Newsletter

of the
Houston Homebrewer's Guild

April, 1983 Volume 1 Number 3

Next H H G Meeting!!!

The next H H G meeting will be held at DeFalco's on **April 21** (not April 17 as erroneously stated in the last newsletter). We will get underway about 7:30 PM. Some items to be discussed will be the homebrew bill in the Texas legislature, our upcoming pub crawl, submitting entries to the AHA competition as well as the serious activity of tasting and testing a few brews. Our theme beer will be amber beers (see the previous Newsletter for examples).

We will set the date of the First Annual H H G Pub Crawl at the April meeting. We will also try to determine the pubs that we want to crawl to. We need your input on these matters so that we can pick dates and pubs that are amenable to everyone.

May H H G Meeting

The May meeting of the Houston Homebrewer's Guild will be held at DeFalco's on May 19. We plan to have a preview of beers that are going to the AHA competition. This should be an interesting mix of beers brewed by our club members.

A H A Competition

The American Homebrewers' Association Conference and Competition will be held in Boulder, Colorado, May 31 through June 4. If you have read the latest Zymurgy you should be familiar with the instructions and rules for this year's homebrew competition. If you plan to enter any of your brews in the competition and have not read the rules you should get a copy of the April Zymurgy and read it as soon as possible. DeFalco's has volunteered to handle the packing and shipping of entries to Boulder. The shipment will be sent off on Greyhound on **May 17** so you **must** have your entries to DeFalco's before that date. The cost of shipment will be approximately $2.30 per entry (three bottles), in addition to the AHA fee of $5.00 per entry.

How to Contact Us

Those of you who want to contact us with suggestions, literary contributions, ideas, etc., may do so through the following addresses and phone numbers:

Scott Birdwell or Jan Andrews
DeFalco's Wine Cellars
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713-523-8154

and

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Up Your B B Q !

by Larry Bristol

The following test is designed to UP YOUR BBQ (Beer Brewing Quotient). We all want to become better brewers, and this test is designed to help you find those items upon which you should work to improve your brew. Would you believe it will even help you better understand your fellow homebrewer?

So relax, have a homebrew, take the test and UP YOUR BBQ! Answers and analyses will be provided in next month's Newsletter.

1. The best beer in the world is made
- (a) at MY house.
- (b) at YOUR house.
- (c) in St. Louis.
- (d) without preservatives.
- (e) to be served at 35-40F.

2. Hops are called "hops" because
- (a) that is their name.
- (b) the first successful cultivation was done by a one-legged man.
- (c) of the peculiar effect they have on heavy beer drinkers.
- (d) they look like rabbit food.
- (e) of the famous whiskey made from them.

3. Barley is
- (a) the first name of Mayberry's deputy.
- (b) a famous circus promoter.
- (c) an adverb meaning "not quite".
- (d) essential to the human diet.
- (e) as barley does.

4. The best thing to have with beer is
- (a) Mexican food.
- (b) a buxom young lassie.
- (c) two buxom young lassies.
- (d) a buxom young laddie.
- (e) a beer chaser.

5. The worst thing to have with beer is
- (a) a banana split.
- (b) a hangover.
- (c) two weeks of work due at 9:00 AM tomorrow.
- (d) creme de menthe.
- (e) the lack of a bottle opener.

6. The cleanest organism known to man is:
- (a) Mary Tyler Moore.
- (b) boring.
- (c) the cockroach.
- (d) a fish.
- (e) lager yeast.

7. The best use for "light" beer is
- (a) to wash your hair.
- (b) to wash your cat.
- (c) to wash your toilet.
- (d) to lower the specific gravity of distilled water.
- (e) to prevent aluminum cans from crushing under their own weight.

8. Mr. T is best known for
- (a) being the world's largest homebrewer.
- (b) being ET's father.
- (c) authoring the famous bartending guide.
- (d) his guest appearence on Sesame Street.
- (e) his contribution to the PGA.

9. The recipe for a "Depth Charge" is
- (a) equal parts gasoline and alcohol.
- (b) required training for all submariners.
- (c) enough to make a beer lover cry.
- (d) written on the Dead Sea Scrolls.

10. The only way to kill a beer infection is
- (a) a Mafia hit man.
- (b) a silver bullet.
- (c) a wooden stake through the heart.
- (d) phasers and photon torpedos.
- (e) Serutan.

11. A serious discussion of the techniques of beer making invariably leads
- (a) to a demonstration of the techniques of serious beer drinking.

(b) to a free-style dirty joke contest.
(c) innocent souls into paths of darkness.
(d) to plans for a subsequent serious discussion of the techniques of beer making.
(e) to all of the above.

12. **After tasting your homebrew, a friend comments, "This is almost as good as Michelob!" Your reaction is to**
(a) buy him a bottle of Michelob.
(b) break a bottle of Michelob over his head.
(c) stab him with a broken Michelob bottle.
(d) throw him into a vat at the Michelob brewery.
(e) do all of the above.

Answers in the May Newsletter

Single Stage Fermentation With a Touch of Glass

by Scott Birdwell

As many of you may have read in Zymurgy, Home Fermenter's Digest, or The Amateur Brewer, the latest rage on the West Coast is single stage fermentation, not in the familiar 7 1/2 gallon polyethylene tubs but rather in a five gallon glass secondary. I admit that when this procedure was first suggested I cringed. However, after a little research and experimentation, I can recommend that you give this method a try. It is the preferred method of Dr. Michael Lewis, of the Brewing Science Department at the University of California at Davis.

First, let us briefly examine the process. After the wort is boiled and cooled, it is placed in the carboy and topped up to within a few inches of the neck. After the temperature and specific gravity are recorded and yeast is added, a drilled bung is attached to the carboy with a four foot length of clear hosing (1/2" - 1" I.D.). The loose end of this hose is placed in a container of half-full of sterilizing solution. The idea is that as the wort begins to ferment vigorously, much of the foam and undesirable yeast cap is ejected into the container. This eliminates the need to skim the cap and prevents the decayed yeast, extraneous proteins and hop resins from settling back into the beer and imparting a bitter taste. One should change the sterilant in the container on a daily basis. After a few days, when the fermentation has slowed down, the tubing may be removed, the beer topped up with water and a regular fermentation lock attached to the carboy. From this point forward you may follow your normal procedures.

Now a few words about the advantages of this system versus traditional methods. Apart from the obvious elimination of the skimming step, it simplifies the fermentation process by eliminating racking. This exposes the brew to less air and fewer number of vessels and tools that could potentially contaminate the batch. Furthermore the possibility of a stuck fermentaion is lessened. Aesthetically, it is very pleasing to be able to watch the beer work from the very beginning (It sure beats watching Love Boat reruns on the TV). There are some claims that this "in vitro" fermentaion actually speeds the process up. I will leave this question up to you. You will simply have to see for yourself.

A word of caution: Under no circumstances can you allow the "muck" that is being ejected to block the exit tube. There would be no way for the CO2 to escape and you will have an explosion and/or beer geyser in your home brewery. For this reason it is very important that you strain the wort through a fine mesh filter bag before fermentation or allow the wort to settle out in another container for a half hour or so before syphoning it into the glass carboy. Leave about an inch or two of trub (wort settlings) in the bottom. Obviously, the larger the inside diameter of the exit tube, the less a problem this poses. A 1" I.D. tube is better for this homemade Burton Union System than a 5/16" I.D. tube (which is what I used).

For those of you who would like to read more about this system, I can recommend the Home Fermenter's Digest, July, 1982, issue (Volume III, Number 7), Fred Eckhardt's Talk to Your Beer March-April 1983 (Volume IX, Number 1) or contact Dr. Michael Lewis directly at the University of California at Davis, Department of Brewing Science. Have Fun.