



M^cHENRY HOHNEN

Margaret River, Western Australia

**A run down on what was good, bad and indifferent for 2011 vintage from winemaker
Ryan Walsh**

Our old friend and veteran mountain biker, Mike Gadd was back in the cellar again this year. He teamed up with Freya and Jock back in 2007 to help with a very similar warm vintage. He didn't take long to find his feet, even with a broken collar bone, which he had strapped up with his old school tie. 'I wasn't doing anything crazy' he told us. We later found out he was hitting table tops and jumping over his buddy in tandem.

An old acquaintance of Dave's from his days of study at Fresno landed us with Katie Bagicigulpi. A Sonoma local gal who's family is making some cracking wines under the name John Tyler. Katie was a breath of fresh air to us blokes, eager to learn and a great source of humour over the 8 week stint.

So with Mike on light duties and Katie in her knee cut denims we started picking Chardonnay on the 15th February. December and February both set records for high temperatures which continued for a longer than normal duration particularly over the Christmas break and caused tannin development to stall. These hot temperatures cause the vines to shut down making sugars creep, acids fall and tannins linger. It became a rush to pull whites in but a slow drawn out process for the reds whilst we waited the tannins to ripen. We finished with Petit Verdot on the 10th April.

Most wines were pressed relatively sweet bar some Cabernet which we held through to get some fantastic structural backbone for the Rolling Stone. Managing extraction with higher alcohols is always a challenge but we stood on the side of caution and had some lovely development so our patience to get them right on the vine paid off.

The Shiraz wines as a region five variety were stand outs this year. They have amazing colour and intensity and a depth of flavour and concentration that one can expect with plenty of sunshine. In the whites Marsanne is showing some great varietal intensity and Chardonnay is a regular stalemate with intensity of fruit and fresh lively acidity. Some strange acids were experienced all over the region with high pHs accompanying high total acids, particularly Chardonnay. To that end we went through 50/50 Malolactic Fermentation on our Chardonnays for the first time.

I'm looking to bottle everything earlier than usual as I find the wines can go flabby in the warmer years if they sit around in barrel for too long. They'll be drink-now wines and whilst alcohols are well managed you'll find softer acids and textural depth from some increased lees contact on all the reds.

For more information visit www.mchv.com.au

McHenry Hohnen wines are distributed in the United Kingdom by Louis Latour Agencies - www.louislatour.co.uk