



From: Fern Gavelek Communications, contact [ferng@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:ferng@hawaii.rr.com) for photos & captions  
MEDIA CONTACT: Brittany Horn, [brit@pacificcoffeeresearch.com](mailto:brit@pacificcoffeeresearch.com)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE- Sept. 8, 2022**

## **Hawaii Coffee Association Names Winners of 2023 SCA US CoffeeChamps Prelims**

### **Top Competitors in Brewing, Roasting Advance to Next Round**

HAWAII—The Hawaii Coffee Association (HCA) returned as host of the Hawaii Prelims for the 2023 Specialty Coffee Association (SCA) US CoffeeChamps (USCC). This year's Hawaii Prelims recently presented the Roasters and Brewers Cup Competitions on Oahu. Tradition Coffee Roasters of Kailua offered their venue to host the slate of competitors and their support teams. Open to the public, the two-day event was lively and energetic with music, food trucks, winery and distillery tours, lots of Hawaii-grown coffee beverages and friendly competition.

Honolulu Coffee Company competitors swept the three top rankings for the Brewers Cup competition. Earning first place was returning competitor Thomas Kiesling, using Big Island Coffee Roasters Kona-grown Red Bourbon, washed process (parchment-dried) coffee. Both first-time competitors, Melia Hardin placed second and Rebekah Tucker took third, while returning competitor Kyla Villamor of Cafe Villamor in Honolulu placing fourth. All three used Paradise Coffee's Ka'u-grown Red Bourbon, natural process (fruit-dried) coffee. Each competitor has a reserved slot in the Qualifying Round in 2023.

In the Brewers Cup Competition, competitors were given 20 minutes to create and serve two individual brews using Hawaii-grown coffee for two sensory judges. The host-provided, Hawaii-grown coffees were sponsored by Hala Tree Coffee, Paradise Coffee and Big Island Coffee Roasters. Competitors utilized manual coffee brewers such as Hario V-60, Fellow Stagg, Clever Dripper and French Press, and then brewed coffee for the judges while giving an eight-minute presentation about their brewing process and the coffee selected. The sensory judge panel included local coffee professionals Juleigh Burden, John Letoto, Ross Broznan, Alex Brooks and Head Judge Brittany Horn of Pacific Coffee Research.

For the first time, the HCA hosted the Roaster Competition, which consists of three components: Cup-To-Profile Presentations, Judges Cupping and Audience Service. Final top three Roaster rankings included Mark Kove of White Nene Coffee Roasters in Kailua-Kona taking first, Thomas Kiesling of Honolulu Coffee placing second and Frank La of Be Bright Coffee of Los Angeles, Calif. earning third. Each has a reserved slot in the 2023 Qualifying Round.

In the Cup-To-Profile Presentations, competitors had five minutes to present, but not serve, their Hawaii-grown coffee to two judges. Coffee for the Roasters Competition was sponsored by Kona Hills LLC. Kona Hills provided a Kona-grown Typica Peaberry, washed process (parchment-dried). During the Judges Cupping segment, judges evaluated each competitor's roasted coffee in a blind cupping. In the third segment, competitors had 20-30 minutes to serve their Hawaii-grown coffee to the audience. Competitors were evaluated and scored by co-head judges Taylor Love and Tyler Zaiss, plus sensory judges Brain Burik of Tradition Coffee Roasters and Fred Cowell of Kauai Coffee Company.

Locations and dates for the Qualifying Round on the US Mainland are pending and will be announced towards the end of this year. For information on the US Coffee Championships, visit <https://uscoffeechampionships.org/>

The Hawaii Coffee Association's mission is to represent all sectors of the Hawaii coffee industry, including growers, millers, wholesalers, roasters and retailers. The HCA's primary objective is to increase awareness and consumption of Hawaiian coffees. A major component of HCA's work is the continuing education of members and consumers. Its annual conference has continued to grow, gaining international attention. Learn more about the HCA at [www.hawaiicoffeeassoc.org](http://www.hawaiicoffeeassoc.org)