



LIVIN' THE BREWS



The Newsletter of the North Texas Home Brewers Association, Inc.

Volume XVII, Issue 2

February, 2002



February Meeting Tuesday, Feb 12, 7:00 PM

The Londoner
14930 Midway Road
(South of Beltline Road)
Addison TX 75006
972-458-0747

Prez Sez

By Walter Hodges

During last month's meeting I announced the Big Brew-der program, and dang if I didn't go and forget to hand out the sign-up sheet. Anyway, that gives me a reason to explain it a bit further and hopefully encourage people to sign-up.

I see the Big Brew-der program as an extension of the club Brewmeisters. The club Brewmeisters have volunteered their advice and experience to help other brewers with questions or problems. However, it might be a little uncomfortable for a new member to call someone they don't know. That's where the Big Brew-der comes in.

A Big Brew-der would be assigned to each new member that joins the club. The Big Brew-der would then contact the new member either at the

meeting or by phone or e-mail and introduce himself. At the meeting, the Big Brew-der could talk with the new member, find out what the new member's brewing interest are, and then introduce them to the other club members, including the Brewmeisters, who also may be able to contribute to the new member's experience. The Big Brew-der might also encourage the new member to join in on any upcoming club events or brew sessions by offering to meet them at the event. You would really only be limited by what the new member wants from the club.

The main idea is to make new members feel welcome, get them involved, and above all else, make brewing and the club fun.

March Meeting
Tuesday, Mar 12, 7:00 PM
Location: Flying Saucer

The Club Christmas Party—Unwrapped

By Bo Turton

The Christmas Party went well this year. We had 70-80 people attend and went through all of the food (a ham, a turkey, and a brisket) in the first 15 minutes. We didn't expect that. Fun was had by all that attended. We had 14 kegs of beer. Thanks to everyone that brought their beer to share with the club. Phil Faulconer won the "best of beer" contest and received \$50. We all know that the tap handle design of the woman in bed probably influenced the judges!

If you enjoyed the Keg Christmas party then let's try to have more parties this up-coming year. It will give you an opportunity to share your beer with others and have fun in the process. Attached are some pics of the Christmas party. Please visit our web sites to see all the pictures. Enjoy and happy brewing.

It's Almost Here!!

The Bluebonnet Brew-Off, our biggest local homebrew event of the year, is on March 22nd and 23rd. Don't miss it! Check the official Bluebonnet website for the latest information:

www.welcome.to/bluebonnet

X-Mas Club Party 2001



Nothing like a GOOD Brew



Meeting time



Carving the Turkey
"Thanks Don"



Winners of X-Mas Keg contest



X-Mas Drawing presents



Brewer Royale Update

By Kelly Harris

As usual the Jan. COC was not a heavily entered competition. Not because it was a hard beer style to make or a style that most brewers don't like to make, but because no one knows the style until Dec. and in most cases no one has time to prepare. As the officer in charge of the COC I have addressed the problem and have included the style for most of '03 listed above.

Although we did not have a lot of entries in the Scottish Ale competition, quality was not lacking! We had two beautiful entries, a Export 80/- from Jim Layton (Yummmmm!) and a Heavy 70/- from Rod Slattery (Aaahhhhh!). Special thanks to our volunteer judges for making a tough decision in-

deed! As always, here is the winning recipe. Congratulations Rod Slattery !!!!

Recipe for Rod Slattery's 70 Shilling Scottish Ale:

11.5 lb Klages 2 Row
1.0 lb British Crystal 55L
4.0 lb light Munich
1.0 lb Pauls Chocolate 350L

Treat ~20 gallons of water with 2T Burton Water Salts

Dough in with 2.75 Gallons of 153F Water to hit a temp of 123F. Hold 15 minutes.
Add 2.5 Gallons of boiling water to hit 154F. Hold for 1-2 hours.

Add 3 Gallons of boiling water to hit 169F. Hold for 10 minutes.

Re-circulate until clear.

Put 42grams (1.5 ounces) of

whole Goldings 5.0AA in boil kettle (first wort hopping)

Begin collecting sweet wort, and sparge with enough water to collect 15.5 gallons (Yes, fill that 1/2bbl keg!)

Bring to a boil (90 min. total) With 15 min. remaining, add 28grams (1 ounce) of whole Goldings 5.0AA, and 4 whirlflock tablets (or Irish Moss)

After boil, chill and collect 14 gallons of 1.038 wort into 3 separate corny kegs. Kegs were oxygenated for 5 minutes each, "daisy chained", and pitched 1250ml of Wyeast 1728 starter.

After fermentation starts at room temperature move to chest freezer at 55F. Rack after 1-2 weeks, and let ferment at 55F until finished. FG = 1.012. (3.4% ABV)

Lessons Learned:

Don't harden the water, it accentuates the hops, and not the malty character desired for a Scottish ale. Although Hard or soft water is acceptable for this style, I probably over-hardened it.

An experienced judge recommended 4-6 ounces of roasted malt.

This is a style to be careful with carbonation. Don't overcarbonate.

Note: All first place COC winners, send your winning beer to the AHA COC nationals! www.beertown.org/aha/clubs/clubonly_comp.htm.

The Brewers Calendar 2002

Revised February 2002

January

- 8 January Club Meeting - 7:00 PM**
 Location: The Flying Saucer
 Dallas, TX
 Brewer Royale Competition - Category 5
Scottish Ales

Location: Wilson World Hotel
 Irving, TX

February

- 12 February Club Meeting - 7:00 PM**
 Location: The Londoner
 Addison, TX
- 15 Start accepting entries for Bluebonnet**
- 16 President's Brewday 8AM-until done**
 Location: Bo & Robin Turton's home
- 23 Early entry deadline for Bluebonnet**

July

- 9 July Club Meeting - 7:00 PM**
 Location: The Flying Saucer
 Dallas, TX
 Brewer Royale Competition - Category 1
American Lager

August

- 13 August Club Meeting - 7:00 PM**
 ** Location: The Londoner
 Addison, TX

March

- 3 Late entry deadline for Bluebonnet**
- 9-10 First round judging for Bluebonnet**
- 12 March Club Meeting - 7:00 PM**
 Location: The Flying Saucer
 Dallas, TX
 Brewer Royale Competition - Category 15
Porter
- 21 Bluebonnet kickoff party—Big Buck Brewery**
- 22-23 Bluebonnet Brew-Off**
 Location: Wilson World Hotel
 Irving, TX

September

- 10 September Club Meeting - 7:00 PM**
 Location: The Flying Saucer
 Dallas, TX
 Brewer Royale Competition - Category 18
Strong Belgian Ale
- ?? Cactus Challenge**
 Location: Lubbock, TX

April

- 9 April Club Meeting - 7:00 PM**
 ** Location: The GingerMan
 Dallas, TX
- 12-13 Crescent City Competition & Crawfish Boil**
 Location: New Orleans, LA

October

- 5 Club Oktoberfest Party**
 Location: Bo & Robin Turton's home
- 5-7 Great American Beer Festival**
 Location: Denver, CO
- 8 October Club Meeting - 7:00 PM**
 ** Location: Bavarian Grill
 Plano, TX
- 18-19 Dixie Cup 2002**
 Location: Houston, TX

May

- 4 AHA Big Brew Day & Club Birthday Party**
8AM until done
 Location: Bo Turtons
- 14 May Club Meeting - 7:00 PM**
 Location: The Flying Saucer
 Dallas, TX
 Brewer Royale Competition - Category 7
India Pale Ale
- 18-20 Sunshine Challenge**
 Location: Orlando, FL

November

- 12 November Club Meeting and Election of club officers - 7:00 PM**
 Location: The Flying Saucer
 Dallas, TX
 Brewer Royale Competition - Category 21 & 22
Fruit Beer and Spice/Herb/Vegetable Beer

June

- 11 June Club Meeting - 7:00 PM**
 ** Location: The Old Monk
 Dallas, TX
- 20-22 AHA National Home Brew Conference**

December

- 7 Christmas Party**
 Location: Bo & Robin Turton's home

If you know of any homebrew events and their dates that would be of interest to our club members, please email them to Bill Dubas at bill.dubas@hotmail.com Thanks

** Tentative meeting location (unconfirmed at this time)

Gadgets, Gizmos, and Tips

by Joe Scivicque

Well, I've made it to the second addition of Gadgets, Gizmos, and Tips with lots of information to share.

As I worked on the first article for the January newsletter, I had some anxiety about having enough input to produce future articles. So far, the folks I have asked for assistance have been very helpful. I would like to thank Rod Slattery, Paul Doxey, Chuck Pattie, Bill Dubas, and Walter Hodges for their help. These folks were very generous in sharing their techniques. In fact, they were so generous that I have more information than is needed for one month. So, guys, if the stuff you sent me isn't in this month's article, it will be in the next.

The February and March additions will focus on gadgets for maintaining mash temperature. There is still time if you would like to send me your ideas for insulating mash tuns, stepping temps, or generally controlling heat loss in the mash or lauter tun.

I am also beginning to form up a method of keeping the articles and information rolling. I owe credit to Bill Dubas for suggesting that I pick a future topic and solicit feedback for that topic in the newsletter. So, get those pencils sharpened and keyboards dusted off. The next gadget topic is going to be wort

chillers. If you have a wort chiller that you have built (unique or otherwise), modified a wort chiller you have bought, or you've just come up with a special technique for chilling your wort, let us hear about it. You can contact me via three methods: catch me at a homebrew club meeting (I'll start packing a pencil and notebook to the meetings); send me an e-mail (joseph.scivicque@gte.net); or call me at home (972-412-6722).

On to the gadgets, gizmos, and tips.

Paul Doxey uses a converted keg for a mash tun, and he uses the same keg to boil his wort. When his mash reaches the appropriate temperature, he wraps the tun with a couple of super size bath towels and a space age blanket. If he has any heat loss during the mash, he can apply heat directly to the tun to raise the temperature, unlike those of us who use the picnic cooler method for mashing. He then transfers the mash to a different vessel for lautering. I won't give away his lautering method today. I'll save it for a future article.

Paul said in his experience, he loses less than two degrees after an hour of mashing. The only concern Paul expressed was the potential for a bit of unplanned heat in the form of smoldering towels. He wants to find a non-flammable wrap for his mash tun. If anyone has any ideas, let us know.

Chuck Pattie has recently ac-

quired a 3-tier all grain system (lucky guy) on which he has brewed once up to this writing. His mash tun is a converted keg. Chuck's mash tun, however, is not insulated. With the one brew session in which he used his new system, his temperature did not vary more than two degrees (F) over a 1 hour period.

Rod Slattery considers himself a gadget kind of guy. From my e-mail conversation with him, I'm guessing he could provide enough gadget descriptions to help keep this column going for several months.

For mashing, he uses a 10 gallon GOTT cooler. At one point, he built a gizmo for step infusions that didn't quite work the way he wanted. I think it's worth including, because we all have our own styles, and someone in the club might pick up some new ideas from Rod's trials. Here's the deal in Rod's own words:

"My first all-grain attempt was quite an experience. I had a stuck mash, and I couldn't hit nor control my mash temperatures. After a 12 hour day to make 5 gallons of beer, 55-60% efficiency, I thought there MUST be a better way! I decided that If I was going to spend all day making all-grain beer, I was going to make 10 gallons or more at a time.

I found my round 10 gallon GOTT cooler at a contractor equipment rental place for \$35, (I bought 2. One for mash tun,

(Continued on page 6)

and the other for Hot liquor tank.) I bought twist type plastic valves at Homebrew Headquarters (like in a bottling bucket) for both. And I use a stainless steel false bottom in the mash tun.

I decided to brew a big beer. After all, everything is bigger in Texas, and bigger is better, right? Well, my 10 gallon GOTT cooler will hold about 30 lbs of grain and about 8 gallons of water. This is nearly overflowing! I could basically do a single infusion mash with NO mashout for such a big beer. I didn't like my efficiencies when I followed this procedure.

I devised a coil of copper tubing that was similar to my immersion chiller. I put it in the big mash, and pumped nearly boiling water through it to hit the mashout temperature. This allowed me to add heat to my insulated GOTT cooler. Actually, I got the idea from the internet from Dave Ludwig's Brewery. The following link seems to be bad at the moment, but it is the only reference I can find: <http://www.us.hsnet.net/user/dludwig/webdoc3.htm>

Immersing the coil in the mash tun worked, but it required constant stirring on my part to evenly distribute the heat. It also took longer than I wanted every time I wanted to boost the temperature. And stirring the mash for 15-20 minutes at a time was WORK! I tried to rig up an Ice-Cream stirrer that I bought at a garage sale for \$1, but It never really worked well

for me.

Now, I usually perform an upward triple step infusion with a dough-in around 122, a main rest 148-158 (depending on style), and a mash out 168-175. Promash software lets me know exactly how much strike and boiling water to add in order to hit the desired temperatures. I hit my desired temperatures usually within a minute or two of adding each infusion (this means less stirring for me!).

The GOTT cooler holds my temperatures VERY well. I usually only notice a 2-3 degree drop during a 50-60 minute rest. I keep the lid on as much as possible. The last batch of beer I brewed was 10 gallons of Dunkel with nearly 100% Munich malt. I got an efficiency of 86%. (Good bad problem. I calculated my grain bill for 75% so I overshot my target gravity.....) Now I have 12 gallons of Dunkel.

I have made as much as 10 gallons of 1.096 Barley Wine with my current system. Currently, I am playing with low gravity beers like 60 shilling and ordinary bitter, and I can easily mash enough grain to make 25 gallons of each. (My current limitation here is boil kettle.)

I recently received another stainless steel 1/2 BBL keg from my father-in-law (The 2nd largest consumer of my beer!). I have been working on a RIMS system with this keg as the mash/lauter tun. I have most of the pieces including a BASIC Stamp controller with

my own software. Talk about the ultimate GADGET. I have not tried brewing with it yet, but I don't plan to insulate it because it would be temperature controlled by the RIMS. If my Step times take too long, I might insulate it, but this probably won't buy me much."

What I gather from Rod in further e-mail exchange is that he still uses his pump for pumping boiling water into the mash tun for his infusions. He got his pump at Moving Brews, <http://www.movingbrews.com>.

I'm also looking forward to the day Rod finishes his RIMS system so we can get the full blow by blow on its construction.

All this typing, editing, cutting, and pasting have sure made me thirsty. I think I'll go have a home brew. Don't forget to send those gadgets.

Party Central

By Bo "Party Boy" Turton

Thanks to everyone that voted me back this year. As "party boy," I have worked hard to ensure home brew is available at all of the club parties. The club was generous enough to buy the materials so that I could make tap handles for each party, and the club also gave \$50 to the winner of the overall best home brew at each party. Phil Faulconer won the contest at the club's Christmas party.

Upcoming parties:

In case you've forgotten, or just

haven't thought about it, WE NEED KEGS! What I'm talking about is the NTHBA "hospitality suite" for the Bluebonnet Brew-Off room crawl.

Last year we had about 9 kegs of home brew. This year I would love to have 15 or more.

I've been told that each room will have some type of theme. The theme for our room will be "English brews," but we will take whatever brew you would like to provide. This is our hometown brew conference, so we need a variety of home brew to show them what we can do.

As always, I will make tap handles and will provide kegs to those who don't have them. I will also provide the CO2 and all fittings for the room. All you need is the beer.

If you haven't brewed a beer for the Bluebonnet yet, or would like to brew a beer with others, then mark Saturday, Feb. 16, on your calendars – Presidents' Brew Day. This event will be held at my home in Dallas, starting at 9:00 AM. Each year the club sponsors this event, and invites former club presidents to get together with club members to brew beer. The club provides the materials.

This year we hope to make it a two-fold event. We would also like to use this opportunity to have new members of the club, or non-club members that want to know how to brew, come as well. This will be our first attempt to "Train the commu-

nity."

The club has agreed to buy materials to make three 5-gallon batches of home brew that we will drink at a future club event. We want this to be the first of many educational events for the club. We will begin by finding three brewers that will commit to brew at Presidents' Brew Day. As a club, we all have to make sure that anyone that wants to watch and learn from experienced brewers will attend to learn those great tricks that make for an outstanding home brew.

This event is open to both club members, **and non-club members.** We want to teach the community how to brew beer, even join the club if they wish, and most importantly, SUPPORT OUR LOCAL HOME BREW SHOPS.

When the beer has been kegged and aged, we will have another party to drink those 15 gallons of home brew. We will also have food, and some type of prize drawing to raise enough money to make another 15 gallons so that we can do it all over again later in the year.

If you have an interest in teaching, or know someone that wants to brew beer, or just wants to know HOW to brew beer, then invite him or her along.

Now I know it will be cold, so I have a few heaters that I will provide, and all those burners under all those kettles will heat things up a little bit too. I have

two copper-in-copper heat exchangers with pumps, and I would love to use that nice cold pool water for the first heat exchanger and ice water for the second to get a great cold break on the beer. The combination should cool the beer from 170 F to 45 F in just a few minutes. That should help clarify the beer. This setup will allow us to cool 10 gal of beer in less than 10 minutes, then move on to the next batch.

Side dishes are welcome, and please bring some home brew for others to try. Kegs or bottles welcome. Please give me a call at 214-352-7657 if you have any questions.

Is the Lack of Clarity Bothering You, Bunco?

By Tom Garner

Some of us think a beer is not just perfect unless it is clear as a whistle. Well, we can spend a lot of sleepless nights worrying about the clarity of our product or do something about it! First realize that certain beer styles, particularly those with a percentage of wheat in the grain bill, need to be opaque or the suspended yeast characteristic flavor will be lost.

So, let's assume that your beer does not clear and you believe it should. Let's start with the boil. Be sure to have a good rolling boil in your kettle to affect a good hot break. Did you forget the Irish moss for the last 15 minutes? Cooling as quickly as possible to get a good cold

break and pouring/racking off the trub before pitching an adequate quantity of yeast at high krausen is also important. Do you rack to a secondary fermenter? If the answer is yes to the above – read on.

If your near beer is still cloudy after 10 days in the secondary (and three weeks of lagering), then you should consider two courses of action:

Cold filtration – This has been used for years to clarify Scotch whiskey and involves crashing the temperature from fermentation temperature to 31 degrees F. You are already at this temperature if you have been lagering your lagers, but may have lowered it in 5 degrees per day steps. If your lager is still not clear, you might consider raising the temperature in 5 degree per day steps to 60 degrees F., hold for a diacetyl rest for three days and then crash to 31 degrees. Hold ales and lagers here for 5-7 days or until clear. Note: Heavy dry hopping in the secondary will almost always result in some cloudiness, regardless.

Fining – The addition of a fining agent to the secondary about five days before bottling should be tried if cold filtration does not yield the desired clarity. Isinglass is a traditional fining used by large breweries. Gelatin can be used successfully if you follow the instructions regarding warm hydration and warm pitching. Polyclar is a plastic bead medium, which is easy to use, and bentonite is a mineral fining used primarily

in wine. The choice is yours. Gelatin is my personal favorite.

Aging for several months will almost always result in a clearer beer (assuming there is no resident infection), but the flavor profile may also change with time. If you have added fresh fruit or vegetables to flavor your beer, clarity may not be achievable at all. Unless you are entering competition (BJCP score sheets only deduct a maximum of 3 points for appearance now), serve you beer in a ceramic or pewter mug and “relax, have a homebrew”.

Make mine a “Real Ale”

By Bill Dubas

The Chicago Real Ale Festival will be held this year on March 1st and 2nd. This festival, hosted by the Chicago Beer Society, features America’s largest collection real ales. But just what is a “real ale” anyway?

According to The Campaign For Real Ale (CAMRA), an organization dedicated to reviving traditional English brewing, real ale is "a name for draft (or bottle) beer brewed from traditional ingredients, matured by secondary fermentation in the container from which it is dispensed, and served without the use of extraneous carbon dioxide."

Sounds pretty simple, but serving a proper pint of real ale is much more of a challenge. English brewers rack beer into casks before fermentation is

complete, or prime beer in the cask with fresh wort. These casks don't have the internal workings of American kegs to muck things up, they don't draw beer from the bottom (where yeast will have settled), and they do have two holes vital to the conditioning process.

When the cask is sealed at the brewery, a wooden stopper called a shive is driven into a two-inch bung hole, and a wooden plug is placed in a smaller keystone at the end. Finings, traditionally Isinglass (made from the swim bladders of fish), are added which cause the yeast suspended in the beer to drop to the bottom of the cask.

After a cask is delivered to a pub, it stands in the cellar for two to three days to allow the yeast to settle. Ideally, the casks will be tilted at an angle and left undisturbed until the cask is empty. The shive hole is knocked in and a soft spile inserted. The condition of the beer is affected first by the amount of remaining sugar content, then by the cellarman's skill in venting the beer.

After the beer is conditioned to the cellarman's taste, a hard spile is inserted. When the beer is served, the hard spile is removed so air can be drawn into the cask as beer is pulled through the beer engine. A beer engine, topped by a handpump at the bar, is actually a hydraulic system. The line to the handpump is attached to the tap, which is inserted through the keystone plug.

A properly conditioned pint will be nicely carbonated and should look as "bright" as a lightly filtered beer. Of course, the beer must be served at the proper temperature. Cellar temperature is not room temperature -- it's between 55 and 58 degrees F, and cool to the taste -- but it's also far from the 32 to 40 degrees at which most American bar's coolers are set.

The process is simple, but it is also an art.

For more info on the Chicago Real Ale festival, go to their website: www.realalefestival.com



The Brewing Equipment Trading Post



HELP WANTED

Homebrew Headquarters is looking for a knowledgeable person in beer and wine making. Help is needed for weekends mostly and some weekdays. Part and full-time available. Contact Kelly Harris @ 972-234-4411

To list your equipment, include the following information -

- 1 - Description of items)
- 2 - Whether it is "For Sale", "Will Trade For _?_" or "Free, Come & Get It"
- 3 - Your name
- 4 - How and when to contact you about your items).

You can give the information to Bill Dubas at our club meeting or email it to bill_dubas@hotmail.com.

Your items) will be listed in the next issue of the newsletter. There is **no charge** for this service if you are a club member. Non club members may post here for a modest fee.

North Texas Home Brewers Association, Inc. Board of Directors

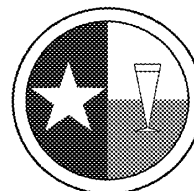
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Club Brewmeisters

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

Russ Bee -----	(972) 771-9489
Charlie Feder -----	(972) 223-8771
Darrell Simon -----	(972) 475-7571
McKee Smith -----	(972) 393-3569

North Texas Home Brewers Association, Inc.



The North Texas Home Brewers Association 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. Deadlines for ads and articles are the last Monday of each month for publication the following month.

Visit the NTHBA Website at <http://www.nthba.org>

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If you received this with a yellow post office forwarding sticker,
please give Tom Garner a call at (972) 234-4411 and give him your new address.