Sept. 29, 1970 W. J. LANE 3,531,014

CARRYING CASE FOR BOTTLES

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Fig.1.

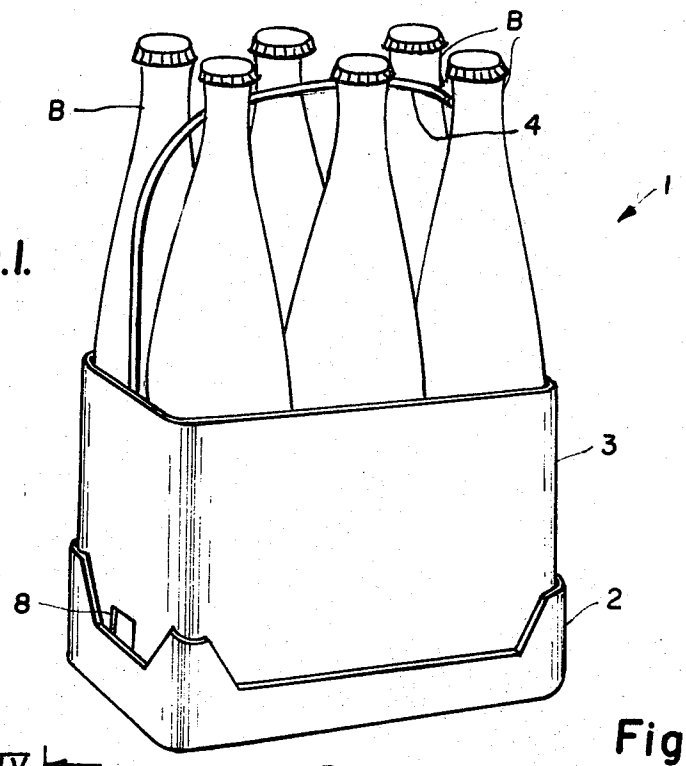


Fig.2.

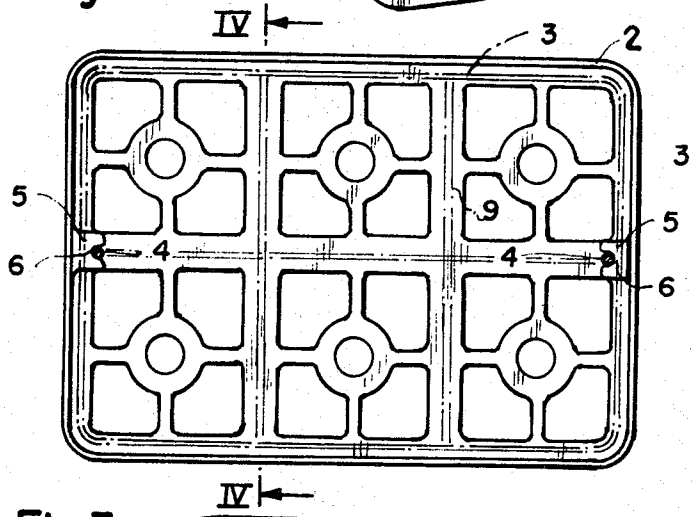


Fig.3.

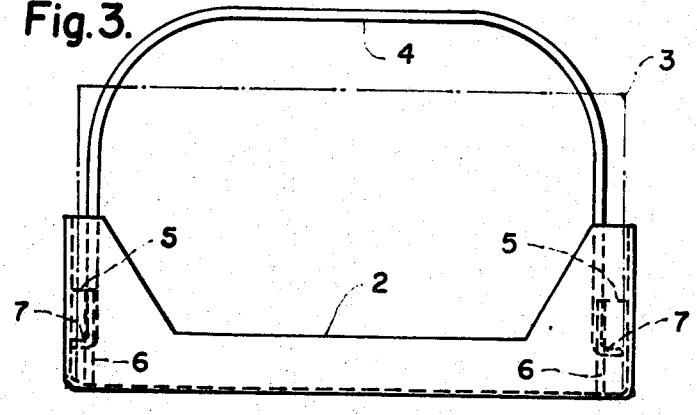


Fig.4.

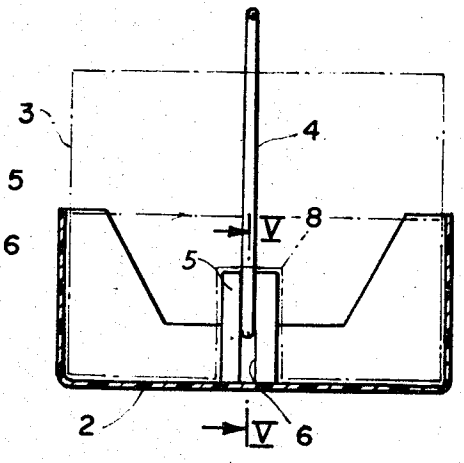
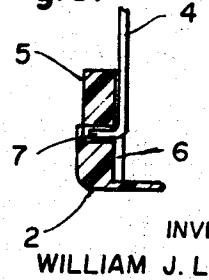


Fig.5.



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Fig.6.

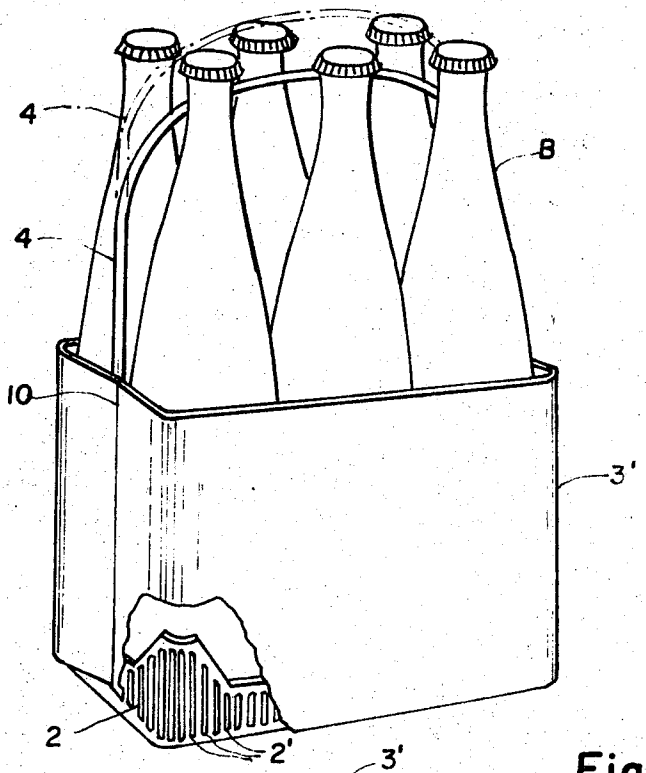


Fig.7.

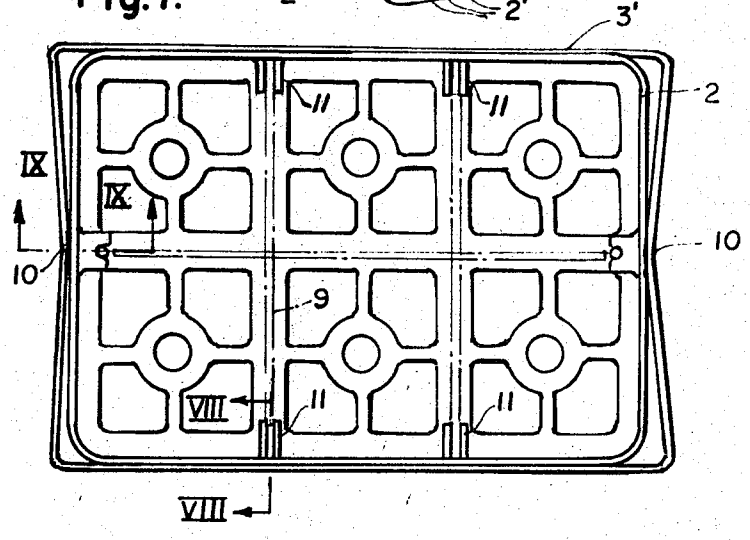


Fig.8.

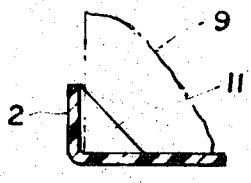
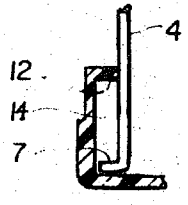


Fig.9.



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CARRYING CASE FOR BOTTLES

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Int. Cl. B65d 25/14, 25/34
U.S. Cl. 220—65 2 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A carrying case for bottles containing soft drinks, beer and the like, which case comprises a plastic supporting frame, carried by a retractible carrying handle, and in which a disposable cover is provided, made of cardboard, foil, plastic sheets, or any other disposable material which is easily and quickly replaceable at very little expense.

This invention relates to improvements in a carrying case for bottles containing soft drinks, beer or the like and commonly referred to as a six-pack.

The commonly used six-pack is made of cardboard material, which readily becomes soiled or torn from use and is not reuseable an appreciable number of times, therefore involves a substantial expense for the manufacture of a complete case.

Attempts have been made in the past to overcome this problem by making the case entirely of plastic material. However, this has involved considerable expense in making an intricate mold and in making of the complete case of plastic material.

An object of the present invention is to overcome the abovenamed disadvantages of both the cardboard case and the plastic case while retaining the advantages of both.

A more specific object of the invention is to provide a novel carrying case for bottle or cans containing soft drinks and the like, which case comprises a base or frame structure made of plastic material and includes a removable carrying handle and in which the body is made of readily disposable material, such as cardboard, metal foil, plastic sheet and the like, so as to involve a minimum overall cost and to provide a case which is reusable numerous times with insignificant additional expense.

A more specific object of the invention is to provide a composite carrying case comprising a bottle supporting frame of plastic material, which may be carried by a handle which is retractible in a support so that the case may be carried without scuffing the fingers by the bottle caps, and in which the outside cover is readily replaceable and is made of disposable material, such as cardboard, metal foil, plastic sheet, etc.

Other objects and advantages will become more apparent from a study of the following description taken with the accompanying drawings wherein:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a bottle carrying case or six pack embodying the principles of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a top view thereof, with the handle shown in cross-section;

FIG. 3 is a side view of the case;

FIG. 4 is a cross-sectional view taken along line IV–IV of FIG. 2;

FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional view taken along line V—V of FIG. 4;

FIG. 6 is a perspective view, shown partly broken away, of a modification;

FG. 7 is a top view thereof;

FIG. 8 is a fragmentary, cross-sectional view taken along line VIII—VIII of FIG. 7; and,

FIG. 9 is a fragmentary, cross-sectional view taken along line IX—IX of FIG. 7.

Referring more particularly to FIGS. 1 to 5 inclusive, numeral **1** generally denotes a bottle carrying case or six-pack embodying the principles of my invention and comprising essentially a durable carrying frame **2**, preferably of plastic material, such as polyethylene, (or perhaps metal) and a disposable cover **3** of inexpensive disposable material, such as cardboard, metal foil, plastic sheeting and the like.

The plastic base or frame **2** comprises a perforated bottom **4** of any suitable design, such as that shown for providing continuity as well as substantial openings to make the base light and easy to carry and to have it use a minimum amount of plastic material. The bottom **2** is integrally molded with the sides, which sides have four upstanding corner portions, as shown more clearly in FIG. 1. A partition or divider **9** of cardboard grid-like construction, such as used in egg crates, is provided for partitioning the base into six separate receptacles for receiving the six bottles as shown. It will be readily apparent that a smaller or large number of partitions may be used instead, such as 8, 10, 12, etc. Suitable guides or channels are molded in the plastic base frame for fixing the position of the extremities of the partition **9**, such as shown in FIG. 8 wherein two triangular webs are molded into the base and side portions of the carrying frame.

A handle **4**, preferably of spring steel, is provided with turned ends **7**, as shown more clearly in FIGS. 3 and 5, which ends project into openings formed in two integral plastic handle support bases **5**, which have vertical well portions with walls **6**, as shown more clearly in FIGS. 2 and 5, for preventing the handle **4** from pivoting about the ends **7** as a center. The handle **4** may be installed in place by first contracting the end portions together somewhat and, when in proper position, allowing the end portions to spring apart into the position shown in FIGS. 3 and 5. It will be noted that the cover **3** is provided with tow opposite cut-out portions **8** for snugly fitting over the portions **5**.

In operation, it will be readily apparent that when the cover **3** becomes soiled or torn through use, it may be readily collapsed, retracted and replaced with a new cover with great ease and at very nominal expense. Such cover **3** may be replaced numerous times before it becomes necessary to replace the base **2** since the latter has indefinite life.

FIG. 6 shows a modification wherein the plastic carrying case **2** is provided with either ridges or depressions **2'** to provide a frictional surface for more securely holding the cardboard cover **3'** which, in this modification, encircles frame **2** instead of being contained therein as in FIG. 1. Accordion pleats **10** may be provided in the end walls to facilitate installation and removal of the cover **3'**. While such covers **3** and **3'** are preferably made of stiff cardboard material which may be slipped into and out of place, they may be, instead of metal foil, or perhaps plastic sheeting which may be wrapped tightly about the base **2** shown in FIG. 6 and either heat sealed at the ends after being tightly wrapped about the base or stapled or glued or otherwise adhesively secured to the outer surface of the base **2**. Advertising is printed on the cover.

As shown more clearly in FIGS. 7 and 8, integral webs **11** are formed at the junction of the base and side walls at four different points to serve as guides or channels for receiving the ends of the cardboard partition member **9** so that they will stay in place.

The handle **4** is normally in the position shown in full lines in FIGS. 6 and 9, that is below the bottle caps, so as to facilitate stacking of cases, but, when lifted, will assume the position shown in dot and dash outline so as

to clear the tops of the bottles and thus prevent scuffing of the fingers of the carrier. Such limited movement of the handle is made possible by providing a vertical slot **14** in the handle supporting base portions **5** to allow slight vertical reciprocation of the handle **4**. When the handle is in normal position as shown in full lines, it may be lifted until ends **7** engage stop portions **12**, corresponding to the dot and dash position shown in FIG. 6.

In operation, when it is desired to replace a torn or soiled cover **3'**, it is merely lifted out of frictional contact with base **2** and a new cover put in place by first straightening out the accordion pleat **10**, and, when in place, allowing it to yieldingly assume the normal position shown in FIG. 7 wherein it makes contact with the central vertical sections of the sides of the base carrying frame **2**.

The base carrying frame **2** is preferably made of an inexpensive plastic material, such as polyethylene, although in some cases it may be made of other long wearing material, such as metal, fiber-board and the like. Therefore, the base carrying frame and handle will have very long life and may be reused innumerable times. Since the covers **3** and **3'** are easily, quickly and inexpensively replaced, they may be replaced after each use by the customer so as to always present an attractive and clean cover, as distinguished from the soiled, torn covers that are prevalent with the usual cardboard containers, even after a single use.

Thus it will be seen that I have provided an efficient carrying case for pop or beer bottles, cans, and the like, having all the structural, strength and permanency advantages of an all-plastic case and all the economical advantages of an all-paper case, and yet none of the disadvantages of either; furthermore, I have provided a six-pack or carrying case for bottles wherein the base is of rigid material, such as plastic, and the cover is of inexpensive, disposable material, such as cardboard, which is very easily and quickly replaced after each use; also, I have provided a removable handle for the carrying case which, upon mere lifting, will clear the tops of the bottles and which, by gravity, will normally rest below the tops of the bottles so that six-packs may be stacked on top of each other.

While I have illustrated and described several embodiments of my invention, it will be understood that these are by way of illustration only, and that various changes and modifications may be made within the contemplation of my invention and within the scope of the following claims.

I claim:

1. In a carrying case for soft drink bottles and the like, a substantially rectangular base frame of rigid material having upstanding sidewalls and endwalls, the latter having centrally positioned receptacle portions for receiving the ends of a handle, a rigid handle having ends detachably secured to said receptacle portions, and a separate paper-like cover of substantially greater height than that of the base frame, detachably secured to said upstanding sidewalls and endwalls and projecting thereabove so as to make the cover readily disposable and replaceable after one or more uses of the carrying case, said upstanding sidewalls and endwalls being provided with integral corner portions of greater height than the remainder of the frame and said cover being snugly surrounded by said sidewalls and endwalls with its bottom edge supported on the bottom perimetrical portion of said frame.

2. In a carrying case for soft drink bottles and the like, a substantially rectangular base frame of rigid material having upstanding sidewalls and endwalls, the latter having centrally positioned receptacle portions for receiving the ends of handle, a rigid handle having ends detachably secured to said receptacle portions, and a separate paper-like cover of substantially greater height than that of the base frame, detachably secured to said upstanding sidewalls and endwalls and projecting thereabove so as to make the cover readily disposable and replaceable after one or more uses of the carrying case, said sidewalls and endwalls being provided with a roughened outer surface to provide frictional contact with the inner surface of said cover, said cover being provided with accordion pleats.

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U.S. Cl. X.R.

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