

Bar Hoppin' With Hops

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

Bar #296:

the breakfast club, too

610 Greene Street
Sunday, 27 May 2018, 1:30 pm
www.thebctoo.com

Jai Alai (draft) \$6??

This Hop took two tries. The initial attempt was ten days prior, on St. Pat's Day, after de-roofing from the Waterfront Brewery (#292). B&J had scouted *the BC too* before and found out that they had no nighttime hours – most unusual for a Key West watering hole. But, yeah, *breakfast club*, right? They are open something like 7 AM to 3 PM daily. We approached at about 5 PM. Not gonna work, you say. Well, their plan for this special day included extended hours, so it looked good.

We got there, saw their door open, with a sidewalkside bar set up on the steps and figured we were in like Flynn. [*No, it's not "in like Flint". That's a 1960's James Coburn spy movie. The original saying refers to the elegant smoothness of black-and-white film actor Errol Flynn, who was legendary for being "in" with the ladies.*] I dallied out front so I could snap a few pickiwicks (a) for your enjoyment, and (b) to save a few thousand words, while Jan went inside to stake our claim.



You see, Jan had proclaimed this one to be Her Treat. Most times, I pay my share and Brian pays for both him and Jan. On occasion, either he or I picks up the whole tab. On some of those occasions, we're doing more than one Hop that day/night, so I-got-this-one-you-get-the-next-one is



reasonable. Whoever is thinking ahead will pounce on the 2-for-1 tab and leave the other stuck with the full-price next bar.

So, Jan was taking great pride in doing the treating, and B & I were taking great joy in being the treated.

But we all got tricked. Jan came back out a moment or two later looking vexed. It was a classic first-grade-teacher kind of vexed too: the kind where you keep your composure, but it's apparent to all that the kettle is boiling. All but the most clueless of first grader's get the vibe and know enough not to touch the stove. The most clueless ones, well, it doesn't go well for them.

Jan had been told inside that BC2 was indeed closed and that the sidewalk bar was all that was available. B & I shrugged it off, figuring that *had* to be another bar around *somewhere* in this town, wink-wink, but Jan was discreetly steamed. [We ended up doing that very brief Hop of Wet Willie's (#293), not a great consolation prize.]

So, there was a definite sense of purpose-postponed as we convened here today. I biked over from my shed, but B&J could have actually hopped to this Hop from their temporary abode. Yeah, I suppose I could have too, but a half-mile of hopping would have left me crippled. They can see this building from their yard.

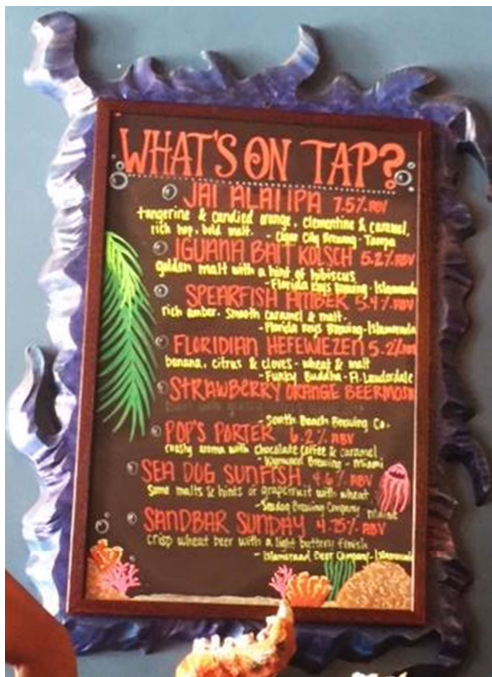
It was 1:30 PM, but, since this is *the breakfast club, too*, and since it was still Jan's treat, I decided to have some breakfast. It *is* the most important meal of the day, some say. But the word itself – break fast – means the first meal after you haven't had one for a while, so if you fast for, say, an hour, your next meal could qualify. It all depends on how you define "fast", I reckon. Anytime you are not eating, you are fasting, yes? When you take a breath between French fries, you're fasting, right?

Nah. That's stupid. Ha.



So, I ordered a waffle! Hadn't had one o' them for a long time. I usually trade breakfast time for extra sleep time, then knock down a Chewy Granola bar and a Coke Classic on the ride to work. Not the healthiest meal, but certainly the most important.

Then I got to wondering. Are waffles just pancake batter shaped differently? Color is similar, and they both hang out really well with maple syrup. The waffle texture seems a bit different, but that could be due to the cooking process.



I asked Jan. She's one of the best cooks I know 'round these parts, so I figured she'd know. I thought it was a simple yes/no question, but she admitted uncertainty. Do you know? Yeah, you. Read on and you'll find out. (Ha, a tease!)

The beer selection here is pretty good, especially for an early-day kind of place. I needed just the top line: Jai Alai IPA, the flagship of the Cigar City Brewery fleet.

Florida is one of the few places in the USA where the game of jai alai is actually still played. Miami Jai Alai Fronton, which was built in 1926, is the biggest in the world, having once held 15,502 people for a match.

The game has a similarity with handball or racquetball in that players propel a ball off a big wall, but in this game they wear a big scoop-like thing on their arm that enables them to zooooom the goatskin ball at up to 180 MPH. It's not exactly a game for the masses because of the need for such specialized equipment and the scarcity of such large walls and huge playing areas. But it's big with the gamblers – in fact, it was banned in the Philippines because of widespread game fixing – and the Florida Legislature passed a law adjusting other gambling regulations to keep the state's jai alai frontons from going out of business. The game is also dangerous enough that fatalities have occurred, so no wonder Floridians like it.

But nobody plays jai alai at [the BC too](#), they only drink it here. Yummm, waffles, maple syrup and IPA. They also drink coffee here, as you'd expect, and even have a Gratitude Island Coffee Company counter right inside the front door.

The name of the place is in lower case letters on the front façade, so I guess they don't want to seem too self-important. But it's a pain in the ass when you have to write/type it. It just blends into the sentence and looks like bad grammar. I finally decided to use italics and blue print to show that it's name, not just working class words.

They are "too" because it's easier to spell than "two", which is more work than either "2" or "II" would be. Just going for the cleverness angle, it would seem. But it refers to this being the second such place; the original link of this very short chain, called "the breakfast club, etc." is in Lake Placid, New York. No, it's not in the lake, but the town of the same name.



I like job that they did with the décor in here, especially the rays hanging from the ceiling and, most especially, the weird squidhorse, diver, and octopus that dominates the wall over the back bar. That's a pic that is worth way more than a thousand words.

This is the fourth Hop at 610 Greene. BC2's predecessors were Chicagos (#239), Shameless (#220), and Solo American Bistro (#108). Sports Page was here before that, and before our tours began.

So, yes, pancake batter and waffle batter are similar, and some people do use them interchangeably but, no, when properly composed, they are not the same. Standard pancake batter is too thin to work in a waffle iron. Waffle batter has more sugar in it for carmelization (which is fancy word for "turning it brown", and more fat in it to make the outside crisper, and to make it cling to the grid. My Google search found some spirited arguments about the finer points of each vs. the other, which was kinda fun, but, well, there ya have it.