

Britain's finest bites were guzzled with gusto at the Pork Pie Appreciation Society's annual competition at the OldBridge Inn, Ripponden, on Saturday. More than 30 butchers and bakers from all over the country aimed to take the coveted best pie prize. But Mr Andrew Jones, a butcher and baker of Huddersfield, took first prize for the second year running.



*Sampling the delights . . . Stuart Booth and John Hirst*

Second, third and fourth prize trophies were awarded to Mr Brian Seddon, of Staffordshire, A. and E. White, of Barnsley, and Mr Paul Hopkins, of Birkenshaw, respectively. Three Calderdale pie perfectionists were placed in the top 10: R. Heseltine, a butcher, of Southgate, Elland, A. and J. Harris, also of Southgate, Elland, and McFarland's of Queen's Road, Halifax.

Mr Jones said his pies were good because he used prime pork and his secret of balancing the seasoning and just the right amount of jelly. Society judges were helped by Mr Stephen Marshall, who runs butcher's shops in Ripponden and Hebden Bridge. Society secretary Mr Peter Charnley said it's the most National known competition and the one everybody wants to win the premier accolade.

He was pleased entrants had come from all over the country but claimed Tykes were the superior pie producers. 'Yorkshire is the capital of pork pies. The Lancashire pies are not as good because they tend to eat beef pies- but that might change now.

He said the best pies were porky in taste and well seasoned, but they had to be given a distinctive taste by the baker. It was also important the pie was attractive to look at. But Mr Brian Farrier, who made a three hour bus journey from Horwich, near Bolton, said his pies were best.

"They are full of plenty of meat with no rusk and with good pastry. Lancastrians definitely make the best pork pies. But he said not just anybody could make a pie. It took an expert hand. Third placed Barnsley baker, Mr David White, said: "Pork pies are as popular as ever. There are a lot of pork pie consumers about who like the good old British pork pie."