

# RECENT ARTICLES

## Newcastle Herald 28 January 2008



**Available:** Warners at the Bay

**Price:** \$3.80 single; \$17.99 six-pack

**Rating:** 



With Greg Ray

### Red Angus Pilsener (4.8%) William Bull Brewery, NSW

Now that wineries all over the country are making beer, must beer writers start talking about floral bouquets and sweaty saddles and pondering whether the hops came from the top or the bottom paddock?

I'll be in strife if they do: I doubt my vocabulary of smells and tastes will stretch far enough to do the trick.

For the time being I'll blunder along as best I can and thank the famous wine people at De Bortoli for keeping their Red Angus German-style pilsener nice and straightforward.

It's their first stab at a boutique beer, produced under the label of their William Bull Brewery down at Bilbul (get the pun?) in the Riverina.

About 10 years ago they tried to make a standard mass-market lager. It didn't work, and the brewery has only just come out of mothballs to ride the new premium product wave.

This attempt is already a lot more successful and, given the strength of this \$200 million-a-year company, the early success suggests bigger things to come.

"Pure grain-fed beer" the label says, which goes to show how much these

folk like their puns. "Five malted grains and three classic hops" is their boast and "a wild profusion of spicy and fruity aromas" is their promise.

From my sample I wouldn't have gone quite that far.

For mine, Red Angus is a clean, refreshing drink. My impression was of a beer that was not as heavy on the hops as a lot of other boutique pilseners on the market, but still tended to the sweetish.

Brewer Neal Cameron suggested the lighter-than-expected hop flavour might have been because the bottles I sampled came from a relatively old batch. Because De Bortoli filters their beer instead of pasteurising, there's a conscious trade-off happening between longevity and flavour.

Red Angus was lovely and light golden-clear in the glass, like a good German-style pilsener should be, but the head was fairly thin and short-lived.

The beer is very easy to drink: I could happily have drunk another one, but I had a review to write and needed to stay at least slightly focused.

This is a drop that would complement a barbecue on a hot day. I can picture myself sinking one while I watch somebody cook, then perhaps another one to accompany my medium-rare fillet steak. But maybe that's just the cow's head on the label influencing my thinking.

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# DE BORTOLI WINES