



THE FOAM RANGERS Newsletter Urquell

FeBrewary 2023 Volume 43 Issue 2

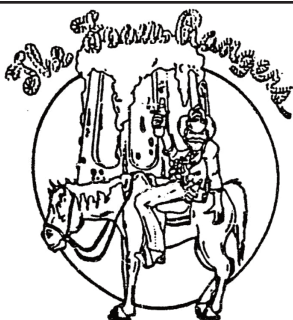


**FeBrewary 18th
Astral Brewing
4816 N.Shepherd Dr.
77018**

**This Month's Style:
Belgian Brews**

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Out (of) The Wazoo

Greetings Rangers!

Thank you all who came out to our first 2023 meeting at Frost Town Brewing. Our wet January month has come and gone and we are now looking forward to the future of spring in just another month or so. This means more outdoor brewing and beers on the patios while we enjoy the cooler weather right before summer. Next meeting will be at Astral Brewing Saturday, 2/18 and in celebration of J9's birthday, style of the month is Belgian Beers. (I'm secretly hoping Phil brings back his Lefe Blonde so that we can savor it again and use it as a talking point for the Belgian styles) As Janine does, I too love Belgians and hope to see some homebrewed examples shared at the upcoming meeting. Based on the survey that we sent out at the beginning of January, that's also what other Rangers look forward to most, sampling homebrew!



As I look at my own upcoming brewing, Saison is getting pushed back a little further than I hoped but I'm looking

FROM THE EDITOR



Greetings, Foamies! Take me to your lager! We are entering a strange dimension known as the Second Issue of 2023. So far, so good! We even received an article submission after last month's issue! And, from out of town, no less! Mike Retzlaff from New Orleans reached out and said he missed our monthly rag and was happy to see its resurrection.

In fact, he was so glad, he submitted a very nice article on Small Beers. See pages 4 - 5 for the article. Thank you, Mike! Other mentionables include photos from last month's meeting that I stole on the web. These were taken by Fearless Leader Hayden. The Secondary Fermenter's better half submitted some notes on last month's meeting which helped tremendously with the About Last Month column. We have a few updates to the Calendar you may wish to check out. Always happy to receive Newsletter submissions (Oooh! Sounds dirty, doesn't it!). Still at sales@defalc0s.com

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(From Out of the Waz page 1)

forward to splitting the batch with spices in one half, no spices in the other and sharing with the club in the future. After those brews, I'm back on my IPA and hoppy beer brewing which I had strayed away from in the last couple years. COLD IPA IS ON THE RISE! Have you brewed one? Any tips to share? Would love to hear what everyone's brewing through the Foam Rangers email DL or on the facebook page.

Cheers y'all,
Waz



**The Priory Inn
Tetbury
Gloucestershire**

(i.e. filler)

The Foam Ranger Newsletter Urquell is published quasi-monthly by the Foam Rangers Homebrew Club. The editor is grateful for any articles or photos (Puleeze!). Newsletter Editor: Scott "Was Bozo" Birdwell (sales@defalc0s.com)

(From About Last Month page 7)

some great beers that everyone enjoyed based on the overheard compliments. Stacey a close second (doppelbock).

- **Dixie Cup 2023 - will be 40th Comp, need to make this one special. Venue confirmed (date?), planning committee needed!**
- **Request for volunteers for open club positions: Scrivner, Lone Star Circuit Coordinator, Dixie Cup Coordinator, and maybe one or two more.**

The Main Event

Kyle Tennyson, Former Foam Ranger, Chief Brewing Officer & co-owner at Frost Town, gave us a very in-depth walkthrough of their whole brewery. From the grain storage/mill room, to allowing us up on the brew deck of their 15 bbl brewing system, review of the fermentation setup as well as their keg filled cold room. Their pre-prohibition lager Southern Style was the recipe he walked through as he provided us the tour. This was a very refreshing lager made from a blend of 6 row, flaked maize, additional malts, german hops and a lager yeast. This was followed by a Q&A session. Thanks, Kyle!

ITS OUR 2023 FOAM RANGERS CLUB SURVEY!

The Officers are interested to hear your feedback regarding what this year's club meetings should focus on and how can we get everyone more involved.

This survey takes 3 - 4 minutes of your time - so sit back, crack a beer and please fill this out for our benefit. The link is below. Please just copy & paste into your web browser:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSctWdMmGBpaxUscLYinrGT9zC4E390ZQBJ1lpctBJwh0oZwSA/viewform?usp=sf_link

Calendar of Events

Feb 18 - Foam Ranger Monthly Meeting Astral Brewing 1 - 3 pm

Feb 25 - OpFerm Award Ceremony

March ? - March Foam Ranger Monthly Meeting

March 18 - Bluebonnet Awards Event (Dallas)

May 6 - National Homebrew Day (TBD)

May 20 - Mashtronauts Lunar Rendezbrew Awards (entries open March 1)

June 25 - KGB Big Batch Brew Batch - St. Arnolds (Entry deadline: June 16)

For more Events, go to: <https://foamrangers.com/clubevents.php>

My name is Mike Retzlaff and am a member of Crescent City Homebrewers in New Orleans. I've been a reader of the Brewsletter for a number of years and noticed some time back that it stopped. I was aghast!

I must admit that some of the content has migrated east and found its way into our Ho-pline. It's time for restitution. Attached is an article for your consideration for inclusion in your publication. It's the least I can do to help get this thing back into circulation.

SMALL BEERS

By Mike Retzlaff

Small beers have been around for a long time. They were generally brewed as an alternate to almost non-existent potable water. Creeks and lakes could be contaminated with amoebae and various animal parasites. Cholera and other nasties could leach into dug wells. City life sported neighborhood wells but most of them were barely adequate for clothes washing. Public service announcements containing "boil orders" didn't exist although that's exactly what kept most folks alive.

Small beers have less alcohol and fewer calories but they really aren't diet beers! In the past when they were popular and widespread, some governments greatly reduced the tax rate or exempted such beers from taxation when the alcohol content dipped below a particular level. So, just what is a Small beer? True Small beers have less than 3% abv. Some ran about 1% abv and have been called table beers or dinner ales or even table water in some cultures. They were given to children with their meals as any fermented beverage was safer to drink than water! Small beers were extensively brewed in the American colonies.

"Only a pint at breakfast-time, and a pint and a half at eleven o'clock, and a quart or so at dinner. And then no more till the afternoon, and half a gallon at supper-time. No one can object to that." John Ridd in the novel Lorna Doone

Brewing medium to semi-high gravity beers is normal and the relatively easy thing to do. Most home brewers go through the phase of "how strong a beer can I make?" Eventually, most of us find out, but going to the other extreme is a horse of a very different color and the path seldom chosen. Using subdued malt bills will produce beers with far less alcohol. Too many commercial brewers have turned creative control over to the tunnel vision of their accountants. All that's left is to convince consumers that this pre-processed urine is what they've always wanted and "what it takes to hang with the cool kids."

Traditional Small beers minimize alcohol and therefore calories but can certainly make up

for the lack of mouthfeel with lower attenuation. When brewed correctly and with the right yeast, they can be enjoyable and add much to the limited hours available to share with friends. To intentionally brew a beer with such a low OG is tough. It is quite a feat to feed the mash tun virtually nothing and still produce a beer worth drinking. However, when you plan for it, brewing such a beer with mouthfeel and flavor is not only possible but can be just shy of a sure thing!

The Scots, Brits, Belgians, Germans, and many other brewing cultures have been making such beers for a very long time. In Britain the process used was called parti-gyle. Ordinary Bitter was normally a product of the parti-gyle system as were most Mild Ales. They, and any number of beers, had been the second, third, or even fourth runnings

Historical Louvain White beer used about 50% raw wheat and had an OG between 1.025 and 1.030 SG.

Historical Louvain Peeterman beer used lots of raw wheat and flour. It was brewed to an OG of 1.016 and was lightly hopped with year old cones. As a mixed-ferment in a closed wooden barrel, it usually would emit the odor of ethyl butyrate (pineapple) as it vented.

Grisette was to miners what Saison was to farm workers. Grisette could be brewed from 1.004 - 1.028 SG for Catégorie 3 but could rise to over 1.060 for a Catégorie 1 beer.

The German tax code lists a simple or basic beer with an OG of 1.008 - 1.022 SG. The next step up the list is a Tap or Draft beer with an OG of 1.028 - 1.032 SG.

My introduction to Small beers came when I brewed a number of Bremerweisse and Grätzer beers at less than 3% abv. These beers were very drinkable and didn't taste thin or watery. Perhaps I'd just gotten lucky but doing my homework, developing an understanding, and not deviating from what seemed to be a well marked path surely helped a bit.

Small beers will never give you the mouthfeel of a Doppelbock or a Wee Heavy but that's not in their nature. The concept is to create wort which will produce a beverage low in alcohol but still retains flavor and drinkability. It seems a bit nebulous until you break the whole thing down. Carbohydrates have 4 calories per gram. Ethyl alcohol has 7 calories per gram. Reducing the alcohol but sustaining or even boosting the carbs of the beer will maintain mouth feel and actually make everything work. There is a point at which the carbs can cause the beer to become overly sweet and cloying. All you have to do is find that point and back away from it a bit! Simple, huh? Well, maybe not but the brewing of Small beers is just another challenge for a home-brewer with moxie. These beers can really test the skill level of any brewer as there are fewer places in the finished beer for flaws to hide.



**Pictures from
the January
meeting at
Frost Town
Brewing**

**Special Thanks
Kyle
Tennyson!**



ABOUT LAST MONTH (and other conspiracy theories)

Last month we met at Frost Town Brewing near downtown. 13 Rangers attended. Parts of town (especially NW Houston) had horrible rain, making travel iffy, at best. Luckily Frost Town Brewing was pretty dry and comfortable and a good time was had by those who made the trek.

Topics of Discussion (Taken from Rosie's meeting minutes)

- An announcement made that 2023 meetings will focus on homebrews, homebrewing, and supporting the local host brewery (taking break from bringing "other" commercial brews in to sample)
- The CIA's Operation Fermentation is Feb 25 - any Foam Ranger entries? Would be great to support our neighbors!
- We held a Mini homebrew comp - 6 entries! People's Choice winner - Phil Verdieck with an American Pale Ale that came in under 5% abv. Rumor has it that Phil came in with

continues on page 3



I Want To Be Somebody!

Sign Me Up to Become A Member!

Foam Rangers Homebrew Club



Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Mobile Phone _____ Other Phone _____

E-Mail Address _____

Amount Paid _____

Membership Fees per year \$30 individual/\$60 Family

Paid between December 1 - December 31 \$25/\$55 (Pay early & save!)

Paid between January 1 - June 30 \$30/\$60

Paid between July 1 - September 30 \$25/\$55

Paid between October 1 - November 30 \$30/\$60 (Includes the next year!)

Please Make Checks (Remember them?) Payable To: The Foam Rangers