

HOT SPOT

By Art Snyder

As warm weather takes its breezy stand, thoughts of active skaters turn to quenching thirst. Thankfully, you're able to help. Beverage news is abundant, and it includes Muscle Milk®, Red Bull Editions, AQUAhydrate, Pepsi brands, Mountain Dew and Coca-Cola. For sweet nibbling, turn to the latest information about Little Debbie Oatmeal Crème Pies, Luna and other nutrition bars, and Nestlé Crunch Girl Scout Candy Bars. Details are below.

Muscle Milk®

Muscle Milk® is one of the largest sports nutrition companies in the United States, and the company this year has awarded \$250,000 in grants to help revitalize high school athletic programs across the country. This underscores the company's commitment to youth sports, and with a nationwide presence and advertising campaign, the company's efforts bode well for rinks. Muscle Milk® Ready-to-Drink bottled beverage is a protein-based functional beverage that aids energy, promotes recovery and generates overall lean-muscle growth. Muscle Milk® should be a good addition to your rink food-service lineup, and if you offer hockey activities, be doubly sure to stock and promote Muscle Milk®. Also look into retailing Muscle Milk® protein bars for all your skaters.

Red Bull

In distinctive new red, silver and blue cans, Red Bull Editions comprises the latest flavor varieties — cranberry, lime and blueberry — that are now part of the fabled Red Bull family of energy drinks. Red Bull Editions should be available nationwide this spring and summer. In taste and sales tests a few months ago, Red Bull Editions practically "flew off the shelves," according to marketing analysts, and that should indicate prospective demand for the

new Red Bull offerings. Talk to your supplier to get flashy new signage and promotional materials, and ask for introductory discounts and related incentives to fire up rink sales of Red Bull Editions.

thrilled to be part of it," said Wahlberg, according to a company media release. "We all strive to do the best we can for our bodies ... and AQUAhydrate helps me achieve the balance my body needs." Combs concurred, adding, "Partnering with AQUAhydrate and Mark is an incredible opportunity for me, and I am looking forward to making history in the process." As a top-rated electrolytic water for wellness and sports, AQUAhydrate should be nationally available before June, Wahlberg and Combs added. Ask your beverage supplier for all the marketing materials (including celebrity posters of Wahlberg and Combs), signage and promotions to help make AQUAhydrate a best-seller this year at your rink and to connect with your under-30 customers.

Little Debbie

From Chips Ahoy to Oreos, everyone has his or her favorite cookie. But if you want the dollars-and-cents

wagon. Get any pertinent signage from your beverage supplier, and as you play her music at your rink, consider drawings for Jepsen-licensed fare. Be sure to stock your redemption area, too, with Jepsen items that'll do well with young people.

MtnDew KickStart

Pepsi has enjoyed mountains of profits with its Mountain Dew franchise — now being termed MtnDew — and the company has just introduced its latest variety, MtnDew Kickstart. It's positioned as a caffeinated, carbonated beverage with added "flavored sparkling juice beverage from concentrate." In a small nod to health and good nutrition, this means MtnDew Kickstart is 5 percent orange juice and grape juice. The beverage also has a mix of sweeteners that lower the per-drink calorie count in half, to 80 calories. MtnDew Kickstart is available in two flavor varieties: Orange Citrus and Fruit Punch. If your rink sells a significant amount of MtnDew varieties, be sure to ramp up your beverage offerings with MtnDew Kickstart, and get all the signage and marketing materials you need to make the brand a continuing success on your premises.

Mountain Dew partners with Brantley Gilbert

Keeping its corporate eye on young America, Mountain Dew has gone with its Tennessee roots in signing the hot-and-rising country music star Brantley Gilbert for a series of promotional events. Brantley, whose No. 1 best-sellers include You Don't Know Her Like I Do, My Kinda Party and Country Must Be Country Wide, has toured with Eric Church and Toby Keith, and is headlining concert tours this year as he acts as a spokesman for Mountain Dew and its several MtnDew varieties. "I have been a fan of Mountain Dew for as long as I can remember," said Brantley. "I'm honored to be able to partner up with the Dew 'family' for some exciting projects this year." Consider a few Country Time sessions this year, and ask your beverage supplier to get your rink all the Brantley Gilbert promotional materials and discounts you need. Teen sessions and open skates, as well, might be ideal for a few Gilbert music hits and announcements of 2-for-1 MtnDew specials. It's time to get crankin' with Brantley Gilbert.

Nestlé Crunch Girl Scout Candy Bars

Voted one of the top new candies in the world of supermarket sales, Nestlé Crunch Girl Scout Candy Bars should be a great fit at rinks. Licensed by Girls Scouts USA, these new Nestlé Crunch varieties combine the formidable Nestlé Crunch franchise with three

Muscle Milk, Red Bull, Little Debbie, Carly Rae Jepsen in the news



Actor Mark Wahlberg promotes AQUAhydrate.

AQUAhydrate

The health-and-wellness movement continues to grow, and that spells opportunity for rink operators. Why? Entertainment biggies Sean Combs and actor-producer Mark Wahlberg have announced their joint venture to bring big-time marketing strength to AQUAhydrate. This fitness and wellness water brand brings Combs and Wahlberg together with business strategist John Cochran, the former president of Fiji Water. Altogether, they should bring a high profile to AQUAhydrate, and that should translate into consumer demand for the water at rinks carrying it. "This is a truly innovative company, and I'm

inside story, look to Little Debbie Oatmeal Crème Pies. Little Debbie is the top-selling cookie across the United States with consumers under age 21, who likely make up the bulk of your customer base. You owe it to your rink fans to have Little Debbie Oatmeal Crème Pies in stock all the time. Talk to your supplier about new signage and sales incentives to keep Little Debbie working to keep your profits bright.

Carly Rae Jepsen

All that fizz is for chart-topping recording artist Carly Rae Jepsen. Coca-Cola has teamed with Jepsen and the hit TV show American Idol to create the Coca-Cola Perfect Harmony songwriting program. Its purpose is to discover new talent, and in doing so, the winner will earn a chance to collaborate with singer-songwriter Jepsen. "I wrote or co-wrote nearly every song on my album, and the songwriting process is very important to me," said Jepsen. "I've collaborated on songs with people via e-mails, telephone calls and text-messages, but the Coca-Cola Perfect Harmony program takes it to another level because people across the country can join in on the fun. I can't wait to create a new song with my fans." With the huge visibility of American Idol, especially with the show's rink-friendly demographics, be sure to hop on the Jepsen-Coke band-