

News Release

Chartered Institute of Horticulture Young Horticulturist of the Year 2018.

And the winner was Tim Miles, representing the South East Region



A gripping final was enjoyed by an audience of more than ninety spectators at the Young Horticulturist of the Year competition at the Harrogate Spring Flower Show on Saturday 28 April. The 2018 winner is Tim Miles, who graduated from the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh in 2017. Tim won a £2,500 travel bursary provided by the Percy Thrower Bursary. He is currently working at Sissinghurst Castle in Kent and was representing the South-East branch of the CIH.

Tim who was delighted to win this prestigious competition said *"The entire journey towards winning Young Horticulturist of the year 2018 has been fun. I have enjoyed meeting members of the Chartered Institute of Horticulture, as well as my peers who competed from Great Britain and Ireland. Most accolades celebrate longevity, so it is nice to be part of something that promotes young Horticulturists at the beginning of their careers. With the travel bursary I plan to go to Japan. I have a particular interest in Japanese woodland flora, and I am keen to learn more about Japanese horticultural*

tools and practices, especially pruning techniques."

Emily Marston, an apprentice at RHS Harlow Carr, came second, representing the North, and third place went to Frances Porter, who is currently studying for a Level 3 Diploma at Derby College's Broomfield Hall. Frances represented the North West and North Wales branch. The other finalists were Sally Newbrook, representing the South West, Josh Egan-Wyer representing West Midlands and South Wales, Owen Harlow representing Scotland, Leo Walsh representing Ireland and Rosie Innes-Taylor, representing the East. This year's contest contained a wide variety of contestants, from those already working in the industry to those still enjoying their horticultural studies. The Question Master was Martin Fish, senior Royal Horticultural Society judge and horticultural expert. The questions reflected the breadth and diversity of horticulture, stretching and testing the contestants with a combination of quick-fire rounds and identification tests.

The lead national sponsors, Percy Thrower Bursary and Shropshire Horticultural Society, were joined by ICL, Harrogate Spring Flower Show, and the Horticultural Trades Association. Bord Bia sponsor the all-Ireland competition. Bulldog Tools sponsor the regional competitions across the UK and Ireland.

President of the Chartered Institute of Horticulture, Owen Doyle, said: "What a great YHOY competition this year. There was a buzz about the Harrogate Flower Show Event Centre on Saturday morning as the contestants milled around with the audience members and sponsors, waiting for the contest to begin. It always amazes me, as I struggle with a few of the questions, how broad our subject area is and what an encyclopaedic knowledge you need to have to win. But you don't know what you don't know, and I'm being slightly dishonest when I say there were only a few of the questions that I couldn't get. The rapid-fire rounds demanded instant answers and I was really impressed by the calibre of contestants this year.

If we can continue to attract young people with this level of knowledge and capability, then our industry will be fit for the future. And the £2,500 travel bursary is a great prize for the winner, encouraging them to go and explore new regions of the globe. Horticulture is all about exploring and enquiring - you never stop learning. Congratulations to everyone who entered the contest and long may we continue to attract the 2,000 entrants each year. Special congratulations to Timothy Miles (B.Sc. Horticulture), our Young Horticulturist of the Year for 2018."

To find out more about the competition and how to take part visit the Young Horticulturist of the Year pages at www.horticulture.org.uk.

Join in the discussions with past and present competitors on Facebook CIHort and Twitter @CIHort.

Anyone interested in taking part in, or sponsoring the 2019 competition should contact the Chartered Institute of Horticulture - Email: cih@horticulture.org.uk.

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Editor's notes

1. The competition

- This annual competition is organised by the Chartered Institute of Horticulture, the only professional body representing all aspects of horticulture. The Institute founded the Young Horticulturist of the Year competition in 1990 as a way of encouraging and rewarding excellence among those starting out in a career in horticulture and today around 2000 young people under the age of 30 participate each year.
- The 2019 competition will be free to enter and is open to any horticulturist who is below the age of 30 on 31 July 2019.
- The competition is run in three phases: heats which take place in January and February, followed by eight Regional Finals held in March and the Grand Final in May.
- Heats are based on multi-choice questions covering a wide range of horticultural topics, run through a PowerPoint presentation. The heats are organised by eight CIH Regional Organisers and take place at colleges, garden centres and anywhere else where competitors may gather. To take part contact the Secretariat - email cih@horticulture.org.uk
- For more information, and to have a trial run at some previous heat questions, visit: <http://www.horticulture.org.uk/page.php?pageid=562>
- Heat winners go forward to one of eight Regional Finals held in March, when a Question Master asks a wide range of horticultural questions, some through a buzzer round, and some directed to individual contestants. In addition, there are two identification rounds to further test their depth and breadth of knowledge on a range of plants as well as pests, diseases, disorders and weeds.
- The winner of each Regional Final progresses to the Grand Final where the format is the same as for the Regional Finals with questions covering all sectors of horticulture.
- The winner of the Grand Final receives the £2,500 Percy Thrower Travel Bursary, provided by the Shropshire Horticultural Society, Percy Thrower Trust. This funds a horticultural trip anywhere in the world. Previous winners have visited Borneo, China, New Zealand, South Africa, the Himalayas, the Galapagos Islands, the United States of America, South America and Europe.

2.2018 national competition sponsors

- Shropshire Horticultural Society/Percy Thrower Trust, they provide the £2,500 Travel Bursary and sponsorship of the Grand Final
- ICL
- The Horticultural Trades Association
- Bord Bia

3.The Chartered Institute of Horticulture is interested to hear from companies who would be willing to offer financial, or other sponsorship, at all levels of the 2019 competition. Email: cih@horticulture.org.uk

4.The Institute of Horticulture was established in 1984 with the aim of fostering a close relationship between all sectors of professional horticulture (advisory and research, amenity, commercial and education and training) throughout the UK and Ireland. It is the only professional body representing those who work in all aspects of horticulture. It founded the Young Horticulturist of the Year competition shortly after it was established as a way of encouraging and rewarding excellence among those starting out in a career in horticulture.

On 21 July 2014 the Institute was granted a Royal Charter by her Majesty the Queen and became the **Chartered Institute of Horticulture** (CIH), with many new plans and initiatives to enhance its standing and that of its members both inside and outside the horticultural industry.

The Chartered Institute of Horticulture is represented on, and works collaboratively with, other horticultural organisations throughout the industry to unite a growing profession.

The Chartered Institute of Horticulture has eight branches throughout the UK and Ireland, as well as overseas members. Members are linked to the branch where they live but are encouraged to attend meetings arranged in any other branch area.

5. Media enquiries and photos

Chartered Institute of Horticulture, C/O Horticultural Trades Association, Horticulture House, Chilton, Didcot, OX11 0RN.

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