



THE BREWER'S LEAGUE JOURNAL



December 2003

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Club Officers:

Shelley Albright,
President

Valerie Oliver,
Vice President

Eric Wilson,
Secy.

Dennis Fugier,
Treasurer

2003 European Driving Tour (Pt 6) by Lori Brown

Day 5 – Bamberg to Cologne Thursday May 8, 2003

On our way out of Bamberg this morning (after our big breakfast at Spezial), we drove past Weyermann malting company. Of course, I had to stop. Brewers are familiar with the name, but might not know they are based in Bamberg, Germany. The malting company has a large complex of buildings. There was a guardhouse at the entry to the complex. In German, I told the guard I was a brewer from the United States and I wanted to take a picture of Weyermann to show my brewing friends back home. He smiled and laughed (probably at my bad German language skills) and let me wander into the complex. I snapped a few pictures, took a few deep breaths of fresh malt, and sadly had to head out of town. As hard as it was to leave Bamberg, I knew what was coming later that day and could not wait. We were making the long drive to Cologne. I can almost taste the Kolsch.



Today we had a chance to play with the car on the autobahn. We got into an open stretch of the road with real good visibility and drove with the fast cars. We never did top out the car, so we don't know for sure how fast it will go, but here is a photo of about 132 mph. We know that power will go to waste in the U.S. so we might as well enjoy it here! Driving that fast made our trip much quicker than expected.

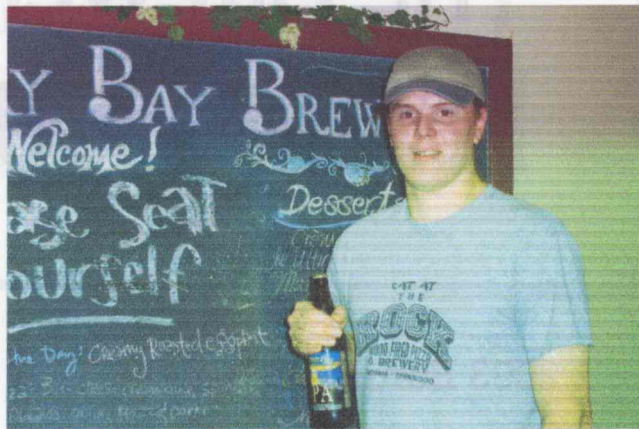
We arrived in Cologne and found our hotel. It is right next to the Cathedral and we have a nice view of it from our window. Also near the Cathedral is the Fruh am Dom brewery. We had lunch at Fruh and were able to sample our first authentic Kolsch beers. Even Phil was willing to try this one! The server brings you skinny little 0.2L glasses of Kolsch and makes a tick mark on your beer mat to

(Continued page 4)

Next GEBL meeting will be at 7 PM **Dec. 11th** at The Flying Pig.
Remember the Christmas gift exchange!

Featured Brewer of the Month

By: Gordon Legg



This month our featured brewer is Jacob Keating, our newest GEBL member. Jacob was born in Kirkland's Evergreen Hospital and grew up in the Kenmore/Lynnwood area where he attended Junior High and High School. Jacob was on his own at an early age, leaving high school to go to work, mostly in restaurants and pizza places. He eventually got tired of working nights and got a job in the construction industry, getting his GED along the way.

Jacob, who just recently turned 21, became interested in craft beer around the age of 18. He started asking questions and searching the internet, and eventually discovered the Howtobrew.com website. After 9 months of thinking about it, he finally got the courage to brew up a batch. He bought a kit at The Hop Shop in Edmonds and brewed an extract IPA, his favorite style of beer.

Next came a stout from a Coopers' Kit, in which he steeped specialty grains before adding a dry yeast. Finally, he made another IPA with a Wyeast smack-pack. This was his best batch ever, his major accomplishment being that he got his final gravity down to the mid teens for the first time.

Jacob was still doing partial boils and using an ice bath in the kitchen sink to cool his wort, but he was starting to think big. He purchased an outdoor burner, a 20 gallon pot and a wort chiller so he could do a full boil. He brewed up a German style wheat beer using Nottingham yeast. It didn't taste quite right to him. Since then he has bought books and studied, and now uses the more traditional German yeast.

Although he is still an extract brewer, Jacob is researching different system types to see what he might like to have for an all grain system. One thing he enjoys about his GEBL association is being able to meet so many people who are knowledgeable about brewing and brewing systems. He thinks he might like to be a professional brewer someday, and would like to find more about what that would be like. His uncle, Tom Bannister, was an original investor in the Glacier Peak Brewing Company, the predecessor to the Flying Pig.

Jacob's favorite beers are Mongoose IPA, Bridgeport IPA, and Diamond Knot Industrial. The next time you see Jacob at a meeting or an event, be sure to go up and say hi to our newest, and I think youngest member!

Style Calendar - 2003 and Beyond

Dec - Winter Beers (Any Big Beers)

Jan 04 - No tasting (guest speaker)

Feb 04 - Mead and Cider (#25 and 26)

AHA Club Only Competition Schedule

December—Barleywine (#12)



UPCOMING EVENTS

**12/5-7 Holliday Ale Festival, Port-
land, Or.**



December Meeting



By Shelley

The December meeting is an important meeting to attend. We will be electing the offers for the 2004 GEBL year. We will also be having the Christmas white elephant gift exchange and bring strong ales for our tasting.

The officer nominations so far are as follows:

President: Val Oliver and Eric Wilson (Will Fredin withdrew his name for president)

Treasurer: Dennis Fugier

Secretary: Eric Wilson

Membership Coordinator: Bob Winchell, Shane Miels, and Fred Farris

Librarian: Jim Brischke, Will Fredin, and Gary Albright

Newsletter Editor: Gordon Legg, Lori Brown, and Shelley Albright

We will be accepting nominations at the meeting before the election takes place.

Remember to bring a gift for the white elephant gift exchange. Do not spend more than ten dollars on the gift. If you bring a gift, you get a gift.

(2003 European Driving Tour Pt. 5, con't)

keep track of how many you have been served. As your glass gets close to empty, another one simply shows up. You have to let them know when you are done drinking, otherwise they just keep on bringing you refills! Fruh had a very light colored and light bodied Kolsch. It turned out to be one of the better Kolsch beers I sampled.

I managed to sample a number of different versions of Kolsch while staying in the city. There are over 20 Kolsch producers in Cologne, so I had to choose a plan of attack. We were using Cologne as a base camp for several days, so I could try a few different beers each day we were in town. Malzmuhle brewery served a fuller bodied more complex Kolsch. I highly recommend Malzmuhle for both the food and the beer. Gaffel Kolsch was crisp and refreshing on draft, but a bit generic out of cans. I tried bottled Reissdorf in Cologne and was very disappointed in the flavor. (Reissdorf happens to be one of the few bottled Kolsch beers you can get in the U.S. Based on my tasting of it Cologne, I can only say – don't let this one be your calibration beer for how a good Kolsch should taste.) Paffgen was the ultimate Kolsch for me. It had incredible complexity and flavor compared to the other Kolsch I sampled. It also had some of the best hop aroma and flavor – perfectly balanced with the malt.

Kolsch beers are generally either 100% pilsner malt, or up to about 20% wheat. That malt bill gives these beers a light, clean flavor, but the mashing temperatures give these beers an interesting complexity. The hops are typically German varieties such as Hallertau, Perle, Tettnang and Spalt. Some even include Saaz. These beers are served fresh from small wooden kegs. The kegs don't last very long, as you notice while sitting in the brewery. The servers are constantly bringing up kegs from the basement. Freshness is the key to this style of beer. I was very surprised at the diversity of the examples I tried. It seems like such a simple beer style, but these beers have much more flavor and complexity than I ever imagined. If only I had time to try all of them. Oh, well, this just means we will have to come back sometime.

GEBL Tasting Summary

Style: Same Recipe Robust Porter
Date: 11/1/2003

Brewer	Averages					
	Aroma	Appearance	Flavor	Mouthfeel	Overall	Total
HB1 Bob Winchell	7.67	2.33	13.67	3.33	6.67	33.67
HB2 Dennis Fugier	9.00	2.33	13.00	3.67	6.33	34.33
HB3 Jim Brischke	8.00	2.33	12.33	4.67	6.33	33.67
HB4 Will Fredin	10.00	2.33	16.33	4.33	8.33	41.33
HB5 Shelley Albright	7.00	2.33	11.67	4.33	6.00	31.33
HB6 Gordon Legg	9.67	2.00	12.67	3.67	6.67	34.67

Inaugural Brew Day (Part 1)

By Jeff Dalziel

Introduction

The beginning of a long journey is finally over, and the dawn of yet another is here. I am finally going to be able to brew the first batch of beer on my new HERMS system. The journey has been long, hard, and often frustrating, but in the end, worthwhile. There is much that I've learned, and more that I'm still learning, with the one constant of change that is inevitable when it comes to brewing systems. Something can always be done better, and that is half the fun of it. I've enjoyed the challenges of designing, building, and now, using the system.

I lay full blame for my out of control hobby on all of my brewing friends and colleagues. If it weren't for them, I wouldn't know how to make great beer, and wouldn't have gotten the desire to make my own setup so I can brew and experiment on my own. Now, it's not a bad thing to be blamed for it- it's really a sign of respect for their skills, knowledge and friendship. It has always been very appreciated. This hobby is a social thing as much as an enjoyment of good beer.

The beer I brew ends up being split with friends and family, with the lion's share to my father-in-law, Mick Osgood. The new system is also a present to him indirectly, as he appreciates all of his "Jeff-beer" that he can get his hands on. He can finally take a part in the making of the beer he enjoys so much, and learn more about it as we brew together. Now all I have to do is to get him to tell me what kind of beer he wants!

HERMS anyone?

My overall philosophy for the setup was to make it a RIMS type of system. I believed that the beer you could produce with recirculation was well worth the time (and money!) invested. I won't know that answer for a little while, for as I write this, the first batch is waiting to be brewed. I spent countless hours surfing the web, books and magazines for examples of others RIMS applications, and the various off shoots of the basic design.

After much self-deliberation, I settled on the HERMS variety for a few reasons. Mainly, I didn't want to have the wort in direct contact with the heating element to eliminate any scorching. Secondly, I anticipate that the extraction ratio and clarity achieved will be greater than that I achieve with a single infusion mash without recirculation. Lastly, the wort would be heated softly rather than as it flows down the heat exchange coil. It also offered the capability to heat the sparge water to temp at the same time you begin to mash out, without having to direct fire the mash tun. I don't plan on step mashing beyond the alpha or beta amylase and sparge ranges, so temperature rise in the hot liquor tank is not an issue, as it would be if I rested at any stage below.

I started out with only my 10-gallon boil kettle for extract or partial mashes, so I had an uphill battle to acquire a significant amount of hardware and construct the whole system. The boil kettle is a converted keg I got from Lori (thanks!). I have two options for the kettle drain: an easy masher and a round pancake screen. I haven't used the easy masher yet, except to test flow, and it was rather slow. The screen worked good for the first boil, but failed miserably for the second, probably due to an installation error on my part. I will experiment with both to find which one works best to flow and for filtering of the trub and hot break. The inaugural brew will use the screen again, once I rebuild the dip tube to fit the new keg.

The HLT was a tough one to fabricate. I had about 75 feet of 3/8" copper tubing from a plumbing friend, that I used to make my counterflow chiller and the heat exchange coil for the HERMS. The coil was easy to do, while the holes for the inlet and outlet on the kettle weren't! Thanks go to Tim O'Brian on this one. We had fun one night drilling them out, and then grinding them out an extra 1/16" to get the thru wall fitting to work that I got from Homebrew Heaven. Long story on this one, if anyone wants the sordid details. I put a ball valve on the outlet side to stop the flow as needed. Word of advice I learned: if you need to control flow rates of your pump; do it from the OUTFLOW side only, otherwise the pump can be damaged from cavitations, as its not designed to be controlled from the inlet side. I also created my own sight tube from a few parts and some acrylic tubing for a lot less than you can buy one pre-built. Another word on this: make a cap for the top if you have it installed in line with the outlet for sparge water. The pump will suck the water down out of the tube, inject air into the hot wort. NOT GOOD! Another word yet. You must sacrifice a small amount of wort to get the flow started into the coil from the mash tun. The mash tun must also be exposed to air to allow the vacuum to be broken and to allow the wort to flow out.

I bought the mash tun from Larry's, with the slotted manifold included. In talking with Terry, he expected fairly high extraction rates of over 80%. Time will tell if he was right. In doing all of my research on line and in magazine, I saw a manifold made out of copper for the sparge and recirculation. I thought that I would make one also, but after testing and cleaning the system, the flow was rather minimal to really allow it to work through all of the holes and pipe legs I built. I will be experimenting with the sparge/circulation manifold I created; the jury is out on whether it will work as I think it will. I had to build the bulkhead and valve, as the base setup out of Larry's was just a piece of vinyl tubing, with no way to control flow.

The hopback was a fun and frustrating project. I saw it one of the BYO projects sections. I wanted to make one, so I did. The hardest part was making the dip tube for the outflow. Mine is horizontal, with holes drilled in it, and a chore boy copper scrubber around it. I'm hoping that this will keep it above the trub coming out of the kettle, and the loose hops, with the intention of keeping the flow nice and steady. This little project made me want to buy all sorts of new plumbing toys. Needless to say, I didn't. It made the job that much harder, but still doable.

The counterflow chiller was built by hand from the Phi-Chill phittings, a store bought hose, and my copper tubing. I have it wired under my hopback platform. Sidebar on the bucket issue: the counterflow chillers tend to leave the cold break in the bottom of the carboy, wasting a lot of valuable beer volume. I will try to see if the bottling bucket will allow settling out, with racking into the carboy to follow.

My pump is a March MDX-MT3 model. It has the 1/2" male NPT threading for both inlet and outlet. It came with just the pigtail. I had to wire a plug or something on it, and I wanted to be able to switch it on and off, so I wire it directly to a switch. Dumb move. Can't remove the pump then to clean it! So, I will let it fly the first go around, and rewire it to a plug end, and add a larger electrical box for the switch and an outlet, with the outlet being half switched, and the other hot, in case I need it for something else down the road.

I could fill this article with the dos and don'ts, the good and bad, etc. I don't have the energy to do that right now, but I am always available to chat at length in person, if anyone is interested the details. Suffice it to say, that the little things were and are the hardest to deal with. You learn as you go when designing from scratch, and you can't be afraid to question your judgments about what will and won't work. If I have to say there was one thing that took the most energy, it would have to be the plumbing, and all of the bits, pieces, parts, and options that are available. It's nothing that money won't solve! (Continued Next Month)

Congratulations and Thanks By Shelley

Congratulations and thanks to all GEBL members who entered a beverage into this years Evergreen State Fair. Due to the great beers entered into this years' beer competition, GEBL won the ESF's Homebrew Club of the Year Award for the fourth straight year.

Special congratulations go out to Fred Farris who won best of show and placed third in the best of show round, Lori Brown who placed second in the best of show round, and Will Fredin who had his Lambic go to the best of show round.

Lot's of thanks also go to all that helped with the judging, stewarding, setting up and manning and womaning the homemade beverage booth during the fair.

By the way, yours truly won the creativity award this year for best label. Maybe someday I can enter a beer that will place better.

Cheers!
Shelley



Marc and his wife Linda were married on a July 1st, 2000, on a tour boat in Seattle's Lake Union. It was a lovely, balmy evening, and Marc had had arranged to have a keg of Mirror Pond Pale as well as a nice brown ale on hand, making it one of the most enjoyable weddings this writer has been privileged to attend in recent memory. Marc and Linda love good food, good company, and a beautiful sunset. They live in Ballard, not far from Hales and Maritime breweries. Somehow, I don't think this is a coincidence!

I Feel Better Than James Brown Ale

Batch Size: 10 gallons

16 ½ Lbs. of pale malt

2 Lbs. Crystal 40

1 Lb. Chocolate

¼ Lb. Flaked Barley

4 1/2 Oz. Fuggles 60 minutes

2 Oz. East Kent Goldings 10 minutes

Yeast: White Labs American Ale #1

White Labs American Ale #2

(Split batch and use one in each)



Just a small part of Marc's brewing "stuff"