Stout casts spell over homebrew judges

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Campaign

Matthew Winter with his Black Magic – Tropical Stout (7 per cent) beer has been crowned winner of the Champion Homebrewer of the Year 2025 competition at the Great British Beer Festival at the NEC Birmingham. The brew also topped the strong stouts and porters category. Sponsored by Nailmaker Brewing Co and Brew At Home, the award seeks out the best of homebrewing and showcases the brightest brewers of the future. In the final judging round at the festival, the homebrewers’ beers were blind tested by a panel of experienced beer judges. Final round judging coordinator Kevin Travers described the winning beer as: “A full-bodied stout, with a thick creamy head. Incredibly complex with a sweet aroma, loaded with dark fruits and a smoky finish. Really easy drinking for its strength.” The Silver went to Richard Taylor with The Bishops Tripple (4.4 per cent) which won the brown and red ales, old ales and strong milds category. The Bronze was awarded to James Bailey with his Because I'm Hoppy! winner of the British and New World IPAs category. Bailey said: “Wow! I never expected to win this, and I am very happy.” CAMRA awards director Gary Timmins said: “Whether it’s a hobby that’s been mastered, or an ambition to go on and brew commercially, Champion Homebrewer of the Year showcases the brightest and best people that are taking their beer knowledge home with them. “A massive congratulations to Matthew, and to everyone who put themselves out there and entered their beers for judging by our expert panels.”