

CLUB WORLD

Beer news...

• Sunderland's first outdoor beer festival will take place on July 3 at Ashbrooke Sports Club in West Lawn. Expect Morris dancers and a ceilidh night and, of course, plenty of beer and traditional summer games like Tug of War. The festival will be a weekend event. Over 30 beers have already been selected and the organiser is expecting between 500 and 1,000 visitors.

• Sales of cask ale were up 0.04 per cent last year (2009) in comparison to 2008. Total cask volumes are up one per cent among small brewers and turnover is up, on average, by 16 per cent, according to the *Cask Report*.

Cask ale generally is now more widely accepted by younger people, including women, and it is the only sector of the drinks market in growth. According to Roger Protz, writing in the *Independent*, small craft brewers are recording growth of between three and seven per cent a year, thanks to a rise in consumer interest in cask ales at a time when mainstream premium lager and keg ales are in serious decline. Protz argues that progressive beer duty, introduced by Gordon Brown in 2002 when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and a renewed interest in 'localism' are the two driving forces behind the new appeal of cask ale.

• Hartlepool-based Camerons Brewery has made it into the *Sunday Times* PriceWaterhouseCoopers Profit Track 100. Profit Track ranks companies according to compound annual growth in profits over a three-year period.

Beer and women

Women are becoming a key target for brewers and Molson Coors is in the process of launching a new beer designed specifically for the female market.

Molson Coor's Bittersweet Partnership, a company set up to spearhead the brewer's penetration of the female marketplace, has already conducted market research and determined that women like their beer in bottles,

not on draught, because of the reduced risk of having their drink spiked.

Reducing calorie content will be high on Molson's agenda too as weight-conscious women have traditionally steered clear of beer for this reason. Molson, which tried to launch a female-oriented beer last year (a green tea and dragon fruit-flavoured product closely aligned in taste terms with

alcopops) claims that this year the planned product will taste more like beer.

Brewing beer for women seems like a plan for the brewing industry, which is struggling in the on-trade. During the recent cask ale week (March 29 to April 5) a movement called Dea Latis was formed with the express purpose of bringing beer to women. Major brewers, such as Heineken UK,

Wells and Young and Greene King, as well as CAMRA, are supporting the group.

It is estimated that only 13 per cent of beer is consumed by women because of the drink's image (most women regard beer as a man's drink) and its calorific content. Taste has also been an influencing factor. More women drink beer in the USA and in Europe than here in the UK.

Kings Heath Cricket & Sports Club
Presents
0121-444-1913

Bringing you to Marrakech

Moroccan Street Party

SATURDAY 1st MAY

Music, Entertainment, Food Stalls
Create your menu from different street stalls
which will include:

*Soup, Olives & Appetizers,
Lamb Tagines,
Salads & Bread,
Chicken and Kebabs*

Book your place now
Table bookings can be made
Cartland Room 8pm

£14

Entertainment from Belly Dance Elements



Former King of Clubs and Catering Club of the Year, the Kings Heath Cricket & Sports Club in Kings Heath near Birmingham, is to run a Moroccan Evening on 1st May.

The evening will offer everything you might expect from a Moroccan street party including belly dancers and food stalls offering soup, olives, appetizers, lamb tagines, salads, bread, chicken and kebabs. *Club Mirror* says go along and see how it's done.

Bookings are being taken now and tickets cost £14. For further information, call the club on 0121-444 1913.

Budget blues

The recent budget, the last before the forthcoming general election, proved yet again to be very bad news for the drinks industry. The so-called 'duty escalator tax' on drinks has been extended and will continue until 2015 and the current position is that beer will go up by 2p per pint, wine by 10p and spirits by 36p per bottle.

The only good news was that the Government scrapped its planned 10 per cent tax increase on cider but claims it will be reinstated in June if Labour wins the election.

There were some predictably uncomplimentary responses from some of the major organisations behind the drinks industry. Brigid Simmons, CEO of the British Beer & Pub Association said that the budget

would jeopardise the green shoots of recovery in the pub sector while Gavin Hewitt, CEO of the Scotch Whisky Association called the duty escalator tax 'totally misguided'. For Jeremy Beadles of the Wine & Spirits Trade Association, 'tax rises will mean further job losses'.

Conservative party leader David Cameron called the proposed tax on cider a 'Wurzel' tax and would scrap it if they win the election. Speaking recently at Fuller's brewery in South West London, Cameron acknowledged the role of the supermarkets in binge drinking and said that heavy discounting should be banned. He said that he wanted a 'good and thriving pub trade' and that the Conservatives wanted to help the industry.

Prescott drops in

Former deputy prime minister John Prescott watched the recent televised political debate between the leaders of the Conservatives, Labour and Liberal-Democrat parties in a working men's club in Southampton.

Prescott dropped into the club in Swaythling during a tour of

Southern England and drank lime and soda.

Club secretary Mick Grassick, said the atmosphere in the packed club was great and Prescott made a speech after the debate and chatted to people. The club was so packed that some people had to sit on the floor.