



# BURP NEWS

THE BEER  
NEWS THAT'S  
PRINTED MAY  
GIVE YOU  
FITS

The Official Newsletter of the  
**BREWERS UNITED FOR REAL POTABLES**  
"So Many Brews So Little Time"

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**May 1993**

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## Directions to May Meeting

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May 23	2:00 Meeting and Chili Contest at the home of Rod Rydlun
June 6	Bucca's Annual Wine Tasting
June 11-12	Stoudt's Festival, Adamstown, PA
June 19 or 20	Meeting at the home of Bert and Marianne Tagge in Burke, VA
June 26	1:00 Pool Party with Cross Street Irregulars at the home of Ted and Melissa Mina in Catonsville, MD
July 17	Meeting at the home of Trish and Larry Koch in Silver Spring, MD
August 14	Meeting at the home of Jim and Alice Davis in Falls Church, VA

BURP News, the official newsletter of Brewers United for Real Potables. BURP is dedicated to promoting homebrewing. Annual dues are \$15 for individuals and \$20 for couples. If you care about the beer you drink, join BURP. Please submit new memberships, changes of address, and corrections to BURP, 7430 Gene Street, Alexandria, VA 22310. Articles for the BURP news should be delivered on diskette or paper to the Editors (address is in the masthead) or uploaded to the Enlightened BBS at (703)370-9528. Microsoft Word or text format is preferred.

## BUCCA BEVERAGE BASH

BURPer Ralph Bucca has invited us all to his annual wine tasting, on Sunday, June 6, 1993. Ralph asks that you call him for directions and details, at (410) 535-0123.

## SPIRIT OF FREE BEER

By Tim Artz

On May first 186 homebrews were tasted and rated according to their appearance, aroma, flavor, and body. Twenty beer judges, eighteen of whom are participants in the AHA and HWBTA's Beer Judge Certification Program, were on hand to provide helpful comments to the brewer of each beer and to identify the winners for each category. We had two judges come in from Chicago, two from New York City, one from Cincinnati, and one from Pennsylvania. Ten stewards served beers and otherwise attended to the judges' needs. The Nation's Capital "Spirit of Free Beer" Homebrew Competition is now all over, except for the presenting of awards to the deserving winners. By now, all entrants should have received their score sheets.

The day of the competition began at 8:30 at the Old Dominion Brewing Company, our gracious hosts for this event. The beer cases were lined up in the walk-in according to their category, the last tables were set up, judges were signed in, and everyone got their name tags. The judges and stewards were assigned to their categories for the day and took their places. After some opening remarks, a half barrel of Dominion Helles rolled in to serve as a calibration beer, and later as refreshment. Jerry Bailey, who had just completed the loading of a tractor trailer full of kegs of Dominion products, received a German beer stein from BURP in recognition of his hospitality.

With this, the judging began. The first gushers appeared within minutes. The judges were a serious lot, though, and the process continued until it was time for a lunch break. The day was beautiful, and many of the judges took advantage of this opportunity to soak in some sun, and some Helles. We brought out a keg of home made root beer for those wishing to take a break from beer before the afternoon sessions. Lunch was a tasty array of smoked brats and grilled wieners, sauerkraut, rolls, pickles, and chips. Jerry and Rob took a break from their Dominion tour duties to come out and enjoy a brat. With bellies full, everyone shuffled back inside to complete the afternoon judging sessions.

The afternoon sessions went as smoothly as the morning and all of the scored judging was wrapped up by about 5:00. Best of Show judging then commenced. The Best of Show judging panel, consisting of Rick Garvin, Steve Hamburg from Chicago, Bill Major from New York, and Randy Paul, conducted an elimination round to designate a first, second, and third place Best of Show from the first place beers in each category. Who won the awards? Come on out to the May 22 BURP meeting at Rod Rydlun's house to find out! Next month's newsletter will feature a list of the winners and the prizes they received.

**This competition, the largest to be held in the DC area and one of the largest regional competitions in the country, was an overwhelming success. Many thanks are owed to the Old Dominion Brewing Company, our generous award sponsors, judges, stewards, and entrants. Thanks!**

## BURP 1993 CHILI COOKOFF RULES

Cooks are welcome to arrive early at Rod Rydlun's to prepare their chilies for the competition. Judging will take place promptly at 3:30 PM.

Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place chilies. Judging will be by popular ballot, with all present participating, so please make enough for everyone (50-60 people) to get a spoonful (at least a gallon).

1. All entries must use beer (preferably homebrew) as an ingredient.
2. No commercially prepared chilies will be allowed.
3. All ingredients must be combined and cooked at the meeting, although individual ingredients, such as vegetables and meats, may be prepared beforehand (i.e., sliced n' diced).
4. All ingredients must pass inspection by the club veterinary officer.
5. No sabotaging of other contestants' chili will be permitted.
6. Chili recipes must be provided to BURP on request. The first place recipe will be published in the newsletter.
7. GOOD LUCK TO ALL!

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## WENDY'S WORTS OF WISDOM

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By Wendy Aaronson

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I want to thank Rick and Karen Garvin for generously letting BURP take over their home, Bill Ridgely for conducting the commercial Scotch ale tasting, and Jim Tyndall for providing those delectable Thai sticks.

The "Spirit of Free Beer" competition organizers, Tim Artz, Rick Garvin and Jim Tyndall, deserve a special award for excellence. A sign of the competition's success was a truckload of beer.

Pete Kester had a dream that tickets for a Sunday session at Stoudts were available. He called to inquire about tickets and found out that Stoudts actually added a session on Saturday, June 12, from 8 to 12 midnight. I did not think there would be a lot of interest for a bus, but it may not be too late to make your own arrangements. If interested in leaving from Baltimore and attending on Friday night with the Cross Street Irregulars, you may call Melissa Mina at 410-788-9477. Cross Street Irregulars still have tickets available for Friday night, but request that you call no later than May 21.

June is going to be a busy beer month. Besides the Stoudts Festival June 11 and 12, the Cross Street Irregulars have invited BURP to a pool party on June 26, 1:00 PM, at the home of Ted and Melissa Mina in Catonsville. More information and directions will be in next month's newsletter. If Bert Tagge can convince his wonderful wife Marianne that we do not intend to roast a pig in their yard, then we will have a crab feast on either June 19 or 20.

Our May meeting and Chili Cookoff at Rod Rydlun's home is an event not to be missed. The meeting will be at 2:00 PM, but Rod says anyone who is preparing chili may arrive at anytime. He said Al Lowry once set up at 8:00 AM! We plan to start judging around 3:30. Hard Times Cafe owner, Fred Parker, has kindly provided prizes for the chili winners. See you all there!

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## NEW MEMBERS

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By Bill Ridgely

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Welcome this month to **David Ellis** of Bethesda, **Joy Hansen** of Springfield, **Joe Keenan** of Gaithersburg, **Roy Kohn** of Olney, **Robert Lowe** of Chevy Chase, **Jim Miller** of Springfield, **Jon Miller** of Alexandria (no relation between the previous two to my knowledge), **Dave & Becky Pyle** of Fairfax, and **Rhett Rebold** of Burke.

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## Book Review: A History Of Vodka

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By Martin Morse Wooster

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Pokhlebkina, William. A History of Vodka. Translated by Renfrey Clarke. Verso, 209 p., \$29.95.

This eccentric, exasperating, and immensely interesting book had its genesis in a trade dispute. In 1977, the Polish state liquor monopoly sued the Soviet state liquor monopoly, charging that vodka was created in areas under Polish control at the time (in what is now the nation of Belarus), and therefore only Polish products could be called vodkas. The Soviet state liquor monopoly went to the Academy of Sciences, who asked Pokhlebkina, a fellow at the Academy's Institute of History, to research the subject. Academician Pokhlebkina's research proved successful, as an international tribunal ruled in 1982 that the Poles were in error and that the Soviets did not have to think up another name for their vodkas. Pokhlebkina then expanded his research into this book.

Pokhlebkina concludes that vodka was invented in Moscow sometime between 1440 and 1478. To make his point, the author uses linguistics, close readings of chronicles, and heavy helpings of Marxist-Leninist analysis. The author's ideology shows most clearly in dismissing theories he thinks inconvenient by showing that the inevitable laws of history show a conclusion he favors.

But once you get past the author's politics, you will find a great deal of interesting information. People interested in the history of brewing, for example, will learn quite a bit about the history of mead-making in Russia--and how the Russians developed a taste for vodka when the price of honey became prohibitively expensive. I also enjoyed learning why the Russians abandoned beer-brewing in the fifteenth century. According to Pokhlebkina, the Russians preferred to make beer once a year in March in a week-long festival that involved a great deal of drunken revelry. So in 1425, the Russian Orthodox Church banned beer-brewing as a pagan cult.

Pokhlebkina traces Russian drunkenness to a peculiar punishment imposed by Peter the Great. Tsar Peter, says the author, as a punishment forced people to consume the "penalty cup" of vodka, a hefty measure that was over a liter of liquor that was between 15 and 18 percent alcohol (vodka's strength was raised later as distilling techniques became more refined). However, says Pokhlebkina, Peter the Great's military would find the drinking of massive quantities of alcohol to be no problems at all, since in 1721, Peter declared that every Russian soldier was entitled to two mugs of vodka a day, the equivalent of 1.5 liters of vodka with an alcohol content of 15 to 18 percent by weight. One wonders how well these soldiers fought after their daily drink.

In an appendix, Pokhlebkina reveals himself to be a Marxist-Leninist vodka snob. Pokhlebkina first argues that all vodkas except for Moskovskaya Osobaya ("Moscow Special") are not true vodkas, since vodka, he says, has to be made from rye and other grains, has to come from water flowing from springs near Moscow, and cannot have any flavorings. To drink vodka, says the author, you should have a glass, and a zakuski, a Russian appetizer that included pickled pork fat, herring, sturgeon, cucumbers, and plenty of mustard and radishes. Drink vodka with these appetizers, says the author, and you will drink like a Russian gentleman. "Vodka is a drink for gentlemen," the author says, "since only a true gentleman knows how to drink vodka while remaining completely sober."

In another appendix, Pokhlebkina describes every liquor he could find out about. For those drinkers who have barely survived slivovitz, some of these liquors are quite brutal. The Ukrainians and Kazakhs drink veynovaya vodka, made from spoiled wine and low quality grapes. Several nations distill cow and mare's milk. Perhaps the most high octane liquor in the world, though, is bambuse, the Indonesian drink made from fermented bamboo seed. "Despite multiple distillations," says the author, "bambuse is poorly cleaned of contaminants, especially methyl alcohol. It causes hallucinations, and is therefore used only very rarely, on special feast days, as a ritual drink, by local religious cults."

A History of Vodka is an entertaining book that even seasoned drinkers will find interesting and informative.

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## The Whole BURP Catalog

By Jim Dorsch

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President Kevin Brannon reports the Frederick Brewing Company should be operating at 103 S. Carroll Street, in Frederick's historic district, by June 1. Brewer Steve Nordahl brewed the first batch of bottled Blue Ridge Golden Ale at the Frankenmuth Brewery in early March. Kegged Golden Ale will be the first beer brewed in Frederick, followed by Amber Lager and a light Wheat Beer for summer. A robust Porter is planned for the holidays. Call (301)694-7899 for information.

DeGroen's Beers should be easier to find now that they're distributed in Maryland by Microbrew Distributing. Ask your favorite publican to call Simon Price at (410)659-1280 for fresh, draft DeGroen's Beers. Watch for new 10-liter minikegs of these beers next time you visit the Baltimore Brewing Company. And hurry on down for some tasty Maibock while it's still available. BBC is at 104 Albemarle Street.

Wild Goose Spring Wheat Ale is brewed from wheat and two-row barley malts, hopped with Saaz and Hallertau and fermented with famous Ringwood ale yeast. The brewery describes it as having a sweet, fruity body and long hop finish.

Brewer Ron Barchet says Dominion Spring Bock is a "classic Maibock, brewed strictly according to the Reinheitsgebot." With original gravity over 17 Plato (1068), the beer weighs in at around 7% alcohol by volume. This very pale bock beer is brewed from pale malt with a small portion of Munich malt and a pinch of caramel-20. It's hopped with Clusters and Yakima Hallertau in the boil and finished with Saaz and Hersbrucker Hallertau. Get some of this before it's too late.

Dominion Stout has been available in bottles since January. This unusual brew is carbonated partly with nitrogen. The low level of carbon dioxide virtually eliminates CO<sub>2</sub> bite. The beer is carbonated to about two volumes for a nice drinkability. A typical beer contains around 2.75.

Samuel Adams Cream Stout has become a year-round offering. Though long on flavor, it is said to contain only slightly more calories and less alcohol (4.25% by volume) than most beers.

Whitbread Celebration Ale is a high-gravity, limited run brew put up in wax-sealed bottles for laying down. The ale celebrates the founding of the company by Samuel Whitbread on December 11, 1742. The brewery recommends 3-10 years of aging before drinking. Fifty thousand one-pint bottles were tissue wrapped and boxed for customers and friends in England and abroad. I have no idea where you can get this stuff. Call (513)357-5209 for information.

The Hornell Brewing Company, better known for Crazy Horse Malt Liquor, is the importer of Czechoslovakian Original Lager from the Radegast Brewery. Call (718)284-1200 for information.

The Pittsburgh Brewing Company has introduced an all-malt specialty beer, J.J. Wainwright's Select Lager Beer, for sale in the local market and in Western Pennsylvania by request. Anyone who tries this stuff, please report on it.

Marriott Hotels now have their own house brew, Champions Clubhouse Classic, an all-malt beer brewed in Dubuque, Iowa. Marriott says the lack of preservatives and additives is a major component in the definition of a "micro-brew." Isn't that interesting?

The Eastern Coast Breweriana Association has established the ECBA Micro Chapter. Dues are \$3 for ECBA members and \$6 for nonmembers. Contact Roger Levesque, P.O. Box 826, South Windsor, CT 06074, (203)644-9582.

Now that Dan Bradford is publishing All About Beer, it's possible that AAB will become a magazine worth reading. Dan can be reached at Chautauqua Press, 1627 Marion Avenue, Durham, NC 27705. Or call (919)490-0589.

The Bricksletter is the new publication of the Brickskeller. Besides announcing the next tasting, The Bricksletter has the latest information on local brews, plus interviews and feature articles. You should receive a copy by mail if you're a regular at the Brickskeller beer tastings, or you can pick up a copy at the Brickskeller bar. Congratulations to editors Bob & Ellie Tupper!

Steve Johnson's new, two-volume On Tap: The Guide to North American Brewpubs should be published this month. This complete update to Johnson's 1991 directory will cover the U.S. east of the Mississippi and Canada in Volume 1 and the U.S. west of the Mississippi in Volume 2. The books are \$14.50 each. Write WBR Publications, P.O. Box 71, Clemson, SC 29633 or call (803)654-3360.

On a sad note, it looks like the Virginia Brewing Company has finally breathed its last. Its equipment was auctioned off in April. I'm really going to miss Virginia Native.

#### STOUDT'S ABOUT SOLD OUT

One of last summer's memorable BURP events, the bus trip to Stoudt's Beer Festival, will not be repeated this year, due to an early sell-out of tickets. Although Stoudt's is now running three sessions for the festival (An evening session Friday, June 11, and afternoon and evening sessions, Saturday, June 12), demand has exceeded supply. Rumor does have it that a few tickets are left for the Saturday evening session. A number of BURP'ers have secured tickets, so they'll be able to tell the rest of us what we missed.

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The Cross Street Irregulars have a few tickets available for the Friday night session, and will be taking a bus from Baltimore to Stoudt's. If you would like to join the Cross Street Irregulars, call Melissa Mina at 410-788-9477 no later than May 21.

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Bill Ridgely has two Saturday afternoon tickets and wants to exchange them for two Friday evening tickets. Anyone out there interested? Contact Bill at (703) 971-5744.

#### Letters to the Editor

How about a new BURP custom, to complement those of insulting Jim Dorsch and John Gardiner. That is, when BURP meetings are held at someone's house or place of business, you leave two bottles of your finest homebrew as a way of saying thanks. Not really that much of cost to you (I assume that one of the reasons that you began home brewing is that of getting great beers cheap), but a really nice touch to those who have you into their domicile. Say, let's give it a try!!

Bert Tagge

### Scotch Ale Contest

By Wendy Aaronson

An expert panel of judges comprised of Erik Henchal, Bill Szymczak, Alison Skeel, Rod Rydlun and Carl Huntley with special guest, Bill Szymczak, Sr., met at Alison's home on April 26 to judge eleven exceptionally good Scotch Ales. Surprisingly, there were no gushers, and all of the beers actually were in the Scotch Ale style. Because the quality of beers entered in BURP competitions has improved tremendously, it took 2 hours to select the winners. Mike Horkan's 3rd place winner in the Dock Street Competition was chosen as BURP's 1st place winner and will be entered into AHA's club only competition. Ed Safford's Scottish export came in 2nd place, and Tim Artz's export style was 3rd place. All of the entries will be available for tasting at the May meeting. Mike's winning recipe appears below.

#### Scotch Ale

Michael Horkan

For 6 gallons  
 3 lbs. Munton & Fison Amber dried malt extract  
 10 lbs. 2 row pale malt  
 .5 lb. cara vienne  
 .5 lb. cara munich  
 .25 lb. special B  
 .5 oz Chinook 12.3% aa (60 min.)  
 1 oz Northern Brewer 7.1% aa (60 min.)  
 .5 oz Centennial 6.6% aa (60 min.)  
 1 tsp Irish Moss (30 min.)  
 WYeast 1084, Irish Ale

Added grain to 150° water, held at 152° for 1 hour, raised to 170°, sparged grains with 170° water through bucket with holes in bottom three times. Brought wort back on stove to boiling, boiled 30 minutes, skimming foam, added 3 lbs. of dried malt extract, boiled 20 minutes, added boiling hops, after 30 min. added irish moss.

Yeast was pitched at 63°. Transferred to secondary after 9 days, bottled 23 days after pitching.

O.G. 1.069, F.G. 1.012

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## APRIL MEETING REPORT

By Polly Goldman<sup>1</sup>

Our April meeting took place at the home of Rick and Karen Garvin. Amid the chaos created by the last-minute registration of hundreds of bottles of beer for the Spirit of Free Beer contest, BURPers enjoyed the dry but brisk Spring weather.

Bill Ridgely ran an educational tasting of commercial Scotch ales (with one of his own snuck in). With the assistance of Allison Skeel, Rod Rydlun, and Polly Goldman, three bottles of each beer were spread among a large crowd. This was accomplished despite the efforts of a certain member, who quickly swallowed his sample and attempted to convince a different pourer that he had not ever been served, and another member who would sneakily bump the servers' arms to get an extra-large portion. For shame!

In addition to several kegs of his own beer, Rick Garvin provided two grills and five pounds of his homemade sausages. The sausages were a bit long, provoking various obscene comments which Bert Tagge will happily repeat if you ask him. Jim Tyndall once again provided extremely tasty food. Jim's creation of the month was a Thai style grilled pork, with a nice dipping sauce.

Warm weather brewing difficulties were depressing Phillip Seitz. Phillip, as you may or may not know, inhabits an apartment which has high temperatures in the summer and has no place to install an extra refrigerator. With the advent of warm weather, Phillip fears that his brewing season is over. Phillip seems strangely reluctant to drive around town with five to seven gallons of fresh wort in a carboy (probably not a violation of the open container laws if it has not fermented), but John DeCarlo and I almost convinced him that automotive aeration would be good for his beer. If you happen to have a spare kitchen and basement, let Phillip know.

Minister of Finance Larry Koch hawked raffle tickets with his usual aplomb. Prizes included a case of Sammichlaus, a case of Corsendonk, a six pack of assorted fine beers, including Sammichlaus, Thomas Hardy, and Corsendonk, and six packs of Sammichlaus and Corsendonk. The ever-popular coasters were also present, although their winner was somewhat reluctant to claim them. Not to fear, coasters will be available at the next meeting.

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<sup>1</sup>Your name could be here. If you are interested in being the reporter for a meeting, just let us know. You, yes you, can make fun of John Gardiner's beer, praise food, and whine that you did not win enough raffle prizes.

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## The Flying Foamhead

By Dave Smith

The Two Brewpubs of Oslo

Let me make one thing perfectly clear. The most beautiful girls in the world live in Oslo, Norway. They are very healthy and, on sunny, summer days they like to sunbathe top...well, never mind. I think I'll just proceed with what I discovered about the brew scene in the Land of the Vikings.

First off, everything is very expensive up there (I say "up" because Oslo is almost 60 degrees north latitude), as in all Scandinavia. Whereas a half-liter of beer at a pub in Prague costs \$.40 and in Germany \$2.00, it costs \$6.50 in Oslo! Plus, most of the places I saw limited your choices to the lagers of the local Ringnes and Freydenlund breweries.

Second, I don't think beer is sold in liquor stores, only grocery stores (It has to do with Norwegian tax policies, which I'll explain later), and then once again only Ringnes and Freydenlund. I did see one store also carrying Hansa (a west coast brewery in Bergen), Mack, Arctic (the northernmost brewery in the world, in Tromso), Heineken, and Tuborg. They have a container of a size I had never seen before: a .7-liter bottle with a wide, recloseable screw cap.

The most interesting feature, though, is that there are two brewpubs in Oslo taking very different approaches to their trade. One is a totally commercial venture franchised out of Germany; the other is the dream of a Norwegian who was inspired while studying in Portland, Oregon and Berkeley, California.

The first, called Studenten Johan Albrecht (it is right next to Oslo University in the heart of downtown), is a franchise! The German Brewery, Johan Albrecht in Hamburg, has six or seven in Europe, most in Germany. The western Norway Brewery, Hansa, financed this as an attempt to make inroads into the Oslo beer market. I met the brewer, Geir Eggesbo, who tried to explain to me how this franchising worked.

Don't quote me on any of this, as my note-taking may have lost something in the translation from Geir's broken English. Anyway, the investors put up all the money and buy all the equipment from Albrecht. In exchange, Albrecht initially provides the brewing/management/accounting expertise, plus all the ingredients. Once the brewpub becomes proficient, all Albrecht continues to provide are the name, the yeast, and a telephone number to call anytime there is a question.

From a daily operations viewpoint, this brewpub has three brews: an ordinary pils; a dark, Munich Pils (similar to a Dunkel); and a seasonal brew (which now is a summer pils, lighter and more bitter). They use pilsner, caramel, and Bayern malts; only Saaz hops; and only the Albrecht yeast. The yeast is reused ten times. They brew two to three times a week in 1,050-liter (approx 9-barrel) batches. They have two beautiful copper brew pots and twelve stainless steel storage tanks. The brewing process itself is pretty typical. But the chilling process during lagering was new to me. Ice water constantly flows over the outside of the storage tanks to help keep the temperature at two degrees C (36 F).

After the first year, Hansa was allowed to use its own malts and hop varieties, and brew more to the taste of Norwegians: less Dunkel, less yeasty, very clear and crisp, lighter in taste and color (their dark is a very light dark). Geir is an interesting fellow. He got his degree in chemistry, but was a cook and caterer by profession. He had never brewed before last year. What Albrecht did was send one of their brewers to work with him for three months, then Hansa sent one of their brewers for an additional ten months. As of the day we met, he was on his own, except for the phone, of course.

Geir told me that Hansa had just been bought by Procordia (a Swedish brewery), which felt that this brewpub was too expensive (Hansa had lost money, but then the brewpub has only been open since spring 1991. They would like to find a buyer.

I couldn't help but think that part of the problem may be due to Norwegian tax policies on beer. Breweries, including brewpubs, pay a tax of \$1.83/liter on all beer with alcohol content less than 4.7% by volume. Brew anything with a higher alcohol content and the tax goes up to \$3.04/liter! And then when it is sold, there is a 20% sales tax. At least the \$6.50/half-liter price comes into perspective, as does the Norwegian taste and exposure to only light lagers.

Although the manager and brewer are certainly committed, Studenten Johan Albrecht seemed too commercial and artificial for my idea of a brewpub. They did have some great entertainment and the place was very crowded (it holds 400 people on three floors), so maybe it provides an easy transition for people to venture out and try other beer styles.

And when they do, there is an outstanding example of a brewpub for them in Oslo, with five different permanent styles on tap and a seasonal. It is called Mikrobyggeriet. I had a wonderful time talking with the owner/manager, Frithjof Hungnes, and sampling all six brews. I brought a friend back that evening and we stayed a long time (well, not all that long, but as long as our money held out), then we returned to Johan Albrecht, not to drink but to listen to their great piano player.

Frithjof (Don't even think about asking me to pronounce that. I just called him Fredrich) got his initial idea to start a brewpub while getting his degree in Portland and becoming quite the "student" of the local brewpub scene. Then, while getting his MBA at Berkeley, he continued his "real" education at the Triple Rock Brewpub and Anchor Brewing Company.

His brewpub has been open since Fall 1989. The brewer has been brewing for seven years and apprenticed under Peter Austin. I met him briefly. He knew **Alan Pugsley**. They brew both lagers and ales. In the order I enjoyed them (with a nickname like mine, I know that doesn't carry much weight, but this is my article), they are:

1. **Twin Peaks Pale Ale**. Delicious, reminds me a lot of Sierra Nevada Pale Ale. They use lots of Cascade hops.
2. **Maibock**. Their seasonal, great aroma, very tasty, brewed to style (including increased alcohol content).
3. **Steamer**. Traditional ale styled to fit Norwegian palates, but inspired by Anchor Steam. Their biggest seller.
4. **Bitter**. Traditional British bitter, the drawing card for lots of British tourists.
5. **Imperial Stout**. Very creamy head.
6. **Oslo Pils**. Typical Norwegian light lager.

I really did not get into the inner workings of their brewing process because I was enjoying the company and sampling so much. Their yeast comes from a small British brewery (sorry, I forgot the name). They brew 800 liters (about seven barrels) at a time, all in stainless steel tanks. The brew kettle had a copper top facade and the storage tanks, which were in view, were jacketed with wooden slats. They definitely brew to style and thus must charge accordingly for the taxman. I got the feeling that these people had long been interested in brewing and strove to be craftsmen.

The nice weather makes for a slow time for them because everyone wants to be outside (remember those girls I mentioned earlier?), but they do very well in winter. The place holds only 85 people; it has a dart board and lots of British breweriana on the walls. Their logo is a bumblebee, which is a play on words because the Norwegian word for bumblebee and hops is the same: "humel."

Frithjof is always looking for ways to expose people to different beer styles and tastes. In the fall he is going to sponsor a city-wide celebration of pils by promoting the 150th anniversary of Pilsner Urquell. He just started the popular sampler idea (you get five small samples of different beers for the price of a large beer). He wants to brew a wheat beer as a year-round choice because he thinks the Norwegian taste will be drawn to it as an alternative to light lager. We tried to talk him into leasing space in Lillehammer (only two hours from Oslo) for the '94 Winter Olympics. I am sure his beers would be successful. Well, we planted the seed; I hope he keeps thinking about it.

You know what I keep thinking about? I just must tell you about all those Oslo girls. But, since Dorsch and Carter probably wouldn't print it, I'll just end by saying those two brewpubs will take care of most of your evenings. Use your imaginations for the rest of your days and nights. I know mine is presently going wild!

And the quest continues....

P.S. If you would like more information on the Johan Albrecht franchise idea, you can contact them at Brauhaus Joh. Albrecht, Adolphsbriche 7, 2000 Hamburg 11. Tel: 095-49-40-367740.

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## Best of the Net

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By Bill Ridgely

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FROM THE HOMEBREW DIGEST

Date: 06 May 1993 19:52:26 -0400 (EDT)  
 From: WESTEMEIER@delphi.com  
 Subject: Effect of light on beer

In response to yesterday's request for info on the effect of light on beer: RUE always found this fascinating, so I'll just outline what I understand to be the case, and let the experts fill in the gaps and correct the parts that are shaky.

What actually happens is pretty easy to understand (assuming you have a Ph.D. in organic chemistry). The alpha acids in hops are changed chemically during the boil, becoming isomerized (which means the molecules are formed into long chains). These iso-alpha acids (as they are then called) are much more bitter than the naturally occurring alpha acids, and they are also much more unstable in light. When light hits them, they are changed chemically again, and they tend to react with some of the sulfur compounds present in all beers. That reaction produces a new chemical (to be precise, the loss of CO by the acyl radical forms the 3-methyl-2-butyl radical, which then combines with a thiol radical from sulfur-containing proteins to produce 3-methyl-2-butene-1-thiol, for those of you keeping score) which is familiarly known as a mercaptan. Mercaptans are also the active ingredient in a skunk's defense mechanism and are easily recognized by the human nose at levels of a few parts per billion.

OK, how much light does it take? If it's the right (actually, the wrong) kind of light, the answer is "not much." Any light with a wavelength shorter than 520 nanometers will do the job. Think about how sunlight is broken up by a rainbow or a prism. The longer wavelengths are at the red end of the spectrum, and the shorter wavelengths are at the blue end. Red, orange, and yellow won't really cause you a problem. Green is getting dangerous (the yellow-greens are OK, the blue-greens are not). Blue, indigo, and violet are a definite no-no. Ultraviolet is right out. Since normal (white) light contains more or less the whole visible spectrum, you want to use a type of glass that filters out the harmful part. Anyone who has ever done serious photography knows that fluorescent lamps put out light that is more heavily skewed toward the blue end of the spectrum, and incandescent lamps toward the red end. Obviously, fluorescent lights are more harmful to beer than incandescent lights. What kind of lights are used in the beer display case at your favorite retailer? Uh-huh, that's right! Actually, it only takes about 24 hours of exposure to this kind of light to have an effect on beer in a clear bottle (have you had any Corona lately?). Green bottles help, but only a very little, since they just block a little of the red light and a little of the blue. Higher levels of sulfur compounds in some beer produced in green bottles can actually wipe out the advantage, so that some beer shipped in green bottles is even more easily skunked than beer in clear bottles. Brown bottles help quite a bit, since they block almost all of the harmful wavelengths but still let some of the harmful green light through. Some of the big guys actually apply a chemical treatment to their beer, so that light has little or no effect. Miller is the first one that comes to mind, and even though it's shipped in clear bottles, you're very unlikely to find a skunked Miller. But who wants a Miller? We don't always get what we pay for, and it would really be worth your while to ask your retailer for beer that hasn't been exposed to the light. Get a six-pack from a freshly opened case in the back room rather than a cold one that has been sitting in the display case under fluorescent lights for a week.

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## Brewing Fiction

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By Ralph Bucca

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### WOLFGANG - THE NICEST HOMEBREWER (Part 1)

Wolfgang Biere was known far and wide as the nicest and best homebrewer in the Black Forest of Germany. His efforts to help inexperienced or perplexed homebrewers were legendary. If a homebrewer was in need of a certain type of hop, or if his yeast was not working, Wolfgang would dash over on his bicycle to aid his comrade, especially if the brewer in need was a member of his local homebrew club, the Black Forest Dunkels.

During the annual conference of the German Homebrewers Guild (GHG) a local nobleman, the Baron Von Rolf, made a generous offer to the brewer of the best of show beer at the conference: 100 marks and the opportunity to brew a batch a beer in the brewery of his ancient castle. This offer attracted much interest throughout Germany and there were several hundred entries. Of course, Wolfgang was interested; though just a simple peasant, he was an excellent brewer and enjoyed entering competitions.

The entries were of great variety and complexity. There were Marzens, Maibocks, Doppelbocks, Munich Dunkels, Altbiers and even a turkey flavored Rauchbier . Wolfgang's entry was a Munich Helles, a simple but clean brew. This Helles was a beautiful pale, malty beer that was lightly, but appropriately, hopped with Saaz and Hallertauer. Wolfgang's beer emphasized quality, while others in the competition overreacted with excess.

Naturally, Wolfgang's brew, "Wolf's Helles", was chosen best of show and he modestly accepted the gold medal, the prize money and the offer of Baron Von Rolf to brew at his castle. During the conference Wolfgang was also recognized for his contributions to the homebrew community and received a gold medal for this distinction.

At the end of the conference, Wolfgang met with the Baron to discuss what he was to brew at the castle, and what supplies and equipment would be needed. It was at this time that the Baron explained that the brewery had not been used for two generations and might need renovation. Wolfgang offered some suggestions and the Baron invited him to visit the castle the next weekend to see the brewery and determine what would be required to make it operational.

Early on Saturday, Wolfgang bicycled from his village towards the Von Rolf castle, a 40 kilometer ride on a warm October day. Eventually he came upon a great wooden gate suspended on either side from a massive stone wall. Above the gate was an arched sign inscribed: "Von Rolf." This must be the place, Wolfgang thought; he cracked open the gate and entered the Von Rolf grounds, then proceeded up the road that slowly climbed up the mountain through the thick forest toward the castle.

About halfway up the great hill that lead to the castle, Wolfgang came across a small clearing with a bench. Tired from the day's ride, he stopped to rest. While sitting on the bench, he noticed some rustling in the brush; he turned his head and saw a small herd of wild pigs. Wolfgang thought this unusual and made a mental note to ask the Baron about this.

He finally arrived at the castle and was met by the Von Rolf family: the Baron; his wife Olga, an attractive woman about 40 years of age; and their lovely daughter Helga, a comely maiden of 17. The Baron showed Wolfgang the castle brewery which had not been used for over 50 years. The equipment was ancient, but of good quality and condition. It consisted of several copper kettles to be used for mashing, sparging and cooking; the wort was to be boiled by heat from the castle's coal fired furnace.

There was a large grain mill with wooden rollers, powered by an iron wheel, and several oak casks for fermenting and lagering. Wolfgang slowly realized why the Baron had offered the prize; he wanted a good brewer to put his brewery back in operation. The 100 marks prize money was a cheap price to pay. The Baron and Wolfgang immediately set to sanitizing the casks, then filled them all with water in order to swell the staves and seal any possible leaks. After that, they spent several hours cleaning and testing the equipment to make sure it was sound.

Satisfied that the brewery was operational, Wolfgang and the Von Rolf family had lunch and discussed the type of beer to be made and the ingredients needed. Since it was October, a bock would be a logical choice for a beer to last through the winter. Choice German 2 row lager, Munich, Vienna, and caramel malts were chosen along with Hallertauer and imported Saaz hops for flavoring. The Baron promised to acquire the prescribed ingredients, while Wolfgang agreed to obtain some fresh yeast from a local brewery. The old kettles would once again come alive the next weekend, on the last day of October.

[Next Month: Wolfgang brews and spends the night at the castle. Adult situations and graphic brewing are depicted.]