

Amateur Brewer

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NEWSLETTER

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AMATEUR BREWER NEWSLETTER No. 8-2, December 1981

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BOOK REVIEW

by Loren Strunk, editor, Oregon Brew Crew Newsletter

Home Brewed Beer & Cider, by Ben Turner. EP Publishing, Ltd., Wakefield, Yorkshire, England. 94pp, tables, illus., no index.

This is really two books in one--"Beer" and "Cider". The beer part illustrates how far British and American home brewing have developed and how much they have grown apart, and it is the beer segment that this review is primarily about.

There is a chapter on the history of beer in England, and a short but reasonably sophisticated Glossary. Neither are particularly useful to the brewer, but both are informative and interesting to the general beer enthusiast and Anglophile. The following chapters on Beer Styles, Processes, Equipment, Ingredients, etc., are clear, concise and, within the book's parameters, informative. Mr. Turner has aimed at the beginner, while providing enough information to help carry the beginner on to more advanced beers. There are some all-grain recipes. The techniques follow a more-or-less typical British pattern, which is rather oddly different from the American custom. In particular, two objections might be made: Mr. Turner dissolves his malt extract in hot water, boils the hops in a separate batch of water, then adds it to the wort. (When brewing all-grain beers, he boils the hops in the wort.) Also unlike some brewers, Mr. Turner does not use a secondary fermentor, although he does not leave his single-stage fermentor sealed for the entire fermentation period.

The two biggest limitations of the book are the result of its being a British be-

ginners' book. Despite the growing popularity of lager in Britain, the recipes are mostly of one type, and are summed up by Mr. Turner as all being of that type: pale, well-carbonated, medium bodied and relatively dry. The whole range of Continental styles is missed, and even the American style is ignored.

A more general limitation is that Mr. Turner hardly discusses the characteristics of the ingredients. The information needed to compare or evaluate beers from a brewer's standpoint is largely lacking. This is perhaps not a criticism of what the book does have, but it should be borne in mind by the American brewer who wants a book on how to brew British beers.

The "Cider" section parallels the "Beer" chapters, but with some changes. Oddly enough, Mr. Turner doesn't have any apple-juice concentrate recipes. He does favor augmenting fresh juice with genuine cider-apple concentrate, but if you want to make cider, he says to start with apples. Like old-time wine books, the recipes have no flexibility for adjusting the acidity of the fruit, etc.

Overall, Home Brewed Beers & Ciders is rather a mixed bag. For those who value reading about beer and brewing, the comments and ideas will be welcome. On the other hand, Mr. Turner endorses some questionable techniques and processes, and has little or nothing to add to the existing library of brewing books.

BEER BEER

by Jeff Jones, president, Oregon Brew Crew

(Last summer the Oregon Brew Crew toured General Brewing's plant in Vancouver, Wash., and we were all able to obtain samples of their yeast and observe the production of generic BEER, that most American of beers. A couple of months later Jeff brought some samples of a beer he had made. It tasted just like Beer beer, but slightly hoppier, and therefore slightly better. If you really like American beer, you'll LOVE this beer. As usual we don't especially recommend this sort of thing. f.e.)

INGREDIENTS

5-USgals (20-litres) water
6-lbs (2.6-kg) American Lager Malt
2-lbs (1-kg) flaked corn (maize)
1½-oz (45-gm) cluster pellets (2-oz if you like a hoppier beer, plus
½-oz (15-gm) Cascade pellets aromatics if desired)
Amateur Brewer L yeast if you can't get a commercial sample.
Carbonation: 1.2-oz dextrose/USgal

BEER BEER, cont'd.

The better commercial beers often have a smoothness and balance which can be difficult for the homebrewer to duplicate. The ability to create a beer with "drinkability" can be difficult for the amateur. Definition: drinkability--the quality of a beer which allows one to consume a large volume without experiencing satiation. However, the homebrewer is able to duplicate most of the best characteristics of a good commercial beer with a little effort and experimentation.

My first experience with light lagers began after I obtained a sample of the yeast used to make Beer beer. This culture, I learned, has been working for over 30-years and is attuned to a particular environment. This yeast was accustomed to a high proportion of corn as an adjunct in the mash. It works strongly at cold temperatures.

With that in mind I tried a mash with six pounds of American Lager malt (mostly 6-row) and two pounds of (imported) flaked maize to yield a very light bodied wort similar in color and flavor to the commercial variety.

MASHING SEQUENCE

The lager mashing sequence begins by blending the cracked barley malt and maize into the mash liquor at 122-125°F (50-51.5°C). Stir well to insure good mixing of grain and water. Hold the temperature at 118-120°F (48-49°C) and stir frequently for 20 to 30 minutes. This is the protein rest. Gradually increase the temperature to begin starch conversion, stirring all the way. It should take about 15-minutes to reach 150° (65.5°C). Do not exceed 155° (68°C) as you may destroy the enzymes. Hold at this temperature for 30 to 45 minutes, or if you prefer, until the iodine test indicates starch conversion has been completed. Mash-off is next; raise the temperature to 168°F (75.5°C) to end conversion, and bring the mash to sparging temperature, to complete the process.

BOILING THE WORT

The mash liquor, now beer wort, should be brought to a boil as quickly as possible. Once a full boil is under way the hop pellets are added. Since this will be a light bodied beer it is important to balance the hopping character with the body of the beer. An ounce and a half to two ounces of good quality hop pellets are all that are required for boiling and a half ounce aromatic hops, such as Cascades (optional) may be added during the final 15-minutes of boil. The wort is boiled for about an hour and a half until a gravity of 1.040 to 43 is reached.

THE FERMENT

Cool the finished wort as quickly as possible and pitch the yeast at 70°F (21°C). If you are using a good commercial lager yeast (or Amateur Brewer L) you can do the entire ferment under refrigeration. Refrigerator ferment will add greatly to the smoothness of the finished product. If you don't have the proper yeast carry the primary ferment at as low a temperature as can be achieved gracefully. Refrigerate the secondary fermentor.

in the bottle will be the result. If there has been a long storage period you may need to add a yeast culture at bottling to insure a good ferment in the bottle. A week after bottling, the bottled beer may be returned to the refrigerator for cold storage until consumed. With luck and care the Amateur can beat the Pro at his own game.

(ed note: the upward-step infusion mash (above) is described more fully in our paper Mashing for the North American Home Brewer available for \$1).

SEVENTH ANNUAL ABQAIQ BEER-JUDGING

In ABNL 7-4 we published information on the ABQAIQ competition in Saudi Arabia, land of prohibition. Here are the results of that competition.

The Amateur Brewer 20-point system was used with some modification. Seventyfour entries were received in this contest, which has been carried on since 1975, making it one of the oldest American beer competitions. There were 45 light beers, 23 dark, 4 special and 2 kegs!! Winners: Steve Gore, Light, 15.56 points, Dave Roth, Dark, 17.75 points, Keg, John Slining, 11.71, Special, Alan Griggs, 18.25 points. Sixteen judges and nine stewards presided over the competition, which featured the ABKAK German Band. That must have been some festival. As you might imagine, bottles are surely at a premium in such a place, and the report ends with a terse note: BOTTLES should be picked up ASAP by contestants.

MINNESOTA HOME FOAM LEAGUE BEER COMPETITION

November 7, 1981 saw the first Minnesota competition, sponsored by the Home Foam League beer club and Wine Art Minneapolis.

A 50-point scoring system was used, and there were 38 entries. Winners: Lagers (extracts), Scott Smith (31 points), Ale, Bob Ostlund (40-points), Adjunct beers, Don Crenshaw, (33 points), All-Grain Beers, Kevin Smith (42 points). Mike Barrett, Wine-Art manager, writes that four of the judges had judged at the nationals in 1979, and they said the quality was much higher this year in the local contest.

That confirms my own observations to the same effect. Our beers are getting soooo much better as we compete against one another, and share recipes and formulations.

Naturally, secondary ferment will proceed at a slower rate under cold temperatures, so allow plenty of time. Two months should be enough, with optional lagering beyond that.

BOTTLING THE BEER

One side-note: before bottling any refrigerated beer, allow it to come to room temperature. This may take 24-hours or longer. Cold liquids contain higher concentrations of dissolved gasses. If the normal amount of priming sugar is added to the cold beer, over-pressurization in

1982 HWBTA NATIONALS SET FOR SANTA ROSA

HWBTA Beer Competition Chairman Byron Burch announced that the 1982 competition

will be held in Santa Rosa, Calif. Entry is only available thru local HWBTA (Home Wire & Beer Trade Association) member shops. Your local merchant will handle your entry. The beer must be presented in de-labeled 11- or 12-oz bottles (3 bottles per entry). YOUR label may be on the bottle, but commercial labels must be removed. Entry forms and fees are due in Santa Rosa by Saturday, Feb 20, 1982, via your local shop.

The beer (via your local shop) should reach them by the end of February. Beer entries must have your name and address, sponsoring shop, beer type, number and name of category entered. Let this be one way you (we) can show our support for the folks who keep us supplied with beermaking stuff. Entry fee is \$3.00 per entry.

Awards: First, second, and third prize ribbons plus trophies for best of class and best of show.

Categories: 1) American Light beer, 2) Full bodied light lager, 3) Dark lager, 4) Pale Ale, 5) Brown Ale, 6) Sweet Stout, 7) Dry Stout, 8) Porter, 9) Barley Wine. A description of categories may be had from your local merchant, as there is not room here for that. If you want to enter this national contest, you'd best get about it soon.

If you are not near a shop, and you still want to enter, send me two (2) 20¢ stamps AND a long self-addressed envelope. I'll send you zeroes of the information, and the name and phone number of the nearest HWBTA member so you can enter this nationwide contest. Results will be announced in late March at the Charleston SC HWBTA Confab. There is also a wine competition (Boulder Colorado), check your local merchant.

UCD OFFERS ADVANCED HOME BREWING COURSE

UCDavis is offering an extension course for the serious home brewer who wishes to move beyond malt extract technology in the search for the perfect beer. The class will be offered twice, February 6 and 20. The class will emphasize the evaluation of raw materials and the theory and practice of mashing. The class will also cover equipment design, and yeast selection and culturing, plus a tour of the Davis Brewing Lab. A limit of 25 students each time will insure that each can get individual attention from UCD Brewing guru Michael Lewis. For info contact University Extension, UC Davis, Davis, CA 95616, telephone (916) 752-0880.

CARTWRIGHT DELIVERANCE ALE

In October our local small brewer, Charles Coury encountered some financial problems, so he proposed to the local home brewing community that he produce a special ale on a subscription basis. We soon rounded up money for a hundred cases, and Charlie was off and running. A religious man, he called Deliverance Ale.

The beer is now ready, and I call it a Christmas Ale. Wondrously hoppy and quite delicious, I found the beer, although only ten days in the bottle, to hold excellent possibilities, especially if allowed to age a while.



The righteous cry and the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles (PS 37:17), O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever (PS 106:1)

Government Label Approval Missing

Charles wanted to produce a strong ale, but the Oregon Liquor Control people told him that if he did he couldn't sell it in his brewery, so he was forced to keep the alcohol under 4% by weight.

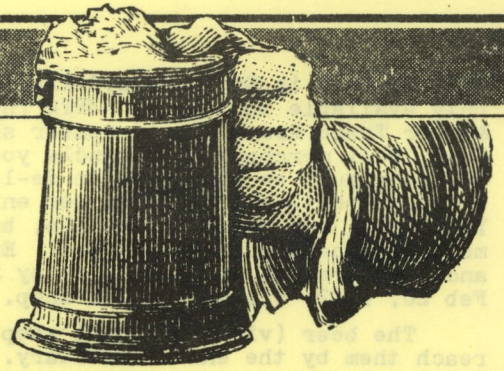
The beer is finished in elegant green bottles (recycled Becks bottles). A total of 2 batches were brewed, 340 cases (under 25 bbl, 765 gallons). Deliverance Ale is brewed to a 13.2°B (1.054) with 2-row Klages barley and 8% Caramel malt, hopped at 1.2-lb/bbl (1.6-oz/USgal; 4.6-gm/L) with 2/3 Cascade pellets, and 1/3 Cluster pellets.

The beer was fermented at 70°F for four days with a top-yeast, followed by 2½-weeks in secondary at 60°F, and primed for bottling at 11.3-gm/L (1.5-oz/USgal) with dextrose, to a bottle pressure of 2.9-volumes. To date the US government has not approved the label, so the beer is being delivered with the regular Cartwright Portland Beer label. Don't you wish YOUR local brewery made good beer? Don't we all!

IN MEMORIAM

Emma Coe, beloved wife of Lee Coe, home brew writer, passed on recently, and we were sad to hear this. I had never met Emma, but I've been Lee's beer friend for several years now, and I know how well they got on together. Lee told me they would have celebrated their 30th Anniversary Jan 6. Emma was well thought of in Berkely where 200 people attended a memorial service, and the City Council passed a resolution of condolence. We are sad to offer Lee sympathy in his bereavement.

I am going to take the liberty of cutting this issue short, by using my Christmas column from the Seattle Times (I do a monthly for them) on the last page. I think you'll enjoy the article. The beers are available in most parts of the US. This will help me meet my newsletter deadline of in-the-mail 12/31.



Ales for wassails

Potent tradition is revived

In England and Northern Europe, strong, dark beers are the normal fare with traditional holiday meals. Three types of beer prevail: amber beers, dark beers and special Christmas beers.

In the "good old days," every brewery made a special beer for Christmas. Some of those "Christmas ales" were brewed with an alcohol content that could be quite high, 8½ or 9 per cent by weight. Such beers seldom are made in the United States, at least since Prohibition.

Recently however, the tradition of brewing special Christmas ales has been revived by some small breweries, notably the Anchor Brewery (San Francisco) and this year, the Cartwright Brewery of Portland, Ore. The Anchor Christmas ale has been brewed annually since 1975.

Anchor Steam Beer, long available in Seattle, always has been one of my favorites, so when I first encountered their Christmas ale, in 1977, I thought: What can they do to make a better beer than their regular product?

What a surprise when we opened that bottle and poured it carefully into tulip champagne glasses. A wonderful lively head unfolded, with tiny bubbles, reminiscent of fine champagne, but with extra zing.

As the light amber liquid filled the glass, I leaned carefully to sniff (not knowing what to expect). WOW! The bouquet was overwhelming and magnificent. The beer had been dry-hopped!

Dry-hopping is the addition of highly flavorful hops into the aging tanks which give the beer a very special bouquet. A bouquet so nice that it tickles your nose. The beauty and delight of dry-hopping is that it does not add extra bitterness; only the hop bouquet.

These annual beers have bouquet and flavor, and each one is an all-time great beer. I have high expectations for the 1981 issue, and I know it's worth a trip to San Francisco. I also know there are only 8,000 cases being made, so hurry. Very little of this production leaves California.

Meanwhile, there are Christmas beers available here in Seattle. The 1981 **Aass Jule Ol** has a redneck label, to differentiate it from the 1980 (whiteneck label). Norwegian beer is among the world's finest, and the small Aass brewery makes a superb product with great flavor and lovely bouquet. **Noche Buena**, another Christmas beer, is from Mexico. It is a good beer, but nothing special, a brown ale. The **Cartwright** beer from Portland is not ready yet, but you'll have to buy it in Portland, because the Cartwright bottle is not the right size to be admitted to Washington State. Be sure to get advance permission from the State Liquor Board, and pay their small fee, to bring beer into this state from another state.

DARK BEERS

Actually you don't need a special Christmas beer because many regular beers are ideal for holiday enjoyment. Ales and stouts are the traditional libation for the rich, heavy foods served during the holidays, but the best beer for such heavy dinners is a good stout or porter.

Porter probably was the first of the very dark English ales to be brewed, although all of the early beer produced in England and Germany probably was very dark in color, because of the lack of temperature control in the mashing systems of that era.

One porter recently has been introduced in Seattle: **Samuel**

Smith's Tadcaster Porter, from England, an excellent example of this type of beer. My preliminary tastings tell me it is at least fine, if not great. (I don't like to jump to beer conclusions in one or two tastings.)

Some of the world's strongest beers are called stout. The word stout originally referred to very strong beer (ale) and first was used around 1677. There also are double stouts and imperial stouts. **Russian Imperial Stout** first was brewed in England for the Empress of Russia, Catherine the Great, in 1795. It still is brewed annually, just before Christmas, by the same brewer, Barclay & Perkins of London.

By far the most popular stout is **Guinness Stout**, made since 1759. Guinness is the Irish dry stout by which the others are measured. Because of the 4.4 per cent alcohol content, you'll have to go to your state liquor store to buy it. Two other great stouts are available at your local beer merchant: **Mackeson**, English-style stout, a little sweeter than most Irish stouts, and **Finnish Koff Imperial Stout**, misnamed, but still a great beer in my book. Australia's **Tooth Sheaf Stout** (4.8 per cent) gets my three-star (fine) rating, and the 25.6-ounce bottle is a real blessing, but only from the state liquor store.

BARLEYWINE ALES

I have saved the best for last, because my real choice for the holidays is **Old Peculiar Yorkshire Ale**. This is the only example of what the English call barleywine available in Seattle. Barleywine ales (you can't call them barleywines because the government doesn't approve of mixing terms) are very rich, strong and flavorful. Old Peculiar, with 6 per cent alcohol is available only in the state liquor stores. Do try it as an aperitif with your Christmas dinner.

BEER



FRED ECKHARDT
Times columnist

*A Happy and
prosperous
New Year
to one and
all.*

*Fred
Eckhardt*

BEER

Special for
Christmas,
hearty,
potent ales

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