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NEBS Spotlight Of The Month ***Andy Husbands***



NEBS caught up with Andy Husbands this month for our spotlight article.

Tell us a little about yourself. How did you get involved with BBQ?

• Full disclosure, I think the first time I tried real barbecue was when I was about 20 years old while working for James Beard Award-Winning Chef Chris Schlesinger at East Coast Grill, and I've been passionate about it ever since. It was following my two years working for Chef Schlesinger that my colleague and high school friend, Chris Hart and I co-founded our competition team, IQUE BBQ in 1997, where we later went on to spend close to two decades on the competitive barbecue circuit. I realized during these years competing that I wanted to make barbecue my career, and opened the first location of The Smoke Shop in Cambridge, MA's Kendall Square neighborhood in 2016.

We know that aside from owning and operating several successful restaurants in the Boston area, you also compete in BBQ competitions. When and why did you start competing?

• Chris Hart and I started our team, IQUE in 1997 after attending a barbecue event

while working for East Coast Grill. We were fascinated by how competition-level Pit Masters carefully tended to their ribs and brisket to create smoky, juicy masterpieces, rather than churning out massive amounts of meat like we were accustomed to while catering, and we decided it was time to challenge ourselves to create barbecue just as delicious.

What do you most like about competitions?

• What I love about competitions is that you build a barbecue family, which is greater than your team as it encompasses all involved; including your competitors and judges. You become part of this community where each member shares the same passion for making top-quality barbecue for everyone to enjoy.

What are some of the challenges of competitions?

• As a team from New England, weather can be very problematic when competing. I remember at our first competition, called Pig N' Pepper in Acton, MA, it rained for two days straight which presented a slew of challenges for every competing team. Just putting together a high-quality, consistent product overall can have its challenges, be it the temperature or how our smokers are performing, to how much bourbon we've consumed that day.

Why do you love barbeque?

• Pit Master, Tuffy Stone once said, "BBQ is the friendliest food around. No one ever cooks a brisket for themselves," and to me that means it's always a communal experience where we share our meal and eat together, and celebrate what a wonderful cuisine barbecue is.

If there is one piece of advice you can give to a team first starting out, what is it?

• I would say to focus on putting out a consistent product while also having fun. Competitions require tons of practice for teams to get to the point of delivering outstanding product every time, and it's important to keep in mind that it's also about the experience and the process, not necessarily the destination.

And... THEY ARE READY!! BRING ON BBQ SEASON!!



March 30th & 31st some of the NEBS Board and NEBS Members had a full weekend with NEBS Members!
NEBS Cooking Class – 24 students
NEBS Judging Certification Class – 18 new NEBS Judges
KCBS Judges Certification Class – 40 new KCBS Judges
KCBS Table Captains Class – 12 new KCBS Table Captains

Big thanks go out to Mike Strout of Gotta Q BBQ, Chris and Joan Clegg of Rhode Hog BBQ, Tom Ryan and Jim Morey of Smoke'em if you got'em and Mic and Kim Stanfield of Boo Boo Qued for organizing and sharing information all weekend with multiple students. We'd also like to thank all the volunteers that showed up to assist in the weekend activities!!



Cooking Class coverage for the students included chicken,

ribs, pork, and brisket – prep, smoking, rubs, sauces, and lots of tips and tricks. Students also had the opportunity to see many types of smokers, discuss cooking methods and more. Special thanks to Mic Stanfield for demonstrating some NEBS categories of fatties and pizza. Students were shown pizza cooked on the Kettlepizza and three went home with gifts donated by Kettlepizza!



NEBS Judging Certification class students were presented with chicken wings, ribs, fatties and dessert entries – judging criteria was discussed and all the students earned their pins!

The KCBS Judging and Table Captain classes were instructed by Nancy and Don Muller. Students were presented with boxes of the four KCBS meats, correct and incorrect garnishes, and more. Flavor profiles, what is acceptable and what isn't was discussed and so much more! All the students took the KCBS Oath and left the class as Certified KCBS Judges and Table Captains!

Thank you to all who participated in the weekend! Welcome to all the new Judges! Congratulations to all the Students! If anyone has questions from the weekend, you are always welcome to reach out to the NEBS Board!

JUDGES NEEDED!!

The following events are looking for JUDGES:

Annual Rib Cook Off

Bridgewater MA - non-sanctioned event

14Th Annual Brookline Tailgate & BBQ/Grilling Cook-Off -

Brookline NH - NEBS sanctioned event

Krazy Days 2019 NEBS BBQ Contest -

Middleboro MA - NEBS sanctioned event

Otter River BBQ Cook-Off - Templeton MA - NEBS sanctioned event

For more information visit www.NEBS.org - News & Events

NEBS Team of the Year!!

Registration has been

extended to May 25th!!

**Register your
team NOW!!**

**Click on the Team of the Year header
to register!**

It only takes a few minutes!!