

## MICHIGAN “DID YOU KNOW” - PRE-IRTP SCHMIDT CONES? By Randy Karasek

In general the USBC has cans pictured of the same type (e.g. beer, ale, ...) and from the same brewery, in chronological order, left to right. If you look at the Schmidt's cones from Detroit, Michigan, USBC 184-02 through USBC 184-05 this indeed appears so. Couple of IRTP cones, followed by a rubber-stamped IRTP statement variation, finishing with a non-IRTP. Makes sense since numerous breweries have both older IRTP and then newer non-IRTP version after the requirement was dropped in 1950.

However, after doing photography for the Michigan Beer Can project and conversations with several other very knowledgeable collecting friends (Chris Taylor and Dave Wheaton), I am now fairly convinced the USBC 184-05 non-IRTP cone top actually appeared first, **BEFORE** the IRTP variations. Here is the current USBC ordering, but lets look at some detailed pictures and explanation why this order should be reversed.



USBC 184-02 is the “NO SUGAR, NO GLUCOSE ADDED” variation, and you can hopefully see the horizontal “INTERNAL REVENUE TAX PAID” printed below the can’s 12 ounce contents.

USBC 184-03 is the “THE NATURAL BREW” variation, and again you can see the horizontal IRTP statement printed on the can face.

USBC 184-04 is again a “THE NATURAL BREW” but notice the horizontal IRTP statement is no longer present. However, this variation has the words “INTERNAL REVENUE TAX PAID” rubber-stamped along the seam (see picture on the next page).

USBC 184-05 is the final “THE NATURAL BREW”, this time with no printed horizontal IRTP statement, and no statement rubber-stamped on the can.

From the above pictures, it appears when the IRTP requirement was dropped Schmidt simply removed the statement, as many other breweries did, and continued producing similar can design. However, why the rubber-stamped IRTP variation, and why those small printed words “PATENTS APPLIED FOR” on a non-IRTP can, but newer style “CCC” on an IRTP can? The above chronological ordering of cans must be incorrect.

### **Canning code variations again???**

Yes, Michigan collectors seem obsessed with those canning codes. For this case though, canning information can actually help us with our chronology. Lets take a closer look. Remember, USBC 184-05 has no IRTP information, and USBC 184-04 has the IRTP rubber-stamped along the seam:



**Stamped along the USBC 184-04 seam**



**Older style "Patents Applied For"**



**Newer CCC canning code**

Both “THE NATURAL BREW”, USBC 184-04 and 184-05, as well as “NSNG” 184-02 come with the “PATENTS APPLIED FOR” canning info. Why would a non-IRTP beer can still carry information about patents? While I don’t know exact date Continental received patents for their canning technology, I am certain patents were granted prior to the 1950 IRTP requirement change.

Also, both “THE NATURAL BREW” USBC 184-03 and the “NSNG” 184-02 come with the newer CCC style canning code, and clearly have the horizontal stamped IRTP statement. This seems to prove patents were granted to Continental before the IRTP requirement dropped, and thus, all beer cans which have the earlier style patents info produced earlier than the CCC variations, and thus should have IRTP info as well.

And finally, renowned dumper Dave Wheaton is certain he has dumped USBC 184-05 (with no IRTP information) along with other cans and items that were definitely pre-WWII, and all pre-war beer cans should have the IRTP statement correct?

## Theory regarding correct chronological order

The following chronological ordering is current theory based on the presented facts. While it sure would be nice if the brewing companies would have been more careful to preserve documentation on their “reasons why”, remember, their first priority was in selling the beer, not to sell beer cans!

USBC 184-05, “THE NATURAL BREW” came first, no IRTP statement, no IRTP info anywhere on the can. Has the early “PATENTS APPLIED FOR” canning information, and simply a mistake that the IRTP was omitted. This is listed as MBC 75-04.

The IRS doesn’t like mistakes, so USBC 184-04 quickly appeared with the IRTP rubber-stamped along the seam. Again, still “PATENTS APPLIED FOR”, and appears Schmidt simply used the rubber stamp to salvage already printed cone top sheets. MBC 75-08.

Next are USBC 184-03, “THE NATURAL BREW”, and 184-02, “NSNG”. Since these two brands come with both the “PATENTS APPLIED FOR” and the newer CCC logo, it seems clear both brands were sold concurrently for period of time. MBC 75-12 and 75-16 respectively.

Conclusion, reverse the USBC ordering of the three “THE NATURAL BREW” cans.

## NO SUGAR, NO GLUCOSE ADDED canning code variations

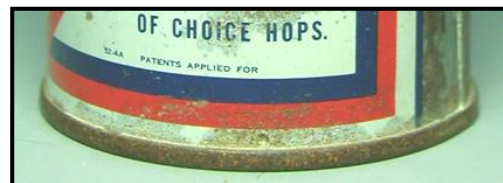
Ok, I can’t finish without including some minor canning code info. USBC 184-02, the “NO SUGAR, NO GLUCOSE ADDED” actually comes with three minor canning code variations (MBC reference #'s used).

First has the “52-4A” and patents information in **RED**. Likely the second NSNG chronologically but was photographed before the blue one.



**MBC 76-16.1 – Red patents info**

Second has the “52-4A” and patents information in **BLUE**. The pictured can is my second ever cone top, and the blue variation by far the toughest (have only seen handful of the blue).



**MBC 76-16.2 – Blue patents info**

Finally the **RED** CCC “52-A”, no patents info. This is the most “common” of the NSNG cones and definitely obtainable.



**MBC 76-16.3 – Red CCC**