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SAUCE

## It's as comfortable as a well-worn mitt

The Boston Globe

By Meredith Goldstein, Globe Staff | May 31, 2008

*An early taste of what's new on the restaurant scene*

On the MySpace profile for the new Back Bay bar McGreevy's, the saloon's staff has posted this description of their ideal patrons: "Red Sox fans, sports fans, Dropkick Murphys and music fans . . . People with a good sense of humor . . . people who can drink Guinness and pound Jameson shots."

Lucky for McGreevy's, those people are all over Boston, and they've already discovered that the new bar on Boylston Street - what used to be the Foggy Goggle - is now a pub run by Peter Nash, formerly of the group 3rd Bass who is now a baseball historian, and Ken Casey, a founding member of Boston's beloved Celtic-punk band the Dropkick Murphys.

Not only is the bar run by Casey, which should be enough to please the city's Jameson-shot-pounding, Red-Sox-worshipping contingent, but it's also named for "Nuf Ced" McGreevy's 3rd Base Saloon, which is said to be the nation's first sports bar, operating in Roxbury from 1894 until prohibition.

Basically, this new bar should be Red Sox Nation's happy place.

As one might expect, the tavern is dark and cozy, an establishment where you can easily picture the Dropkicks making a pit stop for a pint after a show. Sports memorabilia cover the walls, but the bar manages to avoid a Hard Rock Café kitsch vibe. The jerseys and photos seem more like what you'd find in a library archive than a sports bar.

During our visit, which happened to be during Game 3 of the Celtics-Pistons series, bar patrons acted like they owned the place - as if McGreevy's, now three weeks old, had been around for years and they were the regulars. They hollered at the bar manager when the Celtics game wasn't on the big screens at tip-off (mistakenly, the back-room televisions were still tuned to Stanley Cup Game 1). Patrons moved chairs around the dining area without asking to get a better view. The jukebox, which has a good supply of Elvis Costello, David Bowie, and Joe Jackson, had been silenced so that fans could hear the commentating.

While McGreevy's did seem to draw a more mature and relaxed crowd than other sports bars near Fenway Park, we did witness some beer-fueled, ballpark-area behavior. There was plenty of yelling at the television, which isn't necessarily a bad thing, but during our visit we also saw a rowdy patron approach a woman at a nearby table, make some small talk with her, and then turn to his friends to say, in less appropriate words, "she'll do." But to be fair, that kind of thing probably happens at the Bristol Lounge in the Four Seasons.

The food at McGreevy's is good, especially if you go Irish.

We started with the "traditional Irish boxty," which is basically a stuffed potato pancake, an Irish version of a quesadilla. Inside of the delicious mashed-potato cake was hearty, gooey cheese and thick pieces of chicken. It came with sour cream and horseradish aioli. If you come to eat, order it as your meal.

Also on our list of favorites was the all-day Irish breakfast, which came with two fried eggs, bacon, black and white pudding (that's pork and blood sausage, folks), beans, tomatoes, and brown bread. The dark blood pudding was the highlight - a sweet log of filling meat. A great way to soak up beer.

The burger was fine. You'll probably be satisfied by it, but you won't remember it after you leave. The beer-battered fish and chips were deliciously crisp and served with homemade tartar sauce.

The only real misstep was the whiskey chicken, which was a pile of poultry covered in what tasted like an Alfredo sauce, with a side of vegetables served in a red sauce.

There's no dessert at McGreevy's, which is a bummer if you go for a birthday, but perhaps the clientele doesn't need anything sweet. After all, these people are from Boston. They live and die for the red and blue (or green, depending on the season), they know all the words to "Tessie," and most likely, they have the front page of The Boston Globe from Oct. 28, 2004, framed on their walls. They are here on Boylston Street, and they'd like their blood pudding served with Guinness, please.

*McGreevy's, 911 Boylston St., Boston, 617-262-0911. mcgreevysboston.com. Entrees \$7-\$18. Wine by the glass \$6-\$7.*

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