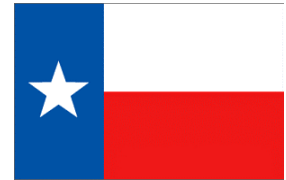


KNIGHTS OF THE BROWN BOTTLE



HOMEBREW CLUB



ARLINGTON, TEXAS

JANUARY 2005 [YOUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER](#) VOLUME 9, ISSUE 1

monthly meetings always on second Wednesday each month

[NEXT MEETING - JANUARY 12, 7:30 PM @DR. JECKYL'S LABORATORY](#)



Club officers for the Knights are:

President: Larro Land

Vice-President: Brad Berven

Competition Chairman: Mike Porter

Treasurer: JustDave Girard

Secretary: Richard Turner

Newsletter Editor: Larro Land

Webmaster: Joel Henderson

Librarian: Phillip Deal

Sergeant at Arms: Gene Wheelbarger

YOUR PRESIDENT SPEAKS!

WASSAIL FELLOW KNIGHTS- -



HAPPY NEW YEAR!
HERE'S TO YOU AND YOURS,
YA'LLS HEALTH AND PROSPERITY,
AND MAY ALL OF YOUR BREWS THIS YEAR BE
REFRESHING, PROLIFIC, AND SATISFYING.

Here are some great unbeatable New Year's resolutions:

- BREW OFTEN / ATTAIN SELF-SUFFICIENCY
- EXPERIMENT WILDLY - DIFFERENT CHALLENGES DEVELOP YOU STYLE
- MAINTAIN CLEAN HABITS, AND KEEP GOOD RECORDS.
- INTRODUCE AT LEAST ONE PERSON TO YOUR HOBBY/SKILL
- GET INVOLVED WITH THE BIGGEST AND BEST PARTY ON EARTH:
THE BLUEBONNET

This year has all the calling to be the Knight's best ever.

Our club is strong- our paid membership is constantly increasing. Our monthly meeting attendance is consistently high. Our level of participation in committees is really taking off. The club's treasury is healthy. The average member's experience level is constantly improving. Our members are winning their fair share of competition awards. Our members are creating better brews, and performing this consistently. In summary, we now have more members brewing better brews and enjoying the benefits of the best brew club in the best country on earth. Think about this a second:

- We can brew anytime we feel like it.
- We can drink our product anytime we wish.
- We can share our skills with our friends, and congregate to do so freely.
- Our craft is limited only by the amount of effort extended.
- Brewing skills are generously offered and often exchanged.

Of course, it should be noted that the more one brews, the higher the quality level.

SO, SPREAD THE WORD! THE KNIGHTS OF THE BROWN BOTTLE JUST DON'T DRINK
GREAT BREW; WE CREATE GREAT BREWS WITH GREAT STYLE.

THE KNIGHTS OF THE BROWN BOTTLE HAVE THE VERY BEST MEMBERS!

HERE ARE THE ORIGINAL KNIGHTS OF THE BROWN BOTTLE CHARTER MEMBERS, WITH THEIR TEN YEAR AWARD PLAQUES



THREE WASSAILS FOR SIR RICHARD GRAHAM, SIR JAMES WRIGHT,
SIR MIKE PORTER, AND SIR STEVE WESSTROM!!
WE LOVE YOU GUYS!



"I SAY, OLD CHAP, THIS WASSAIL IS A WEE BIT PITHY..."



NEAT BEER OF THE MONTH!

Achouffe

N'Ice Chouffe

ABV 10% • Vol 750 ml • bottle • Belgium • Expensive • Flavour 8.5 • Bottle Conditioned



This 1998-vintage winter beer from Achouffe was bought a few years ago and kept in the office to age it before tasting. Reading the back label, it would seem that thyme and dried grapes have been added to the mash. It pours a deep brown colour, and initially pours clear, although it is exceptionally difficult to avoid mixing the yeast in, which has the effect of making it very muddy. When first poured it looks like a coffee float, but then the head rapidly dissipates, although it still appears lively and sparkly. It also leaves a thin, oily sheen on the sides of the glass when you swirl it - a wine buff would describe this as 'legs'. The nose is marmitey with lots of dark prune-like fruit, powdery chocolate and cream. It is also quite vinous and a little spicy in a puddingy way. In the mouth it is smoother than it might appear when poured. The flavours of the added thyme and grapes/raisins are certainly apparent, along with phenols and plenty of malt. There's no doubt that this is a big and complex beer, and the ABV soon makes its presence known - though the alcohol is never harsh. Rather, it is like a fine cognac, and leaves a warmth in the back of the throat, a lightly caramel cloy in the aftertaste and a longing for another sip. A gorgeous beer but, if drinking with friends, make sure yours is the first from the bottle. Ageing it seems to work too.



From Chris Owens:

The BJCP Exam: Who knew beer could be so hard?

Over the last few months, when I would tell people I was studying for a test on beer, I got more than a few credulous looks. These were of course from non homebrewing types. The response of brewers generally was more along the lines of, "wow, I hear that BJCP test is pretty hard." Now that I've taken the exam, I can confirm that statement. Yet I can also confirm that the entire process--the study sessions, cramming for the test, and the exam itself--was an incredibly rewarding experience as well.

For those unfamiliar with the program, the BJCP, or Brewing Judge Certification Program, was created in 1985 to promote beer literacy and recognize beer judging and evaluating skills. It's a non-profit organization that maintains a set of beer style guidelines that are constantly updated and amended as styles change and new information becomes available. These guidelines are the heart of the program, and are used in judging homebrewed (and some commercial) beers at competitions sanctioned by the BJCP. To become a BJCP certified judge, one must pass their test with a 70 or higher, as well as earn a certain number of points judging and assisting at competitions. More info on this below.

But, some might ask, why would anyone want to take the test? You can judge at competitions without being certified, so what are you really getting for all your effort? Well for me, it begins with the fact that my homebrewing hobby is more than just wanting to make my own beer. Homebrewing for me is just one facet of my overall fascination with the history, science, art and lore of the beverage of beer. Initially, I just wanted to make good beer. But as I began to brew more and more, I found I wanted to be able to make a variety of beers in various classic and modern styles. Once I began entering and judging competitions, I found I wanted to be a better judge as well. I wanted to be able to offer insightful feedback to the brewers whose beers I judged, and I wanted to completely understand the terms that were found on the score sheets and in the style guidelines. Thus I initially signed up for the study group so that I could improve my judging skills, yet an incidental by-product of the whole process was that I think it is making me a better brewer as well. Oh, and the class was also a lot of fun. And...we got to drink beer.

The study group met for ten sessions over several months, from July to November. In each class, we would discuss a technical topic, such as malting or mashing or troubleshooting, and then cover one or more of the style guidelines. This always involved tasting a number of examples of each. The class started with over 20 students, but by the end, it had dwindled down to 10 stalwarts who actually took the test. While the class was fun, I think it revealed to more than a couple of us that a good deal of studying was going to be required to pass the test. Thus several opted to drop out before taking the exam.

Initially, each student pitched in 50 bucks to cover the costs of the tasting beers, and this really was a bargain. In the course of the class, we probably tasted over 100 different beers, many of which were not locally available, and this was our first time to taste them. Some of the styles, such as Berliner Weiss, I'd never even tasted before, and thus this class was the first opportunity for me to try this unusual style. Another serendipitous aspect of this class was that it took place in the Rahr Brewery.

I think every homebrewer and beer enthusiast gets just a little bit excited when they find themselves in a brewery. After all, these places are somewhat hallowed ground to us...the cathedrals and temples of our art. And during the course of the class, we got to witness Fort Worth's newest sanctuary of suds come into existence. They were still welding together the fermenters when we started in July, and by the last few classes the first batches were in the keg, and Fritz Rahr had opened his hospitality bar, to which we were invited to belly up after each class. Additionally, Fritz and his head brewer Jason Courtney went through the class with us. It was quite beneficial to have these two among us, not only as a valuable resource of brewing information, but it was just really cool to hear about the day to day goings on in their brewery. What homebrewer among us hasn't at least for a few seconds pondered some day opening a brewery of our own? During these classes, we were able to vicariously live that dream a little bit more thoroughly.

The BJCP maintains a website with their guidelines, as well as lots of other info, such as sample test questions, and hints on studying for the test. There's also a recommended guidelines for running a ten class study group, which we followed in our class. Special thanks should go out to Larry Kemp of the Cap and Hare homebrew club, who organized the class, made sure we had lots of study materials and beers to taste. He also guided us through most of the lessons, lecturing on each topic. Also in the class were several already certified BJCP judges, such as Mark Wedge and our own Jim Grady, who were taking the class again in hopes of improving their scores. Special thanks go to them as well for several of the wonderful beers that they brought in for us to taste. These were rare gems that they'd collected on their travels, and most of which are not locally available (some aren't even available outside their country of origin)

Throughout the course of the class, I learned a great deal, reinforcing what I knew about the styles I'd been brewing, and learning lots of new material on styles I'd previously ignored. This encouraged me to attempt brewing some of these, which has added some new excitement to the hobby. I was also encouraged to try new techniques in brewing. For example, I've always brewed with water right out of my tap, assuming that my beers have always tasted fine, and thus my local water was good enough for anything.

But, in studying how local water chemistry affects many aspects of the brewing process, and indeed is responsible for the character of many world beer styles, I've become interested in filtering and adjusting the salts in my water to match the style I'm shooting for. I'm hoping this will not only help me get closer to the styles I'm shooting for, but also help make my beers taste even better. The class also inspired me to try my first decoction mash, and I've changed my sparging technique because of what I've learned. (I now check the gravity of the runoff, and stop sparging at around 1.010)

The test itself is a timed, three hour affair, in which ten essay questions are answered, and four beers are judged. Sample questions might include

Explain the lambic style and describe each of the following: faro, framboise, gueuze, and kriek.

Identify, describe and differentiate four members of the Stout family. Give commercial examples of each style.

Describe and differentiate between a German Pilsner, Dortmunder Export, and Munich Helles. Give commercial examples of each style.

At least a one page answer is expected for each question, so quick writing skills are a must. The essay questions make up 70% of the test grade, and the other 30% comes from judging sample beers. Of the four offered, one is usually a shining example of a style, as good as the test administrator can find. One is slightly less good, and the other two have some sort of flaw, either one that has occurred on its own, or one that has been introduced. When you are given these beers, you are told the style category, and that is all. You judge them on a BJCP sheet, just as at a competition, but the half of the sheet that lists flavor components and impurities is removed, so all style elements and technical terms have to be recalled from memory. During our test, we had a very good IPA, an okay English Old Ale, and for the problem beers, we had a schwartzbier that had been doctored with butterscotch extract (to simulate a diacetyl problem) and a decent hefe weiss, which was miss entered as an American wheat. This is one of the tricky parts of the test, and judging in general...a beer can be perfectly fine, but not to the style that it was entered, and thus should be scored much lower than if it had been entered in the correct category.

And, we should be able to convey this to the contestant when writing up the score sheet.

Indeed, this was one of the best aspects of taking the class-learning not only how to properly judge a beer, but how to fill out a score sheet as well. How many times have you gotten a score sheet back from a competition and each of the sections of the sheet had only a couple of vague words which neither helped you know what your beer needed, or explained why the beer was scored the way it was. When a brewer pays good money to enter a contest, they are doing it not only for the chance to win a shiny medal, but also to get some decent feedback on their beers. I've often entered average beers with little chance of winning into major competitions just to get some decent feedback on how to improve it. Going through the BJCP class, I learned what was expected of a judge filling out a score sheet. When they put five lines next to 'flavor,' they expect you to find five lines worth of words to say about the beer's flavor. Before the class, I never did this, nor did I realize that I should.

Afterwards, I found that sometimes the five lines weren't enough. When you've been exposed to all the various aspects of judging a beer, and you understand the flavors you are tasting, good and bad, and have a knowledge of what you should be tasting (as well as seeing, feeling, and smelling) it is very easy to find lots to write about. If the beer is awesome and to style, then stroke the brewer's ego a bit and tell 'em about it. If it has some flaws, then identify them, and offer suggestions to cure them. I've included an example of a completed score sheet below, one that would be considered up to BJCP standards. If you'd like to learn more about the test, or peruse the newest style guidelines (they've just had a major update this year), check out www.bjcp.org. You can also find out when and where the next test is being offered, in case I've piqued your interest.

Finally, in case you are wondering, the BJCP offers several levels of certification, based on one's score on the exam, as well as points earned for judging and setting up competitions.

The ranks are as follows:

Rank	Test Score Required	Experience Points Needed
Apprentice	Take the test	No Points
Recognized	60 or higher	0 to 5 Points
Certified	70 or higher	5 or more points
National	80 or higher	20 or more points
Master	90 or higher	40 or more points
Grand Master (1 st degree)	90 or higher	100 points plus BJCP Service requirement

As you can see, a BJCP rank is part test score, and part being an active judge. No matter how well you do on the test, until you earn active judging points, you can't even achieve the certified level. Points are earned in half point increments for flight judged, with no more than one judging point earned per day. Points can also be earned for stewarding, administrating a contest, and other judging activities. For a complete list, see the BJCP web site. For the Grand Master rank, the service requirement is determined by the BJCP board of directors. Additional levels of Grand Master, i.e. 2nd degree, 3rd degree, etc, are available for additional 100 points earned and additional service requirements. There are currently only 8 Grand Masters, and 2 Grand master, 2nd degree in the entire program.

Another rank, Honorary Master, is awarded at the discretion of the board of directors to individuals, such as professional brewers and authors who have demonstrated their vast knowledge of beer and brewing, and/or participated in judging BJCP sanctioned events. There are currently over 2000 BJCP judges on the rolls.

Here is how they break down by rank:

Apprentice 202

Recognized 716

Certified 786

National 267

Master 35

Grand Master I 8

Grand Master II 2

Grand Master III 0

Honorary Master 7

Finally, on a rainy Saturday morning, we all gathered one last time at Rahr's to take the test. Jim Leyton for the North Texas Home Brewers administrated the test. The questions were passed out, and the 3 hour clock started ticking. The first question is always the same...explain the BJCP program. This one was a given, and I believe we all had it memorized. Then I read over the other nine...hard, they were, but doable. I started writing. I was surprised by how much I knew, and just how much of that info had been picked up in class, or cramming over the style guidelines in the week leading up to the test. I figure over half of the material I needed for the test was learned in the class. Still haven't got the results yet, but I've got my fingers crossed, and I can guarantee that I did better than I would have—much better—than if I'd just gone and taken the test cold. So, if any of you decide to take it yourselves, then I'd definitely recommend studying, and see if you can find a study group as well. There's no better way to prepare for a test on beer. Cheers!

Below is an example of a properly filled out score sheet, downloaded of the BJCP site.

offery, diacetyl + chance of yeast reabsorption in the primary + secondary. Not permissible for style. Control diacetyl. They are also present.



BEER JUDGE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Participant No: _____
 Exam City: _____
 Exam Date: _____

Outstanding (45-50) Excellent (38-44)
 Very Good (30-37) Good (21-29)
 Drinkable (14-20) Problem (0-13)

Stylistic Accuracy Classic 1 2 3 4 2 Not to Style
 Technical Merit Flawless 1 2 3 4 5 Significant Flaws
 Intangibles Wonderful 1 2 3 4 5 Lifeless

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 Technical Merit Flawless 1 2 3 4 5 Significant Flaws
 Intangibles Wonderful 1 2 3 4 5 Lifeless

EXAM BEER #3
 Subcategory (Spell out) Oktoberfest

EXAM BEER #4
 Subcategory (Spell out) Russian Imperial Stout

AROMA (as appropriate for style) 12 2

AROMA (as appropriate for style) 12 8

Malt, hops, esters, and other aromatics
Vinegar-like aroma dominates likely caused from acetic acid spoilage organisms. The style should have a toasted malt aroma, which cannot be detected here due to the strong vinegar + sour aromas.

Malt, hops, esters, and other aromatics
Rich, dark roasted grain aromas; pleasant fruity esters reminiscent of raisins + plums. Wine-like aroma is likely from the elevated alcohol level. Hops appropriately used to balance but not detract from the roasted maltness.

APPEARANCE (as appropriate for style) 3 3

APPEARANCE (as appropriate for style) 3 3

Color, clarity, and head (retention, color, and texture)
Light orange color is OK for style, but slightly darker versions are more seductive; very good clarity + good head retention for style. (Foam held at its original height for > 1 min.)

Color, clarity, and head (retention, color, and texture)
Black - appropriate color - Clarity is not a factor in such a dark beer. Decent head retention for style (low).

FLAVOR (as appropriate for style) 20 2

FLAVOR (as appropriate for style) 20 14

Malt, hops, fermentation/ flavor characteristics, balance, finish/aftertaste
Sour + Vinegar flavors dominate. Style calls for toasted malt flavors with enough noble hops to balance while still allowing a malt dominated beer. The sourness is way out of style for an Oktoberfest. (SEE BELOW FOR CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK)

Malt, hops, fermentation/ flavor characteristics, balance, finish/aftertaste
Roasted and burnt flavors are represented well here + in this style. Deep fruit-like flavors such as raisin and plum can also be perceived. A nice complexity of flavors is developing from the roasted grains and high level of alcohol.

MOUTHFEEL (as appropriate for style) 5 3

MOUTHFEEL (as appropriate for style) 5 3 1/2

Body, carbonation, warmth, creaminess, astringency, other palate sensations
Medium body is good for style. High level of sourness is an unpleasant and out of style characteristic for an Oktoberfest.

Body, carbonation, warmth, creaminess, astringency, other palate sensations
Alcoholic warmth evident (good for style); Medium to big body is OK for style, but it could be bigger by adding more malt to the grist.

OVERALL IMPRESSION 10 3

OVERALL IMPRESSION 10 7 1/2

Comment on overall drinking pleasure, give suggestions for improvement
Unfortunately, a contamination has occurred making for a soured beer. Feedback: Practice better sanitation habits and do not allow the wort or beer to be exposed to the air for any great period of time. TOTAL (50 possible points) 13
 Dust + wild yeast can contaminate a beer with acetobacteria that cause sourness. Good luck + try again!

Comment on overall drinking pleasure, give suggestions for improvement
A very nice example of the style. In terms of feedback, try elevating the gravity some to make an even bigger example of the style. The alcoholic + roasted notes worked well in this example. This beer should continue to develop complexity as it ages. Good Job!
 TOTAL (50 possible points) 36

Thanks Sir Chris!

HERE'S SOME COOL LINKS TO CHECK OUT! :

Meadlennium VIII

This is the first mead only competition of 2005. In 2004, Meadlennium was the largest home made mead only competition in the United States. This event is sponsored by the Central Florida Home Brewers, the same club that hosts the Sunshine Challenge in May, which is the largest homebrew competition east of the Mississippi.

Entry procedures have been streamlined to make entering the competition as easy as possible. Awards include stylish mead medallions for all first, second, and third place winners. For entries which score 35-40 a Silver Certificate and for 41 and higher a Gold certificates will be awarded. All First Place and BOS winners will receive a lovely etched Meadlennium VIII glass. Club with the most points will receive a special award (the host club, the CFHB is excluded from this award).

Competition Date: Saturday, January 29, 2005 at 11:00AM

Location: Preston & Teresa Hoover Estate
1927 Coble Drive
Deltona, FL 32738
Phone: 386-574-8741

Entry Deadlines: Open January 3, and Closes Tuesday,
January 25, 2005

Entry Fee: \$6.00 each (Walk in entries accepted if pre
registered)

Entries: 3 bottles 6 oz or greater.

Categories: New 2004 BJCP Style guidelines, Category 24, 25, and 26. Up to nine categories will be awarded (categories may be collapse depending on number of entries) as listed below:

1. Traditional (includes varital) Mead Dry
2. Traditional Mead Semi-Sweet
3. Traditional Mead Sweet
4. Cyser (Apple Melomel)
5. Pyment (Grape Melomel)
6. Other Fruit Melomel

7. Metheglin (spice and herb)
8. Braggot
9. Other Category Mead (includes experimental)

Ship Entries To: Meadlennium VIII
c/o Rockey Measom
2247 King Johns Court
Winter Park, FL 32792

Drop Off Location:
Heart's HomeBrew & Wine Making Supply
6190 Edgewater Drive
Orlando, FL 32810

Awards Ceremony: Sunday, February 6, 2005 at the
Central Florida Home Brewers monthly meeting beginning
at 4:15P. All prizes not presented at the meeting will
be mailed to winners.

Request Entry and Bottle Forms via email at:
bachian@juno.com

For additional information contact Ron
Bach 407-6962738 or e-mail: bachian@juno.com

Registrar: Rockey Measom 407-673-1099 or e-mail:
rockey9@earthlink.net

Head Judge: Mike Urban 407-977-5494

Meadlennium Team E-mail: mead@cfhb.org

AND, ANOTHER EXCITING EVENT:

<http://mnbrewers.com/mashout/>

For those members yearning for more detail discussion and a more in depth knowledge base, you should consider joining:

<http://www.beertown.org/homebrewing/techtalk.html>

Links? Ya want some schintking links? ...here is most likely the most comprehensive page full ever:

<http://www.beertown.org/homebrewing/links.html>

From the Editor



WASSAIL!

GREETINGS FELLOW KNIGHTS

Thanks to all the Knights and their guests who made it to our home and made the Christmas party such a wonderful time. Ya'll sure are a great bunch of people!

Now with Christmas over with, we have the new year to look forward to. And the first big brewing decision I have to make is, ...which brew do I pull out of the closet and celebrate New Years with? Will it be a Porter? Or a Stout? Or a Belgium? ...heck, there is a bottle or two of a middle-aged mead in there somewhere, I'm sure!

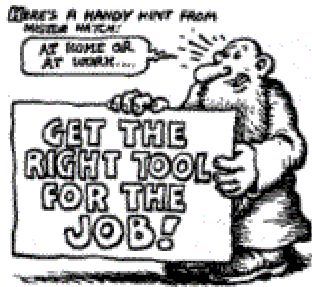
It sure has been fun working with the Knights this year. There is no finer group of brewers anywhere. I am constantly amazed by the eagerness to learn and the depth of knowledge acquired by our many members... as I visit with different brewers I am in awe over the skill level achieved! I was over at a members home, Mr. Mike Haws, and he was showing off his system and cellar, and I could not believe the quality. This man has figured out the mouth-feel and body and head retention aspect of brewing and taken it way on out past what regular brewers achieve.

On the other hand, I had the pleasure to sample one members personal style; super high gravity. Mr. Clyde Allen 111 specializes in perfecting the balance between flavor and alcohol... a delicate task indeed!

Now, just stop and think one minute about these two different but essential styles... "WHAT IF?" What if these two brewers got together and combined their styles? What if YOU were to brew with either of these two Knights and learned their secret? I'm sure that YOU have some tricks you could share; what happens if all these "good ideas" become combined? What if - you were the one that does the combining? ...that's what the club is all about.

Men, it has been fun this last year. I have really been proud to represent the Knights, and have worked hard to support them. However, I feel that it would be good to offer the job to fresh blood. We have many Knights with many things to offer, and our club deserves great service.

WASSAIL to you and yours. May your new year be plentiful and prosperous; may you body and spirit remain healthy and grow stronger.



We now have a discussion group going.

Please go to kobb-subscribe@yahoogroups.com and follow the instructions. This is a free deal that takes anything you send it and broadcasts it back to all of its subscribers. It's a great way to stay up to date. Between this discussion group and Joel's Hard work as our EXCELLENT WEBMASTER, you will always be up to date on ALL the latest events!

(there are now over 2,000 messages served)

JUMP ON THE BANDWAGON!!

Please don't be shy! I sure could use YOUR help in getting this newsletter out each month! And, If you have an idea-ANY idea, Please submit it. So, If you have some winners, Please forward them on. One of the reasons we are here is to promote and cultivate better brews! Please send me feedback!

Hell...send Beer!!!

----- LARRO

Mission Statement

The mission of the Knights of the Brown Bottle and this newsletter is to serve as a forum to promote public awareness and appreciation of the quality and variety of homebrewed beer through the collection and dissemination of information regarding the art and science of homebrewing, and to promote the responsible use of beer as an alcohol - containing beverage.

The club newsletter is published monthly and highlights the events and meetings of the club, local beer events and technical information that will help everyone brew better beer.

Items for publication are welcomed and encouraged.

The deadline is the last Friday of the month, for the following months newsletter.

Items should be directed to

Larro Land E-Mail : Larry.Land@merrillcorp.com

KNIGHTS OF THE BROWN BOTTLE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FOR 2004

NAME-----

EMAIL-----

PHONE-----

ADDRESS-----

AMOUNT PAID \$

DATE-----

Please forward information to Richard Turner, Secretary,
KOBBS. (don't forget to let us know if it changes)