

P R I S O N C I T Y B R E W E R S

SENTENCING

Volume 7 - Issue 81

GUIDE

August 2004

Meading Location!!

The annual Mead Meeting is upon us, please join us at the O'Connor Apiary with Honorary Members Mike and Margaret as our host and hostess! This is an outdoor Meading, and if you're allergic to bee stings, there is good reason to be cautious. There are at least two hives on the property. Nobody has been stung in the past. - The Warden



Next Meeting is Tuesday, Aug 10th

Anyone who wants to make mead should bring an empty carboy or 5-gal bucket. Please RSVP to Phil Wilcox.

There is no competition style for the night, but if you bring it, we'll drink it!

If you have a beer you brewed, bring two. If not, find one in style and bring it also.

By all means, bring any/all of your own homebrew to share--especially Meads!

Feel free to give and accept constructive criticism on beer/mead/cider you're sampling. Knowing what you did right and wrong is all part of making better beer.

Please observe good judgment when imbibing and don't drive while intoxicated.

Meeting Date/Style 2nd Tuesdays 7:30

*Denotes AHA Club-Only Competition
Aug 10 - Meading - O'Connor Apiary
Aug- Jeff Ricker
Sep - Fest - Arcadia
Oct - Rauch - Bill Saurbeck
Nov - Cider*, Saison, Bier de garde
Dec - Herb Spice...

American Homebrewers Association
3rd Annual Mead Day

The 6th Meading

The American Homebrewers Association (AHA) Mead Day is a national event to help increase camaraderie among homebrewers and meadmakers and introduce or reintroduce the meadmaking hobby.

Each year on the first Saturday in August, homebrewers nationwide are encouraged to invite non-brewing and brewing friends and family to celebrate by making mead.

In Jackson, our Mead event predates the national event and is one of the original inspirations for Mead Day. We still like to do things our own way, so we have combined the two events, and we now brew mead every summer at the mead meeting. We have fondly come to know this event as THE MEADING.

This year's event is Tuesday, Aug. 10 at the O'Connor Apiary, as always. So invite non-brewing and brewing/meadmaking friends to help make mead. We'll be brewing and sampling till dark, so come out and enjoy the event.

- Bring an empty carboy or plastic fermentor to put your mead must into
- Your meadmaking supplies and ingredients, other than the honey. (Fruit etc.)
- Bring your wallet. Honey prices have rebounded from the Argentine and Chinese market flooding and currently stand at \$25 a gallon.
- Drink mead, pair your mead with food and HAVE FUN!
- Bring your meads. Especially the ones we made at years past.

MONTHLY RECIPE

Official 2004 Mead Day Recipe from three-time Meadmaker of the Year, Byron Burch

"Epiphanaic Exspearmint" Mead with Fresh Spearmint

2001 AHA Best of Show Mead

Ingredients for 5 U.S. gal (19 L)

18 lb clover honey
4 gal water
4 Tbs tartaric acid
1 Tbs malic acid
8 oz bruised spearmint leaves
2 oz The Beverage People™ yeast nutrient for mead (or 2 tsp each of yeast energizer and yeast nutrient)
4 tsp acid blend
10 g dry Prise de Mousse wine yeast
6 g Sparkaloid™
5 tsp stock Sodium Metabisulfite solution (after fermentation)

O.G.: 26o Brix (Approx. 1.110 SG)
Total Acid 6-6.5%

Instructions

Heat water until warm, turn off stove and stir in the honey until it is dissolved. Boil five minutes, skimming and add nutrient and acid. Cool to room temperature and transfer to a sanitized fermenter. Sprinkle yeast on the surface. Stir in after 12 hours. Ferment two to three weeks. Place spearmint leaves in a mesh bag in another fermenter and rack mead onto the leaves. Age one week, then fine with Sparkaloid (boil in 1-2 cups of water for 15 minutes, then stir into mead) and add Sodium Metabisulfite. Age four more weeks, rack off the lees, then bottle.

MEAD

The new 2004 BJCP style guidelines have been published and are too verbose to include in their entirety here. By fall they should be adopted by both the AHA and the BJCP. Below is the new introductions for categorizing, entering and judging meads. For a complete copy of the guidelines, visit the BJCP Home Page at www.bjcp.org.

Introduction to Mead Guidelines (Categories 24-26)

The following discussion applies to all the mead styles, except where explicitly superseded in the sub-category guidelines. This introduction identifies common characteristics and descriptions for all types of mead, and should be used as a reference whenever entering or judging mead.

1. Important attributes that must be specified:

Sweetness. A mead may be dry, semi-sweet, or sweet. Sweetness simply refers to the amount of residual sugar in the mead. Sweetness is often confused with fruitiness in a dry mead. Body is related to sweetness, but dry meads can still have some body. Dry meads do not have to be bone dry. Sweet meads should not be cloyingly sweet, and should not have a raw, unfermented honey character. Sweetness is independent of strength.

Carbonation. A mead may be still, petillant, or sparkling. Still meads do not have to be totally flat; they can have some very light bubbles. Petillant meads are “lightly sparkling” and can have a moderate, noticeable amount of carbonation. Sparkling meads are not gushing, but may have a character ranging from mouth-filling to an impression akin to Champagne or soda pop.

Strength. A mead may be categorized as hydromel, standard, or sack strength. Strength refers to the alcohol content of the mead (and also, therefore, the amount of honey and fermentables used to make the mead). Stronger meads can have a greater honey character and body (as well as alcohol) than weaker meads, although this is not a strict rule.

Honey variety. Some types of honey have a strong varietal character (aroma, flavor, color, acidity). If a honey is unusual, additional information can be provided to judges as to the character to be expected. Note that “wildflower” isn’t a varietal honey; it is specifically a term used to describe a honey derived from unknown or mixed flowers.

Special ingredients. Different sub-styles may include fruit, spice, malt, etc. Judges need to understand the ingredients that provide a unique character in order to properly evaluate the mead.

2. Common Mead Characteristics:

Appearance: Clarity may be good to brilliant. Crystal clear, reflective examples with a bright, distinct meniscus are highly desirable. Observable particulates (even in a clear example) are undesirable. Highly carbonated examples usually have a short-lasting head similar to Champagne or sodapop. Some aspects of bubbles or head formation that may be observed and com-

mented upon include size (large or small), persistence (how long do they continue to form?), quantity (how much are present?), rate (how fast do they form?), and mousse (appearance or quality of foam stand). The components of bubbles or head will vary greatly depending on the carbonation level, ingredients and type of mead. In general, smaller bubbles are more desirable and indicative of higher quality than larger bubbles. The color may vary widely depending on honey variety and any optional ingredients (e.g. fruit, malts). Some honey varieties are almost clear, while others can be dark brown. Most are in the straw to gold range. If no honey variety is declared, almost any color is acceptable. If a honey variety is declared, the color should be characteristic of the honey used. Hue, saturation and purity of color should be considered. Stronger versions (standard and sack) may show signs of body (e.g. legs, meniscus) but higher carbonation levels can interfere with this perception.

Aroma: The intensity of the honey aroma will vary based upon the sweetness and strength of the mead. Stronger, sweeter meads will have a stronger honey aroma than drier, weaker versions. Different varieties of honey have different intensities and characters; some (e.g. orange blossom, buckwheat) are more recognizable than others (e.g. avocado, palmetto). If honey varieties are declared, the varietal character of the honey should be apparent even if subtle. The aromatics may seem vinous (similar to wine), and may include fruity, floral, or spicy notes. The bouquet (rich, complex smells arising from the combination of ingredients, fermentation and aging) should show a pleasant fermentation character, with clean and fresh aromatics being preferred over dirty, yeasty, or sulfury notes. A multi-faceted bouquet, also known as complexity or depth, is a positive attribute. Phenolic or diacetyl aromatics should not be present. Harsh or chemical aromatics should not be present. Light oxidation may be present, depending on age, and may result in sherry-like notes, which are acceptable in low to moderate levels (if in balance, these can add to complexity). An excessive sherry character is a fault in most styles (except certain Polish-style specialties, or other meads attempting a sherry-like character). Oxidation resulting in a papery character is always undesirable. Alcohol aromatics may be present, but hot, solventy or irritating overtones are a defect. The harmony and balance of the aroma and bouquet should be pleasant and enticing.

Flavor: The intensity of the honey flavor will vary based upon the sweetness and strength of the mead. Stronger, sweeter meads will have a stronger honey flavor than drier, weaker versions. Different varieties of honey have different intensities and characters; some (e.g. orange blossom, buckwheat) are more recognizable than others (e.g. safflower, palmetto). If honey varieties are declared, the varietal character of the honey should be apparent even if subtle. The residual sweetness level will vary with the sweetness of the mead; dry meads will have no residual sugar, sweet meads will have noticeable to prominent sweetness, semi-sweet meads will have a balanced sweetness. In no case should the residual sweetness be syrupy, cloying or seem like unfermented honey. Any additives, such as acid or tannin, should enhance the honey flavor and lend balance to the overall

character of the mead but not be excessively tart or astringent. Artificial, chemical, harsh, phenolic or bitter flavors are defects. Higher carbonation (if present) enhances the acidity and gives a “bite” to the finish. The aftertaste should be evaluated; longer finishes are generally most desirable. A multi-faceted flavor, also known as complexity or depth, is a positive attribute. Yeast or fermentation characteristics may be none to noticeable, with estery, fresh and clean flavors being most desirable. Alcohol flavors (if present) should be smooth and well-aged, not harsh or solventy. Light oxidation may be present, depending on age, but an excessive sherry-like or papery character should be avoided. Aging and conditioning generally smooth out flavors and create a more elegant, blended, rounded product. Flavors tend to become more subtle over time, and can deteriorate with extended aging.

Mouthfeel: Before evaluating, refer to the declared sweetness, strength and carbonation levels, as well as any special ingredients. These can all affect mouthfeel. Smooth texture. Well-made examples will often have an elegant wine-like character. The body can vary widely, although most are in the medium-light to medium-full range. Body generally increases with stronger and/or sweeter meads, and can sometimes be quite full and heavy. Similarly, body generally decreases with lower gravity and/or drier meads, and can sometimes be quite light. Sensations of body should not be accompanied by an overwhelmingly cloying sweetness (even in sweet meads). A very thin or watery body is likewise undesirable. Some natural acidity is often present (particularly in fruit-based meads). Low levels of astringency are sometimes present (either from specific fruit or spices, or from tea, chemical additives or oak-aging). Acidity and tannin help balance the overall honey, sweetness and alcohol presentation. Carbonation can vary widely (see definitions above). Still meads may have a very light level of carbonation, lightly carbonated (petillant) meads will have noticeable bubbles, and a highly carbonated (sparkling) mead can range from a mouth-filling carbonation to levels approaching Champagne or soda pop. High carbonation will enhance the acidity and give a “bite” to the finish. A warming alcohol presence is often present, and this character usually increases with strength (although extended aging can smooth this sensation).

Overall Impression: A wide range of results are possible, but well-made examples will have an enjoyable balance of honey flavors, sweetness, acidity, tannins, alcohol. Strength, sweetness and age greatly affect the overall presentation. Any special ingredients should be well-blended with the other ingredients, and lead to a harmonious end product.

Ingredients: Mead is made primarily from honey, water and yeast. Some minor adjustments in acidity and tannin can be made with citrus fruits, tea, chemicals, or the use of oak aging; however, these additives should not be readily discernible in flavor or aroma. Yeast nutrients may be used but should not be detected. If citrus, tea, or oak additives result in flavor components above a low, background, balance-adjusting level, the resulting mead should be entered appropriately (e.g. as a metheglin or open category mead, not a traditional).

MEAD

Vital Statistics:

OG:	ABV:	FG:
Hydromel: 1.035 – 1.080	Hydromel: 3.5 – 7.5%	Dry: 0.990 – 1.010
Standard: 1.080 – 1.120	Standard: 7.5 – 14%	Semi-sweet: 1.010 – 1.025
Sack: 1.120 – 1.140+	Sack: 14 – 18%	Sweet: 1.025 – 1.040+

IBUs: Not relevant for anything but braggot, but bittering hops are optional even in this style.

SRM: Basically irrelevant since honey can be anything from almost clear to dark brown. Melomels and pyments can have orange, red, pink and/or purple hues. Cysers are most often golden. Braggots can be yellow to black. In all cases, the color should reflect the ingredients used (type of honey, and fruit and/or malt in some styles).

3. Entering and Categorizing Meads:

Mandatory Requirements:

Entrants **MUST** specify carbonation level (still; petillant or lightly carbonated; sparkling or highly carbonated).

Entrants **MUST** specify strength level (hydromel or light mead; standard mead; sack or strong mead).

Entrants **MUST** specify sweetness level (dry; semi-sweet; sweet).

Optional Requirements: Entrants **MAY** specify honey varieties used. If honey varieties are declared, judges will look for the varietal character of the honey. Note that the character of a varietal honey will be identifiable as distinct to the source flowers, but may not resemble the source plant, tree, or fruit. For example, orange-blossom honey has the character of orange blossoms, not oranges; blackberry honey is only distantly like blackberries, although it is an identifiable character.

Category-Specific Requirements: Some categories require additional information, particularly in categories other than traditional mead. For example, declaring specific fruit, spices, or special characteristics. Supplemental materials may be provided to judges if an obscure ingredient or method is used.

Defaults: If no attributes are specified, judges should evaluate the mead as a semi-sweet, petillant, standard-strength mead with no varietal honey character and no special ingredients. Competition organizers should make every effort to ensure that judges are provided the full set of attributes of the meads being evaluated.

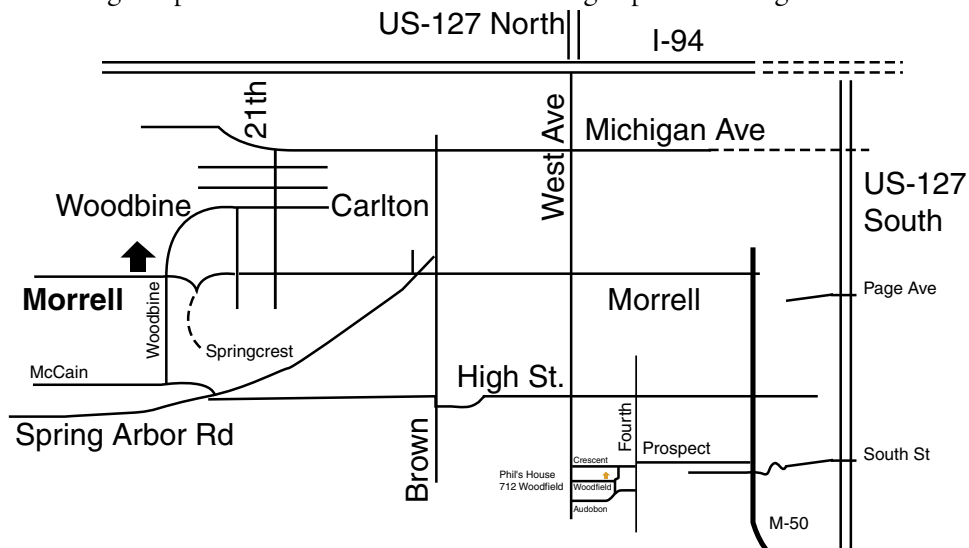
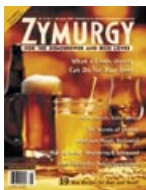




This Month's Meeting is at O'Connor Apiary, a.k.a. Mike and Margaret's house

The easiest way to get to their house is from Michigan Ave. by the Westwood Mall. This is the main East/West street in town. From the North side of town or I-94/127N, take West Ave. into town and hang a right on Michigan Ave. Proceed West past McDonald's and take a left before the Felpausch grocery store. This should be 24th St. Go down three blocks and hang a right on Carlton. Continue through the next stop sign (the road changes its name) on what is now Woodbine. This takes a wide 90 degree bend and intersects with Morrell. Turn right on Morrell, O'Connors is the first house on the right. Blue house, black shutters. 2700 W. Morrell is the address. 787-1241 is the phone if you get lost. If you live in town and want to attempt to follow Morrell all the way over--It's possible--but tricky. Feel free to diagonal park in the ditch across the road. Bring a spouse or designated driver!

Please bring your club **Zymurgy** magazines back to each meeting. Others would like to read about what is going on in the beer world. If you just can't part with it, back issues are available through the AHA. Or see Phil for a discount on your own membership.



Visit us on the Internet: <http://hbd.org/prisoner!!!!>

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