



## Young Butcher of the Year 2009:

### *The Finalists Line up*

*The finalists in the Young Butcher of the Year competition for 2009 have been decided. All that remains is a tense one-day final event in Auckland on October 1, culminating in a black-tie dinner that evening at which the winner will be announced. The Grand final competition will comprise a written exam (80 marks); an interview (40 marks); practical tests (400 marks) in which contestants' abilities on three types of cuts will be demonstrated; and a three-minute speech (40 marks) on a selected subject to the assembled dinner guests. The 2009 Young Butcher of the Year will emerge from the following :*

#### **Alesha Ross**

Alesha Ross, a 20-year-old from Warkworth, is the only female finalist. A member of the team at New World Warkworth, Alesha is demonstrably passionate about her work as a



butcher. Her boss, Bruce van der Net, describes her as a perfectionist type of person. Under his tutelage, she has completed her apprenticeship (the Foodstuffs programme) and graduates (level 4) in November. Her interest in retail meat as a career probably dates back to early childhood on her parents' Tokoroa farm, but the decision to pursue it was made during a primary school visit to New World Tokoroa. She doesn't forget the date of her starting work at New World Warkworth. It was 6/6/06! After a move away from Warkworth, Alesha was asked to return and rejoin New World Warkworth. As Bruce van der Net says, that's an

accolade in itself. She only entered the Auckland-Northland regional competition for experience, so she is surprised as well as nervous about being in the Young Butcher of the Year final. Good luck Alesha!

#### **Wade Flavell**

Wade Flavell is one of the other two Auckland region finalists. He's a supervisor for The Mad Butcher group, working from the so-called *Sausage Heaven* in Manurewa. Marketing manager Dan Adams says the company 'took a punt' on the relatively young Wade Flavell and the 'punt worked out nicely'. At 25, Wade is responsible for training, health and safety, and food safety at 11 Mad Butcher stores across Auckland.



He helps franchisees maximise sales and profits and helps them through any procedural issues that arise. Dan describes Wade as a policeman of company policy and standards. Wade's career in butchery is tending towards management/supervisory roles and that's the way he likes it. He is said to be an ardent supporter of the Warriors. In The Mad Butcher environment, does ardent mean over-the-top? At 25 years old,

this is Wade's last opportunity for a tilt at the coveted Young Butcher of the Year title. All the best, Wade!

#### **Callum Carncross**

Callum Carncross, who works at New World Victoria Park in Auckland, made it into the final last year as a 17-year-old. So it is not surprising that he is in this year's final line-up as well. He is well through his apprenticeship, and his colleagues rate his chances highly. So too does Craig White, meat manager at Vic Park. Craig saw Callum's potential when he was a school-



boy part-timer and invited him into an apprenticeship. Now, when Craig is away, Callum very often takes on the manager's role. He has a real management bent and seems likely to go down that path in future. He seems to have carved himself a niche as the resident processor of gross profit data for the meat department. Callum sounds like a very confident young man, but that doesn't mean he's not nervous about what's coming up on October 1. Go Callum!



## **Brendon Taylor**

Last year, Brendon won the under-20 part of the Young Butcher of the Year competition. Which makes him a formidable contestant this time round, despite being just short of his 21st birthday. But Brendon seems to have done lots at a young age, like joining New World Te Rapa as a schoolboy part-timer. That was about four years ago and he is still loving the job, having completed the apprentice-



ship that he started soon after a he left school. This year, it's the open competition Brendon has in his sights and he admits he's not as confident as he was last year. He has a particular

interest in health and fitness. In fact, it's not out of the question for him to become a personal trainer in the future. If he does, he'll no doubt be a passionate advocate of the health benefits of red meat. Good luck to you Brendon.

## **David Ker**

New World Te Rapa is the best represented entity in the finals of the Young Butcher of the Year with David Ker joining Brendon Taylor in the line-up. David is only four months into his apprenticeship, but his association with New World Te Rapa goes back further, having started in the grocery department as a part-timer while studying mechanics. He saw an advertisement on the staff notice board for an apprentice. Now his competence and cleverness have been switched to retail meat. His parents



and mates are proud of his reaching the national finals of the competition. David is looking forward to the finals event and sometimes practises specifically for it, be it preparing cuts or subjecting his work colleagues to his oratory. Best wishes to David.

## **Jonathon Haywood**

As a 14 year-old, Jonathon Haywood decided that school was not for him and he engineered an approved sign-out (involving high-level approvals like one from the Minister of Education) so he could start a career in butchery instead. Now he's a finalist in the Young Butcher of the Year competition. As he says, butchery has been good for him, and it obviously has. He loves it. He entered the Wellington regionals when he was an apprentice about 8 years ago. At his first try since then, he has won the Wellington regional event and earned himself a place in the National final. Jonathon works for New World Wellington City. His previous experi-



ence includes six years at Porirua New World. Go for it, Jonathon.

## **Gareth Hunt**

Gareth Hunt's work experience has all been at New World Whitianga. He says it is an advantage being a butcher in a smaller centre like Whitianga (population 3500, until it jumps to about 14,000 over summer). The reason is the lack of scale and relative lack of space. The consequence is that he and his colleagues have to do more on-the-spot butchering for customers. "Like butterflying lamb that in a larger centre might be pre-prepared." Gareth graduates from his 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -year apprenticeship in November. He loves everything about his job – even the time he spent as clean-up boy back in



his year 11 school days. He attributes a great deal to the Gateway Work Experience programme which helped so much in his appreciating butchery and

setting him on the chosen career path. He enjoys working with customers, adding value to their shopping experience by explaining various cuts and suggesting appropriate cooking methods. As he sees it, every day is different. Gareth is looking forward to the finals, but is nervous. We wish you all the best, Gareth.

## **Tim Edwards**

If Tim Edwards' boss were a judge at the Young Butcher of the Year Award finals, the winner would be declared before competition even started. Mark McKenzie, manager of the meat department at Pak 'N Save Northlands, Christchurch, cannot speak highly enough of his young employee. Punctual, reliable, bright, high standards, team player, helpful, quick learner – these are all words/phrases Mark McKenzie used to describe Tim. Tim has been a qualified butcher for two years. His route into the industry was typical. Working as a clean-up boy in a Countdown supermarket after school, he was offered an apprenticeship and has never looked back. The apprenticeship was through the meat school at CPIT. He said it was a great course and gave him a good understanding of butchery methods. As well as having his boss behind him, it seems all his work colleagues are behind him as well. He's a bit nervous about October 1, but excited too. Good luck to him.



## Jordan Hopkins

When Jordan Hopkins was a schoolboy part-timer at New World Halswell, he had a career as a mechanic in mind. This soon changed. He asked his boss Steven Joseph about butchery career possibilities. He was nominally given a 6-month trial which was cut down to three months, then commenced his apprenticeship. He is only 18 years old and is still in the first year of training. As for switching away from his planned career as a mechanic, Jordan is adamant that there are no regrets as he is extremely happy in his work and work environment.



Steven observes that Jordan is very passionate about butchery. Steven insists that all his apprentices enter the Young Butcher of the year competition on the basis that it is good experience, and Jordan agrees. He has two new experiences coming up – first time flying, and first time in Auckland. He's nervous about the finals but looking forward to them too. Happy travels Jordan, and good luck.

## Lance Thompson

He's only 19 years old, but Lance Thompson is off to the Young Butcher of the Year finals for the second time. He was the Under-20 winner for the lower North Island (Wellington Region) last year as well as this year. He works for Rob Cameron, well-known former teacher at the recently-disestablished Weltech Meat School, who has butchery shops in both Tawa and Ngaio, suburbs of Wellington. Rob Cameron identified Lance as a young man with potential and approached him out of the blue. Lance wasn't even thinking of butchery as a career, but he saw it as an opportunity to learn about meat



cuts for his intended career as a chef. Now his aspirations to be a chef are on the back burner, but not entirely forgotten. While Lance has the advantage of having experienced the finals before, he still has the disadvantage of having never done a block course as part of his ongoing apprenticeship. Best of luck, Lance.

## Tragedy Strikes

A pall of sadness has fallen on the retail meat community and the Young Butcher of the Year Award with news of the tragic death of one of the finalists. Bruce Wing was last year's runner-up and was well poised for success in this year's event. He died in a car accident in the early hours of Friday September 18. The 21-year-old was a much-respected staff member at Allenton Meat Centre, Ashburton. Owner Paddy Kennedy admired Bruce Wing immensely. "He was keen and eager, learnt quickly, and showed lots of initiative. His success at winning the South Island Young Butcher of the Year title two years in a row speaks for itself." All those at Retail Meat NZ and the Retail Meat ITO join in extending to Bruce Wing's family their deepest sympathy.



Photo Courtesy Ashburton Guardian

## New Premises Great for All



The move by Retail Meat New Zealand and the Retail Meat ITO to new premises at 73 Kenepuru Drive, Linden, is proving advantageous to all concerned. CEO Gary Beecroft says the move was driven by easier access, better parking (for staff, board members and other associates), more space and cheaper rent. Easy to find, Linden is on the main back road from Porirua to Tawa. Kenepuru Drive becomes Main Rd just south of the new premises. The phone numbers have changed, though the 0800 number is unchanged at 0800-88 00 99. See separate panel for new numbers.

### New Phone Numbers

Main 04-238 2256 Fax 04-238 2254  
CEO direct 04-238 1960  
Training coordinatotr 04-238 1961  
Accounts 04-238 1962  
Executive Assistant 04-238 1964



The view of the new first-floor premises coming north from Tawa.

# Review of Training

*The review of the Retail Meat ITO Unit Standards and Qualifications has now been completed.*

The overall thrust of the changes is that training will in future be more tailored to the different business models that exist in the retail meat sector. A young butcher will be able to specialise in training that suits their employer's requirements, whether that is in a supermarket or in a smaller independent butchery. Not only will the training content change to meet the different requirements, but so will the qualification specifications.

The review has involved three industry panels. Their findings were made available for consultation with the wider sector including training providers. Responses were invited and received from a wide range of organisations.

Mark Williams, an industry training consultant who helped with the review, presents a diagrammatic overview of the eight different qualifications (certificates) which are available to view on the RMITO website:

[http://www.retailmeat.org.nz/ITO\\_information/Quals\\_Consultation/index](http://www.retailmeat.org.nz/ITO_information/Quals_Consultation/index)

Having said there will be changes in the delivery of training in the sector, everyone should know that many things will not change. For example, Government subsidies will still be accessed; and block courses will still take place, run by the appropriate local provider.

The block course structure will change to focus on the underpinning knowledge required for individual roles.

For apprentices and trainees, butchers will still train them on the job. But they'll have the option to continue with the courses they've already enrolled in or transfer to the new qualifications. The RMITO is recommending people consider transferring to the new qualifications to help future proof their training.

The changes that will happen include those that mean increased support for butchers and apprentices alike. The Retail Meat ITO is employing extra training advisors to help support the on- and off-job training and complete on-job assessments. Well-known butcher/trainer Gerry Hogan has already been employed in this role for the Auckland region. Butchers and trainees can expect four visits or contacts each year from a training advisor. What's more, the advisors will be there to help plan and revise training for individual trainees/apprentices. There will be training material and other resources to support training, both on-job and off-job.

In the new training format for young butchers, there will be a special emphasis on literacy and numeracy. The consultation process clearly showed that this is what the industry wanted. Being able to communicate with customers is an integral part of butchery, says Gary Beecroft, and we want to ensure that ability is enhanced.



*From left, Gerry Hogan, Gary Beecroft and Mark Williams in discussion about the future mapped out for training in the retail meat industry.*



## Have you entered?

If not, please note:

The closing date has been extended!

Call Retail Meat NZ  
freephone  
0800-88 00 99

and give yourself the  
chance of a lifetime.

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### Remaining Block Course Dates for 2009

Here are the dates for the remaining block courses for the year at Manukau, Weltech and Christchurch.

Manukau Institute of Technology:  
Stage 1 second module 9-13 November  
Stage 3 second module 21-25 September.

Weltech:  
Stage 1 First Module 19-23 October  
Stage 3 First module 27-30 October

Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology:  
Stage 1 second module 12-23 October.