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REVIEW of the JULY MEETING

The July 19 meeting of the Foam Rangers involved the testing (tasting) of several Continental Dark Lagers, in what will be the last (at least for a while) judging of commercial beers. Needless to say for all of you faithful attendees, I was again unable to attend, being trapped in Boston for what will be the last (at least for a while) time. There should be few times when I will be so unfortunate again.

Enough of this stuff, and on to the matter at hand!

The "several" Continental Dark Lagers mentioned above turns out to be exactly five. With only five beers to sample, maybe it was not so unfortunate that I was unable to attend...

Enough is enough! Here are the ball scores:

Hofbrau	29.15
Lowenbrau	28.80
St. Pauli Girl	27.10
Dortmunder	24.85
Ringnes	21.95

It is important to note that the judging was made using the new "Official Foam Rangers' Beer Rating" form, published in the July issue of this... this... this... (oh, yes) "Newsletter". Very nice!

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PREVIEW of the AUGUST MEETING

The theme beer for the August 16 meeting of the Foam Rangers will be "Home Brew Grab Bag"!!!. At this meeting there may be a beer judging for these brews, along with the normal swilling, but who cares? Just think of it - real home brew again!!! Don't miss it if you can!

Another item of great importance to be discussed at the August meeting will be the continuing planning for the regional home brewing competition. Elsewhere in this issue is a report of the recommendations from the steering committee. Unless you want them to ramrod their views down our throats, you had better plan on attending!

Incidentally, just in case anyone is counting, at this time I have no idea at all whether or not I will be able to attend (Sigh!) All I know for sure is that I have to travel to Dallas that day, and do not know when I will be returning; I hope to see you there!

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SNEAK PREVIEW of the SEPTEMBER MEETING

The theme beer for the September ?? meeting of the Foam Rangers will be Brown Brews. Okay, so maybe it's not your favorite, but who cares? It IS home brew, after all! Here is your opportunity to show off your best, and cry over your worst (I seem to have a lot of these lately). This promises to be the second best meeting that the Foam Rangers have had in a few months. Not there is anything wrong with all these sissy imported beers we have been sampling, but after all, Home Brew is where it's at!

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SUPER SNEAK PREVIEW

of the OCTOBER MEETING

The beer for the month of October will be Wheat Beers! These things are kind of strange, I know, but I do not have any say in the selection. Actually, wheat beers have a very interesting and unique quality that you just cannot describe - you just gotta' try it! I assume that everyone will want to whip up a batch for this meeting. If not (but why not), there will be a few home brewed wheat beers I bet, and there are some (yuk!) commercially available.

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HOT FLASH!

If you want to get a jump on the "Hot Flash" of the year (good grief), then you should take a look at a new offering from Avon Publishers by the title of The Complete Joy of Home Brewing, by (you guessed it) Charlie Papazian, to be released shortly (probably in late September) for \$8.95. A pre-release copy will be reviewed in this very (uh) "Newsletter" next month.

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DREGS

--- by Chad Alexander

"The time has come," the Brewer said, "to speak of many things. Of hops and malt and many yeasts and stuff that makes us sing." In other words, this seems like a good time to just ramble and prattle about a few odd thoughts (Okay - so all my thoughts are odd...). [Ed. note: How true, but they do keep you on the edge of your glass.]

Hops - Shortly after I began brewing, almost three years ago, I came across a "deal" and acquired 2+ pounds of Goldings and a like amount of Hallertau, and put them in the freezer. A lot has been used but I keep buying "fresh". The old ones seem to work fine for bittering - or is it just my imagination?

Malt - It is no secret that the kid likes to use Edme grain. It provides fantastic body for any potation with bubbles, but, and here is the silly question, could it be the reason I seem to have chronic chill haze problems? Some English ales (Samuel Smith Pale, for example) seem to display a similar predilection.

Also, what about malt extracts, hopped versus unhopped? Having used several but never paying attention to whether they were prehopped or not I ask, "Does it really make a difference? Doesn't everyone add hops anyway? Do the rates change?

Yeast - Again, I'm an Edme fan. The stuff is consistent, hearty, honest, brave, forthright, ... Now that more and more unpasteurized beers are available from the micro-breweries, it seems that we might be able to establish some fairly good liquid cultures at home. Will they also be consistent, hearty, honest, brave, forthright, ...? I guess I'll keep a couple of packages of Edme just in case.

Stuff that makes us sing - a confession. I actually paid an American green back dollar and tried a Light Alcohol "beer"(?) [Ed. note: HORROR!!!] Without a doubt, it will soon rival Sparklettes for honors as an excellent source of pure H₂O. Completely uncontaminated by offensive tastes or odors. Wonderful stuff --- really! Everyone should try it. Larry Bristol will sing its praises [Ed. note: Don't count on it!]. We should dedicate a meeting to the virtues thereof. Why, this elixir...

A friend of mine has recently opened the first bottle of his first batch. Granted, it doesn't take much to get me excited, but it's good and he's hooked. Something akin to losing one's virginity. (AMEN)

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PUB CRAWL REVIEW?

Who would not like to see a dissertation reviewing the infamous Foam Rangers' Second Annual Pub Crawl? This is certain a set of prose of great wonder and nobility! Surely there is one among us (yes, of course there is, but quit calling me "Shirley") who has the courage and fortitude to undertake this great challenge!

I gave you fair warning! NO VOLUNTEER has come forward! I will now select a volunteer. Who wants to be the next publisher?

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REGIONAL COMPETITION

Plans for the "Dixie Cup", a regional home brew competition among home brewers from the States of Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Arkansas, are well underway. The steering committee meeting on July 31 has provided a wealth of recommendations which will be reviewed and approved by the general membership at the August meeting. Unfortunately, the entire committee was not present, but thanks to Chad Alexander, Dave Bensey, and Scott Birdwell (don't I know him?) a great amount was accomplished.

The "Dixie Cup" will tentatively occur on November 3, at 2:00. The current favorite site is a wonderful place called "The Orange Show" near Gulfgate Center; from what I hear, a visit to this establishment is worth the time, even without the regional competition!

The committee also developed a complete set of categories for entries. The plan is to provide an adjustable set of categories which could vary according to the number of entries! This sounds complicated, but is really very simple. First, a list of the categories and subcategories:

I. LIGHT LAGERS

- A) NORTH AMERICAN LIGHT LAGERS (AL) - Light color pouring clear and bright when chilled, with high carbonation, light body, delicate (not overpowering) hop bouquet, generally less than 5% alcohol. (Commercial comparisons: Budweiser, Molson's Golden, Pabst Blue Ribbon)
- B) CONTINENTAL LIGHT LAGERS (CL) - Straw colored, with a full malt body and character, high amount of hop bouquet and flavor with an underlying malty sweetness. (Commercial comparisons: Pilsner Urquell, Heineken Light, Becks Light)

II. AMBER BEERS

- A) PALE ALES (PA) - Light to copper in color, this beer is well hopped with a hint of sweetness to balance the hoppy edge. Pale ales have a hoppy, somewhat estery nose. This includes British bitter and light ales. (Commercial comparisons: Watneys, Fullers, Ballantine IPA)
- B) STEAM BEERS (SM) - The only indigenous American beer style, steam beer has become synonymous with Anchor Steam Beer, the only surviving commercial brewer of this style. Bottom fermenting lager yeast is used to ferment the wort at ale like temperatures (58°F-65°F) in long shallow pan like vessels. Anchor Steam is copper in color, with a malty body and a pronounced hop bite and aroma. (Commercial comparisons: Anchor Steam Beer, of course)
- C) OKTOBERFEST/VIENNA STYLE LAGER (OV) - "A copper colored lager, notably full bodied and with malt emphasis. Originally the local style of the city (Vienna) but now more widely represented by the Marzen (March) or Oktoberfest brews of Munich." - Michael Jackson from The Pocket Guide of Beer. (Commercial comparisons: Spaten Oktoberfest, Dos Equis)

III. BROWN BREWS

- A) BROWN ALES (including BRITISH MILDS) (BA) - Brown ales are caramel sweet, not too carbonated, and have just a hint of hop

aroma and bite. (Commercial comparisons: Newcastle Brown Ale, McEwan's Tartan Ale)

- B) CONTINENTAL DARK (including MUNICH style, BOCK, and DOPPELBOCK) (CD) - Dark in color, these lagers have more hops and carbonation than their brown ale counterparts. Continental darks are characterized by a subtle, crisp delicateness that can only be obtained by a significant period of cold storage. (Commercial comparisons: Heineken Dark, San Miguel Dark, Becks Dark)

IV. BLACK BREWS

- A) PORTERS (PO) - A very dark brown ale with a strong hop character, this style derives much of its unique bittersweet flavor from the use of roasted barley grains and caramel malts. (Commercial comparisons: Anchor Porter, Sierra Nevada Porter)
- B) SWEET STOUTS (SS) - Similar to porter, but darker, not as highly hopped, and with a "sugary" sweet aftertaste (as opposed to the grainy, malty sweetness of a porter). (Commercial comparisons: Mackeson's Stout)
- C) DRY STOUTS (DS) - Like sweet stouts, dry stouts are more full bodied, richer, and traditionally stronger than porters. Dry stouts tend to be more highly hopped than either of its cousins, with a slightly bitter, "iron like" aftertaste, and just a faint hint of sweetness in the finish. (Commercial comparisons: Guinness Stout, Tooth Sheath Stout)

- V. STRONG BREWS (including OLD ALES, BARLEY WINES, MALT LIQUOR, etc.) (SB) - Highly alcoholic (7-12%), these brews may be light or dark in color with a pronounced fruity, almost "winey" smoothness achieved through long maturation. Very complex finish. (Commercial comparisons: Watneys Stingo, EKV 28, Spaten Optimator)

VI. SPECIALTY BEERS

- A) NOVELTY BEERS (NB) - Beers made with recipes including unusual ingredients such as honey, fruit, teas, coffee, buffalo chips, and so forth (buffalo chips?).
- B) ALE MEAD (AM) - Brews that utilize honey in lieu of malt as a base for fermentables. Very light in color and body. Lightly hopped.
- C) WHEAT BEERS (including WEISSE and WEIZEN BIERS) (WB) - Brews that incorporate the use of wheat or wheat malt in the recipes, generally one quarter to two thirds of the mash. These beers are traditionally lightly hopped. (Commercial comparisons: Belgian Kriek (cherry) beers, Spaten Club Weisse, Hoegaarden White)

WHEW!!! As you can see, there are six major categories and a total of fourteen subcategories. When a beer is entered into the competition, it should be placed into the appropriate subcategory. In order to be judged in a unique group, there must be a minimum number of entries within that subcategory. If not, the subcategories will be combined into the more inclusive major category. In all cases, however, brews will be judged according to the criteria established for that subcategory, even though it may be competing against beers in other subcategories. As you can see, there will be somewhere between 6 and 14 prizes, depending upon the number of entries.

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From the Editor

Six down and six to go!!! And this one is only one day late!

September 1 represents a memorable date to all home brewers within the State of Texas. It marks the first anniversary of the repeal of the State law which had previously banned the private production of beer within Texas. It seems that this is a good opportunity to count our blessings in that the hobby (art) which we practice so vigorously is completely within the moral bounds that our leaders deem appropriate. And so, I quote from Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code:

SUBCHAPTER B. HOME PRODUCTION OF WINE, ALE,
MALT LIQUOR OR BEER

Sec. 109.21. HOME PRODUCTION OF WINE, ALE, MALT LIQUOR, OR BEER.

(a) The head of a family or an unmarried adult may produce, or have manufactured by a winery permittee, for the use of his family or himself not more than 200 gallons of wine, ale, malt liquor, or beer per year. No license or permit is required.

(b) The commission may prohibit the use of any ingredient it finds detrimental to health or susceptible of use to evade this code. Only wine made from the normal alcoholic fermentation of the juices of dandelions or grapes, raisins, or other fruits may be produced under this section. Only ale, malt liquor, or beer made from the normal fermentation of malted barley with hops, or their products, and with or without other malted or unmalted cereals, may be produced under this section. The possession of wine, ale, malt liquor, or beer produced under this section is not an offense if the person making it complies with all provisions of this section and the wine, ale, malt liquor, or beer is not distilled, fortified, or otherwise altered to increase its alcohol content.

(c) There is no annual state fee for beverages produced in compliance with this section.

On September 1, each and every home brewer within the State of Texas should lift his or her glass towards Austin and drink a toast to those Legislators who decided that enough was finally enough, and rewrote this section of the law.

Relax! Don't worry!! Have a home brew!!!



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