

Minutes of the Midlands Craft Brewers Meeting Held in the Alexandra Hotel, Derby, 5 May 2012

Present

Ron A, Geoff C (guest), Damien C (guest), Ray C, John C, David E (guest), James F, Peter F (chair), Bill G, Allan G, Steve H, Simon J, Tim L, Steve O, Russell P, Alan Q, Steve R, Ian R-B, Jim S, Steve S, David S, Lorna W.

Apologies

Greg P, James T, Mike C, Phil S, and Guy H

Welcome & Introductions

The Chair welcomed all the members present and then those present briefly introduced themselves. Damien, Geoff, and Tim were attending their first meeting and David, who did so much in the early days of the (then) MCBA, his first meeting for a number of years.

IPA tasting

MCB brewers submitted 8 beers to the Saltaire competition and each entrant was asked to bring bottles of their beers to the meeting so that MCB members could have the opportunity to have a go at the judging process. In total 22 members attended the meeting although our Chairman did not participate in the judging process and one member did not score the beers.

The 8 beers sampled had a potential total score of 480 points (8x60) . The Saltaire judges awarded 317 points in total whereas MCB members awarded an average of 300 points. However there was a wide variation with the lowest score by a MCB member being 192 and the highest score 395. Having said that, 50% of the MCB members awarded scores within 10% of the 317 points awarded by the Saltaire judges and a further 25% were within 20%.

The judging procedure adopted by the Saltaire judges must be taken into account in this experiment. Beers were allotted to different tables and the beers which were awarded the highest marks were transferred to a top table for final judging. This explains why beer no 8 came 2nd out of MCB entries with 46 points and beer no 3 came 3rd with 52 points.

A comparison of the rankings based on total marks awarded for each beer by the Saltaire judges and MCB members is as follows:

Beer Number	Saltire Judge Ranking	MCB Members Ranking
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	Score	Score
7	1st 57	5th 37
3	2nd 52	2nd 42
2	3rd 43	4th 38
8	4th 42	3rd 41
4	5th 41	1st 42+
1	6th 31	7th 35
6	7th 30	6th 36
5	8th 21	8th 28

It can be seen that apart from Beer Numbers 4 & 7, the ranking order awarded by the Saltaire judges and by the MCB members was either the same or only 1 place different. In the case of beers 4 & 7 the Saltaire judges considered beer number 7 to be the best, whereas the MCB judges considered the same beer to be in 5th place. MCB judges thought beer 4 was the best, whereas beer 7 was in 5th place.

The results of the MCB tasting session suggest from the mathematics that MCB members are not bad judges after all.

However the following points need to be taken into account.

- 1) Whereas the Saltaire judges awarded a top mark of 57 and a bottom mark of 21 (a difference of 36) MCB members awarded an average top mark of 42 and an average bottom mark of 28 (a difference of only 14) This suggests that MCB members generally felt the beers were of more similar quality than the Saltaire judges.
- 2) The variation in marks awarded to a particular beer by individual members varied enormously as the following table shows

Beer no	Top Mark	Bottom Mark
2	52	14
6	52	10
5	46	5

3) Faults

- a) With regard to the faults identified by MCB members every type of fault listed was apparently found in at least one beer.
- b) One member found 6/8 beers to be astringent.
- c) One member found all beers after the first two sampled to be sour/acidic.
- d) One person found a range of faults in 7/8 beers.
- e) The winning beer (no 4) was found to have the following faults: Green Apple, Sour/Acidic, DMS, Solvent, Grassy & Metallic.

A few people did not list any faults on their score sheet but it is not clear whether they considered the beers to be fault free or whether they just did not complete this part of the exercise.

In conclusion, although on the face of it the results from MCB members were similar to those of the Saltaire judges, a more in depth analysis suggests that substantial training is required to develop our tasting skills. Perhaps the next meeting when we are going to attempt to recognise certain brewing faults will help in this respect.

The following MCB members entered the Saltaire competition- Alan Q, Allan G, Ian R-B, James F, Peter F, Ray C, Ron A and Steve S. Steve won the competition at Saltaire and Peter's beer was judged the best at this meeting. Both these recipes are included in the Recipe Section of this website. Anyone wishing to obtain any of the other recipes should contact the brewer.

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Beer Clinic

There were no beers for this part of the agenda

Lunch

A substantial lunch was provided by Janette E (another founder member of the "old" MCBA). A highlight, for many were her home-made Scotch Eggs.

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Dry Hopping Techniques

Peter gave a short exposition on the art of dry hopping, including different methods and techniques and then two beers were tasted. One was from Peter and the other from Simon. Peter had used 10 grams of the NZ hop Wakatu in 25L and a subtle hop aroma was detected. Simon used 100 grams of NZ Cascade in 27L and, not surprisingly perhaps, a huge aroma was evident.

An information sheet was provided by Peter and this is on our website under Brewing Topics

The Yeast Day

Some feedback and an update on the (very successful) yeast day were provided by Alan, Allan, and Peter. An account of this has been posted on our website, under Past Events and some technical notes provided by Peter can be found under Brewing Topics.

Comparison Brews

A discussion on comparison brews for the future was held and a wide range of opinions and possibilities were aired. Ron agreed to email the wider membership to ascertain their views.

Forthcoming Events and Announcements

The next meeting of the Cambridge brewers is on Saturday 19 May in Cambridge.

The next meeting of the MCB is on Saturday 7 July in Nottingham

Hot Break organized by UK Home brew is on 4th August

There will be another Yeast Day on Saturday 11 August (already fully subscribed). In case there are any cancellations please let Allan know asap if you are interested.

Cambridge meeting on 18 August

Burton meeting on 8 September

The National Craft Brewers Festival is on Saturday 15 September in Bristol (details have been circulated previously).

It is hoped that there will be a hop walk/brew pub visit near Worcester in September.

Simon is hoping to organise a brewery visit in Nottingham in July

AOB

The new MCB logo was circulated.

It was agreed that a poster would be produced for publicity purposes.

Allan is investigating the supplies of a polo shirt with MCB on it. The probable price is £7 for the shirt plus £3 for the logo.

The Treasurer reported that after some expenditure on the website, the balance was £199.39.

This led to a discussion on MCB funding and it was suggested that a strictly voluntary contribution of £1 per member per meeting be tried. There was wide spread support for this and a total of £24 was collected.

The meeting closed at 16.10.