



## Hefe My Favorite Beer!

*By Bill Caldwell*

I don't remember the first time I tried Weiss beer, but I'm pretty sure I liked it. Actually I do remember trying a Weiss beer made by Oldenburg, and wondering why some folks liked the style so much. However, once I got onto the real deal, imports that is, then I knew what the fuss was all about. I was a member of B.O.C.K. at that time, and found that others liked and brewed this beer. It did surprise me to learn that not everyone liked it as much as I

did. I'm sure there are exceptions, but it seems that folks are rarely ambivalent about weizen. It's love or hate. One B.O.C.K. member described it as looking like a bladder infection (obviously not a fan). One thing for sure, at least in my own experience, once I got the hang of brewing this beer, I became much more popular. The first thing people would ask me at parties was did I bring a keg of that wheat beer? I have noticed, however, that I don't seem to brew it as often as I once did, mostly because I want to try other styles. Also, since I now brew in fairly large quantities (25 gallons), I don't have to brew as often. I have never brewed a dark wheat, but would certainly like to try, maybe this fall.

Brewing with wheat is certainly an experience. I started using a double decoction to mash, but once I tried using a step mash instead, I never went back to the decoction, and I really couldn't tell any difference.

The real trouble with wheat is lautering. It runs off slow and sets easy. For me, rice hulls are the answer, I use a lot of 'em, 4 gallons in the last batch, to be exact. Best run off ever.

The yeast is what this beer is all about. Certainly the flavor would be nothing like it is with any other yeast strain. My grain bill is 2:1 malted wheat to Pils malt and is pretty much standard for the style. I prefer to use only the noble type hops, the lower the alpha acid, the better I like it. The Weinstephen yeast strain is my favorite. Others I have tried don't seem to have the spicy flavor I like.

Froth is the publication of the Brewers of Central Kentucky (B.O.C.K.): a non-profit organization dedicated to homebrewing.

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### May Meeting Minutes

Too many beers ..not enough time! Blues brews and barbecue committee formed.. see back page. Next meeting at Sawyers on wednesday june 14th..tasting German wheat beers.

## German Wheat Beer Terminology

**Weizen.** A German word that literally means wheat, but colloquially means wheat beer or Weissbier, particularly in Swabia.

**Weissbier.** Weiss means white, but anyone who has ever drunk a Weissbier knows that its color is more golden yellow, not white. But Weissbier is much paler than the dark beers that were so popular in Bavaria in earlier times, so the word white is used relatively.

**Hefe Weissbier or Hefe Weizen.** These terms refer to any Weissbier that has yeast (Hefe) in it; i.e., a bottle-conditioned Weissbier.

**Kristall Weizen.** A term used to describe any filtered wheat beer. Kristall Weizen is more popular in Austria than in Germany.

**Berliner Weisse.** By German law, beer brewed in this style can only be labeled Berliner Weisse if it has been brewed in Berlin. It is made, as are all Weissbiers, with a certain percentage of wheat malt. Berliner Weisse has a much lower starting gravity, is hopped less, and has a decidedly more lactic character than southern Weissbier. Phenolic character is not present in a Berliner Weisse.

**Dunkles Weissbier.** Dunkles Weissbier is most commonly found in Bavaria. Literally, the words mean dark white beer, a contradiction in terms. It is made with dark barley or wheat malts. The color is further deepened with colored malts or colored beer (derived from beer that has been made with a higher than normal percentage of black malt). Dunkles Weissbier is similar in flavor to Hefe Weissbier, but its rich, malty aroma is more pronounced than the aroma of a pale Weissbier.

**Weizenbock.** A wheat beer that is brewed to bock strength (at least 16 Plato). It is usually dark, but pale versions are also found. Many breweries brew a Weizenbock as a Christmas beer.

**Leichtes Weissbier.** Leicht means light; believe it or not, light Weissbiers are selling well in Germany. The main characteristics of a Leichtes Weissbier are similar to those of a full-strength Weissbier, but the overall impres-

sion is diluted.

## Sensory Profile of German Wheat Beers

There are many variations among the different styles of Weissbier in Germany. The pale Hefe Weissbier is the most popular on the whole, but some of the other German wheat beers have a rich tradition and enjoy a loyal following. With the exception of Berliner Weisse and isolated beer styles similar to it, the Weissbiers of Southern Germany have three common characteristics in addition to the fact that they all contain wheat. First, Weissbiers are highly carbonated. In fact, they contain 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 times the amount of carbon dioxide that American and German lagers do. Second, true Weissbiers are very lightly hopped. Bitterness should not exceed 18 IBU if the beer is to be true to style. Finally, they have a very typical phenolic and estery-fruity aroma and flavor that sets them apart from any other beer. This character is attributable to many fermentation parameters, but the yeast strain is the most important. The trademark of a Hefe Weissbier is its phenolic, estery flavor and aroma. This is one style of beer where a phenolic note is desirable and a fruity nose is expected. Since hopping rates are low, these characteristics come to the fore, along with a slight maltiness.

The most commonly used word by the millions of armchair braumeisters in Germany to describe the flavor and aroma of Weissbier is *wurzig*, or spicy. Another common term is *nelkenartig* (clovelike). To brewers and brewing scientists these words are synonymous with phenolic. Although the esters and alcohols play an important role in the elegant balance of Weissbier flavor and aroma, it is the phenolic substances in Bavarian and Swabian wheat beers that set them apart from any other beers in the world.

Stella Artois - Reassuringly Expensive  
Pint o' lager virtually erases sexiness

**Email from Mark Roberts:**

This came in on JudgeNet. It's still in the planning stages, but it presents a fun challenge. We could even do a pre-entry club tasting to see what brewing BOCKians can come up with. Imagine a Small Barleywine (Morgan?) or an Imperial Mild (Mark R.), a Small Bock (Tony?) or an Imperial Hefeweizen (Bill C.?). Oh, what fun.

From: Tom Schmidlin Subject: X-Brew

An invitation to brew, enter, and judge.

**\*\* X-Brew: The Extreme Homebrew Competition \*\***

We're not talking about brewing from a mountaintop or while falling from an airplane - although you're welcome to do so. X-Brew is about brewing at the extremes of gravity ~ specific gravity that is!

Entries will be accepted for all BJCP categories and subcategories, however each entry must be entered as either an Imperial or a Small beer/mead/cider. Imperial versions of a category must have an SG 20 points above the listed max, Small versions must have an SG 20 points below the listed minimum.

For example, an Imperial Koelsch must have an SG of at least 1.068, while a Small Koelsch must have a maximum SG of 1.020. Yes, this opens the door to Imperial Russian Imperial Stouts and Small Milds, but that's OK with us!

The competition is scheduled to be on or about October 4/5, 2003 and is AHA/BJCP sanctioned. Venue selection has yet to be set in stone, but all rules and details will be forthcoming shortly.

So fire up your kettles and cram as much grain as will fit in your tun!

So, let's think about this. I know this is one competition I plan to enter.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>June</u></b> Beer Style(s):Hefeweizen Activities:</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>July</u></b> Beer Style(s):Pilsner Activities:Nashville Beer Festival</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>August</u></b> Beer Style(s):Witbier Activities:KY State Fair</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>September</u></b> Beer Style(s):Oktoberfest Activities:AShville Beer Festival</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>October</u></b> Beer Style(s):Irish Red Ale Activities:</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>November</u></b> Beer Style(s):Stout Activities:Thanksgiving Potluck</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>December</u></b> Beer Style(s):Old Ales, Barley wine Activities:Christmas gift exchange</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>January</u></b> Beer Style(s):Brown Ale Activities:</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>February</u></b> Beer Style(s):Bitter Activities:</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>March</u></b> Beer Style(s):Oatmeal Stout Activities:Spring Brewoff</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>April</u></b> Beer Style(s):Belgium Strong Ale Activities:</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>May</u></b> Beer Style(s):Maibock Activities:</p>

On a subject closer to hand. The WUKY BB&B Committee (Bryan Richardson, Mark L Roberts, Morgan, Tim and Tony) will be meeting with Gail Bennet, Marketing Director on June 25 to see what we are getting into and how much we can add to this summer's Blues, Brews and Barbeque to be held Saturday, August 2. Rumor has it Marcia Ball may be the musical guest. If she is, there will be some dancing.

So keep your calendars clear. We need all the beer-educated volunteer servers we can muster. I personally am excited to think that folks asking questions about beer at the beer tasting portion might get informed responses that increase their interest in this wonderful, traditional and ever-changing beverage.

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