



# The Cellar

The Official Newsletter of the Colonial Ale Smiths and Keggers

## September Meeting Round-up

By Norman W. Schaeffler

CASK once again basked in the glow of the hospitality of Andy Rathmann and the St. George Brewing Company. We all gathered in the Tap Room and had some might fine brews, including their newest seasonal, a fall bock. The Style of the Month was Pilsner and several commercial examples and a few homebrewed ones were available for sampling. CASK VP Steven Davis gave a great presentation on the history and varieties of Pilsners. There was also discussions about possible new meeting locations for the club now that we are no longer meeting at the Williamsburg Brewing Company. Mike and Mellissa Pensinger of HomeBrewUSA in Norfolk were able to attend and extended a 10% discount on ingredients to all current CASK members. Upcoming brewing competitions were discussed, including the TransAtlantic Showdown 2006, details of which are on the right. Even though the Cider demonstration had to be postponed at the last meeting a few homemade ciders were observed making the rounds. All in all, a good time was had by all!



### So, You say you want a Revolution?

Details are beginning to leak out about the **TransAtlantic Showdown 2006**, which is the competition that our neighbors to the south, the Hampton Roads Brewing and Tasting Society (HRBTS), are putting together for February of 2006. The competition has been registered with the AHA and BJCP and appears on the BJCP Calendar.

**When:** February 19, 2006 **Time:** TBD

**Where:** St. George Brewing Company, Hampton, VA

**Entry Accepted:** 1/30/06 -2/11/06

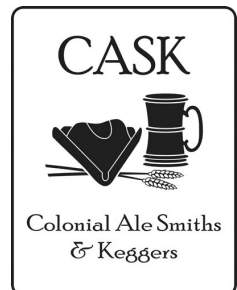
**Entry Fee:** \$8.00/entry (Judges may bring their entry the day of contest but must preregister.)

#### 2004 BJCP Categories:

- 8C Extra Special Bitter (English Pale Ale)
- 10A & 10C American Pale Ale and Brown Ale
- 11 B&C Southern and Northern English Brown
- 12 A & B Brown and Robust Porter
- 13 A & E Dry and American Stout
- 14 A & B English and American IPA
- 19 B & C English and American Barleywines

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# The Cellarmaster

By Norman W. Schaeffler

I thought that I would use *The Cellarmaster* column this month to update the membership on the status of the club, given the recent events that have unfolded. As those of you who attended the September meeting know,

CASK will no longer be meeting at the Williamsburg Brewing Company and is in need of a new permanent place to meet. Also we no longer have access to the same web space that we once had. We have set up a temporary web site so that we at least have a focal point where members can find information. So two major issues face the club, where to make our physical home and where to put our "virtual" home.

Brian Hershey, Competition/Event Coordinator for CASK, has made contact with several neighborhoods with clubhouses. Of the ones he contacted, only two were even willing to consider the idea of renting their clubhouses to us once a month. Both had to discuss the idea with their respective neighborhood boards. One has rejected the idea, they will only rent to people who live in their neighborhood. The other has not yet reached a decision. Member Lee Benner offered the meeting room at his church. While the board greatly appreciated Lee's offer, the location off Main Street in Newport News was considered too far south for most members. So we are still looking for a permanent place to meet. Again, I am requesting that if any member knows of a clubhouse, church meeting hall or other meeting location that the club can use, please let Brian, Steven, Don or myself know. Someone must know of a location, pool clubhouse in someone's neighborhood?

As for our virtual home, the board has decided to rent space for our web site on a commercial server. The advantage of this is that we will have more control over our web site. For example, we will be able to have a Calendar on-line that any member can add events to. A great way for us to keep each other informed about any upcoming beer and club events. We will also be able to use modify the web pages using just a web browser, so members will not have to be "web gurus" to update the pages. We also get to register our own domain name. Unfortunately the obvious cask.com (and .org) are both already taken. Available possibilities are ColonialAleSmiths.com, Cask-brewing.com, and alesmiths.com. If you have a good suggestion, let me know or better yet send an e-mail to the mailing list, [cask@hbd.org](mailto:cask@hbd.org) and let the whole club know your great idea!

Till next time, Cheers!

## News Items:

The Maryland Ale and Lager Technicians (MALT) are attempting to move up to the big time by holding what hopefully will become an annual regional AHA/BJCP sanctioned homebrewing competition. MALT needs experienced judges to help us create a successful event. Since we are new at this, we were hoping that some of the more experienced homebrewers in the area would be willing to mentor us as we make this step. The competition will be held on Saturday, November 12th at Clipper City Brewing Company in Baltimore, MD. We will get started promptly at 9 am and hope to be finished by 5. MALT will be providing breakfast and lunch to judges and stewards. Additional information can be found on the MALT website: <http://www.maltclub.org>.

A beer mat that knows when a glass is nearly empty and automatically asks for a refill has been created by thirsty researchers in Germany. Andreas Butz at the University of Munich and Michael Schmitz from Saarland University came up with the idea while out drinking with their students. The disc-shaped mat can be attached to a normal beer mat so that it still soaks up spilt liquid and displays an advertisement. But it also contains a pressure sensor and radio transmitter to alert bar staff of the need for a refill. The device weighs 110 grams and costs \$100 to make, but Butz and Schmitz think the weight and cost would shrink if the mat were to be mass-produced.

For more information see:

<http://www.newscientist.com/article.ns?id=dn8069>



# Teach-a-Friend-to-Brew Day

*By Harrison Gibbs*

November 5, 2005 is National Teach-a-Friend-to-Brew Day, a brewer's holiday created by the American Homebrewer's Association to encourage homebrewers to share their love for homebrewing with their friends. CASK continues to be involved in Teach-a-Friend-to-Brew Day, this year holding the celebration and brewing demonstration at a location that, at the time the newsletter was written, has not yet been determined. Any CASK member interested in helping out and sharing their homebrewing skills and wisdom should contact Harrison Gibbs at [rharrisong@lycos.com](mailto:rharrisong@lycos.com). Stay tuned to your e-mail to find out where the demonstration will be.

Most importantly, any CASK member who has a friend or acquaintance that may be interested in learning more about the hobby, should encourage that person to come out and see what all the fuss is about.

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# Got Beer? Try Making Your Own.

*By Harrison Gibbs*

Home brewing is a fun and rewarding hobby. You get to make and drink some of the best beer that you will ever have. As the first Saturday in November is Teach-a-Friend-to-Brew Day, I think this is a good time to go over some of the most commonly asked questions about homebrewing. I will also go over some of the basic steps so that any non-brewer's reading this article will know that brewing is not only fun, but easy.

## **Is home brewing legal?**

It is legal to brew your own beer in almost every state so long as you are 21 years of age. You are allowed to brew up to 100 gallons per year, or 200 gallons if there is more than one adult in the household. (200 gallons is over 80 cases). You may not sell the beer you make.

## **What is in beer?**

Basically, beer is fermented grains (or more accurately the fermented sugar from grains), just as wine is fermented grapes. Generally, the primary grain is barley, though other grains such as wheat, rice, corn and even rye are used in brewing. Yeast ferments the grain sugars making alcohol and those bubbles that tickle our nose and make our beer look like beer. However, grain by itself produces a pretty sweet but bland drink, so people started adding things in order to "spice" it up. In addition to making beer more interesting, the herbs and spices often acted as a preservative so that the beer lasted longer. The primary "herb" used today is the "flower" of the hop vine. It adds the bitterness that makes beer refreshing. It also adds interesting flavors and aromas of its own. While most beer is still made today with all manner of herbs and spices like ginger, clove, cinnamon, etc.

## **How hard is it to make my own beer?**

Brewing is not rocket science, unless you want it to be (or maybe you work at NASA Langley). Brewing is as easy as making "malt soup." Fortunately, brewing beer at home has been made even easier - most of the hard work has already been done in the processing of various "malt extracts," in dry or syrup form, of the grain sugars. You simply mix the extract with water and boil for an hour. Usually, you will add hops at various times during the boil. This malt soup or "wort" is then cooled, poured into your fermenter (a large plastic food grade container) and diluted with water to make five gallons. Then brewer's yeast is added and you wait for the yeast to do their stuff.

## **How Long Does it Take?**

Just so you know what to expect, it will be about four weeks before you can drink the beer you make. It usually takes about a couple of hours to "brew" the beer, 1 to 2 weeks to "ferment," and 2 weeks to "bottle condition" or carbonate in the bottle. After that, pop the cap and enjoy your very own beer.

## **How can I learn more?**

The best resource about brewing is other Homebrewers. They are every where and they love to talk about their favorite hobby - brewing! You can also contact your local homebrew club, in this area it's the Colonial Ale Smith's and Keggers (CASK). Or try contacting your local homebrew shop. We have two in the area: HomebrewUSA in Norfolk (1-888-459-BREW) or [www.homebrewusa.com](http://www.homebrewusa.com) and the WeekendBrewer in Chester (just south of Richmond) 1-800-320-1456 or [www.weekendbrewer.com](http://www.weekendbrewer.com).

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# Greeting From Columbia

(Former CASK Member Tim Peltier checks in with this report from Columbia)

*By Tim Peltier*

Harrison asked me to fill you in on the beer scene in Colombia and I just put a Belgian Double, the fourth beer I have brewed here in Bogota, into the bucket so now seems like as good any to finally write to you guys. First off I should say the Colombia is great, Interesting people and places, feels safer than much of DC, beautiful women (I will be getting Married June 10, 2006), Bogota is very cosmopolitan. If you have seen Mr & Ms Smith, think just the opposite, No Bombs, No Gun Fire, No War Zone, and showing a complete lack of research, Bogota is Not Hot!

In fact this is the first thing a brewer needs to Know about Bogota, We are right on the Equator but it is about 65 degrees everyday. That's because we are high up in the Andes, 2600 meters closer to the stars, the tourism board tells me. To save you all the conversion just think that Denver is at 1600 meters. So we are high and this change of air pressure changes brewing. When the pot is at a rolling boil, I can stick my finger into it without scalding. I don't know if I would dive in with the whole hand like some medieval trial by fire but the water is much cooler at boiling temperature. Because of this the wort simply does not have the heat to bring out all of those wonderful hop oils. To compensate you must keep the boil going at full constantly, even at the risk of a boil over, boil for longer or use more hops (or higher Alpha hops). Otherwise that Extra Special bitter will come out more like an Ordinary.

But I have adjusted, making a Coffee Stout (with Juan Valdez Coffee), an Ordinary Bitter (1.5 hour boil), A Berlinerwies, and currently a Belgian Double. Ingredients are hard to come by here so I have had to send kits through the APO (Air Force Mail) and have not been able to experiment as much as I would like. Nonetheless, can only say good things about Midwest Brewing and Alternative Beverage who use chemical ice packs to get my yeast here in good health.

I have been forced to remain an active home brewer by the lack of a good commercial option here (Not that I would have stopped anyway). The Beer market is dominated by a company called Bavaria, They have many labels, Aguila, Costana, Club, Poker, but they are all pretty similar, variations on a Bud. This is fine for Costana and Aguila, made on the north coast where temperatures are in the 90's but up on the Mountain some stronger flavors would be appreciated. Bavaria was just bought by Miller, I don't expect much improvement. None the less I have managed to find a small, dedicated beer community.

First there are a few brew pubs, Palos de Mouger makes a Red and a Porter, The Bogota Bear Company makes a decent stout. The Bogota Beer Company (BBC) is run by a brit and was destroyed by a couple of grenades thrown by FARC communist guerillas 2 years ago (a clear sign that they are out to destroy our way of life), but has been rebuilt better than ever. While the Brew Pubs offer a little variety, their general cost cutting and fear of bold flavors has kept me looking for another source.

Luckily for me that source turned out to be the closest bar to my house. Called the Ozy Pub this bar is owned by a Colombian (he got his MBA in Australia) with a desire to bring new berrs to Bogota. Starting out as a Murphy's and Erdinger bar (ironicly you can't get Fosters here), he expanded to a couple Czech Pilsners, some German ales and Lagers, before finally stumbling on an importer for Unibraue Brewery out of Quebec. He ordered 2 cases of Moudite, an 8% Beglian Style strong ale, and Blanche de Chambly a Belgian style Wit. He bought these with the theory that they would be too strong for the average Colombian's tastes and the 2 of us,





and a few other beer aficionados would drink them ourselves. They both sold out in an hour and a half the first Saturday he had them and they have become the two best selling beers on the menu. So there is a taste for beer here and a small community that really cares about it. I've taught 2 friends to brew and have another signed on for the next batch. I miss CASK and you guys but there is a strong little community of beer lovers to meet here if any of you feel like visiting.

# No-Sparge Brewing

*By Carl Townsend*

The no-sparge brewing process is a useful all-grain technique with a number of advantages. About the only down side to the technique is that it is less efficient. Hence, you will have to buy more grain to get your target volume and starting gravity. However, these are usually offset by these many advantages:

1. Save time. You can easily shave an hour off your brewing day.
2. Less equipment. You can avoid the expense of a sparge water tank and an extra platform on your brewing system.
3. Avoid astringent flavors. Sparging tends to extract phenolics and tannins that can degrade the flavor of your beer.
4. Make high gravity beers. The gravity of the runnings is considerably higher than a sparged batch. You can avoid extra boil-down time you would otherwise need.

You can make just about any style of beer and the technique can work regardless of whether you are using a single infusion, step infusion or decoction mashing.

There are basically three things to consider when calculating your recipe and gravity. First of all, the gravity of the runnings will depend on the ratio of water to grain. Make sure you use the total water used, not just the first addition. Second, the grain will absorb some water than you cannot retrieve. Finally, boiling will reduce the volume and increase the gravity. I'll walk you through an example to show how this works.

You may have calculated your point-gallons per pound of grain in the past. You can start with this number, which should be somewhere between 25 and 30. I typically get 27 with my system. For example, if you mash 10 pounds of grain with 5 gallons of water you will have  $10 \times 27/5 = 54$  points, or a specific gravity of 1.054.

But, you will lose some of that 5 gallons absorbed into the grain. Figure 1.25 pints per pound. Hence, you will lose  $1.25 \times 10 = 12.5$  pints, or 1.56 gallons. So now you are down to 3.44 gallons.

Next, you'll lose volume from the boil. Figure 20%. Now your volume is only 2.75 gallons, but the gravity has increased by 20% to 1.065. If you top this up with water at the end of the boil, you can make 5 gallons of beer with a starting gravity of 1.036. But most all-grain brewers prefer to do a full-volume boil.

So you have to do a bunch of math to get five gallons, right? No, I was kind enough to work it all out for you and put it in the table below. Note that you should use a thin mash for low gravity beers and a thick mash for high gravity beers.

**Recipe Table for No-sparge Brewing for a 5-gallon batch**

OG of wort	1.035	1.041	1.048	1.051	1.054	1.057	1.059	1.064	1.069	1.074	1.080
Pounds of Grain	8	10	12	13	14	15	16	18	20	22	25
Gallons of water	7.5	7.8	8.1	8.3	8.4	8.6	8.8	9.1	9.4	9.7	10.2

This table assumes: 27 point-gallons per pound of grain, 1.25 pints per pound absorbed by grain, and a 20% boiling volume reduction.

(Printed with permission of Carl Townsend of the Pacific Gravity Homebrew Club in Los Angeles, CA)



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# The CASK Calendar of Club Events and Competitions

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

## 2005 Monthly Beer Styles

**October** Baltic Porter  
**November** English Bitter and Pale Ale  
**December** Free for all  
**January '06** Belgian Strong Ale

### November 5, 2005: Teach a Friend to Brew Day:

Grab a friend and teach them how to brew! Join your fellow CASK'ers and spread the word about the joys of homebrewing.

**November/December 2005: Baltic Porter Club-Only Competition:** Category 12C\* Hosted by Brian Lanius and the Ruffian Brewers of Suffern, NY. Entries due October 21, 2005. Judging will be held November 5, 2005.

**February 2006: Big Beautiful Belgians Club-Only Competition** Hosted by Lori Brown and the Greater Everett Brewers League of Everett, WA. *Category 18\*, Belgian Strong Ale.* For more information, contact Lori Brown at [loribrown@att.net](mailto:loribrown@att.net). *Entries due February 4, 2006. Judging will be held February 11, 2006.*

**February 19, 2006: TransAtlantic Showdown 2006** Hosted by Hampton Roads Brewing and Tasting Society. Entry Accepted from: 1/30/06 to 2/11/06. Entry Fee is \$8.00/entry. All registration materials, beer and money to be sent to Mellissa Pensinger at HomebrewUSA Categories will be: 8C, 10A & 10C, 11 B & C, 12 A & B, 13 A & E, 14 A & B and 19 B & C. BJCP 2004 Styles and Judging Guidelines will be followed

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