

P R I S O N C I T Y B R E W E R S

# SENTENCING

## GUIDE

Issue #96

January 2006

### Meeting Location!!

Did someone say Belgians? I'm in for hosting! Not to say that I'll be tapping a keg of Spaten, but I'm liable to have a few beauties in the basement. The Poison Frog Home Brewery is on Jackson's south side. See the map on the back page for directions.



### Next Beer Meeting is Tues., Jan. 9th

Big Beautiful Belgians is a Club-Only competitive style. That's all of category 18 (A-E) in the BJCP style guidelines. So bring some of your own to enter if you have some, or bring some commercial examples. There are lots to choose from.

**Please bring your own glass and some munchies to share.**

Feel free to give and accept constructive criticism on ciders you're sampling. Knowing what you did right and wrong is all part of making better beer.

Please observe good judgment when imbibing and don't drive while intoxicated. And be especially careful driving

### Meeting Date/Style 2nd Tuesdays 7:30

- \*Denotes AHA Club-Only Competition
- Jan - Big Beautiful Belgians\*, Cat.18 - Phil
- Feb - Brown Ale - Jim Hegedus
- Mar - 10 Amer. Ale, Cat.10\* - Chilson's
- Apr - Extract Beers\* - Travoli
- May - Smoke & Wood-aged - Gier
- Jun - Belgian & French
- July - 24-26 Meading\*! - O'conner's
- Aug - Light Lager -
- Sept - Stout, Cat.13\* -
- Oct - Specialty & O'Fest -
- Nov - Light Hybrid Beer, Cat. 6\* -
- Dec - Strong Ale -

Extremely popular with teenagers:  
Belgian Roulette



## Belgians

Does that word scare you? Does it bring to mind foul tasting fruit and mouth-drying sourness? It doesn't have too. No group of beers is more diverse in flavor, color, or alcohol level than Belgian beers.

This month we will exclude those funky-tasting fruit lambics and explore the five higher alcohol categories of Belgian Blond Ale, Belgian Dubbel, Belgian Tripel, Belgian Golden Strong Ale and Belgian Dark Strong Ale.

Extra water, extra munchies and extra drivers are *strongly* suggested for this meeting.

### 2005 Great Lakes Olde World Syder Competition

A Big Success!



A celebration of fermented beverages made with the addition of apples/pears.

This was two competitions in one. One division for commercially produced products and one division for noncommercial products made at home.

Forty five commercial entries from three countries and 68 homebrewed entries were judged on a snowy Sunday afternoon at the Founders Brewery in Grand Rapids on December 11th.

Best of Show went to Uncle John's Fruit House Winery in St. Johns, MI. for their Farm House Perry. They had six medals in total. The next highest tally was three shared by Black Star Farms, from Suttons Bay, MI and Aepeltreow Winery, Burlington, WI.

Best of Show for the homebrewers went to Gary Awdey for his common cider made with mostly Golden Russets. Jeff Carlson placed two medals, a Gold Medal for his Westside Raspberry Cider, a Bronze for his Maple Hill Cider and a Honorable Mention for his Peach Ridge Cider. Phil Wilcox brought home a Gold medal for his Kylie's Spiced Cyser. Other award winning familiars include John Applegarth, Eric Fouch and Scott Day.

# Brewing in Style

## 18. BELGIAN STRONG ALE

The following guidelines were developed by the Beer Judge Certification Program (BJCP)

### 18A. Belgian Blond Ale

**Aroma:** Light earthy or spicy hop nose, along with a lightly sweet pils malt character. Shows a subtle yeast character that may include spicy phenolics, perfumy or honey-like alcohol, or yeasty, fruity esters (commonly orange-like or lemony). Light sweetness that may have a candisugar-like character. Subtle yet complex.

**Appearance:** Light to deep gold color. Generally very clear. Large, dense, and creamy white to off-white head. Good head retention with Belgian lace.

**Flavor:** Smooth, light to moderate pils malt sweetness initially, but finishes medium-dry to dry with some smooth alcohol becoming evident in the aftertaste. Medium hop and alcohol bitterness to balance. Light hop flavor, can be spicy or earthy. Very soft yeast character (esters and alcohols, which are sometimes perfumy or orange/lemon-like). Light spicy phenolics optional. Some candi sugar or honey-like sweetness on palate.

**Mouthfeel:** Medium-high to high carbonation, can give mouth-filling bubbly sensation. Medium body. Light to moderate alcohol warmth, but smooth. Can be somewhat creamy.

**Overall Impression:** A moderate-strength golden ale that has a subtle Belgian complexity, slightly sweet flavor, and dry finish.

**History:** Relatively recent development to further appeal to European Pils drinkers, becoming more popular as it is widely marketed and distributed.

**Comments:** Similar strength as a dubbel, similar character as a Belgian Strong Golden Ale or Tripel, although a bit sweeter and not as bitter. Often has an almost lager-like character, which gives it a cleaner profile in comparison to the other styles. Belgians use the term “Blond,” while the French spell it “Blonde.”

**Ingredients:** Belgian pils malt, aromatic malts, candi sugar or sucrose, Belgian yeast strains that produce complex alcohol, phenolics and perfumy esters, noble, Styrian Goldings or East Kent Goldings hops. No spices are traditionally used, although the ingredients and fermentation by-products may give an impression of spicing (often reminiscent of oranges or lemons).

**Vital Statistics:** OG: 1.062 – 1.075  
IBUs: 20 – 30 FG: 1.008 – 1.016  
SRM: 4 – 6 ABV: 6 – 7.5% (6.5 – 7% is most typical)

**Commercial Examples:** Leffe Blond, Affligem Blond, La Trappe (Koningshoeven) Blond, Grimbergen Blond, Val-Dieu Blond, Straffe Hendrik Blonde, Paten Lieven Blond Abbey Ale.

### 18B. Belgian Dubbel

**Aroma:** Complex, rich malty sweetness; malt may have hints of chocolate, caramel and/or toast (but never roasted or burnt aromas). Moderate fruity esters (usually including raisins and plums, sometimes also dried cherries). Rarely esters will include banana or apple. Spicy phenols and higher alcohols are common (may include light clove and spice, peppery, rose-like and/or perfumy notes). Spicy qualities can be moderate to very low. Alcohol, if present, is soft and never hot or solventy. A small number of examples may include a low noble hop aroma, but hops are usually absent. No diacetyl.

**Appearance:** Dark amber to copper in color, with an attractive reddish depth of color. Generally clear. Large, dense, and long-lasting creamy off-white head.

**Flavor:** Similar qualities as aroma. Rich, complex medium to medium-full malty sweetness on the palate yet finishes moderately dry. Complex malt, ester, alcohol and phenol interplay (raising flavors are common; dried fruit flavors are welcome; clove-like spiciness is optional). Balance is always toward the malt. Medium-low bitterness that doesn't persist into the finish. Low noble hop flavor is optional and not usually present. No diacetyl. Should not be as malty as a bock and should not have crystal malt-type sweetness. No spices.

**Mouthfeel:** Medium-full body. Medium-high carbonation, which can influence the perception of body. Low alcohol warmth. Smooth, never hot or solventy.

**Overall Impression:** A deep reddish, moderately strong, malty, complex Belgian ale.

**History:** Originated at monasteries in the Middle Ages, and was revived in the mid-1800s after the Napoleonic era.

**Ingredients:** Belgian yeast strains prone to production of higher alcohols, esters, and phenolics are commonly used. Soft water. Complex grain bill: Belgian pils or pale base malt, Munich-type malts for maltness, Special B for raisin flavors, CaraMunich for dried fruit flavors, other specialty grains for character. Dark candi sugar for color and rum-raisin flavors. Noble-type, English-type or Styrian Goldings hops commonly used. No spices.

**Vital Statistics:** OG: 1.062 – 1.075  
IBUs: 15 – 25 FG: 1.010 – 1.018  
SRM: 10 – 14 ABV: 6 – 7.5% (6.5 – 7% is most typical)

**Commercial Examples:** Westmalle Dubbel, La Trappe Dubbel, Corsendonk Abbey Brown Ale, Grimbergen Double, Affligem Dubbel, Chimay Premiere (Red), New Belgium Abbey Belgian Style Ale, Duinen Dubbel, Stoudts Abbey Double Ale, St. Feuillien Brune.

### 18C. Belgian Tripel

**Aroma:** Complex with moderate to significant spiciness, moderate fruity esters and low alcohol and hop aromas. Generous spicy, peppery, sometimes clove-like phenols. Esters are often reminiscent of citrus fruits such as oranges, but may sometimes have a slight banana character. A low yet distinctive spicy, floral, sometimes perfumy hop character is usually found. Alcohols are soft, spicy and low in intensity. No hot alcohol or solventy aromas. The malt character is light. No diacetyl.

**Appearance:** Deep yellow to deep gold in color. Good clarity. Effervescent. Long-lasting, creamy, rocky, white head resulting in characteristic “Belgian lace” on the glass as it fades.

**Flavor:** Marriage of spicy, fruity and alcohol flavors supported by a soft malt character. Low to moderate phenols are peppery in character. Esters are reminiscent of citrus fruit such as orange or sometimes lemon. A low to moderate spicy hop character is usually found. Alcohols are soft, spicy, often a bit sweet and low in intensity. Bitterness is typically medium to high from a combination of hop bitterness and yeast-produced phenolics. Substantial carbonation and bitterness lends a dry finish with a moderately bitter aftertaste. No diacetyl.

**Mouthfeel:** Medium-light to medium body, although lighter than the substantial gravity would suggest (thanks to candi sugar and high carbonation). High alcohol content adds a pleasant creaminess but little to no obvious warming sensation. No hot alcohol or solventy character. Always effervescent. Never astringent.

**Overall Impression:** Strongly resembles a Strong Golden Ale but slightly darker and somewhat fuller-bodied.

**History:** Originally developed at the Trappist monastery at Westmalle.

**Comments:** High in alcohol but does not taste strongly of alcohol. The best examples are sneaky, not obvious. High carbonation helps to bring out the many flavors and to increase the perception of a dry finish.

**Ingredients:** The light color and relatively light body for a beer of this strength are the result of using pilsner malt and up to 20% white candi sugar (sucrose). Noble hops or Styrian Goldings are commonly used. Belgian yeast strains are used – those that produce fruity esters, spicy phenolics and higher alcohols – often aided by slightly warmer fermentation temperatures.

**Vital Statistics:** OG: 1.075 – 1.085  
IBUs: 25 – 38 FG: 1.010 – 1.016  
SRM: 4.5 – 6 ABV: 7.5 – 9%

**Commercial Examples:** Westmalle Tripel, La Trappe Tripel, Chimay Cinq Cents (White), St. Bernardus Tripel, Affligem Tripel, Grimbergen Tripel, Witkap Pater Tripel, Corsendonk Abbey Pale Ale, St. Feuillien Tripel, New Belgium Trippel, Unibroue La Fin du Monde, Val-Dieu Triple, Brooklyn Triple, Dragonmead Final Absolution.

### 18D. Belgian Golden Strong Ale

**Aroma:** Complex with significant fruity esters, moderate spiciness and low to moderate alcohol and hop aromas. Esters are reminiscent of lighter fruits such as pears, oranges or apples. Moderate spicy, peppery phenols. A lot to moderate yet distinctive perfumy, floral hop character is often present. Alcohols are soft, spicy, perfumy and low-to-moderate in intensity. No hot alcohol or solventy aromas. The malt character is light. No diacetyl.

**Appearance:** Yellow to medium gold in color. Good clarity. Effervescent. Massive, long-lasting, rocky, often beady, white head resulting in characteristic “Belgian lace” on the glass as it fades.

**Flavor:** Marriage of fruity, spicy and alcohol flavors supported by a soft malt character. Esters are reminiscent of pears, oranges or apples. Low to moderate phenols are peppery in character. A low to moderate spicy hop character is often present. Alcohols are soft, spicy, often a bit sweet and are low-to-moderate in intensity. Bitterness is typically medium to high from a combination of hop bitterness and yeast-produced phenolics. Substantial carbonation and bitterness leads to a dry finish with a low to moderately bitter after-taste. No diacetyl.

**Mouthfeel:** Light to medium body, although lighter than the substantial gravity would suggest (thanks to candi sugar and high carbonation). Smooth but noticeable alcohol warmth. No hot alcohol or solventy character. Always effervescent. Never astringent.

**Overall Impression:** A golden, complex, effervescent, strong Belgian-style ale.

**History:** Originally developed by the Moortgat brewery after WWII as a response to the growing popularity of Pilsner beers.

**Comments:** Strongly resembles a Tripel, but may be even paler, lighter-bodied and even crisper and drier. References to the devil are included in the names of many commercial examples of this style, referring to their potent alcoholic strength and as a tribute to the original example (Duvel). The best examples are complex and delicate. High carbonation helps to bring out the many flavors and to increase the perception of a dry finish.

**Ingredients:** The light color and relatively light body for a beer of this strength are the result of using pilsner malt and up to 20% white candi sugar (sucrose). Noble hops or Styrian Goldings are commonly used. Belgian yeast strains are

used – those that produce fruity esters, spicy phenolics and higher alcohols – often aided by slightly warmer fermentation temperatures.

**Vital Statistics:** OG: 1.070 – 1.095  
IBUs: 25 – 35 FG: 1.010 – 1.016  
SRM: 4 – 6 ABV: 7.5 – 10%

**Commercial Examples:** Duvel, Hapkin, Lucifer, Brigand, Judas, Delirium Tremens, Dulle Teve, Avery Salvation, North Coast Pranzster, Unibroue Eau Benite.

### 18E. Belgian Dark Strong Ale

**Aroma:** Complex, with a rich malty sweetness, significant esters and alcohol, and an optional light to moderate spiciness. The malt is rich and strong, and can have a Munich-type quality with an occasional caramel, toast and/or bready aroma. The fruity esters are strong to moderately low, and can contain raisin, plum, dried cherry, fig or prune notes. Spicy phenols may be present, but usually have a peppery quality not clove-like. Alcohols are soft, spicy, perfumy and/or rose-like, and are low to moderate in intensity. Hops are not usually present (but a very low noble hop aroma is acceptable). Nodiacytyl. No dark/roast malt aroma. No hot alcohols or solventy aromas. No recognizable spice additions.

**Appearance:** Light coppery-red to deep coppery-brown in color. Huge, dense, moussy, persistent cream- to light tan-colored head. Can be clear to somewhat hazy.

**Flavor:** Similar to aroma (same malt, ester, phenol, alcohol, hop and spice comments apply to flavor as well). Moderately malty or sweet on palate. Finish is variable depending on interpretation (authentic Trappist versions are moderately dry to dry, Abbey versions can be medium-dry to sweet). Low bitterness for a beer of this strength; alcohol provides some of the balance to the malt. Sweeter and more full-bodied beers will have a higher bitterness level to balance. Almost all versions are malty in the balance, although a few are lightly bitter. The complex and varied flavors should blend smoothly and harmoniously.

**Mouthfeel:** High carbonation but no carbonic acid “bite.” Smooth but noticeable alcohol warmth. Body can be variable depending on interpretation (authentic Trappist versions tend to be medium-light to medium, while Abbey-style beers can be quite full and creamy).

**Overall Impression:** A dark, very rich, complex, very strong Belgian ale. Complex, rich, smooth and dangerous.

**History:** Most versions are unique in character reflecting characteristics of individual breweries.

**Comments:** Authentic Trappist versions tend to be drier than Abbey versions, which can be rather sweet and full-bodied. Higher bitterness is allowable in Abbey-style beers with a higher FG. Barleywine-type beers (e.g. Scaldis/Bush, La Trappe Quadrupel, Weyerbacher QUAD)

and Spiced/Christmas-type beers (e.g. N°ice Chouffe, Affligem Noël) should be entered in the Belgian Specialty category, not this category.

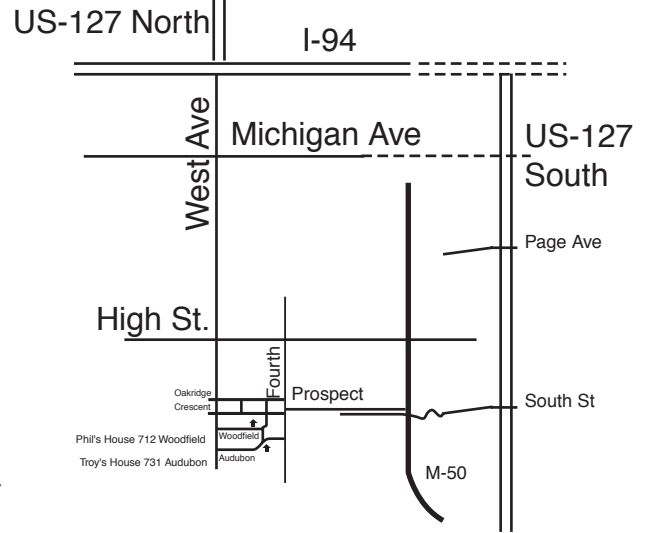
**Ingredients:** Belgian yeast strains prone to production of higher alcohols, esters, and sometimes phenolics are commonly used. Soft water. Complex grain bill: Belgian pils or pale base malt, Munich-type malts for maltiness, other Belgian specialty grains for character. Candi sugar to lighten body and to add color and flavor (if dark candi is used). Noble-type, English-type or Styrian Goldings hops commonly used. Spices generally not used; if used, keep subtle and in the background. Avoid US/UK crystal type malts (these provide the wrong type of sweetness).

**Vital Statistics:** OG: 1.075 – 1.110+  
IBUs: 15 – 25+ FG: 1.010 – 1.024  
SRM: 14 – 20 ABV: 8 – 12%+

**Commercial Examples:** Rochefort 10 (blue cap), Westvleteren 12 (yellow cap), Chimay Grande Reserve (Blue), Rochefort 8 (green cap), St. Bernardus Abt 12, Gouden Carolus Grand Cru of the Emperor, Abbaye des Rocs Grand Cru, Gulden Draak, Kasteelbier Bière du Chateau Donker.

# This Month's Meeting is at Phil Wilcox's House!

The easiest way to get to Phil's house is from West Ave. This is the main north/south street in town. From the north side of town or I-94/127N, take West Ave. all the way through town and hang a left on Woodfield. It's the fourth to last house on the left side of the only block. Feel free to park out front or on the side street. 712 Woodfield is the address. 796-0569 is the phone if you get lost. If you live south of town, you need to remember that Woodfield doesn't go through to Fourth. Take the left on Audubon and go down a block to Briarcliff and hang a right. This will take you to Woodfield—just four houses up from the corner is Phil's house.



## Brewing Equipment For Sale!

Former member Harry Sabourin is getting rid of his brewing stuff. Call him at (517) 788-2360 for more details.



Please bring your club *Zymurgy* magazines back to each meeting. Others would like to read about what is going on in the beer world. If you just can't part with it, back issues are available through the AHA. Or see Phil for a discount on your own membership.



Visit us on the Internet: <http://hbd.org/prisoner!!!!>

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# BREWERS



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