

Spurs stop Cavs  
in NBA Finals,  
103-92



## OLD GUYS RULE

Company inspired by Southern California lifestyle  
for guys who don't let age slow them down

# SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS



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## Dressing their age



Thom Hill, above and below, is president of Old Guys Rule. Above, he is walking the beach trail to the Rincon.

STEVE MALONE / NEWS-PRESS PHOTOS

### Old Guys Rule brand targets, well, old guys

By BETHANY HOPKINS  
NEWS-PRESS STAFF WRITER

As the story goes, Don Craig came up with the slogan in honor of his father, Doug Craig, Doug, a well-known surfer and founder of the San Onofre Surfing Club in San Diego County, was in his 70s and still heading out with his friends to catch waves in the morning. So Don had some stickers made up for their vehicles that said "Old Guys Rule."

Three years ago, Don took his idea to Thom Hill, owner of the graphics and apparel design company Coastal Classics, to make it into a brand. The result: a Santa Barbara-based apparel company inspired by the Southern California lifestyle for guys who don't let age slow them down.

"There really wasn't anything out there for guys in their 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s that paid

tribute to them, and also poked a little fun at them," said Mr. Hill, president of Old Guys Rule. "It just continues to take off—I think it just strikes a nerve with a lot of guys out there today."

Doug has since passed away, but Don's idea lives on with the company. Don remains the inspiration behind the brand, but he has since licensed the name to Mr. Hill, who runs the company and handles all the day-to-day activities.

At age 39, the father of three, who also surfs, admitted he is not an "old guy" yet. But, then again, others who buy the Old Guys Rule products aren't just self-proclaimed old guys either. He estimates that 70 percent to 75 percent of customers are women.

"It's a huge gift item," said Mr. Hill, a UCSB alum.

Father's Day, which is Sunday, is great for business for the clothing and accessory line. In honor of dads, Old Guys Rule is even offering a poster on the privileges of Father's Day with any purchase of \$50 or

more.

"(Fathers are) notoriously hard to buy for. My dad is impossible to buy for. He has everything he needs—what do you buy somebody like that?"

Old Guys Rule has plenty of answers to that question. The line is dominated by T-shirts, with 111 different designs currently available at their online catalog at [www.oldguysrule.com](http://www.oldguysrule.com). In addition to surfing designs, there are logos that pay homage to passions such as fishing, boating, golf, vintage cars and motorcycles, barbecuing and beer. Other clothing options include tank tops,

long-sleeved shirts, polos, sweatshirts as well as hats, signs and decals. All products have the signature saying printed on them—and sometimes another funny saying to accompany it.

"We try to incorporate humor into the brand," Mr. Hill said. "One of our sayings that you'll see throughout the products we do



Please see GUYS on D6

# Style FASHION & TRENDS



STEVE MALONE / NEWS-PRESS

Thom Hill took Don Craig's idea of "Old Guys Rule" and made it into a brand that includes a men's clothing line of shirts, polos, sweatshirts and more.

## 'The older I get, the better I was'

### ■ GUYS

*Continued from Page D1*

is, "The older I get, the better I was."

One of the best-selling designs is an oval-shaped beer label accompanied by the phrase "Still crazy after all these beers." Other popular styles include a biker guy and a diamond design with a longboard in the center.

Since its inception, Old Guys Rule has gone from Don's small batches of T-shirts and decals to a company whose products are stocked internationally in places like Australia, Canada and parts of Europe. The company expanded and moved its headquarters to a bigger location in Ventura last year, where Mr. Hill now lives. He said Old Guys Rule has also seen its online presence grow.

"We've kind of developed a whole Old Guys Rule community

through our Web site and all our dealer networks and (formed) quite a fan base out there of people wearing the stuff."

On the Web site, users can upload photos of themselves or other "old guys" to be posted in the "gallery." Posts there on a recent day included Kenny Morgan giving a "surfing lesson" to his 19-month-old granddaughter, Steve Corrales posing in front of his mint-condition '57 Chevy, and Jerry Covington and Rusty Davis skydiving at the World Freefall Convention.

The brand is really about guys who have reached a sweet spot in life," Mr. Hill said. "They've got the wisdom of all their years of experience, but (are) still young enough and healthy enough to do things they've dreamed of doing.

"They have the resources and time to do the things they want."

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### A FEW STORES THAT CARRY 'OLD GUYS' PRODUCTS

#### The Beach House

10 State St.  
963-1281

#### Devil & The Deep Blue Sea

219-C Stearns Wharf  
962-0715

#### Santa Barbara Outfitters

1200 State St.  
564-1007

#### Surf Country

5668 Calle Real, Goleta  
683-4450

#### The Green and Yellow

##### Basket

911 State St.  
965-7722

#### Backdoor Board Shop

1693 Mission Drive No. 101,  
Solvang  
688-1005