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DREGS FROM THE KEG

February 2016

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Foam at the Top

By Bob Wilson President

We're famous! Kelcie Pegher of the Beach Reporter attended the January meeting and wrote a great [article](#) featuring several club members. I'm quoted as saying the best beers I've had have been homebrews. The reason is simple: homebrewers are not bound by economic constraints in the same way that commercial breweries are.

Breweries have to manage risk and only brew beers they're reasonably confident will sell. Economies of scale encourage using the same ingredients as much as possible. The consequence, for better or worse, means beers from the same brewery tend to have similar flavors. And rare or expensive ingredients, like blood oranges, are almost never used!

Homebrewing is different! Most homebrewers buy hops by the ounce, grain by the pound, and yeast by the vial, encouraging experimentation with new varieties. Sure, many homebrewers *choose* to stick with the same yeast strain, but almost never for economic reasons. And the number of blood oranges needed for a five gallon batch is a lot more palatable than for a fifty barrel batch! A homebrewer can choose to age that sour for one more year or to dump that chocolate raspberry wit, all while drinking the freshest IPA possible. You won't find that kind of flexibility at your corner liquor store!

So cheers to homebrewing, and cheers to all you crazy homebrewers!



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.

Would you like to be a senior BJCP Judge?

By Jim Wilson, BJCP Grand Master III Beer Judge

Would you like to be a senior BJCP Judge?
Jim Wilson BJCP Grand Master III beer judge

The stepping stone to a high rank is the Written Proficiency Exam. You can learn the details at

<http://www.bjcp.org/examcenter.php>. A friend is preparing to take the exam and asked if there were any resources that could help. Here's my answer. When the time is right maybe it can help you too.



Help is available. 190 judges have made 89+ on the written exam and so can you.

There are three kinds of resources to help prepare for the test; basic, supporting and tools.

The BJCP Style and Study Guides have the basic information needed for complete answers and they're the first resources graders use. There are other all purpose study guides by Chuck Cox, Greg Walz, JustDave, WAHA, David Teckam, Al Boyce and others. None of the alternatives worked as well for me as the BJCP's. But, who's to say? They might for you. In particular, based on the 1200+ exams I've graded, Al's guide is too restrictive when aiming for 90 or higher on the written.

Only light use of supporting resources is required. The good ones might have more vivid descriptions, a different perspective or a different organization that is a little easier to understand. Expect to read a lot to find the occasional gem. I'm a glutton and read all Michael Jackson's books and all the AHA style books for starters. But, you can't read everything. I disregarded online material unless I knew the pedigree of the author and totally ignored opinionated blogs, Beer Advocate, Rate Beer and the like. In the end, I guess that 90% of my answers came from the BJCP guides.

I took the legacy exam 11 years ago just before turning 60. By then, my memory had seen better days. Science

and craft were still easy, style details not so much. I like studying, learning and perversely, exams. I knew from experience that it would be hard for me to get motivated for a second exam so I focused on studying well enough to reduce the possibility. Tools made success on the exam more probable.

The task seems easy enough. Write full credit answers to each of the questions in the time available (it was 14 then and is now closer to 16 minutes). Practice is the key to saying the right stuff quickly.

I learned to write a full page in 10 minutes. That meant if I could write an average of 1.4 pages or less on each question I'd have a chance to earn full credit on all of them. Average is important because the recipe answer requires about 2 pages for a complete answer. That squeezes the time available for the others a bit.

I also discovered that time spent reading or writing in the evening wasn't productive. My workaround was to get up an hour early in the morning and also study at lunch if I could.

I wrote open book practice answers using the BJCP Guides. Some were good to use. To improve the poor ones I read supporting resources. Later, the good resources were scanned and Carl Townsend maintains them as the [Complete Reading List](#), user name bjcp, password January28Exam. The list has two discussions about memory improvement. They suggested ways to take notes and practice self-questioning that were helpful on those pesky style descriptions. Writing succinctly is critical on the exam. In Vonnegut's essay, he tips his hat to E. B. White and *The Elements of Style*. There, the most important thought is "omit unnecessary words". With practice, you can do that.



For some questions, it took 3-4 tries to distill information into short, complete answers. In the end, I wrote closed book practice answers to all 43 questions used at the time. Stay on topic and focus on just answering the question. Straying off topic wastes time and doesn't earn credit.

I made 88/72 on that first exam. Several years later, with the dreaded essay in my rear view mirror, I retook the judging portion making 93 and Master in one swell foop.

Field Report: All Things Bigger in Texas

By Ryan Penrod

While in Texas we went to visit some of my wife's friends from college. Due to time constraints with family commitments and little kids nap schedules we found ourselves meeting at a new Whole Foods. It had a nice taproom with over 20 beers, and fancy tap towers as seen in figure 1, there were also some comfortable couches.



Figure 1 Whole Foods Tap List

Notice some of the beers are listed with a red background and others with a black. It turns out this Whole Foods has a complete brewery on premise, a few pictures are shown in Figure 2 and Figure 3. The beers with the red background were brewed on site. Since we were visiting friends, I did spend too much time looking at the brewery so I need to let the few pictures I took be the description. I was pretty surprised to see a brewery in a grocery store, but I think whole foods and other high end grocery stores make a significant portion of their profits from prepared food (I have no proof). I wonder if this is going to become a trend. Figure 3 also shows two beer engines for serving cask ale.



Figure 2 View of the brewery from the entrance



Figure 3 View of the brewery from next to the Bar

In addition to a large selection of beer and wine on tap the Whole Foods had a comfortable bar and sitting area with great reading material seen in figure 4. Are you wondering how the whole foods brewed beer is? I am too.

While there were a few variations of a Russian Imperial stout brewed on site that looked interesting, this Whole Foods had a Mikkeller Spontan-Raspberry on tap and I was much more interested in it than anything brewed on site. I don't consider Texas a home brewing state so I was surprised to see a micro brewery on site in a Whole Foods and the Zymurgy and magazines on hand to read, but it was a fun treat.



Figure 4 Reading Material by the comfortable couches

Strand Brewers Club Events

February 9th - Club Meeting

At the February Club meeting Ryan Penrod will be sharing five saisons made from the same wort.

February 12th - 14th - Homebrew Club of the Year Celebration, Anchor Brewing Company

The Strand Brewers Club is the 2015 Homebrew Club of the Year! We can't say that enough. A trip has been planned along with axillary trips to other breweries along the way.

The 25th Southern California Homebrewers Festival will be held on April 29th and 30th, 2016.

Thirty-Seven homebrewers' clubs have signed up to serve homebrew to an expected 2,000 festival attendees. The Strand Homebrewers Club will be setting up our bar at the festival and serving "the best damn beer." The festival features commercial beer tastings, educational speakers, music, a raffle with great prizes, a "Bragging Rights Only" competition, and homebrew, lots of homebrew.

In order to attend the SCHF you must be a member of the [California Homebrewers Association](#). CHA memberships are on sale now for \$10. Membership benefits include discounts to Southern California breweries and home brew shops.

Registration for the SCHF began on January 1st, 2016. The initial cost will be \$35, but increases to \$40 on February 1st, and then increases again to \$45 on March 1st. Registration closes on April 24th. When you register you have the option of volunteering to work at the SCHF. Volunteers commit to two (2) hours of work during the festival in exchange for free SCHF registration. If you sign up for Sunday cleanup, you will only need to do one (1) hour of work. Volunteer registration lasts through February 1, or until all spots are filled.

The SCHF will be held at the [Vail Lake RV Resort](#), Temecula, CA. Resort rules provide:

- Maximum occupancy of 6 people per campsite;
- One RV and two vehicles maximum per campsite; and
- Excess vehicles must be parked at designated overflow parking areas.

Although there is a rule prohibiting tents, Vail Lake RV Resort has waived this rule for the SCHF.

The Strand Brewers Club has reserved nine campsites for April 29th and 30th. Each campsite has a captain who you can contact to arrange for sharing the campsite. Some of the sites are already full. The captains are as follows:

Campsite Captains	Sharing Status	Campsite Number
Rick and Penny Wirsing	Ron Cooper and sons	84
Bob Wilson	Steve Fafard	86
Jeff and Christy Hoy	Full	87
Joe Pace	Full	88
David Eaves		89
Rich Thornton		90
Chris Remensperger	Full	109
Chris Remensperger	Full	110
Nate Federman	Full	111

Note: Campsite Captains are free to trade campsites.

Also, campsites can still be reserved directly with Vail Lake RV Resort, but probably will not be close to the club campsites. That may be good or bad.

So make your plans now for the 25th Southern California Homebrewers Festival!

Iron Brewer Inner Club Competition

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

March: Hallertauer, CaraMunich, and Blood Oranges

July: Tettnang, Flaked Wheat, and Raspberries

October: Saaz, Munich, and Passion Fruit

Competitions

By [Rives Borland](#), Competition Advisor

This section was previously filled out by the VP but for 2016 we created a newly appointed position of Competition Advisor in order to give renewed club focus to competitions and encourage people to enter and judge more. BJCP sanctioned competitions are the best way to get honest feedback on your homebrews from trained judges, as well as gain some recognition for yourself and the club. Aside from a few select individuals, Strand Brewers as a whole haven't really been a dominate powerhouse in competitions in recent years, mostly due to lack of entering, in my opinion. I think we have some amazingly talented brewers in this club, and if we start simply start entering more and focusing on having beers packages correctly and in prime condition, I think we will start to see Strand Brewers racking up the medals. I challenge everyone to step up their game!

For the newbie, entering competitions can be a bit confusing, so I'll be rolling out a few tips for entering competitions each month and providing updates and more details about the high priority competitions. I might even throw in some info about judging and judge training opportunities. In the meantime, if you have any questions about entering competitions feel free to contact me at <mailto:rives.borland.sbc@gmail.com>. I will also be available to talk to about competitions at any of the regular monthly meetings. I'll try to specifically devote the first 15 minutes or so to answering competition related questions, including tasting beer and giving some quick opinions on which

category to enter them in and if last minute adjustments can be made to get them into prime condition.

To make it as easy as possible to enter competitions, as long as there is enough interest, we will try to make South Bay Brewing Supply an (unofficial) drop off location for all the local competitions and see that they are hand delivered or shipped (pending board funding approval) to an official drop-off location. For some of the smaller competitions, we will at least try to coordinate pooling entries together somehow for drop-offs so we are not all making individual trips. The club Facebook page will be a good communication medium to coordinate things. I would also like to make bottling equipment (Blichmann beer gun, counter-pressure fillers, etc) available loan to people so they can have the best chance of packaging their beer correctly for competitions. If you have equipment you are willing to loan out or allow people to use at your place occasionally, please let me know. I'm happy to lend my beer gun and even show people how to properly fill bottles from a keg.

The table at the end of this section provides a summary of the targeted competitions for a full year and will be updated as more details become available. I have also created a calendar with reminders for these competitions:

<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

To start things off, I'll provide some brief background on these competitions and why we are giving them highest priority. They are all either local competitions from neighbor clubs or have some national-level significance. These should be plenty to keep most people busy, but if not, there are hundreds of additional BJCP sanctioned competitions happening nationwide and internationally as you can see at http://www.bjcp.org/apps/comp_schedule/competition_schedule.php

The first competition to mention is a new one that our own club is hosting for the first time this year, The Jeff Sanders Memorial Homebrew Competition, to honor

the memory of our beloved long time member who we lost in 2015. It is going to be a small competition focusing a select number of styles that Jeff enjoyed brewing and drinking. We plan to make it an annual competition, which will have the side benefit of keeping our organizing skills sharp.

The Pacific Brewers Cup is another competition that our club is involved in but we rotate the hosting responsibility with 2 other local clubs – Long Beach Homebrewers and Pacific Gravity (Culver City area) – so that each club organizes it every 3 years. It is one of the largest competitions in Southern California. Strand Brewers hosted The PBC in 2015 and Long Beach Homebrewers will be hosting in 2016, followed by Pacific Gravity in 2017.

Speaking of Pacific Gravity, this will be the 2nd year they are hosting the Los Angeles Belgian Brew Challenge. It is a small competition focusing on just the Belgian related style in the BJCP guidelines.

The Maltose Falcons (Woodland Hills area) keep busy hosting 3 competitions each year! The Doug King Memorial is relatively small competition with the styles restricted to mostly lagers, session beers, imperial anything, and experimental beers. They also added mead for 2016. The Mayfaire is one of the largest local competitions and they claim it is also the oldest in the country. This year will be the 38th annual Mayfaire, which if you are keeping track dates back to when homebrewing was legalized, if not earlier. The Mayfaire is also one of 3 competitions looked at in consideration of both the Anchor CA Homebrew Club of the Year award and The Sierra Nevada Homebrewer of the year award. The other 2 competitions are the California State Fair and the California State Homebrew Competition, which is why they are on the list. We managed to win Anchor CA Club of the Year for 2015 despite non-stellar showing in these 3 competitions, but I would encourage more people to enter them in consideration of future CA club of the Year submissions. I am pretty sure the Sierra Nevada Homebrewer of the Year is awarded simply based on total points in those 3 competitions and no other factors. The last competition that the Maltose Falcons host is the Los Angeles County Fair, which is another fairly large competition that has been around for many years.

As a related side note, The LA County Fair also runs a commercial beer competition every year that takes

place over 2 days and they are always looking for judges, especially BJCP Certified judges, but they will take any homebrewer with some experience. That is a unique opportunity to judge commercial beers and they actually pay you to show up (the past few years compensation has been \$50 and free tix to the fair). For more info visit

http://www.fairplex.com/wos/beer_competition/

Romancing the Beer is a competition put on by our friends up North in Thousand Oaked Homebrewers (TOaked) that I believe is in its 3rd year. It's a mid-sized competition, judging the full gambit of BJCP styles.

America's Finest City is one of the largest competitions in San Diego and is run by QUAFF, one of the largest clubs in the country. It makes the list, because it is the closest competition to us that is a qualifying event for the prestigious [Masters Championship of Amateur Brewing](#). An entry must place first in a MCAB qualifying event to be eligible to be entered in the MCAB.

As far as prestigious competitions, it does go any higher than the National Homebrew Competition, which is actually the largest beer competition in the world, amateur or professional. The competition takes place over 2 rounds with the 1st round judging distributed over a dozen sites nationwide. All of the beers that place in the first rounds then move on to the final round, which is judged during the AHA National Homebrewers Conference. Some of the individual categories received over 600 entries last year, which had to be narrowed down to the top 3 beers! The competition has become so popular in the past few years that you now have to register in a lottery system with open enrollment from 2/1-2/7 for 2016. You can request to submit up to 6 entries and select your top and back up choices of drop off locations. If there is too much demand to completely fulfill your request, it will be partially fulfilled based on a random lottery.

The last competition I included is the Mazer Cup, for those meadmakers in the club. This is the largest mead only competition in the world, with one day of commercial mead judging, followed by another full day of homemade mead judging. It is also a trade conference of sorts for commercial meadmakers, so if you enter this competition there is a good chance you might get feedback from some of the best commercial meadmakers in the world, or at least from some of the most serious mead judges.

Stayed tuned for more information about entering competitions next month and for now make sure to register you entries for Romancing the Beer and The Jeff Sanders Memorial. Also register for the NHC lottery by Sunday 2/7! that each club organizes it every 3 years. It is one of the largest competitions in Southern California. Strand Brewers hosted The PBC in 2015 and Long Beach Homebrewers will be hosting in 2016, followed by Pacific Gravity in 2017.

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Stayed tuned for more information about entering competitions next month and for now make sure to register you entries for Romancing the Beer and The Jeff Sanders Memorial. Also register for the NHC lottery by Sunday 2/7!

Strand Brewers Club Targeted Competitions

Competition	Entries Due	Judging Date(s)	Judging Location	Website
Romancing The Beer	2/12/16	2/27/16	Westlake Village, CA	http://www.toaked.com/competition/
America's Finest City	2/24/16	3/4/16 and 3/5/16	San Diego, CA	http://quaff.org/AFC-2016/
Jeff Sanders Memorial Homebrew Competition	2/27/16	3/12/16	Lawndale, CA (TBR)	http://jeffsandersmemorial.com
Mazer Cup International Home Competition (mead only)	3/4/16	3/19/16	Broomfield, CO	http://www.mazercup.com/
AHA National Homebrew Competition 1st round*	3/9/16	4/8/16	San Diego, CA (additional locations available)	http://www.homebrewersassociation.org/competitions/national-homebrew-competition/competition-information/
Los Angeles Belgian Brew Challenge	3/12/16	3/26/16	Los Angeles, CA	http://belgianbrewchallenge.com/
Mayfaire	TBD (early April)	TBD (late April)	TBD (Winnetka, CA area)	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	TBD (early Jan 2017)	TBD (late Jan 2017)	TBD (LA/ San Fernando Valley)	http://www.maltosefalcons.com/comps

*Registration lottery takes place 2/1-2/7

Note From The Editor

By Chris Sousa-Wynn, Dregs Editor

As I publish my first edition of The Dregs I want to take a moment to informally solicit your opinions. Let me know what you like about The Dregs, what kind of articles you enjoy reading, what kind of articles you would like to see more of, and what you think can be done to make The Dregs even better than it is.

I have started a new section, **Field Reports**, that Ryan was kind enough to write the first article for, although he didn't know it at the time. In that section I would like to include personal stories about breweries, beer bars, restaurants with a killer beer selection, etc. they have visited recently near or afar. I would like this to be a monthly section of The Dregs, so please keep those submissions coming. So, did you make it to Iron Triangle's opening or Brouwerij West's Hoppy Valentie's Day Dinner? Let the rest of us know about it.

Lastly, I plan on writing a bimonthly article about historical brew ranging from Meads and Gruit to more modern, but forgotten methods and recipes. If you have any suggestions for styles or methods I might find interesting, please let me know. I have already started working on my article for March, Mead Four Ways, exploring four different methods for brewing Mead. And don't worry, I plan on using the club as taste testers to determine the best method.

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
Vice-President:	Dan Parker	vicepresident@strandbrewersclub.org
Treasurer:	Chris Remensperger	treasurer@strandbrewersclub.org
Activities:	Jay Ankeney	activities@strandbrewersclub.org
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