

Australian Amateur Brewing Championship Aims, Rules and Information

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A. Brief History of the Australian Amateur Brewing Championship

The first national competition of the ABAA (Amateur Brewers Association of Australia) was held in Sydney in 1995 in conjunction with the Ausbeer Homebrew Expo organised by Colin Penrose. The call for entries was publicised in the magazine Ausbeer and entries were judged over several days/evenings preceding the Expo by a number of Sydney judges.

The second national competition was held in Melbourne in 1996, again with the call for entries via Ausbeer. Judging was carried out at a number of brewpubs around Melbourne on a single Saturday with both local and interstate judges.

Some of the categories in 1996 had a very large number of entries –some more than 70 – which made them almost unjudgeable on one day by a single panel of judges. This added weight to a long-running desire of a number of people (particularly Colin Penrose) that the National Championship should consist of the best entries from each of the states. This would require State Qualifying Championships, which have slowly developed over the years. Since 1997, there have been State/Territory Qualifying Championships each year in VIC, SA, ACT, and NSW, and often in QLD.

The third national competition in 1997 in Melbourne was the first with state qualifiers. An AABC has been held each year since then. The locations of the AABC have been: 1995 Sydney; 1996 Melbourne; 1997 Melbourne; 1998 Canberra; 1999 Canberra; 2000 Adelaide; 2001 Melbourne; 2002 Sydney; 2003 Canberra; 2004 Canberra; 2005 Adelaide; 2006 Melbourne. The total number of entries in the State/Territory Qualifying Championships in 2005 was 800+ (Vic 302, SA 177, ACT 160+, NSW 148, QLD 14, WA 11)

A rather informal body (the AABA – Australian Amateur Brewing Association) with self-appointed delegates from some of the states has been responsible for deciding on the rules and categories for the AABC, which has been run by a local organising committee. There have been some attempts to try to organise a formal structure with ongoing funding but without much success. At times the AABA has been very active, at other times it has almost disappeared from view. Most deliberations of the AABA have been by email, some by phone, with occasional meetings at the same time as the AABC. A web site was set up in 2003 by the Canberra Brewers with some assistance from other states, but disappeared at the end of 2004. The rules/decisions of the AABA have not been well documented. Many rules were never formally decided upon but were the outcome of long-running email debates or simply the copying of local state rules. There were several years of intense discussions about and changes to the categories for the AABC, but they have remained fairly constant for the last few years.

(For the record, it should be noted that there is a longer running amateur beer competition - the National Amateur Wine and Beer Show which has been running in South Australia since the early 1980s but has always had a focus on wine. It has attracted entries from around Australia but the numbers of entries have generally been quite small, the categories were for many years very broad, in the late 90's beer was almost removed from the competition, and beers were often judged by only one or two judges.)

B. Aims of the AABA (Australian Amateur Brewing Association)

B1. To organise the annual Australian Amateur Brewing Championship (AABC). This will usually involve appointment of a local organising committee in one of the States/Territories to hold and run the Championship.

B2. To help coordinate and, where possible, support the State/Territory Qualifying Championships so that all interested amateur brewers have the opportunity to qualify for the AABC.

B3. To standardise categories, style guidelines, and judging sheets at the AABC and the State/Territory Qualifying Championships to ensure consistency and fairness.

B4. To help organise educational workshops (such as courses, judge accreditation and exams) for beer judges to improve the overall standard of beer judging and to broaden the pool of judges available for amateur brewing competitions.

B5. To encourage friendship and the exchange of ideas between amateur brewers throughout Australia.

C. Structure and Rules of the AABA (Australian Amateur Brewing Association)

C1. Delegates. The AABA consists of delegates (normally two) from each State and Territory willing to support the Aims of the Association (section B). It is the responsibility of each State/Territory to nominate their own delegates.

C2. Deliberations. The main deliberations of the AABA will be by email or similar means.

C3. AGM. An annual meeting of the AABA will be held in conjunction with the annual AABC.

C4. Web presence. The AABA will maintain a web presence, through a dedicated site (www.aabc.org.au) or hosting and mirroring at amateur brewing sites such as oz.craftbrewers.org, www.vicbrew.org, www.canberrabrewers.org, www.sabsosa.com, and nsw.craftbrewer.org.

C5. Decision-making. Where possible, decisions of the AABA will be reached by consensus. If voting is necessary, each State/Territory will have two votes on the AABA with issues decided by a simple majority of those voting provided that votes are received from at least three States/Territories. Any issue to be voted upon must be circulated (by email) to all current delegates with at least 14 days provided for discussion.

C6. AABC Local Organising Committee. A local organising committee responsible for running the annual AABC will be selected by the AABA based on nominations received. In selecting the location of the AABC, the AABA will, amongst other considerations, attempt to give all States/Territories the chance to host the AABC, and will take into account the track record of the organising committee.

C7. AABC Decisions. Where it is necessary for the successful running of the AABC, the local organising committee is authorised to make decisions on issues not previously agreed upon by the AABA. Such decisions should be guided by the other AABC rules, the Aims of the AABA and, where possible, the views of other AABA delegates.

C8. Categories & Styles. The categories and styles for the AABC will be decided upon by the AABA. In order to maintain some consistency from year to year, a maximum of three changes are allowed per year.

C9. Rules for State Qualifiers. State/Territory Qualifying Championships shall, where possible, follow the same (relevant) rules as the AABC. However, in order ensure that all interested amateur brewers have the opportunity to qualify for the AABC, the AABA will make reasonable efforts to accept entries from State/Territory Qualifying Championships, provided that all AABC entrants are treated equitably and fairly.

C10. State Qualifier Registration. The State/Territory Qualifying Championships shall be registered by 1st March each year through advice to the AABA delegate list and registration on a dedicated web site. The information shall at a minimum be competition date, categories, and organiser contact details

C11. Accreditation of State/Territory Qualifying Championships. There shall be only one Qualifying Championship in each State/Territory. If there is more than one nomination for the competition to be used as the State/Territory Qualifier, this shall be decided upon by brewers from that State/Territory. In the event of a dispute, the AABA will nominate which competition is to be used as the State/Territory Qualifying Championship. Each State/Territory Qualifying Championship shall accept entries from throughout that State/Territory. If there is no Qualifying Championship in a particular State/Territory, then

another State/Territory Qualifier may chose to accept entries from that State/Territory. The beers from both States/Territories would be judged together but for the purposes of qualification for the AABC, the placings for each State/Territory would be decided by only considering the scores for the entries from that State/Territory (see the example in the explanatory notes).

C12. Categories for State/Territory Qualifying Championships. All State/Territory Qualifying Championships shall be run using the published AABC categories, styles and guidelines.

C13. Results from State/Territory Qualifying Championships. The organisers of the State/Territory Qualifying Championships will supply the full results of placegetters in their competitions and their contact details to the AABC organising committee within one week of the running of the State/Territory Qualifying Championship.

D. Rules of the AABC (Australian Amateur Brewing Championship)

Except for the rules that specifically apply to the AABC (D1, D4, and D10–Champion State), these rules shall also be used by the State/Territory Qualifying Championships.

D1. Qualification. The first three placegetters at State/Territory Championships automatically qualify for entry to the Australian Amateur Brewing Championship in the same year (see D8 for resolving tied scores). A maximum of three entries in any category will be accepted from each State/Territory. Entrants may enter only those categories in which their placings were achieved. If the original beer is no longer available, entrants may submit a different beer in the same or a different style in that category. The beer style nominated must be a designated style for the category, as listed on AABC Entry Form available at www.aabc.org.au. Organizers reserve the right to reclassify or disqualify non-conforming entries. In the event that a qualifying entrant is unable to submit a beer in a particular category, State/Territory organizers may invite the next highest scoring entrant in that category to do so, in his/her own name, in order to fill the quota of three entries for AABC.

D2. Entries. No more than **two entries** are allowed from each entrant in any one Category. Within this rule, no more than **one entry** is allowed in any one style. (This rule would normally be enforced in State/Territory Qualifying Championships.)

D3. Amateur brews. The competition is restricted to amateur brews, that is to beers that have not been brewed on premises licensed as a commercial brewery. Beers produced from extract kits and wort kits and Brew-On-Premises beers are allowed as they not considered to be commercially brewed. Entries must be submitted under the brewer's name(s).

D4. One Qualifying Championship per Brewer. Entrants can only qualify from one State/Territory Qualifying Championship.

D5. Bottles. Each entry must consist of a single bottle of at least 500 mL in volume or two smaller bottles to make up at least 500 mL. Both glass and plastic bottles are acceptable. Bottles should not have any unique identifying features other than possibly a batch code on the bottle cap.

D6. Judging. Judging will be by blind tasting. Where possible, each judging panel will include at least one BJCP-qualified judge. Neither the judges nor the stewards serving the judges should know the name of the brewer whose beer is being served. Judges decisions are final and no correspondence will be entered into. Completed judging/score sheets will be returned to the brewers within three weeks of completion of judging.

D7. Category Awards. Prizes will be awarded for the first, second and third placed beers in each category based on the judging scores.

D8. Tied scores. In the event of tied scores in determining the first three placegetters, placings will be resolved either by the judging panel during judging or using a progressive countback until the tie is resolved based on: a) highest score for Overall Impression; b) highest score for Flavour; c) lowest range of individual judge scores (smallest spread of scores across panel); d) the judging panel will be requested to resolve the tie.

D9. Champion Beer and Champion Kit/Extract Beer. The award of the Champion Beer of the Show will be to the beer that receives the highest number of judging points in the championship. If awarded, the Champion Kit/Extract Beer of the Show will be awarded to the kit/extract beer (identified on the entry form) that receives the highest number of judging points in the championship. In the event of equal top scores for two or more beers, the

Champion Beer will be decided using the criteria for resolving tied scores given in rule D8. The same rules apply for resolving ties for the Champion Kit/Extract Beer.

D10. Champion Brewer and Champion State. The sum of category placing points is to be used for deciding Champion Brewer and Champion State. Category placing points are 3 points for first place, 2 points for second place, and 1 point for third place. If there is a tie for first place, then the sum of points normally available for first and second places ($3 + 2 = 5$ points) will be split equally between the two winners (i.e. $2\frac{1}{2}$ points each), and the third placegetter will receive 1 point. If there is a tie for second place, then the points normally available for second and third places ($2 + 1 = 3$ points) will be split equally between the two second placegetters (i.e. $1\frac{1}{2}$ points each). If there is a tie (in the number of placing points) for Champion Brewer or Champion State then the sum of the placing points times the judging points will be used to decide the winners. For example, a win (3 placing points) for a beer receiving 130 judging points and a third place (1 placing point) for a beer receiving 110 judging points would have a total of 500 points. If there is still a tie, then joint winners will be declared.

D11. Privacy. Personal information (names, addresses, and other contact details, etc) provided by brewers on the entry form will only be used for the conduct of the competition. This information will not be released to third parties, other than the names of brewers, which will be published in the results lists for the competition.

D12. Results. The full results for all beers entered in the AABC will be published on the AABC web site within one week of completion of the judging. The results will include score, brewer, category, style and state, as well as the judges for each category and their BJCP Rank where applicable.

E. Categories & Styles for AABC 2008

Category	Styles – Beers may only be entered in the listed styles	
1. LOW ALCOHOL (<3.5% alc)	1.1 Light Australian Lager 1.2 Light Wheat Beer 1.3 English Ordinary Bitter	1.4 English Mild 1.5 Scottish Light (60/-)
2. BRITISH & IRISH ALE	2.1 English Special/Best Bitter 2.2 English Extra Special Bitter 2.3 English Pale Ale	2.4 Irish Red Ale 2.5 Scottish Heavy (70/-) 2.6 Scottish Export (80/-)
3. PALE ALE	3.1 Australian Pale Ale 3.2 American Pale Ale	3.3 English IPA (India Pale Ale) 3.4 American IPA (India Pale Ale)
4. DARK ALE	4.1 Australian Dark 4.2 Northern English Brown Ale 4.3 Southern English Brown Ale	4.4 American Brown 4.5 Brown Porter 4.6 Robust Porter
5. STOUT	5.1 Dry Stout 5.2 Australian/Foreign Extra Stout	5.3 Sweet Stout 5.4 Oatmeal Stout
6. STRONG ALE (>6% alc)	6.1 Old Ale (English Strong Ale) 6.2 Strong Scotch Ale 6.3 Imperial India Pale Ale	6.4 English Barley wine 6.5 American Barley wine 6.6 Russian Imperial Stout
7. PALE LAGER	7.1 Australian Lager 7.2 Premium Australian Lager 7.3 Pale Continental Lager 7.4 Munich Helles	7.5 Dortmund Export 7.6 Classic American Pils 7.7 German Pilsener 7.8 Bohemian Pilsner
8. DARK LAGER	8.1 Dark Lager 8.2 Munich Dunkel 8.3 Schwarzbier (Black Beer)	8.4 Vienna Lager 8.5 Oktoberfest/Märzen
9. STRONG LAGER (>6% alc)	9.1 Strong Pale Lager 9.2 Traditional Bock 9.3 Maibock/Helles Bock	9.4 Eisbock 9.5 Doppelbock 9.6 Baltic Porter
10. WHEAT & RYE BEER	10.1 Berliner Weisse 10.2 Australian Wheat 10.3 Weizen/Weiss bier	10.4 Dunkelweizen 10.5 Weizenbock 10.6 Roggenbier (German Rye Beer)
11. HYBRID BEER	11.1 Kölsch 11.2 Blonde Ale 11.3 Cream Ale	11.4 North German Altbier 11.5 Düsseldorfer Altbier 11.6 California Common Beer
12. BELGIAN, FRENCH & SOUR BEER	12.1 Belgian Witbier 12.2 Belgian Pale Ale 12.3 Belgian Blonde Ale 12.4 Dubbel 12.5 Tripel 12.6 Belgian Strong Golden Ale 12.7 Belgian Strong Dark Ale 12.8 Biere De Garde	12.9 Belgian Specialty Ale 12.10 Flanders Red Ale 12.11 Flanders Brown Ale/Oud Bruin 12.12 Straight (unblended) Lambic 12.13 Fruit Lambic 12.14 Gueuze 12.15 Saison
13. FRUIT & OTHER SPECIALTY BEER	13.1 Fruit Beer 13.2 Spice/Herb/Vegetable Beer 13.3 Christmas/Winter Specialty Spiced Beer 13.4 Classic Rauchbier (Smoked Beer) 13.5 Wood-aged Beer 13.6 Other Speciality	
	(Specify the fruit, herb, spice, vegetable, smoke or other details on label)	

Final version, 16 May 2008.

F. Categories from the Australian Amateur Brewing Championship 1995-2007

Note: This list only includes the category names and do not indicate the variations in the styles within the categories, although the changes have generally been minor.

Year	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Location	NSW	VIC	VIC	ACT	ACT	SA	VIC	NSW	ACT	ACT	SA	VIC	NSW
No of cat's	21	20	12	15	14	14	14	14	13	13	13	13	14
				Light Beer	Low Alcohol	Low Alcohol	Low Alcohol	Low Alcohol	Low Alcohol	Low Alcohol	Low Alcohol	Low Alcohol	Low Alcohol
<i>Lagers</i>	Austral. Lager	Austral. Lager	Australian Lager	Australian Lager	Other Lager	Australian Lager	Pale Kit Beer	Pale Australian Lager	Pale Australian Lager	Pale Australian Lager	Pale Australian Lager	Pale Australian Lager	Pale Australian Lager
	Austral. Ale	Austral. Ale											
"	German Lager	German Lager	Cont'tal Lager	Cont'tal Lager	Pale Continental Lager	Pale Continental Lager	Pale Lager	Pale Lager	Pale Lager	Pale Lager	Pale Lager	Pale Lager	Pale Lager
	Pilsner	Pilsner	Pilsner	Pilsner									
"	Dark Lager	Dark Lager			Dark Lager	Amber/Dark/Strong Lager	Dark/Strong Lager	Dark/Strong Lager	Dark Lager	Dark Lager	Dark Lager	Dark Lager	Dark Lager
	O'fest, Märzen	Oktoberfest											
"	Bock	Bock			Strong Lager				Strong Lager	Strong Lager	Strong Lager	Strong Lager	Strong Lager
<i>Ales</i>	Bitter	English Bitter	Bitter	Bitter		Bitter Ale	European Pale Ale	British Ale	British Ale	British Ale	British Ale	British Ale	British and Irish Ale
"	Pale Ale	Pale Ale	Pale Ale	Pale Ale	Pale/Bitter Ale	Pale Ale	Colonial Pale Ale	Pale Ale	Pale Ale	Pale Ale	Pale Ale	Pale Ale	Pale Ale
"	Brown Ale	Brown Ale	Dark Ale	Dark Ale	Dark Ale	Dark Ale	Dark Ale	Dark Ale	Dark Ale	Dark Ale	Dark Ale	Dark Ale	Dark Ale
	Porter	Porter											
"	Dry Stout	Dry Stout	Stout	Dry Stout	Stout	Stout	Stout	Stout	Stout	Stout	Stout	Stout	Stout
	Sweet Stout	Sweet Stout		Sweet Stout									
	Imperial Stout	Imperial Stout		--									
"	Strong/Scottish Ale	Strong/Scottish Ale	Strong Ale	Strong Ale	Strong Ale	Strong Ale	Strong Ale	Strong Ale	Strong Ale	Strong Ale	Strong Ale	Strong Ale	Strong Ale
"	Wheat Beer	Wheat Beer	Wheat Beer	Wheat Beer	Wheat Beer	Wheat Beer	Wheat Beer	Wheat Beer	Wheat Beer	Wheat Beer	Wheat Beer	Wheat Beer	Wheat & Rye Beer
"	Belgian Ale	Belgian Specialty	Belgian Specialty	Belgian Specialty	Belgian Specialty	Belgian Specialty	Belgian Specialty	Belgian Specialty	Belg. & French Specialty	Belg. & French Specialty	Belg. & French Specialty	Belg. & French Specialty	Belgian, French and Sour Beer
<i>Misc</i>	Fruit/Herb	Fruit Beer	Fruit/Herb Beer	Fruit/Herb Beer	Fruit/Herb Beer	Fruit/Herb Beer	Fruit/Herb Beer	Fruit & Other Specialty	Fruit, Spec, Hist. & Exptl	Fruit, Spec, Hist. & Exptl	Fruit, Spec, Hist. & Exptl	Fruit, Spec, Hist. & Exptl	Fruit & other Specialty Beer
	Cider	Cider	Cider/Mead	Cider	Cider	Cider	Cider	Cider					Hybrid Beer
	Mead	Mead		Mead	Mead	Mead	Mead	Mead					

Explanatory/Background Notes

These documents (Aims, Structure, Rules) have been put together based on rules that have been used by the AABC and some of the state competitions. They have also taken into account of a vigorous email discussion in 2006 about what types of rules are required. The aim is to have a minimalist set of rules that are clear, can be easily enforced but are not so rigid that they can't cope with the variations between the state championships. These explanatory/background notes are included to summarise the main arguments used in formulating the rules so that these don't have to be revisited/rejustified every few years.

Explanatory/Background Notes – Aims of the AABA

B1. Having the AABC run by local organising committees in the States/Territories has many advantages over being run directly by a national body. It provides experience and understanding to a greater pool of people, provides more judges with the experience to evaluate national-standard beers, removes what could be a persistent State bias in judging, provides fresh input into the competition, and provides greater opportunities for sponsor involvement.

Explanatory/Background Notes – Structure and Rules of the AABA

C1. Delegates. A longer term aim should be a formally structured AABA with delegates elected from state bodies. However, this would be very ambitious at present given the difficulty of even getting on-going organisations for many of the state competitions. The ACT has the Canberra Brewers, Victoria has VicBrew, and South Australia has Mike Leupold, but the other states have struggled to maintain an on-going structure. Colin Penrose, and later Peter Ryan, tried to establish a national organisation along the lines of the American Homebrewers Association, with funds to support a national body and competition, but these were not sustainable. We need to have something that will actually work, which is probably a decentralised structure with a number of groups of people willing and able to run successful competitions including sponsorship and follow-up. Delegates need to be willing to support the Aims of the AABA (see section B).

C4. Web presence. An AABA web site was established in 2003 but the domain names fees were not renewed and the site is now defunct. Given the problems of on-going support for a separate web site and the potential loss of all information on the site, it should be mirrored at a number of relevant sites that are likely to survive in the longer term.

C5. Decision-making. Given the tenuous nature of the state bodies and the many disagreements between them over the years, it is unlikely that they would not take kindly to an AABA dictating how they should run their state competitions. Thus, in order to ensure that the AABC survives, it is necessary to be encourage consensus decision making and to work with a loosely-structured AABA.

C7. AABC Decisions. From time to time, the AABC local organising committee running the AABC may have issues that need more rapid resolution than is possible using rule C5. It is not anticipated that this rule should be used very often. Where appropriate, new rules should be developed following each AABC in order to clarify the issue for future organising committees.

C8. Categories & Styles. This is the issue that generates the most heated debates amongst brewers and within the AABA. There are many factors that need to be taken into account. It is

also recognised that there needs to be a mechanism for changes to the categories/styles. The rule to allow a maximum of three changes per year is designed to minimise wild swings in the format of the competition from year to year. A brief history should be provided of the reasons for the current categories to prevent the same issues being debated every year or so.

C10. Registering State Qualifiers. The aim should be to have competitions registered early (by 1st March) but the AABA should be sufficiently flexible to try to ensure that qualifying competitions are run in all States/Territories to give all interested amateur brewer the opportunity to qualify while ensuring that all AABC entrants are treated equitably and fairly. The Craftbrewer web site (oz.craftbrewers.org) provides a simple system for registering competitions that could be adopted. The AABA delegates are responsible for endorsing the State/Territory Qualifying Championships and ensuring that only one competition is endorsed for each State/Territory.

C11. Accreditation of State/Territory Qualifying Championships. If there is no State/Territory Qualifying Championship in a particular State, and entries from that State were accepted in another State Qualifying Championship, then the following example indicates how the qualifications for the AABC would be worked out. Example: If there were entries from States A and B with the following results in one category: 1st A, 2nd B, 3rd B, 4th A, 5th B, 6th B, 7th A. The three entries that would qualify for the AABC would be: From State A - 1st A, 4th A, 7th A; From State B - 2nd B, 3rd B, 5th B.

C12. Categories for State/Territory Qualifying Championships. This rule provides clarity for entrants and competition organisers.

C13. Results from State/Territory Qualifying Championships. This information is necessary for the AABC organisers to ensure that only suitably qualified entries are accepted for the AABC and to follow up on missing/mis-classified/broken entries directly with the entrants.

Explanatory/Background Notes – Rules of the AABC

D1. Qualification. Qualifying rounds are necessary for the national championships in order to limit the number of beers to be judged to manageable levels. In 2005, there were a total of about 800 entries in the qualifying championships. The rule allowing a different brew to be entered for the national competition exists because unless bottles for both qualifying and national rounds are submitted at the same time, it is impossible to enforce that the same beer is entered at both state and national level. The desire of the AABC should be that the same beer as that winning the state qualifier should be judged. In practice, there would be little point in a brewer entering a second-rate beer at state level and saving a better beer for the AABC. And in most cases there is insufficient time to prepare another beer for the AABC after the state qualifier. However, the rule allows for this. Another way of wording the whole rule would be to say that a state placing qualifies the brewer to enter the AABC in that category, but this is effectively what is said, just in a way that is easier to understand for most brewers who have another bottle of the same beer available. The rule specifies that in each category the top three beers from each state qualify for AABC. The previous version of this rule specified that a brewer had to place first, second or third in a qualifying competition. With tied placings (which were also permitted) more than three beers could progress to AABC. Or if one of the placegetters no longer had a beer available, that state only had 2 entries progress through to AABC. The amended rule with a quota of three addresses both these issues.

D2. Entries. *The rule of a maximum 2 entries per category provides a balance between the desire of some brewers to enter lots of beers to get feedback on them, the ability to properly judge all the entries in a competition with the time and number of judges available, and the desire to prevent a category (or competition) being overwhelmed by a single entrant to the detriment of a good competition. The rule of a maximum of 1 entry per style is in part for the above reason on limiting entries, in part to prevent a brewer entering the same beer twice in the same style. Even the American Homebrewers Association has a limit of one entry per style.*

D3. Amateur Brews. *The name of the competition is the Australian AMATEUR BREWING Championship. This indicates the competition is for amateur brews and not for commercial beers. For many years there was no rule on this issue. The competition name was commonly interpreted to mean that it was restricted to amateur brewers (rather than amateur brews) and not open to professional brewers. An issue arose occasionally when a homebrewer turned professional. Depending on the state, they were sometimes told they could not enter, sometimes they chose not to enter, and sometimes they were allowed to enter their homebrewed beers. This rule seeks to clarify the issue by referring to the beer itself. It recognises that when a professional brewer goes home from work and brews non-commercial beer as an amateur, then the beers they produce should be considered to be amateur brews. A commercial beer is defined as one on which full excise duty is payable. Note that the rule specifically allows beers from Brew-On-Premises establishments, which pay a reduced rate of excise. The formulation of this rule was highly contentious and only evolved out of dozens of emails between AABA delegates. One position was simply to restrict entries to amateur brewers because this is a simple rule to enforce – it is generally public knowledge whether someone is brewing professionally. But a significant number of delegates wanted a rule that would encompass a slightly broader range of brewers. It is expected that most full-time professional brewers would not have the time or interest in making or submitting amateur brews.*

D4. One Qualifying Championship per Brewer. *Most brewers will only enter one state qualifier so that this should be considered the norm. Given the way the state qualifiers are run (with competition organisers not aware of what entries other states will receive), it is almost impossible to prevent brewers from entering several state qualifiers. From a practical point of view, it is easiest to allow the brewer to choose which state qualifier they want to use, but they should only be able to enter based on their results in one qualifier. Of course, states may choose to limit their entries to residents of their state.*

D5. Bottles. *There needs to be sufficient beer for judging. While 750 mL was the preferred size, these bottles are becoming scarcer. The 500 mL size provides sufficient beer (100-150 mL) for each judge. When served in jugs, it is best that all entries have the same amount of beer in the jugs to help ensure that judges can't be influenced by perhaps knowing that the brewer only entered a stubbie. Identifying marks on the bottle cap (recorded on the entry form by the brewer) can help competition organisers sort out mix-ups during registration. These identifying marks should be removed or covered by the random entry number so that they cannot be identified by cellar staff or stewards. If a Best Of Show judging round were introduced, then it may be necessary to require that 2 bottles be submitted with each entry.*

D6. Judging. *This rule provides guidance to how the competition should be run so that the brewers are not known to the judges or stewards.*

D8. Tied Scores. *The previous version of this rule allowed for tied placing, but this produced inconsistencies at AABC. Some states resolved all ties during judging and always only awarded 3 placings - one first, one second, and one third, whereas other states allowed tied placings and there were commonly 4 and sometimes 5 qualifiers from some states in some categories. The amended rule (along with changes to D1) allows the best three beers from each qualifier through to AABC. It also makes competition fairer for Best State Award.*

D9. Champion Beer and Champion Kit/Extract Beer. *The method of selecting Champion Beer does not account for the variations in judge scoring between categories, but is often used in Australian competitions and is the simplest method. Differences between judging panels should also tend to reduce as more judges become BJCP-accredited. An alternative method is to judge the Best of Show separately using another bottle of the best beer in each category. This would require twice as many bottles to be handled and may be hard to fit in the one day that has traditionally been allowed for the AABC. However it would provide a ready supply of beer for the awards dinner at night after judging! The Champion Kit/Extract Beer is seen as inappropriate by some brewers (why distinguish based on production method) but sponsors such as Coopers and homebrew shops are keen to see a Champion Kit/Extract award because this accounts for so much of their business. It also encourages new entrants who are vital for all competitions. An option would be to leave the inclusion of the Champion Kit/Extract award to the local organising committee who are organising the sponsorship.*

D10. Champion Brewer and Champion State. *In the case of a tie for these awards, a taste-off of beers is not possible because they are based on results from all the categories judged throughout the day. Thus the suggested method of computing a sum of placing points times judging points.*

D12. Results. *This clarifies the precedence for AABC and most competitions that full results be published.*

History of Rule Changes

25 February 2007 C12 revised on, based on unanimous vote of 12 AABA delegates.

Previously the rule read:

“It is recommended that all State/Territory Qualifying Championships be run using the published AABC categories and styles. However, if other categories and style guidelines are used in a State/Territory Qualifying Championship, then it is the responsibility of the State/Territory to select the best three beers that will qualify for the relevant categories in the AABC. The organisers of State/Territory Qualifying Championships shall inform entrants before entries close for their State/Territory Qualifier of the method to be used in these cases for selecting qualifying beers for the AABC.”

15 July 2007 www.aabc.org.au website added

List of Categories and Styles for 2007 inserted as section E

27 September 2007 Rule D1 changed to remove requirement for qualifying entries to AABC to achieve a score of at least 60%, **but only for AABC2007**. This was based on a yes vote from all states with a condition that it revisited soon after AABC2007 to clarify the situation for future competitions. Some comments were:

- *Our judges were very strict and stuck firmly to the guidelines. We had several beers that were good, but out of style enough, or had a few classic faults that it caused a point loss. When they fell below the 60%, I was really curious how they would have stacked up against the other states.*
- *I think the judges really need some guidance. A mark below 60% means the judge is saying that the beer has problems and/or is not quite to style.*
- *In principal I think the 60% rule is a good one.*
- *I think we need a follow-up discussion about reference beers [for standardising scoring], which have proved very effective in recent ACT comps.*
- *A discussion soon after this year's national comp would be good to clarify the situation for next year's state comps*

30 January 2008 Rule D12 added following a unanimous vote of 12 AABA delegates in November 2007.

5 September 2008 Rules D1 and D8 amended following a unanimous vote of 10 delegates from all states (ACT, NSW, QLD, SA, VIC, WA)

Previously the rules read:

D1. *To qualify for the Australian Amateur Brewing Championship, a brewer must have placed first, second or third ~~(and scored at least 60% of maximum possible points)~~ in one of the year's State/Territory Qualifying Championships (see D8 for handling tied placings).etc.*

D8. *The “normal” procedure is to be used for awarding placings if there is a tie for category placings. For example, if there is a tie (equal scores) for first place, then two equal firsts will be awarded, and the next highest scoring beer will be awarded third place. If there is a tie for second place, then two equal seconds will be awarded, and no third place will be awarded. If there is a tie for third place, then two equal thirds will be awarded. In this last case, a total of four beers would qualify from a State competition for the AABC. If more than four beers would qualify for AABC because of tied placings, their acceptance for the AABC is at the discretion of the local organising committee. Competition organisers, if they so choose, may decide to arrange a taste-off to avoid tied placings.*

23 September 2008 Corrected delegate list inserted.