

JULY 1992

BEER BARONS

A Monthly Publication for the Beer Barons of Milwaukee
"Dedicated to the Education and Enjoyment of Fermented Malt Beverages"

Style Groups

The following style groups are currently active. If you have a particular interest in any of the following beer styles and would like to pursue that interest in more depth, contact the leader of the group:

Brown Ale - Larry Krolkowski (545-8509)

Lager - Scott Lord (242-7836)

Brew News

For those of us who frequent the Summerfest grounds during the summer, it's disappointing to have only one style of beer available, American Light Lager. You can find all kinds of ethnic foods and music, but when it comes to beer, the big local breweries have the grounds all to themselves. This is especially noticeable at Germanfest, where it's really difficult to separate the great national beverage from the rest of the culture.

There is hope. Specialty Brewing Company, the division of Pabst that is currently producing the surprisingly tasty Old Tankard Ale, recently brewed a pilot batch of "Germanfest Bier". Pabst is considering selling this all-malt brew at Germanfest, though it's not definite. The Germanfest Board of Directors was invited to a special tasting preview and their comments were generally favorable.

Pabst should be applauded for their efforts to introduce variety to the local beer market. Perhaps if Old Tankard and Germanfest Bier succeed, we may see even more new specialty beer introductions. Let's give Pabst our support.

July Monthly Meeting

The July monthly meeting is at 7:30 pm on July 22 at Clifford's (10418 W. Forest Home Ave, Hales Corners). Beer Barons member Don Voltz will be organizing a Doctored Beer Lab. The purpose of the Doctored Beer Lab is to help brewers and tasters identify specific flavor components in their beer. The format will be similar to the session at the AHA Conference in June, except we will be tasting fewer flavors due to time constraints. This is good experience for those who have never participated in this type of exercise as well as good practice for veterans who have been through it before.

Upcoming Meetings

August 26 - Brewing Cider by Bob Wilson and Jerry Uthemann

September 23 - Octoberfest by the Lager style group

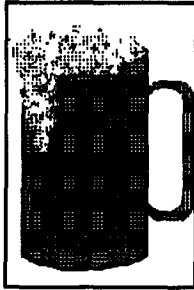
October 28 - How to keg your beer -- looking for a speaker

November 18 - Brown Ales by the Brown Ale style group

December 16 - Christmas party

Seasonal Brewing

by Larry Krolikowski



Although the Beer Barons are "Dedicated to the Education and Enjoyment of Fermented Malt Beverages", this article is about a different kind of fermented beverage -- mead. Mead is a fermented honey beverage. It's virtually impossible to find commercial meads -- all the more reason for homebrewers to give it a try.

Here's a sample recipe for a five gallon batch of plain, unflavored mead:

- 8 - 12 lbs honey
- 1 tsp citric acid
- 3 tsp yeast nutrient
- 1 oz. boiling hops (Cascade, Hallertauer, or Saaz)
- 1 or 2 pkgs champagne yeast

The brewing process for meads is the same as for beer only easier. Boil the honey, citric acid, yeast nutrient, and hops in 2 gallons of water for an hour. Add the boiled "wort" to cold water in a primary fermenter. Pitch the yeast when the temperature is 70-78 degrees.

The difficult part of brewing meads is the fermentation. The large amount of honey leads to a very high original gravity (1.080 - 1.120). As the mead ferments, the alcohol content increases, eventually stopping the fermentation by killing the yeast. This is why champagne yeast is recommended -- champagne yeast is more tolerant of alcohol. This is also why the yeast nutrient is added -- anything to give the yeast a boost. If the fermentation stops too soon, you get a very sweet mead. If you want a dry mead, you have to try to get the fermentation to go as far as possible. High temperatures aid the fermentation which is why meads are good for

summer brewing. Transfer your mead to a secondary fermenter after a couple of weeks. Expect to wait a long time before bottling a mead (several weeks to a year).

You can make a plain mead or you can add fruit or spices. Apple juice, grape juice, pears, raspberries, blueberries, cherries, plums, strawberries, or peaches can be added. If you add fresh fruit, use the same procedure to pasteurize the fruit as you would for a fruit beer and do your primary fermentation in an open container. For spices you might try ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, orange peel, allspice, anise, or coriander.

You can make a sparkling, carbonated mead or you can make a still, noncarbonated mead. If you want sparkling mead, prime with one-half cup of corn sugar at bottling time like you would with beer. For a still mead, omit the priming sugar and make sure your fermentation is complete before bottling.

BARON MIND

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The BARON MIND is published monthly for members of the Beer Barons of Milwaukee thanks to the efforts of Larry Krolikowski, Paul and Denise Arneson, Ed and Maryann Sulkowski, Ted Wilinski, and other club members who contribute articles.

We welcome any comments or suggestions.



Wort Oxidation

by Larry Krolkowski

There were several interesting technical sessions at the AHA Conference here in June. The one that I found most interesting was about wort oxidation, presented by Alberta Rager. Although Alberta got into quite a bit of detail about the life cycle of beer yeast, the primary message was that there are times when you want to provide oxygen to the yeast and there are times when you want to keep oxygen away.

I've read Charlie Papazian's "The Complete Joy of Homebrewing" many times so I already knew that during the first 4-8 hours after pitching, the yeast reproduces through a respiration process where oxygen is a necessary ingredient. After respiration, the yeast goes into its fermentation cycle where oxygen is not needed. Thus, you want to introduce oxygen into your beer before pitching the yeast by splashing the wort into the carboy. Once fermentation is underway, care should be taken to avoid splashing the beer.

What I didn't know was that you shouldn't introduce oxygen into the wort until after the wort has cooled to pitching temperature. If you follow Papazian's basic brewing procedure, you boil the wort, then immediately pass it through a strainer into a carboy that is partially filled with cold water. Passing the wort through the strainer adds plenty of oxygen to the wort. Unfortunately, according to Rager, it is bad to introduce oxygen when the wort is this hot. The reasons for this were a bit complicated, having to do with enzymes and fatty acids and such but the bottom line was that it hurts the flavor of your beer. It's better to strain the wort after it has cooled to 78 degrees or so.

This calls for a change to the basic brewing procedure. You could just let the wort sit until it cools before straining it into a carboy. The problem with this is that you risk contamination while the wort is cooling and your finishing hops are going to lose some of their flavor and aroma if left in the hot wort for a great length of time. A better approach is to use a wort chiller to quickly drop the temperature. Wort chillers were a topic of another technical session -- they are

inexpensive to make or you can buy one through your local supply shop. They're not hard to use and they actually reduce your brewing time. It seems like a good thing to try so I'll be using one from now on.

The Grand Banquet

by Peter McMullen

The highlight of the AHA National Conference was the Grand Banquet held on the last night. The meal was created by AHA Instructor Candy Schermerhorn. Each course of the banquet was made with beer and served with beer. She also gave a tasty lecture on cooking with beer and has a forthcoming book on the subject.

The meal began with a minestrone soup made with Miller Reserve and served with Oldenburg Blonde. The soup brought echoes from my table of being the best minestrone they ever had, and the beer was light as not to be over filling or overpowering. Soup was followed up with a potato bread and served with Sam Adams Boston Lager. I felt the beer gave the bread a nice airy texture. The main course was stuffed Cornish game hens made with two different wheat beers. The stuffing consisted of the splendid mixture of Wisconsin Bleu cheese, grapes, and toasted walnuts, with Frankenmuth Weiss and Millstream Wheat Beer. The beer allowed the stuffing and meat to be moist and tender, while the grapes and walnuts tamed the cheese. This was served with Red Feather Ale, which was just dry enough to cleanse the palette and leave you wanting more. For dessert there was cheesecake made with Frangelico, white chocolate, and cream cheese. This was served with Michael Matucheski's Commemorative Homebrewed Lambic. I had to contain myself from pouring the Framboise over the cheesecake and eating it that way, but I couldn't do that to someone who hand picked 210 pounds of raspberries.

This review is not intended to make mouths water, but rather to invoke some thoughts for great beer-food combinations. Perhaps some of you may have a special beer-food recipe you would like to share?



Membership Information

Annual membership dues are five dollars. Basically, this pays for the cost of producing and mailing this newsletter. In addition, we charge fees for the meetings, between \$1 and \$5, depending on the cost of the beer we taste that night. Membership dues can be paid at the monthly meetings or you can send a check for \$5 to Gerry Burant, 2731 N. Downer, Milwaukee 53211.

We mail the newsletter free of charge to prospective members for three months. The date that appears on your newsletter address label is the end of the three month period. If that date is prior to 7/1/92 you will not receive another newsletter unless you pay the annual dues.

For current club members, it is up to you to remember to renew -- we do not send out reminders. So check the date on your address label to see if it's time to ante up.

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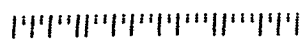
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