



## From the Bottom of the Mash

By the EHG Editors

I can't believe it is already February! This mild weather has probably been a good thing for the outdoor/garage brewers in the club. We should all definitely take advantage of this good weather and put our brewing into high gear since there are only a couple months left until the deadline for the AHA first round entries. Once again, our neighbor, ALES club is hosting the AHA Canadian qualifying site for the largest Homebrew competition in the world. I can't wait to enter tons of beer and see how my brewing has improved...(I hope). ALES is also hosting the Hot Break Conference this year in conjunction with their large competition during the April 7-9 weekend. It would be nice to show a strong presence of EHG members that weekend to help out with judging, stewarding, and attend the conference. Hopefully we can come together to plan a group trip for a fun weekend in Saskabush!

I can now officially say that I have prizes for the Yukon Red Replicator! The boys in Yukon came through with enough stuff to make everyone happy. Dave Gardner, the Edmonton Yukon sales representative, delivered the prizes on the 28th and joined us on our pub tour last month. Dave is also planning on joining us for the comparison of the Arctic Red at our regular club meeting Monday February 6 at 7:00 pm.

All participants, please be sure to bring enough of your arctic red to share with all members attending as well as a bottle or two to send back up to the brewery in Whitehorse.

### Kurt

Is it winter yet? This has been the best Belgian beer brewing season with nice warm mid-70s F temperatures in my apartment. Of course, I'll probably be brewing ales in May, knee-deep in snow.

As you will see in this issue, it's competition season again. This is a good time to bring your beers to the meetings for tastings by all the BJCP judges and other members. The input from fellow members will help in submitting your brews in award winning categories.

Thanks Jim W. for all you efforts with the EHG web site over the years!

### Bob

## Upcoming Competitions

# Edmonton Homebrewers Guild 3rd Annual



## Brew - Off

## February 25-26, 2006

You already know that Brew House makes the best kit beers available. Now's your chance to prove that you're the Best Brew House Brewer!

The Edmonton Homebrewers Guild (EHG) in co-operation with Brew Crew/Winning Wines Plus stores are offering you the chance to show that you're at the top of the pack when it comes to brewing expertise! Besides the glory of being named *Best Brew House Brewer of the Year* there's gonna be some nifty prizes to boot!



[www.ehg.ca](http://www.ehg.ca)

Entry brochures are available from an Brew Crew store and the EHG web site (<http://www.ehg.ca>)

## Lethbridge Werthogs 7th Annual WertContest Homebrew Competition

**March 18, 2006**

The Lethbridge Werthogs will host their annual Homebrew Competition Saturday March 18th, 2006. The entry deadline is 5:00 pm on Saturday, March 5, 2005. Two bottle entries at \$6 per entry. Details of the competition are on the Werthogs web site ([www.netcon.ca/werthogs/](http://www.netcon.ca/werthogs/)) They are also looking for judges. This is a good opportunity for newly minted BJCP judges to gain points towards Certified or National rank and get ready for the ALES competition. Contact Veryl Todd, [toddivi@telusplanet.net](mailto:toddivi@telusplanet.net) or 403-381-8314 for details on the competition or if you are interested in judging or stewarding.

## ALES 2006 Homebrew Open & AHA Qualifier Competition

**April; 6th to 8th, 2006**

The 2006 ALES Homebrew Open/AHA Qualifier competition will be held April 6th to 8th, 2006. Check the ALES Club (Regina) web site (<http://www.alesclub.com>). An EHG group shipment is planned for March, so get your entries ready!

ALES is also putting out a call for judges. Those of us who have judged in the past two competitions can tell you it's well worth the drive across the prairie to Regina. This is another very good opportunity for new BJCP judges to gain points.

The ALES Club will also be hosting the third Annual Hotbreak 2006 as part of the Western Canada Confederation of Homebrew Clubs. More details to follow.

## Fourth Annual Brewing Under Really Ridiculous Parameters! (BURRP!):

**"Don't Hop, Jump Back to the Beginning"**

**May 1, 2006**

As announced last month, it is time for the fourth annual BURRP! - Brewing Under Really Ridiculous Parameters! - "*Don't Hop, Jump Back to the Beginning*". This year's ridiculous parameter is to brew a beer with no hops but any other herb or spice to provide the bitterness and flavouring.

And this year there will be real prizes! Details on the competition can be read in last month's newsletter available for reading on the EHG web site.

## Getting pumped ...

### Entering your brews in competition

*(Editor's Note: Later in the newsletter, we have re-published Greg Wondga's sage advice to winning medals.)*

The July-August 2003 issue of *Brew Your Own* magazine had two excellent articles on entering your homebrew in a competition. The second article "The Heavy Medal Man – ten more ways to earn points and win awards" by Ed Meason, is the one that best fits the words of wisdom from many of the medal winning members of EHG.

1. Enter! – If you don't enter, how will you know? You may be surprised even with entering the "screw-ups". Note: "Screw-ups" does not mean "bad beer" but a beer that ended up outside the intended style may still be a winner in another close style.
2. Take notes – Roxy's form for keeping good beer records discussed in the November, 2003 issue of *The Worthouse News* is a good foundation. Develop a good record keeping system so you can re-create the winners. (MCAB allows re-brewing for the second round.)
3. Chose the best style – and enter in multiple categories for those borderline brews. *(Ed. Note: BJCP Styles have been updated at <http://www.bjcp.org>)*
4. Set aside entries – At least 12 bottles, clearly marked "**Competition**" so they don't disappear!
5. Brew early and often – You will not only have beer to enter but improve your brewing with practice.
6. All-grain or not – As a former EHG president is oft to quote "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."
7. Do your homework – Read as much as you can, get to the club meetings and share your experiences.
8. Become a judge – and be a serious judge to yourself.
9. Constant temps – to provide stability for the yeast and consistency in your brews.
10. Have fun! That's what it's all about!

## Meet Your Fellow Guild Members!



**Name:** Kevin Zaychuk

**Day job:** Business development manager at 20/20 seed labs Inc.

**Years with EHG:** 7 years

**How long homebrewing:** since I joined the club in 1999

**Favorite beers, (besides Alley Kat!):** Anything drinkable, but if I had to pick a style it would have to be well-hopped British ales.

**Past awards or acknowledgments:** "I was awarded a gold medal for the first beer I made and entered into the ABC in 1999. Otherwise I have received various medals for different beers over the years. The BJCP really helped with understanding the different styles and how to enter my beers properly. I also won the door prize at the ABC two years in a row! I think I am forever banned from winning again!"

**Current Brew System:** "I am part of the KGB (myself, Glen and Bruce) where we brew large volume all-grain batches. At home, I use Brewhouse kits which I think are excellent as well as partial mashes. I try and keep on Bruce's good side in order to brew on his system as often as possible. At home I also have a couple coolers where I keg most my beer and lager it with a prototype Brewlogic temp controller."

**How did you get into homebrewing?** "I worked with a couple of EHG members, Guy and Richard, who brought me some samples of the EHG's work. I loved the beers and came to the next meeting."

**Did anyone teach you or help you in the beginning?** "I learned a lot once in the club from everyone especially Roxy."

**How has your brewing changed from the beginning?** "I tend to experiment more so now than the beginning. I know my styles better since the BJCP course. Sanitation has also come a long way."

**What are some things you have done to experiment?** "I recently used blueberries in a KGB porter that turned out excellent. I have also played around with using tons of hops and experimenting with dry hopping. With the KGB we all experiment with different yeasts in the same wort."

**What is the strangest brew or experiment you have done?** "BURRP has been pretty strange in the past. Otherwise things stay pretty normal."

**Is there one brew or style of brew you would be known for best?** "Currently I would have to say the blueberry porter has been a hit! Otherwise consistently it would be Pale Ales"

**What is your favorite beer you have ever made despite feedback?** "I really enjoyed a Berlinier Wiese I made. The beer had actually gone south on me but turned out great! Most people don't like the Berlinier Wiese style but I really enjoy it."

**Do you use any special or unique ingredients in your brews?** "I use Alberta malts as much as possible, otherwise I usually stay close to a recipe."

**What are you most meticulous about most on brew day ... what things are most important to you to producing a good brew?** "Sanitation, Sanitation, Sanitation."

**Do you have any future goals you would like to achieve with brewing?** "Educate the world about Real Beer! Or at least North America. There is more to beer than just Molson. Support your local guys like Alley Kat!"

**Do you have any brews planned in the near future?** "I plane on brewing a Pilsner style lager. I would love to make a Pilsner Urquell clone and perfect lagering"

**Do you have any memorable moments involving beer?** "I went to Las Vegas with Bruce and judged at the AHA National in 2004. That was a great unforgettable experience. I may go to St. Paul Minnesota and judge the MCAB this year hopefully."

**Do you have any tips for fellow homebrewers?** "Participate in competitions whether you steward or judge. It is a great experience to learn about different styles and faults in beer."

## Beer Fault of the Month

by Mark Nездoly

The topic of this month's column is autolysis. Autolysis is caused by dead yeast, specifically, letting the beer sit on or be in contact with dead yeast.

Autolysis usually isn't a huge issue, but every now and again at a competition I will come across a few beers that exhibit this character. In low amounts, autolysis can be very difficult to diagnose.

In high amounts, autolysis will smell like fat – very much like lard. If you do not know what lard smells like, smell the congealed fat that forms after you've fried some chicken, pork (not bacon), or beef. It's quite unmistakable. It's also common to get a soapy aroma, since some soaps are made from fat as well. This character is also described as "yeast bite", broth-like, meaty, sulphury and dirty diaper. In low concentrations, it smells like a vitamin bottle. To me, it smells exactly like Flintstone vitamins, but I've heard other judges say it smells like vitamin B12.

When yeast cells die, their cell walls rupture and release lipids (generally lipids affects the flavour the most), amino acids, phosphorous compounds, and proteolytic enzymes. These enzymes can degrade beneficial beer foam proteins, and increase protein and carbohydrate hazes. These compounds can actually raise the pH of the beer, thereby affecting the perception other flavours, such as bitterness from hop compounds such as isohumulones.

To avoid autolysis, the number one thing the brewer can do is to not let the beer sit on the yeast cake for an extended period of time. You should avoid letting ales sit in the primary for more than two weeks, and about 3 weeks for lagers. Temperature plays a role, with higher temperatures accelerating the yeast growth cycle. If you repitch your yeast, you should avoid excessive overpitching. You should be fine with fermenting up to 3 batches of beer from the same yeast if you do not wash it. The small amount of yeast present when bottling usually doesn't pose any problems; it's the large yeast cake from the primary that's the main culprit. Generally, healthy yeast will take longer to autolyze.

To get an idea of these aromas, you can perform a simple experiment. If you keg your beer, let an empty sealed keg sit at room temperature for a few weeks. When you open it, that smell is autolysis.

At least it will be if your keg wasn't contaminated with bacteria. If you're really adventurous (brave), take a small amount – perhaps a teaspoon – and stir it into a full beer to get an idea of the flavour as well. If you bottle your homebrew, set aside a bottle once you pour yourself a beer. Leave a very small amount of beer and the yeast in the bottle, and then re-cap it. Set it aside at room temperature for a week or two, then open it and note the aroma. Again, if you're curious, you can swirl up the sediment and pour it into a homebrew to sample the flavour.



## Recipe Corner: Black and Tan Celebration

by Kurt Stenberg

St. Patrick's day is coming up Friday March 17<sup>th</sup>, and what a great excuse to drink some Irish beer. Or why not follow a great tradition and make your own Black and Tan! A "black and tan" is two beers served as one. A dark ale such as a stout /porter is carefully poured on top of a pale ale or even lager. Some Irish pubs serve black and tans usually with Harp Lager or Kilkeny on the bottom, topped with Guinness.

In order to pour a perfect black and tan, you must first pour your pale beer nice and gently and fill your glass about two thirds full. Next, take an old spoon and bend the handle near ninety degrees so you can easily hold it above the pale beer. Finally gently pour the dark ale onto the spoon, letting it slowly fall over the edges and lay it on top the pale beer. Naturally the beers will mix a little but it should be minimal. This can take some practice so it is recommended to start off using small glasses while sober!

Try different beers with different carbonation levels, bodies, and even temperatures. Experimentation should eventually lead you to a perfect pint of Black and Tan!

*(Recipes continued on page 7)*

## The Beerstein Beer Bling Bling

by Greg Wondga

(Editor's Note: Originally published in February, 2004, Greg's advice is still very up-to-date and is being reprinted for the benefit of the new brewers.)

**Medals.** As competitive home-brewers, we covet these babies. A medal is a symbol of competence. Despite the popular misconception that homebrew "tastes like piss", your friends can know that you are, indeed, someone who can produce great beer. In addition to showing off your brewing talent, winning medals can make you a better brewer. Competition motivates brewers to get better and better. Home brewing clubs compete against one another, and therefore the sharing of brewing knowledge is key to a club's success. No matter how you look at it, clubs and competitions make home brewers better at what they do. Let's face it, this is a rewarding hobby, and we all want to make impressive beer.



Some brewers plan out their brews weeks in advance with careful thought regarding the ingredients, brewing process, and yeast selection.

The idea is to produce a beer that fits the Beer Judge Certification Program (BJCP) parameters. Other brewers brew without a style in mind, and then enter what they have in a category that best fits the beer and hope for the best. Some brewers take competition very seriously, with a goal to win as many medals as possible for the club, and some just want some genuine feedback. Either way, competing brings out a flavor of camaraderie, anticipation, and often pride.

To be perfectly honest, I am not a very experienced competitor, and therefore have much less advice to offer than could many other members in the guild. However, I have learned a few things from competing.

### Don't ever take this too seriously

This is a fun hobby. The goal is to make great beer, share it, and enjoy it. If competition is taking the joy away by stressing you out, then you have

the wrong mindset. Competing gives you the spark you may need to move forward in the hobby and try something new.

### Start with beers that are easier, and work your way up to harder styles

The whole idea here, I presume, is to make better beer. In order to improve, I've found it's best to take baby steps. As an illustration, your first beer should not be an all grain Munich Helles. Start with a simple ale such as an American pale or British bitter. Minor flaws are less detectable in beers with plenty of hop flavor, fruit, or spices. Also, these beers are much easier to brew to style.

### Research the style before you brew the beer

*Zymurgy*, *Brew Your Own*, and the *Brewing Techniques* Archive are magazines that contain a wealth of information from experienced brewers on how to brew specific styles of beer. Often these articles include recipes that can be copied directly, or used as a guideline to help you design your own version. In the back of every issue of *Zymurgy* is a list of recipes that have medaled at a prior National Level home brewing competition. If you really want to know a lot about a style, inquire about a set of books called the Classic Beer Style Series. Each book focuses on a particular style and will tell you absolutely everything about it. Many other books exist as well, such as Ray Daniel's *Designing Great Beers*, Dave Miller's *Homebrewing Guide* and Greg Noonan's *Brewing Lager Beer*. I tend to take any information on the Internet with a grain of salt, but some sites offer a lot of useful information. Ask Guild members if they have any good recipes or suggestions. Finally, check out the BJCP style guideline. The judge of your beer will be using that as the guideline, so the beer you make needs to look, smell and taste the way the BJCP says it should. I realize that style guidelines can sometimes place limitations on your creativity. However, if you want to be creative, then do so! You can enter your beer under several creative categories. Examples include the Belgian styles, experimental, spice/herb/vegetable beer, etc.

### Don't get too attached to the style

Even the greatest beer ever made will do poorly if it is entered in the wrong style. Many brewers, experienced or no, set out to brew a specific style of beer but unintentionally end up with a final product that misses the target completely. This "mistake" is NOT a problem! Look through the BJCP guide to see if your beer fits anywhere else.

If you are still unsure, bring it to a meeting and ask as many people as you can to try and fit the beer to a BJCP style. If in doubt over two styles, enter the beer in both. You would be hard pressed to find a brewer who has never had to switch styles after the beer was made.

### Reserve 12 bottles of your beer

Competition probably isn't the reason that you entered this fine hobby. Most likely, you just happen to be someone who loves beer and everything having to do with beer – including making it yourself. Use competition as a tool to learn the craft better. The sacrifice is that you will need to put away some bottles from every batch you make. If you feel like you are just paying money to have some stranger drink your beer, then think of it this way instead: You are paying for unbiased, honest evaluation of your beer. If the beer does well, then you will actually save money by winning prizes that will be used to make more beer. You brewing will just keep getting better every time. Trust me, it's worth it.

### Don't ever take this too seriously

When you get the judge sheets back, remember something Roxy told me; it's important to keep in mind that "sometimes the judges don't know shit". Last year I entered my American Brown Ale into several different competitions under the same class and had a range of scores from 28 to 43! It is this reason especially that you should try to enter the same brew more than once. One bad score certainly doesn't mean that the beer lacks quality. Even though a judge is BJCP qualified, he or she may still be learning about that style of beer. (*Ed. Note: Or at the end of a long day of judging*). Consistency is the key.



It's kind of like the "circle of life" except that it's really the "circle of great beer". If you join a club that consists of extremely talented home brewers, you will quickly learn to make better beer. If you make beer and compete, you will get feedback and initiative to improve. Every member's small

improvement then increases the value of the club to other brewers. New brewers join (and taste fantastic beer at the meetings) and the quality of beer just gets better and better. Let's get those beers going for this year's competitions and win a ton of medals! We belong to easily one of the best clubs in North America, so let's do the EHG proud. Oh yeah, and be sure to raise a glass of your finest home brew when you win a medal, and drink that beer with pride.

Cheers!

*Greg*

### Recipe Corner (continued from page 5)

#### Harp Lager Clone (bottom)

5 Gal. (OG 1.052-1.054) (FG 1.012- 1.013) SRM 4-5, IBU 26

9# 2-Row (pref. Lager malt)  
10 oz. Crystal 10L  
Mash @ 150 F 90 min or until full conversion

\*(? Oz) Hallertau (for bittering) 60 min  
0.5 oz Hallertau (flavor) 15 min  
0.5 oz Saaz (flavor) 15 min  
0.25 oz Hallertau (aroma) 5 min  
0.25 oz Saaz (aroma) 5 min  
\*use appropriate amount based on your AAU's to obtain 26 IBU's in conjunction with other hop additions.

Ferment with 2206 Bavarian Lager 8- 11 Celcius and lager if you so choose or use 2565 Kolsch lager 11-17 celcius.

#### Murphy's Irish Stout Clone (top)

5 Gal. (OG 1.040-1.043) (FG 1.008-1.010) SRM 81?, IBU 37

5.75# 2-Row  
0.5# chocolate malt  
7 oz. Roasted barley  
4 oz crystal 55L  
0.5# cane sugar (in boil)  
Mash @ 150F 90 min or until conversion

(?oz) Goldings (for bittering) 60 min  
0.25 oz Goldings (flavor) 15 min  
\* use appropriate amount based on your AAU's to obtain 26 IBU's in conjunction with other hop additions.  
Ferment with 1084 Irish Ale 20-22 Celcius