

March 20, 2025

BeerBoard Stats Show Another Dud of a St. Patrick's Day

After tracking a 20% decline in draft volume over St. Patrick's Day festivities last year, one would hope the St. Paddy's days numbers coming from BeerBoard this year would be much improved, but that ain't the case.

Draft volume tracked by BeerBoard again fell double-digits (-12.7%) in the latest holiday weekend (Friday-Monday, March 14-17) vs. the 2024 holiday weekend (Thursday-Sunday, March 14-17), which, of course, is not a favorable comp.

And considering this case of the Mondays holiday timing, there are more tough trends... Draft dollars, which have typically boasted better trends than volume as of late thanks to pricing, saw virtually no improvement vs. the corresponding volume trends from the weekend, at down 12.6%.

And packaged beer performance was, well, also down double digits during the weekend at -11.3%.

LONG TAIL TO BLAME? Poor draft performance over the weekend looks to be owed to the long tail, as most of the top styles (outside of IPA, down 5.9%) were flat to growing in volume: light lagers were flat; lagers grew 1.8%; Mexican lagers jumped 5.5%; and stouts/porters saw a 1% increase in rate of sale.

BBD understands that every style not listed above was down in volume, as everything seemed to funnel in the styles previously mentioned.

Turning to brand performance on draft, let's talk Guinness.

GUINNESS DOUBLES ITS SHARE OF POURS. Guinness, which ranked as the no. 13 most-poured brand heading into the holiday, saw that position elevate to no. 9 over the weekend, as its volume share more than doubled during the festivities, going from 1.44% YTD to 3.12% in the weekend. Then too, "bars poured an average of 122% more Guinness pints for these four days than the daily average for the 30 days before," according to BeerBoard.

BUT MICH ULTRA LOOKED TO BE THE WINNER OF THE WEEKEND. Yet while Guinness flowed more frequently over the weekend, Mich Ultra appears to have been the big winner from the holiday. The brand was the no. 1 poured brand nationally, with volume up 7.3%, and it was the no. 2 packaged brand, with volume up 5.8%.

Modelo Especial had a strong weekend as well, with draft volume up 6.8% and packaged volume up a whopping 42.6%.

Miller Lite, a top three style in both draft and package, saw mixed results with draft volume down 2.2%, but packaged volume up 3.8%.

And Coors Light saw declines in both draft (-3%) and package (-4.9%).

NA, CANNED COCKTAILS AND HARD SELTZER HAD A BIG WEEKEND. Other notes to point out: non-alc had a great weekend, ranking as no. 3 style in package, with packaged volume up 113.2%; as did RTD cocktails, no. 4 in package style, up 68.7%; and hard seltzer, no. 5 in package style, saw some lift too, up 7.5%.

HOW FESTIVE CITIES FARED. BeerBoard checked in on a trio of cities – New York City, Boston and Chicago – known for its St. Paddy’s Day festivities.

In NYC, draft volume was down nearly 12%, but Guinness had a big day in the Big Apple, ranking as the most poured brand in the city, with volume up a staggering 112.4%.

In Boston, Bud Light ranked as the top brand on draft, despite a near 20% decline, and overall draft volume was down 7.8%. Too many BORGS?

And finally, in Chicago, Miller Lite held the top spot on pours, and grew 4.2%, while overall draft was down 3.4%.