

The Worthouse News

A Publication of the Edmonton Homebrewers Guild

January 2004



Upcoming Events

January Meeting

January 5, 2004 7:30 PM

Alley Kat Brewing

Theme: Porters/Stouts & Strong Belgians

February Meeting

February 2, 2004 7:30 PM

Alley Kat Brewing

Theme: European Lagers

March Meeting

March 1, 2004 7:30 PM

Alley Kat Brewing

Theme: Meads (AHA)

The Edmonton Homebrewers Guild

Executives (Sept 2003 to June 2004)

President Roxy Hastings

Vice-President..... Kevin Zaychuk

Secretary Boyd Oberhoffner

Treasurer Ray Duperon

Competition Chair Glen Hannah

Newsletter Editor Bob Boufford

Web Administrator..... Jim Whittome

Guild Meetings

Edmonton Homebrewers Guild meetings are held on the first non-holiday Monday of a month from September to June, at Alley Kat Brewing, 9929-60th Ave in Edmonton. Meetings start at 7:30 PM. A few meetings each season will be held at other local beer establishments.

Each meeting includes a theme or style session with a "mini-competition" where anyone attending the meeting can have one's beers tasted, evaluated and judged. Several meetings over the year will be AHA sessions where the winner is forwarded to an AHA event.

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The Edmonton Homebrewers Guild

The Worthouse News is sent monthly to paid members, guild sponsors and CABA/AHA member clubs. Past issues may be read at <http://www.ehg.ca>.

Original articles may be reprinted in other homebrewing club newsletters with credit to the author and The Edmonton Homebrewers Guild. Submissions welcome and may be sent to the editor.

View from the Top of the Tun

by Roxy Hasting, President

Wasn't that a party!! If we ever needed proof that Edmonton Homebrewers Guild members know how to throw a great party then our December meeting should have done the trick. A great turnout with the room feeling comfortably full, a great spread of food, and of course who could forget the awesome executive brewed Belgian Strong Ale. The keg was pretty light when I loaded it into my car for the trip home and considering that the beer was pushing 10% it was pretty clear that people had a good time. Such a good time in fact that there was no incentive to taste any of the other Belgian beers that members had brought, so we will do them in conjunction with the Stouts and Porters in January.

I hope that we can carry on with putting on a good show because we are going to need it. The long anticipated conference that we have talked about for years is finally going to happen. No doubts.... It's a go. And it's happening in your hometown on the weekend of June 5th. Boyd has booked the hall, we have a keynote speaker lined up, two of the four teaching sessions have been set and we have spread the word to brew clubs across western Canada that we are hosting the event. There's no backing down now... at least not without a total loss of face and that's not going to happen. We've had a great response from other clubs, most notably Regina and so now it's time to start bearing down and doing the nitty gritty planning. We are going to need all members to pitch in and help pull this one off. Conference co-chairs Neil Herbst and Kevin Zaychuk will be giving you regular updates and will be press-ganging you into helping on various organizational committees. It's a honour for Edmonton to be the first western club of the new Confederation of Western Brew Clubs to host what we hope will be an annual conference that will rotate between western clubs. You'll find start up information on the conference inside this newsletter.

It's nice to get mail and a sure sign of success is when unsolicited mail asking for help, starts arriving in your mailbox. In addition to a flurry of emails from new members I've been getting email from brewers in B.C. and other parts of the country. Most of these people have found us through our web page, with many commenting on the fact that we've got the best web site in Canada. So everybody should take a moment and thank our web administrator, Jim Whittome for putting up the site. It's attracted members to the club and helped establish our presence at the national level. (Continued on page 2)

View from the Top of the Tun - (from Page 1)

Jim's work is just another example of a dedicated EHG member serving the homebrew community. The Edmonton Homebrewers Guild is without a doubt one of the most influential clubs in western Canada, which in effect puts us at the top of the six-pack in Canada. We may not be the biggest, or score the most points in competitions, but our members have always been the leaders when it comes to quality brewing and pushing the boundaries of what defines an excellent brew club in the Canadian homebrewing scene.

As this year draws to a close we should all take a moment to reflect on what a great club we are, and give thanks to the dedicated team of people that make us more than just a brew club- for we truly are a GUILD, a group of craftsmen striving for excellence in our chosen hobby and endeavour. I wish all members well and hope you all excel in this craft in the year ahead.

Roxy

From the Bottom of the Mash

by Bob Boufford, Editor

With the holidays coming fast upon us, the newsletter is out a little early so we all can relax and enjoy time with family and friends during the start of the new year. We are now getting into the swing of the competitive part of the brewing season. Even though I am just starting to enter my beers into competition, I have already learned much about brewing and taking my beers beyond tasting like rejects from a Budweiser plant.

Next week when many of us have time off is an opportune time to brew some beers for entries in the First Annual Brew House Brew Off! Instead of fighting the crowds on Boxing Day, open up a Brew House box and brew away. If you start on Boxing Day, there will be plenty of time to get the beer into the bottle before the Feb 13th entry deadline.

Several members have already started brewing their beers. And while the original intent of the competition was for Edmonton only, our colleagues in the other brew clubs want to participate in the competition. So, we definitely need to open the boxes and start pouring or Roxy will never let us hear the end of it if Regina out does us in our own local competition.

One box, two beers

One of the nice features of the Brew House kits is the ability to make two beers, maybe three, from one kit. For the upcoming competition, I already have four entries from two kits. I would have had more but I ran out of carboys.

As discussed in November issue of The Worthouse News, once the undiluted wort is mixed with the acid neutralizer, varying amounts of water can be added to take the wort to a desired gravity. And there is nothing in the directions that say the water added to the wort has to be plain water. Take the water, do some partial steeping or partial mashing and throw in some DME to change the flavour profile and bring the gravity back up to a stronger ale.

As many of us have learned, just changing yeast can dramatically change the flavour and style of a beer. Just pitch a Wyeast 1214 Belgian Abby yeast instead of the supplied Coopers dry yeast in an undiluted Brew House Pale Ale kit for a different taste experience.

The Brew House kits are a great way to introduce someone to the fun of homebrewing. So, don't just break open the box by yourself, invite a friend, relative, co-worker or neighbour to join you. Or better yet, there is still plenty of holiday shopping time left to give a Brew House kit with an offer to help brewing entries for the Brew Off.

Remember, as Roxy is oft to say "We are not just a bunch of all-grain beer snobs, we are simply a bunch of beer snobs, making the best brews possible by whatever means we choose." For me that includes the Brew House kits.

Have a safe and relaxing holiday season.

Bob



Brew-Off
February 21-22, 2004

The 2004 ABC Update

by Glen Hannah, Competition Chair

The EHG 2004 Aurora Brewing Challenge on June 3-5, 2004 has been registered with both the BJCP and the AHA. The Edmonton Home Brewers Guild is proud to once again to be hosting this event as an MCAB qualifier. Our strong commitment to provide excellent feedback and results to our competitors in a short turn around year after year makes our event among the best. Without the enthusiasm from the volunteers in our club and those in the Western Canadian clubs this wouldn't be possible.

The ABC will run from Thursday to Saturday, different from previous years. This is to attract out of town judges, stewards and other club members and their spouses to not only attend the competition but also the conference and dinner that will follow on the Saturday night.

I have received emails from brewing clubs in the U.S. that are interested in submitting entries and I must admit I have to work harder on recruiting more interest from the clubs in our Eastern provinces to submit entries into the ABC. The Western Canadian clubs; the Headhunters from Saskatoon, Marquis de Suds from Calgary, Lethbridge and ALES from Regina will again show strong numbers this year and we need to return the support for their competitions.

This year will be a memorable event for the Guild and its members. We are shooting for the stars and aim to shatter last year's record of 238 entries. We are anticipating over 300 entries this year – a 26 % increase from last year! Am I nuts for expecting this? Yes! Is it possible? Well I wouldn't be organizing the event if it wasn't. To do my part there is an article in the December newsletter on building up an inventory of homebrews strictly for competitions. See "The Scoop on Competitive Brewing by the Master Competitor". I have adopted that philosophy in my brewing by bottling six to twelve bottles per five-gallon batch and storing them in a room in my basement never to be seen again until competition time. By doing this, my inventory has grown leaps and bounds. I ask my fellow EHG members to do the same and enter many and in multiple categories if so desired.

Cheers,

glen

Upcoming Competitions

Edmonton Homebrewers Guild First Annual Brew House Brew-Off

February 21-22, 2004. Entries due Feb 13, 2004.

The Edmonton Homebrewer's Guild in co-operation with Southside Brew Crew and Harvest Brewing Co. are having the first annual contest for the Best Brew House Brewer!

The competition brochure and entry form can be printed and downloaded from the EHG website, <http://www.ehg.ca>. A copy of the brochure is also included with this month's newsletter email. Encourage any homebrewing friends and neighbours to enter the competition.

Lethbridge – competition is set for 6 March 2004. No details yet, probably a two bottle entry this year.

Regina – the AHA has awarded the Regina Ales the first round site for Canada in their national competition. Date has yet to be set but probably in mid-April.

Edmonton – Aurora Brewing Competition, 3-5 June 2004. In addition, it will also be the:

First Annual Western Confederation of Brew Clubs Conference.

Plans are underway for the now evolving Western Confederation of Brew Clubs first annual conference in conjunction with the ABC on Saturday, June 5, 2004

Tentative schedule at this time:

- Organizational meeting/luncheon of the Western Confederation of Brew Clubs
- Conference presentations Saturday afternoon
 - o BCJP Exam preparation
 - o Sanitation techniques (tentative)
 - o Quality brewing with Brew House kits (tentative)
- Saturday evening dinner BBQ with keynote speaker and ABC awards ceremony

It's going to be one hell of a party. Details will follow in upcoming newsletters. Membership participation is going to be required to help pull off this dream.

Calgary – date not set yet but these people are committed. They are almost certainly going to go to a two-bottle entry format. The popular Lawn Mower beer event is promised to make a comeback.

It's BS - Towards a "Better Stout"

Frank Kuzemski, Past President, EHG

I brewed such a horrible oatmeal stout for the Aurora Brewing Competition in Edmonton last June that I have been researching stout brewing ever since. How bad was my batch? Well, one judge scored it at a 12. The next judge went all out and awarded a grand total of 14. The third judge, a novice, just plain quit judging right then and there, really!

So what has my research yielded to date? Well, I have read many articles on stout, but a good general outline by Thomas J Miller was found in *Brew Your Own* in the Jan/Feb 2003 issue.

A general outline would be, in no particular order:

1. First goal is to design a well-balanced recipe or formula. The typical stout malts are roasted barley, chocolate malt and black patent malt. Overuse of these darker grains can cause an astringent, acidic or burnt flavour. The darker grains should be less than 20% of the total grain bill.
2. The defining character of stout generally comes through the use of "roasted barely". To add more complexity, you can use other dark grains. Caramel or crystal malt add some sweetness. Black malt gives a "bite" to the stout. Chocolate malt adds color with less aggressive flavour. Caramalt or dextrin malt add sweetness and body because they are less fermentable than other malts.
3. When crushing the malt for the stout, crush the pale malts first. Then adjust the mill to a bit wider to crush the dark malts. The dark grains are drier and tend to shatter into smaller pieces if crushed together with the pale malts. Also, after crushing, ensure your grains are well mixed before wetting.
4. Hops add a more floral or spicy type of bitterness to the stout. Any type of hops may be used but the higher alpha varieties seem to be detectable through the roasted grains more so than the lower alpha varieties, even when the same amount of IBUs are added to the wort. Common stout hops are Chinook, Centennial and Galena, all rated around 9-15 % alpha acids. Conversely, another professional brewer prefers Nugget, Northern Brewer, Challenger and Amarillo, avoiding the high alpha acid hops because they

sometimes leave a cloying raisin taste. Since even the "experts" cannot agree, take your choice and use what pleases your palette.

5. The most popular yeast for stouts seem to be the Wyeast 1084 Irish Ale or the White Labs WLP004 Irish Ale. But any English ale yeast is acceptable as long as the yeast does not produce excessive amounts of diacetyl.
6. A challenge is to get a more full-bodied mouthfeel in a stout. The best way is to build the mouthfeel in the mashing process by mashing at a higher temperature (155-160°F). Another option is to use caramalt or dextrin malts at 8-10% of the grist.
7. Stouts tent to blow off a lot of foam during fermentation. Pitching at a lower temperature and then allowing the wort to warm to your preferred temperature can reduce excessive foam.

Keep in mind that there are several types of stouts to experiment with including: dry stouts, sweet stouts, oatmeal stouts and high gravity imperial stouts along with other variations.

Probably the most popular stout for beginners would be the oatmeal stout. Adding oatmeal to a stout lends a nice velvety mouthfeel, mainly from the oils and proteins of the oatmeal. This helps round out the aggressive roastiness and acidity of the dark grain.

Now you can start planning a stout and beat my best score combination of "12-14-QUIT".

Style of the Month

Porters and Stouts

Here are the style descriptions for this month's Theme Night at the upcoming monthly meeting. The style descriptions are from the Beer Judge Certification Program (BJCP) *Guide to Beer Styles For Home Brew Beer Competitions*. For the most up-to-date BJCP Style Guide, visit the BJCP web site: <http://www.bjcp.org/style-index.html>

15. PORTER

15A. Robust Porter

Aroma: Roast malt or grain aroma, often coffee-like or chocolate-like, should be evident. Hop aroma moderate to low. Fruity esters, and diacetyl, are moderate to none.

Appearance: Dark brown to black color, may be garnet-like. Clarity may be difficult to discern in such a dark beer. Head retention should be moderate to good.

Flavor: Malt flavor usually features coffee-like or chocolate-like roasty dryness. Overall flavor may finish from medium sweet

to dry, depending on grist composition, hop bittering level, and attenuation. May have a sharp character from dark roasted grains. Hop flavor varies widely. Diacetyl moderate to none.

Mouthfeel: Medium to medium-full bodied. Low to moderate carbonation.

Overall Impression: A substantial dark ale with complex roasty malt, hop and fermentation characteristics.

Vital Statistics: OG: 1.050-1.065

IBUs: 25-45 FG: 1.012-1.016

SRM: 30+ ABV: 4.8-6.0%

Commercial Examples: Sierra Nevada Porter, Anchor Porter

15B. Brown Porter

Aroma: Malt aroma with mild roastiness should be evident.

Hop aroma may be moderate to low. Esters and diacetyl may be moderate to none.

Appearance: Medium brown to dark brown in color. Clarity and head retention should be fair to good.

Flavor: Malt flavor will include mild to moderate roastiness.

Hop flavor low to none. Hop bittering will vary the balance from slightly malty to slightly bitter. Diacetyl, and sourness or sharpness from dark grains, should be low to none.

Mouthfeel: Medium-light to medium bodied. Low to moderate carbonation.

Overall Impression: A fairly substantial dark ale with some roasty characteristics.

Vital Statistics: OG: 1.040-1.050

IBUs: 20-30 FG: 1.008-1.014

SRM: 20-35 ABV: 3.8-5.2%

Commercial Examples: Samuel Smith Taddy Porter, Fuller's London Porter.

16. STOUT

16A. Dry Stout

Aroma: Coffee-like roasted barley and roasted malt aromas are prominent. Esters low to medium. Diacetyl moderate to none. Hop aroma low to none.

Appearance: Deep garnet to black in color. Clarity is irrelevant in such a dark beer. A thick, creamy, long-lasting head is characteristic.

Flavor: Moderate acidity/sourness and sharpness from roasted grains, and medium to high hop bitterness, provide a dry finish. Balancing factors may include some creaminess, moderate to low fruitiness, and medium to no diacetyl.

Mouthfeel: Medium-light to medium body, with a creamy character. Low to moderate carbonation.

Overall Impression: A very dark, roasty, bitter, creamy ale.

Vital Statistics: OG: 1.035-1.050

IBUs: 30-50 FG: 1.007-1.011

SRM: 35+ ABV: 3.2-5.5%

Commercial Examples: Guinness Draught Stout (also canned), Murphy's Stout, Beamish Stout.

16B. Sweet Stout

Aroma: Mild roasted grain aromas. Fruitiness can be low to high. Diacetyl medium to none. Hop aroma low to none.

Appearance: Very dark amber to black in color, which makes clarity essentially unimportant. Creamy head.

Flavor: Dark roasted grains and malts dominate the flavor as in dry stout, though there is medium to high sweetness. Hopping is moderate and tends to be lower than in dry stout, emphasizing the malt sweetness.

Mouthfeel: Full-bodied and creamy. Carbonation low to moderate.

Overall Impression: A very dark, sweet, full-bodied, slightly roasty ale.

Vital Statistics: OG: 1.035-1.066

IBUs: 20-40

FG: 1.010-1.022

SRM: 35+

ABV: 3-5.6%

Commercial Examples: Mackeson's XXX Stout, Watney's Cream Stout, Tennent's Milk Stout.

16C. Oatmeal Stout

Aroma: Mild roasted grain aromas. Fruitiness should be low to medium. Diacetyl medium to none. Hop aroma low to none.

Appearance: Black in color. Thick creamy head. Dark color will likely obscure any clarity.

Flavor: Medium sweet to medium dry, with the complexity of dark roasted grains prominent. Medium hop bitterness with the balance toward malt. Diacetyl low to medium. May have a slight nuttiness.

Mouthfeel: Full bodied, smooth, silky, with an oily or even mealy texture from the oatmeal.

Overall Impression: A very dark, full-bodied, roasty, malty ale.

Vital Statistics: OG: 1.035-1.060

IBUs: 20-50 FG: 1.010-1.018

SRM: 35+ ABV: 3.3-6.0%

Commercial Examples: Samuel Smith Oatmeal Stout, Young's Oatmeal Stout, Brew Moon Eclipse.

16D. Foreign Extra Stout

Aroma: Roasted grain aromas prominent. Fruitiness medium to high. Diacetyl low to medium. Hop aroma low to none. Occasionally has the aroma of alcohol.

Appearance: Very deep brown to black in color. Clarity usually obscured by deep color.

Flavor: Can range from sweet to dry, with roasted grain character obvious but not sharp. Fruitiness can be low to high, diacetyl medium to none. Hop bitterness can be medium to high.

Mouthfeel: Medium full body, creamy character. May give a warming impression.

Overall Impression: A very dark, moderately sweet, strong, roasty ale.

History: Originally high-gravity stouts brewed for tropical markets. Some bottled export versions of dry or sweet stout may also fit this profile.

Vital Statistics: OG: 1.050-1.075

IBUs: 35-70 FG: 1.010-1.017

SRM: 35+ ABV: 5-7.5%

Commercial Examples: ABC Stout, Guinness Foreign Extra Stout (bottled).

December Strong Belgian tasting and mini-competition during the January monthly meeting!

A reminder that due to the overwhelming fun at the EHG Holiday Party, the formal strong Belgian ale tasting and mini-competition was delayed to the January meeting. The tasting will take place along with the regularly scheduled Porters and Stouts tasting and mini-competition. So, bring any of your strong Belgian ales with you along with your porters and stouts.

The Beerstein

The Ales of Old

by Greg Wondga

In medieval England, huge festivals were held in celebration of various important events. At that time, these festivals were called 'ales'. Of course, the term has evolved over the years to now define a type of beer. Many of these medieval parties still exist today, and some regrettably do not. Here is a list of some of the ales of old:

Bachelor Ale: This was the precursor to the bachelor parties of today. The primary purpose of the bachelor ale was to raise money for the new couple. Donations were given for each tankard of ale consumed. If a few people happened to have a great time in the process, it was a bonus.

Bride Ale: The obvious way to get double your money and gifts when you got married was to have one party for the boys, and one for the girls. The bride ale was analogous to the modern bachelorette party. As with the bachelor ale, each tankard of ale was exchanged for a gift or money. The term bride ale was shortened eventually to the term used today, 'bridal'.

Weddyn Ale: On the special day, the mother of the bride brewed ale that was to be served at the weddyn ale, or what we now refer to as the reception party. As with most ales, the purpose was to exchange beer for money and gifts. A guest would make sure to bring enough money or gifts to the wedding to afford the amount they wanted to drink.

Groaning Ale: At childbirth, a celebration was held for the new addition to the family. I doubt that the new mother was too enthused about this festivity, or its name.

Give Ale: If a first son were born, the parents would celebrate the arrival of the legacy by having a huge party with free beer for all.

Cuckoo Ale or Lamb Ale: A celebration of springtime. Cuckoo refers to the singing of the birds, and lamb refers to lambing season, when the baby lambs are born. You would think that in our frigid country we too would place more emphasis on celebrating the end of a cold winter.

Harvest Ale: A celebration of Autumn, when the harvest was done. Farmers could now afford to celebrate, and plenty of grain was available for brewing.

Tithe Ale: Churches held festivals serving beer to bring the people of the community in and persuade them to pay their tithes.

It's interesting how the traditions have changed. Can you imagine a couple trying to make a profit by selling beer at their wedding today? Perhaps, just for the sake of tradition, some of you may decide to hold a harvest ale this autumn.

Greg

beersteincolumn@hotmail.com

Beers to try over the holidays

Alley Kat has released two venerable favourites just in time for the holidays. *Chat O Oatmeal Stout* is available in bottles at Chateau Louis. Coming in at 5.5% it is considerably stronger than Guinness at a whimpy 4.2%. *Chat O* is for the serious stout lover. It is a true oatmeal stout being on the dry side of spectrum with just enough oatmeal for a bit of slickness. Plenty of roast coffee character coupled with a firm body makes this a memorable brew.

Alley Kat's second release is the much-anticipated 2003 edition of *Olde Deuteronomy Barley Wine*. It is available at several liquor stores, including Chateau Louis, and also at Alley Kat. At 10.0% this beer is not for the faint of heart. It makes a statement with a huge malt palette coupled with an assertive hoppiness, an excellent winter warmer. Roxy suggests buying at least a few if not more, 24-bottle cases to put down for several years. At around \$2.00 - \$2.25 a bottle, this is a bargain barley wine. And it is only going to get better as it ages. Quantities are limited and those "in the know", know that this beer is a keeper.

While at Chateau Louis, Roxy also checked out some Belgian Ales. One of the nicer finds was *Artevelde Grande Cru*, a nice double. It has a distinct chocolate malt palette and just enough cloviness to be interesting. Goes down nice and easy with a soft yet dry finish. Unlike *Chimay Red*, which tends to be quite fizzy being conditioned with a lager yeast, the *Artevelde* comes across like a fine ale with enough carbonation to throw a distinct but not huge head. Less gassy than *Chimay*, she found it easier drinking. The solid malt character also separates this beer from *Chimay*, which tends to lean towards a more distinct yeast character. At 7.0% *Artevelde* is big but not huge, pleasantly warming but not a pounder. It's a soft kiss at midnight. Well worth seeking out.



Edmonton Homebrewers Guild

Membership Info

Membership in the Guild is open to anyone, from any place, interested in brewing better beer. The only membership restriction is one must be of legal drinking age in Alberta.

Member expertise ranges from the most basic of novices to distinguished experts who have been brewing for about 20 years including a few professional brewers. While many members enjoy all-grain brewing, some of our best brewers are extract specialists. The Guild simply encourages its members to brew better beer; no matter what path they choose to follow.

Benefits of Membership:

- Monthly newsletter
- Savings on beer making supplies including a yearly hop order and discounts from some of the local homebrew shops
- Discount on the Beer Judge Certification program
- Learn to brew better beer!

Group Brews

Organized group brews are also a featured activity of the club. Styles are selected months in advance and experienced brewers lead a brewing session to create the beers. On an appointed meeting night, a panel of judges evaluates the beers and leads the members through a tasting session.

The Annual Hop Order

The club makes an annual hop purchase in November, available only to current Guild members. We purchase fresh leaf hops and plugs. The bulk purchase is a great membership benefit as it ensures we get the best available hops at a good price.

Monthly Theme Nights

Theme nights at each monthly meeting provide an opportunity to learn about different styles of beer and provide members that are taking the Beer Judging Certification Program to judge some beers. It is also an opportunity for members to have their beers tasted, judged and evaluated before sending entries off to competitions. Several of the monthly Theme nights are designated "AHA" where the beer deemed the best of the night, will go forward to an AHA event.

Membership Fees

Membership is \$25.00 per year and is renewed at the beginning of each brewing season in September.

Sign me up as an ongoing member of the Edmonton Homebrewers Guild!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Province: _____

Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____

Email Addr: _____

Email the newsletter to me.

Note: Adobe Acrobat Reader is required to view and print electronic versions of the newsletter.

New Member, Renewing Member

Membership Fees (per year): \$25.00

Please make checks payable to:

The Edmonton Homebrewers Guild