



Sam Fairgrieve: Bricklaying

Competed in: WorldSkills Calgary 2009 – Team UK
Awarded: Medallion for Excellence
Home town: Leicester
Region: East Midlands
Date of birth: 24/06/1988
Age at competition: 21
Employer: Jelson Homes
Learning provider: Leicester College

Qualifications

- NVQ Level 2 & 3



What was your route into Team UK?

Sam's first encounter with skills competitions came whilst studying at college. He achieved success at the regional SkillBuild competition and was invited to take part in the national competition. Impressing the judges with his skills, Sam achieved a silver medal in 2006 and began the shortlisting process to WorldSkills. Sam was then invited to attend the WorldSkills competition in 2007 as an observer after just missing out on a place in Team UK. Seeing the competition in Japan only made Sam hungrier for a place in Team UK. During the WorldSkills Calgary 2009 selection process he made it through both the Squad and Team selections earning himself a place in Team UK.

Why did you choose to get involved with WorldSkills?

Success at each level of the competition had a knock-on effect, encouraging Sam to keep going for a place in Team UK.

"I didn't really make a conscious decision to go to WorldSkills, I just did it."

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

As soon as the shortlisting for WorldSkills Calgary 2009 was underway, Sam began the intense training needed to achieve a world class skill level. Sam travelled around the country to complete his training, with York College playing host to the majority of his practical training. All this extra work and travel had an impact on Sam's personal and social life,

"I couldn't play football at the weekends anymore. I had to get my priorities right and for me WorldSkills was my number one priority."

What was WorldSkills like?

Having been to a WorldSkills competition as an observer already, Sam knew exactly what to expect.

"I turned up knowing I had a huge job to do and just got on with it."

The enormous scale of the event and crowds of spectators had no effect on Sam's focus.

What did you have to do during the competition?

The Bricklaying competition involved three modules to be completed in sequence within the 22 hour deadline. Sam had already received the drawings for the competition before heading out to Calgary but the design was subject to a 30% change.

Who inspired you during your journey to WorldSkills?

Sam's drive and determination to be part of the team and represent the UK encouraged him throughout his journey.

"No one was pushing me to go; I just really wanted to be part of Team UK and do my best."

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

"The whole experience was amazing! It is impossible for me to describe unless you have been and seen the scale of it for yourself."

At the opening ceremony Sam was chosen by his team mates to carry the flag for the UK.

"Being chosen to carry the flag for Team UK was unreal!"

How did it feel to receive a Medallion for Excellence?

All of Sam's training and hard work paid off during the Competition. Although Sam didn't get the medal he was aiming for, he still achieved a very impressive score and was awarded a Medallion of Excellence for his work.

"Looking back now after a couple of months, I have realised what a massive achievement it was to get a Medallion for Excellence."

What has competing done for you both personally and professionally?

Post competition Sam aims to make the most of his experience.

"It's all about what you make of it. Eventually I want to run my own business and I think the extra training and experience will be a huge advantage."

Would you encourage others to get involved in WorldSkills?

"Yes, definitely! I couldn't fault the experience. From start to finish it was amazing."

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

"It's great that WorldSkills is coming to London in 2011. It's a really good opportunity for everyone in the UK to go along and see what skills competitions are all about."



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