

An English homebrewer perspective

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**English Beer Styles**

# Agenda

- The principal players
- Development of beer style understanding
- English beer styles – contrasting views
- English homebrew practice
- English beer's future
- Brewing English beer at home



# Key themes

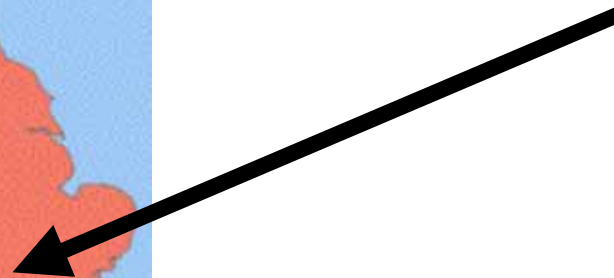
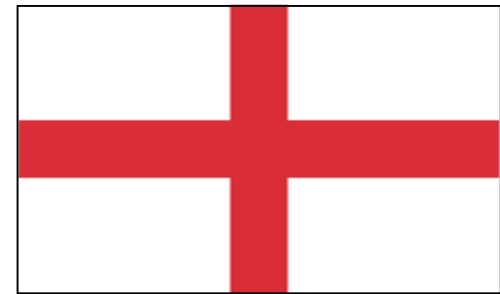
- Beer styles are not that tightly defined
- History is important
- A few principles will get you a long way



# Disclaimer



**England**



**English Beer Styles**



**Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland all make great beers, but these are left for another day.**

**Some of the observations made regarding English beer may apply equally to the beers brewed in other parts of the UK.**

# English Home Brewing



- April 3<sup>rd</sup> 1963 – Reginald Maudling abolishes the need for a licence or for duty to be paid
- 1963 - Home Brewed Beers and Stouts – CJJ Berry
- 1974 – AWS becomes National Association of Wine and Beermakers (Cyril Berry – first chairman)
- 1974 conference – 1,000 attendees and 3,000 entries
- Beer classes: Pale Ale, Milk Stout, Irish Stout, Brown Ale and Barley Wine



# English Beer Judging

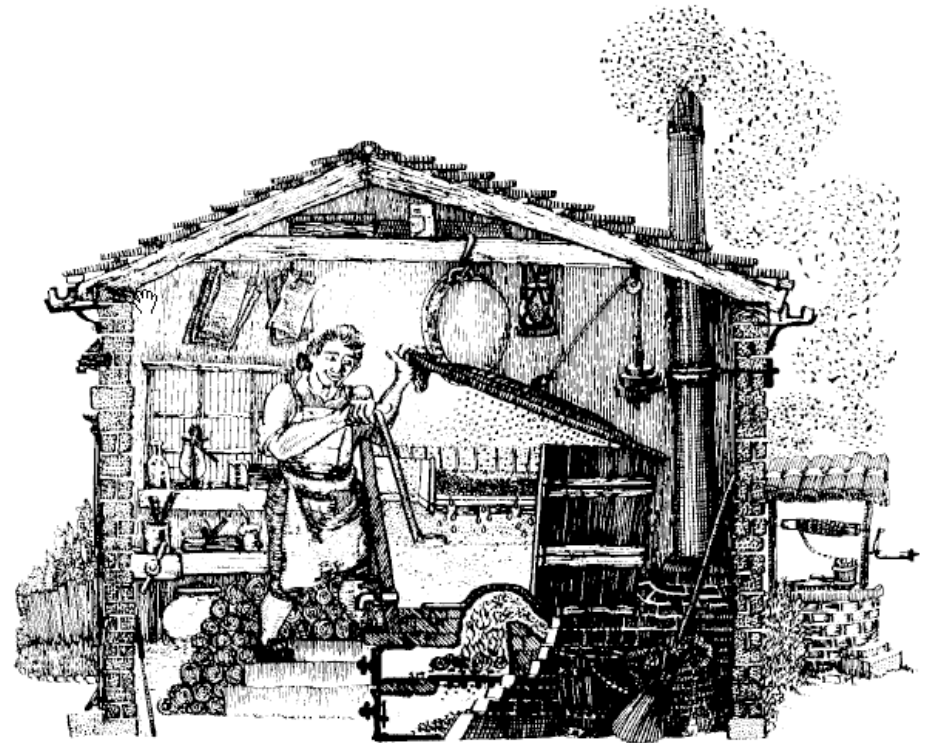


- 1978 – National Guild of Judges becomes: National Guild of Wine and Beer Judges
- “A judge should be able to assess twenty bottles in an hour but should not be expected to deal with more than fifty in one session”



# Craft Brewing Association

- 1971: Durden Park Beer Circle formed
- 1995: Craft Brewing Association founded by James McCrorie
  - Exclusively beer focused
  - Covers the whole UK
- 2008 National in Derby
  - 133 entries



# In summary: the players

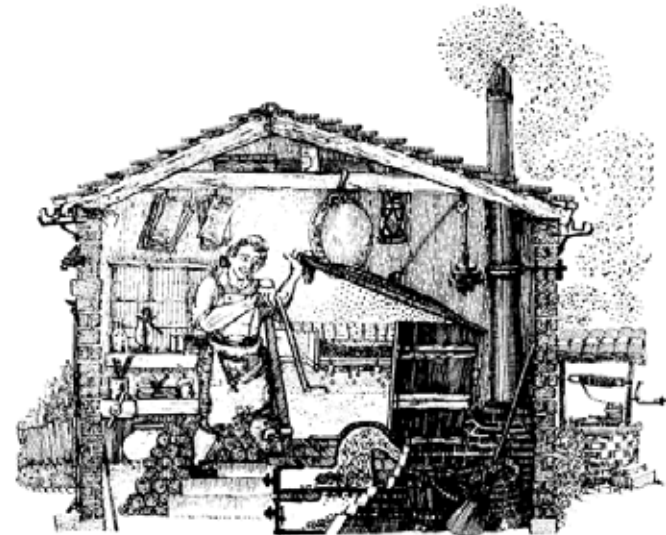


**National Association of  
Winemakers and Brewers**



**National Guild of Wine  
and Beer Judges**

**“The Guild”**



**Craft Brewing Association**



**English Beer Styles**

# English Beer's low point

- By the 1970's English beer was dying
- Homebrewers mainly brewed beers of the day:
  - Brown ale/ Mild
  - Pale ale/ Bitter
  - Stout
  - English lagers
- Prevailing view was that great beers of the past would never be enjoyed again



# OLD BRITISH BEERS AND HOW TO MAKE THEM



by Dr. John Harrison  
and Members of  
The Durden Park  
Beer Circle

A new hope



English Beer Styles

# Durden Park leads the revival

- 1973: Dr John Harrison leads project to research and brew historic beers
- Major exercise:
  - Brewers didn't write down the “obvious”, e.g. brew length
  - Modern ingredients differ
  - Guilds discouraged dissemination of information



# Understanding English Beer Styles

- Words change meaning, e.g.
  - Original porter brewed with brown malt
  - 1817 – D. Wheeler invents patent malt
  - New porter largely pale malt, with some black
- Regional variation is big
- London is different
- There are plenty of opinions
- CAMRA plays a significant role



# English beer is weaker

**The most popular brands, making up about 70 per cent of the beer market, have an average alcohol-by-volume content of 4.21 per cent.**

The Times - 19 May 2008



# Guild Beer Styles

- Light Lager
- Heavy Lager
- Light Ale
- Pale Ale or Bottled Bitter
- India Pale Ale
- London Brown Ale
- Newcastle Brown Ale
- Dry Stout
- Sweet Stout
- Porter
- Strong Ale
- Barley Wine



Beer styles are a means of communication between the brewer and the judge.

Guild judge



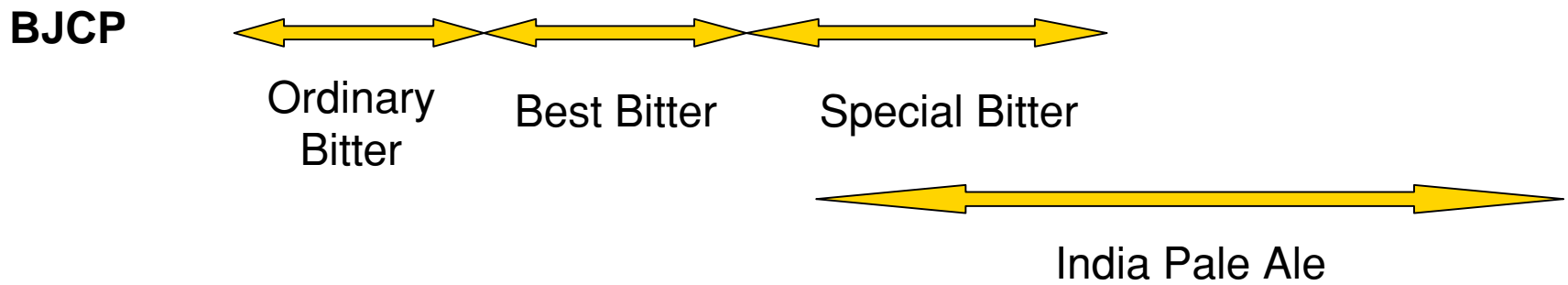
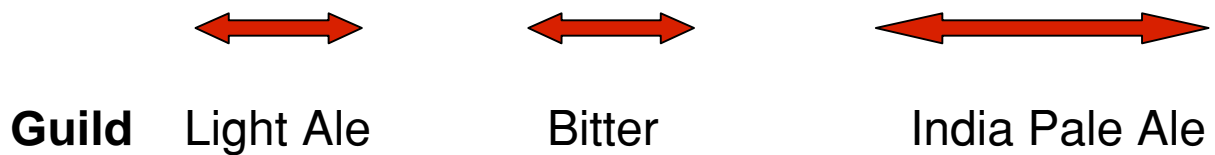
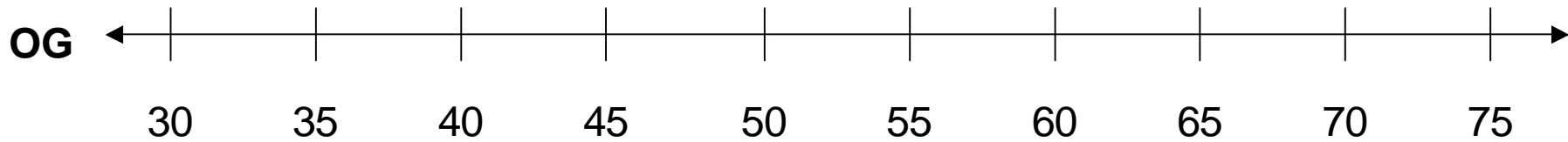


Original gravity is an absolute criterion to determine a beer's style.

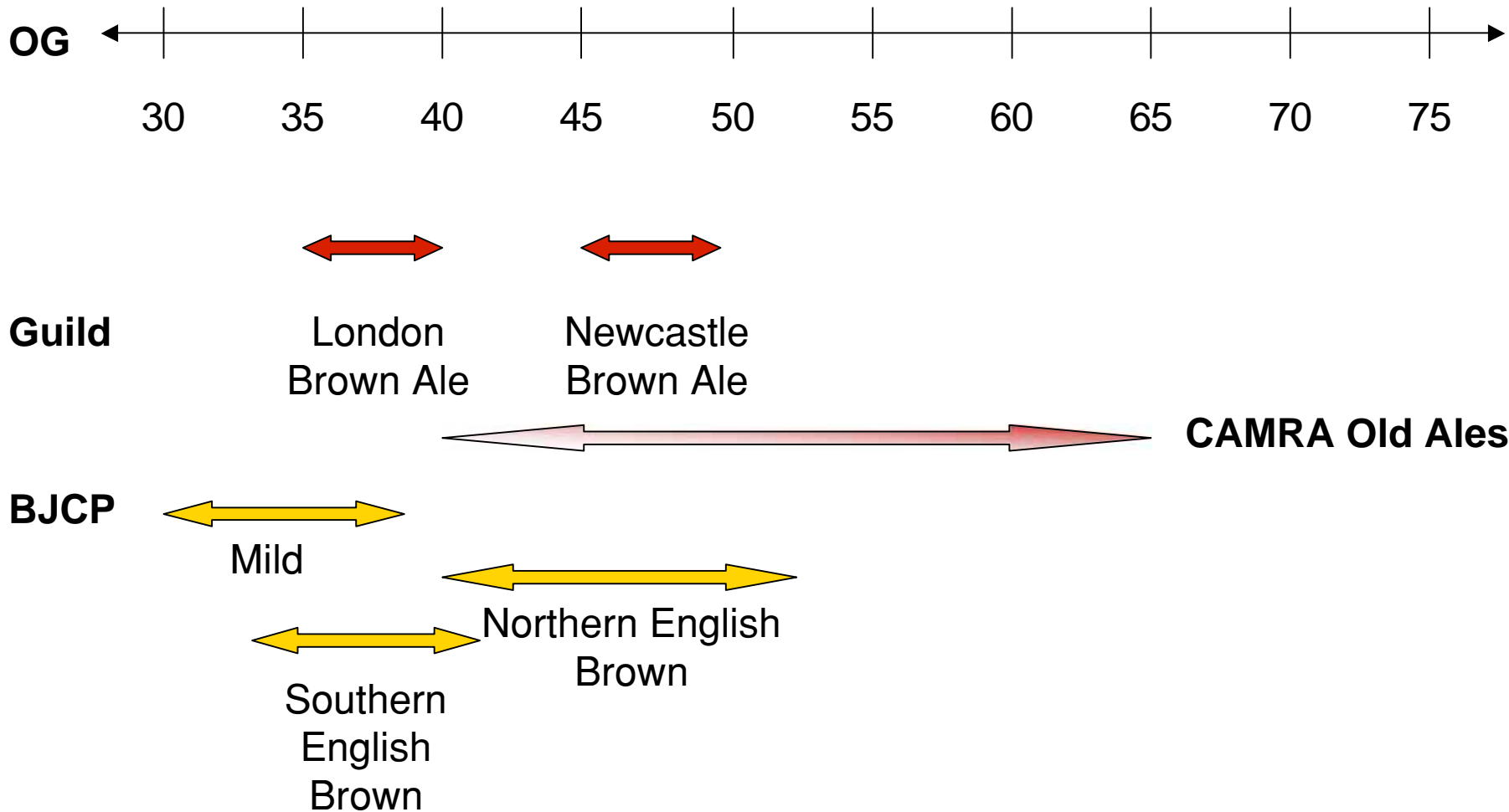
## CAMRA Guide to Beer Styles



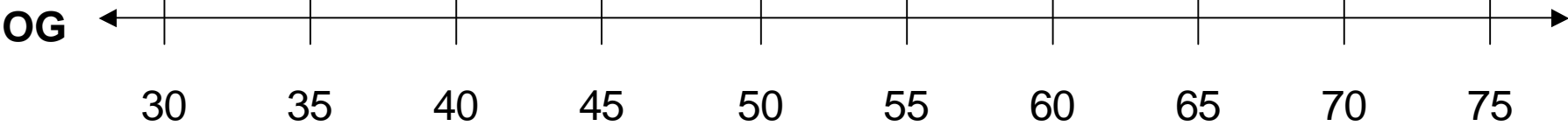
# Pale Ale



# Brown Beer



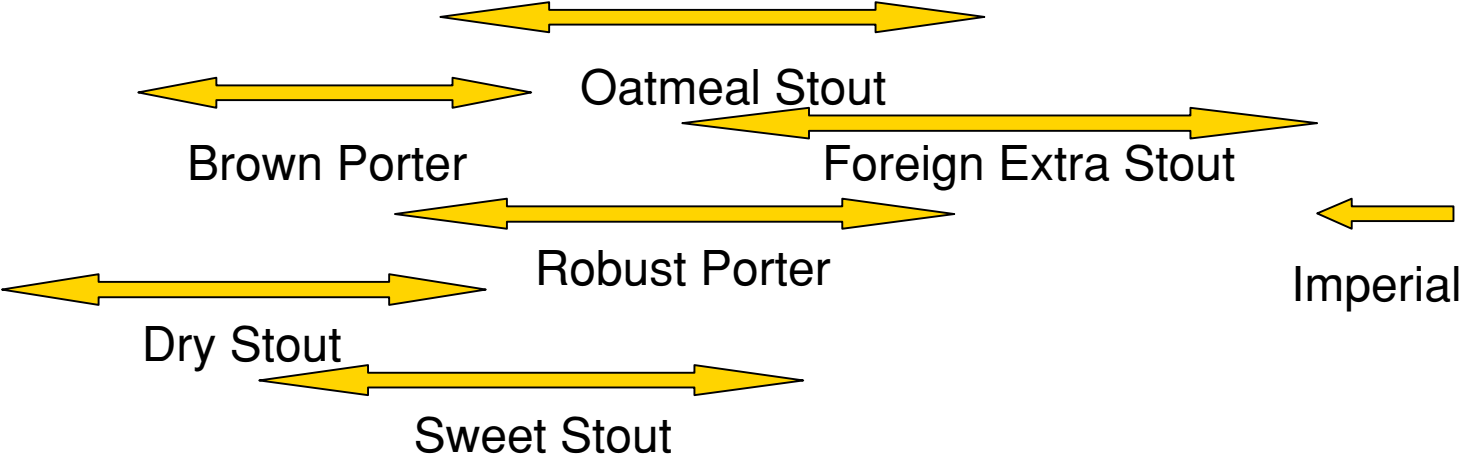
# Porter



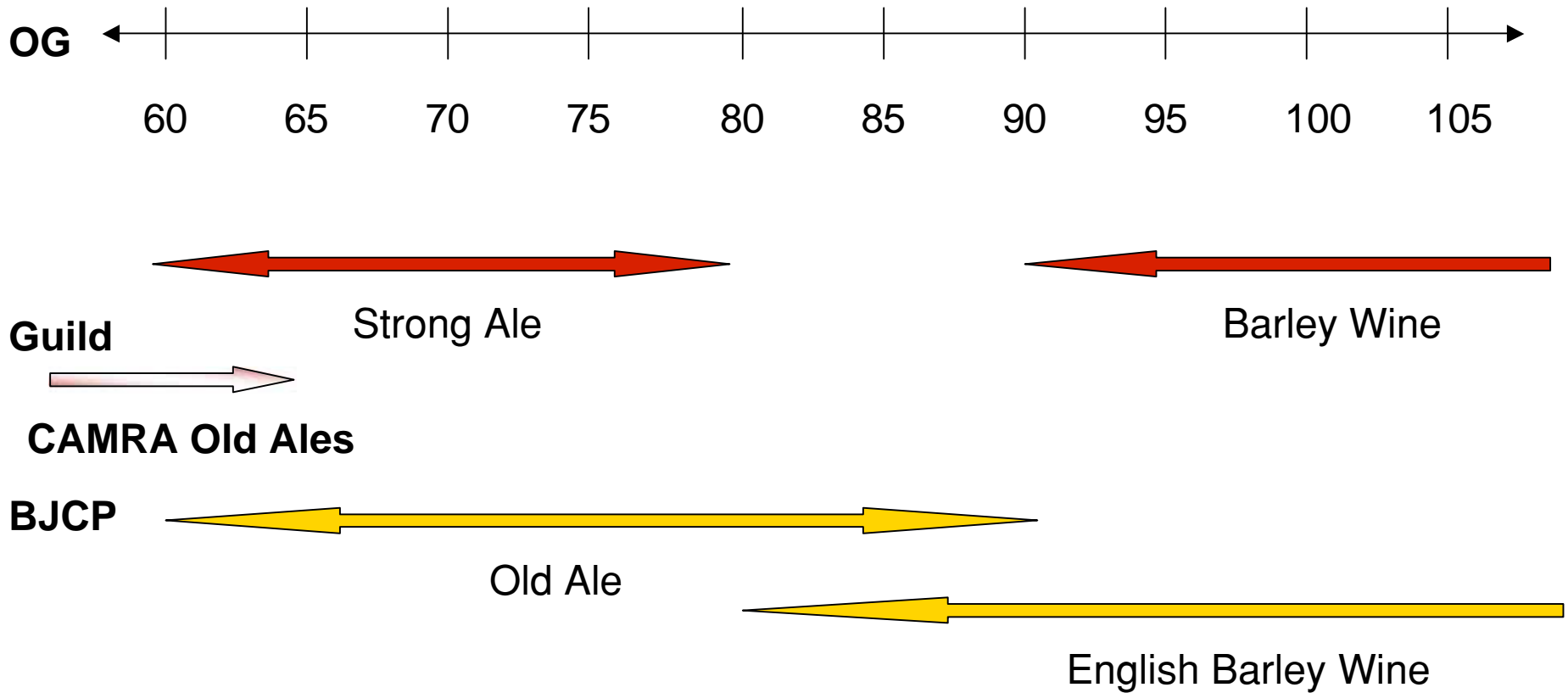
**Guild**



**BJCP**



# Strong Ale



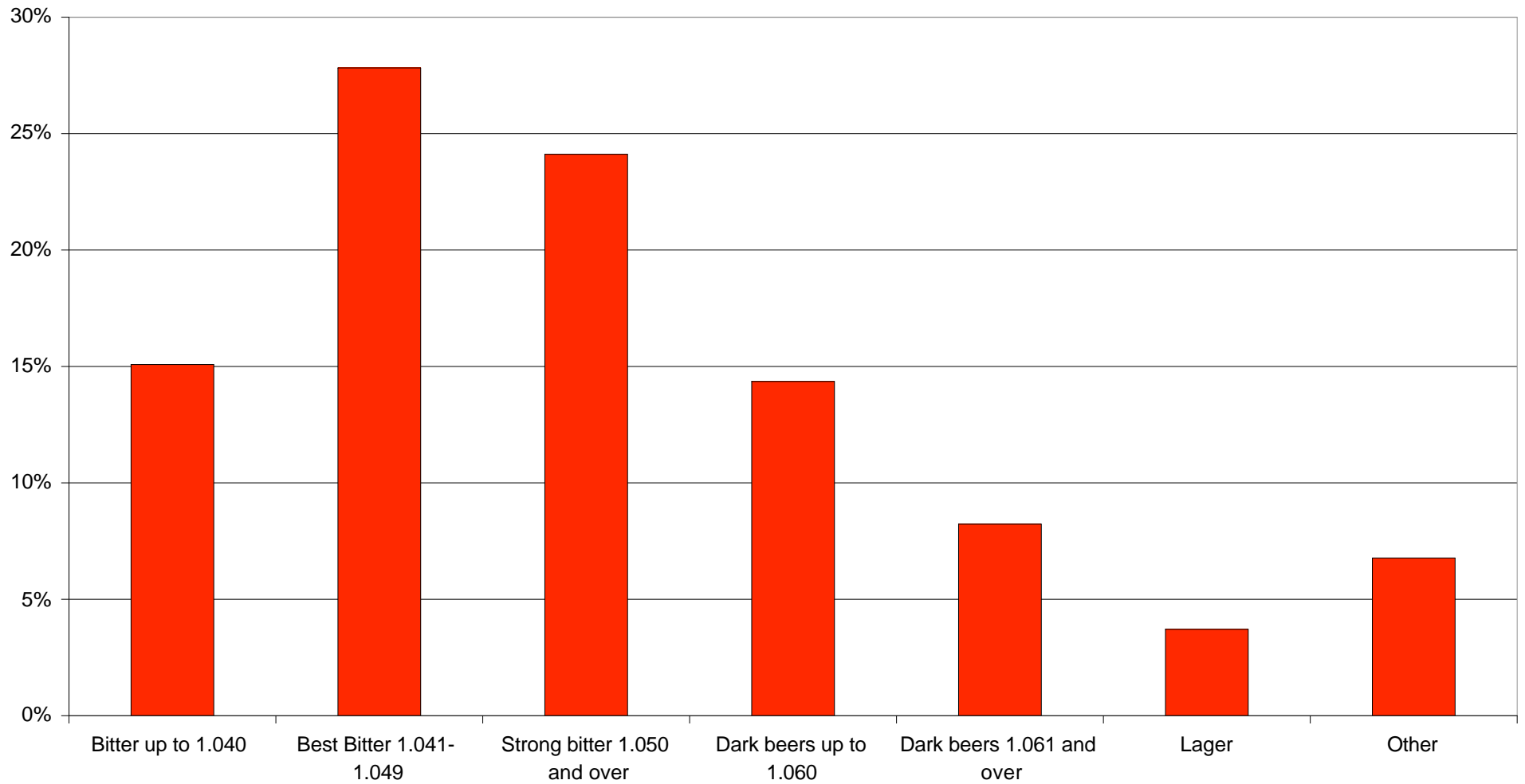
# English Homebrewer Practice

- Ingredient availability is great
- Weather is kind – cool most of the year
- Equipment tends to be basic – dustbin breweries abound
- Real ale is the benchmark, but

AHA impact is increasing, particularly amongst younger brewers



## 2008 Craft Brewing Association National Entries by Style



English Beer Styles

# The Future of English Beer

Perfecting pale ale,  
brown ale & porter

Further exploring our  
heritage



New style development



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# Back catalogue

- Vintage Ale – Not quite a barley wine
- Strong Mild – caramel (OG 1.040 to 1.060)
- Pale Mild – light fruity aroma, gentle hoppiness
- Strong Old Ale – dark barley wines
- Majority Ale – 21<sup>st</sup> birthday brew

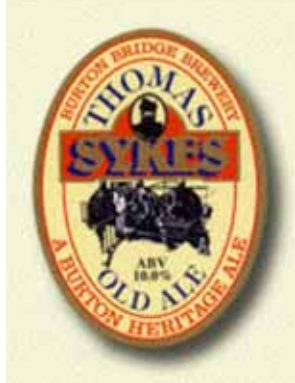


# New development areas

- Golden Ale – pale, strong hop, refreshing
- Fruit Bitters – bitter with a fruit edge
- Seasonal Ales
- Single hop varietal beers



# Brewers to watch



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# Brewing English Beer at home

- Keep it balanced
- Drinkability is important – picture a pub
- Understatement is a virtue
- Genuine ingredients help:
  - Marris Otter
  - Goldings, Fuggles
- For the keen.....



# Visit the London Amateur Brewers



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Questions and comments?

