

March 13
NFBL Meeting

Saccharomyces Journal
March 2008

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President's Message

Matt Ruddell



Continuing from last month. A brief recap, I was discussing my strong feeling about beer and questioning what beer means to me. I asked a question early on in my letter last month which I will ask again: am I an obnoxious beer snob?

I certainly hope not. I will be the first to tell you that I do not judge a person's worth by their choice of beverage. But it certainly is a contributing variable into our relationship. Example: I've just met this person who I think may be interesting to get to know. He or she likes a lot of the same things that I do, and we generally enjoy each others company. I find out that this person is a die hard mega brew drinker who thinks that all other beer is bitter/heavy/generally disgusting.

He/she thinks that beer should be yellow and ice cold. What does this tell you about this person?

Now these are just possibilities, they do not necessary always apply:

1. This person is easily swayed by multimillion dollar advertising campaigns.
2. This person lacks a certain amount of culture when it comes to their choice of alcoholic beverage.
3. This person is close minded and refuses to open up and try new things.
4. This person is rigid, unmoving, and set in their ways to the exclusion of any other possibilities.

This person does not care about quality, hand crafted products and would much rather support a humongous mega corporation who has been dumbing down the tastes of beer drinkers worldwide and sees beer brewing as a money making prospect as opposed to an art form....

Maybe that is taking it too far, but I admit all these things come to mind. I cannot deny that I am prejudiced when it comes to a person's beer preference.

Here is where I see a big difference. The mega brews, to me, seem like soda-pop. They are cold, wet, refreshing on a hot day. They have cheesy pop songs to go over their commercials. They have broad appeal across ethnic and socioeconomic lines. They have slogans which change often and they paid someone millions of dollars to research for them. They have blimps and boats and racecars. Beer, real beer, shouldn't have any of these things. Real beer is brewed by people who brew for the glory of God. Real beer is brewed in castles, in caves, in cellars, and in garages. Real beer is made by people who would rather make a great beer than make a great buck. Beer should not be seen as a widget to be made in a factory and sold for a profit. Real beer is art my friends and I cannot in good conscience call the mega brews real beer.

And then I question myself. Have I gone too far? Have I become obnoxious about it? I don't think so, but sometimes I wonder if I've lost touch with reality. I mean, so many people drink mega brews, maybe I'm missing something. Sometimes I think "That's fine, more real beer for me." But that is not the spirit of the brew now is it? The spirit of real beer is in sharing, community, togetherness. The spirit of beer is what makes it so special and I fear that most people don't know what the spirit of beer really is.

I read an interesting story about Sam Calagione (head brewer for DogFish Head – makers of real beer). It seems the author of the book I was reading went out drinking with Sam one night. At the end of the night, the guys at the table were down to the change in their pockets but still wanted another beer. They pooled their money and went up to the bar and ordered a pitcher of "Light" beer. Sam Calagione, the man who puts raisins in one of his beers, bought a pitcher of "Light" beer. The inventor of Sir Hops-a-lot pulls the last change out of his pocket, swallowed his pride, and drank a "light" beer. According to the author he did so without a second's hesitation. I wonder if I could have done the same?

Mark Your Calendars	
Mar 13	NFBL Meeting
Mar 15	Club Brew at the Howards'
Mar 17	St. Patrick's Day
Mar 18	Porters submitted to AHA Club Only
Mar 23	Easter
Mar 27	EC Meeting
Mar 29	Springtime Tallahassee

Treasurer's Report

Balance: The Club's account balance as of 2/28/08 is **\$2059.16**. The Club has **53 active members**.

Membership renewals due March 2008:

Jennifer & Brian Hall
Chris Sella
Derek Vollmer
Martin Brungard

Membership renewals due April 2008:

Christopher Sullivan
Jan Yeargan

Membership renewals past due:

Amy & Vince George
Melissa Horwitz & Marc Dixon
Courtney & Rob Shoen
Emily Boyd & Stuart Davis
Jimmy Nelson & Robbie Nelson
Carol & Buddy Brown
Alyssa Wiedenmayer & Jason Dickey

Annual membership is \$20 for individuals and \$30 for couples. Please see me at the next meeting with your dues or mail checks to NFBL, PO Box 3325, Tallahassee, FL 32315-3325. Attention Randy Desilet.

Randy Desilet

Membership Cards: Remember that it is important to keep current with your club dues. The NFBL card is used to identify members as being up-to-date with their dues and eligible for discounts at The HomeBrew Den. Only membership cards of active NFBL members will be honored.

NFBL Stuff For Sale

We have Club t-shirts (\$15), Henley shirts (\$20) and bumper stickers (\$1), available at our monthly meeting. See Randy at the meeting for the selection.

Feb 14 NFBL Minutes & Feb 28 EC Meeting Minutes

Corrigan Loduha

NFBL Minutes: February's style was Brown Ales. The meeting began with two commercial examples; Brooklyn Brown from Brooklyn Brewery and Downtown Brown from Lost Coast Brewery. Although there was a small turnout, we did get to meet some new faces. Our raffle was held, and a number of members (and a new member!) brought homebrews to taste.

Raffle Prizes:

Newcastle- Joe Pignatiello
Barbary Coast Gold Rush- Randy Desilet
Sierra Nevada ESB- Randy Desilet
Longhammer IPA- Allen Turnage
Frank Zappa Lumpy Gravy Memorial Pale Ale- Allen Turnage
Avery White Rascal- Allen Turnage

Fullers London Porter- Paul Russo
Raffle Winner: Michelle Zeisset

Homebrews:

Ginger Beer (Ale)- Johann Pautz
Brown Porter- Joe Pignatiello
Extraterrestrial ESB- David Zinn
Pale Ale- Jason Dickey
Gruit- Paul Russo & Johann Pautz
Sweet Stout- Joe Pignatiello

EC Meeting Minutes: Among topics of discussion were possible dates for upcoming club brews and seasonal parties, as well as potentially suitable venues for

the beer and food pairing event this spring. Also up for consideration were new merchandise items for sale through the club- t-shirts, pint glasses, etc.



AHA Club Only Competition in March: Yummy Porter

Sarah Bridegroom

Each year, the American Homebrewing Association (AHA) hosts club only competitions. In these competitions, a beer style is selected, and registered beer clubs (of which we are one) send one entry that represents the whole club in the contest. When the NFBL enters a beer, the club pays for the competition entry fee and the shipping costs to send the entry.

The first of the competitions that NFBL will pursue, Porter, is upon us. The competition includes Brown Porter, Robust Porter and Baltic Porter as defined by the BJCP beer guidelines (visit bjcp.org and see Category 12). If you have a porter that you would like for the club to consider as its club entry, please bring a sample of your beer to

the upcoming beer meeting – March 14. The tasting of those beers won't occur at the meeting. Matt will take the samples with him and handle the tasting of those beers separately. For tasting purposes, it doesn't matter too much how your beer is packaged – bottled, plastic bottle with CO₂ cap etc.

Matt will handle that tasting fairly quickly because the beer that is sent on behalf of the club needs to ship by the following Tuesday, March 18. For those beers, the ones that are actually entered into the competition, two beers should be bottled in standard, brown 12-oz bottles. After Matt notifies us as to which beer is going, that brewer can bring the shipping beers to HomeBrew Den by noon on Tuesday the 18th, with

completed entry forms and we'll ship the beer. If you simply want to bring three bottles all at once to the beer club meeting – that's fine too.

Visit beertown.org for full competition details, or e-mail me or Matt if you have questions. sarah@homebrewden.com, ruddellmj@comcast.net.



Is It a Pale Ale or an Amber?

Most homebrewers are familiar with Pale Ales and Amber Ales – they are both popular styles to drink as well as being styles that most homebrewers can create with their systems. It’s common for homebrewers to brew a Pale Ale as one of their first homebrew batches. Pale Ale recipes are fairly easy to obtain through clone books and other Internet sources, and they do not require overly specialized equipment.

What’s always impressed me about the style of Pale Ale is its ability to remain popular in the craft brewing and homebrewing marketplace over many years. Equally as impressive is some breweries’ dedication to retain Pale Ale as a flagship beer, thereby graduating the style from cult status to the backbone of a beer distributor’s inventory line. Pale Ale has been the number one selling beer style in the craft brewing market for decades. Traditional mass-market breweries like Anheuser Busch and Miller have since developed Pale Ales in response to both craft brewing growth and the popularity of Pale Ale. And finally, even the most basic of liquor

stores will likely have some sort of Pale Ale in the mix somewhere.

Amber Ales have gained lots of momentum in the craft brewing market in recent years. Its origins almost always trace back to the American West Coast, but the beer style combines the complexity of both English Pale Ales and Irish Red Ales as well as the experimental hop uses of most American craft brewers. The style is now available nationwide.

These beer styles are very similar. At times, it can be pretty darn tough for a brewer to distinguish between them – both in tasting commercial examples and in developing recipes for homebrews. Their alcohol ranges are similar, their bittering ranges are similar (with Pale Ales being slightly higher), and their core compositions are similar. In general terms, Pale Ales often have less body than ambers, lower levels of specialty grains and more finishing hops. Amber Ales often have more body than Pale Ales, more caramel malts, and darker colors. My new favorites include Red Seal, Full Sail, and Avery Redpoint.

Sarah Bridegroom

Hogtown Brewoff in Gainesville

Our Gainesville-based brewing neighbors, the Hogtown Brewers (HB), are hosting their annual competition, the Hogtown BrewOff, on May 16-17. Please make a note on your calendar of this great competition. The Gainesville club has always provided terrific support to the NFBL over the years for our own events and competitions. On more than one occasion, the Gainesville club’s volunteerism in Tallahassee events really made the difference of hosting a successful event. To the best of our ability, let’s reciprocate.

Although HB hasn’t posted the official entry window dates, I suspect that entries will be due somewhere around the 1st of May. If you’re interested in entering a beer, prepare your brewing schedule to have some beer ready around this date. NFBL will send information about the official rules and regulations so that you may enter your beers accordingly. Club treasurer, Randy Desilet, has offered to deliver entries to Gainesville on behalf of the membership.

If you would like to volunteer to help during the event, you can do so by stewarding the competition, or by volunteering to help during one of their events. Of course we’re hopeful that our local BJCP-certified beer judges will lend their judging services to Gainesville as well. We’ll send out contact information to NFBL members so that we can hook you up with the appropriate Gainesville contact person.

If you would like to keep up with the details outside of regular NFBL bulletins, please visit their website www.hogtownbrewers.org. Meanwhile, if you have immediate questions, e-mail me or Matt.

Sarah Bridegroom

Event & Other Educational Updates

We have a few items on the calendar for the Spring. First up is the club meeting on March 13. Pale Ales and Ambers will be our featured style of the month. If you bring beer, please use the back entrance. Elsewhere in the newsletter is information about the club-only Porter competition. Those beers can be delivered to the March NFBL meeting.

Next up is a club brew on Saturday, March 15. Details are included in the newsletter. Questions can be directed to Matt.

April 19 is the Scottish Highland Games and a public demonstration brew. Some details appeared in last month’s newsletter. Questions can be directed to Allen Turnage, and volunteerism is appreciated to talk to the patrons about brewing, and to lend a hand to Allen for set-ups and such.

Two Florida homebrew clubs have competitions and events in the spring. The Palm Beach Draughtsmen host the Hurricane Blowoff in early April and the Hogtown Brewers host the Hogtown Brew Off in Gainesville in May.

The NFBL food and beer tasting event is still slated for late

spring/early summer. The planning of that event is coming along, and Matt is our contact man.

And, to keep the beer flowin’, we’d love to find a host for a Spring social. Details are in the newsletter, and any ideas or questions can be directed to the Exec Committee.

National Homebrewing Day is May 3, which will be observed and celebrated in town with a club brew and participation in the national toast.

If you’ve changed your e-mail address recently (or mailing addresses for that matter), please talk to Randy about updating your member information. With updates going out on e-mail, we want to ensure that everyone is included.



Mission Statement: The North Florida Brewers League is committed to sharing, promoting, and teaching the hobby of homebrewing to both beginners and experienced brewers through community involvement, regular meetings, and the Big Bend



NFBL
PO Box 3325
Tallahassee, FL 32315



North Florida Brewers League

Newsletter submissions should be sent by the Friday following the full membership meeting to denise.karnes@gmail.com

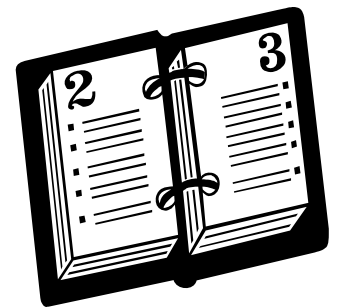
Long Term Calendar

March 13—NFBL meeting
March 15—Club Brew @ the Howards'
March 17—St. Patrick's Day
March 18—Last day for beer to leave for AHA club only (Porter)
March 23—Easter
March 24-28—CPE Week
March 29—Springtime Tallahassee
April 5—Tentative date for Hurrricane Blowoff homebrew competition in West Palm
April 7—Brew Year's Eve
April 8—Easter

April 10—NFBL Club Mtg (Open Call)
April 11—Entries due for AHA Nationals (First Round)
April 19—Scottish Games
April 24—EC Meeting
May 3—Club Brew/Big Brew in celebration of National Homebrew Day
May 8—NFBL Club Mtg (IPA's)
May 10—AHA Club-Only Competition: Extract Beers, Naperville, IL
May 16-18—Hogtown Brewoff Competition in Gainesville
August 2—AHA Club-Only Competition: Mead, Minneapolis, MN

This month's style:

Pale Ales & Ambers



Be there or be square.

~~~Club Brew!~~~

Saturday, March 15

We will be having our first club brew of the year on Saturday March 15th at the Howard's (Denise and Charles) house. Brewing will start at 10:00 AM.

So what is a club brew? A club brew is our chance to come together as a club and do what the heck this club is all about – brewing!! If you are a beginner or an advanced brewer, this is a great opportunity to pick up some great tips and/or tricks that may help you out in your own brewing endeavors. We have some great brewers in the club, and sometimes there is no better way to learn than by participating and asking the brewers questions directly. The club picks up the cost of the ingredients and the beer made will be consumed at the Spring Party*.

We need brewers! If you are interested in brewing at the club brew or at a future club brew—shoot me an email (ruddellmj@comcast.net). If you are brewing please keep in mind, the club only provides the ingredients (malt, hops, yeast), all other processing aids (irish moss, sanitizer, etc) and equipment (including carboys) must be provided by you, the brewer. You are responsible for the fermentation and kegging of the beer. If you are not able to keg, send me an email anyway and we might be able to hook you up with a brewer with a free keg. All beer you produce is to be consumed at official club events. Sampling the beer during aging is understood, but if your keg shows up with 3 gallons in it, we're gonna ask questions...hard questions see...with a bright light in your eyes and pins under your finger nails see...see...

*Spring Party – we are in the process of securing a host for the spring party. Possible dates include: April 12, April 5, and April 26. Parties are a lot of fun and we get to drink the beer from the club brew! Yeah. The club provided the main dish and we ask all members to bring a side dish. More info will come out as we get it. ~Matt Ruddell



Directions to Club Brew at the Howards': Go east on Apalachee Parkway/Hwy 27 past Capital Circle, past the Mom & Dad's restaurant, past Nino's restaurant, until you get to Williams Rd (Williams is about 4 miles past Capital Circle). There is a Church of Christ on the corner. Turn **Right** on Williams and go about 0.8 miles until you get to Old St. Augustine. Turn **Left** on Old St. Augustine. The house is about 0.6 miles down Old St. Aug, on the **Right** side of the road. The address is 7531 Old St. Augustine Rd. It's a one-story brick with dark brown door and shutters. Charles has a bright yellow Jeep he parks out front. You can pretty much park anywhere around the front and sides of the house. If you get lost just give us a call! 980-5369