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(54) **DEVICE FOR BREAKING IN AND SHAPING A GLOVE**

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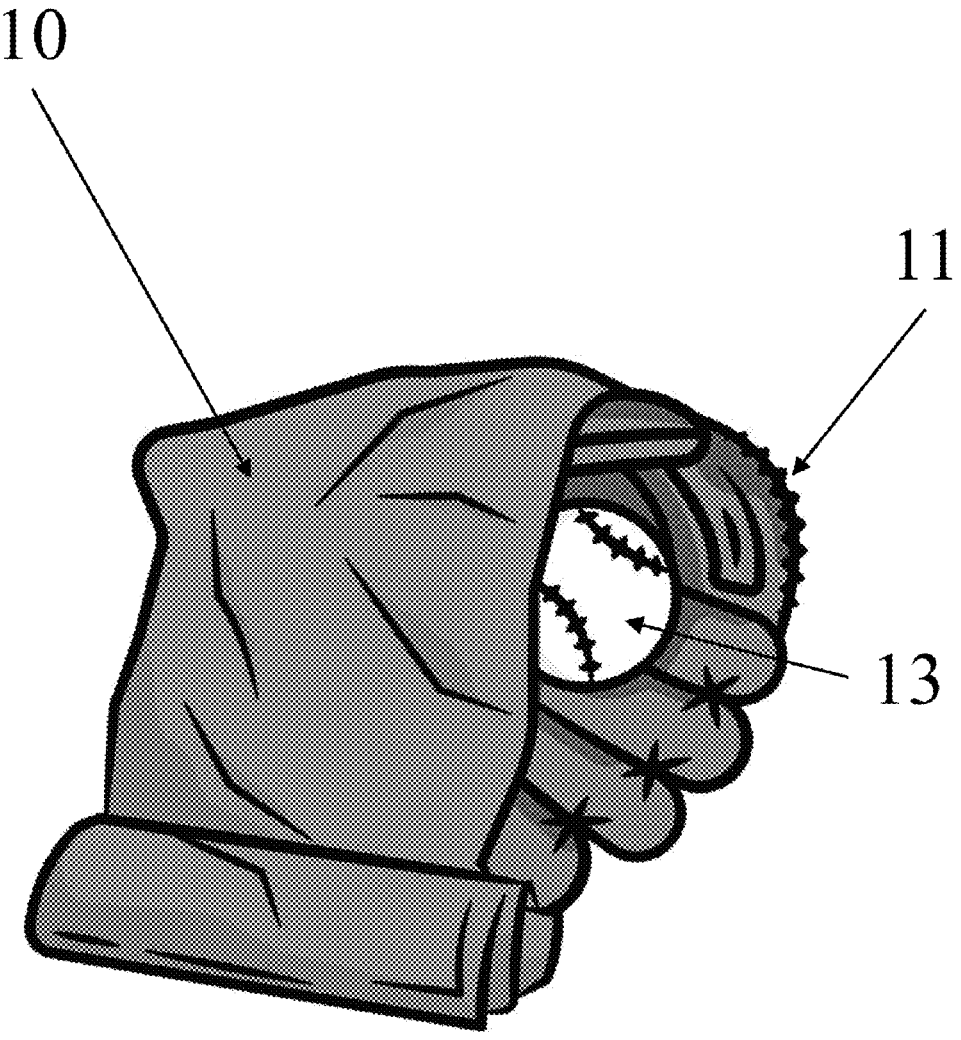
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A stretch or compression band used to tightly wrap a baseball, softball, hockey, or any sports glove of any kind where the glove is intended to hold or catch an object to break in and form a perfect pocket. The band is a latex-type stretch band is 0.35 mm thick, 4 ft long, 5 inches wide and made from a thermoplastic elastomer material that is tightly wrapped around the entirety of the glove, enclosing or encasing the entirety of the glove, breaking in all of the rigid points, which allows the glove to become a lot easier to use in opening and closing it. After wrapping the entirety of the band around the glove, the band end tucks into itself and sticks in place for as long as a user wants, whether to simply break in and shape the glove, or to store it while not in use.



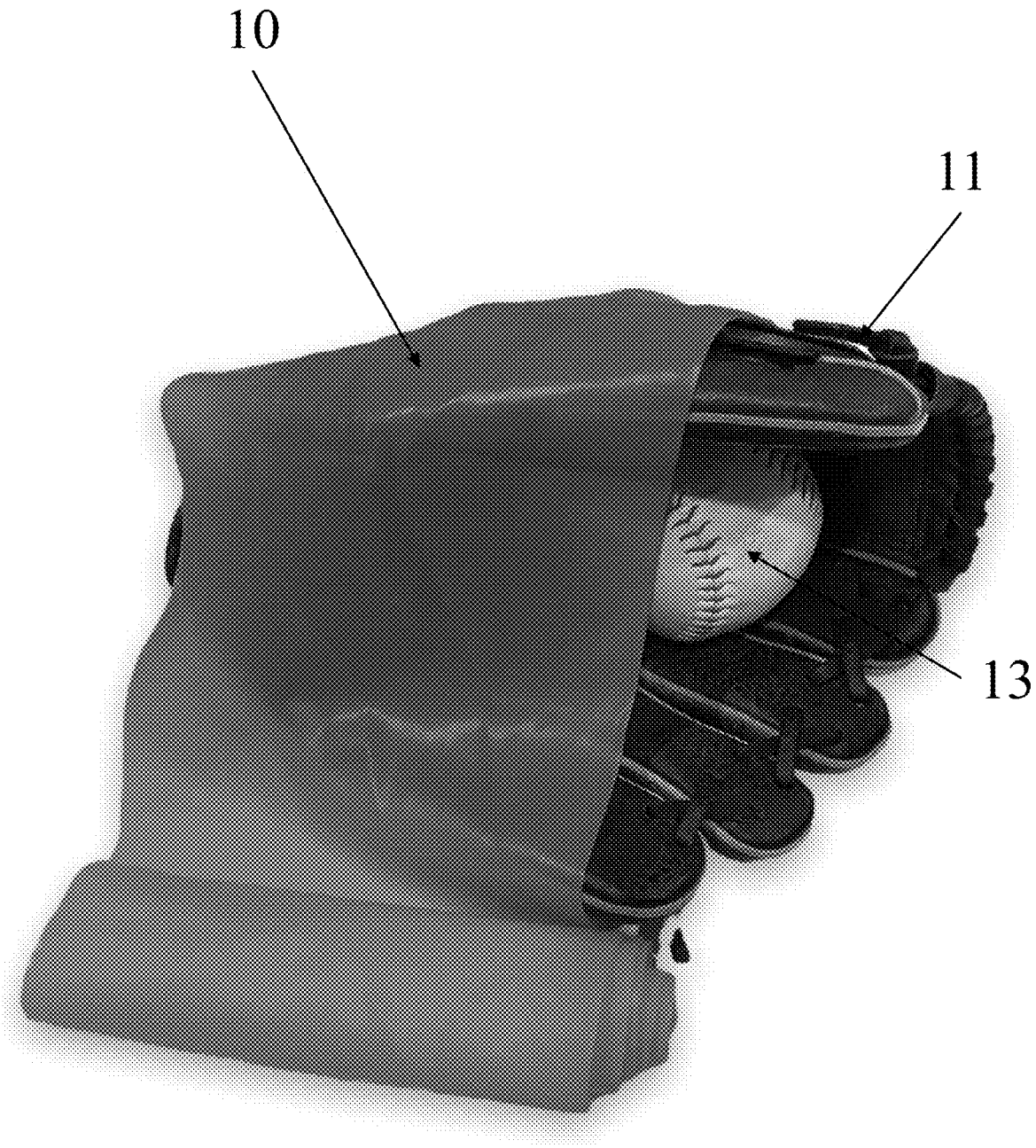


Fig. 1

Fig. 2

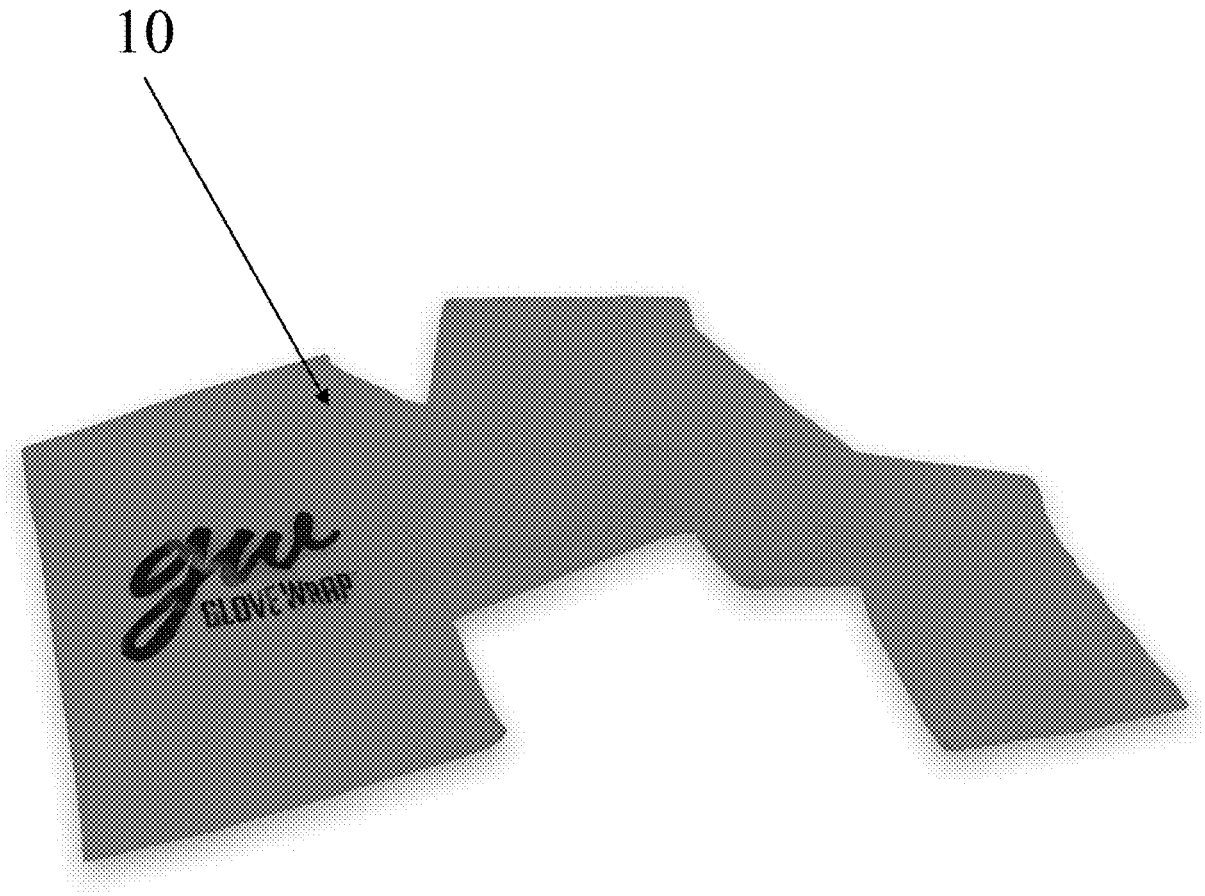


Fig. 3

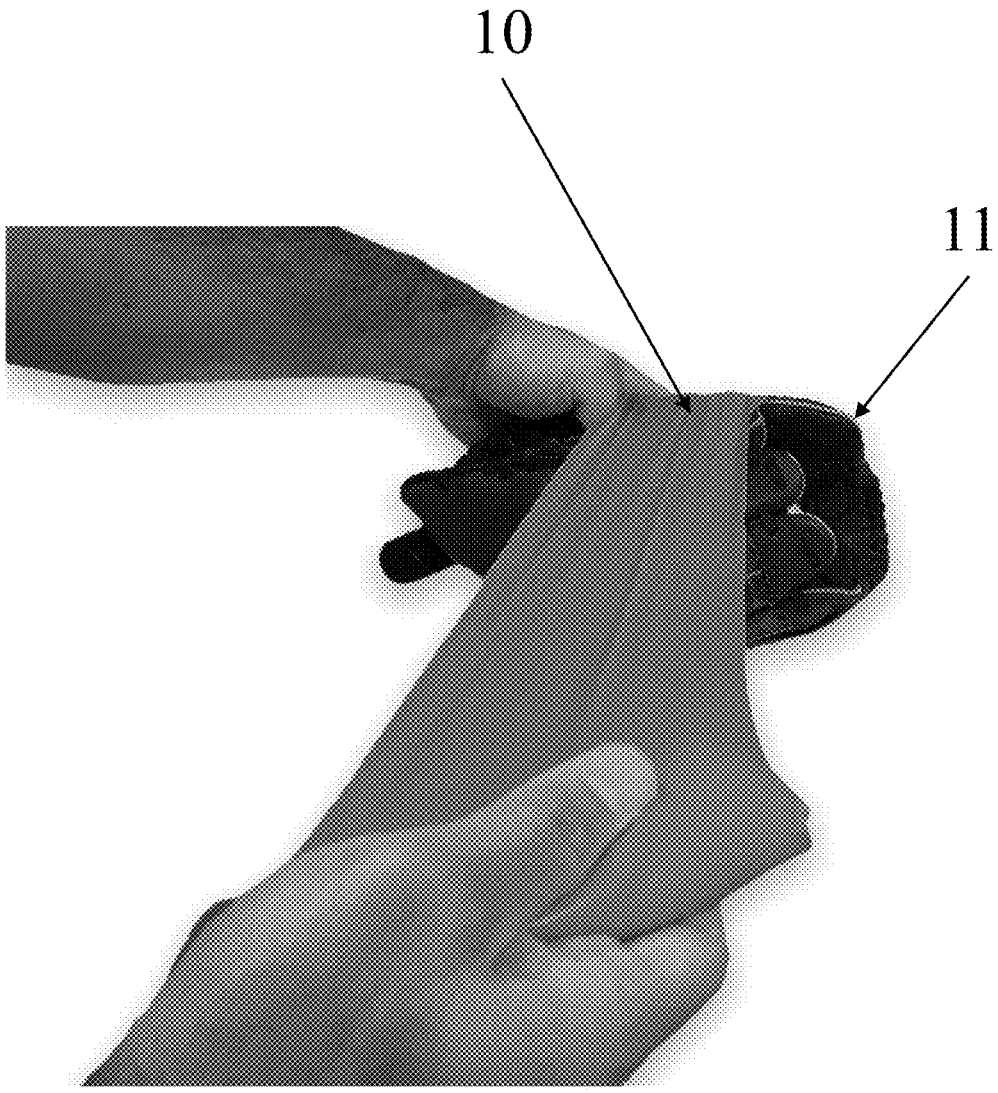


Fig. 4

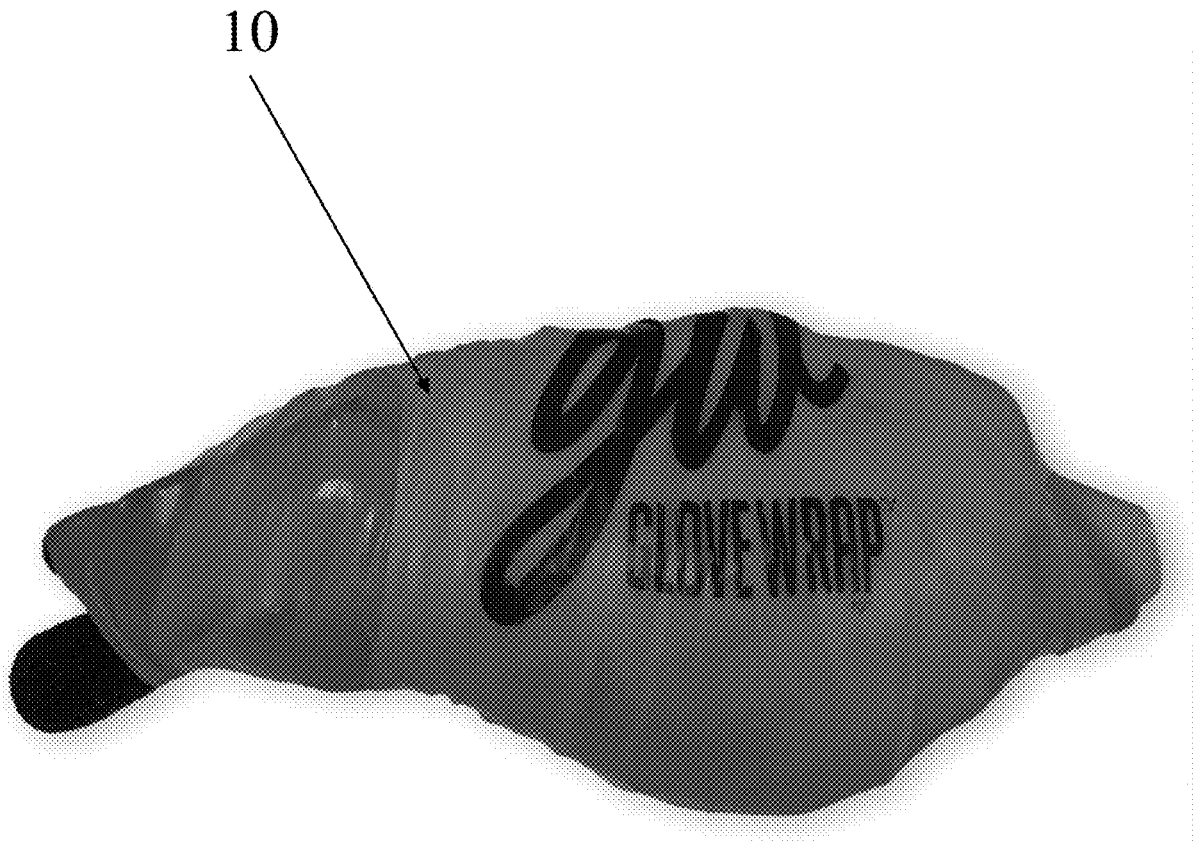


Fig. 5

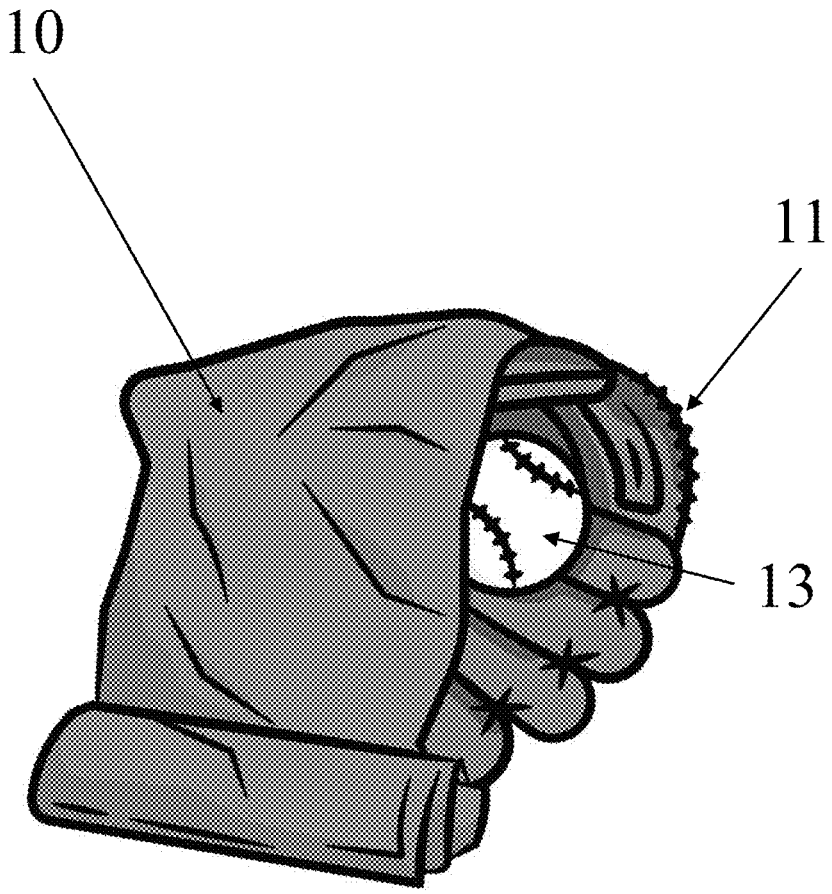


Fig. 6

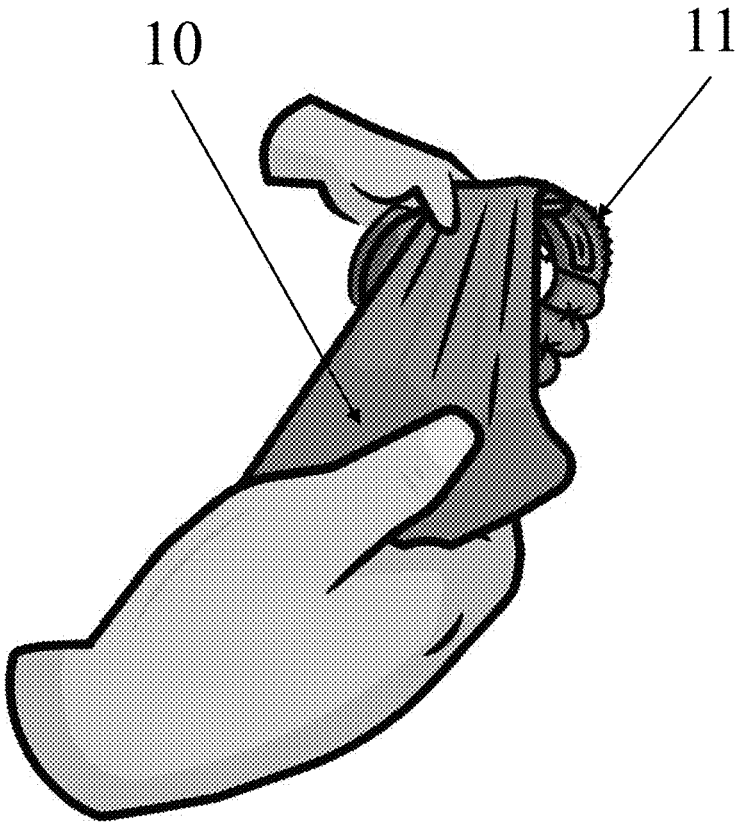


Fig. 7

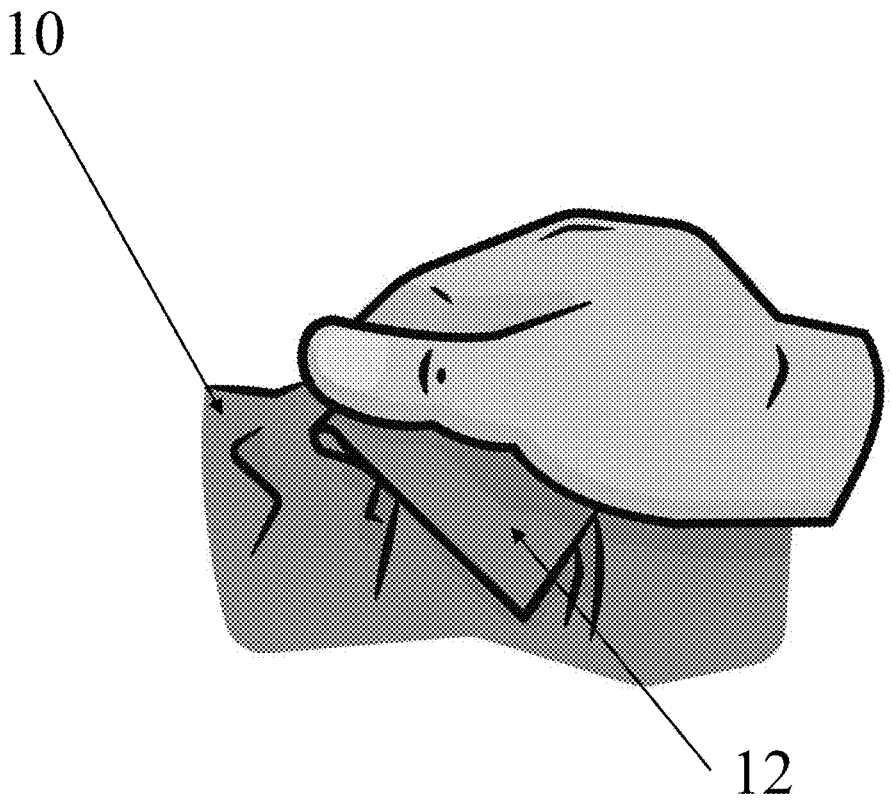


Fig. 8

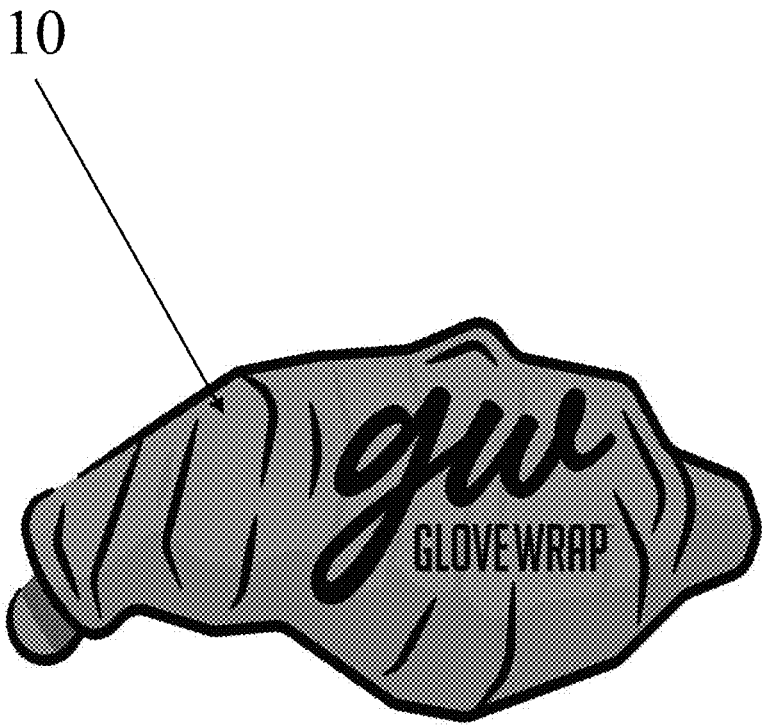


Fig. 9

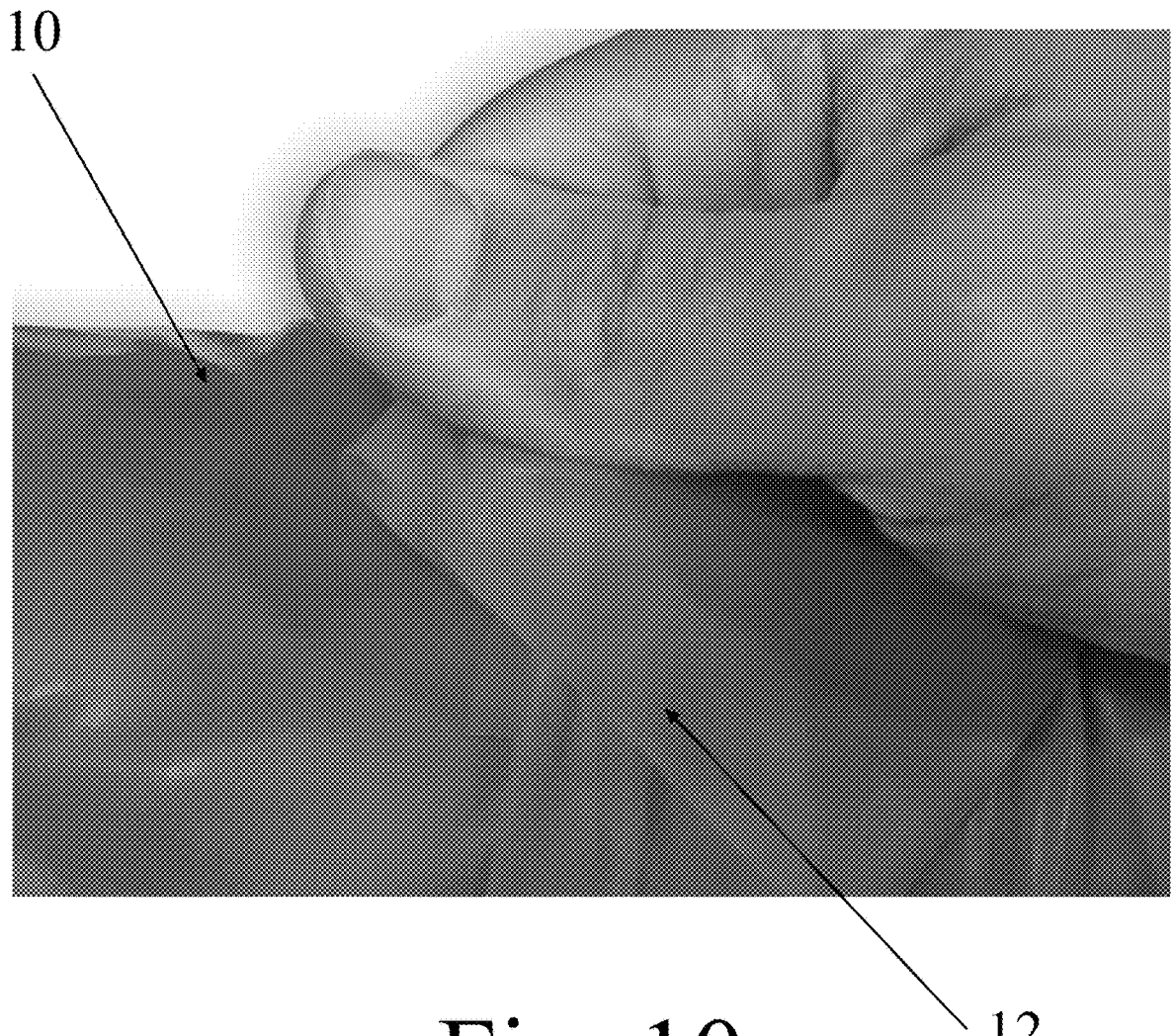


Fig. 10

DEVICE FOR BREAKING IN AND SHAPING A GLOVE

FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH

[0001] Not Applicable

SEQUENCE LISTING OR PROGRAM

[0002] Not Applicable

TECHNICAL FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0003] The present invention relates to baseball, softball, and hockey gloves. More particularly, the invention relates to using a compression wrapping that completely encompasses the glove to break in and shape a baseball, softball, hockey glove, or any sports glove of any kind where the glove is intended to hold or catch an object.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0004] Baseball, softball, and hockey gloves should fit nice and snug, like it's part of your hand. Without breaking in and shaping a glove, it is very stiff and very hard to close when trying to catch or field a ball. This is especially important for kids and youth, starting from Tee-ball or early age levels for any sport where a glove is intended to hold or catch an object.

[0005] Many common way of breaking in a glove include putting it in the microwave or rubbing it with oil. Often times, people new to the sport of baseball, softball, or hockey believe warming or oiling a glove is the best way to loosen up the leather to make it more pliable, but these common tactics result in damage. While a microwave will heat up a glove and make it more pliable, it is also likely to severely dry out the glove which can lead to leather and lace damage and pre-mature failure. Using oil is another common method for breaking in gloves, and while commonly accepted, it is over misused and overdone. The process of using oil to make a glove more pliable results from the oil breaking down the leather to make it more pliable, which again leads to pre-mature failure and wear.

[0006] Another common way of breaking in a glove is to place one or more balls, pucks or other objects the glove is intended to catch in the pocket and wrapping it with rubber bands. The use of multiple rubber bands is frustrating as they are hard to place over the glove, difficult to make tight, and often fail which can result in harm to the use, which is typically a child.

[0007] Therefore, what is needed is a device designed to make the most of baseball, softball, and hockey gloves, by breaking them in and shaping them with ease, while forming the perfect pocket.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] The device of the present invention is a stretch or compression band that is used to tightly wrap and completely encompass a baseball, softball, hockey, or any sports glove of any kind where the glove is intended to hold or catch an object to break in and form a perfect pocket, without causing damage or unnecessary pre-mature aging to the leather and laces of the glove.

[0009] The present invention is a product to break in and shape baseball, softball, hockey, or any sports glove of any kind where the glove is intended to hold or catch an object, while also forming the perfect pocket for catching balls.

[0010] The band taught by the present invention is a 4 foot long by 5 inch latex-type stretchy band that is tightly wrapped around the entirety of the glove, breaking in all of the rigid points, which allows the glove to become a lot easier to use in opening and closing it.

[0011] After wrapping the entirety of the band around the glove, the band end tucks into itself and sticks in place for as long as a user wants, whether to simply break in and shape the glove, or to store it while not in use. Based on extensive testing, the Inventors recommend leaving it overnight and unwrapping it in the morning.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] The accompanying drawings, which are incorporated herein and form a part of the specification, illustrate the present invention and, together with the description, further serve to explain the principles of the invention and to enable a person skilled in the pertinent art to make and use the invention.

[0013] FIG. **1** is a perspective view of the band taught by the present invention as it is starting to be wrapped around a glove.

[0014] FIG. **2** is a perspective view of the band taught by the present invention as package and sold for use on gloves.

[0015] FIG. **3** is a perspective view of the band taught by the present invention partially unwrapped for use on gloves.

[0016] FIG. **4** is a perspective view of the band taught by the present invention as being partially wrapped around a glove as taught by the method of the present invention.

[0017] FIG. **5** is a perspective view of the band taught by the present invention as being completely wrapped around a glove as taught by the method of the present invention.

[0018] FIG. **6** is a perspective view of the band taught by the present invention as being partially wrapped around a glove as taught by the method of the present invention.

[0019] FIG. **7** is a perspective view of the band taught by the present invention as being partially wrapped around a glove where the band is pulled firmly to create pressure around the glove as taught by the method of the present invention.

[0020] FIG. **9** is a perspective view of the band taught by the present invention as being completely wrapped around a glove and when the end of the band is reached after the glove has been tightly wrapped, the end is tucked into itself so that the band and pressure remain, and the band is held in place as taught by the method of the present invention.

[0021] FIG. **9** is a perspective view of the band taught by the present invention as being completely wrapped around a glove as taught by the method of the present invention.

[0022] FIG. **10** is a perspective view of the band taught by the present invention as being completely wrapped around a glove and when the end of the band is reached after the glove has been tightly wrapped, the end is tucked into itself so that the band and pressure remain, and the band is held in place as taught by the method of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0023] In the following detailed description of the invention of exemplary embodiments of the invention, reference is made to the accompanying drawings (where like numbers

represent like elements), which form a part hereof, and in which is shown by way of illustration specific exemplary embodiments in which the invention may be practiced. These embodiments are described in sufficient detail to enable those skilled in the art to practice the invention, but other embodiments may be utilized, and logical, mechanical, electrical, and other changes may be made without departing from the scope of the present invention. The following detailed description is, therefore, not to be taken in a limiting sense, and the scope of the present invention is defined only by the appended claims.

[0024] In the following description, numerous specific details are set forth to provide a thorough understanding of the invention. However, it is understood that the invention may be practiced without these specific details. In other instances, well-known structures and techniques known to one of ordinary skill in the art have not been shown in detail in order not to obscure the invention. Referring to the figures, it is possible to see the various major elements constituting the apparatus of the present invention.

[0025] The device of the present invention is a stretch or compression band **10** that is used to tightly wrap a baseball, softball, hockey glove, or any sports glove of any kind where the glove is intended to hold or catch an object to break in and form a perfect pocket, without causing damage or unnecessary pre-mature aging to the leather and laces of the glove.

[0026] The present invention is a product to break in and shape a baseball, softball, hockey glove, or any sports glove of any kind where the glove is intended to hold or catch an object, while also forming the perfect pocket for catching balls.

[0027] Previous solutions such as those involving oil, microwaves, and rubber bands as previously discussed have many limitations. The present invention provides a solution that covers the entirety of a glove, encompassing or encasing the entire glove and breaks in the entire glove, not just sections or portions of the glove, which is the shortcoming of all prior art solutions that exists in the market.

[0028] The present invention, by providing easy means for wrapping the entirety of a glove breaks in the entire glove and not just parts of the glove. A glove has a plurality of rigid points and the present invention allows break in of all rigid points at one time compared to other solutions that only allow break in to specific points and must be constantly re-applied and applied in different orientations to obtain the same result as the present invention, which can be applied in a single use to condition the entirety of a glove at one time and in one application.

[0029] For example, rubber bands are often used to compress a glove around a ball, but they only apply pressure around the pocket of the glove. A glove has rigid points all along the top and bottom portions that also need to be reshaped to allow for easier opening and closing, which results in making a ball, puck, or any object easier to catch.

[0030] Thus, the present invention products a glove break in device and method which allows for and teaches complete and entire break in of a glove by enabling the wrapping of a glove in its entirety compared to specific points or sections of prior art devices to provide reshaping and break-in for the entirety of a glove.

[0031] The band **10** taught by the present invention is a 4 foot long by 5 inch latex-type stretchy band as shown in FIGS. **1**, **2**, and **3** that is tightly wrapped around the entirety of the glove **11**, encompassing or encasing the entirety of the glove **11**, as shown in FIGS. **4-5**, breaking in all of the rigid points, which allows the glove **11** to become a lot easier to use in opening and closing it.

[0032] After wrapping the entirety of the band **10** around the glove **11** as shown in FIGS. **5** and **9**, the band end **12** tucks into itself and sticks in place as shown in FIG. **10** for as long as a user wants, whether to simply break in and shape the glove **11**, or to store it while not in use. Based on extensive testing, the Inventors recommend leaving it overnight and unwrapping it in the morning.

[0033] In a preferred embodiment the latex-type stretch band **10** is 0.35 mm thick, 4 ft long, 5 inches wide and made from a thermoplastic elastomer material that wraps around and covers the entirety of the glove **11** as shown in FIGS. **5** and **9**, creating pressure to reshape and break in baseball, softball, hockey glove, or any sports glove of any kind where the glove is intended to hold or catch an object. The band can also be used to store a glove when not in use.

[0034] Now referring to FIGS. **6-10**, the specific method of using the band **10** of the present invention is illustrated. The present invention teaches four steps for using the band **10** of the present invention and a method for breaking in a glove **11** using the band **10** of the present invention, although the method taught herein may be used by other similar devices and is not limited to the specific band **10** taught by the present invention.

[0035] Now referring to FIG. **6**, in a first step a user places a ball or whatever object **13** the glove **11** is intend to catch like a softball or puck, inside the pocket of a glove **11**. The band **10** is wrapped around the glove **11** while holding it closed. Next, as the glove **11** is being wrapped, while keeping the glove **11** closed, the band **10** is pulled firmly to create pressure around the glove **11** as shown in FIG. **7**. The more pressure created, the better.

[0036] Now referring to FIGS. **8** and **10**, when the end **12** of the band **10** is reached after the glove **11** has been tightly wrapped, the end **12** can be tucked into itself so that the band **10** and pressure remain, and the band **10** is held in place. Finally, as shown in FIG. **9**, the glove **11** should be left fully wrapped and in place overnight, or for a period of 12-24 hours. The process can be repeated as many times and for as long as the user wants until the desired pliability of the glove **11** is reached.

[0037] While the example given and illustrated is directed to a baseball glove, as taught above, the present invention is applicable to baseball, softball, hockey, or any sports glove of any kind where the glove is intended to hold or catch an object. As such, the scope of the present invention should not be limited to the specific embodiment illustrate for exemplary purposes.

[0038] Thus, it is appreciated that the optimum dimensional relationships for the parts of the invention, to include variation in size, materials, shape, form, function, and manner of operation, assembly, and use, are deemed readily apparent and obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, and all equivalent relationships to those illustrated in the drawings and described in the above description are intended to be encompassed by the present invention.

[0039] Furthermore, other areas of art may benefit from this method and adjustments to the design are anticipated. Thus, the scope of the invention should be determined by the appended claims and their legal equivalents, rather than by the examples given.

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. A device for breaking in and shaping a baseball, softball, or hockey glove, comprising:

a stretch or compression band that is used to tightly wrap a baseball or software glove to break in and form a perfect pocket.

2. The device for breaking in and shaping a baseball, softball, or hockey glove of claim **1**, wherein

the band is a 4 foot long by 5 inch latex-type stretchy band.

3. The device for breaking in and shaping a baseball, softball, or hockey glove of claim **1**, wherein

the band is tightly wrapped around the entirety of a glove, breaking in all of the rigid points.

4. The device for breaking in and shaping a baseball, softball, or hockey glove of claim **1**, wherein

after wrapping the entirety of the band around the glove, the band tucks into itself and sticks in place.

5. The device for breaking in and shaping a baseball, softball, or hockey glove of claim **1**, wherein

the latex-type stretch band is 0.35 mm thick, 4 ft long, 5 inches wide and made from a thermoplastic elastomer material.

6. The device for breaking in and shaping a baseball, softball, or hockey glove of claim **5**, wherein

the band wraps around and covers the entirety of a glove, creating pressure to reshape and break in baseball, softball, and hockey gloves.

7. The device for breaking in and shaping a baseball, softball, or hockey glove of claim **5**, wherein

the band is also used to store a glove when not in use.

8. The method for breaking in and shaping a baseball, softball, or hockey glove, comprising the following steps:

placing a ball inside the pocket of a glove;

holding a glove closed around a ball;

wrapped a band around the glove while holding it closed;

pulling the band firmly to create pressure around the glove as the glove is being wrapped and held closed;

tucking the end of the band into itself so that the band and pressure remain, and the band is held in place when the end of the band is reached after the glove has been tightly wrapped.

9. The method for breaking in and shaping a baseball, softball, or hockey glove of claim **8**, further comprising the following steps:

leaving the glove fully wrapped and in place overnight, or for a period of 12-24 hours.

10. The method for breaking in and shaping a baseball, softball, or hockey glove of claim **9**, further comprising the following steps:

repeating the process as many times and for as long as the user wants until the desired pliability of the glove is reached.

11. The method for breaking in and shaping a baseball, softball, or hockey glove of claim **9**, further comprising the following steps:

repeating the process to store a glove when not in use.

12. The method for breaking in and shaping a baseball, softball, or hockey glove of claim **8**, wherein

the band is a 4 foot long by 5 inch latex-type stretchy band.

13. The method for breaking in and shaping a baseball, softball, or hockey glove of claim **12**, wherein

the latex-type stretch band is 0.35 mm thick, 4 ft long, 5 inches wide and made from a thermoplastic elastomer material.

14. A device for breaking in and shaping a glove of any kind where the glove is intended to hold or catch an object, comprising:

a stretch or compression band that is used to tightly wrap a of any kind where the glove is intended to hold or catch an object to break in and form a perfect pocket corresponding to the object to which the glove is designed to catch or hold.

15. The device for breaking in and shaping of any kind where the glove is intended to hold or catch an object, of claim **14**, wherein

the band is a 4 foot long by 5 inch latex-type stretchy band.

16. The device for breaking in and shaping of any kind where the glove is intended to hold or catch an object, of claim **14**, wherein

the band is tightly wrapped around the entirety of a glove, breaking in all of the rigid points.

17. The device for breaking in and shaping of any kind where the glove is intended to hold or catch an object, of claim **14**, wherein

after wrapping the entirety of the band around the glove, the band tucks into itself and sticks in place.

18. The device for breaking in and shaping of any kind where the glove is intended to hold or catch an object, of claim **14**, wherein

the latex-type stretch band is 0.35 mm thick, 4 ft long, 5 inches wide and made from a thermoplastic elastomer material.

19. The device for breaking in and shaping of any kind where the glove is intended to hold or catch an object, of claim **14**, wherein

the band wraps around and covers the entirety of a glove, creating pressure to reshape and break in the glove.

20. The device for breaking in and shaping of any kind where the glove is intended to hold or catch an object, of claim **14**, wherein

the band is also used to store a glove when not in use.

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