



The Grain Mill

Publication of the

Scioto, Olentangy and Darby Zymurgists, Inc.

February 2007

Vol. 12, No. 9

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By RICK DeSHONE

We are less than a month away from the 4th annual British Beer Festival, our annual competition. This is a great experience for all club members to judge, steward, and help with setup and teardown for the event. The competition is always entertaining, and it's a great chance to sample some good beers and see lots of beer people in one place.

I picked up a bag of Marris Otter pale malt at the end of last year, just so that I could start concentrating on some British beers for our event. January was busy and it took a while to get started, but I've made up for it during the last few weeks. I now have about 25 gallons in primary or secondary fermenters. Now I'm on to cleaning kegs and bottles for all that beer.

I did finally get a Scottish brewed for the Lucci cup challenge. That was the last one brewed, and it was a fight to get it done. First I had to pick up the appropriate yeast, as the cultures I had available for harvesting were not going to be appropriate. Then I had to get a starter going based upon when I thought I would be able to brew. Then when I started going through my supplies, I realized I had gone through all my crystal and honey malt. Then I had quite a bit going on at the office – I won't start an all-grain batch if it's after 7:30 at night during the week.

I started to drop into excuse mode – I was tired, there wasn't enough time to get it ready, it was too damn cold. Then God stepped in, stopped the world, and said, "Now, get it done." On the 12th, I stopped by the WineMakers Guild to drop off a bottle of the fireball cider for them to taste, turned around, and found the crystal I was missing. The next day the snow started. I traveled home through the slush and ice and watched it accumulate. On Valentine's Day, I got up and surveyed the weather reports. Everything was closed, and snow was still coming into the area. I called off work for the office, but still dug out and trekked over to make sure all was fine there. Things got really quite by the afternoon, so I knocked off early to get by the bank.

I got home about 4:00 and there it was – The kids were immersed in video games, I had my ingredients, the yeast was stepped up twice and ready, and I had a sufficient block of time to get the beer brewed without stumbling around in half sleep. I was able to brew a Valentine's Day batch of "Kilts to the Wind." I can barely wait to get to PhotoShop with that one.

On an organizational note, there is still plenty of time to contact merchants and beer-related businesses that you frequent and approach them for sponsorship. We were able to keep our competition last year on a break-even financial basis, and we would love to do the same this year. Be sure to go through your stores, see what you have brewed that you would like to get feedback, and get your entries registered for the competition. We put a lot of effort into putting on a competition, and we would like SODZ to dominate all challengers. Jay tells me there may be some heavy hitters shipping in their beers, so we need to muster our best.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the meeting next Monday. I'm sure the thermometer clinic will be entertaining, and the calibration differences on all our equipment will be an eye-opening experience. This will also be officer nomination night, where we will be determining candidates for our executive posts for the coming year. Rumor has it in the past that your absence from the nomination meeting is consent that you are available for any position. I look forward to seeing you all there and also seeing who isn't there and is therefore available.

SODZ MEETING

Monday, February 26

Dinner at 6 PM; Meeting at 7PM

Bogey Inn

6013 Glick Road, Dublin, OH

Thermometer Clinic

SODZ INFO

The Scioto, Olentangy and Darby Zymurgists, Inc. (SODZ) meets on the third Monday of the month at various locations in Central Ohio.

Meetings begin at 7 p.m.

Membership dues are \$15 per year and are renewable during the member's anniversary month of joining SODZ. Dues may be mailed to:

Mark Katona, Treasurer
2574 Zebec Street
Powell, OH 43065

Members receive *The Grain Mill*, the club's monthly newsletter. Articles submitted for the newsletter should be received no later than 10 days prior to the next meeting date. Articles should be submitted by e-mail, preferably in MS Word, and graphics in .jpg format to bkatona@columbus.rr.com.

Current SODZ officers are:

President

Rick DeShone
rdeshone@CTCODEWORKS.COM

Vice President

Frank Barickman
fbarickm@columbus.rr.com

Secretary/Newsletter Editor

Bonni Katona
bkatona@columbus.rr.com

Treasurer

Mark Katona
mkatona@columbus.rr.com

Membership Director

Don Croucher
donpam@copper.net

SODZ Web Site

www.sodz.org

BrewDad.com

By MIKE BESSER

BrewDad.com is a brain child of mine. I was getting tired of looking all over web pages for competition information. My time is precious just like everyone's. So I thought, Hey what we need is a one-stop website to find all the information.

I realize that all comps have to list all their rules but for most of us we know the rules. We know the types of bottles to use. We also know not to glue or tape on our bottle forms. We also know to be sure to list special ingredients in our special fruit beers.

What BrewDad does is leaves the rules and regulations on the competition-specific sites. We take the needed information, break it down, and put it in an easy-to-read standardized format: Dates of comp, dates for entries, cost, who to make the checks out to. We also grab the links to competition forms and bottle ID forms and make those one click away from filling out or printing.

Our goal is to remain free for the individual and in the near future to charge a fee to competitions who would like to advertise through us. In return, the competition organizers get access to all our members through group emails, which we would do for them and then also using our website as a front-page banner for their competition in hoping to get more entries—thus becoming a bigger and more successful competition

The competitions are listed in a forums section, but we are not trying to take over homebrew forums; there are too many other great homebrewing forums out there. We are just mainly for information. Check us out let us know how we can make it better.

I have been a homebrewer for over 10 years and have entered many out-of-state competitions. Also I have found that many competition sites or information is listed very last minute and or is not complete. I do the work in finding that information and putting it on the BrewDad site. I bug the competitions' coordinators for this information, so it is out with time to spare and allows people to send their brews. Ask Frank, I am sure he loves my emails as I bug him for more information.



PROPER THERMOMETER CALIBRATION
By Herb Bresler

Article originally posted in the *Home Brew Digest* (HBD#2880 & HBD#2883) and in *SODZ Grain Mill*, January 1999. Article is based Herb Bresler's response to Rick Pauly's post (on HBD) about calibrating thermometers. [This just goes to show how much good stuff can be found in some of the past *Grain Mill* issues! - Frank]

Rick wrote:

I was worried about the accuracy of my thermometers and came up with what I think is a good solution. We have a people thermometer that I assume has got to be pretty accurate\ round 98.6°F. So I got a sink full of water at about 98°F and tested all my thermometers against it. Can I stop worrying now????

Rick, you are on the right track. Proper calibration of a thermometer indeed should be based on a reliable source for calibration. This is why most people suggest using an ice bath to calibrate at 0C/32F, or a boiling water bath to calibrate at 100C/212°F. We all know the melting point and boiling point of water, so we use them as benchmarks to calibrate our thermometers. So far so good, but by using this method we are calibrating our thermometers at temperatures that are far away from where we need them to be accurate. Thermometers are not perfect. How many of you have adjusted the calibration of your bimetal brewing thermometers so that an ice bath reads a perfect 0°C/32°F, only to find that it doesn't read exactly 100°C/212°F in boiling water (even accounting for differences in altitude)? I would bet that this is a common event. Thermometers should be calibrated against a reliable standard **IN THE RANGE OF USE FOR THE PURPOSE INTENDED** (sorry to shout, I just needed to add emphasis). So to calibrate your brewing thermometer you should

calibrate against a standard that you know is accurate at mashing/sparging temperatures, say in the range of 95°F/35°C to 170°F/77°C. So Rick is right on track when he chose a "people thermometer" to calibrate his brewing thermometer. Sure is a lot closer to mash temps than ice!

There is a problem in using a "people thermometer," however. Most clinical thermometers are made to record the highest temperature and stay there (this is why you have to "shake them down" to get the mercury back into the bulb). So if you try to calibrate with a "people thermometer" in 98°F water, and the water cools while it's sitting there, the water may actually be cooler than 98°F by the time you set the calibration on your brewing thermometer (even though the "people thermometer" says it's still 98°F). So all your temps will actually be lower than what your newly calibrated brewing thermometer says. Could be a problem for mashing.

The proper way to calibrate a thermometer is to start with a standard reference. These are called "NIST traceable" thermometers. NIST is the National Institute of Standards and Technology, formerly the National Bureau of Standards. You can buy NIST traceable thermometers from scientific supply catalogs for a few dollars more than a regular lab thermometer (don't get "Primary Reference Standards" unless you want to spend \$200+ for a thermometer). You don't use the NIST traceable thermometer in your mash, you only use it to calibrate your other thermometers. To ensure accuracy, you should calibrate all your bimetal thermometers periodically (every few months or after each time it's dropped on the floor, whichever comes first). For a liquid thermometer, once you have calibrated it, you're done calibrating it forever (unless it becomes damaged). You simply note how far off it is from the NIST traceable and use that to correct the reading. In this way, all your

(Continued on p. 4)

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thermometers become "NIST traceable;" you connect them to the NIST traceable standard yourself.

You should use a NIST traceable thermometer that just covers the temperatures of interest. The narrower the range of the thermometer, the more accurate your readings. This is the rule for liquid-filled thermometers (and for thermometers in general). Usually thermometers are accurate to within +/- one calibration mark. So, if the scale is marked every tenth of a degree, the actual temperature is within a tenth of a degree of the reading - if the calibration is marked every 2 degrees, then your actual temp is within 2 degrees of the reading.

Be sure to get a partial immersion thermometer (not a total immersion). Partial immersion thermometers are meant to give the proper reading when they are immersed to a specific depth, usually 100mm (there's a line there to tell you proper immersion depth). This is what you want to do when you calibrate your brewing thermometers. If you use a total immersion thermometer that is only partially immersed, you will get inaccurate readings. (I know this should be obvious, but) be sure to allow the temperature reading on any thermometer to stabilize.

Bimetal thermometers are notoriously inaccurate right out of the box. I don't think I've ever had one that didn't need adjusting. I've also had them go bad on me, that is, become un-calibratable (if that's a word). Periodic checking is the best way to guarantee accuracy.

If you don't want to rely on your bimetal thermometer for accuracy, you can use it to get close to your desired temperature and then check the temp with a more accurate liquid-filled thermometer to know that you have hit your target. Again, I don't recommend using your NIST traceable for this; use one you calibrated.

A suggestion: Since you only need to take the NIST traceable out of its secure home every few months, it seems to me to be a good thing for a homebrew club to buy and loan to its members. Just a thought for those of you in active clubs.

It is important to calibrate at more than one temperature. Usually, one calibrates a thermometer near both ends of the proposed use range. For brewing you'd calibrate at 95°F/35°C and 170°F/77°C, or thereabouts. Ideally you should also calibrate in the middle, or nearest your most critical temperature; for brewing, this will probably be about 154°F/68°C. If your thermometer reads correctly at all three of these temperatures, then you can rely on it to give you accurate readings for mashing.

Sorry to be so long-winded about all this, but I hope this info is useful for some of you. I've learned a lot from this forum, and I hope I can give back a little.


Good luck and good (accurate) brewing,

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THERMOMETERS AND BEER

By Frank Barickman

Temperature is one of the most important properties to beer from the start of the product to the finish. Temperature plays a part in both extract and all-grain brewing. If you think about the brewing process, temperature is involved in steeping grain, partial-mashing, mashing, boiling wort, pitching yeast, fermentation, carbonating, conditioning, storage, and finally serving. At any of the stages mentioned, manipulating temperature can change the outcome of the final product. In some cases, being off by as little as 2 degrees can change your beer.

In the old days, temperature-measuring devices were not available to brewers. Through years of trial and error, they were able to achieve great results (actually quite amazing to me). Today good-quality, low-cost thermometers are readily available to brewers. Having an accurate reliable thermometer is one of the best tools a brewer can have.

There are many different types of thermometers available to brewers. Homebrewers commonly use glass mercury-filled, bi-metal dials, digital, and/or liquid crystal thermometers.

Glass liquid-filled thermometers are accurate and low cost. Many laboratory quality reference thermometers are this type (and use mercury). The downside is that they are made of glass and contain mercury. Thus they can break easily and mercury can be toxic in your beer.

Bi-metal dial thermometers are inexpensive and can be accurate over a given temperature range (you get what you pay for with these types). Their downside is that they need to be frequently calibrated. Dropping or mishandling them can cause them to lose their calibration. Even new, I would recommend checking their calibration.

Digital thermometers are cheap and fairly accurate for brewing. They are fairly robust and do not need frequent calibration. The downside is that many are not waterproof and will quit working when they get wet.

Digital thermometers vary in price. In most cases you get what you pay for, but I have had good luck with some \$5 Taylor thermometers I have purchased at Harbor Freight.

Liquid crystal thermometers are cheap and not all that accurate. These are the stick on thermometers that can be attached to your fermenter. They give a ball park estimate of the temperature and should be used only for getting an idea of the approximate temperature.

Regardless if you use a \$5 or \$50 thermometer, knowing its accuracy and if it's calibrated is very important.





SODZ 4th Annual British Beerfest Competition

aka: The Irwin Memorial (He's still in Boston)
at:

Winking Lizard (Crossroads)

100 Hutchinson Avenue, Columbus, OH 43235

Saturday, March 10, 2007 - 9:00AM

Scope: The scope of this competition is limited to the traditional British BJCP styles including Mead and Cider.

Eligibility: The competition is open to all non-commercial, home-produced beers and meads. Enter as many categories and as often as you wish. Competition organizers, sponsors, judges, and stewards may enter the competition but may not judge or steward any category that they are entered in.

Categories: The SODZ British Beerfest will accept entries from the following categories as defined by the 2004 BJCP Style Guidelines:

8.	English Pale Ale (all subcategories)
9.	Scottish and Irish Ales (all subcategories)
11.	English Brown Ale (all subcategories)
12.	Porter (all subcategories)
13.	Stout (all subcategories except 13E. American Stout)
14.	India Pale Ale (14A English IPA only)
19.	Strong Ale (19A. Old Ale and 19B. English Barley Wine only)
24.	Traditional Mead
25.	Melomel (Fruit Mead)
26.	Other Mead
27.	Standard Cider and Perry (all subcategories)
28.	Specialty Cider and Perry (all subcategories)

All entries must indicate both a category number and a sub-category letter in addition to a written description of the style. All entries will be judged according to the appropriate sub-category style guidelines. However, categories may be combined with related categories for the purpose of awarding prizes. Multiple entries per style are allowed.

Entry Fees: \$6 for first entry, \$4 per additional entry. (Checks payable to SODZ.)

Registration: All entries must be pre-registered by Friday, March 2, 2007. Pre-register online

at www.sodz.org. Please print out the completed entry sheet, fold so your name appears on the front, and attach it to the beer bottles with a rubber band. Include entry fee (fold within label if you like). Flights will be fixed prior to event, so no late entries will be accepted. Two bottles per entry are required; bottles from 10 to 24 oz. may be used (judges will be served beer in a pitcher). Promash competition forms will also be accepted.

Mailing Instructions: Entries are due between the dates of 2/19/07–3/2/07, unless they are pre-registered and hand carried by a judge and/or a steward. Please ship entries to:

Columbus Brewing Company
Attn: SODZ BBF Entries
535 Short Street
Columbus OH 43215

Call for Judges and Stewards: Judges/Stewards are invited and encouraged (OK begged) to join us. The competition is BJCP-sanctioned, and BJCP points will be awarded. If you are interested, please sign up at www.sodz.org.

Awards: Prizes will be awarded for first, second, and third place for each category (to be determined based on the numbers of entries in each style, etc.). In addition, there will individual awards given to the "Best British Beer" (BOS). Meads and Ciders will be not be eligible for "Best British Beer;" however, a separate award will be designated for the best Mead and/or Cider. "Best British Beer" will be awarded a traditional English "Yard Glass." Flight winners will win a smaller "yard-style glass," and second and third place will be awarded ribbons.

Additional Information: For more information, please feel free to contact Frank Barickman by email: fbarickm@columbus.rr.com or by phone (614) 354-8750.

UPCOMING AHA CLUB-ONLY COMPETITION SCHEDULE

COC Category	SODZ Judging	AHA Due Date
Scottish Ales	March/April 2007	3/24/07
Extract Beers	May 2007	5/04/07
Strong Ales	August 2007	TBA
Bocks	Sept./Oct. 2007	TBA
Pilseners	Nov./Dec. 2007	TBA
Dark Lagers	Jan./Feb. 2008	TBA
Perfect Porter Challenge	March/April 2008	TBA
Extract Beers	May 2008	TBA
Mead	August 2008	TBA
Imperial Anything	Sept./Oct. 2008	TBA



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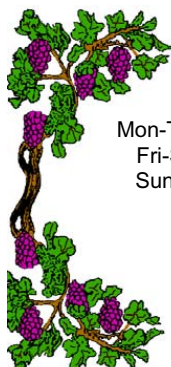
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Join us as we tap a Rhineland Sticke Alt beer on Feb. 20th and celebrate Mardi Gras style! Party kicks off at 6:00 PM with a keg tapping at 6:30 PM. Food, Fun and Spirits

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mark your calendars for these meetings and future beer events!

- Feb. 26 SODZ Meeting, 7PM, Bogey Inn – Officer Nominations & Thermometer Clinic
- Mar. 3 BJCP Class #7, 9-11:30AM – Recipe Formulation – Style TBD
- Mar. 10 4th Annual British Beerfest, 8AM-3PM – Winking Lizard
- Mar. 17 BJCP Class #8, 9-11:30AM – Brewing Procedures – Stouts / Porters
- Mar. 19 SODZ Meeting, 7PM, Winking Lizard Crosswoods – Officer Elections
- Mar. 24 BJCP Class #9, 9-11:30AM – Exam Review – Style TBD
- Mar. 31 BJCP Exam, 9AM-Noon – Springfield Polo Club, Springfield, Ohio
- Apr. 8 Easter Brew – Mark & Bonni Katona's House
- Apr. 16 SODZ Meeting, 7PM, Mulholland Brewing Co. (New Officers Installed)
- May 21 SODZ Meeting, 7PM, Leatherlips Yacht Club – Mead
- June 20 Ohio State Fair Competition Entry Forms & Fees Due
- June 21-23 National Homebrew Conference, Denver
- July 19 Ohio State Fair Homebrew Competition, Fairgrounds
- July 20 SODZ Picnic, Location TBA



Hours:
Mon-Thurs: 11 a.m.-8p.m.
Fri-Sat: 11a.m.-9 p.m.
Sunday: 1 p.m.-6 p.m.

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TOGA, TOGA!

Last weekend was the CMI Toga Pub Crawl. Rick DeShone had every intention of going after the BJCP class ended, but inclement weather heading down to Cincinnati forced him to cancel the trip. Instead he joined a group of his classmates and other friends at the Winking Lizard for lunch. A number of people looked at his purple outfit and wreath of hops and started drawing their own conclusions.



(Type your own caption here.)

The advertisement for Columbus Brewing Company features a circular logo with "Est 1988" and "Columbus BREWING COMPANY". Below the logo are four beer bottles: Columbus Pale Ale, Columbus 90 Shilling Ale, Ohio Honey Wheat, and Columbus Apricot Ale. A "Welcome" message follows, stating the company is located in the historic Brewery District and is a proud conservator of beer-making heritage. It mentions using locally harvested ingredients and offers seasonal selections on draft at fine restaurants and pubs throughout Ohio. Contact information is provided: 614.224.3626 and CONTACT@COLUMBUSBEWING.COM. A signature for Eric Bean, Brewmaster, is at the bottom right, along with a "BREWED IN COLUMBUS, OHIO" seal.

THANKS TO OUR 2006 BRITISH BEERFEST SPONSORS

Be sure to express your thanks to the following for their donations of sponsorships and raffle prizes in support of our 3rd Annual British Beerfest Competition:

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Northern Brewer

The Winemakers Shop

Winking Lizard