

OTC Markets Group

CEO Mike Ballardie of Slinger Bag Inc. that trades on our OTCQB Venture Market under the ticker "SLBG." Slinger is a new sports brand focused on delivering innovative game improvement technologies and equipment across all categories with the vision to become a next-generation sports consumer products company. Slinger enhances the skill and enjoyment levels of players of all ages and abilities. Mike thanks so much for joining us today.

Mike Ballardie

Cecilia. Thanks for inviting me on the podcast looking forward to our chat.

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Absolutely so talk about your professional background in tennis and how you got involved with slinger as well as the origin of the mission and vision of the company.

Mike Ballardie

Well I've been involved in tennis on a personal level since probably about the age of 4 when I when I started playing and you know I became quite good at it became a you know a semi-professional tennis player a tennis teacher. And then eventually I got into the tennis industry in the in the mid 1980 s worked for Wilson Sporting goods in Europe for a long time progressed through the ranks of that company to lead the tennis division. Um, and then ah you know in 2003 I got an opportunity to join a group of colleagues who were acquiring the prince company through a management buyout. We took we know I was involved in that and eventually in 2012 became the CEO of ah of the prince tennis company. You know so having worked for Wilson and Prince two of the largest tennis companies in the industry. You know I gained obviously a lot of incredible experience as well as a wealth of contracts across the world within the tennis industry itself. Um in terms of how I got involved with slinger.

Actually I was like many of your listeners. But maybe I happened to see the kick starter campaign that slinger had put out onto the kick starter platform I looked at the video and my tennis. Instinct kicked in and I said to myself. Wow if this thing is as good as it looks and does what it says it could be a real revolution in the world of tennis and so within 24 hours I'd actually got hold of the founder Joe Calfer and then and 24 hours later him and I met and actually

you know, managed to get on court with the swinger bag. He he had a ah very rudimentary sample of the product and you know, but it showed me enough to make me believe that what I'd seen was actually you know going to actually you know be possible with the product from the video. Um, and then 48 hours after that I agreed to you know, take on the company and build it up from scratch. Basically, you know start from the beginning. Um, you know so it was ah it was a very fast introduction and that was at the beginning of 2019 ah, Joe who had in you know, come up with the idea of Slinger Bag actually he's an avid tennis player. One of these people that's lucky enough to be able to play tennis pretty much every day for a couple of hours and you know it came it came out of his frustration at trying.

Mike Ballardie

What we call traditional tennis ball machines which if any of your listeners are tennis players and members of tennis clubs country clubs or suchlike, they'll recognize that most places have a tennis ball machine but they tend to sit in the corner of the pro shop and very rarely get used. And if they do get used. It's a bit of a cumbersome process to get it out on the cord connected it up and figure out how to use it. So you know the idea of Slinger Bag was to was to you know make that a kind of an instantaneous activity and provide a twenty four seven hitting partner for regular tennis players that you know find it difficult. To find a playing partner. You know a lot of the time. Yeah, so that that's kind of a you know how in long and short of how I got involved and from that moment forward. It's been a you know a very fast. Ah, but you know, exciting ride with slinger bag.

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So yeah, elaborate on that tell us about slingers game improvement technologies and equipment for the global Tennis market.

Mike Ballardie

Well, firstly, the global tennis market is ah is a significant size market. It's 100000000 tennis players globally which is what the international tennis federation recognizes the tennis playing population. Of course. There's probably twice that many. People who are fans of tennis as well who may be encouraged to actually play one day themselves. Um, you know the concept of slinger is very simple. It's built on 3 platforms versatility meaning you know I

call it. It's a bit like a golf bag for tennis. So if you're a golfer you ah. You put all of the stuff you need for golf in your golf bag including your waterproofs your shoes your teas. Obviously your golf clubs the balls you know, even some snacks and other things go into your golf bag and you tend to keep your golf bag in the car and when you have an hour you go to the driving range and you hit some golf balls and slinger bag is essentially the same but for tennis. So. It's a bag which is versatile allows you to put all of your tennis gear rackets shoes, clothing snacks, drinks. Whatever it is into the bag itself. Ah, keep it in your car and when you have an hour you go play tennis and I can tell you having been involved in tennis for so many years that that's something that has never ever been available to the tennis player ever. And you know tennis is a game where unfortunately you do need 2 people to play. Um and typically you need 2 people to play who are of a similar standard otherwise neither of you would enjoy it and so the versatility of slinger is very important. The second platform is that of um affordability. So um. And you know typically a tennis ball machine those traditional ones I talked about in pro shops might cost anywhere. You know in excess of you know one hundred one thousand five hundred dollars or \$2000 or even up to \$10000 sling a bag. The basic product itself is you know, just under \$600 and the package that we sell called the grand slam pack is seven hundred and fifteen dollars which gives you all of the accessories that go with it and you know I think that's a revolution in itself and when we take slinger out on the court and demo it or show people in tennis. They're amazed. You know when we ask them, you know, okay would you be interested in buying one. You know. Ask what? the price is and when we tell them they're pretty much god smacked I would say that they can't believe that there is such a thing on the market at such a what they consider a reasonable price and to put it into context a good tennis racket these days will cost you 270 so or so dollars you know? so It's the price of ah you know, 2 or 3 tennis rackets at the end of the day for a regular tennis player which is very affordable. The third platform is transportability. So the whole idea of slinger is to make it super convenient to get from the car to the court. So it's built into a typical trolley bag that you might take on vacation with yourself.

Mike Ballardie

You know it weighs £33 Ah, it's got Trolley Handle wheels and you can lift it in and out of the smallest smart car and then just wheel it to the court and because it's run off a lithium battery. There're no cables to attach or anything like that. You just point you know and put it on the court. Ah, set it where you

want to use it from and switch it on and that's it So you know versatility affordability and transportability are really the core of its success.

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And so what is Slinger's competitive advantage in your targeted consumer group and do you do you work with any current or former professional tennis players for advice or consultation.

Mike Ballardie

Yeah, so I mentioned that there's 100000000 tennis players around the world. Well you know all of the tennis companies whether that's Wilson or prince that I work for or any those brands everybody focuses on the 20000000 of those players who are. You know like Joe our founder these are people who are playing tennis at least once a week if not more than that you know these are the people who spend 80% of all of the revenues on tennis equipment. You know whether that's joining you know, clubs or buying equipment itself or consuming you know tennis through visiting events or whatever it might be. So these are the core people who slinger is targeting with the slinger bag product. Um in terms of ah you know, professional tennis support as part of you know the rollout of slinger. Ah you know I was lucky enough through all of my context to get 12 of the top 20 players in the world men and women to actually you know, get hold of a slinger bag and use it for themselves. We're not using them as endorsees, but you know the fact that I know that you know that they're using it on a regular basis. You know, gave us great confidence in the in the in the performance of the product itself. In terms of our ambassador team. Yeah, so we started building out a team of of players who let's say are coming to the end of their careers who have more time to dedicate to a company like Slinger Bag and you know who are actually interested in you know furthering the growth of tennis through increased participation. So Tommy Hass who's the former you know number 2 men's player in the world and an Olympic ah champion or so or Silver Medalist I think he is and Tommy leads. He's our chief ambassador and he leads the team. The team also includes Mike and Bob Brian the famous Brian Bret brothers ah doubles duo ah we just announced today actually that we've added Darren kahill the former coach of Andrea Gassi and today he's the coach of Simona Hallopp you know one of the leading women players. He's joined our team. Um, you know we've got some other you know, well-known. And names like Nick Boletieri you know

he's probably the most famous tennis coach in the world Nick has coached 10 number one world number 1 tennis players and so he's a great advocate of the of the slinger bag you know for teaching tennis. Um. Because it allows the tennis coach to stand on the same side as the pupil and have balls fired from the other side of the court so he can better. You know, explain and understand some of the issues that he's trying to convey to his pupil.

Mike Ballardie

Yeah, so we you know so we're building out a very you know a very strong roster of players actually the other day we signed ah another famous doubles duo from the 1980 s called the Jensen Brothers Luke and Murphy Jensen so they're joining our team so you know they you know they bring also a wealth of experience both from the past but they're currently very active in tennis. And in different ways. So yeah, we're building out a nice and nice team across the globe.

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And excellent Mike so how did the covid 19 pandemic affect or transform your company and business strategy.

Mike Ballardie

And you know you know I'll say first of all that you know obviously the pandemic has been a terrible experience for everybody around the world and so no company or you know individuals within a company want to benefit from you know what's been. You know a very sad situation. But. You know, like many of the home fitness companies slinger has fallen into a category of where the product demand has increased dramatically you know as a result of covid so you know because sling a bag you know is something that you can use you know any place anywhere really. You know we've had you know we saw us a significant rise in interest a demand and sales. Ultimately, you know over the last year and a half certainly um and you know we you know if you follow us on our Instagram Page you'll see lots of videos of people using it in their backyards on their driveways. Ah, in the streets and in the tops of their apartment blocks all kind of weird and wonderful places during covid where you know slinger bag provided them an opportunity to actually maintain some form of tennis practice. Whatever that might have been and so I think people have been pretty ingenious and. Ah, you know in the way that they found to

use slinger bag and you know yes like ah like peloton or like other fitness companies in the market. You know we've seen ah a very you know positive surge in demand and sales you know throughout the covid period.

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So what is on the horizon for slinger and 2021 and 2022

Mike Ballardie

As we look forward so um you know um you know I think everybody in the United States all of your listeners will be aware that there's ah, there's a whole new game called pickaball which is ah, let's say another version of tennis played with ah with a paddle racket and a whiffle ball on a smaller court. And many of the tennis clubs and institutions are converting tennis courts into pickleball courts and I think today there are about 5000000 regular players of pickleball in the United States so we have been working over the last year on a version of the slinger bag which is going to you know work just fine for pickable. And we'll be launching that product before the end of 2021 likewise there's another version of tennis called paddle tennis which is played inside a glass court. Typically you play doubles again. It's played with a paddle racket and but with a normal tennis ball. And you know it's a hugely popular game outside the United States in places like Spain where paddle tennis is 3 times bigger than regular tennis and even people like raphael nadal and all of the top Spanish tennis players love playing paddle tennis. So. Ah, we've developed also a machine a slinger bag launcher for paddle tennis and you know that will launch also before the end of this year so you know we've been very busy behind the scenes as well as expanding our current production capacities to meet the demand of the slinger tennis bag. Um, as we go further forward in you know, 2022 and looking into 2023 we're already at the first prototype stage of developing a similar concept. You know transportable versatile affordable for baseball and for softball. And you know as we go through the development process over the next eighteen months you know we're very excited at the at the market opportunity that you know if we can bring something you know akin to what we have in tennis into baseball and softball. I think the you know that's another huge market opportunity for slinger bag to address.

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So Slinger began trading on the OTCQB Venture Market in 2020 tell us about your experience since you've joined the OTCQB Market.

Mike Ballardie

Yeah I think you know up listing to the to the OTCQB has been a very good experience for us overall and you know I think particularly the weekly information that you know that we get about our you know our trading activity. Ah, you know, allows us to do some deep dives and you know see what's going on behind the scenes I think Also you know, just you know, being on the OTCQB as ah as grown our you know daily ah volume of trades you know which is which is a nice thing I think they've gradually been increasing since we since we went up you know week over week. Um, yeah I you know I think you know just maybe we're appealing just to a wider audience of you know retail investors and of course you know that's so you know I think also on the capital raise Size. It's ah it's also attracted. Ah you know, ah you know a different level of potential investors. You know that that we've. Had access to talking to as well. So You know all in all our experiences has been. You know very positive.

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Well, it's been a pleasure talking with you. Mike.

Mike Ballardie

Thank you? So really? yeah, it's been great talking to you too? Um I should have mentioned also maybe that you know one of the things that we're doing later this year is we're launching a um, a tennis app which will be available all over the world both in Android and iPhone. Ah, for tennis players which is going to is driven by artificial intelligence and is going to allow tennis players of all levels and abilities a great scope of analytics. Some things that have never been seen before in tennis. So. You know that in itself is going to drive some recurring revenues for Slinger Bag which is also an exciting thing. So if you would like to find out more information about that and about Slinger Bag in general. Please you know, follow us on our social media Facebook or Instagram at Slinger Bag. Ah, or you know just check into our website at www.slingerbag.com and you know there'll be you know lots of new



Podcast

Slinger Bag Inc. Season 5 | Episode 28

information posted up there about you know what we're doing today and how you can get hold of a Slinger Bag yourself of course and what we're looking at doing throughout the rest of this year

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Slinger Bag trades under the symbol SLBG on our OTCQB Venture Market.

**This is an autogenerated transcript and may contain typos.*