

An Artisan Cup Journey

like having a baby to look after without the extras. On one occasion I had to go to the shopping centre on my way home. I carried the bowl with me into several shops. (Couldn't risk leaving it in the hot car). A cover on top and tucked under my arm – the looks I had and the word 'weirdo' would have been

appropriate. When I arrived at work sure enough students and colleagues saw me carrying the 'bowl' of an unknown substance under my arm. They must have thought my mental well being was in question. My loving wife said very little, however I am sure our children were duly informed about my odd behaviour.

One week to go

I had all the recipes finalized and had two more practice days to go. Our products were taking shape. We decided some products should be a little different. The Danish pastry had no mention of being a sweet variety and it was decided to be diverse and present a 'chicken satay' whilst the competitor's choice was a Laminated Brioche. We included these as a point of difference and are waiting the judge's feedback to see how it had been received.

The final practice day – Sunday (before flying to Sydney) was for fine tuning. I was still not completely happy with the bread formulas – more flavour – what adjustments can I make etc. Our products on the day were of a suitable standard and yes we had fun even on the last day. I produced all the dough's and the intention was to produce the required product on the day. We had decided to cross over when and where required for support on the competition day. I must mention Jana was very happy with the 'nipples' (as she called them) on the brioche and 'no drooping was evident' she said.

Competition day

6.00 am start. We had our pre-ferments and Polish performing as they should have (set previous day). We commenced our designated products and with

identical recipes and methods we were all going in the same direction. I was a little nervous then James and Jana mentioned we were here to have fun and let's enjoy. It was an incredible feeling to be competing with the very best at the Australian Artisan Baking Cup™. During the production we had a few things that did not go to plan however we re-tuned and moved forward. One of these moments was the Croissants. The dough was a little soft. An extra fold and long proof - 190°C Steam when commencing baking and a bake time of 45 minutes. All these elements should have meant an average product. To our surprise it looked almost faultless. I decided to increase my stiff levain to 40% for one of my products. It performed better than I expected. We made the allocated time by five minutes. We were proud of our efforts as a team and yes we had fun.

In Conclusion

To be crowned the overall winning team at the Australian Artisan Baking Cup™ was unexpected. When we had won a category I was overjoyed and remember yelling out to Jana "well done". We were extremely happy at this point and were ready to congratulate others for their efforts. When it was announced Team Cairns had won the Australian Artisan Baking Cup™, James and I were astounded. We started to walk to the podium with Jana saying "where are you going – what's happened – come back. She was also in a state of disbelief.

This journey has been one of positive feelings and emotions. At no time did egos or individuals 'go it alone'. We all gained from our experience. We will debrief in the near future and distinguish what changes and improvements need to be made. The Australian Artisan Baking Cup™ is used as the selection trials for Team Bakery Australia who go on to represent Australia at International competitions such as the SIGEP Bread Cup in Italy each year. We are hopeful of being selected to represent our country in a world event and know we have the winning team because we will have fun.

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I would like to share one of our recipes with you.

Competitors Choice

Rich formula and full of flavour. The filling was Rhubarb with spice and palm sugar. Dough was light and layers evident. Has many variations and filling can be what ever you desire. An example may be to replace water with fruit compote and a shape that would capture the judge's eye. Another excellent addition would be Corman 82% butter from Kirk Foods who distribute the Corman product in Australia.

Laminated Brioche

Ingredient	%	Grams
Bakers flour	100	1800
Water	11	195
egg	50	900
sugar	8	180
salt	2	48
Dried Yeast	1	28

Cormans 82% Butter

To be laminated into dough	45	1000
Expected yield	217	5200

Mix	Intensive
First fermentation	1 hour room Temp 12 -15 hour in cooler
Laminate 3 x 3 folds	Place required filling onto dough. Fold as required
Final Proof	1-1.5 hr 26° C 65% Rh
Baking	2 sec steam 12- 15 min 200° C

