USBC Supplement: TOC Signs

Tin Over Cardboard (TOC) beer signs range from pre-Prohibition to present day. Our focus on this project is from the early days to the mid-1960s. The TOCs pictured in the USBC are the first branch out beyond beer cans for the site, and it's an exciting venture. These signs display some of the early forms of advertising for these product lines and are a good study in the history. The primary focus is on TOCs, but we cover a wide range of metal signs, eventually to be sorted under unique categories.

To access the USBC site from the new BCCA Home page, click on the "MORE" button [1] in the top navigation, and then click on USBC Supplement Page" in the drop-down menu [2]. On the next page click the blue "USBC Supplement" link in the center of the page [3], which takes you to the USBC site. Next click on the TOC image on the lower left [4]. Then click on "TOC Search" [5] under the TOC images to bring up the TOC Search page. Now you have choices.

Under "Custom Search," select any of the parameters listed in the center page dropdowns. Enter directly or use the dropdown lists to the right, i.e., the small arrows. The entire documentation can be seen numerically (numbers by order of input) by clicking on the arrow following "Brand," then selecting "All." Then click on the large blue "Search" button at the bottom of the page. Subsequent pages can be reached by clicking on the "Next" button. The most recent inputs are near the "Last" button.
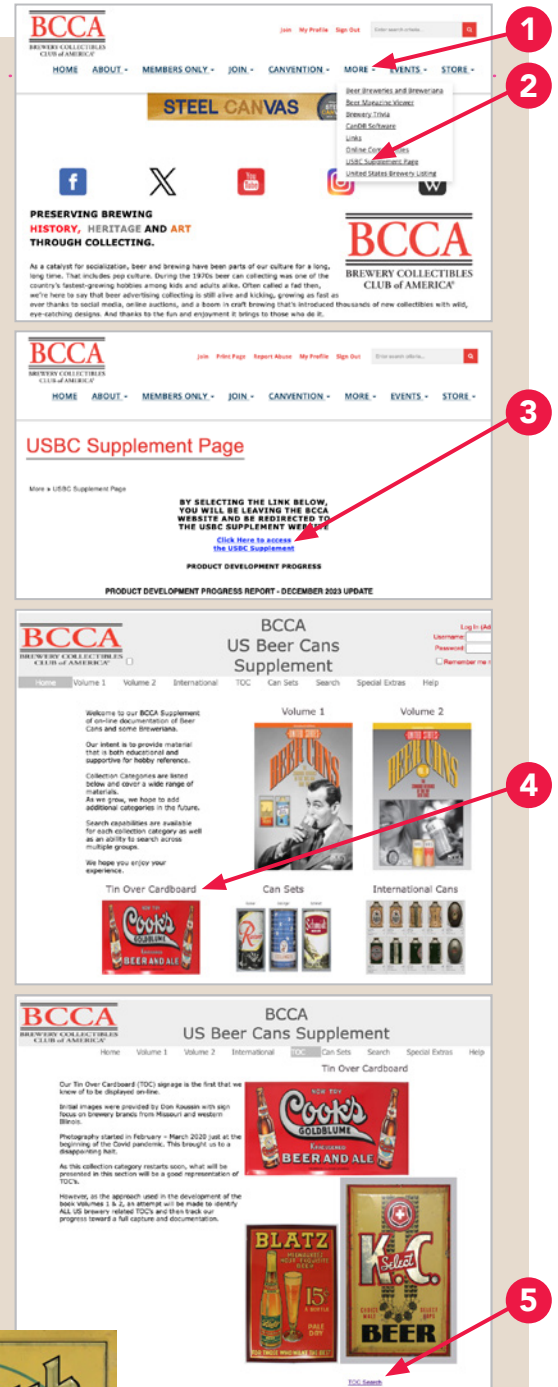
A specific Brand may be entered directly or selected from the dropdown list using the arrows. It's easy to sort by brand, brewery, city, state or your specific area of interest.

Several Predefined Searches are listed under "Select a Query" on the left side of the TOC Search screen. Additional searches will be added as we progress.

A number of Output Display choices are on the right side of the TOC Search page. You may select "Sort Order," "Output Columns," "Cans/TOCs Per Page" and other options. There are several spreadsheet layout options you can choose from, as well. As selected, this data can be seen at the end of each screen display.

Be sure to check the "Clear Selections" button in between searches. Also, there are a number of entries with data entered but no images at this time. (Sign descriptions are found under "Details.") A TOC or a blank will indicate a Tin Over Cardboard sign. Other inputs might include Thermometer, Door Push, Flat Tin, Button, Lee-See, Calendar, etc. As we see a broader spectrum of metal signs in our work, some of these might be placed in another unique category, so stay tuned or give us your thoughts. An input of Prismatic, Crystoglas, Pulveroid, Nicolene, etc. is a TOC from a specific sign manufacturer describing a proprietary paint-finish design.

To the best of our knowledge, this is the only catalogue display of Tin Over Cardboard beer advertising. As of this writing we have 750 signs input, plus some 400 to 600 more to enter. When we're finished, we'll have a nice representation. Our goal is to photograph as close to 100% of TOCs as possible. The BCCA is partnering with NABA in an attempt to reach this lofty goal. You, too, can help grow our numbers. Please contact me at btgregg@earthlink.net for data and photo instructions.

If you have questions or suggestions, please contact Bruce Gregg at btgregg@earthlink.net.