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Global Chefs Challenge Semi-Final Pacific Rim serves up success for Australian Chefs

An Australian trio have taken out top honours in the International Pacific Rim Global Chefs competitions held in Auckland this weekend.

Chefs Matthew Weller, Jenni Key and Chris Malone beat competitors from New Zealand, Fiji, Vanuatu and Guam for the respective Global Chef, Global Pastry Chef and Hans Bueschgens Young Chef titles.

The Chefs shone in the timed culinary competitions, where strict criteria are applied and marks awarded not only for taste and presentation, but for technical skill in the kitchen, ingredient use and punctual service.

All three competitors will be representing the Pacific Rim at the International WACS WorldChefs Congress in Greece next September. They will be battling against twenty teams from seven different regions for the world title.

Joining the Australians in Greece is Global Chef 'Wild Card' winner Mark Sycamore from Christchurch, New Zealand.

The judges noted that the competition was incredibly tight between the Kiwi and the Australian, with only two points difference in their overall scores. Both chefs worked with consistent even tempos throughout the three hour competition, showcasing a variety of different food preparation techniques.

However, Matthew Weller's three finished dishes gave him the slight edge: He used three unique ways to highlight the key ingredient, halibut, in his appetizer. While the veal in his main course was cooked to perfection. The meal was finished with an elegant dessert including cleansing mandarin and passionfruit elements that balanced out the richness of the dark Valrhona chocolate.

The judges also commented that both the Global Pastry Chef winner Jenni Key and New Zealand first runner up Bryan Bae did incredibly well, producing their desserts and chocolate sculptures in a challenging stadium environment, within the six hour time frame. The two competitors are "strong contenders in the pastry category which has traditionally been dominated by the Europeans".

Gary Farrell, the Pacific Representative of the WorldChefs Culinary Competition Committee said the standard was incredibly high across all three Global Chefs events. With the competition being "a fantastic opportunity for some of the smaller countries in the Pacific Rim, like Guam and Vanuatu, to showcase their chef's skills".

Gary added that he was looking forward to seeing the Australian and New Zealand competitors cook in Greece. “New Zealand and Australia bring quite a different style of food to the International WorldChefs Competition” he said “as both countries are influenced by such a wide range of cultures”.

The Global Chefs Pacific Rim event was held as part of this year’s NZChefs National Salon, New Zealand’s annual culinary and hospitality competitions. NZChefs President Graham Hawkes said the International Global Chefs competitors had provided inspiration and motivation for many of the younger Kiwi chefs present.

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Worldchefs Global Chefs Challenge Results

Semi Final Pacific Rim Continental Competition

Global Chefs Challenge

Winner	Mathew Weller, Australia
1st runner up	Mark Sycamore, New Zealand
2nd Runner up	Abhinesh Sharma, Fiji
Wild card winner	Mark Sycamore, New Zealand

Hans Bueschkens Young Chefs Challenge

Winner	Chris Malone, Australia
1st Runner up	William Mordido, New Zealand
2nd Runner up	Jasmine Nadres, Guam

Global Pastry Chef Challenge

Winner	Jenni Key, Australia
1st Runner up	Bryan Bae, New Zealand

With special thanks to the following Sponsors of the Global Chef Competition

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