

Kaylee Case Wins Student Division at Biscuit Festival

Written by Mark Darnell
Wednesday, May 30, 2012



Kaylee Case competed in the Student Division of 2012 International Biscuit Festival held May 18-19th in Knoxville, Tennessee. With the help of her “Mammie,” she was crowned the junior biscuit queen.

The International Biscuit festival is dedicated to “the biscuit.” This year it was sponsored by Southern Biscuit Flour, a subsidiary of Midstate Mills, Inc. The sponsor is a family owned and operated mill located just across the mountains from Knoxville just off the town square in Newton, North Carolina. This family operated business mills local grains to produce traditionally Southern flour and corn meal. Southern Biscuit believes in providing high-quality, wholesome products as a result of hard work, high standards, and great customer service.

Biscuits in the Case household are a family tradition. Anyone that knows Kaylee’s father Tim knows that he loves to cook. When Kaylee was old enough to enter the local 4-H biscuit contest, Tim was eager to pass down a family recipe. Tim remembered about his Mammie, “I grew up eating my grand-mother’s biscuit’s. She never measured anything and only told me the recipe. I never had it written down.” After a lot of trial and error Tim and Kaylee, with a lot of help from mom Kellye and sister Kara, perfected “Mammie’s Hammie Biscuit.”

The Cases discovered the festival thru sheer luck. While looking online Kellye Case came across the competition. “We saw this competition in Knoxville online and submitted Kaylee’s recipe and didn’t think a whole lot more about it,” said Kellye. Early in May Kaylee was notified

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that her recipe had been selected as a finalist in the Student Division and that she would have to go to Knoxville and cook her biscuits in the finals.

As I drove east to downtown Knoxville, I relished the opportunity to taste and sample biscuits. Cat Heads or dainty, savory or sweet, stuffed, plain, and decadent biscuits all at my fingertips. Oh I was giddy and loving this part about what I do. Last year the festival estimated that they had over 15,000 visitors and I was sure there was a biscuit there with my name on it.

I met Tim, Kellye, Kaylee, and Kara at the big biscuit tent promptly at 10 a.m. on Saturday. After checking in with the contest organizers we walked up and down Market Street, renamed Biscuit Boulevard, scoping out all the biscuits. You bought a tasting ticket and had the ticket validated at each tent when you sampled the biscuit. I don't have room to tell you all that I saw and tasted, but I didn't find that biscuit, yet.

The competition began at 12 noon. Kaylee and three other girls took center stage in front of 50-60 spectators and a panel of judges. They were given approximately 40 minutes to prepare, bake and present their biscuits for the judges. There was even someone to help the girls with the commercial convection ovens. Kaylee mixed, folded, cut, baked, set-up, and presented her biscuits. As I moved around the stage to take pictures, they sure did smell good!!

Kaylee was able to incorporate her family with the biscuit for the contest. She had a picture with the recipe her "Mammie" passed on to her father, as he remembered it, along with a description of her twist on the recipe and what it meant to her. She also had a photo of Mammie holding Kaylee as a newborn. Her biscuits were presented in her Mammie's old skillet with a cup of soft butter and a mason jar of sweet tea.

After some careful deliberation, Kaylee was announced as the winner. She beat a "Cin-full" biscuit and a take-off of a BLT biscuit. She was presented her trophy and was one of four finalists who could be crowned Grand Champion of the 2012 Biscuit Festival. The eventual champ was the Savory winner, a Cajun-tater biscuit, which I was able to sample. However, I had already found the biscuit I was looking for. I got to eat one of Kaylee's left over biscuits and Oh was it good!!

"I had a lot of fun at this competition," said Kaylee. She was awarded a crate of biscuit Booty, including prizes from the festival, Lodge skillets, a hat, apron, and tee-shirt, almost \$100 in gift cards, and some baking samples of Southern Biscuit Flour. She talked to the people from Midstate Mills and her recipe will be on their website or could be used in one of their cook books.

Not bad for a young lady from Sullivan Drive in Macon County. Kaylee Case will get to forever carry the title as 2012 International Biscuit Festival's Junior Biscuit Queen.

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Post Script: As we left the festival, Tim whispered to me, “As you drive back home on the interstate, what do you think of.....????” At 10:30 p.m. in my kitchen, we whipped up a batch. Oh we’ve got the fever bad! Guess WE are looking for another biscuit now.

