



LIVIN' THE BREWS



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

Volume XVII, Issue 1

January, 2002



January Meeting TUESDAY, Jan 8, 7:00 PM

The Flying Saucer
14999 Montfort Dr
Dallas, TX 75240-7519
(972) 934-2537
COC: Scottish Ales

Prez Sez

By Walter Hodges

Well, another year has come and gone. Where have we heard that before? As I look back on the past year and look forward to the New Year, I think about the past and what I enjoyed, was thankful for and wished I had done. As for the next year, I think about what I would like to do and how I can get to those things I wished I had done last year.

2001 was a busy year for me. I didn't get to make as much beer as I would have liked. I also sail and did not get to spend as much time on the water as I would have liked. So, for the New Year I plan to brew and sail more. That sounds a little like a resolution. While I'm on that path, I'll put down a few more resolutions that I think you might want to add to your list. I'll keep it light; you

can come up with your own serious resolutions.

I resolve to:

1. Brew at least one beer I've never made before
2. Enter into at least two more beer competitions
3. Introduce at least two people to home brewing
4. Conduct a "how-to" home brew session (i.e. beginning extract, all grain, etc.)

I am looking forward to 2002, and my new responsibilities as the President of the North Texas Homebrewers Association. I want to hear from you and your thoughts about what you want from your club. My e-mail and phone number are available on the club web page, or I'm always available at the meetings.

February Meeting
Tuesday, Feb 14, 7:00 PM
Location: TBD

Brewer Royale Update

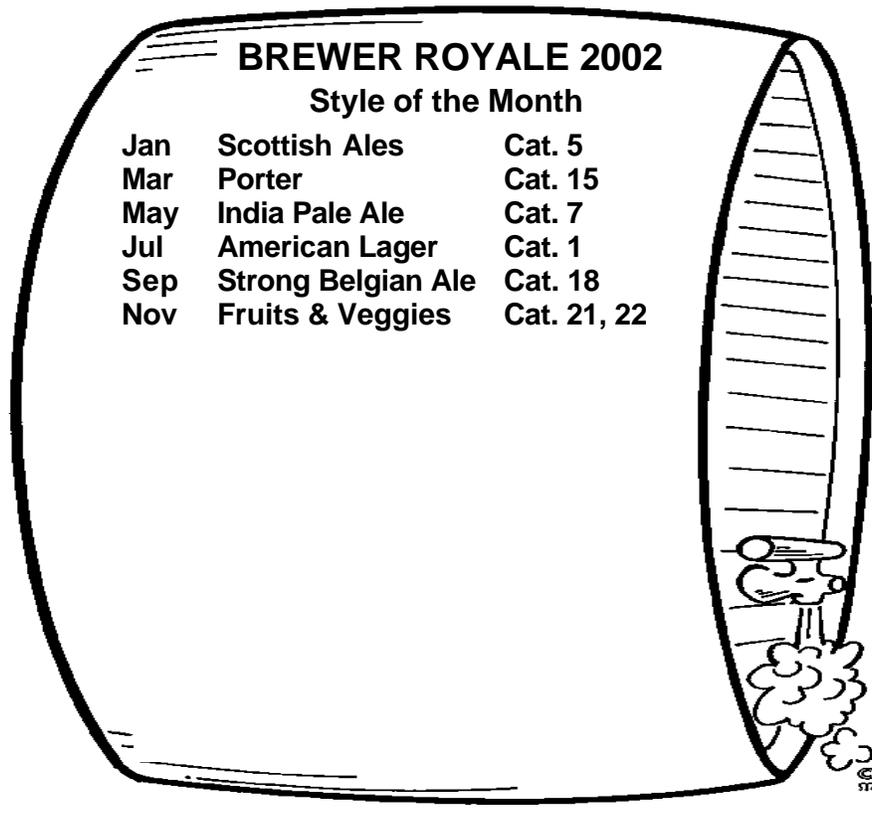
By Bill Dubas

Scottish ales include three sub-categories, distinguished by gravity, and named Scottish-style light, heavy, and export. There is also a very strong beer, called strong Scotch ale, which is classified separately from the lower-gravity Scottish ales, but it is not included in this month's Brewer Royale.

An antiquated system of nomenclature for Scottish ales is also seen from time to time. This system is based on an obsolete unit of currency called the shilling. This system designates the three sub-categories based on the nineteenth-century price charged for a barrel of each one. Light, heavy, and export are known as 60/-, 70/-, and 80/-, respectively, where "/-" is read as "shilling."

Though similar in gravity to English bitters, the malt-hop balance of Scottish ales is decidedly to the malt side. Long, cool fermentation leads to clean malt character (which may include some faint peat or smoke character). Note that this smoky character can be due to the yeast as often as to smoked or peat-kilned malt. More recent commercial interpretations from Scotland have begun to

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drift towards English bitter in terms of bitterness, balance, attenuation, esters and dry-hopping. These guidelines don't account for these recent commercial examples which would more accurately be described as bitters. Traditionally, Scottish ales were dispensed via pumps, which forced air into the headspace of the cask, thus forcing the beer out. These air-powered systems are referred to as "tall fonts."

Common characteristics of Scottish Ales:

Aroma: Malt is evident; some examples have a low level of hop aroma. Fruitiness low to none. A very faint smoky and/or toasty/roasty characteristic sometimes present. May have some diacetyl.

Appearance: Amber to dark brown. Draught examples often have a creamy, long-lasting head.

Flavor: Malt-dominated flavor, with subdued esters and just enough hop bitterness to prevent the beer from being cloyingly sweet. A very slight toasty, roasty and/or chocolate-like character is sometimes present. Caramel flavor from crystal malt medium to none. May have some diacetyl.

Mouthfeel: Creamy, with low carbonation

Overall Impression: Cleanly malty, with perhaps a faint touch of smoke and few esters
Ingredients: Scottish or English pale malt with small proportions of roasted barley, crystal or chocolate malt. English hops. Clean, relatively un-

attenuative ale yeast.

Vital statistics:

Light 60/-

OG: 1.030-1.034. Body is medium-light, but full for the gravity. The "light" name associated with this style refers to the gravity rather than the color.

IBUs: 9-15 FG: 1.010-1.013
SRM: 12-34 ABV: 2.5-3.3%
Commercial Examples: Belhaven 60/-, Caledonian 60/-, Maclay 60/- Light.

Heavy 70/-

OG: 1.034-1.040. Body is medium to medium-light.

IBUs: 10-25 FG: 1.011-1.015
SRM: 10-19 ABV: 3.2-3.9%
Commercial Examples: Belhaven 70/-, Caledonian 70/-, Maclay 70/-, McEwans 70/- (also sold as Younger's Scotch Ale and Tartan Special).

Export 80/-

OG: 1.040-1.050. Body is medium to medium-full.

IBUs: 15-36 FG: 1.013-1.017.
It is important to note that while the IBUs on some of these beers can be rather high, the low attenuation and solid maltiness results in a balance that is still even at best and more than likely towards malt.
SRM: 10-19 ABV: 3.9 to 4.9%
Commercial Examples: McEwan's 80/-, Belhaven 80/- (Belhaven Scottish Ale in the US), Caledonian 80/- Export Ale (Caledonian Amber Ale in the US), Maclay 80/- Export (Maclay 80 Shilling Export Ale in the US).

Gadgets, Gizmos, and Tips

by Joe Scivicque

On Monday, a week before Christmas, I was mashing a batch of grain for what I hoped would be a contender in the 2002 Bluebonnet, and I think I had an epiphany. Well, maybe the term epiphany conveys too much spontaneity. I've been thinking about starting this article for a few weeks now, and the sudden conviction was probably brought on by the anxiety I was having while I rinsed a half a gallon of wort out of my garage and into the grass. Doh!

As I was washing out the brew house, I mean garage, I was trying to think of a gizmo that I could attach to the side of my 10 gallon picnic cooler to hold the circulation tube in place. You see, I had it jammed under the lid of the cooler and then without thinking, I lifted the lid to check the mash temp. I probably took about 10 seconds to check the temperature and did not realize the tube was lying on the ground spilling sweet black wort all over the place. What's worse is when I looked down and saw the tubing, it took 3 or 4 more seconds for the situation to register in my thick head. No, I had not had any homebrew.

I wasn't even circulating wort at the time so, had I had the foresight to put a tubing clamp and crimped the tube, none of this would have occurred. But, I still feel the need for a gadget to hold the end of the circulating tube in the mash tun. This is not the first time the circulation tube has popped out of the mash tun. I would just as soon not have to hold the tube down in the mash while circulating the wort. There are other things to be done during the brew process. Looks like I'll just have to build a new gadget.

So, what's the point of all this. Well, I thought it would be of interest to start a regular (the term regular to be defined at a later date) article devoted to some of the experiences of our brewing members. This article will

be devoted to gadgets, gizmos and tips that our members have developed during their brewing experiences. Yes. That's correct. The sentence says members with an s not member as in the guy writing this current article.

Many of us build little tools to save time, save money, can't find a commercial tool that does exactly what we want, or we just enjoy building our own toys rather than buying them. We also develop our own techniques for brewing because our experience shows us what works best for our brews. The club could benefit by sharing some of these little developments and learning experiences.

I will solicit ideas from various members on a regular basis. You may either write the entry or just jot down enough notes for me to figure out what you want to describe and I will be happy to write the entry for you. I will edit and forward to the secretary for entry into the newsletter either monthly or bi-monthly depending on the level of response. The entry does not need to fill volumes, just anything you developed or adapted and found to be useful in your brewing process. If you have something that you want to go ahead and share, you are welcome to send it to Joseph.Scivicque@gte.net.

To get things rolling, here is something I have rigged together as the first entry.

Quasi-RIMS

I use a 5 or a 10 gallon picnic water cooler for a mash and lauter tun, so step infusion mashes were a problem for me when I decided to attempt more complex recipes calling for step infusion mashes. I did some online reading about Recirculating Infusion Mash Systems (RIMS) and decided rather than spend money on a stainless mash and lauter tun, I would build what I now refer to as my Quasi-RIMS. I won't go into detail on RIMS, so for more info on RIMS, try the following links: <http://www.hbd.org/kroyster/>; <http://www.mastermolding.com/Beer/>.

A simple explanation of a RIMS, for those who have not researched this before, is the use of a temperature based control system that turns on a pump when your wort is below the target temperature. The system circulates the wort through a pipe with a water heater heating element. When the wort hits target temperature, the control system turns off the pump.

My system does not use an electronic control system. It uses a sentient organic control system, namely me. It consists of a magnetic drive pump, a 10 foot coil of 3/8" copper tubing, enough vinyl tubing to connect the system in a loop, and a 12 quart pot full of boiling water. Once the water is boiling in the 12 quart pot, I drop the copper coil into the pot, and circulate the wort. I have to continuously monitor during the temperature rise. Since the wort is cooler than the water in the pot, the circulating wort will lower the temperature of the heating water over time. I will turn the pump off when the heating water stops boiling and wait for it to return to boil.

If I continue to circulate the wort and the heating water is too cool, the temperature in the mash tun can begin to drop instead of rise, so monitoring is necessary. However, if you overshoot your target temperature, you can lower the temp as quickly as you raised it by removing the copper coil from the heating water.

I have used this system in 5 or 6 batches to date with success. I can now raise the temp of my mash from 150 degrees to 160 degrees in less than 15 minutes after my heating water begins to boil. I have had no problem with scorching as may be caused by some RIMS devices. The biggest advantage for me was not spending over one hundred dollars on an electronic control system. My biggest expense was the magnetic drive pump that I found for \$120 at morebeer.com (sorry Kelly).

If I could only keep the recirculation tubing secured in the top of the mash tun, it would be exactly what I anticipated. I guess I'll just be forced to build another gadget.

Thunder Canyon Brewery

By Bill Dubas

I have often thought that opening a brewpub or tap house in a suburban shopping mall would be a good business opportunity.

While shopping for Christmas gifts this year, I noticed quite a few men being dragged from store to store by their spouses, reduced to mere beasts of burden, carrying shopping bags and boxes back to their SUVs and minivans. I even spied two or three guys, in obvious misery, perched in chairs next to the ladies dressing room, guarding purses while their wives try on seemingly endless quantities of skirts, dresses, and blouses.

Now, imagine if you will a refuge within the mall. Imagine a place where the beer lover could escape the agony of Express, Lerner's, Ann Taylor, and The Gap (notice that I omitted Victoria's Secret from this list). Imagine a place where you could enjoy a fine, hand-crafted beer and ponder questions such as "I wonder what kind of hops they used in this pale ale", instead of "Does that dress make my wife look fat?"

Well, such a place does exist, although you have to live in Tucson Arizona to enjoy it. The Thunder Canyon Brewery, located in the Foothills Mall on La Cholla Blvd., opened its doors to thirsty shoppers 4 years ago, and has enjoyed continued success ever since. During a recent visit to Tucson over the Christmas holiday, I was able to sample nine different beers on tap at Thunder Canyon; four "flagship" beers and five seasonal beers.

The first flagship beer was Sandstone Cream Ale; a light bodied American Cream Ale. It was very

pale, brewed with 100% barley, and lightly hopped with Willamette and Tettnanger. This beer won a bronze medal in the Cream Ale category in the 1998 World Beer Cup. Next on the list was Deep Canyon Amber; a medium bodied ale brewed with caramel malt for a rich amber color and malty flavor. This beer contained Cascade and Tettnanger hops to round out the profile. The third beer that I tried was Catalina Pale Ale. This beer had a pale copper color and a pronounced bitterness and aroma, no doubt induced by the generous amounts of Northern Brewer, Liberty, and Chinook hops in the boil, and Willamette hops in the finish. The final flagship beer was Obsidian Porter. This was a robust, full-bodied porter, with a deep reddish brown hue. It was brewed with a portion of chocolate malt, in addition to other roasted malts. Northern Brewer and Willamette hops were again the hops of choice for this beer.

The first seasonal beer that I tasted carried the name Prescription Pils. This beer won a silver medal in the European Pilsner category at the 1998 Great American Beer Festival. Next on the list was Countdown Honey Brown. This beer enjoys even greater distinction. It received a bronze medal in the Specialty Honey Lager category at the 2000 Great American Beer Festival, then went on to better that by receiving a gold medal in the same category in the 2001 GABF. The third seasonal beer that I sampled was a stout named Blackout Stout. This beer had a thick creamy head and a nice roasty flavor and aroma. The final two seasonal beers available were definitely the most creative. The first was a fruit beer named Desert Devil. After tasting it a few times, my wife and I got into a debate over the fruit used for the flavor-

ing. I insisted that it was raspberry. My wife insisted that it was either peach or apricot. It turns out that both of us were right as raspberries AND apricots were used in this beer. The final beer was a spiced Christmas beer. A definite clove aroma and flavor was evident. Our waitress mentioned that ginger had been added as well. It was nice to see a brewer given the flexibility and freedom to brew something a little out of the ordinary for a change.

In addition to some creative beers, Thunder Canyon also had an interesting selection of pecan wood fired gourmet pizzas, with crusts made from spent grains. I tried the French Quarter pizza, which was topped with Cajun-spiced chicken, basil, fresh and sun-dried tomato, and Parmesan cheese. The "sauce" was a blend of artichoke hearts, scallions, Parmesan cheese, and sour cream.

If your travels happen to take you through Tucson Arizona, I highly recommend a stop at Thunder Canyon Brewery.

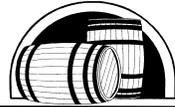
From The Editor's Desk

By Bill Dubas

If you were at the December Club Meeting and Annual Christmas Party at Bo Turton's place, you are probably aware that I am the new NTHBA Club Secretary. My main responsibility is to put the newsletter together. That in itself is a pretty big job. Fortunately, our past secretary, Don Trotter, has offered lots of assistance. My goal is to keep up the high standards that Don set, and hopefully raise the bar a notch. If you have any suggestions on how to make our newsletter more useful, entertaining, what-

ever, please contact me. My phone number and email address are listed below.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to encourage all members to submit an article for publication in the newsletter this year. It's really not that difficult. We're not shooting for Pulitzer Prizes here, believe me. I'm going to continue using Don's algorithm for article submission deadlines. The deadline for each month will be 12:00 noon Saturday, 10 days prior to the club meeting. For the February newsletter, that would be 12:00 noon, February 2nd.



The Brewing Equipment Trading Post



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

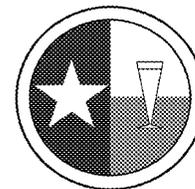
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1st Vice President -----	Kelly Harris -----	(972) 769-0958 killet@dhc.net
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Club Brewmeisters

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>

THE IRVING BEER
DRINKING SOCIETY



Livin' the Brews Newsletter
c/o Bill Dubas, Editor
P.O. Box 168274
Irving, Texas 75016-8274

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.