



The Midland Craft Brewers Association



Brewing crafted ales.....at home

Meeting at the Swan in the Rushes (Loughborough 7/11/09)

Attended by Ron and Margaret A, James F Peter F, Allan G, Steve H, Steve O, Greg P, Ray C, Dave W, Phil S, Andy H, Steve R and Alan Q.

Apologies: Mike C and Gary C

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Meetings for 2010 (RA).

The agreed schedule is in the Table below.

The contents of the future meeting were discussed and there was a request for more technical areas to be covered at each meeting. It was proposed that a basis for the topics could be the chapter headings from Wheeler's book "Home Brewing" 2001.

Date	Venue	Organiser	EXAMPLES
January	Rugby	Ray C	Cleaning/Sanitisation
March	Banbury	Steve O	Water Treatment
May	Burton	Dave H	Grain
July	Nottingham	Ron A	Hops
September	Leicester	Allan G	Yeast
November	Chesterfield	Mike C	Mashing and sparging

Therefore, 2011 may include Boiling/Cooling, fermentation, finishing, conditioning and bottling, equipment and finally fault-finding. If the Organiser wishes to exchange topics with other organisers this will be acceptable.

Ray C will determine the technical subject for the meeting in Rugby and the rest of the subjects for the future meetings can be discussed and agreed at that meeting.

3. The MCBA Web Site (JF)

It was agreed that the current web site left a lot to be desired. Most concern was expressed about the site not being up to date. Information about meetings was incorrect and that contacts were also out of date and “unlinked”. It was agreed that the way forward should be addressed by a smaller group and Allan G, Steve H and Phil S will support James F to address all the issues raised at the meeting and report back at the next meeting.

However, in the interim, a one pager should be prepared that can replace the existing web site stating that the web site is under revision (ACTION: JF/AG).

4. Summary of the Jaipur Comparison Brew (RA).

Ron stated that he had had a lot of feedback to a draft report he circulated, to some of the members, summarising the tasting at Leicester in September. There were a lot of issues to take into consideration and he is writing an article for Brewer’s Contact.

5. Taste the Difference (AQ).

A tasting to determine the difference in bitterness based on a single wort was completed (Appendix 1).

6. Beer Tastings

a) The first brew tasted was from PF, a high adjunct brew (1042, 4.5% ABV) using Goldings and Northern Brewer hops and an Irish Ale yeast. The beer had a good aroma and a balanced flavour appreciated by all.

b) AG provided a stronger bitter at 1050 and 5% ABV. It was a repeat brew from the one tasted at Leicester. It was made on the 9/10/09 and bottled on the 20/10/09. Residual gravity was 1012 and contained 63 IBUs. Tasters noted a strong elderflower aroma and a strong flavour of blackcurrants? The hops used were Goldings, Fuggles and a lot of Cascade at the end of the brew. The brew was considered marginally overbittered.

c) A copy of the Poole Brewery Bitter was supplied by SR. A 1050 brew containing pale malt and 8.5% (w/w) crystal malt was made in March 2009. It had a good aroma and good flavour, too high in crystal??

d) SH brought along a stout for tasting. It was a 1047 brew containing Susan hops (40IBU). A good stout but perhaps lacked hops/roast barley??

e) RA provided a “Dubbel” brewed at 6.5% using the Brupaks Belgian yeast. It was well conditioned (lively) and had good aroma and flavour with the residual sweetness typical of the style.

7. Clinic

a) A bitter (5% ABV) was brought by AQ that had an odd aroma when bottled. This aroma was first noticed associated mostly with the yeast (Californian Ale) skimmed off one of the two buckets at harvest. The yeast stored overnight then had a very strong acetic acid aroma the next day and it was discarded. The beer was made from green First Gold hops and pale malt. It was agreed that the bitter was drinkable and the “unusual” flavour may be down to the hops and was not an acetic off flavour.

8. National Festival (2010)

RA stated that the Festival was likely to go ahead next May at the Copper Dragon Brewery in Skipton and was being organised by Derek Spedding/Northern Group. Please note that the Sutton competition is next weekend and AG has entered some beers.

9. Social Function

RA reminded all that there was a social function in Derby on the 28th of November 2009. Meet at 11am at the Babington Arms.

10. AOB

a) AG reported that the donations collected at the September meeting were received gratefully by LOROS.

b) SR reported problems with his ancient hydrometer. He was advised to buy a new one.

11. Next meeting.

This will be on the 9th of January 2010 at the Atomic Brewery in Rugby and will be hosted by Ray C.

The room, the buffet lunch, the beer and the staff at the Swan in the Rushes in Loughborough were all first class.

APPENDIX 1.

Taste the Difference

1. Introduction

A definitive reference for the ability of drinkers to taste subtle differences in International Bitterness Units (IBUs) has not been found. Therefore, an experiment that could determine the ability of a taste panel to differentiate ales that have different final levels of bitterness was attempted. A single brew (Maris Otter Pale Malt, S.G. approximately 1040) was mashed and then divided into four aliquots. Each aliquot, with different hop charges was boiled separately, but concomitantly, to minimise differences in the comparison brews.

2. Method Outline

Pale malt (4.5kg) mashed and sparged and the resultant wort (approx. 26L) divided in four at the ratio of 1:1:1:3. The worts were boiled for one hour after addition of bittering hops. Protofloc was added 45 minutes after boil commenced and aroma hops were added at boil end (60 minutes). The wort was cooled, hops removed and each made up to volume with cooled treated water.

Yeast starter culture was divided and the four batches fermented separately at 20°C.

The four brews were bottled with sugar priming (1.5g/L) on the same day.

3. Raw Materials

Cascade hops were used, assumed 20% hop utilisation, with pale malt (Maris Otter) and Nottingham yeast.

4. Experiment Outline

Batch	Fermentation		Weight of hops (g)	
	Volume (L)	Test IBU	At boil + at 60 minutes	
A	4	25	9+10	Demijohn
B	4	35	13+10	Demijohn
C	12	45	50+30	Bucket

D	4	55	20+10	Demijohn
Total	24		92+60	

5. Brewing

The brew details followed the experimental outline above. All brews started at 1042/3 and all residual gravities were 1007 (4.8% ABV).

6. Tasting

The four batches were colour coded and each taster was given four plastic, see-through cups at the same time containing the four different beers. A simple ranking scheme was requested. The form also asked about flavour and aroma (to be scored) and to state which beers were best balanced and which was the favourite beer. There was a space on the form for recording problems.

It was evident at the tasting that the tasters were unable to distinguish the beers from the comments heard while tasting was being completed. Collection of the result sheets at the end of the tasting confirmed this as the case.

One can summarise the results

1. Bitterness.

Only 9/12 of the tasters graded the beers, three sheets were completed incorrectly.

Nobody scored the four in the correct order. Three failed to get any in the correct order.

Four tasters identified the least bitter brew and 4 identified the bitterest (but not the same four). One can conclude that the same outcome would have been obtained if the brews were selected randomly.

There are some possible reasons for these problems. One of the beers was not poured correctly and the beer contained some yeast which may have added to the difficulty of the experiment. One can also state that in practical terms the experiment had flaws given that the different boils may have resulted in varying hop utilisations. One can only confirm the final IBUs of the four brews by laboratory analysis.

2. Aroma and Flavour

Total score is points awarded for aroma plus flavour (each marked out of 5).

“Favourite brew” and “Most balanced” brew were the number of votes.

	IBU	Total score	Favourite	Most balanced
Blue	25	65	1	1
Green	35	75	2	2
Red	45	65	4	3
Yellow	55	81	4	3

Note that some of the forms were incomplete so numbers may not add up.

In terms of issues recorded one taster noted an issue with a sulphurous nose and another an astringency both noted with the Blue brew that was slightly cloudy.