sphere but permitting free rotation of the sphere.

3. A preserving and display device for an autographed trophy exemplified by a baseball, comprising a hollow transparent sphere in which the trophy is tightly encased and a supporting base unit for the sphere upon which the sphere is sustained for free rotation, in which said base unit comprises a hollow cuplike member in which the transparent sphere is fitted, an annulus encircling the transparent sphere and detachably joined to the rim of said cuplike portion, the annulus having an inside diameter slightly less than the diameter of the transparent sphere and engaging the latter in a plane above a plane passing through the radial center of the transparent sphere whereby to retain the latter against removal from the cuplike lower portion but permitting rotation of the transparent sphere.

4. A preserving and display device for an autographed trophy exemplified by a baseball, comprising a hollow transparent sphere in which the trophy is tightly encased and a supporting base unit for the sphere upon which the sphere is sustained for free rotation, wherein said base unit comprises a cuplike lower portion in which the transparent sphere fits, means attached to the rim of the said lower portion for retaining the transparent sphere against removal but permitting its free rotation therein, and an anti-friction element in the bottom of the cuplike lower portion upon which the sphere rests and rotates.

5. A preserving and display device for an autographed trophy exemplified by a baseball, comprising a hollow thin walled transparent sphere in which the trophy is tightly encased, a supporting foot, and a base unit mounted upon said foot and comprising a cuplike lower portion in

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which the hollow sphere is cradled, said cuplike portion having a stem connecting it with the foot, and a ring detachably connected with the rim of the cuplike portion and encircling the sphere, the ring having an inside diameter slightly less than the major diameter of the sphere which it encircles and functioning to maintain the sphere against removal from the lower portion but permitting free rotation of the sphere therein, said base unit also being formed of transparent material.

6. A preserving and display device of the character stated in claim 5, with a socket formed in the bottom of the cuplike lower portion and opening upwardly therein, and an anti-friction ball resting in said socket and projecting slightly above the interior surface of said cuplike portion

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to be engaged by and rotatably support said transparent sphere.

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