

By **DON McINTOSH**
Associate Editor

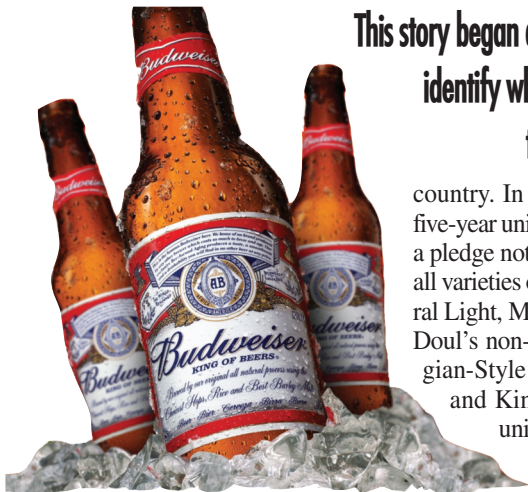
Beer is said to be the beverage of the American worker — an ice-cold reward for a hard day's work, steeped in heritage and pride for the place it was made. Half the beer in America sports images of a bald eagle, verbiage about tradition, or a red-white-and-blue label. But look past the marketing and you find an industry profoundly reshaped by corporate consolidation and globalization in the last three decades. Today, 10 of the 10 best-selling beer brands in the United States come from just two companies, both of which are foreign-owned.

This story began as a quest to find union-made beer. But it turns out it's not easy to identify what beer is made by union workers. There's no union label on beer today, and accurate, up-to-date information isn't easy to come by. To produce this guide, the Labor Press spent days poring through government databases and corporate annual reports, hounding union and corporate press officers, and cold-calling local union officers. Here's what we found: Two massive and mostly unionized companies, one big beer company that doesn't make any beer, several smaller unionized breweries, and a fast-growing and almost entirely nonunion craft brewery sector.

Anheuser-Busch

Everyone knows Anheuser-Busch was started in St. Louis, Missouri in 1876. But since 2008, it's been a

UNION BEER



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country. In April, they ratified a new five-year union contract, which contains a pledge not to close any breweries. So all varieties of Budweiser, Busch, Natural Light, Michelob, Rolling Rock, O'Doul's non-alcoholic, Shock Top Belgian-Style wheat ale, and Hurricane and King Cobra malt liquors are union-made. A company web page lists which brands are brewed at each brewery for which area of the country, so if you're drinking a Budweiser in Oregon, for example, you can tell that it was brewed in Fort Collins, Colorado or Fairfield, California.

Miller-Coors

The can says "since 1855, Milwaukee, WI" but today, Miller is one of over 150 brands in the world's second largest beer company, SABMiller, headquartered in London. In the United States, SABMiller

owns a 58 percent stake in a joint venture with Molson Coors (Canada's Molson and Denver's Coors having merged in 2005). The joint venture, Miller-Coors, functions as a single company, brewing, marketing, and distributing the brands of its two parent companies, totaling about 28 percent of the U.S. beer market. The six former Miller breweries are union. The two former Coors breweries are not.

At the Miller-Coors breweries in Irwindale, California; Fort Worth, Texas; and Eden, North Carolina, workers are represented by the Teamsters. In Trenton, Ohio, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, it's the United Auto Workers (UAW). And in Albany, Georgia, it's the International Association of Machinists.

Miller-Coors' largest facility is the flagship Coors brewery in Golden, Colorado. Workers there were union-represented for 44 years, but Coors famously busted the union after permanently replacing workers who

went on strike in 1977. That led to a 10-year boycott of Coors by the AFL-CIO, until Coors agreed to give union organizers a shot. But workers voted down the Teamsters in 1988. Today, five members of Operating Engineers Local 9 are the only union-represented workers among the brewery's 1,100 employees.

Meanwhile, Coors' newer Shenandoah brewery, which opened in 2007 in Elkton, Virginia, has never been union: Teamsters campaigned there in 2009 and again in 2012 and 2013, losing all three elections, the third of which was a rerun election ordered by the National Labor Relations Board after it found management's anti-union campaign broke labor law in multiple instances.

Since two of Miller-Coors' eight breweries are nonunion, it's not easy to know which products were union-made. John Drew, Milwaukee regional representative for the United Auto Workers, says UAW considers any Miller products to be union-made. That includes top-selling Miller Light and Miller High Life, but not Coors Light or Keystone Light, even though those are also brewed at the former Miller breweries. Teamsters take the opposite tack, listing Coors as union-made, even though the former Coors breweries are nonunion.

SABMiller does have an upper-Midwest regional subsidiary that's all-union: Leinenkugel's, brewed by Teamsters in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin.

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Collette Witting
Labor Industry Manager
949-553-4302

Armand Antonian
Sr. Relationship Manager
213-236-5046
Southern California, Southwest, Midwest

John Mendoza
Sr. Relationship Manager
415-705-7112
Northern California, Pacific Northwest, East Coast

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