

NATIONAL CHEF OF WALES FINAL

Immediate: February 21, 2006



Nick Evans, 33, head chef of Owens Restaurant, The Celtic Manor Resort, Newport, held off a strong challenge from three rivals to triumph in the National Chef of Wales Final on the opening day of the Welsh International Culinary Championships at Coleg Llandrillo Cymru, Rhos-on-Sea.

His recipe for success opened with a starter of pan-fried John Dory, lobster and smoked trout, salsify, peas and light shellfish sauce followed by creamed celeriac and apple soup, whipped goat's cheese and chives. Main course was braised shoulder of Welsh Lamb, lentils, shallot puree, road artichoke, garlic and a balsamic vinaigrette jus and dessert was hot rhubarb soufflé, rhubarb and orange crumble with blood orange and yoghurt foam.



Nick Evans in action at the National Chef of Wales Final, sponsored jointly by the Welsh Development Agency and Hybu Cig Cymru/Meat Promotion Wales.

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Stephen Duffy, 33, head chef of St Tudno Hotel, Llandudno, was hoping to add the senior title to the National Junior Chef of Wales title which he had previously won.

Having been runner up for the senior title in 2002, he had to settle for the same finish again.

**He served up:
Starter: Risotto of leek with butter poached lobster, fresh peas, seared John Dory and shellfish broth.**

Soup: A light veloute of Jerusalem artichokes and Welsh goat's cheese with olive oil.

Main course: Braised shoulder of lamb wrapped in Carmarthen ham, roasted beetroot, braised potato, parsnip puree, red wine and thyme reduction.

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Ross Williams, 33, head chef of La Marine Restaurant, Penarth, reached the final at the first attempt and will no doubt be back in two years' time to compete again.

He served up:

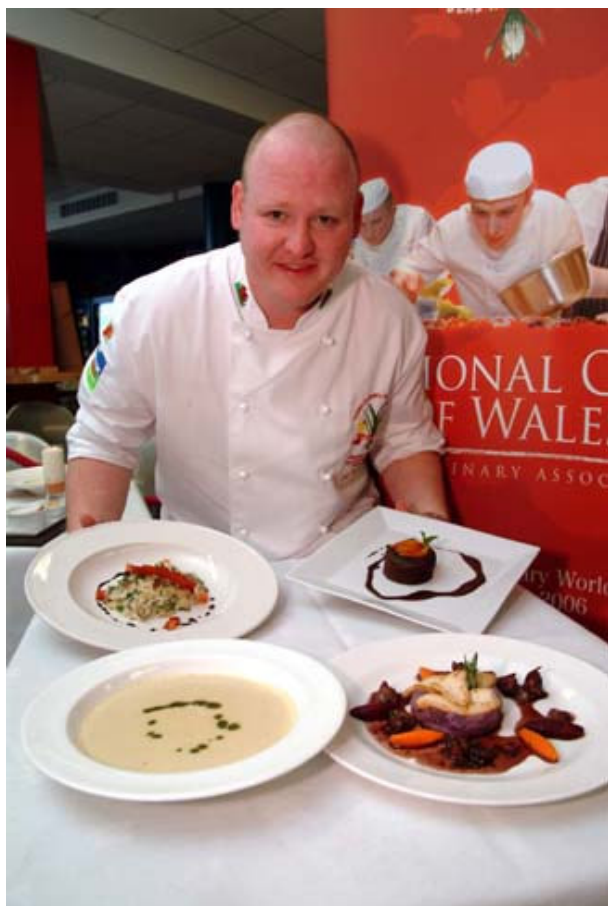
Starter: Risotto of shitaki mushrooms and baby spinach, topped with crisp Carmarthen ham.

Soup: Celeriac and sweet apple soup.

Main course: Pan-fried fillet of John Dory, red wine, lobster and thyme reduction, truffle potato mash and turned vegetables.

Dessert: Chocolate fondant, Bailey's and chocolate cream and blood orange segments.

Bottom left: Ross Williams with his four dishes.



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It was also third time unlucky for Gareth Dwyer, 26, head chef at the Castle Hotel, Conwy, another former National Junior Chef of Wales winner.

Having been fifth in 2002 and runner up in 2004, He was hoping for an early birthday celebration just a week before he turns 27. Sadly, he had to settle for runner up again.

He served up:

Starter: Terrine of John Dory and lobster wrapped in smoked trout with Jerusalem artichoke, beetroot orea and sultana and caper dressing.

Soup: Shitaki and thyme soup.

Main course: Roulade of chicken with bean puree, braised potato, stuffed roast onion and lamb pativier and port wine jus.

Dessert: Apple and cinnamon curd parfait, rhubarb syllabub, braised rhubarb and caramelised apples.

Ends

For more information please contact Peter Jackson, Welsh Culinary Association chairman, on 01766 780 200 or Duncan Foulkes, public relations consultant, on 01686 650818.