



March 2008 Newsletter

Next Club Meeting Sunday 13th April 2008 @ 12:30pm

THE PRESIDENTS REPORT



I hope that you all had a relaxing Easter. The weather was certainly kind, although a bit warm for brewing if you don't have temperature controlled fermentation.

As we move into Autumn we should all be starting to think about brewing for upcoming events such as the Stout Extravaganza, Pale Ale Mania and Vicbrew 2008 !

This months edition is a little late and light on for content as I caught the flu – so please send in the odd item and think about getting a flu shot !!!

Also a reminder that Matthew Sutton will be giving a presentation on Medieval brewing at this month's meeting!

Cheers ... Colin MacEwan

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE AT THE NAVAL ASSOCIATION
HALL, BARRETT RESERVE, GRAHAM STREET, WEST
FOOTSCRAY (OPPOSITE THE YMCA) MELWAY 41 J3

Westgate Brewers is committed to encouraging responsible drinking

REMEMBER-If you Drink and Drive-You're a Bloody Idiot

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Club Meeting Diary

April 2008

Medieval Brewing Presentation
Brown Ale – English or American Comp

May 2008

Activity Tba

June 2008

Activity Tba

July 2008

Activity Tba

August 2008

Activity Tba

October 2008

Activity Tba

Coming Events

July

**Westgate Brewers
Stout Extravaganza
Venue to be advised**

August

**Worthogs
Pale Ale Mania
Venue to be advised**

October

**VicBrew 2008
Venue to be advised**

Contacts

President

Tba

Secretary

Matthew Sutton

Treasurer

Elina Bowron

Newsletter Editor

Colin Mac Ewan – 95347198

Email

westgatebrewers@yahoo.com.au

Correspondance

**PO Box 6058, West Footscray, Vic
3012**

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Houston we have a problem - "Stuck" Fermentation

I recently had a fermentation that started quickly, fermented vigorously for 2 days and then suddenly died ... The SG at 1020 indicated that my fermentation was not complete so I started to research the reasons for what is known as a "Stuck" fermentation.

Factors that may impact on the health of your yeast and contribute to a stuck fermentation in order of likelihood are:

1. insufficient nutrition for the yeast,
2. temperature shocks,
3. high alcohol levels AND insufficient oxygen for the yeast,
4. high alcohol levels AND insufficient starter size,
5. very high alcohol levels, or
6. overly-flocculent yeast.
7. PH outside of 3.5~8.5

Note that #1 and #6 are not really stuck ferments

If fermentation stops unexpectedly, you should first determine if you are close to the expected apparent attenuation for the yeast. If you are, then nothing you will do, short of adding a more attenuating yeast will get the gravity to drop any further. You calculate the apparent attenuation by using the following formula:

$$\% \text{ApparentAttenuation} = (1 - (\text{FG} - 1)/(\text{OG} - 1)) * 100$$

So, for example, if your OG was 1.050 and your FG was 1.012, then:

$$\begin{aligned} \% \text{ApparentAttenuation} &= (1 - (1.012 - 1)/(1.050 - 1)) * 100 \\ &= (1 - 0.012/0.050) * 100 \\ &= (1 - 0.24) * 100 \\ &= (0.76) * 100 \\ &= 76\% \text{ apparent attenuation} \end{aligned}$$

The most common cause is an unfermentable wort. Usually this is caused by mashing at too high a temperature.

Insufficient nutrition is also common among beers that are made of very large percentages of Dextrose, Sucrose, rice sugar or honey. When making meads, some kind of yeast nutrient is virtually mandatory. The best solution is to decrease the percentage of these nutrient less sugars and use more malt, but the easiest solution is to add yeast nutrient.

Temperature shocks (sudden changes, downward usually, in temperature) can cause yeast to flocculate out early and settle on the bottom. For example, Wyeast American Ale (#1056) really doesn't like temperatures much below 63F. At 57F Wyeast #1056 will simply sink to the bottom and go to sleep. The solution is to warm up the batch into a comfortable range for the yeast you used and then stir the yeast up into suspension again somehow (without aerating) or pitch a new starter.

If you are trying to make a high alcohol brew like a barleywine or a triplebock and fermentation stops, you must ask yourself: "Did I aerate enough?" and "Did I use a big enough starter?" Aeration is a tricky topic but most advice is to use an airstone and aquarium pump for 2~5 minutes. The longer the higher the SG !

As for pitching rates it is recommended that you always use a starter ! I try and use at least a 500 ml starter in a 23Litre batch for ale yeasts and double this for lagers.

If the alcohol level is really high, then about all you can do is to pitch a more alcohol-tolerant yeast, such as Pasteur Champagne yeast, available both dry and from Wyeast. You should still make up a big starter even if you use a more alcohol-tolerant yeast. Sometimes rousing (stirring up the yeast) can lower the gravity a few more points (try to not aerate the wort too much or you will elevate diacetyl levels).

If you are using a very highly flocculent yeast then you will have to keep rousing the yeast to get it back into suspension.

What can I do about a "stuck" fermentation?

Ah yes, the eternal question ... What's the hydrometer say now? If it is below 1.020 then I'd just live with it. If not, there are several things you can try, but they don't always work:

- (1) Give the fermenter a good shake or stir to rouse the yeast
- (2) Aerate again to wake up the yeast (could have bad side effects)
- (3) Add some more wort to wake the yeast
- (4) Add 1 to 2 litres of actively fermenting beer (high kraeusen)
- (5) Add yeast nutrient and energizer according to instructions
- (6) Move fermenter to a warmer place (only if it's too cold)
- (7) pray

The one most likely to work is the 5th - adding yeast nutrient and energizer. And if the cause is simply that the temperature dropped sharply, this could have shocked the yeast into going dormant. In this case get the temp back up to the proper range for your yeast (65F-70F for most Ale yeasts) and then stir to rouse the yeast back into suspension. But as I've said, if it is below 1.020 then live with it. In any case, this is a likely sign that you've done something wrong, so you should correct it for next time.

Possible things that went wrong are:

- mashed at too high a temp (all-grainers only)
(not necessarily wrong, but will mean your fermentation will finish a lot quicker, so maybe what you are seeing now is simply expected. Is your thermometer really accurate?)
- didn't aerate well enough
- didn't pitch enough yeast (not a big enough starter)
- racked to 2ndary too late (very likely)
- too much sugar or adjunct causing too little malt nutrients for yeast
- ambient temperature of fermenter dropped sharply

Something I've been reading about in Noonan's new book is Kraeusening your beer to help prevent it from sticking after racking. This involves taking off 2 before fermentation litres and storing it in the fridge before ferm, then adding it back (preferably actively fermenting) when you rack to 2ndary. I haven't tried this yet, but may try it on my next batch.

To do this right you have to have good timing. 24 hours before you rack, draw off a pint or so of fermenting beer and add it to the 2 litres you drew off before to get it going (use an airlock and all the rest, of course), then dump that back in just after you rack.

But chances are that there is some little thing you haven't done just right, and should correct next time around.

Sourced from www.bodensatz.com

\$450 beer a bit hard to swallow



A bottle of what is being billed the world's most expensive beer is seen in a dimly lit crypt-like cellar 50 feet beneath an old brewery in Copenhagen, Denmark. Photo: AP

Australians might consider themselves to be beer connoisseurs but we are unlikely to see a local version of the \$450 a bottle Carlsberg beer that has been launched in Denmark.

Carlberg's Vintage No.1 beer, probably the most expensive beer in the world, will be sold mainly through three of Copenhagen's most exclusive restaurants, Jens Eiken, the company's brewmaster, said. They will sell at 2008 kroner (\$450) a bottle. Only 600 of the 375ml bottles will be made, he said.

One Australian beer seller was sceptical about whether any beer could be worth that much. "It's hard to justify, I would think," Daniel Bennett, manager of the International Beer Shop in Perth, said. "But there are champagnes that sell for thousands of dollars. "It's hard to know what it's actually worth. I suppose it's up to the person who buys it to decide." Mr Bennet said that Australian beer brewers and sellers were not ready for a similar super-premium beer. "They are very much a limited market," he said.

Mr Bennett, who also sells beer through his shop's website, said that Australia's premium beer market had no equivalent.

Our version of a super-premium beer, Redoak Bock, could be had for \$6.40 for a 250ml bottle. "We've got a demand for Redoak here. They're one of the most awarded breweries in Australia," Mr Bennett said. He said the large breweries - Foster's and Lion Nathan Australia - tended to be more about "turnover of big-volume stuff".

The Lion Nathan Australia premium beer, the Knappstein Reserve Lager, sells for about \$5 a 330ml bottle at liquor shops.

"We're keeping opportunities in the market under review and I'm sure if the market demonstrates an appetite for that kind of [super-premier] brew we'd considered it," James Tait, corporate affairs director for Lion Nathan Australia, said.

"But it's not a market segment that we've recently identified.

"But beer is such a fantastic product. So who knows?"

The chief executive of the Australian Liquor Store Association, Terry Mott, was also sceptical of the local appeal of a super-expensive beer.

"At \$450 a stubbie, it's a tall ask, [but] there's a market there for collectors and people are interest in boutique beers," Mr Mott said.

Mr Eiken said part of the secret of the 10.5 per cent alcohol beer was the way it was stored in special Swedish and French oak casks in a dimly lit crypt 15 metres under the company's old brewery.

The expert said the taste of the brew hinted at prunes, caramel, vanilla, oak and cherry port bitterness, and was best consumed with gourmet blue cheese or on its own with "a very special friend".

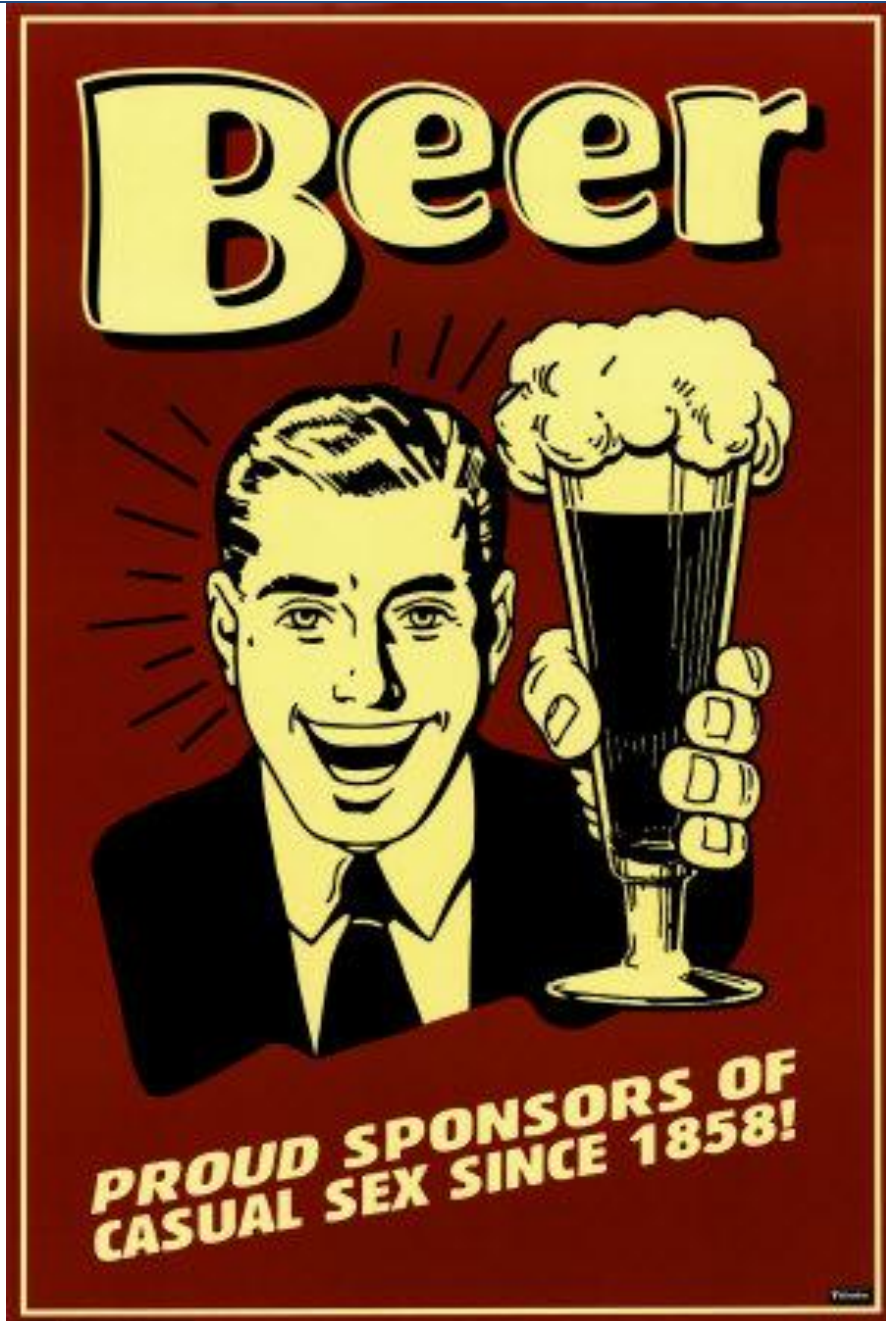
"We believe that there are people out there who are willing to part with this amount of money just so that they can taste an amazing beer or to keep it on their mantelpiece," he said.

Despite the Danish capital's high standard of living, some Copenhagen residents expressed doubts as to whether any beer would be worth that much.

"Only show-offs will buy this beer," said TV journalist Marie Grundtvig Buss. "There can't be any justification for such a price for a single bottle of beer."

There is another incentive for those finding the beer's price a bit hard to swallow. Each bottle is labelled with a hand stencilled original lithographic print by Danish artist Frans Kannike, making the empties worth 500 kroner (\$113) apiece, Mr Eiken said.

Comment was being sought from a spokeswoman for Carlsberg in Australia.
with AAP



At about 3AM, I was drunk as a skunk. I came home just in time to hear the cuckoo clock cuckoo three times. Quickly coming up with a plan, I cuckooed nine more times, hoping my wife would think it was midnight. I was very proud of myself.

The next day, my wife asked what time I got home, and I replied, "Midnight, just like I said." She said that was good, and for some reason she said we needed a new cuckoo clock.

When I asked why, she answered, "Last night when it cuckooed midnight, it cuckooed three times, said 'Shit!,' cuckooed four more times, farted, cuckooed three times, cleared its throat, cuckooed two more times and then started giggling."



Life Is Full Of Difficult Decisions