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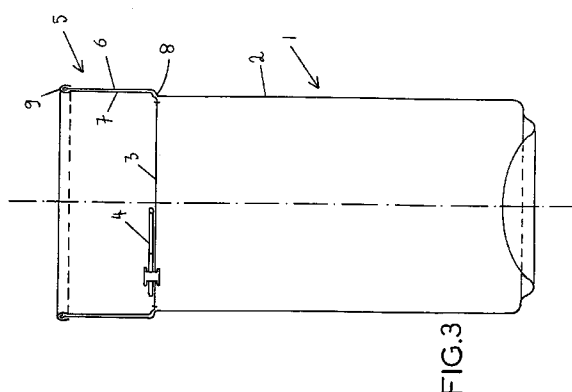
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(54) **Beverage containers.**

(57) A beverage container comprises a cylindrical can (1) with an opening device (4) in one end wall (3) beyond which the side wall (2) of the container is extended to form a cup portion (5) from which the contents of the container can be drunk.



The invention relates to a container for a beverage.

Beverages, for example, fruit and soft drinks, and beer, are conventionally sold in sealed cylindrical metal cans with an opening device at one end which traditionally would be a "ring-pull" or a non-detachable opener. Once opened, the container contents can be drunk directly through the opener aperture but this is unsatisfactory because the device may still be present and because of the location of the aperture and its sharp edge. The contents are therefore normally dispensed into a glass or other drinking vessel.

In accordance with the invention, there is provided a beverage container generally of the kind described, formed with a cup portion from which the beverage can be consumed directly.

The invention thus provides a beverage container comprising a cylindrical body portion having a side wall and end walls, the side wall extending axially beyond one of the end walls, in which an opening device is provided. Otherwise expressed, the invention provides a beverage container comprising a cylindrical side wall and end walls, one of which is fitted with an opening device, the end wall with the opening device being recessed inwardly of the adjacent end of the side wall.

The cup portion of the container is preferably reinforced, as by being double walled, and its free edge is advantageously smoothed to avoid a sharp edge, as by being beaded. Where the cup portion is double walled, the free edge of one wall can be rolled over the other to form the bead.

The cup portion is conveniently formed by an integral portion of the side wall of the container, of the end wall with the opening device or both. Preferably, the cup portion is formed of the side wall of the main body portion and an inner side wall integral with the end wall.

The cup portion is preferably about 2.5 cm. deep and of an internal diameter sufficient to receive the other end of a like container to permit the containers to be stacked. A container embodying the invention can be readily manufactured in conventional materials. The invention considerably enhances the convenience and versatility of comparable prior art containers, and eliminates the need to provide separate drinking vessels where this would be desirable.

The invention is further described below, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawing, in which:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a beverage container in accordance with the invention;

Figure 2 is a plan view, on a larger scale of the container of Figure 1; and

Figure 3 is a cross-section on the line A-A of Figure 2, on the larger scale.

Figure 1 shows a container in the form of a cylindrical metal can 1 with side walls 2 and an opening de-

vice in one end wall 3, in the form of a non-detachable opener 4 of known construction. This opening device could also be a detachable "ring pull" or any other opening device to provide access to the can's contents. The can 1 has a cup-portion 5 in the form of a radially extending lip, protruding in the axial direction upwardly of the can 1 to provide a drinking vessel integral with the can.

These features are illustrated in plan view in Figure 2.

In Figure 3 one embodiment for the construction of the can of the invention is shown. The side walls 2, which are integral with the bottom of the can 1, extend above the end wall 3 by a distance which would advantageously be about 2½ cm., but could be any convenient distance. This forms the outer wall 6 of cup portion 5. The inner wall 7 of the cup portion 5 is formed integral with the end wall 3 of the can 1 and is crimped at its junction 8 with side wall 2 and beaded at its free end 9 by being rolled over the free end of wall 6 to form a comfortable drinking edge. There could be around 1 mm. gap between the double walls 6 and 7 of the cup portion, but this would not be accessible by the contents of the can 1.

The cup portion may alternatively be single walled, and formed from the side wall 6 integral with side wall 2, or formed from side wall 7 integral with end wall 3. Again the free end 9 of either would preferably be beaded to avoid a sharp edge.

As is seen from all the figures, the cup portion 5 has an internal diameter at least equal to, and preferably slightly larger than, the external diameter of the can 1 so as to be sufficient to receive another can 1 to enable a set of cans to be stacked. For example, in a typical can of diameter 65 mm. and height 91 mm., the cup portion would have internal diameter 67 mm. and height 25 mm. (providing a total height of 116 mm.).

The construction of a container according to the invention allows the use of any material traditional to the field of drinks containers, for example, aluminium or steel or any other material of suitable strength and mouldability. It could be made for little extra cost, compared to production costs for a traditional can without a cup portion, and would be equally recyclable.

In use, the opener 4 is activated in known manner and the can 1 is tilted in the same manner as would a cup or glass. The contents of the can 1 thereby pour into the cup portion 5 from which they may be conveniently and comfortably consumed. Preferably the opener 4 is constructed to provide a large area of access through the top end wall 3 to the contents of the can 1.

Claims

1. A beverage container having a first wall portion (3) provided with an opening device (4), characterised by an external second wall portion (5) around the opening device and shaped to permit drinking from the second wall portion of contents of the container discharged therefrom through the opening device.

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2. A beverage container as claimed in claim 1 wherein the first wall portion (3) is one of two end walls of the container, the end walls being connected together by a tubular side wall (2), and the second wall portion (5) comprising a continuation of the tubular side wall beyond the one end wall (3).

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3. A beverage container as claimed in claim 2 wherein the second wall portion (5) is shaped to receive therein the end of a like container remote from the second wall portion thereof.

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4. A beverage container as claimed in claim 2 or 3 wherein the second wall portion (5) comprises a wall (7) integrally formed with the one end wall (3).

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5. A beverage container as claimed in claim 4 wherein a wall portion (6) of the tubular side wall (2) extends beyond the one end wall (3) around the wall (7) to a free edge adjacent that of the wall (7).

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6. A beverage container as claimed in claim 5 wherein the wall (7) is rolled over the wall portion (6) at the free edge thereof to form a bead.

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7. A beverage container as claimed in any one of claims 1-5 wherein the second wall portion (5) extends to a free edge which is smoothed as by being formed as a bead.

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8. A beverage container as claimed in claim 7 wherein the bead is formed by rolling over the free edge of the second wall portion (5).

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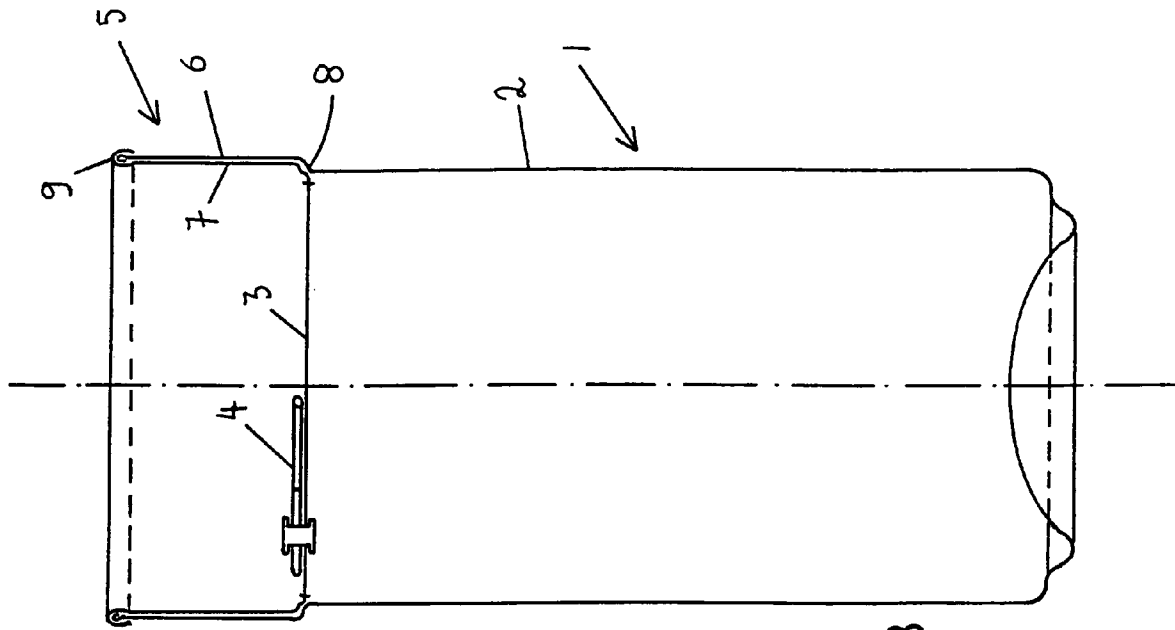


FIG.3

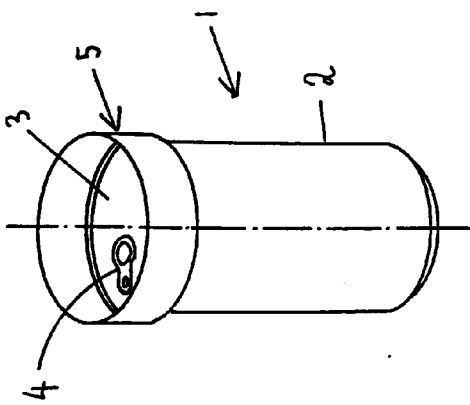


FIG.1

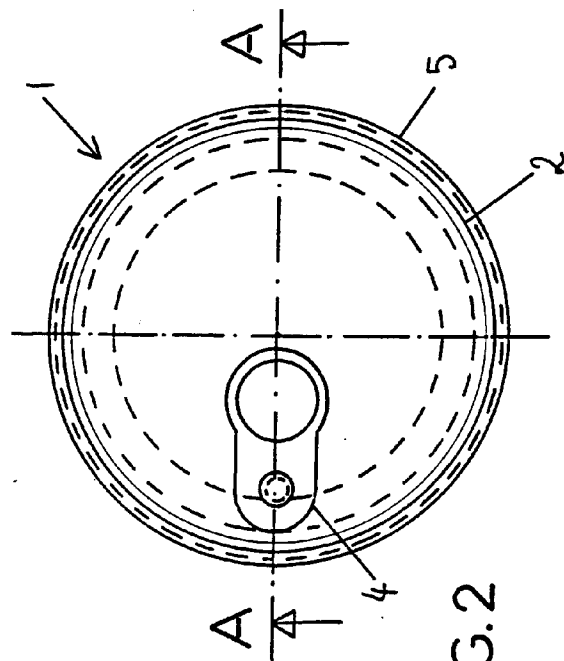


FIG.2



European Patent
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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

EP 93306864.5

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			EP 93306864.5
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.5)
X	<u>DE - A - 3 500 811</u> (NIPPON LIGHT METAL CO. LTD.) * Figs. 3-7, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17; claims 1, 2 *	1, 2	B 65 D 17/28 B 65 D 8/04 B 65 D 25/20 B 65 D 1/10
A	--	4-8	
A	<u>EP - A - 0 252 354</u> (BOCCHI) * Figs. 1-10 *	1, 3	
A	<u>US - A - 3 690 506</u> (KENNEDY) * Figs. 1-4; column 3, lines 19-26 *	1, 2, 4-8	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.5)
			B 65 D 17/00 B 65 D 8/00 B 65 D 25/00 B 65 D 1/00
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search VIENNA		Date of completion of the search 23-11-1993	Examiner BRÄUER
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons ----- & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

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