

March 20, 2024

St. Pat's Draft Volume Fizzles, Down 20% vs. Prior Holiday Weekend

BeerBoard has some sobering news about the recent St. Patrick's Day holiday: Draft volume was down 20% for the recent party weekend, compared to the St. Patrick's Day weekend (both measured as Thursday to Sunday) of the prior year.

Contributing factors included the fact that this year's holiday fell on a Sunday, vs. a Friday last year. Another biggie: The NCAA Basketball Tournament (and the corresponding on-prem lift) was already underway by the time of St. Pat's Day weekend 2023, but that was not so as of last weekend.

MARCH MALAISE. That NCAA factor may also be contributing to overall lower draft trends for the month. Draft volume month to date (3/1 through 3/17) is down 34% vs. the same period last year.

"We'll continue to monitor the rest of the month and see if the NCAA Tournament leads to a spike in draft volume," said BeerBoard.

STYLE TRENDS: LIGHT LAGER SHARE DOWN, BUT COORS LIGHT UP. As for style trends, "Light Lagers were surprisingly down -3.7% in share points at the taps for the holiday weekend," said the company. "Consumers were choosing a higher-priced, higher-margin product, leading to more revenue for the retailers: Lagers were +1.40%, Stouts/Porters grew +0.82% and Wheat/Hefeweizen saw a +0.60% lift."

However, "Coors Light saw the most growth year-over-year (same weekend) among top brands, climbing 2.17% on the weekend. Modelo Especial grew +1.01% and Guinness was +0.73%." And of course, per usual on the holiday, stouts punched above their weight for the occasion. Stouts, normally ranked no. 10 on the list of top beer styles year to date, were the no. 7 style for the holiday weekend "and realized a 101% increase in share."

Guinness was of course the top-poured stout, climbing to the no. 9 brand for the day (it's usually no. 14).

"It outperformed its year-to-date returns by 125% for the weekend, climbing to a 2.92% share (up from 1.30%)."