

WEC Group Apprentices win Gold and Bronze at WorldSkills UK Finals!

Two of WEC Group's Training Academy apprentices have won gold and bronze medals at the WorldSkills UK final in Construction Metalwork.



24-year-old Christopher Taylor, a fifth year welding and fabrication apprentice, won the accolade after beating off stiff competition - including five other WEC Group apprentices - at the three day final which was held as part of the Skills Show at the NEC, Birmingham from 17 – 19 November.

This follows Christopher's bronze medal triumph at last year's competition after scoring higher than previous gold medallists.

He said: "After winning bronze last year I had a personal aim to win gold this time. The other competitors, as usual, were world class and they had a real chance of taking the gold medal. Myself and the other WEC apprentices always believed one of us would get one."

WEC Group Training Academy's third year apprentice and 2015 Apprentice of the Year, Jonathan Holding, also managed to bag a bronze medal at this year's competition.

Christopher added: "It was announced first that Jonathan Holding had won the bronze medal, and then the silver went to Benji Daems of Grimsby College. The suspense was uncontrollable. Then it was announced that I had won gold.



"I am so proud to have won and to be part of a team that is taking Worldskills standards to a new international level, by winning 4 medals and scoring over 90% again in our second year."

The six apprentices competed against over 100 entrants from across the UK in the regional competition in order to secure their places in the final 10.



Kris Mercer, Training and Development Manager at WEC Group Training Academy said: “For the second year in a row we have managed to bring home Gold and Bronze medals, which is a huge achievement for us.

“The competition was fierce and I am extremely proud of what all of the apprentices have accomplished. It is a tribute to the investment by

WEC Group in our apprenticeships and also the hard work put in by the lads themselves.”

Kris held weekly welding/fabrication master classes with the finalists in the run up to the competition, teaching them skills beyond the baseline apprenticeship framework.

The standards of the competition were extremely high and Christopher Taylor’s score of 91.25% won him gold, with the other apprentices Jonathan Holding, Sam Carter, Ryan Thompson, Philip Hosey and Tyler Atkinson, the youngest in the competition, not far behind.

James Ennis, a WEC Group apprentice who won the regional event and set a new record score, was unable to attend the national final due to personal reasons.

The judges commented that this year’s standards were very high, with all test pieces scoring above 86%.

Thomas Woodburn, now a fourth year apprentice at WEC Group Training Academy, won gold at last year’s competition.

