



The Cellar

The Official Newsletter of the Colonial Ale Smiths and Keggers

Club News Roundup

Slamming the Shamrock!

Steven Davis is keeping the CASK winning streak alive for 2008 with an impressive showing at the 2008 Shamrock Open. The Shamrock Open is a large, well-organized competition, sponsored by the homebrewing club CARBOY and held on March 15, 2008 in Raleigh, N.C. Out of the 442 entries, Steven won first place with his Northern German Pilsner, first place with his Schwarzbier, second place with his Biere de Garde and first place with his English Barleywine. Congratulations, Steven!

Judges wanted for AHA National Homebrewing Competition 1st Round South Region

The organizers down in NC are looking for BJCP Judges and experienced judges to assist in judging the 1st Round South Region of the NHC. Judging will be held on April 19 in Raleigh and Charlotte, NC, two separate locations, and April 26 in Raleigh, NC (morning only prior to the World Beer Festival - as needed).

To sign up to judge, use the online sign up page located at:

<http://www.maltsters.org/RegionalCar08.htm>

101-year-old beer lover to complete in marathon

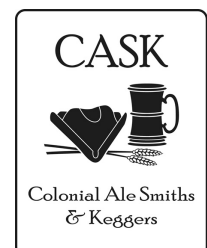
A 101-year-old man has his sights on the London Marathon in a bid to become the world's oldest competitive runner, BBC News reports.

Working plumber Buster Martin ran Sunday's Roding Valley half marathon in Essex in five hours 13 minutes, and is now focusing on London's 26-mile event.

On finishing the run, the first words of the ex-member of rock band The Zimmers were: "Where's my beer?" Mr Martin, who has 17 children, started work at Pimlico Plumbers in London three years ago because he was bored. He drank a tankard of ale before signing autographs and chatting to fans near the finish line of the Essex race.

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The Cellarmaster

By Steven Davis

Simple Tips to Brewing Better Beer

Brewing good beer is the desired outcome of every new homebrewer that enters the hobby. Some people seem to be very enthusiastic and jump right in with both barrels, while others take a more cautious approach and ease their way in. Either approach can be just as successful in brewing good beer as long as you follow some simple rules.

First and foremost remember that everyone starts with the same level of experience...None. To become a better brewer, like any other aspect in life, you have to make mistakes. That is how people learn and improve. There are some things you can do to limit the number of bad learning experiences you encounter though, and those are what I will try to cover here.

- Always use fresh ingredients. Like cooking anything, spoiled or old ingredients produce off flavors or poor results.
- Dechlorinate your water if possible. Chlorine has several negative effects on the brewing process. Several products are available on the market to remove free chlorine.
- Sanitize EVERYTHING that will come in contact with your wort after it is cooled. Nothing will spoil a beer quicker than bacteria or unwanted yeast.
- Use recipe formulation guides or brewing software. Brewing is an art where just because some is good doesn't necessarily mean that more is not better. Like any other recipe, the correct ingredient ratios are necessary to get the desired outcome.
- Always use a full boil for at least 60 minutes. Boiling is important in the brewing process for ensuring proper hop utilization, removal of unwanted byproducts in the steam, and generating conditions to ensure proper hot and cold break. Don't cut it short, and make sure it is a good rolling boil.
- Cool your wort as fast as possible. This will ensure a better cold break as well as help suspended particles come out of the beer easier in the fermenter. Additionally, it will minimize the amount of time your beer is subjected to bacteria prior to putting it in the fermenter.
- Manage your yeast. Treat yeast like the living organism it is. Use only fresh, healthy yeast when possible, and make starters for higher gravity beers. Also make sure you don't shock your yeast with rapid temperature changes.
- Oxygenate your wort well prior to pitching yeast. Every homebrewer has heard how bad oxygen is for your beer...Except this one time. Yeast needs oxygen to grow and reproduce. Always fully aerate your wort just prior to pitching your yeast, and then avoid oxygen like the plague after that.
- Finings work. Adding Irish Moss to your boil 15 minutes before flame out and clarifiers such as Divergan or Isinglass to the secondary fermenter will help remove a lot of proteins and suspended particles that cause cloudy beer. Remember though that if your beer contains a notable amount of wheat, all the clarifiers in the world will never remove that haze, and will actually detract from the taste added by the wheat.
- Use secondary fermenters whenever you have the time. While it is important to remove the beer from the primary fermenter after no more than 10-14 days to get the beer off of the trub, there are a lot of benefits to aging beer in a secondary fermenter. Lagers and high alcohol beers especially need that time to ensure the fermenting process is completed and to age the beer to help in improving the beer flavor profile.
- Be patient. Most brewers biggest mistake is that impatience causes them to cut corners, make exceptions to their normal routines or not wait long enough during the different phases of making their beer. Brewing beer is a long process, and requires repeated attention.

These are just some simple rules that everyone should follow when brewing beer. I hope to elaborate on some of them in future articles, however there are several good references available to people who may want more information now. Homebrewing books are an excellent source, as well as asking your fellow homebrewers. Don't hesitate to post your questions on a brewing message board or ask your local brewery. Just remember that you are not alone out there. Just as you want to MAKE better beer, many of your friends want to DRINK your better beer as well. Here's to a world full of great homebrewers. Cheers.



Brewing With Extract

By Harrison Gibbs

[This article first appeared in the March 2007 issue of The Cellar]

Extract Brewing is where most of us began our wonderful hobby. And there are a few of us, who still enjoy the comforting simplicity of extract brewing even after we have gone on to step infusions, decoctions, and other labor intensive and costlier (at least in equipment) methods of brewing. So let me share some of the extract brewing tricks I have learned over the years.

Before we get to the extract and the boiling, let us look at the most important thing to get right - the Yeast. Yeast is usually the most important ingredient in a good extract batch, and with yeast cleanliness is all important. Fortunately, there are good sources of pure yeast, from the Wyeast smack packs and White Labs vials to the new Fermentis Safale dry yeast. An extract batch can always be improved if you are willing to make a starter. And if you are willing to use starters, you can save money by trying to culture some of your favorite bottle conditioned beers.

Whether you are brewing with extract or mashing grains, the ability to quickly cool the boiling wort down to room temperature at the end of the boil is crucial. Some brewers use immersion chillers, others counter flow devices. A cheaper and easier method is using a sterile ice cube to cool your wort. This requires a 6 to 8 cup Tupperware container and fill it close to the brim with boiling water from a tea kettle. Cover it with a lid and when it cools to a reasonable temperature stick the plastic container in the freezer and within a day you will have a sterile chunk of ice that will quickly bring your wort down to pitching temperature. Remember to factor in that extra water.

Now we can get to extract. I have found that that 5 pounds of light malt extract or 6 lbs of liquid extract along with 1 to 2 pounds of adjuncts makes a good basic recipe for pale ale styles. For darker beers, I like to use dark malt extract with 1 to 2 pounds (0.45-0.9 kg) of dark roasted grains. Once you get some experience with different extract brands, you will learn which best fits the style you are attempting.

Whether the malt extract is labeled hopped or not, you will probably want to add more of your own. Always use freshly purchased hops. If you need to store your hops, keep them in the refrigerator or even better the freezer. The cold temps will reduce their oxidation and breakdown. However, constant warming and freezing may increase their degradation. Always boil your bittering hops at least 60 minutes to get the proper bittering character.

Grains still serve a purpose with extract brewing in the use of specialty grains and adjuncts. Grains used as adjuncts, to add more fermentables, require a mini mash before adding them to the wort. Crystal and roast grains can be steeped at 150F for about 30 minutes to get their full effect. A grain bag or strainer helps separate the grains from the wort avoiding excess mouth-drying tannins from boiled grain. Adjuncts can be treated the same just make sure your temperatures are close to 150F. It also helps to sparge your mini-mash with additional hot (175F) water.

Boiling an extract recipe differs little from all-grain brewing. The only real trick comes in adding the malt extract, which can scorch on the bottom of a hot pot. Heat the water to boiling before adding the extracts, but make sure that you turn off the burner while you add them in. It usually takes about three hours to leisurely brew up a batch of malt extract beer, including clean up.

After the one hour boil and all of the hops added according to the recipe, it is time to cool it so that you can pitch the yeast. Depending on pot size, you can add a bit of cold water to bring the wort down from boiling temperature - the residual heat of the wort should sterilize the additional water. Now is when you grab that sterile ice cube from the freezer.

Transfer it to the sterilized fermenter. A plastic bucket is easier to handle than the glass carboy at this stage. Now is a good time to strain the wort as you pour it from the pot into the bucket. Remember to sterilize your strainer before hand. Now pitch the yeast. If you made a starter try remaking another one from the yeast left over in the secondary. Another good cheat is to plan to brew when you bottle again, now you have plenty of yeast absent the trub from the primary.

Jay Akeney of the Strand Brewers in California recommends splitting the process over two evenings. For example, on the first night, bring the wort to a boil and add your grain adjuncts and the bittering hops. This should



take less than an hour. Cover the pot and turn off the heat. The next night, bring the wort to a boil again, add the flavoring and bittering hops at the appropriate time, cool the wort down, transfer it to the carboy and pitch the yeast. According to Jay, "Using this split, an activity that used to consume sunset to midnight can be accomplished in two shorter, easier sessions. Just don't take the lid off your brew pot between boils!"

An Award-Winning APA

Harrison Gibbs was kind enough to share his "Best of Show" winning American Pale Ale recipe with us.

The Boss American Pale Ale

Ingredients:

10 lb American Pale Malt

1 lb Crystal 40L

0.5 lb Carapils

0.5 lb Aromatic Malt

1.5 oz Cascade Leaf 6.9% AA (First wort hop)

0.5 oz Cascade Leaf 6.9% AA (30 min)

1.0 oz Cascade Leaf 6.9% AA (0 min)

1.0 oz Cascade Leaf 6.9% AA (Dry hop in Secondary)

1 Tsp Irish Moss

SafAle 05 Dry Yeast

Mash grain at 154F for 60 minutes and raise the temperature to 165F for 20 minutes. Sparge and boil for 60 minutes. Pitch dry yeast when cool. No starter required if you use 2 packs of yeast. Ferment around 65-68F. For extract recipes, substitute 6 lbs of light dry malt extract for the pale malt. OG: 1054 FG 1014



The CASK Calendar of Club Events and Competitions

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

March	Stouts
April	Extract Beers (Club-Only)
May	Lambics
June	California Common (Steam Beer)
July	Mead (Club-Only)
August	German Wheats
September	Imperial Anything (Club-Only)
October	European Light Lagers
November	Homemade Wine
December	Christmas/Spiced Beers

March 20, 2008: CASK March Meeting 7:30 PM

March 29, 2008: Porter Club-Only Competition (CASK Judging at February Meeting) Entries are due on March 21, 2008 and the judging will be held on March 29, 2008. Hosted by Ron Smith and the Foam Blowers of Indiana (FBI) of Indianapolis, IN, this competition covers BJCP Category 12 beer styles.

April 17, 2008: CASK April Meeting 7:30 PM

May 15, 2008: CASK May Meeting 7:30 PM

May 30, 2008: Extract Beers Club-Only Competition (CASK Judging TBD): The entry due date and judging date are to be determined. Hosted by Jim Burzynski and the Urban Knaves of Grain of Naperville, IL, this competition covers all BJCP 2004 beer styles (Categories 1-23). Extract must make up more than 50% of the fermentables.

June 19, 2008: CASK June Meeting 7:30 PM

August 2, 2008: Mead Club-Only Competition (CASK Judging in July): Entries are due 7/25/08 and judging will be held 8/2/08. Hosted by Al Boyce and the Minnesota Homebrewers Association of Edina, MN, this competition covers BJCP Categories 24, 25, 26 mead styles.

September 15, 2008: "Imperial Anything" Club-Only Competition (CASK Judging TBD): The entry due date and judging date are to be determined. (Sometime September - October) Hosted by Fred Bonjour and the Clinton River Association of Fermenting Trendsetters (C.R.A.F.T.) of Macomb Township, MI, this competition covers imperialized versions of all BJCP categories. The imperialization of the beer (ABV, IBU, etc.) must be stated on the entry form.

You can add items to the CASK calendar and keep your fellow club members informed about beer-related happenings in the area. Logon to the CASK Message Board to find out how!