

BJCP Exam Grader Training

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Training Overview

- Background
- Scoring Components
 - Scoring Accuracy
 - Perception
 - Descriptive Ability
 - Feedback
 - Completeness



Training Overview

- Process Suggestions
- Examples
- Proper Proctoring
- Questions



Background

- BJCP Scoresheet Guide
 - Transparent & consistent process
 - Metrics created after evaluation of proctor's scoresheets
 - Metrics and rubric intended to minimize subjectivity - not a recipe for finding faults.



Background

- A reference, graders must still perform final assessment
 - Independent thinking desired, not regurgitating style guidelines
 - Not filling out form correctly, but best capturing perceptions of the beer, evaluating beer, and identifying problems & hallmarks.



Scoring Accuracy

- Scoring Accuracy
 - Defined by consensus score, not necessarily proctors consensus score
 - Need to take into account exam administrators description
 - Analyze examinees scores looking for potential adjustments
 - Do NOT allow scoring accuracy to influence scoring on other four components



Perception

- Perception is arguably the most difficult competency to evaluate because it requires condensing data from several sources into a concise representation of the characteristics of each exam beer. These data sources include not only the proctors' score sheets, but the score sheets completed by the exam participants, the exam beer descriptions supplied by the exam administrator, and the BJCP style guidelines.



Perception

- Determine consensus perception of the beer
 - Use proctor's perceptions as the base
 - Note when proctors vary widely on a characteristic, and when they are similar
 - Use the exam administrator's description to adjust consensus



Perception

- Determine Consensus
 - Look for common variations that occur in a significant number with examinees



Perception

- Determine full, partial or no credit
 - Don't create a lengthy list of characteristics, choose 6 to 8 to capture the essence of the beer
 - Anything beyond 6 to 8 make up allowable descriptors to be used by examinees without losing points

Perception

- Levels of characteristics can vary based on:
 - Variation determined for consensus;
 - Plus partial credit for slight variations
- Descriptions of characteristics can be perceived differently by different tasters:
 - Very similar terms should get partial or full credit

Perception

- Common perception grading mistakes
 - Not allowing for variations in consensus description based on data provided
 - A lengthy list of characteristics creating an unrealistic expectation



Perception Competencies

- Master: At least three components of the aroma described on the score sheet are consistent with those noted by the proctors and/or over one-half of the examinees.
- Master: There are no aroma components perceived at lower or higher levels that were not noted by the proctors and/or at least one-half of the examinees.



Perception Competencies

- Master: The descriptions of the color, clarity and head are consistent with the proctors and/or over one-half of the examinees. It is also desirable to describe other characteristics of the head, but this is not essential information for the brewer.
- Master: At least three components of the flavor described on the score sheet are consistent with those noted by the proctors and/or over one-half of the examinees.



Perception Competencies

- Master: There are no flavor components perceived at lower or higher levels that were not noted by the proctors and/or at least one-half of the examinees.
- Master: At least three components of the mouthfeel described on the score sheet are consistent with those noted by the proctors and/or over one-half of the examinees.



Perception Rubric

- When evaluating this competency, errors relating to secondary characteristics should be given 50% of the weight given to errors in perceiving primary characteristics.



Perception Rubric

- Master: No more than two elements of the aroma, appearance, flavor and mouthfeel differ from the consensus of the proctors and/or over one-half of the examinees.
- National: No more than three elements of the aroma, appearance, flavor and mouthfeel differ from the consensus of the proctors and/or over one-half of the examinees.



Perception Rubric

- Certified: No more than four elements of the aroma, appearance, flavor and mouthfeel differ from the consensus of the proctors and/or over one-half of the examinees.
- Recognized: No more than five elements of the aroma, appearance, flavor and mouthfeel differ from the consensus of the proctors and/or over one-half of the examinees.



Perception Rubric

- Apprentice: More than five elements of the aroma, appearance, flavor and mouthfeel differ from the consensus of the proctors and/or over one-half of the examinees.



Descriptive Ability

- Descriptive Ability is a measure of the competency to use adjectives and phrases to identify the aroma, flavor and other characteristics of the beer. Score sheets from Master and Grand Master judges typically have a proliferation of descriptive information beyond just "malty" or "hoppy".



Descriptive Ability

- Examples of what is expected for descriptive abilities:
 - Apprentice – Hoppy aroma
 - Recognized – American Hop aroma
 - Certified – Moderate American hop aroma
 - National – Moderate citrusy American hop aroma



Descriptive Ability

- Master – Moderate citrusy American hop aroma with notes of tangerine and pine needles



Descriptive Ability Competencies

- Master level: At least six descriptive adjectives or phrases are used to describe the aroma of the beer.
- Master: At least four descriptive adjectives or phrases are used to describe the intensity of the aromatic components of the beer.
- Master level: At least four descriptive adjectives or phrases are used to describe the appearance of the beer.



Descriptive Ability Competencies

- Master level: At least six descriptive adjectives or phrases are used to describe the flavor of the beer.
- Master level: At least four descriptive adjectives or phrases are used to describe the intensity of the flavor components of the beer.
- Master level: At least four descriptive adjectives or phrases are used to describe the mouthfeel of the beer.



Descriptive Ability

Descriptive means adjectives more specific than generic words such as "malty," "hoppy," and "estery."

Note that "No" or "None" are valid adjectives for characteristics which may be appropriate in the beer style being judged but are not present in that particular sample.



Descriptive Ability

As an example of phrasing, the comment, "A medium spicy noble hop flavor emerges mid-palate," has two descriptive adjectives for the hop flavor, one for the intensity and one descriptive phrase.



Descriptive Ability

- Common descriptive ability grading mistakes
 - Docking points for proper nouns – Pilsner Malt

Descriptive Ability Rubric

- There are a total of twenty eight opportunities to use descriptive adjectives or phrases, and the targets for Master/National/Certified/Recognized judge (based on 90/80/70/60 percent of that total) are: Total number of adjectives and phrases: Master: 25 or more, National=22-24, Certified=19-21, Recognized=16-18, Apprentice=15 or fewer.



Feedback

Brewers should receive relevant and constructive feedback explaining how to adjust the recipe or brewing procedures to produce a beer that is stylistically correct.

Feedback

- Comments should be constructive and consistent with the characteristics perceived by the examinee as well as the score assigned to the beer.
 - The style grid at the bottom of the score sheet and appropriate descriptor definition boxes should be checked.



Feedback Competencies

- The feedback is constructive, polite and professional, generally including at least one supportive or positive comment about the beer.
- The feedback is consistent with the score assigned to the beer.
- The judge provides an accurate diagnosis of any stylistic and/or technical flaws which impacted the beer quality and/or score. A good rule of thumb is incorporating one suggestion for improvement for each scoring level below Outstanding (45-50).



Feedback Competencies

- The feedback does not make any assumptions about the process or ingredients.
- The feedback given in the Overall Impression section is consistent with comments in other sections of the score sheet. Issues with the aroma, flavor or other attributes of the beer should be noted in the appropriate section of the score sheet, with feedback either given in that section or as part of the Overall Impression.



Feedback Rubric

Number of above feedback elements on score sheet:
Master: All 5, National=4,
Certified=3, Recognized=2,
Apprentice=1 or fewer.



Common Feedback Grading Mistakes

- Not providing feedback even though score or description indicates improvement is needed.
- Incorrect direction on resolving issue(s) noted
- Noting what the issue is, but not providing direction on fixing that issue



Completeness

- A measure of a judge's ability to clearly and effectively communicate information about the beer to the brewer
- In theory, the easiest category to achieve a high score
- Not only addressing components of the beer but the book-keeping details



Common Completeness Grading Mistakes

- Over weighting the description of the beer with respect to bookkeeping items
- Deducting points for quality of description even though score sheet is very complete – the depth of the description should be scored as descriptive ability



Completeness and Communication Competencies

- All applicable components of the aroma listed on the score sheet are addressed.
- All applicable components of the head listed on the score sheet are addressed.
- All applicable components of the flavor listed on the score sheet are addressed.
- All applicable components of the mouthfeel listed on the scores heet are addressed.
- Overall Impression section includes a comment on overall drinking pleasure associated with entry and if the total score is less than 45, offers at least one suggestion for improvement.



Completeness and Communication Competencies

- Comments are well organized and legible.
- Efficient use of vertical space: Fewer than two or three blank lines remain on the completed scoresheet (these are typically only in the Appearance or Mouthfeel sections on a Master level scoresheet).
- Efficient use of horizontal space: The scoresheet typically has six to seven words per line with a font size and spacing that balances content and legibility.



Completeness and Communication Competencies

- Numerical values are assigned for each component score and also for the total score.
- Stylistic accuracy, technical merit, and intangibles boxes are checked.
- Descriptor definitions are checked when applicable (flavors are either perceived at low or higher levels or are flaws in the style being judged).
- The header of the scoresheet is complete, with the Exam ID number, beer number and the name of the beer style identified.



Completeness and Communication Competencies

The phrase "applicable components" means characteristics which are expected in the beer style being judged according to the BJCP Style Guidelines and/or to perceived characteristics which would be regarded as flaws in that particular style.



Completeness Rubric

There are a total of twelve qualities of a complete score sheet, and some of these are routine book-keeping. Partial credit should be given when appropriate. The targets for Master/National/Certified/Recognized judge (approximately 90/80/70/60 percent of the number of above elements on scoresheet) are: Master: 10 or more, National=9, Certified=8, Recognized=7, Apprentice=fewer than 7.



Process Suggestions for Grading

- Preview entire packet of exams first
- Create the perceptive expectation
- Scoring accuracy
 - Verify consensus is appropriate
 - Don't let scoring accuracy influence your scoring of other components



Example #1 – Oktoberfest/Marzen

Aroma: Moderately rich German malt aroma, but then a strong sourness that dominated the beer. Couldn't detect anything else.

Appearance: Deep gold with brilliant clarity. Big, off white head persists.

Flavor: A strong sourness that dominated the favor. Maybe a little hop bitterness but difficult to tell. The sourness lasted all the way into the finish. Balanced to the sourness.

Mouthfeel: Thin body with low carbonation. No alcohol warming, astringency or creaminess.

Overall Impression: It appears this beer has sanitation issue due to the acetic acid found in the aroma and flavor. Clean and sanitize your equipment well all the way through the bottling process. Check your sanitizer for viability.



Example #2 – Cream Ale

Aroma: Light maltiness and some corn. Low hop aroma, and some nice esters. No diacetyl.

Appearance: Light gold color with nice clarity. The white head has good retention.

Flavor: Low malty sweetness and dry. The overall hop character is fairly low and balances well with the malt. Some corn character and a few fruity esters.

Mouthfeel: Light body with appropriate carbonation. No astringency.

Overall Impression: This is a good example of a cream ale. The hop bitterness is at a good level and the corn character is OK for style. Maybe a bit over attenuated, more sweetness would help this beer.



Example #3 – Dry Stout

Aroma: Moderate coffee and roast malt aroma, followed by a low earthy hop aroma. Medium-low apple/pear esters emerge as the beer warms.

Appearance: Light brown color and quite clear. The tan head is thick and creamy and persists forever.

Flavor: Moderate grainy, roasty maltiness with a light coffee character, followed by a medium hop bitterness that lingers into a dry finish. Light apple/pear esters develop in the middle. No hop flavor. Balanced strongly to the roast.

Mouthfeel: Medium body with low carbonation. A light but not harsh astringency is noted from the roasted grains. No alcohol warming. Quite creamy.

Overall Impression: A nice beer overall but the diacetyl in the aroma and vegetal character in the flavor were very distracting. There was a light lactic sourness also present that is not appropriate to style. This beer needs to be cleaner.



Example #4 – American IPA

Aroma: Intense citrus hop aroma with notes of grapefruit rind and a light fleeting grassy dry hop character. A light pale malt sweetness supports the hop aroma. No fermentation esters or alcohol noted. No diacetyl or other off aromas.

Appearance: Deep gold with a light orange hue and very slightly hazy. Off white head leaves a thick stand of fine bubbles on the beer. Persistent, good retention.

Flavor: High citrus hop flavor with grapefruit up front followed by a high hop bitterness. Moderate pale malt sweetness with light caramel character emerges mid-palate in support of the hops, with a light grassy dry hop flavor. Balanced to hop bitterness, but not too dominant. The dry finish accentuates the hop flavor. No fermentation esters or alcohol. No diacetyl or other off flavors.

Mouthfeel: Medium body with medium high carbonation that lends additional dryness to the mouthfeel. Very low alcohol warming is smooth. No hop derived astringency or creaminess.



Example #4 - American IPA

Overall Impression: Solid American IPA. The malt character in the aroma and flavor supports the hop character well. Although not required, a light amount of fermentation esters would add some intrigue, this can be accomplished by a higher fermentation temp or different yeast strain.



Example #5 – Baltic Porter

Aroma: Slight fleeting vegetal aroma. Medium roast and caramel malt aroma, light coffee and low spicy hops. Faint esters and low alcohol adds complexity.

Appearance: Copper to brown color and clear. Tan head has fine bubbles and is long lasting.

Flavor: A moderate and complex malt aroma is roasty and is balanced by a good hop bitterness. The spicy hop aroma lingers into a smooth finish. Some dark fruit esters and alcohol go into the aftertaste.

Mouthfeel: Medium to full body with medium CO2 with some nice alcohol warming. A really nice creaminess helps create complexity with the aroma and flavor.

Overall Impression: A quite complex malty, rich and creamy Baltic Porter. The vegetal aroma is a detractor although it was fleeting. This is likely a sanitation issue so check your sanitation practices.



Example #6 – Bohemian Pilsener

Aroma: Slight spice aroma, candy red apple, ethyl hexanoate – overpowering.

Appearance: Very clear. Off white head that stays. Light gold color.

Flavor: Candy malt flavor, bitterness almost too light for style.

Mouthfeel: Smooth, round, good carbonation.

Overall Impression: Candy flavor/aroma detracts from the beer. Seems like a yeast health issue that caused this. Without that, this would be a great beer!



Example #7 – Helles Bock

Aroma: Malty sweet, very slightly fruity, clean aroma. Tiny bit DMS perhaps.

Appearance: Golden color, excellent clarity, creamy white lasting head.

Flavor: Malty sweet clean malt flavor, nicely balanced with noble hop bitterness. Slightly spicy, clean.

Mouthfeel: Medium to full body, good carbonation. Warming alcohol. Clean finish.

Overall Impression: Very nice clean Maibock, not finding anything I can find fault with. Could perhaps be a little more malty, but very good and appropriate for style. Nice work!



Example #8 – Munich Helles

Aroma: Faint malty aroma first, then a low hop aroma. Light DMS. No fermentation esters noted and no diacetyl. No other aromatics detected.

Appearance: Deep yellow color and really nice clarity. The tan head has fine bubbles and good retention.

Flavor: Moderate malty sweetness with some hop aroma. Good hop bitterness lingers into a nice finish. The aftertaste is malty. Balance is to the malt. Low fruity esters and a little diacetyl.

Mouthfeel: Low body and carbonation is to style. I found a little bit of astringency. There is no alcohol warming and maybe a little creaminess.

Overall Impression: This is a really nice beer. I liked the maltiness and the hop character was real good. Make sure you give it a diacetyl rest and a lower fermentation temperature. The astringency is not appropriate.



Example #9 – Belgian Blond Ale

Aroma: Really nice earthy but kind of subtle hop aroma dances across the nose, along with a moderate graham cracker like pilsner malt aroma that really complements the hops.

Appearance: Beautiful and inspiring deep gold hue that's really super clear. The off white head is really dense and creamy. Really love the appearance.

Flavor: The pilsner malt comes across as graham cracker like and lasts all the way into a subtle semi-sweet finish. The earthy hop flavor kicks in mid-palate along with a low hop bitterness that really balances the malt. Really nice alcohol.

Mouthfeel: Medium to medium-full body and high champagne like carbonation that lends a dryness to the finish. The alcohol is smooth and not hot or fusel, and really complements the beer.



Example #9 – Belgian Blond Ale

Overall Impression: This may be one of the best Belgian Blond Ales I have ever had. The ester and phenol character were spot on for style, and the malt and hop character were also really good. Don't ferment so warm next time. The yeast strain you used was good.

Example #10 - ESB

Aroma: Medium to low earthy hop aroma with some bready, caramel malt aroma behind. Medium to high bruised apple esters. No diacetyl, but very light alcohol and some sulfur.

Appearance: Deep gold to light copper and brilliant clarity. Low off white head leaves a thin stand of fine bubbles on the beer, fair retention.

Flavor: Strong caramelly malt sweetness supports a medium to high hop bitterness. A nice earthy, floral hop flavor emerges mid-palate and lingers into a dry finish along with low to medium bruised apple esters. No diacetyl. Sulfur not noted in flavor.

Mouthfeel: Medium to medium-full body with good carbonation. Some alcohol warming is smooth and no hop derived astringency. Some creaminess.

Overall Impression: A well brewed beer overall. The medium to high hop bitterness is supported by the malt. The carbonation was spot on for style. I would prefer a bit more hop flavor, but this was OK for style.



Responsibilities of Proctors

- Communicate perceptions and observations to the graders
- Provide complete sensory evaluation with as much detail as possible
- Address each key characteristic listed on the score sheet
- Provide an overall impression of the beer
- Explain why score was given, breakdown of deductions (not how to fix the beer)
- Provide comments to the graders

Questions??

