



The Cellar

The Official Newsletter of the Colonial Ale Smiths and Keggers

Dominion Cup 2012

The Dominion Cup tapped out with 518 entries this year, a new record for the event. This year, the Cup was held at the [Hardwood Park Craft Brewery](#), a new brewery in Richmond. It turned out to be a great place to hold the event. It also was apparent that Hardwood is a popular place to go on a Saturday and enjoy a pint. The tasting area was packed and there were vendors in the parking lot selling food, one doing grilled sausages and another doing pizza from a mobile wood-fired oven. Quite impressive.

As I stood there during the "Best of Show" judging, I was struck by how large the Dominion Cup has grown. The first time I judged there it was right after taking the BJCP Exam in 2004. There were 105 entries and CASK's own Steven Davis won the Best of Show. The number of entries actually went down a few years later when another CASK member, Brandon Orr, won. That year, 2006, there were only 78 entries. The numbers bounced back and in 2008, they were back to 156 entries and the competition has grown every year since, evolving into the large competition it is today.

The Best of Show was won by Brian, Scott, and Rod Bergquist of FBI (Fredericksburg Brewing Insiders) with their Coconut Robust Porter #2. Congratulations!

Congratulations to CASK members that won in this year's Dominion Cup!

- ★ Jeffrey Flamm took second place with his English Cider
- ★ John and Jared Smith took second place with their Eisbock
- ★ Rollin Woolley took second place with his Dry Stout
- ★ Eric Gold took second place with his Berliner Weisse

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The Cellarmaster

By Jeff Stuebben

Seattle (NHC 2012)

Well another year of the National Homebrew Conference is complete. This year four cask members were able to attend the conference. Seattle turned out to be a great location to hold the conference.

Some of the highlight of the week:

Brouwer's Café (<http://brouwerscafe.blogspot.com/>) , Located on 35th street, this is one of the best beer bars in the country. Beers selection is a good mix of local and Belgium beers(to include De Garr triple). The food was also very good with Belgium favorites like Flemish beef stew , mussels and frites, along with nice steaks and lamb burgers.

One of the Best breweries is the relatively new Black Raven Brewery (<http://www.blackravenbrewing.com/>) where we were able to get Pour Les Oiseaux a farmhouse ale with Brett and aged in French oak Chardonnay and Viognier wine barrels. This was the hit beer of the Pro-brewers night. Their other beers were also very good. Other notable breweries include Pikes Place , Rouge, Naked City, and Snoqualmie brewery.



The conference was long days with seminars starting at 9am and the hospitality rooms closing at 2am. Conference attendance was over 1800 people and next year they are looking at 3000 for Philly. All conference lectures were video taped and should be available soon for any AHA members wanting to view them(beer not included). Just go to the AHA website and login ([http://](http://www.ahaconference.org/)

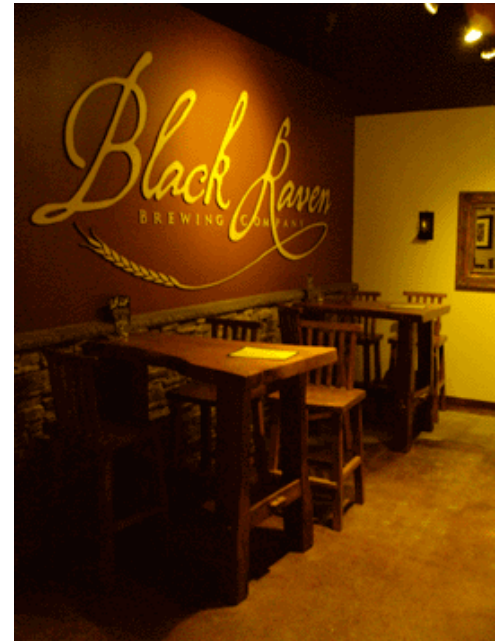
www.ahaconference.org/).

I am looking forward to next year's conference and would like to be able to have a booth to serve beer on club night, we would need about 15-20 kegs of beer and some type of themed booth. This may be the closest we get to a conference for a few years and I would encourage anyone who wants to attend to get a ticket when they become available. Philly is packed with great beer bars and historic things to do. Hope you can make it next year.

Cheers,

Jeff Stuebben

President



10 Tips to Improve your Brew

By Erik Gold

We spend so much time trying to make beer and often it is really good. Sometimes though, we take shortcuts because we get tired or lazy. This information was gathered from over 10 years of brewing and learning the hard way through trial and error. Additional inspiration comes from The Mad Fermentationist, Chris White and Jamil Zainasheff's book on Yeast, and many many gallons of beer dumped down the drain. Spend a few minutes and do not discount any of these points:

1. Fermenting at too high of a temperature

Take note of the ambient temperature of the room the beer is fermenting in, but realize that at the peak of fermentation the yeast can raise the temperature of the beer by as much as 5-7F. Fermenting too warm can cause the yeast to produce higher alcohols and excessive fruity flavors or phenols. Your Beer will NOT be clean. Letting the ambient temperature rise towards the high end of the yeast's range as fermentation slows helps to ensure a clean well attenuated beer. If you are unable to control the fermentation temperature, then choose a yeast strain that fits the conditions such as Saison yeast (or other belgian yeasts). If you want to brew American ales, you need to get a temperature controller and a cheap fridge from craigslist, a brand new chest freezer from home Depot or Costco, or use a Swamp cooler and 2-liters filled w/ ice .

2. Keep it Simple

Don't start with a recipe that is strong or unusual. Brewing a big complex beer sounds like a great idea, but play it safe on your first few batches and brew something really simple. High alcohol beers require a LOT more yeast and time. Interesting adjuncts (like fruit and spices) add complexity to the recipe and process. These are things you really shouldn't deal with on your first batch, I recommend brewing a beer once and if it comes out really well, then consider adding your crazy flavor additions. The same applies anytime you change your equipment. A new brewpot is not the time to brew a 1.100 gravity Russian Imperial Stout.

3. Get a no-rinse sanitizer like Star-San or Iodophor.

I do not recommend using the sanitizer that comes with a beer kit (like B-brite) but instead get a no-rinse sanitizer like Star-San or Iodophor, which are faster and easier to use. Sanitize everything that touches your beer post-boil, and make sure it is cleaned well after each use (sanitizers are only effective on super clean scratch-free surfaces). Keeping unwanted microorganisms and bacteria out of your beer is the single most important step to brewing solid beer. Also keep sanitizer or alcohol (isopropyl) handy in a spray bottle for quick access during your brewday, you will need it.

4. Watch your Water, don't brew with unfiltered, chlorine-containing tap water.

If you are on Newport news water supply it contains chloramines. To remove them you can either charcoal filter or treat your water with metabisulfite (campden), or alternatively use bottled water. One of the most common off-flavors in homebrews is chlorophenol (medicinal), which is formed by the combination of chlorine in the water or sanitizer and phenols from malt and yeast. Water is so important I will expand on this on a few months.

5. Make a starter

A package of dried yeast starts with as much as twice the cells as a fresh package of yeast from either Wyeast or White Labs, and retains high cell viability for much longer. Liquid yeast can produce great beers, but require a starter unless you are getting extremely fresh yeast from your homebrew store and brewing a session

beer or using more than one pouch/vial. Use the online Mr. Malty Calculator to calculate the amount of yeast needed for your batch. You will be surprised how much yeast you need for higher gravity beers. When you are ready, get a stirplate so you can make the healthiest yeast starters possible.

6. Aerate A LOT

Aerating the wort adequately after chilling is a super easy way to make your beer a lot better. It takes several minutes of shaking for the chilled wort to absorb half of the amount of oxygen required to allow the yeast to complete a healthy growth phase. The healthier your yeast cells are the cleaner and quicker they will complete the fermentation and often the beer will finish a point or two lower in gravity.

7. Pitching yeast TOO warm

Do not pitch the yeast when the side of the pot or fermentor feels “cool enough.” Use a sanitized thermometer to check the actual temperature of the wort before you add the yeast. Pitching when the wort is above 100 F will kill the yeast. Ideally the temperature should be at or below your target fermentation temperature to allow the temperature to rise as the yeast grows and ferments. If the ground water is 80 degrees, you will never be able to chill your beer to pitching temperatures without setting the carboy in ice or the fridge. If necessary, you can pre-chill the sterilized water you use to top-off after the boil to help bring the temperature down. (or just buy a gallon of distilled water & toss it in fridge)

8. Is it done yet?

Do not just rely on judging the amount of bubbles in the airlock to tell you when fermentation is complete, always wait until final gravity stays the same for a couple of days. There is no rush to bottle, and doing so before the final gravity is reached can cause bottle bombs or beers that are too sweet. Once fermentation is complete and the beer tastes good, you can move the fermentor somewhere cool to encourage the yeast to settle out for clearer beer in the bottle. You can use a bucket of ice overnight, or a spare fridge to help the yeast flocculate.

9 Check the Code

Get a program like Beer Smith or ProMash when you are ready to create your own recipes. Make notes after you try your beers and after submitting them to competitions so you can move your cluster closer to your target. (all my beers need more hops, etc)

10. Fill'em Proper

If you are filling beers from a keg for competition, make sure you get proper carbonation. Just about every beer I drank at 2012 CASK competition last year was woefully under carbonated.

CASK Member Profile: Jared Smith

Full Name: Jared Smith

Hometown: Tacoma, Washington

Town of Residence: Virginia Beach, Virginia

Occupation: Starbucks Barista

Years Brewing: 5 years

Favorite Beers to Brew: Changes daily, though lately anything smoked and/or sour.

Favorite Commercial Brew: Also changes daily, but Cantillon's Rosé de Gambrinus has always been a favorite.

Favorite Brew Pub or Beer Bar: The Birch, Norfolk.

How did you started brewing?: My father got me into brewing and I've been hooked ever since.

Type of Brewing (Extract, Partial Mash, All-Grain): All-Grain

Why do you brew?: I love beer, and there is no better way to appreciate a good brew than with good friends in front of a boiling kettle.

Awards, Beer Related Associations, etc: 2nd in the "Best of Show" round at CASK Beer Blitz 2008, a few others.



The CASK Calendar of Club Events and Competitions

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

August - Dark Lagers

September - Oktoberfest (Iron Brew - Brown Ales) and (Light Hybrid COC), HRBC Stouts

October - Barley Wine (Old Ale COC)

November - Wine and Mead

December - Open/Blitz Beers

January - Extract beers

February - Belgium and French Ale (BJCP Category 16)

March - Fruit beers

Calendar looking empty?

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

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

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