



worldskills
UK Alumni

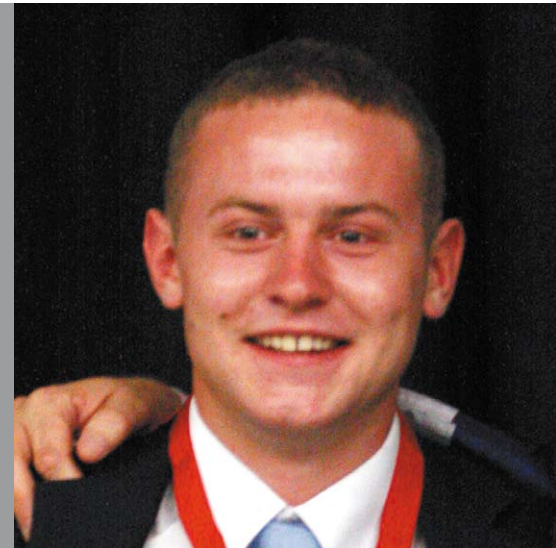
Christopher Lonsdale: Plumbing and Heating

Competed in: WorldSkills Calgary 2009 – Team UK
Awarded Medallion for Excellence
Home town: Bishop Auckland
Region: North East
Date of birth: 13/04/1987
Age at competition: 22
Employer: B Warm
Learning provider: New College Durham

Qualifications

- Level 3 NVQ Gas/Plumbing

City & Guilds
Qualified



What was your route into Team UK?

Having won an in-house competition at college, Chris was put forward for the WorldSkills UK regional competition. Putting on a winning performance at the regional competition, Chris then progressed to the national competition which he also won.

Chris and three other competitors then began the short listing process for WorldSkills. At the Squad Selection he was the only competitor to show the necessary qualities and skill level for WorldSkills and went forward to Team Selection. Competing against the WorldSkills standard for his place in the team, Chris impressed the judges and was awarded a place in Team UK.

Why did you choose to get involved with WorldSkills?

It is Chris's competitive nature that sparked his interest in WorldSkills.

"I was originally competing in sheet lead work but when I found out that the plumbing competition went all the way to WorldSkills, I decided to switch my focus."

What training did you undertake as part of your journey to WorldSkills and what impact did this have on your life?

Chris's training manager Paul Dodds prepared an intensive training plan, which began as soon as Chris was short-listed for WorldSkills.

"Starting with the basics I was taught how to work to the high tolerances expected at WorldSkills. I learned loads of new skills and worked with new tools and materials that might be used in the WorldSkills competition. By learning a broad range of skills and knowledge about plumbing I was prepared for any situation during the competition."

What was WorldSkills like?

WorldSkills was bigger and better than Chris ever imagined. *"Looking back it was such an unbelievable experience and I'm really pleased that I worked so hard to get there. It was an honour to represent the UK and be part of such an elite team of competitors."*

What did you have to do during the competition?

Chris started the competition with a cast iron soil stack module. Although he found this easy to cut and assemble, the hard part came during the installation because of the sheer weight. The second module involved creating a Canadian flag from steel pipe which Chris found very time consuming and difficult. To finish the competition, Chris had to construct a complicated copper pipe task.

"The final task wasn't as physically draining as the other two tasks but it was the most complicated and after three days of competition it was really challenging."

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Who inspired you during your journey to WorldSkills?

Throughout Chris's journey to WorldSkills he met many inspirational people.

"I really looked up to and respected Paul Dodds. His passion and dedication to me and my training helped me give WorldSkills 110%. The past UK competitors I met along the way gave me some really good advice and the achievement of WorldSkills Shizuoka 2007 gold medallist, Gary Tuddenham, motivated me to try and be the best."

What did being part of Team UK and competing at WorldSkills mean to you?

"Competing at WorldSkills was a once in a lifetime experience which few people ever get the privilege of doing. I got a huge amount of satisfaction from making my friends and family proud."

How did it feel to receive a Medallion for Excellence?

"I'm really proud of my achievement and a Medallion for Excellence is proof that I performed at a world-class standard. I'm really pleased that I had the potential to be the best in the world unfortunately things just didn't happen my way on the day."

What has competing done for you both personally and professionally?

Having returned from WorldSkills, Chris's outlook on life has changed drastically.

"I feel like anything is possible now and it has really opened my eyes to new opportunities."

Would you encourage others to get involved in WorldSkills?

Chris has already started recommending the competition to others.

"I look at the journey to WorldSkills like an achievement ladder. It doesn't matter where you get off as you're in a better place than when you stepped on."

What do you think of the event being held in London in 2011?

"I think WorldSkills London 2011 will be absolutely fantastic and I can't wait for it to kick off. It will give skill competitions the recognition they deserve throughout the UK and I hope to be a part of it. I will be there no matter what and in the words of Simon Bartley, CEO of UK Skills 'Bring it on!'"



For more information about the WorldSkills, UK Alumni, contact the UK Skills communications team:
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