
The WIZARDS' Homebrew News

Worcester Incorporated Zymurgists Advancing Real Draughts

May/June, 1997

Upcoming Meetings:

July 9 - 7:00 p.m. Robert's House in Hudson, MA

August 13 - 7:00 p.m. T.B.D.

For more information: Call Phil at (508) 839-2320, send e-mail to 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).

Please Note:

The Newsletter has gone to bi-monthly publication for the summer. Look for a July/August issue during the first week of August. The Newsletter will resume monthly publication in September.

News:

July Meeting

As the summer is a busy time for everyone, we will not have our regular meeting on the second Wednesday of the month. However, we have been invited to attend the Worry Worts meeting on July 9. Robert, who alternates between our meetings and the Worry Worts', will be hosting this meeting at his house in Hudson. Call Phil if you need directions.

Permanent Meeting Location

We have discussed a permanent meeting place at several of our recent meetings. We are still awaiting word regarding the Horseshoe Pub in Hudson -- initial indications unfortunately are not favorable. There has been no information available regarding Main Street for several months now. Bruce Susel's offer to use the Vinotheque Office in Marlboro is still open. We may look into holding the August meeting there to try it out, and also to get a tour of the warehouse. We also are currently investigating the Polish American Veterans' hall in Worcester. In the interim, we discussed the possibility of rotating the meetings between member's houses.

Every place has its pros and cons. A pub provides a nice atmosphere, while a place like Vinotheque ensures us hassle free sampling of our own homebrew. Once we get into a new permanent location we can start some serious advertising again and get the club back on track.

To this end, we will try to select one of these options at the August meeting, allowing us to take some momentum into the fall brewing season.

Summer Picnic

The tentative July 26 date for the first annual summer picnic has fallen through, but we are working on setting up another date -- possibly at Dave's house in Douglas in August. Look for more information in the next newsletter.

Boston Brewpub Crawl

Our Boston brewpub crawl was held April 26 and was a great success! Attending the crawl were club members Phil, Russ, Bill, and new member Dean; and two guests John and Marc. John is a regular on our club outings, and Marc is a homebrewer from New Zealand who just happened to be in the area. We started the day off at Cambridge Brewing with lunch outside in the Courtyard. A pleasant setting for lunch, and two Cambridge seasonal brews -- a Maibock and a Barley Wine. These two beers scored well in our tasting survey -- on a scale of 1 to 5, the Maibock and the Barley Wine both scored a 4. Meanwhile the regular Cambridge brews lagged behind with the Pale Ale scoring a 3.5, the Porter Scoring a 3, and the Amber scoring a 2.5.

Our next stop was Boston Beer Works, where the sampling was very informal with too few people sampling any given beer for statistically significant information. However, the consensus did seem to be that in one word this stop was uninspiring. The Fenway Ale, a cask conditioned hoppy ale and the Curley's Stout did rate in the 3.5 to 4 range, but the rest of the lot seemed to score in the 2-3 range. Although uninspiring if given a one word rating, the more complete story is a great place to have a beer if you're going to Fenway, but don't go out of your way otherwise.

The next stop at Brew Moon was very interesting -- it definitely looks like the kind of brewpub you would find in the theater district -- in fact it didn't look much like any other brewpub we had ever seen. Lots of glass and chrome instead of wood and copper. All six of us had the six beer sampler here, providing plenty of sampling data. Interestingly, all the beers had an average score of 3. The Kolchsh, Munich Gold, and Six Grain Ale all scored 3's across the board, while the Orion's Red, I.P.A., and Scotch Ale had a range of scores from 2 to 4, but still an average score of 3.

The final stop was at Commonwealth Brewing for dinner. The beers here scored extremely well as did the food. While this could be attributed to the beer consumed at the previous stops, past experience indicates Commonwealth just has good beer. Scores here were consistently high, with the Porter scoring a 4.5, the Old Ale (Barleywine), the Amber (I.P.A.), and the Classic Stout scoring 4's, and the Boston's Best Burton Bitter and the seasonal Best Brown scoring 3.5's. To anyone who missed this event we highly recommend our next brewpub crawl, which will contain at least 2 new stops.

AHA National Homebrew Competition

First round results are available from the American Homebrew Association National Homebrew Competition. Bill placed second in the English Style Pale Ale category at the East Coast Regional with his Classic Style English Pale Ale. Phil placed third in the same category with his

I.P.A. Both of these beers will advance to the final round judging at the National Homebrew Conference in Cleveland during July. Good luck to Bill and Phil!

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, Luscious Lager, and Bock Is Best contests are over. We are still waiting for scores for Phil's Sleeping Alligator Bock from the Bock Is Best competition. Don't forget to bring your extract beers to the meeting on July 26, and start planning your Weiss beers and your Bitters. The remaining 1997 schedule is:

Extract Extravaganza -- July 26 -- 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 listed 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

Due to the unfavorable effects of shipping beer during the summer, this calendar starts in September. Check the latest issue of Zymurgy or check with Phil for the latest complete schedule if you are dying to enter a contest this summer.

September 13 -- Thunder Mountain Brew-Off, Sierra Vista, AZ. Entries due September 5.
Contact Paul Lachmanek at (520) 378-4290 or paulgl@primenet.com.

September 13 -- Second Dayton Beerfest, Dayton, OH. Entries due September 6. Contact Mark Schmitt at (937) 236-4857 or DRAFT97@juno.com.

October 4 -- Minnesota Brewfest '97, Minnetonka, MN. Entries due September 28. Contact Steve Piatz at (612) 452-2444 or piatz@cray.com.

Other Events

The summer festival season is here. Check out these local and regional events.

July 12-13 -- Harpoon Summerfest, Newport Yachting Center, Newport RI. Call (888) HARPOON for more information.

July 18-19 -- Vermont Brewers Festival, Waterfront Park, Burlington, VT. 3 sessions, Friday 6-10:30 p.m., and Saturday 12-4:30 p.m. and 6-10:30 p.m. \$15 admission includes 8 beer samples and a souvenir glass. Call (802) 865-FEST for more information.

July 19 -- 2nd Annual Cape Cod Brew Festival, Cape Cod Melody Tent, Hyannis, MA. 1 session, 4-10 p.m., \$20 admission. Call (508) 775-9100 for more information.

August 15-16 -- Harpoon Hot Summer In The City, Location in Boston TBA. Call (888) HARPOON for more information.

Meeting Minutes - April:

The WIZARDs met on April 9 at Phil's House in Grafton. We had three members attending and discussed the brewpub crawl, the status of Main Street, potential meeting locations for the club, and correspondence from other members who were unable to attend. Our sampling included Phil's Sleeping Alligator Bock, which we compared with a bottle of Kulmbacher Eisbock. We also tried Phil's I.P.A. and Cherry Stout.

Meeting Minutes - May:

The WIZARDs met on May 14 at Phil's House in Grafton. We had five members attending and discussed the brewpub crawl, future events, and potential meeting locations for the club. With respect to club events, there was a consensus that time is short in the summer, and we will resume our schedule in September. Potential events include an Oktoberfest at Phil's house in Grafton, the Harpoon Oktoberfest, the Pilgrim Oktoberfest in Hudson, another trip to McNeill's in Brattleboro, VT, and another brewpub crawl. Despite a significant amount of discussion, no consensus was made on a meeting location. We will continue to investigate potential locations during the summer. Our sampling included another of Dave's tasty ales, Bill's Porter, Phil's I.P.A., and some Alt and I.P.A. that Russ brought back from our trip to McNeill's.

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