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**THE**

# **Northern Brewer**

**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB**

**JANUARY 2010**

## **The Prez Sez**

*by Dennis Sessler*

**W**ell, as you can see, I have been one busy president. I have yet to update my Prez Sez picture and I hope that you are not repulsed by my beverage of choice. I promise to get an updated picture within the next month. In fact, I want to challenge all members to try to grab that priceless photo of your Prez – you will have more than ample chances with the upcoming Great Alaskan Beer and Barleywine Festival (GABBF) and at our club meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Please email me your photos and I will select the most fitting or not so fitting, my choice. The winner will receive a very special beverage, again of my choice.



The month of December was a jam packed adventure. The Great Northern Brewers Club hit the ground running with the Humpy's Big Fish Homebrew Competition. I want to personally thank Billy Opinsky and Jason Ditsworth for sponsoring and coordinating one of the GNBC's greatest competitions. Jason has a wrap up article on this competition with all the winners; congratulations to all who entered. Steve Schmitt also has a wrap up article on the greatest side challenge around. Check out his article for the winners and the announcement of next year's challenge. In case you were unable to attend the competition to judge or steward, Billy and the crew have totally gutted and remodeled SubZero. Despite its name it is now a very warm and welcoming environment to enjoy all of their wonderful bottled and draft libations. I found myself not wanting to leave on the day of the competition, but there was so much more in store for me and our club.

After a quick change into my rendition of "Twas the Night before Christmas" attire, I was ready for a fun filled night at the Snow Goose for our club's annual holiday party. I want to thank Julie and Tim Mc Donald, and Joe and Amber Michael for all their hard work, planning, setting up, and cranking out the tunes and finally the cleanup of the facility. We all had a wonderful time, and all the food was great. Read Joe's article to find out just what you missed if you weren't there.

On December 8<sup>th</sup> the club had a board meeting at the Snow Goose in the Pub Meeting Room. There were many issues discussed and voted on by the board. The minutes were completed by our secretary and emailed out to the club on about the 13<sup>th</sup>. I am very excited with all the changes coming online, I believe some of these changes will increase membership and give us a renewed sense of purpose. The Secretary's Corner will highlight the issues discussed, and the newly appointed Membership Coordinator has an article on the issuance of personnel membership cards and the suspension of business memberships.

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Also in this issue are articles on the last call for the 2010 Fur Rondy Home Brew Competition and an announcement of the 2010 Snow Goose Homebrew Competition and return of Project Homebrew. Check out board member Tim Bisson's article on brewing American Ales. This article coincides with the first American Homebrewers Association Club Only Competition (AHA COC) GNBC will participate in this year. So please read his article, brew your best American Ale and bring four bottles (at least one of them cold) to the February 16th meeting. A panel of Nationally Certified beer judges will evaluate all samples and pick the best one to forward to the Club Only Competition held in March.

As mentioned earlier our next meeting will be on the **14<sup>th</sup> of January**. This is on a Thursday, and will coincide with the GABBF. This is, bar none, our largest and most attended club meeting. We will quickly take care of our club business and in no time at all will move on to our special guests Todd and Jason Alstrom. They are the founders of Beer Advocate and will be giving a presentation about BA. They will answer all your questions and then they would like to sample all the great homebrews that Alaska has to offer. That means bring your homebrew and lots of it. There will be a dozen or so commercial brewers at our meeting and they are also eager to talk with us and sample some of the best homebrew brewed in the northwest.

Don't forget to check what your responsibility at the meeting will be with regard to setup, food, and cleanup. It's up to all of us, Board, Officers and members to make this meeting a success. We will be starting the setup at 5:30-6:00 pm on the 14<sup>th</sup>; the meeting will start promptly at 7:00pm. After the conclusion of the meeting and presentation in the theater, you will all be welcome upstairs in the pub for an after party. In years past some of the best memories come from this late night celebration. Please remember to store all your homebrew creations in your vehicle at this time and show some of that great GNBC patronage to the staff at the Snow Goose. There will be many tasty suds on tap; the Sleeping Lady's new head brewer Greg Mills has been cranking out some tasty treats as of late.

The GABBF, will kick off on the 15<sup>th</sup>, if you haven't purchased your tickets there still may be time, tickets can be purchased online at <http://www.ticketmaster.com/search?q=Beer+Barley+Wine+Festival>. If you don't purchase your tickets online you most likely will be on the outside looking in, not a pretty picture. If you volunteer to help out at the festival for Aurora Productions you will be able to attend the festival for free, not a bad trade off. I have volunteered for the past 6-7 years and enjoy the time I spend pouring for a short three hour session and then get in free the following day to sample more of the great beers brought up to us by the distributors. There are a lot of volunteer slots that do not require a TAMS or TIPS serving card, but if you wish to serve you must have a current card. There are a couple of options if you need a serving card. Anchorage CHARR hosts TAMS classes at Eddie's Sports Bar and information about dates and times for these classes can be found at <http://www.alaskacharr.com/tam.html>. You can also contact Jeremy Henga at Aurora Productions (they have put on the GABBF for years). Jeremy is the point of contact for volunteering and rumor has it he may be putting on another TIPS class for fest volunteers on Jan 12<sup>th</sup>. Contact him either way if you would like to help, he can be contacted at [jeremy@auroraproductions.net](mailto:jeremy@auroraproductions.net) or call him at 562-9911.

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With January being another busy month on the GNBC schedule, please take a few minutes to plan a safe exit for all of the events scheduled around mid month. It is too easy to consume way too much among the beers dinners, our club meeting, and the GABBF. Dena and I usually spend at least one night at a hotel downtown. Prices are a steal this time of year and there are so many events that happen before and after the festival that I just don't want to miss out on any of it. All I'm asking is for members to plan ahead. It's not like you don't have any notice.

Until we all meet again, please enjoy your beer, meads and ciders responsibly. Let's all think before we drink.  
Brew On!



## Secretary's Corner

*by Jennifer Bisson*

### What we learned at the last meeting?

Special thanks to Jim Roberts and his team for reviving the Beer Quiz tradition at the December Christmas party. The questions were difficult but we all learned something. Thanks to all the teams who participated.

### What happened since or at the last meeting?

The Big Fish home brewing competition was held on December 5, 2009. Check out Steve Schmitt's article about the side challenge and Jason Ditsworth's article for the overall competition results.

The December Christmas party was a great success because of the great people who helped organize, set-up, and entertain. Check out Joe Michael's article for more information on these wonderful people.

### What is happening now?

The Great Alaska Beer and Barleywine festival is coming up January 15-16, 2010. The January GNBC meeting is scheduled on the day prior, January 14, to kick off the festivities at the Snow Goose Theater. Jason and Todd Alstrom, founders of beeradvocate.com, will be joining us this year. Arrive early to meet them before they make their presentation.

Local restaurants are currently scheduling beer dinners and tastings around town to attract the Beer and Barleywine crowds. Check out Jim Roberts's article for more information on how to attend and support these local happenings.

# EVENTS

*Every First Thursday*

*Moose's Tooth First Tap*

*Every Thursday*

*Midnight Sun Brewery Tours*

*6:00 PM 344-1179*

*09-17 Alaska Beer Week*

*08.....Beer Tasting and Auction at the  
Challenger Learning Center in  
Kenai*

*14.....GNBC Monthly Meeting at the  
Snow Goose 7:00 pm*

*15.....Meet the GABBF Luminaries at  
The Spenard Roadhouse: 2-4 pm*

*15-16.....Great Alaska Beer and Barley  
Wine Festival - Egan Center*

*19.....Alaskan Smoked Porter Linear  
Tasting at the Millennium Hotel  
Time/Cost TBD*

*25.....Firetap Alehouse/Alaskan Brewing  
Beer Dinner: 6 pm, \$50 pp.*

*16.....GNBC Monthly Meeting at the  
Goose 7 pm*

# JAN FEB

Got I.D? The GNBC will be issuing membership cards to all paying club members. This membership card will be required to get discounts at local retailers, including Arctic Brewing Supply and La Bodega. Take a look at Dena Sessler's article for more information.

Haven't paid your dues yet? We have made it even more convenient for you to keep your membership in good standing. You can now pay your dues on-line with PayPal. Go to <http://www.greatnorthernbrewers.org/membership.html> to get and stay current. Thank you for supporting the GNBC with your valuable membership!

### What does the future hold?

Do you like pairing beer with your meals? Join in the fun at one of the upcoming in-home beer dinners or host one at your own home. Contact Julie McDonald at [juzy@gci.net](mailto:juzy@gci.net) for more information.

The first home brewing competition of the year, Fur Rondy, is coming up on February 6 at the Snow Goose at 10am. This is the time to start reeling in those "Homebrewer of the Year" points. More information is available in Dennis Sessler's article.

Have you brewed your beer yet? The Snow Goose Break-Up home brewing competition is planned for either late March or early April. Take a look at Dan Bosch's article for more information.

Ever wonder how hard it is for a small, independent brewery to take on Corporate Beer America? This David and Goliath tale finally has a voice in the recently released documentary, *Beer Wars* - directed by Anat Baron. **The GNBC is currently in talks with the director to arrange two showings at the Snowgoose Theater on May 15, 2010.** So, stayed tuned for more information and check out the movie's web-site at [www.beerwarsmovie.com](http://www.beerwarsmovie.com)

Do you like trying new beers? If you have plenty of experience or none at all find out how you can be a beer judge at one of the 2010 homebrew competitions. Make this year your year to get involved!

### Important Dates in Beer History

January 16, 1920:  
Prohibition begins when the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment goes into effect.

Prior to Prohibition, there were thousands of breweries in the United States, mostly brewing heavier beers than modern American beer drinkers are used to. Beginning in 1920, most of these breweries went out of business, although some converted to soft drinks and other businesses, while others were issued government contracts to continue brewing to produce military rations. Bootlegged beer was often watered down to increase profits. This began a trend, still on-going today, of the American palate preferring weaker, lighter beers. Recently, segments of the American market are breaking free of the light beer and starting a new trend of appreciating fuller-bodied beers with the help of smaller breweries and a greater variety of imports in local markets.

Check out Tim Bisson's article for more information on the history of American Ales as well as some great recipes.

See page 20 for board Minutes.



### 2010 Homebrewer of The Year Categories

#### Fur Rendezvous HBC

- Category 12
- Category 18
- Category 19
- Category 23
- Category 28

#### Snow Goose HBC

- Category 1
- Category 3
- Category 4
- Category 6
- Category 16

#### Anchor Town HBC

- Category 7
- Category 10
- Category 13
- Category 15
- Category 27

#### Equinox Mead HBC

- Category 24
- Category 25
- Category 26

#### Humpy's Big Fish HBC

- Category 2
- Category 5
- Category 9
- Category 14
- Category 22



# GNBC Holiday Party 2009

by Joe Michael

Members of GNBC came together on the eve of December 5<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the holiday season and ring in the New Year. Great food, festive decorations, and friendship made for a great time had by all!

The basement meeting room of the Snow Goose was transformed from the usual meeting space into an upbeat party atmosphere. "Santa's little helpers" met up that afternoon and strung lights, decorated tables, and set up music for the festivities. Julie and Tim McDonald did a wonderful job organizing the event and contributing the decorations. Julie coordinated the room arrangements, and all the table centerpieces were garnished with beers from Tim's ample cellar.

The food, as always, was a great spread of potluck-style dishes. Working with the theme "Fire And Ice", there were selections of both spicy and cool fare, elegantly separated out by table. Homebrew and craft beer was readily available at most all of the tables, and some brews not often seen here in Anchorage were showcased.

Partygoers were encouraged to follow the theme of "Twas The Night Before Christmas" when dressing for the event, and most club members did not disappoint in this area. Loungewear, "footie" and flannel pajamas, and luxury bathrobes were seen adorning members milling about the room.

Newly elected club President Dennis Sessler was on hand to address the throng of homebrewers, and Jim Roberts served up another challenging pint of trivia for some added fun. Jim definitely didn't make it easy on people, as many teams fought the clock to come up with answers to the questions. Written and visual questions, combined with some beer sampling mysteries, made for a fun party game that kept everyone hoppin'!

I put together an eclectic playlist of music for the night, with samplings from every genre imaginable. There was probably not enough Warren Zevon for Steve Schmitt, and apparently not enough reggae for others, but hey, you can't please 'em all, right? Per multiple requests, there was nary a Christmas tune to be found in the mix, though....well, except for one song. Don Lewellyn was adamant about "no barking dogs singing Christmas songs!" Which for me could only mean one thing: bring on the barking dogs. I made sure to include a little "Woof The Halls With Boughs Of Milkbones" in there, just for him. Sorry if you didn't hear the song you wanted, but I think overall it came off well.

For those that want to see pictures of the event, several have popped up on the GNBC's Facebook page, and you are also welcome to visit my wife Amber's Flickr account at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/alaskanmama>. Finally, if you have not seen the video of John Craig dancing it up to some Hebrew pop music, that's something not to be missed! It should be viewable via the Facebook page, or you can email me directly and I will point you in the right direction.

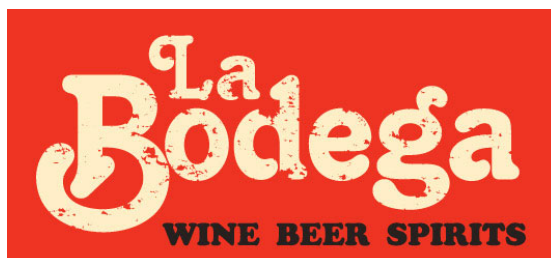
Several folks have said this was one of the better club parties that there has been in some time. I am sure I speak for all involved in the planning when I say that we hope you had a great time and enjoyed every minute of the fun. It was great to see everyone there, and to meet some of the newer members as well. We hope you will continue to join us for the monthly club meetings and other club functions. Whatever your flavor of holiday celebration may be, good wishes to you and yours, and of course, "brew on"!!

## MEETING SETUP

A - J Setup  
K - P Cleanup  
R - Z Food

A - J Cleanup  
K - P Food  
R - Z Setup

A - J Food  
K - P Setup  
R - Z Cleanup



# 2009 Humpy's Big Fish Results

by Jason Ditsworth

Another Humpy's Big Fish Homebrew Competition is complete and was greatly successful, with one exception – yours truly lost the darn beer score sheets for which I can't apologize enough. We received 109 entries from 37 entrants. Special thanks to Dena Sessler, Pete Devaris, and Ed Kenna for helping with entry collection, setup, judging, and cleanup. Thanks to all the judges and other folks that helped throughout the judging as well. Lastly, I would also like to thank Arctic Brewing Supply for allowing us to collect entries at their awesome new store; Bill Opinsky and Humpy's for continuing to hold this event after an amazing 15 years; Midnight Sun Brewing Company for taking on the challenge of brewing the winning batch of beer; and Celestial Meads for brewing the winning batch of mead.

The awards party this year will be Monday, February 22, 2010, at Sub Zero. The winning beer has been brewed and will be ready for the party. The mead will be brewed and served at Humpy's in about a year. Hope to see you all at the party. Everyone is welcome.

The winners of the completion this year are as follows:

**Best of Show Beer – Frank Bell, Robust Porter**  
**Best of Show Mead/Cider – Pete Devaris, Other Fruit Melomel**

## Beer

### **Category: AMBER HYBRID BEER**

2 Flash Lubitsh-White California Common Beer

### **Category: AMERICAN ALE**

1 Aaron DeBruhl American Brown Ale  
2 Barclay Roeder Thomas Schultz American Amber Ale  
3 Breck Tostevin American Amber Ale

### **Category: BELGIAN AND FRENCH ALE**

1 Jack Smodey Witbier  
2 Ted Rosenzweig Saison  
3 Ted Rosenzweig Belgian Specialty

### **Category: BELGIAN STRONG ALE**

1 Steve Jayich Belgian Golden Strong Ale  
2 Steve Jayich Belgian Tripel  
3 Flash Lubitsh-White Belgian Blond Ale

### **Category: BOCK**

1 Steve Jayich Maibock/Helles Bock  
2 Aaron Christ Eisbock  
3 Aaron Christ Doppelbock

### **Category: DARK LAGER**

1 Rick Levinson Schwarzbier (Black Beer)

### **Category: ENGLISH PALE ALE**

1 Steve Jayich Special/Best/Premium Bitter  
2 Steve Jayich Extra Special/Strong Bitter (English Pale Ale)  
3 Flash Lubitsh-White Special/Best/Premium Bitter

### **Category: EUROPEAN AMBER LAGER**

1 Breck Tostevin Oktoberfest/Marzen  
2 Steve Jayich Oktoberfest/Marzen

### **Category: FRUIT BEER**

1 Tim Bisson Todd Rock Fruit Beer  
2 Breck Tostevin Fruit Beer  
3 Andrew Storck Fruit Beer

### **Category: GERMAN WHEAT AND RYE BEER**

1 Dana Walukiewicz Weizen/Weissbier  
2 Flash Lubitsh-White Weizen/Weissbier  
3 Aaron Christ Weizen/Weissbier

### **Category: INDIA PALE ALE (IPA)**

1 Tim Strayer Don Lewellyn Imperial IPA  
2 Bill Howell American IPA  
3 Flash Lubitsh-White Imperial IPA

### **Category: LIGHT HYBRID BEER**

1 Flash Lubitsh-White Kolsch  
2 Jason Norris Cream Ale

### **Category: LIGHT LAGER**

1 Steve Jayich Premium American Lager  
2 Flash Lubitsh-White Standard American Lager

### **Category: PILSNER**

1 Steve Jayich Classic American Pilsner  
2 Steve Jayich Bohemian Pilsner  
3 Flash Lubitsh-White German Pilsner (Pils)

**Category: PORTER**

- 1 Frank Bell Robust Porter Best of Show Beer
- 2 Ted Rosenzweig Baltic Porter
- 3 Ed Kenna Robust Porter

**Category: SCOTTISH AND IRISH ALE**

- 1 Bill Howell Strong Scotch Ale

**Category: SMOKE-FLAVORED AND WOOD-AGED BEER**

- 1 Todd Rock Classic Rauchbier
- 2 Andrew Storck Wood-Aged Beer
- 3 Steve Jayich Wood-Aged Beer

**Category: SPECIALTY BEER**

- 1 Aaron Christ Specialty Beer
- 2 Steve Jayich Specialty Beer
- 3 Dennis Sessler Dena Sessler Specialty Beer

**Category: SPICE/HERB/VEGETABLE BEER**

- 1 Rich Vicente Spice, Herb, or Vegetable Beer
- 2 Shawn Kane Spice, Herb, or Vegetable Beer

**Category: STOUT**

- 1 Flash Lubitsh-White Dry Stout
- 2 Ed Kenna American Stout
- 3 Bill Howell Russian Imperial Stout

**Category: STRONG ALE**

- 1 Pete Devaris Old Ale

**Mead and Cider**

**Category: MELOMEL (FRUIT MEAD)**

- 1 Pete Devaris Other Fruit Melomel Best of Show Mead & Cider
- 2 John Trapp Other Fruit Melomel
- 3 Bradley Cruz Other Fruit Melomel
- 3 Steve Schmitt Other Fruit Melomel

**Category: OTHER MEAD**

- 1 Pete Devaris Metheglin
- 2 Alex Bereron Michael Dalsfoit Metheglin

**Category: STANDARD CIDER AND PERRY**

- 1 Flash Lubitsh-White English Cider

**Category: TRADITIONAL MEAD**

- 1 Pete Devaris Dry Mead
- 2 Pete Devaris Semi-Sweet Mead
- 3 John Trapp Semi-Sweet Mead

**Side Challenge**

**Category: Humpy's Big Fish Side Challenge – Black IPA**

- 1 Steve Schmitt
- 2 Dennis Sessler Dena Sessler
- 3 Austin Lashley



# American Ales- A Gateway Style to the Harder Stuff

by Tim Bisson

For many people an American Ale is the first craft beer they try. Whether it is an American Pale, Amber or Brown Ale, otherwise fizzy yellow beer drinkers find American Ales full of flavor and great tasting without overloading the palate. With more malt and hop flavor than light lagers, the American Ales can be seen as a gateway style. Once hooked, a new craft beer drinker may seek out stronger and more flavorful beers. So, be careful of introducing your light lager drinking friends to American Ales because soon enough they will be seeking out Barleywines, Russian Imperial Stouts or the ever elusive Coffee, Oatmeal, Jalapeno, Maple Syrup Barrel-Aged Super Galactic Porter of the Future. But, if you choose to take your currently content friends down this path, the following lays out some history, ingredients and simple recipes for American Ales.

## Style Background and History

The roots of American Pale and Brown Ales can be traced to England. English Bitters and Northern English Brown Ales, specifically, have direct influences on the malt profile of the American Pale and Brown Ales. The American styles, though, have a cleaner yeast character and bolder, more assertive hop flavor, aroma and bitterness.

American Pale Ale's path to fame began on November 15, 1980 at the Sierra Nevada Brewing Company. Using locally available ingredients instead of vastly more expensive imported malts and hops from England, Sierra Nevada's founder Ken Grossman made his famous Pale Ale a hop dominant but easy to drink beer that soon became their flagship beer.

According to Ray Daniels in *Designing Great Beers*, American Brown Ale was created by Texan homebrewers who were new to hops and specialty grains in beer and piled them on which gave rise to this style of Brown Ale. No year was given but it was probably some time in the early to mid 1980s. In 1986, Pete Slosberg introduced the US to the first massively successful American Brown Ale; Pete's Wicked Ale. The current rendition of Pete's Wicked Ale is a more of an English Brown Ale than the hoppy beer it once was.

While American Brown and Pale Ale ancestry can be traced directly back to England, the roots of American Amber Ale do not have a trail that is as easy to follow. It has been theorized that Amber was born out of the Irish Red Ale. It has also been theorized that early brewpubs wanted a style to fit in color between their Pale Ale and their dark colored Porter or Stout. Amber was created to fit this need. The Mendocino Brewing Company is credited with introducing the first Amber (Red Tail Ale) on August 14th 1983. This was at the opening of the Mendocino Brewing Company's Hopland Brewery - the first brewpub in California since Prohibition. The late, great Michael Jackson called Red Tail Ale "an American classic".

Since their introductions, all three styles have spread to every corner of the United States and continue to please and intrigue those new to craft beer and die hard connoisseurs.

## Ingredients and Flavor Profiles

These three styles have a lot in common. According to the Beer Judge Certification Program's (BJCP) 2008 Style Guidelines, all three have an Original Gravities (OG) between 1.045 and 1.060, Final Gravities (FG) between 1.010 and 1.015, typically use two row American pale malt as a base malt and American (usually citrusy) hops. Also, all three styles use yeast that produces a clean tasting beer with moderate to very low levels of fruity esters and low to no diacetyl. Using yeast with little fermentation characteristic makes for a crisp beer that allows the hop and malt flavors to shine.

With moderate to high levels of hop aroma and flavor, American Pale Ales emphasize American hops, usually of the citrusy varieties and quite often Cascade for aroma and flavor. Sierra Nevada Pale Ale uses only Cascade hops in their flavor and aroma additions. Hop bitterness should be between 30 and 45 International Bitterness Units (IBUs) for Pales. While Pales are balanced towards the hop, a clean malt character provides necessary support and maybe some bready or biscuity notes. Without this bit of malt flavor and touch of sweetness, the beer would be decidedly bitter. The malt bill consists of 80-90% American two row pale malt with Munich, a light colored Aromatic and/or low Lovibond (20-40) Crystal malt making up the rest.

American Amber Ales also use American hops, primarily citrusy varieties, and can range in balance from malty to hoppy. The best have good caramel malt flavor to blend with the hop flavor and are still very drinkable. The malt character is usually derived from the use of various crystal malts, Munich malt or Vienna malt. These malts generally make up 15-30 percent of the grain bill. The rest of the grist is American two row pale malt. Hop varieties like Cascade, Centennial and



Columbus are great varieties for Ambers. Ambers are normally slightly less bitter than Pales but should have moderate to high hop flavor. While still full of American hop presence, the use of caramel malts adds some sweetness and balance to the mix.

American Brown Ale is generally the least hoppy of the American Ales. But it is still hoppier than its cousin, the Northern English Brown Ale. American Browns have moderate to high malt flavor with a grain bill that consists of caramel and chocolate malts and some nutty or toasty qualities. Hops are normally American varieties and citrus, pine or resin like qualities are typical. Hop aroma and flavor are typically low to moderate. This beer is not as robust in dark malts as a porter but is hoppier than other brown ales.

### **Extract recipes with All Grain Conversion**

The following recipes have been borrowed from Jamil Zainasheff and John Palmer's *Brewing Classic Styles*. This is a great book with proven recipes.

#### **American Pale Ale (BJCP Style 10 A)**

OG: 1.056

FG: 1.013

IBUs: 40

Alcohol by Volume (ABV): 5.7%

Boil: 60 minutes

Pre-boil Volume: 7 Gallons

Pre-boil Gravity: 1.048

#### **Extract (% of Total Grist)**

8.1 lbs Light Liquid Malt Extract (LME) 82.2%

0.5 lbs Munich LME 5.1%

0.5 lbs Wheat LME 5.1%

#### **Steeping Grains (% of Total Grist)**

0.75 lbs Victory (28L) 7.6%

#### **Hops (Schedule and IBUs)**

0.66 oz Horizon (13% AA), 60 min, 34.2

0.25 oz Cascade (6% AA), 10 min, 2.4

0.25 oz Centennial (9% AA), 10 min, 3.6

0.5 oz Cascade (6% AA), 0 min, 0

0.5 oz Centennial (9% AA), 0 min, 0

#### **Yeast and Fermentation**

White Labs California Ale WLP001 or Wyeast American Ale 1056. Ferment at 67 F.

#### **All Grain Conversion**

Replace the light extract with 11.3 lbs American two-row malt, the Munich LME with 0.75 lb Munich malt and the Wheat LME with 0.5 lb Wheat malt. Use a single infusion mash at 152F.

#### **American Amber Ale (BJCP Style 10 B)**

OG: 1.052

FG: 1.013

IBUs: 38

Alcohol by Volume (ABV): 5.1%

Boil: 60 minutes

Pre-boil Volume: 7 Gallons

Pre-boil Gravity: 1.044

#### **Extract (% of Total Grist)**

6.6 lbs English Pale Ale LME 72.9%

0.7 lbs Munich LME 7.7%



**Steeping Grains (% of Total Grist)**

0.75 lb Crystal (40L) 8.3%  
0.5 lb Crystal (120L) 5.5%  
0.5 lb Victory (28L) 5.5%

**Hops (Schedule and IBUs)**

0.6 oz Horizon (13% AA), 60 min, 31.7  
0.25 oz Cascade (6% AA), 10 min, 2.4  
0.25 oz Centennial (9% AA), 10 min, 3.6  
0.25 oz Cascade (6% AA), 0 min, 0  
0.25 oz Centennial (9% AA), 0 min, 0

**Yeast and Fermentation**

White Labs California Ale WLP001 or Wyeast American Ale 1056. Ferment at 67 F.

**All Grain Conversion**

Replace the English Pale LME with 9.25 lbs British Pale Ale malt and the Munich LME with 1 lb Munich malt. Mash at 154 F.

**American Brown Ale (BJCP Style 10 C)**

OG: 1.048  
FG: 1.011  
IBUs: 34  
Alcohol by Volume (ABV): 4.9%  
Boil: 60 minutes  
Pre-boil Volume: 7 Gallons  
Pre-boil Gravity: 1.041

**Extract (% of Total Grist)**

7.2 lbs Light LME 82.8%

**Steeping Grains (% of Total Grist)**

0.5 lb Crystal (40L) 5.7%  
0.5 lb Chocolate Malt (420L) 5.7%  
0.25 lb Crystal (60L) 2.9%  
0.25 lb Victory (28L) 2.9%

**Hops (Schedule and IBUs)**

0.45 oz Horizon (13% AA), 60 min, 24.0  
1.0 oz Amarillo (9% AA), 15 min, 9.8  
1.75 oz Amarillo (9% AA), 0 min, 0

**Yeast and Fermentation**

White Labs California Ale WLP001 or Wyeast American Ale 1056. Ferment at 67 F.

**All Grain Conversion**

Replace the Light LME with 10 lbs American two-row pale malt. Mash at 152F.

Now that you are armed with enough knowledge to be a craft beer enabler, go forth and brew an American Ale. You have a little time to get it brewed and ready for February 16<sup>th</sup> club meeting. If your brew is selected as best at the meeting, it'll be sent on to the American Homebrewers Association Club Only Competition for March/April.



# Alaska Beer Week Requires Schedule and Liver Budgeting

by *Jim Roberts*

Despite my own rather loud proclamations that the Great Alaska Beer And Barleywine Festival (GABBF) was going to morph into a weeklong event this year, the transformation is slow in coming. Efforts remain at the grassroots level, but continue with vigor. The objective, of course, is to squeeze a little more mileage out of a beer-lively time in Anchorage that everyone knows about but no one really broadcasts in an organized, coherent way. Unofficially, at this point, Alaska Beer Week extends between January 9<sup>th</sup> and January 17<sup>th</sup> this year.

We all know that our Club meeting shifts in January to accommodate the Festival that takes place on January 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> this year. Instead of the club meeting being one the normal third Tuesday of the month, it's moved back to Thursday, January 14<sup>th</sup> so that our Club members can enjoy an event centered around the beer luminaries that come to Alaska to attend the fest. This year, I'll get the great honor of introducing Jason and Todd Alstrom to GNBCers in attendance at the meeting. Their introduction is an honor to me because they are much more aspiring writers than I am and have moved on to become the publishers of Beeradvocate, one of my all-time favorite beeriodicals. What I appreciate most about the Bros (as they're affectionately known) is that they are not afraid to call a spade a spade. If something's going down in the industry that reeks of crap, they'll identify it, often in no kind words. They are the same way with beer evaluations, too. When I read the beer reviews within each monthly publication, I don't get that placating tone I discover in too many other beer magazines that are more worried about offending someone than being up front about a beer's shortcomings.

Undoubtedly, the January meeting is one of the Club's biggest in terms of attendance. Don't get too territorial or possessive when a hoard of rare attendees and outsiders crowd the theater room at the Snow Goose Restaurant and Sleeping Lady Brewing Company where the event will be held at 7 pm. Consider it an honor to represent our club.

Also on Friday January 15<sup>th</sup>, plan on attending a grip and grin of sorts at the Spenard Roadhouse at 2 pm where, with any luck, organizer Barb Miller will be able to lasso most, if not all of the in-place and attending dignitaries under one roof so that they can mingle with those truly interested in interfacing with key people in the industry. This informal, casual event is pay-as-you-go, so drop in and share a pint with some truly great folks that have traveled from afar to represent their breweries or represent the beer world that we so truly love.

At the time of this writing, more events are rolling in. There will be a Left Hand and Full Sail Brewer's Dinner at Kinley's Restaurant and Bar at 6 pm on Wednesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>. This will feature numerous beers from around the United States, but in particular, John Harris, Brewmaster at Full Sail and Chris Lennert, Brewer at Left Hang Brewing will be in attendance and featuring some of their beers.

There is also rumor that Kassik's Kenai Brew Stop will be hosting a beer dinner at the Embassy Suites. This is in the process of being verified.



Of course, the capstone event is the GABBF itself, and GNBCers play a crucial role during these two days. There are plenty of opportunities to volunteer and even get into the Fest for free by donating a couple of hours of your time at the Friday Fest or the Saturday Connoisseur's Session or the Saturday evening Fest. In order to serve beer for a distributor or brewery, you will need a current, valid Total Alcohol Management (TAM) Card. This can only be obtained by attending one of the frequent TAM Classes that are put on by the Alaska Cabaret, Hotel Restaurant and Retailer's Association (CHARR). Call the organization at 274-8133, emailing them at [info@alaskacharr.com](mailto:info@alaskacharr.com) or checking out the schedules that are listed on the organization's website at [www.alaskacharr.com](http://www.alaskacharr.com). There are numerous opportunities to volunteer even if you don't want to serve alcohol or do not obtain a card in time. Non-serving functions include checking people in, putting on wrist bands, handing out the commemorative glasses and programs and helping set up and break down the event.

If you want to volunteer, contact the event organizer, Aurora Productions, at (907) 562-9911 to firm up your spot. Not to detract from this column and toot my own horn, but a good way to keep up on the upcoming events is by subscribing to my weekly blog that's all about beer and features, among other things, a consistently updated events calendar. The blog is sent out via .pdf file every Friday (more or less) to those interested in receiving it. If you would like to be on the list, email me at [jroberts@peakalaska.com](mailto:jroberts@peakalaska.com) and I will add you. The reason I mention this is because this is the last GNBC newsletter between now and Alaska Beer Week and there will be at least three more blogs posted between now and then.

Regardless, you can be guaranteed that you will need to budget both your time and your liver to survive Alaska Beer Week. This may be the first year that I will take off the entire week surrounding the Fest; I've tried to balance these events in years past with a full time work schedule, and I'll be the first to tell you that it's incredibly tough to do. I'll see you during Alaska Beer Week!



## WANTED: Upcoming Beer Dinner Hosts

*by Julie McDonald*

I hope this finds you all having enjoyed your holidays, safe and sound. With the New Year here and all of the events that go on during Alaska Beer Week kicking off the GABBF we have decided not to hold a January beer dinner. The February beer dinner has been spoken for and is already full. It will be at Don and Tracey Lewellyn's home for a second straight year. Last February we had the beer dinner on Valentines Day and the theme was Aprodisiacal Foods. It was one of the best beer dinners we have done to date.

If you are a current Great Northern Brewers Club member and interested in hosting a beer dinner at your house sometime in the future, get back to me ASAP and let's work out the details. As host, you get to pick the date, choose the theme, decide how many attendees can come and determine any particular beer or food challenges. So if you want in on hosting the March (or any other upcoming month) dinner, drop me a quick note and let me know. ([juzy@gci.net](mailto:juzy@gci.net))

If you are not a current club member but would like to renew or become one for the first time, please check out our website for membership information at <http://www.greatnorthernbrewers.org/membership.html>. Happy New Year!





## Fur Rondy Homebrew Competition (February 6<sup>th</sup> 2010)

*by Dennis Sessler*

**A**s the New Year approaches, I have been trying to brew that big bock I wrote about in last month's Prez Sez article. There are the gallons of mead and cider that Dena and I will be blending and bottling in anticipation of the next homebrew competition in February. That's right, it's time for the Fur Rondy Homebrew Competition. Our club actually has little association with the actual festival, probably because we take care of everything on our own. It's a great way to kick off the New Year as the daylight is slowly making an appearance. In fact the second week of February is about the time that the sun actually makes its appearance on my home. Well enough about all the winter stuff and on to the details.

The competition will be held on **Saturday, February 6th** at the Snow Goose. This will be the first competition in 2010 to garner as many points as possible towards the 2010 GNBC Homebrewer of the Year Competition. The categories which will garner points towards the year long competition are Categories 12 Porter, 18 Belgian Strong Ale, 19 Strong Ale, 23 Specialty Beer, and 28 Specialty Cider. But by no means are you restricted to just enter those beers, you may enter any style you like.

Judging will begin at **10:00 a.m.** and, as always, there will be a need for plenty of judges and stewards. This competition is an AHA/BJCP sanctioned competition so all beer, mead and cider categories will be open for entry. You can find the current style guidelines at: <http://www.bjcp.org/stylecenter.html> Entry forms can be found at: [http://www.bjcp.org/docs/SCP\\_EntryRecipe.pdf](http://www.bjcp.org/docs/SCP_EntryRecipe.pdf)

Entries will be accepted at the Snow Goose in the basement on Friday February 5th from 11:00 am to 6:00 pm. There will be **no fees** collected on your entry; that's right, it's **FREE!** You will need to provide three 12 oz. bottles for each beer entry. Mead and Cider entries can be three 12 oz bottles or one 750 ml bottle. If you are unable to drop off entries during that time please feel free to contact me to make other arrangements.

This year's competition will award a Best of Show Beer and a Best of Show Mead or Cider. There will be unique prizes for both of the Best of Show winners plus all the great Fur Rondy medals and notoriety. I have contacted several breweries and they have accepted offers to come and judge. They will be allowed to take any award winning beer and brew it commercially with the homebrewer. Those beers will be eligible to be entered at the Great American Beer Festival Pro-Am Competition in September 2010 in Denver CO. All the leftover beer/meads and ciders along with all the judge evaluation sheets and the awards will be available at the February 16<sup>th</sup> homebrew club meeting.

Let's make this a great competition. Dust off your meads and ciders, brew those beers and let's get ready to "Rondy!" For more information contact me at [sessak@mtaonline.net](mailto:sessak@mtaonline.net).

# GNBC Article Submission Guidelines

*by Kerri Canepa*

We love articles! We want to hear about all sorts of cool beer related stuff that members are involved in!

## **BUT**

We need you to follow some guidelines that will help everyone involved in crafting our fabulous GNBC newsletter every month. First, some personnel information:

Your newsletter editors are Debbie Grecco and Jim Roberts.

Debbie Grecco: (907) 250-0388: bushy@alaska.com

Jim Roberts: (907) 263-7006: jroberts@peakalaska.com

Your newsletter coordinator (but only for January; see Want Ad in this month's newsletter) is Kerri Canepa.

Kerri Canepa: (907) 317-4288: kcanepa@uwalumni.com

Send all articles **SEVEN DAYS BEFORE THE END OF THE MONTH** to the newsletter coordinator and cc the newsletter editors and Dennis Sessler, sessak@mtaonline.net, our fearless leader.

Please read the following information from your newsletter editors carefully. Following these guidelines will go a long way towards getting the newsletter completed and posted in a timely manner.

Your newsletter editors use a combination of Microsoft Word, Adobe PageMaker, Adobe Powerpoint and Acrobat Distiller and Reader to create the newsletter.

Newsletter submissions are welcome in any format, even hand written, but there are some things you can do to improve the efficiency with which your editors conduct their work.

**Do not use** fancy fonts and characters. Everything is converted in PageMaker anyway.

**Give your article a title** and make sure you include who wrote it on a line below it. Bolding and underlining for emphasis are okay.

**Graphics should be sent as a separate attachment** (generally, logos and pictures), but with the same email as the document, if possible. If they are added to your document, there is always the risk that we cannot take them out to be re-used in Pagemaker and Photoshop.

**Avoid embedding elements from other programs** where possible such as Excel, Publisher and the like; they don't always convert exactly in PageMaker which requires the editors to sometimes re-type the entire piece.

**The deadline for submission is seven days before the end of the month.** If you cannot make that deadline and have something critically important to include, contact the editors. If there are not calendar items looming in the immediate future, the newsletter can be delayed for legitimate reasons.

**Make sure to include times, dates, costs of events and other pertinent details.** The editors do a decent job of correction for spelling, punctuation, grammar and other mechanical issues with submitted work. What editors often cannot do is research critical missing information.

**Don't assume that everyone is familiar with the acronyms you are using.** Understand that the newsletter reaches a broad audience that contains experienced and inexperienced brewers alike. It's always safer to write to the lowest common denominator. Spell out the acronyms as a rule the first time and then use the acronym afterwards (eg: Great Alaska Beer and Barleywine Festival (GABBF)). If you've got an article idea and either aren't sure about it or need some guidance, please contact Dennis Sessler. Got the picture? Wonderful! Now get those creative juices flowing and contribute to your newsletter!

# And Now, A Few Words from the New Membership Coordinator

by *Dena Sessler*

**A**s I write this article, all paid members with a current snail mail address on file with our Treasurer, Breck Tostevin, should have received their new 2009/2010 membership cards, just in time for Christmas.

On December 8, 2009, I was appointed as your membership coordinator and I'm here to let you know that your \$25.00 membership dues come with perks that some of you may not be aware of. Not only can you now flash a card confirming your enrollment in the coolest club in town, but it is a mandatory wallet accessory that must be shown to receive a 10% discount at La Bodega and 10% off of your brewing ingredients at Arctic Brewing Supply. Dr. Fermento is hard at work, pounding the pavement of our local businesses trying to secure more discounts for card carrying members.

As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010 you must have a membership card to receive these benefits and any others that are coming. If you are a paid member, and have not received your membership card, it is because we do not have a current mailing address for you. Please e-mail me at [sessak@mtaonline.net](mailto:sessak@mtaonline.net) with your address information and a card will be mailed to you.

Another change is that the board also decided to eliminate business memberships. The businesses that support GNBC do so much for our club that charging them a business fee to display their logo in our newsletter seemed unnecessary.

With your card, you also received a questionnaire. If there is an area of brewing, mead making, or cider making that you are interested in, just fill it out and send it back to the Membership Coordinator at 19049 Eagle River Road, Eagle River AK 99577, and I will do my best to match you up with someone more experienced in your area of interest, so you can witness pure yeasty magic in it's simplest, most satisfying form! I look forward to serving you, the members of this club, and am very excited at the new direction and new things that will be happening in the months to come.

## The Alaska-Wisconsin Connection

by *Kerri Canepa*

**A**nd, no, I'm not talking about the occasional bottle of New Glarus beer making an appearance at GNBC functions. No, this is about a collaborative activity between Alaska and Wisconsin homebrewers and the wonderful beer that came out of it.

In 2002, I left Alaska to attend graduate school in Madison, Wisconsin. Well, before I made the trek, I had been in contact with the local homebrew club and upon arrival I began attending their meetings. They were a friendly bunch, like homebrew clubs are wont to be, and they gladly welcomed me to the club.

Sometime in 2003, I believe, Pete Devaris sent an email out to GNBC members (of which I was one) announcing the availability of hand harvested spruce tips. Instantly, I spread the word around the local homebrew club and received requests from three of them. Working with Pete, I was able to make some spruce beer aficionados very happy.

Fast forward to 2007 and it is the last homebrew club meeting I attended before heading back to Alaska. Since I didn't want to try to hide my collection of beer in my household goods to be shipped (I had been told that I could not ship liquids), I chose to bring it all to that last club meeting, open it all and share it with my friends. Don't have a heart attack; it was maybe two cases of beer total. I have had neither the space nor the liver capacity to collect a lot of beer.

One of the spruce beer geeks came up to me at the end and gave me two bottles of beer brewed from Alaskan spruce tips. These I took on the plane with me and they lived in my fridge until the summer GNBC barbecue in August 2008. There I cracked them open and shared them. My, how tasty! The beer had aged very well. The members who sampled it were very impressed so I asked the brewer if he would be willing to share the recipe. Graciously, he agreed and here below, for your brewing pleasure, I give you **Robert the Spruce** – the result of a fortuitous partnership between two great states, Alaska and Wisconsin.

## Robert the Spruce

### Grist:

6 lbs Vienna Malt  
13 lbs 2 Row Malt  
1.5 lbs Wheat Malt  
2 lbs Pils Malt (this was Briess Anniversary Malt)  
1 lb Carafo II (Black Malt)  
1 lb Chocolate Malt (Briess)

### Hops:

Chinook 1.25oz @ 60 mins.

### Yeast:

Wyeast 1007 - German Ale

OG ~ 1075

FG ~ 1024 (bottle version)

FG ~ 1018 (keg version)

Approx Alc ~ 7.5%



### Application of Spruce:

Add 1lb Spruce Tips to the bottom of lautertun & sparge as usual.

### Brewers notes:

Keg version taste better.

80% extract efficiency

## Snow Goose Break-up Homebrew Competition April 3, 2010: Brewers, Fire Up Your Propane!

*By Dan Bosch*

**I**f you don't have a beer in hand while you are reading this you cannot call yourself a brewer. I'll wait while you jump up and trot off to the fridge – kegerator- garage-cooler- alpine cave –wherever you keep your homebrew.....Ok, by now you are back.

The Snow Goose Break-up Homebrew competition is unique, and will be even more so this year. The Break-up is **only open** to the following BJCP Categories and to the Brewers Challenge. Categories include: Light Lagers (Category 1), European Amber Lagers (Category 3), Dark Lagers (Category 4), Light Hybrids (Category 6) and Belgian and French beer (Category 16). The Brewers Challenge will be a noir wit (black white, or black Belgian white ale).

The Brewers Choice, may not be the overall "Best of Show (BOS)" in this BJCP sanctioned event, but it will be chosen by the head brewer at the Snow Goose and the BOS panel. The Brewers Choice award will be served at the Snow Goose this summer, so it must conform to some criteria. It must be a quick turn around beer for brewing economy, so a beer ready to go from kettle to tap in several weeks. For the brewer of the Brewer's Choice, this is a chance to work with the pros at Snow Goose, as you can help them expand your recipe from your meager unworthy homebrewing system with a capacity measured in gallons to the Snow Goose system measured in barrels. I don't know about you, but I would sell my soul to the devil for a chance like this. The Brewers Choice will most likely be ale – even though a lager may win the BOS. If the stars align and brewing gods smile upon you, the BOS and Brewers Choice may be one and the same. Also, the Brewer's Choice will be "first tapped" on Saturday May 15<sup>th</sup> just prior to the second showing of the movie "Beer Wars" in the Snow Goose Theater.



By the time this competition rolls around on April 3rd it will have been a long winter, with plenty of time to craft the perfect recipe for a Blond ale, Cream ale, Belgian wit, Saison, or even a dreaded noir wit (black white). The Brewers Challenge, a black wit, will be judged on how black your wit can be, while still preserving that unique "wit" character. A beer that is light, refreshing, soft, creamy, spicy with a touch of citrus – yet jet black. I'm sure there are several ways to do this, but I will leave this to ingenuity of each brewer to devise the best way based on their own brewing system. This beer is also eligible for the Brewer's Choice award and may be served at Snow Goose this summer. What more could a homebrewer ask for – sitting up on the Snow Goose deck on a hot summer day surrounded by friends drinking a beer created in their own fermented mind.



## Change is Happening. Don't be Afraid; It Won't Hurt a Bit

by *Tim Bisson*

Last winter's survey results have been sliced and diced and discussed by the GNBC Officers and Board Members. The following is a synopsis of some changes club members want and what we plan for 2010. Also, GNBC has an open door. So, come to a Board meeting with your ideas, write a Newsletter article or volunteer to be on a committee.

### **More focus on education at meetings and other club events.**

- Look for the return of the American Homebrewers Association (AHA) Club Only Competition (COC). See Article on the AHA COC in the December newsletter for more details. This newsletter has the first of several articles covering beer styles in upcoming AHA COC. Check out my article about American Ales elsewhere in this newsletter. There is time to brew a batch and have it evaluated at the February 16<sup>th</sup> club meeting for consideration as the representative beer for the GNBC.
- Brewathon this year will have an educational aspect to it.
- The May 15<sup>th</sup> GNBC event at the Snow Goose will include a brewing demonstration. There will also be two showings of the movie "Beer Wars" which will enlighten us on how the large multi-national brewing conglomerates have stacked the deck against American craft breweries.

### **Making new and long time members feel like they belong**

The club position of Membership Coordinator has been created. Dena Sessler has volunteered for this and is already hard at work. She will be heading up recruitment efforts, maintaining a membership database and collecting basic demographic information.

- GNBC membership cards have been designed and mailed to all dues paying members. **Starting January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010 these cards will be necessary to obtain your GNBC discount at those wonderful stores offering us discounts.**
- New member packets will be sent to all new members. This will include a membership card, a welcome letter from the GNBC President and a copy of the club bylaws and constitution. (Yes, we have bylaws and a constitution.)
- Also, people want name tags to be used again at club meetings. Starting in February, name tags will be available at monthly meetings. This will make it easier for all members to interact.

### **Newsletter Changes**

The club position of Newsletter Coordinator has been created. Kerri Canepa volunteered for this and we appreciate her efforts. Unfortunately for us, Kerri is moving to England in February for six months. So, if you are interested in being the second Newsletter Coordinator please let us know. Safe and fun travels Kerri!!!

- The Newsletter Coordinator's role is to encourage club members to submit articles for the Newsletter, gather the articles and coordinate what will be put into the Newsletter.

- Newsletter will be posted by the first of the month.
- Newsletter articles will be more focused on beer including technical brewing matters and style profiles.
- Lastly, the option to have your newsletter mailed to you may return. (But probably for a fee.)

#### **Website Maintenance and Enhancements**

- A committee has been formed to improve the GNBC website.
- They are researching ways for a few GNBC members to be able update the website so it can be updated frequently.
- The Calendar of Events will be kept current.
- Competition results will be posted in a timely manner.
- If you are a website guru and interested in helping out, please talk to one of the Officers or Board members about this important item.

There were lots of other great suggestions that will be considered and possibly implemented as the new club management gets settled in. Thanks again everybody and have a great 2010. See you at the Barleywine Fest.



## **The Big Fish That Really Counts – The Side Challenge**

*by Steve Schmitt*

**B**ack in the day, there was a radio program broadcast over the airwaves called 'Dr. Fermento's Growler Hour' – if you never heard it I wouldn't be surprised. About the only way you could pick up a signal was when you sat in the parking lot at UAA since the signal broadcast from KRUA (UAA radio) is only good for about 200 yards. During one of these broadcast rants Fermento and I were discussing beer (surprisingly), Thanksgiving, and pumpkin beers – we decided that a Pumpkin Porter would taste pretty damn good. One thing led to another and it was decided that we needed to hold a contest – which turned out to be the first Big Fish Side Challenge (BFSC). Over the years we've critiqued vegetable & cereal beers; beers brewed based on a recipe by Charlie Papazian; Malt Liquor, 3.2 beer and now a Black IPA. Probably the most stellar judging took place with Fermento and Breck Tostevin judging in the Sub Zero men's room with assistance from one of the cooks who ate an entire combination nacho plate with extra jalapenos the previous evening... but I digress.

Over the years the evaluation of entries has become finely tuned – like a cheap Swiss watch. Judging standards are of the highest, naming convention is crucial, and size really does matter. To expand upon this process I will now take the interested reader through the process of judging this event while discussing entry options in comparison to this years winning entry (which happened to be mine – but that is purely a coincidence – even though I designed the event and set the rules for the competition).

To start with, the commercial standard for this event was Midnight Sun's XXX Imperial Black IPA – this beer is big, black, and hoppy. Prior to actually judging the entries the judging panel sampled and discussed this worthy beverage. By the way, the panel of judges was comprised of Professionals: a professional brewer, a professional beer writer, and a professional land surveyor – a highly qualified panel to say the least. While the judges' palates were being calibrated the evaluation of entries commenced by 'bubble sorting' the entire flight of 9 entries; in doing so all of the entries were lined up and each entry was judged against its brethren on one element – then the panel moved to the next element. These elements included: Name, Volume, Taste, Impression; essentially, all of the entries were judged against each other based on the name, then all were judged against each other based on volume, etc. Here's how it worked this year:

- Name – while we had a couple of entries with stellar names (Spanking Blacky's Ballsack & Grandma's Black Taco IPA) none were even close to the 2008 winning entry (Aurora Clitoris). The name of the overall winning entry (I'm a Drunk and My Kids a Punk – 12 points) and many others were average this year; remember that to score highly in this category innuendo is CRITICAL! (20 points available).
- Volume Submitted – many entries were in standard 12 ounce bottles and while 3 of these add to 36 ounces it was determined that 'impact' and 'size' would get you all the way to home plate, baby – especially with a 3 Liter Jeroboam (20 points). The overall winning entry was packaged in a 750 ml. white-washed bottle which originally held a Belgian specialty ale of some sort (13 points) – cool but not as cool as a growler (19 points) (20 points available).
- Taste – standard BJCP scale with 50 points available; the winning entry scored 35 points as compared the commercial standard – many entries were in the 20's as they were good but not hoppy enough or black enough or whatever.
- Overall Impression; 10 points available – name and size are sure to maximize this element.

And now – drum roll please – the announcement for the 2010 BFSC: **THE BELGIAN STOUT CHALLENGE**. It's gotta be a stout, and it's gotta be Belgian (you can decide what that means). Remember that the winning entry doesn't receive something lame like a ribbon or beer mug or whatever – no - they win something that will surely take up space on their mantle and elicit oohs and aahs from the hottest chick in town. After a 1 year hiatus the Golden Garden Gnome will make a triumphant return to the BFSC!

## The Incredible Beer and Travel Adventures of Todd Rock

### Part 4, Judging in Nebraska and home

*By Todd Rock*

*(Todd was last seen in Portland and Bend struggling valiantly to go everywhere and do everything in 24 hours or less.)*

Now, before I left for the lower 48, I signed up to judge a beer competition in Omaha, Nebraska on my way home. The competition was on September 12<sup>th</sup> and our tour of Deschutes was on the 10<sup>th</sup>. For those of you considering the geography you might deduce that we were in trouble. After Bend we made it as far as Twin Falls, ID before settling in for the night and the next day we drove clear through the country to arrive in Omaha three hours before the competition. While our deadline was pressing we did not want to leave the primary reason for our trip completely out of the equation so we did find time to stop in at Boise, ID and Evanston, WY.

In Boise we found one remaining brewpub open at the late hour we passed through: The Ram Restaurant and Brewery. The stand-out here was their cask conditioned selection, a Kolsch which had been lagered in Chardonnay barrels. Personally I wouldn't recommend it and neither did the bartender, but I had to know. The barrel and wine completely overpowered the base beer and turned it into something that was just short of refreshing. At least I now have an idea of the limits of barrel aging. A pity, as the Kolsch took a silver at the GABF this year. All I will say about Evanston is that I bellied up to the worst Weizenbock I have ever had and practically ran from the bar. I had passed through this brewery in 2003 and had fond memories of the beer, particularly the Alt. Unfortunately the Alt was no longer on the tap list and the brewery was being operated under a new name. I can only assume by that damning Weizenbock that the brewer is also new.

Anyway, the competition in Omaha was being held at the Upstream Brewing Company. Much to my surprise this place's claim to fame is a series of GABF medaling sour beers, including a gueze. Much to my chagrin none of these were currently available, though the locals assured me that cellared stock were something to be coveted as they really began to reach their prime years after they had been released. In all, the competition had over 100 entries from all across the country and I had the privilege to judge with several national level judges, one of whom won National Home Brewer of the Year in 2006.

The level of these gentlemen's knowledge was impressive and we all turned our pallets to judging several very strong entries. In particular a blackberry lambic stands out as well as an amazing Biere de Garde. Both of these went on to place as two of the top three beers at the completion. I hear that the one that took Best of Show was a Munich Helles which blew both out of the water. I wish I could have tasted that beer as trouncing two such highly flavorful beers says a lot about a lager. I was, however, reassured by the judges that I sat with that the final outcome was justified and that the Helles was the rightful winner.

After the competition and the grueling ride across the country the night before, my traveling companion and I limped along to Lawrence, Kansas where we closed the day with friends barbequing bacon wrapped steaks and having a few pints at the local brewery, the Free State. Here we found that the brewers had worked up an impressive version of Schneider's Hoppenweizen. For those unfamiliar, this is a traditional Bavarian hefeweizen replete with banana and cloves that has been aggressively hopped in a manner similar to an IPA. These beers have the same compelling balance between sweet and bitter that you find in an IPA but the flavor profile tends to try and blend the citrus of American Northwest hops with the esters and phenolics typical to a solid hefeweizen. For my part I had several.

Sad to say every trip eventually comes to a close and this one had dragged on long enough. At the crack of noon the next day, after a nap-compelling bacon weave for breakfast, Skippy and I packed our bags and crossed into Missouri, penniless, running on fumes, with a trunk full of beer.

## Great North Brewers Club (GNBC) December 8th 2009

### *Board Meeting Minutes*

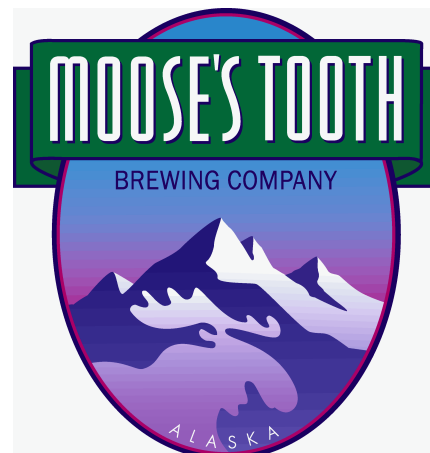
*by Jennifer Bisson*

#### Attendees:

President - Dennis Sessler  
Vice President - Steve Schmitt  
Treasurer - Breck Tostevin  
Secretary - Jennifer Bisson  
Board Member - Tim Bisson  
Board Member - Jim Lamb  
Board Member - Joe Michael  
Board Member - John Trapp  
Board Member - Tim Strayer

#### Member Attendees:

Jason Ditsworth  
Flash Lubitsh-White  
Pete Devaris  
Kerri Canepa  
Debbie Greco - "The Editors"  
Jim Roberts - "The Editors"





## Discussion:

### 1. Newsletter

- a. Newsletter Coordinator (new position - Kerri Canepa appointed)
  - i.. This position will act as intermediary between newsletter article submitters and "The Editors"
- b. All Submissions to be turned into Kerri 1 week before the end of the month (approx. 25<sup>th</sup> depending on month)
- c. All newsletters submissions to follow "The Editors" guidelines.
- d. All newsletters to be posted to the web-site by the 1st of the month

### 2. Next Meeting

- a. January 14 2009 – preceding GABBF
  - i. "Homebrewer of the year"

### 1. Flash Lubitsh-White - will be presented award at meeting

- b. Speakers will be Jason & Todd Alstrom (Beeradvocate.com)
  - i. Dennis Sessler to email them directly to introduce the club and ask the brothers what they want to do
  - ii. Aurora Productions is sponsoring their trip.
  - iii. The speakers were chosen by the Brewer's Guild
- c. All GNBC members will be asked to wear a nametag

### 3. AHA Club only competition

- a. Non-profit status based on competitions
- b. February will be American Ale
- c. 2-page article about the style so that the GNBC newsletter recipient has time to make the beer and/or bring an example into the meeting
- d. Further discussion/scheduling needed to ensure GNBC member has enough time to homebrew the beer for possible submission to AHA competitions.

### 4. "New Homebrewer of the Year" – new GNBC award

- i. Aaron Crist will be awarded the first one
  1. Jason Ditsworth will get the plaque/trophy
- ii. Future award recipients will be chosen on total year accumulated points and ultimately Board Member discretion
  1. Future discussion on designation of year

### 5. "Past President Appreciation"

- i. will be awarded to Ira Edwards

### 6. Homebrew Competition (HBC) awards/awards presentation

- a. Results will be posted to the web-site and spammed to the e-mail list ASAP after results are tallied
- b. Awards will be presented ASAP to recipient
- c. Next HBC
  - i. Fur Rony – Feb "Brew"ary
    1. Dennis to outreach to local breweries to judge "Best of Show"
    2. Possible creation of Pro-Am beer from "Best of Show"

### 7. Web-site

- a. Web-site task force assigned to investigate why web-site so out of date and not driving traffic (possible new software, redesign, text/graphic update and/or having a board member make the updates instead of Jon who has been hired to make updates to the website)
    - i. Tim Strayer – Lead
    - ii. Joe Michael
    - iii. Steve Schmitt
    - iv. Jason Ditsworth
    - v. Breck Tostevin
    - vi. Jennifer Bisson
  - b. Agreement on keeping Jon for future major malfunctions
    - i. Web-site has had major problems in the past and maybe heading toward another breakdown based on Dennis' difficulty posting newsletter to the site
  - c. Currently spending approx \$75/month on Jon
  - d. Web-site reform to include:
    - i. Updated Calendar
- i. "Our Friends" – links to local retailers

### 8. Financial – Sponsor dues/contributions

- a. GNBC will NOT continue to pursue Sponsor dues cost (\$100)

- b. GNBC will run logos for local retailers for free
  - c. More emphasis will be placed on getting membership card discounts from and accepting current donations/contributions made to GNBC from local retailers/breweries
9. Membership
- a. Membership Coordinator (new position) - Dena Sessler appointed
    - i. This Position will work to distribute GNBC member cards and welcome packets for new members.
  - b. Members will be issued a card when they pay dues as GNBC member
  - c. Board Members agreed on a horizontal style vs. vertical (7:3) for the membership card design
  - d. Lifetime membership will be offered but \$\$ will be decided upon at later meeting
  - e. Membership Cards must be presented at local retailers for discounts
    - i. At this time local retailers cannot control their giveaways since there is no membership card to see
    - ii. With a membership card, Dennis will do outreach to obtain more discounts for club membership
10. Other business – Beer Wars
- a. Tim Bisson and Kerri Canapa will be working on the “Beer Wars”
    - i. Tim Bisson will speak with Sleeping Lady managements for costs
    - ii. Joe Michael opted to assist in “Beer Wars” future planning



## WANTED: Newsletter Coordinator!

Kerri Canepa will soon be leaving for six months and GNBC is in need of a newsletter coordinator while she is gone. This coordinator will be the collection point for all articles for the coming month's newsletter, make the first set of corrections (spelling, reformatting, editing) and then send the articles all together to the newsletter editors. The coordinator also proofs the draft newsletter once the editors have it formatted, sends corrections to be made to the editors and then makes one final proof. The coordinator may add their own articles if they so choose but it is not required. When there are more articles than space, the coordinator will maintain a collection of articles that may be used in future newsletters and make sure to send them to the editors as needed. The coordinator must be available during the last week of each month and able to proof articles quickly.

Okay, that's the nitty-gritty but don't let it scare you. It takes two – four hours a month to get all the proofing done. You keep in email contact with the editors and the president during this time so there's plenty of load sharing. Attention to detail is important, though.

Let your inner editor break free and come to the aid of your club!

**T**he Northern Brewer is a monthly newsletter published by the Great Northern Brewers Club for distribution to all club members. Subscriptions are a part of club membership and may be obtained by joining the club. Membership is open to everyone over the age of twenty-one. Please send \$25 to:

Great Northern Brewers Club  
Attn: Treasurer  
PMB 1204, 3705 Arctic Blvd  
Anchorage, AK 99503

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*The Great Northern Brewers Club and  
the American Homebrewers Association  
remind you to....Savor the Flavor Responsibly*



The **Northern Brewer** welcomes letters, opinions, articles, ideas and inquiries. You can contact the editor, Debbie Grecco at:

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**NEXT MEETING: January 14th, 2010 7:00 pm  
at the Snow Goose in the Theater**