

# The WIZARDS Newsletter

July - August, 2000

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## *WIZARD's Upcoming Events*

### Upcoming Club Meetings

Club meetings this quarter will be July 12, August 9 (although this is subject to change to accomodate the summer picnic - this will be decided at the July meeting and I will update the web site) and September 13. The July meeting will be held at Rich's house in Hudson. Other meeting locations have not yet been decided (check our web page or call Strangebrew for the latest location and directions).

The July meeting theme beer will be "the beers from National Homebrew Day at the Horseshoe Pub." Try to save a bottle or two for this one!

The August meeting theme beer will be Kolsch. Brew any recipe in any way you want and bring it our August meeting. Brian has graciously offered a 10% discount on ingredients for anyone brewing Kolsch for this meeting. Just mention it when placing your order. Besides the Kolsch tasting, this will be our first-ever summer bar-b-que and swill-off. Watch your email for more details on the bar-b-que and bring 3 cans or bottles of your favorite (least favorite?) "swill" beer (ie, any North American Industrial Lager) for the swill-off tasting.

The October meeting theme beer will be Octoberfest. If you haven't thought about your Octoberfest yet, now is the time to get down to business. This is the annual event where our home-brews are stacked up against the best national and international fest beers on the market. What? You need help with brewing your Octoberfest? See the [March 2000](#) Special Edition of our newsletter for Phil's complete article, including full color pictures.

The December meeting theme beer will be Belgian Dubbels. The plan is for everyone to use the same yeast along with your own recipe, however, the chosen yeast has not yet been picked. Look for it in the next newsletter or on the egroups web postings.

### Upcoming Trips & Outings

We usually don't plan any special outings for the summer and this year will be no exception. Look forward to Phil and Katie's Octoberfest and the club brew day this fall!

## *WIZARD's Club Business*

### Election of Officers

New officers were elected at the May meeting. Phil and Russ were re-elected as president and treasurer, respectively. The posts of newsletter editor and webmaster were combined into a single post called "secretary" and Bill was elected to fill this spot. Greg was elected club vice-president. Responsibilities of these club officers can be found on the [club rules](#) section of the club's web page.

## Dues

Dues are now past due. If you haven't paid your dues for this year, please make plans to fork over twelve big ones at the July meeting. Dues help the club in many ways. Dues pay our nominal expenses like buying the pretzels and cups for meetings. The biggest way your dues are spent is at club functions where the club finds some way to treat everyone in attendance like buying the Christmas Ales at our holiday party this past December.

## Newsletter

As always, articles and suggestions for the newsletter are both welcomed and encouraged and should be sent directly to [Bill](#).

## *WIZARD's Recent Events*

### Jewel in the Crown IPA Night

The highlight of our April meeting was the Jewel in the Crown tasting. Six brewers took a shot at making Phil's Jewel in the Crown IPA (see the recipe library for details) for the meeting. In a blind tasting of the six beers, Bill's came out on top (interestingly enough, Bill picked Scott's as the top beer). And Greg won the label contest (look right).



Damase's Jewel in the Crown IPA showed up one month later at our May meeting. His was an extract beer which the club felt was creamier and much darker in color than the all-grain versions sampled the month before. While everyone enjoyed drinking it, we felt some adjustments were needed for the extract version of Phil's all-grain recipe.

### Boston Pub Crawl

Maybe it was because it was the day before Easter. Maybe it was the blinding rain and bitter wind. Maybe it was just the phase of the moon, but something kept the turn out for this year's pub crawl especially low. Phil, Russ, Bill and Darja and Scott and Beth were the only ones who made it for the crawl. Even though our numbers were small, those who went weren't discouraged by the weather (or in some cases the beer) and had a great time. This year we visited Northeast Brewing, Back Bay Brewing and John Harvard's before sitting down to dinner at Redbones.

Our first stop was Northeast Brewing for lunch and a beer. The food was ok and the beer was better. Tastings included the Lobsterback IPA (fair), the Bostonia Blonde (a Pilsner which has a

few small floaters but was still "no slouch"), a Dusseldorf Alt (Russ thought it a little flat), the NorEaster Copper Ale and the Nail in the Brain Barley Wine (if you like Thomas Hardy, this one's almost as good). The first really funny moment of the day came when we were leaving the pub and heading to the train. Some poor soul standing a little too close to the side of the road got soaked by ten foot waves when a car drove through a nearby puddle (it was certainly funny at the time - maybe it was the beer?). Needless to say, we spent considerable time avoiding puddles for the rest of the afternoon.

Our trip then took us to the Back Bay Brewing Company for what would probably be the last time. Sometime in June, Back Bay will cease brewing and selling its own ales and will no doubt be removed from our "must see" list. On this trip we each had a glass of our favorite; those without a personal favorite were cajoled into the cask IPA by Bill. Besides the IPA, we tried the ESB and the Marzen, which Russ thought especially malty and Darja thought reeked of alcohol.

The anticipation of the club's first ever visit to John Harvard's made the long train ride across town fly right by. The club bought a sampler for everyone who made the trip (your club dues at work). Our sampler included the cask bitter (Russ thought it very quaffable), John Harvard's Brew House Pale Ale (our waitress said it was like Sierra Nevada - she was wrong), Newtowne Nutbrown (one of Scott's favorite beers with a subtle, lingering roast taste and smell), Old Ivy ESB (somewhat thin), Irish Dry Stout (Beth would have preferred a Guinness) and the Scottish EPA. We also rated each of the sampled beers on the club's usual five point scale and the results can be seen on the [Commercial Beer Index](#).

We rounded out the night at Redbones where we had a fine dinner with all the fixins as well as few more beers. Bill had the Sierra Nevada, Scott and Beth had the New Glarus Raspberry xxx (I can't remember what it was but it came from Wisconsin) and Russ and Phil had an Einbecker Urdbock. As we boarded the final train back to Alewife, we all stopped and reflected on what an exceptional pub crawl it had been, and we made sure there weren't any puddles on the side of the train tracks.....

## National Homebrew Day and Competition

### Sponsored by Strangebrew, Dejabrew and the Horseshoe Pub

On Saturday May 6th, the W.I.Z.A.R.D.s hosted a day of brewing demonstrations at the Horseshoe Pub in Hudson, Ma in conjunction with the AHA's National Homebrew Day. Bill, Greg, Scott, Damase, Russ and Bob were the brewers of the day while Brian spent the day promoting the club and his store. The AHA theme beer was American Pale Ale but not too much of this was produced. Scott worked on his Ipswich Clone (which we tasted last month). Greg, Russ and Bob got together and brewed a XXX using Greg's all-new brewing setup (look for it soon on the breweries web page). Damase was the only one of the bunch who really stuck to the AHA's guideline by brewing the AHA's American Pale Ale. In honor of May 6th being CAMRA's National Mild Day in the United Kingdom, Bill brewed his trademark Hillside Dark Mild.

National Homebrew Day was the day of the club's awards ceremony for our second annual home-brew competition. Bill's Hillside Pale Ale was judged best of show and other awards went to xxx. Also that day, the best of show beer was featured on tap at the pub, courtesy of Dejabrew.

The commercially produced version was slightly darker, a little stronger and not quite as aromatic as the original. While not quite as good as the original, it was still quite tasty! Reports from the pub indicate sales were brisk and another keg has already been ordered.

While there was some discussion and concern over having this event at the Horseshoe Pub, the club felt it went fairly well. While we can't bring home-brew to the pub, most of us felt this wasn't a terrible problem as the pub has plenty of fine commercially brewed beers on tap! After not much debate, the club felt we should consider returning to the pub again next year for National Homebrew Day, only next year we would advertise a little more and hope for a turn out similar to 1999!

## Hefeweizen Night

The special theme for the June meeting was Hefeweizen. Three homebrews (courtesy of Bill, Phil and Scott and two commercial varieties, Paulaner and Hack Pschorr (courtesy of Greg) were available for the judging. To give everyone some practice for next year's homebrew competition, judging was done using AHA score sheets. In the end, Bill was pleased to see his beer chosen over the others.

## Club Samplings

Homebrew tastings over the last few months have included Dave's Brown Ale (his first extract brew was especially tasty with nice body and carbonation), Bill's light mild and Doppelweizenbock, Phil's Pilsner, Greg's Imperial Stout (everyone liked this one, even Chuck, it was nice and smooth), Bill Sam Adams Clone (not bad for an extract), Phil's Sam Adams Clone (much better than Bill's), Scott's IPA (brewed with 3 ounces of 12% Galena Hops - sticky on your tongue and the top of your mouth), Rich's American Pale Ale and Chuck's Best Beer Ever. Commercial tastings included Otter Creek Mud Bock (1.5/5) which had a nutty taste with some hop bitterness, a Harpoon Summer Ale (2.25/5) and an Ace Fermented Berry Cider (3.75/5 but judged as a wine cooler). The Harpoon Summer Ale is actually a Kolsch which the club described as a "plain" taste and a nice lawnmower beer! Bill thought he could sense a wheat taste and everyone felt it had an "interesting" smell. Note, numbers in parenthesis, where available, show our rating on the five point scale with one being "it stinks" and five being "give me more."

## *The Other Stuff - Hints & Ideas*

## Back Bay Update

Last month this paper had the unfortunate task of reporting the demise of brewing at the Back Bay Brewing Company. Unlike the Boston Herald or Yankee Brew News, this paper said "Rumor has it, Tod Mott, the head brewer may be moving to his own place in Quincy sometime last this year." As it turns out, he is helping launch the Quincy Ships Brewing Company, which is scheduled to open later this month. Although a temporary role, Tod's brewing experience will no doubt be an early key to success for this new brewpub. Quincy Ships is located at 579 Southern Artery (Route 3A) in Quincy. Look for brewing to start later this fall.

## Get Restricted!

Use restrictor hose for your keg dispensing faucet - Did you know they make special hose for attaching the faucet to your keg? Its the black stuff and has thicker walls and a smaller inside diameter. The theory being the smaller inside diameter of the hose better equalizes the pressure as the beer exits the keg and this results in less foaming as the beer leaves the faucet and enters your glass! FYI - restrictor hose is available at Strangebrew for \$1.00/foot.

## Getting the German Taste

When it comes to yeast selection, Scott's taken his Hefeweizen brewing to the next level. Now he's trying to pick his yeasts to match the aromas and tastes he remembers from traveling in Germany a few years back.

As for the results so far, he thinks the 3056 is the right choice, noting very similar esters between his brew and the Tucher and Hacker-Pschorr at the Horseshoe Pub.

And as an interesting footnote to Scott's research, the wining beer at our June meeting's Weisbier tasting was brewed with a 3068. Most interesting.

## Brewing Belgian Doubles

To help with brewing Belgian Doubles for the December meeting, the following have been borrowed from the Brewing Techniques (check with Greg) and the Brewery's web site.

An excerpt from Belgian Trappists and Abbey Beers  
by Martin Lodahl in Brewing Techniques

"When people speak of Trappist beers, however, the substyle they are thinking of is generally the Double. These are big brown beers, very lightly hopped and with a powerful malt component, the maltiness expressed more as a complex fruitiness than as a uniform sweetness. There is nothing simple about Doubles. The ester component often has a dark-fruit character to it, like plums -- or better, raisins -- rather than a berry or banana quality. While the body is generally substantial, it is also usually less than the intense flavors would lead you to expect thanks to the addition of sugars in the kettle. These sugars are generally caramelized to some degree, and thus deepen the beer's color as well. Frequently, the beer will be fermented with a yeast of profound character, generally providing an identifiable "house character" that may include substantial spiciness. These beers are not to be taken lightly.

From the library at "The Brewery" website

Doubles  
1.060-1.070  
6-7.5% ABV  
18-25 IBU  
10-14 SRM

"Dark amber to brown. Sweet malty aroma. Faint hop aroma ok. Medium to full body. Malty, plum-like flavor. Very low bitterness, no hop flavor. Medium to high carbonation. Low esters ok. No roasted flavors or diacetyl. This beer focuses on malt flavors, and doubles should be malty and sweet with a noticeable plum character. Modest alcohol flavor is ok, as are low levels of esters, but the malt flavors should predominate. Doubles are usually full-bodied with fairly moussy carbonation that produces a very nice head.

#### Brewing method

"As with all Belgian beers the base should be pilsner malt with various amounts of caramel malts (Belgian varieties work especially well here, including both Caramunich and Special B) and a portions of sugar to control body (start with one pound per 5 gallons). Roasted malts can also be used for coloring, but should not be tasted. Toasted Belgian malts contribute a pleasantly nutty flavor, and these can be used in fairly high quantity (+/- 2 lbs. for a 5-gallon batch). Yeast choice seems to offer some flexibility, though strains with a smooth, fruity character complement the raisin/plum flavors of the caramel malts better than yeasts yielding spicy flavors.

"Extract brewers will not be able to use the Belgian toasted malts, but otherwise should be able to produce a nice, malty brew."

#### Commercial examples

Westmalle Dubbel (6.5% ABV), Affligem Double (7% ABV), Grimbergen Double (6.2% ABV), Steenbrugge double (6.5% ABV)

### Tasting Glasses

The topic of tasting glasses comes up every couple of months at club meetings. Usually we do our tasting with those opaque white plastic cups and someone says we need real glass. A few folks already bring their own glasses but its not the general rule. We've often talked about finding those English half-pint glasses as the perfect tasting glass but never found them. Someone even took a shot at finding them on the Internet with only marginal success. Now we find out Brian has carried them all along at a very reasonable two for a buck!

### *Feature Sites*

Here are this issue's feature web sites! Everyone is encouraged to [reccomend](#) a site for future issues.

- <http://www.cnn.com/2000/HEALTH/diet.fitness/05/19/health.beer.reut/index.html>  
Drinking Beer can be good for you!
- [members.aol.com/brewwizard](http://members.aol.com/brewwizard) Brew Wizard - The Brewer's Encyclopedia
- <http://www.brewrats.org/> The BrewRats Home-Brew Club's web page.



Comments, questions or information on the WIZARD's to [Bill](#)