

2017 THIRD COAST BREW FIGHT

Rules and Regulations

SUMMARY

Competitors will have 8 minutes to produce at least 200 ml of coffee for judges to taste. The extraction must contain only Coffee and Water as defined below, and may contain any permissible Coffee that the competitor chooses.

Competitors may utilize any Manual Brewing device to brew their coffee, as long as it is permissible as defined below.

Competitors may use provided equipment or bring their own. Each competitor will have access to 3 110v outlets. Supplied competition equipment includes a dedicated grinder, scale and electric kettle per competitor during competition time.

Stipulations for Coffee and Water

Coffee used must be roasted seeds of the plant Genus Coffea, and must contain no additives or flavoring of any kind after it is harvested. Permissible manipulations include introduction of yeast strains or compounds specifically relating to the primary fermentation or pection process that the coffee undergoes during post-harvest processing.

Water must not contain any flavoring or compounds that alters the flavor profile of the water beyond what typifies potable water. Added compounds that are typically found in potable water that are intended to influence the extraction, such as sodium bicarbonate or magnesium sulphate, are permissible. Water used during competition must be tasted and approved by the head judge.

Stipulations for Manual Brewing

Manual Brewing is defined in this competition as any brewing device that requires the preparer to manually brew the coffee without the influence on the coffee of any automated mechanisms powered by additional energy, such as electricity. This includes portioning mechanisms that influence water and coffee contact, such as automated coffee brewers. Heat sources, vacuum siphons, and balance brewers are permitted.

COMPETITION PROCEDURE

Competitors will compete head to head, with 3 competitors at a time. Competition time begins at Competition Manager's signal, and is 8 minutes. During this time competitors must produce at least 200 ml of coffee in their station's designated cup. Competitors that go over their time limit will be docked .25 points for every second over the time limit. Prior to competition time, no coffee and water contact may take place intended for judging. Coffee may be ground, filters may be prewetted, brewers may be preheated, etc, as long as no coffee and water contact occurs.

Each competitor will be assigned to a specific station during competition time: Station 1, Station 2, or Station 3. In addition, each Competitor will be assigned a letter on the bottom of their required service vessel that only the Stage Manager, Competitor, and Event Organizer are aware of. The letter will only be revealed to judges, Competitors, and audience members once scoring for the heat is concluded.

When cups are presented to the judges, the technical judge will ensure the cups are at 120 F, using an infrared heat gun to measure and decanting to cool. The judges should take the first 8 minutes to blind taste the coffees without discussion, and score the coffees independently. (The lead judge will be responsible for keeping the team on time.)

After 8 minutes, the head judge will taste the coffees, elicit feedback, and ensure calibration. After 6 minutes of discussion, judges will be given a 3 second countdown (initiated by the MC) and will point to their highest scoring cup, and the emcee will announce the heat winner.

Once the coffees are evaluated, judges will move to the judges Green Room for open discussion to temper feedback and ensure calibration. It is not discouraged to make minor scoring changes after deliberation. After discussion is completed, scoresheets will be handed to the scorekeeper by the head judge.

JUDGING

Upon orientation, judges will be divided into two teams of three. Each team will serve 30 minute shifts, and each team will be assigned a lead judge. While on break, judges should be standing-by either backstage or in the Greenroom. If at any point a judge needs to step away, the head judge must be notified to stand in.

The technical judge will be responsible for ensuring a sound competition. This position will also taste each competitor's brewing water straight from their kettle, and is responsible for penalizing competitors who go over their time. The technical judge will also ensure coffees are served to judges at 120 F.

Judges Calibration

Each team will undergo a calibration, carried out by the head judge. Calibration will entail an exercise in sensory evaluation, where the head judge will brew three cups (one "outstanding" (88), one "very good" (84), and one "good" (80, or lower)) and will openly discuss the layout of the evaluation forms before tasting. The evaluation itself is to be silent to mimic competition judging, and will involve the head judge. After evaluation, the head judge will walk through the form and describe tasting notes, opening up discussion. The goal is bring judges to a uniform zero, so that competitors are judged fairly from one judge to the next.

Another point of this exercise is to demonstrate anticipated time frames for each part of judging: 8 minutes for evaluation, 6 minutes for discussion.

During competition time, judges should refrain from smoking and should try to only eat neutral tasting food before judging.

SCORESHEETS

The scoresheet is divided into 4 scoring sections (Aroma, Tactile, Flavor/Balance, and Aftertaste) and one penalty section (Faults). The penalty section is where any competition violations or time penalties will be marked.

T: _____					FLAVOR/ BALANCE ____		
J: _____	COFFEE	AROMA ____	TACTILE ____	AFTERTASTE ____	FLAVOR/ BALANCE ____	FAULTS ____	TOTAL
attributes	1:						
	score	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5		
feedback				this cup made me feel like			

T: _____					FLAVOR/ BALANCE ____		
J: _____	COFFEE	AROMA ____	TACTILE ____	AFTERTASTE ____	FLAVOR/ BALANCE ____	FAULTS ____	TOTAL
attributes	2:						
	score	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5		
feedback				this cup made me feel like			

T: _____					FLAVOR/ BALANCE ____		
J: _____	COFFEE	AROMA ____	TACTILE ____	AFTERTASTE ____	FLAVOR/ BALANCE ____	FAULTS ____	TOTAL
attributes	3:						
	score	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5		
feedback				this cup made me feel like			

Reference: 0 = Good 1 = Very Good 2 = Outstanding 3 = Exceptional 4 = Best Ever ©2017 third coast brew fight

A score of 0 for a section is considered “good”, or baseline specialty coffee (80). The scoresheet does not accommodate scores under this baseline. A score of 1 for a section is considered “very good” (84), a score of 2 is considered “outstanding” (88), a score of 3 is considered “exceptional” (92), and a good parameter for a score of 4 is “best ever” (96). Scores should be dictated in increments of .25 in each category.

In general, judges should be positive (though critical) in their feedback, and should refrain from commenting on the brew technique or extraction, focusing on the characteristics of the cup. Judges should also record sensory notes for each category.

Aroma

Once the technical judge has set down cups to be evaluated, judges should first immediately assess the aroma of each cup, regardless of temperature. For this category, judges are to assign the coffee’s aromatic quality a score, based on both its pleasing qualities and intensity.

Tactile

As soon as cups are at the proper temperature, judges should taste and assess the coffee, beginning with the tactile section. This is the “taste” of the coffee, the way it feels on the tongue. Acidity and body should both be evaluated at this step.

Flavor/Balance

This category is where the combination of olfactory and gustatory sensations are evaluated. The flavor of the coffee should be evaluated for not only its pleasing qualities and intensity, but also its balance.

Aftertaste

The last category is intended to evaluate both the retronasal characteristics and sensations left on the tongue. Lingering flavors should be evaluated both for their pleasing qualities and intensity.

Scoring

The scoresheet begins at 80, and does not dip lower unless a fault designates a lower score. Scores can easily be added by starting at 80, and adding the points attributed to each section.

Feedback

The feedback section is meant to allow the judge to provide a more thorough response to the cup. Judges should refrain from commenting on brewing technique or extraction. Comments such as “over-extracted”, “change dosage”, or “use different brew method” are not condoned. Valid descriptions are references to the sensory-evaluation experience.

This cup made me feel like...

This section is meant to facilitate an emotional appeal or human response from the judge. Descriptions in this section should come from as though from a customer’s perspective, and should focus on summarizing the experience that the scoresheet displays.

Each judge must write the time that evaluation began and their assigned symbol on the top of the evaluation form.

Scoresheets will be precut up to the top (but still attached) so as to aid in easy transference to competitors at competition end.

TECHNICAL ISSUES & PROTEST

Competitors may be given extended time if there is a technical issue resulting from the official grinder, kettle, hot water tower, scale, or electrical capacity for the aforementioned official equipment. Issues resulting either from misuse of official equipment or functionality of personal equipment, whether it is user error or electrical capacity, will not be time credited. Competitors are responsible for ensuring their equipment is functional and does not exceed electrical capacity during practice time. If a competitor experiences an issue, he or she should raise their hand and call, "Technical." The Competition Manager will then inspect the issue and determine if time will be credited.

If a competitor wants to protest a decision or make an appeal, he or she should contact the Competition Manager or Event Organizer. If the issue cannot be resolved before the end of the competition, the Competition Manager or Event Organizer may ask the competitor to make a written appeal to the Great Lakes Coffee Showcase board.

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