

Germans' delight

You've heard of taking coal to Newcastle, well the Lass 'O'Gowrie has got Germans flocking to sup the British ale on sale in Manchester

YOU'VE HEARD the one about the British penchant for German lager. Well what about the German penchant for cask ale?

"They love cask beers here," says Gareth Kavanagh, licensee of the Lass 'O'Gowrie, Manchester, talking about the large German ex-pat community that throngs to his pub every week.

"I think it's because the beer is so natural and brewed locally to exacting standards. Much like lagers brewed to the German purity standard (Reinheitsgebot)."

What with entertaining the German customers with regular German Bundesliga football games, it seems that the 'Lass' caters for every taste. It also holds comedy nights, music nights, hosts art evenings – and even retro computer games nights.

A real following

"But it is cask ale that is its true champion selling point. It is one of our main attack dogs," says Gareth. "We are one of the few pubs in the city centre area that does cask ale, so it has started to get a real following. Cask beer is a great reason to come here."

"When we came into the pub it only had four out of the 10 pumps running. We soon got it back up to nine beers. We would have 10 different beers, but the Black Sheep is so phenomenally successful that we have two hand pumps for it."

Gareth has run the Lass with his business partner Patrick Smith for three years. Before that he worked as a consultant in the leisure industry. He spent his teens and early 20s working in pubs and hotels in his hometown of Llandudno, North Wales.

"I'd heard that the Lass, which was one of my locals, was going to be turned into a rock music pub and have all of the cask beer engines ripped out. So I was hugely relieved when that deal fell through and thought Patrick and I should go for the lease."

Good for Gareth and Patrick – and good for cask ale in Manchester too. ■



The exterior and interior of the Lass 'O'Gowrie

The six permanent ales

Greene King IPA
Greene King XX Mild
Hardy's & Hansons Kimberley Ale
Black Sheep
Lass Ale
Bombardier

Three rotationals

"We do huge number of different beers. We get a lot from local brewers, particularly the Little Valley brewery," says licensee Gareth Kavanagh.