

The WIZARDS Newsletter

January - March, 2002

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WIZARD's Upcoming Events

Upcoming Club Meetings

Club meetings this quarter will be January 15, February 19 and March 19 all at Deja Brew in Shrewsbury. Check our web page, call Strangebrew or call Deja Brew for directions.

Upcoming Trips & Outings

Activities	Club Meetings
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• March 24 - Wizard's Homebrew Competition Entry Deadline• TBD - Competition Judging• Earth Day April 27 - Annual Pub Crawl• May 4 - Wizard's Homebrew Competition Awards Ceremony and Brew Day at the Horseshoe Pub in Hudson	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• February Meeting - Porter Night• March Meeting - Learn About Competition Judging• April Meeting - Brown Ale (Mild & Brown ale)• June Meeting - Bitter & English pale ale• August Meeting - IPA• October Meeting - Strong Belgian Ale• December Meeting - Barley Wine

Upcoming club activities are always posted on the club's website at <http://www.brewbeer.org/wizupcoming.htm>. Additional details will be published in the newsletter as they become available and provided via email to the club's egroups email list.

WIZARDS Home-Brew Competition and National Homebrew Day

The Wizard's are pleased to announce their 4th annual Homebrew Competition!

Once again the competition is being sponsored by Strangebrew, Deja Brew and the Horseshoe Pub. The format will be the same as in year's past. You can enter a beer in any AHA category. Categories will be collapsed based on the number of entries and a winner will be declared in each collapsed category.

All category winners will proceed to a best of show round. A Best of Show beer and a brewer's choice will be chosen. The Best of Show beer takes all honors and the brewer's choice will be brewed at Deja Brew and put on tap at the Horseshoe Pub. In the past three years, the Best of Show beer has also been the brewer's choice!

Awards will be presented on National Homebrew Day at the Horseshoe Pub in Hudson. In addition to the awards ceremony, the WIZARDS will be hosting a brewing demonstration at the pub. This will feature all-grain and extract brewing demonstrations put on by our club members. The event should get underway at 10 AM and should be completed by 6 PM. All club brewers are invited to participate for this day of brewing at the pub. Planned to coincide with National Homebrew Day, the day will also feature a nationwide home-brew toast at 2 PM. All WIZARDS are encouraged to attend and especially encouraged to invite their family and friends to stop by! For those members wishing to put on their own brewing demonstration, please coordinate with Bill.

It is our hope that each and every WIZARD will find at least one beer to enter in this year's competition. As a special note to all of our new members, this is an excellent opportunity to get some honest feedback on your brewing. Who knows, you could even walk away with bragging rights for the next year!

When the time for judging gets close (we haven't picked an exact date yet but it will be at the end of March), we'll also need judges and stewards. Both are a great way to get involved with the club and learn something about the judging process. I can tell you from past experience, judgment day is definitely something to be a part of! By the way, what do you think happens to all the leftovers?

Complete details of the competition are available on the club's web site at <http://www.brewbeer.org/competition.htm>.

4th Annual Earth Day Pub Crawl

Join the WIZARDS pub crawl to be held on Earth Day April 27, 2002! We'll meet at the Alewife 'T' station, outside the turnstiles @ 12 noon. We will try to keep to the itinerary shown below so people can join up mid way through the day. Spouses and guests are more than welcome. Visit the WIZARDS web [page](#) for details about last year's pub crawl.

- First stop is John Harvard's (Harvard Square T-stop) @ 1230 for lunch
- Second stop - BrewMoon - which has changed to names - I think its Red Rock Brewing (Harvard Square T-stop)
- Third stop - Cambridge Brewing Company (Kendall Square T-stop)
- End @ RedBones (Davis Square T-stop) for dinner @ 6 PM

Directions to Alewife - From 128 (or anywhere else), take Route 2 into Boston/Cambridge. Not too far after the road narrows down to two lanes, you'll see an exit for Alewife Station on your right. Take and enter the parking garage. After parking, follow signs to "TRAINS." After going downstairs, open your eyes! We'll meet right in front of the turnstiles.

 **WIZARD's Club Business** 

Dues

Dues for 2001/2002 are now due again. Dues are still a bargain at \$12/year and cover most, if not all, of our club activities. 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 or buying the appetizers on the annual pub crawl.

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* 🍺🍺🍺

January Club Meeting - Mash Tun Design

Mash tun design was the topic of our January meeting and a quite a few members brought in their own designs. Brian from Stranegbrew showed us a number of commercially available mash tuns for the home-brewer and Ray showed us the mega mash tun he uses at Deja-Brew. The home built tuns fell into two broad categories: picnic coolers and converted kegs. Almost all of the mash tuns brought in also served as the lauter tun by including some sort of a false bottom. The pictures below provide a look inside four different mash tun designs to show you the lautering system used. The owner of each tun is also shown so that can contact them with your questions. A quick summary of the pros and cons of the various designs follows the pictures.

The Wizards Mash Tuns



Dave, Brett, Ray, Bill, Brian, Tony, Brian, Brian, Greg, Brett, Glen, Brian, Dave, Brian



Description (owner)	Pros	Cons	Efficiency
Half-barrel stainless steel keg with a 12" hole cut in the top, The valve is installed using a custom designed weld-less bulkhead fitting. The false bottom is a pair of stainless steel screen tubes attached to copper tubing. Owner - Greg.	The height to width ratio of the keg helps to create a tall deep grain bed; Strike water can be heated in the keg and if necessary direct fire temp boosts can be made; A normal sized 10-gallon batch mash holds temperature well without any additional insulation; Minimal re-circulation of the mash (Just a few cups) to get clear runoff.	The keg is heavy even when empty; Smaller mashes may need some insulation particularly in cold weather	82- 86% for normal gravity beers 70-76% for my biggest beers.
50L keg with slotted copper tube manifold (Dave)	cheap; Durable; Able to add heat; Heat mash water in it; Plenty of room; Holds heat fairly well; Simple; Manifold doesn't move around when stirring; Fast clearing	I wish I had some better non flammable insulation other than a moving blanket for it; I wish I had a manifold like my mash tun in the boil kettle too; I wish I had a more compact brew stand on wheels.	Not Available
Picnic Cooler with slotted copper tube manifold (Bill)	Light, portable; Easy to clean;	Poor extract efficiency;	60-65%

	Excellent heat retention; Never clogs during sparge	Difficult to raise temperature; Not big enough for big beers or 10 gallons	
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Holiday Party

The WIZARDS annual party was held at Bill's house in Hudson this year. We already talked about the beer in last month's newsletter so there's not much to add here. Let it suffice to say, all in attendance had a good time. Let's relive the event through a few candid photos taking during the night!



🍺🍺🍺 *The Other Stuff - Hints & Ideas* 🍺🍺🍺

My First Batch of All Grain Brew - A Comedy of Errors

By Jeremy Cagle

All grain is what every new home brewer should strive for, right? I agree. I just wish I'd had a little smoother time with my first batch. It wasn't a complete disaster but it had its moments. I teamed up with Glen Misiaszek and we decided to tackle this project by piece mailing our equipment together. Oh and by the way, you know what they say about two cooks "that's right, they wear big shoes" or whatever.

Now both Glen and I have made several batches of extract beer and had all the normal equipment associated with that process; carboys, plastic buckets, a couple of pots, cleansers and sanitizers, thermometers, you get the picture. We also acquired a few necessities, or at least I feel they are necessities, in our pursuit of that illusive all grain batch. I managed to pick up two turkey fryers and Glen and I each had a propane tank. So now we are ready to brew right? Wrong? We still were short a mash tun and a sparge kettle. I suppose we could have used some jerry-rigged system but we figured if we were going to do it, we were going to do it right, or at least in theory.

So lucky for us Greg let us borrow his 5 gallon mash tun. When he gave it to me I felt like Luke Skywalker holding Ben Kanobi's light Saber. It's the same in brewing as it is in the Jedi arts, in order to become a "Jedi Brewer" you must first construct the weapon of a brewer, a mash tun. For now we are borrowing Greg's weapon until we can make our own.

That leaves us still short a sparge kettle. We didn't know what we were going to do. I guess we could have used a pot and just siphoned the sparge water into the mash tun. But as I said before, we were going to do it right. So now enter Bill Nevits. He lives right down the street from our brew hut so we figured in the morning we could just pick up whatever we needed. So out comes the phone and Bill answers both the call and the request. But just as I hung up the phone I also realized that we had nothing to stir the grain with. So again Bill enters stage left. So without further adieu, Bill and Greg, thank you very much for letting us borrow your equipment.

Now that we had everything we needed to brew, we just needed to decide on a style. I decided, since the February theme for the Wizards meeting was porter month, that I would try a porter. I did some research and ended up using 15 lbs. of grain (13 lbs. of base grains) utilizing 1 oz of Northern Brewers Hops and ½ oz of Cascade Hops for the bittering hops (60 min) and ½ oz of Cascade hops for the flavoring hops (15 min).

Glen decided on a clone of New Castle and derived his recipe from the published book called "Clone Brews". He ended up with a specific Gravity of 1.36, which was a little lighter than the target specific Gravity. He used just over 9 lbs. of grain (most of which were base grains), utilizing ½ oz of target hops for the bittering hops (60 min) and ½ oz of East Kent Goldings hops for the flavoring hops (15 min).

Since we had just one mash tun we had to space these batches out so that we would have one batch in the brew Kettle and one batch in the mash tun. We decided to first go with the Porter. So in went the grain and 15 quarts of 150 °F water. Oh by the way did I mention that we were trying a step temperature mash? That was our first mistake. Well I should say it was my mistake, I had decided that this was the best way to go; walk Jeremy, walk before you run.

We were shooting for a temp of 122 °F for 30 min as a protein rest. We ended up with a temperature of about 117 °F. To compensate we had to add small amounts of boiling water until we reached 122 °F. Unfortunately, instead of a thick mash we had more of a soup-like mash.

When you do the math, 15 lbs. of grain, 4 + gallons of water, and a five gallon mash tun. Somehow those don't add up. Even worse we still had to bring the temperature up to 150 for the starch to sugar conversion. Well we ran out of room at about a temperature of about 140 °F. I wasn't sure what to do so I decided that I would drain the liquid from the mash and heat it to about 152 °F and would be back in business. Sounds plausible? So I turned the flow on, a couple of drops came out and then stopped. In our haste, we were stirring like Harry Potter making a potion for Professor Snape's Class and knocked off the strainer which is just a rubber stopper fitting that plugs into the spigot setup. So now the whole mash had to go into the "heating pot" and the mash tun had to be fixed.

Once we were back in the mash tun we were back in business. We finally had a moment to relax while the mash sat at about 150 °F (give or take a few degrees, remember no insulation). Then we finally realized that we had a pot in the kitchen that was filling up. Actually, it was already full and was starting to fill up the kitchen floor. That took about ten minutes and several hundred towels to clean up. But we made it through and were ready to sparge to the brewing kettle. Somewhere along the way we left the hose from Bills Sparge tank too close to the burner and melted a section of it. Fortunately for Bill and us we only lost an inch and ½ of tubing. I guess you could call us lucky.

The wort was near boil and I started to prepare the hops by double bagging them in the disposable hop bags. I had the ½ oz of Cascade hops but couldn't find the Northern Brewers hops. Then I realized that Brian at "Strange Brew" was a little cocked when he was putting my order together and in his homebrew stupor forgot to put those in the bag. No pun intended. Anyway, those homebrews he had at the shop were good though - uummmmm. So I had to substitute the Cluster hops. They were about the same Alpha Acid number and frankly I had no choice. It was a forced decision on the fly.

I was now brewing and it was time to start Glens batch. We added to the sparge tank and started to heat it up. We put a heavy glass pot lid on it, which fit perfectly except in one small place around the cutout. You can smell the foreshadowing can't you? It fell through. But that's not all it did. It fell in such a way, almost perpendicular to the bottom of the pot, that it managed to crush the floating thermometer. A one in a million shot. But I guess today the odds were more like one in two. And to top it off as we were cleaning out the kettle of glass and whatever else was in it we had a boil over.

Actually I really looked at the day as a success. The whole reason we brewed was so that we wouldn't look like idiots next week when we had two other experienced all grain brewers over for the real brewfest we had planned. And we were able to get two batches out that from tasting the unfermented wort tasted pretty good. And according to Murphy's Stout law, since so many things went wrong this week, next week they have to even out and mostly go right. At least I hop. But then again I am an optimist. My glass is always half full with beer.

Thank you to Glen's wife Tess for letting us mess up the house and garage and lastly, a special thanks to my girlfriend Cheryl who started all this madness by buying me my first brew kit a year ago.

Book Report - Porter by Terry Glenn

By Bill Nevits

Like many authors, Terry Foster begins his book Porter by giving us his reason for writing it. Quite simply put he had to write this book because "porter must not be allowed to die." Porter is the fifth book in the Classic Beer Style Series published by Brewer's Publications.

Foster begins his discussion of porter with a rather lengthy history of the beer style taking us from porter's early days in the 1700's, through it's rise in popularity in the 1800s and to it's ultimate decline in the early 1900s. Unlike other authors on this subject, Foster doesn't claim to know where porter really came from or how it was originally made. His reason for this lack of knowledge comes from the fact the original porter was made over three hundred years ago in a time when records were scarce and ingredients barely resembled what we see today. None the less, he does offer a number of interesting theories as to the origin of the style and profile of the porter of the early 1700s. For the reasons stated above, he goes on to say it is unlikely we will ever be able to know how well the porters being made today resemble the original style.

Foster then describes the porter profile, or at least what he believes to be the porter profile. Upon deeper examination it appears the porter profile he is suggesting does indeed match that of the BJCP. Foster's descriptive profile is as follows:

- Translucent color with a deep ruby shade
- Full bodied malt flavor
- Dry and certainly not noticeably sweet
- Balanced malt flavor and hop bitterness (bitterness should not dominate as in pale ales)
- English draught forms are low in carbonation (.75 to 1 volumes)
- American bottled versions are higher in carbonation (up to 2.5 volumes)

Next comes a discussion of the typical brewing ingredients and the brewing process. I didn't find this section to be terribly useful. I also found it to be less detailed than most homebrew books on the market today. Foster himself claims "there is no special approach involved here." The new and useful facts I uncovered include:

- Use a single step infusion mash around 150 degrees F
- For OG beers less than 1050, mash around 153 degrees F to give more body
- Traditional English Goldings, Styrian Goldings and Saaz are more effective after the heat has been turned off.
- Primary ferment at 60 to 68 degrees F
- Secondary ferment at 50 to 55 degrees F
- Dry hop with no more than 1/2 ounce per 5 gallons

The author then presents a selection of his homebrew recipes. What's nice is that he covers a wide range of porter "substyles" ranging from a pale porter to a high gravity porter resembling those of the 1700s. Foster concludes his book with a somewhat out of date discussion of the porters in America and England today.

If you're looking to learn more about porters Terry Foster's book Porter could be the book for you. The fascinating section on the history of porter occupies a full one third of the book and is well worth a read. While the sections on ingredients and the brewing process are a little lacking, they may fill the gaps in your knowledge of brewing porters. Finally, the recipes appear to provide a wide ranges of choices to get anyone started on the road to brewing porter. Personally I didn't find the book to be all that useful but since it was a gift, I think I'll keep it.

Feature Sites

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

- http://www.chilliman.com/beer_labels_frame.htm - How well do you know your beers? Try this fun game.



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