



Press release: November 2022

Benj Maycock from Mecca Bingo is crowned champion of the National Bingo Game Caller of the Year 2022!

National Bingo Game Caller of the Year, is back and better than ever. The Final which brought the bingo industry together was held on 13th November at Club 3000 Bingo Club in Wigan. The event opened its doors to over 500 people and Benj Maycock from Mecca Bingo Wednesbury Cross was crowned the lucky winner, receiving £1000, a trophy, and the prestigious title as National Bingo Game Caller of the Year for 2022. All Runners-Up each received £500 and their trophy to commemorate their achievement in participating in the Final.

The nationwide competition whittled down over 200 entrants to just eight finalists, each competing against each other to be crowned as Champion. Customers, supporters and finalists travelled from around Britain in support of their finalist and were welcomed at Club 3000 Bingo Wigan with a complimentary glass of bubbly and a traditional roast Sunday dinner, accompanied by first-class entertainment. The electric atmosphere throughout the day encouraged the finalists to put on their best performance yet. There was also a charity game where funds raised went to Variety – The Children’s Charity, the official Charity of the land-based Bingo Industry.

The event saw great performances from all the finalists. However, Benj Maycock from Mecca Wednesbury Cross stole the show with his performance of his self-penned rap ‘B!ngo!’, which he’s just released under the name BingooBenj. Finalists were judged on criteria such as their knowledge of the game, presence and stage personality and their technical skills as a Caller. This year’s judging panel consisted of Miles Baron, CEO of The Bingo Association, Donna Kunyo, winner of National Bingo Game Caller of the Year in 2019, and Lyn Staunton from Variety – The Children’s’ Charity.

Benj Maycock comments on what it means to him to be crowned the winner: *“I am really happy that I have won and to be crowned National Bingo Game Caller of the Year! The whole atmosphere today has been electric. I want to thank everyone who came and supported me,*

and all the other amazing acts. I can't wait to celebrate with my club and represent the bingo industry over the next couple of years."

This year's other finalists were Michael Farley from Apple Bingo Sydenham, Andrew Skene from Buzz Bingo Sheffield, Christopher Graham from Carlton Bingo Stirling, Stephen Bogden from Club 3000 Bingo Old Trafford, Gary Wilson from Bingo Plus, Anton Fletcher from Castle Bingo Bootle and Richard Leyshon from Castle Bingo Cardiff (Newport Road).

CEO of The Bingo Association, Miles Baron comments: *"We are delighted to run the National Bingo Game Caller of the Year competition again as it's a great chance to recognise the talent, dedication, skill and the vital role of the Bingo Caller in the customer experience This year's finalists didn't disappoint either, making it a tough decision to choose the winner but all judges agreed that Benj deserved to be crowned the champion. From start to finish the atmosphere was amazing and really captured what bingo is all about, it brings people from all walks of life together to play the game and enjoy themselves."*

To find a participating club and for further information on the **National Bingo Game** visit www.nationalbingo.co.uk and follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/NationalBingoGame) and Twitter @nationalbingo.

All players must be aged 18 or over. The National Bingo Game is played under the provisions of The Gambling Act 2005 and played under National Bingo Game Players' Rules. Players should always gamble responsibly. For more information and advice visit www.BeGambleAware.org

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About The National Game

- The National Bingo Game started in 1986, with the current format launched on 30th April 2018
- The new National Bingo Game is a Full House only game and offers players the following prizes:
Club Prize – won in every club, on every game
Jackpot Prizes of £50,000, £1,000 and £100
- To win a Club Prize a player must be the first in their participating venue to successfully complete a full house.
- To win a Jackpot Prize a player must be the first in their participating venue to successfully complete a full house as follows in the following number of calls:
16 numbers or less to win £50,000
20 numbers or less to win £ 1,000
24 numbers or less to win £ 100

- Tickets for the National Bingo Game are £1 for 2 tickets OR £2 for 5 tickets
- Total prize money paid to date by the National Bingo Game is over £1BILLION!
- The National Bingo Game is the UK's second largest computer controlled game in the UK, the national lottery being the largest
- The National Bingo Game is played twice a day, every day, 364 days a year
- Around 270 clubs across the UK offer the National Bingo Game, including Gala, Mecca, Majestic, Castle, Carlton and Beacon, in addition to a wide range of independent clubs
- National LIVE is a linked interval game also provided the National Bingo Game Association.
- Over three million people play bingo regularly in the UK (at least twice a week)
- A night out at the bingo can cost as little as £15-25 each, including game books, duty, food and drink
- Most common reasons for playing bingo are because it's fun: it offers companionship and the chance to socialise as well as winning cash prizes
- Celebrities love bingo! Catherine Zeta Jones can thank bingo for her career after her dad won enough to afford to send her to theatre school; other celebrity fans include: Denise Van Outen, Scott Mills and former President Barrack Obama's step-mother!
- A number of celebrities started their careers in bingo, including Chris Tarrant, Simon from boy band Blue, East Ender's Shane Richie, Russell Crowe and Kian from West Life.

About Mecca Bingo

Owned by the Rank Group Plc, Mecca Bingo is one of the largest Bingo and Slots operators in the UK.

Mecca provides entertainment, for over 18s only, across its UK wide venues as well as its award-winning online site and app, which includes free to play and paid games and chat rooms. Both online and retail venues raise money for Mecca's charity partner Carers Trust.

Mecca Bingo has a firm commitment to safer gambling with a range of tools and support services to ensure that customers can always keep it fun. These include deposit limits, reality checks and take a break as well as direct support from the customer care team.

For further information on retail venues and online play go to: www.meccabingo.com