



THE FOAM RANGERS

Brewsletter Urquell

February 2018 / Volume 38, Issue: 2

Something about February just seems right in Foam-land. I don't know if it's yelling "Happy Birthday Zoey!" and being rewarded with beer, or if it's the fact that the meeting will be full of barley wine. Either way, we all win. So grab a barley wine (or whatever non-barley wine beverage you desire) and raise a glass to you.

That's right, you. Because that's who makes this club great. Well, you and the beer. I mean, mostly the beer...but you're here too, so I'm sure you're fine.




Unfortunately I couldn't come up with a Dad joke this month. I asked my Dad for his best Dad joke and he said "You." Not sure what that meant, but I guess there's always next month.

Upcoming Events

- March 4
Meeting @ Karbach
- March 10
Brew-In @ DeFalco's
- March 16
Club Meeting @ DeFalco's
(Belgium & Fruit Beers)



Mallard Reactions

Aware		Bluebonnet Brew-off 32	Awards Ceremony March 24th
Atari!		Lunar Rendezbrew 25	Entry open now thru 29-Mar Awards Ceremony 19-May
Aware		Cactus Challenge 21	All dates still TBD but entries will be accepted probably sometime in March



Out (of) The Wazoo

Paul Smith, Grand Wazoo

There a lot of beery events in the coming weeks, and hopefully Foam Rangers will be a big part of them. From brewing and competing to 'tasting', it's a good time to be a homebrewer. Regarding the brewing, we have club brewers lined-up for brew-ins through April, including a Pro's vs Joe's brew-off on April 14. Defalco's will be hosting a National Homebrew Day brew-in in May. If your Wazoo can line up a Pro brewer we will do a true Pro vs Joe's where all club members are invited to compete. All brew-ins for the remainder of the year are open for reservation.

There have been several requests for a semi-formal presentation at club meetings regarding the technical aspects of home-brewing. So if you are interested in either presenting a particular topic or would like to have the opportunity to ask one or more experienced brewers questions in a slightly more formal setting, please let me know and we can try to set something up at the front of the shop at the March meeting.

Coming up next week, yeast from the Houston Daisy Chain Project will be available to the club. The project is the brainchild of Sam Wright, Head Brewer at Southern Star Brewing. His goal is to demonstrate unity in the Houston brewing community brewing by inviting breweries and home-brewers in the area to brew a batch of beer (style of their choosing) with yeast shared between brewers. Twenty-three local brewers are participating throughout the spring. The first tastings are being released later this month. On February 24th, yeast from one of the participating breweries will be available to home-brewers through Defalco's. Keep an eye out for confirmation of availability as we get closer to the date.

The Lone Star Circuit has kicked off with Bluebonnet judging underway. Competition Coordinator Nick Handel reports that he delivered more entries to this event than any previous competition in his tenure. Nice work Foamies! Our club, like most others, relies on a handful of individual and team brewers to be competitive on the Lone Star Circuit, but it takes the rest of the club to pick up medals throughout the year to win the circuit. Let's let the C.I.A.lers and Zealots know we are in this to win! Keep brewing, entering, and winning. Lunar Rendebrew is open for entries now.

The AHA Rally takes place at Saint Arnold's on Sunday the 18th. AHA membership gets you in for free. Taps are open and there is a VIP tour and raffle. Ryann Brzoska will be tending a table for the club. (Who has the FR banner?) Come hang out with local home-brewers and don't forget to check-in with Ryann to make sure her glass is not empty.

A club Pub Crawl is scheduled for May 26. Pub Crawl Coordinator Andy Thomas will have details at the meeting. Reservations can be made as soon as we can get it into the Foam Store.

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Denise Whitney, Purser

Foam Rangers!

A small update on finances:

I'm excited to say that as end of January, we have 53 paid members, almost 50% more than we had at this time last year. HOWEVER, by end of February last year, we had 69 paid members. Yep, 69. We still have some catching up to do.

We're already spending big money locking down dates for Dixie Cup, getting a Pub Crawl lined up, and getting lots of good beer and food for the meetings.

If you have not yet paid your dues, please pay them ASAP. You can use Paypal through the Foam Store online, or pay by cash or check at the meeting. \$40 for Single, \$60 for Family. See Ryann Brzoska to pay dues at the February meeting – I won't be there.

THANK YOU for your efforts in being timely and helping set us up for success this year.

Cheers,
Denise Whitney
Purser



Beer of the Month

By Steven Distelhorst (Secondary)

Last month we talked about porters and stouts, which can have wonderful, bold flavors and strong hardy characters, but this month we take a step further into the, sometimes daunting, realm of true boldness and intensity given to us from barleywines. These beers give us true depth of flavor and are a real triple threat to our palates from malt to hops to alcohol they leave no taste bud unfulfilled. Therefore, in true reverence to this style lets dare to be bold and change things up. I know that many members of the club have a great appreciation for and knowledge of barleywines so rather than me boring you with a brief history lesson about barleywines lets instead play a game. Below I have listed a set of statements about barleywines, some are true and some are not, lets see if you can determine which are fact and which are fiction!



True or False (write your answers in the space provided next to each statement):

- _____ Barleywines were sometimes used as a replacement to real wines (aka fermented grape juice)
- _____ The first batch of Sierra Nevada Bigfoot was brewed in 1979
- _____ In Great Britain from 1915-1918 barleywine was not allowed to be put in glass bottles
- _____ Barleywines were brewed for expeditions to the arctic
- _____ Reference to barleywines has been found in ancient Greek documents
- _____ Maine state law currently prohibits the sale of barleywine in bottles/cans larger than 10 ounces
- _____ The first commercial barleywine came out in 1903
- _____ Along with the British and American barleywine styles, a newer Australian barleywine has recently become popular and is being considered as a possible official 3rd variety of the style
- _____ Barleywine was reported to be the favorite beer style of the last German emperor Kaiser Wilhelm II
- _____ Casks of barleywine were often deliberately rolled across brewery floors
- _____ The production of barleywine was briefly banned in England in the early 20th century

At this point I could tell you that I do not intend on giving you any of the answers but, that would be mean and hopefully I have peaked some of your interest or curiosities about some of the statements or at the very least you want to know how well (or not so well) you did. For those of you who are dying to know the answers now or have already grown bored of reading this the short

answer key is as follows (from top to bottom): TFFTTFFFTF. For anyone else who maybe curious to know a bit more information about some of the statements (probably only 1 or 2 people as everyone else has grown bored or would rather drink!) continue reading and I will elaborate.

The first statement above was that barleywines were sometimes used as a replacement to real wines. This statement is somewhat true. To understand why barleywine was sometimes used as a replacement to actual wine, despite the fact that they are two very different things (one is a beer and the other is a wine.....duh!), we need to first go back in time to the country of origin of barleywines, England. Back in 18th and 19th-century England (and in many other countries) beer was seen as the poor or common mans drink while wine was considered the drink of the aristocracy. Now, back then the majority of wine (at least the best wines) came from France, however during the 1700 and 1800s England was often at war with France. As such, there were no imports, which consequently meant no wines (or at least no French wine). During these times high ABV cask aged beers were sometimes brewed for the British high class as a replacement for their beloved (French) wines. During these times the term barleywine hadn't been popularized and was not recognized as any specific style, however, these high alcohol aged beers were similar to what we now refer to as barleywines and thus are considered the predecessor of today's current barleywine style; which is why I said the statement is somewhat true.

The second statement that the first batch of Sierra Nevada Bigfoot was brewed in 1979 is incorrect. The first batch of Bigfoot was actually produced in 1983 (yes, I know, that one was pretty tricky and kind of mean, but, I have to have a little fun). At that point Bigfoot was only the second American barleywine that was being produced commercially in the US, the first being Old Foghorn by Anchor brewing which was first produced in 1975. And while it may seem that Bigfoot is overshadowed by Old Foghorn as being the 2nd barleywine brewed in the U.S. it is really the first American style barleywine given that Old Foghorn was originally brewed as an English barleywine. The major difference being that the American barleywine is much more hoppy than the English style.



The next true statement that's listed above is that barleywines were brewed for expeditions to the arctic. During the mid-1800s when Great Britain was on its mighty quest to navigate the northwest passage and further its geographic dominance 3 separate arctic expeditions were carried out in 1852, 1857, and 1875. For each of these 3 expeditions the Samuel Allsopp and sons brewing company (from Burton-upon-Trent, England) made a heavy and strong 12% ABV beer (an OG 1.130). This beer, called the Allsopp's Arctic Ale, was equivalent to what we now consider a barleywine. Interestingly, within the past 2 decades a few bottles of the Arctic Ale (the few that remained on the ships that made it back) were discovered and sold at auctions for a hefty price. Although none of the Arctic ales have been opened another beer from 1869, not associated with the arctic expeditions, was recently found, opened, and enjoyed by select beer connoisseurs who said that despite its age (137 years old) it tasted very good (not spoiled) with notes of sherry and molasses. Which just goes to show how well barleywines can age.



The next true fact was that barleywine has been referenced in ancient Greek documents. This statement may seem odd or just wrong to some of you given that, as I alluded to earlier, the word barleywine hadn't become a popular term or even a beer style prior to the 1900s. How then, you might ask, is it that this term is found in ancient Greek literature? The answer is that it was likely just an early description of beer. The most well known reference of barleywine in an ancient Greek text can be found in writings of the Greek soldier and historian Xenophon in his book *Anabasis*. The book, written around 370 BC, is a historical account of the journey of an army of Greek mercenaries and their battles and trek across the Persian empire. In this book Xenophon gives descriptions of things he came across throughout their exploits. In one such account he describes what seems to be a barrel of beer in which he uses the Greek words οἶνος κριθῆς (pronounced *oinos krithios*), which translates in English to barley wine. This 'barley wine' that he mentions is likely nothing remotely close to what we consider a true barleywine by today's standards. In fact, the beer he speaks of was most likely a very light low ABV beer. His description of the beer as a barley wine was probably meant as a comparison to wine as that was a commonly known beverage of the times. Since it was not fermented grape juice but was a product of barley his description of it as a 'barley wine' was likely the easiest and best way to describe to the reader (at least back then) what this 'interesting' drink was. So, although it was not a true description of what we now call a barleywine it is still one of the earliest records and descriptor of beer as well as one of the first uses of the term barley wine.

One of the statements above was that Maine state law prohibits the sale of barleywines in cans and bottles larger than 10 ounces. While this might sound like it could be true, in fact, there is no heir of truth to this statement at all as I totally just made it up. Along with this, the statement that barleywine was the favorite beer style of Kaiser Wilhelm II is also complete hogwash and I have no clue if he even drank beer. Although given that he was German I am willing to bet that he did occasionally imbibe in such delights. Furthermore, there is also no truth to there being an Australian barleywine style (at least as far as I am aware!). Currently there are only 2 barleywine styles, English and American.

I did state above that the first commercial barleywine came out in 1903, which is true. This beer was a product of the Bass brewing company, which during this time was one of the largest breweries in the world. The beer was originally their No. 1 Burton Ale, which was considered a strong ale, but in 1903 they changed it to Bass and Co's Barley Wine, although it was solely a change in the name of the beer but not the recipe. There is some debate as to whether the term barley wine was used before Bass and Co changed their beer name and in fact some people believe that this term was actually used before 1903, possibly as early as 1870. However, if the term was used before 1903 it was only for marketing in magazine and newspaper advertisements in reference to certain beers. The first ever and "official" designation of a beer being referred to as a barley wine on the beer label was by the Bass and Co brewing company in 1903. The reason for this sudden change of name of their No. 1 Burton ale to barley wine was done purely in hopes of better marketing. They even went so far as to advertise this "new" beer in medical journals calling it a "royal tonic" that could be used to help with ailments such as anemia, insomnia, indigestion, and more. Now, while I'm no doctor, I don't think

there is any scientific evidence to support the use of their barley wine to treat the majority of ailments that they described, except for maybe one, insomnia. I am willing to bet that if you drank an entire bottle of the Bass and Co barley wine that you would sleep quite well, although in the morning you might have some other ailments instead! Regardless of their interesting marketing tactics we owe a bit of gratitude to the Bass and Co brewing of yore for giving us the first officially named barley wine beer.....even if it wasn't a true barley wine.

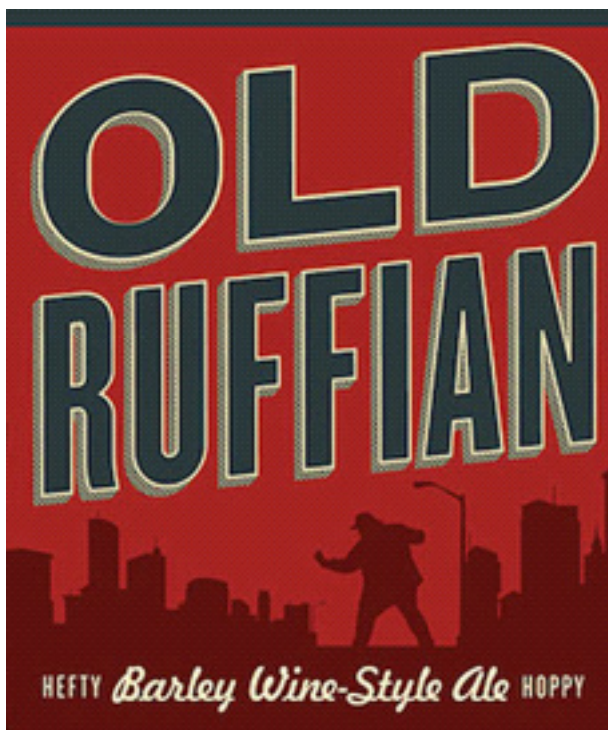


The next fun fact that was true is that casks of barleywine were often deliberately rolled across brewery floors. Why you might ask (or perhaps you already know)!? The reason for this is not because this is how brewers back then travelled around or because they were trying to learn how to walk on a rolling barrel, the real reason actually had to do with the yeast. As any good home brewer knows one of the key elements to making great beer is choosing the proper yeast and making sure to keep the yeast as happy as you can (right temp, pH, ect.). Unfortunately back then there were not as many yeast strains readily available and they didn't have the technologies we currently have to provide the optimal conditions for the yeast. The biggest problem brewers' had with high alcohol beers back then was keeping the yeast alive because as the alcohol content increased the yeast would die or go into a 'dormant' state. To prevent this from happening (so that they wouldn't end up with an under-attenuated syrupy wort) the brewers would often roll the casks around the brewery in an effort to rouse the 'sleeping' yeast and help oxygenate the beer to further help the yeast in their vital task. In some cases when rolling the casks wasn't enough some brewers would actually blow bubbles into the beer to help with oxygenation, although this was also a potential source of contamination the higher alcohol content was helpful, sometimes, in preventing the this. That just goes to show you that even back then brewers took great pride and went through great lengths to ensure they produced high quality good tasting (hopefully) beer.



Now that I have teased your brain with fun facts about barleywines let's talk (briefly) about flavor. The top 4 words that come to mind when thinking about how best to describe barleywines are rich, strong, intense, and complex. These brews will have a prevalent warming character that should come as no surprise given the alcohol content, which typically ranges from 9-12% but can be slightly higher or lower. Barleywines bring a malty richness, especially the English styles, that are almost certain to be complex and cover a range of different flavor profiles from biscuity and nutty to molasses and dark fruit flavors and anywhere in between. But fear not, this sweet maltiness is (or at least should be) backed with a hefty handful of hops to help give balance to this goliath of beers. In the English styles the hop profiles may be less prevalent allowing the malt flavors to take the front seat while the American barleywines let the hop profiles burst through to tingle your nose and tongue and intertwine with the malt flavors in an infinite array of delectable delight! Be aware that this style is not for the faint-of-heart but if you have the boldness to drink a beer that was mentioned in ancient Greek writings, was sent on multiple voyages to the Arctic, and has been a favorite past time of the best damn home brew club in the U.S. then you will be rewarded with the finest complex tapestry of flavors you could ever desire.

Lastly, if you have actually read this far as a thank you and for a little bit more fun I have one last game for you! Throughout this article I have put images of 5 different barleywines each from a different brewery. If you have noticed I have taken out the brewery name on each label and left only the name of the beer. If you can correctly identify to me the five breweries that make these beers at this month's meeting I will give you a prize*!



*Disclaimer: Any and all prizes mentioned within this article refer solely to a congratulatory handshake and possibly a statement of a job well done. No beers will be given out as prizes but if you ask the secondary nicely he may pour you some samples.

There were no beers harmed in the construction of this article, however there were a few consumed.

Foam Rangers Officer Meeting

Minutes by Mike Reed, Scrivener
January 4, 2018 @ Petrol Station

In attendance: Paul Smith, Denise Whitney, Luke Whitney, Steven Distelhorst, Doak Procter, Ryann Brzoska, Phil Verdick, Hank Keller

Discussions:

• Foam Store

- Numerous -shirts and glassware from previous Dixie Cups. Need to liquidate inventory to help generate revenue.
- Discussed inconsistent pricing between items Foam Ranger locker at Defalco's and the Foam Store. Need to have consistent between the two.
- Need to price items in Foam Store to motivate people to buy. Maybe bundle or discount items.
- Phil reminded us that we need to remember to give Dixie Cup t-shirts to people that donate large amounts of swage.

• IT – Foam Page

- Discussed adding items to the foam page. Phil working on web page.
- Discussion around web domain cost and how to reduce it.
- Discussion around all the items (links and such) that we have on the web page. BCOE software and go to person
- Discussion around getting new web page and getting current web page up to date, skills needed to support all IT and back roles.
- Doak to look at new web page, but primary focus is on getting current web page up to date and functioning.

• Dixie Cup

- Hanks discussed putting a section in the brews letter and face book about what positions those need to be filled, duties, when they need to be filled by and how much time is involved.
- The date is the third week in October at the Crown Plaza. The Crown Plaza the only thing available at the time needed and that would suit our needs. We will still need to do a work around for the Pot Luck.
- Discussion around speakers, when to begin the search and where to get them. Doak mention some people he could contact. If anyone finds someone that might be available, they are to coordinate with Hank before extending an invite.
- Discussion about when to start scrounging. Maybe late July or August. Also discussed who to approach for swag. Paul (Waszoo) will work with whoever is spear heading that effort.

• AHA Rally

- Ryann volunteered to man a booth.
- Discussion around what needs to be done
- Beer kits for raffle
- Brewery Pub crawl May 26th.
- Pro's vs Joe's during pub crawl
- Discussion around how members can buy and sell used equipment. Talk more about it next month.
- Discussion about adding a technical aspect to the Club meeting, something short. Waz to put an announcement in the Brewsletter to see if anyone would be interested in doing a short presentation at the front of the store during the meeting. Should be by request or volunteer.

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.



February Officers Meeting @ Petrol Station



Some place that you've never heard of...



Alcohol and food...of course it didn't suck



This is no joke



Officers with beer saying "important" things



They made Doak cry again



Hank finally realizing what he got himself into as Dixie Cup coordinator



**I WANT TO BE SOMEBODY IN PARTICULAR!
SIGN ME UP TO BECOME A MEMBER OF
THE FOAM RANGERS HOMEBREW CLUB!**



NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

MEMBER E-MAIL _____

2ND MEMBER E-MAIL _____ **PHONE** _____

AMOUNT PAID _____ **NEW** **RENEWAL** **CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

Membership Fee: \$40.00 Individual / \$60.00 Family (Member +1)

Paid between October 31, 2017 and December 31, 2017: \$35.00 / \$55.00 (Pay early and save!)

All memberships include Dixie Cup admission!

Please make checks payable to: The Foam Rangers

Bring this form (and your payment) to the next club meeting, drop it off at DeFalco's, or send it to:



Welcome to the Foam Rangers! Now get connected!

We have two E-mail lists:

The **Foam Rangers Discussion** List & the **Foam Rangers Announce** List

What's the difference?

The **Foam Rangers Discussion** list is where people can interact and reply to the posts of other Foam Ranger list members.

The **Foam Rangers Announce** list is where the Grand Wazoo posts club announcements and is not a discussion list. Anything posted to the Announce list will be posted to the Discussion list, so you don't have to subscribe to both.

To subscribe to the **Discussion** list, send an e-mail to:



The Foam Rangers

foam-rangers-join@foamrangers.com



To subscribe to the **Announce** list, send an e-mail to:

foam-rangers-announce-join@foamrangers.com

You will receive a reply from the server with instructions for confirming your subscription. Follow the instructions to complete the subscription process.

Once you have successfully subscribed, you will receive a reply with the list guidelines as well as instructions for unsubscribing.