



The taste and fun: home brewed

Hobbyists honing art of the masters

By JANE MOULTON
STAFF WRITER

During Prohibition, brewing beer at home was a furtive chore, mostly performed by those for whom beer was part of life.

Today home brewing has progressed to a legal hobby and craft involving about a million Americans, according to Charlie Papazian, president of the American Homebrewers Association, based in Boulder, Colo.

Anyone tempted to scoff at such homey concoctions should first taste the beer made by one of the many hobbyists who has perfected the art. Consider, for instance, Larry Polacek of Solon. In the 12th annual National Homebrew Competition held in June in San Francisco, Polacek won second place in the Munich beer category.

He's won many prizes for his beer, including a first place at the recent Geauga County Fair, but this one was special. "I could hardly be-

lieve it," he said with a broad grin. Polacek is confident about proper techniques for making beer but modest about his wins. Rather than tout his own accomplishments, he's more likely to talk about those of others, such as Gary Bauer of Milwaukee.

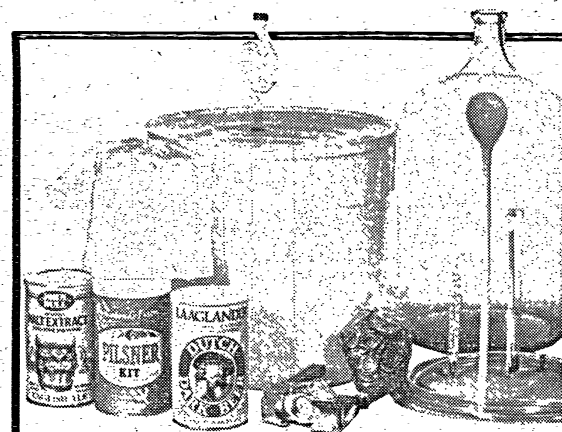
"In 1986 he won five first prizes at the national competition at John Carroll University," he said. "I use one of his recipes, but I'm a hop lover and put in more hops." Polacek eagerly shares his knowledge with anyone who asks, but he's particularly proud of his 3½-year-old granddaughter, Tara. "I'm teaching her to taste. She puts her finger into beer and licks it off." She doesn't get much that way, but she can taste it.

The homebrew competition indicates the increasing popularity of

home brewing. It attracted 1,551 entries, a 40% increase over last year. Polacek's winner was a dark beer with hops prominent in the aroma, full in the mouth with a pleasant, lingering aftertaste. Comparing it or any of Polacek's beers with one from a large national brewery would be akin to comparing Grandma's home-baked bread with Wonder Bread.

But large bakeries and large breweries both have their place. In fact, Polacek admits to buying Genesee for an everyday beer; it's cheaper, he said, than beer he makes. A retired remodeling contractor, Polacek started making beer about 12 years ago just for the challenge. That's not surprising for someone who also makes excellent wine. **SEE BREW/3-F**

- Recipes for making beer at home./2-F
- How to sterilize equipment./2-F
- Beer-making books./3-F
- Where you can buy supplies./3-F



PD/ANDREW CIFRANIC

Little equipment is required for making beer. From lower left: three of the many possible choices of malt extract, bottle capper, crown caps, plastic siphon hose, floating thermometer, plastic spoon, hydrometer. Top row: corn sugar, plastic primary fermentation vessel fitted with a fermentation lock, five-gallon glass carboy.

The first-timer's beer-making tools

By JANE MOULTON
STAFF WRITER

Commercial breweries rely on expensive equipment unnecessary for home brewing. Anyone interested in the hobby needs only a minimal outlay to make wonderful beer.

Well-equipped kitchens already have some of the necessary supplies. A home winemaker will own even more.

Pat O'Hara, owner of the Winemaker's Shop in Bedford, listed necessary equipment and prices for a beginner, with pieces that aren't lavish but will hold up if the first try is just the beginning of many. Total cost is \$49.19, a little under \$1 per bottle if you never make another batch. Advanced hobbyists will want to supplement with other items as they progress.

Primary fermentation vessel: A plastic container (with a lid fitted to hold a fermentation lock) used for the first fermentation of the wort (water with sugar from the barley). Anyone who owns two 5-gallon carboys, such as those used in winemaking, can use them for beer and forgo this item. But then an enamel or stainless steel kettle such as a canner is necessary for mixing. \$6.99.

Five-gallon glass carboy: Used for secondary fermentation vessel. \$12.88.

Fermentation lock: (Also called water or air lock.) Permits carbon dioxide to escape from the carboy and/or primary fermentation vessel, but keeps air out. 79 cents.

Siphon hose, 6 feet: Plastic tubing to transfer wort or beer from one container to another. \$1.99.

Hydrometer: Measures the specific gravity to indicate the amount of sugar in a solution. For a first try, you could follow instructions and do without this instrument and hope for the best, but it's a good tool. \$4.25.

Floating thermometer: Measures the temperature of the wort before adding yeast. Another household thermometer in the 60-to 90-degree range could substitute. \$4.50.

Spoon: Long plastic spoon stirs a deep kettle or primary fermentation vessel. A long stainless steel spoon (not wooden) from the kitchen works just as well. \$2.39.

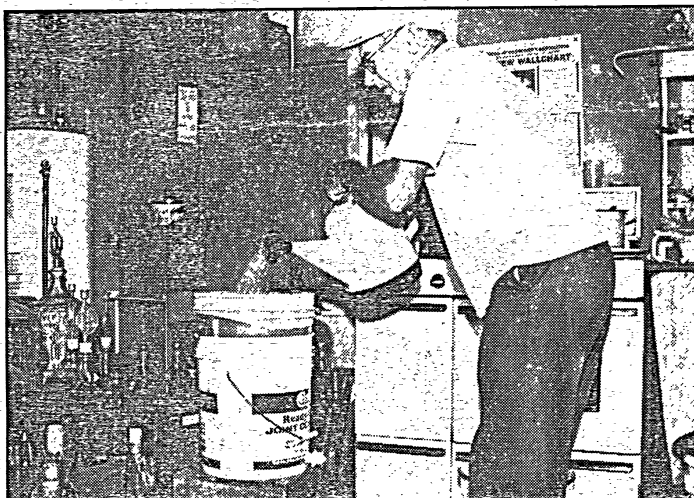
Crown caps: To seal bottles. \$1.25 per gross.

Bottle capper: Maybe you could borrow one, but you can't do without. The one pictured will even cap screw-top bottles. \$14.25.

The recommendations assume a source for beer bottles. When you or your friends collect them, try to rinse them immediately after use, but don't — don't ever — use soap or detergent. It's almost impossible to rinse away and will spoil the beer. (See instructions for sterilizing.)

Other supplies needed for the first batch are a can of malt extract (with yeast) at \$8.95 to \$9.45; corn sugar at \$3 for five pounds, and a supply of good water. Cleveland water is just fine. If your water comes from a mineral-laden well, beg some from a friend.

A clean watering can makes a handy utensil to gently pour hot water over the grain, a process called sparging. Note how Larry Polacek has rigged up a pail within a pail. The inside one has holes in the bottom for straining; the outside one has a spigot for easily draining wort into the bucket below.



PD photos/RICHARD KENDZIERSKI

By checking the specific gravity, it's easy to tell if all the sugar in the wort has fermented into alcohol. At this point the beer has no bubbles so tastes flat, but its flavor approximates that of the finished home brew.



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A CLUB FOR HOME BREWERS

The Great Lakes Brewing Co., 2516 Market St., is organizing a club for home brewers. The first meeting is scheduled for Oct. 1 at 7 p.m.

So many home brewers have visited the brewpub with questions and comments on their own experiences that co-owner Patrick Conway decided it would be a good idea to get them together and use the Great Lakes Brewing Co. as their clubhouse.

Conway plans to have a library available for members' use. Activities will cater to the desires of the members. Ideas include community beer-making equipment for members' use, field trips, speakers and competitions. Dues and frequency of meetings will be discussed at the first meeting.

For more information on the Great Lakes Home Brewers Club, call 771-4404.

No screamin' to make this ice cream

Recipes are quick, easy and fun

By SHERRIE CLINTON
BALTIMORE EVENING SUN

Homemade ice cream is within your grasp even if you don't have an ice cream maker. These easy recipes mix up in minutes, then go right into the freezer — no churning, no stirring. The whipped cream folded into the ice-cream mixture prevents ice crystals from forming.

This no-machine ice cream is just as rich and creamy as the regular stuff. It seems richer, in fact, because the method, which incorporates little air, yields a very dense product.

For best results, follow the directions exactly. Do not substitute evaporated milk

for sweetened condensed milk (such as Eagle brand), and do not substitute whipped topping for whipping cream. Whip the cream until it forms soft peaks. Each recipe goes into a 2-quart container. A 9-by-5-inch loaf pan, a casserole or a mixing bowl all work well. Let the ice cream sit, covered, in the freezer for six hours or until firm.

Eat it within a week or so because it doesn't seem to hold up as well in the freezer as conventional ice cream. So have that second helping; it would be a crime to waste it.

These ice creams are not for the days you're counting fat grams. However, that didn't concern tasters in the PD test kitchen, many of whom tried to sneak off with the recipes.

SEE ICE CREAM/9-F

FUDGY CHOCOLATE ICE CREAM

2 quarts

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| 3 ounces unsweetened chocolate, melted | 2 teaspoons vanilla |
| 1 can (14-ounce) sweetened condensed milk | 2 cups whipping cream, whipped |
| | ½ cup chopped nuts, optional |

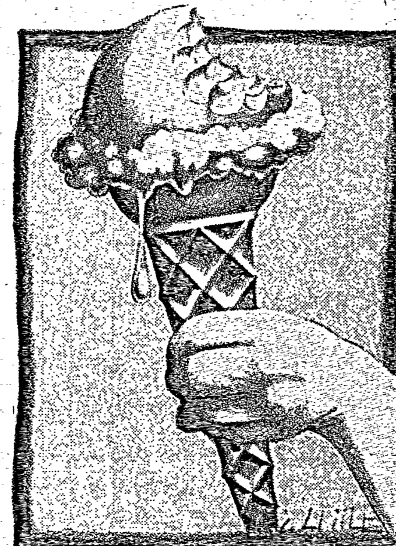
In large bowl, beat chocolate, milk and vanilla; fold in whipped cream and nuts. Pour into 2-quart container. Freeze until firm.

FRESH FRUIT ICE CREAM

2 quarts

- | | |
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| 1 can (14-ounce) sweetened condensed milk | mashed (such as raspberries, strawberries, bananas, peaches) |
| 1 tablespoon vanilla | 2 cups whipping cream, whipped |
| 1 to 1½ cups ripe, juicy fresh fruit, | |

In large bowl, combine milk and vanilla. Stir in fruit. Fold in whipped cream. Pour into 2-quart container. Freeze until firm.



FOOD

Experience gives beer maker a deft touch

By JANE MOULTON
STAFF WRITER

Recipes for beer range from simple to complicated. Either version is subject to individual interpretation, a fact which makes brewing an exciting hobby and turns it into a craft.

Although first-timers should probably follow a recipe exactly, a little experience will have them adding more hops to make the beer bitter or adding a little at the end to give the beer more aroma. Even beer started with extract can be varied.

Most malt extract instructions

tend to produce a beer light in flavor, similar to commercial beers, said Pat O'Hara of the Winemaker's Shop. O'Hara shared the recipe he gives to his customers for a first attempt. Second batches can be altered to suit individual palates.

The second recipe is an advanced one for dark beer from

Larry Polacek of Solon. It starts with whole grain and will take about six hours to get into the fermentation tank, but attention to its temperatures and techniques should produce a superb beer for those who like abundant hops and full flavors. Try it only after you're familiar with the basics.

MALT EXTRACT BEER

52 12-ounce bottles

1 can (53 ounces) malt extract with yeast **2.2 pounds (7 1/4 cups) corn sugar** **+++**
+ Water **3/4 cup corn sugar**

Sterilize all equipment (see box). Pick a spot for the fermentation vessel where the temperature is about 65 degrees. Moving a full container can be difficult, so it's better to start in the right place.

Place a 7-gallon fermentation vessel or glass carboy on a table or box high enough to permit siphoning its contents into a 5-gallon carboy.

Remove instructions and yeast from the top of the can of malt extract and place can in hot tap water for 10 minutes.

In a 3 1/2-gallon stainless steel or enamel kettle, boil 1 gallon of water and allow to cool slightly. Empty contents of can into kettle. Fill can to the top twice with hot tap water, stirring to incorporate all the contents. Stir in 7/4 cups corn sugar, continuing to stir until completely dissolved. Pour or siphon into fermentation vessel.

Add 4 gallons of cold water, adjusting temperature so final temperature of mixture is 65 to 70 degrees, checking temperature with floating thermometer.

Cool if still too hot. Sprinkle yeast over the mixture (wort) and cover with lid. Fill a fermentation lock half-full with water and place it in the hole in the lid or in a cork in a glass carboy. (The fermentation lock allows carbon dioxide to escape but keeps out the air.) Let stand until mixture stops foaming, about 4 days.

Before siphoning beer into a glass carboy for final fermentation, gently tip the full container forward and place a 2-inch block under the edge to maintain the tilt. Be sure to keep the siphon slightly off the bottom to leave the dregs behind. Siphon all but the sediment into the glass carboy. Attach the fermentation lock and after five days check daily to see if the fermentation is complete. (The bubbles will stop rising to the surface.) Don't bottle until fermentation stops.

Have sterilized fermentation vessel and bottles ready. Place the remaining sugar in the fermentation vessel. Siphon beer into it, stirring gently until all sugar is dissolved and well mixed. Immediately siphon beer into bottles to about 3/4 inch from the top. Cap with crown caps. Store bottles upright at room temperature for 2 days, then put in a cooler place for 2 to 3 weeks. Pour gently from the bottle so as not to disturb the sediment.

OCTOBERFEST BEER

About 48 12-ounce bottles

7 pounds 6-row pearled barley malt **1 1/2 ounces Hallertauer hops** **1/2 teaspoon Irish moss**
2 pounds Munich malt **1 package 2308 Munich liquid**
1 pound crystal malt **lager yeast or 1 package**
1/2 pound wheat malt **active dry beer yeast (see**
1/2 pound Cara-Pils **note)**
+ Water (see instructions) **3/4 cup corn sugar**
+ Few drops iodine (from

First assemble equipment: Find a thermal container (Styrofoam works well) that will hold a 3 1/2-gallon enamel or stainless steel kettle with a lid. (A boiling-water-bath canner works well.) Fit a 5-gallon tapered plastic bucket into another 5-gallon plastic or enameled bucket fitted with a spigot on the bottom. Poke 1/4-inch holes in the bottom of the insert bucket so liquid will drain.

Buy or make a nylon net bag that fits bottom and sides of bucket with holes. Place these buckets on a box so that the liquid will drain directly into a 5-gallon enamel or stainless steel kettle or plastic bucket. Find a clean (new or just used for water) plastic watering can that holds about a gallon for pouring water over the drained malt for sparging.

To make beer: Put all the malts and Cara-Pils in the 3 1/2 gallon kettle in the thermal container; mix well. Heat 6 cups water to 125 degrees, pour over malts, cover and let stand 15 minutes. Mixture should be about 100 degrees. Heat 4 pints (2 quarts) water to 135 degrees and mix with the malt. Cover and let stand 20 minutes.

Heat 4 quarts water to 165 degrees; pour over malts and mix well. Temperature will be about 145 degrees. Place mixture on range and gently raise temperature to 162 degrees, stirring frequently. Cover and place in thermal container with lid; close lid and cover with terry towel. Let stand for 1 hour. The temperature should remain 155 to 160 degrees. This mashing process converts starch in the grain to sugar.

To test for completion of the conversion of starch to sugar, place a teaspoon of the mixture on a small saucer. Drop in a few drops of iodine. If liquid stays brown, the conversion process is complete.

Meanwhile, start heating 3 gallons of water and using a household bleach solution (no soap), clean a fermentation vessel (a plastic container or 5-gallon glass jug — or carboy — fitted with a fermentation lock) and all the equipment that will be used after the wort is boiled. With a small saucepan, ladle the hot malt and liquid into the nylon bag that lines the 5-gallon plastic bucket; let the liquid (wort) drain from the bucket with holes through the bucket with the spigot into the kettle below.

When kettle is about a third full, turn off the spigot and pour liquid back over the malt; continue to drain into the kettle.

Measure temperature of the wort that has drained into the kettle and have 3 gallons of water at 18 degrees above that temperature. It will cool about 8 degrees during pouring.

Transfer hot water in batches into the sprinkling can and gently pour over the malt, letting it drain into the bucket below. Periodically turn off spigot and pour wort into a 10-quart kettle on the range, cover and start heating. When finished draining, you should have about 5 gallons.

Continue to heat, but when it nears the boiling point, watch carefully — the "hot break" could spill all over the range if kettle is still covered. Turn down heat to keep it at a boil and add 1 ounce hops. Continue to boil for 30 minutes; add 1/2 ounce hops. Boil 10 minutes more and add Irish moss (for foam on finished beer). Boil 5 minutes more and add final 1/4 ounce hops. Turn off heat and cool quickly by putting kettle into a tub of cold water.

When wort reaches 80 degrees, siphon or pour into primary fermentation vessel and cool to 70 degrees. Add yeast. Cover fermentation vessel. Fill the fermentation lock half-full with water and place atop or insert in cork to stopper a carboy. Leave at about 65 degrees until fermentation foaming stops in about 4 days. Siphon into a clean 5-gallon jug, leaving sediment behind, and again attach fermentation lock.

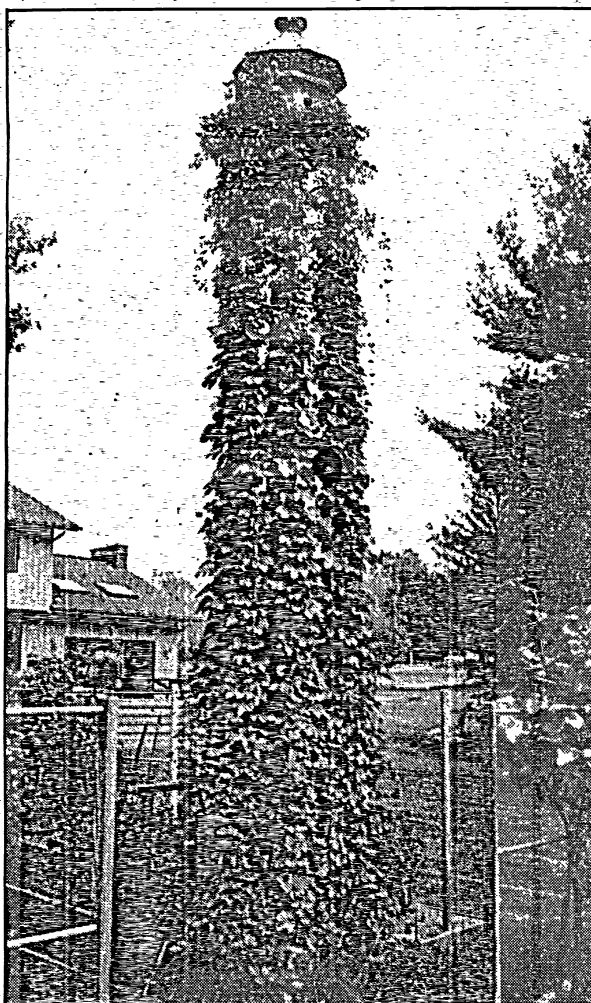
Let stand for 10 days, then check daily to see if fermentation is complete. (Bubbles will stop rising to the surface, the beer will become clear and specific gravity will be 1.015 to 1.018.) Place corn sugar in a sterile carboy or fermenting vessel, and into it siphon the beer, leaving sediment behind. Swirl or stir after siphoning part of the liquid to dissolve sugar completely. Siphon into sterile beer bottles and cap with crown caps.

Store at room temperature about a week, then transfer to a spot about 50 degrees, if possible. Otherwise refrigerate. Taste after 2 weeks but then leave for a month or so to age.

A slight sediment will form on the bottom of the bottle after the fermentation, so be careful when you pour.

Note: Polacek uses liquid Bavarian lager yeast, but it's available here only by mail order. One supplier (ask for catalog) is Great Fermentations, 87 Lakespur Ave., San Rafael, Calif. 94901. Phone 1-800 542-2520. It's possible to retrieve a cup from the sediment of one fermentation to use for another, which will cut down on the cost.

Pat O'Hara said the Winemaker's shop will stock liquid yeast in the near future. Dry yeast can be substituted but produces a slightly different product.



Hops grow almost 20 feet tall in the Polacek yard in Solon.

When beer-making gear needs cleaning, avoid suds

To clean and sterilize brewing equipment, do not use soap or detergent. If a film forms in the equipment used for brewing, it can be removed with chlorine bleach solution.

Use 2 ounces of household chlorine bleach in 2 gallons of warm water in the fermentation vessel; splash on the sides and soak equipment for 30 minutes; rinse thoroughly. If using carboys for the primary fermentation vessel, to each add 1/4 cup chlorine bleach and fill with water; use another enamel container to clean other

equipment. Rinse well with clear water and drain thoroughly.

To sterilize bottles, soak in bleach solution for 30 minutes. You can do this at the same time you sterilize the fermentation vessel. Rinse with clear water and drain thoroughly. If bottles aren't used immediately, they can be covered with plastic wrap or set upside-down on plastic wrap in a divided cardboard carton.

Note: Bottles are easier to clean if rinsed immediately after use.



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Grocery shopping starts in The Plain Dealer Food Sections where home-makers weekly find recipes to add variety to their meal planning, advertisements to lead them to food bargains and money-saving coupons to brighten their food budgets.

FROM/1-F

Beginning beer-makers usually start with a can of malt extract flavored with hops. (Advanced brewers start by boiling the malted bar-

BOOKS FOR BREWERS

on beer and beer making. Membership is \$21 a year. Trial copy is \$4 from American Homebrewers Association, Box 287, Boulder, Colo. 80306.

Many home brewers start their hobbies after a trip to Europe, particularly Germany, where almost every little town has its own brewery that produces distinctive beer with its own personality and a cer-

Papazian had one last word of advice for beginners: "Above all, don't worry. Worry can spoil the taste of any beer. Remember, home brewing is supposed to be fun, supposed to be enjoyed. Relax and have a home-brew."

FOR BEER-MAKING SUPPLIES

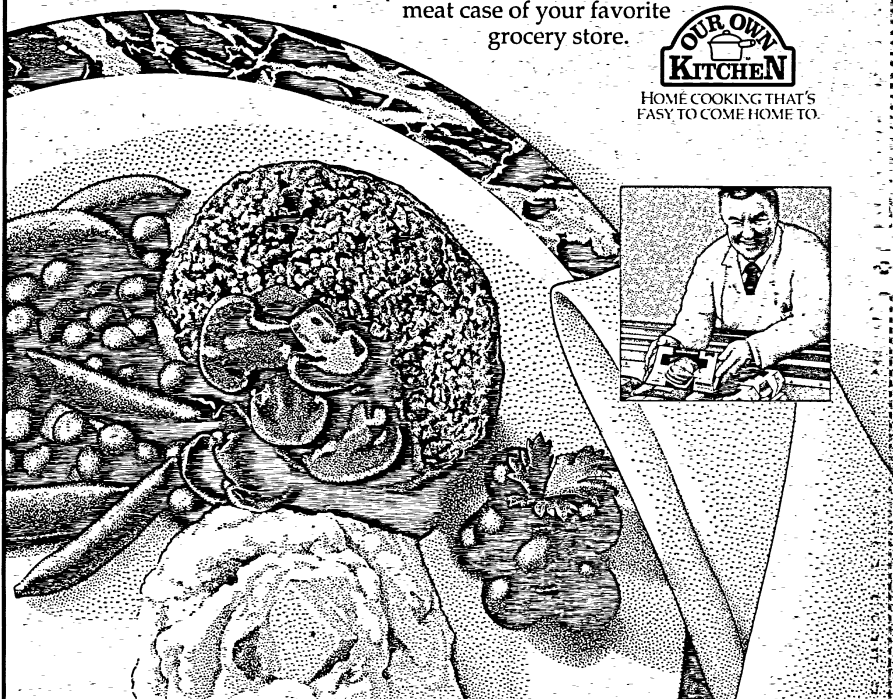
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