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### Adapter for Anchor-Engaging Post for Base

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#### Abstract

A post adapter is provided to enable baseball or softball bases of varying sizes to be configured to engage and be aligned with a ground anchor. The adapter is engaged with the post and includes a first member including a first base plate and a first sleeve extending outwardly from the first base plate and a second member engaged with the first member, the second member including a second base plate and a second sleeve extending outwardly from the second base plate, wherein the first member is disposed in an offset position relative to the second member. The effective position of the post can be altered or reconfigured by engaging one of the first sleeve or the second sleeve with the post and engaging the second sleeve with the ground anchor.

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## Background/Summary

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS [0001] This application claims priority from U.S. Provisional Patent Application Ser. No. 63/553,892 filed on Feb. 15, 2024, the entirety of which is expressly incorporated herein by reference for all purposes.

### FIELD OF THE DISCLOSURE

[0002] The present invention relates generally to ground securing mechanisms for sporting equipment and more specifically to an adapter for ground securing structures for baseball bases.

### BACKGROUND OF THE DISCLOSURE

[0003] In the prior art, baseball and softball bases are designed to be secured to the ground on which they are positioned when in use. As shown in FIGS. 1A-B and 2A-B, in many configurations the base **100** includes a body **101** having a recess **102** located within a lower portion **104** of the body **100**. An upper portion **106** is attached or formed along with the lower portion **104** and provides the contact surface for the body **100**. The upper portion **106** is designed to be compressible in order to cushion the individual making contact with the base **100** during game play.

[0004] To engage and hold the base **100** in position on the ground or other supporting surface, as best shown in FIGS. 1A-1B, a securing mechanism **108** for the base **100** is formed with an alignment post **110** disposed within the recess **102** that is secured to the lower portion **104** and that extends outwardly from the lower position **104** within the recess **102**. The mechanism **108** additionally includes a number of bores **112** formed in the lower surface **104** adjacent the post **110**.

[0005] Referring now to FIGS. 2A-2B, the securing mechanism **108** additionally includes a sleeve **114** engaged with the alignment post **110**. The sleeve **114** is formed with a bracket **116** including a number of apertures **118** alignable with the bores **112** in the lower surface **104**. The sleeve **114** has an internal cross-section at least slightly larger than the post **110** such that the sleeve **114** can be positioned around the post **110** to align the apertures **118** in the bracket **116** with the bores **112**. The apertures **118** receive fasteners **120** therein that can be engaged within the bores **112** to secured the bracket **116** to the lower portion **104**.

[0006] In addition to aligning the apertures **118** with the bores **112**, the sleeve **114** functions to directly engage an anchor **122** disposed within the ground **124** to which the base **100** is to be secured. The sleeve **114** is formed with a length that extends outwardly from the recess **102** a sufficient distance to be engaged with the anchor **122** disposed within the ground **124**. The anchor **122** is disposed in a fixed position within the ground **124** such as by forming a hole in the ground and placing the anchor **122** therein. To secure the base **100** to the ground, the portion of the sleeve **114** extending beyond the recess **102** is inserted within or around the anchor **122** to position the base **100** in the desired position on the ground **124**.

[0007] However, different variations of baseball and/or softball have different requirements for the size of the bases utilized with those sports. However, if a particular area of ground is to be utilized for baseball and/or softball of different types, the anchors utilized to secured the bases are positioned in the ground in a manner that is not readily moveable to adjust the position of the anchors. As a result, the anchors used may not be acceptable to accommodate the bases for the different sports. More specifically, the size of the bases for baseball **100** and softball **100'**, as well as for different levels of these sports, and consequently the position of the posts **110,110'** at the center of the base, are different from one another. Because of this, even if the posts secured to different bases are able to fit within or around the same anchor, the positioning of the bases on the ground are not similar in their alignment with the required base line or path **126**, as shown in FIG. 3.

[0008] To remedy this issue some prior art solutions have been developed that involve forming the anchor with a pair of tubes. The anchor which includes the pair of tubes can be disposed in the

ground at a location where the position of each of the tubes allows for the proper placement of different bases with regard to the baseline. However, this prior art solution creates significant issues with regard to the proper placement of the anchor in the ground to position the tubes at the correct locations with respect to the baseline.

[0009] Other prior art solutions involve the securing of the post to the bottom of the base in a position offset from alignment with the center of the base. In this construction, the base can be positioned in different orientations with regard to the baseline based on the rotation of the base relative to the anchor prior to engaging the post within the anchor. However, in this construction the top or cover of the base that is secured to the bottom is not aligned with the baseline, and a separate top or cover must be employed with the base to provide the proper aligned base for the sport to be played.

[0010] Therefore, in order to overcome these shortcomings of the prior art it is desirable to develop an adapter for a baseball and/or softball base or the like that has a simplified instruction that enable bases of different sizes and/or orientations to be engaged with a single anchor in alignment with a single baseline aligned with the anchor.

#### SUMMARY OF THE DISCLOSURE

[0011] According to one exemplary aspect of the present disclosure, an adapter is formed for use with a post disposed on the lower or bottom surface of the base. The adapter includes a first member including a first base plate and a first sleeve extending outwardly therefrom. A second member is fixed to the first member in an offset position and includes a second base plate that is affixed to the first base plate, and a second sleeve that extends outwardly from the second base plate. The first sleeve has a length less than that of the second sleeve. Using the adapter, the second sleeve can be aligned or offset from the post in order to enable the second sleeve to be engaged with the anchor to align bases of different sizes with a single anchor and baseline.

[0012] Other objectives, features, benefits and advantages of the present invention will be apparent from this summary and its descriptions of certain embodiments of such formulations and compositions, and will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art having knowledge of the synthetic techniques described therewith. Such objectives, features, benefits and advantages will be apparent from the above as taken into conjunction with the accompanying examples, data, and all reasonable inferences to be drawn therefrom.

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## Description

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0013] The drawings illustrate the best mode currently contemplated of practicing the present invention.

[0014] In the drawings:

[0015] FIGS. 1A-1B are bottom plan and cross-sectional views of a prior art base.

[0016] FIGS. 2A-2B are bottom plan and cross-sectional views of a prior art base including a post secured thereto.

[0017] FIG. 3 is a schematic view of the offset of the position of a post secured to prior art bases having different sizes to be attached to an anchor on a baseline.

[0018] FIG. 4 is a perspective view of an adapter and a bottom surface and post for a base constructed according to an exemplary embodiment of the invention.

[0019] FIGS. 5A-5C are bottom plan, cross-sectional and bottom isometric views of the adapter of FIG. 4 engaged with the post to position the adapter in an aligned position.

[0020] FIGS. 6A-6C are bottom plan, cross-sectional and bottom isometric views of the adapter of FIG. 4 engaged with the post to position the adapter in an aligned position.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DISCLOSURE

[0021] With reference now to the drawing figures in which like reference numerals designate like parts throughout the disclosure, a ground engaging adapter constructed according to an exemplary embodiment of the present disclosure is shown generally at **10** in FIG. **4**. The adapter **10** includes a body **12** including a first member **14** and a second member **16**. The body **12** can be formed of any suitable material, such as a rigid material including a plastic or a metal, or combinations thereof. In the illustrated exemplary embodiment of FIG. **4**, the body **12** is formed of a metal material, such as a steel or aluminum.

[0022] The first member **14** is formed with a first base plate **18** and a first sleeve **20** extending outwardly from one side **22** of the first base plate **18**. The first base plate **18** includes a first aperture **24** that is aligned with the passage **26** defined within the interior of the first sleeve **20**. The first base plate **18** can be formed separately from the first sleeve **20** and attached thereto in any suitable manner, or can be formed integrally therewith.

[0023] The second member **16** of the body **12** includes a second base plate **28** and a second sleeve **30** extending outwardly from one side **32** of the second base plate **28**. The second base plate **28** includes a second aperture **34** that is aligned with the passage **36** defined within the interior of the second sleeve **30**. The second base plate **28** can be formed separately from the second sleeve **30** and attached thereto in any suitable manner, or can be formed integrally therewith.

[0024] In the illustrated exemplary embodiment, the first base plate **18** and the second base plate **28** are secured and/or affixed to one another in an offset and co-planar configuration with the first base plate **18** and the second base plate **28** are engaged with one another along adjacent sides of each of the first base plate **18** and the second base plate **28**. The amount of the offset between the first base plate **18** and the second base plate **28** is determined by the distance it is desired move space the second sleeve **30** from the first sleeve **20** to accommodate for the positioning required for the second sleeve **30** on bases of different sizes, e.g., a position for the second sleeve **30** on an eighteen (18) inch square base and a position for the second sleeve **30** on a fifteen (15') inch square base. In one particular exemplary embodiment, the offset of the center of the first sleeve **20** and the center of the second sleeve **30** is between about 1.0 in and about 2.0 in, and more preferably about 1.5 in.

[0025] To secure the base plates **18,28** in this position, as best shown in the exemplary embodiment of FIG. **4**, any suitable securing mechanism, material or device **38** can be utilized, such as a clamp, an adhesive or a weld **40** extending between the base plates **18,28**, among other suitable mechanisms, materials or devices. While a securing mechanism **38** that permanently affixes the first base plate **18** and the second base plate **28** to one another is shown in the illustrated embodiment, i.e., the weld **40**, securing mechanisms **38** that are releasable and/or adjustable to enable the first base plate **18** and the second base plate **28** to be disengaged from one another and/or secured to one another in variable configurations are also contemplated as being within the scope of the present disclosure.

[0026] Alternatively, as illustrated in the exemplary embodiments of FIGS. **5A-6C**, the first base plate **18** and the second base plate **28** can be integrally formed with one another in a fixed offset position using a suitable rigid material, such as a metal or plastic. In addition, the first sleeve **20** and the second sleeve **30** can be integrally formed with their respective base plates **18,28** using a suitable rigid material, such as a metal or plastic, or can be formed separately therefrom and secured to the base plates **18,28** in any suitable manner.

[0027] To enable the adapter **10** to be engaged with a bottom surface **40** of a base **42**, the first base plate **18** and the second base plate **28** each include one or more mounting holes **44** extending therethrough. The mounting holes **44** are alignable with mounting bores **46** located in the bottom surface **40** of the base **42**, such that a fastener **43** such as a screw, bolt or similar element can be inserted through the holes **44** into engagement with the bores **46** to secure the first base plate **18** or the second base plate **28** to the bottom surface **40** of the base **42**.

[0028] Between the bores **46**, the bottom surface **40** of the base **42** additionally includes an alignment post **48** that is affixed to and extends outwardly from the bottom surface **40** but that

remains disposed within recess **47** defined by the bottom surface **40**. The post **48** has a shape similar to and slightly smaller in perimeter or diameter than the first sleeve **20** and/or the second sleeve **30**, such that the post **48** can slide into the interior of the first sleeve **20** or the second sleeve **30**. The alignment post **48** additionally aligns the holes **44** in either of the first base plate **18** or the second base plate **28** with the bores **46** in the bottom surface **40** of the base **42** when inserted within the first sleeve **20** or second sleeve **30**, respectively. This alignment provided by the alignment post **48** significantly simplifies the attachment of the adapter **10** to the base **42** regardless of which sleeve **20,30** is engaged with the alignment post **48**.

[0029] Further, the first sleeve **20** is formed with a length extending outwardly from the first base plate **18** that is approximately equal to or less than the length of the alignment post **48** extending outwardly from the bottom surface **40**. In contrast, the length of the second sleeve **30** extending outwardly from the second base plate **28** is significantly longer than that of the first sleeve **20** and the alignment post **48**. With this configuration, the second sleeve **30** has a length sufficient to engage the ground anchor **50**, whether the second sleeve **30** is engaged with the alignment post **48** or not. In addition, the length of the first sleeve **20** enables the first sleeve **20** to locate the second sleeve **30** in the necessary offset position to engage the ground anchor **50**, while preventing the first sleeve **20** from extending beyond the alignment post **48** and out of the recess **47**, thereby avoiding any interference with the proper position of the base **42** flush against the ground **52**, as shown in the exemplary embodiment of FIGS. **5B** and **6B**.

[0030] In use, as best shown in the exemplary embodiments of FIGS. **5A-5C**, when a base **42** including the bottom surface **40** and post **48** has a size or configuration that enables the position of the post **48** on the base **42** to properly align the base **42** with the anchor **50** disposed in the ground **52** and the associated base line (not shown), the adapter **10** can be positioned on the base **42** with the second sleeve **30** disposed around the alignment post **48**. In this position, the mounting holes **44** in the second base plate **28** are aligned with the mounting bores **46** in the bottom surface **40** of the base **42**, such that fasteners **43** inserted through the mounting holes **44** into the mounting bores **46** can secure the second sleeve **30** around the post **48**. The second sleeve **30** can then be inserted within or around the anchor to hold the base **42** in the proper orientation on the ground **52**. In addition, in this position the first sleeve **20** is disposed in an offset position relative to the alignment post **48** but where the first sleeve **20** is retained entirely within the recess **47** defined by the bottom surface **40**, allowing the base **42** to be positioned flush against the ground **52** when the second sleeve **30** is fully engaged with the anchor **50**.

[0031] Alternatively, in the exemplary embodiment of FIGS. **6A-6C**, when the size and/or configuration of the base **42** requires the second sleeve **30** to be offset from the position of the post **48** on the base **42** for proper alignment of the base **42** relative to the anchor **50** and the associated base line, the first sleeve **20** is positioned around the post **48**. In this position, the mounting holes **44** in the first base plate **18** are aligned with the mounting bores **46** in the bottom surface **40** of the base **42**, such that fasteners **43** can be inserted through the mounting holes **44** into the mounting bores **46** to secure the first sleeve **30** around the post **48**. The second sleeve **30** in the offset position relative to the post **48** can then be inserted within the anchor **50** to hold the base **42** in the proper orientation on the ground **52** while the first sleeve **20** is disposed entirely within the recess **47**, allowing the base **42** to be positioned flush against the ground **52** when the second sleeve **30** is fully engaged with the anchor **50**.

[0032] As it is only the engagement of the fasteners **43** within the bores **46** that retains the adapter **10** on the base **42**, the adapter **10** can be readily and quickly switched in configuration and/or mounted to a base **42** to accommodate the require orientation for the base **42**.

[0033] The invention and the manner and process of making and using it are now described in such full, clear, concise and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, to make and use the same. It is to be understood that the foregoing describes preferred embodiments

of the present invention and that modifications may be made therein without departing from the spirit or scope of the present invention.

## Claims

1. A post adapter for a base, the post adapter comprising: a. a first member including a first base plate and a first sleeve extending outwardly from the first base plate; and b. a second member engaged with the first member, the second member including a second base plate and a second sleeve extending outwardly from the second base plate, wherein the first member is disposed in an offset position relative to the second member.
2. The post adapter of claim 1, wherein the second sleeve has a length greater than the first sleeve.
3. The post adapter of claim 2, wherein the post is insertable within either of the first sleeve or the second sleeve.
4. The post adapter of claim 1, wherein the first base plate is secured to the second base plate in an offset position relative to the second member.
5. The post adapter of the 4, wherein the first base plate is fixed to the second base plate.
6. The post adapter of claim 4, wherein the first base plate is integrally formed with the second base plate.
7. The post adapter of claim 4, wherein the first base plate and the second base plate are formed from a plastic or metal.
8. A base comprising: a. a bottom surface including an alignment post extending outwardly from the bottom surface; and b. a post adapter engaged with the post, the adapter comprising: i. a first member including a first base plate and a first sleeve extending outwardly from the first base plate; and ii. a second member engaged with the first member, the second member including a second base plate and a second sleeve extending outwardly from the second base plate, wherein the first member is disposed in an offset position relative to the second member.
9. The base of claim 8, wherein the bottom surface defines a recess therein, and wherein the post is retained entirely within the recess.
10. The base of claim 9, wherein the first sleeve has a length less than or equal to the post.
11. The base of claim 9, wherein the second sleeve has a length greater than the first sleeve.
12. The base of claim 9, wherein the post is insertable within either of the first sleeve or the second sleeve.
13. The base of claim 8, wherein the first base plate is secured to the second base plate in an offset position relative to the second member.
14. The base of claim 13, wherein the first base plate is fixed to the second base plate.
15. The base of claim 14, wherein the first base plate is integrally formed with the second base plate.
16. The base of claim 8, further comprising a number of mounting holes in each of the first base plate and the second base plate, and a number of bores in the bottom surface of the base.
17. The base of claim 8, wherein the first member and the second member are formed from a plastic or a metal.
18. A method for adapting the configuration of a base for engagement with a ground anchor, the method comprising the steps of: a. providing a base comprising a bottom surface including an alignment post extending outwardly from the bottom surface; b. providing an adapter comprising:
  1. a first member including a first base plate and a first sleeve extending outwardly from the first base plate; and
  2. a second member engaged with the first member, the second member including a second base plate and a second sleeve extending outwardly from the second base plate, wherein the first member is disposed in an offset position relative to the second member;c. engaging one of the first sleeve or the second sleeve with the alignment post; and d. engaging the second sleeve with the ground anchor.

**19.** The method of claim 16, further comprising a number of mounting holes in each of the first base plate and the second base plate, and a number of bores in the bottom surface of the base, wherein the step of engaging one of the first sleeve or the second sleeve with the alignment post comprises: a. inserting the alignment post into one of the first sleeve or the second sleeve to align the number of mounting openings in the associated first base plate or second base plate with the number of bores in the bottom surface; and b. engaging one or more fasteners with the number of bores through the number of mounting openings.

**20.** The method of claim 18, further comprising the steps of: a. disengaging the second sleeve from the ground anchor; b. disengaging the one of the first sleeve or the second sleeve from the alignment post; c. engaging the other of the first sleeve or the second sleeve with the alignment post; and d. engaging the second sleeve with the ground anchor.

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