

# Baron Mind

A Monthly Publication for the Beer Barons of Milwaukee

Dedicated to the Education and Enjoyment of Fermented Malt Beverages

July 1996



## July Meeting

The July monthly Meeting is at 7:30 PM on July 24th, at Cliffords (10418 W. Forest Home Avenue, Hales Corners). As usual, the meeting is \$5.00 per person for members and guests.

## Hefeweizen

Classification: wheat beer, weizen, hefe-weizen, weissbier, all-grain

Source: Jed Parsons (parsons1@husc.harvard.edu)

This is not as heavy as the German varieties, and does not have the clove-like taste: instead, I made it in pursuit of the taste of Grant's Weis Beer, which is much paler, and lighter of body; with a hoppier aroma; and drier, but not bitter, to the taste.

### Ingredients:

5 lbs, wheat malt  
3 lbs, 6 row lager malt  
1 oz, Tettnang hops(45 minutes before end of boil-alpha 4.7%)  
1/2 oz, Saaz (25 minutes-3.8% alpha)  
1/2 oz, Saaz (10 minutes-3.8% alpha)  
Wyeast 1056 ("American Ale")

### Procedure:

Mash in 11 quarts water and protein rest 30 minutes at 130F. Starch conversion 90 minutes at 149F. Mash out and sparge 1 hour at 168F. Boil 1 hour, adding hops as indicated above.

### Specifics:

O.G.: 1.042

## Surfin?

<http://radon.gas.uug.arizona.edu/~jliddil/>  
<http://www.aob.org/aob/aob.html>  
<http://www.cdrom.com/>  
<http://www.coffey.com/~brewshop/BBHome.html>  
<http://teleport.com/~repmail/freshops.html>  
<http://www.web.net/~valley/valleymill.html>  
<http://www.nbrewer.com>

## Upcoming Meetings

July 24th Weiss Beer Group/Yeast

August 28th TBA

## Calendar of Events

- July 26 - 28 Germanfest
- August 1 - 11 State Fair
- August 2- 4 African World Fest
- August 10 *Great Taste of the Midwest Madison, WI. Tickets go on sale May 1. For info send SASE to Madison Homebrewers and Tasters Guild, Box 1365, Madison, WI 53701-1365*
- August 16 - 18 Irish Fest
- August 23 - 25 Mexican Fiesta
- August 30 and 31 Sprecher Fest  
700 W.Lexington Blvd. Glendale WI.
- September 6 - 8 Indian Summer

## Hefe-weisse

by Greg Hall

You're hot. And tired. You just finished a long day of brewing or biking, hiking or painting the garage. It doesn't matter why, you're thirsty. Thus, Hefe Weizen.

That is why we are brewers. To make a potion so refreshing, so quenching and so full of character-what more noble calling can there be? That's the conclusion I came to one hot summer day in 1988, my first season in a brewery. Goose Island Brewmaster Victor Ecmovich gave me my first taste of our Hefe Weizen straight from the unitank just as I returned from receiving a load of malt. Best thing that ever happened to me. I decided then and there to take this summer job seriously and learn the craft of brewing.

Hefe Weizen is unique among beer styles. Light as Lite, and with the depth of character of a big hoppy I.P.A. or roasty Stout. The style that practically begs you to drink more.

It is also a style seemingly tailor-made for the booming craft brewing industry. Of all styles I know, nothing tastes better straight out of the tank and no other beer fades so rapidly. Freshness is paramount in capturing the flavour of a Bavarian style wheat beer. Classically, wheat and pale barley malts are paired with soft water, small amounts of noble hops and a spicy, phenolic top fermenting yeast. To my palate, it is the clove and banana esters produced by this classic yeast that truly makes the style. Alas, many a Northwesterly brewer disagrees and several have had remarkable success brewing a somewhat more tame product. Fine beers, but different than the classic Bavarian style.

I will leave the history and technical discussions to Eric Warner's fine book in the Classic Beer Style Series from Brewers Publications. Herr Warner covers everything anyone will ever need to know about Hefe Weizen and judging by his GABF Gold Medal winning interpretation, he knows his trub.

What all Hefe Weizens have in common, whether from Munich or Portland or somewhere in between (say, Milwaukee?) is a lightness of body and a remarkably refreshing character. Wheat certainly has something to do



with the body, giving what would otherwise be a rather thin beer enough texture to separate it from "premium American lager". In a Bavarian example, all that extra protein also forms one of the beer world's rockiest heads. In the Motherland and the Midwest (home of many Germans), the head and the tall, sexy glass are the first give away to the beer inside. Lemons are optional (and not recommended by this brewer) adornments for those intimidated by the phenolic flavour. Which leads me to the signature character-cloves, bananas, Band-Aids-they're all in there to some degree. Hefe Weizens begin on the team of beers which smell better than they taste (and that's by no means an unacceptable balance). Until you take your first sip. Followed by a gulp. And another. "For Gambinus' sake," shouts the Hefe Weizen, "drink me!"

The trouble with Hefe Weizen is exactly what makes it so appealing. It is essentially an ale of low to medium alcohol and bitterness with suspended microflora. Alcohol and hop acids are beer's only natural preservatives. With live yeast in the bottle, that leaves pasteurization and sterile filtering to other styles. And that microflora better all be Brewer's yeast or you're really in for something funky. Thus fresh beer becomes much more vital than any other style.

**Beer Buying 101:** German beer is fresh in Germany. Period. I've had acceptable imported Hefe Weizens, but I live in a huge city where lots of Germans and bottles of multiple Hefe Weizen brands line the shelves of most liquor stores and taverns. Most beer drinkers don't have that kind of access, and again, the imports are only acceptable. I've been to Munich and can safely report home field advantage is great when it comes to Hefe Weizen. Thus the craft brewer becomes responsible for brewing decent Hefe Weizen on this side of the Rhine.

Early micro examples of the Bavarian style can be traced to Randy Sprecher in Milwaukee and the Stoudts in Adamstown, Pa. More recently, I've tasted outstanding examples in the Bavarian tradition from Capital in Middleton, Wisconsin, Baltimore Brewing and Chicago Brewing. Best of the bunch is the Hefe Weizen from Tabernash brewed by Warner in Denver.

(continued on back page)

## Traverse Brewing Academy

From: Kevin A. Kutskill

Just had to tell all of you midwesterners of a great weekend to look out for next year. I went to the Traverse Brewing Academy on March 22-23 in Traverse City, Michigan. It was fantastic!! The weekend started out with a reception featuring some great microbrewed midwest beers, and an informal home-brew tasting contest on Friday night, then a full day of homebrewing seminars with notable home-brew names such as Dan McConnell, Fred Eckhardt, Karen Barela, Randy Mosher, and Mike Urseth. Between the home-brews, microbrewed beers, and samples brought in by Phoenix Importers, there was more than 75 beers to sample! The seminars and the bonding with my fellow brewers made the weekend more than worthwhile. I highly recommend it to all next year. (insert standard disclaimer here).



For a five-gallon batch, try about 4 lb. of pale malt extract syrup, and another 1-1/2 to 2 lb. of any of these other fermentables, in whatever combination you desire (might I suggest 1 lb. rice syrup and 1 lb. honey?). Hop lightly, maybe 15 - 20 IBU of bittering hops. You can also use hopped extract, but since the extract will be "diluted" you'll need a well-hopped brand (~25 IBU per 4 lb.); ask your home-brew supplier. A small dose (1/4 - 1/2 oz) of finishing hops like Kent Goldings or Cascade (last 10 - 15 min. of boil) for flavor/aroma will add a nice finish. Use distilled or RO water for the brew. Use a neutral and well-attenuating yeast (Danstar Nottingham [dry yeast; rehydrate in a sanitized glass of boiled/cooled water with some wort for up to an hour before pitching] or Wyeast American #1056 [liquid culture *see directions on package*] would be appropriate). Keep your fermentation temperature between 65F and 70F to minimize fruitiness and off-flavors.



## Light Brews

by Ken Schwartz

Butch V asks:

I know that I'm in the minority, but can anyone recommend an extract which is not a heavy beer. I'm looking to brew a lighter type of beer for my better half.

Many kits come with a relatively small amount of extract and call for lots of sugar, which often results in a thin, sometimes cidery brew. Most experienced brewers will tell you to augment a kit beer calling for sugar with malt extract instead. Normally great advice, but this will generally result in the fullest-bodied beer possible. What you need is a good compromise.

Rice syrup is a good fermentable to use that will ferment cleanly without adding a lot of character. Honey can be used successfully, but unless you want a noticeable honey flavor, keep it to a couple pounds or less (per five gal). And even our old nemesis corn sugar can be used without guilt if you keep it to maybe 10% of the total fermentables.

## Light Brews continued

by Ron Montefusco

Butch, you wrote:

I know that I'm in the minority, but can anyone recommend an extract which is not heavy beer. I'm looking to brew a lighter type of beer for my better half.

This is the precise reason I brew from all-grain. This is also how I got the equipment necessary to brew all-grain. I promised my wife that I would brew a beer to her specifications, whatever that was, If she would buy me the equipment (she had a part time job then and I wanted to help her spend the excess income.) Well, It worked, and I now frequently brew an ale we call "Piss Yeller". Its formulated like a lager but brewed like an ale and has a "beer" taste (much like an American Premium Lager but with body, flavor and alcohol). She's happy and I've got a great all-grain setup including Malt Mill, Brewpot, 135,000 BTU Burner, Carboys etc.

Now to improve Piss Yeller, If only I could get some "Heart of the Hops....." :-})

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 Membership Information Annual membership dues are ten dollars. This just barely covers the cost of producing and mailing this newsletter. In addition, we charge a \$5.00 fee for each meeting attended. This pays for the cost of the beer that we taste that night. Membership dues can be paid at the monthly meetings or you can send a check for \$10.00 to: **Treasurer, Milwaukee Beer Barons P.O. Box 27012 Milwaukee, WI 53217**  
 We mail this newsletter free of charge to prospective members for three months. The date that appears on your newsletter address label is the end of that three month period. For current club members, it is up to you to remember to renew - we do not send out reminders, so check the date on your address label to see if its time to ante up.  
 .....

About same time as Sprecher and Stoudt began brewing phenolic versions, Kurt Widmer started his Alt Bier in what has become the American craft beer holy land.

Soon every transplanted Southern Californian had a cloudy beer in his/her paw. A new style was born, but with the same name as an old one. Confusing. Many Northwest brewers now produce this refreshing, very clean "Widmer style" Hefe Weizen and I have yet to encounter a clove, banana or Band-Aid (at least intentional) perfume escaping from a mixing glass of Hefe in the craft brewing Mecca. Don't mistake my tone, these are very nice beers, just not what one familiar with the Bavarian style expects. I wish they had a different name. Cloudy wheat beer is hot. The big boys, the three biggest anyway, are trying their hands at it now. Pierre Celis' much-loved White beer (wheat and yeast in a bottle, that makes it a Hefe, right?) now part

of the Philip Morris stable. Anheuser-Busch and Coors are both "selectively marketing" Hefe Weizens they brew all by themselves. The biggest of the Hefe craft brewers, Widmer, has set up shop in Milwaukee to produce beer under contract for east of the Rockies. What does it all mean? Perhaps this clear beer thing (and I don't mean Zima) was just a fad after all. A century and a half later it's time to dust off all those pewter and earthenware mugs and put the glass away. After all, it's the look more than the flavour that unites all these beers under the Hefe Weizen flag. As for me, I'll just wait until it gets nice and hot here in Chicago and at the end of the day pour a nice phenolic half liter straight from the Unitank. And another. And another...

## Support Clifford's Supper Club with your patronage.

Clifford's allows us to use their banquet room at no charge to the Milwaukee Beer Barons. Our support will help show our appreciation.



**PLUS - The food is VERY GOOD!!**



Gary Metzger  
W159N9460 Cherokee Dr.  
Menomonee Falls WI 53051-1551  
Apr-97.

1st Class Mail



Milwaukee Beer Barons  
P.O. Box 27012  
Milwaukee, WI 53227

