



THE FOAM RANGERS Newsletter Urquell

Special Pool party issue!

Volume 23, Number 8 - August 2004

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August meeting
is
August 20th
at DeFalco's

Quote of the Month

I do now remember the poor creature — small beer!

Source: William Shakespeare, King Henry IV

Out (of) the Wazoo



By
Mike Heniff,
Grand Wazoo

It August, it's damn hot AND humid, and I'm planning spending all weekend brewing in a 100 F garage: it must be Dixie Cup time! It is time to be brewing beer for Dixie Cup (and storing our older brews as well). We have retained our beloved Cup for the last few years and we can't let it go! The Dixie Cup is what the Foam Rangers are known for and we need to make every effort that we can to make OUR competition the best it can be!

Our Dixie Cup Coordinator, Ed Moore, is well on the way with the planning for this grand event. The planning is going well, the website is up to date (thanks Dave Cato!), and we've got a lot work in progress. But, in addition to YOUR vast amount of entries, we NEED your manpower. It takes as ton of work to pull of the LARGEST SINGLE SITE HOMEBREW COMPETITION in the world (and for those that may not know, the Dixie Cup keeps the activities and memberships cheap). So, see Ed Moore or myself to see where you can help out. Regardless, mark the first three weekends of October off your calendar - we have plenty of

work (AND FUN) to do then! More details can be found that the Dixie Cup website (thanks to Dave Cato!).

But, the summer isn't just about Dixie Cup time. Last month we had our July meeting pool party (thanks to Colby and Gloria Sheridan for their hospitality) and the first, of hopefully many, Light Rail Pub Crawl (thanks to long standing members Sean Lamb and Steve Moore for the idea and coordination); both were great times. And once again the Lunar Rendezbrew was a great time and the Foam Rangers racked up a ton of awards! Ed Moore also hosted the AHA Mead National Homebrew Day.

This month we host our first ever meeting with an open invitation to all area homebrew clubs that may end up being the biggest drunk-fest ever. Be sure to welcome our brothers with open arms. Our San Antonio pub crawl for August 28th is definitely a go and will likely be a runner-up in size to the August meeting but I GUARANTEE it will not surpass it in FUN (once again, we have invited our brothers from the other clubs to join us as well)!

Last but not least, I heard through the grape vine that Flying Saucer may be sponsoring a beer garden/festival at Jones Plaza on September 28th.

The Brewsletter Urquell

Official Organ of the
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Notice:

There are none— do you think anyone will notice!!



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

Usually I have a hard time remembering what happened at the last meeting, but this time I had a good excuse...I wasn't there (literally this time). Unfortunately no one else seems to recall anything substantive happening, so I decided to pass on what I learned while away on vacation. As some might be aware, Sandy and I went to France and Italy for a couple weeks and missed "Speedo fest", but fear not we did find some beer. Right off the bat it is interesting to note that in most bars and restaurants, wine (often good local wine) is usually cheaper than beer, so in Western Europe be prepared for wild prices if in search of malt beverages. Our first and last stop was Paris, a place I visited many times, although I never really sought unique beer or beer bars up until this most recent trip. Beers normally found in most bars include Kronenberg, Heineken and your usual lagers, and sometimes Pelforth Brune (a relatively mundane brown ale). Once in a while you might also find a Belgian or two on tap. Knowing this we set out for greener pastures if you will. First we visited the few brewpubs Paris had to offer. Our first taste of Paris brewpub beer was not impressive. Brasserie O'Neil was once an independently owned establishment as far as I can tell, but a chain I first encountered in Montreal, the Trois Brasseurs, have since taken it over, dumbed down there selection and started to use Belgian yeast for everything. As in Montreal, the emphasis was on food, not good beer. Another brewpub that uses Belgian yeast, but with better results, is the Taverne de Nesle on Rue Dauphine. The trendy looking bar makes Epi Noir, a buckwheat ale (not black, but brown in color), Epi Blanc made with oats, and Epi Rouge made with amaranth.

They also serve a wide selection of bottles, mostly Belgian. Our next brewpub stop was the Frog and Princess, one of four in Paris (also Toulouse, Bordeaux, and Lisbon). The Frog chain concentrates on British style cask beers, as well as a few interesting other styles. They included Blondes, Bitters, Wheats, ESBs, and Stouts, as well as seasonals. The beers were good (English Dave would love them) and provided a nice change of pace. Another British pub worth a visit if you are in the mood for flat beer is the Bombardier near the Pantheon (rather next to the Pantheon). It is owned by Charles Well brewery and serves their cask ales. Unfortunately both tasted a little too much like butterscotch, but maybe the casks needed a changeout. Interesting to note a bottle of Corona costs the same 6 Euros as a pint of cask. Supposedly there are two other brewpubs in Paris, but one we couldn't locate and the other we didn't try locating. We did hit a couple of beer bars including Biere Academy near the Isle de la Cite, which had a wide selection of Belgians as well as French staples like Jenlain. Not to be confused, the Academie de la Biere, another Belgian beer bar had an even larger selection and perhaps more ambiance as well as moules frites. There seems to be quite a few Irish bars as well, all with Guinness, Harp, Kilkenny etc., but rarely anything out of the ordinary. In the interest of brevity I need to skip ahead. Our real surprise came in Rome when we found Rome Brewing Company, a brewpub serving American style beers made with west coast hops (and lots of them) by a transplanted California brewer. Although quite a hike from the tourist area (in fact you have to take a metro to get close to it or go by cab). The "Red Ale" and "Blonde" was nothing out of the ordinary, but the Pale Ale was superb, at the top of any I tasted in the US. Although they bottle a barleywine, they had run out, something that I hope they remedy by the time I get back.

Annual Indian Feast

It's that time of year again. Time to host our annual Indian food and beer tasting at Ashiana Indian Restaurant (Dairy Ashford & Briar Forest). The date is Thursday, August 26, the time is 6:30 pm. Price: \$50 plus tax & gratuity. Our tentative menu is:

RECEPTION

Onion Bhaji
Mushrooms stuffed with keema (ground lamb)
BEER: Paulaner Urtyp 1634

FIRST COURSE

Endive boats with tandoori salmon
Radishes with coriander butter
Cherry tomato halves with sffron aioli
BEER: St. Arnold Elissa IPA

SECOND COURSE

Tandoori roasted pepper bisque creme fraiche
BEER: Paulaner Salvator

THIRD COURSE

Chicken Tikka & Tandoori shrimp with Jicama, mango & sweet onion salad
BEER: Hoegaarden White

FOURTH COURSE

Lamb Rhogan Josh
New Potatoes stuffed with paneer & capers
Saffron Rice Pulao
BEER: Sierra Nevada Porter

DESSERT

Nut berries
BEER: Lindeman's Cassis

Obviously, we may make a few adjustments, if necessary.
Scott Birdwell



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Beer of the Month Calendar

January 16th, 2004
Porter & Stout

Febrewary 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

A Tale of Two Firkins

by *Eric Wooten*



I'm at bargaining. Saying to myself repeatedly: just make it a few more hours, it's a marathon not a race, don't let the team down, just...hang...on. It's but three hours until they tap the cask-

conditioned Dogfish Head 90 Minute IPA. All that stands between that brew and me are about 400 other beers. Standing as I was at the Boston Beer Summit, basically every beer was stacked against me and the 90 sharing brewing's special moment just after they tapped the cask. It can't hurt to try some of Dogfish Head's other beers, can it? Like Aprihop, an apricot infused summer quencher with a light hopping hand (perhaps just proving they can hold back?) and their less restrained Summer Ale, a fairly hoppy beer that's still vaguely positioned in the less-bitter end of the AIPA spectrum. These statements are the surest sign of denial: This Hazed and Infused will in no way affect my ability to try the 90. Rockies Brewing Co. is new to the market up here, and they clearly need my personal encouragement on the beer's deliciously bitter flavors. The 90 is not in jeopardy at all. Entire think tanks in Vienna are having high-level conferences aimed at trying to understand even the most basic elements of the thinking process involved in such a deep level of denial that's clearly going and will doubtless require a new word to describe it. And while we're over here "helping" RBC, we've just got to visit the Smuttynose booth. These crazy kids from Portsmouth, NH most notably trotted out their Big A IPA for the show, a sensational, super hoppy Imperially styled beer that shows up in summertime and extends well into the "weedy" flavors of hopworld. And yet it has still got a resounding malt base to balance out all those IBUs. If there's a better beer flowing out of New Hampshire, I don't know about it. Thank God that sure-to-be-magnificent casked 90 we're holding on for is coming out of Delaware.

Let's face it. I can't claim I was ever angry. It's just beer. I mean, yeah, the Stone guy was holding out on the Double Bastard, but isn't that an appropriate attitude? What beer did I want to try again...again?

My depression period was suddenly interrupted a few weeks later when Step Two tossed NERAX into my lap. No, that's not a predictably obtuse reference to some Kevin Spacey movie or an explanation of what he was doing in the park at that hour, it's the New England Real Ale Exhibition. Essentially an East Coast Disneyland for Drunks put on by a couple of passionate Real Ale supporters and their helpful but thirsty friends, NERAX turned eight with this installment. Over the course of three days, nearly 100 casks were tapped; many, if not most, of these beers are available in the Boston area (or most of America, for that matter) only at NERAX. They hailed from the UK as well as regional craft breweries. Even Sam Adams fired up the mill and sent over a Porter; presumably it was one of the few beers actually brewed at the BBC world headquarters down in Jamaica Plain (that's southern Boston to you Texicans). Held in a VFW hall that could conveniently be chilled to cellar temperature (well, this is Boston: warmed to cellar temperature), the casks were stacked high and deep on a serving rack just behind a long bar holding the many, many beer engines. A number of predictably good beers to be had here, among them Strongarm from Cameron's brewery in Hartlepool, which turned out to be a classic bitter with a rosy color and evident but restrained hoppiness behind the ever nutty British malts. But the true moment of Zen happened, as always, when I least expected it (not unlike that time when, in a moment of weakness, you agree to judge "Strong Meat Beers" at Dixie Cup and happen upon the indisputable Best in Show). On a lark, I veered off the English page and tried Rapsallion Premier. Rapsallion is a remarkable beer of its own right. Brewed by Concorde Brewing in Lowell, MA, it seems to me to be a Bière de Garde with intense horse-blanket flavors married to a pleasantly earthy hoppiness but fairly low fruitiness. The cask version, brewed especially for NERAX, appeared to be aimed more at a Celis Grand Cru-style interpretation of Belgian Strong Golden. Blessed with a fantastic piney overtone and strongly alcoholic, fruity flavors and especially orange notes in the finish, this was truly the best beer I've had in about a year, maybe longer; drinking it brought just six words to my mind: This is why we drink beer.

Then acceptance settled in.

July Pool Party Meeting



Colby demonstrates his dogs obedience training



I guess the training needs some work!



Woodstock had nothing on this guy!



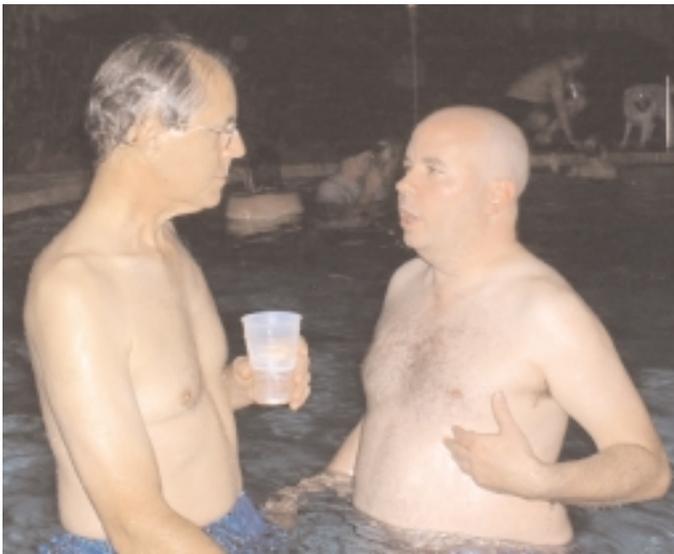
aaaaaaaahhh, Breakfast stout is good anytime



Ed wins the Baby Doyle lookalike contest



Hey synchronized swimming isn't supposed to be mixed doubles, Andrew



It hurts right here all the time... except when I'm drunk of course!



Look out! It's the flying Wazoo



Does this guy ever stop thinking about the BJCP program!



Foamranger synchronized swim event goes awry



...and then she said, "How do look without the swimtrunks Big Boy?"



Ha, I ain't using one of those weenie bottle openers!

Competition Corner

by *Bev Blackwood*

The happy burble of the overflow tube in the pint glass is a reassuring sound and somehow wiping up the puddle of beer & foam that I found returning home was strangely reassuring. You see, it finally happened... I lost a batch of beer... Ten whole gallons, no less, to an infection. I am no stranger to infections. After all, the first beer I ever had evaluated evoked the pithy comment: "You'd have to lick your armpit to get the flavor outta your mouth." from Gary Heyne. Since then my conversion to kegs taught me to clean ALL the little parts and my brief flirtation with counter-pressure bottling was an exercise in off flavors. I've long since dropped back to the K.I.S.S. principle, keeping it simple and trying not to be overly stupid. The culprit this time was sheer laziness. The pair of oktoberfests were to be my National Homebrew day brew, but the weather that day limited me to a batch of Baltic Porter. So I stashed the grain in the freezer until a brew day presented itself. Once fermentation kicked off, the beer went into the fridge and was forgotten. Why? Lots of reasons. Work, a return to my running schedule, brewing burnout and a nagging concern about heat, humidity and a big, heavy cold glass carboy. I had already had some frightening moments loading them into the fridge and somehow removing them was also worrisome. So they sat. Airlocks dried out and somewhere along the way, infection set in.

With Dixie Cup around the corner, am I worried? No. I am thrilled to hear about what's happening elsewhere in the club. Jimmy, Rob, Mike, Joe, Jeff, Colby, Andrew, Sean... the list is long, the brewers are impressive, the numbers are starting to be staggering. The Foam Rangers are brewing and brewing BIG. We're going to be seeing some mem-

bers entry counts in the 30's and a few into the 40's! Since I'm a "double agent" I keep hearing about the spectacular effort being put forth by the KGB, and I've since heard it's nothing to be sneezed at. They are un-retiring their best brewers, folks who haven't been as aggressive in recent years, to bring back KGB glory. They did well last year. This year they want to win it all. Our brewers have responded in kind, rising to the challenge and working to bring the best beers, meads and ciders to the judging tables. Will we have what it takes to prevail? Only time will tell.

If you want to help, NOW is the time to do it. The early entry deadline will be exactly 6 weeks away from this month's meeting. That's time for two brews if you rush it, but one for certain. Choose your styles carefully! Two dozen individual American Pale Ales won't really help the cause, but two dozen different, well made beers could be all the difference. For me, the future is plastics and a flurry of quick brews, which began this weekend. For those of you who've never tried the Better Bottles Scott sells, they're a real change from the glass carboys. The biggest difference I'm having to get used to is that they're a little smaller overall. I found myself with extra wort instead of trying to stretch to fill that second carboy on brew day. The size also means less head space, so I'm making new blow-off tubes quickly to compensate. What's amazing is how lighthearted my brewday was. No delicately setting the carboys on the driveway, no cringing to the sound of glass on concrete, no additional pounds added to the already weighty wort to heft from driveway to house to fridge. I smiled happily as I balanced a full carboy on my knee while reaching to open the door, something I would have never dreamed of doing with glass. One thing to be aware of though, is that unlike glass, a Better Bottle is squeezably soft, so you have to be careful not to squirt beer out the top! Lugging beer around is a happy chore now, not one fraught with peril. From now on, my only glass will be my 12 ounce bottles and the infections won't have lazy days to set in from here on out.

Foam Ranger Events



August

Aug 1

First Sunday
Light Rail Pub Crawl
4pm

Aug 7

National Mead
Homebrew Day

Aug 14

Brew-in
Paige & Lamb
DeFalco's 10am

Aug 20

Monthly Meeting
+ KGB & Mashtronauts
DeFalco's 7pm

Aug 28

San Antonio Pub Crawl
9am-10pm



September

Sept 2

Pack&Ship
Cactus Challenge
DeFalco's 6-8pm

Sept 5

First Sunday
Alamo Draught House
Time/Movie tba

Sept 11

Brew-in
Ed Moore
DeFalco's 10am

Sept 17

Monthly Meeting
DeFalco's 6-8pm

Sept 24-25

Cactus Challenge
Homebrew Comp.
Lubbock, TX

Dixie Cup Information *from The Waz*

Dixie Cup is coming and everyone is gunning for us. We need beer and volunteers. Sign up sheets will be at the August and September meetings. We need (beer) Judges and Stewards for all days. We need (beer)sorters for sorting beer. We need (beer)trucks to haul the beer to and from Defalco's and St. Arnold's and the hotel and the Orange Show. We need (beer)trucks to move the beer trailers into position. We need (beer)volunteers for pot luck, reception desk, decorations. This stuff does not get done on its own. Most of all we need YOU to come to the Dixie Cup and have a fun time. So, brew your beers and enter them in the Dixie Cup. Here is the low down for the Dixie Cup: Early entries are due by Friday October 1st, Late entries by Friday October 8th

Sorting 9 AM October 2nd and 9 AM October 9th

Preliminary Judging - Sunday October 10th and Tuesday October 12th

Reception at the Orange Show (Defalco's if it rains) on Thursday October 14th

Judging will be both Friday and Saturday. Potluck, Raffle, and Fred Tasting will be on Friday. A new event will be the Barley Wine tasting 8:30 AM on Saturday morning Milliconference, pub crawl, raffle, and awards will be on Saturday.

We have a hotel:

Comfort Suite & Inn - 4020 Southwest Freeway (Near 59 and Wesleyan)

Phone: 713-623-4720

We have speakers:

Dr. Charles Bamforth - University of California Davis Professor of Malting and Brewing Sciences

Byron Burch - Proprietor of The Beverage People Homebrew Shop Multiple time AHA Homebrewer/Meadmaker of the Year Author of Brewing Quality Beers Homebrewing Pioneer

Chip McElroy - Owner/Head Brewer of Live Oak Brewing, Austin, Texas

Randy Thiel - Head Brewer Brewery Ommegang

We have Fred and the Mastronauts doing the Fabulous Fred Tasting Beer and Snacks

We have our special category beer

Texas Hold em any two Dixie Cup styles combined into one beer

This year's Dixie Cup is playing a slightly different form of the game. We've long been known for our unique annual "style" but this year, you gotta have two to win! Take your favorite TWO Dixie Cup styles... Breakfast Cereal beer, Big & Stupid, Malt Liquor, Imperial Beers, The Beer That Burns Twice, The Monster Mash or The Beer That Gets You Lei'd and make them one, and make them a winner! Examples might include a Habanero Hershey Bar Imperial Stout, Corn Pops Malt Liquor, Imperial Cherry Belgian Strong Golden or the Classic 24 Carrot Imperial India Pale Ale. Of course the requirements of both categories will apply. If you've forgotten what past style guidelines are, they're included below for your consideration. Deal yourself in, pick a pair, and hit us! (And if you feel an urge to Eis-Anything... You're at the wrong competition!)

We have brew with Ian Larson of Two Rows for the BOS.

We have lots of things but we need volunteers:

Head Judge - Jimmy Paige

Head Steward - Rob

Data Master - ???

Fred Tasting - ???

Program - ???

Pot Luck - Sign up

Beer give away - Jeff Reilly and Jimmy Paige

Label making - Bev

Pub Crawl - Bev

Reception - Any body that can help

Raffle - Andrew and Bev

Registration - George West

No experience necessary -

The Foam Rangers Homebrew Club Houston, Texas

Brewsletter office
8715 Stella Link
Houston, Texas 77025



Monthly Meeting
August 20th
@ DeFalco's

I want to be somebody!
Sign me up to become a member of the Foam Rangers

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home Phone _____

E-mail Address _____

Yes to a Directory Listing

Email my brewsletter

Membership Fees: (per year) \$20.00 Individual / \$30.00 Family

Paid between December 1 & December 31 \$18.00 / \$27.00 (Pay early and save!)

Paid between January 1 & March 31 \$20.00 / \$30.00

Paid between April 1 & June 30 \$17.50 / \$26.25

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

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

Please make checks payable to: The Foam Rangers

Bring this form (and your payment) to the next club meeting, drop it off at DeFalco's or send it to:
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