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CARTRIDGE BOX FOR AMMUNITION BELT

Subject of the invention

[0001] The present invention relates to a cartridge box for ammunition in the form of
10 a belt, comprising cartridges joined together by links.

Prior art

[0002] A person skilled in the art is familiar with using compartment boxes for storing
and delivering to an automatic weapon cartridges that are joined together in the form of
15 ammunition belts by links. The document US 2,811,084 describes for example such a box.

[0003] These prior art boxes have a number of limitations, however: the number of
cartridges available is limited by the size of a single box, the position of the box is determined a
priori and there is no flexibility with respect to this position.

[0004] However, these cartridge boxes are mainly used in applications on-board craft
20 such as the sides of helicopters, for which there is no possibility of reloading in flight.
Moreover, on this type of vehicle, the shape of the available space for the cartridge boxes is
defined more by aerodynamic or balance-related constraints than by the practical aspect of
storing ammunition. Therefore, the possibility of distributing the ammunition over several
smaller boxes represents a key advantage. These boxes also have to be able to be disposed in
25 any position in order to be adaptable to several types of weaponry for standardization
purposes.

Aims of the invention

[0005] The present invention has the aim of providing a cartridge belt for ammunition
30 in the form of a belt that exhibits the best flexibility in terms of positioning and capacity.

Summary of the invention

[0006] The present invention relates to a cartridge box comprising:

- a box comprising an inlet and an outlet, the outlet being positioned under the inlet and being separated therefrom by a turn roller;
- a plurality of compartments separated by partitions;
- a belt of cartridges, said cartridge belt passing through the inlet, then being folded up
5 in the compartments, from the compartment closest to the inlet to the farthest away compartment, the belt then passing through the outlet, over the top of the turn roller.

[0007] Advantageously, the cartridge box of the invention comprises a second inlet and a second outlet separated by a second turn roller on the opposite face of the box such that it is possible to position the inlet and the outlet equally on the left-hand side or on
10 the right-hand side of the cartridge box.

[0008] Preferably, the cartridge box of the invention comprises a removable cover for easily reversing the outlet side of the belt.

[0009] Preferably, a permanent magnet is disposed at the bottom of each compartment, each magnet making it possible to keep the cartridge belt in the compartment
15 regardless of the position of the box.

[0010] When the cartridge box is preferably used with the inlet/outlet at the bottom of the box (upside down), the face of the walls of the compartments that is on the opposite side from the inlet/outlet side may comprise cells that help to keep the belt static.

[0011] The present invention also relates to an assembly of at least two cartridge
20 boxes according to the invention, wherein the cartridge belt exiting the first box is connected to the belt entering the second box.

Brief description of the figures

- [0012]** Figure 1 shows a filled cartridge box according to the invention.
- 25 **[0013]** Figures 2 to 5 show the successive steps of emptying the cartridge box in figure 1.
- [0014]** Figure 6 show a cartridge box according to the invention, with the cover open in order to change the inlet/outlet side.
- [0015]** Figure 7 shows the process of changing the inlet/outlet side.
- 30 **[0016]** Figure 8 shows two cartridge boxes according to the invention disposed in series.
- [0017]** Figure 9 shows a preferred embodiment of the invention, comprising magnets at the bottom of the compartments, the cartridge box being disposed "upside down".

[0018] Figure 10 shows another cartridge box according to the invention.

Detailed description of the invention

[0019] The present invention relates to a cartridge box for ammunition in the form of
 5 a belt having links for connecting several boxes in series, such that it is possible to have as much space available as possible for feeding a machine gun or cannon, mainly for on-board applications.

[0020] To this end, the cartridge box of the invention comprises an inlet 5 and an outlet 6 separated by a turn roller 3, the inlet 5 being positioned above the outlet, on the same
 10 side of the box. The term “above” means here the top of the cartridge box positioned in the position intended for loading the box. In fact, it will be seen below that, according to preferred embodiments of the invention, the box can be positioned, in use, in virtually any position.

[0021] In order to make it easier to position the belt and easily unload the latter, the ammunition box of the invention comprises a plurality of compartments 9 separated by
 15 vertical partitions 2.

[0022] The belt 7 is initially positioned in a zigzag in the compartments 9, from the compartment close to the inlet 5 to the opposite side. The belt 7 is then folded up towards the outlet. This arrangement allows the belt 7 to slide over the top of the filled compartments 9, sliding over the cartridges, this avoiding a situation in which the links catch on the tops of the
 20 walls 2 of the empty compartments 9.

[0023] Advantageously, the bottom of the compartments 9 comprises a permanent magnet 12 for keeping the belt in position regardless of the position of the box 1. This makes it possible in particular to use the ammunition box in an inverted manner, the top of the box 1 as defined above being positioned underneath during use.

[0024] Still in the case of use “upside down” (i.e. with the inlet/outlet at the bottom of the device), it may be advantageous to position cells 23 on the side walls, on the face on the opposite side from the inlet/outlet. In this case, in the strand of the belt on the outlet side of the compartment that is being emptied can move freely towards the outlet (vertical movement in translation), the bottommost cartridge in the compartment carries out a
 25 rotational movement that is not impeded, while the strand on the cell side is retained by said cells. Such a configuration is shown in figure 10.

[0025] Advantageously, either the walls 22 having cells can easily be inverted or the cells 23 are disposed on removable plates that can easily be disposed on the right-hand side or left-hand side of the walls separating the compartments 9.

5 **[0026]** Preferably, the box 1 can also be inverted laterally (to the right/left with respect to the figures), the box 1 comprising an inlet and an outlet on each side face and a second turn roller 4 on the second side face.

[0027] In order to make it easy to load the cartridge box, the upper face is removable or can be fixed by means of a hinge, this not only making it easier to load the belt but also allowing it to be easier to change the inlet/outlet face.

10 **[0028]** Since the box comprises an inlet and an outlet on each face, two (or more) boxes can easily be connected in series, making it possible to optimize the space taken up by the ammunition, without there being a need for an additional feed device.

CLAIMS

1. A cartridge box comprising:

- a box (1) comprising an inlet (5) and an outlet (6), the outlet (6) being positioned under the inlet (5) and being separated therefrom by a turn roller (3);
- a plurality of compartments (9) separated by partitions (2);
- a belt (7) of cartridges (8), said cartridge belt passing through the inlet (5), then being folded up in the compartments (9), from the compartment (9) closest to the inlet (5) to the farthest away compartment, the belt then passing through the outlet (6), over the top of the turn roller (3).

2. The cartridge box as claimed in claim 1, comprising a removable cover easy loading of the belt of the belt.

3. The cartridge box as claimed in either of the preceding claims, wherein a permanent magnet (12) is disposed at the bottom of each compartment (9), each magnet (12) making it possible to keep the cartridge belt (7) in the compartment (9) regardless of the position of the box.

4. The cartridge box as claimed in claim one of the preceding claims, comprising a second inlet and a second outlet separated by a second turn roller (4) on the opposite face of the box such that it is possible to position the inlet and the outlet equally on the left-hand side or on the right-hand side of the cartridge box.

5. The cartridge box as claimed in one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the partitions 22 of the compartments 9 comprise, on their face on the opposite side from the inlet/outlet, cells 23 for keeping a belt strand static during the unloading of the compartment.

6. An assembly of at least two cartridge boxes as claimed in one of the preceding claims, wherein the cartridge belt (7) exiting the first box is connected to the belt entering the second box.