

County Council cook takes bronze at national competition

A West Sussex County Council chef has been named among the best in Britain.

Ismail Polat from Crawley came third at last week's Cook of the Year competition from the National Association of Care Catering.

He also won the South East of England regional contest earlier this year with his two course menu of tangy trout followed by raspberry summer pudding.

The 39-year-old was representing New Tyne Resource Centre in Durrington, where he worked as a cook.

He has since changed jobs and is currently a Cook Supervisor at Woodlands Meed College in Burgess Hill, catering for the nutritional needs of nearly 250 pupils.

Ismail said: "This has been a fantastic year for me and I am delighted to have come third in such a prestigious national competition.

"I have put a great deal of hard work into my menu, developing and preparing each of the dishes in my spare time, but it was certainly worth the effort."

All entrants had to develop a new and exciting recipe for a two-course main and dessert menu that was nutritionally-balanced and appropriate for a care home environment.

John Figgins, County Catering Service Manager, added: "Ismail has performed brilliantly throughout the competition and has done so with real flair.

"He has been well supported and coached throughout by members of our team - particularly Annette Wedd who is one of our Catering Monitoring Officers."

Aside from being nutritionally-balanced, each contestant had to meet the maximum budget of just £1.30 per person, while entrants had only 90 minutes to prepare the meal.

Peter Catchpole, County Council Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health, said: "To come third in the finals of a national competition is a fantastic accomplishment for Ismail and the West Sussex Catering team.

"He has shown great ability in the kitchen and this is an achievement of which he can certainly be proud."

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