

Brews & News

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EDITOR

David Uhl

CONTRIBUTORS

David Uhl, John Aitchison, Irene Kaplan, Bruce L. Bode,

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Maltose Falcons Board 2013-2014

President, John Aitchison

president@maltosefalcons.com

Vice-Presidents, Ed Kochanowski, Cullen Davis

vicepresident@maltosefalcons.com

Secretary, Irene Kaplan

secretary@maltosefalcons.com

Treasurer, Kent Fletcher

treasurer@maltosefalcons.com

Membership Director, Martin Carmen

membership@maltosefalcons.com

Publicity Director, Matt Myerhoff

publicity@maltosefalcons.com

Activities Director, Steve Cook

activities@maltosefalcons.com

Grand Hydrometer, Drew Beechum

grandhydro@maltosefalcons.com

Burgermeisters, Peter Sheppard, Tiffany Fairbrother

burgermeister@maltosefalcons.com

Newsletter Editor, David Uhl

newsletter@maltosefalcons.com

Webmeister, Drew Beechum, Dana Cordes

webmaster@maltosefalcons.com



Well, June was a busy month. Our first semi-annual “Brew-with –a Falcon day went off without a hitch. We had our annual Mead Tasting. Bruce Bode has very kindly provided us with an excellent write-up on it. He also wrote an excellent article on mead making in general. The board is getting into the nuts and bolts of the 40th anniversary blast. I for one cannot wait! I’m even going to borrow a kilt for it this time. I apologize in advance to any of you who may be blinded by my ridiculously white legs.

Don’t forget, no meeting next month. It will be SunFaire out at Mount Pinos on August 23rd.

Well, it’s hot, and this newsletter is very very late. So I’m going to close and have a beer.

Prost!



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President's Report

President's Report

By John Aitchison

Summer is here, now the beer festivals will be coming in bunches. And Falcons will be involved in many of them. In some of them, we'll be attending as beer consumers, and in others—we'll be the brewers as well.

The first one was Sunday, June 29 at Crafted in San Pedro. Crafted is like a giant swap meet of crafters. You find all kinds of interesting stuff made in small batches by individuals or tiny companies. We were invited to pour our beer at a beer festival in their parking lot. The Falcons had about 8 people attend and we served 10 beers or so.

We were joined by the Strand Brewers, Long Beach Homebrewers, the Torrance Crude beer club, the Yeastsiders, and a club from Downey. They all had tasty beer; but ours was the best in my possibly biased opinion. There were maybe 100 beers there and about the same number of attendees. It was fun; you could easily find the brewer of an individual beer and talk to him about how he did it.

Among other festivals in July is Sierra Nevada's travelling Beer Camp. Not quite the same as their



Beer Camp (when brewers get to visit Chico and brew on their system), it will be one of the biggest beer festivals held in California. Sierra Nevada is opening up another brewery in Asheville, North Carolina and celebrating by having a series of festivals. In each location, they have invited every brewery in the state and other nearby states. The Chico festival is on July 13 and has 113 breweries participating so far. San Diego's festival is on July 20 and includes 97 breweries. Whew.

The oldest and one of the largest festivals is also being held the last week in July. It is the Oregon Brewer's Festival along the banks of the Willamette

River in Downtown Portland. They will have 188 beers on tap over a 4 day period. I'll be joining a few other Falcons by marching in the parade from Lucky Lab Brewery to the festival. In addition to the Falcons I will be hanging out with, Maltose Falcon member John Maier is Grand Marshall and will be leading the parade? How cool is that? If we pass by Hair of the Dog, I might take a detour. Where else can you march in a parade and stop traffic with a beer in your hand.

On August 9 is the Arrowhead Brewfest. A number of club members will be there as well. The Falcons will be joining the Mountain Brew Club, the High Desert Brewers, and a dozen or so commercial microbrewers in this beer festival. They expect several thousand people. FREE if you bring a keg. See Chris Moon for details. There is still camping available on the far side of the lake and also some rooms available in nearby Big Bear. Our own Sunfest is coming up in late August. August 23? It will be in the Pinos campground in Las Padres National Forest. You all know the routine for this one—it should be fun.

And the best festival of them all is coming up. It is the Maltose Falcons 40th anniversary banquet in October. There will be many one of a kind beers there to help us celebrate. All this year we've been doing shop brews with this in mind. You'll find an Old Ale, a Belgian Strong Dark, a Barleywine, an Adambier, an Imperial IPA, and Octoberfest, and a Tripel among other shop brews. And Firestone Walker's Brownwine (made with Falcon help (Editor's note: We were actually an eoic hinderance!) and Eagle Rock's Longevity (also made with Falcon help using Izzy's recipe) will be there. And tons of other homebrew. There never has been a festival/banquet like this one before in the quantity and quality of beer. You'll see a number of announcements for the banquet starting this month. Be sure a book a room early; if you try all the beers there—you won't be driving.

On a different subject; don't forget to enter and judge at the Los Angeles County Fair. The fair is really celebrating craft items this year; and they

were eager to have us organize the contest for them (in the past they've even been reluctant). The winner's beers will be celebrated and all who judge or steward will get into the fair for free. There is something to be said for having the "best beer in the largest county in the country". Enter.



35th Anniversary Party



30th Anniversary Party

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Maltose Falcons Board Meeting-June 24, 2014

By Irene Kaplan

Present: Irene Kaplan, Steve Cook, Peter Sheppard, Martin Carman, John Aitchison, Tiffany Fairbrother, Ed Kochanowski, Matt Myerhoff, Tom Sisolak

Absent: Drew Beechum, Kent Fletcher, Chris Moon, Cullen Davis, David Uhl

Membership

Ideas were floated around by Board Members of ways to better manage the membership roster. These include:

Putting together a subcommittee to get the list more automated. Martin would like to have Drew send him the list from the website and merge the names that he has to get everything more squared and cleaned. Tom Sisolak volunteered to be part of this sub-committee to help merge and match up records. Different applications for management were discussed. They would like Drew and Dana to implement in the info ASAP. Lists need to have people's real names just not their email monikers.

The master list should be the one online with Martin manipulating it.

The idea of being able to generate a temporary membership card when people join online that would be good for 30 days.

All membership apps should only be online. No more paper apps to be handed out. If people want to join, they can use the computer in the middle of the shop (the one where Drew does the Troubleshooter's Corner).

On a side note, Ed will like to see the Dropbox cleaned up. Dave needs to move out all the newsletters into an archive. It was agreed that the webmaster should be in charge of setting up a Maltose Falcon Archive to keep things in.

Swag

Men's shirts have been ordered. Kent says they should be available for the July meeting.

Patches- We do not know the status of the patch design. Calls were made to Cullen regarding this.

Growlers- There have been 71 orders for growlers. We will order a few more (6) to keep in store for purchase and/or gifts.

Hats- No orders have been made for hats yet.

Activities

Banquet –Steve wants to start advertising the banquet to paid members in July. Drew will be in charge of sending out the email blast regarding this. It will cost \$60.00 per person (as agreed on at the April Board meeting). Rooms will be at a special rate (Steve will include this link to be sent out). The cutoff for the special rate is September 19th. Drew will attach a link for payment for the banquet and the hotel.

We need to set up a time-frame for what is going to be happening at the banquet. Steve also will be setting up a subcommittee of people to make sure everything gets done and runs smoothly. We will ask Sue Webster to be the lead on this.

Matt will be asking his nieces about sitting outside of the room and checking people in for the banquet. We will have Drew print up a master list for them to work from.

We would like to set up a Bar committee to make sure that the bars are kept filled and rotating. Eric N's name was brought as one of the people for this. Steve says we need to make sure there are floor coverings to put the bars on. He will see if Kevin has these. If not, the hotel could probably provide them. We also want to set up the dry erase board (that we use at SCHF) and the easel to list the beers that are pouring. We will need all the bars for this event. We need to make sure the banners and our light are ready to go.

Other Activities- John A. would like to set up Sour Beer tasting in September. Tiffany would like to do a "Don't Be Afraid of the Dark" dark beer themed tasting at some point.

Sunfest is already paid for.

We discussed having a get-together on November 15th at the Lab in Agoura. This would be totally informal (like the First Friday event that Pacific Gravity has). Steve will give Roger a heads up about it, as we will not be sure how big or small a crowd might show. Obviously people will be paying for themselves as they go. Time of event still to be determined.

Behavior at Festivals

We will be looking at ways to make sure that people act as they should at our festivals. It was thought that when people register for the fests, that we may make them sign or initial an acknowledgment regarding this. We will be working on the language to be sent out about this matter. So far we have two different policy rules that are from other beer clubs that we can have a look at. We also will be mentioning it in our general meetings. We need to stress to people that inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. Members who bring guests to the fests are responsible for their behavior and there will be consequences if the rules are not adhered to.

Vice-President

LACF- Registration has now gone live for the event including entries, and judging/stewarding.

Check-in takes place of July 19th at the shop.

Since Irene will not be available for LACF judging, Tom Sisolak has agreed to take over the role of head steward. He is familiar with how it is run. Thanks Tom!

Tiffany will be serving empanadas and salad for the judge's lunch.

Nancy Gold will be asked to speak with Ladyface brewery about a date for a Big Brew day. Matt will contact her.

Publicity

We are going to try to set up dates ahead of time for the shop brews. The dates picked are July 20th (which Chris will be leading), August 17th, and September 21st. Matt will take care of finding leaders for the brews.

Regarding the Eagle Rock brew, Drew will speak with Jeremy about when this is going to happen and how many people can be accommodated at a time. We were thinking of having people get a reserved spot (signup only) and have ex-amount of time when they can participate.

We still need more Anniversary videos to come in. Tiffany suggested giving these people a 2-week deadline to submit this to us, as she did with her video. John A. and Matt will be following up on the people they contacted.

Newsletter

June 28th is the soft deadline for anything to be put in the newsletter. Hard deadline is by the 30th. Dave would like to "Brew with a Falcon" hosts to submit a write up and some pics and recipes. Also those who went to AHA can submit something.

Other Business

Drew will be speaking with Pac City about doing the Grand Hydro in July. Tiffany will be setting up a Taco Bar for lunch.

John A. will be scheduling a Mead exam for Feb of 2016. There will be 12 seats available. 4 are already filled. He will do a lottery for the other seats. There will be either 3 or 4 classes.

Drew will have an update later this month about the AHA insurance.

The next meeting will be July 15th at John's home.



understanding of the nature of honey to improve one's success in meadmaking. Honey is composed almost entirely of simple sugars (glucose and fructose), in varying ratios, which makes it highly fermentable once it is sufficiently diluted. However, it lacks a nutrient base for the yeast, so use of a complete yeast nutrient such as Superfood or Fermaid-K is recommended. Staging of the nutrient additions into eight portions, each added at 12-hour intervals during the first four days of fermentation, helps to get the fermentation off to a solid start.

Lifting the Veil on Mead's Mysteries

by Bruce L. Brode

Mead is one of those things that, once encountered, can become a point of fascination for many of us involved in the home fermentation arts. However, confusion and misinformation abound on how to make mead. Hopefully, I can help to simplify things a bit for those interested in making mead.

Honey

In its simplest form, mead is nothing more than honey, water, and yeast. Honey is typically no more than 19% water content, and so is too viscous to ferment on its own and must be diluted in order for yeast to work on it. It helps to have an



The best sources for honey are the most direct ones. If you can buy directly from a beekeeper, that is best. Next best would be finding a beekeeper who is selling at a farmer's market and making a purchase there. You can also check an online listing such as honeylocator.com for honey sellers

in nearly every state and region, some of whom will take a telephone order and ship to you. There is a wide variety of honey sources, from the ubiquitous wildflower and clover to the exotic and obscure tupelo and sourwood. honeys that have either a distinctive aroma, such as orange blossom, or a rich set of caramel and sugar flavors, such as some wildflower sources, will make the best meads. And don't be afraid to blend honeys in a mead; I've made excellent meads blending a pale honey, such as clover, with a dark honey, such as true buckwheat, achieving balance and complexity in the honey profile that way.

Water

The water used in meadmaking should be soft and relatively pure, to avoid competing flavors, excessive alkalinity, and antimicrobial additives such as chlorine which may impede the ferment. A good filtered or spring water is best. Some approaches recommend adjusting the pH of the water to an optimum range for yeast, which is fine. On the other hand, there is confusion about acid additions to mead, likely an influence from grape winemaking where such additions are common. Typically, there is no need to add an acid source when diluting the honey and inoculating it with yeast, if your water source is reasonably soft.

Acid additions can certainly be done later on to adjust the taste before bottling. Similarly, no sulfur additions are necessary (another winemaking holdover) unless you are working with fresh fruit, in which case it is best to sulfite the fruit to between 25 and



50 parts per million of free sulfur dioxide gas level before using it in the mead ferment. In this instance it would also be a good idea to add sufficient acidity to achieve a pH of 3.6 or below, which will make the sulfite addition (from potassium metabisulfite, for example) most effective. Note that the honey itself is naturally sanitary due to enzymatic action imparted during its creation by the bees, which induces a level of hydrogen peroxide in the honey that discourages bacterial contamination.

Dilution

Recipes vary in the means by which the honey is diluted and blended with water.

Despite its superficial similarity to syrup malt extract (and the two do have a similar viscosity for recipe purposes), boiling honey and water as one would do for a beer wort is not recommended (but can work in some recipes), as this drives off important volatile aromatic contributions from the honey. Boiling does serve to precipitate albuminous protein to yield a clearer mead, but there are other ways to accomplish clarity that don't affect the aroma and flavor as boiling does. Remember that, unlike syrup malt extract, the sugars in honey are overwhelmingly simple fermentable sugars and there are no dextrins, or body compounds, such as are found in malt. As a result honey will ferment out much further than malt extract, and with more alcohol content, so with this in mind, recipes must be formulated a bit differently for mead than for beer. It is possible to heat a portion of the water for the recipe and dissolve the honey in it before further diluting it with the rest of the recipe's water, as a way to speed the dilution process without blowing off honey aromatics, a method I often use. Mead generally does not contain hops and will instead rely on a sufficiently robust alcohol level in order to result in a stable beverage. The bouchet method involves cooking and caramelizing the honey before inoculating the must with yeast for fermentation, yielding unique flavor effects.

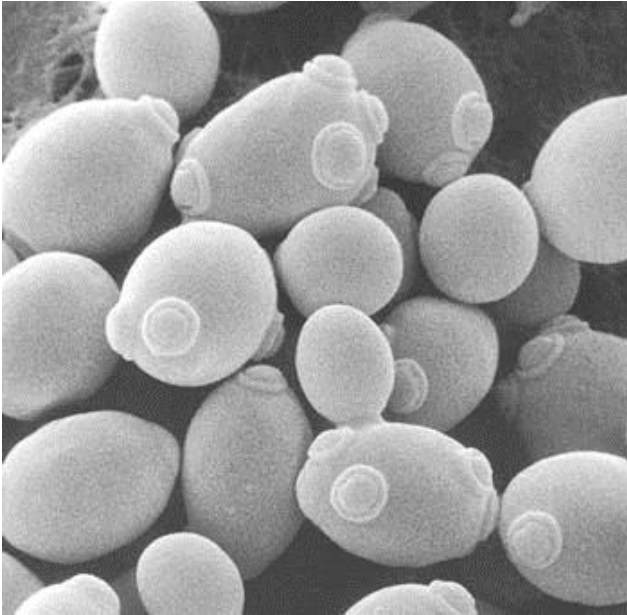
Flavors

Mead may be unique in its ability to incorporate many additional flavors. The creativity is virtually unlimited in the use of fruits, spices, herbs, and other flavorings to balance and enhance the basic medium created by the fermentation of honey. Space here does not permit much examination of these potentials, but consider points of connection and balance when considering flavorings – do the spices dovetail well with the honey's own aromatics? Is the acidic fruit balanced by the honey's sweetness? There are different flavor effects and intensities to be had depending on whether the fruit or herbs or spices or other flavorings are added in primary fermentation, in secondary fermentation, or just before bottling.

Yeast

Given its propensity for fermenting to significant alcohol levels, the choice of yeast for a mead is an important one. Wine yeasts typically work well, particularly those used for white wines which tend to produce and favor floral and fruity aromatics that are also important in mead and often highlight the honey's own aromatics. As is typical for wine-scale ferments, the fermentation activity will not be as foamy and vigorous as a beer ferment, at least in terms of what one can visualize, but will last longer since

more alcohol is being created than in most beers. This is another reason why staged nutrient additions are valuable for mead, in allowing the yeast to build up its fermentation mass to a level and viability that will successfully chew through all that



sugar. Use of a high-gravity beer yeast to ferment a mead presents an interesting experiment, although the potential exists for unanticipated flavors since the sugar spectrum of the unfermented mead medium (known as “must” in winemaker's parlance) will be quite different from what the yeast has been habituated to in a beer wort.

Adjustments

Late-stage adjustments and treatments are quite possible in making mead, in fact I encourage them.

Winemakers often talk about “sugar-acid balance,” and mead is no exception to this subject. The concept of “dry” when applied to wines is misunderstood, and generally does not mean the total absence of residual sugar. Rather, it describes a subjective impression of acidity and tannin levels relative to the residual sugar. As a practical matter, at least a small amount of residual sugar is needed in mead to achieve good flavor balance, even in “dry” ones. There are several sources of crystalline acid available for use, from the green-apple-tart malic acid to the softer citric acid and the grapey tartaric acid, as well as blends of these. If a mead is excessively sweet, but otherwise finished, its acidity level can be adjusted to taste by adroit, step-wise additions of an acid source to cut through the sweetness and “brighten the palate” as I often describe it. In a five-gallon batch, this might be done in increments of ½ to 1 teaspoon of acid at a time, with tasting done after each addition is stirred in, to achieve a nicely balanced flavor. Similarly, meads that are too dry (whether too acidic or too far fermented) can have some balance restored to their flavor by honey additions to taste, in a similar incremental fashion. Take your time with these flavor adjustments so that you get the mead just where you want it at its optimum balance, before bottling. Additions are best done by thoroughly dissolving or incorporating them into a pint or so of the mead, then mixing

that pint thoroughly back into the main body of the mead.

Meads intended to be still and residually sweet should be treated with potassium sorbate in order to prevent refermentation in the bottle. Unless you have a sterile filter (and what home meadmaker does?), you cannot be sure that all yeast has been removed merely by settling. Potassium sorbate is the potassium salt of sorbic acid, originally extracted from unripe berries of a tree in the Sorbus plant family. It inhibits refermentation by preventing yeast from reproducing more daughter cells.

Meads intended to be sparkling (carbonated) will require some careful calculation of sugar concentrations to achieve success and best balance. Generally, make sure that the base mead is not highly alcoholic if you intend to carbonate it by yeast action, as high alcohol levels will inhibit the refermentation, which can add from 0.5% to 2% more alcohol to the mead, depending on the level of carbonation you seek. Champagne wine-like carbonation is very frothy due to the high volume of dissolved carbon dioxide in the wine, thus the French generic name for sparkling wines: Vin Mousseaux, or "mousse-like wine." Such wines require

special bottles to handle the high pressure without exploding.

Fining is a means of achieving good clarity by additives that attract haze-causing particles and cause them to settle out. My favorite method for mead is a double fining, starting with a conservative dose of bentonite (a clay mineral mined in Wyoming) followed directly by Sparkolloid (Scott Laboratories' proprietary blend of polysaccharides derived from algae with a diatomaceous earth carrier). The latter helps to compact the lees of the former, and both are naturally derived. You can actually watch the process proceed pretty rapidly and it is often done in just a couple of hours. Fining is generally the final adjustment to be made before bottling, so check and balance the flavor points discussed above first before you fine, as flavor adjustments can result in a haze of their own.

Hopefully, I have been able to lessen some confusion about mead making without dispelling the many fascinating mysteries of mead. In Mazers of Mead!

Brew with a Falcon Day!

Saturday, June 28th, several Falcons hosted large brews to show their fellow Falcons their tips and secrets. Here are some short articles and pictures on the event. We are hoping to do this a couple times a year.

Brew with a Falcon

By John Aitchison

On Saturday June 28, Bill Heath, Eric Nehring, Alex Samovitz, Chris Moon, Ethen Adams, Art Fitzsimmons, Gerry Ehring and I brewed what turned out to be an Imperial Pilsner. It was a long, but successful brew day.



We got started right at 8 AM. Doughed in 95 pounds of Weyermann's Spring Floor Malted Moravian Pilsner malt. Drew was kind enough to post that Weyermann's had a fire about 6 months ago. I made sure Tavern Service immediately ordered 4 sacks of it. This particular malt is the closest thing we can get in the USA to undermodified malt; and I knew we had to buy it now or wait a long time.

We followed Pilsner Urquell's mash schedule exactly. We doughed in our first decoction to rest at 125 degrees

and the main mash at 95 degrees. We raised the temperature of that decoction to a boil; stopping at 143 and 161 for 10 minutes each. We boiled the decoction for 20 minutes then added it back to our main mash which sat in three different mash tuns. Everyone took part in the decoction; the brewers stirred for about one minute and let someone else spell them. No one got tired.

The decoction addition raised our temperature to 125. After another 10 minute rest; we pulled more grain and repeated the process bring our main mash to 143. And then again a third time brought the mash to 161. 4 ½ hours later, our mash was done. After 20 minutes, we started our vorlauf. Here we ran into our first problem—one of the lauter tuns had a stuck sparge. We found that adding hot water and heated wort, we were able to loosen it up a little; though it was still cloudy. No problem, we just ran the wort through one of the regular mash tuns.



But of course we ran out of hot water. In an effort to speed up the sparge, we actually had six burners going at one time—that solved it. We ended up collecting a little over 40 gallons of 1.058 wort. Decoctions are a pain; but they do give you incredible efficiency. We boiled the first 4 gallons separately to really bring out kettle caramelization. The rest we split into two 100 liter kettles. After 30 minutes of boiling we added 10 Oz

of Sterling and with 20 minutes to go we added 14 Oz. of Saaz. About 30 IBU's worth. By then we added back our first runnings.

Our goal was to use both a plate chiller and a hermes chiller with ice to bring the temperature down quickly. It worked great for the first 20 gallons, our wort was coming out at 42 degrees. Then all those hops caused the plate chiller to clog and we had to rely on the hermes chiller. Still worked ok; the wort came out quickly at 55 degrees.



When we were done, we had about 4 ½ gallons of 1.069 wort each. Almost doppelbock strength. And while it is pale; I can't remember wort with more melanoidins screaming for attention. Something about lack of caramel or Munich leaves nothing for them to hide in. We are currently fermenting our assorted shares with White Labs Czech Budejovice Lager yeast grown up in a 5 gallon batch of German Pils. I'm hoping some will be ready for our 40th anniversary banquet. After cleaning up, all the brewers went home at 8 PM; not bad for what we created.



Craig Frump's BWaFD

Brew with a Falcon day at my house was a complete success. We made an Imperial Oatmeal Stout and a Guinness style stout. We were a little low in gravity but it was still a great day. We smoked a pork butt for pulled pork sandwiches and made 25 gallons of beer.

Craig brewed a 25 gallon all grain batch of Imperial Oatmeal Stout on his 1 BBL automated electric brewery, this batch will be using 75 lbs. of grain and 2 lbs. of hops. This batch will be going towards the Falcons anniversary party.



At Craig's house were Anthony Ashdown, Dennis Canevai, Tiffany Fairbrother, David Dassler, Tom Morris, Brice Williams, Beanie Webster.

Drew Beechum's BWaFD

Drew figured he had room for about 15 of us at his house. He used his brewery to make a Saison - in multiple flavors and with multiple yeast strains. Also, he also demonstrated his technique for pressure canning starter wort to make starters easy for the year!



Drew with the western hemisphere's most dangerous electric drill.



In attendance at Casa Verde were David Uhl, Ed Kochanowski, Izzy Arrieta, Tom Sisolak, Steve Rosolio, David Sherfey, and quite a few new faces. Drew explained his methods for brewing, and showed us a ton of really cool hints. Some of those included: making 6 months to a year's worth of starter in one afternoon using a pressure canner and canning jars, keeping all of his ingredients vacuum packed, the use of stainless steel braided hose for both the boil kettle and mash tun. For lunch, he made some pretty damn fantastic hamburgers.



Random gratuitous bell.

MEAD AT THE SOLSTICE

By Bruce L. Brode

The occasion of the start of summer, the Summer Solstice, nearly coincided with our annual mead tasting in 2014, on Sunday June 22 (the Solstice having been the day before). As is our custom, we tasted more than 30 meads, including a smattering of commercial ones. There was great variety and creativity displayed in the offerings. We also had fine contributions to our buffet table so that we were not tasting meads on an empty stomach or without anything with which to clear our palates. My thanks to all who attended and contributed.

As usual, the emphasis at these tastings is on learning about what is possible in meadmaking. Judging by this year's experience (and many in the past), mead is at least as good as beer in loosening tongues, and the decibel level rose substantially as the tasting progressed. Efforts to counter the chaos were occasionally, and briefly, successful, but we all had a roaring good time, and despite the cacophony I think we all still learned some new ideas and techniques for meadmaking.



My custom is to publish my notes on the most 'noteworthy' meads tasted (pun intended), which follow. Somebody has to document these important proceedings, and it might as well be me.

We opened the tasting with a wildflower honey traditional mead made by Tom Morris from honey purchased at the Encino Farmer's Market. This proved to be a good illustration of the joys of traditional mead (meaning meads which feature the aromas and flavors of honey, without other competing flavors), displaying a nice flowery honey aroma with a touch of herbs and lemon. There was a slightly hazy pale gold color. The sweet flavor was balanced nicely between tartness and fruity characteristics. A classic traditional mead, and fine way to start.

I next demonstrated one of my common themes, that perhaps no other fermented beverage takes age as gracefully as mead. We learn a lot at these tastings about aging when the same mead is brought each year for several years in a row and we can taste how its flavors evolve with time. I served a 1994 traditional mead made from orange blossom honey (that's right, 20 years old!), which had a good honey nose with some wine-like oxidation, a medium gold color, and a flavor still balanced toward the sweet side with notes of orange/citrus acidity and vanilla creaminess.

Victor Macias contributed a commercial mead from a meadery heretofore unknown to me: Hidden Legend Meadery in Victor, Montana, which he located online. The meadery was able to ship the mead to him due to a reciprocal shipping

agreement between Montana and California, in this case a “Dark Mead” made in the bouchet technique, where the honey is cooked and caramelized before the must is set to fermentation (“must” is a winemaking term for the not-yet-fermented base of the mead). This had a rich aroma of caramel and honey, and a deep ruby-brown color. The balanced flavor of dry-burnt and fruity-sweet elements also displayed notes of raisin, pear and brandy. This is among the most interesting and unusual of the commercial meads I have encountered, and our thanks to Victor for bringing this excellent product for us to taste.

Joel Spunt contributed his very first mead, a traditional mead made with buckwheat honey. This had a fruity aroma with sweet caramel notes, and a deep burnished “old gold” color. The sweet complex flavor showed some dry tannic qualities, and a very slight bitter autolysis flavor (which can happen when the yeast cannibalizes itself a bit at the end of fermentation) which just added to the complexity. Outstanding for a first effort!



Two of the most accomplished meadmakers in our area are Jayne and Jeryd Pojawa, veterans of this tasting, who brought several savory creations to share with us. They have the added advantage of being beekeepers. We started with their “whole hive” mead, which included in the must literally

everything in the hive including larvae, bees, wax, etc. It’s something of an ancient Viking idea, apparently, and Jeryd claims that a touch of bee venom gets into the mead and provides some slight intoxicating effects of its own. I’m not sure I experienced that, but there was a rich aroma of brandy, molasses, and brown sugar, with a hint of smoke, decorated by a lovely mahogany color. The similarly rich flavor was both sweet and fruity, with lots of longlasting caramel-class flavors as in the aroma. Unique, and a real hit at the tasting.



Craig Wickham brought a passel of melomels, that is to say, fruit-based meads, for which he has acquired a reputation. We opened with his strawberry melomel, which he amended with



additional fresh strawberry shortly before the tasting. There was pungent fruitiness in the aroma, and a hazy orange-red color. The crisp fruity flavor had a tangy acidic strawberry finish. A very nice job of capturing the elusive strawberry in a mead!

I next served a trio of melomels I had made (you see, there are patterns to these tastings, which may veer from traditionals to melomels to metheglins to the outright strange and back again). These were made in 2013 using 100% source fruit juices from Trader Joe's, in about a 40% fraction relative to filtered water, as well as the mesquite honey one can purchase there, and included Tart Cherry, Blueberry, and Cranberry. They were bottled earlier in 2014 as still (non-sparkling) and "off-dry" (slightly sweet; all three were resweetened with honey to varying degrees to reach this flavor balance), and this allowed the natural fruit essences and acids and tannins to show themselves. The Tart Cherry showed interesting complex flavor elements of spices and cherry fruit, with a slightly hazy pink color that was intriguing; the flavor had apple-pie spice and fruit elements and a tangy cherry finish, all coming from the juice itself. The Blueberry had a spicy aroma with a bit of blueberry fruit, a deep red-wine color, and a rich mouthfeel with a bit of alcohol heat and some drying tannins in the finish, making the red wine connection appropriate. The Cranberry displayed honey and cranberry fruit in the aroma with a hint of spice, a medium ruby color, and a crisp fruity-acidic flavor with some honey support to counter the bit of very tart oxalic acid one finds in cranberries.

John Kaufman specializes in meads that are substantially rich in flavor and strong in alcohol, and often well-traveled in his RV. He also favors the splendid gourmet Tupelo honey from the northern edge of Florida that many of us have worked with over the last several years in meadmaking. The results are indeed impressive. We began with his



Tupelo Persimmon melomel, which showed a richly complex honey aroma with fruity elements, a hazy light orange color, and a mouthfilling texture to the flavor with contributions of fruit, acidity, and balancing sweetness.



Continuing the Tupelo honey theme, we moved to a traditional Tupelo honey mead made by Irene Kaplan and Steve Cook, weighing in at 10% alcohol by volume. Here there was an aroma reminiscent of Cheerios cereal, with light spice and alcohol, a hazy medium gold color, and a smooth full-bodied flavor with vanilla and fruit elements and a touch of tannin in the finish.

More Tupelo: The first-place winners of the Mead class at the 2014 Mayfaire Competition, Pam and John Aitchison, poured their traditional mead made from this notable honey known for its spicy aromatics, light caramel flavors and apple-fruit essences. There was a faint aroma of honey and spice which opened up with time as the honey aspect intensified. The hazy orange-straw color led to a sweet but complex flavor that was both rich and crisp, with some tannins. Another fine Tupelo honey mead!

David Lustig, another veteran of these tastings and a very accomplished winemaker, gave us a tasting of two related orange blossom honey traditional meads diluted to different strengths. The more-dilute one, which we might consider to be a "hydromel," had a complex aroma of honey, a bit of autolysis (it sat on the yeast lees for a couple of years), and some oxidation, but ultimately the honey won out. There was a nice reflective gold color and a crisp, balanced flavor with both fruit and

honey elements and some drier flavors including a touch of alcohol. The less-dilute mead had a similarly complex aroma but with additional dry elements and some caramel notes, as well as a deeper gold color. The nice smooth and rich flavor profile showcased honey, cream, and some interesting bitter elements for punctuation. A very informative comparison.

Next up, that fascinating nexus of cider and mead known as Cyser. Most commonly, this is made by adding honey to apple juice to increase its sugar concentration before fermentation. David Sherfey, a longtime meadmaker now back in Los Angeles at least for awhile after a relocation several years ago to southern New York, brought a cyser on draft that he described as a “work in progress,” making use of the renowned Northern Spy apples long considered one of the best cider varieties. There was a great apple aroma with some alcohol present, and a hazy yellow color. The crisp, complex flavor had plenty of apple fruit character and a dry, tannic aspect to the finish. I'd say some good work has already been done here.



We compared David's cyser with one from the Pojawas, made with the highly-regarded Gravenstein juice from Trader Joe's and some local wildflower honey. This had an interesting fruity aroma with some hard-to-describe additional aromatics, with a load of honey essence emerging with time. The deep orange-gold color led to a sweet, spicy and complex flavor displaying lots of honey character and some fruity apple contributions. A fine and instructive comparison of this mead style.

Craig Wickham became well-known for his intense blackberry melomel a few years ago when a freezer unit quit on him and he suddenly had to do

something with several pounds of thawing blackberries. He did the right thing and made mead with them! This latest version had a rich, deep and complex blackberry aroma with a bit of milky character, and a dark opaque purple color. The crisp fruity flavor displayed some tannins and a bit more of the milk quality. This was a blend of different meads, one of which had some cacao nibs in it, which no doubt explains the complexity.

John Kaufman's Star Thistle Traditional mead from the 2012 vintage proves that he works with honey sources other than Tupelo. Although Star Thistle is a copious nectar producer, it is also considered a noxious weed, particularly in Northern California. Regardless, it is a good pale and neutral honey for meadmaking. Here the aroma had honey character and some spice and alcohol (did I mention John likes to make STRONG meads?). The reddish-gold color was intriguing. A rich, sweet flavor was balanced with acidity, and the substantial alcohol level was managed well.

Picking up on a theme I introduced to this tasting several years ago, the Pojawas brought a Date Mead. The rich honey-caramel aroma had plenty of alcohol and there was a medium honey-amber color. The rich, fruity, balanced and residually sweet flavor did indeed have date-caramel qualities to it.

As a home winemaker of grape-based wines, another means by which I make mead is to make “second runnings” wines using honey as the added fermentable sugar, working with the red grape pomace after the first run wine has been pressed out of the grape skins (which form the pomace). Just add honey and water and a touch of yeast nutrient, and ferment all over again. This can be quite successful in extracting additional color and character from the grape skins. I poured a couple of my creations, known as pyments in mead parlance. The 2011 Petit Verdot pyment was made from an obscure wine grape originally from Bordeaux, France, and had a nice grape fruitiness to the aroma, along with some spice, a very deep ruby-purple color, and a smooth flavor displaying some grape acids and tannins. The 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon pyment, made from a much better-known grape variety from Bordeaux, showed a musty cellar aroma (perhaps imparted by the cork) with some fruit and honey behind that, a hazy red color, and a crisp grapy flavor with a good balance dry and sweet-creamy elements.

The Pojawas came to our rescue once again with a Prickly Pear/Plum melomel, with had a substantial and rich aroma of honey and fruit with a touch of spice and some alcohol presence, atop a deep amber color. The rich, fruity-acidic flavor showed both balance and complexity.

Returning to a modest survey of commercial meads, we encountered three products from the well-regarded Redstone Meadery of Colorado. David Lustig contributed their Mountain Honey Wine, a traditional mead showing a fruity/herbaceous/flowery honey aroma, a light straw-gold color, and a crisp but sweet flavor displaying good balance between sweet and dry elements and a bit of tannin in the finish.

Dana Cordes brought two other Redstone products, both melomels. The Boysenberry melomel had a dry aroma with berry fruit and honey aromatics, a pale pink color, and a fruit-dominated flavor with creamy elements and carbonation crispness. The Black Raspberry melomel provided a nice bit of comparison, with honey aromatics and a bit of fruit essence, a medium pink-red color, and a smoothly accessible flavor of berries and honey and cream.

The Pojawas wowed us again with their Rosemary Metheglin (metheglin being operative mead-speak for meads featuring herbs and/or spices). There was a big and delightful rosemary herbal aroma, a rich medium amber-gold color, and the signature Pojawa mead palate of rich mouthfilling flavor and texture, here with lots of rosemary character. Outstanding!

Another Pojawa contribution was one they simply call "light plain" mead. A crisp aroma with some fruity honey backdrop was detected, with a rich deep gold color. There was nice balance to the flavor of honey, acid, and sweetness, all well-integrated, with a very slight edge of roast and smoke. I beg to differ; there is nothing plain about this one.

As I explained as the tasting was inevitably winding down, all good things must come to an end, even if temporarily. I always try to serve something of a "blockbuster" mead to draw the tasting to an appropriate close, and once again I poured my Port Mead, which is a fortified mead made in the Port wine technique, where spirit alcohol is added during late fermentation to stop the fermentation and leave

some residual sweetness in the wine. This also has the effect of boosting the alcohol level to between 18 and 20 percent by volume. This batch dates from a few years ago using Tupelo and dark wildflower honey sources, and Port is one of those things that typically ages quite well, so I was interested in seeing how it was doing. This one had an aroma showing fruity honey aromatics with caramels, alcohol, and some spice, a dark gold color, and a rich palate flavor of honey, nuts, an edge of spice, and some alcohol presence. I've served it at previous tastings and it seems to be gaining a drier finish with time.

Again, my thanks to all who attended the tasting and for their various contributions in service of a social learning process about mead's mysteries. Until next year, the traditional mead toast: In Mazers of Mead!



Maltose Falcons Membership Meeting Minutes

June 1, 2014 by Irene Kaplan

Grand Hydro Presentation-“You Got Your #%&@! In My Stout

Drew talked about how stout provides a great base for many different flavors. Stouts also give a good introduction to familiar flavors (coffee, chocolate, vanilla, etc). Drew spoke about how vanilla will help boost the chocolate flavors in your stout. Stouts are very easy to play with. Drew suggested using raspberries. He said the frozen raspberries work really well. Also that the taste of “stone fruits” fade more quickly. For our tasting today we had:

1. Young’s Double Chocolate Stout- 5.2%
2. El Segundo Hyperion Vanilla Stout 7.8%
 - a. Drew explained how this stout has more of a burnt character in it due to its use of Black Patent Malt. It only seemed to have very slight vanilla flavor.
3. Belching Beaver Peanut Butter Stout 5.3%
 - a. This was a milk stout which used peanut butter powder for its flavoring. A crowd favorite.
4. Mikkeler Brunch Weasel 10.9%
 - a. This was an Imperial Oatmeal Stout brewed in Norway. Also a crowd pleaser.
5. Stone Smoked Porter with Chipotle Pepper 5.9%
 - a. This is a seasonal brew from Stone which can be found each May.

Buy Buy Buy Buy Your Swag!!! Get It in Person or On-Line Now!

We have lots of great stuff on sale and in the works for everyone to buy. We finally have gorgeous women’s v-neck tees for a mere \$15.00.

Falcon’s 40th Anniversary glasses continue to sell briskly. A mere \$5.00.

New this year are exceptionally fantastic growlers. They will be available in 7 different colors with the Falcon Logo on them. These will be Pre-Order only! The cut-off for ordering will be in Mid-June. The price will be \$45.00.

Also new this year is a great metal bar sign with the Falcon’s Logo on it. Now you can list your brews for your buddies to peruse while they enjoy the great homebrews you provide them. These also will be pre-order only. The price is \$25.00.

Mayfaire Wrap-Up

The Mayfaire Judging went off without a hitch. The actual winners, who were from San Francisco, will not be able to brew their beer at Ladyface, therefore, our runners-up, Chris Rockwell and Josiah Bloomquist will be brewing their Flanders Red. Congrats!

The Mayfaire camping had many attendees and brews. Our President brought up how very important it is to behave in a manner that affords us to be able to continue to use the Acton KOA campsite. **Falcons who bring guests MUST be responsible for their guests behavior, pay for themselves and their guests and make sure that they act accordingly. Part of Mayfaire was marred because these rules were not followed.**

Publicity Report

Brew with A Falcon!! June 28th marks what hopes to be our 1st annual Brew with A Falcon Day. This day is a learning experience for people who want to learn more about the Homebrewing experience. Brews will be held in 5 different locations, which will be posted on the website starting on June 7th. Only one locale will have a brew where you will be taking home wort with you. Signups will be limited. You MUST sign-up online and be a member of a Homebrewing club.

Shop Brews will be held:

June 15th: Tim Burt will be hosting a Saison brew.

July 20th: Chris and Alex will be hosting a Belgian Trippel brew.

You must be a paid-up to date Falcon member to participate. Watch the website for signing up.

And.....

The owners of Macleod's Brewing came by to let us know that their Grand Opening will be on June 22nd. They are located at the corner of Kester and Calvert in Van Nuys. They have a tasting room which holds 48 people. Beers available will be a Best Stout, Bitter, and IPA and a Scottish Ale. Their hours are from 5-10 p.m. Wednesday-Friday, and on Saturdays from 12-10 p.m. They plan to have many food trucks show up too.

Peter once again served us a delicious lunch. The lasagna and salad were great, as was our lemon cake and strawberry dessert.

Please submit articles to Dave for the Newsletter. Do a review of a beer, a brewpub, your brewday!

We had 13 fine libations brought today with the winner being Jefferson who brought us a fine Maibock. He won our new Falcon 40th Anniversary glass.

Membership Benefits

10%Discount:

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Tavern Services

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Northridge, CA 91325

818-349-0287

(applies to CO2 and all purchases—
except beer)

Vendome Wine & Spirits

10600 Riverside Dr.

Toluca Lake, CA 91602

818-766-9593

(applies to beer only)

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Glendale, CA 91207

800-339-0609

(applies to beer only)

30% Discount:

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Los Angeles, CA 90027

(323) 644-8000

(applies to beer only)

15% Discount:

Ciao Cristina!

4201 West Olive Avenue Burbank, CA 91505 818-563-2426

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Join our Shop Brews on a one-barrel (31-gallon) pilot brewing system—and our many festivals, camp-outs and par-ties throughout the year!

Show Your Card!

All of the above benefits are only avail-able to you if your membership is cur-rent. Your membership expires on the last day of the month printed on the front of your membership card, and in the year that has been punched.

Check out one of our monthly meetings and check out our Club House.

Cost? A mere \$25 per year. For more details e-mail the membership director at membership@maltosefalcons.com You can pay at the meeting, at the shop or on-line through PayPal at <http://www.maltosefalcons.com/catalog/fees>

Board of Directors

Contact information for each member is on the 2nd page on the left side.

The President



Got a problem, a suggestion that doesn't fit anywhere else? Talk to this guy.

John Aitchison.

Vice President



Questions about a Competition? Ed Kochanowski is the man to talk to.

The Secretary



She is in charge of maintaining our club history.

Irene Kaplan

The Treasurer



Got some money? This guy will take it off your hands.

Kent Fletcher.

Publicity



He sets up the shop brews and does all of our publicity. Matt Myerhoff

Membership



He hands out cards and maintains our membership lists. Martin Carman

Activities Director



This is the guy who make things happen for the club: Steve Cook

Newsletter Editor



Want to submit an article? Get it to this guy! David Uhl

Grand Hydrometer/Webmaster



Got a technical question about beer or the web-site. Drew Beechum!

Burgermeister



When drinking, it's important to be well-nourished. Peter Sheppard

Associate Members



Chris Moon
Activities



Tiffany Fairbrother
Burgermistress



Cullen Davis
2nd Vice-President

HOME-BREW COMPETITION SCHEDULE

July

12

Amador County Fair Homebrew Competition

Plymouth, CA

Contact: william tarchala

Phone: (209) 223-1976

Entry Fee: \$7

Entry Deadline: 06/28/2014

26

Antelope Valley Fair Home Brew Competition

Lancaster, CA

Contact: [Corey Cordovando](#)

Phone (661) 951-4677

Entry Fee: \$7

Entry Deadline: 07/19/2014

27

Ventura County Fair Amateur HomeBrew Competition

Ventura, CA

Contact: [Charlotte Crocker](#)

Phone: (805) 402-6092

Entry Fee: \$5 per submission

Entry Deadline: 07/17/2014

August

02

[2014 Los Angeles County Fair Homebrew Comp](#)

Woodland Hills, CA

Contact: [Ed Kochanowski](#)

Phone: (818) 917-2467

Entry Fee: \$8

Entry Deadline: 07/18/2014

September (Continued)

07

[2014 Society of Barley Engineers Homebrew Competition](#)

San Marcos, CA

Contact: [Chris Stawney](#)

Phone: (858) 945-0948

Entry Fee: \$5

Entry Deadline: 08/24/2014

20

[Fresno Fair Homebrew Competition](#)

Fresno, CA

Contact: [Matthew Humann](#)

Phone: (559) 618-5848

Entry Fee: \$0

Entry Deadline: 09/06/2014

September

06

[National Organic Brewing Challenge](#)

San Francisco, CA

Contact: [Tallula Preston](#)

Phone: (831) 454-9665

Entry Fee: \$8

Entry Deadline: unknown

[Pacific Brewers Cup](#)

Los Angeles, CA

Contact: [Carl Townsend](#)

Phone: (310) 903-1871

Entry Fee: unknown

Entry Deadline: 08/23/2014

Santa Cruz County Fair Homebrew Competition

Watsonville, CA

Contact: [Margie Lynch-Freshner](#)

Phone: (831) 338-6364

Entry Fee: \$5

Entry Deadline: 08/17/2014

[Ramona Homebrew Competition](#)

Ramona, CA

Contact: [Grant Fraley](#)

Phone: (513) 465-5566

Entry Fee: \$10

Entry Deadline: 08/31/2014

07

[Tulare County Fair Home Brew Competition](#)

Tulare, CA

Contact: [Richard Gleason Jr](#)

Phone: (559) 734-2716

Entry Fee: none

Entry Deadline: 08/22/2014

Calendar of beery events

July

13 - Meeting at the shop

20 – Shop Brew lead by Alex and Chris Moon. They will be Brewing a Belgian tripel.

20 - Sierra Nevada Beer Festival – San Diego

29 – GABF tickets go on sale. <http://www.greatamericanbeerfestival.com/tickets/member-tickets/>

August

02 – LACF at St Martins of the Fields Church in Winettka, CA

09 - 5th Annual Lake Arrowhead Beer Festival

17 – Shop brew Crew leaders and style TBD

23- SunFest- Mount Pinos (No meeting)

The Strand Brewers Bike Pub Crawl – Date and location TBD

September

07 – Meeting at the Club house

21 – Shop brew. Crew leaders and style TBD

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