

March 79

THE

LONDON DRINKER

10p

Produced by the London branches of the Campaign for Real Ale Ltd



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Welcome

Welcome to Issue Number One of LONDON DRINKER. This new magazine is produced by the London Branches of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. Despite this, we hope that the tone adopted by LONDON DRINKER is not totally one of obsession with Real Ale. We make no apologies for the fact that we have certain views about beer and the way it is brewed and served, but we are aware that the pubgoer has other issues that concern him. As LONDON DRINKER develops we hope that these issues will be covered in a way which informs, on occasion entertains, and always provokes the reader's thought.

You as a reader can help in this. Although this first issue has no Letters column - to have had one would have meant making them up and we want to be honest about these things - we certainly want to publish letters in our future issues. So if there is any aspect of pub life, of beer, or of drinking in general (We are aware that many people drink wines and spirits as well as beer and we don't want to leave them out) then drop a line to The Editor, LONDON DRINKER, c/o 6 Ashburton Road, Croydon, Surrey. Please enclose full name and address, although this will not be printed if you wish to remain anonymous.

Advertising

Advertising in LONDON DRINKER is not expensive, and should reach more and more drinkers and pubgoers with each successive issue.

For details of introductory rates (Display or Classified) write to Brian Sheridan, 6 Ashburton Road, Croydon, Surrey, or telephone during the day (Monday - Friday only) on (01) - 211 6698

LONDON DRINKER is published by the combined London Branches of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale Ltd. The opinions which are expressed in this publication are those of the individual contributors and are not necessarily the views of either the London Branches of CAMRA or of the Campaign for Real Ale Ltd

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Will they won't they?

The 'will they won't they' saga over the compulsory use of lined glasses continues. The Government's new Weights and Measures Bill proposes to outlaw brim measure glasses and to do away with the old principle that the head is part of a pint. Now it looks as if pressure from Guinness drinkers has put back plans for legislation on this point.

With its thick head, and a slow rate of separation of liquid from head, Guinness is not the sort of drink that would endear bar staff to filling lined glasses so that the liquid part reached the line. Indeed the Tory MP Michael Sheraby has predicted the emergence of a new industrial disease known as "Barmaid's Squint" - caused by constantly having to peer closely at pints of the dark Irish fluid to ensure that a legal pint has been drawn.

The whole thing may come as a rather confusing storm in a beer glass to drinkers in London. Down here there is less obsession than in the North with getting a thick head on a pint, and so the problem of short measure is less acute. If you get short measure in the South you can usually tell, and complain about it. In the North it's not so easy. That is why metered electric pumps are more common up North, as a pint can be put into a lined glass with a huge head on it with the drinker secure in the knowledge that his glass contains a pint and not 19 fluid ounces.

Have you seen the latest Whitbread Trophy TV commercial? It features a rugged Northern type waxing eloquent about the brew while his pint is being gratefully sipped by his mate.

Apart from mumbling on about the "nice tight head which the beer possesses (We can almost sense drinkers of Marlow or Faversham Trophy - both good cask ales - laughing themselves sick at that posturing) the poor actor at one point enjoins us to "look at that lovely body" Now we had always thought that body in a beer was something that you tasted and not a visual phenomenon. We look forward to the next Trophy advert telling us to "Listen to that wonderful bitterness" or perhaps to "Smell that wonderful condition."

Another pub guide came our way the other day. Published by Bass, and given away free in their pubs, it carried details of those of the company's pubs which provided good food, whether full meals, hot or cold snacks, etc.

Of the few pubs in London which we were able to try, the food was indeed of above the average standard. But we felt that the guide would have been better if it had also told readers about the beers on sale and the type of dispense used. Perhaps Bass will put this information in the second edition.

