



Brewhaha #2: Union Station Brewery, Providence RI

Big Brudda Yeast MacBarley picked me up at Green Airport at 11:30 pm, and we zoomed north from Warwick to downtown Providence. I had scoped out a couple of places in RI's capitol, but only one of them was open this late. I had a map, but immediately off I-95, things didn't match up. Signs were missing or seemed to be pointing the wrong way. We knew getting lost was imminent, so we played it smart and pulled over in the only parking spot we could see, figuring we could find it better on foot.

As we got out of the Mustang, we scanned the area for signs to get a reference point, and the first sign we saw, on the building closest to our random parking spot, said "Union Station Brewery." Well, I'll be dipped. Serendipity, baybee.

Nice stone building, in a modern heart-of-downtown plaza. Interior was brick and stone too and had a used-to-be-a-boiler-room look to it. Not like there were old boilers here and there, but it was a basement in a medium sized building that was probably built 50+ years ago, so it was easy to envision it being used that way.

So, I started my quest for unusual beers by ordering "The Usual, whatever that is." It wasn't a wiseass quip; The Usual was a prominent item on their chalkboard. Before the barkeep could reply, the dude on the stool to my left blurted out, "It's a Pale Ale, not quite as blah blah blah I know so much blah blah hoobie toots." Or something like that. It was the type of blunt interruption that I usually treat with utter scorn, but he actually had just enough good nature in his tone that I let it ride without a grunt. "I'm sure I will like it," I smiled at him, and at the two pretty younger women to his left, who got sort of a there-he-goes-with-his-beer-savvy-again giggle out of the exchange.

The Usual was very tasty. Or as people who know just a tiny bit of Spanish say, *muy tasteo*. I drained it pretty quickly too. Air travel certainly does prime up my thirst. Actually, I reckon most things do.

Yeast was in Sippin' Mode, so I ordered up the ½ Day IPA. My bar neighbor practically applauded, so I knew I had picked a winner. I commented to him that I had rarely met an IPA that I didn't like, and he nodded in total agreement. I showed him my shirt and filled him in on NEBPT. He was envious and wished me a great trip.

They got up to leave shortly before we did, and only then did I notice his affliction. He had those crutch-canes with the arm supports on them and knee-high braces on both legs. There can't be any way to move gracefully with such things, so his



dismounting the stool was a bit awkward and clunky. But he turned to give one more friendly, "Have a great trip, Hops!"

I was glad I hadn't scorned him. The dude really did turn out to be a good egg, and God knows he has enough problems on his daily plate without being scorned by a dickhead like me.

I tossed back the last suds of the IPA, and Yeast and I headed off for the Bay State.

