

# *The WIZARD's Club Red*

---

This is the story of Club Red, the first joint brewing effort of the Wizards Homebrew Club. It all started at the first meeting in our new location at theVinotheque Warehouse. While sampling a few homebrews, our host Brian suggested we make a batch of beer - his treat. With an offer like that, who could refuse? Brian went on to say we could make any beer in the warehouse we wanted - as long as the can was dented (and thus not suitable for sale). Strolling through the warehouse, we stumbled into a can of Framboise extract and the adventure began.

After some careful consideration and a few more homebrews, we came up with the recipe:

3.3 lbs	Framboise Extract
1 lb	Big Red Dry Malt Extract
1.5 lbs	Honey
1 lb	English Light Dry Extract
1 oz	Tettnang Pellets
-	Wyeast 1056

Brewing was simple, if not crude by most of our standards. Several gallons of pure spring water were brought to a boil, the malt and honey was added and boiled for fifteen minutes. Irish moss was added for the last five minutes of the boil. After turning off the heat, the hops were steeped in the wort for five minutes. After transferring to the primary and topping up to five gallons with more pure spring water, our job was finished for the night. It appears we forgot to take a SG reading (too many brews?) but a good estimate would be an OG of 1043. Brian added the yeast later that night after we all left, and the wait began.

Three weeks later, Brian bottled up a case and kegged the rest! The beer was first sampled about a week later at our October meeting and has been a mainstay of our meetings ever since. Below is the story of that beer, now affectionately known as *Club Red*.

## *October 1997*

After being in the bottle for only five days, the first tasting of *Club Red* was conducted at our October meeting. Brian described the beer as sweet, young and flat (as if that wasn't expected). Robert expressed his concern by simply stating "it can age enough!"

## November 1997

In this month's *Club Red* tasting, the club noted some raspberry flavor in a well carbonated beer, but all present agreed a little more aging would not hurt. Everyone present the beer had significantly improved since last month, but no one wanted seconds. Even Robert upgraded his opinion to "give it a couple years to age!" Brian claimed the keg version is different but didn't go into details.

This month we introduced the rating system as Tastes Great (a full mug), Tastes Awful (an empty mug) and eh-eh (a dumping mug).

## December 1997

In December *Club Red* was starting to show a nice red color and we all agreed it was getting better. Once again, Robert summed up the feelings of the group by saying "looks good, lets talk about taste next year."

## January 1998

In January we started to notice the expected sour taste in *Club Red*. January marked the first month where *Club Red* actually got a few yes votes. It still had a nice red color, good carbonation and hints of raspberry. While some were started to voice approval, Phil took the opportunity to voice his opinion by stating "I did not participate (in making this one)" while Brian finally admitted "I never get this framboise to come out right!"

## Febrewary 1998

February's *Club Red* tasting proved to be the real shocker. The club noted a beer which looked good and smelled good. The tasting proved to be a different matter: Bill thought it tasted a little like soap and Russ thought it tasted like "ipecac." Brian expressed his sentiments by saying "I'm glad its gone" while Robert stated "I'm not coming back for this." Actually, this was Robert's last meeting before moving to Switzerland. His comments on *Club Red* will be sorely missed by all. Despite the negative comments, this month has the best showing in the voting yet!

## March 1998

Even though Brian forgot to chill the *Club Red* for this month's tasting, we moved forward with our regular tasting anyway. The new guy, Seigi, started out by saying "I could drink two of these" before going on to say his was an objective view not ruined by past experiences with *Club Red*. Most of the club agreed that maybe we were no longer giving *Club Red* a fair shake. Brian went on to exclaim "I would rather finish this than dump it," Russ went on to say "I've paid good money for much worse and even Phil was heard to say "I'm getting used to it.! It was just starting to appear as though *Club Red* had turned the corner and was about to get an all thumbs-up vote, when Bill firmly stated "its still awful."

## September 1998

Just when everyone had just about forgotten all about *Club Red*, Brian produced another bottle. With this month's tasting, the club found a good-looking beer with a dry and sour taste, however, some felt it was a bit too "watery." Chuck said "its not my cup of tea" but went on to give it a thumbs up rating. Phil and Russ both thought it was ok but didn't say much. Bill and Rich voted thumbs down almost as soon as the cap was popped. Most of the other comments do not bear repeating but let's just say, maybe the *Club Red* experiment was our best idea ever! And just when we thought this was the end of *Club Red*, Brian announced "there's one bottle left."

## October 1998

When the final bottle of *Club Red* was opened, the club noted a beer that had a raspberry smell and a sour but unflavorful taste. Bill was glad more people were at the meeting, that way everyone had less to sample. Chuck thought it to be what he considers a good framboise - junk. Bob commented if "Red Brick" (editor's note - his first beer) comes out like this, he will be disappointed. Phil was surprised the case finally ran out and did not last longer. Rich and Bill's comments are not worth repeating but both were glad it is gone. Despite all the bad press, Scott and Bob both went for seconds!

And thus ends the saga of *Club Red*. Keep an eye for the all new *Club Red II* brewed on our WIZARDS all grain demo day!