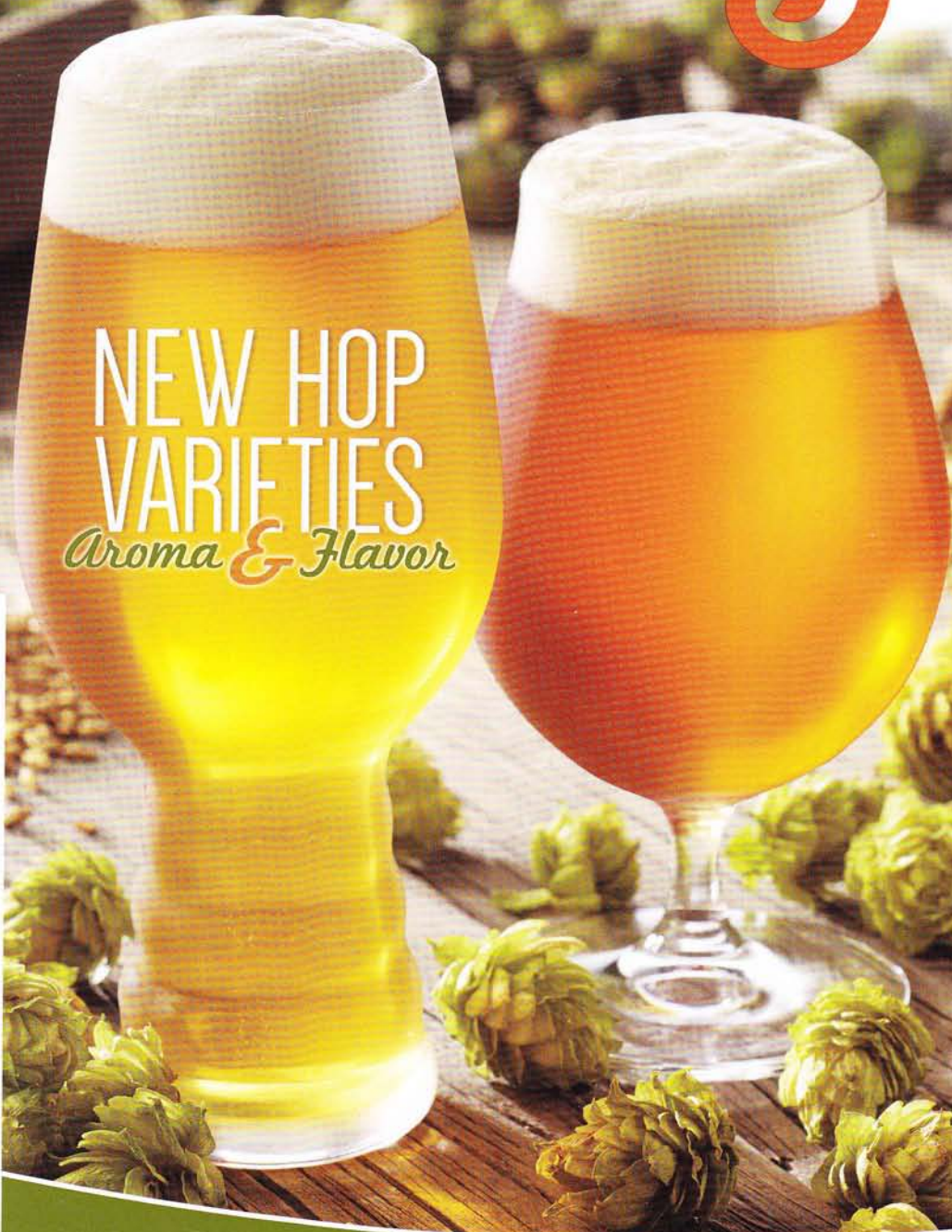


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# HOMEBREWING IN POLAND

BY STAN HIERONYMUS

In June 2013, a five-judge panel from Austria, Belgium, England, Germany, and the United States chose an imperial IPA as grand champion of Poland's largest homebrew contest, Konkurs Piw Domowych Birofilia. On December 6, the Zywiec Brewery released Brackie Grand Champion Birofilia 2013 Imperial IPA, made using homebrew competition winner Czeslaw Dzielak's recipe and distributed throughout Poland. The style originated in America.

In July 2013, judges who gathered in Boston chose two winners in the Samuel Adams LongShot Homebrew Contest. Boston Beer Company brewed those two beers, along with one using a recipe from an in-house competition, and distributed them nationwide in 2014. One of those beers was based on a recipe by Chicagoan Cesar Marron for a style known as Grätzer or Grodziskie. It originated in the Polish town of Grodzisk.

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**Call it cross-pollination  
of beer cultures  
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As in much of the rest of the world, homebrewing is booming in Poland. The 2014 contest run by the Polish Home Brewers Association (Polskie Stowarzyszenie Piwowarów Domowych, or PSPD) attracted 782 entries, an increase of more than 75 percent from the year before. The PSPD, started by 24 homebrewers in 2010, now has more than 500 members in eight local branches.

That's considerably different than 1998. Volker Quante, now a colonel in the German army responsible for the military's satellite communications systems, was a soldier about to begin a three-year assignment in Warsaw. A newcomer to making beer at home, he asked on Homebrew Digest if there were any homebrewers in Poland or Warsaw. He received one answer. Andrzej Sadownik wrote back, "If you arrive here, we'll already be a party of two!"

Quante and Sadownik brewed beer together, and occasionally visited breweries, Quante said, basically begging for ingredients because there was no place for homebrewers to acquire them.

Sadownik had been introduced to homebrewing in 1994 when he spent a year as a research assistant in the chemistry department at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pa. Czeslaw Perun, a member of the local Polish community, demonstrated the finer points of the hobby. Sadownik admitted, "[Perun] seduced me with the quality and beauty of his homebrew" and then insisted Sadownik learn himself, lending him the necessary equipment. "The first brew was an instant success as well as the following six others," Sadownik said.

When he returned to Poland he was determined to "propagate in my country the hobby which gives so much joy and



Homerewer Jacek Kocurek in his Master Brewer apron, awarded to champion brewers in the Birofilia Festival by Zywiec.

Photos courtesy of Stan Hieronymus



Czeslaw Dzieiak draws a pint of his grand champion Imperial IPA at the rollout party in December 2013.

pride and which simultaneously seems to be a powerful educational tool." Others refer to him as the "father of homebrewing in Poland" but he defers. "My role here has just been a transmitter between the USA and Poland," he said, crediting Perun and Charlie Papazian's *The New Complete Joy of Homebrewing*.

An American influence is evident. For instance, the most entered category in the 2014 Konkurs Piw Domowych (Homemade Beer Contest) was Cascadian Dark Ale. A few months after an American "I am a Home Brewer" video was posted on YouTube in 2009, Polish homebrewers collaborated to make their own, "Jestem Piwowarem Domowym" (with English subtitles). However, it would be most accurate to conclude they are joining Americans—as well as Czechs, Scandinavians, Brazilians, and others—rather than following them.

### JUDGING BEER

The PSPD has established its own beer judging program, similar to the Beer Judge Certification Program (BJCP) but with interesting differences. (Three Poles are members of the BJCP, including

Tomasz Rogaczewski, who sought out an English tutor when he prepared for the exam. Rogaczewski is also co-founder of Pracownia Piwa, the second craft brewery opened in Poland by homebrewers.) They've written their own style guidelines, created their own process for certifying judges, and fashioned their own scoring system.

Judges must first take part in two days of theoretical and sensory training and then pass an exam (and they must renew their certification regularly, taking the sensory test again). Judges advance from C, the beginning level, to B, and theoretically (because no one has done it yet) to A based on judging experience, accruing points as in the BJCP, and by taking additional theoretical and sensory exams. Sensory training is a cornerstone of the program.

Almost everybody who has entered a beer into competition is familiar with the BJCP scoresheet that allots 12 points for aroma, 3 for appearance, 20 for flavor, 5 for mouthfeel, and 10 for overall impression. The Polish criteria put more emphasis on appearance and bitterness. Aroma is

worth 12 points, color 3, foam (including the structure and quality) 6, flavor 17, bitterness (intensity and quality) 6, and mouthfeel 6. Although judges are expected to comment on overall impression, there is no point value.

"Bitterness is the element that makes beer special," said Krzysztof Lechowski, who served on the committee to write the guidelines and succeeded Sadownik as PSPD president. He calculates that taste accounts for 58 percent of the score in the Polish system, aroma 24 percent, and appearance 18 percent. On the BJCP scoresheet, taste is 63 percent (of the 40 points not assigned to overall impression), aroma 30 percent, and appearance 8 percent (these total 101 because of rounding). How the 10 "overall impression" points (20 percent of the total score) are allocated depends on each judge.

### BEYOND THE TIPPING POINT

Sadownik and Quante met Ziemowit Falat not long after they began brewing together. Falat and some friends had started a magazine for beer enthusiasts in 1997, *Piwosz Ilustrowany* (beer-lover

illustrated). The scope of the magazine expanded in 1998 after Sadownik wrote, "Juz pora zaczynac warzenie domowe." ("It's time to start homebrewing.") Quante also provided fodder, writing about the brewing process and providing pictures of his rather simple equipment. "This started a movement which none of us had expected," Quante said.

Falat and his partners first used their magazine to sell brewing supplies to homebrewers in 2000, then opened Browamator in 2002, initially as a shop for homebrewers. Browamator began selling ingredients to commercial breweries in 2004 and now those sales account for about 70 percent of business. Falat wrote and published the first guide for Polish homebrewers in 2004 and sold 4,000 copies during the next four years.

Browamator organized the first Konkurs Piw Domowych at Zywiec in 2003, and Sadowick established the rules, running the contest with the help of his wife, Anna. Unlike most competitions in the United States, this one does not include all styles. The homebrewers announce which styles—in 2014 there were 10—will be featured about six months in advance.

The Zywiec Brewery in the town of the same name in southwestern Poland began brewing and distributing the grand champion beer in 2009, and in 2010 established the Bifolia Festival with homebrewing as a major component. It is held on the grounds of the expansive brewery, and includes one of the largest gatherings of breweriana collectors in Europe, booths with regional food, and more than 600 beers along the "World Beer Avenue." Select homebrewers

pour their beer in a tent where there are demonstrations throughout the day and live music later on.

Brewers earn the right to pour beer by winning in previous competitions at Zywiec. They also receive aprons from Zywiec with the name of their home brewery, their own name, and a tagline that reads "Mistrz Piwowar" (Master Brewer).

"I'd like to emphasize the role of Grupa Zywiec (a subsidiary of Heineken) in establishing the association," Sadownik said. "I believe it was the first time ever that a big brewing company gave substantial help to homebrewers. I don't think the association could have been established in 2010 without the helping hand of Heineken's Chris Barrow (the president of Grupa Zywiec at that time)."

## IMPERIAL IPA

When Czeslaw Dzielak's Imperial IPA won best of show at Bifolia 2013, none of the other homebrewers appeared surprised. Tomasz Rogaczewski, co-founder of Pracownia Piwa, explained that was because everybody expected Dzielak would have won years before. He began brewing in 2008 and his champion Imperial IPA was the 288th batch he brewed. His 338th batch, a dubbel,

earned him a second straight grand champion award at Bifolia 2014.

The 32-year-old Dzielak teaches history and physical education at a secondary technical school. He's written a business plan and acquired some of the necessary licensing, but still needs investor financing if he is to open his own brewery. Should he succeed, the

other competitors in Polish homebrew contests may well be as happy about it as he is.

Dzielak's original Imperial IPA recipe was for 51 liters, which he split in half for fermentation and dry hopping. The percentage of each of the fermentables is slightly different in this 5.5 gallon recipe, which assumes 75 percent efficiency.

### INGREDIENTS

for 5.5 U.S. gallons (20.82 L)

<b>10.0 lb</b>	(4.5 kg) Pilsner malt
<b>1.5 lb</b>	(0.68 kg) wheat malt
<b>1.5 lb</b>	(0.68 kg) 10° L Munich malt
<b>0.4 lb</b>	(181 g) 60° L Cara-Gold malt
<b>1.0 lb</b>	(0.45 kg) sugar
<b>1.125 oz</b>	(32 g) Magnum, 14.5% a.a. (60 min)
<b>0.7 oz</b>	(20 g) Zeus/Columbus, 14.2% a.a. (30 min)
<b>0.7 oz</b>	(20 g) Simcoe, 11.9% a.a. (20 min)
<b>0.7 oz</b>	(20 g) Citra, 12.7% a.a. (15 min)
<b>0.7 oz</b>	(20 g) Centennial, 10.0% a.a. (10 min)
<b>0.7 oz</b>	(20 g) Ahtanum, 5% a.a. (5 min)
<b>0.7 oz</b>	(20 g) Amarillo, 10.1% a.a. (2 min)
<b>0.7 oz</b>	(20 g) Simcoe, 11.9% a.a. (1 min)
<b>1.4 oz</b>	(40 g) Zeus/Columbus, 14.2% a.a. (dry)
<b>1.4 oz</b>	(40 g) Citra, 11.9% a.a. (dry)
<b>1.4 oz</b>	(40 g) Amarillo, 10.1% a.a. (dry)
<b>1.4 oz</b>	(40 g) Simcoe, 11.9% a.a. (dry)
<b>Wyeast</b>	1056 American Ale yeast

**Original Specific Gravity:** 1.076

**Final Specific Gravity:** 1.014

**Boiling Time:** 80 minutes

**Primary Fermentation:** 8 days at 66-70° F (19-21° C)

**Secondary Fermentation:** 6 days at 54° F (12° C)

### DIRECTIONS

Dough in with 18 quarts of water at 131° F (55° C). Heat 17 minutes to 150.6-151.7° F (65.9-66.5° C), rest for 45 minutes. Heat 7 minutes to 159.8-161.6° F (71-72° C), rest for 15 minutes. Heat 6 minutes to 169-170° F (76-77° C). Lauter. After boiling, chill to 70° F (21° C) and pitch. After primary fermentation, dry hop for six days at 54° F (12° C). Carbonate to 2 volumes CO<sub>2</sub>.

### EXTRACT VERSION

Substitute 8 lb (3.63 kg) pilsner malt extract syrup for pilsner malt, 1 lb 3 oz (540 g) Munich malt extract syrup for Munich malt and 1 lb 3 oz (540 g) wheat malt extract syrup for wheat malt. Omit Cara-Gold malt. Dissolve extracts and sugar completely and proceed with boil.

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“There are many more ‘craft’ pubs,  
and they are crowded every week.  
They are sucking up every barrel of  
beer that [the brewers] can produce.”

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— Piotr Wypych, Browar Arzezan

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## THE REVIVAL OF GRODZISKIE (GRÄTZER)

Both Sadownik and Quante are members of the commission founded in 2011 by PSPD to revive Piwo Grodziskie (also known as Grätzer). Brewing originated in the town of Grodzisk in the 16th century, and the unique beer made entirely with oak-smoked wheat malt was sold around the world as recently as 80 years ago. The last brewery in Grodzisk closed in 1993. Even before the commission was formed, some of its members met in Germany with American Shawn Scott, an avid homebrewer who works on special projects with Choc Beer Company in Krebs, Okla.

As a result, Choc brewed a beer called Signature Grätzer with one of the original yeast strains used to ferment Grodziskie and oak smoked malt from Weyermann® in Germany. Scott wrote about that beer, and included a recipe, in articles that appeared in *The New Brewer* and *Zymurgy*. The one in *Zymurgy* (November/December 2012) inspired Marron to brew his LongShot competition winner. The Choc beer won a silver medal at the 2012 Great American Beer Festival.

In Poland, several recently opened small breweries have made their own versions of Grodziskie. In addition, the principals who revived Browar Fortuna, a regional brewery on the verge of closing, are renovating one of the shuttered breweries in Grodzisk and plan to be brewing there by summer.

## GAINING MOMENTUM

When Darek Doroszkiewicz, Jacek Materski, and Piotr Wypych began selling Browar Arzezan beer in the summer of 2012, they discovered the Polish market was not ready for what they were making. They were the first homebrewers in Poland to open their own small brewery, and they struggled to sell 20 hectoliters (about 17 U.S. barrels) a month.

“The market today is completely different than two years ago,” Wypych wrote via email. “There are many more ‘craft’ pubs, and they are crowded every week. They are sucking up every barrel of beer that [the brewers] can produce.”

The trio began with a five-hectoliter brewhouse, soon expanding it to 10. In September, they took delivery of a new 30-hectoliter brewhouse with fermentation tanks that would boost capacity to 5,000 hectoliters a year. Not surprisingly, several other homebrewers have followed their lead, and still more have indicated they will, too.

“It’s hard to say what the market will look like in three months,” Doroszkiewicz said last June. But he already knew one thing—Arzezan was going to need to make a lot more beer.

**Stan Hieronymus is the author of *Brew Like a Monk, For the Love of Hops*, and *Brewing with Wheat*. He is a frequent contributor to *Zymurgy*.**

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