

## ON-TRADE NEWS ROUND-UP

**Last month's** daily newsletters brought the usual mix of on-trade celebration, innovation and consternation.

Punch Tavern's decision to bolster its entry-level wine range marked a competitive if disheartening reaction to the on-trade's continuing struggle. It remains to be seen whether consumers find real value in the extended array of sub-£4 a bottle choices, and whether this move helps counteract the group's slipping profits and gloomy forecast of ongoing decline in the pub sector.

Those consumers still heading out for a pint in their local may take heart from the launch of "The Perfect Pint" by Utopia Tableware. Created from a specially developed type of fully toughened glass, the sturdier design promises

to reduce the risk of injury if it does break.

On a more celebratory note, Yohann Jousselin, head sommelier of The Vineyard at Stockcross in Berkshire, was crowned Piper-Heidsieck UK Sommelier of the Year. It was third time lucky for the Frenchman, a finalist for the last two years, who pushed a strong duo from The Fat Duck into second and third position.

As summer makes its usual intermittent UK appearance, Rémy Martin is offering Londoners some alfresco glamour with sponsorship of a Cognac, Champagne and cigar terrace overlooking The Courtyard at 51 Buckingham Gate.

Meanwhile *the drinks business* was out and about, bringing you reviews of Feng Sushi and Chez Manny.

