

2026 MBN Rule Updates
Finalized December 7, 2025

MBN Plate update:

Teams will be provided with official MBN plates (formerly known as the MBN placemat), which must be used for all onsite presentations. No other plates are permitted.

Personalized items update:

Teams are prohibited from providing any personalized or team-branded items (including disposables) for use by the judges during onsite presentations.

Age classification and participation of minors:

The minimum age requirement for Standard MBN events, including teams (head cook) and judges, is 18 years.

Minors aged 12-17 may participate in specialty or patio events only if a youth/kids' contest is unavailable at the event. Participation of minors is subject to the contest organizer's approval and stipulations. A separate team application for the minor's team must be submitted along with the appropriate fees and liability release statement. During the contest, minors must always remain under adult supervision. Supervising adults may assist with starting the fire but are not allowed to handle the entry beyond the initial knife work. Both the minor and the supervising adult are required to attend the cook's meeting.

Rules and regulations for these events will be at the contest organizer's discretion.

Team of the Year:

The team with the highest accumulated points in each meat category will be designated as the Team of the Year for that category (Whole Hog, Pulled Pork, and Rib). The chart above will be used to assign points.

The Overall MBN Team of the Year will be calculated using the points earned during their finals presentations. The team with the highest accumulated total score in a single category will be named the Overall MBN Team of the Year.

Minimum Number of Teams:

A minimum of four (4) teams must compete in each meat category (Whole Hog, Pulled Pork, and Rib) for that category to be considered valid for Team of the Year points and prize money.

If fewer than four teams compete, no points or awards will be issued for that category at that contest.

Finals Time Penalty:

Teams have 15 minutes for their finals presentation. The Contest Rep acts as the official timekeeper and will provide the team visual notifications of the remaining time. If the team exceeds this limit and the Contest Rep must remove judges from the team area, the maximum score per judge will be 9.8 in presentation.

The official time starts at rep introduction to team.

Timelines for Standard and Dual Events

STANDARD CONTEST		
CATEGORY	TURN-IN TIME	JUDGING BEGINS
WHOLE HOG	9:45 – 10:00 AM	10:00 AM
PULLED PORK	10:45 – 11:00 AM	11:00 AM
RIBS	11:45 – 12:00 PM	12:00 PM
FINALS		1:00 PM

DUAL CONTEST		
CATEGORY	TURN-IN TIME	JUDGING BEGINS
WHOLE HOG	9:15 – 9:30 AM	9:30 AM
PULLED PORK	10:15 – 10:30 AM	10:30 AM
RIBS	11:15 – 11:30 AM	11:30 AM
FINALS		1:30 PM