

May 8, 1928.

1,669,198

T. GREER

LACING FOR SOCCER FOOTBALLS

Filed Sept. 3, 1926

3 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1.

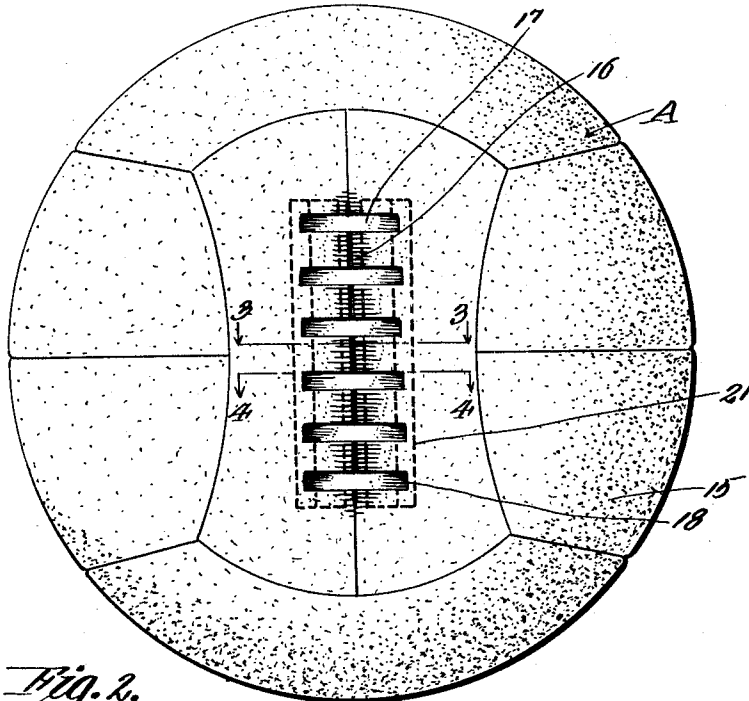


Fig. 2.

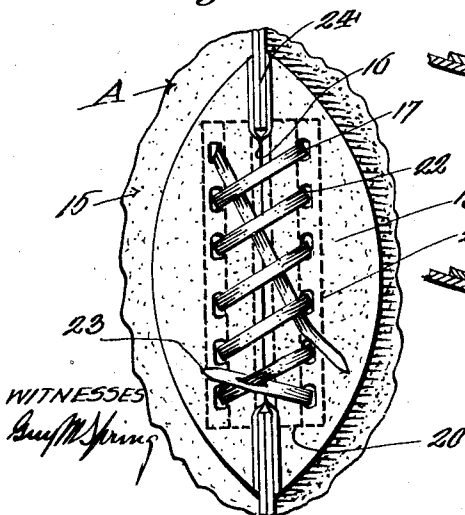


Fig. 3.

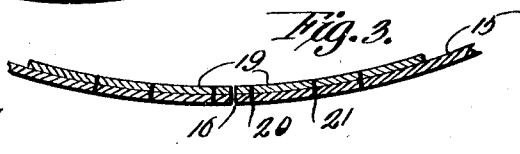
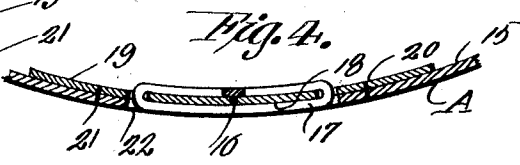


Fig. 4.



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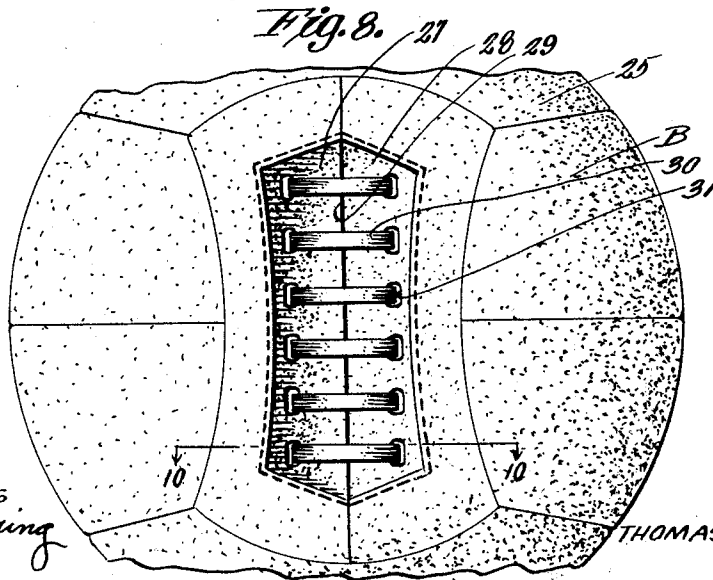
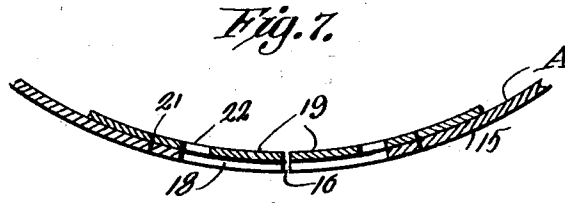
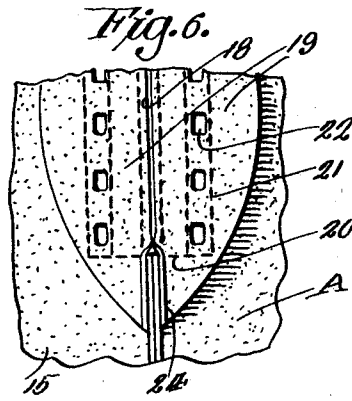
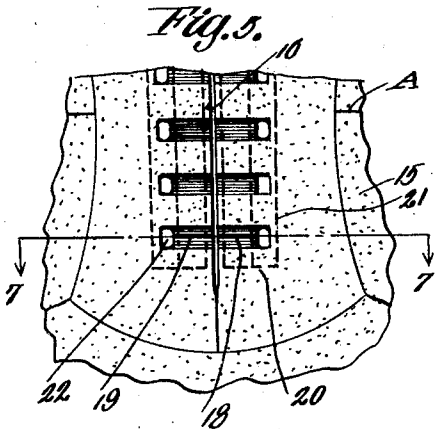
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Filed Sept. 3, 1926

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WITNESSES
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Fig. 9.

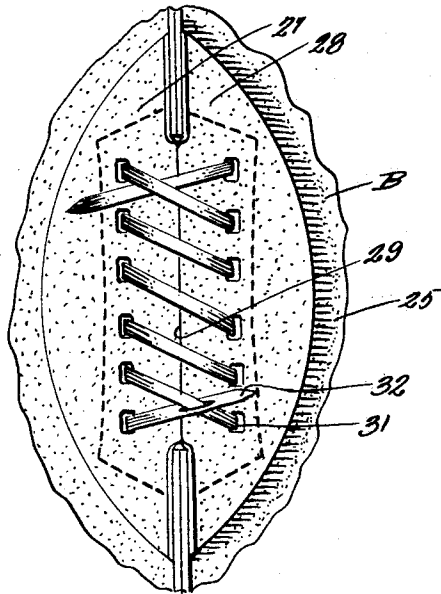


Fig. 10.

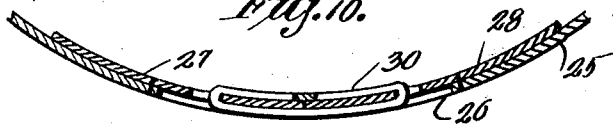
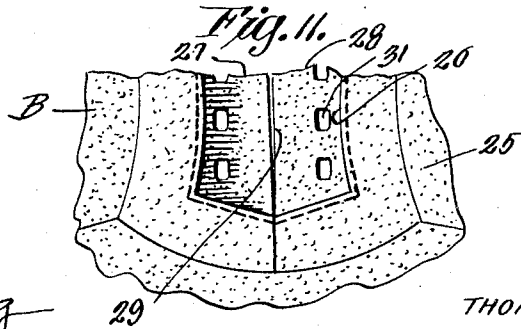


Fig. 11.



WITNESSES

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

THOMAS GREER, OF GLOVERSVILLE, NEW YORK; ISABELLA GREER, ADMINISTRATRIX OF SAID THOMAS GREER, DECEASED, ASSIGNOR, BY MESNE ASSIGNMENTS, TO WILSON-WESTERN SPORTING GOODS COMPANY, OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, A CORPORATION OF DELAWARE.

LACING FOR SOCCER FOOTBALLS.

Application filed September 3, 1926. Serial No. 133,466.

This invention relates to balls of the type embodying an inflatable bladder such as footballs, basketballs, volley balls, rugby balls and the like.

One of the primary objects of the invention is to provide novel means for lacing soccer and like balls, whereby such lacing will be flush with the outer surface of the ball, thereby accurately preserving the contour of the ball and thus permitting the highest degree of speed and accuracy in the bouncing and rolling of the ball and the elimination of the risk of injury from projecting laces.

Another salient object of the invention is the provision of means for lacing the casing of soccer and like balls embodying polygonal shaped openings instead of round openings through which the lace is adapted to be threaded, and recesses communicating with said openings in which the lacings are adapted to fit, whereby the said lacings will be flush with the outer surface of the casing.

A further object of the invention is the provision of novel means for permitting the countersinking of the lacings of a soccer or like ball flush with the outer surface thereof with means for reinforcing the ball at the lacing opening.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a ball of the above character which will be durable and efficient in use, one that will be simple and easy to manufacture and one which can be placed upon the market at a reasonable cost.

With these and other objects in view, the invention consists in the novel construction, arrangement and formation of parts, as will be hereinafter more specifically described, claimed, and illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which drawings:

Figure 1 is a plan view of a soccer ball illustrating one form of the novel lacing,

Figure 2 is a fragmentary inside elevation of the ball and the planter mouth thereof showing the formation of the reinforcement and the method of lacing the ball,

Figure 3 is an enlarged detail section taken on the line 3—3 of Figure 1 looking in the direction of the arrows,

Figure 4 is a similar view taken on the line 4—4 of Figure 1 showing the position of the leg in the grooves provided for that purpose,

Figure 5 is a fragmentary plan view of the ball with the lacing removed showing the novel grooves or seats for the lace,

Figure 6 is a fragmentary inside elevation of the casing of the ball with the lacing removed,

Figure 7 is an enlarged section taken on the line 7—7 of Figure 5 looking in the direction of the arrows,

Figure 8 is a fragmentary top plan view of the ball of the soccer type showing a modified type of lacing,

Figure 9 is a fragmentary side elevation of the ball utilizing the modified type of lacing,

Figure 10 is a transverse section taken on the line 10—10 of Figure 8 looking in the direction of the arrows,

Figure 11 is a fragmentary top plan view with the lacing removed.

Referring to the drawings in detail, wherein similar reference characters designate corresponding parts throughout the several views, the letter A generally indicates a ball constructed in accordance with one form of my invention. The ball A has been shown of the soccer football type but it is to be understood that the invention is to be applied to all types of balls embodying an outer protecting casing and an inner inflatable bladder.

The ball A comprises a protecting casing, preferably of leather which is constructed according to the usual or any preferred method with the exception of the mouth 16 thereof through which the bladder is introduced and the novel means of constructing said mouth for receiving the lacing 17. As in the usual construction the mouth 16 is an elongated slot arranged at the top of the ball and in the present instance the ball on each side of the mouth 16 thereof is provided with a plurality of transversely aligned slots 18 which extend entirely through the casing. Secured to the inner face of the flexible casing 15 on each side of the slit or mouth 16 are reinforcing leather strips 19 which extend to the said mouth or slit and cover the slots 18. The leather reinforcing strips 19 can be secured in any desired manner to the casing, such as by the use of a suitable adhesive and stitching. Attention is directed to the manner of stitching these leather strips in place and it is to be noted that a series of rows of stitch-

ing 21 is utilized, which rows extend parallel with the sides of the mouth or slit 16 and the innermost rows are adjacent the edges of said slit. Thus these plates or reinforcing strips 19 form a bottom for the slots 18 so that the slots are in the nature of grooves which form seats for the lacing. At the outer ends of the slots 18 the reinforcing strips 19 are provided with elongated openings 22 through which the lacing 17 is adapted to be threaded. These openings allow the lacings to be threaded there-through in a substantially flat condition, thus eliminating the necessity of rounding or tapering the lacing as is necessary in balls having round lacing openings.

In lacing a ball the lacings are run transversely across the outer face of the casing and are fitted within the grooves or slots 18 as clearly shown in Figure 4 of the drawings. Thus the lacing on the outer surface of the ball will be flush therewith and thus not interfere with the bounding or rolling and catching of the ball.

Referring to Figure 2 of the drawing it can be seen that the lacing extends diagonally from one opening to the other and that the terminals of the lacing are placed under the diagonally extending portions as indicated by the reference character 23.

The proper method of securing the end of the lace after passing through the first two holes is, by passing part of the lace through a slit cut near the end of the lace to form a loop as clearly shown in the drawings.

It is to be also noted by referring to Figure 2, that the extreme ends of the reinforcing strips 19 are sewed to the seams 24 of the portions of leather from which the ball is formed.

In Figures 7 to 11 inclusive I have shown a modified form of lacing the ball and in this form the ball is generally indicated by the reference character B.

In this form of the invention the casing 25 is provided with an elongated opening 26 and affixed or otherwise secured to the inner face of the casing are reinforcing strips 27 and 28 which can be and preferably are formed of leather. These strips cover the opening 26 and form an inner wall for the same and these strips at the longitudinal

center of said openings defining a slit or mouth 29 through which the bladder of the ball is adapted to be inserted and blown up. By securing the strips 27 and 28 to the inside of the casing 25 at the opening 26, it can be seen that the strips will lie inward of the outer face of the ball and thus form a countersunk portion in which the lacing 30 is adapted to lie. The lacing 30 is of substantially the same thickness as the thickness of the casing so as to lie flush with the outer surface of the casing. Each strip is provided with a longitudinal row of elongated or polygonal shaped openings 31 through which the lacing is inserted and the terminals of the lacing are adapted to be inserted under the portions of the lacing extending transversely of the slit portion on the inner surface of the ball as indicated by the reference character 32.

Rugby footballs made from this design provide a much better gripping surface for the fingers when in the act of throwing the ball and consequently will greatly increase the distance and accuracy of the throw. The fingers fitting in between the lacings and holding on the ribs formed by the outer casing provides this grip.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that I have provided a novel means for lacing the casing of footballs and the like in which the lacing will be flush with the outer surface of such ball and the casing will be reinforced at the mouth thereof.

Changes in details may be made without departing from the spirit or scope of this invention, but:

What I claim as new is:

A ball comprising a protecting casing having an entrance slit and transverse slots communicating with said slit, reinforcing strips secured to the inner surface of the ball and meeting at the entrance slit and forming bottoms for the transverse slots, said strips being provided with a row of apertures having substantially flat sides on the side toward said slits, and a lacing threaded through said openings and drawn against the flat side of said openings in said transverse slots for closing said slits.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature.

THOMAS GREER.