



For Immediate Release

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SCAA Announces 2010 U.S. Cup Tasters Champion

Coffee-Taster Wins Competition After Showcasing a Discriminating Palette

LONG BEACH, Calif. U.S.A. (May 6, 2010)—The Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA) declared Ben Kaminsky of Ritual Coffee Roasters as the winner of its 2nd Annual U.S. Cup Tasters Championship, sponsored by Boyd’s Coffee Company and Technivorm. The three-day competition educated and motivated the country’s best cuppers, recognized their credibility and status as on par with sommeliers, and promoted the concept of quality coffee. The championship was held at SCAA’s 22nd Annual Exposition & Symposium, April 16 – 18, 2010 in Anaheim, Calif. SCAA is the world's coffee authority and largest coffee trade association.

The winners of SCAA’s 2nd Annual U.S. Cup Tasters Championship are:

Champion: Ben Kaminsky, Ritual Coffee Roasters, with eight correct and a time of 8:00 minutes

Second Place: Jennifer Howell, George Howell Coffee Company, with seven correct and a time of 3:01 minutes.

Third Place: Andy Sprenger, Caffe Pronto Coffee Roastery, with seven correct and a time of 8:00 minutes

At the U.S. Cup Tasters Championship, 18 competitors from across the country kicked off Round One, all in hopes of being crowned the national champion, and to represent the United States at the Speciality Coffee Association of Europe’s World Cuptasters Championship, June 23 – 25 in London. Event organizers said they expect up to 40 cup tasters from both consuming and producing countries to compete in the World Championship.

Recognizing that different taste preferences are found in coffee cultures around the world, the U.S. Cup Tasters Championship did not ask contestants to judge or identify coffee. Instead, participants in the competition tested their skills to discriminate between tastes in a “triangulation” format. Tasters received eight sets of three-cups, or triangles, where two cups were identical and one was different. Competitors identified the one cup that was different, testing their ability to smell, taste, recall and concentrate on the task at hand against the clock. The competitor with the most correct answers in the shortest amount of time was the champion.

The competition began with three-person qualifying heats. Scoring was kept in real time and displayed immediately for participants and spectators. The top six competitors moved on to the semi-finals, where triangles increased in difficulty. The three high scorers became finalists. The overall winner took the title of 2010 U.S. Cup Tasters Champion and automatically qualified for the World Cuptasters Championship.

In addition, SCAA hosted the 2010 Canadian Cup Tasters Championship. The winners are:

First Place: Barrett Jones, 49th Parallel Coffee Roasters, with eight correct and a time of 5:48 minutes.

Second Place: Geoffrey Polci, Crema Coffee Company, with a seven correct and a time of 5:03 minutes.

Third Place: Josh Del Sol, Level Ground Trading Ltd., with a six correct and a time of 4:52.

For more information on next year's U.S. Cup Tasters Championship, Canadian Cup Tasters Championship or the World Cuptasters Championship, e-mail Marcus Boni at mboni@scaa.org.

About SCAA

For more than a quarter of a century, the Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA) has offered its members education, training, resources and business services. It is the world's largest coffee trade association, with members representing more than 40 countries and every segment of the specialty coffee industry, from growers to roasters and retailers. The SCAA has also been at the forefront of developing and promoting specialty coffee, and is committed to meeting the challenges of a rapidly changing industry by setting and maintaining standards, expanding professional certification programs, conducting industry-specific research, and providing even more opportunities to connect, exchange, and work together so our industry continues to thrive.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Photos available.