



# DREGS

From the Keg

Strand Brewers' Club

April 1999

## GET READY FOR TEMECULA!

See articles, pages 2 & 5

### Foam at the Top

by David Welch

#### INDIVIDUAL BEER JUDGING/EVALUATION

In efforts to help all members of the Strand Brewers Club make the Best Damn Beer even better, the SBC is now offering individual beer judging/evaluation at the beginning of each monthly meeting. This is a perfect opportunity for anyone who would like their beer to be judged as it would be in a competition. However, it won't cost you anything. Best of all, we don't even care how the beer is packaged (6 oz., 12 oz. or 22 oz. Bottles, Grolsch/Swing Top Bottles, or Pepsi Bottles, etc.). You bring the beer and one of the Club's eight (8) judges will score it for you on a competition score-sheet.

Competition beers are scored on a scale of 0 - 50 points as follows: Problematic (0-13), Fair (14-20), Good (21-29), Very Good (30-37), Excellent (38-44), Outstanding (45-50). Generally speaking, a score of 35 or higher means you have a damn good beer and a good shot at winning a competition! This is also the perfect opportunity for constructive feedback on your beer and to be able to discuss the comments

with a judge. You might have an excellent beer that could be classified in the wrong category or you could simply get some positive feed back on how to make the beer even better.

Who knows, you might find out that you have an excellent beer! If you are interested, please see one of our 8 judges listed below before our meeting officially starts at 7:30 p.m. After this time, all bets are off as the judges may not be able to properly judge your beer depending upon how much beer they have already consumed!

#### SBC JUDGES

Jay Ankeney	Mike Froehlich
David Cordrey	Bill Krouss
Pete Chin Sang	Joel Rosen
Steve Fafard	John Welsch

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## What's Up

by Ron Cooper, Activities Director

### BREWSKI CHALLENGE

It took a while, but Brewski's have chosen a winner in their challenge competition. Jon Maxey carried off first prize for a fine American Pale Ale (might I call it Maxeyman Pale?) They plan to brew it "about a month" from mid-March. As I get a date and time I'll spread the word.

Other finalists were Dave Welch with an American Amber and Bill Krouss with a Stout. Jason Rosenfeld and Casey Davis got an honorable mention for their Brown Ale. Congratulations to them all, - now for the brewing and drinking!

### TEMECULA

You've still got time for a batch for Temecula, but its getting tight. Don't forget the free ingredients available at South Bay Home-brew Supply - pick 'em up at the April meeting. In case you need them here are the key telephone numbers:

(800)234-7275 to reserve campsites,

Hot line (562)908-9434 (Date is 8 May).

APRIL MEETING on the 14th will feature the judging of the Tap Handle Derby.

FINAL FRIDAY will be at the Redondo Beach Brewing company on the 30th. (There was a good turnout for Naja's in March and the large glasses of Bigfoot were flowing like.....(beer?). Good times had by all).

29 MAY: - CA Blues and Brews Festival.

This message from our esteemed President. "The date for the Great California Blues & Brews Festival at Avilla Beach (just past Pismo Beach) is set for Saturday, May 29th this year. Tickets are not available yet, but you can call the Hospice of San Luis Obispo at 805-544-2266 for more information about the event.

Campsites are filling up quickly, so call 805-595-2359 and ask for Shari to book your site at the Avilla Hot Springs campsite. There is a 3 day minimum booking for this campsite. I look forward to hopefully seeing some SBC members at the Festival." David.

### JUNE:

There'll be another club brew - the Summer Solstice. Details when we get it firmed up.

### BEER JUDGE CLASSES.

Still no definite plans, to press time. However interest is very high, with more than 30 interested parties from the three clubs. A poll regarding weekend classes was favorable, so the class(es) may be on weekend(s). As I get more news I'll pass it on.

Please let me know if you'd like to be added to our list. Also let me know of conflict days so we can accommodate as many as possible. Call me at (310)546-1524 or email to roncooper@earthlink.net

### PACIFIC BREWERS' CUP.

Planning meetings are the 4th Thursday at Culver City Home Brew Supply, 7 PM. If you're interested in participating, come by. Its at 4358-1/2 Sepulveda, just south of Culver Blvd.

Don't forget those Temecula Brews!

Ron

## Southern California Homebrewers' Festival

Saturday May 8, 1999, 9:00 am - 9:00 pm  
Lake Skinner, Temecula CA

Camping Reservations are going fast. Most of us will be in Loop A. If you prefer something quieter, you might choose Loop B or C. Camping reservations 800-234-7275.

Tickets - Tickets are available at the meetings for \$30. This event is not open to the public, but some tickets will be made available at the door for \$50. Buy now.

Volunteers - For the past few years the clubs received a rebate of \$3 for each ticket sold. Last year a new policy was implemented by which the clubs receive the rebate only if two or more volunteers show up for duty. Each volunteer works a two-hour shift and gets in free. To volunteer call Lisa Cook at 909-682-5765 or Kurt Miller 909-689-7643. Shifts and duties assigned on a first-come first-served basis.

Food - Gazzolo's Sausages, Taco Factory, Hot Pot

Speakers - Greg Noonan and 2 others to be determined

Entertainment - Jazz band in the morning. Evening band to be determined

T-Shirts - T-shirts with the festival logo on the back and our club logo on the front are available pre-paid only. \$12 up to XL. \$13 for XXL and XXXL. You must pay by the March meeting.

Beer - The beer is provided by the clubs. That's us! If you haven't yet brewed for the fest then get brewin'! We always make a most impressive show with the quality and quantity of our beer. Let's keep up the tradition.

Be Cool. - Please take responsibility for yourself and any friends that you purchased tickets for, both at the festival and the campground. If we end up with problems, we will no longer be welcome at Lake Skinner. Please be responsible. The future of the festival depends on you.

## The Veep Speaks

By Jon Maxey, Vice President

As a follow up to last months article, I thought it might be interesting (and timely) to find out what the first Temecula Festival was like, so I contacted Eric Stoker {one of the founding fathers mentioned last month} and indeed not only had Eric attended, but also could remember some of what went on. I think the Temecula Fest is like the sixties "if you can remember it, you didn't live it", oh well, be that as it may, lets find out what Eric does remember about the Fest.

Q: Eric, was the festival held at the same location as it is now?

A: Not originally. The first couple of festivals were at Cilurzo Vinyards in Temecula which is just down the road from the present site. It was very nice, but a lot smaller than Lake Skinner. The camp ground was basically just the grounds of the vinyard, nice but very cozy with quite a few tents crammed into a small area. If someone snored, half the people there could hear it.

Q: Did the SBC have a table or booth set up for Fest I.

A: No we didn't. There were only four of us there, myself, Doug Brasher, Sean Colvin, and Mark Cookson and homebrew in kegs was somewhat of a rarity back then. We all just brought bottles of what we'd been making and passed them around kind of like a big SBC meeting. I remember maybe only four or five homebrew clubs there, and the Falcons were the only ones with a table set up. By the second fest, there were quite a few more homebrew clubs and everyone had their own tables. Also, the first festival was about half homebrew clubs and half microbreweries.

Q: Any personal memories of the first Temecula?

A: A few. I remember it rained Saturday night and Sean didn't have a tent. We found him in the morning rolled up in a plastic tarp, and I won two big bags of hops at the raffle and me and Doug had forgotten our pillows so we used those. They worked great as pillows and also helped with the tent aromatics (I guess that third sausage sandwich had settled in on the boys). There was also a drinking area called "center line" which was a picnic table where everyone would line their glasses up down the center and whoever was pouring would work their way down the center of the table.

Q: So Eric, are we going to see you out there this year?

A: I sure hope so. I've got an English bitter that I just brewed for this years fest so I'm looking forward to it. Well, this is your inquisitive VEEP signing off for yet another month. Who will I be bothering next month?

Nuf said, Jon.

### MEETING AGENDA FOR APRIL 14TH

7:00 - 7:30 SOCIAL/RANDOM TASTING

1. Social Tasting
2. Individual Beer Judging/Evaluation

7:30 - 7:45 ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. SBC/Brewski's Winner (Jon Maxey)
2. Temecula Festival Tickets(Purchase Now & Save!)
3. Temecula Festival Beer Sign Up Sheets
4. Temecula Festival Gift Certificates For Beer
5. SBC Club Brew (March 13) For Temecula Festival
6. Final Friday-Redondo Beach Brewing
7. Miscellaneous

7:45 - 8:00 TAP HANDLE DERBY JUDGING

1. Best
2. Worst
3. Most Unique

8:00 - 8:30 TASTE AND TELL PRESENTATION

1. Ron Cooper - Extract Brewing

8:30 - 9:00 SOCIAL/RANDOM TASTING

1. Raffle?
2. Social Tasting

## Spent Grains

by Bill Krauss, Treasurer

There has been a lot of interest expressed recently in beer judging. One of the most difficult parts of judging for me is understanding what the different flavor elements/flaws in beers really taste like. The following is a post to the Home Brewers Digest (<http://hbd.org>) from last Monday made by George De Piro. I thought it very concisely described many of the major flavors you might find in a beer, and gives some commercial examples which could help you identify the flavors for yourself.

Subject: Beer characteristics & commercial examples

Hi all,

Since the queue is short, and I have a few minutes, I figured that I would discuss some of beer's organoleptic qualities, including commercial examples that have certain flavor elements in a clearly discernible quantity (at least they are clearly discernible by me; your mileage may vary):

**Diacetyl:** butter or butterscotch, very noticeable in any Middle Ages (Syracuse) beers and in many English beers (especially the older ones). Any brewpub with a Pugsley system will produce beers with diacetyl above threshold level. Failing all this, go to the supermarket and buy some imitation butter flavor (in the spice aisle).

**Phenols:** as Jeff Renner said, the really gross ones that taste like plastic, medicine, or chlorine aren't often found in commercial beers. Pleasantly spicy phenols, like 4-vinyl guaiacol, are found in Bavarian-style wheat beers and many Belgian beers. Many lip balms contain phenol; simply read the label and purchase one with phenol in it and give it a whiff/taste. Pretty strong, and pretty gross. **Dimethyl sulfide (DMS):** this is noticeable in many light lagers. Perhaps the best beer to try is the reissue of Rheingold. It reeks of DMS. If you are sensitive to DMS you will smell it as a vegetable-like aroma in Rheingold. If you are less sensitive to DMS, Rheingold may smell like creamed corn. It's really the only reason to purchase such a poor (and overpriced) beer (IMNSHO).

**Cheesy:** bake some hops (any form) for a little while at low heat. Smell them periodically. You will notice an unpleasant cheesy aroma after a short while (I don't know how long it will take).

**Acetaldehyde:** smells like freshly cut pumpkin or unripe apples. Also smells like Budweiser (its easier to smell it if the beer is warmer than the typical serving temperature of Budweiser).

**Skunky:** Pour a Bass ale into a clear pint glass. Set it in full sun for 30-60 seconds, then smell. You could avoid that work by simply buying Corona or Heineken and smelling what is in the bottle, but then

you'll have 5 more poor beers to get rid of.

**Oxidized:** a very broad array of flavors/aromas are caused by oxidation. These include metallic, papery (especially noticeable when the beer is swished around the tongue), vegetables, and sherry. Oxidation can also cause a decrease in the perception of malt flavors, leaving the beer unbalanced and incomplete. Many imported beers are severely oxidized, including every bottle of Sam Smiths I have ever had in the States. The major Munich brewery's 1998 Oktoberfestbiers were all quite papery tasting, even on draft, in the NYC area (and I had a reliable report of the same thing in Texas). Spaten's Franziskaner Weissbier often has papery notes, too (here in the NYC area).

**Sour/acidic:** yogurt-like (lactic acid) or vinegar-like (acetic acid). A good Lambic like Cantillon will display these qualities, or you can simply spike a beer.

**Sulfur:** hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S) smells like rotten eggs and is a common byproduct of lager fermentations. This aroma should not be discernible in the finished beer.

**Fruity:** a class of organic compounds called esters are responsible for the fruity characteristics found in beer. On the extreme end of fruity commercial examples is Bavarian-style wheat beer, with its big banana character.

**Solvent-like:** alcohols that are larger than ethanol (the so-called higher alcohols or fusel alcohols) can be discerned as harshly alcoholic or solventy. Certain esters can also be solventy in high enough concentrations (ethyl acetate, for one). Fusel production is *\*always\** exacerbated by excessive yeast growth (see my recent Brewing Techniques article (Jan/Feb. 1999) about yeast management for more details). Excessive fusels are often found in high-gravity homebrew. Schneider's Aventinus probably has as much fusel character as any commercial beer will ever have, although it is still not as stupefying as many high-gravity homebrews.

**Brettanomyces:** this earthy, musty, fruity, sharp character has many components contributing to it. Words cannot do it justice. An old bottle of Orval (all of the Orval in stores in the USA is old) will teach the drinker what Brettanomyces smells like. Fresh bottles of Orval are very hoppy in nose, with the Brett. character being very undeveloped compared to the older bottles. Those of you who still think that Brett. character smells like a horse or its blanket should check out:

<http://members.aol.com/Maltoon/funnypage.html>

Have fun! George de Piro (Nyack, NY) M a l t e d Barley Appreciation Society <http://members.aol.com/MaltyDog/maltind.html>

## The Boiling Pot

*By David Cordrey - SBC Secretary*

### CLUB BREW

The March Club Brew was a success in spite of the light turn out. Thanks to Casey Davis, Dan Hakes, Steve Fafard, Bill Krouss, Jason Rosenfeld and Angelo Valdespino who all showed up at my house on March 13<sup>th</sup> to make two, 10 gallons of beer. The styles produced were a Belgian Tripple and a Dortmund export.

Club brews are always fun and a good way to pick up tips and learn new tricks. It's not quite the same as brewing alone – you're forced to improvise a bit because you're using different equipment, you don't have complete control of the process yourself, and there's plenty of "backseat drivers". The end result however is very satisfying – both in the drinking and in the memories.

This time, we used my setup to make the Dortmund Export using a double decoction mash schedule. We actually did an extra decoction to hit the mash temperature. This is because I'm accustomed to making 5 gallon batches and didn't fully anticipate the extra temperature drop from mashing in a converted keg, rather than the plastic bucket like I normally use. Everything worked out OK though and I think everyone present saw how easy it is to do a decoction mash. This beer is amber in color, starting gravity of 1.055 and about 38 IBUs. Wyeast 2206 Bavarian Lager yeast was used. The gravity was 1.010 on 3/30/99 and a small sample was approved as "Good Beer".

Jason, Casey and Angelo brought their setup over and it was used to make the Tripple. They have a nice portable setup, however we had to improvise a three tier system, using an old refrigerator in my garage. The Tripple used a single infusion mash and a healthy addition of Belgian

candi sugar during the boil. This beer is very pale, has a starting gravity of 1.078, about 12 IBUs, and a touch of spice. Wyeast 1214 Belgian Abbey Ale yeast was used. Because of the high starting gravity this beer may not be quite ready for Temecula.

Here are a few things I learned from the club brew:

I recently made a "heat shield" for my boiling pot and hot water tank. It's made from sheet metal and wraps around my converted kegs. A couple of long door springs keep about a 1/2" gap between the sheet metal and the keg. This channels the waste heat that flows around the bottom of the keg up along the sides and also reflects the heat radiated out the sides back onto the keg. I've used this a few times before, but never with a 10 gallon batch. Both time to boil and heat input to maintain boil were dramatically reduced compared to the setup without the heat shield. See the related article in this issue for plans.

Jason's setup used a funny looking propane burner that he claims has a 200,000 btu/hr output. This thing really cranked – it shot a flame about three feet into the air when no pot was over it. This burner was so simple I took a few measurements and built a similar one for about \$7.00 worth of parts. I haven't tried it out yet for brewing, but if this thing works as good as Jason's did, then I'll publish the plans in a future issue of The Dregs.

Wort chillers were used on both batches, a counterflow chiller on the Lager and an immersion chiller on the Tripple. This opened the great debate on which type is better! I don't think anyone's mind was changed, but it was a good demonstration of how each type works. Everyone did agree that some type of wort chiller is essential. If you don't know what a wort chiller is, see the article "Wort Chiller Basics" on the SBC website tech info page.

## Shorten Your Brewing Time & Improve Your Fuel Efficiency

By David Cordrey

How often have you wished you could get your wort to a boil faster or heat mash / sparge water in a hurry? If you're like me it probably happens every time you brew. I got tired of all that waiting (I've got better things to do than watch water heating), so I made a simple heat shield that dramatically reduces the time to boil and allows me to maintain a rolling boil with just a small flame on my Cajun Cooker type burner.

It can take 30 to 40 minutes or longer to get 10 gallons of wort or water to boil on most homebrewing systems. The problem is heat loss – the burner puts heat into the bottom of the pot, but heat is lost through the top and sides. Putting a lid on the pot helps a lot, but then it's hard to stir, take temperatures, add hops, watch for boil overs, etc. A tremendous amount of heat is lost through the sides of the pot as well. There is a lot more surface area on the side of the pot and this acts like a radiator, dumping heat from your brew pot into the surrounding air. The problem is worse if you brew outdoors and there is even a slight breeze.

The concept of the heat shield is that the heat normally radiated out the sides of the pot is reflected back to the pot. An additional feature of this heat shield design is that some of the heat from the burner is also channeled up along the side of the pot, where it can be used to help heat your brew instead of heating your garage or backyard.

The construction details are quite simple and shown in the accompanying figures. Use 20" wide galvanized steel roll roof flashing for the

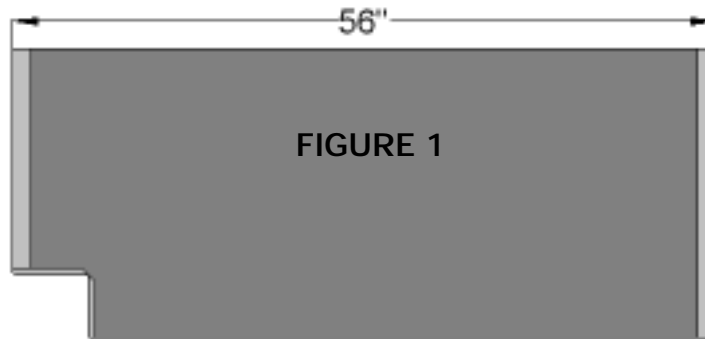
main part of the shield. This width fits the height of a converted keg brew pot perfectly. Cut a piece of flashing about 58 to 60 inches long, then fold back the cut edges an inch or so to get rid of the sharp edges. Caution: use bricks or 2 x 4s to hold the flashing flat while working with it and wear gloves to avoid cuts.

Don't try to flatten out the natural curl in the material – that's what will keep the shield wrapped around your keg. Measure and cut out a notch for the spigot on your keg (5 inches square for my keg) on one corner. See Figure 1. The shield should wrap around the keg with the spigot sticking through the notch and the ends should overlap a few inches.

For proper operation the heat shield needs to stand off the keg a little bit. To accomplish this, get some long skinny old fashioned screen door springs that are about 1/2" in diameter and 12 inches long (get unplated or stainless springs if you can find them). Just connect each spring end to end and stretch them around the keg at the top and bottom.

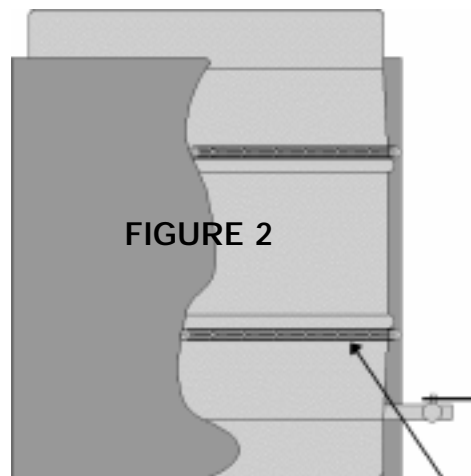
To use the shield wrap it around the keg so the springs keep it about a 1/2" away from the side of the keg, the curl in the material. See Figure 2.

When using your heat shield avoid turning the fire up to the point where it starts burning the galvanized finish off the metal. If you use galvanized springs, the plating will probably start to flake off the springs after a couple so uses, so it's best to install the springs with the keg upside down before you fill it, in order to keep those metal flakes out of your beer. When you're done brewing, just roll up the shield and secure it with a short piece of rope or strap – it stores easily.



FOLD BACK & FLATTEN CUT EDGES! (THEY'RE SHARP)

FLAT LAYOUT OF HEAT SHIELD



SPRINGS WRAP AROUND KEG TO ACT AS A STANDOFF.