Miscellaneous Brewing Notes
By Brewmaster Timotheus Zacharia von Schloss Zwilling

Clean Equipment

Remember that 75% of all problems or contamination can be traced to your equipment not being cleaned properly.

Fining Agents

Irish Moss, Sparkleoid, Egg Shell, etc are various ways to cause your brew to become clear. Also once used you won't get it much clearer so no improvement can happen. All of these can leave a taste or flavor which means you will loose points in the judging by as much as 4-8 points so it seems silly to try to gain three points to loose 8 points….

Let it clear naturally as this will cause you to age it a while and to let the balancing to occur in brews that may be a little young.

Racking

Racking is the transferring of your brew to another Fermenting unit. This takes your brew off of the Sediment (dead yeast, used protein etc). The sediment can impart a bad taste to your brew and even cause the yeast to go dormant. Anytime the sediment goes beyond ¼ to ½ inch you should rack your brew.

Closures

Caps must be pristine, clean, and centered.

Corks should have less than 8 layers, and 10 pores per quarter. More than this can be grounds for points off if there are problems with the drink. The cork must be inserted all the way, anything more than 3/16 of an inch above the bottle is grounds for points off.

Aging

Remember that your log notes should show the difference between the date you started the brew and the date you bottled it.

The age of the drink starts when you start making the drink. For most beers aging 1-2 months after bottling will add to its flavor and body.

For wines:

White or Fruit - should have a minimum of 1 year after bottled
But should be used be the end of the 3rd year.

Light Red, oddities - should have a minimum of 2 years after bottled
But should be used be the end of the 5th year.

Heavy Red, Mead - should have a minimum of 3 years after bottled
Can go another 10 years. These in many cases will continue to age.

Are there exceptions to the aging periods? Yes, as with everything there are exceptions and you won't know it till it happens.

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