

for many years Young's has for me been the quintessential London brewer overshadowing its chief competitor with quality ales. From the easy drinking bitter to the hoppy Ram Rod and the creamy magic that is the traditional Oatmeal Stout, the company has always maintained a smashing portfolio of ales and lagers. I did say lager; it's just that they don't appear to want to sell any of them in the tied pubs around Epsom.

On a recent trip to the nearest tied house I found Stella, Carling and Guinness on draft, and the bottled rice filled delight that is Budweiser. Only one of Young's bottled ales, Ram Rod, not a drop of the oatmeal stouts and no luxuriant Chocolate stout to finish my meal in style. I asked for the Special London Ale and the lady behind the bar didn't know what it was. In fact she didn't even know what a reel ale was. They didn't even have the hoppy St George's ale surely a must at this time with the world cup round the corner.

Do we want our Rising Sun to turn in to this? I don't think so. We want quality over quantity, diversity of choice in a smoke free environment. We like having beers that are brewed with care unlike the chemical filled lagers sold in the Young's house up the road. I know Young's do some fantastic examples of German beers, so why not sell them? Are the marketers mad? Young's please leave this pub alone; I will not touch any of your ales until this mess is sorted. And the order I was going to place with Majestic for 48 bottles of Special London ale? It's now cancelled.

Or should that be special Bedford ale, not yet, but it will be soon.

Martin Roberts