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VOLUME 7 | ISSUE 11 | April 2020

These Pink Boots were made for BREWING



Backstreet Brewery's Pink Boots Collaboration Brew Day

Photo provided by Pink Boots Society OC Chapter

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COVER STORY

THESE PINK BOOTS WERE MADE FOR BREWING

by David Mulvihill



Anaheim Brewery's Pink Boots Collaboration Brew Day
All photos provided by Pink Boots Society OC Chapter

Seven Orange County breweries participated in this year's Pink Boots Collaboration Brew Days, which took place on and around International Women's Day on March 8.

First, some info about the origin and development of PBCBD: The idea for what began as International Women's Collaboration Brew Day (IWCBD) came from the UK's Sophie De Ronde, head brewer at Burnt Mill Brewery in Suffolk. She and other members of Project Venus (a UK based female brewers association) would regularly get together for collaboration brews. With the help of the U.S. based Pink Boots Society, the idea of taking these collaborative efforts global, as a way of promoting and building relations between women in the brewing industry, became a reality. International Women's Day was decided upon as the logical date to mark the event, first held on March 8, 2014.

Since that time it has morphed into Pink Boots Collaboration Brew Day (PBCBD). Pink Boots Society members come together every year (typically on or around March 8) at breweries around the world to support, encourage, bring awareness to and raise funds for women to advance their careers in the brewing industry. A portion of the proceeds from sales of "Unite" collaboration beers goes to fund educational scholarships for Pink Boots Society members.

A partnership with Yakima Chief Hops was formed in 2018. Each year, during the Great American Beer Festival in Denver, a new hop blend is chosen/ created by PBS Members, which YCH scales up for purchase. YCH in-turn donates \$3 from every pound sold to the Pink Boots Society for further funding of education and programming. Please support Pink Boots Society members by enjoying these beers wherever your beer travels bring you.

During this year's Orange County brew days, I met with PBS OC Chapter member Mary Jane "MJ" S. Doddridge to get the run down on the Pink Boots Collaboration brews that took place in OC. She attended six of the seven Orange County brew days in addition to others around the Southland. MJ is an avid craft beer enthusiast, who first found out about the Pink Boots Society from Anaheim's Barbara Gerovac. She is currently part of the Gamecraft Brewing (Support Droid) team and is Finance Liaison for Pink Boots Society Orange County Chapter.

Beers were brewed in at least seven OC breweries and would have been flowing at area tap houses and the breweries that participated this year if not for the COVID-19 crisis. The 2020 PB/YCH hop blend (chosen by over 100 Pink Boots members) consists of one part Azacca, one part El Dorado, two parts Idaho Gem, and two parts Loral hops, a mix that will reportedly exude tropical, citrus and piney qualities. It seems to be especially suited for IPA, given that all six of the OC breweries that used this year's hop mix made some form of IPA.

Anaheim Brewery's owner/brewer and Pink Boots member Barbara Gerovac, staff and PBS members participated in brewing this year's rendition of Unite Belgian Tripel on March 4. They utilized the 2018 YCH blend that has worked so-well in the Belgian-style tripel formulation in past years. In



Gamecraft Brewing's Pink Boots Collaboration Brew Day

addition to benefitting Pink Boots Society, a portion of Anaheim's Unite proceeds will also go to the Orange County Family Justice Center and its efforts that support the community.

Backstreet Brewery in Anaheim provided a unique twist for their brew day. In addition to inviting Pink Boots Society members to participate in the March 5 brew, BSB had the wonderful idea of including the next generation of potential brewers. Backstreet's PBCBD also became Teach Your Daughter to Brew Day. Utilizing the PBS/YCH 2020 hop blend and choice Vienna malts, Baby Boots IPA was created in a collaboration of brewers Tim Barro & Bob Weden, as well as the daughters and ladies of BSB and PBS-OC.

On March 6, in Laguna Hills, Gamecraft Brewing's head brewer Andrew Moy hosted the Pink Boots OC and the group brewed Unplanned Variable, a 6.1% ABV hazy IPA. The beer was released for offsite purchase and consumption on March 24. It was originally named as a tribute to The Outer Worlds (an action role playing game) and to the brewing process, where things don't always go according to plan. Adjustments and adaptation are necessary when unplanned variables come into play. Released in the midst of the COVID-19 chaos, the name took on additional meaning.



Lost Wind Brewing's Pink Boots Collaboration Brew Day
Photo provided by Lost Winds Brewing Co.



Riip Beer Co's Pink Boots Collaboration Brew Day



Stereo Brewing's Pink Boots Collaboration Brew Day
All photos provided by Pink Boots Society OC Chapter

At Karl Strauss Brewing in Anaheim, Jarrod Davis and the brewers and women from Karl Strauss Anaheim, Costa Mesa and Los Angeles gathered with Pink Boots members at KS Anaheim on March 5 to brew a Hazy IPA.

Lost Winds Brewing in San Clemente hosted the PBS women on March 3 and brewed Pink Boots Hazy Double IPA with head brewer Brandon Winneker.

Then, on Saturday, March 7, OC Pink



Riip Beer Co's PBCBD: Head Brewer Ian McCall and Pink Boot's OC's Mary Jane S. Doddridge

Boots Chapter members arrived in full force to take part in Riip Beer Co's IPA brew day in Huntington Beach. Head brewer Ian McCall was outfitted with at least one "pink boot" during their brew. Still on the mend, he displayed his Pink Boots spirit by sporting a pink cast on his left foot. Staying with the theme, Cast a Pink Shadow (West Coast IPA) was brewed.

International Women's Day, March 8, was the Pink Boots brew day at Stereo Brewing in Placentia. Owner/brewer Rick Smets and assistant brewer Dylan Macsata assisted the ladies of Stereo and Pink Boots OC to brew Rebel Rebel Haze, a David Bowie-inspired hazy IPA.

While most breweries had release parties planned for late March and early April, the unplanned COVID-19 variable has affected most of those initial plans. In the meantime, if you see any Pink Boots Collaboration Brew Day beers on any of your local brewery to-go lists, be sure to order, support and enjoy via social distancing.

Stay safe, stay strong and think pink!

Beer Paper's newly minted OC Columnist David Mulvihill thirsts to experience and promote the best of what craft beer has to offer. He also covers Southern California for SoCal Food & Beverage Professional Magazine and provides business-side support (reporting, excise tax, policies & personnel) to local breweries and brewers guilds. david@socalcraftbeer.com.

FEATURED ARTICLE

THE LABEL DESIGN PROCESS

by Sean Inman

Imagine if your favorite artist was reduced to a canvas 5" x 8" in size. Then subtract from that, more space, that is taken up with governmental warnings and other required information as well as a barcode. Would they be able to design an eye-catching label that was both pretty and functional?

To get answers to that question, I e-mailed with beer writer, brand designer and beer label designer Kelly Erickson, co-owner of Craft Media Solutions in Los Angeles, on how the whole process works up to the point where that first label is stuck to the can or glued to the bottle.

BEER PAPER: How does the process of designing a label work with a brewery? How much leeway do you have? What is the back and forth like?

ERICKSON: We dedicate a considerable amount of time to brand discovery when we first start working with a client. Like most small businesses, not many breweries have the resources to develop brand strategy when they first get started, so we often find that they are thinking about the larger picture of their brand for the first time. We talk about the company's core values and ethos and how they would like to be visually represented, but also how they would like the customer to experience their product or brand. Once we've established the brand roadmap, we start talking details about each label - sometimes even participating in the brainstorming of the beer names themselves.

In the design process, I really take my time creating multiple concepts that are as complete as possible and that provide vastly different options to choose from. The amount of creative license I have for each label really depends on the brewery - I have one client that has a pre-determined template and style, and another that is more interested in more wild, out-of-the-box designs. Sometimes I knock it out of the park in the first round of concepts, and others require multiple revisions before getting approval. So,



Kelly Erickson

it depends on the client and my level of design inspiration! I try to tap into their mindset but also keep in mind that the customer experience is very important if they want the product to sell. With how competitive shelf space is, and the amount of visual noise you see in the IPA section, achieving brand vs. consumer purchase behavior is our biggest challenge.

BEER PAPER: What information do you get before you start working on a label?

ERICKSON: In addition to those

overall brand elements, I make sure we are on the same page with the overall "look and feel" or theme of the product. For instance, there is a new series of Dry River Brewing bottles coming out that feature photographs of parts of the LA River (which has been part of the brand story since the beginning) but are more architectural focused than what they had previously done. They want to tell a story of this urban river and a stark contrast between concrete and nature. It's a very different style of art from what I've been doing for LA Ale Works,

which are 16oz.cans but they also have a brand style that's more illustration-driven; so from them I get the beer name and style, and maybe an example of what they like before I start on the concepts.

BEER PAPER: What do beer consumers NOT know about the difficulty in designing for a consumer product?

ERICKSON: You have to think three-dimensionally when designing a product like beer labels - and that can be challenging! I make sure to print



Scrappy, LA Ale Works

Photo Credit: Kelly Erickson

out my concepts and make physical mockups to ensure each line of text or graphical element is where it needs to be. I even take those mockups to a local beer store, put them on the shelf and make sure I like how it sits. You want to make sure important design elements (like important text - ABV, etc) aren't being covered up by a shelf or price tag holder, and that the colors or layout stand out next to competitors.

There are also so many legal details you have to include when designing consumer products - something I learned about in my first graphic design job many, many years ago producing private labels for a grocery store chain. If you want to get label approval, you have to consider font sizes, legibility and other required statements including brewery location, alcohol warnings, fluid ounces, etc. You'd be surprised at how many breweries forget to put these required items on their packaging, some even forget to put on a UPC code.

Preparing files for press is also quite challenging, particularly if you're doing custom print jobs with spot UV or foil stamping. I was just working on a piece that has multiple layers of opaque white elements in the background, so that some of the printing on the label looks clear (so you see the can shining through) and other elements have different gradients of color with a bit of metallic from the can. It's hard to explain but even harder to picture when you have this layered Illustrator file in front of you. But methods like that end up producing a unique label that stands

out on the shelf but doesn't require expensive printing processes.

You also have to send these labels in about 3-4 weeks in advance, so it does take a lot of preparation and planning to make sure the beer release aligns with your printer's schedules.

BEER PAPER: Do you prefer a can or bottle? And do you like a 12 oz or a 16oz?

ERICKSON: Depends on the style! Sours typically sell better in bottles, while the lagers and ales tend to do better packaged in cans. I prefer 12oz cans when I'm drinking alone, but 16oz cans have so much more room to play with when I'm designing them.

BEER PAPER: Any Easter Eggs planted in the artwork?

ERICKSON: A while back I was watching (for the second time) the Netflix documentary about the Fyre Festival when I texted Kip of LA Ale Works about doing a label for it since it was such a huge part of the zeitgeist at the time. As a result, Orange Crushed Dreams was born, with a label that mimicked the orange tile (that was used by the festival in a viral marketing attempt) and it looked just like a screen capture of an Instagram post. The LA Ale Works team actually created an Instagram account that was printed on the label called @pabloescobarsisland and was posting on that account using similar imagery used by Fyre Festival. It was probably the most fun can release marketing I participated in - even if it didn't go crazy viral!

As for the rest of the labels I produce, they pretty much all have a story behind them whether it's a throwback from my childhood or an experience of my clients. I'm trying not to be too gimmicky but I'm also not ashamed if one or two slips through.

BEER PAPER: What label(s) would you like to "re-design" or "re-think"?

ERICKSON: There are so many great labels out there BUT I'd love to have a crack at any label that portrays women or people of color in misogynistic or racist ways. I would like to see more labels celebrating women not as objects but in positions of success and celebration and power, or as just a person. For instance, Bottle Logic's Recursion IPA label portrays a female scientist who is not over-sexualized and is just one example of how you can put women on your label without objectifying them. It's not that hard!

BEER PAPER: What labels have you done and what do you have coming?

ERICKSON: While I'm excited to start pitching some collaborations with other breweries around Southern California and beyond, I have a couple of clients I'm doing consistent work with. Scrappalicious Juicy IPA just came out of LA Ale Works, which features a custom illustration of their brewery cat Scrappy. I'm looking forward to seeing a new version of the Sum Sum label, a summer ale with a very summery vibe in the design. We had some really great success with Shoulder Pads last year - a very purple, 90s inspired theme I did for the Pink Boots brew. This year's Shoulder Pads has a slightly different design, which I'll tweak each year but maintain the same overall concept. Lastly, new Dry River's bottles should be hitting the shelves soon and I really recommend grabbing some of those - the Saison (called Ex Materia) is really tasting amazing!

Sean Inman has been writing about craft beer in Los Angeles since 2009. His daily beer posts are on the Beer Search Party blog. He also writes a monthly beer column for Food GPS.



Shoulder Pads, Juicy IPA

Photo Credit: Kelly Erickson

OPINION

THE IDES OF MARCH

by David Mulvihill

Beware the Ides of March. On Sunday, March 15, California's Governor Newsom held a press conference focused on managing COVID-19, the virus that has affected how we are currently living our lives. The following statement made during the conference was especially pertinent to multitudes in the beer and brewing industry, as well as restaurants and bars.

Governor Newsom: "We are directing that all bars, nightclubs, wineries, brewpubs and the like be closed in the State of California. We believe that this is a non-essential function in our state and we believe that it is appropriate under the circumstances to move in that direction."

After watching and listening to the entire press conference, realizing that the above directive would affect so many people in an industry that I have grown very close to, I was seriously concerned. The unfolding threat of COVID-19 was relatively new to us all at time and the directive gave rise to strong questions. Were basic rights of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness being challenged? While it's obvious (to most) that alcoholic beverages aren't by themselves life-sustaining, didn't the powers-that-be understand people's jobs and small businesses are? On the surface this statement inferred that thousands of small businesses and thousands of jobs Californians perform for a living are non-essential functions. Livelihoods depend on these "non-essential functions" as does California's economy.

Following, are a few statistics on just one of these non-essential segments (from the CA Craft Brewers Association). The Craft Brewing Industry supports more than 61,335 jobs across our state. As of October, 2019 there were 1,039 craft breweries in CA. They contributed over \$9.01 billion to the state's economy in 2018.

Overcoming Challenges

In the days that followed it became more apparent that increased distancing and isolation would be necessary by every individual and



BeerToGo: Just a few of the many Southland to-go selections for supporting your local breweries.

Photo Credit: David Mulvihill

business in order to kick virus butt. Restaurants that, for a few days, were allowed to remain open in most locales, were also required to close. To-go sales would now be the only option for restaurants, pubs, breweries, and bars. Note that the California ABC also stepped up on March 19, in light of the crisis and in favor of the businesses it licenses, by instituting Regulatory Relief from restrictions on things like off-site sales and deliveries by on-site licensees.

Given this column's focus on beer, let's return to the breweries and brewpubs and their ongoing efforts to stay in business, one growler, crowler, six-pack or four-pack at a time. Local breweries and brewpubs quickly rallied to change the way they conducted their daily business. Social media presence was increased to communicate and promote sales for *offsite* consumption, including home deliveries. Package deals and quantity discounts have also been offered by many brewers as further incentive for increased sales. Many brewers enhanced pre-order ability through partnering with ordering apps and websites (toasttab.com; Toast TakeOut app, etc.). Loyal customers and patrons began individual efforts and quests to support their local breweries. Purchases and spreading of the word commenced. The necessary closing of taprooms and restaurants meant most staff were laid off or furloughed.

I stopped by Artifex (San Clemente) on March 17 for a crowler fill and found owners Nicholas Cordato and Johnny Johur toasting and bidding a hopefully short farewell to their sales and tasting room staff members. A few days later, when picking up some preordered crows, I witnessed a strangely different sort of *deja vu* that brought me back to the time period when Nicholas and Johnny were running the brewery sans employees in the early days of Artifex. They, as most owners and brewers across California, the U.S. and the world are looking to do whatever they can to weather this storm and come out the other side intact.

Joining the Effort

Please do whatever you can to assist in the efforts to support our local breweries and businesses. In addition to ordering beer for pickup, consider purchasing gift cards and merchandise. Any financial help brewers receive today will aid in their continuance after this mess is behind us.

And, every little bit does help. The Brown Family's Savagewood Brewing in San Diego recently reported the following. "We did the math. [The sale of] Just 40 cans a day will keep the lights on and beer flowing. So please tell your friends!"

El Segundo Brewing experienced such an overwhelming response in beer

orders that it had to adjust its same-day order pickup to next-day pickup.

Distilleries and breweries across the nation are also cooperating in a temporary shift to manufacture hand sanitizer. One example: Blinking Owl Distillery in Santa Ana has contacted and placed social media calls out to local brewers for mash and/or batches of beer that could be distilled for making hand sanitizer: "Local BREWERIES, come partner! We need mashes faster than we can make them for hand sanitizer. Let's Talk! If you have any bad batches, we can distill it immediately for hand sanitizer and keep your breweries producing! Let's make this a community effort to meet the insane demand."

Many uncertainties still exist at the time of this writing on March 21; six days that have seemed like an eternity. There's comfort in knowing that we, as family, friends, neighbors, associates and residents are here to provide whatever help and support we can to assure a fruitful tomorrow.

Addendum

I had to chuckle when seeing a recent post from a friend that contained a photo of a card Molson Coors representatives presently carry in conducting their daily work: "I am an employee of Molson Coors Beverage Company. We provide multiple "Essential Businesses" including grocery stores, convenient stores and restaurants with supplies necessary for their operation. As a result, we are an "Essential Business" and I am allowed to travel to and from work under the existing public health order."

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