



PRESS RELEASE

(For Immediate use)



2010 Institute of Horticulture Young Horticulturist of the Year Competition gets underway

The IoH has signalled the start of the competition to find the 2010 Institute of Horticulture Young Horticulturist of the Year with the announcement that the Grand Final will be held at Kew Gardens in May 2010. The competition promises to be bigger and better than ever with over 1500 students and young people working in the industry from across Britain and Ireland expected to take part. They will be competing for more than £10,000 worth of prizes courtesy of a wide variety of generous sponsors making this the biggest and most prestigious competition for young people in horticulture.

The competition will kick off in January 2010 with regional heats based on the Institute's eight Branch areas. These will be held in colleges in each area, but competitors unable to get to a college heat will also be able to enter on-line. The heat winners will go forward to Regional Finals in February and March 2010.

"We know we have a great many very high calibre people coming to work in horticulture," said Institute President, Heather Barrett-Mold. "Through our Young Horticulturist of the Year competition we can recognise the most talented and reward them for their effort. We are also very lucky to have some very generous sponsors in horticulture who make it even more rewarding for the many entrants who are successful at all levels of the competition."

Sponsors for the 2010 competition include the major sponsor, The Shropshire Horticultural Society, who, through the Percy Thrower Trust, provides the £2,000 Travel Bursary for the overall winner. Other sponsors include the Horticultural Development Company (HDC) who are providing £1,000 worth of prize money for the Grand Final, Bulldog Tools (Regional Final Sponsors) and MorePeople, who provide sponsorship for the scores of Regional heats.

The winner of the 2010 competition will be looking to emulate the success of Alex Summers, who won the 2009 Final at The National Botanical Garden of Wales in May this year. He is using his bursary for a trip of a lifetime to Borneo to study the native flora of the region.

The 2010 Grand Final is to be held at Kew Gardens (Jodrell Lecture Theatre) on Saturday 15 May 2010. With the world famous gardens as the backdrop, this culmination of the 2010 competition promises to be an event not to be missed. Anyone wanting to enter the competition or companies interested in sponsorship at any level of the competition should contact the IoH Administration Team on 01992 707025 or email: info@horticulture.org.uk.

Notes for editors:

For media updates please contact Graham Porter on 07711 704 152

The competition

- The 2010 competition is open to any horticulturist who is below the age of 30 on 31 July 2010.
- The competition is run in three phases: local heats, available on-line for those not able to get to local and regional colleges, followed by eight Regional Finals and the Grand Final.
- The competition is organised by the Institute of Horticulture through an organising group, chaired by Susan Nicholas (contact details available from Graham Porter on request).
- Local heats are based on multiple choice questions on a wide range of horticultural topics, through an MS PowerPoint presentation and on-line. The heats are organised by eight IOH Regional YHOY Organisers and take place at colleges, garden centres and anywhere else where competitors may gather. These will be getting underway from early January 2010 onwards. For contact details of the Organising Committee and Regional Organisers, contact Graham Porter (details below).
- Heat winners go forward to one of eight Regional Finals, usually run in February and March, in which a Question Master asks a wide range of horticultural questions, some on a buzzer, some directed to individual contestants, with three identification rounds to further test the contestants.
- The winner of each Regional Final then goes forward to the YHOY Grand Final to be held on May 15 2010 at Kew Gardens. The format is the same as for the Branch Finals and the questions are drawn from all branches of horticulture.
- The overall winner collects the Percy Thrower Travel Bursary, worth £2,000, provided by the Shropshire Horticultural Society. This funds a horticultural tour anywhere in the world. Previous YHOY winners have visited New Zealand, the Himalayas, the United States, South America and various parts of Europe.
- There are plenty of prizes at Regional Final and local heat level as well. The value of prizes in the 2009 competition topped £10,000, thanks to the generosity of a wide range of sponsors.
- Further information on the competition on the IOH website at www.horticulture.org.uk.
- The 2009 finalists were:
 - South East Branch – Alex Summers – (1st place)
 - Eastern Branch – James Hearsom (2nd place)
 - West Midlands and South Wales Branch – Faye Steer (3rd place)
 - Scottish Branch – Adam Bowley (4th place)
 - North West and North Wales Branch – Sam Turner (5th place)
 - Northern Branch – Sally Johnson (6th place)
 - Irish Branch – Jennifer Reilly (7th place)
 - South West Branch – Ross Tapley (8th place)

Sponsorship

Major 2009 national sponsors included:

- Shropshire Horticultural Society/Percy Thrower Trust, which funds the Percy Thrower Travel Bursary
- MorePeople (Heats)
- Bulldog Tools (Regional Finals)
- Horticultural Development Company (National Final)
- The National Botanical Garden of Wales (National Final)

The Institute of Horticulture is interested to hear from companies who would be willing to offer financial or other sponsorship at all levels of the competition for 2010. In the first instance, please contact the IoH Administration Team on 01992 707025 or email: info@horticulture.org.uk.

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