



THE

Northern Brewer

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB

January 2020

Brewer's Log

By Mike Fisher



Fellow homebrewers, 2019 was an interesting year. Much has changed in the brewing and homebrewing worlds and at times it was a wild ride. As we say goodbye to 2019, I look forward to 2020 for the opportunities it presents as well as what I hope will be more stability!

I have a lot to discuss in the column this month as we look back at 2019 events and then look forward to everything we have in store for 2020. Those aforementioned challenges are still with us, but my hope is that we can rally together to bring back and strengthen competitions.

We had two club events in December, the joint Anchor Town / Big Fish competition and the Christmas Party. Both were a great success. Read the article about Big Fish later in this newsletter.

Following Big Fish, I am pleased to announce our winner of the GNBC 2019 Home Brewer of the Year: Mike Cragen. It was a fierce competition. Congratulations, Mike!

Our January meeting has officially been moved to **Thursday, January 30**. With the replacement of the mid-January Great Alaska Beer & Barleywine Festival by the new Alaska Craft Beer and Barleywine Festival on January 31 and February 1, along with shifting of Alaska Beer Week, the GNBC board voted to move our big meeting to coincide with the new dates. We're still finalizing details—expect e-mail blasts and Facebook posts—but we'll have a formal changeover to our officers and board members for

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Big Fish Homebrew
Competition

January Meeting

Turnagain Tartside
Challenge 2020

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Contact information via our website

2020, some club awards, and hopefully a guest speaker from out of state. We hope to see you there! See the article in this newsletter for more information about the meeting.

We have a lot of great events on the horizon, including GNBC events of:

- January 29: Pickup day for the Turnagain Tartside Challenge. See the article later in this newsletter.
- January 30: January meeting, graciously hosted by 49th State Brewing Company. We'll have a changing of the guard and welcome of the 2020 GNBC officers and board members. We'll get the word out about the meeting details as they solidify.
- February 18: Regular monthly meeting in the barrel room of 49th State Brewing Company, 7:00pm. Jeremiah Christian, founder of Magnetic North Brewing Company, will give a presentation about how he started his brewery. Christophe Venot will introduce a special ingredient brewing challenge (be present to sign up or contact him in advance to put your name in the hat). We are also starting a beer style theme for meetings this year. To start us off, February will be IPA/Pale. Please bring commercial and/or homebrewed IPA and Pale Ale beers to share. We'll have a portion of the meeting devoted to people talking about the IPA/Pale beers they've brought.
- March 17: Regular monthly meeting in the barrel room of 49th State Brewing Company, 7:00pm. We're working on the program, but one part will be the special ingredient challenge results. Anyone who drew a ingredient at the February meeting will return with their beer to share.
- March 27-29: Beer Trippin' in Talkeetna with Denali Brewing Company is in the planning stages. Stay tuned for an announcement about the dates and draft agenda once it's confirmed. That weekend, we also expect to hold the Equinox Mead and Cider Competition, along with Denali's homebrew competition. More details to come!

February is the time that GNBC has traditionally held the Fur Rondy Homebrew Competition. **We need an organizer to make it happen.** If you are interested in organizing this competition, please let me know. Plenty of help can be provided; we just need someone to lead our first competition of the year.

Plenty of other beer events are coming up soon. Alaska Beer Week runs from January 24 to February 2. Check out their website at akbeerweek.com to look up events. On January 31 and February 1, the retooled Alaska Craft Beer and Barleywine Festival kicks off at the Denaina Center. We'd like to encourage GNBC members to help out the Brewers Guild of Alaska with this new event, especially those members with a servers card. Please watch out for and answer the call to volunteer to help it all come together and run smoothly. If you'd like to help with pre-event coordination, setup, cleanup, doors, or pouring, please let me know. Volunteers make the party the amazing event it is. More information is available at alaskacraftbrewandbarleywine.com. Finally, jumping ahead a few months, our friends will be putting on the Rondy Rotary Beer Fest on March 7. Check out rondyrotarybeerfest.com for more information.

The 2020 officers and board will vote on GNBC 2020 Home Brewer of the Year guidelines in February. That said, we expect the program to be largely the same. If we have an organizer step up for the Fur Rondy competition, the draft guidelines have the following style groups as eligible for points: lager, stout/porter/brown, imperial (8% and up), Belgian/French, and Wheat, with IPA/pale, wild/sour/brett, and Irish/Scottish eligible for Best of Show but not points.

Also remember that it is a members-only event, so if you haven't renewed for 2019-2020 yet, take care of that before the January meeting! The easiest way is through our website at <https://greatnorthernbrewers.org/membership/>. Simply fill out the form and pay online. We also have a paper application if you'd prefer to mail it in or pay in person.

Our long-time social media coordinator, Julie McDonald, is no longer on Facebook and therefore no longer maintaining our club's Facebook page. Julie, you've done an amazing job, often behind the scenes, at getting the word out about club events and other news for a long time. Thank you for all that you have done! You've left big shoes to fill.

Big Fish Homebrew Competition Recap

By Liz Greer and Christophe Venot

The 2019 Humpy's Big Fish competition rounded out a year of fierce competition for GNBC's Homebrewer of the Year (HBOTY) competition. Over 20 judges gathered to evaluate 78 entries in a broad range of categories including two brewer's challenges. Midnight Sun's challenge was any beer containing "Belgian candy sugar" and King



Street's challenge was "any style of porter."



The competition was particularly fierce in the IPA category with 11 entries and the top 5 beers scoring 38 to 41 out of 50 possible points. In addition, nine beers were deemed worthy of the Best of Show round, with Brady Olsen's fantastic double IPA chosen as the best beer of the competition after much deliberation by the judges.

A strong showing by Mike Cragen cemented his title as 2019 HBOTY, winning the by crown with only a two point lead over Christophe Venot. Brady Olsen's impressive submissions for the final competition of the year placed him in a solid third place for HBOTY. We look forward to the excellent beers that our veteran and new contestants will enter in 2020!



Competition results are summarized as follows:

Best of Show

- 1st: Braden Olsen - Double IPA
- 2nd: Braden Olsen -Schwarzbier
- 3rd: Mike Cragen - Doppelbock
- NOTE: 2nd and 3rd are honorable mentions

King Street Brewing Side Challenge- any style porter - NO Brewer's Choice

- 1st: Mike Cragen - Baltic Porter
- 2nd: Nicolas Carillo - Smoked American Porter
- 3rd: Jerry Siok - Bourbon Oak Baltic Porter

MSBC Side Challenge - Belgian Candy sugar

- 1st: Christophe Venot -Chocolate Orange Imperial Stout with Belgian Candy Sugar - BREWER'S CHOICE
- 2nd: Sam Shea - Spiced Imperial stout with candy sugar, cinnamon, and vanilla
- 3rd: Mike Cragen - Belgian Dark Strong

Stout/Brown

- 1st: Braden Olsen -American Amber Ale
- 2nd: Christophe Venot - Tropical Stout
- 3rd: Nicolas Carillo - Imperial Stout

Fruit/Spice/Herb/Vegetable

- 1st: Sam Shea -Imperial stout with Dark candy sugar, cinnamon, vanilla
- 2nd: Jerry Siok -Cucumber Berliner weisse
- 3rd: Mike Fisher - Mole style imperial stout

Imperial

- 1st: Mike Cragen -Doppelbock
- 2nd: Robert Trosper -American Barleywine
- 3rd: Mike Fisher - Olde Ale

Smoked/Wood

- 1st: Mike Cragen -Belgian Dark Strong
- 2nd: Christophe Venot -Piwo Grodziske
- 3rd: Mike Fisher - Olde Ale

IPA/PALE

- 1st: Sam Shea -New England IPA
- 2nd: Braden Olsen -Double IPA
- 3rd: Chaven Davidson - American IPA with Spruce Tips

Wild/sour/brett

1st: Braden Olsen -Brett American Wild Ale
2nd: Nicolas Carillo -Mixed fermentation sour, cranberries, ginger, raspberry
3rd: Christophe Venot - Sour NEIPA with mandarin zest

Belgian/French

1st: James Strzempka -Belgian Dark Strong
2nd: Christophe Venot -Belgian Dark Strong
3rd: Jerry Siok - Belgian Dubbel

Lager

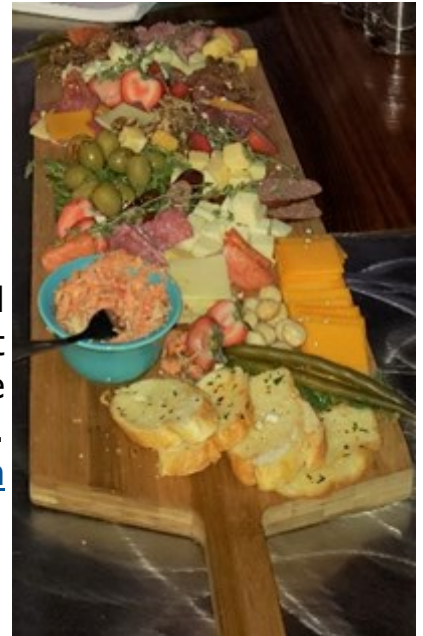
1st (tie): Ryan Carter -Doppelbock
1st (tie): Brady Olsen -Schwarzbier
3rd: Mike Cragen - Marzen

Irish/Scottish

1st: Mike Cragen -Scottish export
2nd: Timothy Rimgale -Irish Stout
3rd: Robert Trosper - Irish Red Ale

Wheat

1st: Mike Cragen -Weizenbock
2nd: Timothy Rimgale -Dunkles Weissbier
3rd: Christophe Venot – Gose



Thanks to all of the participating homebrewers, the judges, and stewards. This event could not have happened without our host venue [SubZero Microlounge](#) and Humpy's Great Alaskan Alehouse which provided a fantastic spread of food and palate cleansers. Prizes were graciously provided by [Arctic Brewing Supply](#), [Alaskan Brewing Co.](#), and [King Street Brewing Company](#)!

January Meeting

NOTE: OUR JANUARY MEETING HAS MOVED TO JANUARY 30 TO CONCLUDE WITH THE ALASKA CRAFT BEER & BARLEYWINE FESTIVAL AND ALASKA BEER WEEK.

January marks the return of Alaska Beer Week and the new Alaska Craft Beer & Barleywine Festival (ACBBF). GNBC has long been a supporter of the festival's competitions by supplying judges and beer stewards, and has also been the host for the Thursday night meeting for brewers, brewery owners, special guests, and other beer industry workers. The industry meeting will happen again this year and it's scheduled for Thursday January 30, 2020, at 6:30 PM, at 49th State Brewing Co. We owe a huge thank you to 49th State for helping us continue this tradition. Get down there and have a pint and some food. Here's what you need to know.

First and foremost, and this will be repeated several times in this announcement:

This is a GNBC member event ONLY. Visiting brewers and dignitaries are also welcome as GNBC guests.

The meeting adjusts a little every year. This year we're keeping the big adjustments we

made last year and making some other small changes. First, the schedule:

6:30–7:00 GNBC Business: Come to say hello to the new GNBC leadership, say thank you to the outgoing leadership, and catch a quick update of upcoming GNBC business.

7:00–7:30 Guest speaker, *TBD*: Please show our speaker the respect he/she deserves. We are trying to keep the night moving quickly and with lots of time to socialize.

7:30–11:00 Social: What many of you are waiting for!

IMPORTANT DETAILS—NO EXCEPTIONS:

- This event is NOT open to the general public. It is only for GNBC members and invited industry guests.
- We are asking for donations up front and/or membership dues before the meeting. This party has been a mainstay of our community. We hope to keep it this way by diversifying how the party is paid for.
- To enter as a GNBC member, you will need to present your current GNBC Membership card and a clean driver's license (i.e., no red stripe). Absolutely no exceptions.
- To enter as an industry member, you or your company will need to have prepaid the suggested per-person donation and given your name for us to include in the guest list. As with GNBC members, you will also need a clean driver's license.
- GNBC memberships cover one or two adults who reside in the same household. There are NO +1s for this event and each spouse/partner must present his or her membership card. Unrelated adults must each sign up for individual memberships.

MEMBER DUTIES:

- Be responsible and have a ride home if you are going to drink.
- There will be no potluck. All food is being provided by 49th State Brewing.
- If you bring homebrew, label it with your name and style at minimum before you come.
- Do not bring any outside glassware or cups to the meeting. All will be provided.

OTHER DETAILS:

- There will be plenty of water available to cleanse your palette between tastings.
- There will be all kinds of amazing commercial beer on tap for you to taste. All beer will be available for tasting from approximately 6:30pm until last call (approximately 11:00pm). We will not go all night, but we will have plenty of time to share.
- No beer in cups/glasses may leave or enter the theater area.

On behalf of GNBC and 49th State Brewing, we want everyone to have a great time. We ask that you think when you drink and plan ahead for a safe ride home, whether you are driving yourself or have another pre-arranged ride.

Please send an e-mail to president@greatnorthernbrewers.org if you have any questions or concerns. Watch for e-mail and Facebook announcements as we finalize event details!

Turnagain Tartside Challenge 2020

By Ted Rosenzweig

Greetings homebrewers! In the spirit of friendly competition and creative sour beer brewing, Turnagain Brewing is proud to raise the SECOND Tartside Challenge. Here is how it works: we'll give you a gallon of our fermented and soured base wort, you take it home and finish it as you will within a month, and in two months we reconvene at the homebrew club meeting to share a taste. We'll brew a batch of the best beer and serve it in our taproom.

The details:

- 1) You **MUST** show at our taproom on Wednesday of beer week (January 29 — **NOTE THE DATE CHANGE**) during business hours (4-8pm) to claim your gallon of unfinished beer. Please bring a container to hold your proto-brew (a couple sanitized growlers or a milk jug might work well). If you are busy, you may send a proxy to collect wort, but we cannot dispense wort outside of January 29.
- 2) You **MUST** bring or send your finished beer to the club meeting in March for "judging". The entire club will be encouraged to sample and rate beers to help us choose a winner, but entries will not have your name on them during judging. It is important for us all to learn not just what works, but what does not and why.
- 3) The beer we chose to reproduce will be the best beer, as rated by club members, which is also reproducible on a larger scale at reasonable cost and poses no threat to the health of the general public or the reputation of our fine brewery.
- 4) **METICULOUS PRODUCTION DETAILS** must accompany the submission. We are looking for refermentation/conditioning temperature, source/preparation/exact quantity of any fruit/spice/fermentable added to the mix as well as the volume of base beer to which it was added, and time spent on such additive prior to crashing. Beers may spend **NOT MORE THAN ONE MONTH** above 40F.
- 5) Fill out an entry form and 3 bottle labels, attach labels to bottles, and bring your submission to the March GNBC meeting for judging. Three containers of at least 12 oz are needed for judging. Both PET and glass are considered acceptable.

Helpful hints: Force carbonation is recommended. Yeasts do not perform reliably in acidic environments. Be very careful with any spices or herbs as they are easy to overdo. Freezing any fruit prior to addition improves extraction of flavors. If refermentation is desired, repitching yeast is a good idea as the beer we will give you has been cold for some time. Avoid pits and seeds as much as possible as well as the pith of any citrus peel (it tends to be bitter). Don't worry too much about sterilizing anything you might add; the beer we give you is already a polymicrobial playground with origins in wild and spontaneous fermentation. Have fun and get creative!

Editor's note: An entry form is included in this newsletter. Please save time at the meeting by filling it out in advance of the March meeting. And yes, it's January and you won't need it until March, but see Ted's 4th item. Use the paper now to keep notes, then bring it with you to the meeting.

TURNAGAIN TARTSIDE CHALLENGE

YOUR NAME:

YOUR PHONE:

EMAIL:

STYLE DESCRIPTOR (EG-PEACH SOUR):

PRODUCTION DETAILS: STARTING VOLUME:

ADDITIONS, QUANTITY AND SOURCE/PROCESSING OF ADDITIVES:

TIME AT TEMPERATURE:

OTHER DETAILS (BE THROUGH!):

-----BOTTLE LABEL-----

STYLE DESCRIPTOR:

-----BOTTLE LABEL-----

STYLE DESCRIPTOR:

-----BOTTLE LABEL-----

STYLE DESCRIPTOR:

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The *Northern Brewer* welcomes letters, opinions, articles, ideas, and inquiries. Please send article submissions to the president or secretary.

GNBC Web Site: www.greatnorthernbrewers.org



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



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**NEXT MEETING: January 30, 2020
Special January Industry Meeting, 49th State Theater, 6:30pm**