

Economist & Sun/Sun-Tribune

DIVERSIONS

SUPER BOWL SUDS

Our frothy experts pick the tastiest brew for American football's biggest game

BY JOHN CUDMORE
Staff Writer

Even before the Miller Brewing Company's Tastes Great, Less Filling TV commercial debates of the latter 20th century became seared into our collective conscience, beer and the Super Bowl regularly spilled into each other's territory.

No surprise, then, that beer has risen to become a major player in the National Football League, as has Anheuser-Busch, which has affiliated its products heavily with the most hyped single-day event on earth.

This year it's Super Bowl XXXIX, scheduled to kick off Feb. 6 with defending champion New England Patriots and Philadelphia Eagles.

In the spirit of pre-game hype, we tossed out a challenge to some members of the York Region football community to determine our own king of beers through an informal blind taste test.

Though no means an official poll, given the limited scope of our taste-off, our hosts at Sneakers Downtown Sports Bar & Grill in Newmarket offered six popular beers and our panelists provided football chit-chat for the York Region Newspaper Group Super Bowl Beer Taste Test.

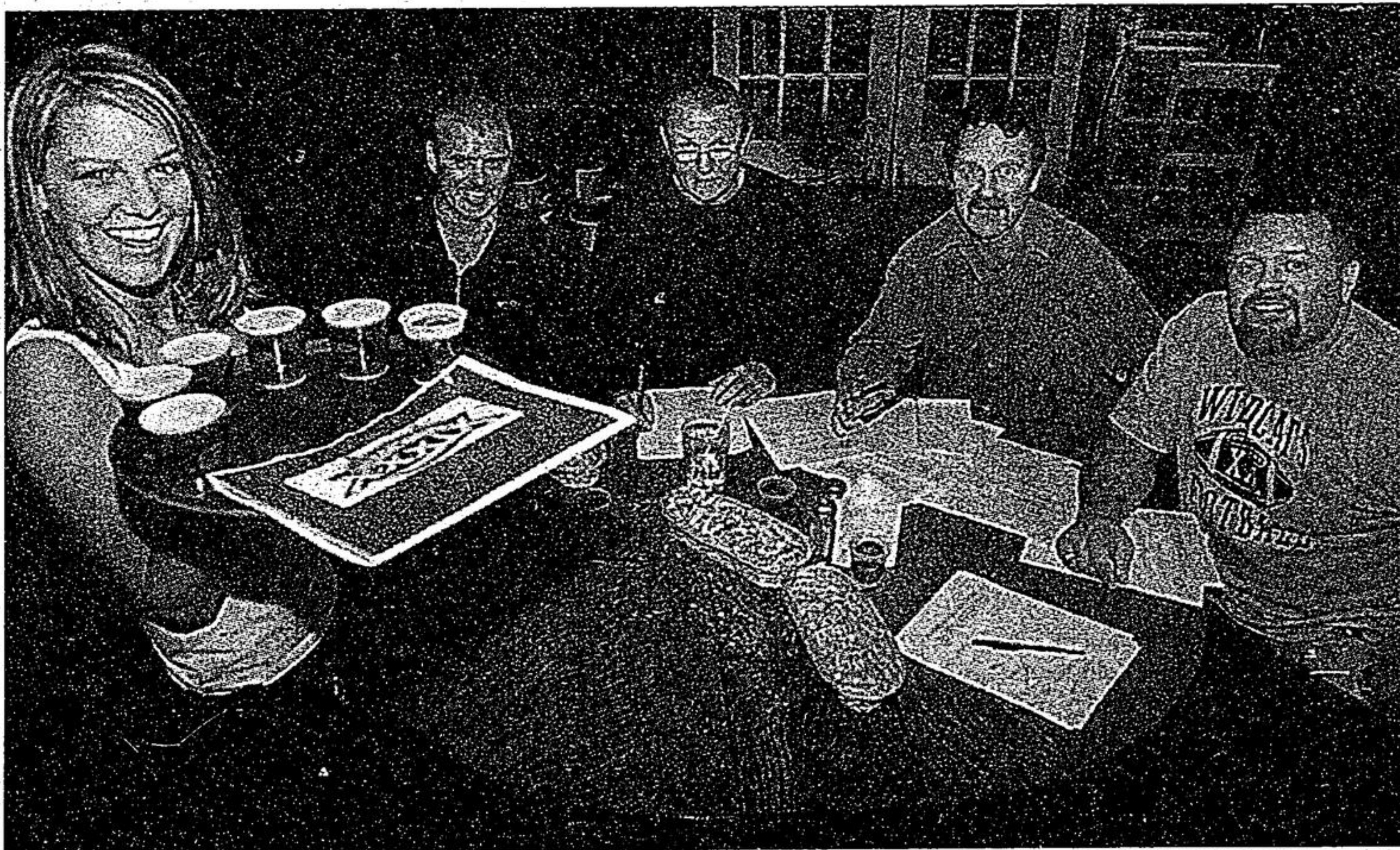
Using a four-point scoring system to judge each product, panel members were asked to rate the categories from a low of 1 to a high of 10.

Beers were served in the following order: Labatt 50, Sterling Lager, Sleeman Cream Ale, Molson Canadian, Alexander Keith's and Stella Artois.

No need to go to the instant replay, though, as it was all in fun.

Two of our three panelists, our server Elisabeth and the designated writer, back the Patriots to defeat the Eagles.

A mock scenario: What if you were hosting a Super Bowl party and suddenly found you couldn't serve up your first choice of



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Elizabth Millar, waitress at Sneakers Downtown Sports Bar & Grill in Newmarket, serves up beers to our intrepid panel: Jeff Collett (left), Frank Hallinan, John Cudmore and Kent Bulmer. They were deciding what would taste best while watching the Patriots and Eagles battle for the Super Bowl title.

beers? You need alternatives and you need 'em fast. Better get hopping on perfecting that two-minute drill.

Like football, in which offence and defence must perform in unison so, too, must a variety of issues converge for a tasty, pleasing beer.

Do you: a) roll out and pray for another Beer Store to have your brand? b) hope beer is available sooner rather than later — like, within the hour — at the corner store? c) call a bootleg to the left or right and head for your local bootlegger?

It's a worthy question when faced with situations requiring split-second decisions. The

answer sits at the feet of the provincial government, of course, to be answered one future day.

Fact is, everyone knows a beer drinker needs options, just as much as a quarterback requires secondary receivers and a swivel head to combat whatever an enemy defence can present.

So, make way for the audible. That is, an ad lib at the line of scrimmage.

Our panel convened for a Super Bowl taste test at the Sneakers Downtown Sports Bar & Grill in Newmarket.

Consisting of Dr. G.W. Williams Wildcats senior high school team head coach Kent Bulmer; Jeff Collett, vice-president of the York-

Simcoe Bucs youth football program and football fan at-large, Frank Hallinan, a Sneakers' employee.

When it comes to a good beer and a championship football team, certain ingredients are required to produce a winner.

Like football, in which offence and defence must perform in unison so, too, must a variety of issues converge for a tasty, pleasing beer.

"You've got to stay with a winner until they are proved otherwise," said Mr. Bulmer, clearly throwing his support behind the Patriots.

See PLENTY, page 18.

SO WHICH BEER IS BEST?

Scoring is based on accumulation of placings from judges, lower being better.

1. Stella Artois — 6
2. Molson Canadian — 9

3. Labatt 50 — 10
4. Sleeman Cream Ale — 11
5. (Tie) Alexander Keith and Sterling Lager — 12



Anne Brodie

On Movies

Expose of Hollywood child stars eerie, fun

Childstar

Starring Don McKellar, Eric Stoltz, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Mark Rendell and Alan Thicke.

Now playing

A meeting with 11-year old Haley Joel Osment (star of *The Sixth Sense*) at the 1999 Oscars gave Mr. McKellar, this film's writer and director, the idea about the unnatural control of a the child star in Hollywood. A song by Ron Sexsmith, called *Childstar*, nailed it.

The resulting film, shown at last fall's Toronto International Film festival is fun, eerie and cool, as many of Mr. McKellar's films have been, what he calls a 'film noir about American culture' in which pop stars create parallel universes for themselves.

In this case, it's 12 year-old actor Taylor Brandon Burns (Rendell), an American prodigy who comes to Toronto to shoot the action-oriented film *The First Son*.

When his father is taken hostage on Air Force One, Taylor's character must save the White House, and the world and his father from annihilation.

His mother, played by Mr. McKellar's pal Jennifer Jason Leigh, is fond of gift baskets and fleeing the set for shopping excursions. So she can continue to do

See McKELLAR, page 18.

* 2 - 6 ft.
Screens
for viewing

WILD WING

"Now Open 7 Days a Week at Noon"
905-944-WING (9464)
20 Fred Varley Dr., Unionville
(Just off Main St. Unionville in the Meat Shoppe Plaza)

Every Super Bowl Party should have great wings! (12 Flavours)

PRIZES ALL DAY LONG!

Wing & Pitcher Special