

# The Herald Tribune



Volume # 26 Issue # 10

Newsletter of the Ann Arbor Brewers' Guild

October 2012

## October Meeting

This month's meeting of the AABG is Friday **October 12th**. It will be hosted by **Matt Becker**. See the map and directions on the next page. The featured style is **Light Hybrid\***.

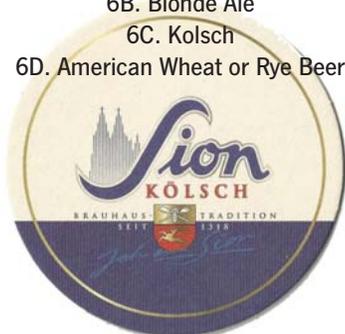
### 6. Light Hybrid Beer

6A. Cream Ale

6B. Blonde Ale

6C. Kölsch

6D. American Wheat or Rye Beer



## AABG 2012

January .....	Adventures in Homebrewing .....	Dark Lagers*
February .....	Adventures in Homebrewing .....	Dark Lagers*
March .....	Adventures in Homebrewing .....	Stout*
April .....	Geoff Billir and Annie Zipser .....	Stout*
May .....	Stephen Krebs .....	Scottish/Irish*
June .....	Josh Budde .....	Wheat Beers
July BeerBQ .....	Dave Olds .....	Mead
August .....	Chris Frey .....	Porter*
September .....	Michael Erickson .....	Light Hybrid*
October .....	Matt Becker .....	Light Hybrid*
November .....	.....	Old Ale*
December .....	Rolf Wucherer .....	Old Ale*

\* Denotes AHA Club Only Competition Style

All meeting 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 club's pico system is available to members for brewing. If you wish to borrow it contact Mike O'Brien at:

734.637.2532

picobrew@comcast.net

Access the AABG Club System forum at:

<http://tinyurl.com/29h7yxc>

## 6C. Kölsch

**Aroma:** Very low to no Pils malt aroma. A pleasant, subtle fruit aroma from fermentation (apple, cherry or pear) is acceptable, but not always present. A low noble hop aroma is optional but not out of place (it is present only in a small minority of authentic versions). Some yeasts may give a slight winy or sulfury character (this characteristic is also optional, but not a fault).

**Appearance:** Very pale gold to light gold. Authentic versions are filtered to a brilliant clarity. Has a delicate white head that may not persist.

**Flavor:** Soft, rounded palate comprising of a delicate flavor balance between soft yet attenuated malt, an almost imperceptible fruity sweetness from fermentation, and a medium-low to medium bitterness with a delicate dryness and slight pucker in the finish (but no harsh aftertaste). The noble hop flavor is variable, and can range from low to moderately high; most are medium-low to medium. One or two examples (Dom being the most prominent) are noticeably malty-sweet up front. Some versions can have a slightly minerally or sulfury water or yeast character that accentuates the dryness and flavor balance. Some versions may have a slight wheat taste, although this is quite rare. Otherwise very clean with no diacetyl or fusels.

**Mouthfeel:** Smooth and crisp. Medium-light body, although a few versions may be medium. Medium to medium-high carbonation. Generally well-attenuated.

**Overall Impression:** A clean, crisp, delicately balanced beer usually with very subtle fruit flavors and aromas. Subdued maltiness throughout leads to a pleasantly refreshing tang in the finish. To the untrained taster easily mistaken for a light lager, a somewhat subtle Pilsner, or perhaps a blonde ale.

**Comments:** Served in a tall, narrow 200ml glass called a "Stange." Each Köln brewery produces a beer of different character, and

each interprets the Konvention slightly differently. Allow for a range of variation within the style when judging. Note that drier versions may seem hoppier or more bitter than the IBU specifications might suggest. Due to its delicate flavor profile, Kölsch tends to have a relatively short shelf-life; older examples can show some oxidation defects. Some Köln breweries (e.g., Dom, Hellers) are now producing young, unfiltered versions known as Wiess (which should not be entered in this category).

**History:** Kölsch is an appellation protected by the Kölsch Konvention, and is restricted to the 20 or so breweries in and around Cologne (Köln). The Konvention simply defines the beer as a "light, highly attenuated, hop-accentuated, clear top-fermenting Vollbier."

**Ingredients:** German noble hops (Hallertau, Tettnang, Spalt or Hersbrucker). German Pils or pale malt. Attenuative, clean ale yeast. Up to 20% wheat may be used, but this is quite rare in authentic versions. Water can vary from extremely soft to moderately hard. Traditionally uses a step mash program, although good results can be obtained using a single rest at 149°F. Fermented at cool ale temperatures (59-65°F) and lagered for at least a month, although many Cologne brewers ferment at 70°F and lager for no more than two weeks.

### Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.044 - 1.050

FG: 1.007 - 1.011

IBUs: 20 - 30

ABV: 4.4 - 5.2%

SRM: 3.5 - 5

**Commercial Examples:** Available in Cologne only: PJ Früh, Hellers, Malzmühle, Paeffgen, Sion, Peters, Dom; import versions available in parts of North America: Reissdorf, Gaffel; Non-German versions: Eisenbahn Dourada, Goose Island Summertime, Alaska Summer Ale, Harpoon Summer Beer, New Holland Lucid, Saint Arnold Fancy Lawnmower, Capitol City Capitol Kölsch, Shiner Kölsch.

## When and Where

Friday, Oct. 12, 7:30pm

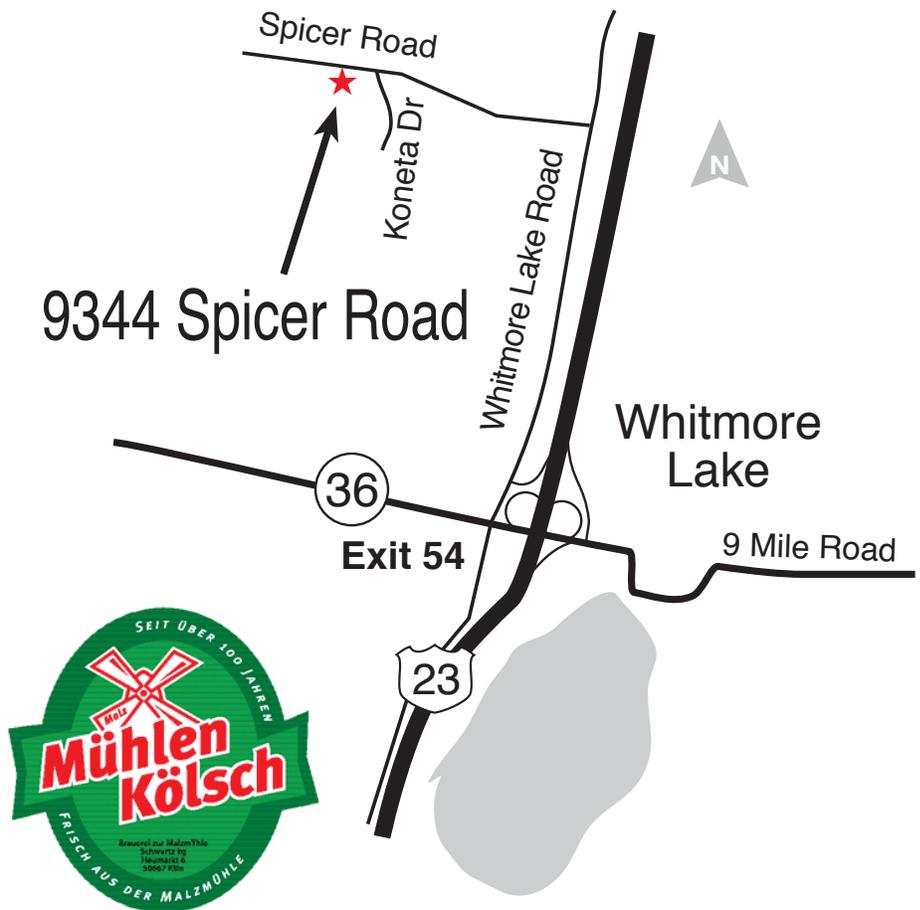
**Matt Becker**  
9344 Spicer Road  
Brighton Michigan

### Guide for New Members

Bring a tasting glass and 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.

### AABG Policy

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



## Cologne

Medieval Ales Are at the Root of Kölsch? We know from ancient documents that brewing in Cologne goes back at least a thousand years, but the modern Kölsch style we know today, perhaps surprisingly, goes back not even a hundred years. Until the late Middle Ages, most brews in Germany were probably ales, especially in the summer. For at least the past five centuries, however, most German brewers have been making mostly “new” beers, that is, lagers. The only “old” German beers that escaped the lager onslaught and survived up to the Industrial Revolution and into modernity were the wheat-based Weissbiers, mostly of Bavaria, and the barley-based, copper-



colored ales of the Rhineland. The Rhenish beers brewed by the old ale method came to be known as Altbiers (alt is “old” in German). Just as the British pale ale is an outgrowth of older, darker British ales, the modern Kölsch is an outgrowth of the older, darker Altbier.

The Cologne city fathers made their own official contribution to preserving the “old” indigenous ale-style beer. In 1603, they issued an important ordinance: Henceforth brewers were only permitted to brew top-fermented beers in Cologne. Less than half a century after summer brewing was made illegal in Bavaria, which pushed that part of Germany firmly into the lager column, the authorities in Cologne took the opposite course. They downright outlawed the making of bottom-fermented beers.



## Kölsch

Kölsch (also spelled Koelsch) is a local beer specialty that is brewed in Cologne, Germany. It is a clear beer with a bright, straw-yellow hue, and has a prominent, but not extreme, hoppiness. It is less bitter than the standard German pale lager.

Kölsch is warm-fermented at a temperature around 13 to 21°C (55 to 70°F) and then cold-conditioned, or lagered. This manner of fermentation links Kölsch with some other beer styles of central northern Europe, such as the Altbiers of northern Germany and the Netherlands.

Kölsch is strictly defined by the Kölsch Konvention, an agreement between the members of the Cologne Brewery Association. It is a pale, highly attenuated, hoppy, clear, top-fermenting beer with an original gravity of between 11 and 16 degrees Plato (1.044–1.065). In practice almost all Kölsch brands have a very similar gravity near the middle of this range.

*Kolsch continued on next page...*

## History

In the year 1396, the Brewer Gaffel signed, with 21 other guilds, a document called the Kölner Verbundbrief, that set up a new democratic constitution of the free city, which terminated the rule of the nobles over the citizens, and held until 1796, when the army of Napoleon Bonaparte conquered Cologne. The term Kölsch was officially used for the first time in 1918 to describe the type of beer that had been brewed by the Sünner brewery since 1906. This type of beer developed from the similar, but cloudier variant Wiess (White in the Kölsch dialect). It never became particularly popular in the first half of the twentieth century, when the most popular beer was bottom-fermented, just as in the rest of Germany. Before World War II, there were over 40 breweries in Cologne, but in the aftermath of the devastations wrought by the war, that number was reduced to two. In 1946, however, many of the breweries managed to reestablish themselves. During the 1940s and 1950s Kölsch still could not match the sales of bottom-fermented beer, but beginning in the 1960s it rose in popularity and achieved hegemony in the Cologne beer market. From a production of merely 50 million liters in 1960, Cologne's beer production peaked in 1980, when 370 million liters were produced. Due to recent increases in price and changed habits of alcohol consumption, the sale has decreased causing economic hardship for many of the traditional corner bars (Kölschkneipen) and for smaller breweries. In 2005, 240 million liters of Kölsch were brewed.

Thirteen breweries produce Kölsch in and around Cologne; the big four are Früh, Gaffel, Reissdorf and Kölner Verbund. Kölsch is the only beer that may not be brewed outside the Cologne region, as determined by the Kölsch convention of 1986.



There is a grandfather clause for a few breweries in the larger area that were already established as of 1986. About ten breweries in Germany produce beer in Kölsch style, but do not call it Kölsch because they are not member of the Kölsch convention.

In 1997 Kölsch became a protected designation of origin, expanding this protection to the entire EU and several countries outside the EU. Kölsch is becoming more popular outside of Germany with exports to United States, Russia, China and Brazil. Exported Kölsch doesn't need to be strictly compliant with the Provisional German Beer Law, the current implementation of the Reinheitsgebot.

Kölsch also has considerable popularity in the United States. Microbreweries which brew Kölsch-style beer operate in Buffalo, New York, Boston, St. Louis, Charleston, Philadelphia, Portland, Durango, and Raleigh.

## Culture

Kölsch stands in direct competition to Altbier, the production of which is centered around Düsseldorf. The difference between the two types is indeed technically slight, Altbier being fermented at slightly higher temperatures than Kölsch and using dark malt, harder water and far more bittering hops, resulting in a nuttier, firmer and drier taste. The rivalry between the cities of Cologne and Düsseldorf, bitter in the past but today mostly a humorous matter, is often expressed by the preference of one of these types of beer, and ordering the wrong kind in the wrong city has in fact resulted in abuse and even violence in the past, although today a couple of jokes about "immigrants" or "foreigners" is probably all that would result.

Another interesting sociological point concerning Kölsch is that its consumption is deemed acceptable by women to a much greater extent than other beers in Germany, and also that it is often drunk in groups of rather mixed social standing — exclusiveness is frowned upon by the Kölsch drinking culture, and there is a deal between the breweries that no Kölsch will be sold with any of the



extra titles that are popularly used with other German beers, like "Premium", "Special", "Extra High Quality" etc. Karl Marx once famously remarked that his revolution could not work in Cologne, since the bosses went to the same pubs as their workers.

Kölsch waiters (Köbes) in traditional pubs are encouraged, and indeed expected, to speak the local dialect which is called "Kölsch" as well and to use fairly rough, unrefined language, which might include crude jokes with the customers. In keeping with serving tradition, the Köbes in such pubs will also continue to exchange empty Kölsch glasses with new ones unprompted until customers leave their glass half full or place the beer mat upon the glass to signal that they no longer wish to be served.

Waiters carry filled glasses of the beer around the beer hall, in special circular trays called a Kranz, ready to replace any empty glasses immediately.

Kölsch is usually served about 10°C/50°F in long, thin, cylindrical 0.2 litre glasses. This glass is known as a Stange (pole), but is sometimes also derisively called a Reagenzglas (test tube), or Fingerhut (thimble) because they are a lot smaller than the beer glasses used in most of the rest of Germany. Recently though, many bars (especially outside central Cologne) have moved to reduce the waiters' work load and to satisfy their more thirsty customers by offering larger, less traditional glasses, (0.3 L or 0.4 L) of the same shape. Connoisseurs would even drink Kölsch from smaller (0.1 L) glasses, called "Stöbche" (Cologne dialect noun for a German noun "Stößchen" = little push), as the taste of Kölsch deteriorates rather quickly while it is sitting in the glass. Since 1936 Kölsch has also been available in bottled form, and nowadays some brands are even sold in cans, much to the chagrin of traditionalists.



**Bischoff Kölsch**

Brauerei Wilhelm Bischoff  
<http://www.bischoff-koelsch.de/>

**Dom Kölsch**

Dom Brauerei GmbH  
<http://www.dom-koelsch.de/>

**Gaffel Kölsch**

Privatbrauerei Gaffel Becker & Co. oHG  
<http://www.gaffel.de/>

**Garde Kölsch**

Brauhaus zur Garde AG

**Gilden Kölsch**

Gilden Kölsch Brauerei GmbH  
<http://www.gilden.de/>

**Kurfürsten Kölsch**

Kurfürsten Bräu GmbH

**Mühlen Kölsch**

Brauerei zur Malzmühle Schwartz GmbH & Co. KG  
<http://www.muehlenkoelsch.de/>

**Peters Kölsch**

Peters und Bambeck GmbH Privatbrauerei  
<http://www.peters-koelsch.info/>

**Reissdorf Kölsch**

Privat-Brauerei Heinrich Reissdorf GmbH & Co.  
<http://www.reissdorf.de/>

**Sester Kölsch**

Sester Brauerei GmbH  
<http://www.sester.de/>

**Sion Kölsch**

Altstadt-Bräu Johann Sion GmbH  
<http://www.sion.de/>

**Zunft Kölsch**

Erzquell-Brauerei Bielstein Haas & Co.KG  
<http://www.zunft-koelsch.de/>

**Bürger Kölsch**

Rheinische Bürgerbräu GmbH & Co.KG

**Früh Kölsch**

Cölnner Hofbräu P.Josef Früh  
<http://www.frueh.de/>

**Ganser Kölsch**

Privatbrauerei Ganser GmbH & Co.KG

**Giesler Kölsch**

Dom Brauerei GmbH  
<http://www.giesler-koelsch.de/>

**Küppers Kölsch**

Küppers Kölsch GmbH

**Maximilian Kölsch**

Kurfürsten Bräu GmbH

**Paffgen Kölsch**

Brauerei Paffgen GmbH & Co. KG  
<http://www.paeffgen-koelsch.de/>

**Rats Kölsch**

Dom Brauerei GmbH

**Richmodis Kölsch**

Richmodis-Bräu vorm. Brauhaus Fried. Winter GmbH

**Severins Kölsch**

Brauerei Peter Schopen

**Sünner Kölsch**

Gebr. Sünner GmbH & Co. KG  
<http://www.suenner-brauerei.de/>