

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

SENTENCING

GUIDE

Special Cider Issue #95

December 2005

Meeting Location!!

This Cider meeting is at Sweet Seasons Orchard just past Concord. It's a bit of a hike, but we do it every year despite the snow. Take M-60 and follow the signs or look at the map on the back page.



Next Beer Meeting is Tues., Dec. 13th

Cider is style for the night. So bring some of your own or bring some commercial examples.

Please bring your own glass and some munchies to share.

Feel free to give and accept constructive criticism on ciders 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. And be especially careful driving through Spring Arbor. They will pull you over, just for the heck of it!

Meeting Date/Style 2nd Tuesdays 7:30

*Denotes AHA Club-Only Competition
 Dec 2, Cider Squeezing - Sweet Seasons
 Dec - Winter Warmers - Troy Rerucha
 Jan - 18 Big Beautiful Belgians* - Phils
 Feb - 11 Brown Ale - Jim Hegedus
 Mar - 10 American Ale* - Chilson
 Apr - Extract Beers* - Travoli
 May - 22 Smoke & Wood-aged - Gier
 Jun - 16 Belgian & French
 July - 24-26 Meading*! - O'conner
 Aug - 1 Light Lager -
 Sept - 13 Stout* -
 Oct - 23 Specialty & O'Fest -
 Nov - 6 Light Hybrid Beer* -
 Dec - 19 Strong Ale -



For the sixth consecutive year Ed Jasinowski of Sweet Seasons Orchard has agreed to press apples for homebrewers to ferment.



We will meet Friday Dec. 3 at 7:00 or there about at Sweet Seasons Orchard 15787 Allman Road, Concord, MI. (See map on the back page.)

This year, like three of the last four years, Ed got a limited yield off the orchard. What the frost didn't destroy, the hail storm beat to death. So, single variety pressing is out. Next year he promises a single variety night with Honey Crisp and Spy's leading the charge. But this year whatever Ed has left is what we will squeeze. (His usual blend)

The price won't be as low as it has been in years past either, Ed has been importing apples from Berrien county all fall. But all that said, he still wants to have us out for our Annual Cider night, so I think we should support him.

Friday Night, Dec. 2nd 7:00 p.m. or so at the orchard. \$4 a gallon. **Please reserve gallons with Phil by Wed night. Ed will be pressing Thursday morning.**

The Editor.

Michigan's First Hard Cider Competition



Contact: Rex Halfpenny
 Michigan Beer Guide
 248-628-6584
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Our Cider meeting is an official Drop-off site for the this competition. PLEASE help support this effort by entering your Apple-fermented wares into this competition. Forms are online at www.michiganhardcider.org.

Judging will take place beginning noon December 4th at Founder's.

This competition - which is open to entrees from around the U.S., Canada and the rest of the world - will include categories for both commercial producers (holding liquor licenses) and non-commercial producers (home hobbyists and non-liquor licensed commercial establishments). Fermented products of all kinds are welcome, including ciders, perrys (made with pears), meads (made with honey), and even beers, provided that they are made with or include apples and/or pears.

More information about this effort can be viewed at www.michiganhardcider.org, the website for Michigan hard cider enthusiasts. This is the home page for the Michigan Hard Cider Club, spearheaded by O'Connor.

Judging will be by blind panel. Each entry will be identified by a registration number and judges will only see that number along with important information needed to properly evaluate the entry, such as still or sparkling, sweet or dry, and any special ingredients used in production. Judges will be a combination of experienced Beer Judge Certification Program (BJCP) judges and industry professionals. A special award ceremony announcing al the winners will be held during the Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable, and Farm Expo. Dec 4.

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Cider Making

Indoors or out, a cold cider warms the chill of a fall day anytime of the season.

Like hot dogs, baseball and apple pie on the Fourth of July, a homemade cider by the fireplace or next to the bonfire makes many memories of fun fall activities.

With Oktoberfest over, it's easy to organize your own Ciderfest 2001 celebration. And you thought you wouldn't be able to get rid of the left over brats and sauerkraut.

Here are some tips for making your own cider. And the best part is, the flavors are endless. Let Feiger and Engler drink tea. It's Cider Time.

A Bushel, A Basket

First, pick your apples. They should be fully ripe, windfalls are excellent. Do not use heavily bruised or damaged apples. After picking, keep in a cool place for 1 to 2 weeks to soften the skins.



Do not wash or sterilize the apples if you wish the cider to be fermented with wild yeasts. You can perform this step if you want to ferment with a specific yeast strain, however treatment with sulphur dioxide (see below) will get rid of wild yeasts.

If you have apples which have small amounts of damage, you can cut these parts out. But it's not essential, and many traditional cider makers avoid this step.

Get a Fresh Squeezed pH

After the apples have matured, you will need to press them. A store bought fruit juicer will achieve this, but this is a laborious, time consuming process — and the return in terms of juice per pound of apples is poor. It's much better to buy a wine maker's fruit press, the sturdier the construction the better. Or you can build your own press.



Once the juice is separated from the pulp, you must check the pH. If the correct balance of apple varieties is used, this step may be omitted. Few of us are fortunate enough to obtain the correct types, so some compensation must be made to ensure sufficient sharpness, but that it's not overdone. Your pH should range from 3.9 to 4.0.

To lower the pH, add malic acid (the principal acid in cider). To raise the pH, add precipitated

chalk. Also, 1 tsp of pectolase per gallon of juice may be added at this stage to ensure that the cider clears. Traditional ciders shun this step, and some can look like cloudy apple soup. Never fear, they still taste great.

If a correct balance of cider apples has not been available it may be that you need to compensate for a lack of sweet apples. Only experience with various apple varieties will tell. Measure the original gravity (this may be difficult if the juice was not sufficiently well separated from the pulp). The target O.G. should be around 1055. If not, add sugar to bring it to this level.



A good guide to how much to add is — 2 1/2 ounces of sugar will raise the gravity of 1 gallon of juice about 5 degrees. You can either dissolve the sugar in a small quantity of juice and add to the bulk of the juice, or if very fine (caster) sugar is used, stir it directly into the bulk of the juice. DO NOT heat the juice, or you will get a cooked apple flavor which will ruin your cider.

Time to Ferment

Place the apple juice in a fermenting vessel. Traditionally this is a wooden barrel. If these are not available, any suitable wine fermenter would be fine. Put under an airlock and leave to ferment.

Cider is traditionally fermented at the outside ambient temperature. However, if you are fermenting with a pure yeast culture, it may be better to ferment at the temperature specified with the culture. There are wild yeasts present on apple skins (so long as they are from an unsprayed orchard) which will ferment the cider naturally.

If you wish to ferment with a specific yeast, add 1 crushed campden tablet per gallon of juice and leave to stand, covered, for 48 hours. This will see off the wild yeast. Then pitch with a yeast of your choice.

For a traditional style English cider, use an ale-type yeast. For a Normandy style cider, use a wine yeast. Kitzinger, Hock and Champagne yeasts all give good results. The finished product is paler than English cider and tastes closer to apple wine than does English cider.

Dr. Clayton Cone, the head of research for Lallemand/Danstar suggest the following yeast for cider production. 71B-1122, light and fruity. K1V-1116, light and fruity, but with slightly more body. D254, suitable for barrel aging.... used a lot in France... more body. RC-212 suitable for barrel aging....used a lot in France... more body.

Time for a Gravity Check

Check the gravity regularly. There is a tendency to go on fermenting after the desired gravity has been obtained. To prevent this, you can add a crushed campden tablet to the cider when the desired gravity is reached.

Once the desired gravity is obtained, the cider is ready to mature. Store the cider in glass carboys or another similar container, under airlock. Cider is usually left in outbuildings to mature. The fluctuations in temperature are not detrimental.

In the late spring or early summer following the making of the cider, it will undergo a malo-lactic fermentation. This will occur when the temperature reaches about 35 F (15 C). This mellows the cider, causing it to lose much of its sharpness.

You can add malic acid or acid blend at this point if the cider is not sharp enough for your taste. Traditional English cider is flat, no attempt is made at a secondary fermentation. English cider may also be served slightly carbonated analogous to real ale.

The target carbonation in this case is 1 volume of carbon dioxide per volume of cider (partial pressure of carbon dioxide of 1 atmosphere). If the cider is to be served slightly carbonated, bottle in beer bottles with 1/2 teaspoon of sugar per pint of cider (dissolve the sugar in water and add to the cider before bottling).

Normandy cider is refermented in a Champagne-style bottle in a manner similar to Champagne making and is highly carbonated. Consult a good wine making guide for details on how to do this.

Enjoy your cider!

For more information check out these valuable resources.

Cider Making and Cider Research: A Review by F.W. Beech. Journal of the Institute of Brewing volume 78 pages 477 to 491. 1972. Despite being published in a technical journal, this is a highly readable account of cider making accessible to anyone although you'll get more out of it if you have a biology background.

Making Cider by Jo Deal. Published by the Amateur Winemaker Publications Ltd. ISBN 0 900841 45 1, 1976. This is a tremendous little book! It tells you how to make cider, describes a cider press you can make at home, gives you recipes for cider, cider punches, and a terrific section on old English food recipes using cider. There are also a couple of good cider drinking songs. This is a good book to have in your library.
--Dan Gretzner



Style Guidelines

The BJCP has been very busy in the last year and has finalized their second complete overhaul of the style guidelines

Introduction to Cider Guidelines

Cider is fermented apple juice. Perry is fermented pear juice. There are two categories for cider/perry: Standard (Category 27) and Specialty (Category 28). The Standard category covers ciders and perries made primarily or entirely from the juice of apples or pears (but not both at once). The only adjunct permitted in the Standard category, and only in some sub-categories, is a limited addition of sugar to achieve a suitable starting gravity. Note that honey is not a “sugar” for this purpose; a cider made with added honey must be entered either as a specialty cider or as a cyser under the appropriate mead sub-category. Other sugar sources that add significant flavors (brown sugar, molasses) would also create a specialty cider (such as New England style).

Aroma and Flavor:

Ciders and perries do not necessarily present overtly fruity aromas or flavors—in the same sense that a wine does not taste overtly of grapes. Drier styles of cider in particular develop more complex but less fruity characters. In fact, a simple “apple soda” or “wine cooler” character is not desirable in a cider or perry.

Some styles of cider exhibit distinctly UN-fruity tastes or aromas, such as the “smoky bacon” undertones of a dry English cider.

The sweetness (residual sugar, or RS) of a cider or perry may vary from absolutely dry (no RS) to as much as a sweet dessert wine (10% or more RS). In sweeter ciders, other components of taste—particularly acidity—must balance the sweetness. The level of sweetness must be specified in order to arrange flights of tastings and entries within flights. Tasting always proceeds from drier to sweeter. There are three categories of sweetness:

- Dry: below 0.9% residual sugar. This corresponds to a final specific gravity of under 1.002.
- Medium: in the range between dry and sweet (0.9% to 4% residual sugar, final gravity 1.002 to 1.012). Sometimes characterized as either ‘off-dry’ or ‘semi-sweet.’
- Sweet: above 4% residual sugar, corresponding roughly to a final gravity of over 1.012.

If a cider is close to one of these boundaries, it should be identified by the sweetness category which best describes the overall impression it gives.

Acidity is an essential element of cider and perry: it must be sufficient to give a clean, refreshing impression without being puckering. Acidity (from malic and in some cases lactic acids) must not be confused with acetification (from acetic acid—vinegar): the acrid aroma and tingling taste of acetification is a fault.

Ciders and perries vary considerably in tannin. This affects both bitterness and astringency (see “Mouthfeel” below). If made from culinary or table fruit, tannins are typically low; nevertheless some tannin is desirable to balance the character. The character contributed by tannin should be mainly astringency rather than bitterness. An overt or forward bitterness is a fault (and is often due to processing techniques rather than fruit).

Appearance:

Clarity may vary from good to brilliant. The lack of sparkling clarity is not a fault, but visible particles are undesirable. In some styles a “rustic” lack of brilliance is common. Perries are notoriously difficult to clear; as a result a slight haze is not a fault. However, a “sheen” in either cider or perry generally indicates the early stage of lactic contamination and is a distinct fault.

Carbonation may vary from entirely still to a champagne level. No or little carbonation is termed still. A moderate carbonation level is termed petillant. Highly carbonated is termed sparkling. At the higher levels of carbonation, the “mousse” (head) may be retained for a short time. However, gushing, foaming, and difficult-to-manage heads are faults.

Mouthfeel:

In general, cider and perry have a mouthfeel and fullness akin to a substantial white wine. The body is less than that of beers. Full-sparkling ciders will be champagne-like.

Ingredients:

In general, adjuncts are prohibited except where specifically allowed in particular styles, and then the entrant must state them. Common processing aids, and enzymes, are generally allowed as long as they are not detectable in the finished cider.

Yeast used for cider/perry may be either “natural” (the yeast which occurs on the fruit itself and/or is retained in the milling and pressing equipment) or cultured yeast. Malolactic fermentation is allowed, either naturally occurring or with an added ML culture.

Enzymes may be used for clarification of the juice prior to fermentation.

Malic acid may be added to a low-acid juice to bring acidity up to a level considered safe for avoiding bacterial contamination and off-flavors (typically pH 3.8 or below). Entrant MUST state if malic acid was added.

Sulfites may be added as needed for microbiological control. If used, the maximum accepted safe level for sulfites (200 mg/l) should be strictly observed; moreover, any excess sulfite that is detectable in the finished cider (a “burning match” character) is a serious fault.

Sorbate may be added at bottling to stabilize the cider. However, any residual aroma/flavor from misuse or excessive use of sorbate (e.g., a “geranium” note) is a distinct fault.

Carbonation may be either natural (by maintaining CO₂ pressure through processing or by bottle-conditioning) or added (by CO₂ injection).

27. STANDARD CIDER AND PERRY

The styles represented in this category are the principal established styles. The Common Cider and Common Perry styles are analogous to the cider and perry categories of earlier style standards. There are well-known styles not represented here—for example, Asturian (Spanish)—for which there are presently insufficient appreciation and a lack of commercial examples for reference.

In the case of a cider made to a style not explicitly represented here, it should be entered in the closest applicable category. The first decision is whether the cider was made with apples with significant tannin content that gives the cider noticeable astringency or bitterness. If not, it should be entered as a Common Cider. If so, the choice is between the English and French sub-categories; this decision should be based on whether the cider tends more toward sweet, rich, somewhat fruity (French) or drier and more austere (English). For perry of a non-represented style, the decision is, as above, based on tannin content. If in doubt, enter as Common Perry.

27A. Common Cider

A common cider is made from culinary/table apples, with wild or crab apples often used for acidity/tannin balance.

Aroma/Flavor: Sweet or low-alcohol ciders may have apple aroma and flavor. Dry ciders will be more wine-like with some esters. Sugar and acidity should combine to give a refreshing character, neither cloying nor too austere. Medium to high acidity.

Appearance: Clear to brilliant, pale to medium gold in color.

Mouthfeel: Medium body. Some tannin should be present for slight to moderate astringency, but little bitterness.

Overall Impression: Variable, but should be a medium, refreshing drink. Sweet ciders must not be cloying. Dry ciders must not be too austere. An ideal cider serves well as a “session” drink, and suitably accompanies a wide variety of food.

Comments: Entrants MUST specify carbonation level (still, petillant, or sparkling). Entrants MUST specify sweetness (dry, medium, sweet).

Varieties: Common (Winesap, Macintosh, Golden Delicious, Braeburn, Jonathan), multi-use (Northern Spy, Russets, Baldwin), crabapples, any suitable wildings.

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.045-1.065 FG: up to 1020
ABV: 5-8%

27B. English Cider

This includes the English “West Country” plus ciders inspired by that style. These ciders are made with bittersweet and bitter-sharp apple varieties cultivated specifically for cider making.

Aroma/Flavor: No overt apple character, but various flavors and esters that suggest apples. May have “smoky (bacon)” character, from a combination of apple varieties and MLF. Some “Farmyard nose” may be present but must not dominate; mousiness is a serious fault. The common slight farmyard nose of an English West Country cider is the result of lactic acid bacteria, not a *Brettanomyces* contamination.

Appearance: Slightly cloudy to brilliant. Medium to deep gold color.

Mouthfeel: Full. Moderate to high tannin apparent as astringency and some bitterness. Carbonation still to moderate, never high or gushing.

Overall Impression: Generally dry, full-bodied, austere.

Comments: Entrants MUST specify carbonation level (still or petillant). Entrants MUST specify sweetness (dry to medium). Entrants MAY specify variety of apple for a single varietal cider; if specified, varietal character will be expected.

Varieties: Kingston Black, Stoke Red, Dabinett, Foxwhelp, Yarlinton Mill, various Jerseys, etc.

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1050-1075 FG: 0.995-1.010
ABV: 6-9%

Commercial Examples: (U.S.) White Oak Traditional and Kingston Black, Westcott Bay Vintage, Farnum Hill Farmhouse and Kingston Black; (UK) various from Hecks, Dunkerton, Burrow Hill

27C. French Cidre

This includes Normandy styles plus ciders inspired by those styles, including ciders made by various techniques to achieve the French

flavor profile. These ciders are made with bittersweet and bitter-sharp apple varieties cultivated specifically for cider making.

Traditional French procedures use small amounts of salt and calcium compounds (calcium chloride, calcium carbonate) to aid the process of pectin coagulation. These compounds may be used, pre-fermentation, but in limited quantity. It is a fault if judges can detect a salty or chalky taste.

Aroma/Flavor: Fruity character/aroma. This may come from slow or arrested fermentation (in the French technique of *défécation*) or approximated by back sweetening with juice. Tends to a rich fullness.

Appearance: Clear to brilliant, medium to deep gold color.

Mouthfeel: Medium to full, mouth filling. Moderate tannin apparent mainly as astringency. Carbonation moderate to champagne-like, but at higher levels it must not gush or foam.

Overall Impression: Medium to sweet, full-bodied, rich.

Comments: Entrants MUST specify carbonation level (petillant or full). Entrants MUST specify sweetness (medium, sweet). Entrants MAY specify variety of apple for a single varietal cider; if specified, varietal character will be expected.

Varieties: Nehou, Muscadet de Dieppe, Reine des Pommes, Michelin, etc.

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.050-1.065 FG: 1.010-1.020
ABV: 3-6%

Commercial Examples: (US) West County (various), Rhyne Cider; (France) Eric Bordelet (various), Etienne Dupont.

27D. Common Perry

Common perry is made from culinary/table fruit.

Aroma/Flavor: There is a pear character, but not obviously fruity. It tends toward that of a young white wine. No bitterness.

Appearance: Slightly cloudy to clear. Generally quite pale.

Mouthfeel: Relatively full, low to moderate tannin apparent as astringency.

Overall Impression: Mild. Medium to medium-sweet. Still to lightly sparkling. Only very slight acetification is acceptable. Mousiness, ropy/oily characters are serious faults.

Comments: Entrants MUST specify carbonation level (still, petillant, or sparkling). Entrants MUST specify sweetness (medium or sweet).

Varieties: Bartlett, Kiefer, Comice, etc.

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.050-1.060 FG: 1.000-1.020
ABV: 5-7%

Commercial Examples: (at present, no known true perries in North America)

27E. Traditional Perry

Traditional perry is made from pears grown specifically for that purpose rather than for eating or cooking. (Many “perry pears” are nearly inedible.)

Aroma/Flavor: There is a pear character, but not obviously fruity. It tends toward that of a young white wine. Some slight bitterness.

Appearance: Slightly cloudy to clear. Generally quite pale.

Mouthfeel: Relatively full, moderate to high tannin apparent as astringency.

Overall Impression: Tannic. Medium to medium-sweet. Still to lightly sparkling. Only very slight acetification is acceptable. Mousiness, ropy/oily characters are serious faults.

Comments: Entrants MUST specify carbonation level (still, petillant, or sparkling). Entrants MUST specify sweetness (medium or sweet). Variety of pear(s) used must be stated.

Varieties: Butt, Gin, Huffcap, Blakeney Red, etc.

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.050-1.070 FG: 1.000-1.020
ABV: 5-9%

Commercial Examples: (At present, no known commercial U.S. perries) Bordelet “Poire Authentique” and “Poire Granit” are French perries available in the U.S.

28. SPECIALTY CIDER AND PERRY

Specialty cider/perry includes beverages made with added flavorings (spices and/or other fruits), those made with substantial amounts of sugar-sources to increase starting gravities, and the beverage made from a combination of apple and pear juice (sometimes called “pider”).

The same general characteristics and fault descriptions apply to specialty ciders as to standard ciders (preceding category), with the exception of adjuncts allowed.

28A. New England Cider

This is a cider made with characteristic New England apples for relatively high acidity, with adjuncts to raise alcohol levels

Aroma/Flavor: A dry flavorful cider with robust apple character, strong alcohol, and derivative flavors from sugar adjuncts.

Appearance: Clear to brilliant, pale to medium yellow.

Mouthfeel: Substantial, alcoholic. Moderate tannin.

Overall impression: Substantial body and character

Comments: Adjuncts may include white and brown sugars, molasses, small amounts of honey, and raisins. Adjuncts are intended

to raise OG well above that which would be achieved by apples alone. This style is sometimes barrel-aged, in which case there will be oak character as with a barrel-aged wine. If the barrel was formerly used to age spirits, some flavor notes from the spirit (e.g., whisky or rum) may also be present, but must be subtle. Entrants **MUST** specify if the cider was barrel-fermented or aged. Entrants **MUST** specify carbonation level (still, petillant, or sparkling). Entrants **MUST** specify sweetness (dry, medium, or sweet).

Varieties: Northern Spy, Roxbury Russet, Golden Russet

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.060-1.100 FG: 0.995-1.010

ABV: 7-13%

Commercial Examples: There are no known commercial examples of New England Cider.

28B. Fruit Cider

This is a cider with other fruits or fruit-juices added - for example, berry. Note that a "cider" made from a combination of apple and pear juice would be entered in this category since it is neither cider nor perry.

Aroma/Flavor: The cider character must be present and must fit with the other fruits. It is a fault if the adjuncts completely dominate; a judge might ask, "Would this be different if neutral spirits replaced the cider?" A fruit cider should not be like an alco-pop. Oxidation is a fault.

Appearance: Clear to brilliant. Color appropriate to added fruit, but should not show oxidation characteristics. (For example, berries should give red-to-purple color, not orange.)

Mouthfeel: Substantial. May be significantly tannic depending on fruit added.

Overall Impression: Like a dry wine with complex flavors. The apple character must marry with the added fruit so that neither dominates the other.

Comments: Entrants **MUST** specify carbonation level (still, petillant, or sparkling). Entrants **MUST** specify sweetness (dry or medium). Entrants **MUST** specify what fruit(s) and/or fruit juice(s) were added.

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.045-1.070 FG: 0.995-1.010

ABV: 5-9%

28C. Applewine

The term for this category is traditional but possibly misleading: it is simply a cider with substantial added sugar to achieve higher alcohol than a common cider.

Aroma/Flavor: Comparable to a Common Cider. Cider character must be distinctive. Very dry to slightly medium.

Appearance: Clear to brilliant, pale to medium-gold. Cloudiness or hazes are inap-

propriate. Dark colors are not expected unless strongly tannic varieties of fruit were used.

Mouthfeel: Lighter than other ciders, because higher alcohol is derived from addition of sugar rather than juice. Carbonation may range from still to champagne-like.

Overall Impression: Like a dry white wine, balanced, and with low astringency and bitterness.

Comments: Entrants **MUST** specify carbonation level (still, petillant, or sparkling). Entrants **MUST** specify sweetness (dry or medium).

Vital Statistics: ABV: 9-12%

OG: 1.070-1.100 FG: 0.995-1.010

Commercial Examples: AepfelTreuw "Appely", Irvine's Vintage Ciders.

28D. Other Specialty Cider/Perry

This is an open-ended category for cider or perry with other adjuncts such that it does not fit any of the categories above. This includes the use of spices and/or other sweeteners. A cider with added honey may be entered here if the cider character remains dominant. Otherwise it should be entered as mead in the cyser sub-category.

Aroma/Flavor: The cider character must always be present, and must fit with adjuncts.

Appearance: Clear to brilliant. Color should be that of a common cider unless adjuncts are expected to contribute color.

Mouthfeel: Average body, may show tannic (astringent) or heavy body as determined by adjuncts.

Comments: Entrants **MUST** specify all major ingredients and adjuncts. Entrants **MUST** specify carbonation level (still, petillant, or sparkling). Entrants **MUST** specify sweetness (dry or medium).

Vital Statistics: ABV: 5-12%

OG: 1.045-1.100 FG: 0.995-1.020

Ed. Note: It wouldn't be proper not to include Cyser in this newsletter so here it is.

25A. Cyser (Apple Melomel)

Aroma: Depending on the sweetness and strength, a subtle to distinctly identifiable honey and apple/cider character (dry and/or hydromel versions will tend to have lower aromatics than sweet and/or sack versions). The apple/cider character should be clean and distinctive; it can express a range of apple-based character ranging from a subtle fruitiness to a single varietal apple character (if declared) to a complex blend of apple aromatics. Some spicy or earthy notes may be present, as may a slightly sulfury character. The honey aroma should be noticeable, and can have a light to significant sweetness that may express the aroma of flower nectar. If a variety of honey is declared, the aroma might have a subtle to very noticeable varietal character reflective of the honey (different

varieties have different intensities and characters). The bouquet should show a pleasant fermentation character, with clean and fresh aromatics being preferred. Stronger and/or sweeter versions will have higher alcohol and sweetness in the nose. Slight spicy phenolics from certain apple varieties are acceptable, as is a light diacetyl character from malolactic fermentation (both are optional). Standard description applies for remainder of characteristics.

Appearance: Standard description applies, except with regard to color. Color may range from pale straw to deep golden amber (most are yellow to gold), depending on the variety of honey and blend of apples or ciders used.

Flavor: The apple and honey flavor intensity may vary from none to high; the residual sweetness may vary from none to high; and the finish may range from dry to sweet, depending on what sweetness level has been declared (dry to sweet) and strength level has been declared (hydromel to sack). Natural acidity and tannin in apples may give some tartness and astringency to balance the sweetness, honey flavor and alcohol. A cyser may have a subtle to strong honey character, and may feature noticeable to prominent varietal character if a varietal honey is declared (different varieties have different intensities). Slight spicy phenolics from certain apple varieties are acceptable, as are a light diacetyl character from malolactic fermentation and a slight sulfur character (all are optional). Standard description applies for remainder of characteristics.

Mouthfeel: Standard description applies. Often wine-like. Some natural acidity is usually present (from the blend of apples) and helps balance the overall impression. Some apples can provide natural astringency, but this character should not be excessive.

Overall Impression: In well-made examples of the style, the fruit is both distinctive and well-incorporated into the honey-sweet-acid-tannin-alcohol balance of the mead. Some of the best strong examples have the taste and aroma of an aged Calvados (apple brandy from northern France), while subtle, dry versions can taste similar to many fine white wines.

Ingredients: Standard description applies. Cyser is a standard mead made with the addition of apples or apple juice. Traditionally, cysers are made by the addition of honey to apple juice without additional water. A spiced cyser, or a cyser with other ingredients, should be entered as an Open Category Mead.

Comments: There should be an appealing blend of the fruit and honey character but not necessarily an even balance. Generally a good tannin-sweetness balance is desired, though very dry and very sweet examples do exist. See standard description for entrance

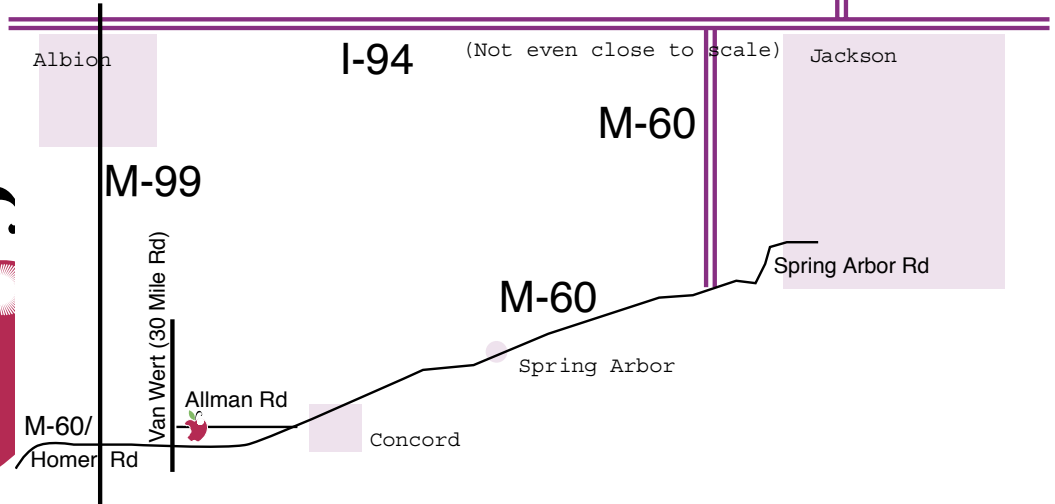
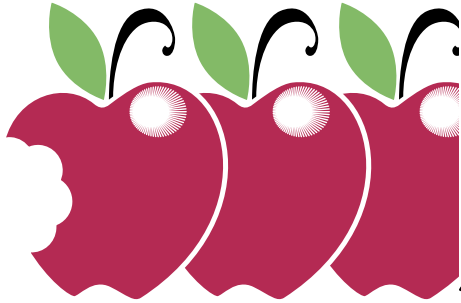
requirements. Entrants MUST specify carbonation level, strength, and sweetness. Entrants MAY specify honey varieties. Entrants MAY specify the varieties of apple used; if specified, a varietal character will be expected. Products with a relatively low proportion of honey are better entered as a Specialty Cider.

Commercial Examples: White Winter Cysr.

This Month's Meeting is at Sweet Seasons Orchard!

Ed Jasinowski
15787 Allman Rd
Concord, MI (517) 524-8535

US-127 N



Cider Pressing!

Friday Dec. 2! 7:00 - we leave

Ed has once again come through for us, lets be sure to bring some of past years products to share.

Also Cider Competition Drop-off Point

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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