
LIVIN' THE BREWS



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

NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY

By Larry Papkin

Just a brief note about this month's newsletter. After the dismal showing last month, we have harassed all the officers (including me) into making sure they get their articles written and submitted for this month's edition. And boy, how they have responded! This may be the biggest newsletter I've seen yet, and not only that, but the articles are great too! Please take a look at their hard work. There is a lot of good information in here.

If you have something you'd like to say to the club, have a great recipe, a gadget that works great, or just want to tell the club about a great beer you've had or a brew pub you've visited lately, don't hesitate to send me an article. It can be long or just a tidbit, doesn't matter. Hope to see everyone at the next meeting at Franconia. It should be a lot of fun. Cheers!

PREZ SEZ

by Wayne Yandell

The 25th anniversary Bluebonnet Brewoff is in the history books and I survived. I had a great time as always and met many great people and drank a lot of great beer! Our keynote speaker this year from Deschutes Brewery was Tim Alexander and gave an interesting talk about sensory testing. For those unable to attend or make it to the tech talk, he said he would get the presentation to Mike Grover to distribute.

Our upcoming club meeting will be hosted by Franconia Brewery. If you have never made it up to McKinney for the tour of the facilities, next month is your chance. Dennis is always a gracious host and does a lot to promote both craft beer and the home-brew community. So come out and enjoy some pizza and beer and some good times with us.

We are moving swiftly into warmer weather and some warm weather brewing so if you are not doing controlled fermentation and would like to do so, look for a short article below documenting an easy way to do this without buying a second refrigerator and temperature controller. This can really bring your beer to a new level of consistency and quality by providing your yeast a nice stable fermentation environment.

I would like to encourage anyone in the club who is confident about any particular procedure or method you are using to document it for the club and write up a short article for the newsletter. If you

would prefer to be anonymous, we would be happy to put it in as well. Even the most simple and introductory information is welcome. If you have a simple and effective bottling method or perhaps a way to organize and schedule your brew cart or brew session then let us know. Maybe you have found a way to do something that simplifies a procedure or makes better beer. Feel free to share your ideas on both the discussion forum or by writing up a short article to share with the rest of the club.

So hope to see you at the next meeting!

Wayne

Keep Your Cool

By Wayne Yandell

Keeping your fermentation temperatures either cool or warm can be a demanding task in Texas. If you are new to brewing or are not so new and just want to move to the next level of consistency and control in your process but you don't have room and/or the money for a spare refrigerator, then this article is for you.

The following methods work with heat or cooling but for the coming season we will obviously be dealing with the unrelenting summer heat.

This method will require a square Ice Cube brand picnic cooler, some water and plastic 16 oz bottles. You will want to buy the version with a flat bottom that will hold a bucket or carboy. Either type of vessel will stick out but you can cut a custom cut piece of Styrofoam to replace the lid and fit over the airlock or the neck of the carboy. You can also just cover the top with an old sleeping bag, towel or something to insulate it from the air.

The basic idea is to place your ferment bucket or carboy in the cooler, add some water so the bottom third is covered but not so much that the bucket or carboy floats. You fill 16 or 20 oz plastic soda $\frac{3}{4}$ full, freeze them and add them to the cooler each day. Loose ice will work also if you want to use that.

You will swap the frozen ice bottles out as they melt. Depending on the heat involved it will only take 2 or 3 of these a day to keep your beer in the proper Ale fermentation temperature range. Lagers can be done but you will need to swap out more frequently and depending on your schedule, this might not work out as well without causing the temperature to swing up and down too much.

For those needing pictures to visualize this process search google.com for IceCube Fermentation Chiller and you will find some nice picture guides and different approaches to this method.

I'll cover some more complicated methods in next month's issue. If you need to go to the next step before then, there are some very good guides on the web on this topic.

Happy brewing!

NHC Regional Judging

Leroy Gharis

We can use judges and stewards to help with the NHC Regional judging. Judging will be at Coors Distributing, 2550 McMillian Parkway, Ft. Worth, TX. We will start judging at 9am Sat. April 9th. There will be three judging sessions on Saturday. We will also be judging on Sunday beginning at 9am. Hopefully we will be able to finish with two sessions on Sunday, April 10th. We will be using the [BJCP queued judging](#) process. If you follow the link you will find four documents describing the process. There will be several judges from out of town so this will be a good time to make new friends or possibly catch up with old ones. If you need more information you can go to this [link](#) which includes a link to send me an email or [here](#) to contact Jimmy Orkin, the Judge Coordinator. Here is a [map](#) to Coors.

Top of Tree from the Education Department

Chuck Homola

I'd like to start out this month with a big thank you to everyone that helped make the Bluebonnet an overwhelming success once again! In particular I was really happy to see so many new beer judges helping out in a number of different capacities. It really feels like we are growing the ranks, which will allow us to provide better than ever feedback to all the competitors that work so hard to submit quality beers. It would be a real injustice for us not to work just as hard in the evaluations that we perform in the competitions.

I am happy to announce that we will once again be offering our flagship education program this spring/summer – the BJCP Exam Preparation Course. I will have sent out an initial email to those that have expressed interest in taking this course by the time you read this article. If you did not receive it and would like more information on the course or to sign up – please send me mail at education@nthba.org as usual, and I will get you on the class list. The current plan is to have the first class on the 3rd Sunday of April and then starting in early May we would meet every other weekend through the middle of September. This would allow us the ability to get about 12 class sessions in before the first of two exam offerings come up this fall. The cost of the class is \$100 for the entire series to cover the cost of the beers we will use to calibrate our senses on a per sub-category basis. The club will pick up the other class expenses.

We will offer the option of buying single class sessions for approximately \$10/class for those that cannot make most of the classes. The course will also include at no extra cost a sensory calibration session using an off-flavors doping kit from Siebel – this is a unique experience that helps each of us to understand how we uniquely perceive each of the most common beer flaws that we come across in real life judging situations.

The BJCP class is targeted at a number of different goals including but not limited to: folks who are taking the Judging exam for the first or subsequent times, those that want to learn more about detecting and correcting flaws in beers, how to perceive and interpret off aromas and flavors, general beer style education or anyone wanting to understand more about entering or participating in beer competitions. There is no requirement that anyone in the class has to take the exam – that is completely optional.

Each class session is composed of the following sections: technical lecture, review of 2 beer style categories in depth, a pop quiz from the previous class and a tasting session of each covered sub category comprised of commercial examples and homebrewed beers. I really hope you all will consider taking this course – it seems to be well received over the past few years and we will continue to evolve it over time as we get feedback on the content and format.

The other educational focus I want to highlight is that of the mini-courses we try to do at the brew days. There are two brew days coming up very soon and I want to make sure we having something planned for each of them. We need some ideas/presenter for the April brew day at Anthony and Greta's place – please let me know if anyone can help out with this as I will be out of town that day (more on that in a moment). The May brew day will be at Kelly's house and I am planning to do the yeast starter class at that time – a number of folks have been asking about this and I thought it would be a good time to do this one.

Last but not least – I wanted to talk about something that is not education related. As most folks know – the 2011 edition of Dark Lord Day is on the final Saturday of April. I know of at least 4 club members that will be attending – if you plan on being there – let me know – it would great if we all could meet up. A couple of us are planning to get a bunch of photos and videos and we will post them online for everyone to check out. There has been a significant change in how the festival works this year which restricts who can even get onto the grounds – so there will be far less folks than in past years. Due to that, I'd like those of us that are fortunate enough to get to attend to at least bring some of the experience back to the club – not to mention some DL '11. We will also use this opportunity to purchase some most excellent commercial examples for the BJCP Exam Class that are not available in our beloved land of TABC – this allows us to have the best possible reference beers available for the course.

Well I think that should be enough for this month – time to filter an Altbier, siphon an American Amber and keg a North English Brown while the weather is so nice – I love this stuff!

Brewing an American Classic in the Time Honored Tradition

By Bill Lawrence

I had originally thought that I would offer up a recipe for a competitor beer but then thought, “the hell with that”, instead I'll give you a formulation for a beer I sometimes make just for fun. In the dark days of American beer, roughly the 60's to maybe the late 80's, all that could be easily purchased was the always present fizzy yellow lager. After that of course, the craft brewing/home brewing

renaissance emerged and as a consequence today we have a plethora of very good, flavorful beers from which to choose. Beer in this country however is much like religion; there is this “born again” phenomenon which is still going on. Before the dark ages referred to above, there were actually many flavorful beers to be had as the industry was made up of many regional breweries brewing their local specialties. So, if you look at roughly the last 150 years, there was a period of plenty followed by drought which itself gave way to the current period of enlightenment. Another thing which has waxed and waned over the years is the popularity of ales versus lagers. From its birth, American brewing began with an English ale tradition since many of the early brewers were immigrants of the British Isles. The ale tradition was eventually supplanted by a lager tradition brought over by migrating Germans who eventually came to dominate the brewing industry. Now of course, the pendulum has swung back to the ales we so enjoy today (at least in the high quality craft brew segment anyway).

Being somewhat more mature than most in the club, I remember as a young teenager a beer unlike most others on the market at that time. It was referred to as an ale, but at the time, I did not know what that meant. It was a beer for people who enjoyed a more aggressive flavor in a beer and as I recall, the beer had a macho image probably fostered by the advertising campaign the brewer employed to market the brew. Anyhow, this beer was Balentine’s XXX which was essentially American Pale ale, the grandfather of the now legendary Sierra Nevada Pale Ale. At that time, the first age of enlightenment was coming to an end as the dark days of the “fizzy Yellow Lager” were starting to squeeze out all mass marketed ales. I bring you this recipe in the spirit of nostalgia to a simpler time when men were men and oh, never mind.....

WILLY’S NOSTALGIA PALE ALE

American 6 row malt 67%
Light Munich malt 8%
Crystal malt 20L 4%
Corn grits (or flaked corn) %
Cluster hops 7 HBU 60 minutes in the boil
Brewers Gold hops 4 HBU 20 minutes in the boil
0.75oz Brewers Gold 5 minutes in the boil
1.0 oz Cascade hops dry hopped

Adjust the malt bill to your system to obtain an original gravity of 1.055 assuming a boil of 90 minutes. If you use corn grits (like a real man or woman would) they will need to be cereal mashed. I buy mine in the grocery store, they come in a 2 lb box and I use the instant variety (3 Minute Brand, Quick Grits). Get a really big pot (I mean really big) add to the grits about a pound of the 6 row malt and a lot of water and bring the whole thing up to 150F. Let it sit for 15 minutes or so then raise the heat and get the whole thing up to a boil. First of all, add a lot of water and keep a big pitcher handy while boiling the stuff in case you need to add more. There are a few things you need to know about grits. First, they swell up a lot over time (which is why you need a big pot). Secondly, when they boil, they spit at you and it hurts (which is why you need to “man up/woman up” to make this beer, also cover your arms when boiling). Finally, nothing is as sticky as cooking grits. I think they may have built the pyramids with this stuff. As it stiffens up, it will try to burn so keep stirring the whole time and additional water as needed. 15 minutes before the cereal mash is done, dough in the main mast at around 120F or so. Add the boiling grits to the main mash once they are done and get the whole thing

up to 150F and leave it there for 90 minutes. After that, follow your normal ale brewing procedures. By the way, if you are a “Girly man/woman” you can use flaked corn but that takes some of the “sport” out of the process plus the beer will not taste quite the same (although it will be very good). I use the Chico ale strain (I have read that this yeast was actually derived from the strain used in the original ale but who knows?) and ferment around 68F.

I think you will enjoy this beer and if you opt to do the cereal mash will also have learned something you can employ on other projects. Besides this beer, I also like to make a CAP which of course can also be made using corn grits. Other styles for which this technique could be employed would be American Cream Ale, Standard American Pilsners and Dark American Lagers just to name a few. Incidentally, Don Trotter and I did a blind taste test just this last weekend and verified that indeed, cereal mashing made for a better beer (although the difference as subtle and the beer made with flaked corn was also very good). You will likely not win any awards for this beer in a big contest but I hope you find it fun to make and enjoyable to drink, I really like it. Finally, I am hoping that the newsletter will contain a monthly recipe written by one of the members each month. Besides filling up space in the newsletter, this might actually help the members brew up some good beer and hopefully it will give the readership some good ideas. This won't work however unless the recipes come from a diverse group of members so send in a write up of your favorite recipe for publication and let's increase the communal knowledge base. If you decide to make this brew, please keep me in mind when it comes time for sensory evaluation, I am always willing and usually available.

2011 Bluebonnet Brew-Off NTHBA Winners

At this year's Bluebonnet the North Texas Homebrewers Association had a great showing with one Best of Show 2nd Place winner and eight 1st Place winners. The club brought home 19 medals overall. There was fierce competition across all of the categories. Please congratulate all of our winners, they did an outstanding job!

Category	Person	Place	Beer
Best of Show	Walter Hodges	2 nd Place	STOOPID FLANDERS!
3. European Amber Lager - Total Entries: 54	Richard Harris	1 st Place	Auggies Vienna
4. Dark Lager - Total Entries: 45	Orlando Guerra	1 st Place	All Hail, The Pope's American Dark Lager
4. Dark Lager - Total Entries: 45	Orlando Guerra	3 rd Place	Pope's American Dark Lager, The Solo Tour
5. Bock - Total Entries: 48	Orlando Guerra, Damon Lewis	2 nd Place	Doppel Flop, The 2010 Tour
14. American Amber Ale - Total Entries: 37	Orlando Guerra	1 st Place	All Hail, The Pope's American Amber
14. American	Don Trotter, Kelly	3 rd Place	Sun Dog Amber Ale

Amber Ale - Total Entries: 37	Harris		
15. American Brown Ale - Total Entries: 33	Kent McBride	1 st Place	Rye Do I Even Try?
15. American Brown Ale - Total Entries: 33	Don Trotter, Kelly Harris	3 rd Place	Sun Dog Brown Ale
22. Imperial Stout - Total Entries: 34	Anthony Perea	3 rd Place	Imperial Stout
26. German Wheat & Rye Beer - Total Entries: 50	William Lawrence	3 rd Place	Willy's Heffeweizen
27. Belgian & French Ale - Total Entries: 109	Charlie Gottenkieny	1 st Place	Oud Trappisten
28. Sour Ale - Total Entries: 29	Walter Hodges	1 st Place	STOOPID FLANDERS!
28. Sour Ale - Total Entries: 29	Don Trotter	3 rd Place	Oud Sour Puss
32. American Barleywine - Total Entries: 18	Scott Townson	1 st Place	El Chupacabra
33. Fruit Beer - Total Entries: 37	Bart Askew	2 nd Place	Texas Rain Dance Peach Cobbler
40. Standard Cider & Perry - Total Entries: 19	Scott Townson	2 nd Place	Hertfordshire Cider
41. Specialty Cider & Perry - Total Entries: 24	David Ireland	2 nd Place	Dat's D'Apfelwein
42. New Entrants - Total Entries: 40	Grant Austin, Lawrence Drinkard	1 st Place	Strong Scotch Ale

Upcoming Competitions

March/April Club-Only Competition (COC)

The March/April Club-Only Competition will be BJCP Style 5 Bock covering 5A. Maibock/Helles Bock, 5B. Traditional Bock, 5C. Doppelbock and 5D. Eisbock. Entries will need to be dropped off by April 7th at the following locations:

Homebrew Headquarters
300 N. Coit Rd. Suite 134
Richardson, TX 75080
972-234-441

The Wine Maker's Toy Store
1300 N. I-35E, Suite 106
Carrollton, TX 75006
866-417-1114

May COC Angel's Share – Wood-Aged Beer

The May Club-Only Competition will be BJCP Sub-Category 22C. Do not enter this competition with base styles where barrel-aging is a fundamental requirement for the style (e.g., Flanders Red, Lambic, etc.). If your beer is based on a classic style (e.g., Robust Porter) then the specific style must be specified. Classic styles do not have to be cited (e.g., "porter" or "brown ale" is acceptable). The type of wood must be specified if a "varietal" character is noticeable (e.g., English IPA with Oak Chips, Bourbon Barrel-aged Imperial Stout, American Barleywine in an Oak Whiskey Cask). Entries need to be dropped off by April 21st at the following locations:

Homebrew Headquarters
300 N. Coit Rd. Suite 134
Richardson, TX 75080
972-234-441

The Wine Maker's Toy Store
1300 N. I-35E, Suite 106
Carrollton, TX 75006
866-417-1114

16th Annual Big Batch Brew Bash

The Big Batch Brew Bash is the KGB's signature homebrew competition. Begun in 1996, it has grown into the largest single-style homebrew competition in the history of humankind. This year's style will be Old Ales BJCP Category 19A. I will coordinate a packing party the week of April 25th where you can bring your entries and we'll pack them and ship them to the competition as a group. Keep an eye out on the club calendar for the date. You can find out more details at <http://www.thekgb.org/BigBatchBrewBash/CurrentNews.aspx>

Celtic Brew-Off

The Celtic Brew-Off is the largest homebrewing competition in the country devoted exclusively to beers, mead, and cider with origins in Celtic nations of the world. Entries are due by May 6th with May 12th the final day for Entry Drop Off. I will be coordinating a packing party the first week of May

where you can bring your entries and we'll transport them to the drop off location before the 12th. Keep an eye out on the club calendar for the date. You can find out more details at <http://www.kobb.org/celticbrewoff/>

A Call for Judges

I'd like to ask anyone interested in judging to help out by volunteering to judge the Club-Only Competitions. This is a great way to hone your judging skills and you don't need to worry about your experience level, we will always have experienced judges to guide you through the process. If you plan to take the BJCP test this year judging the COC is a great way to get some practice sessions in with certified judges before the test. If you are interested in judging please send your contact information to competitions@nthba.org with COC Judging as the subject.

Planning for a Competition

In the past I've struggled with having my beer ready for upcoming competitions. Sometimes I miss the entry deadline because my entries are still fermenting, other times I've got entries that would be better if they aged a couple of months and at other times, I've had entries that are great when they're young but by the time the competition rolls around their flavors and aromas have faded and they are just a shadow of their younger selves.

Planning for a competition is hard! You need to be well organized to have your entries ready and at their best on the day of judging. The only way to plan it correctly is to know your recipes and your beer. The best way to plan for a competition is to back into your brew date based on the competition judging dates and the entry deadline.

All of the competitions I've entered have always provided these dates and if they don't, just plan that the judging will take place on the second weekend after the entry deadline. Most competition organizers need a weekend to check-in the entries and pull the flights and then they'll start the first round judging the following weekend.

So, let's try my method out. Say you are going to enter your highly favorite Fuller's ESB clone in an upcoming competition. If we just go by what your recipe lists for aging and fermentation time we can come up with a brew schedule that will get your entry there in its best shape at judging time. If you need to ferment your beer for two weeks and age it for six weeks that means that you need to brew your beer at least eight weeks before the judging date to have it show up in its best condition. Based on that, if we know the judging date and entry deadline for an upcoming competition our brewing schedule will need to be something like the one below:

Judging: 04/01

Entry Deadline: 03/18

Ship Entries: 03/11

Bottle Entries: 02/04

Fermentation End: 02/03

Fermentation Start: 01/20

Brew Date: 01/20

This schedule gives us our two weeks to ferment the beer and on the day of judging our six week aging period has just ended. When you bottle and ship your entries are based on how you like to do things. If you are someone that bottles all their beer, you'll bottle when your fermentation period is up. If you are someone who kegs their beer, you might wait until the day before you ship to bottle. When you ship depends on how far away the competition is and how much you're willing to pay. Those of us with thin wallets might give ourselves two to three weeks to ship so we can save some pennies, other big spenders might ship all their entries overnight. I've been using the above technique to plan for all of the competitions I'm entering in this year and so far I haven't missed a competition entry deadline yet, and on the day of judging I would say my beer has been at its best. Hopefully this will be helpful for the rest of you out there struggling with planning for competitions.

It's Time to Pitch!

Well that's all I've got for you this month. So, it's time to pitch the yeast and see how things turn out. So stay sanitized, keep an eye on those fermentation temps and I'll catch you all at the next club meeting.

Jim Lavin – Otaku Brewer

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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