

MEDIA RELEASE FROM THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF WELDING

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New-Look SAIW Welding Challenge off with a blast!

The new-look SAIW Welding Challenge, which comprises the Youth and Senior competitions, took place from 21-25 November 2016 at the head office of the Southern African Institute of Welding (SAIW) in Johannesburg and was a whopping success attracting more than 40 competitors from all around the country.

The winner of the SAIW Youth Challenge was Philippus Terblanche while the Senior Welding Challenge winner was Houston Isaacs who was also a previous winner of the Youth Challenge (the Young Welder of the Year as it was then known). Houston, who has now won more than R50 000 in these welding competitions can certainly lay claim to being one of Africa's best welders!

Both Isaacs and Terblanche were ecstatic with their achievements. "I'm over the moon," said Isaacs. "I will now compete overseas representing my country and I am looking forward to doing well."

Isaacs, who received R15 000 for his win, will represent South Africa at the IIW Arc Cup in Shanghai in 2017. Terblanche, who also won R15 000 for his efforts, will go, along with the Youth Challenge's two runners up, to the WorldSkills national competition, which will take place early next year. The winner of that will represent South Africa at the WorldSkills International Competition in Abu Dhabi from 14-19 October 2017.

SAIW's Etienne Nell, appointed by WorldSkills SA as the South African National Expert, coordinated the new SAIW Welding Challenge. "The format worked extremely well and I have no doubt that both the numbers of participants and the standard will continue to grow and improve as the format enables greater penetration into the regions," he said.

All stages of the SAIW Welding Challenge continue to test the welders in the three categories of carbon steel, stainless steel and aluminium, with the welding projects based on the WorldSkills 2015 Sao Paolo project structure.

Nell says he was particularly pleased with Houston Isaac's performance. "He won the Youth

Challenge a few years ago and he shows what is possible for South Africa to achieve in the welding industry. I was also pleased with Philippus Terblanche's effort and we look forward to him making great strides in the future," he says.

Sean Blake SAIW Executive Director says he was delighted with the first edition of the SAIW Welding Challenge. "This country has enormous potential in terms of welding expertise and our competition will help to realise it. Thanks to Etienne, our sponsors and all those who made the SAIW Welding Challenge happen."

Caption for pic: (Welding Challenge winners 2016)

The winners of the new-look SAIW Welding Challenge, Philippus Terblanche (left) Youth winner and Houston Isaacs Senior winner.

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