

Mondo - an eye for world beers

Mondo has an impressive entrance for a small brewery. With a large sign above the door and a prominent A board, it can't be missed as you walk along the side of the usual non-descript trading estate. Walk into the tasting room and stare through the window into the brewery and the thing that really strikes you is that it sparkles! The cleanliness of this brewery is more akin to a dairy. So the question had to be asked as to why and the reason became very clear.



Tom Palmer and Todd Matteson set up the brewery after working at London Fields. Tom Palmer comes from Missouri and was originally a professor of anthropology but his family has brewing connections. His dad, uncle and brother all worked for InBev; his dad and uncle were Brew

Masters. The hygienic approach apparent in large brewers such as InBev, have made a mark in Tom's ethos; you could have eaten off the equipment! The two originators have been joined by Andy Turner (sales) (check) and Joe Bevan, who were also ex London Fields and all home brewers, to create the team that got the brewery going. The fifth member is Dale, the driver.

It took four and a half months to set up the new brewery and a look around indicates that there has been considerable investment. There are not many small brewers that have invested in a CIP system (Cleaning in Place). The kit (6.5 barrels) came from Hungary but using all Sheffield steel. Other investments include a malt mill, so they are able to bring in whole malt and to mill it as they need it, helping to keep the ingredients fresh; there is a small automatic bottling line that many brewers in London would die for and there are ten 13 barrel fermenters, which stand in line like some large sentries and dominate the brewery. Right by the bottling plant are two huge (250 litre) mobile Druck tanks. Andy commented 'They came as part of the brewery, like a free gift. The tanks act like big key kegs and are designed to be used for external events but they are rather heavy so they haven't been used as yet'. An attempt to move one was singularly unsuccessful, even though it was empty!



Mondo's brewing is designed around producing keg beer. The process involves the use of a whirlpool before the beer is fermented to remove the hops. The fermenters are enclosed and so the CO₂ level has to be carefully controlled (CO₂ is a by-product of the fermentation process). Too high and the yeast gets stressed and dies. The yeast is run off and reused five times before refreshing it; three wet yeast strains are currently used: Ale, Alt and San Francisco. They fine in the storage tanks, with vegetarian finings.

The Brewery's Tap Room gives a regular outlet for their beers but, like all breweries they rely on other outlets for volume. Andy described their ethos on distribution, which is currently all London.



'You can make the best beer in the world but if a beer tastes like crap because it's not been handled well, it's not much use. We have stopped supplying certain outlets because we were not happy with the quality'.

He also clarified the brewery's name: 'Mondo came from the idea of having beer styles from around the world and this is reflected in the four core beers: All Caps (American Pils), Rider (Pale Ale), Kemosabe (IPA) and London Alt; seasonals and one offs. These included a Double IPA (Geronimo), a brown ale (James Brown) and a Belgian Dark Strong (Figgie Smalls).

The London Tasting Panel tasted the following beers:

Rider 4.6% ABV

An amber coloured American Pale Ale using Amarillo, Cascade, Centennial and Simcoe hops. The malts used are Best Malt, Caramalt and Crystal. The malt blend gives some caramel in the aroma complementing the perfumed hop and fruity nose. This comes through in the flavour with a little spice, passionfruit, peach grapefruit zest and caramelised pineapple. The aftertaste has a little fruit (lemon zest), spice, bitterness and a building dryness.

Alt: 4.8% ABV

This beer is fermented at 15°C for 7-10 days and then conditioned for 3 weeks around 0°C. It uses Liberty (American) and Spalt (German) hops and a complex 7 malt blend to create a smooth dark gold beer with sweet malt and caramelised creamy toffee notes in the flavour and aroma. The flavour also has some earthy and peppery hops with some developing fruity citrus; this fades in the finish, which is sweetish but balanced by a little bitterness and a dryness that lingers.

All Caps 4.9% ABV

This is a Pilsner style beer has an American twist in that it uses Cascade (American) alongside Saaz (Czech) plus some British Northern Brewer, truly international! The malt is just Pilsner malt with some flaked maize and it is conditioned for 28 days at -1°C. It's a honey sweet and refreshing beer with citrus flavours and a little banana on nose and palate with traces in the finish, which is predominantly dry and just a trace of bitter.



James Brown Ale 5% ABV

Dark ruby brown in colour coming from the use of the chocolate malt, which is added to the Best Ale Malt and Caramalt. The inspiration for this beer is a Northern English Brown Ale but it uses two American hops, Willamette and Liberty to give fruity, candied citrus peel character that balances the sweet roasty malt with some peppery hop. Finish is of dry cocoa and a little bitter. The aroma is of toast.

Kemosabe 6.4% ABV

An American style golden IPA using Chinook, Cascade and Centennial hops, Best Ale Malt, Munich and Crystal malts. The aroma is of pine hops and a trace of tropical fruit. There is a strong bitterness with peppery hops and grapefruit marmalade. The finish is long and lingering with the bitterness and peppery hops remaining present with a trace of grapefruit pith.



Geronimo 8.8% ABV

There is a strong hoppy nose on this sweet, warming Double IPA. The caramelised citrus notes are present in the aroma and flavour alongside the peppery hops and tropical fruit, which fade in the aftertaste with a growing bitterness and a trace of dryness. The hops are all American: Mosaic, Citra, Simcoe and Cascade with Cara, Munich and Best Ale malts.

You can taste their beers at their Tap House: Wednesday - Friday: 17:00 - 23:00; Saturday: 14:00 - 22:00; see: www.mondobrewingcompany.com.