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54 **Multipack for returnable bottles.**

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EP-A- 0 203 806
DE-A- 2 542 924
FR-A- 2 363 493

73 Proprietor : **THE MEAD CORPORATION**
2000 Courthouse Plaza NE
Dayton Ohio 45463 (US)

72 Inventor : **Saulas, Alain**
24 Rue de la Loutre
F-36000 Chateauroux (FR)

74 Representative : **Hepworth, John Malcolm**
Hepworth Lawrence Bryer & Bizley, 36 Regent
Place
Rugby Warwickshire CV21 2PN (GB)

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Description

This invention relates to a carton accommodating a plurality of articles, such as bottles, which can be adapted to provide a top gripping type of retention means for returning the bottles, when empty, to point of purchase.

DE-A-2 542 924 discloses a carton according to the preamble of claim 1.

The invention provides a carton accommodating a plurality of articles, such as bottles, which carton comprises a top, a base and a pair of spaced side walls interconnecting the top and the base and end wall panels connecting together the side walls and the base at opposite ends of the carton and wherein means are provided for detaching upper portions of said side walls and said top from lower portions of said side walls, said base and said end wall panels thereby leaving the articles accommodated in a tray comprising lower portions of said side walls, said base and said end wall panels, characterized in that said base is formed with a plurality of openings each to receive a top portion of one of said articles so that the articles can be retained together in a group by co-operation of their tops with said tray.

According to a feature of the invention, the tray may be inverted for application to the tops of the articles so that the base of the tray is presented uppermost of the article group.

According to a further feature of the invention, the base may be formed with a least one aperture adapted to receive an upstanding post provided in a crate to locate the carton in the crate.

According to a still further feature of the invention, said detaching means may comprise tear away strips provided in said side walls.

An embodiment of the invention will now be described, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

FIGURE 1 is a plan view of a blank for forming a carton according to the invention;

FIGURE 2 is a perspective view from above and one end of a complete carton accommodating a plurality of bottles;

FIGURE 3 is a perspective view of the carton shown with the upper portions of the side walls and the top wall of the carton removed leaving the bottles standing in an open-topped tray;

FIGURE 4 shows the bottles removed from the tray and shows the tray in perspective view from below and one end; and

FIGURE 5 shows the tray inverted and secured to the neck portions of the bottles to provide a top gripping retaining and carrying means to return the bottles to a point of purchase.

Referring to the drawings and first to Figure 1, there is shown a blank 10 formed from paperboard or similar foldable sheet material which comprises from

left to right, in series, a first top panel 12, a first upper side wall panel 14, a first lower side wall panel 16, a base panel 18, a second lower side wall panel 20, a second upper side wall panel 22 and a second top panel 24, hinged one to the next along transverse fold lines 26-36.

As is well known in the art, each of the first and second upper side wall panels 14 and 16 is provided with a series of bottle neck receiving apertures "A" which assist in the retention of two rows of bottles within the carton.

At the base of the carton, the bottle heels are accommodated within a tray-like structure, comprising lower portions of the first and second lower side wall panels 16 and 20, the base panel 18 and a set of lower end closure panels. The lower end closure panels are provided along each of the longitudinal edges of the base panel 18 and lower portions of the first and second lower side wall panels 16 and 20. Thus, opposed base end closure panels 38 and 40 are hinged to opposite ends of the base panel 18 and side end closure panels 42, 44 and 46, 48 are hinged to the first and second lower side wall panels 16 and 20, respectively, and interconnect the base end closure panels with respective ones of the lower side wall panels 16 and 20.

Each of the lower side wall panels includes a tear-away strip 50 and 52, respectively, to enable upper portions of the carton to be detached from lower portions of the carton.

The base panel is provided with a series of so-called "sunburst" apertures "S" and a pair of centrally disposed retaining apertures "R" to allow the carton to be impaled upon a pair of upstanding posts provided in the base of a crate which is adapted to receive a plurality of such cartons.

The completed carton is shown in Figure 2 of the drawings and as can be seen accommodates six bottles arranged in two rows of three bottles per row. The carton is wrapped about the bottles and the two top panels 12 and 24 are secured (as by gluing) together above the bottle caps in overlapping relationship. The bases of the bottles are seated on the base panel 18 with the ends of the carton partially closed by the lower end closure panels 38, 42, 44 and 40, 46, 48.

In use, access to the bottles is gained by tearing away each of the tear-away strips 50 and 52 whereupon the top panels of the carton, together with each of the upper side walls panels 14 and 22 and adjacent portions of the lower side wall panels 16 and 20 which are above the height of the lower end closure panels can be removed thereby leaving the bottles accommodated in a tray-like structure as shown in Figure 3 of the drawings.

In Figure 4, the tray structure 50 is shown unloaded with its base exposed therefor illustrating the "sunburst" apertures. As shown in Figure 5, the tray structure 50 can then be utilised as a so-called top gripping

carrier and in this regard the tray structure is inverted and applied to the group of bottles so that each of the bottle necks protrudes and is retained by respective ones of the "sunburst" apertures. By this means, the empty bottles can be returned as a unit to a point of purchase. Conveniently, the retention apertures "R" may be used to facilitate portage of the package.

Claims

1. A carton accommodating a plurality of articles, such as bottles, which carton comprises a top, a base and a pair of spaced side walls interconnecting the top and the base and end wall panels connecting together the side walls and the base at opposite ends of the carton and wherein means are provided for detaching upper portions of said side walls and said top from lower portions of said side walls, said base and said end wall panels thereby leaving the articles accommodated in a tray comprising lower portions of said side walls, said base and said end wall panels, characterized in that said base is formed with a plurality of openings each to receive a top portion of one of said articles so that the articles can be retained together in a group by co-operation of their tops with said tray.

2. A carton according to claim 1, further characterized in that the tray is inverted for application to the tops of the articles so that the base of the tray is presented uppermost of the article group.

3. A carton according to claim 1 or claim 2, further characterized in that said base is formed with at least one aperture adapted to receive an upstanding post provided in a crate to locate the carton in the crate.

4. A carton according to any of the preceding claims wherein said detaching means comprise tear away strips provided in said side walls.

Patentansprüche

1. Verpackung zum Aufnehmen einer Mehrzahl von Artikeln, beispielsweise Flaschen, aufweisend ein Oberteil, einen Boden und ein Paar beabstandete Seitenwände, die das Oberteil und den Boden miteinander verbinden, und Stirnseitenwände, die gemeinsam die Seitenwände und den Boden an entgegengesetzten Stirnseiten der Verpackung verbinden und in der Mitte zum Abnehmen oberer Bereiche der Seitenwände und des Oberteils von unteren Bereichen der Seitenwände vorgesehen sind, wobei der Boden und

die Stirnseitenwände dadurch die Artikel zurücklassen, die in einer Schale untergebracht sind, die untere Bereiche der Seitenwände, den Boden und die Stirnseitenwände aufweist, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß der Boden mit einer Mehrzahl von Öffnungen, jede zum Aufnehmen eines oberen Bereiches eines der Artikel, versehen ist, so daß die Artikel zusammen in einer Gruppe durch Zusammenwirken ihrer Oberteile mit der Schale gehalten werden können.

2. Verpackung nach Anspruch 1, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die Schale zum Anpassen an die Oberteile der Artikel umgekehrt werden kann, so daß der Boden der Schale zuoberst der Artikelgruppe angeordnet ist.

3. Verpackung nach Anspruch 1 oder Anspruch 2, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß der Boden mit zumindest einer der Öffnung versehen ist, die vorgesehen ist, eine aufrechtstehende Stütze aufzunehmen, die in einer Steige angeordnet ist, um die Verpackung in der Steige festzulegen.

4. Verpackung nach irgendeinem der vorangegangenen Ansprüche, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die Abnehmmittel Abreißstreifen aufweisen, die in den Seitenwänden vorgesehen sind.

Revendications

1. Carton pouvant recevoir plusieurs articles, tels que des bouteilles, lequel carton comprend une paroi de dessus (12, 24), une paroi de dessous (18) et des parois latérales espacées (14, 16; 20, 22) reliant entre elles les parois de dessus, de dessous et des panneaux de parois d'extrémité, ces derniers reliant entre eux les parois latérales et la paroi de dessous aux extrémités opposées du carton, et dans lequel des moyens (50, 52) sont prévus pour séparer les parties supérieures des parois latérales et de la paroi de dessus des parties inférieures de ces parois latérales, de la paroi de dessous (18) et des panneaux (38, 40) de parois d'extrémité, si bien que les articles restent logés dans un plateau qui comprend les parties inférieures (16, 20) des parois latérales, de la paroi de dessous et des panneaux (38, 40) de parois d'extrémité, ce carton étant caractérisé par le fait que plusieurs ouvertures sont pratiquées dans la paroi de dessous (18), chacune d'elles pouvant recevoir la partie supérieure de l'un des articles de manière à ce que ces derniers soient retenus ensemble en formant un groupe, leurs sommets coopérant avec le plateau.

2. Carton selon la revendication 1, caractérisé par

le fait que le plateau peut être retourné pour être appliqué sur le sommet des articles de façon que sa paroi de dessous (18) se présente sur la partie la plus haute du groupe d'articles.

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3. Carton selon l'une ou l'autre des revendications 1 ou 2, caractérisé par le fait que la paroi de dessous (18) est pourvue d'au moins une ouverture "R" adaptée pour recevoir une chandelle verticale prévue dans une caisse à claire-voie afin de positionner le carton dans celle-ci.

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4. Carton selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 3, caractérisé par le fait que les moyens de séparation peuvent être constitués par des bandes déchirables (50, 52) prévues dans les parois latérales.

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FIG. 1.

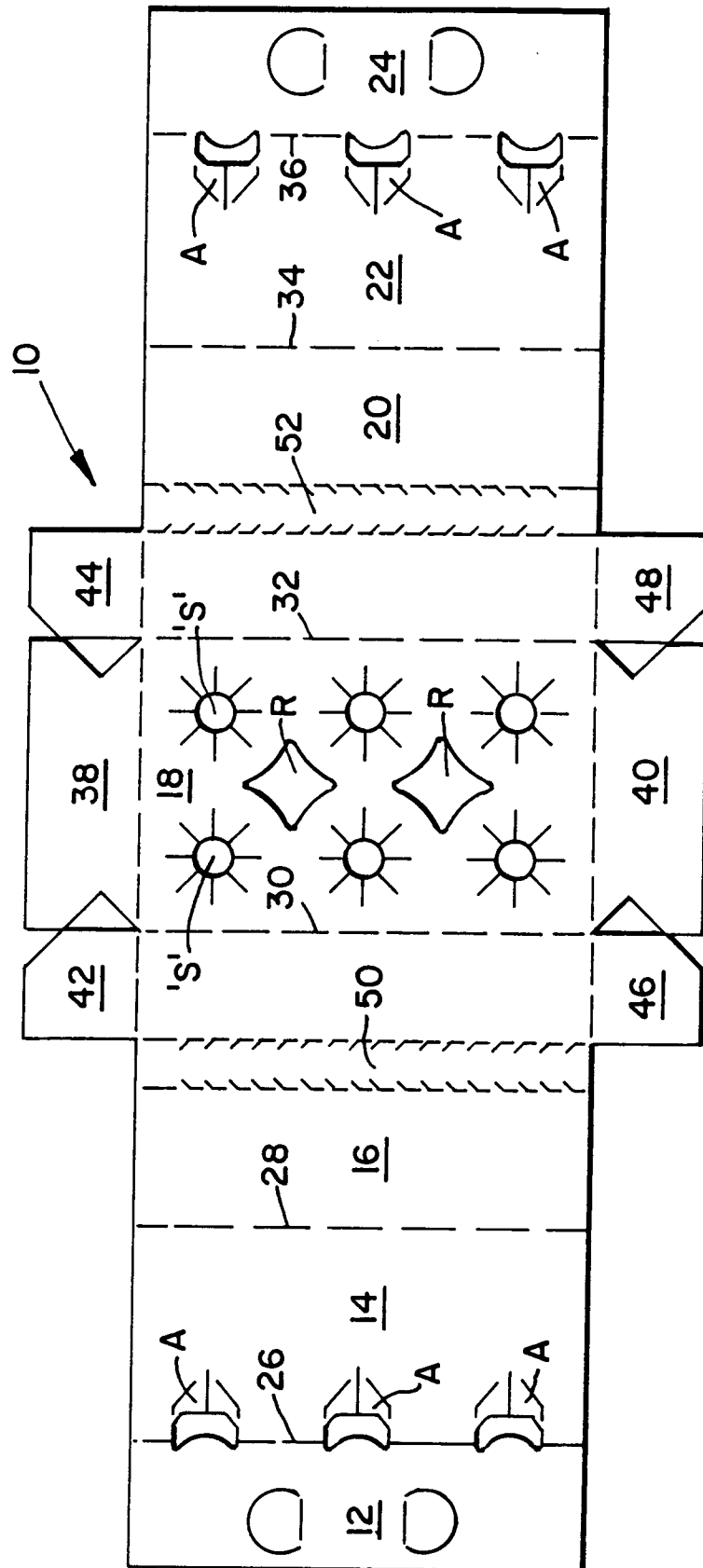


FIG.2.

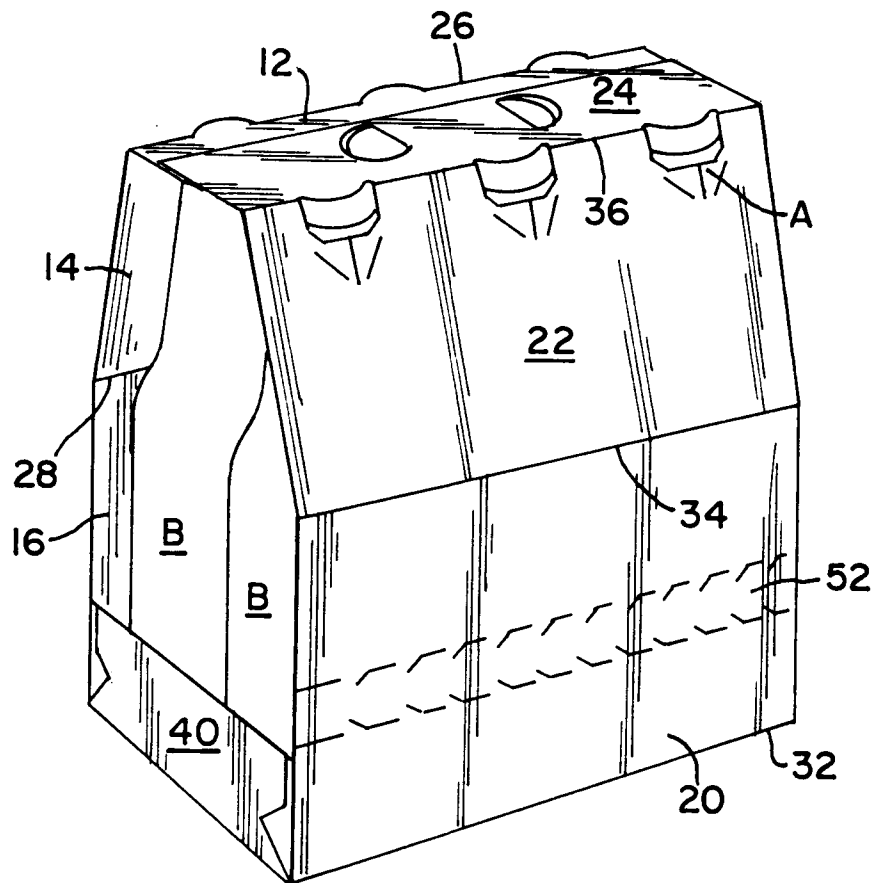


FIG. 3.

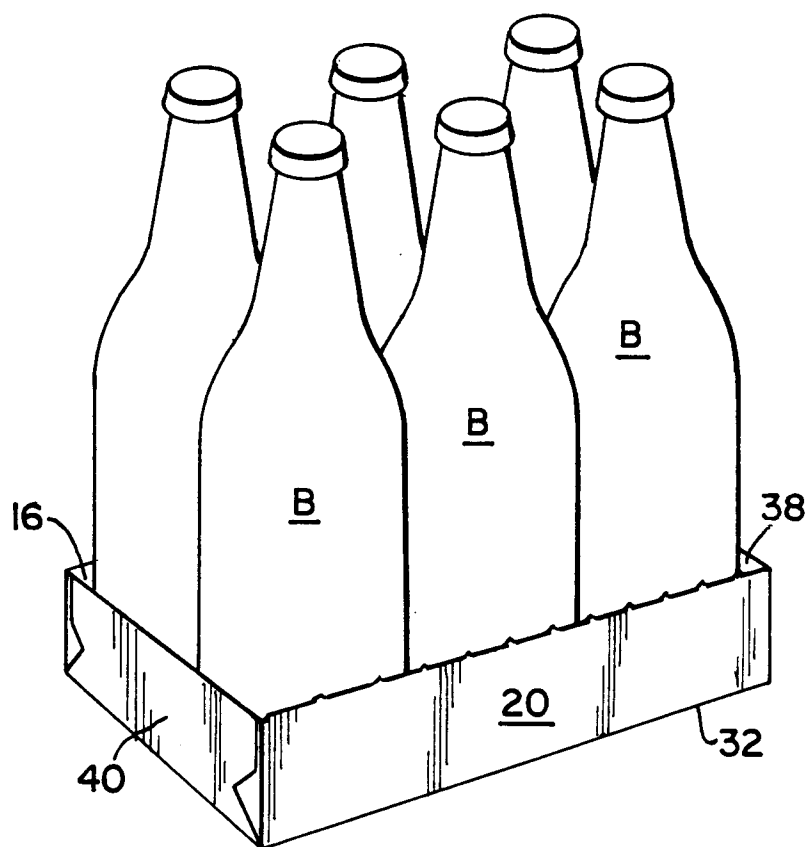


FIG. 4.

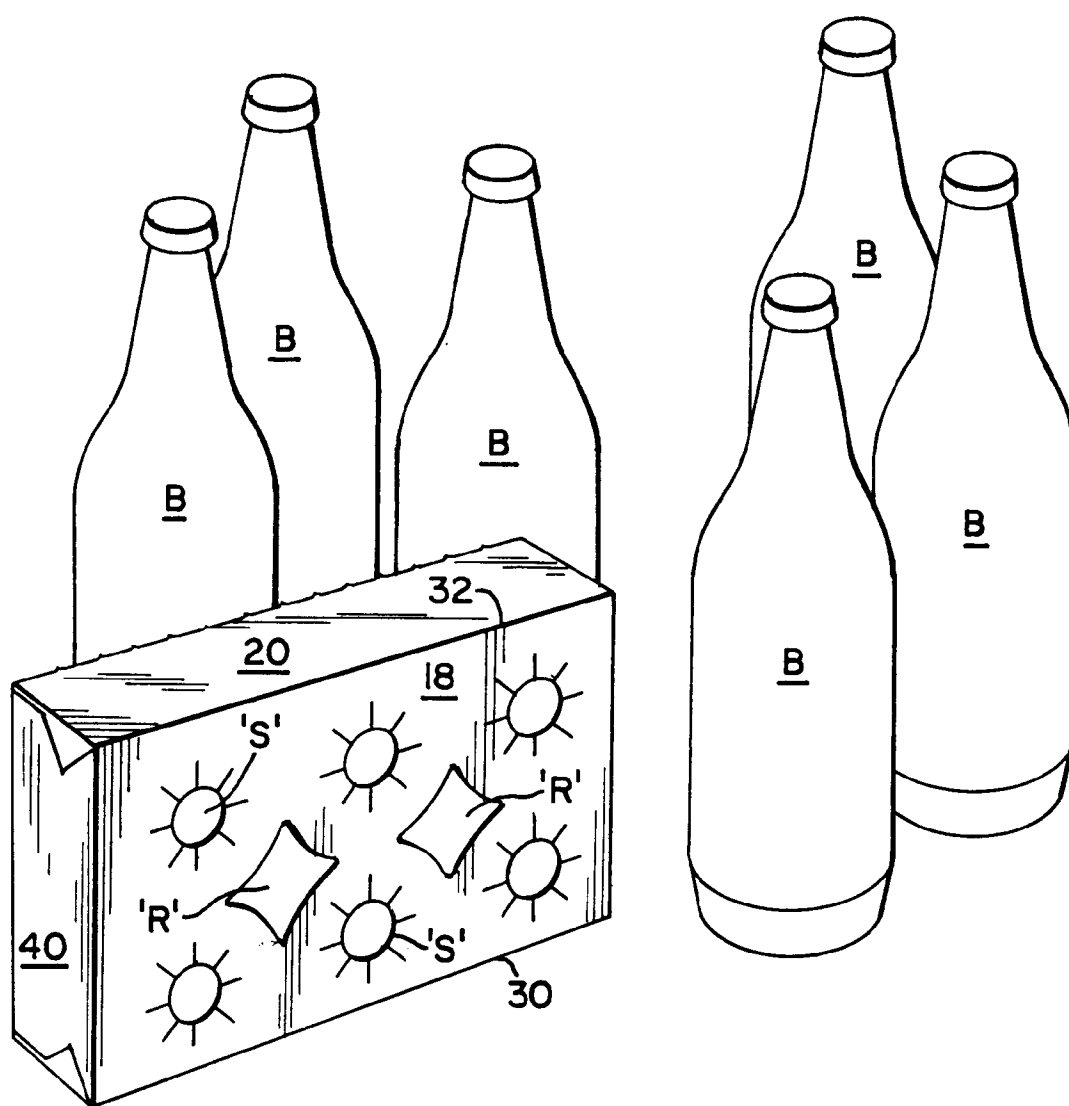


FIG. 5.

