

Blackheath Stout wins Champion beer title

Fixed Wheel Brewery has scooped gold in CAMRA's Champion Winter Beer of Britain competition with Blackheath Stout, a five per cent ABV stout packed with malts, fruits and hops.

Following more than a year of local tasting panels and regional heats, Blackheath Stout was named overall champion, and beer writer Roger Protz described it as "a very fine example of a stout".

He added: "We were all very impressed by its rich malty flavour, its fruity hop aroma and the overall flavour of the beer."

Runners-up include Elland brewery's '1872' porter (silver) and Hawkshead 'Brodie's Prime Export' (bronze).

Available all year in cask and keg, 'Blackheath' is a full-bodied fruity stout dedicated to the home of Fixed Wheel's Blackheath brewery. It is brewed with New Zealand and English hops to give an oaky bitterness and dark fruits finish.

The Champion Winter Beer of Britain competition marks the first day of the Great British Beer Festival Winter, which is running from 4-8 February at The New Bingley Hall in Birmingham.

It provides an opportunity to showcase the best traditional winter brews in the country, out of categories such as barley wines, strong old ales and stouts.

The Great British Beer Festival Winter features a range of ales from dark, strong winter ales to light hoppy ales. It also boasts a Learn & Discover area to meet brewers and try comparative tastings, a key keg bar and a retro gaming section.

Scott Povey, who owns Fixed Wheel Brewery alongside his partner Sharon, said: "I'm just really shocked. It's amazing news for us, fantastic! Blackheath Stout is the first beer we brewed, and is named after where we're based.

"We're really pleased to see it get the recognition it deserves – we'll probably have to brew it a bit more now."

Gary Timmins, CAMRA's national director responsible for the competition, said: "This is one of the highest accolades in the beer world. It was a very close competition and a well deserved win."

This year's gold, silver and bronze awards will now go through to the finals of the Champion Beer of Britain competition.

Champion Winter Beer of Britain: Overall: Gold – Fixed Wheel's Blackheath Porter; silver – Elland's 1972 porter; bronze – Hawksheads Broodies Prime Export

Barley Wine Strong Old Ales: gold – Hawkshead, Brodie's Prime Export; silver – Exmoor's Beast; bronze – Lacon's Audit Ale

Old Age Strong Milds: gold – Loddon's Hocus Pocus; silver – Brunswick's Black Sabbath; bronze – Tintagel's Caliburn

Porters: gold – Elland's 1872 porter; silver – Fownes' King Korvak's Saga; bronze – Colchester's Old King Coel London Porter

Stouts: gold – Fixed Wheel's Blackheath Stout; silver – Barn gates, Goodhew's Dry Stout; bronze – Plain, Inncognito