

BUSINESS

Inland Northwest throwdown tests baristas' skills Wall Street rally loses its steam

By CAMERON RASMUSSEN
Staff writer

SANDPOINT — Baristas both local and abroad descended upon Evans Brothers Coffee Thursday night to test their brewing skills and artistic sensibilities.

All the ruckus was due to the latest Thursday Night Throwdown Inland Northwest. An event designed to bring coffee professionals together with a series of challenges, the throwdown organized earlier this year for the Inland Northwest and has progressed steadily ever since. However, this was the first chance for Sandpoint to get a taste of the action.

"This will be the fourth monthly throwdown, and the whole idea is to build upon the foundation of artisan coffee in the Inland Northwest," Evans Brothers co-founder Rick Evans said.

With plenty of choice beer and coffee to be had, the Thursday Night Throwdown opened to



—Photo by CAMERON RASMUSSEN

Daniel Gunter carefully prepares some latte art in the first qualifying round of the recent competition.

a respectable turn-out that grew over the hours. Attendees got to check out some live music and grab a beverage or some food from Jupiter Jane's before the competitions

commenced.

First up on the agenda, some of the region's most skillful coffee experts whipped up their finest brew using the handcrafted, single-cup brewing method well-practiced at Evans Brothers. The evening capped off with the true test of a steady hand and a keen eye: latte art.

The practice of creating a decorative pattern or design on the surface of a coffee by pouring steamed milk into espresso, latte art can be notoriously unpredictable due to highly variable conditions. Success is far from certain even with a very skilled practitioner.

When the chips hit the table, however, Daniel Gunter of Evans Brothers proved himself to be a barista of formidable ability. He took first place in both the single-cup brew and the latte art competitions, grabbing the latter in a three-way face-off after two qualifying rounds.

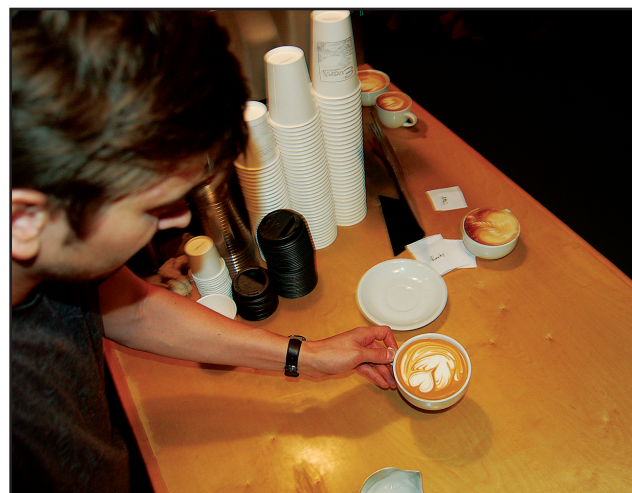
Meanwhile, Nicolai Cherny of Spokane's

Coeur Cafe took second in the single-cup brew, while Young Bennett of Spokane's Doma Coffee placed third. In latte art, Cherny grabbed second place, while Evans Brothers' Jeff Dunwoody landed third.

Aside from promoting a fun time for everyone involved, the throwdown helped promote the third wave of coffee in the region. A movement that seeks to redefine coffee

as an artisan's product rather than a commodity, proponents reinforce the elevated status with high quality standards and a developed aficionado culture.

"Compared to Portland, Seattle, San Francisco and other locations, this area is still behind the times in terms of coffee culture," Evans said. "However, we are starting to experience a coffee renaissance."



—Photo by CAMERON RASMUSSEN

Nicolai Cherny of Coeur Cafe in Spokane focuses on his latte art design during the championship round of the contest.

Wall Street rally loses its steam

NEW YORK (AP) — A stock market rally lost steam Wednesday after mixed earnings from U.S. companies added to fears about Europe's economic slowdown.

Several big consumer goods companies warned that weak demand in Europe was cutting into their revenue. That followed worrisome economic news from England, France and Germany, where growth had offset recessions in other European countries like Italy and Greece.

Major U.S. stock indexes closed little changed, including the Dow Jones industrial average finishing up 7.04 points, or 0.1 percent, at 13,175.64

The Dow had risen 290 points over the previous three trading days. On Tuesday, the S&P 500 passed 1,400 and the Nasdaq composite closed above 3,000, both for the first time since early May.

As stocks in New York traded tentatively, the dollar rose against the euro, a sign that investors are becoming more fearful.

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