

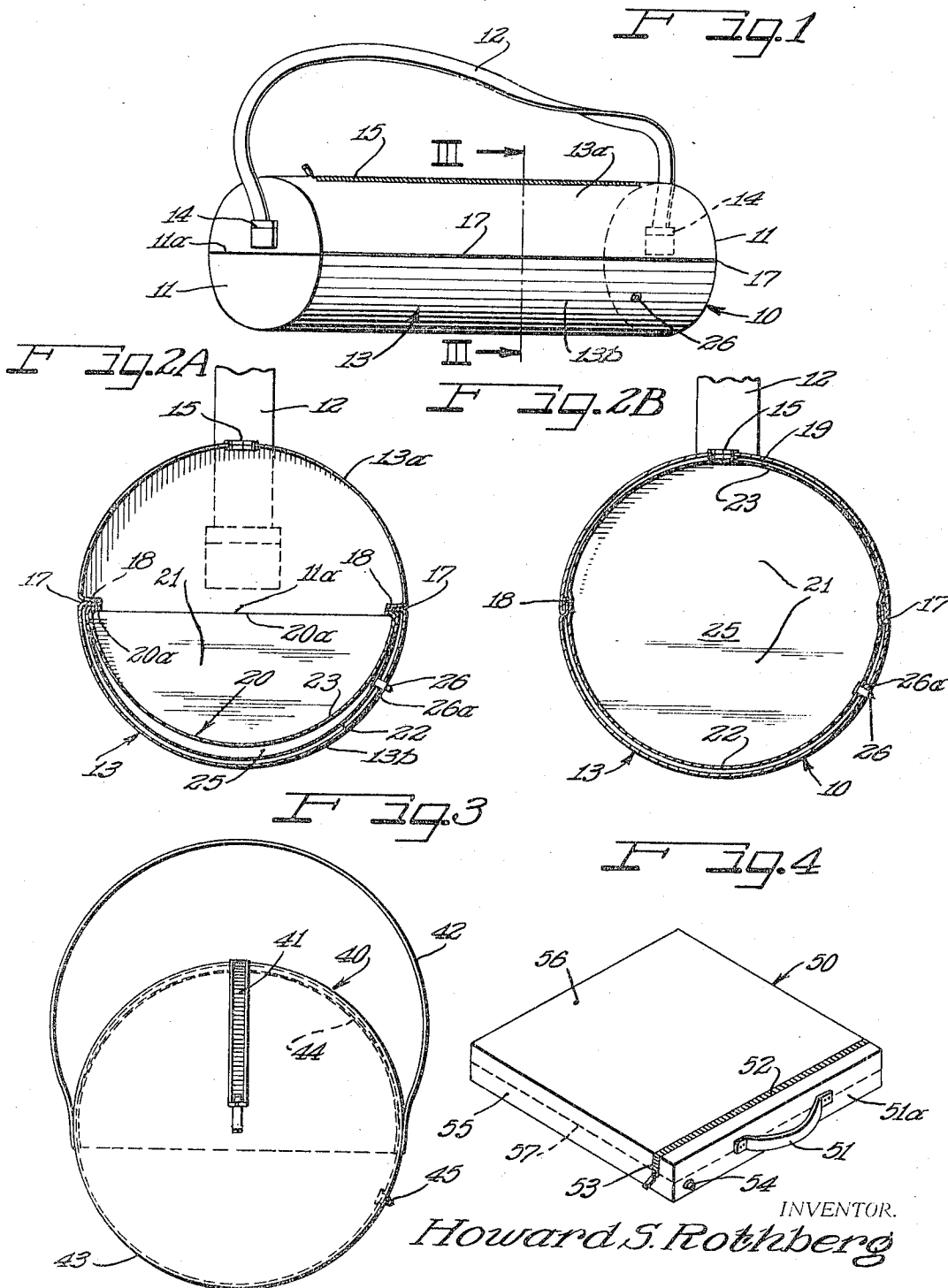
Sept. 12, 1967

H. S. ROTHBERG

3,340,969

CONVERTIBLE FLEXIBLE WALLED CARRYING CONTAINERS

Filed April 6, 1966



INVENTOR.
Howard S. Rothberg

Hill, Sherman, Meroni, Gross & Simpson ATTORNEYS

BY

1

3,340,969

CONVERTIBLE FLEXIBLE WALLED CARRYING CONTAINERS

Howard S. Rothberg, 1700 N. Park,
Chicago, Ill. 60614

Filed Apr. 6, 1966, Ser. No. 540,687
10 Claims. (Cl. 190—1)

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A flexible walled carrying container having an air-tight lining in one-half of the container and forming an air-tight chamber with a portion of the container which may be inflated to convert the container to a second use such as an air cushion or inflated ball.

The present invention relates to flexible walled carrying containers and is characterized by providing such a carrying container in which a symmetrical half of the carrying container interior has a lining affixed thereto which may be selectively inflated to occupy the entire interior of the container and to thereby convert it into a second use such as a cushion or inflatable ball.

The invention finds utility in several environments but is presently thought to be most beneficial when applied to a generally cylindrical shaped flexible walled beach bag which can be converted into a head cushion by inflating an internal lining. In this environment of use, a bag is provided which has the advantage of providing a water-resistant and mildew-resistant receptacle for carrying wet and damp items such as swim suits and towels.

Examples of other shapes which are also believed to be of special utility are spherical and rectangular. In the former case the bag may serve the dual purpose of a beach ball and a seat cushion, respectively.

It is the general object of the present invention to provide a new and improved flexible walled carrying container.

It is a specific object of the present invention to provide such a container of the beach bag type which is both easy and economical to manufacture and simple to use.

It is a further specific object of the invention to provide such a flexible walled bag which may also serve as a beach ball.

It is another object of the invention to provide a flexible walled bag for carrying football blankets and the like which bag may also be converted into a seat cushion.

The organization and manner of operation of the invention, together with further objects and advantages thereof, may best be understood by reference to the following description taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, in the several figures of which like reference numerals identify like elements, and in which several exemplifications of the invention are illustrated.

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of one embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 2A is a sectional view of the embodiment of FIG. 1 as seen from the line III—III of FIG. 1;

FIG. 2B is a similar view as FIG. 2A with parts in a moved position;

FIG. 3 is a side elevational view of a second embodiment of the invention; and

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of a third embodiment of the invention.

Referring now to FIG. 1 there is depicted a flexible

2

walled portable carrying container or bag. The bag 10, for convenience in illustrating, is shown as a cylinder. Of course being of flexible material it would normally appear more or less deformed by the pull of gravity on its walls or by the shape of items it contains. The bag 10 is of a generally cylindrical shape having end walls 11, 11 of a circular configuration. The side or longitudinal wall 13 of the bag is comprised of an upper portion 13a and a lower portion 13b joined along a longitudinal line 17. A strap 12, to aid in carrying the bag 10, is releasably affixed at either end to an end wall as at 14. The bag 10 may be used as a beach bag, i.e., a bag for carrying towels, swim suits and other desiderata of sun and sea bathing. The bag has located along one longitudinal portion, a zipper closable opening 15 providing access for the interior of the bag 10. The zipper 15 extends along the center of the side wall portion 13a from a point slightly below one end wall 11 along a line parallel to the axis of the cylinder to a point slightly displaced from the other end wall 11. The bag 10 may be constructed of plastic or a cloth material such as canvas or other suitable material. Any conventional flexible container outer wall material may be used. A typical bag 10 may measure approximately 8 inches in diameter of each end wall, approximately 15 inches in length. The bag 10 may be, as depicted, formed in two sections, an upper section formed of the portion 13a and the upper one-half of the end walls 11 and of a generally hollow half cylindrical shape with a semi-circular base which section is joined along the line 17 as by sewing or any other appropriate method to the lower portion formed at the portion 13b and the lower one-half of the end walls 11.

This particular method of construction is shown in more detail in FIG. 2A. The internal seam is formed by an overlying edge or rim of the material of which the outer wall of the bag is zoned. It is common for bags, such as the bag 10, to be constructed while inverted or inside-out so that the seam 18 may be worked upon more easily. The finished bag is then simply inverted by turning it through the zipper opening 15. The above construction is described for illustrative purposes only as the present invention may be adapted to many other forms of construction and to other flexible wall materials. The above-described embodiment is the presently contemplated best mode of practicing the invention but the principles of the invention are not limited thereto.

As best shown in FIG. 2A, in accordance with the invention, an inflatable lining generally indicated by the numeral 20 is provided. The lining 20 lines a symmetrical one-half of the bag 10 opposite the opening of the zipper 15. The lining 20 thus is in the general shape of a hollow one-half cylinder with a semicircular end edge 21 formed therein, and conforms in shape to the lower one-half of the bag 10 comprising the wall 13b and the lower one-half of the end walls 11. The lining may be of any airtight material but is preferably of plastic. The lining 20 defines a compartment 25 and may be made of at least a first layer 22 adjacent to the external wall 13b of the bag 10. A second layer 23 of conforming shape is provided and the two layers 22 and 23 are each approximately one-half of a hollow cylinder in shape and are, during use of the bag 10 to carry items, nestled in one another as depicted. For clarity in illustration, the relationship between the walls 22 and 23 of the lining 20 is shown as exaggerated in FIG. 2A, and in practice the walls 22, 23 would closely conform in shape and the area 25 would be relatively smaller. The walls 22, 23 are bonded together, as by heat

sealing along the periphery 20a and are affixed thereat to the rim 18. Thus, the lining 20 is formed to provide an airtight chamber 25. The upper generally rectangular end edge abutting the rim 18 is affixed thereon by any conventional means such as by using glue or sewing but is preferably sewed. As the two layers 22, 23 are bonded together about their peripheries the sewing will not interfere with the airtight nature of the compartment 25. The lining 20 is of an airtight material formed into a compartment 25 between the layers 22 and 23. In accordance with the invention, the lining 20 is made to be inflatable and is provided with a valve 26 which may be a conventional air valve through which air can be blown. The valve 26 is affixed at a convenient location for passing air through the wall 22 and protrudes through a conforming opening 26a of the outer surface 13 of the carrying bag 10. When in the inflated position, the lining 20 assumes the configuration shown in FIG. 2B in which the compartment 25, defined between the layers 22 and 23, is expanded to fill the compartment 19. With the zipper 15 closed, the flexible walled carrying container 10 is now converted into a head-rest pillow or float such as may be used in water play at the beach. The pillow or float may be deflated by allowing the air to leave via the valve 26 to restore it to its useful function of carrying items.

The lining 20 is of a material that is airtight and flexible but not necessarily expandable. Thus, it unlike a rubber balloon will not materially increase the surface area defining the compartment 25. In its use as a head pillow it should be noted that the strength of the material of the outer walls of the bag is combined with that of the outward pressing inflated lining. The cooperation of the two allows for a material reduction in the required strength of the material of the lining 20. Because of the low strength requirement for the layers 22, 23 of the lining 20, in some embodiments it may be necessary or desirable to provide a protective lining between the layer 23 and the compartment 19.

Referring now to FIG. 3 there is depicted a second embodiment of the invention generally indicated by the numeral 40. In this embodiment the container 40 is of generally spherical shape having a semicircular-shaped zipper 41 and a detachable carrying bag handle 42. The bag 40 is considered to be best adapted for beach bag use and is constructed in accordance with the present invention. It is provided with a semi-spherical shaped lining 44 affixed to the bag 40 about a circular diameter. The lining 44 is shown after inflation, via a valve 45, juxtaposed and conforming with the upper half of the spherical bag 40. In the case of the embodiment of the bag 40, the lining 44 comprises only a single layer, the second layer being eliminated by rendering the bottom semi-spherical portion 43 of the flexible walled bag 40 airtight. This may be done by spraying the interior with liquid rubber or plastic material, or alternatively the material of the bag 40 may be airtight plastic to begin with. In any event, a symmetrical one-half of the interior surface of the bag 40 is lined with a lining 44. The bag 40 may serve, after inflation and detachment of the handle 42, as a beach ball, since the lining 44 is, of course, water resistant as well as airtight. In this environment of use, the bag-ball 40 must be lightweight so that it may be played with as a ball. When desired, the lining may be deflated in a manner similar to that of the embodiment of FIGS. 1 and 2 and the zipper 41 opened. Although the zipper 41 is depicted as a metal type zipper, a plastic type zipper may be preferable in some environments of use.

Referring now to FIG. 4 there is depicted a third embodiment of the invention, in this case a generally rectangular flexible walled football blanket bag 50 having a small carrying handle 51 affixed to a rectangular top panel 51a, and an opening zipper 52 extending at a point indicated as 53 on a narrow side wall 55, over the top of a square main panel 56, ending upon another side panel oppositely disposed to the panel 55. As indicated by the

dashed line 57, the bag 50 is provided with an inflatable lining which is inflatable by a valve 54. The lining 57 forms a symmetrical one-half of the bag 50 of a shallow conforming configuration and defines an airtight compartment. The bag 50 may be attached as in the case of the first embodiment of FIGS. 1-2. In the envisioned environment of use, the bag 50 carries a football blanket and also serves as an inflated seat cushion while the user is attending the game. Such football blanket bags are commercially available but serve only the carrying function and are consequently of little or no use while the blanket is being used. However, the present invention allows such bags to be converted into a seat cushion for use in a football stadium. As the environment of football stadiums is such that the spectators are often exposed to the elements during the fall season, the utility of such a bag is manifest.

As is now apparent there are many applications to which the principles of the present invention may be applied. It is also now apparent that a new and improved flexible walled carrying container has been provided which is easily constructed and simple to use.

It will be understood that various modifications may be suggested by the embodiment disclosed, but I desire to claim within the scope of the patent warranted hereon all such modifications as come within the scope of my invention.

I claim as my invention:

1. A carrying container comprising:

flexible outer walls enclosing a carrying compartment for carrying items, said walls being formed to have two symmetrical portions,

a closable opening in said outer wall in one of said two portions for providing access to the carrying compartment,

a flexible airtight material lining for said other of said two portions of conforming shape to said portion and affixed to said outer walls at least about the major part of the periphery of said lining, said lining defining a selectively inflatable and deflatable compartment which is inflatable so as to occupy and displace the entire carrying compartment and to effectively convert said carrying container for a second use.

2. The carrying container as claimed in claim 1 which is further characterized by having said container of a generally cylindrical shape with circular end walls.

3. The carrying container as claimed in claim 1 which is further characterized by having said container of a generally spherical shape.

4. The carrying container as claimed in claim 1 which is further characterized by having said container of a generally rectangular shape.

5. The invention as claimed in claim 2 in which said lining is formed opposite a longitudinally extending zipper opening.

6. The carrying container as claimed in claim 2 in which said inflatable lining comprises a first and second hollow generally cylindrical layer of conforming shape to one-half of said bag which are bonded together about their peripheral edges and are affixed to said bag at said edges.

7. The container as claimed in claim 1 in which said part of the outer wall of the container serves with the lining to define an inflatable compartment.

8. The invention as claimed in claim 5 in which a detachable strap handle is provided having two ends between said end walls with one end attached to one end wall and the other end attached to the other end wall.

9. The invention as claimed in claim 8 in which said lining is formed from two similar sized and shaped layers of conforming flexible material heat sealed about their periphery to each other and attached to said outer wall by means of sewing said lining thereto about the sealed periphery of said layers.

10. A convertible beach bag which may selectively be converted into a beach ball comprising:
a generally hollow spherical outer wall of flexible mate-

5

rial formed in two hollow semi-spherical portions and joined together at the circular edges thereof, an opening being formed in one of said portions and the other of said portions being airtight;
a semi-spherical lining conforming in shape and size to said semi-spherical portions and affixed within said bag about its circular edge to the junction of the circular edges of said portions in an airtight manner to define with said other portion an inflatable chamber capable of inflating to occupy the interior of said bag; and
an air valve affixed on said other portion to selectively admit or expel air from said inflatable chamber.

5

10

6

References Cited

UNITED STATES PATENTS

303,859	8/1884	Kiam	190—2
1,864,648	6/1932	Haines	190—42
1,927,471	9/1933	Salomon	190—1
2,324,701	7/1943	Herman	138—30

FOREIGN PATENTS

30,318	10/1959	Finland.
--------	---------	----------

JOSEPH R. LECLAIR, *Primary Examiner.*

FRANKLIN T. GARRETT, *Examiner.*