

## Romancing the Foam No. 125

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I first met Scott Dibble at the 1998 DFL (Democratic Farmer Labor Party - Minnesota's version of democrats) state convention in St. Cloud. He was the Mike Freeman for governor floor person – he ran around with a headset telling people what to do. I learned from sailing that if you paid attention to what the skipper needed and gave him or her what they wanted very rarely would they have you do something you didn't want to do. I noticed early on that Scott wasn't doing things like staying hydrated and eating lunch so I every hour of so I would run over to the local convenience store and pick him up some Gatorade and a sandwich or something. He thought I was wonderful and never asked me to do anything other than what I was already doing. After the convention I worked on his state house campaigns and then his state senate campaigns and part of the work involved marching in the Gay Pride Parades. Scott's sister Kelly is an incredibly creative person and at the time did some things with the Heart of the Beast Puppet Theater – the folks who make giant puppets for the annual May Day Parade and other such things. I told Kelly that under no circumstances would I be a dancing lollipop, so she made me the

maypole. For several years during the Gay Pride Parade I would carry the pole in the picture in a harness with dancing humans in lollipop costumes at the end of each ribbon. Nancy was a lollipop. Scott, his partner and sisters would stand in the bed of a large truck at the head of the procession waving at the crowd.

The Minneapolis Gay Pride parade always struck me as a less inebriated and more joyful pink, lavender and rainbow version of the St. Paul St. Patrick's Day Parade. The best (and only other) gay pride parade I



saw was Amsterdam's in 1999. They hold theirs the first weekend of August and it's a canal parade. I was staying out on Java-eiland and biked into town each day on a different canal. That day I chose the Prinsengracht on my way to Café Johnny's on Elandsgracht. At the head of the canal I started passing more and more bizarre canal boats – boats filled men dressed like Marcel Marceau, men wearing leather outfits

with the butt cheeks cut out, men in drag and ever more interesting canal boats as I passed through town. At Café Johnny's my fellow inebriates informed me that it was the Gay Pride Canal boat parade and it went down Prinsengracht, 2 doors west of where we were sitting. A couple of Italian tourists volunteered to watch the parade and come alert us whenever anything particularly interesting floated by. Every 20 minutes or so the place would empty as we watched another extravagance slowly chug down the canal.

This issue of Romancing the Foam celebrates Gay Pride and wishes all involved a happy weekend and parade. Here are some beverages to try if you are out and about. For starters, try Wild Mind Artisan Ales. Wild Mind specializes in wild, sour, farmhouse, saison and rustic ales and focuses on barrel aging and blending. Their wood cellar has a 550-barrel capacity housing everything from large oak foudres to used white wine, red wine and gin barrels (45 barrels total). Prior to the invention of refrigeration many breweries cooled their brews with coolships – large shallow pans that allowed the beer to cool in the night air. Wild Mind has a coolship in their cellar that allows open-air cooling and fermentation, inoculating the cooling beer with the wild yeasts and microbes that live in the cellar. The head brewer scours the wild fruit bushes, trees and wildflowers of Minnesota harvesting local wild yeast strains. The tasting room is family and dog friendly and there is a patio and courtyard available weather permitting.

Wild Mind is located on Pillsbury Avenue S. just north of 35W and the Crosstown in an Industrial area with filled with construction companies, the Left Foot Academy, a dog day care center, a power mower sales company, industrial steel fabricators, lawn care and similar businesses. Wild Mind's 10 car parking lot fills quickly, and the ubiquitous food truck is parked in the street in front of the brewery. Most of adjacent businesses rely on street parking so if



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you arrive during the neighbors' normal business hours, parking may be scarce.

Wild Mind Artisan Ales Silla (5.5% alcohol by volume) is an example of what they brew and may not be available but they will have plenty more like it. It is an oak age blend of stainless steel and fodder style sour golden beer aged in oak on smoked peaches. The beer has a faint

hint of skunk but peaches and tropical fruit with traces of funk are the dominant aromas with a trace of floral in the background. It pours hazy straw with a thin white film on top. It is tart like a fruity lemonade. The peach is in there, but the smokiness comes across more as an earthiness than smoke. The body is medium light, and the carbonation is medium high. This is an interesting, refreshing very flavorful beer. I rate it 80.



Insight brewing is located on the east end of Hennepin Avenue as it nears St. Paul. The tap room is large and friendly, and their beer selection is interesting. During the summer I especially enjoy their Crazy Aunt, a gin and tonic style ale. It has a big lime, juniper and spice nose with traces of malt in the background. It is hazy gold with

streams of rapidly rising bubbles under a 1.5" off-white cap with fair retention. The attack starts with a hint of lime and by mid tongue it fills the mouth with big lime flavors and traces of spice. While it starts mildly sweet it dries a little on the finish. Hop bitterness is low to medium low and malt flavors are medium low. The lime is the big flavor player but the beer texture has enough heft to keep Crazy Aunt from tasting like an alco-pop. The body is medium light and the carbonation is medium high. Crazy Aunt is light, refreshing and very drinkable.

If you have made it through the parade and you are out in Loring Park and want to get out of the sun, into some air conditioning with a place to sit, wander over to Lakes and Legends Brewing Company. Its two blocks east of Loring park on 1368 Lasalle. They specialize in traditional style beers and beers inspired by Minnesota Ingredients. Their Great Wit North (5.6% alcohol by volume, 23 International Bittering



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Units) may not be available right now but it is a good example of what they brew. It is a Belgian Wit brewed with orange and coriander. Poured from a 12 oz. bottle into an ale glass the tea tinted amber beverage with a slight haze produces a cream colored foam cap that takes 3 minutes to recede. A continuous stream of bubbles rises from the bottom of the glass. It gives off citrus, orange, and spice aromas with some background wheat. On the palate, the orange and coriander are obvious with bready wheat in the background. Orange flavors linger and mix pleasantly with the wheat. While slightly sweet a mild tartness arises on the finish. Great North Wit has a medium to medium light body, medium to medium high carbonation, and is very creamy. Great North Wit is a very good Belgian style wit that stands out due to its texture and assertive orange and spice.



So here is a toast to all wishing you a warm, dry and happy Gay Pride Weekend.