



Volume 3, Number 2 February, 1985

REVIEW of the JANUARY MEETING

The January 17 meeting of the Foam Rangers featured the sampling of British Bitters and Pale Ales. So I am told, there even were a few present! The rest of the time was spent on sampling commercial beers along with the regular chaos.

Even among all this, it seems that a great deal of actual business was conducted, primarily in the planning for the forthcoming club competition. Surely you know by now (yes, and quit calling me "surely"), this competition will transpire this month. I hope you have your entries ready! Elsewhere within this (choke) periodical, you will find all the information you need about this fabulous event!

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PREVIEW of the FEBRUARY MEETING

The beer for the month for the February 21 meeting of the Foam Rangers will be "Sneak Previews of the Beers Entered into the Foam Rangers' Club Competition". This is an interesting category, since practically anything applies! Not only can you sample some of the better (and worse) beers that the Foam Rangers make, but you can get a clear insight as to whose beer is going to beat you in the competition! How could you ask for anything more?

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SNEAK PREVIEW of the MARCH MEETING

Time to clean out those brewing vats! The beer of the month for the March meeting (beware) of the Foam Rangers will be "Bock Beer". That's right! And after you have those vats cleaned out, be sure to add one goat, finely chopped or ground; I bet you did not know that a food processor was an essential brewing tool!

At any rate, "Bock Beer" it is. There are even a few commercial offerings which fall within this category, such as Shiner Bock (oh boy!), Paulaner, and Spaten Ur Bock. This is a fun category. Bring several home brewed bocks, and a couple of cases of commercial brews and join the festivities!

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CLUB COMPETITION

The Foam Rangers club home brew competition will be held on Sunday, February 24, 1985, at Munchies Cafe (Bissonet at Morningside) from 2:00 p.m. until it ends (approximately 6:00). The entry fee is \$1.00 (cheap). Ribbons will be awarded to the top entries in each category, along with a "Best of Show". The same categories available at the recent Dixie Cup regional competition are open, as follows:

- American Light Lager
- Continental Light Lager
- Continental Dark Lager
- Pale Ale
- Steam Beer
- Oktoberfest/Vienna
- Brown Ale
- Porter
- Dry Stout
- Sweet Stout
- Novelty Beer
- Strong Beer
- Ale Mead
- Wheat Beer

The first place beers in each category will be eligible for entry in the Sixth Annual Home Wine and Beer Trade Association National Home Brew Competition to occur in Houston on March 8 and 9 (more on this later).

This is the big event for the Foam Rangers! Time to bring out your wares, and let the rest of the club see what it is you have been hiding for all those months! As is usual, we need volunteers for judges, stewards, and "gophers"! There will be no more complaints about judging, pouring, poor organization, and so forth, since every one of you has the opportunity to volunteer to help make this the smoothest and most enjoyable event of all time!

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SUPER SNEAK PREVIEW

The theme beer for the April meeting of the Foam Rangers will be "Basement Black Bitter"! Surely you know how BBB is made (yes, and I really wish you would quit calling me "surely")!

Have you ever made a brew that defied placement into any known category? As a frequent "judge" in the various home brew competitions, I can assure you from personal experience that every brewer has encountered this phenomenon. It is a sad but true fact that many brews entered into competitions suffer from this effect!

Quite often, brews which are lovingly made with great care and the finest ingredients (which are absolutely delicious!) are entered into competitions and simply do not score very well. Other beers, which are clearly inferior in terms of taste, will out score these brews. On occasion, it even happens that the brews which eventually win the category are not really as good!

This phenomenon has nothing to do with poor judging; in fact, this is a result of judges correctly disregarding their personal preference in favor of accurately scoring the entries based upon the defined characteristics of the category of beer they are scoring. As you are aware, each category has a standard of quality against which the entries are judged. There is a desired color, a proper amount of malt flavor and aroma, a proper amount of hop flavor and aroma, and a proper balance between the malt and hop qualities. In addition, certain categories dictate the use of a particular type of malt and/or hops. For example, a brew without a roasted barely flavor is not a stout, no matter how many other stout qualities it may possess!

So what do you do with an otherwise excellent beer which does not fit within one of the published categories? Until now, you simply picked the closest category and took your chances. The "Basement Black Bitter" category is an attempt to provide a new category that characterizes the most typical home brew of this type, one which every brewer has made from time to time!

To be a real category, it must have defined characteristics, against which beers may be judged. Herein follows the definition of the "Basement Black Bitter":

- Style: Definitely an ale, without the subtleties of a well-aged lager.
- Body: Medium to full bodied.
- Color: Brown to "light" black.
- Grain flavor: Dark grain taste (characteristic of roasted barley, patent malt, or chocolate malt), but not so much as a stout or porter.
- Grain aroma: Undertone of dark grains.
- Hop flavor: Very well hopped, with a strong bitter flavor.
- Hop aroma: Pronounced hop aroma like that of Continental Lager.

One of the interesting aspects of "Basement Black Bitter" is that there is no commercial equivalent; if there is a commercial beer similar to yours, you do not have a BBB!

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NATIONAL COMPETITION

Here is an event to mark on your calendar! The Sixth Annual Home Wine and Beer Trade Association National Home Brew Competition will be held in Houston on Friday and Saturday, March 8-9, 1985. The event will be held at the Olde English Inn on the Southwest Freeway (the "castle" near Sharpstown Center, which has sported several different names over the last few years).

The Foam Rangers will hold a club competition on February 24 (discussed elsewhere in this issue). The purpose of this competition is to select the entries which will be sent into the national event. The winning entries from the fourteen categories at the club competition will be forwarded into the National competition, so it is time to get brewing! The categories available are as follows:

- American Light Lager
- Continental Light Lager
- Continental Dark Lager
- Pale Ale
- Steam Beer
- Oktoberfest/Vienna
- Brown Ale
- Porter
- Dry Stout
- Sweet Stout
- Novelty Beer
- Strong Beer
- Ale Mead
- Wheat Beer

We will need judges, stewards, and volunteers of all sorts, not only for the Foam Rangers' Club Competition, but for the National Competition as well. Please volunteer your time to help out in these important events.

The schedule of events for these two days is as follows:

Friday evening (3/8)...

7:00-11:00	First round judging
11:00-????	Party time!!!

Saturday (3/9)...

7:00- noon	Recouperation from party time
noon- 1:00	"Lite" lunch
1:00- 4:30	Second round (Best of Category) judging
4:30- 7:00	Open forum on home brewing/dinner
7:00- 9:00	Best of Show judging
9:00- ????	Son of Party Time!!!!

The Olde English Inn is providing a special room rate for participants in this competition. Standard rooms will be available at \$29.00 per night (single or double occupancy); rooms with built-in wet bars are available at \$39.00 per night (single or double). Be sure to inform the reservationist that you are a participant in this event in order to confirm these rates.

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NUTS and BOLTS

Scott informs me that the note on DeFalco's will be paid in full in March! He is planning a big time party to celebrate this event, and that the Foam Rangers are invited! Watch for details in a future issue of this "thing".

We have learned that a new home brew club was born on February 2, 1985 in a San Antonio hospital. We have no details as to its weight or the condition of the mother, but we offer our congratulations and best wishes to its success!

In a deranged moment, Bill Watts has promised to have a home brew party! Now that this fact has been published, there is no way he can get out of it! Watch for details in a future issue.

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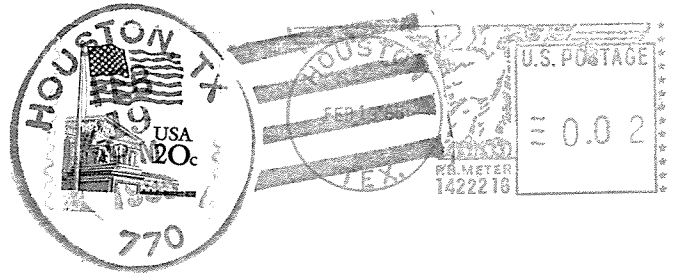
From the Editor

Twelve down and none to go!!!

Actually, I have been coerced into "helping" with one more issue! I guess that is only fair, since I received a lot of help from George when I was just getting started a year ago. You will be relieved to know that we have an actual volunteer to produce the Newsletter for the coming year; I will keep this a secret until he/she is ready to go public. You know who you are, and I want you to know that I (and the entire club) appreciate it!

I am really looking forward to having time to make some home brew again! Until next time... "Relax! Don't worry! Have a home brew!"

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