

The
MEANTIME
College Beer
Club

Beer No.5
April 2011
Lovibond's XXXX

9.12% ABV 17 EBC 63 EBU

File Under 'Old Recipe'

Your Notes:

The Brewmaster's Notes

The use of 100% Barley Malt in this 9.12% ABV beer gives Lovibond's XXXX the unmistakable characteristics of a quintessential English Strong Pale Ale. This month's is a cross between a Pale English Barley Wine and an Imperial India Pale Ale, showing off the best of British brewing skill and brewing materials.

British barley malt has long been renowned for being the richest malted barley in the world. The perfect maritime climate, cool, moist and sunny (perfect if you are *Hordeum vulgare* rather than *Homo sapiens* that is) all helps the plump barleycorns create high starch/protein ratios, which ultimately means that during the malting and brewing process the sugars of the grain are readily released, in generous quantities, to form the 'wort' the beer is fermented from. If this beer were a wine it would be given a Grand Cru classification and lauded around the world as the finest vintage of this 'special grape'. So, similarly, in the beer world we see it as the epitome of the coming together of our brewing heritage and tradition, and the finest brewing ingredients known. This applies equally to both malt and hop.

Warming alcohol fruit flavours, almond, sultanas, dried fruit and spice flavours are balanced by the very assertive bittering hop. Flavours of Madeira, orange, peppermint, dried apricot all come and go as the beer changes temperature in a glass in your hand. Fruit esters and aromas are typical of a beer fermented at warm temperatures.

Orange and spice can be attributed to the use of Golding hops.

In full malt brews of this strength the intensity of barley sugar can be perceived as cloying. With this in mind the bittering hop is essential to help balance the impact of the malt richness and in turn it increases complexity. Historically speaking the hop was also the main weapon in the brewers arsenal to guard against infection, and is typically used in large quantities in India Pale Ales, where the beer was required to survive a journey by sea to India. The hops in this beer are mainly English, but in times of hop shortages (diseases such as 'wilt' were common in the days prior to fertiliser) American hops would be imported. Today American hops from Washington state are prized as the most aromatic and intense hops in the world. Some of this strength of character is evident in this brew.

A beer like this has been aged for at least three months and will improve in the bottle over time.



Alastair Hook
Brewmaster

Lovibond's XXXX

Historical Notes

The **April beer** is a strong ale taken from Lovibonds brewing log of 1864, which belongs to beer historian Ron Pattinson, and is as close to the original as we can make it.

To replicate the white malt mentioned we have used a mixture of Maris Otter and Pilsner malt. The recipe refers to American hops and, to many people's surprise, an unusually large quantity of American hops - usually Californian - were found in English beers during the nineteenth century as the explosion in bitter beer drinking following the 1830s stretched domestic supply to the full. In those days varieties were not referred to and brewers' logs tended to only list the supplier, so we have to take an educated guess as to which of today's varieties would be most like those then available. Accordingly we have settled on Cluster as our American bittering hop and, much more easily, on Golding as our Kentish aroma variety. The hop rate is high.



Lovibond's brewed this beer on October 7th 1864 for release at Christmas 1864 (Christmas is specifically referred to on the brewing record.

Our version was brewed on 16/17th February 2011, meaning it has a comparable aging period, and so should be a passable representation of the original article.

It was a parti-gyle of XXXX and their standard X Ale. The ingredients and their cost were as follows.



Lovibond's original Greenwich premises are still standing and, happily, still functioning in the drinks trade as a branch of Davy's. The building overlooks Greenwich DLR and mainline stations.

10.5 quarters of white malt	£33 1s 6d
40 lbs American hops	£1
30 lbs Mid Kent hops	£2
40 lbs Kent hops	£2 13s 4d
Total cost	£38 13s 10d

There were three worts at 40 (1111°), 26 (1072°) and 6.4 (1018°) pounds per barrel gravity. The X Ale only contained the last two. The yield from the brew was as follows.

17.5 barrels XXXX

24.75 barrels X

On the 7th October the brewer recorded the facts that the air temperature was 45° F, Bar 30.25, humidity 80, wind NE with rain. Again this was the custom as brews were much more susceptible to atmospheric conditions than today, in particular the boil was affected by barometric pressure. The fermentation was fairly cool, not getting warmer than 57° F (a positively lagerish 13.9°C), and consequently took until 20th October.