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IN SEARCH OF THE WHITE WHALE





John Hansell
John Hansell writes about beer, wine and spirits. He is the creator, publisher and editor of *Malt Advocate*, a magazine for the whisky enthusiast



Stephen Beaumont
Once described as "beerdom's Brillat-Savarin," Stephen Beaumont is the author of five books and countless articles on beer, spirits, food, travel and how it all goes together

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BEERS FROM AROUND



Barley Wine

Dock Street Brewing Co., Philadelphia, PA

Dock Street Brewing Co. was founded in Philadelphia in 1985, the first microbrewery in the City of Brotherly Love. This barley wine has been aged in Pinot Noir barrels for 10 months, hand-bottled and bottle conditioned.

ABV: 10.5	AVAILABLE: PA
ABW: N/A	
COLOR: DARK	
BITTERNESS: 76	
ORIGINAL GRAVITY: 1101	

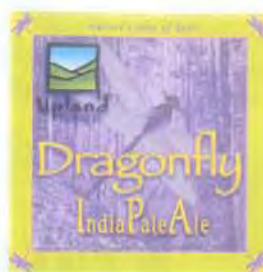
HANSELL: I can smell and taste the oak from the barrel-aging in this dark and murky beer, but it blends in nicely with the rest of flavors: burnt raisin, cherry pits, light molasses, plum, fig and over-ripe Clementine—all leading to a dry, burnt black licorice, charred oak finish that keeps the sweetness in check. It's thick, viscous and not very carbonated, but that was on purpose. Sip in a snifter, no colder than cellar temperature.

BEAUMONT: I hadn't noticed the "barrel-aged" descriptive on the label before I opened and poured this beer, but I certainly recognized it after one sniff. Which is not to say that this is an oak bomb, because it certainly is not. In fact, what oaky notes do exist in the nose (and body, for that matter) are very well integrated with the beer, much as they would be in a studiously barrel-aged wine. There are hints of vanilla, of course, but more so raisins and barely burnt cocoa and faint black licorice. In the body, more raisin and prune, roasted walnut, cinnamon, vanilla and a growing hop presence that meshes well with the alcoholic heat. Big bottle, big beer, fit for sharing slowly with a special someone in front of the fire.

Dragonfly IPA

Upland Brewing Co., Bloomington, IN

Upland Brewing Co. has been brewing beer in Bloomington, IN since 1998. The name "Upland" comes from the Norman and Crawford Uplands, the name geologists give this area of Indiana, where glaciers advanced and retreated, resulting in a region of rugged, heavily wooded hills and hollows.



ABV: 6.5	AVAILABLE: IN, KY, WI
ABW: 5.07	
COLOR: 10	
BITTERNESS: 40	
ORIGINAL GRAVITY: 1062	

HANSELL: Very floral, with orange marmalade, caramel, subtle pine needles and ginger. These notes follow through on the palate, with the caramel and honey-kissed malt to the fore and a steadily building tannic hop bitterness that lingers on the finish. Not as malty as some IPAs I've tasted, but that bold hop finish has "IPA" written all over it.

BEAUMONT: Do dragonflies sting? I don't think so, and neither does this slightly hazy, dark copper-colored ale, which is not necessarily a bad thing, especially if you prize balance over straight-on hop assault in an IPA. The nose is fragrant and fruity with notes of caramel, peach and sweet citrus, while the body begins with a gentle fruity sweetness before developing a more aggressively hoppy bitterness as the beer coasts from the front to the back of the palate. The finishing touch is a lingering, lemon pith-ish bitter tang. Serve chilled, in dragonfly season, with a side order of salty peanuts.



Railyard Ale

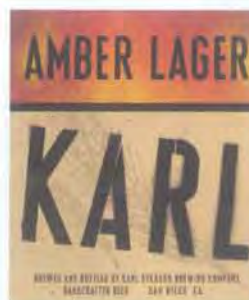
Wynkoop Brewing Co., Denver, CO

The Wynkoop Brewing Co. is Denver's oldest brewpub and one of the busiest in the country. It was founded in 1988, is housed in the glorious J. S. Brown Mercantile Building. The founder, a geologist named John Hickenlooper, is now the mayor of Denver.

ABV: 5.2	AVAILABLE: CO
ABW: 4.1	
COLOR: LIGHT AMBER	
BITTERNESS: 18	
ORIGINAL GRAVITY: 1051	

HANSELL: A very approachable beer. Well-balanced too. And in cans! With its (smooth, toasty, biscuity) caramel maltiness, hop bitterness in check, gentle fruitiness, and relatively tame alcohol level, it's a thirst quenching beer too! But don't expect this beer to awe you. That was never its intent. It's happy playing second fiddle to other things grabbing your attention. (For me, that means it's in my cooler on my boat, fishing on a warm summer day.)

BEAUMONT: I've been long familiar with this beer from trips to Denver, but only on tap, never in a can. The appearance is a familiar orangey-brown, and the dry, nutty and faintly tannic nose rings a bell, too. Likewise, I'm taken back to my last visit by the ale's dry maltiness, Macintosh apple fruitiness and nutty hop leading to a mildly bitter, just faintly toffee-ish finish. An excellent job translating the Wynkoop experience into a can and a fine choice for stuffed pork tenderloin.



Amber Lager

Karl Strauss Brewing Co., San Diego, CA

Karl Strauss was born into a brewing family in Minden, Germany. He studied brewing at the University of Munich-Weihenstephan, home of the oldest brewery in the world. Strauss emigrated to the United States in 1939, where he worked for the Pabst Brewing Co. After retirement, he helped his cousin, Chris, open a microbrewery in San Diego.

ABV: 4.2	AVAILABLE: CA
ABW: 3.5	
COLOR: 15	
BITTERNESS: 16	
ORIGINAL GRAVITY: 1048	

HANSELL: Only 4.2% ABV, so this one's a quaffer. And it's pretty straight-forward: malty, with some caramel, delicate malted milk balls, and a hint of fig. Light, gentle caramel on the finish. Fill up a liter mug with it, give me a huge, warm soft pretzel with spicy mustard, a baseball game to watch, and I won't even care who wins.

BEAUMONT: The neck label of this lager advertises it as having a "rich caramel maltiness," which I would say from the first sniff of this deep copper colored is likely true. I get off-dry caramel with a touch of smokiness on the nose, along with a hint of hazelnut. In the body, there is ample sweetness for such a light beer, more than a bit reminiscent of caramel, and notes of toasted walnut and hazelnut, leading to a finish that stays sweet and a tad cloying. Accessible to the hop-phobic, perhaps, but I'd like a little more bitterness for balance and dryness.