



FOUNDERS FIRST



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 12 August

KIS WIN GOLD AT TWO INTERNATIONAL SPIRIT COMPETITIONS PLACING THEM ON THE WORLD STAGE

Tucked away from the rest of the world, Kangaroo Island Spirits (KIS) has been cleaning up the biggest awards on both sides of the Atlantic.

KIS have received the highest accolades for their gins at both the 2020 International Wine & Spirit Competition (IWSC) and the International Spirits Competition (SIP Awards), and a number of other honours.

Last week in London, at The International Wine and Spirits Competition, the world's largest and most influential spirit awards, KIS had not one, but two gins receive 96 points. Both their Wild and O Gins were rated higher than any other Australian gin in the 'Oscars' of world spirit competitions.

This week, at the SIP Awards in California, KIS took out the Consumers' Choice Award 2020 and a Platinum Award for their Whisky Barrel Aged Gin. It was the only Australian gin to receive a Platinum at this year's event and with Wild Gin collecting Double Gold, Old Tom Gin scoring a Gold and O Gin picking up a Silver, KI Spirits were the highest awarded Australian distillery yet again.

KIS Founders and Brand Ambassadors, Jon & Sarah Lark, are thrilled about their achievements and are proud to represent Australia on an international scale.

"Both the competitions represent great recognition for the winners," Sarah said. "The IWSC has been operating for over 50 years and is really the 'Oscars' of spirit competitions and we really respect the results coming from the SIP Awards who unlike most competitions, have a strong consumer judging focus."

The IWSC sets the benchmark for international wine and spirit quality and along with the Wild Gin and O'Gin their Old Tom Gin was presented a Silver award, with the Koala 48 Gin and Whisky Barrel Aged Gin being awarded Bronze medals.

"I think the success of Australian Gins now showing is a lot to do with the maturing consumers," continued Jon Lark. "When we started in 2006, we had to explain what Craft Premium Gin was. Now, consumers are armed with a lot of knowledge about styles, brands and processes.

"These are the punters who buy the stuff based solely on what tastes great. So, to get the Consumers highest honour is pretty bloody good.

"It's been a tough year for KIS and everyone on Kangaroo Island. Earlier in the year, a huge amount of the island was badly affected by the fires, and Covid has added an extra burden on an island that lives off tourism, so these global awards are a nice boost."



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Pierre Gregor, Chairman of the Kangaroo Island Tourism Food Wine and Beverage Association, paid tribute to KIS' achievements. "From small seeds great things grow and so it is with KIS. KIS' international standing as a champion boutique Gin producer is a credit to them and is another example of the amazing products and experiences offered on Kangaroo Island. Yet another reason to visit, see, taste and experience Kangaroo Island. As members of the Island's Ambassador program the Lark's have a focus not only on quality product but also customer service and exceeding visitor expectations," Mr Gregor said.

Mark Haysman, CEO of newly listed Founders First was also thrilled about the results.

"These awards just confirm what we already knew; that Kangaroo Island Spirits represents the pinnacle of craft, not only in Australia, but the world. Jon and Sarah Lark and the KIS team are the embodiment of what craft is all about. They stay true to traditional processes and make spirits that capture a rare purity of flavours and place."

"The achievement marks a great leap for the recognition of Australian made gin on a global scale and the KIS team are determined to continually deliver great quality spirits and win the world's best awards," Mark concluded.

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ABOUT KIS

Kangaroo Island Distillery was founded by Jon and Sarah Lark in 2004. KIS, one of Australia's first gin distilleries established in Jon and Sarah's humble shed on Kangaroo Island. Since then they have built a reputation as one of Australia's best gin distillers with numerous awards. In 2019 they were named best contemporary gin at the International Wine and Spirits Competition in London. It was the first time an Australian Gin had won the award in its 50 year history. In March 2020 Founders First acquired KIS with Jon and Sarah Lark remaining at the helm of the business.

ABOUT FOUNDERS FIRST

Founders First (ASX:FFL) is an ASX listed company that leads the industry in supporting and growing independent craft brewery and distillery businesses, backing talented makers with a big vision. Their focus is on allowing founders to play to their strengths while the FF team of industry experts supports by covering any gaps constraining growth and profitability. Ultimately, Founders First backs founders to succeed... loves being part of the journey and collaborates to create a stronger craft community. foundersfirst.group/