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1.0 ORGANIZATION

a. The U.S. Brewers Cup ("USBrC") is a program of the Specialty Coffee Association ("SCA") U.S. Chapter.

2.0 RIGHTS

a. All intellectual property related to the U.S. Brewers Cup, 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 express permission of the Specialty Coffee Association U.S. Chapter.

3.0 2023 U.S. COFFEE CHAMPS BREWERS CUP QUALIFYING COMPETITIONS

3.1 PARTICIPATION

3.1.1 Qualification

a. U.S. CoffeeChamps Brewers Cup Preliminaries ("Preliminaries")
   i. The Top 4 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 Preliminary Host. Competitors who do not place in the top 4 may register for a Qualifying Competition via the Lottery and/or Open Registration spots.
   ii. 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 4 at more than 1 of the Preliminaries, then their spot will be given to the next person in ranking order.
   iii. For the Preliminaries, no waitlist will be maintained, if a top 4 competitor passes on their reserved spot at the Qualifying Competitions the spot will be released back to Open Registration.

b. U.S. CoffeeChamps Qualifying Competitions ("Qualifying Competitions")
   i. The Qualifying Competitions are open to the 48 competitors who register. There will be 24 competitors at each of the 2 competitions, held at separate times and places. Brewers may compete at either competition regardless of company or geographic location. Competitors may only register to compete in 1 Brewers Cup Qualifying Competition.
   ii. The Top 4 competitors from each of the Preliminaries will be awarded a reserved spot at one of the U.S. Coffee Champs Qualifying Competitions.
   iii. The Top 6 finalists from the 2023 USBrC will receive a reserved spot at 1 of the 2024 U.S. CoffeeChamps Qualifying Competitions. *
   *Exception for 2023 season: due to a scorekeeping error, top 6 finalists from 2022 USBrC have been given space in the 2023 USBrC.
   iv. Remaining spots will be 50% Lottery Selection and 50% 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 the conclusion, the top 12 competitors from each of the 2 Qualifying Competitions will be invited to compete in the USBrC.
   vii. The single highest scoring competitor from each Qualifying Competition will be given a travel and accommodations stipend to United States Brewers Cup plus free registration.
viii. All Competitors and Judges are required to attend 1 Online Learning Session in order to participate at the Qualifying Competitions.

ix. Competitors may only compete once within the season at the Qualifying level. For example, if a competitor competes in the first Brewers Cup Qualifying Competition, that same competitor may not compete in the second Brewers Cup Qualifying Competition. They may, however, compete in another competition (i.e., Barista, Cup Tasters, or Roaster) at the second Qualifying Competition.

c. United States Brewers Cup (“USBrC”)  
i. The positions to compete at the USBrC will be guaranteed until an invited competitor turns down their spot or fails to register for USBrC within the designated registration window. Any unclaimed position(s) will be offered to the next highest scoring Brewer(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 2 weeks prior to USBrC.

ii. All Competitors must compete in 1 of the 2023 Qualifying Competitions to be eligible to compete in the 2023 USBrC. (Exception, 3.1.1b,iii, 2022 USBrC scorekeeping error)

iii. All Competitors and Judges are required to attend 1 Online Learning Session and the Competitor Meeting in order to participate at the USBrC.

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 National Competitions Manager.

3.1.2 Age requirement

a. Competitors and judges must be at least 18 years of age at the time of the Brewers Cup Qualifiers

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 links for the Qualifying Competitions can be found at uscoffeechampionships.org or requested from the National Competition Coordinator (uscompetitions@sca.coffee).

b. For the 2021-22 USBC and USBrC in Boston, a weighted lottery was used to select competitors for the very limited number of registration slots available. This decision was made for a number of reasons: a lack of qualifying events for that season, a small number of spots available, and a desire to ensure equity across the registration system. This year, to strike a balance and offer the best opportunity to all competitors, there will be a hybrid method of registration for competition spots at all qualifying events. For the US Brewers Cup Qualifying Events, 50% of the available registration spots will be selected by a weighted lottery and the remaining 50% of spots will be available during an open registration period.

c. Competitors who are interested in competing in one of these events may select their preferred method of registration. If they wish to participate in the lottery, they may submit an application. Following the same protocol as last year, a random drawing will take place and the selected competitors will be notified by e-mail. Each competitor will be given a registration code following their selection. Lottery selection will take place 1-2 weeks prior to open registration. The remaining spots for each competition (including any spots that are left unclaimed by lottery recipients) will be available at a set time for online registration. Competitors must register and pay any registration fee to the SCA via the internet. Space is limited, and competitors will be admitted on a first-come, first-served basis. Once an entry form has been received, a confirmation letter will be sent to the competitor via email. Competitors who qualify to compete at the U.S. Coffee Championships through the Qualifying Competitions will receive an invitation and registration information via email following the Qualifying Competitions.

d. Competitor registration is not complete until competitors have paid for their registration and filled out the registration form.

e. Competitor registration belongs to the competitor listed on the registration form.

f. All registrations are non-refundable and non-transferable.

3.1.5 Expenses

a. Competitors must pay their own expenses related to the competition including, but not limited to, travel, accommodations, supplies, and ingredients needed for the competition. The Preliminaries, Qualifying Competitions, USBrC, Hosts, and SCA are not responsible or liable for any of the competitor’s 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, USBrC, or World Brewers Cup ("WBrC"), even if they do not advance. Competitors from the Qualifying Competitions may not judge at USBrC or WBrC, even if they do not advance. Additionally, competitors may not judge at any World Coffee Events (WCE) sanctioned WBrC (world, national, regional) in any country, prior to the conclusion of that season’s WBrC.

3.1.7 Conflicts of Interest

a. Judges and competitors are encouraged to let USBrC Head Judges or the National Competitions Coordinator know of any potential conflicts of interest at the soonest opportunity, and prior to the commencement of any competitions by competitors, 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 uscompetitions@sca.coffee.

3.2 COMPETITOR QUESTIONS

a. All competitors must thoroughly read and understand the Qualifier Rules & Regulations and scoresheets without exception. All Brewers Cup and U.S. CoffeeChamps 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 rule or regulation, it is their responsibility to clarify that position with the U.S. Brewers Cup Committee or the National Competitions Manager prior to the competitions by contacting competitions@sca.coffee. Competitors will also have the opportunity to ask questions during the 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 CoffeeChamps Qualifying Competitions.
       2. For the Qualifying Competitions, 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”, “CoffeeChamps Coffee in Good Spirits Qualifying Competition”, “U.S. CoffeeChamps Barista Preliminary”, etc.) in each instance when the competition title is used.
       4. Without limiting the generality of clauses (i) or (iii), 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 U.S. CoffeeChamps Preliminaries as the pathway to the U.S. CoffeeChamps Qualifying Competitions at every opportunity without charge to the SCA U.S. Chapter or USCC.
3.4 ENFORCEMENT OF RULES AND REGULATIONS

a. The USBrC 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. In the Qualifying Competition there is 1 round.
b. This round consists of 2 components called Services: Compulsory Service and Open Service. All competitors will compete in both Services. There will be no Finals Round in the Qualifying Competitions, only the US Brewers Cup Championship. There will also be an audience service component in the US Brewers Cup Championship.
c. During Compulsory Service, competitors will be evaluated by 3 sensory Judges. Additionally, a Head Judge may be present, and will taste the cups served. The Head Judge will not score the cups and is present to ensure calibration of the judges.
d. During Open Service, competitors will be evaluated by 1 Head Judge and 3 sensory judges. Each sensory judge panel will consist of 2 scoring judges, and 1 non-scoring judge-in-training or guest judge. Non-scoring shadow judges may also be present on stage.
e. During Open and Compulsory Services, competitors will prepare and serve 3 individual and separate beverages, 1 for each sensory judge.
f. Competitors may utilize any set of brewing devices of their choosing, so long as they qualify according to the definitions in these Rules.
g. For Compulsory Service, competitors will have 38 minutes of combined practice and setup time in preparation for and prior to Service. For Open Service, competitors will have 5 minutes of setup time.
h. During the Compulsory Service, competitors will have 7 minutes of competition time to prepare and serve their beverages, without any presentation or demonstration. Competitors will be limited to utilizing only the whole bean coffee provided by the Brewers Cup competition.
i. In Open Service, competitors may utilize any whole bean coffee of their choosing and will have 10 minutes of competition time to prepare and serve their beverages with an accompanying presentation.
j. All 3 beverages within open service must be prepared using the same whole bean coffee.
k. Competitors may produce as many beverages as they like during their competition time. Only the beverages served to the judges will be evaluated.
l. TDS measurements will be taken of each served beverage (for competitor reference only) during compulsory service.
m. At the Qualifying Competitions, Brewers will compete on both days of competition. Competitors will complete Compulsory Service one day and Open Service on the converse day.

5.0 STANDARDS AND DEFINITIONS

5.1 COMPULSORY SERVICE

a. Compulsory Service is 1 of 2 coffee services at the Qualifying Competitions.
b. Each competitor will receive 350g of the compulsory coffee at the start of their practice/setup time.
c. Competitors will be given 38 minutes of practice/setup time and 7 minutes of competition time to prepare and serve 3 cups of coffee, each brewed individually, to 3 judges.
d. There is no break between the practice/setup time and competition time. Competitors will have 45 minutes total for Compulsory Service.
e. Competitors in the Compulsory Service will all use the same Whole Bean Coffee and the same Standardized Service Vessels, as provided.
f. As instructed by the Stage Manager, competitors will prepare and serve their coffees when their competition time begins.

g. The beverages will be evaluated by sensory evaluation only and in accordance with the USBrC judging protocols (see relevant section below).

h. In Compulsory Service, accompanying information (visual, verbal, sensory, etc.) will not be evaluated and should not be presented.

i. During Compulsory Service, competitors must use the provided grinder, hot water tower, and water.

j. The Compulsory Stage is closed, competitor’s coaches or helpers may not assist them at any point. If a coach or assist is found on the Compulsory Stage, the competitor will be disqualified.

k. Bags/backpacks are not permitted on the Compulsory Stage. Competitors will be given a bus tub to carry their wares/brewing equipment onto the Compulsory Stage.

l. Competitors must return any remaining compulsory coffee at the conclusion of Service.

5.2 OPEN SERVICE

a. Open Service is 1 of 2 coffee services at the Qualifying Competitions.

b. Competitors will be given 5 minutes of setup time and 10 minutes of competition time to present, prepare, and serve 3 cups of coffee, each brewed individually, to 3 sensory judges and 1 head judge.

c. Competitors will utilize their own Whole Bean Coffee and serve beverages to the judges with an accompanying presentation that enhances the coffee experience.

d. The competitors will be evaluated by sensory and presentation evaluation in accordance with the USBrC judging protocols (see relevant section below).

e. During Open Service, competitors may use their own grinder backstage or the sponsor grinder onstage. They may also use their own water.

5.3 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.).

c. Coffee ground before the competition time will be allowed. The same rules regarding additives apply.

d. The provided Compulsory Service coffee will be a medium to medium-light roasted fully-washed specialty-grade coffee (Agron 60 to 80 Ground on ‘gourmet scale’), roasted without major roasting defects, such as baked or burnt, no more than 7 days prior to the competition day. If more than 1 individual roast-batch is provided, the batches will either be labeled uniquely, or batches will be completely blended. All the provided coffee will be identical and individually packed and sealed.

e. The Compulsory Service coffee information will not be revealed until the conclusion of the 2023 USBrC. The sponsor of the compulsory coffee will confirm the confidentiality responsibility with the National Competitions Coordinator.

5.4 THE BEVERAGE

a. The beverage must be an extraction from particles of whole bean coffee, using water as the solvent. No other additives of any kind will be allowed, aside from those contained within the relevant definitions of whole bean coffee, brew water, brewing devices, and service vessels. Additional water may be added (“bypass”) to the beverage before serving to alter concentration.

b. The beverage is suggested to have a total dissolved solids content of less than or equal to 2.00% or 20,000 ppm (ppm).

c. Competitors will prepare and serve three individual coffee beverages, one to each of the three sensory judges.

d. Each of the three beverages should be between 150 and 375 mL. If a beverage served is found to be less than 150 mL or more than 375 mL, that particular beverage (cup) will be disqualified and receive no score.

e. It is not necessary to serve the entire quantity of beverage produced during the coffee preparation. However, each sensory judge must be finally served at least 150 mL of the beverage to evaluate. Only the cup will be disqualified, Taste Description and Customer Service scores will still be counted. Judges will still evaluate the under or over-served cup for the competitor’s reference.

5.5 BREW WATER
a. Competitors must utilize the water provided by the competition for Compulsory Service, but competitors may utilize their own brew water for Open Service.

b. Provided water will be calibrated to within the acceptable ranges according to section 7.2c below.

c. If a competitor chooses to utilize their own water, the water may be analyzed to ensure that it does not contain prohibited levels of additives or chemicals. Competitors should be aware that the head judge will taste the water at both room temperature and heated after their competition time, to verify that the water does not contain any flavors or characteristics not typical of clean potable. Competitors intending to utilize their own water for Open Service must notify the Stage Manager and/or Head Judge prior to competing. Please see 9.3.2e for water evaluation protocol.

d. Provided water will be available both at room temperature and heated to between 96.0 and 98.5°C.

e. If a competitor chooses to use their own water, they must also provide their own device to heat the water to the desired temperature. Electrical power provided to power such devices will be limited to that provided by the competition.

5.6 GRINDER

a. A grinder is a device that grinds whole bean coffee into smaller physical particles without changing the chemistry of the coffee, aside from that directly related to the grinding of the coffee (friction, heat, etc.), and does not add any additives to the coffee.

b. Within the competition stage area and during competitors’ competition time competitors may NOT use any grinder other than the provided sponsored grinder.

c. During Compulsory Service, the sponsored grinder must be used.

d. During Open Service, competitors may use the sponsored grinder or another grinder of their choosing for Open Service. (see more information in Section 7.3)

5.7 BREWING DEVICE

a. A brewing device is any item that a competitor uses during and is involved in the beverage extraction.

b. Brewing devices must be “manual” in nature, and may not include or involve mechanical action powered by supplemental forces (i.e., electricity) other than those exceptions below:

   i. Mechanical action powered by the competitor’s manual action (i.e. hand and/or arm action), by gravity, or created by the act of coffee brewing itself (i.e. pressure in vacuum brewers, movement in balance brewers) is permitted.

   ii. Heat sources are allowed (electrical, magnetic, or liquid fuel), provided they are used to heat water or the coffee beverage and not to power any additional mechanism.

   iii. A machine or mechanism that supplies the competitor with brew water is allowed, though it involves any automated and/or portioning mechanism (i.e., a machine programmed to dispense a specific quantity of water), it may not be used directly on the coffee. For example, an automatic water delivery machine could dispense into a pouring vessel, but not directly to the coffee.

c. Competitors must utilize their own brewing devices. While sponsors may make certain brewing devices available for competitor use, competitors are ultimately responsible for supplying their own brewing devices (including filtration media if applicable). The U.S. Brewers Cup cannot be held responsible for the operational or structural integrity of the brewing devices supplied. Competitors using those devices should thoroughly test and inspect them.

d. Competitors may utilize as many or as few brewing devices as they wish in order to produce the required three preparations within the allotted time.

e. Brewing devices may not add any additive substances to the beverage whatsoever.

5.8 COFFEE PREPARATION

a. The coffee preparation for each judge shall consist of separate and individual preparation(s).

b. A “separate and individual preparation” is defined as an extraction directly resulting from 1 distinct quantity of coffee and 1 distinct quantity of water. Competitors may therefore NOT serve more than 1 judge from any distinct and individual preparation (e.g., competitors may NOT prepare a single 1 liter French press and pour it into 3 cups for the judges. Acceptable service would involve the use of 3 individual French presses).

c. The “extraction time” is defined as the duration of time that begins the moment the brew water and coffee grounds first come into contact and ends the moment the competitor stops brewing. Brewing stops when the extracted beverage has completely separated from the coffee bed (water retained within the coffee grounds is not considered part of the “extracted beverage”), or when the barista has cut the flow of extracted beverage into the service vessel, whichever comes first. Water due to prewetting of filters will not be considered as “brew water”.

d. Beverages will be disqualified if the extraction time begins before the competition time begins.
5.9 SERVICE VESSEL

a. A service vessel is a cup, server, or other vessel in which the competitor serves the coffee beverage to the judges.

b. A minimum of 3 service vessels are required per coffee service or presentation.

c. Coffee beverages must be served in 1 complete portion of a minimum of 150 ml for each judge in a service vessel (e.g., they may not be served in 2 or more distinct portions of beverage as a “split beverage”).

d. Service vessels should not impart any flavors or odors.

e. There is no restriction on the material, shape, or size of the service vessels, though the judges should be able to pick it up and sip from it directly.

f. The competition will supply a Standardized Service Vessel with a volume between 150 to 375 mL. This vessel will be provided for Compulsory Service. For Open Service, this vessel is available only upon request to the Stage Manager prior to the start of practice, setup, and competition time. It is the responsibility of the competitor to request the Standardized Service Vessel for Open Service.

g. During the Compulsory Service, all competitors must serve their coffee in the Standardized Service Vessel.

h. During the Open Service, competitors have the option to use the Standardized Service Vessels or service vessels of their own provision. Standardized Service Vessels must be requested from the Stage Manager prior to the start of the competitor’s setup time.

i. The “Aroma” score component will be evaluated as the coffee is served and from the cup the beverage is finally served in, unless the competitor gives specific instructions during the Open Service. Competitors may override the protocol and provide a service vessel to evaluate the aroma but they will need to decant the beverage into the final service vessel, within the competition time, for judges to evaluate the beverage. Under modified COVID-19 protocols, the head judge will decant 4 spoonfuls of each served beverage before sensory judges evaluate aroma. This is to support judges calibration and to record sensory uniformity for competitor reference.

j. To accelerate cooling, the coffee may be decanted into the Standardized Service Vessel after Aroma is evaluated, if the judges deem necessary. If the beverage is decanted in this manner there will be no impact on the evaluation.

5.10 TDS MEASUREMENT

a. A TDS measurement device will be used to measure the total dissolved solids of each compulsory brew. (There is not TDS measurement recording for Open Service.)

b. The TDS measurement protocol will be found in this document.

c. TDS measurements will be recorded on each scoresheet as a percentage to two decimal places (hundredths place, i.e. 1.15%).

d. TDS measurements are provided for the competitor’s reference only and will not be involved in the compulsory scores.

6.0 COMPETITION AREA

a. The full competition area for the Qualifying Competitions will consist of 1 area: The Stage.

b. Compulsory Service will be on The Stage, in a roped off area. Only competitors competing in their specific time slot, event staff, and scheduled volunteers will be allowed on the Compulsory Service part of The Stage. Competitors not scheduled, audience members, coaches, and helpers may watch Compulsory Service from the audience seating area.

c. Bags/backpacks are not permitted on the Compulsory Stage. Competitors will be given a bus tub to carry their wares/brewing equipment onto the Compulsory Stage.

d. Each Compulsory Service station will have a sponsored grinder and hot water machine.

e. The Open Service area will be a stage area, with seating for the audience. This area is open to everyone. Any equipment (e.g., grinders, hot water machines, water, brushes, dump buckets, etc.) on the Open Service stage are for Competitor, Judge, and Volunteer use only.

6.1 THE STAGE

6.1.1 Compulsory Service Stage Area

a. The Compulsory Service area consists of:

i. Compulsory Table: 3 tables will support the hot water machines, sponsored coffee grinders, cleaning accessories, and other tools and accessories.
Each individual station will have 1 sponsored grinder and 1 hot water tower. The hot water machine and grinder are in a fixed technical configuration and may not be moved by the competitors.

6.1.2 Open Service Stage Area

a. The Open Service Station consists of:
   i. Judging Table: The judges will be seated side-by-side at a rectangular table (30” H x 23-30”W x 72”-96”L), facing the competitor and prepared to evaluate the coffees served and competitor presentations.
   ii. Machine Table: A table (30” H x 23-30”W x 72”-96”L) will support the hot water machine, the sponsored coffee grinder, cleaning accessories, and other tools and accessories.
   iii. The hot water machine and grinder are in a fixed technical configuration and may not be moved by the competitors.

7.0 MACHINERY, ACCESSORIES & RAW MATERIALS

7.1 HOT WATER MACHINE

a. The hot water machine will be set to dispense water between 96.0°C (204.8°F) and 98.5°C (209.3°F), measured at the point of use (nozzle or spigot).

b. Competitors may not change, adjust or replace any element, setting, or component of the hot water machine. 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.

7.2 WATER

a. Competitors have the option to use the sponsored water or to supply their own brewing water during Open Service. Competitors must use the sponsored water during Compulsory Service.

b. The sponsored official hot water machine will be dispensing sponsored water only. Competitors do not have the option of using their own water with the sponsored hot water machine.

c. The sponsored water will be calibrated with the following standard as the target:
   i. Odor: Clean/fresh and 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)

7.3 GRINDER

a. A sponsored coffee grinder will be located on the equipment table for competitor use.
b. Coffee must be ground using the sponsored grinder during Compulsory Service. Coffee ground before the competition time will be allowed only during Open Service.
c. During Open Service, competitors may use the sponsored grinder or another grinder of their choosing, however only the sponsored grinder may be used in the competition area and during the competition time. If a competitor uses a grinder of their choosing (not the sponsored grinder) it may not be used in the competition area (on stage) or during the competition time. It may not be plugged into the electrical supply of the competition stage.

7.4 ADDITIONAL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

a. Competitors may bring a maximum of 2 pieces of additional electrical equipment to be used during their coffee preparation and/or presentation. Competitors must notify the Stage Manager onsite. Total power requirements for the additional electrical equipment must be accommodated by a single single-phase circuit which will be shared with the grinder(s). Maximum 120v/20 amp draw combined for the 2 pieces of additional electrical equipment.
b. It is the competitor’s responsibility to ensure the provided electrical service is sufficient to power the competitor’s additional equipment. No “technical appeals” will be accepted due to excessive electrical needs for a competitor’s additional equipment.
c. Please note, in the competitor practice area, electrical equipment should be limited to grinders. Electrical will not be provided for water kettles. All electrical in the competitor practice area is shared and its use is at the discretion of the Stage Manager.
d. There is no restriction on additional equipment that does not require the use of the provided grounded electrical service, provided such equipment is otherwise permitted by these Rules.

7.5 PROVIDED FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT

a. The competition area will be equipped with the following:
   - Equipment Table (For hot water machine and grinder)
   - Practice/Work/Judges Table
   - Hot water machine
   - Official coffee grinder
   - Standardized Service Vessels
   - Cleaning brushes (for grinder and counter)
   - Trash can and/or compost bin
   - Bucket for discarded liquid
   - Cupping spoon, water, rinse water cup, spittoon, and napkin for judges

7.6 COMPETITOR EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES

a. Competitors are required to bring all the supplies necessary for their presentation. Competitors should make allowances for breakage during travel and/or during the competition. Competitors are responsible for and in charge of their own equipment and accessories while at the competition. USBC volunteers, and event staff are not responsible for the safety of items left in the competition area.
b. Competitors MUST bring the following:
   - Brewing devices
   - Coffee filtration media
   - Open Service coffee (coffee for practice, Service, and additional coffee Audience Service, equaling a minimum of 5.0 lbs)
c. The following are optional:
   - Spare brewing devices
   - Additional Electrical Equipment (Maximum 2 items)
   - Brewing device stands
   - Brewing device accessories
   - Scales (for mass measurement)
   - Thermometers (for temperature measurement)
   - Timers (for time measurement)
• Additional coffee filtration medium
• Service vessels for Open Service (at least 3 plus spares)
• Cleaning cloths/rags
• Visual items such as printed items - Other visual aids may be used as long as they serve a clear purpose and are not decorative in nature. Visual aids must enhance the performance by being clearly intentional and applicable to the performance.
• Waiter’s cart (option to use USBrC-provided cart or bus tubs)
• Polishing clothes
• Gloves to wear while polishing dishes
d. The following are NOT allowed:
  • Judging table decoration items which have no function for the coffee service.
  • Any sensory/food items, including water and ground coffee, presented to the judges for sensory evaluation except for the coffee served.
  • Cupping spoon, water, rinse cups, spitoons, and napkins for judges (which are provided by USBrC).
  • Competitors who provide these prohibited items will receive a 0 in customer service.

8.0 COMPETITOR INSTRUCTIONS PRIOR TO PREPARATION TIME

8.1 ONLINE LEARNING SESSIONS

a. Prior to the Qualifying Competitions, Online Learning Sessions will take place. Taking part in one of these sessions is mandatory for all competitors. Any important onsite information will be given to you via email before the competition. The National Competitions Coordinator, 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 USBrC COMPETITOR MEETING

a. There is no competitor meeting before the Coffee Champs Qualifying Competitions. Please email uscompetitions@sca.coffee with questions about the schedule, logistics, and Rules questions prior to the event.

b. On the Thursday prior to the start of the USBrC, a Competitor Meeting will take place. This meeting is mandatory for all competitors. During this meeting the National Competitions Manager, event staff, head judges, and Stage Managers will make announcements, explain the competition flow, discuss the competition schedule, and cover onsite logistics. This will be an opportunity for competitors to ask questions of the event staff and head judges. If a competitor does not make advanced plans with the National Competitions Coordinator and does not attend the orientation meeting, they are subject to disqualification by the presiding head judges.

8.3 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.worldbrewerscup.org/ Competitor and Coach will be required to sign a statement confirming they have read and understood what is required prior to the competition.

8.4 BE ON TIME

a. Competitors must be in the preparation room a minimum of 60 minutes prior to their scheduled Cart to Stage time and check in with their Stage Manager or Asst. Stage Manager.

b. Competitors must have their carts or bus tubs ready to be wheeled out to the stage at their Cart to Stage time indicated on the competition schedule. Any competitor who is not standing by and ready to be wheeled out immediately at their Cart to Stage time may be disqualified.
8.5 PREPARATION ROOM

a. There will be a staging area designated as the competitors preparation room. The table layout cannot be altered in the preparation room.
b. Competitors will have access to their preparation table for the whole weekend. All wares must be removed after the competitor has finished competing.
c. The load-in flow and schedule will follow the process outlined below (times/competitor numbers are for example only; actual load in times will be communicated to competitors ahead of competition with their practice and performance schedule.)
   i. All competitors may load in starting Friday afternoon from 2pm-4pm
   ii. All competitors may load-in starting at 6:30am on Saturday morning
d. In the competitor preparation room, electrical equipment should be limited to grinders. Electrical will not be provided for water kettles or other electrical equipment. All electrical in the competitor practice area is shared and its use is at the discretion of the Stage Manager.
e. These areas are reserved for the competitors, coaches, volunteers, and any USBrC officials.
f. Press/media and family members and supporters may not be present in this area without consent from the USBrC event organizers or the Stage Manager.
g. Preparation room and practice area access will be restricted to the competitor and 2 coaches, unless otherwise communicated by the Stage Manager.
h. Competitors will be able to store their equipment, accessories, ingredients, etc. in this room at their own risk.
i. Refrigerators and freezers will be provided for any ingredients that need to stay cold or frozen. All items stored in the provided refrigerators and freezers must be labeled with the competitor’s name.
j. The preparation room will also include a dishwashing station for competitors to use to wash glasses and barware. Competitors are responsible for keeping track of and cleaning their own dishes and glassware. Runners and event staff are not responsible for breakage or loss of dishes or competitor items.
k. Judges and Head Judges are not permitted in the preparation room or practice area at any time.

8.6 PRACTICE TIME

a. Each competitor will have 20 minutes of scheduled practice time on the stage. Competitors will practice on the same station on which they will compete. Practice times will be scheduled based on competition time (i.e. the first scheduled competitors will have the earliest scheduled practice times). Competitors will be emailed a practice schedule prior to the Qualifying Competition. Access to practice space outside of assigned practice times cannot be guaranteed.
b. Practice time is run by the clock, if a competitor is late to their practice time they will not be given additional time (For example, a competitor’s practice time starts at 7:00am and they arrive at 7:05am, they will only have 15 minutes of practice time.)
c. Competitors must be cleaned up & off their station prior to the end of the practice time. Competitors should be near the practice station & ready to start as soon as their practice time begins.
d. The National Competitions Coordinator will provide details of the practice times via email. Practice times will be listed on the competitor’s schedule.

8.7 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 at the end of their competition time. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.

8.8 STATION SETUP

a. The Head Runner or Asst. Stage Manager will be responsible for ensuring that each competitor’s station is set as the competitor has requested prior to their preparation time (i.e. the Head Runner or Asst. Stage Manager will make sure each competitor’s electrical equipment are placed per the competitor’s request).
b. If a competitor has brought additional electrical equipment, the competitor needs to inform the Stage Manager prior to the start of competition. The Head Runner or Asst. Stage Manager will contact the competitor prior to their Cart to Stage time. If the competitor or the competitor’s coach would like to help the Head Runner or Asst. Stage Manager take their additional electrical equipment to the station, this will be allowed; however, once the items are in place, plugged in, and tested to ensure they power on, the competitor or coach will not be allowed to touch the items and must leave the stage immediately.
8.9 EVENT AUDIO SYSTEM/COMPETITION MUSIC

a. Competitors may bring music on 1 CD; 1 MP3 player; 1 USB drive; or 1 smartphone that is unlocked (no screen passcode), in both Airplane & Do Not Disturb mode, and with the playlist downloaded to be played during their competition time.
b. Music may not contain profanity, otherwise the competitor’s score on “Customer Service” may be penalized on all Open Service sensory scoresheets.
c. Competitors must mark their music clearly with their name and competitor number. It is the competitor’s responsibility to give the Stage Manager, Asst. Stage Manager, or Audio Visual staff their music prior to the start of the preparation time. It is also the competitor’s responsibility to retrieve the music from the stage manager or Audio Visual staff after the competition. Music that is not retrieved will be discarded after the competition. Audio may be provided on an MP3 player or mobile device with a 3.5mm headphone jack; however, the Audio Visual staff assume no responsibility for the compatibility of or the condition of such devices.

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 ROUND ONE COMPETITION

9.1 SUMMARY

a. The Qualifying Competition will consist of Compulsory Service and Open Service. Scores for the Qualifying Competition will be calculated as the sum of scores for Compulsory Service and Open Service.
b. Competitors will be assigned and scheduled for both Compulsory Service and Open Service. Competitors who are not ready to begin their Setup and/or Competition time at their designated time will be disqualified. If the competition is delayed, competitors should still be ready to begin their setup at the scheduled time.

9.2 COMPULSORY SERVICE

a. Immediately before each competitor’s practice time starts, each competitor will receive a 350g bag of the Compulsory Coffee. Competitors will use this provided coffee for both practice and competition. See “Standards and Definitions” for more about the provided coffee.
b. Any unused Compulsory Service Coffee remaining at the end the competitor’s competition time MUST be returned to the National Competitions Coordinator, Asst. Stage Manager, Head Judge, or designated volunteer. Failure to return any unused Compulsory Coffee will result in disqualification.

9.2.1 Practice Time

a. For Compulsory Service, practice time will be scheduled just prior to each competitor’s set up and competition time. Competitors will have 38 minutes of practice/setup time. At the end of the 38 minutes, the timekeeper will start the practice/setup time, followed by the competition time. There will not be a break in between practice/setup time and competition time. Competitors should be prepared to start their competition time at the end of practice/setup time.
b. Competitors are not allowed to have assistance from coaches, helpers, or any other individuals at any time during Compulsory Service.

9.2.3 Begin Competition Time

a. Competitors will be scheduled on a timetable in groups of 3 competitors. After their 38 minutes practice/setup time the Competition Time will begin. There will be no hard stop in timing between practice/setup time and competition time. The timekeeper will provide verbal time cues, but the competition time will continue fluidly on from the practice/setup time.

9.2.4 Competition Time

a. The competitor has 7 minutes to prepare and place on the provided tray for service to the Compulsory Judges.

b. Competitors serve 3 cups of coffee, each brewed individually, to 3 judges.

c. Each of the three beverages should be between 150 and 375 mL. If a beverage served is found to be less than 150 mL or more than 375 mL, that particular beverage (cup) will be disqualified and receive no score.

d. All competitors shall exclusively use the Compulsory Service coffee, as provided by the competition, and no other coffee (whole bean or ground).

e. No “presentation” should be performed whatsoever. Competitors should endeavor to work quietly.

f. Competitors may not prepare their coffees at the judging table. The judging table is for the evaluation of the beverages only, and judges will not be able to observe the preparation.

g. Competitors have the option of grinding their coffee and preparing their brewing water during the competition time or during the practice time.

h. Beverages must be prepared and served according to these Rules specifically the “Standards and Definitions” section.

i. The competitor is to serve the beverages to the judges by placing them on the designated service tray located at the end of the preparation station. A service porter will deliver the beverages to the judges.

9.2.5 End Competition Time

a. Competition time ends when the competitor serves the third and final beverage on the designated serving tray, or when their competition time has elapsed, whichever occurs first. A competitor does not need to announce or otherwise indicate the end of their competition time. The competitor whose beverages are not served within 8 minutes will be disqualified. However, judges may continue to evaluate and score the beverage for the competitor’s reference only.

9.2.6 Time Penalties

a. If the competitor has not finished his/her presentation during the allotted 7 minute period, they are allowed to proceed until the preparation is completed.

b. After the 7 minutes has lapsed, 0.5 point shall be deducted for every 1 second over 7 minutes from the competitor’s total score up to a maximum penalty of 30 points (1 minute).

9.3 OPEN SERVICE

9.3.1 Open Service - Practice Time

a. For Open Service, Competitors will be able to practice brewing their own coffee during the morning of their scheduled Open Service competition day on The Stage. Competitors will be given 20 minutes of practice time, in which they can receive assistance from coaches, helpers, etc. Practice time will be monitored by a volunteer timekeeper, but it is the responsibility of the competitor to manage their own time and be respectful of other competitors by making sure they are off the stage at the end of their 20 minute practice session.

b. Practice time is run by the clock, if a competitor is late to their practice time they will not be given additional time (For example, a competitor’s practice time starts at 7:00am and they arrive at 7:05am, they will only have 15 minutes of practice time.)

c. Competitors must be cleaned up & off their station prior to the end of the practice time. Competitors should be near the practice station & ready to start as soon as their practice time begins.

d. The National Competitions Manager will provide details of the Open Service Practice Times via email before the event. Practice times will also be listed on the competitor’s schedule.

9.3.2 Open Service - Setup Time

a. Competitors will be assigned a scheduled Setup Time for Open Service.
b. Competitors will have 5 minutes to set up their station and prepare all relevant items for the Competition Time. Electrical equipment may be set up and plugged in prior to the start of Setup Time, but may not be energized (turned on) until Setup Time begins.

c. When Setup Time elapses the competitor must cease all active preparation or manipulation of items on the Machine Table or Competitor Table that will be involved in the coffee service until the Competition Time begins. Competitors may not be holding in their hands anything involved in the coffee service after the Setup Time elapses, with the exception of a timer or personal drinking water.

d. Competitors should account for the fact that the time between the end of Setup Time and beginning of Competition Time may and shall vary.

e. Once the Setup Time concludes, competitors who utilize their own water must provide 2 approximately 100 mL samples of water: 1 at room temperature and the other heated. The 2 vessels will be provided by the event organizers. The samples will be poured from the kettle, container, or bottles the competitor uses to prepare the coffee. Both samples will be evaluated by the Head Judge upon conclusion of competition time to verify the water does not contain any flavors or characteristics not typical of clean potable water.

9.3.3 Open Service - Begin Competition Time

a. Competitors will be assigned a scheduled Open Service competition time. After their 5 minutes Setup Time the competitor will start their competition time by announcing this to the timekeeper. The competitor should verify that the timekeeper is prepared to start the timer.

9.3.4 Open Service - Competition Time

a. Competitors will have 10 minutes to prepare, serve, and present 3 individual preparations of brewed filter coffee to 3 judges.

b. Competitors will utilize whole bean (or ground) coffee of their choosing.

c. Competitors have the option of grinding their coffee and preparing brew water during the competition time or beforehand.

d. Coffee service should be accompanied by a presentation to the judges that articulates the taste-experience presented, demonstrates excellent customer service, and enhances the overall coffee experience.

e. Beverages must be prepared and served according to these Rules.

f. The competitor is to serve the beverages to the judges by placing them on the judging table, 1 in front of each judge. Competitors must actively place each beverage in front of a judge in order for it to be deemed “served.”

g. Each of the three beverages should be between 150 and 375 mL. If a beverage served is found to be less than 150 mL or more than 375 mL, that particular beverage (cup) will be disqualified and receive no score.

9.3.5 Open Service - End Competition Time

a. Competition time ends either when the competition time has elapsed or when the competitor raises their hand and announces “time,” whichever occurs first.

b. A competitor whose beverages are not served within 11 minutes will be disqualified. However, judges may continue to evaluate and score the beverages for the competitor’s reference only.

c. The judges will not evaluate based on anything said, served, or presented before or after the competition time.

d. Once the competition time is over the competitor is to return to the preparation area to clean up and prepare the station for the next competitor.

9.3.6 Open Service - Time Penalties

a. If the Competitor has not finished their presentation during the allotted 10 minute period, they are allowed to proceed until the preparation or presentation is completed.

b. After the 10 minutes have lapsed, 0.5 point shall be deducted for every 1 second over 10 minutes from the competitor’s total score up to a maximum penalty of 30 points (1 minute).

c. Any competitor whose preparation or performance period exceeds 11 minutes will be disqualified.

9.3.7 Additional Open Service Information

a. Competitors should present their coffees with an accompanying presentation that enhances the taste experience of the coffees and relates to exemplary service in a real world specialty coffee experience.

b. The presentation will be evaluated based on how well the taste experience matches the competitor’s description.

c. Presentations may be creative, informative, and entertaining, but should always be focused on enhancing the judges’ coffee experience.
d. Competitors may not serve or present any food, drink, or aromatic experience for the judges to consume, imbibe, taste, or smell, other than the coffees served. Any such service will be not be evaluated by the judges and 0 score will be given in Customer Service category of the scoresheet. Competitors may not ask the judges to physically move from their judging positions.

e. Judges will only evaluate beverages that are served to them in the final cup. Judges may follow Aroma evaluation instructions given by the competitor. Under modified COVID-19 protocols, the head judge will decant 4 spoonfuls of each served beverage before sensory judges evaluate aroma from the final service cup. This is to support judges calibration and to record sensory uniformity for competitor reference.

f. Once the beverage is decanted and finally served to the judges for taste evaluation, the competitor may no longer interact with the beverage or cup.

10.0 TECHNICAL ISSUES

a. During the preparation and/or competition time, if a competitor feels there is a technical problem the competitor should raise their hand, call “technical” and ask for the National Competitions Coordinator or Stage Manager (during preparation time) or for the Head Judge (during competition time). The competition timer will pause. Competitors may call for a technical timeout for the following reasons only:
   i. The electrical power supply
   ii. The provided Official Grinder or Official Brew Water Machine
   iii. For Open Service only: The audio visual equipment (i.e. the competitor’s microphone)

b. If the National Competitions Coordinator and/or Stage Manager 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 National Competitions Coordinator/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 National Competitions Coordinator 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 National Competitions Coordinator/Stage Manager/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.

f. Unfamiliarity with equipment is not grounds for a technical timeout.

10.1 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.

11.0 FORGOTTEN ACCESSORIES

a. If a competitor has forgotten some 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 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.

12.0 SCOREKEEPING

12.1 OFFICIAL SCOREKEEPING

a. The official scorekeepers are responsible for keeping all scores confidential.

12.2 ROUND ONE SCORING

12.2.1 Compulsory Service Scoring

a. In order to calculate the Total Cup Score the scores for each of the seven Cup Score components are to be summed (with the
13.0 BREWERS CUP QUALIFYING COMPETITIONS JUDGING

scores for Acidity, Body, and Balance being doubled).

b. The competitor’s total Compulsory Service score will be tabulated by adding the total of the 3 scoresheets, 1 from each judge, and dividing the total by 3. (e.g., scores of 85.25, 91.00, and 89.50, for a combined total of 265.75 will result in a total score of 88.58).

c. The maximum possible Total Compulsory Service score is 100.

12.2.2 Open Service Scoring

a. In the Qualifying Competitions, the competitor’s total score for Open Service will be tabulated by adding the total of the 2 scoresheets (not including the guest judge/judge in training) and dividing the total by 2.

b. Scores for the Total Cup Score will be tabulated as in Compulsory Service.

c. To calculate the Presentation Score, the 2 relevant scoring components will be added together, with the score for Taste Description and Customer Service being doubled.

d. To calculate the Open Service Score for each scoresheet, the Total Cup Score shall be added to the Total Score of Presentation, and that sum shall be divided by 1.40.

e. To calculate the competitor’s Total Open Service Score, the 2 sensory judges’ Open Service Scores (1 from each scoresheet) will be added together and the total divided by 2. The total Head Judge score will be added to the Total Open Service Score which is multiplied by 1.4, and then the sum will be divided by 1.6. (See Open Service Head Judge Scoresheet) The maximum possible Total Open Service score is 100.

12.2.3 Round One Score

a. Round One Total Score is calculated by adding the Compulsory Service Score and the Open Service Score. The maximum possible Round One Score is 200.

12.3 ROUNDING

a. Scores shall be rounded to the nearest hundredths-place (i.e., a total score of 88.583333 will be rounded to 88.58)

12.4 TIE SCORES

a. In the Qualifying Competitions: If there is a tie between 2 or more competitors, the procedure to determine placement be the following:

i. The competitor with the higher Total Compulsory Service score will be ranked higher.

ii. If there is still a tie, the competitor with the higher sum of “Flavor” scores on the Compulsory Service scoresheets will be ranked higher.

iii. If there is still a tie, the competitor with the higher sum of “Balance” scores on the Compulsory Service scoresheets will be ranked higher.

iv. If there is still a tie, the competitor with the higher sum of “Overall” scores on the Compulsory Service scoresheets will be ranked higher.

v. If the scores are still tied, USBrC will progress with however many competitors qualify with the top 12 scores.

12.5 COMPETITOR SCORESHEET DEBRIEF

a. Following the awards ceremony, competitors will have an opportunity to review their scoresheets with the judges on-site in accordance to the announced schedule. Competitors are allowed to keep their original scoresheets only if the Scorekeeper and National Competition Coordinator have scanned the scoresheets.

b. Digital copies are available to competitors upon request starting 30 days after the conclusion of the Qualifying Competition by emailing the National Competitions Manager 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 may 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 Strategic Committee along with the National Competitions Coordinator 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 Strategic Committee or the National Competitions Manager will inform the competitor of the decision.
13.1 WHO IS CERTIFIED TO JUDGE THE BREWERS CUP

a. Individuals judging the U.S. Brewers Cup must be certified by the U.S. Competitions Committee as demonstrating a thorough understanding of these Rules and possessing the necessary skills and experience to effectively and consistently perform complete organoleptic evaluations of coffee extracts (of 2.00% strength or lower) to a standard suitable for a U.S. Brewer Cup Championship.

b. Judges must attend 1 of the scheduled U.S. Brewers Cup Online Learning Sessions and attend and pass the Judges Certification Workshop scheduled just prior to the Qualifying Competition. Judges must also participate in the morning calibration session of each competition day.

c. Head Judges will be designated by the U.S. Competitions Committee (based on judging and professional experience) to evaluate and score Technical Uniformity and Overall Workflow. Head Judges will evaluate but not score sensory uniformity for competitor reference and to oversee deliberation of judges during the Open Service portion of the competition. Head Judges will also take notes of the taste description and brewing method given by the competitors for reference.

d. A Head Judge may be designated by the U.S. Competitions Committee (based on judging and professional experience) to oversee the Compulsory Service to ensure calibration of sensory judges and flow of the service.

13.2 GOALS AND PURPOSES FOR JUDGES

a. To support the coffee professionals.

b. To promote specialty coffee and coffee excellence in the cup.

c. To be neutral, fair, and consistent when evaluating.

d. To select a worthy and highly professional Brewers Cup Champion.

13.3 WHAT THE JUDGES ARE LOOKING FOR IN A BREWERS CUP CHAMPION

a. The judges are looking for a champion who:

   i. Prepares brewed coffee beverages of exemplary quality.

   ii. Delivers outstanding customer service.

   iii. Can articulate the taste experience offered by their brewed coffee beverages.

   iv. Delivers an exceptional overall coffee service experience.

13.4 MAIN TASKS FOR BREWERS CUP JUDGES

a. Brewers Cup Judges are expected to support the competitor by:

   i. Evaluating and scoring fairly and without bias or prejudice.

   ii. Demonstrating support by being constantly responsive and engaged (i.e., smiling, eye contact, answering competitors’ questions enthusiastically).

   iii. Showing respect to the competitor and their cultural background.

   iv. Writing objective and respectful comments on the scoresheets. The competitors will be given their scoresheets after the competition.

   v. Participating in the mandatory debriefing (score sheet review) with the competitors to emphasize opportunities for improvement.

   vi. Being accessible to the competitor after the competition for further comments.

13.5 WHAT THE JUDGES SHOULD EXPECT FROM THE COMPETITOR

a. Competitors will have a firm understanding of these Rules.

b. Preparation, service, and presentation will be in accordance with these Rules.

c. Competitors will perform within the competition time.

13.6 JUDGES’ DO’S AND DON’TS PRIOR TO JUDGING

a. Judges should refrain from communicating with the competitors regarding specifics about their service, coffee, or presentation, before and during all days of competition. Judges should always be encouraging and positive in interactions with competitors and not avoid them.

b. Sensory judges should try to only eat bland or neutral tasting food before judging.
c. Do not smoke before judging.
d. Use non-perfumed deodorant.
e. Do not wear perfume, cologne, or scented aftershave.

13.7 JUDGES’ BEHAVIOR DURING THE COMPETITION

a. All judges must be FAIR and HONEST.
b. All judges must be POSITIVE and RESPECTFUL of the competitor at all times.
c. Judges must focus only on the coffee they are evaluating during the Compulsory Service.
d. Judges must listen and focus only on the competitor and coffee they are evaluating during the Open Service.
e. Judges must be prepared for and actively respond to any reasonable questions from the competitor.
f. Judges should refrain from talking with one another during the evaluation process.
g. During Compulsory Service, judges shall NOT watch the competitors prepare their brews, lest their sensory evaluation be affected by what they see.

13.8 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.

13.9 JUDGES’ MORNING CALIBRATION

Each competition day, before the competition, the judges pool should engage in coffee calibration.

a. Judges shall acquire three different brewed coffee beverages of at least 150 mL each.
   i. For Compulsory Service Judges, beverages should be prepared from the provided Compulsory Service coffee, but with varied brew characteristics.
   ii. For Open Service Judges, the beverages should each be prepared from a different coffee.
b. Each beverage should be divided into 3 portions, 1 for each judge, and labeled properly.
c. Judges will taste each beverage a minimum of 3 times:
   i. When the coffee beverage is served and has cooled to approximately 70°C (“hot”).
   ii. When the coffee beverage has cooled to approximately 40°C (“warm”)
   iii. When the coffee beverage has cooled to between room temperature and approximately 25°C (“cold”).
d. Judges will evaluate the beverages and record scores on a calibration scoresheet.
e. The calibration exercise is for “priming the palate” and practicing using the scoresheets. Judges may confer during this period and ask questions at this time.

14.0 EVALUATION SCALE

a. The evaluation scale is the same for both Round One and Finals Round scoresheets.
   ● Unacceptable : 0
   ● Acceptable : 4 – 4.75
   ● Average : 5 – 5.75
   ● Good : 6 – 6.75
   ● Very Good : 7 – 7.75
   ● Excellent : 8 – 8.75
   ● Extraordinary : 9 – 10
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 or service.
15.0 COMPULSORY SERVICE EVALUATION PROCEDURE

a. The following is an exposition of the World Brewers Cup Compulsory Service Judging standards and procedure.

15.1 JUDGING PREPARATION AND PROTOCOL

15.1.1 Judges Table Supply List

- Pencils
- Clipboard (1 per judge)
- Judging placemats (standard size paper with 3 coded position markings)
- Cupping spoons
- Spittoons/cups (optional)

15.1.2 Cupping Spoons and Spittoons

a. Judges have the option to use cupping spoons to slurp or sip the coffee from or to slurp or sip directly from the service vessel.

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 spoon, slurping, sipping, spitting, or swallowing through the entire competition.

15.1.3 Observing Competitors

a. During Compulsory Service, Judges may NOT observe or inspect the competitors and the preparation of the coffees, in order to remove bias or presumption based on what is observed. A curtain or barrier may be used to fully isolate the judges from the Compulsory Service preparations.

15.2 CUP SCORE EVALUATION SCALE

a. Cup scores are limited to the following range:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.00 Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.00 Very Good</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.00 Excellent</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.00 Extraordinary</td>
<td>Extraordinary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.25</td>
<td></td>
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<td>8.25</td>
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<td>9.25</td>
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<td>8.50</td>
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<td>9.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.75 - 10.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. Judges should use the Evaluation Scale of: Good, Very Good, Excellent, and Extraordinary.

c. Judges may not use scores lower than 6.00. Evaluations below the description of “Good” should be given a score of 6.00.

15.3 SCORESHEETS

a. When served, the judge should move each cup to the evaluation placemat, and mark each placemat position with an alphabetic code. This code will be recorded in the box marked Cup Letter.

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 sample and experiential understanding of quality.

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.

d. 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.
15.4 CUP SCORE COMPONENTS

15.4.1 Aroma

a. Generally speaking, the range of the coffee’s aromatic character corresponds to the origin of coffee. In contrast, the intensity of aromatic character generally relates to the freshness of a coffee, as measured by the length of time between roasting and brewing and depending on the type of packaging used to provide moisture and oxygen protection for the beans.

15.4.2 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.

15.4.3 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 detracts from the experience of the cup (i.e. astringency or bitterness), lower marks should be given; whereas if the aftertaste contributes positively to the experience of the cup, higher marks should be given.

15.4.4 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.

b. The final score marked on the horizontal tick-mark scale should reflect the judge’s perceived quality for the Acidity, relative to the expected flavor profile, based on origin characteristics and/or other factors (degree of roast, intended use, etc.). Judges are encouraged to link the origin, variety, or processing information of the coffee given by the competitor to what has been delivered in the cup. Low or High intensities of Acidity can score well if the quality of acidity is high, and works well with the overall experience of the cup.

15.4.5 Body

a. The quality of the body is based upon the tactile feeling of the liquid in the mouth, especially as perceived between the tongue and roof of the mouth. Samples with a light or heavy body may receive high scores relative to the quality of the tactile feeling in the mouth. Some samples with lighter bodies may also have a pleasant feeling in the mouth. However, coffees expected to be high in body can receive equally high preference scores although their intensity rankings will be quite different. Judges are encouraged to link the origin, variety, or processing information of the coffee given by the competitor to what has been delivered in the cup.

15.4.6 Balance

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

15.4.7 Overall

a. The “overall” scoring aspect is meant to reflect the holistically integrated rating of the sample as perceived by the individual judge. A sample with many highly pleasant aspects, but not quite “measuring up” would receive a lower rating. A coffee that met expectations as to its character and reflected particular origin flavor qualities would receive a high score. An exemplary example of preferred characteristics not fully reflected in the individual score of the individual attributes might receive an even higher score. This is the step where the judges make their personal appraisal.

16.0 CUP EVALUATION PROTOCOL

a. As soon as the coffee beverage is served, the judge should evaluate the Aroma component. It is important to evaluate this as quickly as possible, because the intensity of aroma will decline as the beverage temperature declines.

b. Under modified COVID-19 protocols, the head judge will decant 4 spoonfuls of each served beverage before sensory judges evaluate aroma. This is to support judges calibration and to record sensory uniformity for competitor reference.

c. In the case of Compulsory service, an additional small sample will be taken to measure TDS (see TDS measurement section below). This will not be scored and is for the competitor’s reference only.

d. The coffee beverage may, at this time, be decanted into a cup or vessel to aid cooling for evaluation. Judges may also take the coffee beverages to the judges deliberation room.

e. When the sample has cooled to 70°C (158°F), evaluation of the liquor should begin. The liquor is aspirated into the mouth, either with a spoon or by directly sipping from the service vessel, in such a way as to cover as much area as possible, especially the tongue and upper palate. Because the retro nasal vapors are at their maximum intensity at these elevated temperatures, Flavor and Aftertaste are rated at this point.

f. As the coffee continues to cool, the liquor is sipped from the service vessel or using a spoon to evaluate the Acidity, Body and Balance. Balance is the cupper’s assessment of how well the Flavor, Aftertaste, Acidity, and Body fit together in a synergistic combination.

g. The judge's assessment for the different components is evaluated at three different temperatures as the sample cools:
   i. “Hot” which is defined as approximately 70°C (158°F)
   ii. “Warm” which is defined as approximately 40°C (104°F)
   iii. “Cold” which is defined as between 25 and 30°C (between 77 and 86°F)

h. Judges should clearly indicate a refined point on the tick-mark cupping form for 3 of the samplings; “Hot”, “Warm”, and “Cold”. This may be done by using the letters H, W, C or by placing a tick or circle on the scale and using arrows to communicate how the cup has changed over time.

i. Evaluation of the liquor should cease when the sample reaches approximately 30°C and the Overall score is determined by the cupper and given to the sample as “Cupper’s Points” based on ALL of the combined attributes.

j. Judges will record details on their sensory evaluation in the notes area provided. This is for reference and for the competitor’s benefit. Judges should limit their notes and comments to those from a customer or sensory evaluation perspective, and avoid commentary on the brew method, technique, or device. (i.e., “Sharply acidic” or “baggy” is a valid note. “Brew time too long” or “under extracted” is NOT a valid note)

17.0 OPEN SERVICE EVALUATION

a. Cup Evaluation scoring components and evaluation protocol will be the same as in Compulsory Service.

b. Competitors may override the evaluation protocol by giving judges specific alternative instructions on how they want the beverage consumed. As long as the instructions are reasonable and given before the beverage served, the judges should follow the instructions.

c. Once the judges start to evaluate the beverage served in its final cup, competitors may not override the evaluation protocol. Judges will not follow any instructions to evaluate the beverage at any other temperature than the 3 temperatures stated in the “Cup Evaluation Protocol” section.

17.1 PRESENTATION EVALUATION SCALE

a. Presentation scores will use the full range of the Evaluation Scale.

17.2 PRESENTATION SCORESHEET SECTION,
a. Presentation Scores range from “Acceptable” (4) to “Extraordinary” (10), with “Unacceptable” (0) reserved for situations of clear and conclusive violations of the Rules, common sense, or minimum standards of professionalism or service.

b. Judges will use the note area and horizontal evaluation scale “tick marks” for reference, and mark the score in the box marked Total after the presentation is over and the sensory evaluation is concluded.

17.3 PRESENTATION SCORESHEET COMPONENTS

17.3.1 Taste Description

a. Competitors will be describing details regarding the sensory experience of their coffee beverages. Judges should take detailed notes, particularly those regarding specific taste or otherwise sensory descriptions. Higher marks will be given when the competitor’s description of taste aspect that becomes apparent during tasting is both accurate and detailed. However, this is an evaluation of the quality, accuracy, and relevance of their descriptions, not the quantity.

17.3.2 Customer Service

a. Competitors should be engaging, professional, and provide an exemplary coffee service experience. Competitors will not be expected to craft complex or fine-dining type experiences, and the presentation should relate to a real-world coffee service experience. Service that positively and creatively enhances the coffee experience beyond the cups of coffee beverage will score highly.

b. Proper hygiene during the service and service vessel cleanliness will be taken into account.

c. Information on why the coffee was chosen and how/why it was brewed the way it was is encouraged.

18.0 HEAD JUDGE EVALUATION

18.1 PRESENTATION HEAD JUDGE SCORESHEET COMPONENTS

18.1.1 Overall Workflow
a. The Head Judge will evaluate the competitor’s overall workflow and use of tools, equipment and accessories throughout the station. The head judge will evaluate the competitor’s workflow throughout the presentation, including: the organization and placement of tools and accessories; the competitor’s movement and flow in and around the workstation; the cleanliness and maintenance of the station (equipment, counters, brewers, service vessels, towels); and the management and consistency of brewing process.

18.1.2. Technical Uniformity

1. a. Head judge will evaluate the technical uniformity of three (3) cups brewed for each judge. The head judge will evaluate the consistency of the brewing process including coffee to water ratio, grind size, operation of the brewing device and kettles, filtration material, time, temperature and turbulence.

19.0 TDS MEASUREMENT

19.1 PURPOSE

a. A filter coffee beverage is typically between 1.0% and 1.5% dissolved solids and approximately 99% water. The proportion that is coffee solids is often referred to as “TDS,” or total dissolved solids.

b. Conversely, approximately 10% to 25% of the mass of the coffee will be extracted into the beverage. This soluble mass is often referred to as “solubles yield” or “extraction yield.”

c. The SCA Gold Cup brewing standards, based on consumer taste studies and research, each illustrate a range of variables that achieves desirable beverage taste results. The recommended SCA TDS range is 1.15% to 1.35%, the SCA TDS range is 1.20% to 1.45%, and the extraction yield for both standards is 18.0 to 22.0%.

d. If the TDS is very low, the common sensory assessment is that the beverage is “weak.”

e. If the TDS is very high, the common sensory assessment is that the beverage is “strong.”

f. If the Extraction Yield is very low, it is generally referred to as “underextracted” or “underdeveloped.” If the Extraction Yield is too high, it is generally referred to as “overextracted.”

g. For Compulsory Service, TDS measurements will be taken for each cup served for competitors to have for their own reference. Competitors are encouraged to calculate the extraction yield of their brews, based on their knowledge of the mass of coffee and brewing water that they utilized for their preparations. There will be no TDS measurements taken for Open Service cups served.

19.2 FORMULAS

a. To calculate extraction yield there are a few methods of varying complexity. The simplest method is to utilize a software calculator that will handle the various calculations.

b. To calculate extraction yield yourself, the best and simplest method is to first take three measurements:
   i. Mass of the coffee grounds
   ii. Mass of the coffee beverage
   iii. TDS

c. Extraction Yield = TDS × mass of solution ÷ mass of coffee grounds

d. It is possible to calculate Extraction Yield from TDS, mass of the coffee, and mass of the water used, but it is more complicated.

19.3 MEASUREMENT PROTOCOL

a. The beverages are served to each judge on the compulsory tray. The judge will first assess the Aroma of the beverage.

b. Under modified COVID-19 protocols, the head judge will decant 4 spoonfuls of each served beverage before sensory judges evaluate aroma from the final service cup. This is to support judges calibration and to record sensory uniformity for competitor reference.

c. Using a pipette or spoon, a sample of coffee beverage will be transferred to a small clean glass, cup, or shot glass.

d. If the beverage appears to have suspended solids (fine coffee particles), the sample will be filtered with a paper filter or syringe filter at this point.

e. As the coffee beverages are cooling and being evaluated, the technician will measure the TDS of the sample with a calibrated measurement device.

f. The TDS reading will be recorded on the appropriate place on the scoresheet, to the nearest hundredths place (i.e., 1.15%).
20.0 COMPETITOR PROTEST AND APPEALS

20.1 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 National Competitions Coordinator. The National Competitions Coordinator 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 National Competitions Coordinator decides that the issue can be resolved onsite at the competition, the National Competitions Coordinator 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 National Competitions Coordinator, 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 National Competitions Coordinator

d. The National Competitions Coordinator shall operate under the purview of the Specialty Coffee Association US Chapter and US Competitions.

20.2 APPEAL LETTER

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

20.3 APPEAL DECISION

a. The National Competitions Manager 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 National Competitions Manager

b. The National Competitions Manager shall operate under the purview of the Specialty Coffee Association management and Advisory Board.