
LIVIN' THE BREWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH TEXAS HOME BREWERS ASSOCIATION
VOLUME XXVII ISSUE III



PINTS OF INTEREST

- THE NEXT CLUB MEETING IS MAR. 13TH AT ALAN WICKWERS IN PLANO
 - STAY TUNED WE ARE PLANNING A CHICKS RULE BREWDAY
 - BLUEBONNET HERE GRAB A BEER AND VOLUNTEER —MAR. 23-24TH
 - THE CELTIC BREWOFF IS COMING IN APRIL —ENTRIES DUE APRIL 12TH
 - THE NEXT CLUB COMPETITION IS SCOTTISH ALES
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Prez Sez

By Chuck Homola

Wow – where do I start – there is so much going on this time of year. Let's start with the Bluebonnet competition. We just completed the second week of judging and we set a new record for entries once again. While its nice to see this much interest in the competition – it means we will need more judges than ever. If you want any interest in judging – even if it is the first time – please come out and help – I promise it will be a good experience – there are many experienced judges that new folks can be paired up with – you will be amazed at how much the veteran judges enjoy mentoring the new guys/gals. Please give it a try – I know I was happy that I did a few years ago.

We also have quite a few folks in our club that are heavily involved in the competition again this year – positions including but not limited to: Director, Head Judge, Head Steward, Overall Data guys, Beer Wrangler, Raffle Lead and the list goes on. These folks are putting a lot of effort into to making this a huge success once again this year – so please support them and the other member clubs if you can give up a little time on the coming weekends. We will also be looking for Bluebonnet volunteers.

I have caught a bad (or maybe good) case of the brewing bug this year – already got about 6 batches done. Once Bluebonnet settles down – I am hoping to get a bunch more in. This should set me up with some entries for the other Lone Star Circuit competitions looming on the horizon. So even though Bluebonnet is in the books – don't forget that it is just the tip of the iceberg for the year.

There are certainly a lot of other things going on locally in the DFW area – we are currently working on club functions at the Holy Grail, Peticolas Brewing and the ever interesting Burning Beer event. We are also looking into events at Deep Ellum Brewing and Franconia – more on those later.

So what is this “Burning Beer” thing you speak of? Well.....for those that were at the last club meeting I threw the idea out there and we seem to be getting a decent response. It is not entirely planned but here are some quick snippets on it: we are shooting for the second weekend in May at a location just outside of Sherman. It is essentially a beer centric campout for that weekend. We would need to limit it to about 30-40 folks to minimize the impact on the environment. This leads to the name Burning Beer – a play on the Burning Man event. One of the main tenants of that event each August in Nevada is to leave no trace when it is over – and we will certainly strive for the same. We will be able to fish for bass and catfish in the ponds and

campout. We will also have a large campfire and we are toying with the idea of brewing an archeological beer recipe (a Bronze Age Celtic) over the campfire. Folks would bring whatever they need to eat/drink and there is a house nearby that would be available as needed. We are looking into providing some sort of restroom facilities for those in need of at least some creature comforts. We'll see where this goes – but I hope it can become an annual sustainable event for us if it works out.

There are also many interesting beer events around the country that many of our members attend throughout the year. I'm keeping a keen eye on the evolving events leading up to Dark Lord Day at 3 Floyds in Indiana – if I am lucky enough to get tickets again this year – this will be 3 in a row! Please let us know of trips you all are planning – we'd like to track these on the website so we can all enjoy from afar.

One last thing I'd like to throw out to everyone – we have had a lot of new interest in the club lately which I am really excited about – let's go out of our way to involve the new folks at our many events and make them feel welcome up front. We have a great club that is located in an area that is starting to bloom in the ever expanding Craft Beer movement – we have the makings of something very special right now and I hope we all can make this a huge year for our club in addition to the beer culture we all embrace.

A quick mention to our friends at Franconia who suffered a difficult situation recently we wish the best and a speedy recovery. Dennis has been a big supporter of the club and we look forward to working together in the coming months.

BREW ★ ENTER ★ JUDGE ★ WIN
THE CONTESTS OF THE LONE STAR CIRCUIT!

2012 EVENTS

BLUEBONNET BREWOFF
ALAMO CITY CERVEZA FEST
CELTIC BREWOFF
BIG BATCH BREW BASH
LUNAR RENDEZBREW
LIMBO CHALLENGE
CACTUS CHALLENGE
DIXIE CUP



WWW.LONESTARCIRCUIT.COM

Chicks Rule Brewday

By The Cougar Brewers

Historically, brewing was a female chore as a way of providing a safe water supply and a form of sustenance. The brewing went commercial capacity the men took over. So, don't let these guys with beards scare you off from brewing.

We are planning a women's brew day sometime this summer to expand the knowledge of the women in the club. If you are interested in attending we are looking at a coming Sunday. Dates are still in air but we want to have beer ready for the Queen of Beer competition this fall.

The Queen of Beer Women's Homebrew Competition is open to all non-commercial, home brewed beers, meads, and ciders produced by persons of female gender. Beer, mead, and cider produced by or with the assistance of persons of the male gender are not eligible.

"Assistance" is defined as: coaching during the brewing process, measuring ingredients, performing chemical reaction and/or timing calculations, racking, bottling or in any other way manipulating wort or fermented product.

Lifting of heavy equipment or full brewing vessels, milling of grain and operation of a capper device are permitted.

We will keep you posted. Watch next month's newsletter or visit a club function for more details.

Melinda Beyer and Kim Rhea
— The Cougar Brewers

COC-Stouts Results

First - Kent McBride - American Stout
2nd - Jay Ellsmore - Dry Stout
3rd - Jimmy Orkin - American Stout

(see page 8 for standings)

Education Station

By Aaron Wolin

Walter Hodges provided a water filtering demonstration on his February 18th Brew Day. Water filtering helps remove unwanted minerals and chemicals, which results in a cleaner beer and prevents off flavors. Walter explained the differences between standard carbon filters and his RO water filtration system.

A carbon filter runs water through a reservoir holding carbon, which is a natural filter that helps remove water chemicals and impurities. Walter had a great tip to store the carbon filter in the refrigerator after use, which will prevent any trapped water from molding. A carbon-based filter can be purchased at any home improvement store for a small cost.

Walter's RO system consists of three filters that remove more impurities and minerals than a single carbon filter, and a final membrane allows only small water molecules to pass through while stopping larger compounds. Due to all the filters, the water takes a long time to run through the system and outputs about 2 gallons an hour. An RO system costs more than a single carbon-based filter, but also produces a very clean water with zero-readings in minerals and chemicals. Anybody who has brewed during the summer knows that the Texas water can be pretty harsh, so starting with RO water can provide a significant boon to your brews!

There is no education demos scheduled for March, since there is no March Brew Day. We do still need volunteers for April!

Aaron Wolin
Minister of Education

If you want to volunteer to teach a brew day session or suggest a topic you would like to learn, please send an email to education@nthba.org.

A Not So Gastro Pub

By Anonymous

After waiting since spring of 2011 for their grand opening the Mad Tavern finally opened its doors. Located with a bunch of other restaurants at the corner of Preston and Frankford the tavern is easy to miss. Foodies and beer geeks have maintained anticipation for almost a year. The place advertised 30 drafts served with fine food. They also would feature a selection of 120 beers.

A group of us visited on opening night. Mad Tavern indicated by a Mad Hatter theme from Alice in Wonderland. Sends visitors go down the hole with an upside down table as the ceiling fixture. Along with this centerpiece there is a curiously small rabbit tucked in the rafters.

Unfortunately that's about as exciting as it gets. My guess is financial difficulties delayed what one might expect. The Mad Hatter theme stopped short of wonderland. The interior was average and the beers list was nothing special. They have some decent Belgians and some other drinkable beers but nothing you can't get at other beer pubs. I don't mean to be too hard on them – it's a decent place, the staff is friendly and it seems like they are trying. For the beer geeks looking for a rotator tap and extensive handles of Texas beer, Mad Tavern has yet to foster great relations with distributors. As for the food it's wise not to call burgers, fish & chips, or shepherd's pie 'gastro' creations. I could paint a better picture with our soft pretzel order. What arrived were two very large pre-frozen and re-heated twists of staleness.

Not to be mistaken for gastro pub we stopped by Mad Tavern again the following week. They had a pretty good band and a pretty good crowd. Bottom line, the tavern is a decent place to have a beer. Nevertheless the food is sub-par. The location is convenient and hopefully the beer list will improve over time.

Article rewritten to fit this form.

Competition Corner

By Einar Jonsson

Bluebonnet is drawing to a close we are wrapping up the first round of judging and would like thank everyone who came out to help. This year we received 1800 entries and set another record for beers entered. Make arrangements to attend the festivities if you have not already.

The COCs are growing as well this month we had 21 entries. Those were judge at Chuck's place in Allen. Thank your judges we able to get this complete in the mist of Bluebonnet. If you plan on brewing for Celtic keep in mind that the next NTHBA COC also cover Scottish Ales. We would like see some really good beers in both.

Lone Star Circuit

The Celtic Brewoff is coming up in April. Entries are due by April 12th, and awards will once again be held at the Texas Scottish Festival, on May 5th. The Scottish Festival is a great time, and it will be better this year, since they moved the event from June to May, in order to get out of the heat.

The Big Batch Brew Bash comes up in May. This is a single style competition, put on by the Kuykendahl Gran Brewers and Saint Arnold Brewery. This year's style is Black IPA. Entries are free, and are due May 11th. Entries will be judged at Saint Arnold Brewery on May 20th. The winner gets to have their beer made as a future release of Divine Reserve.

NHC

First round entries must be sent to a judging center, and must arrive between March 19th and 28th. Entries can be sent to any of 10 judging centers, but you must send all your entries to a single site. Entry fee is \$10 per entry for AHA members, \$15 for non-members. The closest judging center to us is Denver. I will arrange a packing party and post details on the NTHBA forum.

Motor Up!

By Wayne Yandell

Motorizing my barley malt mill has been one of those "future projects" for several years. The barley crusher is a nice 2 roller mill with a 7 pound hopper and works just fine when turned with a cordless drill, but it could be better!

I had not planned on doing this project just yet, but plans accelerated when I found an old air compressor by the dumpster. The motor, belt and pulley parts were what I needed to get this going.

The first thing I had to do was cut the brace holding the compressor and motor to the air tank. The next step was to calculate turning ratios. Without changing the pulleys the ratio would have run the barley crusher at over 500 rpm. To get the revolutions down I've ordered a 1.75" pulley for the motor and a shaft bushing. The 9" pulley on the compressor had a 5/8" shaft and the barley malt mill has a 3/8" shaft so I ordered a 5/8 OD x 3/8" ID bushing. I cut a key in it to act as a shim on the mill pulley. This will get the mill speed down to 334 rpm. Still a little high but slower than I've milled with the drill on occasion.

I'm in the process of designing the cabinet and figuring out how I want to position the whole setup. My first thought was to place the whole assembly on top of the cabinet. I've decided to mount it inside the cabinet and have the hopper under the top surface. This will allow me to make a hopper extension and to have a flat surface for measuring.

The whole setup will be on wheels to make it easier to move around on brew day.

Cost on this should be less than \$20.00 with the found parts and the few small parts on order.

For pictures of this build go the club forum and look for the "Motor Up" thread under General.

<http://nthba.org/forum/>

Brewing Structures

By Andrew Speer

I recently upgraded my brewing system and thought I would share a few ideas on the topic, in case you too are thinking about putting hard earned cash and effort into your system. To give you a quick idea of where I stand on brewing, I've been brewing for about 1.5 years and have made about 25 beers. After much internet scouring and asking around NTHBA I started thinking of the pros and cons of a single level system vs. a gravity two or three level system.

Single Level:

Pros - 1) Low to the ground so kettles can be loaded easily even if full or hot; 2) No ladder required to stir or see inside of any kettle; 3) Can brew in my garage since it's low enough to not hit the ceiling.

Cons - 1) Requires one or two pumps, which is an extra cost and another moving part. 2) Takes up more horizontal space than a stacked system; 3) May be harder to move from home to another location than a stacked system due to size.

For a two or three level system, basically flip the pros and cons. I chose a single level system for a few reasons. Moving heavy and sometimes hot kettles onto and off the system is easier. Imagine lifting 5-10 gallons or filtered water to the top level of a three tiered system, especially if you brew without help. I also didn't climb a ladder to stir the mash. I'd be limited to brewing outside with a three-tiered tower as tall as the ceiling.

Those are the obvious reasons to go with a single level stand - here are the not so obvious. To me it's not really a con to have a pump, it's an advantage. Sure, it costs about \$150 but it allows you to do a lot of things: 1) re-circulate hot wort, 2) use a plate or counterflow chiller, and possibly 3) filter beer (I haven't yet but who knows). Re-circulating allows something that's hard to accomplish with standing mashes: temperature consistency. A standing mash will have hot spots, and your read-

ing will be wherever your thermometer is within the mash, unless you stir constantly through the whole mash. Without recirculation I've had a real problem getting the mash temperate up. A direct flame under the mash-tun it hard to control. Temps can vary even when stirring. I've found that recirculating over a direct flame allows me to correct a missed mash temp without overshooting. I also think that re-circulating tends to produce clearer wort. This may be just a myth but a lot of people think that pushing the wort through the grain constantly like a filter should create a cleaner end product.

After deciding on the basic structure it's time to think about RIMS vs. HERMS, if you decide to re-circulate wort. RIMS (Recirculating Infusion Mash System) is basically heating the mash with direct heat, i.e. flame the mash tun. Of course you can't do this if you have an insulated cooler as a mash tun. HERMS (Heat Exchange Recirculating Mash System) is re-circulating the wort through a coil within the HLT, to heat the wort, and this system is said to have an advantage in that your grains are never in contact with direct heat and you will avoid scorching. Picture the wort running from a tube at the bottom of your mash tun to a coil inside the hot liquor tank and back to the top of your mash tun. I like RIMS for simplicity, and I have had no issue with scorching grains as I'm careful to keep the flame low and stir if needed.

Don't hold me to this, but here are some general costs for brew systems in general: Single level stand - about \$500-\$900 depending construction and how the number of burners; Tiered stand is about the same price. The pump will cost \$150; keggles or kettles; about \$60-\$140 each depending on size and conversion. Another option: get the Academy fry cart for \$150 or so and call it a day - it is not as sturdy but a lot of people like it. And a final option spend \$2-3k for an automated smart system from somewhere like <http://www.morebeer.com>.

See you at the next brew day.

Brewmaster #3.0

By Erich Gens

Big Batch #3 is now in fermentors. Let's discuss what went into this brew. It started with Bill Lawrence's forum post. He encouraged the members of NTHBA to enter competitions by brewing a big batch beer that could be entered in the club only competition. I decide to put my money where Bill's mouth is. I need to be careful. Bill has way more mouth than I have money. So that was my direction, brew a beer for competition.

There are many reasons to brew and competition arguably is not even the best one. I've drank and even brewed some really fun beers that would not place in a competition. That said competing is a rewarding sport, worthy of the experience. Even if you score low you walk away with honest feedback. This makes it a worthwhile and an endeavor I am happy to encourage.

An Engineer by temperament, and training I firmly believe in applying scientific method. The Big Batch was an opportunity to run a controlled experiment. Offer everybody the same wort, and get results from varying judges. We can learn some things about yeast strains and managed fermentation. That got me excited about this idea.

I am asking all takers of wort to enter the next COC and the Celtic Brewoff. The choice of style really came down to what was easiest to brew. I went with the Scottish 70/-.

I had several sources on the subject. Greg Noonan's "Scotch Ale (Classic Beer Style)" provided a lot of great history on the style. If I was going for historical accuracy, I would have brewed one of his listings. I was going for a competition winner. I turned to the resource that the big medal winners use, Jamil Zainasheff. I listened to a podcast from the Brewing Network. Jamil's recipe broke away from Scottish history. Traditionally, Scottish Ales used a very simple grain bill with base malt and some crystal. Flavor is produced by caramelizing the first running to develop an amaz-

ing depth. However, according to Jamil, it can also produce flavors that judges can mistake for diacetyl. Thus bad for competition Jamil's recipe uses specialty malts to achieve complex flavors.

I am also contacted Damon Lewis of Cedar Creek Brewing who's brewed the style extensively and won some medals for his home brewing efforts. After some vetting the recipe was modified using chocolate malt as the coloring agent.

Thanks to all of you who helped me brew this thing and clean up afterwards. Thanks to Bill Lawrence for getting the ball rolling. And special thanks to Wayne Yandell for letting us use his big system, and not making too much fun of me when I screwed up.

70/- Scottish Ale

5.0 Gallons at 1.038 OG -15 IBUs -70% Efficiency

Malts:

5 lbs Hugh Baird Pale Malt (Maris Otter)
1 lbs Hugh Baird Crystal Carastan
0.5 lbs Caramel/Crystal Malt -120L
0.5 lbs Honey Malt
0.5 lbs Munich Malt
2oz Pale Chocolate Malt 200L

Mash at 155°F for 60 Minutes

Hops:

0.65 oz Kent Goldings (5.8% AA) —60 Minutes

Yeast:

We had eight takers of wort. I would like to know each yeast and fermentation temperature.

Fail or Sail Brewing

By Barrett Tillman

Since Bluebonnet is behind us as a club. Brew kettles have been cold around my home. I have time to further analyze and drink those beers. The goal is to understand my entries and get to know their faults. The judges comments will later help to refine my process and so I must know the nuances of each brew.

I am sure I've entered some rather lifeless beers along with some admirable interpretations of style. The recipes are my own creations. I can't expect everyone share my palate. Of the ones entered the "Saison Rue" we have been following was entered as a Flanders Red. I had far reaching aspirations having never brewed this style. The entry seemed to be on par with the guidelines. It's no longer a Saison with Brettanomyces. The aroma was complex with some citrus, spice, and pitted fruits. It appears with classic reddish color and clarity. The flavor includes some peppery notes. While the sour quality is low the ale is comparable to Petrus golden. I decided against the Belgian and specialty categories. As my first time entering Bluebonnet it's placed in New Entrants. Fail or sail I am hoping the young sour has a chance.

Waiting for competition results I've also not brewed because I'm trying different post mashing experiments. Using wort from the Big 50 brewdays. The chores assigned for setup and cleanup seemed like a small price to pay for cheap beer.

I took SMaSH wort produced by Wayne Yandell and Scottish 70/- wort from Erich Gen's brewday. Each offered the ability to play with techniques with little cost.

Wayne's wort was split three ways: a twice hopped version, a lite-session, and mini-mashed specialty. Erich's Scottish was used for two beers an original 70 Shilling and an 80 shilling ale.

The SMaSH twice hopped version was boiled an additional 15 minutes and dry hopped. I wanted to push the last hop addition further into the beer's flavor. I added dry hops to regain some hop aroma. Keeping with the SMaSH the hops were all Centennial.

The next effort was to achieve a session beer or lite-SMaSH. I diluted the twice hopped version to a gravity of 1.044. The wort had the same flavor but was lower in gravity. After fermentation much of the malt character was lost and the bottles also had low carbonation. I am guessing there was less remaining fermentables post secondary.

The third wort was a no longer a single malt and single hop brew. I conducted a min-mash of specialty grains then added the SMaSH wort. The specialty version has an agreeable profile that is somewhat disjointed.

Of these experiments I like the twice-hopped version the most. I am wondering what other members have done with the SMaSH wort.

The Scottish round of experiments were much simpler. The batch was split into two. The first batch would remain unaltered the gravity rested at 1.038. I pitched Nottingham dry yeast and let it ferment. The second version would be a Scottish Export 80/- fermented under exact conditions.

The Export was brewed by reducing two gallons from the original wort with 0.5 lbs of dark candy sugar. Jason Starnes had prepared the candy sugar by caramelizing jaggery a natural sugar blended with date juice. The sugar was taken to the point of tar and allowed to cool. The sugar had a smoky flavor. We debated about how much of the burnt candy to add with Jim Lavin and Aaron Wolin. In hindsight the recipe could use more to push the gravity higher. However this would have warranted more hops. The base was relatively low at 15 IBUs. I feared brewing a sweet malt beverage.

If you have items of interest, questions, articles or corrections submit them to secretary@nthba.org.

2012 Competition Schedule

Competition/Style	Entry Deadlines	Awards
Bluebonnet Brewoff All BJCP Beers, Meads, Ciders	February24	March 24
Alamo City Cerveza Fest	March 11	April 14
AHANHC All BJCP Beers, Meads, Ciders	March19-28-FirstRound Early to Mid June-National	May 4 June 23
Celtic Brewoff "Celtic" Beer, Cider and Mead	April12	May 6
May2012COC BJCPCategory9-ScottishandIrishAles	Late April-Club May10-AHA	May19
Big Batch Brew Bash Black IPA	May11	May 20
Lunar Redez-brew All BJCP Beers, Meads, Ciders	Early July	Early August
Limbo Challenge Beers w/SG<1.050	Late July-early August	Late August
Cactus Challenge All BJCP Beer ,Meads, Ciders	Early August	Mid September
August2012COC BJCPCategory12-Porter	TBD-Club TBD-AHA	TBD-AHA
September/October2012COC BJCPCategory6-LightHybrid	TBD-Club TBD-AHA	TBD-AHA
Dixie Cup All BJCP Beers, Meads, Ciders	Mid-late September	Mid-late October
November/December2012COC Ant Hayes Memorial Burton (Olde) Ale BJCPCat19A	TBD-Club November10-AHA	November17-AHA

Brewer Royale Standings

Brewer	Competition	Points
Bill Lawrence	COC-Dark Lagers	3 Points
Kent McBride	COC-Stouts	3 Points
Jesse Thoresen	COC-Dark Lagers	2 Points
Jay Ellsmore	COC-Stouts	2 Points
Leroy Gharis	COC-Dark Lagers	1 Point
Jimmy Orkin	COC-Stouts	1 Point

NTHBA Officers

President

Chuck Homola
president@nthba.org

1st vice president

Einar Jonsson
competitions@nthba.org

2nd vice president

Jason Starnes
socials@nthba.org

Treasurer

David Lee
treasurer@nthba.org

Minister of education

Aaron Wolin
education@nthba.org

Secretary

Barrett Tillman
secretary@nthba.org

Past President

Wayne Yandell
pastpres@nthba.org

Club Brewmeisters

Club Brewmeisters are members who are experienced brewers and have volunteered to help other brewers, new and old, with brewing problems. Give them a call with your questions! Just don't call too late, too early, or during Cowboy games!

Homebrew Headquarters
(972) 234-4411

The Wine Makers' Toy Store
(866)417-1114

North Texas Home Brewers Association

The North Texas Home Brewers Assoc. is a group with an interest in beer in general and home brewing in particular. We meet once a month on the second Tuesday at various locations in the area. Visitors are welcome! "Livin' the Brews" is our newsletter and is published about once a month. We do accept advertising, although the NTHBA, its officers, assignees, and editors are not liable for losses or damages resulting from mistakes or misprints, or any other consequences of advertising in this or any other publication. Ads are \$30 for a 1/3 page and \$50 for a full page, subject to change without notice. Readers are encouraged to submit articles. The deadline for ads and articles each month is 14 days prior to the club meeting.



Visit the NTHBA Website at
www.nthba.org