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Landrum team scores upset in festival barbecue contest

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Festival-goers line up for the chance to sample tasty entries from the S.C. Peach Festival barbecue competition. A total of 34 teams entered the competition, the first held by the Peach Festival.

For South Carolina Peach Festival Vice-Chairman Dennis Stroup, this year's festival really didn't need a barbecue competition to be considered a success.

One thing is for sure, however. The stomachs of the folks who sampled tasty pieces of chicken and ribs are certainly satisfied that festival organizers decided to include the event.

Adding a different taste to this year's festival, 34 teams spent much of the weekend in front of their grills hoping to serve up something appealing to judges at the event's first barbecue competition sanctioned by the Kansas City Barbeque Society (KCBS).

"It was great to have 34 teams in the competition," Stroup said. "It definitely adds a cherry to the top of this year's festival."

Things officially got underway Friday as teams put together their best desserts and "Anything Butt" items, or any food cooked on the grill not included in the regular barbecue cookoff.

However, on Saturday the competition kicked into high gear as teams scurried to put together their best in categories like pork ribs, pork shoulder, beef brisket and chicken.

Entries were judged on appearance, taste and tenderness on a 2 to 9 scale, with nine being the best a team could be graded in any category.

Particularly benefitting from the barbecue competition were the judges, who Don Harwell, a member of the Kansas City Barbeque Society board of directors, said would have received their fill of barbecue meat had they sampled all the available fare.

"If any judge were to eat everything entered in the contest, they would have eaten two pounds of barbecue meat," Harwell said.

The favorite coming in the competition was Lotta Bull BBQ from Marietta, Okla., a previous national barbecue champion with 64 championships and numerous others awards to their credit.

But all that is needed for an upset is time and opportunity.

Butts and Breastts, a competitive barbecue team hailing from Landrum, was able to fill the role of spoiler for the event. Though not receiving top billing in any of the four categories, the team was able to claim the title of S.C. Peach Festival barbecue competition grand champion.

"Sweet! ... that's all I can think of right now," said Shawn Creef of Butts and Breastts. "We've won awards, but not grand champion. This one's going to go home and sit in the kitchen for a while."

Here are the winners in the S.C. Peach Festival Barbecue Cookoff competition:

GRAND CHAMPION: Butts and Breastts

BEST CHICKEN: Blue Sky BBQ

PORK RIBS: Q-WE-DO

PORK: P&C Smoke-AHolics

BRISKET: Pickin' Porkers

"ANYTHING BUTT": Mountain Magic Country BBQ

DESSERT: Cajun Mojo