How to Use the AHA/BJCP Scoresheet

Please fill out your **Name** and **Judge Qualifications** on each scoresheet. If you don't know what to fill in here, you should probably fill in **Non-BJCP**. If you have taken the exam but not received your results, check **Rank Pending**. You may give contact information so that the entrant can respond to you with praise or constructive criticism. This is a great way to get feedback on your judging.

Descriptor Definitions are listed as check boxes in the left column of the scoresheet, and are intended as cues to the judge to help in making their assessments. They may be checked or left blank as the judge sees fit.

The **Bottle Inspection** section may be helpful in determining if a beer is likely to be a "gusher," or if you should be especially careful in decanting the entry so as not to rouse any sediment that may be present. Informational only.

The style adherence part of the scoring is separated into four sections: **Aroma, Appearance, Flavor, and Mouthfeel**. These sections are customarily used for recording objective descriptions of the entry. Beers should be judged as to how well they conform to the characteristics of their indicated style.

The final section, **Overall Impression**, largely ignores stylistic considerations and represents how much you enjoyed the beer. Another good use of this section is giving suggestions on how to improve the beer. It may also be used to summarize your feelings on aspects of the beer that don't fit neatly into one of the other four sections. The difference between an **Excellent** beer and an **Outstanding** beer can often be in subtle or intangible details. Likewise, beers with no easily discernible flaws can be lacking in specialness or "magic." This section is used to give such feedback.

The **Scoring Guide** represents the six broad scoring categories. It is intended as an aid to help judges broadly define a beer at first, and then to help them decide on a specific number within that category to assign to the entry. Categories in the Scoring Guide range from **Outstanding** to **Problematic**. A score in the **Outstanding** range is reserved for those beers that not only are lacking flaws, but that also have great character or that hard-to-define "magic" great beers have. Beers scored in the **Problematic** range are often assigned a score of 13 as a courteous lower limit, although this is not a firm limit.

Here is the full description of the ranges as given on the AHA/BJCP SCP cover sheet:

Outstanding (45-50) – A world class example of the style. A beer with great character and no flaws.

Excellent (38-44) – Beers in this range may have no flaws but may be missing the intangibles for a world class beer.

Very Good (30-37) – Beers in this range may have a minor flaw (technical or stylistic), or may be lacking in balance or complexity.

Good (21-29) – A satisfactory beer that generally fits the style parameters. Scores near the upper end of this range may have only a few minor flaws or be slightly out of style and also may be lacking in balance or complexity. Scores near the lower end of this range tend to have more flaws and are likely to have stylistic inconsistencies as well.

Fair (14-20) – This beer has its share of problems that may include missing the style parameters, off flavors and aromas, balance problems, contamination, or other major flaws. Scores near the lower end of this range exhibit more major flaws. Unpleasant to drink.

Problematic (0-13) – A beer with a major problem (usually contamination) that overwhelms all other flavors and aromas. Often barely palatable, may be undrinkable.

The **Style Grid** is the box to the right of the **Scoring Guide.** Three sets of checkboxes let you quickly summarize the areas where you felt the beer was strong and where you felt it was weak. This should not be used as a substitute for descriptions and helpful comments in the five scored sections, but as a summary and a way to break down the information along different lines. What is meant by these three scales?

Stylistic Accuracy: The aroma of Cascade hops in a Bohemian Pilsener would be an example of a problem in Stylistic Accuracy. This can be thought of as recipe feedback.

Technical Merit: Oxidation would usually indicate a problem with technique and would be classified under Technical Merit. This can be thought of as process feedback.

Intangibles: Some characteristics don't fall neatly into one category, for example phenolic aroma and flavor might be from the yeast strain used (stylistic) or from wild yeast contamination (technical merit). Here you will have to make the best guess for these ratings. **Intangibles** rates the same characteristic of "magic" discussed above in **Overall Impression**.

The choice of which box to check has been left vague. We don't want judges or entrants trying to subject the ratings in this section and the five scored sections to a detailed quantitative analysis. Try to sum up all the stylistic issues you have considered in the scoring, and decide whether the beer does particularly well or poorly, and choose an appropriate box to check. Continue likewise with the other scales.