



The Cellar

The Official Newsletter of the Colonial Ale Smiths and Keggers

Upcoming CASK Events and Club Information Topics

By Steven Davis

The following is a list of upcoming Club events for CASK Members and their friends.

The **1st Annual Gloucester Beer Festival** is scheduled for Saturday, October 9th also in Gloucester. Our Club Vice-President, Warren Haskell is actively involved in organizing this event and is looking for club support in both sponsorship as well as volunteers. Once again this presents an opportunity for CASK to set up a booth where we will be able to provide a public homebrew display (possibly including an actual brew presentation) as well as provide homebrew sampling. Hampton Roads sincerely lacks adequate beer festivals for the size of our community and this will be a great opportunity to help promote a new festival for locals to enjoy good food and beer.

The Club is looking into ordering some **new CASK glasses** which are non-pint glass style if there is enough interest. We are considering mugs, pilsner style, goblets and Belgian tulip styles. Once we have a price quote, I will be sending out an e-mail seeing who is interested in going forward with ordering.

Arrangements are being made to begin our **BJCP Class** around the early April timeframe. We are still trying to find a National Judge to sponsor an exam. The earliest available date for the exam would be September; however the Club feels it is important that we continue with the class though, so that Members can get exposure to the process and information. Also, Members can arrange to travel to one of the currently scheduled exams if they wish to take it earlier.

The Club has re-instituted its "**Member Profile**" section of the newsletter. Look for an e-mail from Norm some time in the future requesting your info so you can share your most personal beer secrets with the Club.

Using this format to put out Club information is new, but allows us to keep it out of the meetings and therefore devote more time to enjoying beer with our friends. Keep those great ideas and suggestions coming, and let us know what you would like to so info on in the future. Cheers.



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CASK



Colonial Ale Smiths
& Keggers



10 Tips for Better Extract Brewing *By Harrison Gibbs*

This article originally appeared in the April 2008 Issue of *The Cellar*.

Brewing beer from liquid or dry malt extract is not just for beginning homebrewers, it opens up (a can) of possibilities and ease that all grain brewing cannot. The use of malt extract allows for shorter brewing sessions, less cleanup, and consistent fermentation. The following tips provide some tips for better brewing with malt extract.

1. Use dry malt extract. Dry malt extract has a longer shelf life than liquid malt extracts. Liquid malt extract can become stale as it sits in the can, particularly when exposed to heat. The heating process used in liquid extracts results in a darker more caramel character that is better added through specialty grains. (See Number 3). The exception is using bulk liquid malt extract. Many homebrew shops purchase large drums of malt extract, which they can sell rapidly, keeping the time of the shelf to a minimum. Do not just take it home and store in the garage. That defeats the purpose of using the fresh stuff.

2. Used light or pale malt extract as your base. Just as all grain brewers start with a light pale and pils base malt, so too should extract brewers. If you start with a light malt base, you can build up color, body, and flavor from the use of specialty grains, exerting more control over the recipe and providing you areas to tinker later. Using a neutral base allows you to build any beer you want.

3. Use specialty grains. The addition of grains to your recipe adds character to the beer that you cannot get from extract alone. You do not need to mash the grains, but steep (not boil) the grains the mash water into which you will later dissolve your extract. The range of crystal malts provides the palette for your brewing brush. Other grains such as chocolate, black malt and roast barley are crucial. For example, small doses of roast barley can add color for a red ale, while large amounts of the stuff gives the stout its roast-burnt robustness. When using specialty malts a grain bag can be removed from the mash water. However, I recommend putting it into a second pot of 165F water to get more of the grain goodness from it. Try a metal strainer that you pour the mash water through.

4. Use Hop Pellets instead of whole. Hop pellets stay fresh longer than whole hops and fresh is critical for great hop bitterness, flavor and aroma. If you use pre-hopped extract try using some flavor or aroma hops to add more depth to your recipe. It is not necessary to strain hop pellets from your wort before you add it into the fermenter, but I do with a metal strainer as it makes the beer easier to transfer from the secondary to the primary. If using whole hops you will need to strain or use a hop bag. However, putting the hops in the hop bag reduces the level of hop oil extraction.

5. Boil more of your wort. If you have the space, use a full wort boil. That means boil all 5 to 6 gallons in a single pot. This provides greater control over the chemical processes that comes from boiling. You will get better hop extraction, richer used of the specialty grains and it reduces the darkening affect of boiling a thicker wort. If you cannot find or use a 30-quart pot, then use a 16 or 20-quart pot, adding a gallon plus water after your wort has cooled. If you have not already done so, invest in a turkey fryer. They usually come with a 7-gallon pot and being able to boil outside could save your marriage, or at least your kitchen stove.

6. Put the sugar back in. When I began home brewing, the use of any non-malt adjuncts was anathema. This was especially true for sugar. However, some beers require additional sugar because it is 100% fermentable and that is the only way to get your original gravity up and your final gravity down. This is important when brewing lighter ales like an English mild or ordinary. It is also required in most Belgian ales with their big full bodies and dry finish. This finish comes the higher dryer alcohol from using sugar. Swap out sugar and dry malt extract on a one-to-one ratio. Use 13 ounce of sugar for a pound of liquid malt extract. Rarely go over 10% of your fermentables from sugar, unless the recipe calls for it and it is a Belgian Ale, however, no more than 20%.

7. Cool things off. Hot wort carries a lot more heat than you realize and it can take a long time before everything is cool enough to add the yeast. The longer the wort sits without yeast the greater the chance for infection. Try using a cool water bath in a large sink or bathtub. Keep the water moving, and maybe add ice to the water. Remember to keep the lid on the wort during this time, so that a water splash will not lead to an infection. A wort chiller can be a handy tool and are not had to make from parts found at Home Depot. If you are already brewing outside with your new turkey fryer, cooling outside with a wort chiller and a hose is a great idea. I



have also used ice-cold bottled water to bring down the last 10 to 20 degrees. Do not add it at first as the level of heat to be exchange is too high.

8. Beer is water. Beer is mainly water with some sugar and other compounds mixed in. If using good malt extract is important, so too is using good water. While most city water is OK for brewing, some water can have too much salt or iron that can harm your yeast. If you buy bottle water for brewing, use soft or even distilled water. If you need to add calcium, then you can. It is easier to add than subtract. If you carbon filter, you can avoid some of the problems with chlorine.

9. Use a starter or multiple packs of yeast. You need to ensure that you have enough yeast to do the job, a stable reasonable fermentation temperature, and adequate aeration. Either make a starter or use enough yeast from another source to make sure that you have enough yeast cells. Strained yeast creates off flavors. If using a good dry yeast from Fermtis or Danstar, add a second or third packet to your batch. That still is about the same as using one liquid yeast packet, which will usually need a starter.

10. Keep a journal. If you want to brew better beer, you need to know what you did with your previous brews. You can repeat the good things and avoid the bad.

Daffodil Festival 2010

By Warren Haskell, Photos by Jeff Flamm.

On March 27th CASK made a second appearance and the Gloucester Daffodil festival and was greeted by a beautiful crisp day with not a drop of rain in sight. The Club set up an informational booth to help get the word out about our beloved hobby and talked to members of the community about what we do. Though it was a small showing, I believe everyone had a good time and even got to go enjoy the festival a bit. A great thanks goes out to Jeff Flamm, Jeff Stuebben, Steven Davis, and Ken Rygh for coming out to Gloucester and supporting the club.



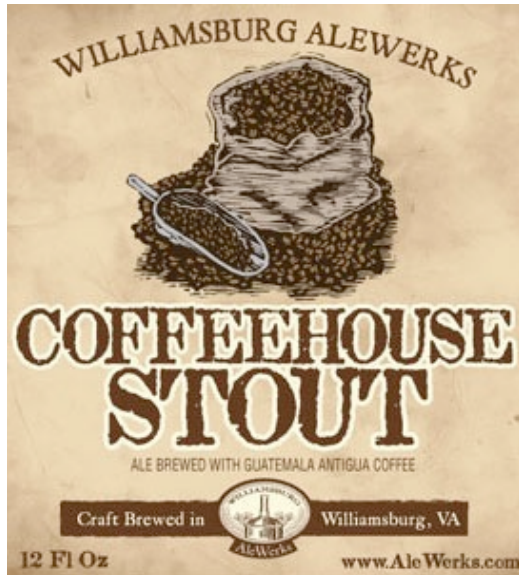


The Beer in Front of Me ...

"The Beer in Front of Me ..." is a new feature in the newsletter where a CASK member tells other members about a beer that they are enjoying right now. Be it "true-to-style" or "way-out-there creative," if it is a beer that is your current "favorite" and you want to tell the club about it, e-mail your description to beer@colonialalesmiths.org

This month, Harrison Gibbs tells us about Williamsburg AleWerks Coffeehouse Stout ...

I would like to tell you about the Coffeehouse Stout from the Williamsburg AleWerks, our local brewery. With



company coming over for a cookout and me wanting to ensure that any left over beer was something I wanted to drink I tossed in a six pack of Williamsburg's Coffeehouse Stout into the mix. It was a hit with me and the other drinkers. It should be as it is a very good beer. Geoff Logan, the brewery who we all know from the club, has made the best beer I have ever had from this brewery (past and present). Geoff has done well and put lots of care and "craft" into this craft brewer, leaving out the ego.

The beer is a sweet/milk stout at 5.4% alcohol by volume. Brewed with caramel and black malts on a 2-row base and sweetened with Lactose. Upon pouring, the dark black/brown beer puts up a nice tan head. The label says that the it uses cold Guatemala Antigua coffee, which comes though wonderfully in the nose. This is a beer that made the non-beer drinkers smile when they smelled it. Fortunately, the coffee carried nicely into the flavor as well, which was sweet but not cloying. I looked at Marta on my first sip and said, this beer would make a great ice cream. The hops, American Fuggles, provide a slight counter to the overall sweetness of this stout, never dominating or getting into the way of the rich roasty coffee and caramel flavors. The mouthfeel is full. The after taste is clean with lingering coffee and caramel. Although not fake tasting, it reminds me of those hard coffee candies I used to get as a kid.

This is a really great beer, and my hats off to Geoff and the guys at Williamsburg AleWerks. They have done well and should be getting this beer in front of both beer aficionados and non-beer drinkers who are looking for something different.

Pub Review: Brewer's Alley

by Warren Haskell

This past Monday I stopped in for lunch at the Brewer's Alley in Frederick MD. After a quick look at the menu, I ordered the 1634 ale, which was created as a historical recipe based on ingredients available in years past. According to the Brewer's Alley website (www.brewers-alley.com), it is a "rye-based ale recipe that also includes malted wheat, molasses and caraway. Brewmaster Tom Flores says the caramel and dark malts round out the flavor of the "lighter bodied ale." My opinion is that it is a light blond ale with a slight rye character, minimal hop character, and a light brown hew. Is is OK, but does not meet the description with no noticeable hints of caraway or molasses. A second beer was the seasonal hefe-weizen which was a solid version of the german style, crisp with a fair clove spice. The food was an extensive pub menu with some regional MD selections with the addition of well made wood-fired pizza. If you are in the area it is worth stopping in and grabbing a beer and lunch, but I wouldn't make a special trip of it.



CASK Member Profile: Greg Nowicki

Full Name: Gregory D. Nowicki

Hometown: St. Paul, MN (raised in Minneapolis, MN)

Town of Residence: Poquoson, VA

Occupation: Cyber Security Analyst at Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility. Open House this May 1st!
(<http://www.jlab.org/openhouse/index.html>)

Years Brewing: About 5 years.

Favorite Beers to Brew: IPAs, Stout, Porter, Kölsch

Favorite Commercial Brew: Deschutes Black Butte Porter

Favorite Brew Pub or Beer Bar: The Taphouse in Hampton, The Bulldog in Minneapolis, and The Brass Horse Pub in Portland, OR

How did you started brewing?: Moving away from the huge beer selection in Portland, OR and finding the beer monoculture in SE VA. But I really didn't set out to brew the beers I wanted to drink. The thought that I could take malted barley, water, hops, and yeast and create something I'd like to drink is what really got my interest. The podcasts "Craftbrewer Radio" and "Basic Brewing Radio" had something to do with it too.

Type of Brewing (Extract, Partial Mash, All-Grain): Extract, partial mash, and just started building the setup needed for all-grain.

Why do you brew?: It's all about the process. Determining what I want to brew next. The creation or modification of a recipe. The ritual of cleaning and preparing the equipment before a brewday followed by the step-by-step process of the beer brewing. Solving little problems as they crop up. The fermentation, and so on. It all comes down to an infatuation with the beer brewing process which has kept my interest.

Awards, Beer Related Associations, etc: AHA member. No awards to speak of. I'm not really in this to win awards. I just want to brew better beer. I'm not very good at it yet.





The CASK Calendar of Club Events and Competitions

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

April - Extract Beers (COC)

May - Bock

June - Irish & Scottish Ales

July - Summer Party / Mead (COC)

August - Sour Ales (COC)

September - Cider

October - Strong Ales (COC)

November - TBD

December - Winter Party

You, yes you, can add items to the CASK calendar and keep your fellow club members informed about beer-related happenings in the area!

Either:

1. logon to the CASK Message Board to find out how to add events to the calendar or

2. E-mail information about the event to calendar@colonialalesmiths.org