



Press Release

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Meantime Founder Acclaimed 2008

'Brewer of the Year'



A surprised Alastair Hook stepped onto the podium at the Tower Bridge Hilton last night to accept the 'Brewer of the Year' award for 2008 at the Annual Awards Dinner of the British Guild of Beer Writers.

160 people (a record turnout to the brewing industry's premier event of the year) applauded as Alastair - founder and brewmaster of London's second largest brewing company, Greenwich based Meantime - accepted his trophy from Guild Chairman, Tim Hampson, who described the award as being for Alastair's vision, innovation and as recognition that was

'long overdue'.

Upon receiving the award Alastair said. "Naturally I am delighted to have my work recognised by the people we rely upon to get our message across to the drinking public. Britain's beer writers perform a crucial function for us and without them we wouldn't be here; after all the Guild was founded by my particular hero and mentor Michael Jackson, and I would like to dedicate this award to his memory."

Training at Heriot-Watt and at the world famous brewing school Weihenstephen in Munich, Alastair serves regularly as one of a small number of British judges at the World Beer Cup and Great American Beer Festival. This has meant that he has always brought a more

cosmopolitan and international perspective to the British brewing industry than his purely British trained peers.

Even Alastair's first brewery, the Packhorse, in Ashford Kent, which was set up in 1990 was unusual in being geared solely to the production of authentic lager beer. Subsequent breweries that he commissioned for others, including Freedom, Mash & Air and Mash were all very Continental in both the approach to brewery design and style of beers produced.

In 1999 Alastair felt he was finally in a position to fulfill his ambition to start his own brewery and the first bottle of Meantime beer was cracked open in April 2000. Since that time Meantime has carved out an enviable reputation as Britain's most ground breaking and innovative brewery. In 2004 it became the first British brewery to win any medals at the World Beer Cup. In 2005 it became the first British brewery to make a Fairtrade beer, with its acclaimed Coffee Porter, which went on to win a WBC gold in 2006. A further silver medal in 2008 made Meantime the only British brewery to have enjoyed unbroken WBC success since 2004, and in both 2007 and 2008 Meantime had no fewer than four beers in the 'World's 50 Best Beers' produced by the UK's premier brewing competition the International Beer Challenge.



Under Alastair's direction Meantime's mission has been unashamedly to challenge the way that both brewers and consumers view beer. To his end in 2005 Meantime became the only British brewery able to package beer into champagne bottles and produced both the broadest range of beers of any British brewery and a range packaged in a style that tore up the rule book as far as the presentation of beer was concerned. Meantime even worked to produce a bespoke 330ml 'mini-Krug' bottle which won a medal at the British glass industry's own design awards.

In 2009 the 'Brewer of the Year' will be busy planning the construction of Meantime's two new brewing facilities. At the end of the year Meantime will install a new research brewery in the original 1717 brewhouse at the Old Naval College part of the Greenwich World Heritage site, which will focus on experimental brews, researching and recreating historic beers and championing the provenance of beer from London; the city that was once the brewing capital of the world. In 2010 Meantime will build a brand new production brewery which will triple the capacity of the, now rather cramped, Penhall Road site. Alastair commented. "This award – demonstrating, as it does, the faith that people have in us - will certainly be of use in putting together the various packages we need to see these ambitious projects to completion."

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640 Words

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