

TALENTED APPRENTICE WINS MEDALLION OF EXCELLENCE AT WORLDSKILLS



Riki Lincoln, 22, a talented young tradesman from Upper Hutt in Wellington not only held his own at the WorldSkills competition in Japan in November last year, but was awarded a **Medallion of Excellence** for his bricklaying skills. Held over four days, the competition was fierce and there was only 11 points between Riki and the gold medal winner.

Riki was part of a 14-strong New Zealand Tool Blacks team (plus NZ International Judges), who went to Japan to compete against other young tradespeople from all around the world.

The team left New Zealand on November 11 and spent 11 days in Shizuoka, nestled at the base of Mt Fuji three hours from Tokyo on the bullet train.

The 24 international bricklaying competitors had to construct three projects over a four day timeframe and Riki's says *"It was so intense, so crazy, some of the guys had been training for years and years just for this competition. The other competitors were like machines, they were carving me up on the first few days so I had to pull finger"*.

Riki had to work most weekends to raise enough money to attend the competition although he was very fortunate to obtain some sponsorship from Firth Industries and the BBA - Wellington & Auckland came to the party with some additional funds.

International Bricklaying Judge and WelTec Bricklaying Tutor Greg Sinden, coached Riki at weekends 3 months prior to November to get him accustomed to the pressure, speed and detail required at international competition level. *"I have nothing but the highest regard for Riki" said Greg, "he really showed commitment in honing his craft and his drive and dedication certainly paid off"*.



To be able to represent New Zealand at a WorldSkills competition, held every two years in different countries around the world, applicants should be 22 or under at the time of the competition, be out or just finishing an apprenticeship and would need to enter the National Skills competitions being run this September at WelTec, Petone. If you have any questions about entering, sponsoring or being involved, contact Greg Sinden at WelTec on 9200466 Extn 956 between 8-4pm week days.

The next WorldSkills competition will be in Calgary, Canada in 2009.