



LIVIN' THE BREWS

Märzen/March



Prez Sez

By Bo Turton

March is here, the best month of the year, why??? Bluebonnet month. For those that attend the room crawl every year, you know what I'm talking about and for you new members unfamiliar with Bluebonnet, this is your year to find out.

If you have the time, please plan on attending the entire conference. It is an educational time and social time to meet members from all the surrounding clubs. Now if you don't have the time or don't think you want to spend the \$40 + dollars for the conference, then just think about attending the room crawl Friday night, its free!! You will not for-

March Meeting: Tuesday, Mar. 9th, 7 PM The Flying Saucer

14999 Montfont Dr
Addison, TX 75001
(972) 934-2537

get the experience. One more thing, rooms are only \$69 a night and if you share a room, it is half that amount. Trust me when I say after sampling 40+ beers, even using a small 4 oz. sampling cup, driving isn't something we want to do. If you don't have a room, then think about a designated driver and taking a taxi, it's cheaper than a DWI and a whole lot safer.

I want to thank everyone that helped with the login of all the homebrewed beer for the judging. And I also want to thank all the judges that have and will continue to volunteer their time; it is a very rewarding experience. As far as winning the cup this year, I guess we have to sit back and see that happens. The entry dates have past and we can only hope that our club has entered some of the best beer of the conference.

There are only a few things left that we, as a club have to do. First we still need about 10-15 people at the conference that will help set up chairs and do various odd jobs through out

the conference. Each job will talk very little of your overall conference time. Second!!!! We have the room to create for the room crawl. The theme for the room is a cloning lab; first we cloned Dolly the sheep now we have cloned wild beers and strange foods for consumption. We have gone wild; there are no rules that limit what we can do.

So do you have a picture yet, No???? Then close your eyes and just dream of it, like a science SiFi movie. Then when those ideas come to mind, than think about how we could incorporate it into the room decorations. This is your time to be creative for the club. If you have lab jackets, then wear it to the conference, Anything Doctor related, bring it. You like to draw and have a wild idea, put it to paper; we have plenty of wall space. Is there a food dish you want to make for the room, make it and think of a wild name and we could clone the ingredients. Every ideas count's and we need them all. We want the best room ever this year. Don't forget the beer, we need kegs as many as we can get. Last year we went through close to 15 kegs of beer in our room alone. That is a lot of consumed beer. So lets put our head together and blow the hop off of the other clubs, we are the biggest and best club out there and we want every-

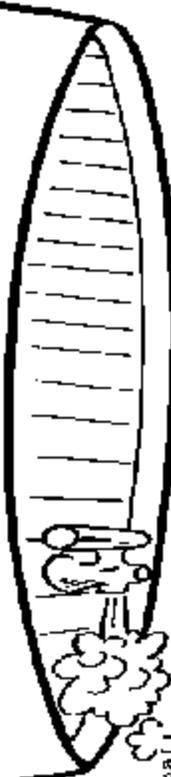
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BREWER ROYALE 2004

Style of the Month

Nov '03	Barleywine & Imp. Stout	Cat. 12
April '04	Mead	Cat. 25
May '04	Extract Brews	N/A
August	Wheat Beer	Cat. 17
September	Smoked Beer	Cat. 23
November	IPA	Cat. 7

<u>Standings</u>	<u>Points</u>
Jim Layton	4
Bill Dubas	2





winner will receive a \$50 gift certificate to Homebrew Headquarters. Good Luck!

We have no time to rest, just because beers have been entered into the Bluebonnet. The Crescent City Competition and Crawfish boil entry deadline is April 2. Watch for a packing party date on the club web site or listen for the announcement at the March club meeting. Closely following the Crescent City competition, we have the Central Florida competition in May. Keep brewing, because, we still have the Cactus Challenge and Dixie Cup to go later in the summer and fall.

The first Club Only competition is not until April, but I wanted to bring up a change in the COC rules for 2004. In order to reduce the load on the judges, we (the board) have decided to limit each entrant to one beer per sub-category. In April the style is mead, so that means someone could enter eight meads. They would all have to be in different sub-categories.



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one to know it. Good luck, get a room and I will see you all at bluebonnet.

Before I sign off I have a few more items. The next club meeting is at the Flying Saucer in Addison so bring some of your beer and others can sample and tell you what we think. Second, Bill Dubas has put together a brew day for April at Big Bucks brewery. See his article and the MSN group site for more info. We hope to have all the local clubs involved for this event.

We have a club member that has two all grain setups and a lot of brewing equipment for sale, please give Phil Butler a call at 469-360-1781 and ask what he has for sale.

Happy brewing and I will see you at the club meeting.

Bo Turton



Competition Coordination

By Walter Hodges

All we can do now is...have a good time. The deadline for entering beers into the Bluebonnet has come and gone. Hopefully everyone in the club entered a beer or two and I'll see you all at the Bluebonnet. We will have some stiff competition from the Houston, Florida and Tarrant County United. If the brewing gods are with us, we will keep the Bluebonnet Stein in our possession.

If you entered beers into the Bluebonnet, you will receive a raffle ticket for each beer entered. If your beer places at the Bluebonnet you will receive more tickets: one for third, two for second and three for first. These raffle tickets will be issued for a special drawing at the April club meeting. The

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We want to encourage everyone to enter, but we don't want to overload our judges and have them scoring beers until 10 PM. If you feel that this is an unreasonable rule change, I will be happy to discuss your concerns at the next club meeting.

As I stated earlier, the April COC is Mead. Mead is traditionally, water, honey and yeast. Using blends of honey or single honeys, fruit juices, spices and herbs or malt, will produce the eight sub-categories of mead. The style guide for Mead can be found at: <http://www.bjcp.org/styleguide25.html>



What's on Tap?

By Bill Dubas

I hope that everyone had a chance to attend the brew day last month. It's a good thing that Bruce scheduled it for Sunday, because the weather on Saturday was not brewing-friendly. Since I was not able to attend, Pat Kruger's column elsewhere in this newsletter will recap the event.

I hadn't planned on scheduling any more brew days until May, but something dropped in my lap the other day that I couldn't pass up. I received a call from Raymond Plasek, head brewer at Big Buck Brewery in Grapevine. Raymond would like to get all of the DFW area clubs together on Saturday, April 24, for a giant brew day/homebrewing demo on the Big Buck outdoor patio. The goal is to have extract, partial mash, and all-grain brewers going at

all times during the day so that Big Buck customers (and other passersby) can drop in and check out what homebrewing is all about. This will benefit all parties involved (local brewpubs, homebrewing clubs, and homebrew stores) by getting more people interested in craft brewing. The event will run from 9AM to 5PM.

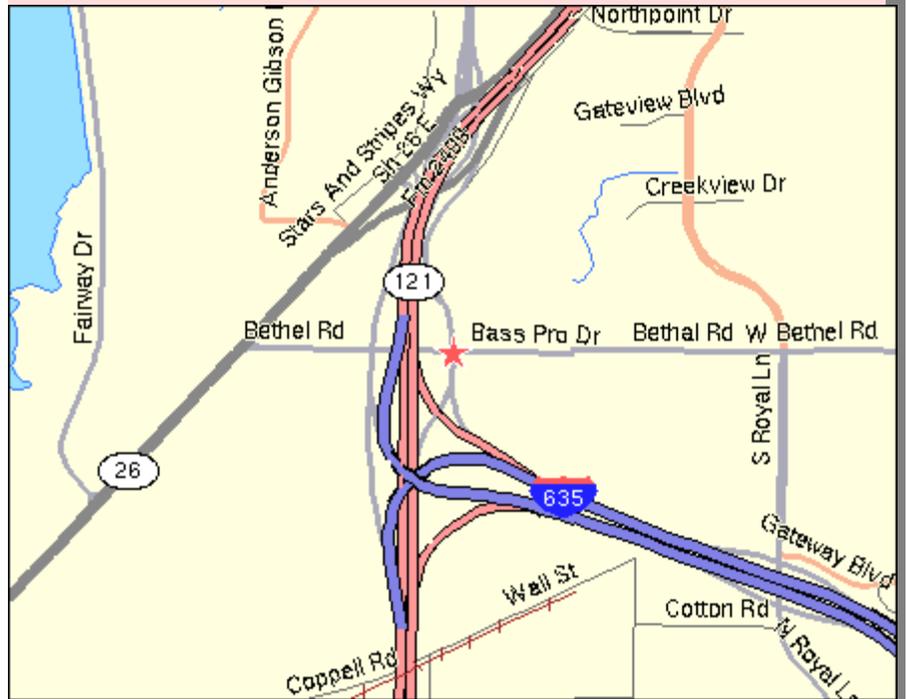
A map to Big Buck is provided below, just in case you have been living under a rock and have never been there. To get to the patio, park at Big Buck and go in the front door. Once you get inside, make a hard left and walk into the glass-enclosed breezeway that connects Big Buck to the hotel next door. On the right side of that breezeway there is a door that opens out onto the patio. It is a huge patio with lots of ta-

bles and chairs. Raymond says that there are plenty of electrical hookups scattered around the patio, but there may be only one hose bib. If you plan to attend, you'd better bring along an extension cord and garden hose + splitter if you need that for your brewery. Due to this event being on Big Buck property, we will NOT be allowed to bring homebrew. We don't want to have any run-ins with the TABC and we certainly don't want to get Raymond or Big Buck into any hot water. There will be waitresses trolling the patio taking your food and beverage orders, so bring along some extra cash. Please contact me if you have any other questions.

We're only 2 weeks away from the Bluebonnet. Our plan for the club room is to go to the

Big Buck Brewery & Steak House

2501 Bass Pro Dr
Grapevine, TX 76051-2097
Phone: (214) 513-2337



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hotel early on Friday afternoon and get a head start on the decorations. We'll first have to move all of the furniture out of the room to make space for Bo's kegerator and the bar. Once that's done, we can start transforming our room into a "Mad Scientist Lab". If you have pledged a keg or a side-dish for the room, please try to bring them to the room by 9PM so that we can be ready when the crawl officially starts at 9:30. All items must be marked with your name so that they can be returned to their proper owner. If you donate a keg of beer, please include the beer style, or the name of the beer that you have attempted to clone. If you want to donate a keg of beer or a side dish, but cannot attend the event, please contact me so that we can make other arrangements. I have an empty 20 cubic foot chest freezer, so I can store as many kegs as are needed. If you want to help decorate the room, come on by and we'll put you to work. We also need people to help clean up the room on Sunday morning.

Focus on Education: Yeast Cultures and Stuck Fermentations

By Steve Haney

The first thing to remember when cloning yeast is the old KISS adage. That's Keep It Sanitary Sport! Keeping it simple is also a good idea. Begin by doing a little research to find out if the style of beer you want to brew has viable yeast. There are several places to look. *Clone Brews* has the beers listed. The web is also a good source. Check out: <http://www.ingermann.com/links.html>

[ingermann.com/links.html](http://www.ingermann.com/links.html)

Have good sterile 1.030 gravity wort made either from wheat or barley DME or from the last runoff of a mash. The yeast needs nutrients and minerals that corn sugar doesn't have. For airlocks, the little two-way bubblers are great because you can heat the wort to sterilize it, put the bubbler on and have the air that's sucked back into the container pass through the sterilizing solution. Rinse the bottle containing the yeast you want in sanitizer for a bit then let it drip for another minute.

Decant the beer from the sediment -- remember there may not be many viable cells in there so don't let any out. Leave an inch or so of beer in the bottle, a good rule of thumb is to leave 15 to 20% of the beer. Let the wort and the beer in the bottle come to room temperature. Using a funnel, or pouring carefully, add the wort into to the bottle. Put the sanitized bubbler on the bottle and rinse the top of with sanitizer. Set the bottle out of direct sunlight in an area that stays close to the same temp. Gently rouse the yeast every day or so by swirling the bottle. It may take up to three weeks to get going. Once it gets through high krausen let it settle out, decant the spent wort and repeat the process until you have good slurry on



Brew Day Report

By Pat Kruger

With Saturday's snowfall, I had concerns about the weather for the Presidential brewday at Bruce Fabijonas' house. My own personal plans to get pampered at the Bed and Brew in Fredricksburg had just been scrapped because I was afraid that road conditions would be miserable going down on Friday evening. But the sun came out Saturday afternoon and melted most of the snow. By the time I went to Bruce's on Sunday, the only snow perceptibly visible was the remnants of snowmen that had been hastily built the previous day. Pity the snowmen, but it proved to be a great day for brewing and enjoying the company of fellow brewers.



Wake up and smell the coffee — porter, that is!

Bruce was a great host, even providing a smoked pork shoulder that was absolutely delicious (sorry, Earnest). It was accompanied by Paul Doxey's tasty California Common, which was made at the previous brewday. A keg of American amber ale that had a sweet finish was also enjoyed. Many other homebrewed beers were sampled as some folks took advantage of the assembled body of experience to figure out whether their beers

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were Bluebonnet worthy and, if so, what category they were best suited for.

As for some of the brews made that day, Jim Layton represented the past president's of the club and brewed an IPA. Looking at his hopping schedule, it almost seemed that he was inspired by a need to clean out his freezer. Bruce made two beers, one being a very aromatic coffee porter. Talk about mixing your uppers and downers!

Steve Haney and I attempted to introduce some culture to the day with a tag team presenta-



Bruce transferring his porter to fermenters

tion on yeast. I showed how to do a simple step culturing of a smack pack of yeast. Steve took it a step further by showing how to capture yeast from a bottle of un-pasteurized commercial beer. For those that didn't take notes or weren't able to come that day, Steve's notes are reproduced elsewhere in this month's newsletter.

Put a reminder on your calendar

Welcome New Members!

Clark Harmon
Jason Wacker
Wayne Yandell
Lionel Lucchesi
Daniel Robinson

that the next brewday on April 3 will not be club-sponsored but will be hosted by Big Buck Brewery. Their brewer, Raymond Plasek, has invited all the DFW area clubs to come and brew on their big patio. I predict it will be a big party as much as a big brewday. Since it is Big Buck's event, I don't plan on doing any demonstrations that day.

There is no brewday scheduled for March since we will all be busy at the Bluebonnet. Our next club-sponsored brewday will be at Steve Jones house in May (date TBD). I haven't settled on an educational topic just yet. I will either demonstrate how to build a counter-flow wort chiller or let Bill Dubas play with his chemistry set while he demonstrates how to detect imperfections in beer (Beer Judging 101).

Enjoy your Spring Break while the Professor works during his. I'll be slaving away in Cancun at a teachers workshop.



The Professor

By Pat Kruger

"It's the little things. The lttty Bitty things. It's the little thii-innngggsss that piss me off."

This lyric, courtesy of Robert Earl Keen, Jr., kept running through my head after my recent brew session. I had noticed earlier that my metal thermometer no longer registered the appropriate temperature of boiling water. It was off by about five degrees. Thankfully I had noticed it before I had gotten too far into my mashing

schedule. So, for the rest of my brew session I had to make mental adjustments every time I took a temperature reading. My last couple of batches had been under whelming. This may have been the cause.

Times like this shows that the Great Brewer can still be easily humbled by simple stupidity. Simple things can break you. Other simple things can make you great. Here's a few of the latter:

Choose yeast most appropriate to the style.

Have you ever noticed that all the beers at a particular brewpub may taste virtually the same? It's most probably because they use the same strain of yeast for most of their beers (it's more efficient). Yeast contributes a great deal to the character of a beer. In some styles, such as a German Weiss, it's the most important ingredient. Good old 1056 is great for a California Common, but it just won't produce those hints of clove and banana that an authentic Weiss strain can so easily yield. Irish ale yeast is very different from London ale yeast and so you should not readily substitute one for the other. Try an experiment of splitting a batch and pitching each half with a slightly different yeast strain. Viva la difference!

Make a yeast starter. The cell count in your typical smack pack of yeast is too small to be counted on to readily overtake any and all foreign creatures that may lurk around your fermenter. Increase their chances by making a mini-wort (two cups water and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup DME

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PILSNER · HELLES · BITTER · PALE ALE · CALIFORNIA COMMON · SCOTTISH · KOELSCH · ALTBIER · OKTOBERFEST · VIENNA · BROWN · BARLEYWINE · IMPERIAL STOUT · SCHWARZBIER · BOCK

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boiled for ten minutes) a day or two beforehand and pitch into that first. Try to time it so that the mini-wort is at high-kreusen when you pitch the whole of it into your primary. Step twice before final pitching if you are making a lager. Also, oxygenate the newly inoculated wort by shaking the fermenter vigorously for a minute. Oxygen is critical for cell wall development during the initial multiplication stage.

Do some historical reading on your favorite style.

The first time I made guacamole, I found what I thought was a good recipe but was somewhat dissatisfied with the result. I later found out that my recipe included a very non-traditional ingredient, mayonnaise. Simple research could have helped me avoid this mistake. Get a book on a style that you really enjoy and want to perfect. I highly recommend the Classic Beer Style Series published by Brewers Publications. If you don't want to create your own, you can at least arm yourself against badly formulated recipes.

Keep it clean and then sanitize it just before you use it.

The first thing all novice homebrewers should concentrate on is cleanliness. You can have the most expensive equipment and use the freshest ingredients but it will not matter should you let your beer get infected due to sloppy habits. I am a confessed "dirty brewer" as far as not sanitizing my brewpot or sterilizing my paddle. But that is not where it counts. Boiling wort excuses a multitude of sins. Once the wort has started cooling, treat it with all due respects

of cleanliness. Anything that contacts the cooled wort should be visibly clean first and, once that is verified, sanitized fully following the label instructions on the product of your choice. Don't confuse cleaners with sanitizers. They are not interchangeable. I prefer TSP as a cleaner (it's very cheap) and iodophor as a sanitizer (it's very effective). I let things drip dry after sanitizing, but if you feel you must rinse then only use hot water from the tap.

Track your mashing efficiency.

Enter your recipe in one of the many recipe calculator programs available via the Internet, such as Promash or Suds. Compare your O.G. with what was expected. Depending on your mashing method (infusion vs. decoction, number and type of rests, etc.) your efficiency rating may vary. Take this all into account when you plan your next brew session. Doing this will not necessarily help you increase your efficiency but, more importantly, help you achieve consistency and therefore repeatable quality.

Avoid oversparging of the spent grain.

This applies to both all-grain and partial mash methods. The last drops of sparging run-off are the most astringent and will give a grainy, husky taste to your beer. If partial mashing, soak in only enough water to cover the grain, and then rinse with an equal amount of water as was first used for soaking. For all-grain, take a gravity reading of the first runnings and then compare this with readings of the sparge runoff. Stop sparging when the gravity drops to one quarter of the original reading.

There are many more little things but these to me are the largest of the small. The others we will get around to dealing with later.

A final note on how to calibrate a thermometer: Bring some distilled water to a rolling boil in a vessel deep enough to fully immerse the tip of the thermometer without touching the sides or bottom. Immerse for a full minute before adjusting by turning the nut on the backside of the dial until the appropriate temperature is pointed to. Water boils at 212° at sea level. Compensate one degree downward for each 500 foot gain in altitude. Therefore most brewers in the Metroplex should set their dials at 211°.

Important Dates

March:

6th, 7th Bluebonnet Judging – we need volunteer judges!

9th General Meeting, at the Flying Saucer in Addison — bring your brew!

13th, 14th Bluebonnet Judging – we need volunteer judges!

15th Entries Accepted for Crescent City Competition.

19th—20th THE BLUEBONNET!

April

2nd Deadline for Crescent City Competition

Spring Party at Mike Marolda's House. Date TDB.

13th General Meeting, Club only Competition at the Gingerman in Dallas

17th Crescent City Competition and Crawfish Boil

24th Brew Day #3 at Big Buck Brewery.

May

1st Spring Party at Mike Moralda's house.

Brew Day #4 at Steve Jones', date TBD.

The Brewing Equipment Trading Post

I have too much equipment and no time to use it! New baby is going to take up even more time! Here is a list of stuff for sale:

- 1 ea RIMS all grain with two Pumps and Gas fired burners on portable rack -\$375
- 1 ea All grain 3-keg syst w/ no stand or burners, just kegs w/ valves and screens -\$150
- 4 ea Kegs with 3/4 inch bottom drain valve and 1/2 inch side valve (great fermenter or mash tun) - \$40 with no valve \$55 with valves
- 1 ea Butterfly clamp and High

- volume Pump systems, convoluted chiller 10 1/2 inch valves, many extras, Invested \$1500, this is what the breweries use just smaller size-\$500
- 12 ea Corny Kegs bought as a group only -\$125
- 2 ea Beer Taps with long shanks for cooler mounts -\$25 ea
- 1 ea Stout Beer Tap with long shanks for cooler mounts Murphies Handle-\$40
- 1 ea CO2 Two zone Regulator with 6 outputs \$60
- 2 ea CO2 Regulators- \$35 ea
- 1 ea Motorized adjustable grain Mill - \$170
- 2 ea Digital scales one does tenths of Ounce other hundredths -\$30
- 1 ea Digital PH meter -\$20
- 1 ea PID controller with 8 channels with 16 (2 sets) different thermocouples -\$120
- 3 ea Copper chillers -\$10 ea
- 1 ea Double Glass Door

Beverage Cooler 120V -\$300

More Misc Parts than I could even think of. I will send what pictures I have to anyone who needs them. My cell number is 469-360-1781. These items can also be picked up earlier if needed. I will open my garage door Saturday 6, Morn at 8:00 am and have to close it by 12:00pm Thank you for reading Phil Butler



To list Your equipment, include the following:

1. Description of item(s)
2. Whether it is "For Sale," "Will Trade for..?," or "Free, come and get it"
3. Your name.
4. How and when to contact you.

You can give the information to Steve Atkinson at our Club meeting or email NTHBNews@AOL.com

North Texas Home Brewers Association, Inc.

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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	Russmbee@aol.com	(972) 771-9489
Darrell Simon		(972) 675-5562
McKee Smith		(972) 393-3569
Jim Layton	Blutick@juno.com	(903) 546-6989
Homebrew Headquarters		(972) 234-4411

North Texas Home Brewers Association, Inc.



The North Texas Home Brewers Assoc. is a group with an interest in beer in general and home brewing in particular. We meet

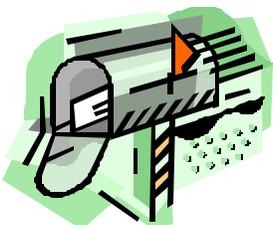
once a month on the second Tuesday at various locations in the area. Visitors are welcome! "Livin' the Brews" is our newsletter and is published about once a month. We do accept advertising, although the NTHBA, its officers, assignees and editors are not liable for losses or damages resulting from mistakes 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 next club meeting.

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



The Living Brews Brewing Forum

Livin' the Brews Newsletter
Stephen Atkinson, Editor
c/o Homebrew Headquarters
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Richardson, Texas 75080



If you received this with a yellow post office forwarding sticker, please give Bill Lawrence a call at (972) 644-8878 and give him your new address.