

Young people weld their way to victory

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ESSEN/DÜSSELDORF - The eighth national DVS "Young Welders" competition in 2009 was absolutely characterised by stage fright. While the theoretical and practical tests accelerated the pulses of the participants, first-night nerves became noticeable at DVS - German Welding Society. Because the competition at the national level was staged in front of a large audience during the International ESSEN WELDING FAIR for the first time.

As was shown in the course of the week of the fair, the nervousness on both sides was unfounded. The trade public followed the contests in the Galeria at Messe Essen with great interest, the numerous sponsors of the event were constant and welcome guests and the young up-and-coming welders completed their theoretical and practical tasks brilliantly. They proved their knowledge, ability, discipline and steady hands in this way.

The young people, all between 16 and 21 years of age, competed against each other in four different disciplines in total - Gas Welding (G), Tungsten-Inert Gas Welding (TIG), Manual Metal-Arc Welding (E) and Metal-Active Gas Welding (MAG). Beforehand, they had already won through against their rivals at the regional and state levels. The items on the agenda during the days of the fair in Essen were then to establish the national winners in the individual disciplines, to select the most successful state branch overall and, on the Saturday (the last day of the fair), to compete against young welders from China and the Czech Republic.

The competition led to top-class welding performances and, at the same time, was a superb logistical feat. Because, without the active support of a large number of sponsors, it would not have been possible to provide a professional welding workshop according to the DVS standard on the fair site and, every afternoon, to modify it for the next welding process. The numerous non-cash prizes for the winners and the daily transfer of the participants between the competition arena and the accommodation were also made possible by the sponsors, all of them renowned companies in welding technology. They have all recognised that the DVS "Young Welders" competition, which has taken place since 1995 mostly in a biennial rhythm, is an important instrument for promoting the up-and-coming generation.

Messe Essen GmbH, which made available the area for the competition, also arranged for the subsistence for the participants and, not least, the cash prizes which were handed over to the national winners as a reward for their victories. KEMPER GmbH from Vreden provided the welding cabins. In addition, different sponsors every day were responsible for supplying all the appliances and equipment in the cabins for one welding process in each case as well as for the international contest between nations and, as extra highlights of the event, offered the spectators an action stage programme which changed every day:

Mechanische Werkstätten Wurzen GmbH was the sponsor responsible for the competition in Gas Welding. EWM Hightech Welding GmbH was the day sponsor in the case of Tungsten-Inert Gas Welding. The contest in Manual Metal-Arc Welding was supported by Merkle Schweißtechnik GmbH while Cloos Schweißtechnik acted as the sponsor for Metal-Active Gas Welding. In turn, Fronius Deutschland GmbH supported the final international contest between China, Germany and the Czech Republic on the last day of the fair.

Alexander Binzel Schweißtechnik GmbH was active as the sponsor for the torch technology in the competition. Böhler Schweißtechnik Deutschland GmbH and Hermann Fliess & Co. GmbH supported the competition with filler materials while Linde AG ensured the gas supply for the welding work.

The exciting competitions climaxed every afternoon when the Chairman of the national "Young Welders" working group, Dipl.-Päd. Heinz M. Klein from SLV Bildungszentren Rhein-Ruhr of Schweißtechnische Lehr- und Versuchsanstalt SLV Duisburg, Niederlassung der GSI mbH, announced the awards ceremony: "Here is DVS. Here is the German Welding Society. Here is the national 'Young Welders' competition." In the presence of the patron Dr. Mathias Hallmann, Chairman of the Management Board of Böhler Welding Holding GmbH, Dr.-Ing. Klaus Middeldorf, Chief Executive Officer of DVS, Frank Thorwirth, Chairman and CEO of Messe Essen GmbH, and the day sponsors, the medals were handed over to the three winners in front of a large audience. As a particular reward for their outstanding performances, the people occupying the top three places in the four welding disciplines received not only the mark of distinction, non-cash gifts and a cash prize from Messe Essen GmbH but also an invitation to China. There, they will take on their international rivals in May 2010 during Beijing Essen Welding & Cutting in Peking.

The winners were:

In Gas Welding (G)

- 1st place: Dominik Böhme (Saxony)
- 2nd place: Johann Seibel (Westphalia)
- 3rd place: Steffen Schmidt (Saxony-Anhalt)

In Tungsten-Inert Gas Welding (TIG)

- 1st place: Steffen Poschitzke (Berlin-Brandenburg)
- 2nd place: Sebastian Apitz (Thuringia)
- 3rd place: Sören Jungmann (Saxony-Anhalt)

In Manual Metal-Arc Welding (E)

1st place: Steffen Blackstein (Saxony-Anhalt)

2nd place: Elias Herrmann (Thuringia)

3rd place: René Weickel (Baden-Württemberg)

In Metal-Active Gas Welding (MAG)

1st place: Michael Thiele (Hesse)

2nd place: Daniel Nehrings (Baden-Württemberg)

3rd place: Konstantin Kaucher (Rhineland-Palatinate)

This year, the cup for the most successful state branch went to Saxony-Anhalt.

In the international contest, the young Chinese welders came out on top in all four disciplines ahead of the youngsters from the Czech Republic and Germany. However, the Germans were able to secure victory in Metal-Active Gas Welding (MAG) for advanced welders and demoted the Chinese to second place.

The national DVS "Young Welders" competition in 2009 has shown in an impressive way how special performances can be achieved as a result of the commitment, professionalism, sponsorship, enthusiasm and passion of many DVS members. Even now, DVS and all the participants are therefore already looking forward to the next "Young Welders" competition with corresponding confidence and great expectations. The national "Young Welders" working group of DVS, without whom it would not have been possible to implement this year's national competition at all, will once again be in charge of its organisation, planning and staging. The working group is composed of DVS members in the fields of the skilled trades and industry as well as of representatives of welding course centres, training and research institutes, educational centres and the DVS head office. A large number of the members of the working group accompanied the competition in Essen and supported it through their activities in the jury, in the organisation team and as supervisors. Moreover, various DVS educational establishments provided the welding supervisory personnel as well as the PZA inspectors. A great proportion of the success of "Young Welders" in 2009 is owed, above all, to the employees of SLV Bildungszentren Rhein-Ruhr, Niederlassung der GSI mbH, to the Chairman of the national working group, Dipl.-Päd. Heinz M. Klein, and to Martina Esau, responsible for organising the competition on the part of the DVS head office in Düsseldorf.

DVS thanks the following companies for supporting the national "Young Welders" competition with cash and non-cash prizes:

Main sponsors:

Alexander Binzel Schweisstechnik GmbH & Co. KG; Böhler Schweißtechnik Deutschland GmbH; Carl Cloos Schweißtechnik GmbH; DVS-TV GmbH, EWM Hightech Welding GmbH, Hermann Fliess & Co. GmbH; Fronius Deutschland GmbH; GE Sensing & Inspection Technologies GmbH; GSI SLV Bildungszentren Rhein-Ruhr; KEMPER GmbH, Klöckner Stahl- und Metallhandel GmbH, Lincoln Electric Deutschland; Linde GAS, Mechanische Werkstätten Wurzen GmbH; Wilhelm Merkle Schweißtechnik GmbH; Messe Essen GmbH

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