

Tommy Pickworth's Tried-and-True Steps to Creating Prize-Winning Mountain Fresh Beer Arrangements

Competition beer arranging can be a career in itself. The satisfactions to be gained from it are many: the pleasures of artistic creation, the stimulation of striving in keen competition, and the accumulation of lots of dandy ribbons, plaques, vases, and other trophies of victory to grace the entryway of the old fraternity house or dormitory hall. Mr. Pickworth, veteran of several contests, offers these steps to hopeful contenders in the Rainier "Thirsty Month of May" Beer Arranging Competition:

Get as thorough a knowledge as possible of the general principles of beer arranging. There are dozens of books on the subject, as well as classes offered by the A.A.B.A. (Association of Amateur Beer Arranging) at various watering holes around the country. Pay close attention to the rules and regulations of every contest you enter. Analyze the theme and make sure your arrangement will convey the proper mood. If the theme is "Springtime Freshness," and you enter an arrangement using crumpled and crushed cans, you're not going to win doodley-squat. The same arrangement, however, might walk away with first prize in the "Autumn Riot" category.

Make a checklist of everything you will need for the arrangement and gather the components well ahead



of time. You may need to spend weeks lurking around the dumpsters of public houses and fast-food joints in order to get the best selection. If you plan to empty every container in your arrangement yourself, you will also want to get as early a start as possible.

It is advisable to make, a few days in advance of your final arrangement, a dry run. Assemble the arrangement, using the essential components, so that if there are some details that do not work out — and there almost always will be — you will have a chance to change them. For instance, if your pickled egg keeps slipping off the platform of bonsai pepperoni, you can abandon that idea before it is too late.

One final word: if you fail to win an award, don't criticize or threaten the judges — at least not out loud. You do not want to get the reputation of being a "kicker." Judges often travel long distances to judge shows, and spend long, hot thirsty hours on their feet, judging arrangement after arrangement. Annoying one could be dangerous.

Well, good luck and good arranging! May the thirstiest win! And remember, it matters not whether you win or lose, its how many Rainier cans and bottles you can cram into that arrangement.

There are tricks to all trades — beer arranging is no exception. Here are some of Mr. Pickworth's **Do's and Don't's** for creating successful arrangements every time:

DO keep it simple. Resist the temptation to use every kind of bottle and container that you have gathered. You want this to look like a pleasing arrangement, not like a recycling center.

DON'T water the arrangements too often or too much. Some of the crispier elements have a tendency to absorb water, leading to snack food rot, which can ruin your arrangement.

DO steer clear of the more exotic ingredients that may be perishable, if you want the arrangement to last more than one day. A pickled egg left out in an arrangement for more than 24 hours is not pleasing to look at and gives off a foul aroma.

DON'T use a vase that is too large or small for your arrangement. It looks dopey.

Mr. Tommy Pickworth, designer of a prize-winning arrangement, is the current Northwest Regional Beer Arranging Champion. President of the local chapter of the Petrified Florists, Tommy is a relative newcomer to the art and is referred to by his admirers as "The Lone Arranger." He rose to national prominence when he began gathering and using only wild Rainiers in his arrangements instead of the usual hothouse brews, a technique which changed the face of beer arranging forever. He likes the light, fresh, satisfying touches the Rainiers add to his creations. Tommy is social chairman of a local fraternity, and he says that one tour of the hallowed hallways after a successful function keeps him amply supplied with raw materials for his fascinating avocation.

Why not try your hand at beer arranging? So what if you are a rank amateur? This is your chance to enter the ring in a jousting match with fellow beer arrangers from colleges and places of higher learning all over the Northwest.

The Mountain Fresh Beer Arranging Competition Rules and Information

1. The theme is "The Thirsty Month of May," or "Beer Arranging Hath Charms to Soothe the Savage Thirst."
2. The competition is open to students of all member colleges and universities of the A.A.B.A. (Association of Amateur Beer Arranging) Pac Six division.

3. Do not send actual arrangements. Photographic documentation of your entry must be sent to Tommy Pickworth, Department of Beer Arranging, Rainier Brewery, 3100 Airport Way South, Seattle, Washington 98134, on or before July 31st, 1980.

4. Winners will be published in the fall, with full credit, honors and possible consideration for late-night television programming, given to the arrangers and their schools. Decision of the judges shall be final and judges may withhold any award, if in their opinion an arrangement is just too ugly to believe.

Rainier Brewing Company, Seattle, Washington