

MACLEAN'S TOWN IS THE CONCH CRACKING CAPITAL

On October 13, residents of this outlying settlement and visitors from the luxury resorts of Freeport/Lucaya gathered to see who was the fastest conch-cracker in the islands.

Conch (pronounced 'konk') is a mollusk that lives in a spiral shell and is abundant in Bahamian waters. The chewy white meat of the shellfish is used to make a variety of local delicacies including 'cracked' conch, conch salad, and conch fritters. Over 500 tons of the mollusk is consumed

annually by Bahamians.

The novel conch cracking contest was the highlight of an all day fair that features native foods, Goombay music, bingo, and other contests such as swimming, dancing, skulling (a local form of rowing), and beer drinking.

The defending conch cracking champion was Charles Rolle of Bimini in the northern Bahamas was swept the field for the past two years by cracking the shells of 30 conchs, extracting,

and cleaning them in under five minutes. Last year, a crowd of 2,000 watched him 'crack' his way to glory.

This year's contest will take place between 1 and 2 p.m. There were three categories this year — children, women and men.

A raffle was drawn for prizes that include crystal ware, table linen, automotive products, chinaware, weekends at hotels in Freeport/Lucaya, and dinners for two at popular restaurants.



FROM McLEAN'S TOWN, Grand Bahama, The Bahamas — the conch-cracking capital of the world, are members of the coordinating committee which organized the all-day community fair here October 13. The conch cracking contest has been a part of the fair for the past seven years. Charles Rolle, the defending champion from Bimini, has "cracked them all out" for two years running. Pictured (from left) are: Jolly Russell, chairman; John Lee Ferguson, principal of McLean's Town school; Cynthia Lindsay-Hall, Coordinator; and Horace Bullard of the Grand Bahama Tourist Office. (Bahamas News Bureau photo by Basil Smith)