

RULES FOR THE WORLD OYSTER OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

1. A sub-committee of the judges will select only the finest Galway Bay Oysters (*Ostrea Edulis*), which shall be not less than 76 millimeters in diameter.
2. The opening tables will be approximately ninety centimeters from the ground.
3. Each competitor will receive a sealed box of oysters on stage. He / She will ensure it contains 30 oysters prior to the start.
4. Each competitor will be required to open 30 oysters.
5. The boxes will be allocated to the competitors by lottery and each competitor's tray will bear a code name.
6. The oysters must be opened on the board provided and presented on the tray provided - nothing else can be used for presentation purposes.
7. The competitors must present their oysters face upwards and may present them all either on the deep or flat shell.
8. In opening the oysters, the competitor will only use a knife, a cloth and any board supplied by the Committee. The competitor cannot use any support, holder or any other implements whatsoever - the knives must also be approved by the Judges.
9. Competitors must wear the aprons provided.
10. Competitors may wear gloves or any protective covering on their hands.
11. The Festival Compare will start each heat of the competition. Each competitor will start opening on his / her order.
12. Each competitor must indicate that they are finished, by ringing the hand bell provided. The competitor must not touch the tray after ringing this bell as disqualification may result.
13. The Judges will examine the trays of oysters with the following points in mind :-
 - Good appearance
 - Well opened, without flaws
 - Totally severed from shell
 - Muscle intact – not torn, cut, sliced, wounded, and without blood
 - Orderly and neat appearance
14. Points are awarded primarily for the speed of opening 30 oysters. Judges award bonus points for presentation of the tray of opened oysters. A bonus of from 1 to 30 points is awarded by the Judges at their discretion for a tray of oysters that are presented in a neat and orderly manner.

The test for the Judges is how attractive the tray would look for a customer in a hotel or restaurant.
15. The following penalty points may be imposed:-

a) An oyster not severed from it's shell	- 4 points
b) An oyster with blood	- 30 points
c) An oyster with shell or grit on it's flesh	- 4 points
d) An oyster, the flesh of which is cut or sliced	- 4 points
e) An oyster not presented upright	- 4 points
f) For each oyster not opened or presented	- 30 points

(If an oyster shell is presented empty, or the flesh only is presented, the oyster will be deemed not to have been presented).
16. These rules have been prepared by the Galway International Oyster Opening Competition Committee of Judges and the decision of the Judges in relation to the interpretation of these rules is binding on all competitors and is final.