



The Wort Alert

February 2007
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Newsletter for Hop Barley and the Alers Homebrew Club Boulder, CO
<http://hopbarley.org>

President Steve Skidmore

First Runnings from El Presidente!

Chocolate and Stout – sounds good to me! Our speaker for this month's meeting is Chris Toomey from Belvedere Chocolate Shop just off the Pearl Street Mall and the Beer Style will be Stout. Looking forward to hearing about pairing of these two favorites and sampling the goods. The Blue group has put together a dry stout at Tanya & Brandon Overstreet's home and Dr Dave and Chris are bringing some commercial stouts. Don't let that stop you from bringing your own.

Thanks to Kurt Meyer and Brian Hutchinson from Mountain and Southern Sun Pubs and Breweries for putting on an entertaining talk at our last meeting. They have invited us to come to Mountain Sun during Stout Month as their guests. We are planning to get together February 17th at 2:00 PM for our first pass at using up the generous gift certificate they have give us.

Our club competition the **Reggale and Dredhop Homebrew Competition** is coming up very soon, March 3, 2007. I hope you are all getting something brewed and bottled up to keep those ribbons at home. Bob Kauffman recently put out an email and talked with some of you about the competition at our last meeting. Look for more detail about the competition in this newsletter or just email Bob at acmebrew@juno.com to see how you can help out.

I would like to see how many of our club members would be interested in participating in a **BJCP study group** to prep to take the **BJCP Exam**. Planning to make mention of this here I went out and looked at <http://www.bjcp.org>. The site has made quite a transformation since my last visit. Take the time to look it over for yourself – I found it to be quite a resource. Short of a more structured group, I have beers set aside for a Wit and/or a Bock tasting at my house (sometime after the Dredhop) that we could structure as a judging demo. **Please send me an email so we can establish the level of interest in the club.**

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Now it's time for me to climb up on my **soapbox!!!** Please, please remember to take care not to drive too quickly after drinking. When you hear the slogans to *drink responsibly* and *not to drink and drive*, know that this applies to beer tastings, judging at contests and sampling at our club meetings. From personal experience I can tell you that having a blood alcohol content of .08 may be lower than you think. The expense and the time commitments for community service and alcohol evaluation classes can be a real drag. More importantly, the last thing we want is for club member to have a traffic accident or get a traffic citation involving alcohol after attending a club function.

Closing on a positive note, from the feedback I got from the membership, it looks like the **Boulder Outlook Hotel and Suites** could continue to work well as a meeting place for the club. Let me know if you feel differently. Remember to pass on the address - 800 28th St, Boulder, Co 80303 to other members and guests. Looking forward to seeing you there on the February 27th

Sláinte!

Vice President(s) Corner

By Dan Rabin and Bob Kauffman

By Bob Kauffman

Altbier

Altbier is one of the oldest beer styles known. It is most closely associated with Dusseldorf, where historical evidence suggests that some form of brewing has been taking place in the area since 1000 B.C. We will not cover that type of information here, but there is obviously a long and honorable tradition of brewing. The modern origins of the style most likely date to the 1800's. The oldest operating altbier brewpub opened in 1838, the Brauerei Ferdinand Schumacher. It's founder, Mathias Schumacher, took the traditional Rhineland ale, added more hops than usual for the time, brewed it stronger, and experimented with aging in wooden casks to let it mature. In his innovations lie the roots of the modern altbier, a robust, copper colored, slow fermented, lagered ale. For those who are lucky enough to make a trip to Dusseldorf, the Schumacher brewpub is still in operation at the site the brewery was moved to in 1871. This time frame is also important to note for another reason. It was in the late 1800's that Emil Christian Hansen, of the Carlsberg Brewery in Copenhagen, classified yeasts into ale and lager strains. Hansen also noted the wide variations in both types of yeast. By 1890, he had developed a practical method for cultivation of pure yeast strains from a single cell. By the mid 1800's, brewers had learned that yeasts worked best only in their own narrow temperature ranges. But until the invention of modern refrigeration, around 1873, blocks of ice had to be used for cooling. Within two decades of these two major innovations, all German brewers, with the exception of the Rhineland, had converted to lager fermentation. Still, Kolsch and altbier were produced using these modern methods of

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brewing. Altbier brewing and the number of breweries producing has gone through the same changes as other styles of beer, going from around 100, mostly small, breweries in 1860, to less than half that many by the end of WW1. By the end of WW2, only 18 breweries survived, and of those only three large breweries and four brewpubs still existed as of five years ago.

Altbier is somewhat similar to Kolsch in brewing practice, that is, usually a multiple step infusion or decoction mash program is used, the beer is fermented at cool temperatures for an ale (55-65F), then the beer is lagered, or cold aged, for several weeks of longer. This allows the flavors to mellow and mature, and gives these beers their smoothness and drinkability. For those homebrewers who don't have the ability to brew lagers, alt (and Kolsch) give you the chance to brew an authentic German style of beer with a minimal investment in equipment. For your grain bill use mostly Pilsner malt, with Munich and/or Vienna malt for color and body. Crystal malt up to 60L can be used, as long as no roasted flavors are added. From 5-15% wheat is a common addition, which I recommend for head retention, and in darker alts a little (1-2%) black malt can be used. As with all beer styles, best results are obtained using grains from the country the style originated. I.e.: German malts for German beers, Belgian malts for Belgian beers, etc. Hop choices should also be German or of German in origin. Best choices for alts are Perle, Hallertau, Spalt and Mt. Hood. These can be used for bittering, flavor and aroma. Tettnanger and Saaz can be used as aroma hops as well. An authentic altbier yeast is essential to obtaining the right flavor. Wyeast # 1007 or 2565, and White Labs WLP029 and WLP036 are the best choices.

This is an excellent time of the year to brew an altbier, as almost everybody has a cool closet or basement room to ferment one in. But don't let not having all the perfect conditions stop you from making an altbier. There are not many alts available in the US, so as often is the case, if you want a good altbier, brew it yourself!

Cheers, Bob.

SKI TRIP to Eldora Mountain

Join your fellow Alers on February 24th at Eldora Mountain!

We are planning on taking the bus up at 8AM. Or, you can meet us there. Please let us know if you think you can make it. We are trying to get a group rate, but will go regardless.

The lodge has a nice variety of local microbrews! Even if you don't ski, you can relax at the lodge and enjoy some good beers.

18th Annual Reggale and Dredhop Homebrew Competition

March 3, 2007 at the Falling Rock Tap House in Denver

I hope that everyone has been busy brewing beers and meads for this year's event. We are rapidly approaching the 18th Reggale and Dredhop; by the meeting date it will only be a month away.

This is a great opportunity to get feedback from qualified judges. It is also a great opportunity to take part in an important Hop Barley and The Alers event. We are the longest running competition in the state, and we need lots of support from the membership to make this another first class competition.

We will be looking for people to sign up to judge and steward at the meeting, and you can e-mail me at acmebrew@juno.com if you'd like to help or have any questions.

All current Hop Barley and the Alers members will receive their first entry free. It's only \$6 to begin with, so this is a screaming deal.

Entry forms will be available at hopbarley.org, at What's Brewin', and at the meeting. If you have questions about what category to enter your beer or mead, you may download a copy of the style guidelines at www.bjcp.org. You can also bring in a sample of your beverage to the meeting this month and we will do the best we can to help you decide.

Cheers! Bob

Time to Re-new your membership!

Be sure to re-new your membership or the March newsletter will be your last.

Events Calendar

Who's Doing What and When

Month	February	March	April
Day	2/27/2007	3/27/2007	4/24/2007
Red Group	Setup/Cleanup	Beer	Relax
Blue Group	Beer	Relax	Food
Green Group	Relax	Food	Setup/Cleanup
Orange Group	Food	Setup/Cleanup	Beer

One brew per group will be reimbursed. Save your receipts.

Color Groups – Please bring your recipe along with your beer and tell us about it!

Color Groups – Please coordinate with your group as there will be a \$75 max limit on reimbursable food per meeting. Please see the treasurer in an unusual circumstance.

HBA Club Meeting at the Boulder Outlook Hotel

Boulder Outlook Hotel 800 28th Street, Boulder, Colorado 80303

From the lobby, turn right and enter the bar, follow to end of hallway

February 27th, 2007 (fourth Tuesday monthly) 7PM

Speaker: Chris Toomey from Belvedere Chocolate Shop

Will be featured at the ALERS Feb27th meeting at the Outlook. Chris Toomey, owner of the Belvedere Belgian Chocolate Shop at 15th & Pearl in Boulder will be on hand to enlighten us about various types of chocolate and how they may best be paired with different styles of stout. Chris will be working with a variety of stouts including Left Hand and Mountain Sun Breweries.

Chris and his wife Mary Francis have owned and operated their Chocolate Shop for six years. Chris is a former member of the American Homebrewers Association and looks forward to sharing his talent as a Chocolatier with us.

Dave Welker

Upcoming Beer Styles

February	Scottish Ale*
March	Stout
April	Extract*
May	Pale Ale/IPA
June	Belgian Wheat/German Wheat
July	Strong Ale*
August	Mead
September	Bock*
October	Fruit
November	Pilsner*
December	Belgian

* Indicates Club-Only-Competition Style

Remember that What's Brewin' provides free ingredients to the monthly color group responsible for beer. Go into the store and get your stuff. Tell them that it's for HBA group brew and they will take care of the rest.

The club also sponsors an all-grain and an extract brew from club members each month. The brew should be the style for that month. Bring in a receipt and you will be reimbursed. It is that easy.

(Second) Friday Out

March 9th

Left Hand Brewery

Twisted Friday

March 16th

Twisted Pine Brewing Co. 3201 Walnut Rd. Boulder, CO 80301

Great monthly get-together. **\$1 off Pints for Alers.** – Peanuts and pretzels abound. <http://beeradvocate.com/beer/profile/23>

Upcoming Beer Events

Fat Tuesday Feb. 20

Visit Oskar Blues at Liquor Mart from 3-6pm and enjoy a crawfish boil

Avery Maharaja party in the tap room - Feb 23rd 3-7pm

www.avery.com

Ski Trip to Eldora Mountain Feb. 24th

<http://www.eldora.com/>

Bristol Brewing Ferkin Rendezvous Feb. 24th

http://www.bristolbrewing.com/images/event_cask_icon.gif

Pump House and Oskar Blues Beer Dinner Feb. 28

<http://www.pumphousebrewery.com/>

Mountain Sun Stout Month through Feb. 28th

<http://www.mountainsunpub.com/>

Hop Barley and the Alers Dreadhop Competition:

Entries due: Feb. 12 - 23

Competition: March 3, 2007

Scotch and Beer Dinner featuring Left Hand beers March 5th

At Cork in Boulder <http://www.lefthandbrewing.com/>

AHA Rally – Oskar Blues March 10th

http://www.beertown.org/email/aha/membership_drive/oscarblues_07.htm

Walnut Brewery tapping Fire Chief Ale – March 14

Free samples from 6-6:30 in the bar <http://walnutbrewery.com/>

Boulder Strong Ale Festival April 6th

<http://www.averybrewing.com>

Officers:

President: Steve Skidmore president@hopbarley.org

Vice President: Dan Rabin and Bob Kauffman vice@hopbarley.org

Treasurer: Caroline Kauffman treasurer@hopbarley.org

Secretary: Diana Vann secretary@hopbarley.org

Web Master: Mike Paige webmaster@hopbarley.org