



THE FOAM RANGERS Newsletter Urquell

Late Edition

Volume 23, Number 5 - May 2004

In this Issue:

Out (of) the Wazoo.....	1
Bock Brewing Tips.....	3
Photo pages.....	5-7
Brewman.....	8
Competition Corner.....	10

May meeting
is
May 21st
at DeFalco's

This is the
Third
Friday!!!

Out (of) the Wazoo



By
Mike Heniff,
Grand Wazoo

In March, we won the coveted Bluebonnet stein. Quite a feat! Last month, we took second at Crescent City in New Orleans. Not bad at all (the home team Crescent City homebrewers stepped up to the plate). We also shipped about 90 entries to Orlando for the Sunshine Challenge. Also very good; we'll see how well we do soon.

But, the busy part of the competition schedule is winding down. Most of the locals and MCAB qualifiers will be done or entry deadlines passed by the end of the month. (KGB Big Batch is on June 6th with entries due by May 28th and the Mashtronaut's Lunar Rendezbrew is on July 25th). AHA South Regional have been judged (thanks to all of those that helped out; especially those that judged with last minute's notice on Wednesday!) and we'll all know the results before the meeting.

It seems like we've been focusing on competitions the last few months. Well, we have been; but, the first half of the year is always stacked with Gulf Coast competitions, other locals, AHA's, and MCAB qualifiers every year. Watch the schedule for the last few (MCAB VI is one - those brewers with qualifiers know who they are). Also, we are well on the way to planning for our competition, The Dixie

Cup, in October. Maybe we can get Ed to write an article to give us an update so far ...

Now we will have time to focus on other aspects of the club. Great homebrew is always first priority, be sure to bring some to the meetings, especially if it is in kegs! Brew-ins, First Sunday pub visits, and a few extra meetings fit the bill well. In the works for the rest of the year as of right now: a July pool party meeting (more info soon!), a Foam Ranger-KGB-Mashtronaut joint meeting in May (at the KGBs home) and in August (sponsored by us), a San Antonio pub crawl in August, and some sort of beer education classes (BJCP or otherwise).

As far as brew-ins go, we have had a number of scheduled ones each second Saturday in front of DeFalco's. We have also had a number at individual's homes as well. On May First, we had "the big one" outside of Saint Arnold Brewery. It was truly an event to be missed; the beer flowed and the water did the same. We got at least 4 inches of rain, the temperature dropped at least 10 degrees, and the wind was howling at times (ask Czar Don about his canopy!). But, the barleywine flowed all day and we figured out who the diehard brewers are. Foam Rangers brewing were myself, Bev, Joe Lindsey, and Colby Sheridan. The KGB had Czar Don and MOW Wes brewing. At least 10 guys from the Golden Triangle in Beaumont were there as well (talk about diehards!). Ed Moore and the KGB's Tim White filled in dutifully as cooks. In all, we brewed about 80 gallons of beer!

The Brewsletter Urquell

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Notice:

Calling all Foamrangers, please feel free to submit any ideas for articles or try writing an article yourself for inclusion in your brewsletter.



By
**George
"Stu" West,
Scrivener**

I was stressing out a bit about having taken so long to complete this, but then I remembered Dave certainly isn't going to drive beyond the belt-way to kick my ass if it's not done, so why worry? Of course I have an obligation to act as the collective memory of meetings past that quickly seem to grow hazy for some reason, and I will do my best to recollect what happened with the aid of the illegible notes I took. The task made even more daunting by a late night visit to BJ's. Funny how they always seem to make sense on the night of the meeting. The April meeting covered news that the Foamrangers almost swept Bluebonnet as everyone (well OK mainly Bev) hovered around the trophy/phallic symbol. There was some talk of winning Homebrew Club of the Year and Mike winning Homebrewer of the Year. Reminders about Crescent City and Sunshine were noted as was the next brew-in on May 8th, a wheat beer. The last first Sunday at the Saucer was a triumphal success in that club members took the remainder of a keg of Sisyphus off the bar's hands. The next Sunday meeting was mentioned as being at BJ's at Clear Lake. A reminder about AHA's Homebrew Day at St. Arnolds also was mentioned. Mike did his best to peddle T-shirts, glasses, and badges, but I don't think he should quit his day job. The KGB also asked to inform everyone about the May 16th Steak out event on the Northside. There were too many pack and ships to mention, but I am sure everyone is keeping up.

As a side note (and because Dave constantly bitches about how short my section is), I decided to also share some recent insights on the

world of beer beyond our heavily guarded borders. This time I can comment on the Middle East to some very small degree. As I am writing this I am on the plane back to Houston after about 25 hours of travel time originating in Tehran. Tehran as you might be aware has no beer, at least none with alcohol. They do produce a number of non-alcoholic beers, some of which also have fruit flavors, but all of which taste nothing like real beer...not even close. As devout as the government there claims its citizens are it is amazing how quickly they start to call flight attendants for all forms of alcohol as soon as the plane lifts off the ground from Mehrabad airport (I am being literal here) and they don't stop drinking until the flight is over or attendants cut them off. Emirates Airlines, at least on most flights I went on, served Bud and Heineken. Also on my agenda was Dubai which is about as western as you will find the region. In addition to a large number of Irish pubs, Dubai has a huge Indian population (that do all the work in the country), so there are a vast amount of Indian bars and loud Hindi discos (my hotel room was above one and I think I have permanent nerve damage). The main beers of choice in Dubai are lagers and they import a wide variety including Fosters, Becks, etc. In the Irish theme pubs you can find Guinness and Kilkenny. One of the good ones is the Irish Village, a small franchise in the country that also operates one in the airport that stays open 24 hours around the clock. Beyond that as most people know your best bet for beer is to save yourself for a connection in Gatwick and hope you have time to head somewhere like the Red Lion in the North terminal that serves cask ale at all hours. There is nothing like a couple of Director's Best Bitters and scrambled eggs on toast at 7am. From what I remember they have six cask ales on tap as well as Guinness etc.

Brewing Tips for Bocks

by *Mike Heniff*

The focus of the bock style is the malt. Typically the malt bill is Munich malt with Pilsner malt. Many brewers have problems converting an all Munich malt mash since the enzymes are at the very low end of the scale for base malts. Pilsner malt (a good German variety) should be used as at least 10-30% of the grain bill in order to provide enough enzymes to avoid a troublesome mash.

The traditional method to get the extremely strong and complex maltiness of a bock is to perform a double or triple decoction mash. The high heat in the mash will cause sugars and amino acids to combine to form the trademark melanoidin character of the bock. "New Brewing Lager Beer" by Gregory Noonan describes the process on how to best perform decoction mashes (Dave Cato gives some good insight as well in his recipe below). For those lazy brewers that don't like to decoct (such as myself), melanoidin malt is available to provide some of the flavor that you typically get from decoction mashing. Belgian aromatic malt is a decent substitution as well.

Hop levels in a bock should be at a minimum. The IBUs are quite low considering the gravity, the goal is to focus on an intense maltiness. Choose a quality continental hop for bittering such as German Perle or Hallertauer Tradition. For flavoring, avoid adding hops after 15 min (left to boil). At this point, stick with noble hops such as Hallertauer Hershbrucker or Tettnanger.

Since bock is a lager style, a lager yeast and cold fermentation schedule is a necessity. The Wyeast 2206

Bavarian Lager yeast is the standard for brewing clean German lagers; the bock style is no exception. White Labs WLP830 German Lager yeast is a good substitute (it is probably the same yeast!). A new yeast is available from White Labs: German Bock Lager WLP833 which is reportedly from Ayinger (this may be a Platinum series yeast with seasonal availability).

To properly ferment a lager, the lager yeast should be pitched at 70 F. (Lager yeast can be pitched at fermentation temperature but the lag time will be quite a bit longer. According to Dr. Chris White of White Labs, ester production will not be high at the beginning of fermentation so there is little risk of pitching at the higher temperature.) At the first sign of fermentation, begin lowering the temperature 1 F per hour to 50 – 55 F. Ferment in the primary for two weeks. Some lager yeasts do not require a diacetyl rest. If you need to conduct a diacetyl rest (I would suggest to do so, regardless), raise the temperature for the last two days of the primary fermentation to 70 F. For the secondary fermentation, lower the temperature 2 – 4 F per day until in the 32 – 38 F range and hold for 1 – 2 weeks. Bottle or keg, either naturally or force carbonate (preferable force carbonate since there will be very little yeast left after the secondary fermentation – add some yeast at bottling if you are going to naturally carbonate). After the beer is carbonated, store at refrigerator temperature for a few weeks to a few months before serving.

cont on p11

Beer of the Month Calendar

January 16th, 2004
Porter & Stout

February 20th, 2004
Barleywine & Holiday

March 12th, 2004
Belgian & Fruit Beers

April 16th, 2004
Brown, Old & Scotch

May 21st, 2004
Bock

June 18th, 2004
Wheat Beers

July 16th, 2004
Pilsner & Kolsch

August 20th, 2004
Pale Ale & Bitter

September 17th, 2004
Oktoberfest / Marzen

October 15th-16th, 2004
Dixie Cup XXI

November 19th, 2004
India Pale Ale

December 14th
Homebrewer's Xmas Party



History Lesson

by Sean Lamb,
Closet Historian

5 years ago...

In the Brewsletter Urquell Secondary fermenter Vallhonrat admits that his tangential ramblings are really a ruse to avoid being asked to run for Grand

Wazoo, and then delves into the mangin of Bockness. Bev's "Watch this space" takes up the space fo two pages. GrandWazoo Waynes Smith is looking for email addrese for a few good men.

At the club meeting - Held a DeFalco's on Robinhood. Crescent City Competition winners were annoucned - Sly Bastards got something for Barley Wine and Steam beer, as did Bev Balckwood for IPS, "Sleazy Bastards for Lousiana Toe Jam Ale" David Cato for German Bock, and Jimmy Paige for Amber Ale.

Other Events -National Homebrew Day brew-in at St. Arnold is a big success. Phil Endacott organized ti and over 200 gallons of brew were made. 2ndary Vallhonarat and Steve Moore are club emissaries to the Sunshine Cahllenge.

10 Years ago...

In the Brewsletter Urquell - Editor Ken Baker keeps packing the columns in. Grand Wazoo Autumn Moore covers teh club's activites. A column on "Women and Brewing" - "News Shorts" "Protalnd Brewing Goes Nationwide" Crazy Horse Banned In Minnesota" "Spread o Microbrewers Spawns industy Suppliers" are all reprinted articles ripped off by editor Baker. Kurt Keelnbenz relates the apperance of the "Bard of Beer' Michael Jackso at DeFalco's and the Ginegerman.Autumn Moore writes up Beligna beers.

At the club meeting - Held at the homne of Steve and Autumn Moore. Some shuffling of the officers resulted in Autumn Moore officially claiming Wazhood and Sam Zbbia filling in as secondary. BVeers of the month were Celis White, Grimbergen Double adn Triple, Duvel, Chimay Grand Reserve, Liefmans Goudenband and Kriek.

Other Events - The Jennings thing happened - thge Foam Rangers lost the overall competition, especially owing to the "ringer" the New Orleans crew brought for the keg toss. Keeping with tradition, the Foam Rangers won every event involving beer. Houston's 1st brewpub opens - the Village Brewery. St. Arnold Brewing opens.

15 Years ago...

In the Brewsletter Urquell - Grand Wazoo Brad Kraus usese the word "ASCII" and then begins a tengential ramble that will not be paralled for another

10 years. Dr. Strangebrew explains why a batch of beer that is both kegged and bottled tastes differently. The 411 on pestering your state senator about the homebrew legislaiton is put into black and white.

At the club meeting - Held at Buck Wyckoff's house way out west. Beer of the Monthwaws "Beers of the Pacific"

Other Events - The "Bock in the USSR" pub crawl was held - the Gingerman, Munchies, Local Charm Rover's Galss Hat and the Richmond Arms were official stops.

20 Years ago...

In the Brewsletter Urquell - Results of the March in club competition and "Mother Steinberg's Genuine Secret Kosher Recipe for Fickled Eggs" are highlights.

At the club meeting - Held at the Gingerman - BOTM was german light lagers.

Other Events - 2nd annual pub crawl - Munchies, Elephant and Castle, Kenneally's the Ale House, Mr. Dunderbak's were vistied.

Scenes from the Flying Saucer...



Wow! what was that a UFO?



Screw the UFO, I just saw a Beer Goddess!



Look Joe, if I smile wide enough I could have a real live Beer Goddess tonight!



Yeah, Yeah, there ain't no such thing as Beer Goddesses!



I could care less about that tart they call a Beer Goddess, I can't decide what to drink, dammit!



Are you really a Beer Goddess? can you meet me in that back room in 5?



I don't see no Beer Goddess, I'm bummed about it too, man!

April Meeting Pix



I won the raffle, Woo hoo!



Is there actually anything left in there, Mark?



So that's why he shaves his head



Synchronized posing, anyone? Could be in the next Olympics.



They like it when grabbed this way...



No, it's much better grabbed like this laddie!

Homebrew Day - Noah's Tale



1)The edict came down from above and the heavens poured rain upon the hapless chosen few...



2)Two by two, they gathered. Noah, Gilligan, The Professor Barryann and The Skipper were all there...



3) They obediently loaded up the pickup ark...



4) braved the storm and...



5)made a "batch for the road" as rumors flew that BOM was to be named 40 days & 40 nights. But the skies cleared..



6) and the boys grinned happily as Thing delivered the 'Beer Dove' and...



7) it flew triumphantly over the soggy bayou taking it's malty payload to the masses.




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H O U S T O N ' S F I R S T M A L T B R E W E R Y

Foam Ranger Events



May

May 15Austin Zealots
Homebrew Inquisition
Austin, TX**May 21**Monthly Meeting
DeFalco's 7pm**May 21-22**Sunshine Challenge
Orlando, FL**May 27**Pack & Ship
Spirit of Free Beer
DeFalco's 6pm**May 28**Entry Drop-off
KGB BBBB
DeFalco's BY 6pm

June

June 6KGB BBBB
Strong Belgians
DeFalco's BY 6pm**June 12**Brew-in
Rob Kolacny
DeFalco's 10am**June 13**SECOND Sunday
Red Lion 4pm**June 17-19**AHA National
Homebrew Comp.
Las Vegas, NV**June 18**Monthly Meeting
DeFalco's 7pm

Competition Corner

by Bev Blackwood

So long, New Orleans. Good bye Orlando... While these grim statements haven't come anywhere near true just yet, I can't help but wonder if the handwriting isn't on the wall for the Gulf Coast circuit. In some ways, we have been the victims of our own success. Dixie Cup was always big, but it wasn't ever over 1000 beers, Bluebonnet was always big, but has approached that 1K milestone only rarely. New Orleans was barely 250 beers last year and around 400 this year. They resorted to a variety of incentive programs to get their own members to enter and were still disappointed in the results. Orlando has always done well and is a great party in a great location, but the same people end up running the show year after year... it wears them down! Are they on their last legs? Crescent City is. We have likely seen the last of the C-Cup. The Sunshine Challenge is faced with a huge gap in their support with Ed & Rocky Measom bowing out of their leadership roles for that event.

Burnout happens.

It happens when brewers get tired of making beer, or when the same people are called upon to make things happen again and again. Thankfully, we have not reached that point yet, but the day may come when it is true for us as well. It's when that next batch of beer is a chore to keg rather than a pleasure to anticipate or when the next meeting is a deadline rather than a fun evening with your friends. It's when there are two volunteer spots

left on your sign-up sheet and nobody to fill them, which means extra hours for you. Worst of all, it's when you've done your best to make an event work and someone complains that it wasn't good enough or that you did it wrong, or that it was better last year.

I'm guilty of that last one and in retrospect, I did a disservice to us all. We had some concerns about Crescent City's incentive programs which, in our eagerness to win back the C-Cup, we let overpower our common sense. We lost the battle for the C-Cup, and then in criticizing the way victory was won, we took a chainsaw to the very support that made the event happen. For that, I am personally very sorry. I've been there, I've done the hard jobs and put in the long hours. When someone comes back to you with a complaint about the event, it's a slap in the face. They may not realize what went into it, but when something is put on with volunteer labor for the enjoyment of others, then only gross misrepresentation or negligence should merit attacking those who gave their time and energy to make it happen. Whether right or wrong, the New Orleans clubs were simply trying to save the Crescent City competition.

I will not say that my complaints will end up killing the Crescent City competition. It was barely surviving already, but the apology I made above was certainly necessary. So what's our fate? What is the fate of the Gulf Coast Circuit? If New Orleans leaves a hole in the schedule, who fills it? What about tradition?

Change comes to all things and all organizations. Anyone with a sense of Foam Ranger history

cont on p11

cont from p3

**Traditional Bock (5 gallons)
by Dave Cato**

OG: 1.066 11.0 lb. Light Munich
 FG: 1.015 2.0 lb. Pils
 IBU: 25 0.5 lb. Dark Crystal
 0.5 lb. Light Crystal

0.75 oz. Tettnanger (4.3%) for 60 min.
 1.5 oz. Hersbrucker (3.2%) for 60 min.
 0.5 oz. Hersbrucker (3.2%) for 30 min.

Wyeast 2206 Bavarian Lager yeast

Note: All malts and hops are German (this is a German beer after all) and you will decoct!

Mash in with 4.5 gal. hot liquor for a strike temp of 104F. Rest 30 min. before pulling 30% of the mash for the first decoction. Heat the decoction to 149F and rest 30 min. then raise to 160F and rest another 30 min. or until conversion is complete; then boil for 10 min. Return the decoction to the rest mash which should bring the temp to 131F; rest 10 min. before pulling 30% of the mash for the second decoction. Repeat the first decoction schedule. Return the decoction to the rest mash which should bring the temp to 149F; rest 10 min. before pulling 40% of the mash for the final decoction. Heat the decoction to 160F and rest 30 min. or until conversion is complete, then boil for 10 min. Return the decoction to the rest mash which should bring the temp to 168F. Rest 10 min. before beginning the sparge.

cont from p10

knows that. This club is not the club it was a decade ago or even 5 years ago. The club we see today will not be the club we see in five years. It will hopefully be even better, but it can just as easily be worse. The same is true for the competitive landscape. Take the MCAB.. It is now entering its seventh year and is a cornerstone of our club's competitive strategy. It assures the Bluebonnet and Sunshine competitions that there will always be Foam Ranger entries, regardless of the existence of the Gulf Coast Circuit. The Cactus Challenge has risen to become a major event for both the Houston and Dallas area clubs. The Big Batch Brew Bash is far and away the largest event of its kind, and shows no sign of slowing down. It's a challenging landscape competitively and one which offers us many opportunities to grow in our own backyard. The same is true in Florida, with the Sunshine Challenge being the crown jewel of that state's many events. Do I advocate destroying what we have? Of course not. I just think we need to look ahead to see what change may bring us as a homebrewing community. Only by recognizing that change will come, whether we want it to or not, can we be prepared to face the future as a club and as a competition.

Brewers Assistance Program

Need help brewing?

Contact one of the following Foam Ranger members:

Bev Blackwood
 713.432.1248 (H)
 713.927.4832 (C)
 Before 11:00 p.m.

Kuyler Doyle
 713.523.8379 (H)
 832.566.1197 (C)
 Before 10:00 p.m.

Mike Heniff
 281.489.3762 (H)
 281.474.1537 (W)
 Before 9:00 p.m.

Joe Lindsey
 409.925.4664 (H)
 409.763.2366 (W)
 Joe Never Sleeps

Jimmy Paige
 281.894.0307 (H)
 832.576.6191 (C)
 Before 10:00 p.m.

Ron Solis
 281.324.7157 (H)
 Before 9:30 p.m.

Jim Youngmeyer
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Monthly Meeting
May 21st
@ DeFalco's

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Paid between July 1 & September 30 \$15.00 / \$22.50

Paid between October 1 & November 30 \$20.00 / \$30.00 (Includes the next year!)

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