



The Barleycorn Press

Monthly Newsletter Published by the Green Mountain Mashers of Vermont



April, 1999

Volume 10 Issue 4

In Search of...Beer! Le Petite Moulinsart by Dave Gannon

"We're off work, the weather sucks, and there's no snow. Let's go to Montreal!"

"I don't know anything about Montreal," I said, embarrassed that after ten years in Vermont I didn't know anything about the nearest metropolitan center and was not able to act as a guide for my out-of-state friend.

"Sounds good. Let's go!"

And with that, we were off to spend a free Saturday in a faraway land.

After wandering around the shopping district on Saint Catherine Street, and the artsy section between the University of Quebec at Montreal and McGill University, we found the quaint and very picturesque old city, Vieux Montreal. Here there were wonderful old stone buildings, cobblestone streets, horse-drawn carriages...and restaurants! Lots of restaurants!

One of the restaurants we found had reviews posted in the window commenting on the restaurant's novel emphasis on beer as an accompaniment to fine food, and as an ingredient in many of the recipes. "This is the place," I thought. And since the big hand was on the 12 and the little hand was on the 6, little convincing was required. "Table for two, please!"

Le Petite Moulinsart is located on Rue Paul in Vieux Montreal (Old Montreal). The restaurant is small but very well appointed with a prominent bar and even a terrace...for the warmer weather months, presumably. The bar is attractively decorated, and there are a number of tap towers including a large "DAB" ceramic tap

tower and a very colorful "Lucifer" ceramic tap tower.

Upon being seated, several menus were provided for our inspection--a food menu, a specials board with additional food selections, a wine menu...and a multi-page beer menu! Clearly Belgian beers are featured here, and the menu lists a total of 50 Belgian beers. Several Belgian beers are on tap. There are also other beers from around the world listed on the menu, including several "domestic beers" from Unibroue in Chambly.

Beer is a specialty at Le Petite Moulinsart. And the staff obviously prides themselves on serving the beer "correctly." Many Belgian beers have their own specific glasses which are designed for them and in which they are intended to be served. This gives the beers a certain sense of style. Amazingly, Le Petite Moulinsart seems to have all the correct glasses for the beers they serve. And that's no small feat when you consider the size of the beer menu!

The specialty for food seemed to be steamed mussels. The menu lists a dozen ways that steamed mussels can be prepared for your pleasure, and about half the patrons in the restaurant were enjoying pots of mussels steamed in one of these many ways. I "went with the flow" and ordered the mussels steamed in beer (of course!). I was most impressed! These were the most tender shellfish I have ever had. And there was no sand anywhere--not in the mussels, not on the shells, and not even at the bottom of the pot. I wish I knew how they did that!

We also indulged in some of the specialties from that other menu--the beer menu. How were the beers? I thought you'd never ask!

* Hoegaarden (on tap)

We couldn't resist starting our sampling with a couple of Belgian beers on tap. And this famous Belgian witbier headed the list.

Pierre Celis revived the traditional witbier style when he started the Brewery De Kluis to make this beer at in the 1960s. His effort was a success, and the popularity of Belgian witbier has soared. Many brands of Belgian witbier (and French "biere blanche") are made throughout the world. But Hoegaarden is the one that (re-) started it all.

With a starting gravity of 1.048, and an alcohol content of 4.8% v/v, Hoegaarden is relatively light for a Belgian beer. But the fermentation method which is used (warm conditioning) and the spices which are added (coriander and Curacao orange peel) give the beer plenty of character. The wonderful aromatic quality of this beer makes it a perfect aperitif...and a perfect accompaniment to a lengthy menu-reading session (we had no shortage of menus to keep us busy).

Our sample of Hoegaarden was drawn from a tap, and was served to us in the proper six-sided Hoegaarden glass. The beer was golden yellow in color, and very cloudy with plenty of yeast. The yeast seemed to soften the beer

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NEXT MEETING At Tom and Ellen's On March 29th

The annual "Hoops & Hops" Meeting will take place on Monday, March 29th at the home of Tom Ayres in Richmond. The business meeting will begin at 8 pm (Masher time), after which those interested are invited to watch the NCAA basketball game. Tom lives on Grandview Road off the Richmond-Huntington road. His phone is 434-2939. From "Downtown" Richmond head south on Bridge Street, over the bridge and past the Round Church. Take a right and go through the S-Curves. When the road comes to a fork, stay left. Go up the long hill. Almost near the top, Grandview is your second left (the first is Besaw). Tom's is the second house on the right, completely surrounded by evergreens. Please park on the road.

The agenda for the meeting is:

- 1 Presentation from the homebrew experiment committee regarding status, plans, etc.
- 2 Update from Dan Marshall regarding the competition.
- 3 New business and Masher Challenge Cream Ale judging.

PLEASE NOTE - If you'd like to judge or steward at the competition but will not be at this month's meeting, please contact Dan Marshall at (802)862-7667 or John Gallagher at (802)482-2847, (email) john@richfrog.com 🍷

Minutes of the March Meeting by Jerry Gormley

The meeting commenced at 8:30, or thereabouts. The first order of business was an im-

passioned plea for dues payment on the behalf of Lew Greitzer. Second on the agenda were proposals for the Great Masher Brewing Experiment. Rich Evans presented an idea for varying the boiling time of the wort for an experiment. The experiment proposed is to make one 20-gallon batch of wort, and boil it for ½, 1, 2 & 4 hours. Dave Gannon then presented an idea for an experiment in First Wort Hopping. Dave did not have a formally prepared presentation, but was very impressive in his use of the flip chart. This lent an air of professionalism, which is not often seen at a Masher meeting. It is often lost in the other various "airs" that are wafting about in the crowd. Dave also got the triple word score of the evening for successfully using the word "paradigm" in a sentence. First Wort Hopping is a classical German technique where you put hops into the wort as it runs out of the lauter tun, before the boil. Apparently, there is some confusion among the brewing community regarding the effects of this procedure. The procedure for this experiment would be to establish a recipe for a light base beer, and divide it into three batches. The first batch would be the control and there would be a set quantity of boiling hops and 1 oz. of finishing hops. The second batch would have the same total amount of hops, but 1 oz. of the boiling hops would be added to the first wort. The remainder of the boil would follow the same hop schedule as the control batch, less the 1 oz. added to the first wort. The third batch would again use the same total amount of hops, but the finishing hops would be added to the first wort. The remainder of the boil would again follow the same schedule as the control batch, less the finishing hops. A heated discussion then ensued regarding the details of the experimental procedure, types of beer that would be appropriate to each experiment, testing methods, etc. It was decided that we would pursue the Boiling experiment first, this June at the Club Brew at Rich's house. Then, with one under our collective belt, we could attempt the slightly more complex First Wort Hopping experiment, perhaps as early as

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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:

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time@dec.anr.state.vt.us

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Note: The yearly dues of \$15 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:

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33 Harbor View Road #1201
South Burlington, Vermont 05403
(802)658-2621
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this fall. A committee volunteered to pursue the experiment project. The committee consists of Dave Gannon, Rich Evans, Phil Kaszuba, Darell Whitaker, Bob Livingstone, Anne Whyte, and Jerry Gormley. Expect a detailed report, probably chock full of really big words, in the near future. Steve Lefebvre encouraged everyone to bring his or her samples of Cream Ale to the April meeting. A search was initiated for the club logo, which Anne claims to have. Tom Ayres reported that the Trub Trek was experiencing a discouraging turn out (ed. note - it has since been canceled). The meeting was adjourned around 9:30, and the tasting of the flavors of the night, Stout and Porter, was begun. 🙌

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somewhat, and I found the flavors more gentle, more rounded, and more subtle compared to witbiers I have had from the bottle. Hoegaarden on tap--something not to be missed!

*** Leffe Blonde (on tap)**

There must have been some kind of special running on this beer. The overwhelming majority of beer being served that night was Leffe Blonde, and most of the patrons had a glass of Leffe Blonde in front of them throughout their meal. The restaurant soon ran out of the proper glasses for Leffe Blonde, and Leffe Blonde was soon being served in whatever glasses were available--like Bud at a sports bar.

Leffe Blonde is an abbey ale made by the Artois company Interbrew, under license from the abbey of Leffe. Our sample of Leffe Blonde was drawn from the tap. And since we ordered it early enough in the evening, it arrived in the proper Leffe Blonde glass--a generous spherical glass container perched atop a long, substantial stem. The beer was light amber in color, and very clear. The aroma and taste were

on the light side and somewhat subdued compared to many abbey-style beers I have had. But it had all the "right stuff"--aromatic nose, complex taste, and a clean finish. I found it to be unusually smooth and rounded for an abbey ale, which made it very "drinkable." Maybe too much so--this beer is so drinkable and so "available" when it is on tap that you could easily lose count of how many you have had. "Danger, Will Robinson, danger!"

*** La Fin Du Monde (bottle)**

I spied a lot of beer in La Fin Du Monde glasses being delivered to tables, and ordered one thinking that this wonderful beer must be on tap. I was wrong. The bartender was simply using whatever glasses he could lay his hands on to fill orders for Leffe Blonde. My La Fin Du Monde arrived in a bottle...but with the proper La Fin Du Monde glass on the side.

La Fin Du Monde needs no introduction. It is one of the bottle-conditioned, Belgian-style beers made by Unibroue in Chambly, Quebec. La Fin Du Monde is light-bodied and very pale in color, but at 9% alcohol v/v it is very strong in its effect. La Fin Du Monde is a wonderfully drinkable beer...and that's why "The End of the World" is something to watch out for!

*** Maredsous (bottle)**

After the Hoegaarden, the La Fin Du Monde, and the Leffe Blonde, I decided to look further into the beer menu for another abbey ale. I ordered a bottle of Maredsous. The Leffe Blonde may have lacked somewhat for assertiveness, but the Maredsous did not.

Maredsous is an abbey ale made by Moortgat (brewer of Duvel). Apparently there are several versions (strengths) of Maredsous produced. The version we had was 8% alcohol v/v. It was medium amber in color, and bottle conditioned with a light dusting of yeast on the bottom of the bottle. This is a big, full-bodied beer with a wonderful "Belgian" aroma. The flavor was deep, complex, and assertive.

There was "a lot going on" taste-wise, so I won't even try to describe all the subtleties.

We both agreed--this beer was the best Belgian beer of the night.

*** Douglas Scotch Ale (bottle)**

My friend likes deserts. I generally don't bother. He was driving. I had to keep him company while he ate his desert. What can I say? (In all fairness, the deserts did look quite good. But I was more interested in the beer menu. So I ordered a beer for desert while my friend ordered something that required a fork.)

Douglas Scotch Ale is made by Scottish and Newcastle of Edinburgh, Scotland for Belgium. It is not sold in Scotland. The beer is made in Edinburgh, and shipped in bulk to Belgium where it is bottled. It is sold under the name Gordon Highland Scotch Ale for the Belgian market and under the name Douglas Scotch Ale for the French market (which is presumably how it finds its way to Quebec). At an original gravity of 1.090, and an alcohol content of 9% v/v, it was the heaviest beer of the night, and one of the most alcoholic.

Our beer arrived in a bottle with a green tartan label, and with a Douglas Scotch Ale thistle glass on the side. One smell and one sip was enough to tell me. "We've hit pay dirt," I said. My friend gave it a try. "You're right," he agreed. He ate his desert. We split the beer.

For Scotch Ale fans, this beer is not to be missed. It is dark amber in color, with a subdued red glow if you really get some light through it. The aroma and the taste are absolutely unbelievable. Our example had been aged properly, and had just enough of the oxidized/sherry-like notes that one likes to see in a beer of this type. It was malty, fruity, aromatic, and very deep and complex. If you ever see a bottle of this, buy it. If it is not for sale, steal it.

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Well that's it for my trip to Montreal, and to the Belgian beer enclave known as Le Petite Moulinsart. If you go, keep in mind that non-smoking areas in restaurants are not part of the culture in Quebec. Nevertheless, if you are ever in Montreal, don't miss Le Petite Moulinsart. The food is wonderful, and the beer...like I said, don't miss it!



beer. I added a pound of crystal 60 for sweetness and body, some chocolate, and a small amount of roasted malt for color and flavor. Trying to maintain a level of simplicity, I tied my grains in a muslin bag and let them sit in my boil pot as the water rose from cold to just about boiling. Then I added the malt and the brew was under way. Liquid yeast was used to achieve a more authentic flavor. After six weeks in the bottle I judged this beer. Many of the stylistic parameters were duplicated reasonably well. However, Brown Porters are supposed to have low to medium malt sweetness and I felt that mine was lacking given the final gravity (F.G. 1.014) and amount of crystal used. I recall this characteristic from my extract beer days and I believe I perceive it in other extract beers I have tasted. Clearly, excellent extract beers can be made as is evidenced by their success in national homebrew competitions so why did my beer lack this component? Anne and Matt Whyte, of Vermont Homebrew Supply, had many suggestions about remedying this problem. One was to add the grains just prior to boil and keep them there longer. Another was to put the muslin bag in a colander and pour hot water over the grains to extract more of the sugar components.

Since this topic is too long for here, Anne has agreed to address this issue in the next newsletter if she can get her Energy of Writing (Ew) high enough.

This experience reminded me of a very positive use of the muslin bag that I have used in all-grain brewing. On several occasions I have made all-grain

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Brewers Notebook II by Steven Lefebvre


The first topic on my brewers notebook this month is the Energy of Activation in Brewing. Energy of Activation (Ea) is a chemistry term used to describe the amount of energy chemicals require to form product. This analogy holds true for Steve's Brewing Energy (SBE) as well. Once I have put forth the right amount of energy I inevitably end up with a carboy full of sweet wort product. For me, I find the energy threshold is reached after the formulation of a recipe. Once I have designed the beer, I know the brewing process has begun, SBE has been reached, and the beer will happen. For example, someone gave me 3 pounds of malt extract and 3 pounds of DME. It probably sat on the shelf for six months. What hurt was buying commercial beer due the dearth of homebrew in my cellar (sound familiar?). Finally, I decided on Brown Porter reasoning that I could experiment with steeping grains in an extract

Maine Homebrew Competition Rescheduled by Dave Gannon

The Maine Homebrew Competition has been rescheduled.

The Maine Homebrew Competition, which usually takes place in the spring, will be held on September 25, 1999 in Searsport, Maine. Announcements will be sent out two months prior to the competition. The Maine Homebrew Competition is open to all brewers, and is part of the New England Homebrewer of the Year circuit.

Please note: although this date is in September, this is the Maine Homebrew Competition and not the Common Ground Fair. There will be no homebrew competition as part of the Common Ground Fair this year.

For contact information about the competition, see Page Five. 



Vermont Homebrew Supply Beer

- ◆ New! Organic New Zealand Hallertau leaf hops
- ◆ Clone Brews: 150 recipes for Belgian, English, German brews you'll recognize (and some you won't)
- ◆ Everything you'll need to beat Rich in the Masher Challenge: Cream Ale: extra- light malts, adjuncts :-o, & more!
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Wine

- ◆ 6 gallons of fresh Californian & Italian juice: Cabernet, Merlot, Zinfandel, Reisling, Chardonnay, & more!
 - ◆ Use a Wyeast wine yeast and toast the "millenium"
- Call before noon & we'll have your recipe ready after work**

Mon-Fri 10-6 Sat 10-5 Sun 11-5



Green Mountain Masher Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Information
3/27/99	Hudson Valley Homebrewers 9 th Annual Homebrew Competition	Contact Lyn Howard (ph)(914)229-5941 (email) Lynhbrew@aol.com OR judge contact Bill Woodring (ph)(914)896-5476.
3/29/99	Green Mountain Masher April Meeting "Hoops and Hops" (Style of the Month and Masher Challenge - Cream Ale)	Contact Jerry Gormley (hm) (802)658-4038 (email) jgormley@xraylitho.com OR Tom Ayres (hm) (802)434-2939 (email) toma@together.net
4/10/99	KnickerBocker Battle of the Brews, AHA Sanctioned Competition, Schenectady, NY. Sponsored by the Saratoga Thoroughbrews. Entries due by 4/5/99.	Contact James Raimo (hm)(518)884-8689 or (wk)(518)385-7828 (e-mail) jamesraimo@ps.ge.com.
5/1/99	Green Mountain Homebrew Competition	Contact Dan Marshall (hm) (802)862-7667 or judge/steward contact John Gallagher (hm) (802)482-2847 (email) john@richfrog.com
5/10/99	Green Mountain Masher May Meeting (Style of the Month - Mai Bock and other lagers)	Contact Jerry Gormley (hm) (802)658-4038 (email) jgormley@xraylitho.com OR Brook Anderson (hm)(802)878-4353 (email) andersb@wai.wyeth.com
6/7/99	Green Mountain Masher June Meeting (Style of the Month - ales)	Contact Jerry Gormley (hm) (802)658-4038 (email) jgormley@xraylitho.com OR Rich Evans (hm) (802) 899-3006 (email) evansrj@us.ibm.com
9/25/99	Maine Homebrew Competition	Contact Tom O'Connor (hm) (207)236-3527 (wk) (207)596-8900
12/4/99	New England Fall Regional Homemade Beer Competition	Contact Charlie Olchowski (hm) (413)773-5920 (wk) (413)774-2217

Please contact Tim Cropley at (802) 658-4038 or by email at timc@dec.anr.state.vt.us 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.

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batches and excluded the very darkest grains from the mash. Then I steeped these grains until I felt that the flavor and color that I desire had been reached. I have found that this method also accentuation of the aroma these grains offer. Maybe we should do a study on this?

Another beer in my notebook for early this year is a Belgian Dubbel. I have been wrestling with this style for several batches, but Judge van Ryckevorsel keeps finding faults in my

efforts. Fair enough. It is a difficult style. Here is some of what I have learned so far. The three vital parameters of a Dubbel or Trippel are brewing sugars, fermentation temperature, and yeast. Brewing sugars in Dubbels are typically candi sugar (a.k.a. rock candy). I have tried making my own invert sugar, or using other cheaper types of sugar, but this did not give the appropriate flavor component or color. All sugars, however, will help to create very creamy and moussy head. This year I opted for the real stuff, but had to guess at the color or sugar contribu-

tions. I guessed about 40 pts/gal/lb for the sugar contribution which seemed to be correct. My guess on the color was too low? Yeast and fermentation temperature are important in every beer, but are deceptively more important in these ales. In order to create the appropriate contributions to the nose by the yeast, Abbey yeast must be used. Also the temperatures for primary fermentation are low for ales (62-66F), the secondary fermentation can/should be lagered, and fresh yeast is added at bottling and aged for two weeks at (80F).

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LAST CHANCE TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!!

If you haven't paid your mem-

ber-
last newsletter and your name
will be removed from any and all
use.
Your membership status is noted at the

A 1/99 means your membership dues
are due
you you are paid through that month
and year. I know that most that haven't
embers but just
haven't gotten around to paying.

The following people have not paid
their dues asap to ensure that they con-
activities:

TOM AYRES
ALDEN BEE
MICHAEL BOVEE
DAVE CLARK
JOE CUTTS
GREG DINKEL
VERLYN FISCHER
PHILIP GALIGA
JOHN GALLAGHER
PAUL MCCABE
JOHN MCLAUGHLIN
JOHN OLENDER
JEFF PADGETT
LEONARD PERRY
CLIFFORD TIMPSON
TOM WALTERS
MIKE WERNER
ANNE WHYTE

If you won't be at the next meeting and
wish to remain on the Masher mailing
and emailing list, please send a check
for \$15 to Lew at the address listed in
the Staff Box on Page Two. Thanx 🙌

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Well, that's it for this month. I am off
to design another recipe. Peace, love,
and happy fermenting... 'til next month.



Beer Tasting in Boston by John Leak

The next time you're in Boston,
one package store worth visit-
ing is New Boston Wine and
Spirits, 474 Columbus Ave., South End
(617) 536-5545 where beer tastings are
held Saturdays from 4 PM to 6PM.
The tastings have been a big hit and
have been more profitable than the
store's Friday wine tastings. On tap
this Saturday are two Belgian beers,
LaChouffe and Dupont Moinette.



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