

# Rubber Chicken



January 2024

## Planning Your Year!

### Monthly Competitions

One down, ten more to go. As many of you know, our main events are our monthly meeting and pre-determined beer style competitions. This month's Specialty IPA had nine competitors including a White IPA, a Black IPA, a Corn IPA, a Wheat IPA, and multiple Rye IPA's. Using the Beauty Pageant (active members vote for top three) the third-place winner was Greg Sanial, second-place winner was Rick Kruse, and first-place winner was Bill Smith. See the [Primetime Brewers Website](#) for overall scores for this year's Brewer of the Year competition.

See the following chart for the rest of the year's dates and styles:

Month	Date *	Category	Style	Judging
January	1/17	21b	Specialty IPA	BC
February	2/21	17c	Wee Heavy	BJCP
March	3/20	C2b	Cider w/other Fruit	BC
April	4/17	31a	Alternative Grain Beer (Gluten Free)	BJCP
May	5/15	2	International Lager	BJCP
June	6/19	-	Beer and food Pairing	BC
July	7/17	27	Kentucky Common	BJCP
August	8/21	X4	Catharina Sour	BC
September	9/18	20c	Imperial Stout	BJCP
October	10/16	6a	Marzen	BJCP
November	11/20	26c	Belgian Triple	BJCP
December	TBD	-	No Comp. Christmas Party	

Other competitions:

[AHA/BJCP Sanctioned Competition Program](#)

West Michigan Homebrew Competitions and Judging via Facebook

*"Fermentation may have been a greater discovery than fire."*

David Rains Wallace



## Wee Heavy 17C

### February Beer Style

BJCP Guidelines:

History: Wee Heavy is descended from Edinburgh Ales, is a stronger malty beer brewed in a range of strengths and is similar to Burton Ale (although at half the hopping rate). Modern versions have two main variants, a more modest 5% ABV beer and the more widely known 8-9% ABV beer. As gravities decreased over times, some of the variations ceased to be produced.

Characteristic Ingredients: Scottish pale ale malt, a wide range of other ingredients are possible, including adjuncts. Some may use crystal malt or darker grains for color. No peat-smoked malt.

Commercial Examples: Belhaven Wee Heavy, Broughton Old Jock, McEwan's Scotch Ale, Orkney Skull Splitter, Traquair House Ale, The Duck-Rabbit Wee Heavy Scotch-Style Ale

# Beer Notes - Water

## *Newbies*

I asked myself what was one of the first things I learned via the club that impacted my beer quality the most. The first topic I would like to share is water set up. Yes, this is something we expect our brewers to still work on, but there are definitely some first steps, when you are brewing your first batches, that can greatly impact your final product. Know your water. Is it hard? Is it soft? Is it city water? Is it well water? Being a city boy, I had to deal with what the city puts in my water. I was able to make a few batches that I really enjoyed but my first attempt at a Wit Beer was awful. Chlorine can produce some biproducts that leave your beer medicinal due to chlorophenols. Adding Campden tablets and filling your kettle the night before usually removes chlorine and chloramine. I fill two kettles with 5 gallons each and add ½ tablet of Campden in each one. I also add 1 tsp of Calcium Chloride and Gypsum to each one. Next step for me is to start adjusting the salt based on style, always more to learn.

## *Oldies*

Ok, you've had your water tested or requested a report from your local water company. Some of you just skip the report and Reverse Osmosis the water to strip it of all ions. Either way the goal is to adjust your water to fit the style of beer you're working on.

Downloading a water calculator like [EZWaterCalculator](#) or using an online tool like the one in [Brewer's Friend](#) can help with creating the perfect beer. Keep an eye on the pH levels you get from the different waters you use. Do this by taking some of the mash and cooling it off and using a pH meter to see how acidic/basic the beer is. You can adjust with lactic acid or phosphoric acid to lower the pH.

Please understand that I'm not an expert but am starting to work on the water recipe and measuring pH. I will share my learning as I go, but please know we have great people in our club that are always willing to help.



## **Primetime Brewers**

We are the OG club. We have the most experience. We have the most history. We have the most connections. We are the most social.