

KMF duo target 'precious metal'

The quality of the apprentices at KMF (Precision Sheet Metal) has once again been recognised, with two of them going through the selection process for *World Skills Leipzig 2013*. After a series of stringent skills tests that included developing and fabricating a patio heater,

the judges selected KMF's Matt Page to be the UK's representative, with his colleague Jake Repsys also going to Leipzig as first reserve.

This is the first time in over 20 years that the UK has been represented in sheet metal at World Skills, and the achievement of Matt and Jake is even more impressive, given the fact that the usual 18-month build-up to the skills test was reduced to six months.

World Skills mentor Dave Vaughan said: "Sheet metal at *World Skills* was abandoned many years ago. It re-appeared in 2009, but with totally different criteria; competitors now need more all-round skills, rather than just craft technique. The new contest includes CAD, CNC laser and CNC press brake, as well as the traditional manual skills of developing a fabrication. Not many companies train their apprentices with all of these skills."

The competition between Matt and Jake was extremely close and literally went to 'the eleventh hour'. After they had completed the four days of selection tests, the pair were separated by half a point and the judging panel had to take extra time to review all of the work they had done, with Matt winning the final decision at 11pm on the evening before the team was announced.

KMF (Precision Sheet Metal) has made a considerable investment in training and developing its apprentices, including a training centre and workshop. In addition, it works closely with local primary and secondary schools to develop an interest in manufacturing throughout the curriculum, with its Young Engineer Awards one highlight of this.

