

## Coney Crowns Its First-ever Mr. Cyclone!

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# Miss Cyclone Finds Her Mister! First-ever Mr. Cyclone Is Crowned

By Jess Goodwin

Coney Island was hot enough last Saturday, but it wasn't the temperature making the seven finalists of the Mr. Cyclone contest sweat. After a grueling afternoon of being scrutinized by a crack team of judges (Nate Bliss, Lisa Crumb, Hawley Hussey aka Mermaid Hawley, and M'Lady Upper crust), the contestants stood onstage, smiling widely and nervously, waiting to see which among them would be walking away in defeat, and which would be walking away the first-ever Mr. Cyclone.

Whittled down from 21 semi-finalists, the seven finalists — Pat Byrne, Robby Corrado, Erik Knapp, Brian Lease (aka Fisherman), Joshua Jerome Lee, Brewster McCall and Takeshi Yamada — had to first show off their style and talent, then compete in a battle of Coney Island Wits, displaying their knowledge about the Cyclone coaster and Coney Island itself. Next, during the Romance category, they were interviewed by Miss Cyclone Angie Pontani.

"If you could be any animal, which animal would it be?" was among the questions, as well as what kind of date they would take her on in Coney Island.

After a short break, the finalists were asked to gear up for the Strength and Endurance test, in which they had to douse themselves in baby oil, grab a greased-up watermelon and carry it safely through an obstacle course of

tires, where a table of cups filled with iced tea sat waiting for them. Whomever managed to bring the watermelon and iced tea back through the tire course fastest and without spilling any had, according to host Mr. Showbiz Murray Hill, a good chance of becoming the first Mr. Cyclone.

The contestants cleaned themselves off and, after the scores were tallied — twice, because it was such a close call — climbed up onstage, joined hands and listened for their names. One by one were asked to step down until only two remained: Brewster McCall and Joshua Jerome Lee.

Over the course of the day McCall had become something of a crowd favorite — particularly after his talent portion, for which he created an homage to the "Feeling a little down?" commercials of yore. His version was a bit racier, though, calling for him to strip down to his skivvies and twirl a pair of fireballs on chains.

In the end, though, Lee took home the title of Mr. Cyclone. Lee, whose family and friends came out to support him in full, with T-shirts, signs and hollers, composed a rap for his talent, as well as a love poem — not to Miss Pontani, but the Cyclone itself.

As part of his reign as Mr. Cyclone, Lee, who works with kids in the Coney Island projects through Metro Ministries, will be awarded a date with Miss Cyclone (he'll also get to accompany her to appear at various events in Coney Island), a season's pass to ride the Cyclone, and the opening pitch at a Cyclones' game.



Miss Cyclone with her new Mister — Joshua Jerome Lee.

Runner-up Brewster McCall performing his talent.



Winner Joshua Jerome Lee



Finalist Takeshi Yamada



Finalist Pat Byrne



Finalist Robby Corrado



Finalist Brian Lease (aka Fisherman)



Finalist Erik Knapp



All lathered up and rarin' to go.

PHOTOS: JESS GOODWIN