

## Pinot Noir – AM 10/5

### The clone with a “split personality”

By Nick Hoskins

Selected by the Wädenswil Research Station in Switzerland, Pinot Noir clone AM 10/5 was first imported to New Zealand in the early 1960s by government viticulturist Frank Berrysmith. More recently, “Ten Bar Five” has been the source of some confusion, due to the two distinctly different selections found in this country’s vineyards.

In Martinborough, 10/5 is known as a vigorous and extremely upright clone with a narrow angle between the bunch and the stem – making the bunches relatively upright as well. In Central Otago, 10/5 is known as a moderately vigorous vine with a semi-prostrate habit and a wider angle where the bunch joins the cane. In Canterbury, where the imported material was first planted, both forms are known.

Following its release from quarantine in 1962, the 10/5 material was established at Lincoln University. Cuttings from these vines were sent to Robin Mundy at St Helena Estate. St Helena achieved notable success with this variety in the early 1980s, and interest in Pinot Noir spread rapidly. Much of the early material planted in Martinborough, for example, was sourced from St Helena. There was, however, a mixed population of 10/5 in the St Helena vineyard. Apparently, the material collected and sent on to Martinborough was taken from vines that had a vigorous, upright growth habit since they were easier to collect cuttings from.

It is uncertain which selection is the true 10/5 – the upright selection or the semi-prostrate. Georg Fromm (the fourth-generation Swiss winemaker who founded Fromm Winery in Marlborough) tells me that he has viewed 10/5 at Wädenswil in Switzerland. The Swiss 10/5, according to Fromm, is not upright and has a wide angle where the bunch joins the cane. Jean-Michel Boursiquot, the notable French ampelographer and former director of ENTAV-INRA®, observes that “the more upright clones are considered to produce inferior wines.”

Nonetheless, it was the upright selection of 10/5 in Martinborough that was responsible for a number of early award-winning Pinots from the area. In fact, some of the early wines were 100% AM 10/5 (upright selection). During my years as vineyard manager at Martinborough Vineyard, we made source blocks of the upright 10/5 available for distribution through the local vine improvement group.



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#### In the field

Both the upright and semi-prostrate 10/5 are medium to high vigour, with medium to large bunches. Yields can be irregular. The upright clone is easy to manage: it requires only two sets of foliage wires and fewer wire lifts than the semi-prostrate strain or other clones of Pinot Noir.

#### In the winery

Provided yields are controlled and canopy management is maintained, 10/5 can produce very good wine – as demonstrated by the sheer number of award-winning wines from Martinborough and Canterbury produced solely from this clone. Many of the current New Zealand Pinot Noir wines retain a percentage of 10/5 in the blend. While not known for its fruit flavours, 10/5 can add structural backbone and fine tannins to a wine. It must ripen fully: otherwise, it can impart undesirable green, herbal characteristics.

#### Biographical note:

*Company viticulturist for Riversun Nursery Ltd since 1998, Nick Hoskins was previously the vineyard manager for Martinborough Vineyard. Nick now resides in Wairarapa: in addition to his viticultural consultancy services, he also operates a vineyard management company.*