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DREGS FROM THE KEG



May 2016

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Foam at the Top

By Bob Wilson President

Last month's meeting at Honest Abe Cidery was a lot of fun! Thanks especially to owner and head cider maker, Spencer Chambers. We're planning a ciders-only competition open to Strand and Pacific Gravity. We'll coordinate a group (unfermented) cider purchase which will be more economical than acquiring your own (though you are free to do so). Aside: in North America, the term cider refers to both unfiltered apple juice as well as alcoholic 'hard' cider. So we will buy a bunch of 'soft' cider for you to ferment.

You are encouraged to doctor your cider however you like. For example, you could add another fruit like blackberries. You could freeze the cider, collect the concentrated juice as it thaws, and make ice cider (details below). You could ferment with Belgian-style yeasts or Brettanomyces. You could even dry-hop! I'm sure the club can come up with an impressive variety of ciders, even starting from the same base!

We will then arrange an informal competition to judge the various ciders and declare a best-of-club winner from Strand and PG. Those winners will then collaborate with Honest Abe on a cider.

Here are some details: we'll get the (unfermented) cider from an orchard near Big Bear. Not sure what apple varietal(s) yet. Cost depends on participation, but it should be no more than \$8 per gallon. The cider will be raw and unpasteurized, so for best results, treat with Campden tablets before pitching yeast. Just add one Campden table per gallon of cider and let sit for 24-48 hours.

Buy as much as you want, and enter as many different ciders as you like, just don't enter the same cider twice. Judging will be based on the BJCP guidelines, but we have no intention of running this like an official BJCP competition (that's a lot of work). A Best-of-Show cider will be selected, and the high-point winner from each club will also be awarded (the Best-of-Show is not always the high-point winner). Participation in the purchase and competition will be limited to members of Strand and Pacific Gravity. Dates for the cider purchase and judging have yet to be determined. Contact me (info at the end of the Dregs) with any questions.



What is Ice Cider?

Most ciders end up below 6% because the sugar content of apple juice does not lend itself to higher alcohol levels. According to the 2015 BJCP guidelines, ice cider originated in Quebec in the 1990s. The process works like this: the raw cider is frozen in a container with a drain at the bottom, such as a mash tun. As it melts, the first liquid to trickle out will be highly concentrated juice. When you have collected the desired volume, or when the desired original gravity is hit, stop collecting additional liquid. The freezing/melting process can be repeated if further concentration is desired. It can take 5 gallons of raw cider to produce 2 gallons of ice cider. Disclosure: I have never made ice cider, and I don't think I've ever had it, but it sounds delicious!



We brewed his Westvleteren 12 clone recipe.

80% Castle Belgian Pils

16% Zulka Morena unrefined cane sugar

4% Belgian Special B

20 IBU from Magnum

Target OG=1.094

John grew up the dregs from bottles of Westvleteren 8 that Falcon Alan Tracy imported from Belgium. He stepped them up three times and then brewed 5 gal of Belgian Single. The beer was fruity, slightly spicy, clean, and in his opinion the yeast was the real thing. We each fermented our beer with yeast from the 5 gal batch.

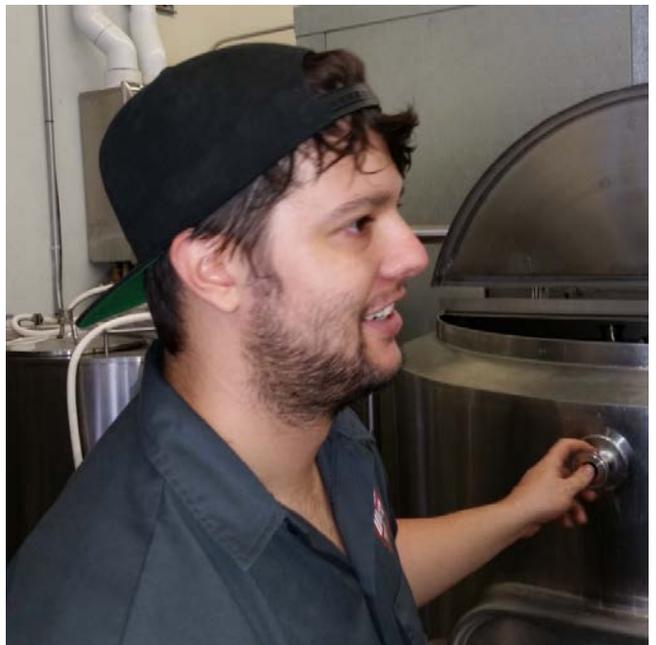
Spent Grains

It's a new year. It is now time to pay your 2016 club dues. You may pay your dues on the club website www.strandbrewersclub.org/membership, or you can pay by cash, check, or credit card at the next club meeting. Contact [Chris Remensperger](#), Strand Treasurer, if you have any questions about paying your dues.

Big Brew with the Falcons

By Jim Wilson

John Aitchison is a Maltose Falcon and one of my very good homebrewing friends. His friendliness and positive attitude are enlivening and he's a big part of why I try to give back and help his club whenever I can.



[Westlake's brewers, Alex Samovitz above and Donovan Nebreklievski, front row center in the group picture, are Falcons too.](#)

Westlake has a 3 barrel brewery that started life at [Enegren Brewing](#) in Moorpark. At this scale, everything is hands on starting with grain milling.



John knows my favorite beers are Belgians and when he offered the chance to join a small group of Falcons for a big brew at [Westlake Brewing](#) last month I jumped on it.



This hanger queen Hungarian grain mill has a big motor, maybe 2hp, running on 240v. Lotsa torque there!



The entire mash was pumped to the lauter tun and Craig Wickham (also appearing in the role of pope) got to slither into the mash tun and muck it out so it could be transformed into a kettle.



The direct fired brewery has three vessels on a small footprint. The hot liquor tank is on the left, the lauter tun is in the middle and the combination mash tun/kettle is on the right. Westlake Village tap water was filtered through activated carbon and its alkalinity was raised with a mineral addition. Mash water was heated in the HLT, pumped by a multi-tasking portable pump to the mash tun where it was manually mixed with the grist at 120F, held for 15 min, heated to 150F, held for 45 min and finally mashed out at 168F.



At the same time, the recipe's sugar was inverted by heating to 150F with water, acid and invertase enzyme then boiled to drive off the water and become caramel. In a second pot, 15 gal of first runnings wort was also caramelized and both were added to the brewery kettle. The inverting and caramelizing steps took 20 pounds of propane. If more was available, a longer boil would have intensified the caramel flavors and darkened the beer.



The wort was oxygenated in-line on the way to the transport buckets.



Yeast meister John works his Zen magic on the yeast.

After the mash and sparge water drained to the kettle a 90 min boil made 94 gal of wort right on the target OG. Yeastex 82 nutrient was added near the end of the boil. The next step was chilling through the blue counter flow plate chiller using tap water followed by glycol. The small, shiny cylinder above the chiller is a filter to stop solids from moving along. Not too much of an issue on this brew but a big deal when they do a DIPA, which might require several filter cleanings before the whole batch is ready to pitch.

My wort showed bubbles in four hours which is usually a good omen for a healthy fermentation. But, after two days at 70F, the yeast went on strike. I tried stirring and raising the temp to 75F, but attenuation had slowed a lot, which made me uncomfortable. So, I pitched two envelopes of rehydrated Safale 05 and mixed well. Fermentation reengaged and the beer finished at 1.011 after 10 days. I crashed to 36F for two days and kegged.



14 days after brewing, I took a bottle to Mayfaire where John, Mike Haisma, Rives and I tasted. There were no technical flaws. Stylistically, the beer's color was about 12 SRM, which is right at the lower limit for Belgian Dark Strong. It was strong and had a youthful edge due to suspended yeast. The peppery phenol intensity was low and while the ester level was high, it was mostly stone fruit rather than the expected dark and dried fruits. I think it will mellow with age and be very

drinkable. Getting closer to W12's flavor profile will need a nudge to the recipe or process on the next try.

Brouwerij West Big Brew

By Anthony Brownstone

Thanks to an invite from Josh Smith and the Long Beach Homebrewers Club, I recently participated in a "Big Brew" at Brouwerij West in San Pedro. If you haven't been already checked this place out, Brouwerij West specializes in Belgian-inspired beers (so many Saisons!!) and is housed in a giant wooden warehouse built in the 1940s.



Photo By Josh Smith

When I heard that we would be brewing using a "mash filter" I had no idea what that meant. It turns out that they are able to get **over 100% mash efficiency** when compared to standard lautering methods, using a giant array of filters as a lauter tun. This changes the brewing process quite a bit. Because there is no chance of a stuck sparge using a mash filter, Brouwerij West can produce beers with grists others can't. The currently have spelt and 100% wheat beers on tap.

Their process starts with making flour. They grind the grain down to a fine powder and transfer it to the mash tun along with strike water from the hot liquor tank (HLT). An agitator moves through the tank stirring the slurry and ensuring clumps don't form. Unfortunately, they had a short that day on the HLT, so I was handed a steel paddle and tasked with clump bashing duty. After stirring-in, they added salts and acid to adjust the mash water. Brouwerij West uses RO water for all their brews, with their in-house reverse osmosis system located at the back of the warehouse.

Once the mash was done, the entire mash was pumped into the mash filter. The filter is comprised of about 60 large cartridges pressed together. Each cartridge has a space on one side for the mash, then a filter, and a bladder on the other side that fills with compressed air to squeeze every last drop of wort from the grains. After all the wort is extracted, they just open the filter over a large bin and the grain just falls out. A quick rinse with the hose and they are ready for the next batch.



Then we moved-on to the boil. This brewery uses steam for all their heating needs! Steam heats the boil kettle, HLT and mash tun. They can direct-inject steam into the mash tun for accurate temperature control. A 3° rise over an hour mash? No problem on this system!

After the boil and a quick spin in the whirlpool tank, the beer was run through a plate chiller, oxygenated and pumped into an empty fermenter where a line of buckets waited to be filled. Bucket full, I got in line for some bugs. Brouwerij West offered to give us some of their house yeast strain, which included some laco and brett and was poured from a keg right into our buckets. Newest to the strain were a couple Saison yeasts used to make "Dog Ate My Homework", their Blackberry Saison, making the yeast slurry purple.

Here is the recipe we used, as provided by Josh:

45.5% Pilsner (2 row)

41.3% Flaked Wheat

9.3% Flaked Oats

3.9% Munich Malt

Hallertauer Hops (2.7%AA) @ 60 minutes (9.8 IBUs)

I plan on adding strawberries and rhubarb once the bubbles in my airlock have stopped (still going after 2 weeks!) and hope I end up with a good tart strawberry rhubarb Saison.

A big thanks to Josh from LBHB for organizing the brew. And thank you to Brian, Jeremy, and the staff at Brouwerij West for their time and hosting such a fun and educational brew day!



Photo By Josh Smith

Alternate Ways To Make Mead: Part 1

By Chris Sousa-Wynn

Ancient and rustic brews fascinate me. When I first started brewing I read all I could about recreations of ancient Samarian beers, Chicha from South America, Gruit from medieval Europe, Pulque from Mexico, and many more. None of them fascinated me more than Mead.

I will not go into depth here about the history of mead and the myths and legends that surround it's origins from many different cultures. And I should also state that I am a novice mead maker. Before I started this current project I have only made two meads.

The first was a wild mead that I was inspired to make after reading [Wild Fermentation](#) By Sandor Ellix Katz. It is a great book about fermented foods and well worth reading. My mead, however, was awful and undrinkable after 6 months. So I dumped it. In retrospect it might have aged out and been ok, but it would have never been great.

For my second mead I decided to research more. I re-read the appendix of *The Complete Joy Of Homebrewing* by Charlie Papazian and I read countless homebrewing blogs. After tasting a couple of meads, both commercial and homebrewed, I learned my personal taste leans to the dry side of meads. I decided on a recipe for dry sparkling mead from *The Complete Joy Of Homebrewing* and purchased one and a half pounds of Peach Honey from my local Farmers Market for a one gallon batch of mead. The recipe was fairly standard one. After bottle conditioning for 6 more months I tasted the first bottle and it continues to age well two years later.

Contemporary mead making process involves adding honey and water, stir, add yeast and yeast nutrient. There are variations, how much yeast/yeast nutrient to add, to heat or not, etc. In my research I came across two other methods. The first method was very old, some speculate it was how the first meads were made. The second is very new and I will discuss it in a second part to this article.



No Stir Mead

The first method very simple. You add your honey into your fermentation vessel, add desired amount of water for your taste in mead (general guidelines I have found per gallon of water are 1-1.5 lbs of honey for dry, 1.5-2 lbs for semi-dry, and 2+lbs for sweet), add your yeast, cap with airlock, and let it sit. The yeast will eat away at the honey as it dissolves in the water. Do not stir and do not heat the honey.

For my two one gallon batches I used two pounds of honey each and then filled the fermenter the rest of the way with water, approximately 3.5 quarts of water. In one bottle I added 5g of Lalvin dry yeast. The other bottle I left open until it started to spontaneously ferment, about 48 hours.

It was interesting to observe how the honey was being metabolized by the yeast. You could visibly see the change in the level of honey on a day to day basis. The honey layer in the bottle with the yeast added fully integrated with the water after four weeks. The honey layer in the bottle with the wild yeast fully integrated after 5 weeks. I let them sit another week before transferring to secondary. I plan on bottling this month and will bring a bottle of each, if they are any good, to the meeting in June.

Strand Brewers Club Events

May 11th -7pm-Club Meeting

@ South Bay Brewing Supply

June 8th -7pm-Club Meeting

@ South Bay Brewing Supply

Iron Brewer Inner Club Competition

Recipe must include the special ingredients which must all be detectable in the finished beer.

July: Tettngang, Flaked Wheat, and Raspberries

October: Saaz, Munich, and Passion Fruit

Final Fridays

May 27-	Strand
June 24-	King Harbor
July 29-	The Dudes
August 26-	Monkish
September 30-	Phantom Carriage
October 28-	3 Weavers
November 18-	Select Beers (last Friday in November is the day after Thanksgiving)
December-	TBA due to holidays & Club Party

Activities Report

By Jay Ankeney-Activities Director

Summer is so close you can just about smell it and this one is going to be packed with great beer related activities.

Stuffed Sandwich day trip-- Saturday, May 14

We are going to start off with a bus trip to Stuffed Sandwich on Saturday, May 14.

We'll gather at the Redondo & Marine Park and Ride Lot 2406 Marine Ave, Redondo Beach, CA 90278. You can park all day for free there. Plan to get on the bus at 11 AM.

Then we'll be returning by 4 PM.

Transportation cost will be \$20 per person, paid as you board the bus.

This is going to be an especially great event because Marlene (the kindly owner of the Stuffed Sandwich) has announced she will be hosting a special Vintage Belgian Beers Tasting on that day.

There will be a pre-set flite of Belgian taster samplers for between \$25 to \$35. Marlene has yet to determine the final price, but for Belgian lovers it's sure to be

worth it. She will also have 9 Belgians on tap which you can order individually, and there will be over 700 beers in the cooler.

Remember to bring your own glass or buy one when you get there, and since Stuffed Sandwich is not officially a bar be sure to order food before beer.

Early summer Beach Bar Ride--Saturday, June 4

Since this is an addition to our annual "BBBB" it's being called the "AAAA" until someone comes up with a better name.

But the idea is we will gather at some at one of the excellent beer venues along the great South Bay bike path around 10 in the morning and ride as a group from one pub to the next.

A list of bars will be publicized ahead of time, and we'll have someone designated as Cell Phone Central so you can always catch up with the herd if you decide to deviate from our path.

We should have a good turnout, and members of other clubs have also been invited to supplement the gang. Bring friends, lots of sunscreen and maybe some bandages depending on how wild you plan to get.

Recruiting and Information Booth--Saturday, July 2

On the Saturday that kicks off the 4rth of July weekend, I've arranged with Parks and Recreation for us to set up an information stand by the sidewalk across from the head of the Manhattan Beach pier where we can hand out flyers and greeting cards to folks passing by. I envision a card table with samples of hops and grains on it, broad mention of our "Homebrew Club of the year" award, and maybe some photos of past club activities. Of course it should be obvious to everyone that we cannot come within a country mile of having any beer at the stand. Please don't even try to sneak any in disguised as a water bottle. You can be sure we'll be closely watched. On the other hand, there are plenty of nearby bars where you can wet your whistle during breaks.

We'll need two teams to make this work: one team to provide transportation of the table and display material to the spot around 10 AM and to pick everything up around 3 or 4 in the afternoon (it's doubtful any parking will be found nearby) and another team to actually man the stand wearing our cleanest Strand Brewers Club T-Shirts and waving our club banner.

I'll be asking for volunteers at our June meeting, but you can always contact me at any time if you want to help out.

It should be a lot of fun. We'll get to stand around the pier watching the scenery walk by while telling people about the glories of our beloved hobby. Here's hoping we recruit some new members along the way.

Some future ideas I'd like your input on include some "mini brewery tours" where we'd select a local neighborhood that has an abundance of breweries, such as Torrance, or the downtown L. A. area. Then, instead of renting a bus we might consider taking Uber cars from place to place. With three people in each car, the cost would not be very high, and it would give us more flexibility. Please share your ideas on this with me. Jayankeney@mac.com

Strand Homebrewer Of The Year

Points are awarded for the following. Bringing homebrew to meetings earns 1 point per beer. Having the best beer of the night earns 2 points. Organizing an educational topic for a meeting earns 3 points. Participating in an Iron Brewer contest gives 1 point, while winners get 4. Hosting a club brew earns 3 points, and attending earns 1. Writing a Dregs article earns 3 points. Bringing a keg to an event earns 3 points per keg. Each beer entered in competition earns 1 point. Winning a bronze medal earns an additional 2 points (3 points total including entry point). Winning a silver medal earns 4 points total. Winning a gold medal earns 5 points total. Winning runner-up best of show earns 7 points. Winning best of show earns 10 points. Points are doubled for NHC, so winning a bronze in NHC earns 6 points total.

Please let me know (president@strandbrewersclub.org) when you enter/win competitions, and also if you brought beer to the January and April meetings, because apparently I can't be trusted to hold on to a piece of paper (from now on I'm just going to take a picture of the signup sheet at the end of the night).

Current point tallies:

Brewer	Points
Ryan Penrod	25
Jim Wilson	16
Jim Hilbing	14
Dan Martin	12

Dan Parker	11
Chris Remensperger	8
Rives Borland	6
Rick Wirsing	5
Anthony Brownstone	4
Brian Pheiffer	4
Edgar Cuevas	4
Greg Foster	4
Jeff Hoy	4
Bob Wilson	4

Jay Ankeney	3
Penny Wirsing	3
Rob Proffitt	3
Alan	2
Jill Updyke	2
Rich Thornton	2
Alex Schlee	1
Chris Sousa-Wynn	1
Robert	1
Roberto Hernandez	1

Strand Brewers Club Targeted Competitions

Competition	Entries Due	Judging Date(s)	Judging Location	Website
AHA National Homebrew Competition 1st round	past	4/8 and 4/9	San Diego, CA (additional locations available)	http://www.homebrewersassociation.org/competitions/national-homebrew-competition/competition-information/
Mayfaire	4/8/16	4/23/16	St Martin In the Fields 7136 Winnetka Ave, Winnetka, CA 91306	http://www.maltosefalcons.com/comps
California State Fair	5/6/16	5/19/16	Sacramento, CA	http://www.northerncalbrewers.com/homebrew-competition
Los Angeles County Fair	TBD (July)	TBD (July/Aug)	TBD (LA/ San Fernando Valley)	http://www.maltosefalcons.com/comps
Pacific Brewers Cup	TBD (Sept)	TBD (Sept)	TBD (LA/Long Beach)	TBD
California State Homebrew Competition	TBD	11/6/16	TBD (San Francisco, CA area)	http://www.nchfinfo.org/state-comp.html
Doug King Memorial Homebrew Competition	Jan 2017	Jan 2017	TBD (LA/ San Fernando Valley)	http://www.maltosefalcons.com/comps
Romancing The Beer	Feb 2017	Feb 2017	Westlake Village, CA	http://www.toaked.com/competition/
America's Finest City	Feb/March 2017	March 2017	San Diego, CA	http://quaff.org/AFC-2016/
Jeff Sanders Memorial Homebrew Competition	March 2017	March 2017	Lawndale, CA (TBR)	http://jeffsandersmemorial.com
Mazer Cup International Home Competition (mead only)	March 2017	March 2017	Broomfield, CO	http://www.mazercup.com/
Los Angeles Belgian Brew Challenge	March 2017	March 2017	Los Angeles, CA	http://belgianbrewchallenge.com/

<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/ical/42e7c9i2uj194r0ad2ipfle7r8%40group.calendar.google.com/public/basic.ics>

https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=42e7c9i2uj194r0ad2ipfle7r8%40group.calendar.google.com&ctz=America/Los_Angeles

Tell Us What You're Doing

Your stories are welcome in the *Dregs*. Upgrade your brewery? Fine tune your practice? Take a road trip? Do well in a competition? Have recipes to share? Read a good beer book? Have club related pictures, especially for the *Dregs* cover? Send all those, or anything else you think would be interesting to the [Editor](#). Thanks!

What We Stand For

The objectives of the Strand Brewers Club are to brew beer and share information about brewing, presentation, consumption, judging and history of beer. We promote and encourage homebrewing competition and hope to foster general goodwill through the making and consuming of this noble and most excellent beverage. We aim to brew the best damn beer.

It is our policy to brew and consume beer strictly for fun. Under no circumstances does Strand support or condone in any manner the sale or barter of homebrewed beer, the operation of a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol by a member or participant in any club event or the provision of alcohol to minors.

Strand Brewers Mentors

The following members have volunteered to answer your brewing questions and to help beginning brewers learn the craft. You should take advantage of their expertise.

Name	Location	Phone	Email
Jay Ankeney	Manhattan Beach	310-545-3983	jayankeney@mac.com
Jim Hilbing	Redondo Beach	310-798-0911	james@hilbing.us
Jim Wilson	Redondo Beach	310-316-2374	jim7258@gmail.com
Steve Fafard	Rolling Hills Estates	310-373-1724	sfafard@cox.net

2012 Club Officers

President:	Bob Wilson	president@strandbrewersclub.org
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