



Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian

Brandon Keck, Johnny Miller and Nich Martinez enjoy sampling beers with pretzel necklaces Saturday at the California Beer Festival in Aptos.

Beer festival a big draw in Aptos

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APTOS — Stout, ginger beer, pale ale, IPA, darks and lights and everything in between in the world of beer was the topic of the day Saturday at the annual California Beer Festival. Held in Aptos Village Park, the four-and-a-half hour event showcased more than 70 types of brews under mild sunny skies.

Once equipped with a souvenir glass, guests were able to sample brews from 35 different craft beer companies. Local breweries represented include Seabright Brewery, Santa Cruz Ale Works and Discretion Brewery of Capitola.

An hour after the event opened 1,864 beer fans had already entered the event. An hour later the park was packed.

Three live bands kept the atmosphere lively. Several bocci ball courts were set up and attendees lobbed bocci balls in a series of matches.

"It's all about beer and this is the best beer event there is," said Rob Lograsso of Mountain View, who came with his wife Julie. "It's a great park and a fine selection of beer. It's a little pricey but worth it. We're hav-



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The blues band, Blues at Eleven, rocks the stage at the festival.

ing a good time. So far, the best thing I've tasted is the Arrogant Bastard Ale by Stone Brewing. Their Stone Ruination IPA is something worth trying as well."

Derek Snider of Turlock said it was his first time at the festival.

"To me, sampling fine craft beers from the smaller name places is fun," he said. "There are so many of the microbreweries now. And they all seem to have something interesting to offer. I just tried the IPA from St. Florian's Brewery and it was fantastic. We just came here to check out the music and sample some good beer."

While waiting in line for another sample, Allen Zapalac of Santa Cruz said, "Lots of sunshine and plenty of beer—that's perfect. The top beer I've tried so far in the Wookey Jack by Firestone Walker: that's a good beer. I tried the IPA at St. Florian's and that was refreshing."

Vendors meanwhile offered a selection of goods including cigars, clothing, olives, smoked meats and world imports. A food station maintained a steady business with seven eateries featured.

California Beer Festival takes place on varying dates around the state.