



BREWS & NEWS

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Mayfaire Parties and More

By Drinking Beechum

The weather has turned mighty hot here the past week and it's just in time for us to get our party faces on! But before we get to the Mayfaire party, we do have two other things that have to be taken care of.

May Meeting (No Meeting For You!)

No I mean it. We have Mayfaire this month. There is no shop meeting.

Mayfaire Competition

Thanks to the stellar efforts of our competition organizers we have another large collection of beers to judge, a whopping 315 entries! But this makes us victims of our success, as we need a raft and a half of judges to make our way through the flights. As a special treat, Sean has agreed to whip up some of his cuisine for our lunching pleasure. Judging for Mayfaire will be taking place at St. Martin's School (same location as the last few years) on May 8th at 9:30AM. Contact Martin Carman at judging@maltosefalcons.com for details or register online.

AHA Bottling Party – Double Down Double IPA

Remember that big batch that we did for the AHA? Well the chickens have come home to roost and it's time to get that brew into bottles. Sunday, May 9th at 10:00 a.m., we'll need a small cast of Falcons at Kent Fletcher's house to bottle and label our brew. Cullen Davis will be unveiling the gonzo label of the Double Down.

We'll need enough folks to run four bottling lines, so about 12 volunteers should do it. The bonus for everyone involved will be some wonderful fresh beer.

We're also still looking for some more cases of bottles. Put those 12 oz brown long necks that you don't use anymore to good use. Either drop the bottles off at the Shop (where the treasurer normally sits) or bring them cleaned and sanitized to the bottling party. *Or at least clean, we will sanitize on site. ed.*

See "President" (continued on page 4)

The Great Decoction Experiment

By John Aitchison

Bring up the subject of the importance of a decoction mash to a group of experienced home brewers and you're almost sure to start an argument. Many traditionalists will argue that a decoction mash is essential to a malty European lager beer. Experts like Gregory Noonan argue that a de-

coction is essential for certain grains and that an infusion mash will negatively affect clarity, character, maltiness, and fullness. Other experts like Dr. M. Lewis at UC Davis have done informal tests over the years and found that judges couldn't tell the difference in mashing techniques when sampling beers. Decoction advocates say you need the process for smoother, rounder, and more complex malty beers. The decoction opponents say brewers are wasting their time with the process, and that

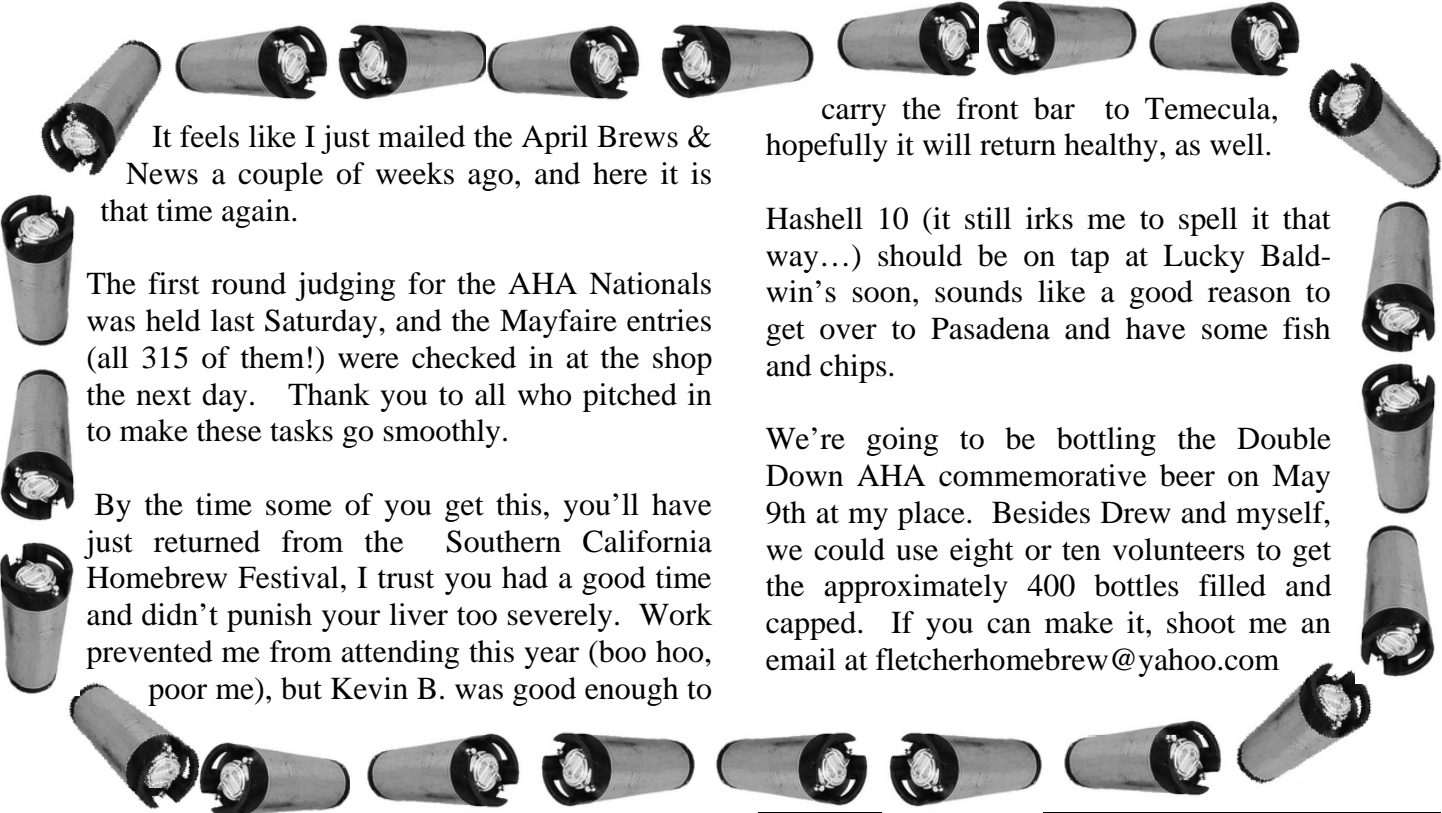
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Random Notes

By Kent Fletcher



It feels like I just mailed the April Brews & News a couple of weeks ago, and here it is that time again.

The first round judging for the AHA Nationals was held last Saturday, and the Mayfaire entries (all 315 of them!) were checked in at the shop the next day. Thank you to all who pitched in to make these tasks go smoothly.

By the time some of you get this, you'll have just returned from the Southern California Homebrew Festival, I trust you had a good time and didn't punish your liver too severely. Work prevented me from attending this year (boo hoo, poor me), but Kevin B. was good enough to

carry the front bar to Temecula, hopefully it will return healthy, as well.

Hashell 10 (it still irks me to spell it that way...) should be on tap at Lucky Baldwin's soon, sounds like a good reason to get over to Pasadena and have some fish and chips.

We're going to be bottling the Double Down AHA commemorative beer on May 9th at my place. Besides Drew and myself, we could use eight or ten volunteers to get the approximately 400 bottles filled and capped. If you can make it, shoot me an email at fletcherhomebrew@yahoo.com

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Brewer's Support Network

These knowledgeable and experienced Falcon brewers are part of our new support network. They are available to help you with any brewing related questions you might have, so please feel free to contact them.

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ODE TO THE STILL

by Tom Hamilton

The following poem was found in an old and tattered, leather-bound book containing beer and wine recipes. The book belonged to my neighbor in Maryland, Mary Lou Bohle, and it was given to her by her grandmother.

*Oh the Olson boys, they built a shingle mill.
They built it up on the side of a hill.
They worked all night, and they worked all day,
And they tried to make the old mill pay,*

And by heck - they couldn't.

*So the Olson boys just took that shingle mill
And turned it into a whiskey still.*

*They worked all night, and they worked all day,
And they tried to make the old still pay,
And by heck - they did it.*

- Bohle

4-19-33

Phantom Brewer Tips: Cold Soaking Dark Grains To Adjust Your Beer Color

It happens to all of us at some time. That beer that you wanted brown is copper instead or maybe your stout is just a shade more brown than black. What's a light in the color brewer to do? Do what the Germans do and make up a homemade batch of Sinamar, which is a Weyermann malt extract product used to adjust color.

To produce your own, soak a pound of Carafa malt in a quart of cold water for 24 hours. Strain the mixture through cheesecloth, a fine mesh strainer or a coffee filter. The resulting black inky mixture can be saved in a sanitized jar for over a month.

To use your new color extract, carefully pour a small amount into the brewpot, stir and pull a sample to look at the color. Keep adding small amounts of colorant until satisfied.

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Here's Falcon Derreck Bourdon pouring our 30th Anniversary brew, Hashell 10, at BJ's in Woodland Hills. The beer will soon be on tap at Lucky Baldwin's in Pasadena. Note the custom Hashell tap, created by Cullen Davis especially for our anniversary brew.

President (Continued from page 1)

While we're bottling, Kent and I will be brewing up the cask version of Double Down. The fine folks at BJ's are loaning us the use of one of their firkins to bring this final creation to life. This brew will probably be just a touch lighter than the previous versions as it won't have all the benefits of aging, as the others have. John D. was kind enough to cover the second batch, which we did as the April shop brew, thanks again, Long John!

Mayfaire Party:

When: May 15th, 1PM-10PM

Where: La Jolla Group Campground - Pt. Mugu State Park

Cost: \$12 day use w/dinner; \$5 camping

The band will be playing, the beer will be flowing, the raffles will be raffling and the medals and the Bird will be handed out. We have some really special stuff to raffle, including a 10 gallon Cornie keg, for those who entered at least one beer in the AHA Nationals. Come on down and enjoy the party with all of your favorite brewers.

The La Jolla Group camp is located in the middle of the lovely Point Mugu State Park, about 1.5 miles north of Sycamore Canyon. In order to get there from the Valley, cross over to Malibu and proceed north on PCH and head into the State Park. Sycamore Canyon will be on the right hand side, follow PCH for a little while longer and look for the La Jolla Canyon group site on the right side. Park in the lower parking lot and walk up the hill. If the lot is full there's additional parking just a short walk up the road, you can unload your stuff at the site and then park.

Anniversary Beers

To everyone who has helped shepherd an Anniversary brew or two along, come to the next meeting and pick up your share of magnums for bottling. We'll want to have 7 magnums of our brews ready to rock and roll. The goal will

be to have beers ready to sample for each year until our 35th party.

**AHA Conference
"Beer and Loafing in Las Vegas!"**

The AHA website is now taking reservations for the Vegas conference. Details are available at <http://www.beerandloafing.org/>. The conference runs from June 17th through the 19th at the Riviera Hotel. Remember to register online at [beerandloafing.org](http://www.beerandloafing.org) or call the AHA at: 1.888.822.6273. Prices go up after May 14th, so get on it!

Rooms are still available at the conference hotel, The Riviera, at a discounted (about 50% off!) rate. You can link to the reservation with the group code already entered from <http://www.beerandloafing.org/reservations.shtml> After June 1 the discount disappears. The conference is much more enjoyable when the only navigation you have to do is find the elevator! Ed.

The two important dates for you to remember are that we have the Thursday (June 17th) night shift on the Hospitality Suite. Basically, we'll be serving up our brews to all of those thirsty brewers! The next night is the Club Night and this is when we really want to shine!

We also need your help running the club booth during both the Club Night and the Hospitality Suite shifts. (We also need your beer! I'll also be looking for folks to help me run the Pro Brewer's Night on Thursday.

Membership Cards and Dues Increase

John D. has announced a new policy at the shop. If you don't have a card starting May 1st, you don't get your discount.

If you've lost your membership card, there will now be a \$3 fee charged to replace the card. If you never received a card, contact Cullen at membership@maltosefalcons.com. **db**

See "Great Decoction Experiment

(Continued from page 1)

even in Germany less than 1% of the brewery still decoct. They argue modern, well modified malts don't need the process.

I've heard the arguments for years from professional brewers and accomplished homebrewers. Since I decoct about half of my beers, I thought it might be a good idea to get an answer. What better way than to brew two identical beers with everything being the same except the mashing schedule. If you went to the June 2003 club meeting, you tasted the results.

Brewers have been doing decoction mashes for centuries. Well before a thermometer was ever invented, Germans found that by taking 1/3 of their mash and boiling it; they had very good results. Until the last 200 years or so, malt quality was inconsistent and often was lacking in enzymes necessary to convert the starches into sugars that yeast likes to eat.

John Rasmussen and I chose a Bohemian Pilsner as the style for our taste test for several reasons. We've brewed many over the years and have a good recipe. We love the style, I have one on tap most of the time. Bohemian Pilsners are subtle beers. The soft water and noble hops bring out the best in malt flavor. I marvel at how a beer like Pilsner Urquell can be so complex and flavorful with just one kind of malt.

We decided to give decoction a real test by using under-modified Moravian malt exclusively. In the malting process, a root or acrospire forms as the barley seed germinates. As the acrospire grows, the amount of enzymes present in the barley kernel increases. The longer the acrospire, the greater the degree of modification. Almost all modern malts are fully modified and have their full compliment of enzymes. Under-modified Moravian malt doesn't. The enzymes were going to have to be helped by the mashing process. However, some would argue that this extra work would produce a more complex malt flavor than

found in fully modified malt. Our other ingredients were 100% reverse osmosis filtered water, Czech Saaz leaf hops, and Wyeast's Pilsner Urquell strain. We have two identical 60 quart mash-lauter tuns. They are ice chests with a copper manifold with slots in the bottom. Unfortunately, it will be hard to repeat the experiment with this malt since St. Patricks (homebrew supply) no longer sells malt retail and no one else carries it.

On brew day, we decided to use a modified version of Lynne O'Connor's mash schedule found on St. Patrick's of Texas's website and also in the Feb. 2001 issue of Brew Your Own. I've used the under-modified malt several times, one time we had the world's worst stuck sparge at a shop brew. I asked Lynne about it at an AHA convention and she told me to never skip the 95 degree rest. She is right. Anyway, we doughed in the decoction grains at 95 degrees with a thick mash. We used just over 1 quart per pound. After we got the decoction started we doughed in the infusion mash. It was more traditional, we started our mash at 95 degrees in a 15 gallon kettle. The infusion mash had about 1 1/2 quarts of water per pound.

After 25 minutes, we added enough boiling water to the decoction to raise our temperature to 125 degrees, while stirring all the time. Our mash was now very thin, perhaps 1 3/4 - 2 quarts per gallons. As soon as the temperature was stabilized we turned on the heat on the infusion kettle and slowly raised it to 125 degrees for the protein rest. By that time, the decoction mash had rested 20 minutes and it was time for our first decoction. We pulled about 40% of the thick part of the mash, added some more water, and raised our temperature to 145 degrees. We rested there for 15 minutes, turned the heat back on and raised it again to 158 degrees. While it rested for another 15 minutes, we turned the heat up on our infusion mash. The infusion rested for 30 minutes at 145 degrees and an hour at 158 degrees. The enzymes produce different sug-

See "Great Decoction Experiment

(Continued on page 7)

General Meeting April 4, 2004 By Paul Sedgwick

A little over 30 Falcon's showed up this month at about 1:30 PM to break-in our newly refurbished clubhouse. There was fresh paint on the walls, a new whiteboard and the floor was cleaner than it had been in years. Thanks to all the Falcons and Cellarmasters that made it happen.

This month's featured style was extract beers. Grand Hydro John Aitchison started off the tasting with a Red Ale and an IPA from Big Bear Mountain Brewing Company. Next we sampled John's extract Rauchbier, and an Export Stout and an Imperial Stout that John brewed with John Rasmussen. Gregg Van Citters brought a hoppy amber extract beer. Johnny Lieberman provided us with his Barley Champagne and we enjoyed an extract Smoked Porter from our President Drew Beechum. The club chose John and John's Export Stout for our entry into the AHA Club Only Competition.

This month Chef Sean Donnelly was back with another gourmet treat for lunch. Sean always provides us with a great meal but every so often he goes beyond the call of duty and prepares something really special, like the prime rib we enjoyed at the January meeting. This time it was Salmon Kouloubiac, a classic Russian dish served to the Czar. It was accompanied by salad, saffron rice and crumb cake for dessert. Thanks Sean!

After lunch it was time for the business portion of the meeting. Drew encouraged club members to enter the AHA National and Mayfaire competitions. Those interested in judging for these competitions should contact Martin Carman.

Although there will be no general meeting, May will be a very busy month for the Falcons. The Southern California Homebrewers Festival will be held in Temecula on the 1st,

the Mayfaire judging will be at St. Martins Church on the 8th, and the Mayfaire party is slated for the 15th at La Jolla Group Camp-ground.

Drew announced that the April shop brew would be a draft version of the Double Down Double IPA. This will served at the AHA Convention in Las Vegas. Two more lucky Falcons won the right to purchase 5 gallons of the Hashiell 10 brew. Congratulations to George Mahoney and Jay Babchuck.

We finished the meeting off with a tasting of a fine assortment of homebrews. John Aitchison and John Rasmussen provided a Bohemian Pilsner. Matt Udall shared his West Coast Extra Pale Ale. Jen and Ken Rhude brought a Cherry Ale. Ken also let us sample his Rude-dog Double IPA, an Ordinary Bitter, and his De Klonic. We enjoyed a Saison from Jim Kopitzke and Drew as well as an Alt brewed on the shop system. For those of us who wanted more alcohol there was Mark Poliner's Electric Lemonade, and for those of us who wanted more hops there was Jim Moorman's IPA. We had an El Salvador Lager from Kevin Barranowski, and George Mahoney brought an American Light Lager and a Sorval. (Sort of an Orval Clone)

The meeting adjourned at about 5:00 PM. *ps*

April Board Meeting By Anonymous Board Member

We had a board meeting on April 12; Chef Sean graciously hosted at his new digs. I'm sure we discussed matters of some import, but Sean had Delirium Tremens on tap, so some of the details escape me at this time.

There was a fair amount of discussion on the swag issue, and on finding a venue for the 30th Anniversary party. It was also agreed that the first joint So Cal homebrew Oktoberfest would have to wait until next year. That's all I've got. *abm*

Great Decoction Experiment

(Continued from page 5)

ars at the different temperatures and a Bohemian Pilsner needs both the fermentable maltose as well as the non-fermentable dextrans. While this was going on we brought our first decoction to a boil and boiled it for 15 minutes before adding it back to the main mash.

Our decoction main mash was now at 145 degrees, right where we wanted it. After a half hour, we pulled another 40% of the thick part of the mash and brought it up to 160 for a 20 minute rest. By that time, we also brought the infusion mash to 170 and transferred it to our lauter tun. We boiled the second decoction and added it back, bringing the decoction mash to 168. It was time for it to lauter in the other tun.

After a normal sparge, we took gravity readings of the extract. We got a little more yield out of the decoction mash, our gravity was 1.060 instead of 1.057 for the same volume. We calculated how much water to add, modified the hopping schedule, and proceeded to boil. We tried to maintain the same boiling rates, and added the hops at the same time. We chilled the wort with a counter flow chiller and again adjusted the gravity with water to make it identical. Our starting O.G, was 1.058.

The beers were fermented side by side in identical carboys. Primary was 45 degrees for a month and secondary started at 60 degrees and the beer was chilled 1 degree a day until it reached 35 degrees. It was then lagered for four months and racked to stainless kegs. Finishing Gravity was 1.015.

Now came the moment of truth, the tasting. I brought the beers to our June meeting and gave all members two tasting cups. I gave all BJCP judges pencils and paper as well. We had a large meeting, unfortunately the meeting was at John D's winery with lots of heat and noise from a surf band. One other prob-

lem, the infusion beer had managed to pick up some diacetyl along the way. I told all my judges to ignore any buttery aroma, and to just give me their impressions of the malt profile. After everyone had a chance to sample, I asked for impressions.

I used a blind taste test and called the beers X and Y. Most people guessed wrong. Of those willing to give an opinion, 11 of 18 picked the wrong beer as the decoction. They found little or no difference in the malt profile. However, with the BJCP judges, there was a major difference. All 6 BJCP Certified or better judges got it right. Here are some of their comments: Bruce Brode, Master Judge: The decoction beer was much cleaner. Fermentation was quicker, and the decoction provided more Nitrogen for the yeast resulting in a cleaner beer. Pam Aitchison, Certified Judge: The decoction had a maltier nose, less body, and the alcohol was less noticeable. Sal Sciortino, Certified Judge: The decoction is cleaner, rounder.

An undiluted 1.070 version of the beer was the Maltose Falcon's club only entry in the AHA's European Lager contest and took 3rd place. Master Judge Mark Groshek of Foam on the Range commented "Very nice malty note, hint of biscuit. Aroma close to Pilsner Urquell. Finish too sweet. Good proportion of darker sweeter malts." I agree. My conclusion is that there is a slight difference in the decocted version over the infused. But only a trained palate can tell. Considering the fact that the malt was ideal for a decoction and it is so much easier to use an infusion mash or use a herms or rim system I'm not sure it is worth the work. Will I still decoct?

Of course! *ja*

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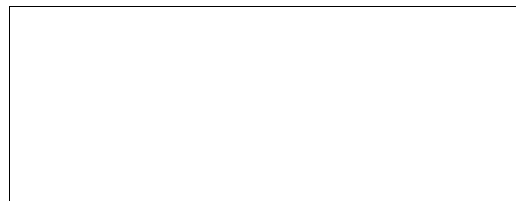
Make check payable to Maltose Falcons

Coming Events:

- **Mayfaire Competition Judging: Saturday, May 8th, at St. Martin's School**
- **Mayfaire Party: Saturday, May 15th, at La Jolla Group site, Point Mugu State Park**
- **Next Shop meeting: Sunday, 6th, at the Home Beer, Wine and Cheesemaking Shop**
- **AHA Annual Conference: June 16-18, at The Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas!**



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