



2020 U.S. Roaster Championship Official Rules and Regulations

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

- a. The U.S. Roaster Championship (“USRC”) is a program of the Specialty Coffee Association (“SCA”) U.S. Chapter and the U.S. Coffee Championships (“USCC”).

2.0 RIGHTS

- a. All intellectual property related to all U.S. Coffee Championships (“USCC”) competitions, 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.

3.0 2020 U.S. ROASTER CHAMPIONSHIP

3.1 PARTICIPATION

3.1.1 Qualification

- a. USCC Roaster Preliminaries (“Preliminaries”)
 - i. Each of the Preliminaries will be open to up to 12 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 USCC Qualifiers. Competitors may choose at which Qualifier 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 Qualifier via the Open Registration spots. Qualifiers 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 Qualifiers. 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 Qualifiers 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. USCC Qualifiers (“Qualifiers”)
 - i. The Qualifiers are open to the 72 competitors who register. There will be up to 36 competitors at each of the 2 competitions, held at separate times and places. Roasters may compete at either competition regardless of company or geographic location. Competitors may only register to compete in 1 Roaster Qualifiers.
 - ii. The Top 3 competitors from each of the Preliminaries will be awarded a reserved spot at one of the USCC Qualifiers.
 - iii. The Top 6 finalists from the 2019 USRC will receive a reserved spot at 1 of the 2020 USCC Qualifiers.
 - iv. Remaining spots will be available for Open Registration.
 - v. For the Qualifiers, 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 Qualifiers. 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 Qualifiers.
 - vi. At the conclusion, the top 12 competitors from each of the 2 Qualifiers will be invited to compete in the USRC.
 - vii. The single highest scoring competitor from each Qualifier will be given a travel and accommodations stipend to United States Roaster Championship plus free registration.

- viii. All Competitors and Judges are required to attend 1 Online Learning Session in order to participate at the Qualifiers.
- ix. Competitors may only compete once in each competition within the season at the Qualifying level. For example, if a competitor competes in the first Roaster Qualifier, that same competitor may not compete in the second Roaster Qualifier. They may, however, compete in another competition (i.e., Barista, Cup Tasters, or Roaster) at the second Qualifier.
- c. United States Roaster Championship (“USRC”)
 - i. The positions to compete at the USRC will be guaranteed until an invited competitor turns down their spot or fails to register for USRC within the designated registration window. Any unclaimed position(s) will be offered to the next highest scoring Roaster(s) from the Qualifier 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 2 weeks prior to USRC.
 - ii. All Competitors must compete in 1 of the 2020 Qualifiers to be eligible to compete in the 2020 USRC.
 - iii. All Competitors and Judges are required to attend 1 Online Learning Session and the Competitor Meeting in order to participate at the USRC.
- d. Any dispute relevant to the qualifications or eligibility of a competitor will be reviewed and resolved by the U.S. Competitions Committee or the Competitions Manager.

3.1.2 Age Requirement

- a. Competitors must be at least 18 years of age at the time of competing.

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 information for USRC will be emailed to qualified competitors by the Competitions Manager (competitions@sca.coffee). Competitors must register and pay any registration fees to the SCA via the Internet. Once an entry form has been received, a confirmation letter will be sent to the competitor via email.
- b. Competitor registration is not complete until competitors have paid for their registration and filled out the registration form.
- c. Competitor registration belongs to the competitor listed on the registration form.
- d. **All registrations are non-refundable and non-transferable.**

3.1.5 Expenses

- a. Competitors are fully responsible for any and all expenses personally incurred that are related to the competition including, but not limited to, travel, accommodations, and supplies needed for the competition. The USCC, SCA, the U.S. Chapter, or Hosts are not responsible or liable for any of the competitor’s expenses. If a competitor cannot afford the aforementioned 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 Qualifiers, USRC, or World Coffee Roasting Championship (“WCRC”), even if they do not advance. Competitors from the Qualifiers may not judge at USRC or WCRC, even if they do not advance. Additionally, competitors may not judge at any World Coffee Events (WCE) sanctioned WCRC (world, national, regional) in any country, prior to the conclusion of that season’s WCRC.

3.1.7 Conflicts of Interest

- a. Judges and competitors are encouraged to let their head judges or the Competitions Manager 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 could result in disqualification. Questions regarding conflicts of interest or clarification of the above policy should be directed to competitions@sca.coffee.

3.2 COMPETITOR QUESTIONS

- a. All competitors must thoroughly read and understand these Rules & Regulations and the scoresheets without exception. All documents may be downloaded from the competition website at www.uscoffechampionships.org
- b. Competitors are encouraged to direct any questions to the Competitions Manager prior to arriving at the competition. If any competitor is unclear as to the intent of any of the Rules and Regulations, it is the competitor's responsibility to clarify that position with the Competitions Manager prior to the competitions by contacting competitions@sca.coffee. Competitors will also have the opportunity to ask questions during the required Online Learning Session. Please see www.uscoffechampionships.org for the dates/time of these Online Learning Sessions.

3.3 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- a. Competitors and the winners of the U.S. Coffee Championships are representatives of the Specialty Coffee Association (SCA), the U.S. Chapter, and United States Coffee Championships (USCC).
 - i. Fully abide by the SCA's Code of Conduct, found here: sca.coffee/code-of-conduct
 - ii. Upon entry into any USCC competition and in exchange for the opportunity to win, each competitor undertakes that they will:
 1. Permit the SCA, the U.S. Chapter, and USCC to use the competitor's name and image in any format without charge for the purpose of promotion of the SCA, the U.S. Chapter, USCC, or any USCC competition.
 2. Without limiting the generality of clause (i), the formats referred to in clause (a) may include: photographic, video, print, Internet, and any electronic media.
 3. With fulfilling these terms and conditions, actively work to uphold the good reputation of the SCA, the U.S. Chapter, USCC, and any USCC competition.
 - iii. Upon entry into any USCC competition and in exchange for the opportunity to win, each competitor undertakes that, should they win or place in the top ranking positions, they will:
 1. For the Preliminaries, make themselves available to travel to compete in the USCC Qualifiers.
 2. For the Qualifiers, make themselves available to travel to compete at the U.S. Coffee Championships.
 3. Include the name "Specialty Coffee Association U.S. Chapter", "SCA U.S. Chapter", "U.S. Coffee Championships", or "USCC" immediately before the name of the competition title (e.g., "U.S. Barista Championship", "U.S. Brewers Cup", "USCC Coffee in Good Spirits Qualifier", "U.S. USCC Barista Preliminary", etc.) in each instance when the competition title is used.
 4. 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.
 5. Promote the Specialty Coffee Association U.S. Chapter and U.S. Coffee Championships at every opportunity without charge to the SCA.
 6. Promote the relevant USCC Preliminaries as the pathway to the USCC Qualifiers at every opportunity without charge to the SCA U.S. Chapter or USCC.
 7. Promote the relevant USCC Qualifiers as the pathway to the U.S. Coffee Championships at every opportunity without charge to the SCA U.S. Chapter or USCC.
 - iv. Upon entry into any USCC competition and in exchange for the opportunity to win, each competitor undertakes that, should they win, they will:
 1. Fully abide by the USCC Champion's Code of Conduct.
 2. Make themselves available to travel to represent the U.S. at the World Coffee Championships.

3.4 ENFORCEMENT OF RULES AND REGULATIONS

- a. The U.S. Roaster Championship will employ these Rules & Regulations throughout the competition.
- b. If a competitor violates one 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 one 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 THE COMPETITION

4.1 COMPETITION SUMMARY

- a. The USRC competition is divided into 4 separate competition steps:
 - i. **Green Grading:** Competitors are given 30 minutes to evaluate the provided green coffee for moisture, density, screen size, and defect count. Competitors will submit the green evaluation sheet of the Single Origin coffee when the green evaluation time is finished.
 - ii. **Sample Roasting:** Competitors are also given 30 minutes to sample roast the Single Origin coffee.
 - iii. **Open Lab & Cupping:** Competitors will be designated additional time to learn about the lab equipment and roasting machines. Competitors are also allowed to cup the sample roasted coffees for sensory evaluation during open cupping time.
 - iv. **Production Roasting:** Competitors will submit their roasting plan for their intended roast of the Single Origin coffee at the designated time before their production roasting time starts. Competitors are given 30 minutes to roast their Single Origin coffee. Before the production roasting time has elapsed, competitors will submit the roasted coffee as a final product in the provided bag(s).
 - v. **Production Roast Evaluation:** The competitors submitted coffee are cupped blind by judges.
 - vi. **Audience Service:** Competitors will have 20-30 minutes of Audience Service where they will discuss and present their compulsory coffee to the audience and attendees. Competitor’s Single Origin coffees will be brewed on batch brewers by volunteers before the start of their Audience Service time.
- b. Total scores are based on the Production Roast Evaluation results, Single Origin green evaluation, and the roasting plan scores.

5.0 STANDARDS AND DEFINITIONS

5.1 GREEN COFFEE

- a. All green coffee in the competition will be of the species *Coffea Arabica*, produced in various countries or regions. Competitors will be provided with Single Origin green coffees for each step of the competition. Competitors will be informed of the provided coffees onsite.
- b. The green coffee may have been processed by any of the different processing methods (e.g., washed [wet-process], natural [dry-process], semi-washed, etc.)
- c. **Green Coffee Sample for Sample Roasting:** A 500g quantity of a Single Origin green coffee will be provided to competitors for their sample roasting. The green coffee sample provided will be randomly pulled from the bulk quantity of a Single Origin green coffee.
- d. **Green Coffee Sample for Green Grading:** A separate 350g quantity of a Single Origin green coffee will be provided to competitors for their green grading evaluation time. ONLY this sample will be used for the green grading evaluation time and be scored.
- e. **Green Coffee for Competition:** Up to 13 kg of a Single Origin coffee will be provided to competitors at their production roasting practice and competition time. The Stage Manager will randomly pull from the bulk quantity of the Single Origin green coffee. Competitors MUST use the provided Single Origin green coffee for the production roasting, otherwise the competitor will be disqualified.
- f. **Coffee Density:** A density-measuring device may be provided by USRC to measure the density of the green coffee. The density calculation protocol below will be used if the device is not provided:

- i. A measurement of mass density of green coffee is calculated by the mass of coffee (in grams) divided by the volume of coffee (in liters), as measured in a container of known volume. It is not necessary to calculate for interstitial space (air between individual beans), which is treated as a constant and is ignored. In this competition, the weight of the coffee will be measured in a 250 mL vessel.
- g. **Coffee Moisture:** A moisture-measuring device may be provided by USRC to measure the water content in the green coffee. A measurement of water content in green coffee is calculated as the mass of water content divided by the total original mass of green coffee. The unit for coffee moisture is a percentage (%), and shall be calculated to the nearest hundredths (e.g., 10.33%)
- h. **Screen Size:** A stack of sizing screens are used to physically separate a green coffee sample by bean size. The screen sizes are increments of 1/64th of an inch (e.g. screen 15 has holes of 15/64 inch.) The resulting data should be notated as one, two, or three screen-numbers (no more than three of mass retained on that particular screen, if and only if as they occur above 10% of the total sample mass).
- i. **Roast Color:** Roasted and ground coffee shall be evaluated for roast color using the provided colorimeter. Instructions and the grind size for the roast color evaluation will be given during the competitor tutorial time. Competitors may bring their own roasted coffee sample to be calibrated with the provided colorimeter. If the sponsored colorimeter has multiple reading settings, the setting to be used will be agreed upon and communicated in the orientation meeting.

5.2 ROASTING PLAN

- a. Competitors will submit a roasting plan, a written log of their proposed roast profile and the reason for selecting that roast profile. Competitors will clearly describe their roast profile and give taste and flavor descriptions, including the intensity of acidity and body. Competitors are recommended to use the SCA standard flavor wheel as a reference tool.

5.3 DEFECT COUNT

- a. Green coffee defects shall be identified and counted from a 350g sample. Competitors will be provided a 350g sample of a Single Origin green coffee, identify and count the defects listed in the green evaluation scoresheet: full black, partial black, full sour, partial sour, etc. Competitors will submit all the defects (except quakers) found in the Single Origin sample in the provided bag when they submit their green evaluation scoresheet. Quaker(s) will be identified and counted from the Single Origin production roast and evaluated by judges after the submission.

5.4 PRODUCTION ROASTING

- a. Competitors must arrive at the roasting area at their designated "Arrive" time listed on the competitor schedule.
- b. Competitors will be given 5 minutes of setup time to prepare their roasting area. Competitors may not begin roasting until their official Roast time begins, as indicated by the Stage Manager, judge, or designated volunteer.
- c. Competitors will have 30 minutes to roast their Single Origin green coffee.
- d. A judge will oversee production roasting.
- e. Competitors must utilize the provided roasting machine.
- f. After each competitor's roasting time, each competitor will have 5 minutes of clean-up time.
- g. During production roasting, competitors will place their roasted coffee into the provided bag(s).
- h. Each competitor must submit **3 lbs of roasted coffee**.
 - i. **Roasted Coffee Submission:** The roasted coffee product is submitted by the competitor as their final product to be evaluated by judges. The submission must be completed by competitors before their production roasting time is finished. Competitors will be evaluated only on the work associated with the coffee included in the roasted coffee submission. Coffee submitted for judging must be from the provided Single Origin green coffee. Competitors will submit 3 pounds of the roasted coffee in the provided bag(s).
 - ii. Competitors will submit any quaker(s) found from their Single Origin production roast in a separate provided bag.
 - iii. No coaches or helpers may assist the competitor during their setup, production roasting, or clean-up times.

5.5 AUDIENCE SERVICE

- a. Competitors will be scheduled to provide sample sized portions of each of their coffees to attendees.
- b. Each competitor will be scheduled for 20-30 minute Audience Service time slots on Sunday.
- c. Attendance during the time slot is mandatory. Audience Service is required but not scored. Competitors who do not participate in Audience Service will be disqualified.
- d. Competitors will be given 1 air pot or dispenser with their coffee and cups for Audience Service. Competitors must remain in the Audience Service area for the entire scheduled time.
- e. Competitors may present their coffee in any manner they choose with any accompanying presentation. The format of this time is entirely up to the competitor. It is time allotted for each competitor to engage with attendees and let people taste their coffee.
- f. No audio/visual or power are provided for Audience Service. Competitors may not play music during Audience Service.
- g. Competitors may hand out sample materials to audience members (for example, flyers, postcards, stickers, buttons, whole bean coffee samples, etc.) during their Audience Service time.

6.0 COMPETITION OVERVIEW

- a. Competitors will be assigned the competition times for sample roasting, green evaluation, roasting practice and production roasting. Competitors will not have access to the competition equipment, the competition coffees, or equipment except during the allotted competition and practice times.

6.1 COMPETITION PROCEDURE

- a. The competition is divided into 5 competition steps, each with its own procedure and available facilities:
 - i. Sample Roasting & Open Cupping
 - ii. Green Grading
 - iii. Production Roast Practice
 - iv. Production Roasting
 - v. Audience Service
- b. During green grading and competition times, coaches and non-competitors **cannot** give assistance or input to competitors, or interfere in any way with the competitors, judges, Stage Manager or the competition procedure. Failure to comply with this may lead to disqualification of the competitor.
- c. Competitors should be at the competition area 30 minutes prior to any scheduled competition or practice time. Any competitor who is not onsite at the start of their competition time may be disqualified by the Stage Manager or presiding head judge. If the schedule is delayed, the competitor should still be prepared at their designated time.
- d. All green coffee will be released right before each activity starts with the presence of technical officials or the Stage Manager.
- e. All the coffee at the competition area will be collected by officials immediately each roasting activity is finished. The activity includes green evaluation, sample roasting, practice roasting, and production roasting time. Competitors are allowed to take some of the sample roasted coffee to be used **ONLY** at the open cupping time for their own reference. Green and roasted coffee may not leave the USRC stage area.

7.0 MACHINERY, ACCESSORIES, & RAW MATERIALS

7.1 ROASTING MACHINES

- a. The production roasting machines provided shall be manually operated and be 3 kg in capacity, installed according to local laws for safety and environmental effects. No use of automation mode will be allowed during the competition. USRC will make every effort to ensure competitors use the same roasting machine for both practice and production but it is not guaranteed.
- b. A coffee-roasting machine designed for roasting 100-500g samples will be provided. The sample roasting machines may be sponsored from multiple manufacturers.

7.2 DISQUALIFICATION FOR ALTERATIONS OR DAMAGE TO EQUIPMENT

- a. Except for usage of the external controls, competitors may not change, adjust, or alter any component of the competition grinders, including the hoppers. Competitors may not change, adjust, or replace any element, setting, or component of the roasting machines. Any changes or adjustments made may be grounds for disqualification. Any damage to the competition equipment due to misuse or abuse is grounds for disqualification at the discretion of the presiding head judge.
- b. Competitors may not attach anything to the roasting equipment (e.g. magnets or lights). Anything added to the roasting machine made may be grounds for disqualification.

7.3 PROVIDED EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES

- a. The competition area will be equipped with the following:
 - Green Evaluation Work Station (e.g., green grading table, green grading scoresheets, bags for defects collection, etc.)
 - Lab Tools Station (e.g., moisture measuring device, density measuring device, sizing screens, etc.)
 - Sample Roasting Machines
 - Production Roasting Machines
 - Containers and accessories for competition
- b. Cupping Station equipment:
 - Hot water machines
 - Hot water kettles
 - Filter/bulk grinders
 - 42" cupping tables
 - 30" supply tables/accessible cupping tables
 - Cupping bowls/glasses
 - Cupping spoons
 - Trays
 - Scales
 - TDS Meter (available upon request from the Stage Manager)
 - Color meter

7.4 RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES

- a. Competitors may optionally bring their own cupping spoon and manual note-taking implements (e.g., notebook, papers, pens.) No electronic devices or items that can provide any additional resources for competitors are allowed to use during any competition time. Stop watches or flashlights may be used as long as that is their sole purpose (e.g. no cell phone for use as a stopwatch).
- b. Competitors may only use items provided by the competition (or listed as optional above) during the competition time, no other resources may be utilized.
- c. Competitors may wear headphones or ear plugs. However, time cues may be verbal only so these competitors will need to be mindful of time cues from volunteers.
- d. Competitors may wear headlamps. However, competitors may not attach anything to the roasting equipment (e.g. magnets or lights). Anything added to the roasting machine made may be grounds for disqualification.

8.0 COMPETITOR INSTRUCTIONS

8.1 ONLINE LEARNING SESSIONS

- a. Prior to the USRC, Online Learning Sessions will take place. Taking part in one of these sessions is mandatory for all competitors and judges. Any important onsite information will be given to you via email before the competition. The

Competitions Manager, Stage Manager, Head Runner, and/or Head Judges will also be able to assist you with onsite event questions during the competition.

8.2 BE ON TIME

- a. Each competitor should be at the competition **at least 30 minutes** prior to their scheduled time. Any competitor who is not onsite at the start of their competition time will be disqualified.

8.3 OPEN LAB

- a. On Thursday morning there will be open lab time. Competitors may use this time to familiarize themselves with the laboratory and roasting equipment.
- b. Competitors should work around each other and keep the stations clean and organized. If a competitor is disorganized, disruptive, or otherwise unprofessional during this time they may be asked to leave the lab practice. This time is for competitors to become familiar with the laboratory and roasting equipment.
- c. The production roasting machine sponsor will be onsite during this time to answer competitor questions about roasting equipment.

8.4 OPEN CUPPING

- d. Throughout Friday and on Saturday morning, competitors will have access to the cupping area. **1 coach or helper** may assist the competitor in the cupping area. Competitors may cup their sample roasted coffee and their production roast practice coffee during the scheduled hours only.
- e. Competition coffees, both green and roasted, may NOT leave the competition area.
- f. Competitors should work around each other and keep the stations clean and organized. If a competitor is disorganized, disruptive, or otherwise unprofessional during this time they may be asked to leave the lab practice. This time is for competitors to become familiar with the laboratory and roasting equipment.
- g. The production roasting machine sponsor will be onsite during this time to answer competitor questions about roasting equipment.

8.5 COACHING

- a. Instructions or 'coaching' may **not** be provided to a competitor during their green grading or production roasting times under penalty of disqualification.
- b. **1 coach or helper** may be with the competitor during their open lab, practice, and cupping times.
- c. USRC encourages audience participation and enthusiastic fan support that does not interfere with competition.
- d. Please note: coaches, supporters, friends, or family members are not allowed on stage or in the roasting area while the competition is in progress, otherwise the competitor is subject to disqualification by the presiding head judge.

8.6 TECHNICAL ISSUES

- a. During the production roasting time, if a competitor feels there is a technical problem the competitor should raise their hand, call "technical" and ask for the Stage Manager or head judge. The time will be stopped. Competitors may call for a technical timeout for the following reasons only:
 - i. The electrical power supply
 - ii. The gas supply
 - iii. The provided official roasting machine
- b. If the Stage Manager and/or head judge agree there is a technical problem that can be easily resolved they will decide the appropriate amount of time for the competitor to be credited, if appropriate. Once the technician has fixed the problem the competitor's time will resume.
- c. If the technical problem cannot be solved in a timely manner the Stage Manager/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 rescheduled time.

- d. If a competitor must stop their competition time the Competitions Manager will reschedule the competitor to compete in full again at a later time.
- e. If it is determined that the technical issue is due to competitor error or the competitor's personal equipment the Stage Manager and/or 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.
- a. Unfamiliarity with equipment is not grounds for a technical timeout.

8.7 FORGOTTEN ACCESSORIES

- a. If a competitor has forgotten some of their equipment and/or accessories during their Roasting time, they must inform the head judge that they have forgotten an item(s) offstage and then personally retrieve the missing item(s). The competition time will not be stopped.
- b. Nothing may be delivered by the runners, supporters, team members, or the audience during the competition time.

9.0 POST-COMPETITION

9.1 SCOREKEEPING

- a. The official scorekeepers are responsible for keeping all scores confidential. Judges will not tabulate scores, all scoresheet tabulations will be made by the scorekeepers and verified by the Competitions Manager.

9.1.1 Competitor's Total Score

- a. The competitor's total score will be tallied by adding the sum of scoresheets from all three days, then by deducting any penalties.
- b. After the product roast evaluation, the numeric score should be notated in each box marked Total. Scorekeepers will calculate the sum of the component scores to determine the Total Score.
- c. The total product cupping score of each coffee submission will be calculated by adding the total scores from the median 3 judges selected by removing the highest and lowest total scores out of 5 judges.

9.1.2 Competitor's Total Score

- a. If there is a tie between 2 or more competitors, the official scorekeepers will total all of the involved competitors cupping scores. The competitor with the highest cupping score will win the tie and place above any other competitor with the same total competition score.
- b. If competitors have the same cupping score, then the competitor with the higher total roast profile score will be ranked higher.
- c. If competitors have the same roast profile and cupping score, then the competitor with the higher total green evaluation score will be ranked higher.

9.2 COMPETITOR SCORESHEET DEBRIEF

- a. Following the awards ceremony on Sunday, competitors will have an opportunity to review their scoresheets with the judges onsite in accordance with the announced schedule. Competitors are allowed to keep their original scoresheets only if the Scorekeeper and Competition Manager have scanned the scoresheets.
- b. Digital copies are available to competitors upon request starting 30 days after the conclusion of the USRC by emailing the Competitions Manager competitions@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 their head judge during the competitor debriefing to explain their protest. The head judge and/or one or more representatives of the U.S. Competitions Working Group along with the Competitions Manager will discuss the competitor's protest on-site with the judges who judged the competitor. They will make a decision on-site and a representative of the U.S. Competitions

Working Group or the Competitions Manager will inform the competitor of the decision.

10.0 PRE-ROASTING

- a. Competitors will be assigned the competition times for green evaluation,roasting practice and sample roasting. Competitors will not have access to the competition equipment, the competition coffees, or equipment except during the allotted competition and practice times

10.1 SAMPLE ROASTING TIME

- a. Competitors will be issued a 500g of the Single Origin green coffee for sample roasting. All sample roasting must come from the provided sample.
- b. Sample roasters are for the roasters own personal use in order to determine roast parameters and green coffee attributes. Sample roasted coffee will not be submitted for evaluation. Competitors are expected to work in an organized and respectful manner towards other competitors and technical officials.
- c. Competitors will have 30 minutes of sample roasting time. Competitors must not start a new roast if they have less than 5 minutes remaining for their sample roasting time. A timekeeper volunteer or judge will keep time for competitors. No extra time will be given except in case of a technical problem. Determination of a technical problem is at the discretion of the head competition official and must be raised by the competitor before completion of time.
- d. Officials will warm up roasting machines to the warm-up temperature, for a period of 30 minutes before the first competitor is to begin. The machines will be returned to the same warm-up temperature before the next competitor competes. Competitors may be given 5 minutes of preparation time to adjust their own warm-up temperature before their sample roasting time begins.

10.2 GREEN EVALUATION TIME

- a. Each competitor will be given 350g of Single Origin green coffee specified for the green evaluation, along with a blank green evaluation scoresheet to complete. (Quakers in the scoresheet are not identified during the green grading time.)
- b. Competitors are expected to demonstrate knowledge of green coffee, its defects, and an ability to use the equipment supplied to evaluate the coffee's properties.
- c. Green coffee evaluation shall occur according to Standards and Definitions as defined in the section above and following the usage guidelines explained during the competitor meeting.
- d. Defect Count should be determined based on the guidelines detailed by the SCA Green Arabica Coffee Classification and the SCA Defect Handbook out of the provided 350g sample. No handbook will be allowed to be used during the green evaluation time but may be present during Open Lab and practice times.
- e. Competitors will have 30 minutes of green evaluation time to complete their green evaluation scoresheet for the provided Single Origin green coffee. A timekeeper volunteer, a judges, or the Stage Manager will keep time competitors. No extra time will be given except in case of a technical problem but this will be at the discretion of the head judge or Stage Manager. The technical problem must be raised by the competitor before the completion of competition time.
- f. Once competitors complete green grading they must submit their green evaluation scoresheet with the defects, separated into the provided bag(s), to be checked by a head judge or certified Q grader.
- g. If the competitor has not finished their submission during the allotted time period, they will be allowed to proceed until the submission is completed. .25 (¼) point will be deducted from the competitor's total score for every second over 30 minutes, up to a maximum penalty of 15 points (1 minute). If a competitor's green grading time exceeds 31 minutes their green grading will be disqualified.
- h. Competitors will evaluate moisture using the moisture-measuring device provided by USRC. Competitors must show they have the ability to measure the water content of green coffee.
- i. Competitors will evaluate density, using the equipment supplied by USRC. Competitors must show they have the ability to measure the density of green coffee.
- j. Screen size will be determined using only the screens supplied by USRC. Competitors must demonstrate the ability to use the supplied screens to evaluate the screen size of the coffee. Competitors will shake 350g of green coffee through sizing screens and record the weight in grams for the screens that retain the greatest number of beans.

10.3 PRACTICE ROASTING

- a. Competitors will be given 30 minutes of practice time on the roasting machines. USRC will provide coffee for practice roasting.
- b. Competitors must keep the stations clean and organized. If a competitor is disorganized, disruptive, or otherwise unprofessional during this time, judges may charge a 1 point deduction on the Overall Score Sheet. Otherwise, this activity is not judged and is purely for the competitor to become familiar with the laboratory equipment and area.
- c. Competitors can choose a selected profile from their practice time as a reference curve for their competition roast if they prefer; they will need to clearly make note of this in the roasting plan and inform the stage manager or technical officials of their preferred roast profile number.

10.4 OPEN CUPPING TIME

- a. Competitors may examine and handle their roasted samples (grind, brew, evaluate color and/or cup) at the open cupping area during the scheduled open cupping time.
- b. Competitors must work around each other and keep the stations clean and organized. If a competitor is disorganized, disruptive, or otherwise unprofessional during this time, judges may charge a 1 point deduction on the Overall Score Sheet. Otherwise, this activity is not judged and is purely for the competitor to be able to determine how they would like to roast.
- c. Competitors, volunteers, etc. MUST NOT remove any coffees used in the competition from the competition area. This includes roasted sample, practice, and production coffees.

10.5 ROASTING PLAN

- a. At the scheduled time, competitors will submit their roasting plan. This is a written log of the coffee that has been proposed, roast profile, and reasons for the selected roast profile. Competitors should describe the quantity and quality of each roast profile, and what the product cupping results should be in terms of taste and flavor including tasting descriptors and the intensity of acidity and body. Competitors should use the SCA flavor wheel as a reference tool when describing flavor attributes.
- b. Green coffee will be released to competitors right before their production roasting time. Any remaining green coffee MUST be returned to the stage manager during clean up time.
- c. The judges will evaluate cup-to-profile based on the accuracy of competitor's taste descriptions of the final product, considering the taste descriptors and the intensity of acidity, body, and sweetness written in the roasting plan. This will be evaluated by judges during the deliberation of production roast evaluation. The expected cup-to-profile of each cup will be disclosed by the Stage Manager or the presiding head judge during the deliberation and judges will score the cup-to-profile based on their notes from the cupping.

11.0 PRODUCTION ROASTING

- a. Competitors will be assigned competition times for production roasting time. Competitors may not have access to the competition area, the competition coffees, or equipment except during the allotted competition time.

11.1 ROASTING TIME

- a. Competitors will have 30 minutes of scheduled production roasting time. Competitors are responsible for making sure they know when their competition time is and making sure they are there on time.
- b. Officials will warm up roasting machines to the appropriate temperature for a period of 30 minutes before the first competitor is to begin. Between competitors, the machines will be returned to the same warm-up temperature before the next competitor. The competitors will be informed of the warm up temperature during the Competitor Meeting. Competitors will be given 5 minutes of preparation time to adjust their own warm-up temperature before their roasting time begins.
- c. Competitors will receive a time call of 15, 10, and 1 minutes remaining. Competitors must not start a new roast if they

- have less than 10 minutes remaining of their competition time.
- d. Roasting machines will have time/temperature logging systems, which will log and display real-time roasting information to the competitor, the technical officials, and to the audience. The roast log information will be recorded and saved for the roasting plan evaluation. For accurate recording, competitors should push the stop button on the logging system immediately after they dump the roasted coffee into the tray, or at the same time. In case of any technical issues on the logging system, technical officials will manually log the roasting information, and this will replace the data from the logging system when agreed upon by the head judge and Stage Manager.
 - e. Competitors will be given a practice time on the time/temperature logging system prior to competition. It is the responsibility of the competitor to ensure the roasting log system is ready, enabled, and logging the roast accurately. Any roasts not logged or attempts to change the system setting shall be disqualified and not considered.
 - f. If the sponsored roasting machine allows for airflow adjustment, the competitor may choose to utilize this control if they want, however it will not be scored in any way. At the start of each competitor's competition time the airflow will be reset to a fixed setting announced at the Competitor Meeting.
 - g. Roasted coffee must be presented to the Stage Manager before the end of that competitor's production roasting time. Competitors may call "time" to stop their roasting time before the end of the allotted time if they so choose.
 - h. Competitors are responsible for and in charge of their roasting process during the competition time. The roasting process also includes charging, dropping, cleaning, and packaging. There will be no assistance provided by volunteers or technical officials.
 - i. Roast color will be measured from ground coffee by an official designated by the Stage Manager or head judge. The roast color measurement will take place at least 1 hour after the submission is complete.

11.2 DEDUCTION AND OVERTIME PENALTY

- a. Any coffees used and incorporated into the roasted coffee submission will be evaluated and judged in comparison to the corresponding roasting plans submitted. Significant differences between the roasting plan and the corresponding roast log data may result in point deduction(s) by head judge and technical officials. Temperature of roast will be logged and variance will result in loss of points: 1 point for every 2 degrees to either side of desired temperature with a maximum deduction of 6 points.
- b. The end weight of each roast will be measured by technical officials during the production roasting time and scored, such that if the actual end weight of the roast is within 200g of the end weight specification, no deductions are made. For every 100g past the allowed 200g variation a 1 point will be deducted.
- c. For roast color, if the actual roast color is within 2 points of the roast color specification, no deductions are made. For every 1 point past the allowed 2 point variation a 1 point will be deducted.
- d. If the competitor has not finished their roasting or submission during the allotted time period, they will be allowed to proceed until the submission is completed. .25 (¼) point will be deducted from the competitor's total score for every second over 30 minutes, up to a maximum penalty of 15 points (1 minute). If a competitor's green grading time exceeds 31 minutes their green grading will be disqualified.

12.0 PRODUCTION ROAST EVALUATION

- a. Judges will participate in the product cupping, featuring all of the roasted coffees submitted.
- b. The production cupping by judges for each coffee category will consist of 2-4 tables of cupping.
- c. The cupping will be blind. The Stage Manager will mark each competitor's submitted coffee with a code provided by the Competitions Manager. Only the Stage Manager and Competitions Manager will have the key to the codes.
- d. 4 cupping judges and 1 head judge will cup together. Judges will 'break crusts' (stirring the cups to collapse the coffee grounds) as arranged by the head judge.
- e. 4-7 cups of each coffee will be prepared to SCA Cupping Standards and Practices, and the cupping will proceed according to the direction and protocol established by the head judge. All cupping judges must listen carefully to directions from the head judge and follow all directions and protocols.
- f. Only cupping judges and head judge scores count towards the total scores. Judges are expected to follow standard SCA cupping protocols and may not physically touch or move cups at any time.
- g. Head judges will be designated by the U.S. Competitions Working Group (based on judging and professional experience)

to oversee the competition and lead the calibration, deliberation, and debrief during the competition.

12.1 SCA CUPPING STANDARDS AND PRACTICES

- a. Cupping Glasses Cupping vessels shall be of tempered glass or ceramic material. They shall be between 7 and 9 fluid ounces (207 ml to 266 ml), with a top diameter of between 3 and 3.5 inches (76 - 89 mm). All cups used shall be of identical volume, dimensions and material of manufacture.
- b. Determining Measurements
 - i. The optimum ratio is 8.25 grams of coffee per 150 ml of water, as this conforms to the mid-point of the optimum balance recipes for the Golden Cup.
 - ii. Determine the volume of water in the selected cupping glass and adjust the weight of coffee to this ratio within +/- .25 grams.
- c. Cupping Preparation
 - i. Sample should be ground immediately prior to cupping, no more than 15 minutes before infusion with water. If this is not possible, samples should be covered and infused not more than 30 minutes after grinding.
 - ii. Samples should be weighed out as WHOLE BEANS to the predetermined ratio (see above for ratio) for the appropriate cup fluid volume.
 - iii. Grind particle size should be slightly coarser than typically used for paper filter drip brewing, with 70% to 75% of the particles passing through a U.S. Standard size 20 mesh sieve. At least 5 cups from each sample should be prepared to evaluate sample uniformity.
 - iv. Each cup of sample should be ground by running a cleansing quantity of the sample through the grinder, and then grinding each cup's batch individually into the cupping glasses, ensuring that the whole and consistent quantity of sample gets deposited into each cup. A lid should be placed on each cup immediately after grinding.
- d. Pouring
 - i. Water used for cupping should be clean and odor free, but not distilled or softened. Ideal Total Dissolved Solids are 125-175 ppm, but should not be less than 100 ppm or more than 250 ppm.
 - ii. The water should be freshly drawn and brought to approximately 200° F (93°C) at the time it is poured onto the ground coffee. Temperature needs to be adjusted to elevation
 - iii. The hot water should be poured directly onto the measured grounds to the rim of the cup, making sure to wet all of the grounds. The grounds to steep undisturbed for a period of 3-5 minutes before evaluation.

12.2 PRODUCTION ROAST EVALUATION PREPARATION

- a. All samples will have been rested for a minimum of 8 hours.
- b. The sponsored water will be calibrated with the following standard 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)
- c. Once the judges finish dry fragrance evaluation, the hot water should be poured directly onto the measured grounds to the rim of the cup, making sure to wet all of the grounds. The grounds will be left to steep undisturbed for a period of 4 minutes before evaluation begins.

12.3 EVALUATION SCALE

- a. Scoring will be based on the USRC production roast evaluation form. Each score sheet will be scored out of 100 and the total scores from the product cupping will be combined with scores from previous days scoresheets to determine the overall winner.

- b. Judges should consider the numerical score to be a code that corresponds with each descriptive word.
- c. Intermediary scores may be utilized in 0.25 point increments, and judges may not use scoring increments smaller than 0.25 points.
- d. A score of Unacceptable (0) is reserved for situations of clear and egregious violations of the Rules, common sense or minimum standards of professionalism.
- e. The evaluation scale is the same for both Tasting rounds scoresheets.
 - Good : 6 – 6.75
 - Very Good : 7 – 7.75
 - Excellent : 8 – 8.75
 - Extraordinary : 9 – 10
- f. Judges may not use scores lower than 6.00 on Tasting scoresheets. Evaluations below the description of “Good” should be given a score of 6.00.

12.4 PRODUCTION ROAST EVALUATION SCORESHEET

- a. The production roast evaluation form provides a means of recording important flavor attributes in coffee: Fragrance/Aroma, Flavor, Aftertaste, Acidity, Body, Sweetness, Balance, and Roasted Defects. Judges base scores on the quality of these attributes by scoring higher for increased quality and lower for decreased quality. The Cup-To-Profile score is based on the accuracy of taste description provided by competitors.
- b. Each evaluation component is marked with a horizontal (left to right) scale, which is used to rate the judge’s perception of relative quality of the particular component based upon their perception of the coffee and experiential understanding of quality as a filter coffee product.
- c. Some components are marked with vertical scales. The vertical (up and down) scales are used to rank the intensity of the sensory component and are marked for reference and notation, and are not included in the score. In the case of the vertical scale for the Sweetness category, the scale is used as a reference not as intensity, but as the development of sugars during roasting (from sweet grains, to candy, to chocolate).
- d. The SCA flavor wheel is to be used as a reference tool for the cupping judges to create a common language for competitor feedback.

12.5 TASTING COMPONENTS

12.5.1 Fragrance/Aroma

- a. The aromatic aspects include Fragrance (defined as the smell of the ground coffee when still dry) and Aroma (the smell of the coffee when infused with hot water). One can evaluate this at 3 distinct steps in the cupping process:
 - i. sniffing the grounds placed into the cup before pouring water onto the coffee;
 - ii. sniffing the aromas released as the coffee steeps and crust is formed; and
 - iii. sniffing the aromas released while breaking the crust.
- b. Specific aromas can be noted under “qualities” and the intensity of the dry, break, and wet aroma aspects noted on the vertical scales. The score finally given should reflect the preference of all 3 aspects of a sample’s Fragrance/Aroma evaluation.

12.5.2 Flavor

- a. Flavor represents the coffee's principal character, the "midrange" notes, in between the first impressions given by the coffee's first aroma and acidity to its final aftertaste. It is a combined impression of all the gustatory (taste buds) sensations and retro-nasal aromas that go from the mouth to nose. The score given for Flavor should account for the intensity, quality and complexity of its combined taste and aroma, experienced when the coffee is slurped into the mouth vigorously so as to involve the entire palate in the evaluation.

12.5.3 Aftertaste

- a. Aftertaste is defined as the length of positive flavor (taste and aroma) qualities emanating from the back of the palate

and remaining after the coffee is expectorated or swallowed. If the aftertaste were short or unpleasant, a lower score would be given, and vice versa.

12.5.4 Acidity

- a. Acidity is often described as "brightness" when favorable or "sour" when unfavorable. At its best, acidity contributes to a coffee's liveliness, sweetness, and fresh-fruit character and is almost immediately experienced and evaluated when the coffee is first slurped into the mouth. Acidity that is overly intense or dominating may be unpleasant, however, and excessive acidity may not be appropriate to the flavor profile of the sample. The final score marked on the horizontal tick-mark scale should reflect the judge's perceived quality for the Acidity.

12.5.5 Body

- a. The quality of Body is based upon the tactile feeling of the liquid in the mouth, especially as perceived between the tongue and roof of the mouth. Most samples with heavy Body may also receive a high score in terms of quality due to the presence of brew colloids and sucrose. Some samples with lighter Body may also have a pleasant feeling in the mouth, however. Coffees expected to be high in Body, such as a Sumatran coffee, or coffees expected to be low in Body, such as a Mexican coffee, can both receive equally high quality scores although their intensity rankings will be quite different.

12.5.6 Sweetness

- a. Sweetness refers to a pleasing fullness of flavor as well as any obvious sweetness, and its perception is the result of the presence of certain carbohydrates. The opposite of sweetness in this context is sour, astringency or "green" flavors.
- b. This category is directly affected by how the coffee was roasted and how the sugars were developed during roasting, and the score is multiplied by 2.

12.5.7 Balance

- a. How all the various aspects of Flavor, Aftertaste, Acidity, Sweetness, and Body of the sample work together and complement or contrast each other is Balance. If the sample is lacking in certain aromas or taste attributes or if some attributes are lost or overpowering, the Balance score would be reduced.

12.5.8 Cup-To-Profile Accuracy:

- a. Competitors will be describing details regarding the expected sensory experience of their roasted coffee. Judges should take the taste descriptions and intensity mark on the submitted Roast plan into consideration after the cupping evaluation. Higher marks will be given when the competitor's description of taste is both accurate and detailed. However, this is an evaluation of the quality, accuracy, and relevance of their descriptions, not the quantity.

12.5.9 Defects

- a. There are multiple Defects that may arise from the roasting process that can affect the quality of the sample in a negative way.
- b. They are scored on a 0 to 5 scale based on the intensity of the Defect as perceived by the judge. A score of 0 would mean the Defect was not present and a score of 5 would indicate the Defect was overwhelming in the sample. These Defects are:
 - i. Underdevelopment - Aggressive acidity and flavors at the front of the palate with no finish or aftertaste.
 - ii. Overdevelopment - All acidity and flavor have been muted.
 - iii. Baked - Usually caused by trying to extend the roast for too long at too low of a temperature. It can look the same color but caramelization has stalled. The baking defect tastes like popcorn or hard cereal/oat flavors.
 - iv. Scorched - Happens at the beginning of the roast when green coffee is burnt before any enzymatic or sugar browning. Tastes burnt, smoky, and roasty.

- v. Tipped - Caused when heat is applied to the bean at excessive speed. It tastes burnt, over baked biscuit, and darker roasted coffees may have skunkiness.
- vi. Faced - Comes from two main reasons, an overloaded roaster and excessive heat. The coffee takes on heat faster than it can develop on the inside. Tastes burnt, roasty, and smoky.
- c. Roasting defects listed above found by cupping judges and agreed upon by the head judge will be part of the cupping score evaluation.

12.6 JUDGING PREPARATION AND PROTOCOL

12.6.1 Judges Table Supply List

- Pencils
- Clipboard (one per judge)
- Cupping spoons
- Spittoons/cups

12.6.2 Cupping Spoons and Spittoons

- a. Judges will use cupping spoons to slurp the coffees.
- b. Similarly, judges have the option to spit the coffees from their mouths, or to consume them.
- c. It is recommended (but not required) that judges try to be consistent with their spitting or swallowing through the entire competition.

12.7 SCORESHEETS

- a. Each evaluation component is marked with a horizontal (left to right) scale, which is used to rate the judge's perception of relative quality of the particular component based upon their perception of the sample and experiential understanding of quality.
- b. Some components are marked with vertical scales. The vertical (up and down) scales are used to rank the intensity of the sensory component and are marked for reference and notation, and are not included in the score.
- c. After evaluation, the numeric score should be notated in each box marked Total. Scorekeepers will calculate the sum of the component scores to determine the Total Score.

13.0 COMPETITOR PROTEST AND APPEALS

13.1 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 Competitions Manager. The Competitions Manager 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 Competitions Manager decides that the issue can be resolved onsite at the competition, the Competitions Manager 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 Competitions Manager, 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 one or more competitors to perform the relevant competition service to supersede the prior scores,
 - iii. Another solution, as determined by the Competitions Manager
- d. The Competitions Manager shall operate under the purview of the Specialty Coffee Association management and Advisory Board.

13.2 APPEAL LETTER

- a. If any protest described above cannot be resolved onsite or the competitor wishes to appeal a decision made by the Competitions Manager onsite, the Competitions Manager will ask the competitor to submit their appeal in writing (which may be by email or hard copy) to the Competitions Manager.
- 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 Competitions Manager within 24 hours after the subject incident.

13.3 APPEAL DECISION

- a. The Competitions Manager & U.S. 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 one or more competitors to perform the relevant competition service to supersede the prior scores,
 - iii. Another solution, as determined by the Competitions Manager
- b. The Competitions Manager shall operate under the purview of the Specialty Coffee Association management.