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12 Claims, 8 Drawing Figures

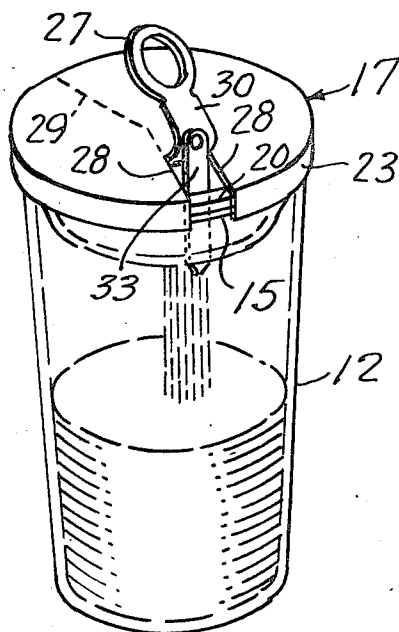


FIG. 1.

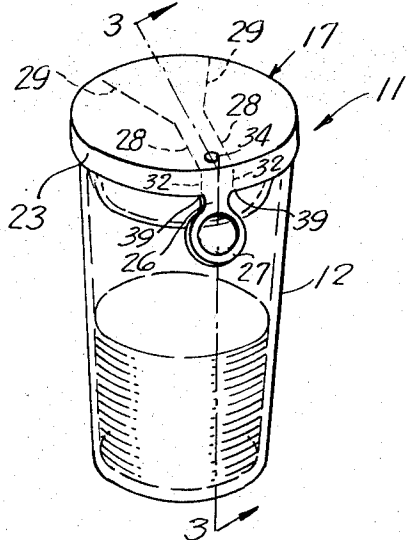


FIG. 2.

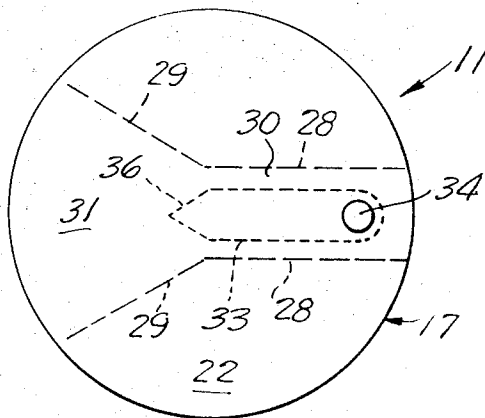


FIG. 4.

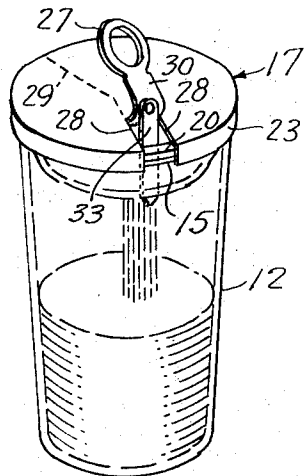


FIG. 3.

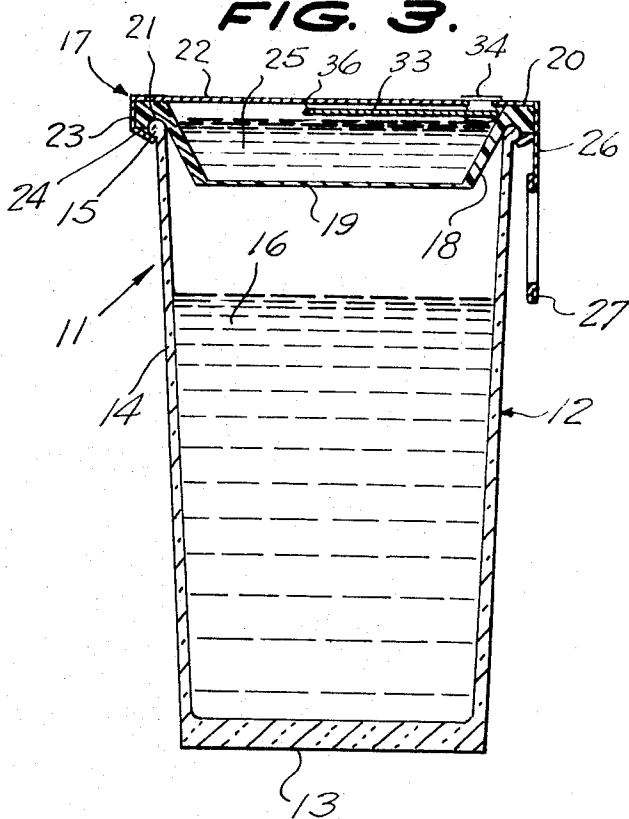


FIG. 5.

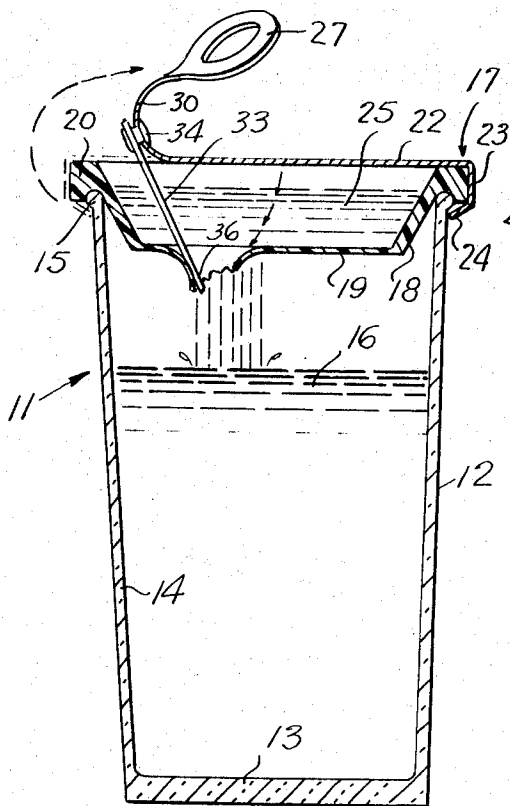


FIG. 6.

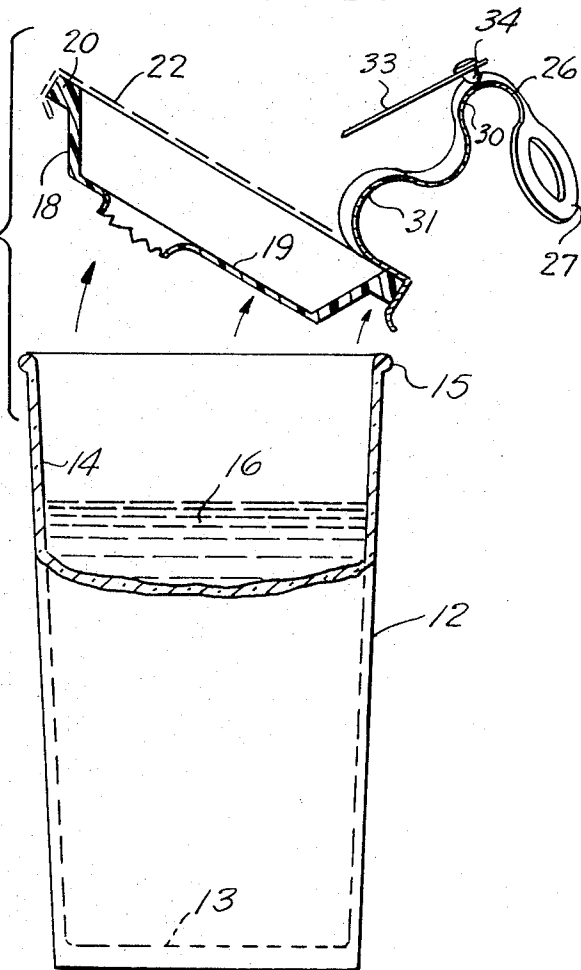


FIG. 7.

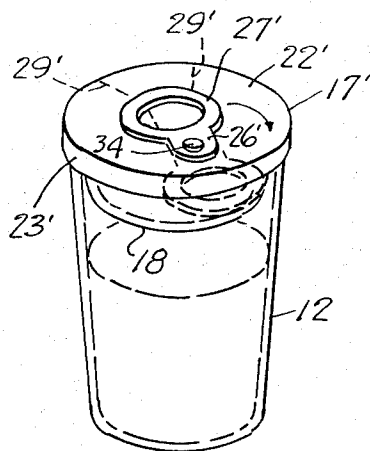
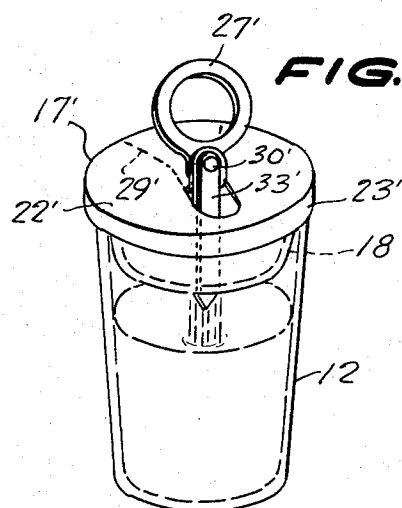


FIG. 8.



CONTAINER FOR THE COMPONENTS OF MIXED DRINKS

This invention relates to beverage containers, and more particularly to a dual container for the two components of a mixed drink.

A main object of the invention is to provide a novel and improved dual-compartment container for the components of a mixed drink, the container being simple in construction, being easy to manipulate so as to release the contents of one of its compartments so that said contents can mix with the contents of another compartment thereof, and providing a means for facilitating the packaging, presentation, sale and consumption of mixed drinks, such as alcoholic mixes in the nature of cocktails, mixtures of soft drinks with an alcoholic beverage such as whiskey, gin, or the like, or for other drinks requiring the mixture of one liquid component with another.

A further object of the invention is to provide an improved dual container for the components of a mixed drink, the container being provided with means for automatically releasing one component for mixture with another responsive to the opening of the container, and the container being so arranged that when it is opened its top sealing cap portion is automatically released so that it can be readily removed, allowing the main compartment of the container to be used as a drinking cup.

A still further object of the invention is to provide an improved dual container for the components of a mixed drink, wherein the components are maintained separated so that they cannot interact with each other until they are ready to be used for consumption, the container being essentially transparent so that the user can view its contents and estimate their quality and quantity, and the main portion of the container being suitable for use as a drinking cup as well as for use to carry advertising material.

A still further object of the invention is to provide an improved dual compartment container for the components of a mixed drink, the compartments serving to maintain the liquids therein separated until mixture thereof is desired, whereby to prevent undesired interaction of the liquids prior to use, and the container being provided with easily operated means for simultaneously opening the container and releasing the contents of one of the compartments for mixture with the other.

Further objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the following description and claims, and from the accompanying drawings, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an improved dual-compartment container for the components of a mixed drink constructed in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 2 is an enlarged top view of the container shown in FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is an enlarged vertical cross-sectional view taken substantially on the line 3—3 of FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 is a perspective view, similar to FIG. 1, but showing the positions of the parts as the pull ring is elevated during the process of opening the container for use.

FIG. 5 is an enlarged vertical cross-sectional view, similar to FIG. 3, but showing the parts in the positions corresponding to FIG. 4.

FIG. 6 is a vertical cross-sectional view, similar to FIGS. 3 and 5, showing the manner in which the emptied hollow top cap is detached from the main lower compartment of the container, allowing said main lower compartment to be used as a drinking cup.

FIG. 7 is a perspective view similar to FIG. 1 but showing a modified form of dual container for the components of a mixed drink according to the present invention.

FIG. 8 is a perspective view of the modified container of FIG. 7 with its pull ring elevated to a position corresponding to that shown in FIG. 4, namely, to a position causing rupture of the bottom wall of the upper compartment of the container, allowing the liquid contents of the upper compartment to be released and to flow downwardly into the main lower compartment for mixture with the other liquid component of the mixed drink.

The container of the present invention represents an effort to facilitate in a novel manner the presentation, sale, and consumption of ready-to-use mixed drinks, with the feature, however, that the proportioned or measured amounts of components of the drinks are not normally mixed but will be mixed upon opening the container.

The container of the present invention is intended for marketing "mixed drinks," such as alcoholic mixes (cocktails), a mixture of a soft drink with an alcoholic beverage such as scotch or other whiskey with soda, gin, rum and coke, and the like.

At present, the normal preparation of a mixed drink requires a stock of certain alcoholic beverages, suitable liquid diluents, glassware, openers, and the like, for example, as follows: (a) an alcoholic beverage (whiskey, gin, rum, or the like) (b) a liquid diluent (water, soda, tonic water, cola beverage, or the like) (c) an opener (d) individual glasses (e) ice and the container therefor, tongs, and the like.

It is especially difficult to provide and use the above components on picnics, in camping areas, at beaches, in stadiums, or the like, where there is little or no assistance and where relatively large groups are to be served.

The improved container of the present invention solves problems created by the above requirements in that the dual containers can be purchased in multiple unit packages, such as "six packs," now used for beer and soft drinks, and may be placed in a refrigerator preparatory to use. They can also be carried in ice hampers for outdoor picnics, hikes and the like.

Another important feature of the present invention is that the containers are transparent so that the consumer has a visible knowledge of its contents, that is, the consumer can see each component of the drink and can estimate its quality and quantity. The main portion of the container is adapted to be used as a drinking glass and can be discarded after use, or it can be reused in the home. The container is likewise suitable for carrying advertising material, and this advertising continues to be effective if the main portion of the container continues to be used as a drinking glass as above described.

Another important feature of the container of the present invention is that the components are packaged separately, assuring the quality of the final mixed drink, in contrast to the case of premixed beverages sold in containers wherein the drink may have been spoiled by interactions of the components.

The main portion of the container should be preferably transparent, and may be either glass or plastic. The lid portion may be made either of metal or opaque plastic material.

According to available information, a large amount of alcoholic beverage is consumed in the form of mixes, either with other liquor or with nonalcoholic drinks. This is especially true in the case of scotch and other whiskeys. In Mexico, for example, over 80 percent of the brandy used is mixed with various types of cola drinks.

Another important feature of the container of the present invention is that it provides automatic mixing of the drink components by the act of opening the container, the act of opening the container being generally similar to that in which the well known "Easy Open" cans of beer or other beverages are opened. At the same time, the consumer has a guarantee that the quality of the mixed drink has not been impaired by previous interaction of the components, since the mixing does not occur until the opening of the container.

Referring to the drawings, 11 generally designates a typical container for the two components of a mixed drink, in accordance with the present invention. The container 11 comprises a main compartment 12, preferably of transparent material, such as transparent plastic material, glass, or the like, said main compartment being generally in the form of a drinking cup. Thus, as shown in FIG. 3, the main compartment 12 may be of circular cross-sectional shape and has a bottom wall 13 and an upwardly flaring main peripheral wall 14 provided at its top rim with a bead 15. The main compartment 12 is adapted to contain a suitable quantity of diluent liquid 16, which may comprise water, soda, tonic water, cola beverage, or the like, or a mixture of such liquids.

Designated generally at 17 is a hollow flanged cap which may comprise a generally frusto-conical downwardly tapering cup member 18 of any suitable material, such as plastic material or the like having a relatively thin easily frangible bottom wall 19 and provided at its top rim with a flange 20 having a bottom groove 21 shaped to receive the bead 15 of the main compartment 12. As shown in FIG. 3, the cup member 18 is relatively shallow as compared with the main compartment 12.

Engaged over the cup member 18 is a cover disk 22 of relatively thin easily tearable material, such as thin metal, or the like. The cover member 22 is provided at its rim with a retaining flange 23 which engages around the cup flange 20 and which is turned thereunder as shown at 24 so as to engage beneath the cup flange 20 and the subjacent portion of the bead 15, as is clearly shown in FIG. 3. The cover member 22 acts as a retaining means to hold the cup member 18 in sealing contact with the bead 15 and to retain the cup member 18 on the main compartment 12 until it is desired to consume the contents of the container, as will be presently described.

The cup member 18 is adapted to contain a suitable quantity of a second beverage 25 intended to be mixed with the beverage 16 in the first compartment 12, for example, an alcoholic beverage, such as whiskey, gin, rum, or the like, or any other liquid intended to be mixed with the liquid 16.

The top cover element 22 is integrally formed with a depending tab element 26 provided with a pull ring 27,

the pull ring 27 normally depending subjacent the cup flange 20 at one side of the container, as shown in FIG. 3. The thin top cover element 22 is preferably formed with score lines 28 leading from the opposite edges of the tab 26 and extending over the cover element 22, said score lines preferably flaring outwardly opposite the tab 26 in the manner indicated at 29,29 in FIGS. 1 and 2. This defines a tear strip 30 between the parallel score lines 28,28 and a flaring strip portion 31 between the outwardly divergent score line portions 29,29 as shown in FIG. 2. The score lines 28 extend around the retaining flange portion 23, and merge at notches 39,39 with the side edges of the tab 26 as shown at 32, 32 in FIG. 1.

Designated at 33 is a relatively rigid lever element secured beneath the cover member 22 adjacent to the flange 20 and included beneath the strip portion 30. The lever 33 may be rigidly secured beneath the strip 30 in any suitable manner, for example, by a rivet 34 as shown in FIGS. 2 and 3. The rigid lever 33 is of substantial length, and is of sufficient length so that its free end can engage substantially centrally with the thin bottom wall 19 of cup 18 when rotated downwardly responsive to pulling the ring member 27 upwardly to a position similar to that shown in FIG. 4. The lever 33 is preferably provided with a pointed free end, shown at 36 adapted to puncture the thin cup bottom wall 19 when the lever 33 is rotated downwardly as above described. As shown in FIG. 2, the lever 33 is normally disposed beneath the strip portion 30 substantially parallel thereto with its secured portion rigidly held by the rivet 34 so that said secured portion follows the outer portion of the strip 30, namely, the portion connected directly to the tab 26, when the ring 27 is pulled upwardly.

When the beverages 25 and 16 are to be mixed and consumed by the user, the user pulls the ring 27 upwardly to a position such as that shown in FIG. 4, causing the strip portion 30 to tear away from the remainder of the thin cover element 22 along the score lines 28,28.

This causes the rigid lever 33 to rotate downwardly, for example, in a clockwise direction, as viewed in FIG. 5, whereby its pointed end 36 engages the thin frangible bottom wall portion 19 of cup 18 causing the cup bottom wall 19 to become ruptured, as shown in FIG. 5, and allowing the liquid 25 to flow downwardly into the main compartment 12 and mix with the liquid 16. The retaining flange 23 is torn at the score lines 32,32, whereby to release the grip of the flange 23 and to thereby allow the now empty hollow cap 17 to be easily disengaged from the top bead 15 of main compartment 12, in the manner illustrated in FIG. 6. The detached cap 17 can be discarded and the mixed contents of main compartment 12 can then be consumed by the user.

The main compartment 12 can be employed as a drinking glass, and may also be used to carry advertising messages on its external surface.

As above mentioned, the main container 12 is preferably of transparent material, and similarly, the shallow cup member 18 may be of any desired material, such as plastic material, or the like. If the cup member 18 is of transparent plastic material or other transparent material, such glass, the user can observe its contents and estimate its quantity and quality. Similarly, the user can view the contents 16 of the main container 12, since

said main container is preferably of transparent material.

FIGS. 7 and 8 illustrate a modified form of container according to the present invention.

In the modification illustrated in FIGS. 7 and 8, the flanged hollow cap member, shown at 17' is provided with a pull ring 27' having an attachment tab portion 26' which is secured to the cover element 22' by the same rivet 34 employed to rigidly connect the rigid lever 33 to the underside of a tearable strip portion 30' of the cover element 22'. The strip portion 30' is defined by corresponding score lines provided on the element 22' defining said strip 30' so that when the ring 27' is pulled upwardly to the position thereof shown in FIG. 8, the rigid lever 33 is rotated downwardly in the manner described above in connection with the first-disclosed embodiment of the invention, in the manner illustrated in FIG. 8, causing the thin bottom wall 19 of the top beverage cup 18 to be punctured, whereby to release its contents. The thin top cover element 22' is further provided with outwardly flaring score lines 29', 29' so that continued tension exerted on the pull ring 27' causes the tearable strip portion to be completely detached from the member 17', thereby breaking the retaining flange 23' and allowing the empty hollow cap assembly 17' to be easily detached from the top bead of the main container 12 substantially in the same manner as described in the first-disclosed embodiment of the invention.

As shown in FIG. 7, the pull ring 27' and its attachment tear portion 26' are normally oriented so as to overlie the central portion of the cover element 22'. When the user wishes to mix the contents of the container and consume same, he rotates the ring member 27' around its rivet connection 34 so that the ring member 27' projects outwardly from the cap assembly 17'. The outwardly projecting ring 27' can then be grasped and pulled upwardly to the position shown in FIG. 8, causing the lever 33 to be rotated downwardly towards the depending position shown and to cause its pointed end to rupture the thin bottom wall of cup 18. As in the previously disclosed embodiment of the invention, this allows the contents of cup 18 to flow downwardly into the main compartment 12 and to mix with the contents 16 therein. Continued pulling force exerted on the pull ring 27' causes the complete detachment of the portion of cover 22' connected to said pull ring in the manner above described, breaking the retaining flange 23' and thereafter allowing the now empty hollow top cap assembly to be readily detached from the main compartment 12 and to be discarded.

As will be readily understood, the riveted connection at 34 is such as to allow the tab 26' and pull ring 27' integral therewith to be rotated horizontally to bring the pull ring 27' to an outwardly projecting position, shown in dotted view in FIG. 7, so that the pull ring can be readily grasped and pulled upwardly in the manner above described.

While certain specific embodiments of an improved dual container for the components of a mixed drink have been disclosed in the foregoing description, it will

be understood that various modifications within the spirit of the invention may occur to those skilled in the art. Therefore, it is intended that no limitations be placed on the invention except as defined by the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A container for the components of mixed beverages comprising a first container adapted to contain a first beverage component and adapted to be employed as a drinking vessel, a second container sealingly mounted on said first container and adapted to contain a second beverage component, said second container being provided with a top wall having a tearable portion, opening means attached to said tearable portion, said second container having a frangible bottom wall portion, and a rigid lever element secured to said top wall beneath said tearable portion and at a point adjacent said opening means, said rigid lever element being of sufficient length to engage and puncture said frangible bottom portion when the opening means is actuated to tear said tearable portion, whereby to release the second beverage component and allow it to mix with the first beverage component.

2. The container of claim 1, and wherein said tearable portion is in the form of a strip and said lever element normally extends therebeneath and is normally substantially parallel thereto.

3. The container of claim 1, and wherein said lever element is secured beneath said tearable portion by a rivet.

4. The container of claim 3, and wherein said opening means is a pull element in the form of a ring.

5. The container of claim 4, and wherein said ring is integral with said tearable portion.

6. The container of claim 4, and wherein said ring is pivotally attached to said tearable portion by said rivet.

7. The container of claim 1, and wherein said second container comprises a cup element, said frangible bottom portion comprising the bottom wall of said cup element, said top wall of the second container comprising a thin cover member having a peripheral flange normally retentively engaged around the rim of the cup element and the top rim of the first container, said tearable portion forming part of said thin cover member.

8. The container of claim 7, and wherein said opening means comprises a pull element connected to said thin cover member.

9. The container of claim 7, and wherein said thin cover member is provided with at least one score line extending across said peripheral flange and arranged to break said flange responsive to the movement of said pull element.

10. The container of claim 9, and wherein said lever element is secured beneath said tearable portion by a rivet and normally extends beneath said tearable portion substantially parallel thereto.

11. The container of claim 10, and wherein said first container comprises transparent material.

12. The container of claim 11, and wherein said cup element comprises plastic material.

* * * * *

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

Patent No. 3,779,372 Dated Dec. 18, 1973

Inventor(s) Herminia Alvarez Gil de Lloret

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent are hereby corrected as shown below:

In the heading, the correct name and address of the inventor is:

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Urbanizacion Caurimare
Caracas - Venezuela

Signed and sealed this 17th day of September 1974.

(SEAL)
Attest:

McCOY M. GIBSON JR.
Attesting Officer

C. MARSHALL DANN
Commissioner of Patents