

LIVIN' THE BREWS



The Newsletter of the North Texas Home Brewers Association

Volume XXXVIII

Issue III

Quick Sips for March:

Officer Meeting

March 1st 6:30PM

The Brass Tap, Addison

Club Meeting

March 8th 6:30PM

3 Nations, Carrollton

Prez Sez by James Smith

Welcome to March, Homebrewers! March is upon us and that of course means Bluebonnet season...and by Bluebonnet, I mean Bluebonnet Brew-Off. After a couple years hiatus from in being an in-person event, we appear to be relatively back to normal. If it just so happens you are new to the club or have not been to the Bluebonnet Brew-Off event in March, I highly recommend you consider attending. For more information and tickets, please go here: <http://bluebonnetbrewoff.org/>

Once we are past Bluebonnet, we will start focusing on some club objectives and organizing for our club-sponsored competition The Limbo Challenge. There should also be some fun events and gatherings as we seem to be normalizing after a couple of years. Our quarterly parties are on track and we are planning some other weekend social events. We invite you to keep an eye on your inbox and the newsletter for future announcements.

Monthly Officer and Club Meetings

The March officer meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 1 at The Brass Tap in Addison. They are located at **6959 Arapaho Rd #108, Dallas, TX 75248.** As always, club members are welcome to join. We will arrive at 6:30 and get going around 7:00. The March club meeting will be held on Tuesday, **March 8 at 3 Nations Brewing in Carrollton.** They are located at **1033 Vandergriff Dr, Carrollton, TX 75006.** We will get started around 7:00, so plan to arrive at 6:30 or earlier. 3 Nations does have food on-site and they allow it to be brought in, so plan accordingly.

Hope everyone has a great brewing month! We will see you at the club meetings and other gatherings.

Prost,

Smitty

The First Sip by Terry Olinger

Hope everyone survived Ice-mageddon 1 and 2 without any damage or too much impact on your brewing plans. For myself, we delayed kegging of a Big Rig brew until next week which is just a minor inconvenience.

February club social activities for the most part took a backseat to bluebonnet judging, which is also another great way to get together with other brewers, meet new people, and gain experience at the same time. We had several new members join in, even some non-brewers showed up to help out. Keep this in mind as we look towards Limbo this summer.

The February club meeting at Bitter Sisters was well attended with 20 or so members. Our newest member walked away with a kegging system from the raffle.

This month, we resume with a brew day at Garry Beckhams house in North Plano. Bill Lawrence will be giving a demonstration on cereal mashing at the brew day.

Looking out a few months, we will be having a spring party on April 23. Thanks to James and Julie for volunteering to host.

Here's what's on tap for March

Monthly Officers meeting will be held **Tuesday March 1st** at, **The Brass Tap – North Dallas, 6959 Arapaho Rd #108, Dallas, TX.** We will be arriving around 6:30 with business starting at 7:00pm.

Monthly Club meeting will be **Tuesday March 8th, 3 Nations Brewing, 1033 Vandergriff Dr, Carrollton, TX.** As usual socializing for the first 30 minutes starting at 6:30 and official business starting around 7:00pm.

Current Scheduled brew days for 2022

- March 12th Garry Beckham 2321 Stacia Dr, Plano TX
- April 9th Matt Parulis 1805 Redbud Circle, Carrollton, Tx
- May AHA National Homebrew Day, Collaboration with Brewpub
- June Bryan and Melinda Beyers
- July Walter Hodges
- August No Brew Day due to Limbo judging
- September James Smith
- October Chris Van Allen
- November AHA Learn to Homebrew Day, Collaboration with Brewpub
- December Bill Lawrence

Prost,

Terry

The February 2022 Meeting at Bitter Sisters:



Competition Corner by Jimmy Orkin

Bluebonnet Brew-Off™

As I write this article, we are entering the 3rd weekend of judging the Bluebonnet. We hope to complete this weekend. If not, you will see more requests for judges to finish up.

The Bluebonnet's Awards are on March 19 at the Sheraton DFW Airport. Good luck to all that entered.

The Brewer Royale Program

We had the January competition. Walter Hodges and Bill Lawrence judged and got 1 BR point apiece for their efforts. The table below shows the standings after the first competition. I will be giving medals to each of the BR winners at the Club Meeting after the competition.

The second BR competition will be in March. The drop off will be at the Club Meeting in March. Sorry, no late entries. I have created a bottle label to use for the BR entries located here: [BR Bottle Labels](#). At this point I am fine if you want to use the BJCP bottle labels as well.

I am working on a Google Spreadsheet to track all points. That spreadsheet can be viewed at this link: [Spreadsheet Link](#).

The Brewer Royale Rules are located at this link: [Rules Link](#).

Name	Total Points
Mark Rendon	4
Terry Olinger	3
Jimmy Orkin	2
Garry Beckham	1
Walter Hodges	1
Bill Lawrence	1
Matt Parulis	1
James Smith	1

4th Bottle Evaluation

We discussed a new program in the club I am calling the 4th Bottle Evaluation. Here is how it works: when bottling your entries for a completion, fill an extra bottle to be used after the competition to evaluate your score sheets from the competition. We get one or more of our best judges to evaluate your 4th bottle and compare it to the score sheets you received from the competition. We will attempt to explain faults called out in your score sheets. This program will start with evaluations of Bluebonnet entries.

We will do the Bluebonnet 4th Bottle Evaluations at the next club brewday after the Bluebonnet event. Bring your 4th bottle and its score sheets.

Mashtronauts Lunar Rendezbrew 28

The DFW dropoff site for the Lunar will be at the Bluebonnet Awards Ceremony. If you will not be able to get your entries to the Awards, please work with me and I will get the entries to the Awards Ceremony.

The Limbo Challenge

The process for Limbo is well known and almost runs itself. We need a director for the 2022 Limbo Challenge to keep us in line. It is a good way to for a new person in the club to learn about the details of a homebrew competition.

We also need someone's home to judge in. Don't worry about refrigeration; we can use the club kegerator for refrigeration if needed. The Beyer's have offered to host the Limbo Awards. We will do another Meat-a-palooza.

It's time to put your Limbo brewing calendar together. You will need to start your lagered beers soon. I am not going to press members to enter different categories but rather stress entering. We cannot win if we don't enter.

We have the dates for the Limbo:

- Registration: July 11-28
- Login: July 30
- Judging: August 5-7, (12-14 if needed)
- Awards: August 27

Give me Feedback

I want your feedback. Please take some time at any and all club event to talk to me about what you want from me as your Competition Coordinator. You can also write to me at: firstvp@nthba.org.

Brew Strong!

Jimmy

The Club Calendar 2022

March

- 1 Officers Meeting
- 8 Club Meeting
- 8 Brewer Royale due
- 12 Brewday at Garry Beckham's
- 18,19 BBO Event
- 20 Lunar Rendezbrew Entry Closes

April

- 5 Officers Meeting
- 9 Brewday at Matt Parulis house
- 12 Club Meeting
- 23 Spring Party Smitty's

May

- 3 Officers Meeting
- 7 AHA National Brewday
- 10 Club Meeting
- 10 Brewer Royale due
- 14 Lunar Rendezbrew Awards
- 20 KGB BBBB Entry Open

June

- TBA Brewday at Brian Beyer's house
- 3 KGB BBBB entry closes
- 7 Officers Meeting
- 14 Club Meeting

July

- TBA Brewday, Walter Hodges' house
- TBA Club Party at Bill James' house
- 5 Officers Meeting
- 11 Limbo Registration opens
- 12 Club Meeting
- 12 Brewer Royale due
- 28 Limbo Registration closes
- 30 Limbo Entry Log in

August

- 2 Officers Meeting
- 5-7 Limbo Judging
- 9 Club Meeting
- 27 Limbo Awards

September

- TBA Brewday at James Smith's house
- 6 Officers Meeting
- 13 Club Meeting
- 13 Brewer Royale due

October

- TBA Club Party
- TBA Brewday at Chris Van Allen's
- 4 Officers Meeting
- 11 Club Meeting

November

- 1 Officers Meeting
- 5 AHA Learn to Brew Day
- 8 Club Meeting
- 8 Brewer Royale due

December

- TBA Brewday at Bill Lawrence's house
- 6 Officers Meeting
- 13 Club Meeting



Congrats to our newest member on winning a kegg set at his first club event!

Tips and Tricks by Bill Lawrence

First a bit about an upcoming educational opportunity. As you know, Garry is having the March brewday at his abode on March 12th. As it turns out, he is not content to just buy malted grain from a normal supplier but instead occasionally malts his own (in the years I have been doing this I don't remember anyone else trying this). He has malted several pounds of 6 row barley and will be making a very homemade pilsner using the fruits of his labor. Given that 6 row will sometimes result in a hazy beer (in this case a bad thing) I beseeched him to allow me to cereal mash some ground corn to add to his mash which should correct that issue for him. My intent was to segway my last column concerning adjuncts into a hands-on demonstration about how to cereal mash at home. We will get started at 9:00am so if you have interest, please show up at the start of the brewday and learn something new.



This month's dissertation is about making German wheat ale, specifically Hefeweizen. As in most things in life, there are several ways to go about this and what follows are just the methods I use; as they say YMMV. Want to know how to handle brewer's yeast to the best advantage? Brew up some hefeweizen and learn firsthand how yeast handling and process affects the taste of the beer because with this style, it's all about fermentation by-products. I have been making this style for decades now and I have tried several different techniques. I will be suggesting some rather "aggressive" procedures, but they have worked well for me in the past multiple times. If you are making almost any other style when it comes to yeast handling I would do exactly the opposite of what I am suggesting here. In my opinion, heffe yeast behaves much the same way that many Belgian strains behave as they also are very temperature sensitive, and they will blow the top off your fermenter.

German wheat ale is traditionally greater than 50% malted wheat but as it turns out, the exact percentage is not critical to the flavor. I personally get close to 70% wheat but many recipes use significantly less (see the recipe presented below). As with most German styles, you will want to do a step mash and with a heffe, the first step will affect the flavor. Mash in at roughly 120F, that will produce the precursors of the clove taste you will want in the finished product. Then run the mash up to around 150F for say ½ an hour then to around 158F or so for another 20 minutes then mash out. I do not want to start the endless decoct/don't decoct debate however I believe that a decoction mash will affect the mouthfeel of the beer and so I use that method to move the mash through the mash temperatures mentioned above. After that, just collect the wort as normal and start the boil. Oh and by the way, if you enjoy a stuck mash just forget to use rice hulls and your chances of having issues will go way, way up making this style.

Now let's talk about fermentation conditions and yeast handling because this is how the sausage really gets made. First of all, there are several liquid yeast strains you can use to make this beer but I have

been using WLP300 for quite some time now with good results. You will end up with a beer which has the classic banana/clove flavors which many devotees of the style look for if you do it correctly. I like to ferment around 62F which will give you a good balance of the banana and clove flavors. The higher the temperature, the more banana you will get. Above around 68F you will start to generate fusels and yes, I've tried it and yes, they ruin the beer. This yeast strain will also cause a really big mess **EACH AND EVERY TIME**. Do yourself a favor and set up a blow off tube least you end up scrubbing down your fermentation chamber. I have found that a good balance of banana and clove flavors will do the best in competition but it's your beer so do what makes you happy.

The best German examples of this style have very prominent fermentation flavors so if you want a really good example try some of these suggestions (and yes, I do all of this even though it seems positively radical):

1. Don't make a yeast starter, make the yeast work
2. Don't oxygenate the wort, again you want maximum by-products from fermentation
3. Consider open fermentation for the first couple of days; again, more by-products
4. Fermenter geometry makes a difference, short and wide is good in this context

Ok so here is the recipe I use most of the time: I do 5 gallon batches and the weights listed below give me the O.G. I am looking for in my system, 1.050. Adjust as needed to get a similar O.G. in your system.

Grist:

7.6 lbs	German Wheat Malt
0.8 lbs	Light Munich malt
2.3 lbs	German Pils Malt

Hops:

Hallertau	3 HBU	60 minutes (but any noble German hop will do)
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Yeast:

I use WLP 300

I use Richardson water charcoal filtered. It is medium hard with both temporary and permanent hardness.

When it comes to packaging, this style can be a pain because you want it fairly carbonated. I like to naturally carbonate in the keg and I also do this when bottling for competition ('cause we want hazy beer anyway so some yeast in the package is a good thing) as bottling a fizzy beer like this can be problematic to say the least. In my experience, this beer does not keep well so once it's ready to drink go at it quickly. Likewise for competitions, this is the last beer I make just before the entry deadline. This is a great summer beer and it's fun to see how playing around with production variables can change the flavors; give it a try.

Finally, I need to find more education opportunities for the members. I would just love to publish guest submissions from others who have experience doing other brewing projects, making other styles or employing other techniques to make their beers (or ciders or meads for that matter). Also, I want to publish a recipe every month and unless you want to constantly see the recipes I have come up with, I respectfully request recipe submissions as well.

Prost,

Willy

The Treasurers Report by Walter Hodges

Treasurer's Report:

MONTH ENDED	EQUITY
2022 BEGINNING	9543.15
JANUARY	9104.22



Current Membership: 52

New/Renewing Members:
Steve Littel

Thank you to everyone who came out to my home to help judge Bluebonnet entries. I hosted three sessions which included, Belgian Dark, American Stouts and Porters and British Brown beers. Judging was tough. We had many well-made beers and very few major flaws. The quality of homebrew has improved substantially over the last 20+ years. A lot of credit goes to the better ingredients and copious references available to homebrewers. But I think a key factor in the improved quality of homebrew is the tribal knowledge shared among homebrewers. Your homebrew club is the sticky wort (better than glue) for local brewers to meet, exchange ideas and learn. As we begin to emerge from the pandemic (knocking on wood, rubbing rabbit's foot, crossing fingers, praying, sacrificing goats), I hope we will see more people at meetings and events. If there is some topic of education you'd like to see covered, event, or some other idea you have for the club, please talk to, or email any or all the officers.

Memberships may be renewed at club meetings and events or by following the directions at:

<https://nthba.org/?q=content/membership>

Financials trail the newsletter by one month. Financial reports are available on the club web site at:

<http://nthba.org/?q=groups/financials-corner/financial-statement-archive>

If you have any questions about the financials, contact me and I will be happy to share club financial detail.

*Slainte,
Walter*

Product Review by James Smith – TapCooler Counter Pressure Bottle Filler

If you bottle from kegs for competing, you know the value of doing it the right way. Other than excellent sanitation practices, keeping oxygen out of your bottles and carbonation in are top priorities. Prior to bottling Bluebonnet entries this year, I invested in a Tapcooler Counter Pressure Bottle Filler. I happened to get mine from Great Fermentations, so I will provide the link below. There are other places you can buy it along with accessories, and the prices seem to be set by the manufacturer. So, you shouldn't invest too much time in trying to find the best price. I will say there seemed to be a better selection of accessories than elsewhere...and there are a few accessories you will likely want.



Tapcooler with case, ball lock adapter(gas side), and growler filler bung

My bottle filler for many years was a Blichmann Beer Gun. They both have some similarities in that they integrate CO2 and beer delivery through a single tube. However, the Blichmann is not a counter-pressure filler. If you do not know, the main advantage with a counter-pressure filler is after your CO2 purge, you are slightly pressurizing the container you are filling, thus limiting foaming and carbonation loss. As you fill, there is an adjustable pressure relief valve which allows the pressure from the beverage displacing the air space to slowly escape the container.

I suppose you could rig up the Blichmann beer gun with a stopper to give it some pseudo-counter pressure filler qualities. However, you would still need some kind of pressure relief. I never did this with mine. The Blichmann is also quite a bit longer than the Tapcooler, or I should say the Tapcooler collapses where the Blichmann does not. I can operate the Blichmann Beer Gun fine and I would not have a problem recommending it. There is some setup and tweaking involved though, but once you get your process down, it can serve you quite well.

My primary goal with the Tapcooler was to reduce the footprint needed to bottle entries and to eliminate the need for a long beer line going to the filler. I wanted to fill directly from my taps and this is what Tapcooler is designed for out of the box. These objectives were largely achieved without any issues. However, I did opt to purchase an 11-inch extension accessory since I realized my taps are too low to accommodate the Tapcooler and a bottle. As you can see in the photos, fully collapsed, the unit is about 7 inches long. Fully extended, it is about 14 inches long.

The Tapcooler is designed to fit forward sealing beer taps such as Intertap and newer Perlick. There is an adapter for other taps should you need it. It should be noted that the Tapcooler will not work with non-forward sealing taps, i.e., ventilated beer taps.

Setting up and filling bottles was a very easy and seamless process for the most part. Notice

that it has a built-in stopper at the top and a lip that points any spillage down instead of potentially in your face. There is a button on the top for dispensing your CO2. Once your bottle is purged and you are ready to dispense, simply open your tap and adjust the pressure relief valve for optimal foam-free filling. Once your bottle is filled, close the tap, cap your bottle, and if needed, start the process over.



Length collapsed and fully extended. Right side is your gas inlet and push button purge valve. Left side is your pressure relief valve/overflow.



Tapcooler before and during filling. Gas side ball lock connector and gas attached. Notice the very low amount of foam when filling. Adjustable pressure relief valve on opposite side from gas side.



Safety first...glasses recommended when filling pressurized bottles.

As far as accessories, the only one purchased for bottling right away was the gas side ball lock connector. This allows you to hook your gas side ball lock directly to the unit. I did purchase a growler filler which is simply a stopper that goes over the tube. I have ordered an 11 inch flexible extension because I realized my tap tower is too short to easily attach a bottle and fill. They offer longer extensions as well. You may or may not have this issue depending on your setup. I can function without it, but it will make things go a little faster. Tapcooler comes with a vast array of accessories, including a can filler, handsfree clip, pressure relief valve drain tube, and many others. There is also a good selection of replacement parts should you need them.



Collapses to fit in an 8" x 8" container for easy cleaning and sanitizing.

Pros:

- Compact, all stainless design
- Easy to clean and sanitize
- Accessories make it very customizable to your specifications
- Ease of use

Cons:

- May not have clearance to operate without a flexible extension

Tapcooler Counter Pressure Bottle Filler & Accessories:

<https://shop.greatfermentations.com/category/tapcooler-bottle-filler-and-accessories>

Beer Porn

And finally, a pair of cold-weather beers:



The Wee Heavy (17C)



The Dunkelweizen (10B)

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North Texas Home Brewers Association

The North Texas Home Brewers Assoc. is a group with an interest in beer and homebrewing. We meet the second Tuesday of the month at various locations around the DFW area. Visitors are welcome!

"Livin' the Brews" is our monthly newsletter. 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.



www.NTHBA.org