



RURAD In the Sticks

LEADMILL BREWERY
and BOTTLE BROOK
BREWERY
Producers of Traditional
Hand Crafted Real Ales

In the Sticks

Welcome to the latest issue of "In the Sticks" the newsletter of RuRAD, Rural Real Ale Drinkers. We hope you enjoy reading it.

If you want to receive a copy electronically, e-mail snugdave@outlook.com.

For current & previous issues log on to www.dgmhall.me.uk/rurad. You can also find copies of the newsletter on the Loughborough CAMRA web-site (www.loughboroughcamra.co.uk/newsletters) along with digital copies of other local beer-centric publications.

Well, three months on and "In The Sticks" is still being printed and distributed. Hopefully, the Covid crisis that seems to have hit some of mainland Europe will stay on their side of the channel. The RuRAD Executive and Staff at "In The Sticks" would like to wish all its readers a very Merry (drink sensibly) Christmas and let's hope for a happy and prosperous 2022.

BEEHIVE

151 Peasehill, Ripley
Tel: 07510 431414

Selection of 3 real ales at the Beehive
and 6 real ales at the Honey Pot as
well as various ciders and perrys

Darts, Dominoes and Skittles
on weekly

Quiz night Fridays plus card bingo

Everyone welcome

Beer & Pub News

The **Belper Tap** in Belper has permanently closed it's doors with the last trading day being Sunday 24th October. Presumably a victim of former drinkers pre-lockdown not returning to pubs.

The **Angry Bee** in Heanor will be an even bigger micro-pub in the near future which will necessitate a short period of closure. Mick Ward at the pub sent in the following details:

"Whilst we were in the last lockdown, we opened up the room opposite the "cellar". That helped us immensely with social distancing as well as giving us more seating capacity. We have now been offered by our landlord the opportunity to expand further. The snug at the rear, we will be able to knock through the wall

DECEMBER 2021

and there is a 3mx3m space behind it. There is also a dog leg to the side of that where we can put in an additional toilet and barrel room. We think with the refurb we can get an additional 15 people seated. With a little bit of luck and no complications we think we can finish the refurbishment at the beginning of January. However this would mean we would have to close the 1st week in January to complete the work."

Barrie & Sarah would like to
welcome you to the...



8 Ray Street, Heanor, DE75 7GE

UP TO 6 EVER-CHANGING
REAL ALES + CIDERS

Family run real ale bar. Something for all
in a relaxed, comfortable setting.

Dart & Dominoes every Tuesday
Quiz night on Thursdays

Children & dogs welcome
Beer Garden at rear



The **Crooked Cask** at Heanor is planning to brew beer on site, with a couple of test brews already done. One of these is **Go With The Flow**, a 6% malty beer which is just up my street. Looking forward to when the beer is flowing on a regular basis. **Charisma Bypass**.

The **Dew Drop Inn** at Ilkeston no longer offers a 30p reduction on a pint from Monday to Wednesday. Sad Face. :-)

The **Barley Mow** at Kirk Ireton is closed on Mondays & Tuesdays (according to Facebook and Charisma Bypass!).

The **White Lion** at Swingate, near Kimberley has closed and will not be re-opening and has been put up for sale. This is a former GBG pub and could be a real opportunity for somebody with a bit of vision as it has been a very successful pub in the past. **Didler**.

On 27th October, the former Rowells shop in Long Eaton was finally granted permission for "change of use!" How long it will be before Erewash Borough Council will grant them a premises licence is another matter. **Big Al**.

Andrew Ludlow (Secretary, Nottingham CAMRA) contacted "In The Sticks" to say that a Hucknall Real Ale Map has been created and can be downloaded from the Nottingham CAMRA web-site. It's well hidden mind you! Look under Campaigning-

>Crawls, Trails & Strolls->Nottingham Pub Crawls.

Emily & Ben at the **Smithfield** (Derby) have had their van repainted to say "POTY four years in a row" to save having to add the extra year each time. Until they get it next year as well of course!

Contributors: Andrew Ludlow, Big Al, Charisma Bypass, Chris P Duck, Didler, Mick Ward, Snug Dave

Amber Valley CAMRA Beer Festival Update

The 2022 Amber Valley Beer & Cider Festival was discussed and officially approved at the meeting held in the Steampacket Inn on 4th November. The plan was accepted unanimously by the meeting and will therefore go ahead with Nigel Heathcote as Festival Chair. It is an ambitious plan for a relatively small branch and more help is needed both during the planning phase and the festival itself. In particular a Treasurer, Staffing Officer, people to handle publicity, program and sponsorship are all required.

If you are interested in getting involved with either the organisation of the festival or working at the festival itself please attend the next meeting which is at 8.00 pm on Wednesday December 15th at the George and Dragon, Belper, or e-mail nigelheathcote@live.co.uk.

Nigel Heathcote
Festival Chair (AV CAMRA)

April and the team welcome you to the

THORN TREE INN

21 Chesterfield Road, Belper
Tel: 07974 470774

Winner of the Amber Valley
CAMRA Winter Ale Trail 2019

Live Music --- Quiz Nights

Family and dog friendly

Real Ale, Real Cider, Real Fire
Real Pub

RuRAD Xmas Outing

Having been abandoned in 2020, the get together this year will be held in Wakefield

on Saturday 18th December. Please check train timetables from your local station as it is possible to get direct trains from Langley Mill, Alfreton and Derby or you can change at Chesterfield or Sheffield. Also think about splitting your ticket at Sheffield as from Derby, this works out much cheaper! You don't have to change trains - it only has to stop in Sheffield! Ludicrous isn't it? Please also note that Wakefield has two stations: Westgate & Kirkgate. The plan is to meet at the **JDW Six Chimneys** pub at about 11.00 and explore the town from there.

It has also been suggested to visit a National Inventory pub called the **Kings Arms** in Heath (about 2 miles from Kirkgate station) should people wish to do so. It's an Ossett pub so the ale should be good.



Beer Festival Reports

Golden Eagle & Dead Poets

On Wednesday November 15th I was at the **Golden Eagle** festival in Derby. Bald Eagle and myself started at the old jail across the road from the pub, where two beers were on the stillage - **Hilltop Blonde** and **Return Of The King** from **Leatherbritches**. The highlight for me was the impressive old jail, full of history and character with all the old cells - you could not imagine that this once used to be a night club? Across the road at the pub, there were 12 beers - I sampled the **White Rose White Dragon** (4.2%) and the **Green Duck Session IPA** (4.0%). Bald Eagle stuck to the dark stuff. The **Fixed Wheel Blackheath Stout** at 5.0% went down well. Only a shame that they charged more for two halves than a pint - "you get more beer" so the landlord told me!

The day after saw me at the **Dead Poets Inn** beer festival, which didn't seem to be too well advertised. "It was on Facebook" isn't much use to people who don't use Facebook! I only spent an hour here, but was impressed with the quality of beer. There was also a good range of ales on the bar. I had the **Acorn New English CF-185 IPA** (5.0%) and the **Bingley Sonoran** (5.6%) - the better half (so she keeps telling me!) had the **Titanic Plum Porter** and the **Blackthorn Sloe Porter** from **Settle**. I finished off on the **Three Sods Dark Magus** milk stout (4.7%). An hour well spent. **Charisma Bypass**.

Spotlight on...

Having recently discovered the location of

the Bentley Brook Tap near Matlock, "In The Sticks" contacted brewmaster, Kurt Baker for more details about his business which he was happy to share with us. And so we shine the RuRAD Spotlight on the...

Bentley Brook Brewing Co.

The Bentley Brook brewery is located in an old mill close by the Bentley Brook itself in the picturesque Lumsdale Valley just to the east of Matlock. Contrary to what some people believe, there is no connection with the Bentley Brook Hotel in Fenny Bentley but it's likely that the confusion arises because the Leatherbritches brewery was based there from 1994 to 2008 when it moved to Ashbourne (although it is now located in Smisby near Ashby-de-la-Zouch). But hey! Enough about them.

Owner and brewer, Kurt Baker's interest in beer stems from being a home brewer and an enjoyment of drinking beer. In his own words:

"I studied Aeronautical Engineering at Loughborough University, so enjoy the mechanics of a brewery, but in terms of brewing techniques, I'm pretty much self taught through a lot of trial and error! I have a twin brother (Chad) who actually runs a small brewery (Plot Five), so we help each other out with tips and suggestions.

"As mentioned, I've previously worked in the engineering world, as well as in IT. However, I currently split my time between brewing and glass blowing in a studio situated in the same mill as the brewery. We've had plans to create an experience weekend which would include blowing a drinking glass and brewing a beer, but we've yet to organise it. I think we could do with an eighth day in the week to fit it all in!"

Angels Micro Pub

**29 Market Place
Belper DE56 1FZ**

**Serving up to nine (or more)
real ales from the barrel and a
similar number of ciders & perries**

**Amber Valley CAMRA Cider POTY
Winner 2020**

**Amber Valley CAMRA Mild Trail
Winner 2019**

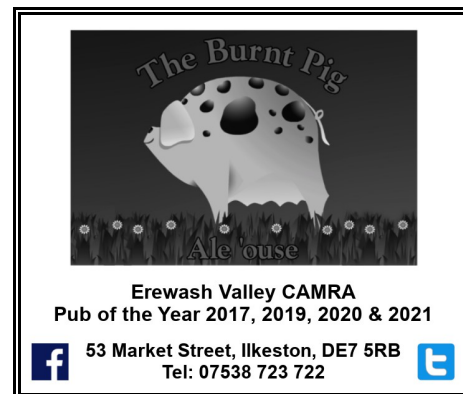
On the subject of how the business got established, Kurt continues:

"We started off on home brewing scale kit, and got set up with HMRC etc. with that in my kitchen. Following moving and scaling up, they had to do a few further checks, but it wasn't too bad on the whole. Quite a lot of paperwork and interviews, but it's just a case of answering questions clearly and being as organised as you can!

"We got set up with our own taproom in the brewery a couple of years ago. This was a little complicated, but the council on the whole were pretty helpful. It's good to see small businesses

given a chance to give things a go and have an additional sales channel, and the taproom has been critical to us being able to operate and grow."

Bentley Brook currently have about seven beers which they brew "on a seemingly random rotation". However, Kurt generally only brews the darker beers, including Wappers, their 6.3% Belgian Dubbel, in the Autumn/Winter. They have about a 50:50 split between cask and craft keg "both of which have their benefits and challenges".



As far as naming the beers is concerned:

"It's usually either myself or a friend/family that come up with a suggestion. Some are a bit random, but some have a little more meaning to them. Djambo Untrained is probably my favourite (Jam being one of my dogs, and me being a fan of Quentin Tarantino), but Down Dale is a little more meaningful, giving a nod to the chap, Andy Dale, who saved my dad's life with CPR. Andy won't be paying for any beer when he gets a chance to visit the taproom, that's for sure!"

Most of the brewery output is sold through the taproom but some has found its way to the Feather Star in Wirksworth, and Twenty Ten and the Newsroom, both in Matlock. Charisma Bypass also reported that he sampled **All Together** (6.5%) at the Barrow Hill Rail Ale festival in September. Kurt is hoping to expand the wholesale business so that it will be possible to find Bentley Brook beers in a few more bars in the near future.

On the subject of the impact of Covid & Lockdown, Kurt has this to say:

"Covid made us think seriously about how to develop online sales. We were able to quickly knock up a basic online shop and I added delivery driver to my list of jobs! I actually enjoyed doing the deliveries, but there's no denying that it wasn't really sustainable from a business perspective in the long term.

"Now that the situation seems to have relaxed a bit, we need to up our game on the wholesale side of things. I've had pubs and bars enquire about the beer, but I'm usually so busy with everything else, that I find the task of delivering, collecting and tracking dozens of casks and kegs around the county rather daunting - never mind finding the time to brew more beer!"

And a final word from Kurt about what he does for relaxation:

"I love most things about the business and I genuinely enjoy brewing but when I'm not occupied with work, I like to go for walks with the dogs, preferably to a pub! I also enjoy watching Matlock Town FC and Derby County [both teams may be in the same league before too long the way things are going! Only Joking! Ed] on the odd occasion. Generally though, knocking about with friends and family is how I'd spend my spare time, I could just do with a bit more of it!"

Many thanks to Kurt for taking the time and trouble to tell his story to "In The Sticks".

Pete and Tracey welcome you to
THE RAILWAY
25 King Street, Belper

Serving 8 Cask Ales, 6 Craft Beers
and Real Cider
Star Bars Cask Ale Finalist 2019
Quiz Night every Wednesday
Live Music at week-ends
Food served until 8.00 pm
Family and Dog Friendly
Fantastic Outdoor Garden

Out & About

St Albans, October 2021

On the first day of October, I met Tippers and Barry at Long Eaton station to catch the train to St Pancras. On arriving in London, we were joined by Phil and caught our connection to St. Albans. From there we took a cab and we soon arrived at our first pub the **Six Bells** which was partaking in a tap takeover by **Vale Brewery** of Brill. Four of their beers were on offer and we all plumped for **VPA** which was outstanding - so much so that two pints each of that very ale were consumed with the exception of myself who had **Oakham JHB** as my second drink. After walking through the picturesque Verulamium Park, we entered the **Ye Olde Fighting Cocks**, reputedly England's oldest pub. Offerings from **The 3 Brewers**, **The Mighty Oak Brewing** and **Farr Brew** were available, all sampled and in fair condition. Far better than our previous visits here! Walking into the city centre, after passing the impressive St Albans Abbey, we reached the relatively new **Mad Squirrel Tap**, owned by the aforementioned **Mad Squirrel Brewery**. Only two cask ales were on offer here and average to say the least. A beer festival was due to take place the same day but the casks on stillage had not even been tapped yet! A wasted journey here was not helped by pretentious hipster figurines masquerading as bar staff and not serving full measures! Close to the market place was the **Boot Inn**. Plenty of choice here with beers from **Five Points**, **Siren Craft** and **Bristol Beer Factory** being quaffed and all were first class. This pub has improved year upon year during our visits to the city.

After a quick Greggs break, we took a steady

walk to the **Garibaldi** which is a **Fuller's** house. **Dark Star APA**, **Fuller's ESB** and **Red Fox** were purchased and downed quite easily in a resplendent beer garden. Literally around the corner was the **White Hart Tap** where a mini beer festival was being held and ales from **Purity**, **Tring** and **Siren Craft** were imbibed outside on their front terrace. All ales were in top order. Not too far away was the **Farmers Boy** a locals pub which did not have the greatest choice of beers but the ales we had from **Church End** and **Nailmaker Brewing** were spot on. Walking uphill and passing CAMRA's HQ, we arrived at our final destination the **Robin Hood** which the previous night had been awarded the POTY by the local branch. A true locals pub in the proper sense. Beers supped here came from **Hornes Brewery**, **Purity** and **Harveys** of Sussex. After finishing our drinks and feeling slightly wobbly, we weaved our way the short distance to St Albans City to commence our journey home via "The Smoke". **Big Al**.

Sally, Jean & Steve
welcome you to the



55 Green Lane, Ockbrook
Tel: 01332 662378

Country Pub of the Year
2011/12/13/15/16/17/20

Bass + 3 Constantly Changing
Guest Ales Available

Norwich, Sept 2021: Day 1

Earlier in the year, it was announced that Norwich would be celebrating a City of Ale event during September but sadly, this was cancelled and will now take place (pandemics permitting) in May 2022. Despite this setback, I joined up with the Jedi and we headed off to Norfolk for a couple of nights. We stayed in The Town House, a little way out of town on the Yarmouth Road but on a bus route and had the advantage of having parking and also access to a very good carvery restaurant.

On arriving into Norwich, we announced our arrival at the hotel and then caught the (very cheap) bus into the city centre, heading first for the **Murderers** pub (aka the **Gardeners Arms**). As a result of having to close temporarily due to a member of staff having contracted Covid, the management had insisted that visitors must show proof of double vaccination. Although we came prepared, the rule had been dropped by the time we arrived. The landlord - maybe the bar manager - told us that it had caused quite a stir with the press having picked up the story which resulted in a crowd of anti-vaxxers turning up to demonstrate - including that well-known rational, conspiracy theorist, Piers Corbyn! We were told that one protester said she would never drink in the pub ever again...

but since she had travelled down from Carlisle, the management were not too concerned about the potential loss of trade. Anyway, we were made very welcome into this sizeable pub and had a choice of seven ales - fewer than in normal times - from **Adnams**, **Sharps (!)**, **Wolf**, **Parkway**, **Fengate** and **Mithril**. As usual with trips of this kind, it wasn't possible to have more than one drink in each pub, however nice they were.

We then walked through the Market Place and main shopping area to reach the **Vine** which, reportedly, is the smallest pub in Norwich. Really, it's more of a Thai restaurant but they had four ales on the bar from **Oakham**, **Fat Cat**, **Elmtree** and **Rudgate**. Just a swift half here (**Elmtree Best Bitter**) and then it was on to the **Plough**. By this time we were noticing that there are a lot of churches in Norwich - more medieval churches within its walls than London, York and Bristol put together, according to John Betjeman in 1974 - although many of them seem to have been deconsecrated and the buildings used as art galleries or antique/collectors centres. The **Plough** was taken over and refurbished by **Grain** brewery and is their Brewery Tap in Norwich. Very stylishly finished in modern colours and wood, there were three of their ales on and we sampled the **Best Bitter** (4.2%) which was OK, but a bit thin. Perhaps the **India Pale Ale** (6.5%) would have been a better choice?

DAVE and MANDY invite you to the

THORN TREE INN

161 Church Street, Waingroves

Serving a changing selection of
Real Ales, Ciders, Wines and
soft drinks

Quiz Night every Wednesday
Starts at 9.00 pm

Open mic night every other Thursday
See Facebook for details

Dominoes every Monday
New players welcome

We then have a 10+ minute walk to reach the **Alexandra Tavern** which is an old-fashioned, corner-plot pub in a residential area. It's interior is unspoiled with lots of nautical pictures and memorabilia. Only three ales on offer (with one clip turned round): **Oakham JHB** and two from **Mr Winter's**, a Norwich brewery - **Best Bitter** (4.2%) and **Vanilla Latte** milk stout (4.5%). It was then a short walk to the **Fat Cat** pub, twice winner of the CAMRA National POTY and an unmissable destination in Norwich. It is a multi-roomed house with very much an old-fashioned pub atmosphere. The beer menu comprised 20 cask ales including 2 dark beers, 15 craft keg beers and 10 ciders/perries. Talk about being spoilt for choice. There was a good selection of beers and ciders from the **Fat Cat** brewery itself plus a number from **Green Jack**, based in Lowestoft. But if mainstream brands are

more to your taste, they also stock **TT Landlord, Oakham, Adnams, Black Sheep** and so on.

By this time it's getting towards late afternoon so we headed back into Norwich and fortunately found a bus going our way. And then we took advantage of the carvery which proved to be very substantial and good value for money. **Snug Dave**.

Birchover & Wirksworth

After a Peak District walk on Monday 11th October we visited the **Druid Inn** at Birchover - it must have been around 30 years since my last visit. It was good to see that whilst being a dining pub it has retained an area for local and visiting drinkers plus has plenty of outdoor seating in a terraced garden. It was also good to see no national ales, just a range of local ales on the bar. I sampled **Bradfield** seasonal **Farmers Jack O'Lantern** which was decent with their **Farmers Blonde** also on along with **Peak Ales Chatsworth Gold** and **Bakewell Best**. Moving back nearer to home we also visited the **Nelson Arms** at Middleton by Wirksworth. I always find this has very good beer, at least as good as some GBG entries and my **Leadmill Wild Rover** was excellent. They usually hold at least one **Leadmill** ale and on this occasion **Fluffer** was a second option with **Pedigree** and

Dancing Duck Ay Up also available. Still my choice for the best ales in the Wirksworth area. **Chris P Duck**.

Sheffield, 23rd October

A while back HH suggested a wander round Sheffield for a change and having not been to Sheffield since the last time the RuRAD Christmas gathering was there, I thought it a good idea - he does have them..... occasionally. So on the morning of October 23rd I got to Derby station for the 10.34 only to find EMR in turmoil with all St Pancras - Sheffield trains severely delayed or cancelled due to an incident outside Leicester. There was a Newcastle train not too long after about which I informed HH and he joined me on that at Chesterfield.

We got into Sheffield at about 11.15 and took a stroll to the **Riverside**, which opens at 11.30, and found 5 pumps on the go with **Abbeylea Hopback Jester Olicana** and **Thornbridge Market Porter** being sampled. Then is was a short walk round to Kelham Island where our first port of call was a new pub for me, the **Taphouse**, which had 3 ales on offer and **Acorn Blonde** was in fine form. We then moved on to another new pub for me, the **Millowners Arms** and we found 3 beers available with us both going for **Bradfield Farmers Jack O' Lantern**, which was

a bit wishy-washy I thought. The **Fat Cat** was next where of the 8 wickets we went for **Empire Aniseed Porter** and **Chin Chin Quantum Shift** before moving on to the **Shakespeare** and a third of **Bang The Elephant Diabolito rum and raisin** was favoured of the 7 ales listed. We nipped across the road to the **Bar Stewards** where of the 3 beers on offer we had **Errant Straight Up** and **Redwillow Sabro Simcoe** before moving on to the **Crow Inn** to find 5 beers on the go. HH had **Wild Beer Big Bibbler** and I went for **Liquid Light Day Tripper** (managing not to break into song).

Then it was on to the **Perch Brewhouse**, which is the home of **Dead Parrot Beer Co**. Of the 10 hand pumps on the bar only 4 were in use with 2 of those dispensing house beers, which were both tried and in good order. I went for **Norwegian Blue** and HH had **Pen-Ale-Ty Charge Notice**, which the barman said actually means something in Welsh but derives from the original use of the building (something to do with traffic wardens). We got the tram back to the station where the EMR trains were still TU so we got a Nottingham train to Chesterfield and a train back to Derby from there. We called in the **Brunswick** and the **Smithfield** on return before heading our separate ways. A good afternoon out. **Rodders**.

Beer Festival Diary - Near and Not so Near

2nd-5th Dec. West Bridgford RFC Beer Festival. Stamford Road, West Bridgford. 16 ales, 3 ciders. Belgian, Czech & German ales
18th Dec. Christmas (Tickers Ball) Festival. The Fat Cat etc. 23 Alma Street, Sheffield
9th-12th Feb. National Winter Ales Festival. New Bingley Hall, 1 Hockley Circus, Birmingham. 250+ ales, 50 ciders & perries

30th Nov-4th Dec. 36th Pigs Ear Beer Festival. The Round Chapel, Powerscroft Road, Hackney, London. 175 ales
4th-5th Dec. Humpty Dumpty Brewery Open Weekend. Reedham, Norfolk


11th Dec. Haddenham Winterfest, Haddenham Youth Centre, Woodways, Haddenham, Aylesbury, Bucks
21st-22nd Jan. 32nd Exeter Festival of Winter Ales. Exeter Football Club, St James Park, Stadium Way. 70 ales 12 ciders
26th-29th Jan. 14th Colchester Winter Ale Festival. Colchester Arts Centre, Church St, Colchester. 130+ ales 30+ ciders

We advise confirmation of dates and times before attending the above festivals, as changes may occur.

Well that's all for this issue folks. If you have any info or news which could be included in a future issue of "In the Sticks" please contact Charisma Bypass on 07891 365887 or Snug Dave at snugdave@outlook.com by the 23rd December.

Edited by Snug Dave

Many thanks to all our contributors and the "In The Sticks" distribution team: The Baron, Big Foz, Charisma Bypass, Del Boy, The Jedi, HH, Konrad, and Sooty. Apologies if I've missed anyone. Thanks also to our advertisers without whom this newsletter would not get published.



The Dew Drop Inn
Ilkeston Junction
Traditional, unspoilt,
Victorian Pub in the CAMRA
heritage pub guide
(Ilkeston's best kept secret!)

A selection of the finest cask ales,
ciders, craft beers and bar snacks

Two minutes walk from Ilkeston train station

Mon-Thur: 4.00-10.00, Fri: 2.00-11.00
Sat: 12.00-11.00, Sun: 12.00-10.00



Meadow Road, Derby, DE1 2BH Tel: 01332 986601

**Derby CAMRA Pub of the Year
2018, 2019, 2020 & 2021**

**East Midlands Pub of the Year
2019**

Tickers Paradise, 9 ever changing ales
from across the UK, including 2
Stouts/Porters served all year round

Pork Pies & Fresh Cobs available daily

Fantastic Beer Garden right next to
the river

Tracy and all the staff welcome you
to the

OLD OAK INN

176 Main Street
Horsley Woodhouse
DE7 6AW Tel: 01332 881299

East Midlands Pub of the Year 2016

Serving a wide selection of beers
from BOTTLE BROOK and
LEADMILL plus Guests Beers

RuRAD Bar Open Fri, Sat & Sun

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