

# The OVHA Tap

Vol 10 No. 12

December 2006

Meeting Wednesday, 7:00 pm Dec.13 at Germania Mannerchor

Featured Beer: Porters

Beer evaluation schedule:

December 2006 Holiday/Winter Warmer

January "Mystery" beers

February "Beer your wife will drink"



NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICERS THIS MONTH AND DECEMBER!

Election of officers will take place at the January meeting.

Dues for next year can be paid at this or the December meeting.

Meeting Schedule 2006

November 29th Germania 7 pm

December 20th Germania 7 pm

January 31st Germania 7 pm

## , Brewer's Musings

Well, the bewery is up and running. We made a "Novemberfest" beer for Teach a Friend to Homebrew" day (very flexible guidelines for Novemberfest) that is sort of a brown ale of somesort.

Our main malt mill is out of action -- it decided to go walkabout this spring for the Big Brew Day and hasn't quite recovered yet. It's fully disassembled, waiting for some parts and a new frame. New bearings might be in the works as well, the original oil-light bushings got badly clogged with malt dust, causing quite a bit of drag on the driven roller, with resultant shearing of the grist. That caused mash flow problems, and so forth. We've been using the old backup handcrank PhilMill with a drill motor. Works fine if you don't overload it.

We also rediscovered that pitching fresh wort on the yeast in the secondary can cause a very vigorous fermentation -- so vigorous, in fact, that the beer doesn't stay in the carboy. Very sticky floor in the brewery for a while, considerable danger in standing still for very long, one's feet tended to adhere to the floor.

Naturally, none of this interferes with beer consumption! Steve decided that a Vienna would be fun, so he worked one of those up while I was sledgehammering the bathroom floor out (why does the plumbing always go to perdition when you have company coming?)

Should be a fun season again!

## 12. PORTER

### 12A. Brown Porter

**Aroma:** Malt aroma with mild roastiness should be evident, and may have a chocolaty quality. May also show some non-roasted malt character in support (caramelly, grainy, bready, nutty, toffee-like and/or sweet). English hop aroma moderate to none. Fruity esters moderate to none. Diacetyl low to none.

**Appearance:** Light brown to dark brown in color, often with ruby highlights when held up to light. Good clarity, although may approach being opaque. Moderate off-white to light tan head with good to fair retention.

**Flavor:** Malt flavor includes a mild-to moderate roastiness (frequently with a chocolate character) and often a significant caramel, nutty, and/or toffee character. May have other secondary flavors such as coffee, licorice, biscuits or toast in support. Should not have a significant black malt character (acidic, burnt, or harsh roasted flavors), although small amounts may contribute a bitter chocolate complexity. English hop flavor moderate to none. Medium-low to medium hop bitterness will vary the balance from slightly malty to slightly bitter. Usually fairly well attenuated, although somewhat sweet versions exist. Diacetyl should be moderately low to none. Moderate to low fruity esters.

**Mouthfeel:** Medium-light to medium body. Moderately low to moderately high carbonation.

**Overall Impression:** A fairly substantial English dark ale with restrained roasty characteristics.

**History:** Originating in England, porter evolved from a blend of beers or gyles known as “Entire.” A precursor to stout. Said to have been favored by porters and other physical laborers. **Comments:** Differs from a robust porter in that it usually has softer, sweeter and more caramelly flavors, lower gravities, and usually less alcohol. More substance and roast than a brown ale. Higher in gravity than a dark mild. Some versions are fermented with lager yeast. Balance tends toward malt more than hops. Usually has an “English” character. Historical versions with Brettanomyces, sourness, or smokiness should be entered in the specialty category.

**Ingredients:** English ingredients are most common. May contain several malts, including chocolate and/or other dark roasted malts and caramel-type malts. Historical versions would use a significant amount of brown malt. Usually does not contain large amounts of black patent malt or roasted barley. English hops are most common, but are usually subdued. London or Dublin-type water (moderate carbonate hardness) is traditional. English or Irish ale yeast, or occasionally lager yeast, is used. May contain a moderate amount of adjuncts (sugars, maize, molasses, treacle, etc.).

**Vital Statistics:** OG: 1.040-1.052  
IBUs: 18-35 FG: 1.008-1.014  
SRM: 20-30 ABV: 4-5.4%

**Commercial Examples:** Samuel Smith Taddy Porter, Fuller’s London Porter, Burton Bridge Burton Porter, Nethergate Old Growler Porter, Nick Stafford’s Nightmare Yorkshire Porter, St. Peters Old-Style Porter, Bateman’s Salem Porter, Shepherd Neame Original Porter, Flag Porter, Yuengling Porter, Geary’s London Style Porter

### 12B. Robust Porter

**Aroma:** Roasty aroma (often with a lightly burnt, black malt character) should be noticeable and may be moderately strong. Optionally may also show some additional malt character in support (grainy, bready, toffee-like, caramelly, chocolate, coffee, rich, and/or sweet). Hop aroma low to high (US or UK varieties). Some American versions may be dry-hopped. Fruity esters are moderate to none. Diacetyl low to none.

**Appearance:** Medium brown to very dark brown, often with ruby- or garnet-like highlights. Can approach black in color. Clarity may be difficult to discern in such a dark beer, but when not opaque will be clear (particularly when held up to the light). Full, tan-colored head with moderately good head retention.

**Flavor:** Moderately strong malt flavor usually features a lightly burnt, black malt character (and sometimes chocolate and/or coffee flavors) with a bit of roasty dryness in the finish. Overall flavor may finish from dry to medium-sweet, depending on grist composition, hop bittering level, and attenuation. May have a sharp character from dark roasted grains, although should not be overly acidic, burnt or harsh. Medium to high bitterness, which can be accentuated by the roasted malt. Hop flavor can vary from low to moderately high (US or UK varieties, typically), and balances the roasted malt flavors. Diacetyl low to none. Fruity esters moderate to none.

**Mouthfeel:** Medium to medium-full body. Moderately low to moderately high carbonation. Stronger versions may have a slight alcohol warmth. May have a slight astringency from roasted grains, although this character should not be strong.

**Overall Impression:** A substantial, malty dark ale with a complex and flavorful roasty character.

**History:** Stronger, hoppier and/or roastier version of porter designed as either a historical throwback or an American interpretation of the style. Traditional versions will have a more subtle hop character (often English), while modern versions may be considerably more aggressive. Both types are equally valid.

**Comments:** Although a rather broad style open to brewer interpretation, it may be distinguished from Stout as lacking a strong roasted barley character. It differs from a brown porter in that a black patent or roasted grain character is usually present, and it can be stronger in alcohol. Roast intensity and malt flavors can also vary significantly. May or may not have a strong hop character, and may or may not have significant fermentation by-products; thus may seem to have an “American” or “English” character.

**Ingredients:** May contain several malts, prominently dark roasted malts and grains, which often include black patent malt (chocolate malt and/or roasted barley may also be used in some versions). Hops are used for bittering, flavor and/or aroma, and are frequently UK or US varieties. Water with moderate to

## Fruit/vegetable/spice beer Profile (cont)

high carbonate hardness is typical. Ale yeast can either be clean US versions or characterful English varieties.

Vital Statistics:           OG: 1.048-1.065  
IBUs: 25-50+            FG: 1.012- 1.016  
SRM: 22-35+            ABV:4.8-6%

Commercial Examples: Anchor Porter, Great Lakes Edmund Fitzgerald Porter, Sierra Nevada Porter, Bell's Porter, Thirsty Dog Old Leghumper, Otter Creek Stovepipe Porter, Portland Haystack Black Porter, Avery New World Porter, Deschutes Black Butte Porter, Redhook Blackhook Porter

### 12C. Baltic Porter

**Aroma:** Rich malty sweetness often containing caramel, toffee, nutty to deep toast, and/or licorice notes. Complex alcohol and ester profile of moderate strength, and reminiscent of plums, prunes, raisins, cherries or currants, occasionally with a vinous Port-like quality. Some darker malt character that is deep chocolate, coffee or molasses but never burnt. No hops. No sourness. Very smooth.

**Appearance:** Dark reddish copper to opaque dark brown (not black). Thick, persistent tan-colored head. Clear, although darker versions can be opaque.

**Flavor:** As with aroma, has a rich malty sweetness with a complex blend of deep malt, dried fruit esters, and alcohol. Has a prominent yet smooth schwarzbier-like roasted flavor that stops short of burnt. Mouth-filling and very smooth. Clean lager character; no diacetyl. Starts sweet but darker malt flavors quickly dominates and persists through finish. Just a touch dry with a hint of roast coffee or licorice in the finish. Malt can have a caramel, toffee, nutty, molasses and/or licorice complexity. Light hints of black currant and dark fruits. Medium-low to medium bitterness from malt and hops, just to provide balance. Perhaps a hint of hop flavor.

**Mouthfeel:** Generally quite full-bodied and smooth, with a well-aged alcohol warmth (although the rarer lower gravity Carnegie-style versions will have a medium body and less warmth). Medium to medium-high carbonation, making it seem even more mouth-filling. Not heavy on the tongue due to carbonation level.

**Overall Impression:** A Baltic Porter often has the malt flavors reminiscent of an English brown porter and the restrained roast of a schwarzbier, but with a higher OG and alcohol content than either. Very complex, with multi-layered flavors.

**History:** Traditional beer from countries bordering the Baltic Sea. Derived from English porters but influenced by Russian Imperial Stouts.

**Comments:** May also be described as an Imperial Porter, although heavily roasted or hopped versions should be entered as either Imperial Stouts or specialty beers.

**Ingredients:** Generally lager yeast (cold fermented if using ale yeast). Debittered chocolate or black malt. Munich or Vienna base malt. Continental hops. May contain crystal malts and/or adjuncts. Brown or amber malt common in historical recipes.

Vital Statistics:           OG: 1.060-1.090 -  
IBUs: 20-40            FG: 1.016-1.024  
SRM: 17-30            ABV: 5.5-9.5% (although 7-8.5% is most typical)

Commercial Examples: Sinebrychoff Porter (Finland), Zywiec Porter (Poland), Baltika Porter (Russia), Carnegie Stark Porter (Sweden), Dojiidy Polski (Poland), Aldaris Porteris (Latvia), Utenos Porter (Lithuania), Kozlak Porter (Poland), Stepan Razin Porter (Russia)

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## Hop of the Month

### Crystal Hops

Crystal is a cultivar released for commercial planting in late 1993. It was developed by the experimental stations in Oregon and Idaho, and is claimed to have excellent vigor, high yield potential, and brewing traits similar to European aroma hops.

Crystal is a naturally seedless female triploid, a half-sister of Mt. Hood and Liberty. Genetically it is 2/3 Hallertau Mittelfruher, 1/6 Cascade,, plus Brewer's gold, Early Green, and others. Crystal's alpha acids average 6% in nursery tests, but only 3.0% to 3.5% in commercial test plots. Pellets from the recent crops have had alphas of 2.6 to 2.8%. Crystal has relatively poor storage stability of its soft resins, again in common with other members of the Hallertau family.

### Upcoming events:

#### Brown Malt:

Brown malt is one of the "old fashioned" malts that has largely vanished from the brewing scene. It was originally most likely a fairly dark, almost crystal malt obtained from uneven malt processing before the advent of temperature and humidity controls in malting.

Several suppliers carry it, but the character it imparts will vary quite a bit depending on exact source. It should impart a sweet, caramel flavor to the beer, along with some toasted or roast (but not black roast) flavor

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