



Next Meeting – May 13

Hope for good weather so we can go outdoors at Durty Nellies and not have to worry about fashion shows or Guitar Hero. Or maybe the downstairs will be a little quieter. This meeting will be more beer oriented without any big agenda items. Four bottles of homebrew or \$5 is required. See you at 7:30 PM as Brad gets to run his first meeting.

Upcoming Club Events

Saturday, May 17 – Brew-in at Elliot Hamilton's, Contact if interested.

Tuesday, June 10 – Monthly Meeting, Durty Nellies, 7:30 PM.

What Members Want

The email information that went out before the vote on buying equipment was good for the Club because it allowed 30 members to have a say in how their money is spent. We should allow all our members to do this more often. In year's past our officers have sent out surveys to help guide them as they plan activities for the Club. I call upon our officers to once again survey the Club members. Here's an easy way – check out www.surveymonkey.com. I did an online survey that someone setup through them, and it was fast and easy. I think we can do it for free. Let's!!!

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Congratulations and Thanks

The vote for officers at April's meeting brought a new beginning to our Club as 2 relatively new members and a 3rd who had never held an office threw their hats into the ring and agreed to serve. Congratulations to President Brad Griffin, Vice-President Eric Raz and Treasurer Dan Langrill.

Our thanks go out to Randy Drumtra, Bill Roefer and Mark Procter for serving these last two years.

Apr. 2008 Meeting Highlights

We met in a new corner of Durty Nellies – the main dining room – as a Guitar Hero performance in the main stage area was so loud we couldn't conduct a meeting. Durty Nellies was good enough to push together tables and chairs to accommodate eighteen members and 3 guests.

Randy Drumtra started the meeting talking about the May brew-in. Since the original date of May 3 conflicted with Nellies Fest, and the next weekend was Mother's Day, it was decided to delay until May 17. No style was suggested.

Jim Thommes told everyone that all his Great Taste tickets were spoken for. There were 3 rooms available on his reservation at the Super 8, all with a bed and sofa.

The guests were introduced next. Rick Rodriguez is a friend of Eric Raz and knows Ed Pawelko. Evan Van Dyke had been in contact with Jim and myself for a couple of months, and finally made a meeting. Both Rick and Evan have brewed a few times. Bill Morgan had brewed during the 90's, and wants to

get back into the hobby. All three became our newest members at the end of the evening.

Randy then reminded members that dues were due. Jim Arendt talked about the library, and offered old issues of Zymurgy and other magazines that members have never taken out.

The AHA Club Extract contest was contested with only one entry – Eric Raz’s Schlitz clone.

The first of the two main items to be considered – the possible equipment purchases – came up on the agenda. First, the Club members approved \$50 to replace consumable equipment (hoses and such) as needed. Elliot Hamilton passed around the listing of equipment to be purchased under each of the possible plans. A lively discussion then ensued. Randy brought the most expensive proposal to a vote first, with the less expensive proposal to be voted if it failed. With all the proxies, the expensive proposal passed 18-11 with 1 abstention.

The second main item was the Club elections. Randy was nominated for President, but declined. I nominated Brad Griffin, who accepted, and in the absence of any other candidate, was elected by acclamation. As Bill Roefer was not in attendance and had not indicated any intentions to remain in office, Eric Raz was elected by acclamation. Mark Procter was nominated for Treasurer, but also declined the honor. Dan Langrill indicated his interest and was the last of the acclamation elections. There was no one interested in the Newsletter Editor or Librarian, so Jim and I will continue in our roles. John Guilfoil will be the new Beer Steward.

The newest batch of Sieben’s Beer came out less malty than the 1st 2, and has been kegged, but not placed in any bars. Rich Sieben will be pouring at Beer on the Pier (May 3). They are looking for a new distributor to handle accounts west of the Fox River. Roger Santagato talked about the upcoming beer sampling at De Carlo’s in Mundelein.

The business part ended with Brad demonstrating a magnetic mixing apparatus for yeast that he made out of old computer parts. It worked pretty neat.

AHA Beer Contests

July 2008 – Meads (24, 25, 26)

September 2008 – Imperialized versions of any style

November 2008 – IPA (14)

January 2009 – Belgian & French Ale (16)

Note the style guideline numbers and letters after each beer. You can check at www.beertown.org to get the style info.

Classified Section

Nothing for sale at this time.

Not With a Lime, Por Favor

Corona Extra became America’s best-selling imported beer by pitching itself as a vacation in a bottle. But dark clouds are moving in on the beach party.

The economic down turn, an ill-timed price increase and rising competition have pushed Corona into a sales slump. Last year Mexican brewer Grupo Modelo SA shipped 2% less Corona to the U.S. That marked the first such decline for the brand since 1999. The news is even worse for this year, with sales down 6%.

These problems also affect Big Brother Anheuser-Busch since they own 50% of Grupo Modelo. And, this investment yielded almost 30% of A-B’s profit. Wall Street analysts have trimmed earnings estimates for A-B because of the Corona problem.

Corona’s downfall began with the housing-market malaise in Southern California and Arizona, which caused Mexican-American job losses. They have cut back on the relatively luxurious-priced Corona in favor of cheaper brews. This was exacerbated by

a 5% price increase last year which rivals failed to follow.

Bill Hackett, president of Crown Importers, the importer of Corona, says that these problems are temporary. “We are confident that Corona remains very relevant across a wide range of consumers.” But don’t tell that to Lori Eccles, the owner of Sun Devil Liquors in Tempe, Arizona. The price increase drove a six-pack to \$8.49 at her place, which is more than rival brands such as Dos Equis, which costs \$7.99. “For Corona, that is really high,” Ms. Eccles says.

Other beers appear to be taking some sales away from Corona, such as other Mexican beers and even Miller chill, a Mexican-style beer introduced last year. Indeed, Dos Equis sales rose 17% and Tecate 8% last year.

Other analysts point to a stale marketing campaign and the danger that Corona is becoming “your big brother’s beer.” Corona became the top-selling import (28% of imports compared to 18% for No. 2 Heineken) based on the wedge of lime advertisements, which appealed to consumers who typically shunned imported beer. The Dos Equis ads featuring “the most interesting man in the world” have captured the current group of drinkers. The “whole resort and relaxation theme is kind of yesterday’s news,” according to John Greening, a professor of communications at Northwestern University.

The last problem they are facing is Corona customers moving on to more flavored brands. On a recent weekend, Brody Hammond chose a case of Pacifico over Corona due to more flavor and costing less.

Di Carlo’s Armanetti Fest

by Roger Santagato

I attended the Di Carlo’s beer fest on April 12th. I estimated that they were offering 60 – 80 different beers for tasting. I was only there for about 2 hours

of the 4 hour time frame, but I had more than enough to drink for my \$5.

For the first hour or so there were more vendors pouring than there were tasters. But after that it got to be more crowded than I remember seeing it when the fest was free.

The Unibroue table seemed to be very busy most of the time. Rich Sieben was there pouring his new version of Sieben’s. I liked it. He told me that he got a lot of good comments from the people who tried it.

One of the more interesting brews was Di Carlo’s beer manager pouring his homebrew. He had a two year old barley wine that I really liked. Goose Island was there with 4 beers, 2 of which, Pere Jacques and Matilda, were well received by attendees and by me.

I tried several of the Chimay’s all of which I liked. I avoided IPA’s and any brews that I was told was hoppy. Another one I liked was the Sprecher Mai Bock.

And, of course, there were 2 different Polish meads, both very good.

One of the more interesting brews was a chocolate-orange stout from Mickey Finns. I thought it smelled great but tasted like crap (not that I have tasted crap). However, several people seemed to like it.

Walter Payton’s Roundhouse had a barley wine that had been aged in a bourbon barrel. Rich and I disagreed on it. He enjoyed it and I thought it had an unpleasant aftertaste.

Rich also liked a nice hoppy brew from Governor’s Pub that he thought was an English IPA.

I asked Jim Holbach for his thoughts, but he has failed me. Maybe if you see him at the meeting you can get more info from him. But I thought it was a very good fest.

Alcoholism on the Job

A Brazilian court has ordered local brewer Ambev to pay the equivalent of \$49,000 to an alcoholic beer taster who drank about a liter and a half of beer each day.

The unidentified employee alleged that the company didn't provide the health measures needed to keep from developing alcoholism, a labor court said.

The employee said in his suit that for more than a decade, he drank between 16 and 25 small glasses of beer during his eight-hour shifts.

An initial ruling had favored Ambev, which can still appeal the decision. The company alleged the employee was an alcoholic before becoming a beer taster.

Welcome To Our Newest Member



BABY BLUES

