



March 2010 Newsletter

Next Club Meeting Sunday 21st March @12.30 pm

Wheat Beer
Comp!

THE SECRETARY'S REPORT

Greetings Fellow Brewers!

What a month it has been. The good wife and I have traveled around Victoria and had some great beers and some great times. The month started with a trip to Mirboo North and Melbourne Brewers Beer Fest. Westgate supported the event well, both with entries and attendance. The main day, Saturday, did result in a bit of palate fatigue, to say the least but it was a great event and I'm sure everyone that went had a good time. Congratulations must go to Geoff Daly for his best beer in show with his Strong Scotch Ale. Michael Bowron also got a third with his Pale Lager. Well done! For a club that does struggle to get members, we've had 2 brewers now get 2 best beers in show at the last 2 major competitions. We must make sure that someone from Westgate brews the best beer in show at our Stout Extravaganza! I've put down another Oatmeal stout with a "tweak" of the recipe, so, we'll see how we go!

Mia and I also spent this weekend at another beer related festival. We went up to Heathcote for the Snag, Beer & Bubble festival. There was a fine selection of beers available from Bridge Road, Red Duck, Coldstream Brewery and The Tooborac Hotel (which is where Damian brews). It was the first time they had run this but it was great weather and really nice to sit outside, drink some nice beers, eat some really good sausages and listen to some great music. The only downside was the pub we stayed at only had VB or Carlton. It was a reminder of why I brew!

On the way home, we stopped in and had a look at the set up at Tooborac. James, the owner, seems keen on the idea of a brew day there, so it may be a case of watch this space!

Lastly, On Saturday 27th of March, there will be an unofficial brew day at my house. I aim to be mashing in around 10.30 and at this stage, will be making an ESB. Everyone is welcome to come along and see how I do things. The BBQ will be available for use and it will be like a club meeting in so far as it will be BYO food. I'll have plates and cutlery and beer glasses.

The committee are also planning on having a meeting an hour before the next meeting. If you'd like to have some input in the agenda for the club, feel free to come along and have your say!

'Till next time

Cheers

Ferg

Secretary



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

Club Diary

March 2010

Wheat beer (no Wit) comp
27th Brew day with Fergus

May 2010

Stout comp
2nd Brew day @ your place?

June 2010

Pale ale comp

July 2010

Annual general meeting.
Who will be on the committee for the next year?

Contacts

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Coming Events

17th & 18th March

Victorian Microbreweries Showcase
The Atrium, Fed square

27th March

Yarra Valley Brewers
Belgian Beerfest

5th May

Local Taphouse Brewshare

21st & 22nd May

Beer & Brewer Expo
Fed Square

4th July (TBC)

Looking for an alternate venue
Westgate Brewers
Stout Extravaganza

28th to 30th October

Australian National Homebrewing
Conference, Melbourne.



**Sponsors of
Westgate
Brewers**

Westgate Brewers is committed to encouraging responsible drinking
REMEMBER– If you Drink and Drive-You're a Bloody Idiot

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Ferg's attempt at reculturing yeast !

As we all know, yeast is very important to our brewing. Recently, I under pitched an old Wyeast pack. I know I under pitched because it took 5 days to get going. When I dumped a new batch of wort on the cake, it was moving within a day. I'm just new to all this yeast stuff. And I thought there was heaps to learn and know when it came to just mashing, sparging and boiling !

I've got a few bottles on Unibroue's Fin Due Monde in the fridge. They have stopped importing this Belgian style Golden into Australia because they apparently cannot satisfy domestic demand. I've decided to see if I can culture some yeast out of this lovely brew, and if I can, I'm going to use it to make a Belgian golden ale. Seeing I have 6, this is just an experiment !

So this experiment started by requiring me to drink some really good (in my opinion) beer !

I poured it out into a glass until I saw some sediment start to run out and then I stopped. This left about 25% of beer in the stubby. I then put the lid back on..Well tried to...it was a crown seal !

Now I should point out that the flask I use for the next step is suitable for use on the stove top and can handle being put straight from stove top to ice bath. I got it from the Grain & Grape. You can buy them elsewhere, but John & the boys are my first port of call for all things brewing !

My next step was making up a wort on the stove top. This was a mixture of light dried malt extract and water at a ratio of 1 liter of water to 100 grams malt extract to make a wort of about 1.040.



This apparently is the best OG when making a yeast starter. I boiled it for about five to ten minutes to sterilize it and then took it off the heat. I then put a tin foil lid over it and put it in the sink, which was filled with ice and cold water to cool it down. I needed to get it down to about 24 to 20 degrees to make it a nice healthy environment for the yeast to grow.

Once the wort was at this temp, I carefully poured the rest of the Fin Du Monde Beer into the flask (after a quick swirl) and then turned on my plate stirrer and put the foil lid back on.

Apparently, you should do this 4 or 5 days before you want to brew. At this stage, this is just an experiment to see if this yeast is viable. I'll know in a day or two. If it is, the yeast may form a foam on top (without a plate stirrer, it should definitely) Then if I was brewing, after a taste and smell test, I just pour it into my main batch. I should point out though, I may need to step this starter up. That is another whole kettle of fish. Maybe I'll write another article next month...if you people tell me at our next meeting you'd like me to ! Cheers in Beers...Ferg. Secretary. Westgate Brewers.



Go Watch Fergus Brew Something

Seeing as Fergus was good enough to write the front page report and send in an article, I thought I would just mention his upcoming brew day again.



It's on the 27th of March starting around 10.30 am. Brings some brews and lunch to cook on the BBQ. For those new to the club or not able to attend the last Christmas function, his address is

270 Francis St
Yarraville

Drop in take a sticky beak at another brewers setup.



I've got a blank space to fill, so here is a picture of a kettle with a stainless filter in the bottom, filling up with fresh wort.

Almost erotic with its interplay of light, gently curving tubing and bubbling liquids. I need to get out more, too many hours spent on this newsletter are taking their toll...

Worlds Strongest Beer Update

A few months ago I printed a story on the Imperial Stout, at the time the strongest beer, called Tactical Nuclear Penguin. (Still think it's a great name..) Well since then the hype and mainstream negative news stories have hit overdrive with what seems to be a showdown for the title of World's strongest beer. It's certainly generated a massive amount of controversy and publicity. The two combatants have been on BBC radio together so I'm certain the brewers involved are loving the attention.

How strong can a beer be and still be called a beer? Think of the strongest beer you've ever tried and this would be three times as strong. What does a beer that strong even taste like? Apparently it's an IPA and it's massively alcoholic, thick, caramel like, hoppy and drinkable.

A controversial Scottish brewery has said it has reclaimed the title of the world's strongest beer from German rivals - with Sink the Bismarck at 41%.

BrewDog, of Fraserburgh, made headlines last year when it unveiled a 32% beer called Tactical Nuclear Penguin.

However, Schorschbrau released the 40% strength Schorschbock. BrewDog said its newly released 41%, Sink the Bismarck, would cost £40 for a 330ml bottle and would only be sold online.



Editor's Eisbock Ordeal



Last winter I made a dopple bock and bottled the majority as per normal, holding back about 7 litres to have a try at making an Eisbock. I just used a rectangular, plastic sanitised storage container with plastic wrap over the top. At a rough estimate I would give it about an hour for every litre to see some freezing action.



The strainer couldn't hold all the ice I had created so I had to juggle it in various containers. Not ideal and rather messy. I think I put the first concentrate back in the freezer and gave it all another straining.

As the freezing process kills the yeast, I rehydrated some champagne yeast in a little water and added this along with a couple of drops of that dry beer enzyme stuff, hoping this would do something. After about 2 weeks the gravity had dropped to 1.016 so I bottled away. Almost 6 months to the day, I found some exploded bottles. I only had 8 to start with and this took out 3.

The remainder are in the fridge waiting for me to work up the courage to degas them.

The beer tastes like rocket fuel at the moment and the enzyme, and possibly the champagne yeast, may have been a mistake.

If I could have captured the flavours of that freshly concentrated sample and carbonated it in a keg, I think it would have been something special. Does any one have the patience to try this and make a whole keg of it?



From left to right is the Eisbock, Dopple bock and the ice discarded portion. From memory there was little difference in the gravity of the samples, about 22, 20 and 18 respectively. And yes I did warm the frozen ones up. The colour doesn't vary a great deal either. What did vary was the flavour. The concentrate was strong rich and incredibly smooth, while the ice discarded portion tasted all wrong and watery despite the similar gravities.



A Peak At Some Possible New Australian Hop Varieties

"The first weeks of autumn mark the annual hop harvest and the brewing of Cascade First Harvest, a highlight here at Cascade. While it's always rewarding to work with our local barley and hop growers to source the freshest seasonal harvest, it's also a time for us to experiment with new hop varieties," Max said.

"Using hops that haven't been used in brewing before means that we're able to craft a truly unique tasting full-flavoured beer each year, and in doing so, keep beer lovers guessing."

Continuing the tradition and in a nod to the history of the Tasmanian hop growing industry, Max has personally named the three new hop varieties: **Text** (aroma hop), **Glenleith** (bitter hop) and **Oakley** (flavor hop) after the original hop drying kilns (otherwise known as 'oast houses') of Tasmania. Amongst many others which were built more than 100 years ago, these kilns still stand today in the Derwent Valley.



"Based on this year's hop selection and the traditional style of First Harvest beers, we anticipate the 2010 brew to have distinctive fruit salad and resinous hop flavours offset by peppery, spicy aromas and finishing with leafy spearmint notes," Max said

The 2010 release of Cascade First Harvest Ale will be available from the 3rd of May at premium retailers nationally

Other Australian Harvest Beers

Bridge Road Brewery



Ben Kraus owner/brewer at Beechworth's Bridge Road Brewery has a very modest hop garden of East Kent Goldings, but also has access to the research garden at the nearby Rostrevor Hop Gardens. These provide him with access to some experimental hop varieties that he is among the first to use. Last year Ben turned out The Harvest, a fresh-hopped version of his Australian Ale and Ben is about to brew The Harvest II. The hop harvest will take place on Monday 14th March and the beer will be available in April or May. The uncertainty of exactly when is because, as Ben explains, "we keep adding hops to it until we think it's ready."



The Brewers were knee deep in hops for this special brew, using hops just harvested from our own vines which were then steeped in our conditioning tanks for months, this is a traditional English style bitter. Copper in colour with a strong malt character, balanced by the use of our new seasons Willamette and Goldings hops to create a full hop flavour and aroma. The complex grain bill provides a full, rich & malty ale that has hints of marmalade and lashings of hop resin flavours, finishing with a peppery spicy note.

Malt- Maris Otter, Crystal, Pale Chocolate

Hops- Bittering Willamette, Aroma Goldings, Dry hopped Goldings

Original Gravity 1061. IBU 44. Alc/v 6%

Short & Sweet



No Ticket system this year?

To sample beer you will be given a 200mL tasting glass, and then you will need to purchase beer to sample from each Exhibitor. Tastings are expected to be around \$2 per 100mL and \$4 per 200mL.

Beer & Brewer Expo, proudly brought to you by Dan Murphy's, brings the magazine alive with the core elements presented by our celebrity cast. Join Jamil Zainasheff (USA) in our Home Brewing presentation area, brought to you by BREW Cellar, Ed 'Fast Ed' Halmagyi (Aus) in the Beer & Food Matching area, brought to you by Coopers and Chang, along with Roger Protz (UK) in the Beer Tasting Master Classes presentation area, brought to you by Dan Murphy's. In your showbag at entry you will find a tasting glass to sample from over 100 full-flavoured local and imported beers from Broome to Colac and from Germany across to Thailand. The Expo is open to the public Friday 21st May, from 12 - 4pm and 5 - 9pm in The Atrium, Fed Square, with live demonstrations in Transport Hotel and Saturday 22nd May 11am - 5pm along the River Terrace, Fed Square, with live demonstrations in the BMW Edge presentation room.

Here is a handy little website for those times when your own beers are in short supply. Choose the beer you want and your postcode and it will list all the bottle shops in the area that stock the beer, and the price.

It doesn't have the newest microbreweries obscure specialty beer, but it does have things like Little Creatures and Mountain Goat along with the usual mainstream Australian and Imported beers.

You can also search any bottle shop specials for that week. Have a go, it works surprisingly well. Thanks to Robin for the tip off. Link to the website [here](http://boozle.com.au).



A funny version of the Dr Seuss book Green Eggs & Ham, called Craft Beer & Ale can be found online [here](#). I have to question the wisdom of matching children's stories and beer, but it's rather well done I thought.



"Alcohol Is Not The Answer
To All The questions"
-M.K. Gandhi



"Alcohol Is Not The Answer
To All The questions ,
But If u Dont't Get The
Answer It Helps You
To Forget The Questions"
-Vijay Malhiya



Full Results available over [here](#).

Nice Result Geoff!

Beerfest 2010

Champion Beer of Show		Sponsored by: Grand Ridge Brewery	
Geoff Daly	Westgate	Strong Scotch Ale	131 Points



Champion Brewer		(sponsored by Jamieson Brewery, Mrs. Parmas Restaurant and White Rabbit Brewery)
Tied Champion		
Chris Taylor	Melbourne Brewers	7 points (2 x 1st, 1 x 3rd)
Robin Brown	Melbourne Brewers	7 Points (2 x 2nd, 3 x 3rd)



Best Novice Brewer		Sponsored by: VicBrew	
Andrew Davison	Melbourne Brewers	Lambic	116 points



Best Club of Show		Sponsored by: Grain & Grape			
		1st Place	2nd Place	3rd Place	Total
1	Melbourne Brewers	3	4	6	23
2	Worthogs	0	3	1	7
3	Westgate	1	0	1	4
4	Western Sydney	1	0	0	3
5	Yarra Valley	0	0	0	0
6	Bendigo	0	0	0	0
7	Bayside	0	0	0	0



Category Results Summary

Category 1		Sponsored by Little Creatures	
	Pale Ale		
1	Kevin Tewerik	American Pale Ale	117 points
2	Dan Walker	Cream Ale	115.5 points
3	John Strantzen	English Pale Ale	115 points



Category 2		Sponsored by True South Brewery	
	Pale Lager		
1	Mark Beevis	Munich Helles	121 points
2	Lukas Dedman	Bohemian Pilsner	114 points
3	Michael Bowron	German Pilsner	114 points



Category 3		Sponsored by Brewer's Den	
	Dark Ale/Lager		
1	Stephen Hewitson	Dusseldorf Altbier	122.5 points
2	John Strantzen	Schwartzbier	119 points
3	Robin Brown	American Brown Ale	118 points



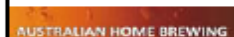
Category 4		Sponsored by Bintani	
	Strong Ale/Lager		
1	Geoff Daly	Strong Scotch Ale	131 points
2	Robin Brown	Strong Scotch Ale	123 points
3	Chris Taylor	Doppelbock	120.5 points



Category 5		Sponsored by Greensborough HBS	
	British Ale		
1	Murray Robinson	Best Bitter	98 points
2	Robin Brown	Irish Red Ale	93 points
3	Michael Hewes	Best Bitter	93 points



Category 6		Sponsored by Australian Home Brewing HBS	
	Porter/Stout		
1	Chris Taylor	Russian Imperial Stout	122 points
2	Darren Hayes	Baltic Porter	120.5 points
3	Robin Brown	Brown Porter	117.5 points



Category 7		Sponsored by Three Ravens Brewery	
	Belgian Ale		
1	Cale Hunkin	Saison	120 points
2	Linton Young	Raspberry Lambic	117 points
3	Andrew Davison	Lambic	116 points



Category 8		Sponsored by Bintani	
	Wheat & Rye Beers		
1	Chris Taylor	Weizenbock	112 points
2	Paul Yates	Witbier	111.5 points
3	Robin Brown	Weizenbock	109 points





Yarra Valley Brewers Belgian Beerfest 2010

Saturday 27 March at Coldstream Brewery
694 Maroondah Hwy, Coldstream, Victoria. Melways Ref: 281 B8

Closing Date for entries: Saturday 20th March, or 12 pm at the competition venue.
\$5 per entry. Entries can be delivered to participating homebrew stores: *Brewers Choice, Grain & Grape, Greensborough Home Brewing Supplies, The Brewers Den*, or presented by 12 pm at the competition venue.

Rules & Information

- Maximum of 1 entry per substyle within each category, per brewer. The beer style nominated must a designated style for the category, as listed over the page. The organisers reserve the right to reclassify a beer to a listed style. Style guidelines (to be used in the judging) available at: www.vicbrew.org
- One bottle (per entry 750ml preferred) with a minimum of 500 ml beer. If necessary, provide two bottles and attach an entry form to each bottle with an additional marking as Bottle1 and Bottle2. Cost \$5 per entry.
- Judging will be by blind tasting. Judges decision will be final. Completed judging sheets will be returned to brewers.
- Prizes will be awarded for the best three beers in each Category, the 'Champion Beer of Show' award and the 'Best Novice Brewer' award. The Sponsors of the prizes are listed over page. Beers within a Category will be judged together using the Style guidelines. (See rule 1.)
- Tied placing's will be separated by applying the following criteria in order until a winner is found: a) highest score for "overall impression"; b) highest score for "flavour"; c) smallest spread in total scores (smallest difference between highest and lowest scores); d) the tie stands.
- Champion Beer and Best Novice will be based on the highest number of judging points received for any beer, with rule 5. to be invoked in the event of a tie.
- Best Novice Trophy is open to Victorian entrants who have not placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd in previous VicBrew accredited competitions.
- Presentations for Belgian Beerfest 2010 to be made by 5 pm on Saturday 27 March.

ENTRY FORM – Belgian Beerfest 2010

Closing Date: Saturday 20th March at participating homebrew stores or 12 pm at competition venue.

Fold page or cut off entry form and attach to bottle with payment and entry details visible, using rubber band only.

Brewer's Name One name only will be registered by Organizers		Organiser use only – entry #	
Address (street)		Suburb	
Email		Postcode	
Phone	Club		

Category		Style Must be a designated Style for the Category nominated (see over).	
Name of Brew (optional)		Bottle Cap ID	
<input type="checkbox"/> Full Mash	<input type="checkbox"/> Mini Mash/Extract	<input type="checkbox"/> Extract	<input type="checkbox"/> Kit Please specify kit:
Yeast:	OG:	FG:	

Payment included	<input type="checkbox"/> with this entry
	<input type="checkbox"/> as part of a bulk payment.
Payment for bulk entries must be enclosed in a single envelope, accompanied by a complete list of Brewers and their Entries.	

Categories & Styles for Belgian Beerfest 2010

Full Style Guidelines available at: www.vicbrew.org.au

SPONSORS



Category/Awards	Styles (Beers can only be entered in the listed styles)
1. BELGIAN STRONG ALE	1.1 Belgian Blonde Ale 1.2 Belgian Strong Golden Ale 1.3 Tripel 1.4 Dubbel 1.5 Belgian Strong Dark Ale
2. FARMHOUSE ALE	2.1 Witbier 2.2 Saison 2.3 Biere De Garde
3. WILD BEER	3.1 Flanders Red Ale 3.2 Flanders Brown Ale/Oud Bruin 3.3 Straight (unblended) Lambic 3.4 Gueuze 3.5 Fruit Lambic
4. CHAMPION BEER OF SHOW	
5. BEST NOVICE BREWER	

ENTRY COLLECTION POINTS

