

## Cider Club Report

The cider making activities for 2021 are now complete – and this is a summary of what we managed during the year

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October saw the packaging of the Covid Cider. This was from the crushing of Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> 2020 made under rigorous Covid rules – which meant individuals had to book 1 hour slots and press on their own before sanitising and handing over to the next person. There were 200 litres to package which meant 20x10 litre boxes were filled in one day.

The 2021 crushing took place over a number of different sessions and sites. This was so we could demo at events which were emerging after the previous year's almost total lockdown of public events and also see if we could facilitate an early pressing as if it was found early apples crops wouldn't keep until December and led to a good degree of waste

A common theme from everyone participating was that crops were down this year due to a late frost in Spring (April?) causing large scale blossom fall.

So how did we do this year?

Sun 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct – Hutton Apple Day – From demo's to the public a 30 L container was filled as Community Cider

Sun 10<sup>th</sup> Oct – Early pressing at Mosser Gate meant the early dessert apples were able to be pressed and we managed to fill a 100L tank

Sun 5<sup>th</sup> Dec – Despite volumes of apples being down John & others managed to produce a fair few apples which after a long day produced, with everyone else's contributions, 2x30L + 2x100 L, of cider. For the record that was about 35L per hour. The cleaning time is a constant and always seems to take about an hour after that. It was good to do the juicing as a social event again and the pace of work was sustained by the usual Mosser Gate hospitality in the form of soup and cakes.

Mark has all the details of the yeast's used, PH levels, SG's etc. tucked away on a spreadsheet for later analysis. (Mark – do you want to record them as part of this report?)

So in total we now have 390L community cider fermenting away – nearly twice as much as last year.

In addition we do have a number of members who juice their own apples for private fermentation and juicing purposes. Amounts not recorded but this is all part of the cider group activity and welcomed.

## Alternate Location

It became clear during this year's pressings that the amount of cider produced in the last two years has been suppressed because of Covid and also unlucky frosts. It was generally agreed that with a number of orchards maturing, members contributing and things returning to normal then if we have a bumper harvest we're likely to exceed the capacity to deal with such a crop at Mosser Gate – especially as Mark would be enjoying bumper crops at the same time.

The matter was raised at the AGM and all members are asked to think about alternate, convenient locations we could use in order to reduce the burden on Mark's operation and allow Members to process their crop. Any suggestions to the Committee in the first instance.

The matter is urgent as the group thinking is that due to the biennial fruiting nature of cider apple tree's this could be one of those bumper years.

### NCOG Cider Award

We had an inaugural NCOG Cider Award competition at this year's AGM. The idea was to test the idea and the way it could work for the future. As it was the first year and we had no members entries, we trialled it on commercial ciders. We used a blind tasting method of judging. The summary results are shown below:-

Bottle	Entry	Total	Average*
8	High Mosser Gate Cider	49	3.8
5	Westons Cloudy Vintage	48	3.7
2	Strongbow Cloudy Apple Cider	40	3.1
3	Thatcher Vintage Pick Of The Year 2020	33	2.5
4	Thatchers Katy	31	2.4
1	Community Cider	20	1.5
6	Magners Original	19	1.5
7	Hawksridge Apple Cider	19	1.5

**TOTAL**

\*Highest average score achievable would be 10

The event seemed to work well and with a few minor refinements we hope to repeat the exercise next year. With the entries from Members only this time the competition likely to be more "competitive". If you want to enter then ask Mark for a special bottle so your entry will be truly anonymous. Seven bottles have been distributed already.