



The inaugural USA BBQ Championship in Las Vegas was a huge success. Ronnie Cates, and the Smoke on the Water team, did an outstanding job organizing the event. It was our first time competing in a Smoke in the Water contest and I must say it was one of the best organized contests I've ever attended, especially considering the size - 95 teams. The Orleans Casino was a great host and it was nice to be able to go inside and take a shower while at a BBQ cookoff.

We didn't collect any of the big bucks, but it was great seeing some old friends and making some new ones. Steve Farrin and Charlie Pine from the I Smell Smoke team came out and cooked with us. It was a lot of fun spending time with our New England friends. We also got to socialize with Mike Compton, President of the Caribbean BBQ Association, and the BBQ Freaks team from Puerto Rico. Sponsored by Rums of Puerto Rico, they conducted rum tasting classes throughout both days. Congratulations to the BBQ Freaks for their 18th place call in the brisket category.

We finished 59th in chicken, 24th in ribs, 40th in pork, 6th in brisket and 17th overall. Given the caliber of the competition at this event we didn't feel too bad. We look forward to attending again next year.

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