



2023 U.S. CoffeeChamps Barista Preliminaries Official Rules and Regulations

Written and approved by the U.S. Competitions Committee
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1.0 ORGANIZATION

- a. The U.S. Barista Championship (USBC) and U.S. CoffeeChamps are programs of the Specialty Coffee Association (SCA) U.S. Chapter.

2.0 RIGHTS

- a. All intellectual property related to the U.S. Barista Championship (USBC), U.S. CoffeeChamps Barista Qualifying Competitions, or U.S. CoffeeChamps Barista Preliminaries (Barista Preliminaries), including these Official Rules and Regulations and the format of the competition, are the property of the Specialty Coffee Association U.S. Chapter. No part of this document may be used or reproduced without the expressed permission of the Specialty Coffee Association U.S. Chapter.

3.0 2023 U.S. COFFEECHAMPS BARISTA PRELIMINARIES

3.1 PARTICIPATION

3.1.1 Qualification

- a. U.S. CoffeeChamps Barista Preliminaries (“Preliminaries”)
 - i. Each of the Preliminaries will be open to up to 24 competitors. Registration will be on a first-come, first-served basis, and is created by the Preliminaries Host. A competitor may register for any of the Preliminaries, regardless of where they live.
 - ii. The Top 3 competitors from each of the Preliminaries will be awarded a reserved spot at one of the U.S. CoffeeChamps Qualifying Competitions. Competitors may choose at which Qualifying Competition they would like to compete during registration. These spots are only reserved, registration costs are not covered, unless otherwise noted by the Host. Competitors who do not place in the Top 3 may register for a Qualifying Competition via the Open Registration spots. Qualifying Competitions dates/locations are TBD.
 - iii. Competitors may compete at as many of the Preliminaries as they wish. Competitors will only be awarded 1 spot at the Qualifying Competitions. If a competitor places in the top 3 at more than 1 of the Preliminaries, then their spot will be given to the next person in ranking order.
 - iv. For the Preliminaries, no waitlist will be maintained, if a Top 3 competitor passes on their reserved spot at the Qualifying Competitions the spot will be released back to Open Registration.
 - v. All Competitors and Judges are required to attend 1 Online Learning Session in order to participate at the Preliminaries.
- b. U.S. CoffeeChamps Qualifying Competitions (“Qualifying Competitions”)
 - i. The Qualifying Competitions are open to up to 140 competitors. There will be up to 70 competitors at each of the 2 competitions, held at separate times and places. Baristas may compete at either competition regardless of company or geographic location. Competitors may only register to compete in 1 Barista Qualifying Competition.
 - ii. The Top 3 competitors from each of the Preliminaries will be awarded a reserved spot at one of the U.S. CoffeeChamps Qualifying Competitions.
 - iii. The Top 6 finalists from the 2022 USBC will receive a reserved spot at 1 of the U.S. CoffeeChamps Qualifying Competitions.
 - iv. All remaining spots will be available for Open Registration.
 - v. For the Qualifying Competitions, a waitlist will be kept based on the chronological order of registration of each registrant who was not initially assigned a competition registration confirmation. The waitlist will be used to replace each confirmed competitor who cancels or cannot otherwise participate at the Qualifying Competition. The participant(s) will be selected from the waitlist based on the chronological order of their registration. This waitlist will be maintained until 3 weeks prior to the Qualifying Competition.

- vi. At their conclusions, the top 6 competitors from each of the 2 Qualifying Competitions will be invited to receive a “bye” to bypass the Round One of the USBC and automatically advance to the Semi-Finals Round.
 - vii. The next 12 highest scoring baristas (i.e., ranks 7 through 18) from each Qualifying Competition will advance to USBC and start in Round One.
 - viii. The single highest scoring competitor from each Qualifying Competition will be given a travel and accommodations stipend to United States Barista Championship plus free registration.
 - ix. All Competitors and Judges are required to attend 1 Online Learning Session in order to participate at the Qualifying Competitions.
 - x. Competitors may only compete once in each competition within the season at the Qualifying level. For example, if a competitor competes in the first Barista Qualifying Competition, that same competitor may not compete in the second Barista Qualifying Competition. They may, however, compete in another competition (i.e., Brewers, Cup Tasters, or Roaster) at the second Qualifying Competition.
- c. United States Barista Championship (“USBC”)
- i. The positions to compete at the USBC will be guaranteed until an invited competitor turns down their spot or fails to register for USBC within the designated registration window. Any unclaimed position(s) will be offered to the next highest scoring barista(s) from the Qualifying Competition in which the unclaimed position(s) came from. Positions will be offered in descending sequence until all positions are filled. This waitlist will be maintained until 3 weeks prior to USBC.
 - ii. All Competitors must compete in 1 of the 2023 Qualifying Competitions to be eligible to compete in the 2023 USBC.
 - iii. All Competitors and Judges are required to attend 1 Online Learning Session and the Competitor Meeting in order to participate at the USBC.
- d. Any dispute relevant to the qualifications or eligibility of a competitor will be reviewed and resolved by the U.S. Competitions Committees.

3.1.2 Age Requirement

- a. Competitors and judges must be at least 18 years of age at the time of the Barista Preliminaries.

3.1.3 Nationality

- a. Competitors must hold a valid U.S. Passport, U.S. Green Card, or have 24 months of documented employment or scholastic curriculum in the United States of America.

3.1.4 Competitor Registration and Fees

- a. Registration and fees will be determined by and paid to each U.S. CoffeeChamps Preliminaries Host. The fee will be a minimum of \$10 and a maximum of \$40 per competitor, per competition.

3.1.5 Expenses

- a. Competitors must pay their own expenses related to the competition including, but not limited to, travel, accommodations, and supplies needed for the competition. The Barista Preliminaries, USBC, Hosts, and SCA are not responsible or liable for any of the competitors’ expenses. If a competitor cannot afford these expenses, it is their responsibility to see that their company or other outside parties cover these expenses.

3.1.6 Judging

- a. It is not possible to compete and judge in the same competition, in the same season. Competitors from the Preliminaries may not judge at the Qualifying Competitions, USBC, or World Barista Championship (“WBC”), even if they do not advance. Competitors from the Qualifying Competitions may not judge at USBC or WBC, even if they do not advance. Additionally, competitors may not judge at any World Coffee Events (WCE) sanctioned WBC (world,

national, regional) in any country, prior to the conclusion of that season's WBC.

3.1.7 Conflicts of Interest

- a. Judges and competitors are encouraged to let USBC head judges or the US Competitions Committee know of any potential conflicts of interest at the soonest opportunity, and prior to the commencement of any competitions by competitor, judges, and/or event organizer. Failure to declare a potential conflict in advance of the competition may result in disqualification. Questions regarding conflicts of interest, or clarification of the above policy should be directed to uscompetitions@sca.coffee.

3.2 COMPETITOR QUESTIONS

- a. All competitors must thoroughly read and understand the Barista Preliminaries Rules & Regulations and score sheets without exception. All Barista Preliminaries and USBC documents may be downloaded from the competition website at www.uscoffeechampionships.org
- b. Competitors are encouraged to ask questions prior to arriving at the competition. If any competitor is unclear as to the intent of any of the rules or regulations, it is their responsibility to clarify that position with the Barista Committee or the US Competitions Committee prior to the competitions by contacting uscompetitions@sca.coffee. Competitors will also have the opportunity to ask questions during the Online Learning Session.

3.3 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- A. Baristas qualifying for USBC at U.S. CoffeeChamps Qualifying Competitions and U.S. CoffeeChamps Barista Preliminaries and the winner of the United States Barista Championship (USBC) are representatives of the Specialty Coffee Association (SCA) and United States Coffee Championships (USCC).
- B. Upon entry in the Barista Competition and in exchange for the opportunity to win, each competitor undertakes that they will:
 - a. Permit the SCA to use the competitor's name and image in any format without charge for the purpose of promotion of the SCA, USBC, U.S. CoffeeChamps Qualifying Competition, or U.S. CoffeeChamps Preliminaries.
 - b. Without limiting the generality of clause (i), the formats referred to in clause (a) may include: photographic, video, print, Internet, or any electronic media.
 - c. When fulfilling these terms and conditions, actively work to uphold the good reputation of the SCA, U.S. Barista Championship, U.S. CoffeeChamps Qualifying Competition, and the U.S. CoffeeChamps Preliminaries.
- B. Upon entry in the USBC, U.S. CoffeeChamps Barista Qualifying Competition, and U.S. CoffeeChamps Barista Preliminaries and in exchange for the opportunity to win, each competitor in the Competition undertakes that, should they win the Barista Competition, they will:
 - a. (For the Preliminaries) Be available to travel to one of two Qualifying Competitions. Location and date TBA.
 - b. (For the Qualifying Competition) Be available to travel to compete in the United States Barista Championship.
 - c. (For U.S. Barista Championship) Be available to travel to compete in the World Barista Championship. Location and date TBA. The Official U.S. Barista Championship Travel Sponsor will award the 2023 U.S. Barista Champion with funds for the USBC Champion's travel expenses to and from the World Barista Championship, accommodations for the duration of the competition, competition preparation expenses, etc.
 - d. Include the name "Specialty Coffee Association" or "SCA" immediately before the name "U.S. CoffeeChamps Barista Qualifying Competition" or "United States Barista Championship" in each instance in which the name "U.S. CoffeeChamps Barista Qualifying Competition" or

“United States Barista Championship” is mentioned.

- e. Include the name “United States Barista Championship” or “USBC” in each instance in which the name “U.S. CoffeeChamps Barista Qualifying Competition” is mentioned.
- f. Without limiting the generality of clauses (i) or (ii), the instances referred to in clauses (i) and (ii) include mention verbally, in print or via any electronic medium.
- g. Promote the Specialty Coffee Association at every opportunity without charge to the SCA.
- h. Promote the relevant U.S. CoffeeChamps Barista Preliminaries and U.S. CoffeeChamps Barista Qualifying Competitions as the pathway to the United States Barista Championship at every opportunity without charge to the SCA.

3.4 ENFORCEMENT OF RULES AND REGULATIONS

- a. The Preliminaries will employ these Rules & Regulations throughout the competition.
- b. If a competitor violates 1 or more of the Rules & Regulations, they shall be automatically disqualified from the competition, except when the Rules designate a specific enforcement or consequence.
- c. If a judge or competition organizer causes the violation of 1 or more of these Rules, a competitor may submit an appeal, according to the process detailed in the section “Competitor Protest and Appeals.”

4.0 COMPETITION SUMMARY

- a. At the Preliminaries, there will be one round of competition.
 - i. One Round: competitors create 2 single espresso and 2 milk beverages for 2 sensory judges.
- b. Each competitor will be given 22 minutes at their assigned station, made up of the following segments:
 - i. 10 minutes Preparation Time
 - ii. 7 minutes Competition/Performance Time
 - iii. 5 minutes Clean-Up Time
- c. Hosts must provide competitors with a choice of at least 2 or more coffees for Service. Competitors will select 1 of these coffees to brew and present to the judges during their competition time or competitors may select 2 or more coffees and blend them together. The total amount of coffee provided will be 3lbs regardless of how many different coffees are chosen.
- d. The Host provided coffees must come from 2 or more coffee roasting companies.
- e. Each competitor will receive a total of 3lbs of Compulsory Coffee.
- f. Competitors may not select a coffee from their own roaster/wholesaler. If one of the Host provided coffees is from the competitor’s current employer they must select one of the other provided coffees.
- g. Prior to the start of competition, the Host will have a blind coffee selection cupping or tasting so the competitor may choose coffee(s) for competition. Basic information about the coffees (origin, processing method, and elevation) will be provided to the competitors after they have selected their coffee(s).
- h. A full schedule of competition flow will be made available for competitors 1-2 weeks prior to the event.
- i. There will be NO station maintenance between competitors. Each competitor will use their 10 minute Preparation Time to reset their station for the start of competition and their 5 minute Clean-Up Time to tidy (knock out pucks, sweep grounds off tables, etc.) for the next competitor.
- j. At the conclusion of Competition, there will be a ceremony where placements are announced and all competitors will be acknowledged. It is recommended all competitors attend this ceremony.
- k. The competitor performances will be evaluated by 3 types of judges: sensory, technical, and head.
 - i. The panel will consist of 2 sensory judges, 1 technical judge, and 1 head judge.
 - ii. Non-scoring shadow judges or Head Judge-in-training may also be present on stage.
- l. Competitors will serve 1 beverage from both categories of drinks (i.e., espresso, milk beverage) to each of the sensory judges, for a total of 4 drinks during a period of 7 minutes. Head judges cannot be served. Nothing consumable (e.g. water, espresso, etc.) should be served or provided for the head judge. The competitor decides the order in which the

drink categories are served; however, any category of drinks must be completed (e.g., both single espressos are served) before a competitor may serve another category of drinks, otherwise they will be disqualified.

- m. Within each category (i.e., espresso, milk beverage), drinks may be served in any combination to judges (e.g., one or two at a time). Sensory judges will begin evaluating each drink as soon as it is served, unless otherwise instructed by the competitor.
- n. Competitors may produce as many drinks as they choose during the competition; however, only drinks served to the sensory judges will be evaluated.

5.0 STANDARDS AND DEFINITIONS

5.1 BEVERAGE DEFINITIONS

5.1.1 Espresso

- a. Espresso is a 1 fl. oz. beverage (30mL +/- 5mL) made from ground coffee, poured from one side of a double portafilter in one continuous extraction.
- b. Coffee is the accumulation of roasted product of the seed of the fruit of a plant of the genus *Coffea*.
- c. Coffee may not have any additives, flavorings, colorings, perfumes, aromatic substances, liquids, powders, etc. of any kind added at any point between the time the coffee is picked (as cherry) to when it is extracted into beverage. Substances utilized during growing, cultivation, and primary processing of the coffee are permitted (fertilizers, etc.).
- d. Whole bean coffee may be a blend, single-region, single-country, single-farm, etc.
- e. All judges must be served a full espresso. If the shot does not comply with the espresso definition, then taste and/or tactile scores will reflect the resulting sensory experience. Espresso may be prepared with various amounts of coffee.
- f. Espresso will be brewed at a temperature between 90.5-96 degrees Celsius (195-205 degrees Fahrenheit).
- g. The espresso machine brewing pressure will be set between 8.5 and 9.5 bar.
- h. Crema should be present when espresso is served, with no break in coverage.
- i. Espresso must be served in a 60 to 90 mL vessel from which judges must be able to drink as required without any functional detriment to their ability to score accurately; this includes but is not exclusive to: vessel being too hot, unable to hold and drink from vessel safely, judges unable to execute espresso evaluation protocol. Otherwise a "no" will be given for "Functional and correct espresso vessel used." Vessels will be provided by the event host, however, competitors may bring their own as well.
- j. Espresso must be served to the judges with an appropriate spoon, napkin, and unflavored water; otherwise the competitor will receive a reduced score in "Attention to detail." Spoons and napkins will be provided by the event host, however, competitors may bring their own as well.
- k. Nothing other than ground coffee and water may be placed in the portafilters; otherwise the espresso will receive 0 points on all scores available on the technical and sensory scoresheets in the espresso category.

5.1.2 Milk Beverage

- a. A milk beverage is a combination of 1 single shot of espresso (per the definition of espresso) and steamed cow's milk that should produce a harmonious balance of rich, sweet milk and espresso and is less than 240 ml in volume.
- b. Milk beverages may be served with latte art or with a central circle of white milk. Latte art expression may take any pattern the competitor chooses.
- c. Milk beverages must be served in a vessel from which judges must be able to drink as required without any functional detriment to their ability to score accurately; this includes but is not exclusive to: vessel being too hot, unable to hold and drink from vessel safely. Otherwise a "no" will be given for "Functional vessel used." Vessels will be provided by the event host, however, competitors may bring their own as well.
- d. Additional toppings, including but not limited to sugar, spices, or powdered flavorings are not allowed. If used, the competitor will receive 0 points in the "Taste balance" category.

- e. Milk Beverages must be served to the judges with a napkin and unflavored water, otherwise the competitor will receive a reduced score in “Attention to detail.”
- f. Nothing other than ground coffee and water may be placed in the portafilters, otherwise the milk beverage will receive 0 points on all scores available on the technical and sensory scoresheets in the milk beverage category.

5.2 WHOLE BEAN COFFEE

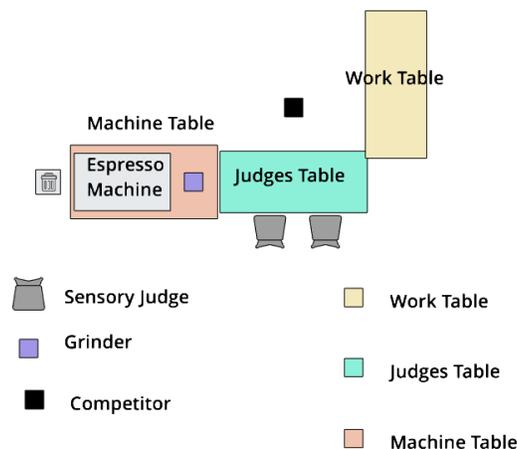
- a. Whole bean coffee is the accumulation of roasted product of the seed of the fruit of a plant of the genus Coffea.
- b. Coffees may not have any additives, flavorings, colorings, perfumes, aromatic substances, liquids, powders, etc. of any kind added at any point between the time the coffee is picked (as cherry) to when it is extracted into beverage. Substances utilized during growing, cultivation, and primary processing of the green bean are permitted (water, yeast, coffee, coffee byproducts, fertilizers, etc.).

6.0 COMPETITION AREA

- a. The competition area will have an espresso machine and an espresso grinder.

6.2 COMPETITION STATION

- a. Individual stations will be similarly organized as shown in the figure below, however the station and tables may be placed in a way that will best suit the space and constraints of the competition venue keeping in mind the ease of use, the route from the barista's preparation area to the stations, the vantage points for the spectators, and any camera positions that may be present.
- b. Please note that table sizes may vary depending on the Hosts' available tables.
- c. The Head Judge has no fixed position.
- d. The grinder(s) and espresso machine will stay in a fixed position, set by the Host.



7.0 MACHINERY, ACCESSORIES, & RAW MATERIALS

7.1 ESPRESSO MACHINE

- a. Competitors may only use the espresso machine supplied for the competition by the Host. No other espresso machines may be used on stage.
- b. The provided espresso machine has a fixed technical configuration and cannot be altered by the competitors. The espresso machine will be calibrated to the following specifications: The temperature will be set between 90.5-96

degrees Celsius (195-205 degrees Fahrenheit), and the pump pressure set between 8.5 and 9.5 bar.

7.2 NO LIQUIDS OR INGREDIENTS ON MACHINE

- a. No liquids or ingredients of any kind may be placed or poured on top of the espresso machine (e.g. no water in cups, no pouring or mixing liquids or ingredients, no warming ingredients). If a competitor places or pours liquids, containers or cups with liquids, or ingredients on top of the machine at any time, they will receive 0 points for the Station Management category.

7.3 DISQUALIFICATION

- a. Competitors may not change, adjust or replace any element, setting, or component of the espresso machine. Any changes or adjustments made may be grounds for disqualification (e.g. the portafilters, insert baskets, temperature, pressure, steam wand tips, etc.). Any damage to the competition equipment due to misuse or abuse is grounds for disqualification at the discretion of the presiding head judge.

7.4 GRINDER

- a. Hosts will provide 1 espresso grinder per station.
- b. Competitors must use the Host provided grinder.

7.5 PROVIDED EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES

- a. Each competitor station will be equipped with the following: Machine Table (for espresso machine and grinder), Espresso Machine, Grinder, Trash Can, and Waiter's Cart or Bus Tubs (for use during preparation and clean-up time).
- b. Competitors are not required to bring all additional necessary supplies for their presentation.
- c. Competitors may bring their own wares and equipment if they would like to use their own items instead of the Host provided supplies.
- d. Competitors are responsible for and in charge of their own equipment and accessories while at the competition. The SCA, volunteers, and Host are not responsible for the safety of items left in the competitors' preparation room or competition area.
- e. Hosts will provide the following:
 - Compulsory Coffee (for practice and the competition)
 - Tamper
 - Shot glasses
 - Steaming pitchers
 - Knockbox
 - Whole Cow's Milk
 - Cups for espresso and milk beverages
 - Spoons
 - Napkins
 - Water glasses (for 2 sensory judges)
 - Water (for 2 sensory judges)
 - Bar towels/clean cloths (for practice and the competition)
 - Cleaning supplies (counter brush, grinder brush, etc.)
 - Waiter's cart and/or bus tubs
- f. Competitors may wish to bring the following:
 - Scales (input/dosing & output/drip tray)
 - Polishing cloths
 - Gloves to wear while polishing dishes

7.6 WATER

- a. Competitors **must** use the provided water.
- b. The provided water will be provided at room temperature in the Preparation Room.
- c. The provided water will be calibrated with the following standards as the target:
 - i. Odor: Clean/fresh, odor free
 - ii. Color: Clear color
 - iii. Total Chlorine/Chloramine: 0 mg/L
 - iv. TDS: 85 mg/L (acceptable range 50-125 mg/L)
 - v. Calcium Hardness: 3 grains or 51 mg/L (acceptable range 1-5 grains or 17-85 mg/L)
 - vi. Total Alkalinity: 40 mg/L (acceptable range at or near 40 mg/L)
 - vii. pH: 7.0 (acceptable range 6.5 to 7.5)
 - viii. Sodium: 10 mg/L (acceptable range at or near 10 mg/L)

8.0 COMPETITOR INSTRUCTIONS PRIOR TO PREPARATION TIME

8.1 ONLINE LEARNING SESSIONS

- a. Prior to the Preliminaries, an Online Learning Session will take place. Taking part in 1 of these sessions is **highly recommended** for all competitors. Additional important onsite information will be given to you by the Host via email before the competition. The Host, Stage Manager, Asst. Stage Manager, and/or Head Judges will also be able to assist you with onsite event questions during the competition.

8.2 INTERPRETERS

- a. Competitors may bring their own interpreter. When speaking to the competitor the interpreter is only allowed to translate what the emcee or head judge has said. When a competitor speaks, the interpreter is only allowed to translate exactly what the competitor has said. No additional competition time will be allotted with the use of an interpreter. It is the competitor and coach's responsibility to read the Interpreters best practices document that is available from <http://www.worldcoffeingoodspirits.org/>

8.3 PREPARATION ROOM

- a. There will be a staging area designated as the competitors' preparation/practice room. This area will be reserved for the competitors, their coaches (maximum 2 per competitor), volunteers, and the Host. Press/media, competitor's family members, and supporters may not be present in this area without consent from the Host.
- b. Competitors will be able to store their equipment, accessories, ingredients, etc. in this room at their own risk. Near this room will be a dishwashing station for competitors to use to wash glass and brewing devices. Competitors are responsible for cleaning their own dishes and glassware, and keeping track of these items. Runners and event staff are not responsible for breakage or loss of dishes or competitor items.
- a. Judges and Head Judges are not permitted in the preparation room **at any time**.

8.4 COMPETITION COFFEE

- a. Prior to the start of the competition, the Host will set up a blind cupping or tasting for competitors to choose with which coffee they'd like to compete. The number of choices is at the Host's discretion, with a minimum of 2 choices from a minimum of 2 different roasters.
- b. After this blind cupping/tasting, each competitor will receive a 3lb bag of their chosen coffee(s). Competitors will use the Host provided coffee(s) for both practice and competition. See "Standards and Definitions" for more about the provided coffee.

- c. The Host will provide the origin, processing method, and elevation, of the Compulsory Coffees to competitors **after** the conclusion of the blind cupping/tasting.
- d. Any unused Competition Coffee remaining at the end the competitor's competition time should be returned to the Host.

8.5 BE ON TIME

- a. Each competitor should be at the competition **at least 60 minutes** prior to their scheduled preparation time and check in with the Host. Any competitor who is not onsite at the start of their competition time will be disqualified.

8.6 PRACTICE TIME

- a. The Host will provide competitors a minimum of 30 minutes and a maximum of 60 minutes practice time with their selected coffee on the Host provided equipment. This practice time may be shared or group practice time with other competitors or it may be individual practice time. Practice times & arrangements will be set by the Host. The suggested practice time is 30 minutes for individual practice times and 60 minutes for shared or group practice times. Hosts will communicate practice time information via email or onsite during the cupping/tasting.
- b. Hosts must provide access to competition espresso machine, wares, milk, and grinder during practice time.

8.7 EVENT AUDIO SYSTEM / COMPETITOR MUSIC

- a. Competitors may or may not have mics, and may or may not be able to play music during their presentation, depending on the venue and the Host.

8.8 STATION MAINTENANCE

- a. Competitors will be responsible for keeping the preparation area clean and ready for the next competitor. There will not be "station maintenance" volunteers, so competitors must clean and organize the station during clean-up time (e.g., discarding spent pucks (used coffee grounds) from the portafilters, cleaning coffee grounds and any spills off counters, emptying the provided knockbox into the trash can, etc.)

8.9 STATION SETUP

- a. A head runner or the Stage Manager will be responsible for ensuring that each competitor's station is set as the competitor has requested prior to their preparation time.

8.5.1 Grinder

- a. No coffee beans may be placed in the hopper whether attached to the grinder or being brought out separately, until the competitor's preparation time has begun.

8.10 SUPPORTERS / ASSISTANTS NOT ALLOWED ON STAGE

- a. No one other than the competitor, authorized event personnel, and designated volunteers are allowed on stage during the allotted preparation, performance, or clean-up time. Failure to comply may result in disqualification.

8.11 CART TO STAGE

- a. A waiter's cart or bus tubs will be available for the competitor to transport their items to and from the competition area. Prior to the competitor's preparation time, they will load the cart or bus tubs with the supplies and glassware needed for competition. The Head Runner or an Asst. Stage Manager will assist the competitor as they wheel the

waiter's cart or bus tubs from the preparation area to their assigned station. Only the Head Runner or an Asst. Stage Manager will be allowed to assist the competitor on stage with the cart. Once on stage, the Head Runner or an Asst. Stage Manager will ask the competitor if the station is set to their specifications; if the competitor says "yes" the Head Runner or an Asst. Stage Manager will leave the stage; if the competitor says "no" the competitor will say what additional changes need to be made. The Head Runner or an Asst. Stage Manager and the competitor are allowed to make these adjustments together per the competitor's request. Once the station setup meets the competitor's approval the Head Runner or an Asst. Stage Manager will introduce the competitor to the preparation timer and leave the stage.

9.0 PREPARATION TIME

9.1 PREPARATION/SETUP TIME

- a. Competitors will be assigned a scheduled Setup Time.
- b. Each competitor will have 10 minutes of Preparation time. The competitor may begin their 10 minute preparation time upon advisement from a Stage Manager, head runner, and/or the designated timekeeper.
- c. Once the competitor has arrived at their assigned station, the official preparation timekeeper will ask the competitor if they are ready to begin. The competitor must raise their hand and say "time" to begin their 10 minutes of preparation time before touching anything at their station. The designated timekeeper will begin a stopwatch at that moment. If a competitor's preparation time is ready to begin and the competitor is not ready, their time may be started at the discretion of the stage manager or presiding head judge. Competitors are responsible for ensuring that they are ready prior to the start of their preparation time.

9.2 CART OR BUS TUBS

- a. Competitors are responsible for the loading and unloading of supplies on the provided waiter's cart or bus tubs. The preparation timer will remove the cart or bus tubs off stage at the end of the competitor's preparation time. The waiter's cart is not allowed on stage during the performance. Please note that if items are left on the cart after the competitor's preparation time has concluded, the competitor may not retrieve those items until their performance is underway. (See Section "Forgotten Accessories")

9.3 JUDGES PRESENTATION TABLE

- a. The judges' presentation table can be set during the competitor's preparation time. If a competitor does not wish to preset the judges' presentation table during their preparation time they can set the table at the start of their competition/performance time.

9.4 PRACTICE SHOTS

- a. Competitors are allowed and encouraged to pull practice shots during their preparation time. "Pucks" (also known as "cakes") may remain in the portafilters at the start of the competitor's competition time.

9.5 PRE-HEATED CUPS

- a. Cups can be preheated during the competitor's preparation time. However, no water may be present in cups at the start of the competitor's competition time. Liquids or ingredients must not be placed on top of the machine otherwise zero points will be awarded in "station management."

9.6 END OF PREPARATION TIME

- a. Competitors may not exceed their allotted 10 minutes of preparation time. The timekeeper will give the competitor a 5 minute, 3 minute, 1 minute, and 30 second warning during their 10 minutes of preparation time. At 10 minutes, the

official preparation timekeeper will indicate that time has expired and ask the competitor to step away from the station. Any competitor who fails to cease preparation within 10 minutes will be subject to penalties as shown in the “time penalties” section.

10.0 COMPETITION TIME

10.1 INTRODUCTION BY THE MASTER OF CEREMONIES

- a. Immediately prior to beginning their presentation, the Master of Ceremonies (emcee) may introduce the competitor to the audience.

10.2 BEGIN COMPETITION TIME

- a. Before introducing themselves to the judges, the competitor must start their official time by raising their hand and saying “time”. The designated timekeeper will begin a stopwatch at that moment to begin their 7 minutes of competition/performance time.
- b. Tracking time elapsed during the 7 minute competition/performance time is the responsibility of the competitor, though they may ask for a time check at any point. The competition timekeeper will give the competitor a 5 minute, 3 minute, 1 minute, and 30 second warning during their 7 minutes of competition time. The timekeeper is required to vocalize these warnings in real-time and may interrupt a competitor while they are speaking.
- c. The official time will be read from the timekeeper’s watch.

10.3 COMPETITOR INTRODUCTION

- a. At the start of the competitor’s performance, they will introduce themselves to the two sensory judges and the head judge. The two sensory judges and head judge will be behind the judges’ presentation table. The technical judge will stand towards one side of the station or behind the station and will take reasonable care to not interfere with the competitor.

10.4 SERVE REQUIRED BEVERAGES

- a. All drinks must be served at the judges’ presentation table. Drinks not served at the judges’ presentation table will receive a score of 0 in Taste Balance and Flavor (where applicable).
- b. Competitors are required to serve and/or provide unflavored water to the 2 sensory judges for each beverage course. Competitors can serve unflavored water to the judges at the start of the performance time or when the first set of drinks are served. The competitor should refill water glasses as needed throughout the presentation.

10.5 BUSSERS CLEAR THE SERVED DRINKS

- a. After each set of drinks has been served to and evaluated by the judges, a busser will clear the drinks from the judges’ presentation table at the direction of the head judge. Busser will remove cups, saucers, and spoons used in the previous beverage course. If a competitor has special instructions for the runner they will need to explain these instructions to the stage manager and the runner before the start of their competition time, otherwise the standard of cups, saucers, and spoons will be removed. If instructions were not given to the stage manager and if the wares the competitor wants onstage were removed by the runner, retrieval of the wares is allowed in accordance with Section “Forgotten Accessories.” The runner will make every reasonable effort to avoid impeding the competitor but it is the competitor’s responsibility to navigate their station successfully.

10.6 STATION PERIMETERS

- a. Competitors may only utilize the work area provided: the machine table, work table, and presentation table. The introduction of any other furniture and/or equipment that is placed directly on or over the competition area floor (e.g., a stand, table, dumbwaiter, bench, etc.) will result in automatic disqualification. Competitors may not utilize any space under any competition tables for storage, otherwise the competitor will receive zero points in the "Station management/Clean working area at end" section on the technical scoresheets. The only exception to this is the allowance of a free-standing knockbox.

10.7 END COMPETITION TIME

- a. Competition time will be stopped when the competitor raises their hand and says "time". The competitor is responsible to make their signal loud and clear to the official timekeeper and head judge.
- b. The competitor may choose to end their performance at any time. For example, competitors can stop their time once their final drink is served to the judges on the presentation table or may choose to go back to their station to clean before stopping. Only the time recorded by the competition scorekeeper or head judge will be used for scoring purposes.
- c. Competitors are allowed up to 7 minutes for completion of their performance without penalty. There is no penalty or additional incentive to complete a performance in less than 7 minutes.

10.8 COMMUNICATION AFTER THE COMPETITION TIME

- a. Competitors may not talk to the judges once their performance has ended. Any communication provided to judges after the completion of a presentation will not be considered for scoring evaluation. Competitors may continue to talk to the Master of Ceremonies after the competition time has ended; however, the judges will not be impacted by the conversation or information given after the competition time.

10.9 TIME PENALTIES

- a. If the competitor has not finished their preparation or presentation during the allotted 7 minute period, they are allowed to proceed until the preparation or presentation is completed.
- b. One point shall be deducted for every second over 7 minutes from the competitor's total score up to a maximum penalty of 60 points (1 minute).
- c. Any competitor whose performance time exceeds 8 minutes will be disqualified.

10.10 COACHING

- a. Instructions or 'coaching' may not be provided to a competitor during the time of their competition under penalty of disqualification. Audience participation and enthusiastic fan support is encouraged so long as it does not interfere with competition. (Please note: coaches, supporters, friends, or family members are not allowed on stage while the competition is in progress, otherwise the competitor is subject to disqualification by the presiding head judge.)

11.0 TECHNICAL ISSUES

- a. A competitor may raise their hand and declare a "technical time out" in the event that they believe there is a technical problem with any of the following Host-provided equipment:
 - i. The electrical power supply to the provided grinder or espresso machine
 - ii. The provided grinder or espresso machine
 - iii. If provided: The audio visual equipment (i.e. the competitor's microphone)
- b. Preparation or competition time will be paused by the Stage Manager or Host (during preparation time) or by the head judge (during competition time). The official timekeeper will make note of the time when "technical time out" is called. It is the competitor's responsibility to ensure the timekeeper is aware of making note of "technical time out" being called.
- c. If the Stage Manager/head judge agrees there is a technical problem that can be easily resolved, they will decide the appropriate amount of time for the competitor to be credited. Once the technician has fixed the problem, the

competitor's time will resume.

- d. If the technical problem cannot be solved in a timely manner, the Host, Stage Manager, or head judge will make the decision whether or not the competitor should wait to continue their performance or stop the performance and start again at a reallocated time.
- e. If a competitor must stop their competition time, the competitor along with the head judge and Host will reschedule the competitor to compete in full again at a later time.
- f. If it is determined that the technical issue is due to competitor error or the competitor's personal equipment, the head judge may determine that no additional time will be given to the competitor, and the preparation or competition time will resume without time being credited.
- g. No time credit will be issued for technical issues caused by improper use; therefore it is the responsibility of all competitors to understand and follow the correct use of all competition equipment.
- h. A technical time out for inconsistency or variation between group heads requiring adjustment may only be declared during preparation time.

11.1 OBSTRUCTIONS

- a. If any individual, such as volunteers, judges, audience members, or photographers are of an obvious hindrance to a competitor, then the competitor will be given additional time at the discretion of the head judge.
- b. If the judges' presentation table has not been cleared within a reasonable amount of time after each set of drinks has been served, then the competitor will be credited time for the delay this error has caused at the discretion of the head judge.

11.2 FORGOTTEN ACCESSORIES

- a. If a competitor has forgotten any of their equipment and/or accessories during their preparation time, the competitor may exit the stage to retrieve the missing items; however, their preparation time will not be paused.
- b. If a competitor has forgotten any of their equipment and/or accessories during their competition time, they must inform the head judge that they have forgotten an item(s) offstage and then retrieve the missing item(s) themselves. The competition time will not be paused.
- c. Nothing may be delivered by the runners, supporters, team members, or the audience, otherwise the competitor is subject to disqualification by the presiding head judge.

12.0 POST-COMPETITION

12.1 SCOREKEEPING

- a. The Host's scorekeepers are responsible for adding all scores and for keeping all scores confidential.

12.2 SCORING

- a. The competitor's total score will be tallied by adding the sum of the 1 technical scoresheet and the 2 sensory scoresheets then deducting any time penalty. Please note the head judge and shadow scoresheets do not count towards the competitor's total score.

12.2.1 Tie Scores

- a. If there is a tie between 2 or more competitors the procedure to determine placement will be the following:
 - i. The competitor(s) with the higher sum of sensory espresso scores (Part I from both sensory scoresheets) will be ranked higher.
 - ii. If there is still a tie the competitor(s) with the higher sum of sensory milk beverage scores (Part II

- from both sensory scoresheets) will be ranked higher.
- iii. If there is still a tie the competitor(s) with the higher sum of sensory “Total Impression” scores (Part III from both sensory scoresheets) will be ranked higher.
 - iv. If the scores are still tied the U.S. CoffeeChamps Qualifying Competition will give reserved spots to however many competitors qualify with the Top 6 scores.

12.3 DEBRIEFING

- a. Following the awards ceremony, competitors will have an opportunity to review their scoresheets with the judges on-site in accordance with the announced schedule. Competitors are allowed to keep their original scoresheets only if the Scorekeeper and Host have scanned the scoresheets.
- b. Digital copies are available to competitors upon request starting 30 days after the conclusion of the Preliminary Competition by emailing the US Competition Committee uscompetitions@sca.coffee. Only competitors may request digital copies and only of their own scoresheets.
- c. If a competitor objects to their scores given by one or more judges, the competitor can meet with the Presiding Head Judge during the competitor debriefing to explain their protest. The Presiding Head Judge will discuss the competitor’s protest on-site with the judges who judged the competitor. They will make a decision on-site and the Presiding Head Judge will inform the competitor of the decision.

13.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA

13.1 WHAT THE JUDGES ARE LOOKING FOR IN A COMPETITOR TO QUALIFY FOR USBC

- a. The judges are looking for baristas who:
 - i. Have a mastery of technical skills, craftsmanship, communication skills, and service skills and are passionate about the barista profession
 - ii. Have a broad understanding of coffee knowledge beyond the drinks being served in the competition
 - iii. Prepare and serve high quality beverages; and
 - iv. May serve as role models and a source of inspiration for others.

13.2 COMPETITION AREA

- a. The technical judges will evaluate the competition area for cleanliness and organization at the beginning and end of the performance/competition time.

13.3 TASTE EVALUATION

- a. Points will be awarded for the taste of each individual drink. Consideration will be given to raw materials used and style of the beverages. Competitors should strive for a harmonious balance of sweetness, acidity, and bitterness and are advised to verbally explain to the judges why they chose their particular coffee, the basic roast profile, the espresso constituent structure, the major taste elements and the philosophy behind the drinks served.

13.4 BEVERAGE PRESENTATION

- a. Points will be awarded based on the visual presentation of the drinks including cups, glasses, and accessories. This includes elements such as cleanliness of cups and saucers (no spills or drips on cups), consistency of methodology and style of presentation.

13.5 TECHNICAL SKILLS AND WORKFLOW

- a. Points will be awarded based on how fluidly the competitor arranges and navigates their station, the competitor's technical knowledge, and skill operating the espresso machine, grinder, and any other equipment.

13.6 JUDGES TOTAL IMPRESSION

- a. Points will be awarded based on the judges' overall impression of the competitor, their skills, taste of drinks, and personal and beverage presentation.

13.7 GUIDELINES FOR JUDGES

- a. Smile and welcome the competitor when introduced
- b. Answer direct questions from the competitor.
- c. Smile and make eye contact with the competitor when they are serving the drinks.
- d. Take care to protect your palate by preventing burns from hot coffee.
- e. Always remember the psychological power and the impact a judge has on the competitor.
- f. Never share an evaluation with another sensory judge on stage.
- g. Never do anything that can be interpreted negatively by the competitor or audience.
- h. Judges MUST score in pencil.

14.0 TECHNICAL EVALUATION PROCEDURE

- a. Each competitor will be evaluated by 1 technical judge. The following is an explanation of the technical scoresheet.

14.1 EVALUATION SCALE

- a. The evaluation scale is the same for both technical and sensory judges. There are 2 types of scores: the Yes/No Score, and the 0 to 6 Score.

Yes = 1 No = 0

Unacceptable = 0 Acceptable = 1 Average = 2 Good = 3 Very Good = 4 Excellent = 5 Extraordinary = 6

- b. Yes/No Score:
 - i. The competitor receives 1 point for a score of Yes on these items and 0 points for a score of No.
- c. 0 to 6 Score
 - i. Some scoresheet criteria are evaluated on a scale of 0 to 6 with 0 being the lowest score and 6 being the highest. It is acceptable to use half point increments between 1.0 and 6.0, which are recorded using a decimal point, not a fraction. (For example, 1.5, 2.5, 3.5.) The lowest score with value is 1. A score of 0.5 may not be used. A score of 0 is used when a scoring element is deemed totally unacceptable. Scores of 0 and 6 require the approval of the head judge.

14.2 TECHNICAL SCORESHEET - PART I - STATION EVALUATION

Part I - Station Evaluation At Start-Up

0 to 6		Clean working area at start-up/Clean cloths
6	/6	

14.2.1 Clean working area at start-up/Clean cloths

- The cleanliness and organization of the competitor's workstation (work table, prep table, top of machine) will be evaluated on a scale between 1 and 6. If the area is deemed messy, a "1" will be recorded.
- Verify the competitor's ability to organize the working area in a practical and efficient way.
- Over-preparation should be marked down (e.g., milk in the pitchers, etc.)
- A minimum of 3 clean cloths should be available when the performance time starts. The cloths must be clean and have a designated purpose (e.g., 1 for drying/cleaning baskets, 1 for bar clean up. A towel on the competitor's apron/person for 1 of these uses is included in this count.)
- There should be no water in the cups at the start of the competitor's competition time. If there is any liquid in the cups on top of the espresso machine at any time, the competitor will receive a score of 0 for "Station management/Clean working area at end" on the technical scoresheet.
- Competitors may have pucks (used coffee grounds) in the portafilters at the start of their competition time. This will not count against "Clean working area at start-up/Clean cloths".

14.3 TECHNICAL SCORESHEET - PART II - ESPRESSO EVALUATION

- Please note the technical skills standards are the same for both beverage categories; the technical scoresheet is the same in Parts II and III.

Part II - Espresso Evaluation		
0 to 6	Yes No	Technical Skills
		Flushes the grouphead
		Dry/clean filter basket before dosing
		Acceptable spill/waste when dosing/grinding
		Acceptable/level dosing and tamping
		Cleans portafilters (before insert)
		Insert and immediate brew
11	/6 /5	



SHOT	
Time	
Waste	g

14.3.1 Flushes the group head

- Flushing of the group head must occur in the time after removal of the portafilter and prior to each extraction. If the group head was flushed prior to the extraction of the served beverages, the judge will mark "Yes".

14.3.2 Dry/clean filter basket before dosing

- If the filter basket is completely dry and clean prior to dosing the coffee for the served beverages, the judge will mark "Yes".

14.3.3 Acceptable spill/waste when dosing/grinding

- Spill/waste is ground coffee left unused during the competition/performance time that may be found on the espresso grinder, in the knock box, on the counter, in the trash, on the floor, or elsewhere. Waste created in the process of

preparing beverages that are not served to judges does not count towards a competitor's total waste evaluation. Spill/waste of up to 5 grams of unused coffee per beverage category is considered acceptable.

- b. In order to earn a score of excellent (5) or higher, the waste must not exceed 1 gram of unused coffee per beverage category. Wasting more than 5 grams of coffee per beverage category is unacceptable and will result in 0 points. A reasonable amount of coffee purged is not included in waste. All coffee used for drinks must be ground during the competitor's 7 minutes of competition time.

14.3.4 Consistent dosing and tamping

- a. The competitor must demonstrate an acceptable method for dosing and tamping. The competitor should evenly distribute the coffee grounds, followed by leveled tamping of adequate pressure. Cultural differences are taken into consideration.

14.3.5 Cleans portafilters (before insert)

- a. Cleans basket rim and side flanges of portafilter before insert into the machine. If done, the judge will mark "Yes".

14.3.6 Insert and immediate brew

- a. The competitor should start the extraction immediately after inserting the portafilter into the machine without any delay. If done, the judge will mark "Yes".

14.3.7 Extraction time (within 3.0 second variance)

- a. Judges will time all shots extracted and determine whether shot extraction times are within a 3.0-second variance. If the extraction time is within a 3.0-second variance of each other within each category of drinks, the judge will mark "Yes." Extraction time begins when the competitor activates the machine's brew cycle. Shot times for shots that are not served will not be included in this score.

14.4 TECHNICAL SCORESHEET - PART III - MILK BEVERAGE EVALUATION

- a. Please note the first 7 evaluation areas are the same as under the Espresso Evaluation –Technical Skills.

Part III - Milk Beverage Evaluation			
0 to 6	Yes	No	Technical Skills
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Flushes the group head
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dry/clean filter basket before dosing
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Acceptable spill/waste when dosing/grinding
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consistent dosing and tamping
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cleans portafilters (before insert)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insert and immediate brew
22	/12	/10	Milk
			Empty/clean pitcher at start
			Purges the steam wand before steaming
			Cleans steam wand after steaming
			Purges the steam wand after steaming
			Acceptable milk waste at end
			SHOT 1
			Time <input type="text"/> : <input type="text"/> g
			Waste <input type="text"/> : <input type="text"/> g
			SHOT 2
			Time <input type="text"/> : <input type="text"/> g
			Waste <input type="text"/> : <input type="text"/> g
			MILK <input type="text"/> ml/oz

14.4.1 Empty/clean pitcher at start

- a. The competitor should pour cold, fresh cow's milk into a clean pitcher, which must not have been filled during the preparation time. The pitcher should be clean on both the inside and on the outside.

14.4.2 Purges the steam wand before steaming

- a. The competitor should purge the steam wand before inserting it into the milk pitcher.

14.4.3 Cleans the steam wand after steaming

- a. The steam wand should be cleaned with a dedicated steam wand towel.

14.4.4 Purges the steam wand after steaming

- a. The competitor should purge the steam wand after steaming the milk.

14.4.5 Acceptable milk waste at end

- a. The pitcher should be more or less empty after the milk beverages have been prepared. Acceptable waste is no more than 90ml/3oz in total.

14.5 TECHNICAL SCORESHEET - PART IV - TECHNICAL EVALUATION

Part IV - Technical Evaluation

0 to 6		Yes	No
9	/6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	/3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Station management/Clean working area at end
- Clean portafilter spouts/
- Avoided placing spouts in doser chamber
- General hygiene throughout presentation
- Proper usage of cloths

14.5.1 Station management/Clean working area at end

- a. Technical judge will evaluate the competitor's overall workflow and use of tools, equipment and accessories. In the absence of a technical judge, the head judge will evaluate the Station management and cleanliness at the end of the performance/competition time.
- b. The competitor should display an understanding of the correct use and operation of the espresso machine.
- c. The competitor should display an understanding of the correct use and operation of the grinder – including the management of coffee in and through the grinder. Competitors should be grinding coffee for each shot or set of shots.
- d. The competitor should try to achieve extraction times within a 3.0 second variance and shot volume of 25-35 mL(30 mL +/-5 mL).
- e. The technical judge will evaluate the competitor's work-flow throughout the presentation, including: the organization and placement of tools, cups and accessories; the competitor's movement and flow in and around the workstation; the cleanliness and maintenance of the station (equipment, counters, towels, pitchers); the management of coffee and ingredients (i.e., milk). In the absence of a technical judge, the head judge will evaluate the Station management and cleanliness at the end of the performance/competition time.
- f. Liquids or ingredients must not be placed on top of the machine; otherwise 0 points will be awarded in "Station management/Clean working area at end".
- g. The cleanliness of the area is evaluated. If a spill occurs, the competitor should have it cleaned up by the end of their performance time. Cleaning while working (e.g., removing spent grounds or wiping tables) will improve the competitor's score, as will cleaning the station before they end their performance time. All wares and tools (e.g., tampers, cups, trays, pitchers) are included in this evaluation including items on the espresso machine and work tables. Spent pucks (used coffee grounds) are allowed to be in the portafilters at the end of the performance and are not part of this score

14.5.2 Clean portafilter spouts/Avoided placing spouts in doser chamber

- a. The competitor needs to remove any water or grounds on the portafilter spouts by cleaning them. Rinsing, using a towel, and wiping with fingers are all acceptable methods for achieving clean spouts.
- b. During distributing and leveling of coffee grounds, the competitor should not place portafilter spouts directly over the dosing chamber. (This could allow water to contaminate the dosing chamber.)
- c. If the competitor has clean portafilter spouts before each extraction and does not place the portafilter spouts over the dosing chamber, the judge will mark "Yes".

14.5.3 General hygiene throughout presentation

- a. The judge will determine this score based on the competitor's sanitary practices throughout their entire presentation. If proper hygiene is used for the entire presentation, the judge will mark "Yes".
- b. Examples of unacceptable practices include:
 - Touching hands to face, mouth, etc. and then using the hands for beverage preparation.
 - Touching the floor and then using the hands for beverage preparation.

14.5.4 Proper usage of cloths

- a. The judges will evaluate the correct and sanitary usage of the competitor's cloths. The competitor should use dedicated cloths for cleaning the filter basket, cleaning the workstation, and steam wand.
- b. Examples of unacceptable practices are:
 - Anything that is not sanitary or food safe with a cloth such as touching it to face, mouth, etc.
 - Using a cloth once it has touched the floor or dropped.
 - Using a non-dedicated cloth to clean a steam wand (using it for some other purpose other than using it to clean a steam wand).

15.0 SENSORY EVALUATION PROCEDURE

- a. Each competitor will be scored by the 2 sensory judges. The following is an explanation of the sensory scoresheet.

15.1 EVALUATION SCALE

- a. The evaluation scale is the same for both technical and sensory judges. There are 2 types of scores: the Yes/No Score, and the 0 to 6 Score.

Yes = 1 No = 0

Unacceptable = 0 Acceptable = 1 Average = 2 Good = 3 Very Good = 4 Excellent = 5 Extraordinary = 6

- b. Yes/No Score:
 - i. The competitor receives 1 point for a score of Yes on these items and 0 points for a score of No
- c. 0 to 6 Score
 - ii. Some scoresheet criteria are evaluated on a scale of 0 to 6 with 0 being the lowest score and 6 being the highest. It is acceptable to use half point increments between 1.0 and 6.0, which are recorded using a decimal point, not a fraction. (For example, 1.5, 2.5, 3.5.) The lowest score with value is 1. A score of 0.5 may not be used. A score of 0 is used when a scoring element is deemed totally unacceptable. Scores of 0 and 6 require the approval of the head judge.

15.2 ESPRESSO EVALUATION - PART I

- a. See 5.1.1 for Espresso Definition.
- b. espressos will be evaluated using the following protocol by all sensory judges. Sensory judges will complete all steps of the evaluation before recording scores.
- c. Sensory judges will stir the espresso **3** times with a spoon (moving the spoon front to back) to mix the flavors within the shot, then immediately taste. Sensory judges will take at least 2 complete sips to fully evaluate the espresso. Judges will not taste the espresso off the spoon.
- d. Competitors may override the evaluation protocol by giving the judges specific alternative instructions on how they want the espresso evaluated. As long as the instructions are reasonable, and are not in contradiction with other rules, the judges should follow all instructions given by the competitor

Part I - Espresso Evaluation		Flavor Information:
Yes	No	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
/1		
Crema		
0 to 6		
2 x	<input type="text"/>	
/12		
Taste Experience		
0 to 6		
3 x	<input type="text"/>	
/18		
Accuracy of Flavor Descriptors		
2 x	<input type="text"/>	
/12		
Tactile Experience		
2 x	<input type="text"/>	
/16		
Accuracy of Tactile Descriptors		
Yes	No	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
/1		
Functional and correct espresso vessel used		

15.2.1 Crema

- a. Judges will visually evaluate the appearance of the crema in the vessel. To score a “yes” the crema must stretch across the entire surface of the espresso and not have any holes or broken spots.

15.2.2 Taste Experience

- a. The taste experience of the espresso is evaluated to determine the quality of the beverage. Judges will evaluate the components of the taste experience of the espresso (sweetness, acidity, and bitterness) to determine their quality, how well they fit together, and how well they complement each other. Both the taste components of the extraction and the coffee itself are evaluated. If one or more of the taste components detracts from the taste experience of the espresso (e.g., sour, acrid), lower marks are given. If the taste component contributes positively to the overall taste experience, higher marks are given. If the espresso is unbalanced (lacking in a certain taste component in a way that detracts from the overall positive experience or if a taste component is overpowering the beverage), the experience score is reduced. Note: Accuracy of taste description is not taken into consideration for this score

15.2.3 Accuracy of Flavor Descriptors

- a. Judges will listen to the flavor descriptions and explanations given by the competitor and compare those with the beverage served. The flavor profile of the beverage served should support specialty coffee. All flavor descriptors given by the competitor for their espresso will be taken into consideration under this score. This score is based on how accurately these descriptors match the flavor of the espresso. Flavor descriptors must be given or a score of 0 will be given in this category.

15.2.4 Tactile Experience

- a. The quality of the tactile experience is evaluated. Judges will evaluate the weight, texture, and finish of the espresso served. The espresso should have a tactile experience that correlates to the preparation, method of extraction, and coffee used in the espresso. Weight relates to the viscosity of the espresso, from thin to thick. Texture is defined as the

mouthfeel(e.g., “watery,” “tea-like,” “velvety”). The quality of weight and texture is based upon the tactile feeling of the espresso in the mouth. Both a light and heavy weight can receive high scores relative to the texture quality in the mouth. If the weight and/or texture detracts from the espresso experience (e.g., “watery,” “rough,” or “dusty”), lower marks are given. If the weight and texture contribute positively to the experience of the espresso, higher marks are given. Finish is defined by the length of positive flavor qualities after the coffee is swallowed. If the aftertaste detracts from the espresso experience (e.g., “astringency”), lower marks are given. If the aftertaste contributes positively to the experience of the espresso, higher marks are given.

15.2.5 Accuracy of Tactile Descriptors

The judges will listen to the tactile descriptions and explanations given by the competitor and compare those with the weight, texture, and finish of the beverage served. The judges will score how accurately the given description matches the tactile sensation of their espresso. If the experience matches the description, but the tactile experience score is low, high marks cannot be given. If no descriptors are provided, the competitor will receive a 0 for this score.

15.2.6 Functional and Correct Espresso Vessel Used

- a. Espresso must be served in a 60 to 90 mL vessel from which judges must be able to drink as required without any functional detriment to their ability to score accurately; this includes but is not exclusive to: vessel being too hot, unable to hold and drink from vessel safely, judges unable to execute espresso evaluation protocol. If any of these types of conditions are present, a “no” will be given for “Functional and correct espresso vessel used”.

15.3 MILK BEVERAGE EVALUATION - PART II

- a. Milk beverages will be evaluated using the following protocol by all sensory judges. It is important that sensory judges follow this protocol consistently. Sensory judges will complete all steps of the evaluation before recording scores.
- b. Sensory judges will first evaluate the appearance of the milk beverage. Next, they will take an initial sip from anywhere on the rim of the cup. After the initial sip, the sensory judges will revisit the milk beverage for at least 1 additional sip from an undisturbed location on the rim of the cup.
- c. Competitors may override the evaluation protocol by giving the judges specific alternative instructions on how they want the milk beverage evaluated. As long as the instructions are reasonable, and are not in contradiction with other rules, the judges should follow all instructions given by the competitor.

Part II - Milk Beverage Evaluation			Flavor Information:
0 to 6	<input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/>	/6	
	Visual		
0 to 6	<input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/>	/6	
2 x	<input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/>	/24	
	Taste Experience		
2 x	<input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/>	/24	
	Accuracy of Flavor Descriptors		
Yes	No	/1	
<input style="width: 40px; height: 15px;" type="checkbox"/>	<input style="width: 40px; height: 15px;" type="checkbox"/>		Functional vessel used

15.3.1 Visual

- a. Judges will evaluate the appearance of the milk beverage to determine its visual score. On the surface, the milk beverage should have a color combination of milk and coffee, with good color contrast definition, balance in the cup,

symmetrical design and a smooth, and possibly glossy/glass-like sheen. (Note: It is not acceptable for milk beverages to be topped with any additional spices and/or powders. Doing so will result in a 0 in the "Taste Balance" category.)

15.3.2 Taste Experience

- a. The milk beverage is a hot beverage that should be served at a temperature that is immediately consumable. The texture and temperature of the beverage, and the taste of the coffee and milk will be included in the balance evaluation. The milk beverage should have a harmonious balance of the sweetness of the milk and its espresso base. The flavor profile of the beverage served should support specialty coffee, with a balance created by the addition of cow's milk.

15.3.3 Accuracy of Flavor Descriptors

- a. Judges will listen to the flavor descriptions and explanations given by the competitor and compare those with the beverage served. The flavor profile of the beverage served should support specialty coffee. This score is based on how accurately these descriptors match the flavor of the milk beverage. Flavor descriptors must be given or a score of 0 will be received in this category.

15.3.4 Functional vessel used

- a. Milk beverages must be served in a vessel from which judges must be able to drink as required without any functional detriment to their ability to score accurately; this includes but is not exclusive to: vessel being too hot, unable to hold and drink from vessel safely. If any of these requirements are not met, a "no" will be given for "Functional vessel used."

15.4 JUDGE'S TOTAL IMPRESSION - PART III

Part III - Judge's Total Impression	
0 to 6	Judge's Total Impression
= 4 x	Total Impression

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- a. The Judge's Total Impression score captures 2 primary areas:
 - i. The "Total impression" score is the overall composite impression of the taste scores (e.g., Did the combination of the two courses of drinks create an experience that was stronger in delivery than if just 1 course had been served on its own?).
 - ii. The judges must consider and assign points towards the passion and inspiration that the barista has displayed during their routine. They must consider (allowing for cultural and personality differences) points such as natural, clear and concise communication, display of enthusiasm and dedication toward specialty coffee, and an ability to act as a role model for the barista profession and industry (e.g., If in a cafe/restaurant environment, would this barista have inspired me about specialty coffee?). If the judges feel that this has been achieved, they should award high scores.

16.0 COMPETITOR PROTEST AND APPEALS

16.1 PROTEST

- a. If a competitor wishes to appeal a scoring decision or protest any other matter that arises during the competition which affects such competitor, the competitor shall address it to the Presiding Head Judge. The Presiding Head

Judge will then determine whether the issue can be resolved onsite at the competition, or whether the issue will require a written appeal following the competition.

- b. If the Presiding Head Judge decides that the issue can be resolved onsite at the competition, the Presiding Head Judge will discuss it with applicable judges or any other parties involved to enable a fair presentation of the issue. A decision will be made onsite by the Presiding Head Judge who shall inform the competitor of the decision at that time.
- c. Possible resolutions to a competitor protest or appeal may include (but are not limited to):
 - i. Disqualification of another competitor
 - ii. An opportunity for 1 or more competitors to perform the relevant competition service to supersede the prior scores,
 - iii. Another solution, as determined by the US Competitions Committee
- d. The Presiding Head Judge and the US Competitions Committee shall operate under the purview of the Specialty Coffee Association management and Advisory Board.

16.2 APPEAL LETTER

- a. If any protest described above cannot be resolved onsite or the competitor wishes to appeal a decision made by the Presiding Head Judge onsite, the Presiding Head Judge will ask the competitor to submit their appeal in writing (which may be by email or hard copy) to the US Competitions Committee at uscompetitions@sca.coffee.
- b. The appeal letter must include the following:
 - i. competitor name
 - ii. date
 - iii. a clear and concise statement of the complaint
 - iv. date and time references (if applicable)
 - v. competitor's comments and requested resolution
 - vi. party/parties involved
 - vii. competitor's contact information
- c. Any written appeals, which do not include this information, will not be considered. Competitors must submit their written appeal to the US Competitions Committee within 24 hours after the subject incident.

16.3 APPEAL DECISION

- a. The US Competitions Committee will review written appeals within 30 days of receipt and contact the competitor in writing via email with the final decision.
 - i. Disqualification of another competitor
 - ii. An opportunity for 1 or more competitors to perform the relevant competition service to supersede the prior scores,
 - iii. Another solution, as determined by the US Competitions Committee
- b. The US Competitions Committee shall operate under the purview of the Specialty Coffee Association management and Advisory Board.