

Instant Ice Cream Machine Is A Great Crowd Pleaser

There's instant coffee and instant iced tea. But have you ever heard of instant ice cream?

The recipe is simple. Because liquid nitrogen is about -300 degrees F, when the two liquids combine, the ice cream freezes instantly.

It's a phenomenon that chemistry teachers have used for years to show students what nitrogen can do. But until recently, no one had found a way to commercialize the process.

It all started when T.J. Paskach and Will Schroeder, both graduate students in chemical engineering at Iowa State University, were challenged to come up with a way to spotlight their student organization at an annual celebration.

Schroeder says the students had made instant ice cream in the past, mixing up small batches in a bowl. "It was a neat trick, but impractical if you wanted to actually serve to a crowd," he says. "So we decided to design a continuous process where we freeze ice cream with liquid nitrogen and give away free ice cream cones."

They tried several methods but the instantly hard ice cream kept plugging up the machines. Finally, they came up with a process that was fairly reliable and they gave away 1,500 ice cream cones at the celebration.

"Nitro" ice cream, as it's called, tastes better than regular ice cream, says Schroeder. The main reason for the improved taste is the ice cream freezes so fast that ice crystals don't have a chance to form. It's much smoother than normally processed ice cream, even soft-serve. And while it's frozen solid, it can be dipped easily.



T.J. Paskach and Will Schroeder, both graduate students in chemical engineering at Iowa State University, designed a continuous process where they freeze ice cream with liquid nitrogen.

After their first success, the two formed a company they called Nitro Cream to build a working prototype. A patent is now pending.

In their latest design, the ice cream mix and the liquid nitrogen combine in a freezing chamber. As the two liquids meet, the liquid nitrogen boils and expands, causing a lot of turbulence that provides a natural mixing of the ice cream. The result is a consistently frozen liquid. The nitrogen becomes a gas and dissipates into the atmosphere. (Air is about 79% nitrogen gas.)

Using their prototype, they demonstrated the process at the Iowa State Fair and sold thousands of cones. They're planning to take it to other such events, including the Minnesota State Fair and Taste of Minnesota next year.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Nitro Cream, Thomas J. Paskach or William D. Schroeder, 420 Hilltop Road, Ames, Iowa 50014 (ph 253295-2755); E-mail: tjp@iastate.edu or schroede@iastate.edu.)

Headless Chicken Lives On As Legend

The legend of Mike the Headless Chicken began on September 10th, 1945, when Lloyd Olsen set out to the farmyard to prepare the tasty-looking chicken for dinner.

Lloyd's mother-in-law was coming for dinner and she loved to eat necks. So he aimed his ax high in order to leave as long a neck bone as possible.

After chickens get their heads chopped off, they almost always get up and run around for a minute or two. The difference this time was that Mike just went right back to being a chicken. He wouldn't die.

Lloyd selected another bird for that night's dinner and let Mike be. When he found the headless bird still alive the next morning, preening his feathers and trying to peck for food like the other birds, he decided to let him live.

Mike was given water with an eyedropper and grain was dropped directly into the hole in his neck. After a week of that, Lloyd took Mike to the University of Utah where a skeptical scientist examined the amazing bird. Their conclusion was that a blood clot had prevented Mike from bleeding to death and that the ax had missed most of the brain stem. Since chickens are primarily controlled by the brain stem, Mike remained quite healthy.

The headless bird lived for 18 months, growing from 2 1/2 lbs. to 8 lbs. He became famous when Life magazine did a story on him. Local residents described him as a "big fat chicken who didn't know he didn't have a head". By all reports, he seemed just as happy as any other chicken.

Mike got a manager and the Olsens took him on a national tour. Thousands paid 25 cents apiece to see the headless wonder. At the peak of his popularity, Mike was valued



After his head was chopped off, Mike just went right back to being a chicken. He survived for 18 months, fed through a hole in his neck.



Mike the Headless Chicken became famous and traveled the country.

at \$10,000. After 18 months, Mike finally choked to death when something got stuck in his airway.

The Olsens's hometown, Fruita, Colorado, thought so much of Mike it erected a statue of him in the town and he's remembered with a celebration each year called "Mike the Headless Chicken Days".

You can get the whole story on Mike at this website: www.MikeTheHeadlessChicken.org.

Little Britches: Where Kids Get Their Rodeo Start

Just like any other sport, rodeo attracts participants of all ages. Besides the adult cowboys and girls, and the promising high school rodeo competitors, there is an especially entertaining, but perhaps less known group... the "Little Britches Rodeo Association." This organization starts literally from the ground up, with members being anywhere from pre-school age to 14 years.

This "farm league" of the rodeo circuit is where many of the daring and courageous adult cowboys got their start.

It's a really kid-friendly environment and it teaches them about rodeo in a slow and safe way," says Sandy Chevallier of Peachland, B.C. who has seven and eight-year old daughters in Little Britches. "We find it's a great family activity and it's good preparation if the kids later decide to be involved in high school rodeo where they can be eligible for full scholarships."

Chevallier herself has been involved in rodeo for 20 years and her boyfriend's a farrier and horse trainer, so she admits it fits well with their lifestyle, but believes the group is a good one for anyone.

"It teaches the kids responsibility and how to care for their animals and it encourages them to stay focussed and motivated in a positive direction," she says. "Some people say it's too expensive, but the way I look at it, it's a lot cheaper than down the road, paying lawyer bills to get your kids out of jail."

There are 16 events altogether in the junior (nine years old and younger) and senior (10 to 14 years old) girls' and boys' divisions of the B.C. Little Britches Association. Events

are the following: barrels, pole bending, goat tail tying, stake race, steer riding, break-away roping, calf tying, steer daubing, steer undecorating and cow riding.

American associations such as the Ohio Little Britches operate somewhat differently than the Canadian ones. For example, they have a third age division (pee wees) and a few different events such as sheep riding (mutton busting), chute doggin', two-person team roping, dummy calf roping and calf roping.

All events are a race against time, and while they mimic adult rodeos, the kids are much safer because they work only with sheep, calves, goats, cows, and of course, their own well trained horses. There are no snorting bulls here.

The B.C. association has 135 members and holds 11 Little Britches rodeos from May until September. There are an average of 88 competitors at each one. The kids win prizes such as belt buckles, breast collars, picture frames, fly masks and buckets. Prize money is not the norm.

Twelve-year-old Clay Thibeault has been rodeoing in Little Britches since he was eight and says he likes it because it gives him something to do.

"I grew up on Canada's largest ranch (the Douglas Lake Ranch, where he still lives) and I ride quite a bit," Thibeault said on his way home from a two-day rodeo where he earned the distinction of "best all-round cowboy."

The youngster says his best memory of Little Britches so far is when he won the high point saddle at a two-day rodeo at Chilliwack earlier this year. He sees himself continuing



"Little Britches Rodeo Association" has members from pre-school age to 14 years. This "farm league" of the rodeo circuit is where many adult cowboys got their start.



on with rodeo as he gets older and enters adulthood. There will always be the opportunity to challenge himself.

Contact: FARM SHOW Follow-up, B.C.

Little Britches Rodeo Association, Box 232, Merritt, British Columbia, Canada, V1K 1B8, (ph 250-378-6827), Website: www.rodeobc.com