

PRESS RELEASE

World's best beer sommelier hails from Italy

Simonmattia Riva clinches Beer Sommelier World Championship in Brazil

Gräfelfing, 20 July 2015 – The elite of the beer sommelier world gathered last Saturday to find a champion. 53 beer sommeliers from nine countries lined up at Brasil Brau and Degusta Beer&Food in São Paulo and demonstrated their abilities at the fourth Beer Sommelier World Championship (BSWC). Six beer sommeliers in all successfully qualified for the final in disciplines such as a beer style blind tasting, a sensory description of a beer, beer and food pairing and a theoretical exam. Italian Simonmattia Riva prevailed over his five competitors in the grand finale on the podium at Degusta Beer&Food and was selected as the new beer sommelier world champion by the six-strong jury. Second place was taken by Germany's Frank Lucas and the only lady in the field, Irina Zimmermann, also from Germany, was placed third. With its atmospherically charged finale, the fourth BSWC demonstrated just how emotional the subject of beer is, the importance of beer sommeliers and what skills they possess the world over.

The BSWC, launched by Doemens in 2009, was being staged for the fourth time. The competition venue was located outside Europe for the first time, with the 53 contestants from nine countries, after months of preparation, making their way to Brazil, where the BSWC took place under the auspices of Brasil Brau and Degusta Beer&Food. The contestants took part in the preliminary rounds in camera in the tranquil atmosphere of the Academia Barbante, and were required to demonstrate their credentials in various disciplines. The first preliminary round comprised a beer style blind tasting, identifying aroma defects and a challenging theory exam. Three of the six finalists emerged from the first preliminary round. The remaining three finalists successfully qualified in the second preliminary round comprising a sensory description of a beer and Beer&Food pairing. "Because of the national eliminating heats that are now required the level of the contestants was extremely high and for the best to make it through to the final was also correspondingly difficult", said Wolfgang Stempl, Managing Director of the Doemens Academy, from Brazil.

The final was held at the Degusta Beer&Food event on Saturday evening, where the six best beer sommeliers demonstrated their prowess with a beer presentation in front of the six-strong jury, the public and representatives of the press. "Degusta Beer&Food was an ideal venue for staging the final because the passion for beer was center stage at the event and the world championship virtually suggested itself as a highlight", said Dr. Michael Zepf, Director of the Savour Academy unit at Doemens, of the good atmosphere in Brazil. It was a major challenge for the contestants to keep a cool head for an assured performance in an atmospherically charged setting in front of a big audience. Ultimately it was the Italian Simonmattia Riva who won the jury over and who can now with immediate effect call himself the world champion beer sommelier. Riva put on a perfect show for the jury and

public. He won them over with both a technically assured presentation of his chosen beer and with a very emotional and rousing demeanor, which had the public leaping from their chairs in “standing ovations”. “Incredible! I never expected it. It’s a dream come true”, said the freshly crowned world champion beer sommelier through tears of joy, after having been feted by his Italian colleagues and receiving the trophy from his predecessor Oliver Wesseloh. The two Germans Frank Lucas in second place and Irina Zimmermann in third place also made it onto the podium.

Caption: Simonmattia Riva from Italy victorious at fourth Beer Sommelier World Championship in Brazil (photo: Doemens).

The jury

The decision as to who is the world’s best beer sommelier was taken by a six-strong jury with expertise in the beer industry and in gastronomy. Founder Dr. Wolfgang Stempf was there as a regular jury member. The main sponsors contributed two ladies well-established in the industry, beer connoisseurs and experts in beer varieties in the guise of Dr. Elisabeth Wiesen, Barth-Haas-Group, and Petra Westphal, drinktec. Oliver Wesseloh, as the still reigning world champion, subjected his successor to close scrutiny and especially critical assessment. The third lady in the line-up was Tatiana Spogis, who was runner-up in 2013 and representing the host country as a trainer in Brazil. Last but not least, the finalists had to win over well-known wine sommelier Manoel Beato from Brazil.

The sponsors’ group

The world championship was supported by a group of sponsors which champions beer culture and beer diversity and which in recent years has made it possible to stage the competition. There from the very beginning and the principal sponsor once again this year was the Barth-Haas Group, the world’s biggest service provider for all hop-related matters, and drinktec the world’s leading trade fair for the beverages and liquid food industry, making it the industry’s most important event. The sponsors’ group also included well-known representatives of the brewing and beverages industry: BrauKon, independent brewers Die Freien Brauer, Sahn, Siemens and specialist producer Weyermann®.

About the Beer Sommelier World Championship

The Beer Sommelier World Championship takes place every two years. It was staged for the fourth time by the Doemens Academy in 2015. Its founder is Dr. Wolfgang Stempf, Managing Director of the Doemens Academy, which has been offering a training course as a beer sommelier since 2004. Courses are now offered in six languages on four continents. The training course is intended to qualify ambassadors for high-end beer culture, capable of acquainting consumers with the rich diversity and appreciation of beer. This year in July saw the quest for the champion from among the ranks of the more than 2,000 beer sommeliers. 50 beer sommeliers from different countries competed to demonstrate their knowledge and nose for beer.

Additional information is available from www.doemens.org.

You are welcome to requests additional information, photographic material and quotations from:

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