

Central Oregon Homebrewers Organization

General (Club) Meeting Minutes

DETAILS

Date: Wednesday, 04/16/14

Start Time: 6:30pm PST; 7:00pm PST Call to Order

End Time: 9:00pm PST

Type of Meeting: Monthly COHO General Meeting

Location: Aspen Ridge Retirement Community

Organizer / Chair: Tom Brohamer

- I. Call to order at 7:15 pm (Tom Brohamer led the meeting). There were 33 folks in attendance.
- II. Treasurer's Report (Kevin Tucker) – COHO has approx. \$2,500 in our accounts and we are approx. \$141 ahead of budget. All members are welcome to examine the COHO books.
- III. Introduction of first-time attendees (please excuse any misspellings, mistakes or omissions of some folks' last names); all listed below joined COHO tonight.
 - Blake Creagen – likes homebrew beer. He's been brewing 12 years; he began as an extract brewer and now brews all-grain on a natural gas fired system. He's currently on "a big Belgian kick – high alcohol beers". Blake moved to La Pine in December from Cody, WY.
 - Patrick Cougill – is in the process of moving from Portland to Bend. He has been brewing for 20 yrs and is still a member of The Oregon Brew Crew. He took a hiatus from brewing while his kids were in high school; his coney kegs of homebrew kept disappearing. Patrick began as an extract brewer, went to partial mash and then to all-grain; he likes doing partial mashes. He knew there must be a homebrew club in Bend and found COHO on the Internet. Patrick also spoke to Joseph about COHO at Zwickelmania.
 - Jeff Morero – just brewed his second batch of beer. He got into brewing because his daughter just got married and he needed a hobby to share with his new son-in-law. He is brewing with extract and just brewed an amber.
 - Alan Tompkins – has been brewing one year. He found out about COHO from visiting the COHO table at Zwickelmania at 10 Barrel.

Tom reminded everyone if they joined COHO tonight, they would be eligible for the Attendance Raffle at the end of the meeting tonight.

- IV. COHO Club Only competition – the current competition is style category 9, Scottish and Irish Ale. You need to turn your beer into the Brew Shop no later than 7pm on Friday, 5/2. Beers are judged by the Deschutes Sensory Panel per BJCP guidelines and through a People’s Choice competition during the May Club meeting; ribbons are awarded for both parts of the competition. Those who enter every competition receive an additional 10 points.
- V. April Group Brew – Ben Wiersch. Ben brewed two 5 gallon extract batches. This was a tremendous showcase for newer brewers especially to see what one can do with an approx. \$100 investment. The brew session was well attended and was a good time for all. Ben smoked some chicken wings and made this incredible smoked chicken dip, also. Group brews are an opportunity for all members to learn from each other. It is a free event and all, including guests, are welcome.
- VI. May Group Brew – will be held on Saturday, May 3rd at The Brew Shop. It is the AHA Big Brew Day. Tom Brohamer and Tom Gilles will be brewing all-grain on the Blichmann system and Mac McLean will be brewing extract.
- VII. Barrel Brew Update (Gary Wirt) – the contents of the barrel – that Deschutes generously provided and we filled with 55 gallons of a 1.097 beer – has receded a few inches but is not leaking. Gary asked if he should top it off; all agreed he should keep the barrel full. Gary tasted the beer and it was quite good.
- Gary has been the caretaker of our barrel brew all 4 times COHO has done a barrel brew and for his labor, the Club presented him with a \$50 gift certificate to The Brew Shop (this was money that was budgeted for the Barrel Brew but we had not spent).
- VIII. Tom presented on Yeast Starters and building a pitchable starter from a slant. Listed are the main points (as best I could record what Tom told us):

STARTERS IN GENERAL

- We make starters to improve the quality of our beers. One smack pack or vial of yeast is insufficient for any beer (5 gallons is the size batch we’ll reference) that has an OG exceeding 1.040; even a 1.040 beer can benefit from a small starter to get the yeast active.
- A beer’s flavor profile is developed during the growth phase, i.e. the first 72 hours or so and it is important to have a sufficient number of healthy yeast during this time so the yeast is not stressed. Also, having enough yeast cells available to eat the sugars will ensure your beer attenuates fully (all residual sugars are consumed by the yeast) and does not finish too sweet.
- Always determine your pitching rate prior to making a starter. The pitching rate will dictate how big of starter you will need. Use the pitching rate calculator at www.mrmalty.com by Jamil Zainasheff or Wyeast website’s calculator for good results. Don’t forget to factor in the date stamped on the smack pack; the older the pack of yeast the more dead cells and many of the others are less viable.

- Using a stir plate for making a starter will grow approx. 50% more yeast than just letting the yeast sit in starter wort. One may also intermittently shake the starter to get the yeast into the starter wort. The idea is to keep the yeast in suspension.
- It's best to have a heat source – open flame – in your work space when making a starter (working with yeast) to create an updraft so wild yeast, bacteria and other undesirables riding the airwaves, don't fall into your sweet starter wort.
- You can use DME (dry malt extract), LME (liquid malt extract), second-runnings, or make a 1.040ish wort from all-grain. The idea is to have your starter wort in the 1.030-1.040 range (the upper portion of the range being best). This is optimum for yeast growth and health. Remember, you're not making beer, you're making happy, healthy yeast at this juncture.
- Tom, and others in the Club, can their wort using a pressure canner/cooker. Tom, in the not too distant future, will hold a class on this topic at his house (also, COHO's website has instructions for canning starter wort; click on Yeast bank under the Member Only tab).
- The minimum container for making a starter should be 2000 milliliters (ml). You also need a thermometer, lighter (for flaming the rim of canned starter wort), scissors, sanitizer (such as Starsan) and yeast nutrient; a stir plate and stir bar are optional (COHO's website has plans for a DIY stir plate; click on Yeast Bank under the Member Only tab).
- Sanitize the scissors, vessel cover (foil, etc) and smack pack/vial (also, stir bar if using a stir plate).
- Empty yeast into cooled starter wort (that you checked with your sanitized thermometer).
- Cover the top of your starter vessel with a sanitized, loose fitting top such as a large piece of foil or, as Tom uses, a plastic pop bottle with the top cut off that sits over the mouth of the starter vessel (Erlenmeyer flask); air locks are not the best because you want an exchange of gasses. Covering the top sufficiently will keep airborne particles out and bacteria and their ilk cannot climb the side of your vessel.
- Place on stir plate or intermittently shake starter (at least every hour is best but any amount is better than none).
- Grow your yeast at room (70-72°F) for 13-24 hours (depending on if you want to pitch at high krausen or later if you wish to decant most of your spent starter wort. It's best to pitch no more starter wort than 5% of your beer volume.
- If you choose to decant your spent starter wort, you can let it settle over the course of about 12 hrs (during which time the yeast build their sterols) and then decant, or you can cold crash the yeast in a refrigerator, etc to get the yeast to settle faster. Leave a little wort in the flask so you can swirl up the yeast cake; otherwise, you may leave precious, needed yeast stuck to the side of your flask.
- When you decant your spent wort, pour some in a cup so you can taste it. ALWAYS TASTE YOUR WORT after your starter is complete to ensure it is not contaminated. Have a packet of dry yeast on hand just in case.
- When you pitch, ensure the temperature of your yeast is w/in about 5 degrees of your wort to prevent shocking your yeast.

MAKING A STARTER FROM A SLANT

- The Yeast Bank that Tom manages (owns) has approx. 30 yeast cultures. In the past, the bank was not used enough to maintain all the cultures, so Tom is rewriting the policy on using the Yeast Bank. More information will follow in subsequent meetings.
- When you get a culture from the Yeast Bank, Tom has already done a lot of work getting it to the slant stage.
- For \$2, you will get a slant (in a test tube) plus a small container (25 ml) of 1.020 starter wort (a lesser OG is necessary for such a small amount of yeast) and you get \$1 back when you return the empty container and test tube.
- Next to your updraft flame, pitch the yeast into your container of starter wort and shake it up. Let it sit for 24 hours at 70-72°F. The yeast will have eaten the sugars in the wort w/in 24 hours.
- Now we need to step up this starter by a factor of 10. Flame the opening of your 25 ml container (if glass) and, next to your updraft, pour the contents into 250 ml of 1.040 wort (Erlenmeyer Flask works best). The yeast will consume the sugars in the wort in approx. 36 hours. It's good to shake this starter intermittently. This will produce about 100 billion cells – the same amount you get in a smack pack. You got to have all this fun and create a smack pack's worth of yeast for only a buck!
- The next size starter would be based on what your pitching rate dictates, but to double the 100 billion cells, you would need to pitch this starter into 2500 ml of fresh wort.
- The best on-line (free) resource for yeast starters and pitching rates is www.mrmalty.com by Jamil Zainasheff.

IX. Upcoming Events

- Spring Fling – Saturday, May 10th (see website for details)
Deadline for entries is Saturday, May 3rd at The Brew Shop.
If you have judged a competition in the past, please contact Tom. Anyone interested in helping should contact Doug.
- Central Oregon Beer Week – Sunday, May 25th from 6-9p at Lava Lanes. The Beer Angles invited COHO to their karaoke and bowling event. We will have an info table displaying equipment and ingredients and also have info on making a DIY keezer/kegerator.
- Fermentation Celebration – Thursday, June 19th in the Old Mill District. This will be our 3rd year to participate. We need members to brew beers for this event. It is rare when we get the opportunity to pour our beers for the general public and this is a big one for us. The public's reaction is incredible! In the past, people have commented that our beers are better than some of the commercial beers. We want to taste the beers we take to ensure they are up to standards, so brewing them as soon as possible would be best. If you have a partial keg, 3 gallons or more, we

can use that, too. We will be pouring 4 beers at a time, so we have more choices than most of the commercial breweries, also.

- Summer Bash Camp Out – Friday, June 27th – Sunday, June 29th until 1p at Big River Camp Ground; there is no charge for members. We have already reserved the campsite; we will have games and food and, of course, beer. Registration is now open on the website. Please register so we know how much food to purchase. There will be a potluck on Saturday night so please bring your favorite dish to share with your fellow campers, too. You can come spend the entire weekend or how
- X. New Club Brew System Update – we have completed the design phase but Tom has not had time work on building the frame due to work.
- XI. Name badges – we decided as a club a few months back that we’re in favor of wearing name badges to assist getting to know each other by name but we want to ensure members actually wear them. We’re thinking of a way to motivate members to wear the badges and one idea is to make winning the Attendance Drawing dependent on wearing one’s name badge, i.e. if you’re not wearing your badge, you’re ineligible to win. Another idea is to charge any member who is not wearing their badge a dollar. Think about this; we will be discussing it further.
- XII. Attendance Drawing –David Feldman’s name was drawn and he was the recipient of \$20 in gift certificates redeemable at The Brew Shop. Next month’s drawing will be for \$20 again.
- XIII. Adjournment
Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.