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(54) Abstract Title: **Football chest protector**

(57) A football garment 1 comprises a body section 3 for fitting to the trunk of a wearer, including a front panel 5 and at least one chest protection element 17a, 17b disposed on the front panel 5 to provide protection for a chest region of the wearer on impact with a football. The front panel 5 may include at least one pocket 19a, 19b to receive the chest protection element(s) 17a, 17b. This may allow the element(s) to be changed to vary the level of protection.

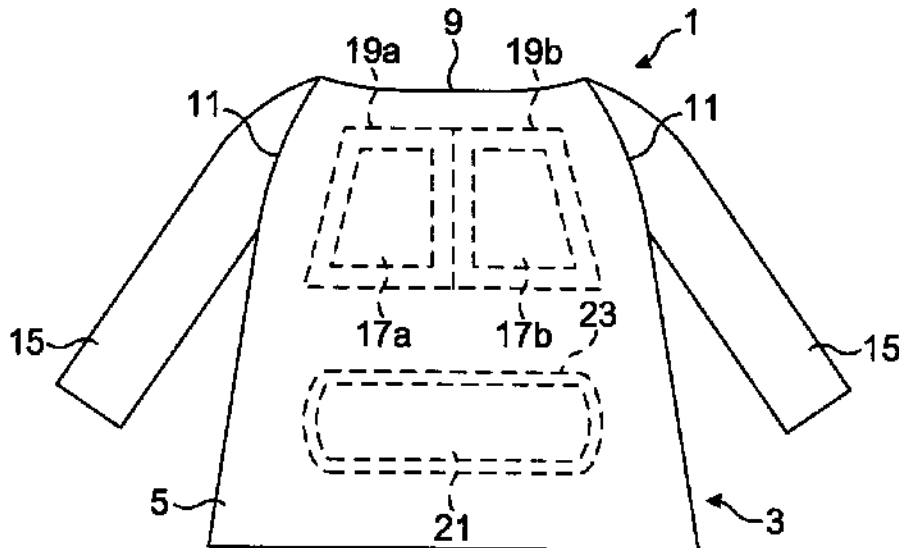


FIG. 1

At least one drawing originally filed was informal and the print reproduced here is taken from a later filed formal copy.

This print takes account of replacement documents submitted after the date of filing to enable the application to comply with the formal requirements of the Patents Rules 1995

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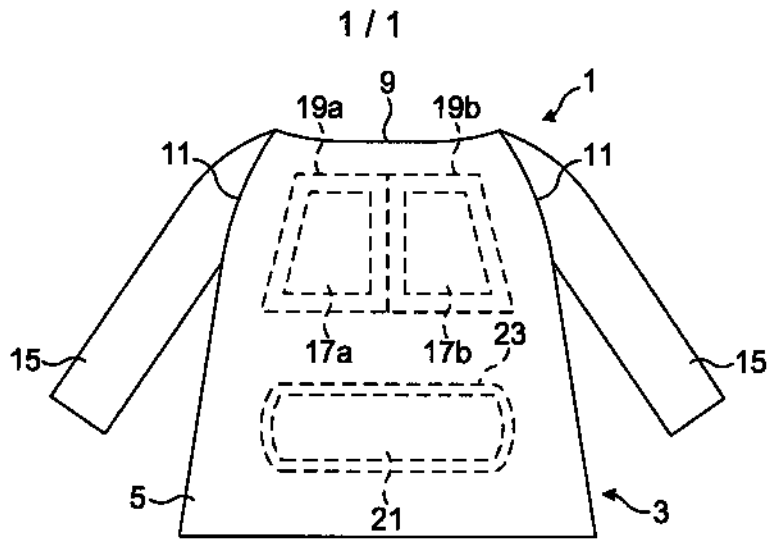


FIG. 1

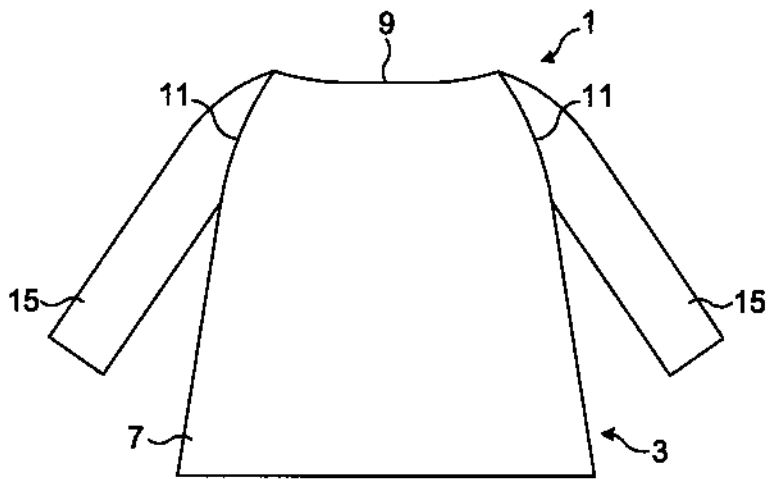


FIG. 2

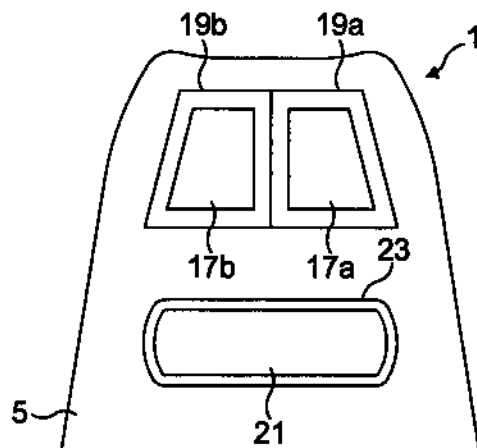


FIG. 3

A FOOTBALL GARMENT

The present invention relates to a football garment which includes at least chest protection elements for protecting the chest region of a wearer.

The present invention finds particular application in relation to children who are uncomfortable with controlling a football on their chests, this being a necessary skill of a footballer.

By providing a football garment which includes chest protection elements, and in a preferred embodiment chest protection elements which are interchangeable to provide differing levels of protection, the present inventors have provided a football garment which facilitates chest control.

Accordingly, the present invention is a football garment comprising: a body section for fitting to a trunk of a wearer, the body section including a front panel; and at least one chest protection element disposed to the front panel to provide protection for a chest region of the wearer on impact with a football.

In a preferred embodiment the body section of the garment is formed of an elasticated material and configured such as to be a tight fit to the trunk of the wearer.

In another embodiment the body section of the garment is configured to be a loose fit to the trunk of the wearer.

Preferably, the at least one chest protection element is formed from a resilient material.

In one embodiment the at least one chest protection element is formed from a foam material.

In another embodiment the at least one chest protection element is formed from a rubberised material.

In a further embodiment the at least one chest protection element is formed from a gel-like material.

In another embodiment the at least one chest protection element is formed from a plastics material.

Preferably, the front panel of the body section includes at least one chest pocket for receiving the at least one chest protection element.

In one embodiment the at least one chest protection element is permanently attached to the body section.

In another embodiment the at least one chest protection element is removable.

In a further embodiment the garment forms part of a football garment kit, comprising the above-described garment, where including a plurality of chest protection elements which alone or in combination provide differing levels of protection, thereby enabling the configuration of the garment to provide for differing levels of chest protection.

A preferred embodiment of the present invention will now be described hereinbelow by way of example only with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 illustrates a front view of a football garment in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 2 illustrates a rear view of the football garment of Figure 1; and



Figure 3 illustrates an interior view of the front panel of the garment of Figure 1.

The garment 1 comprises a body section 3 which comprises front and rear panels 5, 7, a neck opening 9 and arm openings 11, 11, and sleeves 15, 15 which are attached to the arm openings 11, 11.

In this embodiment the garment 1 is fabricated from a resilient material, typically a fabric containing Lycra (RTM), to provide for a tight fit to the trunk of the body of the wearer, and thereby prevent any significant movement of the garment in use. In another embodiment the garment 1 could be loose fitting and fabricated from a non-elasticated material such as cotton.

The body section 3 includes at least one chest protection element 17, in this embodiment first and second chest protection elements 17a, 17b, in the front panel 5 thereof to provide protection to a chest region of the wearer. The chest protection elements 17a, 17b can be formed of a foam padding material, such as a closed cell foam, a rubberised material, a gel-like material or a rigid material, such as a plastic.

The front panel 5 of the body section 3 includes at least one chest pocket 19, in this embodiment first and second pockets 19a, 19b, for receiving the chest protection elements 17a, 17b, with the chest protection elements 17a, 17b being removable in this embodiment as to allow for replacement.

In one embodiment the garment 1 is supplied with a plurality of chest protection elements 17a, 17b which alone or in combination provide for a differing level of protection, thereby allowing the level of protection to be tailored to the wearer. In this regard, it is envisaged that chest protection elements 17a, 17b providing progressively lesser chest protection will be used as the wearer develops his/her confidence in controlling a football on his/her chest, which should happen over time, and with increasing age.

In an alternative embodiment the chest protection elements 17a, 17b can be permanently fixed to the front panel 5 of the body section 3.

The body section 3 further includes an abdomen protection element 21 in the front panel 5 thereof to provide protection to the abdomen of the wearer. The abdomen protection element 21 can be formed of a foam padding material, such as a closed cell foam, a rubberised material, a gel-like material or a rigid material, such as a plastic.

The front panel 5 of the body section 3 includes an abdomen pocket 23 for receiving the abdomen protection element 21, with the abdomen protection element 21 being removable in this embodiment as to allow for replacement.

In an alternative embodiment the abdomen protection element 23 can be permanently fixed to the front panel 5 of the body section 3.

In this embodiment the sleeves 5 are made in part from a mesh fabric at the arm openings 11, 11 in the body section 3 to allow for perspiration.

In an alternative embodiment the garment 1 need not include sleeves 15, 15.

Finally, it will be understood that the present invention has been described in its preferred embodiments and can be modified in many different ways without departing from the scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.



CLAIMS

1. A football garment, comprising:
a body section for fitting to a trunk of a wearer, the body section including a front panel; and
at least one chest protection element disposed to the front panel to provide protection for a chest region of the wearer on impact with a football.
2. The garment of claim 1, wherein the body section is formed of an elasticated material and configured such as to be a tight fit to the trunk of the wearer.
3. The garment of claim 1, wherein the body section configured to be a loose fit to the trunk of the wearer.
4. The garment of any of claims 1 to 3, wherein the at least one chest protection element is formed from a resilient material.
5. The garment of claim 4, wherein the at least one chest protection element is formed from a foam material.
6. The garment of claim 4, wherein the at least one chest protection element is formed from a rubberised material.
7. The garment of claim 4, wherein the at least one chest protection element is formed from a gel-like material.
8. The garment of claim 4, wherein the at least one chest protection element is formed from a plastics material.
9. The garment of any of claims 1 to 8, wherein the front panel of the body section includes at least one chest pocket for receiving the at least one chest protection element.



10. The garment of claim 9, wherein the at least one chest protection element is permanently attached to the body section.
11. The garment of claim 9, wherein the at least one chest protection element is removable.
12. A football garment kit, comprising the garment of claim 9, where including a plurality of chest protection elements which alone or in combination provide differing levels of protection, thereby enabling the configuration of the garment to provide for differing levels of chest protection.
13. A football garment substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.





INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Application No: GB 0313027.5
Claims searched: 1-13

Examiner: Peter Middleton
Date of search: 29 July 2003

Patents Act 1977 : Search Report under Section 17

Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Relevant to claims	Identity of document and passage or figure of particular relevance
X	1-2, 4-12	US 6035452 A (BRAXTON) see abstract
X	1-8,10	US 2002133867 A (LEE) whole document
X	1,4,5,10 at least	EP 0246812 A (COX) see abstract
X	1,4,6,10 at least	FR 2787298 A (GOMARD) see English abstract
X	1,4,10 at least	US 5652967 A (HSU) see abstract

Categories:

X Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art
Y Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.	P Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
& Member of the same patent family	E Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.

Field of Search:

Search of GB, EP, WO & US patent documents classified in the following areas of the UKC^v:

A3V

Worldwide search of patent documents classified in the following areas of the IPC^v:

A41D
A63B

The following online and other databases have been used in the preparation of this search report:

EPODOC, WPI, JAPIO