

QUEST FOR THE BARMEN



As I was leaving home in Gold Canyon, Arizona



To drive to Denver, Colorado to see the girls for Christmas



My mind began to wander, as it is wont to do from time to time.

I wonder what a *Barmen* would taste like right about now?

A *Barmen*, you ask? What is a *Barmen*?

To answer that, one has to go back to Germany, where Adolph Coors was born.



Blick auf Barmen vom Hohenstein aus, um 1908.

Barmen was originally developed by one of the rocket scientists up at Coors Brewing Company in Golden Colorado. Barmen is the town or region in Prussia where Adolph Coors came from. Most people think it was "Barman", which is a stupid name.

Pete Coors authorized it and wanted to make a very authentic German-style pilsner. The original pilot batches were brewed at the Sandlot brewery, located at Coors Field. Then they decided they wanted to make it in Golden. So they made it in the pilot brewery for a couple of years up there. Then, for whatever reason, those guys really didn't want to do it any more, and they were going to kill the brand. So we were like, "You know, we need capacity so maybe we could do it at the Sandlot Brewery?" So we had a meeting with Pete and he asked, "Does it make good business sense?" Well, sure. So he said, "Go ahead. You guys make good beer." We've been making it ever since. We've adapted it a little bit for our system. The Coors yeast doesn't work well for us at all. So over the course of time, we've played around with different lager strains and came up with one that works really well here. We messed around with the hops quite a bit, but for the most part, it has stayed true to its original origins. We've been doing that for about three years now.

Andy Crouch: Do you bottle the Barmen as well?

Tom Hail: No, that's draft only. I want to say it's in about 15 or 20 accounts around the Denver area. (Consumers) just rave about it. If we had more capacity, we could probably make more. But it's kind of like a supply and demand thing. There's probably a little mystique to it because not everyone can get it.

What is the Sandlot Brewery, you're wondering?

**SandLot Brewery at Coors Field
(Molson Coors)**
Denver, Colorado

Opened: 1995.

Brewer: Tom Hail.

Annual Production: 4,000 bbl.

The brewery is owned by [Coors](#) and operated by **Unibev**, the restaurant by Aramark and the Colorado Rockies. No beer to go (or packaged), even though it's legal here.

SandLot was named Small Brewing Company of the Year at the 2005 **Great American Beer Festival**.

- **Barmen Pilsner**

American-Style Pilsener

Awards:

- Bronze Medal, 2003 Great American Beer Festival
- Gold Medal, 2005 Great American Beer Festival

Sandlot is the proud owner of numerous GABF medals for its inspired beers, which include two kinds of smoked beers and three pilsner styles. The brewpub is best known for its creation of the successful Blue Moon portfolio, now produced for national distribution by parent company Coors. The pub opened in 1995 when the stadium hosted its first game for the Colorado Rockies.

Just what is the Great American Beer Festival?



Gold Medals & Glory - The Great American Beer Festival

Twenty-four years ago, Charlie Papazian and Michael Jackson thought an American Beer Festival sounded like a pretty good idea. *The Age of the Microbrewery* was just an imaginative thought in the minds of most homebrewers, and beer styles in the United States had not yet been clearly defined by the beer police or any semblance thereof. Despite these little challenges, Papazian decided to forge ahead, and held the first festival in 1982 at the Harvest House Hotel in Boulder, Colorado. In 1983, the **Great American Beer Festival** awarded a gold, silver and bronze “*Consumer Preference Poll*” award. Period!

As they say, “*It just shows to go ya’!*”

The **GABF** is now one of the most prestigious events in the world, the Guinness World Record Holder of beer events. This year 466 breweries entered 2,335 beers in a competition in which brewing excellence claims its deserved reward. Gold, silver and bronze medals are now awarded in 69 categories. The crème de la crème of brewing companies, brewpubs and brewers are also selected as top dogs in large, mid-size and small categories.

The Great American Beer Festival spans three days at the end of September. For 2005, it ran from September 29 to October 1. Attendees received a commemorative tasting cup, along with the privilege of sampling emerging and award-winning beers from “sea to shining sea.” With 1,669 beers on tap, it is the largest selection of representative American beer on the planet.

Seven Golds went to Colorado Breweries, with **SandLot Brewery at Coors Field** ensnaring awards for top-notch **Barmen Pilsner** and inimitable **Pinch Hit Pilsner**. **SandLot** was named **2005 Small Brewing Company**, with **Tom Hail** winning as **Small Brewing Company Brewer**.

Back to my quest.

I got to Amanda's house in Hudson, Colorado and the snow kept coming down. A lot of the roads were closed and cars were buried in snow, kind of like this:





But when a man is on a quest, he can't let a little thing like some snow slow him down.

So I got in my car and headed down the snow-packed streets of Hudson...



And I drove down I-76, got on I-70 and then on to CO State Route 58 to Golden.



I could barely make out the brewery on the south side of the road, but the sweet smell of hops assured me that I was on the right track.



I turned down Washington Street, fearless of the dangers and headed into downtown Golden.



The sight of the Golden Arch let me know that my quest was nearly at fruition.



There, on the right stood Adolph Coors.

I knew I was getting close.



Yes, there he was right where I remembered him to be: standing watch outside of the Old Capitol Grill.



Once inside I could barely contain my excitement as I walked by the bar to check out the taps.



I grabbed the nearest seat and barely got my coat off when the bartender came over.

“Pour me a Barmen,” I requested when the bartender came over.



Seven long minutes I waited...

Finally at last!

My wait was over.

There in front of me the bartender placed my long cherished Barmen.

I took a drawn-out, strong drink and savored that long awaited epicurean delight.

Yes, my quest for the Barmen was over.



I could go home now.

Until the next time I'm in Colorado.

And I can once again order, "Pour me a Barmen, sir!"