

# The Herald Tribune



Volume #22 Issue #1

Newsletter of the Ann Arbor Brewers' Guild

January 2008

## January Meeting

This month's meeting of the AABG is Friday the 11th and will be hosted by **Randy deBeauclair**. See the map and directions on the next page. The featured style is **Dark Lager**.

## Vienna

Amber-red or only medium-dark, lager. This was the style originally produced in Vienna. Brewers still talk of a "Vienna malt" to indicate a kilning to this amber-red colour, but the beer-style itself is no longer especially associated with the city.



## AABG 2008

January .....	Randy deBeauclair .....	Dark Lager*
February .....	Matt & Rene Greff .....	Belgian & French Ale
March .....		Porter*
April .....		Light Hybrid Beer
May .....	Stephen Krebs .....	Extract*
June .....	Mark Zadvinskis .....	Smoke
July .....		Mead*
August .....	Chris Frey .....	Light Lager
September .....	Jeff Renner .....	Imperial Anything*
October .....	Jason Henning .....	European Amber Lager
November .....	Chris Frey .....	English Brown Ale
December .....	Rolf Wucherer .....	Cider/Specialty

\* Denotes AHA Club Only Competition Style  
All meeting are the second friday of each month beginning at 7:30 p.m., except for the July meeting (BeerBQ) which is the second saturday.

## AABG Pico System

The guardian of the club's pico system is Mike O'Brien. Anyone wishing to use it should contact him at:  
734.637.2532 or e-mail:  
mobrien315221MI@comcast.net

## Dark Lager

- 4A. Dark American Lager
- 4B. Munich Dunkel
- 4C. Schwarzbier (Black Beer)

**Aroma:** Little to no malt aroma. Medium-low to no roast and caramel malt aroma. Hop aroma may range from none to light spicy or floral hop presence. Hop aroma may range from none to light, spicy or floral hop presence. Can have low levels of yeast character (green apples, DMS, or fruitiness). No diacetyl.

**Appearance:** Deep amber to dark brown with bright clarity and ruby highlights. Foam stand may not be long lasting, and is usually light tan in color.

**Flavor:** Moderately crisp with some low to moderate levels of sweetness. Medium-low to no caramel and/or roasted malt flavors (and may include hints of coffee, molasses or cocoa). Hop flavor ranges from none to low levels. Hop bitterness at low to medium levels. No diacetyl. May have a very light fruitiness. Burnt or moderately strong roasted malt flavors are a defect.

**Mouthfeel:** Light to somewhat medium body. Smooth, although a highly-carbonated beer.

**Overall Impression:** A somewhat sweeter version of standard/premium lager with a little more body and flavor.

**Comments:** A broad range of international lagers that are darker than pale, and not assertively bitter and/or roasted.

**Ingredients:** Two- or six-row barley, corn or rice as adjuncts. Light use of caramel and darker malts. May use coloring agents.

**Vital Statistics:**

OG . . .	1.044-1.056
FG . . .	1.008-1.012
IBUs . . . . .	8-20
SRM . . . . .	14-22
ABV . . . . .	4.2-6%

**Commercial Examples:** Dixie Blackened Voodoo, Shiner Bock, San Miguel Dark, Beck's Dark, Saint Pauli Girl Dark, Warsteiner Dunkel, Crystal Diplomat Dark Beer

## Dunkel, the first beer-purity-law lager

The Bavarian Dunkel lager (as well as its darker siblings, the Schwarzbier and the Rauchbier) is the historical precursor of all modern lagers. These include such Bavarian hallmark beers as the Helles, Märzen/Oktobfest, and Bockbier, as well as the Vienna lager, the Bohemian pilsner, the Dortmunder Export, the German Pils, and even North American mass-produced generic pale lagers.

Dunkel is the German word for "dark." It refers to the deep brown, mahogany, or sepia color of this opaque, all-barley based lager. The Dunkel, like all Bavarian-style beers, tends to be low in hop bitterness. Brewed with a large portion of Munich malt, a Dunkel is soft and elegant, with almost no nose. Malt, not hop, flavors dominate in a Dunkel. It has a rich, malty, mildly vanilla, nutty-sweet palate and a dry, rounded finish. Its alcohol-by-volume level ranges broadly between 4.8 and 5.6%. It has a full-bodied texture, rich mouthfeel, and creamy, long-lasting head.

From the early 16th to the late 19th century, dark lagers were the most common beers in Bavaria. Initially called red beers, they came to be called by their modern name only in the 1840s, probably to distinguish them from the growing variety of paler lagers that were being introduced then.

**A Beer Style...By Law!** Before the introduction of the indirect-heat kiln in the early nineteenth century, which allowed maltsters to make pale malt, all beers were more or less dark. Depending on the climate and the season, the beers were either ales or lagers. Most beer became ales, because uncontrolled fermentation in unrefrigerated, open vats was usually by top-fermenting yeasts. They would be lagers only in the winter in colder regions, such as Bavaria, when ale yeasts would be dormant and only bottom-fermenting yeasts were still active. These medieval beers often tasted sour and medicinal, especially in the summer, when the chance of infection from airborne wild yeasts and bacteria was greatest, and brewers would use any number of strong herbs and seeds to cover up bad flavors.

See **Dunkel** continued on next page...

## When and Where

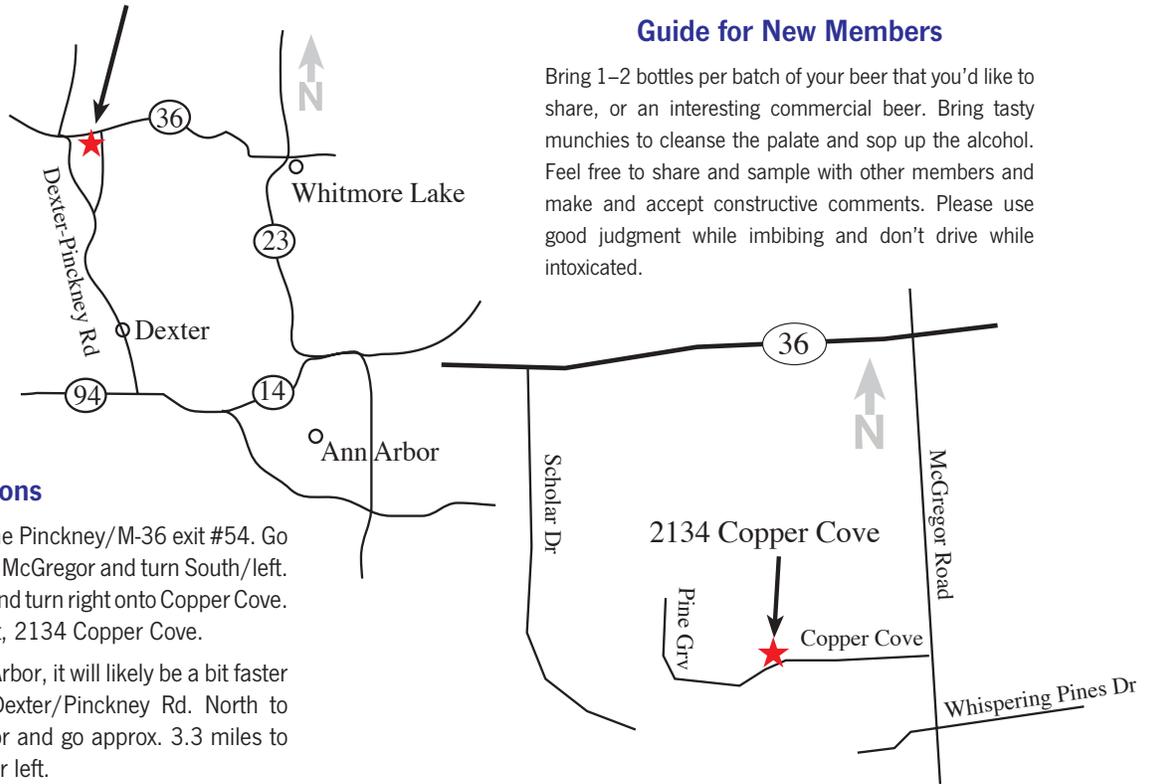
**Friday Jan. 11, 7:30 pm**  
**Randy deBeauclair**  
**2134 Copper Cove**  
**Pinckney MI**  
**734/878-3472**

## Directions

From Ann Arbor take 23 north to the Pinckney/M-36 exit #54. Go West on M-36 approx. 8–9 miles to McGregor and turn South/left. Go approx. 1/4 mile on McGregor and turn right onto Copper Cove. My house is the fourth on the right, 2134 Copper Cove.

If you live on the West side of Ann Arbor, it will likely be a bit faster to go through Dexter and take Dexter/Pinckney Rd. North to McGregor. Turn Right on McGregor and go approx. 3.3 miles to Copper Cove, which will be on your left.

Randy's house is brown brick/tan siding, and at the top of a steep driveway. Park in the driveway, (it is a bit steep), or on the street, either side.



## Guide for New Members

Bring 1–2 bottles per batch of your beer that you'd like to share, or an interesting commercial beer. Bring tasty munchies to cleanse the palate and sop up the alcohol. Feel free to share and sample with other members and make and accept constructive comments. Please use good judgment while imbibing and don't drive while intoxicated.

## *Dunkel* continued...

The famous Bavarian Beer Purity Law of 1516, the Reinheitsgebot, began a momentous process that would change beer making not just in Bavaria, but the entire world. In Bavaria, after 1516, beer could be made only from water, malted barley, and hops. The importance of yeast in beer making had not yet been discovered. In spite of the Reinheitsgebot, however, summer beers remained of poor quality. In 1553, therefore, the then-Bavarian ruler Duke Albrecht V of the mighty House of Wittelsbach (a resilient dynasty, which occupied the Bavarian throne between 1180 and 1918), simply forbade all brewing between April 23 and September 29. As a result of these two regulations, a new beer evolved. It was always a dark lager, barley-based, and hop-flavored. Fixed by government decree, it became the staple beer of Bavarian drinkers. Both brew-technically and brew-culturally, this beer was the world's first recognizable modern beer style.

During the early decades of the nineteenth century, the new (lager) beer style spread from Bavaria to neighboring Austria and Bohemia. As pale malt became available around that time, brewers started to create blond lagers as well.

After the invention of refrigeration near the end of the century, cold-fermenting lagers replaced ales as the favorite beers in all parts of Europe except for the lower Rhineland, Holland, Belgium, Britain, and Ireland. On its home turf, however, in Bavaria, as well as in the world's brewpubs, the historic Dunkel has retained a good foothold.

— Horst Dornbusch

## The road to red Oktober

*What color were Anton Dreher's first lager brews?*

In 1840/41, Anton Dreher began to brew lager in Vienna. Unfortunately, accounts of brewing at that time are always very vague about the aroma, colour and taste of the beer. Brews subsequently made to commemorate this period have always been amber red, and I have always believed that was the colour of Dreher's lager.

Again, judging from what little we know of his process, and of the beers that have since proclaimed themselves to be of the Vienna style, I believe these beers typically to have been malt-accented, perhaps with some barley-sugar aroma and flavour, but with a good hop balance.

The Austrian beer writer Conrad Seidl recently wrote to me with three historical references that

in various respects bear out this belief. He feels that the nearest beer to this style currently being produced in Vienna is the Marzen of the brewpub Siebenstern, in the street of the same name. Marzen because the beer was originally hid down in March and matured until September.

In 1842, in Pilsen, Bohemia, Josef Groll (or Grolle) produced the world's first golden lager. It is hard to believe, but accounts from that time seem to suggest that the pale colour — which made the beer so startlingly different at the time — was a happy accident.

The local barley was very low in protein, and that would have helped clarity. The brewery, which was brand new, had British-inspired maltings, using indirect heat, which produced a pale kilning. While other brewing cities had water high in various minerals, Pilsen's was very soft. In particular, it was innocent of limestone, which brings colour from the malt into the beer. The plentiful local hops were used lavishly, and that would also have helped clarify the beer.

At a time when metal tankards and stoneware stains were being replaced by mass-produced glass, sparkling golden lagers would eventually dominate.

See *Red* continued on next page...

*Red continued...*

Pilsen's hoppy examples were eventually joined by maltier golden lagers from the Munich area and something between the two (with a slightly higher gravity and firmer, "hard water", body) from Dortmund. Alongside them, the darker styles survive, albeit as specialties.

In 1858, Gabriel Sedlmayr's brother Josef introduced the Vienna style of lager to Munich as a seasonal speciality at the famous festival that starts in September but takes its name from October, when it finishes. The classic Marzen-Oktoberfest style today is an amber-red brew of about 1055 (5.75 per cent ABV), malt-accented but with a good hop balance. Unfortunately, this style is becoming very hard to find at the festival. Some have the gravity, but most are less malty than in the past, and golden in colour.

Lowenbrau is launching such an interpretation in Britain on September 18 (day one of the festival) for a limited period. This beer is golden, quite firm-bottled, with a good malt background, and well-hopped. Medium-strength, lightly malt-accented lagers of this type are offered at many festivals in Germany. Often, they are identified simply as Festbier. There are also stronger seasonal lagers, sometimes golden or amber but often dark, in the Bock range.

I hesitate to mention this, but the easiest place to find a proper amber-red, malty Oktoberfest beer these days is in a lager-brewing micro in the United States.



## Herold Bohemian Black Lager

The Czechs are famous for the golden lagers of Pilsen and Budweis, but also have a history of dark versions. Some have a dark red hue, and a nutty malt accent, and are typically identified as "garnet". Others have always been closer to black, richer and spicier in flavour, sometimes with a suggestion of licorice. The most famous in that vein is the house beer at U Fleku, the 15th-century brewpub in Prague.

I have been pleased to notice more beers emerging in this style, not only in the Czech Republic but elsewhere. I have seen the term Prager used to indicate the Czech style of dark lager in one brewpub in Vienna and another in Tokyo.

In the Czech Republic, one brewery doing great work for the style is Herold.

Herold Black is made from a starting gravity of 13.1–13.2 (1053). Pilsner, crystal, Munich and black malts are used. Some of the Pilsner malt is made at the brewery. A double decoction mash is employed. The brew has an unusually long boil, and it is hopped three times, entirely with the Saaz variety. Lagering is for 75-80 days. The beer emerges with 5.2 per cent alcohol by volume (4.1 by weight).

It has collected first prize two years running in Bohemia's annual judging, and has had similar success as far away as Stockholm, Sweden. In Britain, this lager has even been presented in a cask, as though it were an ale.

**Tasting note:** Dark brown to black. Dense creamy head. Oily richness. Flavors reminiscent of bittersweet chocolate. Some sappy bitterness. Long, cedary, dry, smoky. finish.

**Food pairings:** In describing a good beer, the Czechs use the expression chlebnatost, "full-breadedness". What a great description. This style of "black" lager is served with chunky dark bread and a generous dollop of cream cheese at U Fleku. It's pretty good with marinated meats like brisket, in dark sauces: Austrian Tafelspitz or German Sauerbraten. And have another with your post-prandial cigar.

— Michael Jackson



## Dark beers heart friendly

Dark beer offers some of the same heart-healthy benefits as chocolate and red wine, according to a new study. Guinness Stout had substantially more anti-clotting activity than Heineken, said John Folts, University of Wisconsin scientist. He presented his findings Tuesday at the American Heart Association annual meeting.

The beneficial effect comes from flavonoids in the beer. Flavonoids are anti-oxidant compounds that provide the dark color in many fruits and vegetables. There are hundreds of flavonoids in beer, Folts said.

Flavonoids also work to prevent the oxidation of cholesterol, which plays a role in causing atherosclerosis — known as hardening of the arteries. They also help arteries to dilate, which improves blood flow and blood pressure, he said.

Folts said a person would have to reach a blood alcohol level of 0.06 in order to get the optimal anti-clotting effect. He said that for the typical person, that would be accomplished by drinking two 12-ounce bottles.

As always, doctors offered a balanced warning that even though dark beer may have heart-healthy properties, it also has a downside that could negate any benefit: extra calories. Dark chocolate and red wine have similar properties, but they also provide extra calories, and obesity is a risk factor for heart disease.

Ronald Korthuis, a professor of physiology at the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, said Folts' research bolsters epidemiological studies suggesting that alcoholic beverages can reduce heart attacks.

"What is impressive about Dr. Folts' observations is that the flavonoids in dark beer produce anti-platelet effects that rival those of aspirin," Korthuis said.

Folts is working on development of flavonoid extracts that can be put in a capsule so people can get its health benefits without consuming alcohol or excessive amounts of sugar in grape juice. "All of this good stuff is in the seeds, skin and certain other parts of fermenting plants, which are left in dark beer for a longer period of time than in light beer," Folts says.