

**News**

**Copp Brewery wins gold medal**

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CRYSTAL RIVER — Copp Brewery may be small, but it’s making a name for itself.



The brewery owned by Fran Copp recently brought home a gold medal for its Southern Grit cream ale in the American light hybrid category and a bronze medal for a fruit beer called Apricopp at the recent Best Florida Beer Championships.

“This is a pretty big deal for a brewery the size of Copp,” said Gerard Walen, author of “Florida Breweries.” “Hundreds of beers are entered in the contest, but medals are awarded in only 32 categories. Copp has entered the past three years, and has brought home medals each year. This is the first time he’s won the gold, though.”

Copp said last year he entered the Southern Grit and lost to Yuengling, and this year they lost to his beer.

As a cream ale, Southern Grit is a cross between an ale and a lager. Copp said it’s comparable to Yuengling or a traditional light beer.

“We wanted a local beer, a backwoods flavor, and what better than corn grits?” he said. “It sells well, because it’s got a lager quality — a light, crisp flavor.”

Walen said this win is significant because Southern Grit is one of the Copp Brewery beers that is distributed around the state to restaurants and bars from Tallahassee to Spring Hill.

“So, Citrus County residents will find it on tap at other local businesses,” he said.

Copp said he’s most pleased with the award because it affects more than just his brewery.

“I sell it to the distributor, and the distributor sells it to local Citrus County restaurants, so when the beer gets recognition, it benefits other local businesses,” he said. “In that way, it’s a community thing.”

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