

NOVELTY CONFECTIONERY ITEM

The invention relates to a novelty confectionery item comprising a candy product which is situated inside a housing or container comprising a holder member provided with a cap or cover in such a way that the confectionery product is essentially enclosed inside the housing when the holder member is covered by the cap. The entire candy product can be consumed by the consumer just by holding the uncovered holder member.

10 Generally, this kind of confectionery item comprises a solidified sugar mass which is licked by the consumer. Most often, the item has a cylindrical shape a diameter in the range of 1 to 3 cm, its length being in the range of 5 to 8 cm.

15 One particular confectionery product exemplifying the prior art is called a "PUSH POP", distributed by, e.g., Topps Ireland. This Push Pop is a solid mass of candy housed in a two-part detachable plastic container. As its name implies, the candy mass is retained on a slidable member within the
20 housing and thus can be pushed up from the housing to extend beyond the housing a desired distance as needed for licking by the child. The candy product is freely slidable within the housing which is opaque and prevents viewing of the candy product. It is a problem with this product that as the candy
25 mass is converted into a liquid state, i.e., as it is being licked, some of the liquid may drip onto the slidable member and prevent the sliding motion of the candy mass. Also, the continual movement of the candy mass into and out of the housing is detrimental to the cleanliness of the candy product
30 and potentially increases the manufacturing costs of the same. Moreover, the product, after manufacture and upon standing, also becomes sticky and adheres to the walls of the container. As a result the candy cannot slide inside the container and cannot be consumed, which results in great disappointment for
35 the child. The most beautiful aspect of a deposited candy

product is its translucency. However, when in contact with the air (which is always humid), the outer part of the candy crystallises and takes on an opaque aspect. In such conditions the candy loses attractiveness for the child.

5 Although protected by a wrapper, the Push Pop candy bar is in contact with the air.

Accordingly, the present invention provides a novelty confectionery item comprising a candy product arranged within a housing, the housing comprising a holder member and a cap

10 removably coupled to the holder member, the candy product being fixedly secured to the holder member such that movement of the candy product relative to the holder member is prevented, and the cap being adapted to cover the candy product. The fixed attachment of the confectionery product

15 to the holder member prevents the cap from adhering to the holder member which may hinder removal of the cap in prior art products. Preferably, the candy product is translucent and preferably the cap is transparent. The candy product can be viewed from outside due to the transparency of the cap which

20 provides a hermetic airtight seal so that the air cannot be in contact with the candy product. Therefore, moisture will not affect the deposited clear candy and it will maintain its transparency.

Preferably, the holder member is elongate and a first end

25 thereof has retaining means for retaining the candy product. The retaining means may comprise a stud penetrating into the candy product or a recess in which a portion of the candy product is received.

In an embodiment of the invention, the holder member has

30 an internal compartment accessible via a second end of the holder member which second end is provided with a sealing member. This feature of the invention represents an innovation in the worldwide field of confectionery. The internal compartment can contain an additional product such

35 as a small toy, a "tattoo", or a second candy product which

may have a different taste from the first candy product. In the confectionery art such an internal compartment presently only exists for the hollow chocolate eggs, but it is a complete innovation for candy products. The cap is preferably
5 designed in such a way that, sealed with the sealing member of the holder member, it can be used as a container to keep the surprises or collectible small toys found inside the hollow compartment.

The holder member, the cap and the sealing member may
10 each have a substantially circular cross-section. The sealing member may have a substantially cylindrical base section having a diameter substantially equal to that of the outer surface of the holder member and a substantially cylindrical upper section having a diameter substantially equal to that
15 of the internal compartment such that the upper section is insertable into the compartment to frictionally engage with the inner surface of the internal compartment.

Since the cap is transparent, the confectionery item is more attractive to the child who can view the candy product
20 through the cap. The cap and the holder member preferably include interengageable means for removably attaching the cap to the holder member. For example, the holder member may have an uppermost portion of reduced cross-section and the interengageable means may comprise a peripheral projection on
25 the uppermost section of the holder member and a ridge on the inner surface of the cap, the ridge passing over and engaging below the projection when the cap is attached to the holder member.

Preferably, the cap is provided with a clip for attaching
30 the confectionery item to, for example, a garment pocket, in order to enable the child to put the cap on the candy product, attach it to a pocket, uncover it again and consume portions of the product several times.

The invention will now be described in more detail, by

way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Figure 1 is an exploded view of a packaged confectionery item according to a first embodiment of the invention;

5 Figure 2 is a vertical section through the item shown in Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a fragmentary view, partly in section, of an alternative stud for the holder member shown in Figures 1 and 2;

10 Figure 4 is a part-sectional view of an item according to a second embodiment of the invention, not showing the cap;

Figure 5 is a vertical section through the holder member shown in Figure 4;

15 Figure 6 is a perspective view of an item according to a third embodiment of the invention, not showing the cap;

Figure 7 is a part-sectional view of the item shown in Figure 6, including the cap;

Figure 8 is a vertical section through part of the candy product shown in Figures 6 and 7; and

20 Figures 9, 10 and 11 are vertical sections through alternative candy products which can be substituted for that shown in Figure 8.

Figures 1 and 2 show a confectionery item including an elongated translucent candy product 1 formed from a solid mass
25 of candy. The candy product 1 comprises an upper part 2 having a particular flavour and colour and a lower part 3 having a different colour and flavour. For example, the upper part 2 may be coloured red and have a strawberry flavour,

whilst the lower part 3 may be coloured yellow and have a lemon flavour.

The candy product 1 is substantially cylindrical but tapers slightly towards the top. Its length is from 20 to 165 mm, for example 53 mm and its diameter is from 7 to 55 mm, for example, 24 mm at its base and 20 mm at its top.

The base of the candy product 1 is fixed to a substantially cylindrical holder member 4 of plastics material. The holder member 4 is hollow, having an internal compartment 5 in which a surprise product such as a small toy, or a temporary "tattoo", or an additional candy product is concealed. The upper end of the internal compartment 5 is defined by a reduced cross-section portion 6, at the centre of which is a round-headed stud 7 which penetrates into the candy product 1 to fix the latter securely to the holder member 4.

A substantially cylindrical cap 8 of transparent plastics material is removably attached to the holder member 4. The cap 8 is domed at its top and has a clip 9 enabling the entire confectionery item to be attached to a garment. A ridge 10 is provided on the inner surface of the cap 8 near its lower edge and a projection 11 is provided on the reduced cross-section portion 6 of the holder member 4. The ridge 10 engages below the projection 11 to securely but removably attach the cap to the holder member.

The cap 8 and holder member 4 have the same diameter which is from 9 to 70 mm, for example 30 mm. The lengths of the cap 8 and the holder member 4 both range from 23 to 190 mm and in this example the cap is 60 mm long and the holder member 50 mm long.

The internal compartment 5 of the holder member 4 is closed at its lower end by means of a substantially circular sealing member 12 of plastics material. A base section 13 of

the sealing member has a diameter substantially equal to the external diameter of the holder member 4 and an upper section 14 thereof has a diameter substantially equal to the diameter of the internal compartment 5. Thus, the sealing member 5 frictionally engages the lower end of the internal compartment 5 to retain the toy or candy product contained therein. To facilitate detachment of the sealing member 12 from the holder member 4, the former includes a lens-shaped indentation 15.

Figure 3 shows an alternatively configured stud 20 of the 10 holder member which is flat-headed. The stud 20 is substantially cylindrical and has four vertical protrusions 21 and two circumferential beads 22. The purpose of the protrusions 21 and beads 22 is to enable a secure connection between the candy product 1 and the holder member 4. The 15 candy product is placed in a liquid state onto the holder member 4 and portions of the liquid are displaced by the protrusions 21 and beads 22. Upon solidification, the candy product 1 remains firmly fixed to the holder member 4, embedded around the protrusions 21 and beads 22.

20 A second embodiment of the confectionery item, shown in Figures 4 and 5, differs from the embodiments shown in Figures 1 to 3 only in the attachment of the candy product 101 to the holder member 104. A reduced cross-section portion 106 includes a substantially cylindrical recess 117. The lower 25 surface of the recess 117 has a plurality of indentations 118 and the side wall of the recess includes a circumferential indentation 119 and vertical ribs 120. The indentations 118, 119 and ribs 120 serve to securely fix the candy product 101 in place on the holder member 104 in the same manner as the 30 protrusions 21 and beads 22 shown in Figure 3.

Figures 6 and 7 show a third embodiment of the confectionery item, comprising a holder member 204, a candy product 201 secured thereto and a cap 208. The candy product 201 includes an elongate base section 230, also shown in 35 Figure 8, having a hollow cavity 231 in an upper region

thereof. The cavity 231 is closed at its upper end by a candy lid 232 having a peripheral lower edge slightly smaller than the upper periphery of the base section 230. During fabrication of the confectionery item, an additional candy product is placed in the cavity 231 and the lid 232 is stuck to the base section 230 so that the cavity 231 is no longer accessible.

The base section 230 and lid 232 are both edible and can have different colours and/or flavours. The cavity 231, which has an upper frustoconical and a lower conical surface, can be filled with different products such as small pieces of popping candy 233 and/or syrup, chocolate, small pieces of bubble gum, liquid bubble gum and the like. The candy product 201 may be produced according to a process adapted from that described in US-A-5,279,842. In this known process, an initial candy mass is at a temperature between 90°C and 150°C and a degree of moisture below the equilibrium moisture of the resulting gasified candy. Essences and/or colourants are added to the mass which is then deposited in two complementary moulds. Cavities having a volume of 0.2 ml to 20 ml are stamped in the two parts of the candy mass in the moulds which are then cooled to a temperature below about 50°C. Chips of gasified candy, and possibly bubble gum particles, are placed in the cavities. The candy mass parts are then joined together with edible adhesive and the resulting candy product is removed from the moulds.

The base section 230, which tapers slightly towards its lower end, may be made transparent to allow viewing of the additional candy product in the cavity 231, through the base section 230 and also through the cap 208 if the latter is also transparent.

The holder member 204 has a recess 217 including indentations and projections, not shown in Figure 7 but similar to the indentations 118, 119 and ribs 120 shown in Figure 5, for securing the candy product 201 on the holder

member.

Figures 9, 10 and 11 show alternative configurations for the candy product which can be used with the holder member 204.

5 In Figure 9, a cavity 241 has a flat lower wall. The diameter d1 of the lower surface of the base section 240 is selected in the range of from about 10 mm to about 50 mm, the diameter d2 of the top surface is selected in the range of from about 7 mm to about 52 mm, and the diameter d3 of the
10 cavity 241 at the upper surface is selected in the range of from about 5 mm to about 48 mm. Thus, the remaining ring portion of the top surface of the base section 240 is selected in the range of from about 1 to about 24 mm. The diameter d4 of the lower wall is selected in a range from about 1 mm to
15 about 48 mm. The distance A2 between the lower surface and the lower wall is selected in a range from about 10 mm to about 100 mm and the distance A1 between the lower wall and the top surface of the base section 240 is selected in a range from about 10 mm to about 65 mm. Thus, a wide variety of
20 different shapes and sizes of candy product can be made. In one specific embodiment, the diameter d1 is 20 mm, the diameter d2 is 24 mm, the diameter d3 is 16 mm so that the remaining ring portion of the top surface of the base section 240 is 4 mm all around, the diameter d4 is 10 mm, the distance
25 A2 is 30 mm and the distance A1 is 22 mm. In this embodiment the lid 232 has a diameter of 23 mm and a thickness of 5 mm. However, since the dimensions of the base section vary, the dimensions of the lid 232 should also vary so that its diameter is selected to be substantially the same as or
30 slightly smaller than the diameter of the top surface of the base section 240, i.e., in a range of from about 7 mm to about 52 mm, while its thickness varies in a range of from about 0.2 mm to about 50 mm.

Figure 10 shows another alternative embodiment of the
35 candy product in which the lower section of a cavity 251 is

hemispherical and a candy lid 252 is also hemispherical. Figure 11 shows a further alternative embodiment in which a cavity 262 is cylindrical. The base section shown in Figure 11 may be covered either by the disc-shaped lid 232 shown in 5 Figures 6, 7 and 9 or the hemispherical lid 252 shown in Figure 10.

It will be appreciated that modifications may be made to the specific embodiments which have been described above without departing from the scope of the invention as defined 10 by the appended claims. For example, instead of or in addition to the clip 9, the housing may be provided with a through hole through which a loop of string is threaded so that a child can hang the confectionery item around his or her neck.



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CLAIMS

1. A novelty confectionery item comprising a candy product arranged within a housing, the housing comprising a holder member and a transparent cap removably coupled to the holder member, the candy product being fixedly secured to the holder member so that movement of the candy product relative to the holder member is prevented, and the transparent cap being adapted to cover the candy product, wherein the holder member has an internal compartment provided with a removable sealing member.

2. A confectionery item as claimed in claim 1, wherein the holder member is elongate and a first end thereof has retaining means for retaining the candy product.

3. A confectionery item as claimed in claim 2, wherein the retaining means comprises a stud penetrating into the candy product.

4. A confectionery item as claimed in claim 2, wherein the retaining means comprises a recess in which a portion of the candy product is received.

5. A confectionery item as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the internal compartment is accessible via a second end of the holder member which is provided with said removable sealing member.

6. A confectionery item as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the holder member, the cap and the sealing member each have a substantially circular cross-section.

7. A confectionery item as claimed in claim 7, wherein the sealing member has a substantially cylindrical base section having a diameter substantially equal to that of the outer surface of the holder member and a substantially cylindrical upper section having a diameter substantially

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equal to that of the internal compartment.

8. A confectionery item as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the sealing member is adapted to close the cap, when the sealing member and cap are removed from the holder 5 member, so as to form a container from the cap.

9. A confectionery item as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 8, wherein the internal compartment contains a surprise product such as a toy, a tattoo, or an additional candy product.

10 10. A confectionery item as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the cap and the holder member include interengageable means for removably attaching the cap to the holder member.

11. A confectionery item as claimed in claim 12, wherein 15 the interengageable means comprise a peripheral projection on the holder member and a ridge on the inner surface of the cap, the ridge passing over and engaging the projection when the cap is attached to the holder member.

12. A confectionery item as claimed in any preceding 20 claim, wherein the cap is provided with a clip for attaching the confectionery item to a garment.

13. A confectionery item as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the candy product is transparent.

14. A novelty confectionery item, substantially as 25 described herein with reference to Figures 1 to 3, or Figures 4 and 5, or Figures 6 to 8, or Figure 9, 10 or 11 of the accompanying drawings.

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