Free! Summer 2010 Issue 7

The Pursuit of Hoppiness - the voice of SOBA -

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plus lots more!

Your Craft Brewing and Pub Newsletter
“Beer for all the right reasons”
EDITORIAL

Kia ora and welcome to the seventh edition of The Pursuit of Hoppiness. Quite an international feel to this one with articles on craft beer from both Argentina and Japan, most useful for that OE you’ve been thinking about for 2010!

THE Christmas and New Year festivities have come and gone, but not without myself and fellow beer scribes reflecting on the preceding year and making the traditional spurious ‘best of’ lists. In an incredibly surreal way, my own list intended for publication here, turned out to be almost identical to Neil Miller’s ‘Ten Best Beers of 2009’, as featured in The Wellingtonian at the end of December. The chart clearly reflects both our tastes for big hoppy beers but, while some may be hard to find, every beer is well worth trying. Here is Neil’s selection, with last year’s ratings shown in brackets, which I am most happy to concur with:

3. Epic Pale Ale (1) – A rare combination of full-flavour with drinkability, this is rapidly becoming a Wellington beer fixture. The brewer loves his hops and it is evident in every glass.

2. 8 Wired Hopwired IPA (NEW) – One of the first brews from a new Blenheim brewery, this is my new beer of the year. It has a billowing hop aroma, big passion fruit and citrus flavours, late bitterness and subtle power.

1. Epic Armageddon (3) – Easily one of the most highly hopped beers ever made in New Zealand, this huge beer showcases massive orange and grapefruit notes, a solid malt backbone and lingering bitterness. It should be enjoyed as if it was the last beer on earth.

The holiday break and the associated wild Wellington weather gave me an opportunity to resurrect the ‘Days Gone By’ feature which had appeared in a couple of earlier editions. This time I decided to delve back to the very early origins of the brewing industry in New Zealand, to track the history of a business that first was founded back in 1864. Not unsurprisingly, through a series of takeovers and mergers, this family-run brewery ended up being acquired and subsequently closed by one of the ‘Big Two’ Kiwi nationals, in this case DB Breweries.

One of my favourite items of UK ‘breweriana’ was a framed wall poster graphically depicting a UK breweries “family tree”, circa 1980, where the origins of all known beer producers were displayed and their history mapped. I am not aware of any similar publication here, but would be interested to know if anyone has carried out detailed research in this area, or who would be keen to produce a similar type of poster.

Fortunately, with the recent growth in localised craft beer production, we are now seeing a resurrection of local brewers who are replacing those that disappeared over the years due to corporate conglomerate. Let us hope they all continue to thrive and retain their independence for many years to come!

Finally, a special thank you to the Puke Ariki Museum, New Plymouth and The Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, for allowing publication of the historical images.

NICK PAGE, EDITOR

The Pursuit of Hoppiness - Summer 2010
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te kaunihenga rō whakatā
ARTESANAL BEER IN ARGENTINA

PRIOR to moving to New Zealand in mid 2005, my work had taken my family and me to Buenos Aires. We arrived in early 2002, just in time to witness the collapse of their economy and any sense of security – the plus side was that travelling and living in the country became very affordable just so long as you weren’t paid in pesos!

A combination of cheap flights and a social event, involving many of my old mates, gave me the excuse to return to the city for a few days in late November 2009. This article summarises my experience of the craft beer (which is called “cerveza artesanal”) scene in Buenos Aires today.

Recoleta and CBD

The first contact I had with Argentinian boutique beer, back in January 2002, was at Buller brewing. Buller is in Recoleta, situated just across the park from where Evita is buried. As Recoleta is one of the more affluent areas of the city, even when buying with US$, the beer wasn’t that cheap. The brewery produced a range of 6 beers, ranging from a standard lager, through an IPA, to Honey beer.

One quiet Saturday afternoon, I was slowly working my way through the range of beers and, having supped some 7 pints, asked the staff about a blackboard behind the bar, which had various names and a quantity of “pintas” against the name – it turned out that this was a list of those that had consumed the most pints in a session and the record stood at 8 pints (!). When I reached my ninth pint the bar owner appeared and bought me the 10th one – I was duly applauded and staggered off to my hotel. The blackboard is still there and my ‘achievement’ is put into perspective by the quantities since consumed (the record currently standing at 31 pints).

The big positive behind Buller during the period I was living in Argentina, was the consistency of their beers – something that could not be said for the majority of the artesenal beers at that time. Most craft brewers had attended a course given by one expert, unfortunately this expert encouraged everyone to use iodine as a sterilising medium for their bottled beers – unsurprisingly most craft beers had an iodine flavour to them. Fortunately the word seems to have got around and none of the beers I tasted, on this visit, had any hint of this undesirable flavour to them.

Buller bar today, has hardly changed and even the beer range has only been adjusted to the extent that the Cream Ale has been dropped and replaced by Hefeweiss. If visiting Buller, it makes sense to go during their happy hour as prices drop from 18 or 22 pesos (depending on beer) to 9 or 11 pesos/pint (at the time of the visit there were approx 2.75 pesos to NZ$1). The happy hour is from 6pm until 9pm.

Beers sampled:

- **Light lager** – grassy aroma.
- **Dry Stout** – Coffee aroma, pleasant dark mild flavour. Good tight head.
- **India Pale Ale** – served too cold, but I’d foreseen that possibility and ordered the beer poured whilst I was drinking the stout. As the beer warmed up, the aroma (peachy) became more apparent.

The next port of call was a craft beer bar called Cervelar which is situated in Viamonte St 336, in the CBD. Nothing like this place existed in 2005, and its existence is an indication of how things have progressed in the interim. Cervelar opened in mid 2008 as a craft beer shop, however 6 months later they took the further step of installing a bar, so that beer can be consumed on the premises.

![Cervelar, Viamonte St 336, CBD.](image)

The staff was quite knowledgeable about the beers they were stocking and were able to recommend beers most suited to my palette or give me appropriate tasting descriptions for those that I didn’t try. The highlight of the visit was a Sixtofer IPA – this turned out to be the hoppiest beer I found on my trip. On tap they had beers from the Kraken brewery – the Rubia was a little cloudy, had a slight spice aroma (cardamom?) and was vaguely peach flavoured. Apart from the beers mentioned above, Cervelar also stocks beers from Gulmen, Bersagliere, Waffe, Antares, Centurion, Nat, Mastra, Barba Roja, El Bolson, Yapai, Indias and Cortesana.

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Suitably charged, I decided to take a roundabout route, via Puerto Madero, to the San Telmo district. Puerto Madero is one of the traditional dock systems built toward the end of the Victorian era and which are now being gentrified, with the old warehouses being converted into expensive lofts and offices, whilst the ground floors become flash restaurants. They have also berthed a couple of sailing ships, to add some visual interest.

San Telmo

Anyway, I digress, we’re here to talk beer not tourist traps!! The first pub on the list was Breoghan in Pasaje San Lorenzo 389. (this took a bit of finding as the pasaje didn’t appear on the street map). Breoghan sell two of their own beers plus one from the Antares brewery. The brewer and his brother were both on hand, serving. The brother had lived in Wellington for a year, though I suspect that he didn’t learn much about beer during that time as his favourite bar was the Sports Bar (groan). The Breoghan bar was very comfortable but their own beers weren’t at all challenging. This proved to be a common theme and is principally due to the Argentines historically being wine, rather than beer, drinkers. As beer has gradually broken into the mainstream, the locals have taken time to adapt, so brewers tend to avoid brewing anything that will make too much of an assault on the taste buds.

The Breoghan in Pasaje San Lorenzo, San Telmo

Moving on from Breoghan, I was looking forward to re-visiting Bar Gibraltar – one of our old regular haunts. Unfortunately whilst the board on the wall advertised opening hours being “until late”, they obviously didn’t open till late either and it was closed. I was really looking forward to trying the hand pulled Kingston “real ale from the cask” – it comes from the north of the city but that is as much as I know.

Thwarted in this attempt to savour a “real ale”, I walked a block to Bar El Federal. El Federal is attractively decorated both inside and out in traditional colours and materials. The bar stocks two of their own beers – a “rubia” (otherwise referred to as a Kolsch or Pilsner, depending upon the brewer) and a “negra” (dark beer or stout) – which were also fairly non-descript beers, though the very cold serving temperature didn’t allow much character to show itself. If a craft brewery is to brew two beers, they will inevitably be a “rubia” and a “negra”. The other popular style is “roja”, which might also go under the guise of a “Scotch” or “Irish Red” ale.

Bar El Federal, San Telmo

The final San Telmo pub call was to the Patio Cerveceros on Plaza Dorrego. Plaza Dorrego is one of the tourist “must visit” spots, often having antique stalls, couples dancing tango, etc. Patio Cerveceros has a prime position facing the plaza, unfortunately it is very tired looking and does very little to encourage you to actually stop, so it was only in the interest of completeness that I actually ordered a beer from what is a fairly acceptable range of artesanal beers i.e. El Bole (15 types), Antares (3 types), Otro Mundo (2 beers), Cardos (3 types) and Bersaglier (also three types). Plumping for the Cardos Scottish Ale, this was served at about 6deg C, so it took a while before the beer warmed up to the extent that the Argentinian Cascade hop aroma appeared. The temperature may also have been the cause of a suspected protein haze.

CBD

The following day, I returned to the centre to find Cruzat Bar, which had its address listed as Corrientes 1660, 1st floor. The address turned out to be a new shopping arcade and the bar was actually more easily found by walking up to Sarmiento 1617, on the opposite side of the block. Cruzat advertises itself as the “place with the largest selection of beer”, having 150 different craft beers including 14 tap beers. This was the only bar that I visited that had a flyer that explained the different beer styles, in Spanish and English.

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ARTESANAL BEER IN ARGENTINA continued

Their tap beers came from a number of different brewers and included examples of Kolsch, Scottish, Stout, Strong, Honey, Barley Wine, Imperial Stout, Cream Ale, Dry Stout, Indian Pale, Golden, Nut Brown and Lager Ale. Asking for a glass of Kraken APA, which turned out to be unavailable, I was given tastings of the Kraken Lager and Irish. The “Irish” had sat too long in the pipes, however the lager was better and turned out to be surprisingly bitter for an Argentinian version of the style. Opting for an Antares Honey Ale, this proved to have a very evident honey aroma, but was quite soft on the palate. Deciding to stick with Antares, I next tried the bottle conditioned Imperial Stout (8.5% abv) – this had the aroma of Christmas cake, being full of rich fruit flavours and hints of tobacco. Coming toward the end of this sampling, the staff had managed to find the Kraken APA and served me a free half – it was a little cloudy and had a green apple aroma.

Dubliners, Palermo

some 90km up river. Whilst the beers were better than I remembered, they couldn’t be said to be particularly characterful. The roja had apple notes in its aroma, whilst the negra was charcoal-ly with a sweet finish.

The next bar on the list, Flor Azteca (Thames 1472) was closed, so I continued on to the Antares Brew Bar in Armenia 1447. I walked right past it first off and it was only on a second pass that I realised why – the front door was hidden by a roller garage door. By good fortune one of the staff had just left the bar, leaving the roller door sufficiently open that I could have a look inside. Having been spotted by someone inside, I was quizzed as to why I was hanging around so suspiciously; fortunately they found my cover story sufficiently convincing as to invite me to have a look around. It was at this point that my luck took another positive turn and I was asked if I’d like to sample the seven or eight beers they had on tap. Having responded positively in my assessment of their beers, the barman revealed that he was actually the Antares brew master, Leo Ferrari, who happened to be in Buenos Aires (the brewery is in Mar del Plata) for a beer launch that night!

Antares Brew Bar, Armenia 1447, Palermo

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The Pursuit of Happiness - Summer 2010

Cruzat Bar, close to Sarmiento 1617, CBD

Their bottled beer range include ones from Barba Roja, Cardos, Vahlala, Fabeliaht, Duff, La Reserva, Otro Mundo, Local, Bersaglieri, Monte Cristo, Beider, Corsario Negro, Rupestra, Valle de Tafi, Heberling and El Bolson. It should be noted that most bottled artesanal beer is bottle conditioned and a yeast sediment can be expected.

Palermo

Some days were to pass before I had the opportunity for another investigatory trip into the local beer scene. Unfortunately this was also my last chance and it fell on a Monday, the day of my return back home – Mondays are not the best days to go beer hunting in Argentina.

The first bar on the list is called Dubliners which, unsurprisingly, sold Guinness and Kilkenny and had other Irish themed décor to justify the name, but also sold their own roja and negra. These beers are brewed by a micro brewery in Quilmes (situated to the SE of the city centre) whilst the water comes from Zarate,
My notes on the beers sampled read:

**Kolsch** – Clean, easy drinking. Hopped with Argentinean Cascade and Liberty.

**Scotch** – malt aroma, mild, rather lacking in character.

**Cream Stout** – well rounded, pale malt aroma more obvious than the expected dark malt. Beer nitrogenised. Hopped with Cascade and Nugget.

**Barley Wine** – gold coloured, having a slight honey and turps (?) aroma. 10% abv. Hopped with both Argentinean and American Cascade and Nugget.

**Doppelbock** – lovely sweetness that rolled on the tongue, being well balanced by the hops.

**Wheat** – very much in Belgian style, which whilst reminding me of Hoegaarden had its own character, 45% malt, 46% wheat and balance of the grist being oats. Flavoured with orange peel and coriander.

My final call was to **Sullivan’s Irish Bar**, which turned out to be something of a disappointment after my experience in the Antares Brew Bar. Sullivans stock Otro Mundo Negra. Roja and Golden. The roja also went by the name of “strong Red” and at 7.5% abv, this was a fair description. The beer itself was quite sweet, with a malt aroma.

Other craft beer bars in Palermo are **Olsen** (Gorriti 5870), **Bangalore Bar** (Humboldt 1416 – a curry house popular with expats), **Koh Lanta** (Gorriti 4647) and **Van Koning** (Baez 325).

Whilst the foregoing paints a fairly positive picture of the craft beer scene in Argentina – it must be said that the quality has improved and variety increased over the last 4 years or so – it should be borne in mind that the population of Buenos Aires alone is over three times as large as that of New Zealand as a whole, so the Argentine craft beer market has not developed to anywhere near the same extent as ours.

IAN CAIG

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News of the Brews

8 Wired Brewing now has 500ml size bottles of both Rewired and Hopwired available, while Yeastie Boys will shortly have Pot Kettle Black available permanently in the 330ml size.

Golden Ticket Brewing have a late summer release which is an easy-drinking American-style Cream Ale exhibiting fruity American hops. Available on tap nationwide from March.

Golden Bear have brewed an American Wheat which will be on as beer of the month at Pomeroy’s, Christchurch during February.

The Mussel Inn’s Captain Cooker is not an easy beer to track down, but good news is that batches of the beer are now being made at Invercargill Brewery and are being put in 330ml bottles and kegs. At some point the decision was made to increase the alcohol level from 4% to 5% in the Invercargill-brewed version and it has taken two batches to get the level of the manuka flavour right to compensate. Hashigozake in Wellington currently has some of batch 2 of the Invercargill Manuka on tap.

Tuatara is not a easy brewery to track down, hidden in Tararua foothills, but Wellington SOBA has its 3rd visit provisionally booked for Saturday 20th March. Always a superb afternoon out. Contact trip organiser Ian Caig at condor@soba.org.nz for more details.

The Vicar’s Vice is the latest seasonal beer from Croucher Brewing. It is an homage to Hoegaarden’s classic Verboden Vrucht, and was brewed using the peel from a bucket load of fresh New Zealand citrus (oranges, lemons, grapefruit) and a kilo of crushed coriander seeds. The brew is smooth on the palate, and has a citrusy/spicy zing, reminiscent of the best Belgian classics and comes in coming in at 7% abv. A third of the batch has been distributed to the South Island, and there has been a keg two around Auckland and Wellington as well.

Currently on tap at Malthouse, Wellington are two beers closely associated with the pretty extreme Hallertau Humulus Lupulus Maximus. This is the hop-driven beer which battles out the West Coast APA Challenge with Epic Armageddon each year in mid-July. Hallertau Statesman at 5.3% is a well-made Pale Ale which has a sweet, spicy nose and plenty of body. There is a touch of honey sweetness in the middle which counterpoints the spicy, sharp hop aromas and finish. Hallertau Minimus at 3.8% is baby brother to Statesman. Described by creator Steve Plowman as a super-hoppy golden ale, it is bursting with sharp grapefruit and citrus notes. It is surprisingly full bodied, almost silky, well balanced and a great session beer.

Soren Eriksen hand-labeling his Hopwired IPA

Speciality beers on tap are chosen from the Emerson, Mata, Tuatara and Epic ranges

Mike’s Organic Ale and Lager now on tap from Whitecliff's 10 litre mini kegs

Contact Craig on 04 473 3600
69, The Terrace, Wellington

Competition

The winner of Issue 6 competition was Greig McGill of Hamilton. The correct answers were A. The Underground Bar, Rotorua and B. Brew on Quay, Auckland. Competition takes a Summer holiday but returns next edition.
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CAMPAIGNS UPDATE

New SOBA website goes live!

SOBA is delighted to announce that its revamped website has officially gone live. The experience will make browsing about beer almost as much fun as drinking it. Check out all the new features....

Festival of Fear

SOBA notes that festival glasses will not be used at this year’s Blenheim Blues, Brews & BBQs and has encouraged its members not to support the event. We argue that beer, like wine, is best enjoyed when sampled from appropriate glassware. SOBA is also concerned that the use of plastic will devalue the event and alienate many beer lovers wishing to sample a range of quality beer. SOBA feels that any such cheapening of the event will only enhance its reputation as a ‘piss-up’.

Already a number of craft brewers have expressed a strong reluctance to present their beers in anything other than glasses. Many have also stated an intention to not participate in future Blues, Brews & BBQs events. Blenheim has suffered from glass left on streets after previous events, but the majority comes from broken beer bottles. SOBA notes that nothing is being done to prevent people from drinking on their way to the festival and suggests a local liquor ban on the streets of Blenheim on the day would help alleviate this problem.

Mindful of the revenue raised for local charities by the event - and the $30,000 already wasted by the purchase of branded glassware - SOBA has recommended that those who choose not to attend this year’s event should consider making a donation to the Round Table.

Promoting great beer at www.soba.org.nz

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DAYS GONE BY

James Paul Egmont Brewery

JAMES PAUL was one of those larger than life figures in New Plymouth in the later part of the 19th Century. Originally from Girvan, Scotland, he emigrated to the Otago Goldfields via the ship ‘Jura’ in the early 1860s before venturing north to New Plymouth. In 1863, in partnership with Mr W. Henderson, he established the Egmont Brewery at the rear of what is now the TSB Showplace on Devon Street.

This partnership was dissolved in 1878 and Paul opened a new brewery on a site which is now part of the Richmond Centre on Egmont Street. This construction caused a bit of a sensation in that concrete was used, the first such building be constructed in New Plymouth. As well as being a prominent businessman Paul served as Mayor (1884-1886), was an all-round sportsman, racehorse owner, one-time officer in the militia and founder of the New Plymouth Bowling Club. He died in 1906.

The Egmont Brewery operated successfully until 1927 when it was taken over by the newly formed Taranaki Brewery Ltd. Taranaki Brewery Ltd operated until 1969 when it was taken over by Dominion Brewery Ltd.


In 1969 Dominion Breweries acquired both the Taranaki Brewery at New Plymouth and the Tui Brewery at Mangatainoka, giving increased production and more economical supply of draught beer to the lower half of the North Island. Taranaki Ale continued to be produced until the mid-1990s at Mangatainoka even though the new owner, Dominion Breweries, stopped brewing it in New Plymouth in 1971.

A promotional tea towel for Taranaki Ale. © Puke Ariki. Accession No.PA2008.081
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  Richard will be pouring beer
  and also participating in Beer
  Education sessions.

- The NZ Beer Festival, Wellington
  Saturday 6 March.
  Westpac Stadium

- Regional Wines & Spirits,
  Wellington. Saturday 6 March.
  Instore tasting of Taieri George
  with Richard. 11 am – 1 pm
  Taieri George Release Day!

- Brewer’s Reserve February
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ALE AND CHEESE - THE PERFECT PARTNERS

Kieran Haslett-Moore continues his series on matching beer styles and cheeses, drawing on his experience as both homebrewer, cheesemonger, beer drinker and cheese buff.

Hard Sheeps Cheese and Strong Mild Ale

WHILE some of you might be feeling a little short changed at the summer we have had so far, fear not! Autumn will be upon us soon and that offers up the perfect opportunity to try this fantastic combination of hard sheep cheese and strong mild ale.

Much like last issue’s pairing of New Zealand Pilsner and Emmentaler this is a match that has arisen out of much research. While for last issue’s match it was New Zealand Pilsner which I had struggled to find a cheese for, this time it was the cheese which gave me trouble.

Back in 2007 at the first Regional Wines and Spirits Beer and Cheese Tasting Geoff Griggs and I matched Blue River Dairy’s Curio Bay with Pink Elephant Rushin Imperious Stout. The roasty robust stout hopelessly overwhelmed the nutty sweet cheese leaving the match as a good example of what doesn’t work!

The next year I matched Neudorf Dairy’s Neudorf with Founders Generation Ale and found that this time the nutty meaty character of the cheese overwhelmed the subtle nutty notes of the brown ale.

So from this experience we can take what I should have known all along, that for a match to work there must be a level of balance between the character of the beer and the cheese. Matching heavy weight with feather weight always ends in disaster! On to the match that works!

The Cheese

I believe that hard sheep cheese is one of the best types of cheese produced in New Zealand. There are several producers who despite being limited by the ban on unpasteurized production, and often hindered by limited milk supply, produce some absolutely world class cheeses which stand up very comfortably to overseas classics. Compared to dairying, farming sheep for milk can be very difficult and is often only just viable. As a nation I think we should eat more locally produced Sheep Cheese and support an industry that is producing some absolute gems!

The cheeses which are suitable for this match are broadly in the Spanish Manchego style or in the Italian Pecorino style, semi hard to hard in texture, often with a pale white colour, and preferably with a natural rind. They will have a pronounced nutty, slightly sweet caramel-like flavour, some sharpness with an earthy sheep note that those who hail from the city often taste as roast lamb while those from the country note as being like the smell of the shearing shed. As unappetizing as that may sound the result is complex, satisfying and incredibly moreish.

One of my favorite producers, Neudorf Dairy, has had an eventful history. Situated on the Beuke Family Farm in the Moutere Valley just outside of Nelson, Neudorf has passed through several owners in recent times. The situation seems to be stable now under the ownership of Michael Smith and Barbara Hewitt. Neudorf produce three fantastic hard sheep cheeses from the farms East Friesian herd, the tangy nutty Neudorf, the slightly funky red rinded Richmond Red and the sweet rich Rawhide.

continued on p15
At the other end of the Mainland is pioneering sheep cheese producer Blue River Dairy. Amongst their wide range of sheep cheeses (and one fantastic sheep milk ice cream!) are two fantastic hard cheeses. Curio Bay is billed as a pecorino style and offers plenty of tangy nutty bite while Blackmount Cheddar is a crumbly tangy sheep milk cheese with a nutty finish. In Oamaru, craft cheese pioneer Whitestone Cheese Co produce a fantastic hard sheep cheese called Island Stream, that has rich creamy note and a nutty finish.

The Beer

There are several styles of strong English ale that possess the crystal malt driven pronounced nutty caramel character that this match relies heavily upon.

Strong Dark Milds today get categorized into the ‘catch all’ style of Old Ale as Milds are now seen to be an exclusively low gravity style. This is somewhat ironic considering the fresh young nature of these beers. Prior to the two World Wars Milds were brewed to a range of gravities. Good examples include Theakston Old Peculier, and Twisted Hop Twisted Ankle.

Burton Ale is the other style which fits this match and today also gets lumped into the Old Ale category. Prior to finding fame for hoppy pale ales, Burton-Upon-Trent specialized in exporting mature strong sweet dark ales. A few examples remain with Marston’s Owd Roger being only example still brewed in Burton. Others include Fullers Old Winter Ale, Fullers 1845, Pink Elephant Mammoth, and the blended Greene King Strong Suffolk. All these beers have a tangy earthy hop note and a crystal malt driven nutty caramel character that is crucial to this match.

The Match

This match is all about complimentary autumnal flavours. Nutty crystal malt flavours combine with the nutty aged sheep milk character, earthy hop notes combine with the tangy sheep milk character, sweet caramel malt combines with the sweetness in the milk. Finally as always the beer cuts through the milk fats and cleans the palate for the next bite.

Next issue I will look at German style Bock Beer matched with aged gouda.

KIERAN HASLETT-MOORE
CELEBRITY CORNER

ADAM PAGE
15 instruments.
1 vegetable.
SOBA member.
So many possibilities.

Tonight I’m planning to... eat a spinach pie washed
down with a pint of Rogue Chocolate Stout at my
favourite pub in Oz, The Wheatsheaf.

It always makes me laugh when... my girlfriends
farts are smellier than mine!!

The thing I love most is... when I have mates around,
I have BBQ tongs in one hand and a beer in the other... and a Saxophone in the other... if that’s possible.

It annoys me when... I wake up having to go to the
toilet and I just go back to sleep.

My most decadent pleasure is... bottles of Rogue
Imperial beers.

In my fridge I always have... a light when I open the
door, it’s so hard to see what’s in there if you don’t
have a light.

My ideal meal is... Gumbo at Sweet Mother’s Kitchen.

Washed down with... a cup of hot stinking rules.

My ultimate beer drinking companion would be...
Tom Robbins (author of 'Jitterbug Perfume' among
other classics).

I am most at peace... when I am doing a Sax solo
playing with a killer band.

My favourite beer is... Moo Brew Dark Ale from
Tasmania.

My biggest letdown was... finishing the keg of 8
Wired Hopwired the other night at Hashigozake. I only
got a half a pint. Tears were shed.

If there’s one thing in life I want to accomplish it’s...
being unmotivated.

WINNER of the Best Music by an Emerging Artist
Award at the 2007 Adelaide Fringe Festival and one
of the best saxophonists in South Australia, Adam
made his first appearance in New Zealand at the
Wellington Fringe Festival 2009, fresh from a
successful run at the 2008 Edinburgh Fringe Festival.
His act won Best Music and Best Solo Show at the
Wellington event.

He’s the original music man, a composer who’s into
spontaneity. He has an array of instruments, a unique
way to record and harmonise them, and he takes
requests - both for which instruments he uses and
what musical style they should be played in.

More recently, Adam performed a one-off Christmas
gig with the ‘Adelaide Sax Pack’ quartet at the
Downstage Theatre, Wellington. Coming up, over
three consecutive Thursdays, they are performing
at the Adelaide Fringe Festival, delivering music
from the Eighties (February 25th), Nineties (March
4th) and Noughties (March 11th), recreating all the
hits and one hit wonders as you’ve never heard them
before.

Adam is one of SOBA’s newest recruits and is
currently considering permanent move to the Capital
(of Kiwi craft beer) from his Aussie homeland.
ON the Kapiti Coast at Waikanae Beach, the Long Beach Café is thriving under new management and offers an excellent range of both tap and bottled beers, in addition to well presented and tasty food. Featured on tap are the local Tuatara Pilsner, Hefe and Porter. In the bottle choose from the remainder of the Tuatara range, Three Boys Golden, Emerson’s Pilsner and JP, Epic Armageddon, Invercargill Pitch Black, Hawkes Bay Force and Black Duck, plus Mac’s Great White. Sadly the last remaining bottle of Yeastie Boys His Majesty IPA sold out on Wellington Anniversary weekend. Todd and the team, previously of the Mussel Boys at Paraparaumu, are keen supporters of craft beer and it’s great to see a venture like this showing such commitment, whilst operating outside of the central Wellington comfort zone.

The Parrot and Jigger in Lower Hutt will have hosted the latest Wellington area SOBA social by the time we go to press. Manager Alex Henderson is a paid-up member and currently stocks an independent guest tap beer on a monthly rotation. The current offering is Roosters Summer Ale and accompanying bottled beer range includes Three Boys, Moa, Emerson’s, Tuatara and Dux de Lux.

In the craft beer desert of Wanganui, The Rutland Arms has a range of English beer on tap comprising Old Speckled Hen, Tetley’s Bitter, Fuller’s London Porter and Boddington’s, plus Bulmer’s Original Cider and a small range of bottled English beers. Never mind about putting an H in there, let’s just get some decent ale.

The 8th Kumeu Beer, Food and Wine Festival will be held on Saturday 13th February at Kumeu Showgrounds, Auckland and will definitely feature beers from both Hallertau and Waiheke Island, with more likely to be confirmed prior to the event.

Want info about your pub/bar/restaurant/club/event published here? Email your friendly Editor at nick.j.page@paradise.net.nz.
SOCIAL EVENTS

Fond farewell to Mac’s
WELLINGTON SOBA members were priviliged to be invited by Ally Clem to Mac’s Brewery for a second time, with this visit having the added poignancy of probably being the last ever group tour around the Taranaki Street brewhouse, before production moves to Christchurch in April of this year. With the announcement coming literally the day before our trip, Ally was obviously unsure about future commitments, but we all wish him well for the future.

NYE Whare Flat Folk Festival
NEWSLETTERS found their way, courtesy of Dunedin member Richard Pettinger, to the little makeshift bar at the Whare Flat Folk Festival. Organiser and new SOBA member, Mike Moroney, is on the right with the great teeshirt. The two facing the camera are guest musicians Chris Priestly (left) and Peter Madill (right). Emerson’s Bookbinder was in good form and sold very well. Mike’s wife (also co-organiser) Bernadette Berry told the country on National Radio on the day before the festival that we would be “drinking decent beer - none of that Speight’s!”

SOBA Weekend Away 2010 - Hamilton, Rotorua & Tauranga

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED in attending some or all of the events planned for this trip, contact Martin Bridges at martin@soba.org.nz. The itinerary is:

Friday 19th March - travel to Hamilton in the evening for drinks at the Ruakura Campus Club, where there will be 4 different craft beers available (including one on handpump). Stay overnight in Hamilton.

Saturday 20th March - drive to Rotorua, arriving around lunchtime for a tour of the Croucher Brewery. Afterwards head into town for drinks at the Underground bar. Stay overnight in Rotorua.

Sunday 21st March - drive to Tauranga. Visit the Brewers Bar brewpub.

SOBA Weekend Away 2010 - Blenheim, Marchfest & Mussel Inn

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED in attending some or all of the events planned for this trip, contact Nick Page at nick.j.page@paradise.net.nz. Package includes minibus transport between local pickup and departure points, backpacker accommodation and discounted beer festival tickets.

Friday 16th April - make your own way to Picton or Blenheim by air, ferry, train, jet ski or whatever, for minibus pickups between 11.00am and noon. Brewery tours of Renaissance and Moa, plus early evening session at the Old Bank Pub in Blenheim. Travel by minibus to Paradiso Backpackers in Nelson.

Saturday 17th April - late morning visit to Bays Brewery, Nelson. Afternoon and evening at leisure at MarchFest in Founders Park, Nelson. Note volunteers needed for SOBA stand at this event. Overnight at Paradiso Backpackers in Nelson.

Sunday 18th April - all day minibus visit to The Mussel Inn, Onetuhia. Drop off at Nelson airport for return flights between 7.00pm and 8.00pm.

STILL A FEW SPACES LEFT FOR THOSE WISHING TO HAVE THE FULL EXPERIENCE!

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JAPAN BEER DIARY

WARWICK FOY is a keen beer brewer and drinker from New Plymouth. He has a passion for traditional English ales and also likes a keen German or Czech style pilsener. Warwick visited Japan on a New Plymouth/Mishima sister city teacher exchange programme from 20 June to 17 July 2009.

It’s sold in a beer shop, it is in a beer can, it pours like beer, it looks like beer but, in Japan, it may not be beer! I am talking about “not beer” beer - the best translation I could get.

It seems that, to avoid tax and therefore to produce a more competitively priced product, Japanese breweries have devised a beverage called happoshu that contains few taxable ingredients. In the case of “not beer”, I fear that this may include malted barley, hops and, I must say, taste. One thing that “not beer” contains in abundance is alcohol. My Suntory Straight was 6% alcohol. There is a wheat symbol on the can. I am not sure if this is just a symbol or whether there is malted wheat in the mix. “Straight” certainly didn’t taste like a wheat beer.

I am told that these beverages are surging in popularity but I suspect this is solely due to the relatively cheap price. My can (beer is almost never seen in a bottle here) of “Straight” was 120 Yen ($2). A can of premier lager like Asahi “super dry” will set you back 220 Yen or ($3.70). That’s $22 for a 6-pack of beer. Actually, that seems pretty cheap when compared to the $10 handle I bought at the train station in Tokyo. I was forced to drag my parched carcass straight off the plane into a bar because Air New Zealand could only offer me an Export or Steinyn Pure. It may as well have been a choice between a rock and hard place. Let’s crank up the campaign pressuring Air New Zealand to offer a decent selection of NZ beers on their international flights. But I digress…

In terms of taste, “Straight” was a real 1 star brew. The head lasted about as long as a conversation in Japanese between me and my host. There was no body to speak of and the head consisted of fat, ugly bubbles. The brew was watery, fairly dry and had no bitterness at all. I would liken it to a watered down Export that had been sitting in Grandad’s top cupboard for a couple of summers. The fine print read Kire (clear) koku (deep taste) but if there was a “Fair Go” in Japan, I would be giving them a call. The locals call it the “third beer”, the second being better quality “not beer” and the first being proper beer. My host father was a keen beer drinker and he showed disdain for any of the second and third beer varieties.

So on to the real beers of Japan. As many readers will know, the market is dominated by Asahi, Kirrin, Suntory and Sapporo. The number one selling beer is Asahi “super dry” but this may be a feat of marketing over substance. Most of my beer drinking featured brands produced by the big four, however I was given a bottle of Usami which was made in a brew bar. This was a lovely, lightly hopped and clean tasting beer. The water in this part of the country is renowned as it originally falls in the slopes of the venerable Mount Fuji. By the time it bubbles its way up through the ground in the coastal areas, 100 years has passed and the water is crystal clear and fresh tasting. Usami was very refreshing for the hot conditions of the season and fresh tasting like any beer that is micro brewed rather than mass produced.

I sampled all the common brews and, to be honest they were all in a very similar style. I would describe them as classic Asian lightly hopped lagers in the same vein as Tiger or Singha. They are popular and go nicely with the flavoursome yet delicate foods of Japan because of their clean taste.
The two beers I came to enjoy the most were Yebisu (pronounced “Ebis”) and Suntory Premium Malts. Yebisu is produced by Sapporo. Both of these beers were malty and hoppy in a German Pilsner or pale lager style. They had a bit more body to them than the other standard lager brews and they both had a fine hop/malt balance. I suspect one is probably a market match for the other.

I also drank a fair bit of Kirin Ichiban as this is still the stock brew in many bars, restaurants and homes. Ichiban means “the first”. It completes the Asian beer profile I described above but can be commended for its crispness and sheer drinkability largely due to its smoothness. Asahi Super Dry is also widely served on draught. It’s a very drinkable beer especially on a hot day. It is dry and it is refreshing taste but for me it lacked the character of a more malty beer and it’s a bit too gassy.

I spent nearly a month in Japan. I sampled many drinkable beers but while the quality was high, the variety was low. I know there is a strong seasonal beer scene in Japan. I wonder if my summer visit was the reason for the many lighter beers I sampled. On another visit, I would like to go in winter and see if the small dark beer range is expanded at this time.

BEFORE 1995 craft brewing was effectively illegal in Japan as the industrial brewers were protected by a bizarre minimum capacity requirement. Since its repeal 500 breweries have sprung up and it is often touted that Baird is the best of them. Founded by ex-pat American Bryan Baird and his Japanese wife Sayuri, the company has grown steadily and now has three of its own bars and is exported to the United States through Shelton Brothers.

As well as producing a stable of fine year round beers, the brewery is celebrated for its dazzling array of seasonal beers. Baird’s repertoire is thought to extend to well over 100 different releases, generally coming out at a rate of one per week.

Hashigo Zake in Wellington is Baird’s first outlet in the southern hemisphere and they are delighted that the brewery has agreed to supply them directly from their brewery in Numazu, at the top of the Izu Peninsula, around an hour (by shinkansen) from Tokyo. Their extensive range comprises:

Rising Sun Pale Ale, 330ml ABV: 5%
Teikoku IPA, 330ml, ABV: 5.8%
Red Rose Amber Ale, 330ml, ABV: 5.4%
Angry Boy Brown Ale, 330ml, ABV: 6.2%
Kurofune Porter, 330ml, ABV: 6%
Rainy Season Black Ale, 633ml, ABV: 6.1%
Harajuku Taproom Celebration Ale, 633ml, ABV: 6.5%
Imperial Pilsner, 633ml, ABV: 7%
Yabai Yabai Strong Scotch Ale, 633ml, ABV: 7.7%
Suruga Bay Imperial IPA, 633ml, ABV: 7.5%

WARWICK FOY
What does the next decade hold for craft brewing in New Zealand?

I THINK that we will see quite a few positive changes. There will be more and more “Free Houses” opened as the public continue to demand choice. I also believe we will see more brewpubs where the independent brewer sitting in an industrial area of, let’s say, Dunedin, will take more control of their own destiny and use the brewpub as a perfect way to promote their own unique products. The proliferation of big brewery backed outlets where choice is limited and owners have to resort to nude jelly wrestling in order to draw a crowd will (mostly) have its day.

The big boys have seen this already and are they are marketing the bars they back as independents with the likes of Monteith’s, Mac’s and Speight’s themed bars. However you can only fool the public for a short time and I believe that the attitude of exclusive supply to brewery backed bars will have to change if the beer market is to grow at all.

Provenance is going to be a major issue, as customers demand to know where and how their beer is made - look at the Mike King/caged piggy debacle. People want to know what they are consuming and while I don’t believe many beer drinkers give a shit if their beer is organic or not they are beginning to ask questions about where the ingredients come from and how their pint is made.

The consumer will become more and more interested in flavour. While there will always be a ready market for cheap “Golden Arches Syndrome” beers, there will be a swing away from tasteless slop. Per head volume sales will continue to decline until customers (and some brewers) realise that beer can be as interesting and varied as wine. Then I see slow but steady growth back to tasty well made beer.

We will also see a uniquely New Zealand style of beer emerge just as we have in other parts of the world. All small brewers are guilty of copying American Pale Ales, English Bitters and Continental lagers and why not? They’re interesting and tasty tipples, but there is a very real need for something that screams New Zealand. However, regardless of what some may say, “Draught” (who ever heard of anything as bloody ridiculous as draught beer in a bottle anyway?) is not it.

We are seeing a bit of an emergence of a New Zealand style beer where New Zealand “Saaz” varieties are used. However, most are overdoing these hops and there is a boring sameness about beers where the brewer has been a bit heavy handed.

What we really need in this country is top quality malt in order to develop this new beer style. Now, while I would hate to see David Cryer go out of business, top end New Zealand malt is absolutely essential as a building block for any unique style development. And while for years I have hated the “Greenness” of New Zealand hops I have seen a big improvement recently and most I have sampled lately seem to be “riper”. I hope this continues, as we really do need our hops to be world class to develop this new style; it isn’t just about alphas guys.

An organisation run by brewers for brewers to promote members and their products and has some teeth will need to emerge. I have always given the New Zealand Wine Institute as an example of how it could work. Brewers will need to dig into their pockets however as I don’t believe such an organisation can be run on a volunteer basis as is currently the case. While those involved in the vehicle brewers currently have available to them do an admirable job, they have their own jobs and businesses to attend to and cannot be expected to put their day job on hold. As long as our industry remains fragmented we will not prosper.

In all, an interesting 10 years for both the brewer and consumer. More choice, better beer, growth in the market and a bright future for this noble drink. Beer will again be the drink of preference for the majority of Kiwis.

Keith Galbraith
GREAT GIFT IDEA FOR FATHER’S DAY AND CHRISTMAS!

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5-MINUTE BEER QUIZ

1. Brasserie Duyck has its home in which French town?

2. Who said “Filled with mingled cream and amber I will drain that glass again. Such hilarious visions clamber through the chambers of my brain - quaintest thoughts - queerest fancies come to life and fade away; who cares how time advances? I am drinking ale today.”

3. In which year was Bays brewery in Nelson founded – a)1989, b)1991 or c)1993?

4. What is a Yorkshire Square?

5. What is the name of the process in brewing beer in which the mash is separated into the clear liquid wort and the residual grain?

6. Lion Nathan and DB Breweries together have 90% of the New Zealand beer market – true or false?

7. Whose bottle branding features an abstract drawing of the north island above its logo and an abstract drawing of the south island on the reverse?

8. S. Manning and Co. were brewers in which New Zealand city?

9. What is the abv of Rogue Imperial Stout - a)9%, b)10% or c)11%?

10. What do the following have in common – Toad in the Hole, Bat and Trap & Shut the Box?

CORRECTION

With regard to the following question from last edition:

1. Tui East India Pale Ale won a gold medal in the 2009 BrewNZ NZ Draught Ale Category, competing against how many other entries?

The correct answer was Seven.
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The Oak Bar, Arrow Brewing

WHILE on holiday in Central Otago our family spent a pleasant afternoon at the Oak Bar, home of the Arrow Brewing Company in Arrowtown. I was shown around by brewer John Timpany, leaving the family to enjoy lunch on some of the most comfortable sofas seen in a bar and the collection of toys in the kids’ area.

Although the brewery is on town’s main street (Buckingham Street) it was not easy to find. Seeing the brewery sign pointing down to the back of the Oaks Arcade was a relief.

The attractive setting of the Bar in the Oaks Arcade

The brewery was launched in December 2008 on the site of the Royal Oak Hotel by a group of craft beer enthusiasts. Naming the bar “The Oak” keeps the link with the former legendary Hotel.

The beer is brewed in 350 litre batches but is made back to back on consecutive days to make 700 litres. No additives or preservatives are added nor are the beers pasteurised or filtered. The brewery shows much of John’s past electrical engineering and stainless steel expertise and ingenuity with the equipment being built largely by him.

When I visited there were eight beers on tap. I thought the bar’s biggest selling Oak Organic Lager (brewed with an ale yeast and Rakau hops) was tasting particularly good, followed by the fruity Arrow Pilz Pilsener. Other beers included Fox Session Ale, Tobin’s Cask Ale, Gentle Annie Golden Honey Lager using honey from the Catlins, Schist Dark, Mace’s Ale and the Roaring Meg Powerhouse Black Ale at 7.4%.

The names of the beers have a local connection which fits in well with the historic nature of the town. Fox, Tobin and Mace are Otago pioneers, Gentle Annie is a bridge in Cromwell, Schist is a local rock and Roaring Meg is named after the local hydro station.

A total of eight beers on tap

John says business is going well surviving the economic downturn from last year. Female patrons tend to outnumber the males which John thinks is due to the comfortable laid-back atmosphere of the bar. As the slower shoulder seasons outside the summer and winter months are low on tourist numbers, the bar is targeted towards locals as well as tourists.

The brewery does not bottle or keg its beers as they are all served in the bar directly from the tanks. The only outlet in which they are sold is at the Oak Bar apart from the odd festival. In the past the brewery did one bottle run which had good demand. A bottling plant is one of the next things on John’s plans to build.

Brewer John Timpany at home out the back

Last winter the brewery made a mulled wine after being unable to find one in the market. They also produced a dry red wine called “Bob” (Born Out Back) using pinot grapes. A cider, rosé and white wine are planned for the coming year. No seasonal beers are planned. The last “seasonal” beer was the Arrow Pilz Pilsener which ended up being part of the regular line-up.

So if you are in the Central Otago area make some time and visit the Arrow Brewing Company. Brewery tours are free and the staff are happy to show you around. Just keep your eye out or you could pass it by and miss a great brewery.

DAVID WU

The Pursuit of Hoppiness - Summer 2010
WHAT’S ON

There are now FOUR regional groups staging SOBA events over the coming months....

WELLINGTON AREA
Contact: Ian Caig, email condor@soba.org.nz

Tuesday 16th February, 7.00pm
Special Summer Social
Malthouse, Courtenay Place, Wellington

Tuesday 2nd March, 7.00pm
Monthly Social
Liquidate, The Terrace then D4 Featherston Street

Tuesday 6th April, 7.00pm tbc
Beer Tasting
City Centre Wines, Waring Taylor Street, Wellington

Tuesday 4th May, 7.30pm
Monthly Social
Bar Bodega, Ghuznee Street

AUCKLAND AREA
Contact: Martin Bridges, email martin@soba.org.nz

Saturday 6th February 2.00pm
Monthly Social
tba

Saturday 6th March, 2.00pm
Monthly Social
tba

Saturday 3rd April, 2.00pm
Monthly Social
tba

DUNEDIN AREA
Contact: Richard Pettinger, email pettail@clear.net.nz

Wednesday 17th February 7.30pm
Social
Inch Bar, Bank Street, Dunedin

Wednesday 14th April, 7.30pm
Social
Tonic Bar, Princes Street, Dunedin

CHRISTCHURCH AREA
Contact: Craig Bowen, email sales@beernz.co.nz

Tuesday 2nd March 7.00pm
Inaugural Meeting / Social - Discounted beer!!
Snug Bar, Twisted Hop, Poplar Street, Christchurch

MEMBERSHIP

Please join and support the Society Of Beer Advocates (SOBA) Incorporated.

■ Complete the form below, or complete oen on the new SOBA website.
■ Submit it in person to the Secretary or Treasurer OR by post, to SOBA, 11 Malda Grove, Khandallah, Wellington 6035, OR by email to members@soba.org.nz.
■ Pay your membership fee in cash to the Secretary or Treasurer OR by bank deposit to SOBA 01 0527 0079253 00 (use your name as a reference) OR by sending a cheque to the above postal address.

By completing and signing this form you agree to the following conditions:
1. I will abide by the charter of the Society Of Beer Advocates Incorporated (hereafter “SOBA”) and accept club rulings.
2. I absolve SOBA from any liability that may arise due to my participation in SOBA events or meetings or by using SOBA equipment, or other property, except as provided by law.
3. I will pay the specified membership fee of $30.00 within 14 days of completing and signing this form.
4. Membership, when granted, is active for 1 year from the month of having your application processed.
5. SOBA undertakes to collect, use and store the information provided on this form according to the principles of the Privacy Act 1993. The information will be used by SOBA for statistical, funding and administration purposes within the society. You have the right to access the information held about you and to request corrections.

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SOBA Newsletter

FRONT COVER IMAGE

James Paul,
second left, with
the staff of his
Egmont Brewery,
New Plymouth,
circa 1898.
© Puke Ariki
Accession
No.PHO2006-126
There are two types of customer.

One that knows the yeast strain & hop intensity of their beer.

And the other, obsessive kind.

Luckily we stock 150 types of speciality beers and ales including 26 on tap, more than enough to satisfy the most demanding of palates.

Malthouse