

Drink Wars

Which traditional Irish drink is your favorite? We let the people decide.

by Brian Francis Smith
Philly EDGE Correspondent

After months of painstaking research and polling, the results of the 2006 Philly Edge Irish Drink Wars Tournament are in. And the people have spoken. But before we reveal the winner, we must first take a minute to explain our precise scientific method used in determining a champion.

For the past few months our staff has been holed-up in various Irish Pubs around the region drinking heavily. (This had nothing to do with research for the arti-

cle. We simply have a problem).

In the past couple of days the staff was ordered to bring pens along to conduct a few interviews based on the question: What's the best Irish drink? Interviewees were presented with a fantasy match-up scenario pairing two Irish drinks and asked to select the superior beverage using their own criteria. Most polled participants were pre-screened and deemed experts in their field, including bar managers, bartenders, and bar drinkers, respectively.

Lucky for us, the Philly region is full of two things: alcohol and opinions.

The Elite Eight Line-Up (Includes scouting report)

- Guinness Stout**- Projected favorite. Too cocky?
- Jameson Irish Whisky**- Strong runner. Will go deep.
- Bailey's Irish Crème**- Holiday Delight or Hair of the Dog?
- Smithwick's Irish Ale**- (pronounced *Smittick's*) Young upstart looking to make some noise.
- Irish Coffee**- Cagey vet. Weak off the bench.
- "Irish Car Bomb"**- (Boilermaker combining Guinness, Bailey's and Jameson.) Will politically incorrect name prove downfall?
- McDonald's Shamrock Shake**- Unpredictable.
- Murphy's Irish Stout**- Upset special.

Quarterfinals



VS.



Quarterfinal Match-up: Guinness Stout vs. Murphy's Irish Stout

Venue: Finney's Pub, 15 S. Main St., Doylestown, PA 215-348-2124

Judge: Jennifer Jeletic, bartender

"I like Guinness better. I think Guinness is a little bit more smooth than Murphy's is."

Winner: **Guinness**



VS.



Quarterfinal Match-up: Jameson Irish Whiskey vs. McDonald's Shamrock Shake

Venue: Fergie's Pub, 1214 Sansom St., Philadelphia, PA 215-928-8118

Judge: Tricia McGoldrick, bartender (see pic Page 2)

"Shamrock Shake? [Laughs] I'm gonna have to go with the whiskey there. Because for one thing, I can tell you what goes in whiskey, as opposed to the Shamrock Shake. And, you know... whiskey cures what ails you... or at least makes you forget what it is."

Winner: **Jameson Irish Whiskey**



VS.



Quarterfinal Match-up: Bailey's Irish Crème vs. Smithwick's Irish Ale

Venue: McGuinn's Place, 1781 Brunswick Ave. Trenton, NJ 609-392-0599

Judge: Judy McGuinn, owner

"I'll pick Bailey's because it's not too strong, smooth, maybe on the rocks or chilled. But as far as popularity goes, we sell a hell of a lot more of Smithwick's than we do Bailey's. But I pick Bailey's... it's a perfect St. Patrick's Day drink!"

Winner: **Bailey's Irish Crème**



VS.



Quarterfinal Match-up: Irish Coffee vs. "Irish Car Bomb"

Venue: The Shanachie Irish Pub and Restaurant, 111 E. Butler Ave., Ambler PA 215-283-4887

Judge: Ed Dolan (at right), General Manager

"The 'Irish Car Bomb,' [Laughs] Well, here we try to call that drink 'The Three Irishmen,' you know, Arthur Guinness, John Jameson, and, um... Mr. Bailey, whose first name I forget right now. But you can't beat a real Irish Coffee. We use fresh whipped cream, the whole deal."

Winner: **Irish Coffee**

