

SECOND WIN FOR DAIWA

For the third year in a row a Japanese canmaker won the Can of the Year award at Cannex. For Daiwa it was the second time, showing that striking decoration catches the eye. John Nutting reports

Japanese canmaker Daiwa won the Can of the Year award for the second time at the Cannex Asia show in Singapore last month.

This time it won the prize, as voted by delegates at the show, for a newly-launched 355ml aluminium drinks can featuring spiral embossing and complementary graphics. First seen on the Japanese domestic market in March, the can was produced exclusively for rice wine producer Takara and its seven-percent alcohol fruit-flavoured mix called Sukish, which means "I like" in English.

Daiwa also won the Gold award in the Three-piece Beverage category for the 150ml shaped can made for Georgia Royal coffee, a Coca-Cola product. Daiwa first won the Can of the Year in 2000 for its New Bottle Can, a bottle-shaped

polymer-coated aluminium container with a screw top that has since been used for a variety of brands in Japan. In February, it was debuted in the US by Kraft Foods for its Capri Sun fruit drinks.

A team of expert judges appointed by *The Canmaker* magazine, which organised the Cans of the Year awards, selected winners in ten categories. Although the Daiwa aluminium can was overall winner it only won the Silver award in the Two-piece Beverage (over 250ml) category. In that, the Gold prize went to US-based CCL Container for its 14-oz aluminium bottle-shaped can for Snapple Beverages' Mystic RE fruit drink that features a recloseable twist-off cap.

"At CCL Container we are extremely honoured to have won two Cannex Awards that recognise our success in two very different business segments," said Ed

Martin, vice-president of sales and marketing based in Norwalk, Connecticut.

"Cannex always receives outstanding entries from the world's best canmakers, so tough competition makes the success that much more enjoyable. We are very pleased to receive an award for our efforts in our core aluminium aerosol business as well as in the dynamic beverage bottle market. The common theme for both awards is innovation and product differentiation. With regard to the aluminium beverage bottle, or bottle can package, we believe that we are seeing the dawn of the use of this package form in North America and Europe."

The bottle can package offers a number of advantages, said Martin. "It is unbreakable, resealable and offers complete UV protection. Because of the thermodynamic properties of metal it also retains coolness longer than PET or glass. With that said, the package simply captures the imagination of the end-use customer. That, in the end, drives consumption.

"We have had consumers contact us, after identifying CCL Container as the bottle canmaker, inspired to create artwork, write songs and use the package as a prop in a television show. The package even made an appearance at the 2003 Grammy awards in the USA. I guess you can say that sometimes the package can make a difference."

CCL Containers' design uses an impact-extruded container with a plastics thread to take a lug cap. Martin explained why: "One reason why we used the sleeve was because we did not want to have to create a special specification for the cap.



"The lug cap that is used is made to a glass specification. We also felt that with current necking equipment that we could provide a more consistent 'lug cap' finish using a plastics sleeve. We are in process of evaluating the feasibility of a necked lug finish.

"The bottom line is that the lug cap finish, with hot filling, creates some special challenges." All components are FDA-compliant and have been tested and approved on standard filling lines for non-carbonated, hot-fill beverages.

Susan Chirico, director of packaging at Mystic Brands' parent company, Snapple Beverage Group, is enthusiastic about the container's appeal and comments, "This innovative new bottle and its bold graphics deliver great shelf impact and a premium quality impression... a prelude to the bold tasting and premium quality product that's inside."

CCL's R&D group collaborated with a leading cap manufacturer to design a polypropylene sleeve that accommodates the industry-standard and consumer-preferred lug caps found on many glass beverage bottles.

Director of research and development for CCL Container, Mark Goda commented, "The cap features a specially designed lining that forms a snug vacuum seal with the rim of the container during the cooling process. This results in the familiar pop with the first turn of the cap. For the consumer, it's a reassuring sign of product purity."

CCL Container was piped into the Sil-



CANS OF THE YEAR



Above: Hisao Asakura of Daiwa receives the Can of the Year trophy from publisher of The Canmaker Allan Sayers. Main picture: the winning Sukish can. Category winners included GM Metal Packaging (left), Daiwa (top), NCI (above right) and Envases (right)



Innovation was recognised in the Two-piece Beverage (up to 250ml) category with Ball Packaging Europe's DWI tinplate slim can for Kraft Foods' Ice Cappio coffee drink. Ball and its predecessor Schmalbach-Lubeca have been developing aseptic filling systems for milk-based products for a number of years. The Kraft product was launched late last year and was first to feature a widget that foams the drink on pouring, making in effect a milkshake. Ball also won the Silver award for its Kid can featuring an easy-opening end with a small opening for a straw.

Metal containers that explore new decorative avenues usually score in the Promotional category, in which GM Metal Packaging won the Gold award for its shopping bag shaped can.

One of a number of novel entries from the Hong Kong-based firm, the little container is perfect as a gift. Sunil Gidumal, who runs the company, reckons its key features are that "it takes metal packaging to a new level, shows how metal can reach new customers, and of course is reusable."

Japanese firm Nittoh Sangyo, which has also won Cans of the Year awards before, this time won Silver for its hand-made tea caddy decorated with peach seeds. It pushed CarnaudMetalbox Speciality Packaging's biscuit container into Bronze. With a mesh panel on a decorated

ver award in the Aerosols category by the latest design of a shaped container for Lynx and Axe body sprays produced by Lever Fabergé. Launched last year, the Gold-award winning impact-extruded aluminium can made by Envases Group features asymmetric embossing which matches other plastics containers in the Lynx range.

Envases, which has manufacturing operations in the UK and Spain, has a patent on the technology, which registers the embossing to the graphics and ensures that the actuator is always in the correct position. The can also features the

latest improvements in print management, enabling small text to be reversed out of solid colours, even down to 5pt.

Bronze went to Japan's Chugai Pharmaceutical, which won the overall Can of the Year in 2001 for its self-heating insecticide container. This year, Chugai's packaging for its Varsan foam was particularly eye-catching, using a card box with instructions on how to use the product, which was launched in March. This is equally novel, in which insects are encased in the insecticide foam that sets around them, enabling easier disposal.

CANS OF THE YEAR 2003: Category winners

AEROSOLS:

Gold: Envases Group (UK and Spain), Lever Fabergé's Lynx body spray aluminium container.

Silver: CCL Container (US), Extended Neck Trimline extruded aluminium aerosol for Beyond the Zone brand hair mousse.

Bronze: Chugai Pharmaceutical (Japan), Varsan insect spray container.

BEVERAGE TWO-PIECE, UP TO 250ML:

Gold: Ball Packaging Europe, Kraft Foods' Kenco Ice Cappio milk coffee drinks can with a widget.

Silver: Ball Packaging Europe, 250ml Kid can with small opening end and straw.

Bronze: No award.

BEVERAGE TWO-PIECE, OVER 250ML:

Gold: CCL Container (US) 14-oz aluminium bottle-shaped container with a twist-off cap for the Snapple Beverage Group's Mystic energy drinks range.

Silver: Daiwa Can (Japan) for Takara rice wine aluminium can with spiral embossing.

Bronze: Toyo Seikan (Japan) for Asahi Soft Drinks Agari green tea using drawn TULC steel container shaped like a tea cup.

BEVERAGE, THREE-PIECE:

Gold: Daiwa Can (Japan), 250ml shaped steel can for Coca-Cola's Georgia Royal Mandheling coffee blend.

Silver: Hindustan Tin Works (India), 250ml decorated can for BDM's Apple juice.

Bronze: No award.

DECORATIVE/PROMOTIONAL:

Gold: GM Metal Packaging (Hong Kong), shopping bag-shaped container.

Silver: Nittoh Sangyo (Japan), hand-made tea caddy with peach seed decoration.

Bronze: Crown Cork & Seal Speciality Packaging (Europe), Menou Biscuits container.

ENDS, CAPS AND CLOSURES:

Gold: Brasilita (Brazil), for the resealable and tamper evident Ploc-off plastics closure used on cans for dry products.

Silver: Crown Cork & Seal Food Europe, for Capitaine Cook drawn can with peelable lid for processed fish.

Bronze: Ball Packaging Europe, for aluminium beverage can tabs with laser-etched images for prize promotions.

FOOD, TWO-PIECE:

Gold: Crown Cork & Seal Food Europe, for Top Chef shallow dog food container with a peelable lid.

Silver: Toyo Seikan (Japan) for drawn tuna can using extrusion coated steel.

Bronze: No award.

FOOD, THREE-PIECE:

Gold: No award.

Silver: Hindustan Tin Works (India) for Nestlé's Ghee.

Bronze: Shetron Limited (India), Red Rossogollas welded and decorated can.

GENERAL LINE/INDUSTRIAL:

Gold: NCI Packaging (Australia) for its Dulux RingSeal paint container.

Silver: Morris McMahon (Australia) paint drum with bark effect decoration.

Bronze: No award.

PROTOTYPE:

Gold: Nittoh Sangyo (Japan), three-piece can with embossed 'hologram' style images.

Silver: Spark Innovations (US), beverage tab that enables easier lifting.

Bronze: No award

CANS OF THE YEAR

tin, the product is easily viewed by the consumer.

Crown Cork & Seal Food grabbed the honours in the Two-piece Food category with its Gold award-winning drawn tray for pet foods. Produced for Top Chef cat and dog foods, the containers have a peel-off lid so that the pet is able to eat direct from the container. Bronze winner was Toyo Seikan for its drawn tuna can of polymer-coated steel using extrusion.

Brazilian canmaker Brasilita has been introducing novel ideas into metal packaging for some years. Chief executive Antonio Teixeira's latest idea is the Ploc-off lid that won Gold in the Ends, Caps and Closures category. This is a plastics moulded lid for dry products that offers tamper evidence and resealability, avoids the seaming process on the filling line and matches the performance of many foil lids in the market, says Teixeira. Bronze went to the Peel Seam easy-open foil end made in Italy by Crown Cork & Seal Food Europe for Capitaine Cook's tuna salad drawn container. Suitable for



CCL Container's Mystic RE winner (left), and clockwise from right, Ball's Kenco coffee can, Brasilita's Ploc-off, Nittoh Sangyo's prototype winner and Crown's new Top Chef pet food container



both dry and 121 deg C processed foods, the decorated lid is available in 73, 83 and 99mm diameters.

Bronze went to Ball Packaging Europe for its laser-etched beverage end tab.

Industrial containers are rarely innovative, conforming to traditional formats. But the 15-litre tapered paint can for Dulux made by NCI Packaging in Australia offers something new with the RingSeal lid that features a circular plastics clip easy to close and open without tools. Bronze went to another Australasian canmaker, Sydney-based Morris MacMahon for the high-quality decoration on its tapered paint can.

The Prototype category is for metal containers that have yet to reach commercialisation. Japanese canmaker Nittoh Sangyo hit Gold with its clever film decoration for three-piece cans that has a visual effect similar to holograms. It gives the appearance that the image on the container is moving and on the 401 diameter can entered was especially striking because the two sets of images moved in different directions.

Silver was won by Spark Innovations, which has been developing a tab for easy-open beverage ends that levers up and locks in position to provide more space for small fingers. The prototype is made from plastics but a tooling manufacturer has been engaged to made aluminium versions.

