Jan. 16, 1968 B. J. BLUNDELL 3,363,869

COASTER

Filed June 21, 1966

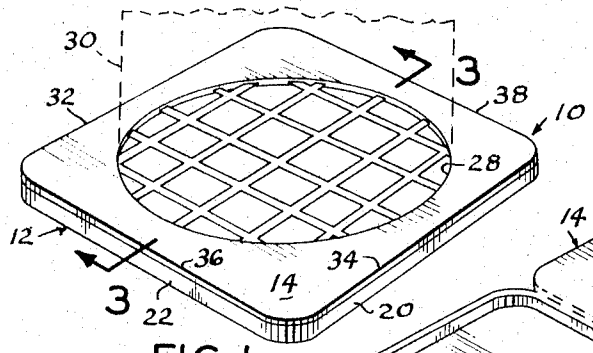


FIG. 1

FIG. 2

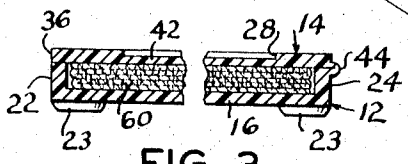


FIG. 3

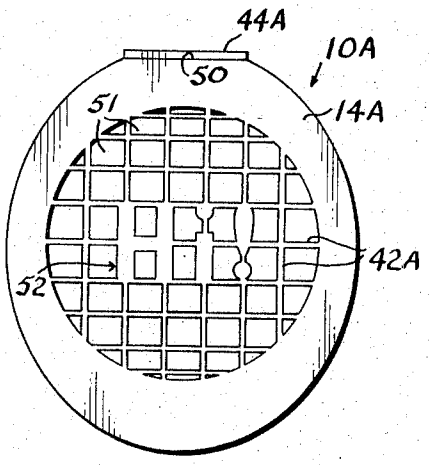


FIG. 4

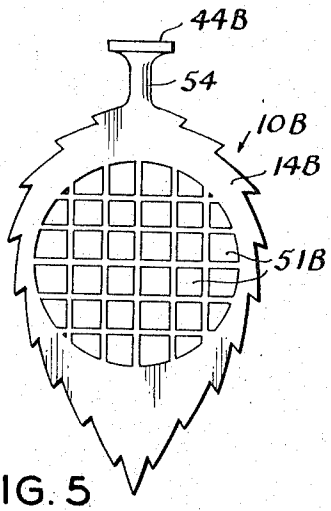


FIG. 5

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3,363,869

COASTER

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Continuation-in-part of application Ser. No. 364,528, May 4, 1964, now Patent No. 3,257,092, dated June 21, 1966. This application June 21, 1966, Ser. No. 559,264
4 Claims. (Cl. 248—346.1)

The present invention is a continuation-in-part of an application filed by me in the United States Patent Office May 4, 1964, Ser. No. 364,528, for Coaster, now Patent No. 3,257,092.

This invention is distinctive over the patent by eliminating the depending walls of the lid member.

It has been common practice to provide a section of absorbent material at the bottom of a coaster which absorbs the moisture condensing on a drinking glass. Frequently the absorbent material becomes saturated and moisture eventually collects in or runs out of the bottom of the coaster. In some coasters the absorbent material is not secured to the coaster and when the material is wet it tends to adhere to the bottom of the drinking glass and be lifted out of the coaster. Other types of coasters have an absorbent material therein which has been glued to the coaster bottom which renders the absorbent material difficult to remove and replace.

It is, therefore, the principal object of this invention to overcome the foregoing difficulties and disadvantages by providing a novel coaster adapted to receive a sheet of moisture absorbent material, such as a paper napkin, which may be readily placed within and easily removed from the coaster.

Another object is to provide a coaster wherein the absorbent material is firmly anchored within the coaster and is not in direct contact with the supporting drinking glass.

Another object is to provide a coaster having a well for retaining excess moisture collecting on and draining out of the saturated absorbent pad.

Yet another object is to provide a coaster of this type which is formed of a unitary section of plastic material arranged in superposed sections to releasably receive a pad of absorbent material therebetween and which is light in weight and attractive in appearance.

The present invention accomplishes these and other objects by hingedly connecting a drinking glass supporting lid member to an absorbent pad nesting base member.

Other objects will be apparent from the following description when taken in conjunction with the accompanying single sheet of drawings, wherein:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of the coaster illustrating, by dotted lines, a fragment of a drinking glass supported thereby;

FIGURE 2 is a perspective view of the coaster, per se, in open position;

FIGURE 3 is a fragmentary vertical cross-sectional view, to an enlarged scale, taken substantially along the line 3—3 of FIG. 1; and

FIGURES 4 and 5 are top plan views of alternative embodiments of the coaster.

Like characters of reference designate like parts in those figures of the drawings in which they occur.

In the drawings:

The reference numeral **10** indicates the coaster, as a whole, comprising a base member or bottom section **12** and a top section or lid member **14**. The base member **12** includes a horizontal bottom portion **16** having surrounding upstanding side walls **18–20** and end walls **22–24** of uniform height joined by rounded corners to enhance its generally square wafer-like appearance and form a shallow well **25**. Adjacent each of the rounded corners the lower surface of the bottom **16** is provided with a support or foot **23**, two of which are shown in FIG. 3. The lid member **14** is preferably substantially plate-like and is provided with a central opening or aperture **28** of a size to receive a drinking glass **30**, or the like. The lid is defined by side edges **32–34** and end edges **36–38** similarly merging with rounded corners and coinciding in overlying relation, with the outer surfaces of the respective upstanding walls of the base member when in closed position (FIG. 1).

A plurality of crossed bars or strips **42**, parallel with the respective side and end edges of the lid, are integrally connected to each other and at their respective ends to the inward surface defining the aperture **28**, as seen in FIG. 1, to form a lattice across the aperture **28** to support the drinking glass **30**, or the like, when the latter is placed thereon.

The bars **42**, in the example shown by FIGS. 1 to 3, are substantially smaller in transverse dimension than the thickness of the lid member **14** and having their lowermost surfaces coplanar with the plane of the bottom surface of the lid when the latter is in closed position. This forms a relatively shallow indentation in the upper surface of the closed lid defined by the wall forming the aperture **28** and the upper surfaces of the bars **42**.

Alternatively the lattice configuration may be achieved by forming a plurality of relatively large closely spaced-apart apertures or holes through the lid member **14**. The material of the lid between the apertures or holes then defines a lattice pattern which is of equal thickness with respect to the thickness of the lid member such as is shown by the examples of FIGS. 4 and 5.

A portion of the free edge of the bottom end wall **24** is integrally connected to a portion of the lid edge wall **38** to form a relatively thin hinge **44** permitting vertical pivoting movement of the lid member **14** toward and away from the base member **12**.

Referring more particularly to FIG. 4, an alternative configuration for the device, indicated at **10A**, comprises a substantially ovate shape, in top plan view, having relatively short straight marginal edge portions **50** preferably disposed perpendicular to the major axis of the ovate shape for connecting a similar hinge **44A**.

In this embodiment the lid member **14A** has a plurality of relatively large substantially square apertures **51** formed therethrough in closely spaced relation to define a lattice pattern having a substantially circular perimeter spaced inwardly of the marginal edges of the lid. Obviously the holes **51**, forming the lattice pattern, may be formed with perimeters having shapes other than square if desired.

Centrally of the lattice bars **42A** a portion of the material of the lid forms letters, indicia or a selected insignia for the purposes of forming slogans or trademarks for advertising, or the like, as indicated at **52**.

FIGURE 5 illustrates still another embodiment **10B** of the device. The device **10B** simulates a fanciful leaf, or the like, with the free end portion of the stem portion **54** transversely widened to form straight side edge surfaces for receiving a similar hinge connector **44B**.

In the example a plurality of holes **51B**, formed through the lid member **14B**, form a lattice pattern as described hereinabove for the alternate embodiments of FIGS. 1 to 4.

Operation

In operation an absorbent member, such as a conventional paper napkin **60**, is folded to underlie the position of the glass **30** and is freely received on the bottom **16** within the well **25**. The lid is closed and thereafter the drinking glass **30** may be positioned within the aperture **28** on the lattice bars **42**. When the napkin **60** is wet or

has become soiled it is replaced by manually raising the lid 14.

The operation of the alternative embodiments 10A and 10B is identical to the operation of the device 10 with the exception that the alternative embodiments are not provided with the drinking glass receiving recess 28.

Obviously the invention is susceptible to some change or alteration without defeating its practicability, and I therefore do not wish to be confined to the preferred embodiment shown in the drawings and described herein, further than I am limited by the scope of the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A coaster for drinking glasses, comprising: a base member having a substantially flat bottom and having a surrounding wall of uniform height forming a moisture and absorbent pad receiving shallow well; an absorbent pad removably received by said well; a lid member superposed on said base member, the marginal edges of said lid member coinciding with said upstanding wall, said lid member having a plurality of spaced-apart openings in its central portion; and an integrally connected relatively thin hinge joining an upper outer free edge portion of said wall of said base member to a lower outer free edge portion of said lid member.

2. Structure as specified in claim 1 in which said lid member has a circular recess formed in its upper surface coincident with the outermost limit of the openings formed therein and in which the openings are substantially greater in area than the spacing therebetween.

3. Structure as specified in claim 1 in which the openings formed in said lid are substantially greater in area than the spacing therebetween.

4. Structure as specified in claim 2 in which the openings formed in said lid are irregular shaped.

References Cited

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