

## Candidate Statement for Josh Weikert

I don't want you to trust me – I want to be told what you need to be the best and most productive beer judging region in the country. Don't get me wrong: I have ideas of my own. But I want to be your representative because I have an almost masochistic desire to hear your ideas, complaints, suggestions, and needs when it comes to beer judging and the BJCP. Mostly, I want to represent you so that we can make advances in three areas:

- Improving communication in both directions so that the BJCP satisfies the needs of its judges
- Refining the current promotion system to provide a clear roadmap for the progression of judges from Recognized to Master.
- Encouraging the responsible evolution of the BJCP Style Guidelines so that they are a useful tool and not a blunt instrument (or a faddish, overcomplicated nightmare).

I get the sense from many judges that, to them, the “BJCP” is some shadowy organization that exists in a cave somewhere, surrounded by proposed Guidelines revisions and exams in mid-grading-process. That image needs to change. The role of information conduit falls to your Regional Representative, and I'm happy to pass information both ways so that you're getting the information you need to be effective judges, and that your feedback gets to the BJCP.

I also sense that many are frustrated by a rank and promotion system seems arbitrary. As your representative I want to advocate for a system that provides a clear rubric for how to advance within the current exam structure, OR (if necessary) create a new exam structure that utilizes a step-based system to promote judges: online/initial tasting exam to reach lower ranks, but specific National and Master exams that test for advanced knowledge and judging ability.

Finally, I (like every other judge and brewer who has ever sat a flight or entered a competition) have views about the Style Guidelines. How frequently should they be revised? What styles should be added? What descriptions and examples should be used? One thing I can guarantee – even when we disagree about the specifics – is that I have great respect for the impact that these changes can have, and their importance to judges and brewers around the world. I would never sign off on ANY change without thoroughly considering the practical effect it will have on brewers.

I hope that I get your vote, and thanks for reading!

**BORING PERSONAL BRAGGING:** I'm a Master judge, a newly-proposed Associate Exam Director, a Certified Cicerone, a brewer with medals in all 23 beer categories (and one Cider category), and a two-time Eastern Pennsylvania Homebrewer of the Year. I encourage every brewer I meet to become BJCP-certified, and my club has a higher proportion of judges than any in the country (I think). If there are qualifications I don't have that you'd like to see, let me know and I'll see what I can do (though I draw the line at learning to knit).

