

TRANSFUSION

LINKS DRINKS' CANNED COCKTAIL IS A HOLE IN ONE

BY TEDDY DURGIN

Some of the best days are golf days. You're away from the demands of your business, your family, your day-to-day life, and it's just you and the ball . . . and maybe two or three of your buddies or colleagues. You shot a pretty decent round, you're feeling pretty good about yourself, and now you just want to relax at the clubhouse and have a drink. A beer is always good. So is a soft drink. But a lot of golfers will tell you that the best drink after 18 holes -- or at the turn -- is the Transfusion.

A mix of vodka, ginger ale, and grape juice, Transfusions are not only great to replenish the fluids, they're also good to share in social circles. Now, Links Drinks LLC has come up with a canned, ready-to-drink version.

THE DRINK

This gluten-free Transfusion features a six-times distilled vodka made with ginger ale and Concord grape juice. The company uses all-natural ingredients and no preservatives. And it is seven percent ABV.



Links Drinks owner Fred Evanko says the product was a hit right from the testing and tasting phase. He remarked, "The overwhelming response when people tasted it was 1) 'It's refreshing;' and 2) 'It's delicious and is not too sugary or sweet.' A fair amount of people also say it's 'dangerous.' [chuckling] It doesn't really feel like you're drinking a strong vodka drink, but it certainly has a kick at seven percent."

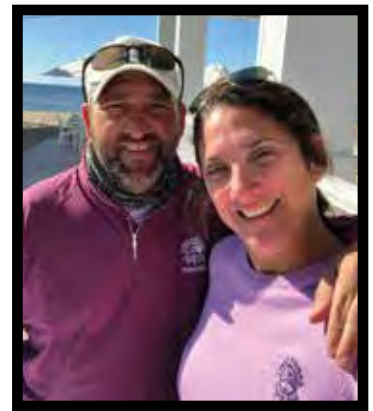
THE APPEAL

For sure, the product has a built-in audience in golfers. And Maryland certainly has its share of popular courses from Bulle Rock in Havre De Grace to the Links at Perry Cabin in St. Michaels to the Maryland National Golf Club in Middletown. "A lot of people know this cocktail and like it," Evanko stated. "We figured the response would be, 'Wow, there's a can version? Let's give it a try.' Golfers like to tell each other about things they purchased. Well, hopefully, they are telling each other about our product."

Evanko added that the product is selling well in packaged-goods stores near golf courses and at sports bars. In fact, Links Drinks found that about 60 percent of Transfusion's sales have been via off-premise. "There's more volume, more foot traffic," he reasoned. "Plus not all golf courses are open year round. When they are open, they have certain hours. You're probably only going to have a couple of drinks at most at the course. But you might buy in bulk at a store."

Evanko hopes the product will eventually mature into a lifestyle drink. After all, you can't be on the course all of the time. But with Transfusion in a can, you can pop the top in your living room, your kitchen, or on your back porch after a

Fred and Denise Evanko of Links Drinks LLC.



long day of work or family; close your eyes, sip; and feel you're about tee off on a Par 4.

THE PACKAGING

Links Drinks' Transfusion is sold in standard, 12-ounce cans in so-called "foursome packs." The can design practically shouts "TRANSFUSION." But it appeals to golfers with its subtle use of golf ball dimples as background art. The company's logo is featured also and has a subtle, almost hidden peace sign. "We lost our daughter to cancer," Evanko said, "and she was big into peace signs. The words 'Enjoy life' that are on the can also comes from that. We went through a lot and we came out the other side with a perspective that many people don't have. Life is too short. Enjoy it."

His wife, Denise, is the creative person on the Links Drinks team and came up with the company name. She is also credited with the dimpled design of the can and handles Links Drinks' website and social media.

THE FUTURE

Looking ahead, the Evankos are eyeing an expanded line of canned beverages for the golf course and beyond. "We want to continue growing the business," Fred concluded. "We're hopefully going to have two more flavors by the end of this year. Right now, we have the classic Transfusion. But we're also going to have the Front 9 Transfusion, which is vodka, ginger ale, and orange juice. It will be ideally suited for those early-morning tee times. And then the Back 9 Transfusion will be vodka, ginger ale, and cranberry juice. It's going to be more of a year-round cocktail. The game plan is variety!" ■



Ready to Drink

TRANSFUSION

cocktail in a can!

Vodka
Ginger Ale
Grape Juice

Grab it and go
No bartender needed
Perfect for golf course
Ideal for the outdoor patio
Bring to the beach & pool



6x
premium
distilled
vodka

7%
abv/vol

natural
ingredients



NO
preservatives

