

## *Hank Speaks...* **So Listen** by Hank Bienert

### **ROVING REPORTER SPECIAL**

I was talking with Monk (the man who beat LA DEPT of REVENUE!!) the other day about the need for an article on summer beach vacation beer information.

I gathered a few ideas from him over his usual garbled phone line. If you ever call him you will know what I mean about the line - not only is the phone tap from the LA Dept. of Rev still in place (WHAT A BUNCH OF SORE LOSERS.. I'm glad we still talk deviously to mess with them saying things like "I put the stuff in the slop tank of the last 2 Portapotties at Orleans Parish Prison) but the tap is a power drain plus if the gators on the treadmill that runs his system are tired and slow, communication is poor.)

But I did hear a few things...the Hopline was in full support as long as I stayed in the US and I heard loud and clear "SPARE NO EXPENSE" and later that week the CCH credit card came in the mail. I confess that the whole conversation was a little vague (but not as vague as the rambling/mumbling announcements at CCH meetings) but I gathered he said –

- 1) "Go to a great island or a grand one or a big island"....
- 2) "It's a place where Monks are seen ...they are rare"....
- 3) "Natives are primitive with their own language"....
- 4) "Lots of fishing"....
- 5) Something about sandwiches....
- 6) "There was a cook who tried to work around there but the job killed him"..

or he said something like that when the call dropped. I tried to call back but no connection.

Being completely confused, Rocky (the Wonder Dog) and I consulted the Internet and WE FOUND IT!! And so here are the pictures of me ON ASSIGNMENT- on the Big Island of Hawaii, enjoying a post – snorkel Maui Big IPA (*Of course he meant for me to go to Hawaii!!*)



*Where else do you find such an alignment of vectors contained in the clues?*

- 1) *The Big Island,*
- 2) *The home of the rare Monk seal,*
- 3+4) *Unpronounceable names, rough hewn fisherfolk*
- 5) *The Sandwich Islands which is what the discoverer*
- 6) *Captain Cook named it, a place where he was killed - I didn't realize before this that Monk D knew all that history-what a guy!!)*

The major Breweries encountered were Kona

<http://konabrewingco.com/>

whose leading product is Longboard lager which one can buy for less at Sam's Club, Airline than at the Foodland, a major grocery chain in Kona, a few blocks from the brewery and this is an undertone throughout. Food in stores is 20% more than N.O. although the fruit is fresher, hotels 50% except around Honolulu where they are 250%, and the air fare and time to get there is at best the same time it takes to get to Europe. Since you are still in the US however your cell phone works and since you fly "domestic" you have to pay to check a bag. This was a second trip to Hawaii for me and the first time I saw Kuauai, Big Island and Maui which are less crowded than Oahu where Honolulu is. It was pricey moving from island to island and I sure appreciate the club paying my way. Kona has the usual selection plus an unusual offering-a wheat with passion fruit. Their Lavaman red Ale was just OK and not even close to my favorite West Coast Cinder Cone Red, made by Deschutes.

Maui Brewing

<http://www.mauibrewingco.com/mbc/MBCCannedBeer.html>

makes a number of beers which, like Kona, include Island fruit including a Coconut Porter, a Pineapple wheat, Big Swell IPA and a helles called Bikini Blond, the last two being excellent and my favorites of the ten or so different beers I sampled. The fruit additions I cite whether by Kona or Maui are not to my taste inasmuch as I prefer the unadulterated versions of those styles.

There are a few microbreweries which are closing and opening. I sampled from Waimea which has just moved a mediocre pale ale. Bottled beer in grocery stores is the usual Bud light swill with some from Deschutes but NOT the Cinder Cone. Overall a limited selection and few Asian beers for a place closer to Japan than we are. But we must remember it is the most isolated archipelago in the world

Food - a lot of fancy HRC (Hawaiian regional cuisine) restaurants in the tourist areas with good seafood-fish, rarely shrimp which like most food other than fruit is imported. Plate lunches and road side trucks are abundant but it's the old story - little flavor added during cooking - no one has such good food for so little as the Crescent City hole in the wall!!

Plate lunch choices are laua pork (pulled pork), Poke (raw fish chunks marinated in vinegar/soy) fried chicken, grilled fish tacos - all with little seasoning and a choice of sticky rice or macaroni and mayonnaise as sides. I guess spices are costly.

McDonald's deluxe breakfast is eggs, rice and a choice of Portuguese sausage or Spam; some offer noodles.

Something I did enjoy was saimin; a chicken noodle soup with Chinese style pork and bok Choy and sometimes cooked egg-read about it here

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saimin>

Sushi is plentiful but NOT at the low prices you will find here at such places as the East Buffet on Severn or Rouse's.

One goes to Hawaii for the beautiful weather with constant breezes, breathtaking scenery around every corner and along every road (the Honolulu city bus can take you in 20 minutes from downtown to some incredible places) and nice music. In my case I HAD to go as a job assignment.

As always, constructive comments are welcome via the Hopline ... for those uncomfortable with readin' n' writin' big words, please continue to mumble during meetings from the back row which is where I like to sit/sip/mumble...and where the often and previously mentioned (yet sadly still unseen) free beer should be delivered.