

Bar Hoppin' With Hops

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

Bar #304:

Henry & Eli's Side Street Pub

112 Fitzpatrick Street
Saturday 10/20/18, 7:30 PM

Full Sail Amber (dark)

The namesakes of this latest Hop are dogs. Bow-wows. Canines. Woofies. Bitches, or sons thereof. How come nobody is ever called a daughter-of-a-bitch? I guess because they would just be bitches themselves? Probably.

All's good, though. I like dogs. I used to have one, a Lab-Shep combination named Fredrick The Great. He insisted that everyone call him Fred though. He was a humble pooch. Loved his beer too. That's m' boy.

So, a bar named after dogs works for me.

H&E has sprung up — like many of the 303 previous Hops — where another bar once stood. The most recent was Bruschetta Cucina Italians (#275), which was preceded by, in reverse order, Turquoise (#240), El Mar (#201), and 100 Montaditos (#122).



Did I tell you that I saw another 100 Montaditos when I was in Rome? I didn't? Oh, maybe I had a good reason. Never mind.

So, yeah, here we — that would be B&J and I, plus special guest star Double-A — were, back on Fitzpatrick Street, hopping its only bar. It's fitting the H&E dubbed themselves a "Side Street Pub" because even many lifelong Key Westers couldn't tell you where Fitzpatrick Street is. If you tell 'em, that where Kino's Sandals is, they'll go, "ohhhh, ya, I know where that is," but if you ask 'em what street Kino's is on, the majority will draw a blank.

How much foot traffic does this little red-brick-paved connector between Greene and Front get? Doesn't seem like much. Maybe someone short-cutting to Agave Tequila Bar (#112), or to/from Mallory Square, but, really, what other use does it get? And if people are short-cutting, they're not looking to stop into a bar on a whim. H&E's will need to make a name for itself so people — especially locals — will deliberately go there, and then spread the word.

What will make that happen? A good Happy Hour might do the trick. Locals love to feel like we're getting preferential treatment — like that upstairs bar at Lucy's (#303).



Or some kickass food item that would bring 'em back for more. I had Tyler's Tenders (chicken tenders) and they were awwwesome! Piping hot, juicy, deeelicious, and plentiful. Gooood stuff. No idea about anything else on the menu, but the Tylers were a victory indeed. And they came with Garlic Aioli dipping sauce. Ooooh. Good shtuff.

But I gotta backtrack a bit.

As we walked into H&E's, there was a fairly young, slim dude at a podium by the front door. He wasn't in a tux or anything, and he didn't have a red theater rope like that douchefuck at Coasters (#132) had had. This bloke was just a dude in a t-shirt, pretty much there so people would know that the place was open for bizniz. We already knew, so we gave him a nod and strolled on in.

There were no goats or rabbits to be seen, so went straight to the bar and made ourselves at home. Our barkeep was a familiar young woman. I think we knew her from WOB (#101). Seems like we know a lot of people who once worked at WOB (#101).

The bar is longer than it used to be, though the stools are more basic. The dining area was dominated by one lonng table, but I think that was just because a party of eight large men had pulled a roomful of two-tops



together for their own selfish purposes. No problems with that; if you spend that kind of money, the floor plan is all yours.

Thirty flavors of brew were available for the drinking. I chose one from the taps, the Full Sail Amber, but I think what's-her-name pulled the wrong handle because it

tasted a lot like a porter to me. That was OK, though, as long as it didn't taste like a Bud Light (cringe). It was a good complement to the Tylers. I wondered how it would go with that other menu item called "Lick Your Balls" (an avocado dish). Dog theme, remember.

Speaking of that vile Bud Light beverage, I soon noticed that Double-A, who typically does drink that swill, was holding a white can with an unfamiliar label. He showed me what it was: Henry's Hard Sparkling Water. WTF, Double-A?? But an upgrade, undoubtedly.

This was Goombay Saturday, so we were loosely considered within the bounds of Fantasy Fest. That can mean costumes, revelry, creativity, fun, drunkenness, and bared breasts. And we got a dose of some of that.

A large woman, with "huge tracts of land", which were contained only loosely by a full-torso fishnet, um, garment, sat down next to me. I've said before that sexy does not have to be naked and naked is not always sexy — case in point.

But there are some who hold to the philosophy that Any Breast Is A Good Breast, and I was in the company of one such philosopher.

Brian turned in my direction to start a random conversation, but his eyes were bypassing me like I wasn't even there. "Do you want to switch seats?" I politely offered.

B&J and Double-A also grabbed some victuals. They seemed to enjoy theirs, but, I'll tell ya, my Tyler's Tenders stole the show. Yum yum yum. Gotta bet back for more of those soon.