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Newsletter of the Ann Arbor Brewers' Guild

October 2008

October Meeting

This month's meeting of the AABG is Friday October 10th and will be hosted by **Jason Henning**. See the map and directions on the next page. The featured style is **European Amber Lager**.



AABG 2008

January	Randy deBeauclair	Dark Lager*
February	Matt & Rene Greff	Belgian & French Ale
March	Mike O'Brien	Porter*
April	Alex Pettit	Light Hybrid Beer
May	Stephen Krebs	Extract*
June	Mark Zadvinskis	Smoke
July	Dave Griese	Mead*
August	Jeff Renner	Light Lager
September	Joe Walters	Imperial Anything*
	Liberty St Brewing Co.	
October	Jason Henning	European Amber Lager
November	Chris Frey	English Brown Ale
December	Rolf Wucherer	Cider/Specialty

* Denotes AHA Club Only Competition Style

All meetings are the second Friday of each month beginning at 7:30 p.m., except for the July meeting (BeerBQ) which is the second Saturday.

AABG Pico System

The guardian of the club's pico system is Mike O'Brien. Anyone wishing to use it should contact him at: 734.637.2532 or e-mail: mobrien315221MI@comcast.net

3. EUROPEAN AMBER LAGER

3B. Oktoberfest/Märzen

Aroma: Rich German malt aroma (of Vienna and/or Munich malt). A light to moderate toasted malt aroma is often present. Clean lager aroma with no fruity esters or diacetyl. No hop aroma. Caramel aroma is inappropriate.

Appearance: Dark gold to deep orange-red color. Bright clarity, with solid, off-white, foam stand.

Flavor: Initial malty sweetness, but finish is moderately dry. Distinctive and complex maltiness often includes a toasted aspect. Hop bitterness is moderate, and noble hop flavor is low to none. Balance is toward malt, though the finish is not sweet. Noticeable caramel or roasted flavors are inappropriate. Clean lager character with no diacetyl or fruity esters.

Mouthfeel: Medium body, with a creamy texture and medium carbonation. Smooth. Fully fermented, without a cloying finish.

Overall Impression: Smooth, clean, and rather rich, with a depth of malt character. This is one of the classic malty styles, with a maltiness that is often described as soft, complex, and elegant but never cloying.

History: Origin is credited to Gabriel Sedlmayr, based on an adaptation of the Vienna style developed by Anton Dreher around 1840, shortly after lager yeast was first isolated. Typically brewed in the spring, signaling the end of the traditional brewing season and stored in cold caves or cellars during the warm summer months. Served in autumn amidst traditional celebrations.

Comments: Domestic German versions tend to be golden, like a strong Pils-dominated Helles. Export German versions are typically orange-amber in color, and have a distinctive toasty malt character. German beer tax law limits the OG of the style at 14_P since it is a *vollbier*, although American versions can be stronger. "Fest" type beers are special occasion beers that are usually stronger than their everyday counterparts.

Ingredients: Grist varies, although German

Vienna malt is often the backbone of the grain bill, with some Munich malt, Pils malt, and possibly some crystal malt. All malt should derive from the finest quality two-row barley. Continental hops, especially noble varieties, are most authentic. Somewhat alkaline water (up to 300 PPM), with significant carbonate content is welcome. A decoction mash can help develop the rich malt profile.

Vital Statistics:

OG: ..	1.050 - 1.057
FG: ..	1.012 - 1.016
IBUs:	20 - 28
ABV:	4.8 - 5.7%
SRM:	7 - 14

Commercial Examples: Paulaner Oktoberfest, Ayinger Oktoberfest-Märzen, Hacker-Pschorr Original Oktoberfest, Hofbräu Oktoberfest, Victory Festbier, Great Lakes Oktoberfest, Spaten Oktoberfest, Capital Oktoberfest, Gordon Biersch Märzen, Goose Island Oktoberfest, Samuel Adams Oktoberfest (a bit unusual in its late hopping)

Märzen

Märzen or **Märzenbier** has its origins in Bavaria, probably before the 16th century. A Bavarian *Brauordnung* (brewing ordinance) decreed in 1539 that beer only may be brewed between St. Michaels Day (29 September) and St. Georg Day (23 April). The reason for this requirement was the increased danger of fire during the warm summer months.

The beer name comes from the German word for the month of March (German: *März*). Märzen was lagered (stored) in caves or stone cellars built into the sides of mountains or hills. Frequently these locations were chosen because there was a pond nearby. During the winter, when the pond had frozen, blocks of ice would be cut and put into the cave or cellar to keep the chamber cool. The ice would eventually melt, but could frequently last until March, which is also where the name Märzen comes from. The entrance to the cellar or cave would also be shielded from sunlight by planting before it chestnut trees, which had large leaves.

Märzen continued on next page...

Where and When

Friday, Oct. 10, 7:30 pm

Jason Henning

9180 Wildwood Lake Road

Whitmore Lake MI 48170

734.449.4795

Directions

Jason lives just off of Barker Road. There is an exit for the north bound but no exit for the south bound. So, the instructions aren't quite the same.

From the south, exit on Barker Road, take a left. The second street on the left is Wildwood (across from the trailer court). Take a left on Wildwood and I'm on the left side of the curve. From the north, exit on to 8 Mile Road, take a left and follow it in to town. It changes in to Main Street. At Polly Market, take a right on to Barker Road. After the over pass, Wildwood Lake Drive is the second road on the left (across from the trailer court). Take a left on Wildwood and I'm on the left side of the curve.



AABG Policy

AABG encourages responsible, legal consumption of homebrewed and craft beers. You must be at least 21 years old to attend AABG meetings.

Guide for New Members

Bring 1–2 bottles per batch of your beer that you'd like to share, or an interesting commercial beer. Bring tasty munchies to cleanse the palate and sop up the alcohol. Feel free to share and sample with other members and make and accept constructive comments. Please use good judgment while imbibing and don't drive while intoxicated.

...Märzen continued

Some of these cellars and caves are still in use, primarily in Franconia, but as part of a beer garden, which, still today, often is shaded by the traditional chestnut trees.

The original Märzen was described as "dark brown, full-bodied and bitter". The beer was often kept in the cellar until late in the summer and was even served at the Oktoberfest. In order to achieve this ability to last so long, either the original gravity and alcohol were increased or the hopping was strengthened.

The German style is most often characterized by a medium to full body, a malty flavour balance, a wide range of colours, and a clean dry finish, though wide variations are notable amongst German breweries marketing Märzen. Amongst these variations are colors ranging from pale to dark brown.

The North American style normally exhibits a stronger, though not aggressive, hop aroma and bitterness balance. The Austrian style closely resembles a Helles in color, body, and flavor balance, and is the most popular beer style in Austria.

Common names for Märzen include Märzenbier, Wiener Märzen, Festbier, and Oktoberfestbier.

Märzen is an extremely popular style in many lager-producing countries, and is produced as a seasonal special (usually for the autumn) by a great many breweries around the world.

Coining the Name

Ironically, the name was coined 30 years later by Josef Sedlmayr, younger brother of Gabriel. Although bottom-fermenting techniques had swept across Europe by 1870, beer color in Bavaria had remained dark (Dunkel). But in 1871 Josef Sedlmayr, who had separated his brewing activities from Gabriel years earlier, decided to produce a slightly paler beer. Perhaps because of the old Sedlmayr-Dreher link, he chose to brew a reddish "Vienna style" beer.

He called it Märzenbier because he had brewed it in March, although it was September before he broached the first barrels for public judgment. Traditionally, Bavarian brewers had produced large batches of beer in March and April before the weather got too warm for brewing and then

stored it in cool places to use during summer. But by the 1870s this practice was becoming obsolete with the development of mechanized refrigeration.

This was also a time of railroad development, which enabled tens of thousands of Bavarians to travel to the Munich Oktoberfest. Whether Josef intended his new Märzenbier for the festival is unclear, but it became the Oktoberfest beer style for the next 100 years and its popularity spread. The style faded in Vienna after World War I. Sadly, Märzen has in recent years been supplanted at the Oktoberfest by a paler, less robust "Oktoberfestbier" to suit broader international tastes. But even this beer still retains a deeper amber color than the average lager beer.

Many south Bavarian breweries still faithfully reproduce Märzen, if only in small quantities. Most of Munich's big brewers still brew a draft Märzen at Oktoberfest time (September-October) for sale in their beer halls, notably Hofbrau and Spaten (which incorporates Josef Sedlmayr's

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Franziskaner brewery). Typically, a Bavarian Märzen will be copper-red, with a full-bodied maltiness, a little spicy and dryish with an abv of around 5.5 percent.

In Austria, the term Märzen is applied loosely to any golden lager of around 5 percent abv, but a new wave of brewpubs in Vienna has begun brewing red-brown beers that they call Märzen. These new Vienna reds are malty, full bodied, fruity-dry and unfiltered, which may have been the condition of Dreher's early brews.

Two of the most noteworthy are Salm (at Rennweg 8, near Schwarzenbergplatz), which has an initial malt sweetness, a fruity dry finish and long aftertaste; and Siebernstern (at Siebernstern Gasse 19), with a rich malt-fruitiness, hints of spiciness and a dryish finish.

Siebernstern calls its interpretation a "Wiener Märzen," but of Dreher's name there is no mention or commemoration in today's Vienna and Austria, although his Schwechat brewery still functions as part of the giant Brau AG group. Dreher died prematurely in 1863, possibly from over work-at the age of only 53. He did live to see his Vienna style become one of the biggest selling beers in mid-19th-century central Europe. He acquired a chain of breweries across the Austro-Hungarian empire. One of them was in Michelob, yet another Bohemian-German name borrowed by Adolphus Busch, co-founder of the Anheuser-Busch giant.

It is left to Dreher's former Kobanya brewery in Budapest, now owned by South African Breweries, to honor Dreher by recently naming several brews after him. The beers are being made to rediscovered 19th-century recipes and, of these, Dreher Export is thought to come closest to Dreher's Vienna style, with an amber color, full-bodied malt flavor and dryish finish.



Oktoberfest

The Oktoberfest is a sixteen-day festival held each year in Munich, Bavaria, Germany during late September (and running to early October). It is one of the most famous events in the city and the world's largest fair, with some six million people attending every year, and is an important part of Bavarian culture. Other cities across the world also hold Oktoberfest celebrations, modeled after the Munich event.

Oktoberfestbiere are the beers that have been served at the event in Munich since 1818, and are supplied by 6 breweries known as the Big Six: Spaten, Löwenbräu, Augustiner, Hofbräu, Paulaner and Hacker-Pschorr. Traditionally Oktoberfestbiere were the lagers of around 5.5 to 6% abv called Märzen - brewed in March and allowed to ferment slowly during the summer months. Originally these would have been dark lagers, but from 1872 a strong March brewed version of an amber-red Vienna lager made by



Josef Sedlmayr became the favourite Oktoberfestbier.

Since the 1970s the type of beer served at the festival has been a pale lager between 5 and 6% abv, and the terms Oktoberfest and Märzen are used by non-Oktoberfest brewers in Germany and the USA to market pale lagers of this strength. The colour of these lagers may range from pale gold to deep amber, with the darker colours more common in the USA. Hop levels tend not to be distinctive, though some American examples may be firmly hopped. Modern beers sold as Oktoberfest and Märzen in Europe tend not to be too differentiated from other pale lagers of this strength, while older German and American influenced examples will be fairly malty in flavour and inclined to use a range of malts, especially dark malts such as Vienna or Munich.

The Munich Oktoberfest, traditionally, takes place during the sixteen days up to and including the first Sunday in October. In 1990, the schedule was modified in response to German reunification so that if the first Sunday in October falls on the 1st or 2nd, then the festival will go on until October 3rd (German Unity Day). Thus, the festival is now 17 days when the 1st Sunday is October 2nd and 18 days when it is October 1st.

The festival is held on an area named the *Theresienwiese* (field, or meadow, of Therese), often called *d' Wiesn* for short.

Visitors also eat huge amounts of food, most of it traditional hearty fare such as Wurst sausage, Hendl (chicken), Käsespätzle (cheese noodles), and Sauerkraut, along with such Bavarian delicacies as Obatzda (a fatty, spiced cheese-butter concoction), roast ox tails and Reiberdatschi (apple pancakes).

Modern festival

Since 1950, there has been a traditional festival opening: A twelve gun salute and the tapping of the first keg of Oktoberfest beer at 12:00 by the current Mayor of Munich with the cry "*O'zapft is!*" ("It's tapped!" in the Austro-Bavarian dialect) opens the Oktoberfest. The first mayor to tap the keg was Thomas Wimmer.

By 1960, the Oktoberfest had turned into an enormous world-famous festival. After this foreigners began to picture Germans as wearing the Sennerhut, Lederhosen, and the girls in Dirndl. Horse races ended in 1960.

There are many problems every year with young people, who overestimate their ability to handle large amounts of alcohol. Many pass out due to drunkenness. These especially drunk patrons are often called "*Bierleichen*" (German for "beer corpses"). They are brought by staff to a medical tent where drunks as well as sick people are treated.

To keep the Oktoberfest, and especially the beer tents, friendly for older people and families, the concept of the "quiet Oktoberfest" was developed in 2005. Until 6:00 PM, the tents only play quiet music, for example traditional wind music. Only after that will Schlager and pop music be played, which has led to more violence in earlier years. The music played in the afternoon is limited to 85 decibels. With these measures, the organizers of the Oktoberfest hope to curb the over-the-top party mentality and preserve the traditional beer tent atmosphere.

Starting in 2008, a new Bavarian law banning smoking in all enclosed spaces that are open to the public will be in place at the Oktoberfest. This will mean a complete smoking ban inside the tents. However, after heavy losses in the 2008 local elections, the state's ruling party wants to grant special exemptions to beer tents and small pubs.