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Sam Mitchell gets his cake

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Sam Mitchell claimed victory this afternoon in his years-long quest to find the perfect piece of chocolate cake in Toronto. At a throwdown between two bakeries at the Air Canada Centre, the head coach of the Raptors crowned Dufflet Pastries the winner in his search for the kind of cake he's been looking for during the four years he has been in Toronto. But not all the Raptors were chocolate fans. Reporter Dave McGinn attended the event:

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11:47 How did we get here? A little more than two weeks ago, Mr. Mitchell told *The Fan 590* and the *National Post* that he can't find a piece of chocolate cake to suit his tastes anywhere in Toronto. Every cake he gets is made with mousse or pieces of fruit. But all he wants, he said, is "just a plain old chocolate cake with yellow cake mix." National Post readers began sending in their nominations for where to find the right piece in the city. And after the interview with Mitchell appeared, calls flooded the switchboard at the ACC from people offering their suggestions for where Mr. Mitchell should go for dessert. Two of those calls came from Baker Street Desserts and Dufflet Pastries. Both companies brought cakes to the ACC yesterday in the hope of satisfying Sam.

11:50 Inside the ACC, two tables have been set up, one featuring cakes from Baker Street, the other stacked with cakes from Dufflets. No one from Baker Street is at the company's table, although several chocolate cakes are on display. The Dufflets team, featuring partners Dufflet Rosenberg and Daniele Bertrand along with Patrick Duhaney, who finishes cakes for the company, are ready and waiting, all of them wearing T-shirts that read "Eat More Cake."

11:52 "What's Baker Street doing here?" asks Ms. Rosenberg, unaware that she would be facing any competition today. But she's brought the stuff: a Vanilla Vanilla cake, a Double Decker Fudge cake, a Carrot cake, a Belgian Milk Chocolate cake, a Banana Cream cake, a Chocolate Banana cake, two cakes made especially to Mr. Mitchell's specifications, some Chocolate Crackle, as well as chocolate and vanilla cupcakes featuring the Raptors logo.

12:47 T.J. Ford is the first player to emerge from the practice court to discover the cake tables. "What do we got goin' on here?" asks the point guard. When asked by one of the Dufflet team if he'd like a piece of chocolate cake, he declines. "I like carrot cake," he says. "We have one of those," come the reply. Mr. Ford takes a piece. "This is great," he says, and then shambles off to an elevator.

12:53 Sam Mitchell, the man of the hour, comes out to try some cake. When told that Dufflets has brought carrot cake, he exclaims, "You have carrot cake? You should tell T.J. Ford. He loves carrot cake." How would he know that?

12:55 Mr. Mitchell surveys the cakes. "Why is it so hard to make chocolate cake in Canada?" he asks. But he's clearly happy, saying jokingly of the arrival of the cakes, "It only took four years. It's like I say, cry long enough and you'll get what you want."

12:56 Handed a piece of the cake baked especially for him, Mr. Mitchell stares at it for a moment, pokes it a few times tentatively with his fork, and takes a bite. "This is good," he says. "This is really good." Then it's on to the Baker Street cake. "Not bad," he says. When asked to decide the winner, Mr. Mitchell gives the honour to Dufflet.

12:58 Asked what the deciding factor was, Mr. Mitchell proves diplomatic in his response. "I can't say that," he says. But, feeling the love, Mr. Mitchell thanked all the National Post readers and others who took an interest in solving his cake conundrum. "I'm touched that people actually cared about my dilemma," he said. "You appreciate that people care enough to bring you chocolate cake. We got great fans here in Toronto." He then holds up a piece of the Dufflet cake and, mid-interview, gives a lesson in the finer points of dessert simplicity. "See how simple this is," he says, using his fork as a pointer and running it up and down the piece of cake. "There's no fruit, no mousse, just nice and simple."

1:01 Jose Calderon approaches the cakes table and takes a cupcake. Why is it that point guards are the only players indulging?

1:02 Two men from the Raptors organization stand off to the side enjoying the free cake. "Sam's got to speak up more often," says one. "Tell him to say he can't find good wings." Adds the other, "He should say he can't find decent beer."

1:05 Dufflet Rosenberg is happy to have satisfied Sam. "We rose to the challenge and we knew we could do it, so we're very pleased," she says.

1:08 Rajani Kamath, manager of corporate communications for Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment, says just like Sam, the organization is feeling the love. "We're certainly overwhelmed by the generosity of people who have come forward to help find Sam the perfect chocolate cake," says Ms. Kamath.

1:10 Dufflet Rosenberg lets it be known that everyone will soon be able to try the contest-winning cake. "I think we'll sell it in the store for a while," she says. "We'll call it 'Sam's Cake.'"

Photo of Sam Mitchell trying Sam's Cake by Tyler Anderson / National Post

