

SAB's former US partner attacks it in its own backyard

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The US monster SABMiller created by acquiring Millers and then merging it with Molson Coors looks set to attack the former SAB in its home market in alliance with arch-enemy Heineken.



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Miller Genuine Draft, a brand SAB launched in SA in 2004 after acquiring the US's Miller Brewing Company, will now be sold in SA exclusively by Heineken, the MD of the brewer's South African operations, Ruud van den Eijnden, said on Monday.

Those who have followed the global beer wars will know the South African theatre turned particularly vicious after Heineken refused to allow SAB to continue selling its "green bottle" brand Amstel in retaliation for SAB entering South America.

The fighting escalated when Heineken proceeded to attack SAB in its backyard by building Sedibeng brewery in partnership with Diageo and Namibian Breweries.

SABMiller's divorce from MillerCoors so as to marry Anheuser-Busch InBev appears to have freed its former US partner to form new alliances.

Molson Coors International CE Stewart Glendinning said in Monday's press release: "We have welcomed the world famous Miller family of brands into our business globally and are therefore pleased to partner with Heineken SA, a key player in one of the world's largest beer markets by volume.

"The shared experience and skills of our respective organisations gives us confidence that this partnership will deliver on Molson Coors International's growth ambitions and our 'first choice for consumers and customers' agenda."

Heineken said in the press release: "We believe that the Miller Genuine Draft brand perfectly complements our existing brand portfolio and will help to grow our business in SA. We are determined to grow the brand and are convinced that we have the right experience and skills to deliver on this aspiration as part of our strategy to win. This agreement is an important milestone for our company and our relationship with Molson Coors International."

Source: BDpro

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