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Louisville Restaurant News: Varanese's julep: 4-time champ

BY DANA McMAHAN • SPECIAL TO THE COURIER-JOURNAL • APRIL 30, 2011

For the fourth year running, Varanese, 2106 Frankfort Ave., has taken home the prize for the best mint julep in the Four Roses Rose Julep Recipe Contest.

Held April 21 at the Baxter Avenue O'Shea's, the contest drew bartenders from 10 local restaurants in a competition for the best twist on the traditional Derby cocktail.



Photo courtesy Ashley Jobson

Judged on taste, presentation and creativity, Rory McCollister won for Varanese with his Triple Crown. This is the third year McCollister has won.

The Triple Crown featured Four Roses Single Barrel bourbon with a root-beer glaze from Varanese's boar ribs, finished with root beer, ginger ale and crushed fresh mint.

"This year I went with something crazy because I didn't think we had a chance of winning four years in a row," McCollister says, "but it backfired into a win!"

He explains that the idea of the drink goes back to the concept of using egg whites in cocktails, "but instead using the boar protein to get creaminess and froth in the drink."

The drink, along with McCollister's past winning creations, will be featured at Varanese during Derby season.