

The National Ice Cream Competition 2021



The National Ice Cream Competition has been for many years a real achievement and source of pride to the people who enter it.

The National Ice Cream Competition has been running since 1953 and is one of the most important and prestigious events that usually takes place at the Ice Cream Expo, where an entrant's ice cream is judged against their peers to find out who will be the National Ice Cream Champion for that year. In addition to the National Champion, all classes judges will have major awards, with a further large proportion of entrants obtaining recognition for their efforts in ice cream production.

It is an excellent opportunity to show the care with which the product is made, incorporating the best of ingredients, the history of the business you run and the knowledge with which you produce the finished product.

Scoring

The long-standing method of scoring, in my experience, narrows down the perimeters for marking and allows the marks to be very specific. It also works well with computerisation. Using this system has been incorporated we have seen more consistent marks awarded and when a very good sample is passed through the line the supervisors notice straight away.

Using the iPads, the marks are broken down and rated on appearance, texture and flavour.

There is also a comments box to give the judges the option to give feedback.

What Happens When You Enter?

You complete your competition entry form online and duly receive your sample containers for the classes you have entered. All the containers are numbered. Please read the instructions on how to fill the containers, you would be surprised on how many entries fail at this first hurdle. The rules are quite specific so do not waste your entry! Upon arrival at Head Office they are all renumbered to hide their source.

Who Can Judge?

All we need now is Judges! Well, judging is only a matter of opinion but it helps if you have a healthy interest in and enjoy the product, knowledge of its manufacture is also an advantage but not paramount. Experience could count for something but if you don't have any, how can you acquire some? We have incorporated a judges meeting where a supervising judge who has manufacturing and judging experience explains the various technical details on how to go through the scoring and the merits of what could make a good sample. We all have different palates and tastes as judges and we come from different geographical locations - but our aim is to find by consensus of opinion the best sample.

You cannot judge any class you have entered.

Judging

In 2020, there will be a judging panel made up of four judges (socially distanced). Under the supervisors direction the first few samples are re-entered into the line for re-judging to ensure the samples are not penalised for being the first through. The quality of the top marked sample has a great bearing on how the rest of the

diplomas are separated out.

Using the computer the separation could be very tight between a Special Diploma of Merit down to a Diploma. The graduation is set by the top mark.

If a tie in the scores happens, which it quite often does both amongst the top places and the diplomas, the relevant samples are re-judged. We did have a year where in one class a tie happened five times, this must mean that the panel of judges was very consistent!

After we have come to the results of the vanilla and sorbet classes the samples are sent to an independent laboratory to be analysed for the specifics of their class. Once the samples have returned and all other classes judged the appropriate winning samples are identified. Then the Best of Vanilla and Best of Flavour go head-to-head to become the National Ice Cream Champion. The results of the National Ice Cream Competition will be announced in Spring 2021.

*Written by Henry Nurkowski,
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The National Ice Cream Competition Do's and Don'ts

