



The Man, The 40, The Legend

ALKY'S CORNER

Every time you open your eyes, there always seems to be someone in this world you should know. But god damnit, why must this noteworthy person always be the guy that saved Little Tyrone from being swallowed up by Lake Michigan's grimy blue waters or the millionaire that helped the heroic high school kid that had two jobs and was a single parent, go to college. [! MEAN, THESE SUPPORTIVE INDIVIDUALS ARE GREAT AND WOULD BE SORELY MISSED IN OUR COMPASSIONLESS WORLD, BUT I, LIKE MANY OTHERS, WANT THAT SUPERFLUOUS "SOMEONE YOU SHOULD KNOW" VOID FILLED.](#) You know, the individual whose expertise is rooted in an utterly outlandish pot of golden knowledge, yet without the fruitful investigative will power of this talented individual, life would be hard as hell. Enter Bruz. [TO CALL THIS MAN A 40 OUNCE CONNOISSEUR WOULD BE AN UNDERSTATEMENT SO GRAVE, I'D HAVE TO POP MYSELF IN THE MOUTH FOR SAYING IT.](#) This man is to the 40 ounce drinker what Jesus Christ is to the Christian: a savior so grand if the alcoholic ever formulated a Bible about the divinity of alcohol, Bruz's words would be printed in red, or in this case piss-yellow, a color every drinker knows a little something about. Navigating www.40ozmaltliquor.com, Bruz's intensely informative website, is like clicking into the 40-ounce Hall of Fame. [THE GUY KNOWS WHAT HE'S TALKING ABOUT AND HAS TASTED AND CRITIQUED OVER 400 DIFFERENT 40 OUNCES TO PROVE THIS FACT!](#) Not only does he possess the self-proclaimed, "World's Largest 40 Collection", Bruz has bottles that were discontinued before you were even conceived. Have you ever been so interested in 40's that you placed an e-bay bid on a empty "Colt 45 Power Master" bottle, a 40 not made after the year people stopped rocking high top fades, just to obtain the label? Didn't think so! So let's sit back and appreciate all the long hours of 40 intake that Bruz's has sacrificed to make our lives a little easier. Let the man shed some much beckoned wisdom on the tall, beautiful glass bottled Utopia juice we so loving call 40's! »



TEXT: KAI WILSON
PHOTO: BRUZ

KAI: Bruz, it appears you bleed 40 ounce malt liquor. Where did the dream begin? How did the 40 ounce become a passion of yours?

BRUZ: My junior year of college at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ, I moved into an apartment with my buddy Beerface and some other waste who will remain unmentioned. The cabinets in our kitchen had a space between the top of them and the wall that I thought would be cool to line with beer bottles. But it was such a tall space that I thought 40s might fill the gap better. So Beerface and I would go to all the local liquor stores looking for different 40s to drink and put up there... it quickly became addicting. We started driving further and further away looking for more and more new 40s. Not before long, our cabinets AND kitchen table were completely lined with different 40s. It then became an obsession. I went on many road trips with him and other friends, most notably Ford, who coincidentally does not drink at all, but was eager to help me travel down the road to alcoholism. [We went] everywhere, as far south as West Virginia up through Maine, and even into Canada a few times to Toronto & Montreal.

KAI: What's the furthest destination you've ever driven to get a unique 40?

BRUZ: My furthest destination probably was Quebec City, Canada. We stopped in Montreal the first night, which was actually my second time there, but did go further north the next day to check out Quebec City, which unfortunately had the same - yet [smaller] - selection of [40s]. That evening I drove straight back from Quebec City, through Montreal, stopping at the Casino to exchange our money, and back to NJ. I drove 30 min's further south than I needed to so I could drop Beerface back home, then head 30 min's back north to my place. A long night and a long drive, but it was for a great cause.

KAI: It's obvious you don't just drink 40's, you investigate the 40 ounce. Who first conceived the idea of the 40 ounce? Where did the first 40 ounce come from?

BRUZ: You are right, I definitely try to learn as much as I can about the history of 40s, and the question "when and what was the first 40oz?" has been my #1 question this entire time. A question for which I have yet to find the answer, [although] recently was made aware, with proof, that Carling Black Label 40oz's existed in December of 1969! So that is the earliest year and brand that I know of so far for 40s! I actually have the bottle, but not the label attached to it; however, you can see photos of this '69 CBL 40oz with the label and the case it came in with the date on the bottom on my website. One time I had the opportunity to speak with the National Sales Manager of Olde English 800, a Miller brand. I met him at the New York Hardcore band No Redeeming Social Value's DVD release party at CBGBs in NYC. He was there because NRSV is sponsored by OE800 and they were serving the brand in 12oz cans behind the bar, and had OE800 girls giving out free merch. Anyway, he and I talked for quite awhile about malt liquor, 40s, my site, etc... and I asked him this very question. He told me Colt 45 in the 80s. I told him how I know of Carling Black Label to have existed as early as 1969 in 40oz form, and he tried to cover up by saying he meant the 1st big/popular 40oz was Colt in the 80s, but he didn't know what the actual 1st was/when.

KAI: That was pretty salty on that dude. You'd think he'd know a little 40s history considering his employer. Anyway, who was Carling Black First marketed to?

Believe it or not, I don't walk around the streets or live life dedicated to the 40oz! It all began as a hobby that amused me. When it began, there were hardly any sites about 40oz malt liquor and the ones that existed either didn't have much information or had been abandoned. SO MY WEBSITE WAS CREATED WITH THE INTENTION OF BEING THE BIGGEST AND THE BEST OF ITS KIND, BUT IT DIDN'T GET THERE OVER NIGHT. IT IS WHAT IT IS AFTER SEVERAL YEARS OF ADDING AND REORGANIZING. So when I go to a movie I'm not searching out scenes with 40s, but you can believe me when I see that there's a 40 in the background my eyes will catch it.

BRUZ: Carling Black Label was 1st marketed towards middle class white America, as were all beers & even malt liquors back in those days. There are many Country Club Malt Liquor ads from years ago that have an image of the can next to a beer poured in a nice glass and a white family drawn in the background. The text describes it as being something special. In today's market, Country Club 40s & cans do not exactly dominate the white middle class neighborhood liquor stores... they're in the other stores, if you know what I mean.

KAI: Yeah I know what you mean. Nowadays some people think that 40's are kind of a joke to show how "ghetto" someone is. People have this preconceived notion of some dude drinking a 40 in a paper bag in the middle of the projects, which could not be further from the truth. As a college graduate, director of my own non profit as well as a 40 drinkers I feel the image of the 40 drinker needs to be reevaluated!

BRUZ: The image of the common 40 drinker definitely does need to be reevaluated. Look at myself for starters. The 40oz King, a white 26 year old Mortgage Broker with a degree in Economics from Rutgers University. Do you think Pabst takes people like you and I into consideration when they are producing their next St. Ides advertisement? Or the other millions of college kids across the nation that love 40s, and who are at the same time learning how to be fiscally responsible. I mean, more beer, higher alcohol content, less money.

KAI: True, true... hypothetically, if you were approached by all the 40-providers you had an affinity for to be a spokesman, which 40 ounce, living or dead, would you represent?

BRUZ: I would represent Olde English 800, mostly because of its popularity. It would be in my best interest to align myself with the most popular, most widely distributed and most well known 40oz. Plus let's be honest... overrated or not, OE's da shit!

KAI: Do you live your life with the awareness that somehow everything has the potential to be 40's related?



The 40's

40s are basically only available in North America (U.S. and Canada). However over in Europe you can find 1 liter bottles of beer, which would be their equivalent and look much like 40s. A buddy of mine brought me back four 1 liter beers from Spain, which are pretty cool, but I can't include 'em on my site cause like it or not, they're missing that extra special 0.18 liters (40oz = 1.18 L). [NOW I'M NOT TOO FAMILIAR WITH THESE LARGE MILK CARTON BEERS YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, BUT IF YOU CHECK OUT MY 40OZ ARCHIVE AND CLICK ON FALSTAFF, YOU'LL SEE AN OLD MILK CARTON 40OZ THAT IT USED TO BE SERVED IN! IT'S A VERY UNIQUE ITEM WHICH I'VE NEVER SEEN OR HEARD OF SINCE, FOR ANY OTHER BRANDS, AND DOES INDEED LIST ITS CONTENTS AS BEING 40 FLUID OUNCES.](#)

BRUZ: Believe it or not, I don't walk around the streets or live life dedicated to the 40oz! It all began as a hobby that amused me. When it began, there were hardly any sites about 40oz malt liquor and the ones that existed either didn't have much information or had been abandoned. So my website was created with the intention of being the biggest and the best of its kind, but it didn't get there over night. It is what it is after several years of adding and reorganizing. So when I go to a movie I'm not searching out scenes with 40s, but you can believe me when I see that there's a 40 in the background my eyes will catch it. And I should also mention that my site is as large and comprehensive as it is thanks also to the general public for emailing me with stuff to add to it. Even more thanks to The 40oz Crew, the 1000+ members of my message board!

KAI: [The 40oz Crew ..sounds like fun! Are they your running mates, so to speak?](#)

BRUZ: The 40oz Crew is more than just another online forum. They are very passionate about our group and the topic at hand, and will quickly run someone out who is not strong enough or passionate enough to survive. Dozens of members have met each other on several different occasions. Most notably was the "1st Annual Meeting of the Minds" which took place August 2004 in Chicago, IL. 40oz Crew from all corners of the U.S. flew in for the event, including myself, which was being hosted at one of my member's cribs. Chicago having been picked because it was a member, lmissmy64oz, who started the ball rolling. Members from Washington state, Washington DC, Florida, New Jersey, and New York were all representing in the Chi-town for 3 days and 2 nights of chillin' n' swillin'. And there have been other meetings... internationally and domestically in New York. There are photos & even video of these meetings all documented on my website!

KAI: [Chi-town, represent!! Are there plans for any "meeting of the minds" get-togethers in the future?](#)

BRUZ: There is indeed a discussion on the next Meeting of the Minds, which will be in New York City this summer, most likely August sometime. Again we're planning on it being a multi-day/night event, but instead of hosting it at someone's crib we are going to all book rooms in the same hotel and party there as well as tear up NYC! For further details, all you gotta do is peep the message board on my site. Check at the top of the 40oz Crew forum.

KAI: [My friend Lynsee was in South Africa for a few months and drank the equivalent to a 40 ounce there, but it packaged in a milk carton container. Although I can probably safely say all 40's come in that tall, thick ass glass bottle here in the United States, there's got to be something about the labels that keep you hunting and gathering 40oz bottles. Have you collected a label that is simply priceless?](#)

BRUZ: 40s are basically only available in North America (U.S. and Canada). However over in Europe you can find 1 liter bottles of beer, which would be their equivalent and look much like 40s. A buddy of mine brought me back four 1 liter beers from Spain, which are pretty cool, but I can't include 'em on my site cause like it or not, they're missing that extra special 0.18 liters (40oz = 1.18 L). Now I'm not too familiar with these large milk carton beers you're talking about, but if you check out my 40oz Archive and click on Falstaff, you'll see an old milk carton 40oz that it used to be served in! It's a very unique item which I've never seen or heard of since, for any other brands, and does indeed list its contents as being 40 fluid ounces. As far as priceless labels go, there are several which really are awesome. My personal favorite is Laser (editor's note: refer to Top Ten 40's list). I look at that label and images of Atari, disco, & the 1980's flash through my mind. Hi Test, the U.S.'s version of Perfect 10 in Canada, is the only 40oz with a nude woman on it. Although it is hard to see, you can definitely peep some nipple! Bad Frog & Johnny 3 Legs are a couple other cool labels... the list could go on.

KAI: [You literally drench your website with 40's knowledge. I mean you have 100s and 100s of confirmed references to 40's in movies, television, print, even video games, you have 400 plus 40s critiqued, the dog from Nintendo's Duck Hunt double fisting some 40's, the "interesting" Gary Coleman one and my favorite, E.T. looking fucked up as hell. However what caught my eye most was the petition to bring back the 64oz. The day the 64oz. gets re-released, what will you do first?](#)

BRUZ: Almost anything that I find out about that is 40oz-related is referenced on my website. There's only a couple areas I draw a line. I try to avoid adding photos of random people drinking 40s that I find on other sites, so to keep the pics on my site unique to MY site... once in a great while I'll make an exception though if the photo is truly priceless. I also won't add every single solitary reference to a "40oz" in articles/sites that mention them in passing - there are simply too many & that is what Google is for. But any articles or sites ABOUT 40s are indeed linked to on my Links page. As far as the 64oz goes, that is a dream of mine and 1000s of other people across the land! Years ago, several brands produced 64oz (half gallon) bottles of malt liquor, most notably was Olde English 800. They became discontinued and it is my goal to prove there is enough demand for them to bring the supply back! If they are indeed re-released I will be thrilled to know that I played a large part in malt liquor history, and the first thing I'll do is buy 2 of them to celebrate properly!

THE LIST THAT WILL LAUNCH ONE THOUSAND 40 DRINKERS TO THE CORNER STORE (OR AT LEAST ACROSS STATE LINES).

As a person who enjoys the finer things in life, I'm always striving to find the 40 ounce that fits my decadent lifestyle. You know, one whose label matches my new 300mb iPod. Well, that may be wishful thinking, but I at least want to find one whose taste doesn't resemble that of three day old cat piss. Now don't get me wrong, of course I've had wonderfully pissed nights, where visions of Colt 45 Double Malt danced in my head as I attempted to get my next door neighbor naked. but where is the variety? My stock broker tells me to diversify my accounts and my inner alcoholic tells me to diversify my 40 selection. I mean I go to the store and see the aforementioned 40, along with King Cobra and fake 40s like Miller Light and Budweiser. Lately I've been getting frustrated and I can conclude that others have become tired of such repetitive tripe as well. Thank goodness Bruz has devised this list of drinkable goodness. Although some are no longer in circulation, there's still plenty to discover. And just in time for summer: the season of relaxed-porch, 40-guzzling never ending days.

OLDE ENGLISH 800: many 40oz connoisseurs are hesitant to give this too much props, saying it is overrated. As far as taste goes, perhaps it is... there ARE better tasting 40s. But it still tastes good and there are other reasons it's #1 on my list. Even people who are not "into" 40s know of OE800. More songs & media parodies have been devoted to this brand than any other. It is easily available almost anywhere in the U.S., and in many parts of Canada. The label hasn't undergone any drastic design changes, the company (so far) sticking with an awesome & classic design, while other companies are trying to make fancier looking labels, which takes away from the lowbrow appeal of the 40oz, to me.

DOGFISH HEAD LIQUOR DE MALT: This brand came out in the summer of 2004, limited to only 300 cases, and retailing between \$6-\$7 per 40oz, about 3 times more than any other brand! It was made kinda "just for the hell of it" by the Dogfish Head brewing company, and using the finest ingredients. Comparing Dogfish Head Liquor de Malt to OE800 is like comparing a premium beer to Pabst Blue Ribbon. And the Dogfish Head tasted delicious!

AXE HEAD: This brand 1st appeared in Canada as Axe Head, and is currently the strongest 40oz in the world at 11% alcohol! It later started distribution in the U.S. under the name Rock Head, with a similar label & same alcohol content. It's a strong & harsh taste, but at 11% that's to be expected, and it's actually not that bad when compared to many weaker malt liquors... definitely not the worst. And with 40 ounces of 11% brew you know you're gonna be feeling good!

HAFFENREFFER'S PRIVATE STOCK: A malt liquor with an imported taste, as the label declares, and it's true! This is a very tasty malt, one of my favorites to actually DRINK. Also a cool, classic label, makes this a great 40 to strut around with.



MIDNIGHT DRAGON BEER: Midnight Dragon also made an ale & a malt liquor, but their beer was incredibly tasty the one & only time I found it. I don't remember ever enjoying a 40 as much as I did this Midnight Dragon... but that may also have been because I was hiking around the streets of NYC on an extremely hot summer day & was dying of thirst. Either way it stuck in my memory as quite possibly one of the best 40s I ever had the pleasure of swillin.

LASER: A classic & basic malt liquor, with an extremely awesome label. It reminds me of an 80s disco/atari kinda style, and I'm ranking it this high solely cause I love the name & label THAT much. It rules.

PHAT BOY: This 40 was discontinued due to it appealing to young people via it's name & bright colors. But it also had ginseng in it! Phat Boy is a classic not to be forgotten.

CRAZY HORSE (ORIGINAL): The old Crazy Horse was an awesome 40. Classic & good malt liquor taste, in an awesome bottle under an awesome name. The label was clear, with an Indian chief's head as the logo. Native Americans filed lawsuits against the company, claiming it gave THE Crazy Horse a bad image, and the old Crazy Horse disappeared off the shelves for awhile. A bit later it resurfaced in a whole new & more colorful package. It now had a horse's head in place of the Indian chief's, and the label design reminded many of Arizona Iced Tea bottles... mainly because it was made by the same people! Currently that Crazy Horse is being phased out & replaced by "Crazy Stallion", same newer label design, with just a new name. Even if the taste is the same as the original, it's not the same brand as far as I'm concerned.

BAD FROG: This 40 is no longer made & even when it was it was only available in certain states, having been banned from others due to its label & slogans. The label depicts a frog giving the middle finger & the slogans boast a lot of attitude. I'll admit, I never had the honor of drinking this malt liquor (although I once had some 12oz bottles of Bad Frog Light beer), but the story behind it makes it worthy of an honorable mention.

CAMO HIGH GRAVITY LAGER: This was the strongest 40oz around when I got into the malt scene, at 8.5%... since then it's been beating several times over, mostly by Canadian brands, but it deserves respect regardless for paving the path for other companies to start making really strong brews in 40oz size. A kinda harsh taste, but you can get used to it, and an awesome label makes this 40 a classic in my mind. Camo has released several other brands, including Camo Silver Ice at a stronger 9.0% alcohol but the taste is one of the worst around. ■