

Washington Beer Awards Rules for 2024

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General Washington Beer Awards Rules

1. Eligibility & Pricing

a. Brewery Eligibility

- i. Brewers must own a licensed commercial brewery in the state of Washington to participate in the Washington Beer Awards. Beers submitted must have been brewed in and commercially available in the state of Washington. If a brewery is deemed to not meet this requirement or comply with any of the competition rules and still registers entries in the competition, they will be disqualified and may not be reimbursed any paid fees.
- ii. All beers entered must have been brewed in a facility located in Washington which has a Brewers Notice on file with the TTB (U.S. Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau).

b. Entry Pricing

- i. \$50 per entry.

2. Entering Beers for WABA Judging

a. Registration

- i. The online registration period will be from June 28th through July 19th. All entries must be registered online.
- ii. Breweries may enter up to 10 entries. Breweries with multiple locations may register up to 10 beers per location or they may enter all of their beers under one location (up to 10 total). Each registered location will be treated as a unique brewery for the brewery of the year awards.
 1. In order to manage competition size and preserve judging integrity, it may be necessary to reduce the maximum number of entries per brewery to a lower number. This number will be determined at the end of the online registration window. If it is necessary to reduce the maximum number of entries per brewery, breweries with entries in excess of the final maximum number of entries will be notified of the change. The order of registration of the brewery's beers will be used to select which final beers will be accepted into the competition. Consequently, breweries should enter beers in the order that they would like to ensure that they are judged.
- iii. Beers will be entered into the online registration tool leveraging the currently published Brewer's Association Style Guidelines as of May 20th of the competition year. The competition organizers reserve the right to add or remove categories in response to market needs or to ensure competition efficiency. It should be noted that categories may (or may not) have changed from the previous competition year so the breweries should carefully review the Guidelines. The Guidelines being used for the competition year will be linked to

on the Washington Beer Awards website. It is up to the brewer to enter their beer in the appropriate category and specify any subcategory as necessary.

- iv. Additional information is required with many categories noted in the Brewer's Association Style Guidelines. It is the responsibility of the entrants to properly complete this information in the "Specialty Information" section. Failure to do so may significantly compromise the entry's ability to be correctly judged. No information should be provided that identifies the brewery or name of the beer. The Washington Beer Awards reserves the right to edit the "Specialty Information" of any entry to ensure anonymity of the entrant and support smooth competition execution.
- v. Entries may be altered using the online registration tool until the end of the registration period. At the end of the registration period, entrants may not make modifications to entries.
- vi. In order to be eligible for a "Brewery of the Year" award, the breweries must specify their previous year's production volume during registration.
- vii. Please note any pouring instructions using the available selections during registration. The registration tool will allow entrants to specify "normal pouring", "do not rouse – quiet pouring" or "rouse." If no pouring instructions are provided, "normal pouring" will be used.
- viii. Submission of any entries binds the brewery to adhere to the Washington Beer Awards name and logo usage policies.
- ix. During the brewery registration process, entrants must indicate that they agree to accept the standard agreement.

b. Confirmation of Entries

- i. A minimum of 8 (eight) entries is required in a category for that category to be eligible to be judged independently. The competition organizers reserve the right to merge categories into hybrid "award categories" at their discretion to ensure that awards are provided in meaningful categories with enough entries to provide healthy competition. The entries will be judged according to the style category originally entered; however, placements will be awarded compared to the beers in the hybrid award category. Brewers with entries in the affected categories will be notified and given the option of accepting the category merger or withdrawing the entry.
- ii. Confirmation of entries, judging categories, award categories (if different) will be sent to entrants via e-mail by July 22nd. Please review the confirmation message carefully and ensure that all information is correct. If any information is incorrect, entrants may reply to the Washington Beer Awards with corrections.
- iii. Entrants must confirm or submit any changes to their entries by July 25th.

c. Payment

- i. An invoice will be emailed on July 30th to the email used during the registration process.

- ii. Check payments made out to “Washington Beer Awards” must be received by August 23rd. They must be mailed to:

Washington Beer Awards
PO Box 26398
Federal Way, WA 98093

d. Submitting beers

- i. Entrants must provide at least six (6) 12-ounce containers, four (4) 22-ounce containers, or the equivalent of at least 72 ounces for each entry packaged in a minimum of four containers. Acceptable package sizes must be between 10 and 32 ounces. **Entrants must send at least 4 packages of each beer being judged (even if the total volume exceeds 72 oz).** All entries must be bottled or canned. Brewers will be informed if this will be necessary. “Crowlers” are an acceptable packaging option, but anecdotally the organizers have observed that fewer “crowler”-packaged entries show as well during judging.
- ii. After confirmation of entries, entrants will be e-mailed bottle labels on August 7th to print out and label their entries. These bottle labels should be affixed to the bottles or cans using clear packing tape. Labels should be affixed below the shoulder of the bottle.
- iii. All beers must be mailed or delivered to the published drop sites on the Washington Beer Awards website (www.wabeerawards.com/drops).
- iv. Beers must be received between August 9th and August 23rd. Some alternate drop locations may have different drop window constraints – details will be posted on the Washington Beer Awards website (www.wabeerawards.com/drops). Late entries will not be accepted. The only variations for the deadline will be due to entries broken during transit that are coordinated through the Washington Beer Awards. If entrants have any problems with shipping they should contact Peter Twigg (206-412-3664).
- v. Please note that it is illegal to ship beer via the United States Postal Service. We recommend using UPS, FedEx, or delivering in person. For breweries distant from a drop location, we encourage entrants to coordinate a group delivery.
- vi. Entrants should package entries well to avoid breakage during shipping. If entries break during shipping and replacements do not arrive prior to the deadline, the entries may not be judged. Sending replacements is the responsibility of the entrant, not the competition. Shipping containers and bottles will not be returned to the entrant.
- vii. Recommendations for shipping entries:
 - 1. Wrap each entry in bubble wrap (please use scotch tape to tape the wrapping closed, not packing tape).
 - 2. Separate each bottle with cardboard.

3. Place each entry in a separate container (for example, a six-pack of one entry or 4 pack of 22 oz entries). Make sure that every bottle from the same entry is in the same box. Do not ship bottles from a single entry in multiple boxes. Bottled and crowler entries must be in a closable box.
 4. Use packaging materials to fill the rest of the box. Bubble wrap is preferred but if Styrofoam peanuts must be used, please put them in plastic bags first. Do not use shredded paper.
 5. Wrap each entry box in a plastic bag in case of breakage. Place the entry boxes in a strong shipping box.
- viii. Recommendations for dropping off entries:
1. Please check the operating hours of the drop location prior to delivering entries. Certain drop locations may only have certain dates or a limited drop window. Check the “Entry Drop Off” section of the competition website for complete details (www.wabeerawards.com/drops).
 2. Group bottles for each entry together, preferably in a line or a six pack inside of a box.
 3. Entries must be delivered in a closable box, preferably a box designed for beer packages. Free-standing bottles or six-packs will not be accepted. For standard sized cans (12 oz or 16 oz), flats may be used as long as the flats are full (clearly marked “filler” or karma” beers/cans may be used to complete flats so that they stack easily). For 16 oz cans that require only 5 cans, a six pack holder missing one can is sufficient to provide appropriate spacing.

e. Judging

- i. All beers will be judged in accordance with the current Brewer’s Association Style Guidelines published as of May 20th of the competition year with any modifications or additions made by the competition organizers prior to registration.
- ii. Beers will be judged by a panel of judges in a blind format. A series of precautions will be taken to prevent judges from determining the origins of the entry. No information will be provided to judges that could tie the entry to a specific brewery. Judges will determine placements by the relative stylistic accuracy and technical merits of the beers presented to them.
- iii. Judging will be conducted comparing the beers within an “award category” assessing how well each beer meets the profile of the entered “judging style category” as well as how each beer meets technical brewing merits appropriate for the style.
- iv. In the event that, after entry processing, the number of entries in an “award category” drops below 8 entries (ie one or more entries are not physically submitted by an entrant), the competition organizers reserve the right to reconsider “award category” style groupings to maintain a competitive “award categories.” Any award category reassignments will be provided to the affected

entrants. Entrants may reserve the right to remove their entry following such a reassignment.

- v. Judges will be selected on an invite-only basis based on judging skills and experience. When judges have any conflicts of interest in judging beers from any particular brewery (if they work for, used to work for, have ownership, or brewed as a free laborer for a brewery) they must inform the Washington Beer Awards of the conflict. They will not be allowed to judge in a category that the brewery(ies) has entered. Judges must recuse themselves if they discover that they are accidentally assigned to judging a category that they entered.

f. Post competition

- i. Awards will be presented at an Awards Ceremony following the competition. Details will be posted on the Washington Beer Awards website. Awards will be mailed to entrants not able to attend the Awards Ceremony.
- ii. Judge tasting notes from the competition will be mailed no later than the first business day after the Awards Ceremony. Awards not picked up at the Awards Ceremony will be mailed shortly following the ceremony to the brewery addresses specified in the registration process.

iii. All decisions from the Washington Beer Awards are final.

g. Use of Washington Beer Awards Logo

- i. Reference to an award must include a mention of the category in which the award was received, must specify the type of award received (i.e., gold; silver; bronze) and must include a mention of the year it was received. If the award was received in a Special Award category, the title of the Special Award category must be referenced. In all cases, reference to an award must include the name of the beer and brewery exactly as entered in the Washington Beer Awards for the year in which the award was received.
- ii. All of the above required items must be in a font size large enough to be read in the format in which they are presented. Use the artwork provided by the Washington Beer Awards and choose the highest resolution appropriate for the desired use.
- iii. **Always use the ® when using the Washington Beer Awards logo.** It is a registered trademark of the Washington Beer Awards. When writing the words “Washington Beer Awards” or “WABA” an ® must be used after first mention.
- iv. Promotions or any other mentions of the Washington Beer Awards **may not mention other brewing companies nor the name of any judge or judges serving as a part of the Washington Beer Awards judging or evaluation.**
- v. By entering the competition, breweries agree to use the Washington Beer Awards mark only in pre-approved advertising/promotions (print/web, etc.) in compliance with the guidelines specified above. **This does not grant permission to use the WABA mark on any merchandise promoting the win (shirts, hats, glassware, etc.). Individual arrangements can be made for non-standard uses.**

- vi. These rules do not waive any right to trademark or copyright material of the Washington Beer Awards. The Washington Beer Awards logo, copyright, or trademark material may be used only with written permission of the Washington Beer Awards.
- vii. Failure of any brewing company, or of any person acting on a brewing company's behalf or at a brewing company's direction, to comply with these rules may result in suspension from participation in the Washington Beer Awards for a duration to be determined at the absolute discretion of the Washington Beer Awards organizers.

Washington Pro-Am Special Award Rules

Awarded to the best beer produced by scaling up a recipe from a Washington homebrewer and produced commercially. Beers submitted for the Washington Pro-Am Special Award must meet the following requirements:

- 1) Breweries that have entered at least one regular entry in the Washington Beer Awards competition are eligible to enter a beer in the Washington Pro-Am Special Award competition. Breweries are not allowed to enter ONLY the Washington Pro-Am Special Award competition.
- 2) Beers submitted for the Washington Pro-Am Special Award competition must have been brewed in and commercially available in the state of Washington. All Washington Beer Awards eligibility rules apply to Washington Pro-Am Special Award entries.
- 3) Brewers may select homebrew recipes to scale up in one of four ways.
 - a) Select an award-winning homebrew recipe from a Washington homebrewer from a homebrew competition. A list of potential competitions can be found at www.bjcp.org or www.wahomebrewers.org.
 - b) Organize their own brewery-run competition to select a recipe from a Washington homebrewer.
 - c) Partner with a Washington homebrew club to select a recipe from its club members. A list of Washington homebrew clubs can be found at www.wahomebrewers.org
 - d) Partner with a Washington homebrewer who will provide a homebrew recipe to scale up and brew commercially.
- 4) The homebrewer brewing their recipe with the professional brewery MUST be a resident of Washington State. Organizers of the Washington Beer Awards will not participate in the Pro-Am Special Award Competition.
- 5) The homebrewer brewing their recipe CANNOT be, or have ever been, an employee of that brewery or on the brewing staff at ANY brewery.
- 6) Entry Fee:
 - a) There is a \$15 charge for the entry to cover award and administration expenses.
- 7) No more than one entry per licensed brewery is accepted for the Washington Pro-Am Special Award competition.
- 8) No more than one entry per homebrewer is accepted for the Washington Pro-Am Special Award competition.
- 9) **Entries must be submitted into the “Pro-Am” category during registration. In the “Specialty Information” section, the brewer must specify the base style category from the competition guidelines (largely based on the Brewers Association Style Guidelines) that the beer will be judged to.** Any other supplemental information required for correct judging must be submitted in the “Specialty Information” section as well. Entries that do not include the appropriate information may not be judged correctly.
- 10) The Washington Pro-Am medals do not count towards “Brewery of the Year” awards. This entry will not count as one of the 10 maximum entries allowed per brewery.

- 11) It is possible to submit the entry in the regular Washington Beer Awards competition as well. The beer should be entered as described in the standard rules and will be treated as a separate entry (normal entry fee, bottle requirements, and registration rules).
- 12) After registration, breweries who submit beers into the Washington Pro-Am Special Award will be contacted for information on the homebrewer who provided the recipe. The brewery should be prepared to provide the name, e-mail address, phone number, and city of residence of the homebrewer.
- 13) Entrants must provide at least six (6) 12-ounce containers, four (4) 22-ounce containers, or the equivalent of at least 72 ounces for each entry packaged in a minimum of four containers. Acceptable package sizes must be between 10 and 32 ounces. **Entrants must send at least 4 packages of each beer being judged (even if the total volume exceeds 72 oz).** All entries must be bottled or canned.
- 14) All other submission guidelines from the regular Washington Beer Awards competition apply.
- 15) Washington Pro-Am Special Award entries compete in a best-of-show style judging. The guidelines posted by the competition organizers prior to the competition which leverage Brewers Association Style Guidelines are used for the judging. Entering brewers must submit the beer in the correct style category and provide any requested stylistic supplemental information for the entry to be judged correctly in the "Specialty Information" during registration.
- 16) Judges will determine the top entries in the Washington Pro-Am Special Award. A minimum of 3 entries will be required to hold the Washington Pro-Am Special Award competition. If there are 3-5 entries, a Gold medal will be awarded. If there are 6-8 entries, Gold and Silver medals will be awarded. If there are 9 or more entries, Gold, Silver, and Bronze medals will be awarded. Medals are issued to both the winning brewery and the winning homebrewer. If there are insufficient entries to hold the competition, breweries will be notified during the entry confirmation process.

Washington Collaboration Beer Special Award Rules

Awarded to the best beer produced by through collaboration between Washington breweries. Beers submitted for the Washington Collaboration Beer Special Award must meet the following requirements:

- 1) Breweries that have entered at least one regular entry in the Washington Beer Awards competition are eligible to enter beers in the Washington Collaboration Beer Special Award competition. Breweries are not allowed to enter ONLY the Washington Collaboration Beer Special Award competition.
- 2) Beers submitted for the Washington Collaboration Beer Special Award competition must have been brewed in and commercially available in the state of Washington. The breweries involved in the collaboration may be from out of state, but the beer must have been brewed in the state of Washington and be submitted by the brewery where the beer was brewed. All Washington Beer Awards eligibility rules apply to Washington Collaboration Beer Special Award entries. All collaborating breweries must be licensed as a commercial brewery in the state of their brewery with a valid TTB license (or the equivalent licensure in their jurisdiction for those out of country).
- 3) Entry Fee:
 - a) There is a \$50 charge for the entry to cover award and administration expenses.
- 4) **Entries must be submitted into the “Collaboration Beer” category during registration. In the “Specialty Information” section, the brewer must specify the base style category from the competition guidelines (largely based on the Brewers Association Style Guidelines) that the beer will be judged to.** Any other supplemental information required for correct judging must be submitted in the “Specialty Information” section as well. Entries that do not include the appropriate information may not be judged correctly.
- 5) The Washington Collaboration Beer Special Award medals do not count towards “Brewery of the Year” awards. This entry will not count as one of the 10 maximum entries allowed per brewery.
- 6) It is possible to submit the entry in the regular Washington Beer Awards competition as well. The beer should be entered as described in the standard rules and will be treated as a separate entry (normal entry fee, bottle requirements, and registration rules).
- 7) After registration, breweries who submit beers into the Washington Collaboration Beer Special Award will be contacted for information on the second brewery involved in the collaboration. The brewery should be prepared to provide the brewery name, e-mail address, phone number, and brewery mailing address for the collaborating brewery.
- 8) The brewery where the beer was brewed must submit and pay for the entry. That brewery will also be responsible for coordinating with the Washington Beer Awards for any competition and awards details. The organizers of the Washington Beer Awards will only contact the brewery who registered the beer during the registration window.
- 9) Entrants must provide at least six (6) 12-ounce containers, four (4) 22-ounce containers, or the equivalent of at least 72 ounces for each entry packaged in a minimum of four containers. Acceptable package sizes must be between 10 and 32 ounces. **Entrants must send at least 4 packages of each beer being judged (even if the total volume exceeds 72 oz).** All entries must be bottled or canned.

- 10) All other submission guidelines from the regular Washington Beer Awards competition apply.
- 11) Washington Collaboration Beer Special Award entries compete in a best-of-show style judging. The guidelines posted by the competition organizers prior to the competition which leverage Brewers Association Style Guidelines are used for the judging. Entering brewers must submit the beer in the correct style category and provide any requested stylistic supplemental information for the entry to be judged correctly in the "Specialty Information" during registration.
- 12) Judges will determine the top entries in the Washington Collaboration Beer Special Award. A minimum of 3 entries will be required to hold the Washington Collaboration Beer Special Award competition. If there are 3-5 entries, a Gold medal will be awarded. If there are 6-8 entries, Gold and Silver medals will be awarded. If there are 9 or more entries, Gold, Silver, and Bronze medals will be awarded. Medals are issued to both the winning breweries. If there are insufficient entries to hold the competition, breweries will be notified during the entry confirmation process.

Fresh Hop Beer Information

A separate competition will be held during the September/October time period to award medals for fresh hop beers (beers utilizing freshly harvested hops that have not been dried prior to use). Further details of this competition will be announced during the summer.

- 1) Medals awarded during the Fresh Hop Competition will not count toward the “Brewery of the Year” awards in the previous or subsequent Washington Beer Awards competitions.
- 2) Entries to the Fresh Hop Competition will not count as part of a brewery’s total entry count for the Washington Beer Awards competition.
- 3) Fresh Hop beers should not be entered during registration for the main Washington Beer Awards (unless they meet the requirements from the Brewers Association Guidelines), registration will be completed separately.
- 4) Due to the timing of the seasonal Fresh Hop beers, if not enough Fresh Hop entries arrive to qualify as a full category in the main competition, the Organizers retain the right to have them judged as Fresh Hop Beers within the regular style category.