

Beverage Journal

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THE 21ST CENTURY BARTENDER

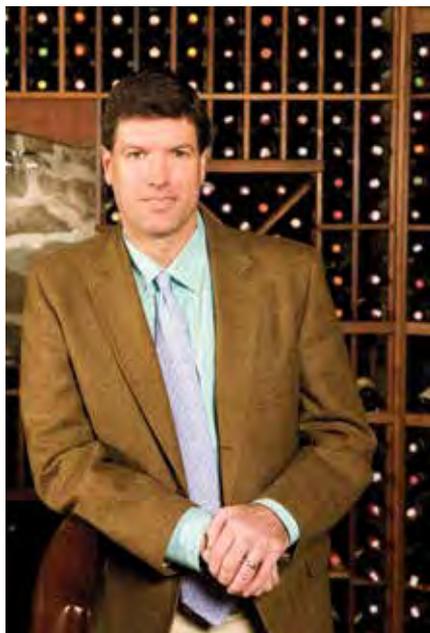
HAVE KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS
OVERSHADOWED HOSPITALITY?



WINE & COCKTAILS
TAKE A "CAN" DO
APPROACH

OFF-PREMISE
MOMENTUM CONTINUES

BITTERS:
STRONG & PROFITABLE



Casey's Bar and Restaurant Holds Charity Golf Tourney

I always enjoy hearing about good deeds being done by members of the industry. I came across something that is very worthy of some press. Casey's Bar and Restaurant in Parkville, MD recently hosted their 7th annual golf tournament in honor of three of

their favorite customers on the spectrum (the Autism Spectrum) ... Christina Pollizzi, CJ Manouse, and Eric Kane.

Owners Casey Brooks and his mom, Terry Santoro started their annual golf tournament as a way for employees and patrons to get together and have fun outside of the establishment. There was no specific charity. More recently proceeds were donated to a local church. This year, however, Casey wanted to support an organization that works to provide resources, research, and awareness to his patrons. He chose Autism Speaks and he worked hard to get sponsorships from his distributors and donations from nearby businesses. Most of all, he needed golfers. Well, he got them, lots of them. Casey's efforts paid off as he raised \$5,000 to benefit Walk Now for Autism Speaks: Baltimore.

This industry is full of people and organizations giving back to their communities in very heart-warming ways. If you or your company has conducted a fundraiser, let us know about it. We are very happy to tout your efforts here in the *Beverage Journal*. ■

STEPHEN PATTEN
PUBLISHER



HERE ARE SUSAN PERELES, AUTISM SPEAKS; KELLI AND KAYLA MANOUSE, MOTHER AND SISTER OF CJ MANOUSE; AND CASEY BROOKS, CASEY'S BAR AND RESTAURANT.



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WINE & COCKTAILS

..... TAKE A

CAN-DO APPROACH

LIFTING A PAGE FROM CRAFT BEER'S MARKETING MANUAL...

..... BY JEFFERY LINDENMUTH

It's back to the future for the aluminum can. First used to package frozen juice concentrate in 1960, aluminum cans were quickly embraced by soft drink and beer producers following the addition of the convenient pull-tab, patented in 1963. Despite the timeless luster of traditional glass bottles and the lightness of modern PET plastics, more beverage producers are realizing that even today few packages can rival aluminum for its combination of recyclability, portability, durability, lightness, and protective qualities.

Craft beer producers are returning to the format in droves, a movement instigated by Peter Love of Cask Brewing Systems, who revived the prestige of the package at Colorado's Oskar Blues starting

in 2002. "Cans are now seen by craft beer consumers and brewers as a premium and preferred package for beer, and we have a long list of brewers who have quickly grown their business by using cans. That will someday be the case with wine, cider and cocktails," predicts Love.

Indeed, more spirits and wine producers are asking, "why should beer have all the fun?" By putting their products into aluminum formats, wine and spirits are entering traditional beer occasions and catering to active lifestyles. Launched in 2013, Winestar is moving more aggressively in the U.S., distributing their line of French AOC wines in a 187ml "canette" in

Malibu RTD cocktails have extended easily into cans; Cola, Cranberry and Pineapple flavors are now joined by Strawberry Kiwi.



Florida, California, New York and New Jersey. "It is the best of any packaging on the market," says Bryan Schell, VP Sales and Marketing, Winestar. "It is already made from mostly recycled material, and is again 100% recyclable." Priced at \$3.99 per unit retail, Winestar takes advantage of the great quality to price ratio of southern French wines, with flagship red and white blends from AOC Corbières, joined by a Languedoc rosé.

FROM LEFT: WineStar cans emphasize the great quality/price ratio of French AOC wines. Oskar Blues is the craft brand that made cans cool again for beer. Tiqo is a custom cocktail in an aluminum bottle.



The popularity of wine in cans comes as little surprise to Francis Ford Coppola Winery, which first put its Sofia sparkling wine in single-serve 187ml cans, dubbed the Mini, in 2004. “The concept of canned wine was received with mixed fanfare at first, but the Sofia Minis have seen steady growth and they’re now one of our most popular selections,” says Tondi Bolkan, winemaker. Sparkling wine and other styles of fresh, ready-to-drink wines are great candidates for cans, explains Bolkan. “Think of the can as a small wine tank—the vessel is sealed with no air venting in or out. Some wines need aging and/or micro-oxidation, be it through the staves of a barrel or the pores of a cork.”

Other notable can-do wines include two 500ml “tall boys” from Field Recordings in Paso Robles, CA: the “Fiction” red blend and Alloy Wine Works Grenache Rosé. And from France, two “slim” (237ml, 8oz) cans of Pampelonne, spritzers in Rosé Lime and Red Sangria (SRP \$3.99, 6% ABV). And Infinite Monkey Theorem sells their canned wines by the liter (as a four-pack of 250mls), only in Denver and Austin.

■ SPIRITED NOVELTY

While beer producers continue to offer new cocktail-inspired malt beverages in a can, like Bud Lite with their Mixxtails in flavors of Hurricane, Long Island and Firewalker, spirits-based beverages are aiming for the high ground, betting that consumers will differentiate among their cocktails with a distilled spirits base.

Gosling’s Rum is enjoying immense success with their own ginger beer cocktail, the Dark ‘n Stormy Ready-To-Drink in an 8.4oz can, made with Black Seal Rum and ginger beer. Coupled with its diet counterpart, the Dark ‘n Skinny, these canned cocktails are on target to top 1 million case sales annually in 2016. “It has taken on a life of its own and is being enjoyed all over. The convenience makes it wonderful for golf courses, beaches and boating. But even above convenience we find people appreciate

Now 10 years in the market, Francis Coppola’s “Sofia” is effectively the elder statesperson of the category. For a novel twist, the 187ml cans of blanc de blancs bubbly come with straws, adding to their inherent playful edge.

the consistency,” says Malcolm Gosling, President & CEO of Gosling-Castle Partners Inc.

Other entries suggest that cocktails in aluminum are just getting started. Frustrated that she was unable to find a good portable substitute for beer during a backpacking trip in central America, Sarah Pierce partnered with a college friend to create Tiqo, a custom cocktail of blanco tequila, coconut water, ginger, turmeric and lime in a black matte aluminum bottle (SRP \$4.99, ABV 6%). “Spirits are doing well for a number of reasons. And one of the things Bud Lite does not understand is it’s not just the flavor, but that people are trying to avoid the the carbs and the calories and the sugariness of malt beverages,” says Pierce. With distribution in New York and Connecticut, Tiqo has gained a following among young consumers in beach towns like Montauk; Miami is their next market.

Wyn Ferrell, a partner at Mile High Spirits in Denver, chose to target the classic Moscow Mule, with the introduction of Punching Mule, a combination of real vodka and ginger beer, in a 12oz can. “Not everybody wants to drink beer, and this is a cocktail that can live in a beer world,” says Ferrell, noting that Punching Mule is comfortable being tossed among the crowd by hawkers at Denver Nuggets games. The brand also

is actively pursuing those who choose to avoid gluten; “It was a bland world for them. Unless you wanted to haul around 2-liter ginger ale, you had few choices,” says Ferrell.

For San Diego’s craft beer producer Ballast Point (recently snapped up by Constellation), putting their distilled spirits into canned cocktails, like a Bloody



Mary made with Fugu Vodka (10% ABV) and a gin and tonic using their Old Grove gin (6.2% ABV), seems a natural fit. Debuted in August 2015, the canned cocktails are available in four-packs, priced around \$14.99 at retail. Just another sign that aluminum, this wonder material of the 1960s—stigmatized by industrial beer but recently reclaimed by craft brewers—is helping to carve out future markets for beverage alcohol today. ■



□ UNDERWOOD WINE

Oregon’s Union Wine found fast success with their Underwood Pinot Noir in a 375ml can, launched in spring 2015 (SRP \$24/ four-pack), followed by Pinot Gris and Rosé. According to Ryan Harms, owner and winemaker of Union Wine Company, the familiar feel of a beer can is instrumental to his larger mission of making wine more accessible: “You can’t easily sniff, or swirl wine in a can. It forces you to just drink it and enjoy it without over thinking the activity,” says Harms.

USAGE OCCASIONS FOR CANS:

Picnics, train commutes, concerts, camping, hiking, outdoor festivals, travel...

