

# LISTEN

GOOD NEWS FOR LOVERS OF REAL BEER

S

Library

# to your BEER

FEB 19 1985

Portland, Oregon

a Fred Eckhardt Publication — dedicated to the improvement of American Beer and the enjoyment of Real Beer from all over the world



**RATING THE STRONG LAGERS**

1984 Beer of the Year — inside

**January 1985**

**THE LISTENER'S GUIDE TO BEER**  
**SIXTEEN CLASSIC STRONG EUROPEAN LAGERS**  
 (alphabetically in class)

- **DAB Original Special Reserve**,  
W. Ger. (Beer Import Co.,  
Union NJ)
- **Dortmunder Ritterbrau**, W. Ger.  
(Acme Food Specialties, Los  
Angeles)
- **Kulmbacher Schweizerhofbrau**  
**Bock M.L.**, W. Ger.  
(HDT Importers, Portland, OR)
- **Paulaner Wies'n Marzen**, W. Ger.,  
(Morandell, San Francisco)
- **Spaten Franziskus Heller Bock**,  
W. Ger. (Chrissa Imports,  
Brisbane, CA)
- **Altenmunster Brauer Bier**,  
(Wm. Grant & Sons/Global  
Trading, Butler, WI)
- **Carlsberg Elephant Malt Liquor**,  
Denmark, (All Brands, Lake  
Success, NY)
- **Dinkel Aker Pils**, W. Ger.,  
(Dieter Steinmann, NYC)
- **EKU Jubilaumsbier**, W. Ger.  
(Morandell, San Francisco)
- **Giraf Malt Liquor**, Denmark  
(Wisdom Imports, Irvine, CA)
- **Maiselbrau Spezial**, W. Ger.  
(Importer unknown)
- **Monkshof Amber Malt Liquor**,  
W. Ger. (Dieter Steinman,  
NYC)
- **Paulaner Maibock**, W. Ger.  
(Morandell, San Francisco)
- **Paulaner UR-Bock Hell**, W. Ger.  
(Morandell)
- **Spaten Ur-Marzen Oktoberfest**,  
W. Ger. (Chrissa Imports,  
Brisbane, CA)
- **Wurzburger Hofbrau Mai Bock**,  
W. Ger. (St. Killian Importing,  
Danvers, MA)

**FOUR SPECIALTY BEERS**

**Biere De Paris (Lutece)**, France  
(Merchant Du Vin, Seattle)

**Brassin De Garde de Saint Leonard**, France  
(Almaden Imports, San Jose, CA)

**Lindeman's Kriek Lambic**, Belgium  
(Merchant Du Vin)

**EKU Kulminator Urtypp Hell 28**  
(Morandell)

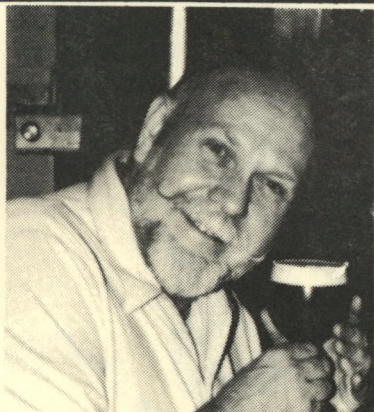


photo by Brad Gordon

## LISTEN!

Well, here we are. Finally! You probably thought you'd never see another issue of **Listen To Your Beer**.

I hope you like our new format, but it's a lot more work. Hopefully we'll be rewarded by larger circulation, greater advertising revenues, etc. The new format is much more readily expandable than that of a newsletter and, naturally, we hope potential advertisers will be able to relate to this style rather more readily. As you will see, the **West Coast Pub Guide** is now an insert. Even so it is mailed to *all* of our subscribers, and is in every copy sold by our West Coast distributors.

*(continued on page 11)*



**Cover photo:** Portland's new Publican Mayor Bud Clark "Listening" to his beer. Bud had the courage to stand up to Budweiser in defense of Oregon's Bottle Law (Listen 1:2). We look forward to his courage and leadership here in Portland during the coming four years.

Listen to Your Beer, Volume 2, Number 2

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**Contributors:** Steve Dafoe, Michael Laybourn, Jim Tindall.

If there's a red dot on your label, you've expired. Send money (\$9, if by March 15) to renew and add \$2 if you live in Canada. If you are also an **Amateur Brewer** Subscriber and you wish to renew that publication, add another \$8 for renewal to **AB**. Two years \$17, both publications, \$33 (Canada US\$37).

## STRONG LAGERS TO REMEMBER

by Fred Eckhardt

At the 1983 Oktoberfest in Munich, the Bavarian Minister-President Franz Joseph Strauss told an enthusiastic German audience (about the Common Market campaign to change German beer), "The bureaucrats in Brussels want to replace century-old recipes with chemical concoctions that read like formulas for new pharmaceuticals. Some of these brews contain benzoic acid, muriatic acid, sulfuric acid, saccharin, gum and formaldehyde. The fact that they call their products 'beer' is outright slander. Stuff like that belongs in test tubes, not beer mugs."

Mr. Strauss's outburst caused a lot of wailing and gnashing of teeth by brewers in the U.S., as well as in the other Common Market countries, but the truth remains that German beers are among the finest in the world.

The best of these, the so-called Pilsen style lagers, have become the prototype for our North American common beer: *Bud*, *Millers* and *Stroh-Coors*, although a side-by-side tasting of the best of the latter against any of the former reveals what any fool can tell, namely that German beer at its worst is usually better than the American lagers at their best.

The best of these European "Pils" are made to a slightly stronger alcohol content than is allowed in most states. Many states have laws limiting alcohol content of "beer" at less than 4% (by weight — 5% by volume). If a beer is stronger than that, it must be marketed as a different beverage — an ale or a stout, as a "bock," or as a

"malt liquor." Now you can't call a lager an ale, so that leaves only bock or the latter term, a catch-all title, to identify the stronger alcohol beverages. The problem is that American so-called malt liquors are rather dreadful. *Schlitz Bull*, for example, is sold at any alcohol content that comes out of the vat. In Utah and Colorado it might be 3.2%, while in other places (on draft) it will be 3.6%, and it might even be found at its designed 4.5%, one never knows.

The great European lagers are brewed to an alcohol strength of just over 4% (weight), that is around 4.2-4.5% (5.3-5.7%/volume) although some of them are much stronger. Most European "Pils" are marketed in this country by simply increasing the water content, at bottling, to reduce the alcohol content to the required 3.9% (by wt.). This actually makes the beer more appealing in the eyes of marketing people, because it also decreases the hop level. Of course these marketing people assume that Americans don't like hops or more correctly that Americans lack taste for the good things in life. The malt liquor-bocks are actually among the best beers being brought into the U.S. If you are tired of the repetitive nature of many European lagers being brought into the U.S., (and *they* talk about the similarity of our beers!), then this list will be a revelation in taste. Where I could find only one five-dotted among the classic Bohemian lagers I reviewed in *Listen* 1:4, there are five on this list.

**Altenmunster** is typical of these beers. **Altenmunster** means "Old Church."

The only choice.



## ALTEMUNSTER™

A pure and natural product, Altenmünster is brewed in the traditional Bavarian manner from carefully prepared barley malt, the finest hops and sparkling clear water from mountain springs.

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## ALTEMUNSTER

Taste the Tradition

Imported by Global Trading, Inc., Butler, Wisconsin

**Brauhaus Altenmunster** was founded in 1648 by Bavarian Cistercian monks and, as the years went by, the town of Altenmunster grew up around the "Kloster" (monastery). The beer is no longer brewed by the good brothers, but their formulas and craftsmanship have been passed on. The beer is a pale beer, so it is not the original beer brewed there, as that product must have been much darker, yet the spirit remains firm. Copper brew kettles, open fermentors, *Rheinheitsgebot* purity and natural krausening are still the standard. This beer is brewed to 13.5° (1056 British — 13½% fermentables) to produce 4.6% alcohol by weight (5.8% volume). I've found the beer with some light sediment and chill-haze, which is always a good sign. **Altenmunster** has a splendid bouquet, a deep rich maltiness, and a hint of sweetness, plus a pleasing hop overlay on the palate without a lingering aftertaste. **Altenmunster** is also available in porcelain capped half- and 2-liter bottles.

My favorites on this list are probably the Dortmund **Ritterbrau Bock**, and the DAB Original. These are Dortmund-style beers. One of the four great Northern European beer styles of the nineteenth century, Dortmund is a distinctive pale beer style, a bit darker than the classical Bohemian or Pilsner beers, with a little more alcohol, and a little lower hop rate. They are usually drier on the palate. These two have quite satisfactory hop rates for my palate, however. The old **Dortmunder Classic Malt Liquor** (no longer available) was a true example of type. The current version (**Dortmunder Classic Beer**) being marketed is an example of what happens to a beer when it is restructured for the U.S. market. It is quite insipid by comparison with the two listed above. The beer was ruined, in my opinion, to make it available to Americans. ■

### SPECIALTY BEERS

The **Biere De Paris** (Lutece) and the **Brassin De Garde de Saint Leonard** are superb examples of the style of beer called *Biere De Garde* (laying down beer). These are two excellent beers by any standard. Both are bottom fermented lager beers with 4.4 and 4.5% alcohol (wt.) respectively. Each

is Champagne finished, as is the style for this type. Both of them are all-malt beers deserving of your attention. The **EKU Kulminator 28** is rated the strongest beer in the world at 28% fermentables (1118 British), 10.6% alcohol (13.2%/volume). This is an outrageous beer, with the taste of a barleywine ale. The beer is lagered for nine months and then freeze concentrated — an "Eisbock." The beer has an amber color, with a malty aroma, a good ear (you can really hear it!), and a mellow hop bouquet. The alcohol is noticeable, but still smooth; almost too strong, however. A great winter beer. Not available in some states such as Oregon and Washington where the liquor authorities limit beer to 8% alcohol (wt.). The **Lindeman's Kriek Lambic** is a delightful top fermented Belgian lambic style beer with a very nice sweet-sour finish, not an ordinary beer. (Part II of our Belgian beer survey will appear in the next *Listen*). ■

### TRAPPIST ALE

We left out this description of the Trappist ales featured in the last issue of *Listen* (2:1).

No description of Belgian beers would be complete without mention of the great Trappist ales made in that country, of which three are presently available here. We wrote at length about **Orval** in *Listen* 1:3. The **St. Sixtus** is a very strong, dark, rather sweet bottle conditioned beer, and we gave it 4-dots in my last issue.

The Trappist ales are so unique that they have been given their own "Appellation" by the Belgian government. Only three of the six are available in the U.S., but I rate the **Chimay** (blue cap) best of the bunch. Lovely copper-amber color, 6.5% alcohol (wt), a nice bouquet, with a *very* pleasing taste — and smooth. There's a faint "private brewery" (or homebrew) taste to point up its elegance. The beer comes in at least two sizes, but the Champagne "fifth" with a wired down cork meets my full approval. Incidentally, many Belgian beers are finished out with wired Champagne corks and some have both cork and crown cap. **Chimay** is also available with lower alcohol levels in red and white "cap" styles. ■

## DARTS — A SHORT HISTORY

by Michael Laybourn

In the 1500s pub games in England were outlawed because it was thought they might interfere with archery — the national defense at the time. One exception was the game of darts — a close relative of archery — the logic being that accuracy with darts would make a better archer.

The first dartboard was probably a log-end with its concentric rings for doubles and triples and the heart circle for the bullseye. The numbers on the board were placed in their unusual order in 1896 by a 44-year-old carpenter by the name of Brian Gamlin.

But darts is really a 20th-century game, becoming very popular by the middle of the century. Now it's Britain's most played sport and a fast-rising tavern sport in the U.S.

Darts is ageless, classless and sexless. Young and old, rich and poor, male and female can play equally well with some talent and (lots of) practice. You can be fully equipped for the game for \$10-15 or less. It is a polite sport with little room for argument — your dart is there or it is not. Winning is done almost entirely with skill and the luck factor is minimal. The game is challenging for good players and easily

enjoyed by beginners.

In North America darts is becoming a big sport with more and more leagues and tournaments appearing. ■

Michael Laybourn is president of the Mendocino Brewing Co., which is also the Hopland Brewery Tavern and Beer Garden, a brew pub on Hwy 101, North of San Francisco. The brewery's *Red Tail Ale* and *Black Hawk Stout* have earned our 5-dot rating. The brewery's beer is available (at this time) only at the Tavern.

The brewery newsletter shows a full calendar of events, possibly tempting one to move to that small town and become a public drunk. The newsletter is sprinkled with such gems as this from H.L. Mencken, "Democracy is the art of running the circus from the monkey cage." And this "Optimists Law: Eat a live toad for breakfast in the morning and nothing worse will happen to you the rest of the day." I've heard of kissing toads, but eating them?

The brewery celebrated its first anniversary in August with a limited edition beer, *Eye of the Hawk*, beer in Champagne Magnum bottles. There was a Keg Toss, barbeque, and music to complete the festive occasion. ■



RED TAIL ALE



EYE OF THE HAWK



BLACK HAWK STOUT

## BALLANTINE'S BURTON ALE

by Steve Dafoe, Van Etten, NY

The description of the various holiday beers in LTYB #5 brought to mind what had to be the most welcome Christmas brew of all, **Ballantine Burton Ale**. According to Michael Jackson in **The Pocket Guide To Beer**, "There remains in private circulation a number of bottles . . . now 20 to 30 years old. This remarkable ale was aged for up to ten years in tanks that were gradually tapped and replenished, like the sherry solera. Burton had a proud 60 units of bitterness." What Jackson neglects to mention is that you couldn't buy **Burton Ale**, at least not at a retail outlet — one received it as a gift! Merry Christmas, indeed!

I've come across four bottles of **Ballantine Burton Ale** (all, unfortunately, empty). The first was bottled in a 6 oz. nip and like all pre-War *Ballantine* products was referred to in the possessive, **Ballantine's**. (They, like most brewers, dropped the apostrophe during the '40s.) Like all **Burton Ale** labels, it proclaimed "SPECIAL BREW NOT FOR SALE" and gave both the brewing date and bottling date and the name of the recipient, in this case one Steward Martin. It was brewed on May 12, 1934 (less than a year after 3.2% beer was legalized) and bottled in December, 1941. This label is "signed" by the Badenhausen brothers, post-prohibition owners of *Ballantine*. This Ale was "only" 7 years old at bottling, others were close to 20.

The other three bottles, all 12 oz., give the brewing date as May 12 (again), 1946 with two being bottled in November, 1966 and the other in 1964. Receivers included one James Flaherty and the *Fin, Fur and Feather Club*. Gone were the Badenhauser signatures, in their place was a scroll saying "SEASONS GREETING FROM ALL OF US AT BALLANTINE".

I've yet to discover how one became an honored enough customer of *Ballantine* brews to receive **Burton Ale** or how many bottles such a gift included. A former *Ballantine* Brewhouse worker once told me that it was common practice, on special occasions, for workers to tap into a tank of aging **Burton Ale** for a gallon or two, plug-

ging the hole with a whittled down bung. Another former *Ballantine* worker said that the White House was a constant on the gift list and that packaging material for **Burton Ale** was always under lock and key.

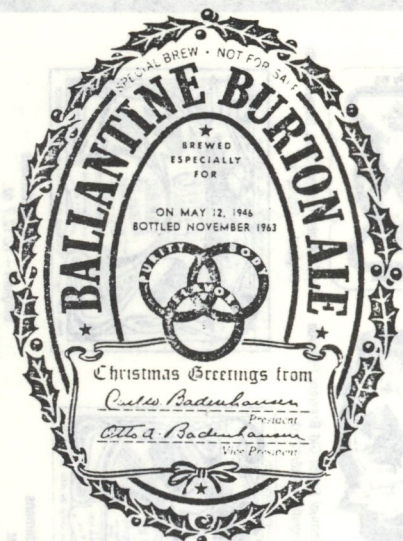
One can only wonder what became of the tanks of **Burton Ale** in 1972 when *Ballantine* sadly closed its doors. It's possible, of course, that accountants had already convinced management that aging beer for 20 years was not cost effective. Hopefully, it wasn't simply dumped.

As Jackson points out, **India Pale Ale** still survives and it ain't exactly **Miller Lite** itself. Old timers in New Jersey will often comment that **IPA** and **Ballantine XXX Ale** "aren't the same" since *Falstaff* took over but then their opinion is made suspect by the bottles of **Bud** or **Miller** in front of them. Still, in the 10 years I've been drinking **IPA** there does seem to be a light-ening of the brew with each new batch (easily distinguished from the last by *Falstaff* constantly changing breweries, labels, bottle shapes, cap design, etc.). The old *Ballantine* label proudly proclaimed "AGED IN THE WOOD ONE YEAR" which *Falstaff* shortened to "AGED IN WOOD" though distributors claim it's still aged for around six months. A pre-War bottle came with a back label which read:

IMPORTANT NOTICE — The process used to brew **Ballantine's India Pale Ale** a century ago is still employed. After bottling it continues to age and mellow. With age a slight cloudiness and precipitation develop, which in no way affect the quality of the ale. Connoisseurs know this to be a condition characteristic of India Pale Ale brewed according to old time methods.

Obviously, such bottle conditioning was dropped by *Ballantine* before the *Falstaff* take-over. *Falstaff* has also increased the price of **IPA** dramatically in the last couple of years. A 1964 price list shows **Ballantine XXX Ale** going for \$1.13 a six pack with **IPA** at \$1.42 (by contrast, **Bud** was \$1.17, **Michelob** \$2.25 and **Heineken** \$2.49). I recall buying Ale for \$1.79 and **IPA** for \$2.60 a six-pack, only a couple of years ago. Today **IPA** is often twice the price of the





be willing to print the research. As for **Yuengling Porter**, when the brewery is willing to admit they have a dark lager there, I'll tell them I like the beer. Incidentally, I don't worry about whether the yeast is proper, I worry about taste (in this case lack of it). We expect more taste from **Porter** than is expected in a mellow dark lager. ■

## EUROPE LISTENS

by Jim Tindall

Jim Tindall is chief of our European Bureau, which is more like a drawer at this point, he teaches school at the Nuernberg American High School, APO New York, 09696. ■

average US beer, around \$4.75 a six-pack, and before the micro-brewery boom, was easily the most expensive US brew. Still, it is a bargain, and puts to shame many imports costing more, yet hardly equalling its 45 units of bitterness or 7.5% alcohol by volume (6%/wt).

Steve Dafoe is from Van Etten, NY, a beer aficionado, and home brewer, and we really rang his bell in **Listen #5**, when we mentioned his favorite **Ballantines Ale**. I know it's not Christmas, but I just couldn't sit on this delightful article until next Christmas, now could I? He babbled on even more: "I think you sell **Yuengling Porter** a bit short by saying it's no more than a dark lager . . . but it is still richer and fuller bodied than most U.S. Darks like **Prior** or **Tuborg** or the draft darks from **Anheuser-Busch** and certainly beats out the best selling import darks like **Heineken** or **Becks**. I'm not one to mix beers, but the central Pennsylvania custom of mixing half (porter) and half (**Yuengling Chesterfield Ale**) makes for an interesting brew, a bit pale in color, but still rich and hoppy." He asks about **Ballantine Porter**, since it seems scarce, and I can only speculate, as I believe that beer and **Narraganset Porter** are one and the same, I found them in successive years at the **Great American Beer Festival**. If someone out there knows more I'd

In Europe there is always good beer around you. My wife Pam and I had the opportunity, last September, to experience this as never before in our three years in Germany. It still gives me a sense of awe.

■ We were in Frankfurt waiting for a train to Berlin, so with some time to kill we left the Bahnhof, crossed the Main via the Eiserner Steg, and entered the Bohemian district of Sachsenhausen. We wandered, looking for a cafe or some outdoor establishment. Our hope was to locate a gasthaus serving **Guinness Stout**, as we were hungry.

In our wandering we unexpectedly sighted the **Irish Pub**, in the vicinity of Klappergasse. Tables were out, off an alleyway, in a courtyard which was surrounded by a half dozen medieval structures, each housing drinking establishments. We soon realized we sat surrounded by business serving *many* brands and beer types.

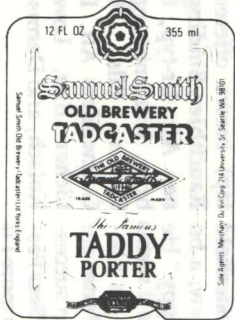
Within a twenty yard radius of the **Irish Pub**, we noted the following *vom fasz* (on tap) brews offered: **Hecht Schlenkerla Rauchbier**, **Binding Bier**, **Guinness**, **Hannan Alt**, **Ur-tyt**, **Diebels Alt**, **Michelsbrau**, **Kronenbourg**, **Alpirsbacher**, **Krombacher Pils**, **Veltins**, **Worsteiner**, **Gatzweilers Alt**, **Der Altes Hochstater**, **Licher Bier**, **Lowenbrau**, **Richmoldi's Kolsch**, and **Darmstadter Bier**.

(continued)

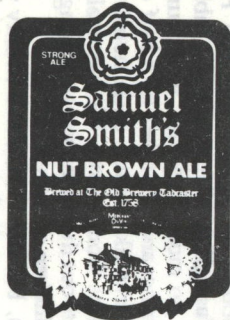


Copyright © 1984

Merchant du Vin beers have been acclaimed as being among the finest beers of the world. Michael Jackson rates Samuel Smith and Lindemans Kriek as two of the five best beers in the world. Four of Merchant du Vin beers are listed as among the ten best beers by the "Book of Bests" and the "Gourmet Guide to Beer" rates Samuel Smith as the only great British brewery.

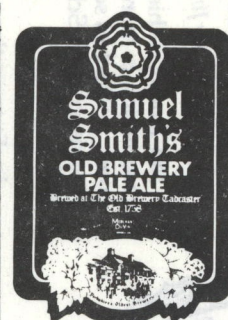


The Famous Taddy Porter, Samuel Smith England - 4x6/12 oz.

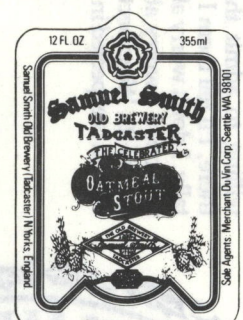


Samuel Smith Nut Brown Ale England - 4x6/12 oz.

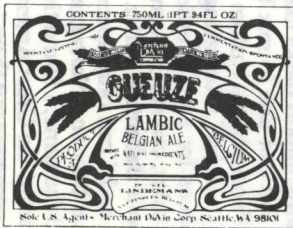
An Art, a book about Merchant du Vin beers, miscellaneous marketing tools and expert assistance in compiling beer lists is available free from Merchant du Vin. Alephentia Beer News, a consumer oriented beer publication in stacks of 100 copies, is available free from Merchant du Vin distributors on request. All of these are available through your local distributor or by calling collect (206) 682-5880.



Samuel Smith Old Brewery Pale Ale England - 4x6/12 oz.



The Celebrated Oatmeal Stout, Samuel Smith England - 4x6/12 oz.



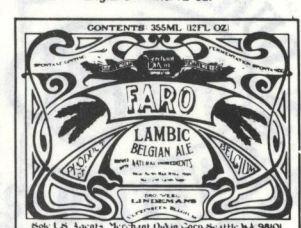
Gueuze, Lindemans Belgium - 12/25.4 oz.



Framboise, Lindemans Belgium - 12/25.4 oz.



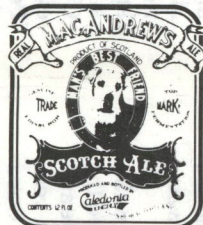
Kriek, Lindemans Belgium - 12/25.4 oz.



Faro, Lindemans Belgium - 12/12.7 oz.



Celebrator Germany - 4x6/11.2 oz.



MacAndrew's Scotland - 4x6/12 oz.



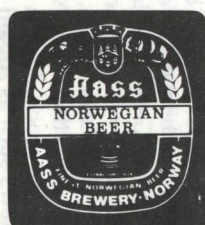
St Sixtus Belgium - 12/11.2 oz.



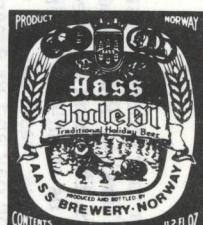
Rauchbier, Kaiserdom Germany - 4x6/11.2 oz.



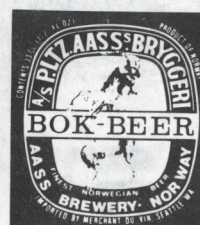
Cold Spring Export USA - 4x6/12 oz.



Aass Norwegian Norway - 4x6/11.2 oz.



Aass Juleøl Norway - 4x6/11.2 oz.



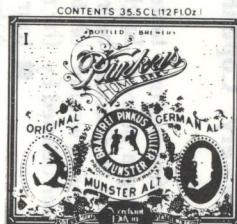
Aass Bok Norway - 4x6/11.2 oz.



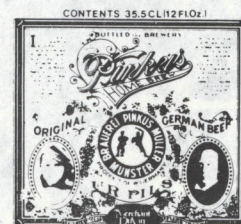
Biere de Paris Brasseurs de Paris France - 12/25.4 oz.



Pinkus Original Weizen Beer Germany - 4x6/12 oz.



Original Munster Alt, Pinkus Muller Germany - 4x6/12 oz.



Pinkus Pils Germany - 4x6/12 oz.

Also Available:

Imperial Stout Oy Sinebrychoff Finland - 4x6/12 oz.

Yuengling Pilsner USA - 4x6/12 oz.

Celebrated Pottsville Porter, Yuengling USA - 4x6/12 oz.

Dortmunder Light & Dark Germany - 4x6/12 oz.

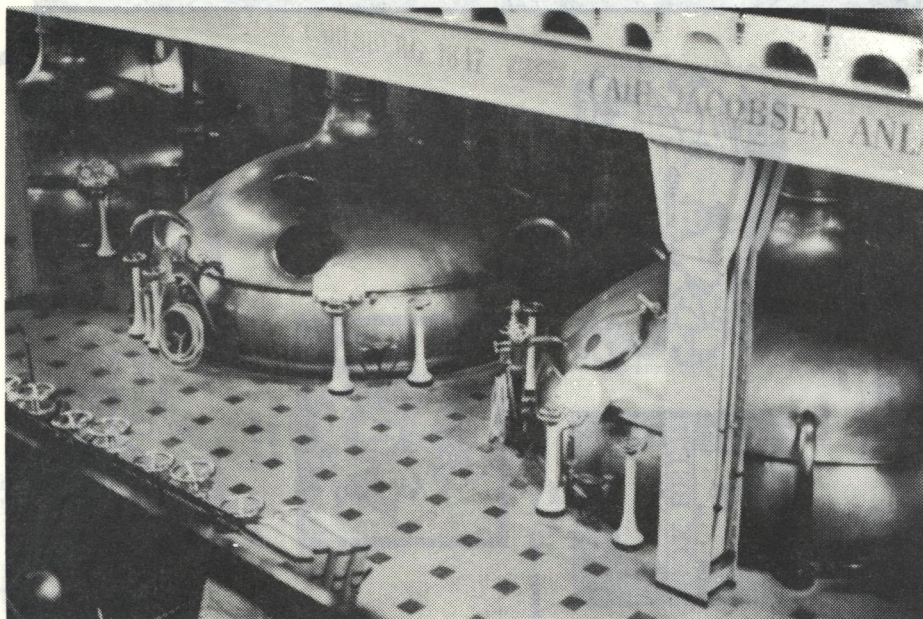


Bios Belgium - 24/11.2 oz.



Orval - Belgium - 12/11.2 oz.

For More Information and a list of distributors Please contact: Merchant Du Vin 214 University Street Seattle, Washington 98101 Telephone: (206) 682-5880



## Carlsberg Brewery, Copenhagen, Denmark

photo by Jim Tindall

(continued)

With time running short we finished our stout and walked off. Turning a near-by corner we were again amazed to discover another side street of equal brewing wealth!

In Europe one is always surrounded by beer. ■

We were informed that Denmark wasn't much as a nation of public beer drinkers. This is not surprising when one learns of the heavy taxes (MOMS) levied against goods and services there. Danish beer, nearly all of it pasteurized, is good. The available draft brews are very good, but scarce. The Danes prefer their beer bottled and bought to take home, thus avoiding the heavy taxes. Coming to Denmark from Germany we found this practice almost shocking. In Germany public drinking is a tradition.

We took a tour of the Carlsberg Brewery on Thanksgiving day, and you can imagine our surprise at a tasting room with no draft beer. We were told this reflected the Danish

taste. Our tour group consisted of Irish, English, Turkish, Polish and American beer lovers. The Tour Guide seemed intent on telling us as little as possible, after all (he must have reasoned) this was the last tour of the day and in America it was a national holiday, you know.

It was dark when Pam and I began walking back to our hotel room. We passed the famous Elephant Gate for the last time and on Vesterbrogade we came across a very small shop selling beer. Inside, there was a vast wealth of bottled beers. Not only did the merchant stock dozens of diverse Danish brews such as **Albani Giraf**, **Faxe Fad**, and numerous **Jules Oler** (Christmas Ales), he had a good selection of international beers as well: Trappist beers, Kulmbachers, but what was most astounding was the presence of **Traquair House Ale**. I had never even seen this label *inside* Scotland. Besides ourselves, and the shopkeeper, in the tiny cluttered room were two other Americans. We wished each other a happy Thanksgiving indeed. Pam and I departed quietly with our new discoveries. ■



**Original Pure Yeast Culture apparatus, Carlsberg Brewery, Copenhagen, where Emil Christian Hansen with the help of Louis Pasteur developed the pureculture method for cultivating brewery yeast in 1883.**

photo by Jim Tindall



(continued from inside front cover)

If you have purchased a copy of this issue, and there is **NO West Coast Pub Guide** insert, and you would like a copy of that; just send a long stamped self-addressed envelope to **Pub Guide**, at our address.

With the larger format we'll need more input, so if you have an idea for an article, just let me know. Better yet, let us help you write one. In our "other" publication we've introduced many folks to the joys of writing. In this issue Steve Dafoe and Jim Tindall take the writing "plunge," and very nicely, too!

Our last issue, featuring Wheat Beers, was well received. It seems that several U.S. Breweries are pondering wheat beers, but the An-

chor Brewery actually set forth and brewed a wheat beer to celebrate their 10th anniversary in their new location. In due course we received a sampling of the beer, and it is indeed a winner, so good that we have named it Beer of the Year 1984 (see Best-Worst, p13). One of the new Northwest microbreweries plans a draft wheat beer this year. According to Charles Kauffman writing in *All About Beer* (September 1984) wheat beer production is up in Bavaria, and the beer is on its way to becoming much more popular than it has ever been in the past. We, at **Listen To Your Beer**, look forward to seeing this new Anchor product in regular production, rather than as a celebration item produced once a year. ■

## WHEN IS A PUB?

One of our continuing features is a listing of "Good Beer Pubs." For every good beer pub that you recommend, and which we find acceptable, we will extend your subscription by one additional issue. Only our subscribers are eligible, and we will not accept recommendations from management or staff of any establishment. So what is a "Good Beer Pub"?

I think of a pub as a place with the following five characteristics:

1. A beer oriented establishment — no domination by wine or hard liquor, although these may be sold there.
2. Several beers on tap, at least five, including at least two imports (or micro-brews), one an ale. An exception might be made when the establishment serves *only* micro-brewed tap beers, or when a remarkable collection of bottled beers is offered.
3. Most important, a genial, friendly atmosphere. Music, yes, but not the main course, and not disco. Pool and darts OK, as long as they don't dominate. Computer games are intrusive, and should be tolerated only if they are silent, or in a detached area.
4. Most important, a friendly staff who

have a feel for beer and its service.

5. The pub must serve beer oriented food, or have regular dining arrangements, and should be medium-sized — not a hole-in-the-wall, but not a beer hall, either. We're interested in beer halls, too, but not as pubs.

This is to be a consumer listing service, and we do not charge pubs for the listing. They don't even have to subscribe, but we wish they would.

We plan to publish a full listing annually, and as space permits we will do a get ale-anated in Oregon, Washington, Wisconsin, California, Chicago or Boston, wherever we get enough pubs and advertising. A separate Brew Pub Guide is also planned, when that situation shows itself. Normally, however, we will list a pub once, when we first receive the recommendation from our readers. Additional listings will be by city and community as space and advertising allow. We have a continuous need for pubs, and we need many more. Don't renew your subscription, send pubs. We need pub name, listing of draft beers, correct address including zip, telephone including area code, and owner or manager's name. ■

## WHAT IS BEER

by Fred Eckhardt

The U.S. government defines beer as an alcoholic beverage produced from cereal grains. That includes all malt beverages such as beer, ale, stout, porter, malt liquor and even sake. Beer is, in fact, one of society's oldest alcoholic beverages.

Beer, in common with all other alcoholic beverages, is the result of a ferment of sugars by yeast bacteria. When this happens the by-products are alcohol and carbon dioxide in about equal parts. If such a ferment is from grapes or fruit we call the resulting potion wine, but if it is from grains and cereals we call it beer. If the alcohol in the beer or wine is concentrated by distillation the product is spirit alcohol or brandy, whiskey, rum, etc.

Production of beer is complicated by the fact that cereal grains do not usually contain sugars that are directly fermentable by yeast. Grain cereals such as barley, wheat, corn, and rice are made up mostly of

starches. These starches are to be changed into sugars if there is to be a yeast ferment. There are several ways that this may be managed, but beer as we know it is the product of a ferment made possible by a process called "malting."

## MALTING AND MASHING

When cereals are planted, the damp ground activates enzymes present in the grain, and these enzymes change the grain starches into sugars during the growth of the seedling. Malting is a process which takes advantage of that fact. The grains are first steeped in cold water and, after draining, they are allowed to stand until sprouting occurs. When this happens the grain is dried, usually by a heating process. Thus the sugar producing enzymes are ready to go when the malting process is complete. At brewing time the malted cereal (usually barley) is reactivated with warm water, and the sugar conversion continues. In the brewery this is called "mashing" and the result is a sweet liquor called wort. Over

the years it was discovered that the enzymes in barley malt had extra power beyond what was needed to make their starch into sugar. There was extra power, and one could add other unmalted cereal grains to the potion, and their starches would be converted, too. When the infusion of warm water and malts is at an end, the spent cereal grains are separated from the liquor, and the liquor is boiled with hops, cooled, and fermented with special strains of yeast to produce our beer.

The role of hops in this process is very interesting, because without them the beer has an entirely different taste. Hops are the flowers of certain female plants of a climbing vine called *Humulus Lupulus*, a dioecious perennial, and a relative of the marijuana plant. Hops are found wild in most temperate climes. Originally they were added to the beer as a preservative to protect the yeast ferment from other, more destructive, bacteria. In wine, for example, this protection is not needed because grapes have almost 25% sugar, and when they are fermented there results about 12½% alcohol. This high alcohol content protects the beverage from the ravages of souring bacteria, but cereals are not that productive and there is only about 12-15% sugar present in normal beer wort. That

produces the rather low alcohol content of 7% or less. The low alcohol level does not stop the souring bacteria, but the hop resins do, hence the hops. In this age, of course, a brewery can manage a ferment without allowing stray bacteria, but they still keep the hops in beer because we like their taste.

Beer, then, is made from an infusion of malted barley, and possibly other cereals, which has been boiled with hops, and fermented. The wonder and joy of beer is that there are so many possibilities. Not only can we make it from any cereal combination, but we can vary the process by how the malt is produced and at what temperatures it is dried, and also by adding different amounts and varieties of hops. The fermenting process can be varied to produce different kinds of taste and varying amounts of alcohol. Because of this variety, and because almost every people on earth have made beer, we can, and do, make special beers for just about every occasion and season.

Beer is a unique beverage in that it is both seasonal AND varietal. Beer experts tell us there are about 24 distinct styles of beer, and it is to the varieties and styles that a beer festival addresses itself. ■

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## BEST BEERS OF 1984

**BEST LOW ALCOHOL BEER:** **Grant's Celtic Ale.** At a tasting in Seattle, Celtic outpointed Grant's Scottish Ale and Watney's Red Barrel proving once and for all that a low alcohol beer CAN have taste (●●●●)

**BEST IMPORT BEER:** Bavarian **Spaten Franziskus**, (●●●●●), and Chimay Belgian Trappist Ale (●●●●●)

**BEST MICRO-BREWED BEER:** I choose four, alphabetically. **Black Hawk Stout**, Mendicino Brewery, CA; **BridgePort Ale**, (a brown ale), Columbia River Brewery, Portland, OR; **Pyramid Ale** (Pale Ale), Hart Brewer, Kalama, WA, **Riley's Red Lyon** (Pale Ale), Little Rock, AR. Each (●●●●●)

**BEST ALE:** **Sierra-Nevada Celebration Ale, 1984**, Chico, CA (●●●●●)

**BEST CANADIAN BEER:** **Mitchell's Extra Special Bitter**, (●●●●●) Vic West Brewing, Victoria, B.C.

**BEER OF THE YEAR 1984:** **Anchor August 13, 1984 Celebration** Wheat beer, San Francisco, CA (●●●●●) Brewer, Fritz Maytag. ■

## WORST BEERS OF 1984

**WORST LA/LIGHT:** **LA from AB**, there were actually worse LA beers, but Budweiser has no excuse for making a beer with so little taste. Leaders lead.

**WORST NON-ALCOHOLIC BEER:** Texas brewed **Pearl** non-alcoholic. Not only is it not non-alcoholic, but a horse could brew better beer than that.

**WORST IMPORT:** **Berliner Pils** from East Germany (where else). They should return to the Rheinheitsgebot.

**BIGGEST RIPOFF:** **Oscar Wilde Beer.** Supposedly aimed at Gay drinkers, my sources tell me this is the very same beer as is sold in Southern California and elsewhere, labeled generic BEER, only the price is different. **Pearl** only makes the beer, they don't price it. ■

## AMATEUR BREWER'S BOOKSHELF

### HOME BREWING BOOKS

	amount	
Eckhardt, F., <b>A Treatise on Lager Beers</b> , Seventh ed., Illus., 55 pp.	2.75**	_____
Baker Patrick, <b>New Brewer's Handbook</b> , 1979, 37pp.	1.25 SALE	_____
Burch, Byron, <b>Quality Brewing</b> , 2nd Ed., 1979, Illus.,	2.25	_____
Leistad, Rog, <b>Yeast Culturing for the Homebrewer</b> , 1983, 41pp., Illus.,	3.50	_____
Line, Dave, <b>The Big Book of Brewing</b> , 1974, 256pp., Illus.	5.25	_____
_____, <b>Brewing Beers Like Those You Buy</b> , Illus., 158pp.	4.75	_____
_____, <b>Beer Kits and Brewing</b> , Illus., 158pp.	4.75	_____
Lundy, Desmond, <b>A Standard Handbook for the Production of Handmade Beers</b> , 1979, Illus., 48pp.	4.95	_____
Mares, <b>Making Beer</b> , 178pp., Illus.,	7.95	_____
Miller, David, <b>Home Brewing for Americans</b> , 110pp., Illus.,	4.50	_____
Moore, William, <b>Home Beermaking</b> , 1st Ed., SALE PRICE	1.50 SALE	_____
Moore, William, <b>Home Beermaking</b> , 2nd Ed., NEW	3.95	_____
Morgan, Scotty, <b>Brew Your Own, A Beginners Mashing Manual</b> , 1979, 28pp.	2.50	_____
Papazian, Charles, <b>The Complete Joy of Home Brewing</b> , 1984, 332 pp., Illus.,	8.95	_____
Toby, Alan, <b>Brewing All-Grain Beers</b> , 1982, Illus., 20pp.	2.00	_____
Weathers, Jim, <b>Practical Beermaking for Beginners</b> , 1980, Illus., 152 pp.	4.95	_____

### AMATEUR BREWER COMMUNICATIONS KEPT IN PRINT (available wholesale)\*\*

ABC 1, 2, 3 being reprinted as a single unit.		
AB #4 Special Hop Issue, 24pp., updated 1984	2.25**	_____
AB #5 Bock Beer, ABC's, (Kegging) index 1-4 20pp. update '83	2.25**	_____
AB #6 Special YEAST issue, 20pp., updated 1984	2.25**	_____
AB #7 English Beer, Additives, Lite Beer, 20pp. update 1983	2.25**	_____
AB #8 Steam Beer, Beer Design, Malting, etc., 28pp.	2.25**	_____
AB #9 Penn's va Beer, Coffee Urn Mash Tun, Calculations for Home Brewers, Yield, Attenuation, etc.	3.00**	_____
AB #10 Swiss Beer, Hops, Yeast	\$2.25**	_____
AB #11 Dortmund Beer, all grain wheat beer, Alt Beer	2.50**	_____
AB Newsletters available: 7-1, 3, 4, 8-4	each .50** Tot.	_____
Talk To Your Beer NL's: 9-1, 9-4	each 1.00** Tot.	_____

### MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS from ABIS (available wholesale) \*\*

1. <b>Beer Tasting and Evaluation for the Amateur</b> , being revised		
2. <b>Mashing Notebook</b> , (parts I & II) grain mashing plus recipes	2.50**	_____
3. Mashing paper, included in notebook above, our original paper, still	1.00	_____
4. Sake, Our original paper revised	1.00**	_____

### GENERAL INTEREST BOOKS ABOUT BEER

Hillman, <b>Gourmet Guide to Beer</b>	5.95	_____
Jackson, Michael, <b>World Guide to Beer</b> , Illus., 254pp.	9.95	_____
Jackson, Michael, <b>The Pocket Guide to Beer</b> , 1982, 138pp.,	5.95	_____
Listen to Your Beer, back issues 1, 2, 5, & 6, 2:1	each 1.50 Tot.	_____

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*Sake: A Drinker's Guide*, Kondo, Hiroshi, 1984, Tokyo: Kodansha International Ltd., 128pp, illus, hard cover, ISBN 0-87011-653-3, \$14.95 from ABIS (add \$1.50 for shipping).

Hiroshi Kondo, a Japanese food writer and connoisseur of sake, has done for that beverage what Michael Jackson did for beer. Magnificent color photographs, drawings, maps, and charts, add to the author's wonderful commentary about that little appreciated beer called sake. There is a map showing locations of the 62 largest sake breweries (of the 2772 active ones) in Japan. There is a chart showing how to read a sake label, and much more.

As George Plimpton writes in the forward: "... sake enjoys as complex and studied a tradition of being judged for its qualities as wine . . . in the lexicon of sake tasting there are ninety-odd terms to describe the qualities of the drink. (English translations of some sake terms include) 'cloying,' 'garrulous,' 'thick,' and 'ill-bred.'" It is clear that we beer tasters need some of those good Japanese terms. I long to use "ill-bred" to describe some brewer's beer (LA from AB?). As a writer on the subject, of sake, from time to time, I was well aware that Americans demand their sake served much too hot, but I didn't know that the correct temperature was "mo hito hada," another person's skin. Indeed, the author suggests the proper place to take that temperature is between your partner's legs!

The ways to drink sake are numerous too. There's warm, the way that is nearly always served in Japanese restaurants, (but usually too hot), and as a mixer in cocktails; but best of all at room temperature, in a square cedar vessel called a "masu" which imparts a delightful cedary taste to the beverage. Get this book, you'll love it. f.e. ■



*The Great Beer Trek*, (A guide to the Highlights and Lowlites of American Beer Drinking), Stephen Morris, with illustrations by Vance Smith, 1984, The Stephen Green Press, Brattleboro, Vermont, ISBN 0-8289-0525, paperback, \$10.95.

Steven Morris, his wife Laura, and Guinness, the dog, climbed into their well-used Chevy van in Massachusetts, and drove 18,220 miles trying to learn what beer in America is all about. Their odyssey took them through the east, to New Orleans and Texas, back through the mid-west, through the Rockies to California, and finally the Pacific Northwest. Morris describes interviews with brewers large and small, drinking sessions with sundry kindred spirits, and visits to beer-related establishments across the country. He includes an array of beer facts that will intrigue anyone who is interested in what is in his glass of beer. He never finds the answer to his riddle of the attraction of beer, but shares the experience of his quest which all will enjoy.

— Patrick Baker

Pat Baker is a Western CT writer, and a partner in Winemaker Ltd. and the Village Store of Westport, MA. Pat's monthly column in *All-About Beer* is one of that magazine's outstanding features. He is the author of the *New Brewer's Handbook*.

## PUBS PUBS PUBS

As one might imagine we have a host of new pubs to incorporate into our *Pub Guide*, 31 in fact! This issue includes a center-insert with a full *West Coast Pub Guide*. The West Coast edition is sent to all subscribers, and to our West Coast distributors, but is not included in those distributed to non-subscribers in the rest of the U.S. If your copy of **Listen** does NOT include the pub guide, and you would like a copy send us a long stamped self-addressed envelope (remember 22¢), and we'll send you the *West Coast Pub Guide* too.

## COLORADO

### Boulder

**Old Chicago**, 16 taps, 9 specialty  
1102 Pearl St. (on the mall), Boulder, CO  
8030  
(302) 443-5031  
Gary Foreman, Mgr.  
World Tour Club cards



## Denver

**Duffy's Shamrock**, 7 draft, 4 specialty  
1635 Court Pl., Denver, CO 80202  
(303) 534-4935

**My Brother's Bar**, 9 aps, 4 specialty  
2376 - 15th, Denver, CO 80202  
(303) 455-9991

Jim Karagus, owner  
Classical music, good liquor selection

**Wazee Lounge & Supper Club**, 8 taps, 3  
specialty

1600 - 15th  
Denver, CO 80202

(303) 623-9518  
Angelo & Jim Karages, owners

## MARYLAND

### Baltimore

**The Bun Penny of Harbor Place**, 6 taps, 6  
specialty, 130 bottled imports  
301 S Light St., Baltimore, MD 21202  
(301) 730-4100

## NEW YORK

### New York City

**Jo Allen Restaurant**, 5 draft  
326 W. 46th St., New York, NY 10036  
(213) 581-6464

**Peculiar Pub**, over 200 bottled beers  
182 W. Fourth St., New York, NY 10014  
(212) 691-8667

## OHIO

### University Heights

**East Side Our Gang**, 65 beers (bottled)  
20680 N. Park Bv, University Heights, OH  
44118  
(216) 371-4700  
Steve Hall, owner

### Rocky River

**West Side Our Gang**, 65 beers (bottled)  
19279 Center Ridge Road, Rocky River, OH  
44116  
(216) 333-6211  
Steve Hall, owner

## WISCONSIN

### Madison

**Essen Haus**, more than 7 drafts, 7 specialty  
514 E. Wilson St., Madison, WI 53705

(608) 225-4674

Gail & Robert Worn, owners

## CALENDAR

Mark March 23 on your calendar this year, because that's when we are presenting a **BEER SYMPOSIUM** in Portland at Portland State University for anyone who is interested in such matters. This will be an all-day seminar on the subject of beer, and open to the general public. The aim will be mainly that of education about Beer. Bar owners and operators, distributor sales people, restaurateurs, bartenders and anyone who wants to learn more about beer will find this symposium worthwhile. Representatives from Northwest microbreweries will be on hand for a panel discussion about that industry. Another panel will deal with the new alcohol laws in Oregon and Washington. The subjects of beer manufacture and ingredients, such as hops, will be treated fully. The day will end with a tasting of U.S. and import beers. Co-sponsors of the symposium will be the Oregon Brew Crew, Portland State University Chemistry Department and *Listen to Your Beer*. Cost will be \$30 or less.

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## CLASSIFIEDS

Rates \$5 for up to 20 words, 50¢ per word beyond that. 3 inserts, \$12.50 plus words.

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SEX? If the subject interests you, send for sample copy, the Madison Institute Newsletter. Madison Institute, 5723 - 20th NW, Suite 9, Seattle, WA 98170.

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**Back issues Listen \$1.50 each.**

## THE LISTENER'S GUIDE TO BEER

### About Our Ratings

For several years now I've kept a card file on my beer tastings. Since 1977, when I began to keep a careful record, I've tasted 485 beers in 1582 tastings. I try to make some sort of comment on the card, so that I'll have something to say about the beer should the occasion arise. Whatever ratings are published in **Listen** will be mine only, at least in the *Listener's Guide*, (that wouldn't preclude us from publishing *your* opinion on a given beer, should you express that in a letter or an article). In the *Listener's Guide*, the opinions are mine alone. I can't presume to speak for anyone but myself, so that rules out any tasting panel.

My ratings are based on the University of California-Davis Wine rating system, twenty-points possible. Three on appearance, four on aroma (beer)/bouquet (hops), and ten in-the-mouth. After all that, I consider the entire impression the beer has created in me, and award a further zero to three points, for the total rating. Incidentally, I usually taste each beer five times over a period of several weeks, sometimes in blind tastings, some not. Then I discard my high and low scores and average the middle three.

The listings will show (or not show) several dots. Other beer critics have used beer mugs, stars, and asterisks, so what style remains for Listeners? When I was young, I and my compatriots had great times with the *Olympia* beer labels, because when you took the label off the bottle, there was a series of dots on the back (*Oly's* bottle date code). We used those dots as a sort of fortune telling scheme to foretell the future. A one dotter meant that you would not find a lady for your evening,

two-dotter mean that you might find her, but she would not be at all cooperative, while three and four-dotters were a precognition of your success possibilities for that evening. And five-dotters, well, you can see the game had endless possibilities. *Oly* labels still do that, incidentally, but the game is not nearly as much fun when their beer must be consumed along with the dots. I offer you a better "dotter" program:

- (19-20 points), gold if you will. Five-dotters are rare, but they do exist, and you can find them.
- Superior beer, silver medal class to be sure. (17-18)
- Fine beer, bronze medal, a beer of distinction. (15-16)
- Good beer, *Budweiser*, for example, I rate 12¾ (a borderline case). (13-14)
- Fair, commercial beer. I rate generic *Beer* 11½. (11-12)
- no dot: Poor beer, 8-10. *Miller's*, for example, *Oly Gold* another. Most Lites fit this category.
- NL NL means that I haven't formed an opinion (no listing), usually because I haven't made enough tastings.

If I can't give a beer 8-points, it is fairly bad and, to my way of thinking, should be left off your list. I don't plan to list such beers unless to warn you against them if that seems necessary. ■

### SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

over-the-counter price, single issue \$1.75

**Listen to Your Beer** is published about six times a year. Annual subscription (6-issues) is \$10 (Canada \$12.00).

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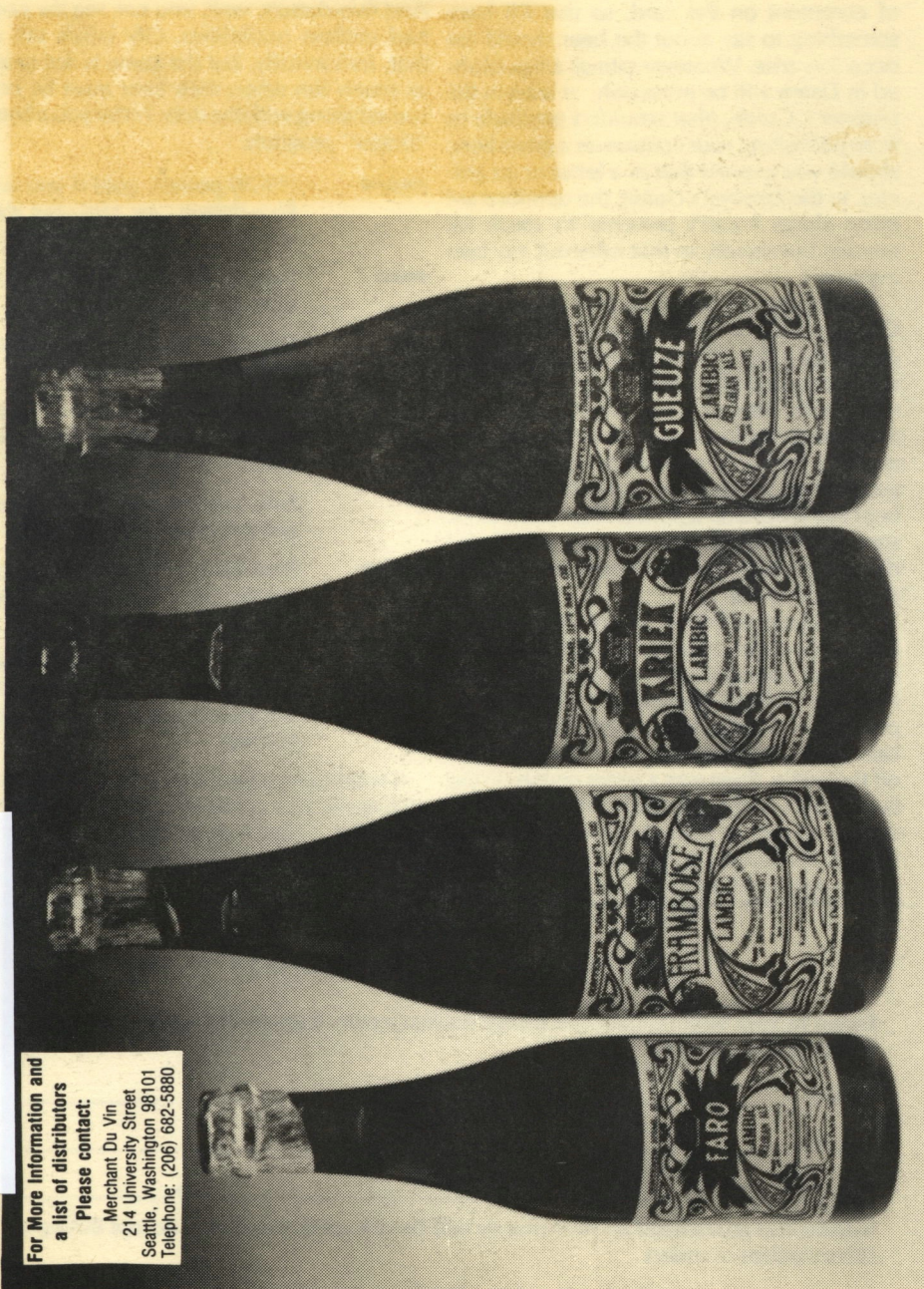
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