

The OVHA Tap

Vol 12 No. 6

June 2008

Meeting Wednesday, 7:00 pm June 25th at Germania Mannerchor

Featured Beer: Wheat/Wit

Upcoming events

Atria Assisted Living Demonstration

We still haven't managed to get our demonstration at Atria done, hopefully we can find a weekend sometime this Spring!

National Homebrew Meeting

June 19th, 20th, and 21st. Details later.

Indiana State Fair Homebrew Competition

Submissions for the Indiana State Cup must be in by late June. Save some of your best for this -- we've had several members place well in the past. Exact dates when available.

WestSide Sportsman's Club Demonstration

We will be doing another demonstration at the Sportsman's Club Barbeque competition this year. This event was quite a blast last year. Plan on bringing a keg or two of brew to dispense! Should be quite a bit of excellent barbeque circulating late in the afternoon as well. Exact dates when announced.

SWIRCA Brewer's Festival

The SWIRCA Brewer's Festival will be August 16th at the SWIRCA building on Virginia St. We have been moved outside this year along with a few other folks, so we will have plenty of room and should have a good time.

OVHA's New Serving Station

Our diligent members found a lovely stainless steel portable serving station in Bloomington last month. Set us back a bit, but we now have a portable, covered apparatus from which we should be able to serve a dozen or so beers from taps. It has space for a chiller plates, CO2, and the beer in a somewhat more organized space than we usually have. We should be able to have three people at a time operate taps without colliding. Needs some re-configuration, but all in all a great thing. And it fits in the back of Jack's truck!

Brewer's Musings

I've discovered another bug-bear in my brewing methods

-- cleaning bottles. Seems that scrubbing and rinsing with One-step isn't doing it. The last couple batches have had a few bottles develop over-carbonation and strange nasty flavors, while most of them are fine. Hmm. Back to a bleach soak followed by the hot One-step I think. I'm also scrubbing bottles out when I drink the beer, too, although just with warm or hot water and a bottle brush. Time to get nasty clean again.

I think the Brewery On Barton is going to switch back to bottles, too. We have had a rough year, with some of us starting a new business, the kids all moving out (and sometimes back), and car crashes. Not a good year, and we just don't seem to drink the beer fast enough to keep it from going stale in the kegs (or downright nasty). Too many chances for the pressure to drop and condensation to back up into the CO2 lines, or infections to take hold in the portable tap, and so forth. We've decided that the hassle of bottling is less than the annoyance of



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Meeting Schedule 2008

June 25th 7:00 pm at Germania

July 30th 7:00 pm at Germania

August 27th 7:00 pm at Germania

Beer Evaluation Schedule

April: Pale Ale/ IPA

May: Bock

June: Wheat/Wit

July: Kolsch

August: Lawnmower Beers

Meeting Subject Schedule

February: Beer Defects

March: Yeast Starters

April: Water and Beer Brewing

May:

15A. Weizen/Weissbier

Aroma: Moderate to strong phenols (usually clove) and fruity esters (usually banana). The balance and intensity of the phenol and ester components can vary but the best examples are reasonably balanced and fairly prominent. Noble hop character ranges from low to none. A light to moderate wheat aroma (which might be perceived as bready or grainy) may be present but other malt characteristics should not. No diacetyl or DMS. Optional, but acceptable, aromatics can include a light, citrusy tartness, a light to moderate vanilla character, and/or a low bubblegum aroma. None of these optional characteristics should be high or dominant, but often can add to the complexity and balance.

Appearance: Pale straw to very dark gold in color. A very thick, moussy, long-lasting white head is characteristic. The high protein content of wheat impairs clarity in an unfiltered beer, although the level of haze is somewhat variable. A beer “mit hefe” is also cloudy from suspended yeast sediment (which should be roused before drinking). The filtered Krystal version has no yeast and is brilliantly clear.

Flavor: Low to moderately strong banana and clove flavor. The balance and intensity of the phenol and ester components can vary but the best examples are reasonably balanced and fairly prominent. Optionally, a very light to moderate vanilla character and/or low bubblegum notes can accentuate the banana flavor, sweetness and roundness; neither should be dominant if present. The soft, somewhat bready or grainy flavor of wheat is complementary, as is a slightly sweet Pils malt character. Hop flavor is very low to none, and hop bitterness is very low to moderately low. A tart, citrusy character from yeast and high carbonation is often present. Well rounded, flavorful palate with a relatively dry finish. No diacetyl or DMS.

Mouthfeel: Medium-light to medium body; never heavy. Suspended yeast may increase the perception of body. The texture of wheat imparts the sensation of a fluffy, creamy fullness that may progress to a light, spritzzy finish aided by high carbonation. Always effervescent.

Overall Impression: A pale, spicy, fruity, refreshing wheat-based ale.

History: A traditional wheat-based ale originating in Southern Germany that is a specialty for summer consumption, but generally produced year-round.

Comments: These are refreshing, fast-maturing beers that are lightly hopped and show a unique banana-and-clove yeast character. These beers often don't age well and are best enjoyed while young and fresh. The version “mit hefe” is served with yeast sediment stirred in; the krystal version is filtered for excellent clarity. Bottles with yeast are traditionally swirled or gently rolled prior to serving. The character of a krystal weizen is generally fruitier and less phenolic than that of the hefe-weizen.

Ingredients: By German law, at least 50% of the grist must be malted wheat, although some versions use up to 70%; the remainder is Pilsner malt. A traditional decoction mash gives the appropriate body without cloying sweetness. Weizen ale yeasts produce the typical spicy and fruity character, although extreme fermentation temperatures can affect the balance and produce off-flavors. A small amount of noble hops are used only for bitterness.

Vital Statistics: OG: 1.044 – 1.052
IBUs: 8 – 15 FG: 1.010 – 1.014
SRM: 2 – 8 ABV: 4.3 – 5.6%

Commercial Examples: Weihenstephaner Hefeweissbier, Schneider Weisse Weizenhell, Paulaner Hefe-Weizen, Hacker-Pschorr Weisse, Plank Bavarian Hefeweizen, Ayinger Bräu Weisse, Ettaler Weissbier Hell, Franziskaner Hefe-Weisse, Andechser Weissbier Hefetrüb, Kapuziner Weissbier, Erdinger Weissbier, Penn Weizen, Barrelhouse Hocking Hills HefeWeizen, Eisenbahn Weizenbier

15B. Dunkelweizen

Aroma: Moderate to strong phenols (usually clove) and fruity esters (usually banana). The balance and intensity of the phenol and ester components can vary but the best examples are reasonably balanced and fairly prominent. Optionally, a low to moderate vanilla character and/or low bubblegum notes may be present, but should not dominate. Noble hop character ranges from low to none. A light to moderate wheat aroma (which might be perceived as bready or grainy) may be present and is often accompanied by a caramel, bread crust, or richer malt aroma (e.g.,

from Vienna and/or Munich malt). Any malt character is supportive and does not overpower the yeast character. No diacetyl or DMS. A light tartness is optional but acceptable.

Appearance: Light copper to mahogany brown in color. A very thick, moussy, long-lasting off-white head is characteristic. The high protein content of wheat impairs clarity in this traditionally unfiltered style, although the level of haze is somewhat variable. The suspended yeast sediment (which should be roused before drinking) also contributes to the cloudiness.

Flavor: Low to moderately strong banana and clove flavor. The balance and intensity of the phenol and ester components can vary but the best examples are reasonably balanced and fairly prominent. Optionally, a very light to moderate vanilla character and/or low bubblegum notes can accentuate the banana flavor, sweetness and roundness; neither should be dominant if present. The soft, somewhat bready or grainy flavor of wheat is complementary, as is a richer caramel and/or melanoidin character from Munich and/or Vienna malt. The malty richness can be low to medium-high, but shouldn't overpower the yeast character. A roasted malt character is inappropriate. Hop flavor is very low to none, and hop bitterness is very low to low. A tart, citrusy character from yeast and high carbonation is sometimes present, but typically muted. Well rounded, flavorful, often somewhat sweet palate with a relatively dry finish. No diacetyl or DMS.

Mouthfeel: Medium-light to medium-full body. The texture of wheat as well as yeast in suspension imparts the sensation of a fluffy, creamy fullness that may progress to a lighter finish, aided by moderate to high carbonation. The presence of Munich and/or Vienna malts also provide an additional sense of richness and fullness. Effervescent.

Overall Impression: A moderately dark, spicy, fruity, malty, refreshing wheat-based ale. Reflecting the best yeast and wheat character of a hefeweizen blended with the malty richness of a Munich dunkel.

History: Old-fashioned Bavarian wheat beer was often dark. In the 1950s and 1960s, wheat beers did not have a youthful image, since most older people drank them for their health-giving qualities. Today, the lighter hefeweizen is more common.

Comments: The presence of Munich and/or Vienna-type barley malts gives this style a deep, rich barley malt character not found in a hefeweizen. Bottles with yeast are traditionally swirled or gently rolled prior to serving.

Ingredients: By German law, at least 50% of the grist must be malted wheat, although some versions use up to 70%; the remainder is usually Munich and/or Vienna malt. A traditional decoction mash gives the appropriate body without cloying sweetness. Weizen ale yeasts produce the typical spicy and fruity character, although extreme fermentation temperatures can affect the balance and produce off-flavors. A small amount of noble hops are used only for bitterness.

Vital Statistics: OG: 1.044 – 1.056
IBUs: 10 – 18 FG: 1.010 – 1.014
SRM: 14 – 23 ABV: 4.3 – 5.6%

Commercial Examples: Weihenstephaner Hefeweissbier Dunkel, Ayinger Ur-Weisse, Franziskaner Dunkel Hefe-Weisse, Schneider Weisse (Original), Ettaler Weissbier Dunkel, Hacker-Pschorr Weisse Dark, Tucher Dunkles Hefe Weizen, Edelweiss Dunkel Weissbier, Erdinger Weissbier Dunkel, Kapuziner Weissbier Schwarz

15C. Weizenbock

Aroma: Rich, bock-like melanoidins and bready malt combined with a powerful aroma of dark fruit (plums, prunes, raisins or grapes). Moderate to strong phenols (most commonly vanilla and/or clove) add complexity, and some banana esters may also be present. A moderate aroma of alcohol is common, although never solventy. No hop aroma, diacetyl or DMS.

Appearance: Dark amber to dark, ruby brown in color. A very thick, moussy, long-lasting light tan head is characteristic. The high protein content of wheat impairs clarity in this traditionally unfiltered style, although the level of haze is somewhat variable. The suspended yeast sediment (which should be roused before drinking) also contributes to the cloudiness.

Flavor: A complex marriage of rich, bock-like melanoidins, dark fruit, spicy clove-like phenols, light banana and/or vanilla, and a moderate wheat flavor. The malty, bready flavor of wheat is further enhanced by the copious use of Munich and/or Vienna malts. May have a slightly sweet palate, and a light chocolate character is sometimes found (although a roasted character is inappropriate). A faintly tart character may optionally be present. Hop flavor is absent, and hop bitterness is low. The wheat, malt, and yeast character

dominate the palate, and the alcohol helps balance the finish. Well-aged examples may show some sherry-like oxidation as a point of complexity. No diacetyl or DMS.

Mouthfeel: Medium-full to full body. A creamy sensation is typical, as is the warming sensation of substantial alcohol content. The presence of Munich and/or Vienna malts also provide an additional sense of richness and fullness. Moderate to high carbonation. Never hot or solventy.

Overall Impression: A strong, malty, fruity, wheat-based ale combining the best flavors of a dunkelweizen and the rich strength and body of a bock.

History: Aventinus, the world's oldest top-fermented wheat doppelbock, was created in 1907 at the Weisse Brauhaus in Munich using the 'Méthode Champenoise' with fresh yeast sediment on the bottom. It was Schneider's creative response to bottom-fermenting doppelbocks that developed a strong following during these times.

Comments: A dunkel-weizen beer brewed to bock or doppelbock strength. Now also made in the Eisbock style as a specialty beer.

Bottles may be gently rolled or swirled prior to serving to rouse the yeast.

Ingredients: A high percentage of malted wheat is used (by German law must be at least 50%, although it may contain up to 70%), with the remainder being Munich- and/or Vienna-type barley malts. A traditional decoction mash gives the appropriate body without cloying sweetness. Weizen ale yeasts produce the typical spicy and fruity character. Too warm or too cold fermentation will cause the phenols and esters to be out of balance and may create off-flavors. A small amount of noble hops are used only for bitterness.

Vital Statistics: OG: 1.064 – 1.090

IBUs: 15 – 30 FG: 1.015 – 1.022

SRM: 12 – 25 ABV: 6.5 – 8.0%

Commercial Examples: Schneider Aventinus, Schneider Aventinus Eisbock, Plank Bavarian Dunkler Weizenbock, Plank Bavarian Heller Weizenbock, AleSmith Weizenbock, Erdinger Pikantus, Mahr's Der Weisse Bock, Victory Moonglow Weizenbock, High Point Ramstein Winter Wheat, Capital Weizen Doppelbock, Eisenbahn Vigorosa

16A. Witbier

Aroma: Moderate sweetness (often with light notes of honey and/or vanilla) with light, grainy, spicy wheat aromatics, often with a bit of tartness. Moderate perfumy coriander, often with a complex herbal, spicy, or peppery note in the background. Moderate zesty, citrusy orangey fruitiness. A low spicy-herbal hop aroma is optional, but should never overpower the other characteristics. No diacetyl. Vegetal, celery-like, or ham-like aromas are inappropriate. Spices should blend in with fruity, floral and sweet aromas and should not be overly strong.

Appearance: Very pale straw to very light gold in color. The beer will be very cloudy from starch haze and/or yeast, which gives it a milky, whitish-yellow appearance. Dense, white, moussy head. Head retention should be quite good.

Flavor: Pleasant sweetness (often with a honey and/or vanilla character) and a zesty, orange-citrusy fruitiness. Refreshingly crisp with a dry, often tart, finish. Can have a low wheat flavor. Optionally has a very light lactic-tasting sourness. Herbal-spicy flavors, which may include coriander and other spices, are common should be subtle and balanced, not overpowering. A spicy-earthy hop flavor is low to none, and if noticeable, never gets in the way of the spices. Hop bitterness is low to medium-low (as with a Hefeweizen), and doesn't interfere with refreshing flavors of fruit and spice, nor does it persist into the finish. Bitterness from orange pith should not be present. Vegetal, celery-like, ham-like, or soapy flavors are inappropriate. No diacetyl.

Mouthfeel: Medium-light to medium body, often having a smoothness and light creaminess from unmalted wheat and the occasional oats. Despite body and creaminess, finishes dry and often a bit tart. Effervescent character from high carbonation. Refreshing, from carbonation, light acidity, and lack of bitterness in finish. No harshness or astringency from orange pith. Should not be overly dry and thin, nor should it be thick and heavy.

Overall Impression: A refreshing, elegant, tasty, moderate-strength wheat-based ale.

History: A 400-year-old beer style that died out in the 1950s; it was later

revived by Pierre Celis at Hoegaarden, and has grown steadily in popularity over time.

Comments: The presence, character and degree of spicing and lactic sourness varies. Overly spiced and/or sour beers are not good examples of the style. Coriander of certain origins might give an inappropriate ham or celery character. The beer tends to be fragile and does not age well, so younger, fresher, properly handled examples are most desirable. Most examples seem to be approximately 5% ABV.

Ingredients: About 50% unmalted wheat (traditionally soft white winter wheat) and 50% pale barley malt (usually pils malt) constitute the grist. In some versions, up to 5-10% raw oats may be used. Spices of freshly-ground coriander and Curaçao or sometimes sweet orange peel complement the sweet aroma and are quite characteristic. Other spices (e.g., chamomile, cumin, cinnamon, Grains of Paradise) may be used for complexity but are much less prominent. Ale yeast prone to the production of mild, spicy flavors is very characteristic. In some instances a very limited lactic fermentation, or the actual addition of lactic acid, is done.

Vital Statistics: OG: 1.044 – 1.052

IBUs: 10 – 20 FG: 1.008 – 1.012

SRM: 2 – 4 ABV: 4.5 – 5.5%

Commercial Examples: Hoegaarden Wit, St. Bernardus Blanche, Celis White, Vuuve 5, Brugs Tarwebier (Blanche de Bruges), Wittekerke, Allagash White, Blanche de Bruxelles, Ommegang Witte, Avery White Rascal, Unibroue Blanche de Chambly, Sterkens White Ale, Bell's Winter White Ale, Victory Whirlwind Witbier, Hitachino Nest White Ale

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tossing two thirds of a keg because we didn't finish it fast enough.

We will probably also make smaller batches of beer. We had so much hanging around last year that we decided to make less and work more on quality than quantity (although the ability to make 30 gal at a time is still tempting!) and concentrate on method rather than volume.

This is the busy season in the yard and garden, helped along this year by way too much rain and a seemingly endless supply of large limbs falling out of trees (I've got four more, plus the half a maple tree in the back lot to cut up this week) and more than the normal summer travel (and extra expense this year). No brewing for a while, all I seem to get done is mow grass, pull weeds, and try not to get any further behind on the landscaping and house repair!

Fortunately, it will be the dead of summer before too long, and I can quit working on cars, driving all over the place, and brew some more beer!

I've got a nice lager to keg for the Sportsman's Club event and one that should be ready for SWIRCA, though. Not much for me, but I can fix that with some ales in a few weeks, I hope.

Hop of the Month: Challenger

Challenger is a hop bred in England from Northern Brewer and German downy mildew resistant males. This hop is a result of Wye's efforts to combine higher levels of alpha acids with technically good aroma, disease resistance, and good agronomic properties. It was released in 1968. It is a late season hop, producing between 1400 and 1800 lb/acre. Alpha acid levels average 6.5% to 8.5%, making it a mid-level alpha acid hop these days. Beta acids range from 4 to 4.5%. It has good storage capacity, the 70-85% of the alpha acids remaining after six months storage at 20C.

Challenger is one of the few recognized dual purpose hops combining moderate amounts of alpha acids with a good kettle hop aroma. Typically it is used in English style Ales, Porters, Stouts, ESB, Bitters, Barley wines, and Brown Ales. US or German Perle or Northern Brewer hops are very similar and may be substituted for each other.

Malt of the Month: Victory Malt

Victory Malt is a pale 2-row malt dry roasted to give a Lovibond of around 25 degrees. It can be purchased from Briess Malting or other sources, but it can also be made at home by roasting good quality 2-row malt at 350F for about 15 minutes, preferably in a screen-bottom tray with occasional agitation. Home roasted malt will be likely to be somewhat more variable than purchased malt, but like coffee, will be very much fresher.

Victory malt will give a nutty, roast flavor to beer and copper to amber highlights. Lighter than amber or brown malts with correspondingly lighter flavor, it will enhance Brown Ales, Golden Ales, and Bitters. It has little or no enzyme activity left after roasting, so shouldn't make up the majority of a mash. Use to give fullness, head retention, and "toasted bread" flavor.