

**NATIONAL**

# **HOMEBREW COMPETITION**

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**VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

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## **2021 UPDATES**

The American Homebrewers Association Competition Subcommittee discusses rule and process changes after the conclusion of each competition year. For 2021, the AHA Competition Subcommittee has decided to implement the following changes for judging and stewarding:

### **JUDGING**

#### **Scoresheets**

All judging will use the official NHC scoresheet. Two scoresheets (2) are required for each entry. These will look similar to 2019 and 2020.

### **TABLE CAPTAIN/STEWARDING**

#### **Table Captain**

There is one Table Captain at every table (beer pouring station) in the staging area. The number of table captains required is based on the number of entries in the competition, space available, and categories judged that day. Table Captains collaborate with the stewards assigned to them to pull, pour and present entries for judging at tables similarly numbered within a judging room. These individuals verify category winners and collect beers to be moved on to the next round. They are the liaison between the competition Manager and judges.

#### **Stewarding**

There are one to two stewards assigned to every Table Captain. An additional steward on a team may be pulled to fill a vacancy on the team of another Table Captain as needed during the competition. Stewards prepare the judging rooms, pull necessary entries (under direction of the table captains), serve the beers to the judges, keep the judging room orderly and provide support and assistance to the judged. They are the main point of contact for the judges and lay out expectations and run of show for the judges.

### **SINGLE-SITE JUDGE CENTER**

The 2021 NHC will see a major change with format and structure. The competition will no longer have first round judge centers and a final round judge center format. The competition will use a single-site judge center that moves entries through subsequent rounds until a final round is achieved, awarding first, second and third place in a category.

This new format will allow entries to be judged in parallel rather than over a six-week period and establish consistent, high-caliber judging at one location than over 13 first round locations. Entrants will only need to brew and ship once.



## COMPETITION INTEGRITY

The National Homebrew Competition (NHC) is organized and run with great passion and integrity. Everyone involved is dedicated to a high-quality competition that runs smoothly. Be **exact** and doing things **correctly**.

**Confidentiality is an absolute expectation. Conversations about the beers and winners with judges, entrants, or friends should never take place. Please try to refrain from excessive use of cell phones during the judging sessions unless necessary.**

Other points that promote a high-quality competition include:

- i. **Punctuality:** The competition only works well when everything and everyone is on time.
- ii. **Hygiene:** Please avoid perfumes, aftershaves, and scented lotions on competition day
- iii. **Courtesy:** Be respectful and considerate to everyone involved.
- iv. **Accuracy:** **Double-check everything you do to ensure accuracy.**
- v. **Moderation:** Please sample responsibly.

## ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

As an event involving alcohol, our goal is to create a safe, enjoyable environment. The following information highlights the formal program developed for restaurants and bar employees called TIPS (Training for Intervention Procedures by Servers of Alcohol):

- The average 150-pound man will exceed the “legally impaired” level of alcohol in the bloodstream (.08) by drinking four 12-ounce beers within one hour. Women will generally have a higher level of alcohol because they have a higher % of body fat vs. muscle (body fat does not absorb alcohol)
- There are many factors including rate of drinking, strength of drink, height, weight, size, stress, medication, and other drugs in the bloodstream.
- When determining whether an individual is intoxicated, look for:
  - Loss of judgment
  - Impaired reactions
  - Hampered coordination
- If a person exhibits any of the above signs:
  - Use a calm voice and suggest the individual take a break from tasting alcohol
  - Provide a reason for your action in a non-threatening and nonjudgmental way
  - Act as if you are on their side.



## JUDGE RESPONSIBILITIES

### Why You Are Here

Your obligations are to **1)** provide quality feedback to entrants and **2)** select entries to advance to the Final Round of the National Homebrew Competition. When filling out scoresheets, you should include the reasons why you find the entry to be exemplary of the style or lacking in style characteristics. Be as specific as possible. Do not simply say “does not exemplify style” without stating why. **About 80 percent of the entries do not advance beyond the First Round, and offering informative feedback to those brewers is critical.**

### ARRIVING

Check in with the organizer. If you have been assigned to a category that you have an entry in, please notify the Competition Staff immediately. Be sure you sign-in or you will not receive your points.

### WHERE TO GO

Find the table with your category. **Relax and review the categories you’re judging. Scoresheet Labels will be provided to judges to place on the scoresheet. This is required.** Judge Name ID Labels will also be provided.

### ASSIGNMENTS

Ask the competition staff to change your assignment if there is a conflict of interest.

### TABLE CAPTAINS/STEWARDS

Table Captains and Stewards are here to take care of the details to make life easier. They are also here to learn more about judging. Many of them aspire to be in your seat. Please encourage those interested stewards and make them feel welcome.

### JUDGING

A competition of this size for large categories uses multiple round judging system to advance entries. Multiple judge pairs concurrently judge all entries of each style. Each judge pair will select two to three of the best entries in their flight to advance to a subsequent round for the category until a final table is achieved. At the final table, all four (4) judges evaluate final round entries to determine winners.

Only entries with a score of 30 or higher are eligible to advance beyond the first round. There is a new bottle used for each round, with two reserved for the final round to accommodate more judges and repours. There are strictly no repours in the first round.

**Remember to record a consensus score and write on the scoresheet in the box at the top of the page. The difference between an entry’s scores must be less than five points.**

### AFTER JUDGING

**Leave the area immediately. Don’t hang around and talk, it’s distracting and causes delays. Do not pour any entries until you get the go-ahead from the Competition Staff.** Last minute changes may have to be made if judges are absent.

### QUESTIONS?

If you have questions about something, please bring it to the Competition Staff’s attention.



## COMPETITION TEAM OVERVIEW

Several teams work together for a competition of this magnitude to run smoothly and efficiently: Competition Staff, Stewards, Results Staff, and Cellar Crew.

**Competition Staff:** These are the overall organizers of the competition. They usually include a site organizer, a judge coordinator, and a cellar master.

**Stewards:** Stewards control all entries and paperwork, as well as assist judges.

**Results Staff:** This group proofs and verifies scoresheets, flight sheets, and any additional paper work.

**Cellar Master Crew:** The cellar master manages the organization, sorting, and delivery of the entries.

**Comment Card Staff:** ensures all comment cards are completed and turned in for every beer.

## TABLE CAPTAIN & STEWARD INFORMATION

Many volunteers may have a limited understanding of what running a major competition entails and how their specific responsibilities fit into the competition.

In the following pages, effort was made to detail the natural progression of events from the time of entries are received through the time paperwork is returned to homebrewers after the competition.

### PRIOR TO COMPETITION

Leading up to the competition, entries are received, unpacked, labeled, boxed, checked-in, palletized, stored. All entries are relabeled with a unique Judging ID number to keep things “blind.”

### COMPETITION DAY

Check-in with the competition staff. Stewards provide judges with everything they require while judging, from setting up the table to getting whatever they need during the session and clearing the table at the end of the session. Make sure the judges at each table have the following supplies:

<b>Judging Cups</b>	<b>Calculators</b>	<b>Dump Buckets</b>
<b>Documentation</b>	<b>Water</b>	<b>Water cups</b>
<b>Pencils</b>	<b>Bottle Opener</b>	<b>Bar Towels</b>
<b>Bread/crackers</b>	<b>Cork screws (if needed)</b>	<b>Tasting Stoppers</b>
<b>Water pitchers</b>	<b>Category Info placard</b>	<b>Judge Assignment</b>

Score sheets are used to document judges’ evaluations of entries. There are specific scoresheets for beer, mead, and cider because the criteria for judging each is different.

Every judge team should have a flight summary sheet for their flight of entries to keep track of entry and score information. This form is for the judges’ reference and collected after judging.

### GETTING STARTED



Stewards responsible for a table will be given a packet with necessary items. Each packet will contain very important documentation.

1. List of judges at corresponding table in judging room
2. Table tent number with category to be judged
3. Judging schedule
4. Pull sheets
5. Cup labels for glasses for all flights at the table for the particular session, which may or may not include final round labels depending on the schedule.
6. Winners lists to be filled out by each judge *team* (2 total). This specifies which entries will go on to the next round.
7. Medal round envelope and gold results sheet (if applicable)
8. Specialty ingredient list for certain categories

Upon receipt of the judging packet, the Table Captain should review its contents to ensure all required documents are present.

The Table Captain must locate the table by number in the staging area and ensure all supplies needed for the day are present. Next, the Table Captain should attach the pre-printed entry number labels to plastic judging glasses, ensuring one glass of each beer for each judge. Labels are printed with a random entry number, the category, and the subcategory information. Some labels will contain specialty information. Glasses should always be checked for cracks and cleanliness. Do NOT touch the rims of the glass.

Prior to pouring, Table Captains should read through the style description for the category being judged, and pay special attention to pouring instructions and other quirks that may affect judging.

After all judges have arrived and are seated, the Table Captain and Stewards should introduce themselves and help determine how judges will be paired up. This is also an opportunity to establish a serving order if needed.

Things to do while judging is happening:

Keep water pitchers full	Empty dump buckets
Replenish bread/crackers	Act as liaison between judges and competition staff
Clear away used cups	Keep judges on time (5-7 minutes/entry)

Stewards will find their table based on a table number and name. The entries judged during that session will be delivered to the staging room. The entries are organized in case boxes by table.



## JUDGING

Once all entries are in pull order and the announcements have finished, judging begins. The process used for judging is called queued judging. The process:

1. The steward will pull entries from the pull sheet starting from the top and on the direction of the Table Captain.
2. Table Captains will sticker all glasses for judges based on the pick sheet.
3. The Table Captain will verify all information is correct and start pouring entries for the judges. All entries are delivered to judges for evaluation at once. One steward is required to always remain in the judging room.
4. Judges evaluate all entries within their flight first, then discuss entries with their judge partner to determine advancing entries.
5. Every entry needs to have two scoresheets and one summary card (blue) that captures the consensus of the entry.
6. A steward should put all scoresheets in numerical order, paired together AND all the blue comment cards are stacked in the same order to be turned in.

**After entries are judged, the steward checks the judges' math, ensures all paperwork is complete, and returns all paperwork to the Table Captain. The Table Captain is responsible for all paperwork to be turned in accurately and in proper order.**

## PREPARING FOR THE NEXT ROUND

Each judge team will pass on 2 to 3 entries in their flight to the next round. For all rounds other than a final round, judge teams determine the top three beers that go on to the next round and write those entry numbers on the appropriate white sheet. The Table Captain confirms these numbers verbally with the judges for accuracy.

Once all round winners' sheets have been collected from all the tables judging a particular category during that session, the Table Captain may begin the above process again with the next round of beers.

For the final round of a category, all judges at a physical table determine three winners. The medal winners' list is placed in an envelope and sealed for security, and given to the Table Captain.



**AFTER JUDGING**

Once the session is finished and all paperwork is completed and turned in, begin the clean-up process. Stewards move all opened beers from the table and tidiness begins. This includes:

<b>Dump all bottles/dump buckets</b>	<b>Refill water pitchers</b>
<b>Dispose empty bottles and cases</b>	<b>Straighten up table for next session</b>
<b>Restock supplies</b>	<b>Replenish bread/crackers/water</b>
<b>Check in with staff for additional needs</b>	<b>Retrieve next session paperwork</b>

**End of the day:** return all judging supplies and unused paperwork to the competition staff.

**HANDLING ENTRIES**

**Please be careful** handling the bottle entries. If the bottles are mishandled or broken, everyone involved will be greatly disappointed. Be careful not to disturb sediment when handling the entries.

**KILLING TIME**

The first session takes a little while to get going. Instruct the judges to be patient. If judges are taking a longer time to finish a flight, let the Competition Management team know.

During the session, you may sample beers only at the judges discretion. Do not pour beer for yourself from any bottle until the session is finished and the results have been collected.

**ASK QUESTIONS**

Ask if you have questions about a procedure or your duties. We're happy to answer questions.

**Final Note**

It takes lots of volunteers completing multiple tasks to make a competition like the National Homebrew Competition run smoothly. No team of volunteers is more important than any other. If any one of the teams were missing or underperforming, all other teams would be affected and the competition itself would grind to a halt.

Therefore, ALL OF YOU are extremely integral to the competition. Take pride in being part of this competition! Responsibilities of each team and the competition should not be taken lightly. We trust that you commit to the work and put forth your best efforts to preserve its integrity. And have fun!

Cheers!

John Moorhead

NHC Director



