



THE

Northern Brewer

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March 15, 2022
49th State Brewing
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The Prez Sez - By John Trapp & Liz Greer

February may be only 28 days long, but holy cow did it fly by. We did have a fantastic meeting (the Bock meeting) a few weeks ago, lots of great beer and a wonderful presentation by Rick Levinson. A big Thank You goes out to all that participated or contributed to the meeting. German lagers, light or heavy, are some of my favorite beers. Starting in April we will concentrate on summer time session beers or more commonly known as "Lawn Mower Beers". Here's the 3 month calendar:

- March 6th –Turnagain Brewing Tartside Challenge Wort pick up (see article below)
- March 15th – GNBC monthly meeting at 49th State Brewing, 7:00 p.m.
- April 8th/10th - Talkeetna Beer Tripping, a little smaller, but still happening!
- April 19th – GNBC monthly meeting at 49th State Brewing, 7:00 p.m. (session beers)
- May 7th – Brew-a-Thon, no location but highly encouraged to partner up with another club member.
- May 17th – GNBC monthly meeting, could be at 49th State or somewhere else, please stay tuned.

"Dr. Ted" over at Tunagain Brewing is kind enough to be running the Tartside Challenge again. Please read the article below for details on who, what, where and when to pick up the sour wort from the brewery. You take it home and do with it as you please. It will then be shared at the June BBQ (location not determined yet). The winner may have their beer brewed at Turnagain Brewery. Plus, Dr. Ted will be the speaker at the March meeting, talking about sour beers.

Talkeetna Beer Tripping is back! It will be a little more low key, but should still be a great time. The dates are set for April 8th, 9th and 10th, so book your accommodations accordingly. Normally there's a homebrew competition as well as the Equinox Mead and Cider competition. In place of those events, we are looking at just having a homebrew tasting session, and a mead & cider tasting session. So please go into your crawl space, cool garage or closets and dig out some home brews and meads to bring up and share. Denali Brewing Company has agreed to do a wort share once more. The exact details will be posted later, but you can receive up to 10 gallons of wort and doctor it up as you wish. DBC just asks that you provide a six-pack for tasting (usually the May meeting). Also, Twister Creek restaurant has been under renovation for the winter. There's a new kitchen going in and they hope to be up and running by the time beer tripping rolls around.

Our April meeting is going to be dedicated to session beers, you know, the light easy drinking beers you can pound on a hot day and still finish mowing the lawn. We will have recipes, styles and examples to try, so plan on attending. Also, just after the April meeting comes May, and Brew-a-thon (first Saturday).

The Prez Sez (Con't)

We aren't planning on having a set location, but we want to encourage everyone to find a partner and brew a batch of beer. We'll still be live-streaming for the 9:00 a.m. toast, just not at a particular site.

Until next time, keep brewing because life is good. - Cheers

February Meeting and Future Fun! - By Elizabeth Greer

Our February 2022 meeting was the best live attendance we have had since February 2020. Bock beer was the style and several members brought in their bock homebrews to share. John Trapp provided style descriptions of Bocks, Doppelbocks, Maibocks (Helles) and Eisbocks, which were accompanied with several delicious commercial examples of these. Rick Levinson gave a presentation on the history of bock beer from its origin in the Einbeck region of Germany in the 14th century, through the changes over the last several hundred years - including the addition of hops - to what we currently are drinking in America styles and European styles. Everyone had a fair sampling of bocks! Below is an interesting article on Martin Luther to round out your German Beer studies.

In addition to our upcoming events mentioned above, there is some summer fun planning in the works too! June Picnic, July BBQ, and the GNBC campout August 12-14 at Eklutna Lake. More information to come!

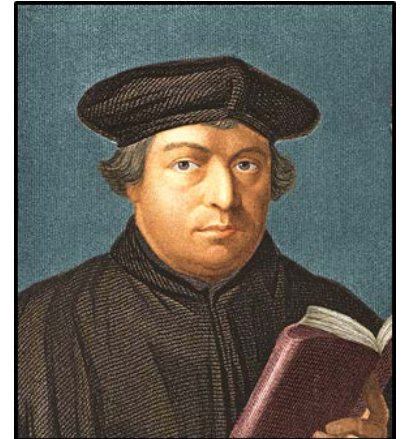
Beer Research . . . Martin Luther in a BEER NUTShell - By Rick Levinson

Martin Luther. We've all heard of him; he was an historic religious leader. But he was also an accomplished beer aficionado.

He lived in the time of the Reformation, the great Protestant revolt from the Roman Catholic Church in Europe. However, the really important revolution of the time was the great transformation from herbs and spices supplying bitterness in beer to that of hops. Turns out that Martin Luther was one of the earliest hopheads. This new beer inspired him, was a comfort in difficult times, and was associated with all key moments in his life. Let's take a look at some of those moments.

- Martin Luther was born in 1483, and lived a large portion of his life in the city of Eisleben, in northern Germany. Eisleben is a short distance east of the city of Einbeck, which was then the center of the brewing trade. Martin Luther loved the Ainpockisch Bier which was brewed in Einbeck using locally grown hops. It was the precursor to the bock style we all love, but was actually an ale.
- Martin was a law student at the University of Erfurt. Like most German law students, he hung out in the pub and drank a lot of Ainpockisch Bier while "studying".
- One evening on the way home, he was caught in a horrific thunderstorm. Lightning was striking all around him, and he thought God was communicating to him. He prayed to God and Saint Anne that if he could survive the storm, he would become a monk. He did survive the storm.
- He dropped out of law school and became a monk, thereby fulfilling his promise to God. He wisely chose the Augustinian Order of monks, who were well known for their production of the original Augustiner Bier.
- But Martin Luther became disillusioned with the Roman Catholic Church. He witnessed immorality, indulgences, and corruption among Catholic priests. But what really concerned him was the Catholic Church's attempted stranglehold on beer production. Spices and herbs used in brewing at that time mostly came from Catholic countries around the Mediterranean. These ingredients were heavily controlled and taxed by the Catholic Church which also tried to ensure that the beer brewed, sold, and consumed was traditional gruit (spice and herb-bittered beer) instead of the new hopped beer. Hops were considered by the Church to be an undesirable northern weed and were untaxed. The Augustinian Monks at that time were also forced to brew gruit beer. This made Martin Luther "mad as hell" and "he couldn't take it anymore".
- He was in spiritual turmoil. He sought out his old friend, Ainpockisch Bier. And then enlightenment finally came, and he solidified a course of action.

- He documented the abuse he saw and wrote the famous Catholic Church expose', "95 Theses", which he nailed to the University of Wittenburg's church door. Aided by the newly invented printing press, "95 Theses" became a best-seller throughout Europe within 2 months.
- The expose' got the attention of the Pope and it touched a raw nerve. The Pope demanded that Martin Luther recant his writings. Fueled by Ainpockisch Bier, Martin Luther was emboldened. He in turn demanded that anyone in the Church provide any passage from the Scripture that would refute his writings. There were none; the abuses he wrote about were not promoted in the Scripture.
- He was put on trial for heresy (unforgettably named "*The Diet of Worms*"). Fortunately, he was given a cask of Ainpockish Bier, which he drank before and during his trial, giving him courage to withstand the stress of the event. However, it was pre-ordained; Martin Luther was convicted as a heretic, was excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church, and became a condemned fugitive with a death sentence. Fortunately, his writings and his love for good hopped beer, gave him a large following. Friends helped hide him in Wartburg Castle. There, he drank Ainpockisch Bier, partied with nobility, and published more pamphlets.
- While hidden there, he translated the Bible from Latin to German and published it. Catholic priests no longer had exclusive right to interpret the Bible. For the first time, it was accessible to anybody and ordinary people could interpret it.
- His writings gave the Reformation movement a much-needed boost. As more followers joined the movement, the Roman Catholic Church became more focused on fighting the Reformation than on fighting Martin Luther, so he regained his freedom. He was quoted, "I've no doubt prayer made the biggest difference of all, but some ale may well have helped along the way."
- He married a rebellious nun, Katharina of Bora, who had abandoned her convent by escaping via a fish barrel. Ainpockisch Bier was served at their wedding. Katharina was a qualified brewer, so it was a marriage made in heaven. This helped break the priestly code of celibacy and allowed clergy to marry.
- The "disgraced" couple flourished. They opened a brewery and Katharina was the brewmaster. They ate, drank, and made merry. They had 6 children.
- By now, Martin Luther had gained a reputation. He was a tremendous preacher, and he had the common touch. He was motivated by three things: his love for the Bible, his love for his wife, and his love for good beer. He often made references to beer in his sermons.
- He is known for galvanizing the Reformation movement in Europe and for founding the Lutheran Church. There are ~80 million Lutherans worldwide today. His love of hops helped change the course of beer in Germany and in history.
- Martin Luther died after having a stroke at age 62 in Eisleben, the city of his birth. He had ill health the last few years and had become harsh and short-tempered. He may have had dementia. Katarina maintained her love and kindness to him, and provided beer and some damage-control to his reputation.



A sad footnote: Ainpockisch Bier, the beer that had so inspired Martin Luther, became a victim of his success. The Reformation movement was heavily fought by the Roman Catholic Church in what became the Thirty Years War, one of the most destructive wars in European history. It led to a severe economic depression in Germany that lasted 200 years, and also led to the demise of the brewing trade in Einbeck and closing of the brewery that produced his beloved Ainpockisch Bier. Now there's a tragic opera story that Wagner missed.

"Whoever drinks beer, he is quick to sleep.

Whoever sleeps long, does not sin.

Whoever does not sin, enters Heaven.

Thus, let us drink beer ---Martin Luther

Session Beer Day - *By Steve Johnson*

April 7th is Session Beer Day, also known as National Beer Day, commemorating that day in 1933 when 3.2 per cent (by weight) beer became legal. The date is different from the date of the formal end of national Prohibition, December 5th, 1933. The 18th (Prohibition) Amendment did not define intoxicating liquor. It was the Volstead Act that defined intoxicating liquor as beverages containing more than one-half of one-percent of alcohol.

The Cullen-Harrison Act, signed on March 22, 1933, was a revenue bill which defined non-intoxicating liquor as containing no more than 3.2 percent alcohol (by weight). The bill taxed breweries and put a barrel tax on these beverages and also prohibited their shipment to states with prohibition laws.

Reading about the advent of 3.2 beer in Stanley Baron's *Brewed in America: The History of Beer and Ale in the United States* (Little, Brown, 1962, p. 321), the paragraph that stood out was a 1932 letter from T.C. Hoffenferrer, of Hoffenferrer & Company, to the House Committee on Ways and Means. The subject is modification of Volstead Act limits on alcoholic content.

"An alcoholic content of 3.2 percent is preferable to 2.75 per cent in both beer and ale and porter, as all brews improve in taste, flavor and aroma directly in ratio with the increased alcoholic content. The improvement in palatability does not come from the alcohol itself, which is tasteless and only incidental to fermentation, but from the aromatic properties produced in the process of fermentation. Hops used in all brews, primarily for flavoring purposes, contain resinous substances soluble in alcohol. The higher the alcoholic strength, the greater the solubility of aromatic resinous substances. This is one of our prime reasons for desiring the maximum permissible alcoholic strength of our products."

Note that 3.2 percent alcohol by weight is equivalent to 4 percent alcohol by volume, the metric now typically used in the United States. Four per cent alcohol, by volume, seems the typical content of a session beer: a beer one might thoughtfully consume more than one with less impairment than beers of far greater strength. Some of these beers are called lawn mower beers. In Alaska, some sources say chain saw beers.

Brewing Session Beer

Session beer is not a style, but a category that cuts across styles. Table saison, Murphy stout clone, American and English milds, session IPA, and Berliner Weiss are among the all-grain recipes in a 2016 entry at the Experimental Brewing blog:

<https://www.experimentalbrew.com/session-beer-day-recipe-bonanza-14-recipes-you-brew>

Drew Beechum, John Palmer and Ron Pattinson were among the contributors of individual recipes. To convert recipes to extract ingredients and processes, see instructions such as those provided by Beersmith author Brad Smith, <http://beersmith.com/blog/2008/06/03/convert-ing-all-grain-recipes-to-malt-extract/>.

For a more detailed look at session beers, the obvious title to consult is Jennifer Talley's *Session Beers: Brewing for flavor and balance* (Brewers Association, 2017, 249 pages). Jennifer Talley brewed for twenty years in Utah, where state law limited all beer to 4 percent alcohol by volume: session beer. From 2000 to 2021, Talley and her brewing crew won 20 medals at the Great American Beer Festival.

Talley is less rigid than the state of Utah in defining session beer: "session beer must be enjoyable to drink multiple pints of in a single sitting and be relatively low in alcohol." She quotes Lew Bryson's cutoff strength of 4.5 percent and the Great American Beer Festival's 5 percent limit on session versions of other recognized styles. The first chapter of the book, *A Short History of Session Beer*, describes the wide range of lower alcohol brews as developed in England, Europe, and North America.

Although the book is aimed primarily at professional brewers, the discussion of the history and development of session beer is accessible and never opaque. The discussion of sieve pans and grind specs on page 49 is likely of interest only to professional brewers.



Session Beer Day (con't)

A brief chapter compares costs of brewing different strengths of beer in a brewpub doing 400 barrels per year and a brewery making 4,000 barrels per year. As alcohol content increases, the increase in cost is strong, though not precisely proportional. I no longer assume that in small brewery taprooms the ongoing costs of physical plant and labor completely overshadow differences in ingredient costs for different strengths of beer.

Homebrewers may look first to the ninety-some pages of all-grain recipes from commercial breweries, divided into three sections: North American session beers, German-inspired session recipes; and other international session beers. Again, extract brewers would need to convert recipes using techniques suggested by Brad Smith and others.

Session Beers is available from the Brewers Association in print or as an ebook.

Tartside Challenge 2022! - Pickup Sunday, March 6 - By Ted Rosenzweig

Turnagain Brewing - 7920 King Street, Anchorage



Greetings homebrewers! In the spirit of friendly competition and creative sour beer brewing, Turnagain Brewing is proud to raise the FORTH Tartside Challenge. Here is how it works: we'll give you a gallon of our fermented and soured base wort, you take it home and finish it as you will within a month, and in two months we reconvene at the homebrew club campout to share a taste. We'll brew a batch of the best beer and serve it in our taproom.

The details:

- 1) You **MUST** show at our taproom on **Sunday, March 6** during business hours (2-6 pm) to claim your gallon of unfinished beer. Please bring a container to hold your proto-brew (a couple sanitized growlers or a milk jug might work well). If you are busy, you may send a proxy to collect wort, but we cannot dispense wort outside of March 6. Entry will be limited to the first 20 to claim wort.
- 2) You **MUST** bring your beer by the brewery **AT LEAST 2** days prior to the GNBC campout, during business hours, to submit for "judging". The entire club will be encouraged to sample and rate beers to help us choose a winner, but entries will not have your name on them during judging. It is important for us all to learn not just what works, but what does not and why.
- 3) The beer we chose to reproduce will be the best beer, as rated by club members, which is also reproducible on a larger scale at reasonable cost and poses no threat to the health of the general public or the reputation of our fine brewery.
- 4) **METICULOUS PRODUCTION DETAILS** must accompany the submission. We are looking for refermentation/conditioning temperature, source/preparation/exact quantity of any fruit/spice/fermentable added to the mix as well as the volume of base beer to which it was added, and time spent on such additive prior to crashing. Beers may spend **NOT MORE THAN ONE MONTH** above 40F.
- 5) Fill out the provided entry form and 3 bottle labels, attach labels to bottles, and bring your submission to the brewery prior to the campout. Three containers of at least 12 oz are needed for judging. Both PET and glass are considered acceptable.

Helpful hints: Force carbonation is recommended. Yeasts do not perform reliably in acidic environments. Be very careful with any spices or herbs as they are easy to overdo. Freezing any fruit prior to addition improves extraction of flavors. If refermentation is desired, repitching yeast is a good idea as the beer we will give you has been cold for some time. Avoid pits and seeds as much as possible as well as the pith of any citrus peel (it tends to be bitter). Don't worry too much about sterilizing anything you might add; the beer we give you is already a polymicrobial playground with origins in wild and spontaneous fermentation.

Have fun and get creative!

TURNAGAIN TARTSIDE CHALLENGE

YOUR NAME:

YOUR PHONE:

EMAIL:

STYLE DESCRIPTOR (EG-PEACH SOUR):

PRODUCTION DETAILS:

STARTING VOLUME:

ADDITIONS, QUANTITY AND SOURCE/PROCESSING OF ADDITIVES:

TIME AT TEMPERATURE:

OTHER DETAILS (BE THROUGH!):

-----BOTTLE LABEL-----

STYLE DESCRIPTOR:

-----BOTTLE LABEL-----

STYLE DESCRIPTOR:

-----BOTTLE LABEL-----

STYLE DESCRIPTOR:

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