TIPS FOR COMPETITION COOKING

These tips are for both Section K (open age cookery) and Section L (Youth cookery)

A judge has provided us with these tips to assist exhibitors to understand some of the rules of show competition cookery. Hope this helps!

Always read the schedule carefully, especially the special notes at the beginning. Only cook what is listed in the schedule.

Plain Scones - Use a plain cutter, not much more than 5cms. There should be no flour residue on tops or bottoms. Remove by brushing lightly, then some melted butter and pastry brush. All on presentation plate should be browned the same. Dough needs to be soft. Knead lightly and flatten with hands to try to remove all cracks and creases. Be sure they contain salt as this helps with flavour; a little sugar can also enhance the flavours.

Sweet Scones – can be cut with fluted cutter. Date scones are made richer by addition of beaten egg, sugar and a little cinnamon. Remove flour residue.

Cakes – Show cakes do not need to be larger than 20cms unless schedule suggests larger. “A cake” is round or square. Loaf tins for “loaves”. The flavour asked for should be the dominant flavour, but not too overpowering. If nuts are used, they should be chopped small so as not to interfere with cutting. Rack marks should not be seen on the bottom of a cake. You may need a couple of tea towels on the rack – the tea towels will then need to be soaked before washing – to remove fat. Soft cakes (as a rule) should be left to cool in tin for 5 minutes. Then turn out and over to base (bottom on cooler). Be careful when lining tins – there should be no markings on the cakes from the paper linings.

Icing -No icing unless stated in the schedule. Icing should be neat and tidy, no runs down sides at top – an icing consisting of icing sugar, small amount of butter (or sometimes oil) and hot water. Not fluffy icing.

Sponges – Light and spongy! When putting a sponge sandwich together, the two bottoms of the sponge cakes should be together in the middle of the sandwich. Join with small amount of raspberry jam – this is only to hold the 2 layers together – jam can be sieved to remove seeds if liked. Cook in appropriate tins – same size, same weight of metal tins as this will cause a difference in cooking time and colour.

Pikelets – Dainty, approximately 5-6 cm try to make same colour on both sides. No thicker than 8mm. The number required should all be the same size.

Chocolate Crackles – should have even amounts in patty papers (all be the same size).

Biscuits – should be crisp, snap when broken in half. Should be the size specified in schedule and if size not mentioned, they should all be the same size on the plate.