



**INTERNATIONAL BARBEQUE COOKERS ASSOCIATION  
(IBCA)  
RULES**

The purpose of the IBCA as stated in Article II of the IBCA By-Laws is “to develop and bolster equitable competitive barbeque cooking internationally”. The entire concept of our organization is to standardize the cook-offs internationally. Referring to the introduction paragraph, “Rules, why have them,” it states that we feel when IBCA rules, procedures, policies, and guidelines are followed, that it provides the best on any given day will be recognized. The rules set by IBCA are to be utilized in conjunction with the stated cook-off and judging procedures, policies, and guidelines.

- 1) **HEAD JUDGES** - All IBCA Head Judges and assistants must be a current member of IBCA.
- 2) **SANCTIONED COOK-OFF** – Any cook-off event with at least 11 teams, having paid the required request for sanctioning fee. Any event that fails to meet sanctioning requirements for two consecutive years, may not be eligible for re-sanctioning. This does not change the requirement for the American Royal or The Jack.  
**NOTE:** The minimum required trays of each listed IBCA meat to be turned in at any sanctioned event shall be 15. If an IBCA meat category does not meet the minimum required tray count during the turn in window, then the event shall no longer qualify as an IBCA sanctioned event.
- 3) **COOKED ON SITE** - All meats will be cooked on-site. The preparation and completion (excluding pre-trimming) of any and all meats in competition is within the confines of the cook-off site and during the time limits designated by the promoter. Once a team and their IBCA meats have arrived at an IBCA event the meats are not allowed to be removed from the competition grounds. Pre-trimming of competition meat is allowed and may be removed from the store packaging to do so unless there is a health department rule requiring that all meat must be in store packaging when meat is inspected. If this is an issue, it must be made clear on the cook-off flyer so that all cooks attending an event know about this ahead of time.
- 4) **SANITATION** - Cooks are to prepare and cook in as sanitary manner as is possible including but not limited to using gloves, washing hands, and avoiding cross contamination. Cooking conditions are subject to inspection by the Promoter and Head Judge. Infractions identified or witnessed by the Promoter and/or Head Judge shall be immediately addressed, and the Team will be subject to disqualification by Head Judge.
- 5) **ENTRIES PER PIT** - IBCA recognizes only one entry per head cook on a given pit. It will be the responsibility of the Promoter to monitor entries. Multiple entries in the same category by the same cook or from the same pit, or multiple entries from the same piece of meat shall not be allowed. The head cook of the team registered for the event must be at least 18 years old and present at the event. If an emergency arises that requires the head cook to leave the event, the head judge must be notified immediately. The remaining team members may complete the competition and the head cook will receive the points. If the head cook is not in attendance at the event, the team members may not cook under the head cook's name. Points will be awarded to the member in attendance who is determined to be the head cook if a member of IBCA.
- 6) **BBQ PITS** - Any commercial or homemade, trailered, or un-trailered, pit or smoker normally used for competitive barbeque. A BBQ Pit may include gas or electricity for starting the combustion of wood or wood products but NOT to complete cooking. Pit should be of a permanent design that contains separate individual cooking chambers and heat sources (no sharing of heat sources). Pellet cookers are allowed. Electrical accessories such as spits, augers or force drafts are permitted. The use of heat lamps, proofing cabinets or any other electrical heating or holding device is prohibited. The process of Sous Vide, boiling, or frying of competition meat is not allowed.
- 7) **OPEN FIRES** - IBCA further recognizes that open fire, ground pits, are used in some areas. It is in the interest of safety; a barrier shall be placed around said open fire pit. A fire extinguisher shall be readily available.
- 8) **CATEGORIES** - Promoters shall advise contestants in advance of applicable meat categories and/or cuts of meats and/or types of cookers. The following categories are recognized by IBCA for overall event ranking:
  - Beef Brisket

- Pork Spareribs
- Chicken

**9) DOUBLE NUMBER SYSTEM** - IBCA requires that the secret, double number system be used. This system assures a fair competition and is a fundamental tenet of the IBCA. IBCA requires that two tickets bearing the same number be utilized, one firmly attached to the top of the judging tray in a manner which hides the number and the other ticket easily removed by the Head Cook for retention after signing the Head Cook's name in front of an IBCA representative. At awards, the ticket attached to the lid of the tray will be removed, and the ticket number announced. Only lids with tickets will be taken to the awards ceremony with final table numbers.

**The Head Cook/Head Cook Representative will draw a random master ticket at tray pick up and the master ticket along with the tray tickets will be scanned to associate the tray tickets to the master ticket. The Head Cook/Representative will receive a printed receipt showing the ticket numbers that are associated to the master ticket. The Head Cook/Representative is responsible to verify the ticket numbers on the receipt match the trays and report discrepancies before leaving the tray pick up area.**

**10) TRAY PICK-UP** – Promoter will provide the tray pick-up form (alterations not permitted) marked with the appropriate paid categories and initialed by the event representative. Only this tray pick-up receipt will be accepted by the IBCA Head Judge or designated representative for participants to receive trays and/or other containers. All judging trays not picked up on Friday must be picked up on Saturday between 9 am and 10 am. Trays will not be handed out after 10 am Saturday.

**11) JUDGING TRAYS** - IBCA will use Styrofoam trays with hinged lid and without dividers (i.e. Gen Pak 200 or Gen Pak 270 for chicken half). A single sheet of aluminum foil should be supplied for each tray. All judging containers shall be clean and free of any markings. Marked containers may be disqualified at the Head Judge's discretion. Cooks are responsible for ensuring that the containers they receive remain clean and undamaged. Only the containers and foil provided by the head judge will be utilized for product turn in. The head cook or other authorized representative must write the name of the head cook on the exposed portion of the ticket affixed to the judging container and the master ticket receipt. All judging trays are non-transferrable and property of IBCA until all judging is completed.

**12) JUDGING TRAY CONTENTS** - IBCA requires that the Head Judge advise all cooks of the exact quantities and cuts of meat that will be placed in the judging trays. This will normally be accomplished at the Cook's meeting. The Head Judge or designated representative will inspect all trays at the time of turn-in to assure compliance with the turn-in criteria. All garnishes and condiments are prohibited, as they do not reflect the true quality of the cooked meat. Sauces and/or other liquids may not be added to the box prior to placing product in the box. Meats may be cooked with sauces and/or other liquids, but once the cooking is complete, sauces and/or liquids may not be added once put into tray. Each tray will include one sheet of foil placed unfolded under the contents of the tray. Each turn in tray will consist of the following at all events:

- Brisket eight (8) full slices. Blocking brisket ends is allowed. The fat cap may be trimmed or cut away before the slices are placed into the tray. Brisket must be placed in the tray parallel to the hinge.
- Pork Spareribs eight (8) individual cut ribs (bone in) (St. Louis Cut acceptable) Ribs must be placed in

the tray MEAT side up lying parallel to the hinge. Baby back or Country Style Ribs are not permitted.

- Chicken one (1) 1/2 fully jointed chicken MEAT side up (to include breast, wing, thigh, and drumstick). SKIN ON (No Cornish Game Hens)

**13) TURN-IN TIMES** - Standard turn in times for IBCA recognized categories shall start at 12pm and continue at 1.5 (1 ½) hour intervals in the order of chicken, pork spareribs, and brisket. Jackpot categories will not be submitted during the IBCA recognized categories schedule and must occur either before or after the IBCA recognized categories. Open/Jackpot categories will be limited to only 2 categories on the day of main event and as many as the promoter wants on the day before. Once this time is set and/or announced at the Head Cooks meeting no change will be made. A turn-in window of ten (10) minutes before and after the set turn-in time will be recognized. Judging trays received after that time will not be accepted for judging. Ten minutes and one second is considered after the set turn-in time.

**14) TERMS FOR TRAY DISQUALIFICATION** - After the tray has been turned in, any tray found to be in violation of the IBCA rules will be disqualified at the discretion of the Head Judge.

**15) TASTING JUDGES** - Must be 18 years of age or older to judge. IBCA uses five (5) judges per table be utilized during all phases of judging. Head cooks are prohibited to participate as tasting judges at any event in which they are competing. No smoking in the judging area. Alcohol will not be permitted during the taste judging of any category, except for mixed drink jackpot categories. Tasting judges who are deemed unable to fully comply with the requirements of judging by the head judge will be asked to leave the judging table and/or their score sheet removed from the total tally for the table.

**16) JUDGING** – For events with 11 to 20 teams, judging will be done in one (1) round. For events with 21 or more teams, judging will be done in two (2) rounds. Taste judges will score each tray on three (3) criteria (appearance, taste, texture) on a scale of 5 to 10 in the first round. Each score will be weighted (appearance – 0.6, taste = 1.86, texture = 1.54). The score of 1 will be given to disqualified trays for all criteria and all judges and 0 score will be used for trays not turned in. The second round will be judged on two (2) criteria (taste & texture) using the same weights as the first round.

The trays in the second round will receive points that correspond in reverse order of placement. These points will be added to the first-round score. The first-round scores plus the second round points will determine the top 10 for each category.

The overall placements will be determined by the cumulative point for each of the IBCA meat categories.

**17) JUDGING QUANTITY** - For two (2) round events, a maximum of fifteen (15) trays or containers should be assigned to each judging table in the first round. Judges should not be required to sample and judge more than twenty (20) containers during any round. The top scoring trays from the first round will advance to the second round of judging. The number of trays will be determined based on the number of teams participating. Events with 21-99 teams will take 15 trays to the second round and 100+ teams will take 20 trays to the second round. Points will be awarded accordingly with more trays going to the second round. For example, with 15 trays in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round, 15<sup>th</sup> place = 1 pt., 14<sup>th</sup> place = 2 pts....3<sup>rd</sup> place = 13 pts, 2<sup>nd</sup> place = 14 pts, 1<sup>st</sup> place = 15 pts added to the first-round score.

**18) ANNOUNCING WINNERS** - Winners for each category will be announced starting with the IBCA recognized categories in order of chicken, pork spareribs, and brisket. The ticket numbers for the top 10 scores in each category will be announced and the winners recognized. The promoter may recognize more than the top 10 but only the top 10 will receive points toward Cook of the Year. After the announcement of the top 10 in each category, the final table tray numbers will be announced. After the IBCA categories are called, the jackpot categories as well any other special awards offered by the promoter (i.e., people's choice, best pit etc.) will be announced. At the end of the individual awards, the top ten (10) overall along with the Reserve Grand Champion and Grand Champion of the event will be announced along with the accumulative points.

The announcement of the winners will be by the Head Cook's name followed by the team's name only after the ticket number has been verified. Tickets must be verified by the IBCA Head Judge, IBCA Assistant or other IBCA representative. Only the Head Judge or Promoter will announce names. The Head Cook will be allowed 10-15 seconds to acknowledge any sponsors during their first announcement. Children will not be permitted to take the microphone. When calling the overall top 10 the name or master ticket number and number of points will be announced.

When claiming the award, the ticket matching the called number or the master ticket receipt showing the called ticket number must be presented for verification. Copies of the ticket number including but not limited to handwritten list, photographs etc. will not be accepted. If unable to produce the original matching ticket part or master ticket receipt, the place called will be declared as unclaimed.

Ticket holders of unclaimed places in the IBCA categories have until the end of the announcement the final table brisket numbers to claim the place. If the original matching ticket part or master ticket receipt is presented to the Head Judge after the announcement of the final table brisket numbers, the place will remain listed as "Unclaimed" on the official winners list; however, points will be used for cumulative scoring to determine the overall winners.

**19) PRIZES** - IBCA states that the top ten overall cooks be named at every cook-off. In the event of a tie for Grand Champion, ties will be broken by the highest score in brisket, followed by ribs, and then chicken.

**20) PROMOTERS** - For the sake of contest fairness, IBCA prohibits promoters from cooking in their own contest. Promoters are not allowed to act as the head judge for their event. This will allow the promoters to address all needs of the event and the cooks while the head judge is able to oversee the judging area without interruption from outside the judging area except for issues that are a result of violation of IBCA rules as requested by the promoter.

**21) EVENT DISQUALIFICATION** - Failure to comply with IBCA rule can result in a disqualification of the offending team or teams. The penalty will be administered by the head judge. If administered, the head judge will notify the Executive Head Judges and the President. As required the President will also notify the Regional Directors.

**22) CHANGES TO RULES** – Promoters shall not add to, alter or amend IBCA rules in regards to IBCA meat categories.