



Brewhaha #17: Finback Alehouse, Bar Harbor ME

Finback was almost literally right next door to the Whale, so my walk was so short, I barely had time to work up a valid thirst. I did it, but that's just the experienced trooper that I am. This isn't child's play, you know.

Quiet Monday night all around town, I reckoned, as Finback was just slightly more populated than TW had been. It wasn't all that late, about 10:00, but I reckon there weren't many Party Animals on the prowl this night. Maybe it's just as well. It had been a long day already.

But one more brewhaha and one more brew were gonna make the list before this Party Animal called off the jam.

Finback was more of a trendy place, especially compared to the classic pub design of the Whale, but I liked it. The bar was kind of curvy-shaped and the stools were padded with backs.

Backless stools encourage that forward-leaning, elbows on the bar, face close to your drink pose that can be good for conversation, either with the keeper or your neighbors. A true bar has these.

Stools with backs are more of a lounge kind of thing, maybe because you can better lounge back in them without toppling to the floor. Or because the place tends to have a quieter atmosphere where you don't have to hunch over the bar to place your order or hear somebody two stools away.

I suspected that was Finback's true nature, though background noise was certainly not an issue tonight.

It was a small bar, with only about six seats, and the middle one seemed to be the only one not taken. Three local guys close to my age took up the first three, and half-full glasses held the others for the invisible guests.

It wasn't until I settled into my seat that I noticed the barkeep. She was tall, slender, fit, lovely, and friendly. Her hair was blond and shoulder length. I never got her name, but I'm gonna call her Inger because he had a Swedish/Russian kinda look and twang.

Anyway, she ranks waaay up the Best Barkeeps of NEBPT List. Sublime Cleavage Jill may actually outrank her in every appearance category, but Inger had something about her casual stance, her slim jeans, her smirk, and the slightly come-get-me-big-boy gleam in her eye. I think she had a thing for tall older men.

An Allagash Blonde Ale struck me as perfect complement to the atmosphere and company, and it arrived in a brand-specific, chilled glass, but with a slice of lemon draped on the rim. I noted in the Not Book, "when my beer has fruit in it, it's time to call it a night." That slice went from rim to napkin in no time.

There was a lame attempt at conversation with the guys on my left, but they were typical locals scorning a typical tourist. Every comment I made had to be refuted by them. They were just the Negative Boys this evening, and Inger seemed relieved that I had shown up to try to brighten the mood. After a while, Norm Negative, the ringleader,



was forced to agree with me on a couple of things, and actually cracked into a laugh. He caught himself right away, though, and re-stiffened, but softer than before.

Anyway, I polished off my fruity brew. Inger was eager to pour me another, but I was tired and the company (besides her) was tiresome. It had been a lonng day. I packed up, and began the shuffle back to the WV and its glorious moose.

I bid Inger a sad goodnight, and took her smile and “come back sometime” with me to dreamland.

Tomorrow, I'd be up early and heading west, trying to find where that sun went.

