



Media Contacts:

Pigs Fly PR Amanda Frederickson
312.636.2028 | pramanda@pigsflypr.com

Roundtable Marketing Ryan Maybee
816.682.0064 | ryan@roundtablekc.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Champions Crowned at Midwest's Largest Bartending Competition

The 4th Annual Greater Kansas City Bartending Competition Transforms Cocktail Culture

KANSAS CITY, MO (September 1, 2010) – Twelve of the region's best bartenders threw down on Sunday, August 29th, 2010 vying for first place at the Greater Kansas City Bartending Competition. The largest competition of its kind in the Midwest, pit twelve finalists against each other in front of a panel of judges and a live audience to prepare their unique cocktail recipes and test their skill and knowledge of cocktailing and spirits. Finalists were selected to compete after submission of their original cocktail recipes and a panel of judges evaluated their recipes for their use of quality spirits, fresh ingredients, proper technique and creativity.

The 4th annual competition was held in Kansas City and drew dozens of finalist hopefuls from across the country. More than 500 cocktail enthusiasts attended the competition which featured each of the contender's cocktails for purchase, sampling tables from regional beverage industry companies like Soda Vie, Original Juan and Boulevard Brewing Company, live audience text message voting for the 'Fan Favorite' champion and live music performed by local bands.

"This event is rapidly growing each year as word of the Midwest's cocktail culture spreads," said Ryan Maybee, co-founder and judge of the competition. "Kansas City is quickly gaining notoriety for being the hub of the cocktail renaissance in the Midwest. There is a wealth of talent here and this competition aims to showcase the best our region has to offer," Maybee added.

Finalists prepared their original cocktails, an impromptu classic cocktail for the judges, and this year had the challenge of batching their cocktail for the audience. The judges, comprised of regional media and cocktail industry heavyweights, sampled the batches to look for consistency between their large batch and their individual cocktail. Contenders were quizzed on advanced spirits knowledge and the development of their cocktails. Ultimately, the judges selected the following bartenders as their 2010 champions:

First Place - \$1000.00 Prize

Mark Church of Grunauer in Kansas City, MO
Drink: Refined Austrian Cocktail

Second Place - \$500.00 Prize

Chris Conatser of Justus Drugstore in Smithville, MO
Drink: Tit for Tat

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Third Place - \$250.00 Prize

TJ Vytlacil of Franco Restaurant in St. Louis, MO

Drink: Silver & Sand

Audience 'Fan Favorite' Award

Anthony Beyer of Benton's Prime Chop House in Kansas City, MO

Drink: El Remolino

Champion Mark Church and Third Place's TJ Vytlacil were both first time contenders in the competition. Second Place winner Chris Conatser has competed in the contest for the past three years and taken home first, third and second place, respectively. Anthony Beyer has wooed audience goers for the past two years running as the returning Fan Favorite champion.

WINNING COCKTAIL RECIPES

FIRST PLACE COCKTAIL by MARK CHURCH

Cocktail: The Refined Austrian Cocktail

Ingredients & Measurements:

1 1/4 oz Monopolowa Austrian Gin

1 oz Austrian Brandy

3/4 oz Aromatized Lillet Rouge with vanilla and cardamom

1 bar spoon of Edel Kirsch liqueur

3-4 dashes of homemade aromatic bitters

Glassware & Garnish:

Lowball or old fashioned glass

Long lemon twist

Directions:

Pour all ingredients in mixing glass over cracked ice and stir 25-30 times (or until properly diluted). Strain into lowball over large ice cube and twist a long lemon peel over the surface of the drink.

SECOND PLACE COCKTAIL by CHRIS CONATSER

Cocktail: Tit for Tat

Ingredients & Measurements:

1/2 oz 2:1 simple syrup

1/2 oz fresh-squeezed lemon juice

1 tsp Aqua Perfecta pear eau de vie

3 drops Bitter Truth celery bitters

2 oz Hendrick's Gin infused with wild carrot tops and calamus root

(*Note: Queen Anne's Lace seed heads are also known as wild carrot tops)

Glassware & Garnish:

Cocktail (martini) glass
Queen Anne's Lace flower head (gathered fresh for aroma)
Freshly bruised juniper sprig

Directions:

Combine all ingredients over ice and shake. Strain into chilled glass and float garnishes on top.

THIRD PLACE COCKTAIL by TJ VYTLACIL

Cocktail: Silver & Sand

Ingredients & Measurements:

1 oz Balvenie 12 year infused with Lemon and Ginger
1 oz Cherry Heering
1oz Fresh Lemon Juice
1 oz Lillet Rouge
Lemon Bitters
1 Egg White

Glassware & Garnish:

Coupe
Lemon Twist Garnish

Directions:

Dry shake all ingredients for 10 seconds. Add ice and vigorously shake for 20 seconds. Fine strain into cocktail glass and garnish with a lemon twist.

AUDIENCE 'FAN FAVORITE' COCKTAIL by ANTHONY BEYER

Cocktail: El Remolino

Ingredients & Measurements:

1.5 oz Ancho & Cinnamon infused Milagro Blanco Tequila
.75 oz Licor 43
1 oz Agave and Rice Milk syrup
Juice of 1/2 lime
1 Egg White
A few dashes of chocolate bitters

Glassware & Garnish:

Cocktail glass

Directions:

Combine first four ingredients in mixing glass and shake vigorously without ice until ingredients are emulsified. Add ice to shaker. Shake and strain into a chilled cocktail glass and garnish with chocolate bitters.

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MEDIA NOTE: Photos of the competition, bartenders, judges and biographies are available. Interviews with the judges and bartenders can be arranged by contacting Pigs Fly PR.