

Meet the new world champions

World Coffee Events and the Australian Specialty Coffee Association (ASCA) held seven competitions throughout April and May. These are the victors.

2014 WORLD LATTE ART CHAMPION

CHRISTIAN ULLRICH



It was an emotional moment as Germany's Christian Ullrich held tightly onto Italy's Chiara Bergonzi, as they waited to hear who would be crowned the 2014 World Latte Art Champion. When the announcement was made, Christian could hardly hide his elation. Up against some tight competition, his execution of a turtle design was enough to win over the judges.

Christian is handicapped, missing to top half of four of his fingers. As a result, he says he has a "special technique" that adds that extra bit of interest to his routine: "While most baristas use their hands, I use my entire body."

Christian is an independent coffee trainer and consultant, having worked as a freelance barista since 2010. Christian says latte art is his favourite part of preparing coffee: "I started with latte art because I like that it makes my guests smile."

To prepare for the World Latte Art

Championships, Christian put a pause on his workload in April to practice his designs. He says he used at least 350 litres of milk practicing for the competition.

He also took advantage of Dalla Corte's dc campus training opportunities, held in mid-April in Milan, Italy. The camps, which are co-sponsored by Mahlkoenig and Urnex, invite national latte art champions from around the world to take part in mock competitions, as well as preparation workshops. It was at this training opportunity that he came up with the winning turtle design.

Brita Professional sponsored Christian to travel to Melbourne to compete. "BRITA is proud to have helped Christian on his journey to the World Latte Art Championship and we are very excited and proud of his win," says Tim Bonaguro, National Sales Manager for Brita Professional.

2014 WORLD CUP TASTERS CHAMPION

PANG-YU LIU



Taiwan's Pang-Yu Liu has proven that hard work and dedication pay off – even if you've only been cupping for one year.

"I'm so excited win the world championship. I've been training extremely hard for this event – all day every day with my coach, for the past two months since I won the Taiwan championship," he says.

Pang-Yu's quick hands and accurate tasting was enough to beat the United States' Amanda Juris who came in second place, Finland's Panu Reinikainen in third place, and The Netherlands' Yoeri Joosten in fourth place. Pang-Yu Liu has become not only the first Taiwanese World Cup Tasters Champion, but the first ever from an Asian country.

"I was completely focused on the competition and the job I had to do, but my intuition definitely help me win," says Pang-Yu. "Today's coffee rounds were very challenging but I had practiced a similar situation in my

preparations so I felt confident."

Pang-Yu is an independent cup taster who works at his family's restaurant. "My father loves coffee and was a cup taster so I followed his passion and I've since before a certified Q grader," he says. "I entered the National Taiwan Cup Tasting Championship to further expand my experiences and learn from the community of cuppers. I never thought I'd be the world champion, it's very exciting."

Since winning, Pang-Yu has trained with his mentor Shih-Ru Wang and Lulu Wang of Just Go Coffee, which they say have "passed on all their master knowledge".

As part of his prize, Pang-Yu will travel to Panama to with Toby's Estate. "I was just so excited and honoured to come to Melbourne to meet the world's best cuppers," he says. "I look forward to travelling to origin later in the year, it's something I've always wanted to do but never had the opportunity, until now."

WORLD COFFEE IN GOOD SPIRITS CHAMPION

MATT PERGER



When a two-time Australia Barista Champion took to the stage as the final competitor in the World Coffee in Good Spirits (WCIGS) Championship, it wasn't surprising that he performed to a packed arena.

The crowd erupted with the culmination of Matt's routine, which saw him popping open a bottle of champagne before the announcement of the results.

Moments later, Matt had reason to raise the glass again as the judges called his name as the new WCIGS champion.

"It was really unexpected and obviously really exciting," says Matt. "As always the competition on the world stage was really tight and it was impossible to predict the judges' decision."

Supported by a big team from St Ali in Melbourne, Matt impressed the judges with his two Irish Coffees, and two original coffee cocktails.

Matt's signature coffee cocktail was inspired by Christmas cake, with a mix of Kraken Black Spiced Rum, Grand Marnier, Morris of Rutherglen Muscat and espresso roasted by Sensory Lab.

The drink was served in a glass rimmed with cinnamon icing.

"I chose these flavours because they partner so well together. I looked for ingredients that bring out the best in the coffee, rather than overpower it," says Matt.

Matt has been a stand out performer on the coffee competition scene for six years now, as the Australia Barista Champion (2011 and 2013), World Brewers Cup Champion (2012), and Runner-up at the World Barista Championship (2013).

"I love being a part of the competitions, there's a really great atmosphere here at MICE today, especially which such a big crew from St Ali down here to support and cheer me along. We're a bit of a family at St Ali and I'm glad I could bring in a good result for them," he added.

Matt is now ready to take a break, and says he doesn't have any more competitions planned for this year.

"For now I'll continue working with St Ali and doing what I love most which is making really good coffee – I'm not planning on resting for too long though!"



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