
The Brain Mill

Publication of the Scioto, Olentangy and Darby Zymurgists, Inc.

May 2000

President's Corner

by Mark Irwin

This year Cinco de Maibock will be a few days late this year for many of us. This month we will be having our meeting at Hoster's, thanks to Victor's hospitality. Victor has his Maibock on the tap and I hear its great batch this year. I guess we'll find out Thursday night. The main program for the evening will be grading the Homebrew Homework for all the students who decided that they needed some extra credit in this grading period. The meeting will start at 7:00 PM like usual. If you wish to join the crowd for dinner before the meeting, please come early so we can start the meeting on time.

Also this month there are two other events that you might be interested in. The first is on Wednesday, May 17th, where

there will be a Brewer's dinner at Barley's Ale House Number 1 to celebrate the Russian Imperial winning gold and silver medals at the Real Ale Festival this year. The dinner will start at 6:30 PM and tickets are \$25, assuming that I read the sign correctly. The other event will be the unveiling of AJ's and John's Maibock one week later on the 24th. The festivities are supposed to start around 6:00 and Lenny is planning on serving a roast pig that night. Hope to see you all there.

As we started to plan at the last meeting, we have the Club Brew and Picnic coming up. The plans are shaping up and will hopefully be finalized at this month's meet-

ing. One thing that we haven't addressed yet is what we will brew this year. If you have any suggestions for a style, please send them along ahead of time or bring them to the meeting. Also if anyone would be willing to be the lead brewer on this brew, please step forward. Also don't forget the pub crawl that Kurt is planning. Hopefully he will have more information about it on Thursday night.

Finally, even though it seems a bit early, its time to start thinking about the fall. If you have ideas for events or something that you would be willing to take charge of, please let one of us know. I've had one suggestion so far. Let see some more and make Jim's job easier.

See you all next Thursday at Hoster's.

Upcoming Events

May 11 SODZ Meeting, at Hoster's, 7 PM
Bring Your Homebrew Homework Scottish Ale

May 24 Bock Tapping & Buffet, Barley's Smokehouse, 5 PM

June
Club Brew, TBA

July
SODZ Picnic, TBA

July 15 Ohio State Fair Competition Judging, Ohio Expo Center

August 19 Beer & Sweat, Howard Johnson's, Springdale



SODZ INFO

The Scioto, Olentangy and Darby Zymurgists, Inc. (SODZ) meets on the second Thursday of each month at Barley's Smokehouse, Dublin Road, Columbus, Ohio.

Meetings begin at 7 p.m..

Membership dues are \$20 per year and are renewable during the member's anniversary month of joining SODZ. Dues may be mailed to:

Eric Drake (Treasurer)
821 Hiawatha St.
Columbus, OH 43211

Members receive The Grain Mill, the club's monthly newsletter. Articles submitted for the newsletter and should be received no later than the end of the month prior to issue and may be submitted by e-mail, preferably in MSWord, to markrichards@columbus.rr.com or on disk in MSWord.

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Barley's Smokehouse Inaugural Spring Bock Tapping & Pig Pickin' Buffet Banquet

As you may recall, A.J. Zanyk and John Bohn brewed their winning homebrew entry at the Smokehouse. To inaugurate the first lager that

Barley's has ever brewed, the Smokehouse will host a Pig Pickin' Buffet Banquet. It will be held in the front room, and the food was selected to go well with the brew.

Starting at 5:00 PM
Tapping of the Spring Bock
6:00 PM



Mildred's Sauerkraut Balls
House Salad & Rolls
Braised Cabbage
Country Green Beans
German Potato Salad
Bourbon Baked Beans
Low Country Coleslaw
Fresh Fruit Bowl

Barley's House-Made Smoked Bratwurst
Roast Chicken Quarters with Barley's Pale Ale Hunter Sauce
&

Whole Dry-Rubbed, Hickory-Smoked Hog

Cream Puffs for Dessert

All for just \$12.95

All you can eat, while it lasts, washed down with Spring Bock. Barley's pints, including the new Spring Bock, are just \$2.50 a pint until 7:00 PM. Make your reservations now.

BEER DRINKING IN EUROPE

BY JIM LEAS

Although my recent trip to Europe was not for the express purpose of drinking beer, it occupied quite a bit of my time. So I've decided to share some of my experiences with members of the club that may not have been to Europe at all or at least not recently. First of all, this is not one of those articles wherein the author mentions every beer he tasted and rates them. There are others who can do this far better than I can. Secondly, this is not a travelogue - buy a book or video. But hopefully some of my experiences may be useful should you make the plunge and pub crawl Europe.

I certainly did not go everywhere in my 10 days abroad. But I did get to drink beer in the Netherlands, Belgium, France and Germany. And I found some very fine beers in these countries. Beer was priced quite reasonably, except, of course, in hotel bars. Generally, you could get a great beer for about \$2.50-\$3.00 for a .33 liter glass. And each brand of beer is served in its own distinctive glass with the name printed on it. Very classy.

Amsterdam

Amsterdam is a monstrous

bastion of permissiveness. Most of you have no doubt heard about the Red Light District where prostitution is legal and some of the cafes serve marijuana. Just walk right in and they'll roll you up a big doobie - or, eh, so I've heard. But the city is also pretty dirty with litter and dog shit all over the streets. And there are an incredible numbers of bicycles all over the city. This makes sense with gas at over \$4/gallon. Bikes are parked and locked to about anything that doesn't move. Bicyclists have the right-of-way over autos and pedestrians as long as they stay in the bike lanes, so you need to be constantly dodging cars, bicycles and dog shit as you seek out the great bars.

In Amsterdam, as in much of Europe, there are bars all over the place. And almost

everybody speaks English and loves beer! I'm glad I didn't have to speak Dutch. It's a strange language. When pronouncing certain words, it sounds like the speaker is coughing up fur balls. Since I was unfamiliar with many of the local beers, it was a stroke of fortune that virtually anyone in any bar was willing to expound on the virtues of his or her favorite brew in my native tongue. In many bars the beers are listed along with their alcohol content (always by volume). Although the city is suffocated with Heineken and Amstel signs, it is reassuring to know that many of the bars carry better beers on tap and many of them are from Belgium.

Amsterdam is particularly easy to navigate since signs are usually in both Dutch



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and English. In a city of 1.5 million, it is estimated that 200,000 bicycles are stolen each year (despite some heavy-duty locks). If your bike is stolen, it will likely show up in a flea market where you can repurchase it. In Amsterdam, this is known as “recycling!”

Brussels

Architecturally, Brussels is an intriguing city. But it seemed a bit stiff and formal to me compared to Amsterdam. But the good news is that all the great Belgian beers can be found and most people speak very good English. The most popular beers in Belgium are Jupiler, Maes and Stella Artois. They are all pilseners and are the Belgian training beers. Signs advertising these brews are as common as Bud and Miller in the US. But it is quite easy to find a bar which serves Hoegaarden, Duvel or a trappist or abbey ale. Actually, the monastery beers are very popular and there is at least one on tap almost everywhere. The lambics are not nearly as popular.

One of the highlights of the trip was sampling the Westvleteren St. Sixtus Yellow (10.8% ABV). Beers from this trappist monastery are not widely distributed. By the way, have you ever wondered whether you are pronouncing the names of European beers correctly? I have. But after going to Europe, it is not surprising to hear beer names pronounced differently by different folks, especially the French and the Dutch. So don't sweat it.

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Antwerp

If I could have only visited one city in Belgium, it would have been Antwerp. It's a beautiful city with an exuberant people. On a sunny Saturday afternoon on the Meir downtown, hundreds of thousands of people congregated on this pedestrian-only street to more or less do nothing. I met local friends at a small bar called Den Engel and was introduced to De Koninck, the local beer of Antwerp. I don't know what style this beer is but it is eminently drinkable in dangerously large quantities. My friends informed me that if one wants to order a large (.33 liter) De Koninck, you ask for a “bolleke” (BOLL-e-ka). A smaller one is called a “prinske” (PRIN-skee). And if you just want a local pilsener, you request a “fluitje” (FLOOT-cha). The first syllable rhymes with “foot.”

I also found out from my host that each area of Belgium tends to regard the closest trappist monastery as the producers of the best beers in Belgium. My host's favorite was Westmalle, so we were “forced” to sample several Westmalle tripels during dinner. Outstanding!

Paris

I have to admit that I went to Paris with certain expectations. They were:

- The people dislike Americans and do not speak English
- All they drink is wine
- The city is beautiful but kind of dirty

Wrong on all counts! I found

the French people to be very kind and spoke passable English in most cases. The only Frenchmen who were prickly seemed to be just as big pricks to those who spoke French as those who spoke English. These were mainly the older waiters.

Although wine is still king in France, there is a lot of beer drinking going on. France produces very few beers of note except their training beers, Kronenbourg and Kanterbrau. But many Belgian beers are available in Paris. And some are on tap. You won't go thirsty for a beer in Paris.

Paris is exceptionally clean. The buildings are not the dirty limestone you've seen in the movies. Most have been cleaned using either acids or lasers. And people in green suits are continually sweeping the streets with green brooms accompanied by green street-sweeping machines. Since it seems that 90% of Europeans smoke, it's a full-time job just sweeping up the butts!

Frankfurt, Wiesbaden and Heidelberg

Let's get this straight at the beginning -- I was not in prime German beer drinking country. As a matter of fact, we had dinner in a Frankfurt restaurant that didn't serve any beer at all. All they offered was wine and a sour apple cider, which the locals seemed to lap up by the gallon. But the food was superb so I didn't complain too much!

In the western part of Germany I visited, most of the

beers were pilseners. However, Bitburger is an exceptional pils and Konig and Warsteiner are popular here as well. Bartenders have an annoying habit of taking 6-7 minutes to pour a pilsener. They insist this is necessary to produce the right kind of head, but I poured a beer at a bar in 15 seconds that tasted every bit as good. Sometimes tradition is counter-productive, especially when you are thirsty.

Unlike the other countries I visited, Germany only offered German beers. They seemed

insulted when you asked about beers from another country, like Belgium. By the way, you find very few American beers in Europe.

It helps to take a little German dictionary with you. Some people do not speak English, and most of the street signs and menus are printed only in German. This may be different in a tourist heavy city like Munich, but I haven't been there so I don't know this for a fact.

So, is it worth going to Europe just for the beer? Of course!

It's worth going anywhere for a good beer. Most of the beers I drank in Europe are available in the U.S. (though perhaps not in Ohio), but sampling them on tap is truly a delight. I can't wait to go back!



PUB CRAWL UPDATE

By Kurt Stocker

I do have some things confirmed for the pub crawl. I have the bus reserved. It will take 25 passengers, it costs \$440.00 plus \$66.00 for tip, so that will average a little over \$20.00 per person. I figure with T-shirt cost included we should be able to get by with charging \$30.00.

The schedule we have worked out is:

- 12:00 leave Kingswood Lumber parking lot. (corner of W. 3rd Ave., and Edgehill)
- 12:15 arrive at Hoster's
- 1:45 leave Hoster's
- 1:55 arrive at Barleys High St.
- 3:00 leave Barley's High St.
- 3:10 arrive at Elevator (they agreed to open early for us)
- 4:20 leave Elevator
- 4:50 arrive at Brazenhead
- 6:00 leave Brazenhead
- 6:30 arrive at Barley's Smoke House
- 7:50 leave Barley's Smoke House
- 8:00 arrive at Thirsty Ear

Jerry was supposed to know about the band situation on Monday, but he e-mailed me and didn't have anything confirmed yet. I need to bug him again to find out if he has the Irish band coming in or not.

Transportation from Thirsty Ear back to Kingswood Lumber parking lot is on your own. It is probably no more than a 5 minute walk down 3rd Ave.

The date of course is Saturday, June 24th. For those people who don't have a designated driver it would be a good suggestion to reserve a room at the Cross Country Inn on Olentangy River Rd. It would be within long walking distance, or if a few people split a cab, it couldn't cost more than a couple of bucks each.

CHICAGO REAL ALE FESTIVAL 2000

BY MARK IRWIN

As I mentioned in last month's newsletter, I spent my Spring Break in Chicago at the Real Ale Festival. It was two and half days of beer, beer and more beer. If you ever plan on attending in the future, remember public transportation is your friend.

I saw a number of familiar faces at the event. Just about the first person I saw walking into Goose Island Wrigleyville was Ron Phillips, a founding SODZ member and our second president. He was director of the Cask Ale Competition. I ended up spending much of the weekend with Pat, Larry, and Randy from DRAFT. For those of you that have helped out at various homebrew judging will recognize Pat and Larry. On Saturday night I also ran into Bob Klahn and Blotarian and Beer and Sweat organizer Rob Pinkerton. Also in attendance were noted brewers and homebrewing people, such as Larry Bell, John Maier from Rogue, Fred Eckhart, Ray Daniels, and Al Korzonas

On Thursday evening was the Homebrew Competition. There were 19 entries this year. While some were pretty good, I was generally unimpressed. Just about every beer we've had at a meeting this year has been better. You should all be very proud of the beers you have been brewing recently. My favorite was Hop God Turbo Ale, a barley wine brewed by Hop God and his Minions. It was a big malty beer with a strong hop character. The Hop God is quite a character. By the end of the weekend, everybody knew who the Hop God was. To

call him obsessed with hops would be an understatement. He was telling me about a beer that he brewed that he claimed had 425 IBU. I don't believe it as I don't think that is possible with standard brewing techniques. However this had to be one bitter and hoppy beer as it had 32 ounces of hops in it. Every time he had to do something with the beer he added hops. Boil it, add hops. Put it in the primary, add hops. Transfer it, add hops. Add the priming sugar, add hops. Probably even pour the beer, add hops.

The three main sessions took place Friday evening and Saturday afternoon and evening. Available in these sessions were 147 cask conditioned ales and 55 bottled beers. Needless to say I wasn't able to try all of them, but I gave it a good try. They were giving about 5 oz tasters, so if you weren't careful, you might need more than the bus to get back to your hotel. My favorites among the cask beers included Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild (a big malt flavor), Goose Island's IPA (a clear bitterness with a good malt backbone) and Mild (a subtle session ale), Big Grizz Barleywine (a big malty British style barleywine), and Old Conundrum Barleywine (aged in a whiskey barrel). Of course I can't leave out Barley's three beers, the IPA, the Russian Imperial, and the Robert Burns Scottish Export. Actually I was surprised the Scottish didn't win a medal. It was great there. One thing I noticed was that the Bitters and Pales didn't hold up very well. They oxidized and went stale very

quickly. The bigger beers held up much better. Besides Barley's success, another Ohio brewery did well. Buckeye Brewing from the Cleveland area won two bronze medals for their Sasquatch Pale Ale (which I didn't try) and their Old Mammoth Stout (ok, but seemed a bit thin when I tried it).

Among the bottled beers, my favorites among those tasted at the festival included Church Brew Work's 2000 Trippel (very Westmalle like), Willoughby's Wenceslas (a spiced ale) and Brew Moon's Fris Opdienen (a cranberry/blueberry lambic). Also included in the selection of bottled beers were a number of my favorites, such as Bell's Expedition Stout and Third Coast Old Ale and some of the Goose Island beers. Since there were so many other beers to taste, I thought it prudent to skip these.

People came from all over to attend the event. Probably the pair that came the farthest were from Japan. Their main reason for coming over was for the festival. One of them spoke pretty good English but his friend didn't know much. However he did know enough to be able to get the beers he wanted. Ohio was well represented with members from most if not all of the major clubs in attendance. In addition to the clubs mentioned earlier, I also saw SAAZ members from Akron and SNOBs from Cleveland. Of course the majority of the people attending were from the Chicago area, including a women wandering most of the

time wearing an Old Style sweater. I know its Chicago's beer, but as a punishment she shouldn't have been allowed to have any beer while she was wearing it. (Ok, I know I'm a beer snob, and I'm proud of it)

And finally, as every trip to Chicago has to include, is a visit to Sam's, across the parking lot from the Goose Island on Clybourn. They still have a great selection of beer, though maybe not quite as good as it used to be at their old place a block to the west. Though that impression might be due to the new store being much better organized. Regardless I was able to pickup many interesting beers and I will be reminded of it when I see my Visa bill for the next couple of months.

They are currently starting to plan next festival, tentatively scheduled for early March next year. If you want to get on the mailing list to get information for next year's event, take a look at www.realalefestival.com.

Don't Forget...
BARLEY'S
5th Annual
Homebrew
Competition

Applications and information may be picked up at Barley's, Barley's Smokehouse and The Winemaker's Shop. Beer may be dropped off at The Smokehouse and The Winemaker's Shops from May 13-27. The winner will be announced at the Afternoon with the Brewers on Sunday, June 11, and will have a chance to brew the winning beer at Barley's in the future.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Let's all offer a warm welcome to our new club members that joined SODZ last month. They are as follows:

Josh and Karen Johnson
Sean Beckwith

Also, there quite a few of you out there that have not yet brought your membership dues current as of yet (sixteen to be exact). Please remit your dues to our new treasurer:

Eric Drake (Treasurer)
2821 Hiawatha St.
Columbus, OH 43211.

THE CRABBY GOURMET REPORT

by Tom Jones

THE HOPS RESTAURANT BAR BREWERY 1481 POLARIS PARKWAY

My wife and I went to the Hops Restaurant Bar Brewery because I received some gift certificates for my 39th birthday and offer the following report. I took part in their four primary beer sampler, and extend my bias report on the following:

CLEARWATER LIGHT

It is their low calorie, reduced carbohydrate, lager style beer.
"The beer is truly a light beer without much body or taste. Would be a good lawn mower beer."

LIGHTING BOLD GOLD

It is their golden hued, medium bodied, classic American lager style beer.
"The beer is a medium bodied beer with a homebrew 'cider taste' (which I understand is because it was fermented too warm), of which I do not favor. I do not recommend this beer."

HAMMERHEAD RED/THOROUGHbred RED

It is their "All malt", medium bodied, amber ale, brewed with distinct chocolate and caramel malts.
"The beer is a medium bodied beer with a good flavor, and consider it one of their best beers."

ALLIGATOR ALE

It is their "Brewmaster Special", mahogany colored, full-bodied, rich roasted ale with a smooth creamy finish.
"The beer is a dark, hardy, porter -type beer."

They also offer a combination of the above beers and a "Razzberry Brew", which is a whisper of raspberry liqueur with one of the beers listed above.

The food is also very good and well worth a stop for a meal anytime.



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