

The Worthouse News

A Publication of the Edmonton Homebrewers Guild

February 2005



Upcoming Events

February Meeting

February 7, 2005 7:30 PM

Alley Kat Brewing

Theme: Sour Beers (AHA)

March Meeting

March 7, 2005 7:30 PM

Alley Kat Brewing

Theme: Strong Beers

April Meeting

April 4, 2005 7:30 PM

Alley Kat Brewing

Theme: Extract Beers (AHA)

The Edmonton Homebrewers Guild

Executives (Sept 2004 to August 2005)

President Bob Boufford

Vice-President Kevin Zaychuk

Secretary Boyd Oberhoffner

Treasurer Ray Duperon

Competition Chair Arnold Moerth

Newsletter Editor Matthew Smolak

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 WCBC 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 editors.

View from the Top of the Tun

By Bob Boufford, President

Many of us are probably feeling "So many competitions, so little time", or that's how it seems these days with all the homebrew competitions that are starting to appear on the calendar. Add in all the other commitments with work, school and family life, it does get to be a juggling act to schedule a brewing session. And it doesn't help that the weather was nice during the workweek and turned lousy during the weekend.

As you will see there are several competitions coming up. If you have the time to brew, definitely build up your entry inventory for the upcoming competitions. If you look through past articles in *The Worthouse News*, a recommendation given by Roxy and Greg is to set aside 6 to 12 bottles for competitions every time you bottle or keg some beer. Put a big red label on each bottle that says, "Hands off. Do not drink, competition only!" Unfortunately, I made the mistake of not doing that for a few beers and suddenly discovered I didn't have enough entries for a second round competition.

Speaking of sending out entries to competitions, this year we are going to start encouraging everyone to submit their entry beers in 341 ml Canadian brewing industry-standard brown glass bottles or similar size and shaped 12 oz import bottles, particularly for the ALES-Regina AHA First Round competition and the EHG Aurora Brewing Challenge MCAB First Round. We are not discouraging you from submitting in other bottle sizes such as stubbies, plastic, 500 ml glass or swing-tops. It's a matter of efficient cost-effective group shipping and potential shipping challenges to later second round competitions, particularly "south of the border". We are just putting out the word early enough so you can plan accordingly.

Even if you do not submit any entries to the upcoming competitions, there are many other ways you can participate in competitions and learn a lot about homebrewing, beers and beer styles. (Continued on page 2)



Canada Flag Day
15 Feb 2005

February Monthly Meeting
February 7th, 7:30 PM
Mini-competition entries by 6:45 - 7:00 PM

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

I found stewarding to be a great a good starting experience for those of you new to homebrew competitions. Even if you never enter a beer, I assure you that there will be a great learning experience. It was stewarding at my first Aurora Brewing Challenge where I was able to experience some beer styles that we can never find in the local liquor store. So, as the call goes out for stewards and volunteers at the various competitions, including our club-only monthly mini-competitions and the upcoming The Brew House Brew-off, don't hesitate to raise you hand and plan on a good time.

Now, what about the time issue and all the other challenges that might but a crunch on your brewing? One trick I have found is to first follow Charlie P's advice, "Relax, don't worry, have a home brew!" and if you don't have any home brew follow this variation, "Relax, don't worry, have an Alley Kat!" And one very important key I have found is to work in smaller batches to get more beer styles and potential entries.

How can you do smaller batches? One way is make a standard 5-gallon wort then split the wort into two fermenters with different yeasts or additional hopping. From my experiences hacking The Brew House kits, you can get some distinct differences splitting the wort into two fermenters with English yeast in one fermenter and Belgian Trappist yeast in the other fermenter. Or better yet, join together with some fellow EHG members and make a larger amount of wort that can be split among you.

Once I get through February, I'm even considering looking at parti-gyle when I do all grain brewing. For those not familiar with parti-gyle, it's an old technique of using first runnings for a high-gravity beer and then re-mashing to get second runnings for a smaller low gravity "sessional" beer. Hacking a Brew House kit with half going straight into one fermenter and the other half diluted with water as it goes into the fermenter is sort of like doing a parti-gyle. The upcoming BURRP! 3 might be a good time to give parti-gyle a try.

I look forward to seeing everyone on Monday. Remember bring beers to share and learn.

Bob

From the Bottom of the Mash

By Matthew Smolak, Co-Editor

Even though spring is officially still a number of weeks away, the recent nice weather has got me itching to brew outside. Just last weekend I was trying out a new propane burner/smoker/BBQ unit I bought a little while back. I was outside making some homemade smoked malt for an entry I am planning for BURRP! 3. I will bring in some of the malt at the next meeting for any interested folks to check out along with the other malts I've been making. By the way, if smoking beers is your thing (much healthier than smoking cigarettes), you might be interested in knowing that Alley Kat is brewing another smoked porter - I can't wait!

But back to BURRP! 3. If you are up for an easy but fun challenge, be sure to pick up your plain two-row malt from Bob at the next meeting. I've already bought some and have been busy in the kitchen, and on the deck, making my specialty malts for a variety of entries I am planning.

In fact, despite lots of writing and studying about beer, it has been a while since I've actually brewed a batch of beer. So I have plans this weekend to get back in the habit of regular brewing. And my timing couldn't be better as there are lots of competitions coming up to send beer to for some constructive feedback.

Inside this issue you will find details on a number of those competitions: March in Montreal, the Ales Club in Regina, the Lethbridge Werthogs, the Marquis de Suds in Calgary, our own Brew House Brew Off and BURPP! So read on for lots of information about these assorted competitions.

It has been said many times before, but entering beers in competition is always useful. You may think your beer is only average but you may be surprised. More importantly, you get feedback that may help you identify characteristics in your beer that you haven't been able to pin down. It can also help determine how close you are brewing to a particular style you are aiming for. And there are many more reasons to enter. If you are unsure of what category to enter a beer into, then bring some down to the next meeting and share it with some fellow beer geeks - we'd all be happy to help!

Matthew

Important Upcoming Events

EHG 2nd Annual Brew House Brew-Off Competition

February 26-27, 2005



The Edmonton Homebrewer's Guild in co-operation with Southside Brew Crew, are having the second annual contest for the Best Brew House Brewer!

Competition Deadlines

Entries are due on Friday, February 18, 2005, and can be taken to:

Alley Kat Brewing Co
9929-60th Ave, Edmonton

Southside Brew Crew
5718-111 Street, Edmonton

Judging will take place on the weekend of February 26-27. Awards will be presented at the monthly meeting of the Edmonton Homebrewers Guild at Alley Kat Brewing Co. on Monday, March 7, starting at 7:30 P.M. All competitors are encouraged to turn out to the awards night and to bring some of their beers for other competitors to try out.

Entry Forms

Entry Forms will be available at:

- Southside Brew Crew
- Edmonton Homebrewers Guild webpage:
http://www.ehg.ca/COMPS/BrewHouseBrewOff_2005.pdf

For the competition, only brews made using the following seven Brew House Kits as a base are eligible: American Premium Lager, Cream Ale, India Pale Ale, Munich Dark Lager, Pale Ale, Prairie Wheat and Red Ale. For each kit, participants can enter the style of the base kit or any of the other styles associated with that kit.

Prizes will be awarded for the best three beers made using each of the seven kits. All non-EHG entrants receive guest memberships in the Guild from March 2005 until August 2005.

2005 WZZ Homebrew Competition

February 27, 2005



The Edmonton Homebrewers Guild has been invited to send entries to the Washoe Zephyr Zymurgists (WZZ) Homebrew Competition.

The competition is a BJCP certified and AHA sanctioned competition.

The grand prize is the opportunity to brew your beer at Great Basin Brewing Company in Reno, Nevada along with \$50 gift certificates from the Reno Homebrewer and from Beer, Beer and More Beer.

WZZ has a highly skilled base of BJCP judges that will be participating in the event who can provide valuable feedback prior to the AHA 2005 National Homebrew Competition.

Entries are due between February 5-19 and fees are \$6 for the first entry and \$4 for additional ones.

For more details including online registration and an event flyer, check out <http://washoezz.net/competition.html>

March in Montreal

March 19, 2005

The deadline for submissions is 19-Feb-05. This year's winner of Best of Show will be brewed and bottled for commercial release by La Brasserie Les Trois Mousquetaires. Competition entry forms are available at <http://www.homebrewers.ca> in the Competitions section.

Lethbridge Werthogs Homebrew Competition

March 12, 2005

The Lethbridge Werthogs will host their annual Homebrew Competition Saturday March 12th, 2005. The entry deadline is 5:00 pm on Saturday, March 5, 2005. Two bottle entries at \$6 per entry. The entry forms and competition details can be obtained by contacting Veryl Todd, toddivi@telusplanet.net or 403-381-8314

2005 ALES Home Brew Open

April 25, 2005

The ALES Club is getting ready to host its 2005 Home Brew Open, which is an AHA Qualifier Competition. Last year this was a huge competition and several EHG members placed, including second and third place in best of show. In addition to our own Aurora Brewing Challenge, be sure to set aside some bottles for this competition. Details to follow shortly but start brewing now!

Marquis de Suds Competition in Calgary

June 25/26, 2005

Word has come from Calgary that the Marquis de Suds brew club will be holding their homebrew competition in late June. Watch here for more details in future issues of the Worthouse News.

Third Annual Brewing Under Really Ridiculous Parameters! (BURRP!)

It time for the third annual BURRP! - Brewing Under Really Ridiculous Parameters! - an in-house competition to see who can brew the best beer within certain limitations. Since beer at one time or other has been made with other sources of fermentables including many different vegetables, this year's BURRP! is themed "Squashed Roots."

To begin there will be the same limitation of starting with 10 lbs/4.5 kg of 2-row pale malt as your base malt. As with previous BURRP!s, you can roast, toast, smoke and stew to make any specialty malts for your recipe. To have Really Ridiculous Parameters, along with the malt, you will need to add to your mash, one pound of squash or a root-type vegetable (root, tuberous root or tuber)

Your mission, should you decide to accept this ridiculous challenge, is to take that 10 pounds of base malt, and try to make your own Munich, your own crystal, your own black or brown or smoked malt. Then throw in a pound of squash or root-type veggies.

EXTRACT BREWERS – As with previous years, you're in the game also, but the rules are a wee bit different for you. Instead of 10 lbs of malt you will start with 5 lbs of DME and 5 lbs of malt but you still need to include at least 1 pound of squash or root-type vegetables.

Rules of the game:

(Condensed. Full rules are in the January, 2005 issue of *The Worthouse News*)

1. Sign up at the January through March meetings. You can enter as many brews as you want. Teamwork is encouraged.
2. To ensure that we all start at as close to the same point as possible, the Guild has purchased the malt and will sell 2.5 kg (5.5 lb) bags at \$5.00 per bag to members during the January through March meetings.
3. Go to the local grocery store and get a pound or more of a squash or root-type vegetable. The basic rule is the entire pound of vegetables can be eaten during a normal family meal. If you are not sure a vegetable qualifies, you should get approval from the competition chair Bob or past chair, Roxy.
4. Name your beer, which should include the name of the vegetable such as "Red Beet Bock"
5. Bring at least 4 bottles of the results to the May meeting – more is better, this should be a real hoot.
6. Awards will be given for
 - ⚡ Best overall beer – regardless of style
 - ⚡ Closest to a BJCP style
 - ⚡ Most outrageous attempt at a style – e.g. a Porter, a Schwartz, an Imperial Stout
 - ⚡ Most outrageous use of squash or root-type vegetable.

To help extract or new brewers who might want to take this as the opportunity to try all-grain brewing, experienced EHG all-grain brewers will donate a Saturday or two at the beginning of March to helping you brew. We will bring all equipment to Alley Kat. You bring your recipe, all your ingredients and a fermenter. We will help you do a single infusion mash and get the wort into your fermenter. You have to get your wort home after it's made – no fermenting at Alley Kat. To be fair, we will not advise you on how to create the recipe. Sign up at the February meeting to will arrange a Saturday to do the brews. We will do AM and PM runs with 3-4 people at a time.

Making Your Own Specialty Malts Or how to keep warm on cold winter nights

By Matthew Smolak

I need to be quite up front about something: this article is not going to be very comprehensive. Nor is it going to be very scientific. Also, it isn't really about making specialty malts so much as sort of making specialty malts. So what is this about? Well, it's about how I attempted to mimic a few specialty malts using some plain two-row malt and my kitchen oven.

This article isn't comprehensive because I am only going to write about the few malt types I attempted. It isn't very scientific because I rely on the accuracy of my stove's thermometer (which I think is pretty accurate but may vary from other people's) and I rely upon the heating characteristics and ability of that stove compared to others. And it isn't really about making specialty malts because making specialty malts occurs in the malting process, not after malting is complete. In other words, manufacturers do not simply buy a bunch of malted two-row and then make specialty malts. They buy barley and either make two-row malt or specialty malts with it.

Now that I have clarified things (I hope), let me tell you what I did and why.

Normally I would just buy the specialty malts I need because their characteristics are more quantifiable and reliable than what I might make at home, and it is a lot less work. However, I want to brew a few batches of beer for this year's BURRP! challenge and part of that challenge is "making" the specialty malts you need from plain two-row malt. Now, I don't want to give away too much about what I planning on brewing, but I will tell you about how I attempted to make the following malts: Vienna, Munich and Brown. I may still make more at home, but these are what I have made so far

If you are interested in making smoked malt, you can see the article I wrote for the October Worthouse News about the malt I made with Roxy.

Vienna

I made the Vienna malt by using a low temperature and a short period of time. I set the oven at 300°F and put a pound of two-row on a large cookie sheet in the oven for 10 minutes. That's all it took to give the room a nice cookie smell and make what I hope will substitute for Vienna malt.

Munich

The Munich was made by keeping the oven at 300°F. Another one pound of two-row went on a large cookie sheet and put in the oven. After 10 minutes I pulled it out, stirred it and then put it back in for an additional 10 minutes. After making a number of pounds of Munich, the smell of cookies was stronger in the house and the kitchen was getting a little warm. At this point smoke isn't much of an issue, but I've opened the kitchen window anyway.

Brown

Making the Brown malt is more of a challenge. Not because the process is any more difficult, but because your spouse is more likely to get upset as the nice smell of cookies from the other malts is replaced with smoke. It also gets warmer, which is a good supplement to the furnace running in overdrive on a cold evening! Anyway, making the brown malt is only a bit more complex than the Munich in that the temperature is higher (400°F) and I moved the malt in and out of the oven more times. I put one pound of two-row malt on a large cookie sheet in the oven for 10 minutes, then removed it and stirred it up. I put it back in for another 10 minutes, removed it, stirred it up and put it back in for 8 minutes, removed and stirred it and put it in for a final 5 minutes (for a total of 33 minutes in the oven).

With all of the malts, I put the finished products in open containers for a week, stirring them up every day to get rid of any smoke or fumes that might be on them (except when I make smoked malt in which case I do not want to lose any of the aromas).

There will be some amount of smoke in making any of the malts, ranging from nearly negligible in the Vienna to slight in the Munich to fairly heavy in the Brown (though nothing like what you get trying to make chocolate malt!).

Part of the purpose and fun of the BURRP! challenges are to get amateur brewers to think and learn a bit about the malts we use and the different characteristics we get from those malts in our beer. It also gives us an even greater appreciation for the difficulty of achieving consistency in different batches of the same recipe. Not only can brewing conditions vary (such as mash temperature), but the quality and character of the ingredients can vary, too. The only way to learn, though, is to try, so buy your two-row at the meeting, fire up your oven and get cooking!

Diacetyl and Acetaldehyde

A BJCP Question and Answer

By Matthew Smolak

Diacetyl

Diacetyl is a compound found in beer that can be detected by a variety of senses: smell, taste and mouth feel. The amount of diacetyl in a beer can vary from non-existent or imperceptible to excessive. Furthermore, depending upon the amount, diacetyl may be acceptable or unacceptable in any given beer style.

It is commonly described as an artificial butter, butterscotch or toffee-like aroma and flavour. As for mouth feel, it is often perceived by slickness in the mouth.

Diacetyl is a by-product of the fermentation process. Normally yeast can reabsorb diacetyl, converting it into innocuous diols. High levels may result, though, if beer is prematurely removed from the yeast (denying the yeast time to reabsorb diacetyl) or by exposing beer to oxygen during fermentation. The amount created, if any, can increase with high fermentation temperatures. Coincidentally, higher fermentation temperatures can also promote elimination of diacetyl by yeast. Yeast may be inhibited in reabsorbing diacetyl either by mutation of the yeast or low levels of free available nitrogen.

Diacetyl can be created at low fermentation temperatures. To eliminate it in lagers, brewers may raise the temperature of beer, in conditioning tanks, to about 50-55°F for a few days (called a diacetyl rest) to allow remaining yeast to remove the diacetyl.

The other source of diacetyl is by the introduction of bacteria into the beer, specifically "Pediococcus damnosus" (what a great name!) and would generally be the result of accidental exposure and infection.

In limited amounts, diacetyl is acceptable in some styles of beers, particularly Scottish ales and Irish Red Ale. It may also be present in some lagers, particularly Czech pilsners, and Vienna-style beers.

Acetaldehyde

Acetaldehyde is not only difficult to pronounce and spell, but can be problematic in beer. It is best described as smelling and tasting like fresh cut

green apple, cut grass or latex paint. Acetaldehyde can impart an acid or tart character to beer.

Normally acetaldehyde is reduced to ethanol by yeast in secondary fermentation. This can be reversed by oxidation of the finished beer (oxidation converts the ethanol back into acetaldehyde). Also, elevated levels can occur in green beer or when beer is prematurely removed from yeast during fermentation. Bacteria, namely Acetobacter and Zymomonas, can also cause acetaldehyde.

Acetaldehyde is not an acceptable character in most beers, the exception being in low amounts in American lagers.

Recipe Corner

January Monthly Theme Winners

This month, since first and second place finished so closely, we are presenting both recipes

First Place – Killed Kenny

Brewed by Ryan Rybchuk

Ryan Rybchuk's Irish Red Ale just edged out the competition. As a note, Ryan made almost all of his malt for this beer, so the grain bill should be considered as estimates.

8.00 lbs Copeland pale kiln
 1.25 lbs Copeland medium crystal
 0.50 lbs Copeland dark roast
 0.25 lbs Hugh Baird roast barley
 1.25 oz Whole Perle (6.1%AA) – 60 min.
 1.00 oz Homegrown Hallertau (~5%AA) 60 min.
 Wyeast 1084 Irish Ale Yeast

Single infusion mash for 75 minutes at 68°F, dropping to 61°F.

Wort boiled for 90 minutes.

Water was treated with non-hydrated calcium carbonate (CaCO₃)

Original Gravity: 1.048 -- Final Gravity: 1.011

Second Place – Irish Red Ale

Brewed by Glen Hannah

Glen's entry was brewed using a Brew House kit. He explains in his own words how he made it work:

When I stated that I used a Brew House kit at the January meeting, Ryan called me a "cheater." Well I suppose he's right considering the hours of effort he put into brewing his Irish Red. (i.e. roasting his own homegrown malts and using homegrown hops). In my defence, I think the kits are great, particularly when one is short on time, the

neighbours are waiting for more homebrew and there's a huge whack of yeast slurry sitting on the bottom of a primary just waiting to be used again. In this case, how could I resist? Besides, Christmas was coming up. There isn't much to my recipe but here it goes...

The lads at KGB Brewing (Kevin, Glen, Bruce) brewed a Barley Wine in October 2004 using Wyeast 1098 Irish Ale yeast. After racking this beer from the glass primary, I added a Brew House Irish Red Ale kit, six litres of spring water and the kit's water conditioner to the yeast slurry and let the fermentation processes take their course.

I generally tweak the Brew House kits to learn more, however this time I decided to leave it alone. The temperature in my basement sits at around 64 degrees and that was the constant fermentation temperature.

The beer sat in the glass primary for five days after which I racked it to a glass secondary for another 14 days before kegging it with 20psi of CO₂ and chilling it. I emphasize using glass fermentors because I find I attain better results than I do using plastic. The chances of beer acquiring any off flavours or any other undesirable characteristics are almost slim to none using glass.

Out of the keg, the carbonation is perfect. I still have some difficulty trying to achieve bottling from the keg. Roxy made a suggestion at the January meeting and Bruce has a counter-flow filler that I will try to borrow.

Glen

The Beerstein

Brewing – A Science or an Art Form?

By Greg Wondga

Brewing is the ultimate hobby for both science and art types alike.

The scientific brewer enjoys the experimentation – altering only one variable at a time, calculating efficiency, documenting results, predicting exact quantities of ingredients, etc. Of course, the scientist discusses popular brewing methods with other experts before creating the masterpiece that looks, smells, tastes, and feels exactly as intended. And if the beer is not exactly as intended, a reflective discussion ensues about how the body could have been reduced slightly, or how to decrease the parts per million of dimethyl sulfide for next time. This scientist spends weeks prior to the

brew day reading on the BJCP recognized style before developing a recipe that matches all of the numbers exactly. The style guidelines are like a gospel scripture to be honoured and respected as THE authority of how beer should be. The favourite beer of the scientist is a perfectly engineered German lager. The ultimate dream of the scientist is to produce a beer deserving of a perfect score of 50/50 at a reputable home brewing competition sanctioned by the BJCP. The scientific brewer only likes to drink commercial beers that brew to BJCP styles.

The artist brewer refuses to let the numbers dictate how s(he) brews. Instead, ingredients are measured by whim. The artist develops the recipe the morning of the brew, but may later change it mid brew depending on how things “feel”. The colour of the beer is described using metaphors and similes instead of SRM units. The purpose of sanitation is to allow the Belgian yeast strains to have their ultimate freedom of expression. The BJCP guidelines may be followed, but only as a suggestion. The artist will evaluate a beer on its own merits regardless of how closely it matches a BJCP style. The favourite beer of an artist is a Belgian lambic. Artists rarely repeat a batch of beer – did Leonardo da Vinci paint two Mona Lisas? Artistic brewers only brew to style so that they can increase their skill set in order to later create brews that better express their inner thoughts and feelings. This is no different to a novice painter learning the styles of Matisse, Dali, and Van Gogh in order to eventually develop his/her own style. Therefore, the ultimate goal of the artist is to develop a brand new beer style that will some day be included in the BJCP guidelines and copied by many. To the artist, beer doesn't have to be made to style to be worthy of praise. In fact, even the worst beer s(he) ever had was bloody beautiful.

Most of us fall somewhere in between the scientist and the artist. As brewers we constantly choose between these two philosophies of beer making, yet – no matter what philosophy we accept – we all have the same desire to get better. It is my opinion that the ultimate brewer is somewhere on the equator, sitting on the fence, in a grey area, a hybridization of the scientist and the artist. The best of us can think of brewing as science AND art.

Happy Brewing!

Greg