



The Cellar

The Official Newsletter of the
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>

Inside The Cellar

In Case You Missed It

Cub news and notes **pg.1**

Holidays and Brewers

All I want this holiday is beer **pg.2**

Help Out a Beer Club

CASK is looking for Board members **pg.3**

Corny Beer

DMS isn't a gangsta rapper **pg.4**

On Tap

Upcoming competitions and events **pg.5-6**

CLUB NEWS

November Meeting Recap

by Harrison Gibbs

At the November meeting, the club made plans for the December meeting and heard Brian Hershey's account of the Club Only judging of IPAs in Richmond. CASK also did something a little different. We put aside our beer snobbery to sample... wine. The November meeting featured not only homemade wines but, Virginia's most renowned home winemaker Dan Mouer.

For those who were not at the last meeting, Dan is one of the original founders of Richmond's James River Brewers and the recently organized Central Virginia Winemakers. This later group is a loose group of home wine enthusiasts that are doing for winemaking what homebrew clubs did for home beer making.

The crux of Dan's presentation on home wine making is that it does not have to be difficult. In some ways, the exercise is easier than home beer making and often less forgiving. Certain basic rules apply. Start with good ingredients and always sanitize. The big difference appears to be patience. But if you have brewed a big style beer such as a Barleywine or Belgian Triple, you should be familiar with this concept.

Dan poured tastes of his fine wines. He makes wines from both grapes and wine kits. And for some he will put a kit in on top of the left over grapes from a previous batch creating a hybrid source wine. All of them were excellent. Craig, Ramon and Harrison also brought in samples of their grape wines. Some were made with pressed grapes and others with wine kits, but all tasted great. ■

As Potluck Would Have It: December's Holiday Meeting

In the last meeting, the members decide to do something different for the December meeting. In addition to featuring a free for all of our favorite beers, commercial and home made, CASK members are encouraged to bring a pot-luck dish. We are adding a dinner component to the December meeting. The only request is that if possible try to feature beer in the dish. We will also have our biggest raffle of the year. Expect great beers, kegging stuff, and brewing equipment.

At the December meeting CASK will also be accepting nominations for the club offices of President and Vice-President. If you are interested, please let us know and we will toss your name in. Unlike the Pentagon, we can only use the "stop loss" power for so long. Hopefully, we will not have to resort to the draft.

Finally, CASK will finish tallying up the points for Homebrewer of the Year and announce who this year's winner will be. Already plans are being made for next year's running. In 2005, expect more members to be close to winning. ■

Quote of the Month

"Of course you'll have another drop of ale. A man's twice the man afterward. You feel so warm and glorious."

— Thomas Hardy
Far from the Madding Crowd

THE CELLARMASTER

Dear Santa: Gifts for brewers

By Harrison Gibbs

CASK recently asked some of its members what gifts they were asking Santa Claus to bring this holiday. While this is just a small survey, it provides some inspiration as to what the "average" home brewer has on his or her wish list.



Big on this year's wish list among members is keging equipment. Once you have been brewing long enough, the bottling process becomes the least favorite step. This is a perfect time to add that corney keg to your system. For those already with kegs, there is always the kegerator, a mini-fridge with taps on top. Most will hold one regular commercial keg and up to four corney kegs of homebrew. Another "Big" brewing item is a stainless steel fermenter.

More manageable gifts are brewing books, magazine subscriptions, and useful brewing tools such as a temperature control thermostat, Erlenmeyer flasks for yeast culturing, and even beer glassware and mugs.

Here is a sample of some CASK member's request of Santa,

- **I would like a temperature controlled stainless steel conical fermenter and a 3-tap kegerator (hope I'm not asking for too much...lol).**
- **... Refractometer, couple of corney kegs, Erlenmeyer flask, "Brewmaster's Table," and "Farmhouse Ales"....**
- **I like the idea of personalized beer mugs/steins.**
- **Only cheaper shipping from Williams brewing [ed. note: to Bogotá, Columbia]. I'm also looking for a source of CO2. Speaking of which if you have a socket for a pin lock keg, it would be a great gift.**
- **Kegerator, BrewTree, Wine Rack, Beer of the Month Club Subscription, Subscription to Zymurgy or BYO, Complete**

Joy of Home Brewing Book, 1 case of Victory Hop Wallop (or put a keg in the kegerator) [ed. note: I wonder who this is?]

- **Personally, I'd go for a book.**
- **I would like a beer bong, no just kidding! Seriously, I would love to see some Great Lakes Brewing Co., Smuttynose Pumpkin Ale, or Harpoon Winter Warmer underneath my tree. Yuummmmmmmmmmm!**

If you have not gotten your letter written to "Santa," there is still time. Some gifts may be purchased at the local brew store or at the merchants listed in the link section on the CASK website. Even if Santa cannot get you that 3-tier brewing system you want (they don't travel well down chimneys) or the latest brewing book, there is always the perfect gift for any beer lover – good beer. Hoppy Holidays and have yourself a very beery Christmas.

New England Cranberry Wheat Ale

Every fall I brew a holiday beer to give to family and friends. This year I was little preoccupied with a wedding and so I needed a recipe that could be done fast. I chose an all extract recipe. This one has only one hop add and no specialty grains. The one time-consuming part was grinding the cranberries, but this was quickly accomplished with a food processor. If you have had Sam Adams Cranberry Wheat, this is what that beer should be. Great color and fruit flavor. The hops and cranberries balance the sweetness, and the fruit blends wonderfully with the wheat and alcohol.

The Recipe:

6.6 lbs Liquid Wheat/Malt Extract
 2 ounces Willamette Hops - 60 min
 2 Tbsp Malto-Dextrin Powder
 2.5 lbs Pureed Fresh Cranberries – 20 min
 Pectin Enzyme (liquid or powder)
 White Labs English Ale Yeast

Bring brew pot of water to a boil. Take off heat. Add wheat/malt extract and dissolve. Return to heat and boil. Once boil begins add hops and malto-dextrin. Boil for 40 minutes. Puree cranberries in food processor or blender. Add to wort and boil for 20 minutes. Cool. Strain into fermenter. Following instructions, add pectin enzyme to reduce protein haze. Pitch yeast and ferment for 1 week at 65 F. Rack to secondary and bottle after 1 or 2 weeks. Prime with 1.25 cups Malt Extract. ■

CASK BOARD SEEKS NEW MEMBERS

2005 will see a shake-up in the CASK Board of Officers as long time Club President Harrison Gibbs steps down along with Vice President Ramon Rodriguez. Club Treasurer Don Welsh has agreed to remain in his post. Don is starting to remind some of us of Allen Greenspan, but considerably less cryptic and obtuse unless he has been hitting the strong Belgian beers. Tim Jones has also agreed to stay on in the appointed board position of Newsletter Editor/Webmaster. Thank you Don and Tim. *(ed note—There is still plenty of room for help with the newsletter and web content....)*

This year CASK hopes to expand its board to include 2 new appointed officers. Currently, only the Newsletter Editor/Webmaster is an appointed position. In 2005, the club will try to encourage more member involvement and activities by appointing a Competition Coordinator and an Activities Director.

The Competition Coordinator is responsible for collecting, judging, and shipping the club representatives to the Club-Only competitions and getting members to enter some of the other competitions. The post is also responsible for tallying points for the CASK Homebrewer of the Year Award.

The Activities director is responsible for organizing and finding volunteers for the larger club events such as National Homebrew Day, the Summer Party, Teach a Friend to Brew Day and the CASK Holiday Party. Note the mention of volunteers. People who take a leading role in getting these events together are still eligible for points toward Homebrewer of the Year.



Voting for the elected officers (President, Vice President, and Treasurer) will occur start in January up to the February meeting. Nominees will be announced in the January Newsletter. Ballots will be accepted at the first two meetings of next year and on line.

This time of year, don't ask what your club can do for you (providing good beer is a given), but what you can do for your local homebrew club. ■

Do the right thing: Volunteer for your local homebrew club. It's not tax deductible, but it's for a good cause (beer)...think about it. The holidays, after all, are about giving and drinking.

The Green Leafe's 2004 Christmas Beer Tasting Dinner

Williamsburg's home to great beers, the Green Leafe Cafe is again hosting its annual Christmas Beer Tasting Dinner. It is to be held Saturday, December 18, 2004, at 6:30 P.M.

The Green Leafe closes its doors to the public to host this private event. The dinner will include a five-course gourmet meal paired with five seasonal brews. The price is \$50 per person all-inclusive.

For reservations, visit the Green Leafe, call at 757-220-3405, or fill out the form on line at http://www.greenleafe.com/christmas_beer_tasting_2004.shtml. Seating is limited, so please make your reservations early.

The menu this year includes the following beers: St. George Amber Bock, Heavyweight Lunacy Belgian Golden Ale, Spaten Optimator, Stone Smoked Porter, and Legend Barleywine 2003. The food menu features: caramelized onions and feta cheese on polenta chips; fried blue crab ravioli with cognac cream sauce; warm white bean salad with sun dried tomatoes, smoked mozzarella, and prosciutto; Cornish game hen with friend root vegetable crisps; and eggnog cheesecake with a rum custard sauce. ■



New Year's Resolution Beer

from www.realbeer.com—Beck's plans to debut the lowest-calorie beer in the U.S. market next month. Beck's Premier Light has just 64 calories.

InBev USA, which owns German brewer Brauerei Beck & Co., announced Premier Light is in production and will start shipping in January. A national TV and print campaign, as well as a strong local radio and outdoor effort in key markets across the U.S., will begin in the spring.

"We are very excited about early enthusiasm from retailers for Beck's Premier Light," says Victor Melendez, director of marketing at InBev USA. "It's a fantastic tasting beer that stays true to its German roots in both taste and its brewing process."

A standard Beck's beer has 143 calories and 10 carbs, while Light is 103 and 6.1. Premier Light has 3.9 grams of carbohydrates. Premier Light will be packaged like others in the Beck's family—in green bottles. It will also be sold on draft. ■

BREWING TIPS: What's that corn-like, sulfury smell?

by Harrison Gibbs

A corn-like smell is usually due to a specific chemical compound known as dimethylsulfide (DMS). DMS forms in the malting process and in the boiling process while brewing any beer. It is the result of a thermal degradation of sulfur-containing amino acid in the grain called s-methylmethionine. Because this amino acid is present in all malts, all beers have some amount of DMS. This is a problem more common among all grain brewers than those who brew from extracts, but it can even there it can be a problem.

DMS is a highly volatile compound and it is easily detectable compound in aroma, even in trace amounts. Open a bottle of Rolling Rock and you will understand what the cooked corn character of DMS is. Fortunately, this volatility makes it fairly easy to "scrub" out of your beer.

The level of DMS in your finished beer depends on several factors. The first factor is the amount of s-methylmethionine in the grain. High protein malts such as six-row have higher amounts, so more DMS. Also, some of the DMS is driven off by heat in the kilning process so that paler malts kilned

at lower temperature have more. These two aspects contribute to the fact that pale lagers (made from pale six-row malt), often have high levels of DMS. See the Rolling Rock example. Not surprisingly, corn also contains a lot of s-methylmethionine.

The second factor that affects the amount of DMS is how much is removed from the wort during the boil. Steam that rises from the wort carries some DMS with it. Therefore, the longer boiling time and a more vigorous boil reduces DMS levels. For best results, you want to keep the boil rolling for the whole time. Don't simmer your beer.

The third factor that affects DMS levels is the cooling rate. The reaction that converts s-methylmethionine to DMS is driven by heat. Once you shut off the heat and start cooling the wort, scrubbing action of the steam stops. DMS continues to be formed, however, until the wort is below about 160F. Thus, a long steep will increase DMS. A wort chiller will reduce the levels.

The final factor is the amount of DMS that is scrubbed out during fermentation.

Carbon dioxide bubbles will remove some of the DMS. Since more CO2 comes off at higher temperatures, more is scrubbed out of ales than lagers. Well-attenuated beers will be more scrubbed as well. However, if you're not too careful about sanitation, some bacteria may also contribute to DMS levels. Coliform in particular is known to produce DMS. Generally, though, it will also produce other foul odors such as mercaptan (natural gas smell) and hydrogen sulfide (rotten egg smell), making the DMS levels the least of your worries.

Carl Townsend of Pacific Gravity suggest that if the DMS level may still be too high for your taste and you keg your beer, then "you can artificially scrub out DMS using CO2." He explains:

This is best done before carbonating. If you have a lager, allow it to warm to room temperature first. Then, switch around the ball-lock fittings on your keg so they are backwards. Hook up the long dip tube (labeled "out") to the CO2 tank. Prop open the pressure relief valve. Carefully allow CO2 to bubble through the beer. Slow down if it starts to foam out. Occasionally sniff the gas as it exits the keg. You should be able to smell the DMS at first, and then notice it fading with time. After the level has dropped, switch the ball locks back to their usual configuration. Then carbonate as usual.

For those of you who have encountered DMS in your brews, the above explanation may help reduce your levels in the future. Remember, boil vigorous and cool rapidly, and your DMS levels will be appropriate for style.

Special thanks to Carl Townsend of Pacific Gravity for his efforts to help answer this difficult question. ■

A longer boiling time and a more vigorous boil will reduce DMS levels.



Just say 'no' to corny beer.

COMPETITION NEWS:

by Harrison Gibbs

BURP's Spirit of Belgian Beer

Brewer United for Real Potables (BURP), the DC area homebrew club, presents Spirit of Belgium 2005. This celebration of Belgian & Belgian-Style Beers is on the Martin Luther King Weekend, January 14-16, 2005 in Washington, DC. The event features expert speakers, technical seminars, homebrew competition, & a Dinner Banquet. Got to <http://www.burp.org/events/sob/2005/index.html> for more information.

The associated homebrew competition is the first recognized event to get points toward next year's CASK Homebrewer of the Year Award. If you were close this year, this is a great time to get a jump on the competition.

Open to all homebrewers, this competition is only for Belgian Style Beers. At \$6 for each entry, there is no limit on the number of entries. Nor is there a limit on the number of entries per BJCP Sub-Category. Entries are accepted beginning Saturday, 18 December 2004 and are due by Saturday, 8 January 2005. Out of town judges may hand-carry entries if their paperwork is sent in by the 8 January due date. See the above web site for more information and entry forms. ■

Ship via UPS or other private carrier to:

Spirit of Belgium
211 E Oxford Ave
Alexandria, VA 22301

Be sure that your entry is received by Jan. 8

Or drop entries off at:

Jay's Brewing Supplies
12575 Garland Tree Ct
Fairfax, VA 22033
703 298-4705
www.jaysbrewing.com

January 2005 Club-Only Comp: Category 9D- Irish Red Ale

Hosted by Eric Ware and MUGZ of Davenport, IA, entries are due Jan 26th 2005. Judging will be held Jan 30th 2005. This is a newly designed category and is part of the Scottish Ales, so think of it as a newly combined "Celtic Ale" style.

The club will have its inter-club taste off at the January meeting. Bring 3 clean unmarked 12 ounce bottles, one for the taste-off, the other two are to be sent if your beer advances to represent the club. If you do not have the entry form filled out, we will have some available at the meeting, so bring your recipe.

The BJCP describes the style as:

An easy-drinking pint, the Irish Red Ale is malt-focused with an initial sweetness and a roasted dryness in the finish. Expect low to moderate malt aroma, generally caramel-like but occasionally toasty or toffee-like in nature. It may have a light buttery character (although this is not required). Hop aroma is low to none (usually not present). Should be quite clean. Sometimes brewed as a lager (if so, generally will not exhibit a diacetyl character). When served too cold, the roasted character and bitterness may seem more elevated.

The appearance is amber to deep reddish copper color (most examples have a deep reddish hue); clear; and a low off-white to tan colored head. The flavor features moderate caramel malt flavor and sweetness, occasionally with a buttered toast or toffee-like quality. Finishes with a light taste of roasted grain, which lends a characteristic dryness to the finish. Generally no flavor hops, although some examples may have a light English hop flavor. Medium-low hop bitterness, although light use of roasted grains may increase the perception of bitterness to the medium range. Medium-dry to dry finish. Clean and smooth (lager versions can be very smooth). No esters. The mouthfeel is medium-light to medium body, although examples containing low levels of diacetyl may have a slightly slick mouthfeel.

As far as ingredients, Irish Red Ales may contain some adjuncts (corn, rice, or sugar), although excessive adjunct use will harm the character of the beer. Generally, they have a bit of roasted barley to provide reddish color and dry roasted finish. UK/Irish malts, hops, yeast.

Vital Statistics: OG: 1.044-1.060, FG: 1.010-1.014, IBUs: 17-28, SRM: 9-18, ABV: 4.0-6.0%

Commercial examples include Moling's Irish Red Ale, Smithwick's Irish Ale, Kilkenny Irish Beer, Beamish Red Ale, Caffrey's Irish Ale, Goose Island Kilgubbin Red Ale, Murphy's Irish Red (lager), Boulevard Irish Ale, Harpoon Hibernian Ale. ■

Are you America's greatest beerdrinker?

Every year, the Wynkoop Brewing Company conducts a national search for that one person who truly deserves the title, The Beerdrinker of the Year. Someone will win this title on February 26, 2005 at the Wynkoop Brewing Company in Denver. It will be someone who not only enjoys and appreciates beer but knows a great deal about it, how it is made—and its history, legend and lore. Someone who has a great many fine beerdrinking experiences. Someone who represents his or her home brewpub very well

see 'Best Drinker' on pg. 6

Best Drinker *cont. from pg. 5*

To enter, prepare a beer resume detailing key aspects of your beer expertise including your accomplishments involving brewpubs, beer festivals, and beer adventures. A good beer resume demonstrates the range and depth of the candidate's beeriness. Send your beer resume to the Wynkoop Brewing Company before December 31, 2004.

A six-pack of rules:

- Your beer resume must not exceed three pages (8 1/2" x 11").
- It must include your personal philosophy of beerdrinking.
- It must include the name of your home brewpub.
- It must include your T-shirt size.
- It must include your name, address, and phone no.
- Do not enter if you are currently employed in the brewing industry.

How is the winner chosen? A panel of beer experts will evaluate all the beer resumes and narrow the field of candidates to ten finalists. Copies of the ten finalists' resumes are then sent to an elite jury consisting primarily of the editors of America's major beer publications. They will select the three final finalists who the Wynkoop will fly to Denver for the National Finals in Denver on February 26, 2005. (This event begins at noon and is open to the public.) There, a panel of judges will have a few brews with—and many questions for—the Final Finalists. Based on the Finalists' answers, the results of a blind tasting, and their skill at beer whispering (yes!) the judges will then select The 2005 Beerdrinker of the Year. ■

The winner will win:

- Free beer for life at the Wynkoop Brewing Company.
- \$100 worth of beer at the winner's home brewpub.
- Various items of apparel proclaiming the wearer as The 2005 Beerdrinker of the Year.
- The engraving of the winner's name on the very special trophy that is on perpetual display at the Wynkoop.
- Much acclaim.

The deadline for entries: December 31, 2004.

Mail your beer resume:

The Beerdrinker of the Year
Wynkoop Brewing Company
1634 Eighteenth Street
Denver, Colorado 80202
(303) 297-2700
www.wynkoop.com

CALENDAR

Of Club Events and Competitions

2005 Monthly Beer Styles

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

January – Irish Red Ales (see article on pg. 5)

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

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