

Brew Notes

By Pete Reid, editor of *Modern Brewery Age*; with regular panelists Gregg Glaser, editor of *Yankee Brew News*, and Tom Conti and Robert Lachman of the *Yankee Brew News* tasting panel. Joining us each week is a rotating cast of tasters, to include Dr. Steve Victor, formerly of Yale University; Lieut. Von Bair, USN, ret.; expat-Briton Gerry Nicholls, graphic designer Phil Simpson, videographer Paul Lin; Neil Balkun, beer buyer for Ancona's Wines & Liquors, Redding, CT, Greg Zannella, field sales director for Northeast Beverage of Orange, CT, and Michael Anstendig, a writer for *New York Magazine* on-line. Since taste is subjective, we include descriptive comments from each taster. We rate a top beer in each tasting, and rank it "Five Mugs." Beers that are almost on the same plane are "highly recommended" and get four mugs. Other beers are recommended based on their strong points, but don't get a mug rating.



= Top beer of the tasting, superb in every respect.

Permission is hereby granted to excerpt any comments for promotional purposes.

Jubilate Organic Dark Lager Pinkus Brewery Munster, Germany Imported by MDV



Superb

This beer was created by the Pinkus Brewery in 1966 to celebrate the company's 150th anniversary. The brewers reportedly wanted to produce a beer that hearkened back to the dark lagers of the early 19th century. Although it has been produced as a specialty beer for the German market since then, it was first imported into the U.S. in September.

This is a very simple, straightforward dark lager. Our panel likes overstated beers as much as the next bunch of beer geeks, but there is something to be said for the subtle charms of a beer this perfectly balanced and drinkable.

"An aroma of rich sweet maltiness," said Gregg Glaser. "I love this."

"It has a freshness to it, and the maltiness seems to build as you drink it," said Dr. Victor.

"Yummy," said Greg Zannella, "Not overly sweet, but perfectly balanced." "A little light on hops if you're used to American crafts, but this is really nice," said Phil Simpson.

"Nice malt flavor, it's an easy drinking beer," said Gregg G. "Finishes well, with malt and dryness."



Pinkus Jubilate is a very simple, very subtle, very perfect dark German lager.

Redhook Longhammer Redhook Ale Brewery Portsmouth, NH



Highly Recommended

We had not intended to review this beer, but there was some in the fridge, so the panelists shared a couple before the tasting session.

"I don't remember Redhook ales being this good," said Dr. Victor.

"Resiny hop aroma," said Greg Zannella. "Very light in appearance for such a hoppy ale."

"Nice fresh hop flavor," said Von. "It's like they strained this through hops. This is more than dry-hopped."

"Awesome," said Tom Conti. "Very late hop addition. Very nice."

Sam Adams Imperial Pilsner Boston Beer Co. Boston, MA

Go to the Beer Advocate site, and they are raving about this beer. But our panel holds Samuel Adams Imperial Pilsner to a higher standard. Our hopheads usually froth at the mouth when they drink this beer. But while this year's version is certainly an impressively strong and hoppy pils, our tasters said it couldn't compare to the Imperial Pilsners of previous years.

BBC had said they wouldn't be making the Imperial Pilsner due to the hop shortage, but they obviously came up with a prodigious quantity for this brew. It is hoppy for certain, but tasters were underwhelmed by the actual character of that hoppiness. Maybe we are parsing too fine, since 15 years ago many of us would have sold our first born for a beer like this, but there it is.

"Flowery hop aroma," said Gregg Glaser. "but not as bright and fresh as in the past."

"This was my favorite beer in the whole world, and they screwed it up," said Tom Conti. "The hops don't seem fresh. Disappointing."

"I don't find very drinkable," agreed Phil Simpson.

"Notable fusel alcohols, and unpleasant bitterness," Von Bair said.

"Not as good as I remember it," said Greg Zannella.

Samples for tasting can be sent to:
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