# TEA MASTERS CUP
# OFFICIAL RULES & REGULATIONS

Approved by the Board of Directors of Tea Masters Cup, LTD
December 6, 2016


I. GENERAL PROVISIONS ..... 2
II. PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPETITION ..... 4
III. RULES OF THE COMPETITIONS ..... 5
1. Organization and Conduct of the Competition ..... 5
2. The Tea Preparation Category ..... 6
2.1. General Provisions ..... 6
2.2. Competition Are ..... 7
2.3. Performance Scheduling ..... 8
2.4. Master's Conduct during Competition ..... 9
2.5. Use of Non-Essential Equipment and Informational/Promotional Materials ..... 10
3. The Tea Pairing Category ..... 11
3.1. General Provisions ..... 11
3.2. Competition Area ..... 12
3.3. Performance Scheduling ..... 13
3.4. Master's Conduct during Competition ..... 14
3.5. Use of Non-Essential Equipment and Informational/Promotional Materials ..... 15
4. The Tea Mixology Category ..... 15
4.1. General Provisions ..... 15
4.2. Competition Area ..... 16
4.3. Performance Scheduling ..... 17
4.4. Master's Conduct during Competition ..... 18
4.5. Use of Non-Essential Equipment and Informational/Promotional Materials ..... 19
5. The Tea Tasting Category ..... 20
5.1. General Provisions ..... 20
5.2. Competition Area ..... 21
5.3. Competition in the Multi-Ingredient Beverage Subcategory ..... 22
5.4. Competition in the Pure Tea Subcategory ..... 22
IV. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION ..... 23
1. Formation of the Jury Panel ..... 23
2. The Head Judge of the Competition ..... 24
3. Performance Evaluation ..... 24
4. Technical Evaluation and Penalties ..... 26
V. ENFORCEMENT AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION ..... 26
VI. CONCLUDING PROVISIONS ..... 28

## I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Tea Masters Cup (hereafter “the Cup”) is an international competition among tea industry professionals (hereafter “Masters”).

2. The owner and organizer of the Cup is Tea Masters Cup, Ltd, Rooms 05-15, 13A/F, South Tower, World Finance Centre, Harbour City, 17 Canton Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong (hereafter “the TMC”).

3. The Cup aims to:
   - foster the development of high cultural traditions involving tea consumption;
   - raise the prestige of careers in the tea industry;
   - identify promising tea industry professionals and aid their career growth and professional and personal development;
   - foster professional development and exchange of ideas among specialists in the hospitality industry, the specialized retail/wholesale industry and the tea processing industry;
   - improve product and service quality in establishments where tea is consumed;
   - develop and promote new approaches to preparing and serving tea;
   - raise the status of tea culture among consumers.

4. The Cup includes competitions in four categories: Tea Preparation, Tea Pairing, Tea Mixology and Tea Tasting.

5. The conduct of the competition is subject to these Rules and Regulations as well as to Technical Specifications (hereafter “TS”) for each particular competition. TS shall cover aspects of a particular competition that are not covered by these Rules and Regulations; any such specific provisions shall not contradict these Rules and Regulations.

6. The Cup is held, as a rule, once annually and consists of national qualifying competitions and the final competition. The final competition is held after the completion of national qualifying competitions in countries that have organizations authorized to hold such competitions by the TMC. If necessary, preliminary qualifying competitions may be held to determine participation in the national qualifying competitions. Decisions about the need for and the format of such competitions are made in each country independently by the authorized organizations.

7. National organizations authorized by the TMC (hereafter “national bodies”) coordinate national qualifying competitions, establish and maintain communication with the Masters and promote the Cup in their countries.

8. When designating a national body, the TMC gives priority to organizations that:
   - conduct operations inside the country
   - are capable of holding competitions in accordance with these Rules and Regulations

- are prepared to take other necessary steps and to fulfill their obligations to the TMC as set forth in the relevant agreements.

Other factors that may be taken into consideration:

- absence of conflict of interest between the organization and other market participants in organizing industry-wide events
- material and human resources available to the organization
- the organization's previous experience conducting similar competitions
- the organization's level of expertise and reputation in the country.

Additional factors may be considered if deemed necessary by the TMC.

9. To conduct the final stage of the Cup, at the beginning of each annual competition cycle the TMC forms the Organizing Committee of the TMC and appoints a Head Judge of the Cup who automatically becomes a member of the Organizing Committee.

10. A Moderator (host) may be invited by the competition organizers to facilitate the conduct of the competition in any of the competition categories. The Moderator's functions may include facilitating the opening/closing ceremony, announcing the performances of individual Masters, communicating with Masters during their performances (if requested/allowed by the Masters), entertaining the audience during breaks and making other necessary announcements. The Moderator may not engage in conversations or solicit any comments from the audience or the judges during Masters' performances.

11. To conduct national qualifying competitions, a national body forms a national organizing committee that determines the number and format of competitions for the current annual cycle, appoints a Head Judge of the national competition and takes other actions as directed by the national body and set forth in these Rules and Regulations. National organizing committees and national Head Judges coordinate their activities with the Organizing Committee of the TMC.

12. Generally, members of an organizing committee and competition judges perform their duties on a pro bono basis. At the discretion of the relevant national organizing committee, organizing committee members and judges may be compensated for any reasonable work-related expenses.

13. To facilitate the conduct of the competition, the competition organizers may enlist the services of volunteers. The roles of and tasks for these volunteers shall be determined by the competition organizers.

14. The start date, as well as time and location, of each annual competition cycle is determined by the TMC.

15. English shall be the official language of the Cup, used for conducting the final stage of the competition, for authoring regulatory documents and for all official correspondence by the TMC. National

competitions and all correspondence/communication pertaining thereto may be conducted in any language agreed upon by the competition organizers and participants.

15.1. During the conduct of the final stage of the Cup, the competition organizers may choose to provide simultaneous or consecutive translation of the performances into the official language of the country hosting the competition.

15.2. Those participants in the final stage of the Cup who do not have command of the official language of the competition may enlist the services of an interpreter at their own expense.

16. In referring to the final stage of the Cup, the following format is used: “Tea Masters Cup International”. In referring to the national qualifying competitions, the following format is used: “Tea Masters Cup + country name” (for example, “Tea Masters Cup China”). If necessary, a reference to a competition cycle or a year may be appended to the designation of a final competition (for example, “Tea Masters Cup China 2016-2017” or “Tea Masters Cup International 2017”).

## II. PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPETITION

1. A Master may compete in any and all of the four competition categories. A Master who wins first place in one category shall be declared champion in that category and shall receive a commemorative trophy.

2. To be eligible to compete in the final stage of the Cup, a Master must pass the national qualifying competition in his/her country of residence.

3. To be eligible for consideration as a participant in a national qualifying competition, a Master must:
   - be of appropriate legal age to make all necessary decisions and to bear full personal responsibility for any actions pertaining to his/her participation in any stage of the Cup;
   - be a citizen or permanent legal resident of the country in which the competition is taking place;
   - register at the official website of the Cup, www.teamasterscup.com.

   Participation in the qualifying competition more than once during a single competition cycle is not allowed. Additional requirements for participation may be established by national organizing committees and may vary from country to country; however, such requirements shall not contradict these Rules and Regulations and must follow the guiding principles of the Cup, such as openness, transparency and involvement of the maximum feasible number of interested participants.

4. Participation in a qualifying or final stage of the Cup shall imply that a Master is familiar with and agrees to comply with these Rules and Regulations. A violation of the Rules and Regulations at any stage of the competition may result in disqualification.

5. A Master who has secured the right to compete in the final stage of the Cup by winning a national qualifying competition but who is unable or unwilling for any reason to participate in the final stage of the Cup cedes that right to the Master who won the next highest place in the relevant category of the qualifying competition. This rule shall be applicable at every stage of the Cup.

6. Any expenses necessary for competing at any stage of the Cup are the sole responsibility of the Master, unless explicitly stated otherwise in these Rules and Regulations, decisions of the Organizing Committee of the TMC, decisions of national organizing committees or other bodies authorized to make such decisions by the TMC.

7. Organizers of the Cup and their authorized representatives have the right to use the name, likeness, publicly available information and competition scores of any participant in any stage of the Cup in any format, without monetary compensation, for any purpose related to the promotion of tea, tea culture and the Cup.

8. As a rule, the number of participants in the final stage of the Cup in each category is set by the Organizing Committee of the TMC during the current annual competition cycle. This number is determined by the number of national bodies, taking into account other circumstances that may limit the number of participants. In any case, the number of participants in each category shall not be fewer than 3. The number of participants in national qualifying competitions is determined independently by national organizing committees, taking into account country-specific circumstances.

# III. RULES OF THE COMPETITIONS

## 1. Organization and Conduct of the Competition

1.1. In preparation for a competition in any category, the organizers shall prepare and publish TS for that competition. TS may contain provisions relevant to the conduct of the competition, including, but not limited to:

- the location of the competition;
- the layout of the competition area;
- the dimensions of tables used for performances (tabletop shape and area, table height);
- a list of equipment made available to participants by the competition organizers;
- information about any video, audio or other auxiliary equipment used during the competition;
- format of the competition in individual categories;
- the schedule of the competition;
- membership in the jury panels;
- the number of beverages/compositions that must be served as part of the competition;
- rules for access to and use of preparation and storage areas
- conditions/rules for the use of any equipment or techniques that require special permission, such as open flame, etc.
- any other provisions deemed necessary by the competition organizers.

The competition organizers shall use the official channels of the Cup to make the TS public prior to the start of the competition. Parts of the TS may be published at different times, provided that the TS in its entirety is published prior to the start of the competition.

1.2. The official source of information about the final stage of the Cup shall be the website www.teamasterscup.com. The official sources of information about national qualifying competitions shall be listed at www.teamasterscup.com by the national bodies.

## 2. The Tea Preparation Category

### 2.1. General Provisions

2.1.1. A Master competing in this category must demonstrate the skill of tea preparation by brewing and presenting to each member of the jury panel two beverages:

- The Organizers' Tea, a beverage prepared from a single tea sample chosen from a fixed set of samples, the same for all competitors, revealed by the competition organizers prior to the start of the competition;
- The Master's Tea, a beverage prepared from any tea chosen by the Master, possibly from the set of tea samples provided by the competition organizers.

2.1.2. The competition organizers may introduce additional requirements for Masters preparing the Organizers' Tea, including the use of specific types of teaware, preparation methods, water, equipment, etc.

2.1.3. When preparing the Master's Tea, the Master is free to use any type of equipment, water, etc., as long as such use does not violate these Rules and Regulations or any other requirements imposed by the competition organizers.

2.1.4. The Master is limited to using tea proper, i.e., a product prepared from leaves, shoots and buds of the species Camellia Sinensis. Tea can be served to the judges cold as well as hot.

2.1.5. The only permitted beverage ingredients are tea and water. The Master may not use any additives or accessories that can affect the judges' ability to evaluate the taste and aroma of tea. The Master may not use flavored teas or blend several types of tea.

2.1.6. Prior to the start of the competition, the competition organizers announce the rules for preparing the Organizers' Tea. The Master shall have at least 20 minutes to examine the tea samples, select the necessary equipment and plan his/her performance. If additional requirements are imposed, as allowed by the subsection 2.1.2 of these Rules and Regulations, the Master shall have at least 40 additional minutes to examine the equipment, teaware, water, etc.

2.1.7. The two beverages in this category shall be prepared directly in front of the jury panel; they can be prepared consecutively or in parallel, unless stated otherwise by the competition organizers. The Masters may not prepare their teas in advance.

2.1.8. The two beverages in this category can be served in any order, unless stated otherwise by the competition organizers. The serving of the beverages is an integral part of the competition and shall

be performed by the Master without any outside assistance. The amount of served beverage must be sufficient to allow adequate evaluation by each judge.

2.1.9. The Master's performance shall be evaluated according to the following rubrics: aroma, flavor, and aftertaste of the tea, brewing and serving technique, presentation. The Master may receive a penalty for violating any provisions stated in these Rules and Regulations or any additional requirements imposed by the competition organizers. The judges shall record their scores in scoring forms. The two beverages — the Organizers' Tea and the Master's Tea — shall be scored separately. After the conclusion of the competition, the Master has the right to examine his/her scoring form and to get feedback from the judges, including the justification of the score and comments on the Master's performance.

### 2.2. Competition Area

2.2.1. The space used for the conduct of the competition must include the following areas:

- performance area;
- jury panel area;
- jury panel room;
- preparation area;
- storage area;
- technical area;
- audience area.

2.2.2. The performance area shall be equipped with a table/tables for performances as well as a table/tables for the placement of auxiliary equipment. The setup of the performance area shall allow equal space for all Masters, free access to the tables for volunteers and judges as well as unobstructed view for the audience. Any changes to the setup, such as replacing or removing tables, bringing in additional furniture, etc., shall be allowed only when such changes are necessary for the normal conduct of the competition (e.g. in cases of accidental damage, etc.), as determined by the Head Judge of the competition.

2.2.3. The jury panel area shall be equipped with a table/tables for the judges. The jury panel area shall be located and set up in such a way as to allow Masters and volunteers free access to the judges and to allow beverages to be served to each judge.

2.2.4. The jury panel room is intended for use by the judges for activities that do not involve direct observation of the performances (score calculations, discussions and deliberations, handling and storage of documents, etc.). The jury room shall be part of the performance area and shall allow sufficient privacy and adequate working space (i.e. table space and chairs) for each judge.

2.2.5. The preparation area is used by the Masters to prepare for their performances. This area must be visually isolated from other areas. This area shall be equipped with electrical outlets, tables, chairs, a

refrigerator and a working sink/faucet. It shall have ample supply of necessary ingredients, such as tea and water, provided by the competition organizers for preparing the Organizers' Tea.

2.2.6. The storage area is intended for use by the Masters for storing equipment and their personal belongings. This area shall be visually isolated from other competition areas.

2.2.7. The technical area is intended for use by technical personnel (audio and video specialists, etc.) and shall allow for placement of all necessary equipment so as not to interfere with the conduct of the competition.

2.2.8. The audience area shall be equipped with chairs for the spectators.

2.2.9. The competition area may include additional areas for presentational, entertainment or educational activities. The use of these areas shall not interfere with the conduct of the competition.

2.2.10. If necessary, the same area may be used for several purposes (e.g. as preparation area and as storage area).

### 2.3. Performance Scheduling

2.3.1. The main stages of the competition are:

- performances by the Masters;
- Masters' preparations for performances;
- breaks between Masters' performances.

2.3.2. At the competition organizers' discretion, Masters' performances can be broken into two stages. If performances consist of only a single stage, the total performance time for each Master shall not exceed 15 minutes; this is the time for the Masters to prepare and serve both the Organizers' Tea and the Master's Tea. If performances consist of two stages, each Master shall perform twice. The first stage (10 minutes) shall be the preparation and presentation of the Organizers' Tea; the second stage (10 minutes) shall be the preparation and presentation of the Master's Tea.

2.3.3. Regardless of the number of performance stages, there shall be breaks between performances (no shorter than 5 minutes) to ensure that the judges and volunteers can complete their tasks and to allow time for the setup of the next performance.

2.3.4. To make for a more dynamic and visually appealing competition, the performance area may be divided into two subareas, such that while one Master is performing in one subarea, the Master scheduled to perform next is preparing in the other subarea. The performance schedule shall allow equal preparation time for each Master, including the Master who performs first in the competition.

2.3.5. The order of Masters' performances shall be determined by lottery; this order shall become part of the official schedule of the competition. Two Masters may swap their turns if they wish, provided they inform the competition organizers prior to the start of the competition.

2.3.6. The official schedule of the competition can be altered at the discretion of the competition organizers. The Masters shall be informed of any such alterations.

2.3.7. In addition to the performance and preparation stages, the official competition schedule shall include the following stages:

- inspection by the Masters of the tea, other ingredients and equipment supplied by the competition organizers;
- the briefing of the Masters;
- a preliminary conference and calibration by the judges, as well as the final conference for determining the official results of the competition;
- an extended break (no shorter than 30 minutes) if the number of competitors in the category exceeds 8;
- official stages, such as an opening ceremony or an awards ceremony.

### 2.4. Master's Conduct during Competition

2.4.1. The Master must be present within the performance area prior to the start of his/her scheduled performance. If a Master is late for his/her performance, the competition organizers have the right to move the Master's performance to a different time slot with an automatic penalty or to disqualify the Master.

2.4.2. When two Masters are using the same competition area, priority shall always be given to the Master whose performance is scheduled earlier.

2.4.3. All activities in the performance area that require the help of assistants (moving of equipment, teaware, tables, etc.) shall be carried out only during breaks between performances.

2.4.4. A Master preparing in one performance subarea while another Master is performing in the other subarea shall not disrupt the ongoing performance.

2.4.5. During the break before his/her scheduled performance, the Master may place certain relevant materials (performance descriptions, tea samples, etc.) onto the judges' table(s). Any such placement of materials shall not violate these Rules and Regulations or any other rules imposed by the competition organizers.

2.4.6. The Master begins his/her performance after an invitation to do so by the Moderator. The timer starts after the Master gives an explicit signal (e.g. "I am ready!"), OR begins handling ingredients or equipment in the performance area, OR starts his/her presentation, OR launches any media accompaniment (music, video, visual effects, etc.).

2.4.7. The Master is allowed to make comments while preparing and serving the beverages. The Master must inform the judges about his/her choice of tea samples for the performance.

2.4.8. The Master ends his/her performance by giving an explicit signal (e.g. “I am finished!”) Absent such a signal, the timer shall be stopped at the discretion of the Head Judge. If the Master gives an end-of-performance signal but continues to perform, the timer shall be restarted.

2.4.9. All technical issues during a performance that are the responsibility of the Master (missing or broken equipment, teaware, etc.) shall be handled by the Master without outside assistance and without stopping the timer, provided that such issues do not constitute a hazard.

2.4.10. If there are technical issues that are NOT the responsibility of the Master (power outage, problems with audio or video equipment, falling banners, etc.), the Master may interrupt the performance and ask to stop the timer. When the issues are fixed, the Master shall confer with the Head Judge and decide whether to resume the performance and continue timing or to start over.

2.4.11. The Master is not allowed to engage the audience, judges or other Masters in a conversation during his/her performance; the Master may converse only with the Moderator. The nature of the interaction with the Moderator is at the discretion of the Master, but must be communicated to the Moderator prior to or during the Master’s performance.

### 2.5. Use of Non-Essential Equipment and Informational/Promotional Materials

2.5.1. Prior to his/her performance, the Master may submit to the judges and to the Moderator copies of the description of the Master’s Tea, in the official language of the competition; the size of any such submission shall be limited to a single page (A4 or Letter format).

2.5.2. Any audio or video materials used as part of a Master’s performance must not contain offensive images or language or violate the rights of third parties. Proper use of such materials is the sole responsibility of the Master.

2.5.3. Information about available audio and video capabilities shall be stated in the TS by the competition organizers. The use of any other audio or video equipment must be coordinated with the competition organizers. If permitted, the use and maintenance of any such equipment is the sole responsibility of the Master; no outside assistance is allowed.

2.5.4. The following shall NOT be allowed in the performance area:

- placement and use by the Master of any informational or advertising props or materials;
- use of any equipment, ingredients, etc., that bear any advertisements or brand names, unless such use cannot be avoided;
- advertisement or promotion of any brands by the Master.

During the performance, the Master may reveal his/her place of employment or any other professional/educational organization the Master represents or is affiliated with.

1.3.5 The competition may be recorded and shown on television monitors in the immediate vicinity of the performance area. The competition may also be streamed live on the Internet or via other communication channels.

## 3. The Tea Pairing Category

### 3.1. General Provisions

1.3.1 A Master competing in this category must demonstrate the skill of tea pairing (a composition consisting of tea and a light snack) by presenting to each member of the jury panel two compositions:

- "The Organizers' Composition", consisting of tea and a light snack and possibly including other mandatory components specified by the competition organizers;
- "The Master's Composition", consisting of tea and a light snack, prepared by the Master from any ingredients (may include ingredients brought by the Master him- or herself).

3.1.2. Prior to the start of the competition, the competition organizers announce the rules for preparing the Organizers' Composition. These rules may include mandatory use of particular tea samples or other food ingredients, teaware, water, equipment, preparation techniques, etc. The Master shall have at least one hour to select a tea sample from the set of samples provided by the competition organizers and to plan his/her performance.

3.1.3. One mandatory ingredient of any composition prepared in this category shall be tea proper, i.e. a product prepared from leaves, shoots and buds of the species Camellia Sinensis. Tea can be served to the judges cold as well as hot. The beverage prepared as part of the Organizers' Composition must be pure tea (blending and use of any additives or flavorings is not allowed); the beverage prepared as part of the Masters' Composition may be pure tea or a blend containing tea as one of the ingredients.

3.1.4. When preparing the Master's Composition, the Master is permitted to use any type tea with any additives, any brewing method, any equipment, water, teaware, any other ingredients, etc., as long as such use is in compliance with these Rules and Regulations, other rules imposed by the competition organizers and local laws and regulations.

3.1.5. All ingredients/components of the compositions (including beverages) may be prepared by the Master in advance of his/her performance.

3.1.6. The two compositions in this category can be served to members of the jury panel in any order, unless stated otherwise by the competition organizers. The serving of the compositions is an integral part of the competition and shall be performed by the Master without any outside assistance. The amount of served beverage and accompanying snack must be sufficient to allow adequate evaluation by each judge.

3.1.7. The Master's performance shall be evaluated by the judges according to the following rubrics: taste, neatness, visual appeal, presentation, and practical potential. The Master may receive a penalty for violating any provisions stated in these Rules and Regulations or any additional requirements imposed by the competition organizers. The judges shall record their scores in scoring forms. The two compositions — the Organizers' Composition and the Master's Composition — shall be scored

separately. After the conclusion of the competition, the Master has the right to examine his/her scoring form and to get feedback from any member of the jury panel, including the justification of the score and comments on the Master's performance.

### 3.2. Competition Area

3.2.1. The space used for the conduct of the competition must include the following areas:

- performance area;
- jury panel area;
- jury panel room;
- preparation area;
- storage area;
- technical area;
- audience area.

3.2.2. The performance area shall be equipped with a table/tables for performances as well as a table/tables for the placement of auxiliary equipment. The setup of the performance area shall allow equal space for all Masters, free access to the tables for volunteers and judges as well as unobstructed view for the audience. Any changes to the setup, such as replacing or removing tables, bringing in additional furniture, etc., shall be allowed only when such changes are necessary for the normal conduct of the competition (e.g. in cases of accidental damage, etc.), as determined by the Head Judge of the competition.

3.2.3. The jury panel area shall be equipped with a table/tables for the judges. The jury panel area shall be located and set up to allow Masters and volunteers free access to the judges and to allow beverages to be served to each judge.

3.2.4. The jury panel room is intended to be used by the judges for activities that do not involve direct observation of the performances (score calculations, discussions and deliberations, handling and storage of documents, etc.). The jury room shall be part of the performance area and shall allow sufficient privacy and adequate working space (i.e. table space and chairs) for each judge.

3.2.5. The preparation area is used by the Masters to prepare for their performances. This area must be visually isolated from other areas. This area shall be equipped with electrical outlets, tables, chairs, a refrigerator and a working sink/faucet. It shall have ample supply of necessary ingredients, such as tea and water, provided by the competition organizer for preparing the Organizers' Composition.

3.2.6. The storage area is intended for use by the Masters for storing equipment and their personal belongings. This area shall be visually isolated from other competition areas.

3.2.7. The technical area is intended for use by technical personnel (audio and video specialists, etc.) and shall allow for placement of all necessary equipment so as not to interfere with the conduct of the competition.

3.2.8. The audience area shall be equipped with chairs for the spectators.

3.2.9. The competition area may include additional areas for presentational, entertainment or educational activities. The use of these areas shall not interfere with the conduct of the competition.

3.2.10. If necessary, the same area may be used for several purposes (e.g. as preparation area and as storage area).

### 3.3. Performance Scheduling

3.3.1. The main stages of the competition are:

- performances by the Masters;
- Masters' preparations for performances;
- breaks between Masters' performances.

3.3.2. At the competition organizers' discretion, Masters' performances can be broken into two stages. If performances consist of only a single stage, the total performance time for each Master shall not exceed 15 minutes; this is the time for the Masters to prepare and serve both the Organizers' Composition and the Master's Composition. If performances consist of two stages, each Master shall perform twice. The first stage (10 minutes) shall be the preparation and presentation of the Organizers' Composition; the second stage (10 minutes) shall be the preparation and presentation of the Master's Composition.

3.3.3. Regardless of the number of performance stages, there shall be breaks between performances (no shorter than 5 minutes) to ensure that the judges and volunteers can complete their tasks and to allow time for the setup of the next performance.

3.3.4. To make for a more dynamic and visually appealing competition, the performance area may be divided into two subareas, such that while one Master is performing in one subarea, the Master scheduled to perform next is preparing in the other subarea. The performance schedule shall allow equal preparation time for each Master, including the Master who performs first in the competition.

3.3.5. The order of Masters' performances shall be determined by lottery; this order shall become part of the official schedule of the competition. Two Masters may swap their turns if they wish, provided they inform the competition organizers prior to the start of the competition.

3.3.6. The official schedule of the competition can be altered at the discretion of the competition organizers. The Masters shall be informed of any such alterations.

3.3.7. In addition to the performance and preparation stages, the official competition schedule shall include the following stages:

- inspection by the Masters of the tea, other ingredients and equipment supplied by the competition organizers;
- the briefing of the Masters;

- a preliminary conference and calibration by the judges, as well as the final conference for determining the official results of the competition;
- an extended break (no shorter than 30 minutes) if the number of competitors in the category exceeds 8;
- official stages, such as an opening ceremony or an awards ceremony.

### 3.4. Master's Conduct during Competition

3.4.1. The Master must be present within the performance area prior to the start of his/her scheduled performance. If a Master is late for his/her performance, the competition organizers have the right to move the Master's performance to a different time slot with an automatic penalty or to disqualify the Master.

3.4.2. When two Masters are using the same competition area, priority shall always be given to the Master whose performance is scheduled earlier.

3.4.3. All activities in the performance area that require the help of assistants (moving of equipment, teaware, tables, etc.) shall be carried out only during breaks between performances.

3.4.4. A Master preparing in one performance subarea while another Master is performing in the other subarea shall not disrupt the ongoing performance.

3.4.5. During the break before his/her scheduled performance, the Master may place certain relevant materials (performance description, tea samples, etc.) onto the judges' table(s). Any such placement of materials shall not violate these Rules and Regulations or any other rules imposed by the competition organizers.

3.4.6. The Master begins his/her performance after an invitation to do so by the Moderator. The timer starts after the Master gives an explicit signal (e.g. "I am ready!"), OR begins handling ingredients, elements of the composition or equipment in the performance area, OR starts his/her presentation, OR launches any media accompaniment (music, video, visual effects, etc.).

3.4.7. The Master is allowed to make comments while preparing and serving the compositions. The Master must inform the judges about his/her choice of ingredients for the composition.

3.4.8. The Master ends his/her performance by giving an explicit signal (e.g. "I am finished!") Absent such a signal, the timer shall be stopped at the discretion of the Head Judge. If the Master gives an end-of-performance signal but continues to perform, the timer shall be restarted.

3.4.9. All technical issues during a performance that are the responsibility of the Master (missing or broken equipment, teaware, etc.) shall be handled by the Master without outside assistance and without stopping the timer, provided that such issues do not constitute a hazard.

3.4.10. If there are technical issues that are NOT the responsibility of the Master (power outage, problems with audio or video equipment, falling banners, etc.) the Master may interrupt the performance and

ask to stop the timer. When the issues are fixed, the Master shall confer with the Head Judge and decide whether to resume the performance and continue timing or to start over.

3.4.11. The Master is not allowed to engage the audience, judges or other Masters in a conversation during his/her performance; the Master may converse only with the Moderator. The nature of the interaction with the Moderator is at the discretion of the Master, but must be communicated to the Moderator prior to or during the Master's performance.

### 3.5. Use of Non-Essential Equipment and Informational/Promotional Materials

3.5.1. Prior to his/her performance, the Master may submit to the judges and to the Moderator copies of the description of the Master's Tea, in the official language of the competition; the size of any such submission shall be limited to a single page (A4 or Letter format).

3.5.2. Any audio or video materials used during a performance must not contain offensive images or language or violate the rights of third parties. Proper use of such materials is the sole responsibility of the Master.

3.5.3. Information about available audio and video capabilities shall be stated in the TS by the competition organizer. The use of any other audio or video equipment must be coordinated with the competition organizers. If permitted, the use and maintenance of any such equipment is the sole responsibility of the Master; no outside assistance is allowed.

3.5.4. The following shall NOT be allowed in the performance area:

- placement and use by the Master of any informational or advertising props or materials;
- use of any equipment, ingredients, etc., that bear any advertisements or brand names, unless such use cannot be avoided;
- advertisement or promotion of any brands by the Master.

During the performance, the Master may reveal his/her place of employment or any other professional/educational organization the Master represents or is affiliated with.

3.5.5. The competition may be recorded and shown on television monitors in the immediate vicinity of the performance area. The competition may also be streamed live on the Internet or via other communication channels.

## 4. The Tea Mixology Category

### 4.1. General Provisions

4.1.1. A Master competing in this category must demonstrate the skill of preparing multi-ingredient tea-based beverages by preparing and presenting to each member of the jury panel two beverages:

- Organizers' Mix, beverage prepared using a tea, in accordance with the conditions established by the organizer and using the required components, provided by the Organizer;

- The Master's Mix, a beverage prepared according to the Master's own recipe without any restrictions, provided that the beverage and its preparation do not violate these Rules and Regulations or any other rules imposed by the competition organizers.

4.1.2. Prior to the start of the competition, the competition organizers announce the rules for preparing the Organizers' Mix. These rules may include mandatory use of particular tea samples or other food ingredients, teaware, water, equipment, preparation techniques, etc. The Master shall have at least one hour to select a tea sample from the set of samples provided by the competition organizers and to plan his/her performance.

4.1.3. One mandatory ingredient of any beverage prepared in this category shall be tea proper, i.e. a product prepared from leaves, shoots and buds of the species Camellia Sinensis. Flavored teas are allowed. The Master is free to use any other beverages (hot, cold, alcoholic, non-alcoholic) and any other ingredients that are permitted by local laws. The beverage can be served to the judges cold as well as hot.

4.1.4. In preparation for his/her performance, the Master may prepare the ingredients of the beverage (brew tea, peel and cut fruit, etc.), but the preparation/assembly of the beverage must be completed during the Master's performance in front of the jury panel. The two beverages may be prepared concurrently or consecutively, unless stated otherwise by the competition organizers.

4.1.5. The two beverages in this category can be served in any order, unless stated otherwise by the competition organizers. The serving of the beverages is an integral part of the competition and shall be performed by the Master without any outside assistance. The amount of served beverage must be sufficient to allow adequate evaluation by each judge.

4.1.6. The Master's performance shall be evaluated by the judges according to the following rubrics: organoleptic qualities of the beverage, preparation and presentation technique, visual appeal, the degree of synergy between different components of the beverage and practical potential. The Master may receive a penalty for violating any provisions stated in these Rules and Regulations or any additional requirements imposed by the competition organizers. The judges shall record their scores in scoring forms. The two beverages — the Organizers' Mix and the Master's Mix — shall be scored separately. After the conclusion of the competition, the Master has the right to examine his/her scoring form and to get feedback from the judges, including the justification of the score and comments on the Master's performance.

### 4.2. Competition Area

4.2.1. The space used for the conduct of the competition must include the following areas:

- performance area;
- jury panel area;
- jury panel room;
- preparation area;

- storage area;
- technical area;
- audience area.

4.2.2. The performance area shall be equipped with a table/tables for performances as well as a table/tables for the placement of auxiliary equipment. The setup of the performance area shall allow equal space for all Masters, free access to the tables for volunteers and judges as well as unobstructed view for the audience. Any changes to the setup, such as replacing or removing tables, bringing in additional furniture, etc., shall be allowed only when such changes are necessary for the normal conduct of the competition (e.g. in cases of accidental damage, etc.), as determined by the Head Judge of the competition.

4.2.3. The jury panel area shall be equipped with a table/tables for the judges. The jury panel area shall be located and set up to allow Masters and volunteers free access to the judges and to allow beverages to be served to each judge.

4.2.4. The jury panel room is intended to be used by the judges for activities that do not involve direct observation of the performances (score calculations, discussions and deliberations, handling and storage of documents, etc.). The jury room shall be part of the performance area and shall allow sufficient privacy and adequate working space (i.e. table space and chairs) for each judge.

4.2.5. The preparation area is used by the Masters to prepare for their performances. This area must be visually isolated from other areas. This area shall be equipped with electrical outlets, tables, chairs, a refrigerator and a working sink/faucet. It shall have ample supply of necessary ingredients, such as tea and water, provided by the competition organizer for preparing The Organizers' Mix.

4.2.6. The storage area is intended for use by the Masters for storing equipment and their personal belongings. This area shall be visually isolated from other competition areas.

4.2.7. The technical area is intended for use by technical personnel (audio and video specialists, etc.) and shall allow for placement of all necessary equipment so as not to interfere with the conduct of the competition.

4.2.8. The audience area shall be equipped with chairs for the spectators.

4.2.9. The competition area may include additional areas for presentational, entertainment or educational activities. The use of these areas shall not interfere with the conduct of the competition.

4.2.10. If necessary, the same area may be used for several purposes (e.g. as preparation area and as storage area).

### 4.3. Performance Scheduling

4.3.1. The main stages of the competition are:
- performances by the Masters;

- Masters' preparations for performances;
- breaks between Masters' performances.

4.3.2. At the competition organizers' discretion, Masters' performances can be broken into two stages. If performances consist of only a single stage, the total performance time for each Master shall not exceed 15 minutes; this is the time for the Masters to prepare and serve both the Organizers' Mix and the Master's Mix. If performances consist of two stages, each Master shall perform twice. The first stage (10 minutes) shall be the preparation and presentation of the Organizers' Mix; the second stage (10 minutes) shall be the preparation and presentation of the Master's Mix.

4.3.3. Regardless of the number of performance stages, there shall be breaks between performances (no shorter than 5 minutes) to ensure that the judges and volunteers can complete their tasks and to allow time for the setup of the next performance.

4.3.4. To make for a more dynamic and visually appealing competition, the performance area may be divided into two subareas, such that while one Master is performing in one subarea, the Master scheduled to perform next is preparing in the other subarea. The performance schedule shall allow equal preparation time for each Master, including the Master who performs first in the competition.

4.3.5. The order of Masters' performances shall be determined by lottery; this order shall become part of the official schedule of the competition. Two Masters may swap their turns if they wish, provided they inform the competition organizers prior to the start of the competition.

4.3.6. The official schedule of the competition can be altered at the discretion of the competition organizers. The Masters shall be informed of any such alterations.

4.3.7. In addition to the performance and preparation stages, the official competition schedule shall include the following stages:
- inspection by the Masters of the tea, other ingredients and equipment supplied by the competition organizers;
- the briefing of the Masters;
- a preliminary conference and calibration by the judges, as well as the final conference for determining the official results of the competition;
- an extended break (no shorter than 30 minutes) if the number of competitors in the category exceeds 8;
- official stages, such as an opening ceremony or an awards ceremony.

### 4.4. Master's Conduct during Competition

4.4.1. The Master must be present within the performance area prior to the start of his/her scheduled performance. If a Master is late for his/her performance, the competition organizers have the right to move the Master's performance to a different time slot with an automatic penalty or to disqualify the Master.

4.4.2. When two Masters are using the same competition area, priority shall always be given to the Master whose performance is scheduled earlier.

4.4.3. All activities in the performance area that require the help of assistants (moving of equipment, teaware, tables, etc.) shall be carried out only during breaks between performances.

4.4.4. A Master preparing in one performance subarea while another Master is performing in the other subarea shall not disrupt the ongoing performance.

4.4.5. During the break before his/her scheduled performance, the Master may place certain relevant materials (performance description, tea samples, etc.) onto the judges' table(s). Any such placement of materials shall not violate these Rules and Regulations or any other rules imposed by the competition organizers.

4.4.6. The Master begins his/her performance after an invitation to do so by the Moderator. The timer starts after the Master gives an explicit signal (e.g. "I am ready!"), OR begins handling beverage ingredients or equipment in the performance area, OR starts his/her presentation, OR launches any media accompaniment (music, video, visual effects, etc.).

4.4.7. The Master is allowed to make comments while preparing and serving the beverages. The Master must inform the judges about his/her choice of ingredients for the composition.

4.4.8. The Master ends his/her performance by giving an explicit signal (e.g. "I am finished!") Absent such a signal, the timer shall be stopped at the discretion of the Head Judge. If the Master gives an end-of-performance signal but continues to perform, the timer shall be restarted.

4.4.9. All technical issues during a performance that are the responsibility of the Master (missing or broken equipment, teaware, etc.) shall be handled by the Master without outside assistance and without stopping the timer, provided that such issues do not constitute a hazard.

4.4.10. If there are technical issues that are NOT the responsibility of the Master (power outage, problems with audio or video equipment, falling banners, etc.) the Master may interrupt the performance and ask to stop the timer. When the issues are fixed, the Master shall confer with the Head Judge and decide whether to resume the performance and continue timing or to start over.

4.4.11. The Master is not allowed to engage the audience, judges or other Masters in a conversation during his/her performance; the Master may converse only with the Moderator. The nature of the interaction with the Moderator is at the discretion of the Master, but must be communicated to the Moderator prior to or during the Master's performance.

### 4.5. Use of Non-Essential Equipment and Informational/Promotional Materials

4.5.1. Prior to his/her performance, the Master may submit to the judges and to the Moderator copies of the description of the Master's Tea, in the official language of the competition; the size of any such submission shall be limited to a single page (A4 or Letter format).

4.5.2. Any audio or video materials used during a performance must not contain offensive images or language or violate the rights of third parties. Proper use of such materials is the sole responsibility of the Master.

4.5.3. Information about available audio and video capabilities shall be stated in the TS by the competition organizers. The use of any other audio or video equipment must be coordinated with the competition organizers. If permitted, the use and maintenance of any such equipment is the sole responsibility of the Master; no outside assistance is allowed.

4.5.4. The following shall NOT be allowed in the performance area:

- placement and use by the Master of any informational or advertising props or materials;
- use of any equipment, ingredients, etc., that bear any advertisements or brand names, unless such use cannot be avoided;
- advertisement or promotion of any brands by the Master.

During the performance, the Master may reveal his/her place of employment or any other professional/educational organization the Master represents or is affiliated with.

4.5.5. The competition may be recorded and shown on television monitors in the immediate vicinity of the performance area. The competition may also be streamed live on the Internet or via other communication channels.

## 5. The Tea Tasting Category

### 5.1. General Provisions

5.1.1. A Master competing in this category must demonstrate the skill of degustation by identifying tea samples presented for degustation. This competition category includes two subcategories:

- Pure Tea
- Multi-Ingredient Beverage

5.1.2. The competition in the Pure Tea subcategory includes two stages:

- the Master has 10 minutes to taste and memorize 10 samples of tea and read the descriptions of the samples;
- the Master then has 5 minutes to blind-taste 5 samples of tea selected by the organizers from the previously tasted 10 samples and to identify these samples.

5.1.3. The competition in the Multi-Ingredient Beverage subcategory includes two stages:

- the Master has 10 minutes to taste and memorize 10 samples of single-ingredient infusions prepared using herbs, fruits or other ingredients, including one infusion of pure tea, and read the descriptions of the samples;
- the Master has 5 minutes to taste a multi-ingredient beverage prepared from the tea infusion and THREE other infusions selected by the competition organizers and to identify the ingredients.

5.1.4. The order in which the competitions in the two subcategories are conducted shall be determined by the competition organizers. At the discretion of the competition organizers, the competition in the Multi-Ingredient Beverage subcategory may be used as a qualifying competition for the Pure Tea category. In such an event, the points earned in the Multi-Ingredient Beverage subcategory shall become a part of the total competition score for those Masters who advance past this subcategory.

5.1.5. All teas presented as samples in the Pure Tea category must be similar in their degree of fermentation and may not be flavored.

5.1.6. Preparation of teas for the initial degustation shall be done by representatives of the competition organizers and using standardized methods and equipment (water, brewing time and temperature, teaware) under the supervision of the jury panel.

5.1.7. If all Masters compete in each of the two subcategories, the competitions in the two subcategories may be conducted in any order. If competition in the Multi-Ingredient Beverage category is used as a qualifying competition for the Pure Tea category, the competition in the Multi-Ingredient Beverage category shall be conducted first.

### 5.2. Competition Area

5.2.1. The space used for the conduct of the competition must include the following areas:

- degustation zone;
- jury panel room;
- technical area;
- audience area.

5.2.2. The degustation area shall be equipped with a table/tables for degustation as well as a table/tables for the placement of auxiliary equipment. The setup of the performance area shall allow equal space for all Masters, free access to the tables for volunteers and judges as well as unobstructed view for the audience. Any changes to the setup, such as replacing or removing tables, bringing in additional furniture, etc., shall be allowed only when such changes are necessary for the normal conduct of the competition (e.g. in cases of accidental damage, etc.), as determined by the Head Judge of the competition.

5.2.3. The jury panel room is intended to be used by the judges for activities that do not involve direct observation of the competition (score calculations, discussions and deliberations, handling and storage of documents, etc.). The jury room shall be part of the performance area and shall allow sufficient privacy and adequate working space (i.e. table space and chairs) for each judge.

5.2.4. The technical area is intended for use by technical personnel (audio and video specialists, etc.) and shall allow for placement of all necessary equipment so as not to interfere with the conduct of the competition.

5.2.5. The audience area shall be equipped with chairs for the spectators.

### 5.3. Competition in the Multi-Ingredient Beverage Subcategory

5.3.1. Masters competing in this subcategory are offered for an initial degustation 10 samples of single-ingredient infusions prepared using herbs, fruits or other ingredients, including one infusion of pure tea. The method of preparing the infusions and the degustation procedure shall be determined by the competition organizers. All infusions offered for degustation must be labelled with a name and/or a code that can be easily reproduced during the final degustation stage.

5.3.2. Each Master is given an information sheet with a list of all 10 infusions with their names and/or codes.

5.3.3. Masters shall have 10 minutes for the initial degustation. All Masters start the initial degustation at the same time, following a signal by the Moderator or the Head Judge. During this initial degustation, Masters can make notes on their information sheets to help them memorize the samples.

5.3.4. After the initial degustation, a representative of the competition organizers, under the supervision of the jury panel, prepares a blended beverage using the tea listed on the information sheet and THREE other infusions selected from those listed on the information sheet. The blended beverage is prepared using a method chosen by the competition organizer; the quantity of the beverage must be sufficient to provide each Master with a proper sample for degustation.

5.3.5. All Masters start the final degustation at the same time, following a signal by the Moderator or the Head Judge. The time for the final degustation shall not exceed 5 minutes. During this degustation, the Masters fill out a form where they list, in any order, the names and/or codes of the ingredients of the multi-ingredient beverage.

5.3.6. If a Master finishes the degustation in under 5 minutes, he/she hands the degustation form to the Head Judge, and the Head Judge marks the order or the time elapsed since the beginning of the degustation. When the 5 minutes are over, a signal to end the degustation is given, and any Masters who have NOT yet handed in their degustation forms are considered to have finished at the same time.

5.3.7. If one or more Masters begin the final degustation before the Moderator or the Head Judge has given a signal to begin, a false start shall be declared. In such an event, a new blended beverage shall be prepared using three NEW ingredients selected from the set of infusions, and the final degustation starts over. A Master who makes more than one false start shall be disqualified from this category.

### 5.4. Competition in the Pure Tea Subcategory

5.4.1. Masters competing in this subcategory are offered for an initial degustation 10 samples of teas brewed using the same easily replicated method. The method of brewing the teas and the degustation procedure shall be determined by the competition organizers; the quantity of each tea must be sufficient to provide each Master with a proper sample for degustation. All tea samples

offered for the initial degustation must be labeled with a name and/or a code that can be easily reproduced during the final degustation stage.

5.4.2. Each Master is given an information sheet with a list of all 10 tea samples with their names and/or codes.

5.4.3. Masters shall have 10 minutes for the initial degustation. All Masters start the initial degustation at the same time, following a signal by the Moderator or the Head Judge. During this initial degustation, Masters can make notes on their information sheets to help them memorize the tea samples.

5.4.4. After the initial degustation, a representative of the competition organizers, under the supervision of the jury panel, selects five samples of tea from those offered for the initial degustation; these samples are brewed using the same brewing method used for the initial degustation; the quantity of each tea must be sufficient to provide each Master with a proper sample for degustation. Each of the five teas is assigned a unique number prior to the start of the final degustation.

5.4.5. All Masters start the final degustation at the same time, following a signal by the Moderator or the Head Judge. The time for the final degustation shall not exceed 5 minutes. During this degustation, the Masters fill out a form where they indicate, for each of the five tea samples, the name and/or code of the tea.

5.4.6. If a Master finishes the degustation in under 5 minutes, he/she hands the degustation form to the Head Judge, and the Head Judge marks the order or the time elapsed since the beginning of the degustation. When the 5 minutes are over, a signal to end the degustation is given, and any Masters who have NOT yet handed in their degustation forms are considered to have finished at the same time.

5.4.7. If one or more Masters begin the final degustation before the Moderator or the Head Judge has given a signal to begin, a false start shall be declared. In such an event, the Master who makes the false start shall be disqualified from this category, and the final degustation starts over.

5.4.8. The competition organizers have the right to alter the format of the competition in this subcategory without altering the basic premise of the competition: blind tasting of 5 samples selected from a set of 10 samples tasted earlier.

## IV. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

### 1. Formation of the Jury Panel

1.1. Judges are selected from a pool of individuals who have professional expertise, extensive and diverse experience in the tea industry, and a stellar reputation among their peers. All candidates must be certified as judges by the TMC.

1.2. Judges for the final stage of the Cup are selected from a pool of individuals who are certified as certified as international judges of the Cup and have command of the official language of the Cup.

1.3. Judges for the national qualifying rounds are selected from a pool of individuals who are certified as national or international judges of the Cup. At least one member of the jury panel must be certified as an international judge of the Cup. If a member of the jury panel does not have command of the official language of the national qualifying competition, he/she shall be provided with the services of a translator. Procedures for judging lower-level national competitions shall be determined by the national bodies.

1.4. The jury panel for a final or a qualifying competition shall be formed by the Head Judge of the competition but must be approved by the competition organizers. The jury panel must have at least 3 members.

1.5. By accepting the invitation to serve as a member of the jury panel, a judge certifies that he/she has no medical, ethical, religious or other restrictions that would prevent him/her from tasting the beverages/compositions prepared during the competition.

## 2. The Head Judge of the Competition

2.1. The Head Judge is responsible for performance evaluation and for determining the final results of the competition, as well as for facilitating the work of the jury panel.

2.2. The Head Judge of the competition shall conduct a calibration of the judges prior to the competition and a conference for determining the final results of the competition before such results are announced.

2.3. The Head Judge of the competition is responsible for overseeing the technical evaluation of the competition.

## 3. Performance Evaluation

3.1. Judges must be impartial in assigning scores, entering their evaluations and all relevant marks/comments into the designated scoring forms. Judges may not have any type of affiliation with any of the competitors.

3.2. Separate jury panels may be formed for each competition category. Any changes to the membership of a jury panel after the start of a competition are permitted only in cases of emergency.

3.3. Judges may not make any comments regarding a Master's performance or a score assigned to such a performance until after the announcement of the official results of the competition. After the conclusion of the competition, the Master has the right to examine his/her scoring form and to get feedback from the judges, including the justification of the score and comments on the Master's performance.

3.4. For competitions in the Tea Preparation, Tea Pairing and Tea Mixology categories, judges may change their scores up until the moment when they must hand their scoring forms to the Head Judge.

3.5. To calculate a Master's final score during competitions in the Tea Preparation, Tea Pairing and Tea Mixology categories, scores assigned by individual judges shall be added up, adjusting weights for scores in different rubrics, if a system of differential weighting of rubric scores is in use, and any penalties for technical violations shall be applied.

3.6. For competitions in the Tea Preparation, Tea Pairing and Tea Mixology categories, the Master who receives the highest score shall be declared winner. There shall be only one winner in each category; if two or more Masters have the same highest final score, the winner shall be determined as follows:

- the Master who earns the highest score for the taste/flavor rubric shall be declared winner (in the Tea Preparation category, the sum of the scores for taste, aroma and aftertaste for BOTH beverages; in the Tea Pairing category, the sum of the scores for the taste of BOTH compositions; in the Tea Mixology category, the sum of the scores for the taste and the degree of synergy between different components of BOTH beverages); no technical penalties shall be applied to these scores;
- if two or more Masters have the same taste/flavor scores, the Master who earns the highest total score PRIOR TO the application of technical penalties shall be declared winner;
- if the winner still cannot be determined after using this procedure, the jury panel shall confer and designate the winner; if necessary, the winner may be selected by a vote with each judge's vote weighed equally if the number of judges is odd and with the Head Judge's vote counting as two votes if the number of judges is even.

3.7. For competitions in the Tea tasting category, the judges calculate a rank for each Master after the completion of the competitions in each of the two subcategories (the Multi-Ingredient Beverage subcategory and the Pure Tea subcategory). The rank of each Master is determined according to the number of tea samples/ingredients identified correctly by the Master. If two or more Masters have correctly identified the same number of tea samples/ingredients, Masters who have completed their degustations earlier receive a higher rank. If two or more Masters have identical ranks (the same number of correctly identified tea samples/ingredients and the same completion time), they share a spot in the final ranking. The assignment of ranks to Masters with lower scores shall take into account the fact that two or more Masters have the same rank (for example, if two Masters are ranked in first place, the next lower-ranked Master is ranked in third place, etc.).

3.8. Masters are assigned points for their ranks in each subcategory according to the following schema:

| Subcategory rank | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Lower |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Points | 25 | 18 | 15 | 12 | 10 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

3.9. The final score for each master shall be calculated according to the following formula:

**FINAL SCORE = score for the Pure tea category + score for the Multi-Ingredient Beverage category + the number of correctly identified tea samples + the number of correctly identified ingredients**

3.10. The Master with the highest score shall be declared winner in the Tea tasting category. There shall be only one winner in this category.

3.11. If two or more Masters have the same highest final score, the Master who has correctly identified the greatest number of tea samples and ingredients shall be declared winner. If two or more Masters have the same final score and have correctly identified the same number of tea samples/ingredients, then the Master who has earned the highest rank in the Pure Tea subcategory shall be declared winner. If two or more Masters are still tied for the first place, a tie-breaking competition shall be held to determine the winner; the nature of the tie-breaking competition shall be determined by the competition organizer and the jury panel in this category.

### 4. Technical Evaluation and Penalties

4.1. The purpose of technical evaluation is ensuring compliance with these Rules and Regulations and the TS and timing the performances.

4.2. In consultation with the Head judge, the competition organizers may appoint a Technical judge of the competition; the Technical Judge does NOT take part in evaluating Masters' performances. The competition organizers may also assign various technical evaluation functions to the Moderator, members of the jury panel or volunteers.

4.3. All technical violations shall be entered into a technical scoring form; a Master who commits a technical violation shall be assessed a penalty.

4.4. For competitions in the Tea Preparation, Tea Pairing and Tea Mixology categories, if a Master has exceeded the time limit for a performance, the Master shall automatically be assessed a penalty according to the following schema. If the Master exceeds the time limit by less than a minute (for example, 10 seconds over the time limit), he/she shall be assessed a penalty equal to 1% of the Master's final score in that category; if the time limit has been exceeded by more than one minute but less than two minutes (for example, 1minute 20 seconds over the time limit), the Master shall be assessed an ADDITIONAL 2% penalty (i.e. the total penalty shall be 3% of the Master's final score). The Master shall be assessed an additional 1% penalty for EACH additional whole minute over the time limit (i.e. 3% for the second whole minute, 4% for the third whole minute, etc.).

## V. ENFORCEMENT AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

1. These Rules and regulations are binding upon all participants and all competition organizers at every stage of the Cup.

2. A Master who violates any provision of these Rules and Regulations may be disqualified, unless such violation was due to circumstances beyond the Master's control.

3. The decision to disqualify a Master shall be made by the organizer of the competition during which the violation occurred. The disqualification decision with the description of the violation and reasons for

disqualification shall be communicated to the Master within 7 business days of the decision. If the disqualification decision was made by a National Organizing Committee, such decision shall be communicated to the Organizing Committee of the TMC within 7 business days of the decision.

4. Violations of these Rules and Regulations on the part of the judges shall be reviewed by the organizers of the competition during which the violation occurred. For serious violations, a judge may be decertified as a judge by the TMC and/or barred from further work as a judge for the Cup, for a specified period as well as permanently. The disqualification decision with the description of the violation and reasons for disqualification shall be communicated to the judge within 7 business days of the decision. If the disqualification decision was made by a National Organizing Committee, such decision shall be communicated to the Organizing Committee of the TMC within 7 business days of the decision. If a judge is disqualified during a competition, the decision about using that judge's scores in calculating the final scores in that competition shall be taken by the competition organizers.

5. Masters and judges who have been disqualified have the right to appeal the disqualification decision to the Organizing Committee of the TMC. To start the appeals process, the Master or the judge shall submit a written statement to the Chair of the Organizing Committee of the TMC. The statement must contain the name of the appellant, his/her contact information, the date (and, if relevant, the time) of the incident that became the basis for the disqualification decision, a description of the incident and the appellant's reasons for appealing the disqualification decision as well as any other relevant claims/proposals for resolving the situation. The statement shall be submitted to the Organizing Committee of the TMC within 7 business days of the receipt of the written disqualification decision by the appellant. The appeal shall be adjudicated by a session of the Organizing Committee of the TMC, and a written response signed by the Chair of the Organizing Committee of the TMC shall be delivered to the appellant within 30 business days of the receipt of the appeal by the Organizing Committee of the TMC.

6. Any other decisions regarding the conduct of the competition, performance evaluation and final results may also be disputed by a Master. A Master who wishes to dispute a decision shall verbally address the chair of the organizing committee of the competition during which the incident under dispute occurred. If the dispute cannot be resolved immediately, the Master may submit a complaint to the organizer of the competition during which the decision under dispute occurred within 24 hours of the decision. The complaint must contain the name of the appellant, his/her contact information, the date and time of the decision, the reasons for disputing the decision and any other relevant claims/proposals for resolving the dispute. The complaint shall be reviewed by the competition organizer within 7 business days of receipt, and the disposition communicated to the Master. If the complaint is reviewed by a National Organizing Committee, the disposition shall also be communicated to the Organizing Committee of the TMC within 7 business days. A decision by a National Organizing Committee can be appealed to the Organizing Committee of the TMC. To start the appeals process, the appellant must submit a complaint to the Organizing Committee of the TMC within 30 business days of the decision by the National Organizing Committee. The complaint shall be adjudicated by a session of the Organizing Committee of the TMC, and a written response signed by the Chair of the Organizing Committee of the

TMC shall be delivered to the appellant within 30 business days of the receipt of the appeal by the Organizing Committee of the TMC.

7. Decisions of the Organizing Committee of the TMC in any dispute are final and cannot be appealed.

## VI. CONCLUDING PROVISIONS

1. These Rules and Regulations, as well as rules and regulations governing the conduct of qualifying competitions (national championships), may be changed by the TMC (or a national body, if authorized) at any time; however, any such changes cannot take effect earlier than 30 business days after their publication.
2. A Master has a duty to be respectful to other competitors, spectators, supporters and judges, as well as to the sponsors and organizers of the competition.
3. A Master who wins the first place in a category has a duty for one year following the victory not to avoid contact with the press, to do his/her best to promote tea and tea consumption and to abstain from any negative comments directed at any individual/organization within the tea industry/culture.
4. Any questions/issues left unresolved by these Rules and regulations shall be decided by the organizing committee of the relevant competition, by the Organizing Committee of the TMC or by the TMC.