



The Cellar

The Official Newsletter of the Colonial Ale Smiths and Keggers

Changes to the 2013 National Homebrew Competition

Registration for the 2013 [National Homebrew Competition](#) will open on February 26 at 1 p.m. MST (3 p.m. EST) on-line. Last year, there were a record number of entries, 7,823. There are a number of changes this year that you need to be aware of if you plan on entering the competition.

- There are a total of eleven (11) NHC First Round Judging Centers in the U.S. for the 2013 competition. All entrants must choose one of the eleven (11) Judging Centers to which to send **all** of their entries. It is recommended that you have a first and second choice for which Judging Center you want to send you beer to.
- **Each Judging Center has a 750 entry limit.** Once a Judging Center reaches the 750 maximum, the entrants will not be able to register any additional entries. List of [judging centers](#).
- **You must send two (2) bottles for each of your entries** to the First Round Judging Center. This is a big change from years past where only one bottle was required. One bottle is used for the score sheet judging, the second bottle will be used for entries advancing to the mini-best-of-show judging to determine the category winners.
- The maximum number of entries per entrant is 15. This is another change from the past where there was no limit on the number of entries.
- The entry fees for 2013 are \$12 per entry for AHA members and \$17 per entry for non-members.
- All First Round NHC entries must be received at the appropriate Judging Center between Monday, March 18 and 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 27, 2013.



For the latest, most up to date information, see the AHA website. Best of luck to all those that choose to enter!

In this Issue of The Cellar:

The Beer in Front of Me	2
Belgian and French Ales	2
The CASK Calendar of Club Events and Competitions	9



The Beer in Front of Me ...

This month, Steven Davis tells us about the Sea Legs Baltic Porter by Uinta Brewing Company ...

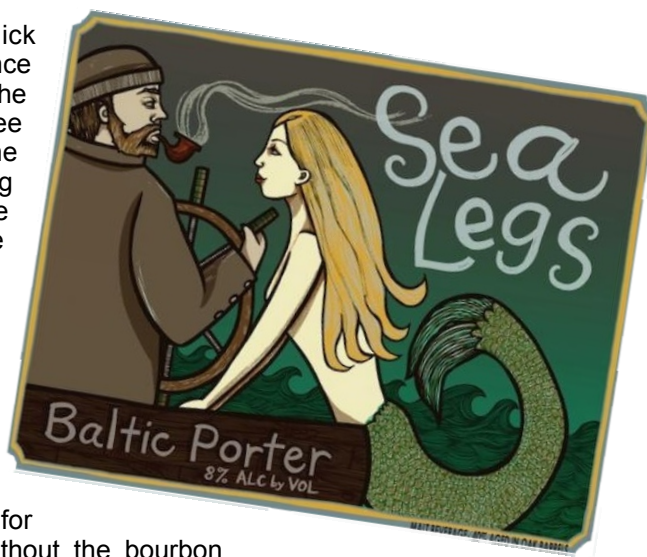
As I walked through Total Wine the other day, I was drawn to the interesting artwork on a 750ml bottle label depicting a mermaid seductively looking at a boat captain. I felt compelled to buy the beer by the label alone, but when I realized it was a Baltic Porter, a beer style with very limited commercial production, I had to have it.

The beer I drink tonight is Sea Legs, the latest release in the Crooked Line series from Uinta Brewing Company in Salt Lake City, Utah. It is advertised as a Baltic Porter, 8.0% ABV, aged in bourbon barrels. Uintah touts it as their “siren of a beer”.

Sea Legs pours from the bottle with a rich, thick consistency. It resonates with a deep dark brown appearance and a very heavy, rich, long lasting sandy colored head. The powerful aroma is dominated by a robust chocolate and toffee character with slight notes of plum and black currants in the distant background. From the first sip, the commanding sweet malt flavor dominates, and never leaves your palate until minutes after taking your final swallow. Only after the powerful almost schwarzbier-like character subsides, do the bourbon, roast coffee and light toffee flavors fill your taste buds. While this beer finishes with a big character, it does not come across as hot, despite the bourbon influence.

Overall this beer fully met my expectations. With a somewhat limited Baltic Porter line for comparison, I had to judge this beer against the likes of Baltika, Smuttynose and the few local examples I had in Finland and Sweden. That being said, this beer hit the mark. If I had to criticize it for anything, I would say I would have preferred to try it without the bourbon influence and with a “tiny” bit more alcohol bite. Uinta Brewing always produces top notch brews, and this beer is no exception. With a limited production of only 1500 cases, get to Total Wine (or your local beer centric store) and get yours now before they are gone for good. I know I will be there tomorrow.

Cheers,
Steven



Belgian and French Ales

By Bryan Falman

Belgian Styles

Belgian brewers do not constrain themselves to pre-defined styles, so the vast majority of commercial Belgian beers would tend to fall in the Belgian Specialty category (16E). Where styles do exist, the descriptions tend to be wider than normal to accommodate these variations.

Belgian Yeasts

The strains of brewers' yeast that are used in the production of Belgian-style beer all tend to produce the same distinct flavors and aromas which give Belgian beers their notable characters. Specifically, these strains are noted for their production of fruity esters and spicy phenolics. The esters produced can evoke pears, plums, citrus, or banana; phenolics are usually peppery or clove-like. Most Belgian strains are also fairly alcohol tolerant, given the lineage of beers that they are used to brew.

Belgian Fermentation Profile

In almost all cases Belgian and French beers are fermented in three stages using ale yeasts:

1. Primary fermentation takes place from ~65-75°F in cylindro-conical fermentors for approximately one week.
2. Secondary fermentation takes place at lagering temperatures for 2-4 weeks. Secondary fermentation vessels may be either cylindro-conicals or horizontal lagering tanks.
3. The beer is then bottled with new yeast (generally not the same strain as primary fermentation) and fermented in the bottle (refermentation) for up to a month at 70-80°F.

Once refermentation is complete, the beer may be pasteurized to stop any further yeast activity, or the beer may be shipped and allowed to continue to evolve.

Sub-Styles in BJCP Category 16: Belgian and French Ales

(The commercial example featured at the meeting is in bold at the end of each section)

16A – Witbier

Aroma

Moderate sweetness, coriander and orange/citrus fruitiness

Complex herbal/spicy aromas from hops or spices may be present

Spice aromas should be well blended and not over-powering

Can have tart aroma

Diacetyl and vegetal aromas are not appropriate

Appearance

Very pale straw to light gold

Cloudy appearance from starch haze and yeast

Dense white head with good retention

Flavor

Sweetness with orange/citrus fruitiness

Spices are subtle and balanced

Hop flavor are spicy or earthy, but should be second to spices

Inappropriate flavors: bitterness from orange piths, vegetal, soapy, and diacetyl

Mouthfeel

Medium-light to medium body

Dry, crisp finish, sometimes tart

High carbonation

No harshness or astringency

Typical ingredients

- 40-50% unmalted wheat
- 40-50% pale barley malt, usually Pilsner
- Up to 10% unmalted oat
- Noble or Czech hops
- Spiced with coriander and orange peel (bitter or sweet)
- Addition spices may be used, but should be less apparent

Statistics

- IBUs: 10-20
- SRM: 2-4
- OG: 1.044-1.052
- FG: 1.008-1.012
- ABV: 4.5-5.5%



History:

Brewed in the Leuven region as early as the 14th century, but production was halted during World War I and did not come back on a large scale after the war. Original versions were always infected with *Lactobacillus* and occasionally *Pediococcus*; with Hoegaarden described as containing “sour milk-like” flavors. During the 1800s, brewers used air-dried malt and very short boil times to keep the beer as white as possible, often not reaching boil at all. To keep hop characteristics to a minimum, only a third of the wort was boiled, and then returned to the rest of the beer in the coolship. The final brewery of wit beer in Hoegaarden closed in 1957, from a peak of 38 breweries in 1758. Pierre Celis restarted brewing of white beer in Hoegaarden in 1966. Modern examples do not have the same sour character due to production process changes.

Commercial Example: Hoegaarden Wit, **Brasserie Lefebvre Blanche de Bruxelles**

16B – Belgian Pale Ale

Aroma

- Prominent toasty, biscuity malt aroma
- Floral or spicy aromas
- Low to moderate hop character
- No diacetyl

Appearance

- Amber to copper color
- Very good clarity
- Head retention not as good as other Belgian styles

Flavor

- Smooth malt sweetness with toast/biscuit/nutty character
- Fruitiness may be orange or pear like, but not as citrusy as other Belgian styles
- Low phenolic spiciness
- Hop flavor is low to none, bitterness is medium to low

Inappropriate flavors: bitterness from orange piths, vegetal, soapy, and diacetyl

Mouthfeel

Medium-light to medium body

Alcohol is restrained, and alcohol warming is low

Medium carbonation

Hot alcohol and solventy characters should not be present

Typical ingredients

~90% Pilsner or pale malt

~10% Vienna or Munich malts for color and body

Noble or English hops are appropriate

May use English yeast strains

Statistics

IBUs: 20-30

SRM: 8-14

OG: 1.048-1.054

FG: 1.010-1.014

ABV: 4.8-5.5%



History

Belgian session beers that originated in the Antwerp and Flemish Brabant regions. Produced starting in the mid-18th century, but the best examples were developed after World War II with hops and yeast strains influenced by British brewers.

Commercial Example: De Koninck

16C – Saison

Aroma

Dominant citrusy fruit esters

Low to medium-high spicy notes from hops, spices, and/or yeast phenols

Yeast phenols are more peppery than clove-like

Low to moderate sourness may be present, but should not overwhelm

Aromatics tend to increase with the strength of the beer

Alcohol aromas should be soft, and not hot

No diacetyl

Appearance

Golden to amber in color, often orange

Dense, rocky, long lasting head

Clarity may be poor to good

Haze is acceptable due to unfiltered nature

Flavor

Sweetness with orange/citrus fruitiness

Spices are subtle and balanced

Hop flavors are spicy or earthy, and are low to moderate

Hop bitterness, can be moderate to high, but should not overpower the fruity esters

Low to moderate tart sourness can be present

Inappropriate flavors: hot alcohol, solventy, and diacetyl

Mouthfeel

Light to medium body

Very dry finish balanced with prickly acidity

Very high carbonation

Tart character may be present but should not reach puckering

Alcohol warming is low to medium, no hot alcohol should be present

Typical ingredients

Majority Pilsner malt

Remaining grain bill can be made up of Vienna, Munich, and wheat

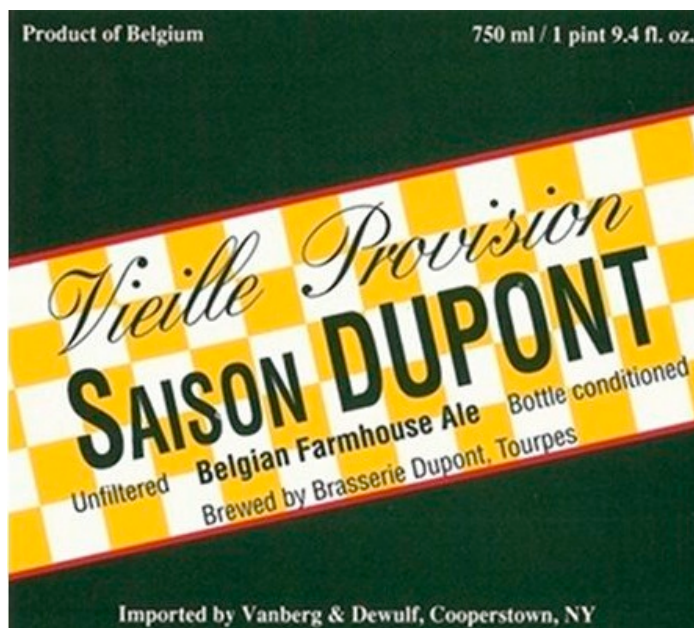
Sugar and honey can be used

Noble, Czech, or British hops

A variety of spices may be used in stronger versions

Acidity/sourness from gypsum, Lactobacillus, or a sour mash

Hard water with moderate sulfates to accentuate the bitterness and dry finish



Statistics

IBUs: 20-35

SRM: 5-14

OG: 1.048-1.065

FG: 1.002-1.012

ABV: 5-7%

History

Originating on farms in Hainaut to be consumed during the summer, it was brewed near the end of March to take advantage of the naturally cool weather. The style is now brewed throughout Belgium in generally small artisanal breweries. Related to the Bière de Garde style, but is crisper and drier to be more refreshing during the summer. Often described as having a “barnyard” or “horse blanket” quality from the acidity/sour characteristics. Stronger versions (8%+) and darker versions (copper to dark brown) should be entered in Belgian Specialty (16E)

Commercial Example: Saison Dupont

16D – Bière de Garde

Aroma

- Malt sweetness, often with a light toasty character
- Low to moderate yeast esters
- Little to no hop aroma
- May have a musty/earthy aroma
- No diacetyl

Appearance

- Gold to brown
- Clarity may be good to poor, haze due to being unfiltered is acceptable
- Well carbonated with white to off-white head

Flavor

- Medium to high malt flavor
- Medium-low hop bitterness
- Smooth lagered character
- No diacetyl

Mouthfeel

- Medium-light to medium body
- Medium-dry to dry finish
- Moderate alcohol with smooth character, should not be hot

Typical ingredients

- Pilsner, Vienna, and Munich malts
- Kettle caramelization tends to be used in place of crystal malts, but crystal malts may be used in darker versions
- Floral/herbal/spicy European hops
- Soft water, unlike Saisons

Statistics

- IBUs: 18-28
- SRM: 6-19
- OG: 1.060-1.080
- FG: 1.008-1.016
- ABV: 6-8.5%

History

Literally “beer for keeping”, it is the French equivalent of the Saison style, but sweeter, smoother, and more malt focused than the Saison style. Three different styles are brewed: Blonde, Ambrée, and Brune. All are malt dominate, but the Blonde tends toward more hops and the Brune



towards more malt. Bières de Garde are typically brewed in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region of France that was once part of the County of Flanders.

Commercial Example: 3 Monts, **Brasserie Castelain Blond** (known as **Ch'ti Blonde** in France).

16E – Belgian Specialty Ale

Catch-all category for Belgian beers that do not fit the other existing categories; Belgian yeast characters are common to all, and diacetyl is not appropriate. This category also includes strong Saisons (8%+) and Dark Strong ales that are of barleywine-type as well as Christmas beers. Beers entered in this category must make clear the intent of the brewer, so the brewer should include the specific beer that is being cloned, a new style, or special ingredients/processes that are being used. Since most Belgian brewers do not brew to given styles, this category encompasses a large amount of commercial Belgian beers.

Commercial Examples: Orval, De Dolle Oerbier, La Chouffe, Ellezelloise Hercule Stout, Unibroue Maudite, Caracole Saxo, Poperings Hommel Bier, Bush, Gouden Carolus Noël, La Trappe Quadrupel, etc.



The CASK Calendar of Club Events and Competitions

Plan your brewing schedule now and hit as many AHA Club-Only Competitions (COC) and other competitions as possible.

February - Belgium and French Ale (BJCP Category 16) (**COC Barleywine**)

March - Fruit beers

April - Amber Lager (**COC - Extract Beers**)

May - Spring IronBrew and Party!

June - Wheats

July - British Beers

August - Rye and Smoked Beers

September - Fall IronBrew and Party!

October - Sour Beers

November - Strong Belgian Ale

December - Spiced and Holiday 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

The Cellar is a publication of CASK,

Colonial Ale Smith and Keggers

P.O. Box 5224

Williamsburg, VA 23188

The AHA has not set the dates for the rest of the COC's this year. So, stay tuned for the final dates. To give you an idea of what is coming up

August: Style TBD, Location TBD, Date TBD

Sept/Oct: Style: European Amber Lagers, Location TBD, Date TBD.

Nov: Style TBD, Location TBD, Date TBD

Jan/Feb 2014: Style TBD, Location TBD, Date TBD

Mar/Apr 2014: Style: Strong Belgian Ale, Location TBD, Date TBD

May 2014: Style: "All Things Porter", Location TBD, Date TBD

Layout and Edited by: Norm Schaeffler

Latest Information:

<http://www.homebrewersassociation.org/pages/competitions/club-only-competitions/schedule/2013-2014-competition-year>