



Next Meeting – June 10

We're still looking for that good weather so we can go outdoors at Dirty Nellies and not have to worry about fashion shows or Guitar Hero. If attendance continues to be big, everyone has to make sure they definitely bring four bottles of homebrew so all can sample (or \$5 if no homebrew). See you at 7:30.

Upcoming Club Events

Tuesday, July 8 – Monthly Meeting, Dirty Nellies, 7:30 PM. AHA Mead Club-Only contest.

Tuesday, August 12 – Monthly Meeting, Dirty Nellies, 7:30 PM.

A New Meeting Day?

At the very beginning of Club Wort's existence, the meetings were held on Monday nights. As Nellies got more popular, the crowd for Monday night football overflowed into the back room and our meetings sucked. For those who have been at the last two meetings, they also have sucked. Is it time to think about another night? Maybe another night is less likely to host a fashion show or Guitar Hero. It's worth talking about, both between the members and with Dirty Nellies. And NO, NO, NO I do not want to switch to another place for the meeting. I think we learned our lesson on the fragility of any arrangement outside of Nellies.

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May 2008 Meeting Highlights

Unfortunately, my wish for good weather was not granted, and so we shared our meeting with a private party on the other side of a partition and Guitar Hero on the stage. An amazing number of members (20) and guests (4) were in attendance as Brad Griffin brought the meeting to order.

Brad started the meeting by having our guests introduce themselves. Greg was a college student; Bill and Fred were friends of Brad; and Barry Filerman was a new brewer. Barry joined our ranks at the end of the evening.

Eliot talked about the upcoming May 17th brew-in after he regained control of a faulty memory. It looked like Amber Ale was going to be brewed, and because of commitments, the brewers were going to be working in 2 shifts beginning at the early hour of 6:30 AM.

Mark Procter made his last Treasurer's report, stating that there had been 31 dues renewals including the free ones for the officers, and he had sent a check for the \$2,300 in the treasury to Dan Langrill.

The Purchasing Committee reported that no equipment had been procured as of yet. Brad reported that due to a mix-up, 47 tickets were purchased for the Great Taste, but Jim Thommes had only 45 tickets to sell. He asked for volunteers to give up their tickets, and one member mentioned that his friend wasn't going to go. The Sieben's Beer info was the same old, same old – no distributor effort but Rich Sieben got it into Binny's south loop store.

Brad talked about a member survey, saying that an on-line one would be free. After some discussion, the membership voted for it. Brad and Evan Van Dyke volunteered to come up with the questions.

A summer pub-crawl was suggested by John Guilfoil. During discussion, the point was made that June was too soon, and August had the Great Taste, so it had to be either July or September. John and Mike Hudak volunteered to work on it for the next meeting.

The last bit of business was a proposal that we put on another brewing demonstration at Dirty Nellies. No decision was made, but the tone of the discussion indicated that the Club did not think it was worth it.

Augie Send His Greetings

(Editor's Note: Augie Altenbaumer is a former Club Wort member who also served as President before moving to St. Louis.)

How are things up north? Not too bad down here. Not working, but other than that things are pretty good. I'm pretty stoked about my beer getting served this weekend. I get to be a celebrity for a couple days :). How are things on the Sieben front? I haven't heard/read much lately in the newsletters (that I remember anyway ;)). A bunch of us got together down here and did a barrel beer a few weeks ago. We brewed up a strong scotch to about 10%abv and are aging it in a Pappy Van Winkle barrel that one of the local craft breweries used one time. Their beer turned out awesome, so I have high hopes for ours. The Pappy is aged for like 27 years or something ridiculous like that, so the barrel wood is just absolutely soaked with bourbon. I think we will still get a lot of bourbon in ours. Well...I think that's it. Hope all is well!

Cheers,
Augie



Homebrewer Augie Altenbaumer finds beer making on a large scale can be a dirty job. He uses a shovel and hoe to scrape out all the grain and empty the mash tun. Fifteen barrels of his Rye American Pale Ale will be sampled at the St. Louis Brewers Heritage Festival this weekend.

Beer fest taps local brewer

Augie Altenbaumer, whose hobby is homebrewing beer, will see a creative dream come true this weekend. His prize for winning "local best of show" at the St. Louis Brews' 2007 Happy Holiday Homebrew Competition last fall was choosing and developing a beer to be brewed for showcasing at the St. Louis Brewers Heritage Festival Thursday through Saturday, May 8 through 10, in the Lindell Pavillion in Forest Park.

Alongside fellow hobbyists of the local club and professional brewers, Altenbaumer will chat with as many as 20,000 people about his favorite sideline. Local brewers represented will include Alandale Brewery, Anheuser-Busch, Augusta Brewery, Griesedieck Brothers Brewing Corp., Morgan Street Brewery, O'Fallon Brewery, Schlafly Beer and Square One Brewery.

Altenbaumer started brewing beer after college

when he worked in "the middle of Texas, where there wasn't much to do." He schedules 15 to 20 batches of different types a year. His hobby fills half the basement at his home in south St. Louis County and two extra refrigerators for ingredients and harvest. His winning beer was an imperial stout, low in hops with malty and caramel aromas. The prize surprised him.

"They didn't say anything about it at the competition until they announced they were going to brew the best of the brews," he says.

He developed a recipe for a Rye American Pale Ale, which seems to translate well into 15 barrels for the festival. When finished, it measures 5.5 percent alcohol.

"I went out and met with Brian (Owens) at O'Fallon (Brewery)," Altenbaumer says. "We kind of discussed the recipe a little bit. It's set up so it pretty much fit right into his system. He had to pull in a favor to get the hops it needed, so he could stay as close to the recipe as possible."

There will be four tents at the Heritage Festival, says Jake Cunningham, senior manager of global industry development at Anheuser-Busch.

Concentrating on educating people at least 21 years old about drinking, making and cooking with beer, the event will be divided by style.

"The flow of the session is lager first, then a food tent from the St. Louis Originals and ales in the third tent," Cunningham says. "The fourth tent is where we will be providing the festival brew, dark American lager, and Augie's Rye American Pale Ale will be there."

The St. Louis Originals is a group of independently owned restaurants and culinary providers in the St. Louis area.

"There is a variety of styles and lots of people who have a passion for knowing more about beer," Cunningham says. "This is the place to explore new styles and varieties, with people from the homebrew, craft, micro brewer and Anheuser-Busch to celebrate the heritage of brewing in St. Louis."

Altenbaumer expects friends and relatives from Centralia, Ill., where he grew up, to join the fun. He graduated from the University of Missouri-Rolla.

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)

March 2009 – Any Beer with a style specifying an original gravity over 1.080.

May 2009 – Any extract beer.

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

Classified Section

Club Wort T-Shirts in the following sizes: Medium (2); Large (7), X-large (7). Cost is \$10. Contact Paul Lange at pdlange@rockwoodco.com.

Three-pound (1 Quart) containers of honey; Cost is \$7.50; Contact Elliot Hamilton at elliioth@ml1.net

May 17 Brew-in

by Elliot Hamilton

6:30 AM?

That's right: C-W brew-in participants began arriving at my house at 6:30 for the May brew-in. Held two weeks after the AHA's Big Brew, we made the "typical" 50 gallons of beer. Today's recipe was Autumn Amber Ale.

The incentive for the early start was availability of the participant's time. Some could only be there in the early morning hours, some in the afternoon, and some could be there a little bit of both.

The first few arrivals, Mike Hudak, Jim Hoblach, and Barry Filerman, dealt with setting up the

hardware, measuring and crushing the grain, and heating the mash water. I dealt with making coffee.

After a while a few more participants arrived, including Brad Griffin, Patrick Smith, Jim Brewer and Rick Rodriguez.

The first problem of the day occurred during the sparge. Somebody, unnamed of course, miscalculated the quantity of sparge water. For the record, we usually figure 1 quart per pound for mashing and two quarts per pound for sparging. We were short about 30 quarts of sparge water which delayed the final few gallons of wort extraction for as many minutes. As it happened, the missing sparge water almost caused a major problem later on!

Once the sparging was complete, the wort was divided among the 5 boilers. As the boilers were coming to temperature, the looming major problem was discovered and resolved.

At about this time, recipe master Eric Raz and Phil Spangler arrived in time for lunch

Well, just what was this major problem? During the sparging, the spargers (?) took great care to not stir the wort being collected in the 55 gallon wort-collector. Everybody stood quietly while we heated the last few gallons of sparge water.

Just before the wort was pumped out of the 55 gallon drum, I took a specific gravity reading: 1.040. With the typical boil off, it should be fairly close to our target OG of 1.048. For reasons still unknown to me, I took a gravity reading of the first boiler: 1.064! Each boiler was a few units less than the previous boiler. Finally, the 5th boiler was 1.040...the gravity of the 55 gallon drum.

Apparently, with the careful wort handling and the wait for additional water, the sugar was stratifying in the drum. We've never had this problem before for two reasons. 1) Spargers often dump the wort in the barrel instead of carefully pouring it in place which helps stir the contents. 2) We usually pump

the liquid through the heat exchanger to increase its temperature while awaiting the boil. Wort dumping and wort pumping keeps the mass evenly concentrated. Imagine that: we've been doing the right thing without realizing it.

Anyway...by moving wort from one boiler to another and adding water, we were able to get each boiler at 1.040 to begin the boil. Lessons learned!

This recipe had a first wort hopping, Irish moss (we ACTUALLY added it this time), and a knock-out hopping.

The pumping went fast. The Arlington Heights municipal water supply was cold enough to run the pump at full speed. The boilers cooperated by not clogging or developing air pockets. The boiler balancing insured there was 5 gallons of wort for everyone. And get this: there were no boilovers!

Roger Santagato and Jim Arendt stopped by to see what mischief we were in. Unfortunately for Roger, I managed to run the spigot of a keg into his knee while he was observing the activities. My apologies!

As I write this article, I am sure everyone's beer is perking away. Expect to taste samples at an upcoming meeting.

May 17 Brew-in Pictures

by Elliot Hamilton



