



# PGA<sup>TM</sup> MAGAZINE

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Five Dollars

# MAKING THE MOST OF UNCERTAIN TIMES

FOCUS ON SELF-  
IMPROVEMENT,  
STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS,  
EXHIBITING LEADERSHIP AND  
HELPING ONE ANOTHER



# 5 Questions



With Christopher Heyn, Chief Executive Officer of Southern Tide

By Lisa Goulian Twiste

Founded in 2006, Greenville, South Carolina-based Southern Tide is a resort-driven golf apparel brand that takes inspiration from the coastal lifestyle across the South. Distinguished by bright colors and classic designs — including the signature Skipjack Polo — the brand features men’s, women’s and boy’s apparel and accessories that work on the course or at “an impromptu summer cruise, a casual family barbecue, or an outdoor party any season.”

With more than three decades of experience building consumer brands, including time as President of Nautica Sportswear and CEO of Summit Golf Brands, Christopher Heyn was appointed CEO of Southern Tide in 2014. He explains why the brand is unique to the golf marketplace, how it continues to build on exclusive performance technologies, and how it is supporting customers and consumers in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.



## 1 How is Southern Tide different than a traditional golf brand?

**Christopher Heyn:** We are actually a traditional brand that develops the very best products we can for the active lifestyle. The resort/club/golf world is an important part of our consumer’s life.

When it comes to golf, it is our love of the game that motivates us, as we design and market merchandise for golfers that is “course tested” for many activities. Of course, we love golf and it’s a part of our core DNA, especially as our home is South Carolina, where the claim is “first in golf.”

We offer fun, energetic, colorful products through unique experiences and memorable

service. At the end of the day, we make clothing for people who live an active sportswear lifestyle.

## 2 What is your take on performance and performance trends?

**Heyn:** “Performance,” although so overused in today’s marketplace, is how we got started. Our first knit, the Skipjack Polo, and our Channel Marker short were built with purpose using cotton stretch. Performance now includes technical fibers that add another dimension.

Although we were one of the first to offer stretch cotton pique and twill cotton shorts, we have not rested there. Our customers love



the quality and the fact that they can wear our products across all facets of their lives. We, like most of our competitive set, offer pure performance apparel. It's important for us to hit the market standards with moisture wicking, UPF protection and stretch — but then improve upon that with shape retention in the collars and shoulders that ensure a lasting wear, no matter how many swings someone may take in it.

We have also differentiated ourselves with the addition of brrr° technology – fibers genuinely proven to keep you cooler – in several product categories throughout the collection.

### 3 What is your strategy to grow the Southern Tide brand with golf and resort customers?

**Heyn:** Our strategy remains to create and develop great solutions for the premium golf and resort properties that celebrate an active lifestyle. We are constantly growing and introducing new fabrics and product categories that provide a better experience for the golf and resort customer. For example, transitional layering is a very important category to us, as this piece has become a staple in the golfer's wardrobe rotation.

Our consumers and their families (we also have women's and boy's collections) love to travel, and all of our products are travel friendly. You can find them on the course or the court, by the pool and at the bar, so it's essential that our products suit the demands of that on-the-go lifestyle.



### 4 In what ways is Southern Tide a lifestyle brand that works on or off the course?

**Heyn:** Our styles, fits and fabrics are designed to fit right and look good. The customer experiences sustained comfort throughout all of life's adventures on, in or near the water; on or off the course; and coming and going from the clubhouse.

We like to say, "If it only works on the course or the court, it's not Southern Tide." With our commitment to craftsmanship and classic design, we develop products that our customer find functional across all facets of their lives. We make clothes to have fun in.

### 5 What are some of the actions Southern Tide is taking to deal with the impact of the coronavirus pandemic?

**Heyn:** It is having a dramatic effect on all business partners, and the golf and resort channel is definitely not immune to the effects of COVID-19. Where there is still play and rounds allowed, of course we are encouraged, as golf is one of the best activities outdoors right now to have some fun and camaraderie (at a safe distance) and let off some steam.

To stay engaged and help both our customers and consumers, we have rolled out two programs. Stronger Together is a revenue support program for our golf, resort and specialty partners, and our Healthcare Heroes program is a collection of T-shirts and caps where 100 percent of the profits go directly to the healthcare heroes on the front lines fighting this deadly virus. There is nothing that makes us feel better right now than helping those who are helping the victims! ■



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