

SMOKIN' SUCCESS



Featuring: "Great Boars Of Fire"



Great Boars of Fire barbecue catering service has found the recipe for success with Southern Pride's portable smokers.

In our continuing quest to learn the secrets of America's most successful barbecue operations, the hungry faculty at BBQ U recently invited *Great Boars of Fire* co-founder David Fombelle to speak to us about the rapid rise to success and now legendary popularity of his company in Southern Illinois and the Central Midwest. We asked Mr. Fombelle to come to us because *Great Boars of Fire* is a barbecue catering service. We wanted to see Mr. Fombelle in action. While he fired up his portable Southern Pride smoker, we peppered him with questions.

Right off, we discovered one of this enthusiastic, charismatic man's secrets: he loves what he does. *Great Boars of Fire* is in fact the story of a hobby perfected. *Really* perfected. *Great Boars* has won top awards in prestigious competitions such as the Memphis In May International Barbeque Cookoff and the Jack

Daniel World Invitational Cookoff.

Mr. Fombelle said he and his son Bob founded the business in 1993 after practically being pressured into it. As owners of a commercial/industrial laundry serving the restaurant industry, the Fombelles frequently invited clients and employees to big barbecue cookouts. Mr. Fombelle developed a reputation as an outstanding barbecue chef who knew how to throw a first-class party and make sure everyone had a good time. One thing led to another, he says, and today the company operates four smoker units which are either mounted on individual trailers or trucked to catering assignments. And there are a lot of assignments — *Great Boars* is booked almost solid, months in advance, including weekdays.

Q: Great name, Great Boars of Fire. How'd you come up with it?

A: Before we were a business we

got invited to enter a cookoff. As we registered, they asked our team name. We didn't have one, but I had a sudden inspiration and blurted, "We're the Great Boars of Fire!" It stuck.

Q: We see you're using a Southern Pride smoker. Why?

A: We went into business absolutely, totally committed to providing a superior product, and I knew the key was to have the best equipment possible. I'm very particular — some would say a perfectionist — and won't settle for second best. So I did a lot of research and traveling to check out every commercial cooker in the country. I ended up in Marion, Illinois, not too far from home, looking at a Southern Pride smoker.

Southern Pride was so far ahead of everything else. Superior in design, versatility and workmanship. There was really no comparison.

As you might expect, Southern

Pride smokers cost a little more. But they're worth it. The peace of mind alone is worth the extra cost. I've served tens of thousands of meals and have never had a cooker fail me. When we did the Super Dome in New Orleans for ARAMARK, we served 25,000 people in three days. That kind of volume, you *have* to have a unit you can depend on.

Q: Do Southern Pride smokers have special features you like or need?

A: Sure. It has an outstanding rotisserie system that makes it easy to load and unload racks. The ability to do this quickly is critical to our operation, because it can cut an hour or two off cooking time when working with a large group. We can season our meat in advance and have 15 or 20 racks ready to reload.

Loading and unloading an entire smoker takes only minutes. Also, because the smoker is not open very long, temperature is basically not affected. Maintaining an even temperature is essential to good barbecue.

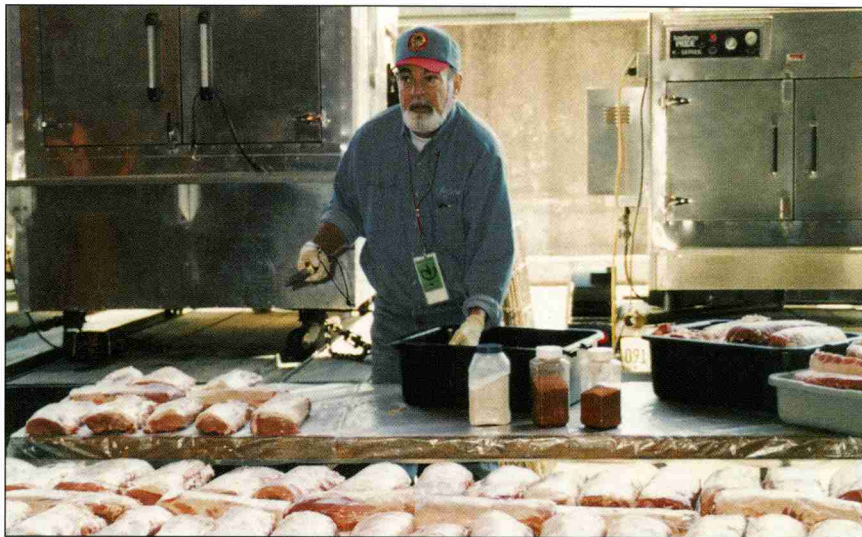
When we cater a large event it can involve cooking several tons of meat. What this amounts to is thousands of racks of ribs. So you can see why the efficiency of the Southern Pride smoker is so important.

Q: Why is temperature so important to your barbecue?

A: Really good barbecue has to cook slow and even. With beef tenderloin, for example, we cook it two hours; pork loin for an hour and a half. And incidentally — Southern Pride's rotisserie rack system allows us to time our entrees so they can all be cooked in the same cooker.

Maintaining a constant tempera-

ture takes the guesswork out of the cooking and smoking process. I can set the temperature at 225° F and it will stay there, regardless of the weather. We did an event where the temperature dropped to 17°, and our cooker stayed at 225°. Other vendors using other cookers had trouble even getting to cooking temperature. Another time, our cookers survived four and a half inches of rain in ninety



David Fombelle does final preparation on boneless pork loins as two portable Southern Pride smokers reach optimum temperature.

minutes. The airtight design kept them going — no problems. When the storm was over, the ribs, chicken and beans were perfect ... everything else in sight was soaked.

There are a lot of variables when you prepare great barbecue. Any time you can eliminate one, you improve the consistency of your product. The Southern Pride cookers' temperature control and automatic operation eliminate the need for constant attention. We don't have to spend time and money on "training." We set up a cooking sequence and the cooker does the rest.

With a Southern Pride smoker, you just don't have to know much about cooking to produce barbecue people will swear is the best they've ever tasted. But if you have a flair for it, a real feeling for cooking, you can be extremely creative, even award-winning.

Q: "Extremely creative"?

A: Take a recent event we did for the St. Louis Rams' coaches and players. The menu included shrimp cocktail, beef tenderloin with elderberry wine-mushroom sauce, smoked loin of pork, baked potato, green beans, our specially blended barbecue beans, tossed salad and rolls. Everything was cooked in the smoker — and the players kept coming back for more and more.

For creativity, the Southern Pride smoker is wonderful. And we have used a variety of woods for cooking and smoking. Hickory, maple, oak, apple, cherry, mesquite, alder, and sassafras. But we usually stick with hickory, because it imparts an intense flavor that people seem to like the most.

Q: Would you recommend Southern

Pride smokers for a start-up barbecue catering service?

A: No question about it. In my opinion, Southern Pride is *the best*. If the person is serious about wanting to provide a quality product and make money doing it, Southern Pride is the only way to go.

Done. Grab yourselves a plate and let's dig in.

For additional information about Southern Pride, please call Steve Walker at 800-851-8180.

**Southern
PRIDE**

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