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DYNAMIC DUO LAUNCHES TO CRITICAL ACCLAIM



Jon Chiusano and Jerrod Larsen

Photo Credit: Tony Betancourt

by Daniel Drennon

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[full cover story online]

PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL BREWERY

NEW BREWERIES

SO CAL OPENINGS IN THE MIDST OF COVID

by David Mulvihill

Despite the increased restrictions imposed by California's State, County and Municipal leaders during this pandemic, new breweries have opened in Southern California.

Relative to the recently revamped State of California imposed Blueprint for a Safer Economy, at press time San Diego and Orange Counties were in Tier 2. Tier 2 allows breweries to open for onsite service outdoors, and indoors at 25% of normal capacity, with distancing requirements and food purchase required. Orange County had just entered Tier 2. While Los Angeles County remained in Tier 1, its COVID-related numbers were continuing an improving trend. On the State level, breweries in Tier 1 are allowed to open for onsite consumption outdoors, as long as the meal requirement is

met, either via an onsite restaurant or 3rd-party provider. Unfortunately for L.A. County, its Board of Supervisors hadn't allowed breweries without in-house restaurants to open. At press time a reprieve had been announced, with word that L.A. County stand-alone breweries could be open for outside onsite service by October 6th.

Orange County

At least five new breweries have opened in Orange County.

Bearded Tang

Now open for onsite consumption, Stanton's Bearded Tang Brewing began its introduction to the brew-thirsty community via a couple of weekends of drive through sales, beginning on September 3rd.



Bearded Tang filling new crowlers

Photo Credit: Tony Betancourt



Bearded Tang Brewing Team (l-r) Brandon Smith, Jen Sullivan, Jon Chiusano, Jerrod Larson
Photo Credit: Coastal Bear Creative (@coastalbearcreative)

Enthusiasts came out in record numbers to get a taste of Bearded Tang's first brews. They included (Cali)bration, a crisp and refreshingly hopped blonde (the first beer brewed on the new system), Tank'd West Coast IPA, a hazy IPA, and Peach Blvd fruited wheat. Saddletail, a hoppy red ale, was added for week two. The Bearded Tang Team includes co-founder Brandon Smith, Jonathan Chiusano, Director of Brewing Operations, and Jerrod Larsen, Head Brewer. OC beer fans likely know Jon and his award winning beer from his years as an integral part of the TAPS brewing team. Larsen comes to Bearded Tang from his tenured post at Tustin Brewing Co. With 24 taps to fill, this winning team plans to provide a wide assortment of quality lagers and ales.

Bearded Tang is located in the Rodeo 39 Public Market, on Beach Blvd., just north of the 22 Freeway. Once open onsite, Bearded Tang brews will be able to be enjoyed alongside an assortment of artisanal food vendors that also occupy the market. 12885 Beach Blvd #23, Stanton

The Dog Pawrk

San Juan Capistrano's man's best friend-themed The Dog Pawrk Brewing Co opened its new tasting room's outside patio for onsite consumption on July 3rd. The Dog

Park is teaming with an assortment of food trucks to meet its meal-component requirements. Initial plans, which were postponed, called for opening the main tasting room in September. For now, enjoy Dog Pawrk beer on the temporary patio or in cans and crowlers to go. 27122 Paseo Espada #904, San Juan Capistrano

Broken Timbers

Within the space formerly occupied by Hoparazzi Brewing, Broken Timbers Brewing Company opened in early May. It is located within the same complex as Asylum Brewing and in close proximity to Bottle Logic. Be sure to check the brewery's website or social media for current limited hours (Thurs through Sun at press time). 2910 E La Palma Ave, Anaheim

Flashpoint

Pat & Christy Anderson began brewing in early June and opened their Flashpoint Brewing Company on July 27. It is located in Huntington Beach, just around the corner from Four Sons Brewing. Flashpoint's current tap list shows a variety of ales, lagers, IPAs and seltzers, with 20 taps to eventually fill. 7302 Autopark Dr, Huntington Beach

Modern Times Anaheim

After four years and numerous delays, Modern Times Leisuretown, in

Anaheim, finally opened in late July. Billed as Modern Times Brewery, Restaurant, and Aquatic Party Palace, the sizable (33,000 square foot) compound includes full-scale production brewery, onsite restaurant (with plant-based cuisine) and even a mini-mart for items to-go. Outside spaces include poolside bar (and yes, a pool), beer garden and elevated lounge areas. An additional focal point is the renovated Craftsman home. 549 S. Anaheim Blvd, Anaheim

L.A. County

Despite L.A. County's added restrictions, at least two new breweries were making a "to-go" of it prior to the most recent good news.

Paperback

Housed in a restored Quonset hut in Glendale (on Magnolia, just south of San Fernando Road), Paperback Brewing Company opened for online orders on July 3rd. Brewery stats: 6,000 sq. ft. brewery space includes sizeable taproom, 15-barrel Premier Stainless brewhouse, six 30 and two 60 barrel fermenters. This reporter looks forward to meeting founders Chris Sesnek and Brandon Monroe, and tasting through their catalogue of brews. The beers have fun names and colorful vintage paperback-inspired labels, such as Fancy Pants (German-style kolsch), Hollywood Hellcats (West Coast IPA), Bunny With a Chainsaw (double hazy IPA), and One

Night with Nora (blonde ale).

Heading up their team as head brewer is the well-seasoned David "Zambo" Zamborski. Zambo began his professional brewing career with BJ's before seasoning his craft at 21st Amendment, Speakeasy Ales & Lagers, and Santa Barbara Brewing. 422 Magnolia Ave, Glendale

Cervecería Del Pueblo

Cervecería Del Pueblo, a South American-inspired brewery, situated not far from Old Town Pasadena, began beer sales for offsite consumption at the end of March. Three years in the making, founder Martin Quinones looks forward to the day when his brewery and taproom can open on-premises. 16 ounce cans available to go include: Gaviota, a coffee blonde ale conditioned on Jones Coffee Roasters coffee; Ámbar, amber ale; Curuba, a South American-style fruited tart beer; and Colonia Kölsch-style ale. 141 W Bellevue Dr #100, Pasadena

San Diego County

WestBrew

Vista is home to the new WestBrew. WestBrew's soft opening was scheduled for late September, so its new tasting room should be open by the time you are reading this. WestBrew is the brainchild of Joshua Schreer, an avid homebrewer for many years with familial brewing



Part of WestBrew's new tasting room

Photo Courtesy of WestBrew



BUNNY WITH A CHAINSAW (HALLOWEEN EDITION)

DOUBLE HAZY IPA
IDAHO 7, MOSAIC
8.4% ABV, 48 IBUS

FANCY PANTS

KÖLSCH
TETT NANG
4.8% ABV, 25 IBUS

Paperback Brewing can and label samples
Photo Courtesy of Paperback Brewing

roots. Schreer's Carlsbad based EvergreenCali construction company is very active on the commercial front in San Diego County.

Head Brewer duties are in the capable hands of Cody Gagnon. Gagnon is a graduate of UC San Diego's Master Brewer's program. His previous professional brewing stints include Pizza Port, Mother Earth, Black Market and Karl Strauss.

Look for new beers to begin occupying the tasting room's 28 taps. They will include pilsners, lagers, ales (blonde, pale, IPA, etc.), as well as hard seltzers. 1061 La Mirada Ct, Vista

Craft Coast

Craft Coast Beer and Tacos in Oceanside has also recently opened. This new brewery and taco stand's main focus is on serving up the best in

beer and hand-made tacos. Utilizing fresh and from-scratch ingredients on both fronts, the buzz of positive feedback continues to build. At press time Craft Coast had three house-made beers available: T.H.B (Tasty Honey Blonde), Pierside Pale, and Galactic Dolphin, a hazy double dry-hopped IPA. 275 Mission Ave, Oceanside

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.

COVER STORY

DYNAMIC DUO LAUNCHES TO CRITICAL ACCLAIM AT BEARDED TANG

by Daniel Drennon

A common, and more importantly, smart strategy if you happen to be building a brand new brewery is to find a decorated professional brewer who might be looking to make a move, whether it be for a new challenge or simply a new environment. Since opening a small business, especially in the unfortunate era of COVID, is akin to rolling the proverbial dice, the best way to hedge your bets (and ensure your investment) is to go with a pro.

Brandon Smith, Bearded Tang's founder is an engineer by profession who earned his own stripes in the beer world by opening various Golden Road locations as the project manager before realizing what he really wanted to do was own his own independent brewery making small batch beers. Smith doubled down and hired not one, but two, world class professional brewers: Jon Chiusano, formerly of TAPS, and Jerrod Larsen, formerly of Tustin Brewing Company.

DRENNON: *Jon. You're a co-founder and Director of Brewing Operations. So, please take us through the genesis, formation and recent launch of Bearded Tang.*

CHIUSANO: Brandon and I met early 2019 through a mutual friend in the industry. Seeing this project come to fruition from blue prints has been a very exciting, yet tumultuous experience, especially in the midst of opening a brewery during COVID. The entire concept was founded on the idea that an anchor brewery within a larger marketplace would present a potentially unique experience for our customers upon every visit to our location within Rodeo 39 Public Market. We experienced a number of inevitable construction based delays pre-COVID, but pushing through the buildout during the pandemic was quite an experience. We experienced significant equipment delays for example, including purchasing and rebuilding a used brewhouse, but I wouldn't trade the experience for anything else as I feel that it has made



Jerrod Larsen, Jon Chiusano, and Brandon Smith

Photo Credit: Tony Betancourt

me not only a better brewer, but a more patient human being. Fortunately, we have had the pleasure of working with many breweries around Orange County and Los Angeles in a collaborative fashion, and these industry colleagues have helped us enormously. With the insanity of 2020, finally seeing smiling faces enjoying the beer and general hype around the brewery has made the entirety of the year's difficulties incredibly worthwhile, and has made us strive even further to improve our community and industry.

DRENNON: *How did you settle on your location in Stanton in Orange County?*

SMITH: Stanton was always one of those places where everyone lived but there wasn't that incredible destination. When the opportunity presented itself to join the Rodeo 39 family, it was not a matter of should we do this but instead, let's make

this happen. Stanton holds a different chemistry, one that Rodeo 39 captures in all its 40,000 SF – hard-working, high quality, and creative.

DRENNON: *What size is your brewhouse and what are your short and long-term production goals for Bearded Tang?*

CHIUSANO: We have an oversized 10bbl Specific Mechanical Brewhouse. What is exciting about this particular brewhouse is that it was engineered to create fantastic European style beers through means of decoction and traditional step mashing. Throughout the build, we made the brewhouse ours by adding a number of customizations to the BH that allows it to produce less traditional styles such as NEIPAs. In our design, we placed nine 10bbl Tanks and five 20bbls tanks with the idea of having an ever-revolving tap list, focusing on consistency, variety, and creativity. This amount of cellar

space for such a small brewery (less than 2000 sq ft) allows us to dedicate a portion of our tank space to what we feel are world class lagers out the gate, as well as churn out other clean and balanced styles that are designed to be paired with the food options that Rodeo 39 provides.

DRENNON: *You both became assistant brewers in 2011, Jon at Santa Barbara Brewing and Jerrod at Tustin Brewing. Jon, you brewed for Bottle Logic and later joined the stellar TAPS team of brewers that garnered a remarkable 11 World Beer Cup and Great American Beer Festival medals during your tenure. Please tell us about your learning curve.*

CHIUSANO: I'd say the steepest learning curve I experienced was during my tenure at Bottle Logic, where I finished my coursework through the American Brewers Guild.

Between BL and TAPS, I was held to an extremely high standard of consistency and cleanliness. Each of the locations I have worked at have presented their own unique challenges and separate learning curves. Santa Barbara Brewing Company (RIP) was an incredibly aging and old school brewery that was like caring for an old ship that was always on the verge of sinking. I learned the important skill set of constantly being able to fix and maintain brewery infrastructures. At Bottle Logic, Kyle Manns and I were given a shiny and brand new brewery to work with, where the equipment ran relatively perfectly (in terms of a brewery that is), so I was able to heavily focus on my brewing process, recipe development, barrel aging, forecasting, and management skills, as well as being part of a start up environment. At TAPS, I returned to a more pub environment, but here is where I began to really improve upon my craft with the assistance of an all star team. TAPS has had an incredibly rich history of fantastic brewers, so I was honored to have had a head brewer title from such a reputable organization as well as transition into building out their new Tustin location. Bearded Tang has given me another unique learning curve pertaining starting a brewery from scratch, and the pile of experience I've had from my previous breweries has proven absolutely invaluable.

DRENNON: *Jerrod, you were responsible for a very impressive five World Beer Cup and GABF medals during your nine years at Tustin Brewing Company. What was your learning curve?*

LARSEN: At Tustin Brewing, I was required to brew six core/house beers and keep them on tap at all times. Brewing these same beers over and over, I was able to hone in on my process very fast. When space would allow it, I would brew new recipes and experimental brews. Being in a brewpub setting, I was allowed to experiment with different raw materials on a weekly basis. My time at TBC allowed me to get familiar with a lot of different ingredients and dial in my recipes.

DRENNON: *When and where did you guys meet and how did you, Jon, end up hiring Jerrod to be Bearded Tang's Head Brewer?*

CHIUSANO: Jerrod and I met during my tenure at Bottle Logic when he

came by to pick up some malt. From there, our friendship blossomed and we eventually began to discuss the possibility of working together down the line. The two of us always had a similar approach to brewing and our personalities meshed perfectly, so when the opportunity to hire a head brewer for BTB arose, offering Jerrod the job became a no-brainer.

DRENNON: *You are a critically-acclaimed two-man brewing team, aka the dynamic duo in my book. Your beers have been exceptional right out of the gate, which is rare for a brand new brewery. Explain for those of us who are not brewers what each of your roles are in the brewhouse and how you mesh responsibilities to produce what are, right out of the gate, tasting like world class beer.*

CHIUSANO: I am glad you think that we are the dynamic duo and thank you for the kind words about our early beers. We have an incredible opportunity to utilize both of our knowledge pertaining the craft and our combined twenty years of professional brewing experience, so meshing responsibilities comes quite naturally. Currently, we are splitting roles evenly, though Jerrod and I joke about my administrative responsibilities. We have a great opportunity to utilize our unique past experiences and combine forces to create a dependable craft beer brand.

DRENNON: *Who is responsible for recipe development and formulating the overall tap list?*

CHIUSANO: I have had the lovely/bittersweet opportunity to develop recipes over the last 18 months while the project was in the early brewing phases. COVID presented me a lot of time to stay at home and draft SOPs, potential draft lists, and of course recipes. Though, now that we have been working together for over a month and the learning curve has flattened, we will begin sharing the responsibility more heavily and really rely/lean on each other for creativity.

DRENNON: *What is your process for naming the beers and speaking of naming, explain the choice of Bearded Tang for the brewery?*

CHIUSANO: I have taken pride in my beer names. I keep a notebook with me at all times in the event I hear a funny



Jerrod Larsen

Photo Credit: Tony Betancourt



Jon Chiusano

Photo Credit: Tony Betancourt

(COVER STORY continued)

phrase or name. Pop culture references and puns are the obvious choice, but every now and then I'll hear an accidentally poetic phrase or word that cracks me up and I have to write it down. Lately, Jerrod and I have been coming up with some great names from simple conversation, music, or life experiences. Bearded Tang was chosen as the brewery name prior to my hiring, but I found the brand to be a great platform for beer as it creates a silly and recognizable character which embodies our company: community focused, creative, and obviously fun. The Blue Tang, similar to Dory in "Finding Nemo" was chosen to be our pipe-smoking, mustachioed fish. We have nicknamed him "Fil" (a suggestion that references filling a glass compliments of our brewer pal Ian McCall from Riip Beer Co.). Blue Regal Tangs play important roles in the ecosystem by maintaining the health of coral reefs, and we were inspired by this integral fish that protects its community.

DRENNON: Where do you see Bearded Tang in five years?

CHIUSANO: We are striving to have multiple locations across multiple Rodeo Marketplaces. Most importantly, I see Brandon, Jerrod, and I creating a craft beer brand that is synonymous with quality and community.

SMITH: To echo, Jon, we hope to see multiple Bearded Tang Breweries in similar concepts like what we have at Rodeo 39 Public Market. Multiple small breweries with a high number of fermenters, pumping out fantastic creations, and putting smiles on customers' faces.



Jerrod Larse Bearded Tang neon sign
Photo Credit: Tony Betancourt



Brandon Smith, Jerrod Larsen, Jon Chiusano and Brandon Goodwin

Photo Credit: Tony Betancourt

DRENNON: What knowledge, skills and abilities do you think aspiring brewers need to develop to achieve that lofty status?

CHIUSANO: Put simply, beer is like any other craft, the more you study, the more you understand what you don't know. The importance of becoming exceptional at anything is, I believe, admitting to yourself that you don't know as much as you think you do. Also, don't use too much crystal malt (wink).

DRENNON: What is your own favorite thing about being a professional brewer?



Cone Deaf (wet hopped IPA)
Photo Credit: Tony Betancourt

CHIUSANO: To beat a dead horse, I love the community. I feel at home inside this industry, and I love the countless approaches that can be taken (and learned from colleagues) to make a good beer. Having something tangible that I can enjoy, and see others enjoy, keeps me motivated to create and share memorable experiences through the canvas of beer.

LARSEN: It's nice to see people really enjoy the beers that we brew. I enjoy being a part of the whole process. Start to finish, grain to glass.

DRENNON: And then what is your least favorite thing?

CHIUSANO: In jest, probably people asking me if I "just drink beer all day." No, I clean and use Ekos all day.

LARSEN: I'd have to agree with Jon. People assume that brewers just drink all day. Also, I despise dirty glassware.

DRENNON: We all despise dirty glassware! If you were not brewers, what would you guys be?

CHIUSANO: I fell in love with brewing because of the balance between manual labor, science, and creativity/artistry. I have a difficult time imagining myself in another role that could fancy each of those three criteria, but in all likelihood, I would probably go into civil or electrical

engineering.

LARSEN: Before I was a brewer I was in Dental Ceramics. So, if brewing beer had never piqued my interest I probably would be still be involved in the Dental Arts in some way.

DRENNON: Which is more important: Work ethic or talent?

CHIUSANO: There is no talent without work ethic. Talent can be molded with work ethic. Without a work ethic, one is stagnant.

LARSEN: Definitely work ethic. You have to have that in order to get through an endless grueling work week. Talent comes with getting the experience.

DRENNON: Please describe yourself in one word or phrase.

LARSEN: Ambitious.

CHIUSANO: Sapere Aude.

DRENNON: I had to look that one up and love it. Readers: If you don't know it, your homework assignment is to look it up, too. Let's all learn a cool Latin phrase!