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From: Urban Knaves of Grain Communications <communications@knaves.org>

To: Kevin <woj@kiltedhopbrewing.com>

Subject: Knaves Knewsletter - January 2018



Knaves Knews

UKG... Because home is where great beer is brewed!

January 2018

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Board of Directors

Abbess - Eileen Uchima

First Lady / Head Penguin -

Welcome Address



Happy winter, all! We certainly can't complain about the weather too much so far this winter. And, after all, colder weather is the perfect time for some dark, roasty,

and strong beers... or for a nice sack mead,... whichever suits your taste. This week, I have a bit of a cold. My mother's cure-all for everything from earaches to sick hamsters was Blackberry Brandy. I think blackberry mead will work in a pinch!

It was great to see some members who don't always make it to meetings at the Holiday party in December. We had an excellent turnout at the Roundhouse, with great beer and food. We

Mike Uchima

*Master of Coin - **Darrell***

Proksa

Communications Minister -

Kevin "Woj" Wojdak

Chaplain of Education -

Andy Day

Sister of Events Planning -

Luann Fitzpatrick

Minister of Tournaments -

Jeff Landers

*Retired Abbot - **Chuck Fort***

*Monk - **Bob Kay***

Newsletter Contributions

Jay Bakula

Communications Channels



Click here to request an invite from a Board member.

always appreciate Two Brothers for all they do for the club. Thanks also goes out to Luann for organizing the party.



The **Twelve Days of Christmas Beer Exchange** was an enjoyable new activity at the holiday party. We swapped the beers that night and enjoyed them (one a day) from Christmas day on through the next eleven days. With offerings such as a dark saison, an apricot sour, and a roasted chestnut porter, it was exciting to see what would come next. The exchange certainly taught me that I really need to up my label game before next Christmas.



Speaking of Two Brothers, it is time to get preparations underway for the annual Drunk Monk Challenge (DMC). This year will be the 20th Annual



ukg-

subscribe@yahoogroups.com

ukg@yahoogroups.com

(Membership requires approval)

Editor's Note:

Most images in the newsletter can be enlarged to see further detail. Simply click on the image and it will open into a new window.

edition of our home competition. We are holding our competition at Two Brothers Roundhouse in Aurora on Friday and Saturday, March 9th and 10th with a possible additional session earlier in the week, if needed. We always need help with judging or stewarding as well as at the entry unpacking the weekend before the competition. Go to the **UKG calendar** and the **Drunk Monk Challenge website** to get more information on entering or signing up to help.

While your looking for a beer to drink this evening, check out your homebrew stash for any exceptional beers from the past year and earmark some of them for the upcoming competition season. Besides DMC, don't forget about the First Round of the National Homebrew Competition and BOSS's Charlie Orr Memorial Cup, which are also right around the corner! There may even still be time to sneak in a brew day or two before the competitions if you don't have enough squirreled away.

Please remember that this is *YOUR* club. Your suggestions are always welcome! Please consider contributing a short article or photos for the newsletter, a suggestion for a Tech Talk, or a Social Night venue idea. Email **Knews@Knaves.org**.

Slainte,
Eileen

Welcome to Our New Members!

- Tim Devitt, West Chicago
-

February Meetings and Events

- *February 8 @ 7:30 p.m., Skeleton Key Brewing* - Topic: "Judging and Stewarding Techniques and Tips and How Competitions Work" by Andy Day
- February 10 @ 11:00 a.m., Social Night - 23rd Annual UKG Train Crawl
- *February 28 @ 7:30 p.m., Alter Brewing, Downers Grove* - Monthly meeting.

For more details on these events, see below or the **[Club Calendar on the website.](#)**

Twelve Days of Christmas Brew Exchange

As an extra activity of the annual UKG holiday party, we organized the inaugural **UKG Twelve Days of Christmas Brew Exchange**. The concept for this activity is 12 brewers sign up to have a beer, mead, or cider ready by the time of the holiday party. Each brewer brings 12 labeled bottles of their brew to the holiday party. All of the brewers exchange their brews so that everyone ends up with a full 12-pack with 12 different brews.

The Twelve Days of Christmas, also known as Twelvetide, is a festive Christian season celebrating the Nativity of Jesus Christ. In most Western ecclesiastical traditions, "Christmas Day" is considered the "First Day of Christmas" and the Twelve Days are 25 December – 5 January, inclusive.

Christians who celebrate the Twelve Days may give gifts on each of them, with each of the Twelve Days representing a wish for a corresponding month of the new year. Contemporary traditions include lighting a candle for each day, singing the verse of the corresponding day from the famous "The Twelve Days of Christmas", and lighting a yule log on Christmas Eve and letting it burn some more on each of the twelve nights. For some, the Twelfth Night remains the night of the most festive parties and exchanges of gifts. Some households exchange gifts on the first (25 December) and last (5 January) days of the Twelve Days.

The **UKG Twelve Days of Christmas Brews** were:

Day 1 - "Dark Silence" Winter Saison with Grains of Paradise. (Brewer: Kevin "Woj" Wojdak - Kilted Hop Brewing)

Day 2 - "Charlie Pecan Brown" Pecan Brown Ale. (Brewer: Kurt Bimler - Bellringer Brewing Co.)

Day 3 - "Centi-ator" Eisbock (Brewer: Jeff Landers - Hasselhoffen Brewery)

Day 4 - "Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire" Roasted Chestnut English Brown Porter (Brewers: Noah Wojdak / Kevin "Woj" Wojdak - Kilted Hop Brewing)

Day 5 - 60 Shilling Scotch Ale (Brewers: Steve Bailey and "Big Boss" Ross O'Neil)

Day 6 - "DuPage County Stout". It's a FEW Rye Whiskey Barrel-Aged Imperial Stout (Brewer: Ray Nonnie - Coco Brewing Company)

Day 7 - Sour Golden Ale and Apricot Sour Golden Ale (Brewer: Andy Day - Elixir Brewing)

Day 8 - Tart Cran-Apple Cider (Brewer: Felipe Carmona - Bad Hombres Brewing)

Day 9 - "The Visible Horizon" Dry Stout (Brewer: Don Leonard)

Day 10 - "10 Buckeyes Marching" Peanut Butter and Chocolate Smoked Porter (Brewer: Tom Russo)

Day 11 - "Eleven Pipers" Mexican Hot Chocolate Stout (Brewers: Mike and Eileen Uchima)

Day 12 - "Black Bread in a Bottle" Rye Baltic Porter (Brewer: Tom Hayosh)

All 12 brews were great and we had a lot of fun drinking them. Look for it again in 2018. We'll set up multiple brew exchanges if we have more than 12 brewers wanting to participate.

Tech Sessions

Recent Past:

January 11th, Skeleton Key Brewing, Woodridge
"Kegging: Getting Started and Getting it Right" by Jeff Landers



For the tech session, we split up into 2 groups. One group was for first time keggers and one for advanced keggers.

The first timer group discussed how to go from bottling to kegging and discussed the type of equipment needed.

The advanced kegger group was more or less a round table discussion on stuff like how to rack from a carboy to a keg with no oxygen, how to make a keg cleaner, and troubleshooting. We also discussed how to maintain a kegging system and it was interesting to hear how different everyone's procedures were.

Upcoming:

February 8th @ Skeleton Key Brewing, Woodridge
"Judging and Stewarding Techniques and Tips and How Competitions Work"

This session will cover topics for both novices and experienced judges and stewards. We'll cover how competitions work and how to approach judging a beer.

Written by Andy Day

Social Night

Past - January 13th at Old Town Pour House in Naperville


Due to the extreme cold weather conditions and people just being busy after the holidays, the turnout for this Social Night was low. The location was very crowded and there were only two confirmed attendees. They enjoyed the night the best they could.

Upcoming - February 10th @ Starting at Noon

23rd Annual UKG Train Crawl

Urban Knaves of Grain

23rd annual train crawl, Saturday February 10th

<p>1. Take BNSF Metra to Western Ave. to arrive at 11:24 AM</p> <p>Walk north on S. Western Ave to 16th street and head west walking two blocks. Lagunitas is the large building on the left.</p> <p>12:00-2:00 Lunch at Lagunitas 2607 W. 17th Street This place is like Disney World for beer lovers so be ready for a lively taproom offering beer tastings, pub food, a retail store, and regular live music.</p> <p>Walk one block south on Washtenaw Ave. and then walk west on 19th street two blocks to S. California Ave. Walk south for 1 ½ blocks to the California Pink line station and take it heading east to the loop (Washington). Get off at Ashland and walk north on Ashland 7 blocks to W. Hubbard</p>	 <p>The map shows the route starting at the California Pink Line station on S. California Ave, heading east to the Loop (Washington), then north on Ashland to W. Hubbard St. A red pin marks the location of Lagunitas Brewing Company at 2607 W. 17th Street. Other landmarks shown include Limespace Chicago Film Studios and Peter's Fresh Market #06.</p>
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Replacing Social Night. This is a long time favorite event of the club and is usually well attended. This year's crawl will feature visits to three Chicago breweries and two great craft beer bars:

- **Lagunitas Brewing** - Start the day with lunch and a good base.
- **On Tour Brewing** - Winner of 2 medals plus *Very Small Brewery of the Year* award at the 2017 GABF!
- **Great Central Brewing** - A contract brewer with a taproom. Brew for *Begyle, Kinslahger, Maplewood, and Warpigs*
- **Kaiser Tiger** - Our dinner stop with 24 taps and a bacon-oriented menu. Same owner as Paddy Longs.

- **Bottom Lounge** - EXTRA CREDIT / Alternative dinner stop - A live music venue with 16 beers on tap.

We'll use the **Metra BNSF Line** to get to *Lagunitas Brewing*, and then the **CTA Pink Line** to get to the others. Join up with the Crawl at any point, leave whenever you like, and pay as you go. No reservations necessary, Just show up! Plan your time accordingly with a guesstimate that we will spend an hour or so at each place along the way.

Transportation cost: \$8 for a Metra weekend pass and \$10 for a CTA Ventra 1-day ticket or \$3 per CTA ride. **Schedule and maps here.**

Competitions

Competition Wins

January 20, 2018 - **Winterbrew**, Chicago, IL

- **Dave Fetty:**
 - 1st for his Imperial Stout
 - 3rd for his Red IPA
 - 1st for his "Ol' 57" American Barleywine
 - 3rd for his "Dave's Pale Ale"
 - 3rd for his Czech Pilsner
- **Jay Kash:**
 - 1st for his Brett IPA
 - 3rd for his Berliner Weisse
- **Jeff Landers:**
 - 3rd for his "Shawn Likes Turtles" American Brown

- 2nd for his “NEIPA’s are Gross” Doppelbock

January, 27, 2018 – Minnesota Mashout, St Paul, MN

- **Jeff Landers:**

- 3rd for his “The Anti-NEIPA, Cause Haze Kills” Munich Helles
- 1st for his “NEIPA”S are Gross” Doppelbock
- 3rd for his “Golden Eye” British Golden Ale
- 1st for his “Shawn Likes Turtles” American Brown

Upcoming Competitions

- February 10, 2018 - **Great Northern Brew-Ha-Ha** from the Northern Ale Stars, Duluth MN.
 - Registration Jan 5th through Jan 29th .
- February 15-17, 2018 - **Kansas City Bier Meisters Annual Competition**. From KCBM Kansas City, MO -
 - Registration Jan 3rd through Feb 2nd
- February 16-17, 2018 - **Midwinter Homebrew Competition** from the Beer Barons of Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI. Registration is Dec 30th through Feb 3rd.
 - It’s a bit of a drive, but many UKG and Chicagoland judges will make the trip to judge and steward. Some will come up for the Friday morning and afternoon sessions There are typically a few flights during the day on Friday followed by a great dinner paired with beers and meads. There will also be 3 flights on Saturday
 - Moonlight Meadery will ramp up the BOS mead. Michael Fairbrother, Owner and Head, typically attends both days, judges, and sometimes gives a lunchtime talk on Mead making.
 - White Winter Winery will ramp up the BOS cider



- March 3, 2018 - **Babble Brew-Off** from Babble of Lake County IL- Buffalo Creek Brewing, Long Grove, IL Registration now until Feb. 16
 - Great local comp to judge and steward
 - Typically the BOS beer will be ramped up by a local brewery
- March 10, 2018 - **Drunk Monk Challenge** – Entry Registration Feb 12th through Mar 2nd. One of the most competitive homebrew competitions in the country is celebrating its 20th Annual Competition.
 - Sponsored by UKG
- March 24, 2018 - **Charlie Orr Memorial Chicago Cup Challenge** from BOSS - Crest Hill, IL.
 - Registration February 10 until March 10.
 - One of the better local comps to judge or steward
 - All volunteers can stay for rather nice dinner during the awards ceremony. Typically a well know professional brewer will give a talk about beer and brewing. In the past, Jim Cibak, head brewer at Revolution Brewing and John Mallet, head brewer at Bell's Brewery have been featured guest speakers
- March 2018 - **Wizard of SAAZ** from the Society of Akron Area Zymurgists, Akron, OH - No info yet.
- Midwest Homebrewer of the Year Circuit Competitions - <http://midwesthomebrewer.com/Circuit.aspx>



Contributions by Jeff Landers / Kevin Wojdak

Drunk Monk Challenge



This year will be the 20th Annual UKG Drunk Monk Challenge (DMC) and it will be held on Saturday, March 10th at the Two Brothers Roundhouse in Aurora. It's one of the biggest competitions in the country and we run a very efficient competition.

We have a lot of fun with our Raffle and Awards ceremony so be sure to try to make it out for the evening even if you can't help during the day.

This is our home competition and we need everyone's help to run it successfully. We'll need judges, stewards, unpackers, raffle ticket sellers, runners, swag collectors, scoresheet organizers, and more.

Our head competition organizer, Lead Monk, this year is Andy Day so, if you don't know how you can help, talk to him. And, if you have aspirations to become the Lead Monk at the DMC someday, talk to him about that too. Now's the best time to help and learn.

Judge and Steward signup started February 2nd on the registration website at <http://knaves.org/DMC/challenge/>.

The unpacking is a fun event held the weekend before the competition. That's the day we unpack all shipped entries, merge them with entries from our drop-off locations, and sort them all for judging. We usually get a great group of

volunteers and crank through the lot quickly. Anywhere from 550 - 800 two-bottle entries come in so we process up to 1600 bottles of beer, meads, and ciders that day. Join us Sunday, March 4th for the unpacking.

Important Dates

Judge / Steward Online Registration Begins - February 2nd

Competition Registration runs from February 12th thru March 2nd

Unpacking - March 4th

Competition Judging:

Evening of Wednesday, March 7th (if needed)

Evening of Friday, March 9th

All Day on Saturday, March 10th

Festivals

The UKG participates in several festivals throughout the year. Our 2017 participation involved pouring our homebrew at 3 different events in Lake Zurich, Lombard, and Racine (WI) bringing more awareness about our brewing and the club to the community.

Coming up May 11th and 12th, 2018 is the **Lake Zurich Craft Beer Festival**. In 2017, four members showcased their brews on the Friday night of the event and had a great time meeting people and sharing beer.



As the event covers two days, there's room for up to 8 participants from the club (4 each night). If you're interested in participating

in an evening of the event in May, please contact Woj at **Festivals@knaves.org** for more information. All participants who are members in good standing (i.e. dues paying) receive \$30 reimbursement towards their materials.



If anyone has a suggestion for an event we should participate in, please email Woj the details at **Festivals@knaves.org**.

Financials

Annual Dues

2018 membership dues will be collected at the January club meeting. As communicated in prior newsletters, annual membership renewal dues are now **\$20**.



Cash or check payable to "UKG" will be accepted at club meetings. You can also remit dues via PayPal on the UKG website at **<http://www.knaves.org/member.html>** or click the link below.

[Click here to Pay Now.](#)

2017 Finances

Income - \$7,727

(Dues, DMC entry fees)

Expenses - \$7,794

(DMC, Tech sessions, Insurance, Website hosting, Club meetings)

Questions about dues? Please contact Darrell at
treasurer@knaves.org.

Member News

This section is for members making the news or who have been highlighted in the news lately.

There can be ONLY ONE....

CONGRATULATIONS

2017 Midwest Homebrewer of the Year

Jeff Landers

(23 Wins out of 47 Entries - 48.9% Winning Percentage)



The **Midwest Homebrewer of the Year** (MWHBOTY) is a special competition that takes place across 13 states in the Midwest each year. Every brewer who enters one of a select group of circuit competitions gets ranked on the website for the Midwest Homebrewer of the Year honors. Only **1st place** wins an award in this prestigious Best of the Best competition that takes into account results from many competitions throughout the year.

The 13 states that make up the competition are Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. Only brewers in these states can win and only select competitions from these states qualify a brewer. Our home competition, the UKG **Drunk Monk Challenge**, is a qualifying competition for the MWHBOTY.

To be a qualifying competition, the competition must have at least 200 entries and give out less than 25% of that number of entries in medals. Every competition gets weighted with a competitiveness factor that ties into the algorithm that helps decide the winner.

To win the Midwest Homebrewer of the Year, a brewer must enter at least 4 of the qualifying circuit competition and enter at least 10 unique BJCP categories.

Of course, the brewer also needs to win 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in a few of those categories to win. The competition algorithm assigns a point system and weight to each place won. Jeff Landers won 23 medals out of 47 entries in qualifying competitions in 2017 (He won more medals outside qualifying competitions as well.). He had a whopping **48.9%** winning percentage in the 9 circuit competitions he entered.

Jeff joins a prestigious group of UKG members who have earned this award in the past:

- 2017 - Jeff Landers
- 2010 - Rodney Kibzey
- 2007 - Joe Formanek
- 2004 - Joe Formanek
- 2003 - Joe Formanek
- 2002 - Joe Formanek
- 2001 - Joe Formanek
- 1999 - Joe Formanek
- 1995 - Tom and Luann Fitzpatrick



Visit the **Midwest Homebrewer of the Year** (MWHBOTY) website for more details on Circuit Competitions to enter and to lookup your ranking.

Written by Kevin "Woj" Wojdak

Member Spotlight

Each month, we'll introduce a different club member to you and discuss how they got into homebrewing.



Joe Formanek
"Dr. Longshot"

Home Town (City):

Bolingbrook

Day Job:

Director of Customer Application Center, Ajinomoto North America, Itasca, IL

I've been a homebrewer since:

1987

When did you start brewing? What got you into brewing?

I was in the Microbiology program as an undergraduate at the University of Minnesota. One of the courses that I took – Fermented and Distilled Beverages – included a tour of a new brewery in Minneapolis called Summit Brewing Company. The tour was so awesome that a buddy in the class (Dave Simonson) and myself decided to start homebrewing. It was taking what we learned in Microbiology and applying it at home to make fun stuff!

What was the first beer you ever brewed? How did it turn out?

It was a Amberish Aleish like sessionable brew. About 3% ABV. Still have a

bottle or 2 of it! It wasn't very good!

Describe your brew system

8 gallon Ceramic mash kettle on the stove, Zapap lauter tun, 8 gallon Ceramic brew kettle, homemade counterflow chiller and a lot of fermenters (12 gal Pyrex for primary).

Are you an indoor or outdoor brewer?

Indoor in basement

How frequently do you brew (times per month or year)?

During brew season (Nov-April) – 4x / month

Do you brew alone, with friends or with someone you live with?

Usually alone when the mood strikes

What is your favorite style(s) to brew?

Like all styles. Imperial Stout is a fun one!

What's the most unusual ingredient you've ever used in a brew?

Probably Bananas

Are you a BJCP Judge? If so, what is your rank and how long have you been judging?

Yes – National, judging since 1996

Do you have a good beer judging story you'd like to share with the rest of the homebrewing world?

Maybe the spider that spread across the top of my tasting glass after having been poured from a bottle at a judge session at Tom and Luann's!

Do you have a homebrewing disaster story you'd like to share? Or, Do you have a good homebrew club story you'd like to share?

One time early in my brewing career, Dave came down to Champaign (when I was in Grad School) to visit. We brewed that night and had a little too much to drink. The next morning, I woke up blurry eyed and kicked into something when I walked into the kitchen. It was the stopper that had been on the carboy from the previous night, but it had a lot of gunk on the bottom of it. I looked at the carboy and it was half empty in the middle of a soaked carpet. I looked on the ceiling and saw stalactites of gunk hanging down that had been in the carboy. Not a great morning!! (^8~

How many medals have you won from homebrew competitions? How many states?

Lots, and lots! Maybe more medals than Rodney, but not as many states! I think I have 25 medals from the final round of the AHA* Nationals in total.

* American Homebrew Association

To be featured in a future issue of the **Knaves Newsletter** , please **[click here to download a copy of the Member Spotlight form](#)**, fill out as much as you can, and then submit the information to **member-spotlight@knaves.org**.

Club Schwag

UKG Work Shirts

Our official UKG work shirts are Charcoal Gray Dickies brand work shirts with the club logo over the left pocket and a full back transfer of the woodcut graphic

on the back. Optionally, you may get your name and/or homebrewery name embroidered over the right pocket.



Club work shirts orders are placed by special order with our vendor and custom made to order. We place a new order 1-2 times per year and need to order so many shirts to make the order happen. Woj is currently coordinating a new order to get shirts made before the 2018 Drunk Monk Challenge in March. Contact Woj at marketing@knaves.org if you want to get on the list for more information and/or to purchase a shirt.

Club woodcut graphic T-Shirts are also ordered at that time.

LogoUp.com Merchandise

We have an account at LogoUp.com for making UKG club logo embroidered shirts, hats, bags, and a whole lot of other cool products. The merchandise is top quality and you can even get a club logo on name brand products such as Nike, Izod, or Under Armor. There are no minimums for orders and we can place an order anytime. Go to LogoUp.com and pick out items you want. Then, email Woj at marketing@knaves.org with your item numbers and colors and he'll coordinate placing the order with you.



UKG Bottle Labels

We have 4 sets of UKG bottle labels available for immediate sale. The labels are vinyl, reusable, write-on labels and are available in Charcoal Gray or Brown. Labels come with a front-facing label and neck label. Labels may be written on with



grease pencil for easy reuse. Each set of 12 labels is \$7.50.

PAID Products to Pickup - Contact Woj!

- Michael Flack - 24 Bottle Labels

Questions about Club Schwag or interest to buy anything? Please talk to Woj or email him at marketing@knaves.org.

Knowledge Share: Techniques for Brewing Eisbock

Eisbock

(Pronounced "ICE-bock.")

As defined in the 2015 BJCP Guidelines, Eisbock is a strong, full-bodied, rich, and malty dark German lager often with a viscous quality and strong flavors. Even though flavors are concentrated, the alcohol should be smooth and warming, not burning.

It's traditionally brewed by freezing a Doppelbock and removing the ice to concentrate the flavor and alcohol content. Commercial eisbocks are generally concentrated anywhere from 7% to 33% (by volume).

Eisbocks are not simply stronger Doppelbocks; the name refers to the process of freezing and concentrating the beer and is not a statement on alcohol.



Jay Bakula

I brewed an Eisbock recently. My OG was 1.090 and FG was 1.018.

I start by CO2 pushing my beer from my lagering keg at 34° into two small 3-



gallon mini kegs. I then put the kegs directly into my freezer. I shake and listen during the course of roughly the next 4 to 5 hours.

Then, I CO2 push the non-frozen beer back in a 5-gallon keg. I melted the remaining ice from the two 3-gallon kegs and had exactly 1 gallon of water. I estimated my ABV and it went from 9.5% to 11%.



I calculated my Eisbock ABV as starting ABV times Volume divided by ending Volume.



Observations: Everything that's in your base beer gets intensified with the freezing process. Toasty/roasty flavors, sweetness and even flaws get intensified.

As you can see in the picture at left, the color of my beer darkened from the base to the final beer.



Kevin "Woj" Wojdak

I've produced two Eisbocks and one Weizen-Eisbock over the years. My Eisbocks began as Doppelbocks.

My first Eisbock was made from a 9.8% extract Doppelbock in February 2011. I was brewing with a friend back then and we split a 6-gallon batch of Doppelbock and each brewed a different final beer from that base. I had roughly 2.75 gallons of Doppelbock that I put into a bucket, covered it, and placed it in the garage for a few days in February to freeze. It was well frozen in a couple days but I didn't have a chance to work with it and I then woke one Saturday morning to find Chicago temps had shifted on me and we were already pushing 50° so, I was forced to jump into action.



I brought the bucket into the house, sanitized a mesh strainer, and went to work skimming ice from the bucket. I ended up skimming 0.75 gallons of ice out of the bucket leaving me with roughly 2 gallons of concentrated beer.

The ice chips I removed tasted like bitter water which indicated to me that a lot of the hop bitterness went away with the ice.



I did a little research on the Web and found a formula for estimating/calculating the final ABV.

Eisbock ABV Calculation:

Starting ABV / 100 = Result

Result x Starting Volume = Result-2

Result-2 / Remaining Volume = Result-3

Result-3 x 100 = New ABV %

My numbers plugged into the formula:

9.8% ABV / 100 = 0.098

0.098 x 2.75 (Starting Volume) = 0.2695

0.2695 / 2.0 (Remaining Volume) = 0.13475

0.13475 x 100 = 13.475 or 13.5% ABV

I brewed a disastrous all grain Weizen-Eisbock in 2012. The original beer had some minor fermentation / sanitization flaws in it and the freezing process just intensified those flaws. The beer was drinkable but several bottles were gushers.

Lesson learned... if your base beer has flaws, they'll only get worse after freeze concentrating it.

I brewed my last Eisbock in February 2016. For this Eisbock, I followed the same process as my first Eisbock. My starting all grain Doppelbock was 9.4%

this time around and a full 5 gallons. I froze the beer in the garage again in a covered bucket.

I started the skimming process 5 days later and took 0.75 gallons of ice chips from the bucket. After checking my result, I decided to refreeze the beer to get more water content out.

I skimmed a second time two days later and took another 0.75 gallons of ice chips from the bucket leaving me with 3.5 gallons of concentrated beer.

My final ABV on this Eisbock was 13.4%.



Jeff Landers



Over the summer of 2017, I brewed an Eisbock. I typically brew 5 gallon batches and I wanted 5 gallons in a keg after I froze it, so I set out to make an 8 gallon batch. Thinking that freezing a normal Doppelbock recipe might end up being cloyingly malty, I toned down the recipe a bit. I subbed out the dark Munich for light Munich and lowered the IBU's a bit.

During fermentation, I left the beer in primary for about 5

weeks and then transferred it to a plastic secondary fermenter. I left the beer in secondary for about another 5 weeks and then slowly lowered the temperature of my chest freezer on a Saturday morning. The beer did not start freezing until it hit about 29 degrees. Using a clear plastic fermenter allowed me to see how the beer was freezing and it took all day. I ended up forgetting about it until the next morning and it looked like I completely froze the beer. It looked like a giant Slurpee! I racked the beer from the carboy into a keg and then measured the ice after it melted. It ended up being 20% of the volume.

Lessons learned

- The final beer was too light of a color and not as malty as I expected. Don't over compensate for when toning down the malts. Going forward, I will use more dark Munich and less light Munich.
- This beer will need to age. Don't bother trying it for at least 6 months. I tried it early and the alcohol taste was too strong. After 6 months, it was much more drinkable.
- If you are going to the trouble of making an Eisbock that will take 6-12 months of lagering, make a big batch but make sure your process can handle all of this extra grain. This was the biggest decoction mash I have done and I missed all of my numbers for not being used to double the amount of grain.
- Don't be afraid to over freeze the beer. If you set your freezer to about 25 degrees, it will take most of the day to freeze. Maybe try freezing it overnight. If I would not have fallen asleep, I would have pulled the carboy from the freezer too early thinking that I reached 20% way before I did.

Note: The observations and lessons expressed in this article were taken from

each individual brewer's experiences with the process. Both Jay and Woj had different experiences with their Eisbocks in that they were drinkable within a month of the freezing process. In fact, Woj's first beer medaled in a competition within a month after brewing and bottling.

Contact us.

If you have any ideas for content for this newsletter, please send them to Knews@Knaves.org.



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