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(54) **IMPROVED CONTAINER HOLDER**

(57) The present containers' carrier consists of a container that can be used to carry groups of cups, soda cans, food holders, etc...which with a foldable and dis-

posable laminated structure allows it to be used as a carrying tray for liquid and solid containers, besides having a large outer surface to be used for advertising space.

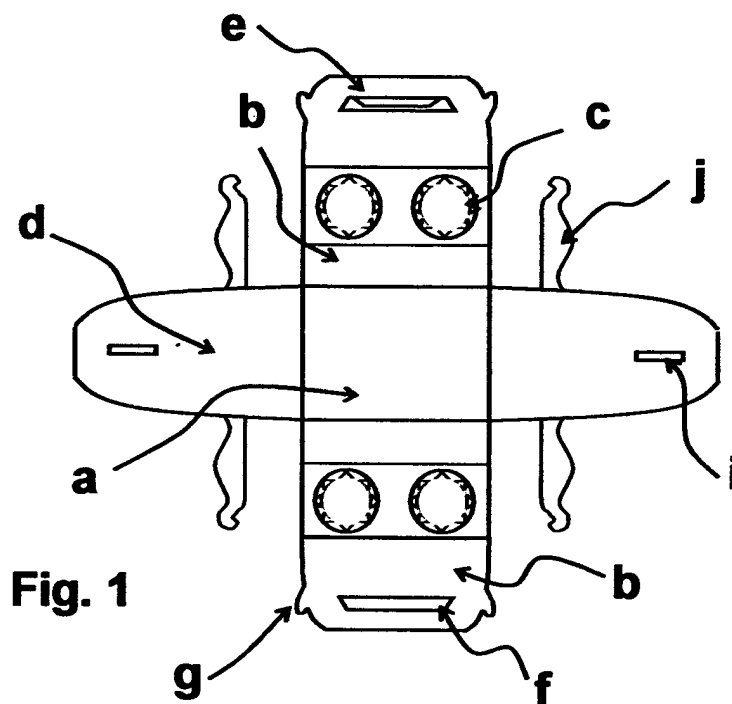


Fig. 1

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Description

[0001] The present invention refers to a containers' carrier, that is, a device that can be used to carry a group of cups, soda cans, food containers, etc... that with a folding laminated structure, and with a disposable nature, allows it to be used as a carrying tray for both liquid and solid containers and with its large outer area, as an advertising medium.

[0002] In many occasions a single individual needs to carry so many containers, with such quantity of liquid and solid contents in them, that it is very difficult not to drop some of the contents during the journey. This usually happens in unexpected situations in which we lack a tray or bag to make this trip safer, being the user limited to perform balancing acts with his/her hands.

[0003] The problem worsens when we need to carry hot drinks along with sugar bags, infusion bags or spoons, ice creams, hamburgers, fries or pop com.

[0004] Sometimes a transportation medium for these containers is improvised with carton trays assembled from paper containers, or even cigarette cardboard boxes. The latter is most often observed in urban business areas, where it can be seen how a customer carries for his fellow employees several cups of coffee in a cigarette cardboard box.

[0005] There are some foldable and disposable bag models in the industry conceived for the transportation of food containers, but they lack important qualities that make the model, object of this memorandum, truly useful and necessary.

[0006] The device for the transportation of containers that the present memorandum proposes has been conceived to improve the joint transportation of cold and/or hot drinks as well as food and cans, presenting an outer surface from such characteristics that, if used as an advertising medium it would allow the production costs to be reduced so much that the device could be given free of charge to fast-food restaurants, cafés, sport arenas and sporting events. This way the customers can carry the items they purchase outside the venue to any place they wish, in a safe and comfortable manner, and at the same time displaying direct advertising. In many fast-food restaurants, cups with liquids are introduced in bags that are not ready for such a purpose. Therefore during the journey the cups tend to shake and in many situations its content is dropped, not only staining the bag but any surface where the bag is standing on.

[0007] The model that is described in the present memorandum is composed of a semi-rigid laminated element, die-cut accordingly so, and by a simple, suitable folding process, it can be configured into a rectangular prismatic unit with circular holes in its upper surface that act as moulds for the various-diameter cups needed to be carried and, attached to this surface, two vertical ends with orifices in their ends which act as handles and, on the outer side walls of the unit two big flaps use to close the sides of the model with a hooking system and

inner vertical flaps formed by slots and small flaps, these ones being able to be used to hold additional containers with side slots, such as pop-corn cups. The unit also includes two pairs of side hooks to improve the locking of the unit.

[0008] In the center portion of the model pairs of cups may be placed, as well as other containers or small trays in its interior, and they all get placed in a unit assembled from the die-cut base sheet, doing the necessary folding process of the flattened surface to achieve the final three-dimensional structure.

[0009] To support the description above, and with the purpose of better understanding the characteristics of the invention, it is attached to the present descriptive memorandum, as an integral part of it, a series of drawings with an illustrative and non limiting-purpose, in which the following has been represented:

Figure 1.- Shows the development plan of the base sheet for the creation of the model and

Figure 2.- Shows the frontal views of the model of the previous figure, properly assembled which includes a pop-corn container attached to the small hooking flap and

Figure 3.- Shows in angle view, the same model with an extended small outer flap with containers inside the model.

[0010] Taking a look at these figures, it can be observed that the drink carrier is formed by a laminated body in which five differentiated sectors are defined, where the central sector (a) constitutes the base of the model, two rectangular sectors (b) are intended to form the holders to carry cups of different-sized diameters (c) for the containers and also have the small flaps that will form in its ends the model handles (e) and (f), and two additional curved flaps (d), attaching system (g) that is ready to hook pop-corn cups that have their corresponding slots, as well outer advertising panels that the surface provides (h), hooking slots (i), lapels with hooks (j) and pop-corn cup with hooking slot (k).

[0011] The attaching system (g) of the outer flaps may be formed by die-cut lapels that have to be introduced in slots (i) of the curved flaps (d) to form the attachment and to ensure the locking of the model. The attachment is formed by two pairs of lapels (j) located on the sides of the curved flaps (d).

[0012] Obviously, the outer surface of the model will be imprinted with graphics, or informative or advertising messages.

[0013] The inner surface of the model may even have imprinted information of any kind, such as advertising, restaurant recipes, etc...

[0014] The assembling system is very simple, by beginning with a laminated structure that may be observed in figure 1, by folding the different die-cut areas and performing the attachments (i), (j) of the outer flaps (b), the drink or food containers can be placed in the different

available surfaces or openings, as it can be seen in the figures 2 and 3.

[0015] Before securing one of the side attachments (i) it is possible to introduce in the lower space, on top of the surface (a), food containers, as well as additional items such as sugar bags, spoons, restaurant bill, etc, which can be seen in figure 3. 5

[0016] Last, the hooking flaps (g) of the attachment system of the outer flaps may be used as a support for additional containers, such as pop-corn cups, that may include a small vertical slot (k) on outer surface. 10

[0017] Within the essence of the invention, it is possible the variation of details, protected as well, and so the amount of openings for the cups could change, as could the shape of the hooking system or attachment of the structural joints and, of course, whatever the dimensions and materials used to produce it are. 15

Claims

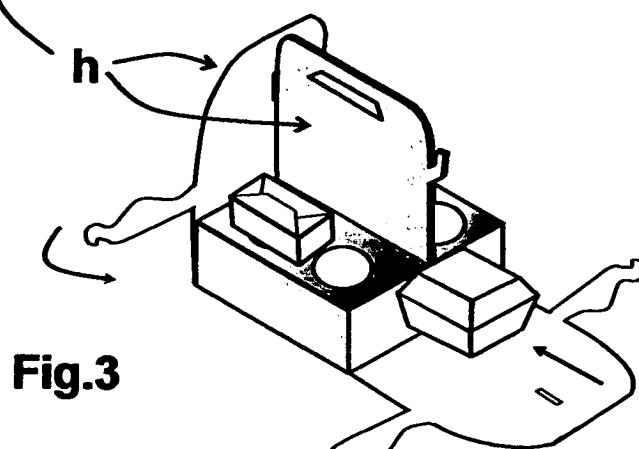
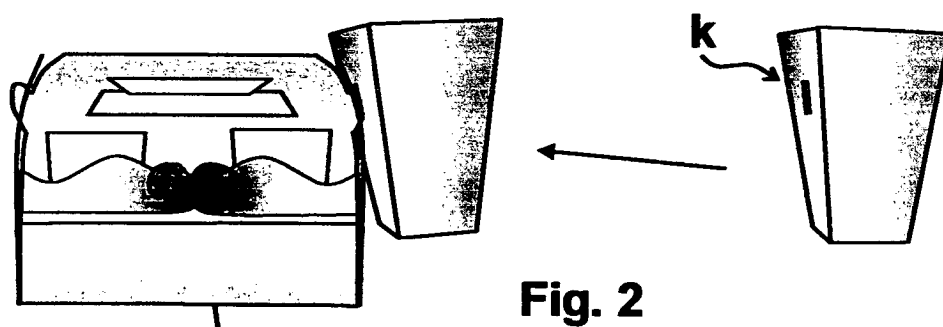
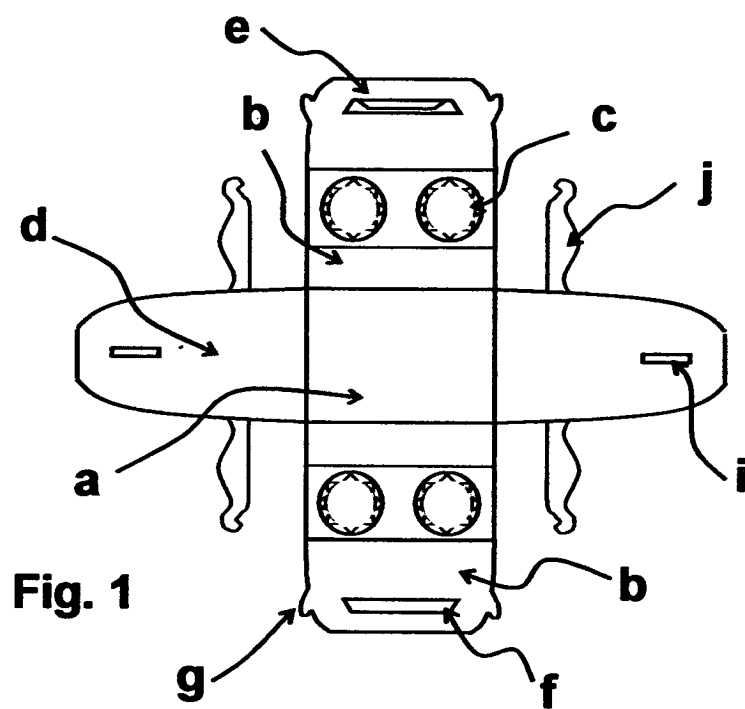
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1. Improved Containers' Carrier, conceived to act as a hot or cold food and drink container carrying system, **characterized by** being constituted by a homogenous flat body, preferably cardboard-made, which when folded by side die-cut flaps conforms a three-dimensional receptacle, with horizontal surfaces and which incorporates round openings with its edge die-cut in a star-shaped form, so when cups of different diameters are introduced, these stay firm when the edge of the die-cut gets folded towards the inside of the round opening, accommodating to the diameter of the introduced cup, and because the flaps that include the round openings with liquids present in their ends slots that, when folded and attached by a hooking flap, form a handle, which also present at its sides' ends ear-shaped flaps, which when introduced in the longitudinal slots located on the opposite side flaps conform the fastening and support mechanism of the improved containers' carrier. 25 30 35 40

2. Improved Containers' Carrier, according to claim 1, **characterized** because the flaps include the round openings for containers with liquids present at their ends slots that, when folded and attached by a hooking flap, conform the handle, which itself also presents at its side ends ear-shaped flaps, which when introduced in the longitudinal slots located in the opposite side flaps conform the fastening and support mechanism of the improved containers' carrier. 45 50

3. Improved Containers' Carrier, according to claim 1, **characterized by** presenting a series of round openings with their edges die-cut in a star-shaped form, so when cups of different diameters are introduced these stay firm when the die-cut edge gets 55

folded towards the inside of the round opening, accommodating to the diameter of the introduced cup.



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/ ES 2004/000039

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

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According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

Int. cl7 B65D 5/20, B65D 85/72, B65D 71/52

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

CIBEPAT, EPODOC, WPI

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X A	GB 2368062 A (Boon Wee Lau) 24.04.2002, the whole document	1-3
X A	US 5524814 A (Davis) 11.06.1996, the whole document	1-5 5
X A	US 6439452 A (Tsao) 27.08.2002, the whole document	1-5 5

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.☒ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

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"&" document member of the same patent family

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/ ES 2004/000039

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US6439452 B	27.08.2002	NONE	-----
US5524814 A	11.06.1996	NONE	-----
GB2368062 A	24.04.2002	NONE	-----

Form PCT/ISA/210 (patent family annex) (July 1992)