

BROWN'S



'TIS THE SEASON

A big, bold stout aged on cherries for a subtle fruit finish with a hint of smoke.

Limited release in 16 oz 4 packs.

Keegan Ales, Still Having FUN After 14 Years

BY MARK MARNELL

Tommy Keegan opened Keegan Ales in 2003, in a 19th century factory building that was once the home of Nat Collin's Woodstock Brewing Co. He started out with four signature beers: Mother's Milk, a popular milk stout that accounts for over 50% of the business, a very hoppy Hurricane Kitty IPA, Old Capital Ale (named with a nod to Kingston being the first capital of NY), and Joe Mama's Milk (a milk stout brewed with Espresso).

His key bearing logo was portentous, because his brewery, along with his beer, has become a key part of the Kingston community. Since its inception, Keegan Ales has been a buzzing fixture in Ktown's expanding hip culture and has become a watering hole for local artists and musicians, both young and old. It has also become a must see tourist attraction for the Craft Beer passerby and after 14 years, remains a huge source of local pride.

Ironically, Tommy did not go right into brewing, a profession, that his great grandfather undertook with Schlitz and in which his father became involved as co-owner of the Brickhouse Brewpub in Patchogue. He decided to enlist in the Coast Guard for four years, where a fateful San Francisco assignment introduced him to West Coast beers. When he left the Coast Guard he enrolled at San Francisco State University, learned how to homebrew and obtained an undergraduate degree in Biochemistry



Head Brewer Patrick Sylvester and Owner Tommy Keegan of Keegan Ales.

in 1998. He followed that up with a Masters degree in Brewing Chemistry in 1999 from U Cal Davis, under the tutelage of Michael Lewis.

Returning east, and after stint at Blue Point Brewing, he and his then wife Christy moved upstate and started the brewery together with his father as an investor and consultant. The brewery was an instant success. Over the years, Tommy's 20-bbl system has won numerous awards but most importantly it has won over the hearts and minds of the craft-minded Kingstonians.

He has hired and trained several brewers, some of which have since moved on to New Belgium, Dogfish Head and other larger breweries, but one key personnel change was hiring Patrick Sylvester as his head brewer and production manager. Since coming in, Patrick has helped Tommy expand the beer slate by introducing new signature beers and additional one-offs.

One such beer is enabling the customers to have a whole lot of fun. That is, because this newest, slick packaged, signature beer is a very popular, all Citra-hopped IPA called FUN; and it comes with a sessionable cousin named Little Bit of Fun. For Tommy and his brew crew, the key in the brewery logo has become their symbolic key to success and longevity. A key that opened the door to a brewery providing a local community all that craft beer promises.

Imagine that an Irish American guy named Tommy, who grew up liking a stout named Guinness that hailed from a brewery at St James Gate in Ireland, would ultimately go on to open up his own Irish named brewery, to become famous for a stout on St James Street in America. That brewery, Keegan Ales, has always given its patrons a whole lot of pride and now, it's also giving them a whole lot of FUN! ♦ ♦ ♦

Hudson Valley Hoppenings

A new Woodstock Brewing Co. is set to open in Phoenicia by year end. Scott Shimomura and partner Rick Shobin, with their 15-bbbl brewhouse, will make beers that run the style gamut from hop forward IPAs and Pale Ales to Saisons and Sours. **Rushing Duck Brewing** in Chester recently opened a second space called Duck In, right next to their current location that remains unchanged as Duck Out. The new location is open weekends with food from Christopher's Bistro and 20 taps that will entail lots more small batch beers.

Helderberg Mountain Brewing in East Berne opened their new taproom with four in-house brews, four rotating NY taps, two NY cider selections, local NY wines and some NY spirits. Their latest beer, For Paws English Style Brown Porter (nitro) gives a buck per pint to monthly rotating animal rescue organizations and their new winter beers will include an Old Strong Ale and a Baltic Porter. **Arrowood Farms Brewery** in Accord has begun work on an additional taproom in New Paltz where they will serve their beers and sell their farm raised organic meat, veggies, honey and duck eggs.

Last March, Tom Vance opened his .5 barrel **Hop Barn Brewing** in Greenville and in the spring, he will grow to 2 barrels. Brewing exclusively with Hudson Valley Malt from, his



Patrick Clancey just opened Great Life's new taproom in Kingston.

six on-tap beers include: 5.4% Gose-Goose; two versions of 10% B.C. Russian Imperial Stout (one on Nitro); 8.6% Citra, Mosaic and Cascade hopped Push Me Pull You IPA; 10.5% Belgian Bull Strong Golden Ale and a cider that he made with sour cherries and apples from Bowan's Orchard in Rexford. This Winter look for a traditional Saaz hopped Pilsner, a Milk Stout, and a mildly spiced Christmas Ale.

Mill House Brewing in Poughkeepsie has a brand new extensive menu to go with their latest winter beers – 11% Pandemonium Russian Imperial Stout is out now and 7.5% double dry hopped HUBAR DIPA by year end. The **Bull and Barrel Brewpub** in Brewster just released 12-oz cans of 4.5% Honey Blueberry Ale, 9% Old Bourbon Oak and 7% Devil's Blood IPA. This winter at the pub, two seasonals are available, 6% Vanilla Maple Bourbon Cream Ale and 5% Tiramisu Porter.

The Brewery at The Culinary Institute Of America in Hyde Park just started offering crowsers that you can fill up with current seasonals like 9.3% Scimitar DIPA hopped with Galaxy, El Dorado, Citra and Cascade, a new Class Project Beer made with Crown Maple syrup and and espresso laden 6% Veloute Noir Stout. Look for two collaboration beers this December: a mango-ginger Pale Ale, made with Geoff Wenzel of New Belgium Brewing using some NY raw rye, and a beer made with Paradox Brewing in Schroon Lake.

Keegan Ales in Kingston is releasing three waxed dipped 750-ml bottles of beer: 10% Double Chocolate Bourbon Barrel Aged Mothers Milk, brewed with cocoa husks and aged in Widow Jane Distillery bourbon barrels, their first ever 4.5% Framboise made using plenty of Oregon raspberry puree and their 12.5% Super Kitty Strong Ale. **Brown's Brewing's** annual 8% Dunder and Blixem English Strong Ale is made with cinnamon, brown sugar and vanilla and will be released to coincide with the Troy Victorian Stroll in early December. It joins a 5.8% Rauchbier (Märzen style) made with some smoked beechwood malt and a 9% bourbon barrel aged imperial stout made with dark chocolate, coffee, vanilla, and black licorice notes. Their latest 16-oz canned beer is Black Cherry Stout made with a mix of their Oatmeal Stout and Cherry Razz beers. ♦ ♦ ♦

NOW IN CANS



docshardcider.com