



The Barleycorn Press

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Tasting Kölsch by Craig Pepin

The delicate Kölsch style often gets overlooked by homebrewers and beer lovers. The reasons, though unfair, are quite easy to pinpoint: Kölsch is a light bodied, light colored ale lacking in the bold flavors that many of us were looking for when we began brewing in the first place. Second, the name Kölsch is protected by German law, and restricted only to breweries in the region surrounding the West German city of Cologne. Finally, the combination of the first two reasons means that Kölsch doesn't make it to this side of the Atlantic very often, for there are fewer producers, generally at a smaller scale, and the beer itself does not travel as well as some of its darker or hoppier cousins (although I do have a label from over a decade ago, of a Küppers Kölsch imported by Fremarques

Ltd. of Westport, CT).

I too at first did not put Cologne near the top of my list of beer destinations on several trips to Germany in the last decade. Yet I discovered that the beer, part of a wider group of styles emanating from the Rhineland, stands up to its more aggressive neighbors on the style chart. On any trip to Germany, Cologne deserves as much a spot on the beer-lovers itinerary as great style centers of Düsseldorf, Bamberg and surrounding North Franconia, and Munich. I've had the good fortune to visit Cologne, its magnificent cathedral, and to worship in a few of its finer temples of the brewing art.

A few words about the city itself first. Cologne is one of the largest cities in Germany, sitting astride the lower Rhine

river, dominated by one of the more magnificent cathedrals in all of Europe (which took so long to build, over 500 years, that the wooden cranes hoisting stone and statuary became almost a per-



manent part of the local skyline). As center to one of the few areas of Catholicism in Northern Germany, Cologne also hosts one of the wildest Mardi Gras celebrations (they call it Carnival) this side of New Orleans. "Authentic Cologne water" refers not to the mineral profile of the local potable, but rather to one of the first widely known perfumes of the early modern history. And of course, it is home to a number of fine drinking establishments that serve the local specialty as well as the several fine local dishes. One of my fondest culinary memories of Germany (a country not noted for culinary achievement) came from an early afternoon in a local bierstube (whose name, and tasting notes, unfortunately escape me now) drinking the house brew and eating "Muskeln nach Rheinische Art" (Mussels in the Rhineland style) which

the waiter assured me had not been fished out of the nearby river. The Rhine may no longer have any of the massive fish kills that used to symbolize its high pollution levels, but I would still look questioningly at any marine life dredged out of its depths and served up on a platter.

Kölsch is invariably served in tall, straight-sided glasses of approximately 7 oz. (2 deciliters). Waiters carry fleets of these small containers in large aluminum trays with fitted holders. You may think the small size contrasts unfavorably to Munich, where in some beer-halls the smallest available mug is a full liter, but citizens of Cologne have adapted quite well, although the waiters are kept much busier. Given the high turnover, the waiters constantly circu-

(Continued on page 2)

In This Issue!

Tasting Kölsch	Pages 1 - 5
Next Meeting Info	Page 2
Staff Box	Page 2
Masher Calendar	Page 3
Now You're Cooking With Beer	Page 5
Ask Mr. Lager	Page 6
Upcoming Club-Only Competitions	Pages 6 & 7

NEXT MEETING

“Hoops & Hops” at Tom Ayres and Anne Barrett’s On April 7th

The next meeting of the Green Mountain Mashers will take place on Monday, April 7th at the home of Tom Ayres and Anne Barrett in Winooski.

The focus of the April meeting is the Masher Challenger (Kölsch), discussing the final details of the Green Mountain Homebrew Competition, and of course watching the NCAA Men’s Basketball Championship Game. Make sure you bring your homebrewed Kölsch and any other homebrews or unique commercial brews you’d like to share.

Directions:

Tom and Anne live at 196 West Canal Street in Winooski. FROM BURLINGTON, take Colchester Avenue over the bridge at the Winooski River by the

(Continued from page 1)

late, and will replace your glass quickly if empty, marking your tally consumed with pencil marks on your coaster. The small size and thin walls of the glass suit the beer better anyway, showing off the light gold color, and the fluffy white head that fades quickly but nonetheless leaves a light coating of Belgian lace on the empty glass. Above all, the smaller size encourages one to savor rather than slam.

For years, the AHA guidelines characterized Kölsch through the memorable descriptor of “wine-like.” Or was it “winey”? For many judges this description obscured more than clarified, even though it seemed the main way to distinguish a Kölsch from, say, a Cream Ale. Puzzled homebrewers who had never tasted the real thing sometimes went to great lengths to add this mystical “winey” nature to their Kölsches, or

Chace and Champlain Mills. West Canal Street is the first left (at the first light) on the Winooski side of the river. "A Taste of Dixie" restaurant is on the corner. **Go down WEST CANAL STREET** for 3/10ths of a mile, past Peking Duck House, The Woolen Mill condo complex, and a small commercial/light industrial area. You will then come to a small residential neighborhood. Tom's and Anne's is the second house on the left, a yellow two-story at 196 West Canal. Park along the street and walk down the driveway to the BACK entrance to the house. We'll leave the light on!

FROM OTHER PARTS OF CHITTENDEN COUNTY: find your way to Route 7/Main Street in Winooski from either the interstate or Route 15. Once at Route 7/Main Street, head toward the river/Champlain Mill/Burlington. West Canal Street is the last street in Winooski before going over the bridge at the Champlain Mill into Burlington. "A Taste of Dixie" is on the right-hand corner at the light. Turn right onto West Canal and follow the directions as above.

Tom's and Anne's phone number is 655-5587 if you need additional assistance or directions.



Don't Forget to Bring Some Snacks and three Homemade Beverages to the mtg. If You Don't Have Any Homemade Bevs, Please Bring Three Good/Unique Commercial Beers

they would take a light colored beer that had gone slightly off or sour and enter it in competition under the Kölsch appellation. The confusing phrase almost certainly originated with Michael Jackson, who in his *New World Guide to Beer* (1989) described “a definite, but only slight, fruity-winy bouquet. This,” he asserted, “is regarded [by the brew-

(Continued on page 3)

Staff Box



The Barleycorn Press is a monthly publication of the Green Mountain Mashers Homebrew Club. The Barleycorn Press appears in the final week of each month. **Contributions are due by the 25th of the month of publication or two Thursdays prior to the next meeting (which ever comes first).** Please send contributions via e-mail (preferable) or send on a 3.5" IBM compatible diskette (hard copy as a last resort) to:

Tim Cropley
235 East Main St., Richmond, VT
05477
(802)434-7293 (hm)
t_cropley@yahoo.com

Contributions on any subject even remotely associated with the brewing and/or enjoyment of beer and related beverages are happily accepted by the editors. The editors reserve the right to edit any contribution as a function of available space, while making every attempt to maintain its integrity. The views expressed by contributors to the Barleycorn Press are not necessarily those of the editors or of the Green Mountain Mashers Homebrew Club.

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Note: The yearly dues of \$10 should be paid by the end of January. Please mail your check or money order made out to the "Green Mountain Mashers" to Treasurer Lewis Greitzer at the following address:

Lewis Greitzer
33 Harbor View Road #1201
South Burlington, Vermont 05403
(802)658-2621
lewis@together.net

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View the Official Web Page of the Green Mountain Mashers at:

<http://www.mashers.org>

Officers not listed above:

President - Rich Evans, Ph # (802) 899-3006
 "Evans, Rich" <evansrj@us.ibm.com>
 Secretary - Ernie Kelley Ph # (802) 434-3674
 "Kelley, Ernie" <epopmafs@together.net> OR
 "Kelley, Ernie" <erniek@dec.anr.state.vt.us>



Green Mountain Masher Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Information
4/7/03	GMM April Mtg - Masher Challenge (Kölsch) and Hoops & Hops	Tom Ayres and Anne Barrett, Winooski (h) 655-5587 (email) tom.ayres@verizon.net
4/25/03	GMHC Entry Deadline	Anne Whyte (h) 879-6462 (w) 655-2070 (email) vtbrew@together.net
4/26/03	GMHC Entry Log In - Rich Frog	Anne Whyte (h) 879-6462 (w) 655-2070 (email) vtbrew@together.net
5/3/03	Green Mountain Homebrew Competition	Anne Whyte (h) 879-6462 (w) 655-2070 (email) vtbrew@together.net
5/12/03	GMM May Mtg - Jim Silvia and Melissa Levy's	Melissa and Jim (h) 482-7400 (email) jim@vt.bitxbit.com OR melissa@vt.bitxbit.com
6/13/03	GMM June Mtg - Friday night Barbecue at Monk's house - Grillables and pot luck dishes made with beer. Last meeting until Fall (September?).	Rich Evans (h) 899-3006 (email) monk@together.net

Please contact Tim at the phone # or email address noted below to add items to the Masher Calendar

Please contact Tim Cropley at (802) 434-7293 or by email at t_cropley@yahoo.com if you have any beer events that you think the membership would like to know about. It is our hope that we will also list other regional competitions as they are announced. We also hope to list AHA sponsored Club Only competitions in an effort to remind people to consider bringing beers that fit the competition style to club meetings so that the membership can pick one for entering.

(Continued from page 2)

ers] as a very important aspect of the style.”(66) Well, who would quibble with Michael Jackson at the very beginning of homebrew competition? Now, you might notice that the current BJCP guidelines make no mention of the word wine or its derivatives anywhere in the passage on Kölsch.

If I had to pin down where Jackson (or the brewers he interviewed) came up with this particular turn of phrase, I would point to the extent to which most Kölsches dry out in the aftertaste. Not in the same way as a North German Pils, where the aftertaste is dominated by hop bitterness, but rather a very lighter dryness, where the maltiness fades leaving more of a light shadow of hop bitterness and hop flavor in its wake. The only time I had an example that put me in

mind of winey was at the Küppers brew-house. The brewery tap offers two versions, the standard Kölsch, and an unfiltered version called Wiess (NOT Weiss, wheat is not implied by the name). My notes recall a gold, some-



what cloudy brew, with predominant notes of sulfury maltiness, marked by medium hop bitterness, very slight hop taste, low carbonation, and a slight tangy bite that I could not quite place. The aftertaste did not dry out much on this example either, but I wondered if the tangy tartness I was picking up might be this mythical “wineyness.” Or maybe it was something to do with the lack of filtration, perhaps a bit of yeast bite, for the filtered version (tasted side by side) did not exhibit that same flavor.

None of the other versions for which I have notes (all bottled, unfortunately) exhibited any tanginess or anything I could describe as wine-like either. The Küppers version in the bottle, which as the only Kölsch with national distribu-

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

tion, is the one you're most likely to find if you don't visit Cologne, tends to be maltier than most examples, and does not dry out correspondingly either. It has a good muted bitterness but usually lacks any discernible hop aroma or flavor. Of the other varieties, Früh and Gaffel were my favorites, featuring smooth, light malty bases, overlaid by subdued bitterness and a delicate dryness in the aftertaste balanced between a slight lingering maltiness and the hop character. P.J. Früh's by the way, is also regarded as one of the best of the Cologne taphouses.

Finally, a word about the flavors associated with the ale yeasts used. Kölsches are supposed to be brewed cool and lagered to generally negate or downplay ester production and other non-hop or malt flavors. Some examples (Kurfürsten, Küppers, Fruh) exhibit a light fruitiness in the nose, although this rarely seemed to appear in any dis-

cernible way in the flavor. They are generally quite clean, although some slight estery fruitiness can round out the complexity. The only time I was able to nail down a particular fruity flavor was with the Kurfürsten, when I thought I detected some pineapple-like notes. The best examples had no roughness around the edges to detract from the refined and restrained balance of malt and hops.

Beginning homebrewers often start with hoppy IPAs, move on to Robust Porters, Russian Imperials, Doppelbocks, and other styles with "in-your-face" flavor profiles. Some stay that way, looking for an intense experience every time they pull the tap or pop the cap. But over the years, I have come to appreciate the subtleties of beers I used to sneer at. I appreciate, for example, the technical skill required to make an American lager, and I won't turn my nose up at one if offered as I used to, (although I don't buy 'em either).

Kölsches are considerably more complex in flavor than a Michelob, but at the same time, they are every bit as hard to make. And, they are well worth seeking out if you ever find yourself in the Western part of Germany with a day or two to kill.

Style Guidelines

8. KOELSCH AND ALTBIER

8A. Koelsch-Style Ale

Note: The "e" substitutes for an umlaut. In German, this is written "Kölsch"

Aroma:

Light hop aroma, German noble or Czech Saaz hops, giving a light fruitiness. Maltiness none to low. No diacetyl, as this is a lagered beer resulting in a clean finish with just a hint of fruitiness from primary fermentation at ale temperatures. Low sulfur aroma, similar to that of pale continental lagers, is acceptable, particularly in a young Koelsch.

Appearance:

Very pale to light gold. Very clear/brilliant. White head lingers as Belgian lace on the sides of the glass.

Flavor:

Soft, rounded palate; light hop fruitiness and a delicate dryness to slight sweetness in the finish. Clean fermenta-

tion with just a little residual fruitiness from ale fermentation temperatures. No diacetyl. Medium-low bitterness. Balanced toward bitterness but malt character should not be completely overshadowed.

Mouthfeel:

Light side of medium body. Medium carbonation. Smooth, crisp mouthfeel.

Overall Impression:

A delicately balanced beer with just a hint of flavor/aroma hops and fruitiness that finishes dry to slightly sweet with a crisply refreshing bitterness over a base of smooth, rounded Pils malt flavor.

History:

As an appellation, the Koelsch name can only be used for beers brewed in Koeln (Cologne), Germany, where it is a native style.

Comments:

Brewed at ale temperatures, then cold

(Continued on page 5)



(Continued from page 4)

conditioned to reduce fermentation byproducts.

Ingredients:

European hops only. Pils malt; small amounts of wheat may be used (<25%).

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.040-1.048

IBUs: 16-30 FG: 1.008-1.013

SRM: 3.5-5 ABV: 4.0-5.0%

Commercial Examples:

Available in Koeln only: Malzmuehle, Hellers, PJFrueh, Paeffgen, Sion, Kuepers. In the US: Hollywood Blonde.



**Now You're
Cooking With Beer!**

**"♪♪♪ I Love Belgium in
the Springtime ♪♪♪... "**

by Ruth Miller

Aaaah, spring. Can it really be? Going from March's meeting at Erik's and it's bone-chilling cold (thanks for all the exquisite Belgians to taste, everyone!) to the more recent comparatively-sweltering temps, we're constantly reminded what a fickle mistress Mother Nature is (here in VT, anyway). On a trip that same week to Atlanta, where daffodils bloomed gaily and it was warm & rainy, the welcome weather did not compensate for the fact that good micros are hard to find when dining out in Georgia. The only one I could find was at the airport bar - Dog-

wood Pale Ale - not bad even at \$5 a pint. And, if you're a tea drinker (as opposed to a coffee-achiever) as I am, you may as well give up and go home.

Well anyway, all this talk about Spring makes me think how lovely it would be to spend some of it in Europe, particularly Belgium doing a beer tour. Alas, Montreal & Chambly will have to suffice for now. So, I've included a classic recipe for what some would say is a Belgian national dish, second perhaps only to "frites" and "moules." *Carbonnade Flamande* is a classic beef stew made with smoky bacon, onions, and laced with Belgian ale. My favorite to use is Liefman's Goudenband, but any strong, blonde Belgian ale will do. Hop shoots are a very big culinary deal in Belgium in the spring, but since you probably won't locate them here unless you grow them yourself, a little steamed asparagus or fiddlehead ferns can stand in for them as an accompaniment. The second recipe is for a scalloped potato and cheese dish made with a locally-

produced Abbey-style cheese made by the folks at Creek Road Cheese Co. in Irasburg, VT. The cheese is a semi-soft raw sheep's milk recipe developed by Trappist Monks, and was a 2002 First Place Winner in the aged sheep's milk category at the American Cheese Society's annual competition. You can find it locally at Cheese Traders and the Fresh Market. Pricey but worth it!

Carbonnade Flamande

Serves 4

- 4 large shallots (or 2 med. onions), chopped
- 1/2 stick butter
- 2 lb. cubed beef (chuck or round steak is good)
- 3 slices thick-sliced smoked bacon
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- pinch of ground coriander
- 1-2 bottles Belgian golden ale
- 2 tbsp. flour
- 1 tbsp. dijon mustard
- salt & fresh-ground pepper, to taste

Fry bacon in a dutch oven or heavy stewpot until cooked but not crisp, then dice. Drain off all grease in pan. Melt butter in pan over medium, and saute onions/shallots for 5 min. Add beef cubes and fry until browned. Add bacon back in, seasonings, and enough beer to cover all. Simmer for 1-1/2 hours covered. When tender, combine flour with a little beer to make a paste, then blend it back into the sauce in the pot. Simmer uncovered to thicken until desired consistency, adding additional beer if necessary. Stir in mustard & serve.

Abbey Potatoes Gratinee

Serves 4

- 4 medium thin-skinned white or red potatoes, sliced 1/4" thick
- 1 large onion, sliced thinly
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp. butter
- 2 tbsp. flour

- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/4 cup Belgian ale
- 1-1/2 cup grated Abbey cheese
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. pepper

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Layer potatoes, onion and garlic in a shallow baking dish. In a saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter, then whisk in the flour and cook until almost brown. Very slowly add the milk and ale, whisking steadily, and cook until it thickens. Stir in the grated cheese until smooth, take off of heat and season to taste with salt & pepper. Pour the sauce over the potatoes, and thump it gently on the counter to make sure it reaches all down through the layers. Bake until golden brown on top and potatoes are tender, about 45 min.

Next issue, Cinco de Mayo looms right after the Competition so how about something Mexican for all of us "Compadres de Birria" (beer buddies)? Corona drinkers, keep moving... :-)



**WANTED:
WRITERS
YEAH - YOU!**



Send your beer-related articles to the **Barleycorn Press** at t_cropley@yahoo.com !!

Ask Mr. Lager

Every month (give or take) Greg Noonan will answer one or two questions from members of the Green Mountain Mashers. Anyone who has questions for this column should email them to me at t_cropley@yahoo.com.

1) I have a question about the need for a homebrewer to "mash out" at the end of the mash. On such a small scale, is there any apparent benefit? In my brewing set up, my mash tun/lauter tun is an insulated plastic bucket, so I can't directly add heat to it raise its temperature. I have on occasion tried a mini-decoction mash and that has worked, but I'm not sure whether I gained anything for the extra time and effort invested. This is something I've always wondered about.

Mashing-out, raising the temperature of the mash to above 160°F before sparg-

ing, has two purposes. The first is to raise the temperature of the mash above the effective limit of diastatic enzyme activity. The second is to make the mash run off more easily.

Commercial breweries need to be very concerned with batch-to-batch consistency. Although it is nearly impossible to orchestrate absolutely consistent batches (A-B combines three mashes in each fermenter, and then at bottling blends 11 fermentation tanks together to ameliorate the effects of batch inconsistencies), one of a brewer's best tools is to repeat procedures exactly. Mashing-out after an exactly-timed saccharification rest improves consistency.

On the other hand, there is very little enzyme activity occurring after an hour of mashing, and for most homebrewers batch-to-batch consistency is not a major issue (how often do you brew the same recipe?). If a brewer is not having problems at run-off with sluggish or stuck mashes, mashing-out can be

skipped with no negative effects of the brew.

2) When you add hops for 60 minutes of boiling, why would it matter what variety of hops you use as long as you got the alpha acid numbers right for bittering?

As most brewers realize, very little varietal hop flavoring and aroma survives a 60 minute boil. However, some distinctive hop-type flavor does still remain. Furthermore, the cohumulone levels of different hops greatly contribute to stable flavor characteristics of a beer's bitterness. The higher the cohumulone of a hop, the more coarse the bitterness that results from its use.

Over the years, we have experimented with most high-alpha hops at Vermont Pub & Brewery. We have abandoned all of them for the same reason - they all impart coarse bitterness to beer. The highest alpha-acid hop that we use is

Perle, which has a very low cohumulone percentage and relatively 'neutral' flavor characteristics. It is the hop that we are most likely to use at the beginning of the boil, even for some ales, because it has such a soft character that it does not overwhelm the character of later hop additions. Northern Brewer, Chinook, Nugget and other higher-alpha hops all have higher cohumulone levels and distinctive flavors that cannot be overcome.

If you are looking to reduce costs, then look for the high-alpha hop with the lowest cohumulone level to use as kettle hops, and then choose one with limited flavor impact - generally, German varieties are less distinctively flavorful than US or British high-alpha hops.



**Remaining Competition
Issues to discuss at the
April Meeting
by Anne Whyte**

Here are the competition items we need to cover at the April meeting.

Beer train: We need to get the beers here. If anyone is going to be in the Boston area/Hartford area the week of April 19th-25th, would you be willing to be a beer train? We can also have entries dropped off at the Seven Barrel. Then a masher can pickup entries in W. Lebanon and bring them here by the morning of the 26th.

Entries/log-in: April 26, 9 a.m. at Rich Frog, a Saturday morning. Once entries have been logged in then the beers will

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

need to be sorted out. Last year I was able to do it pretty quickly. Once entries have been entered into the computer then I can print out pull sheets for the styles and we can organize the beers by style. Lew will be assigning the pre-judge flights and those beers will be pulled. I can send out an email when I know when I will be sorting the entries. Last year Terry Hunt helped and it took us all day. If I can have 2-3 helpers it would probably take half the amount of time.

Beer moving: Beers will be moved to the Homestead on Wed or Thursday. Since my truck is open in the back I will pick the nicest/driest day. I think that it took 4-5 trips to move everything.

Food: We need someone to organize

lunch and someone else to do breakfast. In the past one person has done both and that is clearly too much. So I'd like to find someone for each.

Breakfast: Pick up donuts, bagels, cream cheese, coffee, juice, etc. This could also be the person that picks up the bread for the judges. Make sure that we have utensils/cups/creamer, etc. Be there to make coffee and that's it. Pick up afterwards. Ideally: One person in charge and a helper. You'd be done by 10 and could still steward if you wanted.

Lunch: The issue will be if we can get someone to organize a potluck and then buy the rest of the food that we need. If nobody volunteers to do that then we can buy everything. The Lunch organizer will order/pick up deli platter/

bread, set up table, have utensils and coolers with soda, etc. Just be there to keep it organized. If we want a hot item we could get ziti or something from Junior's. Pick up/package leftovers.

Fame & glory: You want it so bad you can taste it.....no, not just any brew, but your prize-winning, best ever _____(fill in style) made in Vermont. Oh, but wait, you didn't enter! no glory, no fame. well, that may have happened last year, but this year, yeah, **this** is **your** year.....BUT YOU HAVE TO ENTER SOMETHING!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Okay Mashers, this is it..... **please** help out. We'll need to have everyone pitch in to make this fun and go off smoothly. I'm sure I'm forgetting something.....

Thanks, Anne



Barleycorn Flashback - Barleycorn Press 1995

Recipe of the Month

Acer Sap Suds

by Leonard P. Perry

It's sugaring time, and if you ever wanted to make a maple sap beer, now's the time to do it. Recipe published courtesy of the 1995 Original Homebrewer's Calendar (Good Wolf Publishing, 568 Westford Road, Milton, Vermont 05468). This publication gives more details than we can provide here about when and how to tap a maple (Acer) tree, which trees to look for, etcetera.

Recipe for 5 Gallons

Ingredients:

- 6 gallons maple tree sap (not syrup) specific gravity 1.006-20
- 4 lb extra light dry malt extract
- 1½ oz native hops (if none are found growing wild in your area, substitute commercial hops such as the old U.S. Cluster variety, 6-8 HBU)
- ½ oz same hops for aroma
- Ale yeast
- ½ cup maple syrup for priming

Original Gravity: 1.050-56

Final Gravity: 1.024

Boil 4 gallons of sap in the main kettle for 45 minutes with the dry extract and bittering hops. In another pan boil the remaining 2 gallons of sap for at least 15 minutes to sterilize, then cool to use later. Add aroma hops the last 3 minutes. Cool rapidly in an ice water bath or with a wort chiller, strain into the fermenter, top with the sterile sap from the other pan to a specific gravity of 1.050-56 (should be about 5 gallons). Pitch prepared yeast, cover and ferment for one week at 65-70°F. After an optional secondary (which may help to clarify the beer), prime before bottling with maple syrup dissolved in 1 cup of boiling water, and cooled. Final gravity should be around 1.024.



Upcoming Club-Only Competitions

Here are the upcoming AHA Club-Only Competitions. If you've got some homebrew that you'd like to consider entering, bring it to the club meeting before the entry due date for consideration as the Green Mountain Masher's entry.

MAY 2003

"All that Glitters is Not Old" Competition

Entries Due May 12-22, 2003

Judging will be held May 24, 2003

Shipping Address:

AHA COC

c/o Catalina Products

5620 N. Kolb Rd Suite 205

Tucson, AZ 85750

Hosted by David Moritz, Matt Stinchfield and the Rillito Creek Brew Club of Tucson, AZ

Category 11 English & Scottish Strong Ale

AUGUST 2003

European Pale Lager Competition

Hosted by Jon Douglas and Foam on the Range of Denver, CO

Category 2 European Pale Lager

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2003 Specialty/Experimental/Historical Beers

Hosted by Harrison Gibbs and the Colonial Ale Smiths & Keggers of Williamsburg, VA

Category 24 Specialty/Experimental/Historical Beer



**Member Dues were due by the end of January.
Please pay Lew Greitzer either at the February meeting or mail it to him at:**

33 Harbor View Rd #1201

So. Burlington, VT 05403

(802)658-2621

lewis@together.net

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