

Adam **SEBASTIAN**

“I felt I had something to prove.”

If Adam told you he was a world class welder (which he won't because he's too modest), it would be the honest truth. Last August, he placed 9th out of 40 countries at the 2019 WorldSkills Competition in Kazan, Russia. Technically, that makes him one of the 10 best welders under 22 in the world. Talk about bragging rights.

How did you get involved in Skills competitions?

I entered a school competition at Saskatchewan Polytechnic. I was the underdog, but I went on to win. That led to the 2016 provincials, where I also won, and that led to nationals, where I didn't do so good.

What happened at nationals?

I thought provincials was big, but nationals blew my mind. I was new to competition and made a rookie mistake—I misread the instructions.

Why compete in Skills again?

I felt like I had something to prove. Also, 2016 was a qualifying year for the 2017 WorldSkills competition. Seeing how much effort went into that really fired me up. I thought it would be amazing to represent my country.

Did you train?

Yes, I worked four 10-hour days at my apprentice job, then spent a day at Sask Polytech practicing. I went through the whole process again—I won the local and provincial competitions to move on to nationals, where I won the national Gold medal in my skill. It was the most amazing feeling I've ever had in my life.

And then off to WorldSkills?

No, 2017 wasn't a qualifying year. I had to do it all again in 2018. But it all went to plan, and I was one of two welders chosen to compete for a spot on Team Canada. I spent almost a year training and battling it out with the other welder. It was intense. We had a



“Skills Canada really opened my eyes to options in my trade, including more schooling.”

weld-off at the 2019 nationals in Halifax, and I ended up winning.

Any perks being part of Skills Canada?

Having access to a trainer and expert, you learn so much. I also got to travel—Skills Canada pays for everything. My first international competition was in Huntsville, Alabama. I also went to Australia, where I had my first real look at some of the top WorldSkills countries—Japan, Russia, India. I placed third in both competitions.

Any lessons learned?

You think you're good, and then you get to these international competitions and you see people who are even better. It's intimidating, but it fires you up, too.

Tell us about WorldSkills.

The venue was so huge, you can't even wrap your head around it. Over 1,300 competitors from 63 different countries. We stayed in our own Team Canada village. The opening ceremonies were ridiculous—you walk out with Team Canada and there are fireworks, dignitaries, a sell-out stadium crowd, 40,000 people cheering. Russia spared no expense; it was like the Olympics.

How did it go?

I came out with 9th place and a Medallion of Excellence. I was just 4 points off the podium, so it

was close. It was a relief when it was done, but sad too, because you only get one chance at the Worlds.

What's next?

A bit of rest, actually! I'm in my last year of apprenticeship, so I'll finish up the school component and get my hours, then I'll write the Red Seal exam. I'd definitely consider more schooling, like welding engineering technology.

SKILLS CANADA BRINGS OUT YOUR BEST.

Imagine representing your country on the world stage, challenging yourself against the best of the best. The Olympics? Nope, it's WorldSkills, and it's a **HUGE deal**.

Skills Canada promotes careers in skilled trades and technology through annual provincial and national competitions. Competitions are open to high school and post-secondary students. Every 2 years, the two highest ranking participants in their trade at nationals compete in the WorldSkills selection process. These Team Canada “prospects” spend months in training and then go head-to-head at nationals to earn a coveted spot on WorldSkills Team Canada.

2020 is a WorldSkills qualifying year. Learn more at [skillscanadasask](https://www.skillscanadasask.com) and [skillscompetencescanada](https://www.skillscompetencescanada.com).