

PATENT SPECIFICATION (11)

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 (72) Inventor: Gert. F. Korbel.



(54) PHYSICAL EXERCISING DEVICE

(71) We, COMPRET N.V., a Company organised under the laws of the Netherlands, of Paulus Potterstraat 12, Amsterdam Z1, Netherlands, do hereby declare the invention, for which we pray that a Patent may be granted to us, and the method by which it is to be performed, to be particularly described in and by the following statement:—

In Patent Specification No. 968,180 there is described a spring type exerciser involving a telescopic arrangement including a spring so that as the telescopic system is collapsed the spring is placed under compression; also an endless rope is connected to the handles at the ends of the telescopic system so that as two runs of the rope are pulled apart the spring is again placed under compression. In use certain exercises comprise squeezing the spring by applying force to the handles at each end and certain exercises comprise pulling the two runs of rope apart and again placing the spring under compression. In this way the exercises bring into play different muscles involving forces of both compression and tension while at the same time the work by the person using the exerciser always acts on the spring to place it under compression.

An object of the present invention is to provide a physical exerciser of the type described in the above-mentioned Patent which allows the user the possibility of carrying out a wider range of exercises.

It is another object of the invention at least in its preferred embodiments to provide an exerciser which gives a greater amount of contraction for the same initial length of telescopic system.

It is a still further object of the invention to produce an exerciser which allows the user to vary the strength required to move the tension elements during exercise.

Accordingly the present invention provides a physical exerciser comprising an elongate telescopic system, the system being contractible longitudinally by the application of manual pressure, resilient biasing means arranged to resist contraction of the system, a pair of flexible tension elements on opposite sides of the system, for each tension element at least one guide member, each tension element having runs extending substantially between the ends of the system and between adjacent runs passing round a guide member, such that the

amount the system contracts as a result of pulling of the tension elements away from the system is selectable by selecting the number of runs of each tension element which are pulled. This provides an automatic and easily selected variation of the distance through which the tension elements move for contraction of the telescopic system and variation of the strength required to contract the system. Preferably each tension member is endless and passes round two sheaves or rollers mounted in handles at the ends of the system.

According to a preferred aspect of the invention, the telescopic system comprises a central tube beyond the ends of which spring means forming the biasing means extends, and a pair of end tubes, each having a handle secured at its outer end, are slidably and telescopically mounted at opposite ends of the central tube with the spring means extending within the handles and the handles accommodating the ends of the central tube at maximum compression. This allows the system to be contracted to only just over half its initial length, since the only part which does not contribute to the telescopic movement is a small distance at the closed end of the handles.

According to a further preferred feature the inner end of each end tube and the outer ends of the central tube carry inter-engageable flange means to hold the end tubes against disengagement from the central tube, and the inner end of each end tube is slit or bifurcated to allow it to open slightly for initial assembly. A ring member is located around the slit ends to hold them against such opening in the normal assembled position.

According to a still further preferred feature the outer surface of each end tube is pre-formed with a grip surface so that the tubes can be gripped for pushing exercises with the hands parallel to the telescopic system, thus exercising still further muscles.

The invention will be more readily understood from the following description, giving by way of example only, of exercising devices in accordance therewith, reference being made to the accompanying drawings of which:—

Figure 1 is a diagrammatic, partly broken away, view of an exerciser with one end partly in section and with the exerciser in its fully extended condition,

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the exerciser in its fully extended condition, and,

Figure 3 is a view of part of the exerciser of Figures 1 and 2 in section in its fully contracted condition, showing one minor modification,

Figure 4 is an axial section through one end of a modified form of exerciser in its fully extended condition,

Figure 5 is a side view of the exerciser, taken in the direction of arrow V of Figure 4,

Figure 6 is the section on the line VI-VI of Figure 4,

Figure 7 is a section on the line VII-VII of Figure 4, and,

Figure 8 is an end view of the end plate of a handle of the exerciser of Figures 4 to 7.

Referring to Figures 1 to 3, a physical exerciser comprises an elongate telescopic system having hollow handles 11 at its ends, the system being contractible longitudinally by the application of manual pressure. In known manner the handles may be formed with finger indentations to aid gripping. The telescopic system comprises a main central tube 12 and two end tubes or shafts 13 integral at their outer ends with the handles 11. A resilient biasing means in the form of a helical spring 14 extends within the central tube with both its ends extending beyond the central tube into the tubes 13 and abutting against the ends of the hollow interiors of the handles. The ends of the central tube 12 are outwardly flanged at 15 and the inner ends of the end tubes 13 are inwardly flanged at 16 so that inter-engagement of flanges 15 and 16 prevents the end tubes from disengaging from the central tube. The inner portions of the tubes 13 are of bifurcated form as a result of two slits 17 (only one of which is seen) extending for part of their lengths. This allows the end tubes 13 to be expanded slightly so that the flange 16 can ride over the flange 15 for initial assembly. A simple end ring 18 is then pushed over each end to retain it against such expansion in the assembled condition. Extra guide tubes 19 integral with the handles and coaxially within the tubes 13 fit inside the tube 12 and provide additional strength and guidance. A modified form of these is shown at 19A in Figure 3.

The handles 11 extend outwardly of the tubes 13 in a direction normal to the longitudinal axis of the telescopic system and at each side carry a rolling member in the form of a sheave 20, mounted across a channel 21 opening to the side of the handle. Two tension elements 22 located on opposite sides of the telescopic system connect the ends of the system. Each tension element takes the form of a substantially inextensible endless cord which extends in two runs between the handles and passes around a pair of sheaves. These elements can be, for example, of plastic coated wire or any form of rope, they can be flat or of round cross section and they may be initially

limp or under slight tension in the rest position of the exerciser. Each tension element could extend round a single sheave or other guide element and have both its ends fastened to one handle so that it is effectively endless.

The tension elements can be gripped approximately at their mid points and pulled apart in the direction of arrows 25 this causing the handles to move towards each other and compress the spring. The movement distance which is available for an exercise is determined by the distance which the telescopic system can contract in conjunction with the length of the tension elements between the handles. However, by the use of a double run of rope this distance and the force required can be varied by the person doing exercises. If both runs of each tension element are gripped, then maximum force will be required for a relatively small movement. If only the outermost runs of the tension elements are gripped the movement distance increases, since when pulling apart in the direction of the arrows a considerable portion of the inner runs, that is those nearest to the tubes, runs around the sheaves so that the outer runs are extended. By this pattern of movement a block and tackle effect is obtained which reduces the force to be applied for compressing the spring while at the same time the movement distance is increased. This is of greater importance for many exercises than a short distance with a high tension force. A stepped change in tensile force can be obtained by first gripping both outer runs only, then both runs of one element and the outer run of the other, then both runs of both elements.

In addition to large movement distances being obtainable more exercises can be carried out in tension training. For example, between the feet and the upper body exercises can be carried out which are not possible on exercisers having a smaller movement distance. For example, one can wrap one strand of cable round the nape of the neck while the other strand is around the feet. Furthermore, compression and tension exercises are possible simultaneously, for example by pulling the apparatus between one foot and the nape of the neck in a sitting position with simultaneous pressure support by both hands. The number of such combination exercises is more than double that possible with the exerciser according to the abovementioned Patent.

A ring 23 slides on the exterior of the tube 12 pushed by the end of a tube 13 and indicates the degree of compression on a scale marked on the exterior of the tube 12.

A further feature of the invention is the formation on the outer surfaces of the tubes 13 of a grip surface as seen at 26. This allows an important compression exercise with the hands gripping parallel to the telescopic system. The serrated exterior of the tubes extends for example for a 17 cm length of each tube, and for the first time renders possible gripping with the

hands in the position parallel to the exerciser. This allows additional classes of muscles, hitherto not loaded, to be exercised.

The design of the telescopic system allows easy assembly by merely slipping the rings 18 over the central tube 12, pushing the end tubes 13 onto the central tube and pushing the rings 18 back over the ends of the end tubes to assemble the whole telescopic system. In addition the design of the handles allow almost their whole lengths to contribute to the telescopic movement so that the movement obtainable with compression exercises is 50% greater than with the exerciser of the above-mentioned Patent for the same initial rest length. This is best seen in Figure 3 where the central tube 12 nearly abuts against the interior of the end of the handle 11.

The exerciser of Figures 4 to 8 comprises a telescopic system 30 having hollow handles 31 at its ends. The telescopic system comprises a main central tube 32 and two end tubes 33 telescopically slidable on the central tube. Each end tube 33 is integral with the main part of its associated handle 31 formed by two outer side walls 34, 35 and connecting ribs 36, and the end of each handle is closed by a separately fabricated end plate 37. The resilient biasing means in this embodiment is formed by two springs 38. It will be appreciated that although only one end of the exerciser is shown the other end is similar, so that only one of the springs 38 and one tube 33 and one handle 31 are shown and need to be described.

The tube 33 has its outer end, that is the end remote from the central tube 32, turned in to form a partially closed end 40 and then turned in again to provide an inwardly projecting annulus 41, the inner end 42 of which is counterbored to provide an annular shoulder 43. The end plate 37 has an inwardly projecting annulus 44 with an outwardly turned lip 45 so that is a push fit in the annulus 41 with the lip 45 engaging over the shoulder 43 to retain it. The end plate 37 is also formed with bearing parts 47 which are a push fit between the side walls 34, 35 of the handles. These bearing parts 47 carry pins 48 on which are rotatably mounted rollers 50.

A cruciform sectioned spring guide 51 has a disc 52 at its outer end, from the outer side of which projects a boss 53 which is a push fit in the annulus 44 of the end plate with the disc bearing against the end surfaces of the annulae 41 and 44. The spring guide 51 thus extends coaxially within the tube 33 and has its inner end just within the central tube 32 in the expanded condition of the exerciser. Within the end of the central tube 32 is located a spring retaining tubular member 54. This has an outer diameter adjacent its outer end which is a close fit within the tube 32 and has an outwardly turned flange 55 which abuts against the end of tube 32. The retaining member 54 tapers inwardly slightly towards its

inner end which is turned over to provide a spring retaining end surface 57. The spring 38 fits over the spring guide 51 and within the retaining member 54 with its ends abutting the disc 52 and the retaining surface 57. The spring 38 has a slight outward taper towards its inner end.

As seen in Figure 6 the inner surface of the end tube 33 is formed at four substantially equi-angularly spaced points with inwardly projecting rib members 58. At one side instead of a single rib 58 there are two spaced ribs 58A and 58B. The central tube 32 has a groove 60 formed in its exterior surface along its length, in which groove are received the ribs 58A and 58B. This prevents relative rotation of the tube 33 and tube 32. The tube 33 tapers outwardly to increase its outer diameter towards the centre of the exerciser and the depth of the ribs 58 increases in this direction to retain the internal diameter of the notional cylinder defined by the ribs substantially constant. The inner end of tube 33 is outwardly flanged at 61.

In the contracted condition of the exerciser the ends of the spring guides 54 substantially abut the bases of the tubes 33 so that the majority of the handles contribute to the telescopic movement as described in the embodiment of Figures 1 to 3.

As in the embodiment of Figures 1 to 3, two endless tension elements each having two runs connect the ends of the telescopic system on opposite sides thereof. In this embodiment each tension element 62 is in the form of a band of webbing material which passes round a pair of the rollers 50. The sides of the handles are open thus effectively defining open channels to accommodate the rollers and tension elements. As described with reference to the embodiment of Figures 1 to 3 either one or both of the runs of these tension elements can be gripped and pulled to provide the variation in movement distance and force for doing exercises. The tension elements are taut in the expanded condition of the exerciser as shown and prevent the end tubes 33 from coming off the central tube 32.

A grip surface, as seen at 63, is provided on the exterior surface of the tubes 33. A ring 64 similar to the ring 23 slides on the exterior of the tube 32.

It will be appreciated that the use of tension elements having a double run can be applied to telescopic systems, comprising only two tubes or more than three tubes.

It could be applied to a telescopic system which had two or more coupled sets of telescoping tubes or a system which was contractable and expandable without using telescoping tubes.

The spring biasing means may be replaced by other suitable resilient means such as elastic balls or a pneumatic assembly. The biasing means need not be within the telescopic system but could for example be a pair

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of stiffly flexible straight or bowed rods connecting the ends of the system and themselves capable of being grasped and pulled apart.

5 The flexible elements need not pass through the handles but could be secured to separate mounting or guide members carried by the telescopic system or could pass through or over the ends of the tubes.

10 WHAT WE CLAIM IS:-

1. A physical exerciser comprising an elongate telescopic system, the system being contractible longitudinally by the application of manual pressure; resilient biasing means arranged to resist contraction of the system, a pair of flexible tension elements on opposite sides of the system, for each tension element at least one guide member, each tension element having runs extending substantially between the ends of the system and between adjacent runs passing round a guide member, such that the amount the system contracts as a result of pulling of the tension elements away from the system is selectable by selecting the number or runs of each tension element which are pulled.

2. An exerciser according to Claim 1 in which there are two guide members mounted at each end of the system on opposite sides of the system, and the tension elements are endless and run in two runs between and round respective pairs of guide members.

3. A physical exerciser according to Claim 1 or Claim 2 in which each guide member is a sheave.

35 4. A physical exerciser according to Claim 1 or Claim 2 in which each guide member is a roller.

40 5. A physical exerciser according to Claim 2 in which the guide members are rolling members and including handles at the ends of the telescopic system, the rolling members being mounted in the handles.

45 6. A physical exerciser according to any of the preceding claims in which the telescopic system comprises a plurality of tubes slidable one in the other and containing coil spring means comprising the biasing means.

50 7. A physical exerciser according to Claim 6 in which the telescopic system comprises a central tube beyond the ends of which the spring means extends and a pair of end tubes, each having a handle secured at its outer end, the end tubes being slidably and telescopically mounted at opposite ends of the central tube

each end tube of the tubular system has a grip surface formed thereon.

11. An exerciser according to Claim 7 of any claim dependent thereon in which the spring means comprises two springs each having an inner end extending partially within the central tube and an outer end located adjacent the end of an end tube; and including for each spring a spring guide member carried by the associated handle and extending within the outer end of the spring and a spring retaining member carried by the central tube and retaining said spring inner end.

12. An exerciser according to Claim 7 or any claim dependent thereon in which each end tube has ribs on its internal surface, which with the spring means extending within the end tubes.

8. A physical exerciser according to Claim 7 in which the inner end of each end tube and the outer ends of the central tube carry interengagable flange means to hold the end tubes against disengagement from the central tube, and the inner end of each end tube defines a slit which allows it to expand slightly for initial assembly, and including ring members around said slit ends to hold them against such expansion.

9. An exerciser according to Claim 6, 7 or 8 in which the handles are hollow and form part of the telescopic system such that they accommodate the central tube or part of the tubular system at maximum contraction.

10. A physical exerciser according to any of Claims 6 to 9 in which the outside surface of ribs slide on the central tube.

13. An exerciser according to Claim 12 in which the external surface of the central tube defines groove means which engages with at least one of said ribs of each end tube to prevent relative rotation of the tubes.

14. An exerciser according to Claim 5 or any claim dependent thereon in which each handle has a separately fabricated end member and said end members carry the rolling members.

15. A physical exerciser substantially as herein described with reference to or as illustrated in Figures 1 to 3 or Figures 4 to 8 of the accompanying drawings.

A. SPENCE & CO.,
114 Downlands Road,
Purley,
Surrey, CR2 4JF.

of stiffly flexible straight or bowed rods connecting the ends of the system and themselves capable of being grasped and pulled apart.

- 5 The flexible elements need not pass through the handles but could be secured to separate mounting or guide members carried by the telescopic system or could pass through or over the ends of the tubes.

10 WHAT WE CLAIM IS:-

1. A physical exerciser comprising an elongate telescopic system, the system being contractible longitudinally by the application of manual pressure, resilient biasing means arranged to resist contraction of the system, a pair of flexible tension elements on opposite sides of the system, for each tension element at least one guide member, each tension element having runs extending substantially between the ends of the system and between adjacent runs passing round a guide member, such that the amount the system contracts as a result of pulling of the tension elements away from the system is selectable by selecting the number or runs of each tension element which are pulled.

2. An exerciser according to Claim 1 in which there are two guide members mounted at each end of the system on opposite sides of the system, and the tension elements are endless and run in two runs between and round respective pairs of guide members.

3. A physical exerciser according to Claim 1 or Claim 2 in which each guide member is a sheave.

- 35 4. A physical exerciser according to Claim 1 or Claim 2 in which each guide member is a roller.

5. A physical exerciser according to Claim 2 in which the guide members are rolling members and including handles at the ends of the telescopic system, the rolling members being mounted in the handles.

- 45 6. A physical exerciser according to any of the preceding claims in which the telescopic system comprises a plurality of tubes slidable one in the other and containing coil spring means comprising the biasing means.

- 50 7. A physical exerciser according to Claim 6 in which the telescopic system comprises a central tube beyond the ends of which the spring means extends and a pair of end tubes, each having a handle secured at its outer end, the end tubes being slidably and telescopically mounted at opposite ends of the central tube

each end tube of the tubular system has a grip surface formed thereon. 55

11. An exerciser according to Claim 7 of any claim dependent thereon in which the spring means comprises two springs each having an inner end extending partially within the central tube and an outer end located adjacent the end of an end tube, and including for each spring a spring guide member carried by the associated handle and extending within the outer end of the spring and a spring retaining member carried by the central tube and retaining said spring inner end. 60 65

12. An exerciser according to Claim 7 or any claim dependent thereon in which each end tube has ribs on its internal surface, which with the spring means extending within the end tubes. 70

8. A physical exerciser according to Claim 7 in which the inner end of each end tube and the outer ends of the central tube carry interengagable flange means to hold the end tubes against disengagement from the central tube, and the inner end of each end tube defines a slit which allows it to expand slightly for initial assembly, and including ring members around said slit ends to hold them against such expansion. 75 80

9. An exerciser according to Claim 6, 7 or 8 in which the handles are hollow and form part of the telescopic system such that they accommodate the central tube or part of the tubular system at maximum contraction. 85

10. A physical exerciser according to any of Claims 6 to 9 in which the outside surface of ribs slide on the central tube. 90

13. An exerciser according to Claim 12 in which the external surface of the central tube defines groove means which engages with at least one of said ribs of each end tube to prevent relative rotation of the tubes. 95

14. An exerciser according to Claim 5 or any claim dependent thereon in which each handle has a separately fabricated end member and said end members carry the rolling members.

15. A physical exerciser substantially as herein described with reference to or as illustrated in Figures 1 to 3 or Figures 4 to 8 of the accompanying drawings. 100

A. SPENCE & CO., 105
114 Downlands Road,
Purley,
Surrey, CR2 4JF.



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ERRATA

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Page 4, line 54, *after tube insert* with the spring means extending within the end tubes.

Page 4, lines 55 to 72, *delete* whole lines

Page 4, line 89, *after of (second occurrence) insert* each end tube of the tubular system has a grip surface formed thereon.

Page 4, line 90, *delete* whole line *insert*

11. An exerciser according to Claim 7 of any claim dependent thereon in which the spring means comprises two springs each having an inner end extending partially within the central tube and an outer end located adjacent the end of an end tube, and including for each spring a spring guide member carried by the associated handle and extending within the outer end of the spring and a spring retaining member carried by the central tube and retaining said spring inner end.

12. An exerciser according to Claim 7 or any claim dependent thereon in which each end tube has ribs on its internal surface, which ribs slide on the central tube.

THE PATENT OFFICE
10 July 1981