

MINUTES OF THE MIDLANDS CRAFT BREWERS MEETING HELD AT THE GLOBE, LEICESTER ON 10TH SEPTEMBER 2016

Present: Alan Q, Andy R, Chris W, Denis H, Des M, Jim S, John C, Jon A, Jon D, Jon D, Karl H, Matt S, Mike C, Peter F, Sean O'T, Steve H, Steve R and Allan G (Chairman)

1. Introduction

Allan welcomed everyone to the meeting and this was followed by each attendee introducing themselves and giving a brief resume of their brewing experience.

2. Beer Tasting

5 beers were tasted with members splitting into groups for this exercise.

a) Golden Ale 4.5% brewed by Steve R.

Overall impression was that this was an easy drinking beer with no faults, although some members thought it would be more balanced if a little less bitter. Steve informed the group that this was a kit beer, a fact that no one had picked up.

b) American IPA 6.0% brewed by Jon A

Overall impression was that this was a good American IPA true to style.

c) Fullers ESB 5.4% brewed by Des M

This was entered as a clinic beer and members thought it smelt and tasted slightly phenolic. Also the presence of chlorine was noted.

d) Mild 3.9% brewed by Allan G

Allan brought this beer for tasting because this beer had been entered in the HBF competition, when the judges scored it 31 out of 50 points, citing a slight sourness. The group disagreed and thought this was a nice beer with no faults.

e) Fruit Pale Ale 5.5% brewed by Jon D

A distinctive beer where opinion was divided. Some members very much liked this beer, while others thought the bitterness slightly overpowering.

3. Improving the quality of our beers

This session was led by Allan G, Alan Q and Peter F.

The following advice was given:

a) Getting the basics right first before experimenting with new techniques.

b) Not rushing the brew day, to avoid making mistakes.

c) Maintaining good records so that brewing technique can be analysed and recipes can be reproduced or improved.

d) Using fresh ingredients and of the need to package and store them in optimum conditions.

e) Good temperature control, especially during fermentation and the benefits of using an insulated mash tun.

f) Importance of water treatment and how this can be achieved.

g) Contribution made by the attendance at MCB meetings and access to senior colleagues for advice in improving brewing technique.

h) Importance of flavour and aroma hop additions in producing quality beers.

i) Importance of good cleanliness and sanitation.

4. Mash and Brew House efficiency

Allan G stressed the importance of monitoring efficiency in producing quality beers. Most published recipes assume a 75% Brew House efficiency, a figure which should be improved upon by experienced brewers. Fresh ingredients, effective water treatment, good mash temperature control, long sparge times (90 mins plus) and the avoidance of dead space in the boiler all help to improve efficiency.

5. Co-ordinator's Report

- a) The Charnwood Brewery trip is due to be held on 1st October, with 20 attendees. This is to be followed by a social. Many thanks to Alan Q and John C for organising this.
- b) The MCB / NCB annual competition is to be held on 29th October in Sheffield, when the beer to be brewed is a black IPA with English hops. MCB have 13 entries and 20 attendees so this should be a good event. MCB members are invited to meet at the Brewery Tap on the Sheffield Station at 11am.
- c) The recently introduced booking form has worked well and will be used for future meetings.
- d) There was general support for a Christmas Social and Karl H agreed to organise this in Nottingham.

6. Treasurer's Report

The current balance on our bank account is £858.46, including £50 in respect of 5 members who have already paid their 2017 membership fees .