

Philip Jackson

Skill: CNC Milling

From: Malvern, Worcester
Competed in: WorldSkills 2007, Shizuoka
Employer: Yamasaki Mazak

Qualifications

- 7 GCSE's
- Advanced Modern Apprenticeship (WTGA)
- B-Tech National Certificate
- NVQ Level 3 in Machining
- CADD Skills Level 2 Group Training



It came as no surprise to Philip's father when his son told him he wanted to get into engineering. Having watched and listened to his father for many years talking about his job – also a mechanical engineer - Philip knew he wanted to follow in the family footsteps. But last year he took it one step further and competed at WorldSkills 2007 in the CNC Milling competition.

So how did Philip become involved in competing?

Well, Philip was half way through his apprenticeship at Yamasaki Mazak - the same company his father still works for - when his boss approached Philip and asked him if he'd ever considered competing. Having never previously thought about it, Philip realised that this was a chance for him to develop his skills and quickly said 'yes'. He then set about taking part in regional and national competitions which finally led him to make the selection rounds and become a fully fledged member of Team UK for WorldSkills 2007.

"I had gone through about eight months of competitions and training before I got to the final selection event and when UK Skills told me I'd got a place on the team I couldn't believe it. It was such a great feeling of achievement. I couldn't wait to get to Japan."

But it didn't stop there. Philip then trained even harder, alongside his training manager and his work colleagues to push himself further. He set about learning new software and studied manual skills which he knew he might be tested on in Japan.

How did Philip cope with competing at WorldSkills?

"The competition was very intense. I did have the advantage that I work for a Japanese firm so I was already used to the different food and culture, but I was still very nervous before the first day of the competition.

"As soon as we started I just got totally involved in what I was doing and began to forget that we were being watched by so many people – most of the time I didn't even notice them, I was concentrating so hard. Although you could feel their appreciation of what you were doing which really helped."

What was it like to return to the UK?

Philip was glad to get home and see his family and friends but as he tells us: "I miss the team. I've made a lot of good friends and everyone was so close, we were the UK Team, it was great to be part of something like that." Competing has certainly had a very positive effect on Philip. Since returning he has received a promotion at work, which now sees him conducting Customer Training. "When a customer buys a new machine I'm the one who goes to them and explains how it all works. It's very front line, which proves that my bosses trust me and think I'm good enough to be doing it. I also have much more confidence than I ever did, which is great for when I'm talking to customers and in my personal life too."

So where does Philip see himself in five years time?

"Yamasaki are the biggest manufacturers of machine tools in the world so I'm already at a great company. I intend to keep working hard and be the best I can be. I definitely want to stay at Yamasaki and work my way up to the top."



"In Japan, when we realised that one of our team had won gold and that we were going to get the best UK team results to date, you can't imagine the feeling. Everyone went crazy. I don't want this to be the end, I'd love to help the 2009 team and stay involved with UK WorldSkills competitions as much as I can, especially when WorldSkills comes to London, that's going to be really amazing. It will show the world just how great this country can be."

And Philip's advice for anyone wanting to get involved?

"You have to do it. The benefits and experience you get from competing just make it so worthwhile."

A word from Philip's employers: Dave Barnett, Apprentice Supervisor, Yamasaki Mazak

Yamasaki Mazak had never considered entering employees into competitions until a call from UK Skills made up their minds to get involved and enter their first competitor, Philip.

So has Yamasaki seen improvement in Philip since he took part?

Dave is quick to say yes.

"Competing has made Philip much more confident in his work. He's gained a lot of experience and skills which have helped him in his day to day job. In fact, we were so pleased with Philip, he has been given a promotion since he returned, which shows just how much he's improved."

Would Dave recommend that other companies get involved?

I think I would encourage anyone to have a go. Employees do gain a lot from the experience which helps the company in the long run, like encouraging staff loyalty and helping raise training standards."

What does Dave think about WorldSkills heading to London?

"I think it's great that WorldSkills is going to be held here. It will certainly bring more attention to the competition and the skilled industries. Although if you asked Phil I think he'd say he enjoyed travelling to Japan, so there might be some slightly miffed UK competitors!"

For more information, please contact the PR Team, UK Skills: 020 7612 9260