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# The WIZARDS' Homebrew News

Worcester Incorporated Zymurgists Advancing Real Draughts

April, 1997

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## Upcoming Meetings:

April 9 - 7:00 p.m. Phil's House, Grafton, MA

May 14 - 7:00 p.m. T.B.D.

## Calendar of Events:

April 26 - 12:00 p.m. Boston Brewpub Crawl

For more information: Call Phil at (508) 839-2320, send e-mail to [WizBrew@aol.com](mailto:WizBrew@aol.com), or check out our website at <http://www.home-brew.com/wizards> (ed. note - original text changed to current web site address).

## News:

### Temporary Meeting Location

We are still meeting at Phil's house in Grafton while we look for a new site. If you need directions to the meeting, call the information number above or send an e-mail. We hope to have word soon regarding the future of the Main Street Brewing Company. If new information is not available in the next month we will start to pursue alternate meeting sights.

### Main Street Brewing Company News

St. Patrick's Day has come and gone and still no news regarding the future of the Main Street Brewing Company. The bankruptcy judge was accepting reorganization plans until March 15. The only proposals reported in the press were the two reported in our last newsletter; one from the new owners and one from the new note holder. The press has been silent on any proceedings, which leaves us waiting not so patiently for more news. Any news will be passed along as soon as possible. Keep an eye on the press and on our website in between newsletters.

### Wachusett Brewing Company Tour

We had another successful outing on Saturday, March 22, when we met at the Wachusett Brewing Company in Westminster, MA. We had a great tour given by our very hospitable host, Ed LaFortune. We spent an hour-and-a-half on the tour discussing brewing and sampling Wachusett Country Ale, Nut Brown Ale, Black Shack Porter, and IPA. Wachusett is another

New England monument to hard work and attention to detail, consisting of a shrimp cooker turned mash and lauter tun, dairy tanks turned fermenters and conditioning tanks, and a completely rebuilt bottling line which fills the 12 oz. bottles available in package stores since last August. If you missed the tour, stop by any Saturday at 1:00 or 3:00 p.m. for a tour and free samples, and while you are there, pick up a growler or two for home.

### **Boston Brewpub Crawl**

Our Boston brewpub crawl is scheduled for April 26. Scheduled stops include Cambridge Brewing Co., Boston Beer Works, Brew Moon, and Commonwealth Brewing Co. We will be meeting at the Riverside T-station at 12:00 noon to head into Boston. Our approximate schedule is to meet at Cambridge Brewing at 1:00 for lunch, Boston Beer Works, at 2:45, Brew Moon at 4:30, and Commonwealth Brewing at 6:15 for dinner. We will try as much as possible to hold to this schedule so anyone who can not join us for the whole day, or wants to meet us directly at Cambridge Brewing, will know when and where to join us part way along the tour. FYI, Cambridge Brewing is located at 1 Kendall Square in Cambridge (617) 494-1994 (Kendall Square T-stop), Boston Beer Works is located at 61 Brookline Avenue in Boston (617) 536-2337 (Kenmore T-stop), Brew Moon is located at 115 Stuart Street in Boston (617) 742-5225 (Boylston Street T-stop), and Commonwealth Brewing Company is located at 138 Portland Street in Boston (617) 523-8383 (North Station T-stop). The Red Sox are in Baltimore on this day, so we should not have to fight off too large of a crowd at Boston Beer Works, and we all know there won't be any Bruins or Celtics playoff games at The Garden (I refuse to say "Fleet Center") so we should be o.k. at Commonwealth also.

### **AHA Club Only Competition**

We are competing in the 1997 American Homebrew Association club only competition. This competition consists of six individual competitions scheduled throughout the year. Each competition features a different beer style -- a schedule is provided below to help you plan your brewing. Each AHA club is limited to one entry per style. The month before each entry deadline on the meeting date listed below, club members will bring in their homebrew for a club tasting. A portion of the club meeting will be reserved for a short discussion of the subject beer style, and a blind tasting and judging. The winning brew will be sent to the AHA as our club entry. This project will give everyone a chance to learn about the various beer styles, get practice tasting and critiquing beers, and will allow direct feedback from the club to those brewers who bring in an entry. The Hail to Ale and Luscious Lager contests are over. Don't forget to bring your bocks to the next meeting on April 9. There are still three more to go after that, so get brewing! The remaining 1997 schedule is:

Bock is Best -- April 9 -- Bock

Extract Extravaganza -- July 9 -- Any Style Extract Beer (must be 75% extract)

Weiss is Nice -- September 10 -- German Wheat Beer

Bitter Mania -- November 12 -- English Bitter

The beer styles used for this competition are the official AHA style categories. A full listing is available at the meetings, or look in the Winter 1996 Zymurgy.

### **Homebrew Contest Schedule**

For more information, call the contact person listed below, or come to the next meeting.

May 3 -- 1997 Green Mountain Homebrew Competition, Essex Junction, VT. Entries due April 18. Contact Dave Gannon at (802) 879-1304 or dgannon@zoo.uvm.edu.

May 17-18 -- AHA National Homebrew Competition, first round. Entries due April 28-May 9. Contact Caroline Duncker at (303) 447-0816 x116 or caroline@aob.org.

### **Massachusetts Homebrew Contests Illegal?**

The State Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC) has declared that homebrew contests in MA violate Chapter 138, Section 41 of the state alcoholic beverages law, which states that delivery of any alcoholic beverage in or from a building, except a private dwelling, constitutes a sale. Following ABCC threats, the Cape Cod Regional Chamber of Commerce canceled the Cap Cod Homebrew Fest last October. An exception from this law for homebrew contests may be forthcoming, but in the interim you may want to send your beer out of state to avoid the risk of confiscation by the ABCC.

### **Ould Newbury Closes Doors**

The Ould Newbury Brewing Company of Newburyport, MA ceased brewing operations in December after an unsuccessful attempt to finance a bottling line. Owner Joe Rolfe cites the increased demand for 6 packs from customers and distributors alike as the major factor. Sufficient sales volume could not be sustained from growlers and 22 ounce bottles. If anyone is interested in expanding their homebrew setup, or in opening a microbrewery or brewpub, Ould Newbury's 4 bbl. Pierre Rajotte system is for sale -- asking price is \$65,000 which includes the equipment, installation, start up and consulting.

### **Anheuser-Busch Agrees To End Negative Ad Campaign**

The National Advertising Division of the Council of Better Business Bureaus has announced that Anheuser-Busch has agreed to discontinue its advertising campaign targeted at the Boston Beer Company and Pete's Brewing Company. Anheuser-Busch has also agreed not to imply in future ads that Boston Beer does not control the brewing of its beers at the contract breweries. Past ads have implied that quality is compromised because these beers are brewed at facilities owned by brewers such as Stroh's, G. Heileman, and Pittsburgh Brewing. While no one would be surprised that Jim Koch of the Boston Beer Company claimed a victory following the decision, Anheuser-Busch also claimed victory. In what can only be described as corporate gobbledy-gook, Anheuser-Busch announced, "We consider the NAD decision a win because on the guts of the decision they flatly agreed with us. This is about a much, much larger and more important issue: that we ought to have a statement about truth in labeling." Of course the only truth most informed consumers care about is inside the bottle. I for one would buy Sam Adams even if it was brewed at an Anheuser-Busch brewery.

### **Features:**

#### **Tip Of The Month -- Improving Your Extract Brew**

When adding malt extract to the brew kettle there is a chance of scorching the malt on the bottom

of the pot. This is especially the case with liquid malt extract, as the dense syrup will fall to the bottom of the pot faster than the average homebrewer can stir, but the same problem can also occur with dried malt extract. There are two ways to prevent this from occurring. The first method is to pre-mix the malt extract before adding it to the brew kettle. When using liquid malt extract, mix it with an equal volume of boiling water before adding it to the brew kettle. If you empty the can and then use it to measure the water, you will get the added advantage of reclaiming most of the syrup that is "stuck" in the can. If you are using dried malt extract, mix the malt with an equal volume of warm water, and heat over medium heat with constant stirring until the malt extract dissolves into solution. The second method is to remove the brew kettle from the heat source when adding the malt extract, heating the brew kettle again only after the malt extract has been fully mixed into the wort. Either of these solutions should be adequate on their own, although employing both methods will add another level of insurance that you won't caramelize the wort on the bottom of the brew kettle, and that you won't make any extra cleanup work.

### **Equipment -- Building A Counter Pressure Bottle Filler**

Ken Schwartz of El Paso, TX and member of the El Paso Borderline Brewers has published his design for a counter pressure bottle filler in the Spring 1997 Zymurgy. The base design consists of a length of copper tubing with a #2 rubber stopper slipped over the tubing. The tubing should be cut to reach the bottom of the bottle size being filled. To the extent the stopper may be slid over the copper tubing, the filler should be adjustable to fill different sized bottles, or cut a number of different length pieces of copper tubing. A piece of standard vinyl tubing connects the top of the copper tube to a standard beer keg "thumb tap." An inflating needle (the kind used for filling basketballs) is also inserted through the #2 stopper, and a tire valve is attached to it on top of the stopper. To fill the bottle, attach a tire chuck to the CO2 tank regulator, insert the filler loosely in the bottle, and apply the tire chuck to the tire valve long enough to purge the air from the bottle. Now insert the stopper snugly in the bottle, and apply the tire chuck again long enough to pressurize the bottle. Open the beer tap, and beer will flow until a pressure balance is achieved. Press the tire valve pin to slowly release the gas and fill the bottle. When the bottle is full, close the beer tap, press the tire valve pin to release the pressure, remove the filler, and cap the bottle.

### **Meeting Minutes - February:**

The WIZARDs met on March 12 at Phil's House in Grafton. We had a disappointing turnout of two members mostly due to some nasty flu and cold viruses going around. Given the light turnout, we tabled the business to next meeting and concentrated on beer tasting. We tasted Robert's Alt, actually two alts from two different batches. We also tasted Phil's Cherry Stout, and a Nut Brown Ale brewed by Phil, Russ, and Len.

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