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THE MCGB YOUNG MASTER CHEF OF THE YEAR 2016

The Young Master Chef of the Year competition is open to all chefs aged 23 years and under working in a restaurant/hotel kitchen or training at a recognized college of further education.

The competition is designed to allow young chefs to produce a three-course meal using a number of set ingredients to produce classic dishes whilst testing their skills and giving them the opportunity to put their own flair and imagination into the dishes.

This year's competition took place at Westminster Kingsway College on Monday, 21st November 2016 and competitors were required to produce within a time-scale of 2 ½ hours: a salmon starter; a lamb shank with accompaniments and a dessert of their choice.

The finalists were supplied with a whole salmon courtesy of the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation which they needed to prepare for use within their dish, an untrimmed lamb shank from Aubrey Allen and a selection of micro-herbs from Koppert Cress. Contestants were judged on flavour (25%), presentation (20%), innovation (10%), hygiene (10%), workmanship/confidence/professionalism (10%), working method (10%), timing (10%) and originality (5%) with points will be deducted for wastage.

Annabelle Bruce (Westminster Kingsway College), Adam Childs (apprentice at Belton House), James Cook (Gleneagles), Oscar Eggerton (Westminster Kingsway College) Samuel Keith (Millstream Hotel), Harry Lumsdon (St Michael's Manor), Jordon Powell (South Lodge Hotel) and Mark Walker (Middleton Lodge) battled it out in front of the judges Bill Bryce, John McGeever and Alan Whatley.

In a hotly contested final judging was close and as well as awarding a winner and runner-up, prizes were also given for best starter, best main and best dessert highlighting the talents of individual chefs who had come into the competition from colleges, restaurants and as apprentices.

Harry Lumsdon was declared the overall winner and also best main dish with a menu of confit salmon, pickled clams, sweet and charred cucumber, hung buttermilk, radish and sea herbs; braised lamb shank stuffed with Cox's apple, salt baked celeriac, celeriac purée, spinach, glazed ceps, lamb cutlet, nasturtium leaf and sweet apple juice and 77% chocolate delice with a feuilletine and praline base, caramelized hazelnut, malted milk sorbet, tempered chocolate.



Jordon Powell took the runner-up position with a menu of cured salmon with crispy skin, seared turnips, smoked turnip purée and nasturtium leaf oil; braised lamb shank, celeriac and potato purée, roasted shallot, heritage carrots, dehydrated lichen moss and apple delice with apple compote, apple sours jelly and green apple sorbet.

The prize for best starter went to James Cook with lemon and herb steamed salmon, assiette of beetroot, horseradish cream, goats cheese bonbons and chicory salad whilst the best dessert was Annabelle Bruce's vanilla pane cotta, calvados poached pears, blackberry sponge and blackberry jelly drizzled with calvados syrup.



Every finalist received a chef's jacket, a commemorative certificate and a memento whilst the winner's prize included a trip to the Shetland Isles. Both the winner and runner-up received two complimentary tickets to the MCGB's Annual Luncheon 2017 at Gleneagles and the runner-up also received dinner for two in an MCGB establishment. James Cook received lunch or dinner for two at Craig Millar's @16WestEnd and Annabelle Bruce enjoyed a champagne afternoon tea for two at Cliveden.

The Master Chefs of Great Britain are very grateful for the support of the sponsors - Aubrey Allen, Koppert Cress, Oliver Harvey, Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation and Villeroy & Boch.

The competition was followed by dinner in the Escoffier Room and thanks must also go to Gary Hunter of Westminster Kingsway College for providing both the venue and the meal.

Details of the 2017 Young Master Chef of the Year competition will be available shortly on the dedicated website www.youngmasterchef.co.uk.