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(54) **PROTECTIVE COVER FOR BEVERAGE CANS**

(57) The invention relates to a protective cover for beverage cans, for assuring suitable hygiene conditions for drinking directly from the can, **characterized in that** it consists of a body (1), made with a suitably impermeable and sufficiently strong material, preferably transparent, with a cylindrical configuration open at its lower part (1 a) and closed at its upper base (1 b), and with dimensions slightly larger than those of the can (2), such that it covers the latter at the upper part, in the base in which the corresponding ring pull (6) is located, and laterally surrounds at least its upper half in a tight manner; wherein said body (1) has at least one tear means, such as a partially pre-die cut strip (3) or any other similar known system, there optionally being at its end at least one flange (4) which facilitates holding it.

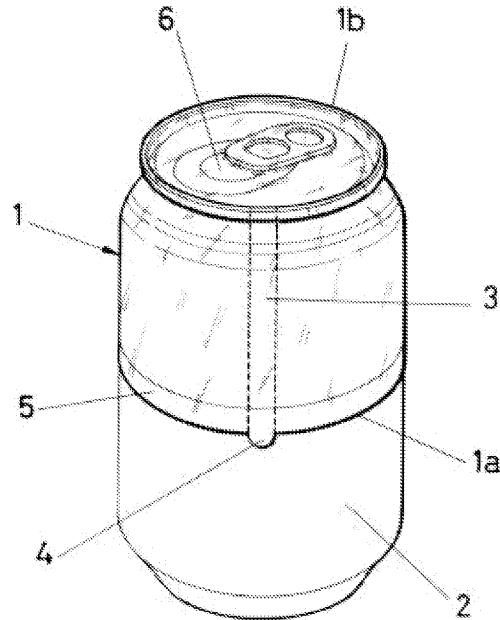


FIG.1

Description**Object of the Invention**

[0001] As expressed in the title of the present specification, the invention relates to a protective cover for beverage cans.

[0002] More specifically, the object of the invention is a cover the purpose of which consists of being configured as a protective element, especially with a hygienic nature, for beverage cans, by means of which the suitable hygiene conditions which the surface of the can will have for safely placing it in contact with the mouth and drinking directly from the can are assured in an effective and simple manner, without fearing the presence therein of dirt and possible bacteria before breaking its seal.

Field of Application

[0003] The field of application of the present invention is comprised within the industry dedicated to the manufacture of containers.

Background of the Invention

[0004] As is known, beverage cans are a type of container which is widely used and the main advantage of which consists of the ease that they provide for their use without needing to use glasses or other vessels for suitably and comfortably consuming the content thereof suitably. However, said type of container has a significant drawback, which is given by the fact that during its transport and/or storage, which can be quite long, the cans can easily accumulate dirt of any type, from simple dust to any type of substance which can possibly be spilled or accumulate thereon, to excrement and urine of different animals (rats, cockroaches, ants, flies) which generally move around without control in warehouses and similar installations.

[0005] Said drawback is partially solved, in some cases, by means of the plastic wrapping of the packs or groups of cans which certain companies use. However, in addition to the fact that said wrappings do not completely cover the cans since they are usually partially open, they do not incorporate any type of safety seal and, on the other hand, when said packs are divided into individual cans or groups of cans of a smaller number, the wrapping is broken or directly removed, the cans again being at the mercy of possible anti-hygienic, even pathogenic, elements which can reach the people's mouths if they drink directly from the can.

[0006] It would therefore be desirable to create some type of protective element assuring the hygiene conditions of the upper surface of each can until the exact time at which it is consumed by the user, this being the main objective of the present invention, with regard to which which, on the other hand, it must be indicated that the existence of any other one having similar technical, struc-

tural and configuration features is not known.

Description of the Invention

5 **[0007]** Thus, the protective cover for beverage cans proposed by the present invention proposed is configured in itself as an outstanding novelty within its field since, according to its application, the objectives indicated above as suitable are reached, the characterizing details 10 which it incorporates and which make it possible being suitably included in the final claims attached to the present specification.

[0008] Specifically, the proposed cover essentially consists of a body, made with a suitably impermeable 15 and sufficiently strong material, preferably fine plastic, cellophane or the like, preferably transparent, which, adopting a configuration similar to that of the can, being placed, for example, using the technique of heat applied on the material (heat forming), among other possibilities, 20 tightly surrounds at least its upper half, being able to optionally cover it entirely. Said cover advantageously has a tear system which can be any of those which are conventionally known, which will assure the hygiene of said part of the can, optionally incorporating side flanges for 25 facilitating its opening.

[0009] Additionally, and in order to provide a greater 30 and better protection, the lower part of the cover can incorporate, at its inner part, a band with adhesive or the like which, in addition to increasing the fixing thereof to the can to prevent it from being accidentally detached while it is handled, seals off the area that it covers, providing greater hygiene assurance for consumption.

[0010] The new protective cover for beverage cans 35 therefore represents an innovative structure with structural and constitutive features unknown up until now for such purpose, which reasons, combined with its practical usefulness, provide it with sufficient grounds for obtaining the exclusive privilege which is sought.

Description of the Drawings

[0011] To complement the description which is being 45 made and for the purpose of aiding to better understand the features of the invention, a set of drawings is attached to the present specification as an integral part thereof, in which the following has been depicted with an illustrative and non-limiting character:

50 Figure 1 shows a perspective view of an embodiment of the protective cover for beverage cans object of the invention, suitably arranged on the can for which it is intended, the way in which it is placed as well as the parts or elements that it consists of being seen. Figures 2 and 3 show respective perspective side elevational views of respective embodiments of the 55 cover object of the invention, completing covering the can in the case of Figure 2 and only covering its upper part in the case of Figure 3.

Preferred Embodiment of the Invention

[0012] In view of the mentioned figures, and according to the numbers adopted, a preferred embodiment of the invention can be observed therein, which comprises the parts and elements indicated and described in detail below.

[0013] As is observed in said figures, the cover in question basically consists of a body (1), made with a suitably impermeable and sufficiently strong material, preferably fine plastic, cellophane or the like, preferably transparent, which adopts a configuration similar to that of the can (2), i.e., a cylindrical configuration open at its lower part (1 a) and closed at its upper base (1 b) and with dimensions slightly larger than those of the can (2), such that it covers the latter at the upper part and laterally surrounds at least its upper half in a tight manner, optionally being able to cover it entirely.

[0014] Said body (1) has at least one tear means, such as a partially pre-die cut strip (3) or any other similar known system, there optionally being at its end at least one flange (4) which facilitates holding it, thus assuring the hygiene of the upper surface of the can (2) in which the corresponding ring pull (6) is located, in order to be able to drink directly from such can.

[0015] Additionally, and in order to provide a greater and better hygienic protection of the can (2), the lower part of the body (1) forming the cover can incorporate, at its inner face, a band (5) with adhesive or provided with some other type of similar fixing, which keeps said lower part of the body (1) adhered to the side surface of the can (2), sealing off the space between both elements (cover and can) from the entry of any type of foreign element.

[0016] Finally, it must be emphasized, as is observed in Figures 2 and 3, that the cover formed by the body (1) can optionally cover the can (2) completely, in which case said body (1) will logically not be open at its lower part and it will not be necessary to fix it by means of the band (5) with adhesive (Figure 2), or it can only cover its upper part (Figure 3).

[0017] Having sufficiently described the nature of the present invention, as well as the way of putting it into practice, it is not considered necessary to further extend its description for any person skilled in the art to understand its scope and the advantages derived therefrom, stating that, within its essence, it can be put into practice in other embodiments which differ in detail from the one indicated by way of example, and which are also covered by the protection which is sought provided that its fundamental principle is not altered, changed or modified.

Claims

1. Protective cover for beverage cans, applicable as a protective element, especially with a hygienic nature, for beverage cans, in order to assure the suitable

hygiene conditions which the surface of the can will have to be able to drink directly from it, **characterized in that** it consists of a body (1), made with a suitably impermeable and sufficiently strong material, preferably fine plastic, cellophane or the like, preferably transparent, which adopts a cylindrical configuration open at its lower part (1 a) and closed at its upper base (1 b) and with dimensions slightly larger than those of the can (2), such that it covers the latter at the upper part, in the base in which the corresponding ring pull (6) is located, and laterally surrounds at least its upper half in a tight manner; wherein said body (1) has at least one tear means, such as a partially pre-die cut strip (3) or any other similar known system, there optionally being at its end at least one flange (4) which facilitates holding it.

2. Protective cover for beverage cans according to claim 1, **characterized in that**, additionally and in order to provide a greater and better hygienic protection of the can (2), the lower part of the body (1) forming the cover incorporates, at its inner face, a band (5) with adhesive or provided with some other type of similar fixing, which keeps said lower part of the body (1) adhered to the side surface of the can (2), sealing off the space between both elements (cover and can).
3. Protective cover for beverage cans according to claim 1, **characterized in that** the body (1) optionally covers the can (2) completely, not being, in such case, open at its lower part and not needing to be fixed by means of the band (5) with adhesive.
4. Protective cover for beverage cans according to claim 1, **characterized in that** the body (1) optionally only covers the upper part of the can (2).

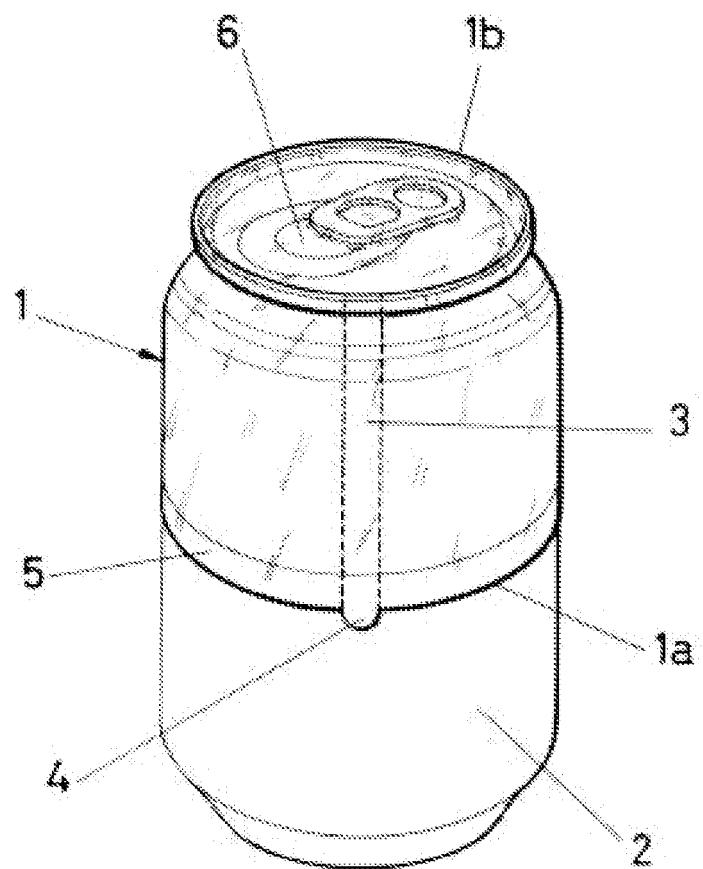


FIG.1

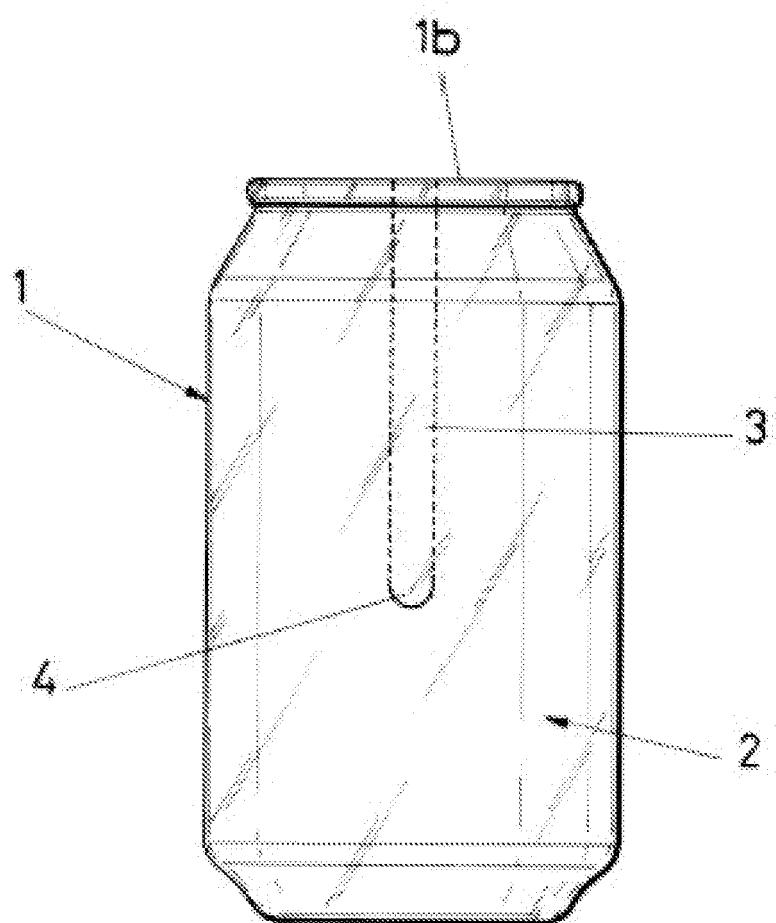


FIG.2

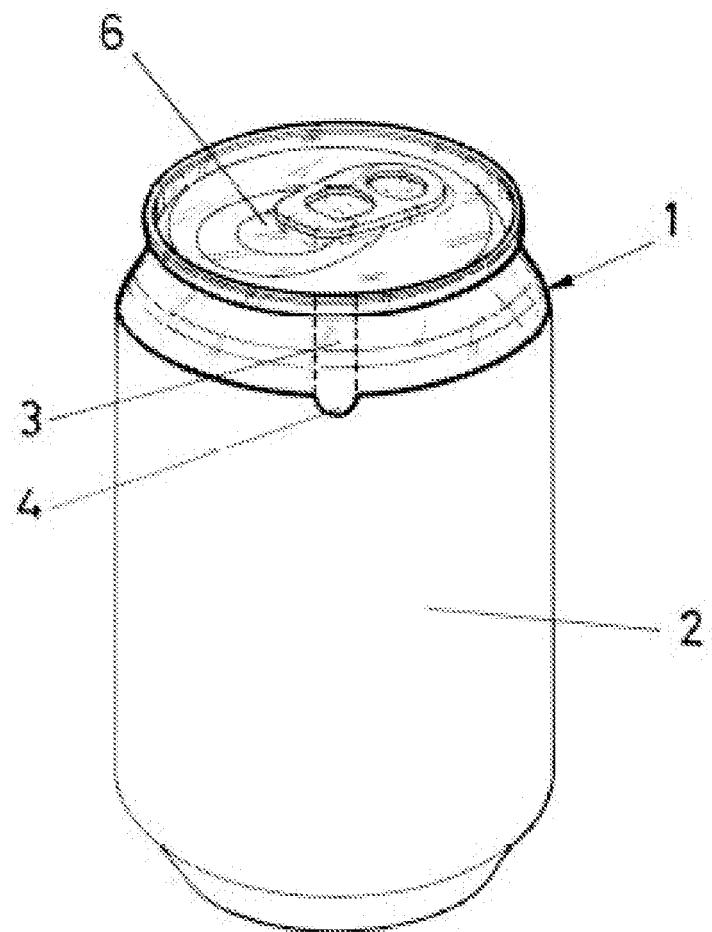


FIG.3

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No. PCT/ ES 2008/000476
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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

see extra sheet

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)
B65D51/00, B65D41/00

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, EPDOC

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	ES 1052339 U (RIERA CORTES MATEU) 01.12.2002, COL1, LÍN60-COL4, LÍN14; images.	1-4
X	ES 2257903 A1 (ORDEIX GIMENEZ JOSE LUIS) 01.08.2006, COL1, LÍN50-COL4, LÍN11; images.	1-4
X	JP 9207956 A (ARCO KK) 12.08.1997, description; images.	1-4
X	WO 03089328 A1 (PERAZA GENOR FILHO) 30.10.2003, description; images.	1,2
X	ES 2162570 A1 (MARTIN SANCHEZ FLAVIO) 16.12.2001, COL1, LÍN58-COL2, LÍN65; images.	1
A	ES 1026302 U (FRANCO ABAD ; SOCIAS TOMAS) 01.04.1994, COL1, LÍN21-COL2, LÍN40	
A	EP 1070669 A1 (ECOBAGS S R L) 24.01.2001, description; images.	

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

* Special categories of cited documents:	"T"	later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"A"		document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance.
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"L"	"X"	document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
"O"	"Y"	document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition, or other means
"P"		document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed
	"&"	document member of the same patent family
Date of the actual completion of the international search 18.November.2008 (18.11.2008)		Date of mailing of the international search report (21/11/2008)
Name and mailing address of the ISA/ O.E.P.M. Paseo de la Castellana, 75 28071 Madrid, España. Facsimile No. 34 91 3495304		Authorized officer M. I. Esteban Gil Telephone No. +34 91 349 5366

Form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet) (April 2007)

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No.

PCT/ ES 2008/000476

Patent document cited in the search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
ES 1052339 U U	01.12.2002	NONE	-----
ES 2257903 A B	01.08.2006	NONE	-----
JP 9207956 A	12.08.1997	NONE	-----
WO 03089328 A	30.10.2003	BR 8200811 U	24.09.2002
ES 1026302 U	01.04.1994	ES 1026302 Y	01.10.1994 01.10.1994 01.10.1994
EP 1070669 A	24.01.2001	ITBO 990404 IT 1310415 B	19.01.2001 13.02.2002 13.02.2002
ES 2162570 A B	16.12.2001	NONE	-----

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CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

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