

Society of Northeast Ohio Brewers

Club Newsletter for September 2011



President's Krausening

by Dave Clark

The Cuyahoga Cup, Elections, Oktoberfest and the Brewer's Roundtable

For those of you who know me, I'm a bit of a contradictionist (is that a word)? I love the outdoors, yet I'm not into camping. So, I've never participated in some of the popular SNOBs events because they involved camping. Last fall, I came out of my shell, to some degree, and attended the Oktoberfest event at the Brooklyn Exchange Cabin in the Hinckley Metroparks Reservation. No, I did not camp (baby steps). But I spent the afternoon and evening with many of my fellow SNOBs and their guests and it was an experience unlike any I had had in the past.

As president having to attend to all details of running a meeting, I am usually being pulled in many different directions, making it hard to "enjoy" our monthly meetings. Oktoberfest gave me a venue where I could sit back, relax and get to know some of our members on a more personal level, without having multiple obligations to attend to at the same time. And, I have to say, I really enjoyed it! Though I have several different things scheduled for the weekend of Sep. 16-18, I definitely plan to attend Oktoberfest now that I know what a great time it is for all involved, and I encourage you to do the same. (No, I'm not going to camp, but you are all welcome to.) For those of you new to the club, this is one of the four events that your membership dues go toward to help fund the event. The club pays for the main course (meat) and everyone who attends

brings a side dish of their choosing. Even if you just go for the day, please plan to make a visit to the beautiful Brooklyn Exchange campsite for this great event, and get to know your fellow club members in a way that simply doesn't present itself in the format of our monthly meetings. And yes, bring your homebrew!!!! Jockey boxes will be available for you to use. The more beer, the better!

Anyone who has TV can already see that things are beginning to heat up for the 2012 elections. Well, in our club, it's almost time to do the same. We will take nominations during our October meeting for all positions and vote on these nominees during our November meeting. The positions that will be voted on are President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Librarian. Please consider running for office so you can bring your ideas to help the club continue to grow and prosper.

Immediately following our election in November, we will be doing something really special. We will have a "Brewer's Roundtable" where all the local brewers are being invited to come out and hold an informal, yet informative discussion on all things brewing. This meeting will be less about learning about a specific topic and more about simple interaction between amateur and professional brewers. It can be about anything brewing related, from learning how to brew a recipe to asking technical brewing questions. Whatever you want to talk about is fair game, as long as we retain order, of course. So, plan to attend this special evening and bring your questions as this event will have many of

your local pros on hand for your enjoyment. But, before we jump ahead to the November meeting, let's talk about the present. For our September meeting (which is actually held on Monday, August 29), we will have a water chemistry expert named Steve Alexander present to teach us about water's role in our beer. What do we need to do to maximize our brewing potential? What modifications are necessary when trying to clone a beer from another region? How does brewing with city water differ from brewing with well water and what does a well water brewer need to do to replicate city water? Come prepared with your questions on water as this should be a very informative session.

Since this will be the last newsletter before Son of Brewzilla, I have to take this opportunity to personally challenge every SNOB's brewer to please do your part to support this competition. Remember as I said in the last meeting; don't enter a beer because I asked you. Enter the beers because your entry fee helps go toward making our club a better club. It gives us the funding necessary to put on great events, hold great parties and upgrade the things we need to hold great meetings. Helping to judge, steward or just volunteer also serves the same purpose. We need multiple people to help pull this thing off, and we rely on many of you for the competition's success. I want to thank those who have volunteered or entered, in advance, for their participation and I personally encourage the rest of you to please do the same so we can make this thing a huge success again this year.

Along these lines, we have an additional incentive to participate as a whole this year. **Jack Kephart** of The Brew Kettle is

building a trophy known as the "Cuyahoga Cup" that will go to the winning Homebrew Club that accrues the most points during the competition. It will be set up on a points system (gold=3, silver=2, bronze=1, best of show likely to be 1st=6, 2nd=5, 3rd=4). Club with the most points gets the cup. We've always maintained a friendly competition with our friends to the south, SAAZ, but this will really ramp up this competition. If you recall, they out-medaled us last year, even though we had more entries. We can't let this happen again! We need our brewers to come through. We have a lot of talent in SNOBs, from the old-guard brewers to some of our new rising stars. But we need all of you to participate so we can bring home the 1st Cuyahoga Cup where it belongs. SNOB: Represent!



Competition Corner

Please use the following club name when you enter competitions:

Society of Northeast Ohio Brewers (SNOB)

Upcoming regional homebrew competitions:

9/24: Son of Brewzilla, North Olmsted, deadline, 9/10

Society of Northeast Ohio Brewers
2011 Officers and Chairpersons

President: Dave Clark
dclark1918@sbcglobal.net
(216) 213-2211

Vice President: Todd Donnelly
donnelt@ccf.org

Secretary: Mike Ontolchik
montolchik@gmail.com
(440) 478-8645

Treasurer: Mark 'Ace' Knapp
danish.ace@sbcglobal.net
(440) 454-3294

Librarian: Tom Roth
tjr247@yahoo.com

Web Admin: Dan Kromke
snob@beersnobs.org

SNOB's 2011 Calendar of Events

August 2011

29: SNOBs Meeting, 7:30PM Sachsenheim Hall,
Holiday Beers

September 2011

2 – 5: Berea Oktoberfest
7: SNOBs Night Out, Edison's Pub, Tremont
10: Buckeye Brewing Keg Dash
13: Bell's Beer Party, Ballentine
16-18: Oktoberfest!!!!
24: Son of Brewzilla

October 2011

3: SNOBs Meeting, 7:30PM Sachsenheim Hall,

*Scotch Ales, Nominations for officers, Club-Only
Specialty Competition
14 – 22: Cleveland Beer Week*

November 2011

7: SNOBs Meeting, 7:30PM Sachsenheim Hall,
Belgian Strong, Club-Only Weizen Competition
??: SNOBs Night Out

11: Microbrew Extravaganza, Massimo da Milano

December 2011

No monthly Meeting

?: SNOBs Christmas Party.

Event Spotlight

Oktoberfest September 16-18

Come spend the weekend with your fellow SNOBs in Hinckley Reservation at The Brooklyn Exchange Cabin. Our annual campsite is located at 2400 State Road in Hinckley, OH. There is bunk space in the cabin, plenty of tent camping area in the field and we can accommodate a few RVs. Bring a side dish to share for each evening meal and homebrew or craft beer. We'll have jockey boxes to hook up your beer, wood for the fire pit and clean facilities.

Cleveland Beer Week October 14-22

Events are already being added to the official [website](#). The 3rd annual Cleveland Beer Week looks to be even bigger and more fun than last year. SNOB will be involved. Christine Montague will be our September meeting to discuss volunteer opportunities during the week.

2011 Membership Dues

Membership dues for 2011 are currently being collected by Mark Knapp, treasurer. The price of a SNOBs membership remains the same, still a bargain at only \$30 for an Individual membership, \$45 for a Dual membership, so **pay up you cheapskates!!**

Included in the membership is admittance to the **4 (yes, count them) big SNOB events of the year: Beer No Sweat** (March 12th), A new (still planning) summer 2011 event, **Oktoberfest** (weekend camping event end of September) and the catered **SNOBs Christmas Party** (December).

Membership also comes with discounts (bring your membership card with you) at local craft beer places and homebrew shops:

- ✓ [Stamper's Grill Pub](#): \$1 off drafts
- ✓ [Buckeye Beer Engine](#) \$1 off drafts on Mondays
- ✓ [JW Dover](#): 10% off
- ✓ [The Brew Mentor](#): 10% off
- ✓ [Grape & Granary](#): 10% off
- ✓ [Leeners](#): 10% off
- ✓ [Warehouse Beverage](#): 10% off homebrew supplies
- ✓ [Rozi's Wine House](#): 10% off homebrew supplies

The Membership form can be found at the end of the newsletter. Dues can be paid to Mark at the next meeting, mailed to him at the address on the form or by using our PayPal link at beersnobs.org.

S.N.O.B.'s Meeting Location

[Sachsenheim Hall, 7001 Denison Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44102](#) (216) 651-0888
Located on the south side of Denison Avenue one block east of Ridge Road

SNOBs Night Out – Thursday, September 7th at 7:00 PM

[Edison's Pub](#)
2373 Professors Street, Cleveland, OH

Brewing with Cleveland Municipal Water

Paul Shick (after Matt Cole, Rick Skains and A.J. DeLange)

This short note is intended as a practical follow up to the inspirational talk that Matt Cole and Rick Skains gave at our June SNOBs meeting. Several questions were raised on brewing with Cleveland water, particularly on dealing with chlorine, and I've attempted to answer them here. I've checked much of what follows with renowned HomeBrew Digest water wizard A.J. DeLange a while back, who graciously took the time to make sure I'm not lying to you.

As Matt and Rick pointed out, Cleveland water is really pretty nice to brew with. It's relatively neutral, in most important respects. The most relevant figures from the Cleveland Division of Water report are the following:

pH 7.0-7.6

Alkalinity: 72-85

Phosphate as P: 0.8-1.3

Hardness: 114-118

Chloride: 18 (rises in winter from road salt)

Total dissolved solids: 175

Calcium: 30.5

Magnesium: 8.8

(These figures are averages from the recent report Dave Clark passed on to me and several earlier reports.)

As brewers, we're concerned with:

1. Driving off chlorine. Dave Clark has double-checked with the Cleveland Division of Water and verified that they do not use chloramines (as many cities do), so many of us need to deal only with free chlorine. Matt and Rick suggested carbon filtering for dechlorination, which I strongly second. Cheap and effective activated carbon filters are available from almost any hardware/home center, although you have to keep within the suggested flow rates to be sure to get rid of the chlorine. Matt also suggested boiling to get rid of chlorine (and temporary hardness), although you need a vigorous one hour boil to get rid of the chloramines, which are much more persistent than the free chlorine. A third approach that gets rid of both chlorine and chloramines is to add a campden (potassium or sodium metabisulfite) tablet to the water and dissolve it. A.J.'s measurements show that this is a simple and very effective way to neutralize chlorine/chloramines for 10-15 gallons. Campden tablets are available at any winemaking supply shop. (Steve Alexander has shown that metabisulfite can be used to lower hot-side oxidation in brewing, with the sulfites binding to the potential receptors before oxygen gets a chance. It's certainly works for me, as shown by the far lighter color of my pilsners. About ½ a teaspoon of potassium metabisulfite seems to work nicely for a 10 gallon batch.)

2. Salt additions to hit a reasonable mash pH. How you figure this depends on whether or not you follow Matt and Rick's advice on preboiling, which precipitates out the temporary hardness. Here is A.J.'s analysis of our water in this regard:

“It is not likely that simply boiling your water will result in the precipitation of much chalk. It can be softened to some extent by boiling but addition of additional chalk (to serve as nucleation sites) will probably be required and even in this case you probably wouldn't be able to get the alkalinity much below 60. Lime treatment would perhaps allow you to do a little better but lime treatment is a little involved and not worth it. The water isn't very alkaline anyway. The residual alkalinity is

$$\text{R.A.} = \text{alk} - [\text{Ca}/3.5 + \text{Mg}/7 = 85 - [76/3.5 + 36/7] = 58 \text{ ppm as CaCO}_3$$

Worst case and 13 ppm better than that (45) best case. This is right around the desirable upper limit of 50. Being over a bit isn't serious. The 76 is the calcium in ppm as CaCO₃ calculated from calcium ppm as the ion divided by 20 (the equivalent weight of calcium) times 50 (the equivalent weight of CaCO₃). Thus you can calculate how much more calcium is needed to lower the RA by a given amount to 0 the RA you'd need (20)(58)/(50) = 23 ppm more calcium - that's about 100 mg/L gypsum which is not unreasonable by any means for some beers (ales) but which would be a disaster for others (Boh Pils). Apparently your sulfates are somewhere in the 20's. In cases where you don't want to increase this you can always get more calcium from the chloride or you can use malt to supply the pH reducing acid you need rather than relying on the calcium/magnesium - phytin reaction. Even a small percentage of crystal will reduce pH significantly for water no more alkaline than this."

So, if I read A.J. correctly here, we need about 2 grams of gypsum (or calcium chloride, if you're doing a lager or a more delicate ale) per 5 gallons, if you don't preboil, with very little change if you do preboil. By the way, I get roughly 8 teaspoons out of a 1 ounce (28 gram) package of gypsum, so it looks like ½ tsp of gypsum per 5 gallons. Funny how it works out that you've been doing the right thing all along, isn't it? Of course, calcium chloride would be preferred for lagers, in general. Keep in mind that dark grains lower the pH significantly, so you don't need much in the way of calcium salts for pH reasons. Also, some people use gypsum as a "flavor salt," in addition to its pH lowering role, when aiming for Burton-style pale ales. This might require adding gypsum to the boil (strictly for flavor) rather than the mash, avoiding too low a pH. With lots of roasted grains, you might even need to add chalk (CaCO₃) to raise the pH, to offset the lower pH from the dark grain. Finally, for a style where our level of hardness is unacceptable (like a Bohemian Pils), a mix of 80% reverse-osmosis/deionized water with 20% filtered tap water works well, with some calcium chloride added mostly for yeast nutrition.

3. How much acid to get sparge water into the 5.5 or so range? Many brewers use a pH meter to check the mash pH, but ignore checking the sparge water. A.J. agrees with this:

"Water with this level of alkalinity probably does not need to be acidified for sparging. You can easily verify or disprove that statement by monitoring pH and SG at the outlet of the lauter tun. I think you will probably find that the runoff gravity will be quite low (2-3P) when the pH reaches 6. Given that you want to reduce the sparge pH anyway, probably the simplest is to add a couple of tablespoons of dry malt extract to the sparge water. If you really want to use a mineral or organic acid, go to <http://brewery.org/brewery/library/AcidifWaterAJD0497.html> for all the gory details on how to calculate the amount."

So go easy on the acid in the sparge water. Personally, I use about 2 teaspoons of 10% phosphoric acid in about 6 gallons of sparge water for light beers, a bit less for darker beers. Some others have suggested that a lower pH yields a smoother bitterness and better hot break, so a less conservative approach might be better.

Web Links of Interest

SNOB

website: <http://www.beersnobs.org/>

Facebook: <http://groups.to/snob/>

forum:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Cleveland_beer_snobs

American Homebrewers Association

<http://www.homebrewersassociation.org/>

National Homebrewers Conference

<http://www.ahaconference.org/>

Pro Brewer (Brewing tools and calculators)

<http://www.probrewer.com/resources/tools/>

Grape and Granary

<http://www.grapeandgranary.com/>

The Brew Mentor

<http://www.thebrewmentor.com/>

J.W. Dover

<http://www.jwdover.com/catalog/>

Leener's

<http://www.leeners.com/>

Brew Your Own (Magazine)

<http://byo.com/>

Basic Brewing

<http://www.basicbrewing.com/>

The Brewing Network

<http://www.thebrewingnetwork.com/>

Brewing TV

<http://www.brewingtv.com/>

Membership Form

Society of Northeast Ohio Brewers (SNOB)

c/o Mark Knapp
2688 Hampton Rd.
Rocky River, OH 44116

Individual Membership (\$30)

Dual Membership (\$45)

(Prorated for NEW members if you join after June. Contact Mark Knapp for the current rate.)

Name(s) _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____

Zip Code _____

Phone
(_____) _____

Email _____

Email _____

Your name and address may be released to beer related business or groups **unless** you initial here _____.

Today's
date _____