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THE INDEX-JOURNAL



MENU



News

S.C.

July 14, 2007

By **LARRY SINGER**

Index-Journal staff writer

Now they're cookin' Competitors show source of passion

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Rob Bagby, who traveled to Greenwood from Lake Wales in central Florida, puts a shine on his cooker Friday evening, prior to the Kansas City Barbeque Society barbecue competition. This is Bagby's fourth year at the Festival of Discovery.

Late Friday afternoon, the delicate fragrance of exhaust fumes generated by automobiles traveling thru Greenwood was replaced with the aroma of smoking pork, chicken and beef brisket.

The reason for the change was the arrival of dozens of cooks and their massive meat cookers as they Kansas City Barbeque Society barbecue competition, which is an integral part of the Festival of Disc One of the busiest competitors was Rob Bagby, who drove to Greenwood from Lake Wales, Fla.

While his meat was heated, Bagby was buffing his black cooker to a high gloss.

"This is my fourth year here," Bagby said. "I first came up here because I wanted to come to South C what it was all about. I met some wonderful people up here and I've been coming back ever since."

Bagby, who is a special-education teacher in Lake Wales, got started with barbecue while raising fun "We won the Taster's Choice award my first year here," Bagby said. "But we haven't won it again si

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reclaim our title.”

One reason Bagby takes such pride in the appearance of his cooker is its unique construction and cap
 “This is called a stump smoker,” Bagby said. “I’ve got two of them, and they’re insulated like a refrig
 now it’s coming up to about 225 degrees. The neat thing is it has what we call a gravity feed. You fill
 with charcoal, and I’ve got about 18 pounds of charcoal in there, and this thing will run from now —
 afternoon — until Sunday morning.”

Phillip Cobb, who was busy taking layers of canvas and cotton protective wrapping off his cooker, m
 Greenwood from Icard, N.C.

“We do the regular pig cook, babyback ribs, some whole brisket, and we’ll do a little chicken,” Cobb
 Last year Cobb entered about a dozen barbecue competitions, and he said he came to Greenwood to e
 experience.

“We’ve never been here before, so I thought I’d give it a try,” Cobb said. “It’s a beautiful little town
 Jimmy Lovett got into competitive cooking because of his family.

“My father in-law has been doing it since 1989,” said Lovett, whose operation is called Smokin and I
 to compete in all four categories of the KCBS event. I’ve never done a KCBS event, and I decided to
 compete because Greenwood isn’t too far from my home in Augusta, Ga.”

Morris Hampton, who enters about 14 competitions annually, drove his cooker south from Blowing F
 Hampton said he came to Greenwood because of his experience during last year’s competition.

“We had a good time last year,” said Hampton, who will be cooking chicken, pork ribs, pork and bee
 came down and cooked it, so we thought we’d come back again this year for the barbecue cookoff.”
 Hampton said he got started in competitive cooking because of the favorable comments of friends.

“I had been cooking in my back yard for eight or nine years and everybody enjoyed it,” Hampton sai
 friends of mine said I ought to try my hand in competing, I took a second place cooking whole hog. A
 fishing: When you get a bite, you’re there to stay.”

Hampton said he had no special secret recipe for his meat to snag the attention of the judges. “We jus
 said, “until it’s done.”

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