

Bar Hoppin' With Hops

The Keep On Hoppin' Tour
Hops MacBarley's Ongoing
Key West Bar Boondoggle

Bar #282:

Bogart's Bar

900 Duval Street

Saturday, 16 December 2017, 6:15 PM

Smithwick's (draught) \$6.00

This place was Bogart's before Hopmania began. But, it changed over and was McConnell's Irish Pub (#67) by the time the *Peace, Love & IPA Tour* graced Key West. But, things happen, and it became Bogart's again. Kinda like how a Phoenix rises from the ashes, but then dies again later and goes back to ashes, and yada yada foonbag.

Anyway, since it was renamed, it was *officially*, a new bar, and hence, Hop-worthy. Trouble is, it was really no different than McConnell's was. If you didn't see the sign, you wouldn't know. Same big cool mirror behind the bar, same nice counters extending out into the room, same cushioned bench seats in the corner, same dark wood pillars, same wood floor, same high-polished bar, same high-backed seats – all the things that I liked about McConnell's and about Bogart's afore that. They even kept the same awning over the front door, but they used a vinyl patch to cover the old name with the even older name.



I *like* this bar. If it was a few blocks farther north, on the Gulf side of The Hill, instead of way up here on the edge of SoDu, I'd be in here a lot. But it's not, so I'm not. 'Tis what 'tis, Liz.

We hit it at 6:15, which is not exactly a crankin' time to visit a bar that doesn't do Happy Hour. Thus, crankin' it was not. We were the crank. Us



three – B&J and I – and the barkeep were, as the saying goes, it. Then Double-A joined us and boosted the crowd size by 33%. He was one-quarter of the crowd, but he had increased it by one-third. He's a mathematical wizard, that guy.

Brian got his usual Coors Light. Double-A got his usual Bud Light. Jan didn't need anything; she still had a goodly slosh of Chardonnay carried over from our previous Hop at Ocean Grill (#281), though I'm sure it had lost its chill by now. I got what I always get in an Irish bar: a pint of Smithwick's (pronounced "Smiddix").

Our barkeep in this Irish bar was Hungarian. We knew that because he was wearing a shirt that said, "Bite me. I'm Hungarian." No, wait. That wasn't right. Actually, he had it tattooed on his chest. Probably. Maybe. Couldn't really tell, since he was wearing a shirt over it. But all Hungarians have that, so it was a safe assumption.

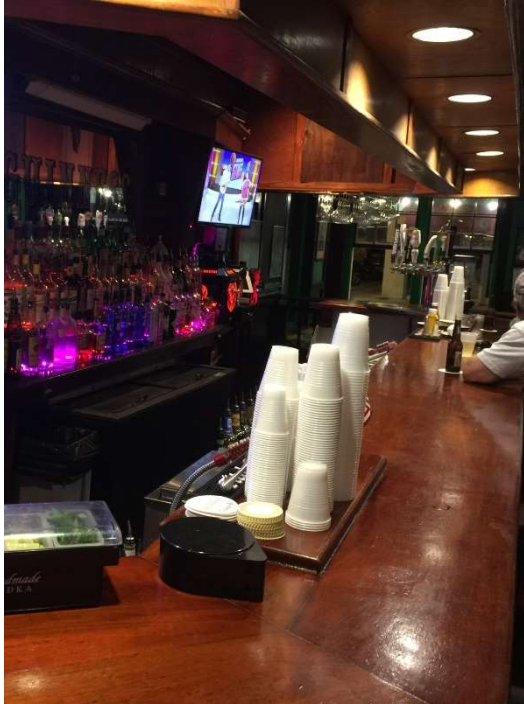


Then he went and told us he was from Hungary. He wasn't a particularly talkative cuss. If we asked a question, like, "where are you from?" We got succinct answers, like "Hungary". Not terse, necessarily, but certainly succinct. Now, before you give me that "hey, those are synonyms" shit, there is a difference. Succinct is like right to the point with no distracting extras. Terse has kind of a *screw you* attitude to it, like when you're pissed at someone and you only say the fewest syllables you possibly can.

So, anyway, I didn't really hear Jan ask him where he was from, but I heard him say "Hungary," so I piped up, "Yeah, actually. Can I get a cheeseburger?" There were odd looks all around, which, of course went right over my head, and then, after he went to the kitchen, Jan discreetly explained to me what had happened. Oh. Ha. Oops. But I still wanted the burger.

A moment of two later, Double-A announced that he was going to order a sandwich as well. And soon thereafter, B&J ordered some kind of appetizer to split. The dinner rush was on!! The kitchen was slammed. Cooks in the weeds. All because the barkeep inadvertently asked us if we felt like eating.

We got our food and were happily munching away, when another customer came in and took a seat at the end of the bar, but he was around the corner of the bar, so he could see us and we could see him. *This* proved to be unfortunate because *he* proved to be a loudmouth blowhard. I forget what



crack in our conversation allowed the bastard to crawl in, but once he was in, he quickly turned the topic to him and launched into dumbass claims and stupid spoutings about things, people, and events that we absolutely gave no shit about.

WTF is wrong with a guy like that? We clearly were content with our own circle, but we were courteous enough not to tell him to mind his own fucking business when he first spoke up. Big mistake. Courtesy is for pussies, after all, apparently.

B&J, seated farthest from him, were able to turn away and tune him out immediately, but Double-A and I were in the trench close enough that he could insist his words upon us. Our replies, succinct at first, became increasingly terse. (Ha.) Even turning to

B&J for the contrived *Oh I Forgot To Tell You*— ploy only gave brief respite. The guy was determined to have somebody to talk at – not talk *to*, talk *at* – and had no use for any return convo from us.

It took longer than it should have, but we finally just turned away from him and refused to turn back. What a freaking moron.

We watched a little NBA basketball, but it turned out that it was replay of the night before and Brian already knew the outcome. That was too weird for me. Since when do they replay regular season games in primetime?

So we finished our food – the cburg was yum – and then had not much of anything to hold our interest – certainly not Moron McDouche – so we bit the barkeep and headed out.