



BREWSLETTER

URQUELL

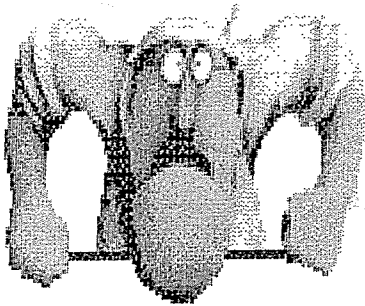
MARCH 2000

The brewsletter of Houston's Foam Rangers

VOLUME: 33 PINTS

Out of the WAZOO

By David Cato, Grand Wazoo



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Pardon me while I ramble on for a while, but I need to fill some space and I've

never quite gotten the hang of the stream of consciousness thing. It's been hell trying to find enough time to perform my duties as Waz. With the hours spent working, eating, sleeping, and keeping up with the happenings in alt.binaries.pictures.lesbians.homebrewers, there's not much time left in the day. And now I have an article to write for the brewsletter? I think I need a beer before I go any further.

That's better. My choices were a bit slim -- either a Bigfoot or an unfiltered Kolsch with a touch of DMS in the nose. Needless to say, I passed on the Bigfoot tonight. In an effort to maintain some sense of intelligence in the writing, I'll postpone the Bigfoot consumption until later. On second thought, I doubt I could have done any worse with the Bigfoot as I just managed to obliterate half of the article I had written. There's probably some kind of anti-drinking campaign in there -- "Don't drink and write. The text you kill might be your own." Or

something like that.

Looking at my calendar, I see that The Onion reported on March 16, 1923 that "Irving Berlin publishes 1,000th annoying, clamorous ditty." Be thankful that you won't have to endure 1000 of these articles.

Trying to get back on track here and failing miserably, I'll start by mentioning our first (almost) monthly visit to the area pubs. On Sunday, February 6, about 2 dozen Foam Rangers invaded Bradley's to sample Phil's beers and show our support for Bradley's. We kept the bartender busy pouring beer and serving food, and everyone had a good time. We're doing it again this month (naturally the event will have already passed by the time you read this) at the Bank Draft. We won't be visiting a pub, per se, in April. Instead, the Craft Brewers are having another festival at the Garden in the Heights on April 1 and 2. This should be similar to last year's festival that was held in July, so head on down and sample the beers from the local craft brewers.

I just got word tonight that St. Arnold's will be hosting National Homebrew Day again. This year's event is Saturday, May 6. We had about 20 brewing teams last year from all of the Houston area clubs, and we got some good exposure for our hobby with the regular Saturday afternoon brewery tour. Make plans to come out again this year.

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Febrewary Meeting Minutes

By Kehn Bacon, Scrivener

Testing...1...2...3 (sound of breath blowing into the microphone). Boy, it's a good thing I record these proceedings because several days later my recollection of the meeting is sketchy at best. I'm sure the BOM had something to do with it! We started out with an update of the Jennings' trip, aka the Louisiana Beer Olympics. The Waz said that about 18 members have signed up and interest appears high from the other Houston clubs, and from as far away as Galveston and Corpus Christi. By the March meeting we should have some figures on the cost of the bus and hotel. Ed Moore is still the contact brewer for Jennings, however, he has moved back to Louisiana. Keep in touch by e-mail, Ed. We'll see you June 3rd, and thanks for your valuable contributions to the club!

Before the meeting a total of 43 entries were packed for the Bluebonnet, along with a fair number of entries to the Reggale and Dreadhop competition in Colorado. The next pack and ship date is Thursday, March 23rd, for the Crescent City competition on April 15th. An important competition that we all need to focus on is the KGB's 5th annual Big Batch Brew Bash coming up in May. The style is APA. The entry deadline is Saturday May 7, which I believe is also National Homebrew Day. Up to two entries per individual can be entered, and it's FREE! The final judging and awards ceremony will be held at Saint Arnold's on Sunday, May 21st. Let's brew up some APAs Rangers! At last years' BBBB, we had the 3rd highest number of entries (11) behind the KGB (14) and Deja Brew (16), but we had

the most entries to make the second round of judging, which won us that keg of Saint Arnold's that I don't ever remember drinking! And of course, it's never too early to start preparing for the Dixie Cup. Bev Blackwood has bravely stepped forward to coordinate our premier event. And speaking of homebrew competitions, San Antonio's Yellow Rose Brewing Co. has concocted a promotional homebrew contest called the Texas Beer Wizard 2000. The winning beer is supposed to be added to the Yellow Rose product line. The deadline is March 20th so hurry, check your brew fridge and see what you got left over from the Dixie Cup, 'cause you ain't got no time to brew. See the ad in the latest Southwest Brewing News for further information.

Our first pub outing to Bradley's on Febrewary 6th was a tremendous success, bringing out the Foam Rangers in force. Phil Endacott worked hard to brew up his signature Rip Tide Red and John Schwarz Beers for our enjoyment. Our next gathering is March 5th at the Bank Draft, a long-time advertiser in the Brewsletter. In April we plan to support the Houston Brewer's Festival, which is to be held April 1st and 2nd at Garden in the Heights. We'll converge on Sunday, April 2nd at 3:00 PM. Come to the next meeting and help us decide on future get togethers! Happy St. Patrick's Day! Hey!! When's Saint Arnold's Day? Before we adjourned to partake in the much anticipated BOM, we sang Happy B-day to Mrs. DONNA Smith, wonderful wife of Was Waz Wayne. RAFFLE!

Beer of the Month

By Bev Blackwood, Secondary Frementer

Pity the poor Belgians. Surrounded by the fastidious French, the doped up Dutch and the grumpy Germans, they suffer from a perpetual identity crisis, fueled by having to deal with three languages, one of which has entirely too many vowels. Is it any wonder their beers have turned out so strange? Take lambics for example, belittled by their wine-snob French neighbors and looked down upon by the anal lager-heads in Germany, no doubt early Belgian brewers were so depressed that they didn't even bother to practice sanitation. The result is the bizarre practice of open air fermentation, intentional lactobacillus and brettanomyces contamination and throwing whatever fruit is handy into the brew to produce a drinkable product. While it is also true that there are "clean" brewers in the country, most notably the Trappist monks, one still has to question what goes into a beer made by a bunch of silent and celibate men. (Clearly our Belgian brothers don't get much tail.) The diversity of beer in the country is downright schizophrenic, which befits Belgium's historic status as the cross-roads of Europe's best armies... it truly IS enough to drive them to drink. Amazingly enough, many of these beers have attained cult status as some of the world's best beers.

Choosing from such diversity for our monthly tasting is truly a challenge. This month I was assisted by John Haas, who was kind enough to do some shopping for us in Philadelphia. What he brought back will make for one of the best Belgian tastings we've ever had. Boon Faro and Boon Gueuze are outstanding examples of what Belgian craft brewing is all about. Boon

(pronounced bone) is noted for their quality and adherence to tradition in formulating their beers. These beers have a healthy dose of brettanomyces, giving them that dense horseblanket flavor that is so hard to find. Gueuze is a unique style in itself, a blend of lambic beers, fermented much as champagne is, in cellars for several years. The beer itself tends to be dry and tart, with very fine carbonation. It is not unusual to see these beers with vintage dates in excess of 3-5 years. Faro is a unique beer as well, a so-called "everyday" beer made in the traditional manner. It tends to be sweeter and more mellow than traditional Belgian lambics, but this particular example still carries lambic characteristics. Vondal Belgian Red Ale is supposed to be a typical example of the Flanders style (not Ned Flanders, the **Belgian** Flanders... Ok-ili-Dok-ili?) The classic of this genre is Rodenbach, and it combines a darker beer character with aging in large wooden tuns, to produce a very distinctive beer. Fantome Saison is from a "new" craft brewer in Belgium, and is a seasonal variant on a traditional Saison. This beer should be somewhat more fruity, but still carry a strong dose of the herbal and spicy notes that characterize a saison. Westmalle is widely known for heir impressive beers. The Westmalle Dubbel we will sample at the meeting is a dark beer, while their Trippel (that we won't sample) is very pale. Rich and dark, this beer is a fine example of the Trappist brewed beers. Kasteel brews very strong beers, with O.G.'s in the 1.100 range. These beers can be either light or dark in color but are characterized

BEER OF THE MONTH

January

Porter and Stout

February

Barleywine and Holiday Beers

March

Belgian and Fruit Beers

April

Brown Ale & Old Ale (+Scotch Ale)

May

Bock

June

Wheat Beers

July

Pilsner (+Kolsch)

August

Pale Ales and Bitters

September

Oktoberfest

October

Dixie Cup

November

Amber Ale and IPA

December

Homebrewer's Christmas Party

**DEFALCO
BREW-IN**

April 8

May 13

June 10

July 8

August 12
Kehn Bacon

September 9
Bev Blackwood

October 14
Dixie Cup

November 11

December 9
Christmas Party

Brewsletter
Urquell
Ad Rates

1/4 Page

1 Issue \$35
3 Issues \$70
1 Year \$150

1/2 Page

1 Issue \$50
3 Issues \$100
1 year \$300

Full Page

1 Issue \$75
3 Issues \$150
1 Year \$300

Brewsletter

Articles for the April
issue are due by
March 31, 2000

**Competition Corner
by The Brothers Slamen**

During the month of February two homebrew competitions targeted by the Foam Rangers were held, one in Kansas City the other in Boston. Between the two events the Foam Rangers entered around 20 entries. Three of our brewers have captured 7 ribbons, the depth of brewing talent in this club continues grow. Please start brewing for Dixie Cup now, your club need you!

Boston

Jimmy Paige 2nd Cream Ale
Jimmy Paige 3rd APA
Jimmy Paige 3rd ABA
Dave Cato 1st Sweet Stout

Kansas City

Jimmy Paige 3rd Mild Ale

Event / Date	Entry Deadline	Pack & Ship	Webpage/e-mail	Style Guidelines
Crescent City 04/15	03/31	03/23	http://members.xoom.com/wacir/the1.thm	AHA/BJCP
Spirit of Free	?	?	http://www.burp.org/sofb99/	BJCP MCAB
Sunshine Challenge 05/19-21	05/08	04/27	http://www.chfb.org	BJCP MCAB
KGB Big Brew 05/21	05/14	N/A	http://www.thekgb.org	APA
BURP	04/29	04/20		

THE BEER PRAYER

Author: Unknown - Sent by Michael Spencer

Our Lager, Which art in barrels,
Hallowed be thy drink, They will be drunk,
(I will be drunk), At home as I am in tavern.
Give us this day our foamy head, And forgive us our spillages,
As we forgive those who spill against us,
and lead us not to incarceration,
But deliver us from hangovers, For thin is the beer,
The bitter and the lager,
Forever and ever,
Barmen.

WATCH THIS SPACE

By Bev Blackwood

This year's brewing calendar is starting to fill up, with the Dixie Cup date being set (October 20-21) The Big Batch Brew Bash coming up (May 21st) and the Lunar Rendezbrew scheduled for July 23rd. It is very important that all brewers cross-enter and attend each other's competitions. After all, these events are the highlights of each club's annual calendar and often play a significant role in each club's annual budget. More than that, they are a chance to socialize with brewers outside your own club, make new friends and enjoy the company of Houston's whole brewing community. Each event has its own character, reflecting the makeup of the sponsoring club. Amazingly enough, the raucous Dixie Cup actually comes off as "serious" when you compare it with the lighthearted events at the Rendezbrew, while the BBBB, a focused and serious competition at its core, is also one big party at St. Arnold. Nobody would argue that the competitions aren't fun, but they also represent a substantial effort on the part of the hosting club and in the spirit of cooperation, it is important that each club's members be willing to assist in preparation, execution and cleanup of every event. Seeing 60 or more entries at the Big Batch or 200 or more at the Rendezbrew is a great feeling and indicative of the strength of Houston's brewing community. When you add in the sponsorships contributed by local brewpubs, St. Arnold and our homebrew shops, it's truly impressive to see the results. I am looking forward to seeing everyone at the competitions and all the other events that fill out Houston's homebrewing calendar!

Last month, I wrote about my decision to start using a breathalyzer when I am out drinking. I thought some of you might be interested in the results of a month's use. First, I've discovered that .08 blood alcohol is a lot lower than I would have thought, which means I've been hitching a lot more rides home than I have in the past. Still, the peace of mind has been great, knowing that I've either done the right thing by getting a ride home or been in control enough to not need one. (I've been told that Randalls sells the chemical breathalyzers on the diaper

row... I am not sure what the message is there, but it sure seems to be that children will drive you to drink!)

Club meetings and news:

Bay Are Mashtronauts - Next meeting: 6:30 p.m. April 11th, at Bradley's in Webster, show up

Watch this Space:

to see exactly what "Chick Brew" is. The Lunar rendezbrew 7 has been scheduled for Jul 23rd, watch the mashtronauts website and this space for further details.

Golden Triangle Homebrew Club

Next meeting: Apr 13th in Beaumont - contact Joe Kubenka (409)721-9810 for location.

They've got new officers for 2000: Wade Perry, Pres; Doug Dusange, V.P.; and Dave VanSteen, Sec. They will be holding a brew-in on the 3rd weekend of Apr; Joe is who to call for details. The Beaumont club makes regular trips into town to sample beers, all Houston clubs should welcome them with open taps!

Deja Brew: Next meeting: 7:00 p.m. Apr 6th, at The Beer Essentials. They are working on the details for the All-Club Invitational Golf Tournament, sure to become a Homebrewing classic event.

Foam Rangers: Next meeting: 8:00 p.m. Mar 17th, at DeFalco's Central. The Foam Rangers are finalizing plans for the Jennings trip on Jun 3. Final prices (food, bus, and hotel) should be set by mid-March. All area clubs are invited to attend.

KGB: Next meeting: 12:00 noon, Mar 18th, at DeFalco's North. Congratulations to Matt Feinberg on his win in the club's KGB Chili Competition at the Feb meeting. The Big Batch Brew Bash is up next on the calendar of events. The entry deadline is May 7th with judging and awards on May 21st at Saint Arnold. The style is

American Pale Ale, BJCP Style 6A.

Mar 24-25, 2000 – St. Louis, MO - Masters Championship of Amateur Brewing II Contact: Louis Bonham E-mail: lkbonham@hbd.org Web: <http://hbd.org/mcab/>

Mar 24-25, 2000 - Hamilton, MT - 1st Annual Bitter Root Valley Homebrew Competition Entry deadline: Mar 17-23, 2000 Entry fee \$4 per entry. Contact: Tony Wickham (406) 363-0457 or (406) 363-7468

Mar 25, 2000 - Hyde Park, NY - Hudson Valley Homebrew Club 10th Annual Competition Entry deadline: Mar 4 - 18, 2000 Entry fee \$5 per entry for 1 to 4 entries, \$4 per entry for 5 or more entries. Contact: Steven Thomas (914) 430-3758 E-mail: drstrangebrew@mail.com Web: <http://hbd.org/hvhhb>

Mar 25, 2000 - Pittsburgh, PA - TRASH X Entry deadline: Mar 25, 2000 Contact: Ralph Colaizzi (412) 331-8087 E-mail: rw@pair.com

Mar 31 - Apr 1, 2000 - West Palm Beach, Florida - 5th Annual Hurricane Blowoff Entry deadline: Mar 13-25, 2000 Entry fee \$6 per entry Contact: Dan Oliver (561) 533-5317 (Home) or (561) 686-4019 (Work) E-mail: olds442@gate.net Web: <http://www.fortunecity.com/littleitaly/giotto/175>

Apr 1, 2000 - Woodland Hills, CA - Maltose Falcons Mayfaire Entry deadline: Mar 4 - 18, 2000 Entry fee \$6 per entry Contact: John Aitchson (818) 886-3568 E-mail: john.aitchisonn@homebeer.com

Apr 1, 2000 - McMinnville, OR - Slurp and Burp Open Entry fee: \$6 for first entry, \$5 for each additional entry Contact: Ted Hausotter (503) 538-9501 or (503) 625-2566

Apr 7-8, 2000 - Germantown, TN - 12th Annual Homebrewer's Extravaganza Entry deadline: Mar 22 - Apr 2000 Entry fee \$5 per entry Contact: Jay Grabowski (662) 449-0493 or (662) 562-5252 E-mail: jgrabowski@aol.com Web: <http://memphisbrews.com>

Apr 8, 2000 - Columbia, SC - 2nd Annual Palmetto State Brewers Open Entry deadline: Jan 31 - Apr 2, 1000. Entry fee: \$5 per entry Contact: Joel W. Masters (803) 739-1419 or (803) 217-7980 E-mail: whalebrew@aol.com Web: <http://www.psbrewer.org/>

Apr 8, 2000 - Albany, NY - Knickerbocker Battle of the Brews Entry deadline: Apr 1, 2000 Entry fee \$6 for first entry, \$4 for each additional entry. contact: Jim Raimo (518) 884-8689 E-mail:

jraimo@nycap.rr.com Web: <http://www.moonbrew.com/kbotb>

Apr 8, 2000 - Plymouth, MA - South Shore Brewoff Contact: Francois Espourteille (508) 923-0059 E-mail: francois@ici.net

Apr 8, 2000 - Cincinnati, OH - Bloatarian Brewing League Fixed Recipe Competition Contact: Guy Burgess (606) 431-300 E-mail: Orientalwok@fuse.net

Apr 13-15 - New Orleans, LA - 2000 Crescent City Competition Entry deadline: Mar 16- 31, 2000 Entry fee \$6 per entry Contact: Andy Hollis (504) 393-1592 or (504) 289-8505 E-mail: honyhollis@aol.com Web: <http://members.xoom.com/wacjr/the1.htm>

April 14-15, 2000 - Crete, IL - 9th Annual Brewers of South Suburbia Challenge Entry deadline: March 30-April 13, 2000 Entry fee \$6.00 per entry Contact: Jerry Sadowski (708) 758-5538 (Home) or (708) 758-6045 (Work) E-mail: jsadow1@E-mail.msn.com Web: <http://www.megsinet.net/~bethke/boss/index.html>

Apr 15, 2000 - Anchorage, AK - Snowgoose/Sleeping Lady 2000 Breakup Homebrew Competition Entry deadline: Apr 14, 2000 No entry fee. Contact: Dave Yanoshek (907) 345-6923 (Home) - (907) 562-3252 (Work) E-mail: dyanoshek@crweng.com

Apr 16, 2000 - Woodbridge, NJ - New Jersey's 2nd Gold Medal Homebrew Competition Entry deadline: Mar 20 - Apr 21 - 30, 2000 - AHA National Homebrew Competition 2000, First Round

Entry deadline: April 5 - 14, 2000 Entry fee \$8 per entry for AHA members, \$12 per entry for non-members. Contact: Gary Glass (303) 447-0816 x 121 E-mail: gary@aob.org Web: <http://www.beertown.org/AHA/NHC/aha2000.htm>

Apr 22, 2000 - San Bernardino, CA - San Bernadino County Fair Homebrew Competition Entry deadline: Feb 22 - Apr 22, 2000 E-mail: bellmtn@oak-tree.net

Watch this Space, cont:

- Apr 29, 2000** - Neconset, NY - B.E.E.R. 4th Annual Homebrew Competition Entry deadline: Apr 15 - 22, 2000 Entry fee \$5 per entry. Contact: James B. Thomas (631) 269-5833 E-mail: Thomsjam@E-mail.msn.com Web: <http://www.homebrewshop.com>
- May 6, 2000** - Buffalo, NY - 4th annual Western New York Homebrew Competition Entry deadline: Apr 17 - 28, 2000 Entry fee \$7 for first entry, \$5 each additional entry. Contact: Keith Curtachio (716) 877-8767 E-mail: good-beer@niagarabrewers.org Web: <http://www.niagarabrewers.org>
- May 6, 2000** - Atlanta, GA - 7th Annual Peach State Brewoff Entry deadline: Apr 17 - 28, 2000. Entry fee \$7 each for the first two entries, \$5.00 each additional entry. Contact: Marlon Hurst (770) 761-9448 E-mail: peachstate7@hotmail.com Web: <http://www.coverthops.com>
- May 6, 2000** - Ashburn, VA - Spirit of Free Beer VIII (MCAB) Contact: Bruce Bennett (703) 594-3344 E-mail: btbennet@erols.com
- May 6, 2000** - Sheboygan, WI - 7th Annual Sin City Sudzzers Homebrew Competition Entry deadline: May 2 - 5, 2000 Entry fee: \$5 for first entry, \$4 each additional entry Contact: Rick Woods (920) 467-9962 or (920) 457-4441 x7-2834 E-mail: rick.woods@kohlerco.com Web: <http://www.dataplusnet.com/homebrew>
- May 6, 2000** - Burlington, VT - Green Mountain Homebrew Competition Entry deadline: April 1-28, 2000 Entry fee \$5 each for first four entries, \$4 each additional entry Contact: Dan Marshall (802) 862-7667
- May 6, 2000** - St. Paul, MN - Northern Brewer Homebrew Competition Entry deadline: Apr 16 - 26, 2000 Entry fee \$8.50 for first entry, \$4.50 each additional entry. Contact: Chris Schiffer or Chris Farley Phone: (651) 291-8849 E-mail: mail@northernbrewer.com Web: <http://www.northernbrewer.com>
- May 15 - 20, 2000** - Rochester, NY - UNYHA 22nd Annual Homebrew Competition / 11th Empire State Open Entry deadline: Apr 12 - May 6, 2000 Entry fee \$5 per entry. Contact: Tina Weymann Phone: (716) 482-3346 (Home) or (716) 231-1212 (Work) E-mail: tweymann@hselaw.com Web:<http://ggw.org/unyha>
- May 19 - 20, 2000** - Corvallis, OR - 18th Annual Oregon Homebrew Festival Entry deadline: May 15. 2000 Entry fee \$5 per entry. Contact: Mark Kowalski (541) 715-8574 or (541) 752-2008 E-mail: mhkowalski@home.com Web: <http://www.hotv.org/>
- May 20 - Jun 4, 2000** - Arlington, TX - Celtic Brewoff Entry deadline: May 6, 2000 Entry fee \$6 per entry. Contact: JB Flowers (817) 467-0398 or (817) 472-4241 E-mail: APICT8@aol.com Web: <http://www.hbd.org/kobb/>
- May 20 - 21, 2000** - Tacoma, WA - Hops Annual May Fest III Entry deadline: Apr 17 - May 18, 2000 Entry fee \$7 for first entry, \$5 for each additional entry. Contact: Jeff King (253) 843-2817 E-mail: jeffking1958@earthlink.net Web: http://members.tripod.com/homebrewers_o_P_S/
- May 21 - 22, 2000** - Haines, AK - 8th Annual Great Alaska Craft Beer and Homebrew Festival Entry deadline: May 18, 2000 Entry fee \$10 each for the first 5 entries, \$2 each additional entry. Contact: Dorothy Sargent (907) 766-2000 E-mail: halsinglan@aol.com
- May 21, 2000** - Rochester, MI - Over the Mill Contact: Rex Halfpenny (248) 628-6574 E-mail: mibeerguy@aol.com
- May 21, 2000** - Houston, TX - Big Batch Brew Bash Entry deadline: May 7, 2000 No entry fee. Contact: Brian Ellis (281) 304-0109 E-mail: bellis@icsi.net Web: <http://www.thekgb.org/>
- May 21, 2000** - Orlando, FL - 11th Annual Sunshine Challenge (MCAB) entry deadline: May 8, 2000 contact: Ron Bash (407) 696-2738 E-mail: bachian@juno.com

Out of the Wazoo:

Thanks to the generosity of St. Arnold's, we'll have plenty of room in the parking lot for everyone who wants to join in the fun. There will also be plenty of hot brewing liquor and chilled water available. What better way to brew in Houston in May and get your wort chilled easily to proper pitching temps. We're talking a few minutes. If you're doing an ale, you'd better watch out or you'll be waiting for your wort to warm up before you can pitch your yeast.

Finally, Jennings is coming together very nicely. Ed Moore has been working with the folks in Jennings to arrange this year's event. We haven't gotten all the prices from the various parties yet, so I can't list them here. However, we should have the prices set by the time the meeting rolls around. We'll also have the information available at DeFalco's and on the Foam Rangers website. We'll be chartering a bus again to take us to Jennings (and back), so you won't have to drive yourself. Besides, the bus trip is half the fun.

I don't know about you, but I'm looking forward to this month's meeting. If for no other reason than the fact that we're going against tradition yet again, you might have noticed that this month's meeting is on St. Patrick's Day. Normally, one would think of Stout for this particular day. Since the Foam Rangers are never ones to adhere to tradition, we'll be celebrating St. Paddy's day with Belgian beers instead. If St. Patrick was a beer lover, I'm sure he'd understand. See you there.

—8<—snip—8<—snip—8<—snip—8<—

Beer of the month, cont:

by a well rounded flavor with hints of vanilla.

Similarly strong, but with a surprisingly light character is the intensely fruity Duvel. A strong golden ale with a crisp, fine head and sweet, yet potent flavor. Styrian Goldings make up most of the hops in this beer and the alcoholic strength derives from a generous addition of simple corn sugar. Of course, no Belgian tasting would be complete without the Pierre Celis classics: Hoegaarden White and Celis White. This pair should be

Beer of the Month, cont:

worth trying side by side, to gain the full appreciation of what the Celis brewery in Austin has accomplished, transplanting a distinctively Belgian beer deep in the heart of Texas. This beer has hints of coriander and bitter orange in the flavor, matched with a light wheat maltiness and some yeast bite. Jackson claims the Texas version to be somewhat lighter in malt than the Belgian original, but I'll leave it to your tastebuds to decide. Celis Grand Cru is the White beer's bigger brother and well worth trying despite its Austin origins, the Hoegaarden Grand Cru is all malt instead of a blend of wheat and barley malt, leading one to wonder if the Celis is similarly made. Some might argue that these tart beers require the addition of fruit to make them palatable, but the tradition of adding fruit actually adds depth and breadth to already complex beers. Lindemann's Kriek was my choice for the evening. While this is not as challenging as a Cantillon or Boon Kriek, both of which are intensely sour, this beer has all the hallmarks of a good Belgian fruit lambic, albeit a sweetish one. Jackson suggests that the complexity of Belgian fruit beers inspired American producers to try their hand at adding fruit to the mix. Rather than go with a Raspberry wheat or the ridiculous "Cranberry Lambic" foisted upon us by Sam Adams, I chose the Pyramid brewery's Apricot I.P.A. This beer marries fruit flavors into a non-traditional fruit beer style with good results.

Truly, the Belgians deserve our sympathy. Amazingly complex and varied beers, lots of high-calorie, butter laden foods and the sad habit of using mayonnaise on their pommes frites. Yes, pity the Belgians, but **do** drink their beers!

P.S. – If you have a Belgian ale you want to share, please feel free to bring it to the meeting. We **always** want more beers!

Homebrewing Sanitation Defeating the Phantom Menace By James Paige

Sanitation is probably the single most critical factor of brewing. Everyone, at one time or another, has had a batch or two of homebrew go bad. Most likely this was around the beginning stages of your hobby. The beer may have smelled sour, or medicinal, and tasted stale, and you just did not know why. You just thought, as you were programmed to do by "Charlie", relax, don't worry, have a homebrew. Thankfully, you persisted with your craft (unlike others who tried and quit after poor results and contamination) and began to pay more attention to cleaning and sanitizing your equipment.

The Pre-Boil: Before you begin your next batch, make sure all your equipment is cleaned well and is free of residues. Sanitizing agents will not work properly on contaminant laden surfaces. During your mash and sparge this may be the time to have a "Bigfoot" because no matter how unsanitary you are at this stage the finished wort will be boiled. I use this time to prepare a large tub or ice-chest full of "no-rinse" iodophor solution. Everything that may come into contact with my finished wort, after the boil, gets totally submerged in this solution, avoiding exposure to air.

The Boil: Not much is critical here except to keep out unwanted bugs or debris. The crucial window begins during the last few minutes of the boil. Ensure your immersion wort chiller gets boiled with the wort for at least the last five minutes of the boil. The copper immersion chiller also contributes minute traces of copper which is good for yeast metabolism and preventing hung fermentations. For those of you with counterflow chillers, make sure they are well sanitized inside as the chilled wort will

will pick up any residues or protein deposits which may have accumulated on the inside walls of the chiller tubes.

Once you begin the cycle of chilling the wort, the wort is susceptible to contamination from bacteria and wild yeasts usually below 140 degrees. This is the most important time in brewing to avoid contamination. Cover the brew pot to avoid debris from entering if possible. Obviously, keep wind or air from blowing onto the wort. And if your neighbor is mowing his/her lawn, watch out. I make it a point to frequently wash my hands in the iodophor solution, already made, before handling the chiller or brew pot once chilled.

Any utensils used to whirlpool the wort or when you siphon should have been completely submerged in sanitizing solution.

Siphoning/Racking: I use and recommend filling your glass carboys with iodophor solution to the correct concentration for "no-rinse" sanitation. My thinking on this is why would you want to introduce possible contaminants from your rinse source after you have just spent time and money sanitizing your equipment. I used to use bleach, but after a batch of beer overwhelmed by chlorophenols, I swore I would never use it again. Since that batch, I can say I have had consistent results using the no-rinse method with iodophor.

When you siphon use a sterile liquid to start the siphon. Some people use sterilized water. I've used the method of starting with siphon with my mouth, however, I rinse my mouth beforehand with a shot of cheap vodka.

Adding Yeast/Air Locks: If you are using

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Brewsletter

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Homebrewing Sanitation:

dry yeast or liquid yeast, make sure the containers or packets have been adequately sanitized in some solution before getting them near the top of the carboys. You may want to add the yeast to your fermentors before racking the beer off the brew pot to aid mixing.

You may want to use vodka in your airlock in case it leaks. Any water in the air lock can be a possible contamination source. Small amounts of vodka falling into your beer should not have any effect on the final flavor.

Bottling: Again, all transfer hoses, canes, and bottling buckets need to be sanitized. Properly boil your priming solution before adding to the bottling bucket. If you use bottles, sanitize the bottles by submerging under iodophor solution, again, I recommend a solution of 25ppm which is "no-rinse" concentration. Make sure the bottles are free of labels as bacteria can accumulate there. If you use a dishwasher to sanitize your bottles, do not use any soap and make sure there is no jet-dri in the unit as this can wipe out head retention in your finished beer. I also soak my bottle caps in iodophor solution because one may never know where bacteria may be hiding.

Cleaning and Sanitizing Products, Most available at Defalco's:

Iodophor: My personal favorite. An iodine, phosphoric acid, surfactant blend which is an excellent sanitizer but a poor cleanser. For "no rinse" concentrations of 25 ppm, use ½ teaspoon per gallon with at least five minutes of contact time. Otherwise, if you want to rinse, use one teaspoon per gallon with at least one minute of contact time. Iodophor has lost its sanitizing ability usually when its color has disappeared.

Chlorine/Sodium Hypochlorite: This is readily available in supermarkets and is very inexpensive, but it is caustic, will etch glass, and can cause damage to stainless steel, copper and aluminum. If used, do not mix with ammonia. Will sanitize in 30 seconds at concentration of one tablespoon per gallon. Rinse very well with hot water. At 20 ppm, or about 1/3 teaspoon per gallon, it

does not require rinsing, but 30 minutes of contact time is required.

CTSP: Chlorinated tri-sodium phosphate, an excellent cleanser and fair sanitizer.

One Step Cleanser: Dry hydrogen peroxide, a fair cleanser and fair sanitizer, no rinsing is necessary. Prolonged soaking may leave a residue.

B-Brite Cleanser/Sanitizer: An active oxygen cleanser, with excellent cleansing capabilities and a fair sanitizer. Removes "beer stone" deposits.

Star-San Sanitizer: An acid based sanitizer, high foaming, excellent sanitizer, but a poor cleanser. Made by Five Star Affiliates, Inc.

PBW: Powdered Brewery Wash, an excellent cleanser, especially at high temperatures but does not sanitize. Is non-corrosive, free rinsing and environmentally friendly.

BLC: Beer Line Cleaner, is biodegradable. Good for cleaning any keging equipment.

Campden Tablets (Potassium or Sodium Metabisulfite): For WINE use only. Inhibits yeast and bacteria growth.

Further Reading

1. *Dave Miller's Homebrewing Guide*
2. *Brewing Techniques*, Vol. 1, No. 2 "Methods of Sanitation and Sterilization" by Maribeth Raines
3. *Brewing Techniques*, Vol. 5, No. 2 "The Dirt on Brewery Cleaning-A Review of Procedures and Chemicals" by Greg Foss
4. *Southwest Brewing News*, Vol. 5, No.1, Feb./Mar. 1997, "Homebrew Talk-Cleaning and Sanitation" by Dave Bone
5. Any of Dave Miller's "Q & A with the Troubleshooter" articles from *Brewing Techniques*

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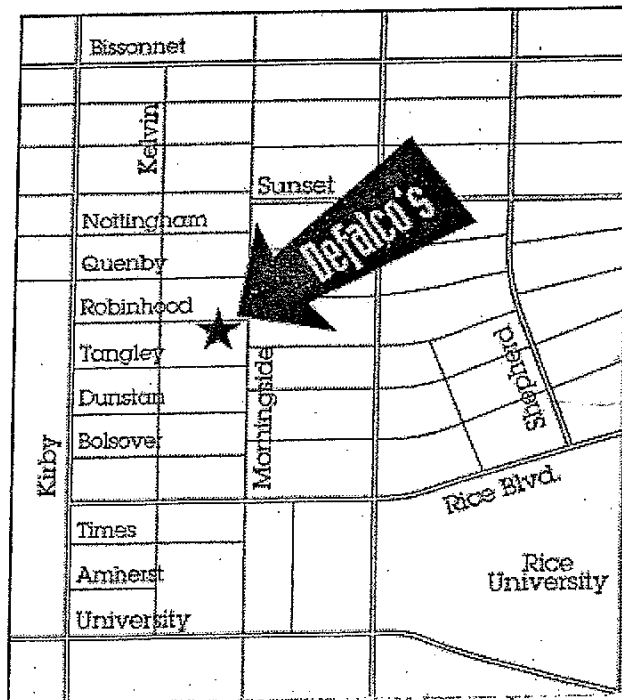
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