

GOLF 20/20 Strikes Urgent Note

Forum featured theme, “The Time is Now” and included sessions on Get Golf Ready and the need to expand the women’s market

With a sense of urgency to affect change in the game, some 150 industry leaders gathered on May 10 in St. Augustine, Fla., for the GOLF 20/20 Forum 2011.



Launched in the year 2000, GOLF 20/20 brings together all segments of the golf industry – from allied associations, to manufacturers, to golf media. The intent of GOLF 20/20 is to galvanize the industry around strategic initiatives and grassroots activation to ensure the future vitality of the game, with the one-day Forum serving as the venue for leaders to report results and next steps on several ongoing initiatives. The 2011 Forum featured the theme of “The Time is Now” and included sessions on player development (Get Golf Ready) and the need to further grow the women and minority market as well as foster new approaches to increase current participation.

As PGA President Allen Wronowski notes in his monthly “From the President” message on page 10, PGA leaders were very much front and center in facilitating the presentations and discussions in St. Augustine. PGA Vice President Ted Bishop provided his unabashed support for Get Golf Ready and PGA Chief Executive Officer Joe Steranka updated attendees on the progress being made with the development of the new strategic plan for the industry, Golf 2.0.

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—PGA CEO Joe Steranka

“We have to work much harder and much faster in our jobs to grow our game today,” said Steranka. “We have to have a different mindset at work. We’re not done with this plan (for Golf 2.0) yet but we know we must look at how we can get the five out of six households that don’t have a golfer, to be interested in our game.

“We’re not seeing golf rank as high on the fun scale as we think it should. Golf is fun, and we need to make it more welcoming to beginners. We know when we get people hooked on golf, that fun comes

along with it.”

Steranka was on a panel with Dr. Joe Beditz, president and chief executive officer of the National Golf Foundation (NGF). Each January, Beditz explained, the NGF surveys 40,000 Americans about the amount of golf played in the United States. Citing the lingering effects of the recession, Beditz reported that the number of participants in the U.S. in 2010 fell by 1 million from the year before, to approximately 26.1 million golfers. Total rounds played per year, according to the NGF, are down by 5 percent since 2005. Conversely, the average number of 18-hole rounds of golf played per year rose from 16.8 in 2006 to 18.2 last year.

Beditz estimated that the total number of golf facilities will decrease from 16,000 today to as low as 15,000 over the next decade. “There is no denying that there has been a significant drop in the number of golfers, and that has been mainly economic-driven,” he explained. “The long-term view remains modestly favorable because of population growth, latent demand and the effect of baby boomers retiring.”

PGA District Director Suzy Whaley appeared on a panel that discussed ways to get more women and minorities engaged in the game.

“My job is to grow the game,” Whaley began. “PGA Professionals need to inspire and influence women to come to their course. We have to look at golf differently for women – more from an emotional perspective. The attraction to golf for women is to be with their friends and family, and enjoy the camaraderie.”

PGA member Cathy Harbin, the executive director of GOLF 20/20, said that the total spend of each new golfer who has gone through the Get Golf Ready program nationally is \$808 and that has equaled an additional \$19.9 million in industry revenue over the last two years. Bishop, for one, cannot say enough about the benefits of Get Golf Ready, especially at his 27-hole semi-private facility, The Legends Golf Club in Franklin, Ind.

Priced starting at \$99, Get Golf Ready is designed to teach golf in five lessons so that students will know how to step onto a golf course and play with confidence.

“There is no other subject that I would rather talk about than Get Golf Ready,” Bishop said. “It’s affordable. It promotes fun and it’s a perfect opportunity to break down some of the barriers to playing our game.”

In his closing remarks, Mike Hughes, chief executive officer of the National Golf Course Owners and current chair of the GOLF 20/20 Executive Committee, echoed the sense of immediacy that permeated the GOLF 20/20 Forum.

“There is an opportunity for everyone in the industry to contribute,” Hughes said. “We have to have that sense of urgency. When we look in the mirror, we have to know that the person is key to ensuring the future vitality of the game and to grow golf.” ■

ALL SHAPES AND SIZES

The sizes and designs of wine bottles have changed dramatically over the years



Master winemaker Chris Cameron has been crafting wines for decades. We've asked him to help explain some of the finer points of the art of winemaking to help you and your customers better understand and enjoy wine of all types. This month's question: **Why are wine bottles shaped the way they are?**



Chris Cameron: The evolution of the wine bottle was brought about more by practicality than any aesthetic reason. Wine was originally stored and transported in "wineskins," which were simply made from a goatskin and shaped for ease of carrying. Some civilizations also utilized pottery urns for storage due to their resilience and neutral effect on the wine.

The Syrians were credited with inventing the glass vessel in 1500 B.C. A strand of molten glass was wrapped around a core of sand and when the glass cooled, the sand was removed.

In 300 B.C., the Syrians began producing glass-blown bottles, which led to more consistency in sizing. These led to a "standard" size of between 700 and 800 milliliters. Some time later, the Romans sold wine in glass but it was measured and then poured into the bottles due to the variation in volume. The basic shape was balloon-like.

In 1400 A.D., Italy became the world leader in glass production. The bottles produced were quite fragile, particularly given the Italians' flair for different sizes and colors. At this point the bottles lost their balloon shape and developed longer, straighter sides for ease of storage.

In an effort to conserve the English forests, King James I proclaimed that all glassmakers cease using wood in their furnaces. This led to the use of coal fires, which produce a much hotter flame. In 1635, Sir Kenelm Digby used a blower to further increase the heat of the furnace. The result was bottles being thicker and much stronger, as well as the introduction of darker colors. This also allowed for

better consistency in the neck size, and led to the common use of corks for sealing.

By 1790, the bottle shape had been finalized and consisted of an even cylinder which could be stored on its side to keep the cork moist, a practice still required today. If the cork dries out it will tend to shrink and lose its sealing ability. The mid-1800s saw the production of glass bottles using a mold, but a consistent size was yet to be agreed upon. Most wine bottles ranged from 700–800 milliliters.

Interestingly, The United States created the "standard size" wine bottle in 1979. The U.S. required all bottles to be 750 milliliters, and European countries agreed to standardize their wine bottles to assist in export sales.

Today, there are many variations of bottle shapes. Some, like Burgundy and Pinot Noir, for example, all use a similar style. But no matter the size or shape, wine vessels have come a long way from the days of goat skin.

For more information on Ben Hogan Wines and how you can serve and sell them at your facility, log on to benhoganwine.com

