

TEAM GB HEADS TO SWITZERLAND

On the 14th-16th November Team GB, will be descending on Lucerne, in central Switzerland; the beautifully situated lakeside town will be playing host to the 24th World Championship for Young Roofers and the 60th International Federation for the Roofing Trade (IFD) Congress.

At the last championship, back in 2010, Team GB had the home advantage as the National Federation of Roofing Contractors hosted the competition in Belfast and scooped gold and two silver awards PLUS a Presidential prize. But this year, Team GB represented by Matt Timby, Stephen Harkin, Sam Hall and Tom Peck face the challenge of techniques and materials that are not in use in the UK. With the additional funding and the excellent training they received on the run up to the competition, both at home and over in Switzerland, coupled with the excellent support from the companies they work for, the mentors, NFRC and manufacturers have certainly put them in with a fighting chance.

The pitched team are mentored by Bob Coutts, a tutor from Edinburgh College who has had years of experience coaching competitors for not only the world competition but for SkillBuild too. Bob accompanied Matt and Stephen over to the Polybau Training Centre in Uzwil, Switzerland and over the course of two sessions they were able to train on a rather complex valley detailing, as well as cement fibre covering, and solar panels. It also proved a beneficial trip as during their first session the Swiss Team were also training and instructors at Polybau gave very helpful tips on the Swiss Valley formation. A few days prior to the competition on the 14th the pair will be having a final training session with Bob at Edinburgh College to work on a pitched roof with a shed-dormer in natural slate. We certainly look forward to seeing what the final outcome will be.

Bob Coutts, talking about the competition said, *"There are many roofing techniques and materials not used here in the UK, so this training may prove to be very beneficial for our team competing in the World Championships in Lucerne and will give the UK team a good chance of a medal place but we are competing against very good and highly skilled opposition."*

Gary Walpole, training manager for Integrated Polymer Systems (UK) Ltd, has taken over the role as mentor to the waterproofing team. For their training, the team has had two sessions on Single Ply at Bauder Ltd with Paul Adderly and Peter Stonebridge, who also kindly donated materials to the team to allow them to continue their training. They will be making their final preparations for the competition at Capital Roofing Co. Ltd in London on the 8th November.

Regarding the waterproofing team, Gary Warpole said, *"Over the last month we have stepped up the training programme and my thanks go to Bauder for organising a comprehensive training course based around the competition specification"*.

"We will be spending a further two days training before the competition going through each discipline set out in the specification and practicing any tricky details. None of this would have been possible without the support of Sam and Tom's employers, Russell Trew Ltd and Capital Roofing; who have also allowed use of their training rooms. Hopefully everyone's hard work will pay off and the lads will return from Switzerland victorious."

Employers must be thanked for allowing the competitors time off work in order to train and for sending people over to support the competitors Matt Timby of Timby Traditional Roofing, Stephen Harkin of D Harkin & Co Roofing, Sam Hall of Russell Trew Ltd and Tom Peck from Capital Roofing Co. Ltd.

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We wish the competitors the very best of luck and we look forward to learning the outcome from the competition.

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Notes to Editor:

NFRC is the UK's largest roofing trade association representing over 70% of the roofing industry by value. NFRC actively ensures that members offer high standards of workmanship and sound business practice through a strict code of practice and vetting procedure, including site inspections and adhering to the Government endorsed TrustMark standards. NFRC also offers training services, technical advice, and represents member interests to the wider construction industry and Government. For more information please visit www.nfrc.co.uk.