



The Cellar

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Colonial Ale Smiths & Keggers
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Visit CASK on the web for the latest news, photos, recipes and updates: <http://www.williamsburgbrewing.com/CASK>

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CLUB NEWS

CASK Welcomes Renowned Guest Speaker to November Meeting

by Harrison Gibbs

Cask is pleased to have Dan Mouer speak at the November 18 Club meeting on home winemaking and the bridge between the barley mashing and the grape crushing hobbyists. Please bring any curiosity, questions, or homemade wine to the Thursday meeting.

Dan is professor of anthropology and archaeology at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. He specializes in American culture history. He has also written on early brewing in Virginia in *Brew Your Own* as well as the meaning of the real meaning of "meritage" in *WineMaker Magazine*.

Twenty years ago Dan co-founded the James River Homebrewers Richmond first homebrew club. Recently, he started the Central Virginia Winemakers to create local community of home wine making enthusiasts in Virginia.

Dan is a prolific wine maker and has won many medals for his homemade wines including gold medals for his Selection Estate Series Washington Columbia Valley Riesling and Limited Edition Oregon Pinot Noir.

CASK is pleased to have Dan come from Richmond to speak to the club. We hope there is a large turnout, so please come out and see what else there is in the world of fermentation. ■

CASK Plans for 2004 - 2005

Compiled from Board Minutes and editor's imagination

As we near the end of yet another fantastic year at CASK, the club is already planning for the 2005 brew year. But, there's still two months to go in 2004, and CASK still has some fun up its sleeves.

At the November meeting, we'll be discussing the possibility of making December a kind of holiday celebration meeting. Think of it like you're office party, but without the awkward small talk, concern of making a fool of yourself, and definitely without the coworker next to the cooler full of Heineken talking about how he's impressed the organization sprung for the "good" stuff.

Instead, CASK is considering a potluck supper and beer tasting. The club will also hand out the Homebrewer of the Year award, and feature some really great door prizes (ie. no patriotic bottle caps or airlocks). Details will be hashed out at the November meeting, and we'd love to have your input.

CASK will also be soliciting nominations for club officers. Voting will run from January until the February meeting. We will be looking for a new club president so if you're interested, by all means speak up. This is a great opportunity to get involved in the happenings of the club. More on this at the November Meeting.

There's plenty more in store for CASK, much of which will be discussed at the November meeting. Also, stay tuned to the newsletter and the website for upcoming club events and announcements. Cheers! ■

Kick it Up a Notch with Yeast

a note from Hugh at the Brewery / Homebrew store

I ordered some super high gravity yeast. It's the seasonal propagation. CASK better get it before I do. ■

THE CELLARMASTER

Winemaking for Homebrewers

By Dan Mouer, guest Cellarmaster

Some think the world's people fall into clear-cut diametrically opposed "types." You can be one type or another, but never both. There are "dog people," and then there are "cat people;" "hotdogs-with-mustard people" and "hotdogs-with-ketchup people;" "wine people" and "beer people." Beer



people are down-to-earth, no-nonsense, folks who wear blue jeans or overalls and drive pickups. Wine people attend black tie affairs, have stock portfolios, and drive expensive SUVs right? This has never made any sense to me. I like cats and dogs; mustard and ketchup, I have both a pickup truck and a big SUV. Oh yeah, and I drink and I make both beer and wine. If you are a homebrewer who has thought about possibly dabbling in winemaking, this column is for you this month. This isn't a "how-to" lesson, but, rather, a brief comparison of the process with homebrewing.

What does it take to make really good wine at home these days? If you have images in your head of stomping grapes in a huge wooden vat, or racks of large oak barrels in the barn out back...well your notions are a bit outdated. Home winemakers can buy grapes from local growers, or import them frozen or refrigerated from California, New York and even from France, but that's not how most of us do it anymore. Instead, we buy a box from The Weekend Brewer, we take it home, add a few things and stir, and voila, it's wine! Well, maybe it's not quite that easy.

Today most make wine at home from kits. Homebrewers have a choice of approaches for making beer. We can use concentrated wort to which we just add water—perhaps with a short boil for sanitation. We can use dry and/or canned extract to which we add fresh hops and possible some specialty grains, or we can do a partial mash, augmenting our fermentables with extract. We can do a full grain mash, choosing a one-step infusion, a multi-step infusion, or, if we're totally nuts, a double or triple decoction mash. There are similar gradations in approaches to winemaking. There are basic "four-week" kits based on grape juice concentrate, often with some sugar syrup added; and there are middle range "six-week" kits, which combine pure juice and concentrate. Premium kits contain more juice yet. One can also purchase boxes containing nothing but

sterilized juice from select vineyards around the world. Or you can harvest, crush, macerate, press, ferment and age your own grapes.

If you read last month's issue of *Brew By You* magazine, you probably saw a special section sponsored by the wine-kit industry. The point it made was that you, as a homebrewer, already have most of the equipment and skills you need to make good—even excellent—wine at home. There are differences, however, so let's look at some of those:

It's easier to make sound wine than it is to make sound beer, especially if you follow kit instructions. If you start with a quality kit, use basic sanitation measures, and keep air off your wine, it is far less likely to become infected than is your beer. Why? Wine is typically around 12% alcohol rather than 4-5%. Wine is usually pretty acidic, and that tends to protect from some forms of infection and oxidation. Wine made according to the instructions that come with kits will be bottled in 4-6 weeks, or slightly more. Wine becomes more susceptible to spoilage the longer it remains in bulk storage (e.g., in a carboy), so early bottling and sound practice makes kit wine nearly foolproof. (I think it's worth the risk to wait much longer before bottling, but that'll be the subject of another column).

Despite the fact that the manufacturers call their products "four-week" or "six-week" kits, don't expect to be drinking your wine anywhere near that soon. Most white wine will need at least

another 3-6 months of bottle aging, and reds will benefit greatly from 6 months to a year or more in the bottle.

Winemaking requires more patience than beer brewing (unless you're used to making barley wine or long-lagered doppelbock).



There is no all-day mash-sparge-boil tedium with a wine kit. You can make up a wine in the time it takes to sanitize your fermenter, pour in the juice, add (filtered) water, sprinkle on some yeast, and pop on a bubbler. If you go with a reputable kit maker's product, that will make good wine; however, most folks will want to check (and possibly adjust) the specific gravity and the total acidity of the "must," which is what we call unfermented wine. "Total acidity" (also called "titratable

see 'Winemaking' on pg. 3

WINEMAKING: *(cont. from pg. 2)*

acidity" or "TA") is a new concept for most brewers, but it's very important to winemakers. Ph is not so important when making wine, but TA is critical. To measure TA you will need a little wine test kit that you can buy from Weekend Brewer. It's easy to use. Just make certain you don't get any phenolphthalein solution from the testing kit into your wine. It's a powerful cathartic and laxative! To increase the specific gravity (and potential alcohol) you simply add cane sugar. No additional extract or special sugars are required.

You'll need bottles, corks and a corker. Sure, you could put wine in a beer bottle and top it off with a crown cap, but how tacky! The bottles aren't as expensive as they look, and a hand corker is very reasonable. Do spend the money for premium corks. Why go to the trouble and expense of making good wine only to have it ruined by leakage and oxidation due to a cheap cork? Crown caps and a beer-bottle capper work fine to cap off champagne bottles if you're making sparkling wine, although wire-wrapped champagne corks, and their modern plastic counterparts, are more traditional.

You'll need storage space. While brewers may have one or two batches of beer in the ready-for-drinking stage, with some odd bottles squirreled away in the basement waiting for the next big homebrew contest, winemakers tend to have lots of wine in the aging process. Whether it's in bottles, carboys, demijohns, barrels, or vats, you will eventually want to find ample space where the temperature is somewhat stable for storing wines.

Now, after a long, hot day in your pickup truck drivin' them doggies on the range, you can sit back on your front porch in your sweaty denim and leather britches, kick back with your feet on the rail and pop the top on a tall frosty...chardonnay!

Comments? Questions?

Write dan.mouer@verizon.net or check out *Dan's Cellar Notes* at weekendbrewer.com.

Quote of the Month

Give me women, wine and snuff
Until I cry out 'hold, enough!
You may do so san objection
Till the day of resurrection;
For bless my beard then aye shall be
My beloved Trinity.

— John Keats

Thanksgiving and Wine:

Don't be a turkey, try something new

Choosing wines to enjoy with Thanksgiving dinner is easy—it's hard to make a bad choice. Picking your favorite wines to share with your guests on this special day will make them thankful. Or, let us give you some ideas. Because your guest list is as diverse as the dishes you plan on serving, we have supplied you with advice for red wines, white wines, rosés and sparkling wines to serve. You may prefer to serve all whites or all reds, or a few selections of each. You may want to start the evening with a sparkling wine and carry it all the way through the meal. And, don't forget how delicious rosés can be. Also, this is the time to serve your wines "family style," the way you serve your meal — just open your selections and let your guests help themselves to the tastes they like. Whatever you choose, we wish you the best Thanksgiving ever.

Because there are so many good wine and food pairings for Thanksgiving dinner, just select the type of wine you favor — and let us offer options to please every palate.

Because a traditional Thanksgiving meal brings together such a diverse range of flavors, and some that are rich or slightly sweet, a sparkling wine that is not completely dry will please nearly everyone.

If your choice is French champagne or California sparkling wine, choose one labeled "extra dry" ("brut" is the driest category, and "extra dry" is just a little softer, with fuller fruit flavors).

It's true that dry rosé wines go well with almost any dish, and with so many flavors on the table at Thanksgiving, rosé can be a great choice. If your taste runs to drier wines, a rosé from the Cotes du Rhone or Provence regions in France will be light, crisp and flavorful, but won't overpower the meal. A dry rosé from California — made from one of the Rhone grape varieties such as Grenache — will also nicely fill the bill.

One of the best pairings for turkey and many of the traditional side dishes is chardonnay, a wine nearly always made in a dry but fresh and fruity style. Choose a full-bodied, ripe, fruity chardonnay, and you'll have a wine that serves well from appetizers through the meal. A slightly more crisp wine that also goes well with the traditional meal is sauvignon blanc

A very aromatic red wine such as pinot noir fits right in and adds its own unique appeal. If you're looking for a hearty, full flavor red, give a Syrah a try.

expcerted from articles on <http://www.ivillage.com>

Teach a Friend to Brew Day



CASK celebrates the joys of homebrewing with good company, great beer, and a free lesson in brewing to all passers-by.

by Tim Jones



Earlier this month, CASK, celebrated the annual brew event, "Teach a Friend to Homebrew Day." Three brewers, Craig Mayotte (left), Steve LaPaugh (right) and me (took photos), came out on a beautiful fall day to enjoy the weather, each other's company, and a chance to do what we love—brew some great beer. Don Welsh, who organized the event, took care of the food and beverages required for such a strenuous day, and club member Brian Hershey also brought some wonderful homebrew to share. Hugh Burns, owner of the Williamsburg Brewing Company was gracious enough to lend us his property, water, buckets, knives and all the other tools brewers need to survive the wilds of brewing outdoors (stuff we forgot).

I arrived at the brewery to find Don, beer in hand, manning the setup. A moment later, I realized that I had forgotten my kettle, and would have to track down another. Hugh graciously let me use one of his, and I got down to brewing a makeshift, leftover ingredient bitter. With a few minor mishaps, including a flaming grain bag (thanks, wind), I managed to get the beer

done right quick. I had forgotten how fast you can brew an extract batch!

Craig took on a pumpkin ale, using real pumpkin (pictured above). By the end of the afternoon, the entire parking lot smelled like pumpkin pie. Oh, I can't wait to try this one. Craig also brought tons of beer (pumpkin included) to share. Many thanks.

Steve waited patiently for my bitter to finish boiling to set his IPA up on the burner. Nothing like the smell of hops to make a Saturday afternoon feel right. Steve also brought his nifty homemade stirring paddle, pictured above, to keep his beer moving.

Throughout the day, our small but diligent group, attracted plenty of WBC shoppers. Most stopped to see why we were drinking beer and eating pizza in the parking lot, but also asked some good questions about the club and brewing. Who knows, we just might have some new members come November.

Also, congrats to Don Welsh, for winning the drawing for a free AHA membership. ■

CALENDAR

Of Club Events and Competitions

UPDATE COMING SOON

November/December 2004

IPA

Hosted by Joel Trojnar and the James River Brewers of Richmond, VA.

Category 7 India Pale Ale

2004 Monthly Beer Styles

Plan your brewing year now and hit as many club-only and other competitions as possible.

November – Homemade Wine

December – Free for all

2005 Monthly Beer Styles

January – Irish Red Ales

February – Scotch Strong Ales

March – Sour Beers

April – Extracts Beers (Brewer's Choice)

May – Mai Bocks

June – Saisons

July – Summer Party!!

August – TBD

September – TBD

October – TBD

November – TBD

December – Free for all

Call for articles:

If you or anyone you know has the ability to string English words together into meaningful sentences, particularly sentences about beer, brewing, homebrewing, drinking, or anything remotely beer related, then *The Cellar* wants to hear from you. Email ukalimbe@cox.net.

CASK

is sponsored by

The Williamsburg Brewing Company

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Enter the Largest Homemade Wine Comp in N. America

Enter your wine in North America's largest competition for hobby winemakers. The best home-made wines from across North America and around the world will compete for gold, silver and bronze medals in 50 categories awarded by a panel of experienced wine judges. Last year we had entries from 41 American states, 7 Canadian provinces and 4 countries. Enter your wines and compete against the continent's best home winemakers! You can gain international recognition for your winemaking skills and get valuable feedback on your wines from the competition's judging panel. Deadline is April 15, 2005.

Wines are to be delivered to:

Battenkill Communications

5053 Main St., Suite A

Manchester Center, VT 05255

Ph: (802) 362-3981

Send two (2) bottles per entry. Still wines must be submitted in standard 750 ml wine bottles. Ice wines or late harvest wines can be submitted in 375 ml bottles. Still meads can be submitted in 12 oz. or 22 oz. beer bottles. Sparkling wines must be in champagne bottles with proper closure and wire. All bottles must be free of wax, decorative labels and capsules. However, an identification label will be required on the bottle. The second bottle is a back-up in case the first has spoiled, leaked or broken in transit.

Entry fee is \$15 U.S. dollars (or \$23 Canadian dollars) for each wine entered. Each individual person is allowed up to a total of 15 entries. You may enter in as many categories as you wish. Make checks payable to WineMaker. Only U.S. or Canadian funds will be accepted. On your check write the number of entries (no more than 15 total) and the name of the entrant if different from the name on the check. Entry fees are non-refundable.

Contest is open to any amateur home winemaker. Your wine must not have been made by a professional commercial winemaker or at any commercial winery. No employee of WineMaker magazine may enter. Judges may not judge a category they have entered. Applicable entry fees and limitations shall apply.

For complete rules and more information, please visit <http://winemakermag.com/feature/296.html>