ABSTRACT

A collectible trading card assembly (10) includes a container (12) and a featured trading card (432). The featured trading card (432) includes a first image (436) and a second image (438). The container (12) includes a container body (16), a viewing region (20) and a retainer assembly (444). The retainer assembly (444) maintains the featured trading card (432) near the viewing region (20) within the container body (16) so that the first image (436) is visible through the viewing region (20) and the second image (438) is not visible through the viewing region (20). With this design, a portion of the featured trading card (432) is visible while another portion is still a secret.
FIG. 1
TRADING CARD AND CONTAINER

BACKGROUND

[0001] Trading cards are a popular way to collect images and information about athletes and celebrities. Trading cards can also be used in card games and other activities. Unfortunately, many of the trading cards are sold and distributed in a fashion in which contents of the trading cards are not disclosed prior to the purchase of the trading card. Further, existing trading cards do not provide an element of mystery or surprise.

SUMMARY

[0002] The present invention is directed to a trading card assembly that includes a featured trading card and a container. The featured trading card includes a first image and a second image. The container includes a container body, a viewing region and a retainer assembly. In one embodiment, the retainer assembly maintains the featured trading card near the viewing region within the container body so that the first image is visible through the viewing region and the second image is not visible through the viewing region. With this design, a portion of the featured trading card is visible while another portion is still a secret. As a result thereof, a person can purchase the trading card assembly with the knowledge of a portion of the information about the featured trading card.

[0003] In one embodiment, the retainer assembly fits in container and maintains the featured trading card spaced apart from the viewing region. The featured trading card can also include a third image that is not visible through the viewing region.

[0004] Additionally, the trading card assembly can also include a plurality of additional trading cards that are not visible through the viewing region. The additional trading cards can be retained in a plurality of packs. The retainer assembly maintains the packs below the featured trading card.

[0005] In one embodiment, the viewing region is substantially transparent and the retainer assembly includes a transparent area positioned between the featured trading card and the viewing region.

[0006] Moreover, the present invention is directed to a game that includes one or more trading cards.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] The novel features of this invention, as well as the invention itself, both as to its structure and its operation, will be best understood from the accompanying drawings, taken in conjunction with the accompanying description, in which similar reference characters refer to similar parts, and in which:

[0008] FIG. 1 is a front perspective view of a trading card assembly having features of the present invention;
[0009] FIGS. 2A and 2B are alternative side views of the trading card assembly of FIG. 1;
[0010] FIG. 3 is a bottom view of the trading card assembly of FIG. 1;
[0011] FIG. 4 is a partly exploded, perspective view of the trading card assembly of FIG. 1;
[0012] FIG. 5 is a top view of the trading card assembly of FIG. 1;
[0013] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of another embodiment of a container having features of the present invention and FIG. 7 is an exploded, perspective view of the container of FIG. 6.

DESCRIPTION

[0014] FIG. 1 is a front perspective view of a trading card assembly 10 that includes a container 12 and one or more trading cards 14 that are positioned within the container 12. The size and shape of these components can be varied to suit the desired design requirements of the trading card assembly. Further, the number of trading cards 14 in the container 12 can be varied. Moreover, one or more trading cards 14, for example, can be a collectible item and/or can be used in sports or entertainment games. For example, each of the trading cards 14 can be used as a game play card or as an interactive sports card.

[0015] In one embodiment, the container 12 includes a container body 16 and a lid 18. In FIG. 1, the lid 18 can be selectively removed from the container body 16 to fully expose the one or more trading cards 14 in the container 12. Further, the lid 18 can be selectively reattached to the container body 16 to close the container 12. Alternatively, for example, the lid 18 can be designed to selectively rotate relative to the container body 16 to open the container 12.

[0016] The container body 16 and the lid 18 can be made of any rigid material, such as tin, steel or a hard plastic.

[0017] Additionally, the container 12 can include a viewing region 20 that exposes a portion of the trading card 14. In FIG. 1, the lid 18 includes a lid aperture 21 and the viewing region 20 is piece of transparent material that is secured to the lid 18 at the lid aperture 21. Alternatively, the viewing region 20 can be positioned in another area of the container 12. The viewing region 20 can be generally rectangular shaped or can have another configuration.

[0018] In one embodiment, only portion of one of the trading cards 14 is visible through the viewing region 20. Stated another way, the viewing region 20 exposes a portion of the trading card 14, and hides another portion of the trading card 14. With this design, a portion of the trading card 14 is maintained in secret prior to opening the container 12. In FIG. 1, the trading card 14 is spaced apart from the viewing region 20. Alternatively, for example, the trading card 14 can be positioned directly adjacent to the viewing region 20.

[0019] FIGS. 2A and 2B are alternative side views of the trading card assembly 10 and FIG. 3 is a bottom view of the trading card assembly 10 including the container body 16 and the lid 18.

[0020] FIG. 4 is a partly exploded, perspective view of the trading card assembly 10 with the lid 18 removed from the container body 16. In this embodiment, the container body 16 defines a container cavity 422 and includes eight body sides 424 and a bottom 426. The body sides 424 are arranged in a hybrid rectangle/octagon configuration. Further, the lid 18 includes a top 428 and eight lid sides 430 that are also
arranged in a hybrid rectangle/octagon configuration. In this embodiment, the lid sides 430 fit snuggly around a portion of the body sides 424. Moreover, the top 428 can include a decorative raised area. Alternatively, the container body 16 and lid 18 can have another configuration.

[0021] Further, in this embodiment, the trading card assembly 10 includes a plurality of trading cards 14 including a featured trading card 432 and a plurality of additional trading cards 434. The design of each of the trading cards 432, 434 can be varied. In this embodiment, the each trading card 432, 434 is generally flat, rectangular shaped and has a length of between 2 and 6 inches, a width of between approximately 1.5 and 4.0 inches, and a thickness of between approximately 0.0625 and 0.25 inches. For example, each trading card 432, 434 can be similarly sized and shaped as a standard trading card having a length of approximately 3.5 inches, a width of approximately 2.5 inches, and a thickness of between approximately 0.0625 and 0.1875 inches. Each trading card 432, 434 can be made of card stock.

[0022] In FIG. 4, each trading card 432, 434 include one or more images. For example, each trading card 432, 434 can include a first image 436, a second image 438 and a third image 440. Alternatively, each trading card 432, 434 can include more than three or less than three images. The images 436, 438, 440 can be on the front side and/or the back side of each trading card 432, 434. In FIG. 4, each image 436, 438, 440 is positioned on the front side of the trading card 432, 434. As non-exclusive examples, one or each image 436, 438, 440 can be that of a sports athlete, a celebrity, an entertainer, statistics, information, instructions, numbers, letters, words, an effect, a logo, a game field or arena, an image used in a game, data, a character, an autograph, an animal, landscape, operation of the trading card, and/or operation of a game associated with the trading card.

[0023] In the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 4, for the featured trading card 432, the first image 436 is an image of an imaginary warrior, the second image 438 is an image that includes characters that identify the imaginary warrior, and the third image 440 is an image that includes characters that identify how the featured trading card 432 can be used in a trading card game.

[0024] In one embodiment, the images 436, 438, 440 are related to each other in some fashion.

[0025] Additionally, the trading cards 432, 434 can include card information (not shown) identifying the company that manufactures or distributes the trading card.

[0026] In one embodiment, the featured trading card 432 is an exclusive, limited production trading card while the additional trading cards 434 are less exclusive. Further, in one embodiment, the additional trading cards 434 are arranged in one or more packs 442 (only four packs are illustrated) that are retained together with a cardboard wrapping, a clear wrapping or other means. For example, the packs 442 can retain additional trading cards 434 that have similar characteristics and features. In one embodiment, the trading card assembly 10 includes six packs 442 (only four are shown) and each pack 442 includes nine additional trading cards 434. In one embodiment, the trading card assembly 10 includes a crisis booster pack, a force booster pack, a guardian booster pack, an invasion of chaos booster pack, and a sanctuary booster pack. Alternatively, the trading card assembly 10 can include more than or less than six packs 442 and one or more of the packs 442 can include more than or less than nine additional trading cards 434.

[0027] Moreover, the trading card assembly 10 also includes a retainer assembly 444 for retaining the trading cards 14 in the container 12. The design of the retainer assembly 444 can be changed to suit the requirements of the trading card assembly 10. In FIG. 4, the retainer assembly 444 includes a first retainer 446 and a second retainer 448. In this embodiment, the first retainer 446 retains the featured trading card 432 near the viewing region 20 and spaced apart from the viewing region 20, the top 428 and lid sides 430. Further, in this embodiment, the first retainer 446 includes a rectangular shaped raised area 450 and a retainer cover 452 that is selectively secured to the raised area 450. The retainer cover 452 can include a transparent area. In this embodiment, the featured trading card 432 is positioned and maintained between the raised area 450 and the retainer cover 452. Moreover, the first retainer 446 can be made of a transparent material, such as a clear plastic.

[0028] Further, the second retainer 448 retains the packs 442 of additional trading cards 434 behind and below the featured trading card 432 and spaced apart from the body sides 424. In FIG. 4, the second retainer 448 includes a retainer slot 454 that is sized and shaped for receiving the packs 442. Moreover, the first retainer 446 stacks on top of the second retainer 448. The second retainer 448 can be made of a plastic material.

[0029] FIG. 5 is a top view of the trading card assembly 10. In this embodiment, the first image 436 on the featured trading card 432 is visible through the viewing region 20 and the second and third images 438, 440 (illustrated in FIG. 4) are not visible through the viewing region.

[0030] FIG. 6 is a perspective view and FIG. 7 is an exploded, perspective view of another embodiment of a container 612 that can be used to retain the one or more trading cards 14 (illustrated in FIG. 1). In this embodiment, the container 612 is a slightly different shape than the container 12 illustrated in FIG. 1.

[0031] It is to be understood that the trading cards 10 disclosed herein is merely illustrative of the presently preferred embodiments of the invention and that no limitations are intended to the details of construction or design herein shown other than as described in the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A trading card assembly comprising:
   a featured trading card including a first image and a second image; and
   a container including a viewing region and a retainer assembly that maintains the featured trading card near the viewing region within the container so that the first image is visible through the viewing region and the second image is not visible through the viewing region.

2. The trading card assembly of claim 1 wherein the retainer assembly fits in container and maintains the featured trading card spaced apart from the viewing region.
3. The trading card assembly of claim 1 wherein the featured trading card includes a third image and the third image is not visible through the viewing region.

4. The trading card assembly of claim 1 further comprising a plurality of additional trading cards that are not visible through the viewing region.

5. The trading card assembly of claim 4 wherein the additional trading cards are retained in a plurality of packs.

6. The trading card assembly of claim 5 wherein the retainer assembly maintains the packs behind the featured trading card.

7. The trading card assembly of claim 6 wherein the retainer assembly includes a slot that is sized and shaped to receive the packs.

8. The trading card assembly of claim 6 wherein the retainer assembly includes a first retainer that retains the featured trading card and a second retainer that retains the packs and wherein the first retainer stacks on top of the second retainer within the container.

9. The trading card assembly of claim 1 wherein the viewing region is substantially transparent and the retainer assembly includes a transparent area positioned between the featured trading card and the viewing region.

10. A trading card assembly comprising:

   a featured trading card including a first image and a second image;

   a plurality of additional trading cards; and

   a container including a container body and a viewing region, the container including a retainer assembly that retains the featured trading card and the additional trading cards so that the first image of the featured trading card is visible through the viewing region and the additional trading cards are not visible through the viewing region.

11. The trading card assembly of claim 10 wherein the retainer assembly fits in container and maintains the featured trading card spaced apart from the viewing region.

12. The trading card assembly of claim 10 wherein the featured trading card includes a third image and the third image is not visible through the viewing region.

13. The trading card assembly of claim 10 wherein the additional trading cards are retained in a plurality of packs.

14. The trading card assembly of claim 13 wherein the retainer assembly maintains the packs below the featured trading card.

15. The trading card assembly of claim 13 wherein the retainer assembly includes a slot that is sized and shaped to receive the packs.

16. The trading card assembly of claim 13 wherein the retainer assembly includes a first retainer that retains the featured trading card and a second retainer that retains the packs and wherein the first retainer stacks on top of the second retainer within the container.

17. The trading card assembly of claim 10 wherein the viewing region is substantially transparent and the retainer assembly includes a transparent area positioned between the featured trading card and the viewing region.

18. A method for making a trading card assembly, the method comprising the steps of:

   providing a featured trading card including a first image and a second image; and

   positioning the featured trading card within a container, the container including a viewing region and a retainer assembly that maintains the featured trading card near the viewing region within the container so that the first image is visible through the viewing region and the second image is not visible through the viewing region.

19. The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of positioning a plurality of additional trading cards in the container, the additional trading card not being visible through the viewing region.

20. The method of claim 18 wherein the viewing region is substantially transparent and the retainer assembly includes a transparent area positioned between the featured trading card and the viewing region.