

Malted Barley Appreciation Society

December 2005 Newsletter

<http://hbd.org/mbas>

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Here's the December 2005 Newsletter!

Proost!

Warren Becker

DECEMBER MEETING

Wednesday, December 7, 2005

Our guest speaker will be Dan Shelton
of Shelton Brothers <http://www.sheltonbrothers.com/>

MUGS ALE HOUSE

www.mugsalehouse.com



125 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11211



Karen and Matt of Dark Star Brewery in Brighton, UK dropped in for a visit!



NOVEMBER MEETING

Scott Kowalski from Merchant du Vin was our November speaker. He spoke and poured bottles of the "8" and "10" from the Rochefort Trappist Brewery.

The Abbey of St-Remy, in the southern part of Belgium, was founded in 1230, and the monks began to brew beer sometime around 1595. The beautiful small brewery in the abbey, Rochefort Trappistes, is one of only six Trappist breweries in the world and makes full-bodied, deeply flavored dark ales. They are bottle-conditioned and among the world's most highly-respected beverages.

"8" or Green Cap: Deep brown color; the flavor is vigorous and complex, with firm body to support the strength. The aroma has elusive notes of fresh fruit, spice, leather, and figs. Great with full-flavored dishes like pate, duck, or wild game; shows well with strong-flavored cheeses. It's also wonderful alone as an aperitif. Serve in traditional Rochefort stemmed goblet.

"10" or Blue Cap: Dark brown color. Great strength balanced by a complexity of flavors and firm malt backbone. The bouquet covers a wide range: port wine, leather, apricots, oak, and spices - a deeply intriguing beverage. Lamb shanks with juniper berries, wild chanterelle mushrooms, truffles, or dishes with intensely reduced sauces. Serve in the traditional stemmed Rochefort goblet.

The "8" and "10" have both won the Gold Medal—World Beer Championships 2004, and are available in 11.2 oz bottles / 12 per case.

http://www.merchantduvin.com/pages/5_breweries/rochefort_beers.html

Maria Granata, of Specialty International Tours, brought Gose beer and mustard from the former East Germany. Gose is brewed with coriander and salt (yes, salt!).



BEER STYLES #1: CZECH PILSNER

By George de Piro, Brewmaster C.H. Evans Brewing Co.

http://www.professorbeer.com/articles/czech_pilsner.html

Of all the world's beers, those claiming to be "pilsner" are by far the most common. There are actually very few that really deserve to bear this moniker, because they are so different from the original Czech lager. The first pilsner beer was brewed in the town of Plzen, in what is now the western Czech Republic.

This beer, now bearing the label, "Pilsner Urquell," is the standard to which the other Czech pilsners are brewed. It has a rich, golden color, with aromas of soft malt and spicy, Saaz hops. It has a crisp, malty flavor up front, fading into a smooth finish with plenty of hop bitterness. Despite the large quantity of hops used, their bitterness is not at all harsh, due partly to the quality of the hops, and also to the balancing malt flavor and the famously soft Plzen water.

The chemistry of that renowned water not only yields beers with smooth hop bitterness, but it also allows for the brewing of light-colored beers. There are ion species in water that effect the acidity of the mash (the mixture of hot water and malt). If the mash is too alkaline, the malt starches are not efficiently converted into sugar. Waters high in carbonate ions yield overly alkaline mashes when only pale malts are used.

Dark malts help to acidify the mash, allowing starch conversion to occur, but the resulting beer will be dark in color. In the old days, before water chemistry could be understood and adjusted, brewers had to use dark malts to compensate for alkaline waters. Light-colored beer could not be produced at many European brewing centers.

Another factor contributing to the dark color of beers prior to pilsner was the malt available in years gone by. Malt is made by steeping grain in water until it starts to grow. Just before the young plant emerges from the husk, the grain is

transferred to a kiln and dried. Depending on the time and temperature of this step, one can make lighter or darker malts.

Before the mid-19th century, malting technology was such that good-tasting, light-colored malts were not commonly made. The palest beers that could be brewed up to that time were copper-colored. That is how pale ale got its name: it was the lightest-colored beer at the time it was invented!



Photo: George de Piro
A bartender at U Medvidku in Prague pours Budweiser Budvar. Photo by the author.

When the town of Plzen was founded in 1295 by the King of Bohemia, Wenceslas II, the malt situation was the same; only dark beers were produced by the 260 town citizens granted the right to brew in their homes. Through the centuries, the right to brew beer in Plzen was passed down to their descendents. Eventually, a guild was formed to protect the interests of the brewers and ensure that knowledge would be preserved for the next generation of brewers.

Unfortunately for all of Europe, the 30 Years War of 1618-1648 began in Bohemia. This religious conflict ravaged many European cities; the effects on the brewing industry were not positive, and it took many years for Bohemian beer quality to return to pre-war levels. In 1838 some Plzen brewers deemed the quality of a batch to be so poor that they dumped 36 barrels of the stuff in front of the town hall! This led to the construction of a new brewery in the town by Martin Stelzer.

Stelzer was well-versed in the latest Bavarian brewing technology and hired a German brewer by the name of Josef Groll to oversee brewing operations. Utilizing the new, gently-kilned malts that were now available, Groll brewed the lightest-colored beer the world had seen: a golden, hoppy beverage fermented with yeast obtained from Bavaria. In

1842 the world's first pilsner was born!

This beer was an instant success. The refreshing hop flavor and soft malt character charmed palates across Europe and later, in North America, too. Marketing this clear, golden liquid was certainly helped by advances in glassware production, which allowed the masses access to clear drinking vessels.



Elsewhere in Europe, the 19th century saw much progress in brewing science. Perhaps most critical was Pasteurs' 1860 discovery of the importance of yeast to the brewing process. At Carlsberg Laboratories in Denmark, Emil Hansen, building on Pasteurs' work, pioneered the techniques necessary to isolate pure yeast cultures.

In Bavaria, Spaten's Gabriel Sedlmayr was busy, applying newly-born refrigeration technology to brewing. This enabled brewers to control their fermentation temperatures with a precision never before known, and to store their beers cold regardless of the time of year. These advances all lead directly to the lager brewing revolution that was soon to sweep the world.

Brewers everywhere were now able to control the quality and consistency of their beers like never before. Light-colored malts, pure yeast strains, and refrigeration for all meant that Pilsner Urquell soon had a lot of competition. As the style emigrated to new parts of the world, it also evolved. Brewers adapted the original recipe to suit local ingredients.



Most of the impersonators were not as hoppy as Pilsner Urquell; Plzen water chemistry permits high hop levels that many other water sources cannot support. Here in America, for reasons of cost and chemistry, some portion of the barley malt in the original Pilsner recipe was replaced by corn. At first, these American pilsners were brewed with relatively high hop levels, and to higher alcohol content than the Czech beer.



WHISKY FEST 2005

By Warren Becker

I have attended most of the Whisky Fests at the Marriott Marquis in New York City for the past seven years. To my amazement, each year's fest affords me new opportunities to try the new releases from established named distilleries, plus new offerings from smaller, less known, artisan distilleries, and vintages from now defunct distilleries. For most, this tasting event can be a daunting task of choosing which whisky selections your palate and constitution might be expended upon. My plans and goals are simple. First taste those hard to find offerings, or new releases, while all the taste senses are acute.



The highlights were Glenfarclas 1968 Vintage, silky smooth intense spicy sweet aroma, poured by sixth generation distiller, George S. Grant; Auchentoshan Three Wood, a impressive wood aroma and lingering palate from the Bourbon, Oloroso Sherry, and Pedro Ximenez Sherry Casks; Suntory 25 Year, sweet and Bourbon-like flavors, with a long sherry finish; Bowmore Dawn, a wine-like plummy flavors with a long smoky, peat finish; The Speyside 12 Year, a new whisky for me. Poured for me by their Master Distiller Andrew Shand, whose years of experience of working at Glenlivet, Chivas, and Ben Nevis distilleries, culminate in this clean, toffee, toasted barley and vanilla aroma and flavor offering; and Scott's Selection's Glenlivet 1977, big vanilla wood nose with a slightly tart, smooth full malty mouthfeel and finish.

In my opinion, the overall choices offered at the Whisky Fest are second to none in the world. It is an expertly run Malt Advocate <http://www.maltadvocate.com/>

event, with a full evening of seminars by whisky professionals, tastings with knowledgeable and friendly pourers, and a mature and well-focused whisky crowd in attendance.

For online Whisky notes check <http://www.whiskymag.com/>



FULLERS VINTAGE ALE 2005 CASK

By Warren Becker

On November 21st, Spuyten Duyvil poured a rare and obscure cask of Fuller's Vintage Ale 2005. Until now, Fuller's of London has never sent it's cask ale over seas, and further more it has never casked it's Vintage Ale. Besides this rare cask treat, we did a side by side tasting of some of the previous Vintage Ale bottles.

Here are my reviews of the vintages:

2005 Cask: Smooth caramel aroma & flavor with plummy, Cabernet wine-like notes and slight vanilla wood in a lingering finish.

1997 Bottle: Rummy, molasses aroma, semi-sweet raison flavors with a slight citric, long finish.

1998 Bottle: Smokey, woody aroma, malty flavors throughout with semi-dry, whisky and wine-like finish.

1999 Bottle: Aged oxidation in aroma with some butter-scotch Madeira flavors with semi-sweet finish.

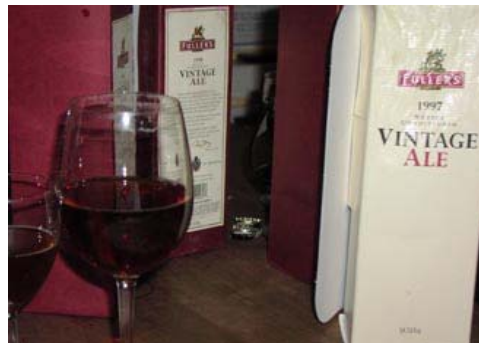
2000 Bottle: Caramel/toffee nose, nutty almond/cashew flavors, with some bitterness in a semi-sweet finish.

2001 Bottle: Slight oxidation in the aroma, malty and citric flavors, noticeable alcohol dryness with semi-sweet finish.

2004 Bottle: Licorice and coffee nose, plummy malty flavors, with a sugary sweet finish.

Roger Protz reviews: <http://www.beer-pages.com/notes/brewery.php?id=fullers>

Fullers site: <http://www.fullers.co.uk>



Sixpoint Craft Ales has now been brewing beer in Brooklyn for over one year and has celebrated multiple one-year anniversary parties. In addition to this historic milestone, Brewmaster Shane Welch is planning his first batch of the "Sixpoint Century Series," a series of unique one-offs commemorating every 100th batch at Sixpoint. The first Century Series, a "West-Coast Grand Cru", will be brewed within the next two weeks and will be released on-draft and a limited amount of bottles around NYC. 25% of the batch will be reserved for barrel aging. Keep an eye out.

Speaking of bottles.... the first EVER batch of Sixpoint bottles will be released before Christmas. The Bolshoi Imperial Stout is currently in bottles and is conditioning at the brewery. The bottles are hand-dipped in wax, hand-labeled, and personally signed with batch and bottle number and date by Shane.

For Holiday Beer Lovers, keep an eye out for the Sixpoint Global Warmer, their first Holiday Beer. Weighing in at 9.1% ABV and dry-hopped with fresh Simcoe Hops, Sixpoint President Andrew Bronstein was caught drinking it out of the fermenter. Afterwards, he claimed it truly tasted like "a gingerbread house soaked in Brandy."

Shane C. Welch

CEO, Brewmaster, and Co-Founder

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We represent Brooklyn.

www.sixpointcraftales.com

HOME BREWING COMPETITIONS:



<http://www.beertown.com/homebrewing/schedule.html>



<http://www.bjcp.org/compsch.html>

BEER RELATED EVENTS:

- **December 1- 4: 5th Annual NYC Real Ale Festival, David Copperfield's**, 1394 York Avenue, at the NE corner of 74th and York. Telephone: (212) 734-6152. Featuring: Blue Point Bourbon Barrelled Old Howlin' Bastard, Blue Point Pale Ale, Middle Ages Beast Bitter, Middle Ages 10th Anniversary Double IPA, Dark Star Original, Dark Star Imperial Russian Stout, Sixpoint Rebellion, Victory Storm King Stout and others to be announced...
- **December 5: Beer & Cheese Tasting, 7pm. D.B.A.**, 41 First Avenue, American & British Ales: The First in a Series of Tastings hosted by Award-Winning Brewmaster, Patrick Jones of Triumph Brewing Company. Eight Pairings of Ales with Artisanal Cheeses, \$35. Monday, www.drinkgoodstuff.com. Limited Availability, RSVP to 917-757-4309 or stecura@hotmail.com.
- **December 6: Samuel Smith Beer Dinner, Elysian Café**, 1001 Washington St. Hoboken, NJ. Telephone: 201-798-5898. The refined, elegant beers from this Yorkshire brewery - established in 1758 - are beautiful matches to fine cuisine.
- **December 7: Malted Barley Appreciation Society Meeting**, 7:30 p.m. at *Mugs Ale House*, 125 Bedford Avenue (North 10th St., three blocks north of the Bedford Ave. L-train station). Note: usually, our meeting is Second Wednesday of each month, but for this December, we are meeting one week earlier. Our guest is Dan Shelton, Shelton Brothers. In addition, we should have some excellent homebrews to taste, and Mugs usual great selection of beers.
- **December 15: Winter Beer Fest, Barcade**, 388 Union Avenue, (718) 718-302-6464. More details to follow!



Every Tuesday, 7PM: **Bierkraft**,
191 Fifth Avenue, Park Slope, Brooklyn (at Union Street)
 Weekly beer tasting and cheese pairing, sometimes featuring
 a guest speaker from the trade. Details: 718-230-7600
<http://www.bierkraft.com>

EVENTS OUTSIDE NEW YORK CITY:

Alex Hall's

THE GOTHAM IMBIBER

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The Gotham Imbiber is New York City's local beer magazine.

BEER CALENDAR

<http://www.cask-ale.co.uk/us/tgi.html>

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<http://hbd.org/mbas/beer.html>

