

The OVHA Tap

Vol 9 No. 3

March 2005

Meeting March 30, 7:00 pm at Germania Mannerchor

Beer Evaluation

We will be evaluating Belgian Beers, if we can find them locally.

Just how long does beer last?

How long will homebrew last in the bottle? This is a common question for new homebrew “addicts”, and while it usually isn’t a problem for a while since newbies usually have trouble getting their consumption rate and brewing rates adjusted to leave any sit undrunk, eventually there is some that the brewer either wants to save for a special occasion or gets pushed behind something and forgotten.

We tried a lager and my “famous” Pale Ale (both brewed with the finest Lake Superior Water). While they weren’t exactly bad, and we all managed to finish what we poured, they were definitely NOT what they were when I tasted them all those years ago!

The lager had been rather sweet with a nice hop bite and good hop flavor, but had now gotten slightly sour, much less sweet, and both hop bitterness and flavor were greatly reduced. Almost an improvement for that particular beer, since it was much too sweet to start with.

The Pale Ale had transmogrified into something completely different. The original had a strong nose and flavor of Fuggles hops and a very bitter character. What was left was moderate bitterness and a completely different taste. Nothing at all like the original, although I’ve had much worse homebrew in the past.

Brewer’s Musings

The Pale ales turned out fine, although I think we still have too much air getting pulled into the circulation pump during the mash -- the hop bitterness isn’t quite what I want and the hop flavor seems overly weak. Not bad by any means, but not quite what I wanted. The strong ale hasn’t been kegged yet

Other than that, brewing has been rather slow this month. I got the flu, my Mom got the flu, it’s springtime so I’m out in the garden and vinyard, and the basement is full of beer. Not a bad thing, having a basement full of beer, but I’m a bit limited on storage space, so when the cases get four high, I stop brewing.

The first lager I made in the fall is still fermenting, believe it or not, still pops a bubble in the air lock once in a while. I’m gonna bottle it soon as is just to get the carboy put away, it’s gonna be wine season before long!

Meeting Schedule 2005

March 30th Germania 7 pm

April 27 Germania 7 pm

May 25th Germania 7 pm

June ?? TBA

July ?? TBA

August ?? TBA

September 28th Germania 7 pm

October 26th, Germania 7 pm

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We did make an "American Wheat" this month -- basically a Belgian Wit minus the orange peel and coriander as we didn't have any handy at Steve's. I made a "real" Wit the next weekend at home, hope I didn't overdo the coriander (0.75 oz, crushed). I used a half grapefruit peel as I have no idea where I could get Curacao oranges here. Ready to bottle, when I get time. Bottling two six gallon batches of wine this week nearly killed me, I had to BOIL the corks to get them soft enough to get into the bottles. Very annoying.

I think I'm gonna run off a batch of something for the Brewer's Festival and plan something for the Bru-Ha-Ha and call it quits for this year.

The Porter turned out very nicely -- almost a Stout in flavor, without the heavy body and bitterness.

Meeting notes February 2005

Meeting turnout was pretty small this month, as per usual. We tasted some very old (12 years?) beer I brewed in Canada before moving home in 1993.

Using the Beer Judging sheets from Zymurgy Magazine, the group judged Anchor Steam Beer as a calibration brew. Surprisingly, (or not!) we were pretty close in our evaluations to those of the beer judges in Zymurgy.

Brewer's Festival

We need to give some thought to what we want to bring for the Brewer's Festival (assuming that Jack will be doing it this year). Probably need to get whatever it is going pretty soon so it won't be just out of the secondary the day of the festival!