

MIDLANDS CRAFT BREWERS
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT THE EXETER ARMS ON 26th SEP 2015

Attendees- Malc N (Chair), Allan G, Colin F, Nick W, Desmond M, Alan Q, Sean O, John C, James F, Peter F, Allen B, Martin H, Steve L, Lorna W, Karl H, James D, Ray C, Andy R, Tom Y, James S, Mike C, Ian R, Jonathan D, Ian P, Richard B.

Apologies: Steve R, Matthew S, Russell P, Mark L, Tom A

It was good to see such a large turnout and, yet again, new members who are always welcome. In the search for new and interesting venues we gratefully accepted the free use of the Cottage rooms at the Exeter Arms in Derby though the fact that it was two distinct rooms led to problems presenting items to two audiences. This resulted in fairly radical changes to the agenda.

Members Beer Tasting

In order to get some structure and process to our beer tastings, we split into predefined groups of four per table in most cases. We also sent out beer assessment reporting forms (BARFs) to each member who wished to have a beer assessed. They were requested to give details of their beer style and recipe. The teams were then requested to fill in the assessment section of the BARFs for each beer. After each tasting the assessments were read out to the meeting then collected for scanning and forwarding to the brewers.

Martin H – Best Bitter 4.6%

Aroma – Generally accepted malt aroma with little hop.

Appearance – Clear/slight haze. Good colour for style. Good head.

Flavour – Malty, sweet. Well balanced. Not very hoppy.

Mouthfeel – Well carbonated. Thin/good body. Minority thought slightly tart.

Overall – Good session ale. No Faults. Maybe less crystal.

James D – Bohemian Pilsner 6.5%

Aroma – Malty, low hop.

Appearance – Clear, good colour. Excellent.

Flavour – True to style. Malty with a dry aftertaste. Subtle hops.

Mouthfeel – Good carbonation and body.

Overall – Almost universally liked. A little strong or sweet for some.

Richard B – Irish Red Ale 5%

Aroma – Good rich malt notes. Little hop. True to style.

Appearance – Good red hues, good head, clear.

Flavour – Starts malty, dry finish. Some said metallic/bleech/marmite.

Mouthfeel – Generally well thought of. One commented thin.

Overall – 50/50 split. Some loved it some didn't

Karl H – Black Saison 6.66%

Brought at the last minute no BARF but was generally enjoyed and appreciated.

Lunch and Raffle

Having had some poor experiences with recent buffets we hoped The Exeter would help restore confidence. The comments received seemed to confirm that it did. Raffle tickets were sold to win a Murphy Water Report with proceeds going to club funds. The winner was Ian P and the raffle made £32 towards club funds.

Following lunch it was decided that we could not effectively present Allan G's water chemistry report nor Malc N's report on up-scaling due to the room configuration. These will be carried over to a future meeting.

Members Beer Tasting

Malc N – Belgian Chocolate 8.3%

Winner of the Gold Medal in the Fruit, Herb, Spice and Vegetable beer class of the UK National Homebrew Competition 2015 with a score of 80%. A Trappist style dark beer with cacao nibs and vanilla in the secondary.
No BARF as it had been evaluated and the competition.

Tom Y – Burton Ale 5.3%

Aroma – Fruity, esters, banana, cloves, Belgian, sweet.
Appearance – Good head, colour and clarity though some said hazy.
Flavour – Fruity, slightly sweet, banana, balanced, spice. Belgian.
Mouthfeel – Good body. Med to high carbonation
Overall – All but one team said not true to style. All liked it and thought it Belgian

Nicholas W – Irish Dry Stout – 4.1%

Aroma – Appropriate for style. Roast malt.
Appearance – Black, good head. Excellent
Flavour – Roast malt, dry finish. To style. Balanced, smooth.
Mouthfeel – Good body, smooth, good carbonation, satisfying.
Overall – Universally enjoyed!

Colin F – American Black IPA 5.8%

Aroma – Mixed. Some said very hoppy, Citra. Some said needed more hops
Appearance – Dark, good head, clear.
Flavour – Good balance between dark malts and hops. A couple didn't like it.
Mouthfeel – Smooth, good body, good condition, creamy.
Overall – Very well liked but would benefit from more hops.

Jonathan D – American Pale Ale

No BARF and a single bottle meant that the beer was tasted by one person per table typically. This was racked straight from the fermenter and Jonathon's first AG brew. Comments were positive with a recommendation for generous dry hopping to achieve the APA aroma

Treasurers and Coordinators Report

The balance in the MCB primary account was £575.67 as at the end of the meeting including subs and raffle takings. There was an additional £100 in the secondary account generated by Yeast Day subscriptions.

Allan G reminded members of the joint NCB meeting and competition on 31st October in Sheffield. There will be a quiz after the judging with voucher prizes donated by Brew UK who have also been kind enough to sponsor the web site.

Allan G told the meeting that the vacuum packer and bags had been purchased and that it was now necessary to find hop suppliers who could supply in smaller quantities. Brewers Select off an annual contract with a minimum purchase of 5x5kg of hops and seem to be the most likely candidate.

We now need to decide which hops to buy. Members have been polled for their preferred hops and likely volume. Response has been slow. For this to work we need to know what members requirements are.

Allan G asked the meeting if there were any new volunteers to run future meetings. Karl H, Nick W, Shaun O and Jonathan D were kind enough to volunteer with a suggestion that we try some new venues in the West Midlands.

Allan G asked the meeting whether there was an appetite for a Christmas Social. Consensus was that we should have one in Derby. Karl H volunteered to plan it with help from Malc N.

AOB

Malc N made a suggestion that we could introduce some new activities to maybe help new brewers and old hands integrate, pass on experience and generate new ideas. A brew challenge with small teams coming together outside meetings to design and brew a new beer to a given theme was muted. Karl H noted that a Nottingham group had a barrel project whereby members brewed a specific style to add to a barrel for aging.

Future Events

Joint Meeting with NCB	31 st October	Sheffield.
Christmas Social	5 th December	Derby