

The American Issue

July—September, 2008

October 17, 2008

NCAA sides with beer industry at the expense of students

An amazing thing happened following a meeting of the NCAA's Executive Committee last month. University of Georgia President Michael Adams, speaking on behalf of the Committee, reported that "we don't think [beer advertising] is appropriate for [college sports]." That revealing admission reflects, for the first time, a clear public discomfort within the NCAA concerning the association of college sports and beer promotion.

The Executive Committee had an opportunity to protect the best interests of student athletes and other young people by removing beer ads from NCAA telecasts. More than 400 college presidents, athletic directors and coaches recently called on the NCAA governing body to change its advertising policy, even offering a suggestion to phase out the beer ads gradually. However, the Executive Committee ignored the values of the NCAA and higher education by once again refusing to adjust its flawed advertising policy and its alliance with beer marketers.

Former University of North Carolina basketball coach Dean Smith put it best when he asked, "If aspirin were the leading cause of death on college campuses, do you think chancellors, presidents and trustees would allow aspirin commercials on basketball and football telecasts?" Not for a minute.

You wouldn't know that the NCAA's advertising rules plainly "exclude those advertisements and advertisers ... that do not appear to be in the best interests of higher education and student athletes" and explicitly prohibit ads for most alcoholic beverages. NCAA advertising rules ban ads for cigarettes, other tobacco products, organizations promoting gambling, and alcoholic beverages, yet they permit ads for beverages with alcohol content of 6 percent or less (beer). The NCAA also prohibits all onsite alcohol advertising during its tournament events and forbids the sale of all alcoholic beverages.

Last month's advertising policy review, if not its result, has begun to take those standards more seriously by questioning the appropriateness of airing beer ads during college sports. That's not a great surprise, given widespread understanding that beer drinking results in so much obvious harm on college campuses.

Across the nation, nearly 45 percent of college students are binge drinkers — consuming five or more drinks on at least one occasion in the past 30 days — according to the Harvard School of Public Health college alcohol surveys. Those students too often get into trouble with the law, get into fights, suffer and cause injuries, cause and suffer sexual victimization, get sick, and jeopardize their college education. Heavy drinking disrupts the lives of other students and community residents. Most college officials agree that student drinking is their biggest headache. Colleges invest heavily in treatment and prevention programs to reduce abusive drinking and for law enforcement and disciplinary actions to punish inappropriate and even criminal behavior.

Sports, particularly football and men's basketball, are the nexus of underage and excessive drinking among students, and the results are not pretty. Sports fans are more likely to engage in binge drinking, and many student athletes have been suspended for alcohol use and its consequences. Alcohol-fueled fans have rampaged after team wins and losses, damaging property, battling police, setting fires, and wreaking havoc in numerous college communities.

Alcohol advertisements encourage young people to drink. They build expectations about drinking, and, according to an evolving body of research, teens' exposure to alcohol advertising has been linked to more frequent and heavier alcohol consumption. Should the NCAA be helping to bring young people to beer ads?

Last April, 115 college presidents and athletic directors urged NCAA President Myles Brand to end all alcohol advertising, including beer, on future NCAA sports telecasts. Those presidents and athletic directors are part of a growing movement that numbers some 360 colleges (about one-third of the NCAA's membership), 16 athletic conferences, and hundreds more athletic directors and college coaches committed to eliminating beer advertising during college sports telecasts.

University of Memphis basketball coach John Calipari noted that coaches have to deal with alcohol issues among their players. "[W]e're saying we don't want these kids to drink, but we want to take the money from the companies that are advertising to these players about drinking. ... We shouldn't do it."

When the NCAA governing bodies convened in Indianapolis in early August, they missed an opportunity to make real progress. They could have listened to the organization's members and ended the embarrassing promotion of beer in college sports.

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(NCAA CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

They could have followed the lead of the Big Ten, which last year prohibited all alcohol advertising on its new, independent sports television network, asserting that such advertising was inconsistent with the Big Ten brand and those of its members.

Regrettably, the NCAA ignored the rational approach put forward by its members — a three-year gradual phase-out of beer ads — that would allow all parties time to adjust and permit CBS, which broadcasts NCAA's basketball championship tournament, to find other advertisers.

NCAA athletes show amazing skills and courage on the field and on the court. Their athleticism and talent exemplify the importance and highest values of sports. Sadly, the NCAA's decision on beer ads and its choice to put the interests of the beer industry over the best interests of higher education and student athletes reflects a continuing lack of courage.

Take It From a Drink Like Me

Jim Spruce, Chatham, IL Meditation given at the ACAP Annual Meeting, Springfield, Illinois

HOW LUCKY can you get? I'm cheap - dollar for dollar the best value in town! I'm popular - everybody wants me in order to look good, act cool and be at ease. I swear by my own name to make you self-assured, hip and suave. So for only ninety-five cents at your nearest gas station, how can you go wrong?

OR FOR A *real* bargain of only \$5.79 per six-pack, you can PBR me at your nearest Wal-mart. So as deals go, that's about as sweet as it gets.

You and two of your friends can chugalug -the likes of me in no time flat, and besides -Who cares? Who's watching? What difference does it make?

-SQ4T-4S that as the default opt4OfI-of~an educated-society I get a lot of good-press, actually.— I get the notoriety of those who consume me, screw up big-time and beat the system. I get unparalleled publicity as the proud sponsor of the Super Bowl and the World Series. And most of all I get the privilege of being secretly offered to minors. I'm so right for them!

HERE I AM the poster-boy of pop-culture, the icon of smart advertising and the hero of every musical genre from blues to Reggie to country-western to rock. Yet in some strange way, I guess I really don't get it. I get blamed for a lot of stuff that is truly no fault of my own.

I'M COOL in the can alright, but you still blamed me because the coach kicked you off the football team. I mean, how lame is that? You're the consumer; I'm merely your beverage of choice. And DUI's? I can't even ride in the car with you anymore, and you can't even afford to have your breath or blood level checked for fear of too much of me!

SO YOUR WIFE is suing you for divorce because of spouse abuse - and blaming you-know-who! What's this world coming to?

Whatever happened to the good old days of white lightning, Muskogee and Merle Haggard? And why am I these days being called a gateway drug to cocaine and methamphetamine?

TAKE IT from a drink like me - being an alcoholic beverage is a party that never really happens. O, for the moment I do offer my highs, my bubbly fizz, my mysterious buzz. I sparkle in the glass. I go down smoothly. I warm the gut. But in the end what doesn't get thrown up in the toilet gets saved up for the liver.

AND THE ODDS are that if we become good-enough friends I will betray you. I will slur your speech and make you look like a fool. I will dull your brain and play havoc with your reaction time.

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"Into your hands " Luke 23:46

Sr. Pauletta Overbeck, Springfield, Illinois

Meditation given at the ACAP Annual Meeting, Springfield, Illinois

In silence let us realize with praise and gratitude that

we ARE in the presence of God. We are the recipients of the WISDOM, KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE, EXPERIMENTATION PSYCHOLOGY, THEOLOGY, SPIRITUALITY, OF THE PAST

YOUR OWN EXPERTISE.

WHAT ARE YOU CALLED TO PASS ON?

HEAR GOD SAY, "INTO YOUR HANDS.

I HAVE NO HANDS BUT YOURS."

We want to hide - resist - incapable - unworthy

But....YOU HAVE SPECIAL GIFTS no one else has.

Once tiny baby hands: taught to patty-cake, wave good-bye, fold in prayer

Then: hold your own bottle, dress yourself

GREW: Taught to **CARE AND SHARE.**

Adolescent; want to experience, experiment, challenge, celebrate:

Bottle in one hand - play cards - pull in money - JOY -Drink to success - "One more for the road" Drive - Crash! Desperate

YOURS - ACT and/or REACT

Hand to hold back - pat on back to encourage - or even just a "high five"

Elderly hands - hurting hands - lonely hands - They take the pill

Go for company - *Hold hand - smile- embrace* The greatest gift we have is "Presence"

YOU? YOU READ THE PAPER/ HEAR THE NEWS Write

to the Editor, call legislators, drive to a rally, vote, pray:

Sometimes all we can do is:

HOLD THE TENSION and say: "Into Your hands!"

Feel God smile: "Let every sunrise be a Pentecostal thrust which says,

GO, DO, BE, I AM WITH YOU. I have no hands but yours."



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CESAR FAX

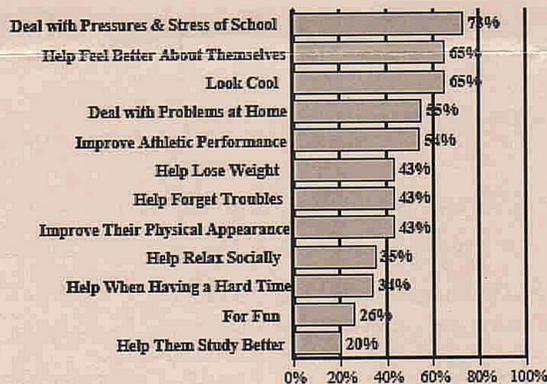
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A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research
University of Maryland, College Park

Coping with School Stress is Number One Reason Given by Teens for Teen Drug Use

Nearly three-fourths (73%) of teens in grades 7 to 12 believe that “kids use drugs to deal with the pressures and stress of school,” according data from the 20th annual Partnership Attitude Tracking Study (PATS). Other reasons cited by more than half of teens surveyed were to help them feel better about themselves (65%), to look cool (65%), to deal with problems at home (55%), and to improve athletic performance (54%). The least cited reasons for teen drug use were to have fun (26%) and to help study better (20%). *Editors note: It is possible that the reasons given would have been different if the survey question had specified the types of drugs being asked about. Previous surveys of high school and college students have found that motivations vary greatly by type of drug. For example, one survey found that the most common motive for use of prescription stimulants by college students was to increase concentration (see CESAR FAX, Volume 15, Issue 13).*

Youths’ Perceived Reasons Why Youths Use Drugs, 2007
(N= 6,511 youths in Grades 7 to 12)



NOTES: The survey was conducted by The Roper Public Affairs Division of GfK Custom Research North America, for the Partnership for a Drug-Free America. The 2007 PATS survey was conducted in schools and in homes with a nationally projectionable sample of 6,511 adolescents in grades 7 through 12. The margin of error is +/- 1.6%.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Partnership for a Drug-Free America, *The Partnership Attitude Tracking Study (PATS): Teen s 2007 Report*, August 2008. Available online at http://www.drugfree.org/Files/2007_Teen_Survey.

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(Take it from a Drink Like Me continued from page 2)

I will drain your conscience of reason and make you do things you'd never consider in sobriety.

I WILL appear to you as the most handsome devil in blue jeans you ever saw. And you will meet me, in a perfect stranger, for a one-night-stand in the next motel you see. And in the morning you will find a note on the pillow next to yours which will read, "Thanks for the night on the town. You are Number 82. The world of AIDS is now yours."

STILL, THE \$5.79 six-pack is the best bargain at Wal-mart.

But the loss of your virginity and dignity and self-worth is the immeasurable price you will pay for me.

It's true: you only have to pay for me twice:

once when you pay the cashier, and once again when I settle up with you.

I SPEAK as a prophet from the bottle

because some are unable to hear the prophets from the Bible.

Tragically, dearly, I am a lesson, a sermon from the bottle - the only sermon some will ever drink.

Would to God those who drink me might drink from His Word instead.

FOR AS the ancient Solomon wrote in his Proverbs:

"Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife and complaints?

Who has needless bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes?

Those who linger over wine, who go to sample bowls of mixed wine."

"DO NOT gaze at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly!

In the end it bites like a snake and poisons like a viper.

Your eyes will see strange sights and your mind imagine confusing things.

You will say, When will I wake up so I can find another drink?"

AND AS THE prophet Isaiah wrote,

'Woe to those who rise early in the morning, to run after their drinks, who stay up late at night till they are inflamed with wine.

Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine and champions at mixing drinks, who acquit the guilty for a bribe, but deny justice to the innocent.'

NO, THIS is not an appeal from me as a popular beverage to be let off the hook. I *myself* am culpable. I *alone* can create a whirlwind of misery and sorrow. But it is an appeal to reason: I am guilty exclusively through abuse and misuse. I have earned a reputation as a beverage that consumes those who consume me.

BREWERIES make me to make money and people drink me because they have money, so I exist at the will of one for the saturation of the other.

I, therefore, am cheaply reduced as a pawn, and I am objectified as a tool of economics. I have no integral worth. I offer no added value. Odd as it sounds, I bring nothing to the table.

IF THE DRUNKARD is the finished product of the brewer's art

- all laughable appeals to "drink responsibly" aside-

and if the law is the means by which I am made legally available,

then I am a sad footnote to a time in history when the means embarrassingly justifies the end.

SO TAKE IT from a drink like me - you only *think* you can afford to consume me!

I once was the scapegoat of prohibition only to become the paragon of moderation.

But alas: moderation is the seductive charm to which my popularity is anchored, because my worst enemy - and your best friend - is the nearly lost relic of abstinence.

**American Council on Alcohol Problems
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PURPOSE: American Council on Alcohol Problems is the channel of cooperation through which state temperance organizations, national religious bodies and similar concerned groups and individuals in America can unite to deal with the problems caused by alcohol and other drugs.

ACAP provides the forum and the mechanism through which concerned persons can find common ground on alcohol and other drug problems and address these issues with a united voice. It is the successor organization to the American Temperance League and the Anti-Saloon League established in 1895. Membership of ACAP presently is made up of 30 local temperance organizations, 22 national Christian denominations, and other fraternal organizations that support ACAP's philosophy of abstinence.

(ACAP is classified by the IRS as a 501 (c)(3) tax-deductible charity.)

Checks should be made payable to:

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Join Together Online

MillerCoors Puts Sparks Red on Hold

September 22, 2008

News Summary

MillerCoors will delay the launch of its Sparks Red caffeinated alcohol drink after 25 state Attorneys General asked the company to ditch the product, the Chicago Tribune reported Sept. 20. Sparks Red contains 8 percent alcohol, higher than the existing versions of Sparks and significantly more than most beer, which ranges from 4 to 5 percent. The company said it was "placing the brewing and distribution of the product on hold" to engage in talks with the states.

"This decision keeps this dangerous product off our shelves and out of the hands of young consumers whose health would have been placed at risk," said New York Attorney General Andrew Cuomo.

In a Sept. 17 letter to MillerCoors, the Attorneys General cited research indicating that combining stimulants such as caffeine with alcohol reduces the perception of intoxication, and also expressed concerns that such products are marketed to underage youth.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) filed a lawsuit last month seeking to block MillerCoors from selling the Sparks line of alcoholic energy drinks. Previously, Anheuser-Busch announced that it would stop including stimulants in its Bud Extra and Tilt products.

George Hacker, director of CSPI's Alcohol Policies Project told Join Together that MillerCoors' decision to delay the rollout of Sparks Red was a step in the right direction. "It's refreshing to see that another major brewer has begun to demonstrate some caution before throwing a new alcoholic-energy drink on the market," said Hacker. "Now we suggest, as we have with our lawsuit, that the company seriously consider dumping the whole category."

Alcoholic energy drinks have been increasingly popular with breweries as sales of traditional beer continue to decline. Nevertheless, Sparks is a small fraction - about one percent - of Miller's annual production in the United States, according to the editor of the trade magazine Beer Marketer's Insights.