

Uiltje Trackdown

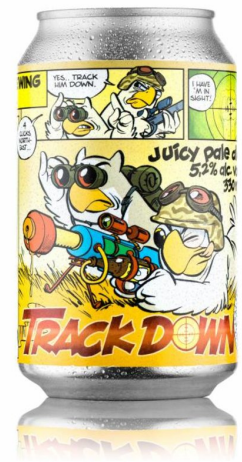
We weren't planning to have Uiltje's Trackdown in the pack this month, but it was sent to us as replacement for another beer that was ordered but unavailable. That, along with our container being a month late means we had few choices.

But it was actually a perfect substitute, and I really enjoyed having this beer again. Described as a juicy pale ale on the label, I think this version of the beer delivers on that promise probably more than the previous batch did.

There is more sweet tropical fruit aroma than I remember, with hints of passionfruit and mango, along with some citrus and pine. Pretty much as you'd expect from a hop bill consisting of Mosaic, Amarillo and Centennial.

Pilsner malt, wheat and flaked oats make for a smooth malty backbone that supports the tropical fruit flavours well. On the finish there is a distinct hop bitterness that lingers in the aftertaste.

It all makes for a nicely balanced beer, perfect for a warm summer afternoon. I've had more than a few of these in just that setting.



Style: Pale Ale
Country: Netherlands
Brewer: Brouwerij het Uiltje
Alcohol Content (ABV): 5.2% (1.35 Std Drinks)

Atrium Florita



Now we are breaking our own unwritten rules this month by having two Atrium beers in the same pack. Our very late container is to blame, and to mitigate this faux-pas we are presenting two very different beers.

The first of which is Florita, the label motto is 'flower power'. It is a Saison with Chinese red hibiscus, orange blossom and yuzu (an Asian citrus fruit).

Unsurprisingly the beer smells and tastes quite floral, which I guess was the intention. There is a solid malty backbone to the beer, and a real sweetness (I'm guessing) from the hibiscus. In behind that is some citrus but it is the flowery hibiscus that is the dominant flavour.

There isn't a great deal of saison character, with the yeast sitting back and coming in late in the form of a nice prickly spice note.

The beer finishes kind of medium to dry, with the good carbonation helping dry this beer up a little on the finish.

Style: Saison
Country: Belgium
Brewer: Brasserie Atrium
Alcohol Content (ABV): 6.0% (1.56 Std Drinks)

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Kees IPA

We often refer to Kees as possibly our most creative brewer, and the creativity extends to more than just the beers. The names of some of the beers are fantastic, but this beer has a very understated moniker.

From a brewers perspective, this is a simple beer. One single pale malt and three hops chosen from the usual suspects for an American IPA in Simcoe, Amarillo and Chinook.

So we'd expect this beer to be full of orange and grapefruit citrus, plus peach and melon along with a dank piney note. Then the Chinook hops are the supporting act, providing a degree of hop bitterness to the proceedings.

And that is pretty much what we've got. The fruity flavours are virtually a roll call we can tick off as the beer progresses. If anything, it is probably a bit sweeter than you might expect, with a slightly heavier malt body than is typical for a US IPA.



Style: IPA
Country: Netherlands
Brewer: Brouwerij Kees
Alcohol Content (ABV): 6.2% (1.61 Std Drinks)

Bevog Ond Smoked Porter

We've now taken a look at a few of the lighter style beers from our new Slovenian (technically Austrian) brewery, so now time to check out the form with a dark beer.

Ond is a smoked robust porter. The smoke comes across as something similar to smoked meat, without being too intense and dominating the other flavours and aromas.

The porter side of things has a rich chocolate and caramel malt body with a strong hint of coffee. It is quite smooth and reasonably full-bodied, with the use of Slovenian and US hops adding a woody, herbal character to the aftertaste.

The brewers have managed to incorporate all of these bold flavours into a beer that has a very nice balance. Typically smoked beers are a little divisive. I'm a fan but I'm eager to see what everyone thinks of this offering from Bevog.



Style: Porter
Country: Slovenia (Austria)
Brewer: Brauhaus Bevog
Alcohol Content (ABV): 6.3% (1.64 Std Drinks)

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Atrium Onyx

Our second beer from Brasserie Atrium is the showpiece in their core range. Onyx is an imperial stout brewed with cacao, vanilla and orange peel.

Of course malt is the hero of this beer, with 15 different malts used in the process. Rich chocolate, caramel, roasted malt, vanilla and to a lesser extent coffee, licorice, a hint of smoke with wood and a mineral spiciness.

We are told there is orange peel in there too, but I really can't seem to find that flavour. I'm sure it's there, but must be pretty subtle underneath all those other robust flavours.

It is a big beer, but dangerously easy to drink. That's always a sign of a good brewer in my book.

This beer will open up a lot as it warms, so do yourself a favour and allow it to stand outside the fridge for a good 10-15 minutes before you pour it.

Style: Imperial Stout
Country: Belgium
Brewer: Brasserie Atrium
Alcohol Content (ABV): 11.0% (2.86 Std Drinks)



Alvinne Land Van Mortagne

The mere sight of an Alvinne bottle induces an eye squint from some of our members, I know. But hang on a minute, because this beer is a little different to the average Alvinne offering.

Land Van Mortagne is described as a Belgian Quadrupel, although I'd suggest it blurs the line between quad and barley wine. And while it contains Alvinne's Morpehus yeast, is it an example of the adaptability of this house yeast that this really isn't a sour beer at all.

A big, rich aroma of caramel malt, raisins, figs, brown sugar and more greets us on the pour. And there is only the slightest sour note hidden well in the background.

These aromas follow through into the flavour. It is a malt bomb, as you'd expect. Again with caramel, dark dried fruits especially raisins, dates, a sugary sweetness but not really in a cloying; maybe thanks to that sour hint. The alcohol is there for a very warming aftertaste.

This beer acts as a base for a few of Alvinne's more challenging beers, like the Cuvee de Mortagne Sauternes BA and the PX barrel aged version – a 16% monster that is way too easy to enjoy. Speaking of which, we have a carton of these in the cool room that have been there for several years, will make some available on the website in the new year!

Style: Quadrupel
Country: Belgium
Brewer: Brouwerij Alvinne
Alcohol Content (ABV): 12.8% (3.33 Std. Drinks)



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