



# The Cellar

The Official Newsletter of the Colonial Ale Smiths and Keggers

## April Meeting Round-up

*By Norman W. Schaeffler*

CASK went to Newport News for its fourth meeting of 2006, the April meeting was held at the home of CASK members, Brian and Susan Hershey. The Style of the Month for April was Extract Beers. There were several beers brought specifically for the Club-Only Competition. Jeff Flamm was the winner of that taste-off with his Bock. In the honor of Jeff's win, bock was selected as the Style of the Month for May. Since the Style of the Month was Extract Beers, a wide variety of commercial beers could be found at the meeting. April also saw an original charter CASK member find his way back into the fold, Matt Joss. Several few faces could be seen at the meeting also. We rounded off the evening with a raffle and some great conversation. A good time was had by all.



### Are You ready to be the Master of your Own Dominion?

Our homebrew neighbors to the north, the James River Homebrewers are gearing up for the

**13th Annual Dominion Cup  
Saturday June 3, 2006.**

**at  
Extra Billy's**

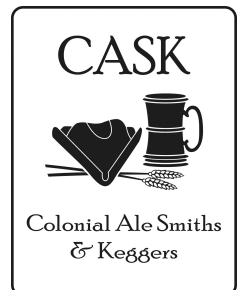
**If you want to Judge or  
Steward, contact**

**Tony Brock  
at  
wtonybrock@yahoo.com  
today!**

Gather together all your entries because CASK will be driving all of them up to Richmond. Let's all enter a beer and have CASK dominate this year's Dominion Cup!

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# The Cellarmaster

By Norman W. Schaeffler

## Don't forget the Second Banana

Sometimes when you talk about beer it is easy to get all caught up in the details of the malts and hops. You start to create a new recipe, or you are talking to a fellow brewer, and it all this malt or that malt, or this beer has 12 different types of malts, how complex! Or it's all about the hops, should the beer feature cascade or amarillo or simcoe, would the flavor be better if you add the hops all at once, just the beginning and the end of the boil. Or perhaps the flavor would be optimal if one add one hop cone every 10 seconds, but only if you alternate through the four varieties that you are using. Whew! You can see what I am saying. While this is all part of the fun of homebrewing, when most people start to create a new recipe, we all tend to concentrate on just two ingredients. The other two ingredients, the other fifty percent, do not get anywhere near the attention of the two. The other two ingredients are, of course, water and yeast. Water, and its effect on the brewing process, is a huge topic that we won't get into today, today we will turn our attention to the yeast.

Yeast plays a vital role in brewing. Without yeast, we do not get beer, we forever have sweet wort. But yeast also play a big role in the flavors that are found in beers. We have already talked about one of those flavors, the butter-like flavor of diacetyl. Now we want to concentrate on esters. Esters are a class of organic compounds with strong fruit aromas: aromas and flavors like strawberry, apple, bananas, grapefruit, pear, raspberry, pineapples, and other fruits.

The classic banana-clove flavors and aromas of a German wheat beer, like a hefe-weizen or a dunkel weizen is due entirely to the yeast selection. You can have the malt bill down perfectly, select the perfect hops and hop schedule, but if you do not use the correct yeast, the beer will not be what you wanted. It won't be bad, just not what you wanted. A good hefe-weizen yeast will produce copious amounts of the ester iso-amyl acetate, the same ester that is found in bananas. Wyeast describes its Weihenstephan Weizen Yeast (3068) as a "Classic German wheat beer yeast, used by more German Brewers than any other strain in the production of Wheat beer. Properties dominated by banana ester production, phenols and clove like characteristics. Extremely attenuative yeast, which produces a tart thirst quenching finish."



All yeast, especially ale yeasts, produce esters as part of the fermentation process. When they show up unexpectedly, the cause is usually fermenting at too high a temperature.

Yeast, such as ale yeast or *saccharomyces cerevisiae*, reproduces itself by budding. New yeast buds grow and then break off leaving the bud scars that you see in the image to the left.

Till next time, Cheers!



# Big Brew Wrap-Up

*By Norman W. Schaeffler . Photos by Ken Gillespie*

This year CASK celebrated National Homebrew Day by hosting a "Big Brew" at Coastal Wine Connection in the Port Warwick section of Newport News. It was a beautiful day to be outside and brewing, everyone there was treated to some fancy skywriting and fly-overs from some of the planes participating Langley Air Force Base's "Air Power over Hampton Roads."



Brewing excitement this year was provided by Dave Bridges and Harrison Gibbs, who demonstrated the Parti-Gyle method of brewing. This method created 2 beers from one big mash. Over 40 pounds of grain was mashed into Dave's keg kettle, which was used as a mashtun. The first runnings produced a strong ale and the second runnings produces a weaker beer. For the Big Brew, Dave and Harrison went Scottish producing a Powerful Wee Heavy and Scottish 80 Shilling Ale. Very cool to watch. At 12 noon, Central time (1 PM EDT), all of the assembled CASK members gathered for a toast to National Homebrew Day, simultaneously with other homebrewers across the nation.

Thanks to Brian Holloway, Coastal Wine's owner and CASK member, for hosting this year's Big Brew.







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# Another Battle of the Bulge

By *The Usual Sources*

There was much discussion last month on the AHA's Tech Talk mail list about using bulging cans of extract. The initial query was if such cans were safe, and what if any was the risk of off flavors. The best reply came from Mary Anne Gruber, formerly of Briess Malting. Her response is as follows:

"I am familiar with bulging cans..... OH, am I familiar! I was in charge of extract production for Briess for many years. During that time we occasionally experienced a problem or problems. Nearly 100% of which were caused by wild yeast fermentation. Wort at 160 F goes to the evaporator which lowers the temperature to 112 - 115 F. Then it goes directly to packaging. Some humidity and occasionally wild yeast are trapped in the headspace in the package. When the water droplets, yeast and extract get together, there is fermentation. The CO2 released will cause the container to bulge.

Samples are taken and tested in the lab for micros including salmonella all along the way. As the extract is being packaged, containers are periodically collected, held for a period of time, and rechecked for micros. Anything suspicious is not released as a precaution. Farmers love it for their cows, bear hunters use it for bait, etc!

I would not brew with bulging cans, there might be off-flavors. I would call the manufacturer with the ID number/lot number and let him know about it, particularly if it was a fairly recent purchase."

Mary Anne Gruber, Briess, retired and loving it

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# Beer Style of the Month: Bock

By *Harrison Gibbs*

A style of German beer, Bock Beer is a bottom-fermented lager and is thought to be named for the famous medieval German brewing town of Einbeck in the Hanover area of Germany. The beer is a heavy bodied lager and is darkened by judicious amounts of munich malt and usually darker crystal malts.

Traditionally brewed in the winter time for drinking during the Spring, Bocks also have a long history of being brewed and drunk by monks in Bavaria. During the Spring religious season of Lent, monks were required to fast. These strong and fortifying beers provided sustenance during the fast.

The image of the goat is associated with many Bock beers since Bock in German means billy goat. Moreover, in the local dialect, Einbeck is pronounced similar to "Einbock," which sounds like "ein bock" (a goat).

Variants of Bock include Maibock (brewed for the month of May), Eisbock (ice bock), Weizenbock (wheat bock), and Doppelbock (double bock). The names of Doppelbock brews commonly end in "-ator" in honor of the original, Paulaner Salvator (Latin, "Savior")

## Maibock/Helles Bock

Since the month of May is associated with Bocks, a closer look at the Maibocks and the similar Helles Bocks, is appropriate.

The lightest colored of the bock beers, these two are generally grouped together. Brewed in winter and first tapped in spring, these pale strong lagers often to coincide with spring celebrations. Ranging in color from deep gold to light amber, the use of light colored malts means that styles are fairly new to the bock scene. Pale malts





were unheard of until early in the 19th century, when malting technology was refined, but they soon found their way into strong lagers in central Europe. This is not your “brother’s” Doppelbock.

Bock producers usually employ a decoction mash. Because no dark malts are used, the soft, clean malt flavor and aroma remains totally unobstructed. Helles/maibocks are often given a slightly higher dose of hops than other bocks, giving them a fresher, livelier aroma and more balance.

Because of their relatively broad color range, pale bocks present a nice diversity. They could actually be segregated into two subcategories, with helles bocks being the golden hued and maibocks being those that appear more amber. The helles version contains almost exclusively pilsner malt, while the maibock contain a significant dose of toasty Vienna or Munich malts.

Many German breweries, especially in Bavaria, include a pale bock in their lineup. Einbecker itself brews both a helles and a maibock. Spaten makes a golden helles known as Premium Bock that is very good. Ayinger maibock, is not as light and is spicier on the palate. For something really unusual in the style, Schlenkera of Bamberg, Germany, makes a rauch maibock that uses the brewery’s famous smoked malt quite liberally.

Not surprisingly, many North American microbreweries that specialize in German-style brews also make pale bocks. Gordon Biersch includes a blonde bock that is smooth, malty and crisp. Other commercial versions to look for are Haake-Beck Maibock,

Spaten Premium Bock, Ayinger Maibock and Rogue Ales Dead Guy Ale (a bock beer brewed with an ale yeast).



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## Competitions & How to Win

*By Harrison Gibbs*

Although luck sometimes plays a factor in scoring well in beer competitions, there are certain things that any brewer can do to improve their scores and chances of bringing home a ribbon. While a good brewer can usually score well with his usual beers, to really do well you must plan ahead. This article is not for those brewers who like to brew “free form” or “anything goes.” This article is for those brewers who really want to win. For help, follow this step-by-step guide.

### Step 1: Review the Style Guidelines

Each competition has its own set of guidelines, so don’t use the guidelines from a different competition. Many competitions use standardized guidelines, such as from the Beer Judge Certification Program or the AHA. Some may have unusual compressed sets because of fewer entries. Club-Only Competitions usually feature one style or even sub-style. Even within a given competition, they can vary from year to year, so make sure you have the latest version. Once you have the latest version, take time to read through the descriptions carefully. Buy some commercial examples and taste them. Do you know what makes each of the flavor and aroma characteristics? Homebrew judges tend to be rather strict about style guidelines. I often wonder if some good commercial examples would score well. An otherwise very good beer can get marked down if it doesn’t exactly fit. Spend some time reading the style guidelines, and then formulate your recipe accordingly.

### Step 2: Timing

All beers go peak in flavor. When that peak occurs depends on the style. Generally, the stronger the beer, the longer it takes to mature or peak. A low gravity beer such as an English bitter can reach full maturity in a month., while a strong barleywine may take over a year. If you want to enter one in this year’s Dominion Cup, it may be too late for anything strong. An ale requires 2 to 4 months from the date of brewing. If you’re making a lager, add another month or two. Note that time will tend to decrease hop aroma, shifting the balance toward malt aroma. Wait too long and you face oxidation and the scores that accompany it.



### Step 3: Address All Scoring Issues

Homebrew competitions use a standardized scoresheet from the BJCP. Look over the various elements of judging and make sure that your recipe addresses all the topics. The judging starts with aroma even before the first sip. If you have a malty German style, the malt should be evident in the nose. Many American styles should feature a prominent hop nose. But make sure you don't have a strong hop aroma with your German Dunkel. Also pay attention to esters, diacetyl and sulfur aromas. Some of these are appropriate for certain styles. Appearance is a small part, but it makes for a few easy points. Make sure the grain bill matches the color target for your style. A protein rest will improve clarity, especially chill haze. Don't be afraid to use some Irish moss if necessary.

Flavor is the biggest portion of your score. Keep everything authentic if possible. Stick with noble hops for German styles and British hops for English styles and calculate out the correct bitterness. Make sure your yeast matches too. Use a range of specialty malts to match the maltiness the style should have. Make sure the overall balance of flavors is correct. Almost all styles require balance.

Do not forget the beer's mouthfeel. Make sure the malt profile gives the right amount of body. If you're making a wheat beer, it should have that sticky gluten feel. Oatmeal stout should feel "big," while an American lager should feel light on the palate. Carbonation is part of mouthfeel, so when you bottle your beer, check the appropriate level for your style. Finally, there is overall impression. Do the judges like it? If so, you're in good shape. If not, it tends to be reflected in lower scores in aroma or flavor areas too. One question seldom raised is: Will the judge remember it? Your beer is being tasted in succession with other similar beers. The ones that stand out, that are memorable are the winners.

### Step 4: Brew Cleanly

Even the best recipe won't win if you get wild yeast or sterilant in the batch. Make sure your yeast starter is working well. Make a big starter and aerate well. Make sure air stays away at any subsequent step. Oxidized beer loses points. Keep the temperature controlled to prevent ester or diacetyl flavors. Finally, don't use funny metals in your brewing setup. Cleanliness contributes substantially to overall impression, so unless you've really missed the mark at recipe formulation, just about any clean beer scores well. Liquid Yeast offers cleaner flavors. So does non-chlorinated tap water. You can brew with tap, but there are drawbacks.

### Step 5: Enter!

You can't win if you don't enter. Among the upcoming competitions this spring are the Dominion Cup, the First Round for the AHA National Competition, and the Spirit of Free Beer. CASK also has regular club-only competitions. Finally, keep in mind that luck plays a certain part. Not all batches of beer come out as award winners. Be persistent. Even though one batch doesn't win, the next one could. You'll get better with time, so that you can usually pick up a ribbon at each contest. It takes a bit of practice, but eventually you can hit upon that best-of-show recipe.

Finally, Good Luck! !



*Here is a very productive upgrade to your PC. A Beer Drive?  
Wonder how many Bbls it is?*



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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.

<b>May</b>	TBD
<b>June</b>	TBD
<b>July</b>	Summer Party Iron Brew
<b>August</b>	Stout
<b>September</b>	TBD
<b>October</b>	TBD
<b>November</b>	Light Hybrid
<b>December</b>	Free for All

**May 20, 2006: 6th Annual May Mead Madness**, New Bern, NC Contact: Frank (or Dick) Russo (or Weiss)(252) 636-8970. 2 - 12 oz Brown Bottles per entry, no labels or identifiers. Your Entries need to arrive between May 6th and the 13th (deadline). Entry Fee: \$6.00 first entry, \$5.00 2nd...

**June 3, 2006: Dominion Cup**, James River Homebrewers, Richmond, VA, <http://www.jrhomebrewers.org> Three bottles required. Entry Fee: \$5.00 per entry Entries accepted 5/15-5/31/06

**July 29, 2006: Mountain Brewer Open**, Huntington, WV, Entry Fee: \$5.00 per entry Entries accepted 7/22/06

**August 2006: Mead** Hosted by John Tull and the Washoe Zephyr Zymurgists of Reno, NV, Categories 24-26\* Entries due by 8/12/2006 and judging will be held 8/19/2006. Shipping Address: WZZ AHA COC, 2335 Dickerson Road, Reno, NV 89503. For more information, contact John Tull at [jctull@biodiversity.unr.edu](mailto:jctull@biodiversity.unr.edu).

**September 23, 2006: FOAM Cup**, Tulsa, OK, Entries accepted 9/15/06

**September 28-30, 2006: Great American Beer Festival**, Denver, CO

**September/October 2006:** Stout Hosted by Steve Fletty and the St. Paul Homebrewers of St. Paul, MN. For more information, contact Steve Fletty at [fletty@UMN.EDU](mailto:fletty@UMN.EDU).

**November 4, 2006: The Wizard of SAAZ Homebrew Competition**, Akron, OH, Entry Fee: \$8.00 per entry, Entries accepted 10/28/06

**November/December 2006** Light Hybrid Beer Hosted by Bill Gornicki & Kevin Kutschill of the Clinton River Association of Fermenting Trendsetter CRAFT of Macomb Twp, MI Category 6\* covering Cream Ale, Blonde ale, Kölsch, and American Wheat or Rye Beer. For more information, contact Bill Gornicki at [gornicwm@earthlink.net](mailto:gornicwm@earthlink.net).