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Tuesday, January 12
at 7 pm. At

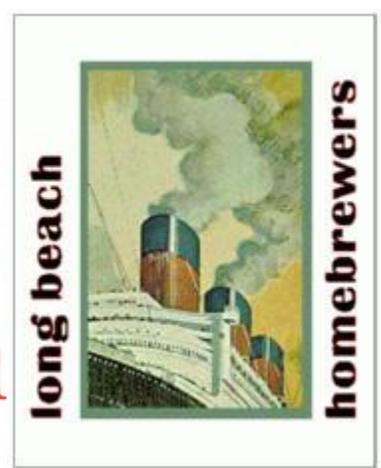
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The Brews Telegram

The Newsletter of the
Long Beach Homebrewers



President's Message

Greetings fellow homebrewers! This month we start the new year and also start the new cycle of the Homebrewer of the Year competition for the Long Beach Homebrewers. As mentioned previously, new to this year, we are including non-judging months in the point tally for the competition. For example, if you bring in the style of the month, you'll receive 1 point for participation toward the Home Brewer of the Year.

This month (Jan) is not a judging month, but the style of the month is Session IPAs. Session IPAs are relatively new to the craft brewing scene, but nonetheless, I don't recall a new style ever gaining such rapid acceptance and significant craft market share. Most of the major (and even minor!) craft brewers are all offering a session IPA as part of their regular beer line-up, and have added them in relatively short time.

"Session" beers refer to beers that are low in alcohol that allow one to drink relatively copious amounts in one session without being too worse for wear. Typically most "session" beers are near 4% ABV, but for IPAs specifically, the BJCP defines session IPAs as being less than or equal to 5.0 % ABV, in contrast to most other IPAs these days which start at 7% ABV and quickly go much higher. Indeed, most commercial session IPAs hover near the 4.5% ABV level (examples include Stone's Go To IPA and Firestone Easy Jack, both at 4.5% ABV), but in some cases are slightly above the 5% ABV level (example being Alpine's Hoppy Birthday session IPA at 5.25% ABV).

In addition to the low ABV, the other main characteristics of the style are huge hop flavor and aroma with medium to high bittering levels. In addition, the beers typically are on the drier side to allow the hop character to shine through.

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What are some of the key things to keep in mind when making session IPAs at home? Well the first thing is to use a lot a hops, along with hopping techniques that maximize the hop flavor and aroma. For example utilizing "first wort hopping" and "hop bursting" techniques. Also, is also recommended to take measures to maintain a certain level of body in the beer while targeting a low percentage ABV. One would be wise to avoid making a low alcohol beer that finishes with a very low gravity, as this would result in a overly thin watery beer. Techniques that you can use to avoid a super thin session IPA are mashing at relatively high temperatures and using a lower attenuating yeast. Mashing at high temperatures (as high as 158 F!) favors a more dextrinous wort (i.e. giving more "body" to the beer), and using a lower attenuating yeast will also result in a higher final gravity. Examples of yeast to use, as opposed to the usual White Labs Cal Ale WL001, include White Labs California Ale V and White Labs Pacific Ale yeast. Lastly, Session IPAs are typically carbonated to medium to high-ish levels, as the carbonation also gives a sensation of higher body and allows the aromatics of the hops to shine through via the off-gassing of the CO2 in the glass.

On a personnel level, session IPAs have become one of the main beers we drink at home, with one of my taps *always* occupied with a session IPA. I look forward to tasting examples that LBHB members have brewed at the next meeting!

Cheers!

Adam Widera

2016 Monthly Style Schedule

Here are the styles for each month.

January: Session IPA

February: British Golden Ale (2015 BJCP Style 12A)

March: Belgian (Trappist) Dubbel (2015 BJCP Style 26A)

April: American Porter (2015 BJCP Style 20A)

May: Dunkles Bock (2015 BJCP Style 6C)

June: Coffee Beers

July: Czech Amber Lager (2015 BJCP Style 3C)

August: Pre-Prohibition American Beer (Pre-Pro Lager, Cream Ale, Kentucky Common)

September: Belgian (Trappist) Tripel (2015 BJCP Style 26C)

October: Black IPA (2015 BJCP Style 21B)

November: American Barley Wine (2015 BJCP Style 22C)

December: Bourbon/Whiskey Barrel flavored Beers (2015 BJCP Style 33B)

Tastings at the December meeting (Standard Cider and Perry-Cat 27)

Adam W.	Cyser
Lance S.	IPA Honey
Paul K.	Mango-Passion Cider
Jon S.	Cider
Ron H.	Big Brew Rock Bottom
Tim K.	Cider
Dick E.	Cider
Mike F.	Commercial Cider
Michael	Tart CranApple Cider

Parti-gyle Brewing

By Jon Silvertooth

Party-gyle brewing is a little used brewing method today, but it used to be an inherent procedure in old brewing methods. The traditional approach was to conduct separate mashes on a given grain bill. The first wort would be completely run off, then the grain re-mashed with hot water and the second wort completely run off, and so on for a third, and even sometimes a fourth mash. It was customary to make strong ale from the first wort (sometimes combined with the second), and to produce a much weaker “small beer” from the remaining worts. It seems that this practice may have changed in the first quarter of the 18th century, when porter came onto the English brewing stage. London brewers came around to the idea of combining all the worts from separate mashing so as to make one beer, known as “Entire,” or “Entire-Butt,” and later becoming porter. The practice of sparging the grains after mashing and continuous collection of wort to make one final beer is relatively modern, dating from the early 19th century. Even through that century it was common for brewers to make, say a pale ale, and a weaker “dinner ale” from the same batch of malt. Since the total product from a brew was known as a “gyle” (or “guile” in some older books), this technique came to be called parti-gyling.

A number of questions regarding this method came up in our email group in the past few months, and as a happy coincidence, I was planning my first party-gyle brew at that same time. Now that I have successfully completed that brew day, I thought I would share my experiences with you in the hopes that it helps answer any questions you may have about the process or how to practically use it.

The first question you may have is “why would one want to brew a party-gyle batch?” There are a few different answers to that. Some may want to make more beer on a brew day without having to clean and refill their mash tun. Others may want to get a very big beer without having to boil longer or add DME to achieve their volume, with the added bonus of getting another beer from the sugars left behind after the higher gravity first runnings are collected. And yet another reason is that some people just enjoy trying different techniques or historical processes. In my case, I was making a Berliner Weisse, which has a simple grain bill and a fast boil, but I wanted to get another beer from my brew day since I was setting up all the equipment anyway. I decided to brew a Wheat Wine with my first runnings since it was a new style in the 2015 BJCP guidelines that I had not made before and because it was a light colored wheat grain bill.

To accomplish this, I set my efficiency in Beersmith to 50% and my mash profile to no sparge. I then designed my recipe as I normally would. In this case, I used the following for a 6 gallon batch:

Estimated OG: 1.106
7kg US Pale Malt
7kg White Wheat Malt
.8kg Honey Malt
.4kg Caravienne Malt

60g Galena (first wort 90 minute addition)
25g Amarillo (30 minute)
30g Cascade (10 minute)
30g Cascade (Whirlpool)
WLP090 San Diego Super Yeast

I mashed the first runnings using the full 14 gallons of water estimated to drain 9 gallons from the mash tun. I had one small glitch with this step in that I had too much water. I had never done a no-sparge batch, so I did not factor in that my BeerSmith equipment profile had losses built in for the hot liquor tank. The result is that I had close to 10 gallons in the kettle after draining the mash tun instead of the 9 gallons I needed. I was able to easily mitigate this with a more robust boil which was able to bring me very close to my desired batch size and final gravity. I wound up with just over 6 gallons of wheat wine wort at 1.102, which was close enough for me to be happy.

For the second runnings, I basically designed a recipe in Beersmith but ignored the efficiency and water estimates. Once I had the grain percentages in at the gravity I wanted, I used the recipe primarily to figure out hop information for the batch. BeerSmith says my pre-boil volume for this batch should be 5.5 gallons, due to the 15 minute boil and 5 gallon batch size. So the very simple process for my second runnings is to heat 5.5 gallons of water to about 175 degrees which I pumped into the mash tun and mixed. Note that I don't need any extra water for grain absorption because the grain is already saturated from the previous batch. I let the mash settle for a few minutes and started draining to an empty kettle. The OG target for this batch was 1.032 and I wound up with 5 gallons of 1.031 wort. If it were higher, I would have added water to get to my target. If it were lower, I would have likely added some DME. In my case, however, I was so close that I went straight to boil for 15 minutes.

All said and done, the process went pretty smoothly and I wound up with two tasty beers from a single brew day. Since I have two kettles and burners that could be used to boil, I was able to boil both beers simultaneously, which means the brew day was not much longer than a standard brew day.... Although I had to be sure my timing was such that I could rack the Berliner weisse into the fermenter through my counter-flow-chiller prior to needing it for the wheat wine. Otherwise, I could not have ended the boil on time... which was one of the reasons I used a 90 minute boil on the wheat wine. You will need to determine when you boil and chill each beer based on your systems and available equipment.

Here are the lessons I learned and things that I think are important to consider if you are going to do a parti-gyle batch:

1. I have built-in losses in my equipment profile for my hot liquor tank. I need to edit that for a parti-gyle batch.
2. If you are going to boil both batches at the same time, you must plan your boils out so you don't end up needing a pump or chiller or other such equipment.
3. Be prepared to alter your wort for the second batch (add water or DME in my case) in the event that the gravity is not what you were expecting. If you are flexible on the OG, you may need to make some on-the-fly hop adjustments to compensate for the gravity difference.
4. Have fun... you'll still make beer. ☺

Brewing Lagers au Natural

by Adam Widera

I have brewed *a lot* of lagers over the years (especially pilsners) and have come to gain a good understanding (at least in my mind!) of what of what is truly needed for a good lager.

However, one thing that is not needed in my opinion is an extended period of aging, post fermentation, at cold temperatures. This sounds like heresy, since of course the root of the German word implies the long storage at cold temperatures, and many of us have either been told or read that extended aging at cold temperatures is required for a true to style lager.

This mis-conception, that lagers require extended aging at cold temperatures, has precluded many homebrewers from even trying to make a lager, since they either don't have a spare refrigerator for carboys, or lack the space to devote months to cold-storage in carboys. I have heard many brewers say to me that they never have attempted a lager for this reason.

However, in my opinion, the *by-product* of the extended cold storage, i.e. a very clear beer, is the important thing, and the cold storage is only a means to an end. Most, if not all of, the flavor development of lager beers occurs during the fermentation stage. If you can maintain cold temps for a long enough period of time for the beer to ferment (i.e. 1 to 2 weeks), and take steps to produce the clearest beer possible with or without extended cold storage (such as protein rests during the mash, robust hot and cold break removal, use of fining agents like gelatine, etc), then you can achieve excellent lager beer, equivalent to what you would obtain with an extended cold storage of a less than stellar made lager beer.

Why am I writing of this now? Well for the past few weeks, and from the forecast for at least the next week, the high temperatures in our area have been/ will be in the low to mid 60's with overnight low temperatures in the low 40's. What does this mean? Well average temps (day and night taken together) will be/have been in the low to mid 50's, which is perfect for lager yeast fermentation!

With this in mind, I recently brewed 15 gallons of pilsner over Christmas, and I fermented the beer outside, in the shade on the north side of my house, shielded from the sun. The beer was consistently cold to downright very cold some days, but a perfect lager ferment was able to be obtained. I plan on kegging this beer (after a diacetyl rest), and have no intention of "lagering" the beer in "secondary" in a carboy. You might read on the internet that you need to maintain very consistent temperatures for the best lager fermentation, but take it from me, the yeast doesn't know what's on the internet, and it will ferment just fine, even with a 20 degree differential assuming you pitch a starter that is suitable (i.e. a large volume of yeast) for a cold fermented beer. In addition, the thermal mass of a five gallon bucket or wort/beer is substantial enough, such that even if you have a 20 degree difference in max and min temps throughout the day and night, the degree of fluctuation of the temperature of your fermenting wort will be much less in the bucket. Add several buckets next to each other and the degree of temp fluctuation is even less due to insulation effect of the adjoining buckets! The important thing for lager yeast in the end is maintaining the cold temps during the ferment.

So take a look at the weather forecast, if you see a week's worth of time where the average temp (day and night taken together) will be in the mid 50's, try fermenting a lager outside, in a cool shaded spot. It's a great way to advantage of naturally cold fermented beer!

"Action" Photo: Fermenting Pilsner in the Elements (look for it at a future club tasting/meeting):



It's a Wonderful Fest!

By David Gansen

It seemed like a blend of Star Wars and the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy as we stood greatly entertained by Jamie Floyd, Founding Brewer of Ninkasi Brewing, while he spoke with great enthusiasm about how his lifelong interest in space travel gave rise to a plan to take beer brewing on a wild adventure beyond the earthly confines of this planet. Having long ago set aside his childhood dreams of becoming an astronaut in favor of his other passion of brewing beer, a decision for which we can all be grateful, it was this enthusiasm that led him to jump at the chance when approached by a private sector space flight company with an idea that was quite literally out of this world.

The idea was simple. The plan, a little more complex. But the adventure would be as close as Jamie could get to the

fulfillment of his dream of space travel: to launch an active yeast culture into space, retrieve the specimens upon their terrestrial re-entry, and use them to ferment an ale to see what effect space travel would have on the resulting flavors. What finally came to fruition was a rich and complex imperial stout fermented with that space borne yeast called Ground Control. This would be served by Ninkasi as their offering at the Annual Holiday Ale Festival at Pioneer Square in downtown Portland, Oregon.



Plastic souvenir mugs- the new reality for Portland beer fests.



The warm and cozy tent structure at the Holiday Ale Fest provides a nice protective barrier from the elements.

Pioneer Square is a 40,000 square foot brick patio covering a square block in the heart of Portland, once the site of the elegantly appointed Portland Hotel that served as the social center of the city for the entire first half of last century. With an elliptical curvature of stairs cascading upward at the west end of the square, and perimeter installations of sculpture and water features, the square now plays host to several events throughout the year. But for five days in December the square is transformed. A huge rain-defiant tent structure morphs its way out of the brick, completely covering the lower patio segment, then snakes its way up the curved stairs to encompass a second level built on a temporary sub deck. With white vinyl walls stretched over steel pipe and a transparent ceiling to allow visible, though somewhat blurred, images of Portland's charming downtown adorned in its Holiday attire, the prominent feature of which is a 75 foot Christmas tree, Pioneer Square gives rise to the venue that will be home to the 20th installment of this great Portland tradition.

As we'd approached the event earlier, our feet slapped against a glistening wet sidewalk while hustling our way up 6th Street under a drizzly grey sky with a chilly breeze thrust in our faces. Making our way to the square and, after stopping briefly to capture a photo of

the sign, we stepped into the cozy tented fest grounds only to have to quite literally come to grips with a disappointing but understandable new feature of all Portland beer fests. It would seem that there are still those few who find it challenging to refrain from projectile launching of their souvenir glassware into stone walls, so now we all must consume our Portland fest beverages from cups made of plastic. City ordinance. But we hardly counted that as a setback and pressed on with an enthusiastic step forward.

Having scoured the local *Oregonian* for the rundown on the setlist of beers, I now had inscribed on my phone the top five best beers, according to the article, to watch out for. Yet, oddly enough, when all was said and done, only one of the five ranked on my personal favorites. Number one on my list was a Spiced Rum Barrel Aged Eisbock from Burnside Brewing called Rum-Tum-Tumbly. I was anxious to try my first ever beer brewed in the Eisbock tradition where the beer is lagered to below freezing temperatures and the residual ice removed leaving behind a concentrated profile of a rich, malty, full-bodied, rich dark German lager. And though the rendition was deliciously rich with the rum character and the oak prevalent, and a slight hint of cinnamon in the finish, it really lacked the euphoria I'd been expecting and I considered that maybe the anticipation from the newspaper article had created lofty expectations. On to more options!



Santa taking time out from building toys to enjoy some Holiday ales.

We worked our way up the Main Bar where we sampled offerings with names that over the years



Firestone's special tasting. Note the Maltose Falcon's collaborative in the third sign.

have traditionally enveloped the character of the event. Names like "Snowball Headed for Hell" and "Pumpkin is the New Black" have become so popular that the names themselves have almost become the main attraction at the Holiday Ale Fest. Almost. Fortunately, four of the five on my must try list happened to be in the main bar and we went right to work. After Burnside I tracked down

Frosty Leo Winter by Ecliptic Brewing, an English style Old Ale advertising a rich malty sweetness and loads of hop flavor featuring prominent profiles of Citra and Sterling. As advertised, but I thought the hops a little too prominent for a winter ale where I much prefer a celebration of the malt.

Gargantua III was a delightful third generation imperial barrel aged strong ale from Eel River Brewing that really had a lot more going on than just the 12.3% ABV. An elaborate blend of an imperial strong and a second strong ale added to the batch that had been aged in bourbon barrels, and then the whole thing aged on Madagascar bourbon vanilla beans and figs. Ex Novo Brewing's creation of a Belgian Quad dubbed Weapons of Mass Fermentation was conceived right in Portland. They used Belgian rock sugar and an extended boil to reduce down the wort to produce a slightly melanoidin and caramelized flavor profile that also featured cranberry for a tart finish.

Two of the more delightful surprises came from Migration Brewing and a small, Irish inspired brewery by the name of Feckin Irish Brewing Company. Migration's offering was a special last-minute addition not even mentioned in the program, their 2015 version of Frankie Klaus, a Belgian Imperial Stout brewed with a Belgian Trappist yeast and French cocoa that was rich and complex, and for an 11.8% ABV, wonderfully well balanced and smooth with no evident warming alcohol burn. But Top O' the Feckin' Mornin, a barrel aged Imperial Espresso Milk Porter, was an outstanding effort by this small brewery from Oregon City that for me stole the show. Irish Ale malt and Irish steel cut oats provided the foundation for this 10.5% porter, the rich coffee and vanilla gave it an exquisite balance especially after being aged in oak bourbon barrels.

But certainly the most intriguing story of the day came in front of the Ninkasi booth in the Side Bar area of the venue. And while the rain water seeped in under the vinyl tent walls making the red brick ground wet at our feet while the atmosphere remained nice and cozy, Jamie Floyd smiled as he described the first of two attempts to launch the yeast into space as having ended with disastrous results. Unexpected problems with the craft's navigational system caused ground crew support team to lose track during landing and it was stranded in the desert for two weeks before it was found. Two weeks in the hot desert sun is far from adequate conditioning for fermentable yeast and the product was not able to be used. The second launch and recovery was much more successful and the resulting imperial stout was a delightful creation using Oregon hazelnuts and star anise, and fermented with thousands of yeast cells whose parents and grandparents may have actually transcended the atmosphere and ventured forth into the expanses of zero gravity weightlessness.

A successful trip to the 20th Annual Holiday Ale Fest in Portland was bookended by visits to several local breweries and a momentary departure from beer to enjoy a splendid afternoon of wine tasting. Even though there were many beers tasted at this great event that were too numerous to list here, and several we didn't get to because there was just too many, the Holiday Ale Festival is one event that should be on everyone's bucket list of "got to do at least once" ♦



The traditional festive Holiday tree in Pioneer Square