United States Patent [19]

Dahl

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[54] **OPENABLE AND CLOSABLE PACKAGE**

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[73] Assignee: **Crystal Thermoplastics, Inc.**, Cumberland, R.I.

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[52] **U.S. Cl.**..... **206/45.34**, 206/78 B, 206/DIG. 24, 220/60 R

[51] **Int. Cl.**..... **B65d 25/00**, B65d 43/10

[58] **Field of Search**..... 206/45.34, 56 R, 206/56 AC, 78 R, 78 B, 79, 80 A, DIG. 24; 220/60 R

[56] **References Cited**

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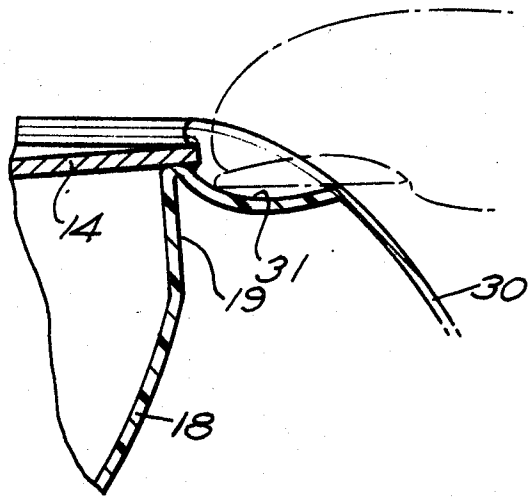
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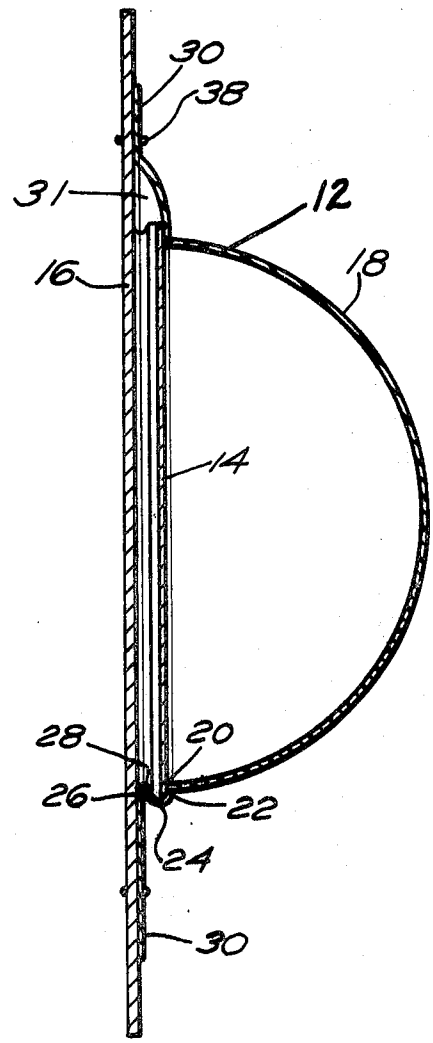
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Attorney—Herbert B. Barlow, Jr. et al.

[57] **ABSTRACT**

An openable and closable package having a see-through cover, an insert member and a backing member. The cover is in the form of a shell having a first opening of a predetermined dimension in its bottom side with a shoulder extending outwardly from the periphery of the first opening. A wall extends downwardly from the shoulder and has an inwardly extending flange which forms a second opening. Tab members extend outwardly from the flange which forms the second opening and a finger recess is formed in a tab member with the mouth of the recess being in communication with a cutaway portion of the wall and flange. The insert member closes the package and it has an outside peripheral dimension greater than the predetermined dimensions of the first opening of the shell section but less than the peripheral dimension of the opening formed by the wall extending downwardly from the periphery of the shoulder. The backing member is attached to the underside of the cover by staples passing through the tab members which extend outwardly from the bottom of the shell.

6 Claims, 7 Drawing Figures





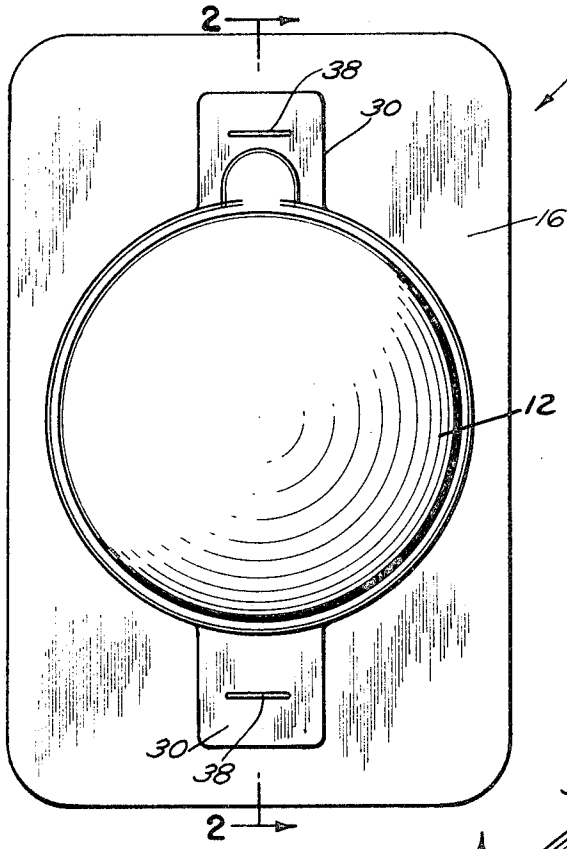


FIG. 1

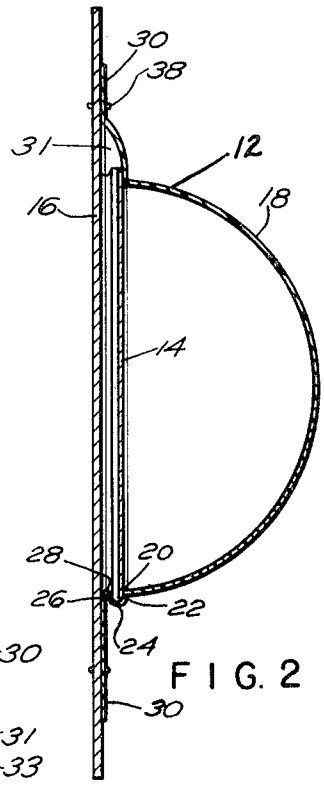


FIG. 2

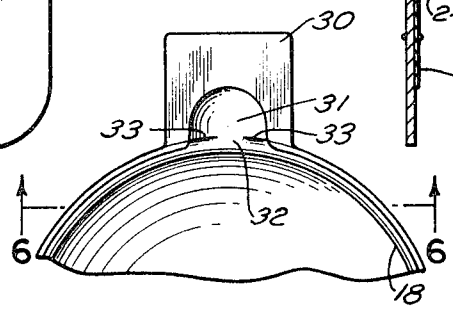


FIG. 3

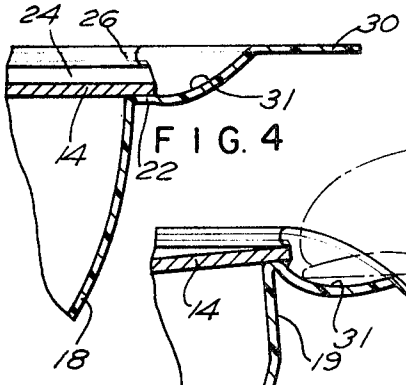


FIG. 4

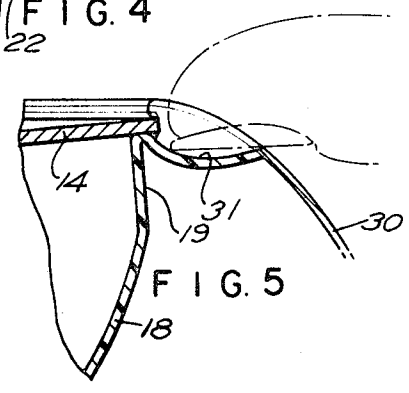


FIG. 5

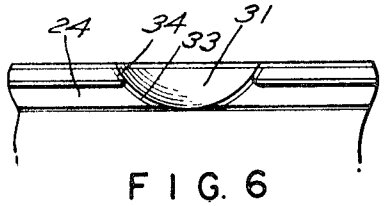


FIG. 6

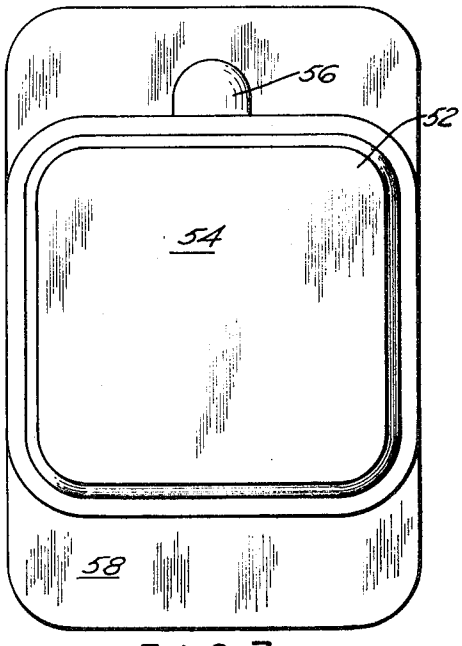


FIG. 7

OPENABLE AND CLOSABLE PACKAGE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to containers and more particularly to openable and closable see-through containers for packing merchandise and other items for purposes of display or sale. In merchandising articles it is frequently desirable to package them in transparent packages for purposes of display. There are presently many different types of transparent packages on the market, but these all have different drawbacks and have not been entirely satisfactory. Some require a paper base or backing to be adhered to a flange on the cover. In this type of container once the cover has been removed the package is not re-usable again.

Also an ever increasing problem is that of pilferage from the containers through their paper base or backing member. Most containers or packages presently on the market have a tab scored into the backing member or a slot or opening therein through which the contents in the container may be removed. With the type of marketing presently used, these packages are left on unattended racks and have been an easy mark for shoplifters who empty the contents from the containers without removing them from the store.

A second drawback to the containers presently marketed and previously described is that this type of container once the cover has been removed the package is not re-usable again. Therefore once the package has been opened the user must supply a new container for storing the unused items from the package. Plastic containers having the snap-lock type of construction and which are re-usable again have been unsatisfactory due to the difficulty encountered in opening and closing the packages repeatedly. Additionally other plastic containers are presently on the market which have different and various connecting structure between the cover and the base member, but these are either complicated in design and do not lend themselves to economical manufacturing.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Applicant's invention is a plastic container which may be opened and closed repeatedly without destroying the container. Additionally the insert member covering the back of the cover is not perforated nor does it have a cut slot portion therein which is to be used for removal of the contents from the package. Instead the insert member itself is removably secured to the back of the cover and additionally a backing member is placed beneath the insert member which when the cover is secured by its tabs to the backing member prevents pilferage of the contents of the container by removing the insert member. Basically the container is comprised of a cover, an insert member and a backing member. The cover member is in the form of a shell having a first opening of a predetermined dimension in its bottom side. A shoulder extends outwardly from the periphery of the first opening with a wall extending downwardly therefrom. At the bottom of the wall an inwardly extending flange is formed which describes a second opening. Extending outwardly from the flange on opposite sides of the cover are tab members. A finger recess is formed in one of the tab members with the mouth of the recess being in communication with a cutaway portion of the wall and flange. The insert member closes the bottom of the cover when it is pushed into

position past the flange against the shoulder in the base of the shell. The peripheral dimension of the insert is greater than the dimension of the first opening such that the card insert is prevented from being pushed too far into the shell cover. When it is desired to remove the insert from the cover, a finger is inserted into the finger recess which allows the finger to easily engage the outer peripheral edge of the insert to allow for easy removal of the insert. Additionally the backing member is secured by staples through the tab members to thus prevent pilferage from the package while it is being displayed unless the cover is removed from the backing member.

An additional marketing benefit is produced by applicant's structure in that it allows pre-packing of the merchandise in the shell with the insert member secured therein while having different advertising on the individual backing members for different individual customers with the only assembly step then being left being that of securing the tabs to the backing member. This would greatly economize the operation where an item is packaged for more than one customer who wants his own particular name advertised on the backing member.

An added benefit also obtained by applicant's structure is that the finger recess provides a stress release for the flange and wall extending downwardly from the shoulder of the cover member. This allows the wall of the second opening to give or elongate as the insert member is being forced into position. This release of stress also greatly facilitates the removal of the insert member from its closing position.

It is an object of the invention to provide a package for merchandise that has an openable and closable unit which is reusable for storage purposes after the unit has been initially removed from the backing member of the package.

It is also an object of the invention to provide a novel package that will thwart a portion of the pilferage presently occurring from display packages by the use of a backing member secured across the back of the packages' insert member.

A further object of the invention is to provide a novel three piece package that is inexpensive to manufacture and which has marketing advantages where merchandise is packaged for two or more different clients and each places his own markings on the backing member.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a top plan view of the assembled package;

FIG. 2 is a cross section taken along lines 2—2 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a partial top plan view of the cover with the insert member removed therefrom;

FIG. 4 is a partial cross section view taken along the length of the finger recess and showing the insert member in position;

FIG. 5 is a partial cross section illustrating how the finger recess is utilized for the removal of the insert member;

FIG. 6 is a cross section taken along lines 6—6 of FIG. 3; and

FIG. 7 is a top plan view of an alternative cover member.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring now to FIG. 1 applicant's novel openable and closable package is generally designated numeral **10.** The basic elements therein are the cover **12,** the insert member **14** and the backing member **16.** The cover is formed in the configuration of a shell section **18** whose top portion is closed and whose bottom portion has a first opening **20** of a predetermined dimension formed therein. A shoulder **22** extends outwardly from the periphery of said opening **20.** Wall **24** extends downwardly from the shoulder and has an inwardly extending flange **26** which describes a second opening **28** of a predetermined dimension. A plurality of tabs **30** extend laterally outwardly from said second opening **28.** A finger recess **31** is formed in one of the tab members with the mouth **32** of the recess being in communication with cutaway portion **33** of wall **24** and cutaway portion **34** of flange **26.** Insert member **14** has an outside peripheral dimension greater than the predetermined dimension of said first opening **20** of the shell section but less than the peripheral dimension of the opening formed by wall **24** extending downwardly from the periphery of shoulder **22.** This structure prevents the card insert member from being pushed too far into the shell section of the cover. Staples **38** or other securing means such as an adhesive or heat seal may be used to secure the cover to backing member **16.** When this has been accomplished, access to the interior of the shell section by removal of the insert member is eliminated absent the removal of the cover from the backing member. In this manner pilferage through the back of the shell by removal of the insert member can be effectively controlled.

The operation of the applicant's novel finger recess **31** and its advantages will be described by reference to FIGS. **3** thru **6.** In FIG. **4** the insert member **14** is seen seated in its sealing position against shoulder **22.** When it is desired to remove the insert member from the bottom of the cover **12** a finger, as illustrated in FIG. **5,** is inserted into finger recess **31.** By virtue of the recess itself the tip of the finger is enabled to engage itself beneath the edge of the insert member to allow for easy removal of the card. Additionally by the use of a downward pressure of the finger while in the finger recess the edge of the insert member is cammed upwardly along cutaway portion **33** of wall **24** and cutaway portion **34** of flange **26** to provide the finger with a better grip of the edge of the insert member. As seen in FIG. **5** area **19** of the shell section is distorted by the downward pressure of the finger in the finger recess which inwardly distorts the flange **26** causing the edge of the insert member to be cammed upwardly.

As previously mentioned in the specification, an added benefit derived from the finger recess is the fact that stress relief is provided to the inner edge of the flange member which allows this inner configuration to distort when the insert member is both inserted and removed therefrom.

FIG. **7** illustrates an alternative cover **52** having a shell section **54** which is square in configuration. Its shoulder, wall and flange sections have an identical configuration with those of cover **12** and function in a like manner with an insert member which would be substantially square in configuration. Likewise cover **52** has a finger recess **56** whose cross section is identical to that illustrated in FIG. **4.** The tab members may take the form of the individual members shown in FIG. **1** or can consist of a peripheral tab member **58** as shown, which is used to secure the cover to a backing member such as **16.**

What is claimed is:

1. An openable and closable container comprising:
- a cover having a shell section,
- said shell section having a top and a bottom side with a first opening of a predetermined dimension formed in said bottom side,
- a shoulder extending outwardly from the periphery of said first opening,
- a wall extending downwardly from said shoulder and having an inwardly extending flange which forms a second opening,
- tab means extending outwardly from said flange,
- at least one finger recess being formed in said tab means with the mouth of said recess being in communication with a cutaway portion of said wall and flange, and
- an insert member, having an outside peripheral dimension greater than the predetermined dimension of said first opening of said shell section but less than the peripheral dimension of the opening formed by said wall extending downwardly from the periphery of said shoulder, being removably inserted on said shoulder.

2. An openable and closable container as recited in claim **1** wherein said shell is made of substantially transparent material.

3. An openable and closable container as recited in claim **1** wherein the dimension of said opening formed by the inner periphery of said flange is greater than the dimensions of said first opening of predetermined dimensions formed in the bottom of said shell.

4. An openable and closable container as recited in claim **1** wherein said tab means comprises at least two tab members and they extending outwardly from said shell from substantially opposite sides thereof.

5. An openable and closable container as in claim **1** wherein the tab means extends outwardly from said shell substantially about the periphery thereof.

6. An openable and closable container as recited in claim **4** further comprising a backing member with said tab members being secured thereto whereby removal of said insert member and entry into the chamber within said shell is prevented unless the engagement of the tab members is released from said backing member.

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