



Homebrewers of Peoria

MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING:

Editors note: And now to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear worth of minutes I got from last month's meeting!

WHAT'S OLD ON TAP:

Treasurer's Report - \$??? no input for this issue, our treasurer is missing in action.

Winter Bus Trip: Save the date... Sat. January 28th, invite your friends and their friends!!! The flyer is or will be posted by this Friday. We are just waiting on some minor details

Christmas Party: The Christmas Party went pretty well. We had a nice turn out despite the promise of light snow. The Martin's water was shut off at the well so flushing toilets didn't happen, but that didn't stop the beer from being consumed. Bruce B brought his usual selection of "way heavies", as well as some horseradish havarti cheese from WI. The Brush family walked in with some killer stuffed mushrooms and Paul demonstrated that one can smoke (via wood smoker!) just about anything, including cheddar cheese and potato chips. It was a smokey night with the addition of Melanie's smoked chicken (her virgin off her new smoker) as well. Don S made an appearance and continued the smokey theme with a crock of Smoked Cheddar Cheese Chowder and several Christmas beers, such as Santa's Butt, Lump of Coal and Bad Elf beers...all better than they sound! Steve King, from Super Liquors, showed up and had an interesting announcement regarding the Jay Cees Beerfest...see What's New On Tap.

Membership Address List: There are a few "holes", one being that I lost Alan Wahl's info, yet again. Alan, if you are there, please contact Melanie and we will finish this project up.

New Meeting Day Suggestion: We discussed changing the day the club meets so John M. can attend the meetings. (His partner meeting has been changed to the 3rd Wed.) Those members in attendance didn't have too much trouble changing the meeting date, as long as it was still on a Wed. So starting in Jan. HOPs will start meeting on the 2nd Wed. of the month...same time, same place.

WHAT'S NEW ON TAP:

Welcome Visitor: We want to extend a welcome to **Bob Kaiser**, a friend of Bill Diebold's and a mover and shaker in the Peoria jazz music scene. He came supplied with some homebrewed nut brown ale, which was well received by the group.

Jay Cees Beerfest: Steve King informed us that the the Jay Cees didn't get their act together soon enough to reserve the Expo Garden for the March Beerfest, so look for that event April 22nd instead. This will help us in getting judges for our Black & Tan Beer competition held during the Beerfest, since it won't be at the same time as the Drunk Munk Competition, which is always held the 2nd Sat. of March.

Dues: Just a reminder, dues are due in Feb. and have been raised to \$18 to cover beer education expenses. Isn't Feb. also election time???

MISCELLANEOUS STUFF:

Problem Beers???: As usual bring in your problem beers for some positive trouble shooting or comments. We all can learn!

Wanna Strut Your Stuff??? Made anything good lately???. Bring some to the meeting and strut your stuff all over the bar tables!!!

Beer of the Month: Dave S went vacationing down in Florida recently and said that he had his first good italian beer...a "Moretti Dark", a doppelbock style beer. He also recommends "Sarah Huges Dark Ruby Mild", "Goose Island Honkers Ale" and Kodie added his favorite recent beer of "Founder's Black Rye".

BEER HOPPERS: Wed. Dec . 28th, 6:30pm.
Decision to be made tonight. See HOPs website for "final answer".

BEER EDUCATION: Kodie Brush will present Winter Warmers tonight. Other questions to think about and maybe bring back to the club...What was the first beer you ever brewed? How'd your brewing experience go? Learn anything you can pass on to the group?

HOPs

PRESIDENT
Kodie Brush

VICE PRESIDENT
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TREASURER/MAILER
John Waldman

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Dave Scuffham

SECRETARY/EDITOR
Melanie Martin

Some things
Brewn'

401 E. Main St.
Galesburg, IL
61401

Proprietors:
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Tues-Fri 12:00-6:00
Sat 10:00-5:00
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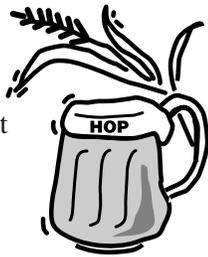
HOPs Club Members Only: (with a 10% HOPs membership discount!) Call Jim up to 4:00pm the day of the HOPs meeting and place your beer supply order and he'll bring your order to the meeting, COD.
Website: somethingsbrewn.com

MONTHLY BEER EDUCATION

(Everyone, who wants to, can participate!!!)

THE PRESENTER: Sign-up for a beer style and a month to present it (*see open months below*). You will be the presenter of that beer by hopefully bringing your home brew of that style plus other store-bought examples. And remember, you have a budget of \$20 on the purchase of similar commercial beers that reflect your beer style that the club will reimburse you for. Give John W. your receipts.

THE REST OF US: We have the option to participate by also brewing a batch of the beer style being presented and bring it along for comparison...or sit back and free-load off of other people's efforts!!!



So, get those kettles brewing!!! Here is the brew schedule. Choose a month not already taken, select your beer style...*(oh and be sure to let the editor know so it makes the schedule!)*

2005

December ... Baltic Porters John M

2006

January Winter Warmers Kodie

February Two Hearted Ale Kodie

March (open) ???

April (open) ???

May (open) ???

June (open) ???

July (open) ???

August (open) ???

September .. (open) ???

October (open) ???

November .. (open) ???

(Don't forget to sign-up for any of the open months with your editor...wanna change? Let her know that too!)

Potential for Mind Exercise...

Baltic Porters by K. Florian Klemp

Few beers fit the season like a Baltic porter does winter and early spring. Siblings of the Imperial stouts, Baltic porters emanate from a swath of countries from Sweden to Poland, wending around the Baltic crescent and deep into eastern Europe. Descendants of the lineage of British porter exports in the 18th century, they range in color from mahogany red to inky dark, and pack a substantial dose of flavor and alcohol. These strong beers can approach barley wines in fortitude, Imperial stouts in complexity, and liqueurs in after-dinner contentment value.

FLAVOR PROFILE

Baltic porters are deep, dense and thoughtful beers. As they borrow much from other, more familiar styles, they have many layers of flavors. Sweet, soothing maltiness akin to the finest German bocks is present. Rummy, raisin and licorice notes similar to an old ale reside in the profile. The character also has hints of chocolate and coffee, and at times, a roasted background. All coming into a smooth, silky flavor that is contemplative but robust. Hops rates are noticeable in the dark versions but understated in the lighter-colored ones. Satisfying indeed.

The Baltic porter brewers have borrowed style and technology from Germany, England and the Czech Republic, creating a somewhat hybridized category of strong beer. Some Baltic porters are top fermented and true to their roots, but others, unlike the porters of London, are bottom fermented, producing a soft roundness in the beer. These brews range from 5.5 percent to over 9 percent ABV.

FROM WHENCE?

Baltic porters share some traditions and characteristics with Imperial stouts, and at times are almost indistinguishable from them. These two styles do, in fact, have a common origin and traceable history. British breweries of the 18th and 19th centuries were famous for their stouts and porters. Seeking to expand markets and satisfy allies to the east, the British exported their dark ales to northern ports by way of the Baltic Sea, touching Scandinavia, Finland, the Baltic states of Estonia and Latvia, western Russia, and continental European port cities. These export ales were made stronger and hoppier than normal, which enabled them to endure the voyage. The extra alcoholic strength was no doubt a welcome attribute in those countries with harsh winters and a taste for the robust.

With distribution routes by both land and sea, it wasn't long before Imperial stouts and strong porters made their way into many markets, from the northern port cities into landlocked eastern Europe. The style's far-reaching appeal convinced many local breweries to make house versions. To this day, each region gives its porter a distinct stylistic interpretation. The farther one gets from England, the less these beers resemble the originals.

Generally speaking, Slavic and Baltic breweries produce strong porters as bottom-fermented lagers that resemble bocks in strength and flavor. Scandinavian brewers use top fermentation and their porters retain the dark roasted malt character.

TRAVELING THROUGH PORTERLAND

The port cities of Sweden are a relatively short sail from Britain and thus provided a convenient and lucrative market for the British export ales. The first porter brewery in Sweden was established in 1791 by Brit William Knox in Gothenburg.

D. Carnegie and Co., Sweden's largest brewery, produces the Baltic porter that most resembles the original porters of London. This holdover brew, called Stark Porter, is a gem. Like a London porter, it is of moderate strength, deep black, and top fermented. It is available throughout North America.

cuz we ol' dogs wanna know more!!!

If ever there were a country where a strong, dark beer would be most comforting, Finland would be it. It is a country that combines quaint, rustic traditions with a progressive outlook to the future. Finland produces a porter in the Baltic style that is a bit stronger, rich and roasty, and still top fermented in the London tradition. It is produced by the Sinebrychoff brewery of Helsinki.

Like Sweden, Finland has had many restrictive and antiquated brewing laws over the years. Thankfully, many of these laws have now been discarded. Sinebrychoff, or simply "Koff," takes advantage of this loosening by producing its strong Baltic porter. The beer has been brewed since 1957, and its revival pays tribute to the London-style exports of yesteryear. Could there be a better way to finish off a sauna than with a restorative Koff on a brisk evening?

Finland is enjoying an enthusiastic rebirth of interest in craft beers. Both domestic and imports are featured at the very popular Helsinki Beer Festival, now in its fifth year.

Estonia has been brewing beer of some sort for over a thousand years. The first written reference to beer in what is now Estonia dates to 1284. In modern times, political unrest left the country's brewing industry somewhat shaky until quite recently. Estonia's brewing industry was in terrible shape just 10 years ago, but two old breweries, Saku and Tartu, founded in the early part of the 19th century, have recovered nicely. The country now boasts a couple of world-class breweries that produce potent and flavorful porters.

New legions of craft beer drinkers in Estonia can now enjoy several strong, bottom-fermented specialties from Saku and Tartu. The porters are hard to come by, but shouldn't be passed up if available. Both the Tartu and Saku porters are noticeably influenced by central European lager brewing traditions even though the country lies very close to Finland. They resemble the strong lagers of Germany in many ways, and lack some of the roasty character of their ancestor, London porter.

POLAND'S STELLAR SELECTION

Of all the Baltic porters, Poland has the best variety and the easiest to acquire, perhaps owing to the country's brewing history and geographic location. The middle of the 19th century is generally regarded as a watershed for refined brewing technology. Chief among these advances was a more thorough understanding of bottom fermentation and lager beer production, which became the standard method in Germany, Bohemia and Austria. Polish breweries adopted this lager technology from their neighbors (much of Poland was actually under German and Austrian control during this period).

Today, there are roughly 80 active breweries in Poland. They primarily brew pale lagers, similar to German and Czech pilsners, and dark lagers that remind one of a Munich dunkel. Several breweries produce excellent strong porters. These are the truly hybridized versions of the Baltic style, and because of the bottom fermentation, the mellowest.

Be wary; they are the strongest as well, reaching 9.1 percent ABV. Rich with licorice or molasses character and a wonderful maltiness, they are not unlike doppelbocks from Germany. The roasted character is subdued, which allows the malt to shine through, and the brews take on the deep mahogany color of a dark lager.

Poland also has a fairly significant hop-growing region, producing fine Lubulin hops that naturally find their way into some of the porters, adding yet another unique, local and delicious touch.

Eastern European beers are somewhat in vogue these days, so pay attention to the selection at your package store, as some of these beers may crop up due to demand. Versions from Okocim, Zywiec, Kozlak and Dojlidy are available in some markets. All are delicious and well worth exploring.

Whether your idea of enjoying winter is a tough day on the slopes or an evening with a crackling fire, comfort food and a good movie, Baltic porters are just the remedy to warm your spirit. As the snow melts and you switch to lighter beers, cache your leftovers and look forward to next winter.

K. Florian Klemp is a research analyst at Duke University in Durham, NC, and an award-winning homebrewer.

TASTING NOTES

Carnegie Stark Porter: Located near Stockholm, Sweden, this brewery was founded in the 1830s by Scotsman D. Carnegie, originally in Gothenburg, and its porter has been brewed since 1836. Stark Porter measures in at 5.5 percent ABV. Deep black and dry, in most respects is very reminiscent of the premium porters of London. Rich, smooth and well balanced with a light molasses and coffee character, it pours with a sustaining, thick head. The bottles are vintage dated and can keep for several years. This top-fermented brew is a throwback to Sweden's early brewing era.

Sinebrychoff Porter: Brewed in Helsinki, Finland, by the country's oldest surviving brewery, founded in 1819 by Russian Nikolai Sinebrychoff. It is believed that "Koff" has been a porter brewery since its inception. Substantial in strength at 7.2 percent ABV, the brew is malty, with a nice bitter, roasty finish. Black as night, with a long-lasting creamy brown head. This beer survived Finnish prohibition.

Okocim Porter: Bottom fermented and strong at 8.1 percent, it is brewed by the Okocim brewery near Krakow, Poland. Very complex with a panoply of licorice, toffee, and chocolate flavors riding over a rich background of malt. Soft and smooth, it reminds one of a bock with a little more complexity. An excellent example of the lagered version of the Baltic style.

Kozlak Porter: Also brewed in Poland and bottom fermented, it is somewhat aromatic and dominated by malt. Toffee-caramel flavors are followed by a chocolate finish. As with all of these porters, the head is substantial, long-lived and brown in color. Coming in at 7.8 percent ABV, this is a perfect winter warmer, after dinner drink, or dessert beer.

Zywiec Porter: Yet another of the relatively plentiful Polish porters, this is the granddaddy of them all at 9.3 percent ABV. The brewery has been around since 1856, the beer, since 1881. Very malty and somewhat sweet, it finishes with a dry, lightly bitter taste. The aroma is molasses and malt. Like a moderately hopped bock, with chocolate and coffee notes. This brew is bottom fermented and well rounded, with its potency hidden in its easy-drinking quality. A perfect combination of porter and doppelbock qualities make this a real treat. It would be hard to find a finer beer of any style.

Utenos Porter: A beer new to the US import market from the Utenos brewery in Utena, Lithuania. Utenos porter is the softest of them all. It has a round, malty caramel flavor and aroma and measures just 6.8 percent ABV, but is quite robust. It displays a beautiful crystal-clear garnet color and is bottom fermented. The flavor is rich, full bodied, and ultra smooth. The brewery proudly proclaims, "This beer has been admired by connoisseurs for many years. Utenos porter offers exceptional indulgence." They are justified in making such a claim.

Join "HOPs" Beer Club

Interested in joining a club of beer-making fools? Find yourself obsessing about beer and don't have anybody to talk to? Want to learn how to make beer in your own but don't know how to start? Or do you just want to get together once a month to drink and talk beer?

Join HOPs (Homebrewers of Peoria)

Dues are an obsessively cheap \$18 a year...pro-rated when you join up. Dues include this newsletter, a monthly place where you can do one or all of the above mentioned desires PLUS various parties, picnics, socials and a beer tasting field trip thrown in.

Fill-out this form and bring to any of our meetings, every 3rd Wednesday of the month. First timers are welcome to visit and check us out.

Yes! I want to join HOPs!

Name: _____

Street/Apt: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Home Phone #: _____

Email: _____



HOPs

c/o Melanie Martin
315 E Santa Fe Road
Chillicothe, IL 61523-9383

Up-Coming Events & Meetings

This is your newsletter...want to contribute???, please email me anytime at: melaniehg@yahoo.com, fax: 309 249-4109 or call: 309 249-4409

note new date

HOPs Beer Club meeting dates:

2nd Wed. of each month • 6:30-8:00pm
Plank Road Pub* • 4714 W. Plank Rd • Bellevue
<http://hop.bradley.edu/>

(* remember this is a cash only bar)

BEER HOPs - Monthly Dinner & Beer Social:

4th Wed. of each month • 6:30pm •
See HOPs email for location • Bring your friends/spouses

Other local Homebrew Club meetings:

ABNORMAL HOME BREWERS

2nd Mon. of each month • 7:30-9:30pm
Fat Jacks • 511 N. Main • Bloomington
(309) 829-2805

GALESBURG HOMEBREWERS ASSOCIATION

2nd Sat. of each month • 3:00-5:00pm
Somthin's Brewin' • 401 E. Main St. • Galesburg
(309) 241-4118



This would be the sign that this is all she wrote!