



October/November 2002

A Monthly Publication of the High Plains Draughters Homebrew Club

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High Plains Draughters
C/O Joe Bocock
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The Draught Card

Oktoberfest 2002

Ken Adamson

The only thing that tastes better than a beer at Oktoberfest is another one!

Origins

Oktoberfest had its origins in a celebration held in 1810 to honor the wedding of Prince Ludwig of Bavaria and Princess Therese of Sachsen-Hildburghausen – it was a huge spectacle accompanied by a mountain of food and a river of Munich beer. It had been celebrated every year since 1819.

O' zapft is!

The Draughters' annual homage to the Bavarian lifestyle saw as many as 12 kegs of beer, and an unbelievable number of bottles of homebrew. The refreshments included at least two varieties of Root Beer, an Alt, a Pumpkin Ale, a 15 gal keg of Spaten Lager, and many, many others.

Food!

Nothing complements a good German lager like good German food – and, boy, did we have some food – Bratwurst, sauerkraut, potato salad, cheese galore – more bratwurst, sauerkraut – oh yeah, there was also some bratwurst there – a great kettle of it, compliments of the chef – the unstoppable Mr. Bocock.

Our own Beer Tent

The Draughters owe their thanks to Mr. Bocock, again, for his generous donation to the Medieval Society for the use of their beautiful tent – a must for any Oktoberfest celebration.

Steins and Such

Of course, the traditional vessel from which to quaff your brew of choice while at Oktoberfest is the stein. Fortunately, if one arrived early enough (which I did not!), one could have purchased a stein from our club

auction.



Special thanks to all who participated in this year's Oktoberfest to make it an unqualified success! Prosit!

Spotlight on Style

Bitter and English Pale Ale

Putting out consistently good Ales is something that every homebrewer, fledgling and master alike, should aspire toward. Accomplishing this requires a keen focus on the fundamentals of brewing and attention to detail. Here, we present the flagship of all beer styles : the Bitter or English Pale Ale.

These should be of low carbonation, unfiltered for fullness of body, with a pronounced nut-like malt character. A touch of woodiness is acceptable, and a good, tight head is a must. It should

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What Every Beer Lover Needs To Know (About)

The Reinheitsgebot

At the very least you should know how to pronounce it: "Rine-Hites-gaBoat"

Most Americans are probably familiar with the "German Beer Purity Law" only because it has been mentioned in Samuel Adams beer commercials. Not long ago, it was completely irrelevant to the American beer scene, but the current popularity of micro and craft brews in the U.S. and Canada has made "Reinheitsgebot" a meaningful term in discussions about North American beer.

So what is this Reinheitsgebot thing all about?

First of all, it should be understood that the Reinheitsgebot is the oldest food regulation in the world and that it still exists today. Translated to English, the word "Reinheitsgebot" essentially means "purity law." The complete, original text of The Reinheitsgebot is included below.

In the middle ages brewing beer was a primitive science, but by the 15th Century it was also becoming a very lucrative industry. Brewers looking to make greater profit often used cheaper ingredients of mixed variety to achieve their financial goals. Unscrupulous brewers would add fruit, herbs, eggs, tree bark, fish bladders and who knows what else to their beer. As a result, beer was frequently foul tasting and occasionally poisonous. In a beer-loving country like Bavaria a purity law was desperately needed.

The first regulation appeared in Augsburg, Bavaria sometime in the 1490's. Establishments that served bad beer or dishonest amounts of beer would be fined and their beer destroyed. In 1516, Bavaria's reigning Duke Wilhelm IV expanded the Augsburg regulation to cover all of Bavaria, creating the world's first Pure Food & Beverage Law. The "Reinheitsgebot." Thanks to the regulation, Bavarian beers quickly became renowned for their superior quality. Eventually all the lands of Germany enforced the regulation.

The Reinheitsgebot stated, in brief, that only pure and essential ingredients be used in beer. The only ingredients allowed were barley, hops and water. Today, of course, yeast is also recognized as a vital ingredient. Yeast was a brewing element whose effect was not understood at the time the law was written. In the 1500's, brewers utilized naturally occurring, airborne yeast and attributed fermentation to the will of God. In fact, lambic beers are still produced this way.

The Reinheitsgebot Today

As a result of the Reinheitsgebot, German beer became world renowned for its quality and consistency. German beer still enjoys the reputation to this day. There are more than 900 breweries in Germany and they all adhere to the purity law. In the German beer tax law, which regulates beer production, it states: "For the preparation of beer, only malt, hops, yeast and water can be used." The Reinheitsgebot lives!

Because of the free movement of goods within the European Union, the sale of imported beers that are not brewed in conformity with the Purity Law has recently been permitted in Germany. They can contain other raw materials (such as unmalted barley, maize, rice or millet) or additives, although they must be clearly labeled. These impure, imported beers have not sold well in Germany

because of poor consumer acceptance.

Although the United States Food and Drug Administration would not allow a brewer to produce an unsafe product, they do nothing to prevent the use of non-traditional ingredients in beer. Truth be told, there are plenty of American craft and micro brewers which use non-essential ingredients to give their beer a distinctive character or a marketing advantage. Although many popular craft and micro brews do not meet the German purity standard, they are admirable, "real" beers in their own right.

Other American brewers, who manufacture their product on a massive scale, use ingredients that are not traditionally associated with beer. Although many of the ingredients may be untraditional or even inorganic, they are not immediately poisonous and

produce no noticeably nasty taste. One could argue that the goal is to use unessential ingredients to give the beer as little flavor as possible.

The Complete Reinheitsgebot Text Translated

We hereby proclaim and decree, by Authority of our Province, that henceforth in the Duchy of Bavaria, in the country as well as in the cities and marketplaces, the following rules apply to the sale of beer:

From Michaelmas to Georgi, the price for one Mass [Bavarian Liter 1,069] or one Kopf [bowl-shaped container for fluids, not quite one Mass], is not to exceed one Pfennig Munich value, and

From Georgi to Michaelmas, the Mass shall not be sold for more than two Pfennig of the same value, the Kopf not more than three Heller [Heller usually one-half Pfennig].

If this not be adhered to, the punishment stated below shall be administered.

Should any person brew, or otherwise have, other beer than March beer, it is not to be sold any higher than one Pfennig per Mass.

Furthermore, we wish to emphasize that in future in all cities, markets and in the country, the only ingredients used for the brewing of beer must be Barley, Hops and Water. Whosoever knowingly disregards or transgresses upon this ordinance shall be punished by the Court authorities' confiscating such barrels of beer, without fail.

Should, however, an innkeeper in the country, city or markets buy two or three pails of beer (containing 60 Mass) and sell it again to the common peasantry, he alone shall be permitted to charge one Heller more for the Mass of the Kopf, than mentioned above. Furthermore, should there arise a scarcity and subsequent price increase of the barley (also considering that the times of harvest differ, due to location), WE, the Bavarian Duchy, shall have the right to order curtailments for the good of all concerned.



Brewing With the Boss

Taking the Step to Step Culturing

Steve Law



One of the most essential ingredients in making beer is yeast. Most home brewers are aware that the health and well being of the yeast is one of the major factors that determine the quality of their beer. Most of us

began with packages of dry yeast, and we may (or may not) have “rehydrated” the yeast before pitching. Later, we succumbed to the lure of purer yeast cultures more specifically tailored to the styles we were brewing: we sought out the foil smack packs that had to be “stepped up” in order to be used. This situation created a market for pitchable vials of yeast; theoretically, these obviate the need to step up the culture.

But the next rung up the yeast ladder is one that involves a return to the procedures necessitated by the smack pack approach to yeast cultures: you want to step up your vial of “pitchable” yeast! There are several good reasons for doing this. First, you can never be certain that the yeast in that vial are ready to do their job. Always check the expiration date on the vial. Even then, the yeast may have suffered some temperature shock in their voyage from the manufacturer to the retailer. Second, stepping up a culture significantly enhances the cell count and gives you the reassurance that the yeast are ready to do their thing. The more yeast cells you have the better. This assures that “lag time” (with all its potential problems) will be minimized. The stepped up culture has moved the yeast from a state of dormancy into their reproductive mode. Thus, when they hit “yeast paradise” in your carboy, they are ready, willing, and able to do their job.

A third, and often under-appreciated, reason for stepping up a vial of pitchable yeast is to properly acclimate the yeast to

the specific environment they will be working in. Yeast health is dramatically effected by what is called “osmotic pressure.” Basically, this is the relative pressure on the yeast walls (both inside and outside pressures). A relatively light wort of 1.045 degrees has a very different environment from something that is 1.090. Yeast need to be ready to support themselves in the wort that they are introduced into. Their cell walls are programmed to either thin out (in the case of lighter osmotic pressure) or thicken up (in the case of higher osmotic pressure). Therefore, in order to avoid some of the by-products of stressed-out yeast, your step culture needs to be an approximate reflection of the wort you will have in your carboy.

The solution to all this? Make a \$10 investment in a 1,000 ml Erlenmeyer flask and a number 9 stopper. It’s one of the best things you can do for your yeast. The procedures are simple. Put some dry malt extract (1/4 – 1/2 cup) in the flask and fill halfway with water. I generally add a small pinch of yeast nutrient and a single hop pellet as well. Heat on the stove (watching for boil-overs). Set on low and simmer for 30 minutes. While the flask is simmering, sanitize your stopper and a bubbler. When the time is up, get your bubbler ready: (1) put only enough sanitizing solution in the bubbler to make sure it works, and (2) take a

small piece of paper towel soaked in grain alcohol and stuff it into the top of the bubbler. The

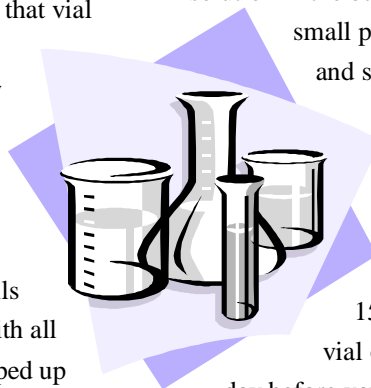
reason for this last step becomes very apparent when you cool down the flask (it will be sucking air big time!). With the stopper in place, set the flask in a pot of water with a tray of ice cubes. About

15 minutes later you’ll be ready to add your vial of yeast and swirl it up. If this is done the

day before you brew, you’ll have a remarkable culture going by the time you’re ready to pitch your yeast.

Do yourself and your yeast a favor: if you make them happy before you brew, they’ll make you happy after you brew.

Now *that* is symbiosis at its best!



Nagode's Boondoggle

Tim Nagode

The brewing of the recent AHA COC Belgian Strong Ale competition was something of a boondoggle, one of those “good-beer-gone-bad”-gone-good stories. You probably don't want to brew this puppy exactly as it originally was, but there are some lessons to be learned from the story.

The beer, a Belgian Triple, was brewed at a garage brew held to commemorate the Trail Boss's 200th brew. Now garage brews typically don't yield winners for any number of reasons, one being the drinking-while-brewing that most of us avoid. But I digress... Here's the grain bill for the 5 gallon batch:

18 lbs. Belgian Pils malt

1 lb. Vienna malt

.5 lb. Carapils malt

The grain was crushed, mashed in to hit a saccharification temperature of 148 degrees and the tun was chucked in the back of the car (along with the other brew gear) for the trip to Steve's.

The gear was set up upon arrival, and sparging commenced with 170 degree water. First-wort hopping was done with an ounce of Saaz. The boil lasted about 100 minutes with a bittering addition (60 minutes) of an ounce and a half of 8.5 AAU Perle, a flavor addition (15 minutes) of 1 ounce of 3.8 Saaz and an aroma addition (2 minutes) of the same. The wort was chilled and racked to a 5 gallon carboy. The OG was 1.098. Here's where the boondoggle starts...

Meeting Minutes

October 25, City Arts Building, OKC Fairgrounds

Despite a newsletter snafu (entirely my fault), we had a decent turn out at the October meeting. It was determined that we had about 70 people at the Oktoberfest celebration, and raised \$215 at the club auction. Well done! We discussed the problems which beset the club's plans to attend Wild Spirits – plans which culminated in the ABLE commission's storm troopers putting the squash on our charitable event. Needless to say, the Nature Conservancy was apologetic.

Much discussion was had regarding the purchase and resale of some club glasses, both snifter and pub glasses. Details regarding the pricing were discussed, and some specifics were discovered since.

The theme of the night was “Spooky Brew” – a clinic on common flaws in beer. Thanks to Bob for a great presentation, as always!

Steve had a couple quart starters of Westmalle yeast he'd cultured and I was going to use one of them. We wound up having to split the starters three ways to accommodate all those needing yeast. Lesson #1 – when brewing strong beers, PITCH A BIG STARTER CULTURE.

So I'm pitched and ready to aerate. In my semi-tipsy condition, Steve convinces me that shaking the carboy 300 times will not only provide sufficient aeration, but will not hurt my back. Lesson #2 – when brewing strong beers, AERATE THE BE-JESUS OUT OF THEM.

So the fermentation goes on for about a week and a half, then stops. I take a gravity, it's still 1.045, so I start on a rousing regime, giving the carboy a big ole' swirl twice a day. After a week, I take another gravity. It's 1.041. At a loss for what to do and with other things taking over my life, I throw in the towel, put a t-shirt over the carboy and set it in an out-of-the-way corner.

After a month or so I remember it and decide to check the gravity. It's 1.004. It's a good thing I didn't light a match over the carboy, it would have blown like a 5-gallon Molotov cocktail. At a loss for what to do and with other things taking over my life, I chuck an ounce of Saaz pellets and an ounce of EK Goldings pellets in and put it back in the corner.

After a month or so I remember it and decide I should try to rescue it. I hit it up with about 12 ounces of maltodextrin to add body and bottle it. I tried it about 3 months later... KAPOW, very angular, strong alcohol, huge Belgian wildness and massive hop character. It was so huge it staggered many jaded Belgo-philies in the club. Eventually it mellowed out until it was quite excellent. So try it out, though I'll not do it quite this way again. Hopefully...

Scotland Yards (of Ale)

Tim Nagode

After returning from a recent golfing expedition to Scotland, the Trail Boss has prevailed upon me to do a write-up on golf and the beverages experienced. Now I'm sure some of you could care less about the golf part, but it must be included for the narrative's sake.

The Golf

The trip was taken by myself, two of my brothers and my father, sort of a once-in-a-lifetime trek to the hallowed home of golf, St. Andrews, located in the Fife of Scotland. The rallying cry of the trip became "Vini Infumo Vici", which roughly translates to "We Drank, We Smoked, We Conquered." That is, we drank many pints and drams, we smoked at least four cigars a day and we conquered the best golf courses the Fife had to offer... OK, we drank, we smoked, we had our asses kicked by the ludicrously constricted fairways, the worst-from-hell rough, sodded pot bunkers with walls higher than your head and greens big enough to land a 747 on. Because we crammed two 18-hole rounds into each day, we had to relieve our barking dogs and blistered hands each and every evening. This occurred in one of two kinds of places: the golf course clubhouse or the local pub.

The Clubhouse

Golf course clubhouses are a bit on the formal side here in the states and are doubly so in Scotland. In general, the rules were quite strict, i.e., no spikes allowed, no hats could be worn, general rules of civility must be strictly adhered to, etc. The clubhouses themselves were always impeccably clean and tastefully appointed. The staff was middle-aged, unfailingly polite, and usually possessed of a very keen and

dry sense of humor. The number of beers they offered were few, but were very fresh and excellent. All were on tap, some pushed with nitro, though several cask ales were encountered as well. Scotch offerings were also limited, usually 5 or 6 excellent choices.

The Pubs

The pubs are a different story. They were generally much rowdier with a wide variety of customers, atmosphere and beverages. St. Andrews is also a college town, so the local pubs were raucous with students in the evenings. They generally had from 5 to 8 taps serving Scottish ales, Guinness and Tennant's Lager. They also had special taps for "Extra Cold Guinness", so I guess the American preference for icy cold beers is making an inroads there. They also served liquor and a number of the kids were drinking a tepid concoction of diet Dr. Pepper and vodka. Go figure. One pub we visited touted "the largest number of cask ales in St. Andrews." Indeed, they had about 25 beer engines going, though they were serving only 8 or 9 different beers. The pubs also served food, some of it spectacularly bad. In general the heavy meat pies and such were just not good and we gave up on them immediately. The fish and chips were usually quite good but we finally resorted to eating steak at every dinner because it's hard to screw up a decent, medium-rare fillet. Green vegetables are few and far between. We were there for six days and I can count the number of times green veggies were part of a dinner on half of one hand.

We generally frequented the pubs that were near our accommodations, however we did on one occasion go to a pub after a round at the Golf Club House at Elie, some thirty miles from St. Andrews. The clubhouse was closed for some event and we'd passed a place called The Golf Tavern on a small street

adjacent to the second hole, so of course we HAD to go. It was quaint, homey and crowded by locals, including a gaggle of kids. It had a variety of bitters and Caldonian 80/- on engines and Budweiser Budvar on tap. I hadn't had Budvar on tap before and wasn't really in a lager kind of mood, but I got one for the Old Man. As usual, we were sharing beers with each other and I was knocked flat when I tasted the Budvar. It was one of the best lagers I'd had in a long, long time. Super Saaz nose, great dry-malt backbone, wonderful kettle hop bite and excellent hop flavor, it was outstanding. I think we drank at least three more before we left. After we'd been there for a bit, the place suddenly emptied out into the street and we went to see what was going on, and down the street came the Elie golf club membership on parade, led by a piper and all in kilts. The parade was the opening of the club's annual meeting and this was how it started. Pretty cool.

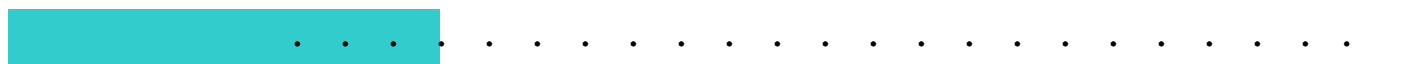
Continued in next month's edition.

Share the Beer!

Have you had a recent beer adventure? Do you have a favorite watering hole in some distant city or country? Please send a short write-up to the editor at krylar@swbell.net



Planning the Next Dav's Assault



Club News

Club Only Competition

Congratulations go to Tim Nagode and Steve Law for their sweep of the club-only Belgian Strong Ale competition. Mr. Nagode took top honors with a Trippel, with Steve's Dark Strong taking second, and his Dubbel coming in third. In fact, either Steve or Tim took the top eight positions. The fix is in, gentlemen! The club's purpose now is to dethrone either, or both of them, so get ready!

The next COC style is Fruit/Spice/Vegetable Beer, followed by Bitter and English Pale Ale – every brewer in the club should enter something into the Bitter and English Pale competition, as these are good “starter” beers for new brewers and excellent beers to hone your brewing skills on for experienced brewers.

Winner's Circle

Adamson's Burton IPA

4oz British Pale Malt

4oz 60L Crystal

6.6lb M&F Light Malt Extract

1lb Light DME

1oz Centennial 11%AA

3.5oz EK Goldings 5%AA

6 gal “Burtonized” water

WLP023, Burton Ale Yeast from pint starter.

Water Treatment – Added Calcium Sulphate. Steep crushed grains 30 minutes in 2 gal 130-135F “Burtonized” water – increase to 148F for 30 minutes, increase to 170F for 5 minutes. While this is going on, heat the rest of the water to boiling, stir in liquid malt extract and dry malt extract. Time it so that you are reaching boil as your

mini-mash is completing. Drop 1oz Centennial at 60 minutes.

Hopping schedule follows - .5oz @ 45min, .5oz @ 30min, .5oz @ 15min and Irish Moss. Chilled with immersion chiller to 80F, then whirlpooled to collect break material in center of kettle.

Wort was siphoned off of break with a spray attachment on the end of the siphon hose, then aerated by shaking for 20 minutes. Pitch yeast and 1oz EK Goldings. Ferment @ 70F took 1 week, during which I skimmed the yeast cake three times (retained second skimming for a really good Porter). Rack to secondary, toss in 1oz EK Goldings. Wait 1 week. Prime with 4oz corn sugar.

“Style” Continued from Page 1

have a smooth, creamy texture with brilliant clarity. with no astringency. This beer should be served cool, not cold, as this will enhance many of its other features.

Most will prefer Marris Otter malt, but any pale malt can be used as long as other measures are taken to compensate for shortcomings in your malt base. For extract brewers, a mini mash is essential, with the addition of a little crystal malt, and a dash of Munich for some additional roundness. English hops are a must – Goldings, Fuggles, and East Kent Goldings are excellent choices. Challenger makes an excellent bittering hops, as well.

OG: 1.046 – 1.065, IBUs: 30-65, FG: 1.011 – 1.020, SRM: 6-14, ABV: 4.4 – 6.2% Commercial Examples: Fullers 1845, Bass (bottled), Royal Oak (from BJCP)

Excerpted from:
<http://www.allaboutbeer.com/features/realhome.html>

Coming Events

November 15

**7:00pm, City Arts Building
 HPD Club Meeting**

Bring your entries for the Fruit/Spice Beer COC

December 2

COC Natl Judging

December 13

Time TBD

HPD Christmas Party

Tim Hibner hosts again this year, directions will be available soon – until then, brush up on your Salsa dancing!

December 1 – January 11

**Big Beers, Belgian and
 Barleywine Festival, Vail, CO**

Homebrew competition for big beers, Belgians and barleywines, sponsoring club: High Point Brewing. Deadline: 1/3/03. Fees: \$5, Awards Ceremony: 1/10/03 Contact: Laura L. Lodge, Phone: 970-524-1092/970-949-0600, Email: bigbeersfestival@hotmail.com

January 13 – February 8, 2003

Lenexa, KS

**Kansas City Bier Meister's 20th
 Annual**

Guest Speaker: Charlie Papazian, Sponsoring Club: Kansas City Bier Meisters, Deadline: 2/8/03, Fees: \$6 for 1-5 entries, \$5 for 7 or more, Awards Ceremony: 2/22/03, Contact: Jackie Rager and Robin Beck, Phone: 913-894-9131, Email: irager@swbell.net, Email: <http://kcbiermeisters.org>

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January 10, 2003
Time/Place TBD
Bitter and English Pale COC
Judging

January 20, 2003
Rochester, MN
Bitter and English Pale Natl
Judging

Sponsoring Club: Minnesota
Timberworts, Contact: Leo Vitt,
Phone: 303-447-0816, x.121,
Email: lvitt@yahoo.com

February 14- February 28, 2003
Irving, TX
Bluebonnet Brewoff

Deadline: 2/14/03 – 2/28/03, Fee:
\$7-9, Awards Ceremony: 3/21/03 –
3/22/03

News from OZ

What a surprise when I opened my email a few weeks ago and discovered an email from none other than Bryan Myers – an expatriate member of HPD, now living in New Zealand. I've excerpted his email for the benefit of our club members:

Thanks also for the kind words in recent newsletters about those musty old bottle of mead I left behind (I actually still have a few bottles of most of that stuff here also!).

I'm still brewing over here - not as often as I'd like (I have to make time for playing with my 2-year-old grandson Joshua, see attached cute pic), but fairly often. I try to stay involved in the brewing scene when I can. I am the New Zealand organiser for the Homebrew Tri-Nations, which is a competition between New Zealand, Australia and South Africa. It was started as a friendly rivalry last year by a South African brewer named Ant Hayes (there is a huge annual rugby competition between

these three countries, that's where the name comes from). Each nation selects their three best homebrews, and the host nation judges those nine beers.

Ant has a web page here with last year's results:

<http://www.geocities.com/anthayes/trinations.html>

New Zealand won last year, and this year we play host. My job is to organise the NZ 'leg' as well as the finals judging (this year), collect the entries, gather judges, etc. Maybe this year I'll make the NZ top three (I came close, last year).

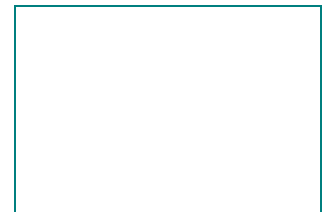
Anyway, feel free to snip some of this for the newsletter if you like, or if you want more details about the NZ brewing scene, I'll try to help if I can.

cheers,

Brian

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Our next meeting is November 15th at City Arts – 7pm