United States Patent

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[54] **TOBACCO POUCH**
7 Claims, 6 Drawing Figs.

[52] **U.S. Cl.** **206/41,** 229/65
[51] **Int. Cl.** **A24f 15/00**
[50] **Field of Search** ..... 206/38(A), 41(F), 37, 48.5; 229/65, 78(A); 150/3, 5, 7

[56] **References Cited**

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ABSTRACT: A deformable tobacco container or pouch including an access opening and at least one, preferably a plurality of pipe cleaners removably attached to and carried by the pouch in proximity to, and at least substantially coextensive with the opening, the pipe cleaners when so positioned serving as stiffening means for the pouch and operable, in conjunction with the pouch, to assist in maintaining the pouch opening selectively open or closed, the pipe cleaners when disassociated from the pouch being usable in a normal manner to clean a pipe.

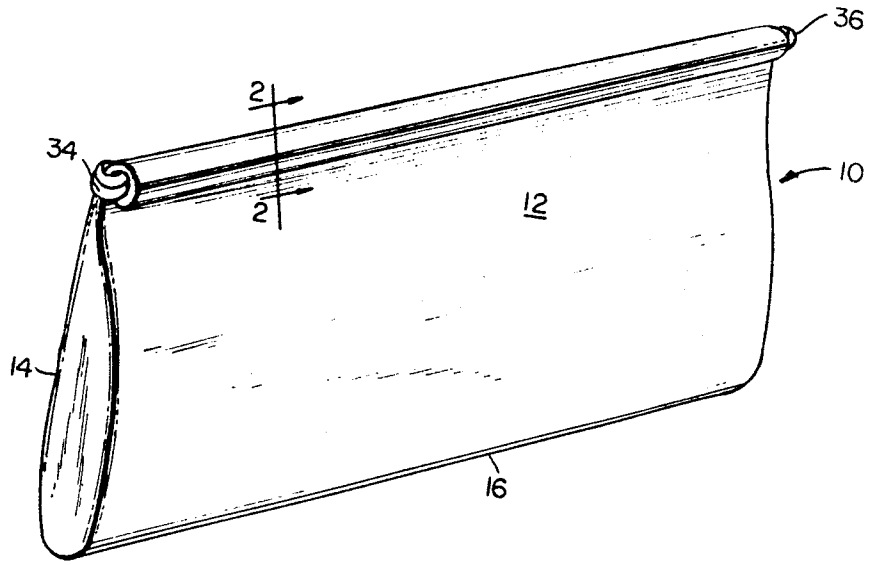


Fig 1.

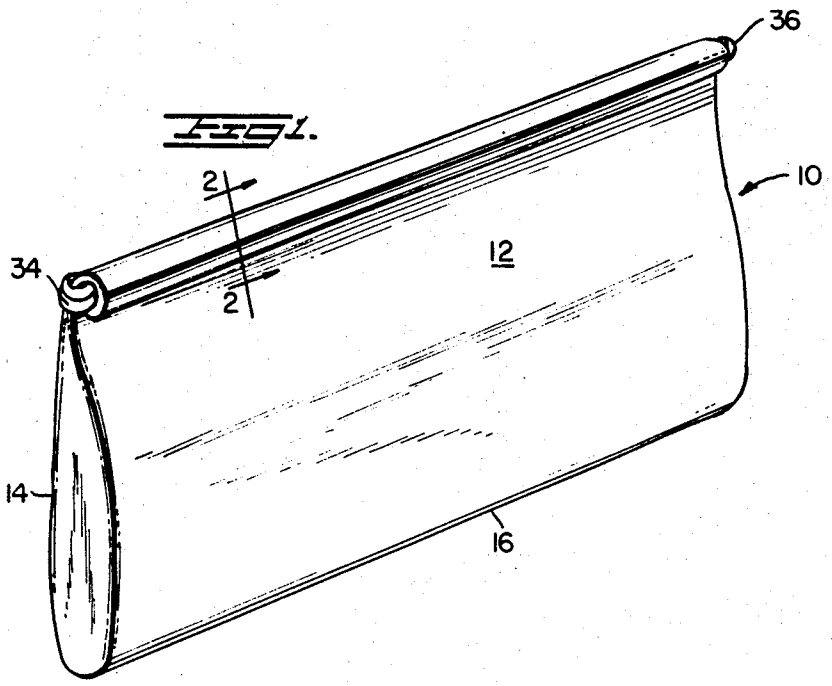


Fig 3.

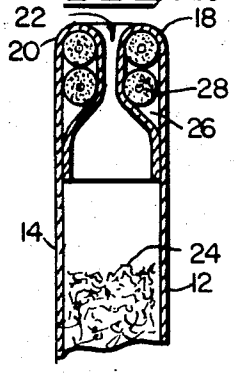


Fig 2.

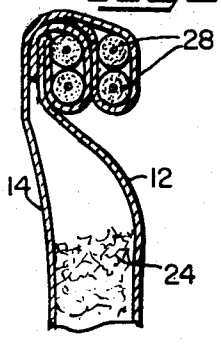


Fig 6.

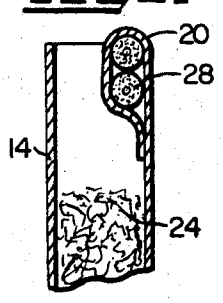


Fig 4.

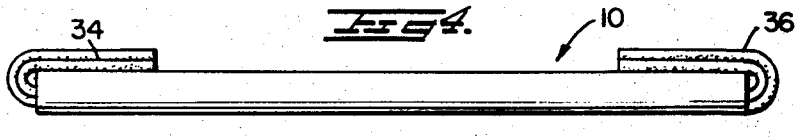
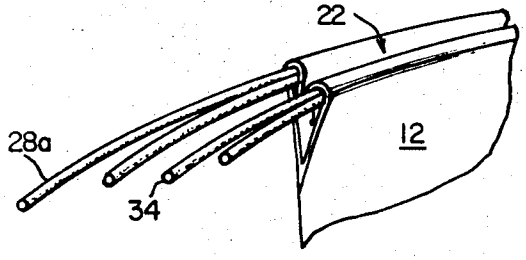


Fig 5.



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TOBACCO POUCH

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The invention pertains to containers or pouches for tobacco of a known type consisting of soft or flexible material, and which are closed along the edges with the exception of an access opening normally positioned at, or adjacent to, one edge thereof. Such pouches prepackaged with tobacco are extensively commercially sold and are conveniently carried and used by pipe smokers. This type of pouch additionally is relatively inexpensive to manufacture which enhances saleability. Pouches of this type normally are provided with closure means to assist in maintaining freshness of tobacco, and to diminish the likelihood of spillage of tobacco, especially in a user's pocket. Such closure means can consist, for example, of flaps integral with the body of the pouch which are foldable over the access opening to at least partially seal the opening and usually overlie the pouch body when in closing position. Other types of closures include multiple folding of the pouch, with or without a flat; fastening means for securing a flap to a pouch body; pouches having tie means extendable about a pouch; removable sealing tear strips, etc.

Tobacco pouches of the above type are generally satisfactory for their designed use and purpose but do, in some instances, lack complete use satisfaction, including a desired relatively leak proof closure.

Convenience is also of importance to pipe smokers and in this connection availability of pipe cleaners is highly desirable, especially when away from home or the office, and provision has not heretofore been made toward a satisfactory solution in this regard.

Another drawback to tobacco pouches of the general type as hereinabove described resides in the inability of the pouch to maintain the access opening in closed or open positions due to lack of body strength or stiffness.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Accordingly it is an object of the invention to provide an improved container or pouch for tobacco which, by its novel construction, overcomes the drawbacks of prior constructions.

The pouch of the invention has increased desirability to a pipe smoker due to an enhanced closure means, improved stiffness which facilitates maintaining an access opening in the pouch in open or closed position, and additionally provides convenience to a user and greater sales appeal without any substantial additional cost over pouches currently being manufactured, sold and used.

Other objects and advantages will be apparent from the following description of embodiments of the invention when taken together with the accompanying drawing in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a preferred embodiment of a container or pouch for tobacco in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a sectional view taken on line 2–2 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary sectional view of the embodiment of FIGS. 1 and 2, showing an access opening in open position;

FIG. 4 is a top plan view of the invention disclosing in more detail a closed condition of the pouch with additional closing means in operative position;

FIG. 5 is a fragmentary perspective view of the embodiment of FIG. 1 with a stiffening means shown partially withdrawn from the pouch; and

FIG. 6 is a fragmentary cross-sectional view showing a modified form of the invention.

Referring now more specifically to the drawings, a preferred form of the invention as disclosed in FIG. 1 includes a container or pouch for tobacco, generally designated **10**, which is made of suitable soft or nonrigid material and constructed in a known manner, for example, from a rectangular piece of the material folded over upon itself to provide a front side **12** and a rear side **14**, with a lower closed edge **16** formed in the folding step. The outer edges are secured to one another in any

desired known manner such as by adhesive, mechanical means, or by heat sealing of plastic material. The method of securement of the edges does not form a part of the present invention and no further description is necessary.

The front and rear sides are not secured to one another at their upper edges **18** and **20**, and form therebetween an access opening **22**, to permit introduction of a pipe into a pouch containing tobacco, indicated at **24**, for filling of the pipe in a normal manner. The description of the structure hereinbefore is generally known and used in the art.

The present invention constitutes an improvement in, or over, known pouches, primarily in using means to stiffen an upper edge **18** and **20**, for example, by rolling or folding an edge over on itself to form a pocket **26** in at least one side **12** or **14** at upper edge **18** or **20**, and into which stiffening means consisting of at least one, and preferably a plurality of known pipe cleaners **28** are inserted. Pipe cleaners, as is known, consist of metal cores in the nature of twisted wire, and have a fabric pile covering the wire. The wire cores normally remain in a substantially linear configuration but are susceptible of being bent to any desired configuration, and will remain so bent until manually bent to a different configuration. Due to the inclusion of such stiffening means positioned adjacent to the access opening, the edges may be placed in a pouch closing and sealing relation, and will so remain until bent to an open condition of the access opening, as shown for example in FIGS. **3** and **6**. FIGS. **1**, **2**, and **4** show the pouch in the closed condition.

The material of the pouch, after the rolling or folding of an upper edge can be secured in position by adhesives, heat welds, mechanical fasteners, or by any other desired manner.

In the preferred form of FIGS. **1** through **5**, a plurality of pipe cleaners **28** are provided at both of the upper edges adjacent to access opening **22**. This arrangement results in effective edge stiffness, as contemplated by the invention, and additionally a large number of pipe cleaners are available for a user of the pouch.

In order to enhance sealing of the pouch, the pipe cleaners are preferably longer than the width of the pouch and project beyond the side edges **30** and **32**. This permits the pipe cleaners to be readily grasped, and the ends **34** and **36** are then folded around and over a side of the pouch, as shown in FIGS. **1** and **4**, to assist in holding the access opening closed. When a pipe is to be filled the pipe cleaners are bent to a position of an open access opening.

As hereinbefore set forth, the pipe cleaners are removable and when removed can be used for their normal function. In FIG. **5**, one pipe cleaner **28***a* is shown partially removed from a pocket. Preferably one or more pipe cleaners are left in the pockets of the pouch to permit use of one of their designed functions. It will be readily apparent that the pipe cleaners, as shown and described, in conjunction with the construction of the pouch, serve a dual function which has substantial merit both as regards an improved pouch and a convenient reservoir for pipe cleaners.

While the preferred construction utilizes pipe cleaners at both edges of the access opening, this is not necessary to utilization of the principles of the invention. A modification is shown in FIG. **6**, wherein pipe cleaners **28** are attached to the pouch at one upper edge **18** or **20** only. Otherwise construction and use are the same.

I claim:

1. A tobacco container or pouch of relatively soft flexible material having an access opening therein, removable stiffening means secured to said pouch along the marginal edges of the pouch's access opening, said stiffening means comprising at least one elongated pipe cleaner having sufficient stiffness to assist in maintaining said access opening in a closed position or in an open position, and having sufficient flexibility to permit bending thereof to said positions, said pipe cleaner being removable from said pouch and thereafter being usable for cleaning a pipe.

2. A tobacco container or pouch as claimed in claim 1, wherein said access opening is defined by and between oppositely disposed edges on sides of said pouch.

3. A tobacco container or pouch as claimed in claim 2, wherein at least one said edge being rolled upon itself to form a pocket for said removable stiffening means.

4. A tobacco container or pouch as claimed in claim 2 and wherein pockets are formed on both said opposite edges and said stiffening means are removably contained in said pockets.

5. A tobacco container or pouch as claimed in claim 4, wherein said removable stiffening means are substantially coextensive with said pockets.

6. A tobacco container or pouch as claimed in claim 4 wherein said removable stiffening means have a length greater than that of said pockets and extend beyond the ends of said pocket, and are foldable over and around said edges to an opposite side of said pouch to secure said access opening in a closed position.

7. A combination container and tobacco pouch comprising an open top body of a relatively soft flexible material, and being closed on the other edges thereof, a closed receptacle being formed of the material of the pouch along the marginal edges of the opening therein, at least one relatively bendable pipe cleaner removably inserted in said receptacle to provide stiffness and reinforcement to the material of the pouch and being bendable into a pouch opened or closed position, and having sufficient stiffness and rigidity when so bent to remain in a said position, said pipe cleaners being removable from said receptacle and when removed from the receptacle being thereafter usable for cleaning a pipe in a normal manner.