



08 September 2009

Media Release

AUSSIE WORLD CHAMPS CELEBRATED AT THE TRADE OLYMPICS

The celebrations have begun for the Australian WorldSkills team after striking gold twice in Canada at the 40th International WorldSkills Competition – the Olympic Games of trade skills.

Two Australian competitors have staked their claim to the title of 'World's Greatest Tradie', having blitzed the world class field to secure gold medals in the categories of Beauty Therapy and Restaurant Service.

For the past week, more than 800 of the best tradies and apprentices from around the world have had their skills put to the test in disciplines ranging from bricklaying and welding, to floristry and web design.

Over the four days of exhausting competition, Australia's Skillaroos featured prominently across the leader boards, setting a sizzling pace in front of a crowd of 250,000 strong at Stampede Park in Calgary.

Last night the sound of buzz saws, hammers and hairdryers made way for thunderous applause as the winners of each category were announced during the closing ceremony.

The loudest cheers came from the Australian corner, with members of the squad finishing on the podium in ten out of the 24 categories that Australia competed in – more than doubling the haul that the team collected at the last International Competition in Japan, 2007.

Adding to the two gold medals, Australia won silver medals in Plumbing, IT Software Applications and the Manufacturing Team Challenge. Bronze medals were also won by Skillaroos in the categories of Web Design, Sheetmetal Work, Wall and Floor Tiling, Welding and Bricklaying.

Once again the Australian team proved to the world that they are a force to be reckoned with, retaining their international ranking of 5th place, following some imposing performances by the whole team.

Jessie-Lee Gladwell from Cairns and James Sun from Sydney put in an extraordinary effort to finish in first place in the categories of Beauty Therapy and Restaurant Service. Jessie-Lee and James' strong finish was a fitting reward for more than 12 months of intense training,

culminating with a dazzling performance at the International Competition - an experience that was equally as fun as it was challenging.

CEO of WorldSkills Australia, Mark Callaghan, was in the stands to cheer home the Aussie competitors.

“Ten medals is an outstanding achievement and one which is well deserved by the team. All of our Skillaroos did their country proud and once again we have demonstrated to the world that our Australian vocational education and training system is of a world class.

“Jessie-Lee and James displayed an exceptional amount of focus and determination to bring home gold medals. It was truly and inspiring effort and I’m sure they are celebrating their success back home right now,” Mr Callaghan said.

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WorldSkills Australia is a not-for-profit organisation that has been supporting youth in trade for over 28 years. WorldSkills Australia aims to raise the profile of skill-based vocations through a series of regional, national and international competitions, engaging industry, government and vocational education and training authorities to promote the benefits of skill development as a pathway to a career in trade.

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