



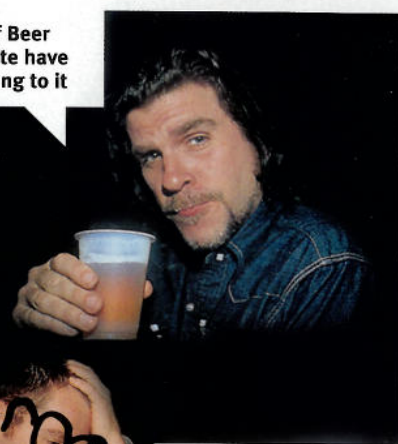
TOP 5 OF THE FESTIVAL

- 1 > Hemp Premium Ale
- 2 > Boag's Strongarm
- 3 > St Arnou St Cloud
- 4 > Velvet Cream Stout
- 5 > Brewhouse Wheat

WORST 5 OF THE FESTIVAL

- 1 > Blowfly
- 2 > Wobbly Boot
- 3 > Carbine Stout
- 4 > Bulldog Pale Ale
- 5 > St Peter's Amber Ruby Ale

Beasts of Beer doesn't quite have the same ring to it



All I have to do is take my hand off my head, grab it and... oh, stuff it



122

but the nearest security guard looks about 12. His uniform was probably ironed by his mum.

I order a Toohey's Extra Dry. It's like finding an old friend in a place no-one ever goes. Hobart, maybe.

A Kilkeny Stout and Guinness cost me \$6 each for a pot – double price "for premium beers".

I've drunk 72 beers and I'm not even half way there.

Behind the main stage, Jimmy Barnes tells me he doesn't drink

– worse still – the beer starts to run out. I want a Cane Toad, but can't have one. They can't change the barrel because there is no barrel to change to.

In a panic, I order a Nail Ale, Wineglass Bay Hazard Ale and a Quayle Ale and strive to make my cooked tastebuds tell them apart.

I queue for the portadunnies with a bladder like a beach ball and try to focus. A girl I don't see asks if I'm alright. My reply has been put in

Tawny Black Ale before my body realises what's hit it, and pile into a Brewhouse Dark. But by the sweet Kanberra Kolsch, I'm slowing down.

I keep going. Rivers of stout flow down my throat; endless ale, dam-bursts of draught. Yesterday I was running out of choices, but today there are many more. To my horror some I haven't drunk may have gone forever, but every bar has barrelsful of new ones.

Raging Bull is 7.9%. It comes out of the tap like chocolate icing and goes down like something you've shaved in. After half a glass, I can feel my heartbeat slowing down.

Robinson's Extra Stout is thick, creamy and smooth. After Raging Bull, it feels like a refreshing rain.

There are fewer drinkers today, so at least I can get to the bar. In an hour, I drink 13 beers. In the next, 17. By 8.30 bar staff are looking at me as if I'm stalking them. The Cruel Sea are due on, so I decide to give them a Wicked Vicars and Bootleg Raging Bull. They're out of both.

"But I need Wicked Vicars for the Cruel Sea," I rave, pawing at the bar.

Gathering my sense, I grab a Sanctuary Cove Premium and Grand Ridge Moonlight. The Cruel Sea's Tex Perkins looks stoked I've brought him a beer. He dips his moustache into the Sanctuary Cove. "I like it. Flavoursome, but not too thick." He tries the Grand Ridge. "Don't like the flavours. Don't like the aftertaste. It's got a real front taste as well. And a side taste."

Everyone gathers at the main stage for the Cruel Sea. Elsewhere, many of the bars are closing. A Leo Sayer track is playing, which really is cruel. Wobbly Boot tastes like something's growing in it. I hand the Brewer's IPA to the nearest bloke. "Tastes like varnish," he says. He must have once drunk varnish.

It's 11pm and I'm stuck on 122 beers. The others have slipped down the cracks somehow. I was too pissed to notice them or they've run out before I could get there. I sit on a bench near a darkened bar and crack open a can of Bundy and Coke. It tastes brilliant.

"Tastes like varnish," says a bloke. He must have once drunk varnish

any more, and suggests I get his daughter to perform a taste test.

I offer his daughter, Mahala, a Gold Coast Queensland Black Ale and she takes a cautious sip. "I don't drink beer normally. I quite like this, though. I might take it on stage with me." I feel warmed by this.

I get the feeling the organisers were not quite prepared for the numbers of people who would turn up. Staff are run off their feet and

a blender before it comes out.

I hear someone screaming like a bastard. It's that nice teetotaller Jimmy Barnes. I buy a Carlton Black and nurse it along like it's fine whisky instead of bad beer. I'm halfway through a Black and Tan when I head off. I've only had about 80 brews, but, you know, f—k it.

The last thing I feel like on Sunday is a beer. I could go a fruit juice, but not 50 beers.

I slug down a Masthead

Working at the recycling plant is doing my head in

This is a good mag. I wonder if they'll let me do work experience



67 YEARS AGO
AMERICANS invent the beer can and the stubby in the same year. Serial troublemakers finally have something to hurl at players and match officials during sporting fixtures.

38 YEARS AGO
GERMANY introduces the world's first metal beer kegs. These top inventions make tapping and closing off much easier for bar staff, and provide the central attraction for countless backyard 21st birthday parties.

5 YEARS AGO
RALPH is invented. Beer has something to do with it.

PRESENT DAY
ERIC the workie, having read this far, has an urge to drink his first beer. After satisfying this urge, he wakes up the next day with no recollection of what he was doing the day before. He sees the magazine open at this page and thinks, "Ah, that article looks interesting," and reads it again. This cycle continues indefinitely.

