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## Press Release

2 June 2017

### **Holy Grail of Ciders wins the blue riband of cider competitions in a great day for Dorset**

Lancombe Rising, a naturally sweet, bottle-matured, sparkling cider produced by Nick Poole of West Milton Cider in Dorset, is this year's Supreme Champion British Cider.

It came out on top to win the Fruiterers' Cup from an entry of over 500 ciders in the British Cider Championships, staged in the Orchards and Cider Pavilion at the Royal Bath and West Show.

An 'absolutely delighted' Nick Poole said that the award was the pinnacle of his 17 year career in cider-making near the village of Powerstock in West Dorset.

"Getting a naturally sweet, keeved cider like Lancombe Rising right is the Holy Grail of cider-making", he said. "We make it without the help of artificial sweeteners, or indeed anything artificial at all. It goes into the bottle young and sweet, at just the right time to produce the perfect sparkle. It takes years of practice to get the process right, and it is just brilliant that all of that time and effort has been recognised, in Britain's premier cider competition."

Lancombe Rising is very definitely a niche product, with only 4,000 bottles being produced each year. It is available in farm shops and, significantly, wine shops in West Dorset.

"We would like people to share a bottle of Lancombe like they would share a bottle of prosecco" says Nick Poole.

The Reserve Champion was another West Country Cider - Exmoor Dry, produced by Secret Orchard of Nettlecombe in West Somerset. This is one of the many new artisan cider businesses which have been springing up around the region, having been started by friends Joe Heley

and Todd Studley in 2013, using apples from the Nettlecombe estate and from many other small and previously underused orchards in West Somerset.

"We may be newcomers to cider-making, but we are very traditional in our approach, using wild yeasts and no sulphites and relying on blending to get our ciders just right" says Joe Heley. "We won a silver in our class in last year's British Cider Championships but to win the Reserve Supreme is beyond our wildest dreams."



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It was a great championship for Dorset ciders, with the Pewterers Cup for Champion British Farmhouse Cider also on its way to the county, having been won by a sweet cider produced by Dorset Nectar, of Waytown, near Bridport.

Dorset Nectar is a family business, run by Oliver and Penny Strong, with their sons Ryan and Dante. They use blends of organically grown traditional cider apple varieties from their own orchards to make their ciders, which are fermented naturally using wild yeasts.

"We are delighted and hugely surprised to have won the Farmhouse Championship" says Mrs Penny Strong. "Half the fun and mystery is in tasting your barrels and blending the ciders to get a taste which is very soft and mellow and redolent of peach and orange flavours."

The Champion British Organic Cider came from Carey Organics, of Whitethorn Farm, in the village of Carey near Hereford. Herefordshire also claimed the Lawrence Reilly Cup for the Champion British Perry, which was won by Woodredding Cider from Yatton near Ross-on-Wye, and the Champion Apple Juice, entered by David Roberts, who won the Vigo Trophy for a third successive year.

Champion Bottled Single Variety cider went to a medium sweet sparkling cider made from Dabinett apples by Harry's Cider, of Long Sutton near Langport in Somerset, which the judges described as 'unbelievably good'.

Cider orchards are not forgotten in the British Cider Championships, with the Bath and West silver medals in the best orchard section going to Jamie Pullen, from Tintinhull in Somerset for bush orchards, and Bill Meaden from Dorset for standard orchards.

Supreme champion in the inaugural Bath and West International Cider Competition was a complex, champagne-style cider produced in New York State by Ryan Burke's Angry Orchard business. Ryan himself was on hand to receive the Trophy from the Royal Bath and West's Honorary Cider-Master Lord Tom King.

Ends

Further information from Anthony Gibson 07831 677144 [anthony.gbsn@gmail.com](mailto:anthony.gbsn@gmail.com)



### **About the Royal Bath & West of England Society**

The Society was founded in 1777 in Bath by a group of philanthropists led by Edmund Rack. We are a registered charity organisation (Registered Charity Number 1039397). The Society was formed with the aims of encouraging agriculture, arts, manufacture and commerce.

Our charitable activities provide:

- Agriculture, veterinary, educational and art scholarships
- Technical events and Seminars
- Practical farming advice and conferences
- Countryside Education
- Diversification advice for farmers
- Education for children
- A market place for countryside products

As the Society approaches its 240<sup>th</sup> year it continues to deliver a wonderful mix of established traditional exhibits through to the latest energy technology and contemporary entertainment.

The entertainment and features around the 242-acre site ensure enjoyment for every member of the family and include attractions that are spectacular to watch, educational, inspirational, “hands on” or just plain fun.

For further information or media enquiries contact Jonathan Hall on 01749 822 210 or e-mail [jonathan.hall@bathandwest.co.uk](mailto:jonathan.hall@bathandwest.co.uk)