

Amateur Brewer

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NEWSLETTER

Portland, Oregon

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Amateur Brewer NEWSLETTER No. 7-4, May 1981

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WE ARE NOT LATE! We solved the problem by changing the due date to May for the fourth Newsletter (and moved the Amateur Brewer due date back to July. April is just a bad month for me to do an ABNL.)

We have a new typewriter, compliments the Blitz-Weinhard brewing Co, a Portland subsidiary of Pabst Brewing Co. What I did for them was to participate in a Seattle beer tasting and judging for the Seattle Times last June, and in that tasting our panel found Blitz-Pabst's Henry Weinhard's Private Reserve to be the best of the U.S. Superpremium beers (other beers tasted: (in order of finish) Augsburger (Huber of Wisconsin), Yuengling (Pottstown, PA), Andekker (Pabst Milwaukee), St. Pauli Girl (Germany), Medallion (Olympia WA), Erlanger (Schlitz), and last Busch's Michelob. Henry scored 99 out of 160 possible, (12.4 points out of 20). Someone was willing to pay me to confirm that panel's findings in a radio commercial. It was great fun, and I loved it. The typewriter is nice too!

PRISTINE RECIPES FROM MAINE

In Amateur Brewer No. 7, we asked readers to send any recipes that did not violate our "pristine principles". John Goldfine of Belfast, Maine wrote us.

"Pristine (?) Principles: I can't in honesty say my friends like (my beer), because they prefer beers less hoppy, but I imagine you would find them both good.

SUPERBRAU HOPLICH

Yield: 5 US gallons (20 liter)
 1 x 3.5-lb (1.6-kg) can Munton & Fison Light (unhopped).
 3/4-lb (350-gm) powdered malt extract, light
 1-lb Crystal malt (500-gm).
 1/2 tspn (1.5-gm) diastase
 2-oz (60-gm) loose Cascade hops
 1-oz (30-gm) loose Talisman hops
 3/8-oz Cascade pellet hops (10-gm)
 1-tspn Yeast Nutrient (3.5-gm)
 1 1/2-tspn Gypsum (4.5-gm)
 1-tspn Salt (5-gm)
 1-tspn Ascorbic Acid (3.5-gm)
 Adjust gravity to 1.042 (10.4°B) with corn sugar or dextrose.
 Superbrau yeast
 6-oz (1-cup) corn sugar at bottling for carbonation.

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AMATEUR BREWER INFORMATION SERVICE
 P.O. BOX 546
 PORTLAND, OR 97207
 USA

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION \$5

BITTER ALE

Yield: 5 US Gallons (20 liter)

1 x 3.5-lb Munton & Fison Amber (1.6-kg)	1-oz Cluster hop pellets (30-gm)
1-lb powdered malt extract, light (500gm)	1-oz Talisman hops (30-gm)
1/2-lb Maize flakes (250-gm)	1/2-oz loose Fuggles (15-gm)
1/2-lb Barley flakes (250-gm)	3/8-oz Cascade pellets (10-gm)
1-lb crystal malt (500-gm) (crushed)	1 1/2-tspn Gypsum (4.5-gm)
1-tspn diastase (3-gm)	1 1/2-tspn Salt (7.5-gm)
1/4 cup black patent malt (whole)	Honey to 1.040 (10 ⁰ B)
1/2-tspn yeast nutrient (3.5-gm)	5 1/4-oz (7/8 cup) (150-gm) dextrose (corn sugar) for bottling
	Edme Ale Yeast

PROCEDURE

"I don't think my brewing technique has many surprises, and it was more or less identical for the two recipes. Things requiring mashing were mashed at least an hour with a gallon of water per pound of ingredients and the addition of 1/2-tspn diastase and 1/4-tspn water treatment per pound ingredients. 150⁰F (65.5⁰C) is the mash temperature I aim at. I crush the crystal malt of course, but I don't see any advantage to a nylon bag. Sparge using the colander plus moaning wife technique. Bring the mash water and spargings to boil, add malt extract. The beer wort boiled an hour, the ale about an hour and a half. Hops were added, starting 15-minutes after boil began, in decreasing amounts, finishing hops going in with about 10-minutes of boil left. I used Fuggles to finish the ale and Cascades to the beer.

"Put sugar or honey in primary, add wort and water to 5 1/2-gallons (22-liter). I pitched the Superbrau dry, after setting my primary in a tub of cold water, two hours, bringing wort temperature down to 85⁰F (29.5⁰C). Ordinarily, I'd prefer a slow acting yeast over superbrau, but I decided to brew in June when cellar temps had already reached 60F, too warm for the usual lager yeast. I trust the superbrau to show a big head within 12-hours.

"I let the ale wort sit overnight and pitched it wet with a quart of it that I'd siphoned and cooled to 70⁰ (21⁰C) right away plus the Edme Ale Yeast.

"Superbrau went into secondary at 1.012 (3⁰B), about 48 hours, plus nutrient. It was bottled eight days later at 1.011, & primed. The beer was smooth and swizzleable. One more thing--I don't skim the ferment.

"The bitter ale was racked at 1.025 (6.25⁰B), plus nutrient. It was bottled 13 days later at 1.013, with priming.

"Lest you think that all my brewing is a race to the bottle capper, let me assure you that this winter when my cellar was 38-40⁰F (3-5⁰C), I had a lager two weeks in the primary, eight weeks in the secondary. I add Ascorbic acid at bottling."

John is 35, a school teacher, married, two children, enjoys fishing, horseback riding, mystery novels and beer. "My first taste was in 1952 or 53 and was a can of Bud offered me by a (friend). We were sitting on the back of a ragtop Ford. I remember the moment and the taste of that Bud perfectly. I think it was the last really good Bud I've had. The next beer I remember was Tuborg Dark, the imported, not phony kind. I loved it and have gone on loving dark beers, imported beers, and small label beers ever since, going on twenty years now. I began home brewing in February of 1979 and the two recipes I've given are my 21st and 22d 5-gallon brews. I have 11 cases of beer in my cellar and find that I ferment faster than I can drink. I loath bottle washing.

BOOK REVIEW

Weathers, Jim, Practical Beermaking for Beginners, 1981, San Leandro, CA: Home Fermentor Publications, 1676 Maubert Court #C, San Leandro CA 94578, 152pp, Illus. \$4.95 paperbound.

I don't know that I'd really call this a book for beginners, the author says it is aimed at intermediate beer makers, even though the title says it's "for Beginners". Some parts of this book are very well written and easy to understand. Others are strange, and difficult to assess their true value. The book is full of interesting tips on various aspects of beermaking. What is not certain is whether they are all good. For example he recommends the use of "Irish Moss" (Chondrus Crispus), and that is a good thing, but what he describes is a product being sold as "Irish Moss", but which is actually is a Japanese culinary delight called Nori. Nori is sheets of seaweed used in wrapping sushi, it is rich in iodine and iron, neither of which is especially valuable to the beermaking process. The only Japanese product I've found which will do the job of Irish Moss is Kanten (agar-agar). I am not aware of fining properties of any other seaweed types, because these (Irish Moss and Agar-agar) are the only readily available gelatinous agents, and it is that aspect which does the job of fining in the kettle. Vegetable fining agents have a negative charge to attract the positively charged protein particles, helping them settle out, to rid the beer of these undesirable elements.

On the other hand the short chapter about growing your own hops is, alone, worth the price of the price of the book. Ditto the chapter on draft beer, with excellent information on using Cornelius tanks. But then again, don't bother with the chapter on krausening. On the other hand the information on forming a beer club is worth more than the cost of the book, especially if you realize that by forming a beer club in your town you will improve your own beermaking abilities by at least 100%! Then there's the bit on rice: I can think of NO reason to add rice (starch) to your beer at any stage except mashing, where enzymes are produced to change the starch to sugar. Jim suggests adding rice, cooked or uncooked-- he doesn't care, to the primary fermentor, where you can build your own starch haze for the iodine from the nori to turn blue, and produce "blue beer" of your very own. I think the book has problems, but it also has some wonderful ideas and they greatly outbalance the few strange notions he sometimes puts forth.

One can even say that one of the most delightful aspects of Jim Weathers' writing is that he is not afraid to try something different. He doesn't feel tied to tradition, indeed, just the opposite, he is perfectly willing to try almost anything that might work in beer.

The book is profusely illustrated and many of them are from the old book "100 Years of Brewing."

I think Jim's pioneering spirit and fascinating writing will make this book a worthy addition to your library, I recommend it.

SEVENTH ANNUAL ABQAIQ BEER FESTIVAL

In January we received a letter from a fellow in Saudi Arabia requesting copies of our Tasting booklet, and subscribing to AB. He told us "There are a number of serious brewers here in Saudi Arabia, even though ingredients for a quality brew are non-existent. As you may be aware, alcohol (in any form) is forbidden by law here, and penalties may be quite severe.

"Those of us employed by ARAMCO enjoy a somewhat privileged

position in that our commissary stocks two brands of hopped malt extracts, and we smuggle hops, yeast, etc., whenever possible.

He continues, "I have been brewing here, in Saudi Arabia, for four years, using your Treatise, and Burch's Quality Brewing, both have been extremely helpful.

"Each year, here in ABQAIQ ("AB-CAKE") we sponsor a clandestine event referred to as "the Annual ABQAIQ Beer Judging Contest and Festival." "The quality of brew (he continues) entered in previous years has ranged from undrinkable to excellent."

The February judging rules he sent me (no results as yet) proposes the following categories and rules: 1) Light, 2) Dark, 3) "Specialties" (Stouts, bitters, etc), and 4) Kegs (tentative). Limit of 2 entries. "Unlabeled or unidentifiable bottles may be opened and drunk on the spot by the reveling and thirsty judges! (and then) If you know any brewers or potential brewers, please have them contact any of the contest coordinators (3 listed). (A history is quoted) numbers of entries: 1977--18, 1978--30, 1979--74, 1980--34. Then this "Quaffing: Donations of additional brew for quaffing by the riotous throngs of brewers, camp followers, and hangers-on, will be welcome and greatly appreciated.

WELL--as you can see even the darkest part of the dark continent has its lighter moments.

FALSTAFF TELLS NEBRASKA "SHOVE IT"

One of the most beer news-items we have come across recently is from the Wall Street Journal, Wed., March 25, 1981. It all came about when Falstaff wanted to market it's popular Beer beer label for Safeway (as Scotch Buy) in Omaha. The Nebraska Liquor Control Commission said no, because that violated a law barring a manufacturer from "giving anything of value to a retailer." At least according to the State Attorney General, who contended that the private label gives big retailers an advantage over smaller merchants because they can afford to advertise and sell their own private blends. Paul Kalmanovitz, who owns Falstaff, General Brewing and Pearl Brewing, makes the popular Beer beer (which is sold around here by both large AND small merchants) took offense, wrote a nasty letter to Omaha Gov. Thone, took out a full page ad in Omaha newspapers, and finally closed the only brewery in Nebraska.

Isn't that fantastic, he just picked up his marbles and went home! It's high time someone told some state to shove their liquor laws. The last I heard on the subject was that Omaha was preparing to secede from Nebraska. Incidentally Paul Kalmanovitz is also responsible for the revival of, and the continued production of Ballantines Old India Pale Ale in Cranston RI., by Falstaff. Brewers like Mr Kalmanovitz need all the support they can get from the rest of us.

PURE ALE YEAST??

A recent beer club newsletter told its members that a "pure" Ale Yeast was about to be cultured for them by Wine Lab, 1200 Oak Av, St Helena CA 94574. Brewing experts tell us that Pure Ale Yeast is no great blessing. You need some of the side bacteria to get best results! English brewers found by experimentation that results were much better with each brewery's own "contaminated" strain, and it was decided that they were an important part of the yeast! Sorry fellows.

Here's to you for a happy April
in May,

Fred Eickhardt