



Press Release
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Students head to international culinary challenge

Securing a gold medal isn't the only goal for two Southland Boys' High School students competing in the International Secondary Schools Culinary Challenge in Australia next weekend – they want to bring home the event itself.

Winners of the Asia-Pacific competition earn the right to host it the following year – a mouth-watering prospect for Conor Monaghan, Isaac Cross and their tutor Scott Richardson.

"It would be wonderful to have all those countries from throughout the Asia-Pacific region – like Australia, Tahiti, Taiwan, Japan, the Philippines – all here and host them in Invercargill," Richardson said.

"We would certainly be able to showcase Southland, and New Zealand, along with all the culinary delights we have to offer."

A team from Southland Boys' has contested the event for the past five years – securing gold each time with a score between 90-99 points – and have been tantalisingly close to winning overall. Just three points shy of victory in Tahiti last year and one point in 2008.

"The goal this year is to win it," Richardson said. "They are still only young fellas competing so we want to represent our country and the Southland region proudly.

Prior to the event, the menu, design concept, cost, photographs and ingredients selected from a set list must be sent to organisers. Teams then have just one hour to produce four main portions during the competition.

"While it's a set list of ingredients, there are lots of different ways you can go – every year it surprises me what the different teams create," Richardson said.

"We've all got a whole salmon to deal with this year ... and that includes filleting it, boning it and preparing it."

The menu designed by Conor and Isaac features a Salmon Wellington with a white bean and potato puree, apple and caramelised ginger relish and a salmon foam.

"We're bringing some of the new innovations in food to the competition."

A \$3500 grant from the Invercargill Licensing Trust has enabled the trio to attend the event on the Gold Coast.

Invercargill Licensing Trust chairman Alan Dennis said competing on the international stage would be a rewarding learning experience for the budding chefs.

"Every year the students from Southland Boys' undoubtedly add some unique Southland flavor to the event," he said.

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