



Huntly's meat ambassador Gary Raeburn heads to Australia later this year for the World Butchery Challenge.
 Picture: Lyn MacDonald.
 Image No 033235

Gary aims to be a cut above

Butcher heading to Oz for World Challenge event

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HUNTLY butcher Gary Raeburn has been picked for the UK British Beefeaters team in the 2016 World Butchers Challenge.

The UK Young Butcher of the year in 2010 and Scottish Butcher of the Year in 2013, Gary, heads to Australia's Gold Coast in September for the first world contest.

Gary, who will be 30 at the time of the competition, was a member of the UK team in last year's Tri Nations Butchers Challenge in Auckland against the winning host nation and Australia.

The competition has been elevated to world status in 2016 with the addition of France into the line up.

The UK was pipped to the title by New Zealand by just two points but Gary, voted the most valuable member of the UK team hopes that experience gathered last year will stand the team in good stead.

He said: "There are three of us who

were in the team last year and three who are in for the first time. The three of us will know what to expect and can hopefully help the new lads."

The UK team is backed by the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board beef and lamb marketing strategy. The first of five training sessions was held in Leeds earlier this month when the team's performance last year was reviewed and the scores scrutinised to see where points had been lost.

In the competition, each team will have three hours to turn a side of beef, pork and a lamb into a first class butchery display. The teams are judged by a panel of expert industry judges on their preparation, presentation, finishing and display.

In a change from last year's format, during the course of the competition, teams will be challenged to create innovative pork, beef and lamb products and sausages which will be judged so that teams can collect points towards the overall final score.

"Last year there was only the award for the winners.

"The addition of the innovation products and sausage competitions means that teams can potentially come home with an award for some of these things even if they don't manage to win the overall title."

The World Butchers Champion is held as part of a six day study tour which showcases some of the best meat retail operations in the host country.

After arriving in Sydney the teams will tour the Gold Coast's best butchers, visit farms and enjoy meat cooked by some of the region's top chefs.

Gary added: "I am pleased to have been chosen again. It is great to have the opportunity to go to Australia for the competition.

"There is word that Scotland could host the competition in 2017 which would be an amazing opportunity for us to show the quality of our meat products and butcher shops.

"If it comes to Scotland it would be good to have a Scottish team."